

# LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND MIGRANT: A EUROPEAN STORY OF DISCRIMINATION AND EMPOWERMENT



The “Epsilon” project is funded by Erasmus+  
KA2 under Grant Agreement  
2016-1-UK01-KA204-024317

[www.epsilonproject.eu](http://www.epsilonproject.eu)

## **IARS Publications**

14 Dock Offices, London, SE16 2XU, United Kingdom

[contact@iars.org.uk](mailto:contact@iars.org.uk) | [www.iars.org.uk](http://www.iars.org.uk)

IARS Publications an independent publisher specialising in social and political sciences. IARS Publications is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and has a non-profit mission. IARS Publications is supported by The IARS International Institute, which is a leading international NGO with a charitable mission to give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society.

Published in the UK by IARS Publications

© 2018 IARS Publications

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First published July 2018

Graphic design: Rita Seneca

© 2018 selection and editorial matter, Theo Gavrielides; individual chapters, the contributors

The right of Theo Gavrielides to be identified as the author of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from IARS Publications. You must not circulate this book in any other binding or cover and you must impose the same condition on any acquirer.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Database right IARS Publications (maker)

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

ISBN 978-1-907641-54-1

### **AUTHORS:**

**Maria Cantiello**, Anziani e non solo società cooperativa sociale

**Jolanda Elferink**, Movisie

**Michelle Emmen**, Movisie

**Michalis Ioannou**, CARDET

**Maija Linnala**, The IARS International Institute

**Eleni Sakellariou**, KMOP Social Action and Innovation Centre

**Manuela Tagliani**, Anziani e non solo società cooperativa sociale

### **Editor:**

Theo Gavrielides, Founder and Director, The IARS International Institute

# LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND MIGRANT: A EUROPEAN STORY OF DISCRIMINATION AND EMPOWERMENT

## Executive summary and National reports

written in English, Greek,  
Italian, and Dutch



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

AUTHORS	2
THE PROJECT PARTNERSHIP	7
INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8

9

## COMPARATIVE CHAPTER

INTRODUCTION	14
KEY COMPARATIVE FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH	14
KEY COMPARATIVE FINDINGS FROM THE FACE-TO-FACE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMME	15
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	19

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

UNITED KINGDOM	21
GREECE	26
ITALY	31
NETHERLANDS	37
CYPRUS	43

## NATIONAL REPORTS

UNITED KINGDOM	50
GREECE	73
ITALY	87

---

NETHERLANDS	104
-------------	-----

---

CYPRUS	131
--------	-----

---

## ANNEXES

HANDBOOK FOR TRAINERS	143
-----------------------	-----

---

THE ONLINE COURSE FOR PROFESSIONALS AND VOLUNTEERS	174
--	-----

---

CASE STUDIES	176
--------------	-----

---

COURSE CERTIFICATES	179
---------------------	-----

---

REPORT ON THE OPENING CONFERENCE IN ATHENS	183
--	-----

---

REPORT ON THE CLOSING CONFERENCE IN LONDON	192
--	-----

---



# THE PROJECT PARTNERSHIP



**The IARS**  
**International Institute**  
Community-led solutions for a fairer society

**THE IARS INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE, UK**  
Project Co-ordinator



KINDLING A BETTER **WORLD**

**FAMILY AND CHILDCARE CENTRE (KMOP), GREECE**  
Project Partner



kennis en aanpak van  
sociale vraagstukken

**MOVISIE, NETHERLANDS**  
Project Partner



**ANS**  
Anziani e non solo  
società cooperativa sociale

**ANZIANI E NON SOLO, ITALY**  
Project Partner



**CARDET**

**CARDET, CYPRUS**  
Project Partner

# Introduction and Acknowledgements

Dr. Theo Gavrielides, Epsilon Project Coordinator  
Founder and Director of the IARS International Institute

## The Epsilon project

The IARS International Institute and the Epsilon partnerships are very pleased to release the findings of the work that we conducted over the last year impacting on some of Europe's most marginalised communities. According to the UNHCR, over 1.1 million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe in 2015. Last year, this flow continued at a rate of 55,000 per month. Violence at the collective and personal level is the key driver that forces these individuals to abandon their homes. While doing so, their basic needs and human rights are compromised. This also includes their dignity and respect, and being free to exercise their sexual orientation, have a partner from the same sex and develop a family life. It also includes exercising this right without being killed, harmed or bullied.

However, the reality is somehow different for a considerable proportion of refugees and migrants. Under EU law, individuals persecuted based on their sexual orientation and gender identity qualify for refugee status. For example, the Qualification Directive (2011/95/EU), defines the criteria for international protection. Therein, it expressly mentions sexual orientation and gender identity as one of the possible reasons for persecution (Article 10). The right to private and family life in the European Convention on Human Rights as well as several Directives and Recommendations make it clear that anyone living or residing in the EU should enjoy similar rights independently of their sexual orientation. The European Parliament EU (2015/2325(INI)) also called on all Member States to adopt asylum procedures and endeavour to develop training programmes, which are sensitive to the needs of Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI)<sup>1</sup> persons.

