

GALE Report 2023

This is the 2023 GALE Report. This is the 17th year of GALE's existence and the 13th year as an independent Foundation.

Strategic context

In 2018 GALE revised her global strategy to focus on making Country Reports which review the education policies of States, and offering local partners assistance in making their own analysis, developing strategy and on capacity building on strategies and interventions. GALE intended to keep her focus on the education system and focuses on the development of World Reports, stimulating strategic committees, organizing conferences, quality development and benchmarking, cooperation on global politics, and capacity building (training and e-learning). However, the implementation of this strategy was dependent on available funding. Global funding turned out to be challenging to raise.

This forced the GALE foundation to focus on a few European projects. When in 2019 the possibility for co-financing for such projects through GALE's sister organization Edu-Diverse stopped, even doing European projects became financially challenging. The years 2020-2021 were also limited in scope because of the COVID-19 epidemic. It was attempted to forge a structural cooperation with another globally operating organization, like ILGA World, Outright Action International, Amnesty International or with UN organizations like UNICEF, but these attempts failed.

Summary 2023

In 2023, the GALE Foundation finished current projects. GALE was engaged in five projects: one global project, three European projects, and one Dutch project:

1. MAPPING: making policy reviews of the implementation of LGBTIQ+-inclusive education in States
2. UNIQUE: EqUal iNclusIon of LGBTIQ stUdents in VET (2021 - January 2023)
3. RAINBO: developing digital support for service providers who offer services to LGBTIQ+ in times of COVID-19 (2021 – May 2023)
4. MY-ID: LGBTIQ+ education program for high schools (2022-October 2023)

5. Training Dutch municipal health SCHOOL ADVISORS: Development of e-learning for Dutch local health authority school advisors on supporting schools during adoption of sexual education (2021 - 2024)

Projects

1. Mapping: development of a survey and the Netherlands

GALE continuously work on mapping to make policy reviews of the implementation of LGBTIQ+-inclusive education in States. Originally, GALE relied on outside sources for information to base the reviews on. This strategy was challenged by a lack of data, because research on LGBTIQ+ students uses widely different and not comparable questions, and often there is no relevant data at all. Existing surveys usually did not yield all the relevant data to cover the GALE Policy Checklist, or they tailored suited only for particular contexts. GALE-partners regularly asked for a survey they could hand out to collect data.

GALE worked on a survey with questions that were directly related to GALE policy criteria, could be used across countries in denying, ambiguous and supportive States, which had questions that were simply to understand across all types of students and could be translated in most (if not all) languages, which could be asked both to cisgender heterosexual and sexually and gender diverse students and which would be short enough to be filled in during one lesson of 50 minutes. This large number of quality criteria make it quite a challenge to develop such a questionnaire.

In 2013, a first version was developed by Signe Hawley. Although this survey was short and only used questions that were proven to be reliable, it did not cover all the criteria of the checklist.

In 2020, a second (long) version was developed and put forward to international experts. Based on their comments, GALE developed new long and short versions in early 2023, but it proved impossible to make one questionnaire covering all education sectors and ages. In late 2023, GALE developed a fourth short student version which focused only on high school experiences. In addition, the original GALE Policy Checklist was edited to link directly to the student questions and also made available as an online form.

With some financial support of an external donor, GALE embarked on mapping the situation in the Netherlands, including testing the new mapping survey. This had the advantage that the GALE director had been working on LGBTIQ+-inclusive education in the Netherlands for 40 years, giving him a unique and inside-view of educational politics and a good overview of the extensive research that already had been done. This allowed GALE to better understand the context and relations between the findings of the questionnaire data and the social and political context.

The research was done among 342 students in late 2023. The [report on this research](#) (in Dutch) was finished and dated in December but published in April 2024. The complete review, which also included the elaborate desk research, was also published in 2024 (*Great intentions but less implementation. A Review of the Implementation of the Right to Education for DESPOGI/LGBTIQ+ in the Netherlands in 2024*). As the title suggests, the review concluded that the Netherlands state great intentions and actually also implement a large number of interventions to promote LGBTIQ+-inclusion, but at the same time the more general neo-liberal laissez-faire policy mostly blocks real implementation of the intentions. The analysis in this review shows how LGBTIQ+-specific policy cannot be seen as separate or independent of more generic policies of a State. A true intersectional strategy to enhance the situation of LGBTIQ+-students needs to include a view and cooperation between the LHBTIQ+-movement and mainstream stakeholders to structurally change the general lack of quality of the system and the aggravated effects of these on (all) minorities).

