Social exclusion of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Europe

Written by Judit Takács
ILGA-Europe and IGLYO

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Content ●●●●●●●●

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Foreword ●●●●●●●●

This publication is the outcome of a fruitful and constructive partnership between ILGA-Europe and IGLYO, the International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organization.

Initiated by Birgit Hardt, who put social inclusion of young LGBT people on our agendas and brought our two organisations together, this research project was enriched by the ongoing contribution of numerous people.

The members of the research steering team, Peter Dankmeijer, Kim Smouter and Patricia Prendiville, provided valuable guidance on the methodology and the thinking on the issue of social exclusion of LGBT youth, as well as important feedback on drafts of this report.

Many people have contributed their time to help us produce this publication in an inclusive fashion by translating the questionnaires sent to young people in different languages: Roman Kuhar, Greg Czarnecki, Chris Swart, Cristian Nita, Linda Elstad, Andreas Nilsson, Jelena Chelebic, Katerina Nedbalkova, Tiago Lopes, Anna Kirey, Anke Bienwald, Eddy, Notty and Ana, Fabio Saccá and Maxence de Barros. Many others have provided assistance in making sure that the questionnaires would reach young people by sharing their technical skills and resources, and in helping the research team process the data collected (Attila Bartha, Katherine Fobear, Beverley Craig, as well as those behind the websites **www.gay.nl**, **www.gay.be**, **www.gay.hu** and **www.pride.hu**). We also thank Nate Nicholson, James Adutt and Chris Christiaansz Ungerer who proofread the report.

Our special thanks go to all the young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who shared their thoughts and experiences with us. Their testimonies are the heart of this publication, and testify to the need of combating discrimination and exclusion of young LGBT people.

Finally, we wish to thank the author, Judit Takács, not only for the high quality of this report, but also for her genuine enthusiasm, dedication and commitment to giving a voice to young people. We believe that this publication will make an important contribution to the work of our two organisations towards greater social inclusion of young LGBT people.

Evelyne Paradis (ILGA-Europe) and Björn van Roozendaal (IGLYO)

On behalf of the Research Steering Team

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Introduction

Background

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people continue to face discrimination and exclusion across Europe in all spheres of life. Homophobic violence and abuse targeting LGBT people occur on a regular basis. In most EU Member States, same-sex couples do not enjoy the same rights and protections as opposite sex couples, and consequently suffer from discrimination and disadvantage in access to social protection schemes, such as health care and pensions. In the labour market, a majority of LGBT people continue to hide their sexual orientation or to endure harassment out of fear of losing their job. Particularly vulnerable are young LGBT people who experience estrangement from family and friendship networks, harassment at school and invisibility, which can lead in some cases to underachievement at school, school drop-out, mental ill-health and homelessness. This discrimination not only denies LGBT people equal access to key social goods, such as employment, health care, education and housing, but it also marginalises them in society and makes them one of the vulnerable groups who are at risk of becoming socially excluded.

Although tackling social exclusion in the Member States of the European Union (EU) has been an objective since the launch of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, little attention has been paid to the exclusion that LGBT people experience in the context of European social policy, and in particular the EU social inclusion strategies. Yet, EU Member States have made many commitments to combating discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation within the EU, including by inscribing the principle of non-discrimination on this ground in European policy-making through Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty and the adoption of the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78). In fact, the link between discrimination and social exclusion has been recognised by the European Commission and the European Council on a number of occasions (as will be discussed in Chapter 1). However, there is a real need to bring equality and non-discrimination considerations into the core of European social policy-making and especially the EU social inclusion process, for discrimination remains one of the main causes of exclusion.

This joint IGLYO and ILGA-Europe project is a response to the need to bring to attention the social exclusion of young LGBT people in Europe. Drawing from ILGA-Europe's expertise in the field of EU policy-making and IGLYO's network of LGBT youth across Europe, this publication provides a comprehensive review

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of the mechanisms of social exclusion which affect young LGBT people and it illustrates the everyday discrimination and marginalisation which LGBT youth continue to experience in all EU Member States.

Aim

Thus, the first aim of this report is to contribute to national and European policy-makers' understanding of the need to formulate social inclusion policies that bear in mind the specific needs of LGBT people, and especially in the context of the EU social inclusion process. The report seeks to do this by highlighting the effect that discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and gender identity has on LGBT people's capacity to participate fully in society and be included in all areas of life.

A second objective of this report is to raise awareness about the need to take into consideration how multiple forms of discrimination interact to put people at a particular disadvantage and risk of exclusion. To this end, the main focus of this research was placed on young LGBT people. On one hand, young people have repeatedly been identified as a group particularly vulnerable to social exclusion and poverty, including by the European Council in the European Youth Pact adopted in 2005. The improvement of the situation of the most vulnerable young people was also made one of the key components of European youth policies by the European Commission (European Commission, COM (2005) 206 final). Yet, there is little awareness of the particular vulnerability of young LGBT people and limited understanding of the double disadvantage which these young people suffer because of their age and their sexual orientation, a disadvantage which can sometimes be increased by discrimination on grounds of sex, gender, disability, ethnic origin or religion. By bringing to light the existence of multiple forms of discrimination which have an impact of social inclusion of young LGBT people, this research wants to stress the importance of looking at all the factors which make people vulnerable to exclusion.

To achieve these two aims, the report examines the main mechanisms of social exclusion which affect young LGBT people as young people and LGBT people, in relation to education, health, employment and active citizenship. It establishes that young LGBT people can be socially excluded as a result of socio-economic factors (such as low income; unemployment; poor education, health, and housing conditions) and as a result of discrimination based on their sexual orientation which affects their ability to realise their autonomy and their citizenship rights.

This study emphasises the effects of the discrimination that young LGBT people encounter in their family,

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at school and in their community, on their ability to manage the transition from school to work, and to become autonomous adults and active citizens. The evidence collected in this report demonstrates how the various forms of discrimination that young LGBT people experience – such as estrangement from family networks, the sense of isolation and invisibility they experience at school and in society, as well as the harassment they are exposed to – reach all spheres of their life. In the educational setting, young LGBT people not only face the threat of homophobic bullying and harassment, but they also encounter structural levels of discrimination related to the lack of representation of homosexuality, bisexuality and gender identity in the education curriculum. Such factors have a negative impact on their achievement at school and access to education which in turn has negative effects on managing the transition from school to work. The harassment and discrimination experienced also makes LGBT youth more prone to mental health problems due to stress and low self-esteem, thereby increasing the risk of being isolated and excluded within their community.

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There are seven sections in this report. The first chapter reviews the definitions of the concept of *social inclusion* and *social exclusion*, as well as the commitments made by EU Member States in the field of social inclusion and non-discrimination in order to situate the analysis of the social exclusion of LGBT youth in the context of EU policy-making. Chapters 2 and 3 sketch the main characteristics of social exclusion of young people (chap. 2) and of LGBT people (chap.3) as a way to understand what are the principal mechanisms of exclusion specifically affecting these two groups. The fourth chapter presents a literature review of existing academic and community-based research and data which provides evidence of the social exclusion that young LGBT people experience in society. In particular, this section provides a reflection on the 'coming out' process and the issue of visibility of young LGBT people in society, policy-making and in research. It also looks at harassment, bullying and lack of representation of LGBT youth in educational setting, and at mental health problems which may result from discrimination, isolation and harassment.

The following chapter (chap.5) presents an original survey conducted by the ILGA-Europe and IGLYO social exclusion research team amongst young LGBT people from 37 countries across Europe. The personal accounts collected from 754 individuals depict the everyday life of young gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and their experiences of discrimination within their family, amongst friends, at school, in their community, and in the media. This qualitative data provides further evidence of how social

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exclusion mechanisms work to prevent the successful social integration of young LGBT people in Europe.

The concluding sections of this report include a compilation of good practices – i.e. projects and policies carried out in different EU Member States, which contribute to greater inclusion and recognition of LGBT youth – and recommendations for EU institutions and Member States to promote social inclusion of young LGBT people. These good practices and recommendations will hopefully contribute to a stronger commitment from all actors involved in the social inclusion process, in particular EU Member States and institutions, to fully integrate LGBT young people in social inclusion policies and programmes.

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1. Social inclusion and social exclusion at the European level

Social inclusion, as an objective of the European Union and a European policy strategy, was put on the European Social Policy Agenda at the Nice European Council in December 2000. The fight against poverty and social exclusion was introduced onto the EU agenda as one of the central elements of the Lisbon Strategy launched at the European Council in March 2000. The EU Social Inclusion Process was identified as one of the strategies to achieve the goal of the Lisbon Strategy which is to make the European Union the most dynamic, competitive, knowledge-based economy in the world, while ensuring that the benefits of the EU's growth reach everyone in society and that the policies are environmentally sustainable by 2010.

Promoting social inclusion and combating discrimination – on grounds listed in Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam[1] – were both featured among the main objectives and actions of the EU Social Policy Agenda for 2000-2005, which was aimed at "modernising the European social model" in the context of the Lisbon Strategy.[2] These objectives were reiterated in the most recent social agenda, published by the European Commission in 2005, which sets the achievement of "a more cohesive society" and "equal opportunities for all" as one of its two priority areas (European Commission, COM (2005) 33 final).

The new framework for social protection and social inclusion policies issued by the EU in 2005 further details these objectives, while reasserting the link between exclusion and discrimination (European Commission, COM(2005) 706 final). This document defines the following as specific objectives of the Social Inclusion Process:

[1] Article 13 of Treaty of Amsterdam – "Without prejudice to the other provisions of this Treaty and within the limits of the powers conferred by it upon the Community, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation."

[2] Among the objectives and actions listed in the Social Policy Agenda are the following:
"To prevent and eradicate poverty and exclusion and promote the integration and participation of all into economic and social life."
And "To ensure the development and respect of fundamental social rights as a key component of an equitable society and of respect for human dignity" (See European Commission COM (2000) 379 final).

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•   To "ensure the active social inclusion of all by promoting participation in the labour market and by fighting poverty and **exclusion among the most marginalised people and groups**" (*emphasis added*)

•   To "guarantee access for all to the basic resources, rights and social services needed for participation in society, while addressing extreme forms of exclusion and **fighting all forms of discrimination leading to exclusion**" (*emphasis added*).

While the promotion of social inclusion is an important objective of EU policies, it is important to keep in mind that the most recent social agenda and the objectives of the social inclusion process were adopted at a time when the European debate was dominated by the economic challenges faced by the EU and the refocusing of the Lisbon Strategy towards growth and employment. This refocusing has been accompanied by an increasingly wide-spread understanding of social policy as a means to achieve economic growth and employment in the context of EU policy-making.

This report seeks to argue for the benefits of social inclusion policies on their own terms, and not only as a means of achieving growth and employment objectives. As this report will show, forms of exclusion endure throughout the EU which can only be appropriately tackled by fighting discrimination which precludes individuals, such as LGBT people, from being able to fully participate in society as well as in the labour market, and from accessing all their rights.

1.1. Defining social inclusion and social exclusion

In order to promote and advance a policy of social inclusion, it is important to be clear about the problem it seeks to tackle, i.e. social exclusion. There is not a single understanding of social exclusion either among academics or among policy-makers, but it is increasingly acknowledged that the concept has a broader meaning than poverty.[3] In a book published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2003, Jordi Estivill explains that "social exclusion may be understood as an accumulation of confluent processes with successive ruptures arising from the heart of the economy, politics and society, which gradually distances and places persons, groups, communities and territories in a position of inferiority in relation to centres of power, resources and prevailing values" (Estivill 2003).

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[3] See "List of some definitions at EU and International Levels" in Mainstreaming Social Inclusion Project (2006), p. 76.

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The EU institutions have also put forward definitions of social exclusion which points to the exclusion of people from multiple spheres of life and the inability to fully participate in societal life, and which includes non-income related exclusion.[4] In the 2004 Joint Report on Social Inclusion, the European Commission and European Council defined social exclusion as a:

> "process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education and training opportunities as well as social and community networks and activities. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feel powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives". (European Council 2004)

The European Commission has also acknowledged that social exclusion often occurs in various and overlapping areas. In its Communication 'Building an Inclusive Europe', it is explained that "social exclusion goes beyond issues of unemployment and access to the labour market. It is evidenced by several types of deprivation and barriers, which alone or together prevent the full participation in areas such as education, health, environment, housing, culture, access to rights or family support, as well as training and job opportunities" (European Commission, COM(2000) 79 final).

By understanding social exclusion as being the result of societal aspects, attitudes, and perceptions which create an environment in which people are not fully able to participate in societal life, it becomes possible to see that not all excluded people are living in poverty or vice versa. Some have indeed argued that income can be interpreted only as "an imperfect proxy for inclusion or exclusion as even many non-poor may suffer from social exclusion as the same income may generate widely varying capabilities for different people because of their inherent diversity and as a result of inherent disadvantages by birth, background, or environment. Moreover, many elements of social 'inclusion' cannot be purchased simply with money as they are public goods that are under-provided by markets and therefore depend on public provision (or public support for private provision) or are directly dependent on public policy" (Klasen 2002: 11).

It is therefore important to adopt a more inclusive scope and context of social exclusion, especially when addressing social exclusion of LGBT people which cannot be defined strictly in socio-economic terms. One approach is to focus on the lack of full social, economic and cultural participation opportunities for

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[4] "Social exclusion does not only mean insufficient income. It even goes beyond participation in working life; it is manifest in fields such as housing, education, health and access to services. It affects not only individuals who suffered serious set-backs but social groups, particularly in urban and rural areas, who are subject to discrimination, segregation or the weakening of the traditional forms of social relations." European Commission, COM (1993) 551.

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individuals and social groups, as well as their social powerlessness regarding their ability to represent their interests as factors determining social exclusion. Doing so entails defining social cohesion as the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members and as a solidarity-creating strategy to tackle different forms of exclusion by means of both prevention and cure (Council of Europe, CDCS (2004)10). Another component of social exclusion, which is crucial to LGBT people, is their lack of recognition as full members of a community and as citizens, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

In this respect, it is important to note that EU institutions have defined social inclusion – the solution to social exclusion – to reflect the breadth and complexity of social exclusion processes. The 2004 Joint Report on Social Inclusion presents social inclusion as "a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have greater participation in decision-making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights (as defined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union)." (European Council 7101/04, March 2004)

1.2 "Including the excluded" in the EU social inclusion policy process

Policy objectives and definitions adopted by EU institutions have reflected an understanding of social exclusion which acknowledges the multi-dimensional nature of social exclusion, and which consequently provides a basis for calls for expanding policies to address social exclusion of LGBT people. To this end, it is important to look at how these objectives have been translated in policy-making terms, and in particular to highlight: 1) the importance of taking into consideration the whole range of fields where social exclusion takes place, and 2) the importance of recognising the diversity of people experiencing exclusion.

EU institutions have acknowledged that social exclusion occurs in a variety of fields and that it is not limited to employment. In a European Council report from 2002, it was acknowledged that "poverty and social exclusion take complex and multi-dimensional forms which require the mobilisation of a wide range of policies" and that "alongside employment policy, social protection as well as other important factors such as housing, education, health, information and communications, mobility, security and

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justice, leisure and culture must also be taken into consideration" in the fight against poverty and social exclusion (European Council 2002, 14164/1/02 REV 1).

Despite this statement, EU policies have tended to focus mainly on employment-related and income-related exclusion, and to considerably limit the attention paid, for example, to the intersection between exclusion and discrimination in education and health. Indicative of this trend are the indicators defined in the framework of the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) and the National Action Plans on Inclusion (NAPs/Inc), the main tools used by the EU to implement the Social Inclusion Process.[5] The European Commission has promoted the use of the indicators by Member States as a means of comparing best practice and measuring progress at the national level. However, the list of the primary indicators of social exclusion, developed by the Social Protection Committee and adopted by the European Council in 2002, includes mainly income and unemployment related items (Social Protection Committee 2001). The only non-income related indicators are the percentage of early school leavers and self perceived health status of the population. A similar approach is put forward in the document issued by Eurostat in 2005 entitled "In-Work Poverty: New commonly agreed indicators at the EU level" (Bardone – Guio 2005).

This being said, the multiplicity of fields of exclusion is more clearly reflected in the priorities set to encourage Member States to develop focused measures to address social exclusion. As defined in the 2005 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion – and reaffirmed in the 2006 Joint Report – Member States should develop policies and measures around the following seven priorities: 1) increasing labour market participation; 2) modernising social protection systems; 3) tackling disadvantages in education and training; 4) eliminating child poverty; 5) ensuring decent accommodation; 6) improving access to quality services; 7) overcoming discrimination and increasing the integration of people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and immigrants (European Commission, COM(2005)14 final).

These priorities do provide ground for Member States to work on exclusion in education, housing and health in addition to exclusion from the labour market, and they do define combating discrimination as a priority for the NAPs/Incl. However, the challenge lies in persuading Member States to address non-income related exclusion and discrimination in their NAPs/Incl. For, according to the 2006 guidelines for preparing the NAPs/Incl, Member States do have to pursue all seven objectives; they are invited to identify

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[5] In the context of the OMC, Member States agree on common policy objectives and common indicators to evaluate progress made towards these objectives, but it is up to the Member States to formulate their own action and policies to meet the common objectives according to what they consider to be priorities in their respective country. These national programmes are presented to the European Commission in the form of National Action Plans on Inclusion (NAPs/Inc). It should be noted that the competency of the EU in relation to the fight against poverty and social exclusion is to promote cooperation between Member States (based on Article 136 of the Treaty of Amsterdam).

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3 or 4 priority policy objectives which better correspond to national needs. Hence, the development of measures which address discrimination targeting groups like LGBT people and youth in particular, depends on the goodwill of public authorities.

However, as mentioned earlier (see point 1.1), focusing too much on income-related exclusion precludes public authorities from developing measures which would help tackle many underlying causes of exclusion, such as discrimination and violence at school. In the framework of the seven priorities listed above, it is important to promote a wider recognition of the diversity of experiences of exclusion in order to develop policies which tackle all underlying causes or factors of exclusion. For instance, as will be discussed later on in this report, policies to tackle disadvantages in education should address issues of bullying and harassment towards youth, including towards LGBT youth. Discrimination at school is an important factor influencing performance at school and ultimately may have an impact on a young person's transition from school to the workplace and his/her inclusion in other spheres of life.

The second element to stress in relation to policy-making is the importance of ensuring recognition of the diversity of everyone experiencing exclusion when defining the groups at risk of exclusion and poverty. Acknowledging the various forms of exclusion faced by certain groups, especially where social exclusion is not exclusively or primarily linked to the labour market, is a first step towards addressing their needs. But it is also important to identify who are the socially excluded.

The European Commission has recognised that people who experience discrimination are particularly at risk of social exclusion and poverty. In the 2006 guidelines for preparing the NAPs/Inc, the Commission encourages Member States "to take into account measures to fight discrimination on grounds of sex, race/ethnic origin, religion/belief, disability, **age and sexual orientation**" (*emphasis added*) when identifying measures to combat social exclusion at national level. This provides a basis to push Member States to include measures targeting LGBT people, and in particular young LGBT people who face discrimination in multiple grounds, in their NAPs/Inc.

Young people have also been identified as a group particularly at risk of social exclusion by the EU in many policy documents, including the European Youth Pact. Adopted in 2005 in conjunction with the revised Lisbon Strategy, the Youth Pact highlights the importance of addressing social inclusion of the youth in Europe (European Council 2005, 6326/05 JEUN 5 SOC 52). EU Heads of States reiterated the importance of improving the situation of young people at the 2006 Spring European Council where they affirmed that "Further progress is also needed as concerns measures for young people, including the implementation of the European Pact for Youth" (European Council, Presidency Conclusions, March 2006).

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In addition, in the Youth Pact, the European Council called upon Member States to give "priority under national social inclusion policy to improving the situation of the most vulnerable young people, particularly those in poverty, and to initiatives to prevent educational failure" (European Council, Presidency Conclusions, Annex I, March 2005).

On the basis of the above-mentioned documents, this report argues that there is scope to translate objectives of social inclusion for all – which includes LGBT people, and especially young people – in all aspects of economic, social and cultural life, into concrete policies and measures at the EU and national level.

Keeping in mind the EU policy framework and context described above, one aim of this report is to show the need to take a broader viewpoint of who are the socially excluded and of what social inclusion entails, in particular in the context of European policy-making, in order to tackle social exclusion of LGBT people. To this end, the following chapters will present an overview of the main aspects of social exclusion of young LGBT people, which occurs in social, cultural as well as economic spheres of life. It will also describe how LGBT youth, who are often forcibly excluded from society as a result of discrimination and marginalisation, see their potential and their ability to access their rights and to contribute positively to society curtailed

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2. Mechanisms of social exclusion affecting young people in general

People can be socially excluded as a result of many different, and sometimes compounding, factors. While young LGBT people are at risk of being discriminated and excluded because of their sexual orientation, they are also vulnerable to social exclusion because of their age. This is why it is important to briefly examine how social exclusion is experienced by young people in general.

It is generally recognised that people are more vulnerable to social exclusion at certain points in the life cycle. According to Katy Orr, they are especially vulnerable during childhood, the transition from education to employment and old age (Orr 2004:77). Young people are thus one of the sections of the population most likely to experience social exclusion. By comparison, the least likely to be socially excluded are those aged 25-50. There are also mechanisms of social exclusion which affect young people in a specific way. While these mechanisms are complex and multi-faceted, three key characteristics of social inclusion of young people can be identified: 1) the link between autonomy, independence and social integration; 2) the transition from school to work, and 3) the ability to participate and contribute to society as a citizen. The European Youth Forum report published in 2004 summarised these elements, explaining that: "For young people, the risk is particularly strong due to the transition from education to employment and from dependence to independence. This is a period of vulnerability for young people until they gain a firm foothold in employment and can depend on an adequate income. But youth is also often a period of dissatisfaction. Young people can feel alienated by society, by education systems and by the conditions in which they live" (Orr 2004:83).

2.1 Autonomy

Successful social integration of young people in general depends on many factors, of which one of the most important is being able to lead an autonomous life. The European Youth Forum defines autonomy as

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"the situation where young people have the necessary support, resources and opportunities to choose to live independently, to run their own lives and to have full social and political participation in all sectors of everyday life, and to be able to take independent decisions" (European Youth Forum 2004, COMEM 0052-04FINAL).

