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The challenges of bisexual individuals in the German Asylum Process

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the experiences and challenges faced by bisexual asylum applicants within the German asylum procedure. It thereby focuses on the factors and challenges forested by the asylum's administrative procedures, including data carrier screenings, leading to the non-acceptance of bisexual applicants. The paper regards the administrative steps in the asylum procedure through a biopolitical and extractive biopolitical lens combining it with queer migration concepts embedding bisexuality and its sexually fluid nature. Via a literature and judicial review, this paper identifies a juridical gap concerning the framing of bisexuality and bisexual individuals in the regional and domestic regulations concerning asylum regards. By applying a QCA on three semi-structured interviews, the author identifies a web of interconnected negatively influencing factors stretched among the administrative measures. The main factors identified on the web include *procedural shortcomings*, *lack of understanding*, *insufficient explanations*, *expected narratives*, *queerphobia*, and *fear*. The paper concludes that the German asylum procedure falls short in providing adequate protection and recognition of bisexual asylum applicants, due to the prevailing heteronormative and monosexual environment declaring and normalizing the discrimination and erasure of bisexual migrants in the scope of an asylum system of a democratic and queer-friendly country, fostering queer complicities.

Abbreviations

APD	Asylum Procedure Directive
AsylG	Asylum Act
AufnthG	Residence Act
BAMF	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EU	European Union
GFF	Society for the Rights of Freedom (german: Gesellschaft für Freiheitsrechte)
GG	Basic Law
GLAAD	Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
I.E.	Insufficient explanations
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILGA	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
L.U.	Lack of understanding
LSVD	Lesbian and Gay Association in Germany (german: Lesben- und Schwulenverband in Deutschland)
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
RCD	Reception Condition Directive
SO	Sexual Orientation
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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1.0 Introduction

In 2017, a bisexual Nigerian man who had lived in Germany for five years and was involved in a same-sex relationship was denied asylum. Despite facing abuse and threats in Nigeria due to his sexual orientation, the Federal Office doubted his persecution story and argued that he could live discreetly in his home country (BVerfG, 2020).

Cases like these are not uncommon, as approximately one-third of queer asylum seekers in the European Union (EU) are being rejected due to disbelief by asylum authorities (Andrade et al., 2020). However, very little research was yet conducted within this field as, only very few of the countries which recognize sexual orientation as a reason for persecution, regularly collect and even less publish data regarding queer asylum cases (Shaw et al., 2022). Bisexual applicants are believed to be disproportionately highly affected by negative asylum outcomes due to asylum officials' disbelief and a lack of knowledge concerning their sexuality, yet they often remain neglected in discourses, statistics, and research conducted on (queer-) migrants (Shaw & Verghese, 2022; Rehaag, 2009; Ibid., 2017). The increase in asylum applications since the 2015 (often referred to) "refugee crisis" has made Germany a major destination for refugees, prompting the introduction of *Integrated Identity Management* measures by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) in 2017, including mobile device screenings, for applicants lacking sufficient identification documents (Tangermann, 2017; Biselli & Beckmann, 2019). However, the usability and transparency of these screenings are debated, and their impact on subsequent administrative measures is rarely researched (Biselli & Beckmann, 2019; Hahn, 2020; Aksamitowska, 2021). It is therefore relevant to question the consequences of such Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) on vulnerable migration populations. Especially considering Germany's reputation as a queer-friendly country while scholars claim a lack of sufficient protection for bisexual migrants increase (SOGICA, 2018; Mole, 2021; Mikalsen, 2021).

Overall, a significant research and knowledge gap within the field of asylum claims based on sexuality could be identified, with limited data availability and a lack of exploration of bisexuality specifically. With research on bisexual refugees mostly based in Anglo-America, the field of bisexuality and its theorization specifically, is rather unexplored in continental Europe and its member states (Millbank, 2009; Rehaag, 2009). As existing research primarily focuses on asylum outcomes, Peyghambarzadeh (2021) calls for the need for "asylum stories from the perspective of bisexual asylum seekers" (p.32). Additionally, a shortage of research was identified on the experiences of bisexual refugees in the German asylum process, in which mobile device screenings have raised ethical concerns and human rights violations (Tangermann, 2017; Biselli & Beckmann, 2019). To contribute to fighting spoken of gab, this thesis aims at answering the following research question:

How do the administrative practices of the German asylum process, including social media screening, between 2017 to 2023, contribute to the negative asylum outcomes of bisexual asylum claimants?

During this course of the research, the following Sub-Question will be answered, to give background knowledge and conclude in a comprehensive attempt to answer the papers research question:

1. How is the legal framework shaping the understanding of bisexuality within the German context?

The first Sub-Question (SQ1) explores the legal framework set by the German government in combination with influences of international legal regulations which hold an impact on the understanding, and recognition of a bisexual orientation within the German asylum procedure. Via examining relevant laws and regulations, the understanding of bisexual applicants by the legal system, and its impact on bisexual case outcomes can be identified.

2. Which are the most prominent administrative measures within a bisexual migrants asylum case?

This Sub-Questions (SQ2) aims at the identification and analysis of the key administrative measures within the German asylum procedure, playing a significant role in bisexual asylum cases. By identifying the important and influential administrative steps and measurements involved, a complete and comprehensive overview of the variables and factors shaping the bisexual applicant's asylum outcome can be drawn.

3. What are the negatively influencing factors shaping the bisexual asylums applicants' experience, and how do these variables manifest within each administrative measure?

With this third Sub-Question (SQ3) the identification and analysis of influential factors negatively shape the experiences of bisexual asylum applicants, during each administrative practice, is aimed at. By shedding light on these factors and variables, specific challenges and obstacles, within and potentially among each stage are aimed to be discovered.

4. What measures have been developed by bisexual applicants to combat administrative obstacles?

The last Sub-Question (SQ4) aims at the investigation of potential unlawful measures taken by bisexual asylum applicants in order to partly overcome or mitigate formerly identified obstacles within the asylum process. Highlighting consequential and pro-active measures taken to potentially positively influence their asylum outcomes and identifying the rooting motivations to them, is aimed to give further insights on their faced challenges.

By addressing these Sub-Questions, a comprehensive understanding of the different administrative practices employed within the German asylum procedure and their impact on the non-acceptance outcomes of bisexual asylum cases is aimed. Therefore the identified questions contribute to the research gap at hand by generating data and aiming at the provision of insights into specific challenges faced by bisexual asylum applicants. This thesis aims at opening a discourse about the precarity of marginalized sexual minority migration populations within

Germany. With the data conduction and discourse, an impulse is sought to be set, to highlight the topic and inform policy and decision makers on the marginalization of bisexual migrant populations within the asylum procedure, aiming at a fair and just treatment to all asylum seekers in Germany.

The research question and its sub-questions will be addressed, via qualitatively analyzing the experiences of bisexual asylum applicants, as conducted during semi-structured interviews with queer asylum advisors. Hence, this thesis first introduces the grounding concepts necessary to comprehend the subsequent analysis. The methodological data analysis approach follows a conceptual lens of queer migration theory as well as the concept of biopolitics. Further, this chapter discusses the regional and domestic judicial framework of queer migration regulations and their definition setting of *sexual orientation* and *bisexuality*. The third section elaborates on the research's methodological framework, connecting the theoretical concepts with the conducted data. As further explained below the research conducts a qualitative content analysis (QCA) to analyze the pre-conducted interviews. The analysis findings will be assessed and discussed in the fourth section of the paper. Thereby limits of the conducted research will be discussed. Eventually in the conclusion an ultimate overview of the findings, will be given and the research question answered. Impulses for further research will be given.

2.0 Conceptual Framework

This chapter provides a theoretical and conceptual background of bisexuality as well as the German asylum procedure, drawing upon the theoretical background of queer migration theory and biopolitical studies as well as the latest academic discourses. This chapter first introduces bisexuality as embedded within the queer migration theory and its concepts, for a nuanced understanding of the bisexual nature and the precarious positioning as a fluid sexuality. Also, a review of the current understanding of bisexuality as present within Germany and the German asylum procedure, answering SQ1 will be presented concluding in the formulation of the paper's working definition.

Subsequently, the chapter focuses on the German asylum procedure, examining its prominent administrative measures through a biopolitical lens. By adopting a biopolitical perspective, the chapter seeks to enhance the understanding of the experiences and unique challenges faced by bisexual minorities within the process. The theoretical frameworks of queer migration theory and biopolitical studies provide valuable concepts that contribute to a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the intersection between bisexuality and the German asylum procedure.

2.1 Bisexuality as a concept

To address the research question, it is essential to establish a comprehensive understanding of the concept of bisexuality. The queer migration theoretical framework provides useful concepts enhancing the understanding and framework under which bisexuality and bisexual individuals have to be regarded and are getting challenged within society. As it is crucial to set a working terminology of the concept for this paper, the legal regulations related to queer asylum applicants

in Germany, as well as international ones influencing the German government's understanding, are examined. Via the further consultation of definitions provided by relevant NGOs and international treaties, a thorough exploration of the field of definitions is ensured.

2.1.1 Queer migration theory

Queer migration theory, is situated at the intersection of migration and queer theory and provides a conceptual framework to analyze the interplay between migration and sexuality. It recognizes that sexuality is socially constructed and influenced by power dynamics, gender, and geopolitical factors (Luibhéid, 2008; Mikalsen, 2021). This interdisciplinary field allows for critical examinations of the diversity within migration experiences, highlighting the specific challenges faced by minority groups. By adopting a critical lens, queer migration theory identifies power dynamics that shape the experiences of queer migrants based on their sexual orientation, facilitating a nuanced understanding of the intersectionality between migration and sexuality. By providing concepts the theory allows for a comprehensive understanding of the bisexual nature and the challenges faced via spoken power relations by bisexual individuals within, *inter alia*, a migrational context (Manalansan, 2006; Mikalsen, 2021). These concepts, which will be elaborated upon below, include heteronormativity, homonormativity, queer complicities, sexual fluidity, and monosexuality.

Heteronormativity, which assumes heterosexuality as the default or normative sexual orientation, plays a crucial role in queer migration theory by challenging assumptions, including that all migrants are heterosexual (Manalansan, 2006; Mole, 2021). By examining heteronormativity, scholars can identify power dynamics and knowledge systems which influence the identities of queer migrants. This concept allows for an exploration of hierarchies within migration experiences, acknowledging the significance of sexuality while not necessarily centralizing it (Luibhéid, 2008).

Homonormativity, introduced by Lisa Duggan (2002), refers to a political stance that upholds "dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions [...] while promising [...] a depoliticised gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption" (Duggan, 2002 p.179). It entails the acceptance of certain aspects of queerness in society as long as they align with heteronormative and neoliberal ideals, such as cisgender norms and monogamy, promoting tolerance without genuine acceptance (Mikalsen, 2021). As a result, homonormativity reinforces heteronormative values such as monogamy, a binary gender system, and reproduction (Luibhéid, 2008).

The concept of *queer complicities* refers to the collaboration of queer-friendly actors, such as states, which advocate for and normalize sexual policies, but only for certain recognized queer identities, while marginalizing others (Duggan, 2002). This limited understanding of queerness excludes individuals who do not conform to established norms, such as queer asylum seekers and bisexual individuals, ultimately facing exclusion and denial of access and recognition (Luibhéid, 2008; Mikalsen, 2021).

Sexual fluidity, as conceptualized by Sin (2015), refers to the ability to engage in romantic and sexual relationships with individuals of either sex. Individuals with fluid sexual identities navigate

between societal constructs of heteronormativity and homosexuality, challenging the conventional binary understanding of sexuality that posits heterosexuality and homosexuality as mutually exclusive opposites (Klesse, 2021). Bisexual individuals exemplify sexual fluidity and threaten the dominant "mononormative approach [which] prioritises monosexual sexual orientations" and marginalizes "plurisexual sexual orientations" (Peyghambarzadeh, 2021 p.22). Sexual fluidity, therefore introduces a paradigm that acknowledges a spectrum of sexual orientations, with heterosexuality and homosexuality on one end and bisexuality, among others, on the other side (Hemmings, 2002).

