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REPORT
of the joint
ILGA-Europe / IGLYO

AGE PROJECT

Intergenerational Dialogue with(in) the LGBT Community

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December 2008

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Introduction

"Remember, we started out life as being 'criminals'. Homosexuality was illegal till 1967 so many of us lived in fear of being caught, losing our jobs and even our families. Though I think mum always knew deep down, it was never talked about and that's how we all just got on with life."[1]

"I was physically abused every day in school for four years. This was because they found me too butch and that I looked like a boy, and of course, because I am a lesbian. Therefore they felt that they should bully me since the first grade."[2]

Participants of the 1st Round Table "Exploring Generational Gaps within the LGBT Community: An Intergenerational Dialogue", 7-8 August 2008, Berlin (Germany)

[1] Age Concern (2006), p. 13.
[2] 20 year old female respondent from Sweden, in: Takács (2006), p. 50.

All over Europe, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are confronted with discrimination based upon their sexual orientation and gender identity. This holds true for LGBT people of all ages in all areas of life. The above quotes are testimony to this very fact.

However, it is important to note that while LGBT lobby groups actively fight homophobia, not all LGBT people benefit from the accomplishments in the same way. Because some LGBT issues are more apparent than others, certain LGBT groups are more visible than others. This, for example, is the case with the different age groups. Given the heteronormative structures in the various spheres of life, LGBT people form a vulnerable group. However, with the increased invisibility of certain LGBT age groups, specific age groups are even more vulnerable. This is the case with LGBT youth and, potentially even more so, with older LGBT people.

The joint ILGA-Europe / IGLYO – Age Project was borne out of recognition of this fact and set out to shed light on this very issue. This project is an important initiative in raising awareness about how strands of identity – in particular sexual orientation, gender identity and age – interlock. As a result, at the core of this project is an underlying conviction of the importance of and need for a 'multiplicity of identity' approach. The Age Project also represents a further example of the fruitful collaboration between ILGA-Europe and IGLYO and is an important step in furthering IGLYO's work.

This report is the final outcome of the Age Project in which the findings – in particular the outcomes of the two round tables and therefore the contributions made by participants – are presented. Thus, the goal of this report is not to make concrete policy recommendations but instead to depict where we currently stand, which issues need to be addressed and how these issues may be best tackled. As with all projects which shed light on the need for further research, a secondary, but nevertheless important goal of this report is to stimulate thought with regard to continuing the work that has begun.

1. The joint ILGA-Europe / IGLYO – Age Project

Participants of the 1st Round Table "Exploring Generational Gaps within the LGBT Community: An Intergenerational Dialogue", 7-8 August 2008, Berlin (Germany)

1.1. General overview of the Age Project

The Age Project is ILGA-Europe's and IGLYO's response to the recognition that certain age groups within the LGBT community are rendered almost invisible, especially LGBT youth and – to an even greater extent – older LGBT people. In this joint collaboration, the two organisations decided to openly tackle this issue in an effort to give a voice to those least heard. In order to truly understand the experiences of all LGBT people, it is essential to recognise that sexual orientation and gender identity intertwine with other strands of identity, including age. The goal of the Age Project, therefore, was to examine the mechanisms at work when different strands of identity intersect.

The Age Project, financed by the European Commission and more specifically under the PROGRESS programme, took place between January and December 2008. As an international project, it reached out to all EU Member States. The project was coordinated by the IGLYO Project Coordinator, Sylvi Paulick.

1.2. Goals and methods of the Age Project

The Age Project pursued a variety of goals, namely:

● to assess the issues faced by younger and older LGBT people and to explore the commonalities and differences with regard to age-related issues;

● to bring LGBT people of all ages together and to assess the desire for and potential of intergenerational dialogue, i.e. a dialogue between LGBT people of different ages; and

● to increase visibility of and support for the hidden LGBT age groups and to investigate how the issues of the different LGBT age groups can be mainstreamed into age organisations.

The fundamental working methods of the project were literature research and the execution of two round tables. Literature research comprised engaging with various international literature, i.e. literature produced by academics, NGOs, government bodies, the media and private individuals, in order to gain a thorough understanding of the issues at hand. The round tables enabled a variety of experts to come together, exchange ideas and network on an international level. The 1st Round Table gathered experts and members of the LGBT community and focused on the first two goals highlighted above. It could therefore be considered a view from within the LGBT community. The 2nd Round Table aimed at intensifying the idea of intergenerational dialogue within the LGBT community as well as realising the third goal highlighted above by addressing age organisations, thus reaching out to those outside the LGBT community.

Furthermore, the Age Project Coordinator attended various conferences including a conference on the experiences of families of lesbian and gay youth in Italy, one on LGBT intergenerational work in Scotland and one on older gay men in Germany. These proved to be very useful resources in assessing the current state of affairs in different national contexts, in particular with regard to exchanging best practices and expertise.

Throughout the project, the concept of age had to be adapted to the respective context and took on a fluid nature. For example:

● When assessing the needs and issues of LGBT youth and older[3] people (see Chapter 2), this was done in contrast to a middle-aged group. It must be pointed out, however, that these three groups are by no means static, homogenous or even clearly definable. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the Age Project, this classification had to be made in order to obtain

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[3] In line with academic practice, the term 'older' is used instead of 'elder' or 'elderly'. "The terms old and older are generally used interchangeably by gerontologists […]. Older individuals often perceive the terms elder and elderly in a negative light." (Shankle et al. 2003, p. 161; emphasis in original).

information about LGBT youth and older people. The age groups were broadly defined in line with classifications used by existing organisations, groups and projects: LGBT youth broadly means those under the age of 27[4]; older LGBT people are broadly considered to be those over the age of 50[5].

● In the context of intergenerational dialogue and as discussed later in Chapter 3, although the focus of this project was on LGBT youth and older people, all age groups are included due to the inherent nature of such a dialogue.

● Similarly, when it comes to mainstreaming LGBT issues and as described in greater detail in Chapter 4, age is not necessarily an explicit component of such a process. However, given that the focus of this project is on age organisations, the distinction between younger and older people was self-evident due to the fact that these organisations focus either on youth or older people.

1.3. The 1st Round Table

The 1st Round Table took place in Berlin (Germany) from 7-8 August 2008 and was entitled "Exploring Generational Gaps within the LGBT Community: An Intergenerational Dialogue".

In preparation for the round table, a wide range of potential participants from all EU Member States were contacted. A total of 28 experts, members and activists from the LGBT community who work on age-specific LGBT issues attended. Three of the participants also formed the organisational team: Evelyne Paradis from ILGA-Europe, Lucy Nowottnick from IGLYO and Sylvi Paulick, the Age Project Coordinator. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, it is important to analyse the geographical breakdown and gender ratio of the participants. The following provides a brief overview (a complete list of the organisations that participated at this round table including the participants' geographical location can be found in the appendix).

Geographical breakdown

Belgium	6
Bulgaria	1
Denmark	1
England	3
France	1
Germany	5
Lithuania	1
the Netherlands	4
Poland	1
Romania	1
Scotland	2
Spain	2

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[4] See for example IGLYO (**http://www.iglyo.com/content/get_involved.html**).
[5] See for example Vieux rose (**http://www.vieuxrose.be**).

Gender ratio

Men	18
Women	10 (including 1 Male-to-Female)

The 1st Round Table was designed to enable discussion, debate and reflection. It primarily used non-formal education methods in order to encourage a collaborative approach and enable participants to discuss the various topics in an informal manner. As such, it was less input-focused and placed more emphasis on producing findings. Workshops of various group sizes and constellations ensured that topics could be discussed intensely and with different participants at each workshop.

The round table began with an assessment of the issues faced by younger and older LGBT people. The findings were presented in a plenary session which enabled a direct comparison between the age groups. The following session, by means of a sociometric exercise, sparked discussions on questions relating to age. This was done in order to prepare for a 'World Café' session, which was entirely devoted to discussing the key questions of intergenerational dialogue. After a summary of the findings in the subsequent plenary session, the first day of the round table came to a close with a visit to the Memorial to Gay Victims of the Nazi regime and an informal discussion about the history of the LGBT movement. The focus of the second day was to intensify the discussions from the previous day. As a result, participants discussed the key issues of LGBT people in two separate sessions; the first session targeted the LGBT community itself, the second session focused on society in general. The presentation of findings enabled a synthesis of outcomes and in the concluding session, recommendations were formulated and future prospects were discussed. A detailed overview of the programme and the individual activities can be found in the appendix.

1.4. The 2nd Round Table

The 2nd Round Table took place in Brussels (Belgium) on 28 November 2008 and was entitled "A Mutual Exchange: Reaching out to Specific Age Groups and Mainstreaming LGBT Issues".

With regard to the selection of participants, the goal was to gather representatives from LGBT organisations and from age organisations (that represent young or older people) in order to instigate a mutual exchange. On the one hand, LGBT organisations could further investigate the idea of intergenerational dialogue within the community, discuss how awareness can be raised within the LGBT community about the hidden age groups and inform age organisations about and sensitise them with regard to the issues that are of high importance to them in their respective work. On the other hand, age organisations could engage with the idea of incorporating LGBT issues into their work, discuss the barriers and possible solutions to such a process or – in the case of best-practice examples – highlight by means of successes, difficulties and the

strategies used how this process has already been realised. In the context of mainstreaming LGBT issues, this round table targeted representatives from age organisations as this represented the most direct connection between the different strands of identity investigated by the Age Project. Nevertheless, the mainstreaming of LGBT issues clearly has to occur on an all-encompassing level. Many of the discussions and conclusions can be easily transferred to other contexts and are not limited to age organisations, as can be seen in Chapter 4.

A total of 29 participants attended the 2nd Round Table, with the same three participants forming the organisational team. A detailed list of participating organisations including the participants' geographical location can again be found in the appendix. The following provides a brief overview of the geographical breakdown and gender ratio of the participants.

Geographical breakdown

Belgium	4
Denmark	1
England	6
France	2
Germany	3
Greece	1
Ireland	1
Latvia	1
Lithuania	2
the Netherlands	3
Romania	2
Scotland	3

Gender ratio

Men	16
Women	13 (including 1 Male-to-Female)

The 2nd Round Table differed from the 1st Round Table in both style and length. Unlike the 1st Round Table with its emphasis on small group discussions in various workshops, the 2nd Round Table was designed to be more input-focused. Keynote speakers gave input based upon their fields of expertise. These speeches were then followed by plenary discussions.

