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If Queers were Counted: An Inquiry into European Socioeconomic Data on LGB(TI)Qs

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ABSTRACT

This article is engaged with the public availability, provision, and quality of large-scale data on the socioeconomic standing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer persons (LGB[TI]Qs) in Europe. While large-scale data on LGB(TI)Qs are a potentially powerful foundation for public discourse and policymaking, their use and sufficiency are highly contested among researchers, activists, and statistical bodies. Analyzing data provided by official national and European statistics institutes, this article describes the inclusion of sexual orientation in the data-generation and reporting processes in thirty European countries and discusses how legal and social acknowledgment make LGB(TI)Qs in/visible in socioeconomic statistics. The article therefore examines if and how LGB(TI)Qs are being "counted" and, importantly, what it means "if queers are counted."

KEYWORDS

LGB(TI)Qs, socioeconomic status, data-provision processes, quantitative research, population statistics

JEL Codes: A13, B54, R2

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing international body of economic and social research indicating that sexuality/sexual orientation has a tremendous impact on socioeconomic status, labor market standing, and social cohesion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer persons (LGB[TI]Qs)[1]; Ahmed, Andersson, and Hammarstedt 2011; Tilcsik 2011; Botti and D'Ippoliti 2014; Douglas and Steinberger 2014; Drydakis 2014; Ozeren 2014; Plug, Webbink, and Martin 2014; Badgett and Schneebaum 2015; Klawitter 2015; Sabia 2015; Uhrig 2015). Policy-oriented research based on community surveys, as well as insights from within LGB(TI)Q and

human rights organizations, supports this evidence (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA] 2014; ILGA-Europe 2015). Public policy institutions, international LGB(TI)Q organizations, and queer and feminist researchers are therefore increasingly acknowledging the importance of statistical data collection on the living and working conditions of LGB(TI)Qs as a potent method to quantify the impact of sexuality and to "measure" socioeconomic inequalities based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Aspinall 2009; Sexual Minority Assessment Research Team [SMART] 2009).

However, it remains a contested issue among researchers, activists, statistical bodies, and policymakers regarding *how* data on the socioeconomic status of LGB(TI)Qs should and could be allocated, and which data can provide sufficient information for such studies. While nonrandom methods of data collection such as snowball sampling, targeted sampling, or respondent-driven sampling have in the past remained the predominant methods to reach "hidden populations," such as LGB(TI)Qs (Magnani et al. 2005), difficulties arise in the lack of generalizability. In nonrandom samples, multiple inclusion and exclusion patterns of individuals cannot be controlled and are a constant source of bias. For example, some individuals have a greater likelihood of being targeted than others, and LGB(TI)Qs with higher education levels are more likely to take part in a survey (Meyer and Wilson 2009). In contrast, large-scale datasets from national surveys or registers have the advantage of encompassing more inclusive information on the population. Socioeconomic data on statistically definable and accordingly visible subpopulations can then be filtered from such data. For this reason, it is important to take a closer look at the circumstances and modes that make LGB(TI)Qs visible in national statistics. Still, we are approaching this issue with caution, since we share concerns about the problematic implications, possible dangers for individuals, and normalizing risks of collecting large-scale data on LGB(TI)Qs raised by a number of queer researchers (Browne 2008, 2010; Ruppert 2008). In this way, we consider our analysis of statistical procedures as a contribution to queer theoretical reflections of quantitative data-generation processes. Large-scale data on LGB(TI)Qs are a powerful argument in policymaking and can also form public discourses and socioeconomic facts for the population.

This article is concerned with the *public* availability, provision, type, and quality of large-scale data on LGB(TI)Qs in Europe. The aims of the paper are to inform about the type and availability of data about LGBT individuals for practical considerations connected to doing applied research in that field and to reflect on the blind spots that result from heteronormativity in data provision based on sexual and gender identity. By analyzing data sources provided by official national and supra-national statistics, this article researches the inclusion of LGB(TI)Qs and questions of sexual orientation in data-generating processes in thirty European

countries, examining if and how "queers" are being "counted."[2] The article discusses how "statistical visibility" of LGB(TI)Qs is shaped by legal and social acknowledgment (largely the access to marriage or registered partnership). Furthermore, this article demonstrates how differences in the national accounting procedures complicate the comparability of data on the socioeconomic standing of LGB(TI)Qs in Europe. Referring to feminist economist Marilyn Waring (1988), this paper therefore not only asks, "who is counting," but also, "how are LGB(TI)Qs counted" and "what does it mean if queers are counted" - all those are questions related to the creation of data on sexual minorities.

THEORETICAL GROUNDING AND METHODOLOGY

Queer/ing feminist economics: The socioeconomic effects of heteronormativity

In 1970, feminist writer Kate Millett pointed to the political implications of sexuality and sexual norms, arguing that "sex has a frequently neglected political aspect" (1970: 1), which is masqueraded as "natural" or "private" activity in patriarchal societies. Her exploration of sexual politics and the way sexuality operates as a category of power in patriarchal societies was followed by numerous lesbian-feminist and queer writings highlighting the need to consider sexuality less a "private matter" of erotic desire or as an "individual sexual orientation" but as a category of power. Sexuality is a sociopolitical construct intrinsically connected with the establishment and performativity of gender and heteronormativity as well as with the functioning of gendered modes of capitalist (re-)production (Charusheela 2010). While, for instance, Judith Butler (1990) explicated the constituting role of homosexualities and queerness as "abjected other" for the formation of "coherent" (heterosexual) gender identities, feminist anthropologist and queer theorist Gayle S. Rubin (1993) demonstrated how societies are framed by complex systems of "sexual stratification" that create social hierarchies on the basis of "good" and "bad" sexual identities and behaviors, which are not only gendered and heteronormative, but also racialized.[3] Thus, queer and lesbian-feminist writers have interrogated the heteronormative bias of most feminist theorizing by also pointing to the material and socioeconomic effects of heteronormativity. Nonnormative genders, sexualities, and self-identified LGB(TI)Qs not only lack cultural or legal acknowledgment, but also face different forms of socioeconomic discrimination, such as experiences of mobbing, (sexual) harassment in the workplace (Ryniker 2008; Gates and Viggiani 2014; Colgan and Rumens 2015), or differential labor-market outcomes (regarding employment, earnings, job progression, and occupational representation; Badgett and Hyman 1998; Giddings 2000, 2003; Badgett 2001, 2007; Robinson 2002;

