

# **The politicization of LGBTI human rights norms in the EU-Uganda development partnership**

## **Abstract**

The EU commits to promote human rights through its development policy. This article argues that its expansive rights frame has led to EU-internal and outside-in politicization of LGBTI rights in Uganda. It views contestation as a mechanism of politicization and suggests two paths through which contestation occurs; based on the normative core or on the application of human rights conditionality. We establish these paths through a case study of politicization of LGBTI rights promotion in the Uganda-EU partnership. While member states' policies are more affected by political pressure from domestic constituents, the EU aims to depoliticize the issue and prioritises diplomatic channels. Conversely, conditionality operates as a driver for contestation in beneficiary states. Whereas postcolonial studies interpret claims of universal rights as neo-colonial intervention, our findings highlight a more nuanced applicatory contestation by rights activists. These actors insert themselves as change agents aiming to reshape the policies of international norm promoters.

**Keywords:** Norm contestation; EU development policy; LGBTI; Human rights-based approach to development; politicization

## Introduction

The EU constitutes the strongest proponent of LGBTI<sup>1</sup> rights globally, having enshrined anti-discrimination policies for its member states in its 1999 Amsterdam Treaty, and formulated minority protections for aspiring candidate countries in the 1993 Copenhagen criteria (Swiebel, 2009). Moreover, it supports LGBTI rights activists engaged in transnational networks (Ayoub, 2016). While these policies make the EU a forerunner in the promotion of human rights for LGBTI individuals, it is not the only global actor incorporating such concerns in its foreign relations, although the EU's impact as leading provider of global Official Development Assistance (ODA) is more acutely felt. A human rights-based approach in which sexual orientation and gender identity rights are subsumed, is at its core. Yet attempts to promote such rights have been contested in the EU and elsewhere, with an attendant scholarly focus on the ambiguous impact of visibility as well as EU support for human rights defenders and a resulting (de)politicization, focused largely on enlargement candidates (Muehlenhoff, 2019; Sloomaeckers et al., 2016). The politicization of LGBTI rights has also been visible in EU-African relations where, for instance, EU heads of delegations have been expelled from the Gambia and Tanzania because they criticized the treatment of LGBTI persons in these countries, and aid has been cut back as a result (EU Council, 2018).

This article examines the understudied field of promoting LGBTI human rights through development means. Scholarly works examining the EU's development policy have so far focused on the extent to which the EU's norm-based foreign policy consists of declaratory

---

<sup>1</sup> Although different terms for sexual and gender minorities exist, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex (LGBTI) is the acronym used by EU institutions.

rhetoric, adhered to mainly in countries of limited geopolitical interest to the EU (Smith, 2014). In order to provide a more nuanced analysis focused on the politicization of rights norms, we trace how political conditionality and norm contestation have acted as drivers of politicization in the EU's LGBTI rights promotion efforts. We ask: How are LGBTI norms politicized in EU development policy, as well as in African countries such as Uganda? And how does the politicization of LGBTI norms affect EU and member states' strategies for LGBTI norm promotion in third countries?

On the one hand, the EU's contestation of LGBTI human rights promotion in development policy is based primarily on grounds that it challenges the principle of state sovereignty. Aid conditionality, including the threat of withholding aid due to human rights violations, is a typical manifestation of this dilemma, and a driving force for politicization. However, in practice few human rights sanctions have been implemented as the EU prefers a dialogic engagement (Smith, 2014). We expect political conditionality together with norm contestation to drive politicization of the EU by its development partners in cases where the promotion of LGBTI rights are connected to high-visibility means such as aid-withdrawals and/or public condemnation. In order to avoid aid cut-offs, governments respond with a neo-colonial charge, and may weaken their homophobic policies only to increase pressure on civil society actors (Picq and Thiel, 2015).

On the other hand, human rights promotion through development policy is also politicized in donor countries. European civil society groups and parliaments tend to call for an accountability-driven approach towards development partners, while diplomats often argue for behind-the-scenes political dialogue. Moreover, member states have historically conditioned interests that may lead them to be more stringent in specific cases at the same

time as the EU aims at generalized LGBTI rights policy prescriptions. Given the authority transfer of development policy to EU institutions, the EU is able to de-politicize and act without public scrutiny to a greater extent than the member states. And even though the European Parliament is a quite vocal interlocutor, it has limited authority to intervene. In terms of hypothesized outcomes resulting from conditionality pressures and contestation, we detect an EU effort to de-politicize LGBTI rights in development policy, by mediating the varying member state pressures while nominally requiring a generalized human rights catalogue.

Politicization literature has focused on growing resistance to authority transfers to international organizations (Zürn et al., 2012). We add to this literature by tracing the ‘outside-in’ politicization (Hackenesch, Bergmann and Orbie, 2020) of EU rights promotion. To explore the mechanism through which outside-in politicization occurs, we chose a typical case (Gerring, 2007), namely politicization of LGBTI rights promotion in the Uganda-EU development partnership. The EU-Ugandan partnership warrants further inspection because it is the most visibly politicized case both at the partner country and the EU-level. The 2014 Ugandan anti-homosexuality act resulted in aid-cuts from several EU member states and subsequent criticism from Ugandan authorities and stakeholders. EU institutions, however, chose to continue aid and address this discriminatory law by diplomatic means. A within-case study allows for a more nuanced assessment of politicization processes that are representative of similar cases in EU-Africa relations. We trace the politicization of EU efforts to promote LGBTI rights across EU institutions, key member states as well as Ugandan stakeholders. In doing so, we highlight a sociological institutionalist logic by showing how institutions and social actors co-constitute policies that are imbued with normative content (Hall and Taylor, 1996).

## **Theoretical framework**

Zürn & de Wilde (2016) developed a framework for politicization, according to which many contentious issues in world politics today are embedded in deeper ideological struggles, with ‘cosmopolitanism’ unifying proponents of universalized norms against ‘communitarianism’, adherents of which rely more narrowly on culturally specific ideologies. It provides the broader normative frame in which the politicization of LGBTI rights (promotion) occurs in Africa. Globally, Africa and the Middle East are two regions where a large majority of states criminalize homosexuality (ILGA Europe, 2019). While the case is often made that LGBTI rights contrast with African cultures, European colonialization contributed significantly to the criminalization of hitherto widely accepted or unregulated non-conforming sexuality and gender expressions. In North Africa, this was reinforced by conservative Islamic practices, whereas in sub-Saharan Africa transnational evangelical churches, while having colonial roots themselves, increased the (hyper)visibility of this issue (Rao, 2020). Hence recent attempts to change the criminal codes and discriminatory policies in African countries led to resistance against the LGBTI rights norms, as well as the promoter of said norms. Uganda is an exemplary case where contributing factors of heightened salience, expansion of actors and norm polarization result in a politicization of its partnership with the EU.

