



The Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Bisexual Persons

challenges and opportunities

NGO Side Event
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GLOBAL SITUATION

Several recent studies such as The Report on Bisexual Invisibility San Francisco Human Rights Commission, The Bisexuality Report, Bi UK show the high index of depression, isolation, mental health problem and one of the highest rates of suicide within LGBT community. This data indicates that the welfare of bisexual persons needs to be taken into account in a more coherent and effective way. The actions taken from state organizations are scarce or nonexistent. Around the World , bisexuality and bisexual persons are marginalized. According to statistics in the United States: more than 40% of bisexual people have considered suicide compared to 8.5% of heterosexuals and 27% of homosexuals. Almost half of bisexual women are rape survivors, compared to 17% of heterosexual women and 13% of lesbians. 45% of bisexual youth have suffered from bullying on the internet compared to 19% of heterosexual youth, and 30% of homosexual youth.

The reality of bisexuals persons is unknown to the official institutions, even to LGTI community and human rights defense. There is an absence of data raised by official institutions and organizations regarding health, education, access to reproductive rights. Bisexuality is highly invisible in Human Rights practice and discourse as well.

At global level bisexual persons and activists attend the first bisexual preconference, on november 29 ,2016 marked as part of the World ILGA conference , in Bangkok Thailand During that conference , bisexual persons an activists adopted central actional agenda based upon needs of bisexual persons that should be globally conducted:

1. **Visibility:** To make our reality visible as bisexual people
2. **Human Rights:** Defense of the human rights of bisexual people
3. **Research:** Scientifically documenting the needs of bisexual people globally
4. **Global fund:** Establish a global bisexual fund

Among the global actions we demand to actualize this lines built on future action:

Visibility

- Eliminate negative stereotypes against bisexual people, providing correct information on bisexuality.
- Empower the work of on bi-specified issues within the LGTI movement.
- LGT and official institutions need to provide information and trainings on the bi related issues.
- Representation of bisexual people in the media.
- Establish health care services that target bisexual people.
- Promote visibility and diversity at work.
- Cooperate with a network of bisexual organizations, globally.
- Fight against heteronormativity in bisexuality.
- Position the bisexual movement as a political movement that claims their rights and representation
- Hold a global bisexual conference.

Human rights:

- Guarantee the right to health, religious freedom, freedom of expression, to work, to education, to freedom of association, to education, to corporal autonomy, right to the expression of identity, right to request asylum, right to security, right to family reunion.
- Establish a network for the defense of human rights of bisexual people.

- Work on the mental health of bi people, support bi-friendly counseling and support, including a campaign to depathologize bi-identity.
- Working to educate young generations about LGBTI people makes them understand that human rights are for everyone, including bisexual people.
- Publish the principles of Yogyakarta with a version for Bisexual population.
- Work with Independent Expert on LGBTI issues at the UN, prepare a report focused on the situation of bisexual people at global level.
- Use the procedures and spaces of the UN, such as the Human Rights Council, such as the UPR and Special Procedures, to make visible the violation of human rights of bisexual persons

Investigation:

- Conduct a global study on the situation of bisexual people.
- Create a network of researcher focused issue of bisexuality.
- Investigate the topics of interest of the bisexual population: problems in the workplace, physical health, mental health, intersectoral issues (polyamory, gender, others), stigma, discrimination, visibility, stress, domestic violence, paternity, rights.

Global Fund

- Increase fundings and support for the global bisexual movement by governments and private funds.
- Establish a bisexual world fund that supports our cause.
- Strengthen the capacities of bisexual people for fundraising and to put pressure on access to them.
- Organize meetings with donors to discuss the problems of bisexual people, including government, private and business donors.
- Create a bisexual fund, where bisexual people can donate their resources for our cause.

REGIONAL SITUATION

AMERICA

Latin America and the Caribbean

Prepared by: Luz Elena Aranda - Reinas Chulas y Frank Evelio Arteaga - Manodiversa

The social reality of bisexual persons is ignored, there is no data or statistics that reflect the conditions of bisexual population and documents on thier lives and their specific needs.

The previous results in the lack of actions and public policies that guarantee rights and full exercise of non binary sexual orientation or non monosexual. When it comes to the exact number of bisexual persons in the region, it is extremely difficult to determine mostly due to the lack of reasearch as well as due to different definicion of bisexuality.

For exemple, if term is narrowly defined, for exemple the number is determined only by the persons who indentify themselves as bisexuals, then that number is reduced.

If term is definied more broadly to all the persons who have had attraction to more then one gender, then the signitificant minority or even majority of the population can be included.

As the matter of the experiences of bisexuals differs in many important aspects than of heterosexuals, gays and lesbians.

Biphobia is manifested in different manners than homophobia and lesbophobia and bisexual persons suffer discrimination and prejudices that come from gay and lesbian communities.

