| About | **O.4 Student's Competence Framework** |
|---|---|
| **Project title** | Sexual Diversity Sensitivity in Social Domain Vocational Training (SENSE) |
| **Reference number** | 2018-1-NL01-KA202-038973 |
| **Date** | 01/12/2020 |
| **Version/dissemination** | FINAL VERSION |
| **Partner** | DEFOIN |
| **Authors** | Juan Escalona Corral |

# Contents

# Introduction

This competence framework is the 4th Intellectual Output of the project **Sexual Diversity in Social Domain Sensitivity Vocational Training (SENSE) No. 2018-1-NL01-KA202-038973**, and it aims to propose a set of competences that are needed both by the students and teachers for the inclusion of diversity, both amongst peers and with future clients at their workplace. The project is coordinated by the organization Stitching Global Alliance for LGBTI Education (GALE) based in the Netherlands. The project further sees the collaboration of the following European organizations:

- Fondazione Centro Studi Villa Montesca (Italy)
- I.I.S. Liceo Città di Pietro
- Formacion Para el Desarrollo e Insercion, Sociedad Limitada – DEFOIN (Spain)
- Eurotraining Educational Organization (Greece)
- ROC Van Amsterdam – ROCVA (Netherlands)
- European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training – EFVET (Belgium)
- CESIE, European centre of studies and initiatives (Italy)
- Associazione Euroform (Italy)

Societies and the labour market are changing rapidly and it is clear that VET students increasingly need generic 21st century skills to be able to have a future chance for a job in changing markets. The acquisition of such key transversal competences is an important priority in the European VET strategy (ET2020).

The goal of the framework is to support a focused dialogue on how to raise the quality of VET education on sexuality and diversity, and to start discussion on how to enhance formal competence requirements of VET students. The partners in this project confirm that formal competence requirements for VET students are different in all of our countries and there is room for improvement. Also, a discussion across countries and on the European level will be beneficial to enhance the European response to intolerance and to promote constructive and professional responses to intolerance and polarization.

The discussion on the framework serves to:

1. Create an awareness of 'deep' diversity skills, including sexual diversity sensitivity
2. Create or strengthen the need to review institutional, or national formal VET competency requirements for students
3. Support the development of new or adapted curricula to enhance diversity education in VET
4. Support exchange and deepen the discussion of experiences, curricula and competence frameworks at the European level

The implementation and work on the skills described in this framework has two outcomes, in the short term and in the long, and both affecting the classroom and the work setting where the VET students will provide services to LGBTI customers. The outcomes are the following:

1. **Inclusion of LGTBI students in the classroom**: By raising the issue of sexual diversity and implementing the tools proposed in this framework, the classroom will become a more open space where LGBTI students can feel safe, therefore promoting their inclusion.
2. **Respect for the diversity of LGTBI customers/users of the companies where the VET students will work**: When VET students join the labour market; they will have to provide services to diverse customers, and specifically to LGTBI customers. For example, while studies on "older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTI) adults in residential care point to their discrimination, invisibility and the taboo on LGBTI lifestyles" (LEYERZAPF, VISSE, DE BEER & ABMA, 2016), a VET student that has the diversity competences described in this framework will be able to provide care attending to the specific needs to the LGTBI users.

## About this framework

This competence framework defines the competences needed by Vocational Education and Training students in order to improve services and attention to LGBTI customers and users in their future jobs. Those competences will be divided in interpersonal and intrapersonal, and this framework includes a definition of those competences and proposals on how to apply them in the classroom with practical activities.

Both groups of competences are necessary for having a good level of inclusion. All people should work in both groups of competences as a way of being more open to diversity.

While in intrapersonal competences the focus is in those people who wish to be respected, in the second group of interpersonal competences we will focus in how we can help other people by promoting and accepting inclusion in sexual diversity.

It is really important promoting sexual diversity among people that do not accept it and at the same time it is important promoting among LGBTI people what they can do to be accepted and integrated in a diverse sexual community. This is essential when people start becoming aware of their sexuality.

