

**Projektbericht**  
**Research Report**

# **European LGB Data Project**

A compilation of statistical data on  
sexual orientation and an application to  
research on the economic status of LGBs

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**Christine Klapeer**  
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Data analysis supported by  
Hafdís Erla Hafsteinsdóttir



**INSTITUT FÜR HÖHERE STUDIEN**  
**INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES**  
**Vienna**

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Project Report

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# Table of Contents

1.	<b>Executive Summary</b>	1
2.	<b>Introduction</b>	4
	2.1.The LGB data project	6
	2.2.Research questions and research design	7
3.	<b>Methodological framework, research methods and instruments</b>	8
	3.1.Theoretical background and general methodological framework	8
	3.2.Methodological questions and problems with gathering data on LGBs	9
	3.3.Research methods and instruments	12
	3.4.Excursus: “Gaydata” as methodological inspiration	14
4.	<b>The Availability and quality of data regarding the economic status of LGBs: Existing data sources and data compilations</b>	16
	4.1 UK project on experimental statistics	16
	4.2 Results from a queer screening of national statistics' web sites	21
	4.3 The socio-economic status of LGBs in European surveys	26
	4.3.1 LGB couples in the EU SILC	30
	4.3.2 LGB couples in the Household Budget Surveys and the national census	42
5.	<b>Data trouble: The impact of legal and political frameworks and socio-cultural norms on the availability, quality and generation of data sources</b>	45
	5.1.The correlation between sexual citizenship rights and the availability and quality of data on LGBs	45
	5.1.1 The impact of legal frameworks on ‘counting’ procedures	45
	5.1.2 The impact of sexual citizenship rights on ‘identification’ procedures	52
	5.2. The impact of socio-cultural norms on data generation processes and the contextualization of data compilations	52
	5.2.1 ‘Privacy politics’ and collecting data on ‘sexual orientation’	52
	5.2.2 Heteronormative implications of input technicalities and data clearing methods	53
	5.2.3 The hypervisualization of LGBs within ‘health’ or ‘crime’ topics	53
	5.3.Statistical bodies as framing institutions	54
6.	<b>Quee(y)ring quantitative research? Some important epistemological and analytical insights from the LGB Data Project</b>	59
7.	<b>On-going thoughts and some conclusions</b>	61
8.	<b>Manual for statisticians and demographers</b>	63
9.	<b>Publications and conference presentations</b>	68
10.	<b>Links to findings (data warehouse)</b>	68
11.	<b>Literature</b>	69
12.	<b>Appendix</b>	77



## Tables

Table 1:	Homepage Review.....	25
Table 2:	Same-sex couples in the EU-SILC 2009 .....	31
Table 3:	Number of same-sex couples in the EU-SILC 2004-2009.....	32
Table 4:	Same-sex couples in the European SILC questionnaires .....	34
Table 5:	Legal Standing of LGBs in Europe and same-sex couples in the EU-SILC .....	48
Table 6:	Partnership laws with regard to same-sex couples in Europe .....	50
Appendix 1:	Total number of married/registered same-sex couples in European Countries..	77
Appendix 2:	Questionnaire.....	79



# 1. Executive Summary

## Research interest

The “LGB data project” tackles the **observed lack of a (comparable) national data collection** on the socioeconomic standing of lesbians, gays and bisexuals (LGBs) and same-sex households/couples in Europe<sup>1</sup>. Referring to results from mainly US-based initiatives and a corresponding body of research<sup>2</sup> which demonstrated that the establishment and availability of national data sets on the social and economic lives of LGBs can fruitfully contribute to study the material and structural effects of (homophobic) discrimination and therefore highlight the **socioeconomic impact of heteronormative structures** the focus areas of this research project are defined as follows:

- evaluating the **availability, access and quality of already existing data** sets on the socioeconomic status of LGBs in Europe;
- reconstructing **explanations** for the lack of data and discussing some of the major problems hindering effective data collection;
- eventually providing **new insights on the basis of already existing data sets**;
- creating **theoretical incentives and/or manuals** for collecting (new) data on the socioeconomic status of LGBs.

Since questions concerning data collection processes on LGBs or ‘minorities’ in general are a highly controversial subject within different disciplines and theoretical fields, a corresponding **epistemological and theoretical discussion** on procedures and effects of data collection and statistical methods is one part of the report. Further on the “LGB data project” is based on a transdisciplinary research design interlinking poststructuralist and de/constructivist critiques on quantitative methods and methodologies concerning LGBs with insights from economics, sociology and statistics, leading to a discussion of the ‘need’ of quantitative data on LGBs.

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<sup>1</sup> European Union and Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

<sup>2</sup> LGBTdata.com

## Organization of the report

The report is organized as follows: Firstly, our **general theoretical and methodological framework** as well as the research methods and instruments are described. Secondly, our **core findings** are presented: A critical review of European data sets and data compilations with special regards to EU SILC, Household Budgeted Surveys and national censuses, examines the availability and/or quality of (national) data sets on LGBs/same-sex households and evaluates the data generating methods and procedures. The results from the data review are then interpreted in the context of European legal and political structures thus highlighting the multilevel effects of citizenship rights on statistic procedures, methods and the data collection process. WE conclude with an outline of the **epistemological and analytical** insights drawn from the research project as well as from some thoughts on further research. The research report also provides a short **manual** or list of recommendations which is of special interest for statisticians and demographers with a focus on European data on LGBs.

## Core findings from the review of European data sets and data compilations

- **General lack of comparable data on LGBs:** Due to highly inconsistent and insufficient data collection there is a general lack of comparable data on LGBs/same-sex households & couples in Europe.
- **General lack of accessibility/transparency of data on LGBs:** Findings from a review of the webpages of 30 national statistics institutes show that 13 countries do not provide any data on LGBs.
- **Invisibility at Eurostat:** The Eurostat website does not offer any data on LGB populations concerning the search terms "sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, gay, lesbian, transgender, same sex, homosexual, homosexuality, marriage and partnership".
- **Different national counting practices within Europeans surveys:** The data review pictures a very heterogeneous situation concerning methods of data gathering, indicators and terms in use. LGBs are not counted in the same way within one kind of survey by the different European nations and within one nation's different household surveys (EU-SILC, census and HBS), making comparison nearly impossible.
- **Data clearing methods:** The data review showed that some countries use data input technicalities and data clearing methods which erase data on same-sex couples/households. Data clearing involved mostly one sex of the household partners or the sex of LGB parents.

- **Too small sample size:** The generated numbers on LGB couples in European household surveys are for most countries too small to comparable data or to make meaningful statements on the economic and social situations of LGBs.
- **Lack of differentiation between same-sex and different-sex couples:** Eurostat recommends to ask for LGBs in legal cohabiting partnerships and then to subsume those numbers with heterosexual couples. Some countries do not comply with this recommendation; by either not counting or explicitly showing numbers on LGB couples, we discuss pros and cons for both of those outcomes.

### **Core findings from a contextualized and multilevel analysis**

- **Sexual citizenship rights for LGBs are reflected in the practices of statistical accounting:** A strong correlation between sexual citizenship rights and the availability and quality of data on LGBs and same-sex households/couples is shaped by national partnership and anti-discrimination laws and socio-cultural norms.
- **Data clearing methods are based on heteronormative stereotypes** and their underlying family and household definitions.
- **Hypervisibility of LGBs within ‘crime’ and ‘health’ topics:** The content analysis of the national statistics’ web sites showed that LGB topics are still hyper visualized within ‘health’ or ‘crime’ statistic. In 10 out of 30 web pages a connection between homosexuality, disease and/or crime was identified.
- **Statistics as a complex network of power relations:** A broad institutional framework is concerned with questions on LGBs; we recommend a closer look at the power relations within those frameworks.
- **Epistemological insights and further thoughts:** Poststructuralist and queer analysis on ‘disciplining’ and ‘normalizing’ implications and ‘productive’ effects of ‘counting’-procedures highlights the **ambivalent relationship** between the needs and benefits of data collection on LGBs and the dangers and problematic implications of ‘measuring’ LGB populations and their socioeconomic status.

## 2. Introduction

*“Very little is known about the lives of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People because the main sources of data about people living in the United States (or in the world for that matter) do not collect sexual orientation data. Do LGBTs earn as much as their straight counterparts? Are LGBTs more likely to live in urban areas? What are the economic, social and health benefits of marriage or domestic partner benefits for LGBTs? Are LGBTs as likely to have access to the health care system as their straight counterparts? And to what degree do LGBTs experience violence, stigma, and discrimination as a result of their sexual orientation? These are just a few of the thousands of questions that need to be answered. These questions are not asked here out of simple intellectual curiosity, but because the answers can influence the development of programs and policies that affect the lives of LGBTs in the United States and elsewhere.”* (www.LGBTdata.com)

A growing international body of research on LGBs<sup>3</sup> living and working conditions (e.g. Colgan et al. 2007; Plug and Berkhout 2008; Guasp and Balfour 2008; Brand 2009; Losert 2009; Hofmann und Cserer 2010), general policy discussions (e.g. Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009) as well as insights from within LGBs movements and their organizations indicate that sexuality has a tremendous impact on socio-economic status, labour market standing and also on social cohesion for lesbian women, also gay men and bisexual people (Takács/ILGA 2006). These theoretical and political discussions therefore highlight the need to consider sexuality less as a ‘private matter’ of ‘erotic desire’ or an individual ‘sexual orientation’ but as an *analytical* category thus giving light to the stratificatory effects as well as the deeply historical, political and social character of sexuality (Evans 1993; Rubin 1993). Famous anthropologist and queer theorist Gayle Rubin for instance strongly argued against libidinal or biological explanations of sexuality demonstrating how and in which ways our societies are framed by a complex system of sexual stratification in creating social hierarchies on the basis of sexual identities and behaviours (Rubin 1993). Queer theorist David Evans particularly indicated the socioeconomic effects of this modern system of sexual stratification pointing to the ‘material’ consequences of living a lesbian/gay/queer life (Evans 1993).

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<sup>3</sup> The term LGB in this text refers to *lesbian, gay, bisexual* as forms of self-definition, self-articulation and social modes of existence. The problematic implications of these categories are acknowledged from a constructivist point of view and are therefore opposed to essentialist and ahistorical understandings of sexuality and sexual identity. Underlying cultural conceptions of sexual and gender identity, not just the terms used to describe these identities, are subject to change over time and place and the relationships among sexual orientation, gender, and gender conformity (whether a person displays the emotional and behavioral characteristics culturally associated with a particular gender) are understood to be complex. The category LGB rather than LGBT has been chosen for this project since we agree that *“it is inappropriate to list “trans” as a category under sexual orientation as it is an entirely different concept and such people may be heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual.”* (Aspinall 2009: 34) Nevertheless, a gender performance deviant from the expected feminine or masculine mainstream may have different outcomes, for instance in labor market hiring, within the group of LGBs. (Weichselbaumer 1999, 2002, 2003)

As a consequence of this vibrant theoretical and political discussions on the discriminatory and marginalizing effects of sexual stratification not only international LGB organizations – as for instance the International Lesbian and Gay Association Europe (ILGA Europe) – also national and European public bodies as well as academic scholars and researchers are increasingly pointing to the importance of data collection as a potent method to *quantify* the stratificatory impact of sexuality on the socioeconomic status of LGBs thus allowing to “measure progress on tackling discrimination and tackling inequality” (Mitchell et al. 2009). Aspinall 2009).

Our research project strongly supports those political and academic demands for an *empirical* underpinning of theoretical presumption about the stratificatory effects and implications of sexuality locating LGBs in a particular way within social and economic structures (Rubin 1993; Evans 1993). Hence, we perceive the establishment and availability of data sets on the socioeconomic status of LGBs as an important contribution to critical engagements with the material effects of (homophobic) discrimination therefore uncovering the socioeconomic impacts of heteronormative structures and discourses. The three **main aims** of this research project were therefore to

- evaluate the **availability, access and quality of already existing data** sets on the socioeconomic status of LGBs in Europe,
- provide **new insights on the basis of already existing data sets**
- create **theoretical incentives and/or manuals** for collecting (new) data on the socioeconomic status of LGBs.

However, drawing on poststructuralist and queer analysis on the ‘disciplining’ and ‘normalizing’ implications and therefore ‘productive’ effects of ‘counting’ as well as referring to insights on the difficulties and risks of quantitative research on LGBs in general this research project was also critically engaged with the methodological, epistemological and ethical challenges of ‘measuring’ the socioeconomic status of LGB (Ruppert 2008; Browne 2008; Browne 2010; Sokhi-Bulley 2011). Hence, our research project was widely shaped by the **epistemological purposes** to

- Create **transdisciplinary interlinkages** between queer, poststructuralist and de/constructivist and critiques on quantitative methods and methodologies concerning LGBs and insights from economics, sociology and statistics which are arguing for the ‘need’ of quantitative data on LGBs and
- highlight the **ambivalent relationship** between the needs and benefits of data collection on LGBs and the dangers and problematic implications of ‘measuring’ LGB populations and their socioeconomic status

## 2.1. The LGB data project

*“Traditionally, sexual orientation has been seen as a private matter... But without clearer evidence – on where lesbian, gay and bisexual people live, where they work, what their experiences and needs of public services are – we are missing a vital piece of the jigsaw. Evidence is the key to making services reflect everyone’s experiences and meet their needs.” (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009, p. 3).*

The initial impetus for the LGB Data Project was a request to the Austrian Statistical Institute (STATAT) in late 2009 (the year before civil partnerships became available for Austrian homosexual couples) asking for data on LGBs and same-sex-households which could have been collected in national household surveys. We assumed that data would be available since the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) standards recommend that *“countries may wish to collect and disseminate data on same-sex partnerships. In some countries, same-sex couples can have their partnership registered. In other countries, two persons of the same sex can legally marry each other. Data needs can arise resulting from the increasing legal recognition of such unions, or on the importance of same-sex cohabiting partners who are not married/registered. In such cases, information on same-sex partnership can be derived by adding specific categories for same-sex partners (distinct from the categories for opposite-sex partners) to the relationship to the reference person question [...] or the household relationship matrix.”* (UNECE 2006, §502)

The non-binding character of this suggestion was reflected in the response by Statistics Austria: We were informed that same-sex couples were ‘cleared’ from the gathered data pool or that the sex of one household member was changed to make up for a heterosexual coupling situation and that therefore there was no statistical data available on same sex households. We learned at first hand that national practices within EU countries remain linked to:

- a) national legislation on LGBs (e.g. partnership laws, non-discrimination laws)
- b) the decision of politicians and the national statistics institutions whether and how to count LGBs and
- c) the technicalities set to include or exclude counted data.

This made us curious to compare international practices concerning the processes of data collection and data availability on LGBs.

Due to this dissatisfactory situation and our interest on the socio-political situation lesbian and gay individuals and couples, we started to become more interested in the data availability in other countries. A first overview displayed a very heterogeneous situation concerning methods of data gathering, indicators and terms in use. As a consequence we shaped this project in order find more.

## **2.2. Research questions and research design**

Our research design is therefore shaped by the **following research dimensions and research questions**:

### **Research dimension 1: Availability and quality of data:**

- What data exists on LGBs and what is the quality of such data concerning the economic status of LGBs in European countries (including Austria)?
- What empirical evidence concerning the economic status of LGBs can be drawn from this data?
- What data is missing in order to comprehend the economic status of LGBs in European countries (including Austria)?

### **Research dimension 2: The impact of legal and political frameworks and socio-cultural norms on the availability, quality and generation of data sources**

- Which impact do the structural and legal frameworks (sexual citizenship rights, partnership legislations, international guidelines) have on the availability and quality of data?
- To what extent is data generation and data collection influenced by homophobic stereotypes, heteronormative assumptions and different forms of institutionalized discrimination?

### **Research dimension 3: Methodological and epistemological challenges for gathering data on LGBs**

- What are important methodological problems and challenges for gathering data on LGBs which need to be considered by statisticians and researchers?
- What are the tensions between fostering data collection on the socioeconomic status of LGBs and criticizing problematic effects of data collection?

Hence, the report is organized as follows:

Firstly, we are describing our general theoretical and methodological framework as well as our research methods and instruments. Then we present our core findings: A critical review of European data sets and data compilations with special regard to EU SILC, Household

Budgeted Surveys and national census'. Then the results from the data review are contextualized within European legal and political structures as well as discussed with reference to insights in the field of queer and gender studies. We conclude with an outline of the epistemological and analytical insights which can be drawn from the research project as well as with some thoughts on further research. The research report also provides a manual which should be of interest for European statisticians and demographers when conducted data on LGBs.

### **3. Methodological framework, research methods and instruments**

#### **3.1. Theoretical background and general methodological framework**

Our research project was inspired by a transdisciplinary framework of different approaches and concepts from queer, gender and cultural studies as well as from economics, statistics and sociology and political science. Hence, our research methodology was based on the creation of new and fruitful interlinkages between quantitative and empirically orientated works from economics, statistics and sociology on LGBs' living and working conditions (e.g. Colgan et al. 2007; Plug and Berkhout 2008; Guasp and Balfour 2008; Brand 2009; Losert 2009; Hofmann und Cserer 2010) and more theoretical and epistemological discussions on the construction of sexualities from the field of Gender and Queer Studies (Rubin 1993), governmentalist analyses of the concept of 'population' as well as critical works on statistical methods in general.

What we perceive as fundamental theoretical background and methodological basis for our research project are queer and feminist works on the historical contingency and performative 'nature' of sexuality. We are strongly arguing against libidinal or biological explanations of sexuality therefore following Gayle Rubin's approach on sexuality as a fundamental stratification category. Hence, we consider sexuality not as a 'private matter', individual 'erotic desire' or 'sexual orientation' but as an *analytical* category thus giving light to the stratificatory effects as well as the deeply historical, political and social character of sexuality (Evans 1993; Rubin 1993).

Moreover, we are also operating with the term "heteronormativity" which was introduced by Michael Warner in order to point to the social structures, institutions and norms which perceive heterosexuality not only as a normal and natural desire but also as presuming the existence of only two 'natural' sexes (Warner 1991; Butler 1990). Hence, our research project bases on the presumption that LGBs life's are shaped by heteronormative social structures and assumption, that they face different forms of personal and institutionalized discrimination and violence.

