

Unique

EqUal iNcluslon of **LGBTIQ** stUdents in VET

About Unique

The UNIQUE project is a two-year project (2021-2023) to reduce LGBTIQ+ bullying, harassment and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ trainees in Vocational Education and Training (VET). It is funded by the EU Erasmus+ program and it has 9 partners in Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Cyprus, Poland, the Netherlands and Germany.

The project partners will recruit VET teachers as ambassadors for LGBTIQ+ equality and train them to do this effectively. The ambassadors will take initiatives to improve VET institutional policies and wider supportive policies.

VET Student Arts Contests Updates



Figure 1: Markos Tsiklis ~ Mirror of Change (1st award)



Figure 2: Phaedra Economou ~ Where I feel free (2nd Award)



Figure 3: Tears Kyritsis ~ Tears (3rd Award)

Croatia



The winning artwork in Croatia was called "Issues regarding identity". It shows a man with a red pointed hat and a blue spot on his nose. Ivonna Grlić, the artist, explained that today's modern society often likes to be called a tolerant society. However, when we scratch beneath the surface of such facades, we realize that reality is different. The celebratory hat is a symbol of the celebration of such an act, and the spot on the nose represents the inevitable - a condemnation which is often a consequence of such act. It also represents the loneliness and alienation that follows disappointment in such an outcome.

Poland

Due to the sensitivity of LGBTIQ+ topics in Poland, IB Polska received only two submissions; also, the artistic context was much more generic and broad instead of LGBTIQ+ specific. Given the negative political and social environment against LGBTIQ+ individuals in the country, we welcome these daring students and we hope that their effort will be imitated by other students in the future.



Cyprus: VET Student Arts Contest in Cuprus was relaunched (after two less successful rounds) in December. The award ceremony was held, in the form of an open event, on the 21st of December 2022. The contest theme was “Inclusiveness” to which VET Students from different fields of arts studies responded with enthusiasm and inspiration. What is more, their VET Teachers/Trainers stood by them, getting actively engaged in the promotion of the activity.

The winner of the contest Thomas Tzortzis with his video “Inclusion is a choice”, which you may watch here: [UNIQUE / KES COLLEGE - Inclusion is a Choice - YouTube](#).

You may also see below the work of other participants:



Development of training materials

Following the latest trends in adult education and emotional intelligence training, the partners designed the Unique materials to be interactive and engaging as well as fit for the purpose of changing attitudes and perceptions. The online training platform, which is not open to the public yet, can be accessed through this link: [UNIQUE Project](#) and will be soon linked to the project's website for maximum exploitation.

