

Adopted in an Extraordinary General Assembly online in May 2014

I. Introduction

IGLYO's vision is a world where we, young people in all our diversity, are able to express and define our own sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions without discrimination, violence or hatred. We work for a world where we can participate without limitation in our lives and communities, so we can rise to our full potential, enjoying respect, celebration and positive recognition. Social inclusion of LGBTQ young people is a key element to realizing this vision.

Defining social inclusion

At the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, inclusive society was defined as ‘“a society for all” in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play’.¹ **An inclusive society is one that rises above differences of race, ethnicity, age, disability, sex, gender, religion, and sexual orientation to ensure equality of opportunities.**

Within EU discourse, social inclusion is interconnected with participation in all aspects of society: ‘Social inclusion is a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have greater participation in decision-making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights.’²

IGLYO believes that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) young people should be fully included in all areas of society, with meaningful participation and recognition without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

This paper builds upon IGLYO's work throughout the years. Social inclusion has been a crosscutting theme in areas of education, human rights and health. **The scope of this paper is to outline the key issues, concerns and challenges for young LGBTQ people that lead to social exclusion and to propose an approach for IGLYO and Member Organisations to promote inclusion of LGBTQ youth.** IGLYO hopes that this position paper will be an important and useful tool for its Member Organisations, friends and young LGBTQ activists in their advocacy work for an inclusive society for all young people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.

II. Background: IGLYO's work on Social Inclusion

Social inclusion has been a crosscutting theme in almost every area of IGLYO's work since its founding in 1984. In the past three years, social inclusion has appeared in each of the thematic focus areas: education, health, human rights, and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. Each

¹ UN 1995, chap.1, resolution 1, ANNEX II, Para. 66

² European Commission and Council (2004) *Joint Inclusion Report*, European Commission and Council, (7101/04), p. 16.



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of these focus areas has its own [position paper](#), where you can find more detail about IGLYO's work on the theme.

Specific actions on social inclusion of LGBTQ young people include:

April 2006, Research report “Social Exclusion of young LGBT people in Europe”³

This research [report](#), which was a joint project with ILGA-Europe, examined the main mechanisms of social exclusion that affect young LGBTQ people in relation to education, health, employment and active citizenship. This study emphasised the everyday discrimination and marginalisation that LGBTQ youth continue to experience in all EU Member States.

The report was presented at the European Parliament (lobbying for the European Parliament declaration 11/2007 against homophobic bullying in schools with the European Parliament LGBT Rights Intergroup) and at various occasions thereafter, including at IGLYO events, the Council of Europe's All Different All Equal campaign, and Norwegian government workers and policy-makers.

2013, Structured Dialogue on Youth Policy in the EU

Throughout 2013, IGLYO has taken part in the Structured Dialogue process of the EU. Structured Dialogue provides the opportunity for young people, represented by youth organisations, to present perspectives to the EU on focused topics. Structured Dialogue is facilitated by the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

From January 2013 through June 2014, the rotating presidency is focused on the Structured Dialogue on social inclusion. IGLYO has been active in providing responses to consultations on social inclusion through this process.

June 2013, Conference “LGBT youth and social inclusion”, Dublin

This conference built upon the work of the EU Youth Conference held in Dublin in March 2013. This conference was part of the 'Structured Dialogue Process' and focused upon youth issues and youth work in the EU. The Youth Conference identified LGBT Youth as one of a number of key groups within society likely to experience social exclusion and clearly identified seven areas where this exclusion can happen: employment, education, participation, welfare, support, youth organisations, and quality. The aim of the conference was to identify key actions to promote the social inclusion of LGBT youth under these four headings at EU level.

The four thematic working areas for the conference: Education, Youth Unemployment, Participation & Rights, Youth Services. [Link to conference](#).

September 2013, Participation in the EU Youth Conference around Social Inclusion, Vilnius

As follow up to the submission of the consultation report during the second cycle of Structured Dialogue process, under the Lithuanian Presidency, IGLYO was invited for the first time to take part in the EU Youth Conference. This conference focused on Social Inclusion and particularly

³ Takács, J. (2006), *Social exclusion of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Europe*. Brussels, Belgium: ILGA Europe.