In the US a wide range of data research has already provided some prolific theoretical and empirical insights indicating that the socio-economic realities for lesbian women, gay men and transgendered people do differ from heterosexual men and women: Especially Badgett has looked in a very concise way into the so called “pink dollar myths” which falsely drew a picture of privileged lesbians and especially gay men (“double income no kids”) (Badgett 2001). With respect to this, Albelda et al. (2005) have looked into the results of the 2005 US census and found that the myth of the “pink dollars” flocking towards LGBs does not hold. Gay men are poorer than heterosexual men; lesbians are poorer than gay men. Twenty-four percent of lesbians and bisexual women in the US are poor, compared with only 19% of heterosexual women. (It’s not that gay and bisexual men aren’t poor, but their poverty rates are roughly equal (13%) to those of heterosexual men.) (Badgett et al 2012)

Research on the uncovering of sexual orientation at the workplace and its economic consequences discovered lack in access to job interviews and gay pay gaps (overview of studies since 1995 available in Badgett 2007; more recently Antecol et al. 2008; for the case of Austria see: Weichselbaumer 2005, for the case of Greece see: Drydaskis 2011) and labour market discrimination such as un- or underemployment and/or occupational crowding (see: Badgett and Frank 2007; for the case of Austria see Weichselbaumer 2002, 2003, 2004), and glass ceilings (Frank 2006), in-work discrimination and mobbing (Colgan 2007, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2009, Colgan and McKearney 2011) and on management (Pringle, 2008).

### **3.2. Methodological questions and problems with gathering data on LGBs**

#### **Lack of social visibility**

The lack of social visibility of LGBs has to be considered as the core problem of the project (Heslin 1972, Biernacki & Waldorf 1981). Basically we have to distinguish between sampling problems in the empirical work (research projects) and sampling problems in statistical procedures of EU member states and Europe as a whole.

During the last decades some literature has been provided in the first field (see e.g. Kaplan et al. 1987, Hendricks & Blanken 1992, Lee 1993, Faugier/Sageant 1997, Herek et al 2010). These and other studies on so called “hidden populations” (Hackathorn, 2002, Salganik and Heckathorn, 2004), “hard to reach populations” (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997, Magnani et al. 2005) or “elusive populations” (Meyer and Wilson 2009) raise not only a number of specific methodological questions usually absent from research involving known populations but also political questions. From a political point of view these labels highlight socio-economic

problems and power relations as the labels refer to so-called minority groups, groups which do not wish to be identified. The labels also construct a quasi-group-homogeneity and make inner-group diversity invisible. On the methodological level the negative effects of power relations result in limitations of random methods. As a consequence non-random methods of data collection such as snowball sampling are taken as a solution (Hendricks/Blanken 1992, Snijiders 1992). This kind of sampling method suffers from difficulties posed by the lack of generalizability. In non-random samples multiple inclusion and exclusion patterns of individuals cannot be controlled (in a statistical sense) and are a constant source of bias (e.g. social distance, some individuals have a greater likelihood of being targeted than others).

To sum up, due to the socio-cultural heteronormative norms and values, mostly people are not asked questions on their sexuality or sexual orientation in surveys or it is a priori presumed that people would not answer such questions for the mentioned reasons or – in case of people with non-normative sexualities like lesbian women, gay men and bisexuals – for reasons related to their potentially vulnerable status in heteronormatively shaped societies. Lesbians and gays have much to lose from disclosing their sexual orientation/sexuality (Meyer and Wilson 2009).

### **Labels and wordings**

Another problem for data gathering on LGBs accrue from the fact that “sexualities” and “sexual orientations” are highly fluid individual, collective and political phenomena and therefore multifaceted constructs (Herek et al. 2010, p.177). In this regard on the one hand sexualities and sexual orientations may change during a life time and therefore influence the self-identification as e.g. “lesbian”, “gay man” or “bisexual women” in surveys and other data collections. On the other hand, labels like lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual have a strong impact on the formulation and operationalization of research questions, empirical research and statistical data collection. Especially from a queer perspective the wording of identity categories in questionnaires for LGBs has to be elaborated thoroughly, as it has to be considered that people do prefer/reject different kinds of labelling like “lesbian”, “queer”, “women” etc.

These problems had to be considered in the LGB-project when elaborating methods and instruments.

### **Intersectionalities and differences within the group of LGBs**

Even though our research project uses the term LGB for lesbians, bisexuals and gays, we are strongly aware about the differences among these groups therefore considering sexuality as an intersection category. Thus, one has to keep in mind differences and inequalities among these diverse group which rise from an intersection of racialized, classed, gendered forms of discriminations or stereotyping.

When it comes to the socioeconomic status it is especially important to realize that lesbians share some experiences of gay men, but in other respects face different realities than gay male populations. (We are thinking of differences arising from likelihoods of parenting and related social perception; and also of the different economic situations associated with gender (e.g. gender wage gap, double-glass ceilings<sup>4</sup>, segregated labour markets etc...)). Lesbians are affected by a general gender-related bias (omitting a differentiation between men and women) and also a bias based on sexuality (omitting homosexuality) in data gathering methods. Lesbian women often work in professional areas like education, social work, care work or sports where “sexual orientation/sexuality” is especially associated with a taboo, where lesbians often feel to be at risk and themselves choose to remain hidden. Finally it is still a highly debated subject if and how not only gender and sexuality influence the socio-economic standing of lesbians but also how those categories are interlinked with each other when it comes to questions of gender performance and their effects on the socio-economic standing or labour market discrimination.

The question of gender performance aside from sexual identity is closely entangled with matters of discrimination and also opportunity and has only barely been researched. One exemption are Doris Weichselbaumer's studies on sexual orientation in combination with levels of inhibited masculinity or femininity for women (see Weichselbaumer 1999, 2002, 2003 and 2004). For transgender people in the USA it is reported that household incomes under \$10,000 are four times as likely while being unemployed is twice as likely as for the typical person in the USA. 90% of surveyed transgender people reported that they experienced harassment, mistreatment, or discrimination on the job. Almost one in five reported of having been homeless at some point in their lives. (Badgett and Sears 2012).

Thus, it is necessary to analyse sexuality as an intersectional category that is historically and politically interlinked with constructions of gender, 'race', class, citizenship and ability. Therefore research on the socio-economic standing of LGBs becomes even more complex: Not only gender produces significant differences (and inequalities) within the group of LGBs also questions of 'race', class, citizenship and ability have substantial socio-economic effects - even though the nature and the extent of those differences are highly debated. Nevertheless, a study of Albelda et al. (2005) shows that 'African American lesbians are

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<sup>4</sup> See Miles 2008

poorer than 'white' lesbians and that black same-sex couples who live in rural areas are even more likely to be poor (Albelda 2009). Children of same-sex couples have poverty rates twice those of children in heterosexual married couple household (Badgett and Sears 2012). Regarding to age it is estimated that of the 1.6 million homeless youth in the U.S. between 20% and 40% of them identify as LGBT. A study for the US Mortgage Lending Market finds, apart from the expected preference of the nuclear family, that discrimination in the housing market is based on whether the woman in a (heterosexual) couple is working or not: The active labour market status is perceived as a good or bad thing - depending on the skin colour. (Robinson 2002).

Education: First attempts comparing education levels found that lesbians may be more likely to invest in their human capital than heterosexual women. (Rothblum et al 2007).

### **3.3. Research methods and instruments**

#### **Transdisciplinary literature review**

Inspired by the interdisciplinary composition of the research team itself (economist, sociologist, political scientist, statistical-mathematician) as well as to avoid disciplinary biases the research project tried to propose a transdisciplinary literature review. Therefore the research team was looking at a wide range of different approaches, new insights and findings from the field of sociology, economics, political science and statistics as well as through critical discussions from the field of cultural, gender and queer studies. The transdisciplinary literature review was focused on methodological discussions concerning problems and challenges of data collection processes regarding LGBs (or 'stigmatized groups' in general), new empirical findings and/or research on the socioeconomic status on LGBs, important policy papers, related socioeconomic topics (e.g. pay gaps) as well as studies on important historical and structural frameworks to be considered when studying with the socioeconomic status of LGBs (e.g. citizenship rights).

## Questionnaire

In the course of this project we were aiming to set up a comprehensive data base for all EU countries. We have set up a questionnaire for national statistics institutes asking them (i) how they have adopted Eurostat guidelines concerning marital status (Guidelines 2008, p. 254) and (ii) whether and how “plausibility checks” are applied in case of a prevalence of same sex partnerships or same sex parenthood.

This questionnaire was based on the transdisciplinary literature review and our knowledge on the particularities of LGBs as statistic subjects (see above) . We also wanted to know:

What data exists on LGBs and what is the quality of such data concerning the economic status of LGBs in European countries (including Austria)? What empirical evidence concerning the economic status of LGBs can be drawn from this data? What data is missing in order to comprehend the economic status of LGBs in European countries (including Austria)? What are important methodological factors for gathering data on LGBs which need to be considered by statisticians and researchers? How can research concerning LGBs as a relevant diversity factor be fostered in EU countries (including Austria) in order to provide better data for evidence-based policy making?

The questionnaire (see Appendix: 2) was sent out to

- all national statistic institutes in the EU-member states, Iceland, Switzerland and Norway,
- international community experts and
- researchers dealing with LGB-issues

## Content analysis of websites of national statistical institutes

One part of the LGB data project was involved with screening the 30 national statistics web pages for contents on LGBs. A standardized research procedure was implemented, to first look for a pre-defined set of terms on the individual web sites. *The key words were: sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, gay, lesbian, transgender, same sex, homosexual, homosexuality, marriage, partnership.* The language of research was always English and all national statistics institutes carry English versions of their web page additionally to the national language. For German, French and Spanish speaking countries the search was also extended to those languages.

Besides this our research team also analysed the websites along the following coding scheme: visibility of (data on) LGBs, sexual orientation same-sex households/partnerships in general, accessibility and availability of data (which data), content/context of data.

### **Data analysis of SILC-data**

Simultaneously to questioning the statistics institutes we have analysed the data itself regarding the number of married/partnered or cohabitating same sex couples. The initial idea was to use the EU-SILC as one of the best comparable data sets for economic status in EU-countries to analyse the economic status of same sex compared to opposite sex couples. However, as will be shown in chapter 4.3.1., the number of couples in the dataset is surprisingly low, even zero for some countries. Thus, an analysis on economic status based on this data is not feasible.

Hence, the analysis of the EU-SILC data went in another direction, putting the focus on the data collection and trying to answer the question on why the number and share of same sex couples shows such huge differences for the different countries. We also compared the data for some subsequent years, in order to see whether legal changes in some member countries had an influence on the frequency of LGB couples in the data sets.

### **3.4. Excursus: “LGBTdata.com” as methodological inspiration**

A great inspiration to the LGB Data project is the webpage [www.LGBTdata.com](http://www.LGBTdata.com) created by Randall L. Sell, Sc.D. Drexel University Philadelphia USA. It is a unique data pool that allows the analysis of predominantly US LGB (and trans) data. The data pool lists foremost national US Census data, data from the "American Community Survey of the US Bureau of the Census", and data from the "Current Population Survey of the Bureau of Labor Statistics". Furthermore data by nationwide and state wide health agencies, the "National Opinion Research Center" and the "Department of Justice" are listed as noteworthy data sources, comprising a list of 30 different data sets (including two Canadian data sets). The webpage not only lists the data sets but also describes the individual survey construction with regard on how to produce valuable data on LGBs. Aside from general information on the data sets (sponsors, survey purpose, location sampled, sample size and links to directly access the data sets) relevant criteria for LGB related data mining are extracted: 1) years when sexual orientation data is collected (this may refer to the introduction of this variable, i.e. for the US census the years 1990 and 2000 are relevant), 2) the method of data collection on sexual orientation (this overlaps with the general survey information, i.e. for the US census this concerns the method of self-completed mail questionnaires collected at the household level) 3) the design of questions on sexual orientation (implicitly or explicitly, i.e. for the US census, sexual orientation is not directly assessed, but the questionnaire asks for head of household information first, coding gender of the head of household; it then asks for information on all other persons in the household, coding gender for each of these persons. For the other members of the household, the form asks how they are related to the head of household. –

This is a method similar to the question design in European census data or the EU SILC. 4) Finally the data compilation offers an overview of LGB specific research papers connected to the specific data set, i.e. for the US census four research papers are listed, three of those are directly linked to the webpage. Interesting details on the practical analysis of the collected data by the official institutions may only be found in these research papers. A practice that most likely had a great effect in the perceived increase of LGB couples in the US between 1990 and 2000 by 314% is that in the 1990 census answers that described a same sex couple within the household as "married" were corrected to "opposite sex couples", in the 2000 census these questionnaires were corrected to "unmarried same sex couples". A second contributor to the large increase in the counting of LGB couples is most likely the advertising campaign by the national "Bureau of Statistics" that sought to encourage LGB couples to participate in the census by advertising in LGBT publications and hosting town hall meetings.

For European standards a surprising wealth of data is available such as on the number of complaints on sexual oriented discrimination compared to complaints concerning discrimination based on race/colour, sex, age, family care, marital status, medical condition, mental disability, national origin/ancestry, physical disability, religion, e.g. from the "California Department of Fair Employment and Housing". The website [www.gaydata.org](http://www.gaydata.org) also includes a subchapter called "measures", providing a history of measuring sexual orientation and different approaches and methods that have been utilized to assess sexual orientation.<sup>5</sup> Sampling techniques to find LGBs in the general population, such as probability versus non-probability sampling, questioned in surveys are also discussed; here the method used for screening by Kaiser is discussed in a methodology report published in 2000 (Denk 2000). Questions for sampling LGB data are recommended, this list is discussed in greater detail in Badgett and Goldberg 2009.

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<sup>5</sup> Those include: Karl Ulrich's Sexual Orientation Classification Scheme, the Kinsey Scale, Klein's Sexual Orientation Grid, the Shively Scale of Sexual Orientation, a wording for the Sell Assessment of Sexual Orientation, the Friedman Measure of Adolescent Sexual Orientation, and Schluter's Russian Sexual Orientation Assessment.

## **4. The Availability and quality of data regarding the economic status of LGBs: Existing data sources and data compilations**

So far research on the economic status of LGBs in Europe has mostly been conducted in the UK (e.g. Arabsheibani et al. 2004 and 2005; Aspinall and Mitton 2008; Browne 2007; Johnson et al. 1994; Jones 2008; Longhi and Platt 2008). Most recently Peter Aspinall (2009) in a study on "Estimating the size and composition of the lesbian, gay, and bisexual population in Britain" pointed to the important factor of the sensitivity in accounting for "sexual orientation" in surveys. Aspinall's study focuses on existing and new methodological concepts and related options for survey design and data mining in order to correctly estimate the size of the LGB population and the socio-economic factors concerning this sub-group. For the LGB population in the UK Aspinall found that "*there is no reliable current information on the size of the LGB population. Estimates range from 0,3 per cent to 10 per cent using different measures and sources. None of these estimates correct for the possibility of higher than average rates of non-reporting and misreporting among LGB people*" (Aspinall 2009: 13).

### **4.1 UK project on experimental statistics**

The British Office for National Statistics (ONS) constituted that it was necessary to meet legislative requirements demanding data on sexual orientation. These demands have come from potential key users including policy makers in central government departments, local government, public service providers like police, health authorities, lesbian, gay and bisexual service providers, the LGB population, academia and other research organisations. First the ONS led a cross-government Review of Equality Data in 2007 which found that there was a lack of sufficient and reliable sources of data on sexual orientation and recommended work was completed to develop a question on sexual identity for household surveys to address this gap. Further ONS worked on developing, testing and evaluating a question on self-perceived sexual identity for use on government surveys. Finally the ONS introduced the question on the Integrated Household Survey (IHS) from January 2009 and published user guidance in April 2009 to promote the use of these questions in other government and relevant surveys. (Joloza 2010)

The IHS was classified as an experimental data source this means new official statistics undergoing evaluation. They are published in order to involve customers and stakeholders in their development and as a means to build in quality at an early stage. While the INS considered sexual orientation, sexual identity, sexual behaviour and sexual attraction, questions were only based on sexual identity, i.e. individual's self-definition.

Interesting conclusions on LGB demographics were as follows: "An initial analysis of the characteristics of those identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual shows that the LGB population have a younger age distribution than heterosexuals. Those who identified as gay or lesbian were more likely to be men whereas those who identified as bisexual were more likely to be women. Those who identify as gay or lesbian were more likely to be in managerial or professional classifications, employed and qualified to a higher degree. Similar proportions of those who identify as LGB and heterosexuals were in perceived good health although the former were more likely to smoke, or have smoked in the past." (Joloza 2010)

### **Data on civil partnerships in the UK**

In 2012 it was the first time that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has been published provisional in annual 2011 and final in annual 2010 civil partnership statistics for the UK. Key findings were:

- The provisional number of civil partnerships in the UK in 2011 was 6,795, an increase of 6.4 per cent since 2010.
- The mean age of men forming a civil partnership in the UK in 2011 was 40.1 years, while for women the average age was 38.3 years. These figures represent a small decrease in mean ages in comparison with 2010.
- The provisional number of civil partnership dissolutions granted in the UK in 2011 was 672, an increase of 28.7 per cent since 2010.<sup>6</sup>

The following questions have been asked in the Integrated Household Survey 2009/10 and 2010/11 on civil partnership

*Are you currently ...*

- 1 single, that is never married,*
- 2 married and living with your husband/wife,*
- 3 a civil partner in a legally-recognised Civil Partnership,*
- 4 married and separated from your husband/wife,*
- 5 divorced, 6 or widowed?*

- In a legally-recognised Civil Partnership and separated from his/her civil partner*
- Formerly a civil partner, the Civil Partnership now legally dissolved*
- A surviving civil partner: his/her partner having since died*

*Is your husband/wife/civil partner a member of the household?*

- May I just check, are you living with someone in this household as a couple?*
- 1 Yes*

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/vsob2/civil-partnership-statistics--united-kingdom/2011/index.html>

2 No

- *Same-sex couple (but not in a formal registered Civil Partnership)*

*I would now like to ask how the people in your household are related to each other*

1 Spouse,

2 Cohabitee,

3 Son/daughter (incl. adopted),

4 Step-son/daughter,

5 Foster child,

6 Son-in-law/daughter-in-law,

7 Parent / Guardian,

8 Step-parent,

9 Foster parent,

10 Parent-in-law,

11 Brother/sister (incl. adopted),

12 Step-brother/sister,

13 Foster brother/sister,

14 Brother-in-law/sister-in-law,

15 Grand-child,

16 Grand-parent,

17 Other relative,

18 Other non-relative,

20 Civil partner,

### **Data on sexual identity in the UK**

The Office for National Statistics also established a project on sexual identity in 2006. The ONS initiated the project recognising the emerging need for information on this topic for statistical evidence to support the legislation and the need for a harmonised measure of sexual identities. The project had three main aims:

Developing questioning on sexual identity that can be used on social surveys and for quality monitoring purposes;

Testing such questioning, and implement it on the core of the new ONS Integrated Household Survey (IHS)<sup>7</sup>;

Providing guidance for those wishing to use the questioning for their own purpose and those wishing to use the post-implementation data.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>The IHS is a composite household survey combining the answers from a number of ONS household surveys to produce an experimental data set of core variables. The IHS is based on a sample and is in evaluation. Sample over 420.000 individual respondents. The IHS is going through an assessment for becoming a National Statistic Institut by the UK Statistics Authority in due course.

