

Berlin, 8 May 2024

MANEO Report 2023 published

Summary

MANEO is an expert unit, dealing with experiences of homophobic violence for 34 years, and which advises, supports and empowers people affected by discrimination and assaults.

We have managed to bring to light, using the indications and case numbers of cases collated for 2023, many cases and indications which previously had not been reported as a crime. We have recorded **685** new cases and indications with anti-LGBTIQ connections, **23% more** than in the previous year (2022: 557). A total of **1,014** cases and indications were communicated to MANEO in 2023, **29% more** than in the previous year (2022: 788) and more than ever before. Of these

978 cases and indications were *new reports*. Our figures are at a high level. In 2023, a total of **892** individuals affected contacted MANEO, again more than in the previous year. These high figures speak to the high level of acceptance that our work enjoys in our settings and to an increasing readiness no longer to remain silent, but to talk about assaults. A contributing factor is the ever-increasing visibility of our diverse scene cultures in the city, which make Berlin a city of diversity, but also offer greater scope for attack from people who are positioned against universal human rights, diversity and tolerance in society and against our liberal and democratic principles. Visibility goes hand in hand with increasing scope for attack.

The recorded cases included 85 attacks against LGBTIQ establishments, memorial sites and participants at our events and also attacks on our allies showing solidarity with LGBTIQ scenes. Establishments were shot at, attacked with butyric acid (stink bombs) or irritant gas, windows were damaged and smashed, incendiary devices were laid, and employees were threatened with attacks and insulted, spat at and intimidated at the door. At scene events, acts of assault, intimidation, insult and the infliction of physical injuries were carried out openly, also against individuals going to attend and on the way there or who had attended and on the way home.

“We are alarmed at the extent of the violence. Assaults leave those affected with marks and injuries, prolonged in some cases. Those affected need every conceivable support – not a trivialisation and dismissal of their experience. We are concerned by the many attacks on our establishments, events and allies. These attacks affected many more people than we could identify. Those affected were not only the persons present but all volunteer and salaried staff, users and visitors of our establishments and events. We call upon the Berlin Senate to ensure the protection of our establishments and events. It must be ensured that we can carry out our work in peace and free from fear and that our clients and guests can feel safe. It is crucial that our protection is taken seriously by everyone,” commented Bastian Finke, director of MANEO.

It is no longer possible for us to compare our figures with those of the Berlin Police following the ban on the exchange of data imposed by the central public prosecutor’s office in 2020. Over the

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MANEO ist ein eigenständiges Projekt von Mann-O-Meter e.V. – Mitglied im Arbeitskreis der Opferhilfen in Deutschland (ado) e.V., und im Deutschen Paritätischen Wohlfahrtsverband/ LV Berlin – finanziell gefördert durch die Berliner Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit, Soziales, Gleichstellung, Integration, Vielfalt und Antidiskriminierung (ASGIVA) – gewürdigt von der Landeskommission Berlin gegen Gewalt, ausgezeichnet mit dem Preis „Aktiv für Demokratie und Toleranz 2015“ des Bündnisses für Demokratie und Toleranz der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (bpb) –. Gemeinsam mit Lambda-Warszawa (Polen), SOS-homophobie (Frankreich) und The Rainbow Project (Nordirland) vergibt MANEO jährlich die europäischen TOLERANTIA-AWARDS. MANEO organisiert das BERLINER TOLERANZBÜNDNISSES. Seit 2020 organisiert MANEO den ‚Nachtbürgermeister Regenbogenkiez‘.

previous 20 years we were able to exchange anonymised statistical basic information with the police in Berlin. It was explained to us in 2023 by the Berlin Senate Department for Justice that for this federal legislation is needed. Although Berlin supports the introduction of such legislation, we were told, however, that, among the other states in Germany, the 'political will' to adopt such a measure is still lacking.