The discursive phenomenon of politicization is a multi-causal concept that can be found in many horizontally or vertically structured power relations (Hackenesch, Bergmann and Orbie, 2020). Highlighting essential components such as an increase in salience (of LGBTI rights) with a resulting polarization of opinions (in donor and recipient countries) and an expansion of actors (involving civil society, governments and the EU), this article analytically demonstrates how an increase in LGBTI rights visibility in EU development policy has led to

politicization in Uganda and the EU. Arguing that it is important to first determine ‘what is politicized for whom’ (Hurrelmann, Gora and Wagner 2015, p. 45) before moving to a more fine-grained analysis, in the following sections we establish what arguments have been framed for which EU-internal and -external audiences, in order to identify drivers of politicization. As a shared competency between EU institutions and the member states in a largely intergovernmental setting, a medium level of authority transfer exists for development policy (Costa, 2018). Authority transfers such as including human rights conditionality in EU ODA agreements represent an EU-internal driver for politicization. Yet authority transfers or conditionality alone cannot explain politicization as it leaves out the sociocultural and cognitive characteristics of actors involved in human rights disputes. Sociological institutionalism thus complements the politicization framework by taking into account individual, collective and institutional agency in mutual interaction (Hall and Taylor, 1996).

Hence to substantiate the latter, we concentrate on the practice of contestation, ‘the forming of diverging demands and concerns’ (Zürn et al., 2012, p. 76), of the EU’s LGBTI human rights promotion. Norm-based scholars argue that contestation is an inherent characteristic of norm constitution and enhances legitimacy (Wiener, 2014). Norms have an innate prescriptive and regulative quality, thus are ‘standards of conduct intended to regulate behavior’ (Sandholtz, 2017, p. 2), a quality that is particularly pronounced in the case of pro-LGBTI norms and homophobic counter-norms. To condense the growing literature surrounding international norms, the major concepts applicable here revolve around issues of normative diffusion (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998) and resistance (Sandholtz, 2008), as well as LGBTI norm polarization (Symons and Altman, 2015; Thiel, 2021). In this regard, LGBTI rights prescriptions are highly visible among both, norm-introducing and -promoting entrepreneurs and opposing anti-preneurs (Bloomfield, 2016), which contributes to their politicization. On

the other hand, instrumental factors of politicization depend on cost-benefit analyzes for policy negotiation and implementation, the existence of veto players (Costa, 2018), as well as the availability of alternative development models (Mayer et al., 2019). Thus, norm contestation serves as a mechanism of politicization, exemplified by increased salience, polarization of opinions and expansion of actors. We show that contestation of the EU's development policy occurs both within EU institutions and member states, as well as in the addressee state Uganda, resulting in the politicization of LGBTI norms, and of the Uganda—EU partnership more generally. In line with other contributions to this special issue we thereby emphasize the need to include third country perspectives, and outside-in politicization, in the study of EU politicization (Chaban and Elgström, 2020; Niemann, Plank and Keijzer, 2020).

Considering norm contestation a mechanism of politicization, we differentiate between two paths: contestation of a norm's validity (validity contestation) and contestation of how a norm is applied (applicatory contestation) (Günther, 1993; Zimmermann, Deithelhoff and Lesch, 2017). Validity contestation questions the normative core of LGBTI human rights while applicatory contestation questions whether the LGBTI rights norm should be acted upon in a particular situation, and if so, through what means. By making use of this distinction we establish two paths through which contestation contributes to politicization. Norms and values of the EU's foreign policy can be contested on validity as well as application, and create (de)politicization in different arenas, such as donor vs. partner country contexts.

The main politicizing claim here is that EU development policy should serve to advance, and be conditioned upon, the promotion and maintenance of LGBTI human rights. This argument is based on policy statements emanating from various EU institutions with reference to non-

discrimination provisions (European Commission, 2015, EU Council, 2013), irrespective of the overall potential politicization of the EU's ODA itself. LGBTI rights have been regularly raised in political dialogues with African countries, and our review of the EU's annual human rights reports evidences an almost ten-fold increase in the visibility of those issues over the past decade. This signifies that the EU fundamentally subscribes to a 'sexual modernization' frame that views LGBTI rights as a tool, but also as an objective for development partners, and a responsibility for donor countries (Klapeer, 2018). Such apparently de-politicizing prescriptions constitute technocratic governmentality (Mühlenhoff, 2019; Walters and Haahr, 2005) and are addressed at member-states' ODA policy circles, but also at the EU's development partners in agreements, resolutions and dialogues. Moreover, the EU funds and relies heavily on the European arm of the civil society group ILGA (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, including its umbrella chapters ILGA-Europe and Pan-Africa ILGA) to legitimize its policy. Yet while EU-institutional actors, member state governments and EU-supported civil society organizations (CSOs) have become pro-LGBTI political entrepreneurs, a number of recipient country leaders such as in Uganda, have emerged as 'anti-preneurs' contesting the EU's propositions.

Applying a process tracing method we examine the politicization of LGBTI human rights as a reaction to the anti-gay law in Uganda initially proposed in 2009, which is still under consideration. We compare the incremental (de) politicization in EU institutions and the Nordic Plus states<sup>2</sup>, all of which are large donors to Uganda and have made a commitment to promote LGBTI norms as part of their development policy. Although France and Germany are key contributors to the European Development Fund, France concentrates on its own

---

<sup>2</sup> The Nordic Plus states, which also go by the label the like-minded states are the Nordic EU member states and the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands (Orbie and Lightfoot, 2017).



former colonies while the German emphasis on Africa only occurred after 2015 and is increasingly centred around migration. Hence, we focus on the Nordic Plus donors instead which have been identified as drivers and ‘norm-setters’ of EU development policy (Elgström and Delputte, 2015). To control for consistency, the triangulation of data relies on semi-structured interviews with officials from EU institutions, member states, CSOs and human rights activists in Europe and Uganda. Interviewees were selected on the basis of their centrality in the Ugandan-EU partnership and the process of contestation of LGBTI norms promotion therein, and are equally divided between CSO activists (EU and Uganda), EU officials in Brussels (EU Council and EEAS) and in Uganda (Member State embassies and EU delegation). The 12 interviews were conducted in Brussels and Oslo between May 2018 and August 2019 and lasted on average 45 minutes (see list of interviewees below). To corroborate findings, we analyzed official documents such as the EU human rights reports, government and CSO statements regarding Uganda, collected through a systematic search on relevant websites.