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the Social Inclusion of Young People not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET's). IGLYO took part in the formulation of the conclusions and recommendations to be handed over to the Greek Presidency where the Resolution around Social Inclusion will be formulated.

III. Key Issues and Areas of focus concerning LGBTQ young people and social inclusion

In this section, we will define the key barriers to social inclusion for LGBTQ young people. This section, like the paper itself, is not exhaustive. You can refer to IGLYO's other position papers on education, health, human rights, and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue for a more in-depth look at these topics.

LGBTQ youth can experience a great deal of stress due to their minority position in society. Known as minority stress, the experience of being 'othered' and excluded due to minority status is caused in this case by both passive and direct homophobia or transphobia. This occurrence can have a severely negative impact on the quality of life and the mental and physical health of LGBTQ youth. This detrimental impact leads to a higher risk of suicide, self-harm, substance abuse, educational underperformance, dropping-out of the educational environment and a resulting difficulty accessing employment and its benefits among other ill effects⁴. **All of these impacts are symptomatic of a process of social exclusion endured by LGBTQ youth. Through a process of active social inclusion such incidences could be significantly reduced.**

Below you will find an overview of the main barriers to the social inclusion of LGBTQ youth:

A. Institutional Areas: Education, Employment, and Access to Healthcare

i. Education and training:

Homophobia and transphobia:

One of the most significant spheres in which LGBTQ youth experience social exclusion, and where the most research has been carried out, is in the field of education and training. Numerous reports have demonstrated that many LGBTQ youth experience a great deal of social exclusion, bullying and discrimination while pursuing their studies.⁵ **Homophobic or transphobic attitudes and behaviour can be perpetuated by fellow students, teachers or officials and is endorsed as appropriate behaviour when not punished by authority figures.**

When teachers or officials are involved in contributing to hostile environments, it is often in the form of heteronormative reinforcement, passively failing to act against the bullying of LGBTQ students by their peers, asking uncomfortable questions concerning an individual's personal life and in extreme cases the use of belittling, offensive or threatening language. **Specific 'othering' and isolating actions taken by schools consist of the maintenance of strict and binary gender roles enforced by peers, teachers and administrators that**

⁴ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2013), *EU LGBT SURVEY: European Union Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Survey- Results at a Glance*. Brussels, Belgium: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

⁵ Takács, J. (2006), *ILGA Europe*; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2013), *EU LGBT SURVEY: European Union Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Survey- Results at a Glance*. Brussels, Belgium: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.



further exclude LGBTQ identified youth who do not abide by such strict gender roles.⁶

Role models and curriculum:

The absence of LGBTQ role models and topics in education and training curricula can further be seen as a contributing factor to the social exclusion of LGBTQ youth. Lack of any LGBTQ terminology as well as the wider lack of any discussion and/or ignorance of sexual orientation or gender identity reinforces LGBTQ invisibility and dominant heteronormative and cisnormative narratives in all subjects. In many cases, education curriculums have painted LGBTQ identities negatively, as deviant behaviour or illness.⁷

Sex education:

Where comprehensive sex and relationship education is a part of formal education, little or no information is provided or facilitated regarding safer-sex practices, healthy relationships and sexually transmitted infections for those who are not heterosexual and cisgender.⁸ **This silence represents a further barrier towards social inclusion as it further defines non-heterosexual relations and transgender identities as the 'other' or renders them completely invisible, exposing them to serious health risks.**

Sports education:

The effects of sport and physical activity have been shown to create greater feelings of inclusion and connectedness to peers and community. However, the sports education environment can also be highly uncomfortable or unsafe for LGBTQ students and perceived as unwelcoming to LGBTQ people. LGBTQ students often avoid sports activities and associated environments such as locker rooms and gyms.⁹ Participation in sport is particularly challenging for trans people who do not have clear guidance on taking part in activities in their preferred gender. **It is especially important for teachers and instructors to have competency to deal with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity in the sports area.**

A result of negative experience in school sport experience is that LGBTQ youth often never progress to community level sport, which potentially further increases the social exclusion experienced at community level as well as denying them the obvious health benefits of sport participation.

ii. Employment:

⁶ For more information please consult: IGLYO (2012), *IGLYO on Gender*. Brussels, Belgium: IGLYO, Issue 20; IGLYO (2013) *IGLYO on Bullying*. Brussels, Belgium: IGLYO, Issue 22; IGLYO, *IGLYO Position Paper on Education*, available at: <http://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/IGLYO-Position-Paper-on-Education.pdf>; Formby E. and, Willis, B. (2011) *Tackling homophobia and transphobia in settings supporting youth people: What are the barriers and facilitators?*, Sheffield: Sheffield Hallam University, p. 36; Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Bartkiewicz, M. J., Boesen, M. J., & Palmer, N. A. (2012). *The 2011 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth in our nation's schools*. New York: GLSEN, p.77.

⁷ Takács, J. (2006).

⁸ Formby, E. (2011) 'Sex and relationships education, sexual health, and lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) sexual cultures: Views from young people', *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning* 11 (3), pp. 257-260.

⁹ GLSEN (2013). *The Experiences of LGBT Students in School Athletics (Research Brief)*. New York: GLSEN. ; LGBT Youth North West (2013) *Including LGBT young people in sport: A guide*. United Kingdom: LGBT Youth North West.



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Employment is an integral part of an individual's social inclusion. Being part of the labour market, financial independence and the opportunity for advancement and growth are all vital avenues in terms of social inclusion for all youth. LGBTQ youth, however, may face additional challenges in the transition from formal education to employment.

As illustrated in the IGLYO Position Paper on Education, incidences of social exclusion and bullying during education can lead to under performance, absenteeism and early school leaving.¹⁰ **As a result many LGBTQ youth lack the educational achievement to access a wide range of employment opportunities that are linked to qualifications and training attainment.**

Many LGBTQ people can fear being discriminated against or dismissed from a job should they reveal their LGBTQ status or should it become known. This fear can limit a number of career options for LGBTQ youth or requires them to hide part of their identity in order to secure employment, with the constant risk of having their 'secret' revealed and their employment terminated. **Such a fear of pursuing meaningful employment creates a barrier to LGBTQ young people's social inclusion through the labour market.**

Transgender people are particularly vulnerable within the workplace and are subject to higher incidences of discrimination than LGB individuals due to their gender identity or expression. Transgender individuals may be subject to prejudice and discrimination in the form of lack of access to promotion, demotion and in some cases even job loss.¹¹ Such incidences of discrimination or fear of such discrimination leads many transgender individuals to limit their pursuit of meaningful employment, leading to further social exclusion. **A lack of focus in the discourse on social inclusion through the labour market contributes to the entrenched exclusion of LGBTQ young people.**

iii. Access to Healthcare:

As elaborated in IGLYO's position paper on health, LGBTQ young people face a number of barriers to accessing healthcare.¹² These range from outwardly homophobic or transphobic healthcare practitioners, violation of patient-doctor confidentiality, and lack of accurate information on the part of the health care provider. **These factors can cause LGBTQ young people to avoid seeking responsive or preventative healthcare to the detriment of their physical and psychological wellbeing.**

The barriers to healthcare can have larger ramifications in terms of social inclusion. If young LGBTQ people avoid health care, they remove themselves from one of the basic social services within a society. **Not only are they at risk of diminished wellbeing, but they are not**

¹⁰ Please consult the IGLYO position paper on Education; IGLYO & Formby, E. (2013) *The Impact of Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying on education and employment: A European Survey*, Sheffield: Sheffield Hallam University.

¹¹ For more information and statistics please consult: Whittles, S, Turner, L, Al-Alami, M, Rundall, E & Thom, B (2007), *Engendered penalties: Transgender and transsexual people's experiences of inequality and discrimination*. Communities and Local Government Publications.

¹² Please consult the IGLYO position paper on Health as it provides an extensive coverage of the topic, IGLYO, IGLYO Position Paper on Health, available at: <http://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/IGLYO-Position-Paper-on-Health.pdf>.



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able to participate fully in their community, further contributing to their social exclusion.¹³

Transgender Health

Transgender youth often have specific issues in terms of health that should be addressed. **The largest problem among young trans people is the lack of access to accurate information about options for transitioning and the availability of any desired services.** Healthcare providers might provide inaccurate or limited medical advice to their patient, or take a ‘one-size fits all’ approach. Instead of receiving patient-centered healthcare from a professional, trans young people are told what they must do with their bodies, rather than receiving nuanced advice and information about what they can do with their bodies.