"In this field, Berlin is a beacon for Germany. The lack of a 'political will' in the other federal states plainly results from a failure to examine the evidence. This was clear last June when, at the conference of ministers of the interior, many of the federal states simply took note of recommendations produced by a Federal Ministry of the Interior working group, to which MANEO had actively contributed. Hate crime against LGBTIQ people is a problem throughout Germany, a problem that affects many people in Europe and worldwide. We ask the Berlin Senate to bring forward the relevant legislative proposal and not to lose any further time," demanded Bastian Finke, director of MANEO.

We wish to point out that an increase (or decrease) in LGBTIQ-related violence does not allow any conclusions to be drawn concerning an objective increase (or decrease) in assaults. We continue to estimate that the proportion of crimes against LGBTIQ in Berlin that are not reported is very high. In our estimation, around 80-90% of such crimes go unreported.

The MANEO Report 2023 can be downloaded in three parts under the following link:
<https://www.maneo.de/infopool/maneo-reporte/maneo-report-2023/>

Analysis of the figures recorded

We receive reports directly from victims, witnesses and dependents as well as from projects and institutions. Further, as part of our proactive outreach work, we regularly visit scene locations, talk to participants and educate them about our work. This means that we learn from many people what they have personally experienced.

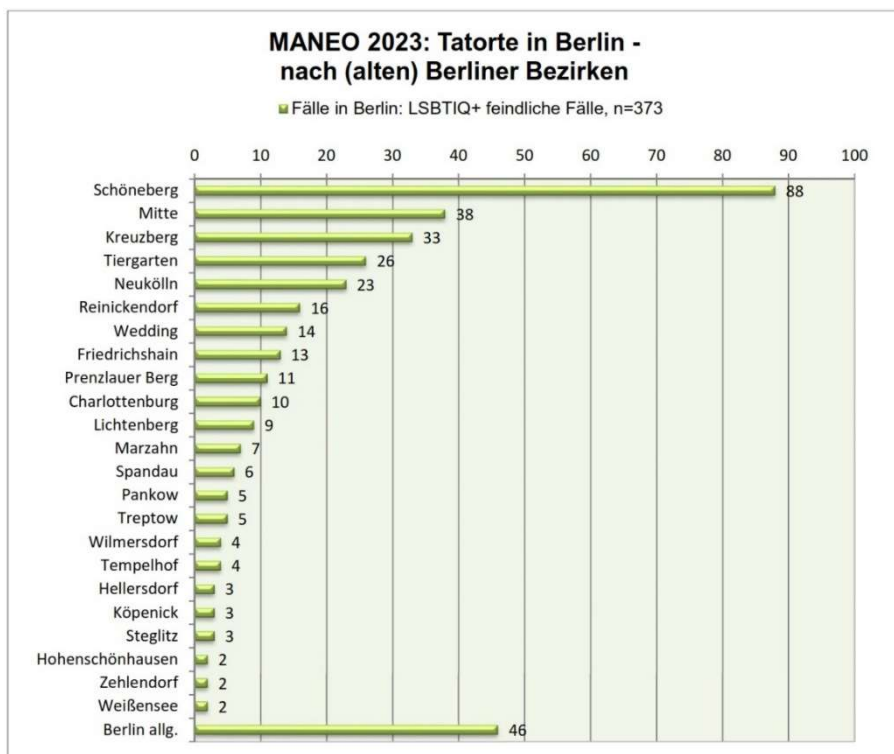
MANEO records cases and indications of violence and attacks in Berlin and its surroundings against gay and bisexual men and against people who are assumed to be gay or who have been affected by an anti-gay attack. Likewise we document indications of crimes against lesbians, transsexual, intersexual, non-binary and queer people and those which are directed against the LGBTIQ community as a whole, for example, attacks against establishments and memorial sites.

A total of **1,014 cases and indications** were communicated to MANEO in 2023, of which **978** were *newly reported* cases and indications (2022: 760) – more than ever recorded in previous years. We established **685** cases and indications with anti-LGBTIQ connections (2022: 557), i.e. in our assessment not all the cases had a recognisable anti-LGBTIQ connection. Overall we have recorded a clear increase in comparison with the previous year.

