SEEKING FRIENDS IN TROUBLED TIMES: THE STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS OF TRANSNATIONAL LGBT NETWORKS IN EUROPE*

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Prior research demonstrates the importance of domestic associations joining transnational advocacy networks to create social change. Few studies, however, investigate how dynamic political opportunities influence the structure of crossnational networks. To address this gap, we analyze an original dataset of 3,103 domestic lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) associations in Europe connected through joint membership in 46 LGBT international nongovernmental organizations from 2010 to 2020. Results from network and multilevel analyses reveal a relatively unstable network that is centrally comprised of associations located in adverse political contexts. More specifically, advocacy associations located in adverse political contexts, but recently joining the European Union, are more likely to occupy central positions in the network. Although the structure of the network suggests LGBT organizations are countering traditional, hegemonic lines of stratification, the instability of central position undermines widely held assumptions about the relationship between power and centrality within these networks.

Transnational advocacy networks are a considerable force in international relations. By creating a transnational public sphere for resource and information exchange and consensus building (Boli and Thomas 1999; Ciplet 2019; Smith, Plummer, and Hughes 2017; Smith, Gemici, Plummer, and Hughes 2018; Tarrow 2005), transnational networks exert pressure on international institutions and domestic governments and make participants more effective advocates (Davies 2014; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tallberg, Sommerer, Squatrito, and Jönsson 2013). Indeed, a large body of scholarship examines the efficacy of transnational networks. Optimists point to the possibilities for more equitable, democratic transfers of knowledge transnationally (Boli and Thomas 1999; Smith et al 2018; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005) and the ability to achieve "human rights" for LGBT communities and women, among others (Ayoub 2016). Those less rosy in their assessments, however, find that networks tend to privilege and circulate ideas and priorities from the Global North (Hughes, Paxton, Quinsaat, and Reith 2018).

While the effects of transnational networks are well researched, scholars are only recently attending to network structure as an object of study (Ciplet 2019; Hughes et al. 2018; Osterbur and Kiel 2017). Analyzing network structure, or the patterns of interaction between network participants, can illuminate the relationship between network outcomes, network position, and network content. Scholars show, for example, that countries more embedded within transnational networks are more likely to see policy change advanced (Ayoub 2016). Others suggest that more central actors are better positioned to influence the network's agenda, attract resources, and more effectively leverage social connections to enact goals (Burt 1992; Cook 1977; Hughes et al 2018; Reagans and McEvily 2003).

Given the importance of network structure and centrality for understanding network outcomes, we examine the factors that shape these attributes. More specifically, we focus on a key mechanism that determines centrality in transnational advocacy networks: political opportunity structures (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005). Political opportunity structures can either allow

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© *2022 Mobilization: An International Quarterly 27(1): 91-114*
DOI 10.17813/1086-671X-27-91

the space and freedom to engage transnationally (open contexts) or create domestic hardships which necessitate external partners for assistance (closed contexts). In this article, we ask: how do open and closed political opportunity structures influence network structure and participation over time?

The LGBT movement within Europe is well-suited to address this question. Prior scholars detail a long, robust history of transnational organizing among LGBT associations and how these transnational advocacy networks affect change across the continent (Ayoub 2015, 2016; Holzhacker 2012; Gonsalves 2020; Paternotte and Tremblay 2015; Paternotte 2016; Swimelar 2017; Velasco 2018). Political receptiveness to LGBT issues varies significantly, which provides analytic leverage for how domestic political contexts influence network structure. Additionally, highly efficacious supranational institutions produce a uniquely influential political opportunity at the transnational level (Ayoub 2015; Paternotte and Tremblay 2015; Paternotte 2016; Swimelar 2017). Taken together, variation in scale and LGBT receptiveness provides an ideal site to investigate the relationship between the structure of transnational networks and the political opportunities that produce and shape them. Revealing these dynamics are needed because, despite highlighting the importance of networks, there is little quantitative research mapping out and explaining network structure and domestic associations' embeddedness within them.

We couple social network analysis with longitudinal multilevel models (Roberts 2019) to examine both the overall structure of transnational LGBT networks in Europe and domestic associations' centrality within the network from 2010 to 2020. Our use an original dataset of 3,103 domestic LGBT associations spanning 46 countries in Europe and Eurasia connected to one another through joint membership in forty-five LGBT international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs)—prominent network-weaving institutions within the international arena (Boli and Thomas 1999; Hughes, Peterson, Harrison, and Paxton 2009; Hughes et al. 2018; Ingram and Torfason 2010). We predict centrality scores using changing political opportunity structures, including the relative within-country change and the comparative between-country differences.

In contrast to prior studies, the most central actors are not those from the relatively more open countries of Western Europe that also tend to be wealthier and normatively powerful, but rather are those in closed political contexts most in need of resources and transnational allies (Evans 2000; Smith et al. 2018). We further find that the network is highly volatile. The most central network members shift over the study time period, which raises questions about the value of network centrality and what centrality enables or represents. While prior studies typically associate centrality with power, prestige, or influence, we offer an alternative way to think about network centrality in the Discussion. We propose conceptualizing centrality as representing a mix of precarity as well as possession of an outward orientation. Our departure from prior empirical work on network structure may be due to measurement: Given difficulties constructing domestic association-level datasets (Hafner-Burton et al. 2009: 587), most scholars use INGO networks with fewer examining networks of domestic associations (except, see Schofer and Longhofer 2011; Gonsalves 2020). We discuss this further in the conclusion.

BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE OF TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS AMONG LGBT ASSOCIATIONS IN EUROPE

Europe has a long history of LGBT organizing and seeing transnational connections as productive toward these ends. Magnus Hirschfeld founded the first homosexual rights organization, the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee (*Wissenscheftkich-Humanitäres Komittee*) in Germany in 1897, to lobby for decriminalization of homosexuality and a lowering of age-of-consent laws (Ayoub and Paternotte 2014) and the World League for Sexual Reform several decades later to bring similar organizations newly established across Western Europe together (Paternotte and Seckinelgin 2016). Though temporarily halted by the rise of Nazism and World War II, organizing accelerated at the war's conclusion. In 1951, COC Netherlands established the International Committee for Sexual Equality (ICSE), which created annual opportunities for homophile

organizations from across Europe and the U.S. to meet and advocate within international organizations like the UN (Ayoub and Paternotte 2014; Rupp 2011). While new domestic associations developed across Europe during this time period, facilitated in part by the work of ICSE and the subsequent International Homophile World Organization (Paternotte and Seckinelgin 2016), these networks broke down as a new era of queer activism came to the fore in the 1960s and 70s.

Queer organizing accelerated and diversified in the late 1960s and early 1970s through visible repertoires of collective action, commonly referred to as pride, equality marches, or "Christopher Street Day" parades and other Stonewall commemorations, religious organizing like the David and Jonathan organization in France, ArciGay in Italy, and the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group, in the United Kingdom in 1972, and new queer liberation organizations, like the French Front Homosexual d'Action Révolutionnaire, spread (Paternotte and Seckinelgin 2016). Though queer liberation organizations attempted to create a transnational network, they were unsuccessful. Instead, transnational organizing centered around a new institution, the International Gay Association established in 1978, which continues as the most enduring and largest transnational LGBT organization today (though now named ILGA) (Ayoub and Paternotte 2014). In its contemporary iteration, ILGA continues to be a crucial network-weaving institution for transnational LGBT organizing in Europe and globally (Paternotte 2016). As this transnational network continues to mature, similar network-weaking institutions have emerged that focus on particular communities, (e.g., Transgender Europe), regions (e.g., LGBTI Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkey), and issues (e.g., Network of European LGBT Families' Associations). Each of these international nongovernmental organizations (INGO) establishes an arena of interaction and provides unique benefits to members and further integrates the transnational space.

For domestic associations, participation in these networks creates opportunities to gain resources and leverage the social capital embedded within these relationships (Murdie 2014; Carpenter 2011). Associations that are more connected and engaged (i.e. more central within the network) are better positioned to leverage their relationships and access these resources. Network participation also offers opportunities to expand normative influence. Megan Osterbur and Christina Kiel (2017) find COC Netherlands, for instance, to be central within a network of hyperlinks between LGBT associations' websites. As a result, COC Netherlands holds a disproportionate amount of power influencing how others frame LGBT issues. Their finding corroborates the idea that gatekeeping is a *relational* feature associated with centrality rather than a detached organizational attribute (Carpenter 2011). Consequently, those most central are able to determine and vet the network's agenda and priorities or, at the very least, be in the structural position necessary to leverage relationships and connections to facilitate these ends.