Weichselbaumer 2003; Frank 2006; Takács 2006; Badgett and Frank 2007; Carpenter 2007, 2008; Rothblum et al. 2007; Antecol, Jong, and Steinberger 2008; Badgett, Gates, and Maisel 2008; Wilcox and Marquardt 2009).[4]

In the last decades, a number of feminist economists have contributed to bringing these critical interrogations into the field of feminist economics, aiming at queering (feminist) economics' approaches, theories, and methodologies (Danby 2007; Jacobson and Zeller 2007; Bergeron 2009). As a plentitude of studies in feminist economics has shown (Agarwal 1997; Badgett and Hyman 1998; Charusheela and Danby 2006; Hewitson 2013), queer frameworks, as well as a focus on LGB(TI)Qs, contribute to a more complex and multi-layered understanding of the gendered division of labor, the household, the family, and kinship structures and provide new insights on how gender differences are still constitutive for the functioning of capitalist economies. Recent studies of feminist and queer economics have voiced concerns for LGB(TI)Qs being economically and socially punished for failing to conform to heteronormative gender and sexual norms (Griffith and Hebl 2002; Blandford 2003; Essig 2008; Wright 2008).

Furthermore, for feminist economics, the question of socioeconomic status becomes particularly relevant with regard to an intra-categorical analysis of the status of women, since lesbian women, that is, women who are, in the sense of Gary S. Becker (1981), "deviants" from the heteronormative household model as suggested by the New Home Economics, are still largely invisible in socioeconomic datasets. The latest research has once again confirmed that lesbians' household incomes rank below those of heterosexual and gay male households, most likely because of a doubling of the female-to-male gender pay gap, even though their individual incomes tend to be higher than the incomes of heterosexual women (see Ahmed, Andersson, and Hammarstedt [2011] for the case of Sweden; Aksoy, Carpenter, and Frank [2018] for the United Kingdom; or Badgett [2007] for the United States).

Methodology and research approach

This article is based on a research project ("The LGB Data Project") that aimed to systematically evaluate the public availability, provision, and quality of large-scale data on the socioeconomic status of LGB(TI)Qs in Europe. In the first part of our research project, we examined if LGBQs were counted and which data were provided by the national statistics institutes of thirty European countries and the supra-national institute Eurostat.[5] We first searched for data on LGB(TI)Qs in the Eurostat database and analyzed it in relation to existing legal partnership institutions for LGB(TI)Qs. Then we analyzed the homepages of Eurostat and the individual countries with a keyword search including the terms: *sexual*

orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, gay, lesbian, transgender, same sex, homosexual, homosexuality, marriage, and *partnership* in multiple languages.

Next, we searched for data on LGB(TI)Qs in large-scale datasets such as register data, national censuses, and European household surveys, focusing on the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) dataset. First, we processed the data to account for LGB(TI)Qs in the thirty countries. Second, we sent out a questionnaire to the thirty national statistics institutes and inquired in detail how national statistics institutes formulate and include questions on LGB(TI)Qs and sexual orientation (and gender identity) in their data production processes and how the data are processed, in light of Eurostat's recommendations. Fourteen out of the thirty countries replied to our questionnaire.

We analyzed how LGB(TI)Qs may become or are becoming "visible" in different data sources and triangulated our findings with the larger scope of research and data on the legal and social acknowledgment of LGB(TI)Qs in Europe.

ARE QUEERS COUNTED? THE PUBLIC PROVISION AND OVERALL AVAILABILITY OF LARGE-SCALE DATA IN EUROPE

Generally, individual LGB(TI)Qs can be identified in large-scale data in two ways: One, if questions concerning sexual orientation/sexual identity are asked or non-binary gender options are included. Two, LGBQs can be identified if they are in a couple *and* if they are cohabiting *or* have a legal relationship status (that is, registered partnership or same-sex marriage; though TI persons cannot typically be identified this way).[6]

Our analysis of the public availability of large-scale data on LGB(TI)Qs shows that, compared to other countries in the world,[7] in Europe, only the UK has successfully taken the first option and asked about sexual identity in the *Integrated Household Survey* (IHS; Office for National Statistics [ONS] 2011). All other large-scale data in Europe, such as census data or data of household surveys, are based on legal couple status or cohabitation as a couple. Only Sweden provides a register-based database of health insurance and labor market studies (Longitudinal Integration Database for Health Insurance and Labour Market Studies [LISA]) for the whole population, which has been used by Swedish researchers to examine the socioeconomic status of LGBQs in Sweden (Ahmed, Andersson, and Hammarstedt 2011).[8] Cevat G. Aksoy, Christopher S. Carpenter, and Jefferson Frank (2018) used the 2012–14 UK IHS, combined with high-quality labor market earnings data from the country's *Annual Population Survey* (APS), creating a sample of more than 2,500 LGBQs through responses to a direct question about sexual orientation.[9] Generally, large-scale data are not available; other studies on labor market outcomes for LGB(TI)Qs are based on field

experiments or community samplings (see Weichselbaumer [2003] for the case of Austria or Drydakis [2014] for Greece).