Of the newly reported cases, we were able to analyse 461 cases, of which 372 cases had an anti-LGBTIQ background (2022: 261). In relation to 517 of the indications, we lacked more specific basic information, for example, the times, places and contexts of the acts and whether these had been reported or not. In the past we were in a position to compare our indications with those of the police, to avoid double counting, and, where appropriate, to add them to our statistical recording.

The **types of crime** which **dominate** are insults 32% (2022: 42%), actual and serious physical injury, including the attempt of this crime, 31% (2022: 29%) and coercion and threats 27% (2022: 24%).

The **boroughs** which **dominate** in our recording of anti-LGBTIQ attacks are Tempelhof-Schöneberg (92; 25%), Mitte (78; 21%), Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (46; 12%), Neukölln (23; 6%) and Pankow (18; 5%). When the figures are examined according to the old borough boundaries (before the 2001 administrative reforms) the boroughs which dominate are, as set out in the diagram, Schöneberg (88; 24%), Mitte (38; 10%), Kreuzberg (33; 9%), Tiergarten (26; 7%) and Neukölln (23; 6%).



The **locations** which **dominate** in the recording of attacks are public locations, i.e. public streets and on public transport, 45% (2022: 46%), private homes and surroundings 9% (2022: 6%), in and at LGBTIQ locations 11% (2022: 7%) and LGBTIQ events 9% (2022: 1.5%).

In total we recorded **85 attacks against LGBTIQ establishments, at events and against allies.**

We recorded 39 attacks which were directed against LGBTIQ establishments, of which 23 attacks were against LGBTIQ organisations, 13 attacks were against LGBTIQ businesses and 3 attacks were against LGBTIQ memorial sites.

Übergriffe gegen LSBTIQ+ Einrichtungen und Events
(alle Fälle , n=461; LSBTIQ+ -feindl., n=373; ASG, n=253)

	Übergriffe gegen LSBTIQ+ Einrichtungen	Übergriffe gegen 'Alliierte'	Übergriffe auf LSBTIQ+ Events	Insgesamt
2020 - alle	./.	./.	./.	./.
2021 - alle	17	9	6	32
2022 - alle	20	35	2	57
2023 - alle	39	14	36	89
LSBTIQ+ -feindliche Taten				
2020 - alle LSBTIQ+	./.	./.	./.	./.
2021 - alle LSBTIQ+	17	9	4	30
2022 - alle LSBTIQ+	20	35	2	57
2023 - alle LSBTIQ+	39	13	33	85

We recorded 33 attacks against participants at LGBTIQ events.

Thirteen attacks were directed against establishments demonstrating solidarity with the LGBTIQ scenes, for example, because they were displaying a rainbow flag, e.g. establishments of the Protestant Church and the Ibn Rushd-Goethe Mosque.

The proportion of cases in which the persons affected had not reported a crime is currently 41% (2022: 49%; 2021: 34%), thus slightly lower than in the previous year. At the same time, in absolute terms the number of cases in which the persons affected had not reported a crime has increased in comparison with the previous year (2023: 129; 2022: 117). This increased number of cases (in comparison with the previous year) means that this year the percentage figures have a different distribution. As a result of our unbureaucratic and accessible approach, we are often successful in reducing the fears and obstacles that persons affected face in dealing with the criminal justice authorities and we are able to build bridges such that the persons affected feel empowered and supported to report the crime to the police.

7 case studies

Kreuzberg, 22 February 2023. Homophobic insults and physical assault on the street – A gay man receives homophobic insults from a group of three young men on Karl-Marx-Strasse, and is then physically attacked. He receives blows to the head from the group and an earring is torn off. The attackers even push the victim towards the roadway. Thanks to the intervention of attentive passers-by the suspects ceased the attack before making their escape. The incident was reported to the police and to MANEO.

