

Step One: Dive in!

An activity to introduce the audience to an open discussion on Sexuality and Gender diversity issues.

Branch Out

Branch Out is the International Junior Branch project on the Content Area of the year of 2014 for CISV: Diversity. The project is composed by six steps that will be launched throughout the year, exploring different themes within the topic area of Diversity. Branch Out encourages participants to develop their perception towards their own identity and towards different communities.

In each step Branch Out will provide you with one ready-to-run educational activity and resources related to it.

Step One: Dive in!

Dive in! is the introductory step of Branch Out and aims to explore the topic of sexuality and gender diversity. While developing attitudes, skills and knowledge (ASKs) related to this specific topic within diversity, the activity also aims to explore it's relations with Human Rights - the Content Area of 2013.

Why should we discuss sexuality and gender diversity?

This issue is related not only to diversity but also human rights. The LGBT (abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered) community still doesn't have their rights respected in many countries. In addition, a lot of people don't feel comfortable talking about these issues. CISV appreciates the similarities between people and values their differences and also supports social justice and equality of opportunity for all. That's why Branch Out proposes to start the debate in 2014 by talking about sexuality and gender diversity.

The activity

Attitudes:

- Willingness to discuss and consider LGBT rights in relation to other human rights.
- Create interest on specific policies related to the LGBT people in their own country.
- Willingness to reflect on how homophobia happens in your own community and how it affects the LGBT individuals.
- Willingness to run future Branch Out steps throughout the year.

Skills:

- The ability to relate Human Rights to Diversity.
- The ability to create a positive and respectful environment to discuss topics related to sexuality and gender.
- The ability to connect Right On reflections in 2013 with this first step of Branch Out.
- The ability to differentiate and explain concepts related to Sexuality and Gender diversity.

Knowledge:

- Understanding of different concepts related to sexuality and gender diversity.
- Understanding of how countries differ on their policies towards the LGBT community.
- Understanding of how people have their rights violated due to their sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Understanding of common problems faced by those in the LGBT community.

Requirement:

- **Materials** (all included throughout the explanation): printed maps and profiles, printed/handwritten debriefing questions, blank posters (the quantity depends on the number of participants), colored pencils and pens.
- **Time:** 90 - 120 minutes
- **Number of participants:** 8 - 40

Do:

1. Introduction

This part is an introduction in order to guarantee that all participants will know all the sexuality and gender concepts that will be used throughout the activity. You should set a table with 10 empty slots (2x5) and write the following five terms: *(The table could be made by drawing on the floor, with pieces of tape on the wall or any other way.)*

LGBT	
Homophobia	
Biological Sex	
Sexual Orientation	
Gender Identity	

The participants are then encouraged to pair up the different terms with their corresponding meaning. It is important that the planning group knows the correct relations between terms and meanings in advance, so it can help the participants to get the right relations. This is what the table should look like, in the end:

LGBT	<i>Abbreviation: lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (Oxford dictionary)</i>
Homophobia	An extreme and irrational aversion to homosexuality and homosexual people <i>(Oxford dictionary)</i>
Biological Sex	Based on a person's biological status, such as sexual chromosomes, genitalia and other organs. Usually categorized as Male, Female or Intersex.
Sexual Orientation	Is related to a person's pattern of emotional and/or sexual attractions to men, women or both sexes. Usually categorized as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.
Gender Identity	Is related to the person's identity in relation to his/her biological sex. It can be categorized as cisgender or transgender, when it's opposed to the biological sex.

2. Sex and gender profiles

The participants are divided into groups of 4-6 people. Each group is given one piece of paper with a person's profile on it. (*Profiles can be found in the attachments.*)

Once the groups have one profile each, they get one sheet of paper, pens and coloured pencil.

Then, they are asked to draw that person and to create an image on how is that person's life, assuming that he/she lives in the same town/city as the participants do.

Reflect:

Participants then turn those previous sheets of papers around and find debriefing questions to discuss in the small groups. The questions could be (*feel free to add your own ones*):

- How is that character treated in school/job?
- Does he/she suffer from any kind of discrimination?
- Are there any specific policies towards that person?
- What kind of stereotypes do LGBT people have to live with?

After that, the groups change their places and leave their drawings for another group. While participants move, the facilitator of the activity must place the printed maps on each spot. Now, they face the profile that has been created by another group. (*The map can be found in the attachments.*)

The groups are now given new papers with a few more questions to discuss about. The questions could be (*feel free to add your own ones*):

- In what countries would that character be protected and in which ones they would not be protected?
- What are possible causes for homophobia and other forms of discrimination due to differences between individuals?
- Do LGBT individuals have their human rights violated in those cases?
- Does homophobia happen in places where LGBT Rights are legally assured? Why?

Generalize and Apply:

Facilitator now reads out loud: *“the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, from 1948, does not include specifics on Sexuality and Gender diversity. In 2008, the debate around LGBT rights was firstly presented by a group of countries, but many countries do not agree with having specific legislation to promote LGBT rights. In this case, do you think LGBT rights are human rights?”*

Here are some quotes from the two sides of the debate that could be read in order to start the discussion:

• “[We believe] that all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, should be able to enjoy their human rights. Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not explicitly mention sexual orientation or gender identity, evolving conceptions of international human rights law include a broad interpretation to include the rights and the protection of the rights of LGBT people around the world.”