**Intrapersonal competences** involve self-management and the ability to regulate one's behaviour and emotion to reach goals, while **interpersonal competences** involve expressing information to others as well as interpreting others' messages and responding appropriately

### Generic or specific?

One could ask the valid question whether *generically* formulated competences are not adequate enough to cover LGBTI students and clients/customers. Do *specific* competences related to sexual diversity exist, and if they do, is it necessary to make them explicit in a separate framework?

The SENSE-project set out to initiate a discussion exactly on these questions.

Because it is not common that VET institutions or teachers automatically give attention to sexual diversity, we found it necessary to be specific about the needs of clients, customers and students. By being specific we create awareness of the issues at hand.

When we were discussing competences, we noted that most generic competences in principle should cover specific skills and behaviours related to LGBTI customers, clients and students. At the same time we see that the recognition that this is so, is not automatic. So we agree that generic competences *should* be enough, but also note that in many cases the sensitivity to actually implement them in this inclusive way is lacking. This is why we have attempted to formulate a competence framework in a general way but to extend them with pointers. These pointers serve to initiate the discussion whether VET-providers agree with this type of sensitivity or not, and why.

**Use of singular "they"**

In this framework we will use the *singular* "they" as the gender neutral pronoun instead of the generic "he". We are doing so in order to include both people who may identify with the pronouns he or she as well as to those who identify with a non-binary identity. We will use the inflected forms for they (them, their and theirs) except for the reflexive form "themself", which even though it is grammatically incorrect, its use can be found when it "is intentionally used for someone whose preferred pronoun is they" ("Themself", 2019) as it is the case in this framework

# Specific competences for the promotion of LGBTI diversity in the classroom

*These competences relate to the knowledge, skills and behaviour we expect students should after their initial training.*

*Of course, teachers need to have the basic competences themselves. In addition, it is expected they are able to transfer to and coach these competences with students*

## Intrapersonal Competences

The intrapersonal competences are the "introspective abilities which permit someone to be deeply aware of personal feelings and purposes" (Strom & Strom, 2003). Six intrapersonal competences have been included in this framework:

- Coping skills
- Self-Esteem
- Self-Control
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Confidence
- Accepting Feedback and criticism

## Coping-skills

A good level of this competence means that students are able to carry out a series of actions, or a thought process used in handling a stressful or unpleasant situation or in modifying one's reaction to such a situation. It typically involves a conscious and direct approach to problems, in contrast to defence mechanisms. If they are upset about their own sexual identity, or the sexual diversity of someone else, they will be able to deal with this professionally.

Having achieved this competence they will:

- Recognise stressors and their sources
- Apply appropriate strategies to deal with the stressors (e.g. positive thinking, taking an objective viewpoint rather than a personal perspective, anticipate the stressor and react in a measured fashion, develop a social support network, learn to communicate their emotions, be physically active, etc.)
- Be able to decide on whether to directly address the stressor or, alternatively, deal with the feelings the stressor generates

## Self-Esteem

A good level of this competence means that students are aware of and believe in their own abilities and personal value. Students are aware of their own values regarding identity, diversity and sexuality.

It is the ability to identify and being conscious of your potentials, as well as being constructive about your limitations. If sexual diversity makes the student insecure about their own identity, this competence makes it possible for them to regain pride in it. If the sexual diversity of someone else feels like a threat to the student, this competence assures them they can take pride in their own identification without having to put down others.

Anyone that has more self-esteem and is more at peace with themselves is less likely to adopt inappropriate defensive behaviour against what is different from them.

Having this competence means that they:

- Are able to have a positive outlook about themselves
- Are able to say no
- Are able to see overall strengths and weaknesses and accept them in a positive way

## Self-Control

A good level of this competence means that they are able to manage their self-emotions and actions consciously. t is the ability to be in command of one's behaviour (overt, covert, emotional, or physical) and to restrain or inhibit one's impulses.

Fear of sexual diversity sometimes takes the shape of an instinctual resistance or response. Self-control means that students do not give in to negative impulses that may harm themselves psychologically or LGBTI clients and customers.