Schöneberg, 13 April 2023. Insults and incitement to hatred directed towards staff at a gay community organisation – An unknown man looks inside through the open door at Mann-O-Meter and tells a member of staff that, although he does not have any personal dislike of that individual, all gay men should be killed in the gas chambers. The man was then ordered to leave and the incident was reported to the police.

Reinickendorf, 25 May 2023. Robbed and injured on a date – A 28-year-old gay man reported to officers at Alexanderplatz police station that shortly beforehand he had been robbed by two men in Reinickendorf and had suffered a stab wound from a knife. He had agreed a meeting using an internet dating site and had followed the instructions given to meet in the courtyard of a housing block in Reinickendorf at 4pm. At the meeting point, he encountered two men who threatened him with a knife demanding his money. After he had handed over his money, he attempted to escape. He was followed and received a knife wound in his back. An ambulance took the 28-year-old to hospital where he was admitted for treatment.

Prenzlauer Berg, 4 June 2023. Irritant gas sprayed inside a bar – As reported by the police, in a bar in Prenzlauer Berg, late at night around 2:20 am, an attack was carried out using irritant gas. Earlier two unknown men had tried to enter the bar. An employee had explained to them that it was a bar for LGBTIQ people. Following a loud argument, the men had left the bar only to return shortly afterwards, however, when, without warning, they sprayed irritant gas inside the bar and insulted customers with homophobic taunts. The attackers then fled. A 25-year-old employee of the bar and a 34-year-old customer were injured by the irritant gas and had to be treated by paramedics. A criminal complaint was made.

Mitte, 24 June 2023. Insults during the East Pride parade – As the East Pride demonstration parade moved along Karl-Liebknecht-Strasse at around 5:40 pm, a participant was insulted in Arabic by 5 or 6 youths, calling him a “son of a bitch” and a “faggot”. The victim approached the police, whilst the youths continued moving forward towards the front of the parade. On the way, they continued to insult participants in German and Arabic, calling out phrases such as “faggots

get out”, and using insulting hand gestures. The police went after the young men and took their details. A criminal complaint was made against the suspects.

Neukölln, 18 September 2023. Insulted with anti-lesbian taunts and violently attacked –

Two women were holding hands walking along the street, when a group of 5 or 6 youths came towards them. Members of the group insulted them on grounds of their sexual orientation. This led to a verbal dispute, as a result of which one of the youths punched the 39-year-old woman in the face, fracturing her face bones. When the 27-year-old woman began to follow the violent youth, she too was physically attacked. She was punched several times in the face, resulting in head and upper body injuries. The group then fled and disappeared. The victims were taken to hospital by ambulance where they were admitted for treatment. They reported to the crime to the police and also to MANEO.

Reinickendorf, 25 November 2023. Anti-trans threats in refugee accommodation –

On 25 October 2023, a 32-year-old refugee trans woman reported that in her refugee accommodation two other refugee women had insulted her with homophobic taunts and had threatened her with violence. They had shouted at her in her own language, insulting her as a “sissy” and a “faggot”. They threatened the 32-year-old that she would be beaten up, if not murdered, if she attempted to use the women's toilets again. The victim contacted MANEO. In light of the threats, she indicated that she would only make a criminal complaint if she obtained a secure place in alternative accommodation for refugees.

The data exchange format with the Berlin Police cannot be continued

The ban on the exchange of data imposed in 2020 by Berlin's central public prosecution office regrettably prohibits a comparison of figures with the Berlin Police. Prior to that, anonymised statistical basic information on cases of LGBTIQ-related hate violence was made available to us by the Berlin Police on a regular basis. A format that functioned for 25 years, was proven and also welcomed by the Berlin Police cannot be continued. The decision has been justified by legal concerns, raised by the data protection officer at the central public prosecutor's office. It was explained to us in 2023 by the Berlin Senate Department for Justice that for an exchange of data of this kind federal legislation is needed. Although Berlin supports the introduction of legislation, we were told, however, that, among the other states in Germany, the ‘political will’ to adopt such a measure is still lacking.