2. Unique-project: Inclusion of LGBTIQ in VET

The Unique project (“EqUal iNcluslon of LGBTIQ stUdents in VET”) focuses on developing on training of VET (vocational education and training) teachers in Europe. This Erasmus+ KA3 project had 9 partners from Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, Cyprus, Croatia, Bulgaria and Germany. The project was implemented through 2021 until the end of January 2023.

The project undertook the following activities:

1. Mapping non-discriminatory educational strategies in VET, taking into account discrimination levels related with gender-based diversity in VET institutions
2. Developing face-to-face and e-learning training for VET teachers which promotes using gender-based diversity curricula

3. Pilot testing of the training material
4. A promotion campaign to advocate the use of the e-learning

The ambassadors were recruited, trained and supported to work in Greece, Poland, Cyprus and Croatia (not in the Netherlands). The role of GALE in this project was to coordinate the dissemination of the project and to organize the training of the ambassadors. In 2023, the final conference of the project was held in Greece and the final work for the project was wrapped up.

3. Rainbo project

The RAINBO project aimed to equip professionals in five Europe countries with the necessary resources as to be able to cope with the online technologies and social distancing to better serve the excluded LGBTQI population as a result of the new situation that emerged from COVID-19 crisis. This was an Erasmus+ KA2 project and it was coordinated by Career Change Wales and had another 6 partners: AKMI and Symplexis (Greece), NOVEL GROUP (Luxemburg), SPEL (Portugal), HIP (Romania) and GALE.

GALE had an important role in the needs analysis which included a global review of the available literature on LGBTIQ+ and COVID-19. This was published in 2022. GALE also wrote some of the modules for the online course. There were few activities for GALE in 2023 except the participation in the final conference in May in Cardiff.

4. My-ID in High Schools

“My-ID” was a project which aimed to integrate LGBTI issues in high schools, using the GALE “My-ID” methodology. The My-ID technology had been developed earlier in the Netherlands for vocational schools and taken to the EU level in the “SENSE” project. The “My-ID for high schools” project was an elaboration of the “My-ID” VET educating technology to the high school sector.

The “My-ID” method is based on an analysis of heteronormativity and evidence-grounded methods to educate in a way which really changes negative attitudes and the underlying negative emotions towards gender and sexual diversity.

The project employed three key strategies to support high schools in implementing the My-ID method:

1. Developing concrete classroom activities to integrate in a spiral curriculum
2. Training to empower teachers
3. Guidance on how to inform and cooperate with parents

The project ran from November 2021 until 1 November 2023 and was implemented by 10 partners: Hallgarten-Franchetti Foundation, study centre Villa Montesca (Italy, Città di Castello; coordinator), CESIE (Italy, Palermo), GALE (international, based in the Netherlands, Amsterdam), Iedersland College (Netherlands, Amsterdam), EUROTraining (Greece, Athens), Doukas College (Greece, Athens), DEFOIN (Spain, Málaga), Jaume Viladoms College (Spain, Sabadell), Scuola Alighieri Pascoli Città di Castello (Italy, associated partner), I.I.S. Liceo Città di Piero Sansepolcro (Italy, associated partner).

In 2023, the partners developed teacher guides to concrete classroom activities on sexual and gender diversity for use in different subjects. GALE developed a manual and a background reader for teacher training. The teacher training manual in this project did not prescribe a required training in detail, but it was a guide on how to develop a teacher training for a specific public of teachers. This was innovative, because most existing guides for teacher training about LGBTIQ+ issues of her standard formats that do not take the specific type of teachers and context into account. The partners trained their own teachers to be able to implement the classroom activities.

Finally, materials were developed for informing and cooperating with parents: a guide for schools on how to cooperate with parents, a model brochure that could be adapted by schools to hand out to parents of the students, and the short leaflet about sexual and gender diversity for parents in general.