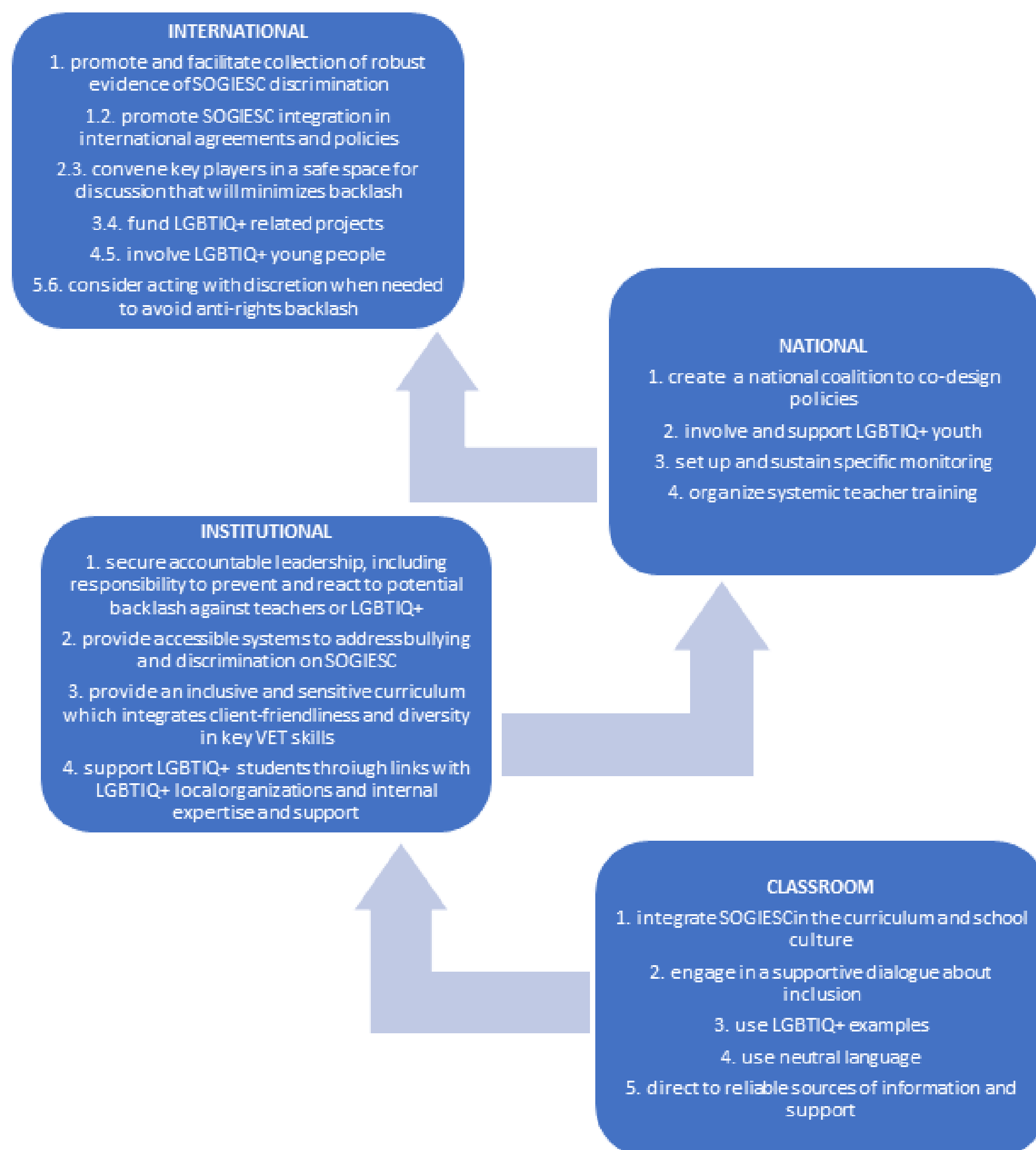
The fourth transnational meeting



The fourth transnational meeting of the UNIQUE project was held on 13 and 14 October, 2022 in Zagreb, Croatia. The partnership discussed the progress of the project and reviewed the content of the MOOC – the online course for VET Teachers/Trainers . Also, a joint methodology on how the peer training activities was planned and agreed among partners. As far as financial management is concerned, the budget was reviewed.

Policy Recommendations

Part of the UNIQUE project is the development of a set of Policy Recommendations, following a bottom-up approach which will reflect the experiences of the project and the VET Teachers/Trainers' problems and challenges in developing safe classrooms in case respective policies are not in place. A draft of Recommendations has already been made based on the development of materials and the elaboration of our strategy.



In the coming months, the draft recommendations will be adapted based on the feedback from pilot implementation in Croatia, Greece, Cyprus and Poland.

Final activities

Final Transnational Meeting is planned to take place in May, in Brussels, hosted by EVBB, associated partner of the project.

Final Conference

National Round Tables

In the coming months, a series of National Round Tables and events in the different partner countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Cyprus, the Netherlands and Poland) will take place. These events will offer an opportunity for interested parties to be informed about the UNIQUE methodology, to hear from the lessons learned and to discuss opportunities for LGBTIQ+ inclusion in vocational education and training.

To be updated for our activities and register in the national events, you may follow our Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

Become an ambassador!

Are you living in Croatia, Greece, Cyprus or Poland? Would you be interested to become an Ambassador for sensitivity on gender and sexual diversity in VET? Would you like to explore what you can do as an UNIQUE Ambassador? We are looking for VET Teachers/Trainers and Staff from Greece, Croatia, Cyprus and Poland who are interested in participating in our activities and playing an active role in the social transformation of VET system in their countries. If you are interested, go to uniqueproject.eu/ambassador and register as aspirant Ambassador! We will then send you materials and invite you for a conversation to get acquainted, and to take part in the training.

Partnership