Monosexuality assumes attraction toward only one gender or sex, stigmatizing those who do not conform to this norm. Recognizing bisexuality is crucial in moving beyond dichotomous theories and understanding the coercive nature of monosexuality (James, 1996). The dominant monogamous understanding of relationships contributes to the invisibility of sexual fluid identities. Therefore bisexuals get often overlooked as they involve in monogamous relationships which are interpreted as being of heterosexual or homosexual nature (Callis, 2009). James (1996) argues that compulsory monosexuality leads to the erasure of bisexual individuals, similar to the erasure experienced by lesbian and gay individuals due to compulsory heterosexuality. Consequences of this erasure include a lack of connection among bisexual individuals as well as fear and misunderstanding among non-bisexual individuals (Ochs, 2009). These consequences underscore the importance of increased visibility and understanding of sexual fluid identities.

2.1.1 Juridical framework

Below two tables provide an overview of the most prominent regulations, to be found at the international and regional levels, which have ultimately shaped Germany's national law. In the third table, the most important laws and regulations on the national level of Germany are displayed. The regulations are shortly introduced and assessed upon their usage and understanding of the terms sexual orientation as well as bisexuality.

Name	Year	Purpose	Assessment	
			Sexual Orientation (SO)	Bisexuality
Geneva Refugee Convention	1951	The convention related to the Status of Refugee aims at the protection of all refugees (UNHCR, n.d.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined
Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees	1967	The protocol displays an updated version of the Geneva Convention and its Refugee definition (UNHCR, n.d.; <i>ibid.</i> , 1992)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined
Guidelines on International Protection	2002	The guidelines aim at providing clear and practical guidance in international refugee matters, based on international law. (UNHCR, 2002; <i>ibid.</i> , 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO is recognised as reason for refuge • SO is differentiated from sexual practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined

Name	Year	Purpose	Assessment	
			Sexual Orientation (SO)	Bisexuality

Table 1: Overview, juridical regulations international level

Name	Year	Purpose	Assessment	
			Sexual orientation (SO)	Bisexuality
Qualification Directive	2004	Sets qualification regulations need to be fulfilled for refugees and persons in need of protection (European Union, 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO is recognised as a reason of persecution due to belonging to a particular social group • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined
Asylum Procedure Directive (APD)	2013	Focuses at the sufficient support and focus people asylum seekers with the need of a special procedure (European Union, 2013a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO is recognised as a reason to requiring a special procedure • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined
Reception Condition Directive (RCD)	2013	Regards joint standards for admission conditions and sets special attention on vulnerable persons (European Union, 2013b; Migration and Home Affairs, n.d.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined
New Pact on Migration and Asylum	2020	Aims at improving and quickening asylum procedures, setting special attention at the protection of vulnerable groups (European Commission, 2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined

Table 2: Overview, juridicial regulations EU level

Name	Year	Purpose	Assessment	
			Sexual Orientation (SO)	Bisexuality
Basic Law (GG)	1993	Concerns legal matters of asylum applicants in Germany and recognises the right of asylum as an unrestricted, individual and fundamental right (LSVD, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined
Residence Act (AufnthG)	2005	Sets regulations about a non-Europeans entry, residence, employment, and termination of residence (BMI, 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined
Asylum Act (AsylG)	2015	Sets requirements for the protection of asylum seekers as well as the asylum process in Germany (Bundesministerium der Justiz, n.d.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO is recognised as particular social group and thus, reason of persecution. • Not defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned • Not defined

Table 3: Overview, juridical regulations national level

As visible in the tables above, sexual orientation is only rare, and bisexuality is not at all mentioned in the most prominent and recognized regulations setting out standardized procedures and definitions concerning refugees. While, since 2004, sexual orientation is recognized as a legitimate reason for prosecution and thus a reason to claim asylum, a standardized understanding of this

term is not provided, on either level. Regarding the APD and RCD, it can be observed that the two directives have contradictory understandings of sexual orientation as displaying a vulnerable group.

2.1.2 Field of Definitions

Prior to conducting the analysis and addressing the research question, it is essential to set the terminology utilized in this paper. *Table 4* examines different definitions provided by various sources, including UN agencies, NGOs, networks, and scholars. These definitions are neither binding nor standardized but offer valuable insights into the subject matter. Reoccurring key characteristics of the definitions are identified, serving as a foundation for this thesis' working definition.

Source	Year	Sexual Orientation	Bisexuality
Yogyakarta Principles - European Commission (n.d.)	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotional, affectional and sexual attraction, intimate and/or sexual relations • with individuals of a different, or the same, or more than one gender 	-
Guidance Note on Refugee Claims Relating to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity - UNHCR (2012)	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-identification • exclusive and non-exclusive attraction • to the same or opposite sex • little or no sense of choice • no set determination and possible evolvment across a person's lifetime • no set realisation point • wide range of expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction • to both, men and women • not necessarily at the same time/ in the same way • Decoupling of experiences with both sexes and sexual orientation • Possible coupling of bisexuality with the terms <i>fluid</i> and <i>flexible</i>
Need to Know Guidance: Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer Persons in Forced Displacement - UNHCR (2021)	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotional, affective and sexual attraction and intimate relations • with individuals of a particular gender or more than one gender • wide range of expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction • to people of more than one gender
Glossary - GLAAD (2022)	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enduring physical, romantic and/ or emotional attraction to another person • With individuals of a different, or the same, or more than one gender • Decoupling of sexual experience and sexual orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction • to people of more than one gender • not necessarily at the same time/ in the same way • Decoupling of experiences with both sexes and sexual orientation

Glossary - ILGA (2022)	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affection, emotional and sexual attraction, intimate or sexual relation • With different, the same or more than one gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotionale and/or sexual attraction • to people of more than one gender
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Table 4: Overview, existing definitions of sexual orientation and bisexuality

In summary, it can be stated that asylum based on sexual orientation is governed via a variety of partly contradictory regulations by several institutions and actors. The most prominent key terms for the definitions of sexual orientation include *emotional, affectional, and sexual attraction, intimate and/or sexual relation, to individuals of the same, a different, or more than one gender, characterized by a wide range of expressions*. The most prominent characteristics of the presented definitions of bisexuality include *the physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction, to people of more than one gender, not necessarily at the same time/ in the same way as well as the decoupling of experiences with both sexes and sexual orientation*.

Addressing SQ1, the comprehension of Bisexuality among German officials appears to be characterized by minimal influences. While juridical documents do not specifically mention bisexuality or provide any definition of it, they refer to sexual orientation instead. However, such a definition is not provided either. Moreover, it is evident that at the EU level, matters concerning sexual orientation in the asylum procedure are only mentioned in Directives, rather than regulations, which grant member states considerable freedom in their implementation and execution. Neither the EU nor the national level promotes standardized definitions. Instead, various international actors propose non-binding terminologies that can offer assistance, however, these top differ in their interpretations and the level of complexity. These missing binding standardizations and even partly contradictory understandings enable procedural gaps to occur which increase the vulnerability of the marginalized group of bisexual asylum applicants.

2.1.3 Working Terminology

For the scope of this paper, a working definition is set combining the formerly identified reoccurring characteristics inherent to the definitions assessed above. Therefore, Sexual Orientation is understood as followed:

Sexual Orientation describes the emotional, affectional, and sexual attraction, intimate and/or sexual relations to individuals of a particular gender or more than one gender, characterized by a wide range of expressions..

Regarding Bisexuality, the same procedure is applied, framing bisexuality as

... the physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to people of more than one gender, however not necessarily at the same time and not necessarily in the same way/ same degree regardless of former (sexual) experiences with any sex.

It is crucial to point out that the paper does not aim at setting a particular definition and advocating for its national or international recognition but to explore the consequences of treatment bisexual individuals experience due to such understanding.

2.2 The asylum procedure

This chapter undertakes an examination of the German asylum procedure, focusing on its administrative steps and measures, within the framework of biopolitics. By adopting a biopolitical perspective, this thesis seeks to explore the intersection of bisexual minority populations and the efficiency-driven administrative measures aimed at controlling them. To facilitate this exploration, the chapter introduces the concept of biopolitics, drawing upon Michel Foucault's theories, and specifically delves into the notion of extractive biopolitical measures as discussed by Aradau and Tazzioli (2020) within the context of migration. Subsequently, the chapter turns its attention to the German asylum procedure, outlining the relevant administrative measures that are of significance to this thesis.

2.2.1 Biopolitical studies

Biopolitics, as conceptualized by Foucault and set into the migrational context, provides a framework for analyzing the exercise of power by states through measures and techniques employed to effectively manage and surveil populations and individuals (Topak, 2014; Foucault, 2003). Biopolitical measures are rooted in a rationality of power that targets the population, draws knowledge from the political economy, and utilizes security as a primary tool (Topak, 2014; Klesse, 2021). In the context of migration, biopolitics refers to the implementation of administrative measures by public institutions and political actors to effectively manage and surveil migrants (Topak, 2014). These measures encompass actions, practices, and discourses aimed at regulating, accommodating, and integrating immigrants, such as border controls and asylum procedures (Aradeu & Tazzioli, 2020). Thereby migrants are categorized via social racism targeting specific marginalized migrant groups, such as sexual minorities, leading to discrimination and exclusion. Within the framework of biopolitics, migrants' lives are subject to regulation and monitoring, viewing them as statistical masses requiring management and optimization, rather than autonomous individuals (Klesse, 2021). Under the scope of migration biopolitical measures decide upon inclusion and exclusions holding the potential to decide upon social as well as literal death (Repo, 2013; Klesse, 2021).

Within the scope of migration, Aradau and Tazzioli (2020) introduce the concept of extractive biopolitical measures. The authors go beyond earlier perspectives by suggesting that biopolitical measures not only focus on the inclusion or exclusion of individuals but also involve the extraction of various elements, including the collection of migrant data (Aradau & Tazzioli, 2020). Data extraction serves purposes such as monitoring and decision-making within the immigration process. Extraction as part of biopolitics measures, enables a nuanced understanding of the ways authorities control the bodies, identities, and personal data of migrants (Collins, 2023).

2.2.2 German asylum decision-making procedure

The BAMF is the office responsible for asylum applications and the procedure in Germany (Ganschow, 2021). As stated by the institution, each case is assessed by trained professional competencies who hold much experience, including LGBT-sensitized special representatives (BAMF, 2019; *ibid.* 2021a). While the specific asylum process varies depending on the nature of each claim, certain measures remain consistent throughout. Upon arrival in Germany, refugees are required to promptly report to a government agency to initiate the asylum application and undergo registration (BAMF, 2017). It is mandatory for refugees to provide adequate identification documents, if they fail to do so, the BAMF may conduct data carrier screenings, including examining refugees' mobile phones, to verify their claimed identities (Tangermann, 2017; BAMF, n.d.-a). Subsequently, two hearings are conducted. The initial hearing primarily focuses on formalities related to determining the responsible state and asylum procedure applicable, also called the Dublin System, while the second hearing delves into the refugee's individual circumstances and the reasons behind their asylum application (Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, 2022). Following the hearings, the BAMF makes a decision regarding the applicant's asylum status. This decision may result in either the grant of asylum or deportation and is reasoned upon a notion (BAMF, 2021a). Notably, for bisexual asylum applicants, there is a recurring pattern of asylum rejections based on the notion of discretion, making discretionary bids a distinct measure employed by the BAMF (LSVD, 2019). *Figure 1* displays the regular chain of administrative (biopolitical) steps involved in the asylum registration to the decision-making procedure, with the inclusion of screening and discretionary bids as variable administrative measures. In the following, the screening procedure, 2nd Hearing (hereafter referred to as substantive interview, extensive interview, or interview), and discretionary bid will be further explored, particularly within the context of bisexual asylum cases.