We know from research that LGBTI migrants and asylum seekers already face multiple forms of discrimination. We also know that public authorities and migration/ asylum procedures are often not equipped to deal with their particular situation. This e-book is written within the framework of the [Epsilon project](#), a two year Erasmus+ (KA2) co-funded programme coordinated by the [IARS International Institute](#) (UK) and delivered in partnership with Anziani e Non Solo (Italy), Movisie (Netherlands), KMOP (Greece) and CARDET (Cyprus).

Epsilon is responding to two current and urgent educational needs in Europe i.e. (1) the rise in migrant and refugee numbers (2) the persistent inequality and persecution of LGBTI individuals. Combined together these two characteristics make LGBTI migrants and refugees one of the most vulnerable groups in modern Europe. Our project aims to help address this issue by increasing the knowledge, skills and awareness of all those adult professionals and volunteers who come in contact with them.

The partners come from key locations in Europe where the two cross-cutting themes of migration and LGBTI discrimination are particularly acute. While we will look at Italy, Greece and Cyprus as locations where not much progress has been made for LGBTI rights, we will explore the Netherlands and the UK as member states

---

<sup>1</sup> Epsilon uses the term LGBTI throughout, even though the measure or policy in place may only concern some categories of persons included in this group. Virtually no information could be collected on intersex asylum seekers.



that have introduced progressive practices and policies in education and training for gay issues and rights. At the same time, Greece, Italy and Cyprus are case studies for migration flow.

The Epsilon partnership believes that the law alone cannot help LGBTI immigrants and asylum seekers whether this is applied at the EU or national levels. Trained as a lawyer, and having observed the deficiencies of the law myself, I have come to conclude that any legal or policy initiative must be complemented with civil action particularly when it comes to education and awareness raising. Therefore, Epsilon will generate on-the-ground, national and local educational initiative targeted at adult professionals and volunteers who work directly with LGBTI migrants and refugees.

This complementary work is intended to have an EU wide impact while being evidence based and user-led. To this end, we constructed educational tools that are based on the voices and real needs of LGBTI migrants and refugees. Through these voices, learning took place in the form of face-to-face and online. This learning was promoted both internally (between partners) and externally (nationally and EU wide).

## Epsilon Results

Over the last few years, the partnership has worked hard to produce cutting-edge, innovative results and intellectual outputs that would assist our ultimate objectives. As a first step, the Epsilon partnership built the evidence base for its remaining activities including its training and educational courses and tools. Therefore, we produced **an e-book** (Intellectual Output 1) in two versions:

- ✓ a longer version with five different chapters written by the partners in their native languages and reflecting their findings in their own countries.
- ✓ a consolidated version with the executive summaries of all chapters written in English.

The chapters were written following primary and secondary research that was carried out in the participating countries. The secondary research focused on a mixture of resources that are local to the partners and written in their own language. This makes this e-book unique given that very little has been done for research in Greek, Italian and Dutch. The findings of the national research projects and chapters are then brought into one for comparative learning and the identification of clear steps for developing the Epsilon educational tools.

Using the results from the first e-book, Epsilon developed an innovative, evidence-based, user-led training methodology and contents targeting professionals and volunteers working in services for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in order to raise their awareness and sensitivity to the needs of all those with LGBTI background. The educational tools then enabled the professionals to identify these LGBTI groups' most current and urgent needs some even reaching on issues of survival, dignity and respect. It also helped them challenge their own biases.

It is intended that the results of Epsilon will continue to:

- ✓ reach widely outside of the participating countries through free, online access Europe-wide
- ✓ being delivered after the project's funding is finished
- ✓ reach groups in society that would not have been otherwise able to receive the face-to-face package and in print material
- ✓ reward and formally accredit its target audiences.

## User Scrutiny – the LGBTI Advisory Board

One of the core principles of the IARS International Institute is user involvement both in the design and implementation of projects. This belief is shared by all the Epsilon partners and in line with our ethos we have

set up an [Advisory Board](#) made up of LGBTI migrants/ refugees, alongside academics and professionals working in the field. A key strength of the Epsilon partnership is our ability to make the connections between users and the experts and we will be using this to help guide what we do going forward.

The board has been drawn together from all five project partners, and interacts with the project digitally through a closed Facebook group and Skype meetings. Currently the advisory board is made up of 18 individuals from across 5 countries and includes academics, psychologists, social workers, students and LGBT campaigners. A key role for the Board is to work with the project's partner organisations to shape the research and training that will be developed throughout the project.

“In the aftermath of the refugee crisis that Europe is facing, I believe it is essential to have a close look to one of the most vulnerable category, namely LGBT refugees. I decided to participate in the Epsilon project to give my personal contribution in order to better understand the instances and the needs of LGBT refugees, and how we can implement good practices.”

(Epsilon Advisory Board Member)

## Concluding reflections

From the outset, we confirmed our assumption that there is a dearth of research and evidence-based knowledge about LGBTI migrants and refugees in Europe. This is not only true in relation to their needs and realities but also their size and composition as a society group. For example, there are no official statistics on the number of asylum claims based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Furthermore, only a few EU Member States have specific national guidelines for interviewing LGBTI persons, while most migration and asylum processes are not adequately adjusted to cater for issues impacting or resulting from individuals' LGBTI status.