Nowadays there is increasing evidence to indicate that there are many factors that can and often do inhibit young people's ability to shape their own lives including often interwoven problems linked to education, employment and social protection, housing, transport and other policy areas. Providing young people with a chance to live autonomously is a complex issue, being very dependent on a variety of factors, including education, family, employment, access to social protection, health, housing, transport and mobility, justice, discrimination and social integration.

As the personal accounts from young LGBT people presented in Chapter 5 will clearly illustrate, acceptance and support for young LGBT people, or lack thereof, within the family, the school environment, circle of friends and the broader community has an undeniable impact of a young person's self-esteem, confidence and well-being, which in turn affect his/her ability to shape his/her own life.

2.2. Transition from education into employment

Given the importance of employment as a factor of social inclusion, the integration of young people into the labour market continues to be a crucial step in the inclusion of youth in society. However, for many young people, successfully managing this transition from school to work can prove challenging for many reasons. The unemployment rate among young people in Europe is indicative of the current situation. According to the European Youth Forum, young people are at least twice as likely to be unemployed as any other adults and are more likely to be among the working poor (Orr 2004: 84). Data from the ILO corroborated this trend and showed that, between 1993 and 2003 in industrialised economies, young people were 2.3 times more likely to be unemployed when compared with older workers. Moreover, the proportion of employed young people out of all young people decreased throughout Europe during the same period; in the transition economies, while the youth population grew by 10.1 per cent, youth employment decreased by 11.7 per cent. This being said, the ILO report on "Global Employment Trends for Youth" noted a significant decrease in youth unemployment in the industrialised economies resulting from the combination of demographic trends, longer education spells and policies specifically focusing on

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young people. Thus, it is important to emphasise two general trends where youth employment is concerned: 1) unemployment rate tends to fall with age; and 2) the incidence of unemployment tends to be higher among less educated young people (ILO 2004).

While the general employment situation does influence the trends in youth employment, the integration of young people in the labour market has its own distinctive features which require specific policy responses. In Europe, the youth employment challenge may be linked to various factors such as cyclical trends and structural factors, but it is also related to discrimination and social disadvantage. Some groups of young people are more vulnerable and face particular disadvantages in entering and remaining in the labour market (ILO 2004 - TMYEWF/2004/7).Given the significant relationship between the level of education and employment, the transition from education to employment is an especially risky one for young people suffering from an "education deficit", i.e. those who have limited formal education or are early school leavers or drop-outs. Transition from school to work can also be rendered difficult because of lack of financial support to ensure a positive transition. According to the report of the European Youth Forum, young people are particularly vulnerable at the time of this transition because "they may not have a sufficient income to cover their living costs, especially if they cannot depend on familial or state support structures. Thus the period of the transition is one when young people risk poverty, or even social exclusion in the most extreme cases." (Orr 2004:45). Furthermore, as explained in a 2005 report by the ILO, dimensions of vulnerability – such as discrimination, economic hardship or geographic location – often interact and magnify the extent of exclusion of young people (ILO 2005).

The outcome of the transition process not only has high short-term costs, but it can have a continuing impact throughout the life cycle in a person's capacity to be included in society. As will be discussed in the following chapters, in the case of young LGBT people, factors impending on young people's achievement in school and his/her ability to learn – such as discrimination, lack of safety and mental health issues – deserve particular attention because of the impact of education on the transition from school to the labour market.

2.3 Participation and citizenship

The ability to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life as well as in decision-making is another integral part of the process of social inclusion (see discussion in section 1.1.). However, young people tend to be less empowered and represented, and are often unable to have their voices heard in policy-making

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and in society at large. This is especially true for young people who belong to a social minority. As acknowledged by Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli, former President of the European Economic and Social Committee, "young people all over Europe face the danger of being excluded from full participation in society because of their gender, ethnic origin, disability, employment status, sexual orientation and many other reasons" (European Youth Forum 2000).

Here it is useful to introduce the concept of citizenship into the discussion on the multidimensional mechanisms of social exclusion which affect young people in Europe. Looking at the question of full participation in society as a question of citizenship allows us to emphasise that the inability to participate in, and be respected by, mainstream society is a violation of a basic right that should be open to all citizens. In this framework, the burden is placed on society to ensure that it enables participation and integration of all its members, as opposed to those who are excluded and sometimes blamed for their fate. The citizenship framework also highlights the role of political, economic and social arrangements in generating exclusion and the role of solidarity among members in overcoming it. Another advantage of this concept is that instead of demanding uniformity of outcomes, it calls for equal freedoms for all to enjoy all aspects of citizenship. The citizenship discourse of social exclusion thus focuses on claims for equal capabilities – to be interpreted as the ability to exercise civil and social citizenship rights – which may necessitate extra efforts by society. In this context, it is important to realise that an equal starting point – i.e. providing 'equal opportunities' – may not be enough to ensure equal capabilities (Klasen 2002). It is also important to take into consideration the fact that groups and individuals who are socially excluded often belong to one or more social minority group, and that there is a hierarchic dimension of social exclusion, which reflects differences in social power relations between those who are "excluded" and those who are "included".

In short, the processes linked to the autonomy, employment and citizenship of young people greatly influence the ability of young people to be socially included. But the degree to which young people are able to become autonomous, to successfully integrate the labour market and to participate fully and meaningfully in society varies greatly and depends on numerous social, economic, cultural, political and personal factors. The following chapters will explore how, for young LGBT people, the discrimination and marginalisation they experience because of their sexual orientation (and/or their gender identity) constitutes an added obstacle to their social inclusion.

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3. Understanding social exclusion of LGBT people

If people can be socially excluded for a variety of reasons, they also experience different forms of social exclusion. What being social exclusion entails for LGBT people is not the same thing as what it entails for someone who is unemployed or homeless for instance.

The exclusion experienced by LGBT people results mostly from the discrimination they face in all spheres of life, a discrimination which hampers their ability to have and access equal rights, and to participate fully in society. For one of the main characteristics of the social exclusion of LGBT people is their invisibility and marginalisation, or in more political terms, the lack of recognition of LGBT people as full members of a community and as citizens.

First, it is important to define what we mean by LGBT. LGBT is an umbrella term covering a very heterogeneous group of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who often feature together as a group in political efforts in the local and international political arena for efficiency: in order to get a better social representation and more political support. While there can be significant differences between the individuals who agree to be politically represented under the LGBT heading, their main uniting force derives from their membership to a social minority group. LGBT people are members of relatively powerless social groups, but they differ from "traditional" minorities in two main aspects: 1) they are usually not marked by their bodies – for example, by their skin colour –, thus they are not recognisable at first sight; and 2) their existence is still perceived in a lot of places as "challenging the natural order of things" (Gross 1991).

LGBT people as members of a social minority group can suffer from various forms of socio-economic and cultural injustice, but their exclusion tends to follow mostly from lack of recognition of their identity as a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender person. Using a terminology introduced by Nancy Fraser, the political claims of LGBT people can rather be identified as claims for *recognition* aimed at remedying

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cultural injustice than some sort of political-economic restructuring referred to as *redistribution* aiming at redressing economic injustice. In this context, recognition is defined as a cultural or symbolic change involving the upward revaluation of disrespected identities, or even a complete transformation of societal patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication in ways that would change everybody's sense of self. As Fraser further explains:

"Sexuality […]is a mode of social differentiation whose roots do not lie in the political economy because homosexuals are distributed throughout the entire class structure of capitalist society, occupy no distinctive position in the division of labour, and do not constitute an exploited class. Rather, their mode of collectivity is that of a despised sexuality, rooted in the cultural-valuational structure of society. From this perspective the injustice they suffer is quintessentially a matter of recognition. Gays and lesbians suffer from heterosexism: the authoritative construction of norms that privilege heterosexuality. Along with these goes homophobia: the cultural devaluation of homosexuality. Their sexuality thus disparaged, homosexuals are subject to shaming, harassment, discrimination, and violence, while being denied legal rights and equal protections – all fundamentally denials of recognition. To be sure, gays and lesbian also suffer serious economic injustices; they can be summarily dismissed from paid work and are denied family-based social-welfare benefits. But far from being rooted directly in the economic structure, these derive instead from an unjust cultural-valuational structure" (Fraser 1997:18).

This lack of social recognition has an effect on the capacity of LGBT people fully to access and enjoy their rights as citizens, especially if we accept the notion that full citizenship "requires that one be recognized not in spite of one's unusual or minority characteristics, but with those characteristics understood as part of a valid possibility for the conduct of life" (Phelan 2002:16). Many models of citizenship introduced in the 1990s – such as feminist citizenship (Walby 1994), sexual citizenship (Evans 1993), intimate citizenship (Giddens 1992; Plummer 1995; 2003) – have emphasised this need to broaden the scope of modern citizenship in order to allow for the full participation of social groups, such LGBT people, who are deprived of full community membership.

One such model is that of *intimate citizenship* which focuses on a fourth category of citizenship rights[6] that examines "rights, obligations, recognition and respect around those most intimate spheres of life – who to live with, how to raise children, how to handle one's body, how to relate as a gendered being, how to be an erotic person" (Plummer 2001:238). Similarly, proponents of *sexual citizenship* have explored the genders, sexualities and bodies of citizens that "matter in politics". They have drawn attention to forms of

[6]According to T.H. Marshall (1963), citizenship is defined as a status enjoyed by persons who are full members of a community. Three categories of rights are attached to this status: civil, political, and social rights.

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social exclusion that LGBT people can experience in relation to, for example, free expression, bodily autonomy and institutional inclusion, and have pointed to the necessity of challenging the heterosexist assumptions that govern most societies (Hekma 2004), where equality and normality is still "defined in terms of sameness with heteronormative mainstream values and practices" (Richardson 2004:407).

In this framework, providing full – or close to full – community membership and ensuring social inclusion to LGBT people can be achieved by broadening the political agenda in at least three dimensions: 1) in gaining respect and representation in national institutions, including the government, workplaces, schools, families, and welfare and health care institutions; 2) in having social dialogues encouraged by institutions, and in a manner which ensures that the concerns of all the parties can be voiced and heard; and 3) by revisiting the norm of the *good citizen* who tends to be heterosexual - or at least a "normal gay" who is "expected to be gender conventional, link sex to love and a marriage-like relationship, defend family values, personify economic individualism, and display national pride." (Seidman 2002:133). Political scientists have emphasized the benefits for the whole of society of working towards this goal of inclusion of marginalised groups like LGBT people, arguing that, while exclusion undermines promises of equal opportunity and political equality implied in democratic commitments, more inclusion of and influence for currently under-represented social groups can help a society confront and find some remedies for structural social inequality (Young 2000).

Thus, the picture of social exclusion of LGBT people is one in which individuals are not recognised for who they are and are socially marginalised because of their identity as a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender person, and as a result, are not given the opportunity fully to participate in all spheres of life nor to access all their rights as citizens. It is this form of social exclusion which young LGBT people also experience, in addition to the challenges they face as young people, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

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4. The main fields of social exclusion of young LGBT people

As young people and LGBT people, LGBT youth often become victims of multidimensional mechanisms of social exclusion and multiple forms of discrimination on the basis of age and sexual orientation. These overlapping aspects of vulnerability imply that European LGBT youth can be socially excluded as a result of their low incomes, their unemployment, their poor education, health, and housing conditions, their gender, religion, ethnic origin, as well as their inability to realise their autonomy and citizenship rights because of their LGBT status. In this chapter, we will present academic and community research findings, which describe the main fields where young LGBT people encounter social exclusion: education, health and representation in the public sphere.

4.1 Invisibility

One could argue that the most consequential part of the social exclusion of LGBT youth is their invisibility. As is the case for LGBT people in general, young LGBT people are (usually) not marked by their bodies and therefore, are not recognisable at first sight. When personal invisibility is transformed into personal visibility, it can be accompanied by claims for (more) social visibility, recognition, equality, acknowledgement and respect for LGBT people. However, coming out of invisibility is a very critical process for most young LGBT people, a process which implies the risk of being excluded from the 'normal functioning of heteronormative society'.

Researchers have emphasised that if the social environment is disapproving of their emerging sexual orientation, LGBT adolescents may experience profound isolation and fear of discovery, which then interferes with achieving the main developmental tasks of adolescence related to self-esteem, identity, and intimacy (Frankowski 2004). Research findings also indicated that those "lesbians and gay men who have escaped social condemnation have, more often than not, lived a life hidden from public view,

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altering behaviour, avoiding certain places and people in an effort to retain an outward 'air' of heterosexuality… In contrast, those who have lived openly have often faced social, political, economic and religious condemnation, sometimes receiving the blame for acts or events that are unrelated to their sexual orientation" (Rivers – Carragher 2003: 375).

Other authors have referred to the life strategy that consists in deciding to remain hidden (or rather imprisoned) in order to avoid negative experiences and discrimination, as an illusionary strategy, an "unbearable comfort" (Švab – Kuhar 2005), explaining that it can also have high costs. Young people, who invent "survival strategies" to hide, spend huge amounts of energy on monitoring their behaviour. This can lead LGBT adolescents who wish to remain hidden to develop patterns of socialisation that differ from those of heterosexual adolescents: the former are learning to conceal themselves during the period while most of the others are discovering how to express themselves socially (Martin 1982).

For example, while research with adult women has demonstrated that greater *outness* – i.e. openness about one's lesbian identification – may have a positive impact on mental health, when a young woman 'comes out', she may be putting herself at greater risk. Compared to an adult woman, a young woman has relatively less control over her daily environment and may be forced to encounter discrimination, harassment and violence in her home and school environment (Morris – Waldo – Rothblum 2001). It has also been emphasized that because of the under-representation of lesbians in society, there has been an absence of positive lesbian role models, which has, in turn, resulted in many women feeling increasingly isolated, thus reducing the likelihood of them taking positive steps towards 'coming out' (Rothblum 1990).

The adolescent years are especially challenging for young LGBT people because of their increased emotional and economic dependency on others at home and at school. Disclosure of their orientation and identity during adolescence and young adulthood is thus largely dependent on the social support they have from families and friends (D'Augelli – Hershberger – Pilkington 1998). The social contexts of schools and families are of utmost importance in the lives of most adolescents, including LGBT youth. Therefore, in addition to worrying about being verbally abused or physically attacked and consequently suffering from chronic stress for years, the accumulated weight of uncertain acceptance both by family and peers can lead many young people to hide their sexual orientation until early adulthood, when they are independent of families and are no longer in school (D'Augelli 2003).

Another factor which may prevent young people being open about their LGB identification, and may cause them to begin living a double life is the homophobia – i.e. prejudice, hatred, fear of LGB people and same-sex attraction – that young lesbian, gay and bisexual people often experience within their family

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due to the unappreciative perception of what it is to be gay. Homophobia in the family can develop into violence and active restriction of young people expressing their sexuality. For some, this can lead directly to homelessness (Gold 2005, Roche 2005, McNamee 2006). According to British research findings, problems linked to intolerance and homophobia can contribute to the loss of stable housing or exacerbate periods of homelessness, particularly amongst those who are most vulnerable, such as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender youth. Homophobia can lead to young people being thrown out of – or deciding to leave – home. In a recent study, leaving home because of negative attitudes to sexual orientation was a key predictor for suicidal thoughts (McNamee 2006). Facing emotional and psychological difficulties in coming to terms with their sexuality, which may also resulting from internalised homophobia, as well as the perspective of having to cope with intolerance and unsupportive environments, young people can be forced into homelessness (O'Connor – Molloy 2001; Dunne – Prendergast – Telford 2002).

Forced invisibility of young LGBT people can be detected in all walks of life: at home, in school, in school curricula, in social and health care institutions, in media representations, in the training material of professionals dealing with young people as well as in academic research.

Invisibility in research

Given the specific ways in which these young people are marginalised, there is obvious need for research to explore how social exclusion processes can be resisted and how appropriate support can be provided for them. However, the very nature of LGBT people's vulnerability means that both the school and the family home environments, where academics usually carry out work with young people, are potentially difficult spaces in which to access and work with these groups. Considering the heterosexuality that prevails in the cultures of young people's peer groups and the stigmatisation of lesbian and gay sexualities, asking young people to identify themselves as lesbian or gay in a school-based research would mean putting them at risk of bullying and social exclusion (Valentine – Butler – Skelton 2001). At the same time, heterosexuality of the family home, which reigns and is taken for granted, can also be experienced as oppressive and alienating for them. In contrast with other vulnerable youth groups such as minority ethnic youth who generally do not face problems of racism and religious intolerance within their own families, "for gays and lesbians abuse often begins at home" (Nardi – Bolton 1998:141).

There are additional problems associated with conducting research on/with LGBT youth deriving from homogenisation tendencies: "One of the challenges in assessing and advocating for the needs of young LGBT people has been the convention adopted by many advocates and some researchers to represent LGBT youth (and findings from studies conducted predominantly with gay youth) as a single homogenous group. … Only by carefully assessing the experiences of young people in different cultural groups and

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environments, we can understand the unique stressors and protective factors that mediate risk, thus enabling providers and policymakers to develop appropriate services and policies to create supportive communities for LGBT youth" (Ryan – Rivers 2003:105).

Within studies focusing on LGBT youth, young gay men tend to receive most of the attention. The under-representation of lesbians in this line of research can be explained by the functioning of "heteropatriarchy" where the baseline for all behaviour is constructed from a straight male perspective (Kitzinger – Perkins 1993). There has been much less attention paid to the additional vulnerabilities of bisexual youth, and the particular risk of violence and discrimination young transgendered people may experience (Ryan – Rivers 2003).

It has also been noted that data on LGBT youth tend to be skewed, in that they represent those young people who are open about their sexual orientation from a relatively early age, who should be seen as being the exception rather than the rule (Rivers 1997). Therefore, in addition to gender, the link between the degree to which people can openly acknowledge their sexuality (and/or gender identity) and its relationship to their position in the social, economic and political environment should also be taken into consideration. Here, we should also refer to the problematic situation of young LGBT people living in countries where cultural identities and needs related to sexuality are still only vaguely understood by researchers and policy makers (Ryan – Rivers 2003).

As a result of the under-representation in academic research, policy-makers also tend to pay very limited attention to the specific needs and problems of LGBT youth: "When left out of research, sexual minorities become invisible, not just in the annals of science, but at the policy table as well" (Kadour 2005:33). For example, invisibility of sexual minorities in demographic research has serious causes and consequences:

> "official agencies that produce demographic data have continuously failed to ask questions about sexuality. This omission is not a simple oversight. It reflects the power of heteronormativity […] By not accounting for sexual identity in demographic research, characterisations of minority, abnormality and pathology in non-heterosexual people are left unchallenged. The official statistical 'silence' on sexuality in the Census allows the perpetuation of the idea that sexual diversity, and prejudice and discrimination on the basis of sexuality, is a private trouble with no public issues or consequences … It encourages the belief that when sexuality is portrayed in the public arena, it is as a moral, health or legal 'problem'. It intrinsically identifies non-heterosexuals as people we need not know about. […] An absence of official data on non-heterosexual sexuality has concrete negative impacts when official data forms the basis for decisions about levels of public policy

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provision and recognitions of legitimacy in areas such as qualifications for private and public benefits, pensions and partnership rights. Without such data, people work with folklore-pathological beliefs on the moral degradation, biological determination, minority status, potential health risks and corrupting social impacts of non-heterosexuals" (Reynolds 2001: 63-64).

This being said, in addition to the challenges linked to applying statistical surveys and quantitative data collection methods in sexual (and/or gender) identity related research (Stanley 1995), it should also be kept in mind that asking sexual orientation in administrative collection exercises could provide results that might be subject to political abuse. As the majority of LGBT people are not in a position to disclose their sexual orientation, inaccurate quantitative data could be used to reduce the level of recognition and funding, or service provision directed to them (McManus 2003).

While there is a clear lack of population-based studies on LGBT people in general and young LGBT people in particular, community research findings are often dismissed as lacking validity because of the use of convenience or targeted samples. However, community-based samples, while not representing the broader population, can serve an important purpose: they "should not be dismissed as has often occurred within government agencies. Rather these studies reflect the lived experience of self-identified LGBT youth and are vital sources of essential data to reflect the changing cultural experiences of LGBT youth, ethnic and cultural differences, risk and protective factors, socialization and development" (Ryan – Rivers 2003:111).

4.2 Mental health

The fact that young people who are open about their non-heterosexual behaviour and identity are likely to experience homophobia and heterosexism from friends, family and society at large, may encourage them to keep their identity and behaviour secret, and to avoid seeking out services that they might need (Campbell – Aggleton 1999). This in turn means that they are not provided with appropriate mental and sexual health services, because of the perception that there are not enough young LGBT people who need them.

Studies focusing on the specific mental health problems – relating to substance abuse, eating disorders, homelessness, depression, and suicide – and needs of young LGBT people emphasise that there is no association between their sexual orientation and psychopathology. However, like members of other minorities, they are subject to chronic and acute stress, related to their occupation of a stigmatised social position: "The mental health problems that may appear among lesbian and gay young adults tend to be explained in social or socio-political rather then psychological terms, [and a] potential range of

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psychologically demanding situations arising largely from the social context, including negative social representations of lesbian and gay sexuality [which] translate into a heightened psychological vulnerability of young lesbians and gay males as a sexual minority" (Vincke – van Heeringen 2002:182).

A study investigating the perceived and expressed mental health needs of young same-sex attracted men in Northern Ireland (N=190)[7] revealed that 32% of the respondents had a potential psychiatric disorder; 34% had been diagnosed with a mental illness at some time in their lives; 27 % had attempted suicide, 31% had harmed themselves, and 71% had thought about taking their own life. 80% of the respondents who had suicidal thoughts indicated that the suicidal thoughts were related to their same-sex attraction. The findings showed that some young, same-sex attracted men experience extreme isolation when coming to terms with their sexual orientation. This isolation often continued after the revelation of their sexual orientation: negative attitudes to non-heterosexual people within school, from family members, at work and from individuals in day-to-day life were a constant reminder that to be gay or bisexual is not fully acceptable in society. The research suggested that it is "not just one homonegative experience that can affect young same-sex attracted men, rather, it is the repeated exposure of incidences of homophobia and heterosexism that will eventually be detrimental to young, same-sex attracted men's mental health" (McNamee 2006:81).