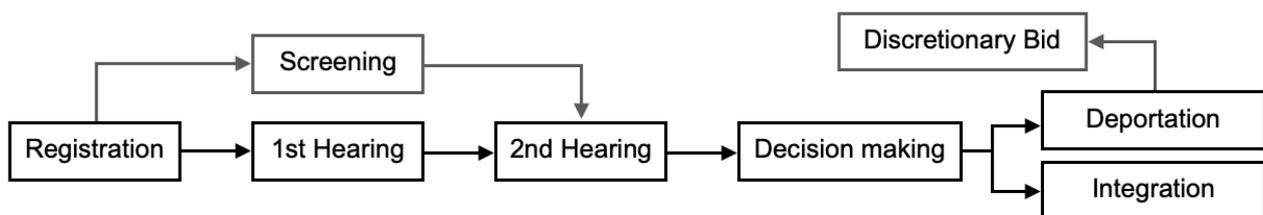


Figure 1: asylum procedural steps and measures

Note. own illustration in reference to Tangermann, 2017; LSVD, 2019; BAMF, 2021a

2.2.2.1 Data carrier screening

With the enactment of the 2017 *Act on the Better Enforcement of the Obligation to Leave the Country* (German: Gesetz zur besseren Durchsetzung der Ausreisepflicht), Germany introduced a set of administrative measures known as Integrated identity management (Bundesministerium der Justiz, 2017). These measures aim at assessing the accuracy and plausibility of asylum applicants' information and enhancing transparency and efficiency within the asylum procedure (BAMF & BMI, 2019). As part of this package, the BAMF is authorized to conduct data carrier screenings, to facilitate the identification and origin of the asylum applicant in the case of them being unable to

provide sufficient valid, legal, and recognized identification documents (BAMF, n.d.-a; *ibid.* n.d.-b). These screenings may too be carried out against the applicant's will and do not require concrete doubts regarding the legitimacy of the claimed identity (Bolhuis & Van Wijk, 2018; Biselli & Beckmann, 2019). Currently, the BAMF primarily focuses on screening mobile phones, but can further examine other data carriers such as USB flash drives, hard drives, laptops, as well as fitness wristbands and step watches (Aksamitowska, 2021, p. 195). *Figure 2* illustrates the step-by-step procedure involved in the data carrier screening process.

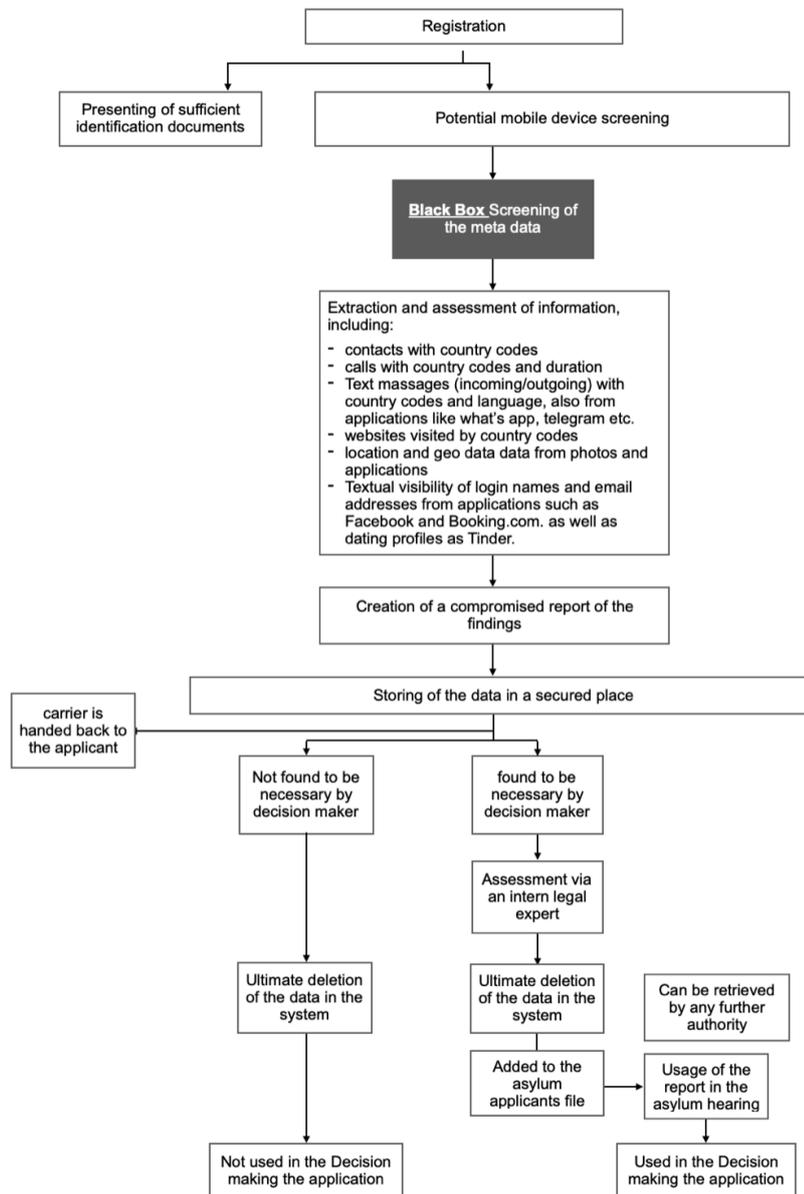


Figure 2: screening procedure by the BAMF

Note. own illustration in reference to Tangermann, 2017; Biselli & Beckmann, 2019; ibid, 2021b; BAMF, n.d.-a; ibid., n.d.-b

Scholars have raised concerns about the limited effectiveness of data carrier screenings in verifying the identity and origin of the carriers' holders (Biselli & Beckmann, 2019; Hahn, 2020). Currently, there are no established measures to verify the accuracy of the software and screening procedure, and the BAMF does not disclose the technical and algorithmic details of the software (Biselli & Beckmann, 2019). This lack of transparency raises concerns about the reliability of the

reports generated and makes scholars are that the decision-making process for asylum applicants relies on opaque and potentially error-prone "black box" software that is unreliable and difficult to review (Hahn, 2020). The potential reproduction of underlying biases due to algorithm testing data used by the BAMF, which is especially fostered if not regularly and sufficiently reviewed, too has been argued by scholars (Bither & Ziebarth, 2020). False data generated by the software and misinterpretation of provided data can significantly impact the outcomes of asylum applicants' decisions (Biselli & Beckmann, 2019). Despite numerous known cases of serious misjudgments leading to wrongful asylum denials, there is yet a lack of assessments conducted on the negative impacts experienced by screened applicants and their case outcomes (Hahn, 2020).

Due to spoken of concerns by scholars, NGOs, and the opposition party "the Left", along with multiple lawsuits filed by the Society for the Rights of Freedom Germany in connection with affected refugees, the Federal Constitutional Court declared the immediate screening of asylum applicants at the start of the application process to be unlawful in February 2023 (GFF, 2023).

2.2.2.2 The Second Hearing for bisexual people

The second, substantive interview is crucial as it offers the only opportunity for applicants to provide credible reasons for their escape in the absence of additional persecution-related documentation (§ 25 AsylG). This interview focuses on the rationale behind their escape, potential alternatives in their home country, and the consequences of deportation (BAMF, 2020a). The hearing is attended by a translator for better communication and translation only (ibid., 2020a). According to the Qualification Directive of the European Union (2011), queer applicants must substantiate the validity of their claim for asylum during this second hearing. For asylums based on sexual orientation, applicants are required to prove their sexual orientation, fear of persecution, and the unwillingness or inability of their home countries to provide protection. The burden of proof lies solely with the applicant. Consequently, the applicants are required to answer multiple questions concerning their private life, the process of self-discovery, and former relationships (Queer Refugees Deutschland, n.d.). The responsible official is prohibited from delving into explicit questions concerning the sexual practices of the asylum seeker, as per Article 4 of the Qualification Directive in relation to Article 7 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (EuGH, 2014).

Critical voices regarding the interview have been raised, especially regarding the provision of proof of the applicant's queerness. While the BAMF claims, to provide sensitivity to the queer thematic specialized officials, the employed practices were repeatedly found to be inappropriate and insufficient, including the utilization of intimate questionnaires concerning sexual positions, usage of protection, sexual dominance, and so forth, while such are prohibited (SOGICA, 2018; Tschalaer, 202). The asylum system's heteronormative dimensions have also been criticized for leading to stereotypes and mis-conceptualization of sexual orientations, particularly bisexuality (Mikalsen, 2021; Dustin and Held, 2018; Peyghambarzadeh, 2021). While rare research could be found about the experiences of bisexual applicants in Germany, scholars repeatedly pointed out the shortcoming understanding of the bisexual nature, resulting in a likelihood of bisexuality not

being recognized as a sexual orientation and rather stigmatized by wanting to experience the same sex either, therefore following the "common binegative believe" of recognising bisexuality rather as "a phase, not a valid, separate sexual orientation" (Peyghambarzadeh, 2021 p.28) in Germany directly or the EU member states in general (Dustin and Held 2018).

2.2.2.3 Discretionary Standard

When applying for asylum based on one's sexuality it is a common practice by the BAMF to decline an application with the notation of homo- or bisexual people being capable of expressing their queerness privately and in seclusion by living in discretion. It is argued that by doing so the applicant could avoid persecution in their home country (Braun et al., 2020). This practice is particularly prevalent in bisexual asylum cases, where case officials argue that individuals can "choose to deny their attraction to their same sex" (Peyghambarzadeh, 2021, p. 30). Millbank (2009) found a strong association between discretionary reasoning and negative asylum decisions. The BAMF justifies this practice by referring to situation reports from the Federal Foreign Office, which describe how LGB individuals live discreet lives in countries from which other queer people seek refuge (LSVD, 2019). In 2013, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) prohibited this practice, ruling that homosexual individuals should not be expected to hide their sexual orientation to avoid persecution. The court recognized that sexual orientation is an integral part of one's identity, and queer asylum seekers should not be compelled to conceal it (ECJ, 2013). However, despite the ruling, the practice continued, now reasoned on the absence of a targeted search for homosexual individuals and thus a low likelihood of criminal prosecution in certain countries (Millbank, 2005). In January 2020, the German Federal Constitutional Court upheld the ECJ's judgment after a bisexual asylum seeker was denied asylum due to the expectation of keeping their "homosexual orientation" a secret in their home country (BVerfG, 2020). This ruling by the BVerfG represented a significant milestone for queer, and especially bisexual individuals, reaffirming the earlier ECJ decision (LSVD, 2022). However, Millbank (2009) argues that, while there is an international trend moving away from discretionary bids, another trend can be observed which moves towards general disbelief in any form of queerness that does not conform to a Westernised stereotypical understanding (Shaw & Verghese, 2022).

2.3 Concluding remarks

This thesis investigates the research question by employing queer migration theory and its concepts embedding bisexuality, as well as a biopolitical lens on the German asylum procedure and it is for bisexual applicants' most influential administrative measures. Via the biopolitical lens, the asylum procedure and its measures can be fully observed within their controlling and categorizing nature, focusing on the categorizing aspects of bisexuality via social racism. The queer migration theory enables a more nuanced understanding of the nature of such categorization and challenges faced by bisexual individuals root in, providing concepts that created the framework in which bisexuality is understood. Combining these theories a framework is established connecting the sexual aspect of bisexuality and the monitoring and controlling aspect of the asylum

system. In this sense, the extractive biopolitical measure displays a more precise lens concerning the data carrier screenings more specifically. This theoretical foundation, facilitates the comprehension and critical evaluation of power dynamics within migration management, fostering the exploration of influential factors within the German asylum procedure which negatively influences bisexual asylum cases and the experience of bisexual individuals.

3.0 Methodology

In the following section, the methodological framework of the thesis will be presented. This paper makes use of a QCA, to analyse data conducted via semi-structured interviews. While the chapter will first explore the relevance of Germany's asylum procedure as the case selection, it continues exploring the method utilized for the data collection. Eventually, the chosen method for the data analysis will be discussed and structured. Therefore, the coding procedure will be explored more closely and a coding scheme based on the conceptual framework presented.

3.1 Case description

This thesis examines the German asylum procedure and its administrative measures, focusing on the experiences and challenges faced by bisexual individuals, specifically regarding data carrier screenings. The choice of the German asylum procedure as the research subject stems from the rather recent implementation of efficiency-driven ICTs (Tangermann, 2017; Bolhuis & van Wijk, 2018). However, the effectiveness and transparency of the introduced data carrier screenings have been subject to ongoing debate and remain opaque (Biselli & Beckmann, 2019; Aksamitowska, 2021). Additionally, with the execution of discretionary bids and scholars' argumentation for non-sufficient protection of bisexual asylum applicants and a disproportionate high affection of spoken of individuals, it was found reasonable to question the consequences of the administrative measures executed in the process on such vulnerable migration population (LSVD, n.d.; Gartner, 2015). With, a research gap identified, regarding not only the effects of data carrier screenings on migrants but also the treatment and challenges faced by bisexual asylum applicants, this study aims at addressing the interface of the two gaps, shedding light on specific factors and variables encountered by bisexual individuals within the German asylum procedure, particularly about data carrier screenings, the substantive interview, and discretionary bids. A timespan between 2017 and 2023 was adapted, starting at the implementation of data carrier screenings in 2017, and the prohibition of the screenings to be utilized as regularly as before and right at the beginning of the procedure, as ruled in February 2023.

