

about words

how language matters

write (better) about LGBTQ+
themes, people, stories and navigate
an ever-evolving scenario.



Maria Paola Mosca

Nov. 9th, 2023

Words, when said and articulated in the right way, can change
someone's mind.

They can alter someone's belief.

A simple choice of words can make a difference between
someone accepting or denying your message.

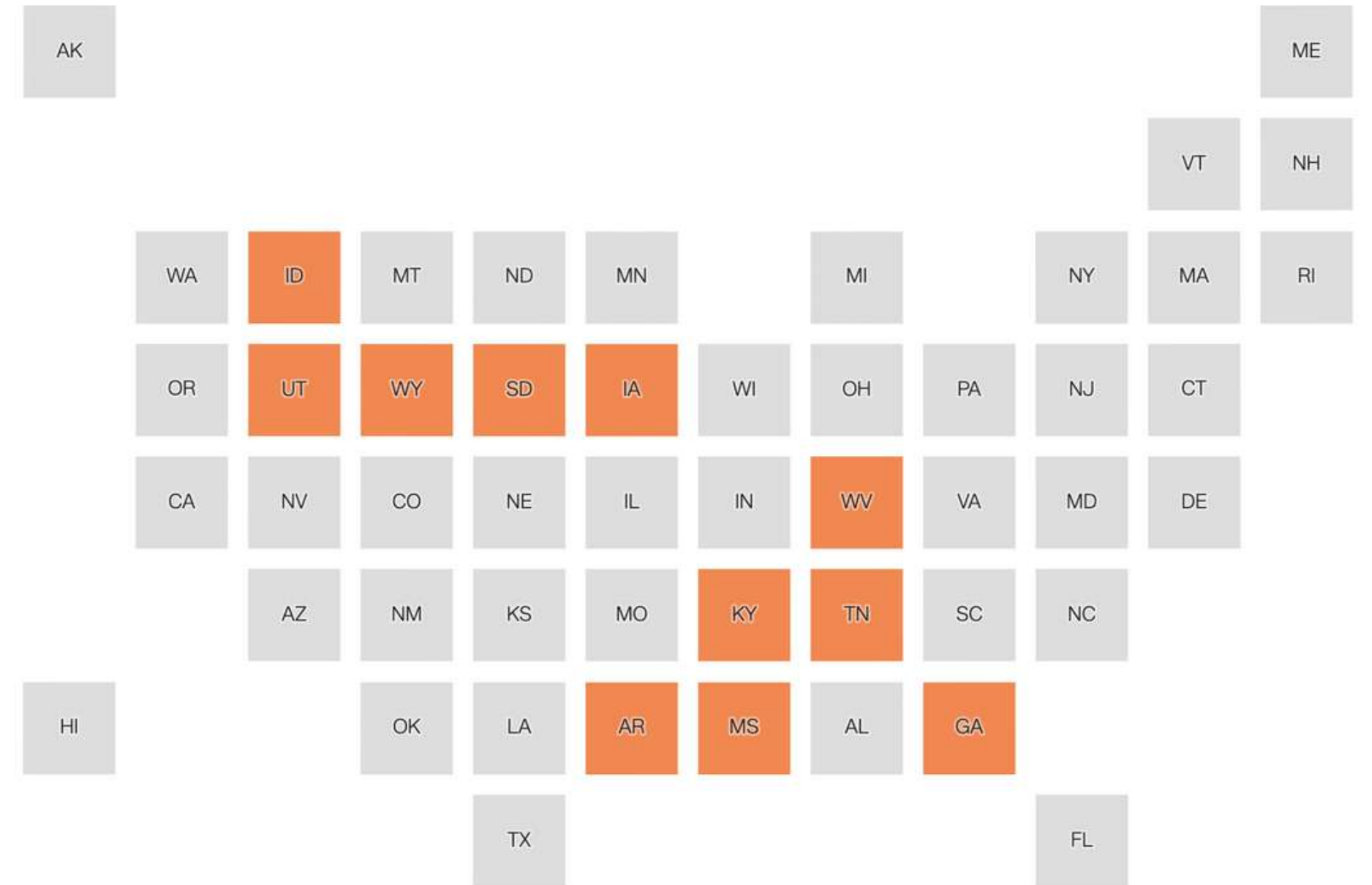
***"People learn from seeing or not seeing themselves that
maybe they don't belong"***

- Heather Hiles, Chair of Black Girls Code

a big(ger) picture - what's happening

11 states have passed anti-LGBTQ legislation this year

So far this year, 24 bills that restrict LGBTQ rights in the United States have passed in 11 states.