Data from the report on violence against LGBT persons America published by IACHR indicates ¹: "The IACHR has found that violence against bisexual persons is the most difficult to track. During the fifteen-month period monitored (between January 2013 and March 2014), the IACHR was informed of three acts of violence against bisexual men, or those perceived as such. The IACHR notes the difficulty in documenting violence specifically targeting bisexual persons. Unless a source specifically indicates that someone is being targeted because of his or her bisexuality, violence against bisexual persons is often exerted because such persons are perceived as either gay or lesbian, or because such persons are witnessed expressing same-sex affection. This tendency in the data to categorize bisexual persons and bisexual expressions of affection as gay or lesbian, regardless of the true motivation, renders violence based on prejudice towards bisexuality invisible for data collection purposes. Notwithstanding, a study carried out in the United States suggests that bisexual persons "experience higher rates of sexual and intimate partner violence than gay, lesbian, and straight people"

During ILGALAC Bisexual Pre-Conference, held on November 16, 2017, in Guatemala City, bisexual people gathered together and addressed the main issues they face in the region, among which the systematic fear resulting in non-expression of their sexual orientation. Both heterosexual and LGBT environments have been hostile to those identifying themselves as bisexuals, indicating that bisexuals are undecided, or rejecting them when bisexual individuals attend activities with people of the opposite sex or gender.

The bisexual people of Latin America and the Caribbean, proposed to carry out the following actions:

1. Disaggregation of the data that already exists: request that organizations that are already undertaking research such as ILGALAC or the IACHR add the data to have statistical information on the situations faced by bisexual people.
2. Incorporation of bisexual population in specific surveys to elucidate the situation of bisexual persons. Proposals :a) conduct studies based upon Attitude and Practice Questionnaires (CAP) on the perceptions of LGTI populations and b) another specific study on the perceptions of bisexual people about the problems they face.
3. Request from CIDH to inform on good practice methods, that is currently being carried out, to incorporate specific recommendations for bisexual populations, since this has never been done. Identify existing strategies (for groups or organizations) that carry out advocacy or advocacy activities to incorporate bisexual people who serve as support to research or projects that explicitly contemplate bisexual people.
4. It can also be considered that they can contribute to the support of the requests that are made for the disaggregation of data. In addition, it contributes to the

¹ Violencia contra Personas Lesbianas, Gay, Bisexuales, Trans e Intersex en América / Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Noviembre 2015

generation of a regional database, whose information may be convenient to manage alliances.

5. Insist that organizations for the defense of the human rights of the LGBT populations, do not only include the B, within its acronyms or within its mission or vision, but to carry out projects in which the respect towards this population group is promoted equitably.
6. Questioning the theoretical basis from which we started to define bisexuality, taking into consideration populations such as pansexuals. This questioning starts from reflecting on the binary basis from which we start to define the populations to who we feel affective, to who feel sexual, intellectual attraction, etc.
7. Contact to LGBTI Relator of the IACHR to comment on the priorities of our population, through meetings, etc.. It is vital to have their support in of a request for a future audience This is vital to have your support in case of requesting a future audience, to expose the challenges for inclusion that as a group we face.
8. Commemorate the dates and celebrate symbols that identify our cause and include them as needs in within our organizations, in order to contribute to ourselves to our own BI-sensitization.
9. Constant positioning in our work, on what it means to be bisexual, generate material to facilitate communication and insist on the break down with respect to the myths and stereotypes that have been generated around our orientation.

North AMERICA

Canada, USA

Prepared by: Ian Lawrence-Tourinho - American Institute of Bisexuality; ambi - Bi Social Community

While the bi rights movement in North America has made considerable progress since its birth in the 1970s, it must be noted that the community has been working against considerable stigma. For example, a national survey of U.S. households conducted in 1999 found that public attitudes towards bisexual men and bisexual women rated less favorably than towards *all* other groups assessed – including all religious, racial, ethnic, and political groups – with the sole exception of IV drug users (Herek, 2002). Paradoxically, subsequent studies have shown that heterosexual individuals in the U.S. generally believe that bisexuality itself is more accepted in society when compared to the perceived acceptance of lesbians and gays (Diamond, 2008; Israel & Mohr, 2004; Klesse, 2011). In reality, bi people face considerable stigma not only from the heterosexual community but also from the gay and lesbian communities (Friedman et al., 2014). Recent research in the U.S. found that close to 15% of participants did not endorse bisexuality as a legitimate sexual orientation (Friedman et al., 2014).

Individuals' political attitudes about sexual orientation tend to correlate with their views of the causes of sexual orientation. Those who hold positive attitudes (i.e., that there is nothing inherently wrong with nonheterosexuality or its open expression) have tended to believe that sexual orientation is due to inborn, essentialist, or otherwise nonsocial causes such as genetics. Those who hold negative attitudes (i.e., that nonheterosexuality is undesirable or immoral and that society should restrict its free expression) have tended to believe that homosexual behavior has social causes, such as early sexual experiences, family dynamics, and cultural acceptance of non-heterosexuality (Bailey et al., 2016). The idea that bi people exercise "choice" in not suppressing their nonheterosexual attractions (an option gay and lesbian people presumably do not have)

may be a root cause of *biphobia* [aversion toward bisexuality and toward bisexual people as a social group or as individuals].