Having this competence means that they:

- Are aware of the risks and negative consequences that may result from carrying out harmful behaviour
- Increase their commitment as a person
- Are able to transform abstract objectives into small stages or tasks that they have to fulfil
- Are able to modify their impulses and act according to what they know should do.
- Train their memory in order to repeat actions

## Self-Awareness

A good level of this competence can help students understand their place/role in the living environment compared to others, as well as being able to understand what they are feeling at any given time. LGBTI student may have to learn to overcome pain or trauma die to exclusion or discrimination. Heterosexual

cisgender students may need to recognize that being born as male or female, and having had to sexual orientation is only "normal" because it is seen as a privilege compared to "others".

Having this competence means that they:

- Demonstrate the ability to identify clearly their skills, values, interests and core strengths/weaknesses/opportunities;
- Accurately judge their own performance and behaviour;
- Understand other people, how they perceive them, their emotion, attitude and identity, and their responses to them;
- Recognise their own competences, feelings and attitudes even without external recognition.

## Self-Confidence

A good level of this competence demonstrates to others that students really know how to do things and accept the consequences of their own decisions. LGBTI students make informed decisions about coming-out, other students feel secure in being able support LGBTI people.

It is the trust in one's abilities, capacities, and judgment, as well as the belief that one is capable of successfully meeting the demands of a task.

A person with low self-confidence feels hurt more easily and may react aggressively to it.

Having this competence means that they:

- Feel comfortable with new circumstances in their life;
- Feel happy with their own decisions;
- Are secure in themselves;
- Accept the consequences of their own decisions;
- Are able to instil confidence in other people in their decisions

## Accepting feedback and criticism

It is the ability to listen to other perspectives, and perform self-evaluation.

A good level of this competence will help students to learn from previous personal experiences - both positive and negative ones - and increase their chances of success in integrating in the school, and in general social life.

If a young person is used to accepting feedback and criticism, they might also find it easier to accept other realities other than their own, including LGTBI realities.

Having this competence means that they:

- Understand that other people could have a different point of view on the same topic which could be beneficial for them;
- Listen to the opinion and comments of their teachers and classmates positively and accepts this feedback;
- Understand that feedback is not disapproval or a personal attack, but it is given so that they can improve as a person;
- Are able to take on board advice that has been given to him/her and use it for further personal development.

## Interpersonal competences

The interpersonal competences are related "the social capacity which makes it possible to work effectively with others" (Strom & Strom, 2003) which entails the abilities to better understand others, as individuals and as a group; handle affective relationships; having strong empathy; good skills in listening...

In this framework we have outlined the following interpersonal competences:

- Diversity awareness
- Respect and dignity awareness
- Respect for others
- Adaptable
- Empathy

## Diversity awareness

A good level of this competence means that students are able to embrace (and to be open to discuss) the uniqueness of all individuals along several dimensions such as race, religious beliefs, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, political beliefs, and socio-economic status, and the recognition that cultural (etc.) factors limit the expression of diversity of clients and customers.

Having this competence means that:

- Diversity awareness skills extend beyond mere tolerance to encompass exploration of such individual differences, respecting them, and ultimately nurturing a healthy relationship with the individual despite the differences
- A harmonious environment where mutual respect and equity are intrinsic, protecting the school diversity

## Respect and dignity awareness

A good level of this competence can help to understand, respect and be tolerant with all people around accepting all kinds of diversity. This competence will allow to interact effectively with all people and support diversity (race, age, ethnicity, gender, educational level, socio – economic status, mental and physical abilities, religious and political beliefs); to recognize and accept both dimensions of diversity – personal and organisational – in the school. It also means to be able to recognize the person first and not act based on stereotypes of diversity.

Having this competence means that they:

- Are able to demonstrate a fair, objective and an open attitude toward those whose opinions, beliefs, practices are different from them;
- Are open minded to other cultures, religions and ways of life;
- Are able to recognise and support people with a variety of diversity situations and empowering them
- Recognise and accepts both dimensions of diversity – personal and organisational – in the school.
- Is able to recognise the person first and not any dversity,

## Respect for others

A good level of this competence means that students have a respectful way of treating or thinking about something or someone. They have respect for others despite the differences they might exist between you and the others. This remains relevant even when aspects of sexual diversity confront your own values or norms.