LGB(TI)Qs in the Eurostat database

A European researcher's first source for European data is the Eurostat database, which is publicly accessible from the Eurostat web page. It is Eurostat's mission to provide the EU with statistics at the European level that enable comparisons between countries and regions. Eurostat gives an overview of the relationship statuses of the European population.[10] The data are based on national census data voluntarily contributed to Eurostat. As of July 2018, ten countries are not providing data to Eurostat,[11] which organizes the data by "marital status."[12]

Aside from a third of countries not providing any data sorted by legal marital status to Eurostat via their census reporting, the problems with availability of comparable data on LGB(TI)Qs in Europe become obvious on many levels. Even if a country has chosen to report their census data sorted according to "marital status" to Eurostat, and even if registered partnership (see countries with light shading in Table 1) or same-sex marriage (see countries with dark shading in Table 1) is available, some countries do not provide numbers (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, France, and Slovenia) or do not have data available (Iceland) for some years. Only a few countries consistently provide numbers for registered partnerships or gay marriage (Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland). One explanation for those countries that have decided to provide data, but do not show LGBQ couples, is that those countries may have subsumed gay and lesbian marriages in the data for "married persons" (which is not shown in Table 1). This would be in accordance with Eurostat recommendations, as Eurostat recommends that European countries count marriages but not distinguish between heterosexual and homosexual couples.[13] Still, this hypothesis cannot hold for Denmark, Sweden, or Norway; these three countries provide data for LGBQs under the heading "registered partnerships," while what is clearly counted in these countries are LGBQ couples in same-sex marriages.

From our inquiry into the Eurostat database, it becomes evident that legal frameworks, particularly same-sex marriage legislation or access to registered civil unions influence the availability and provision of data on LGB(TI)Qs. However, even if data for married/registered same-sex couples are being provided, these data still lack comparability due to national differences in the partnership institutions and due to accounting practices.

The Eurostat database therefore exhibits a "marriage bias" that renders LGB(TI)Qs statistically invisible in countries without legal acknowledgment for LGBQ couples. If LGB(TI)Qs enter same-sex marriage or registered

Table 1 Registered partnerships and same-sex marriages 2007–17, Eurostat database

	2007	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*
Austria	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Belgium	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Bulgaria[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Cyprus[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Czech Rep.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Denmark	6,827	7,357	7,898	8,364	8,799	9,079	8,675	8,037	7,454	6,994	6,628
Estonia[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Finland	2,140	2,426	2,801	3,167	3,619	4,102	4,511	5,029	5,475	5,803	6,004
France	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Germany	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	95,257	106,112	116,883	n.a
Greece[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Hungary	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	130	269	351	417	462	540	652	788
Iceland[b]	24,799	25,183	25,335	25,058	25,417	25,930	26,208	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Ireland[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Italy	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Latvia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Lithuania	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Luxembourg[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	17,454

(*Continued*).

Table 1 Continued

	2007	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*
Malta	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Netherlands	65,738	76,475	87,999	100,966	115,007	129,333	141,431	153,723	167,105	184,886	208,051
Norway	n.a.	n.a.	4,029	2,563	2,291	2,094	1,936	1,812	1,702	1,596	1,507
Poland	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Portugal[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Romania	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Slovakia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Slovenia	n.a.	n.a.	30	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Spain[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Sweden	4,188	4,649	5,294	4,314	3,731	3,384	3,097	2,859	2,643	2,451	2,289
Switzerland	n.a.	3,765	5,644	7,220	8,887	9,944	11,057	12,174	13,282	14,306	15,324
UK[a]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Notes: No shading: no registered partnership institution; light-grey shading: registered partnership available; dark-grey shading: same-sex marriage is legally possible. In countries where same-sex marriage replaces registered partnerships, numbers may refer to either same-sex marriage or registered partnerships, as couples may not have renewed the legal institution of their couple status. Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia have constitutional bans on same-sex marriage.

[a]Country is not included in the Eurostat table. This also holds for the newer member state Croatia, which is not part of this paper.

[b]Iceland stopped reporting all partnership data in 2014.

Sources: ILGA-Europe (2017); Eurostat (2018).

partnerships they *may* appear in the Eurostat data – but only if countries report such data in the first place and if they do not comply with the recommendation of reporting data on married same-sex couples lumped together with heterosexual couples. We conclude that the Eurostat database does not provide sufficient, or, more importantly, comparable data for this group of LGB(TI)Qs. Finally, Eurostat does not link the national census data on marital status to other socioeconomic data in the respective countries. The data only indicate the numbers according to certain stages of partnership.

LGB(TI)Qs and the websites of national statistics institutes

> Official Statistic is not yet up-to-date even just concerning the measurement of families with same sex partners, and a strategy on this matter has become necessary. (Sabbadini 2007)

On the national level, the websites of national statistics institutes are potential sources to look for data on the socioeconomic status of LGB(TI)Qs. We analyzed thirty national statistics institutes' web pages for content on LGB(TI)Qs using a standardized content analysis based on the following keywords in the respective languages: *sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, gay, lesbian, transgender, same sex, homosexual, homosexuality, marriage,* and *partnership*. According to our analysis (as of 2012), we found that fourteen out of thirty countries published statistics on LGB(TI)Qs on their web pages. Contrary to our findings in the Eurostat database, all the European countries with legal-partnership institutions for LGBQs report the numbers for registered or married same-sex couples on their websites (which yields additional data for Austria, Spain, Ireland, Portugal, and the UK). Unfortunately, it is also true for these data that the web pages publish only the number of couples in those institutions (and possibly local residency, age, and previous marital status), while marital status is not linked with any socioeconomic data. LGBQ individuals who cannot identify as cohabiting or do not have legally recorded partners are not visible. Considering the nature of representation, we found that transgender and intersex persons are not identified in national statistics, but one country's national statistics institute offers a brochure on transsexuals for download (Geerdinck et al. 2011).

In 2014, some countries with legal recognition of same-sex partnerships published special reports on the partnership institutions for LGB(TI)Qs or accounting practices on their websites.[14] Two countries displayed some information on discrimination against LGB(TI)Qs.[15] One web page provided data on adoption of children by lesbians and gays (Vonk n.d.).