The proven exchange format was a sign of trust and cooperation between the police and LGBTIQ scenes. The dialogue, in particular, provided support to our shared efforts to strengthen violence prevention work in Berlin. Over those 25 years, MANEO made a major contribution, thanks to its unbureaucratic and accessible way of working, to ensuring that cases were brought to light and no longer went unreported. In this field, Berlin was a forerunner and a beacon in comparison with the other federal states. In no other German region were comparable results achieved.

The extent to which the other federal states are making efforts to improve their knowledge level could be seen at the conference of ministers of the interior in June 2023 when a working group on combatting homophobic and transphobic violence established by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and comprising experts from organisations, the public administration and the police presented its final report and recommendations. The working group had been commissioned in response to figures from the Bundeskriminalamt (Federal Criminal Police Office) indicating a significant increase in anti-LGBTIQ violence across all of Germany. The working group, in which MANEO actively participated, stated that in many of the public authorities in the federal states considerable knowledge gaps existed, which is all the more significant given “the risk to internal security and for our society” that anti-LGBTIQ hate crime constitutes. It called for the cooperation between the police authorities, associations and victim support units to be “intensified and

consolidated". In particular, the specialist victim support units and anti-violence projects must be "strengthened structurally" and "adequately funded". In addition, in each federal state, sufficient LGBTIQ contact persons with the police forces must be nominated ensuring coverage throughout the state and who have sufficient time resources to network proactively with LGBTIQ groups and organisations in the regions. Further, a number of legislative amendments were called for, including measures to permit a data exchange format. The recommendations developed were noted by the conference of the ministers of the interior. It is now up to the individual federal states whether, and if so, how, they progress the recommendations.

Victim support and counselling for those affected by assaults

We continued with our advisory work in 2023. The number of persons seeking advice has risen continuously over the last 10 years. We provided advice to a total of 892 people (2022: 826; 2021: 805):

- 672 people contacted MANEO directly;
- through our pro-active outreach work we reached a further 220 people.

We carried out **2,072 counselling interviews** in 2023 (2022: 2.074), including those with institutions as part of organised case management. There was no increase in the number of counselling interviews provided, in comparison with the previous year, because the workloads for our staff members working in victim support are already very high. We exceed our time budgets and capacity limits every year. For that reason we seek continuously to expand our resources in order to spread the workload across more staff.

In the counselling context, assaults cannot be viewed in isolation from the previous biographical experiences of gay and bisexual men, and of LGBTIQ people in general. They bring with them in many cases experiences of exclusion and discrimination in the form of prior stress experiences, known as minority stress. This can result in both overt and hidden fears and worries as well as particular needs and demands, which we reflect in our counselling work. We integrate on a continuing basis the knowledge developed over the course of 34 years of counselling work to improve our counselling and advisory services.

We recorded 149 specific acts of assistance in the framework of our psychosocial victim counselling services, e.g. accompanying clients to court hearings, meetings with the authorities and the police and representing clients in their dealings with institutions, e.g. assistance in applying for benefits or financial support (e.g. funds, compensation or welfare benefits for victims of crime)

MANEO offers an open telephone advice session daily from 5pm to 7pm. Staff are available every day to take calls on (030) 216 33 36. Following the initial contact, appointments are offered for counselling interviews.

As a specialist victim support unit, MANEO cooperates with other specialist and advisory units in Berlin and throughout Germany. MANEO works as a qualified specialist advice unit in accordance with the quality standards adopted by the federal association *Arbeitskreis der Opferhilfen in Deutschland* (Working Group of Victim Support Units in Germany), which are improved and extended on a continuing basis also with MANEO's participation. MANEO has been a member of the association since 1992.

Refugees

We dealt with 51 cases of homophobic violence against gay and bisexual men refugees in Berlin in 2023, involving 54 persons. Counselling and assistance work for refugees is generally a major

task because, in addition to organising interpreters, many other issues arise, for example, transfers from refugee accommodation units in which threats and dangers were experienced, the organisation of medical and psychological services with the appropriate language skills, and establishing trust in public institutions and care provision.

