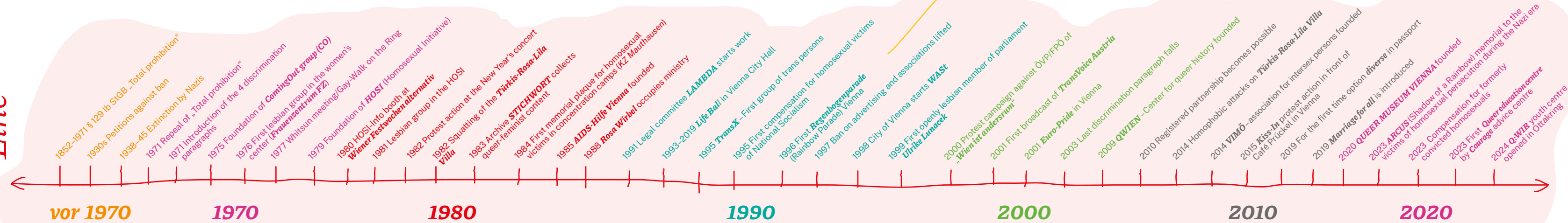


Time Line



„Lesbians are always and everywhere“ – with this statement it becomes clear that lesbians had to fight for their **visibility** for a long time. That is why a group of lesbian activists from the Women's Café (Frauencafé, today „**flinte**“) wanted to have this slogan displayed as advertising in Vienna for International Women's Day in 1989. The advertising company refused, so the activists took legal action and won the case. A big step towards visibility and equality was the entry of Ulrike Lunacek into parliament in 1999 as the **first openly lesbian member of parliament** in Austria, who strongly supported international queer communities.

The Q stands not only for **queer**, but also for **questioning** – that is, people who are still searching for the appropriate affiliations, or who consciously want to leave this question open. Queer questions the idea that there are only two genders. It also refers to people who do not find themselves in this conception. These refer to themselves as genderqueer, genderfluid, pangender or enby (non-binary) among others. As the website **→ nibi.space** puts it, „something else, none at all, multiple, not always the same, or one just doesn't/ can't fit anywhere.“ Language is just finding new ways to express the omission of gender identities with the help of new **pronouns**.

Gay does not only stand for gay cis men, but is generally used in English for homosexual. In Western countries, gay men are the part of queer communities that initially received the most public attention. They still have to fight **stereotypical images** and discrimination today. However, gay communities also face internal **challenges**: transphobia, racism, exoticization, misogyny and femmephobia (more info **→ queer-lexikon.net** are strongly present in everyday life, e.g. on dating apps, and must be addressed and combatted.

Intersex people still struggle with discrimination on a structural and societal level. Many manifestations of intersexuality are pathologized because they do not correspond anatomically, hormonally and/or chromosomally to the binary order of gender. Medicine is challenged to practise a new approach than before and to gain more knowledge and sensitivity in dealing with intersex persons. Alex Jürgen*, known from the movie „Tintenfischalarm“ and the first person in Austria with an X as an entry in his passport, co-founded the **association VIMÖ** in 2014. This association campaigns for **self-determination** and demands **compensation** for victims of surgical interventions.

Bisexual people are hardly considered in the media, which creates a great **need for education** of non-bisexual people. In Austria, there is **visiBi*ity Austria – 1st Bisexual* Association of Austria** since 2017. As it says on the website, „... we do not hide our ‚true homosexuality‘ behind our ‚heterosexual privileges‘, we are also notoriously unfaithful or incapable of relationships!“ The association also gives pansexual people a voice and space to share. **Pansexuality** breaks down gender boundaries even further to include non-binary people (see Q).