<sup>8</sup>See: Malagoda, Maya, Traynor, Loe (2008): Developing survey questions on sexual identity: Report on National Statistics Omnibus Trial 4. Office for National Statistics.

Different versions of questions were tested in the National Statistics Omnibus (Trial 1-4). Concerning sexual identity in the Integrated Household Survey<sup>9</sup> of the UK, a query on sexual identity question has been asked since 2009. (Office for National Statistics 2011):

*“The question on sexual identity was developed and tested on a number of surveys in 2008 and was added to the IHS in 2009. The data have been collected to provide accurate statistics to underpin the equality monitoring responsibilities of public sector organisations and to assess the disadvantage or relative discrimination experience by the lesbian, gay and bisexual population. The sexual identity question was asked to respondents aged 16 years and over when they first entered all component IHS surveys, and was not asked by proxy. Proxy interviews are defined as those when answers are supplied by a third party, who is a member of the respondent’s household. A valid response was provided by 95 per cent of eligible responders.”<sup>10</sup>*

**The following question has been asked in the Integrated Household Survey 2009/10 and 2010/11 on sexual identity:**

- Which of the options on this show card best describes how you think of yourself?
- I will now read out a list of terms people sometimes use to describe how they think of themselves. *(Instruction for the interviewer: Note that 'Heterosexual or Straight' is one option; 'Gay or Lesbian' is one option, Bisexual, Other)*

The IHS data from 2009/2011 indicate that<sup>11</sup>:

- • 94 per cent of adults identified themselves as Heterosexual/Straight
- • 1 per cent of the surveyed population, approximately 490,000 adults, identified themselves as Gay or Lesbian
- • 0.5 per cent of the surveyed population, approximately 239,000 adults, identified themselves as Bisexual
- • 0.4 per cent as ‘Other’
- • 3.6 per cent of adults stated they ‘Don’t know’ or refused the question
- • 0.7 per cent of respondents provided ‘No response’ to the question

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<sup>9</sup>The Integrated Household Survey (IHS) is a composite survey combining questions asked in a number of social surveys by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to gather basic information for a very large number of households. The aim of the IHS is to produce estimates for particular themes to a higher level of precision and at a lower geographic level than is possible in individual ONS social surveys. (Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/integrated-household-survey/integrated-household-survey/april-2011-to-march-2012/index.html>, 20.12.2012).

<sup>10</sup>Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/integrated-household-survey/integrated-household-survey/april-2010-to-march-2011/stb---integrated-household-survey-april-2010-to-march-2011.html>, 20.12.2012

<sup>11</sup>Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/integrated-household-survey/integrated-household-survey/april-2010-to-march-2011/stb---integrated-household-survey-april-2010-to-march-2011.html>, 20.12.2012.

The 'Other' option on the question was to address the fact that not all people will fall in the first three categories.

A comparison by gender showed that 93.6 per cent of men and 94.3 per cent of women identified themselves as Heterosexual/Straight, the equivalent figures in the previous year were 94.0 per cent of men and 94.5 per cent of women. Similar to the previous year, there was a larger proportion of men stating they were Gay, at 1.3 per cent, compared to women at 0.6 per cent.

The question on sexual identity has raised some public attention. Several newspapers suggested that data from the IHS on sexual identity were obtained by "door stepping" members of the public or "cold calls". The director of Economic & Social Analysis officially replied to that:

*"Contrary to your article "Only Gay in the Village? Not quite" on Monday 27 September 2010 about the Integrated Household Sexual Identity statistics, which stated that the Office for National Statistics had collected data on the sexual identity of UK adults by doorstepping members of the public.*

*ONS takes confidentiality very seriously in all our surveys and does not undertake doorstep surveys or 'cold call' households. Interviews are carried out by trained permanent civil servants to high international standards. All ONS social surveys are voluntary and we rely on the goodwill of the public to make our surveys successful. Prior to one of our interviewers calling on a sampled address, a letter is sent to the householder advising them that they have been selected for one of our studies. The letter informs them of the topic of the study, how their address has been selected and provides details of ONS. We also offer a freephone number that the householder can call to seek further details as well as a website where we address many of the questions people have about our surveys.*

*In the case of collecting information regarding Sexual Identity, ONS asks a question on a respondent's self-perceived sexual identity rather than looking to measure the wider concept of sexual orientation. Following consultation and testing, it was decided that a single question on sexual identity was most appropriate to ask in general purpose household surveys. Interviewers ask respondents which option (Heterosexual/Straight, Gay/lesbian, Bisexual and other) best describes how they think of themselves. The question is asked in such a way that maintains confidentiality between household members."*<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Source: Integrated Household Survey sexual identity question: Metro, Observer and Independent, 23, 26 and 27 September 2010: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/media-centre/letters-to-the-press/integrated-household-survey-sexual-identity-question/index.html>, 20.12.2012.

Measuring sexual identity in the IHS was evaluated after its first year (April 2009 and March 2010). In the according report also comparisons with other national<sup>13</sup> and international<sup>14</sup> surveys were made (see: Joloza et al 2010). In this report the introduction of the sexual identity question on the IHS in 2009 had been considered as success (p. 26). There was no evidence of an adverse impact on response rates confirming the general acceptance of the question. According the Survey methodology: Appendix B from December 4th 2012, “the IHS has become the key vehicle for high-profile national data collection initiatives including questions on subjective well-being, and on sexual identity.”

Whether the IHS experiment is to be recommended in a common European setting is a matter of close scrutinization. While the IHS reporting has clearly proven that it is possible to inquire sexual identity in national censuses, it has been shown that a method involving personal polls were considered a best practise in order to provide statistical data for the specifics of sexuality issues. Before recommending this kind of approach to other European statisticians a few more issues that are lacking in the ONS considerations need to be reviewed.

## 4.2 Results from a queer screening of national statistics' web sites

One part of the LGB data project was involved with the screening of 30 national statistic web pages for contents on LGBs. A standardized research procedure was implemented; first step was to search for a pre-defined set of terms on each web site. *The key words were: sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, gay, lesbian, transgender, same sex, homosexual, homosexuality, marriage, partnership.* The language of research was always English as all national statistic institutes carry versions of their web page in English additionally to the national language. For German, French and Spanish speaking countries the search was also extended to those languages.

If any of the search terms were found, the responding value in Table 1 is set to "yes", if none of the search terms were found, the value is set to "no". In summary, positive search results were found in 17 out of 30 countries. The second step was context related. It is relevant, in which context the searched terms are presented. Sometimes connections were purely accidental and not connected to LGB issues. For instance the term "gay" appeared on the

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<sup>13</sup>Citizenship Survey 2009/10, British Crime Survey 2009/10, General Lifestyle Survey 2008, Northern Ireland Life and Time Survey 2005, British Social Attitudes Survey 2005, Scottish Census Small Test 2005, DTI Fair Treatment at Work Pilot Survey 2008

<sup>14</sup>Norwegian Living Conditions Survey 2010, Oregon Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance System 2006, Canadian Community Health Survey 2005, California Health Interview Survey 2005, North Dakota Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance System 2004, National Health and Nutritional Examination Survey 2003/2004 (USA), Vermont Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance System 2002.

Austrian web site only because one boy in Austria had been named "Gaylord" between 1984 and 2011. Other connections were less entertaining. In 10 out of 30 web sites those key words, specifically "homosexual" or "bisexual", appear in connection with AIDS/HIV.

For **Austria**, AIDS/HIV is connected to LGBs as such:

*"Der überwiegende Teil der 64 Personen, die 2007 an AIDS erkrankten, waren Männer (78,1%). Der Anteil Homosexueller an den Neuerkrankten ist in den letzten Jahren zurückgegangen. Während beispielsweise im Jahr 1996 noch rund bei der Hälfte der neu erkrankten Männer die Infektion auf homosexuelle Kontakte zurückzuführen war, traf dies im Jahr 2007 nur mehr auf 34,0% der Männer zu. Rund jede fünfte (22,0%) bei Männern im Jahr 2007 erfasste Neuerkrankung ging auf heterosexuelle Kontakte zurück, 16,0% auf intravenösen Drogenmissbrauch; bei 26,0% war der Ansteckungsgrund unbekannt."*

(Jahrbuch der Gesundheitsstatistik 2007)

Here the connection to AIDS is made via homosexual practices and is not linked to a gay identity per se.

In **France** on the other hand, it is not homosexual practice but the "contamination method" is "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<sup>15</sup>).

In **Ireland** the situation is similar. "Heterosexuals" and "homosexuals/bisexuals" are listed as a "category" along with "intravenous drug users", "mother to child" and "other".<sup>16</sup> This is exactly the same wording for Norway, only the category blood transfusion is added. (Norwegian Health Statistics 1992-2000)

In the **Netherlands** AIDS and homosexuality are related in the web site research twice. In 2004 it was found that "homosexual and bisexual men are at the highest risk for HIV infection."<sup>17</sup> And the statistical Yearbook of the Netherlands 2004 lists groups at risks amongst them homosexual or bisexual people.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> [http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/tableau.asp?ref\\_id=natnon06224](http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/tableau.asp?ref_id=natnon06224)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/en/media/duplicatecsomedia/newmedia/releasespublications/documents/statisticalyearbook/2004/health&socialconditions.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> [www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/.../2005/2005-1835-wm.htm](http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/.../2005/2005-1835-wm.htm)

<sup>18</sup> [www.cbs.nl/nr/rdonlyres/3c60b3e9-09e0-491f-87f2.../0/a32004.pdf](http://www.cbs.nl/nr/rdonlyres/3c60b3e9-09e0-491f-87f2.../0/a32004.pdf)

Apart from the sometimes unfortunate choice of words in association with AIDS/HIV two web pages list homosexuality in connection with crime. Austria refers to its criminal statistics in each year from 2005 to 2010, where it is repeated that male prostitution was legalized in 1989 in order to enable health checks to prevent the spread of AIDS. In Denmark the term "homosexual" showed 21 matches, mainly concerning criminal offences and victims of crime. Homosexuality is listed in connection with sexual offences which are mostly defined for heterosexual people as "intercourse" (without specifying "heterosexual" intercourse. Homosexual sexual offence is listed as a separate category "homosexual sexual offence".<sup>19</sup> This differentiation suggests a different nature of sexual offence, concerning whether it is a homosexual or heterosexual incident.

**Slovakia, Switzerland Ireland, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia** also mention AIDS on their web pages but not in connection with LGBs. In Iceland three Google advertisements follow the search results and remind us to fight AIDS, but also no connection between LGBs and AIDS is being made.

14 out of 30 countries presented statistics on LGBs, mostly partnerships and marriages on their web pages. Two countries did this only subsumed with heterosexual couples (France and Sweden).

The countries with some form of legal same-sex partnership publish special reports on LGBs or detailed data on same sex couples on their websites. One example is **Belgium's** "In the Spotlight 2011" that reflects on seven years of same-sex marriage<sup>20</sup> or **France** exhibits a brief discussion between the civil solidarity pact and marriage. Different to these approaches is the research done in **Ireland** and the **UK**, where inquires and research on sexual orientation (see chapter 4.1 for the UK) is carried out. In a 2004 project by the Department of Health and Children & Crisis Pregnancy Agency "The Irish Study of Sexual Health and Relationships" (ISSHR) distinguishes in their questionnaires between **sexual orientation** (heterosexual, homosexual (gay or lesbian), bisexual, not sure; undecided, something else/other, refused) and **sexual attraction** (only heterosexual, mostly heterosexual, both

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<sup>19</sup> the following crimes are listed: "Incest, (...) Rape, Intercourse by illegal coercion, Intercourse by disingenuousness, Other sexual relations by violence, Other sexual relations by illegal coercion, Other sexual relations by disingenuousness, Intercourse with child under 12 years, Other sexual relations with child under 12 years, Intercourse by exploiting mental abnormality, Intercourse by exploiting helpless state, Intercourse with person placed at an institution, Intercourse by abuse of dependency relationship, Intercourse with child under 15 years, Intercourse by seduction, Other sexual relations by exploiting mental abnormality, Other sexual relations with person placed at an institution, Other sexual relations by abuse of dependency relationship, Other sexual relations with child under 15 years, Other sexual relations by seduction, Intercourse with a prostitute under 18 years - customer, Homosexual sexual offense with a child under 12 years, Homosexual sexual offense [sic] by violence with a child under 12 years, Homosexual sexual offense by illegal coercion with a child under 12 years, Homosexual sexual offense with a child under 15 years, Homosexual sexual offense otherwise, Homosexual sexual offense by violence, Homosexual sexual offense by illegal coercion, Homosexual sexual offense with a child under 15 years, Homosexual sexual offense by illegal coercion with a child under 12 years, Offence against public decency by groping, Offence against public decency by indecent exposure, Offence against public decency by watching secretly, Offence against public decency by verbal indecency and similar, Offence against public decency by other indecency, Offence against public decency otherwise." <http://www.statbank.dk/STRAF5>

<sup>20</sup> [http://statbel.fgov.be/en/statistics/organisation/statistics\\_belgium/dissemination/statbel/in\\_the\\_spotlight\\_archives/in\\_the\\_spotlight\\_2012/](http://statbel.fgov.be/en/statistics/organisation/statistics_belgium/dissemination/statbel/in_the_spotlight_archives/in_the_spotlight_2012/)

heterosexual and homosexual, mostly homosexual, only homosexual, never felt sexually attracted, refused). **Spain** also offers one survey about sexuality on the homepage (Health and Sexual Behaviour Survey from 2003) where a distinction is made between only heterosexual, only homosexual and bisexual practices.<sup>21</sup>

**Ireland** publishes data on discrimination based on sexual orientation in a 2004 Equality Module. In one part of the project report (or publication) the discrimination of LGBs is subsumed under "other" together with "Religious belief", "Member of the Traveller Community" and "other". In a comparison of the years 2004 and 2010 this discrimination is said to rise. A second table for 2004 only lists sexual orientation as an own category. For this instance it was reported that discrimination took place in the workplace, looking for work, in the health services and in transport services.

One **Italian** study on "Gender Violence, discrimination, economic statistics: new challenges in measures based on a gender approach" can be found on the Italian web site that claims: "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."<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately no other European country provides any accessible information on the topic of LGB discrimination on its web page (see appendix).

On the **Dutch** web page one can find data on adoption rates<sup>23</sup>, marriage, voters' views on adoptions of children by lesbians and gays. It is interesting to note that in the Netherlands it is common practice that the reference person of a household couple in a heterosexual relationship is always the man, but in homosexual and lesbian relationships, the reference person is the elder of the two<sup>24</sup>. An approach also used in, for instance, Icelandic statistics. Furthermore the Dutch web page offers a brochure on Transsexuals in the Netherlands,<sup>25</sup> by this the Netherlands are the only country where a responds to our search term "transgender" could be found on their web pages.

The results are summarized in Table 1:

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=/t20/e301/matri/a2010/&file=pcaxis&L=1>

<sup>22</sup> <http://en.istat.it/istat/eventi/2007/globalforum/lunedipomeriggio/Sabbadini%20inglese.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> [www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/...recht/.../2012-3610-wm.htm](http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/...recht/.../2012-3610-wm.htm)

<sup>24</sup> [www.cbs.nl/NR/rdonlyres/...0630.../tableannotationsNLcensus2001.pdf](http://www.cbs.nl/NR/rdonlyres/...0630.../tableannotationsNLcensus2001.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> [www.cbs.nl/NR/rdonlyres/.../0/13U646transseksueleninnederland.pdf](http://www.cbs.nl/NR/rdonlyres/.../0/13U646transseksueleninnederland.pdf)

**Table 1: Homepage Search – Overview of results**

country	search terms found	LGBs connected to AIDS/HIV	statistics on LGBs available	special reports	accessibility (contact, language) for this project
Austria	yes	yes	yes	no	good
Belgium	yes	no	yes	no	fair
Bulgaria	no	no	no	no	bad
Cyprus	no	no	no	no	bad
Czech Rep.	no	no	no	no	good
Denmark	yes	no	yes	no	good
Estonia	no	no	no	no	fair
Finland	yes	no	yes	no	good
France	yes	yes	subsumed	no	fair
Germany	yes	no	yes	no	good
Greece	no	no	no	no	good
Hungary	yes	no	yes	no	fair
Iceland	yes	no	yes	no	good
Ireland	Yes	yes	yes	yes	good
Italy	yes	no	no	no	bad
Latvia	no	no	no	no	good
Lithuania	no	no	no	no	good
Luxemburg	no	no	no	no	bad
Malta	no	no	no	no	bad
Netherlands	yes	yes	yes	yes	good
Norway	yes	yes	yes	no	good
Poland	no	no	no	no	bad
Portugal	no	no	no	no	good
Romania	no	no	no	no	bad
Slovakia	no	no	no	no	fair
Slovenia	yes	no	yes	no	good
Spain	yes	no	yes	yes	good
Sweden	yes	no	subsumed	no	good
Switzerland	yes	no	yes	no	good
UK	yes	no	yes	yes	good

Recommendations for statisticians following this research can be found in the manual in chapter 8.

### 4.3 The socio-economic status of LGBs in European surveys

At the European level, data on "Living Conditions and Social Protection" is provided by the following main sources: 1) Foremost two household surveys: the Household Budget Surveys (HBSs) and the EU-SILC (EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions). 2) national labour force surveys, (i.e. (micro) censuses), which are feeding into 3) specifically conducted health, social life or education surveys or other general public surveys. 4) Community based respondent-driven surveys like the *Lesbians At Work* study (Hofmann and Cserer 2010) or *Out im Office* (Frohn 2007) are other sources of information.