### **EU-external contestation of LGBTI rights promotion: Uganda’s anti-preneurship**

In the past few years, the contestation of EU aid tied to accepting LGBTI human rights has become more vocal, and subsequently led to the pausing or cutting off of ODA to Uganda. Long-held negative views on LGBTI rights exist there, and their increased salience has not led to wider acceptance, with 57 per cent of the sampled population supporting that being LGBTI should be a crime, and 54 per cent agreeing that these identifications are a Western import (ILGA-RIWI, 2017). This popular predisposition and the normative value placed by the EU on the issue, coupled with conditionality mechanisms and state-sponsored homophobia, leads to a high level of contestation and resulting politicization. Moreover, the

Northern funding of human and LGBTI rights CSOs in the countries concerned and the use of Western vocabulary further politicizes human rights defenders in Africa (Courier, 2012), as well the issue itself. In order to identify the drivers of politicization, the following section evidences how Uganda's domestic actors contest EU LGBTI rights prescriptions, followed by a tracing of norm polarization and actor expansion in the EU.

President Museveni has governed Uganda since 1986 and used LGBTI rights provisions in long-standing development policies to detract from his corrupt semi-authoritarianism, with an attendant decline in human rights there (Freedom House, 2017). Uganda's parliament debated a bill to criminalize homosexuality in 2009 - homosexual acts were already criminalized under British colonial rule-, and in 2010 the issue received international attention after the murder of David Kato, one of Africa's most prominent gay rights activists. In 2014, the Ugandan parliament passed the infamous 'kill the gays' bill. However, few months later it was rescinded by the Constitutional Court on a technicality after a number of important donor states decided to cut off aid, including Norway (US\$ 8 Million), Sweden (US\$ 1 million) and Denmark (US\$ 8.64 Million) (Mail and Guardian, 2014). The UK and the EU decided not to withdraw funds. The comparatively high salience of LGBTI issues in the Ugandan press and the country's high reliance on ODA provide support for Western influence in this debate (Adamczyk, 2017). It thus plays into the hands of Ugandans and allied African nations that view such aid conditionality as Western moral imperialism. After the repeal of the bill, donor governments continued their aid disbursements.

In terms of the politicizing factors salience, norm polarization and expansion of actors, domestic civil society played an important role when the homophobic bill was being discussed. The politicization of donor aid cuts among civil society actors in Uganda illustrates

that African societies are not passive ‘recipients of politicization’ (Niemann, Plank and Keijzer, 2020). Rather, CSOs aid in creatively translating and re-framing promoted LGBTI norms for domestic internalization, especially when these arrive with conditionality prescriptions (Ayoub, 2018). Pro-LGBTI civil society contested and questioned the EU’s political conditionality approach on the base of the unfortunate consequences a confrontational response would have on human rights activists, as well as the population at large (Interviews – 7, 11). When the bill was first tabled in 2009, a broad coalition of CSOs mobilized domestically to stop it and to advise international partners on how to act, through the creation of the ‘Civil Society Coalition on human rights and constitutional law’ ([www.ugandans4rights.org](http://www.ugandans4rights.org), hereinafter ‘the Coalition’). This Coalition had close contact with other organizations in Africa and elsewhere and is described as active and effective by diplomats and civil society representatives outside Uganda (Interviews – 4, 5, 8). It had meetings with all donors present in Uganda and initially advised against making (threats of) aid cuts because such threats were considered harmful for LGBTI individuals and could fuel anti-Western rhetoric in the Ugandan public sphere (Interview – 7). ‘Tying it [conditionality] to human rights generally is one thing, but simply tying it to LGBTI rights would cause an issue in making LGBTI person scapegoats’ (Interview – 11). Following Uganda’s adoption of the anti-homosexuality act in 2014, the Coalition formulated a letter of recommendation to international donors stating that ‘We do not support general aid cuts to Uganda. We do not want the people of Uganda to suffer because of the unfortunate political choices of our government’ (Coalition, 2014). Hence, it opposed the means through which donors pursued the promotion of LGBTI human rights, not the normative core of LGBTI human rights.

Yet despite the Coalition’s advice, donors including Sweden and the UK made initial threats of aid cuts already back in 2009. Following the passage of the bill, the European Parliament

(2014b) also issued a resolution calling on the Council of the EU to impose sanctions on Uganda. Subsequently, negative reactions from Uganda and its allies emerged, evidencing the increased salience and an expansion of actors involved. For instance, the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Parliamentary Assembly (2014), which Uganda is a member of, released a statement about the sovereignty-diminishing effect of the EU's development priorities, reaffirming

its rejection of any attempt to pressure the ACP countries into accepting values contrary to the wishes and aspirations of their peoples; regards such attempts by the EU as running counter to the values of parliamentary democracy which it espouses, and having nothing to do with the Cotonou partnership.

Hence in the case of Uganda, a politicization of EU efforts to promote LGBTI human rights materialized as a result of validity and applicatory contestation. On the one hand, representatives of the Ugandan government, and members of parliament disputed the LGBTI norm's validity as well as its conflict with the principle of sovereignty. Furthermore, Uganda's pro-LGBTI civil society contested the member states' approach. This is substantiated by Jjuuko (2013, p. 405), who questions the detrimental impact of

different countries' aid conditionality statements. These statements have the unfortunate impact of being labelled racist, neo-colonial, and Western, and of causing the LGBTI community to be the most blamed for the cut in aid, leading to it being further ostracised

Lastly, in terms of normative polarization, the pressures by various Western governments to repeal the law through withholding aid has led to a widespread resentment of external intervention domestically, but also potentially increased the leverage of Uganda vis-à-vis

donors given the salience of this issue. Kaoma (2013) asserts that denouncing LGBTI rights is Africa's way of claiming power over Western influence. When African leaders proclaim those as un-African while African CSOs contest the related conditionality, both express postcolonial resistance while at the same time decrying western imperialism. We don't suggest that Uganda is the only or 'worst' anti-LGBTI offender in Africa. Indeed, four other African countries have a death penalty for homosexuality on the books (ILGA Europe, 2019). Uganda is important for this study because EU attention and aid allocations have grown in line with its refugee-host status, in theory providing the EU with more leverage over it, but also making the country an elevated actor in this interdependent relationship.

