

Forum: SOCHUM 1

Issue: The question of LGBT rights

Specialist Chair: Nikita Sood

Introduction:

Although the UN had been founded in 1945, the first time that “LGBT” related discussion occurred was in September 1995 at the fourth World Conference on Women. Sexual orientation had been an unspoken matter in political organisations until then. Brazil and Norway separately presented statements in 2003 and 2006 regarding gender identity, and since then, legislation has gradually come into place regarding the LGBT community. However, there are currently 2.8 billion people living in countries where being a homosexual could result in imprisonment, corporal punishment, or even the death penalty. This shows that, although significant progress has been made, there is still much to be done to obtain global LGBT rights.

Some key ideas and definitions:

1. **LGBT+** - this is an initialism that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. It may be used to refer to anyone who is non-heterosexual or non-cisgender.
2. **Heterosexual** – this is romantic attraction, sexual attraction or sexual behaviour between persons of the opposite sex or gender. Eg a male being attracted to a female.
3. **Cisgender** – a term for people whose gender identity matches the sex that they were assigned at birth.
4. **Sex** - a label — male or female — that is assigned by a doctor at birth based on the genitals an individual is born with and the chromosomes they inhabit (XX females, XY males). This is recorded on a birth certificate.
5. **Gender** - the state of being male or female (typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones). Stereotypes are often associated with genders. Eg how someone should behave, dress, present themselves if they are a male or female of a certain age.
6. **Gender identity** – this is one’s personal perception of their gender that may not always correlate to the gender they were assigned at birth. Eg a person with XY male chromosomes and genitals may feel they are not male nor female and thus identify as genderfluid or genderqueer.
7. **Sexual orientation** – this is very different to gender or gender identity. It is who you are attracted to romantically, sexually, and emotionally. Eg a female attracted to males and females may identify as bisexual
8. **Transgender** - a gender identity or gender expression that differs from their assigned sex. Transgender people are sometimes called transsexual if they desire medical assistance to transition from one sex to another. Eg a “female” at birth who identifies as a male and wishes to transition physically to have body parts of a male will identify as transgender or transsexual.
9. **Indeterminate gender** - third gender or third sex is a concept in which individuals are categorised, either by themselves or by society, as neither man nor woman.

10. **Stonewall** - a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights charity in the United Kingdom named after the Stonewall Inn of Stonewall riots fame in New York City's Greenwich Village.
11. **Daughters of Bilitis** - first lesbian civil and political rights organization in the United States.

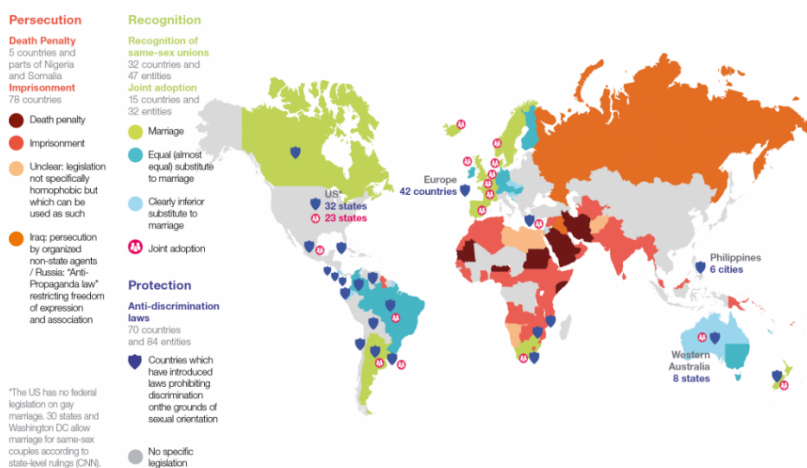
Varying views on the issue of LGBT people:

LGBT people, although slowly gaining rights, have often been portrayed as shameful to their country for various reasons. A main reason is religion, particularly Abrahamic religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Therefore, countries in the middle-east which are dominantly Islamic, as well as large parts of Africa and the West Indies which are mainly Roman Catholic, condemn homosexuals. In many religions, including those listed, LGBT people are seen as sinful and acting against religious teachings. This has led to many LGBT individuals concealing their sexual preferences or their identities due to fear of negative reactions, including dishonour, discrimination, harassment, violence and rejection from family members, religious organisations and school and work places. Many LGBT individuals also find it problematic to report any harassment or mistreatment as they lack trust in law enforcement authorities due to the regularly occurring hate crimes that they face in public, where little penalty has been faced by the instigator at times. Furthermore, the LGBT community often have a feeling of inferiority as they are not supported by the law or even the general community. This lack of self-worth stemming from the discrimination of minorities has a great impact on the social and economic prosperity of the individual too.

Stats and facts to consider:

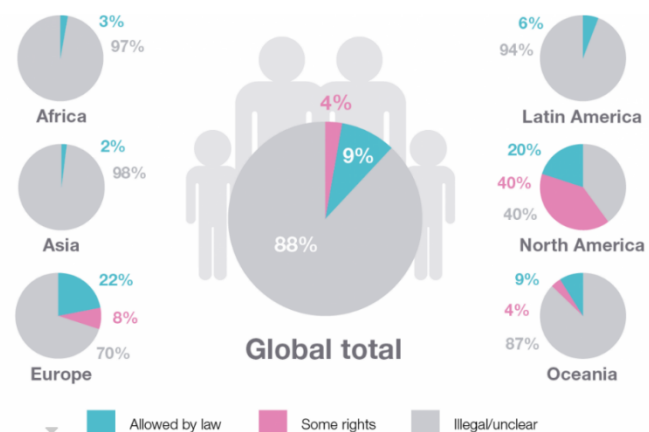
Please take into account that these are the most recent statistics but may not be of 2018 or just before.

