



## Is the ERG obsolete? How to keep your ERG relevant in a rights-friendly environment



October 2010

# Introduction

Most LGBT ERGs around the world have seen their growth fuelled by the galvanizing effect of legislated discrimination. This has long provided the foundation for ERG success by rallying our allies, gaining financial support by progressive organizations, and generating grassroots enthusiasm within the LGBT community.

As the community wins the key rights battles, however, the question arises: **what next?**

This workshop, we will explore the unique challenges – and opportunities – faced by ERGs in jurisdictions where the LGBT community has already won the key legal battles of our generation. Key workshop objectives include:

- Defining “rights-friendliness” and understanding contributing factors
- Evaluating rights-friendliness for LGBT ERGs: how does this compare across jurisdictions and with other communities (e.g. based on ethnicity)?
- Defining broad strategic options for ERGs and associated challenges/opportunities, given the differing rights environments they operate in
- Developing recommendations for maintaining corporate support and LGBT/ally engagement in the absence of key rights
- Addressing the key question: is an ERG needed in a truly rights-friendly environment? If not, why?

# Guidelines

This workshop is:

- An interactive discussion; we won't have all the answers
- An opportunity to raise provocative questions regarding the future of the ERG
- A chance to learn from each others' experiences, given the differing rights environments we each represent
- A comparison of the rights-friendliness "context" facing LGBT ERGs, across different jurisdictions and against the experiences of other diversity communities

The workshop is not:

- A formal lecture
- A discussion focused solely on current rights issues
- A discussion on all factors influencing ERG strategy (which could include structure of the sponsoring organization, its diversity strategy, etc.)

# Agenda

|  | Section   | Duration      |
|--|---|---------------|
| <b>Section I:</b><br><b>Understanding the nature of rights-friendly environments</b> | <b>Topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding what is a “rights-friendly” environment</li><li>• A framework for evaluating rights-friendliness</li><li>• Comparing rights-friendliness for LGBT ERGs across jurisdictions and with other diversity communities</li><li>• Implications for corporate LGBT support and ERG development</li><li>• Other factors to consider</li></ul> | <b>40 Min</b> |
| <b>Section II:</b><br><b>ERG strategic options</b>                                   | <b>Topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategic options for LGBT ERGs</li><li>• Associated challenges and opportunities based on level of rights-friendliness</li><li>• Comparing ERG strategies: a US/Canada Case Study</li><li>• Recommendations for ERGs</li></ul>  | <b>20 min</b> |
| <b>Section III:</b><br><b>Is the ERG obsolete?</b>                                   | <b>Topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What a rights-friendly (Level 5) world means for LGBT individuals and LGBT advocacy</li><li>• The end-game for ERGs - contrasting views of the future</li></ul>  | <b>15 min</b> |
| <b>Q&amp;A</b>   | Open Discussion   | <b>15 min</b> |

# Section I: Understanding the nature of rights-friendly environments

## Why rights-friendliness?

- The level of rights-friendliness in the surrounding environment is a critical influencer on ERG strategy and that of other LGBT advocacy groups in the external community
- Rights-friendliness refers to the amount of legal protection and societal support available to LGBT individuals and organizations, to be able to assemble to pursue common objectives

## Rights-friendliness is generally determined based on the level of LGBT support across five key dimensions

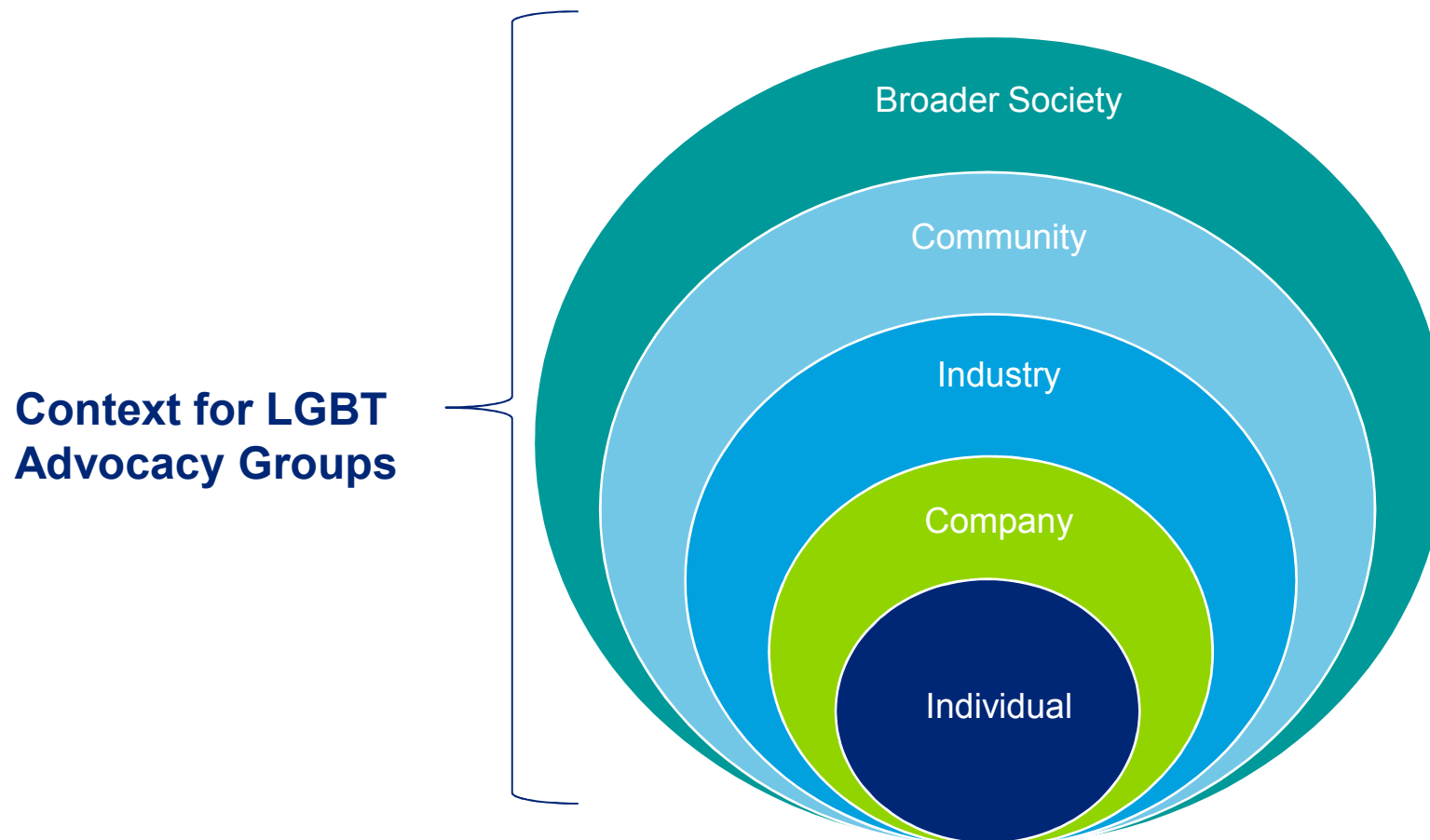
The following are key attributes used to define rights-friendliness:

- 1 Critical Mass:** The number of individuals within community and within reasonable proximity, to fuel support for organized LGBT advocacy
- 2 Knowledge/Awareness:** Sophistication of knowledge within organization or society regarding the LGBT community and interests of its members
- 3 Peer Acceptance:** Degree of support provided through inter-personal relationships (e.g. family, friends, co-workers, etc.)
- 4 Leadership Support:** Degree of support and engagement evident at senior levels of the organization or community, in championing LGBT interests
- 5 Legislated Acceptance:** Policy and regulations governing the rights of individuals within the organization or across society

Q How do YOU define rights-friendliness?

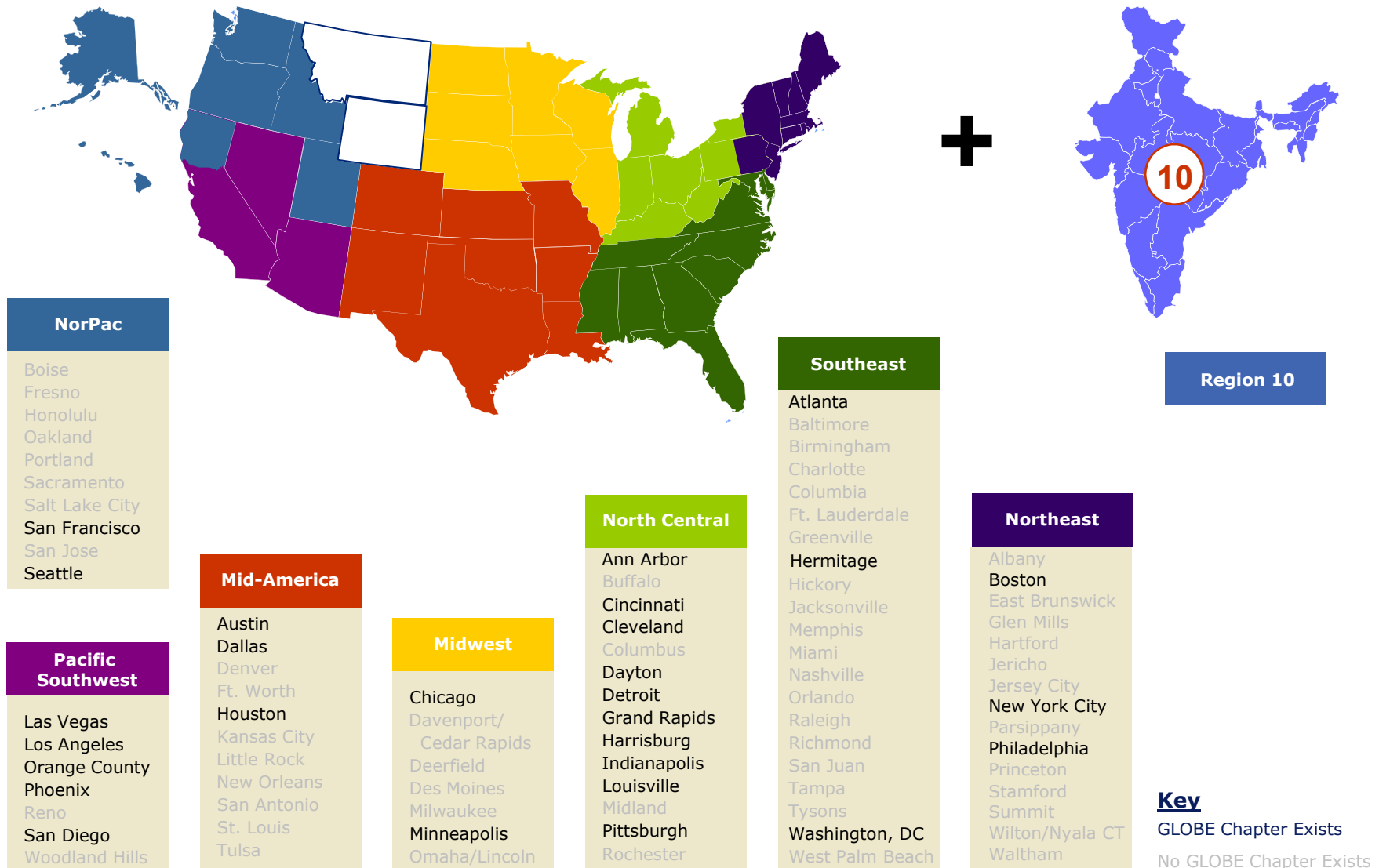
## ERGs do not exist in a cocoon; they are influenced by rights-friendliness at different layers of the surrounding environment

- ERG support is driven by the commitment of its members, who in turn are motivated by influencers/trends at different levels within the communities to which they belong.
- The specific level LGBT advocacy groups - including ERGs - operate at is the most important to gauge for rights-friendliness, but the total “context” encompasses all layers



# ERGs can also be pulled in different directions by varying rights-friendliness across the regions in which they operate

Deloitte's US GLOBE organization provides a good example, representing interests of members across regions with varying legal rights and societal support