The round table began with a session which contextualised the work of the Age Project thus far. Core findings from the 1st Round Table were presented which served to highlight the importance of understanding LGBT experiences as being

shaped by the intersection of different strands of identity. Within this context, Gesa Boeckermann, Policy Officer in the Anti-Discrimination Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities then provided an overview of the European Commission's work on multiple discrimination. The subsequent major session was devoted to intensifying the work undertaken during the 1st Round Table with regard to intergenerational dialogue within the LGBT community. Keynote speakers gave input on the different facets of intergenerational work, and best-practice examples of LGBT intergenerational dialogue were presented. The subsequent plenary discussion provided an opportunity to further examine issues pertaining to the LGBT community in this regard. The second major session focused on the mainstreaming of LGBT issues. By means of presentations, keynote speakers highlighted the importance of a 'multiplicity of identity' approach as well as the key issues for LGBT youth and older people. This served to highlight the issues that would have to be incorporated if age organisations were to mainstream LGBT issues into their work. Further keynote speakers presented examples of organisations which had already instigated mainstreaming processes. The concluding round table debate provided a forum where questions and ideas were discussed in an open manner. A detailed overview of the entire programme can be found in the appendix.

2. Needs and issues of younger and older LGBT people

"When I was kicked out of home I started missing a lot of classes and when my Portuguese teacher asked me what was happening I told her the truth. Instead of helping me and talking to my parents she told me to not tell anyone."[6]

"[…] my partner David had to go into a residential home fairly soon after being diagnosed with dementia. All the time people wanted to know why I was looking after David and who I was, so there was always the issue of needing to come out. […] when the other residents asked me: 'How's your father?', I would say: 'He's not my father, he's my partner.' I had to deal with this all the time."[7]

Participants of the 1st Round Table "Exploring Generational Gaps within the LGBT Community: An Intergenerational Dialogue", 7-8 August 2008, Berlin (Germany)

[6] 18 year old female respondent from Portugal, in: Takács (2006), p. 52.
[7] 60 year old interviewee from the UK, in: Birch (2001).

In a heteronormative[8] society, individuals who identify themselves as LGBT belong to a social minority and experience discrimination by virtue of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The struggle for equal rights is more or less visible and often centres around issues such as adoption rights, protection against discrimination in the workplace as well as same-sex marriage and civil partnership. Although these issues are important for everyone who experiences discrimination based upon their sexual orientation or gender identity, it must be noted that claims for equality are often formulated and advocated for by a particular LGBT age group, namely middle-aged LGBT people. As a result, the particular needs of other LGBT age groups are not always taken into consideration. It is therefore of utmost importance to reflect the category 'age' alongside sexual orientation and gender identity when aiming to achieve equality for *all* LGBT people. Failure to do so will ultimately result in reproducing the invisibility of certain segments of a highly diverse LGBT community.

One of the major goals of the Age Project was to shed light on the specific needs and issues of invisible LGBT age groups. To date, although there has not been a great deal of literature produced on this topic, a slightly greater body of research is available on LGBT youth. Nevertheless, the available literature provides important insights into the realities of LGBT youth and older people.

With regard to LGBT youth, the joint ILGA-Europe & IGLYO report "Social exclusion of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Europe"[9] is an important resource. It highlights how this particular LGBT age group experiences discrimination and social exclusion in everyday life or what Takács describes as "the main agents of socialisation: family, school, peer group and media"[10]. While there are causes of social exclusion that affect LGBT people across the board such as heteronormativity, homophobia and lack of full community membership, Takács also highlights the additional age-specific reasons for social exclusion of LGBT youth, "including:

a) their economic as well as emotional dependence on parents and adults in general;

b) lack of resources and support;

c) lack of positive role models;

d) heterosexist socialisation […];

e) lack of support (to come out) and of groups to belong to;

f) being silenced and isolated;

g) feeling like a freak, different, and lonely;

h) rejection by friends and family;

i) parents' disappointment and feelings of failure;

j) school culture in general: lack of education and communication on LGBT issues in school, lack of teachers' and parents' training;

k) lack of representation in school curricula, and failure to acknowledge bullying in school as a problem."[11]

The report highlights how social exclusion of LGBT youth can lead to underachievement, school drop-out,

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[8] Heteronormativity describes an ideology whereby heterosexuality is perceived as "[…] the elemental form of human association, as the very model of inter-gender relations, as the indivisible basis of all community, and as the means of reproduction without which society wouldn't exist" (Warner 1993, p. xxi).
[9] Takács (2006).
[10] Takács (2006), p. 73.
[11] Ibid.

homelessness, low self-esteem and negative identity development. It is therefore no surprise that LGBT youth are a high-risk category with regard to mental ill-health. Because of the potential of rejection by family and friends and the lack of positive role models, LGBT youth are at higher risk of drug abuse and depression. This can have a highly detrimental impact on their future and prevent them from being able to fully enjoy their life. In fact, thoughts of suicide and attempted suicides are significantly higher amongst LGBT youth compared with their heterosexual peers. This very fact as well as its inherent "significant human rights dimension"[12] has recently been acknowledged by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The situation for older LGBT people does not differ very much in that information about their specific situation is scarce – particularly for people over 65 – with most of it coming from the American and British context. One of the major issues for older LGBT people is social isolation and diminished support networks as the following statistics dramatically highlight:

- "Up to 75% of older LGBT people live alone (compared to less than 33% in the general older population)
- 90% have no children (compared to less than 20% in the general older population)
- 80% age as single people, without a life partner or significant other (compared to less than 40% in the general older population)."[13]

Another major source of vulnerability results from the lack of legal recognition of same sex relationships, exemplified by the denial of entitlement to inheritance of property, tax inequities and lower or denial of entitlement to pensions compared to their heterosexual counterparts.[14] Furthermore, discrimination is also experienced from the various service agencies such as local authorities, residential homes, hospitals or home care agencies: older LGBT people are either constantly forced to 'out' themselves or the services fail to serve their needs due to an implicit assumption of heterosexuality.[15]

It is also important to note that existing data emphasises the differences between the individuals within the older LGBT spectrum. This is not to say that LGBT youth are a cohesive group. However, the differences *between* older lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender persons respectively appear to be more pronounced. For example, literature indicates that older gay men are more affected by inner-community ageism than older lesbians due to a very strong youth orientation amongst gay men.[16] This is exemplified by accounts from older gay men who report "that their peers seek relationships with those under age 35 and view their contemporaries as 'too old'"[17]. Furthermore, lesbians are more likely to have been married and to have children than gay men.[18] However, what many older LGBT people share is the fact that they 'came out' at an older age or, in some cases, have not done so. This can be attributed to the internalisation of homophobia during the course of their life, especially given the context that many older people live in societies where homosexuality was a criminal offence.[19]

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[12] Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (2008).
[13] Age Concern (2002), p. 12. See also Shankle et al. (2003); Age Concern (2003).
[14] Age Concern (2003), p. 3.
[15] Age Concern (2003).
[16] Shankle et al. (2003), p. 166; see also Age Concern (2003), p. 5.
[17] Shankle et al. (2003), p. 166.
[18] Age Concern (2003), p. 1.
[19] E.g. Bennett (2008); Quam (1993).

As highlighted above, LGBT youth and older people are confronted with age-specific situations and challenges that need to be addressed and examined. In this regard, this second chapter will provide insights into the findings of the Age Project's 1st Round Table.

2.1. Assessment of the needs and relevant issues of younger and older LGBT people

The first working session of the 1st Round Table assessed the specific needs of the LGBT community's most invisible groups. Two working groups were set up, both of which discussed the same eight questions but from a different perspective: one group was asked to focus on young LGBT people's experiences with the other group focussing on the experiences of older LGBT people. Participants were asked to join one of the two groups based upon their expertise and/or their own age category. The organisers were very much aware of the problem of differentiating between younger and older LGBT people. First of all, the choice of which group to join was not easy for some participants as they would neither classify themselves as younger or older but in fact as somewhere in between. This brought up the question of which ages are meant by the terms 'younger' and 'older'. Furthermore, setting up these two groups in this way could insinuate that these age groups are homogenous, which is clearly not the case. Nevertheless, the workshop was set up to operationalise the goals of the round table, i.e. to make a rough distinction between the existing different age groups in order to focus in particular on the most invisible LGBT groups and assess their respective issues. The following outlines the findings of the two working groups with regard to the eight topics discussed.

(i) Health. Both working groups highlighted the importance that health plays in the lives of the respective age groups. For example, mental health can be endangered by experiences of bullying or discrimination as well as the feeling of loneliness and isolation. Both groups also emphasised the importance of providing health services that are respectful of LGBT people's sexual orientation and gender identity.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people: [20]
● mental health is a very important issue for LGBT youth, highlighted by the fact that the risk of suicide is 13 times higher for LGBT youth compared with their heterosexual counterparts;

● lesbians tend not to go to gynaecologists. One of the reasons for this is that gynaecologists do not perceive lesbians as sexual beings;

● transsexuality is a difficult issue for young people as there is no assistance for people under the age of 21 (this varies according to the specific country);

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[20] The respective outcomes of the different working groups sometimes vary in length. This is because the two working groups, independently of each other, selected different working methods for their respective working session. The working group on younger LGBT people discussed each of the questions together and summarised their outcomes in a few points whereas the working group on older LGBT people provided each participant's individual comments.

● AIDS prevention is a complex issue because young people tend to be less informed about HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, some doctors directly link male homosexuality with AIDS, thus reproducing a persistent stereotype.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

● mental health issues that arise due to loneliness and isolation need to be addressed;

● there is a need for a health care system that respects LGBT people's sexual orientation;

● health care is also a financial concern;

● in particular amongst gay men, health awareness can turn into body fascism, the rigid system of normative beauty standards which include the social pressure of having to be muscular, look young, fit, etc.

(ii) Decision-making institutions. Both working groups identified the different decision-making bodies that ultimately impact their lives. While decisions are made at various levels, both groups criticised a lack of LGBT inclusion in decision-making processes. As a result, decisions are perceived to be made by outsiders who lack the knowledge and/or experience of LGBT life and specific age-related matters.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people:

● although in some countries LGBT youth organisations are involved in national youth policy, it is felt that policy makers often make decisions without knowledge of LGBT experiences. This is considered an act of disempowerment;

● on the other hand, some LGBT youth feel that they may be too young to get involved in decision-making processes;

● with regard to policies, LGBT youth feel that decisions are made by older LGBT generations for which LGBT youth are expected to be grateful.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

● decisions are often made by outsiders who do not represent and understand LGBT and age issues: decisions are made by institutional bodies such as local and national bodies, parties, the EU, health service providers, health insurance companies, etc. or on more individual levels by family, individual carers, etc.;

● decisions are too often made by younger people without the input of older people;

● decisions taken by health and social care bodies are very heteronormative;

● age issues are all too often reduced to health issues (which in turn are often reduced to HIV/AIDS prevention which exclusively targets men who have sex with men).