How do LGBT rights differ around the world?



Source: The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association

In what percentage of the world are same-sex couples entitled to apply for adoption?



- 72 countries criminalise same-sex relationships (and in 45 the law is applied to women as well as men)
- In Brazil, 1,341 LGBT people were reported murdered from 2007 through 2012
- In Peru, a reported 249 LGBT people were murdered from 2006 to 2010.

- There were 2,343 reported killings of trans and gender-diverse people in 69 countries worldwide between 2008 and 2016
- A quarter (26 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bi staff say they have personally experienced bullying or poor treatment from colleagues in the last five years as a result of their sexual orientation
- Nearly half (48 per cent) of trans people under 26 said they had attempted suicide, and 30 per cent said they had done so in the past year, while 59 per cent said they had at least considered doing so
- One in five LGBT people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the last 12 months

Timeline of key dates and events:

1922 – Homosexuality is decriminalised in the USSR.

1924 – The first homosexual rights organization in America is founded by Henry Gerber in Chicago; the Society for Human Rights. The group exists for a few months before disbanding under police pressure.

1933 – The NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers Party) bans homosexual groups. Homosexuals are sent to concentration camps in Eastern Europe. Homosexual acts are recriminalized in the USSR.

1945 – The Holocaust ends and it is estimated that between about 3,000 to about 9,000 homosexuals died in Nazi concentration and death camps, while it is estimated that between about 2,000 to about 6,000 homosexual survivors in Nazi concentration and death camps were required to serve out the full term of their sentences under Paragraph 175 in prison. The first gay bar in post-World War II Berlin opened in the summer of 1945, and the first drag ball took place in American sector of West Berlin in the fall of 1945.

1946 – "COC" (Dutch acronym for "Centre for Culture and Recreation"), one of the earliest homophile organisations, is founded in the Netherlands. It is the oldest surviving LGBT organisation.

1958 – The Homosexual Law Reform Society is founded in the United Kingdom; Barbara Gittings founds the New York chapter of Daughters of Bilitis.

1958 – The first time The United States Supreme Court rule of a case involving homosexuality. They rule in favour of the First Amendment rights of a gay and lesbian magazine.

1965 – Everett George Klippert, the last person imprisoned in Canada for homosexuality, is arrested for private, consensual sex with men. After being assessed "incurably homosexual", he is sentenced to an indefinite "preventive detention" as a dangerous sexual offender. This was considered by many Canadians to be extremely homophobic, and prompted

sympathetic articles in Maclean's and The Toronto Star, eventually leading to increased calls for legal reform in Canada which passed in 1969.

1967 – The Sexual Offences Act of 1967 decriminalised homosexual acts between two men over 21 years of age in private in England and Wales.

1968 – Paragraph 175 is eased in East Germany decriminalising homosexual acts over the age of 18.

1969 – The Stonewall riots occur in New York City. An Australian arm of the Daughters of Bilitis forms in Melbourne and is considered Australia's first homosexual rights organisation.

1970 – The first Gay Liberation Day March is held in New York City; The first LGBT Pride Parade is held in New York. In November, the first gay rights march occurs in the UK at Highbury Fields following the arrest of an activist from the Young Liberals for importuning.

1972 – Sweden becomes first country in the world to allow transsexuals to legally change their sex and provides free hormone therapy.

1973 – On 15 October the Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatry Federal Council declares homosexuality not an illness – the first such body in the world to do so; in December the American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-II), based largely on the research and advocacy of Evelyn Hooker.

1974 - in London, the first openly LGBT telephone help line opens, followed one year later by the Brighton Lesbian and Gay Switchboard.

1978 - The rainbow flag is first used as a symbol of homosexual pride

1980 – The Human Rights Campaign Fund is founded by Steve Endean; The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organisation working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality.

1990 - WHO (World Health Organisation) declare homosexuality no longer an illness.

2003 - Legal recognition of indeterminate gender. The first European Transgender Council Meeting was held in Vienna.

2006 - The first time a discussion about homosexuality is held at the United Nations since its founding in 1946. Norway presented a joint statement on human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity at the Commission on Human Rights on behalf of 54 states.

2008-A joint statement presented at the General Assembly by Argentina on behalf of 66 states. The 66 countries reaffirmed "the principle of non-discrimination, which requires that human rights apply equally to every human being regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity."

2011 - A resolution submitted by South Africa requesting a study on discrimination and sexual orientation (A/HRC/17/19) passed, 23 to 19, with 3 abstentions, in the UNHRC. This is the first time that any United Nations body approved a resolution affirming the rights of LGBT people.

2014 - The United Nations (as an employer) announced it would extend equal benefits to its employees who have entered same-sex unions in jurisdictions where they are legal.

2016 - UNHRC passed a resolution to appoint an "independent expert" to find the causes of violence and discrimination against people due to their gender identity and sexual orientation and discuss with governments about how to protect those people.

2018 – Trans identities are no longer considered a mental disorder in WHO's ICD-11.

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Unhealthy Attitudes 2015

The RaRE Research Report 2015