



LGBT local policies:

Italy and the Piedmont case

edited by CIRSDe and Turin City Council LGBT Office



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AHEAD Project

www.ahead-bcn.org

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This publication concerns studies carried out by Turin University's CIRSDe and experiments in the training field staged by the Turin City Council LGBT Office together with local partners – Piedmont Regional Council, Turin Provincial Council and the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board – within the context of the European AHEAD project.

It should be mentioned that Turin City Council's participation in the AHEAD project is by no means a one-off activity but the fruit of many year's experience in this field. Turin City Council set up the LGBT Office ten years ago and is a member of the RE.A.DY network established five years back that includes Italian local administrations sensitive to the issues of the effective rights of homosexual, bisexual and transgender people.

The AHEAD project's experimental training activity has meant that work performed to date by the LGBT Office has now been consolidated and systematised, providing new tools and methodologies for future use. These tools and methodologies can easily be used again in other situations and shared within the network established over the years at both local and national level.

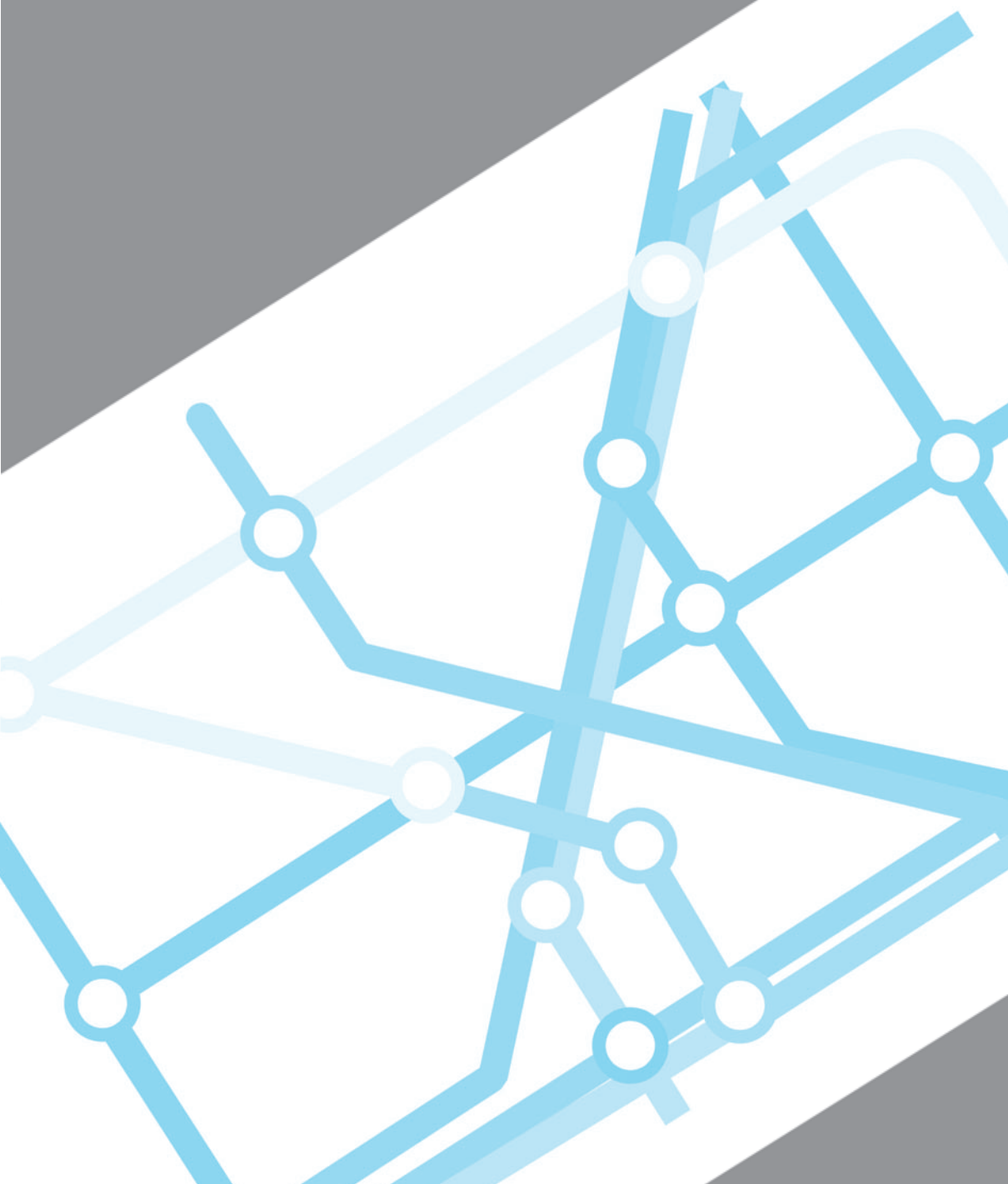
Studies carried out by CIRSDe offer many analyses and considerations concerning experiences within the LGBT context in Italian local administrations (in Bologna, Venice, Rome, Naples). It includes a special focus on the 'Piedmont case', in which over the years a vertical partnership has been created between the City, Provincial and Regional Councils and a horizontal one with the Coordination Board of LGBT associations to become a kind of laboratory extending throughout the region.

It is also worth remembering that the LGBT Office was set up based on a study of LGBT people's needs and how society perceives LGBT people. Now ten years on the CIRSDe study reviews the significance of the work done and validity of strategies to organise and legitimate this adopted in Turin and other places where a dialogue has been established between local bodies and LGBT associations or, as in the case of Venice, where a Monitoring Centre was set up focused on LGBT issues.

And finally, the guidelines at the beginning of the publication provide important methodological and operational indications for local administrations that intend to launch LGBT policies based on experience gained over these past years. This is a tool that, I hope, everyone will find useful.

Turin City Councillor for Equal Opportunities
and Youth Policies
Marta Levi

Introduction



Introduction

In the context of developing policies to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe, local administrations are proving to play a fundamental role. Their ability to design and implement effective policies in this context, working with local associations - first and foremost LGBT¹ organisations - and other levels of governance, indeed appears crucial when it comes to effectively combating discrimination.

This was the subject of the European project AHEAD (Against Homophobia. European local Administration Devices)², implemented in the context of the European Commission's 'Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme (2007-2013)', coordinated by the City Council of Barcelona, with the involvement of public administrations and European universities: Turin City Council; Cologne City Council; CIRSDe – University of Turin; IGOP – Free University of Barcelona and CEPS – Barcelona; MTA SzKI – Budapest; and the Centre for Youth Work Studies – Brunel University, London. Associate partners on a local level in Turin were the Piedmont Regional Council, the Turin Provincial Council and the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board. The main common aim of the project was to publish a White Paper on the public LGBT policies of local administrations in Europe. With the aim of offering useful tools to local administrations interested in developing policies in this area, the White Paper contains: an outline of the legislative situation with regard to rights recognised or denied to LGBT people in various European countries, their social situation and most vulnerable areas; general recommendations on how to implement effective actions, and detailed descriptions of good practices implemented by local administrations in Europe.

For more information on these aspects, please refer to the White Paper³: this publication focuses more specifically on local LGBT policies developed in Italy, gathering the results of work performed by Italian partners which implemented specific initiatives in the context of the project.

The first part of the publication is devoted to the results of the study conducted by CIRSDe, the University of Turin's Research Centre for Women's and Gender Studies, co-funded by the Piedmont Regional Council, which regards the networks developed locally and on a national level with a view to interfacing and developing LGBT public policies in concertation. In a national context characterised by the absence of specific norms protecting the rights of LGBT citizens, the Turin unit focussed on identifying the strategies that local administrations could deploy to grant legitimacy to this issue. To this end case studies were carried out examining the partnerships between administrations and the LGBT sphere in five Italian cities (Rome, Naples, Bologna, Venice and Turin) and the experience of a vertical partnership in Piedmont. Further study was devoted to the work of the Italian network RE.A.DY (a national network of public

1. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual/Transgender.

2. <http://www.ahead-bcn.org/>

3. The White Paper is available on the AHEAD project website.

4. The first part of the volume is the joint work of the authors. In detail, Beatrice Gusmano wrote sections 1.1 and 1.2 of the first chapter; the second chapter; sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of the third chapter; sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the fourth chapter. Chiara Bertone wrote sections 1.3, 3.4 and 4.3.

administrations committed to combating discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity)⁴.

To understand the role played by local governance, the first chapter sets out to explore the changes that have affected LGBT policies following the devolution of power from central government to local administrations, based on research and reflections already available in the international literature. The second chapter describes experiences of local LGBT policies examined in the case studies carried out for the research project: the Permanent Coordination Board on gender identity and sexual orientation in Rome; the permanent Coordination Board between LGBT associations and the Naples City Council; the LGBT Monitoring Centre of Venice City Council; the Office for Diversity Policies of Bologna City Council; the LGBT Office of Turin City Council, the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board, and the vertical partnership between Turin City Council, Turin Provincial Council and Piedmont Regional Council. The third chapter analyses the various strategies deployed to organise and legitimate the partnerships in these case studies. The fourth chapter is dedicated to analysing and reconstructing the history of the RE.A.DY network.

The second part of the publication contains the results of training activities trialled as part of the AHEAD project, by the LGBT Office of Turin City Council, together with Piedmont Regional Council, Turin Provincial Council and GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board. These activities were carried out in Turin with the aim of designing and trialling four innovative training kits addressing the four areas identified by the project: education, families, social inclusion and public space. This document aims to present the motivations behind the trial, illustrate its complexity in terms of both the number of people involved and the various different stages in the process, and underline the attention devoted to assessing results.

Part I

The research: partnership and legitimation in LGBT local policies

by Beatrice Gusmano and Chiara Bertone



Guidelines for local administrations

The following guidelines are indications which emerged during research work, regarding organisational and operative strategies that have enabled local bodies to work effectively on LGBT issues.

Local administration:

- identify a political contact person who assumes responsibility for legitimating LGBT actions and raising the awareness of the entire political apparatus in order to modify the culture of the organisation;
- commission a university or other scientific body to carry out local research into the needs of the LGBT population and the social perception of privileged interlocutors (teachers, paediatricians, social workers, parents' associations...);
- set up a service dedicated to LGBT issues within the City Council to guarantee organisational continuity and combat the invisibility usually associated with these issues;
- make provisions to hire staff motivated on LGBT issues and assign specific tasks to each unit;
- create a piloting group with representatives from all sectors of the Public Administration to ensure that each sector addresses LGBT issues with regard to its own competences;
- ensure measures are implemented across all council departments;
- raise awareness among directors of the Public Administration to grant legitimacy to the actions;
- implement training for all public administration personnel to promote efficient relations with users;
- remove heteronormative assumptions from all council proceedings, be they administrative or normative;
- include LGBT initiatives among city events;
- foresee the evaluation of the initiatives staged every year, implementing the objectives;
- foster the creation of a local network involving the administration and private subjects;
- involve a local coordination board of LGBT associations in all activities, including training (see 'The partnership between local administration and LGBT associations');
- forge a vertical partnership with all levels of governance in the local area;
- join the RE.A.DY network in order to interface with other local administrations in Italy, with regards to both sharing good practices and strategies and reflecting on sources of legitimation for LGBT policies;
- forge relationships with central government while still maintaining autonomy;
- establish an ongoing dialogue with the European Union;

- take account of the specific characteristics of local contexts when designing and implementing initiatives, guaranteeing dissemination throughout the area in question.

The partnership between local administration and LGBT associations:

- promote the creation of a coordination board that brings together all the LGBT associations in the local area;
- forge a partnership with the coordination board to promote a bottom-up approach, always seeking the involvement of the associations in both the decision-making process and implementation;
- foresee regulations to govern relationships between the local administration and the associations, in non-hierarchical terms, endorsing the autonomy of the coordination board with respect to the city council and limiting the power of majority associations;
- formally establish the aspects on which the local administration and coordination board intend to cooperate;
- schedule regular meetings with an agenda;
- work together on initiatives, taking advantage of the coordination board's knowledge and experience of the local area;
- organise concerted initiatives for the important dates in the LGBT calendar: 17 May (International Day Against Homophobia - IDAHO); 28 June (Pride); 20 November (T-DOR);
- take account of the specific characteristics of the single associations, continuing to support their activities beyond the initiatives of the coordination board.

1 Local governance and LGBT policies

The studies exploring how the implementation of LGBT policies has changed following the devolution of central government powers to local administrations reveal three important aspects we will examine in this chapter: the system of governance (Bertone and Cappellato 2006), the role of so-called strategic brokers (Larner and Craig 2005) and the strategies deployed to legitimate LGBT policies.

1.1 From government to governance

The crisis in the welfare state that has been witnessed in western countries in recent decades has challenged the universal nature of the social state in favour of a market-driven approach (Cappelletti and Mittone 2008). Fordism, which up to the 1970s guaranteed a levelling of territorial disparities, began to vacillate in the 1980s, which were characterised by the devolution of political, social and economic coordination following the recession and the rationalisation of public spending (Brenner 2005). This neoliberalist phase saw a transfer of responsibility from central government to local administrations (Ranci 2005) and the outsourcing of services, with the consequence of diminishing the universalist, public nature of the welfare state (Brenner and Theodore 2002). In this context, social policies were also subordinated to market forces, and a climate of economic competition came to characterise local administration (Eisenschitz and Gough 1998): in the 1990s the local service provision developed unevenly within national contexts. With the reduction in public spending, the strategy undertaken by the local administrations was that of forging partnerships with the private sector. The shift that has occurred over the last forty years is therefore from government, intended as the set of powers exercised by the state, to governance, or rather a multilevel, locally-based model of government, the result of synergies between institutional and social actors (Sabbatini 2005).

Rhodes (1996) identifies governance with networks, as socio-political spaces that enable equal interactions involving various sectors across the public administration and partners from the third sector and the market. Governance has also become a form of administration promoted by the European Union as an attempt to reconcile the principles of social justice with those of competition and growth. Indeed the phrase 'multilevel governance' was coined in the 1990s to describe the functioning of the European Union, indicating the continuous negotiation between governments which overlap both territorially and in terms of competences and responsibilities.

In this context public-private partnerships became increasingly pivotal for local administrations, which had gained responsibility from a political point of view, but lacked efficient administrative tools to enable them to implement effective local welfare policies in an autonomous manner. This is the reason behind the proliferation of negotiating boards between the public and private sectors (Bobbio 2005).

1.2 Public-private partnerships regarding LGBT issues

Banaszak *et al.* (2003) identified vertical and horizontal types of relationships forged by the institutions: state authority is *uploaded* from supra-national organisations (the European Union first and foremost) and *downloaded* onto regional, provincial and municipal administrations. Simultaneously, there is a weakening of the power of elected bodies in favour of bodies designated by the government (the UNAR⁵ for example) through a process of *lateral loading*, and lastly, public administration responsibilities are delegated to civil society actors by means of *offloading*. The development of strong partnerships between public administrations and LGBT associations falls under the latter category, and to explain the phenomenon we will examine mainly the British studies which analyse the development of local actions in the context of LGBT policies (Cooper 2006; Monro and Richardson 2010) and their link with the political, economic and social processes that have characterised western societies in recent decades.

With regards to the system of governance, towards the mid 1980s municipal authorities in Great Britain, mainly city administrations, began to address LGBT issues, in a period when Labour governments were prioritising equal opportunities and multiculturalism (Lansley *et al.* 1989; Lent 2001). The aim of this initial period was on one hand to remove heteronormative assumptions from local authority guidelines, policies and procedures, in order to reduce both direct and indirect discrimination, and on the other to support the development of the LGBT community through symbolic initiatives and public funding.

This attention began to wane at the end of the 1980s when, not only in Great Britain, more conservative tendencies began to take hold and the economy became the pivotal factor in political choices. Not a minor aspect in this period is the emergence of a homosexual commercial scene, which brought LGBT issues legitimately into local governance, economically interested in what was dubbed the pink pound, basically the spending power of affluent white gay men (Cooper and Monro 2003). At the same time the same LGBT associations shifted their focus from asserting a non-normative vision of sexual identity to the question of individual rights, a shift that was interpreted as a consequence of the premises of the 'neoliberalist system' (Carabine and Monro 2004). In the 1990s, the initiatives which received the most institutional backing were those which

5. The National Office against Racial Discrimination established in the Equal Opportunities Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

regarded homophobic violence, linked to the more general preoccupation with security, a key concept, as we will see, in the policies of the early 21st century, and a filter by which LGBT issues began to enter organically into local planning.

To firm up these ideas the competences and knowledge of the activists of the movement were used, initially recognised as external consultants of local governance. In the process of restructuring the welfare state, this type of consultancy became increasingly formalised, giving rise to partnerships in which the local administration capitalised on the resources present in its area, promoting a form of empowerment of local communities. However this process was not such a linear one and presented some critical areas – first of all the de-radicalization of LGBT causes – the weight of which was mainly borne by *strategic brokers* (Larner and Craig 2005). These mediators are activists that assisted the partnerships by fostering change through a network approach between associations and local administrations. In the literature we find a distinction between those who work in the local administration, as spokespeople for the needs of the LGBT community, and those who maintain their own profile as activists in associations, engaged in interfacing with the local administration. Apart from the organisational dimension, there is also a second dimension, a relational one, presented as fundamental for the purposes of an effective partnership. Being present both in the public administration and in the LGBT movements, however, led to instances of burnout due to the emotive burden of furthering identity-related issues within an institution characterised by rigid bureaucracy, formal procedures, lack of knowledge of the phenomenon in question - sometimes translating into open hostility - and the limits imposed by political forces that struggle to acknowledge the legitimacy of LGBT needs.

1.3 Forms of legitimation and orienting policies

Even where the action of local government on LGBT issues appears more advanced, it still remains a context whose policies are characterised by a low or uncertain level of legitimacy. Explaining the reasons why local government commitment in this area is legitimate therefore represents a necessary step, but the strategies used by the LGBT movements and local administrations to construct this legitimacy vary and have changed over time.

Analysing the English situation, Cooper (2006) maintains that in order to obtain responses to their requests to local governments, LGBT movements consented to adapt to certain conditions, or limits on their discursive boundaries, abandoning more radical positions that challenged existing power relations between the genders and sexualities and accepting not to call into question the primacy of heterosexuality as the 'natural' form of sexual and romantic relationship. The 'difference' of LGBT was reformulated in terms of the needs of part of the local community that

administrations had to respond to, presenting instances of discrimination that had to be addressed in the name of equality for citizens. In this way, the local administration was assigned a role safeguarding the LGBT population that can be presented not as the result of a political choice, inspired by a certain model of society to create, but as a technical aspect, one of the tasks involved in administering an area.

These tasks are by no means taken for granted, given that the perception of what the local administration has to and can do changes according to how the needs of the LGBT population are defined.