Network connectedness relates to overall network structure. Attending to this overall structure is important because network structure shapes the efficacy of transnational networks (Murdie 2014). For example, Kenneth Andrews (2001) argues that material and nonmaterial resource exchanges are dependent on movement infrastructure—the relational dynamics between actors (see also McCarthy 1996; Shawki 2011). Similarly, Marshall Ganz (2000) proposes that the structure of information exchange influences the strategic decision making of movements. Two particularly influential structural characteristics for transnational networks are density and diversity (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Density, or the increased connections between network participants, enhances the "relational platform" of the network (Shawki 2011). Increased density facilitates quicker responses and transfers of information from actors in different locations, enables better coordinated communications by aligning frames and targeted campaigns, and increases long-term stability by reducing disintegration or fragmentation (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Smith and Pagnucco 1992).

Network diversity, on the other hand, is crucial for developing a shared agenda that accounts for variation in the types of issues that different groups face. Network legitimacy, moreover, derives in part from the perception of networks as representing all relevant communities (Ciplet 2019). Active incorporation of marginalized communities and those from adverse contexts, therefore, is critical for the efficacious and legitimacy of advocacy networks.

Increased diversity, moreover, especially within structurally influential positions, may challenge conventional lines of stratification. Some argue, optimistically, that the new transnational arena developed by these advocacy networks is more equitable, blurs North-South divides, and acts as a counterhegemonic force within international relations (Boli and Thomas 1999; Evans 2000; Smith et al 2018; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005). Empirical studies, however, do not corroborate this optimism. Scholars that have systematically mapped transnational networks find that despite the inclusion of diverse groups, central positions are typically occupied by those from Western countries (Hughes et al. 2018; Murdie 2014).

Together, understanding the structure of networks and the centrality of associations matters as the structure influences the effectiveness of network participants in achieving outcomes and, moreover, the substantive content of those outcomes. Yet, as Amanda Murdie (2014) notes, there is little empirical evidence explaining why participating members like domestic associations hold particular structural location positions within transnational networks. What accounts for transnational networking and network structure?

EXPLAINING LGBT NETWORK STRUCTURE AND CENTRALITY

Several theoretical frameworks are helpful for understanding transnational network participation, including resource dependence, organizational path dependence, and political opportunity structures—we focus on the latter. Political opportunity structures, or the stable components of political environment that enable and constrain transnational collective action (Tarrow 1994; see also Dixon and Martin 2012; Keck 2005; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Staggenborg 1998), are fundamental to understanding an association's purpose and whether transnational partners are needed (Holzhacker 2012; Keck and Sikkink 1998). In the sections that follow, we explore theories that explain how open and closed political environments, at different scales of analysis, shape network structure. Next, we examine how political environments shape network structure during critical periods in which the politics regarding the issue are highly contested. Finally, we discuss alternative explanations for network structure (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and association-level attributes.

Historical Legacy and Creating a Global Network: Network Centrality in Open Political Contexts

LGBT domestic associations from more open political contexts—those with institutionalized support for LGBT rights—may be more central in transnational networks. This may be driven, in part, by historical legacies of LGBT organizing and consequent path dependency. As discussed above, from the earliest days of transnational organizing around LGBT issues within Europe, associations from open contexts dominated. Many of the earliest associations were formed in Northern and Western Europe, regions that now host the headquarters of most LGBT INGOs in Europe (*Yearbook of International Organizations* 2020). Early organizing may have created pathways and organizational cultures that enable these regions to dominate INGO organizing in later years (Sydow, Schreyögg, and Koch 2009), since associations in these regions had an advantage in building transnational networks around them and shaping their structure and patterns of growth. Consequently, associations in these regions likely hold more central positions within the overall network.

Additionally, associations from more "open" political environments have material and symbolic incentives to be highly involved in transnational organizing and, especially, to seek out partnerships with associations in "closed" political environments. Materially, as LGBT rights are recognized within a country, LGBT associations from that country need to keep LGBT issues salient in order to attract continued support from domestic funders. Partnering with associations in other contexts—especially those that are seen as less progressive or open—is one strategy for achieving this (see Thayer 2009). Kathryn Sikkink (2005: 165) argues that those from open contexts will engage in "international activism as a complementary and compensatory option." Indeed, Phillip Ayoub (2013) documents this exact pattern by German LGBT activists mobilizing

to assist counterparts in Poland. Being in a more open space allowed German activists to collect the necessary resources to help their Polish counterparts; activists engaged in fundraising campaigns at bars and LGBT social spaces that would otherwise not be possible in closed contexts that limit such activities (Ayoub 2013).

Associations in more open contexts may also pursue relationships with those in closed contexts for symbolic reasons: the belief that they have a duty to create a global network and help LGBT counterparts in less LGBT-friendly contexts. Transnational feminists demonstrate how Western women's movements looked beyond their domestic contexts to "help" women in the Global South (Abu-Lughod 2002; Hoang 2015). In some cases, these impulses came from a well-intentioned desire to use resources and strategies to further an international women's movement. As scholars show, however, the diversity of social, cultural, and political contexts called into question the relevancy of tactics and ways of understanding gender from external contexts (Mohanty 1987). Western women's movements also—perhaps unintentionally—became part of justification for international military incursions during colonial times, a pattern that continues today. For British and French colonial administrations, women's liberation was important for their "civilizing mission" and was used to justify colonization to European populaces advocating liberal reforms back home (Guha and Spivak 1988; Mani 1987; Lazreg 1994). Recently, Western leaders again deployed women's liberation as a political strategy to justify international incursions (Abu-Lughod 2001; Mohanty 1988). The desire to further women's rights in the Global South, perceived to be closed to women's rights relative to the West, generates incentives for women's groups in the Global North to connect transnationally with their Southern counterparts via grants, fellowships, and other ties (Thayer 2009).

Similar strategies are now used to advance LGBT rights beyond Western Europe. Discussing the shift from women's movements to gay movements in Europe, Sarah Bracke (2012) writes that "'Rescue brown gays' . . . has now joined 'rescue brown women' as a matter of concern high on the civilizational agendas" (247). Similarly, Jasbir Puar (2007: 2) points to how homonationalism, "the emergence of a national homosexuality," operates in Europe, writing that "sites of queer struggle in Europe—Britain, the Netherlands—have articulated Muslim populations as an especial threat to LGBTIQ persons, organizations, communities, and spaces of congregation" (xxxii). Within the European context, countries perceived as anti-LGBT, based on religion, culture, and explicit policy, are largely in Central and Eastern Europe. Consequently, associations operating in relatively open contexts may feel an obligation to connect with and advocate on behalf of their counterparts in Eastern Europe. COC Netherlands demonstrates this perspective by stating on its website under "Proud Accomplishments" that "COC supports LGBT organizations in Central and Eastern Europe" because it "allows them to open their own office, start AIDS prevention programs, build strong communities, organize prides and lobby for better laws." (COC Netherlands 2019). RSFL has a similar outward orientation, training and funding activists from the Global South through the Rainbow Leaders program since 2013 (RSFL 2016).

Several existing studies corroborate the likelihood of Western associations being more central in the network. Across a range of issue areas (e.g., human rights, environment, women's rights), analyses of transnational INGO networks find centrality to be commonly held by Western European and North American actors (Carpenter 2007; Beckfield 2003; Hughes et al. 2009; Linde 2018; Murdie 2014; Murdie and Davis 2012). Although the empirical studies above focus on transnational networks between *international* NGOs instead networks between domestic associations, we nevertheless hypothesize that associations located in more open political contexts, both due to comparative between-country differences and relative within-country changes over time, will spur greater transnational network integration among domestic associations.