(iii) Persons of trust. Although the working group on older LGBT people identified the same groups of people highlighted by the working group on younger LGBT people (i.e. other LGBT people, friends), they also came up with a more extensive and diverse list, most likely due to their individual experiences. While some members of this group emphasised that

they trust those with similar values regardless of age, others explicitly named people of their own generation and peers. Furthermore and again only mentioned by the working group on older LGBT people, some participants answered gender-specifically by explicitly naming either only LBT women or gay friends as people of trust.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people:

● LGBT people are people of trust, however, except when they 'out' you without your wanting it;

● friends, as long as they are not self-proclaimed open-minded people who are, in fact, homophobic.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

● LGBT people, friends and acquaintances;

● people, regardless of age, who share the same values, hopes and problems;

● people of the same age;

● some older LGBT people do not feel safe with younger LGBT people;

● family of choice: older LGBT people tend to have better local networks (which more often than not exclude family members), which, however, tend to break down over time;

● other LBT women;

● gay friends.

(iv) Persons of distrust or fear. The working groups identified groups of people they fear or distrust, and it is interesting to note that each group identified the respective other age group as a potential source of fear. Furthermore, it is also important to note that the working group on younger LGBT people highlighted those generally closest to a young person, including parents, peers, friends and teachers. Perhaps it is therefore not surprising that the working group on older people had already highlighted the family of choice (i.e. the self-selected network of people one trusts) as a specific source of trust.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people:

● parents, peers, friends, teachers and lecturers can be people of distrust or fear;

● older LGBT people who are only interested in them sexually;

● critical power relations may arise.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

● bigots;

● religious fanatics;

● homophobic people and people who are not explicitly LGBT friendly;

● young people;

- younger gay men who make judgements about appearance;

- homophobic care givers;

- LGBT people who actively try to remain invisible while being judgemental about those who are 'out'.

(v) Role models. Both working groups shared the view that LGBT people who are successful (in the broadest sense) and respected are role models. Similarly, to be 'out' and visible seems to be a contributing factor with both groups in this regard. Furthermore, both groups identified older LGBT people as role models whereby one participant from the group on younger LGBT people emphasised that younger LGBT people can also be role models for older people. Again, it is important to note that in the working group on older LGBT people, a gender differentiation was made. Finally, one participant highlighted that there are only a few role models within the LGBT context of new EU Member States and that existing ones come from within the general human rights context.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people:

- an 'out' LGBT person who is successful and respected;

- LGBT people in the media;

- older LGBT people;

- someone with a shard passion, talent or view.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

- lifetime activists, human rights activists;

- older lesbians who have dealt successfully with life changes;

- older gay men;

- pioneers of the gay scene;

- tolerant, open, accepting and honest people;

- peers who make themselves visible to the public.

(vi) Media representation. Both working groups arrived at similar results and came to the conclusion that LGBT people are negatively depicted in the media. Media representation of LGBT people is rare. When it does occur, it is usually in a stereotypical and negative manner. Both working groups highlighted the absence of lesbians in particular, and the working group on younger LGBT people also highlighted the absence of transgender persons.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people:

- rare, if at all;

- stereotypical;

- lack of lesbian or transgender images;
- in terms of gay pride events, the media does not portray what is being fought for but instead only focuses on drag queens.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

- rare, if at all – it is as if older LGBT people do not exist;
- stereotypical (young gays are portrayed as promiscuous, older gays as single and seedy);
- represented in a bad light;
- even LGBT media ignores lesbians.

(vii) Impact of LGBT identity on the individual. Both working groups emphasised the impact LGBT identity has on the individual. While there were differing opinions as to whether it is the core identity or just one aspect of oneself, both groups noted the fear associated with coming out or being 'outed' and the resulting risk of discrimination. It appears that LGBT identity and its impact on the individual are very much context-specific and can be a source of positive or negative experience.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people:

- fear of coming out;
- other people's reactions to LGBT identity can have a tremendous impact on the life of an LGBT person.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

- LGBT is our identity and runs through all facets of our life;
- it is one aspect of several experiences;
- some try to suppress their identity;
- it became a second full-time job (being an activist);
- it makes life harder;
- fear of being identified as gay and the resulting discrimination;
- it shapes life-survival strategies;
- LGBT identity as a source of stability: "With LGBT, I am in my middle!"[21]

(viii) Important areas of social life. Both working groups listed a broad variety of areas, many of which were identical such as family, friends and work. However, the difference in age also manifested itself in this topic; while the group on younger LGBT people named school, youth groups and the Internet as important areas, these were not mentioned by the other group where the political sphere and public social life appeared to take on a greater significance.

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[21] Participant at the 1st Round Table.

Outcomes of the working group on younger LGBT people:

- work;

- school;

- youth groups;

- the Internet;

- family and friends.

Outcomes of the working group on older LGBT people:

- public social life (museums, cafés, clubs);

- private social life (love, partner, friends, family, sport associations, gay associations);

- political sphere;

- work.

2.2. Commonalities & differences between younger and older LGBT people

The final working session of the 1st Round Table synthesised the findings and created a basis for the work that was to follow. As part of this, the participants were asked to establish: What are the commonalities and differences between younger and older LGBT age groups? This was not only helpful in establishing the minor differences in shared issues, but also set the groundwork with regard to tackling the question of intergenerational dialogue.

Dependence and vulnerability. There is a common vulnerability between the two age groups because of their dependence, for example, on teachers or carers respectively. In both cases, this is a hierarchical relationship. However, the difference arises in the permanency of this relationship. Younger people know that they will leave school and have a future they will probably be able to change, whereas older people in care are much less likely to foresee change in dependence structures.

Assumption of heterosexuality. The assumption of heterosexuality in institutional settings is common to both groups. However, this assumption, in general, applies to younger people only during the school day whereas it applies 24 hours a day in a residential setting.

Coming out. Coming out challenges existing relationships for both age groups, but the difference lies in the nature of the challenge. Younger people challenge their parents' view of them. The admission that their children are sexual beings,

exploring their sexuality can be difficult for parents to cope with. Coming out as LGBT can also challenge parents' ambitions for their children. When older people come out, it can challenge long-standing friendships or relationships. In both cases, the challenge arises due to the belief that the relationship was not based entirely on a true understanding of the person, and some relationships do not survive such fundamental challenges.

Mental health problems. Both age groups are at risk of mental ill-health related to experiences of discrimination because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The inability of health services to cope with such mental health problems is a commonality across age groups. The major difference is that younger people are vulnerable to mental health problems while their personality is developing. Older LGBT people are more likely to have mental health problems if they have led a closeted life and persistently denied a fundamental part of their being.

Lack of access to education and information on sexual health. Both age groups have poor access to adequate sexual health education. Furthermore, the available information and education tend to be aimed solely at younger people who are exploring their sexuality for the first time. Some older gay men and lesbians who have come out later in life are particularly vulnerable because sexual awareness and health education is not available to them.

Institutional discrimination. Both age groups are affected by institutional discrimination. For example, LGBT youth experience discrimination in the education system or in children's homes and older LGBT people in residential homes or from health care providers.

Absence in the media. Both age groups are misrepresented or underrepresented (if indeed represented at all) in the media. However, younger LGBT people are still comparatively more present than older LGBT people.

Discrimination in the workplace. Both age groups are faced with the possibility of discrimination in the workplace. But the importance that is attributed to the workplace environment might differ across the age groups depending on one's inclusion in the labour market.

Involvement in LGBT activism. Individuals from both age groups are involved in the LGBT community and LGBT activism. However, the level of involvement, the type of activity and the reasons can vary across the age groups. However, it is very difficult to make generalisations about whether specific age groups are more likely to join social groups, want to give something back to the community, simply want to make new friends, be politically active, etc.

3. Intergenerational dialogue within the LGBT community

"A non-intergenerational life is an impoverished life."[22]
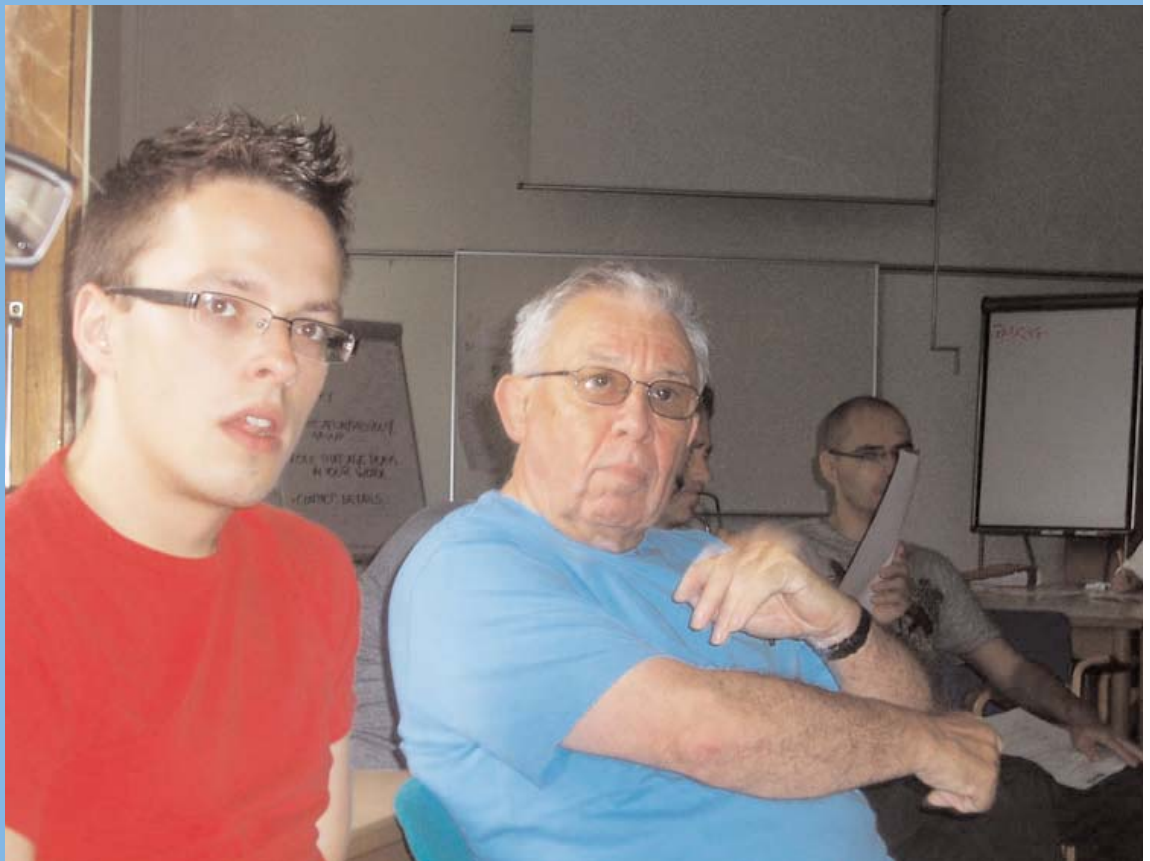
Participants of the 1st Round Table "Exploring Generational Gaps within the LGBT Community: An Intergenerational Dialogue", 7-8 August 2008, Berlin (Germany)

[22] Participant at the 1st Round Table.