Having this competence means that they:

- Are able to respect other people point of view
- Are able to respect actions from other people
- Do not feel superiority in front of other people
-

## Adaptable

A good level of this competence shows the ability to accept changes and new circumstances in personal life; understand that things change and be able to adapt, as well as being able to manage multiple tasks and set priorities in life. As sexual diversity gets more accepted in society, professions and professionals need to adapt to this. It is professionally not optional to be tolerant.

Having this competence means that they:

- Understand that things change at a far greater speed than ever before;
- Are able to accept changes or new circumstances in their life;
- Are able to manage multiple tasks and set priorities in their life;
- Are able to adapt to changing conditions.


## Empathy

A good level of this competence means to be able to put yourself in the position of the other and feel their point of view (including that of LGBTI clients and customers); coming closer to someone, and understanding others better. To be empathic means to allow yourself to feel your emotions - not necessarily by expressing them right away.

Having this competence means that they:

- Are able to put themselves in the place of other
- Are able to deeply understand others situations
- Have the capacity of not making judgments from other people actions
- Are able to have the same feeling that other person has.

## Practical approach

In this section you will find proposals on how to work these competences in class specifically to promote the inclusion and respect towards LGBTI diversity. If you wish to start a conversation in your class about sexual diversity, you can use the **Trigger Technology** that we have developed in this project and that compiles instruments that are used to start a discussion among students.

If you wish to learn more about LGTBI+ diversity, the partnership of the SENSE project has also created a **Teacher Training** that includes discussion of ground rules, a trigger, exploring challenging situations, explanation of the norm of heterosexuality and discussion of pedagogical, didactic and school policy solutions.

You can access these resources through the following links:

- Trigger technology: *insert link here*
- Teacher training: *insert link here*

The following proposals can be used individually, just to work on a specific competence, or complementary to the tools mentioned above to provide a more comprehensive training on sexual diversity to your students.

## Intrapersonal competences

**Accepting feedback and criticism**

Both in the class and in the work environment, a young person will receive feedback on numerous occasions. Being able to accept that feedback without receiving it as an attack is a valuable skill for any young person working with diverse clients/users

> *In a workplace environment, you may unconsciously misgender[1] a client. When corrected, having this competence, you will be able to properly address that client without understanding that criticism as an attack to your person.*

**Activity:**

To work this competence in class, we propose the following role-playing activity:

1. The group is divided into couples. Each of the couples is given a card with a fictional situation where they may receive criticism. Some examples of this situations are: "you have arrived late to an appointment", "you have not answered an important work email", etc. You are encouraged to use situations that they may face in the field of their VET studies.
2. One couple comes to the front of the classroom and role-plays a situation in which one is giving feedback on the situation given. The other participant will have to react to that feedback.
3. The group will reflect on how you can react to that criticism in a mature and non-aggressive manner. The reflection and peer learning is highly important in this activity.
4. All the couples will go through this activity.

*This activity can also be used to practice giving feedback and criticism in a constructive way.*

---

[1] "to use the wrong pronouns or other gender-specific words when referring to or speaking to someone, especially a transgender person" ("Misgender", n.d.)

**Self-Esteem**

Having a good self-esteem is highly important in the class both for the LGTBI+ student (who is likely to suffer from a lower self-esteem) and from the cis-hetero[2] student, who if suffers from low self-esteem is more likely to assume inappropriate defensive behaviours towards what is not normative in their environment. Since male students are most likely both to suffer from homophobic aggressions in the classroom as well as to be the aggressors (Blais, Gervais & Hébert, 2014), this competence is especially interesting for groups with a high rate of male students.

> *When you are in a work environment you may find yourself in a situation where you are interacting with someone with a different sexual orientation or gender identity. Even if that may make you feel uncomfortable, you must behave appropriately and professionally. Having a good self-esteem will make you feel less uncomfortable and allow you to behave in a professional manner.*

**Activity:**

To work this competence in class, we propose that the teacher opens a discussion about sexual diversity and raise awareness and consciousness about orientation. In this way, students can build a higher level of identity and consciousness and feel more self-confident and accepted as a consequence.

In order to carry out the activity, the classroom is divided into smaller groups.