In North America, the cultural ideal is overwhelmingly for monogamy, while all other relationship styles are frowned upon. This has ramifications for bi people that it does not have for gays and lesbians. Unlike *monosexuals* (i.e. those with only 1 kind of attraction; heterosexual and homosexual people), a bi person's orientation is not visible in their monogamous partner choices and consequently a bi person's orientation is instead assumed by the culture at large to be defined by the gender of their significant other. In an environment where bi people face both homophobia and biphobia as well as stigma against non-monogamy (whether or not the bi person is actually non-monogamous), there is little incentive to "come out" and only 33% percent of bi women and a mere 12% of bi men in the U.S. say most or all of the important people in their lives know of their sexual orientation. By comparison, the same statistics are 77% for gay men and 71% for lesbians (Pew 2013). Unlike gays and lesbians, bis must engage in *identity maintenance*, periodically re-affirming their sexual identity in light of cultural assumptions that bi identity is at best temporary or transitional. All this, compounded with a general lack of cultural awareness and understanding of bisexuality, has led to profound *bi invisibility* in North America marked by a lack of role models, community, and resources.

As related by Bostwick and Hequembourg (2014), bisexuals face 7 bi-specific microaggressions in everyday life: 1) hostility (biphobia); 2) denial/dismissal (that bisexuality exists or insistence that it is the province of the deeply confused or lying); 3) unintelligibility (insistence that bisexuality is too complicated to understand); 4) pressure to change ("make up one's mind," "grow up," and self-identify with a "real" orientation such as straight, gay, or lesbian); 5) lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender legitimacy (exclusion from the larger LGBT community for being "too heterosexual" and/or "not queer enough"); 6) dating exclusion (refusal to date bi people because of presumptions of inherent infidelity or aversion to a person capable of heterosexual attraction); and 7) hypersexuality (belief that bi people are incapable of monogamy or otherwise incapable of "meaningful" relationships). Bi people in North America appear to experience fewer physical attacks due to their sexuality compared to gays and lesbians (Bostwick et al., 2014). This is an unsurprising finding since, as mentioned, the majority of bi people do their best to hide their sexuality from almost everyone. At the same time, research consistently shows that bi people suffer higher rates of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, PTSD, suicidal ideation or attempts, risk of STIs, and other health disparities compared to monosexuals. Although there are numerous causes of these disparities, a leading contributor is stress related to stigma and discrimination, including the effort bi people feel compelled to exert in order to conceal their sexual orientation from others (Feinstein 2017). The prevailing conceptual framework used to explain such mental health disparities is the *minority stress* framework. This framework suggests that sexual-identity-based discrimination and prejudice represent social stressors that are unique and additive to the everyday life stressors that people experience (Meyer 2003).

Based on data from five United States population-based surveys, Gates (2011) estimated that 1.8% of the US population identifies as bisexual (2.2% of women, 1.4% of men), compared to 1.7% who identified as gay or lesbian. The bisexual population in the U.S. may be even larger, as one national survey found that 3.1% identified as bisexual (3.6% of women, 2.6% of men) and rates were even higher for adolescents (4.9% of adolescents identified as bisexual, including 8.4% of females and 1.5% of males) (Herbenick 2010). Given the large number of people who can be classified as bisexual, bisexual health disparities are a major public health concern. And yet, there is a dearth of bi-specific

health research and virtually no specific programming designed to address the health needs of the bi community (Feinstein 2017). *The Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center*, the world's largest provider of programs and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, only changed its name to the more inclusive *Los Angeles LGBT Center* in 2014. As of 2018, the programming changes that accompanied the name change are focused almost exclusively on serving the trans community and LGBT seniors. The Los Angeles LGBT Center currently offers only a single bi-specific program: a twice-monthly discussion group co-sponsored by the local chapter of ambi (bi social community). The Center's approach is typical for similar organizations across North America (and the globe) and reflects a cultural myth that the bi community's needs are inherently met by programming and outreach directed to the gay and lesbian communities. This approach not only disregards the unique pressures and greater health disparities of the bi population, it also ignores the reality that bisexuals often do not frequent gay and lesbian social spaces due to rejection and ostracism (Dodge & Sandfort, 2007).

