



Nordic Council
of Ministers

"STANDING OUT EVEN IN GROUPS TO WHICH YOU BELONG"

Conditions and co-operation
for LGBTI people who belong
to multiple minority groups in
the Nordic countries

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ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

Conditions for LGBTI people in the Nordic countries have changed over recent decades, characterised by increased access to social and legal rights, greater protection against discrimination, increased visibility and more opportunities to engage with a community. Despite this, studies show that a gender identity or sexual orientation that does not conform to societal norms is associated with an increased risk of victimisation, discrimination and physical violence, which can lead to negative health outcomes, among other things.

Living conditions for LGBTI people are influenced not only by societal norms surrounding sexual orientation or gender identity but also by other social norms such as those pertaining to gender, ethnicity, skin colour, religious affiliation and socio-economic status. Little is known about the role of these factors, and marginalised subgroups among sexual minorities are often overlooked. A number of projects funded by the Nordic Gender Equality Fund and the Nordic LGBTI Fund aim to change this, focusing on issues that specifically affect LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups.

This publication provides an insight into these Nordic co-operation projects: the problems and challenges the projects have identified, how they have been addressed and the concrete results that have been achieved. In interviews, project participants reflect on the benefits of Nordic co-operation and what is needed to improve conditions for LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups.

This publication aims to shed light on the living conditions of LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups and to disseminate knowledge and experiences from the projects to increase sustainability, benefit more people and inspire others to participate in Nordic co-operation. The publication has been produced by Nordic Information on Gender (NIKK), which is a co-operation body under the Nordic Council of Ministers. NIKK is responsible for administering the Nordic Gender Equality Fund and the Nordic LGBTI Fund.

Nordic Gender Equality Fund and Nordic LGBTI Fund

The Nordic countries and the autonomous regions are working together to ensure that LGBTI people in the Nordic Region have the same rights and opportunities as the rest of the population. As part of this work, the Nordic Council of Ministers has set up a Gender Equality Fund and an LGBT Fund. The Nordic funds finance projects in which at least three organisations from three Nordic countries work together to strengthen gender equality and the rights and opportunities of LGBTI people in the Nordic Region. In this way, the funds contribute to developing knowledge and disseminating it across borders.



INTRODUCTION

LGBTI people in the Nordic countries who belong to multiple minority groups are in a particularly vulnerable position. These groups are exposed to several forms of discrimination and marginalisation based on, for example, racism, homophobia and ableism. Studies show that LGBTI people with disabilities or a foreign background are more likely than other LGBTI people to report exposure to bullying, violence, threats and hate crimes. A study shows that LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups also generally have poorer finances than other LGBTI people (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, 2022).

Sometimes the term *intersectional discrimination* is used to capture how different types of oppression interact and affect conditions for a particular group or individual. LGBTI people who experience intersectional discrimination face structural barriers that affect conditions in different areas of society, such as the labour market and the housing market.

Multiple stress or *multiple minority stress* refers to the effects of overlapping forms of discrimination of people belonging to multiple minority groups. Being a minority increases the risk of being exposed to various psychosocial stressors, such as having to deal with bullying, discrimination and violence. Such stressors can affect mental health. More quotidian, subtle negative events can also contribute to minority stress. These are called microaggressions and can include, for example, looks and comments that reflect a lack of understanding or prejudice.

A RECURRING THEME in the studies on conditions for LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups is a constant sense of being different. There is a feeling of standing out even in groups to which you 'belong', which can give rise to feelings of not belonging anywhere. This is described, for example, in a Swedish study in which LGBTI people belonging to ethnic minorities talk about experiences of racism and exoticisation within the LGBTI sphere (Miller, 2022).

Exotification is the portrayal of a person or group as different, fascinating or mysterious in a way that serves to be oppressive and/or reinforce stereotypes.

In the same study, LGBTI people belonging to ethnic minorities describe experiences of being invisible within the LGBTI movement. The silence surrounding, for example, Sámi or Roma LGBTI people, or LGBTI people who are racialised, contributes to ignorance of the specific experiences and challenges of these groups. This silence can lead to challenges specific to these groups not being included in the political agenda, which can result in important reforms being overlooked. Increasing visibility is therefore important for empowering LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups and promoting change.

