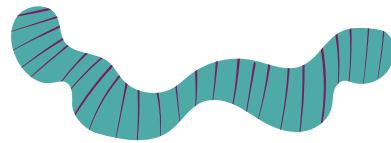




# Progressing or Regressing? **LGBTQPHOBIA** in our current and past society



By Karina Lara Á.

LGBTQphobia is any sort of discrimination against people that are part of the LGBTQ+ community, no matter their identity. It can be any sort of discrimination against a specific gender or against an affective and sexual orientation. It can be manifested by pushing communities to the side as if they didn't matter in the world, yelling slurs at them, committing physical violence, psychological violence, conversion therapy, etc.

I chose to discuss this problem because despite it being a problem that has been addressed for decades, or even more than that, it still exists because people remain ignorant about the fact that LGBTQphobia is literally violating rights of people who are simply existing and searching their identity. It is important to recognize it to be able to eradicate it, because we cannot get rid of something if we do not know what, how or where it is.

To explain this topic better I would like to reference the Chairwoman and Ceo of The Aguda, Association for LGBTQ Equality in Israel, their names being Nurit Shein and Ohad Hizki respectively. Just for you to

know who we are talking about, Nurit Shein has been a founding member of The Aguda, and has amassed years of experience in civil rights groups. Ohad Hizki manages and operates the Aguda's services, which include legal aid, a variety of social services, operation of an emergency line, a refugee project, and a reporting center for homophobic incidents. He was also instrumental in organizing the recent and largest LGBTQ protest in Israel. Both, as you can see, work in The Aguda, and it's important to point this out because it is said that it is Israel's first and leading LGBTQ human rights organization.

In a report of LGBTQphobia in Israel, they have stated: "Regretfully, as every year, the number of reports regarding discrimination, hate crimes, and denial of equal rights against the LGBTQ community has significantly increased during 2020. The following report reveals the fact that LGBTQphobia hasn't left anyone out and has compelled us to take care of all its ramifications in every aspect [...] Ever since The Aguda Report Center, named after Nir Katz (RIP) was established a decade ago, there has been a constant increase of reported incidents".

I have taken this as a claim, coming from an organization and not just any person on social media, because it simply sums up one of our points. Also, because I believe that taking any statement from anybody, whether it is a positive or negative view, would not be as effective because usually it's just about opinions, and an opinion is NOT what we are looking for when we talk about civil rights and lives. Do we?

Back to the point, this organization has been existing for quite a while, working for years. Yet, they reported the rise of incidents instead of their fall (showing many different graphs, examples of where these issues occurred and how they happen) in recent years. It is very sad to see that despite our society keeps trying to progress, history always repeats itself and we do not easily move on from this. It is even easier to believe these claims just by looking up the news, or their own report, to see the numbers of violence of any type that are registered. Sometimes you don't need to see it with your own eyes to believe in something.

These people as an organization have a really important role when it comes to the topic, because they can act and prevent numbers of these assaults to continue. They can also keep informing about what exactly goes on, especially in communities of minorities who struggle a lot with such topics. Point is, spreading the word when you have a bigger role in society, even if it is not on the very top of them, is significant if we want to progress for the future. Though, I know it is a little contradictory to say that, because I previously mentioned how we always repeat history, but what I mean is that even the smallest actions can help us progress as a society, and when I say that we repeat mistakes over and over again, they will usually happen less and less when we learn from them.

Even though this organization has stated how it has increased, it does not mean their efforts are useless. In fact, sometimes even seeing these problems grow in our current century can help society grow and look more into it, avoiding the ignorance that has been happening, and bringing even more awareness to this. It might take a while to completely eradicate this virus of hatred towards communities, but it will be worth the time, especially if we people begin to spread our word so more organizations like this extend.

## References

LGBT Foundation (2023, December 13). *Hate Crime Reporting*. <https://lgbt.foundation/help/hate-crime-reporting/>

The Association for LGBT Equality in Israel. (2020). *LGBTQphobia report #8*. <https://user-1723486.cld.bz/aguda-lgbtophobia-8-eng>

