

Institution: The University of Huddersfield
Unit of Assessment: 22 Social Work and Social Policy
Title of case study: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Equalities
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Research undertaken by Monro from the Centre for Research in the Social Sciences (CRISS) into the continuing marginalisation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people has influenced UK and international policymaking and practice. Addressing key issues concerning relationships between LGBT people and state institutions, the research findings have helped to shape the development of practice in central government departments, local authorities, housing associations, healthcare and community organisations and voluntary sector associations. This impact has resulted in improvement to the material and social conditions of LGBT people, enhancing their ability to contribute to society and the economy, in line with the EU Horizon 2020 theme of promoting inclusive, innovative and reflective societies. The case study provides evidence that the research has raised awareness about LGBT issues. This cultural shift is crucial to improving the life experiences and economic productivity of LGBT people, given the lack of understanding that they commonly face, and the negative impacts on their wellbeing of prejudice and social erasure.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The case study fits into the Institute for Research in Citizenship and Applied Human Sciences research area of gender and sexuality (see REF5). It exemplifies impact derived from communicating the multiple perspectives of stakeholders in ways which support issue resolution by promoting better mutual stakeholder understanding (see REF3a).</p> <p>Recognising that the implementation of legislation concerning LGBT communities has remained inconsistent, Monro has addressed citizenship and equalities issues affecting LGBT people. This research programme has been achieved through a series of research projects and outputs.</p> <p>One project, Organisational Change, Resistance and Democracy: LGBT Equalities Initiatives in Local Government, was undertaken between 2007-2010 by Monro (Research Fellow, University of Huddersfield, co-investigator) with Richardson (Professor of Sociology and Social Policy, principal investigator) at the University of Newcastle, with an ESRC grant of £230,000^a. Monro's distinctive contributions include: the study was initiated by Monro following her research at Keele University (2001-2002) and her doctoral research on transgender diversity (University of Sheffield, 2000); Monro led on developing intersectional approaches and applying these via a range of community and policy-oriented interventions; Monro overtly included bisexual communities in local government sexualities equalities studies for the first time (following its omission in the Keele study), and this subsequently led to a research programme on bisexuality.</p> <p>The Organisational Change project, conducted in Southern and Northern England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, utilised action learning sets which met four times in each region, generating a total of 16 meetings, with members representing different local authorities, community organisations and partner agencies from across the regions. The project also tracked the development and implementation of sexualities equality policies in four local authorities that were purposively sampled to represent different types, levels of performance, political colours, activity concerning equalities, and levels of deprivation. A total of 37 semi-structured interviews were conducted with strategic level and frontline local authority workers, focusing on two different service areas for each authority, and their partners in statutory sector and voluntary/community sector agencies. Further strands of the methodology consisted of 15 interviews with key national stakeholders across the three countries and five interviews with local authority representatives. The study was rated 'good' by the ESRC subsequent to completion. It provided original insights in three respects: in illuminating the operation of resistance to the LGBT equalities agenda in the organisational practices of local authorities and partner agencies in areas such as social care, youth work and leisure services^b; in developing intersectional approaches to sexualities equalities work^c; and in providing policy analysis of LGBT equalities work in the 2007-2010 period^d. Key</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

findings documented in the referenced outputs concerned the marginalisation of bisexual people in policymaking and practice; and the high levels of misunderstanding and stigmatisation that this group faces from both lesbian/gay and heterosexual populations. The findings were drawn on in a book^e published by Palgrave-Macmillan.

Community and media interest in this conclusion prompted Monro to develop further cross-cultural work concerning bisexuality. This was done initially through engagement with the UK bisexual community^f. Subsequently, in 2012-2013, Monro undertook a follow-on research project concerning bisexuality with the assistance of a Columbian researcher. Interviews were conducted in the UK and Columbia with bisexual and other non-heterosexual people, selected to represent individuals of diverse ages, ethnicities, class backgrounds, abilities and genders. Relevant blogs and websites were also analysed. The findings showed that individuals who do not fit into heterosexual, gay or lesbian categories face particular challenges concerning identity construction, social marginalisation, community-building and political activism.