Racialisation is a process in which society makes assumptions about a person's capacities, customs and morals, for example, on the basis of their skin colour or assumed ethnicity

(Non-Discrimination Ombudsman/Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu, 2025)

Studies in the Nordic countries also point to the need for social meeting places, highlighting the importance of access to empowering communities in which a person is not questioned on the basis of minority affiliations. Many LGBTI people who belong to several minority groups find it difficult to meet other people with similar experiences to their own, and it is also not certain that they will be represented in popular culture. The lack of role models and representation is repeatedly highlighted as a problem in Nordic studies and by organisations that bring together LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups.

ONE GROUP THAT HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED as particularly vulnerable in the Nordic Region is LGBTI asylum seekers. In many cases, these are people who have fled persecution in their countries of origin and are still dealing with trauma. At the same time, they are forced to live under uncertain conditions even here in the Nordic Region. Language barriers and asylum status can limit their options. There have also been reports of LGBTI people being subjected to harassment, violence and sexual violence in asylum centres (SOU, 2017). Transgender asylum seekers often face particular challenges, not least those requiring gender-affirming care. In Sweden, for example, asylum seekers are not able to receive an assessment for gender dysphoria. This means that they cannot access gender-affirming treatment unless they already have a diagnosis and have started hormone treatment. Asylum

processes are often long, as are waiting times for gender-affirming treatment. This means that many asylum seekers requiring gender-affirming treatment are forced to wait many years and live with gender dysphoria and the potentially severe consequences in the meantime (Young Håkansson, 2024). Some enter the informal labour market, where they can face exploitation, to try and pay for their treatment themselves.

Another group that is particularly vulnerable in a Nordic context is Sámi LGBTI people. Racism against the Sámi can take many different forms and is based on colonial notions of indigenous people being less developed. These images are also projected onto Sámi LGBTI people, who also face homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. The Swedish report *Våld mot samiska kvinnor* (Violence against Sámi women) from 2024 reported for the first time on exposure to violence among Sámi LGBTI people, with statistics showing that they experience significantly higher rates of exposure than the Sámi population overall (Brandén et al., 2024). The underlying causes of violence among Sámi LGBTI people and the identity of perpetrators is not clear from the study, and the researchers emphasise the need for more knowledge. At the same time, they write that their results are in line with other research that shows LGBTI people in general are more exposed to violence than other groups.

In general, there is very little research on the living conditions of Sámi LGBTI persons. A Norwegian study interviewed Sámi LGBTI people who described challenges linked to invisibility, a lack of meeting places, the importance of religion in Sápmi, double minority stress and pressures to live up to certain expectations both as an LGBTI person and as a Sámi (Grønningsæter et al., 2009). Since the study was published, a Sámi LGBTI movement has begun to emerge through, for example, the 'Queering Sápmi' project, the recurring Sápmi Pride event and the growing Garmeres organisation. New figures from 2024 on Sámi LGBTI people's exposure to violence can be seen as an expression of the fact that there is still much to be done to improve conditions for Sámi LGBTI people.

THE PARTICULAR VULNERABILITY OF LGBTI PEOPLE WHO BELONG TO MULTIPLE MINORITY GROUPS is also confirmed by studies from the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA). They find, for example, that LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups are more likely than other LGBTI people to report discrimination in the labour market, housing and education. LGBTI persons who belong to multiple minority groups are also more likely to experience barriers to health care and discrimination in public spaces such as shops, restaurants and bars (ILGA, 2023). The report is based on data produced by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in its second LGBTI survey from 2019, which was analysed by ILGA with regard to ethnicity, religion and migration experience, among other factors. Overall, the report shows that LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups are more likely than other LGBTI people to be at risk of violence, poor health and social and economic marginalisation.

This is also confirmed by a report focusing on conditions for transgender people, produced by Transgender Europe (TGEU), which shows, among other things, that transgender people who are BIPOC (black, indigenous, people of colour) are disproportionately affected by poverty and economic insecurity and that exposure to violence is particularly high for non-white transgender people (Karsay, 2021).

"ROMA LGBTI PEOPLE NEED TO FIND EACH OTHER"

Britt-Inger Hedström Lundqvist works at Dikko, which publishes Roma literature, and together with the publisher, participates in the project Antigypsyist homophobia and LGBTIQ Roma rights in the Nordics, which received funding from the Nordic LGBTI Fund in 2022. Also involved in the project are the MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society, Södertörn University in Sweden and the LGBTI organisation Seta in Finland. The project will culminate in an anthology on the conditions of Roma LGBTI people in the Nordic region.