To address the acute public health concerns of the bi population, we need bi-specific interventions and programming based on mental health research, ideally longitudinal, across diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups (Persson & Pfaus, 2015). Addressing these issues requires increased attention on "the ways in which bisexual groups differ from lesbian and gay groups in their experiences of sexual orientation and related life stressors" (Bostwick and Hequembourg 2013). Understanding more about the relationship between positive experiences and mental health for bisexual people is of equal importance to understanding negative experiences, though the amount of positive or strength-based research within LGBTQ research is limited (Vaughan et al., 2014; Flanders, 2015). The importance of social climate to mental health has been made evident by research in the United States, which has found that sexual minorities who live in states with policies protective of their rights have lower prevalence of suicidality and psychiatric disorders compared to those who live in states without such policies (Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013; Hatzenbuehler, Keyes, & McLaughlin, 2011). This climate includes legal frameworks that protect LGBT human rights, as well as family and community environments. "Family acceptance predicts greater self-esteem, social support, and general health status; it also protects against depression, substance abuse, and suicidal ideation and behaviors" in LGBT youth, while the inverse is also true. (Ryan, C. 2010). "In the presence of bisexual-related social support, individuals have been found to show increases in well-being, develop stronger and more positive ties to the bisexual community, develop a positive bisexual identity, and develop coping skills needed to combat monosexism and biphobic messages" (Brewster et al., 2013; Firestein, 2007; Ross et al., 2012; Sheets & Mohr, 2009; Roberts, et al., 2015)). In other words, bi-specific research and interventions should include examination and support of the positive role that both family and community networks can serve towards improving the health and well-being of bi people.

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ASIA

Prepared by: Soudeh RAD - Spectrum

Asia is a diverse continent, with different cultures, various social movements, religions, traditions and beliefs and of course governance systems. Yet we face the same issues, in different forms and degrees. There is a general lack of awareness about Bisexuality, Bi+ and BiVisibility, not only in societies but also among the movements. We are seeking for awareness raising and – more – inclusion of non-monosexuality at the local, regional and international level.

Several countries in which same-sex sexual conduct is punishable by death are located in Asia. They include Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Iran, United Arab Emirates and parts of Malaysia. In Iraq and Syria, ISIS attacked humanity but though specifically killed men

engaged in same-sex sexual conduct by throwing them off buildings. However media covered the news as execution of gay men. We do not hear anything specific about bisexuals in Asia since, as it is the case around the world, bi-erasure and bi-invisibility lead to bi people being lumped in with and presumed homosexual.

As a matter of fact, we, bisexual people of Asia face the same issues, in different forms and degrees. There is a general lack of awareness about sexuality, in societies where sexuality is already a taboo and heteronormative. Children do not get any sexual education, anything other than a cisgender man and cisgender woman relationship is considered abnormal. Any same sex sexual conduct, homosexuality, as well as Transgenderism is highly medicalized and treatments for homosexuality are still promoted. Bisexuality is misrepresented, Biereasure is trivialized and sadly not only in societies but also among the LGBT movements. In research, if there is any, bisexuals are gathered under the "homosexual" umbrella, because it is wrongly believed bisexuals only face homophobia, when they are with same-sex partners.

When it comes to our legal rights, if same-sex sexual conduct is not punishable or criminalized, general acceptance remains a battle and we are even more invisible. Even dating apps become a trap. Even in here, at the United Nations, we rarely hear about LGBTIphobia when Asian states are addressed, instead homophobia is used, -- again as an umbrella term.

In Israel for instance, Officially, bisexual/pansexual community enjoys the acceptance of the LGT+ but resistance and biphobia are still very common, while in Lebanon where the only LGBT advocate ngo has still not achieved its official registration, bisexuality is seen as a minority of no priority among the community.

The situation in many Asian countries, pushes the LGBTI+ community members to flee from their countries and start their lives as asylum seekers. Yet, Bi+ asylum is another hassle. In Turkey for instance, Bi+ asylum seekers from Iran, Afghanistan or Iraq, even those from other origins, are seen as "fake-homosexuals" who do not deserve the same right of asylum as homosexual or trans individuals. There are reports showing how they face discrimination among the community but also the way their cases might be treated at the UNHCR offices. Turkey is considered part of ILGA Europe, but it is not a European country, rather a gateway to Europe and Free World for asylum seekers.

Turkey is hosting the LGBT asylum seekers among these immigrants. Yet, they are always at the danger of harassment in a country with its own struggles with LGBTIphobia, not only from the Turkish communities but also from other asylum seekers especially those from their own country of origin. In general LGBTI asylum seekers face many problems in their everyday life regarding housing, work, education and health care and these put the community in a sort of competition to access to resources, even if it is the black market, sex work or health care. Bisexuals are judged and asked detailed questions about their sexuality if they come out as Bi+, that even at the Turkish police offices.

Intersectionality is the key to understand the state of Bi+ people and violation of their human rights, while living in war and peace, democracies and kingdoms, political oppressions and regrowth of social movements. We need more resources, obviously but we need the global movement and all human rights activists around the world to take the situation of Bi+ people into account, and be the amplifiers of the less-heard voices. Bisexuality is a valid and independent sexual orientation and human rights of the

people with this orientations, from any gender identity or expression, or sexual characteristics should not be handled as a second priority, or hidden under another terms.