3.1. What is intergenerational work?

Vanda Carter, Intergenerational Development Worker at the London Borough of Camden and keynote speaker at the 2nd Round Table, provided an apt definition:

"Intergenerational work includes any projects, activities, events or environments where people of different ages mix, and particularly where older and younger people who might not otherwise meet each other are encouraged and enabled to meet and do things together in positive and creative ways. Intergenerational work can include any initiatives which ignore or remove the social, cultural, institutional, architectural or environmental barriers which divide people by age."

Thus, intergenerational work should not solely be understood as activities between children and old people as these are not the only age groups which are separated from each other. In fact, middle-aged people also often do not meet people outside their own peer group. Ideally, intergenerational work can bring people of all ages together and should occur across the entire range of ages. "Intergenerational work is a way of doing things, a radical age-inclusive approach to life, not just a sessional activity."[23]

3.2. Importance of intergenerational dialogue for the LGBT community

The UK Centre for Intergenerational Practice states that the goal of intergenerational work is to create more cohesive communities and contribute to a better understanding between generations based upon the reality that younger and older people are those most affected by ageism.[24] Bringing generations together in meaningful ways enables mutual learning and creates the opportunity to address common issues. The Centre argues that "intergenerational initiatives have direct impacts on those involved, as well as on their communities"[25]. Therefore, the potential positive impact of intergenerational work on the LGBT community is immense.

LGBT people face discrimination based upon their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. However, discrimination also occurs when these strands intersect with other strands of identity. As a result, LGBT youth and older people are highly vulnerable. The "gay generation gap" or "LGBT generational divide"[26] only add to this complex situation. Glenda Russell and Janis Bohan argue that complications arise based upon the nature of the LGBT community:

"In these communities/families, contacts between youths and elders are not an intrinsic element of social systems, as is true in most biological families and in most other communities that face oppression by virtue of their members' identity […]. Rather, LGBT interactions tend to be age-segregated (youths cannot go to bars; adults cannot participate in youth coming-out groups). […] Given that age-related stereotypes appear to be heightened by a lack of interaction, age-

[23] Vanda Carter at the 2nd Round Table.
[24] **http://www.centreforip.org.uk/default.aspx?page=23455**.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Russell / Bohan (2005).

segregation within LGBT communities is likely to be self-sustaining." [27]

The heightened generational gap within the LGBT community is also explained by a tremendous discrepancy between the experience of today's LGBT youth and that of older LGBT people and the rapid change in LGBT life.[28] Intergenerational dialogue within the LGBT community would not only contribute to changing the "disrupted pattern of communication"[29], but also benefit everyone involved and positively affect the LGBT community as a whole.

3.3. Benefits of and barriers to intergenerational dialogue within the LGBT community

Both round tables focused on the topic of intergenerational dialogue between different LGBT age groups. The goal of the 1st Round Table was to find out if there is a desire and potential for such a dialogue. With the creative non-formal education method of a 'World Café' session, the participants of the 1st Round Table investigated the following three questions in various group constellations:

- What can older and younger LGBT gain from intergenerational dialogue?
- What are the perceived problems that stop intergenerational contact?
- Which issue(s) are important to me today which will no longer be an issue for LGBT people in 20 years time?

The following highlights the outcomes of these discussions.

3.3.1. Benefits

Mutual learning and exchange of experience. Intergenerational dialogue provides the space and opportunity to learn on many different levels. It is important to note that participants emphasised that the learning experience would not be unidirectional, i.e. that only one age group can teach the other(s). Learning was considered to go in both (or more) directions. In other words, learning would be mutual and non-hierarchical. For example, participants stated that younger LGBT people would be able to learn what life was like before the recognition of rights that exist today and that this would serve as a motivation for continuing the fight for LGBT rights. LGBT youth would also be able to learn from past mistakes and might be able to lose the fear of getting older due to positive role models and exchanges. Older LGBT people, on the other hand, could learn from the confidence of young LGBT people and benefit from their energy. They might also learn to be more comfortable with emerging as being equal, to let go of anxieties and to see how the world has changed since their youth. Furthermore, older LGBT people could learn how LGBT youth work with communication media and how information can be obtained. Younger LGBT could teach "new recipes"[30] and provide insights into different cultures. An older participant also stated that inflexibility on behalf of older LGBT people, in particular the perception that there is nothing more to learn in life, would certainly be challenged by intergenerational dialogue. In summary, knowledge and experience would be passed on

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[27] Russell / Bohan (2005), p. 2.
[28] Russell / Bohan (2005); Bohan / Russell / Montgomery (2002).
[29] Bohan / Russell / Montgomery (2002), p. 18.
[30] Participant at the 1st Round Table.

and shared, everyone involved would have something to offer and to gain, and a general perception emerged that we could all learn from each other, independent of age.

Common grounds across the age groups. Intergenerational dialogue would enable those involved to realise that some of their respective issues are indeed very similar. For example, participants stressed the fact that coming-out is just as important an issue for older LGBT people as it is for LGBT youth. While the settings may be different for the age groups, the mechanisms of fear, bullying and discrimination work in very much the same manner. Although no other issue was directly mentioned in this particular working session, other working sessions yielded additional common grounds. For example, the negative media depiction of LGBT people and the absence of LGBT expertise in decision-making processes are issues shared by the different age groups. As such, intergenerational dialogue could enable mutual support, solidarity and – as mentioned in the previous point – mutual learning and exchange of experiences.

Positive identity development. Closely linked to the above, intergenerational dialogue could contribute tremendously to a positive identity development. For example, younger LGBT people could benefit from hearing about the experiences of older LGBT people and could learn from them: younger LGBT people would not have to reinvent the wheel, so to speak, and could therefore develop their identity in an easier, less painful and emotionally healthier way. On the other hand, older LGBT people could benefit from intergenerational dialogue, as it can be emotionally and spiritually refreshing to *share* and not only *gain* experience. Furthermore, intergenerational dialogue enables one to view one's own life and the reality around oneself from a different perspective – one could share the key to interpreting reality. Finally, intergenerational dialogue could contribute to debunking myths and stereotypes about the respective other age groups, such as the stereotype that older gay men are 'sexual predators'[31]. Clearly, an identity freed from prejudice would be a healthier one.

Positive impact on the LGBT community & movement. Participants were in strong agreement that intergenerational dialogue and the resulting mutual learning processes could only benefit the LGBT movement. For example, with a vivid transfer of experience, knowledge would no longer get lost. Many attendees critiqued that current LGBT activists tend to be too focused on their own generation to the detriment of continuity within the movement. Intergenerational dialogue could provide a sense of history and common grounds whereby knowledge and experience would be used in productive ways.

Appreciation for one another. Intergenerational dialogue can have many positive effects on a personal level. Aside from creating a better understanding of each other, it also enables those involved to appreciate other people's talents.

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[31] This is one of the most recurring stereotypes held by LGBT youth, however, in particular by young gay men. This issue was not only raised during the 1st Round Table but also during conferences attended by the Age Project Coordinator including the "Equality of Age – Bridging Age Gaps in the LGBT Community" conference held in Glasgow, Scotland on 17 September 2008 and the "Schwule Männer im Alter" conference held in Berlin, Germany on 24 October 2008. The persistence and nature of this stereotype not only highlight the importance of actively encouraging the reflection of impressions about the respective age groups during intergenerational work but also the need to deconstruct underlying stereotypes such as the "long-standing portrayal of LGBT adults as dangerous to youth" (Bohan et al. 2002, p. 17).

Furthermore, those involved will be more open to the problems and fears of those from other age groups, with increased solidarity a likely positive effect. It opens up the possibility of being accepted for 'who one is'. One can express oneself freely based upon the common experience of sharing an LGBT identity. In conclusion, participants believed that intergenerational dialogue would enrich their lives. Or to put it in the words of one participant, "A non-intergenerational life is an impoverished life."

Prospects? Participants supported the idea of intergenerational dialogue and emphasised that such an endeavour should not be limited to a national context. However, the question of how this endeavour could be undertaken, the effort it would require and the fear of whether the interests of the respective age groups might be too different would still need to be examined in further detail.

3.3.2. Perceived barriers

Prejudices. Presumptions about and prejudices towards one another represent a major barrier to intergenerational activities. For example, some younger LGBT people expressed their belief that older LGBT people are, to some extent, still fighting old battles and that they expect to be shown gratitude from LGBT youth for the work they have done to date in LGBT activism. On the other hand, older participants expressed their concern that LGBT youth lack experience and are reluctant to ask them for their opinions. However, these stereotypes might paradoxically be debunked if intergenerational dialogue were to take place.

Invisibility. Intergenerational work in the LGBT community was described by participants as work between two hidden populations as younger and older LGBT people represent the least visible age groups within the LGBT community. Participants from the new EU Member States highlighted this issue for their own national contexts: due to the specific historical context of the Soviet Union in which LGBT people were highly stigmatised and discriminated against, many older people today will do everything to hide their sexual orientation and remain in the closet, having succumbed to the overwhelming pressure to conform to the heterosexual norm throughout their entire life. This makes it practically impossible, in this context, to reach out to older LGBT people and involve them in dialogue.

Communication methods. Methods of communication could represent a barrier to intergenerational dialogue: the different age groups use a different language and different methods of communication. For example, younger people rely more heavily on technology. This must be taken into consideration during intergenerational dialogue and even prior to it when reaching out to the different age groups and instigating interest in intergenerational work.

Lack of common ground. To many it appears that the different age groups do not have enough in common to

instigate a dialogue in the first place. However, as the 1st Round Table has shown, many experiences are shared by the different age groups, even if the specific settings are different. Nevertheless, older and younger people are at different stages in their lives and some people fear that it might be difficult to understand the other person's experience and perspective.

Lack of meeting opportunities. Closely related to the above-mentioned barrier is the lack of meeting opportunities. The different age groups are very differently involved in the LGBT community and activism. Their environments are not mixed which ultimately results in a lack of common projects. New social environments would therefore need to be created which allow LGBT people of all ages to meet naturally. On a different level, some also critiqued the unwillingness of authorities to support intergenerational projects.

3.3.3. LGBT issues of today and the future

While it was important to find out what participants perceive as potential benefits of and barriers to intergenerational dialogue, the third question enabled participants to undertake an actual intergenerational dialogue by examining which current LGBT issues they believe will be resolved in 20 years time. This enabled a perspective of 'Where did we come from?', 'Where do we stand today?' and 'How do we imagine the future in 20 years time?'. The answers given were heavily dependent on the respective national context. Two views emerged – one optimistic, the other considerably less so.