— **Amnesty International, on their statement about LGBT Human Rights**
(<http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/issues/lgbt-rights/about-lgbt-human-rights>)

• “You have to remember, rights don’t come in groups. We shouldn’t have ‘gay rights’; rights come as individuals, and we wouldn’t have this major debate going on. It would be behavior that would count, not what person belongs to what group.”

— **Ron Paul (US politician from Texas)**

Attachments:

1) Profiles

1- girl, 23 years old
biological sex: male;
sexual orientation: homosexual;
gender identity: transgender

2- boy, 12 years old
biological sex: male;
sexual orientation: homosexual;
gender identity: cisgender

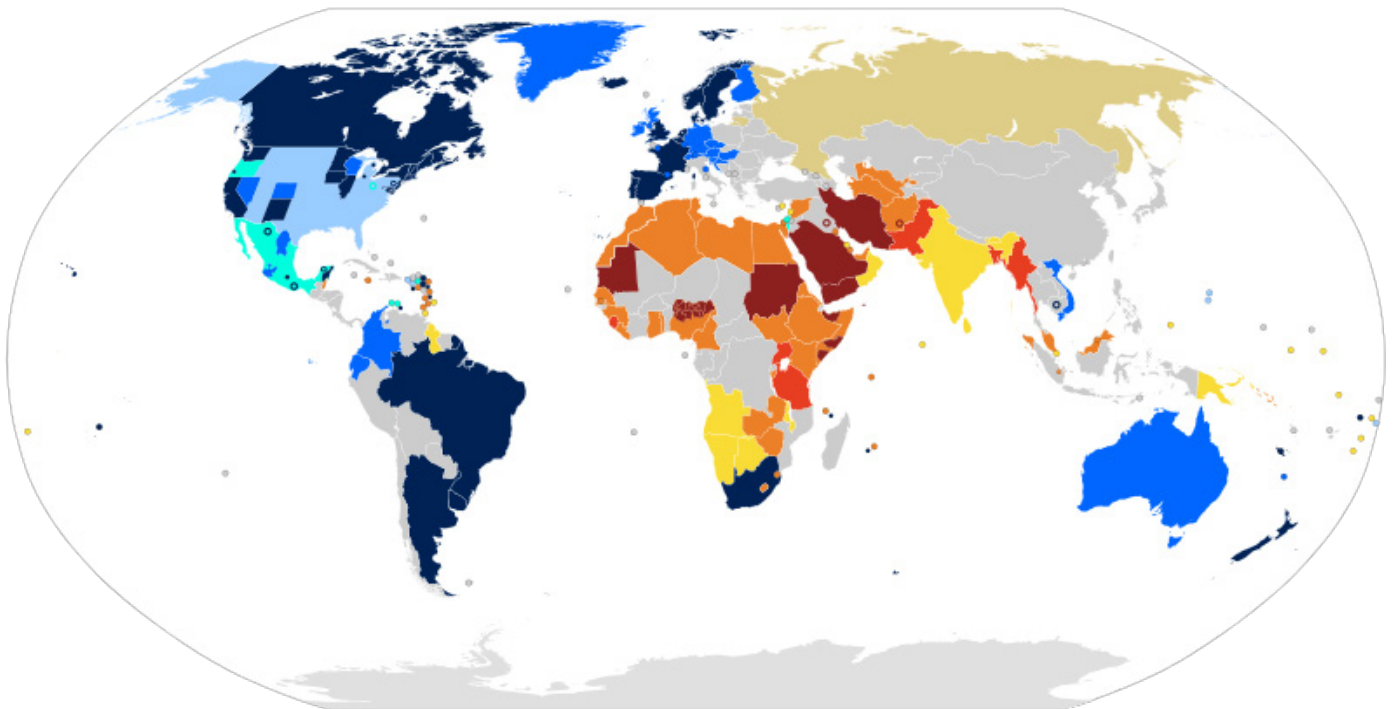
3- girl, 17 years old
biological sex: female;
sexual orientation: homosexual;
gender identity: cisgender

4- man, 40 years old
biological sex: male;
sexual orientation: homosexual;
gender identity: cisgender

5- girl, 4 years old
biological sex: male;
sexual orientation: heterosexual;
gender identity: transgender

6- woman, 35 years old
biological sex: male;
sexual orientation: heterosexual;
gender identity: transgender

2) This is a map on homosexuality laws in different countries.: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:World_homosexuality_laws.svg



Homosexuality legal

- Same-sex marriage¹
- Other type of partnership (or unregistered cohabitation)¹
- Foreign same-sex marriages recognized¹
- Limited recognition of same-sex marriages at the federal level, no state level recognition
- No recognition of same-sex couples

Homosexuality illegal/restrictions

- Laws restricting freedom of expression and association²
- De jure* penalty that is *de facto* not enforced
- Imprisonment
- Imprisonment (up to life sentence)
- Up to death

Rings indicate areas where local judges have granted marriage or imposed the death penalty in a country where that is not otherwise the law.