# A maturity model can be established based on five distinct levels of rights-friendliness

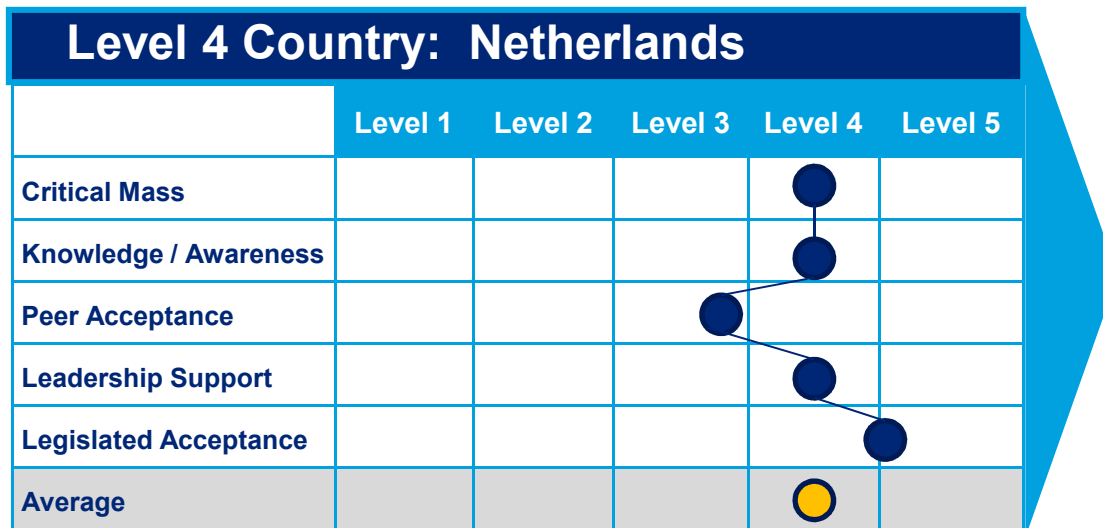
|                                |  | Key Features  |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Increasing Rights-friendliness | <b>Level 1</b><br>Rights<br>Non-existent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group not assembled – scattered/unaware</li> <li>• Little knowledge/awareness of the group</li> <li>• Rights are non-existent and may be considered criminal</li> </ul>                        |
|                                | <b>Level 2</b><br>Taboo behaviour        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal groups are established</li> <li>• Knowledge is increasing but awareness is still low</li> <li>• Legislative rights emerge but only limited leadership support is available</li> </ul> |
|                                | <b>Level 3</b><br>Tolerance              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal groups exist – mainly social networks</li> <li>• General knowledge and awareness across society</li> <li>• Basic rights are in place but may not be agreed upon by all</li> </ul>       |
|                                | <b>Level 4</b><br>Equal benefits         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective ERG emerges</li> <li>• Strong championship and leadership support</li> <li>• Equal rights and benefits are reflected within the context</li> </ul>                                   |
|                                | <b>Level 5</b><br>Full inclusiveness     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widespread peer acceptance and “mainstreaming” of LGBT lifestyle</li> <li>• Full leadership support</li> <li>• All rights battles have been won – Equality in law and policy</li> </ul>        |

# The level of rights-friendliness is in turn reflected across each key dimension, varying significantly by stage of maturity

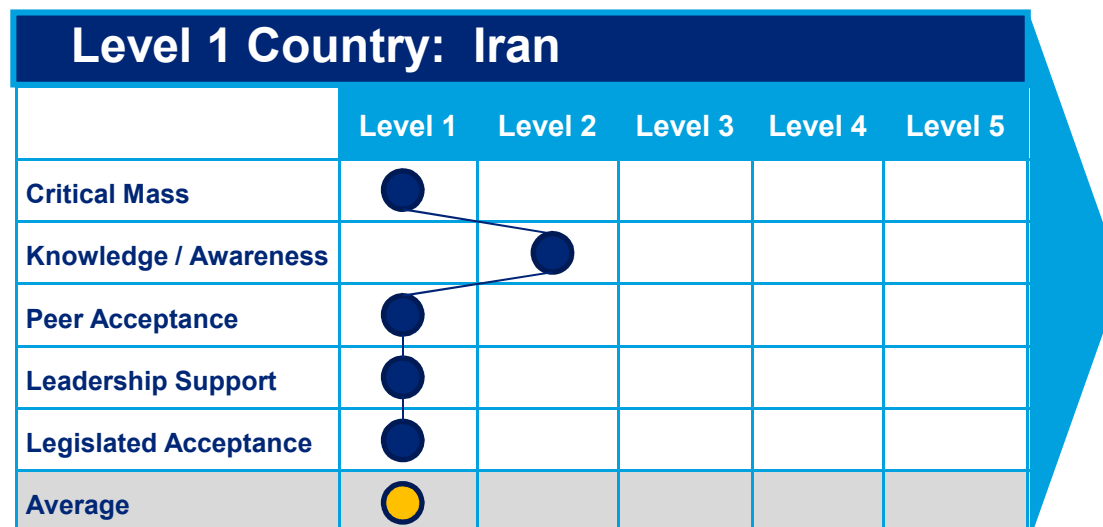
|                                  |   | Stage   |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
|                                  |   | Level 1<br>Rights<br>Non-existent   | Level 2<br>Taboo Behaviour   | Level 3<br>Tolerance   | Level 4<br>Equal Benefits  | Level 5<br>Full Inclusiveness  |
| Company<br>Industry<br>Community | Dimension   |   |  |  |  |  |
|                                  | Critical Mass   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical mass may exist but not assembled</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor informal groups form within community;</li> <li>Pioneering organizations emerge to fight for greater rights / equality</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal groups emerge within community, mainly with social networking focus</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups strengthen involvement in broader civil society and industry</li> <li>Main level at which ERGs start emerging</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERG shift focus to management of programming, as integrated delivery channel within broader society</li> </ul>  |
|                                  | Knowledge/Awareness   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge / awareness very inconsistent between sub-segments of society but generally very low</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited knowledge / awareness;</li> <li>Higher in some sub-segments of society or through personal relationships</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent, basic knowledge is in place across society</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent, fairly in-depth knowledge of community priorities, including those for different sub-groups</li> <li>Limited understanding still exists regarding more advanced needs</li> <li>Benchmarking against other ERGs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced knowledge of ERG needs and diversity of requirements within community; consistent across society</li> <li>Needs are framed as being of similar value &amp; priority to those of other communities</li> </ul> |
|                                  | Peer Acceptance   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total ignorance</li> <li>Low peer support</li> <li>Behaviour may be offensive due to differences</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor acceptance emerging within larger society based on existing relationships (e.g. parents, friends)</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Live and let live” mentality dominates</li> <li>Resistance to changing fundamental social mores / rules</li> <li>Strong opposition remains from some groups - no longer mainstream view</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General support for equality at individual level</li> <li>Opposition at this point based mostly on “extended” rights that are perceived as giving “special” treatment to ERG</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Widespread, consistent support across society for ERG individuals and relationships; this may be extended to individual sub-segments of ERG community</li> </ul>  |
|                                  | Leadership Support  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-existent or occurs behind the scenes</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mainly confined to community; support not visible outside community</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support is evident to both audiences within and external to community but still centered on tolerance</li> <li>Development of champions and community leaders</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong support from leaders in community</li> <li>Key ally leadership support also emerges at this level</li> <li>Champions emerge</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership support is consistent across audiences, and comes equally from senior leaders outside community as within</li> </ul>   |
| Legislated Acceptance            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behaviour is considered criminal and singled out in legislation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behaviour not considered criminal, but generally considered offensive</li> <li>Legislation battles emerging</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic rights reflected in legislation/policy</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights reflected in policies, supplementing strict legal requirements</li> <li>ERG pushing equality in policies practices and benefits</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights do not differentiate within communities and reflect diversity within ERG community</li> <li>No Legislative battles</li> <li>Equality</li> </ul>  |  |

## Using the maturity model, specific differences in rights-friendliness can be assessed at the international level

The following two country assessments highlight the huge variance in international LGBT support:



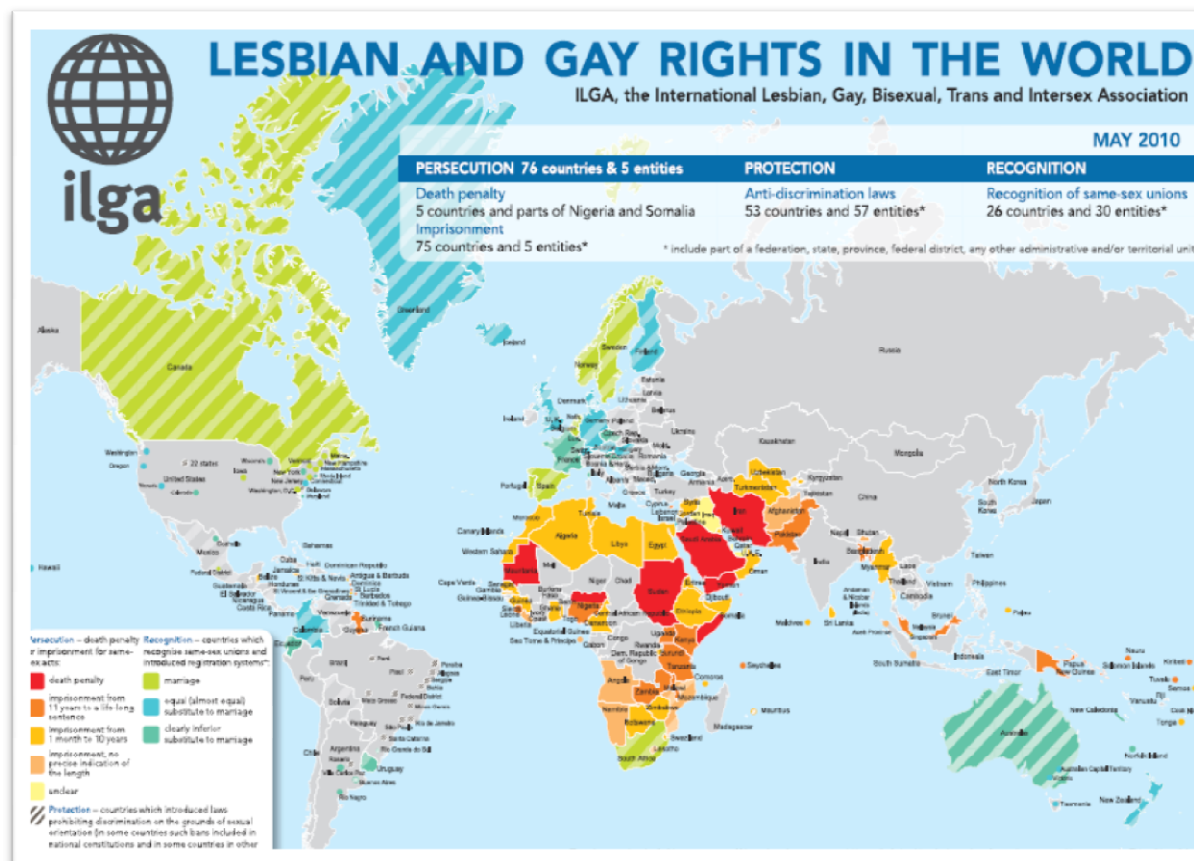
- Same-sex marriage since 2001
- Same-sex couples may jointly adopt
- Gays and lesbians allowed to serve openly
- Many laws extend to cover sexual orientation protections
- Transsexual persons allowed to change legal gender
- Conservative Christians and Muslim immigrants tend to be more traditional in their beliefs about sexual equality



- Islamic Sharia Law applied – death penalty for LGBT activity
- No laws extend to cover sexual orientation protections
- AIDS awareness training is provided (outside of the scope of LGBT discussion)
- Beginning in the mid-1980s, however, transsexual individuals have been officially recognized by the government and allowed to undergo sex reassignment surgery

# The primary arbiter of rights-friendliness remains the amount of legal protection available to LGBT individuals

- The majority of countries in the world are still only at Levels 1/2 rights-friendliness; imprisonment, heavy labour and even the death penalty are frequently imposed for LGBT categorized behaviour
- Social ostracism arising from communal, tribal and religious traditions contribute to the lack of knowledge, peer support and leadership acceptance in many level 1/2 countries



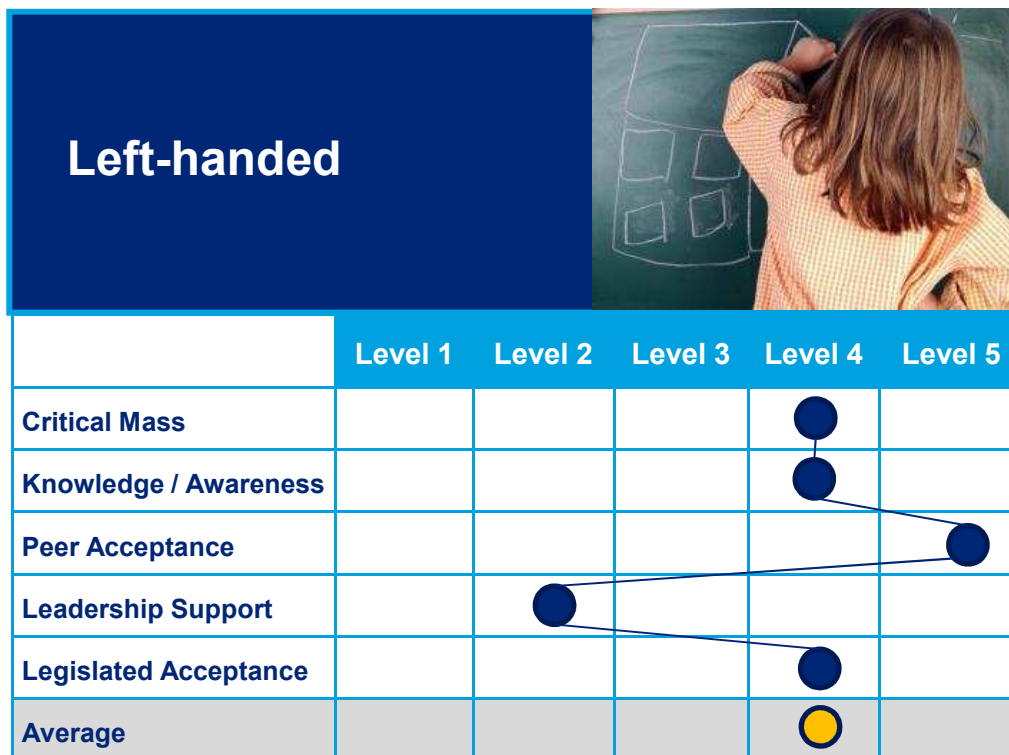


## The maturity model can also be used to compare the LGBT experience against those of other communities

Other diversity communities based on gender, ethno-cultural affiliation and physical attributes share many of the same opportunities and challenges as those faced by the LGBT community.