In household surveys (such as the EU-SILC) people indicate their relationship to every household member. Thus, cohabiting and married same-sex couples can be identified. Eurostat advises to treat registered same-sex couples as married couples and treat children in same-sex partnerships the same way than in heterosexual couples. However, each country does handle this differently, such that problems might arise with plausibility checks. Only in few countries (e.g. the UK's statistical experiment) people are asked a sexual identity question if they take part in Household Surveys (inconsistent practice).

Regarding those European data sets the following four fields of methodological difficulties for identifying LGBs and their socio-economic status can be summarized:

**1.) Living together:** Generally, in household surveys (such as the micro census or the EU-SILC) respondents indicate their relationship to every household member. Thus, cohabiting same-sex couples can be identified, no matter whether they are married, in a legal partnership or without any legal declaration of their relationship. These data sets will then allow drawing household data and also data on the individuals in each of those households. This is an instance where LGBs, their education level, migration background, their work situation, the number of their dependents, their health status and their living situations could theoretically be depicted. Problematic for the purposes of identifying LGBs in the population is that LGBs who do not live with their partner cannot be identified. Other minority groups, like people with migratory backgrounds are identified by questions concerning the nationality of their parents and the time of residence in the respective country. Household surveys generally do not include questions regarding sexuality, one exception is the Integrated Household Survey of the UK, where a sexual identity question is asked. (see chapter 4.1)

**2.) Inclusiveness:** The next methodological problem when trying to extract LGBs from Household Surveys concerns the inclusiveness of those surveys; for the case of Austria we have counted three options to deal with LGBs in surveys, (concerning the other 29 countries researched and EU-SILC, the HBS data and the census data, please see the following chapters of this report):

**Option 1:** EUROSTAT generally advises to treat registered same-sex couples as married couples and treat children in same-sex partnerships the same way than in heterosexual couples. However, each country can handle this differently. For the EU-SILC Austria has started to distinguish between married couples and couples in registered partnerships as compared to singles, widows and widowers, and divorced people since 2010. Consistently, Statistics Austria quotes the corresponding SILC regulation: “*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. Some countries have a legal framework for registering partnerships (in most countries these are same-sex partnership and they have a legal status parallel to married couples). Such information has also to be treated in a harmonised way and it is proposed to treat them as married and classified [sic] them under code 2 when the relation still exists, else as appropriated (legal separation or death of one of partners or so on).*” (EUROSTAT 2004)

**Option 2:** In the micro census (the Labour Force Survey) of 2012 however, unlike in the SILC the list of possible coupling situation does not include the registered partnership.

**Option 3:** For the register data based census Statistics Austria explains the following: “*For the case of the Austrian census the situation is for instance still not very satisfying, although legal partnership for lesbians and gays has been available since January 1st 2010. In the year 2010 705 couples were registered. [Data is now also available for 2011] Austrian census data allows identifying these couples as „married“, but no separate count from heterosexual married couples is possible. Also, non-registered partnerships are not counted....*” (STATAT 2010, p. 17).

As we see, there are three variations of (lack of) inclusiveness in the three major household surveys conducted in Austria. Why there is no stringency within the practises of *one* nation is one question arising from this, which might require an institutional analysis of Statistics Austria or any other national statistics institute, since this is not specific for Austria (this is for example also seen for Portugal). The second question leads to concerns of international comparability: Is the questioning concerning inclusion of LGBs identical in all the European Labour Force Surveys and SILC questionnaires, and is the practice of mixing LGB and straight legal partnerships/marriages identical for all register data censuses?

What we can deduce from the already existing results is that some European practises point in the direction of Option 2: EUROSTAT’s data base lists the following options for marital status in their table on “Marriages by previous marital status and sex”: Total, single persons

(never in legal unions), widowed persons, divorced persons, persons with unknown marital status. (Source: EUROSTAT<sup>26</sup>)

But we also encountered a refusal to collect data on sexual orientation/ LGBs/ same-sex-couples or to differentiate between same-sex and different sex couples in surveys: For example the National Statistical Institute of the Slovak Republic replied: *“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 in plan [sic] to collect mentioned data in the near future.”* (Source: National Statistics office Slovak Republic)

In other countries sexuality was perceived as a ‘private matter’ or ‘individual lifestyle/behaviour’ instead of a socio-political category. The corresponding employee at the statistical institute of Luxemburg stated that *„sexual orientation [...] is considered (like religion) as part of the private sphere which should be protected.”* Generally, it seems that we can deduct those countries with the prevalence of legal partnership institutions for LGBs at least move in the direction of Option 1 and include data on LGB’s but do not necessarily differentiate for it, since this is not recommended by Eurostat and might pose confidentiality problems in small scale regional units.

**3.) Plausibility checks and data correction:** The third problem in identifying LGBs in the population might arise from plausibility checks and data correction, as was quoted above from STATAT for the case of Austria. Concerning the register data based census STATAT confirms that *“...non-registered partnerships are not counted because due to statistic error and data protection, same sex couples which are not registered are re-coded to non-related persons.”* (STATAT 2010, p. 17) Statistics Latvia argues in a similar way in their questionnaire: *“Data entry software normally doesn’t allow to enter the same sex spouse or cohabiting partner. If such situation appears [...] at the stage of data cleaning at CSB such status is corrected according to de facto situation. [sic!]”* (National Statistics office Latvia) These two answers are in line with the observations by Purdam et al. that statistical data mining and data analysis are influenced by discriminatory stereotypes on LGBs and that it is a common practice that same-sex households are not counted as same sex households but treated as housemates while opposite sex respondents living in the same house are treated as cohabiting (Purdam et al., 2008). In contrast to this the answer from Iceland seemed more promising: *“We also ask a question of who is who’s 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 send a data check warning when for instance the “father” is a woman.”* (National Statistics office Iceland)

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<sup>26</sup><http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

**4) Disclosure:** The fourth and last methodological concern is related to the likelihood of the surveyed couples to disclose their sexuality/relationships in household surveys (see methodological discussion in the previous chapter). So far we are only aware of a campaign in 2010 by the U.S. Census Bureau which was encouraging same-sex couples to participate in the decennial count by advertising in LGBT publications and hosting town hall meetings. Recently the Netherlands have also started such campaigns. (See 5.1.1.) Specific considerations with LGB data mainly concern incentives for disclosure, such as the embedding of surveys in a broader socio-political context (Black 2000); the survey modes; racial/ethnic and culture considerations (Badgett and Goldberg 2009); issues of gender non-conformity (Weichselbaumer 1999) and generally the wording of questions. (Badgett and Goldberg 2009)

After passing these four hurdles it seems surprising that any data on LGBs may become available through household surveys. The data accounted for LGBs in the EU SILC 2009 shows that the percentages of LGB couples in the European populations range from 0,6% in France, 0,5°% in the Netherlands and 0,4°% in Germany to 0.3 - 0.2°% in the Scandinavian countries and expected values close to 0 % in 12 other member states. With numbers of these magnitudes it is impossible to generate valid accounts of the living situations of lesbian women in any EU countries, as the sample size (62 observations for same-sex couples in the Netherlands being the maximum) is simply too small to differentiate any further and to deduct meaningful results for whole national populations.

Therefore we have to conclude that LGBs are not appropriately counted by European household surveys due to four major factors: only cohabitating couples are counted, some surveys do not include LGB couples, as LGBs may not want to reveal their sexuality or partnerships, and collected data may be cleared in plausibility checks. Even though the British Integrated Household Survey must still confront some of the four described methodological difficulties, it was found that 1.5 % of adults in the United Kingdom identified themselves as Gay/Lesbian or Bisexual in 2010/11 a number that seems likely for most countries.

### **4.3.1 LGB couples in the EU SILC**

The EU-SILC is the annual EU-wide survey conducted by the national statistics offices, which is part of an EU-wide program to obtain information on the income and living conditions of different types of households. The SILC is Eurostat's main reference source for comparative income distribution and social exclusion statistics. In the case of Austria the SILC sample size consists of 5,900 households (13,600 individuals) for 2009 which are weighted in order to represent the Austrian population. One main function of the EU-SILC is to measure in a comparative way the poverty risk European households are facing. In addition, due to the detailed information on income, household composition and also occupation the dataset offers a wide range of possibilities to analyse the social and economic situation of different population groups.

The EU-SILC gives two possibilities to identify same-sex couples in the dataset:

- By the question on the marital status, when there is an extra option for legal categories only available to same-sex couples (e.g. registered partnerships in Europe).
- By the relation of the household members towards each other (partners being of the same sex).

Following this road the EU-SILC 2009 was analysed for the number of same-sex couples. The results are found in the following table.

**Table 2: Same-Sex Couples in the EU-SILC 2009**

	Couples (observations)		Couples (weighted)		Share in population	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
AT	8	2	5,526	1,800	0.3%	0.1%
BE	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
BG	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
CY	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
CZ	3	4	2,358	1,720	0.1%	0.1%
DE	27	24	101,639	73,012	0.5%	0.4%
DK	4	6	1,899	1,138	0.1%	0.1%
EE	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
ES	9	10	13,942	13,268	0.1%	0.1%
FI	5	10	1,726	2,100	0.1%	0.2%
FR	21	19	81,861	87,286	0.6%	0.6%
GR	1	0	919	0	0.0%	0.0%
HU	0	1	0	233	0.0%	0.0%
IE	6	3	3,820	242	0.3%	0.0%
IS	4	2	197	74	0.3%	0.1%
IT	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
LT	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
LU	7	1	849	25	0.7%	0.0%
LV	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
MT	3	0	102	0	0.1%	0.0%
NL	20	42	15,833	24,140	0.4%	0.6%
NO	7	11	2,313	3,454	0.2%	0.3%
PL	1	0	1,809	0	0.0%	0.0%
RO	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
SE	6	7	3,211	3,520	0.1%	0.2%
SI	0	1	0	54	0.0%	0.0%
SK	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
UK	9	9	34,098	27,290	0.2%	0.2%

Eurostat, EU-SILC 2009, IHS 2012. [No information for Portugal available]

There are surprisingly few observations of same-sex couples in almost all countries, only the Netherlands, France and Germany reach observation numbers of more than twenty. Looking at the weighted numbers we see that the share of people living in same-sex partnerships (registered/married or not) is low, being highest with 0.6% in France, 0.5% in the Netherlands and 0.4% in Germany. Further, there are nine countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania and Slovakia) with no observations at all. These low observation numbers make an analysis of the economic status impossible. Still of

interest, however, is the fact why the numbers are so low and why especially some countries continuously contain no same-sex couple in their dataset.

Looking at the numbers in previous years (see Table 3) some countries with no observation in 2009 have not had observations over the whole period of the EU-SILC from 2004 on, namely Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Romania and the Slovakia. Only one couple in one or two observation years are found in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania and Poland.

**Table 3: Number of same-sex couples in the EU-SILC 2004-2009**

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
AT	10	12	7	0	0	-
BE	0	18	20	17	16	16
BG	0	1	0	-	-	-
CY	0	0	0	1	0	-
CZ	7	3	4	2	1	-
DE	51	44	32	42	33	-
DK	10	10	13	12	13	14
EE	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	19	29	19	9	9	11
FI	15	12	6	8	11	7
FR	40	42	38	29	26	31
GR	1	1	0	0	0	0
HU	1	0	0	1	0	-
IE	9	4	5	10	12	11
IS	6	6	4	6	3	3
IT	0	0	0	0	0	0
LT	0	0	0	0	1	-
LU	8	12	14	9	10	10
LV	0	0	0	0	0	-
MT	3	-	-	-	-	-
NL	62	67	70	57	60	-
NO	18	21	15	0	16	18
PL	1	0	0	0	0	-
PT	-	0	0	0	0	0
RO	0	0	0	-	-	-
SE	13	18	61	97	21	13
SI	1	0	0	1	1	-
SK	0	0	0	0	0	-
UK	18	16	20	26	29	-

Eurostat, EU-SILC 2009, IHS 2012.

To answer the question whether this non-existence of same-sex couples in the EU-SILC of some countries happens by chance or is due to a structured data cleaning process Eurostat's recommendations on data collections were compared to the praxis of the national statistics institutes. The information on the national data collection was gathered by research on the individual homepages of the institutes and via the questionnaire sent out to all of them.

The Eurostat EU SILC Description Target Values 2004 list the following options for Marital Status: 1 Never married; 2 Married; 3 Separated; 4 Widowed; 5 Divorced. In the 2004 version it is then stated: "*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. Some countries have a legal framework for registering partnerships (in most countries these are same-sex partnership and they have a legal status parallel to married couples). Such information has also to be treated in a harmonised way and it is proposed to treat them as married and classified them under code 2 when the relation still exists, else as 3-5 as appropriated (legal separation or death of one of partners or so on).*" Further on an option for consensual partnership is discussed, allowing for distinction between partnership with (1) legal basis = legal spouse or registered partner or (2) without legal basis = "de facto" partner. (Both partners have to live in the same household.) (Eurostat 2004) This system is still identical in the 2011 version but an addendum is then made to specify this for registered partnerships: "*This variable takes into account the consensual unions with or without a legal basis, where the consensual union with a legal basis includes both the married couples and the registered partners. For answer modalities 1 "yes, on a legal basis" and 2 "yes, without a legal basis", both partners have to live in the same household. Modality 1 corresponds to married, legal spouse or registered partner, while modality 2 corresponds to "de facto" partner.*"<sup>27</sup> To summarize these recommendations, Eurostat proposes firstly that all legally accounted for relationships (marriages, registered partnerships) are to be counted as a lump sum and that in a second step consensual partnership can also be accounted for partners without a legal basis. Questions usually asked are based on a household and a personal questionnaire.

Still, European countries do not seem to follow this recommendation in a harmonized way. The overview of possible combinations of LGB and heterosexual couples in SILC questionnaires is based on the returns of the questionnaires which were sent out to all European statistics institutes and research on the individual homepages of the European countries' statistics institutes. Firstly, it was of interest, how the question in the national SILC questionnaires on marital and cohabitation status were posed. It quickly turned out, that neither the wording nor the options for answers were identical. Table 4 summarizes those

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<sup>27</sup>[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income\\_social\\_inclusion\\_living\\_conditions/documents/tab/Tab/Personal%20data%20-%20basic%20data.pdf](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/documents/tab/Tab/Personal%20data%20-%20basic%20data.pdf)

results of this comparison in the first column. The second column lists whether there are countries that allow LGBs to state their connection in the questionnaire but are then cleared from the data pool.

**Table 4: Same-sex couples in the European SILC questionnaires**

country	Same sex couples in SILC	LGBs are cleared from provided data
NL	all cohabiting couples are counted	no
IS	registered couples are counted	no
DE	registered couples are counted	some (parent's sex)
SI	registered couples are counted	some (parent's sex)
CH	registered couples are counted	<i>unable to verify</i>
DK	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
FR	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
SE	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
ES	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	no
FI	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	LGB data not published
NO	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	LGB data not published
AT	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	LGB data not published
PT	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	some (parent's sex)
BE	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	<i>unable to verify</i>
IR	counted, but lumped with hetero couples	<i>unable to verify</i>
LV	not counted	manual correction includes LGBs?
LT	not counted	irrelevant
BG	not counted	irrelevant
CZ	not counted	irrelevant
EL	not counted	irrelevant
IT	not counted	irrelevant
PO	not counted	irrelevant
SK	not counted	irrelevant
CY	<i>unable to verify</i>	<i>unable to verify</i>
ET	<i>unable to verify</i>	<i>unable to verify</i>
HU	<i>unable to verify</i>	<i>unable to verify</i>
LU	<i>unable to verify</i>	<i>unable to verify</i>
MT	<i>unable to verify</i>	<i>unable to verify</i>
RO	<i>unable to verify</i>	<i>unable to verify</i>
UK	<i>unable to verify</i>	<i>unable to verify</i>

Source: questionnaires of national statistics offices, national statistics web pages

### Counting all LGB couples:

The **Netherlands** rank in this overview on the top, since they are actually counting all cohabiting couples regardless of their legal status: married, registered or cohabiting in a uniform way and then obviously do not clear the data. For households of two persons or more, the Netherlands “*first establish the composition of the household: i.e., (1) partners, (2) partners + children, (3) partners + children + others, (4) partners + others, (5) single-parent + children, (6) single-parent + children + others or (7) other. Once the composition is established we ask detailed information for each member of the household (sex, age, marital status). For the members of the household who are not part of the couple / single-parent (the “core” of the household) or a child, we also inform after their relationship to the household core (mother, father, son-in-law etc.)*” (Dutch national statistics answer to the questionnaire)

The interesting innovation here is the *final absence of married couples, registered partners or cohabitants, the key word remains simply “partners”*: When asked, whether data clearing was undertaken, the statistics institute answered yes, regarding marital status and intra-household relationships. The answer seemed to be that all “partners” were accounted for and the discrimination according to marital status was then removed, the variable overview of the SILC on the webpage of the statistics institute only listed respondents’ relationship to a spouse/partner without any further differentiation<sup>28</sup>. Data clearing also assumed that “*the children in the household are their children. We do not ask after children who are not part of the household.*” (Dutch national statistics answer to the questionnaire) The web page does unfortunately not provide detailed insight into personal or household questionnaires.

### Separate accounting of LGB registered partnerships

Germany, Switzerland, Slovenia and Iceland do account for same sex partnerships, but they do not count them in a lump sum with heterosexual marriages.

**Iceland** is another example for a different and innovative approach: “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?*” 1: *Single* 2: *In a relationship (we use registers to determine what kind of relationship if the response is “2”)* and if in a relationship we ask *which household member is the partner (if not obvious). “Who is the spouse?” (and code it from the list of household members)*” (Answer from Statistics Iceland) Data clearing is described as follows: “*As mentioned before we use registers to determine the type of relationship. If there is a relationship and it is not registered we code it as “non registered.”*” (Statistics Iceland) “*We also ask a question of who is who’s parent if not obvious from the list of household members. In case the parents are of the same sex (which has been for one or*

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<sup>28</sup><http://www.cbs.nl/NR/rdonlyres/DEA3B77B-C7E2-4CE0-AB8F-E0A452051B7E/0/080409documentatierapporteusilc2006v1.pdf>

*two households in the Icelandic SILC) we code the older as the father and the younger as the mother. Eurostat always send a a data check warning when for instance the "father" is a woman.* (Statistics Iceland)

**Germany's** household questionnaire's question 8 asks for the relation to the first person in the household giving the following options: (living alone), married partner or life partner, child (including step children, adopted or foster children), siblings, father or mother (also including stepparents, foster parents or adopted parents), grandparents (also includes step-grandparents, foster and adopted grandparents), others (this category includes sons and daughters in law). (EU-SILC 2010 Haushaltsfragebogen) Personal questionnaires, Question 3 ask about the legal status: The options are: single (never married), married, widowed, divorced, in a same sex partnership, same sex partnership has ended, same sex partner has died. (EU-SILC 2010 Personenfragebogen) The described procedures of data cleaning involve marital status, intra-household relationships and parenthood. (*Comprehensive plausibility checking before and during data entry IT procedure for – marital status, intra-household relationships, parenthood.*)

**Switzerland** also lists the following options in their personal questionnaires with a slightly different interpretation: 1) single/never married, 2) married and in cohabitation with married partner, 3) separated (by law or de facto), 4) divorced, 5) in a legal partnership (only for same sex couples), 6) separated same sex partnership, 7) widowed.<sup>29</sup> Here widowed same sex partnerships are missing, but separation is another option to divorce.