Operationalizing Boomerangs: Network Centrality in Closed Political Contexts

On the flip side, threats from the domestic political environment, or closed political opportunities, may also compel associations to seek international partners via transnational coalitions. The impulse to seek allies from open contexts is captured most famously in Keck and Sikkink's

"boomerang theory" (1998). When the political opportunity structures are closed, associations may "reach out to international allies to bring pressure on its government to change its domestic practices," thus throwing a boomerang to allies that then returns in the form of international pressure on the closed political environment (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 36). In other words, associations in closed settings may face incentives to deeply embed themselves within transnational networks to leverage external pressure to move antagonistic or unresponsive governments (Tarrow 2005). Associations in open contexts, with institutionalized political and social support for LGBT rights, are less in need these transnational ties.

In the context of Europe, scholars find LGBT associations in countries with both fewer supportive policies and more negative attitudes toward LGBT communities may be more inclined to seek international partnerships—mimicking the boomerang process (Ayoub 2013, 2016; Holzhacker 2012; Swimelar 2017). Whether across the former communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe or, more recently, the Balkan states, several scholars find boomerang patterns are continuously in operation (O'Dwyer 2018; Pearce and Cooper 2014). Being in comparatively more repressive contexts offers a clear incentive for domestic associations to seek out and maximize transnational ties to partners beyond their national boarders—making them more central in the network. Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH), an LGBT association in Poland, is often used as an example of boomerang models in the late 2000s (Ayoub 2013, 2016). During an intense moment as Poland was entering the European Union, KPH worked with multiple partners from more open contexts across Europe to assist in their efforts to improve LGBT rights. The heightened attention placed on Poland during this moment enabled KPH to leverage new relationships and likely, increased their centrality within the network. Indeed, during this period, the majority of funding from KPH came from international donors (Ayoub 2013). The precarity of KPH's situation, then, was a key enabling force for which they sought out international connections but, importantly, external associations also sought connections with KPH too (Ayoub 2013; Ayoub and Chetaille 2017).

The role of boomerangs is becoming especially relevant as threats to visibly LGBT communities abound. Recently, a number of antigender campaigns and organizations, under which LGBT rights fall, have gained traction in Europe (Kovats 2017; Kuhar and Paternotte 2018). Even countries that seemed supportive of LGBT rights are enacting new reforms limiting rights, like constitutional bans against same-sex marriage in Croatia (Kovats 2017; Swimelar 2017). Consequently, these new, salient threats against LGBT communities are likely to spur transnational participation and greater connections even if, comparatively, the country is still well-off. This is because, as Keck and Sikkink (1998) argue, political opportunity structures are shaped by perception. Therefore, similar to before, we hypothesize that both crossnational comparisons as well as temporal variation in a given country's political context that closes opportunities will spur transnational network integration among domestic associations.

Closed and Open Structures in Unstable Times: The Influence of Supranational Institutions

Political opportunity structures in Europe cannot be disentangled from the unique role that supranational institutions, whether the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, the European Union (EU), etc., play (Ayoub 2013, 2016; Rupp 2011). Recent expansions of the EU and the incorporation of LGBT rights into the European imagery, both through explicit legal or judicial decisions and through symbolic, cultural overtures, together, have implications for how the domestic political environment operates. Considering these dynamic processes is important as these changing aspects of political opportunity structures are likely to influence transnational activist networks (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005). Indeed, despite this theorization by transnational scholars and network theory itself viewing networks as constantly changing relational structures that necessarily call for temporal analysis (Kitts, Lomi, Mascia, Pallotti, and Quintane 2017; Moody 2002), most empirical analyses treat these structural determinants of networks as static (except, see Hughes et al 2018). Therefore, in this section, we theorize how country's changing position vis-à-vis supranational institutions influences transnational networking.

The promotion of "an ever-gayer union" (Slootmaeckers, Touquet, and Vemeersch 2016: 19) exerts pressures on countries within the purview of European institutions and candidate countries to become more "open" to LGBT rights. For example, beginning in 1997, the EU made its first commitment toward protecting sexual minorities with the signing of the Treaty of Amsterdam, making protections against sexual orientation discrimination a necessary condition for accession (Paternotte 2016). Today, various European institutions and bodies, especially the European Court of Human Rights, continue to advance LGBT communities by adopting antidiscrimination measures, commissioning studies into the lives of LGBT people, funding LGBT organizations, and advancing LGBT rights within foreign policy (Ayoub 2016; O'Dwyer 2018). These developments help create a normative environment where the very construction of a "European" identity and Europeanization is interwoven with support for LGBT communities. Domestic LGBT associations leverage this to press for change in countries wanting to adhere to this collective identity (Ayoub 2016; Swimelar 2017).

However, this increasingly pro-LGBT attitude has produced resistance and Euroscepticism in other parts of Europe (Ayoub and Paternotte 2014). Linking European norms to LGBT rights has earned Europe the moniker "Gayropa" from Russia (Foxall 2017). In response, Russia and other countries, primarily in Eastern Europe, have restricted LGBT rights and openly defy calls for liberalizing sexual and gender rights (Bolzendahl and Gracheva 2017; Kovàts 2017; Persson 2015; Wilkinson 2014). Euroskepticism, and its links to pro-LGBT sentiment, may stem from a desire for national autonomy or rejection of Western cultural impositions (Slootmaeckers and Sircar 2018; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2017). Coupled with the rise of anti-gay right-wing parties, anti-LGBT/gender rhetoric has spread in several parts of Eastern Europe (Kovàts 2017; Brubaker 2017; Kuhar and 2018).

Given regional and temporal variations in attitudes towards "Europe," both as institutions and imagery, hypothesizing the effect of this transnational opportunity structure on network structure is challenging. Consequently, we focus on one particular attribute shown to be highly salient in shaping how domestic associations interact with this transnational landscape: when an association's home-country joined the network. Countries that have been members of European institutions for a long time are responsible for generating pro-LGBT norms within them, which likely came out of domestic rather than supranational influences (Ayoub 2016). Countries that are newer to the European project, however, are more subject to the pro-LGBT influence of supranational institutions (Ayoub 2015). Indeed, because LGBT protections have become "symbolic of political modernity" (Ayoub 2015: 295), domestic associations in countries more newly admitted into these bodies have additional leverage to organize transnationally (Ayoub 2016). Moreover, extending Ayoub's analysis of these distinct set of European countries, we suggest that candidate countries may be even more attuned to European expectations (O'Dwyer 2013). For example, in a comparison between Serbia (an EU candidate) and Bosnia (a non-candidate), Safia Swimelar (2017) finds that once the Serbian government expressed interest in joining the EU, domestic LGBT associations worked with international partners to leverage the new opportunity. Akin to the mechanisms driving boomerang effects, we hypothesize that associations in countries that are newer to European institutions or that are candidate countries, may leverage external pro-LGBT norms and integrate themselves into transnational networks to pressure their home governments.

Alternative Explanations

We account for several alternative explanations for transnational network in the empirical analysis below. Resources may play an important role in predicting network structure and participation given their importance for associational activities and survival, and the cost of transnational networking may shape which associations are able to network (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005). In addition, the general political environment (outside of LGBT-specific policies and attitudes) may shape possibilities for domestic associational formation. Finally, association-level characteristics and motivations, involving the core mission or cultural world-

view, may shape their outward orientation as well as homophily with other associations and desire to interact with them (Vaisey and Lizardo 2010; Benford and Snow 2000). We account for each of these alternative explanations in the analysis below.

DATA AND METHODS

To examine the influence of political opportunities on European transnational LGBT networks, we assembled an original dataset of domestic LGBT associations and their transnational connections across three timepoints: 2010, 2017, and 2020. The decade includes important political shifts in Europe, both with respect to LGBT policies as well as larger shifts in the European Union. Between 2010 and 2020, Europe has faced the Brexit crisis, rise of populist parties, and the passage of several pro-LGBT and anti-LGBT laws (Freedom House 2014). The dynamic political environment provides an excellent arena for adjudicating the relationship between political opportunity structures and network processes.