Starting with the British example, but looking at western societies in general, Cooper and Monro (2003) highlight how these definitions have changed in relation to the more general changes in local administrations' scope for action in recent decades. One initial change regards the relationship with services provided by local authorities: from an initial focus on policies of access to services that also guarantee equality for LGBT citizens, with the increasing privatization of services the accent is now on providing high quality services from a competitive viewpoint, and this also entails respecting the specific nature of consumers' needs.

At the same time, other needs, less linked to the provision of services, have acquired a central role in legitimating and orienting the actions of local administrations. On one hand these regard the symbolic question of recognition, namely LGBT citizens' need for recognition of their identity, which is denied and disparaged by widespread prejudice: when administrations are assigned the role of guarantors of an area which respects diversity and minorities, what is called for is cultural action to combat prejudice. Along with the increasing importance of security policies on a local level, there is a growing focus on the need to guarantee the security of LGBT citizens, insofar as they are potential victims of homophobic violence. The main responses in terms of policy include training, delivered with a non-discriminatory approach, including anti-bullying initiatives in the school environment. Nevertheless the risk is that the focus on LGBT subjects as victims overshadows a more positive, assertive vision of their experiences.

Lastly, with the weakening of the distinction between the logic of the public sphere and that of the private economy, forms of justification of local governance action in support of the LGBT population have emerged that make reference to a discourse of *diversity management*. From this perspective, combating discrimination is framed in terms of economic utility, insofar as the safeguarding and management of diversity is viewed as an important tool for promoting the economic competitiveness of an area (Florida 2003). Squires (2008) identifies various problematic implications to this discourse, which focuses on individuals rather than the structural conditions that give rise to situations of disadvantage for social groups. Moreover, by redefining diversity in terms of lifestyle rather than unequal opportunities, the focus is more on cultural and social inequalities, separating these from material inequalities.

These different constructions of the problem, and the possible solutions, are intertwined in LGBT policies with the question of their degree of autonomy or integration in the context of broader actions to combat

discrimination, an undertaking elicited by the European Union and implemented in different forms by central governments (Takács 2007). Above all, in a period of cuts in public resources, where there is competition between actions to combat various types of discrimination, an area with a low level of legitimisation like this one runs a greater risk of marginalisation and invisibility (Kantola and Nousiainen 2009).

2 A study starting from the local level: the experiences of the city councils and partnerships

This chapter offers a brief description of the local LGBT policies that featured in the case studies.

On the multifaceted Italian panorama, the actions undertaken by City Councils on LGBT issues took different forms: in Naples and Rome there is a Coordination Board between the City Council and the associations; in Turin there is an LGBT Office that interfaces regularly with the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board; Venice only had a LGBT Monitoring Centre while in Bologna the Office for Diversity Policies had begun to interface with the Board of associations before it went under special administration. Further attention is devoted to the partnership between the three levels of governance in Piedmont (the Turin City Council, the Turin Provincial Council and the Regional Council).

The White Paper can be consulted for information about the actions undertaken directly by the various municipal councils, given that this chapter is dedicated purely to initiatives carried out in collaboration between the public administration and LGBT associations.

These case histories were studied in 2010, by means of analysing documentary material and staging 12 focus groups and 18 in-depth interviews, which were transcribed and analysed using Nvivo8 software. We would like to thank the people and associations involved in the study and listed in the Appendix.

2.1 The Permanent Coordinating Board on Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation – Rome City Council

Creation: September 2002.

Department involved: Department of Cultural Policies and Communication.

Associations:

A.ge.d.o. Roma - Arcigay Roma - Arcilesbica Roma - Azione Trans - CGIL-New Rights Office Rome and Lazio - Mario Mieli Homosexual Culture Society - Libellula 2001 Society - Consoli Foundation - Di Gay Project - GayLib - Gayroma.it - Gay & Geo - Pesce Roma Group - Linfa – the former Liff (Italian League of De Facto Families) Rome - Nuova Proposta - R.E.F.O. - Roman Volley.

The first, short-lived attempt to address LGBT issues dates back to 1994, when the then Mayor of Rome appointed Vanni Piccolo as ‘Mayoral adviser on the civil rights of homosexual people’. This idea proved

unsuccessful, and with the creation of the Coordinating Board in 2002, the task of coordinating and convening associations passed to the Council Department for Simplification, Communication and Equal Opportunities, under the councillor Gramaglia. From an administrative point of view the work of the Board was once more confirmed by management resolution n.94 of 5 March 2007. This resolution established an unsalaried work group comprising a representative of each association, two members of staff from the Council Department for Equal Opportunities and two representatives from the Equal Opportunities Organisational Unit of Department XVII. The resolution also makes reference to Rome City Council's membership of the RE.A.DY network and the 'European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life', as foundations for the partnership forged by the creation of the Board. An important factor in terms of guaranteeing continuity between the various changes of council is the presence of a body of administrative staff that does not change, although when the study was carried out this comprised one person, reporting to the Council Department for Cultural Policies and Communication.

The Board was therefore established to respond to the need for the public administration and associations to work together, staging common initiatives on the issues of sexual orientation and gender identity: the Council chairs the Board, convening and coordinating the associations to select and establish the initiatives to stage in the city.

According to the associations involved, the level of commitment should be viewed as related to the positive fallout from the World Pride event in 2000, when, compared to the current context, the political and social climate was more open to the idea of the public administration promoting the work of the associations. It should not be forgotten that Rome, as the capital of Italy, seat of government and characterised by the presence of the Vatican, represents a problematic arena for LGBT activities, as every initiative has a wider sounding board than in other Italian cities.

With regards to the work of the Board, the associations report that despite the high number of member organisations, only a small number of these are effectively committed to and actively involved in working with the City Council, as shown also by the limited number of associations that took part in the focus group, compared to the number officially involved in the Board. The Council official appointed to follow the work of the Board reported that rigid bureaucracy prevented transversal action, possibly involving a greater number of council departments in the work of the Board, and signalled the need for greater collaboration between the associations. The associations themselves expressed the need to interface outside of the public administration context in order to present shared actions to the City Council.

Concerted actions:

- Explanatory glossary of LGBT terminology (2002);
- Awareness-raising campaign on LGBT issues (posters and newspaper advertisements showing a face with the word 'heterosexual' stamped on the forehead and the question: "What do you look at in a person?") (2003);

- pamphlet with information on the LGBT associations present in Rome (2003);
- a workshop for the representatives of the city council with experts from the sector (2007, conducted by representatives of the associations);
- a training course for the staff of Rome City Council (Public Relations office, Registry Office, traffic wardens): five training sessions led by external experts were held; each course comprised from 8 to 10 six-hour modules and was attended by around 25 employees of Roma Capitale per session. The two most recent courses were monitored for quality purposes (2010 and 2011).

2.2 Permanent Concertation Board between LGBT associations and Naples City Council

Creation: 01 ottobre 2007.

Department involved: Council Department for Tourism, Major Events, Equal Opportunities and City Time.

Associations:

Arcilesbica Napoli – Arcigay Napoli – A.T.N. (Transsexual Association Naples) – i-Ken Onlus.

The Permanent Concertation Board was established when a number of LGBT associations requested a concerted response to the episodes of homophobic violence that characterised the summer of 2007. The Mayor responded by establishing the Board, officially formalised by means of Council Resolution No.1335 of 10 September 2008. This document refers to the Italian Constitution, the various institutes of the European Union and the Declaration of Human Rights, and the adoption of the RE.A.DY network's Charter of Intentions, as foundations for establishing the Board. Aside from the LGBT associations and the Council Department for Equal Opportunities, the Service Combating New Forms of Poverty and the Network for Social Emergencies was also listed as being part of the Board. The Board was set up with a three-year mandate and a budget of 10,000 euros, which was used to stage the seminar event 'Naples loves diversity'. The council resolution includes a protocol agreement which defines the actions that the partnership can collaborate on. Initially one member of administrative staff on a temporary contract was appointed, and at the time of the study this role was covered by the person who handles violence against women in the Council Department for Equal Opportunities and occupies the position of Equal Opportunities Advisor on the Naples Provincial Council.

One of the major problems encountered in this partnership is lack of funds. On the one hand, the Equal Opportunities Department is without portfolio; on the other, in 2007 the European Social Fund allocated funds in favour of the Naples City Council's Equal Opportunity Plan but these were frozen by the Campania Regional Council as part of its stability pact. Another

weakness indicated by associations concerns the absence of regulations to prevent the deadlock in Board discussions that arose because of an excessive request for uniformity of positions held by the associations concerned, which effectively limits their autonomy. However, the associations themselves have also not been active, in fact the Board has only launched one concerted action and has not been convened in the past few months.

Concerted actions:

- ‘Naples loves diversity’: on occasion of the International Day Against Homophobia on 17 May 2009 the LGBT Board associations proposed and staged a day to promote awareness and provide information about the issue of homophobia. This took place on 18 May 2009 at the Maschio Angioino and comprised two sessions: a meeting with senior high schools to discuss homophobia and a workshop to gather ideas, suggestions, contributions and proposals in order to prepare an action plan and tools for combating discrimination based on sexual orientation and to exchange good practices with other local organisations⁶.

6. <http://www.comune.napoli.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/10368>

2.3 LGBT Monitoring Centre – Venice City Council

Duration: 2005-2009.

Departments involved: Department for Women's Affairs and Anti-discriminatory Policies and Department of Youth and Peace Policies.

Venice City Council was one of the first to explicitly approve the “principle of equal dignity of treatment in society and employment” based on sexual orientation in a Council resolution passed in 1994. Eleven years later, in July 2005, Prof. Franca Bimbi, Councillor for Women's Affairs, Anti-discriminatory and Youth Policies, launched a project known as the LGBT Monitoring Centre. Later, when elected to parliament, she abandoned her role as councillor and was appointed as the mayor's delegate for these issues. From an administrative standpoint the Monitoring Centre is a work group within the Mayor's Secretariat, with an administrative contact, the person responsible for Youth Policies, and a political contact, namely, the mayor's delegate. As for personnel, there is one full-time employee, one with part-time contracts to follow cultural activities plus personnel made available by the Department for Youth Policies that handle workshops in schools. In terms of financing, the majority of funds utilised are those made available under Law 285/97 concerning “actions in favour of infants and adolescents”, given that the target is almost always young people. The basic idea is to develop an experimental module using the leverage of the LGBT community, trade union representatives and anti-racist and cultural initiatives. Already based on this premises, as stated in Ordinance No. 36 of 29.07.05 that established the Monitoring Centre, it clearly emerges that the new project should cut across existing boundaries.

This explicitly refers to queer theories and represents an attempt to progress beyond the normativity imposed by mainstream narratives concerning LGBT. Venice represents the public administration's first attempt to explicitly recognise non-mainstream theories and courses of action that are already well accepted at international level. This is why one of the strengths of this 4-year experimental project is its link with international organisations (embassies, EU, etc.) that provide suggestions for further work and through which the Centre obtains approval that is not always forthcoming at domestic level.

The objective of the LGBT Monitoring Centre is to identify the most appropriate tools from within the Council's expertise to promote the civil and social rights of LGTB people. An objective that concerns three areas of activity:

- to combat homophobia and promote access to **citizen's** rights by preparing informative campaigns and involving networks of young artists and schools;
- to highlight LGBT **cultures** and studies, launch a series of queer studies in collaboration with the regional school and university systems, to cooperate with the Coordinating Committee for Remembrance Day to create an awareness of persecution against lesbian and gay people, to promote film festivals, exhibitions and performing arts projects to bring out the creative expressions of younger generations;
- to build local, national and international **networks**, promote public networks in concert with the Venice Provincial Council so that initiatives have a metropolitan air, launch cooperation with European and Euro-Mediterranean agencies, institutions, cultural centres and cities and participate in EU programmes, both through ILGA⁷-Europe and by linking up projects, already launched in Israel and Palestine, with specific GLBT paths.

7. International Lesbian and Gay Association.

The advantage of this experimental module is that it promotes a project work approach. It is a platform that produces initiatives, can be used by groups, individuals, institutions, associations, universities and attempts to promote a public debate on these issues. Given that it was set up at the mayor's cabinet level it had a very high priority and visibility, however, it was linked to the term of that specific City Council. And, in fact, the Monitoring Centre ceased to operate in 2009. However, the specific situation existing in Venice must be borne in mind. The city does not have the fabric of LGBT associations found in other places and so the Monitoring Centre collaborated with parties that were not entirely LGBT oriented by promoting actions that managed to become integrated within the city's initiatives.

Actions⁸:

- 28 cinema, theatre and literary events;
- 4 artistic projects, of which two at European and two at domestic level, which became the basis for 14 events (2006-2007);
- 8 conferences, series of seminars and workshops;
- 7 workshops in schools;

8. Certain actions taken have been considered good practices in the White Paper.

- a public campaign against homophobia (2007, adopted at provincial level in 2008);
- publication of four volumes and a video (*Super Queerk*, 2007).

2.4 Office for Diversity Policies – Bologna City Council

Duration: 2008-2009.

Department involved: Education and Anti-discriminatory Policies sector.

Associations involved:

Arcigay Provincial Committee-Cassero Gay and Lesbian Centre – Women's Shelter Home to protect them from violence – MIT (Transgender Identity Movement) – CESD (European Centre for Studies of Discrimination) – 'Armonie' Women's Association – 'Fuoricampo' Lesbian Group – 'Eccentrica' Association – UDI (Italian Women's Union).

Starting 2008 the Education and Diversity Policies sector began to set up an Office (Agenda item 11 of 30/10/2007 approved during the City Council meeting on 22 February 2008) within the Education sector, given that the councillor was appointed for 'Education, Diversity and Gender Policies'. The aim was to cover all kinds of diversity, namely, every basis for discrimination recognised in European treaties, and so inter-cultural issues, LGBT, gender policies, equal opportunity policies, disability and age. Two people were transferred internally and assigned to the 'Office for Diversity Policies' that, in particular, focused on equal opportunity, combating gender violence and LGBT, given that certain policies, such as those concerning disability and inter-cultural issues, were already handled by well-established sections in other departments.

As regards the Board of associations, the trend differed during the term of office of the two city councils in power during the period. During the term of the City Council that created the department, the councillor convened a non-institutional, informal Board at random intervals. The first took place in 2007 to illustrate the project that was to lead to establishing the department; later, it was convened with a restricted attendance, but only on occasion of the Protocol against Discrimination. According to the staff involved the intermittent nature of activities weakened the department's operational role. In this case, the lack of a pre-existing Board and relationship with the public administration resulted in a process mediated by the City Council, however, this could in no way replace a truly participative and formalised process. The attempt to formalise this occurred during the following City Council's term of office, with an approach that involved the creation of an advisory committee to overcome discrimination, an institutionalised body identified as the channel through which to interface with associations.

But then the City Council was overthrown by which time the only formal action taken was to establish guidelines in which the City Council instituted a Board of associations appointed to create an advisory committee. From 2010 Bologna City Council has been placed under compulsory administration and so the future of the Office for Diversity Policies is currently uncertain. To date the only official information is that certain policies of this department, in particular, equal opportunity and combating gender violence, have been transferred to the Promotional Activities and Projects Office in the Department for Family Services.

Concerted action⁹:

- launching a project on an experimental basis concerning actions to provide support for people subject to discrimination as a result of their gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.

9. Bologna City Council has implemented good practices, in addition to activities concerning the Board of associations.

For information about these actions see the website <http://www.comune.bologna.it/politichedelledifferenze/>

2.5 LGBT Office – Turin City Council and GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board

Creation: February 2001.

Departments involved: Turin City Council LGBT Office within the Equal Opportunities, Gender and Time-use Policies Sector.

Associations: GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board.

The LGBT Office for overcoming discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity was established by City Council resolution No. 905/42 of 13 February 2001 based on a proposal made by the Turin GLT Coordination Board. The Council was asked to intervene directly as regards LGBT issues given that the register of civil unions had not been approved. The strategy decided by the councillor at that time, Eleonora Artesio, was to include it in the Equal Opportunities Sector and create a means whereby the Board could continue its responsibilities towards the public as regards LGBT issues, while working in concert with all sectors within the City Council. Currently three people work in the Office although the need to increase the staff to five has already been indicated so that it can fully cope with all aspects it is required to cover, namely, coordination of the LGBT Service's activities; schools and activities concerning young people; training of employees in the public sector; local projects; interfacing with networks.

The LGBT Office's first public initiative was in 2002 when it organised the conference 'Homosexual and transgender people in Turin. Experiences, lifestyles, social perception'¹⁰ to present a study of these issues carried out by Turin University. According to the staff involved, the resolution, study and coordination of associations are the three factors that legitimate the Office. On the one hand, the public administration's commitment concerning LGBT issues; on the other, an analysis of needs that the Office covers and, lastly, an ongoing dialogue with the associations that, in addition to submitting

10. For results of the study see Saraceno (2003).

requests to the Board, have also managed to coordinate their issues and so present a united front in dealings with the Council.

In order to systematise its operations the Office prepares an annual plan of objectives for the year against which action taken during the period can be checked. In 2009, for instance, the aims were to combat homophobia among children, adolescents and young people; the inclusion of transgender people both socially and as regards employment; creating awareness of the issue of families and homosexuality. Missions that formed the basis for originally establishing the Office remain unchanged, namely, to create awareness and provide information to the general public and personnel in the public administration as regards LGBT issues, to build both local and national territorial networks and also by taking on the central coordination office of the RE.A.DY network (see Chapter 4).

Territorial networking is based on the Office's relations with four important bodies: the vertical partnership with the Turin Provincial Council and Piedmont Regional Council which is covered in section 2.6 below, the Piloting Group and the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board.

The Piloting Group includes members representing various sectors of the City Council administration and, by means of mainstreaming, it aims to harmonise the city's various areas of operation by promoting transversality of LGBT actions. As regards involvement of the various sectors, the LGBT Office sent a letter to individual directors concerning the resolution and the city's commitment to overcome discrimination against homosexual and transgender people, leaving each director free to select the reference person concerned. Whenever a new member of the Piloting Group is appointed the relevant director is asked to send a letter or e-mail to staff within the sector concerned describing the LGTB Office's activities and informing them of the sector's reference person in order to legitimate actions to be taken. Some of the actions taken were to set up a network involving the city's administrative districts to implement actions throughout the territory; to create a specific exhibition space for LGBT initiatives both within Informagiovani and in district information points; to extend training concerning LGBT issues to include the administration's new hires and National Civil Service volunteers; specific training for managers of educational services on the issues of gender identity in childhood and homosexual parenting; activities in collaboration with LGBT associations hosted by Turin's public libraries.