3.2 Method of data collection

To answer SQ1, a comprehensive scholarly and juridical literature review was conducted to gain insights into the current understanding of bisexuality within Germany, particularly within the BAMF, and the influential legal documents shaping it. The review focused on gathering the most recent information and knowledge about the asylum procedure specifically bisexual individuals, in Germany. The literature review employed a data collection procedure that primarily involved

second-hand data obtained through desk research. An extensive review was conducted on legal and official documents (Bundesministerium des Innern, 2009; UNHCR, 2002) and critical-minded organizations such as LSVD (n.d.), and ILGA (2023). Scholarly articles (Callis, 2009) and empirical studies (Rehaag, 2009; Tschalaer, 2022) were gathered from social science databases like Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Taylor & Francis. For the juridical review, international and national judicial documents, including treaties, directives, acts, and laws, were collected using a snowball system applied to previous and new desk research. The gathered documents were then filtered based on their applicability to queer refugee matters and categorized according to their level of authority and bindingness. By combining the findings from the literature review and addressing SQ1, the reader is provided with essential information to comprehend the subsequent analysis.

The qualitative data utilized in the central content analysis was conducted via three semi-structured interviews. The interview participants were selected based on specific criteria, including advising and assisting officers who have had experience working closely with bisexual refugees, asylum applicants, or asylum holders between 2017 and 2023. These participants were contacted through NGOs functioning as contact points and counseling centers for queer refugees, which are located throughout Germany. The open-ended questions asked within the interviews were aimed at the experiences, the research participants made with, and the information they gathered from their work with queer and more precisely bisexual asylum applicants. The questions primarily concerned and were structured according to the former pre-identified influential administrative measure within bisexual asylum cases, namely: the data carrier screenings, the substantive asylum interview, and discretionary bids. However, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for new measures and perspectives to emerge, which were also explored. The focus of the interviews therefore laid on the socio-legal decision-making process within bisexual asylum cases. All data regarding the NGOs and officials involved in the study were anonymized. For a comprehensive overview, please refer to Appendix A.

3.3 Method of data analysis

This thesis employs a QCA as its methodological framework. A QCA aims at the identification of textual concepts within qualitative data, by the quantification and analysis of the meaning and relationship of words and concepts within textual documents (Smith, 2017). Overall, a QCA can be defined as an "intellectual process of categorizing qualitative textual data into clusters of similar entities or conceptual categories, to identify consistent patterns and relationships between variables or themes" (Julien, 2008, p. 120).

While a textual analysis of qualitative data enables the interpretation of textual documents to identify wider narratives, a QCA more specifically allows for an understanding of reality as a narrative. It focuses on the constructions around content created by authors' framings and intents rather than the belief in the ultimate truth and preexistence of scientific independence of nature. The methodology, therefore, is grounded in the research tradition of constructivism, believing in the subjectivity of reality and the influence of culture and history in such understanding (Krippendorff,

2018). Due to not being bound to any specific theories, the QCA enables the interpretation of the data with any previously chosen theoretical/ conceptual framework (Smith, 2017; Julien, 2008). QCA was found best suitable for the analysis and interpretation of the data, as the QCA connects to the goal of this thesis to explore the research participants' experiences with and information given by bisexual asylum applicants. It is applicable as the study aims at the understanding of the experiences made by bisexual refugees with administrative measures by the BAMF and further aims at the identification of patterns within these experiences and can, thus, contribute to the debate of obstacles such measures create for bisexual refugees, especially regarding the introduced ICT.

3.4 Coding procedure

In this part, the focus is laid on the coding procedure employed in this thesis and a comprehensive coding scheme that serves as the fundamental structure for the subsequent analysis provided. The coding scheme plays a critical role in addressing the research question by establishing a clear and systematic framework that enhances the retrospective understandability of the findings and upholds the integrity of the analysis.

To make the conducted data usable, the recorded interviews were transcribed and filtered for the study's relevant questions. Anonymization measures were applied regarding the participant's personal as well as any NGO-specific information. To analyze the conducted interviews on latent repetitive patterns within the experiences, an emerging coding scheme was employed. The scheme facilitates the connection of the theoretical concepts and the empirical data conducted, enabling the structuring of the data and the identification of potential power relations and obstacles within the BAMF's decision-making of bisexual asylum cases. The transcripts underwent an emerged coding approach, drawing on grounded theory principles (Stemler, 2015). This approach enables to "use the data under investigation to develop a theory. This theory is then applied to the subsequent data" (Stemler, 2015 p.3). Therefore, four rounds of coding were conducted, using atlas.ti. The thesis makes use of a mixed method analysis, combining three inductive and one deductive approach. In the first open coding round the transcripts were coded into seven overarching codes. During the second inductive coding round, these initial codes were not coded again to avoid extensive repetition. Instead, this round focused on developing sub-codes within six out of the seven previously established codes. The sub-codes serve the purpose of correctly displaying the diversity and complexity of each code to ensure full and nuanced comprehension and discussion of the finding in the following.

Within the third round, a closed coding scheme of the previously identified administrative measures of the asylum procedure was applied to the formerly coded textual data, aiming at the creation of three categories, namely *Screening*, *Interview*, and *Discretionary Bid*. In the final (open) coding round, the documents were coded for additional administrative concepts that were not yet extensively explored. Two new categories were created, namely *Translator* and *Overall*. Repeatedly coding the textual documents ensured a thorough analysis, allowing for the complete

recognition and integration of all relevant data. Coding the data inductively and later creating categories with a deductive and inductive approach, enabled the contextualisation of the data as given in the interviews. This process facilitates the identification of codes that appear within specific categories and may also recur across multiple categories.

Figure 3 below drafts the coding procedure and coding scheme found. Colors were added as a guide for a better understanding regarding latter figures. The detailed transcripts of the interviews and codebook can be found in Appendix B and C.

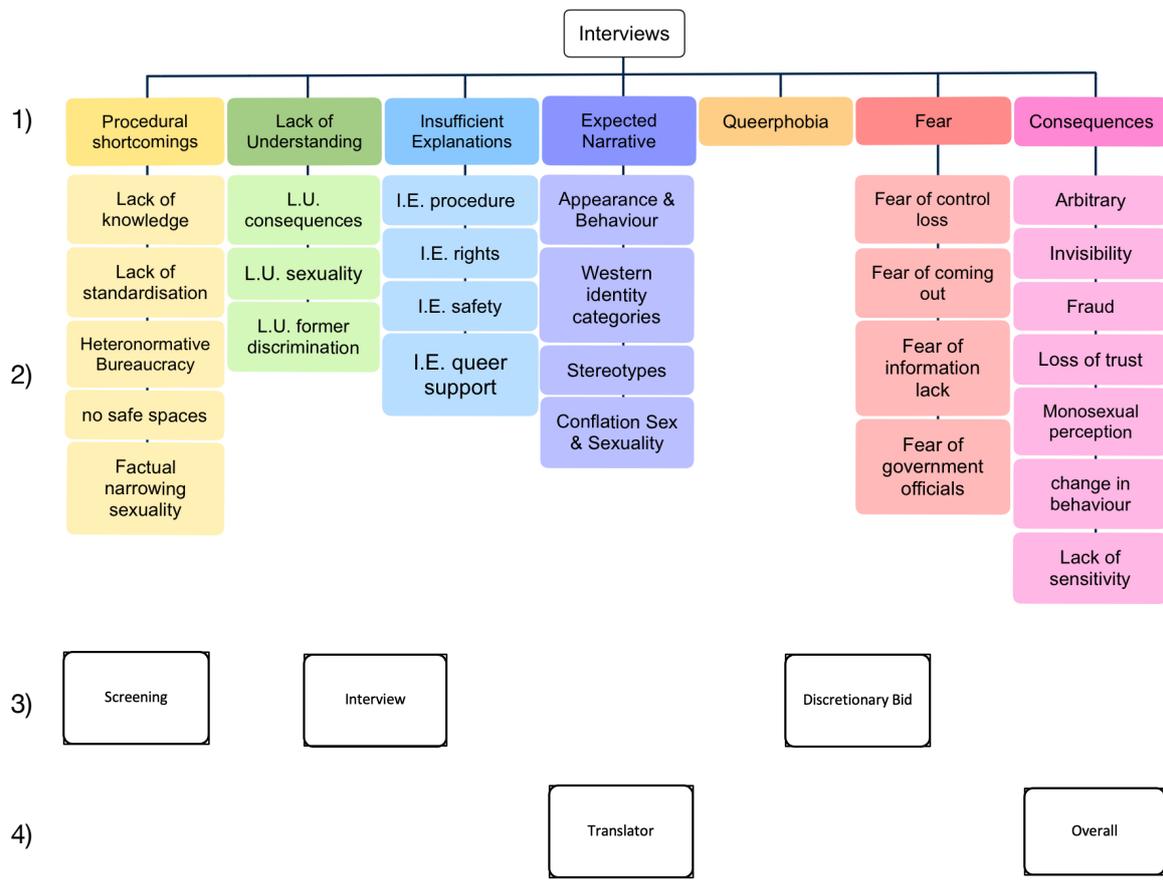


Figure 3: Draft of coding scheme and procedure

3.5 Concluding remarks

Overall, a qualitative content analysis was found to be the most suitable methodological approach, identifying underlying patterns and influential variables within the experiences of bisexual refugees in their asylum procedures, leading to non-acceptance. By collecting data from semi-structured interviews with NGO officials that are closely involved with bisexual refugees, and employing a QCA, this study aims to uncover underlying concepts within these experiences. To achieve this, a mixed method coding scheme was employed, combining deductive and inductive approaches. The coding process involved four rounds, two focused on identifying mentioned influential variables, and two aimed at understanding the contextual measures in which these variables arise. Through this coding procedure, the initial conceptual framework was refined and redefined.

4.0 Analysis

The analysis chapter delves into the findings of the study, which sought to explore how the experiences of bisexual refugees during their asylum procedures are shaped by the employed administrative practices, as well as they contribute to the negative asylum outcomes of bisexual asylum claimants, by uncovering underlying patterns and influential factors. This chapter first introduces the findings of the analysis and utilizes them to answer subquestions two, three, and four. Additionally, the findings will subsequently be discussed drawing upon the conceptual framework and an examination of the limitations of the study given, ensuring a balanced and reflective analysis of the research process and its outcomes.

4.1 Findings

To draw conclusions about negatively influential variables apparent within influential administrative steps and measures in the German asylum procedure for bisexual refugees, codes and underlying concepts were identified and connected. *Figure 4* displays an overview of the found detailed (sub-)codes assigned to the categories, for comprehension, sub-codes belonging to the same code group are colored in relation to *Figure 3*.