We can learn from the challenges they face and how they've addressed these through their own efforts at advocacy.

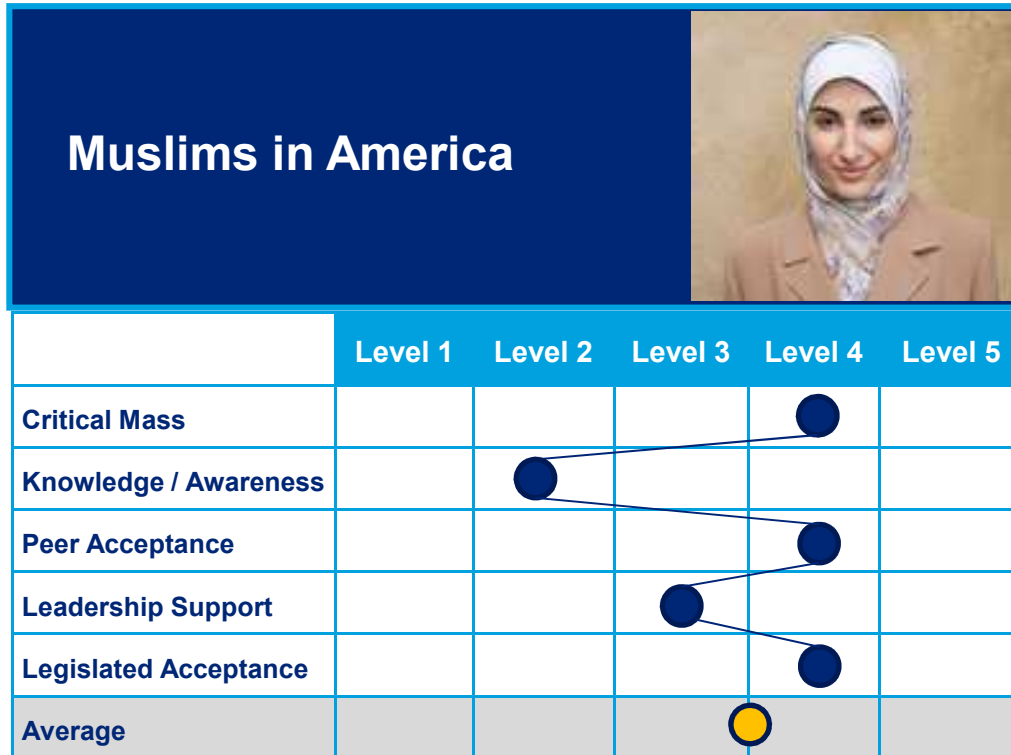
Here are some examples:



- Historical, superstitious discrimination against left-handed individuals, but negative attitudes no longer prevalent
- Community spread out across society, with few points of differentiation; impacts limited mostly to inconvenience caused by product design for right-handed individuals
- While community is large, there is little perceived need – and appetite – for organizing
- Lack of “distinct” leadership support as a result

# Comparing the LGBT experience with those of other communities (cont'd)

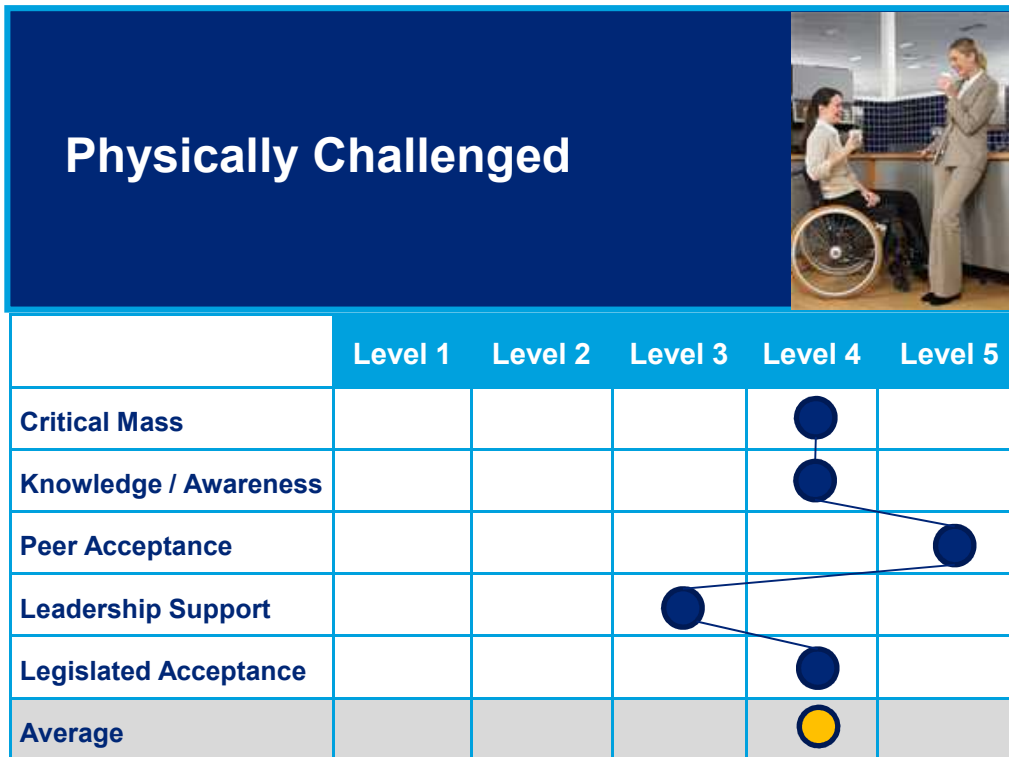
Here's an example from a community where membership does not arise as randomly:



- Community concentrated by family & other relationships, often geographically as a result
- Core values provide for differentiated experience vs. mainstream America
- Limited knowledge and pre-existing misconceptions have fuelled opposition to community objectives/concerns, especially post 9-11
- While key legal rights are not in question, strong “siege” mentality has rallied engagement and leadership support from within the community
- External leadership support is inconsistent and often strongest in areas with greater cultural diversity

# Comparing the LGBT experience with those of other communities (cont'd)

An example from another community with very diverse needs and priorities:



- Visible but small community, defined by diverse set of physical characteristics
- Highly differentiated experience vs. mainstream society; varying constraints not faced by rest of society
- Limited knowledge in society regarding full requirements for physically challenged; tends to be addressed through specialty products/services
- Progress being made in software accessibility, building access, working conditions, etc.
- Diversity of experiences and priorities has led to plethora of niche groups, but often partnering with umbrella organizations promoting common objectives