*What happens if a student makes an LGBTI-phobic comment during the discussion? And during a regular class? Do you respond to phobic comments (first) or to the hurt (LGBTI) student(s)?*

An LGBTI-phobic comment can never be left unanswered. If one of these comments is allowed in the classroom, the students will feel validated to keep doing these type of comments (therefore, the self-esteem of the teacher is important as well, to be able to confront these phobic comments)

---

[2] It refers to a cisgender ("a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex" ("cisgender", n.d.)) and heterosexual person.

**Self-Control**

The key aspect that will be worked in this competence is overriding an impulse and reflecting before acting. This will help teachers and students to manage personal emotions and rationalize them, especially when they are strong emotions.

*The lack of self-control may end up in aggressive behaviours when experiencing strong emotions. Students need to improve their self-control after experiencing strong emotions and frustration to ensure the safety (physical and emotional) of both co-workers and customers/users in the work environment.*

**Activity:**

In this activity, students will be faced with frustration so that they can find tools of cooperating with their classmates rather than reacting aggressively or out of place. For this activity you will need a newspaper page per student.

1. Each participant has a page of a newspaper (they must all be different). They all start reading at the same time. When the teacher says stop, they will stop reading and leave the newspaper page on the floor. When the teacher says change, they will go to a different page and start reading. The goal of the game is that **they continue reading from where the last person left it**.
2. Once they have realised it is impossible to do so without a strategy, they will have time to discuss a strategy. They try it out, and if it works, the teacher will include a new rule that invalidates that strategy (i.e. if they mark with a pen the last word they read, the teacher will forbid the use of pens).

This activity can be quite challenging and frustrating, and after the activity, a discussion ought to be started on how they reacted when frustrated and what the results of that behaviour were. A reflection on how by controlling our reactions we get better results can be raised.

*You can use news articles related to sexual diversity in this activity.*

**Self-Confidence**

Even though self-esteem and self-confidence may look very much alike, there is a key difference between the both. While self-esteem is how you feel about yourself overall, self-confidence is referred to specific situations or abilities, and can change depending on the context. Even though someone may have a great self-esteem, they can have a low self-confidence in a specific ability (i.e. maths). Therefore, we will be working in this activity on the self-confidence related to sexual diversity.

> *When students find themselves in a situation where they are bullied, but decide to come out as an LGBTI person, that shows that they have a high level of self-confidence.*

**Activity 1:**

Discuss with students, and inform them about, sexual diversity and gender identity. Organize round tables in the class to raise awareness about their rights. These round tables could be "safe hubs" where students are able to ask questions, clarify doubts, and discuss their fears related to the theme.

"E.g. Weekly safe hub"

**Activity 2:**

Involve specialist that openly identify as LGBTI. Many LGBTI organisations offer activities for schools, and the people delivering them are openly LGBTI. By participating in one of these activities, your students will not only learn about sexual diversity and gender identity, but they will meet a self-confident LGBTI person, who can be a role model to any LGBTI student in your class that may feel there is a lack of LGBTI referents in their own life and it will normalise interactions with LGBTI people amongst the student body.

## Self-Awareness

Being self-aware of one's own identity can be very helpful when interacting with people whose identity is non-normative. The more you have reflected about your own identity, the easier it will be for you to relate to others.

*In the field of socio-assistance, the student will work closely with LGBTI patients. The student is able to understand the difference between their idea of identity and other possible identities, hence they pay a lot of attention to how different patients would prefer to be addressed, e.g. neutral, feminine, masculine, etc.*