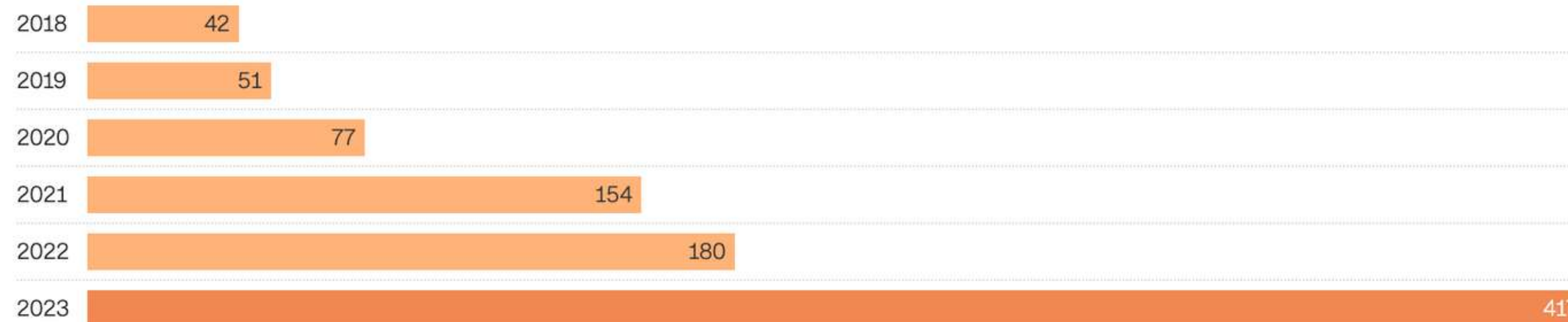


Note: Data as of April 3, 2023. A federal judge paused enforcement of Tennessee's drag ban hours before it was set to go into effect.

Source: American Civil Liberties Union
Graphic: Annette Choi, CNN

Legislation targeting LGBTQ rights more than doubled since last year

Number of anti-LGBTQ bills introduced in state legislatures each session



Note: Data as of April 3, 2023. Bills carried over from previous legislative sessions are included in each year.

Source: American Civil Liberties Union
Graphic: Annette Choi, CNN

% of U.S. adults who think of themselves as ...



Note: Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 18-Aug. 21, 2022.

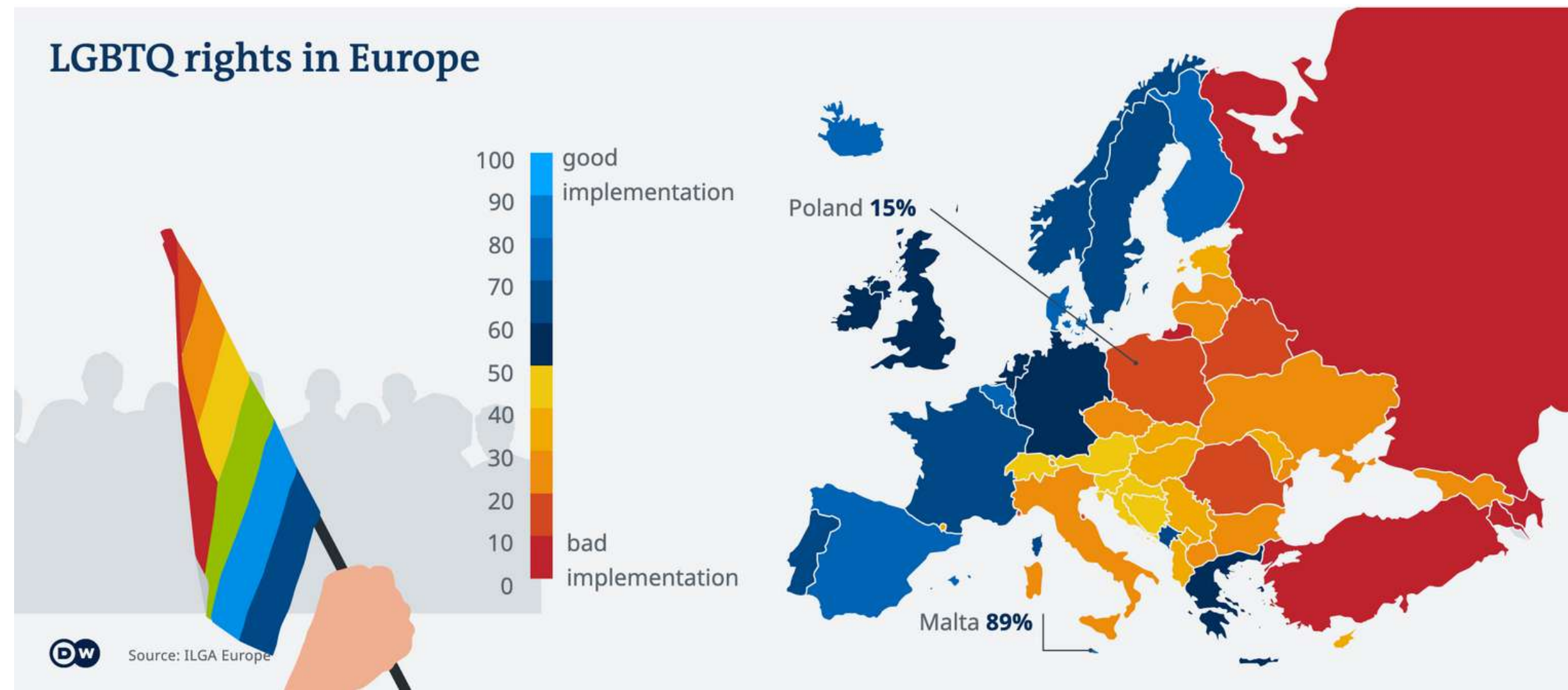
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