In the first Ilga Asia Bi-Preconference in Cambodia, we were witness to this underrepresentation of Bi+ community and the issues we face all around the continent. This pre-conference gathered activists from more than 11 countries and more than 50 participants.

Here follows the statement:

On December 4th 2017, the very first Bi-Preconference took place at biannual ILGA Asia conference. We, bisexual and/or allies are proud and pleased to be participating in this one day event and thank ILGA ASIA for this first step!

We recognize that all over Asia, we face the same issues, in different forms and degrees. There is a general lack of awareness about Bisexuality, Bi+ and BiVisibility, not only in societies but also among the movements. We are seeking for awareness raising and – more – inclusion of non-monosexuality at the local, regional and international level.

We ask ILGA ASIA to act more inclusively and encourage all members to do so. We demand ILGA ASIA to provide members with adequate educational material and empower them in facing the challenges of mono-sexist communities. We want ILGA ASIA to consult with local and regional NGOs and activists about specific Bi issues at local and regional level.

We want non-monosexuality related sessions to be integrated in the next biannual conference and not only in a pre-conference event.

We also wish ILGA ASIA to be an incubator for the Asian Bi-Movement by facilitating the collaboration between individuals, activists and organizations. Dedication of funds for research and activism is vital.

We ask all participants in ILGA Asia conference, and all members in general, to recognize Bisexuality as it is, an independent valid sexual orientation, to acknowledge Biereasure and Biphobia and not considering Biphobia a form of homophobia. Inclusion is a duty, not thinking/acting/talking inclusively is a failure.

Taking into account “Intersectionality” is the key point for all of us who want to bring change, forced or conventional marriages, bi-parenthood, self-identification and sense of belonging to a community are the important topics in need to be addressed promptly. Signed, Participants of Bisexual Pre-conference

EUROPE

Prepared by: Radica Hura - Bisexuals of Serbia

United Kingdom

Survey conducted by YouGov found that half of British young adults fall on bisexual spectrum. (YouGov, 2015). Still, the exact number of bisexual persons in UK is unknown. As it states the Bisexuality Report (2012), there are stress attached both to being out (exposure to potential discrimination) and to remaining hidden (secrets and fearing disclosure). Social prejudices and biphobia are preventing bisexual persons to reveal publicly their sexual orientation.

Bisexual persons in the Uk suffer discrimination in school, at work, have difficulty to access legal services (asylum seekers), suffer double discrimination (rejected by gay and

lesbian organization or groups) suffer violence and have weaker health compared to heterosexual, gay and lesbian persons.

Those who identified as bisexual, queer or 'other' in terms of sexualities were more likely than lesbian and gay identified people to have mental health and were more likely to have attempted suicide.(the Brighton and Hove area of the UK diss. The Bisexuality report). Although this study is not representative for all UK society show worrying data on health of bisexual persons. Bisexual women suffer poorer mental health compared to lesbian women (64% of bisexual were more likely to report eating problems and 37% more likely to deliberately self harm than lesbians.(Collegde, Hickson,Reid, Weatherbum, 2015). There is still no specify data on bisexual persons mental and physical health on the national level. As it stands in The Bisexuality Report the Health Protection Agency, keeps the UK's official records of HIV infection, does not distinguish MSMo from MSMW. Further in the report the authors conclude that public health policy makers should consider specifically bisexual targeted campaigns, both towards the bisexual community and also towards MSM. (The Bisexuality Report, 2012). Health researches that target bisexual persons are of crucial importance.

Although the Uk labor laws ban discrimination in workplace UK Stonewall's report : Bisexual people in workplace found that bisexual persons in UK highlighted high levels of ignorance about bisexuality and biphobia. Bisexual persons in this study faced with constant questions on their sexuality, reported no bisexual network within their organizations, little support, no mention of bisexuality in equality and diversity training, no openly bisexual persons in management. Employment is one of the aspects were lack of bi-specified data is present. Monro in Bisexuality states that contributors stressed the strategic nature of their workplace and sexual identity, for example they are stating that they would be out if this was needed but not otherwise. People with precarious nature of their employment who felt danger of stigmatization were actively closeted all the time at work. (Monro, 2016)

The UK reports school on bullying neglect bisexuality due to bisexual invisibility,however in a recent years there has been testimonies of bisexual persons on biphobic bullying in schools. (The Bisexuality Report p23)

There's no rule that grants asylum based specifically on sexuality or gender identity. The asylum in UK can be granted on the basis of persecution. According to the report NoSafe Refuge published by Stonewall and UK Gay and Lesbian Immigration group Bi interviewees reported that they felt their sexual orientation was doubted because they have been with both men and women. They felt that the interviewing officer considered their claim as not credible, even though bi people face persecution and abuse in their country of origin. (No Safe Refuge, 2016)

There is no exact data on biphobic hate crimes rates in Uk annually.Further research and separation of biphobic hate crimes is necessary.