Improved rights and higher acceptance by society. Participants were optimistic that (in many countries) rights for LGBT people will have improved (e.g. equal rights for same-sex partners and adoption rights for LGBT people). Participants were also optimistic that it will be possible for them to donate blood and that sperm banks will no longer reject potential donors on the basis of sexual orientation. On a more general level, participants believed that homophobia will be less socially accepted, that one can be openly 'out' and that stereotypes will be broken down. Some described an LGBT normality whereby sexual orientation will no longer be an issue (again, only in some countries).

Coming out sooner and sexuality being less important. In the future, the coming-out process for LGBT people might occur at a younger age and in a more open manner. Similarly, discovering one's own sexual orientation at a younger age might be more accepted. Sexuality and sexual orientation might play less of an important role.

HIV/AIDS treatment. In 20 years time, a cure for HIV/AIDS may have been found.

A changed face of LGBT activism. Participants were optimistic that there will be more solidarity and an increase in national and international networks. Furthermore, intersectionality between the strands of identity could be a reality in

LGBT activism. However, one participant critically noted that if LGBT people receive all the rights they have been fighting for, this could lead to a reduction in activism and activists. In such a case, LGBT people would no longer be visible as and therefore no longer speak from an LGBT perspective. This was considered problematic as to be LGBT always also meant to differ from the norm, which in turn provided the opportunity to defend the right to differ from every existing norm in general.

No change in the status quo / increased prejudice. Some participants expressed their concern that the issues will either be the same in 20 years time as they are today or that prejudice and homophobia might in fact increase. Furthermore, those who oppose LGBT rights could be better organised and there could be an increase in religious fundamentalism.

3.4. Key questions about intergenerational work in the LGBT community

3.4.1. What is specific to intergenerational work with the LGBT community?

As with any event, the organisation of intergenerational gatherings requires the careful consideration of various aspects. Detailed guidelines and checklists developed by Vanda Carter, Intergenerational Development Worker at the London Borough of Camden, can be found online[32]. In addition to these guidelines, issues specific to the LGBT community must also be taken into consideration. The following is an overview of potential issues based upon discussions during the round tables.

The basis for intergenerational work, as highlighted by the participants at the 1st Round Table, is **common ground**. The format and settings in which this work could take place can vary, but the common consensus was that such work is more likely to succeed if it has a specific purpose and is directly linked to the LGBT community such as a pride or history event. Thus, intergenerational events should be project or target driven; they should be practical with tangible activities. Interested people should be given the opportunity to be involved in the design and planning of the project from the outset as this will promote a sense of ownership.

When organising intergenerational projects, **reaching out to potential participants can prove difficult** for a variety of reasons. Firstly, as highlighted by Vanda Carter, LGBT communities are hardly ever "local geographical communities"[33]. In fact, LGBT communities may be widely dispersed and have very informal networks. The latter is particularly the case with older LGBT people. Secondly and although changing, many older LGBT people do not use the Internet as much as LGBT youth or do so for different purposes. Similarly and although this varies from country to country, older LGBT people in

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[32] See: **http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/council-and-democracy/having-your-say/older-voices/intergenerational-work.en**.
[33] Vanda Carter at the 2nd Round Table.

particular do not use the Internet as much to advertise their LGBT groups. Thirdly, it is much more difficult to reach out to older lesbians as they tend not to be part of organised networks but instead rely on informal, close networks of friends. Fourthly, the challenge of reaching out to older LGBT people is particularly great in the new EU Member States where older LGBT people are practically invisible and often wish to remain so.

As highlighted by Vanda Carter, it is established good practice for anyone working with young people under the age of 18 to seek the **written consent of the parents**. However, this could be problematic if they have not 'outed' themselves to their parents.

LGBT history in particular is highlighted by very rapid changes to such an extent that participants' common factor of a shared sexual orientation or gender identity might indeed consist of very different, and in some cases even oppositional experiences. As a result, it might be advisable to **prepare the groups to meet each other**. This could include information about the respective other group, such as their background, age, which groups they come from, etc.

It is important to enable **moments of reflection**. Given that age-related stereotypes are more pronounced in the LGBT community,[34] it is important to provide an open forum to address potential prejudices. Preconceptions can only be challenged in an open environment.

In light of the heightened generational gap in the LGBT community, it is very helpful to provide enough **time for socialising** between or after intergenerational events. This will contribute to an increased interaction between the age groups and might therefore enable the discovery of individual commonalities in an informal way.

While it is difficult to get funding for intergenerational work in general, this is even more so the case with intergenerational work within the LGBT community. As a result, the **documentation and evaluation** of LGBT intergenerational events take on an even greater significance, since well-documented projects contribute to the likelihood of obtaining future funding.

From her experience, Vanda Carter reported that LGBT intergenerational events are likely to be more **closely scrutinised** than generic intergenerational projects by host organisations, managers, funding bodies, parents and journalists **due to prevailing homophobic attitudes**. Organisers should therefore network, in particular with generic intergenerational projects, as this can be very useful for mutual encouragement, advice and support.

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[34] See for example Russell / Bohan (2005).

3.4.2. Potential sources of funding

It can be difficult to obtain funding for intergenerational work because the majority of funding tends to be aimed at specific age groups rather than across them. Obtaining funding for intergenerational work therefore requires substantial research on the available funding sources. In some cases, funding from national or provincial government bodies may need to be combined. Non-governmental funding from businesses or charities can also be available.

It is important to note that people who are approaching their later years are no longer happy with the assumption that shared age is enough to bind them to their peers. The traditional view of day care services, for example, is being challenged by older people who would rather associate with those who share their interests than simply just the same age category. This will ultimately force a situation whereby funding can no longer be based purely on age groups. This is something LGBT people should be aware of as it is an opportunity to develop services not only for older LGBT people, but across the LGBT spectrum.

There is also often no 'intergenerational' category in fundraising search engines or databases which ultimately results in time consuming searches as one has to combine different categories such as 'youth', 'older people' and 'community'. Moreover, additional research has to be undertaken to find out if a project promoting both (or more) age groups would even be considered for funding.[35] A further oddity specific to intergenerational funding is aptly highlighted by the Camden Council: "First Light, the UK Film Council Lottery scheme promoting youth film-making initiatives told us that they would not consider a funding application for an intergenerational film-making project 'unless the older people were teaching the young people'. They said that young and older people learning alongside each other would not be within the remit."[36] This example demonstrates the restrictive nature of funding as well as the deeply embedded fallacy that intergenerational projects can only work unidirectionally. However, the Camden Council also notes that the funding situation is slowly beginning to change and that more and more funding streams are being created which promote intergenerational work – clearly a positive prospect for anyone wishing to organise intergenerational activities for the LGBT community.

3.4.3. Existing examples of intergenerational work

Examples of good practice with regard to intergenerational work already exist.

● For example, there is an LGBT specific buddy programme in the Netherlands (**http://www.schorer.nl/**) which was designed for a diversity of people including lesbians, gays, bisexuals or transgender people; people who are chronically ill, people who are going through gender transformation or socially isolated older people etc. Volunteers to the programme become their buddies; they spend time together and provide each other with a safe space. They learn about each other's lives and worlds and enjoy social activities together.

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[35] See Camden Council (2007), p. 12.
[36] Ibid.

● Another example is highlighted by the London Pride which had been viewed as overly youth-oriented until older people made their voices heard. Now, older people and their advocate organisations are not only included in the event, but also in the planning stages.

● Furthermore, from within the Scottish context, Age Concern Scotland, the Equality Network and LGBT Youth Scotland embarked on a project on LGBT and age in order to support intergenerational dialogue. This has led, thus far, to three conferences which examined ways in which older and younger LGBT people could work together.

3.5. The broader context of intergenerational dialogue

In order to strengthen LGBT intergenerational work, it should always be understood as part of generic intergenerational work and should therefore always be linked to it. Opportunities in this regard may include the following.

(i) The 1st European Day on Solidarity and Cooperation between Generations, 29 April 2009

Demographic change is a reality which not only affects the way societies function, but also the relationships between the generations. As a result, such change comes along with challenges as well as opportunities. Efforts to assess these and rework policies accordingly have been undertaken by various European organisations. Solidarity between the different generations is viewed as crucial in this process.

As a result, the Slovenian EU Presidency, the European Commission and various European NGOs organised a conference in Brdo on 28-29 April 2008 on 'Intergenerational Solidarity for Cohesive and Sustainable Societies'. "The conference focused on seeking to reinforce social links between generations as well as to initiate a shift in policy-making to promote greater solidarity between generations."[37] The outcomes of the conference are published in a brochure which is available online[38].

One of the results of this conference was the launching of the 'European Day on Solidarity and Cooperation between Generations'. Further information can be found online[39] and information on how to get involved in this event is outlined in the Intergenerational Solidarity Toolkit[40].

(ii) Proposal to declare 2012 the 'European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity'

Another outcome of the conference held in April 2008 was the proposal by Vladimir Špidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, to declare 2012 the 'European Year of Active Ageing and

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[37] **http://www.youthforum.org/en/press/news/2008/solidarity.htm**.
[38] **http://www.age-platform.org/EN/IMG/Solidarity-uk4.pdf**.
[39] **http://www.age-platform.org/EN/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=87**.
[40] Available online: **http://www.youthforum.org/Downloads/Press_publications/news/Intergenerational_Solidarity-toolkit_final.pdf**.

Intergenerational Solidarity'. This was supported by the Slovene and French Presidencies and would provide the opportunity to discuss the relations between generations and to exchange good practices between the Member States.

(iii) Further intergenerational projects and networks

Generic intergenerational work has already experienced institutional integration in some countries, particularly in the UK. The following provides a short overview of some existing organisations or projects which could represent important starting points with regard to implementing intergenerational projects for and within the LGBT community.

- International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes (http://www.icip.info/)
- EAGLE (European Approaches to Inter-Generational Lifelong Learning) (http://www.eagle-project.eu/)
- Centre for Intergenerational Practice (UK) (CIP) (http://www.centreforip.org.uk/)
- Cymru Centre for Intergenerational Practice (Wales) (CCIP) (http://www.ccip.org.uk/)
- Scottish Centre for International Practice

  (http://www.scotcip.org.uk/)
- Provider of intergenerational arts projects in the UK (http://www.magicme.co.uk/)
- UK reminiscence arts organisation "Age Exchange"

  (http://www.age-exchange.org.uk/)
- Intergenerational work at Age Concern (http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/intergenerational.asp)
- Spanish Intergenerational Network (SIN)

  (http://www.redintergeneracional.es/)
- Dialog der Generationen (Germany)

  (http://www.generationendialog.de/)

4. Mainstreaming LGBT issues into age organisations

"Gender reaches into disability; disability wraps around class;
class strains against abuse; abuse snarls into sexuality;
sexuality folds on top of race ... everything finally piling into a single human body."[41]

Participants of the 1st Round Table "Exploring Generational Gaps within the LGBT Community: An Intergenerational Dialogue", 7-8 August 2008, Berlin (Germany)

[41] Clare in: Brothers (2003), p. 50.