## Multi-national corporations are continuing to implement LGBT policies globally; implementation is faster in level 4-5 countries

In 2010, multi-national corporations were most/least successful in implementing LGBT policies in the following countries, all of which are at level 4-5:



1. United States (Level 4-5)
2. United Kingdom (Level 4-5)
3. Netherlands (Level 4-5)
4. Germany (Level 4-5)
5. Canada (Level 4-5)



1. Thailand (Level 2-3)
2. Bulgaria (Level 1-2)
3. Turkey (Level 2-3)
4. United Arab Emirates (Level 1)
5. Singapore (Level 1)



- Through the provision of comprehensive LGBT policies and benefits, companies operating in level 4-5 countries are also the ones witnessing faster ERG formation
- Level 4/5 ERGs have the critical mass, support and mandate to evolve to a more complex operational model, whereas ERGs operating in less progressive environments (Levels 1-3) can only offer basic support/services to their members

Source: International Business Equality Index 2010

## While business support for ERGs is increasing in general, how this support is delivered is also changing

### Trends in Industry LGBT Support

#### Collaboration

Companies collaborating on joint initiatives, such as sharing LGBT diversity reports/guides and supporting industry networks

#### Geographic focus

Companies are focusing not only on “easy win” countries; working hard to implement diversity policies/programming enterprise wide

#### Diminishing Returns

Smaller incremental gains are being realized, as new company efforts are being focused in Level 1 and 2 countries

#### Industry Bias

Adoption of LGBT-friendly practices is inconsistent between industries, leading to increasing gaps in ERG support

#### Initiative Prioritization

Increased focus on supplier diversity & marketing, with noticeable decreased focus on community involvement

## What other factors are important to defining rights-friendliness?

Several other minor factors should be considered as secondary influencers on ERG participation, particularly at the individual level:

| Factors                           |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Socio-cultural Factors</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social values</li> <li>• Conflicting mores in other diversity communities</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Economic Factors</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual wealth and economic concerns</li> <li>• Globalization – impact on ability to share best practices and support each other</li> </ul> |
| <b>Technology</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social networking – LGBT groups are increasingly moving online</li> </ul>  |
| <b>LGBT Community</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differing priorities across LGBT community segments</li> <li>• Importance of the “burning issues” (e.g. same-sex marriage)</li> </ul>          |
| <b>Expectations of the Future</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current momentum towards increased legal rights and LGBT support through LGBT policies → Personal commitment not seen as necessary</li> </ul>  |

**Q** What are other important factors?

## There are also generational differences to consider

LGBT individuals may have different values and expectations that affect their commitment to advocacy, including within the corporate environment, based on when they came of age.

| Group                       | When Came of Age | Key Attributes (Level 4-5 environments)  |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--|
| Pre-Civil Rights Generation | 50's – 60's      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly retired from workforce</li> <li>• LGBT experience differs from that of others in their generation; treated as criminal</li> <li>• Concerns over security and social support in retirement, including for long-term same-sex couples; acceptance among their peers still lower than in rest of society</li> </ul> |
| Baby Boomers                | 70's – 80's      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBT experience still taboo; most LGBT individuals in the closet</li> <li>• AIDS has been the defining event for this generation</li> <li>• Primary interest has been in gaining basic human rights; main focus today is social support &amp; economic independence in preparing for retirement</li> </ul>              |
| Generation X                | 80's-90's        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIDS is a key element of their reality but not the defining event</li> <li>• Many members prefer to melt into mainstream, taking on traditional lifestyle (e.g. marriage, parenting, etc.)</li> <li>• Expectation has emerged of full equality, nothing less, with LGBT role models</li> </ul>                          |
| Generation Y                | 00's - present   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The world is their oyster; no “need” for a ghettoized lifestyle</li> <li>• Increased polarization between members advocating for full inclusiveness and those for whom sexual orientation is not a differentiator in their lifestyle</li> </ul>   |

## LGBT employees are not on their own; business is increasingly expected to be a partner in the fight for greater rights

*“While 2010 has seen some improvements in the acceptance of LGBT people in some countries (Eastern Europe comes to mind), it has also seen backsliding in terms of human rights (Malawi and Uganda come to mind). Indeed, as accelerators of positive LGBT change, multi-national corporations must become even more involved and active in this global movement for human rights....”*

*-Secretary General, International Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (IGLCC)*

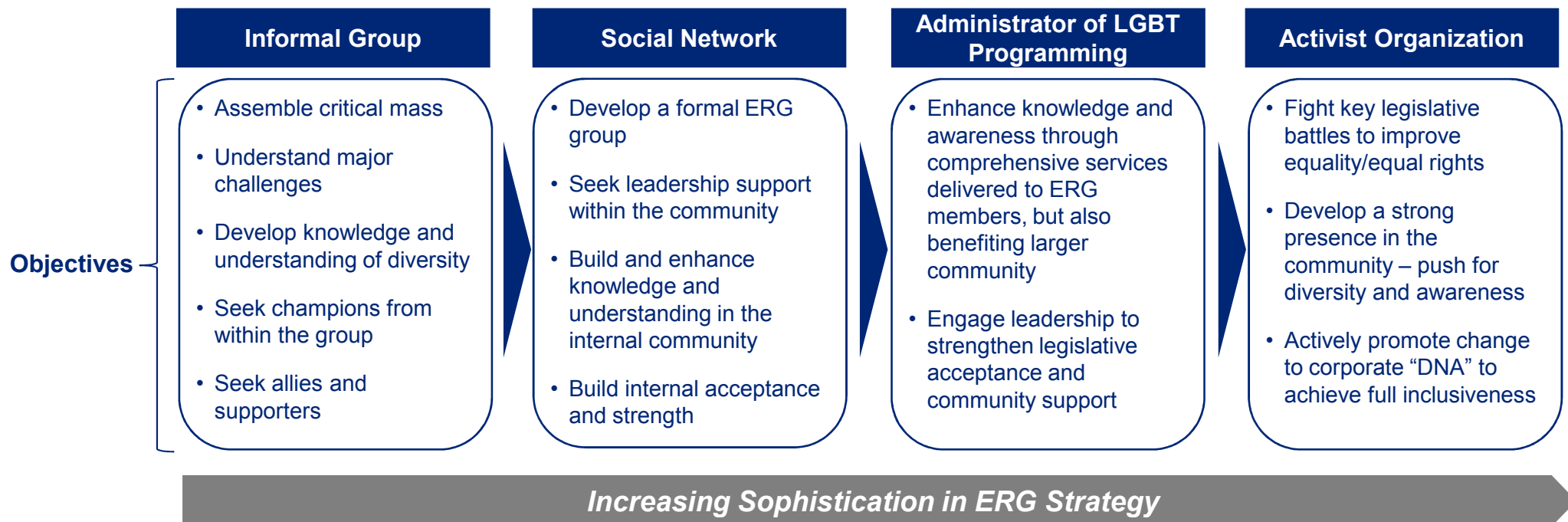
### Implications

- An increasing number of firms have begun to integrate human rights considerations into their mainstream business decision making
- Diversity initiatives are considered a competitive advantage, enhancing the talent and customer base
- Although some have been driven by public scandals, activist campaigns, consumer boycotts or lawsuits over alleged corporate complicity in human rights abuses, others have acted without an external stimulus for other commercial reasons or because they believe it is the right thing to do.