## Activity:

Activities to reflect about one's identity can be included in the classroom. In order to raise the topic of diversity, "The Genderbread Person" (Killerman, 2017)(Figure 1) can be used.
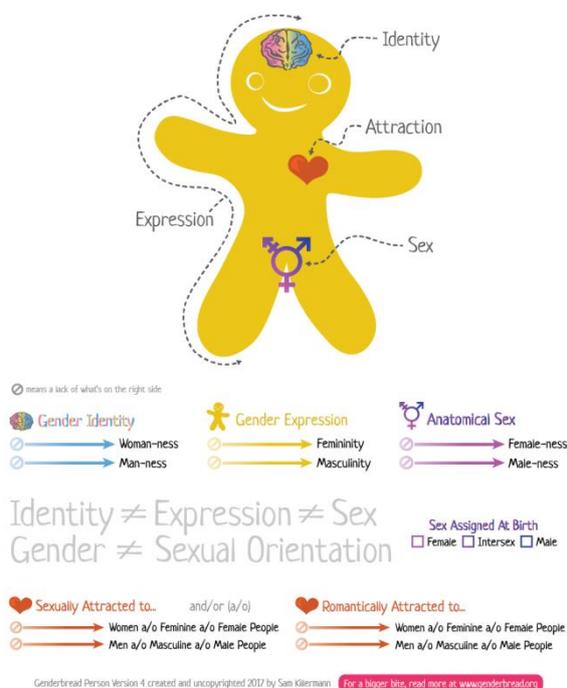


Figure 1: The Genderbread Person v4, Killermann (2017)

**Coping skills**

Coping skills will help you and your students tolerate, minimize, and deal with stressful situations in life. Managing your (their) stress well can help you (them) feel better physically and psychologically and it can impact your (their) ability to perform your best.

> *When someone is in a stressful situation, there is a higher probability of that person acting aggressively, often deflecting their anger (Linsky, Bachman & Straus, 1995) which can lead to hate behaviour towards those who diverge from the normative. Being able to use coping skills can avoid aggressive and tense situations involving LGBTI people.*

**Activity:**

This activity has the objective of making the students reflect on what mechanisms they use to deal with stressful situations: stress management techniques and daily coping skills.

The teacher will write on the board the following questions and will ask the students to answer these questions in a paper. They will not have to share their work. This activity can be used as an introduction on how to use a journal, which can also be a coping skill for a young person.

1. What kinds of situations have been more stressful for me?
2. How have those events typically affected me?
3. Have I found it helpful to seek help from others? Who has been helpful?
4. What have I learned about myself and my interactions with others when I get stressed?
5. What has helped me feel more hopeful or successful? (Capraro, 2012)

## Interpersonal competences

### Diversity awareness

When we are referring to LGBTI diversity awareness as opposed to other kinds of diversity awareness, we find some distinctive features:

- Discredited/discreditable identity: while some forms of diversity are visible to everyone, LGBTI people can sometimes hide their identity.
- Different intimacy allowed: LGBTI people are allowed socially a different level of intimacy in public than heterosexual couples. This does not mean that they share less intimacy, but that they cannot share it publicly.
- Heteronormativity: GALE (the leading partner of the SENSE project) has developed the OGLO model (figure 2). This model explains how social norms work and how they lead to discrimination and social exclusion (Dankmeijer, 2018).

  *Not assuming that the customer/user follows the heteronormativity can be a great quality difference that a professional can make. This allows the worker to be more sensitive and offer a better customer experience.*

### Activity:

You can debate with your students the OGLO model (figure 2). In order to do so we propose to divide the classroom into 4 smaller groups and ask each of the groups to debate one of the OGLO's domains:
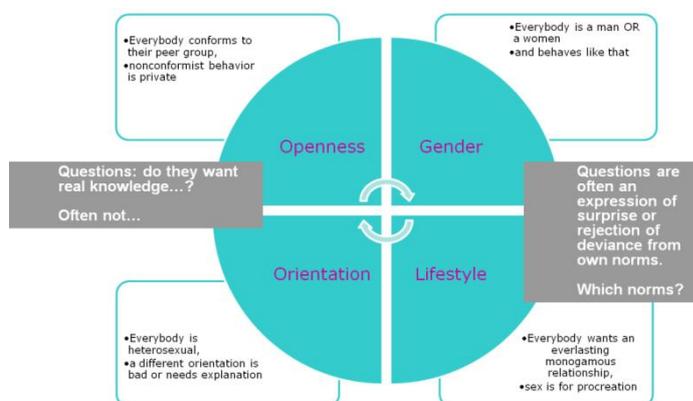


1. Openness
2. Gender
3. Lifestyle
4. Orientation and sexual preference

Figure 2: The OGLO model, Dankmeijer (2018)

**Respect and dignity awareness**

In order to be able to be competent in dignity and respect awareness, we must follow the next steps (Castleberry-Singleton, n.d.):

1. Raise awareness
2. Create engagement (treat the other respectfully)
3. Shared ownership (both us and the customer/user have a common goal: dignity)

The activity proposed is aimed at raising awareness and starting a discussion as the first step towards improving the dignity and respect awareness competence.

