

## Workshop F4: Working against homo-/transphobia without giving in to racist stereotypes

Discrimination against women and sexual minorities has not been overcome completely in any country. Nevertheless, in many Western European societies there prevails an image of the „enlightened West“ versus the „pre-modern THEM“ when it comes to women's rights and the attitudes towards lesbians and gays. Seen from this perspective, immigrants from Eastern Europe and countries with a majority Muslim population are allegedly importing what seemingly had been left behind a long time ago. Homo-/Transphobia, women's rights and questions along race/ethnicity interact and often lead to racist stereotypes in the name of emancipation. The aim of this workshop is to find ways of speaking about prejudice and violence against lesbian and non-lesbian women, gays and transgendered persons without giving legitimacy to racist argumentations.

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### Minutes by Koray Yılmaz-Günay, GLADT Berlin/Germany

The aim of this workshop was to find ways of speaking about prejudice and violence against lesbian and non-lesbian women, gays and transsexual/transgendered people in the context of societies that are structured by these and other forms of exclusion such as race/religion.

What we can extract from this workshop is:

– Countries in Eastern and South Eastern Europe differ a lot from Western European Countries when speaking about the situation of women, homo- and transsexuals/transgender people.

Discrimination against women and sexual minorities has not been overcome completely in any country. Nevertheless, in many Western European societies there prevails an image of a modern society that bettered the situation especially of women through the «enlightenment», but also to a smaller extent of homosexuals. In these modern societies, differences remain within legal structures and concerning questions of social in/exclusion (domestic violence and hate crimes against homosexuals were the main fields of discussion). Transgender people and the myriad forms of discrimination they face are, it seems, invisible in most countries. Ignorance prevents policy changes and social acceptance.

– Racism remains a serious social issue in all countries.

While in the Western European countries immigration poses a challenge to the traditional self-images of states as well as societies, in Eastern and South Eastern Europe indigenous minorities also face a many problems that are hardly dealt with. In particular, the bigger countries in the West hardly accept their realities as immigration countries and Eastern and South Eastern European countries seldom value their ethnic diversity.

– Intersections / Interdependences between racism and homo-/ transphobia are not acknowledged.

In Western European countries homo-/transphobic attacks coming from immigrant youth lead to problematic discourses in which a hierarchy of racism and anti-homosexual /-trans resentment leads to polarized debates, mostly initialized by mainstream gay organizations and individuals. Discussions on these intersecting phenomena seem to be a challenge for debates on a European level for the time being.