Transgender people may also experience prejudice in non-transition related healthcare. The UK Engendered Penalties report showed that 29% of trans-identified respondents felt that their trans status adversely affected the way they were treated by medical professionals and staff.¹⁴ **Such outright discrimination, as well as misinformed and unknowledgeable healthcare providers, lead trans people to seek medical advice and treatment from outside the institutional framework, contributing to social exclusion for this particular population.**

Intersex Health

There is very little research on the situation of intersex people, including the factors that contribute to the social exclusion and inclusion of people born intersex. Above all, medical practitioners should treat intersex people and their parents with respect and frankness, avoiding any unnecessary medical intervention that violates their right to autonomy and self-determination. **Transparent information regarding their condition and the necessary and elective medical interventions should be readily available to intersex people.**

Promoting awareness, both within the medical community and within greater society, would also promote the social inclusion of young intersex people. **As always, medical treatment should be patient-centered, focused on the needs and desires of a consenting person.**

B. Community level: family, friends and religious community

At the community level, different social systems often contribute to the inclusion or exclusion of LGBTQ young people. This section identifies the ways family, friends, and religious communities influence a young LGBTQ person’s feelings of social inclusion.

i. Family:

When a young person’s sexual orientation or gender identity becomes known within the family structure, reactions can vary widely. Many family members are supportive; however, family members can act from a place of non-acceptance. Reactions can involve denial, disbelief, rejection and even physical and verbal violence. **Parental denial or ignoring expressions of identity can be experienced as rejection. In some cases family members may react so negatively that the LGBTQ youth must leave their home.**

¹³ IGLYO, IGLYO Position Paper on Health, available at: <http://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/IGLYO-Position-Paper-on-Health.pdf>

¹⁴ Thom, B et al. (2007).



A lack of family acceptance may also cause problems for transgender children under the age of 18 who often need parental permission to access certain medical interventions (if chosen) or in order to change name and other legal records.

Family rejection has a clear relationship to social inclusion, including but not limited to accommodation, education, and access to social and economic rights. If a young LGBTQ person does not have support within the family unit, they are not empowered in greater society.

ii. Friends:

Friends play an important role in social inclusion, providing acceptance and a sense of belonging.

In general friendship circles appear to be more accepting of LGBTQ identities than family groups. The IGLYO Social Exclusion report showed that fewer than 30% of respondents reported experiencing discrimination and prejudice from their friends. **In many cases, an individual will change their friends to include more inclusive and accepting people, such as friends who are also members of the LGBTQ community.**¹⁵

However, in many societies such accepting peers are not forthcoming. In these cases, an individual might lose friends as they express their sexual orientation and gender identity. **Such isolation contributes to feelings of social exclusion, as peers can support an individual in otherwise hostile situations.**

iii. Religious communities:

Many LGBTQ young people are born into religious families or communities. Often this can cause problems when religious doctrine decrees that nonconforming sexual orientation and gender expressions or transgender identities are incompatible with their faith.¹⁶ Such religious communities can be hostile to and unsupportive of LGBTQ identities, treating them as illnesses or perversions and refusing acceptance. **In extreme cases, religious communities can try to 'cure' homosexuality, which has been proven to be psychologically and sometimes physically harmful. Such antagonism can cause a great level of isolation from a close-knit community of support.**

Whether or not they are believers, LGBTQ young people may feel alienated from unaccepting religious community. This can cause them to feel the need to live a 'double' life for fear of being ejected from their community. Many LGBTQ youth voluntarily leave their religious community, excluding themselves from place of inclusion as they cannot reconcile homophobic and transphobic religious teachings with their lived experience.¹⁷

¹⁵ Takács (2013), pp. 59-61; please also consult the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (2012), *LGBT Survey*, available at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/eu-lgbt-survey> for data and statistics.

¹⁶ Hooghe, M, Claes, E, Harell, A, Quintelier, E, & Dejaeghere, Y. (2010). Anti-Gay Sentiment among Adolescents in Belgium and Canada: A comparative Investigation into the role of Gender and Religion. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 57 (3), p. 2.

