



Insights and Recommendations

International Conference Sexuality in Old Age: Time for Equality and Inclusion

28th February 2019, Porto, Portugal

www.best4older-lgbti.org



Some numbers about the conference

The Best4OlderLGBTI launching conference – *Sexuality in Old Age: Time for Equality and Inclusion* - took place on the 28TH of February 2018, in Porto, Portugal.

The Centro de Atendimento e Serviços 050+, Associação (CASO50+) was responsible for hosting the conference. NGO's, health and social care professionals, students, stakeholders and representatives from the general public were encouraged to attend this event that tackled the problem of discrimination based on age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics of older people.

PARTICIPANTS



The conference was a success with a total of **97 participants**. Although, as expected, the majority of participants were Portuguese, there were also some Brazilian and Italian students attending the conference.

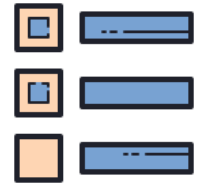
Table 1 shows the distribution of participants in more detail.

Participants					
Students	Professionals	Partners, Speakers & Moderators	Staff	Total	Project Indicator
43	23	23	8	<u>97</u>	70

Table 1. Number of participants

The conference also had the aim to create and establish a network in order to promote discussion, cooperation and mutual learning between the partnership and other interested entities.

PROGRAMME



The conference programme aimed to cover both theoretical and more practical aspects regarding the topic of Sexuality in Old Age.

In this sense, the conference was organized in two main sessions:

Session 1 – SETTING THE SCENE:

State of the Art in Europe: Non-discrimination and rights of older LGBTI people, by **Maciej Kucharczyk** (Age Platform)

Word for Inclusion: the importance of an inclusive language, by **Liliana Rodrigues** (Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, University of Porto)

Talk about the same...discrimination, prejudices, abuse, by **Telmo Fernandes** (ILGA Portugal)

Recognise discrimination and abuse – How to report it, by **Luís Pinheiro** (Plano I- GIS)

Session 2 – OLDER LGBTI PROJECTS – GOOD PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

HEALT4LGBTI – Reducing Health Inequalities Experiences by LGBTI People, by **Massimo Mirandola** (Verona University Hospital)

Roze50+: working together for older LGBTIQ+, by **Manon Linschoten & Meija Bosma** (Roze50+)

Visibility of LGBTIQ+ older persons in the community and among professionals, by **Maria Cantiello** (ANS)

DIVERCITY: Preventing and combating homo- and transphobia in small and medium cities across Europe, by **Alexandra Harkay** (KMOP)

PROGRAMME

The conference programme also included a presentation about the Best4OlderLGBTI project, by *Licia Boccaletti* project coordinator, and the valuable contributions of *Wester Meijdam*, Representative of DG-JUS of the European Commission; and conclusions by *Giorgia Codato* from ENSA.

Participants had the possibility to present their questions at the end of each session which allowed to have a productive and meaningful debate.

Some of the presentations from the Conference "Sexuality in Old Age: time for equality and inclusion" are available and may be used for educational purposes [<https://www.best4older-lgbti.org/conference-2019.html>].

(Note: the conference had a translation service available, which permitted the participants to understand and participate in a more active way).

Best4OlderLGBTI
CONFERENCE:
**SEXUALITY
IN OLD AGE:**
Time for Equality and Inclusion

ICBAS, Porto University, Rua de Jorge Viterbo Ferreira, 228, Porto, Portugal | February 28th 2019 | 09:20 - 17:00

State of Art in Europe: Non-discrimination and rights of older LGBTI people | AGE PLATFORM | HEALTH4LGBTI - Reducing Health Inequalities Experienced by LGBTI People | VERONA UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Words for inclusion: The importance of an inclusive language | UNIVERSITY OF PORTO | Working together for older LGBTIQ+ | ROZESO+

Talk about discrimination, prejudices, abuse | ILSA PT | Visibility of LGBTIQ+ older persons in the community and among professionals | ANZIANI E NON SOLO

Recognise discrimination and abuse How to report it | NGO PLANET - GIS | DIVERSITY: Preventing and combating homo- and transphobia in small and medium cities across Europe | KMGP