WHY IS THE BOOK IMPORTANT?

– It is important because there is a taboo around LGBTI issues within the Roma minority. Many people do not dare to say that they are queer, but queer Roma exist! The book is also important because it highlights the double discrimination faced by LGBTI Roma in majority society.

IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE BOOK THAT PARTICULARLY TOUCHED YOU?

– There are of course a diversity of experiences, but it is clear that many feel a great sense of loneliness, and those stories have affected me. Family is very important among us Roma and Travellers. Staying together is important. Yet there are those among us who are so alone. That grabbed me.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR ROMA LGBTI PEOPLE?

– This book is one step. I hope it will help us improve visibility for the LGBTI community within the Roma minority. I think we can learn a lot from how the Sámi community has worked. There is greater visibility and openness. The most important thing now, I think, is that Roma LGBTI people need to find each other and come together, both to counteract that loneliness and drive change, because I really believe that change must be driven by this group. There is a need for Roma LGBTI organisations or Roma communities within the broader LGBTI movement.

WHAT DO YOU GAIN, WORKING ON THE BOOK PROJECT, FROM CO-OPERATION WITHIN THE NORDIC REGION?

– You become a much larger group and can support each other. My impression is that it is currently somewhat easier to work on this issue in Sweden than in Finland and Norway, and then we can take the lead. In another situation, the conditions will be different and someone else can take over the wheel.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES?

– There are differences in how the Roma minority is defined. In Sweden, more groups are included. This can be challenging in some ways, but it makes us a bigger group and better heard. It seems that Roma and Travellers have a stronger position here in Sweden than in the other countries, and this helps.



NORDIC CO-OPERATION FOR STRONGER RIGHTS

In recent years, there have been a number of initiatives in the Nordic Region to improve conditions for LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups. A number of projects with this aim have received funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers' Nordic Gender Equality Fund and Nordic LGBTI Fund. The two funds finance co-operation to promote gender equality and the rights of LGBTI people in the Nordic Region, and this text describes lessons learned from projects focused specifically on improving conditions for LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups.

All the projects help to create platforms where LGBTI people from different Nordic countries can meet for discussion and organisation. The projects shed light on experiences that are otherwise often rendered invisible and help to identify solutions and strategies that can strengthen the rights of various groups under the LGBTI umbrella. The projects use different methods and address different target groups.

The text is based on project descriptions and interviews with key people in the following projects:

- [Network gathering for experience exchange among queers in Sápmi](#)
- [Nordic Futures: QTIBIPoC Movement Based Learning](#)
- [Gender Talks in Sápmi](#)
- [Antigypsyist homophobia and LGBTIQ Roma rights in the Nordics](#)
- [Minority Stress – Interfem's Network for Feminist Activism](#)

SEVERAL OF THE SPOKESPERSONS for the Nordic projects emphasise that LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups must be allowed to speak for themselves and take leading roles in the current efforts. This is emphasised for several reasons. For example, it can be difficult for outsiders to understand the complexities of belonging to a minority group, which can lead to ineffective measures being proposed.

Another reason people who are themselves members of the group concerned should lead efforts is that it contributes to representation. It also provides opportunities for productive dialogue within the minority group concerned. Many minority groups are severely marginalised by the surrounding society, and when outsiders raise problems regarding the conditions of LGBTI people within the group, it may be perceived as the majority society once again exerting control.

A spokesperson for one of the Nordic projects says:

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It hardly contributes to reducing homophobia and transphobia, and rather risks reinforcing norms.

In interviews with spokespersons for the Nordic projects, there are recurring descriptions of how minority groups can be forced to close themselves off as a form of protection against the majority society, and that this can create problems for LGBTI people. Isolationism can reinforce norms, and in the worst cases those who deviate can be subjected to honour violence or exclusion. Restrictive norms can also lead to LGBTI people feeling that they have to choose between different aspects of their identity: either living in the closet or leaving their community to be open about their LGBTI identity.