Bisexual communities function through grass roots groups and events (such as the national BiCon and local BiFests and networks of activists working to educate people on bisexual issues (such as The Bisexual Index and BiUK), online bisexual spaces (such as bi.org), and the national magazine Bi Community News. The are mostly non commercial and volunteer running.

France

According to Enquête nationale sur la bisexualité (ActUp, MAG, SOSHomophobie, Bi'cause, 2015) 85% of respondents consider bisexuality as "a sexual orientation like the others" but the prejudices they show against bisexuals remain unfortunately numerous and very widespread (seen as "unstable", "their sexual orientation, seen as the "fashion effect"). These stereotypes feed the biphobia and legitimize the discrimination against bisexual persons. Discrimination is according to the testimonies of bisexual persons present in society, interpersonal relations, intimacy, among health care providers and work.

Balkans (Countries of Western Balkans)

In recent years more people living in Balkans have started to come out as persons of bisexual orientation but their coming out in this way is sometimes interpreted as a manifestation of internalised homophobia, which effectively denies their bisexual desire. (Hura, 2016) However, there is some Bi specific events and workshops. During Belgrade Pride week in 2013 and 2014 were marked two Bi Visibility Day commemoration.

At the ERA (LGBT organization specialized in countries of Western Balkans) annual conference in Podgorica in 2017 workshop on BiVisibility was held. The critical assessment on biphobia was made, seen from the perspective of general population but also LGBT population, too. Agreed among the participants the biggest challenges needed to address biphobia was lack of Bi visibility and inclusion.

Spain

Although invisibility of bisexual person is still high, in recent years there has been some improvement. In 2013 Argumentario Bisexual was published by Spanish National LGBT Organization FLGTB. This document tends to clarify the basic concepts of bisexuality and bisexual identities and to focus on bisexual persons realities. The year 2016 has been declared for the year of bisexuality and bisexual persons and activists took parts and were visible during many events. Dossier sobre el 2016 BISEXUAL, document of activities in 2016, the year of bisexuality settled policy goals and priorities for Spanish bisexual community. The goals are:

1. To sensitize the general public against negative attitudes that surround bisexuality with the special attention on family, education, health (The invisibility of bisexuality is evident in sexual health policies and prevention campaigns, that are only focused on sexual practices between two men /women, excluding bisexual persons) and work.
2. To provide bi specialized materials and organize events for bisexual persons and associations in order to achieve greater inclusion. (Guide on information about bisexuality)
3. Fight against biphobia, monosexism and gender binarism
4. Work on intersectionality: Make the reality of bisexual persons more visible and emphasize its diversity.

Similar actions and campaigns are broaden the vision of diversity within the LGBT+ community and society, itself. In fight against biphobia, bisexual community and persons need help of all the persons and entities.

Netherlands

Netherlands has seen in general as one of the Europe's most open and tolerant countries, still bisexual persons and their reality are still marginalized and invisible in

many spheres of society such as social acceptance, national policies, healthcare , representation and work.

75% of Gay men feel totally accepted by Dutch Society. When it comes to bisexual people that number is 50 percent. (SCP 2012, pub.Felten and Maliepaard, 2015)

This recent study, shows however that bisexuality is predominately accepted as temporarily orientation. (Felten and Maliepaard, 2015)

Bisexuality and bisexual persons are seen as an unstable and their sexuality as transit or phase.

Studies on health in Netherlands show negative health statistics of bisexual persons. Bisexual persons in Netherlands have higher substance use (expl.smoking weed) then heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.(SCP,2015 pub.Feltenand Maliepaard,2015) Besides, higher substance use, bisexual persons have higher rates in feeling of loneliness, less self-acceptance, compared to heterosexual, gay and lesbian counterparts. (SCP, 2015, pub.Felten and Maliepaard, 2015)

Bisexual women show higher suicide rates. More suicide attempts are noted in bisexual women (14%) compared to lesbian women (10%). Bisexual young adults are also risky population when it comes to their mental health.(Felten and Maliepaard, 2015)

Their mental health is weaker then in heterosexual, gay and lesbian persons. (SCP, 2015, pub.Felten and Maliepaard, 2015)

Direct actions and more data are always helpful to bisexual persons who face physical and mental health difficulties.

Dutch National Policies are as well one the segments where bisexuality and bisexual persons are not underrepresented.

As Maliepaard concludes based upon in depth analysis of national emancipation policy documents that bisexuality is not represented in LGBT national policies because LGBT people are classified as homogeneous sexual group minority group, with bisexual equated with homosexuals. (Maliepaard 2015a, discussed .Lidonk Keuzenkamp, 2016). Those policies did serve the LGBT community as whole but it takes bi-specific programming that would provided services to the bisexual population. Funding for more bisexual research should be prioritized.