It becomes evident that the norm promotion by EU institutions and member states has led to amplified salience, a higher degree of polarization and an expansion of actors signifying an increased politicization of the issue in Uganda. Contestation is as much related to breaches of the principles of sovereignty and non-interference as to the promotion of an LGBTI human rights norm itself. In such cases, sanctions or threats of aid-cuts combined with public condemnation result in an untenable status quo. The combination of both applicatory and validity contestation of LGBTI rights norms make them particularly prone to politicization. The contentious polarization over LGBTI issues, as well as the range of actors involved increased after some Western donors seemingly adopted an expansive LGBTI rights frame that highlighted previous invisible populations and 'created' a new identity-based category of people in need of protection (Seckinelgin, 2018), exemplified by the adoption of the EU's foreign policy LGBTI rights guidelines in 2013. On the receiving end, donor sanctions allow African countries to reassert their control in an effort to delimit Western attempts to spread LGBTI rights.

## **EU-internal politicization of LGBTI human rights promotion:**

### **‘the donor entrepreneurs’**

This section provides evidence of the augmented politicization in both member states as well as EU institutions. The normative content of EU ODA has received more critical attention on both levels, but the actor’s orientations differ: while in member states, governments and non-state actors are engaged in framing and justifying their actions, in EU institutions this polarization process occurs between national and supranational bureaucrats. The external promotion of LGBTI human rights is not fundamentally politicized in Europe, something which the Foreign Affairs Council consensus illustrates (EU Council, 2013). However, the ‘state-norm entrepreneurship’ (Bonna Nogueira, 2017) of Nordic Plus donors aiming to advance LGBTI human rights in ODA at the EU level and in bilateral negotiations with beneficiaries results in differently configured politicization processes.

### **United in diversity? Differing levels of politicization among Nordic Plus donors**

The UK, despite its recent decision to leave the EU, has been critical for the evolution of European development policies, as well as for the politicization of LGBTI human rights in the Global South. Based on its preeminent role during colonialization, and its export of sodomy laws in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the UK significantly contributed to the politicization of said rights among EU development partners, most of which retained the colonial-era criminalization. In the past decade, leaders from both sides of the political spectrum subsequently expanded such rights provisions domestically, and also started to advocate them externally. This occurred on the backdrop of a substantial public LGBTI rights approval increase (Guardian, 2018). In 2011, the UK, based on pressure from British rights advocates, initiated aid conditionality to combat state homophobia (Blasius, 2013; Klapeer, 2018). Yet former Conservative Prime Minister Cameron’s linking of development aid to human rights maintenance, including

sexual orientation and gender identity, has led to deep concern by numerous CSOs (Lennox and Waites, 2013), as it seemed to damagingly politicize the issue. Illustrating an increase in salience, and expansion of actors, more than 50 African groups together with UK activists condemned the country's approach in a counterstatement, pronouncing that:

donor sanctions are by their nature coercive and reinforce the disproportionate power dynamics between donor countries and recipients. They are often based on assumptions about African sexualities and the needs of African LGBTI people. They disregard the agency of African civil society (African Statement, 2011).

As the quote illustrates, politicization of the UK's policies occurs mainly through applicatory contestation. African activists worked transnationally, including with British activists, to condemn political conditionality by highlighting how sanctions have unwanted consequences such as intensifying intolerance. Notwithstanding the legitimacy of the LGBTI human rights norm, these activists contest the UK's policy of forcefully promoting the norm. Echoing this sentiment, one of the UK's most vocal activists, Peter Tatchell expressed that 'Economic sanctions should usually only be applied when activists inside the country request them' (Godfrey, 2014). The African as well as domestic pushback to the UK's measures led the Conservative May government to rethink its approach to LGBTI rights promotion, and publish a new strategy focusing on supporting local human rights defenders in 2016. No mention of conditionality to uphold LGBTI rights appears in the strategy paper, instead an emphasis on local expertise and support is expressed (Department For International Development, 2016). Reinforcing this softer stance, Prime Minister May apologized for the colonial criminalization in 2018 (Reuters, 2018).

Similarly increasing the salience of LGBTI rights in foreign relations, Sweden initially adopted a high-visibility approach based on its longstanding progressive policies, as well as public opinion, on this issue. Sweden, together with the other Nordic countries, regularly top the list of European states supporting LGBTI rights domestically and internationally (ILGA Europe, 2019). When the homophobic law was first tabled in the Ugandan Parliament in 2009, Sweden made threats to cut aid (Sveriges Radio, 2009), and development minister Gunilla Carlsson condemned the law. At the time Uganda received about \$50 million US dollars in Swedish ODA annually, and Carlsson further stated that these funds might be cut if the law was introduced. These pronouncements received substantive criticism from various actors, indicating an expansion of involved stakeholders. Critiques of the conditioning of aid on the respect for LGBTI human rights did come from CSOs in Africa as well as from within Sweden (Laskar, 2014), leading the government to change its approach.

In a public debate during Stockholm Pride 2012, Carlsson stated that Sweden did not condition aid on the respect for LGBTI human rights. The event titled ‘Is Sweden conducting gay-imperialism in its aid policy?’ also featured representatives from Sweden’s largest LGBTI group, RFSL (Riksförbundet för homosexuellas, bisexuellas, transpersoners, queeras och intersexpersoners rättigheter) and ILGA-Europe, both of which questioned the legitimacy of aid conditionality related to LGBTI rights norms (Laskar, 2014). RFSL also worked closely with other transnational CSOs and established common ‘do no harm’ principles on advocacy related to foreign relations positing that they are

acutely aware that if a government uses LGBTI people as an instrument to condition or cut life-saving programs ... it is working at cross-purposes to our intersectional identities. Do not ask or threaten to cut aid unless local LGBTI groups or actors have explicitly recommended this strategy (Amsterdam Network, 2013).



For Swedish authorities, the issue reappeared when Uganda adopted a revised version of the homophobic bill in 2014. Then, Swedish authorities consulted with CSOs before deciding on their policy. The resulting strategy contributed to de-politicize the issue internally by having consulted with former critics beforehand. Instead of cutting aid directly, aid was redirected from governmental funding to CSOs. Swedish minister for Development at the time, Hellevi Engström, justified Swedish redirections in the following way:

We wanted to have a dialogue with the LGBTI movement here in Sweden. We have also spoken to organisations on the ground in Uganda which express their wish to help people in a better way (Sveriges Radio, 2014).<sup>3</sup>

Hence, we see a change in the UK and Swedish approach from an ‘automatic’ threat-inducing sanctions strategy which resulted in applicatory contestation and resulting politicization, to a more context-sensitive approach in line with demands from local activists and transnational CSOs, which also served to depoliticize the issue. Sanctions were replaced by redirection of aid from government to civil society, but pressure to revert the policy was upheld through political dialogue. The normative core of the policy was upheld, however the way in which the policy is pursued was adjusted.