3. References to the research

^a Richardson, D. and Monro, S. *Organisational Change, Resistance and Democracy: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equalities Initiatives in Local Government*. ESRC grant, reference RES-062-23-0577, October 2007 to March 2010, £230,700.

^b Richardson, D., and Monro, S. (2013) Public Duty and Private Prejudice: Sexualities Equalities and Local Government, *Sociological Review*, 61(1), 131-152.

^c Monro, S. (2010) Sexuality, Space and Intersectionality: The Case of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Equalities Initiatives in UK Local Government, *Sociology*, 44(5), 1-15.

^d McNulty, A., Richardson, D., and Monro, S. (2010) [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans \(LGBT\) Equalities and Local Governance: Research Report for Practitioners and Policy Makers](#). Unpublished report, Universities of Newcastle and Huddersfield.

^e Richardson, D., and Monro, S. (2012) *Sexuality, Diversity and Social Change: In the Name of Equality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

^f Barker, M., Richards, C., Jones, R., and Monro, S. (2011) BiReCon: An International Academic Conference on Bisexuality, *Journal of Bisexuality*, 11(2), 157-170.

4. Details of the impact

The research has significantly enhanced understanding of LGBT equalities issues¹. Crucially, it has challenged two common assumptions: firstly, that LGBT people have won all their rights; and secondly, that bisexual people do not have issues with which policymakers and practitioners should be concerned. As a result, Monro's work has had considerable influence in a number of key areas, both nationally and internationally, in the LGBT equalities field, particularly in terms of her distinctive contribution concerning bisexuality. Monro provided in excess of 12 presentations, many of them invited, to conferences and other events (for example, networks, international workshops and Pride celebrations) organised primarily for community members, policymakers and practitioners over the 2008-2013 period. For example, in Barcelona in October 2009 Monro gave a keynote address at *Against Homophobia*, an EU conference whose delegates included representatives of the European Commission and international human rights organisations.

This work had a direct influence on policy development and implementation across Europe, including the use of Monro's findings in a [White Paper](#)². In 2010 and 2011 the methodologies used for the Organisational Change, Resistance and Democracy project^a were adapted for a [major policy survey of public officials](#) and LGBT human rights in 18 countries by the Equality and Citizens' Rights Department of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. Monro's findings were also used in policy discussions in several EU member states, including Italy, where a [report](#)³ cited Monro and Richardson (2010) as describing a shift in the management of LGBT equalities from a politicised to an administrative approach. The report recommends that: '*local authorities need to make a fundamental transition from the political arena to the technical/ administrative one*'³ (page 41).

Monro was invited to provide a [seminar](#) and a workshop at the Human Sciences Research Council in Pretoria in February 2013. The workshop, which compared LGBT human rights concerns in South Africa and the UK, attracted policymakers and activists. Feedback included statements such as, '*It will make me think about the value of multiple identities*'⁴.

In the UK, the Organisational Change project was substantially drawn on in [The Bisexuality Report](#), which was published by the Open University in February 2012⁵. The report has since been downloaded more than 20,000 times and disseminated to all central government departments. Monro's contribution has subsequently been recognised by requests to assist government departments. In September 2012, following contacts made through the bisexuality research project (see above), she was invited to deliver a training workshop to the Executive at the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) who manage more than 100,000 staff. Individuals subsequently commented on the impact of this workshop. For example, one individual stated that *'I think it might have already changed some people's lives for the better. I for one feel loads better that consciousness of those around me has been raised'* (Manager, post-training feedback filed at University of Huddersfield). The workshop subsequently fuelled, in 2013, the development of nationwide DWP training which focused on equality issues for bisexual DWP employees and customers. Activities included Civil Service LGBT Awareness Learning, bisexual-specific guidance in management training, and bisexuality awareness sections in the Department of Work and Pensions LGBT History Month and International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, all documented on the DWP intranet. These interventions were directly informed by Monro's training. For instance, the national DWP HR Sexual Orientation Lead stated that *'following Surya's bisexuality training last year, I developed a new "Busting some myths about bisexuality page" on the sexual orientation section of our Diversity and Equality intranet site'* (the intranet is available to DWP employees)⁶. In October 2012 Monro also contributed to a Department of Health meeting about public health, with the Policy Adviser to the Department's Equality and Inclusion Team later reporting⁷ that she had taken note that Monro had *'stressed that Public Health England will need to provide some guidance/expertise at a national level... [to] address the health needs of LGBT people as minority communities'*.

