

// LGBTI*-NEWS //



Intersectionality in text books

// Quality Criteria for Equality and Anti-Discrimination of sexual and gender diversity in text books and teaching materials. //

Text books are of special importance for the representation of social diversity and the prevention of discrimination in and through education. Not only do they impart knowledge but they also convey social values. Yet, time and again teachers note that especially with regard to depicting sexual and gender diversity and addressing different identities and lifestyles, teaching materials often show stereotype and discriminating descriptions. In many countries this does not correspond with legal guidelines of anti-discrimination laws, the General Act on Equal Treatment and educational legislation, which require the active promotion of equality and diversity.

In a context in which heterosexuality is the norm, the GEW works towards the recognition of diversity and difference so that lesbian, gay, trans* and inter* youth are not left to themselves in the difficult process of shaping their identities. This also holds for children of lesbian mothers and gay fathers, trans* or inter* parents or relatives, who should find themselves represented in text books.

Analyses of text books show that the sensitisation for various dimensions of inequality and discrimination could be improved. Books and materials should be designed to motivate students, to confidently oppose discrimination and offer concrete approaches.

The GEW's ambition is that text books, too, focus on diversity, equality and anti-discrimination. Quality criteria have been developed for this purpose. With these criteria we approach text book publishers and offer them as a basis for the professional qualification of staff members in text book publishing houses and to authors of text books.

We hereby present these quality criteria to the participants of the 8th EI World Congress in Bangkok.

Thank you!

Quality Criteria for Equality and Anti-Discrimination of sexual and gender diversity in text books and teaching materials:

- Language**
- Usage of gender-neutral forms and inclusive language
 - Avoidance of generalising statements about people, even if they seem simplifying at first (f.i. women/men are ...; instead: **some** women/men are ...)
 - Sensitive use of assigning terms (f.i. homosexuals love **differently**, the **normal** family model etc.)
 - Avoidance of discriminatory and hierarchical terms
- Illustrations**
- People will be depicted with different physical features (*f.i. age, skin colour, clothing, religious features etc., without stereotyping*)
 - Gender diversity will be depicted by ambiguously and unambiguously feminine or masculine figures
 - The figures will be depicted in manifold situations, beyond stereotyped roles (*f.i. men* in technical and educational professions*)
 - LGBTI* persons will be visible through self-imposed terms or contextualisation
 - Same-gender partnerships will be depicted with the same ordinariness as other forms of togetherness
 - Depicted families will show a diversity of family forms
 - Members of groups will not be depicted homogenously (f.i. homosexuality will not be equalled with 'white', 'male' and 'secular')
- Contextualisation**
- Casual thematisation of gender and sexual diversity in various contexts (*f.i. no biological "special theme"*)
 - Discriminated groups should be depicted in ways that allow positive identity options
 - Discriminated groups should not be depicted exclusively in the role of the victim (f.i. avoidance to mention only Jewish or homosexual persons in connection with their persecution and extermination during the Nazi era)
- Contents**
- Equal depiction of different types of sexuality and gender
 - Appreciative attitude towards diversity
 - Social construction of (binary) categories of difference and their contextual conditionality will be addressed (f.i. historical development and construction of gender, partnership, family and sexuality)
 - Social power structures and relations connected with binary categories will be revealed and pondered (f.i. male – dominant vs. not male – dominated)
 - Empowerment to self-efficacy and action ability of learners (*f.i. through information about human rights groups or legal backgrounds*)
 - Thematisation of emancipatory struggles for equality of different women's and gay movements
 - Depiction of existing diversity of functions of sexual activities (a.o. personal attachment, the need to feel coveted, but also social power relations and the use of violence etc. instead of sex as a "natural" act and the desire for procreation)
 - Open tasks offer – if topically possible – space for individual interpretation beyond existing standards.

Notes

LGBTI* stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* and inter* people

We use the asterisk "*" as a placeholder. Inter* and Trans* as nouns or adjectives are umbrella terms and comprise various forms and labels: Inter* is the German umbrella term for intersexuals, intersex persons, hermaphrodites,

intergender persons or persons who were born with a body that does not conform to standards and norms of male and female bodies. Trans* functions as a German umbrella term for transsexuals, transgender persons, transidenticals, transvestites and other persons who do not identify with the gender that they were assigned at birth, and also those persons who want to elude processes of gendering.