Suicide

Concepts of "minority stress" and "gay-related stress" highlight the role of internalised homophobia, self-concealment and emotional inhibition in developing mental health problems specifically related to their (sexual) minority status, including suicidal thoughts and attempts (DiPlacido 1988; Meyer 1995; Rotheram-Borus et al. 1994). The homophobic character of mental health services, as it was demonstrated by the first qualitative research study carried out in this field in Britain, can present LGBT people with additional difficulties, especially if we take into consideration that historically, psychiatry has viewed homosexuality as a psychopathology, and that some doctors and therapists still subscribe to this view (McFarlane, 1998).

According to research findings (primarily American research), the key risk indicator for suicide among adolescents is sexual minority status: "numerous studies spanning the past quarter century have used varied designs and methods in multiple settings and have consistently demonstrated that sexual minority youth are among those most likely to report suicidality (suicidal thoughts, plans, and attempts)" (Russell 2003:1241). A new generation of studies on sexual minority status and the risk for suicide began in the late 1990s with the publication of the first research based on large-scale, representative, and thus

[7] N=size of the sample

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generalisable samples of adolescents (Garofalo et. al. 1998; Remafedi et. al. 1998; Russel – Joyner 2001), and provided a strong link between sexual minority status and suicidality.

Transgender individuals have also been found to have high rates of suicidal ideation. In a study by Mathy (2002), transgender men and women were more likely to have suicidal thoughts and make suicide attempts than non-transgender heterosexual women and both non-transgender heterosexual and gay men. These findings held true for all transgender participants regardless of their sexual orientation (Jernewall 2004).

"Young, gay and suicidal: Who cares?" was the title of an Australian psychology conference where research findings were presented on the attitudes of 1400 heterosexual and homosexual men and women towards gay and lesbian adolescent suicide. According to these findings, there is a belief within the Australian heterosexual and homosexual communities that suicide is one of the recognised and accepted choices open to young persons who become aware of their homosexuality (Molloy et al. 2003).

Yet, a recent study (Jesdale – Zierler 2002) indicates that in American states that enacted gay rights laws, there was a decrease in adolescent suicide for Caucasian males. While a definitive causal link cannot be established, this study offers hope that by creating a more accepting climate for LGBT people, the rate of suicide and suicidal ideation among this population can be decreased. It should also be pointed out that it is not very likely that the rate of suicide attempts of young LGBT people is overestimated; instead it is more probable that suicide attempts are underreported. The underreporting occurs because many youth have not disclosed their sexual orientation or family members may not be willing to offer this information post-mortem (Jernewall 2004).

4.3 School environment

The school environment of LGBT youth is often described as a "strictly heteronormative space" that force them to hide their feelings and sexuality. A Finnish study points out that school space "enforces gendered groupings and sexualizes the oppositional rooms and spaces of girls and boys, while concurrently discouraging sexual and loving emotional and physical interactions between persons of their same gender" (Lehtonen 1993:103).

Similar conclusions were drawn by education experts of New Zealand who stated that schools operate as heteronormalising institutions because of their "use of silence, the pathologisation of (homo)sexuality and the policing of gender through adherence to binary frameworks which define appropriate and normal gender and sexual behaviours" (Quinlivan – Town 1999:514). The pervasive silence of schools concerning LGBT people's experience, feelings and perceptions of their sexuality has disempowering effects by

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contributing to the isolation and invisibility of LGBT youth within the school environment (Sears 1992). The majority of young LGBT people think that coming out would endanger their physical and emotional well-being and therefore they choose to manage their identities by hiding, a practice which can result in suicide ideation, depression, dysfunctional peer group and family relationships, alcohol and drug use (D'Augelli 2002; D'Augelli – Hershberger 1993; Hershberger – D'Augelli 1995; Kourany 1987).

It should also be pointed out that adolescence is a period during which young people learn about social and cultural attitudes regarding gender. It is a time when the boundaries of gender expression as well as the social regulation of gendered behaviour are strict and strictly enforced by significant others, including peer group members, friends, teachers, and family members. In recent years, much attention has been focused on documenting and explaining the high rates of health risks among LGBT youth. One key factor believed to be associated with this risk is atypical gender expression, or gender nonconformity (Russel 2002). Findings suggest that gender nonconforming youth, both LGBT and heterosexual, are at risk in the school environment. Pupils who do not fit gender stereotypes (such as the "Sissy-boy" and the "Tom-girl") are typical victims of bullying – where bullying is defined as the systematic abuse of power which repeatedly and deliberately harms others (Reid – Monsen – Rivers 2004).

In this context, special attention must be paid to the problems young transgender or transsexual people can encounter in secondary and higher educational settings, including safety concerns, bathroom and health care access, and the proper gender designation on records. Secondary school environments are often more difficult for young trans-people because of the greater peer pressure to conform to gender norms, as well as the almost complete lack of knowledge about transgender issues (Beemyn 2004).

Another key element of the school environment is the school curriculum. One of the first studies addressing experiences of lesbian and gay youth in secondary schools was conducted in London in 1984 (Trenchard 1984; Trenchard – Warren 1984; Warren 1984). In 2001, the original project of the London Gay Teenage Group was replicated (Ellis – High 2001). Comparison of the findings of 1984 and of 2001 showed a significant change concerning curriculum subjects where the topic of homosexuality was raised (see table below).

English	10,6%	29,6%
PSHE/sex education	2,6%	23,2%
Religious education	10,3%	17,5%
Biology	8,7%	12,3%
Sociology	4,6%	10,2%
'Homosexuality was not mentioned in any subjects.'	58%	24%

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However, even though the frequency of mentioning homosexuality as part of school curriculum increased, only a small proportion of students found that it was mentioned in a "helpful way" (8% in 1984, 17% in 2001). In fact in 2001 more than half of the respondents (59%) said that it was not talked about in a helpful way (in 1984 this proportion was 33%). "Unhelpful mention" of homosexuality was often related to pathologisation, or "stacks of negative fact aiming to put you off" as one respondent phrased it (Ellis – High 2001:221), especially in PSHE/sex education and biology/science classes, thus reflecting the old tradition of classifying homosexuality as a mental illness and/or an indicator of susceptibility to infection.

The authors of this study pointed to the dangers of presenting sexuality and sexual identity in the single form of (typically male) homosexuality, which is a reductive strategy that actively renders students who are beginning to identify as lesbian or gay a minority. Practices of devoting one class to homosexuality among topics like euthanasia, racism and abortion also give the impression that it is a marginal and controversial issue or a "problem to be solved", in connection to which the highest educational aim can only be tolerance.

This longitudinal research also highlighted problems experienced by LGB youth in school. While in 1984 39.4% of the respondents reported that they had problems because of their LGB identification, in 2001, the percentage went up to 50,8%; at the same time, there was a slight decrease in the proportion of those who did not report any problems (60,6% (1984) and 49,2% (2001) respectively). Among the problems experienced in school, a worrying increase of verbal abuse (1984: 7.7%; 2001: 36.6%), physical assault (4.6%; 15.4%) and feelings of isolation (9.1%; 35,9%) could be detected.

A recent American study, examining the relationship between at-school victimization and health risk behaviours in a large representative sample of young gays, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexuals (N=9188), found that the combined effect of LGB status and high levels of at-school victimization was associated with the highest levels of health risk behaviours:

> "LGB youths reporting high levels of at-school victimization reported higher levels of substance use, suicidality, and sexual risk behaviours than heterosexual peers reporting high levels of at-school victimisation. Also, LGB youths reporting low levels of at-school victimisation reported levels of substance use, suicidality, and sexual-risk behaviours that were similar to heterosexual peers who reported low at-school victimisation" (Bontempo – D'Augelli 2002:364).

According to a Swedish author, social marginalisation is a serious health threat for young people whose personal feelings differ from those of mainstream society – especially in the transitional developmental stage of adolescence "characterised by becoming, not being". After realising that such desires are not

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valued by society at large, they commonly feel alienated: "Self-medication with drugs is one resource for troubled young people. Dropping out is a common negative reaction to being bullied in school" (Berg-Kelly 2003:143). Therefore, it is critical that schools find a way to create safe and supportive environments for students who are or wonder about being non-heterosexual. Support for them can be provided not only the school staff and educational experts, but also from other professionals such as respected paediatricians who can also help to raise awareness among school and community leaders about issues relevant to non-heterosexual youth (Frankowski 2004).

Evidence for the prevalence of at-school victimisation is also documented by British and Flemish findings. A Flemish survey of 1562 LGB young people, who had attended school in the previous three years, revealed that large fractions had suffered teasing (48%), ridiculing (48%), name calling (39%), physical pain (23%), fear (21%), and isolation (36%) (Vincke – Stevens 1999). Similarly, the results of a survey conducted by Stonewall in 1996 with a sample of 4200 gay and lesbian adults from the UK demonstrated that people under 18 were particularly at risk from violent assault and that 40% of all violent attacks on lesbians and gays under 18 took place at school (Mason – Palmer 1996). In addition, a survey of 300 secondary schools in England and Wales found that 82% of teachers were aware of verbal incidents and 26% were aware of physical incidents of homophobic bullying. Almost all these schools had anti-bullying policies, but only 6% referred to this specific type of bullying (DfED 2002:15).

A study of 190 young (15-25 year old) same-sex attracted men in Northern Ireland showed that homonegative experiences in school had a crucial impact on suicide and self-harm. Experience of bullying was a key factor in predicting whether the respondents had attempted suicide, while homophobia from other pupils was a key factor in whether the respondent had considered suicide. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents experienced some difficulties in school related to sexual orientation: homophobia from other pupils (52%), bullying (45%), achieved lower results (19%), avoided attending school – truancy (18%), homophobia from teaching staff (15), leaving school early/dropping out (10%), homophobia from other school staff (10%). Respondents who were bullied in school were more likely to have been diagnosed with a mental health problem, been referred for professional help, have a lower self-esteem, have self-harmed, have considered suicide and have attempted suicide (McNamee 2006).

Another three-year qualitative research in the UK focussed on the reactions of those who suffered anti-lesbian/gay abuse at school (N=190). The content of abuses documented in this study included experiences such as "I was called names", "I was hit or kicked", "I was frightened when a particular person looked in my direction", "No one would speak to me", "Rumours were spread about me", "I was ridiculed in front of others", "I was sexually assaulted", "They took my belongings". The findings of this research

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indicated the potential long-term ramifications of school absenteeism which result from anti-lesbian/gay abuse: fewer absentees remain at school after the age of 16 years; thus there are more early school leavers with fewer qualifications among those who suffer from anti-gay harassment. It was also noted that a significant proportion of absentees contemplated self-harm or suicide as a result of anti-lesbian/gay abuse. Absenteeism was found to be associated significantly with three particular form of harassment: psychological intimidation, being ridiculed publicly by peers and having personal belongings stolen. The victims of these forms of harassment may have been forced to miss classes or feign illness in order to avoid admitting to the loss of books, sport equipment or even homework, while they felt uncomfortable about disclosing the reasons underlying their harassment at school. The study concludes that absenteeism is a common phenomenon among sexual minority youth, leading to poor academic performance and suicidal ideation, which highlight the need for the proactive involvement of those professionals who work in conjunction with schools in setting up anti-harassment initiatives in order to create a safe school environment for all (Rivers 2000).

A qualitative research, conducted by the National Centre for Social Research and carried out with representatives from 41 LGBT organisations in Scotland, indicated that education was identified by LGBT representatives as a key area for research priority. This included:
•   assessments of teaching on equality and sexual orientation;
•   investigation of the training needs of teachers;
•   exploration of the impact of bullying and homophobia in schools (McManus 2003).

It was also emphasized that homophobic bullying and violence is an issue going beyond education itself, since it can affect the learned behaviours of children as well as the opinions and attitudes which they carry into maturity. Therefore, it was recommended to record all instances of bullying as a way of demonstrating the scale of the problem.

This research also pointed out that, until LGBT teachers feel comfortable to be open about their sexual or gender identity, without fearing to lose a promotion or to attract censure from colleagues, it is unlikely that pupils will develop more positive attitudes towards LGBT or as LGBT people. Additionally, the research reflected the need expressed to see sexual orientation issues as well as positive representation of LGBT people and their families included in the school curriculum. This can help pupils to become more accepting of alternative family structures, while seeing their life experience reflected in the school curriculum can be very affirmative for both young LGBT people and the children of LGBT parents. Consequently, the exploration of the specific training needs of teachers and other school employees to enable them to address issues of sexual orientation within education is also crucially important (McLean – O'Connor 2003).

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A unique Dutch research on job perception and health of homosexual and bisexual teachers highlighted various risks connected to being openly homosexual in the teaching profession: it "can make teachers more vulnerable than their heterosexual colleagues; it can be used against them in conflicts at school; it can prevent a teacher from functioning properly at school; it can have negative influence on the authority of the teacher in the classroom; it can even thwart the teacher's career. […] The biggest problems seem to lie with the behaviour of pupils and the degree of support the school managements give the teachers." (de Graaf et al. 2003:11). Teachers perceived the annoying behaviour of students – such as ridiculing the openly homosexual and bisexual teachers' personal lives, making feeble jokes about gay men, commenting on the teachers' appearance etc. – to be a crucial element in creating a *homonegative* school environment, i.e. expressing hostility towards LGB people, starting from primary school. The researchers also pointed to the responsibility of school management to support employees and students in becoming acquainted with different lifestyles and cultures; to promote equal treatment of women and men as well as heterosexuals and homosexuals; to put in place a policy to combat discrimination against minorities; to support teachers in taking corrective measures in case of discriminatory or negative remarks of students on homosexuals (de Graaf et al. 2003:95).

The Netherlands, a country with a long tradition of providing young people with education on sexual diversity, can be regarded as a research and development laboratory for those countries where LGBT issues or the promotion of a safer working and learning environment for gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgender teachers and students, is not a high priority. In most countries, the access for LGBT educational programmes to schools and young people is denied by government authorities, schools managers and parents who still consider the inclusion of these issues as a threat to the default heterosexual lifestyle of young people and /or as being related to paedophilia (Dankmeijer 2005).

The Dutch national level LGBT organisation, COC– Association for Integration of Homosexuality, started to offer educational programmes about homosexuality in a variety of institutions, including schools, from the early seventies. The volunteer educational groups were in regular contact with all the schools in their region offering two-hour sessions mainly for students aged 15-18, which is the age when sexual and societal issues were usually addressed in Dutch schools. The main goals of these programmes were to make homosexuality an accepted and visible part of society, and to facilitate an informed and free lifestyle choice by discussing heterosexual as well as homosexual lifestyles with students. Research on similar education sessions in other countries has revealed the effects of discussions with "real" gays and lesbians on appeasing the negative attitudes of students towards LGB people (Dankmeijer 1994). However, while by the mid-1990s, these groups reached about 13% of Dutch schools on a regular basis, towards the end of the 1990s, these programmes were increasingly barred by those schools having many students of non-

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Dutch origin. These schools were afraid of the violent reactions of students and of the possibility that parents might take their children out of school, and thus lead to a potential decrease in governmental financial support based on the number of registered students (Dankmeijer 2001).

In a large scale (N=41.413) survey on homo- and bisexuality conducted among pupils in the last three years of secondary education in Belgium a consistent relationship was found between information provided at school and attitudes toward LGB people (Pelleriaux et al. 2003). Only 23% of the respondents thought that sufficient information is provided at school about LGB issues, while only one-fifth reported that teaching staff refers to LGB positively or on a par with heterosexuality. Pupils who said that their teachers provided positive information had a more positive attitude themselves. The perception of the information given by teachers will in part be coloured by the existing attitudes of the pupils, however it is probable that pupils who receive positive information will adjust their attitudes. The contact theory, which states that stereotyping is broken when people from other groups are encountered, was also amply confirmed by the survey; every analysis showed that attitudes are more positive as LGB people are known in more spheres.

In the context of this study, a consistent and large difference emerged from the results between boys and girls: girls were more positive toward LGB people, related to them more naturally, and were more inclined to agree to equal rights and less likely to stereotype. For example, only 7,7% of the female respondents as opposed to 21% of the male respondents thought that LGB people should not be allowed to marry, while 60,6% of the female respondents as opposed to 42% of the male respondents supported the idea of adopting children by LGB people.

The form of education often had an important influence on attitudes. Secondary education concentrating on the arts yielded the most positive attitudes, while pupils in technical or vocational education displayed the greatest tendencies to discriminate. The language used at home was another important variable explaining attitudes: Youth who speak Turkish, Arabic or Berber at home had a markedly more negative attitude to LGB people than those with any other language at home.[8] The conclusion of this large-scale representative research study (Pelleriaux et al. 2003) also underlined the importance of providing adequate LGB information in secondary schools as well as creating a safe climate in schools where young people can affirm their own identity.

[8] Due to the large number of returned answers, useful samples were obtained of relatively small groups: the linguistic minorities of Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Moroccan, and Berber were each represented by about 800 pupils, 2% of the whole sample, respectively.

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5. Personal accounts of European young LGBT people on social exclusion

This part of our report is based on original survey research conducted by the ILGA-Europe and IGLYO social exclusion research team. The main goal of this survey was to illustrate how mechanisms of social exclusion work in everyday life all over Europe, and prevent the successful social integration of young LGBT people. By collecting descriptions of real life personal experiences, we wanted to let the voices of European LGBT youth be heard as we believe in the importance of combining research with the politics of solidarity:[9] this work has therefore been prepared for young LGBT people, about young LGBT people and with their valuable help.

5.1. Methodology

On the basis of international research findings, we have identified five main areas where young LGBT people can and often do encounter prejudice and/or discrimination: 1) family, 2) school, 3) peer group, 4) religious and other community life, and 5) media–. Subsequently, two sets of questions were designed to highlight typical cases and causes of social exclusion as well as good examples of fair treatment of LGBT youth: one questionnaire was addressed to individual respondents, while the other targeted organisations (See Annex II for the original questionnaires). These questionnaires were sent to the member organisations of ILGA-Europe and IGLYO, who were asked to collect answers. The questionnaires were also made available on the homepages of ILGA-Europe and IGLYO in seventeen different languages.[10]

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[9] The term 'politics of solidarity' is used by Hermine G. De Soto in the context of feminist anthropology, referring to research "about, for, and with women that women can use in their struggle against the expanding national patriarchies" (De Soto 2000:93).
[10] **http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/news/questionnaire_for_young_lgbt_europeans;
http://www.iglyo.com/content/activities/sexclusion1.html**

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Between January and March 2006, ILGA-Europe and IGLYO received 754 individual responses from 37 European countries[11] as well as 41 responses from European – mainly LGBT – organisations. 93% of the individual questionnaires came from European Union Member States. 68% of the respondents were male, 29% female, 2% transgender and 1% did not give any gender identification. The average age of respondents was 23,7 (median: 22): 60% of respondents were younger than 25, 19% belonged to the 25-29 age group, 20% to the 30-39 age group, while 1% of the respondents were older than 39.[12]

We must note that the results of this survey constitute a classic or targeted community-based sample, which statistically does not have the validating strength of a representative sample. In the case of a representative sample, a smaller number of people are selected to represent a larger population according to certain statistically registered and officially knowable characteristics such as age, gender, domicile, educational background, etc. However, as LGBT status is not an officially recorded – and not at all strictly recordable – personal characteristic of people, the "proper representation" of LGBT people is very problematic, if not impossible, especially in quantitative research. In this context, our main aim was to reflect the actual experience of self-identified young LGBT people and produce indicative data about their problems.

We must also acknowledge that this survey is skewed to the extent that the questionnaires were distributed mostly through LGBT organisations. Therefore, the questionnaires reached young people who are aware of or involved with these organisations, and who are thus ready to associate themselves with the LGBT community, even if it is to varying degrees. As a result, this survey may not properly reflect the experience of social exclusion nor provide visibility to closeted young people who do not dare to identify themselves as LGBT, to associate themselves with LGBT organisations or even to access information on LGBT-related issues.

The strength of our survey is the motivation of several hundred people to answer our questionnaires from which similar patterns of mechanisms of social exclusion emerged from different countries. Therefore, in our analysis, we concentrated on these similar forms of social exclusion, while not focussing on most of the country-specific features. We are aware of the need of more detailed research providing local insights into the problems of LGBT youth.

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[11] Distribution of respondents by country in the original sample in the EU25: Austria (2,5%), Belgium (4,2%), Cyprus (0,1%), Czech Republic (0,4%), Denmark (0,8%), Estonia (0,3%), Finland (0,4%), France (2,9%), Germany (0,5%), Hungary (7%), Ireland (1,9%), Italy (4,2%), Latvia (0,7%), Lithuania (2,5%), Malta (1,9%), Netherlands (45,9%), Poland (2,7%), Portugal (4%), Slovakia (0,3%), Slovenia (3,3%), Spain (3,3%), Sweden (2,5%), UK (1,3%); and in other European countries: Albania (0,1%), Belarus (1,1%), Bosnia Herzegovina (0,1%), Croatia (0,8%), Macedonia (0,1%), Moldova (1,2%), Norway (0.1%), Romania (0,1%), Russia (1,5%), Serbia and Montenegro (0,4%), Switzerland (0,1%), Turkey (0,1%), Ukraine (0,1%), other – unidentified (0,4%).
[12] "Older" respondents were kept because we did not want to apply a restricting age limit: we left it to the respondents to define youth so they could provide us with a kind of "historical insight" on how things developed.

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In the first phase of the analysis, we examined quantifiable variables, looking at the positive and negative responses to questions on the experience of prejudice and discrimination (such as "have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination targeting you as an L/G/B/T person…?"). In order to balance the unequal distribution of responses by country in the original sample, at least to a certain extent, we weighted the original sample by country population size in order to produce the quantitative survey results. Weighting is a sampling method in the course of which the unequal probability of selection into the sample will be equalised. The weighting was necessary because we received a lot of replies from countries with a smaller population size, and in other instances we received few responses from countries with large populations.