The LGBT Office's constant relationship with the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board (initially GLT Coordination Board, then in 2005/2006, Turin Pride Committee) meant it was possible to exploit activities of associations belonging to the latter, to promote training through the Board's 'Training Group' and to develop common initiatives based on needs analyses. As opposed to the situation in other cities, in Turin the Board is the City Council's main point of reference and so activities are carried out in synergy (organisation of Turin Pride 2006; Pride celebration of the International Remembrance Day against Homophobia and the Transgender Day of Remembrance; promotion of international cultural exchanges

through GAI¹¹), and comprises representatives from 15 associations operating at regional level (both LGBT and those providing support for secularism respect for and promotion of diversity).

11. International Welcome Group.

Concerted actions¹²:

- participation in periodic events ('Identity and difference'; 'Biennial for Democracy') and one-off events ('A year for rights' 2007; 'Geodesign', 2008);
- training in schools, for public administration employees (City Council, Provincial Council, Health Services), National Civil Service volunteers and the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board Training Group;
- publication of studies, bibliographies and didactic material;
- ISELT project (Inclusion of transgender people in society and employment), Regional Operational Programme - FSE 2000/2006 Measure E1 (2002-2003); an ISELT desk was set up on completion of this project (2003-2007), followed by the ISELT Coordination Board which is still in operation (training of City Council Social Services and Division personnel and people in the same role in provincial job centres).

12. A complete list of initiatives is given in the LGBT Office's website: <http://www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/lgbt/>. Certain shared action have been considered good practices in the White Paper.

2.6 Vertical partnership: the Piedmont case study

Creation: 2005.

Departments involved: Turin City Council LGBT Office within the Equal Opportunities, Gender and Time-use Policies Sector; Turin Provincial Council Equal Opportunities and Time-use Policies Office; Piedmont Regional Council Presidential Cabinet, General Affairs and Equal Opportunities for All Sector.

The Piedmont situation is an interesting case of vertical partnership regarding LGBT issues that involves the Turin City Council, Turin Provincial Council and Piedmont Regional Council (the latter up to 2010) who cooperate in an ongoing, structured manner. 2005 saw the beginning of an institutionalised form of the preceding informal collaboration – a space was assigned in Regional Council headquarters that provided a workplace for an employee from each of the bodies involved in organising the year's activities for Turin National Pride in 2006.

The Equal Opportunities and Time-use Policies Office is a management structure set up by the Turin Provincial Council in 2004, which the City Council LGBT Office collaborates with thanks to a letter of understanding signed in 2006 by the respective Councillors for Equal Opportunities. This document states that the Provincial Council will not set up a duplicate LGBT Office but will instead utilise the already existing one. The aim was to consolidate synergies between the two organisations in order to optimise resources and safeguard rights in the same way throughout the province;

to extend participation in the Coordination Board of LGBT associations to include the Provincial Council; to actively participate in training aimed at public administration employees and schools.

From the standpoint of concrete actions, thanks to the Provincial Council the LGBT Office stages significant activities involving senior high schools. In 2007 the documentary 'No-one the same. Adolescents and homosexuality' was presented to teachers responsible for health matters in the province's senior high schools. From academic year 2008/2009 the catalogue of teacher training courses prepared by CE.SE.DI (Provincial Centre for Didactic Services) includes a course entitled 'Combating homophobic bullying' created by the LGBT Office and Turin Pride Coordination Board together with Amnesty International. Alongside training courses theatre companies staged plays dealing with LGBT issues, which offered schools interested in tackling the homophobic bullying issue a further opportunity for discussion. In addition to these educational initiatives, the Provincial Council provided support for LGBT initiatives launched by the municipalities of Torre Pellice and Ivrea and LGBT Office exhibitions in a few municipalities. The Provincial Council has also backed the Circolo Maurice's 'Contact' telephone helpline service.

At regional level, in 2005 the Piedmont Regional Council set up an independent Councillorship for Equal Opportunities and then in 2008 it launched the General Affairs and Equal Opportunities for All sector, a structure with two part-time employees who, in line with EU Directives, developed actions covering each aspect of discrimination. This structure is part of the Presidential Cabinet given the importance of horizontal mainstreaming for the entire region.

In 2008 the Regional Council assigned IRES¹³-Piedmont a task to carry out a study of how European organisations working to combat discrimination operate (at national and regional level), an analysis of regional stakeholders and needs expressed and a survey of European, national and regional legislation concerning the fight against discrimination. Furthermore, it approved a frame resolution to combat discrimination, which included the protocol agreement signed with UNAR (Regional Council Decree No. 51-12642 of 23/11/2009).

Between 2005 and 2010 the Piedmont Regional Council's main actions as regards LGBT issues included dissemination of the video 'No-one the same' in all schools; financial and logistic support for the Pride 2006 year initiatives; inclusion of LGBT issues as part of the initiative 'MeltingBox. International Fair of Rights and Equal Opportunities for All' that took place in 2007 (European Year of Equal Opportunities for All); becoming a member of the organising committee for the ILGA-Europe 2011 Conference; promotion of Turin University's first Diversity Management course; patronage and financial support for LGBT initiatives organised by the municipality of Savigliano (Cuneo); promotion of a regional in-depth study of the European Family Matters project.

Lastly, in 2006 the three local administrations coordinated their participation to prepare the RE.A.DY Charter of Intentions which they then signed.

13. Institute for Economic and Social Studies.

Concerted actions:

- annual events concerning a specific anniversary are the World Day against Homophobia (May 17) and T-DOR, Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20);
- organisation of Turin Pride 2006;
- welcome brochure for participants in Pride 2006 with the faces and signatures of the President of the Regional Council, President of the Provincial Council and Mayor of Turin;
- 'Città amiche, friendly cities, ville amies' Conference (2006);
- 'Training diversity' Conference (2007);
- 'The Italian Constitution in operation: equal opportunity projects 2007-2008' (2008);
- European AHEAD project (Against Homophobia. European local Administration Devices), part of the Specific Programme 'Fundamental Rights and Citizenship' 2007/13(2009 – 2010).

3 Partnerships and legitimisation strategies. Reflection on the case studies

This chapter explores the various languages, strategies and activities deployed by the partnerships between local authorities and LGBT communities, namely between the public and private sectors, when it comes to developing local policies to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, highlighting organisational and relational aspects (cfr. ch.1). We will look firstly at the private actor, namely the LGBT associations that unite to form a single subject to interface with the public sector, then we will describe the critical areas of the relational dimension. We will then examine the aspects – the organisational and relational aspects – that can best contribute to guaranteeing the organisational continuity of the local administration’s action in the LGBT sphere. Lastly, we will explore the ways in which the subjects involved in the partnership legitimate the existence of LGBT policies as an integral part of the tasks of local governance.

3.1 The associations and their relationship with the local administration

Starting from the private subject, the elements that emerged from the interviews as essential for the effective functioning of the partnership regard autonomy and planning, tools which enable the networking between the associations to remain on an equal footing, with sharing taking place through the creation of concertation boards.

The notion of autonomy applies to both the relationships between associations, and the relationship between the associations and the public body. Autonomy between associations is defined as capitalising on the specific characteristics that each organisation can contribute, without falling prey to the rhetoric of shared planning in general:

Self determination in choices and the capacity of the individual organisations to retain the intellectual property of the single projects cannot be sacrificed to the populist need for a collective idea that does not exist. (Naples Board)

There were specific characteristics to do with political orientation and objectives, but in all this there were in any case points of contact, and what happened in that period was that we decided: “Ok, each of us maintains our own specific areas of action, but there are things that we can do together”. (GLT Coordination Board, Turin)

The considerable attention devoted to the question of autonomy between the associations does however require some form of guarantee, there being no one association playing a leadership role: to be able to function as a network, the associations must be guaranteed equal dignity and decision-making power.

Basically this absence of leadership is important, because in any committee, when there is one player that [...] acts as a leader over the others, well that isn't a proper committee. (GLT Coordination Board, Turin)

With regards to the autonomy of the associations with respect to the local authority, what emerges is the need for a relationship in which both actors are acknowledged to have equal competences. This autonomy must also be based on an awareness of what requests can be put to the public administration, distinguishing the tasks assigned to each level of governance:

Very often associations in general do not understand the function of the local authority, they confuse [...] the functions of the local body with those of the Regional council, and they don't know that it is the Regional Council that has to pass the law, so they should be fighting for a law that does not exist. (Councillor for Equal Opportunities, Naples City Council)

Above all, this autonomy must not be undermined by the existing relationships that the individual associations have with the public body, in their individual interactions when applying for backing and funding for specific projects:

I think there is a sort of compromise that the associations have with Rome City Council because all three of the biggest associations have a rapport with the Council, they need the Council, and so it's like their hands are tied. For example Arcigay runs the Gay Help Line which belongs to the Council; Mario Mieli has to maintain a good relationship with the Council because of Europride... I'm not criticising the associations, I'm just explaining the problem that exists between the associations and the Council. (Rome Board)

The question of autonomy has been handled in different ways by the cities in the study: in Venice there is no well-established association scene that acts as a key contact for the local authority, while in Turin a bottom-up approach was observed, whereby the associations firstly formed a coordination board and then put forward requests to the City Council. In Bologna, Rome and Naples, a top-down approach prevailed in the creation of coordination boards: the associations began to work together after the City Council established the board. It is interesting to note how in this case both parties first felt the need to organise a meeting between associations in order to present themselves as a single point of contact with the City Council:

Well, to make the Board permanent and more effective it means we need to put them all together... at this point in my view it depends less on politics and more on them, to find a form of collaboration and coordination. This is something that we can't do because the associations are independent, so it's up to them, but we are ready to work on this front. (Rome City Council)

To safeguard the specific characteristics of each association there is the attempt to forge a shared approach to planning, setting out the objects to work on together, and setting aside the areas of conflict that have historically given rise to the multifaceted panorama of associations in the same local context. In Rome for example, this common area was identified as courses for council staff:

The associations have worked together on a number of specific issues [...] setting aside differences, idiosyncrasies, conflicts, etc...we left those things behind in our offices, in our associations and we went there with the idea of doing something meaningful. (Rome Board)

In this regard one critical area arises, namely the fact that not all associations can count on the same resources. Being voluntary organisations, the LGBT associations present a degree of disparity when it comes to being able to participate in a coordination board, both in terms of the number of activists regularly involved in the work of the association, and their level of political experience.

You need to find a person that will take on that responsibility, lead an association, someone with a bit of experience in politics, interested in getting involved... all these variables are not always easy to find in an association, and numbers are important because, statistically speaking, the larger the association the more likely it is to find people willing to get involved in this kind of thing. (Naples Board)

This kind of commitment to a shared initiative also emerges in the ways in which the individual associations involve their activists in the work carried out in the inter-association board, constructing an internal form of approval with regards to their work with the institutions:

The first point of departure is to establish within the association (said with emphasis) that there is a majority saying: "We want to try and work with others". Not to the point of excluding anyone, but saying: "Ok. Let's give it a go". This is the point of departure. If we hadn't discussed things internally we wouldn't have got anywhere. (GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board)

I remember that with Maurice we had decided to open all the meetings of the board with a reference to the work of the Coordination Board, with the specific aim of linking things up. (GLT Coordination Board, Turin)

In terms of the internal cohesion of the association, this idea also represented an opportunity to explain how some associations, traditionally viewed as opposing the institutions, managed to continue working with the public administration:

I wondered how, at a certain point, gay and lesbian associations stopped being oppositional and tried to find strategies to collaborate, and what this collaboration implies in terms of validating the institutional counterpart and giving it credit which remained to be proven. But there and then trying to work institutionally certainly enabled us to work together as associations, rather than engaging in struggles to oppose certain policies. (GLT Coordination Board, Turin)

More than the actual objective, what came to mind was the planning, the project, the fact of being in love, because, basically, what is it that makes you put in all that effort? It's the emotional energy of being passionate about planning something. The act of planning is productive in itself. (GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board)

This final quote reveals the relational dimension, where the emotive aspects such as involvement and a desire for mediation, are fundamental in the construction of the partnership.

3.2 The relational dimension

The subjects involved in the partnership feel the need to forge a relationship based on a desire to mediate between the various identities present in the coordination board, together with a strong personal commitment to the work of coordinating the associations:

If we were in the position of formulating guidelines for associations that want to form a coordination board, [we would suggest] to send two or three delegates, people who really want to get involved and believe in it ... because if the association decides it has to get involved in the committee but just sends the first person that comes along, someone without an important role, who just wants to do something, anything, but doesn't believe in it, then the group is not going to grow. It turns into an obstacle, and there's no feedback to the association. (GLT Coordination Board, Turin)

This involvement requires a strong relationship of trust between the public administration and LGBT associations. The aspect of the credibility of an association or the members of Boards is perceived as important by all the actors involved, because the institutions' trust is based on the reliability of its contact people from civil society, and their ability to participate actively, using their own competences:

LGBT associations [...] wanted to work with the public administration: they asked the public administration but in exchange they also gave a lot, they offered their experience, made their competences available [...]. It was a significant exchange, firstly because the administration acknowledged the value of their knowledge, and that was probably what worked a bit of magic: [...] the administration acknowledged the value of the knowledge of LGBT citizens and the LGBT people trusted that and felt that they were welcomed and respected, and so a reciprocal exchange came about. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

With regards to the people involved in the associations, a significant aspect that emerged was the ability to use their personal acquaintance with the public body in order to further LGBT issues:

One of the reasons why our relationship with the institutions worked is because over the years many of us have forged personal relationships of a political nature with the ruling class of this city, that we have capitalised on for the good of the board. So you could say that I had a background in the movement, but also a political and institutional background – I've been on first name terms with most of the directors and managers of this authority for some time, and that was a great help, for my work too, because personal credibility also enters into these things. (Piedmont Regional Council; GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board)

One risk perceived in the Italian context is that of fostering dynamics of political patronage, something which is rendered explicit where this kind of influence-peddling is predominant:

In this city, and perhaps many others in the south, there is a lot of cronyism, so sometimes if someone doesn't know the right people and has no desire to engage with this kind of dynamic, they come across as conflictual or just simply detached or indifferent. I think that our associations, at least in the past Arcilesbica had a strong attitude [...] of political

distance from this approach [...] not using your personal contacts who would be able to put you in touch with the councillor who would get you into the council department. (Naples Board)

In the interpretation offered by the interviewees, this risk is forestalled by the awareness of working for a common goal that is not that of furthering a personal career, but developing the aims of the coordination board, while gaining familiarity with the bureaucratic mechanisms and rigid hierarchies of the public authority. This relationship of trust is often built on the people involved in the partnerships, both those belonging to the public administration and those from the LGBT associations: we have seen how the role of strategic brokers (cfr. ch.1.2) in the public administration emerges as a linking element in public-private partnerships. The importance of this role also emerged in the evaluations made for recruitment for the Turin City Council's nascent LGBT Office, as recounted by the then Councillor for Equal Opportunities:

Non generic transfers for mobility, generic ranking lists for transferring people from one office to another, rather than recruitment of specific professional profiles [...]. There was also a dual role thing going on, with members of associations actually already working for the City Council, who could therefore both explain the organisational models of the administration to the associations and explain to the administration the delicate situation of being in the association scene on that kind of issue or regarding that kind of identity.

This recognition of the positive aspects of double belonging - to both an association and the public administration - is not always so linear: the personal burden is described as difficult to bear and a possible source of burn-out for employees.

Though I am still an activist and a militant, and though I try to behave with the utmost scruples and awareness of this dual role, I have noticed difficulties in perceiving these subtleties, perceiving the dual role, and even objective difficulties in handling them at times. [...] In any case this subjective implication is one of the contradictions [...] that are in some way implicit in policies based on subjectiveness. It's not easy to eliminate, and it's not just my problem: that reassures me, that I'm not going mad! (laughing). (Office for Diversity Policies, Bologna City Council)

To this end, the interviews reveal that it is essential to separate association roles from institutional ones, in order to prevent the overlap being a source of delegitimation, and compromising the credibility of the association or board in question. This need to separate roles is also due to the different tasks that the different bodies might call for:

In my view, on one hand it is important to bring your own competences, acquired also thanks to the work in the association, while on the other hand you have to remember that you work for the public administration, so you need to avoid situations that can give rise to a 'conflict of interest' [...]. People who had a strong involvement in the association movement had to give up that work, in the sense that [...] we had to leave the associations in order to handle our work in the administration, because you can't work on both sides. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

Then, we need to provide more information on the context: in Turin it was possible to create an LGBT Office initially based on staff not from LGBT associations, because the GLT Coordination Board acted as external consultants. In other local and regional contexts in Italy, these initiatives were developed by individual activists who managed to create a niche in the role of internal consultants to the public administration on LGBT issues. As emerged in the international literature (cfr. ch.1.2), in Italy too the competence of activists proved fundamental in terms of filling a lacuna in expertise on LGBT issues in the public administration. In this way local authorities were able to start addressing this dimension without first having to train staff on the specific aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity, with the consequence of actually empowering these competences:

Not only did it occur that people came out visibly in the workplace, in the local administrations, but it turned out that the administrations viewed them as a resource to be entrusted with a task: there was an affirmation of your identity as gay or lesbian, not just in itself, but also for your association experience, your awareness, self-awareness and capacity to act. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

Nevertheless a distinction must be made between the role of external consultant and that of council worker, due to the fact that in the second case an in-depth knowledge of the council and the mechanisms that make it possible to achieve certain objectives is needed, as emerges from the analysis of the organisational dimension in the following paragraph.

3.3 The organisational dimension

Public administrations respond to a political mandate that periodically calls into question the organisation and contents of policies implemented by the authority, above all in a historic context in which, according to many interviewees, cutbacks represent the biggest hurdle. For this reason it is fundamental to focus on the temporal dimension of LGBT policies.

Despite the growing devolution of responsibility to local authorities, there seems to be a lack not only of resources but also of a national legislative framework that local interventions can be based on. Authorities and associations therefore adopt the strategy of taking part in European projects, despite the fact that this project-based approach presents numerous difficulties, above all with regard to continuity over time:

The problem with European funding is this: either these projects manage to activate resources that can be maintained over time – but this happens in 0.1% of cases - or otherwise these projects end up as interesting experiments that come to an end when the money runs out [...]. Then, once you have identified the problem and the possible solutions, it's up to you, the public administration, the politician, to use the results of this experience to modify everyday reality. (former Councillor for Equal Opportunities, Turin City Council)

Another controversial aspect is that fact in Italy the issue of sexual orientation and gender identity still has a low level of legitimisation, meaning that the initiatives in this sphere have to have strong political backing:

There is always varying scope for working on these issues, and it is a field that is greatly influenced by the political clout of your contact, who in some ways limits your scope of action. (LGBT Monitoring Centre, Venice City Council)

3.3.1 Organisational strategies to guarantee continuity over time

In view of these considerations, there is a comprehensible need to reflect on how to guarantee the temporal continuity of policies and structures that enable action on LGBT issues. In terms of the strategies perceived as effective by the interviewees, the first step, highlighted in the Piedmont situation in particular, is to carry out a study in the area, identifying the needs of the LGBT community on a local level. This should involve all levels of public administration, given that different needs can be fulfilled by different bodies that handle different initiatives in the area, achieving the concept of multilevel governance.