**Slovenia** asks in the household questionnaires: Who is the father of the person ('Name and surname (year of birth)' in this household? Who is the mother of the person 'Name and surname (year of birth)' in this household? Who is the spouse or partner of the person in this household? Since Slovenia uses data from the Central Population Register there is no data clearing for marital status. Plausibility checks ensure that the *"Father must be male, mother must be female; the instance number of father or mother must be the same every year (in the case of longitudinal data); the partner must be the same every year if person was in the household in previous waves; Mother must be at least 15 years old at the time of the birth of child."* (Answer from the Slovenian questionnaire) Slovenia does in this instance mix LGB couples with heterosexual couples, the interesting fact here is, that there seems to be no distinction for different legal status, and no data clearing for same sex couplings. The personal questionnaires were not available to confirm this finding.

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[http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/infothek/erhebungen\\_\\_quellen/blank/blank/silc/03.parsys.93401.downloadList.67190.DownloadFile.tmp/silc2012persond.pdf](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/infothek/erhebungen__quellen/blank/blank/silc/03.parsys.93401.downloadList.67190.DownloadFile.tmp/silc2012persond.pdf)

### Counting LGB couples according to the Eurostat prescription: lumped together with heterosexual registered/married couples and little or no data clearing

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Portugal and Sweden count LGB couples as suggested by Eurostat in a lump sum with heterosexual married couples. Some countries clear the data due to confidentiality reasons, more countries make sure that the fathers are male and the mothers are female which might be crucial for LGB couples. So, there are some inconsistencies in national practice.

**Denmark** proceeds as follows: *"After having established who lives at the address we ask for each person for the relation to the selected respondent. Here 3 of the possibilities are: Spouse or cohabiter/cohabite, Son/daughter of me or my partner, including adoptive and stepchildren, Mother/father including stepmother/stepfather."* (Answers from the Danish Statistics Institute.) There is no data clearing on marriage since the information on legal marriage is taken from the registers. There is also no data clearing on intra-households, but there is data clearing on parenthood: *"Just a check on the age of the son/daughter is lower than the age of the father/mother"* (Danish Statistics Institute)

In **France** the person answering the SILC survey is asked on their "couple life" and their "spouse identity". It is asked whether the respondent lives with someone as a couple, the possible answers are: 1. Yes, s/he does, with someone who lives in the dwelling; 2. Yes, s/he does, but with someone who does not live in the same dwelling; 3. No, s/he does not. There is an age check, to ensure both partners are older than 15. The next question on marital status allows the following answers: 1. Single; 2. Married or remarried (legal separation included); 3. Widow(er); 4. Divorced. Finally it is asked whether the person had signed a PACS<sup>30</sup>. Secondly, same sex couples are identified as couples, there is no "cleaning". Finally, there are no warnings or filters on parent's sex:

The **Austrian** national statistics institute in the personal questionnaire first asks: What is your marital status? The following options are given: Single; married/registered partnership, cohabiting; married/registered partnership, not cohabiting; widowed; divorced; no answer. Secondly, it is asked 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 be a practice anymore. (STATAT 2011<sup>31</sup>) Before the legal option for registered partnerships, same

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<sup>30</sup> 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.

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.statistik.at/web\\_de/frageboegen/private\\_haushalte/eu\\_silc/index.html](http://www.statistik.at/web_de/frageboegen/private_haushalte/eu_silc/index.html)

sex couples were generally transformed into non-related persons unless they were being overlooked.

**Belgium** allows for the following options in the personal questionnaires: "1. *Célibataire*, 2. *Marié(e)*, 3. *Contrat de vie commune*, 4. *Séparé(e)*, 5. *Veuf (Ve)*, 6. *Divorcé(e)*".<sup>32</sup> The interesting instance is here the «*Contrat de vie commune*», which is a contract for cohabitation for LGBs and straight couples.

**Spain** asks the following on people's current legal marital status: Single; Married; Separated; Widower, Divorced. Then it is questioned whether the respondent has a spouse or de facto partner who is a member of the household. Finally it is asked what the type of the union with this person is: Spouse; De facto partner with legal basis; De facto partner without legal basis. Then there is data cleaning for marital status, if a person has a spouse/partner but never married and there is no consensual union.

**Finland** reported that the wording for the SILC questions is as follows: "*The Sex for each household member is derived from the personal identification code. Current marital status is linked from the updated population register to all household members. (single, married, widowed, divorced, registered relationship). In the interview, only the selected person or the household respondent is interviewed. In this interview, the respondent describes all household members' relation to the originally selected person: What is [name of person]'s family connection to the selected respondent? Selected respondent's spouse or co-habiting partner. Biological or adopted child of the selected respondent or his/her spouse/partner. Grandchild of the selected respondent or his/her spouse/partner. Mother or father of the selected respondent or his/her spouse/partner. Grandmother or grandfather of the selected respondent or his/her spouse/partner. Brother or sister of the selected respondent. Daughter-in-law or son-in-law of the selected respondent. Other.*"(Statistics Finland) Finally it is asked whether he/she is the selected respondent's spouse or co-habiting partner? Regarding data cleaning Finland answered that "*same-sex relationships are checked (yearly less than 10 observations) to exclude possible errors in coding sex or relationship, their relationship will stay self-reported. After the data has been transferred into the database, checking programs involving marital status, family connections, co-habitation, age, sex and the age interval between spouses are run. In cases of illogical combinations or other deviating observations, basic data is checked (names, addresses, other population register information like year of immigration etc.) and either confirmed or corrected. The information on marital status is derived from the Population Information System of the Population Register Centre. It should be noted that common-law marriage or cohabiting is not a marital status. People representing all marital status categories may be cohabiting, including those who are still officially married. The current divorce regulations no longer recognise the concept of legal*

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<sup>32</sup> [http://statbel.fgov.be/fr/statistiques/collecte\\_donnees/enquetes/silc/](http://statbel.fgov.be/fr/statistiques/collecte_donnees/enquetes/silc/)

separation. Those persons who are legally separated on the basis of the old divorce provisions prior to 1 January 1988 and still living apart have been slotted under married persons in the statistics. Same-sex couples have been able to register their partnership in Finland as of 1 March 2002. **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.**" The classification of marital status is as follows: "Unmarried; Married; Divorced; Widowed, Partner in a registered partnership; Divorced from a registered partnership; Widowed after a registered partnership" (Statistics Finland)

In **Norway** "two persons are considered a couple when they are registered as resident 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 be living in the same household and be of opposite sex, two persons must fulfil 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. Separated couples registered as resident in the same dwelling are considered a couple when they fulfil at least one of the 3 requirements above. Because a separated couple legally still is considered to be married, they are classified as married couples in the family and household statistics. Divorced couples still living in the same household fulfilling the same requirements are classified as cohabiting couples". (Statistics Norway) 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."

In **Ireland** the possible relationship of the respondent to other members of the household are Husband/Wife; Cohabiting Partner; and Other possible relations (Children, parents, grandparents, siblings, sons/daughters in law), other relatives, or people of no relation.<sup>33</sup>

**Portugal's** SILC questions start with the ordering of the father, followed by the ordering of the mother. Then the question of marital status allows the following options: Single; Married (de jure status); Widowed; Divorced; Don't know/ refusal. Then the conjugality status is polled: Cohabite with the person I am (de jure) married to; Cohabite with a person I am not (de jure) married to; Do not cohabite; Don't know/ refusal. Then the partner is assigned to the respondent by ordering number. There is no data cleaning for marital or intra-household status. But for parenthood, "*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)

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/eusilc/documents/SILCmanual2010.pdf>

In **Sweden** marital and cohabitation status is collected from registers, no questions are asked. There is no procedure of data cleaning concerning LGBs following up on the gathered data on marital status nor intra-household relationships or parenthood. Concerning intra household status it is only assured that two persons do not have the same partner. Data cleaning for parenthood: Yes. The person cannot be his own father. The person cannot be his own mother. Still the sex of the father cannot be female and the sex of the mother cannot be male. Parents of spouses/partners must be different. Child should be at least 15 years younger than its mother. (Statistics Sweden)

**Latvia** answered the questionnaire as follows: "There are no differences from the recommendations of Eurostat. In EU-SILC operations of 2008 and of 2010 cohabitation status is characterized by 2 target variables: "Marital status" (answer categories - 1 Never married, 2 Married, 3 Separated, 4 Widowed, 5 Divorced) and "Consensual Union" (answer categories - 1 yes, on a legal basis, 2 without legal basis, 3 no) . It is questioned in following way. Due to complexity of the questionnaire, the questions about cohabitation status are asked about every household member (in age 0+) in following way: "Marital status (legal/official): Have been never married; Married and lives together with spouse; Married but lives separately from spouse; Widow/-er; Separated". (Statistics Latvia) Only married people will then be asked "Does the person have a cohabiting partner in this household?" On data clearing the following is said: "Data entry software normally doesn't allow to enter the same sex spouse or cohabiting partner. If such situation appears, the interviewer in the dialog comments line writes in an explanation and at the stage of data cleaning at CSB such status is corrected according to de facto situation." (Statistics Latvia)

**The following countries do not count LGBs in their SILC data:**

Lithuania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Poland and Slovakia do not count LGBs in their SILC data.

In **Lithuania** the precise wording of the questions on marital and cohabitation status in the SILC questionnaires 2008 and 2010 both start with the options the father (stepfather, adoptive or foster father), the mother (stepmother, adoptive or foster mother), then the partner (spouse or partner). The question on the marital status allows: 1 Never married; 2 Married; 3 Cohabiting; 4 Spouse living apart; 5 Widowed; 6 Divorced.

**Bulgaria** offers the following options: Not in marriage; In marriage; Co-habitation without marriage.<sup>34</sup>

In the **Czech Republic** the household type - is based on household composition. Two-parent families are based on a couple (married or cohabitating), with or without children<sup>35</sup>: two

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<sup>34</sup> [http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/EU-SILC\\_2011\\_questionnaire\\_EN.pdf](http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/EU-SILC_2011_questionnaire_EN.pdf)

parent nuclear family: two parent families with other relatives, lone parent nuclear family (incl. single parent and divorced), lone parent families with other relatives, non-family households.

**Greece's** options for the SILC allow: never married, married, separated, widowed and divorced. When questioned whether living with a partner the options are: yes, on a legal basis, yes without a legal basis or no.<sup>36</sup>

**Italy:** The questions for SILC came up in Italian, they included: Celibe o nubile; coniugato/a coabitante col coniuge, conjugate/a non coabitante col coniuge (separato di fatto), separato/a legalmente, divorziato/a, vedovo/a.<sup>37</sup> This means also a focus on actual cohabitation. No further information was available.

**Hungary** promises a description of the data collection of the SILC, the SILC questionnaire and more on its web page.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, neither the section "questionnaire" nor any other link can be opened.

**Cyprus** results in no hits when searching for "SILC" on the webpage, the SILC results can be found only in Greek, nothing of the questionnaire.

For the web sites of **Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Romania** and **Estonia** no information on the SILC could be found at all on the web sites.

## Summary

From this research into the practises of SILC statistics it can be concluded that questions and data clearing practises vary all over Europe, which makes comparisons difficult. Still, the numbers on LGB couples generated are so small for some countries that meaningful conclusions for economic or education status, employment situation, family size etc. cannot be made. Interesting is further that countries who do not collect data on LGBs sometimes do show at least one LGB couple in their statistics (Poland, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovenia) while others like Cyprus or Malta show even more than one couple in the SILCs from 2004-2009. We are not sure how to account for this. (This also holds for Austria before legal recognition of LGB couples.) On the other hand, one country with legal partnership rights, i.e. Portugal shows no LGB couples in its SILC outcomes.

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.czso.cz/csu/2012edicniplan.nsf/engp/3012-12>

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ver-1/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/Other/A0802\\_SFA10\\_QS\\_AN\\_00\\_2007\\_00\\_2007\\_04\\_F\\_EN.pdf](http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ver-1/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/Other/A0802_SFA10_QS_AN_00_2007_00_2007_04_F_EN.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/5663>

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.ksh.hu/apps/meta.objektum?p\\_lang=EN&p\\_ot\\_id=400&p\\_obj\\_id=1968\\_2007&p\\_session\\_id=0](http://www.ksh.hu/apps/meta.objektum?p_lang=EN&p_ot_id=400&p_obj_id=1968_2007&p_session_id=0)

### 4.3.2 LGB couples in the Household Budget Surveys and the national census

A second dataset collected by European member states in a rather uniform way is the Household Budget Survey (HBS). The main purpose of this survey is the calculation of the average consumption basket, necessary for the computation of the inflation on consumer prices. Nonetheless, next to the detailed expenditure structure information on income, education, profession, but also on the composition of the household is given.

Unfortunately, the budget surveys are not yet made available by Eurostat for research purpose, only aggregate summary statistics with no information on same-sex couples is available on the Eurostat website. For collecting this data Eurostat gives clear instructions to the member states. The definitions of relationships within the household (in this case only the relationship to the household head is asked for) and of the marital status are similar to those recommended for in EU-SILC. As in EU-SILC there is an amendment to the marital status classifying cohabitation with and without a legal basis (married or registered partnership). The recommendation to always consider the “de facto” situation instead of the “de jure” one could help to prevent confusion, meaning that a person married to another person outside the household, but cohabiting in the household with the household head should answer “cohabitation” instead of “married legally”, adopted children should be indicated as children.<sup>39</sup>

Although we cannot analyse the HBS data the wording of the question for the household composition and the legal status of the household is nonetheless of interest for our research, as is the question whether data clearing processes were conducted. Therefore we included questions on these issues in our questionnaire. However, answers by the statistic institutes were scarce.

Denmark and Sweden stated not to ask for the marital or cohabitation status, no data clearing is done for the relationship between the household members. In Sweden the question on the relationship to the household head explicitly allows for registered partners. Germany uses similar answering possibilities as in the SILC, asking for married or cohabiting in the question on the relationship to the household head and containing an own category for registered same-sex partnership when asking for the marital status. Not otherwise specified plausibility checks on marital status, intra-household relationships and parenthood are conducted. Iceland only provides the category “married” so does Slovenia. Data clearing processes are conducted, however, only regarding logical inconsistencies such as children being older than their parents or respondents having more than one spouse. Latvia changed the question on the marital status and now distinguishes (next to people widowed, divorced) people who were never married (including those cohabiting without legal recognition),

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<sup>39</sup>Eurostat “Data transmission for the HBS round of the reference year 2005”, last revision from 2006.

married and living with spouse and married and not living with spouse. Data clearing processes are not specified.<sup>40</sup> Lithuania distinguishes people married and people cohabiting. Spouses living apart are distinguished as well. The Netherlands use a similar classification to the EU-SILC, Portugal follows Eurostat's guideline by first asking after the "de jure" marital status and then checking whether the marriage occurs with the person cohabiting or with someone outside the household. Spain explicitly states the de facto situation in 2009 and the de jure situation in 2011 being the one that counts. Categories do not contain cohabitation, however, the type of relationship to the partner is asked for, and here the answers married, partner with legal basis or without legal basis are possible. Next to data cleaning regarding logical errors (people being married to their partner and stating not married as marital status) clearing for partners having the same sex is done in order to detect errors on the recording of the sex, and ages of couples of the same sex differing by more than 15 years to detect errors on the recording of the age and or the sex. Regarding parenthood it is checked that only a male and a female can form parents.

Another survey that is similar across European Union member states is some form of census, be it a whole population survey or, like in Austria where the last full census was conducted in 2001, a so called "micro census". Again we asked for the detailed questions via our questionnaire and searched for information on the websites of the statistic institutes. According to this research Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands and Sweden do not ask for marital status as the information is drawn from register data. In Slovenia the answering possibilities were amended 2011 from including only single, married, widowed and divorced (as is still the case in Austria, Cyprus, Latvia and Lithuania) with additional categories allowing for a registered same-sex partnership, as was the case for the UK. Data on these couples, however, are not published due to the small number of cases. Germany even introduced mirroring categories to married, widowed and divorced by same-sex registered partnership, same-sex registered partnership with passed away partner and dissolved same-sex registered partnership. For Ireland we could not find the questionnaires, however, information on same-sex couples is provided, even though a clear definition is missing. Also Denmark provides information on registered partnerships, married and cohabiting same-sex couples are summed up with opposite-sex couples. Interesting is the census questionnaire for Portugal, where same- and opposite-sex consensual unions are distinguished and which is therefore quite different to the EU-SILC questionnaire<sup>41</sup>. Also interesting is the definition of "families" in Switzerland where "family households" and "non-family households" are distinguished, the former being defined by parental connections ((lone) parents with children or couples living with their parents). Same-sex couples are defined as "non-family households".

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<sup>40</sup> However, concerning data clearing at the EU-SILC the Latvian respondent indicates that the data entry software normally does not allow entering a same-sex spouse or cohabiting partner. In such a situation the interviewer has to write a comment and at the stage of data clearing the status is corrected to the de facto situation. This might as well happen with the HBS.

<sup>41</sup>And also to the fact that in no available wave of the EU-SILC a same-sex couple could be found in Portugal.

## ISTAT Survey

This links to a survey that was conducted in 2010 by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat). This survey was part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and looks into how different countries in the UNECE region were going to collect information on de facto same-sex cohabiting couples in the 2010 round of population censuses. The Conference of European Statisticians (CES) discussed that information on same sex couples is of interest to policy makers for a number of reasons and that it may help them in understanding housing need and family information and in determining groups which may be at risk of discrimination. (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2010) In 2010, the Italian Division of General Census sent by e-mail a small set of questions concerning the collection of data on same sex consensual unions in the 2010/2011 population census to 30 European Countries and to United States.