In the second phase, we analysed the content of questionnaires by coding the individual respondents' answers according to the five problem areas (family, school, peer group, community and media). In optimal cases, we were able to compare the content of individual and organisation questionnaires concerning the most typical forms and the most important causes of social exclusion of LGBT youth in a given country.[13]

5.2. Findings

On the basis of our quantitative and qualitative analyses it can be stated that young LGBT people have a lot of trouble with the **main agents of socialisation**, i.e. family, school, peer group and media. Some of them suffer from different forms of **social group pressure** starting at an early age; as one respondent reported: "I wanted to be like the others for the sake of belonging to a group and being accepted. And I tried hard to fit their boxes. Thanks God, I didn't succeed, and I have my one real identity now, but it was very hard for a child to go through this experience" (Moldova F30).[14]

Based on the survey responses, school and family seem to be the social contexts where it is particularly problematic for LGBT youth to fit in. Indeed, 61% of our respondents experienced prejudice and/or discrimination in school, and 51% in their family. On the other hand, 38% of respondents said they

[13] For more detailed information about the data collected through this survey, you can contact the research team at **socialexclusionresearch@iglyo.com**. You can also contact IGLYO or ILGA-Europe directly.
[14] When we quote individual responses, we indicate country of origin, gender (F=female, M=male, FtM= female-to-male transgender, FtM=male-to-female transgender) and age of respondents.(e.g. Moldova, F 29)

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had experienced prejudice and/or discrimination in a community they belonged to and 30% did so in their circle of friends (See TABLE I.). Moreover, 75% of the respondents reported coming across expressions of prejudice or discriminative elements targeting LGBT people in their national media.

TABLE 1. Have you ever experienced prejudice/discrimination in....? (Weighted sample)

Category	Value
Friends' circle	29.8
Community	37.7
Family	51.2
School	61.2
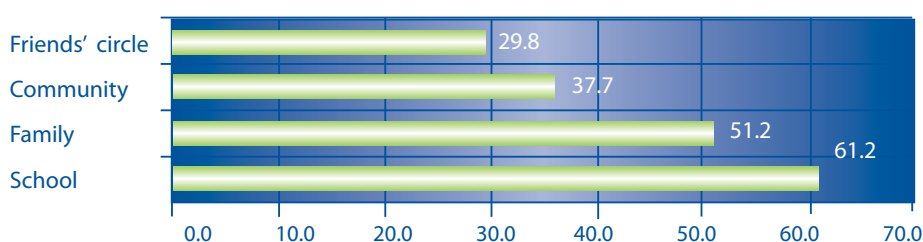
5.2.1. Family

More than half (51%) of our respondents reported experiences of prejudice and/or discrimination in their family. **Disbelief, denial and demands for "changing back to normal"** were described as **typical family reactions** to revealing one's LGBT identity to close family or to "coming out".

Although my parents are both highly educated (doctor, CEO), they were both equally shocked. My mother's first reaction to my outing was "you will die of AIDS", her second thought was to have an exorcism performed on me by a Roman Catholic priest. Due to the church's viewpoint on homosexuality my parents tried everything to "make me change my mind". … At a certain point I didn't have any contact with my parents at all, and I had to go through psychotherapy, they put so much pressure on me to do the ethically right – heterosexual – thing. We re-established a relationship but I stay distant from them. (Austria M20)

I come from a Pentecostal family in Finland which is quite religious, and when I came out last summer as a lesbian, my mother could not handle it. So I have decided not to talk to her about anything that would disturb her and we are not very close any more. … Mother still keeps hinting to me in her letters that there is a possibility to be "healed" … I do not believe in this shit and I am writing my own research about these issues at university this year. (Finland F29)

My mother and her boyfriend were really getting on my nerves by trying to persuade me that I should at least be bisexual and talking about how great it was to be straight. (Denmark F27)

My father even put me into therapy to make me reform. But at the end even the therapist confronted him with his misguided way of thinking. (Malta M23)

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When I came out to her I felt pressure as she told me that it was probably just a phase that would disappear as soon as I would meet the right girl. She also pointed out that relationships between gay men could never work out and that it would therefore be better for me to be straight. She was frequently telling me that homosexuality was something you could choose or decide for. I am not sure if she was doing that because she wanted me to "become" straight. I think her reaction was caused by the fear that I would be mocked and not accepted by society. (Slovenia M21)

It is often assumed that I am heterosexual, and my parents often express thoughts like "I wish you would grow up and forget those things". They seem to think it is unnatural and not normal to be LGBT. They try to influence me to be more "normal". (Sweden F20)

Stereotypical misconceptions of what it means to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual greatly contributed to the non-accepting attitudes towards LGBT family members. Responses showed that homosexuality is often associated with AIDS and HIV infection as well as with drug use.

My father was afraid that even though I am lesbian I will get AIDS infection from my gay friends and in any case he believed that I couldn't be a lesbian as I am not over 100 kg. (Hungary F35)

Sometimes my mother expresses her fear of HIV. She never talked about AIDS with my brother or my sister, as far as I know. (Austria M26)

When I was 20 my mother found a letter from the Lithuanian Gay League which was addressed to me, read it and said that she wanted me to move out of the house because if I was gay, I could infect the whole family with AIDS. (Lithuania M34)

I can't say that my mother was very happy. She said: "well, you might have been a drug addict instead". (Italy M23)

Transgender respondents mentioned that they had to go through a **double coming out** with a double burden: since before identifying as a trans-person most of them believed themselves to be gay or lesbian.

I have experienced prejudice and discrimination in my family both as a lesbian and later as a trans man. Prejudices that my family never overcame in connection with knowing me as a lesbian have been further entrenched with my coming out as a man. These prejudices include associating my life choices with drug abuse – even though I have never tried illegal substances –, inability to love, anti-social behaviours, defying the course of nature, not loving children, mental ill-health, having been corrupted to enjoy "unnatural" sexual practices. … As a trans

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man I have been accused of manipulating health care professionals into believing some lies about me, and further defying the course of nature. They have been refusing to address me with the name I chose myself and respect my life choices at least to the point of non-intervention. My twin sister and my parents tried to prevent my transition, which failed due to the resistance of psychiatrists I went to see. (Hungary FtM29)

At the beginning I thought I was a lesbian. When I came out to my parents their reactions were not positive, they didn't want to accept it. … later when I understood that I had gender disorder it was accepted more easily by my parents – perhaps because they got used to my diversity or perhaps because they thought that now I can be cured with hormones and surgery. (Italy FtM26)

Being rejected as an LGBT person by close family members was shown to force young people into **self-denial** and/or constructing a **double life strategy**.

When my parents assumed I might be non-straight, they said it wasn't normal and that I was a sick liar living a double life. Even though I have always been a perfect daughter, they said they were deeply disappointed in me. Sorry I was born. They said they couldn't look at me or talk to me ever again if I really was lesbian or bisexual – that I would not be their daughter anymore. Then I denied it all and moved on with my "double life" in favour of keeping the peace in the family. (Croatia F19)

For my father it is more difficult to deal with the consequences of the fact that I am gay: that I won't have a real family and children. … He says he believes me that I am gay and I was born that way but he still wants me to have a wife, family, and children – at the worst I can also have a male-lover. (Hungary M20)

My brother suspected me to be lesbian/bisexual. When his homophobic attitudes regarding LGBT persons were revealed and when he threatened to tell everybody about it, I felt very unsafe and I thought I needed to convince him I was heterosexual, so that was what I actually did. Afterwards I felt much better; better hide myself than getting into this kind of trouble. (Lithuania F17)

In some cases coming out to parents could pose the threat of or actually lead to **being forced to leave the family home**.

When I told my father that I was gay he was furious and called me names. He almost kicked me out of the house. (Belgium M20)

My father asked me to leave the family house when I was 18 – he ordered me because I told him I was gay. (France M36)

Let me put it this way: I now only have contact with my brother and sister, and believe me, that was not my choice. (NL M29)

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My parents kicked me out of the house when they found out I was a lesbian. I lived with a friend of mine for two months … I came back home but my father didn't talk to me for another six months. We don't talk about it anymore. (Portugal F18)

When my mother "suspected" that I was a lesbian, she read my diary and then when she saw what I had written, she kicked me out. For half a year I had to stay with a woman that I got to know in the only gay café we have in the city. (Sweden F18)

Rejection by family members often reflects fear of **social stigmatization affecting the parents** and the family as a whole in a heterosexist environment. When parents are not ready to face this stigma, they try to convince their LGBT family member to conceal their real identity in order to avoid shame. This could lead to young LGBT people's feeling of being betrayed and contribute to their isolation within their family.

At first my mother was worried about how friends and neighbours would react, so she asked me not to tell around. When my father asked her whether I was gay she lied to him and denied it. (Austria M26)

I was called a disgrace to the family, faced lack of understanding and threats of being thrown out of the house. (NL M22)

[My parents] consider homosexuality an immoral, dirty, perverted thing and think it's a great sin, a practice that breaks all of society rules and norms, bringing shame. So I've been asked to hide the fact I am homosexual from all the relatives, acquaintances and colleagues of theirs in order not to damage their personal and professional image. […]I'm very sad and disappointed by the fact that my parents are not as supportive, that I couldn't rely on them in a difficult situation and about the fact they couldn't accept me as a child of theirs the way I am now. So I feel betrayed and abandoned by the only people in the world I could rely on and it's hard to face all the challenges of being a homosexual person and parent in any society alone. And how can we expect a society to be more inclusive if our own parents don't accept us the way we are? (Moldova F30)

My mother didn't want me to go out of the house with an earring, or painted eyes, because she was afraid what the other people would think … this made me feel very sad, because I thought that she was more liberal, or that she would stand behind me, or respect me more in my way and say something like 'it's your life, do with it what you want' (Austria M21)

In my immediate family it is fine, but it is not spoken about in other parts of the extended family. However I have heard comments about the "gays" previously, how they are like that because they have not received proper parenting etc. This is hurtful I know to my mother and to me (Ireland M25)

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When I came out to my parents, many hard and sad reactions took place[…] However, the hardest things were: Asking me not to tell ANYONE about my homosexuality, because that would embarrass them and jeopardise their image and the consideration people have of them; Telling me I would have to COOPERATE with them and go to the doctor, so that I could be CURED! (Portugal M28)

I never had the chance to come out: maybe they are the only ones who ignore it. My father is very Catholic, my sister is a teacher. We all live in a very small town. If other people knew my sister might get problems with her pupils' parents (Italy F24)

Family rejection targeting partners was also often reported, which for many respondents meant a painful compromise: while their individual LGBT status seemed to be recognized and accepted by family members, at the same time their partners' existence was symbolically as well as practically denied.

My parents don't believe that a gay couple can exist … my partner is not considered to be a real partner by my parents, so they don't invite my boyfriend home when my sister's boyfriends are. (France M28)

My parents have always told me that I and my (straight) brother are the same in everything but he can take his girlfriend home and sleep with her. I am still not allowed to have my boyfriend for lunch… (Italy M21)

My partner was not allowed to come to my sister's wedding. (Latvia M34)

My parents just don't think two persons of the same sex can have a normal family and they consider it silly. It is very hard and unbearable because if you want to spend time or holidays with your girlfriend and parents at the same time, you cannot – just because you know that everyone would feel bad and uncomfortable. As for me – I cannot touch or kiss my girlfriend so I always feel stupid at my parents', I feel as if I was acting in a film or at a theatre as I've got a role and I am not who I really am. (Latvia F26)

Family rejection also manifests itself by the demands placed on young LGBT people to leave their partners, implying that partners must be the source of the problem, and by getting rid of them, the situation can be "normalised" again.

After coming out to my Mom, she went crazy, trying to convince me that I wasn't "like that", yelling that if she sees him (my boyfriend) on the street she'd kill him. She threatened to tie me to the radiator and to break my legs so I couldn't go out to meet him. She claimed I was too young to be playing around with queer stuff. I was 19. (Poland M21)

I had a lot of problems when the parents of my boyfriend found out about our relationship, they found out

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about me as well. They thought I had made their son gay and I received a lot of calls and they were screaming at me. At the end they send me a message: "we are able to kill for our son". Once his mother tried to hit me with a car in the middle of the street… My ex boyfriend is now kept at home, his parents don't let him go out and he does not have access to computer and phone because of this incident. It caused him many problems and we are not in touch anymore. (Montenegro M22)

My parents treat me as a teenager and think that this is just one of my whims. As a consequence, I can't live my life with my girlfriend; they try to get me back home by any means including threats and blackmail. It affects my everyday life because I'm permanently stressed, under pressure and sometimes I argue with my girlfriend because of it, and it looks like I have a tough choice to make, between my parents and her, which I think is not fair at all. I wish I knew what the solution is. I tried lots of them: I tried to talk nicely, I have been rude to them, and nothing has helped till now. I think there is one more solution: to leave the country (which is going to be a real tragedy for my mother). The most painful aspect for me is that they think I don't love them… (Moldova F23)

Many respondents were/are unable or unwilling to reveal their LGBT identity within their family because an existing **homophobic environment within the family**. Instead of providing much needed acceptance and support, respondents explained that by coming out, they could count only on facing additional problems.

When there is something on television about this topic they start immediately that it is disgusting, that they are all paedophiles… My mother says that if I happen to be gay she will disinherit me. In her view it is a disease, some sort of neurological problem that should be cured. When they will learn about my gayness this view might change, but I think it is more probable that they will chase me away… (Hungary M16)

In my family I have no prejudice because I'm not assumed to be gay. However, I think my parents have a clue. My family is very traditional, so there are a few things I know they do not accept. And in general, there are some behaviours I try to have: for example, when my dad is at home, I don't help my mother washing the dishes; if I did, he would say "why are you helping your mother? Go call your sister, she takes your place". Of course, they don't know I had a boyfriend over the last months. Many times they start talking about girlfriends, as if they were not interested, and I have to throw a superficial lie to end the conversation. Questions of homosexuality never take place in my home. (Portugal M20)

My family members think of homosexuality as a dirty thing but they don't know about my sexual orientation. (Belarus M28)

I'm not open in my family, but I've been living with my girlfriend (separately from my parents) for 10 years. So, I haven't faced direct discrimination. But I often hear my relatives saying bad things about GLBT. This fact

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weakens my power of coming out. (Russia F29)

Revealing one's LGBT identity to **fathers** – especially those who act like heroes of "heteropat̲̲̲̲ (Kitzinger – Perkins 1993) – was described by some respondents as especially frightening.

I have chosen not to come out to my father because my mother was afraid that he would try to kill one of us if he found out. (Denmark F27)

Until the age of 18 perhaps I was maturing with the idea that I am an invalid, deviant person and have no right to live. […]. My father was always making jokes about me being too feminine, not a normal man just because I did not want to play with cars, or to involve in other boys activities that were considered masculine. While watching TV programmes about homosexuals my father in front of all family members said that homosexuals should be exterminated the same as Jews in the Holocaust. This was the most painful experience in my life, since at this moment I wanted to die and I could not even show my tears. […]. My family (excluding my father) knows the fact I am gay and still tries to convince me that I need women, children and psychological treatment. I experienced three attempted suicides already, but fortunately and by accident I am still alive. My mother and sister still live in fear that my father could kill me if he finds out about my homosexuality. (Lithuania M34)

My father speaks especially dishonourably of LGBT people. When younger, he told me a story of a young guy who told a friend about him being gay and when the family found out, he was thrown out of home... I fear that something similar could be the position of my father towards me... I did not decide to come out yet to him personally, even though my other close family members know about me being gay. (Slovakia M27)

My father beat me severely, said I was a "dirty faggot" and that he never wanted to see me again. (NL M19)

My father regularly beats me. My mother still loves me just the same. (NL M16)

In contrast with the negative experiences of most of the respondents, there were a few reports on **positive, accepting family atmosphere**. In some of these families, there were already openly gay or lesbian family members providing positive role models for young LGBT people.

Thank God my family accepted me as I am and still love me just the same even though I am gay, ok they were not over the moon when I told them of my sexual nature, as just like every parent they always would like to see their children getting married and eventually having a family of their own. (Malta M19)

During the last ten years or so, things have been different in my family from when I was younger. My mother used to think of

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homosexuality as weird, now she thinks it's completely ok and understands it better. I don't think anyone in my family has a problem with my being bisexual, and I'm not scared of their reactions. My maternal grandmother used to say she did not understand homosexuality and that during her time "it just did not exist". But she didn't try to change me, or anything. I don't know if she understood what I was telling her, but I think she just accepted it. My paternal grandmother I spoke to about homosexuality when I was a teenager. She did not like it, but when I said that maybe I would one day turn out to like girls that way she was quiet for a moment, then said something like "Well, I guess it would be alright because it's you". I loved her very much, and her comment sometimes makes me smile. Maybe I should be offended, but I'm not. What she was really saying was: I may not understand what you are doing or approve of it, but I will always love you. Considering her age, I'm impressed. If my parents had said something like it, though, I would perhaps not have felt as good about it since that somehow is… different. They are another generation, and I think they should be more open-minded. (Sweden F26)

I have never experienced such thing. In my family it is accepted very well. My aunt from my mother's side is a lesbian and the brother of my father is bisexual. This helps a lot. (NL F21)

My uncle is also gay and my whole family accepts the entire LGBT story. (NL M17)

I have a very open and very kind family. I do know that a niece and a nephew cannot fit it into their religious views, but they do accept it! (NL M20)

5.2.2. School

Our survey shows that it is the school environment where LGBT youth experience most prejudice and/or discrimination; indeed, 61% of respondents referred to negative personal experiences at school related to their LGBT status. In relation to the school context, we asked two additional, more specific questions: 1) about the curriculum, we asked whether respondents ever found anything in the school **curriculum** that expressed prejudice or discriminative elements targeting LGBT people, and 2) we asked whether they had experienced **bullying** or other forms of (verbal and/or physical) **violence** in school. 53% of the respondents reported bullying, while 43% found prejudice or discriminative elements in the school curriculum (See TABLE II.).

TABLE 2. Prejudice/discrimination in school, in curriculum, bullying (Weighted sample %)

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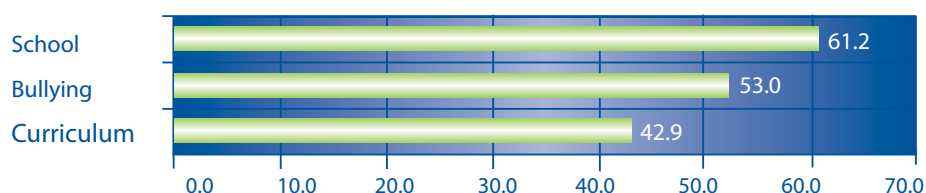
It should be noted that bullying was reported by a higher proportion of male respondents (61%) than female respondents (58%). In each of the four age groups – younger than 25; aged 25-29; aged 30-39; older than 39 –, at least half of the respondents said they had experienced bullying but the incidence of bullying was highest among people younger than 25 (54%).

A. Bullying and violence

Bullying – interpreted as a systematic abuse of power which repeatedly and deliberately harms others (Reid – Monsen – Rivers 2004) – includes a **wide spectrum of negative experiences** from name calling and ostracism to physical attacks. Most of our respondents who experienced bullying at school reported verbal attacks, while a much smaller number of them suffered physical acts of violence.

No physical violence but lots of verbal and indirect violence, snigger when we pass by, insults written on our tables, things said behind our backs. (France F18)

Mostly verbal abuse and emotional bullying in the sense of being excluded from activities, being ignored. (Hungary M21)

The bullying I experienced in secondary school, aged between 11 and 16, was mainly verbal and written abuse. Other pupils wrote on my own books and a diary that I liked a particular teacher and that I was attracted to girls, while I was not ready to face my feelings. (Malta F23)

Physical violence happened only once – but verbal violence is a common thing every day. (Slovakia M18)

They threw things at me, spat on me, damaged my belongings. (Hungary FtM32*)*

I was beaten up with a tennis racquet and sticks, kicked, punched, and physically abused by several people at the same time so that at least one of them would hold me down when the others were beating me up. They would hold me down and jam my head into the wall, keep me from breathing. The teachers and the school nurse all knew about it but they never did anything to stop it. I never pressed charges against the school. (Sweden F20)

Longer term or repeated bullying was shown to have serious consequences on the victims. Some of them became withdrawn and **socially isolated**, and this at a time when most other young people learn to express themselves socially (Martin 1982).

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I was offended and called names. It also happened that guys looked askew at me and never really wanted me to be a part of their company. Words can hurt even more than physical violence and it eventually caused me to become very reserved, unwelcome, I avoided social contacts until the age of 18. (Slovenia M21)

When I was at school, I was bullied for being gay but it was only because my classmates presumed I was gay … it was before I even told people I was gay. I was verbally and physically bullied and I had no friends for the first three years of high school. It made me very insecure as a person and I found it hard to make friends after that as it had made me really paranoid and vulnerable. (UK M21)

In some cases victims of bullying did not see any other way out than leaving school altogether. Most people are aware of the fact that **dropping out of school** or becoming an early school leaver significantly reduces the chances of any young person's successful social integration later in life. However, bullying can create such an unbearable situation for its victims that they are forced to face this risk, too.

I quit high school at the age of 16 because my classmates constantly made rude fun of me with sexuality related jokes. (Hungary M33)

I was beaten up by some girls in the locker room after gym class when they found a paper with the website of a LGBT forum… They said they wouldn't tell anyone if I promised to do everything they told me to. And so I did. I missed a lot of classes and never finished high school because I just can't go back to that high school again! (Portugal F18)

Respondents claimed that mostly their **peers** were responsible for their negative experiences and especially for suffering from bullying or other forms of (verbal and/or physical) violence in school: these peers were more often males than females. In a few instances references were made to the correlation between inclination of bullying on the one hand and the religious/ethnic origin and/or the "lower class" status of the "bully", on the other.

Bullying was often interpreted by our respondents as being related to or being the consequence of **gender nonconforming behaviour, character and look** – or what was perceived to be such by others.

As a kid at school, I was recurrently harassed and bullied by other boys who used their aggressiveness to subject me to humiliating and embarrassing jokes. Although kids can be cruel to anyone, they can be particularly cruel to other kids of the same age who act less like the traditional sexual roles. (Portugal M28)

When I was younger I was more effeminate and that is why boys made fun of me all the time. (Moldova M33)

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a bunch of kids once stole my wallet and cut it to pieces, and the stuff inside, like ID, photos, etc. because they thought I was gay. Funny thing is, I had no idea back then. I was 13 and a tomboy. They judged me on appearance, because I dressed like a boy. (Portugal F20)

I was physically abused every day in school for four years. This was because they found me too butch and that I looked like a boy, and of course, because I am a lesbian. Therefore they felt that they should bully me since the first grade. (Sweden F20)

In the primary school I wasn't out, but I always talked more with girls, boys were pestering me whether I wasn't gay and called me 'little dolly'. (Czech R. M21)

In physical education or in other classes where macho behaviour prevails, non macho playing boys were discriminated against. (France M31)

A lot of respondents reported that they were bullied by peers even before they were out, i.e. before they had consciously revealed their LGBT status in school.