One of the major goals of the Age Project was to encourage thought about and the process of mainstreaming LGBT issues into age organisations. But why is this important?

As highlighted by the above quote, people's identities are diverse, multi-dimensional and complex. Identities are context-specific and intersect differently at different times. And all too often, people experience discrimination because of this. This is a reality that simply must be recognised. Various institutions and societal sectors have done so to varying extents. For example, academia is currently producing a rich body of research on intersectionality, human rights organisations are working on the issue of multiple identities and policy makers are confronted with the topic of multiple discrimination. While many of these efforts are still in their infancy, it is worrying that the complexity of individuals is not yet recognised by a broad spectrum of stakeholders in society. This is problematic because people's experiences, needs and issues will, as a result, not be addressed in an adequate manner.

If the goal of an organisation truly is equality or the provision of services for all members/users/clients, LGBT issues need to be mainstreamed into age organisations, just like age-related concerns need to be fully taken on board by LGBT organisations. For example, in the context of youth organisations, it is insufficient to simply only deal with 'youth issues'. In fact, this is not even possible because 'youth issues' relate to a diverse group of young people. It is therefore necessary to investigate the needs of different young people. The same applies to organisations which represent older people, disabled people or ethnic minorities, etc. The list is never-ending and, of course, also includes LGBT organisations. What becomes apparent is the need to incorporate a 'multiplicity of identity' approach.

The Age Project is an example of such an approach at work. As mentioned at the beginning of this report, this project was borne out of the recognition that the experiences of LGBT people are not only shaped by their sexual orientation or gender identity. Other components of one's identities (including age) also clearly play an important role. Only through the use of a 'multiplicity of identity' approach was it possible to obtain a better understanding of the different LGBT age groups.

Having incorporated this approach into the Age Project, it became clear why organisations also need to adopt a 'multiplicity of identity' approach and mainstream LGBT issues.
- In the various arenas of life, LGBT people of all ages face the **ubiquitous assumption of heterosexuality**.
- If heterosexuality is always the assumed sexual orientation, it becomes normative and a rigid system of **heteronormativity** emerges. **Homophobia**, be it passive or active, often results.

This clearly has to change but can only be accomplished if LGBT issues are considered and acted upon.

The following subchapters provide an account of the discussions and input made by the participants throughout the two round tables. Due to the project's explicit emphasis on the interconnection of sexual orientation and gender identity

with age, the main focus of these discussions was on age organisations, i.e. organisations that lobby and/or provide services for particular age groups (e.g. youth or older people). Although the points raised and suggestions made throughout the following subchapters have an explicit focus on age organisations, they are equally valid for many other mainstream organisations. Furthermore, as the following summarises the outcomes of discussions, it cannot represent an exhaustive list but instead should be understood as a solid basis for instigating the process of mainstreaming LGBT issues.

4.1. What needs to be done to raise awareness of LGBT issues in age organisations?

When organising the 2nd Round Table, many of the contacted age organisations declined the invitation. The following is a brief summary of some of the reasons given.

(i) The organisations, and in some cases the member organisations as well, have never worked on LGBT issues before and could therefore not make any useful contributions at the round table due to their perceived lack of expertise.

(ii) One umbrella organisation stated that efforts to include LGBT issues would have to be instigated by member organisations before it could take up such work.

(iii) Some organisations perceived sexual orientation as "a private right and decision of the individual", thus rendering LGBT issues irrelevant to the work of their organisation.[42]

The aforementioned reasons provide some telling insights into the challenges that need to be overcome in order to increase the profile of LGBT issues in the work of age organisations. The 2nd Round Table was conceptualised in such a way so as to enable mutual exchange, the setting of impulses and a critical reflection of one's work in a productive and constructive environment. As such, not only was having LGBT expertise not a prerequisite for participating at the round table, the round table itself was intended as a potential forum for gaining such knowledge and networking with regard to further exchanges. Despite this, some organisations seemed to believe that not having worked on LGBT issues in the past is reason enough not to examine the potential benefits of doing so in the future. This underlines the extent of the work required with regard to raising awareness and educating the many actors in the context of mainstreaming LGBT issues into age organisations. LGBT organisations have to become aware of the role they have to play in this as well.

4.1.1. Changing how LGBT issues are perceived

The need to challenge misconceptions about LGBT people. Becoming informed about LGBT people involves 'unlearning' certain knowledge and challenging stereotypes. For example, one of the most commonly held misconceptions about older gay men in particular, but also about older lesbians, is that they are better off (double incomes, no dependents, etc.) and therefore less 'needy' than older heterosexuals. This, however, does not reflect reality and is why more extensive

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[42] These three points are based upon comments received by the Project Coordinator in response to the invitation to the 2nd Round Table and have been made anonymous in order to respect privacy considerations.

research on the actual circumstances of older LGBT people is so crucial. Current research indicates that many older LGBT people in fact age alone, experience great isolation, are more dependent on alcohol and/or cigarettes and are more likely to suffer from depression than their heterosexual peers.[43]

The extent of the need to challenge misconceptions varies from country to country, aptly illustrated by an account given by one of the participants from one of the new EU Member States with respect to the status quo in his country: "How LGBT issues are treated is a theme socially and culturally managed in accordance with the existing negative preconceptions about homosexuality, i.e. still synonymous with disease, moral disorder, and public scandals. If it does not provoke institutional anxiety or even panic, it is considered, in the best case, recreational and linked with private life."[44]

Sexual orientation and gender identity are not 'private issues'. As touched upon above, one specific age organisation responded to the invitation to the 2nd Round Table by saying: "We usually consider sexual orientation a private right and decision of the individual, so we never delved into discussions on this topic."[45] This notion is not uncommon within many different types of organisations when explaining the irrelevance of sexual orientation or gender identity in their work. However, this misconception poses a real danger as it too often legitimises inaction by banishing sexual orientation or gender identity to the realms of private life. However, being discriminated against or denied equal rights based upon one's sexual orientation or gender identity is not a 'private issue', but the result of a heteronormative society which fails to grant equal human rights to all of its members.

Counteract the fear of offending other (i.e. heterosexual) members/users/clients. A common argument by generic organisations against mainstreaming LGBT issues into their work is the belief that this could cause offence to 'other' members. Paradoxically, this argument only emphasises the need for mainstreaming. One participant representing a national older age organisation described the angry reactions and resentment by local member organisations in response to initial steps undertaken to find out more about LGBT issues: they could not understand why 'so much attention' was being given to 'those homosexuals'.[46] This underscores the need for communication and education of other members on the importance of undertaking this work.

Abolish the 'We treat everyone the same' philosophy. Although often well-intentioned, this approach is unfortunately misguided as it confuses sameness with equality. The goal of equality is not to treat everybody the same but to treat them equally. Sameness does not allow for difference, equality does. As a result, it is in fact necessary to name the differences in order to be able to understand the basis on which people are being treated unequally and deconstruct hierarchies and power imbalances. It is not problematic to establish where the differences lie; attaching values to them is.

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[43] See also Age Concern
[44] Participant from the 2nd Round Table, Correspondence.
[45] Quote from an age organisation, kept anonymous in order to respect privacy considerations.
[46] Participant from the 2nd Round Table, Correspondence.

The 'We don't offer counselling' argument. Being LGBT inclusive and providing services for LGBT people is often confused with having to deal with psychological problems. While having experienced discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion can no doubt result in mental ill-health, this hardly constitutes the entirety of an individual. To the contrary, in order to adequately respond to the needs of LGBT people, age organisations – be it for youth or older people – would have to concern themselves with a wide range of issues such as housing, health care, sexual health and education, leisure, legal matters, etc.

Failure to acknowledge the identification of LGBT youth and older people as LGB or T. Age organisations often do not include LGBT issues based upon the assumption that young or older people do not have a sexual orientation or gender identity – at least, not one which differs from existing norms. Further reasons for youth organisations not taking LGBT issues on board may relate to the potential homophobic accusation that they are 'recruiting' LGBT youth.[47] On the other hand, older age organisations appear to be working under the assumption that people stop being LGB or T at age 50, 60 or 70. As a result, both fail to adequately respond to the needs of LGBT people.

4.1.2. Reassessing whom age organisations represent and provide services for

Age organisations need to become aware of the LGBT people in the population they represent. It appears that organisations are not aware that LGBT people are either users or potential users of their services or that they have needs that should be reflected in their advocacy work. Possible reasons might include the failure to even reflect the sexual orientation and gender identity of their members/users/clients or the belief that sexual orientation and gender identity are not relevant to their work. Both of these convictions are highly problematic. Firstly, if services are only suitable for heterosexuals or designed in gender stereotypical ways, LGBT people are likely to either not benefit from these services or, even worse, run the risk of being discriminated against by them. Secondly, LGBT people's specific needs will most likely remain invisible in organisations' policy work and ultimately remain invisible in policy-making on the whole.

Age organisations need to question the extent of their inclusiveness. While it is important to make organisations aware that a certain percentage of their users are LGB or T, it is equally important for them to recognise that a certain proportion purposely chooses not to use their services. As a speaker at the 2nd Round Table explained, this is not because they do not need these services, but because they may feel excluded, unsafe, or may anticipate discrimination based upon their sexual orientation or gender identity. Organisations therefore need to question whether the absence of LGBT people is the result of structures and practices which are perceived to be exclusionary by LGBT people. A critical reflection of

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47 Boxer (1997), p. 190. Other articles support this and highlight how programmes developed for LGBT youth are often regarded as being part of a 'gay agenda'. E.g. Bohan et al. (2002).

one's own organisation may show that this could indeed be the case. It is therefore important that age organisations take the lead in making their organisation, services and structures inclusive of LGBT people. A mere absence of discrimination does not equate to inclusiveness.

4.2. What strategies could be useful in mainstreaming LGBT issues?

"We have to go out to get people in!" [48]

Starting in small steps. It is not good enough for age organisations (but also applicable to other mainstream organisations) to simply state that they do not have the capacity to mainstream other issues apart from age, as the basic steps towards becoming more inclusive and more diverse are neither difficult, costly nor time-consuming. Or as Age Concern England puts it, "Changing attitudes, learning about needs and modifying language to be inclusive need cost nothing."[49] Nevertheless, further steps such as "training, producing information, setting up networks and creating new images, for example, all come with a price tag"[50].