It has also become apparent from the testimonies of the LGBTI migrants and refugees whom we interviewed that the most pervasive and indeed worrying form of discrimination that they face is when it is insidious and concealed. This makes it hard to detect and challenge through the law or education. For example, we have found that the UK government's Visa and Immigration (UKIV) department was, as one respondent described it, 'passively homophobic' due to the impact of a perceived default position that claims were being made on false grounds. Respondents commented that UKVI has very little awareness of the situation in claimants' home countries and that the Home Office thought it was acceptable to send LGBTI people back to countries where they are likely to be victims of violence and abuse.

One of the main findings of the UK research was that LGBTI migrants often feel more comfortable seeking support from organisations set up to serve the LGBTI community rather immigration specialists and public services. To accommodate this many LGBTI organisations are operating in areas where they were not set up to do, putting a strain on their time and resources. It has also led to recognition that immigration specialist organisations need to work harder to be more welcoming to LGBTI migrants. We have also found that home country networks often provide vital support for asylum seekers and other migrants on arrival, however for many LGBTI migrants to draw on this support means a continual denial of an essential part of who they are due to the fear of discrimination. As such, supporting LGBTI migrants to gain the skills necessary, such as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, in order for them to make broader connections with other networks has been seen as a vital. However, concerns were also raised that certain sections of the 'gay scene' could also be intolerant causing LGBTI migrants to face further possible discrimination.

In Cyprus, the situation of LGBTI migrants and refugees is rather blurred. Statistics about them, or even LGBTI Cypriots, are missing from the annual state statistics sets. However, we do know that the number of young, non-EU migrants is growing in Cyprus (Republic of Cyprus Statistical Service, 2015). The literature review has also shown that the Cypriot society is one that has a long way to go to be considered tolerant to diversity, with evidence of discrimination on the basis of race as well as sexual orientation and gender identity (European Commission, 2015). Our interviews have showed that LGBTI migrants are reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation to their own communities based in Cyprus. Migrant support groups are often church-based,

which makes revealing of identity an even more challenging task. Some migrant LGBTI organised groups exist, but these are very scarce. Nevertheless, LGBTI migrants feel great support from the relevant Cypriot Civil Society organisations, and important suggestions were collected to guide the next steps of the Epsilon Project.

Similarly to Cyprus, the number of LGBTI people in Greece cannot be specified, because the data are considered as “personal” and are protected by the Hellenic Data Protection Authority (Ελληνική Αρχή Προστασίας Δεδομένων Προσωπικού Χαρακτήρα). Very little data was found in scientific literature focusing on LGBTI immigrants and refugees in Greece, which is reasonable, given that the phenomenon of immigration is recent in modern Greece, while the arrival of refugees and immigrants in Greece intensified over the past two years.

Moreover, the majority of LGBTI people are afraid of revealing their sexual orientation, as the societal attitude towards homosexuality in Greece is quite hostile. Although in recent years the Greek society has started accepting LGBTI people to a greater extent and anti-discrimination legislation protecting them exists, the people in question constitute one of the most vulnerable social groups and continue to become victims of an imperfect legal status including serious oversights and experience all forms of discrimination against the right to equal treatment (Πετροπούλου, 2011). Discrimination experienced by LGBTI people is evident not only in their private (personal and family) life, but also in public life (professional, educational, social). According to the Greek Ombudsman (Συνήγορος του Πολίτη, 2014), people with “different” sexual orientation often experience humiliating behaviour from superiors or colleagues (harassment). A number of interviews indicated that LGBTI immigrants experience multiple discrimination, because, in a society where Greek citizens have the absolute majority, they experience double stigma as LGBTI and as “foreigners”.

According to the fieldwork LGBTI immigrants and refugees in Greece feel much safer and comfortable compared to their home countries, in particular when they come from countries where their life is in danger either because of their sexual orientation or due to a prevailing state of war in countries such as Syria. Obviously, conditions in Greece are not perfect for LGBTI people but in comparison with their countries, LGBTI immigrants and refugees feel much better. We also found out that professionals who work with LGBTI immigrants and refugees have increased educational needs. To begin with, the growing need for training related to gender identity and sexual orientation was cited. Next, it is important that professionals are trained around issues concerning immigrants and refugees’ culture as well as how they perceive the concept of LGBTI and traditional gender stereotypes prevailing in their countries. In addition, the need for training on issues regarding LGBTI rights was reported, because there is poor knowledge not only from the relevant services but also from organisations assisting refugees and immigrants. Special emphasis was placed on the need for training volunteers as well as support staff.

The research in Netherlands revealed several good practices of support, and sometimes acceptance of LGBTI migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. The Dutch respondents felt supported by these good practices. Examples are the Cocktail buddy project, Transvisie (for transgender refugees), LGBTI Asylum support, the Secret Garden foundation, Veilige Haven (Safe Haven), Respect2Love Academy, Queer Welfare, the Prisma group and the ‘Pink Police Network’ of the Police Department. Movisie and Pharos are also national institutes that provide advice and knowledge to professionals and volunteers working with LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees. The Dutch Council for Refugees (Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland) is an advocate for the interests of refugees and asylum seekers in the Netherlands. We also identified an innovative practice, “the Rainbow Refugees NL App”. It is the collaborative output of many organisations aiming to provide descriptive and up-to-date information via handsets and online. However, six of the seven LGBTI people who we interviewed experienced little to no support when talking about their LGBTI identity in the asylum procedure. In the shelters, none of the respondents were open about their LGBTI identity.