¹⁷ Takács (2013), p. 66; For more information please consult IGLYO, IGLYO Position Paper on ICIRD, available at: <http://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/IGLYO-Position-Paper-on-ICIRD.pdf>.



Being alienated from a religious community can have detrimental effects on a young LGBTQ person's feelings of social inclusion, as they may need to seek new structures for emotional and spiritual support and guidance.

C. Societal: Media, public policy and participation

The final part of the section on barriers to social inclusion addresses the societal elements that contribute to the situation of LGBTQ young people.

i. Media:

By media, we refer to the main means of mass communication including television, newspapers, magazines, social media, and all other sources of public information.¹⁸ The Social Exclusion report cited below details how 75% of respondents believed that the media of their own country expressed discriminative or prejudiced elements concerning LGBTQ identities. The media was perceived as reinforcing harmful stereotypes and heteronormativity that contributed to homophobic and transphobic perceptions in wider society.¹⁹

Media coverage of LGBTQ issues and individuals often focuses on sensational aspects. Respondents felt that there is little relatable content being disseminated and that LGBTQ lives and the lives of LGBTQ youth were not accurately represented—if represented at all. Many respondents also mentioned the presence of hate speech in public media that went unchallenged.

ii. Public policy and participation:

Youth, especially those under the age of 18, are often excluded when it comes to influencing the policy-making process. LGBTQ youth are no exception to this situation.

LGBTQ young people often do not have effective political representation, though they do have specific needs and interests that should be reflected in public policy. Organisations such as IGLYO and its Member Organisations offer examples of youth led initiatives that offer representation through democracy. However, appropriate political space should be given to these representatives of LGBTQ youth, enhancing participation at governmental and intergovernmental levels. **The concerns of LGBTQ youth must be taken seriously within the development of public policy, promoting social inclusion through legal measures and through meaningful participation.**

iii. LGBTQ Political Leaders:

At too many governmental levels, LGBTQ people are not represented. The current political stage remains largely heteronormative and offers little of relatable concern to LGBTQ youth. While this is an issue for the entire LGBTQ community, the lack of political role models in the form of LGBTQ people can lead to **LGBTQ youth feeling disconnected from politics and governance.** These feelings lead to apathy to the political process, and a self-removal from civic participation, perpetuating the impact of social exclusion discussed throughout this paper.

This exclusion is further aggravated by the voicing of homophobic and transphobic attitudes by national and international political representatives. The tolerance of such discourse results in the political stage being perceived by many to be unfriendly to LGBTQ

¹⁸ Oxford English Dictionaries: <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/media>

¹⁹Takács, J. (2006).

participation. True social inclusion for LGBTQ youth at all levels will not occur without the development of a climate in which active LGBTQ citizenship is not invisible in political spheres.

D. Barriers to social inclusion: conclusion

The issue of social exclusion is multi-faceted and occurs at many different societal levels. The previous section sought to identify, in broad strokes, the main areas where young LGBTQ experience barriers to social inclusion. For more detail in any of the areas, please see IGLYO's other thematic position papers or explore the sources in the bibliography.

The following section identifies approaches that IGLYO, our Member Organisations, and young people can take to promote social inclusion of LGBTQ young people.

IV. Approaches to combat social exclusion and to promote social inclusion

Unfortunately, there is no cure-all solution to address the social exclusion experienced by LGBTQ young people. Each of the issues above is complex, and results from the fact that we live in a diverse, overlapping society. The section below mirrors the section above, discussing ways to promote social inclusion in each area. **An overarching approach is to ensure that all equality and anti-discrimination legislation includes provisions relevant to LGBTQ young people. The issues affecting LGBTQ youth should be mainstreamed in all policies, in addition to targeted equality legislation to promote the social inclusion of LGBTQ young people.**

A. Institutional Areas: Education, Employment, and Access to Healthcare

i. Education:

The development, promotion and implementation of anti-LGBT bullying campaigns is essential in reducing incidences of discrimination, violence and harassment against LGBTQ youth in educational facilities. **Policies at all levels should prohibit homophobic and transphobic bullying, and all teachers, staff, and students should be made aware of the policies.**