Yet it appears that the normative as well as strategic transformation that worked for the UK and Sweden domestically cannot seamlessly be transposed to other EU member states.

Denmark and the Netherlands, countries which rely on a close development co-operation with the UK and Sweden through the Nordic Plus network, continued an aid-conditionality

---

<sup>3</sup> RFSL stated that they were content with the Swedish response (SVT, 2014)

approach and withdrew budget support from Uganda immediately following the bill (Molenaers et al., 2016). No cross-loading effects among EU members developed, as despite regular coordination meetings between donor governments in Uganda it proved difficult to agree on a common response: ‘We had a completely different views on how to approach an issue like that’. This disagreement was not commonplace among the major European donors in Uganda, as in ODA policies generally they exhibited ‘a very similar approach’ (Interview – 8).

Accepting that there was no basis for coordination on the issue, the Netherlands immediately cut aid to Uganda and Denmark redirected its aid from government- support to CSOs. The Dutch choice to sanction Uganda was justified with reference to the gravity of the law: ‘it was decided by our minister in order to provide a signal to the Ugandans that ...you have certain principles... this is very difficult to accept so you have to make a stance’ (Interview – 8). As one of the most LGBTI-inclusive countries and the first globally to legalize same-sex marriage, defending human and LGBTI rights is an important symbolic priority of Dutch foreign policy (Interview – 8). In addition, it was important for the Dutch government to show to its constituency, including influential CSOs such as COC (Cultuur en Ontspanningscentrum), that they were actively countering rights deterioration. LGBT organizations in Europe, such as the COC, serve as important interlocutors for development agencies in EU member states (Klapeer, 2018). Already in 2012, COC stated that it ‘will use the coming period to exert international pressure from our country on the Ugandan authorities to prevent the introduction of the law’ (COC, 2012). When the bill was passed, COC released a ‘call upon the entire international community to remind Uganda of its international treaty obligations and to join hands against the Anti Homosexuality Bill’ (COC, 2013). Hence, it was important for the government to show to its constituents that they reacted firmly to the

situation, as COC was visibly lobbying against the bill. Contrary to the critical involvement of RFSL in Sweden, COC's lobbying exhibited a homonationalist stance (Puar, 2007), juxtaposing a 'LGBTI-friendly Netherlands' with a 'homophobic Uganda'.

Similar concerns related to domestic constituents are traceable in the reactions of Denmark. As a country whose public is overwhelmingly (90 per cent) in favour of LGBTI equality, and whose main organization LGBT Danmark was founded as early as 1948 and supports an internet portal on these issues in Danish development policy (<http://www.lgbtnet.dk>), such issues have high salience. In fact, its main site states that 'it is important that Denmark's attitudes are crystal clear to the governments, authorities, and civic societies of the partnering countries' (LGBT Danmark, 2020). In relation to the decision to redirect aid for Uganda, LGBT Danmark made no statements in the press. The then-Danish development minister Ulla Tørnæs tweeted about potential aid-cuts in Danish, indicating that the minister sought to deliver a message primarily to domestic constituents and voters (see for instance Tørnæs, 2018).

The reactions of the Danish and Dutch governments substantiate the expectation that a high-visibility approach, while politicizing relations with Uganda, *may* de-politicize the issue internally in donor countries when domestic actors are pressing for accountability. This follows from the expectation of minimum requirements to consistency in foreign policy and the need for visible reactions to enhance legitimacy for a human rights promotion policy internally (Saltnes, 2017).

### **Depoliticizing LGBTI human rights norms: EU institutions**

Although the EU institutions advocate for LGBTI rights, the member states exhibit drastically different levels of such human rights provisions (Ayoub, 2016; ILGA Europe, 2019), which leads to incoherence and further politicization of the EU's common approach. EU institutions, even after the creation of the European External Action Service in 2011, have traded off human rights for more instrumental geopolitical stability or migration concerns.

Institutionally, the Commission concentrates largely on monitoring anti-discrimination in potential member states and countries that want to associate and receive preferential treatment through the Neighbourhood Policy. In contrast, the European Parliament (EP) through the so-called LGBTI Intergroup, made up of 150 MEPs from various party groups, advocates both internal and external rights promotion. And the foreign ministers assembled in the Foreign Affairs Council established in 2013 guidelines for international LGBTI rights promotion and have repeatedly produced declarations supporting the policy despite the varying national stances.

The latter displays a joint effort to de-politicize LGBTI rights in development policy, as the EU guidelines state that 'a consistent but persuasive approach, rather than a public and conflictual approach may be more likely to have an effect' (EU Council, 2013). The politicization of LGBTI rights in bilateral relations between the EU institutions and ODA recipients, however, increased concurrently with the augmented salience and polarization the member states advanced, as evidenced above. The EP contributed to it when, after the introduction of homophobic legislation by Uganda in 2008-9, it passed a resolution in 2010 'reminding' Africa that 'the EU is responsible for more than half of development aid and remains Africa's most important trading partner' and that 'in all actions conducted under the terms of various partnerships' sexual orientation is a protected category of non-discrimination' (European Parliament, 2010).

Following the passage of the bill Uganda in 2014, intensified political dialogue under the Cotonou-Agreement's article 8 was initiated. Then-high representative Catherine Ashton informed the EP that 'any further budget support payments have been placed on hold until the outcome of this meeting' (European Parliament, 2014a). However, the EU's head of delegation in Uganda noted that aid-cuts were not an option the EU considered. Rather, the delegation advocated for a co-operative approach with Ugandan officials in the coordination meetings with the member states (Interviews – 6, 8). Although several statements of condemnation were publicized by the high-representative on behalf of the Union (EEAS, 2013, 2014), the EU's lack of using aid suspension did not go on unnoticed. It prompted the EP to pass a resolution with a request to the Council for 'launching consultations to suspend Uganda and Nigeria from the Cotonou Agreement in view of recent legislation further criminalising homosexuality' (European Parliament, 2014b). The EP resolution, however, was not followed by the Council, thus evidencing a split between the supranational and member state-led institutions within the EU. EU representatives on the ground in Uganda acknowledged the risk of fuelling anti-Western rhetoric in the Ugandan public sphere if sanctions would be used, experiencing first-hand the normative framing by African commentators of 'European donors imposing European values'. As a result, the EU delegation considered it important to take a co-operative approach instead of a public and punitive approach in order to not further such rhetoric, which could damage EU – African development programmes (Interviews – 1, 3, 6, 10).