PROJECT PARTNERS: ANS, CASO50+, GLOBAL CHANGE+ Pugliaera, ApAction, EASI, kmop 50

WITH THE SUPPORT OF: CASO+, PORTO, CNTESIS

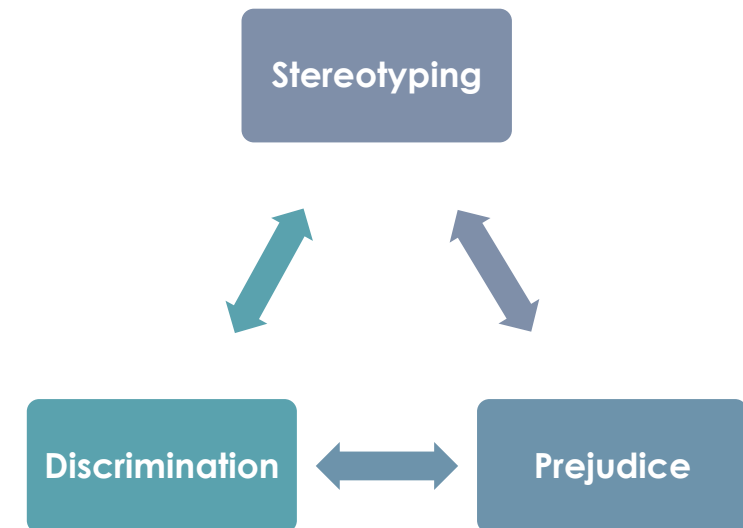
The Conference: INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the exquisite contributions of all speakers, moderators and participants it was possible to identify some key points regarding Sexuality in Old Age and, in particular, regarding older people LGBTI.

These key points are both insights and information about the current situation but also some important recommendations regarding the topic of Older LGBTI.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS TO HAVE IN MIND:

- **Ageism** = term first coined in 1969 by Robert N. Butler.
Any type of discrimination based on age.
- **Stereotyping** = how we think
- **Prejudice** = how we feel
- **Discrimination** = how we act

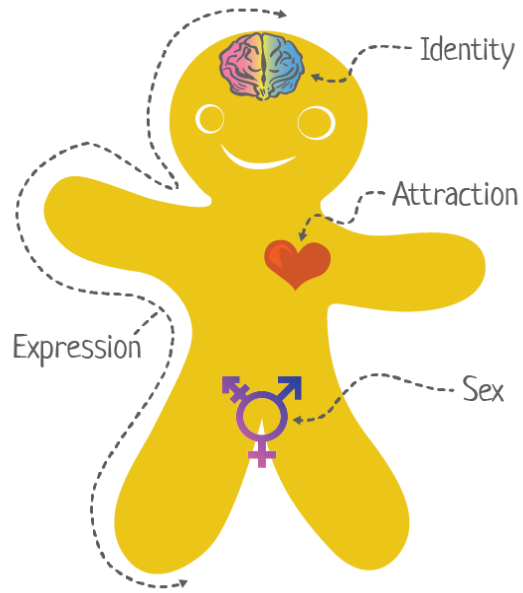


IMPORTANT CONCEPTS TO HAVE IN MIND:

- **Asexual** = someone that has a lack of sexual attraction to others
- **Bisexual** = someone that is attracted to people of both sexes
- **Biological Sex** = a medical term used to refer to the chromosomal, hormonal and anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female or male or intersex. Often referred to as simply “sex,” “physical sex,” “anatomical sex,” or specifically as “sex assigned at birth”
- **Gender Expression** = how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact
- **Gender Identity** = your psychological sense of self. Who you, in your head, know yourself to be, based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be the options for gender
- **Heterosexual** = someone that is attracted to people of the opposite sex
- **Homosexual** = someone that is attracted to people of the same sex
- **Intersex** = someone whose sexual characteristics are not strictly male or female
- **LGBTI** = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Intersex
- **Sexual Orientation** = who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own
- **Transsexual** = People who do not identify themselves with the gender assigned to them at the time of birth (also "transvestites," "trans(gender)," and "trans*")

It is important to bear in mind that [concepts will always be provisional and fallible](#) (Missé, 2014).