Our dependent measure, domestic LGBT association centrality within transnational LGBT networks, comes from our original dataset of domestic LGBT associations. We construct the dataset using several methods. First, we used the *Yearbook of International Organizations (YIO)* to assemble a list of 80 LGBT INGOs and retrieved membership rosters from websites and annual reports. Second, we used government databases of registered charities, ILGA's online directory of LGBT associations, *Encyclopedia of Associations,* LGBT Movement Advancement Project, and grants allocated by LGBT foundations like Arcus Foundation (GPP 2015) to find additional associations. Third, we used membership rosters of domestic umbrella organizations, like the Consortium of LGBT Voluntary and Community Organizations in the UK. Fourth, we added to our list from books and articles on LGBT activism in Europe, which were particularly helpful for identifying older and smaller associations. Since the aforementioned sources may pick up larger and more professionalized associations, we also searched each association's website and social media for references to other groups and conducted country-specific Google searches to find as many remaining organizations as possible. In all, over 200 resources were consulted. The final dataset includes 3,103 domestic LGBT associations across forty-six countries in Europe. Data on each association includes mission statement, founding year, and location. Despite the challenges assembling domestic associations datasets, which are notoriously difficult to measure (Gonsalves 2020; Schofer and Longhofer 2010), the dataset is the most comprehensive of its kind. Prior studies of transnational strategies of LGBT associations focus more narrowly on select groups or INGOs, or those connected via hyperlinks (Ayoub 2016; Osterbur and Kiel 2017; Holzhacker 2012).[1]

Using this dataset, we calculate connections between associations (nodes) as mutual INGO memberships. Although INGOs themselves are commonly treated as actors, by definition, they are network-weaving institutions that create arenas of interaction for member organizations (Boli and Thomas 1999; Hughes et al. 2009; Hughes et al. 2018; Ingram and Torfason 2010; Ingram, Robinson, and Busch 2005; Murdie and Davis 2012; Murdie 2014; Smith et al 2017, 2018). Through shared INGO membership, domestic associations have opportunities to engage with one another at conferences and workshops, exchange information, and develop new norms and set agendas (Boli and Thomas 1999; Meyer, Boli, Thomas, and Ramirez 1997; Schofer and Longhofer 2011).

Next, we use social network analyses to determine network centrality (CENTRALITY). We first create three association-by-INGO matrices—one at each timepoint.[2] The changing organizational landscape as organizations emerge and close results in different matrix compositions: 2,495-by-22 in 2010; 2,938-by-38 in 2017; and 3,103-by-45 in 2020. Next, we transform the two-mode network into a one-mode. Cells in the resulting association-by-association matrix represent the connection between two domestic associations via mutual INGO membership (Borgatti and Everett 1997; Hughes et al. 2009; Wasserman and Faust 1994).[3] Finally, we use Phillip Bonacich's (1987) eigenvector centrality scores to measure centrality (see

Hughes et al. 2009; Paxton, Hughes, and Reith 2015).[4] Eigenvector centrality privileges ties that draw nodes closer toward the center of the network—one tie to an association on the periphery, for instance, is weighed less when calculating centrality than one tie to the actor in the center. Scores are continuous between 0 to 1 with high scores indicating greater centrality.

Independent Variables

Domestic Political Opportunity Structures. We use two measures of domestic political opportunities: policies and public opinion. First, using data from ILGA's *State Sponsored Homophobia Reports* (Carroll 2016), we construct two indicators of the policy environment: full marriage equality and explicit marriage equality bans. Though other policies are relevant, debates over marriage have taken on a particularly salient and symbolic overture (Kollman 2014; Kuhar and Paternotte 2017). Second, we measure public opinion (PUBLIC OPINION) toward LGBT communities using the Global Acceptance Index (GAI) (Flores and Park 2018). The GAI ranges from 0 to 10 for 176 countries from 1981 to 2019 such that an "estimate of 5 corresponds to about 15 percent of British adults agreeing that homosexuality is "not at all wrong.'"[5]

EU Affiliation. To measure a country's position vis-à-vis the European institutions (EU AFFILIATION), we create a series of dichotomous indicators based on the country's relationship with the EU: EU-15, or one of the first fifteen member-states, EU-13, or one of the thirteen additional member-states (see Ayoub 2015), and EU candidate (defined as either official candidate or those that have submitted paperwork to join the EU [EU 2017]). We also include countries that fall outside any of these three affiliation categories.[6]

Alternative Explanations

We account for several alternative explanations, including resource dependence, generalized opportunity structures, and association-level variables. Given the importance of resources for organizational survival, (McCarthy and Zald 1997; Pfeffer and Salancik 1987), we include measures of national network resources, or DOMESTIC MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATION (see Murdie and Davis 2012), the total number of domestic LGBT associations per one million people (DOMESTIC LGBT ORGANIZATIONS) which measures the generalized ecological resources and capacity for a country to maintain an LGBT civil society, broad financial resource environment measured as logged gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (GDP PER CAPITA) (World Bank 2020), and an association-level measure of resources: AGE. We measure generalized opportunity structures through level of democracy taken from Freedom House ratings (Bollen and Paxton 2000) of democracy (DEMOCRACY) which range from 1 to 7, are inverted so that higher values correspond to being more democratic. Finally, we include two association-level measures: an indicator of whether the association is advocacy oriented or not, and whether the association has adopted a human rights framework. We create binary indicators for whether associations are "advocacy" associations (ADVOCACY) by coding mission statements and association names using a combination of text analysis and manual coding (Nord 2005). Given the importance of human rights frameworks in LGBT organizing in Europe (Paternotte and Tremblay 2015; Paternotte 2016), we also create an indicator variable for whether the association's name or mission statement explicitly includes the phrase "human right(s)": (HUMAN RIGHTS FRAME).

Sample Construction and Methodology

Sample Construction. The boundaries of the network are set by incorporating all countries that have membership within ILGA-Europe—the largest and most prominent LGBT INGO on the continent (Paternotte 2016). In 2020, ILGA-Europe had over 600 members across fifty-four countries, spanning Iceland to Kyrgyzstan (ILGA-Europe 2020). Additionally, we include a constant sample of associations that are present throughout the duration of the observation window.[7] Tracking this cohort over time isolates the dynamic processes we intend to investigate.

However, all associations are included in the initial construction of the networks to obtain centrality scores because their structural location is known. Excluding these nodes would necessarily change the overall network structure as the inclusion or exclusion of a single node has ripple effects; doing so, then, would distort the centrality scores for the 2010 cohort (Moody and White 2003; Smith and Moody 2013). Due to missing data on associational age, the final sample includes 5,490 association-year observations from 1,830 associations in forty-five countries.

Methodology. Given the structure of the data, we conduct longitudinal multilevel, or mixed effects, models (see Bryk and Raudenbush 1992; Hoffman and Stawksi 2009; Peugh and Heck 2017). The mixed effects approach produces a three-level model in which repeated centrality observations (level 1) are nested within association (level 2) which are nested within country (level 3). The modeling strategy distinguishes between within- and between-country effects for each predictor (Goldstein 2011; Bryk and Raudenbush 1992; Hoffman and Stawksi 2009; Roberts 2019). Within-country effects are computed by centering variables around country-means while between-country effects are computed by centering variables around the grand means (see Hoffman and Stawksi 2009 for overview of method and Roberts 2019). Distinguishing these effects is imperative as associations may be responding to the intercountry and intracountry changes in political opportunity structures. As a result, country-level variables, except EU AFFILIATION and AGE appear in the models twice. All predictors are lagged two years unless indicated otherwise. Descriptive statistics are included in the appendix.

RESULTS

Before presenting the model results, we first descriptively depict how the network is structured and how it changes over time. At first glance, the dramatic shift in density (actualized ties divided by all possible ties) stands out: the network becomes denser over time. In 2010, the European LGBT network had a density of 2.26%, meaning that 2.26% ties occur out of every possible tie between all associations (n = 2,495). In 2017 this number rose to 3.22% and then to 4.86% in 2020. Another way to highlight this trend: The proportion of domestic associations with no INGO membership drops from 70.5% in 2010 to 57.5% in 2020. For context, network density between women's INGOs decreased from 10% to 8% between 1978 and 2008 (Hughes et al. 2018) and country-to-country networks, via mutual intergovernmental organization membership, increased from less than .1% in 1820 to about 1% in 2000 (Beckfield 2010). Increases in LGBT network density are particularly notable given the entrance of 600 new associations between 2010 and 2020: the overall percentage of connections has increased *despite* the addition of new associations. Denser networks are more effective at transferring resources, information, and achieving outcomes for those involved—perhaps revealing why LGBT advocates are acutely successful in Europe (Ayoub 2016; Beckfield 2010; Keck and Sikkink 1998).

