



6. Alva Träbert's Bi+Pride speech Speaker of the LSVD

A few days ago, the Ministry of the Interior announced an important and far-reaching change in the decision-making process in asylum procedures for queer refugees, for which the LSVD has long fought with its partners*: the discretion requirement has finally fallen.

For a long time, queer refugees were turned away and deported to countries of origin where they had experienced persecution and violence - and told to live their sexuality discreetly, effectively suppressed and kept secret for the rest of their lives. Bisexual asylum seekers were repeatedly told that they should suppress "half" of their identity while they could safely live out the "other half" according to the ideas of mainstream society.

The condition for safety there, then, should be lifelong invisibility, while the condition for a chance at protection in Germany is to make oneself unconditionally visible in the asylum system, and, despite fear, language barriers, and trauma consequences, to reveal intimate details on command in order to "prove" one's sexual orientation. Both are based on the assumption that bisexual people are able to turn parts of their romantic and sexual desire on and off as needed. Neither does justice to the human dignity of bisexual people.

But this assumption is also palpable in many life situations for those of us who live in Germany, with or without a German passport. What about our visibility, our invisibility, and the price we pay for both? Where we remain invisible, our life situations, perspectives and needs are not taken into account: they are missing in youth work, in gender equality work, in education about sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases, in physical and mental health care. They are missing as role models of valid and diverse relationship biographies.

But where we remain invisible, our voices are also absent from important political rallies of support with other parts of the LGBTIQ spectrum that share many of our experiences of discrimination and demands.

But where we do become visible, we are still far too often confronted with the same prejudices. Prejudice hurts, and it paves the way for exclusion, violence. Some of us continue to be excluded from donating blood. Some of us avoid health care because of experiences of discrimination, so that, for example, our cancers are detected later and are more often fatal. We are at higher risk of domestic and sexual violence, which often targets our identities.

We are therefore not concerned today with how common or how mutable bi+, pan, queer sexualities are. They are an inherent part of sexual diversity and there are as many right answers to them as there are people in our communities. We are concerned that our quality of life, our opportunities, our safety, and our social participation should not depend on these answers.

We demand that parentage and family law are adapted to the lived diversity of our life plans. We demand that the Self-Determination Act is implemented swiftly and consistently. We demand that queer-hostile hate violence finally is taken seriously, recorded and fought. And we demand that Article 3 of the Basic Law is amended to protect people of all sexual and gender identities.