All responsible parties should receive training on sexual orientation and gender identities so that heteronormative attitudes do not alienate LGBTQ students and that an inclusive atmosphere can be fostered. This includes using gender-neutral pronouns and inclusive language. Additionally, efforts should be made to include LGBTQ people in the curriculum. **Teaching materials should represent LGBTQ perspectives and contain LGBTQ inclusive material, and students should participate in awareness raising activities around sexual orientation and gender identity.**

Students should have access to safe and appropriate changing facilities as well as bathrooms that correspond with the student's gender identity.²⁰ Targeted signposting towards LGBTQ support services should be available within educational facilities so that LGBTQ youth know who and where to go to receive assistance and support services. Signposting can occur through many means including leafleting, electronic and material resources and the presence of a trained counselor or staff member.

²⁰ For a more detailed analysis of what can be done to encourage inclusion in education please consult: IGLYO, IGLYO position paper on Education, available at: <http://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/IGLYO-Position-Paper-on-Education.pdf>.



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ii. Employment:

A key element in accessing employment is by ensuring education is inclusive of LGBTQ people so that everyone can access educational and training opportunities. From the employer's side, a **strong policy prohibiting discrimination** based on sexual orientation and gender identity should be implemented. Provisions in employee manuals and trainings should frame the workplace as a site of acceptance based on ability, with zero-tolerance of discrimination or bullying.

Providing targeted information about gender identity and informing employers about respecting a transgender employee's pronouns, name and access to gender segregated facilities can also increase the comfort and wellbeing levels of transgender employees

iii. Access to healthcare

To combat the issues in healthcare that lead to social exclusion, **healthcare providers should receive comprehensive information about sexual orientation and gender identity.** As defined in the Health Position Paper: LGBTQ identities and specific needs should be included in medical education curriculum. By increasing the capacity of providers, LGBTQ young people will be encouraged to seek out responsive and preventative health care, promoting their wellbeing and contributing to social inclusion.

Healthcare providers can also adopt equality policies. Moreover, they can signal to patients that they are accepting of all patients, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Healthcare practitioners should adhere to the ethical code of the profession, including patient-centered care and confidentiality. Providers should seek out information, rather than making assumptions about a patient's needs. The assumption of heterosexuality should be removed from any patient consultation.

Transgender health

As with all healthcare, when a patient seeks medical advice about gender identity, the response from the provider should be patient-centered. Transitioning can be a very sensitive process that often needs to be closely supervised by medical professionals. Transgender individuals seeking guidance on transitioning should be able to receive clear, up to date information about the options available. Medical professionals should be well informed of issues around gender identity, including the physical and emotional sensitivity that is required when trans individuals access healthcare at all levels. **Above all, any intervention should be respectful and considerate of the patient's needs.**

Intersex health

Intersex youth should receive complete, considerate and respectful care that is sensitive to their condition. Intersex youth and their guardians should receive detailed information about their medical condition and the benefits and risks of any treatment suggested. **Intersex youth should be informed of all avenues of treatment including non-treatment.**²¹

²¹ For more information on access to healthcare for LGBTQ Youth please consult: IGLYO, IGLYO Position Paper on Health. Available at: <http://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/IGLYO-Position-Paper-on-Health.pdf> ; see also: Gay and Lesbian Medical Association and LGBT health experts (2001), *Healthy*



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B. Community level: family, friends and religious community

IGLYO promotes the approach of dialogue to promote social inclusion concerning family, friends, and religious communities. Since community level social exclusion refers to private, interpersonal relationships, policy solutions are not available. LGBTQ organisations should encourage families and friends to discuss LGBTQ identities rather than resorting to assumptions or judgments that may lead to exclusion of the LGBTQ young people.

Public campaigns that provide accurate, non-biased information about sexual orientation and gender identity can promote awareness that LGBTQ young people exist in all types of families throughout society, leading to acceptance and greater inclusion.

Targeted awareness raising campaigns that promote the greater inclusion of LGBTQ youth within a religious context should be implemented in society as well.²² Belief and sexual orientation and gender identity should be seen as mutually exclusive. **Religious communities should be encouraged to accept diversity of their members, and LGBTQ communities should recognize that there are people of faith within their community.**

C. Societal: Media, public policy and participation

Media portrayals of LGBTQ people should reflect reality, including the diversity of the LGBTQ community. Problematic or stereotypical depictions should be labeled as such. The media should include positive portrayals of LGBTQ people to promote the social inclusion of LGBTQ young people.