HOWEVER, SEVERAL SPOKESPERSONS FOR THE NORDIC PROJECTS emphasise that far from all LGBTI people experience vulnerability within their minority group. Many belong to supportive families and communities. Perceptions of narrow-minded norms and homophobia can in some cases result from negative stereotypes about different minority groups, which makes it all the more important not to rely on preconceived ideas.

Spokespersons for the Nordic projects believe that co-operation between different minority groups is important to strengthen the rights of LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups. There is a sense that some minorities are better at talking about the conditions of LGBTI people within their own group, and that there are lessons to be learnt for minority groups in which LGBTI issues are associated with a greater sense of taboo.

FOR MANY LGBTI PERSONS BELONGING to multiple minority groups, the biggest obstacles arise in relation to the majority society. Several spokespersons for the Nordic projects return to descriptions of minority stress and vulnerability in different areas of society. One spokesperson describes how knowledge of minority stress has increased and calls for initiatives that put this knowledge into practice, with concrete support programmes for vulnerable groups and individuals:

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There is obviously a need to address the structural causes of minority stress, but also initiatives to help people live in this world as it is.

Several spokespersons recognise that LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups may need support. At the same time, these groups may have less access to support and care institutions within society because health professionals, psychologists and counsellors often lack knowledge and understanding of the conditions under which these groups live.

This is highlighted, for example, in connection with the report *Våld mot samiska kvinnor* (Violence against Sámi women), which shows significant levels of violence among Sámi LGBTI people. The report also shows that many in the Sámi community have little confidence in the healthcare system and are reluctant to seek treatment for fear of being subjected to racism. Many Sámi have also had personal encounters with psychologists or counsellors who lack cultural competences and therefore cannot provide good support. This picture is confirmed by a spokesperson for one of the Nordic projects, who emphasises that this is important to keep in mind to fully understand the difficult situation of Sámi LGBTI people who have experienced violence:

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There are clear reasons to suspect that these people do not have access to good support.

SEVERAL SPOKESPERSONS FOR THE NORDIC PROJECTS emphasise the need for more knowledge about the conditions for LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups. They highlight the need for more knowledge about the effects of marginalisation within the majority society and conditions in different minority communities.

In the Sámi community, for example, it is more common for queer people to leave their local community and move to a large city than other Sámi, but there are not enough studies to show why this is the case.

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It may be that people move to places where there is a larger queer community, and that is understandable, but if you really want to stay in your local community it is very important that that it is an option, especially since the Sámi identity is so closely linked to the land to which we belong,” says a spokesperson for a project that aims to contribute to a vital debate on gender, gender equality and LGBTI issues within the Sámi community.

The same spokesperson also emphasises the need to ensure visibility of queer people in Sámi history, to show that LGBTI people have always existed in Sámi society.

THE OVERALL PICTURE GIVEN by spokespersons for the Nordic projects is that many LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups risk feeling insecure or excluded within both majority society and their minority groups. They also perceive that many do not feel fully welcomed within the LGBTI movement, which is confirmed by existing research in the field.

At the same time, spokespersons for the Nordic co-operation projects see significant commitment within the broader LGBTI movement and a willingness to work on issues of intersectional discrimination. Strong solidarity from major LGBTI and gender equality organisations is highlighted as important. At the same time, the need to create new separatist platforms is also emphasised, and several of the Nordic projects aim to help establish and strengthen such communities. Finding ways of working that enable larger, established organisations to contribute and provide support without being ‘overrun’ is described as key. One example is the project Network gathering for experience exchange among queers in Sápmi. The project organised a network meeting for actors involved in the LGBTI movement in Sápmi. The project was administered by the Norwegian foundation the Nordic Women’s University (KUN), but it was Sámi LGBTI organisations and networks that set the agenda. For such an approach to work, effective co-operation is needed and actors linked to larger organisations must be prepared to listen to the type of support needed, as expressed by a representative from KUN:

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Otherwise, the risk is that those of us in the larger organisations will take over. In this case, it would have meant a form of Norwegianization or colonisation.

BASED ON THE INTERVIEWS WITH SPOKESPERSONS from the Nordic projects, it is clear that Nordic co-operation can be of great importance in work to improve conditions for LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups. One important aspect highlighted is that a Nordic perspective expands the community, which is sometimes small in the individual countries. Greater involvement is described as a strength that makes it easier to implement activities and outreach.