*This competence is key for any VET student, especially in the socio-sanitary sector. People with care needs are usually more vulnerable and they can suffer from a lack of dignity. Working in this field entails helping the most vulnerable to be treated with respect and dignity.*

**Activity:**

In this activity we will watch a short film on elderly LGBTI realities and then discuss on some issues and questions.

The short film we are proposing is "A long line of Glitter" (Holmes-Elliot, 2017) which aims to reduce the isolation LGBTI elderly people has. The short film can be viewed here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9g_t-lJsPDA**

After seeing the short film, the following questions can be used to start a discussion in class:

- Did you expect the stories the people in the film shared?
- How can you help elder LGBTI feel less isolated?
- In our job, how can we make sure we protect the dignity of elderly LGBTI people?

Another video, this one addressing Trans realities in childhood, that can be used to raise a discussion in class is "Listen" (Graf, 2018) and can be viewed here: **https://vimeo.com/296667487**

**Respect for others**

In the practical understanding of this competence we are focusing on nonviolent communication as a tool to foster cooperation and communication having at all times respect as a moral compass.

*In the work environment we are always facing challenges, and we are sometimes under great amounts of stress and situations can get tense. The use of nonviolent communication is great for both respecting others, but also for mediating in a situation where discrimination towards an LGBTI person may occur if it is not interrupted.*

**Activity:**

This activity will explore the basic concepts *Observation, Feelings, Needs* and *request* (Kashtan & Kashtan, n.d.), which are basic for nonviolent information.

1. Firstly, start this sentence and ask your students to finish it: "When you have been nervous about a piano recital and you end up playing really well, you feel..." They will respond with adjectives such as fulfilled, amazed…
2. Now ask them to look for adjectives that describe how you feel when things do not go the way you were hoping they would. It is important that they learn to identify how they are feeling.
3. Afterwards, write on the board the following sentences: "You are a pig" and "I feel frustrated when you leave your dirty socks on the bathroom floor because I need to be able to move about more freely. I'd like you to start putting your socks in the dirty clothes basket." and ask them to identify the differences.
4. Ask them to locate the *Observation, Feelings, Needs* and *request* aspects in the second sentence.
5. Divide them in small groups and ask them to think on situations they received a comment that made them feel bad and to rephrase it using the four aspects of nonviolent communications. They can share the results with the rest of the group

**Adaptable**

Adaptability is a skill that is becoming more important every year when it comes to job seeking. Employers look for potential employees that can adapt themselves to different situations. But on the context of LGBTI diversity, adaptability is key to understanding that society changes, and so should we.

> *LGBTI people have gained rights over the last years. Even though there are many still that need to be conquered, there are steps towards equality being made, and society needs to grow with those changes. VET students need to be ready to be able to embrace these changes. For example, what would be" out of the norm" a few years ago, such as elderly LGBTI people in nursing homes, is becoming more and more common, and VET students need to have the skills to be able to modify their work practices according to the times they live (and will live) in.*

**Activity:**

This activity will be focused on removing expectations. When we have certain expectations, our behaviour is influenced by the results, and if they adhere to what we were expecting. To be adaptable we therefore need to remove our expectations. In the context of LGBTI diversity, such expectations usually come in the form of prejudices.

1. The students will be divided into couples. Each of the members of the couple will have a sticker stuck to their head (without seeing its content). That sticker will have an adjective written on it (lazy, loud, effeminate…), but they won't know what the article on their head is.

2. Each couple will role play a situation in which they will have to treat the other person according to the characteristic they have stuck to their forehead.

3. Once they have roleplayed the situation, they will be asked how they felt being treated according to what their sticker was (and how they felt treating the other person the same way).