Given the increasingly connected network, how is participation distributed across the continent? Where are more central actors located? Figure 1 highlights the average centrality scores for the constant sample cohort in 2010 and 2020. In both maps, darker the colors indicate higher centrality. Two characteristics stand out. First, across both timepoints, associations from Central/Eastern Europe and southern Eurasia tend to be most central, providing preliminary support for Keck and Sikkink's boomerang theorization. Second, countries tend to have higher density averages in 2020, which further corroborates increasing network density over time.

Finally, we present the most central associations at the three time points (see table 1). In 2010, the most central association is Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH) in Poland, confirming Ayoub's (2016) insights about the importance of KPH in transnational advocacy around that time. In 2010, center-most positions were primarily held by associations from Central and Western European countries. None of these associations, however, maintain their status by 2017. Instead, the most central association is now LGBT Forum Progress of Montenegro with the remainder of the top fifteen also coming from Eastern European

countries—with the exception of Scandinavia—suggesting that center-most positions may be a dynamic rather than static structural location. By 2020, the top fifteen associations have again reshuffled but are also more distributed throughout Eastern Europe and also include Western European associations. The descriptive results suggest a highly dynamic network core.

Figure 1. Average Centrality Scores by Country, 2010 and 2020

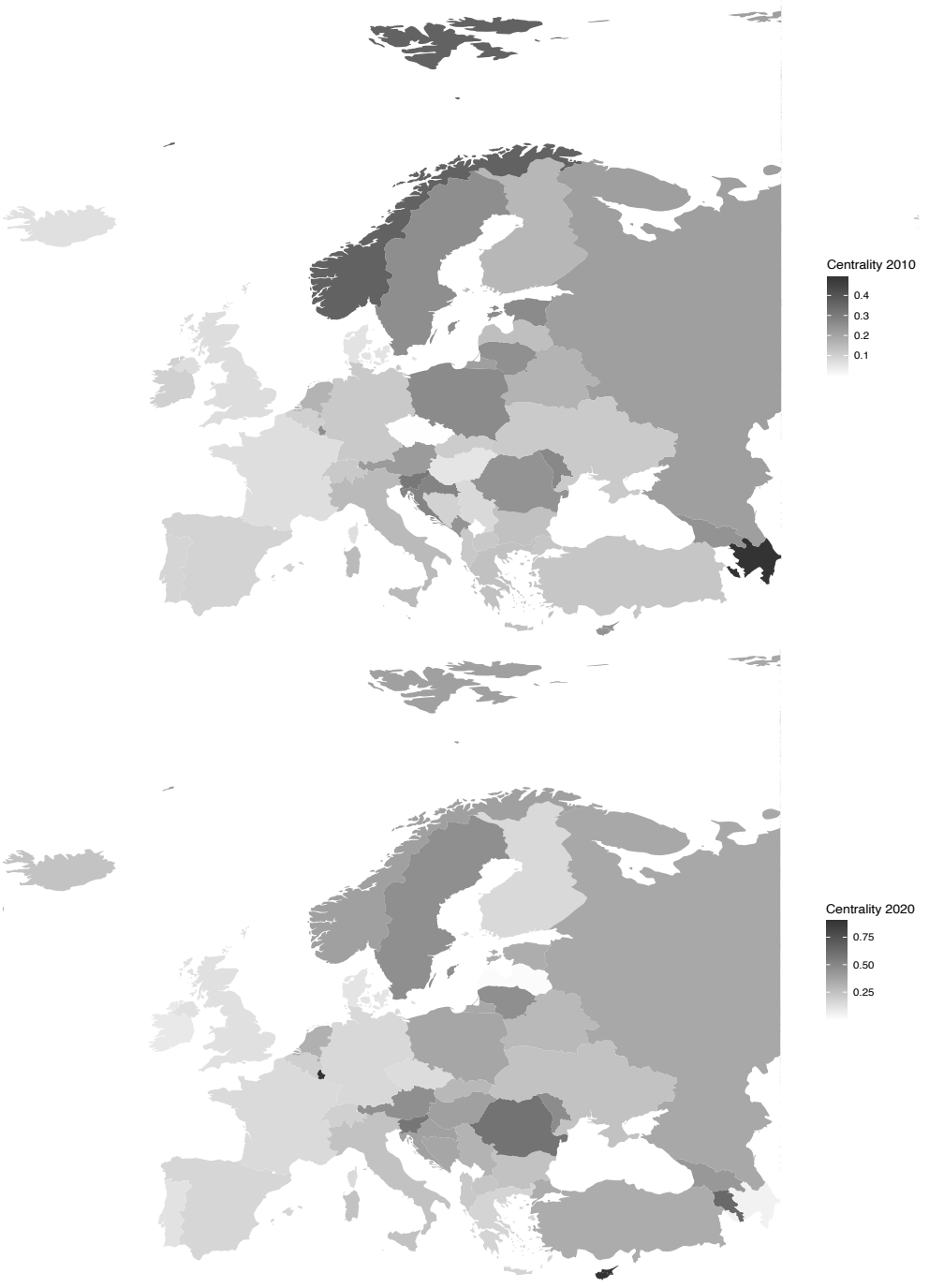

Table 1. Fifteen Most Central Associations, 2010, 2017, and 2020

Association Name	*Country*	*Centrality Score*
2010		
Kampania Przeciw Homofobii (KPH)	Poland	1.000
Circolo di Cultura Omosessuale Mario Mieli	Italy	0.992
GenderDoc-M Information Centre	Moldova	0.992
Mozaika	Latvia	0.992
Rosa Letzebuerg ASBL	Luxembourg	0.992
Zagreb Pride Organization	Croatia	0.992
GayBelarus	Belarus	0.992
Fundacja Rownosci (Equality Foundation)	Poland	0.992
Belgian Pride	Belgium	0.992
HeSeta	Finland	0.992
Samtökin '78	Iceland	0.972
FELGTB - Federacion Estatal de Lesbianas Gays Transexuales y Bisexuales	Spain	0.972
Rikstorbundet Ekumeniska grupporna for kristna homo-och bisexuella (EKHO)	Sweden	0.972
Homosexuelle und Giaube Wien	Austria	0.972
We For Civil Equality	Armenia	0.972
2017		
LGBT Forum Progress	Montenegro	1.000
LGBT United Macedonia	Macedonia	0.999
Pink Embassy/LGBT Pro Albania	Albania	0.999
Association informational centre LEGEBITRA	Slovenia	0.984
Insight public organization	Ukraine	0.982
Social Policies Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association - SPOD	Turkey	0.981
Pink Life Association LGBTT Solidarity (Pembe Hayat)	Turkey	0.981
Montenegrin LGBTIQ Association Queer Montenegro	Montenegro	0.981
Skeiv Ungdom - Queer Youth	Norway	0.979
SETA - LGBTI Rights in Finland	Finland	0.979
RFSL Ungdom The Swedish Youth Federation for LGBT rights	Sweden	0.979
Malta Gay Rights Movement	Malta	0.963
Accept - LGBT Cyprus	Cyprus	0.963
Trans AID - Association	Croatia	0.961
Colour Youth - Athens LGBTQ Youth Community	Greece	0.961
2020		
Inter-LGBT	France	1.000
Asociatia ACCEPT	Romania	0.999
Association informational centre LEGEBITRA	Slovenia	0.989
Pink Freak X	France	0.986
LGBT Foundation	U.K.	0.986
Lithuanian Positive Group	Lithuania	0.978
Social Policies Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation Studies Association - SPOD	Turkey	0.973
Skeiv Ungdom - Queer Youth	Norway	0.967
SETA - LGBTI Rights in Finland	Finland	0.962
Zagreb Pride Organization	Croatia	0.962
CoLeGas - Coro Lesbico, Gay e Simpatizante das ILGA Portugal	Portugal	0.961
Arcigay, Italian LGBT Association	Italy	0.957
Trans-Fuzja Foundation: Supporting Transgender People	Poland	0.954
Estonian LGBT Association	Estonia	0.954
Accept - LGBT Cyprus	Cyprus	0.952

Table 2 includes results from the longitudinal multilevel models predicting centrality scores over time (which are distributed continuously from 0 to 1). The first two models establish a baseline understanding of how centrality is changing without any political opportunity structure covariates. Models 3-5 incorporate the key political opportunity structure variables decomposed into between-country and within-country measures. Due to high collinearity, marriage laws and public opinion are included in the final models separately.