However, what is particularly interesting with regard to the long history of homosexual pathologization, is that in ten out of the thirty websites,

our search terms, specifically "homosexual" or "bisexual," appeared in connection with HIV/AIDS. While in Austria, gay identity is linked to infection and disease, France lists two competing "contamination methods" for HIV/AIDS: "homosexual/bisexual" versus "heterosexual" for men, while for women, by omission, only the category "heterosexual" is listed (French Health Watch Institute quoted on the French national statistics web page [National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies n.d.]). In Ireland (Central Statistics Office of Ireland 2018) and Norway (Statistics Norway n.d.), the situation is similar: "Heterosexuals" and "homosexuals/bisexuals" are listed as a "category" along with "intravenous drug users," "mother to child," and "other." In the Netherlands, AIDS and homosexuality appear on the websites twice: In 2004, it was found that "homosexual and bisexual men are at the highest risk for HIV infection,"[16] and the Statistical Yearbook of the Netherlands 2004 lists groups at risks, among them homosexual or bisexual people (Statistics Netherlands 2004). Two web pages list homosexuality in connection with crime. In Austria, criminal statistics from 2005 to 2010 remind us that male prostitution was legalized in 1989. In Denmark, criminal offences distinguish between heterosexual and homosexual incidents.

From our inquiry of national statistics institutes webpage contents, we can conclude that, in 2014, there was very little information available on LGB(TI)Qs from European national statistics institutes. There are no harmonized standards or common frameworks for information about LGB(TI)Q populations or for collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity. Data are most often available for legally recognized same-sex couples, but the data are hardly comparable due to differences in the legal and social acknowledgment of LGB(TI)Qs. However, what we found particularly problematic is that in a number of countries, issues of sexual orientation still (only) become (hyper)visible with regard to disease (HIV/AIDS) or with criminal offences.[17]

HOW AND IF QUEERS ARE COUNTED? LGB(TI)QS IN THE EU-SILC

Counting *some* queers in the EU-SILC: Cohabiting, registered, and married same-sex couples

In Europe, survey data on socioeconomic living conditions are, next to (micro)censuses, foremost provided by two household surveys: the *Household Budget Surveys* (HBSs) and the EU-SILC. In our research project, we engaged with the statistical procedures of the census and the EU-SILC survey. In this paper, we focus on our findings for the EU-SILC, as they were quite similar to those for the censuses. The EU-SILC is an annual EU-wide survey conducted by the national statistics offices. It is the key

survey for information on the income and living conditions of different types of households and for measuring poverty risks. The national statistics institutes collect and process the data and report them for compilation to Eurostat. In our research, we noticed that in each country, the survey questions are phrased slightly differently, which makes quite a difference for collecting data on LGB(TI)Qs. Also, the data processing differs a little on the national levels – some data on LGB(TI)Qs are cleared (deleted or re-coded) – which made us very curious to find out why.

EU-SILC data generally include information on LGB(TI)Qs. While European household surveys usually do not include questions regarding sexuality, the EU-SILC nevertheless provides two possibilities to identify *some* LGB(TI)Qs. First, the question on marital status could identify LGB(TI)Qs if legal recognition (registered partnerships or marriage) is available to same-sex couples in the specific country. Second, there are questions on the relationships of the cohabiting household members toward each other, which can identify them as partners of the same sex. Living together, being married, or living in a registered partnership thus (again) become the conditions for being statistically "visible"; non-cohabiting LGB(TI)Qs are not counted by this household survey.

The EU-SILC datasets are not publicly accessible, but national and supra-national reports make some data assessments available, though these reports do not talk about LGB(TI)Q households. So, if you are a researcher and want to do your own analysis, you will need to apply to Eurostat to get access to the complete EU dataset, as national statistics offices can provide the national data after a detailed application. What can be expected? For example, for the year 2012, in the case of Austria, with a population of about eight million, the EU-SILC sample size consisted of 6,232 households (11,475 individuals). This sample is then weighted in order to represent the entire Austrian population (Table 2).

In almost every country, the EU-SILC data for 2012 includes surprisingly few observations of same-sex couples. Only the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, and Switzerland reach observation numbers of more than twenty couples. The weighted numbers for the share of LGBQ couples (registered, married, or cohabiting) are also very low: the highest are men, with 1 percent in France, 0.6 percent in the Netherlands, and 0.5 percent in Luxembourg. Regarding women living in same-sex partnerships, the share is highest in the Netherlands and France (0.5 percent), followed by Germany (0.4 percent). Further, there are nine countries (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, and Slovakia) with no observations. Unfortunately, these low observation numbers make an analysis of the economic status using this database impossible. In a second step, we looked at the numbers for LGBQs in previous years, which gave us the surprising result that some countries with no observations in 2012 have not had observations over the entire period of the EU-SILC from

Table 2 Weights of same-sex couples in the EU-SILC, 2012

	Couples (observations)		*Couples (weighted)*		*Share in population*	
	Men	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*
Austria	8	9	5,183	4,514	0.3%	0.2%
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Croatia	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Cyprus	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Czech Rep.	2	0	1,123	0	0.0%	0.0%
Denmark	10	8	4,056	3,202	0.3%	0.2%
Estonia	0	1	0	255	0.0%	0.1%
Finland	5	10	2,823	1,907	0.2%	0.1%
France	38	22	147,218	73,431	1.0%	0.5%
Germany	27	31	93,214	79,291	0.5%	0.4%
Greece	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Hungary	4	1	2,568	141	0.1%	0.0%
Iceland	2	6	66	226	0.1%	0.3%
Italy	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Latvia	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Lithuania	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Luxembourg	10	5	649	208	0.5%	0.2%
Malta	1	3	28	144	0.0%	0.1%
Netherlands	28	46	23,553	19,433	0.6%	0.5%
Norway	12	12	3,769	4,649	0.3%	0.4%
Poland	1	0	2,941	0	0.0%	0.0%
Portugal	1	0	307	0	0.0%	0.0%
Romania	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Slovenia	0	3	0	174	0.0%	0.0%
Spain	6	10	12,110	15,434	0.1%	0.1%
Sweden	13	9	8,545	5,060	0.4%	0.2%
Switzerland	8	13	3,183	4,424	0.2%	0.2%
UK	17	20	58,414	49,549	0.4%	0.3%

Notes: No shading: no registered partnership institution; light-grey shading: registered partnership; dark-grey shading: same-sex marriage and registered partnership.
Sources: EU-SILC (data for 2012); Schönpflug et al. (2013); Eurostat (2018).