Forging alliances. Forging alliances can be done on various levels and is a useful tool in sharing expertise, gaining support as well as addressing specific issues. This is for example the case when alliances are formed between organisations working on different strands of identity. Furthermore, gay-straight alliances have proven to be a successful means of raising awareness for LGBT issues. Although predominantly in school or university settings with the aim of providing a safe environment for LGBT people and their allies, the idea of gay-straight alliances can and should also be transferred to other contexts. In this regard, participants of the 2nd Round Table highlighted two important examples. Firstly, parents and other family members of LGBT people can be important allies when engaging with age organisations. This can occur in a dualistic way; on the one hand, LGBT organisations should seek the support of parents and family members when mainstreaming LGBT issues into age organisations. On the other hand, age organisations could work closely with family members in order to learn from, support and/or advocate for and with them. Secondly and in the context of a generic organisation, straight colleagues could be encouraged to make presentations about LGBT issues at conferences instead of the LGBT officer him/herself, for example when the event relates to their area of expertise (such as housing or health). This ensures that LGBT issues are understood as part of housing or health policies, and housing and health issues as part of LGBT policies.

A written commitment. One of the most obvious strategies in mainstreaming LGBT issues into an organisation is a written and regularly updated commitment in the organisation's equality and diversity policy or, more effectively, in the organisation's mission statement.

LGBT issues must be championed at all levels. LGBT issues must run through the entire organisation and be

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[48] Participant at the 2nd Round Table.
[49] Age Concern (2002), p. 30.
[50] Ibid.

made a priority. There should be genuine contact with top level management so that LGBT issues are championed at the highest level.

Entrust a staff member with overall responsibility for LGBT issues. Mainstreaming LGBT issues will have a greater likelihood of success if someone in the organisation is given the responsibility for LGBT issues. This does not imply the need for a full-time LGBT officer position. All that is required is for someone to take the lead.

Improving the dissemination of information. Information needs to be better organised. Although there are various initiatives, including some undertaken by age organisations, which already deal with the issues faced by different LGBT age groups, they are either not widely publicised or people simply do not know how to find out about them. Better dissemination of information, also on an international level, would provide the opportunity to exchange and learn from best-practice examples.

Training. The provision of training is essential as it helps raise awareness and debunk stereotypes and misconceptions. Furthermore, it enables a process of reflection so that services offered or lobby work undertaken can be changed accordingly.

4.3. Who is undertaking the work of mainstreaming LGBT issues and who should be doing it?

The initial work in mainstreaming LGBT issues is often undertaken by LGBT staff. In other cases, heterosexuals who are personally affected, for example those with an LGBT family member, friend or client might instigate such work. There are opposing viewpoints as to the merits of such an approach. Some point to the danger of tokenism, i.e. that the sole responsibility is left with the person who is personally affected by the issue to the exclusion of an all-encompassing approach. In such cases, the mainstreaming of LGBT issues is likely to fail. However, a 'vested interest' approach is not doomed to failure per se. In fact, 'who else is supposed to fight our battles' is a common argument for this approach. As long as the person's passion and commitment can have beneficial effects in the long run, a 'vested interest' approach is seen as a positive thing.

Whichever approach is taken, the mainstreaming of LGBT issues will only succeed if efforts to do so are structurally integrated. Many participants at the round tables highlighted the importance of support from the upper levels within an organisation (including directors, colleagues in senior positions and board members). This promotes the visibility of LGBT issues and enables a trickle-down effect throughout the entire organisation.

5. Evaluation of the Age Project

Participants of the 1st Round Table "Exploring Generational Gaps within the LGBT Community: An Intergenerational Dialogue", 7-8 August 2008, Berlin (Germany)

5.1. Critical reflection

The most apparent challenge the Age Project had to face was the diversity of the LGBT community. While the Age Project focused on age, sexual orientation and gender identity, these identity strands are highly complex and diverse in themselves. On the one hand, the entire age spectrum with a particular focus on youth and older people was examined. This complexity was heightened by the fact that homogenous and clearly defined age groups could not be assumed (see Chapter 1). On the other hand, sexual orientation and gender identity are also highly complex. Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and

transgender persons hardly form a uniform community. They differ in needs, involvement in the community, ways of organising and social networking, history, visibility, etc. The following outlines in more detail the issues that arose during the course of the Age Project.

Gender imbalance. Of the 28 participants at the 1st Round Table, there was a man-woman ratio of 18:10 (the latter group included one person who had transitioned from male to female). The 2nd Round Table had a man-woman ratio of 16:13 (again, the latter group included one person who had transitioned from male to female). These figures demonstrate a significant gender imbalance, which becomes even more prevalent when viewed from a geographical perspective. At the 1st Round Table, all of the participants from the UK and the new EU Member States were male. This varied slightly at the 2nd Round Table where more women from the UK were present, but again no women from the new EU Member States. The causes of this gender imbalance are difficult to pinpoint. Given that a broad and gender-balanced spectrum of people was invited to both of the round tables, this imbalance cannot be attributed to the invitation process. In some cases, organisations were contacted and asked to identify an appropriate representative. One possibility is that the selection made by these organisations occurred in a way that favoured male representatives over females. Another possibility could be an overrepresentation of males in key positions. Unfortunately, within the scope of the Age Project, it is not possible to provide more detailed qualitative data in this regard. A possible consideration for future initiatives could be to actively reach out to more females in order to arrive at equal gender representation as opposed to approaching the invitation process in a gender-balanced manner.

Age representation. As with the above, it proved difficult to achieve balanced age representation. At the 1st Round Table, the majority of participants could be said to broadly belong to a middle-aged group. This was somewhat surprising given that the focus of the round table was on the least visible age groups within the LGBT community, namely LGBT youth and older people. This could be attributed to the fact that the invitations were directed at experts for either of those age groups. As such, many participants were present because of their expertise, despite not necessarily belonging to these same groups. Others not only had the expertise, but also belonged to the age group they represented. Nevertheless, the point was raised that there were not enough older (in particular 'older-older') LGBT people present for them to claim ownership of their situation. This point is indeed valid. However, the absence of more older LGBT people must also be viewed as a finding in itself: it was less an organisational failure and more an indication of how much work still needs to be done and of the invisibility of older LGBT people within the LGBT community. In particular, there appears to be a distinct under-representation of older people within professional LGBT older groups. Furthermore, despite many contact attempts, there was a distinct lack of response shown from voluntary organisations. This can perhaps be attributed to language difficulties (English was the official working language of the project), technological difficulties (Internet and email correspondence issues despite this being the only contact method provided in some instances) as well as difficulties caused by a highly informal organisational setting. This unproportional representation was further emphasised by the ages of the participants from the new EU Member

States, the reasons for which were highlighted earlier in this report: at both round tables, only one participant from the new EU Member States was in his thirties, the rest were in their early twenties.

The 2nd Round Table presented a different surprising fact: most of the participants from age organisations represented groups for older people. Although approximately equal amounts of youth and older age organisations were contacted and invited, the response level from youth organisations was extremely low, the reasons for which are unclear.

Geographical imbalance. A geographical imbalance was also noted. While potential participants from all EU member states were contacted for both round tables, geographical diversity was difficult to obtain as this was similarly dependent on people's responses to the invitations. The fact that participants from Western European countries formed a clear majority at both round tables (compared to the new EU Member States) is again attributable to the current climate for LGBT people in the respective countries. With regard to the three major goals of the Age Project and the questions discussed, participants from the new EU Member States noted that these issues are "important" but unfortunately remain a "very theoretical construct", are not a "priority".[51] This in no way implies that LGBT youth and older people in the new EU Member States do not have specific needs. It is more a reflection of the tremendous degree of homophobia prevalent in these societies.

Diversity of LGBT people's experience throughout the EU. The level of acceptance of LGBT people in society and the situation regarding their rights vary greatly across the EU spectrum. As a result, the most pressing issues in one context might not be the case in another. Within the context of the three goals of the Age Project, this means that it cannot be about developing one perfect set of strategies that can be applied to any context. Given this, intergenerational dialogue may take on varying levels of priority and the mainstreaming of LGBT issues may have to be undertaken in a different manner in each specific context.

Intersectionality and research limitations. As mentioned on several occasions throughout this report, it was clear that focusing on age as well as sexual orientation and gender identity would never paint a full picture of the experiences of LGBT youth and older people. Many other strands of identity equally shape their lives. As a result, it is of utmost importance to reflect who contributed to the Age Project and who did not, who was visible and who was not. These questions are also mirrored in scientific research. Shankle et al. (2003) for example highlight that research on older LGBT people often focuses on two subgroups: "Middle-class, highly educated, Caucasian males who are out of the closet and who live in larger metropolitan areas and, to a lesser extent, lesbians who are out of the closet, are members of lesbian-specific or lesbian/gay organizations, and who live in primarily large metropolitan areas."[52] As a result, the issues of "people of color, immigrants, people in rural areas, and low-income people […], not to mention bisexuals and transgender persons"[53] need much more exploration. This statement could easily be applied to LGBT youth as well and should be extended by further

[51] The quoted segments are formulations used by participants from new EU Member States during both round tables.
[52] Shankle et al. (2003), p. 160.
[53] Shankle et al. (2003), p. 161.

identity categories such as disability. Quam (1993) highlights furthermore that information on "old-old"[54] LGBT people (by which she means people around 75-85 years of age) is very rare. Also, it is important to note that much of the research was undertaken in the USA or Great Britain and can therefore only provide information for a limited context.

It is important to reflect that the above-mentioned limitations were – to a greater or lesser extent – a reality of the Age Project. While no assumptions shall be made about how the participants identify themselves in relation to the various strands of identity, it is imperative to note that there clearly was an underrepresentation of the above-mentioned minorities.

5.2. Final comments

The participants' evaluation forms and general feedback unanimously confirm the importance and significance of the Age Project. In fact, one of the few criticisms regarding the round tables is in fact an indication of the need for such projects: there was simply not enough time. Nevertheless, participants truly endorsed and highly appreciated the opportunity to engage in an international exchange on LGBT experiences. The international nature of the Age Project had tremendous benefits:

● participants were able to exchange best-practices;

● participants felt empowered as they saw that they are not alone in their national context but that they, in fact, share many problems, issues, challenges and desires;

● participants were sensitised with regard to the situation of their international neighbours;

● participants networked and the round tables provided "fuel for new ideas, projects and approaches"[55].

With regard to the three major goals of the Age Project, it is clear that:

● There is insufficient knowledge and information regarding the issues of LGBT youth and older people and more research is required in these areas. This research should be undertaken nationally and internationally in order to gain intra-national and international knowledge. Only if resources are available will it be possible to meet LGBT youth's and older people's needs in an adequate manner and, thus, enable equality. Organisations, initiatives and/or projects must be supported or set up for that purpose.

● Generic intergenerational dialogue is proven to have immense positive effects on communities. Given the more pronounced generational divide and heightened age segregation within the LGBT community as a whole, intergenerational dialogue is a must. Initiatives for intergenerational work specifically aimed at the LGBT community must be encouraged and should be linked to generic intergenerational work. Such a dialogue would strengthen the LGBT community and its individuals and provide the opportunity for a healthy and positive identity development and self-understanding.