The A stands for the A*spectrum (a*spec), which includes **a*sexual, a*romantic, a*gender** and many other **identities**. Although traces of people on the a*spectrum can be found dating back hundreds of years, it was not until the possibility of anonymous exchange on the Internet in the early 2000s that a community was formed in the USA. The a*spec communities use the prefix allo-, which means „different“, to linguistically distinguish themselves from **norms** in the area of gender, sexuality and romantic perception (e.g. allo-sexuality, allo-romanticism). In Vienna, the ace/aro community meets regularly, more at **→ www.acearo.at**

Trans communities have long struggled for visibility and recognition in society and within queer movements, which are largely made up of cis people. Through their efforts, there is now the possibility of living **gender identities** that do not correspond to the sex assigned at birth. The psychological effect on individuals is enormous. Individuals who previously suffered from gender dysphoria (More info online at **→ queer-lexikon.net**) can now **develop** their **personalities** in their own way. Many a*gender and non-binary people also count themselves among the trans communities, since they cannot identify with cis.

cis = designation for persons who identify with the sex determined at birth

The abbreviation **LGBTQIA+** has only evolved over the years, becoming longer and longer, thus reflecting the **great diversity** in queer communities. The + stands for the future terms that may still join the series of letters. The effect of this is that the project can also be seen as **open and never finished**, always in motion, renegotiating, co-determining.



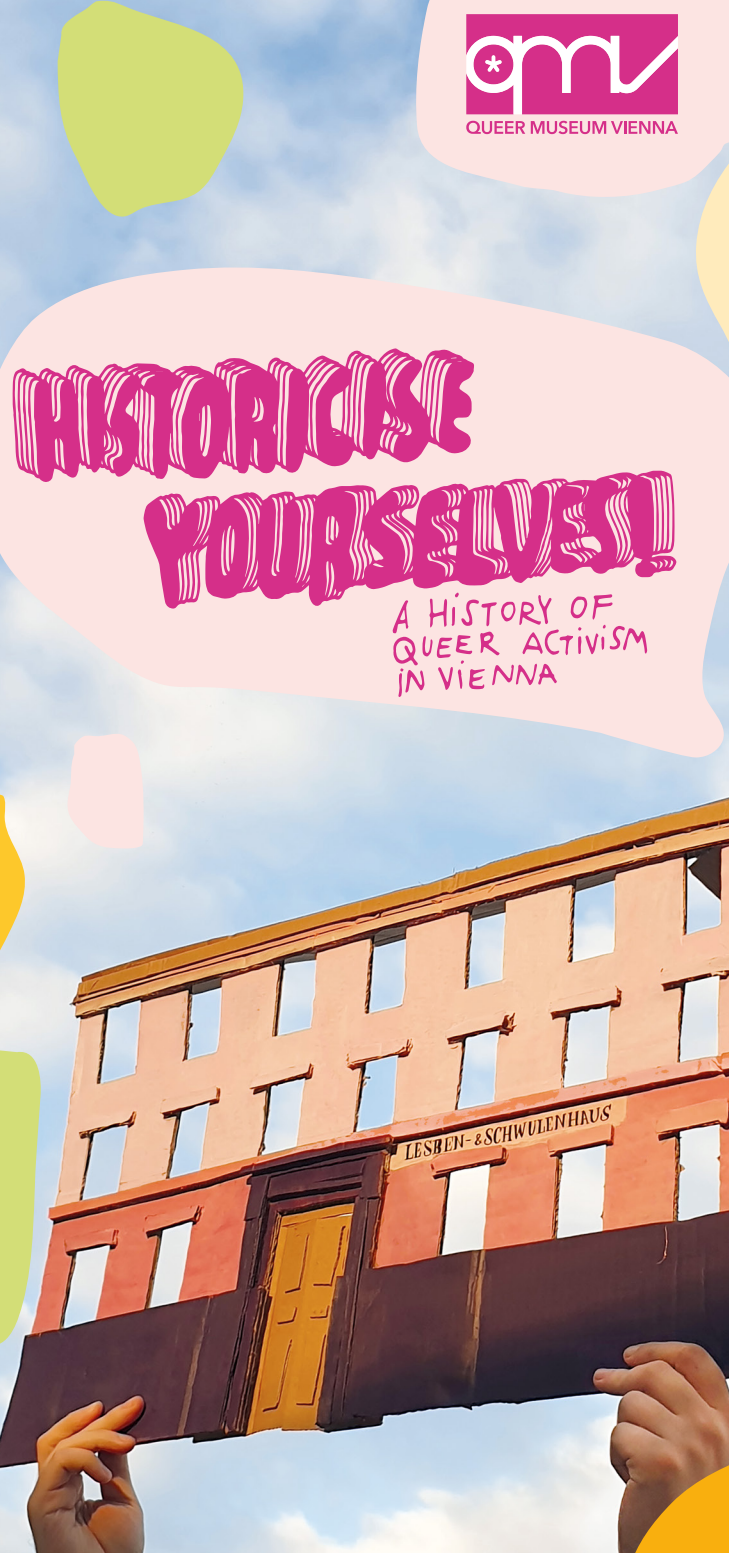
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Poster of the 11th Rainbow Parade Vienna 1996