To sum up the role of donors in the politicization of LGBTI norm promotion, it becomes apparent that the politicization of human rights in the provision of EU development aid has increased over the past decade. Not only are both, LGBTI rights and EU ODA, more saliently

discussed within EU and member state policy circles, but the negative responses from recipient countries, especially concerning aid-withdrawals, have led to an involvement of transnational actors and a divergent polarization of domestic opinions. Yet the public condemnation as well as the aid withdrawals by donors have not been effective in this case but rather led to counter-productive results for bilateral relations, as others have attested as well (Hulse, 2018). In terms of contestation as a politicizing mechanism, the Netherlands and Denmark as well as the EP contested homophobic policies by ODA recipients in order to appease their constituents, while other Nordic Plus donors responded to CSO demands so as to depoliticize the norm polarization. This led to differing outcomes regarding the withholding of aid, with the EU Council and the EU delegation in Uganda aiming to depoliticize the issue to maintain a constructive relationship with the Ugandan government.

## **Conclusion**

This article has traced two paths of LGBTI rights (de)politicization in EU development policies, based on the contestation of rights norms themselves, and/or the conditional application of those. The more human rights issues are stringently applied in a conditional strategy, the more such rights norms are exposed to politicization. Our case study shows that while these processes depoliticize ODA within the EU as it makes it seem more accountable to domestic audiences, they politicize aid externally because of the exerted pressure. More recently, the Council of the EU has taken deliberate steps to depoliticize aspects of LGBTI human rights promotion in response to contestation of EU policy by beneficiary states, aiming to respond with context-sensitive solutions. This approach was contested by the EP, but it resulted only in a politicization between EU institutions. With regards to the member states, we find that policies are significantly affected by political pressure from constituents 'at home' (Fisher, 2015). On the one hand, the choice to react with aid suspension contributed to

depoliticize the issue in Denmark and the Netherlands, even if the use of political conditionality augments politicization in beneficiary states with a resulting deterioration of bilateral relations. On the other hand, Sweden and the UK chose to adopt a more context-sensitive reaction and to not invoke aid suspensions. These donors were also concerned with their domestic audiences and worked together with CSOs to determine their responses, so as to de-politicize the issue domestically. Hence, we trace a marked difference between the positions of domestic audiences in member states despite their similar degree of influence, highlighting how validity and applicatory contestation interact with differently configured domestic development policy priorities.

In addition to these varied responses impacting future EU-Africa relations, the EU and its member states need to be conscious of the geopolitical repercussions of LGBTI human rights politicization in ODA disbursement policies, as China's Beijing consensus presents a further challenge to the EU's rights-based development policy. As shown in the case of Uganda, such highly normative approaches can lead to increased salience and visibility of LGBTI issues with a resulting polarization and expansion of actors, and in turn produce a politicization of LGBTI rights. Our results also show that the promotion of rights norms is contextual and not necessarily universal (unlike the claims themselves). Postcolonial studies have shown that claims of universal justice and principles developed in the Global North constitute a form of neo-colonial intervention in the Global South (Rao, 2020) that aims to universalize Western values and identities, resulting in outright rejection of 'homocolonial' (Rahman, 2014) norms. Our findings add the significance of applicatory contestation of norm promotion by human rights activists both in donor and recipient states. These actors contest aid conditionality practice and insert themselves as change agents aiming to reshape the policies of international norm promoters. At the same time, the re-definition of local activists pursuing LGBTI rights

as Northern-funded and -recognized CSOs play into the homophobic pretext of many Southern governments as those being ‘foreign’, substantiating Zürn and de Wilde’s (2016) claim that contestation and resulting politicization of EU efforts to promote human rights is highly interwoven with the question of sovereignty. The negotiations of the post-Cotonou agreement illustrate that the contentious issues of migration and sexual rights continue to politicize EU-ACP relations (Carbone, 2019).

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank 3 anonymous reviewers as well as the special issue editors for their helpful comments and suggestions. The research leading to these results is part of the project ‘GLOBUS - Reconsidering European Contributions to Global Justice’ funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement no. 693609).



## Bibliography

ACP Parliamentary Assembly (2014) Declaration of the ACP Parliamentary assembly on recent proposals adopted by the European Parliament with regard to Uganda and Nigeria, 19 March. Available at «<http://www.acp.int/content/declaration-acp-parliamentary-assembly-recent-proposals-adopted-european-parliament-regard-u>» Accessed 11 December 2019.

Adamczyk, A. (2017) *Cross-National Public Opinion about Homosexuality* (Los Angeles: University of California Press).

African Statement (2011) Statement on British 'aid cut' threats to African countries that violate LGBTI rights, 27 October. Available at «<https://www.pambazuka.org/activism/statement-british-aid-cut-threats-african-countries-violate-lbgti-rights>» Accessed 11 December 2019.

Amsterdam Network (2013) Guiding Principles. Available at «<https://www.scribd.com/document/297759956/Amsterdam-Network-Guiding-Principles-Version-1-1>» Accessed 17 April 2020.

Ayoub, P. M. (2016) *When States Come Out: Europe's Sexual Minorities and the Politics of Visibility* (New York: Cambridge University Press).

Ayoub, P.M. (2018) 'Protean power in movement: Navigating uncertainty in the LGBT rights revolution.' In Katzenstein, P. and Seybert, L. (eds) *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press), pp. 79-99.

Blasius, M. (2013) 'Theorizing the Politics of (Homo)Sexualities across Cultures.' In Weiss, M. and Bosia, M. (eds) *Global Homophobia* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press), pp. 218-245.