2004 on, namely Italy, Latvia, and Slovakia. We found only one couple each in one or two observation years in the data for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, and Portugal. In the years following 2012 (up to the recent data for 2016), not much has changed.

Given the necessary extrapolations of relatively small sample sizes representing whole population subgroups, this becomes highly problematic, especially if researchers were to subdivide more to distinguish

between sex or age. This shows how important register data and full-sample censuses are for grasping the socioeconomic situation of LGB(TI)Qs.[18]

Especially with the small, and sometimes seemingly random, numbers reported, reliability of data is one of the pressing issues. Therefore, we aimed to find out what was going on in the data-production processes to generate those sparse numbers. We sent a questionnaire to thirty national statistics institutes and asked about their accounting guidelines. We specifically asked if same-sex couples are counted in the EU-SILC (and the census), how they are counted, and if data are cleared from the results. Twelve countries (Portugal, Spain, Iceland, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Slovenia, Denmark, Latvia, and Lithuania) responded to our questionnaire and provided us with detailed information about their accounting procedures. We also tried to find the national EU-SILC questionnaires or the guidelines for making the EU-SILC surveys online (which was often possible) and supplemented the answers with this information.

A very surprising result connected to the data in Table 3 is that, on the one hand, countries that officially do not count same-sex couples (according to their answers to our questionnaire), still report an occasional same-sex couple in the EU-SILCs from 2004 to 2016 (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, and Slovenia). We are not sure how to account for this. Also, legal partnership rights do not always correspond with higher numbers of observations of same-sex couples (namely in Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Portugal, or Slovenia).

A detailed analyses of national counting practices regarding the EU-SILC

To explain some of the puzzles arising from the erratic and lacking data on LGBQ couples in the EU-SILC, in the questionnaires we sent out, we asked about the intention of gaining information on their data-provision processes and accounting practices with regard to LGBQs in the EU-SILC. Specifically, we wanted to analyze and compare how each country words the questions in their EU-SILC (and census) questionnaires – particularly the questions that are asked in every country regarding the relationship status between the adult members of households.

As already mentioned, we also looked at official guidelines and found out that the cohabiting same-sex couples are handled very differently by the individual countries: The EU-SILC data are based on a household and a personal questionnaire. The first thing we found out, which surprised us, is that in the different countries, neither the phrasing of the questions on marital status nor the options for answers were identical. Furthermore, from the answers we learned that some countries cleared cohabiting same-sex couples from their data pool by omitting or re-coding the data.

Table 3 Number of same-sex couples in the EU-SILC data for the years 2004–2016

	2004	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*
Austria	–	0	0	7	12	10	16	12	17	9	11	11	14
Belgium	**16**	**16**	**17**	**20**	**18**	**0**	**49**	**49**	**36**	**35**	**32**	**27**	**32**
Bulgaria	–	–	–	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Croatia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	1	1
Cyprus	–	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Czech Rep.	–	1	2	4	3	7	3	2	2	1	2	3	3
Denmark	14	13	12	13	10	10	10	12	**18**	**17**	**14**	**21**	**24**
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	2
Finland	7	11	8	6	12	15	20	12	15	17	24	35	27
France	31	26	29	38	42	40	45	46	60	**44**	**53**	**42**	**50**
Germany	–	33	42	32	44	51	51	68	58	50	55	0[a]	0[a]
Greece	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hungary	–	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	5	2	4	1	4
Iceland	3	3	6	4	6	6	**7**	**6**	**8**	**6**	**5**	**7**	–
Ireland	11	12	10	5	4	9	11	–	–	36	25	25	–
Italy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–
Latvia	–	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	–	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(*Continued*).

Table 3 Continued

	2004	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*
Luxembourg	10	10	9	14	12	8	9	14	15	8	10	**6**	–
Malta	–	–	–	–	–	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	–
Netherlands	–	**60**	**57**	**70**	**67**	**62**	**65**	**74**	**74**	**75**	**77**	**77**	**110**
Norway	18	16	0	15	21	**18**	**20**	**19**	**24**	**30**	**33**	**27**	**35**
Poland	–	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3
Portugal	0	0	0	0	0	–	**0**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**8**	**9**	**13**
Romania	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Slovakia	–	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovenia	–	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	3	8	3	2	0
Spain	11	**9**	**9**	**19**	**29**	**19**	**16**	**23**	**16**	**16**	**20**	**20**	**42**
Sweden	13	21	97	61	18	**13**	**13**	**15**	**22**	**18**	**14**	**11**	**14**
Switzerland	–	–	–	–	–	–	29	21	21	33	39	47	–
UK	–	29	26	20	16	18	15	18	37	45	**44**	**45**	**59**

Notes: No shading: no registered partnership institution nor marriage for same-sex couples; light-grey shading: registered partnership; dark-grey shading and bold numbers: same-sex marriage and registered partnership; dark-grey shading but regular numbers: same-sex marriage, but no registered partnership.

[a]Even though reported as such, it seems unlikely that there are zero same-sex couples in the data for Germany in the years 2015 and 2016.

Sources: EU-SILC data for the years 2004–2016; Schönpflug et al. (2013); ILGA-Europe (2017); Eurostat (2018).

The first column of Table 4 summarizes (for 2012) how the national statistics offices counted same-sex couples. The second column lists if LGB(TI)Q couples are counted but then cleared from the data pool.

Counting all couples regardless of their legal status

The Netherlands is the only country that counts all cohabiting couples in a uniform way, regardless of their legal status (married, registered, or cohabiting). All partners are accounted for and the differentiation according to marital status is then removed; only respondents' relationships to a spouse/partner are listed without any further differentiation between married couples, registered partners, or cohabitants.[19] This is very equitable, but unfortunately merges LGBQ couples with other couples, and therefore renders them invisible.