Finally, Italy seems to be far behind in catering the needs of LGBTI migrants and refugees. Many NGOs complained about severe human rights violations towards asylum seekers in general, such as mistreatments, violence and sexual humiliations (Amnesty International, 2016) For example, when it comes to LGBTI asylum seekers, it is pointed out that the practices adopted do not devote enough attention on filling the application by which the migrant has to declare the reasons of his intention to ask for international protection: time and attention needed in order to correctly inform the people upon the possibility to ask, for example, for asylum because of persecutions based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Moreover, we found out that mi-

grants willing to ask for protection often get inadequate information due to both linguistic and cultural barriers. Often support workers are not able to explain what it means to ask for asylum for persecutions based on sexual orientation. The field research also confirmed the relational difficulties with the originating communities of migrants, whilst the role of LGBTI organizations is still limited both in terms of specific support given to migrant and as a place of socialization, where they can feel free to express themselves.

Overall, it seems that none of the Epsilon participating countries makes adequate preventative provisions for LGBTI migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and this includes guidelines on provision of specific healthcare and special accommodation facilities for LGBTI persons. Training on specific LGBTI vulnerabilities is provided either randomly and inconsistently or not at all. Relevant NGOs may provide some information leaflets, but usually not in all needed languages. It is also clear that due to fear of persecution and stigmatisation, most incidents of discrimination, violence or harassment are not reported and are not recorded as such.

## Acknowledgements

The project involved a huge amount of work that I had the pleasure of coordinating (but not delivering). Therefore, the credit must go to all the partners, namely Anziani e Non Solo (Italy), Movisie (Netherlands), KMOP (Greece) and CARDET (Cyprus). I am particularly grateful to Rita Seneca for her designing work not just for this book but for all Epsilon's outputs including its e-books, logo, website and newsletters.

I am also grateful to my own team at IARS for working hard to ensure that the work is done according to our user-led mission and indeed our founding values of power sharing, equality and restorative justice. Many thanks also go to Erasmus+ for entrusting us to carry out this cutting edge and innovative project as well as all the donors and supporters including the LGBT community. I also want to thank the LGBTI User Advisory Board for their volunteering and indeed expert advice and input. Without their scrutiny and support the Epsilon project would not have achieved its user led mission. I am also grateful to all the LGBTI migrants but also the professionals who participated in the research either as part of the sample group or as peer researchers.

**Professor Theo Gavrielides**  
**Epsilon project Coordinator**  
**July, 2018**

# Epsilon Project Advisory Board

The LGBTI advisory Panel is an independent body hosted by the **IARS International Institute**. This body is a key feature of the 2-year pan-European Erasmus+ funded project “Equipping Professionals for Supporting LGBT refugees (EPSILON). The Advisory panel consists of 18 LGBT migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, LGBT campaigners, psychologists and other professionals and researchers from 7 countries across Europe.

The Panel’s main role is to scrutinise, guide and support the implementation of EPSILON and ensure that all outcomes are of high quality and responsive to the specific needs of its target groups. Panel members have been drawn together from all five project partners, IARS in the UK, CARDET in Cyprus, KMOP in Greece, Movisie in Netherlands and Anziani in Italy and will interact with the project digitally through a closed Facebook group and Skype meetings.

## **Epsilon Advisory Board : Terms of Reference**

The Epsilon Project is a User Led project that looks to support some of the most marginalised groups in the EU. There advisory board has been set up to ensure that LGBT migrant voices are at the heart of everything the project does. The makeup of the board includes LGBT migrants, academics, activists and professionals working in the field.

To ensure the board reflects the European nature of the project it will extensively live online through a secret Facebook group and Skype conference calls. The conference calls will be scheduled to coincide at the start and just before the end of each project phase to give the advisory board the opportunity to input at the start and before the end of each element of the project.

## **The Role of the Advisory Board**

The advisory board will ensure that the project stays true to its bottom up ethos throughout. The board are to input into each phase of the project. The board’s input will change as the project grows and develops. However it is expect the input for each phase will be as follows:

### ***Phase 1: Research***

- Advise on the questions asked during the field research
- Review and feedback on the country chapters for Output 1

### ***Phase 2: Training Development***

- Advise on the topics that should be covered in the training
- Review the training materials during the production stage

### ***Phase 3: Dissemination***

- Where appropriate support with the dissemination of the training through helping to recruit and deliver the training materials

### **Requirements**

- Commit to inputting at least 2 hours a month to the support of the project.
- Commit to taking an enhanced role in the group when project activities relate to their specialism
- Attend the online meetings as and when they happen.
- Liaise with partner organisations in regards to advisory board issues when necessary
- Commit to being well-organised and prepared for attendance at each meeting, including reading all relevant documents and agenda papers ahead of each meeting.
- Agree with all other members the boundaries and expectations of the members.