a big(ger) picture - what's happening

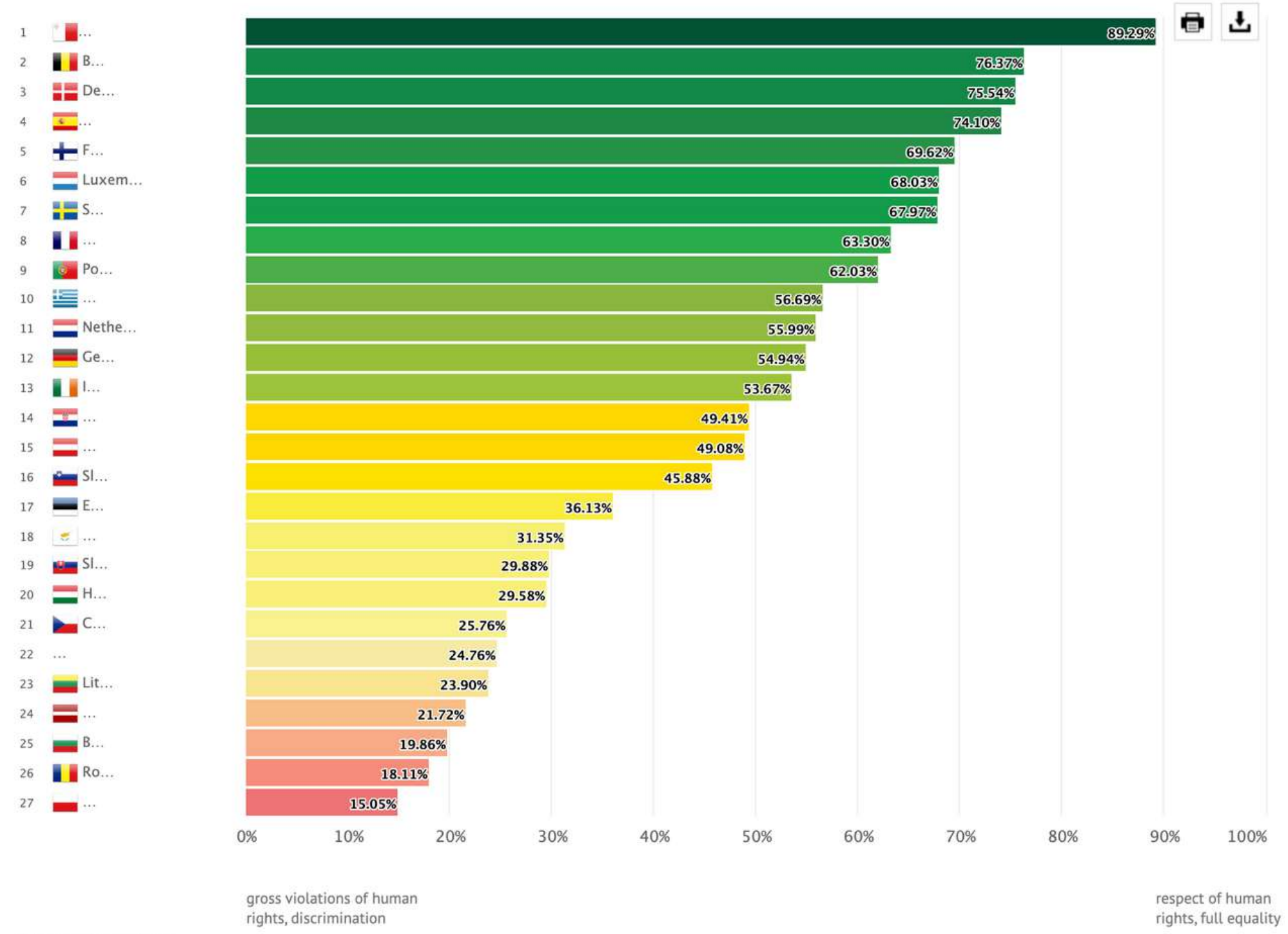
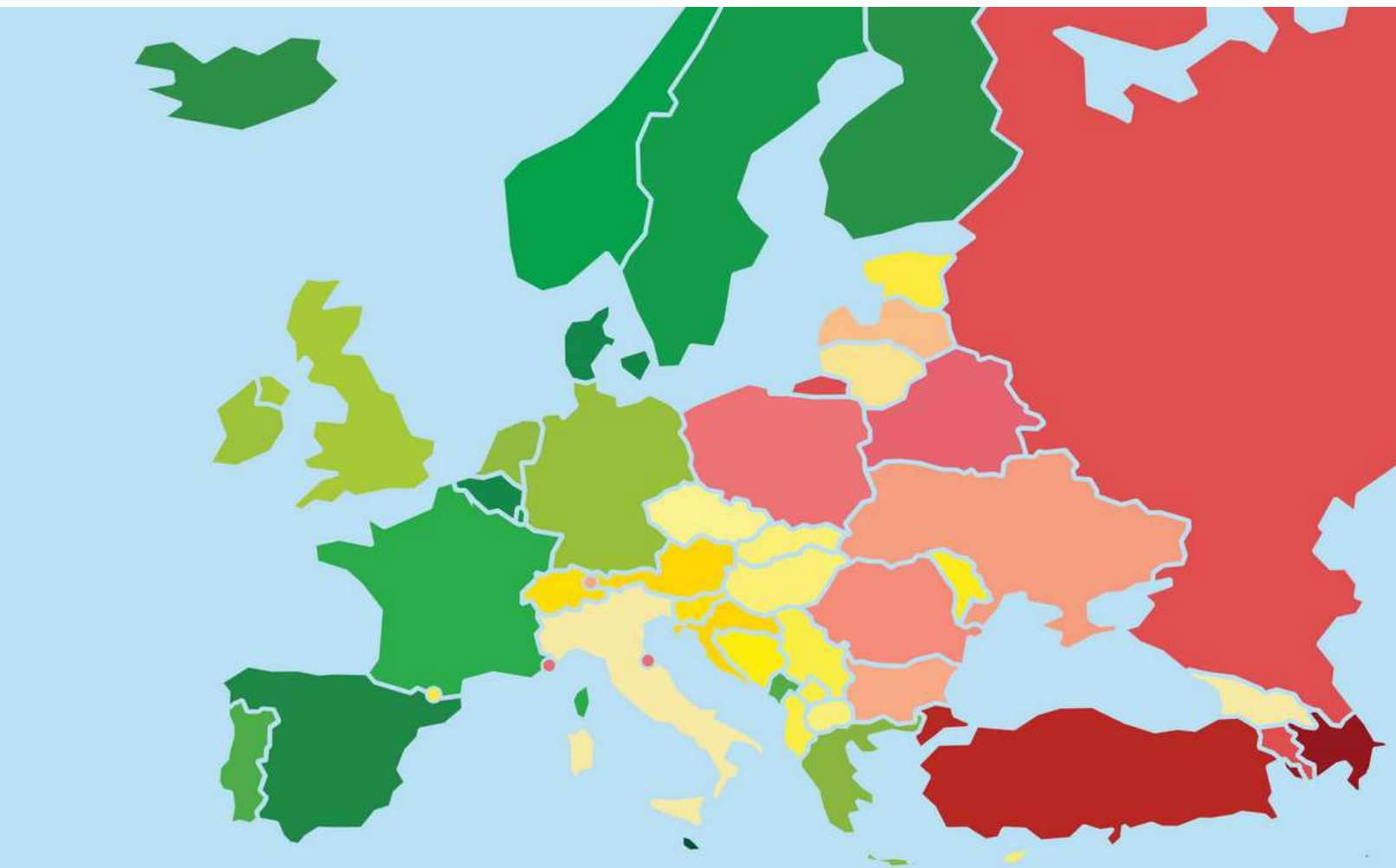
4 October 2023: the Council of Europe's Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity, and Inclusion published **twelve recommendations** to its member states to combat LGBTI-phobic hate crimes.