Counting registered couples and clearing data

Germany, Switzerland, Slovenia, and Iceland account for same-sex partnerships and do not lump them together with heterosexual marriages, which make these data more useful than if they followed the guidelines suggested by Eurostat (which advises the merging of all couples). Iceland is an example of a thorough approach. In Statistics Iceland's answer to our questionnaire, they indicated:

> We have a list of household members from the national register and ask respondents to tell us who should be added or taken off that list to get the correct list of household members. Then, for adults, we ask, "What is your/his/her marital status?" [The possible answers are] (1) Single, (2) In a relationship (we use registers to determine what kind of relationship if the response is "2"). If in a relationship, we ask which household member is the partner (if not obvious). (Statistics Iceland in Schönpflug et al. [2013])

Germany's household questionnaires ask for the relationship to the first person in the household. Personal questionnaires ask about the legal status of the relationship. The options are single (never married), married, widowed, divorced, in a same-sex partnership, same-sex partnership has ended, or same-sex partner has died.

Switzerland also lists similar options in their personal questionnaires but omits widowed same-sex partnerships (Bundesamt für Statistik 2016). In the census, Switzerland distinguishes between "family households" and "non-family households," the former being defined by parental connections ([lone] parents with children or couples living with their parents), while same-sex couples are defined as "non-family households."

Table 4 Same-sex couples in the European SILC questionnaires (2012)

Country	*Same-sex couples in the SILC*	*LGB(TI)Q) are cleared from provided data*
Netherlands	all cohabiting couples are counted	no
Iceland	registered couples are counted	no
Germany	registered couples are counted	some (parent's sex)
Slovenia	registered couples are counted	some (parent's sex)
Switzerland	registered couples are counted	*unable to verify*
Denmark	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
France	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
Sweden	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
Spain	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
Finland	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	LGB(TI)Q data not published
Norway	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	LGB(TI)Q data not published
Austria	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	LGB(TI)Q data not published
Belgium	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	LGB(TI)Q data not published
Luxembourg	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	*unable to verify*
Portugal	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	some (parent's sex)
Ireland	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	*unable to verify*
Latvia	not counted	manual correction includes LGB(TI)Qs?
Lithuania	not counted	irrelevant
Bulgaria	not counted	irrelevant
Greece	not counted	irrelevant
Italy	not counted	irrelevant
Poland	not counted	irrelevant
Slovakia	not counted	irrelevant
Cyprus	*unable to verify*	*unable to verify*
Czech Rep.	*unable to verify*	*unable to verify*
Estonia	*unable to verify*	*unable to verify*
Hungary	*unable to verify*	*unable to verify*
Malta	*unable to verify*	*unable to verify*
Romania	*unable to verify*	*unable to verify*
UK	*unable to verify*	*unable to verify*

Notes: No shading: no registered partnership institution; light-grey shading: registered partnership; dark-grey shading: same-sex marriage; all for the year 2012.

Sources: Questionnaires of national statistics offices and national statistics web pages (Schönpflug et al. 2013).

Slovenia asks in the household questionnaires: "Who is the spouse or partner of the person in this household?" (Statistics Slovenia in Schönpflug et al. [2013]).

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Luxembourg, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, and Sweden count LGB(TI)Q couples, as suggested by Eurostat, in a lump sum with heterosexual married couples. Some countries, such as Luxembourg, clear the data on same-sex couples due to confidentiality reasons and point out that sexual orientation is a question of privacy.

With regard to children of LGB couples ("rainbow" families), many countries make sure that the fathers are male and the mothers are female, which typically erases same-sex parents from statistics. In an answer to our questionnaire, Slovenia indicated that plausibility checks ensure that the "father must be male, mother must be female." Contrary to this, Iceland solves the parenting and gender questions this way, as indicated by their answer to our questionnaire

> We also ask a question of who is who's [sic] parent if not obvious from the list of household members. In case the parents are of the same sex, ... we code the older as the father and the younger as the mother. Eurostat always sends a data check warning when, for instance, the 'father' is a woman. (Statistics Iceland in Schönpflug et al. [2013])

Overall, there are some inconsistencies between national practices. Denmark asks each person for his or her relationship with the selected respondent, giving the options of "spouse or cohabiter." There is no data clearing (neither the removal nor re-coding of the observation in the dataset) of marriage, since the information on legal marriage is taken from the registers (Danish Statistics Institute in Schönpflug et al. [2013]).

In France, the person answering the SILC survey is asked about their "couple life" and their "spouse identity," with an interesting flexibility in cohabitation that is not assumed. And the survey asks whether the person had signed a PACS.[20] Same-sex couples are identified as couples, and there is no clearing. Finally, there are no warnings or filters on a parent's sex.

In the personal questionnaire, the Austrian national statistics institute first asks: "What is your marital status?" Secondly, it asks whether respondents are in a "Lebensgemeinschaft," a (cohabiting) consensual partnership. Registered partnership and heterosexual marriage are lumped together as Eurostat suggests, cohabiting is accounted for, and data clearing is not a practice anymore (Statistik Austria n.d., 2011). Before the legal option for registered partnerships, same-sex couples were generally transformed into non-related persons – unless they were being overlooked and appeared as an "odd couple" in the data. The reason for this practice was to guarantee privacy for LGB couples.[21]

Next to single, married, separated, widowed, and divorced categories, Belgium's surveys ask about the "Contrat de vie commune" (Statistics Belgium n.d.), which is a contract for cohabitation for LGB(TI)Qs and straight couples. Spain asks whether respondents are single, married, separated, widowed, or divorced. Then the surveys question whether the respondent has a spouse or de facto partner who is a member of the household and what type of union it is: spouse, de facto partner with legal basis, or de facto partner without legal basis.

Finland links current marital status (single, married, widowed, divorced, or registered relationship) with the updated population register for all household members. In an interview with a household respondent, the questionnaire differentiates between spouses or cohabiting partners. Regarding data clearing, Statistics Finland answered our questionnaire by stating that:

> [S]ame-sex relationships are checked (yearly less than ten observations) to exclude possible errors in coding sex or relationship. Their relationship will stay self-reported. . . . For reasons of data protection, in municipal tables, those living in a registered partnership are classified together with married persons, as are those divorced or widowed from a registered partnership with divorced and widowed persons. (Statistics Finland in Schönpflug et al. [2013])

In Luxembourg, sexuality is perceived as a "private matter" or "individual lifestyle/behavior" instead of a sociopolitical category. The corresponding employee at the statistical institute of Luxembourg stated, "sexual orientation . . . is considered (like religion) as part of the private sphere which should be protected" (see Schönpflug et al. [2013]).