The study plays an important symbolic function, in so far as it effectively legitimises the needs of LGBT subjects:

The local area study [...] also silenced those who were saying: “No, it’s not true”, because now people are saying, “Well, look, there is a documented study, organised and carried out by the public administration” [...]. Because the LGBT Office took account of that study and continues to do so – along with new national research – and it was actually carried out here in Piedmont, giving us very important indications: it highlighted the points that then became our objectives. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

Moreover, to succeed in legitimating a stable organisational structure that will address the needs of LGBT people, local authorities need to make a fundamental transition from the political arena to the technical/administrative one, namely depoliticising the aspects connected to asserting LGBT rights in favour of an approach more linked to the needs of the local area.

Basically the transition was supposed to be from being perceived as a political creature, in any case linked to a particular council member or executive, to being perceived as a ‘technical’ structure: this was the transition that did not happen because people were afraid and the officialdom did not have the courage to institutionalise us organisationally. (Office for Diversity Policies, Bologna City Council)

Starting from the observation that the only organic, ongoing instance in Italy of local bodies cooperating with LGBT associations is that of the LGBT Office in the Turin City Council, let’s examine the strong points of this organisational decision with respect to continuity over time:

The fact is that there is an actual Office – this is a key fact because councillors come and go but the structure remains – of course, it can always be dismantled: a councillor might decide [...] he or she is not interested in it, the four members of staff working for the Office

will be transferred somewhere else and the LGBT Office gets closed down. But it's different: the fact that there is a structured piece of the council machine [...] [means you have to] take responsibility for saying: 'we're not going to do that any more'. (Councillor for Equal Opportunities, Turin City Council)

The suggestion, where the political structure makes it possible, is that of creating a service that is part of the council structure, so that even if the administration changes it is more difficult to cancel out previous work. To this end it is also interesting to analyse the obstacles encountered by other public administrations and the paths which could not be taken in implementing LGBT policies in the local authority.

One thing that I would have proposed but that we haven't talked about yet is drawing up a protocol agreement between the associations, trade unions and employers' representatives and the Mayor [...] because the only way of verifying if there really is the intention to continue working on these issues in a certain way is to put a series of questions into writing. Let's see if we can get this protocol signed, almost a trade union technique: the Board has to be institutionalised with the decision of the City Council, then funds allocated. (Rome Board)

At the same time, in situations where a dedicated service has not been institutionalised, this absence of structure has been handled by turning to advantage the relative flexibility of other organisational solutions that, although they are isolated within the council structure, have the capacity to come up with other 'survival strategies':

We could say that this structure, or non-structure [...] was weak from the administrative point of view, because it was not positioned as a genuine service or specific office of the public administration. As a consequence it was constantly negotiating for its own survival [...]. Though it is true that a proper service would have not been able to act in the city and within the Council as we have: due to our operative approach, the fact of being seen in the city as something 'weird', not a cold, bureaucratic office. This is something that has facilitated recognition and trust more on a social level, in the city. [...] It has allowed us to be super-mobile, like a task force [...]. There are little strategies that enable you to experiment, think, operate in the meanders of spoken and unspoken censorship, invent survival strategies. (LGBT Monitoring Centre, Venice City Council)

Even when attempts to work on LGBT issues meet with the indifference or open disapproval of the local authority, there remains the perception that an organisational structure effectively represents a defence against the risk of invisibility:

The Board does need more stability, in the sense that...it should meet more frequently, [...] in my view, beyond the protocol agreement that was accepted with the resolution, we also need [...] rules on how often and how we meet, our approach etc., because we need to give it a more organisational, more structural aspect. (Equal Opportunities Department, Naples City Council)

The notion of carrying out a final assessment of organisational strategies can also be helpful: evaluating the pros and cons can indeed make it more difficult for critics to play on the weaknesses of these strategies in order to invalidate the very possibility of institutionalising LGBT policies in the local administration.

The important thing in my view is that a serious, objective, as broad as possible analysis should be done, and shared – and this should not be taken for granted - of the work that has been done, its limits and any eventual strengths [...]. The risk in general, with this discontinuity, is that everything gets lost and you have to start from scratch again, as if nothing had been done previously, except that then you discover that past failures and shortcomings unconsciously weigh on the scenario: they are not processed rationally and taken into account when planning for the future. (Office for Diversity Policies, Bologna City Council)

Lastly, in the accounts gathered there is often reference to 'enlightened personnel' in the public administration who enabled the implementation of initiatives connected to sexual orientation and gender identity. For this reason, both the associations and the council departments involved in this arena demonstrated the need to maintain contacts with administrative staff who, having contributed from the start, already know how to work the bureaucratic and political system.

3.3.2 Mainstreaming LGBT issues in local authorities

When you have an instrument called the LGBT Monitoring Centre or the LGBT Office in an institution, most of the work you do is about 'constructing recognition' on an institutional level and on a social level. (LGBT Monitoring Centre, Venice City Council)

The need for recognition granted by the existence of a department in the public authority that specifically addresses LGBT issues is proven by the elements of structural weakness encountered by all the bodies that have attempted to set up services dedicated to sexual orientation and gender identity. One strategy for fostering this recognition is the involvement of other sectors of the local administration and other levels of local governance in LGBT policies, with strategies of mainstreaming that contribute to the visibility and integration of LGBT events in the ordinary activities of the city. Turin Pride 2006 is an example of this, and is recognised locally and nationally as emblematic of partnership policies that have effectively succeeded in combating the disparaging view usually held of displays of LGBT Pride.

The Turin Pride event [...] set out to be a new event, a dimension where Pride could be experienced as a series of cultural proposals to the city, integrating the identity-related aspect that Pride usually has. (Turin Provincial Council)

Turin Pride represented a turning point for the local bodies involved in the organisation, laying the foundations for cooperating on a long term project that went beyond the event itself: in terms of both events organised throughout the year, and the effects on and involvement of the public, it represented a key episode of mainstreaming of LGBT issues, with staggering results in terms of visibility.

This primary manifestation of the phenomenon of mainstreaming, namely ensuring that LGBT issues are not ghettoised with the creation of separate events, also underpins the strategy that makes it possible: developing horizontal relationships, namely working to ensure that policies are transversal, involving various council departments in the LGBT projects being developed.

The Board also has a limitation, in my view: it is not yet transversal [...], we don't have the strength currently [...] because if we set up a transversal board involving the other council departments, it would be a more comprehensive way of tackling these issues, from cradle to grave [for the individual], as it were. (Rome City Council)

Each sector can tell us something, therefore it is clear that for transgender people the most important services are the 'social services' division and the 'employment' division, also the Registry Office for papers. For bullying, 'education services' and the 'municipal police' for bullying in the area, but also the 'urban regeneration' division, the wards, the Provincial council for what comes under the Centre for Didactic Services [...], and the 'youth' office. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

This kind of collaboration is not always easy, since the mandate for sexual orientation and gender identity issues is given to one council department alone, and there is often a net separation, and at times conflict, between sectors inside the local authority. Moreover, we cannot neglect the particular historical context of the study, with the general precariousness facing the Equal Opportunities sector in Italy, which is where LGBT activities are almost always based.

The experiences in Italy have proven the need to create events using a bottom-up approach in order to get established not only in the local area but also within the local authority: this mainstreaming therefore becomes an ideal solution to bypass barriers and conflicts and foster extensive attention to and awareness of LGBT issues.

I'm not going to come and foist a debate about homosexuality onto you, what I will do is intervene with the language and instruments used in the area: [...] to talk about homosexuality and transgenderism and to make sure that homosexual and transgender people are included in the area's policies, you have to do a cultural operation, a detailed, multifaceted cultural operation that has to be painstakingly crafted with everyone. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

To this end, the most effective tool in the case of Turin was the Piloting Group, already foreseen in the resolution that established the LGBT Office, in order to achieve the objective of a transversal approach across the various sectors of the local authority, by means of analysing needs, planning initiatives, circulating information and raising awareness among colleagues.

The Piloting Group, featuring representatives from various sectors of the City Council and staff from the LGBT Office, operates with a bottom-up approach: each sector's representative brings to the table the needs and issues that have emerged in his or her sector, and the Group then attempts to identify effective measures to implement. The results of the discussion are then taken back to the sector, fostering and implementing good practices. In this way each sector participates in planning and implementation according to their own competences. From the organisational point of view, there are around two meetings a year, as well as specific encounters for particular issues or individual sectors, and training and refresher courses on issues regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

The interviews also revealed the main difficulties encountered in the work of the Piloting Group, namely the prevalence of female members,

indicating that LGBT issues are handled less easily by men, or that they are perceived as connected to the Equal Opportunities field and therefore female; the time needed to take part in the group's activities not always being acknowledged and legitimated by sector directors; too few meetings to construct long term projects that would enable the Piloting Group to be more operative.

One interesting element emerged with the regard to the positive ramifications of this experience, including from a personal point of view:

I am enthusiastic about the Piloting Group. It is a group that has grown over time, a group with little chit-chat and lots of results: it's the first time for me [...]. This is a group that walks the talk. Things might take their time, because we all come from different areas, but it really is growing and the involvement has always been tangible, the fact of working out how to link up to work on shared projects. (LGBT Office Piloting Group, Turin City Council)

The interviews with the members of the Piloting Group clearly revealed the benefits of doing internal training in the public administration, in view of the fact that we cannot expect competences in council staff who do not have the tools to interpret the social background of the users.

From then on it was like a new world opening up to me...even though I knew homosexual couples and also socialised with homosexual couples, it was an unknown world [...]. And I discovered something else, that even if you transition [referred to transgender] you don't arrive at a heterosexual orientation! It was like discovering an unknown world, and things that I never thought existed opened up to me. (LGBT Office Piloting Group, Turin City Council)

It is a project, an experience, for those who work in the public administration, of genuine local governance. We have this mandate, to "think about how you can ensure your services are not, let's say, heterosexist, basically that they don't have only a heterosexual vision; remember that these [experiences] exist too". (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

Now we have examined the phenomenon of horizontal mainstreaming, let's turn our attention to the vertical relationships forged by City Councils.

3.3.3 Vertical relationships

One type of vertical relationship is that with the Provincial and Regional Councils, bodies that can enable the circulation of initiatives to a wider area than that of the City Council:

The strategic approach adopted by this Council [regional] is that of promoting local projects as much as possible, upping the ante a bit and giving the Provinces a role they never had before, as an intermediate body [...]. While the [previous administration] was in power, we always supported all the Pride events, all the T-Dor events and all the International Days against Homophobia, thanks to a de facto agreement between the Regional, Provincial and City Councils, which came about in 2006, and we always worked together [...]. It was a small miracle. (Piedmont Regional Council)

In the Provincial Council, the department of local services for citizens adopted the campaign against homophobia, reprinted it and distributed it to all the libraries, health facilities, clinics and associations in the province... They had seen the campaign and they knew about the problems, so they took it up. (LGBT Monitoring Centre, Venice City Council)

The last quote represents an example of how vertical relations enable the development of projects that a single body would find it hard to achieve: in the case of Venice, the campaign against homophobia was withdrawn after a month due to pressure from the Curia, and for this reason it was then continued on a provincial and national level rather than on a city council level.

Continuity is thus guaranteed by the existence of other nodes on the network between different levels of governance, as clearly expressed by the former Councillor for Equal Opportunities on the Turin Provincial Council:

The coordination between the three administrations facilitated the implementation of the programmes: because the Mayor and the President of the Region were involved, it was easier for the President of the Province not to have problems, and harder not to get involved: it would have been obvious if the Province was not involved.

This work is often carried out by basing the new networks on other previous experiences, above all with regards to violence against women, as in the case of Bologna, or combating AIDS, as happened in Rome. The vicinity of LGBT initiatives with networks combating violence against women is often due to the fact that the sectors that deal with sexual orientation and gender identity are part of the council department for Equal Opportunities, traditionally interpreted as equal opportunities between men and women:

In the previous administration's planning of regional initiatives, the Council department for equal opportunities devoted 21 million euro to equal opportunities, and of this 21 million euro, not one euro was ring-fenced for LGBT [...]. The Council department for equal opportunities has [...] the centre for women's employment, the centre against violence against women, the centre for women's employability, the centre for the female. Full stop. Nothing else! (Naples Board)

The mayor has a delegate for equal opportunities, a woman who only addresses women, because for her equal opportunities are only in terms of gender. (Rome Board)

Extending the network beyond the regional level is fundamental in terms of ensuring organisational continuity:

For us it was important to work on different levels, including in terms of legitimacy [...]: in the city, between individuals, subjects, bodies. On a national level with other cities [...]. For each initiative we sought European involvement because that is the most sensitive of the different institutional levels, and gave legitimacy to what we were doing. This is how we got the idea of joining ILGA Europe. (LGBT Monitoring Centre, Venice City Council)

One pressing question facing both multilevel networks and public/private partnerships is that of autonomy with respect to central bodies, that, while they guarantee legitimacy and support, at the same time may also establish rules and dictate the contents of initiatives (Bell 2008):

The [regional antidiscrimination] network came about through UNAR, therefore in the office of the Italian Presidency, Equal Opportunities department, raising the problem of independence, which is one of the main questions discussed. (Office for Diversity Policies, Bologna City Council)

The European dimension, on the other hand, not raising the aforementioned problem of autonomy, is a less controversial subject to involve in order not to lose the work carried out on LGBT issues:

Undoubtedly the fact that the European Union clearly places questions of sexual orientation and gender identity among issues of diversity, subject to discrimination, [...] can also help when there are changes of administration because [...] the EU directives and guidelines stay in place and those who work with the offices can refer to these to continue with their work: it is hard to just sweep everything away. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

In order to guarantee institutional recognition and organisational continuity for LGBT policies in local authorities, the organisational and relational choices described above must however be accompanied by strategies that legitimate the local authority's assumption of responsibility with regards to the needs and rights of LGBT citizens.

3.4 Strategies for legitimating local LGBT policies

The associations, and above all the actors that promote LGBT policies from within the administrations appear to seek forms of legitimation around which there is sufficiently broad political consensus to enable not only the implementation of single actions, but a continuity of local governance commitment in this field. The strategies deployed present this commitment not as the result of a political choice, inspired by a certain model of society to create, but as a 'technical' aspect, part of the business of administering an area.

The decision [...] to set up a dedicated office, to have an approach [...] that is very practical and also targets the council system [...], in a matter of fact and everyday way, is something that I feel has enabled us [...] to bypass questions of a political/ideological/theoretic nature. (Councillor for Equal Opportunities, Turin City Council)

The reference to the universal nature of the rights of citizenship, therefore the equality of all citizens, appears to make it possible to present LGBT policies not as a possible option, but as an essential duty for administrations, attributing strong public responsibility when it comes to guaranteeing and promoting these rights.

Asking the institutions to take responsibility for a scientific study, with a service dedicated to issues that are not those of a minority but regard citizenship in general, is a political project. [...] When they asked us: "do you want money or do you want other things?" there were no doubts for us. We said: "No, we started with an institutional question of registering civil partnerships, you're not able to give us that, but we want the city to do things for the community, to tell citizens that rights are part of our shared heritage". [...]] When you insist on the value of LGBT rights as rights that are not a question of safeguarding a minority, but a question of citizenship as a whole, then in my view you have found a key. (GLT Coordination Board, Turin)

While the discourse on rights establishes general legitimation for anti-discrimination policies, tackling all the dimensions recognised in the Treaty

of Amsterdam, it does however seem to run the risk of establishing a hierarchy among these rights that renders LGBT issues invisible, due to their low level of legitimation in Italy.

When one is forced to use the weapon of multiple discrimination to assert that one of the two discriminations has the same dignity as the other [...] then that is a failure, basically, because it means affirming that diversity exists even within the field of discrimination. (Turin Provincial Council)

This shortcoming reflects the lack in Italy of a national framework of formal rights: not only juridical recognition for same sex couples, but also general legislation to fight discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; a framework of the kind present in other countries that exerts pressure from the top to implement local policies. The only anti-discrimination legislation in Italy applies to the workplace.

The arena for the specific legitimation of action on this kind of discrimination must be sought by local actors, who construct it by defining the specific needs of LGBT people, in terms of their status as discriminated minority: the administrations are therefore assigned the role of safeguarding this minority by fighting homophobia.

What this means, however, varies according to the needs in question: two particular arenas emerge as crucial. The first is the need for recognition, namely to see the various LGBT experiences and subjectivities recognised by society: this then provides the justification for cultural policies that aim to fight stereotypes and prejudices that abstractly label and stigmatise gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

On the other hand, there is the reference to the security of LGBT people, something which has become increasingly important in recent years. In this case the homophobia to combat is in the form of concrete acts of discrimination and violence that LGBT people are, or risk being, victims to. Given the greater importance accorded to security policies in the local arena, with transversal consensus across the political spectrum, this way of justifying LGBT policies is recognised by the subjects involved, in all the cities we studied, as a very effective, perhaps the most effective, strategy for achieving legitimation, and it is a strategy that can also be presented as politically neutral.

We tried to make ourselves known by taking advantage of a local situation which was fairly negative in terms of homophobia. So we presented ourselves as an association, together with other associations, at a demonstration, and we went knocking at the City Council to say: "We want to demonstrate in the streets and protest against homophobia. Are you on our side?" and the Council were with us. (Naples Board)

[In the Board] we had to somehow find a strategy for the institution in terms of rights, also because it was the period when people started talking about violence against homosexuals. There were even a number of attacks in the Rome area against young homosexual men. And so together with the associations we began to find out about their potential, and what message the administration wanted to communicate to the people of Rome. So we started this big campaign about not being afraid, the campaign ran: "Don't be afraid of homosexual people, they are people just like you". (Rome City Council)

This quote reveals the common phenomenon of combining the various aspects of homophobia as a question of denied recognition and insecurity. Yet it seems that exposing violence and presenting LGBT people as possible victims has a fundamental legitimating function, to which broader policies of cultural change can then be added.

This is in fact a more general change that has also affected gender policies, as highlighted by the case of the Office for Diversity Policies in Bologna. Although this is within the sector of education, diversity policies and gender policies, the work of the office is informed by the emergence of a 'security related aspect of the issue of violence', related to gender and homophobia. Tackling violence indeed represents the main source of legitimation, the basis for the work of the network and the link between LGBT policies and gender policies, and the point of departure for other anti-discrimination policies. The question of security therefore becomes an integral part of the justification of LGBT policies, and is mentioned even when the chosen framework is that of rights:

I thought it was very positive that the President of the Republic and the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies [...], met with the LGBT associations. These are little steps forward that show that the issue of rights, like legality and security, is not right-wing or left-wing. The issue of rights is an issue of justice and fairness. (former Councillor for Equal Opportunities, Turin Provincial Council)

A more marginal justification of local LGBT policies is the reference to needs which concern access to services, which calls not only for a cultural role but also material support from the administration, namely for it to take responsibility for a fairer distribution of resources. In some cases this object is pursued through training, with the aim of changing the organisational dimension of services. As for the requests for dedicated services, these emerge above all for a number of subjects facing particular discrimination, for example transgender people, due to the difficulties they encounter accessing work and affording the costs involved in transitioning. This is the case of ISELT, the desk dedicated to helping transgender people enter the work environment and fostering their social inclusion, which was active in Turin for a number of years (cfr. ch.2.2.5).