- Bloomfield, A. (2016) 'Norm entrepreneurs and theorising resistance to normative change'. *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 310-333.
- Bonna Nogueira, M. (2017) 'The Promotion of LGBT Rights as International Human Rights Norms: Explaining Brazil's Diplomatic Leadership'. *Global Governance*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 545–563.
- Carbone, M. (2019) 'Calm after the Storm: Plurilateral Challenges to the Post-2020 EU-ACP Partnership'. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 57, No. 1, pp. 141-151.
- Chaban, N. and Elgström, O. (2020) 'Politicization and contestation of EU development policy: The role of EU external perceptions (case of Ukraine)'. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, forthcoming/this issue.
- Coalition (2014) Guidelines to National, Regional and International Partners on how to offer support now that the Anti-Homosexuality law has been assented to, 3 March. Kampala: Civil Society Coalition on Human rights and Constitutional Law.
- COC Netherlands (2012) Oegandese parlement agendeert antihomowet, 22 November. Available at: «<https://www.coc.nl/internationaal/oegandese-parlement-agendeert-antihomowet>» Accessed 28 June 2020.
- COC Netherlands (2013) We will fight this legislation TO THE END, 20 December. Available at: «<https://www.coc.nl/internationaal/we-will-fight-this-legislation-to-the-end>» Accessed 30 June 2020.
- Costa, O. (2018) 'The politicization of EU external relations'. *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 26, No. 5, pp. 790-802.
- Courier, A. (2012) *Out in Africa*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).
- EEAS (2013) Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the adoption of the anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda, 20 December. Available at:

«[http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/media/statements/docs/2013/131220\\_05\\_en.pdf](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/media/statements/docs/2013/131220_05_en.pdf)» Accessed 12 December 2019.

EEAS (2014) Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on anti-homosexuality legislation in Uganda, 18 February. Available at «[http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/media/statements/docs/2014/140218\\_02\\_en.pdf](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/media/statements/docs/2014/140218_02_en.pdf)» Accessed 12 December 2019.

Elgström, O. and Delputte, S. (2015) ‘An end to Nordic exceptionalism? Europeanisation and Nordic development policies’. *European Politics and Society* Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 28-41.

EU Council (2013) EU Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by LGBTI persons, 24 June. Available at «<https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/137584.pdf>» Accessed 12 December 2019.

EU Council (2018) Declaration by High Representative Federica Mogherini on behalf of the EU on EU-Tanzania relations, 15 November. Available at «[https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/11/15/declaration-of-hr-federica-mogherini-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-eu-tanzania-relations/?utm\\_source=dsms-auto&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Declaration+of+HR+Federica+Mogherini+on+behalf+of+the+EU+on+EU-Tanzania+relations](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/11/15/declaration-of-hr-federica-mogherini-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-eu-tanzania-relations/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Declaration+of+HR+Federica+Mogherini+on+behalf+of+the+EU+on+EU-Tanzania+relations)» Accessed 12 December 2019.

European Commission (2015) List of Actions to advance LGBTI Equality. Available at «[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/lgbti-actionlist-dg-just\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/lgbti-actionlist-dg-just_en.pdf)» Accessed 12 December 2019.

European Parliament (2010) European Parliament resolution on the future of the EU-Africa strategic partnership following the 3<sup>rd</sup> EU-Africa Summit, 13 December. Available at «<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=P7-RC-2010-0693&language=EN>» Accessed 12 December 2019.

European Parliament (2014a) Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission, 10 April. Available at

«<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2014-002220&language=EN>» Accessed 12 December 2019.

European Parliament (2014b) European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2014 on launching consultations to suspend Uganda and Nigeria from the Cotonou Agreement in view of recent legislation further criminalising homosexuality (2014/2634(RSP)), 9

November. Available at «<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014IP0254>» Accessed 12 December 2019.

Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. (1998) 'International Norm Dynamics and Political change'. *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 887-917.

Freedom House (2017) Freedom in the World Report, Available at:

«<https://freedomhouse.org/country/uganda/freedom-world/2017>» Accessed 13 April 2020.

Fisher, J. (2015) 'Does it Work? Work for Whom? Britain and Political Conditionality since the Cold War'. *World Development*, Vol 75, pp. 13-25.

Gerring, J. (2007) *Case study research. Principles and practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Godfrey, C. (2014) Are Britain's Pro-Gay Foreign Policies Actually Helping the Global LGBT Community? 9 December. Available at «[https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/dpw94a/exporting-lgbti-rights-from-the-uk-abroad-327](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/dpw94a/exporting-lgbti-rights-from-the-uk-abroad-327)» Accessed 12 December 2019.

Guardian (2018) The Guardian view on LGBT rights: the fight for equality is still on, 3 July. Available at «<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jul/03/the-guardian-view-on-lgbt-rights-the-fight-for-equality-is-still-on>» Accessed 12 December 2019.

- Günther, K. (1993) *A sense of appropriateness* (Albany: State University of New York Press).
- Hackenesch, C., Bergmann, J. and Orbie, J. (2020) 'Introduction: Politicization of EU external action – European development policy at the crossfire'. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Forthcoming.
- Hall, P. and Taylor, R. (1996) 'Political Science and the three new institutionalisms'. *Political Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 5, pp. 936–957.
- Hurrelmann, A., Gora, A. and Wagner, A. (2015) 'The Politicization of European Integration: More than an Elite Affair?'. *Political Studies*, Vol. 63, pp. 43-59.
- Hulse, M. (2018) Cultural values, popular attitudes and democracy promotion, Discussion Paper 26/2018, German Development Institute. Available at «[https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP\\_26.2018.pdf](https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_26.2018.pdf)» Accessed 17 December 2019.
- ILGA Europe (2019) Rainbow Europe Index and Map. Available at «<https://ilga-europe.org/rainboweurope/2019>» Accessed 17 December 2019.
- ILGA-RIWI (2017) ILGA-RIWI Global Attitudes Survey on Sexual, Gender and Sex Minorities. Available at «<https://ilga.org/ilga-riwi-global-attitudes-survey>» Accessed 17 December 2019.
- Jjuuko, A. (2013) 'The incremental approach: Uganda's struggle for the decriminalisation of homosexuality.' In Lennox, C. and Waites, M. (eds) *Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the Commonwealth: Struggles for Decriminalisation and Change* (London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies), pp. 381-408.
- Kaoma, K. (2013) 'The Marriage of Convenience: Postcolonial Politics of Sexual Identity.' In Weiss, M. and Bosia, M. (eds) *Global Homophobia* (Springfield, IL: University of Illinois Press), pp. 75-102.