We have been involved in work with refugees since 2015. We currently offer two tea houses as safe spaces for refugees: the MANEO Schöneberg tea house for refugees who speak Russian or Ukrainian and the MANEO Moabit tea house for refugees who speak Arabic, Farsi or Turkish. Staff with the relevant language skills organise the tea houses, held on a regular basis, and offer participants also the opportunity to talk and seek assistance.

The situation of our cooperation partner, the Ibn Rushd-Goethe Mosque, which has been threatened by Islamic State since the summer of 2023 is a matter of deep concern and worry to us. The high risk situation meant that the mosque could only operate on a limited basis and had to discontinue temporarily the provision of some of its services. That had a direct impact on our work, as previously in our refugee work we could regularly call upon assistance and support provided by the mosque. For us it is entirely natural that we regularly show our support for those working at the mosque.

Following the Russian attack on Ukraine and the resulting refugee situation, the demand among Russian and Ukrainian speaking refugees for assistance has increased between four and six-fold (2023: 497; 2022: 721; 2021: 110). Counselling interviews focus in particular on fears of LGBTIQ-related discrimination by the authorities and assaults occurring in the living environment and in the vicinity of scene venues. Our objective is the education of refugees in violence prevention and in their empowerment, i.e. to give them confidence, strengthen their self-help abilities and provide them with support.

Our refugee work is supported with one full-time position which we have divided between two staff members with the relevant language and cultural skills. Regrettably, there is no prospect of an increase in our staff resources.

Neighbourhood focused violence prevention work – local contact points

MANEO is active in neighbourhood focused violence prevention work, which started in the 'rainbow neighbourhood' 34 years ago. Networking, conversations and numerous initiatives and projects have resulted from this commitment, including the Lesbian and Gay Street Fair initiated by MANEO in 1993. MANEO draws on these experiences in its activities in the night mayor for the rainbow district project funded by the Tempelhof-Schöneberg Borough, which MANEO took on as an additional task in 2020. Our project, staffed with a team comprising mainly low-hours part-time employees, shows its presence in the neighbourhood every day both at our rainbow neighbourhood information point, a tiny house provided by the borough situated at the playground at the corner of Fuggerstrasse and Eisenacherstrasse, and by walking a regular round through the streets. We support violence prevention work in the rainbow neighbourhood through our networking activities, conversations and discussion groups.

MANEO is involved in other Berlin neighbourhoods too, including Tiergarten and North Neukölln. Here we are an active member of the Neukölln network against transphobia and homophobia and participate in the networking meetings held on a regular basis. In addition, we organise actions of our own here, for example, in the context of our annual campaign *Kiss Kiss Berlin* (which runs from 21 March to 17 May each year), together with youth facilities, schools, neighbourhood meeting points and local mothers active as peer educators who are all based in the neighbourhood.

We are also expanding our activities by establishing local contact points in Berlin's outer boroughs. In 2023 we organised weekly / two-weekly advice sessions and in-person contact opportunities in the areas of Neu-Hohenschönhausen / Wartenberg, Marzahn North and Rudow. Our work in Marzahn North was part funded in 2023 by Marzahn-Hellersdorf Borough. In contrast, our outreach work in Neu-Hohenschönhausen and Rudow was self-funded. We aim to continue our advice sessions, networking activities and actions in these neighbourhoods too.