References to needs connected to the health field are also marginal, above all as a basis for policies for access to services. These appear more often than not in the form of fostering responsibility and providing information on sexuality, also for strategic and organisational reasons: the contact person for health is often the point of entrance for training activities on LGBT issues in schools. The 'health' question therefore tends to be interpreted in terms of risk (at risk behaviours, protection behaviours), therefore also evoking the security question.

The contact person for health because [...] the idea is these issues can cause distress among students, so we reckoned this was the right person to start with. (Savigliano Town Council, CN)

Lastly, there is one other resource for legitimation that is proving increasingly crucial in other countries, but is rarely mentioned here: that of diversity

management, which asserts the economic utility for the local context in capitalising on differences in identity and life style (cfr. ch.1.3). As we will see in the chapter devoted to the RE.A.DY network, the attempt to use this discourse emerges above all in the creation of this national network.

3.4.1 Needs and actions

If we pass from overall strategies of legitimation for LGBT policies to looking at more specific actions developed by local administrations in recent years, we can see how, in the various fields, according to how needs are defined, the initiatives in question can also assume different forms.

If for example we look at evaluations of initiatives aimed at combating discrimination in the workplace, we encounter the various different perspectives described above. This problem can be attributed to deep-seated heterosexism in the structure and organisational culture of a workplace, “not necessarily to specific abuse towards an individual” (former Councillor for Equal Opportunities, Turin City Council), meaning that structural changes are needed to guarantee equal opportunities for all. The definitions of the problem that appear to prevail, however, are those that focus on the needs of the subjects being discriminated against, with envisaged solutions being support for competences and guidance for individuals. In this field we also encounter the security discourse, when discrimination in the workplace is presented first and foremost in terms of acts of harassment and violence: a perspective that calls for a response of legal protection, as can be offered by the equal opportunities advisor.

In whatever way needs are defined, training appears to be a recurrent response. There is in fact general consensus when it comes to training: between associations, in the relationship between associations and administrations and, within administrations, across the political spectrum. The case of Rome appears emblematic in this regard: the experience of training for local authority staff (cfr. ch.2.2.1) is recognised by everyone - associations and administrations of various political orientations - as the minimum common denominator. There therefore appears to be a general consensus on the role of local governance in safeguarding rights, interpreted as an educational role.

Because the public administration must also give educational input with regards to the people who live in this area. (Rome City Council)

The training courses [...] give you an idea that the City Council, at least this department, wants to give the community a little bit more protection, and a more positive image, when it comes down to it. (Rome Board)

Training appears to be the main possible and feasible response, with long term efficacy, to the range of diverse needs, however these are interpreted, of LGBT subjects: it is indeed justified as a cultural commitment to fostering the recognition of LGBT experiences and identities, as a tool to tackle violence (in particular to combat homophobic bullying, a central argument for training initiatives in schools), and in terms of access to services.

As well as representing a minimum common denominator between those concerned, training is also a fundamental tool when it comes to involving and mobilising other subjects, and therefore for creating networks. We have seen how this function is highlighted, for example, by the members of the Piloting Group of Turin's LGBT Office:

One of the main tools that has enabled us to start the network is training. Through training we have the opportunity to meet people and hear about their experiences, their needs. These people then act as mediators between us and other subjects. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

On the other hand various analyses also highlight the fact that there can be risks involved in viewing training as the only tool for intervention on LGBT issues.

I would like to see something more, that goes beyond this [...] because training focuses on tackling ignorance on this subject, rather than on what we need to improve socially, to do things with a social value. (Piloting Group of the LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

Training actions foster a sense of individual responsibility among service operators, teachers and police operators when it comes to recognising and responding to the specific needs of LGBT subjects. One possible risk is that this can be interpreted as a substitute for organisational and administrative responsibilities to provide a specific service, or guaranteeing effective equality in the conditions for accessing a service. Indeed this situation manifested itself in the aforementioned case of the service for work guidance and support for transgender people in Turin. Set up thanks to European funding, when these resources finished it was effectively replaced by training activities:

So the desk, as it was, had to close down, so you no longer had a place where you could see a psychologist and an educator. We knew that we needed to offer people support: who else would? Who would have accompanied them to employers? Who else would have acted as an interface? It had been an important thing, and now it isn't there any more, so we did our best at least to keep the network going. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

On the other hand, widespread training initiatives can bring about fundamental cultural changes that erode the heterosexist premises of the institutions: the awareness of personnel indeed represents the basic condition to guaranteeing equality in access to services.

What Turin did in terms of internal training on all levels – management, middle management and personnel across the sectors – is an important element for transforming the way in which public power relates to citizens in terms of a broader awareness of the plurality of social subjects, which is no mean feat. (Office for Diversity Policies, Bologna City Council)

The second section of this volume is dedicated to exploring an experimental training initiative developed by Turin's LGBT Office in the context of the AHEAD project.

4.1 A brief history of the network

14. The European Exhibition of Public Communication and Services to the Citizen and Business.

COM-PA¹⁴ in Bologna in November 2005 saw the first meeting between local authorities committed to combating discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity: the City Councils of Rome, Venice and Bologna invited that of Turin to present the experience of the LGBT Office. This represented the first comparison of initiatives implemented by the various city councils, with a view to a subsequent meeting at the Public Administrations Forum in Rome. On this occasion the City Councils of Rome and Turin signalled their intention to establish the RE.A.DY network, Italy's first national network involving local and regional authorities with the aim of "promoting a culture and policies regarding diversity and developing initiatives to tackle discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity"¹⁵. In June 2006 the Turin Pride Committee, with the support of all levels of governance, organised the conference 'Città amiche, friendly cities, villes amies', and on that occasion the public administrations concerned met to draw up a Charter of Intentions containing the aims, objectives and actions of the RE.A.DY network.

15. www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/lgbt/lgbt_reti/lgbt_ready/

The network aims to contribute to the exchange of experiences between various levels of governance, gathering good practices in the LGBT field in Italy, and supporting public administrations in implementing activities aimed at acknowledging the rights of LGBT people.

To enable the network to operate, a central coordination office was set up to perform both the administrative and political tasks that, in theory at least, would then be taken on by the various partners¹⁶:

16. Regional Authorities:
Piedmont; Tuscany.

Provinces: Cremona; Rome; Syracuse; Turin.

City Councils: Bari; Bologna; Casalmaggiore (Cremona); Capraia e Limite (Florence); Cremona; Florence;

Marineo (Palermo); Messina;

Naples; Perugia; Pisa; Pistoia;

Rende (Cosenza); Rome;

Salsomaggiore Terme (Parma);

Savigliano (Cuneo); Turin;

Venice.

The central coordination office was supposed to be on an annual rotation because we wanted to decentralise it and make sure it really operated across the country. In actual fact we then realised that for the time being, thanks to already having a structured service, we were the only ones with the opportunity and capacity to manage a network like this. There was the option of transferring it to Venice, then they closed the LGBT Monitoring Centre; it was supposed to go to Bologna, then the City Council was put under the administration of an external commissioner, so we continued to run it ourselves. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

According to the Charter of Intentions, from a political point of view the central coordination office has the task of supervising the implementation of the guidelines indicated in the annual meeting of the network; to coordinate relationships with institutions and associations; to coordinate the shared actions of the network and distribute tasks between the partners. From an administrative point of view, the office manages membership questions; manages the post; organises the annual review meetings and collects and circulates information and good practices within the network, fulfilling the role of archive and 'history' of the network:

[The central coordination office aims] to be an archive of experiences to guarantee continuity, to transmit our work to future members of the network and [...] not to disperse our efforts and constantly have to start from scratch, something which typically happens in complex organisations. Suddenly everything gets shelved and you have to start over: certain urgent questions and priorities come to light, but you always have to start from scratch. (Office for Diversity Policies, Bologna City Council)

The central coordination office also intervened on two occasions to raise the profile of the RE.A.DY network: the first communication was delivered to the list of all municipal councils supplied by ANCI¹⁷ in 2006. The following year, on occasion of the national meeting of the network in Florence, the Minister for Equal Opportunities Pollastrini invited all the presidents of regional capital city councils, provincial and regional councils to take part in the meeting and join the RE.A.DY network. This important source of legitimation occasioned the biggest influx of new members, demonstrating the importance of national input in terms of involving public administrations. There was no shortage of hurdles, and for this reason each member council chose its own strategy for joining the network, although a council resolution represents the only legally binding administrative deed.

The network is open to regional, provincial and city councils, the associations of these bodies and equal opportunities bodies. Partners are required to interface with local LGBT associations; investigate the needs of the LGBT population by means of research and contacts; develop local initiatives; support the network in circulating information; organise local events on occasion of the International Day Against Homophobia; participate in annual meetings between network partners and initiate, where possible, institutional cooperation between different levels of governance.

17. The National Association of Italian Municipal Councils.

4.2 Strengths and critical areas

With regards to vertical relationships between different levels of governance, the strength of the network lies in its bottom-up approach, rendered even more effective by partners' willingness to develop multilevel networks in their local areas (between city, provincial and regional councils), with each level being assigned different competences. However this effort is not matched with adequate resources: the scarcity of resources in terms of both funding and full time personnel employed by the network is undoubtedly one of the causes of its structural stagnation.

Political leadership on a national level could therefore elicit a greater investment of resources and foster the work of the network. At the same time, the involvement of this kind of leadership would entail a top-down approach, and "such proximity to the workings of central government poses questions as to the body's capacity to be an independent critical voice" (Bell 2008: 41).

On the contrary, the tactic that the network uses for leverage is that of mimetic isomorphism (Powell and DiMaggio 1991), whereby institutions

adopt similar approaches to ensure reciprocal reinforcement, legitimating the work of both.

The Savigliano town council joined the RE.A.DY network with the aim of granting continuity to the work on LGBT issues [...]. Joining the network also means having a support network. (Savigliano Town Council, CN)

The network was set up for this very reason: to bypass the national legislative system that does not offer an adequate response to the needs of the LGBT community. Paradoxically, this legislative vacuum has forced local authorities to find their own solutions, giving rise to a panorama of good practices on a local level which is much more active than in other European countries where LGBT subjects are safeguarded by central government initiatives.

Given that the situation in Italy is so backward, in my view there is great scope for action on a local and regional level. Many initiatives have come about on a municipal level. [...] In spite of national policies, this country has a tradition in this direction. Who knows, we might even be able to envisage a local, municipal arena for citizenship directly linked to the European dimension? (LGBT Monitoring Centre, Venice City Council)

In a context in which coercive isomorphism (where central government dictates the political approach) is absent, the advantage of joining the network is that of exchanging good practices which have been successful on a local level.

With regards to the upper level of vertical partnership, the highest point of reference for the RE.A.DY network is the European Union, which, through directives regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, functions as a political referent where the action of national government is lacking.

Beyond the question of changes in local administration, there are European Union directives and guidelines that those who work with the offices can appeal to in order to continue with their work. It is hard to just sweep everything away. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

In terms of horizontal partnerships there are shortcomings in the network's relationships with the national level of LGBT associations. Those interviewed reported that alliances with the organisations on a national level were problematic, given the heterogeneous and conflictual nature of the association panorama. On a local level, the associations, both those based locally and the local branches of national organisations, proved to be the main point of contact for the authorities. What we described on a local level as a public/private partnership (cfr. ch. 1.1.2 and ch.3) is not therefore accomplished in the creation of a national network, which remains a committee of public bodies.

4.3 Legitimation strategies

With the lack of legitimation from the top, and in a national juridical and political context that obliges local authorities to take an active role in combating discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, as happens in other countries, the network endeavoured to find a shared basis for legitimating LGBT policies as a specific arena for local authority action. The lengthy negotiations aimed at defining shared objectives enabled the network to present itself as transversal with respect to political forces, fostering the continuity of local policies even when there is a change in political orientation in the administrations.

The meeting in Turin in 2006, where, as we have said, the Charter of Intentions was drawn up and the network's rationale and objectives were discussed, attempted to adopt the parlance (terms like *friendly cities*) and ideas of *diversity management*. This concept has been circulated in Italy largely thanks to the translation of Richard Florida's book (2003) on the rise of the new creative class in the United States. Florida's idea is that a social environment tolerant of diverse life styles represents a driving force for economic development, attracting and capitalising on the most innovative forces in society. This discourse could be legitimated as part of a more general transformation of the responsibilities of local administrations, with their nascent role of governance of economic development in their local area.

The interesting element of the conference [...] was this more or less shared urge to address the question of sexual orientation in the dimension indicated by Florida, rather than in a dimension of basic rights: moving away from ... I'm not sure whether it should be termed the archetype or stereotype of safeguarding rights, to look at the aspects of innovation and creativity, and to some extent development. Then [...] that is not what came out of the conference in the end, because the focus turned out to be very much on the dimension of acknowledging rights. (Turin Provincial Council)

However, as the quote shows, diversity management is not the main legitimation strategy for the RE.A.DY network. Indeed the diversity management discourse appears to call for an explicit and public positive construction of non-heterosexual identities, something which does not appear easy to achieve in Italy, and above all is hard to apply transversally across the political spectrum.

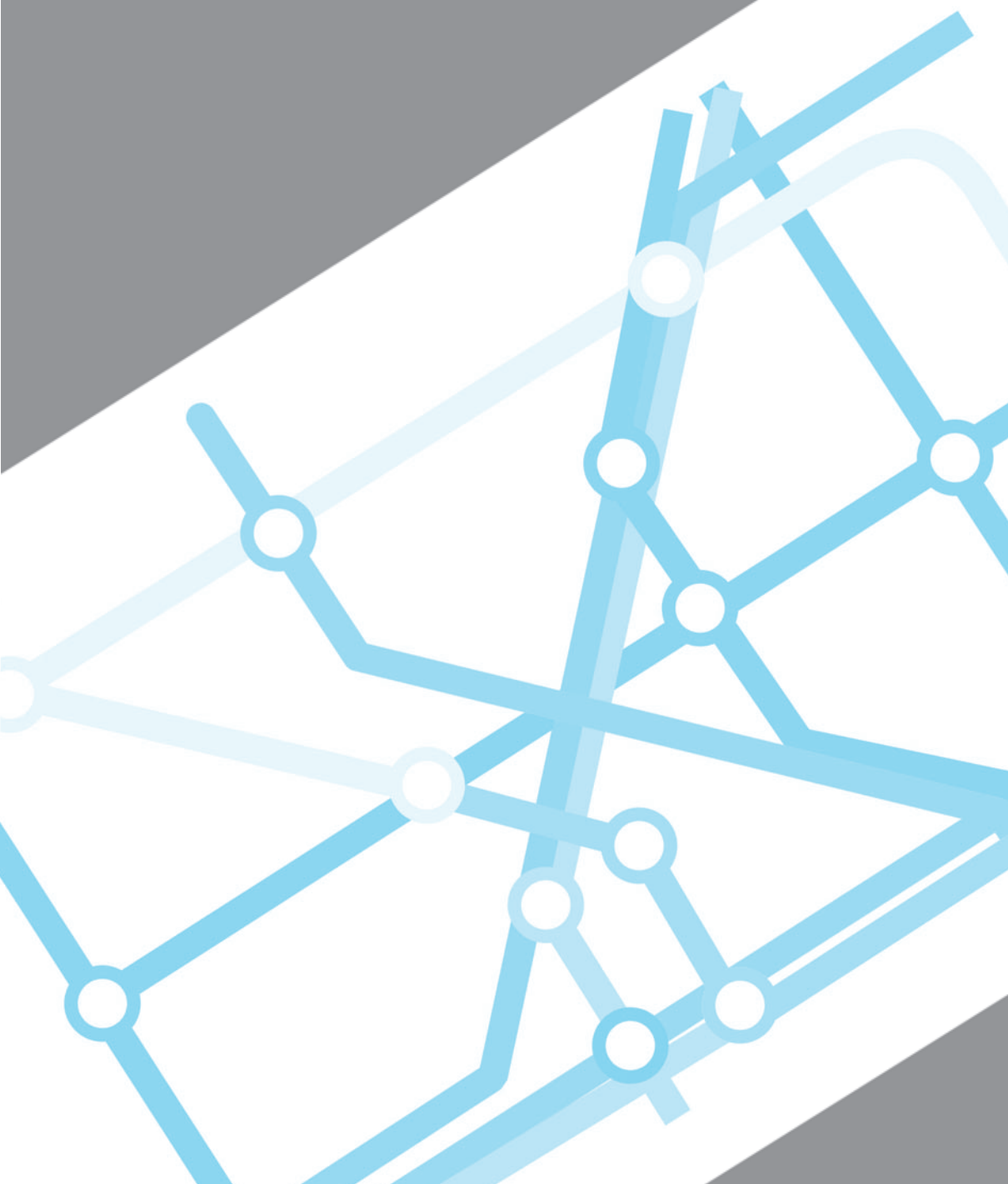
I believe that currently there is a political class that has a serious problem even just naming homosexuality and transsexuality [...]: for us naming means that strong need to say 'I am here', it's not a question of flaunting it. (LGBT Office, Turin City Council)

The minimum common denominator around which broad, transversal legitimation can be built lies in presenting the problem in terms of tackling homophobia, with reference to security issues. This interpretation, as we saw in chapters 1 and 3, enables the network to be presented as a 'technical'/administrative tool, rather than a political strategy. With the final aim established, the network is assigned the role of fulfilling it, namely by

sharing good practices which have been trialled and proven to be effective in other contexts.

In any case, the horizontal communications required by the complex RE.A.DY network represent an opportunity to share and articulate strategic reflections on the premises and tendencies of LGBT policies, and can therefore, if recognised and empowered, represent an important resource to draw on when it comes to creating national policies.

Annex



TURIN CITY COUNCIL

Marta Levi, Councillor for the Equal Opportunities and Youth Policies.

Paola Pozzi, Councillor for the Educational System and the Equal Opportunities 2001-2005.

Eleonora Artesio, Councillor for the Equal Opportunities, Decentralisation and Youth Policies Department 1997-2001.

Susanna Rorato, Director of the Equal Opportunities, Gender and City Time Policies Department.

Anna Maria Gallivanone, Responsible for the Equal Opportunities, Gender and City Time Policies Department.