In secondary school even though I hadn't said anything about my sexuality a guy bullied me for a year by beating me up and calling me a "poof", he probably saw my homosexuality that I was hiding. (France M25)

Mostly in secondary school a lot of remarks, insults even when I didn't know my sexual orientation yet. (France M19)

This phenomenon can also be related to the **strict enforcement of rigidly separated sets of gendered behaviour by peers** who seemed to suspect homosexuality when gender role expectations were not "properly" fulfilled. However, it must be noted that ideas about "proper gender roles" and "proper sexualities" are learnt through a long process of socialisation, reflecting the norms of society. In some societies, LGBT people *"represent a chaos which is deviant, that they have to learn more about, to be able to understand, because what they know so far is based on the prejudice of society"* (Sweden F44).

Both non-heterosexual and heterosexual youth can be affected by anti-gay/lesbian victimisation in school which results from assumptions of being non-heterosexual when a person does not conform to expected gender behaviour. Here we can capture the practical application and mobilisation of the "heterosexual matrix" (Butler 1990): the widespread assumption about the illusory internal coherence of identity, which is manifested in the opposition of asymmetrically divided female and male characteristics in the cultural matrix of gender norms, and in the "heterosexualization of desire". Pupils bullying others on the basis of

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an **"insufficient degree" of masculinity or femininity** have probably unconsciously internalized the causal interrelation between one's sex and one's gender as well as the culturally constructed gender roles and sexual desire or sexual behaviour (i.e. that anatomical sex leads to gender identity, and gender leads to sexual desire). This aspect of anti-gay/lesbian bullying depends more on the perpetrators' gender socialization norms than on the actual traits of the victims, thus it can affect anyone irrespective of their "real" sexual orientation or gender identity.

People were calling me fag and blow me … but one other straight schoolmate who was as shy as I was received the same treatment… (France M24)

Even when I was not out, or even understood who I really was, people were still calling me "fag" and laughing at me, all the way from grade 7 to 11. (Latvia M34)

In school there were loads of jokes, insults and mockery against 'supposed' homosexuals. (Italy M28)

While many respondents reported having been victims of bullying – even before they had come out or identified themselves as LGBT – others also spoke about their fear of becoming victims of bullying. This **discrimination anxiety**, i.e. anxiety related to fear of discrimination or bullying, has led some respondents to see the process of revealing their true self as a luxury with potentially dangerous consequences.

Maybe I should consider myself happy, but no, I cannot recall any open discriminatory events against me as a gay man. This is however also due to the fact that I have not come out to my school mates till grammar school (secondary school level), so the fact that I was keeping to myself and not being open about my sexual orientation may be considered as a reaction of me arriving from a deep seeded fear of being harassed as a gay male in this community. (Slovakia, M27)

I never told anybody in school about my orientation, except the gay people, the rest of them didn't know, or at least I think so. Being an adolescent I couldn't afford telling it to everybody…because this is the most vulnerable age, when you just begin to understand what's going on inside of you, and sharing this with somebody who might not understand you, is a luxury. (Moldova F23)

I suffered the psychological violence of being split with fear of admitting my sexual orientation. (Italy M25)

I wasn't out at school due to anxiety of discrimination. (Germany M30)

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B. Role of teachers

14% of respondents who had negative experiences in school mentioned **teachers** as being the source, or being part of their problems. They talked about teachers who "failed to provide help and guidance" (Austria M21), who did not want to or couldn't "guess where my problems were coming from at the age of 16-19" (France M21), who "were not supportive at all"(Moldova F30). In some cases, teachers were described as passive outsiders who, instead of helping the isolated, hurt and/or bullied students, were perceived to be siding with the LGBT-opposing camp.

All the time during secondary school, homophobic insults that gave me the wish of not being in this world anymore. I could have talked about it to the headmaster or teachers but as they knew the situation already and weren't doing anything against it I wasn't expecting anything from them. (France M22)

When I was kicked out of home I started missing a lot of classes and when my Portuguese teacher asked me what was happening I told her the truth. Instead of helping me and talking to my parents she told me to not tell anyone. (Portugal F18)

I had to ask for exemption from physical education because of bullying: they locked me out of the changing room day by day – and the teacher secretly supported this practice. (Hungary M17)

I was often called names and once I was beaten up … but nothing was done about it by the teachers and a bullied child won't go to the teacher to complain, instead he tries to forget what happened to him. (Hungary M24)

The fact that all the insults I've faced have never been forbidden or sanctioned. It gives the feeling that it's normal to bully LGBT as nobody stops you or tells you it's wrong. (France M22)

On a few occasions **homophobia operating on the institutional level** could also be detected thereby giving the impression that heterosexism was part of official school policy.

I know that three of the teachers were expelled from the department because one of them is a gay man, and the other two were dealing with 'improper' issues i.e. LGBT, feminism (Poland F23)

I went to a church affiliated secondary school where the director was aware of my sexual orientation. The only thing she asked me was to keep it secret in the school. … I had a very good relationship with this director. (Hungary M24)

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Some respondents reported **homophobic and heterosexist manifestations of teachers** who "have spoken against homosexuality without knowing that there are gays in their class" (Finland F22), who "laugh when they briefly talk about this subject" (France M25), who "often made me the target of jokes publicly" (Hungary FtM32). There were various negative experiences mentioned in the collected responses.

I've had a teacher in secondary school who took it upon herself to launch a crusade against homosexuality. She taught me biology and half way through the lesson she would stop what she was doing and try and connect what we had just learnt with homosexuality (even when the lesson would have been about plants) in order to show us how disgusting, how perverse and mentally deficient homosexuals were. Having attended a church school the atmosphere was not much different with other teachers, yet most preferred to avoid even mentioning the word homosexual. (Malta F23)

There was a young researcher a year ago. When she found out that I am lesbian she did not want to counsel me any more. She was afraid that I might try to seduce her. (Finland F29)

When I was on the 10th grade my philosophy teacher asked us to do a paper work about anything that we wanted, I chose homosexuality. He read my paper to the all class, said that homosexuality was a disease and that he didn't believe in bisexuality – but ended with "but I would love to be with two bisexual women". (Portugal F18)

In sex education classes everything was only about heterosexuals. When I asked "what about lesbians?" the lecturer responded that lesbians are not normal as they are unable to bear children. (Hungary F17)

Language use was shown as an important indicator of teachers' homo-negative attitudes. Use of degrading words on LGBT issues was perceived as offensive and threatening by some respondents.

Some teachers have used strong words against LGBT people – hence I chose not to come out at school. (Italy F19)

I was deeply hurt once when a professor at the university during classes said – as a joke – something concerning gays, he referred to gay people using a bad word etc. I felt like I was being directly insulted and I wanted to leave the class. But I didn't. It would have been too obvious and I hadn't enough courage to do it. However I never visited his classes after that. (Slovenia M26)

However, in certain cases politically incorrect vocabulary was seen as simply reflecting the lack of the teachers' knowledge on LGBT issues.

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The prejudices that I came across in primary school were in my opinion caused by teachers' lack of knowledge. It was mostly about using inappropriate words for gays, because they were in my opinion not aware of politically correct or indiscriminative words for gays. I also remember a teacher who was otherwise not homophobic but still he said he would not allow homosexual partners to adopt children because they would probably become homosexual when grown up. (Slovenia M21)

In this context the **lack of teachers' training** to present or handle LGBT issues – in a non-judgemental way – was also emphasised.

In schools there are no clear guidelines about how to present LGBT issues in the classroom, this is why teachers usually skip the topic. Teachers are not trained to deal with this topic. The only occasion I can remember that the topic was discussed was in the religion class where the debate was already oriented, thus providing a partial sight of the topic. (Italy M25)

Teachers were also perceived by some respondents as lacking a better understanding of **privacy issues**. Uninvited inquiries of teachers into the personal lives of students were interpreted as a lack of respect and recognition. In this respect, transgender students could find themselves in specifically problematic situations – especially if their gender designation was seen by teachers as "ambiguous".

Two university professors (yes, two professors!) suspected that the relationship between my girlfriend and I didn't stop merely at friendship (we were both in the same class). And it once drove me to tears when they both summoned me to tell me that the 'strange' relationship I had with my girlfriend was putting a strain on my progress, and they tried their best to make me admit that, yes, we were lovers…and also tried to persuade me to stop our 'strange' friendship. (Malta F22)

At university I'd say the greatest problem is having the possibility of doing exams without teachers inquiring about our personal lives (there is no possibility up to date of having papers with our "new name" before the operations we trans people must undergo). The same goes for enrolling to the exams without having to be embarrassed about our names with people who know us as the identified gender and not as the one we are born in. (Italy FtM23)

Lack of openly LGBT teachers, who can act as potential positive role models for LGBT students, was also perceived to indicate the general problems of acceptance; as one respondent said, "very few if any teachers are openly gay because it's not a conducive environment for employees to be out in either" (Ireland M25). Having met with openly gay teachers in their school environment was very rarely mentioned (and only by Dutch respondents). Additionally, two respondents talked about fear of discrimination and the negative

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consequences of revealing their non-heterosexuality when working as a teacher:

I am a teacher myself and I can only say that I live more easily by not being out. If I came out, I am sure I would be discriminated against and I would probably lose my job. I know of two women who lost their jobs because of their sexual orientation: one was working in a kindergarten (as the boss), the other at a school. So for now, I prefer not to talk about it. (Slovenia F34)

I was working as a teacher, and many parents and colleagues kept their distance from me when they found out. (Sweden F25)

Among those who did not have any negative experiences in school, 4% mentioned **good attitudes, respectful treatment and acceptance from teachers**: "[as opposed to pupils] teachers were always positive about homosexuality and being gay" (NL M20); "One teacher commented very positively on the fact that I had come out at high school" (NL F22); "I was harassed a bit by students when I was still at school but I found excellent support from the teaching staff" (Malta M23). Positive experiences with teachers were mentioned almost only by Dutch respondents. However, it was also pointed out that for teachers "working on issues of prejudice, discrimination, bullying might be harder in schools with more "masculine" or lower class populations." (Italy M26)

C. School curriculum

While 43% of respondents found that their school **curriculum** expressed prejudice or included discriminative elements targeting LGBT people, a lot of **people** referred to the lack of representation of LGBT issues in school curriculum as a deceptive representation of real life.

The topic of homosexuality was absolutely blanked out – as if it did not exist. (Austria M23)

Almost all the course books I had in primary school are full of Victorian-era stereotypes and totally outdated realities and this education only prepares children to live in Disneyworld. The school curriculum does not target homosexuals because homosexuality does not even exist within the school curriculum. (Malta F23)

There was nothing in the school curriculum about sexual orientation but teachers told us degrading stories and dirty jokes from their life about their experiences of meeting LGBT people. (Belarus F18)

The **silencing of LGBT issues in the school curriculum**, i.e. the fact that LGBT issues are not included,

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mentioned or covered in the school curriculum, was interpreted by many respondents as a **tool at the institutional level for maintaining LGBT invisibility** in school and as such an instance of discrimination in itself.

Silence is the worst form of discrimination. (Italy FtM26)

Heterosexism permeates education and is very rarely challenged. (Hungary FtM29)

I think homosexuality is still a taboo in primary in secondary schools. It is not discussed which I also understand as discrimination because I often felt as if I did not exist. The absence of discussion about homosexuality even stimulated my wrong ideas I had at the time. Namely, I got a strong feeling that something is wrong me and that I would somehow have to be medically treated and cured. (Slovenia M21)

Ignoring homosexuality (or other attempts to fight for tolerance against xenophobia, women's rights etc.) and not including it into school curriculum already is discrimination. (Slovenia M21)

We never read or heard anything about LGBT people in school. I regard silencing and the maintenance of invisibility a discriminatory practice, too. (Denmark 25)

The whole curriculum in all disciplines at all levels at secondary, vocational and to a large extent at universities is not gender-sensitive. Even such issues of LGBT as human rights are rarely found in curricula of higher education. The most discriminative element at schools is that LGBT issues are marginalised, omitted, condoned, ignored or presented as deviant, not even worth discussing. (Lithuania M34)

Ignoring non-heterosexual forms of sexuality in **sex education and health education** classes was shown as a wide spread practice in many countries having dangerous potential consequences on, for example, the sexual health of young LGBT people.

Homosexuality was not mentioned in sex education, heterosexual sex was presented as merely reproductive and the only way of expressing sexuality. (Austria M20)

It was just assumed that there were no homosexuals in the class and therefore they did not have to tell us about homosexuality in the sex education class (Denmark F21)

Health education concerns hetero couples, sex is described as happening between women and men. (Finland F24)

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No gay sex education at school but a lot of straight – no representation of alternative ways of life, negation of the homosexuality of famous people, no intervention of authorities in case of homophobic harassment – lots of racial discrimination prevention, no mention about discrimination against gays. (France M31)

There is also no sex education for gay people so we are never shown how to have safe sex. (UK F23)

Besides references to silencing and ignoring LGBT issues in school curriculum, the majority of respondents mentioned examples of presenting LGBT issues in **negative contexts** such as being a disease, a sin or an unnatural way of being, which only strengthening old, well-known stereotypes.

Some stereotypes remain: when people are laughing at LGBT within a course the teacher almost never says anything (even at university). Furthermore we never mention homosexual deportation by the Nazis and there is no prevention of homophobia at school. (France F18)

Religious education curriculum was not in itself negative but had an indirect negative effect by not adequately pointing out the fallacies in such beliefs. Christians do not follow the law of Leviticus yet still use it arbitrarily whenever they wish to run-down gay people. (Hungary M21)

When I was still taking religion classes (read: clericalism) the priests and Catholic teachers often likened homosexuality to sodomy and other Christian 'sins'. (Poland M16)

The biggest problem for me is that homosexuality is only viewed at school like sex, never like a sentiment. (Switzerland M17)

Only a slight touch during the health lessons a very brief comment that there are some sick people: homosexuals. But as this subject was not officially included it was up to individual teachers to talk about it. Most never even open their mouth or just stated that such 'things' exist. (Latvia M37)

One day our teacher of medicine told us that in 83% of the cases LGBT people are responsible for spreading HIV/AIDS infection (Belarus F16)

In medical classes – starting from the secondary school level – homosexuality is mentioned in the context of 'other' diseases such paedophilia, necrophilia etc. (Hungary M20)

In the school curriculum there was something about homosexuality as a form of sexual perversion. (Moldova F25)

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The first time I have ever seen an LGBT topic in school was during my biology class in the seventh grade of the elementary level school in Slovakia. The teacher showed us (the boys) a film as a part of the sexual education within the biology curriculum. The only time an LGBT person was shown, was a picture of an old man who was trying to treat young boys with sweets in a city park just to lure them into an apartment and abuse them. I felt that this old man was not an identification person to me as a young gay man at that time, however the connection between paedophilia and gay male sexual orientation was just plainly wrong, judgemental and thus discriminating. (Slovakia M27)

In my health education school book homosexuality was dealt with under the chapter on "unusual sexual behaviour". Homosexuality was explained as a product of wrong education, despite the fact that the book stated that one should get rid of all the prejudices about homosexuals. (Slovenia M32)

D. Transgender students

Seemingly obvious **specific problems faced by transgender** students also deserve attention:

PE (physical education) classes keep boys and girls separate so FtM or MtF do have problems fitting in. (Italy FtM23)

Homosexuality is rarely discussed, teachers tend not to facilitate any constructive discussions about it – while bisexuals and trans people are completely ignored. (Slovenia F29)

Fortunately, some **positive examples** can be given of more sensitive treatment of LGBT issues in school curricula as well as of anti-discrimination school policies. While in some cases positive developments were reported even in primary schools in the Netherlands positive examples were cited mainly from higher educational settings.

I*n literature, history, we discussed modern challenges of gays' civil rights. In the university I didn't have problems, queer studies were part of my course and I graduated in this subject.* (Italy M26)

At the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Ljubljana there is a course in anthropology of gender and sexuality which provides insight into perception of sexual practices, behaviours, manners, genders and gender roles etc. across the world. One soon comes to a conclusion that any kind of social boundaries and/or limitations are necessarily relative, despite the fact that they are almost always presented as absolute. When one is also a member of a minority of any kind (then again, aren't we all?!), such information may provide an additional "anchoring point" to which to settle one's own heart and mind, at times troubled by silent expectations, discriminative practices, prejudice etc. (Slovenia M24)

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The Swedish LGBT youth organisation, RFST Ungdom, has worked with a project where it was investigated whether Swedish biology books included LGBT people and said the "right" things or not. Most books weren't accepted, and they have been withdrawn from the schools. This project has had a great impact in Sweden and now other institutions has started investigating books in other subjects, and things are getting much better. (Sweden F22)

My school had policies to take extra care not to discriminate LGBT persons. (Sweden F20)

Yes, it is dealt with more and more at schools, so you get the idea homosexuality is not something dirty – at least that is what they are trying to achieve. (NL F21)

At school it wasn't talked about, at least not about someone being 'like that' themselves. In classes it did appear, both at elementary and secondary schools, and then I hoped that no one would notice that I became red and nervous. In these classes we were told that it was normal and prejudice was discredited. (NL F28)

5.2.3. Peer group/Friends' circle

Less than one third (30%) of our respondents reported experiences of prejudice and/or discrimination targeting them as LGBT people in their close circle of friends. In comparison to the relative hostility of the family environment they seemed to find more acceptance and recognition in their friends' circles. A respondent observed: *I had less trouble with friends than with my family.* (Italy M25)

After revealing their LGBT identity, some respondents indicated a certain **restructuring** in their friends' circle, and some mentioned losing some **friends**.

People walking away because of feeling uncomfortable and not knowing how to deal with me – because of thinking they actually had to deal with me in some sort of different way… (Portugal F19)

I lost some friends as a result of my coming out. (France M25)

When I just came out some girl 'friends' weren't so much around suddenly. The contact became less intense and disappeared in a couple of weeks. This made me quite sad. Luckily some other persons around me hadn't problems with me being a lesbian and filled that gap. The cliché line: coming out teaches something about yourself and who your real friends are….became truth. (NL F22)

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The changes in the circle of friends often lead to finding out about real friendships, saying "goodbye" to those who are unable to overcome their negative stereotypes concerning LGBT people, and **making new friends** – especially in the LGBT community.

Not everyone knows but those who know accept it. However, most of my friends are lesbians themselves. (Spain F19)

[I had problems with friends] at the time when I came out. Since then I cannot remember having problems with friends. However, most of my friends are LGBT people. (France F31)

They wouldn't be my close friends if they had some prejudices. (Poland M21)

No, because I haven't told them about my sexual orientation, or they are gay friendly. In fact the majority of my friends are from the LGBT community. I avoid meeting others because I don't want to lie or hide the reality. (Moldova F23)

Respondents also spoke about the need of their "old friends" to get some kind of **informal education** regarding LGBT issues. Given that most young people lack personal experiences about LGBT people and their lives, therefore they often rely on stereotypical images mediated by heteronormative social institutions which can prevent them from readily accepting the coming out of a young gay or lesbian in their friends' circle.

I do sometimes experience prejudices or discriminative comments from a few of my straight friends who do not know I am gay. These comments make me feel uncomfortable and unaccepted. Even if they do not know that I am gay, I still feel they are targeting me which forces me to be careful with every move I make and every word I say as I do not want them to find out about me. In a way such negative reaction motivates me to be more prepared to come out to them; I believe their stereotypes are based on the fact that they do not know any gay or lesbian personally and that their negative image of LGBT people would at least partly change if they knew I was gay. (Slovenia M21)

There are prejudices (for example, a friend thought that every gay man is attracted to young boys, or something like that), but my friends always ask me such things in an interested way, because they really don't know, and they want to understand me. They never had contact with the homosexual world before me, and so there are some clichés, which they are prepared to give up. (Austria M21)

With some I had to work and educate them to make them understand my situation and my feelings better. Fortunately most of my friends are fine. (Italy M23)

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I always felt that some of my friends try to keep me away from their children because of the stereotype that homosexuals are paedophiles. I also notice that my heterosexual friends never invite me to parties which are dominated by heterosexuals with homophobic attitudes. I know they are doing this just for the sake of my safety, but I feel discriminated. I can talk about my homosexual feelings with my closest heterosexual and homosexual friends, but sometimes I cannot be absolutely open. (Lithuania M34)

In the lives of young LGBT people, friends can play a very significant role by providing them with the sense of belonging and being accepted that is often refused to them by their family of origin. Friends – especially LGBT friends and LGBT community members – can become members of a **family of choice** (including people with or without legal or blood ties who feel they belong together and wish to define themselves as family) that can provide young LGBT people with an accepting family-like environment where they can feel at home. The idea of a chosen family is a "powerful signifier of a fresh start, of affirming a new sense of belonging that becomes an essential part of asserting the validity of homosexual ways of life" (Weeks – Donovan – Heaphy 1999:88).

5.2.4. Community

38% of our respondents gave affirmative answer to the question whether they experienced prejudice or discrimination targeting them as an LGBT person in any community they belong to. Most of them referred to negative experiences in relation to the **workplace** spanning a wide spectrum of phenomena including **not getting promoted, being dismissed** – or not **even getting the job** in the first place –, having their **freedom of expression curtailed**, being **ostracised, isolated**, or subjected to **unwanted moralising**.