# COMPARATIVE CHAPTER

# Introduction

This final e-book has integrated the two year learning and practical results of the Epsilon programme. As part of the ground learning, each participating country has conducted literature based research and fieldwork in Europe. This has then been followed by the piloting of the face-to-face training and the e-learning platform in each participating country. In line with the theoretical and practical results, this final e-book concludes with policy recommendations and best practices for professionals working with asylum seekers and refugees as outlined in the key recommendations for national and EU policy in each national chapter.

This is the executive summary of five national reports that were produced as part of the project titled “EpsiLon - Equipping Professionals for Supporting LGBT Refugees”, which is co-financed by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The national reports were written in all partners’ languages, i.e. in English, Dutch, Greek and Italian. EpsiLon project is responding to two current and urgent educational needs in Europe i.e. the rise in migrant and refugee numbers and the persistent inequality and persecution of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) individuals. Combined together these two characteristics make LGBT migrants and refugees one of the most vulnerable groups in modern Europe. Therefore, EpsiLon aims to help address this issue by increasing the knowledge, skills and awareness of all those adult professionals and volunteers who come in contact with them.

One of the main activities of the project was the desk research and fieldwork on LGBT refugees and migrants in the UK, the Netherlands, Greece, Cyprus and Italy. In Greece. The aim of this research was, firstly, to present the current situation regarding LGBT migrants and refugees living in the involved countries and, secondly, to understand the needs and challenges faced by them as well as by the professionals and volunteers who support them. The findings of the research were the basis for the development of a training programme for professionals and volunteers working with LGBT immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in asylum centres, camps, shelters and in local communities. Using an innovative, evidence-based, user-led methodology, the training programme aims to raise professionals’ and volunteers’ awareness and sensitivity on the needs of LGBT migrants and refugees; it also enables them to become familiar with LGBT migrants and refugees’ pressing needs, such as those relating to survival, dignity and respect. Moreover, it helps them challenge their own biases and assumptions. The training has been designed to be delivered both face-to-face and online and has been promoted both internally (between partners) and externally (nationally and EU wide).

The key objective of these national reports was to present the main findings and recommendations from the desk research and fieldwork as well as the findings from the face-to-face education programme which was piloted in all partner countries. The present comparative chapter integrates the two-year learning and practical findings of the project bringing together the results from the activities implemented in each partner country.

## Key comparative findings from the research

- In all EpsiLon countries, LGBT people are offered the opportunity to request international protection (asylum), as long as they are persecuted in their home countries for their sexual orientation or gender identity. However, there is a lack of statistical information about LGBTIQ+ migrants in general and LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees in particular. There is no information as regards the number of SOGI requests. The only exception is the UK, where the UK government has recently started to record the numbers of asylum claims based on LGBTI persecution.
- In all EpsiLon countries, LGBT migrants and refugees are rather reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation either to members of their own communities as well as to the local population, where LGBT discrimination still exists. Especially in Cyprus and in Greece, they experience a ‘double stigma’ as LGBT and as “foreigners”.
- LGBT refugees and asylum seekers often feel unsafe or afraid to open up and reveal their sexual orientation within the shelters and the reception centres even in the more progressive countries, for example the Nether-



lands, where it is more clear that LGBT is part of the Dutch society.

- There is a lack of a continuous support to LGBT refugees and asylum seekers by operators adequately trained and sensitised on the topic in all the phases of the reception path, especially in countries such as Italy, Cyprus and Greece. It is worth mentioning that in Cyprus, all professionals involved in the asylum procedure are often not equipped to deal with so-called SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) claims. Even though the training needs may differ from country to country, all of them emphasised the increased and continuous need to train relevant staff and volunteers on the relevant procedures as well as on cultural diversity, SOGI issues, LGBT rights, etc.
- In the UK and the Netherlands, it was recommended to refer LGBT asylum seekers and refugees to organisations that support them as they may feel more comfortable receiving immigration support from LGBT specialist organisations rather than those set up to specifically provide immigration support.
- In the Netherlands and the UK there are several good examples of services providing psychosocial support, medical treatment, information and sheltering to LGBT asylum seekers and refugees. In parallel, in the years 2017-2018 it has been possible to observe an increase of initiatives and services dedicated to the protection of LGBTIQ+ migrants' rights, with particular attention to asylum seekers and refugees. Few examples of specific services for LGBT refugees and migrants are available in Greece, while these kind of services are underdeveloped in Cyprus.

## Key comparative findings from the face-to-face adult education programme

EpsiLon has developed a user-led, face-to-face educational programme for adult professionals and volunteers. Its aim is to increase knowledge and skills of professionals, ultimately building their capacity to answer to the needs of LGBTIQ+ refugees, contributing to preventing abuse in centers, shelters, local communities and services dedicated to this target group. It has been designed to be an introductory training programme to raise awareness and provide understanding of basic concepts and information to professionals and volunteers working either in the field of migration and asylum (i.e. social workers, cultural mediators, educators, language teachers, intercultural workers, volunteers), in the field of advocacy and support for LGBTIQ+ (activists, social workers, volunteers), or both.

All partner organisations piloted the face-to-face educational programme with professionals and volunteers working in the abovementioned fields. In total, 74 individuals participated in the pilot trainings. Figure 1 provides a breakdown of participants per country:



Figure 1

At the end of each pilot session, participants were asked to fill in the evaluation questionnaires assessing the education programme. According to their evaluation, the training has met 53 participants' expectations and has partially met 21 participants' expectations (Figure 2).