The development of the resources for parents was challenged by different views on the content by the lead partner Villa Montesca and GALE. These competing views could not be reconciled within the partnership. The original draft guide for schools by Villa Montesca was an extremely elaborate text “defending” the right for sexual diversity to exist and to be respected, but it did not contain suggestions for schools or parents how to deal with organizational challenges or with adverse reactions. In addition, it referred to some outdated essentialist research on the development of same-sex attraction and lifestyle choices, while

there was little attention to (trans)gender diversity. Despite GALE's criticism, Villa Montesca maintained that this guide was the right text for the current social and political context in Italy (with an emerging populist right-wing government) and presumably also for the European context. GALE did not agree and felt compelled to develop its own version of a guide for schools. In addition, GALE developed draft versions of the other two resources which were more in line with the GALE view and with recent research. Ultimately, the lead partner Villa Montesca decided that their original guide would be presented to the (Italian) Erasmus+ authority as the official product of the project, and at the same time agreed that the other draft products by GALE would be adopted as official products. GALE did not publish the official guide for schools on its website, because despite some improvements, it still could not agree with the final version of the product. [Read here more about the guides.](#)

5. Training Health Authorities Advising on Sex Education

The Dutch government initiated a large program to train local health authority advisors on how to approach and advise schools to adopt and implement sexual education. The project ran from 2020-2022 and has been extended to 2023-2024. GALE was invited to participate because of its extensive expertise on implementation of sensitive attention to sexual diversity in schools. The main focus of the project is to develop e-learning and online and life exchanges and specialist workshops.

In 2022, GALE developed "specialist" online training modules on sexual and gender diversity and on organizational school change to gradually integrate sex education in schools, as well as a guide for adoption and routinizing sex education in schools. This guide – based on an earlier GALE Consultancy Guide - became an official Dutch national Health Authorities guideline on how to coach schools for gradual implementation of integration of sexual education.

In 2023, the GALE Consultancy Guide (which was LGBTIQ+ specific) was reviewed based on the Health Authorities version and published as a chapter in the [My-ID Teacher Training Reader](#). This guide is innovative because until then, implementation of inclusion of attention for sexual and gender diversity in schools was considered to be a question of products and interventions but not as a process of attitudinal and organizational change. The GALE Consultancy Guide changed this perspective by integrating generic research on

organizational change with LG BTIQ+-specific aspects and concrete experiences with inclusion of gender and sexual diversity in schools.

Despite a contract, due to internal project delays, GALE was not scheduled for more work on strengthening the online trainings and making the ongoing implementation of the project more sustainable. It is planned to proceed on this in 2025.

Other activities

GALE participated as speaker in several real life and online discussions:

1. 12 May 2023: participation in a panel discussion during the final conference of UNIQUE (Brussels, BE)
2. 19 May 2023: presentation during the final RAINBO conference on key choices psycho-social counselors need to make (Cardiff, UK)
3. 21 November 2023: presentation and participation in panel discussion during the final My-ID conference (Athens, GR)
4. 8 December 2023: presentation of preliminary findings of the research for the Dutch GALE Review during the Dutch-Flemish LGBT Research Day (Utrecht, NL)
5. 14 December 2023: presentation and panel discussion during the European VOLT webinar on transgenders and sports (online)

In addition, GALE reviewed an article for the Australian (international) journal Sex Education and a Dutch draft curriculum on gender education.

Fundraising

GALE did not focus on fundraising anymore in 2023. The foundation was asked to participate in various project proposals for European funding, but GALE rejected most of them as they were not enough in line with GALE goals and strategies. Ultimately, GALE only became partner in one partnership proposal with focusses on developing a course on initiating university students in offering sexual education.

Internal policy

The GALE membership forms an informal Internet platform which is supported by a foundation under Dutch law. The legal entity of GALE is the GALE Foundation. The director of the GALE Foundation is also the Board and the only employee.

GALE-website

The plan to replace the elaborate website of GALE by a more simple one that reflects the reduced ambitions was not implemented yet.

GALE membership

At the end of 2023, GALE had 980 members from 104 countries.

Budget

GALE had an expected budget of €60.193, but realized €55.175. The lower amount was due to the contract for the Health Authorities project not being implemented.

There was an expected budgetary deficit of €7.104, which turned into a net result of €1.219.