Joining forces

The 1970s brought visibility for queer communities: from 1975 there was the **CO (Coming Out) group** for gay men, a year later a group of lesbian women was organised in the **Frauenzentrum FZ (Women's Center)**. The **HOSI** has existed since 1979, the first years only by and for **gaymen**, in 1981 **lesbians** also joined the **organisation** with their own group. During this time there were more **squats** in Vienna, and in 1982 a group of activists founded the **Rosa-Lila-Villa**. The house in the 6th district is now known as **Türkis-Rosa-Lila-Villa** – the name extension is meant to reflect the greater diversity of the communities – and remains an important **contact point** to this day. In 1985, **AIDS-Hilfe Wien** was founded and became an important institution for **sexual health** and information on safer sex. It received important support through the **Life Ball** starting in 1993. In the 1990s, the first associations by and for trans people were also founded, one of which is **TransX** and still exists today. The **Rechtskomitee** (legal

What are we learning, and from whom?

Sexuality, gender and the relationship between these have been negotiated and lived differently in all cultures and times. The way we talk and think about queer life today is only one of many perspectives. A major influence on this was the **introduction of the terms** homosexuality and heterosexuality in the **1860s**. This invention of categories had the effect of shaping identities and bringing together queer people who went against the prohibition of their lived sexuality at the time and developed a **sense of self**. In science, psychology, and medicine, queer people were long treated as **research subjects**, and heterosexuality and cis identities were defined as normal – anything else was seen as a deviation. Today, the debate is defined by queer people; **we are talking about ourselves**. For the first time, a lecture with the term homosexuality in the title was held at the University of Vienna in 1989. In the 1990s, philosopher **Judith Butler** (they/them, she/her) pointed out the **performative character of gender** and helped shape gender studies and the queer theories that followed. In Vienna there are strong scholarly contributions, among others by **Hanna Hacker, Gin Müller, Andrea Braidt, Sushila Mesquita, Johanna Schaffer**. They open up **new spaces for thought and action**, enable new perspectives that are reflected in art and culture. This is also the case in literature. Bookstores with a queer focus were founded early on, such as the **Frauenzimmer** or **Löwenherz**, both of which also had a café right next door so that people could have **lively discussions** about what they were reading. How queer life is shaped in Vienna is recorded, collected, researched and interpreted in the **QWIEN – Center for Queer History** and in the **STICHWORT** archive.



HISTORICISE YOURSELVES!
A HISTORY OF QUEER ACTIVISM IN VIENNA

What do we want with this brochure?

The word **queer** was initially used *pejoratively* in the English-speaking world **for people who did not behave the way a man or a woman „should“**. **According to the prevailing ideas of the time.**

To defend themselves against this system and its

The **division into two genders** and the **rules** how they have to behave and whom they are allowed to love is described with the term **heteronormativity**.

attacks, people appropriated the word by calling themselves and each other „queer“. In the German-speaking world, queer is known from the late 1990s, before that the abbreviation LGBT or LSBT was already used to speak collectively of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans people. Today, the diversity of queer communities is better represented by the abbreviation **LGBTQIA+**.

Why and how do we use queer?

In order to show that queer people have always existed, we have decided to use the word for people from earlier times, even if they would not have called themselves so at that time. Each generation faces its own challenges and many benefit from the work already done by previous activists who resisted the prevailing heteronormative system.

Queer activism in Vienna – with this focus we have gathered current and historical info to present it in a compact form. We want to give an **overview** and offer **guidance** in the very diverse and ever-evolving communities associated with the term queer or LGBTQIA+.