Roberto Emprin, Responsible for the LGBT Office, Equal Opportunities, Gender and City Time Policies Department.

Antonella d'Annibale, LGBT Office, Equal Opportunities, Gender and City Time Policies Department.

Piloting group, representatives:

Patrizia Ballardini: Wards.

Mariagiuseppina Borasi: Educational Services.

Chiara Garrone: Youth Policies.

Alessio Pavarallo: Civic Libraries.

Maria Peiretti: Demographic Services.

Barbara Rivoira: Urban Regeneration.

SAVIGLIANO TOWN COUNCIL (Cuneo)

Barbara Rinero, Board for the Equal Opportunities.

TORRE PELLICE TOWN COUNCIL (Turin)

Maurizia Manassero, Councillor for Culture and Equal Opportunities 2004-2009.

TURIN PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

Aurora Tesio, Councillor for Equal Opportunities and International Relationships 2004-2009.

Enrico Chiais, Director of the Equal Opportunities and Time-use Policies Sector, Active Citizenship Policies, Social Rights and Equality Department.

PIEDMONT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Enzo Cucco, Regional Council Presidential staff, General Services and Equal Opportunities for All Department.

NAPLES CITY COUNCIL

Graziella Pagano, Councillor for Tourism, Equal Opportunities and City Time Policies.

Luisa Festa, Equal Opportunities Advisor of the Naples Provincial Council.

BOLOGNA CITY COUNCIL

Renato Busarello, Office for Diversity Policies, Education and Diversities Policies Department.

VENICE CITY COUNCIL

Fabio Bozzato, LGBT Monitoring Centre, Women Citizenship, Diversities Culture and Youth Policies Department.

Elena Piaggi, LGBT Monitoring Centre, Women Citizenship, Diversities Culture and Youth Policies Department.

ONIG (National Monitoring Centre on Gender Identity)

Vittoria Colonna, executive board.

GAY, LESBIAN AND TRANSEXUAL TURIN COORDINATION BOARD

Gigi Malaroda, Circolo Maurice.

Franco Mittica, Informagay.

Marco Pustianaz, Davide e Gionata.

Rosanna Viano, Circolo Maurice.

Training Group

Diego Iracà, Circolo Maurice.

Debora Ventrella, Circolo Maurice.

GLBT TURIN PRIDE COORDINATION BOARD

Francesca, La Jungla.

Enzo Cucco, Fondazione Sandro Penna.

Gabriele Murgia, Gruppo Pesce Turin.

Roberta Padovano, Circolo Maurice.

Training Group

Cristina Torazza, Circolo Maurice.

Maurizio Nicolazzo, Circolo Maurice.

Valentina Violino, Famiglie Arcobaleno (*Rainbow Families*).

PERMANENT CONCERTATION BOARD OF THE NAPLES CITY COUNCIL

Carlo Cremona, i-ken Onlus.

Giordana Curati and Claudia, Arcilesbica Naples.

Fabrizio Sorbara, Arcigay Naples.

Loredana Rossi, ATN (Transsexual Association Naples).

COORDINATING BOARD ON GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF THE ROME CITY COUNCIL

Andrea Berardi Curti, Circolo Mario Mieli.

Leila Daianis and Marcia Leite, Libellula.

Salvatore Marra, CGIL – Nuovi Diritti Rome.

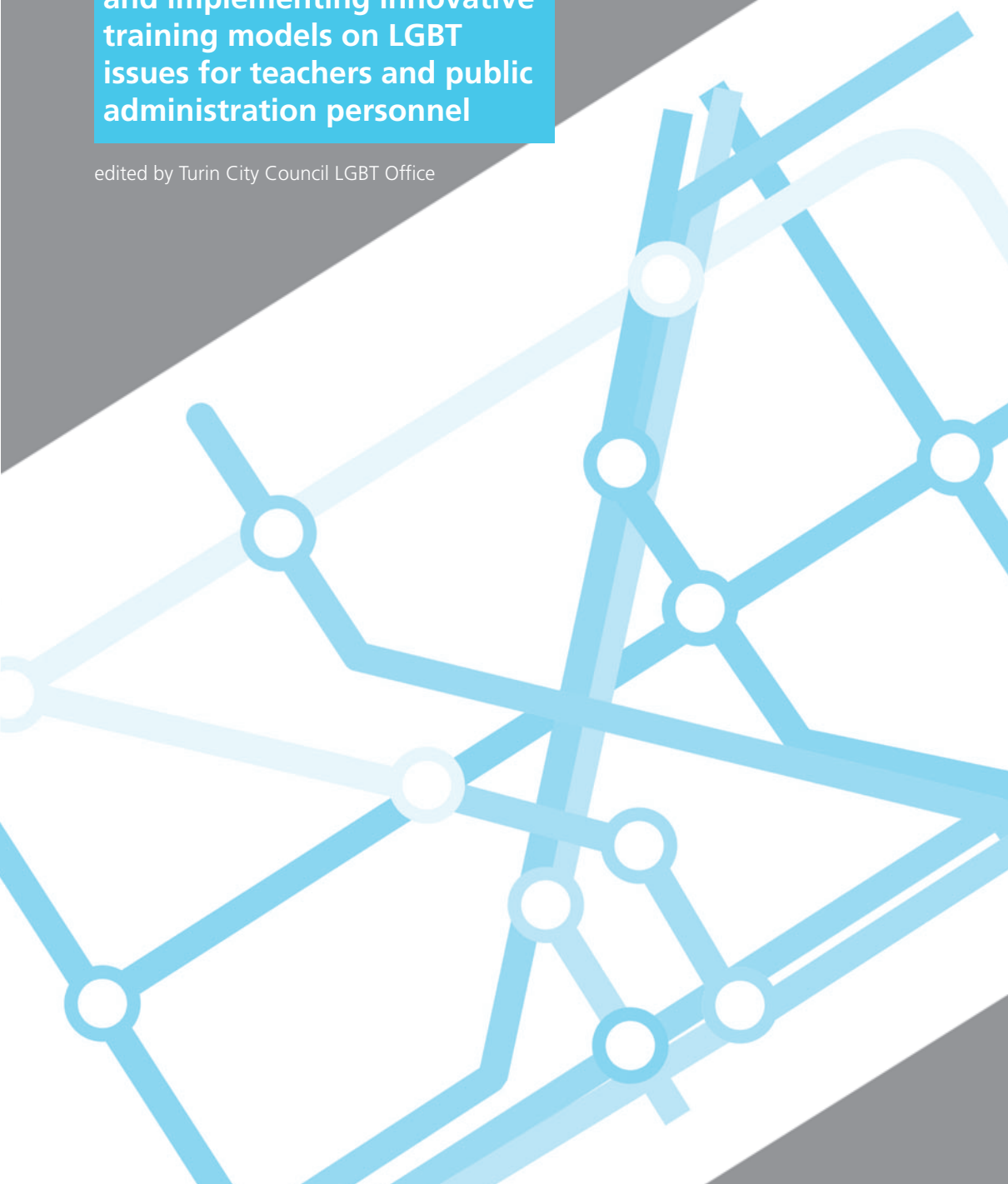
Alessandro Poto, Arcigay Rome – Provincial Committee.

Maria Laura Annibali, Di Gay Project.

PART II

The local action: designing and implementing innovative training models on LGBT issues for teachers and public administration personnel

edited by Turin City Council LGBT Office



1 Training activity and the work of the network as the basis for local action

In the context of the local initiatives related to the European AHEAD project, the Turin City Council, together with the Piedmont Regional Council, the Turin Provincial Council and the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board, has taken on the task of designing and trialling four training kits regarding the different areas addressed by the project. For the Turin City Council the work was carried out by the LGBT Office of the Equal Opportunities, Gender and City Time Policies department.

This section sets out to examine this initiative, starting from the motivation that led to the City Council taking on this task, up to the assessment of the trials of the training kits. It is also an opportunity to document and formulate a systematic approach to a rich but complex area of work, both in terms of the number of subjects involved and the various different stages in the process. Particular attention was devoted to assessment, and this publication is the first opportunity to devote specific space to the results of the trial, giving the reader an overall vision of the entire process: the motivations, the organisation and the results.

1.1 The LGBT Office experience

In February 2001 Turin City Council accepted a proposal from the Associations of the Turin Gay, Lesbian and Transsexual Coordination Board (now known as the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board) and established the *LGBT Office to overcome discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity*, as part of the department for Equal Opportunities, Gender and uses of Time Policies.

The Service does not run a help desk open to the public, but organises and promotes activities designed to foster the social inclusion of homosexual and transsexual people. The various initiatives include a packed programme of training events, constant networking and specific projects in the municipal and provincial area.¹⁸

Through its training initiatives in particular, the Office aims to increase knowledge of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender world and at the same time help challenge the stereotypes and prejudices that are the basis for homophobic and transphobic discrimination.

The training offered by the LGBT Office addresses three broad areas of users. The first regards public administration personnel (in recent years training has been given to personnel of the city and provincial councils and the Local Health Authorities), the second is that of schools (targeting teaching staff and pupils), while the third concerns subjects involved in voluntary work

¹⁸. For a more detailed presentation of the organisation of the LGBT Office see paragraph 2.2.5.

within the public administration. On one side there are the volunteers engaged in National Civil Service and those of the 'Young People for Turin' project, while on the other there are the members of the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board Training Group.

The experience gained in the last few years has shown how training activities have led to significant improvements in the approach of both service staff and schools. Training initiatives have provided tools to respond effectively to the needs that have progressively emerged in the local area, enabling personnel and teaching staff to act with greater awareness in a general atmosphere of acceptance and respect. The training activities have also enabled the LGBT Office to develop a series of networks with operators from other sectors working in different fields.

It is in this context, therefore, that the LGBT Office has chosen training as the main focus of its local action in the AHEAD project. This choice should be interpreted in two ways: it consolidates and systematises the training initiatives implemented thus far and represents an opportunity to acquire new tools and methodologies for the future.

Another important element that has characterised the work of the Office in the last few years is its network approach, developed in two main directions: the local network (including the City Council's Piloting Group, the info points run by the wards, Turin Provincial Council and Piedmont Regional Council, the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board and the ISELT Coordination Board) and the national one, characterised by the RE.A.DY network (National Network of Public Administrations against Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity).

This experience was another decisive element of the LGBT Office's contribution to the AHEAD project. This can be seen both in the choice of partners involved on a local level, namely the Turin Provincial Council, the Piedmont Regional Council, and the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board, and in the methodology adopted, favouring the network approach and fostering a participatory process. This section describes how the networking approach of the LGBT Office has had a positive influence on local initiatives implemented as part of the European project (identifying target users, developing the process, sharing results).

1.2 The characteristics of the training activity

As previously described, the training initiatives implemented for the AHEAD project spring from the experience gained in recent years by the LGBT Office and the aim of acquiring specific know-how which can then be offered to other sectors. The training offered was therefore of an experimental nature, sparked a participatory process and created transferrable tools:

Experimental: with relation to the experience gained thus far by the LGBT Office, the training proposed included experimental elements, starting with

the definition of the process, up to the creation of training kits used during the trial.

Participatory process: each stage of the process sought a concerted approach. This enabled different points of view to be expressed, and the construction of objectives and strategies shared as much as possible by different subjects which each brought their own specific competences, responsibilities and resources to the table.

Transferable tools: the training enabled a series of tools in the kits to be trialled, tools that can be used again in different contexts. Naturally these tools, both in terms of contents and methodology, will require specific adaptations to suit the new setting they are used in.

1.3 Choosing target users

The groups to trial the training kits with were identified taking into account the training activities carried out by the LGBT Office before the AHEAD project, the areas involved thus far and the network approach that characterises its work. Another factor taken into account was that the European project would enable these training activities on LGBT issues to be extended to other, new areas of the Public Administration.

The AHEAD project defined four different areas: education, families, social inclusion and public space. According to these four areas four different groups of users were identified, starting from the needs expressed in the local area and gathered by the LGBT Office since it was established.

For the **Education** area the beneficiaries of the training were middle school teachers. Over the years the LGBT Office has implemented a number of initiatives aimed at fostering greater awareness among both teaching staff and students with regard to LGBT people and the causes of prejudice against them, with particular attention to the issue of homophobic bullying. Up to then the LGBT Office had only addressed secondary schools, and the AHEAD project provided an opportunity to extend training activities to teachers in middle schools, where there are increasing reports of homophobic bullying. The course was attended by teachers from the 'Via Sangone' middle school in Nichelino, a town in the greater Turin area. The group was joined by teachers from ITER (The Turin Institution for Responsible Education) from the Turin City Council, which carries out educational and training activities in schools.

For the **Families** area the training was given to staff of the Turin City Council's Centre for Relationships and Families. The Centre was set up in 2010 within the Social Services Division with the aim of fostering family wellbeing and preventing problems, attentive to the various kinds of relationships that characterise the modern family. The area of families, covering all the different types of families, has long been a key focus for the work of the LGBT Office, both in terms of the dynamics that arise in families between parents and homosexual sons/daughters, and with respect to homosexual parents. The training initiative involved all the staff of the

Centre with the aim of laying the foundations for an effective networking approach in the area. The Centre is indeed a point of reference and support not only for citizens but for all the services that work with families. The course was attended by staff with different qualifications and roles (front office staff, counsellors, executive personnel) who shared a basic training package.

In the **Social Inclusion** area the beneficiaries of the training were the equal opportunities personnel working in each of the Turin Provincial Council's fourteen Employment Centres. This group of people had already taken part in a training day organised by the LGBT Office in 2006, involving the Turin Pride Coordination Board. Following that, the Provincial Council asked to repeat the experience both as a refresher for those who had attended the first course and to extend the training to new equal opportunities personnel who had joined the Centres in the meantime. This further training opportunity aimed to foster the creation of an extended network of services in the local area dealing with access to work for homosexual and transgender people.

In the **Public Space** area the training involved operators from the Municipal Police under the Turin City Council, from the Community Police Unit and the Scientific Investigations and Technologies Unit. In 2007 the Municipal Police received training from the Equal Opportunities department on the theme of gender-related violence. On this occasion the training needs expressed by the Community Police Unit regarded both activities in schools and in the local area. For the former, training on homophobic bullying was requested, while the latter requested knowledge to use in conflict resolution. The involvement of the Scientific Investigations and Technologies Unit was motivated by the desire to acquire knowledge on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity for their work in the area and the identification of persons being detained.

2.1 The stages of the process

As previously mentioned, the aim of the local action of the AHEAD project was to create and trial innovative, transferable training models. This was accomplished by means of a structured process, as described below.

The process involved three successive stages accomplished by three work groups. The complexity of the process meant that the different stages had to be coordinated and monitored by the LGBT Office.

Work was done both individually and in groups, with opportunities to interface.

The three work groups were:

- the methodology group: comprising three experts in the field of training methodology;
- the design group: comprising four experts on LGBT issues with specific competences in the field of training;
- the Training Group: comprising 10 trainers/volunteers from the Training Group of the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board.

Each group had a specific mandate:

- During the first stage the methodology group had the task of drawing up methodological guidelines for the creation of the innovative, transferable training kits. Once formulated, the guidelines were presented and imparted during a meeting with the design group appointed to prepare the training kits (*May – June 2010*).
- During the second stage the design group, following the methodological guidelines, had the task of preparing the training kits to trial with the four groups of users. To identify training needs the designers involved both the stakeholders (representatives of the bodies and associations that interact with the services involved in the training), and the end users. Once created, the four kits were presented during two training days to the group of trainers appointed to trial them in the classroom (*June 2010 – January 2011*).
- In the third stage the Training Group had the task of trialling the four training kits in the classroom setting with the four groups of users. Following the trial there was an assessment meeting between the trainers and the designers. According to the observations which emerged in that meeting, the designers made the necessary changes to the kits. A final assessment meeting was then arranged between the representatives of the attendees, the trainers, the observers from the LGBT Office and the methodology assessment expert (*November 2010 – February 2011*).

After the assessment of the training kits the LGBT Office decided to source audio visual materials that could be used in the teaching context, integrating

those present in the kits. This task, with the aim of creating a reference video/filmography, was entrusted to an expert in film and audio visual materials with training competences and knowledge of LGBT issues.

The entire process, from the needs analysis to the classroom trial, was assessed by a methodologist specialised in assessment. For this activity a series of questionnaires and forms were drawn up and used and a number of meetings were held (*June 2010 – February 2011*).

The entire process was accomplished with the collaboration of the following people, coordinated by the LGBT Office:

<i>LGBT Office</i>	Roberto Emprin, Adele Calabrese, Luca Cipriani, Antonella D'Annibale, Barbara Posa, Eufemio Gianluca Truppa.
<i>Process configuration</i>	Roberto Ceschina.
<i>Methodologists</i>	Federico Batini, Mario Castoldi, Bernardetta Gallus.
<i>Designers</i>	Margherita Graglia, Luca Pietrantoni, Gabriele Prati, Barbara Santoni.
<i>Trainers</i>	The Training Group of the GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board: Filippo Alossa, Monica Bacciolo, Marco Giusta, Denise Magliano, Riche Merighi, Maurizio Nicolazzo, Achille Schiavone, Roberta Porqueddu, Cristina Torazza, Valentina Violino.
<i>Observers</i>	Liliana Ellena, Eleonora Garosi, Luca Rollè.
<i>Assessment</i>	Mario Castoldi.
<i>Filmography research</i>	Riche Merighi.
<i>Project coordination</i>	Director of the Equal Opportunities, Gender and City Time Policies Department: Susanna Rorato – Mariangela De Piano.

2.2 The methodological guidelines

The methodological guidelines were the result of analysis and research work that set out to draw up a set of recommendations for creating the training kits. The professionals involved and the LGBT Office interfaced on this work with the aim of offering the necessary information for creating the kits.

The guidelines are available online on the LGBT Office website but we feel it is opportune to present various parts of them in this paper, to give an idea of the indications the methodologists suggested and shared with the designers for creating the kits. In particular we include:

- the basic principles of the training approach;
- the process of designing the training modules;

- the minimum contents to take into consideration when formulating the training kits.

The basic principles of the training approach, as put forward in the guidelines, are the following:

Ethically oriented training: the point of departure is the principle of acceptance of any sexual orientation or behaviour that respects others, and this is taken as a non-negotiable value. The training must be capable of propagating a culture of diversity (acceptance and respect) based on respecting the diverging opinions on this value.

Rethinking value systems: the training experience aims to be an opportunity not so much to implement type 1¹⁹ changes in the social operators involved (changing professional practices, introducing procedural or instrumental changes, managing new contents, ...), but to elicit type 2 changes, based on revisiting value assumptions, professional routines and implicit cultural and operative assumptions. This focus should not regard only the users but also the value systems of the trainers, with particular attention to recognising and overcoming any interiorised homophobia in the trainers.