# Section II: ERG strategic options

## Several broad strategies are available to ERG groups

- There are various options available to improve and strengthen your ERG
- ERG strategy has often developed organically, coalescing around each of these options based on the pressures and opportunities presented by the surrounding environment



**Q** What are other options available?

## Opportunities and challenges ERGs face, however, are heavily linked to the level of rights-friendliness around them

- The challenges – and likelihood of success – will differ based on the level of rights-friendliness; each level has an ERG strategy that is best suited to meeting its requirements.
- The environment and level of rights-friendliness leading to the ERG’s initial strategy may not be the current one; may need to re-align

| Informal Group  | Social Network  | Administrator of LGBT Programming  | Activist Organization  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most realistic in Level 1 and 2 environments, given safety concerns</li> <li>• May not meet expectations for many LGBT employees at Level 5</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal value to LGBT employees from Levels 3 to 5</li> <li>• Like “informal group”, may not meet expectations for some members at Levels 4 and 5</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not viable at Levels 1 and 2</li> <li>• Likely to require constant audits &amp; education to straight allies and senior leadership at Level 3</li> <li>• Most viable at levels 4 and 5, given focus transcending legal rights advocacy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not viable at levels 1, 2</li> <li>• Generally not viable within private sector organizations at Level 3</li> <li>• Leads the charge either with support from, or conflicting with, firm leadership</li> <li>• May be perceived as unnecessary, at Level 5</li> </ul> |

# Comparing ERG strategies across Deloitte: Canada

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Canada</b></p>  | <h2 style="text-align: center;">LGBT ERG Description</h2> <p>LGBT Employees at Deloitte (LEAD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 members spread across Canada, with formal chapters in three largest cities</li> <li>• Established 2007</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## Rights-friendliness

- Rights are legally enshrined and consistent across Canada
- Opposition confined to specific groups; no longer “mainstream”
- Strong central leadership support, though peer acceptance and LGBT interest differ regionally

## Challenges / Constraints

- Low critical mass for organizing
- Some apathy observed among LGBT employees
- Allies supportive, but not to point of investing political capital
- Strong leadership support, but limited funding

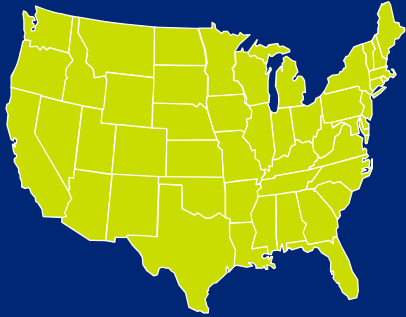


## Strategy and Future Plans

- Provide programming of interest to LGBT employees, and serve as Deloitte’s conduit to LGBT community (e.g. recruiting)
- Provide ongoing support for LGBT employees in smaller offices
- Adapt strategy and programming within individual LEAD chapters
- Build membership through ally engagement and pursue greater business focus through participation in business focused events and ongoing relationship development

# Comparing ERG strategies across Deloitte: United States

## United States



## LGBT ERG Description

### GLOBE and Allies

- 28 chapters in 7 regions, and 20 states
- First chapter established in Hermitage, TN in 1995
- National PMO formed in 2008
- ~350 members, according to conservative estimates

## Rights-friendliness

- National rights-friendliness varies by region, often exceed by rights-friendliness within firm – from 3 to 5, with 5 in larger offices
- LGBT metrics/reporting in annual diversity report
- National policies/practices mandate & integrate LGBT awareness into on-boarding education

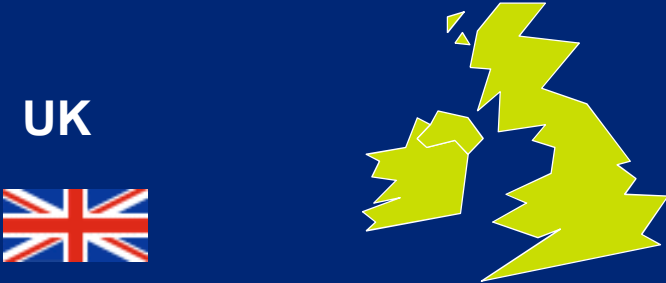
## Challenges / Constraints

- High senior leadership support, but not matched consistently at local levels
- Challenges in achieving “true” legislated acceptance in some offices, due to lower rights-friendliness in surrounding environment

## Strategy and Future Plans

- Increase focus on development of Ally value proposition
- Continue to track and develop strong ROI metrics for use in the value of the BRG across the country
- Plan to continue to develop and engage current members while broadening membership across the US (specifically in areas that lack formal groups)

# Comparing ERG strategies across Deloitte: UK

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>UK</b></p>    | <h2>LGBT ERG Description</h2> <p>GLOBE – The Deloitte LGBT Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established in 2007</li> <li>• Leadership team of 12 people, board level sponsoring partner</li> <li>• Currently 140 members based in a dozen locations throughout the UK &amp; Switzerland; 75% of members in London &amp; Manchester</li> <li>• Allies network just launched</li> </ul>  |
| <h2>Rights-friendliness (Level 4-5)</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong legal rights for LGBT employees</li> <li>• All policies/benefits are equal, with specific policies of LGBT interest in place (e.g. bullying &amp; harassment); benchmarking through Stonewall Workplace Equality Index</li> <li>• Good firm wide general support for all ERGs, though not consistently demonstrated at sub-segment level</li> <li>• Some strong champions – senior sponsor, supporters &amp; LGBT partners now visible</li> </ul> | <h2>Strategy and Future Plans</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build Allies on mentoring scheme</li> <li>• Roll out Allies program more widely</li> <li>• Continue current initiatives             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support members in other local offices (e.g. through links with other corporate networks, “Cyber” events, etc.)</li> <li>– Strive for further progress in generating firm-wide, consistent leadership support and peer acceptance for LGBT individuals</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <h2>Challenges / Constraints</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited funding</li> <li>• Visibility of LGBT clients and/or senior role models</li> <li>• Some LGBT employee apathy - see sexual orientation as private matter &amp; question why they should join an ERG</li> </ul>   |  |

# Recommendations for ERGs

ERGs should adapt their strategies to make the most of the environments they operate in or mitigate against the challenges & constraints posed by these.