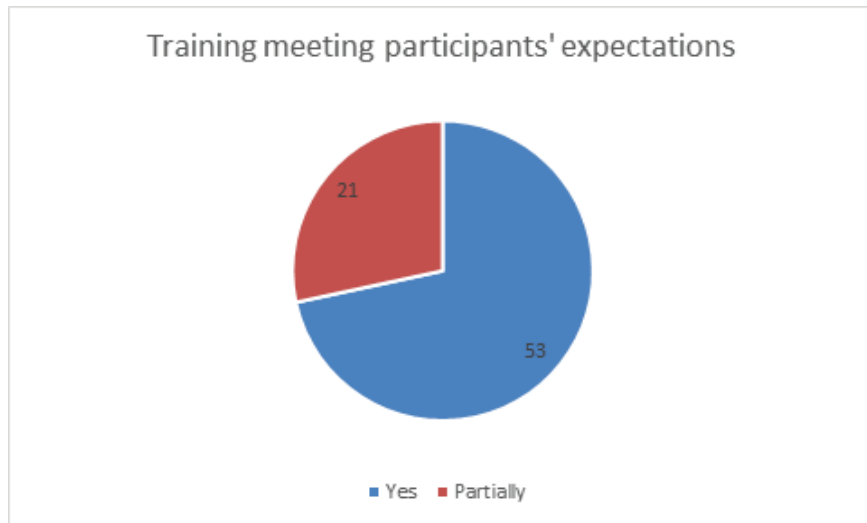


Figure 2

Participants were asked to estimate their knowledge about LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers, refugees and migrants prior to the training and after the training on a scale from 1 to 10. The average score before the training was 5,99 and the respective score after the training was 7,45. As it is illustrated in Figure 3, almost all participants have improved their knowledge after the training.

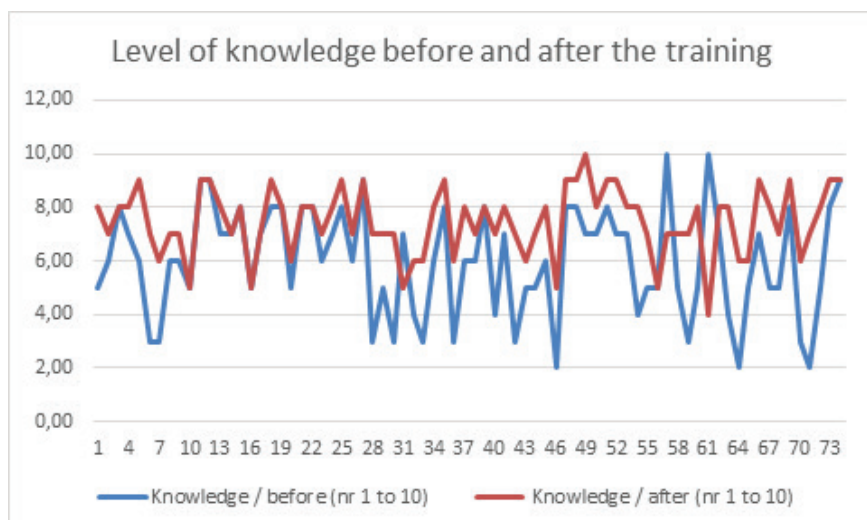


Figure 3

Their opinion about the training was very good (35 participants) and good (34 participants), whereas 5 participants considered the training “regular” (Figure 4).



Figure 4

Moreover, participants were asked to evaluate the trainers. 37 of them considered the trainers “very good”, 34 of them considered the trainers “good”, and 3 participants opinion about the trainers was “regular” (Figure 5).



Figure 5

In addition, the majority of the participants (71) stated that the training methodologies were appropriate (Figure 6).



Figure 6

Finally, as it is displayed in Figure 7, 46 of the participants found that the time dedicated to each topic was appropriate, whereas 28 had the opposite opinion.