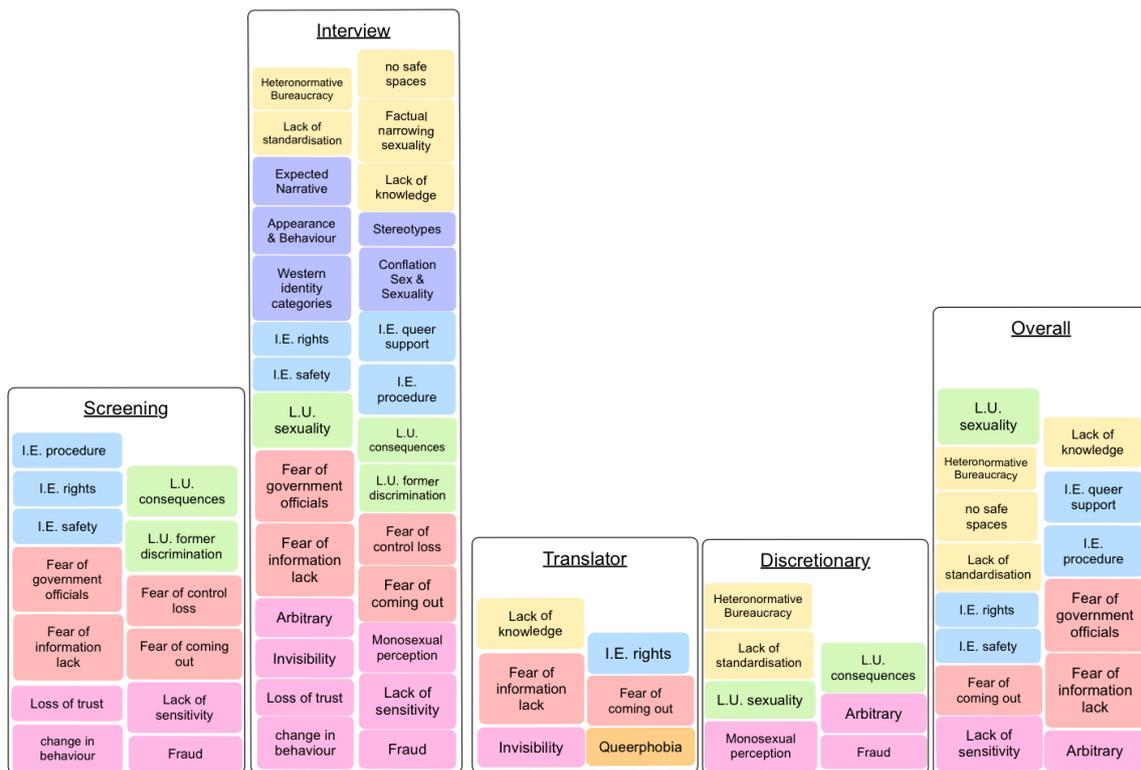


Figure 4: overview of the found detailed (sub-)codes assigned to the categories

4.1.1 Administrative measures

The study examined the most prominent administrative steps and measures influencing bisexual migration asylum cases. Answering SQ2, the analysis identified five distinct categories shaping the asylum decision-making outcome for bisexual applicants: *Screening*, *Interview*, *Translator*, *Discretionary*, and *Overall*. The screening procedure, substantive interview, and discretionary bid were previously identified as influential factors within the conceptual framework, and two additional categories emerged during the inductive coding procedure. The *Overall* category encompasses

various influential factors that affect the asylum procedures measures, environment, and outcomes, and display consequences of circumstances outside of the, for this paper chose to focus, yet influence the happening within. The *Translator* category is closely related to the Substantive Interview but includes distinct variables, making it sufficient to be analyzed separately. These categories collectively shape the experiences and outcomes of bisexual asylum applicants within the conducted data, as illustrated in *Figure 4*.

4.1.2 Variables and interconnectivity

Addressing SQ3 in total 7 codes, and thus influential factors could be identified, with five of them further divided into sub-codes for a more nuanced understanding. The codes and connected sub-codes can be drawn from *Figure 3*. While, each code encompasses multiple reasons of cause as well as ways of expression and can only be understood within its context, first insights can about the distribution of the codes among the administrative measures be drawn from *Figure 4*.

As it is essential to a QCA, the codes found have been contextualized according to their assurance in the data. Thereby interconnectedness among most codes, with variations depending on the identified category was observed. Additionally, significant connections between categories were identified. For a comprehensive understanding, *Figure 5* displays the interconnections among the codes within and across categories. The following subchapters will present and closely assess the findings of the inherent and across-spanning code interconnectivity and their influential and consequential characteristics within each identified category.

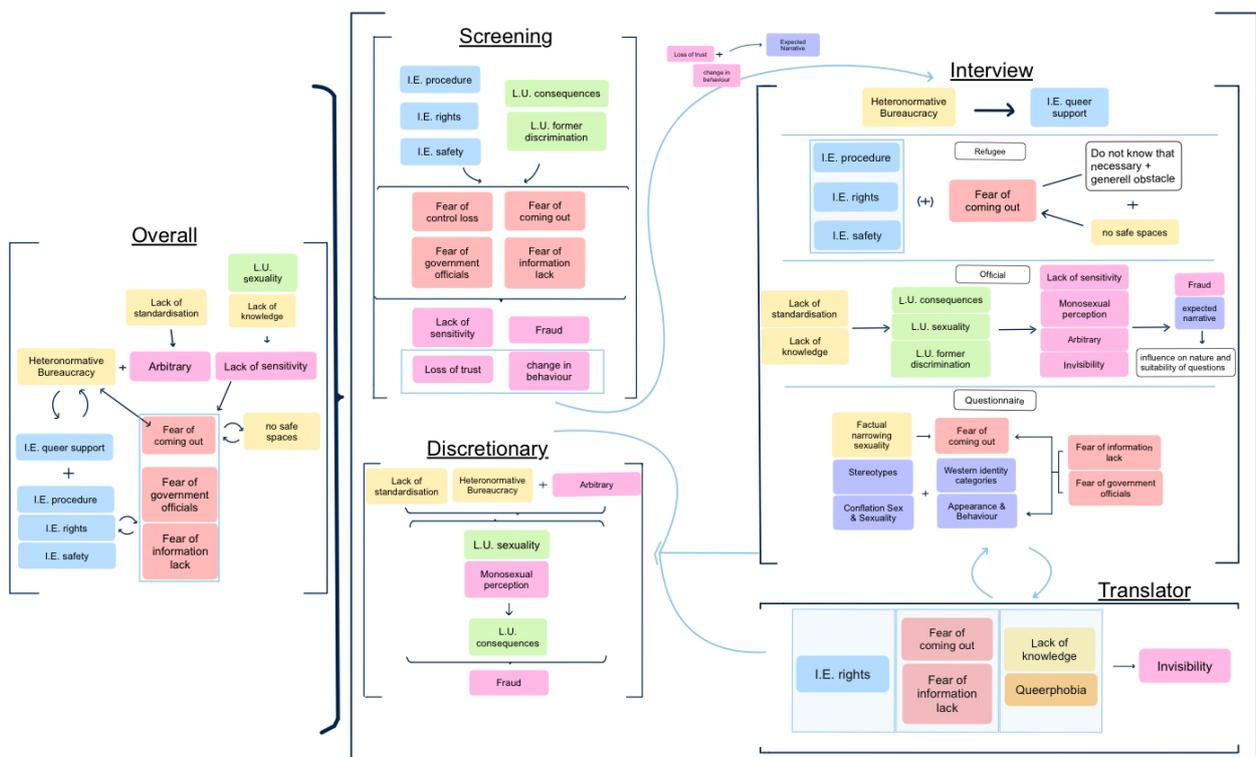


Figure 5: overview of the interconnectivity of the codes within and among the categories

4.1.2.1 Overall

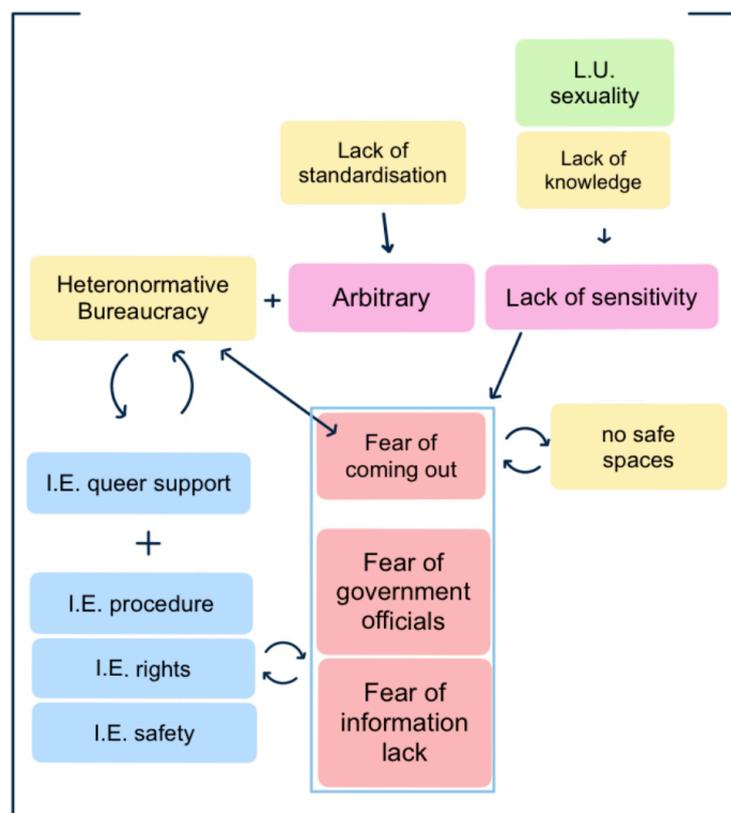


Figure 6: interconnectivity between the codes within “overall“

“I don’t think one can say [the asylum procedure] was designed for queer people [...] I think they are even trying not to do that because people are more likely to be deported this way“ (4:11 ¶ 4 in Interview C)

The system was found to be marked by *heteronormative bureaucracy* and *arbitrary*. The exact procedure of a bisexual asylum seeker's application and the specific obstacles faced within the procedure can hardly be pinned down and depends on a variety of mutually influencing variables. This *arbitrary* was found to be mostly occurring due to a *lack of a standardized* procedure and understanding of not only the vulnerability and the bisexual orientation but also the way bisexual individuals are treated. The help and clarification of their rights and individual experiences are largely depending on the official persons' attitudes and knowledge, which the applicants come into contact with in their accommodations, at the registration, or any of the administrative steps focused on in this thesis. However, the attitudes and education levels were found to be ranging from unreflected, uninformed, and queerphobic to helpful, prepared, and understanding.

Heteronormativity was mainly observed within bureaucratic obstacles hindering bisexual asylum applicants to receive adequate and necessary treatment. It was found necessary for an applicant to out themselves multiple times in front of multiple officials and repeatedly insist on adequate treatment, such as an on queer matters educated official carrying out the substantive interview, to receive it. Naming their sexual orientation as their reason for asylum was, hence, not sufficient. It was further reported to often be additionally necessary for the applicant to consult an NGO,

specialized in queer migrants, to write a letter requesting spoken of specialized officials for the applicant to be given a specialized official (3:22 ¶ 38 in Interview A). Such repeated need for the personal initiative of the bisexual asylum applicant is often hindered by various obstacles, particularly linked to *insufficient explanations*. While accessing *queer support* is crucial, they often face a lack of information about and availability of such support. Furthermore, the applicants often do not receive sufficient information regarding their *rights*, especially special protection concepts, as well as their *safety* and the following *procedural* steps. Receiving sufficient information and advice on time was found to have a vital impact on the case's decision-making outcome. In the case of applicants not receiving sufficient information or timely access to queer support, NGOs were reported to not be able to intervene effectively. As a result, applicants had to attend interviews without adequate support and felt pressured to proceed without substantial support, leading to disadvantageous outcomes (3:23 ¶ 38 in Interview A)

Insufficient information and *fear of coming out*, of *governmental officials*, and *information lack* are also linked, and these factors are compounded by a *lack of sensitivity* toward bisexual applicants. Officials at all levels show a *lack of knowledge* and *sensitivity* towards the sexuality of bisexual applicants, resulting in a lack of safe spaces and reinforcing applicants' *fears* (4:6 ¶ 3 in Interview C). This *lack of sensitivity* and *understanding* contributes to the emergence of further obstacles within the further asylum procedure.

4.1.2.2 Screening

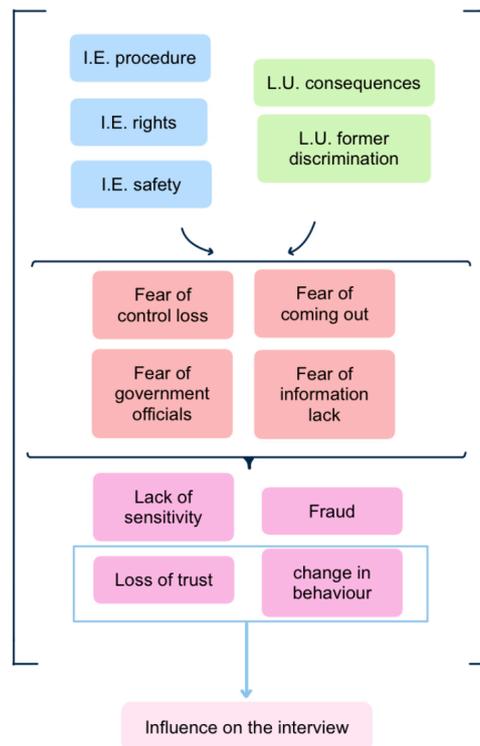


Figure 7: interconnectivity between the codes within “screening“

The codes apparent within the category *Screening*, and thus obstacles to be found during the administrative screening procedure can be observed in *Figure 7*. When assessing the codes

relationships it becomes apparent that five obstacles, namely *Insufficient explanation* of the *procedure*, the applicant's *rights* and *safety* as executed by the officers pair up with the officer's *lack of understanding* of the *consequences* their actions hold upon the applicants, and *former discrimination* experienced by them. Explanations given are "in German and then they [the officers] say: now sign here and then they [the asylum seeker] sign but they don't understand a word" (Interview A, section 50). These variables add up upon each other and result in four identified subcodes of fear experienced by the applicant. The analysis identified *fear of control loss*, of *coming out*, of governmental officials as well as of *information lacks*. The interviewees reported "fear, because they [the applicants] don't know exactly what they [the officers] want to see on their mobile phones" (Interview A, section 85).