● The mainstreaming of LGBT issues with a differentiated focus in relation to the different LGBT age groups and their respective needs must occur at every level of society. Age organisations can be a good starting point for the social inclusion

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[54] Quam (1993).
[55] Participant of the 1st Round Table, Evaluation Form.

of the LGBT community's most vulnerable and least visible members. Given the positive impact of a 'multiplicity of identity' approach, the opportunity for a multi-level exchange arises whereby age organisations could draw on the expertise of LGBT organisations, and LGBT organisations in turn could make use of the knowledge available from age organisations. This way, everyone involved has something to give and to gain.

The Age Project represents an important step in shedding light on vulnerable and mainly invisible minorities. It is now important to make use of the impulses it has set, the networks it has created and the expertise that has formed so as to ensure that these elements so crucial in bringing about equality do not fall by the wayside, but are used to their fullest extent.

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7. Appendix

7.1. Participants at the 1st Round Table

Accept, Romania (**http://www.accept-romania.ro**)

Age Concern Norwich, England (**http://www.acnorwich.org.uk**)

Alzheimer's Society, England (**http://alzheimers.org.uk**)

Bulgarian Gay Organisation Gemini, Bulgaria (**http://www.bgogemini.org**)

Campaign Against Homophobia, Poland (**http://www.kph.org.pl**)

COC Nederland, the Netherlands (**http://www.coc.nl**)

Equality Network, Scotland (**http://www.equality-network.org**)

Expreszo, the Netherlands (**http://www.expreszo.nl**)

Fundació Enllaç, Spain (x2) (**http://www.fundacioenllac.cat**)

GEW Teachers Union, Gay Teachers' Group, Germany (**www.gew.de**)

Het Roze Huis-Antwerpse Regenboogkoepel, Belgium (**http://www.hetrozehuis.be**)

Holebifederatie VZW (x2), Belgium (**http://www.holebifederatie.be/**)

IGLYO, Germany (**http://www.iglyo.com**)

ILGA-Europe, Belgium (**http://www.ilga-europe.org**)

ILGA-Europe / IGLYO – Age Project, Germany

LBL-Denmark, Denmark (**http://www.lbl.dk**)

Lesbenverein Intervention e.V., Germany (**http://www.lesbenverein-intervention.de**)

LGBT Youth Scotland, Scotland (**http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk**)

MAG, France (**http://www.france.qrd.org/assocs/mag**)

MOVISIE, the Netherlands (x2) (**http://www.movisie.nl**)

Schwulenberatung Berlin, Germany (**http://www.schwulenberatungberlin.de**)

Tolerant Youth Association, Lithuania (**http://www.tja.lt**)

University of Manchester, England

Vieux rose, Belgium (**http://www.vieuxrose.be**)

Wel Jong Niet Hetero, Belgium (**http://www.weljongniethetero.be**)

7.2. Programme of the 1st Round Table

Wednesday, 6th August 2008

Time	Activity
	Arrival of participants
20:30	*Dinner at: Amrit Restaurant – Berlin Schöneberg*
	Winterfeldtstraße 40, 10781 Berlin

Thursday, 7th August 2008

Time	Activity
9:00 (GEW Berlin)	Registration of participants
9:30 – 10:30	**Official opening & welcome** **Introduction of the joint Age Project** **Speed intro of the participants** **Fears and hopes**
10:30 – 11:00	*Coffee Break*
11:00 – 12:00	**Working session I** Working groups will assess the needs and relevant issues of younger and older LGBT people.
12:00 – 13:00	**Presentation of the results of Working session I** The working groups will present the results in the plenary session.
13:00 – 15:00	*Lunch at: GEW Berlin*
15:00 – 15:30	**Working session II – Preparation for the World Café (Sociometric exercise)** Assessment and discussion of key questions.
15:30 – 16:45	**World Café** Discussion of key questions regarding intergenerational dialogue, e.g.: What can older and younger LGBT gain from intergenerational contact? What are the perceived problems that stop intergenerational contact? Which issue(s) are important to me today which will no longer be an issue for LGBT people in 20 years time?
16:45 – 17:00	*Break*
17:00 – 17:30	**Presentation of the results of the World Café**
17:30 – approx. 19:30	**Working session III – Active discovery of LGBT history (visit to the Memorial to Gay Victims of Nazis)**
20:30	*Dinner at: Shima Restaurant & Lounge* *Schwäbische Straße 5,10781 Berlin*

Friday, 8th August 2008

Time	Activity
9:00 – 9:15	**Welcome & introduction to the layout of the day** **Appointment of an expert committee**
9:15 – 10:15	**Working session IV** Working groups will discuss the following topics focusing on the LGBT community: 1. discrimination within institutions (e.g. schools, workplace, residential homes, etc.); 2. LGBT sexuality and coming-out; 3. health (e.g. sexual health, mental health, education about health etc.); 4. community involvement (e.g. how to address all age groups, role of social networks, setting of age limits, safe opportunities, infrastructure, empowerment etc.) 5. in/visibility (e.g. in the curriculum, media, social and political representation etc.)
10:15 – 10:30	*Coffee Break*
10:30 – 11:20	**Working session V** Working groups will discuss the same topics as above, however, this time focusing on outside of the LGBT community, in particular, age organisations.
11:20 – 11:45	**Presentation of the results of Working sessions IV & V in small groups**
11:45 – 12:00	**Meeting of the expert committee to synthesise the outcomes**
12:00 – 13:00	*Lunch at: GEW Berlin*
13:00 – 14:00	**Future prospects** The expert committee will present the outcomes in a plenary session. The main focus is: What are the findings and recommendations we want to present at the 2nd Round Table?
14:00 – 14:30	**Feedback session**
14:30	*Event closure*

7.3. Participants at the 2nd Round Table

Accept, Romania (**http://www.accept-romania.ro**)

Age Concern Brighton & GEMS (Gay Elderly Men's Society), England (**http://www.ageconcernbrighton-hove.org.uk**)

Age Concern England, England (**http://www.ageconcern.org.uk**)

ANBO, the Netherlands (**http://www.anbo.nl**)

Equality Network, Scotland (**http://www.equality-network.org**)

European Commission, Belgium (**http://ec.europa.eu**)

European Youth Forum, Belgium (**http://www.youthforum.org**)

Help the Aged Scotland, Scotland (**http://www.helptheaged.org.uk/en-sc**)

IGLYO, Denmark (**http://www.iglyo.com**)

IGLYO, France (**http://www.iglyo.com**)

IGLYO, Germany (**http://www.iglyo.com**)

ILGA-Europe, Belgium (**http://www.ilga-europe.org**)

ILGA-Europe / IGLYO – Age Project, Germany

'Institute for Social Policies' Association, Romania

LGBT Youth Scotland, Scotland (**http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk**)

Lithuanian Gay League, Lithuania (**http://www.gay.lt/lgl/english**)

London Borough of Camden & Generations of Love Project, England (**http://www.camden.gov.uk**)

MAG, France (**http://www.france.qrd.org/assocs/mag**)

MOVISIE, the Netherlands (**http://www.movisie.nl**)

Older Women's Network – Netherlands, the Netherlands

Private Expert and Consultant, England

Public Service Pensioners Council, England

The National Youth Council of Latvia, Latvia (**http://www.ljp.lv**)

Third Age Foundation, Ireland (**http://www.thirdagefoundation.ie**)

Tolerant Youth Association, Lithuania (**http://www.tja.lt**)

UNISON, England (**http://www.unison.org.uk**)

Vieux rose, Belgium (**http://www.vieuxrose.be**)

Village e.V., Germany (**http://www.village-ev.de**)

50+Hellas, Greece (**http://www.50plus.gr**)

7.4. Programme of the 2nd Round Table

Thursday, 27th November 2008	

Time	Activity
	Arrival of participants
20:00	*Dinner at:*
	MAMMA MIA (Italian restaurant)
	Rue Antoine Dansaert 158 / Antoine Dansaertstraat 158 , 1000 Bruxelles

Friday, 28th November 2008

Time	Activity
9:00 – 9:20 Foyer A	Welcome coffee & registration of participants
9:20 – 9:45 Room Bergen	**Official opening** ● ILGA-Europe & IGLYO ● The Age Project & Contextualisation of the 2nd Round Table (Sylvi Paulick, Age Project)
9:45 – 10:15 Room Bergen	**Findings of the 1st Round Table & intersectionality** ● Presenting the main findings of the 1st Round Table (Sylvi Paulick, Age Project) ● Why are we here? – Recognising intersectional experiences: Sexual orientation, gender identity and age (Sylvi Paulick, Age Project) ● Comments on the European Commission's work on multiple discrimination (Gesa Boeckermann, European Commission)
10:15 – 10:45 Foyer A	*Coffee Break*
10:45 – 12:45 Room Bergen	**Intergenerational work** ● Intergenerational dialogue across the LGBT age spectrum – Loose ends of the 1st Round Table (Sylvi Paulick – Age Project) ● The 'hows' of intergenerational work (Vanda Carter – London Borough of Camden) ● Practice examples of intergenerational work: 　□ "The Buddy System" (Juul van Hoof, Movisie) 　□ "Equality of Age": A collaboration between Age Concern Scotland, the Equality Network & LGBT Youth Scotland (Scott Cuthbertson, Equality Network & Nico Juetten, LGBT Youth Scotland) ● Open debate
12:45 – 13:45 Room Cap Nord	*Lunch*
13:45 – 14:45 Room Bergen	**Mainstreaming LGBT issues** The importance of mainstreaming LGBT issues ● The importance of a 'multiplicity of identity' approach (Marco Perolini, European Youth Forum) ● Key issues of younger LGBT people: 　□ Health & education (Nico Juetten, LGBT Youth Scotland) ● Key issues of older LGBT people: 　□ Isolation of older gay men (Peter Otto, Gay Elderly Men's Society) 　□ Invisibility of and lack of knowledge about older lesbians (Deborah Lambillotte, Vieux rose) ● Open debate
14:45 – 15:30 Room Bergen	Practice examples ● Antony Smith, Age Concern England (England) (National Development and Policy Officer for Older Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexuals) ● Christian Hamm, Village e.V. (Germany) (project work that led to the establishment of an entire floor in a nursing home solely for older LGBT people) ● Open debate

15:30 – 16:00 Foyer A	*Coffee break*

16:00 – 16:50 Room Bergen	<u>Round table debate</u> ● What are potential barriers to including LGBT issues in mainstream work? ● What are potential strategies to counter these barriers? ● How can organisations network and collaborate?

16:50 - 17:00	**Event closure**

19:30	*Departure of participants / unofficial dinner at:* *KOKOB (Ethiopian Restaurant), Rue des Grands Carmes 10 / Lievevrouwbroersstraat 10,* *1000 Bruxelles*

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all of the participants of the 1st and 2nd Round Table for their

contributions, insight and enthusiasm, without which the round tables – and ultimately the Age Project –

would not have been possible.

If you would like further information on the Age Project or would like to share your thoughts,

please write to **info@iglyo.com**.

December 2008