Activists advocate for **equality on a legal and societal level** and the abolition of state discrimination, which also has a major impact on how queer bodies are treated by the medical industry.

In the **academic field**, the many structural, social, and cultural implications of living queer and fighting for equality in a queer-hostile system are analysed. Important tools to bring about the changes in society are **cultural events**: they establish a sense of togetherness in communities and provide a presence that is picked up and discussed by the **media**. All of this happens because queer people have come together in a wide variety of places – in bars and clubs where, in addition to having fun, the aim was to network to form new groups, in (long-banned) associations, in bookstores, cinemas, theatres, in private homes, and on the Internet.

Where does the term queer come from?

This brochure, also available online, is here to make progress visible on the one hand and to show where improvements are needed on the other. It will be continuously updated with your comments and ideas – visit → queermuseumvienna.com and join the discussion!

Prohibitions and persecution in the past

In Austria, § 129 Ib StGB (Strafgesetzbuch/Criminal law of Austria) applied from 1852–1971, according to which „fornication with animals or with people of the same sex“ was prohibited. **The law from the monarchy** was also adopted in all other forms of government (republic, Austrofascism).

The law in Austria also included homosexual acts between women, which is an exception compared to other countries in Europe, where homosexual acts were either not punishable at all or only prohibited among men.

In the **1920s** and **30s** there were more convictions, and these were followed by **petitions** to lift the ban. This activism happened mainly in the bourgeois class, supported by some prominent people. Rather than improving, the situation worsened: during the National Socialist regime thousands of people from Austria were persecuted as

homosexuals. Hundreds were interned in concentration camps, only about 30% survived the concentration camp imprisonment.

Homosexuals were marked with a **pink triangle** in the concentration camp. This symbol was appropriated by the gay community in the 1970s and is considered the predecessor of the **rainbow flag**.



Even after the end of World War II in 1945, homosexuals continued to be persecuted due to § 129 Ib, which was still in force. In the mid-1950s, the intensity of persecution reached Nazi levels. The so-called **total ban** was **lifted** in Austria in **1971**, one of the last countries in Europe to do so. Consequently **four new** queer-hostile and discriminatory **paragraphs** were passed, which required further activist struggle.

© QWIEN archive material: Protest action New Year's Concert 1992



Queer and here – loud and unmissable

Vienna's first of many actions by queer activists was the **Whitsun meeting (Pfingsttreffen)** in 1977 – at this gay walk, organized by the *group CO*, gay men from German-speaking countries walked along the Ring holding hands and ensuring visibility. This was also done in 1980 by the *HOSI (Homosexual Initiative)* with its participation in the „Wiener Festwochen alternativ“. With the argument of the then ban on advertising and associations for homosexual acts, the city of Vienna tore down the **HOSI booth** with a digger. This triggered a great **wave of solidarity**

and caused a strengthening of the queer movement. In 1982, to draw attention to the existing injustice, two naked people stormed the stage of the New Year's Concert with the message: **Menschenrechte für Schwule! (Human rights for gays!)** The banner: a pink triangle – the symbol for homosexuals in concentration camps. Also a recognition and commemoration of the murdered and persecuted homosexuals of the Nazi regime did not happen in official form for decades. It was not until a protest action by the HOSI in 1984 that a

commemorative plaque – the first in the world – was installed in the Mauthausen concentration camp. The Rosa-Lila-Villa received a lot of attention with its inscription „Lesben- und Schwulenhaus“ (**Lesbian and Gay House**). The direct-action group **Rosa Wirbel** also drew attention to itself and its issues with an action in parliament and, for example, occupied the office of the Minister of Family Affairs on World AIDS Day in 1988. The Viennese group of **ACT UP!** pointed out the grievances of AIDS crisis management at a press conference in

1991. The **Life Ball** (1993–2019) worked with other means and, as a benefit event, tried to excite public interest with garish costumes, thereby raising important funds for HIV prevention. The Regenbogenparade (**Rainbow Parade**) has marched around the ring every year since 1996 as a hybrid between a demonstration and a party. Since then, the conditions for protest and activism have changed, and the shock value has diminished in many cases. Queer people are no longer exceptions in public life today; every openly queer person contributes!