A *lack of understanding* of officials for the applicant's traumata was observed to possibly lead to a *lack of sensitive behavior* which then again can lead to the applicant getting triggered and ultimately *losing trust in the governmental officials*: "they have that feeling here too [as experienced when persecuted in their home countries] when someone comes: yes, give me your mobile phone, I have to check everything now, and then they have this scene in their head again" (Interview A, section 85). The fear becomes further significant for not yet outed applicants being afraid of being identified as queer by officials screening their phones or applicants having experienced violence when identified as queer via such police checkpoints in their home countries (Interview A).

While a certain amount of fear regarding *governmental officials* could be identified, an *insufficient amount of explanation*, especially regarding the *procedure*, namely which data is going to be observed and withdrawn, and *lack of sensitive behavior* by the officials were identified to fuel further loss of *trust*: "when they [the BAMF] do that, something breaks in that person [...] they are in shock, they came here to seek protection, and then something like this is happening" (Interview A, section 60). Ultimately *change in behavior* could be observed, leading to a change in narrative, "[the applicants] don't dare to share everything they know anymore". As apparent in the next subchapter, this change of narrative is especially influential within the subsequent substantive interview, in which the bisexual asylum applicant is expected to open up, prove their sexuality and share their fear of persecution.

4.1.2.3 Interview

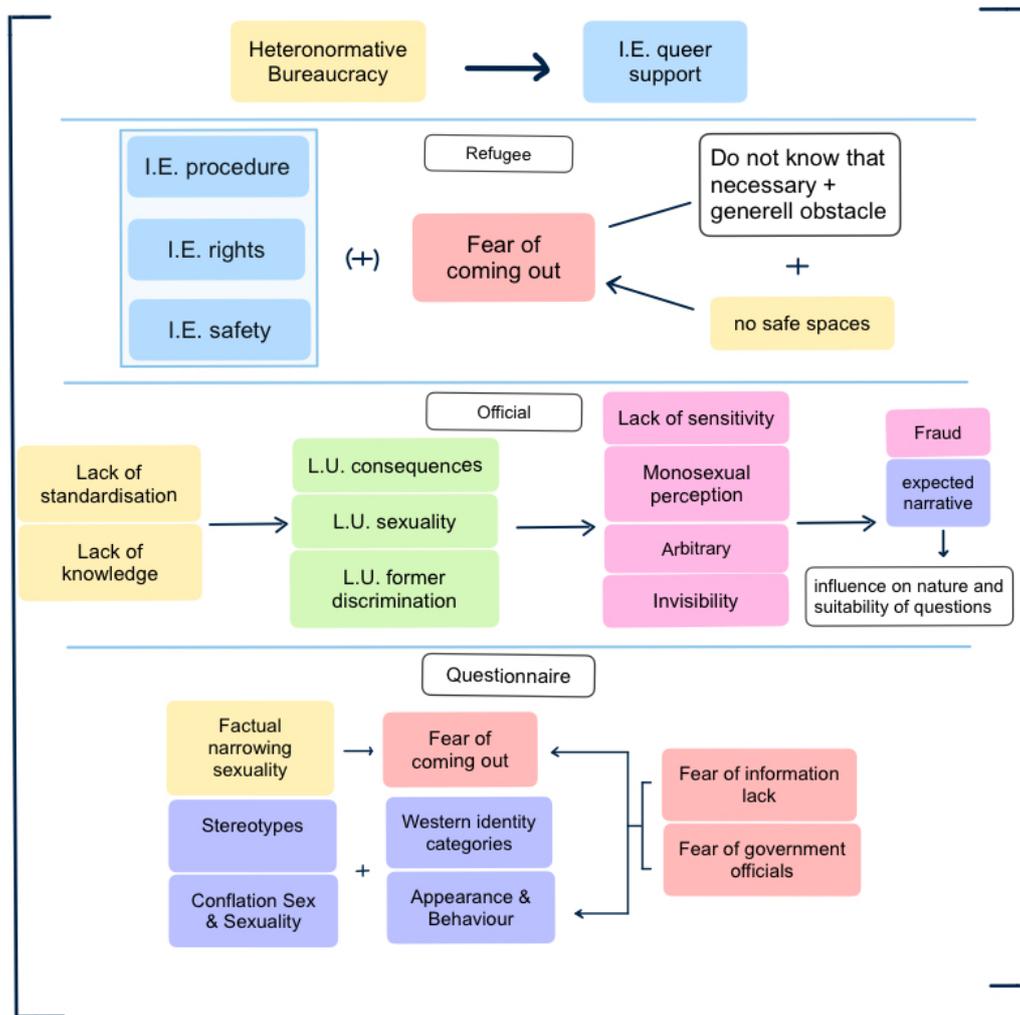


Figure 8: interconnectivity between the codes within “interview“

The experience of bisexual individuals within the substantive interview of the German asylum procedure is shaped by a complex interplay of influential factors. This research analysis aims to explore and report the findings regarding these factors. *Figure 8* provides a visual representation of the interconnected variables identified in the data. It is important to note that while the BAMF claims to provide trained officials in LGBT awareness, accessing their support is often hindered by heteronormative bureaucracy, as discussed in the subchapter *Overall*. The impact of this bureaucratic environment and the availability of sufficient queer support is crucial in shaping the process and outcome of the substantive interview, as further discussed below.

Receiving *insufficient information* regarding their *rights*, particularly the right to claim asylum based on their sexuality, poses a significant challenge for bisexual asylum applicants (Interview C, 4:14 ¶ 6). This lack of information often leads applicants to justify their flight based on other reasons than their sexuality, as disclosing such oftentimes displays an obstacle, especially during the substantive interview. Several factors contribute to this obstacle, including the *lack of safe spaces*, limited access to *queer support*, and *insufficient explanations* about their *safety* and data protection (Interview C, 4:15 ¶ 6). To create a safe environment, for applicants to openly express their sexuality, it is crucial to ensure that their data will not be shared or *leaked* to their home country's

government or communities. Providing appropriate queer support is also essential, as many applicants lack sexual education specific to their queer orientation, especially bisexual applicants who experience a lack of queer vocabulary, including the term „bisexuality" (4:15 ¶ 6 in Interview C). An *insufficient explanation* about and preparation for the *procedure* functions as further obstacles. Applicants may not receive clear guidance on the information expected or necessary to be shared during the interview, and they may not be aware of the language allowed to use. These factors are influential to an applicant's impression, interview process, and ultimately decision-making outcome. In the case of receiving sufficient queer support information and a safe environment encouraging them to open up about their experiences, during the interview can lead to higher chances of a positive outcome.

A *lack of understanding regarding* the applicant's *sexuality*, the *discrimination* they have faced, and the potential *consequences* of deportation contribute to this challenge. This lack of understanding is often linked to a *lack of knowledge* and *standardization*, resulting in a *monosexual perception* of queerness and *insensitivity* in interactions with asylum seekers. The *lack of standardization* primarily affects the procedure, understanding of sexuality, and the questions asked (Interview C, 4:18 ¶ 10; Interview B, 2:5 ¶ 4). This poses an obstacle for bisexual individuals, as it often leads to misconceptions about the fluid nature of their sexuality (2:5 ¶ 4 in Interview B; 4:18 ¶ 10 in Interview C) and *arbitrary* decision outcomes (3:8 ¶ 18 in Interview A; 3:11 ¶ 18 in Interview A). As a result, the applicant's queerness may be dismissed, and their sexuality omitted within the questionnaire, rendering them invisible (3:19 ¶ 33 in Interview A). The fluid nature of bisexuality presents challenges in *understanding the sexuality*, for the officials and the evaluation of same-sex sexual experiences by bisexual applicants as authentic. This can create a sense of reservation and *distrust* by applicants, as well as an insensitive and unsafe environment during the interview process due to the official. The biases held by officials influence the suitability and appropriateness of the questions asked in the interview, while the obstacles faced by refugees may *influence their behavior and narrative*.

The questionnaire used in the substantive interview is predominantly focused on factual data, repeatedly seeking specific dates and numbers and emphasizing coherency. Consequently, the topic of coming out is frequently addressed. However, bisexual refugees often encounter obstacles when discussing their coming out experiences, fuelled by their *fear of information leaks* and a *lack of trust regarding government officials*. Moreover, a *conflation of sex and sexuality* was observed, validating an applicant's sexuality based on their same-sex sexual experiences. This leaves bisexual applicants feeling in need to "have to represent themselves more and more and lay focus on the same sex sexual experiences" (3:132 ¶ 31 in Interview A) and reinforce stereotypical perceptions of queerness from a Western perspective.

The *narrative* enacted by asylum applicants plays a vital role in the outcome of the interview, presenting an additional obstacle for bisexual asylum seekers in the German asylum procedure. The data indicates an expected queer asylum narrative that aligns with *Western identity categories* and according to *appearance and behavior*. Applicants are expected to "sit relatively relaxed and

[...] easily talk about sexuality" (2:84 ¶ 30 in Interview B), thus be confident in their sexuality and display tolerance towards any sexual orientation, Intrinsically as well as extrinsically. Emotional vulnerability is often seen as beneficial and authentic, while the portrayal of Western values, including a liberal and liberal feminist narrative, further influences the interview and makes applicants "quickly become one of us" (2:105 ¶ 36 in Interview B), namely one of the West. A connection between the *expected narrative* and the consequences of the screening procedure could be identified, which intensifies mistrust and poses a potential obstacle to meeting the expected narrative.

4.1.2.4 Translator

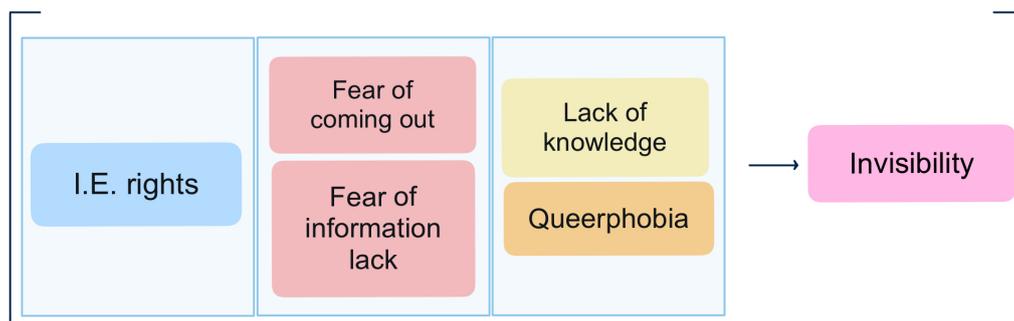


Figure 9: interconnectivity between the codes within "translator"

The category of *Translator* has been identified through an inductive analysis as inheriting unique and influential factors faced by bisexual asylum applicants, ultimately rooting in the *insufficient explanation* of the applicant's *right* to change the translator if feeling uncomfortable. Due to this *lack of information*, applicants are regularly faced with translators from their own community, thus regularly sharing the same origin and appearance as the applicant's persecutors. When required to disclose intimate details about their sexuality to "this person, of whom he or she was actually so afraid back then" (3:104 ¶ 62 in Interview A), applicants often experience fear and concern about potential *information leakage* to their home country's government, community, and family. Furthermore, it has been reported that translators are often inadequately trained, both in terms of queer issues and in addressing their own biases, thus being reported to potentially be consciously or unconsciously *queerphobic*. This lack of training is connected to the issue of *invisibility*, resulting in the omission of potentially important information during translation. Hence, ultimately influencing the chances of a bisexual applicant for a positive asylum report. Interviewee B thus reports:

Someone said, [...] a few times [...] GayRomeo, as a dating app [...] that's good, he knows them, he says that, and the translator didn't translate it [...] because he didn't know what it meant [...] normally, if you can name the apps, that's important, that usually helps you to stay here. 2:119 ¶ 7 in Interview B