Norway, which like Austria omits data on LGBQ couples to protect their privacy, also voiced a protective motive. This is of great interest to us: why or from what or whom do LGBQ couples need to be protected? Statistics Norway answered our questionnaire, stating:

> [T]wo persons are considered a couple when they are registered as residents in the same household and are married to each other, registered partners, or cohabitants, i.e., living together without being married or having a registered partnership. In addition to living in the same household and being of opposite sexes, two persons must fulfill at least one of the following requirements to be considered a cohabiting couple: have a child in common; have checked out for being cohabitants in the census 2001 questionnaire; have been classified as a cohabitant couple in the system for data processing, control, and revision. (Statistics Norway in Schönpflug et al. [2013])

Norway also informed us that the "data quality is not good enough to identify same-sex cohabitants, and statistics for this group is accordingly not published" (Statistics Norway in Schönpflug et al. [2013]).

In Ireland, the possible answers to questions regarding the couple relationship of the respondent to another member of the household are husband/wife or cohabiting partner,[22] which is where LGBQ couples would be counted.

The order of Portugal's EU-SILC questions starts with the father, followed by the mother, according to marital status (single, married, widowed, divorced, or do not know/refuse to answer). The next questions inquire about cohabitation. There is no data clearing for marital or intrahousehold status. However, for parenthood, Statistics Portugal indicated, "the mother has always to be a woman (female) and the father has always to be a man (male), which is in accordance with national law and Eurostat guidelines" (Statistics Portugal in Schönpflug et al. [2013]).

This is clearly a problem for LGBQ couples. In Sweden, marital and cohabitation status are collected from registers; no questions are asked. There is no procedure for data clearing concerning LGB(TI)Qs following up on the gathered data on marital status, intrahousehold relationships, or parenthood. Concerning intrahousehold status, it is only assured that two persons do not have the same partner. Data clearing for parenthood ensures that the sex of the father is not female, and the sex of the mother is not male (Statistics Sweden in Schönpflug et al. [2013]).

Same-sex couples are not counted

Latvia characterizes cohabitation status with the usual categories (single, married, separated, widowed, and divorced) and also inquires into consensual unions with or without legal basis. But only married people will then be asked, "Does the person have a cohabiting partner in this household?" On data clearing, Statistics Latvia said:

> Data entry software normally doesn't allow [us] to enter the same-sex spouse or cohabiting partner. If such [a] situation appears, the interviewer in the dialogue comments line writes in an explanation, and at the stage of data clearing at Central Statistics Bureau of Latvia (CSB), such status is corrected according to [the] de facto situation. (Statistics Latvia in Schönpflug et al. [2013])

Lithuania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Slovakia do not count LGB(TI)Qs in their SILC data. For example, the National Statistical Institute of the Slovak Republic stated: "We would like to inform you that the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic does not survey data on Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals. There is not [a] plan to

collect mentioned data in the near future" (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic in Schönpflug et al. [2013]).

From this research into the practices of EU-SILC data provisioning, we conclude that questions on family status and data-clearing practices vary throughout Europe, which makes comparing statistics regarding LGB(TI)Qs across countries difficult. Moreover, in all of the countries, the numbers generated on (cohabiting/married) same-sex couples are too small for meaningful conclusions on socioeconomic status. Also important is the bias in mostly counting only registered/married same-sex couples even though the EU-SILC regulations do not demand such a strict focus on married/registered couples:

> Marital status is the conjugal status of each individual in relation to the marriage laws of the country (i.e., de jure status). It therefore does not necessarily correspond with the actual situation of the household in terms of co-habitation, arrangements, etc. ... Such information has also to be treated in a harmonised way. (Eurostat 2004)

It can therefore also be concluded that European countries do not follow the Eurostat recommendation in consistent ways. Based on the overview, we see four general practices in the EU-SILC: Only in one instance are all couples counted. Registered couples are distinctively counted in four instances. In ten countries, couples are counted and submerged with heterosexual couples. In eight countries, LGBQ couples are not counted. Single, non-cohabiting couples, or non-registered LGBQs are never counted. Data-clearing processes occur in some instances due to heteronormative structuring of parental roles, and sometimes non-publication of existing data is a result of a protective intent. Unlike the reporting of the Eurostat database (Table 1), all countries with legal partnership institutions for LGBQ couples counted those civil unions and marriages in the EU-SILC data. Most countries (aside from Switzerland and Ireland) provide data for the years where marriage/registration was legally available. But Ireland and Austria somehow provided data before those legal institutions were created. Even though it seems that there are now long enough data series (2004–2016) to allow an analysis of the socioeconomic background of LGB couples in Europe, we advise caution due to a lack of comparability.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we examined the public availability, provision, and quality of large-scale data on the socioeconomic standing of LGB(TI)Qs in Europe. Our inquiry of data provided by official statistics shows that the provision of data on LGB(TI)Qs corresponds with the social and legal acknowledgment

of LGB(TI)Qs, particularly access to partnership institutions, such as same-sex marriage or registered partnership. On the downside, it becomes evident that data-collection processes in Europe are thus shaped by a strong marriage/couple bias.

In our detailed examination of data-provisioning methods in the EU-SILC survey, we learned that data-generating and data-clearing procedures are influenced by heteronormative presumptions about families or parenthood, but also protective motives concerning the private sphere of LGB(TI)Qs.

Therefore, we have come to agree with a number of queer scholars who have been arguing that data-collection processes cannot be interpreted as neutral processes of "revealing" or making "visible" but are productive and highly political practices through which (only) *certain* LGB(TI)Q populations are counted. The "queer data subject" thus is "not always and already there awaiting identification" but is rather being produced by particular statistical practices along normative frameworks regarding ideas of partnership, cohabitation, and family (Ruppert 2011: 224).