When I had a job interview in the media field I did not get the job. The executive said that I was "not solid enough to work with two other male fellow workers" – that indicated I was not given the job because I am a homosexual. (Austria M23)

A friend deliberately didn't disclose his sexuality to his higher ranking colleague because he was afraid he would not get the job if they knew he was gay. (Belgium M21)

When I was working at a McDonald's I was completely ostracized, I had to deal with cleaning up all the time, and I wasn't trained to do any other tasks. … Gender non-conformity in the way of dressing lead to rejection in potential workplaces: a young woman with short hair dressed in a suit, wearing a tie... (Hungary F28)

For some years I worked as clerk in a police office… I have heard so many bad things and words against LGBT

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that I wanted to return to the closet. But I had already come out and I couldn't return. After a newspaper published my photo as an activist lesbian and an interview, the head of the office invited me into her office and clearly expressed that I should stop coming out in the media. (Italy F32)

I was fired after I had worked for this company for four years because I attended a gay party and they discovered my sexual orientation. Needless to say, I was terribly angry, even because it was obvious why they stopped giving me work since they had promoted me a couple of months before, so I knew they liked my work. I would have sued them but I knew it would be a useless hassle because I didn't have the money and I think it's hard to win such a case in Malta. (Malta F21)

I work in homecare, and some older people don't understand the gay way of life. It's more prejudice than discrimination (NL M24)

I worked at a mental health organisation… They began bullying me and laughing at me. I was even told to search motivation elsewhere. As I felt very bad at that time and place, I had to leave the organisation and my work. I spent four years at home, doing nothing in particular except reading books and not leaving the house on a daily basis. I felt offended, worthless, I had no self-confidence, I was sad and suicidal. I had no social contacts outside my home. (Slovenia F40)

When I accidentally told my co-workers that I had a girlfriend, the effect was immediate. I was left out of everything. No one wanted to chat at lunchtime anymore, there were never any biscuits left for me in the coffee break like there used to be. It was terrible. (Sweden F22)

I have had a homophobic boss who tried to get rid of me with every chance that came up and then resorted to trying to make my life hell so that I would leave of my own accord. She was both disgusted due to my different orientation but also scared to death of me because she had never met any LBGT before but heard wild things about them. When she got to know about my orientation she treated me very differently from before. (Malta F23)

When my boss heard that I broke up with my girlfriend, she suggested that I should start to date handsome young men, and added that because I am so young (24), my identity is not so strong yet, which explains the girlfriend stuff. (Finland F24)

There was one reference to an **unsupportive academic climate** for doing research on homophobia. In this context, the depreciation of the topic can be seen as a reflection of heterosexism:

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I experienced a lot of these things in my academic community. The most recent story was that university administration was against me being involved in a project on homophobia, and even our rector said: "Don't they (people involved in this project) have anything more serious to research?" (Lithuania M34)

Revealing one's LGBT identity at the workplace seemed to be a risky endeavour, therefore some respondents preferred to **hide this aspect of their lives**. Sometimes they were forced into subterfuge and deception, while the energy spent in concealing identity and inventing stories is often energy taken away from doing the work at hand.

At my workplace my colleagues, especially those over 30, have very negative views and prejudices about homosexuality, and they also express these views. Thus I am sure they would discriminate against me if they knew… especially concerning my career options. (Hungary M24)

I work for AGESCI, the national Catholic youth association – I am doing fine since I am in the closet. (Italy M21)

In my actual workplace (which has a very macho climate) I feel that it is better to stay in the closet. (Italy M23)

At my workplace I can't talk about it openly, I lie about having a boyfriend… (Spain F25)

Transgender respondents also reported fear of coming out and specific difficulties related to their transition:

I haven't had any negative experiences as yet – but I think it will happen when I am going to come out at my workplace. (Hungary MtF31)

As a supposedly female teacher I suffered bullying from students in two schools I worked in. However, being bullied is not the only memory I have from those four years. I felt that the lack of trust from my colleagues was a more significant factor in my decisions to move on and then to stop teaching until I feel more up to the challenge again. I could not have stayed a teacher and continued transition at the same time. In a sense I am lucky to have moved to another country right after my full official transition, as I did not have to come out as a trans person at work. Where I now work in Britain, there is an anti-discrimination policy in place. Among others, it is against the company policies to discriminate on the grounds of gender or sexual orientation. I feel safe. (Hungary FtM29)

A few **positive examples** of **"LGBT-friendly" workplaces** were also mentioned.

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I used to work in an equal-trade store and I've always been accepted. They also supported me a lot. (Italy F19)

At work I can talk openly about being gay, friends etc. My colleagues are very interested in what I do, friends, the gay scene etc. Some of them even go out with me to the gay scene. (NL M20)

Besides workplaces, some **sport clubs and teams** were also shown to display a certain homophobic character. Respondents mentioned being barred from teams, sometimes on the basis of stereotypical assumptions.

I was kicked out of our (female) football team. The trainer's comment was if an apple starts to rot, it is not enough to cut out the rotten bit but you should throw away the whole apple so I was kicked out together with two other lesbian team members (Hungary F23)

I was kicked out from the sports club I used to go to. (Moldova M20)

Some friends of mine, who were taking part in an inter-mural soccer tournament decided not to let me take part in it as they figured, I would not be a good soccer player. I felt offended as I was the only male friend of theirs who was not invited to play. I certainly felt it had something to do with me being gay, as if gay males would not be able to play soccer! (Slovakia M27)

One could also encounter **discrimination and prejudice within the LGBT community** – especially if one was bisexual or non-conforming to other "normative" expectations of the community.

I belong to an LGBT organisation and I have suffered from discrimination when I told them that I could be bi[sexual]. (France F25)

Many people don't understand the concept of bisexuality and some make comments like "have you decided to become straight again?" when they see me walking hand in hand with a girl. (Belgium M21)

In the Swedish LGBT community there is a lot of discrimination towards feminine lesbians. (Sweden F18)

Many respondents referred to instances of **institutionalised discrimination** – affecting them as citizens whose full community membership is denied by heteronormative institutional policy designs – including **discriminative legislation** failing to provide heterosexual and non-heterosexual citizens with equal rights, **restrictions on giving blood, discriminative insurance policies and everyday practices**.

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I can't get married. I am not allowed to be artificially inseminated. I cannot adopt children. (Slovenia F33)

I'm not open, except for a few persons. It kills me. I'm not honest with myself because of that. Lies are everywhere. It doesn't let me breath and work normally…If I start talking I may loose my job or family or social status…I probably have to change my place of living quite often, until I find some tolerant neighbours.. I can not adopt a child with my partner… And I see all this as a painful effect of widespread discrimination in society. (Russia F29)

I was not allowed to give blood because I was asked at the interview if I was gay and that automatically put me in a high risk group making me unsuitable for blood donations. (Malta F28)

Gays are not allowed to donate blood in our country, because the risk of getting HIV was too high, according to the blood bank. I found that very discriminating, because most gays have safe sex. (NL M20)

Because my friend was honest and admitted being a homosexual on his application for life insurance, he must now pay more / attain less benefit than if he had lied and said he was heterosexual. Or you go round to buy a stupid Valentine Card for your girlfriend and the salesgirl still (of course) looks at you not once….not twice…but three times – until she HAS to ask whether you took a wrong card by mistake! … Gyms offer membership discounts to couples – but they must be male and female, obviously! (Malta F22)

Also many respondents felt **restricted in their use of public spaces** – for example, walking on the streets – without being harassed. **Safety** is a basic concern for everyone but it seems that it cannot be taken for granted so readily by LGBT people who are often reminded to be aware of potential attacks, abuse and other acts of hostility.

I was the victim of verbal abuse many times on the streets just by guys passing by calling out loud remarks… (Malta F28)

If my city … I have received insults targeting me as a lesbian while walking on the street. (Italy F24)

Having been an LGBT activist when I was young, I know and have experienced a lot of indirect impact. I have always had to be weary about my safety since I was often on TV and was publicly known as an LGBT activist. Many times friends and I had to avoid certain places such as cafes to make sure we were not recognised and to avoid possible harassment. It was always an issue of safety and most of the times I used taxis to return home rather that public transport. Especially during the evening and late hours, the locals in my neighbourhood knew about me and although I never experienced direct threats, on a subconscious level I was always aware of the threats and took all possible steps. (Latvia M37)

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Some minor prejudices, like not understanding why both me and my wife are so feminine, or thinking that I hate men. Some of the Muslim boys in my town community whistle and point when we walk holding hands, but otherwise none. (NL F27)

How ironic! After attending the seminar dedicated to LGBT harassment and hate-crime, my boyfriend and I walked through a park holding hands. It was a sunny Sunday afternoon and a gang of teenagers started yelling at us, showing their buts and dicks. After that they began throwing rocks at us. After that we called the police. They were fined afterwards with some hilariously low fines. None of the local papers reported the incident. (Slovenia M)

My girlfriend and I have experienced sexual comments, inappropriate touching and rude questions from strangers at clubs etc. This does not occur when we pretend to be just friends. We also got pushed and threatened by young guys (approx. 14-16 years old) at one occasion. That was really-really scary, and we're never going back to the location where it happened. (Sweden F22)

When I was on the bus last week a group of boys laughed at me when I mentioned the word 'gay' on my mobile phone to my friend. Sometimes when I walk past workmen holding my partner's hand they jeer and make rude comments. (UK F23)

I have come across random people who were hostile to me. This includes taunting, verbal abuse, threats of physical violence and death, and in one instance a knife was pulled on me while walking home alone. People, who perceived I was gay, yet did not know me, did these things. … These encounters were awkward, made me feel belittled, nervous and ostracised. … The fact that such encounters have happened to me at all make me upset, and shows a layer of prejudice that exists (how large this is I don't know) but I count myself lucky that no physical harm has ever befallen me. (Ukraine M20)

5.2.5. Religious community

We invited respondents to include their religious denomination in their questionnaires. 28% of our respondents identified themselves as being religious, 25% as non-religious, and 48% didn't answer this question (See TABLE III). 39% of the religious respondents identified themselves as Catholic, 14% as Christian, 9% as Orthodox, 6% as Protestant, 3% as Buddhist, 2% as Jewish, and 2% as Muslim.

One third (33%) of the respondents who identified as being religious reported to have encountered prejudice or discrimination targeting them as an LGBT person in their religious community, 8% stated that they had no such experience, while 60% did not find this question relevant (See TABLE IV).

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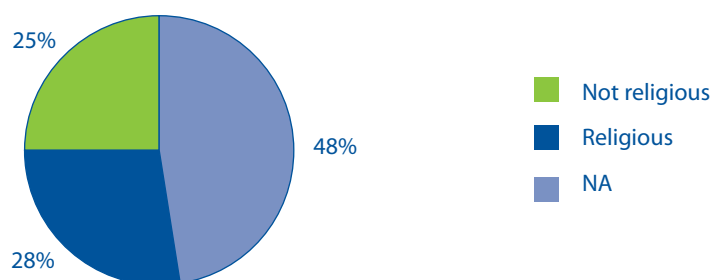and transgender
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Religion was seen as a problematic issue for LGBT people at different levels: at the level of official church institutions, of the local communities, and at a personal level. First and foremost a lot of respondents took objection to **condemnations of homosexuality** by various church institutions and dignitaries.

I find it very sad that especially the Catholic Church and the Islam deny the fact that a human can be homosexual. That they even forbid it officially (of course, there are local religious representatives who aren't like that at all). I think a lot of young religious persons face some mental difficulties because of this. They have to find a way to be gay and believe at the same time – which is quite well possible! I know a lot of people around me (gay and straight) who feel that those two facts don't exclude each other. … I do have a hard time though when religious leaders make negative (even horrible) comments about being gay. I don't believe in God but I don't disrespect Christians because of that! It's a difficult issue because I also believe strongly in freedom of speech. But disrespectful/offending/insulting announcements should be regarded as discrimination and therefore those leaders (or anybody) should be held to account for that. (NL F22)

In the US the Christian community, here in Belgium the Muslim community is very much against gay people. Gay Muslim teens don't get much of appreciation or respect. I find that very weird since the Muslim community expects us to accept them, but at the same time they continue to discriminate against gays. (Belgium M21)

I am not very religious but I belong to the Swedish Church. This community does have some vicars whose attitudes towards homo/trans/bisexuals are quite intolerant. It really makes me angry sometimes. And some of the religious communities in our country speak of homosexuality as not only wrong and sinful but as a disease! I suppose it's the same in other countries, eh? I would laugh if it were not for the fact that these people are quite sincere. It will never stop amazing me how people feel they can act just because they think they can lean on the Bible. Who wants to worship a God who wants to control every step you take, and wants you to harm yourself by not allowing your heart, mind, soul and body to love somebody, just because that person is not of the opposite sex? Many people, apparently… (Sweden F26)

TABLE 3. Distribution of religious respondents (Weighted sample%)

25% Not religious
48%
28%

■ Not religious
■ Religious
■ NA

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Church institutions were often described as **inherently homophobic, which in some cases led** to the development of **internalised homophobia** at the intrapersonal level.

Being born in Portugal and coming from a catholic family, discrimination of GLBT persons is an institution itself inside the church. I grew up hearing that GLBT persons are sick persons who deserve merely our pity, but no respect. GLBT persons, according to the Portuguese Catholic Church official representatives, are second-rate citizens and should not have access to marriage or adoption. So I have definitely been discriminated in my religious community. (Portugal M28)

I'm not practising my religion, though I'm Catholic. The ideas of the Catholic Church are not my ideas. Their opinion on homosexuality, safe sex, AIDS, HIV, women's position in church, gay marriage etc are very outdated, and not realistic. That's why I don't practise my religion. (NL M)

The religious education I got for sure contributed to my internalised homophobia. (Slovenia M32)

TABLE 4. Prejudice/discrimination by religious community (Weighted sample%)
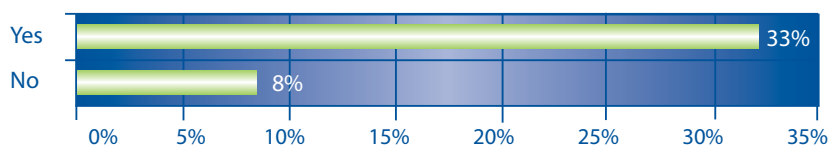
Many formerly religious respondents reported **leaving their church** as a result of suffering from institutionalised homophobic discrimination and prejudice. They found the religious teachings of their former churches to be **incompatible** with their own life experience.

I was Catholic until Joseph Ratzinger was elected pope. For a homosexual it is unbearable to be part of a religions community which still refers to homosexuality as an illness. Until church and state will not be completely separated in Austria, there is no hope for real advance. I feel sorry, appalled, angry about this, but there is nothing I can do. (Austria M20)

I stopped going to the Catholic Church because of their rude statements. (Belgium F15)

I left the church as soon as I came out… I did not care much about it in the first place and did not want to deal with their medieval attitude after I came out. (Latvia M34)

I wouldn't say I've experienced prejudice or discrimination in a particular religious community, however

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Catholic teachings taught me to be homophobic and hate myself, until I felt that I had to leave the Catholic Church if I wanted to embrace my lesbian identity fully. (Malta F24)

My (Protestant) community accused me when my husband was unfaithful to me, so how can I even try to tell them about my homosexuality? I just left them not long before identifying myself as a lesbian. I know their position and it is "tolerant" – yes, things like that happen, we know many sinners, but this is their fault, they've chosen to be like this - but not accepting. "Poor people are driven by sin and evil, they deserve pity, not love." I told only one church member, a very close friend of mine, about the fact that I've discovered my homosexuality and I'm completely happy now, although I miss the church and worship so much. He worried and felt sorry for me. We stopped communicating for a year after that, because I couldn't stand his comments and his attempts to save me from a "wrong way" anymore, it was painful and discouraging. I miss my church very much, I need prayer and communion with other believers, but I can't lie to them and don't want to. So I am thinking about opening a small Christian group inside the LGBT community. I think this is a great need many of us feel all the time. (Moldova F30)

Some respondents who identified as being religious referred to negative experiences within their religious communities in the form of **silencing**, being forced to **hide**, being targets of **hate speech**, or attempts to force them to **change their lifestyles**.

in my religious community I consider myself discriminated like any other homosexual since the Church doesn't welcome and love us at all. Instead we feel shut up in a ghetto, pushed to limit ourselves, suffer repression and deny our being gay. (Italy M25)

I have been told that being gay is an abomination and that if I don't conform to the teachings of the church I will go to hell. I have been given sermons from priests trying to make me change my sexual orientation. (Malta M23)

I once left my church in tears after a priest read out a letter from the Bishop praising the traditional family and condemning people who are gay/lesbian (UK F23)

At a local level, problems were encountered even by very devoted LGBT members of religious communities; where **"compulsory identity transformation"** failed, ejection from the community followed.

Yes – it was a religious group which I chose to attend. Once they got to know they made me feel that it wasn't normal and that it's sinful to be gay or lesbian. In simple words they tried to convince me that I am straight. At the time I was also attending a course (within the religious group) in order to become part of their community – a deeper commitment. I was stopped from attending this course since, according to them, I was obviously not

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ready to commit myself to God since I was having such thoughts about my sexuality. Eventually I felt unwelcome and left the group. (Malta F23)

Twelve years ago one of the religious sisters became very close friend of mine, though when I said her that I'm lesbian, she was shocked enormously and insisted on me going to psychoanalysis. I refused because I didn't see any problem with me, because I wanted to become a religious sister and was able to live a celibate life. Three months later I expressed my wish to her, and she tried to accept me, but couldn't. After several years of traumatising relationships her community sent me to Paris for a medical-psychological examination, and their "experts" decided that I have problems with my identity and can make a choice in my life only after healing my disorder with the help of psychologists. Sisters understood this in the way that I must change my sexual orientation. I had consultations with a psychologist for 6 months, who explained to me, that he can't change my orientation, but everything is all right with my identity. After all those (four) years of trouble and psychological torture they finally rejected my candidature. (Lithuania F)

In spite of the apparent inherent incompatibility of religion and homosexuality a number of responses illustrated that it is possible to **reconcile faith and sexual difference**.

In the Buddhist world everything is accepted as it is and if you have problems with anything you look for the problem within yourself. (NL M16)

My religion, Buddhism accepts all forms of sexuality. (Malta F21)

A gay couple in our congregation has shown me that it doesn't have to cause problems or conflicts. (NL M25)

I do not maintain my religious connections. However, I know that there is one Lutheran priest in Hungary whose ceremony I could attend with no special conditions attached. He is a socialist MP in Hungary and is queer-friendly. (Hungary FtM29)

5.2.6. Media

Three quarter (75%) of the respondents found that the media products of their country expressed prejudice or included discriminative elements targeting LGBT people. Media products were often seen as distorting reality by spreading stereotypes (frequently in a sensationalist manner), contributing to the maintenance of heteronormativity and the spread of homophobia by being the mouth piece of homophobic politicians, priests and other "celebrities". On the other hand, the media are also seen as having the potential to contribute to the

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social integration of LGBT people by being one of the most influential agents of socialisation.

Most of our respondents complained about the non-realistic and distorted media images of LGBT people.

They have a distorted vision of us. It seems according to them that the gay world is a big circus and orgy. (Italy M25)

There are always those cliché-gay-people, who are helping every hetero to keep there prejudices. There are no gay people in the media who can be seen as realistic persons. (Austria M21)

A lot of media products present being gay as a laughing matter or they refer to views condemning gays. (Hungary F28)

Stereotyping of homosexuality is abundant in every Western culture; examples abound, ranging from Hollywood cinema to newspaper ads. Media culture as such is structured around heterosexuality; homosexuality is generally represented as deviation from the norm. Even gay oriented sitcoms such as Will & Grace are based on stereotypes, prejudice, etc., although they consciously play with them. When it comes to media in the Netherlands, the term 'discrimination' seems out of context to me, but this is not to say that representations of homosexuality in contemporary media are honest, positive, or empowering. Constructing positive images of LGBTQ's is still very much needed, also in Holland. (Netherlands, M27)

In relation to partnership and adoption rights for LGBT community the press in Ireland at times can have a doomsday approach that the fabric of society is about to collapse. They tend to advocate an attitude that we are there but represent an undertone on society rather than a community the same as any other. (Ireland M25)

Homosexuals are always seen and represented as a homogeneous group apart from the "normal" population. It has not entered people's minds, that homosexuality doesn't only mean sexual, but in the first place emotional attraction and that it isn't a character quality. If homosexuals would share the fear of discovery, the abuse and treatment as second class citizens, they would have as much in common as heterosexuals have between them: not much. (Austria M20)

Either queers are portrayed as lousy mothers or they are used as an excuse to oppress immigrants. When Danish media takes any initiatives to put discrimination of queers on the agenda it is to fuel the fascist debate by claiming that all immigrants are homophobes, and that Danes are not – although I have only suffered homophobic attacks by men born and raised in Denmark. (Denmark F21)

Sensationalist presentation paints false pictures of LGBT life highlighting scandalous side issues, whilst

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artificially compartmentalizing and alienating LGBT people in society.

Media lusts after sensation. … But we transsexual people are not freaks. Media is misinformed and mixes up a lot of things. They report mainly on unsuccessful SRSs [sex reassignment surgery]… They present dangerous crap and a lot of people believe it. (Hungary MtF29)

In 2004 a scandal about child pornography in a monastery was rather ignored by the media. Only when pictures of two kissing monks appeared, the media coverage began. The scandal was not the child porn but the gay relationship. (Austria M26)

Media is interested in this topic because they find it sells well. They look for the unusual elements and thus reinforce stereotypes such as gays wearing female clothing, having AIDS, and seducing heterosexual boys. When reporting about the gay pride they show the most "colourful people" not those who look just like your neighbour or your uncle… (Hungary M29)

LGBT people and issues were seen to be excluded in the sense that if they are shown at all – for example, *always late at night* (Denmark F21) or with *"Adults Only" rating* (Malta M24) –, it is in a negative or stereotypical setting.

In lots of comedy programmes people laugh at the stereotype of gay people, there are some rap songs which talk about shooting people for being gay, and there are a lot of negative images of gay people on the television (such as lesbians only ever being portrayed in prison, or as very predatory on straight women). Most of the time gay people are not on the television, so one big problem is being completely invisible in the media unless it is a negative image. (UK F23)

5.3. Summary of results: causes of social exclusion of young LGBT people

When we asked our respondents what they consider the most important cause of social exclusion of LGBT youth in their country, we found the following general themes recurring in most of the countries: lack of knowledge; ignorance as well as misinformation; fear of the unknown; homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia; lack of full community membership, equal rights, respect and recognition; distorted

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representation or invisibility in media and all spheres of life; lack of LGBT activism; lack of a public awareness and debate; stigmatisation and marginalisation; patriarchy, heteronormativity, homonegativity, and heterosexism.

In some countries specific references were made to institutionalised heterosexist policies and practices of certain governments, political parties and churches; "old traditions" of tabooing homosexuality; and influence of foreign cultures. In addition, the impossibility of changing trans people's ID before completing their transition was seen as a specific cause contributing to the social exclusion of trans-people in certain countries.