I.e.:

- Improving the capacity and training of law enforcement agencies.
- Promoting accessible reporting for victims.
- Improving implementation and enforcement of existing legal frameworks.
- Survey and research on hate crimes.



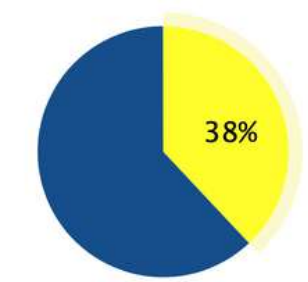
a big(ger) picture - Europe / EU



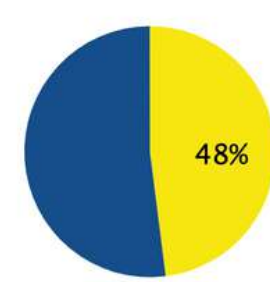
*under UNSCR 1244/99

All Countries

Europe overall score
Achieved LGBTI human rights



EU overall score
Achieved LGBTI human rights



ILGA-Europe is part of **ILGA International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association** - independent, international non-governmental umbrella organisation

a big(ger) picture - numbers

Europe / EU

KEY INSIGHTS

City with most respondents saying it's a good place to live for LGBTQ people

Oslo, Norway

Country where LGBTQ people can be most open about their sexuality

The Netherlands

Country with the strongest LGBTI rights

Malta

Country with the most LGBTI people satisfied with their lives

The Netherlands

PREJUDICE AGAINST LGBTQ PEOPLE

Countries with most and least people saying the government combats prejudice

Most: Malta ; Least: Poland

Countries with most and least LGBTI people saying they'd been assaulted

Most: North Macedonia ; Least: Portugal

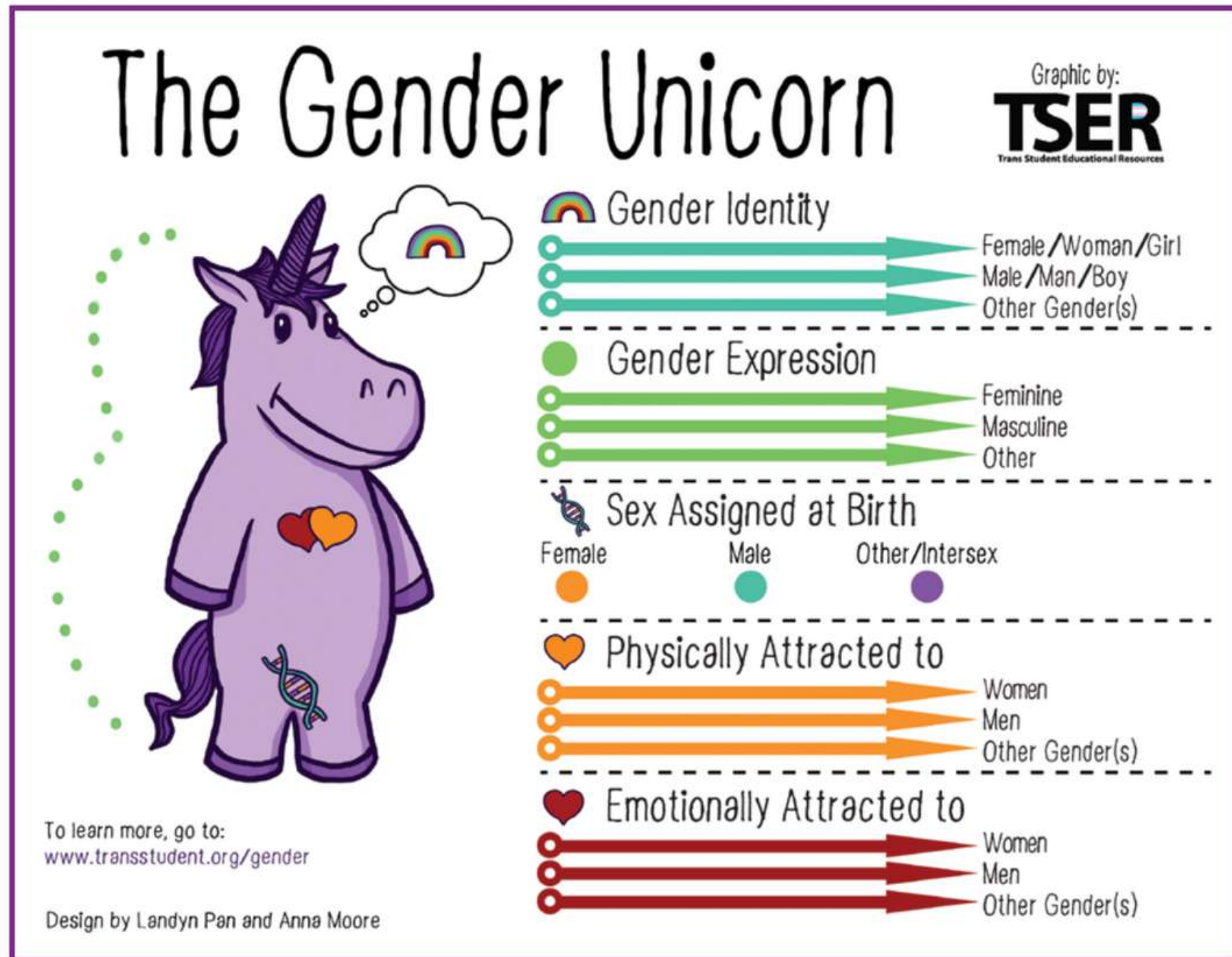
LGBTI groups with most and least people saying they experienced an assault

Most: Intersex people ; Least: Bisexual women

Countries with most and least LGBTI people having experienced discrimination

Most: Lithuania ; Least: Denmark

the baseline



Sexual orientation

"each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender."*

Gender identity

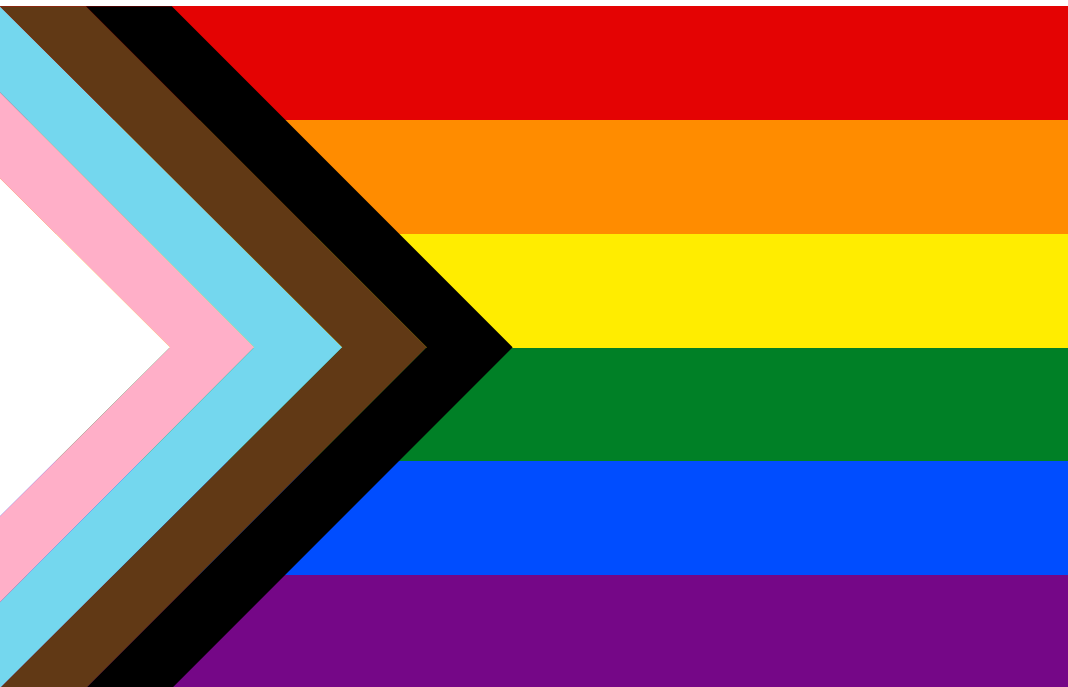
"each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms."*

