

UNHRC 2

*United Nations
Human Rights
Council*



Committee: United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

Topic: Safeguarding the Well-being of LGBTQ+ Youth

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Hello delegates! Welcome to the United Nations Human Rights Council. We are excited to have you participate in the 24th edition of SPISMUN del Paseo. Share ambitions, solutions and hope to solve your committee's topic, strive for the better of your committee delegates, good luck!

If you have any questions, please feel free to share them at spismunpaseo@sanpatricio.edu.mx.

Sincerely,

Ha-June Lee

I. COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) serves as a beacon of hope and progress in the global pursuit of safeguarding fundamental human rights. However, people of all ages, across various regions, continue to face significant violations of their human rights. Comprising 47 member states elected by the UN General Assembly, the council's primary mission is to promote and protect human rights worldwide.

The UNHRC operates on the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity, and non-selectivity, focusing on various thematic and country-specific human rights situations. Its work includes conducting regular reviews of each member state's human rights records, issuing recommendations, and addressing urgent situations through special sessions.



This committee plays a pivotal role in fostering dialogue, cooperation, and action to tackle global human rights challenges. As we gather to discuss the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth, the UNHRC recognizes the importance of addressing the specific challenges faced by this demographic and working towards comprehensive solutions that uphold their rights and dignity.

In societies worldwide, an unfortunate reality persists where discussions surrounding the challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community remain shrouded in taboo. This silence is exacerbated when references to gay individuals are reduced to derogatory name-calling, perpetuating harmful stereotypes. Beyond the immediate harm of such slurs, the more insidious consequences lie in the social invisibility and silence that deny individuals within the LGBTQ+ spectrum their inherent humanity.

When members of the LGBTQ+ community assert their identity, the prevailing culture too often responds with hostility, leading to a cycle of exclusion and discrimination. This exclusionary behavior can escalate from verbal abuse to physical violence, leaving enduring and harmful impacts. The underlying message becomes distressingly clear: conform to societal expectations or face the repercussions of isolation and violence. Even when LGBTQ+ individuals attempt to assimilate, they frequently find themselves targeted, underscoring the pervasive nature of discrimination and the urgent need for broader societal acceptance and understanding.

These ongoing attempts to erode the civil rights of LGBTQ+ people have a negative impact beyond the victims; they cast a stigma on the entire LGBTQ+ community. The simple fact of feeling like society holds negative attitudes about your sexual orientation, regardless of whether you experience direct hostility, can erode your mental health and your ability to develop coping skills and healthy relationships.

II. HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

The struggles faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly youth, have deep historical roots intertwined with societal attitudes, cultural norms, and legal frameworks. To comprehend the challenges they face today, it is crucial to explore the evolution of societal perceptions and legal standings regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.



The history of LGBTQ+ rights activism is marked by significant milestones. From the early protests at places like the Stonewall Inn in 1969 to the gradual decriminalization of homosexuality in various countries, the

journey towards recognizing and protecting the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals has been both arduous and transformative.

Understanding this historical context provides a foundation for comprehending the current struggles of LGBTQ+ youth worldwide. Lesbian and gay history has been obscured through the active erasure of historical references to lesbianism and homosexuality. Lesbian and gay male invisibility is maintained by the pressures which force many lesbians and gay men to conceal our sexual identities, pressures such as the threat of discrimination, harassment and violence.

The enforced invisibility of lesbian and gay male sexualities and relationships contributes to the normalization of heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships, and fuels the popular misconception that heterosexuality is natural and normal, whereas lesbianism and homosexuality are deviant and perverse. This contributes to the oppression of lesbians and gay men, not only because it fuels social prejudice against them, but also because many, particularly youth, internalize the message that they are not normal and consequently suffer insecurity, anxiety and shame:

III. CURRENT ISSUES

The challenges faced by LGBTQ+ youth manifest differently across the globe, with varying degrees of acceptance, legal protections, and societal attitudes. In fully developed countries such as the United States, LGBTQ+ youth may encounter challenges related to societal acceptance and equal opportunities.