The Genderbread Person v4 by its pronounced METROsexual.com



⊖ means a lack of what's on the right side

Gender Identity

- ⊖ → Woman-ness
- ⊖ → Man-ness



Gender Expression

- ⊖ → Femininity
- ⊖ → Masculinity



Anatomical Sex

- ⊖ → Female-ness
- ⊖ → Male-ness

Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation

Sex Assigned At Birth
 Female Intersex Male

Sexually Attracted to... and/or (a/o)

- ⊖ → Women a/o Feminine a/o Female People
- ⊖ → Men a/o Masculine a/o Male People

Romantically Attracted to...

- ⊖ → Women a/o Feminine a/o Female People
- ⊖ → Men a/o Masculine a/o Male People

Genderbread Person Version 4 created and uncopyrighted 2017 by Sam Killerman [For a bigger bite, read more at: www.genderbread.org](http://www.genderbread.org)

Figure 1. The Genderbread Person v.4, created and uncopyrighted 2017 by Sam Killerman

(<https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Genderbread-Person-v4-POSTER-18x24.pdf>)



INFORMATION ON EUROPEAN UNION LEGISLATION

- EU Law protects people against discrimination based on sexual orientation, age, disability, religion and belief in the area of employment (Employment Framework Directive 2000/78). EU legislation does not protect against discrimination beyond employment – such as in access to goods and services, social protection, education, health care or housing, although some kind of legal protection can be retrieved by interpretation of articles 8 and 14 of ECHR.
- On the other hand, although again some kind of legal protection can be retrieved by interpretation of articles 8 and 14 of ECHR, EU Law does not contain an explicit prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of a person's gender identity and gender expression, neither does a prohibition on discrimination against trans people appear in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
- The 2000/43 Race Equality Directive protects against discrimination based on race and ethnic origin in all areas of life.
- Sex discrimination is prohibited by EU law in employment and in access to goods and services (Equal Treatment Directives 2006/54 and 2004/113).
- Trans people are partly covered by these instruments.

You are **legally protected** across the EU against, for example: being refused a job or fired because of your sexual orientation; or being harassed by colleagues at work because you are gay or lesbian.

HOWEVER

EU legislation does not protect against discrimination based on **sexual orientation, age**, disability, religion and belief **beyond employment** – such as in access to goods and services, social protection, education, health care or housing.

What is still lacking?



In relation to intersectionality age - sexual orientation - gender identity - gender expression – sex characteristics of older people there is a:

- Lack of activism among older people to stand together for human rights;
- Lack of visibility of older LGBTI within older population;
- Lack of understanding of the challenges older LGBTI adults face in their lives;
- Lack of protection regarding social exclusion (e.g. older adults (and in particular older adults LGBTI) may experience loneliness, depression, mal nutrition, mental health problems, etc.);
- Lack of respect towards (LGBTI) older adults' needs and to their right to sexuality from residential and institutional care settings.

In fact,



Many LGBT people remain [invisible within seniors' organizations](#) who usually fail to investigate and address their needs: persisting prejudices and taboos among many older people on the issues of sexuality and sexual orientation.

Older people have [difficulties to be recognized within their own LGBT communities](#) because of their old age: myths that ageing leads to loneliness; ageing erases your libido; ageing is depressing, etc.

The right to sexuality is not always respected in the society, communities and care services when it comes to older persons and even more when it comes to older LGBTIs.

International data



- 72 countries criminalize same-sex relationships (and in 45 the law is applied to women as well as men);
- The death penalty is either 'allowed', or evidence of its existence occurs, in 8 countries;
- In more than half the world, LGBT people may not be protected from discrimination by workplace law;
- Trans people are still being diagnosed as mentally ill in many European countries. The latest version of the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) still contains a gender identity disorder (GID) diagnosis;
- Most governments deny trans people the right to legally change their name and gender from those that were assigned to them at birth;
- Between 2008 and 2014, there were 1,612 trans people were murdered across 62 countries - equivalent to a killing every two days;
- Most intersex people have experienced or are experiencing "normalizing" surgical procedures without their consent;
- 22% of trans people surveyed by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in 2012 felt that they had been discriminated against by healthcare personnel;
- A quarter of the world's population believes that being LGBT should be a crime;
- Due to a fear of experiencing stigma or discrimination, LGBTI people may not disclose their LGBTI identity. On average, 42% of those surveyed would not be open about their LGBT status with any healthcare personnel at all.