Gender expression

refers, then, to a person's manifestation of their gender identity, for example through 'masculine', 'feminine' or 'gender variant' behaviour, clothing, haircut, voice or body characteristics.*

* International Commission of Jurists (2007), Yogyakarta principles: principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, March 2007.

a big(ger) picture - terms



2018

LGBTQ+ (“queer”, or “questioning”)

- **avoid:** gay community
- **prefer:** LGBT, LGBTQ+

Queer: An umbrella term that includes everyone who is not exclusively heterosexual. It includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, intersex persons.

Sexual orientation:

- **prefer:** lesbian, bisex, gay, queer, asexual, ...

Transgender (an umbrella adjective to describe people whose gender identity or expression differs from the sex assigned at birth.)

- **avoid:** transexual (outdated)

Gender dysphoria: A sense of unease that a person may have because of a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender.

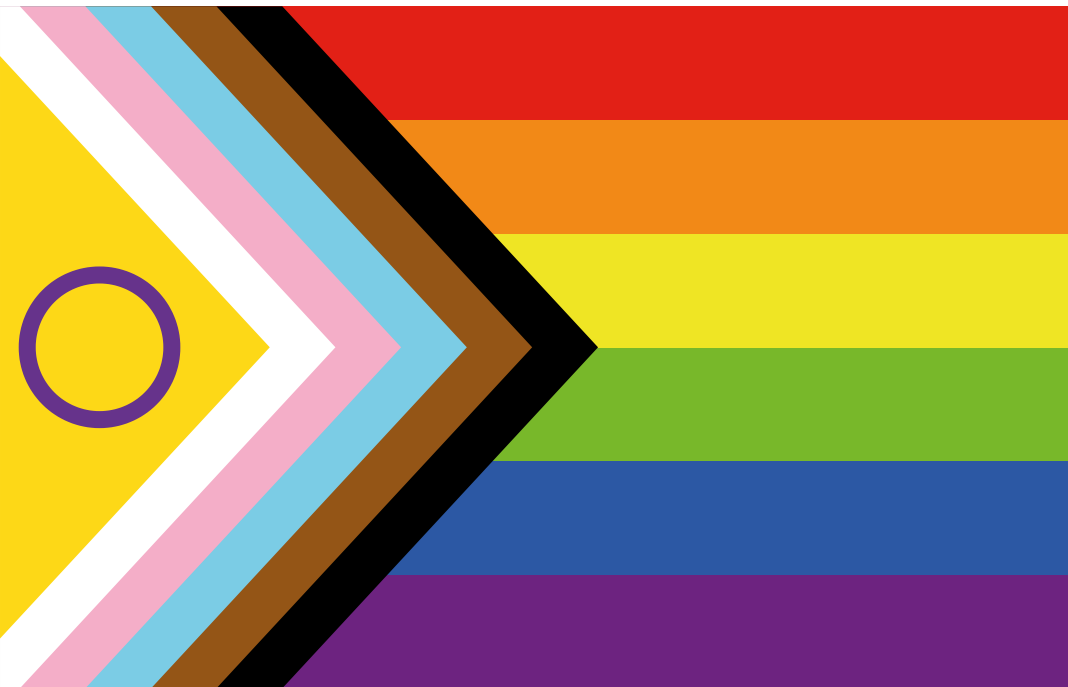
Coming out: the process by which one accepts one’s own sexuality, gender identity, or status as an intersexed person (to “come out” to oneself), and also to the process by which one shares with others.

Outing: Involuntary disclosure of one’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status. Threats of outing can be a tool for blackmail and extortion.