¹May include recent laws or court decisions which have created legal recognition of same-sex relationships, but which have not entered into effect yet

²Other countries with similar laws are shown in darker colours if they also criminalized same-sex relationships.

Tips for facilitators

Talking about sexuality in your JB may evoke quite a strong emotional response amongst participants. So as a facilitator you should try to prepare yourself and think about emotionally intelligent ways to work with participants' (and your own) feelings.

Some things you can do to prepare yourself:

- Together with one or two people who you trust, draw up a list of reactions that you think may come from participants.
- Analyse what emotions and values underlie these anticipated responses to topics such as homosexuality.
- Talk about and clarify your own opinions, values and emotions about these topics.
- Do some research and read up about those issues that you feel uncertain about and anticipated “hot topics”.
- Look at the goals and indicators of the step #1 activity and discuss how you can use your own (facilitator) and trainees' emotions to reach these goals

Adapt the activity to your needs

Feel free to make changes in the activity and to adapt it to the needs and specificities of your group!

Take pictures and share them with us

Branch Out is a global project. Let us know whenever you apply Branch Out in your chapter. Take pictures and share them with us through **branchout@ijb.cisv.org!**

Pictures will be posted in our facebook page, **facebook.com/branchout2014** and our tumblr, **branchout2014.tumblr.com**

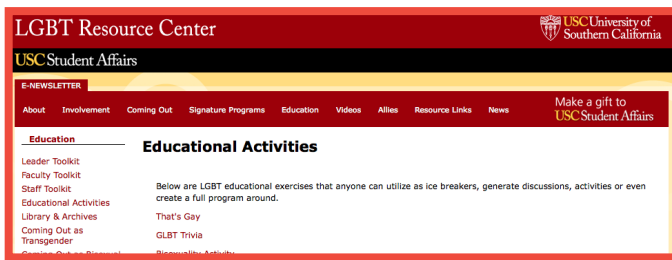
Introducing Branch Out

After the activity is over, remember to present Branch Out to the participants, so they can understand the educational purpose of the project, as well as to create interest on the next steps.

Feedback

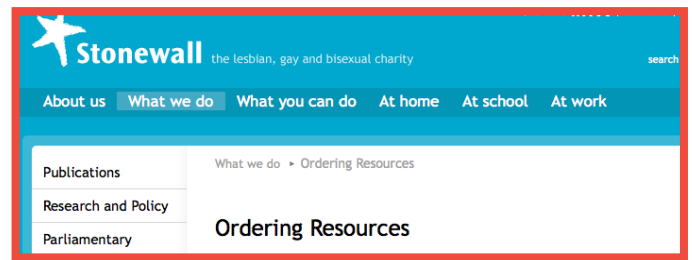
Get feedback from your participants and share your impressions with the Branch Out team! Send an e-mail to **branchout@ijb.cisv.org**

Further Reading



-> A collection of Educational Activities related to Sexuality and Gender diversity, by the University of Southern California

<http://sait.usc.edu/lgbt/education/educational-activities.aspx>



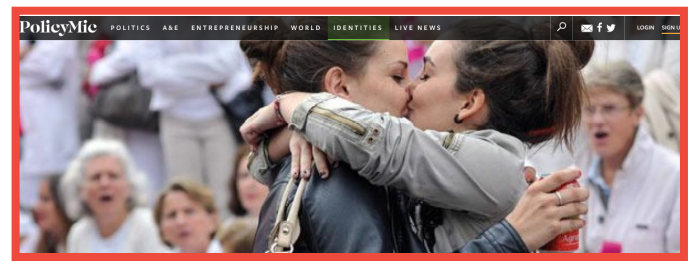
-> Online platform for LGBT Rights resources and events: Stonewall.

https://www.stonewall.org.uk/what_we_do/ordering_resources/default.asp



-> The website from the United Nations' campaign for LGBT Rights: Free & Equal. It contains a great collection of resources and news related to the theme.

<https://www.unfe.org/>



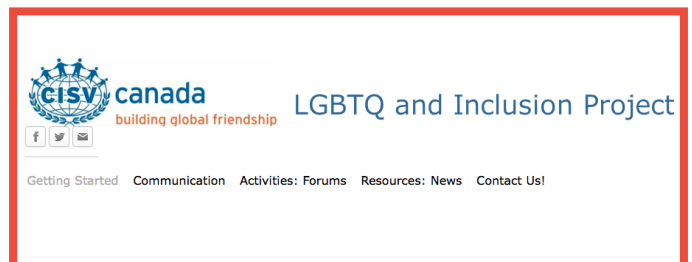
-> A collection of 46 moments in 2013 related to the promotion of LGBT Rights

<http://www.policymic.com/articles/76835/46-most-iconic-lgbt-moments-of-2013>



-> The CISV international blog on Diversity, by Rupert Friederichsen

<http://goo.gl/IFwIaQ>



-> A CISV Canada project on LGBTQ issues and inclusion

<http://cisvlgbtqandinclusion.weebly.com>

