

LGBTQI migrants living in the Global North

FACT SHEET



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LGBTQI migrants living elsewhere in the Global North

Out of 50 publications included in this section, most focus on LGBTQI refugees and/or refugee claimants, with an increase in publications about this topic in the past five years. Most participant samples across studies included people who migrated from a range of origins (i.e. African, Caribbean and Middle Eastern countries). Although the majority of the literature is based in the UK, publications were also located in the Republic of Ireland, Scandinavia, Netherlands, Turkey and Australia.

LGBTQI refugees and the refugee claimant process

The use of 'particular social group' as a category to process SOGIE-based refugee claims appears to be inconsistent across countries and between decision makers. The primary factors in which refugee claims are decided upon include (1) the credibility of the claimant (2) Western stereotypes about sexuality and (3) country of origin information. The second major theme in this section include the multiple forms of discrimination and social isolation faced by LGBTQI refugees due to their refugee status and/or sexual / gender identity. LGBTQI refugees often reported difficulties in maintaining relationships with families and community due to fear of rejection, while navigating difficult mental health impacts of pre-migration trauma and post-migration barriers. Positive experiences were also reported by those who accessed support groups and specialized services.

LGBTQI newcomers, immigrants, precarious status and detention

Although there are very few articles focused on newcomers and/or immigrants, one study situates the migration of gay men from Cameroon to France within a historical colonial relationship between France and Cameroon that shaped contemporary political, cultural and economic ties between the two countries. Another study suggests that LGBTQI youth newcomers experience a significant amount of social isolation, as there is a major lack programs and services that address their particular needs. Also, living in detention has a detrimental impact on the mental health of LGBTQI refugees and increases their exposure to homophobic and transphobic violence from detention staff and detainees. LGBTQI undocumented people are particularly vulnerable to poverty and lack of employment, but may still view their lives as better than in their countries of origin.

Trans migrants

There were only 5 studies that included trans and intersex people and only 2 studies that focused solely on trans realities. In the UK, it was found that detention staff were unlikely to protect trans detainees from harm and healthcare staff were insufficiently trained. Experiences of physical abuse appeared to be an accepted part of the lifestyle of Brazilian trans undocumented migrants engaging in sex work experienced physical abuse in Spain, although the economic benefits of this work were seen to outweigh the potential dangers. Trans migrants were also able to mobilize a transnational network to migrate, access resources and trans-specific health care.

Key Publications

- Bach, J. (2013). Assessing transgender asylum claims. *Forced Migration Review*, 42, 34-36. Available at: www.fmreview.org/sogi
- Eboko, Fred et Awondo, Patrick (2013). Homo-mobilités, du Cameroun vers la France. 96, 272.
- Micro Rainbow International (2013). *Poverty, sexual orientation and refugees in the UK*. London: Micro Rainbow International, CIC.
- Millbank, J. (2009). « From Discretion to Disbelief : Recent Trends in Refugee Determinations on the Basis of Sexual Orientation in Australia and the United Kingdom », *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 13 (2-3) : 391-414.