Model 1, the conditional baseline model that only includes year as a predictor, reveals increasing centrality for associations each year across the entire sample (b=.009; p<.001). In

Table 2. Longitudinal Multilevel Models Predicting LGBT Network Centrality, 2010-2020

Model	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*
Intercept	0.247***	0.116***	0.087***	0.071***	0.098***
	(0.019)	(0.017)	-0.024	(0.022)	(0.026)
Year	0.009***	0.005***	0.006***	0.006***	0.009***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Political Opportunity Structures					
Marriage Equality (Between-Country)			-0.035**		
			(0.012)		
Marriage Ban (Between-Country)			0.055+		
			(0.029)		
Marriage Equality (Within-Country)				-0.034**	
				(0.013)	
Marriage Ban (Within-Country)				0.093*	
				(0.038)	
Public Opinion (Between-Country)					-0.05+
					(0.026)
Public Opinion (Within-Country)					-0.003
					(0.028)
EU Affiliation+					
Candidiate Countries			0.059	0.091+	0.053
			(0.049)	(0.047)	(0.049)
EU-12 Countries			0.067+	0.101**	0.074+
			(0.038)	(0.034)	(0.038)
Non-Member Countries			0.060	0.079*	0.067+
			(0.039)	(0.037)	(0.038)
Association-Level Controls					
Advocacy		0.221***	0.221***	0.221***	0.22***
		(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Human Rights Orientation		0.084**	0.085**	0.083**	0.084**
		(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Age (Between-Country)		0.005	0.01*	0.01*	0.014**
		(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Age (Within-Country)		-0.001	-0.006	-0.006	-0.01*
		(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Country-Level Controls					
Domestic LGBT Orgs (Between-Country)		-0.009*	-0.008*	-0.009*	-0.006
		(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Domestic LGBT Orgs (Within-Country)		0.005	0.007	0.008	0.007
		(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Domestic Umbrella Org (Between-Country)		-0.098**	-0.061*	-0.069*	-0.054+
		(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.030)
Domestic Umbrella Org (Within-Country)		0.231***	0.187***	0.189***	0.172***
		(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.040)	(0.041)
GDP per Capita (logged) (Between-Country)		0.040	0.054*	0.043+	0.071**
		(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.028)
GDP per Capita (logged) (Within-Country)		-0.125**	-0.134**	-0.123**	-0.114*
		(0.045)	(0.044)	(0.043)	(0.046)
Democracy (Between-Country)		-0.025+	-0.027+	-0.025+	-0.014
		(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.016)
Democracy (Within-Country)		0.013	0.019	0.017	0.027
		(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.024)
Association-Year Observations	5,490	5,490	5,490	5,490	5,490
Associations	1830	1830	1830	1830	1830
Countries	45	45	45	45	45

Note: Std. errors in parentheses. + EU-15 countries are the reference category. *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

the ten-year observation period, average centrality increases .09 units (from .25 to .34—a 36.5% increase).[8] Model 2 includes all control variables which, at the country-level, are particularly focused on the resource environment. We find that ADVOCACY is significantly associated with centrality ($p<.001$). Advocacy associations typically have a higher centrality of .22 units compared to their nonadvocacy counterparts. So, although associations in the network are diverse in their mission, like sports leagues, health clinics, and faith-based groups, the core of the network indeed seems to be a transnational *advocacy* network. HUMAN RIGHTS ORIENTATION is also significantly associated with centrality ($b=.084$; $p<.01$). Neither measure of age is significant in this model.

The three country-level resource measures, in their between- and within-country estimates, suggest that greater access to resources is generally associated with less central positions. First, associations from countries with greater numbers of DOMESTIC LGBT ORGANIZATIONS (PER CAPITA) are less central within the network ($b = -.009$; $p<.05$), although there is no relative within-country difference. Second, associations from countries with a DOMESTIC MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION are also less central than associations located in countries without a domestic membership organization ($b = -.098$; $p<.051$), which suggests that the opportunity for domestic networking weakens the pull of transnational networks. However, the within-country effect is positive ($b =.231$; $p<.001$). In other words, when a country gains a domestic membership association their centrality increases. We propose potential explanations for this divergence below. Third, although associations from wealthier countries are comparatively not less central, expansions in country wealth correspond to associations moving away from the center of the network ($b= -.125$; $p<.01$). Finally, associations from countries with higher DEMOCRACY scores are associated with lower centrality scores, though the association does not reach the .05 significance threshold ($b= -.025$ $p<.10$), suggesting that associations from comparatively open political arenas are less central within the network.

With these baseline control models in mind, we turn to the ways political opportunities shape centrality within LGBT networks in models 3-5. Model 3 contrasts the between-country effects of marriage equality and marriage bans. Comparatively, associations from open political contexts are less central within the network ($b=-.0395$; $p<.01$) while those from more closed contexts are more central ($b=.055$; $p<.10$). This finding coincides with the descriptive trends in Figure 1. But how are associations responding to the relative changes within their country, as opposed to comparing their situation to those around them? Findings in model 4 are similar: after marriage equality is acted, associations become less central ($b= -.034$; $p<.01$); after a marriage ban is implemented, associations become more central ($b=.093$; $p<.05$). The coefficients are of similar magnitude for marriage equality in both models but larger for marriage bans in the within-country model. This suggests domestic associations may be slightly more responsive to when a marriage ban is implemented within their country.

Model 5 provides weak evidence that public opinion is associated with network centrality. In the comparative, between-country measure, there is some indication that associations from countries with more supportive attitudes are marginally less central within the network, though the association does not cross our significance threshold ($b= -.05$; $p<.10$). The relative change within-country is not significantly associated with centrality. While these findings are somewhat surprising given prior studies that look at spatial and temporal variation in public opinion (Flores and Park 2018; Ayoub and Garretson 2017), the nonsignificance may be due to limitations in our measurement of public opinion. We discuss this further below.

Finally, across models 3-5, we include the series of dichotomous variables indicating a country's position vis-à-vis the European Union. Though significance levels change across models, the patters are consistent. Compared to the original EU-15, associations in candidate, EU-12, and nonmember countries are, on average, more central within the network. This is finding is highly robust, both in terms of effect size and statistical significance, for the EU-12 countries, corroborating prior scholarship (Ayoub 2016). EU-12 countries have a different relationship with the EU than their EU-15 counterparts: The EU has more influence over the national politics of the former. LGBT associations from EU-12 countries, therefore, may be

more encouraged to use supranational institutions to cultivate transnational connections relative to those in the EU-15. Though the significance threshold is not met, likely due to few observations within these categories and insufficient statistical power, associations from candidate and nonmember countries are similarly more central than associations from EU-15 countries.

DISCUSSION

In this study, we examine the structure of transnational LGBT networks in Europe by attending to changes in political opportunity structures from 2010 to 2020. Though prior research has illuminated the effects of transnational advocacy networks, less attention has been paid to the structure of the network itself or the factors that influence whether and how organizations are connected (Hafner-Burton et al. 2009; Murdie 2014). Using longitudinal multilevel and network analyses, our article addresses this persistent limitation. In contrast to prior studies, which find central positions held by more powerful actors located in Western Europe (Osterbiur and Kiel 2017; Hughes et al. 2018; Murdie 2014.), we find a growing, dynamic network in which associations in countries with closed political opportunities that are newly oriented toward the EU are most likely to be central. In other words, centrality within the network largely stems from Keck and Sikkink's (1998) boomerang pattern. Below, we outline the contributions of this research and how future research can overcome present limitations.

Our analysis reveals three important ways that political opportunity structures influence domestic LGBT networks. First, taking advantage of the multilevel structure of the data and the ability to differentiate between- and within-country effects (Roberts 2019), we find that policy changes in terms of marriage equality and marriage bans explain LGBT network centrality. Crossnational and within-country temporal comparisons show that associations located in more open contexts, i.e., those with marriage equality and without marriage bans, are less central within the network while those in closed contexts are more. Our measure of eigenvector centrality privileges ties that "pull" an association closer to the core of the network—a tie to a deeply connected member is given more weight than a tie to a peripheral member. Consequently, our findings suggest that associations in closed (or closing) contexts aren't necessarily just increasing the absolute number of external ties, but may be strategically networking with associations that are better positioned to assist them. However, as we note below, we cannot distinguish the directionality of these ties. While domestic associations may be seeking ties, external partners may also be searching for associations that appear to need assistance.