Out

- **avoid:** openly gay

a big(ger) picture - terms



2021

Ally

Non binary/non-binary

- do not use: NB

Misgendering: intentionally or unintentionally referring to a person (especially a trans gender person), or using language to describe a person that doesn't align with their affirmed gender.

Biphobia, homophobia, transphobia

terms to avoid:

homosexual

- prefer: gay, lesbian, gay men / women

homosexual relationship

- prefer: relationship, couple

sexual preference: it is used to inaccurately suggest "a choice" that can be changed.

- prefer: sexual orientation)

Gay/LGBTQ/lesbian... lifestyle: there is no ONE lifestyle and again it implies a "choice".

- prefer: LGBTQ+ people

Gay/special rights

- equality (for LGBTQ+ people)

where do
we go
from
here?



Ugo Rondinone, 1999 @ ARKEN, Copenhagen, 2022

visibility?

LGBTQ people are more visible than even in mainstream media

visibility does not automatically leads to larger social acceptance

hate speech & hate crime

discrimination

A different treatment based on a perceived membership in a socially salient group, which causes social harm.

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Multiple discrimination
- Experienced discrimination
- Victimization
- Harassment

main narratives

a *threat* to children safety - pedophilia, sex education, sexual expression, "grooming" narrative, ...

negative othering - us vs them

protecting the "natural family" or "natural order" (es, as established by God) and the equality rights.

"*heteroactivism*":

- assert the supremacy of binary genders as a matter of law and policy, undermine LGBTQ and other liberalizing social policies - via, for example, of discrimination laws, free speech policies supporting attacks on academic freedom and supporting speakers who distain trans rights, parental rights claims undermining public school education on sexual and gender minorities and related liberal or progressive actions seen as undermining the 'natural order'.

how to report?

Lear from the community and educate your audience

Challenge myths

Think about freedoms

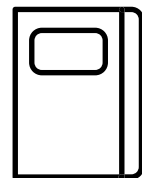
Give voice to the sources

Promote nuances

Consider... "inclusion"

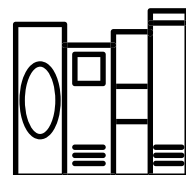
whenever in doubt, ask!

where in the (digital) world?



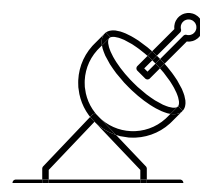
Glossaries

- GLADD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) - [Terms](#)
- ILGA Europe
- TJA (Trans Journalist Association) - [Glossary of Terms](#)



Resources and data

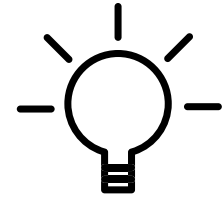
- [Rainbow Europe Map](#) (ILGA Europe)
- [ILGA World Maps](#) and [ILGA Annual Review](#) (EU)
- GATE (Global Actions for trans Equality) - [publications](#)
- [EJC](#) (European Journalist Center)
- VICE - [The Gender Spectrum Collection](#) (repository of stock photos - non bi)
- ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) - ["Mapping attacks on LGBTQ Rights"](#)
- LGBTQ+ in the workplaces: Catalyst (LGBT in the [workplace](#)) and McKinsey ["Active Allyship"](#)



Media outlet reporting on LGBTQ+

- [Them](#) (Conde Nast)
- [NCBOut](#)
- [Reuters LGBT Headlines](#)
- [POLITICO](#) LGBTQ Community
- The Guardian
- The New York Times
- The Washington Post
- The Advocate
- LGBTQ Nation

where in the (digital) world?



Style guides and guidelines

- **Associated Press (AP):** The AP Stylebook is one of the most widely used style guides in journalism. It includes a section on LGBTQ+ reporting with guidance on terminology, grammar, and coverage.
- **BBC** style guide for reporting on LGBTQ+ issues.
- **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)** style guide.
- **GLAAD Media Reference Guide 11th Edition** a comprehensive resource for journalists and media makers on LGBTQ+ issues. It includes guidance on terminology, coverage, and sourcing.
- NLGJA: The Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists Stylebook on LGBTQ Terminology
- ILGA-Europe (Guidelines for Journalists)
- TJA (Trans Journalist Association) - Style Guide for Journalists

the future remains ours to shape through vision, ethics, and responsible innovation.

Thank you.