The amount of adaptation will depend on the extent to which the current strategy is in line with or not aligned with optimal practices suggested by the current environment.

| Stage                                    | Level 1<br>Rights Non-existent  | Level 2<br>Taboo Behaviour  | Level 3<br>Tolerance   | Level 4<br>Equal Benefits  | Level 5<br>Full Inclusiveness   |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Informal group</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build informal community off-site</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build informal community off-site</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define formal ERG, where support exists</li> </ul>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define formal ERG, where support exists</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on interest, establish ERG with business/social focus</li> </ul>                                     |
| <b>Social network</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold the fort – with strong company support / protections</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold the fort – with strong company support/protections</li> <li>Link to other ERGs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop allies and leadership support, educating on LGBT priorities</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop tiered strategy to meet varying member expectations</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide LGBT programming as part of larger diversity orientation</li> </ul>                                    |
| <b>Administrator of LGBT Programming</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrict local scope to social network, where company protections exist</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrict local scope if needed; leverage programming from progressive jurisdictions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop links to other ERGs and external groups for LGBT programming</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand LGBT programming across organization</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate LGBT programming with that of external groups and other ERGs within organization</li> </ul>          |
| <b>Activist Organization</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrict scope to social network</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrict scope to social network; shift activist activities to offsite groups</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop business case for equal benefits</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Position group as conduit to external LGBT community and lever for LGBT-oriented business objectives</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm strategy based on member interest; activism can be channeled through external organizations</li> </ul> |

**Legend:**  Optimal alignment  Minor misalignment  Significant misalignment

Q

What actions would you take in your ERGs, at various levels?

# Section III: Is the ERG obsolete?

# We are slowly progressing to a “Level 5” world

Several trends reflect increasing normalization of LGBT lifestyles within mainstream society:

## Continuing Rights & Economic Gains

- Marriage rights are being won, slowly but surely
- International pressure is forcing less progressive jurisdictions to institute greater LGBT rights and protections from discrimination
- Increasing wealth and influence among LGBT individuals

## Geographic Dispersion

- LGBT individuals are gradually melting into the mainstream and increasingly committing to causes transcending sexual identity
- Geographic distribution also reduces critical mass for ERG formation

## Everyone’s Different

- The divisions between “Us” and “them” are blurred as society becomes increasingly diverse and integrated
- Both gay and straight communities are increasingly tolerant of individuals in the middle (i.e. bi-sexuals)

## From Tolerance to Opportunity

- LGBT rights-friendliness is being increasingly perceived as an opportunity to reach new markets and bring new talent into the firm, as opposed to a necessary evil imposed by legislation

## What is the end-game for the LGBT individual and community, in a truly rights-friendly environment?

*“There are people who worry that marriage will ultimately homogenize us, assimilate us, make our outlaw love less exciting, less our own. For those of us who are outlaws and exciting, nothing as voluntary and as malleable as marriage will ever be able to rob us of our individuality. And for the rest of us, it gives us a roadmap, a lexicon, a way to navigate between concepts like friendship and love and to squirrel out for ourselves something like the loving lives we’ve been reading about since we were kids.”*

*- Bert Archer, journalist with Toronto Life and author of “The End of Gay”*

The following attributes have been suggested for a level 5 environment:

| For LGBT Individuals  | For the LGBT Community  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBT differences are as mundane as left-handedness</li> <li>• “It’s just sex!” - no other differences as to values or individual priorities</li> <li>• There are no greater opportunities or challenges faced by LGBT vs. straight employees</li> <li>• They don’t “need” an ERG; they participate because they want to, and it aligns with their personal objectives</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy shifts to those characteristics that continue to different the LGBT experience from that of the straight community (e.g. needs of transgendered individuals)</li> <li>• Shift to corporate partnerships/alliances</li> <li>• Focus on networking, using common LGBT identity as an enabler, but not the sole basis for assembly</li> <li>• Continuing support for expanding rights internationally</li> </ul> |

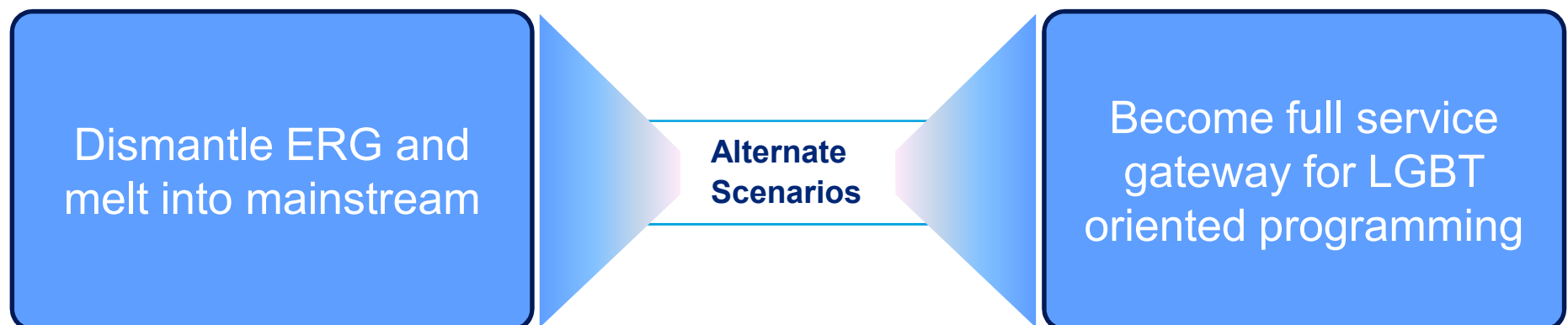
Q

What do YOU feel is the end-game for the LGBT community?

## Is the ERG obsolete, in a fully-inclusive society?

There are contrasting views of the future, when looking at the ERG's role at "Level 5" rights-friendliness. The end-game for ERGs will be determined based on several factors:

- Interests of ERG members and commitment to LGBT interests
- Organizational priorities
- Energy infused by partnering ERGs and other community groups
- Distinctiveness of requirements in serving LGBT members' social and professional needs



Q

What do you feel is the most likely long-term model? Are there any additional factors to consider?

# Q&A

# Q&A

Key questions raised in the workshop:

- Is the ERG purely a product of current rights battles?
- What is the central purpose of the ERG, if not advocating for rights/benefits to be assigned equally to its LGBT members?
- Is there a preferred ERG model to be followed, regardless of how rights-friendly the environment is in which it operates?
- What is the preferred model for ERGs starting up?
- To what model should ERGs aspire in the long-term?
- What partnerships should ERGs pursue to improve their chances for success?

**Q** What other questions should be raised for future assessment?

# Contact Information

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