Positive anthropology: the training should be based on positive anthropology, a viewpoint for which diversity is an asset and people have their own resources to change and actively manage their own lives. The training must be confident and inspire confidence, therefore it is also optimistic about its own goals, while still anchored to reality. Epistemological references prioritise an approach based on humanising pedagogy (Morin 1973; 1986; 1999), focusing on the concept of comprehension/knowledge of the human identity.

'Warm' training tools: the training must be designed to have a 'warm' approach, offering space and containment for the emotions and feelings that the issues related to sexual identity raise, including planning specific opportunities for self expression.

Inductive, inferential learning: training based on the direct experience of the attendees, including tools designed to explicitly value that experience, with the possibility to construct values and meanings from narrative inputs.

Democratic learning: training that uses comprehensible language and explains all specialised terminology, using original techniques to reinforce the culture (for example: the cards explaining the terminology were made like an actual deck of cards, and aesthetically pleasing. A set was given to each participant.)

Centrality of participants: training based on the empowerment of participants, with the awareness that the care and acceptance of others and their opinions and beliefs represents the basis of a training project with these aims (dialogue, respect, openness, comprehension ... and adopting competent behaviours with respect to the different roles involved). Training capable of accepting all emotions but not justifying all behaviours, and capable of distinguishing between the two.

Integrating professional skills: the training experience should offer those involved the opportunity to interface with different social roles and

19. For the theory of change cfr. Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch (1974).

professional profiles, with the aim of expanding participants' points of view, putting them into context and interacting with different perspectives.

Revisiting personal experience: the starting point for individually and collectively processing the issues involved in the training initiative is that of revisiting, valuing and comparing individual experiences on a personal and professional level, and other 'stories' that can be used as input, as paradigmatic examples, as mediated experiences, as situations to analyse, as repertoires of meaning for participants' own experiences.

Stimulating reflections: the training experience intends to elicit a revisitation of individuals' professional experiences, fostering greater awareness of the implicit meanings and dimensions of participants' professional practices.

Transferability: the format of the project and the training materials involved are designed to be a transferable, adaptable model (albeit with the due modifications to some tools) for use in different contexts, with reference to the four target areas identified in the project (education, families, social inclusion and public space).

Self regulation according to the context: the configuration of the project and the related kit of training materials offers a set of tools (regarding the needs analysis and previous experiences, the training tools used, ongoing monitoring, assessment of the process and results) which ensure the project can be adapted to the specific setting it is implemented in.

Role-oriented: the training experience must relate to the characteristics and priorities of the individual professional roles, starting from an in-depth analysis of the training needs of the participants, the organisers and the stakeholders of the local services involved in the project.

A variety of communication strategies: the training materials must be characterised by a variety of mediators and languages used, with the aim of respecting different learning styles and fostering interaction with the various dimensions of the subjects involved (the cognitive, social and emotive dimensions).

As well as establishing the basic principles of the training initiative, the guidelines analysed and put forward a **design process** based on five stages. The stages are as follows:

- **analysis of training needs** carried out with the representatives of the group involved in the training, the end users and the stakeholders;
- **general planning** of training activities;
- **specific planning** of training activities, with details of contents, methods and organisational aspects;
- **implementation/delivery** of the specific training activities with the participants;
- **assessment of results**, comparing them with the needs/problems previously gathered and the objectives indicated, and if necessary reviewing subsequent training initiatives.

The guidelines formulated by the methodologists also established the **minimum essential contents** to be taken into consideration when creating the training kits. These were as follows:

Pre-contents: information gathering

Gathering knowledge and misconceptions regarding LGBT issues, including by means of activities and games. It is necessary to separate knowledge and feelings, emotions and behaviours.

Introduction to basic concepts

Gender, gender differences, gender stereotypes: experimenting through activities of attribution, description, interpretation.

Homosexuality and cultural stereotypes. Transsexualism and cultural stereotypes. The aforementioned issues require an understanding of the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism.

Sexuality and the minimum knowledge necessary. Acquiring and sharing scientific definitions through various activities, readings and exercises to assimilate the definitions into a set of interiorised knowledge.

Developing basic concepts

Historical exploration of the issues: LGBT issues have not always been handled in the same way, and there are significant differences in both geographical and historic terms.

Presence, lifestyle and social attitude towards homosexuality and transgenderism in Italy over the last fifty years. Homophobia and transphobia: constructs to explain them and their presence in society. The new models of family and the achievements of research.

Key contents

The construction of sexual identity in individuals. Explanations of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. The dynamics of prejudice and discrimination in society, in the workplace and in schools in particular.

Specific contents

According to what emerged for each target group at the stage of gathering and analysing needs, these specific contents refer above all to concrete situations, approaches to interpersonal relations in different social and professional contexts, the resolution of potentially 'delicate' or 'typical' situations, and procedures (such as case studies, critical incidents, problematic cases and role play), arriving at the operative tools that the attendees will deploy.

The aforementioned contents were imparted to the designers creating the training kits.

2.3 Designing the kits

2.3.1 From needs analysis to general and specific planning

According to the methodological guidelines, during the process particular importance was devoted to the analysis of training needs, which was implemented as a genuine research activity.

The analysis of training needs took account of both the structural characteristics and internal and external dynamics of the services involved and the needs expressed by participants in terms of knowledge, competences and motivations.

The analysis was therefore carried out in two different stages:

- Analysis of the organisational context, involving the representatives of the participants (service managers) and the stakeholders (representatives of bodies and associations that interact with the services receiving the training).
- Analysis of the attendees of the training initiative (personnel of the services in question).

These two stages had the aim of identifying the general objectives (general planning) and the specific objectives (specific planning) of the training.

With regards to the first stage the following tools were used:

- A questionnaire was completed by the representatives of each service using the training: each manager filled in a questionnaire about training needs in terms of both the demands of the service and those of the staff.
- Focus groups were organised with the stakeholders, one for each service involved in the training. The focus groups, which were conducted by the trainers appointed to design the kits, aimed to analyse the needs of each service in relation to the context they operate in.

Also present during the focus groups were three external observers specialised in the specific issues addressed by the project (gender, gender identity, homophobia and transphobia). Their task was to analyse how these issues were tackled in the discussions and offer further elements of reflection to the training designers. These observers were also present at the meetings to assess the kits and the training.

With regards to the second stage, a questionnaire was given to each participant. The questionnaires (prepared by the designers for each group of participants according to the methodological guidelines) analysed the knowledge, competences, previous professional experiences and training needs with regard to LGBT issues.

Starting from the organisational contexts, the training designers formulated four general plans. The general plan represents the overall set of training actions to be delivered in a given period of time in a given setting.

According to the needs that emerged, each of these four general plans defined the purposes, objectives, teaching method, module organisation and duration of the training programme. They also indicated the systems to use for monitoring the process and assessing the results and described the characteristics required by the trainers.

The general objectives, common to all four training programmes, can be summarised as follows:

- To recognise and comprehend the ways in which stereotypes and prejudices form, in order to prevent discriminatory attitudes and behaviours towards LGBT people.
- To acquire knowledge on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, taking account of both gender differences and multicultural aspects.
- To acquire professional skills and operative tools to manage relationships with LGBT users effectively.
- To be familiar with the LGBT resources in the local area and be capable of helping citizens to use them, fostering networking.

Each of these general objectives was then split into a series of specific objectives linked to the target users and settings in question. According to these objectives, the four training models were designed, with four four-hour modules, for a total of 16 hours of training.

Starting from the general plans the designers then worked on the specific plans, outlining the concrete actions to implement, indicating the contents, methodology, didactic tools, result indicators and assessment modality for each specific objective. The specific plans formed the basis for creating the four training kits.

2.3.2 The training kits

The four training kits were designed around a common structure, comprising a series of slides accompanied with notes for the trainer. Slides make for easy and immediate usage, and the trainer can use the slides in the kit directly in the classroom.

The kits contain two different types of slides:

- Slides with contents, with information on the issues in question, accompanied with explanatory notes;
- Slides with ideas for exercises, where the group has to take an active role, accompanied with notes on methodology (the exercises can take the form of a simple question that the group is invited to answer, or more complex activities, such as role play, for example).

Each kit also features a series of supplementary materials:

- Course notes which tackle various themes and which can also be made available to participants;
- Information sheets for the exercises with information and material to help carry them out.

As previously mentioned, each kit is made up of four modules. The first two modules, apart from various differences, are common to all the kits and cover the following basic areas:

Module 1: **Homophobia and transphobia**

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. Homophobia and transphobia. Social representations. Reducing homophobia.

Module 2: **The formation of the sexual identity**

The components of the sexual identity. Biological sex and intersexuality. The formation of gender identity. Transsexualism and transgenderism. Sexual orientation. Interiorised homophobia.

The third and fourth modules vary according to the group in question and tackle specific themes linked to that context.

Middle schools

Module 3: **Gender stereotypes and sexual identities at school**

The multicultural perspective on gender. Gender stereotypes. The pressure to conform and the dynamics of discrimination. Tackling homophobia. Coming out. The family environment. Interfacing with families.

Module 4: **Homophobic bullying and strategies for intervening**

The definition of bullying and homophobic bullying. Prevention and intervention strategies. Local area resources.

The Centre for Relationships and Families

Module 3: **The experience of couples and families**

Coming out. Why people choose to come out or not. Having an LGBT person in the family. Homosexual relationships and couples. Homosexual parenting.

Module 4: **Good professional practices**

Working with LGBT users and their families. Local resources.

The Employment Centres

Module 3: **The experiences of LGBT people in the world of work**

Coming out. The assumption of heterosexuality. Problems in the workplace.

Module 4: **Good professional practices**

Italian and European norms regarding work. Local resources. Networking.

Municipal Police

Module 3: **Relating to victims of homophobia and transphobia**

Homophobic and transphobic violence. Homophobic bullying in schools. Victim blaming.

Module 4: **Good professional practices in cases of homophobia and transphobia**

Preventing homophobic bullying. Intervening in situations of prejudice and discrimination. Local resources. Networking.

The contents of the training kits, as the designers underline in the introduction to their work, should not be viewed as a rigid syllabus, but rather a proposed training approach. It is up to the trainer, according to the setting in question, the objectives, the time available and the number of participants, to prepare his or her own programme and select the material he or she believes will be useful. In this sense the kit should be seen as a 'tool box' to draw on according to the training needs in question. To do this, the trainer can use the index at the start of the kit, which divides the slides into themes. The index deliberately does not provide a timing schedule, which is left up to the trainer to determine.

2.4 The trial

After the four training kits were created and checked over by the designers and methodologists, the trials began with the four groups of users in November 2010. The trials had two objectives. The first was to test the training kits 'in the field' to assess their efficacy, in order to make integrations and adaptations at the end of the trial. This was the purpose of the assessment meeting arranged between the group of designers and the group of trainers who delivered the training in the classroom. The second objective was to deliver experimental training to users in new settings or who had long needed more information on LGBT issues.

This enabled the LGBT Office to combine the need to trial the kits with that of continuing to deliver training, thus remaining in line with one of the Office's main missions.

Once the objectives of the trial had been identified, the question of who should manage the trial directly in the classroom arose. It was clear that it had to be someone different from both the group of methodologists and that of the designers, to ensure that the transferability and applicability of the programme would be effectively assessed by others. While groups of users had been selected for the trial right from the beginning of the project, the same could not be said of the trainers who were to deliver the training in the classroom. In this regard it proved useful to return to the methodological guidelines. The methodologists had indeed outlined the profile of the trainer suitable for the trial: in other words the competences and knowledge required. In the light of these indications the LGBT Office turned to the Training Group of the Turin Pride Coordination Board which, in the local setting, best fulfilled the criteria established by the methodological guidelines. According to the methodologists the trainers suitable to handle the programmes outlined in the kits had to possess two different competences: classroom management skills and familiarity with LGBT issues. Given that the kits are experimental, a training course for trainers from the Turin Pride Coordination Board was organised and delivered by the group of designers to ensure that the objectives and methodology of the kits were clear.

The schedule of the four experimental training programmes was determined, taking account of both the general and specific planning and the organisational aspects of the individual groups of participants. This is why there are evident differences between the organisation of the four training programmes. For one group in particular it was not possible to follow the general indication of implementing the trial in 16 hours. Specifically:

- the course addressed at 13 teachers from the 'Via Sangone' middle school in Nichelino and 4 teachers from the ITER Centre of Culture for Citizenship Education was delivered in four afternoon sessions of four hours each (sixteen hours in total);
- the course addressed at 19 staff members and counsellors at the Turin City Council Centre for Relationships and Families was delivered in four morning sessions of four hours each (sixteen hours in total);
- the course addressed at 18 equal opportunities contact people at the Turin Provincial Council's Centres for Employment was delivered in three afternoon sessions of three hours each and a one day session of seven hours (sixteen hours in total);
- the course addressed at 16 operators from the Municipal Police (12 from the Community Unit and 4 from the Scientific Investigations and Technologies Unit) was delivered in two seven hour sessions (fourteen hours in total).

With regards to participants, the four groups presented different characteristics due to the specific nature of the settings and types of organisation in question. One general principle provided in the

methodological guidelines was that among participants there were to be no relations of hierarchy, to ensure that they could work together freely and confidently. To ensure that the directors and managers of the four sectors involved in the training in November were also involved, the LGBT Office organised a training day for them in January 2011, once more with the involvement of the Training Group from the Turin Pride Coordination Board and using the information and tools from the four training kits.

With regards to the figures present in the classroom during the training apart from the trainers, all sessions of the four training programmes were attended by two representatives of the LGBT Office. The latter were there in the dual capacity of administrators and observers. The observation took place by means of a chart to compile, which made it easier to identify the strong points and critical areas of each training session. This chart was also used to give positive and negative feedback to the trainers after each session, enabling them to make ongoing modifications or variations. The observation chart was one of the various tools used in the experimental training programmes. A series of questionnaires and forms were prepared for use during and after the four training programmes for a precise assessment of the results of the trial. Due to its broad, structured nature, this assessment will be examined in detail in this section.

3.1 The characteristics of the groups involved in the training

Each of the four groups had their own characteristics, which distinguished and conditioned the training programme. At the same time various differences in the methodological approach used by the trainers influenced the results of the training, capitalising on different aspects of the relationship between the group and the trainers.

In this paragraph we will attempt to underline the specific features of the different training programmes.

The training addressed at the **middle school** teachers was characterised by the participation of a homogeneous group, mostly teachers from the same school, albeit on three different premises.

The group quickly created a climate of openness, thanks in particular to some exercises which invited participants to reflect on their personal experiences. The quantity of contents in the kit to impart during each session did not however leave enough time for group discussion, as was often underlined by the teachers during the training and in the assessment questionnaires.

The interesting aspect of this course was the immediate operative fallout: as soon as the training ended the school applied to a call for applications published by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research to design initiatives aimed at reducing socio-relational problems, often at the root of phenomena of physical and psychological violence. The project put forward by the school and implemented by a group of teachers who had taken part in the training which aimed to tackle homophobic bullying. Also involved in the project were a pre-school, a primary school and a technical school, thus involving pupils from the ages of 5 to 19. The LGBT Office was the partner in this project, while the training was managed by LGBT associations and others.

The training addressed at the **Centre for Relationships and Families** involved all the staff of the service: both in educational and administrative roles, from external consultants to reception personnel. This was therefore a heterogeneous group of people with different cultural and professional backgrounds. The differences in participants' qualifications did not negatively influence the outcome of the training, and the 'knowledge' of the consultants was sometimes used to offer more information on specific contents.

Key terms like 'participation', 'discussion' and 'sharing' emerged in the observations of participants after each session, confirming the need for group discussion opportunities.

One interesting aspect regarded how the sessions were conducted, namely the capacity of one of the trainers to use references to his own personal experience to illustrate various situations in the life of a homosexual person

(coming out, relationships with family members, parenting). This attitude undoubtedly contributed to creating an atmosphere of empathy in the group, fostering the sharing of personal viewpoints.

At the assessment stage this retrieval of personal experience in the training context was held to be one of the strong points of the course. As one of the participants underlined, it encouraged both the trainers and the participants to put themselves on the line, enabling a critical interpretation of personal experiences.

The equal opportunities contact people from the **Turin Provincial Council's Centres for Employment** are part of an existing network that has been in operation since November 2004. They have therefore been working together on common projects for some time, and this was a crucial factor in facilitating discussion during the training programme. Right from the start many of these staff members expressed the wish to call their own personal beliefs into question in order to review professional behaviours. One of the most involving parts of the training programme was the account given by a transgender person. This indeed enabled the participants to get involved both on a personal and emotive level, as well as a professional level, because it was an opportunity to enter into contact with a transgender person, hear about her life experiences and ask questions about problems encountered in the workplace.

One final but important aspect that emerged during the training with this group, thanks to the role that they play in the Centres for Employment, was the opportunity to circulate the training received through the AHEAD project, effectively multiplying the training imparted.

With regards to the **Municipal Police**, while the group comprised different operative units with their own specialities (the Community Unit and the Scientific Investigations and Technologies Unit), it was actually homogeneous.

Unlike the other groups the training was carried out in two full day sessions: this arrangement created an atmosphere of empathy that meant the issues could be tackled in a friendly setting.

Other aspects which were rated positively were the choice of trainers from the Training Group of the Turin Pride Coordination Board and the personal accounts given during the last day of training. These direct accounts were undoubtedly an added value which enabled participants, starting from an analysis of personal experience, to review their experiences in the professional arena. Another important aspect regarded the pointers gathered for new initiatives: these included the wish to offer training to management and the administrative staff of the Municipal Police in order to ensure effective fallout in the organisation. As well as providing training to higher levels of personnel, the intention is to use the trained operators to convey the information and circulate the contents among their colleagues, and to create a specific training module on LGBT issues to include in the training courses for new recruits.

3.2 Reviewing the kits

At the end of December 2010, following the classroom trials of the training kits with the target groups, an assessment meeting was arranged, attended by the four designers who created the kits, the trainers who trialled it in the classroom, the training assessor and the personnel of the LGBT Office.

This meeting was an opportunity to gather suggestions for reviewing the training programmes, starting by turning the kits into 'tool boxes' of 'semi-finished' materials that can be used to create training programmes that can be adapted to:

- the setting (time, space, and structure of the sessions);
- the characteristics of the users, both in terms of their professional role and level of awareness of the issues regarding different sexual identities;
- the 'personality' of the trainers, in terms of both their experience/knowledge and in relation to critical methodological and didactic areas.

Also in view of the time available, it was agreed there should be a review of the four training 'packages', with a view to creating a modular product comprising a set of stand-alone units regarding individual issues that can be assembled and adapted in relation to the specific setting. This had a number of consequences:

- the creation of an introduction describing and explaining the reasons behind the structure of the package;
- toning down the specific indications on the training programme (the timing of the sessions, for example);
- drawing up a list of the units developed;
- planning the units with an introduction that recalls direct experience (with an account of a case, personal experience, analysis, retrieving experience, role play); a central section focussing on developing the contents; a conclusion focused on transferability into participants' professional settings (critical incidents, shared indications, analysis of an experience...).