Six key demands to Berlin's politicians

We call on the Berlin Senate and politicians in Berlin

1. to ensure the protection of our establishments. It must be ensured that we can carry out our work in peace and free from fear and that our clients and guests can feel safe.
2. to advocate for federal legislation which allows for a restart of the statistical exchange of anonymised basic information between MANEO and the police and between other specialist organisations and police authorities in the federal states, above all in the interests of effective violence prevention work.
3. to strengthen quality standards and the quality assurance and development processes of the victim support units which specifically support LGBTIQ people. These units develop knowledge and expertise on a continuing basis which needs to be retained and passed on to new employees. Above all, sufficient funding and staff resources must be ensured in Berlin in order to meet the high levels of demand for counselling and assistance tailored to the needs of target groups and delivered by specialist victim support units.
4. to ensure that in educational, youth and sports establishments even greater educational efforts are directed against hatred and discrimination of LGBTIQ people. We experience the challenge to hatred against LGBTIQ people to be marginalised in these establishments.
5. to support the establishment of residential units in which LGBTIQ refugees can be housed enabling them to find a safe place and better protection. More qualified psychosocial support needs to be made available for them.
6. to advocate more intensively for a greater regular contribution from the private sector to the promotion of democracy and the strengthening of diversity in society. They should advocate for companies to have a greater involvement in LGBTIQ networks and alliances and to provide financial support for educational measures, psychosocial services and assistance in structural development.

Publication

The MANEO Report 2023 is published to mark the upcoming International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) and the closing of this year's *Kiss Kiss Berlin*, an annual public awareness campaign organised by MANEO that runs from 21 March to 17 May each year. The MANEO Report 2023 has 240 pages. It describes the cases and indications recorded by MANEO for 2023 and the work carried out by MANEO in the year. **The MANEO Report has in the appendix figures and information from the Berlin Police and the Berlin Public Prosecutor's Office relating to 2023.** The report will be publicly available on MANEO's website from 12 noon on 10 May 2024: <https://www.maneo.de>

MANEO

MANEO – THE GAY ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT IN BERLIN is an independent project of Mann-O-Meter e.V. and has been operational for 34 years. It is the longest running and most experienced anti-violence project of its kind in Germany. It currently employs 15 staff (including 6 on low-hours part-time contracts) who share a total of 5 full-time positions and, in addition, has 40 volunteer staff members and helpers. MANEO operates from premises comprising four offices and a meeting room. MANEO's work is part financed by the Berlin Senate Department for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination and for its neighbourhood focused violence prevention work in the rainbow neighbourhood by the Tempelhof-Schöneberg Borough. MANEO has four main areas of work.



- 1) **Victim support:** Gay and bisexual men who are victims of discrimination and violence, also witnesses and dependents, are provided with counselling and assistance. In an **open advice session** (daily 5pm-7pm) clients are provided with initial information. Meetings are arranged with qualified salaried staff members for continued **psychosocial victim counselling**. They offer professional counselling and support. Alongside homophobic assaults, our work addresses issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, honour-based violence (forced marriage), violence against persons owed special protection, knockout drops, robbery and theft. Since 1990, over 26,000 individuals have used our services. MANEO cooperates with experienced victim support agencies in Germany and Europe.
- 2) **Recording of violence:** Anti-LGBTIQ incidents are recorded. Persons affected can provide information and report cases by phone or online. We produce an annual statistical analysis of all the reports and publish this in our MANEO Report.
- 3) **Violence prevention:** We inform the public about homophobia and hate violence, we warn the LGBTIQ scenes of dangers, network with disseminators and mobilise. MANEO organises proactive outreach work, reaching out to Berlin's scenes, and is building up contact points in Berlin's outer boroughs. MANEO is committed to a dialogue with Berlin's criminal justice authorities, currently the only one of its kind in Germany, and since 1998 has regularly provided training at Berlin's Police Academy.
- 4) **Engagement and empowerment:** We encourage self-confidence and self-assertion and mobilise for civil society engagement and volunteering.

Further areas of MANEO's work include: public relations, networking, securing of funding / donor acquisition and quality management. To maintain the activities which receive Senate Department funding MANEO had to contribute own funds amounting in 2023 to over 3,000 euros. In addition, it has to acquire donors to fund activities which do not receive public funding, such as assistance to refugees and victim support. For that reason MANEO regularly seeks donations.