The situation for older people is compounded by the evidence which suggests that it is difficult for Western societies to consider their sexuality and intimacy needs in general, and that Residential Care Facility staff are not exempt from this discomfort. Staff may fail to recognize the differences in later life relationships, which can then impact on the provision of holistic care (Greensmith, 2015).

In fact, in recent decades we have observed significant achievements in civil rights and workplace protections for LGBTI people. However, [there is still much work to be done](#) in order to maintain and improve those rights. The legacy of discrimination and prejudice is still very present and has its toll.

RECOMMENDATIONS



For policymakers:

Policymakers should consider implementing public policies to help promote equality for LGBTI people. Some recommendations are:

- Design comprehensive policy measures to prevent discrimination and prejudice against LGBTI people in all areas;
- Decriminalize homosexuality and legally recognize same sex marriages;
- Ensure that laws that already allows LGBTI people to enjoy the same legal rights and civil status as heterosexual people are consistently applied;
- Ensure that LGBTI people have the same rights in the workplace, health and social services and have access to government benefits as heterosexual people. Promote public awareness of the rights of LGBTI people in terms of employment, retirement savings and health benefits.
- Promote equal rights when ageing;
- Ensure that the right to sexuality in old age is recognized and protected;
- The development of an horizontal approach to address multiple discrimination in all relevant policy areas such as: employment; minimum income/ pensions; access to goods and services, health and long-term care; living standards and housing; care giving/family and social support and social exclusion
- Adopt a general policy of inclusion of LGBTI persons at all levels of the society (education, law enforcement, health, public space, work place, media and civil society), that would include the implementation of a national plan against LGBTI-phobia.

RECOMMENDATIONS



For employers:

Employers in all areas can also have a positive attitude towards LGBTI people. Here are some recommendations:

- Foster an LGBTI-friendly work environment;
- Guarantee that LGBTI employees are offered equal pay and equal access to career opportunities;
- Use images and language that are inclusive and make sure that the workplace culture is one in which LGBTI employees feel safe and can be open about their sexual orientation without fear of discrimination;
- Contribute to help employees save for retirement and protect their health, well-being, and financial security;
- Create opportunities in which LGBTI employees can learn about company policy, business practices, employee benefits, retirement plans, etc.;
- Promote training of their staff about diversity management (in particular when it comes to old age and sexual orientation/gender identity).



General recommendations / 1

Every and each one of us has an important role to play in order to make our society more inclusive. Here are some general recommendations:

- The use of inclusive language in social media, public services, schools, workplaces;
- The importance of standing-up for human rights for all generations;
- Call for comprehensive policy measures – to deal with the multiple discrimination faced by older LGBTI;
- The recognition that old people has the right to have a sexual life;
- The training of law enforcement authorities, prosecutors and lawyers in defending victims of homo- and transphobia and in properly identifying and correctly reporting homo - and transphobic crimes;
- Raising awareness about the social risks of homo - and transphobia.



General recommendations / 2

- The promotion of LGBTI associativism;
- The promotion of partnerships between senior organisations and LGBTI organisations;
- The implementation of national transpositions of European legal instruments in order to properly support the victims of hate crimes;
- The improvement of the knowledge on LGBTI policies and situation by enhancing the collaboration between national, regional and local institutions;
- The training of key actors and professionals such as teachers, health professionals, or police officers;
- Spreading the word – improving the knowledge and competencies of future care professionals;
- Understanding that different identities are not experienced separately, but as overlapping categories that combine each other to create particular ways of being in the world.

Fight and report any type of discrimination and violence towards older LGBTI people.

Best4 OLDER LGBTI

www.best4older-lgbti.org

PROJECT PARTNERS:



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