The Dutch government however did include informantion on bisexuality in the attainment targets for Dutch schools in relation to sexuality and sexual diversity in 2012. In Netherlands the organization explicitly focused on bisexual persons is LNBi. In recent years LNBi (Dutch Bisexual Network/Netherlands Network for Bisexuality) is the organizer of many bi specific events such as, third European Bisexual Conference, EuroBicon.

Conclusion

- Bisexual communities and realities are diverse as Europe itself.
- Data, written material and official documents that include bisexuality and bisexual persons are rare in national contexts and almost nonexistent in European context.
- While organizations and stake holders deal or not deal with bisexuality, negative statistics on bisexual persons realities are emerging all over Europe.
- Lack of social and community support are keeping bisexual persons in their closets.

- High quality bi-specified actions, projects and research would help to combat stigma and all forms of discrimination against bisexual persons in Europe.

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Special thanks to Emiel Maliepaard more of his works on <https://www.emielmaliepaard.org/>

United Kingdom

1 in 2 young people say they are not 100% heterosexual Retrieved from: <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/08/16/half-young-not-heterosexual/>

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AFRICA

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There is a paucity of informed dialogue about bisexuality on the African continent, although ILGA has performed useful work on collating a global survey of sexual orientation laws and state-sponsored homophobia (ILGA 2016). Of the 54 African countries, in 21 same-sex sexual acts are legal, while in 33 they are illegal to varying degrees (and in 24 cases illegality also applies to women). Three countries apply the death penalty for same-sex sexual acts according to Sharia law: Sudan, parts of Nigeria and parts of Somalia. The most liberal country according to law for LGBT individuals is South Africa, where there is a prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation written into the Constitution's Bill of Rights.

A number of African presidents have publicly made homophobic comments, notably ex-president of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe, president of Uganda Yoweri Museveni, ex-president of South Africa Jacob Zuma, and Gambian president Yahya Jammeh. This discourse is politically opportunistic and designed to elicit support from conservatives, religious fundamentalists and traditionalists. Frequent recourse is made to the myth of same-sex desire being 'unAfrican'.

Little research is performed specifically on bisexual individuals. In addition, binarist habits of thought (if not unconscious or active biphobia) lead to patterns of the elision of bisexuality. To cite one example, the influential ethnographic book *Boy-wives and Female Husbands: Studies of African homosexualities*, edited by Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe, treats bisexuality dismissively (see Stobie 2003 for a feminist analysis of the 'techniques of neutralisation' it employs). This is despite the fact that those who have same-sex relations are frequently heterosexually married, as African cultures actively encourage and valorise marriage and procreation. While some individuals are pressured into marriage despite having only same-sex attractions, many have emotional and sexual attractions to members of more than one gender.

In South Africa a body of research is accumulating specifically on the subject of bisexuality, from the fields of literary and film studies (see Stobie e.g. 2007, 2011, 2016, 2017), psychology (Arndt and De Bruin 2011), sociology (Lynch 2013), and education (Francis 2017). Novels, short stories, films and television series have been created exploring bisexual themes, mainly but not exclusively in South Africa, and these add to public awareness.

Despite legal protections or a lack of legally endorsed prohibitions and punishments, lived experience for LGBT individuals across African countries is frequently characterised by hostility, prejudice, and stigmatisation. This is particularly the case for bisexuals, who are subject to such common myths as 'insatiability', faithlessness and vacillation. A further problem is that the term 'bisexual' is seldom used for an identity or for patterns of attraction or behaviour, contributing to invisibility. Religion plays a negative role when places of worship only endorse bisexuals' opposite-sex relationships, thus negating vital aspects of their identities. Evangelical Christian groups from the USA fund homophobic drives in African countries. Bisexuals seeking asylum in Western countries encounter particular difficulties when required to 'prove' their identities, as in the case of asylum-seekers in the UK (see Fenton 2015).

The stringent laws and public utterances of homophobia in certain African countries can also be seen as a backlash against activism and organisation on the part of LGBT individuals and groups, which can indicate the strength of visibility of the umbrella movement. More still needs to be done to educate about the presence and validity of bisexuality, and the harmful effects of biphobia from the queer and straight communities. The Internet plays an important role in this regard; for instance, an online article discusses the effects of colonisation and imported religion, and highlights a pre-colonial bisexual Ugandan king, Mwanga II Basammula Ekkere (see OckyDub 2014). There are few groups specifically for bisexuals to meet and share their experiences in order to counter discrimination and isolation, although one exception is a support group for those who identify as bisexual which has been established in Johannesburg, South Africa, by Werner Pieterse (*Mamba Writer* 2017).