While these causes, which are often interrelated, can explain social exclusion of LGBT people in general, LGBT youth was shown to be especially vulnerable to social exclusion because of additional, age-specific reasons including: a) their economic as well as emotional dependence on parents and adults in general; b) lack of resources and support; c) lack of positive role models; d) heterosexist socialisation – through which they learn that "heterosexuality guarantees social inclusion, whereas non-heterosexuality leads to marginalization, to being thought of as somewhat less of a person" (NL M27); e) lack of support (to come out) and of groups to belong to; f) being silenced and isolated; g) feeling like a freak, different, and lonely; h) rejection by friends and family; i) parents' disappointment and feelings of failure; j) school culture in general: lack of education and communication on LGBT issues in school, lack of teachers' and parents' training; k) lack of representation in school curricula, and failure to acknowledge bullying in school as a problem.

As research findings discussed in previous chapters showed, young LGBT people have a lot of trouble with the main agents of socialisation: family, school, peer group and media. This survey supports this assertion by providing further data indicating that school and family seemed to be social contexts where it is particularly problematic for LGBT youth to fit into.

More than half of our respondents reported experiences of prejudice and/or discrimination in their **family**. Typical family reactions to revealing one's LGBT identity to close family was shown to be disbelief, denial and demands for "changing back to normal". Stereotypical misconceptions of what it means to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual greatly contributed to the non-accepting attitudes towards LGBT family members. Transgender respondents mentioned that they had to go through a double coming out with a double burden: since before identifying as a trans-person, most of them believed themselves to be gay or lesbian. Being rejected as an LGBT person by close family members was shown to force young people into self-denial and/or constructing a double life strategy. In some cases, coming out to parents could pose the threat of or actually lead to being forced to leave the family home. Rejection by family

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members often reflected fear of social stigmatization affecting the parents and the family as a whole in a heterosexist environment. Many respondents were/are unable or unwilling to reveal their LGBT identity within their family because the discouraging homophobic environment of the family itself. In contrast with the many negative experiences of most of the respondents, there were a few reports on positive, accepting family atmosphere. In some of these families, there were already openly gay or lesbian family members providing positive role models for young LGBT people.

Less than one third of our respondents reported experiences of prejudice and/or discrimination targeting them as LGBT people in their **close circle of friends**. In comparison to the relative hostility of the family environment they seemed to find more acceptance and recognition in their friends' circles. After revealing their LGBT identity, some respondents indicated a certain restructuring in their friends' circle: some old friends were lost, while new ones were found – especially within the LGBT community. In the lives of young LGBT people, friends can play a very significant role by providing them with the sense of belonging and acceptance that is often refused to them by their family of origin. Friends – especially LGBT friends and LGBT community members – can become members of a family of choice that can provide young LGBT people with an accepting family-like environment where they can feel at home.

Almost two thirds of respondents referred to negative personal experiences at **school** related to their LGBT status. More than half of the respondents reported **bullying** that included a wide spectrum of negative experiences from name calling and ostracism to physical attacks. Longer term or repeated bullying was shown to have serious consequences on the victims. Some of them became withdrawn and socially isolated, or dropped out of school. Respondents claimed that their peers were mostly responsible for their negative experiences and especially for suffering from bullying. Bullying was often interpreted as being related to or being the consequence of gender nonconforming behaviour, character and look – or what was perceived to be such by others. Both non-heterosexual and heterosexual youth can be affected by anti-gay/lesbian victimisation in school which results from assumptions of being non-heterosexual when a person does not conform to expected gender behaviour. Many respondents had negative experiences of anxiety related to fear of discrimination or bullying. In this context revealing one's true – LGBT – self could be seen as a luxury with dangerous consequences.

Some respondents mentioned teachers as being the source, or being a part of their problems. Teachers were often described as passive outsiders failing to provide help for the isolated, hurt and/or bullied students. Homophobic and heterosexist manifestations from teachers were also mentioned including for example, intrusions into the personal lives of students. Teachers' offensive and/or threatening language use could also indicate their homonegative attitudes. In this context, the need for teachers' training to

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present or handle LGBT issues was highlighted. Lack of openly LGBT teachers, who can act as potential positive role models for LGBT students, was also perceived to be indicative of the general problems of acceptance. The fact that LGBT issues are not included, mentioned and covered in the **school curriculum**, was interpreted by many respondents as an institutional tool for maintaining LGBT invisibility in school and as such being discrimination in itself.

With regards to discrimination in different **community settings**, respondents referred to negative experiences in relation to the **workplace** by mentioning a wide spectrum of phenomena including not getting promoted, being dismissed, or not even getting the job in the first place; having their freedom of expression curtailed; being ostracised, isolated, or subjected to unwanted moralising.

Moreover, many respondents referred to instances of **institutionalised discrimination, which affect** them as citizens whose full community membership is denied by heteronormative institutional policy designs.

More than a quarter of respondents identified themselves as being religious, and one third of them reported encountering prejudice or discrimination in their **religious community**. Church institutions were often described as inherently homophobic, and consequently contributing to the development of internalised homophobia. Many respondents reported leaving their church as they found the religious teachings to be incompatible with their own life experience. In spite of an apparent incompatibility of religion and homosexuality, a number of responses illustrated that it is possible to reconcile faith and sexual difference.

Three quarters of the respondents found that the **media products** of their country expressed prejudice or included discriminative elements. LGBT people and issues were seen to be excluded from media in the sense that if they are shown at all, it is generally in a negative or stereotypical setting.

On the basis of our research findings, which reflect the views of young LGBT people themselves, we can conclude that there is a lot to do to prevent the development and the "effective functioning" of social exclusion mechanisms affecting LGBT youth in Europe. As a part of this report, we will give practical recommendations on how to work on social exclusion prevention in this field.

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5.3.1 A note about the sample

It must be noted that by comparing the results of our weighted sample with the Dutch answers, there is considerably less sign of social exclusion of LGBT youth in the Netherlands and this is true for all the examined aspects (See TABLE V-VI.). While not denying the existing difficulties, it is still very indicative that the majority of the Dutch respondents did not report personal experiences of social exclusion. One proposed hypothesis to explain the difference in the Dutch results is the impact of the LGBT-friendly policies and educational programmes focussing on LGBT issues which have been put in place over the past three decades in the Netherlands. This constitutes an important piece of research to be carried out in the future.

**TABLE 5.
Prejudice/discrimination in the weighted sample and in the Netherlands (%)**

Values: Curriculum: 42.9 (General sample), 8,7 (Netherlands); Bullying: 53.0 (General sample), 39.4 (Netherlands); School: 61.2 (General sample), 45.9 (Netherlands)

- General sample
- Netherlands
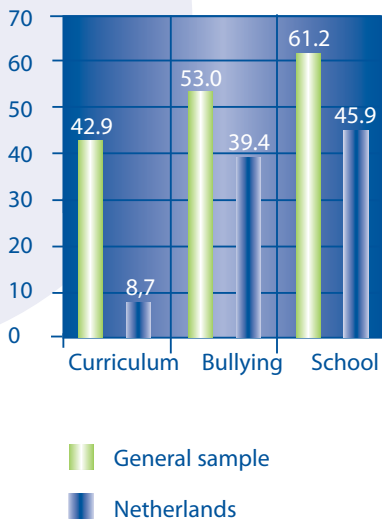
**TABLE 6.
Prejudice/discrimination in the weighted sample and in the Netherlands (%)**

Values: School: 61.2 (General sample), 45.9 (Netherlands); Familly: 51.2 (General sample), 31.2 (Netherlands); Community: 37.7 (General sample), 24.6 (Netherlands); Friends: 29.8 (General sample), 28.9 (Netherlands)

- General sample
- Netherlands

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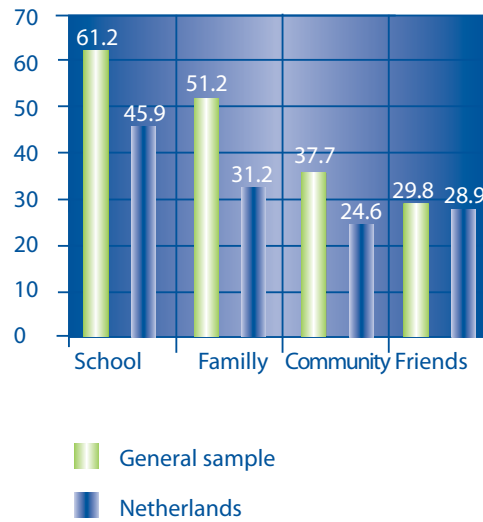
6. Good practices to promote social inclusion of LGBT youth

The previous chapters of this report shed light on the experience of social exclusion of LGBT youth in Europe and the difficult and unwelcoming reality which many of them still have to face on a daily basis. Fortunately, the situation of young LGBT people is not completely bleak, and while much work needs to be done to advance their social inclusion, there are examples of practices which contribute to greater inclusion and recognition of LGBT youth.

In order to move from exclusion to inclusion, this chapter presents a selection of "good practices" to promote social inclusion of LGBT youth. These are examples of projects and policies carried out in a variety of EU countries – old and new Members States – by various actors, such as local and national governments, NGOs, educators/teachers, students. This list of "good" practices, which is far from being exhaustive, is meant to serve as a source of inspiration for others to undertake and promote similar activities and policies.

6.1. "Teach respect" – Educare al rispetto

Summary of the initiative: Training programme for teachers to combat homophobia, bullying and discrimination against LGBT people in schools. It was certified as an official training programme for the years 2002-2005 by the Italian Minister of Education. The programme has been carried out in seven provinces and has reached about two hundred teachers.

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Type of activity: Teachers' training programme

Target group: School teachers

Key actor/Implementing organizations: ARCIGAY (NGO)

Geographical scope: Italy

Languages used: Italian

Date of implementation: 2002-2005

Website for the initiative: www.arcigay.it

Contact: Raffaele Lelleri and Fabio Saccà – E-mail: scuola@arcigay.it

6.2. "Freedom of being, freedom of loving" – libertà di essere, libertà di amare

Summary of the initiative: Poster campaign supported by Municipality of Turin. It started as a contest targeting four local high schools: each institution hosted workshops for students on sexual orientation and diversity, the outcomes of which have been posters and other visual material. The best products were printed and hanged around city walls for three months and all the posters composed an exhibition open to public in the city hall. The same project took place in Venice in the 2005-2006 school year.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Poster campaign

Target group: Students, general population

Key actors: municipal authorities, high schools

Geographical scope: Italy

Languages used: Italian

Date of implementation: 2002-2003

Website for the initiative: www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/as/manif.htm

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6.3. Towards an inclusive school ●●●●●●●●●

Summary of the initiative: An educational project to create safe and affirming schools for gay and lesbian students and staff. EU Socrates project on mainstreaming good practices to overcome social exclusion of LGBT students in schools. This initiative involved five schools from four European countries. A video, training course and training handbook have been produced.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Curriculum development

Target group: Students, teachers, general population

Key actor: EU Socrates programme, high schools

Geographical scope: Italy, Austria, Germany, France

Languages used: English, French, German, Italian

Date of implementation: 2003-2005

Website for the initiative: www.inclusiveschool.org

6.4. "Back to school" – Torna a l'escola! - "¡Vuelve al cole! ●●●●●●●●●

Summary of the initiative: Awareness-raising campaign for including gay and lesbian issues into the school curricula (an adaptation of the "Go Back to School" program of the GLSEN, US). Gays and lesbians are asked to write letters (based on templates available on INCLOU's Website) to the director of their former schools to explain the importance to include gay and lesbian issues into the school curricula and to encourage them to apply more gay- and lesbian-friendly teaching methods. The INCLOU organisation also collected lesbian/gay-friendly teaching material which they make available. In these letters, former students are also invited to talk about their personal experiences from the time they were students as a way to help teachers understand what the difficulties that young people face as a result of homophobic school environments.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Postcard/letter campaign

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Target group: School, teachers, directors

Key actor/Implementing organizations: INCLOU gays y lesbianas en la educación (NGO), school principals

Geographical scope: Catalonia (Spain)

Languages used: Catalonian, Spanish

Date of implementation: ongoing

Website for the initiative: www.inclou.org/torna/

Contact: www.inclou.org

6.5. Teachers' manual on diversity education – "Educar para a diversidade"

Summary of the initiative: Publication of a teachers' manual on sexual orientation and gender identity

("EDUCAR PARA A DIVERSIDADE – Um Guia para Professores sobre Orientação Sexual e Identidade de Género")

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Developing training material for teachers

Target group: Teachers

Key actor/Implementing organizations: rede ex aequo – associação de jovens lésbicas, gays, bissexuais, transgéneros e simpatizantes (NGO)

Geographical scope: Portugal

Languages used: Portuguese

Date of implementation: ongoing

Website for the initiative: www.ex-aequo.web.pt/arquivo/professores.pdf

6.6. "Diversity makes us richer: not poorer" – Različnost bogati: ne siromaši

Summary of the initiative: A CD-rom "Diversity Makes Us Richer, Not Poorer: The Everyday Life of Gays and Lesbians" as a teaching aid for teachers to use during the educational process. The CD-rom is

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intended to assist in classroom discussions on homosexuality; to provide information for employers on how to ensure safe working environment for gays and lesbians; to support gays and lesbians themselves, their parents and friends. The CD-rom includes short movies about everyday life of gays and lesbians and interviews with gays and lesbians which are designed to enhance a better understanding and knowledge of the everyday life of lesbians and gays. This project is part of a wider project "Intimate Citizenship: The Right to Have Rights", which is supported by the European Commission's "Promotion of Active European Citizenship" programme.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: educational material (CD-rom, postcards, website)

Target group: Schools, teachers, directors, gays and lesbians, general public

Key actor/Implementing organizations: Peace Institute (Slovenia) (research institute) in cooperation with Amnesty International Slovenia and Association for the Integration of homosexuality (NGO).

Geographical scope: Slovenia

Languages used: Slovenian on CD-rom, Slovenian and English on website

Date of implementation: ongoing

Website for the initiative: www.mirovni-institut.si/razlicnost

Contact: roman.kuhar@mirovni-institut.si

6.7. "25 questions on sexual orientation" – 25 cuestiones sobre la orientación sexual

Summary of the initiative: Training material for schools on frequently asked questions about sexual orientation. This material was developed by the Educational Commission of COGAM, on the basis of research carried out on safety of LGBT people in schools and inclusion of LGBT issues into the school curricula. The "25 questions on sexual orientation" is a training material for schools which provides clear answers to questions such as "What is homosexuality?", "Who are the lesbian and gay adolescents?", "Is it legal to be gay or lesbian in Spain?", "What is homophobia?", "How can one struggle against homophobia and heterosexism in school?" etc.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Raising awareness

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Target group: LGB youth, general student population, teachers

Key actor/Implementing organizations: COGAM (Colectivo de lesbianas, gays, transexuales y bisexuales de Madrid)/FELGT (NGO)

Geographical scope: Spain

Languages used: Spanish

Date of implementation: ongoing (from 1998)

Website for the initiative:

http://cogam.avanzis.com/WebPortal/_cogam/imagenes//originales/1851_es_25%20cuestiones%2
0sobre%20la%20orientación%20homosexual.jpg

Contact: www.cogam.org and www.felgt.org

6.8. "Getting to know gays and lesbians" – Melegség és megismerés

Summary of the initiative: An educational programme on LGBT tolerance issues for prospective teachers, psychologists and social workers. This programme is aimed at creating a safe school environment for LGBT people. The programme includes: class discussions in secondary schools, colleges and universities in Budapest and in the countryside (on the identity and life of LGBT people, on homophobia, and on what to do in the face of prejudice); training program for prospective teachers, psychologists and social workers; the publication of a teacher's handbook ("Not a Taboo Anymore: A Manual for Teachers on Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgender") and of two brochures for secondary school pupils, and for prospective teachers, psychologists, and social workers. The programme was developed by Labrisz Lesbian Association with the support of the European Union's PHARE Democracy Micro-project in 2000.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Teachers' training, peer education

Target group: Secondary school teachers and students; prospective teachers, psychologists, and social workers

Key actor/Implementing organizations: Labrisz Lesbian Association (NGO) with support from the EU

Geographical scope: Hungary

Languages used: Hungarian

Date of implementation: ongoing (starting from 2000)

Website for the initiative: http://www.labrisz.hu/2/media/pdf/melegseg_es_megismeres.pdf

Contact: Anna Borgos - E-mail: **labrisz@labrisz.hu**

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6.9. Anti-bullying pack for schools

Summary of the initiative: Programme or policy to include homophobic bullying into the general anti-bullying pack for schools.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Awareness-raising

Target group: Schools, teachers, pupils

Key actor/Implementing organizations: Department for Education and Skills (government)

Geographical scope: United Kingdom

Languages used: English

Date of implementation: ongoing (started in 1994, revised in 2002)

Website for the initiative: www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/pack/02.pdf

Contact: www.dfes.gov.uk

6.10. Fighting homophobia in school – Youth seminar

Summary of the initiative: Seminar for young people from Eastern and Western Europe on fighting homophobia in school. The seminar looks at ways to achieve a more secure and friendly-surrounding for LGBT youth in the school and school-related environment, such as clubs, groups, sport teams, etc. The aim of the seminar is to transfer experience on an issue on which LGBT workers in Eastern countries have limited experience, and to share solutions to tackle similar in different geographical and political regions. An outcome of the seminar will be a training material to be used as a basis for a broader campaign against prejudice and discrimination in Eastern Europe, targeting young high school students.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Youth seminar

Target group: Young LGBT activists and youth workers who have experience in working with LGBT youth in schools

Key actor/Implementing organizations: ACCEPT (NGO)

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Geographical scope: Romania

Languages used: English

Date of implementation: June 2-5, 2006

Website for the initiative: www.accept-romania.ro/

Contact: ioana_c@accept-mail.ro

6.11. Guides to handling and surviving anti-gay harassment

Summary of the initiative: Guides providing practical advice for those who are suffering from bullying and those who should be intervening in case of bullying. Five types of guides were designed for pupils, for their families, for head teachers and for teachers, on the basis of guides developed by The Safe School Coalition. These guides are available on the Internet.

1) A Pupil's Guide to Surviving Anti-Gay Harassment and Physical or Sexual Assault

www.safeschoolscoalition.org/PupilsGuide.pdf

2) A Family's Guide to Handling Anti-Gay Harassment www.safeschoolscoalition.org/FamilysGuide.pdf

3) A Head Teacher's Guide to Handling Anti-Gay Harassment

www.safeschoolscoalition.org/HeadTeachersGuide.pdf

4) A Teacher's Guide to Intervening In Anti-Gay Harassment

www.safeschoolscoalition.org/TeachersGuideIntervene.pdf

5) A Teacher's Guide to Surviving Anti-Gay Harassment

www.safeschoolscoalition.org/TeachersGuideSurvive.pdf

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Providing practical advice, raising awareness.

Target group: LGB youth, teachers and parents

Key actor/Implementing organizations: GALYIC Gay and Lesbian Youth in Calderdale (NGO)

Geographical scope: United Kingdom

Languages used: English

Date of implementation: ongoing

Website for the initiative: www.homestead.com/galyic/bullying.html

Contact: getintouch@galyic.org.uk

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6.12. Enabling safety for LesBiGay teachers

Summary of the initiative: Project on the employment situation of lesbian, bisexual and gay teachers. The project included: comparative research on heterosexual/ bisexual/homosexual education personnel (published as "Healthy Teacher, Healthy School"); an analysis of school guidelines on safety, bullying and sexual intimidation; pilot projects in 15 schools (primary schools, secondary schools, regional training centres for young adults and adults) on how to improve their LGB policy; a manual to support LGB specific school policies; organisation of a European Sexual Orientation Mainstreaming Conference.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: research, publication of manuals, exchange of experience

Target group: Teachers, LGB teachers and their heterosexual peers, and indirectly students who are affected by the social school climate

Key actor/Implementing organizations: COC Netherlands (NGO), General Pedagogical Study Centre (APS), General Teacher Union (AOb), Empowerment Lifestyle Services

Geographical scope (countries): Netherlands (collaboration with Sweden and Finland)

Languages used: Dutch, English

Date of implementation: 2002-2005

Website for the initiative: www.lesbigayteachers.nl

Contact: Jorina Horzelenberg – E-mail: j.horzelenberg@coc.nl; Frits Prior – E-mail: f.prior@aps.nl; Erwin Kunnen –E-mail: **e.kunnen@phys.uu.nl**; Peter Dankmeijer – E-mail: **info@empower-ls.com**

6.13. "Everybody is different" – Guidelines by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education

Summary of the initiative: Inclusion of social safety and safety of LGBTQ students in quality standards for schools by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education. In order to do so, the Inspectorate asked Empowerment Lifestyle Services to study the regular guidelines on social safety, to formulate draft LGBT specific standards and to write a draft brochure to inform schools about these guidelines. The Inspectorate approved the

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drafts and the brochure "Everybody is Different" was published and distributed to all schools in 2003. Interviews with schools about these standards started in the school year 2003-2004.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: Publication of guidelines and interviews with school managers

Target group: School managers

Key actor/Implementing organizations: Dutch Inspectorate of Education (Government), Empowerment Lifestyle Services (NGO)

Geographical scope (countries): Netherlands

Languages used: Dutch

Date of implementation: 2003

Website for the initiative: www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/Documents/pdf/Iedereen_is_anders (Dutch version); www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/english (English information)

Contact: Els de Ruijter – E-mail: e.deruijter@owinsp.nl

6.14. Integration of transgender secondary school student

Summary of the initiative: Integration of a transgender secondary school student in a school. After a school was contacted by Berdache, a Dutch organization which aims to counsel transgender minors, a school principal took formal arrangements in the school to prevent the student being addressed as a boy instead of her wanted gender. The educational personnel and fellow student were informed and a personal monitoring and counselling system were initiated. This is not a formal project but a spontaneous example of mainstreaming without plan or report. The initiative was documented through interviewing a number of stakeholders and reporting them by Empowerment Lifestyle Services.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Target group: Transgender student and school environment

Key actor/implementing organizations: secondary school principal; Berdache (a counselling and referring group without formal status)

Geographical scope (countries): School in the centre of the Netherlands

Languages used: Dutch

Date of implementation: 2005 and ongoing

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Publications about the initiative: A more elaborate article can be found at **www.tolerantescholen.net.** (Look for: "geslaagde integratie transgender leerling")

6.15. School book review on LGB content by public authorities

Summary of the initiative: a review of school books and resources to establish the content about LGBT issues. The Dutch Ministry of Education commissioned the National Information Centre on Teaching Resources to review 63 school books, including all primary school resources and the resources for biology, social issues and care in secondary schools. The National Pedagogical Institute, which coordinates the Dutch efforts to make schools safer, used the results of the review to encourage the government to start a dialogue with the commercial school book publishers, who are responsible for the content of school books.