4.1.2.5 Discretionary Bid

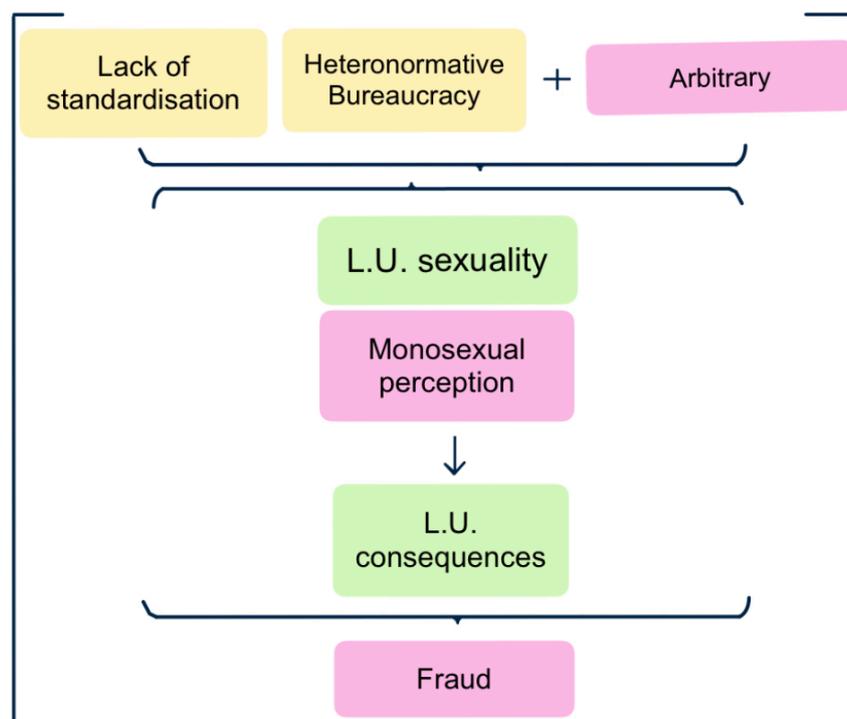


Figure 10: interconnectivity between the codes within “Discretionary Bid”

The discretionary bid, although not an administrative step within the asylum procedure itself, represents a likely possible outcome to the decision-making procedure for bisexual applicants, marking the final stage in the German asylum process as discussed in this thesis. It can therefore be understood as the ultimate consequence of the negatively influencing variable and obstacles encountered in the preceding administrative steps, primarily stemming from *heteronormative bureaucracy* and the *lack of standardization*, which is closely tied to the *arbitrary* resulting from the space given to the official's understandings, perceptions and biases. These obstacles create a space where officials' *limited understanding* of bisexuality, influenced by *monosexual perspectives* and other misconceptions, leads to a *lack of understanding* regarding the potential consequences faced by bisexual individuals in the event of deportation.

The interviews conducted shed light on this lack of *understanding*, highlighting the *limited knowledge* officials have about the precarious situation in applicants' countries of origin and the potential *consequences* faced by bisexual people if caught. The often *lack of understanding* and awareness of the complexities and risks faced by bisexual individuals in their home- countries contributes to biased decision-making and a disregard for the safety and well-being of bisexual asylum seekers. Ultimately influencing the applicant's future and deeming them into a life where they are "forced to marry women or men, and they also had children [...] But they don't have a sexual life with their partner, and they still do their thing there [same-sex sexual activities], [...] and that is still dangerous. So if it is discovered at some point that this person is bisexual, [...] that is still dangerous, depending on where one lives, of course, in some cases there is also the threat of the death penalty, also executed by the family for example" (3:13 ¶ 26 in Interview A).

Overall *Figure 4*, displays a compact illustration of each variable found within each administrative step, the interconnectivity influencing the variable's manifestation can be observed in *Figure 5*, as well as *Figures 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10* more detailed, for each administrative measure. Every variable found was identified to somewhat uphold a negative effect on the bisexual's experience and their asylum outcome. It could be observed that while some variables, including *Fear*, but too, *Lack of standardization*, *Heteronormative Bureaucracy*, and *Loss of trust*, may, depending on their manifestation, not hold a direct negative influence, but often enact within a chain eventually amplifying other variables, as it became apparent in the detangling of the interconnectivity above.

4.1.3 Consequential measures

Sub-Question 4 investigates the strategies employed by bisexual asylum applicants to overcome anticipated administrative obstacles. The only strategy able to be conducted from the data is Fraud. It was found to be a consequential measure primarily in the screening procedure and the substantive interview. It too was found to be a result of the discretionary bids, influencing the substantive interview.

Regarding the screening procedure (*Figure 7*), it was identified, that most applicants are unaware of the screening procedure being possible to be occurring, however, some applicants know of the measurement beforehand, via, inter alia, relatives who too fled to Germany and underwent the measurement or queer NGOs informing them about it. Among the applicants who know beforehand, fraud was identified as a preparatory measure resulting from their fear: "they already come with two mobile phones, one to give to the BAMF and one, to take for themselves" (*Interview A*, section 48). This measure was found to not be intended to conceal criminal activities but rather stemmed from the applicant's fear of governmental officials and the fear of coming out, which was identified to be fuelled by inadequate explanations about the procedure and their safety.

In the substantive interview, it was observed that some applicants fraudulently claimed a homosexual orientation instead of their true bisexual identity. This tactic emerged due to awareness of discretionary bids occurring and was associated with obstacles such as the disbelief of officials, lack of understanding, lack of knowledge, arbitrary, insufficient explanations, and lack of queer support. Therefore bisexual applicants sometimes feel as if their bisexuality specifically poses a too high obstacle within: "they already have to believe that I'm queer in the first hand, that's already so hard, and then bisexuality on top of that, that appears to be too hard" (2:4 ¶ 4 in *Interview B*), claiming asylum on fraudulent sexuality to anticipating the biases and misconceptions. No additional strategic measures were identified. It is important to note that the impact of these fraudulent measures on the asylum outcome, was not analyzed and thus neither found to be influential positive nor negative. However, it was observed that sharing false information could increase the potential risks and the possibility of immediate deportation if discovered later.

4.2 Discussion

The conducted analysis shows that while the BAMF, which facilitates and carries out all asylum procedures, might aim to recognize the precarious position and protection need of certain queer identities and biased free asylum decision-making, the whole procedure is infiltrated with obstacles and challenges ultimately working towards the non-acceptance of bisexual asylum applicants and therefore their marginalization and discrimination. Biopolitical migration management, as described by Foucault (2003), treats asylum procedural outcomes for individuals and populations as matters of life and death, rendering those affected as disposable. Although Germany officially recognized sexual orientation as a valid reason for persecution and asylum in 2004, the operating field is characterized by conflicting measures and arbitrary execution. As exemplified in the findings of SQ1 and therefore the identified juridical gap concerning the perception and understanding of bisexuality and bisexual individuals.

Moreover, the prevailing influence of Western understandings of gender and sexuality, which are entrenched in heteronormativity, binary frameworks, and monosexism and generate stereotypical perceptions and biases, contribute to the marginalization and ultimate erasure of the bisexual migration population. Hence, individuals are required to prove the authenticity of their sexuality while such one is deemed to be perceived as experimental, temporary, elusive, and fraudulent. While bisexual individuals may mostly, not per se targeted directly, the ultimate erasure of their existence and recognition, of a biopolitical and homonormative system categorizing migrants and deciding upon their worthiness of living, makes them a targeted minority. Therefore, bisexual asylum applicants can be regarded as a sexual minority population excluded and discriminated against in the German asylum procedure via Foucault's understanding of social racism.

The BAMF's provision of trained and sensitized special representatives falls short of adequately supporting queer refugees, being for queer refugees, as well as unable to guarantee sufficient queer-supportive. The BAMFs officials often are "[...] somehow only sensitized to homosexuality and not recognize or understand the whole scope of queerness" (#00:29:43-5# Interview C), lacking a comprehensive understanding of sexual fluidity and approach cases from a monosexual perspective. This fosters stigmatization, stereotyping, and erasure of bisexual individuals in the procedure. The absence of data and standards for conceptualizing bisexuality in the asylum procedure further contributes to the exclusion and denial of access for bisexual applicants, via, inter alia, discretionary bids and disbelief. For bisexual applicants who are not only needed to conform to a Western narrative, expected behavior, and appearance, the fluid nature of their sexual orientation can be observed as challenging spoken of Western values such as monosexuality. A connection can be drawn to Duggan's (2002) concept of homonormativity as well as queer complicities, as the institutional shortage of standardization combined with an environment carrying limited understanding of queerness and heterosexual bureaucratic measures act restrictive and exclusive to those queer identities that fit the understandings and western values of the officials. This connection is backed by the consequential measure taken by certain bisexual individuals to rather fraudulently claim asylum based on homosexuality than on their bisexual orientation.

The analysis aligns with previous research on regional, international, and national levels, highlighting similar findings of harmful stereotypes, heteronormative understanding of sexual orientation, and discretionary bids influencing the decision-making outcomes for bisexual individuals (Gartner, 2015; LSVD, n.d.; Rehaag, 2017; Shaw, 2022; Shaw & Verghese, 2022; Tschalaer, 2020; Weßels, 2011). Additionally, the fear of coming out and disclosing same-sex experiences in front of officials and translators further exacerbates the challenges bisexual applicants face (Selim et al., 2022; Alessi et al., 2022). While an expected narrative was found to be apparent and influential, a concrete planned change of bisexual applicants' behavior and appearance in order to fit "a stereotypical understanding of a "Western" gay individual" (p.25), as found by Peyghambarzadeh (2020) concerning bisexual applicants in Europe, could not be affirmed. The negative influence of former heteronormative relationships could too not be found within the data (LSVD, n.d; Dustin and Held, 2018; Maliepaard & Baumgartner, 2020).

The findings of this study could not detect a negative influence in all of the SQ2s identified administrative measures equally rooting the applicant's bisexuality. However, their cumulative effect and thus negative contribution to bisexual case outcomes can not be neglected. The screening measure, viewed through a biopolitical lens, reinforces harmful power structures and contributes to the fear and re-traumatization of bisexual applicants. The data carrier screenings can exemplify an extractive biopolitical measure, which is blind to the effect it holds on the applicants potentially altering their subsequent behavior and narrative which gets disregarded in the substantive interview and holds the significant ability to change the course of the asylum process for bisexual individuals, for the worse. Even though no data regarding the usage of the, via the screening conducted data could be conducted, the screening procedure displays a surveilling measure of the governmental institution. It nightlights how governments and agencies exercise control over migrants' lives by using data as a tool to manage, monitor, and enforce migration policies, ultimately disregarding any harm it may do to the applicant. This underscores the complex power dynamics and ethical considerations involved in the biopolitical governance of migration.

Overall, the web of influential variables stretched around the administrative measures of the German asylum procedure was found to display a comprehensive picture of the experiences made by bisexual asylum applicants and the obstacles they encounter negatively influencing their asylum outcome. In this web bisexual applicants are shown to be in a precarious and vulnerable situation due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of fluid sexualities such as bisexuality, displaying the disposable and deportable. They shed light on an asylum procedure that falls short in providing adequate protection and recognition for bisexual asylum applicants, perpetuating discriminatory practices and marginalization within a biopolitical and homonormative system, displaying the biopolitical aspect of sexuality. The biopolitical usage of heteronormativity and monosexuality further declares this migration population as non-existent, excluded, and disposable (as well as killable in biopolitical terms). These measures normalize the discrimination and erasure of bisexual migrants in the framework of an asylum system of a democratic and queer-friendly country, fostering queer complicities.

4.3 Limitations

As argued in the methodological section this thesis utilizes first as well as second-handed data. It has to be kept in mind that this paper's analysis draws upon small-N interviews, making the findings of this research difficult to generalize and limited in their purpose of acting informatively to policymakers. Additionally, while interview participants and NGOs varied and were spread across Germany, all interview participants displayed advising and consulting officials, who have engaged supportive in various ways to any bisexual applicant's case in some way. A bias in their narrative and experiences made can therefore be suspected and thus acts limiting to the generalization of the found data. Additionally, the differentiating of their experiences made with generally queer and bisexual applicants specifically could not always be fully separated, limiting the significance of the data regarding bisexual individuals specifically. Personal biases too can not be ruled out and display a threat to this thesis as they may have influenced the interviews and coding. However, attempts to minimize such biases by repetitive consultation with my supervisor were executed.