This is emphasised, for example, by spokespersons for a project focused on the rights of Roma LGBTI people. Under the project, an anthology is being compiled with texts from about 20 Roma LGBTI people from Sweden, Norway and Finland. Had the anthology only focused on one of the countries, fewer voices would have been heard, the spokespersons emphasise. They also describe how individuals and groups in the different Nordic countries can benefit from each other by working together. In their experience, conversations about conditions for Roma LGBTI people have come somewhat further in Sweden than the other countries, and for the individuals and groups leading the change in Norway and Finland, this means that Nordic co-operation can act as a springboard.

FOR MANY MINORITY GROUPS, it is self-evident that efforts to strengthen the group's rights should take place across national borders. The Roma, for example, are a transnational minority and the Sámi community spans several nations.

Within the Sámi LGBTI movement, the opportunity to apply for funding for projects that span several countries is described as crucial. The funding that is available for civil society is usually tied to a particular country, which makes it more difficult for associations that are international, such as the LGBTI organisation Garmeres. The organisation is currently based in Norway, but it aims to become a Sámi LGBTI organisation for the whole of Sápmi. Several spokespersons from various projects also emphasise that activists, politicians and other actors in the Nordic countries can learn and be inspired by work in other countries, since the Nordic countries are not necessarily at the forefront. In the project, which will culminate in an anthology on the conditions of Roma LGBTI people, one of the texts will focus on lessons learnt from other countries, such as Germany and Romania. According to a spokesperson for the Nordic project, organisation is stronger among Roma LGBTI people and there are more open-minded pioneers.

THE NORDIC PROJECTS make it clear that LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups living in the Nordic region face significant vulnerability. At the same time, spokespersons for these Nordic projects paint a hopeful picture. They recognise that there are committed individuals and groups who can lead change if they are given the resources and conditions to grow, as the Nordic funds are helping to do.

"AS LONG AS RACIST STRUCTURES EXIST, WE NEED PLATFORMS WHERE WE CAN GET SUPPORT"

Tine Alavi works at Interfem, an organisation that runs the project Minority Stress – Interfem's Nordic Network for Feminist Activism. The project received funding from the Nordic Gender Equality Fund in 2022 and also involves Feministparaplyet Åland (the Feminist Umbrella Åland) and Salam Norway, an organisation for Muslim LGBTI people. During the project, the organisations have arranged network meetings on minority stress for women and transgender people facing racism. Meetings have been held in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland.

WHO HAS PARTICIPATED?

– We have had participants of all ages, from 18 to 60, and some really young participants too, because people could bring their children. We have had 40–80 participants per meeting, and sometimes we unfortunately had to turn people away because there was not enough space. There has been a lot of interest.

WHY ARE SUCH MEETINGS IMPORTANT?

– Many of the participants have said that it is their first time being in a room like this, with so many others who share their experiences. Such meeting places become empowering forums where one's experiences are validated; they offer opportunities to meet others to organise with for change. For example, a number of participants from Norway, who met through the network meetings, formed their own Interfem organisation, so now we have a sister organisation in Norway. It is very important that there are platforms where women and transgender people who face racism can support each other and develop collective strategies to deal with minority

stress. As long as the racist structures that cause minority stress exist, we need to create platforms where we can get support and where we can overcome isolation and loneliness, but of course other efforts are also needed.

WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE TO COUNTER MINORITY STRESS AND SUPPORT THOSE INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS AFFECTED?

– Research and knowledge on minority stress is relatively new, but we now know that it causes problems for both individuals and society. Minority stress leads to increased risk of physical and mental health problems. It includes, for example, the constant worry of being met with negative perceptions and always having to be on standby. This is a stress that majority groups do not experience. There is still a need for more knowledge about minority stress, but above all I think we are in a situation now where knowledge needs to be implemented in different areas of society. How do you deal with this in, for example, education, health care, the labour market and social services? Many people find it difficult to find a psychologist with expertise in minority stress, for example, and that should not be the case. Support from society needs to be better. More work is also needed to counteract the structures that cause minority stress.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF TAKING A NORDIC APPROACH TO THIS WORK?