4. The teacher will then share that we have preconceived ideas, prejudices, towards certain groups such as LGBTI people, and that those prejudices affect the way we interact with them ("Prejudices", 2019).

## Empathy

Empathy is a prerequisite for real understanding and tolerance; and it is different than pretending or tolerance-at-a-distance. It is very important that the group makes ground rules before discussing issues related to this topic, such as *you don't have to say anything, don't be negative about comments others* and *keep private comments in the group*.

*Our students do not need to have a profound understanding and theoretical knowledge of different sexual and identity circumstances. In many occasions, having a good level of empathy will allow them to provide a good service to the most vulnerable customers/users, specially the LGBTI.*

## Activity:

In this activity we will work with the empathy map, which has four aspects: *Feel, Think, Say* and *Do* (Paltrow, 2017).

1. Project or draw the Empathy Map (Figure 3) on the board.
2. Give 4 sticky notes to each of the students
3. Present a situation when in their future work (that applies to the field their VET course is about), they may interact with an LGBTI person (e.g. "You are working in a flower shop and a gay couple who is getting married asks you to prepare the floral arrangements for the wedding").
4. Ask them to, in each of the sticky notes, write what would apply to them in each of the categories of the Empathy Map. Then they are asked to go to the board, stick the sticky notes and share with the rest of the group what they have written.



Figure 3: Empathy Map

# References

Blais, M., Gervais, J., & Hébert, M. (2014). Internalized homophobia as a partial mediator between homophobic bullying and self-esteem among youths of sexual minorities in Quebec (Canada). *Ciência & Saúde Coletiva*, 19(3), 727-735. doi: 10.1590/1413-81232014193.16082013

Cambridge University Press. Misgender. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus.* Cambridge. Retrieved from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles/misgender

Capraro, K. (2012). *Break Free from Depression: A 4-Session Curriculum Addressing Adolescent Depression* (pp. 55-56). Boston: Boston Children's Hospital Neighborhood Partnerships.

Castleberry-Singleton, C. The Dignity & Respect Campaign: An Initiative to Build an Inclusive Workplace that Delivers Patient-centered, Culturally Culturally Competent Care. Retrieved 14 July 2020, from https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-health-disparities-solutions/Events/CasteleberryFrom_Dignity_Respect_to_Cultural_Awareness.pdf

Dankmeijer, P. (2018). *Sexual Diversity in Schools: Reader*. GALE.

Graf, J. (2018). *Listen* [Short film]. UK.

Holmes-Elliot, A. (2017). *A long line of glitter* [Short film]. Glasgow.

Kashtan, I., & Kashtan, M. Basics of Nonviolent Communication – BayNVC. Retrieved 14 July 2020, from https://baynvc.org/basics-of-nonviolent-communication/#:~:text=Empathy,-.&text=Expressing%20our%20own%20observations%2C%20feelings,guessing%20their%20feelings%20and%20needs.

Killermann, S. (2017). *The Genderbread Person v4* [Image]. Retrieved from https://www.genderbread.org/resource/genderbread-person-v4-0

Leyerzapf, H., Visse, M., De Beer, A., & Abma, T. (2016). Gay-friendly elderly care: creating space for sexual diversity in residential care by challenging the hetero norm. *Ageing And Society*, *38*(2), 352-377. doi: 10.1017/s0144686x16001045

Linsky, A., Bachman, R., & Straus, M. (1995). *Stress, culture & aggression*. New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press.

Merriam-Webster. (2019). Themself. Merriam-Webster. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/themself

Oxford University Press. cisgender. *Lexico*. Oxford. Retrieved from https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/cisgender

Paltrow, C. (2017). Empathy Map, *Empathy in Your Classroom* [PDF] (p. 8). The Teachers Guild. Retrieved from https://www.oakland.edu/Assets/Oakland/galileo/files-and-documents/Empathy%20in%20Your%20Classroom%20Teachers%20Guild.pdf

Prejudices. (2019). Retrieved 14 July 2020, from https://dramaforyouthwork.eu/prejudices/

Strom, P., & Strom, R. (2020). *Interpersonal Intelligence Theory*. Retrieved 29 June 2020, from http://www.public.asu.edu/~rdstrom/IIITheory.html