Fight for paragraphs

With the **four new discriminatory paragraphs** of the minor criminal law reform of 1971, queer people continued to be legally disadvantaged.

- § 210 Prohibition of male homosexual prostitution – **abolished** in **1989** in the course of AIDS prevention
- § 220 Ban on advertising and § 221 Ban on associations that promote „same-sex fornication“ – **repealed** in **1996**
- § 209 Minimum age of 18 for male homosexual sex – lesbian and heterosexual sex permitted from 14 – **Rechtskomitee (Legal committee)** **LAMBDA** overturns paragraph through Constitutional Court ruling 2002

Further legal successes:

- 2004 Protection against discrimination in employment and the workplace
- **Marriage**: 2010 registered partnership, 2019 marriage ban was lifted
- Changes in **personal status for trans persons** are no longer tied to genital altering surgery since 2010, but psychological reports are still required
- Since 2014 there are no more discriminatory rules for **artificial insemination**, from 2016 follows non-discriminatory **adoption** of children

- Since 2018, **entry X** (in addition to male/female) as gender in civil status register or passport
- 2022: Regulation for **blood donations** is formulated in such a way that homosexual men are no longer explicitly excluded
- **Conversion therapies** are to be banned in the near future

Conversion therapy attempts to persuade participating individuals that their queer lifestyle and love is wrong. This type of treatment often leads to long-lasting psychological problems and self-hatred.

What else is there to fight for?

- Protection against discrimination in services (levelling up): so that queer people can no longer be denied service in a restaurant, for example
- The Legal Committee LAMBDA demands legal clarification in the Equal Treatment Act that the **protection ground „gender“** also includes gender identity and intersexuality
- Prohibition of sex-determining medical treatments on intersex persons before the age of 14

We stand together! And together we fight!

Queer people have always faced discrimination, but the forms and effects changed over time. They will continue to face unpredictable problems in the future. **Historical context** helps to stand up against oppression and exclusion so that the suffering experienced is not repeated. Queer communities are as diverse as the societies they live in – so in many cases **multiple discrimination** occurs, where class, origin, race, ability (referring to whether people live with or without disabilities), religious affiliation, etc. play as much a role as LGBTQIA+ identities. This is described under the term **intersectionality**. Because we

don't all share the same life experiences, it's important that we listen to each other, support each other, and treat each other with respect within communities. The debate around TERFs (Trans Excluding Radical Feminists) is a recent example where exactly this respectful interaction is missing. Statements that question the right for trans people to exist create a division that has severe consequences: conservative forces use the same arguments to pursue **anti-queer policies**. **Against this we stand together!**

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Türkis-Rosa-Lila Villa:
Lila Tipp, Türkis-Rosa Tipp,
Freiräumchen
→ dievilla.at

Homosexuelle Initiative Wien
& Gugg community bar
→ hosiwien.at

Cha(i)nge – association for
trans persons (afab)
→ changepeergroup.at
trans viel freude collective
→ [transvielfreude](https://transvielfreude.at)

TransX –
association for trans people
→ transx.at

Venib – Non-Binary Association
→ venib.at

VIMÖ (Self-representation of
intersex people) &
Plattform Intersex Österreich
(independent network)
→ vimoe.at
→ plattform-intersex.at

visiBi*lity Austria – Association
for bi- and pansexuals
→ visibility-austria.at

ace/aro Wien – info to
a*spectrum in Vienna
→ acearo.at

Q:WIR youth center

→ q-wir.at

Courage – Counseling and
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→ courage-beratung.at

Legal Committee LAMBDA
→ rklambda.at

Queer Base – support for
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→ queerbase.at

Afro Rainbow Austria –
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→ afrorainbow.at

Têkoşin – Association for
LGBTIQ refugees and
migrants in Vienna
→ [tekosin.lgbtiq](https://tekosin.lgbtiq.at)

Klub Halal – queer arab
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Rosa Antifa Wien
→ raw.at

General infos around queer
issues and LGBTQIA+
communities
→ queer-lexikon.net