Sector of the initiative: Education

Type of activity: (desk top) research

Target group: government officials

Implementing organization: Nationaal Informatie Centrum Leermiddelen (National Information Centre on Teaching Resources) (government)

Geographical scope (countries): Netherlands

Languages used: Dutch

Date of implementation: 2001

Website for the initiative: www.tolerantescholen.net (Artikelen > In de School > NICL Fact sheet)

Contact: Bernadette Korte, Anne Leurink, Jos, Lodeweges, Merleen Ridderink – E-mail: **info@slo.nl**

6.16. Booklet on setting up European LGBT youth projects

Summary of the initiative: A training and educational booklet for youth workers on how to set up international LGBT youth projects. The SALTO Inclusion programme, which is part of the European Youth

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Programme, held a Rainbow training course in Romania in 2005 for youth workers and LGBT youth groups to help them develop projects and work with LGBT groups in other countries. A booklet was developed based on this training to make the information available to a wider audience.

Sector of the initiative: Capacity-building of LGBT youth organisations

Type of activity: Training

Target group: youth workers, LGBT youth organisations.

Key actor/Implementing organizations: SALTO Inclusion, SALTO-Youth Resources Centres, European Youth Programme

Geographical scope: EU Member States and candidate countries

Languages used: English

Date of implementation: 2005 – ongoing

Website for the initiative: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/OverTheRainbow/

Contact: Tony Geudens – E-mail: **tony@salto-youth.org**

6.17. Different in more ways than one: providing guidance for teenagers on their way to identity, sexuality and respect

Summary of the initiative: A manual for educators and counsellors on how to deal with lesbian, bisexual and gay issues in multicultural contexts. This manual was developed to be used as a tool to combat discrimination especially among young people and it manual pays special attention to situations involving double discrimination where individuals face discrimination on the grounds of their race or ethnic origin as well as of their sexual preference. This manual is the main outcome of the European project-team called "TRIANGLE" (Transfer of Information to Combat Discrimination Against Gays and Lesbians in Europe) which brought together representatives from five countries. This project was financed by the European Union with funding from the Action Programme to Combat Discrimination.

In the context of this project, a tool box was developed to support young gay and lesbian who work as peer education groups in schools to teach tolerance and respect between people with different sexual orientations. The Clever Box ("SchLAue Kiste") contains different materials to facilitate education sessions

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with young people concerning the subject of sexual orientation: check lists to prepare lessons, pictures, media, detailed descriptions of methods and games that can be used during the trainings, questionnaires for a feed back, etc. This project was carried out in North Rhine Westphalia (Germany) with the support of the Ministry of Health, Women, Family and Integration.

Sector of the Initiative: Education

Type of Activity: Training programme

Target Group: School teachers, Educators, Trainers, Counsellors

Key actors/Implementing organizations: NGOs: ARCIGAY, Empowerment Lifestyle Services, ProChoix, **SchLAu NRW, Schorerstichting; Government agencies:** Ministerium für Gesundheit, Soziales, Frauen und Familie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen; Research center: Rutgers Nisso Groep

Geographical scope: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands

Languages Used: English, French, German, Italian, Dutch

Date of implementation: 2003-2004

Website for the Initiative: www.diversity-in-europe.org/ and www.schlau-nrw.de (for the tool box)

Contact (for tool box): Dr. Pascal Belling – E-mail: Pascal.Belling@mgffi.nrw.de

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Recommendations

On the basis of the academic and community-based research compiled in this report, as well as the results of the survey conducted by the research team, we put forward the following recommendations.

To EU institutions:

•   In the context of National Action Plans for social inclusion, the European Commission should actively encourage Member States to formulate measures to tackle exclusion of LGBT people, and young LGBT people in particular.

•   In order to support Member States in identifying specific actions aimed at combating social exclusion of LGBT youth, the European Commission and the Social Protection Committee should develop common indicators to measure the progress of social inclusion of young LGBT people, in particular in relation to the educational system and the transition from school to work.

•   Furthermore, in the framework of the Open Method of Co-ordination, the European Commission should organize a peer review on measures to improve transition from school to working life for young people from groups which are vulnerable to discrimination and social exclusion, including young LGBT people.

•   Recalling the European Council's joint report on social protection and social inclusion (7294/06, March 2006) which identified the strengthening of "governance, transparency and involvement of stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring of policy" as one of the overarching challenges for policies in the social protection and inclusion fields, the European Commission should work with Member States to ensure the participation of civil society actors in the design, implementation and monitoring of policy in the social inclusion field.

•   The Social Inclusion Process should be clearly linked to the European Youth Pact and the Youth in Action programme for 2007-2013. The Youth in Action programme should be used to empower youth and to provide support to young people towards participating in the Social Inclusion Process.

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•   The European Commission should continue to support activities of the SALTO–Youth Resource Centres, such as training for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth, which contribute to empowering LGBT youth organisations throughout the EU. The Commission should also build on the experience that SALTO–Youth Centres have in working with LGBT youth organisations and involve these centres in the development of EU programmes in other policy areas such as social inclusion.

•   European Social Funds (ESF) should actively support organisations of young people which represent, or provide support to, groups vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion. The ESF should also promote (transnational) partnerships between youth groups, including LGBT youth organisations.

•   In the framework of the Green Paper consultation on "Improving the mental health of the population: Towards a strategy on mental health for the European Union" (COM (2005) 484), the European Commission should look at the impact of discrimination on mental health and pay particular attention to groups which face increased risk of mental ill-health, like LGBT people, because of discrimination and marginalisation.

•   Taking into account the multi-faceted nature of social exclusion of LGBT people, there is a significant need for stronger coordination between the different Directorate Generals of the European Commission in order to ensure more effective and meaningful action in the field of social inclusion and anti-discrimination policies. Social inclusion, as well as non-discrimination and equality, should be mainstreamed across all relevant areas of EU competence.

To EU Member States:

•   In the context of National Action Plans for social inclusion (NAPs/Incl), Member States should adopt proactive strategies to ensure inclusion of LGBT youth in society. The multifaceted nature of social exclusion of LGBT youth needs to be fully reflected in the design, implementation and monitoring of NAPs/Incl. This can be greatly facilitated by ensuring participation of relevant stakeholders, such as LGBT and youth organisations, in the whole process. Furthermore, Member States should be encouraged to desegregate targets in their NAPs/Incl. not only by age and sex, but also by other socially relevant characteristics such as sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic and religious domination. (See annex for more concrete proposals for NAPs/Incl.)

•   Member States should include in their NAPs/Incl. explicit and realistic goals to reduce the social

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exclusion of young LGBT people.

•   Member States should make the implementation of the European Youth Pact a key component of their NAPs/Incl., in particular with regards to their commitment to "improving the situation of the most vulnerable young people", which should include LGBT youth. Member States should also address the difficulties experienced by young people who are vulnerable to discrimination, including young LGBT people, in the transition from school to work.

•   Transparent preparation of NAPs/Incl. should guarantee the better reflection in social inclusion strategies of groups who are vulnerable to discrimination. To this end, Member States should be proactive in informing social partners and civil society organisations, including those who represent groups vulnerable to discrimination, about the consultation process and provide them with sufficient time to contribute with solid input.

•   Member States and local authorities should actively support young people who are willing to take a lead in empowering groups who experience discrimination and who contribute to enhancing the participation of these groups as active citizens. Young people should be given adequate resources and invited to take part in the decision-making process, especially on issues which concern them.

•   National youth-run organisations that carry out projects to promote social inclusion within the school environment should be given adequate resources.

Concerning research:

•   European agencies should develop indicators to assess the social exclusion experienced by LGBT people, collect specific data on discrimination against LGBT people, and monitor the living and working conditions of LGBT people in the EU. In particular, we encourage the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions to collect information and data on bullying and harassment against LGBT people, including in the area of education, as an indicator of social cohesion. We also encourage the European Agency for Safety and Health at work to look at the links between harassment and bullying in the workplace and mental-ill health amongst LGBT people.

•   Important gaps in research on LGBT people, including LGBT youth, need to be filled. We strongly encourage academic and community-based research teams to pay particular attention to the following:
        i.   the forced invisibility of LGBT people in Europe

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ii.   research on the social exclusion of elder LGBT people

iii.   the collection of information and data on social exclusion of LGBT people

iv.   the constraints and obstacles to the effective enforcement of legal instruments providing protection against discrimination

v.   the multiple discrimination that LGBT people may experience, e.g. on grounds of gender, sex, ethnic origin, religion, and/or disability.

•   Community-based research and partnership between academic researchers and NGOs need to be supported by public institutions as an effective way to include and reach LGBT people.

General:

•   We reiterate the need to integrate anti-discrimination and equality considerations in all relevant policy areas of the European Union.

•   We call for equality mainstreaming to ensure that EU policies in the field of social policy take into consideration all groups in societies.

•   We strongly recommend the European Union to speed up the development of a horizontal anti-discrimination directive to protect against all forms of discrimination in the provision of and access to goods and services and to extend existing legislation beyond the employment directive, especially into the classroom protecting young people from discrimination.

•   We encourage the Commission to give due attention to the effects of multiple discrimination in the formulation of relevant policies, such as those relating to social inclusion and non-discrimination, to labour market integration and employment, the provision of and access to goods and services, to education and health.

•   In order to provide a more diverse climate, it is necessary to start raising awareness about the current norms of identity (such as heteronormativity, masculinity, femininity) as they create boundaries in fighting discrimination.

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ANNEX I

Inclusion of LGBT youth in National Action Plans on Social Inclusion

We strongly encourage Member States to adopt proactive strategies to ensure inclusion of LGBT youth in society in the context of National Action Plans on social inclusion (NAPs/Incl.).

In order to support Member States to do this, we are making the following proposals on how to take into consideration the social exclusion of LGBT youth in the design, implementation and monitoring of NAPs/Incl.

In this context, we want to highlight the following recommendations made the European Commission to Member States in the "Guidelines for preparing national reports on strategies for social protection and social inclusion":

> "In identifying policy measures Member States are encouraged to take into account the importance of a multidimensional approach and thus the contribution that can be made by a range of different policy domains (economic, employment, education, social, environmental and cultural) to achieving the policy objective set… It will also be important to take into account measures to fight discrimination on grounds of sex, race/ethnic origin, religion/belief, disability, age and sexual orientation. In identifying specific actions it will be important to achieve a balance between measures to prevent poverty and exclusion arising and to redress the situation where it does exist."

In keeping with the three key elements to be addressed by Member States in their NAPs/Incl. (i.e. policy measures, indicators and monitoring arrangements and resources allocation), and keeping in mind the seven key policy priorities of the NAPs/Incl., we recommend the following measures, indicators and resources that would take into account discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and age.

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1. Policy measures

Priority on "Tackling disadvantaged in education and training":

•   Allocate resources for the review of school curricula with a view of limiting stereotyping and of reflecting diversity of lifestyles and representation of sexual minorities

•   Provide training and awareness raising for teachers and school professionals on sexual diversity to enable them to talk about homosexuality, bisexuality and gender identity in an inclusive and positive manner, and to prepare them to be understanding and supportive of LGBT students

•   Promote the development of diversity policies in schools including clear anti-bullying rules

•   Provide adequate and accurate information on sexual diversity to school communities and social services in a systematic fashion

•   Actively support youth organisations and organisations representing groups vulnerable to discrimination, such as LGBT organisations, who can contribute to reducing social exclusion of vulnerable groups within schools

Priority "Health and social services":

•   Improve accessibility of support and services for LGBT young people in terms of health and care services by providing training to health professionals

•   Support youth groups, in particular LGBT youth groups, who act as peer support groups for young LGBT people

•   Encourage health professionals and social providers to create a safe and open environment for LGBT youth, e.g. by showing receptiveness through symbols, making information accessible, demonstrating respect and acceptance, etc.

Priority "Overcome discrimination":

•   Expand participation of, and provide support to LGBT groups and in particular youth groups in order to raise self-esteem

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2. Indicators and monitoring

Priority "Tackling disadvantages in education":

•	Social attitude surveys in schools to evaluate the level of homophobia

•	Existence of anti-bullying and diversity policies at all relevant authority levels

•	Identifying drop-out rates of vulnerable groups: who are the school leavers

•	Number of teachers trained on topics related to sexual diversity and qualitative evaluation of those trainings

Priority "Health and social services":

•	Number of existing LGBT youth groups

•	Support given by public authorities to health and social programmes as well as organisations targeting young LGBT people

•	Number of services providers trained on topics related to sexual diversity and qualitative evaluation of those trainings

3. Resource allocation

•	Allocate adequate resources and support to schools and teachers to develop diversity policies, programmes and training

•	Allocate resources to youth groups, and in particular to LGBT youth groups, in schools and at the community level

•	Allocate resources to provide awareness-raising and training to health professionals working on access to and delivery of health and social services for LGBT youth

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Annex 2

Individual and organisational questionnaires

1. Individual questionnaire for young LGBT people

Dear Friend,

ILGA-Europe and IGLYO want to produce a comprehensive report on the Social Exclusion of LGBT Youth in Europe that is planned to be presented at a hearing of the European Parliament in 2006. The report will include case studies collected from European countries, reflecting real life experiences of European LGBT youth in relation to social exclusion.

We need your contribution: send us your own report on your experiences of social exclusion. If you have or have had any of the experiences listed in the questions below, tell us about what happened in your answer. Please, tell us how these experiences affected you, how you felt, how you reacted to the given situations, what actions you have taken, and/or what actions you feel you should have taken at the time.

1) Have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination targeting you as an L/G/B/T person in your family?

2) Have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination targeting you as an L/G/B/T person in the close circle of your friends?

3) Have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination targeting you as an L/G/B/T person in your religious community?

4) Have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination targeting you as an L/G/B/T person in any community you belong to?

5) Have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination targeting you as an L/G/B/T person in school (from teachers, headmasters, pupils or other professionals)?

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6) Have you ever found anything in the media products of your country that expressed prejudice or discriminative elements targeting LGBT people?

7) Have you ever found anything in your school curriculum that expressed prejudice or discriminative elements targeting LGBT people?

8) Have you ever experienced bullying or other forms of violence (verbal and/or physical) in school because of you being an L/G/B/T person?

9) What do you consider the most important cause of social exclusion of LGBT youth in your country?

10) Do you know of any positive developments concerning the fair treatment of young LGBT people from your own country that can – in your view – serve as a positive example for other countries?

Include your age, gender, nationality, (ethnicity, and/or religious denomination, if relevant) and an assumed name we can use in the report.

2. Organisational questionnaire on social exclusion of LGBT youth

Name of the organisation:

Country (where it functions):

I. What do you consider the most important cause(s) and most typical form(s) of social exclusion of LGBT youth in your county?)

II. Has your organisation collected any (research, campaign, etc.) material on the specific problems of LGBT youth in your country? If so, please, specify exactly what kind of material you have and how it could be accessed.

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Glossary

Biphobia: fear of, or anger toward bisexuality and bisexual people.

Bisexual: Capacity to be emotionally and/or sexually attracted to individuals of more than one sex.

Coming-out: the process of revealing one's identification as an L/G/B/T person.
> **Outing**: reference to an event when one's identification as an L/G/B/T person is revealed without consent.
> **Being in the closet**: reference to a situation when one decides not to reveal one's identification as an L/G/B/T person.

Discrimination: unequal treatment.
> **Direct discrimination:** a situation where a person is treated less favourably than others on grounds of his or her sexual orientation. Unfair treatment can be based on a range of factors, such as age, ethnic background, disability or sexual orientation.
> **Indirect discrimination:** where an apparently neutral provision or practice would put persons having a particular sexual orientation at a disadvantage compared to others.

Gay: Term used to describe a person who feels sexual desire exclusively or predominantly for persons of her or his own sex; and more broadly objects, places and abstract concepts identified with such persons. (The word "gay" has been linked with sex and romance even since it surfaced in Provencal as *gai* in the 13th century, when its primary meaning of "merry" was already associated with troubadours who sang of courtly, and sometimes, same-sex love (Hogan – Hudson 1998).

Gender identity: one's sense of oneself as a woman or a man or both or neither (Meyerowitz 2002).

Gender expression: the expression of oneself as a woman or man (or both or neither) in external presentation and/or appearance through behaviour, clothing, hair-cut, voice, body characteristics etc.

Harassment: any act or conduct that is unwelcome to the victim, which could be regarded in relation to the victim's sexual orientation as offensive, humiliating or intimidating. It can include spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

Heteronormativity: Reference to cultural and social practices that coerce men and women into believing and behaving as if heterosexuality were the only conceivable sexuality. (A related concept is compulsory heterosexuality (Rich 1980).) It also implies the positioning of heterosexuality as the only way of being "normal" and as the key source of social reward (Flowers – Buston 2001).

Heterosexism: the belief, stated or implied, that heterosexuality is superior (theologically, morally, socially, emotionally, behaviourally, and/or in some other way) to homosexuality; the presumption that all people are heterosexual (may be conscious or unconscious); the belief that all people should be heterosexual; prejudicial attitudes or discriminatory acts against non-heterosexual individuals which follow from the above beliefs (these may be conscious or unconscious, overt or covert, intentional or non-intentional, formal or informal) (Roffman 2000). As an institutionalised system of oppression, heterosexism negatively affects LGBT people as well as some heterosexual individuals who do not subscribe to traditional standards of masculinity and femininity.[15]

Heterosexual: People are classified as heterosexual on the basis of their gender and the gender of their sexual partner(s). When the partner's gender is other than the individual's, then the person is categorised as heterosexual. It is a forced classification, since clearly there are degrees of preference in sexual partner choice (Kessler – McKenna 1978). The term itself – which is a combination of *"hetero"* being Greek for "different", and the Latin adjective *sexualis* – was coined by Károly Mária Kertbeny, a Hungarian-German translator, writer in 1868-69.

Homophobia: fear of, or anger toward homosexuality and/or LGB people. Homophobia can be internalised – i.e. made part of their self – by LGB people by accepting heterosexuality as the correct way of being (leading to the development of **internalised homophobia**).
> **Cultural Homophobia**: the irrational fear and/or hatred of lesbian, gay or bisexual individuals based on culturally based stereotypes that they are inherently bad, evil, immoral, unnatural, abnormal, perverted, unhealthy, dangerous, sick, contagious, and/or predatory.
> **Social Homophobia**: the dread fear that one will be perceived by others as gay or pro-gay; people who are socially homophobic exhibit a range of anti-gay attitudes and behaviour as a social defence mechanism.
> **Psychological Homophobia**: an irrational fear and/or hatred of lesbian and gay individuals derived from a highly personalized and phobic reaction to the concept of homosexuality; people who are psychologically homophobic exhibit a range of anti-gay attitudes and behaviour as a psychological defence mechanism against the dread fear that they themselves are gay (Roffman, 2000).

Homosexual: People are classified as homosexual on the basis of their gender and the gender of their sexual partner(s). When the partner's gender is the same as the individual's, then the person is categorised as homosexual. It

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of young lesbian,
gay, bisexual
and transgender
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in Europe

is a forced classification, since clearly there are degrees of preference in sexual partner choice (Kessler – McKenna 1978). The term itself is a combination of *"homo"* being Greek for "same", and the Latin adjective *sexualis*. The word was coined by Károly Mária Kertbeny, a Hungarian-German translator, writer in 1868-69 in a very modern human rights context.[16] From the late 19th century the term became heavily medicalised. Homosexuality – as both a concept and as a term – was born of resistance and remains entrenched in the territory of politics (Hogan – Hudson 1998).

Lesbian: a woman who is sexually and emotionally attracted to women. The term derived from the Greek island of Lesbos, home of the seventh-century B.C. poet Sappho.

LGBT: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people.

Out: the quality of being openly gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Sexual orientation:
> **Sexual orientation** is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction to another person. It is easily distinguished from other components of sexuality including biological sex, gender identity (the psychological sense of being male or female) and the socAial gender role (adherence to cultural norms for feminine and masculine behavior).

> **Sexual orientation** exists along a continuum that ranges from exclusive homosexuality to exclusive heterosexuality and includes various forms of bisexuality. Bisexual persons can experience sexual, emotional and affectional attraction to both their own sex and the opposite sex. Persons with a homosexual orientation are sometimes referred to as gay (both men and women) or as lesbian (women only).

> **Sexual orientation** is different from sexual behavior because it refers to feelings and self-concept. Persons may or may not express their sexual orientation in their behaviors.
> **(http://www.apa.org)**

Sexual identity: one's sense of oneself as homosexual, bisexual, heterosexual (Meyerowitz 2002).

Transgender: an umbrella term used for those with various forms and degrees of crossgender practices and identifications. It may include, but not limited to, transsexuals, intersex persons, cross-dressers, and other gender variant people.

Transphobia: fear of, or anger toward, transgender people.

Victimisation: in the law, 'victimisation' is a specific term to mean discrimination against a person because they have made a complaint or been a witness in another person's complaint.

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[16] Kertbeny wrote in 1868: "we should convince our opponents that exactly according to their legal notions they do not have anything to do with this inclination, let it be innate or voluntary, because the state does not have the right to intervene in what is happening between two consenting people aged over 14, excluding publicity, not hurting the rights of any third party" (Kertbeny is cited by J. Takács (2004) The double life of Kertbeny. IN: Past and Present of Radical Sexual Politics. Ed. by G. Hekma. Mosse Foundation: Amsterdam. 26-40.).

Young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people across Europe face discrimination and exclusion in their everyday life. They experience estrangement from family, bullying and marginalisation at school, which can lead to such problems as underachievement and school drop-out, low self-esteem and mental ill-health. These in turn have a negative impact on the capacity of young LGBT people to manage the transition from school to work and to become confident and independent adults who can contribute to society.

This joint report by IGLYO and ILGA-Europe is a response to the need to bring attention to the social exclusion of young LGBT people in Europe and to put the issue on the agenda of national and European policy-makers. This publication highlights the effect that discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and gender identity has on young LGBT people's capacity to be socially included and to become active citizens. It also raises awareness about the multiple forms of discrimination that interact to put young LGBT people at a particular disadvantage and risk of exclusion.