News outlets should showcase upstanding LGBTQ citizens, such as activists or LGBTQ people who are exceptional in their field. News outlets should also condemn any use of hate speech, either in other media or by public figures. **News media have a duty to be watchdogs of the rest of society, promoting accurate and accepting portrayals of LGBTQ people.**

Political processes at all levels should work to include the participation of young people, including LGBTQ youth. Civil society should include a focus on the needs and interests of LGBTQ young people to ensure that the perspective is included in the political landscape at local, regional, national, and international levels.

Organisations should promote out LGBTQ candidates for public office. Such public figures give LGBTQ young people role models within the political system, and promote acceptance of identities across society.

V. Conclusion

As highlighted in the sections above, **social exclusion is something experienced across all levels of society by LGBTQ youth.** It is an issue that is multi faceted and widespread in its proportions and something that must be targeted and tackled across all levels. We hope that this position paper has given you an overview of the topic of social exclusion, the issues and

People 2010 Companion Document for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Health. San Francisco, CA: Gay and Lesbian Medical Association.

²² For more information please consult IGLYO, IGLYO Position Paper on ICIRD, available at: <http://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/IGLYO-Position-Paper-on-ICIRD.pdf>.



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areas in which social exclusion occurs and what approaches can be taken in order to combat social exclusion and encourage social inclusion. Should you require more in depth analysis and understanding of the issues discussed herein please refer to our other IGLYO Position Papers as well as the bibliography below. Recommendations for policy makers and NGOs working on issues affecting LGBTQ young people are below.

Recommendations

a) IGLYO calls on Council of Europe to:

- Strengthen the implementation of its Recommendation on combating discrimination of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression;

b) IGLYO calls on European Commission to:

- Mainstream social inclusion, equality and non-discrimination in EU policies in order to ensure that EU policies in the field of social policy take into consideration all groups in societies;
- Promote the passage of the horizontal antidiscrimination directive against all forms of discrimination in the provision of and access to goods and services and to extend existing legislation beyond the employment directive;
- Establish stronger coordination between the different Directorate Generals of the EU to ensure more effective and meaningful action in the field of social inclusion and anti-discrimination policies;
- Continue to support educational activities, such as training for lesbian, gay bisexual, trans, and queer youth, which contribute to empowering LGBTQ youth organisations throughout the EU;
- European Social Fund (ESF) should actively support organisations of young people which represent, or provide support to, groups vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion. The ESF should also promote (transnational) partnerships between youth groups, including LGBTQ youth organisations;
- Pass a comprehensive funding package to replace the PROGRESS funding, including provisions for operational grants for LGBTQ youth and student organisations.



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c) IGLYO calls on National Governments to:

- Develop cross-sector collaborations to ensure inclusion and non-discrimination of LGBTQ youth in all policies, particularly on employment, education and access to good and services;
- Develop accessible youth-friendly welfare and healthcare services, provided in an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach;
- Provide resources for youth people to organize nongovernmental youth organisations.
- Include young people in the decision-making process through a structured, comprehensive process, especially on issues which concern them;
- Give adequate resources to national youth run organisations that carry out projects to promote social inclusion;

d) IGLYO calls on its Member organizations to:

- Cooperate with all relevant stakeholders in order to mainstream LGBTQ issues in the youth policies and to building their capacities on working on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression issues;
- Develop cross-sector partnerships to advocate for social inclusion of LGBTQ youth in all aspects of life particularly education, employment and access to services.
- Share learning and best practices relating to LGBTQ youth;
- Provide educational materials and resources around inclusion of LGBTQ youth;
- Organize capacity building seminars and awareness campaigns on SOGIE and social inclusion;
- Provide training and capacity building to media on diversity, anti-discrimination and social inclusion of LGBTQ youth issues;
- Conduct research (quantitative & qualitative) mapping and documenting the situation around LGBTQ youth and social inclusion in their countries, which can be provided to policy makers for lobbying and advocacy purposes.



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