In conclusion, bisexuals in Africa share the problems experienced by their LGT peers, but in addition suffer from invisibility, erasure, discrimination relating specifically to

bisexuality and lack of support. More research, financial support and outreach needs to occur.

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OCEANIA

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This report focuses on Australasia only. Same-sex activity is still illegal (or only recently decriminalised) in many of the islands in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, including Papua New Guinea, which is the largest of these.

While the selected research is relevant to the issues faced in Australia and New Zealand, there is very little region-specific research available (through that is beginning to improve). Most LGBTIQ+ research tends to focus on lesbian and gay people, with bisexual people either categorised within these groups or completely excluded (Kuper, Nussbaum, & Mustanski, 2012; Movement Advancement Project, 2016; Smalley, Warren, & Barefoot, 2016). As a result, very little specific sub-group research is available, perpetuating the issue of invisibility commonly faced by bisexuals (Beemyn & Rankin, 2011, p.4; Budge, Rossman, & Howard, 2014; Ulrich, 2011). Yet there is evidence to suggest that this population may be significantly larger than the same-gender attracted / binary transgender populations combined (Allister, 2015; Dahlgreen & Shakespeare, 2015; Kuper, Nussbaum, & Mustanski, 2012; Movement Advancement Project, 2016; Smith, et. al., 2014).

There has recently been increased recognition of the lesbian and gay population in Australia and New Zealand, but bisexual people have not reached the same level of recognition. Recent studies have found that in comparison to lesbian and gay people, mental health outcomes are particularly poor for bisexuals (Barker, et. al., 2012; Budge, Rossman, & Howard, 2014; Fredriksen-Goldsen, et. al., 2010; Movement Advancement Project, 2016; National LGBTI Health Alliance, 2016). Even within the LGBTIQ+ community,

bisexual people may face discrimination and disrespect (Barker, et. al., 2012; McLean, 2008; Palotta-Chiarolli, 2011; Ulrich, 2011; Weiss, 2003).

Bisexual people are subject to much of the same discrimination as the rest of the LGBTIQ+ community, ranging from inequitable legislation to disturbingly high rates of abuse and victimisation. However, they also face invisibility within the formal social structures that are intended to protect them. Recognition of bisexual people is often assumed to be addressed by existing protections for lesbian and gay people, but their distinct experiences of discrimination remain neglected without being specifically mentioned. Bisexual people are more likely than their peers to experience unsafe educational environments (Budge, Rossman, & Howard, 2014), workplace discrimination, and intimate partner violence (Movement Advancement Project, 2016). They may also face unique forms of discrimination such as difficulties with claims for asylum based on sexuality (Movement Advancement Project, 2016).

Bisexual people are misunderstood by mainstream society and are often also invisible in the broader LGBTIQ+ discourse, or face "double discrimination" (Barker, et. al., 2012). While there has been some increase in media representation, the depictions tend to be negative; for example non-monosexual characters are greedy, promiscuous, or manipulative (Barker, et. al., 2012). Public attitudes to bisexual people are much less positive than attitudes toward lesbian and gay populations (Kuezenkamp, & Kuyper, 2013). Even within the queer community, bisexual people are simultaneously accused of being too queer and not queer enough (Barker, et. al., 2012; Palotta-Chiarolli, 2011; Ulrich, 2011; Weiss, 2003). They are often invalidated as being undecided / damaging to the cause, and may even experience overt exclusion (McLean, 2008; Rankin, Morton, & Bell, 2015; Ulrich, 2011). For example, bisexual people were explicitly prevented from being involved in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras for almost 10 years in the 1990s (Palotta-Chiarolli, 2011), and while these rules have changed over time, the festival name remains exclusive (McLean, 2008).

Double discrimination contributes significantly to the higher rates of physical and mental health disparities experienced by bisexual people in comparison to their lesbian and gay peers (McLean, 2008). They may feel guilt / shame about their identity due to constant invalidation and disapproval, and feel they need to alter their behaviours and partner choices in order to avoid discrimination (Rankin, Morton, & Bell, 2015). While this may increase acceptance in the short-term, this sustained inauthenticity can lead to social isolation resulting in serious mental health issues (McLean, 2008) and unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse and sexual risk-taking (Smalley, Warren, & Barefoot, 2016). These problems often become exacerbated as bisexual people feel less able to access psychological support due to a lack of awareness / understanding of their particular issues (Budge, Rossman, & Howard, 2014; Ulrich, 2011).

At a recent gathering of Australian bisexuals, visibility was noted as an overarching priority for the community. The group expressed deep concern about the mental health of bisexual people, with levels of psychological distress second only to the transgender community (see infographic). In spite of this, there is very little awareness or specific focus on this issue within the broader community. The group also discussed the need to feel genuinely included and treated as equals, both in mainstream society and the LGBTIQ+ community. This can start to be addressed by genuine representation and targeted services (Bisexual Alliance Victoria, Melbourne Bisexual Network, and Bisexual+

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