Still, for socioeconomic research, the greatest problem is that most LGB(TI)Qs are not counted (or do not count) at all. Despite some data being available for legally recognized same-sex couples, our research indicates that there is no comparative, coherent, or comprehensive national or European data on (the socioeconomic status of) LGB(TI)Qs in the thirty countries we reviewed. There is a general inconsistency in survey questions, data compilation, and data-clearing practices, and numbers are generally too small for meaningful observations of the socioeconomic standing of LGB(TI)Qs.

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NOTES

[1] The term LGB(TI)Q refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer as forms of self-definition, self-articulation, and social modes of existence. However, even though we use "queer" as an umbrella term for non-normative sexual and gender subjects, we do not want to pretend that we actually (can) talk about transgender and intersex persons (TIs). Since they are not included in European national and supra-national data, we put the TI categories in brackets. By doing so, we acknowledge TI's importance and connectedness to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer issues and movements, as well as their invisibility as socioeconomic subjects in official statistics.

[2] Those thirty countries are twenty-seven countries in the EU (including the UK, not including Croatia), plus Switzerland, Norway, and Iceland.

[3] For instance, some white Europeans perceive heterosexual reproduction of "non-white" (or Muslim) immigrants as a threat to white European populations.

[4] See also, Grossbard and Jepsen (2008), Albelda et al. (2009), and FRA (2009).

[5] Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union situated in Luxembourg.

[6] On the backdrop of our queer theoretical framework, we are aware that terms such as "same-sex couples" are problematic due to their essentializing subcurrents, since it is implicated that (married) lesbian or gay couples have the same *biological* sex and that there are only two sexes. However, when we refer to same-sex couples in this paper we refer to the statistical and legal category of "same-sex couple/marriage."

[7] The US and Australia have recently started to systematically collect data on sexual orientation or same-sex households, thereby providing an important source for a number of studies on the socioeconomic status of LGB(TI)Qs (see, for example, Sabia and Wooden [2015] for Australia; Badgett and Schneebaum [2015] for the US). New Zealand tested to ask sexual orientation questions for the 2018 census, but ultimately decided not to do so (see Statistics New Zealand [2017]). Still, New Zealand publishes data on LGB cohabiting couples regardless of marital status in the official census; the US national census provides data on LGB cohabiting couples regardless of marital status but provides little additional demographic data.

[8] For foreign researchers, the opportunities to obtain data for Sweden are nevertheless limited due to confidentiality reasons. Data information needs to be purchased by the researchers (Statistics Sweden n.d.).

[9] Aksoy, Carpenter, and Frank (2018) replicate the well-documented lesbian advantage and gay male penalty in couples-based comparisons, but show that these effects are absent in similarly specified models of non-partnered workers, which is an interesting avenue, given the couple bias of most European surveys.

[10] Data on marriages and divorces at the national level are based on the annual demographic data collections in the field of demography carried out by Eurostat. The completeness of information depends on the availability of data reported by the national statistical institutes.

[11] Those ten countries are Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, and the UK.

[12] Eurostat categorizes marital status as single persons (never in a legal union), married persons, persons in registered partnership, persons whose legal union ended with the

death of a partner, widowed persons, persons whose legal union was legally dissolved, divorced persons, separated persons, and persons with unknown marital status.

[13] See the Eurostat guidelines (Eurostat 2010).

[14] One example is Belgium's "In the Spotlight 2011," which reflected on seven years of same-sex marriage. France exhibited a brief discussion of the civil solidarity pact and marriage. Ireland and the UK report on research on sexual orientation being carried out by national institutions. In a 2004 project by the Department of Health and Children and Crisis Pregnancy Agency, the questionnaires of "The Irish Study of Sexual Health and Relationships" (ISSHR) distinguishes between sexual orientation and sexual attraction. Most interesting and unique in the European context is that the British ONS experiments with actively asking about sexual orientation. The ONS developed, introduced, and analyzed results for a question on self-perceived sexual identity for use on government surveys on the IHS in 2009 (Joloza et al. 2010). Spain provides a survey about sexuality on the homepage (*Spanish Health and Sexual Behaviour Survey* from 2003) where a distinction is made between only heterosexual, only homosexual, and bisexual practices.

[15] Ireland published data on discrimination based on sexual orientation in a 2004 "Equality Module." Discrimination because of sexual orientation is subsumed under "other," together with "religious belief," "member of the Traveller Community," and "other," but also appears as its own category. One Italian study is available concerning gender violence, discrimination, and economic statistics.

[16] Statistics Netherlands (2004).

[17] Hypervisibility plays on the difference between being seen and being watched as a potential threat.

[18] For example, the 2010 US census, which is a full survey with households mostly returning questionnaires by mail, counted 646,464 same-sex couples in the US. For every 1,000 households, there are 5.5 same-sex couples. There are 131,729 husband/wife couples, with 2.3 same-sex couples for every 1,000. There are 514,735 unmarried partnerships, with 70 out of 1,000 being same-sex. The 2013 New Zealand census specifically states that 0.9 percent of the 934,593 total families with couples are same-sex couples.

[19] Statistics Netherlands (2011).

[20] The French Civil Solidarity Pact (PACS) is a contract between two adult persons of different sexes or of the same sex to organize their cohabitation. It was promulgated by law in 1999. It sets the rights and obligations of the parties in terms of material support, housing, estate, taxes, and social rights. However, it has no effect on the rules of parentage and parental authority if one of the parties is already a parent. The PACS may be dissolved at the request of one of the two parties by sending a declaration to the court of instance. It is automatically broken by the marriage or death of one of the two parties.

[21] The status quo in 2017 for the Austrian *micro census* is to transform all LGB couples, regardless of legal status, into nonrelated persons in order to guarantee privacy. Couples with registered partnerships are counted but not linked to any other socioeconomic data.

[22] Central Statistics Office of Ireland (2013).

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