Istat reports some details adding to our own findings:

The Czech Republic, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom were intending to collect information on de facto same sex couples. The Czech Republic, Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain planned to survey the relationships by the relationship to the reference person question or the relationships matrix and use sex variable to derive same sex couples. Ireland, in correspondence to the item “partner” (relationships matrix), specifies “incl. same sex partner” to make clear that information on same sex partnerships are required. Portugal, Switzerland and the United Kingdom were going to survey relationships by a relationships matrix, or by a question on the relationship to the reference person, adding a specific relationship category for de facto same-sex couples. The United Kingdom collects data using a matrix question similar to Ireland's with specific categories for 'same-sex civil partner' (= registered partnership) and 'partner' (= non-registered cohabitation). Sex is recorded on a separate question. In Switzerland the item is collected with paper- or e-survey-questionnaire on sample basis, but information about sex and other characteristics come from administrative registers. Finland and Sweden were going to carry out register-based censuses, Iceland a combined one. Iceland foresaw the items “same sex registered partnership (equivalent to marriage)” and “same sex registered cohabitation” but excluded non-registered cohabitation (data will be collected from registers). In Sweden there was at that point no information on who is in a couple if the person is not married, in a registered partnership or having children together. The plan was that all Swedes should be registered to a dwelling in time for the census, where statistics on cohabiting couples of different sex could be estimated from this new information. It was not clear whether cohabiting couples that are same-sex and whom are not in a marriage or registered partnership or have children together would be counted or classified as single. Similarly in Finland same sex persons living together are defined as a couple only if they are living in a registered partnership. Other same sex couples are defined as other family type. So they have (de jure) information on persons living together but they are not able to define if

they live as a same sex couple. France and Latvia do not collect data on same sex consensual unions. France planned to make a "micro census" on a sample of 350,000 persons, about family and housing. In the questionnaire the question will be clearly stated: "Your partner is a man? A woman?". Objective of this issue is a national assessment of the number of same sex couples. Summarizing the results, 7 out of 13 Countries collect information on de facto same sex couples by the relationship to the reference person question or the relationships matrix and using sex variable to derive same sex couples or by adding specific relationship categories. In Countries with register-based censuses (Finland and Sweden) and in Iceland same sex partners will be defined as a couple only if they live in a registered partnership. (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2010)

## **5. Data trouble: The impact of legal and political frameworks and socio-cultural norms on the availability, quality and generation of data sources**

*"As counting is always a qualitative decision of what and how to count, the creation and legitimisation of particular groups is a political as well as a productive decision".  
(Browne 2010: 233)*

### **5.1. The correlation between sexual citizenship rights and the availability and quality of data on LGBs**

#### **5.1.1 The impact of legal frameworks on 'counting' procedures**

When examining the already existing data compilations as well as data collection procedures in different European countries (see 4.3) we found out that there exists a strong correlation between sexual citizenship rights and the availability and quality of data on LGBs and same-sex households/couples. Drawing on recent discussions in the field of queer and gender studies the term sexual citizenship in our research indicates "a system of rights" concerning questions of conduct for same-sex behaviour, of identity based rights (as for instance the freedom to live unharmed as LGB, the right to assembly etc.) as well as different forms of relationship-based claims (Richardson 2000b, 128). Moreover, sexual citizenship not only directs to a system of rights but also to a complex system of social and cultural norms, which creates legible and illegible (sexual) identity positions within political communities. It has been widely argued, that traditionally the 'normal citizen' has been/is still encoded as (white) male and heterosexual which means that LGBs were/are still (partly) excluded from fundamental sexual citizenship rights (Richardson 2000a; Richardson 2000b; Phelan 2001).

One of our key findings, thus, is that **sexual citizenship rights for LGBs are reflected in the practices of statistical accounting** due to patterns of their legal recognition and social acknowledgment. Hence, data collection on LGBs/same-sex-households/couples and data generation processes are particularly shaped by national partnership and anti-discrimination laws as well as by socio-cultural norms about LGBs, sexual diversity and relationship and family concepts (see also 5.2).

If and how same-sex households/couples are therefore statistically 'counted' and thus acknowledged as legible relationships is very much dependent on the implementation of partnership laws for same-sex couples as well as the depth of anti-discrimination laws with regard to sexual orientation. As one can deduct from Table 5 is that those countries where same-sex-partnerships are legally recognized and which have strong anti-discrimination laws, also 'count' these couples and it is more likely that household surveys include indicators on LGBs and their children (Table 6 includes some additional information about civil partnership and marriage legislations in the countries).

The **Netherlands** can be perceived as somehow paradigmatic example for our findings: Providing one of the best partnership regulations for same-sex couples, a very broad anti-discrimination law, inclusive regulations with regard to adoption and same-sex families, the Netherlands rank on the top of our research since they are actually counting **all** cohabiting couples regardless of their legal status (for more details on the counting procedures see chapter 4.3.1). Moreover, the Statistics Netherland is conducting their data on a very broad definition of family and households. The respondent(s) from the Statistics Netherland also pointed to the fact that statistic institutions have recently been assigned by official authorities to collect data on LGBs and therefore started campaigns to increase disclosure of LGBs in official surveys. Due to the small population the Netherlands have along with Germany and France the highest rate of same-sex couples in the EU-SILC observations 2009.

Beyond the inclusion of same-sex couples/households in the EU-SILC or other European/national surveys the cohabitation status is particularly important when it comes to the **census**. Most countries count same-sex couples only when they enter a 'legal' form of partnership, registered partnership, civil union or civil marriage. Thus, as one can also see in Table 5, it becomes plausible that in countries without legal partnership recognition or with discriminatory legislations data collection on LGBs is still a taboo subject of marginal interest: We know nothing about LGBs economic, educational or health status and nothing about the reasons for those who have decided to enter registered partnerships or get married.

Moreover legal frameworks for LGBs and partnership laws in particular also seem to correlate with practices of statistical "data clearing" methods: In the Netherlands, Iceland, Denmark, France, Sweden, Spain and Finland, same-sex-couples/households are not 'cleared' from provided data for the SILC survey (see also 4.3.1). The legal and social acknowledgment of LGBs has therefore also a huge impact on statistical policies and

statistical methods even though statistical bodies have some independent agency in this field (see also 5.3).

However, we also found that some European countries – as it is for instance the case for Austria - changed their methods of data collection only when the implementation of a registered partnership for same-sex couples was established, which supports our finding on the strong correlation between sexual citizenship rights for LGBs and the availability and quality of data on LGBs.

Thus, the diversity of partnership laws and legislations concerning LGBs and same sex-households/couples/families in Europe as well as ongoing legal and social discrimination of LGBs inhibits a comparative perspective and as a consequence comparative analysis of the socioeconomic status of LGBs in general. Even though different international and European bodies provide guidelines for the statistical inclusion and treatment of LGBs/same-sex couples/households, there exists no conjunctive standard for data collection which means that same sex-households/couples/families are treated very differently in statistic processes.

**Table 5: Legal standing of LGBs in Europe & same-sex couples in the EU-SILC**

Country	Partnership and parenthood laws					Anti-discrimination laws			Discriminating Legislation	SUM	Same-sex couples in the EU-SILC
	Cohabitation or Registered partnership	Civil Marriage	LGB adoption single...0,5 joint ...1	2nd parent adoption	lesbian insemination	Area of employment	other areas	hate crime protection	age of consent...-1 restricted assembly...-2		
Belgium	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	8	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Iceland	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	8	registered couples are counted
Netherlands	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	8	all cohabiting couples are counted
Spain	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	8	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Sweden	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	8	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Denmark	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	7	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
UK	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	7	unable to verify
Norway	1	-1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	6	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Portugal	1	1	0,5	0	0	1	1	1	0	5,5	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Finland	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	5	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Germany	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	5	registered couples are counted

France	1	0	0,5	0	0	1	1	1	0	4,5	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Ireland	0	0	0,5	0	0	1	1	1	0	3,5	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Switzerland	1	0	0,5	0	0	1	1	0	0	3,5	registered couples are counted
Luxemburg	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	unable to verify
Romania	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	unable to verify
Slovenia	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	registered couples are counted
Czech Rep.	1	0	0,5	0	0	1	0	0	0	2,5	not counted
Estonia	0	0	0,5	0	0	1	0	1	0	2,5	unable to verify
Austria	1	0	0	0	-1	1	0	1	0	2	Counted but lumped with hetero couples
Greece	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	-1	2	not counted
Hungary	1	-1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	unable to verify
Lithuania	0	-1	0	0	0	1	1	1	-2	2	not counted
Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	not counted
Bulgaria	0	-1	0,5	0	0	1	1	0	0	1,5	not counted
Poland	0	0	0,5	0	0	1	0	0	-2	1,5	not counted
Cyprus	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	-1	1	unable to verify
Italy	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	not counted
Malta	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	unable to verify
Latvia	0	-1	0	0	0	1	0	0	-2	0	not counted

Sources: Questionnaires, webpages of national statistics institutes, ilga.org, rainbow europe, wikipedia

**Table 6: Partnership laws with regard to same-sex couples in Europe**

Country	Year of implementation of civil marriage	Comments & Terminology	year of implementation of registered partnership/ civil union	Comments & Terminology
Austria			2010	available only for same sex couples Terminology: Eingetragene Partnerschaft
Belgium	2003	one of the partners must have been living in Belgium for a minimum of three month  gender neutral definition of civil marriage	2000	available for same sex couples, different sex couples and relatives Terminology: Dutch: <i>wettelijke samenwoning</i> French: <i>cohabitation légale</i>
Bulgaria				
Cyprus				
Czech Republic			2006	available only for same sex couples
Denmark			1989	available only for same sex couples  Terminology: <i>registreret partnerskab</i>
Estonia				
Finland			2002	available only for same sex couples  Terminology: Finnish: <i>rekisteröity parisuhde</i> ; Swedish: <i>registrerat partnerskap</i>
France			1999	available for same sex couples and different sex couples Terminology: <i>pacte civil de solidarité (PACS)</i>
Germany			2001	available only for same sex couples  Terminology: <i>Eingetragene Lebenspartnerschaft</i>
Greece				
Hungary			2009	available only for same sex couples  Terminology: <i>bejegyzett élettársi kapcsolat</i>

Country	Year of implementation of civil marriage	Comments & Terminology	year of implementation of registered partnership/ civil union	Comments & Terminology
Iceland	2010		2006	currently and only very recent there is one law for all Hjónaband = marriage. Staðferst samvist = civil union used to be for LGs only, but has been abolished again.
Ireland			2011	available only for same sex couples Terminology : Civil Partnership
Italy				
Latvia				
Lithuania				
Luxembourg			2004	available for same sex couples and different sex couples  Terminology: <i>partenariats</i>
Malta				
Netherlands	2001	difference between same sex and different sex marriage in cases of parentage  one of the partners must have Dutch nationality	1998	available for same sex and different sex couples  Terminology: Dutch: geregistreerd partnerschap
Norway	2009	gender neutral definition of civil marriage	1993	available only for same sex couples
Poland				
Portugal	2010			
Romania				
Slovakia				
Slovenia			2006	available only for same sex couples
Spain	2005			
Sweden	2009	gender neutral definition of civil marriage	1995	available only for same sex couples; since 2009 only civil marriage is possible;
Switzerland			2007  Geneva since 2001  Zurich since 2002	available only for same sex couples  available only for same sex couples and different sex couples  available only for same sex couples
United Kingdom			2005	available only for same sex couples

Source: ILGA

### **5.1.2 The impact of sexual citizenship rights on ‘identification’ procedures**

However, sexual citizenship (rights) can be said to have also a huge indirect impact on and how people identify themselves as LGBs in a survey setting. As it was already discussed in the previous chapters, that data collection on LGBs and same-sex couples/households is widely dependent on the willingness of people to identify themselves as LGB in the survey setting. Even though we have no definite proof, the Dutch example indicates some empirical evidence for our thesis. At least our research indicates that only those countries in which LGBs inhabit an essential amount of sexual rights are engaged in the provision of data on LGBs and their socio-economic status or on discrimination.

As Europe has a history of prosecution and murder of LGB people in particular during the Nazi-regime, it can be stated, that sexual citizenship rights enhance the willingness of people to identify themselves as LGBs.

## **5.2. The impact of socio-cultural norms on data generation processes and the contextualization of data compilations**

### **5.2.1 ‘Privacy politics’ and collecting data on ‘sexual orientation’**

Data collection on LGB people faces the problem of a general view that sexuality and sexual orientation has to be considered as a ‘private matter’ which should not be part of any public interest or survey. The corresponding employee at the statistical institute of Luxemburg, for instance, stated that *„sexual orientation [...] is considered (like religion) as part of the private sphere which should be protected.“*

But drawing on the longstanding feminist and queer engagements with the relationship of sexuality and privacy/the private sphere it is evident that sexuality was and has never been a ‘private’ matter because social and political institutions (state, economic institutions, family) are organized around heteronormative principles and heteronormative gender/family concepts. Hence, heterosexuality can be considered as an ‘unmarked’ public norm of sexuality even though sexual acts still remain/ed ‘(mostly) private’.

Unclosing the sexual orientation or sexual behaviour of a person thus only becomes a ‘problem’ when not all sexual behaviours are considered to be equal and people therefore

fear discrimination or negative consequences. Hence, the strong emphasis on ‘privacy politics’ in relation to gathering data on sexual orientation/LGBs or/and same-sex couples/households/families can be indirectly linked to the prevalence of heteronormative society and socio-cultural norms.

### **5.2.2 Heteronormative implications of input technicalities and data clearing methods**

We also find that data generation and data collection is influenced by different forms of institutionalized heteronormativity, homophobic stereotypes and discrimination: a) We find that (heteronormative) family and household definitions anticipate data collection on sexual orientation/LGBs and same-sex households/couples and that there is an invisibility of lesbians and gay men in a large amount of household survey questionnaires and also as a topic or keyword on the websites of the national statistics institutes. (It was kind of funny when Statistics Belgium’s search engine encouraged us to substitute our search for the term “lesbian”, which yielded 0 results and a question was asked: “Did you mean belgian?” [sic] (Source: Statistics Belgium<sup>42</sup>)) b) Less entertaining is that lesbians (and especially gays) are often discussed in connection to disease (HIV/AIDS) and crime issues.

### **5.2.3 The hyper visualization of LGBs within ‘health’ or ‘crime’ topics**

Drawing on our content analysis of the national statistics’ web sites it can be stated that LGB topics are hyper visualized within ‘health’ or ‘crime’ topics (see also Chapter 4.2). In 10 out of 30 web sites our key words, specifically “homosexual” or “bisexual”, appeared in connection with HIV/AIDS. It is especially still very common to differentiate between “homosexual” and “heterosexual” (men) when it comes to HIV “infection” or HIV/AIDS “contamination” rates. Homosexuality is therefore still linked to ‘illness’ as ‘being gay’ (instead of having risky sexual activities) is connected with a ‘high risk’ of being infected with HIV/AIDS.

In relation to HIV/AIDS the academic discussions already pointed to the importance of ‘sexual activity’ and not ‘sexual identity’ when it comes to the measurement of risk.

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<sup>42</sup> <http://statbel.fgov.be>

### 5.3. Statistical bodies as framing institutions

Data collection on LGBs is embedded in a complex framework of statistical bodies, legal guidelines and laws. Thus, statistical bodies can be seen as institutions which **frame and structure data collection processes**. In this chapter we give a short overview of the complex network of actors and their functions in order to demonstrate the multilevel structural context of data generation in Europe.

First of all the **UNECE - United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**<sup>43</sup> coordinates statistical activities in the UNECE region through the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and its Bureau. The main objectives of the CES are:

- to improve national statistics and their international comparability
- to promote close coordination of statistical activities so as to achieve greater uniformity in concepts and definitions and to reduce the burden on national statistical offices
- to respond to any emerging need for international statistical cooperation
- to discuss and adopt statistical standards in the UNECE region

Each year the CES Bureau<sup>44</sup> reviews selected statistical areas in depth to improve coordination of statistical activities in UNECE region, identify gaps or duplication of work, and address emerging issues.

What is important for the LGB issue is the fact that the UNECE develops guidelines and training materials on statistical methodology and practices working with groups of specialists from national and international statistical organizations. The UNECE also organizes meetings and other opportunities for statistical experts to exchange experiences on a wide range of statistical topics. The organization also provides technical cooperation to member countries.

The **European statistic system (ESS)** represents the partnership between the Community statistical authority of the EU, which is the European Commission (Eurostat), and the

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<sup>43</sup> [http://www.unece.org/stats/stats\\_h.html](http://www.unece.org/stats/stats_h.html)

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.unece.org/stats/archive/act.00.e.html>

National Statistical Institutes (NSIs)<sup>45</sup> and other national authorities responsible in each Member State for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics.

The Member States collect data and compile statistics for national and EU purposes. The European Statistical System functions as a network in which Eurostat's role is to define the methods of harmonization of statistics in close cooperation with the national statistical authorities. Harmonization has been extended to nearly all the statistical fields. Eurostat coordinates its cooperation with the National Statistical Offices within the European Statistical System and at European level with other Commission services, agencies, the European Central Bank, International Organisations, such as the OECD, the UN, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

***Statistical Programms of the ESS<sup>46</sup>:***

The Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics constitutes the legal basis for the preparation of the European statistical programme, providing the framework for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, the main fields and the objectives of the actions envisaged for a period not exceeding five years.

The current programme covers the period 2008-2012. It was established by the Council Decision 1578/2007/EC of 11 December 2007. The five-year programmes are backed up by annual programmes that set more detailed objectives for each year.

The Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics and the Communication on the improvement of coordination of statistical work, adopted by the Commission on 21 February 1996 (SEC (96) 253/4 of 15 February 1996), provide for the Commission adoption of an annual statistical work programme. This programme is discussed with the Statistical authorities of the Member States and Commission services concerned. The statistical work programme of the Commission comprises the priorities of the Commission as regards to the statistical work for 2012. It relates to the 2008–2012 programme and to the political guidelines for the next Commission published on 3 September 2009. In the program for 2012 (like in the program the year before) “sexual orientation” are mentioned once in Chapter: Discrimination (page 23). Same-sex, registered partnerships are not mentioned.

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<sup>45</sup> List of National Statistical Institutes: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/ess\\_eurostat/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/ess_eurostat/introduction)

<sup>46</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/pgp\\_ess/about\\_ess/statistical\\_programmes](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/pgp_ess/about_ess/statistical_programmes)

The **European Statistical System Committee (ESSC)** is the core of the European Statistical System (ESS). The ESSC was established by Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 March on European statistics. In Article 7 of the Decision the task of the Committee is laid down: "... shall provide professional guidance to the European Statistical System (ESS) for developing, producing and disseminating European statistics."