In the context of this general review, the following specific indications emerged:

- to improve the methodological instructions for the exercises;
- to retrieve some 'cases' which emerged from the attendees;
- to propose activities/tools to monitor the level of awareness on the issue of respect for different sexual identities;
- to capitalise on opportunities for listening and discussion;
- to explore the themes of the module on professional practices in greater depth.

The course designers reviewed the training kits in the light of these indications and made the changes requested.

Once the kits had been assessed and reviewed, with the aim of creating a 'tool box' of training materials, it was decided to integrate the package with didactic tools in the shape of a reference video/filmography. This includes

Italian and foreign audiovisual materials, which can be used in Italy, regarding LGBT issues. Each film is accompanied with some basic information, a synopsis and some methodological indications for use in the teaching context. The documents are presented according to key words that reference the contents of the AHEAD project. The research work, currently in progress, will identify possible partners from the association sphere, the public administration and universities with a view to exchanging audiovisual materials for training initiatives.

20. This paragraph was written by Mario Castoldi, who handled the assessment of the training activities.

3.3 Assessment²⁰

In view of the aims of the project, oriented at creating training prototypes that can be reused in other contexts, particular attention was devoted to the assessment process, starting from a number of qualifying premises:

- a **plural** approach, exploring and comparing multiple points of view from which to observe the training experience;
- a **participatory** approach, involving the various subjects which took part in the training experience in different capacities;
- a **reflective** approach, exploiting the learning potential connected to processes of reflection on the experience in professional contexts.

With these characteristics in mind, the assessors identified key questions to structure the assessment process around, based on the main principles of the training initiative indicated in the methodological guidelines.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Ethically oriented training
Centrality of participants
Rethinking value systems
Integrating professional skills
Eliciting reflection
Positive anthropology
'Warm' training approach
Inductive and inferential training
Retrieving personal experience
Democratic training
Operative transferability
Self-regulation according to the context
Role-oriented

KEY QUESTIONS

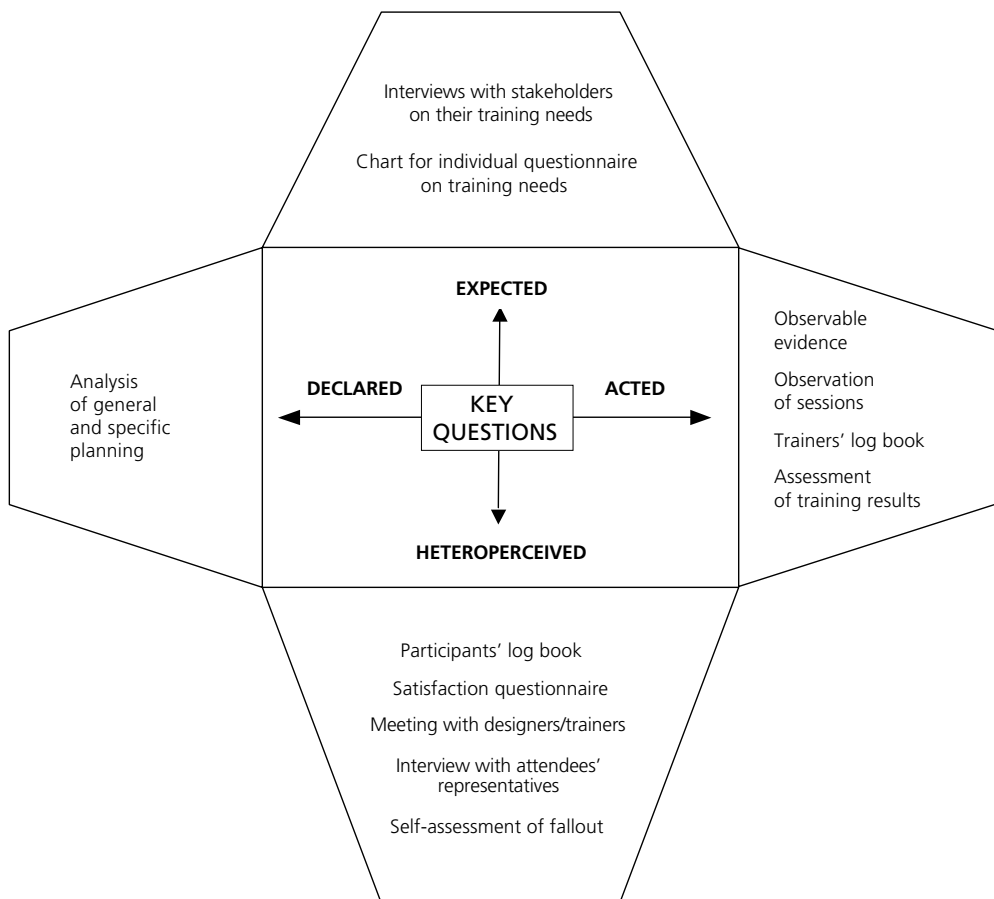
During the training experience were the various opinions present in the group respected and valued?
Did the training experience give you the opportunity to critically revisit your professional experience in relation to the issue of respect for different sexual identities?
Was the training experience an opportunity for participants to increase control over their choices and professional behaviours?
Was there the opportunity to express emotions and feelings with regard to issues of sexual identity?
Was participants' direct experience at the centre of the training activity?
Was the language used clear and accessible to all?
Were different communication codes and media used during the training experience?
Did the training experience take account of the characteristics of the operative context (professional roles, specific characteristics of the service, the setting...)?
To what extent were the training objectives achieved?
Is the training experience sustainable in terms of the resources deployed?
Did the training experience respond to participants' needs?

Starting from these key questions a set of tools were created, mapped along two axes:

- the horizontal axis of actual behaviours, on a spectrum from ideal (DECLARED) to real (ACTED);
- the vertical axis of representations, on a spectrum from ideal (EXPECTED) to real (HETEROPERCEIVED).

For each of the four emerging perspectives specific tools were formulated, and the consistency of these was guaranteed by reference to the key questions. The chart below shows the horizontal and vertical axes in the centre with the tools created and used during the assessment in the side boxes.²¹

21. The tools used during the assessment are part of the "Methodological guidelines" that can be consulted at: <http://www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/lgbt/>



The structure described was used for all four training programmes and ended with four conclusive assessment sessions in which many elements were summarised. Aside from the specific characteristics of the different programmes, various common lines of interpretation emerged that can be summarised in two distinctive traits common to all four training experiences: **the opportunity to raise personal awareness on the issues of respect for different sexual identities** and **the broad scope of the contents**. These two characteristics emerged frequently in the assessment sessions, with different accents and various rationales and proved to be ambivalent to the value of the training experience, highlighting both elements of interest and critical areas.

With regards to the first aspect, for example, strong points that emerged were the high level of emotive involvement elicited by the training experience and the change in attitude towards the issues dealt with in the training (these factors were always among the highest levels perceived by the users, varying between 76 and 88% in the four courses), highlighting the awareness-raising and emotive involvement achieved by the training.

Confirmation of this was the particular appreciation of direct accounts of LGBT people and the personal experiences presented by the trainers, who were also from an association background (these were frequently cited as strong points of the experience by attendees of all four courses).

On the other hand, weak points were identified as the low level of attention to the specific characteristics of professional roles in the contents of the training and most of the activities proposed, highlighting the need for a further level of training that goes beyond awareness-raising and focuses on formulating indications and operative materials that can be used to develop more suitable professional behaviours when it comes to respect for different sexual identities. This need emerged diversely in the four user groups, due to the diversity of professional roles and previous experiences with regard to these issues.

The following quotes from attendees, in response to the request to describe the most significant thing learned on the course, confirms the main trait of raising awareness of individuals in their own right, as men and women, over and above professional roles: *"relating theoretically and empathetically with the issues in question", "discovering your own openness and that of others", "the importance of awareness, sharing, pain and rebirth", "understanding how a judgmental/prejudiced approach negatively impacts others", "the importance of listening to the other person and using the right words", "less rigidity towards other sexual orientations", "accepting a person with a sexual orientation different from my own in a natural, confident way", "the normality that people express within their own most authentic identity"*.

With regards to the second aspect, the variety and rigour of the contents were appreciated, in terms of clarifying a set of key concepts and phenomena connected to sexual identity (the percentage of correct answers in the final test on the four courses ranged between 80 and 93%). On the other hand the density of the contents proposed and the direct/frontal angle of the training materials, presented using a series of slides, were identified as critical areas, due to not allowing a more in-depth personal exploration of many of the issues tackled. On a number of themes in particular, such as prejudices and stereotypes, attention was focused more on prevalent social representations rather than on participants' personal experiences, with the risk of being overly theoretical (the weak points mentioned included: *"too much of a focus on theory, when real situations in practice could still present serious problems", "it would have been useful to spend more time on this and have more time for discussion", "little consideration for professional backgrounds"*).

Many of the critical areas were linked to the structure of the training roles in the project, which was based on three stages – drawing up the guidelines, preparing the training kits and trialling the training – carried out by three different groups. Each group had to impart the results of its work to the next one in an approach based more on the separation of roles than continuity. While respecting the different competences that have to be deployed, it would be more opportune to foresee greater integration and more circularity between the various stages.

In particular the need to validate the training materials created, with a view to using them in different contexts, called for more time for the review and redesign stages. The results that emerged from the assessment highlighted a series of suggestions and proposals for improvements which would have enabled the methodologists and designers to review and perfect the guidelines and training kits; this was accomplished only in part due to the time constrictions on the different stages, and the fact that collaboration agreements focussed mainly on the initial planning stage.

With regards to indications for developing future initiatives, the assessment process brought forth many different ideas for redesigning the training activities. Beyond the specific contents tackled, it is a question of dealing with this material by means of: an initial stage that aims to retrieve participants' personal experience through an account, a case history or input which encourages them to retrieve or analyse their own experiences or express their own opinions; an intermediate stage focussed on systematising the elements that emerged and developing key concepts and essential contents; and a final stage oriented at ensuring the transferability of learning into participants' professional settings, by means of role play, analysing an experience, sharing various lines of action, etc. (the suggestions included: *"more personal experiences"*, *"creating opportunities for discussion"*, *"more game-based activities"*, *"experimenting and getting involved directly"*).

In particular it is a question of managing the fallout of the training in the various professional settings. This can be accomplished both by arranging opportunities to revisit the contents and designing actions to enable participants to pass on and disseminate the training experience, and by arranging further training and follow-up meetings at a later date, in agreement with the managers of the services concerned (suggestions included: *"extending the knowledge to colleagues"*, *"shorter refresher courses"*, *"keeping in touch with the trainers and the associations in the local area"*, *"a sort of supervision for cases"*). The focus on transferability was also fostered by the direct involvement of the service managers in the training activity, particularly appreciated in the experiences carried out.

In conclusion, the assessment of the four courses yielded multiple elements to reflect on and indications for improvements, which can be used not only to validate and redefine the training prototypes formulated for the project, but also to boost the know-how of the Turin City Council LGBT Office when it comes to designing, delivering and assessing training activities. This is a highly significant outcome, in so far as it has given the staff of the Office the experience of managing a complex training project, from the design to the assessment stage. Indirect appreciation for all the work carried out came from the services involved in the training, representatives of which were involved at all stages of the project: their active and proactive participation demonstrated their appreciation of the project and the professional manner in which it was implemented. Beyond the results of the individual training experiences and the materials produced, the AHEAD project has enabled the LGBT Office to raise the bar in terms of training initiatives, according to the principles of professional competence and integrating resources and services.

3.4 The legacy of the AHEAD project

To conclude this chapter we would like to dedicate a final section to the most significant results of the AHEAD project for the LGBT Office.

The first is the process of creating the kits and training programmes. From now on the LGBT Office will be able to approach its training activities with greater knowledge of the methodology involved in designing training activities, and with a wealth of tools (for needs analysis, general and specific planning, and assessing results) derived from the work carried out on the AHEAD project. In other words this should be viewed as an asset that will positively impact the future training activities of the LGBT Office. The second result regards the four training kits. These represent an important training tool both for operators who wish to tackle LGBT themes in one of the four areas handled by the kits, and for the future work of the LGBT Office. It should be noted that the kits as they presently stand should be viewed as a rich but perfectible resource, namely that they can be enhanced or adapted by observations and integrations from any operators wishing to use them after the trial conducted as part of the AHEAD project. As previously mentioned, the kits should be treated flexibly, as 'tool boxes' to draw on entirely or in part, which can be varied and adapted to the contexts they are used in.

The third result regards the broadening of the networks of the LGBT Office. As often underlined, the networking approach of the LGBT Office has long characterised its activities and therefore also its local action on the AHEAD project. The project itself was an opportunity to strengthen, broaden and create networks. For example the network of collaboration with other local bodies (the Turin Provincial Council and the Piedmont Regional Council) and with local LGBT associations. Thanks to the focus groups with stakeholders, the network of contacts with employers' associations, trade union representatives, school-related associations (associations of parents, teachers and head teachers) and representatives of the city health office, has been extended. Starting from this project, new networks are also being constructed. It is indeed no coincidence that the Turin charity Fondazione Carlo Molo Onlus will be staging specific events to foster the inclusion of transsexual and transgender people in the world of work. To do this it will use the network of contacts created by the LGBT Office for the focus groups carried out in June regarding the kit for equal opportunities personnel in the Employment Centres. This represents an opportunity to create a new network of relationships starting from one of the networks forged in the context of the AHEAD project.

The fourth and final result regards the strengthening of the competences of the Turin Pride Coordination Board Training Group. The classroom trial of the kits represented a dual training opportunity for the group: on one side for the training received before the classroom trial and on the other for being able to access training kits defined in terms of methodology, information and tools to work with. The trial of the four training programmes was also an opportunity for the Training Group to be fully involved in a shared training project. This fostered internal dialogue, also

thanks to the observations made at the end of each classroom session, and led to overall growth in terms of the group's competences and homogeneity.

MATERIALS PUBLISHED

METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES

Analysis and research carried out to draw up a set of recommendations for the training kits.

TRAINING KITS

Tools for training on LGBT issues, comprising slides for classroom use, notes for the trainer, course notes and exercises.

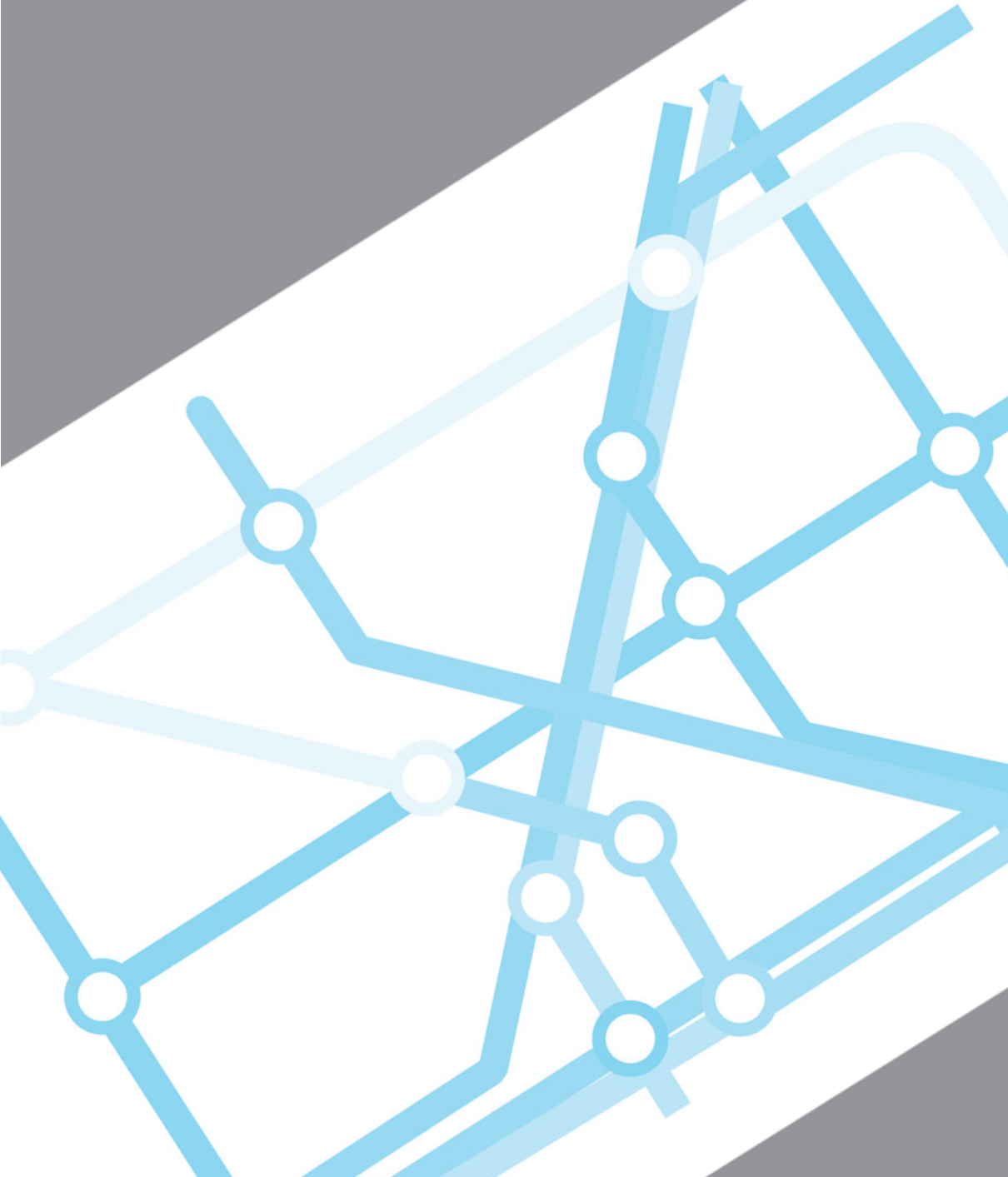
REFERENCE VIDEO/FILMOGRAPHY

A bibliography of audiovisual material that can be used in the classroom for teaching purposes, supplementing the training kits.

The material is available online at:

<http://www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/lgbt/ahead/>

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AHEAD Project

www.ahead-bcn.org

Project local Partners

Turin City Council
LGBT Office to overcome discrimination
on the grounds of sexual orientation
and gender identity
www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/

CIRSDe
Research Centre for Women's and Gender Studies
University of Turin
www.cirsde.unito.it

Piedmont Regional Authority
Equal Opportunities for All Unit
www.regione.piemonte.it/pariopportunita

Province of Turin
Equal Opportunities and Time-use Policies Sector
www.provincia.torino.it/pari_opportunita.htm

GLBT Turin Pride Coordination Board
www.torinopride.it