The findings of the Organisational Change project have also influenced policies at regional and local levels. For example, the documentation for the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Hospitals NHS [Foundation Trust's Equality Delivery System](#), in November 2011, called for *'people in senior management positions ... to give a clear message about the importance of the sexualities and trans equalities agenda in relation to employment opportunities and all areas of service provision'*⁸. Monro was invited to give the keynote speech at the 2009 LGBT Health Summit, held in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and attended by 250 delegates including policymakers, practitioners and members of the local community, that helped lay the foundations for the research impacting on professional training and practice. More than 80 per cent of participants who took part in a post-conference evaluation (on file at the University of Newcastle) said that the research findings would affect their work. For instance, a housing manager stated that he would consider the needs of LGBT people more inclusively; a NHS representative said that he would make the LGBT population visible in policy and action plans; a local authority representative considered that the research would contribute to the establishment of an equality scheme for LGBT people in his organisation; and a union representative vowed to raise LGBT issues with his county council and employer. The research findings have since been drawn upon in practice guidelines, including the [Social Care Institute for Excellence's 2011 At A Glance](#) report⁹, which cited the findings in its recommendations for developing training programmes.

LGBT Equalities: Surviving Austerity, a workshop held in November 2012 for community members, policymakers and practitioners as part of an ESRC Festival of Social Sciences, also developed impact, as demonstrated in the workshop evaluation. For example, a manager in the third sector wrote: *'I am producing an LGBT strategy for my workplace, so [this] information ... will feed into it'*; An Equality Policy Officer stated that *'The findings ... will be incorporated into work done within the Welsh Local Government Association on providing equality across the public sector'*; and a member of the community and voluntary sector said: *'I will be more mindful of the wider LGBT community/sector outside of my organisation's specific focus'* (evaluation results on file at the University of Huddersfield).

The research has generated wider public appreciation of LGBT issues through media exposure which have included: widespread coverage in the LGBT press and Monro's appearance on Radio

4's *Woman's Hour* (April 2012). It has also directly stimulated LGBT diversity awareness work with approximately 130 11-to-18-year-olds at two Youth Citizenship conferences funded by the ESRC (November 2012 and November 2013) which resulted in vulnerable young LGBT people accessing support¹⁰

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- ¹ [ESRC project website](#) – provides a comprehensive overview of project activities, findings, outputs and impacts.
- ² [European White Paper \(2011\)](#): 'Combating Homophobia – Local Policies for Equality on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity', co-funded by the European Union's Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme and AHEAD (Against Homophobia European local Administration Devices) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Vienna, Austria.
- ³ [CIRSDe and Turin City Council LGBT Office](#) (eds.) (2011) 'LGBT Local Policies: Italy and the Piedmont Case', Torino: Citta di Torino.
- ⁴ Contact details (1). Clinical psychologist at the Centre for the Study of AIDS in South Africa.
- ⁵ [The Bisexuality Report](#) Contact: Meg Barker, Open University.
- ⁶ Factual statement (2). Email sent by manager, DWP; evidence concerning the impact of bisexuality diversity training across several areas of DWP work, including five intranet links.
- ⁷ Factual statement (3). Email sent by policy advisor, Department of Health concerning Monro's contribution to a public health consultation in October 2012.
- ⁸ [Newcastle-upon-Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust \(2011\)](#), Evidence for Equality Delivery System Grading, November.
- ⁹ Social Care Institute for Excellence [At a Glance](#) report, April 2011.
- ¹⁰ Factual statement (4). Email sent by youth worker demonstrating positive effects of attendance at the 'It's OK to be Gay' sessions at the Youth Citizenship conference in November.