– One reason is that the racism that exists in the Nordic countries has a specific expression. The Nordic countries have not tackled racism in the same way as the USA, for example. They talk more openly about their history and colonialism, and the Nordic countries have a very strong self-image as being tolerant and accepting. This makes it difficult to label the racism that exists, and when it is pointed out, there can be a clash with that tolerant self-image. We have seen during the network meetings that this is something that leaves an impression on people who encounter racism.



KEY MESSAGES FROM THE NORDIC CO-OPERATION PROJECTS

The interviews with project spokespersons can be summarised in a number of key messages:

CO-OPERATION:

- Nordic co-operation is a factor in success. Co-operation expands the LGBTI community, which is sometimes small in individual countries. Greater involvement is a strength that facilitates the work and makes it easier to implement activities and conduct outreach.
- Co-operation between different minority groups is important to strengthen the rights of LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups. The spokespersons for the Nordic projects emphasise that some minorities are better at talking about the conditions for LGBTI persons within their own group, and there are lessons to be learned for minority groups in which LGBTI issues are associated with a greater sense of taboo.

KNOWLEDGE:

- Existing knowledge needs to be implemented in various areas of society, such as education and health care, but also in the labour market in general.
- More knowledge is needed about the conditions for LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups. Several spokespersons for the Nordic projects highlight the need for more knowledge about the effects of marginalisation in the majority society and about the conditions in different minority communities.
- It is important to provide a historical perspective and make it clear that LGBTI people have always existed within minority groups.
- It is important to utilise the knowledge and experiences of minorities within the LGBTI group.

FUNDING:

- It is important to have funding that is not limited to one country but available in several countries. This makes it possible for international organisations that span several Nordic countries to apply for funding.

ORGANISATION:

- Separatist platforms are needed where LGBTI people belonging to multiple minority groups can be open about all parts of their identities and not be questioned.
- LGBTI people who belong to multiple minority groups must be allowed to take up leadership roles in projects and organisations, and to speak for themselves. At the same time, it is important to have cohesion and openness within the broader LGBTI movement.

"MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE RACIALISED AS NON-WHITE FEEL THAT THEY ARE NOT ACCEPTED"

Samaria Mata Alvarez is a project manager in the Swedish youth organisation Tamam. They are involved in the project [Nordic Futures: QTIBIPoC Movement Based Learning](#), which received funding from the Nordic LGBTI fund in 2022. The project is developing a guide entitled 'Rivers in Resistance', to improve initiatives aimed at people who are QTIBIPOC. Behind the project was a sense within the organisations that existing initiatives did not always hit the mark and risked rendering invisible LGBTI people who are racialised as non-white instead of empowering them.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESS OF INITIATIVES TO EMPOWER LGBTI PERSONS WHO ARE RACIALISED AS NON-WHITE?

– People within the group need to identify the problems themselves and drive the work. It is also about everyone having the same opportunities to take on leading roles within an organisation or institution. Many people who are racialised as non-white feel that they are not able to progress. This is also true in organisations that work actively with anti-racism. The systems of oppression that exist in society are reflected in the organisations.

HOW CAN THIS BE CHANGED?

– I think it requires education about the different conditions in which we live. It also requires that organisations are prepared to listen to and make room for people who are directly affected. It's about genuinely including people and building trust. Separate meeting places are also needed, where LGBTI people who are racialised as non-white can meet others with shared experiences.

WHY ARE SEPARATIST MEETING PLACES IMPORTANT?

– It provides a space for people with shared experiences to explore issues of power and privilege. Separatist spaces offer a platform to build a community, share experiences and learn from each other. Many LGBTI spaces are white-dominated and can be difficult to navigate. The young people we work with tell us that they often feel that their identity is questioned in these environments. For example, they get many questions about how one can be both Muslim and gay.

DO CONDITIONS DIFFER BETWEEN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES?

– They seem to be quite similar. However, the conditions are different for different groups. For example, there is a big difference in conditions depending on whether you are an asylum seeker compared to if you were born here and have a parent with a Nordic background, but the need for separatist meeting places where you are not questioned on the basis of any part of your identity applies generally.

WHAT DO YOU GAIN, IN THE PROJECT, BY CO-OPERATING WITHIN THE NORDIC REGION?

– Not much is known about the situation of QTIBIPOC^[1] people in the Nordic countries. The co-operation gives us a better picture, both of what the positive are and what needs to be improved.

1. QTIBIPOC stands for queer, trans, intersex and black, indigenous, people of colour.



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