In practice, this means that the Commission consults with European Statistical system Committee in relation to:

- a) the measures that the Commission intends to take for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, their justification on a cost-effectiveness basis, the means and timetables for achieving them, the reporting burden on survey respondents;
- b) proposed developments and priorities in the European Statistical Programme;
- c) the annual work programme for the following year;
- d) initiatives to bring into practice the reprioritization and reduction of the response burden;
- e) issues concerning statistical confidentiality;
- f) the further development (revision or update) of the Code of Practice;
- g) any other questions, particularly issues of methodology, arising from the establishment or implementation of statistical programs.

The European Statistical System Committee is chaired by the Commission. It is composed of the Presidents or Directors General of the Member States' National Statistical Institutes. The representatives of the National Statistical Institutions of the EEA and the EFTA countries participate as observers. Observers from the European Central Bank (ECB), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), can also participate in the meetings of the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC). The Committee meets four times a year.

The European Statistical Advisory Committee<sup>47</sup> has been established to contribute to the development of statistical information policy and to the rationalisation of the production of statistical data at the European level.

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<sup>47</sup>[http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/employment\\_and\\_social\\_policy/situation\\_in\\_europe/em0003\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/employment_and_social_policy/situation_in_europe/em0003_en.htm)

The **Conference of European Statisticians (CES)** provides a platform for coordination of international statistical work in the UNECE region. In 2009 the CES already declared:

“In particular, Reconstituted families, Commuters between households, Living apart together, Same-sex couples, and persons Living apart but within a network, have been identified as the most relevant new forms of family and living arrangements. In order to properly survey and study these emerging realities in a comparative framework, clear definitions at international and regional levels have to be developed.

Within the overall objective of improving the relevance of families and households statistics, a UNECE Task Force on Emerging Families and Households was established to cope with the challenge to (Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians, 2006; 2006a):

- define the concepts related to policy concerns that would include the new forms of families and households and the issues related to family background;
- develop an analytical framework under which different forms of households and families can be measured;
- assess the feasibility of implementing the concepts for administrative data or survey use in the UNECE region after taking into account the results of the testing.” (CES 2009, 3)

As a consequence, the family concept of the CES is more elaborated than in many member states: “A family nucleus is defined in the narrow sense as two or more persons who live in the same household and who are related as husband and wife, as cohabiting partners, as a marital (registered) same-sex couple, or as parent and child. Thus a family comprises a couple without children, or a couple with one or more children, or a lone parent with one or more children.” (CES 2009, 6)

**The European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC)** has 24 members representing users, respondents and other stakeholders of European statistics (including the social community, social partners and civil society) as well as institutional users (such as the Council and the European Parliament). The Committee ensures that user requirements as well as the response burden on information providers and producers are taken into account in developing the Statistical Programmes. It delivers its opinion on the Multiannual Statistical Programme, addressing in particular its relevance to the requirements of European integration. It also gives its view on priorities and resources balance between different areas

of the Multiannual Statistical Programme as well as the annual statistical work program of the Commission.

- Previous Statistical Committees were:
- Statistical Programme Committee (SPC)

**The Conference of the Directors General of the National Statistical Institutions (DGINS)** was created on 15 July 1953 in Luxembourg and was acting then as the predecessor of the Statistical Programme Committee (SPC). The meeting is held once a year with the aim of discussing topics related to the statistical programme, methods and processes for the production of the Community statistics. It is hosted each year by a different Member State and the Director General of the host country chairs the conference.

As we can see, there exists a broad institutional framework and actors, who are or should deal with questions on LGBs. A closer look to the power relations within this framework and the scope of action of each actor regarding the improvement of data collection on LGB should be part of further investigations.

For the data collection on LGB the following recommendations concerning definitions are especially important, as it shows the possible scope of action for the member states:

**"Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing":**

- **family nucleus** is described as *"two or more persons who live in the same household and who are related as husband and wife, as cohabiting partners, as a marital (registered) same-sex couple, or as parent and child."* (UNECE 2006: §493)
- *"Some countries may wish to collect and disseminate data on same-sex partnerships. In **some countries**, same-sex couples can have their partnership registered. In other countries, two persons of the same sex can legally marry each other. Data needs can arise resulting from the increasing legal recognition of such unions, or on the importance of same-sex cohabiting partners who are not married/registered. In such cases, information on same-sex partnership can be derived by adding specific categories for same-sex partners (distinct from the categories for opposite-sex partners) to the relationship to the reference person question [...] or the household relationship matrix."* (UNECE 2006: §502)
- *"a thorough testing program (both cognitive and quantitative) be conducted prior to introducing such a sensitive topic on the census questionnaire."* (UNECE 2006: §510)

Due to this latitude of the statistical bodies concerning their definition of “family” and “marriage” their reference to the national legal situation of LGBs is further on an important part of the current data collection activities (see 5.6).

The preconditions for changing this situation are the assessment of the current status of data collection practices in the EU member states, the commitment of official authorities and an according legal framing. Such a framing would provide public bodies with the instrument to make sure that a harmonised and effective approach to data collection on sexual identity becomes an integral part of their service duties (defining questions and indicators on sexual identity, identifying data gaps, protecting anonymity, improving the knowledge on the LGB population). In addition, public bodies would have to deal with the general problem that LGB people still experience discrimination what leads to mistrust and suspicion regarding how the data will be used and a belief that no improvements will result from surveys. (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009, p. 1).

We conclude that a broad institutional framework is concerned with questions on LGBs; and we recommend a closer look at the power relations within those frameworks.

## **6. Quee(y)ring quantitative research? Some important epistemological and analytical insights from the LGB Data Project**

*“There can be little doubt that statistics not only measure and calculate, but also create, control and inform.” (Browne 2010: 232)*

In this last chapter we want to point to some important epistemological and analytical insights which can be drawn from our “LGB Data Project”. Building on the work of Michel Foucault predominantly on his concept of governmentality as well as on recent critical approaches on quantitative research with regard to ‘counting’ LGB populations we want to highlight ambivalent effects and discuss some problematic implications of quantitative research on LGBs (see Browne 2008; Browne 2010; Sokhi-Bulley 2011; Ruppert 2008; Ruppert 2011). Even though our project is and was based on the notion that there is a strong need of collecting data on LGBs and their socioeconomic status particularly in order to create empirical data on the material dimension and effects of discrimination, homophobic stereotypes and heteronormative power structures ‘more’ data on LGBs does not automatically indicate political change, liberation or even a transgression of those structures.

First of all it has to be considered that data collection on LGB identities or (assumed) same-sex behaviour has a very 'negative' or even a murderous history in Europe not only but especially with regard to the 'pink lists' (the systematic registration of assumed or 'real' same-sex behaviour during before, during and after the Nazi regime in Austria and Germany) and the killing of homosexuals during the Nazi area. Knowledge about the lives of LGBs or the same-sex behaviour of people thus was and is historically linked to 'negative' effects for the LGB population itself. Discriminating laws and the long history of persecution of LGBs thus has to be considered when arguing for data collection on LGBs or the inclusion of sexual orientation/identify questions into the census.

Beside this, the collection of data on LGBs, same-sex couples and/or households has also to be analysed with regard to the performative and thus 'productive' implications of every statistical counting procedure. Thus, data collection cannot be interpreted as a 'neutral' process of "revealing" or making LGBs 'visible' but as a performative process in which certain 'LGB populations' are being (re-)constructed along normative frameworks. The gay/lesbian/bisexual "data subject" thus is "not always and already there awaiting identification" but is rather being produced by particular statistical practices (Ruppert, 2011, 224) or a discursive-materialist perspective is formed by a statistical apparatus (see Barad 2012).

LGBs do therefore not exist in a similar way 'before' they are 'counted' because they are socially constructed within a complex process of (self-)identification and statistical objectification. First, people have to identify themselves in relation to pre-scribed categories or frameworks (for instance, cohabitation/marital status, sex status). This means that only if one identifies (or is able to identify) themselves with regard to these categories or frameworks she/he/the couple/household is 'counted'. Therefore the question "of what and how" someone is counted, is always shaped on the basis of socio-cultural norms and political decisions and power structures (Browne 2010: 233). Our findings regarding the strong correlations between sexual citizenship rights and the availability and quality of data on LGBs as well as the heteronormativity of data clearing methods strongly indicates the political dimension of 'counting' and statistics itself. This also points to the fact, that statistical categories/frameworks entail a 'normalizing' effect, because 'counting' presumes identification with entangled categories; e.g. with categories which already have and imply a certain socio-cultural meaning and norm.

Being statistically 'counted' thus brings (only) certain groups/identities/relationships into existence. But statistical existence and 'visibility' grounds on the creation of abstract categories and shaping the diversity of sexual gender existences into "forms that are calculable and able to be regulated" (Sokhi-Bulley 2011, 141). Sokhi-Bulley and Kath Browne

(2011) therefore analyse statistics as specific “tool of governmentality” because it produces certain knowledge to make subjects ‘governable’.

Critical approaches to data collection on LGBs’ socio-economic status thus have to be aware of these ambivalent implications of data generation procedures. For this reason, we also want to point to the necessity of analysing data sets on the socio-economic status of LGBs in context of multiple socio-technical arrangements and epistemological, ontological, and political presumptions as well as historical developments that have made the ‘identification’ of LGBs as a ‘new’ population possible and/or desired. However, we still hold on the premise that counting LGBs/ same-sex couples/households can under certain circumstances queer(y) social and statistical presumptions about the ‘normal’ and thus challenge heteronormative assumptions.

## 7. On-going thoughts and some conclusions

While we were evaluating the availability of data concerning the social and economic status of LGBs in Europe, we became increasingly concerned with current theoretical debates on “surveying sexual orientation,” since we learned how methodological issues of data generation are highly influenced by heteronormative structures such as different forms of institutionalized discrimination and homophobic stereotypes. We concluded that there are tensions between fostering the data collection on sexual orientation/LGBs/same-sex-couples and questioning modes of data collection as a form of governmentality since data collection is always a political act by (re)creating population groups and making a certain (sub)set politically visible. The riskiness of this is also highlighted by a few statistics offices “*same-sex couples have been able to register their partnership in Finland as of 1 March 2002. 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, correspondence).

Apart from the danger of illicit contextualizations and miss/use of data on LGBs it must ambivalently but still remain a working thesis that data on LGBs can be a valuable backdrop for policy debates and informed policy analysis on antidiscrimination rights, provision of benefits to same-sex couples and parental rights (e.g. Black et al., 2000, Herek et al., 2010). Especially given the importance of statistical data as a powerful policy tool (Colgan et al., 2007, Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2009) an improvement in the homophobic and potentially stigmatizing wording, labelling and definitions (Brackertz, 2007) as well as a prevention of sampling biases to the research results which may be misleading for further

research, policymakers and practitioners (Meyer and Wilson, 2009) is an important goal for statistics on LGBs.

We found that every critical analysis on the socio-economic status of LGBs has not only to deal with the 'technical' question of data availability but with the whole process of how and why LGBs are identified or identify themselves in the data collection procedures as well as with the individual, institutional and socio-cultural effects of heteronormativity. The statistical 'identification' and possibility of 'counting' of LGBs is highly dependent on sociocultural norms, political frameworks and language as well as on the 'willingness' of the subjects to comply with these norms and identify themselves along those classification systems (Ruppert, 2011). The lack of (social) visibility and the on-going discrimination of lesbian women, issues of defining the population (Meyer and Wilson, 2009) and of operationalization informed by socio-political power relations have to be considered as core problems in data collections within empirical studies. Public bodies engaging in such projects would have to deal with the general problem that LGB people still experience discrimination which leads to mistrust and suspicion regarding how the data will be used and a belief that no improvements will result from surveys. (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009, p. 1). On the methodological level the social invisibility and heteronormative exclusion of LGBs results in limitations of standard sampling and estimation techniques in research projects and in statistical procedures like these of EU member states and Europe as a whole. At this point in time we have come to the conclusion that due to lack of data European researchers are far from being able to answer any questions on the socio-economic status of lesbian women.

Future data collection remains an ambivalent challenge at this point: It will allow to measure socioeconomic inequality and deprivation, and will also validate the analytical importance of sexuality as a structural category. But in the same instance data collection can support the framing of sexual subjectification by shaping people into calculable and countable sexual identity and gender categories. According to queer accounts on the construction of sexual and gender identities/categories the inclusion of LGBs/sexual orientation into statistical procedures therefore also entails the danger of re-establishing, re-essentializing and homogenizing sexual/gender categories along heteronormative principles and making invisible the fluidity and complexity of sexual and gender identifications.

Another issue which has not been touched by this project at all is the inclusion of more than one sexes or transgender into national statistics. This is a project based on even lesser evidence and experience of statistics but all the same just as worthwhile.

## 8. Manual for statisticians and demographers

One aim of the LGB data project was to follow the recommendations of UNECE 2006 and to also pursue the US American effort to establish a set of "*Best Practices for Asking Questions about Sexual Orientation on Surveys*" (Badgett and Goldberg 2009) and to make it available for European statisticians and demographers. A second aim is to report on findings of this project in order to contribute to UNECE's call for a thorough testing program to be conducted prior to the introduction of LGB demographics.

Concluding this project we are hereby putting together a brief manual of some of the issues we find worth discussing. We hope these suggestions will be of some use to European statisticians and demographers in their efforts for data collection of LGBs and in order to find out more about LGBs economic situation in Europe. Our findings and recommendation result from the different research questions of this project:

### **Findings from the review of the homepages of national statistics institutes**

We find it advisable to provide some information on LGBs on the websites of national statistics which can be found using the local search engines. At the time of this study, 13 out of 30 countries did not provide information or data on LGBs for the search terms: "*sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, gay, lesbian, transgender, same sex, homosexual, homosexuality, marriage, partnership*". Nowadays the terminology "gay" and "lesbian" is considered suitable, "homosexual" is also possible but has often a different ring to it; being mentioned in statistics mainly in connection with medical or criminal issues. On 10 out of 30 web pages a connection between homosexuality, disease and/or crime could be found. When providing data on AIDS/HIV it is therefore advisable to not list "homosexuality" or "bisexuality" as a "contamination method", "category" or "risk" along with "intravenous drug use" etc. Contraction methods should not be linked to a homosexual identity per se or to the term "homosexuality". Instead sexual practices, such as "unprotected sex", or "anal sex without a condom". would be an appropriated wording. Similar considerations can be made for linking homosexuality to crime. Heterosexual and homosexual sex offence should be treated equally in wording.

Countries providing the legal possibility for same-sex partnerships report numbers on those partnerships, but in varying detail. Some countries exactly list groups according to age, distinct region of the place of receiving the legal partnership status, sex of the partners, legal status before entering the partnership, age difference between the partners, etc., other countries offer less detail. Aside from different legal institutions being in charge, the different data sets may be another hindrance of cross country comparisons. To subsume LGB data with heterosexual partnerships, as is done by two countries, makes further comparison impossible.

In some countries it is a common practice that the reference person in a heterosexual relationship is always the man. Maybe this practise should be questioned generally, for our case, i.e. in gay and lesbian relationships; the reference person is usually the elder of the two. Both practices seem outdated and it remains questionable, whether this should stay or become an international standard.

Only very few countries provide data aside from civil partnerships and on other issues of relevance to LGBs on their web pages. Of interest could be data on discrimination (as provided by Ireland), sexual identity (as provided by the UK), adoption rates, marriage, voters' views on the adoption of children by lesbians and gays (as provided by the Netherlands). Data on transgender people was only available by one country (the Netherlands) but this is an area not focused on by this project.

The most interesting finding of this research project is that data on the socio-economic status of LGBs could not be found on any web site. Research in this area would certainly be of interest.

### **Findings from the British experimental statistics project**

Whether the British experimental statistics' approach is to be recommended in a common European setting is a matter of close scrutiny:

One part of the British experiment dealt with questions regarding the wording, for the use of the categories "sexual orientation" and/or "sexual identity" in statistical surveys. The British work concluded to use "sexual identity" rather than "sexual orientation", "sexual attraction" or "sexual behaviour". This seems advisable in a socio economic context of research on LGBs, but in the context of questioning the likelihood of AIDS transmission it is not sufficient. (See discussion above.) The sexual identity options include: 1. "Heterosexual or Straight", 2. "Gay or Lesbian", 3. "Bisexual", or 4. "Other

While the British experimental statistics has clearly proven that it is possible to inquire sexual identity in national censuses, it has been shown that a method involving personal polls was considered best practise in order to provide statistical data for the specifics of sexuality issues. Before recommending this kind of approach to other European statisticians a few more issues lacking in the considerations need to be reviewed (as for instance, the political implication of 'counting' LGB populations, the 'murderous' history of collecting data on LGBs and same-sex behaviour in some European countries, the discriminating context of collecting data on LGBs).

### **New approaches in the USA**

This also holds for new developments in the US. Starting in 2013, the Federal National Health Interview Survey will include questions about sexual orientation. The national survey on the health of the American published by the Department of Health and Human Services queries 40,000 households annually, gathering information on 100,000 people. The survey, where also questions about health insurance coverage, smoking, and vaccinations among others are asked will eventually include questions about LGBTs. Questions about sexual orientation and behaviour are currently included in two much smaller government surveys. Unfortunately they both are too small to provide data that can be generalized to the country as a whole. Before adding questions to larger surveys, the statisticians will meet with experts to determine what should be asked and what detail is being sought. The questions will also be field-tested.<sup>48</sup>

While it is a good approach to consult with experts, it is questionable whether issues of governmentality can find their way into this process of designing new statistical methods.

### **General findings from European surveys**

LGBs are not counted in the same way within one kind of survey by the different European nations which makes comparison difficult if not impossible. Eurostat recommends to ask for LGBs in legal cohabiting partnerships and then to subsume those numbers with heterosexual couples. Even if counted, the subsuming makes it difficult if not impossible to locate economic and other social differences between LGBs and heterosexual couples. Eurostat itself does not offer any data on LGB populations. The Eurostat web page yields no findings for the search terms (see above) on the website and only documents heterosexual families. (In December 2012 data on population by sex, age and marital status is only available for 1991 with the following categories: Single persons (never in legal unions), Married persons, Widowed persons, Divorced persons, Separated persons.<sup>49</sup>) This is not setting a very good example.