Second, associations in countries that are newer to the EU, the EU-13 as well as candidate countries, are more likely to be central. Given the historic role of associations in EU-15 countries in developing European transnational networks, it is surprising they are not more central. However, European LGBT politics is fundamentally intertwined with the European Union and processes of Europeanization (Ayoub and Paternotte 2014; Slootmaeckers et al. 2016). As countries strive to become more "European," they may be more influenced by the pro-LGBT politics of the EU than countries that are already established members (Slootmaeckers et al. 2016). The centrality of associations in EU-13 and candidate countries relative to EU-15 states also highlights the importance of transnational processes rather than domestic processes in understanding LGBT politics within these countries (Ayoub 2015 2016; Swimelar 2017). Candidate countries may be particularly shaped by transnational processes: By expressing interest to joining the EU, a country signals its openness to civil society pressures that are in line with EU norms and goals (Swimelar 2017).

Third, we find that dynamic political opportunity structures yield dynamic network structures. Our analysis reveals a highly unstable European LGBT network. Given that domestic associations are responding to changing conditions, the network should reflect changing political contexts. The decade under investigation, 2010 to 2020, is one in which LGBT politics were politically salient, contentious, and in constant flux (Page 2019; Paternotte 2018). Consequently, as highlighted in table 1, associations occupying the most central positions, those traditionally

viewed as the most powerful in the network (Bonacich 1987), don't hold such positions for long. Though our modeling is not causal, statistical patterns suggest this may indeed be the result of these changing political opportunities. Yet, despite these dynamic conditions, network density and diversity is continuously increasing—especially as associations from Eastern Europe and Eurasia get incorporated. This geographic diversity lends legitimacy to network actors in claiming their work is helping to advance those in anti-LGBT contexts (Ciplet 2019). Since density and diversity are critical for network effectiveness (Keck and Sikkink 1998), the increase in both features may help explain the notable efficacy of the transnational LGBT movement within Europe (Ayoub and Paternotte 2014).

Beyond political opportunity structures, this study also contributes new insights into how to think about centrality—both what it means for individual actors and for the network as a whole. An actor's centrality is often conceptualized as coinciding with power, influence, and prestige within a network. But classic network theorists conceptualize power as "defined by [a node's] persistent relations to other nodes," (Hafner-Burton et al. 2009:570). Persistence is key to understanding network power. Our analysis, however, demonstrates that the *most* central are actually the *least* persistent—understandable given the volatility in LGBT politics from 2010 to 2020 across Europe. To what extent, then, can a central node set the agenda, influence resource distributions, and challenge hegemonic ideas about around gender and sexuality if their central position is fleeting and changes according to domestic opportunity structures?

Instead, we suggest that actor centrality may also be conceptualized across two continuums: outward-orientation and precarity. While seeking ties is a precondition for being part of a network, some associations within the same network may be more outwardly oriented than others. COC Netherlands and RSFL in Sweden, for example, are explicit in viewing partnerships with those in troubling situations as central to their work—going back decades. A high level of outward focus and viewing transnational connections as important toward fulfilling one's mission could generate ties and greater centrality. But this outward orientation may be conditional on a second feature: precarity. Associations in open contexts may be less outwardly oriented because they have less to gain from international connections. As the consistent boomerang patterns reveal, associations in more precarious positions are more likely to be central. This centrality can emerge both from associations intentionally seeking out ties or external allies recognizing these associations need assistance.

Centrality may also signal where the network, on the whole, is focused at a given point time. Around 2010, for example, KPH in Poland was most central within the network. Given the precarious domestic environment, but new entrance into the EU, KPH wanted external assistance and the broader European movement, itself, was focused on these events too (Ayoub 2013, 2016; O'Dwyer 2012). However, after Poland entered the EU, KPH's centrality waned, and the broader transnational network's attention shifted. In the latter-2010s, the Balkans became a site of continuous interest as new campaigns over marriage equality, EU expansion, and pride efforts drew international attention and external support (Ayoub et al. 2021; Kalezic and Brkovic 2016; Swimelar 2017). Identifying the most central actors, then, can indicate where current priorities are within the network. In this sense, by capturing the attention of external allies and influencing their focus, centrality may employ some level of power—even if momentarily.

Together, these dynamic processes question how transnational LGBT network formation mirror and respond to conventional lines of stratification within the international system. Countries with closed political contexts tend to also be those with less geopolitical influence (with the notable exception of Russia). While prior research has found that structural positions of power tend to be held by associations from Western Europe (Hughes et al. 2018; Osterbur and Kiel 2017), we find that associations in Balkan and Eurasian countries are more central. While theories like boomerang effects (Keck and Sikkink 1998) can explain how domestic associations respond to threats by seeking international allies, this is one of the first studies to empirically demonstrate how the boomerang effect manifests in network structure. Importantly, the analysis suggests that the European LGBT network may be responsive to those in more

precarious positions and perhaps challenging hegemonic power dynamics (Evans 2000). Results also suggest that if public policies were to become more restrictive, LGBT associations would be able to embed themselves deeply within the network to gain access to partnerships and resources to help improve conditions back home. However, more research is needed to understand the structure of the network indeed results in a space with a relatively flat hierarchy.

Conceptualizing the relationship between network centrality and power as it relates to precarity, dynamism, and outward orientation may also help explain networking patterns in other issue areas. For example, within the movement for climate justice, there is significant attention on island nations like the Fiji and the Marshall Islands (Kirsch 2020). This is because of the *precarious* environmental situation these nations face. If this analysis were to be re-created in other social movement contexts—the climate justice movement, for instance—we may see associations from island nations being most central given their precarity and associated outward orientation. Associations in environmentally precarious countries may garner "power" by bringing momentary network attention to their cause. However, future qualitative research should examine how central associations, especially ones that change dramatically over time, understand and experience this structural position and motivations for their level of engagement.

Finally, our departure from previous empirical studies of network power and centrality may be due to the scale of our analysis and the close alignment between theory and measurement. Previous studies of transnational networks have primarily measure network formation at the INGO level, which is why "network analysis has not yet made significant contributions to the study of TANs [transnational advocacy networks] and NGOs" (Hafner-Burton et al 2009: 576). Many of these studies compile data from the *Yearbook of International Organizations*, an important resource that catalogs INGOs and their country affiliations (Smith et al. 2017). As our study highlights, however, two issues arise with this database. Theories of political opportunity structures, indeed many of the qualitative studies on which these theories are based, pertain primarily to domestic associations rather than INGOs themselves—meaning *YIO* may not be able to capture these nuanced, local processes. Second, *YIO* creates a binary coding scheme indicating whether or not an INGO is connected to a country—masking the degree of connection. For example, while ILGA has connections to France and Montenegro, nearly all associations in Montenegro have membership in ILGA while only a small percentage of French associations have membership. Inattention to the thickness of connections to a country, in turn, may over-report Western European connections to INGOs and under-report connections to other regions. We overcome these data challenges by developing a vast, original dataset comprised of domestic associations and their transnational connections via INGOs (though we certainly may not account for all domestic associations). Cognizant of the hurdles to providing a richer measure of domestic ties to the transnational space, we encourage researchers to work toward alleviating this consistent limitation.

Limitations and Opportunities for Future Research

The analysis above point to several important directions for future research. First, the observed networks are produced by examining just one type of relationship binding domestic LGBT associations—INGO membership. We prioritize INGOs because they are central to international politics (Boli and Thomas 1999; Meyer et al. 1997; Tallberg et al. 2013) and because INGOs are fundamentally network-weaving institutions (Ingram and Torfason 2010). However, future research could look at other types of relationships between associations, such as financial ties, shared lobbying campaigns, or website hyperlinks (see Osterbur and Kiel 2017). Examining different types of relationships will provide a more robust understanding of this important transnational space and how these relationships facilitate outcomes.