5.0 Conclusion

This bachelor thesis aimed to shed light on the often marginalized and neglected population of bisexual asylum applicants within the German asylum procedure. The research revealed that bisexual individuals seeking international protection receive inadequate attention due to the lack of published (queer) statistics specifically focusing on bisexual asylum claims. Such lack of attention hinders research in this area, despite expectations from scholars that bisexual applicants are disproportionately affected by disbelief and deportation based on discretion. Germany, with its newly introduced ICT measures, including the possibility to screen data carriers of asylum applicants, and a lack of focus on the effect such screening hold on further administrative steps as well as generally speaking a lack of attention drawn to bisexual asylum applicants, served as an appropriate case for this study.

Answering the research question, by analyzing data collected from semi-structured interviews and utilizing a QCA, this thesis highlighted the negative influences of German administrative measures on bisexual asylum applicants cases. Making use of queer theory and biopolitics studies, it is argued that while bisexual applicants are recognized as a particular social group with the possibility of being granted asylum in Germany, this alone does not offer sufficient protection. Discrepancies between theoretical aims and practical implementation were observed, rooting in the lack of standardizations, sufficient education of the officials, mistreatment of the applicants, and a generally monosexist and heteronormative system. Decision-makers' recognition and understanding of each individual's narrative and individual with a unique experience shaping their journey, are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the basis of their asylum claim as well as a fair assessment. The burden should not fall solely on the applicant to demand a sufficient procedure or prove their bisexuality within an environment that fails to comprehend the realities of their belonging to a sexual minority and a sexually fluid orientation. The administrative measures create and contribute to an environment that fosters biases, within a web of influential variables

working against a positive asylum outcome for bisexual individuals. It is crucial to recognize that not one of the administrative measures should or can be addressed alone when trying to reform the system. The web, these measures are located in has to be recognized and the biases addressed, reforming the system to recognize and protect bisexual applicants requires attention to heteronormativity, monosexism, and homonormativity. Germany must acknowledge its role as a country fostering compulsory monosexuality and homonormativity and integrate knowledge from queer migration theory and biopolitics into the asylum procedure.

Acknowledging the inherent conflict of sexually fluid individuals' unique experiences and a judicial system aiming at distinguishing between truth- and falsehood, based on a need for facts and numbers and a narrow framework that declares the misfitting as false, the question of how sufficient protection can be guaranteed arises. While a detailed policy recommendation or elaborating reformative measures extend the scope of this thesis some insights that arise during the analysis can be shared, which may display steps towards reformative measures. These insights too can display starting points for further research to be followed. Insights conducted include providing all officials with a comprehensive education on queer identities and sexual sensitivity as well as the rejection of narrow definitions of any sexuality but rather adopting a holistic framework taking the individual as a whole into consideration. Ultimately the role of queer NGOs should be strengthened to offer supporting workshops, and education for officials, and educational and psychological help to refugees. It was also reported by the NGO officials, that they would feel confident in telling a queer person and a fraudulently claiming queer person apart after a short period, overtaking the "proofing one's sexuality" part of the asylum procedure, and executing it possibly more inclusive and effectively due to more knowledge on the subject.

In conclusion, this research has identified obstacles in bisexual asylum cases in Germany and opened up a new discourse on the impact of ICT usage, specifically data carrier screenings, on bisexual applicants. However, more empirical research and data generation is needed to fully understand and address the challenges faced by sexual minorities, especially sexually fluid ones, within migration and surveillance contexts. Further research is also needed to explore the role of NGOs and the circumstances for queer migrants in refugee accommodations. By conducting comprehensive research and implementing appropriate reforms, Germany can work towards providing fair and just asylum procedures for all individuals, including bisexual asylum applicants.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Overview Interviews

Interviewee	Date	Time	Duration
A	15.06.2023	03:00 pm	61:06 min
B	22.06.2023	10:34 am	53:54 min
C	28.06.2023	12:30 pm	31:13 min

Appendix B: Interview Transcripts

Interview Transcripts were excluded due to anonymity reasons

Appendix C: Codebook

Code	Subcode	Description	Example
	Lack of knowledge	The misinformtness of BAMF employees and officials concerning queer and especially bisexual matters in any regard	“they [the BAMF officials] sit there and learn new things themselves that they don't understand, and they first have to learn about HIV or prepp, or I don't know what“ (Interview B, 2023)
	Lack of Standardisation	The missing of standardised definitions, understandings, procedures (e.g interview questions), rules	“I think there's no, kind of standard or no rules that they follow there or something. I think it's really an individual decision“ (Interview A, 2023)

Procedural shortcoming	Heteronormative Bureaucracy	Bureaucratic measures which are additionally needed to be taken or made more complicated for individuals not being heterosexual, as well as the omission of measures due to the expectation of an individual being heterosexual	“It is not automatically applied for. So sometimes applicants say, I'm applying for asylum because I'm gay or because I'm bisexual, and still, if it's not written personally by an NGO, the special protection programme is not applied for“ (Interview A, 2023)
	Lack of safe spaces	The missing of physically and psychologically safe spaces, namely rooms but too environments, for queer individuals to be and relax	“Being able to live their sexuality freely is then not possible for the time being [in the accommodation with other potentially homophobic refugees from their home countries]. They continue to live in fear. It is very difficult to get the people out of there or even to create separate rooms“ (Interview C, 2023)
	Factual narrowing of sexuality	The recognition of a sexual orientation based on facts solely	“The time questions are very important for them because they somehow think, okay, I'll get them there“ (Interview B, 2023)
Lack of understanding	Lack of understanding of consequences	A shortened understanding of the consequences an applicant is faced with due to either the decision outcome per se or the officials actions	“They don't see the consequences“ (Interview A, 2023)
	Lack of understanding of sexuality	A shortened understanding of the complexity, facets and characteristics of a sexuality	“[...] there are a lot of people in court [the BAMF officials who do the interview], who don't really have much to do with this matter, [...], who don't travel in these [queer and bisexual] spheres and they simply think: well, its simply 50 per cent“ (Interview B, 2023)
	Lack of understanding of former discrimination	A shortened understanding of formerly experienced and endured discrimination and potential traumas	“It is really the case that these people come and are partly totally traumatised and have total mistrust, and [...], in the hearings, so, now tell us everything, and they have to do this giant leap“ (Interview C, 2023)
Insufficient Explanations	Insufficient explanations about procedure	The intentional or unintentional omission of education given by an BAMF employees to the applicant regarding the current or upcoming procedural process and the applicants role therein	“There is a lack of education before the hearing, [...] what they can tell and what they can't, and so. So, that is also very important“ (Interview A, 2023)
	Insufficient explanations about rights	The intentional or unintentional omission of education given by an BAMF employees to the applicant regarding the applicants rights they uphold or can possibly claim	“When they come to Germany, they are often not adequately advised about their rights“ (Interview C, 2023)
	Insufficient explanations about safety	The intentional or unintentional omission of education given by an BAMF employees to the applicant regarding the safety measures at hand in order to protect the applicant and their information	“sometimes it's so difficult for them to even understand, that this society is so safe, there are rules and there are laws that protect them, because they dont know“ (Interview A, 2023)

	Insufficient explanations about queer support	The intentional or unintentional omission of education given by an BAMF employees to the applicant regarding the queer support possibilities that exist and an applicant can make use of and how to excess them	“Usually they don't know that such a thing exists, and then they don't do it“ (Interview A, 2023)
Expected Narrative	Appearance & Behaviour	An expectation held by the BAMF official about what an authentic applicant looks like and how they behave as well as how they may not look like and not behave, which influences their judgment of an applicants authenticity	“So some look more like administrative officials, a bit more introverted and like a little mouse, and they have a harder time than when they sit in front and are perhaps a bit more stylish in their clothes and don't radiate this openness“ (Interview B, 2023)
	Western identity categories	An expectation held by the BAMF official, of an authentic applicant needing to fulfil a certain (queer) westernised narrative and/or inherent western values (according to the interviewees)	“In the interview, when they realise, okay, he grew up in the wrong country [...] but he's one of us [...] so, I mean, western“ (Interview B, 2023)
	Stereotypes	An expectation held by the BAMF official stating that an authentic applicant follows stereotype	“I honestly believe that this leads to nothing, it doesn't help at that point. And all the cliches alone that are out there“ (Interview B, 2023)
	Conflation sex & sexuality	The recognition of a sexual orientation based on sexual behavior solely	“They always have to come back to the story of when they had sex with men or same sex“ (Interview A, 2023)
Fear	Fear of control loss	The fear of an applicant to no longer being in control of their data, personal information, and the further occurrences. Linked to uncertainty about the subsequent events	“They also have fear because they don't know exactly what they want to see on their mobile phones“ (Interview A, 2023)
	Fear of coming out	The fear of an applicant to out themselves as identifying as non-heterosexual	“They are very afraid and that they themselves sometimes have problems with the inner coming out and also coming out here in Germany [...]“ (Interview A, 2023)
	Fear of information lack	The fear of an applicant to have their personal information, especially about their sexuality transferred to their home-country, family, community	“So also this fear that this interpreter was not respecting this confidentiality, it was also huge“ (Interview B, 2023)
	Fear of governmental officials	The fear of an applicant to be face negative consequences when engaging with governmental official individuals	“They are very afraid that the police can simply take them away and then to the embassy, and the embassy will then take them back to their home country“ (Interview C, 2023)
	Arbitrary	The random, unpredictable and partly incomprehensible outcome of a situation	“I don't think they have a rule, because in many cases you see, for example, like the one from Lebanon, they just gave it like that, although really, with the same conditions, somehow also from Lebanon, they say, no“ (Interview A, 2023)

	Invisibility	The intentional or unintentional omission of an individual, their needs and/or information concerning them	“So she said that specifically, I fled because I’m queer, and then it was just so about life, what they did, what they worked, where they went to uni” (Interview A, 2023)
	Fraud	The execution of an knowingly unrightful act or giving of incorrect information by the applicant	“And some know this beforehand, and they already come with two mobile phones, one for the BAMF and one to take for themselves” (Interview A, 2023)
Consequences	Loss of trust	The decrease in trust an applicant hold into either an governmental official of any kind or the system	“[...] and now, I’m not sure anymore, they’re just as weird as my government, I can’t say everything, so why should I say everything here now?” (Interview A, 2023)
	Monosexual perception	The dichotomous understanding of individuals of any sexual orientation to be attracted to only one gender or sex	“They always have to make it clear that they like both sexes so much and that they won’t do without one” (Interview A, 2023)
	Change in behaviour	The consequential, intentional or unintentional changing of ones behavior and confidence	“I think, that changes for sure, and then they are really afraid, and then they don’t dare to tell everything anymore” (Interview A, 2023)
	Lack of sensitivity	The intentional or unintentional missing of total, or sufficient sensitivity and compassion in language, behavior or interaction of officials with applicants	“Sometimes it is really clear that they were not sensitised to the topic of sexual education, and that is already the first disaster, because they themselves cannot talk about sexuality” (Interview B, 2023)
Queerphobia		The feeling of hatred and fear towards as well as enactment of discrimination or other negatively influential behavior due to those feelings towards non-heterosexual individuals	“The interpreters have often not taken a course where they deal with Lgbtq issues and with their own attitude and what this has to do with their own biography and perhaps also religion, and then they are sometimes not open” (Interview B, 2023)
Screening		Category for any code named within the context of or in regards to the data carrier screening procedure	“Often they are also afraid of this screen procedure [...]” (Interview A, 2023)
Interview		Category for any code named within the context of or in regards to the substantive Interview procedure	“so sometimes you notice that they are not trained in sensitivity with the questions” (Interview B, 2023)
Translator		Category for any code named within the context or in regards to the the translator is used or present in the interview	“So you can change the interpreter, many don’t know that” (Interview B, 2023)
Discretionary bid		Category for any code named within the context of or in regards to the discretionary bids measure	“[...] because often, they say this stupid statement, yes, you can live there as a hetero, because you can have your wife, and then you will live normally without being persecuted somehow” (Interview A, 2023)

Overall

Category for any code named within the context of or in regards to the asylum procedures environment and system itself and/or influential codes stemming from a happening outside the system but is yet influential on it

“I don't think one can say [the asylum procedure] was designed for queer people [...] I think they are even trying not to do that because people are more likely to be deported this way“ (Interview C, 2023)