Apart from the question whether and how countries are following Eurostat recommendations on accounting for LGBs, data clearing processes are also crucial for including or excluding LGBs. If "fathers" can only be male and "mothers" can only be female and a set of two parents most contain maximum one of each, this will automatically clear for LGB couples.

Finally it is of concern whether the surveyed individuals/couples will disclose their sexuality/relationships in household surveys. If it is desired to enhance the disclosure rates some opinion building processes need to be implemented. So far we are only aware of a campaign in 2010 by the U.S. Census Bureau which is encouraging same-sex couples to

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<sup>48</sup> <http://www.newsmax.com/US/NationalSurveyIncludesSexOrientationQueries/2011/06/30/id/402029>

<sup>49</sup> <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/setupModifyTableLayout.do>

participate in the decennial count by advertising in LGBT publications and hosting town hall meetings and a new Dutch campaign. Specific considerations of LGB data apart from incentives for disclosure, should mainly be made about the embedding of surveys in a broader socio-political context; the survey modes; racial/ethnic and culture considerations; issues of gender non-conformity and generally the wording of questions.

### **Findings from the EU SILC questionnaires**

This research of the practise of SILC statistics concludes that questions and data clearing practises vary all over Europe, which makes comparisons difficult. Still, the numbers of LGB couples generated are for most countries so small that meaningful conclusions for economic or education status, employment situation, family size etc. cannot be made. Interesting is further on that countries which do not seem to collect data on LGBs sometimes do show one or the other LGB couple in their statistics. On the other hand, one country with legal partnership rights, i.e. Portugal shows no LGB couples in its SILC outcomes. We recommend that if data on LGB couples is to be collected in the SILC, it should be done in a uniform, comprehensive way.

Although we regret a lack of LGB data visibility, we hesitate to recommend a separate listing of data on LGBs as Finland, Austria and Norway reported that 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. Questions on protection of personal privacy should in this context be discussed in an international setting and at broad length.

### **Findings from the EU household budget surveys and the European censuses**

Looking into the European household budget surveys and the censuses we found once again that there are many ways to include or exclude LGBs from national statistics. While some countries made great efforts to follow Eurostat's instructions for definitions of relationships within the household others did not. Some countries allowed explicitly for registered partners, other followed the SILC structure, while others only offered options for married or not. Data clearing involved mostly the sex of the parents. Still, the recommendation to always consider the "de facto" situation instead of the "de jure" is a good starting point for synchronization, since it could help to prevent confusion, meaning that a person married to another person outside the household, but cohabiting in the household with the household head could answer "cohabitation" instead of "married legally", adopted children should be indicated as children.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Eurostat "Data transmission for the HBS round of the reference year 2005", last revision from 2006.

Looking at the census it was interesting to see that some countries had made amendments to include LGBs. As more and more countries are switching from conventional censuses to register based data they have no need to ask for marital status as the information is drawn. It is interesting to note that there is not necessarily coherence between methodology for the EU-SILC, census and HBS statistics even within one country.

Finally, one country distinguishes between “family households” and “non-family households”, the former being defined by parental connections (alone) parents with children or couples living with their parents). Same-sex couples are defined as “non-family households”, which does not sound especially gay-friendly and should be avoided. If one counts LGB households they should be considered families.

### **Findings from a contextualized and multilevel analysis**

When examining the already existing data compilations as well as data collection procedures in different European countries we found that there is a strong correlation between sexual citizenship rights and the availability and quality of data on LGBs and same-sex households/couples. One of our findings is that sexual citizenship rights for LGBs are reflected in the practices of statistical accounting due to patterns of their legal recognition and social acknowledgment. Hence, data collection on LGBs/same-sex-households/couples and data generation processes are particularly shaped by national partnership and anti-discrimination laws as well as by socio-cultural norms about LGBs, sexual diversity and relationship and family concepts.

If and how same-sex households/couples are therefore statistically ‘counted’ and thus acknowledged as legible relationships is very much dependent on the implementation of partnership laws for same-sex couples, the depth of anti-discrimination laws with regard to sexual orientation and socio-cultural norms on sexual/gender diversity. Moreover, we also found that data generation and data collection is influenced by different forms of institutionalized heteronormativity, homophobic stereotypes and discrimination in particular with regard to data clearing methods and their underlying family and household definitions. We found that there exists a broad institutional framework and actors, who are or should deal with questions on LGBs. A closer look to the power relations within this framework and the scope of action of each actor regarding the improvement of data collection on LGB should be part of further investigations. Critical approaches to data collection on LGBs’ socio-economic status thus have to be aware of these ambivalent implications of data generation procedures. For this reason, we also want to point to the necessity of analysing data sets on the socio-economic status of LGBs in context of multiple socio-technical arrangements and epistemological, ontological, and political presumptions as well as historical developments that have made the ‘identification’ of LGBs as a ‘new’ population possible and/or desired.

## 9. Publications and conference presentations

Hofmann, Roswitha/ Klapeer, Christine/ Schönplugg, Karin (forthcoming 2013): From 'invisibility' into national statistics? Lesbians and the socio-economic sphere, in: Colgan, Fiona/ Rumens, Nick (ed.): *Sexual Orientation at work. Contemporary issues and perspectives*, London: Routledge.

2013: Presentation, Workshop Feministische Ökonomie, Vienna, January 18, 2013, The LGB Data Project. "From 'invisibility' into national statistics?"

2012: Presentation, 5th "Equality, Diversity and Inclusion International Conference", Toulouse, France, July 25, 2012.

"Citizenship rights, institutionalized discrimination and the availability of data on the socioeconomic status of LGBs".

2011: Presentation, Annual Conference International Association for Feminist Economics, Hangzhou, China, June 24-26, 2011.

"The LGB Data Project Europe".

Paper publications in relevant economics, statistics, political sciences, sociology and gender studies journals (such as *Feminist Economics* or *Signs*) are still on our agenda.

## 10. Links to findings (data warehouse)

Part of the LGB data project aimed at establishing a European data warehouse relevant for research on the economic status of LGBs. A webpage containing the data collection and links to other sites was to be set up in order to further engage international networking concerning LGB data collections. The findings of this project can only be linked to the "LGBTdata" webpage due to funding cuts. A thorough body of research literature will still be available in the process of publication of the results and by the project report.

The ambitious goal to establish the first collection of data sets to enable future studies on the economic situation of LGBs in Europe could not be pursued since there is currently no data available at all.

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HU	Registered partnership	2009	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	
IE	Registered partnership	2011	-	-	-	-	-	-	Data available for 2011
IS	Civil marriage	2010	-	-	7	-	-	6	
	Registered partnership	2006	10	5	10	-	-	-	
IT	No partnership law	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
LT	No partnership law	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
LU	Registered partnership	2004	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	
LV	No partnership law	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
MT	No partnership law	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
NL	Civil marriage	2001	656	573	660	752	785	694	
	Registered partnership	1998	298	221	234	313	274	253	
NO	Civil Marriage	2009	-	No data available	No data available	-	No data available	No data available	data available for 2011
PL	No partnership law	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PT	Civil marriage	2010	-	-	177	-	-	89	
RO	No partnership law	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
SE	Civil Marriage	2009	-	330	280	-	440	420	
	Registered partnership	1995	160	30	-	250	40	-	
SI	Registered partnership	2006	1	7	4	1	4	5	
SK	No partnership law	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
UK	Registered partnership	2004	3824	3203	3129	3345	3077	3256	differentiates along demographic and geographic characteristics

Source: National statistics institutes

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire



# Questionnaire

## LGB Data Project for the EU

### A compilation of statistical data on sexual orientation and an application to research on the economic status of LGBs<sup>1</sup>

This questionnaire is part of a research project aiming at enhancing data availability on LGBs for the EU and its member states in order to foster evidence-based policies<sup>2</sup>.

It is conducted by the Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, Austria [www.ihs.ac.at](http://www.ihs.ac.at), the University of Vienna, Austria [www.univie.ac.at](http://www.univie.ac.at) and is funded by the Austrian National Bank [www.oenb.at](http://www.oenb.at).

The questionnaire covers four segments:

1. The legal status of same sex (lesbian and gay) couples in EU member states
2. The availability of data on lesbian and gay couples in national and EU data
3. The availability of data on lesbian and gay individuals in national and EU data
4. Specifics in data collection, data analysis and sampling problems

This questionnaire is being sent to the national statistics institutes and to national research institutions of all 27 EU countries, Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland.

We are expecting to not only improve Austrian data collection mechanisms but also that our results will be of interest to the statisticians of the participating countries. We are planning to provide all participants with an English language version of our study by the end of 2012.

The completion of the questionnaire should take around 15 minutes. Not all sections of the questionnaire may be within your field of expertise. Please skip the sections not applicable for you and distribute to other experts you think are more suitable.

*Contact in case of questions:*

Karin Schönplflug: [karin.schoenplflug@ihs.ac.at](mailto:karin.schoenplflug@ihs.ac.at), ph.: 0043-1-59991-313

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<sup>1</sup> Lesbians, gays and bisexuals

<sup>2</sup> A complete study proposal is available on request: [karin.schoenplflug@ihs.ac.at](mailto:karin.schoenplflug@ihs.ac.at)

**Recipient of questionnaire**

Country:

Institution:

Name of contact person:

E-mail address:

Telephone number (if preferred):

Website:

## 1. Legal status of lesbian and gay partnerships

This section inquires on the optional legal status for same sex couples **in your country** and the number of couples counted by marriage and civil union institutions.

**In my country the following legal institutions are available for gay and lesbian couples:**

### **1.1. Civil marriage<sup>3</sup> for same sex couples is available:**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If the answer is yes, in which year was marriage opened for same sex couples?

How many **male** couples were married in total since then?

- unknown

How many **male** couples were married in ...

2008  2009  2010

- unknown

How many **female** couples were married in total since then?

- unknown

How many **female** couples were married in ...

2008  2009  2010

- unknown

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<sup>3</sup> Does not include those civil unions/registered partnerships which provide similar or identical rights to civil marriage, but are **not named marriage**.

**1.2. Civil unions/registered partnerships<sup>4</sup> for same sex couples are available:**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If the answer is yes, in which year were civil unions/registered partnerships established for same sex couples?

How many **male** couples have in total entered civil unions/registered partnerships since then?

- unknown

How many **male** couples entered civil unions/registered partnerships in ...

2008

2009

2010

- unknown

How many **female** couples have entered civil unions/registered partnerships since its establishment?

- unknown

How many **female** couples entered civil unions/registered partnerships in ...

2008

2009

2010

- unknown

Are civil unions/registered partnerships also available for different sex (male/female) couples?

- yes
- no
- unknown

**Total** of heterosexual couples who enter civil union in an average year?

- unknown

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<sup>4</sup> The term civil unions/registered partnerships is used to describe all legally recognized forms of partnership institutions which provide same-sex couples certain rights and benefits **but are not to be called 'civil marriage'**. (As the exact levels of rights, benefits, obligations, and responsibilities vary depending on the laws of a particular country, our usage of the term civil unions/registered partnerships may still include those institutions which provide almost *similar* or identical rights to civil marriage as well as those who provide rights and benefits to a lesser extent.)

**1.3. There are other partnership rights for cohabitating non-married, non-registered same sex couples available:**

- yes
- no
- unknown

Those are

→ If the answer is yes, in which year were those partnership rights established for same sex couples?

- unknown

Are those rights also available for different sex (male/female) couples?

- yes
- no
- unknown

**1.4. No legal partnership institutions are available for same sex couples**

- yes
- no
- unknown

## 2. The availability of data on lesbian and gay *COUPLES* in national and EU data

This section looks into national and international data sets where data on same sex couples is possibly available.

### 2.1. International Data

#### 2.1.1. EURO SILC<sup>5</sup> and national input:

This section concerns data of the LGB population in the EURO SILC.

**A. What is the precise wording of the questions on marital and cohabitation status in the SILC questionnaires 2008 and 2010 of your country? Please provide English translation:**

**Here is an example for the answer for the state of Austria:**

**Question 4** in both SILC 2008/2010

Does the father (or stepfather, adoptive or foster father) of [insert number of person] live in the same household? If yes, please indicate which person is the father!

**Question 5** in both SILC 2008/2010

Does the mother (or stepmother, adoptive or foster mother) of [insert number of person] live in the same household? If yes, please indicate which person is the mother!

**Question 6** in both SILC 2008/2010

Does the partner (spouse or partner) of [insert number of person] live in the same household? If yes, please indicate which person is the partner!

**Question 114** in SILC 2008

*What is your current marital status?*

single	1
married, cohabiting	2
married, not cohabiting	3
widowed	4
divorced	5

**Question 114** in SILC 2010

*What is your current marital status?*

single	1
married/legal partnership, cohabiting	2
married/legal partnership, not cohabiting	3
widowed	4
divorced	5

---

<sup>5</sup> European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions

**B. Is there a procedure of data cleaning following up on the gathered data? For example concerning the sex of one of the partners, the nature of their relationship or the selected legal status.**

**- marital status**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If yes, please specify

**- intra-household relationships**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If yes, please specify

**- parenthood**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If yes, please specify

## **2. 1. 2. National data in the Household Budget Surveys (HBSs)**

This section is concerned with data of the LGB population in the EURO SILC.

**A. What is the precise wording of the questions regarding marital and cohabitation status in the HBS questionnaires 2009/2010 of your country? Please provide a translation to English:**

**Here is an example for the answer for the state of Austria:**

**Question PI\_10\_F**

*What is your current marital status?*

- 1 single
- 2 married, cohabiting
- 3 married, not cohabiting
- 4 widowed
- 5 divorced

Applies only to people older than 16. This question aims at the legal status. "Married" refers to civil marriage, independent from any religious marriage.

**Question PI\_11\_F**

*Are you cohabiting?*

Applies only to people older than 16. This question aims at the effective status.

**B. Is there a procedure of data cleaning following up on the gathered data? For example concerning the sex of one of the partners, the nature of their relationship or the selected legal status.**

**- marital status**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If yes, please specify

**- intra-household relationships**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If yes, please specify

**- parenthood**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If yes, please specify

## 2.2. National data

### 2.1. Census data

This section is concerned with data of the LGB population in the national census.

**A. What is the precise wording of the questions regarding marital and cohabitation status in your country's last census questionnaires? *Please provide a translation to English:***

**Here is an example for the answer for the state of Austria for 2001:**

**Question 2:**

*Marital status:*

1. single. 2.married (year of wedding) 3. divorced 4. widowed

**Question 7:**

*Position within the household*

1. head of household (or single household)
2. daughter/son (including stepchildren and adopted children)
3. mother/father (mother or father in law, stepfather or mother, grandparent)
4. husband or wife of the head of household
5. husband or wife of daughter or son
6. other relationship (e.g. brother, aunt, nephew)
7. partner of head of household
8. grandchild or husband/wife of grandchild
9. not related

**B. Is there a procedure of data cleaning following up on the gathered data? For example concerning the sex of one of the partners, the nature of their relationship or the selected legal status.**

**- marital status**

- yes  
 no  
 unknown

→ If yes, please specify

**- intra-household relationships**

- yes  
 no  
 unknown

→ If yes, please specify

**- parenthood**

- yes
- no
- unknown

→ If yes, please specify

**2.2. Specific studies on couples**

Are you aware of specific (international), national or regional surveys (representative or non representative) which provide data on the living conditions (e.g. income, social status, education, discrimination, poverty, health, cohabitation/partnership status, or ethnic/national background) of the lesbian, gay and bisexual population?

- yes, the following studies are available:
- no
- unknown

### 3. The availability of data on lesbian and gay *INDIVIDUALS* in national and EU data

#### **3.1. International data**

Do you know of any international surveys specifically reporting on lesbian and gay individuals your country participates in? (These studies may inquire for instance into health issues, education levels or the economic performance of lesbians and gays.)

- yes, the following studies are available:  
 no  
 unknown

#### **3.2. National data**

Do you know of any private or governmental surveys in your country or samples which entail questions on sexual identities/identifications, sexual orientation or sexual activities?

- yes, the following studies are available:  
 no  
 unknown

If yes, which terminology is being used for what kind of survey?

	name of survey	name of survey	name of survey
sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sexual identity/identification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sexual behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sexual activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
gay and lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
gay men	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
lesbian women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
homosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
heterosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
straight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MSM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

... please use extra paper for more examples

### 3.2. Specific studies on LGB individuals

Are you aware of specific (international), national or regional surveys (representative or non representative) which provide data on the living conditions (e.g. income, social status, education, discrimination, poverty, health, cohabitation/partnership status, or ethnic/national background) of the lesbian, gay and bisexual population?

- yes, the following studies are available:
- no
- unknown

#### 4. Specifics in data collection, data analysis and sampling problems

Collecting data and data analysis for lesbians and gays has certain caveats. The next section inquires on whether you would subscribe to the following concerns in national data collecting or data analysis and is also interested in the responses found to solve these problem issues:

- 1... strongly agree
- 2... agree
- 3... disagree
- 4... strongly disagree
- 5... undecided

<b>4.1. In my country...</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
... on average, lesbian and gay data have so far been a taboo subject of marginal interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... statistics institutions have recently been assigned by official authorities to collect data on lesbians and gays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... lesbians and gays are reluctant about disclosing their identities in surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... same-sex-partnerships are considered „families“	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... it is hard to establish information on LGBs due to missing indicators and questions in surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... official authorities are committed to research on LGBs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...we have experienced a number of specific methodological questions raised by 'hidden populations'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... we have experienced limitations of nonrandom methods of data collection such as snowball sampling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... social visibility can be identified as the core problem in LGB research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... due to issues such as social distance, some LGB individuals have a greater likelihood of being targeted than others, which may lead to biased outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... there are linkages between citizenship rights of LGBs and data collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... due to discrimination methods of sampling (personal, per phone, online...) lead to different outcomes especially with research on LGBs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... due to a high probability of statistic error and data protection, same sex couples are re-coded to non related persons in some surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... due to a high probability of statistic error and data protection, same sex couples are re-coded to different sex couples (male/female) in some surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...the national statistics institute has started campaigns to increase disclosure of lesbians and gays in official surveys <sup>6</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... a small sample size leads to too few observations to get representative results for the LGB population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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<sup>6</sup> In 2010 for instance the U.S. Census Bureau was encouraging same-sex couples to participate in the decennial count by advertising in LGBT publications and hosting town hall meetings.

**4.2. How can research concerning LGBs be fostered in EU countries in order to provide better data for evidence-based policy making?**

**Thank you very much for your participation!!!**

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Title: LGB Data Project for Europe

Research Report

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