Second, by projecting a one-mode network originally based on a bipartite structure, associations-by-INGOs, this limits our analysis' research design (Everett and Borgatti 2013). For example, we are unable to account for characteristics of the INGO themselves through pro-

jection mapping like the cost of membership dues that may prevent associations from joining. Additionally, we are unable to account for directionality within these relationships like whether domestic associations are actively seeking out participation within INGOs are INGOs are actively recruiting and seeking out members. Though this distinction does not influence the structure of the network, it does have implications for how processes and dynamics within the network operate. If INGOs are seeking out members in closed contexts to appear more legitimate (Ciplet 2019), for instance, domestic associational centrality may be symbolic and devoid of the structural benefits from this position.

Third, while the analysis above prioritizes the role of political opportunities, there are other pathways that may explain network centrality. In 2017, for instance, LGBT Forum Progress in Montenegro was most central within the network. This position may be because in 2016, it received grant from the U.S. Embassy—enabling transnational networking. Indeed, many of our resource control variables are significant, suggesting that resources are also critical to understanding network structure and degree of embeddedness within it. More data on association-level resources and funding can help advance our understandings of how resources nuance and condition our findings.

Finally, future research could examine network processes in other substantive areas to see whether other movements corroborate boomerang theory as well as similar volatility during critical periods. Using this research design as a template, future scholars could assemble and analyze datasets on entire populations of different types of associations. For example, the years leading to the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing was an important period for women's organizations (Ferree and Tripp 2006; Paxton and Hughes 2015). Especially around the 1995 conference, the composition of women's networks changed as women from the Global South and lesbians pushed to make themselves part of the agenda (Wilson 1996; Ferree and Tripp 2006). For environmentalists, the 2016 Paris Agreement also signaled a new period for climate politics and, like the EU for LGBT rights, makes the politics of scale shift ever more salient (Balboa 2018; Finger and Princen 2013). As different movements come under threat during the present historical moment, these would all suggest an increase in transnational networking but especially by those most impacted.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we draw from an original dataset of 3,103 domestic lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) to examine network processes in Europe. Results from our network and multilevel analyses reveal an unstable network that is centrally comprised of associations located in adverse political contexts. More specifically, advocacy associations located in adverse political contexts that have recently joined the European Union are more likely to occupy central positions in the network. In other words, organizations in closed domestic contexts have an incentive to seek out and work at the transnational level. In Europe, a highly networked transnational space, there are more opportunities for this type of scale shift. Importantly, it is not always the usual suspects/power-players that are most central. Furthermore, although the structure of the network suggests LGBT organizations are countering traditional, hegemonic lines of stratification, the instability of central position undermines widely held assumptions about the relationship between power and centrality within these networks.

NOTES

[1]Though comprehensive, there is still the possibility we do not include all organizations, especially those that are informal, smaller, or purposively clandestine.

[2] See appendix for list of LGBT INGOs. INGO membership data was collected in June and July of each timepoint. For the 2017 and 2020 networks, we collected membership data in real time. For the 2010 network, data was collected

retroactively. To do so, we used Google's "Wayback Machine," a validated, digital archive of websites that captures snapshots of webpages every few years (Murphy, Hashim, and O'Connor 2007). We searched LGBT INGO website snapshots in 2010 to determine membership. To assess the validity of this approach, we compared ILGA-Europe's 2010 website to their 2010 membership roster in previous reports. The two sources matched, providing confidence that using archived websites is appropriate.

[3]While mutual membership grants members several opportunities for shared engagements which are also encouraged by INGOs, we are presently unable to determine the frequency of interactions between associations.

[4]Degree centrality, or the count of ties to other actors, was also used. Results were similar.

[5] Scores are made available in different pooled waves: 2000-2003, 2004-2008, 2009-2013, and 2014-2017. This, unfortunately, creates different lags between the measure and centrality: two-year lag prior to 2010; four-year lag prior to 2017; and a three-year lag prior to 2020. Additionally, the pooled estimates from 2009-2013 and 2014-2017 overlap with the dependent variable from the prior timepoint. This is not ideal. However, the GAI is presently the only data source that allows us to have opinion data for all countries in our sample. Therefore, interpretation must be cautious. We acknowledge and are transparent about this clear limitation.

[6]As mentioned, other European institutions certainly matter. We operationalize a country's relationship to this transnational space via the European Union, however, given the extensive work by Ayoub (2015, 2016) and others (Swimelar 2017) documenting the importance of the EU, in particular, in shaping domestic LGBT politics.

[7]On occasion, there are nested situations in which INGOs are members of other INGOs. At present, we do not allow INGOs to appear in the data as member-organizations. Only distinctly domestic associations are incorporated within the dependent variable. Moreover, we exclude INGOs from counts in total domestic LGBT associations. In other words, INGOs only appear in the data as establishing connections between domestic associations.

[8] Examining the random effects components of this unconditional model reveals how much variation in the dependent variable is explained at each level: 50% of the variation occurs across repeated measures of the same association; 40% of the variation occurs across associations within the same country; and the remaining 10% of variation occurs across averages between countries. In other words, though we are focused on the within- and between-country effects related to political opportunity structures, there is still 50% of variation left to be explained by changing dynamics within each association—demonstrating a level of agency relative to the structural environmental components.

APPENDIX

Table A-1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	*Obs*	*Mean/ Proportion*	*Std. Dev.*	*Min*	*Max*
Continuous Variables					
Public Opinion	5,490	6.56	1.13	1.7	8.9
Democracy	5,490	6.68	0.95	1.5	7
GDP per Capita (logged)	5,490	10.46	0.67	6.87	11.65
Domestic LGBT Associations (per 1,000,000)	5,490	5.05	3.23	0.11	27.21
Associational Age	5,490	16.98	12.88	0	119
Categorical Variables					
Marriage Equality	5,490	0.52			
Marriage Ban	5,490	0.08			
Domestic Membership Association	5,490	0.73			
Advocacy	5,490	0.49			
Human Rights Orientation	5,490	0.04			
EU Affiliation					
Candidate	168	0.0306			
EU-15	4,464	0.8131			
EU-12	354	0.0645			
Nonmember	504	0.0918			

Table A-2. List of LGBT INGOs with European Membership

Organization
A Wider Bridge
Asociación Internacional de Familias por la Diversidad Sexual
Association of Nordic and Pol-Balt LGBTQ Student Organizations - ANSO
BABELNOR
CentroAmerica Diferente
Contact Group
Égides - Alliance internationale francophone
ERA - LGBTI Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkey
Eurasian Coalition on Male Health
European Forum of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Christian Groups
European Gay and Lesbian Sport Federation
European LGBT Police Association
European LGBTI Chamber of Commerce
European Pride
European Same-Sex Dance Association - ESSDA
Federation Gay Games
GALA Choruses
Gay and Lesbian International Sport Association
Gay Hockey International
Global Network of Rainbow Catholics
Global Queer Muslim Network
ILGA-Europe
International Association of Gay and Lesbian Country Western Dance Clubs
International Association of Gay and Lesbian Martial Artists
International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs
International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics
International Gay and Lesbian Football Association
International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association
International Gay Rodeo Association
International Gay Rugby
International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association - ILGA
International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organization - IGLYO
Interpride/ International Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Pride Coordinators
LEGATO - Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Choirs in Europe
National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce - NGLCC
Network of European LGBT Families' Associations - NELFA
Organization Intersex International
Pink Hockey - International Gay & Lesbian Field Hockey Federation
Post-Soviet Trans Coalition
Queer European Asylum Network
Regional Network Against Homophobia
Southeastern European Queer Network - SEEQ
The Commonwealth Equality Network
Transgender Europe
World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Jews
Wrestlers without Borders

Table A-3. Total Associations per Country in Sample

Country	*Total*	*Country*	*Total*
Albania	4	Latvia	4
Armenia	4	Lithuania	6
Austria	22	Luxembourg	2
Azerbaijan	1	Macedonia	4
Belarus	9	Malta	3
Belgium	96	Moldova	2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5	Montenegro	2
Bulgaria	11	Netherlands	81
Croatia	9	Norway	16
Cyprus	4	Poland	17
Czech Republic	13	Portugal	32
Denmark	26	Romania	6
Estonia	13	Russia	32
Finland	31	Serbia	29
France	282	Slovakia	9
Georgia	4	Slovenia	8
Germany	146	Spain	123
Greece	11	Sweden	50
Hungary	18	Switzerland	51
Iceland	8	Turkey	16
Ireland	62	Ukraine	25
Italy	119	United Kingdom	405
Kyrgyzstan	9		

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