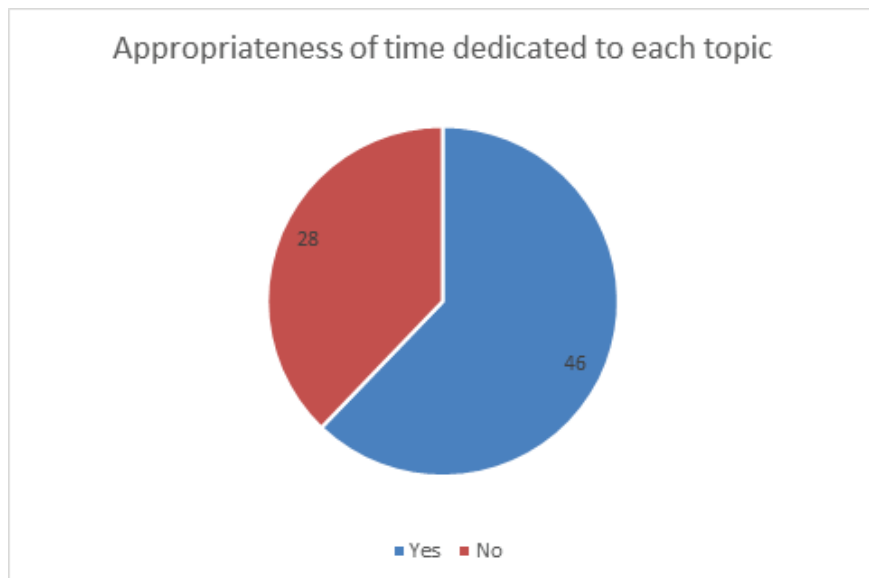


Figure 7

# Key recommendations

All findings from the UK, the Netherlands, Greece, Cyprus and Italy indicate that LGBT immigrants and refugees across Europe still remain one of the most vulnerable groups, facing many barriers and having specific support needs, so as to be able to adapt and cope with the new conditions in a foreign country. At the same time, they have to deal with LGBT discrimination, which still exists across Europe. Epsilon as well as other similar projects carried out at EU level can definitely improve their situation, as they can contribute to the improvement of the skills and knowledge and to the awareness raising of the professionals and volunteers working with LGBT immigrants and refugees.

Based on the above-mentioned findings a series of key recommendations is suggested:

- Both LGBT and migrants/refugees organisations & associations should be trained accordingly so as to better support and help LGBT migrants and refugees.
- Professionals working in reception centres, shelters, asylum services and other relevant services should be properly and adequately trained to handle SOGI-related cases and to support LGBT migrants and refugees.
- Establishment of dedicated services providing support to LGBT migrants and refugees, meeting their particular needs.
- Record of the number of LGBT migrants and refugees and of the SOGI requests could help in better understanding their needs and also could facilitate the development of effective practices and policies.
- Information and awareness-raising of wider society regarding this particularly vulnerable group
- Improvement of accommodation structures and living conditions of LGBT refugees and immigrants, so as they feel safe; when it is deemed necessary, separate shelters could be created.
- Involvement of LGBT migrants and refugees in the training, given that they can fully understand the needs of this vulnerable group.
- Finally, Epsilon partners are recommended to build on and follow up on the results of the project by implementing similar activities addressed to professionals and volunteers working with LGBT refugees and migrants across Europe.

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES**

# UNITED KINGDOM

## Key Objectives of the UK Chapter

This chapter is the final output of the Epsilon project in the UK. Epsilon is a two-year Erasmus + KA2 European project (2016-2018), which seeks to draw on the experiences of LGBT migrants in order to develop educational and training resources to support organisations to provide better services to LGBT migrants. This chapter presents the key findings and recommendations from academic research and fieldwork, the contributions from the LGBT Advisory Board, and the findings from the online and face-to-face adult education programmes conducted by the IARS International Institute. The objective of this chapter is to integrate the two-year learning and findings from the project by bringing together the theoretical and practical results of the Epsilon project in the UK.

## Methodology

The overall aim of the literature review was to analyse the national context in terms of LGBT migration in the UK. It aimed to capture the experiences of LGBT migrants attempting to navigate the UK asylum process whilst trying to settle and build their lives in a new country. Our literature review consisted of a collection of the current academic research and reports from frontline organisations, including research conducted by Stonewall, UKLGIG and Women For Refugee Women.

The overall aim of the fieldwork was to understand the challenges both the LGBT migrants and the organisations providing support to LGBT migrants face in the UK. Furthermore, it aimed to identify good practices that can be built upon. Our fieldwork research was qualitative in nature, and the sample was acquired by using a non-probability sampling method. In total, we conducted 11 semi-structured interviews with both professionals working in the sector and with LGBT migrants themselves.

The overall aim of the LGBT Advisory Board was to bring together LGBT migrants, professionals and academics working in the field to help guide and direct the Epsilon project. Furthermore, the Advisory Board aimed to strengthen the user-led and needs-based aspects of the project. The Advisory Board was set up at the beginning of the project through referrals from the partner organisations, and IARS has been coordinating the Board's quarterly meetings; sharing project updates; and providing the Board an opportunity to input into every phase of the project.

The overall aim of the training tools was to increase the knowledge and the skills of professionals, and ultimately, build

up their capacity to better respond to the needs of LGBT refugees. Our research was conducted by utilising quantitative data derived from an e-learning online platform and from a face-to-face training. In total, 200 participants took part in the online training, and, the face-to-face training was conducted with nine participants, who were professionals, volunteers, researchers, activists, social workers and senior level management working with asylum seekers and refugees.

## Key Findings

As our literature review aimed to understand the lived experiences of LGBT migrants attempting to navigate the UK asylum process, we have been able to identify some shortcomings, and thus, the key findings from our literature review included:

1. The treatment of LGBT asylum seekers by UK Visa and Immigration and its predecessor the UK Border Agency.
2. The impact of conflicts between sexual or gender identity and home culture that persist even when LGBT migrants relocate to countries, such as the UK.
3. Issues with inclusivity of migrants within the UK 'gay scene'.

In regards to the challenges the LGBT migrants and organisations trying to support them face, the data collected from our fieldwork broadly mirrored the findings of the literature review. This was evident in relation to the impact of the UK Visa and Immigration's procedures on the wellbeing of LGBT migrants, and in terms of the struggles that migrants still face in reconciling their cultural and sexual identity when settling in the UK. In addition, it was also apparent from the data that LGBT migrants may feel more comfortable receiving immigration support from LGBT specialist organisations rather than those set up to specifically provide immigration support.