- Klapeer, C. (2018) 'Dangerous Liaisons? Homodevelopmentalism, sexual modernization and LGBTI Rights in Europe.' In: Mason, C. (ed) *Routledge Handbook of Queer Development Studies* (New York: Routledge), pp. 102-118
- Laskar, P. (2014) 'The Illiberal Turn: Aid Conditionalis and the Queering of Sexual Citizenship'. *Lambda Nordica*, Vol. 1, pp. 87-100.
- Lennox, C. and Waites, M. (2013) (eds.) *Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the Commonwealth*. (London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies).
- LGBT Danmark (2020) LGBT Rights in Danish Development Policy. Available at [«http://www.lgbtnet.dk/why-lgbt/lgbt-rights-in-danish-development-policy»](http://www.lgbtnet.dk/why-lgbt/lgbt-rights-in-danish-development-policy) Accessed 29 April 2020.
- Mail and Guardian (2014) Three EU Nations Cut Uganda Aid over Anti-gay Law, 27 February. Available at [«http://mg.co.za/article/2014-02-27-three-eu-nations-cut-uganda-aid-over-anti-gay-law»](http://mg.co.za/article/2014-02-27-three-eu-nations-cut-uganda-aid-over-anti-gay-law) Accessed 12 December 2019.
- Mayer, S., Beringer, S. and Thiel, M. (2019) *EU Development Policies: Between Norms and Geopolitics* (New York: Palgrave).
- Molenaers, N., Gagiano A. & Smets L. (2016) Dataset Budget Support Suspensions (DBSS) 1999-2014. University of Antwerp: Institute of Development Policy and Management.
- Muehlenhoff, H. L. (2019) 'Neoliberal governmentality and the (de)politicization of LGBT rights: The case of the EU in Turkey'. *Politics*, No. 39, Vol. 2, pp. 202-217.
- Niemann, A. Plank, F. and Keijzer, N. (2020) 'A comparative perspective on horizontal politicization: Policy nexuses in the EU's relations to Western Africa' *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Forthcoming.
- Orbie, J. and Lightfoot, S. (2017) 'Development. Shallow Europeanisation?' In Hadfield, A., Manners, I. and Whitman, R. (eds.) *Foreign Policies of EU Member States. Continuity and Europeanisation* (London: Routledge).

- Picq, M. and Thiel, M. (2015) *Sexualities in World Politics: how LGBTQ claims shape International Relations* (New York: Routledge).
- Puar, I. K. (2007) *Terrorist assemblages: Homonationalism in queer times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press).
- Rao, R. (2020) *Out of time: the Queer Politics of Postcoloniality* (New York: Cambridge University Press).
- Rahman, M. (2014) 'Queer Rights and the Triangulation of Western Exceptionalism. *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 274-289.
- Reuters (2018) UK PM May regrets British role over anti-gay laws in former colonies, 17 April. Available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-chogm-may-apology/uk-pm-may-regrets-british-role-over-anti-gay-laws-in-former-colonies-idUSKBN1HO18E>» Accessed 12 December 2019.
- Saltnes, J. D. (2017) 'Norm collision in the European Union's external policies: The case of European Union sanctions towards Rwanda'. *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 553-570.
- Sandholtz, W. (2017) 'International Norm Change'. In Thompson, W. (ed) *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Empirical International Relations Theory*. Oxford Research Encyclopedias. Oxford University Press.
- Sandholtz, W. (2008) 'Dynamics of International Norm Change: Rules against Wartime Plunder'. *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 101-131.
- Seckinelgin, H. (2018) 'Same-sex lives between the language of international LGBT rights, international aid and anti-homosexuality'. *Global Social Policy*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 284-303.

- Slootmaeckers, K., Touquet, H., Vermeersch, P. (eds) (2016) *The EU Enlargement and Gay Politics*. (New York: Palgrave).
- Smith, K. (2014) *EU Foreign Policy in a Changing World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Swiebel, J. (2009) 'LGBT human rights: the search for an international strategy'. *Contemporary Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 18-35.
- Sveriges Radio (2009) Swedish aid minister: Uganda's Anti-Gay law 'appaling', 28 November. Available at <https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=2054&artikel=3271246> Accessed 12 December 2019.
- Sveriges Radio (2014) Sverige drar in bistånd till Uganda, 5 March. Available at <https://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=83&artikel=5800745>» Accessed 12 December 2019.
- SVT (2014) RFSL: Strypt bistånd kan drabba Ugandas homosexuella, 5 March. Available at <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/utrikes/rfsl-strypt-bistand-kan-drabba-ugandas-homosexuella>» Accessed 12 December 2019.
- Symons, J. and Altman, D. (2015) 'International norm polarization: Sexuality as a subject of human rights protection'. *International Theory* Vol, 7, No. 1, pp. 61-95.
- Thiel, Markus (2021) *Europe's International Promotion of LGBTI Rights: Challenges and Prospects*. London: Routledge.
- Tørnæs, U. (2018) Tweet, 14 November. Available at [https://twitter.com/Ulla\\_Tornaes/status/1062773804978573312](https://twitter.com/Ulla_Tornaes/status/1062773804978573312)» Accessed 12 December 2019.
- Department for International Development (2016) DFID's approach on LGB&T rights, 9 February. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfids-approach-on-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-lgbt-rights>» Accessed 12 December 2019.



- Zimmermann, L., Deitelhoff, N. and Lesch, M. (2017) ‘Unlocking the agency of the governed: contestation and norm dynamics’. *Third World Thematics*, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 691-708.
- Zürn, M., Binder, M., Ecker-Ehrhardt, M. (2012) ‘International Authority and Its Politicization’. *International Theory*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 69–106.
- Zürn, M. and de Wilde, P. (2016) ‘Debating globalization: cosmopolitanism and communitarianism as political ideologies’. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 280–301.
- Walters, W. and Haahr, J.H. (2005) *Governing Europe: Discourse, Governmentality and European Integration* (New York: Routledge).
- Wiener, A. (2014) *A theory of contestation*. (Heidelberg: Springer).

## **Interviews**

- Interview – 1: EEAS official, Brussels, 28.5.18
- Interview – 2: EEAS official; Brussels, 28.5.18
- Interview – 3: EU Council/EEAS official, Brussels, 30.5.18
- Interview – 4: EU delegation official, Telephone, 7.9.18
- Interview – 5: Civil society representative from Europe, Oslo, 17.10.18
- Interview – 6: EU delegation representative, Telephone 20.10.18
- Interview – 7: LGBTI human rights activist and civil society representative, Uganda,  
Telephone 18.10.18
- Interview – 8: EU member state embassy senior official, Telephone, 31.10.18
- Interview – 9: EU delegation official, E-mail correspondence 16.11.18
- Interview – 10: EU Commission official, E-mail correspondence 16.11.18

Interview – 11: LGBTI human rights activist and civil society representative, Uganda,  
Telephone 6.11.18.

Interview – 12: Civil society representative from Europe, Skype, 29.08.19