In developing countries such as Latin America and other countries like India, where legal frameworks may not provide adequate protection, LGBTQ+ youth face additional hurdles. Cultural norms, religious beliefs, and societal expectations contribute to the marginalization of this demographic, hindering their ability to live authentically and access essential services.

In underdeveloped nations such as Liberia, LGBTQ+ youth often face substantial gaps in healthcare and education. Limited resources and pervasive discrimination exacerbate their vulnerabilities, creating significant obstacles to their overall well-being.

Despite these diverse challenges, LGBTQ+ youth globally share common threads of resilience and a desire for acceptance. Recognizing these challenges is crucial for fostering empathy and understanding among UNHRC delegates as they work towards solutions.

Globally, the average level of acceptance for LGBTQ+ people has increased since 1980. Iceland, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Canada are the top five most accepting countries, and acceptance has increased over time. Australia and Oceania, North and South America, and Western Europe have had positive changes in acceptance since 1990.

IV. UN ACTION AND RESOLUTIONS

The United Nations has taken significant steps to address the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, with a focus on youth.



Although significant progress has been made, issues such as discrimination in education, healthcare, and employment persist. In recent years, many countries have made a determined effort to strengthen human

rights protection for LGBT people, unfortunately, these efforts are only taken by developed countries.

An array of new laws has been adopted, including laws banning discrimination, penalizing homophobic and transphobic hate crimes, granting recognition of same-sex relationships, and making it easier for transgender individuals to obtain official documents that reflect their preferred gender. Training programmes have been developed for police, prison staff, teachers, social workers and other personnel, and anti-bullying initiatives have been implemented in many schools.



Resolution 32/2, adopted in 2016, emphasizes the importance of protecting LGBTQ+ individuals against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. This landmark resolution calls for an end to such discrimination and urges member states to take concrete steps to safeguard the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Additionally, the Report of the Independent Expert on Protection from Violence and Discrimination, released in 2017, provides valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, including youth. The report highlights the need for targeted interventions and recommends measures that member states can adopt to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ individuals.

While these resolutions mark significant progress, challenges persist. Member states vary in their commitment to implementing these recommendations, and disparities in the protection of LGBTQ+ rights persist globally. As the UNHRC, it is our collective responsibility to assess the

effectiveness of these resolutions and explore avenues for further action to address the specific challenges faced by LGBTQ+ youth.

V. **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**



1. How can national legislation better protect the rights of LGBTQ+ youth?
2. What measures can be taken to enhance education and awareness about LGBTQ+ issues in schools?
3. How can healthcare policies be adapted to address the specific needs of LGBTQ+ youth?
4. In what ways can discrimination and stigma against LGBTQ+ youth be effectively challenged and reduced?
5. How can international cooperation contribute to improving the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth globally?
6. What role can non-governmental organizations play in supporting LGBTQ+ youth rights and wellbeing?
7. How can the media contribute to foresting a more inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ youth?
8. What strategies can be implemented to address the intersectionality of challenges faced by youth, considering factors such as race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status?

9. How can educational institutions create safer spaces for LGBTQ+ youth and promote inclusivity?
10. What initiatives can member states undertake to actively involve LGBTQ+ youth in decision making processes related to policies affecting them?

These essential questions provide a comprehensive framework for delegates to address important aspects of LGBTQ+ youth well-being in their position papers, encouraging thorough study and thoughtful consideration of potential solutions.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the background paper has provided a comprehensive overview of the United Nations Human Rights Council, the historical context of LGBTQ+ rights, current challenges faced by LGBTQ+ youth, UN actions and resolutions, and essential questions for delegates to consider. The complexity of the issues at hand underscores the importance of collaborative efforts to safeguard the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth globally.



The journey towards inclusivity and equality is ongoing, and the UNHRC has a crucial role to play in advancing the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. By delving into the historical roots of discrimination, understanding current challenges, and exploring potential solutions, delegates can contribute meaningfully to the committee's discussions and work towards creating a more just and inclusive world for LGBTQ+ youth.

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