Other key findings from the fieldwork and consultation data included:

1. Concerns over the UK Visa and Immigration's treatment of LGBT migrants;
  - a. Jurisprudence still not being applied,
  - b. Inaccurate Home Office Country policy information notes.
2. Cultural and Integration Issues;
  - a. Conflict between cultural and sexual identity,
  - b. The need for ESOL Support.
3. Service Delivery Concerns;
  - a. Lack of funding,
  - b. Demand for services,
  - c. Complex needs.
4. Discrimination within asylum specialist services;
  - a. The employment of asylum seekers and refugees as staff members,
  - b. Volunteers and staff lack awareness.
5. Skill level of LGBT organisations;



- a. Increase in demand,
- b. Lack of specialist training or expertise.

As coordinated by IARS, the LGBT Advisory Board has been able to provide consistent and thorough feedback throughout the duration of the project in order to ensure a bottom up approach for the project. The Advisory Board has contributed significantly in both the design and implementation of the project. In particular, the Board's input and contributions in the training tools have been one of the key strengths of the project.

Overall our training tools, which aimed to increase knowledge and skills of professionals and build up their capacity to better respond to the needs of LGBT migrants, were positively received and reviewed by the participants. Based on the quantitative data derived from the online and face-to-face training, our evaluation included the following findings:

- Participants' knowledge about LGBT refugees increased 13 per cent after receiving the training.
- 78 per cent of the participants agreed that the training has met their expectations, whereas, 22 per cent agreed that the training has done so partially.
- 89 per cent of the participants considered the quality of the training very good, whereas, 11 per cent considered the quality of the training regular.
- 89 per cent of the participants considered the quality of the trainers very good, whereas, 11 per cent considered the quality of the trainers regular.
- 100 per cent of the participants agreed that the training methodologies were appropriate.
- 78 per cent of the participants considered the time dedicated for each topic being appropriate, whereas, 22 per cent did not think the dedicated time was appropriate.

## Key Recommendations for the UK and Europe

Based on the review of the literature, fieldwork and consultation and training outcomes, our research has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed at a practical and at a policy level.

As part of our practical suggestions, we recommend:

1. Better equalities awareness within the LGBT scene to improve migrant integration;
  - There were indicators that the UK LGBT scene can be both discriminatory and exclusionary, thus more work needs to be done for LGBT migrants to be accepted with UK based LGBT communities.
2. LGBT groups should receive immigration training;
  - LGBT specialist organisations are being called upon to help with immigration cases with very little training. LGBT migrants feel more comfortable receiving support from those who understand their sexual or gender identity.
3. Immigration support organisations and immigration solicitors should receive training to increase their LGBT sensitivity;
  - There is a perception that immigration specialist organisations are not always sensitive to LGBT issues. This is partly due to the experiences of LGBT migrants when accessing these services, but also due to the perceived perception.

4. The Epsilon programme should be part of the basic training for all service providers and organisations working with migrants.
  - The ambiguity of identifying who is an LGBT migrant.
  - LGBT migrants should be involved in the training in order to understand the needs of this vulnerable group.

As part of our policy suggestions, we recommend:

1. Revise the way LGBT Asylum claims are processed, including:
  - The use of detention seems inappropriate and should be ended,
  - The culture of assuming the claimant is lying causes a burden of proof.
2. Quicker decision making:
  - LGBT migrants are at risk of being abused physically and emotionally,
  - Cases with increased risk of mental or physical harm should be dealt quicker.
3. Review and amend country information:
  - There is a disparity between the experiences of asylum seekers in their home country and Home Office in country Guidelines.
4. Invest in ESOL:
  - Additional resources should be invested to make ESOL courses more widely available and more should be done to make ESOL provision more LGBT appropriate.
5. Invest in Identity Support:
  - There needs to be more support to help LGBT migrants understand how to embrace their identities.

Overall, the above outputs have had an impact on increasing the knowledge, skills and awareness of professionals working with LGBT refugees and migrants, as demonstrated by the findings. As a result of the learning from the project impact, we can conclude that the Epsilon project has successfully involved LGBT migrants in the design, delivery and monitoring of the project, and raised awareness by providing training to organisations, professionals and volunteers working with LGBT migrants.

# References

- Alexander, J. (2018). You're so different that your difference is you. *Youth Voice Journal*, 8, 14-31. doi: 2056-2969
- Bryman, A. (2004). *Quantity and quality in social research*. London: Routledge.
- Creswell, J. and Creswell, J. (2018). *Research design*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Gavrielides, T. (2017). *Supporting and Including LGBTI Migrants. Needs, Experiences & Good Practices*, IARS publication. Retrieved from <http://www.epsilonproject.eu/e-books/>
- Gray, D. (2018). *Doing research in the real world*. London: SAGE.
- Harris, L. (2016). Body Control. *Humanity & Society*, 40(2), 133-154. doi: 10.1177/0160597616643877
- The Home Office. (2014). *The Home Office response to the Independent Chief Inspector's report: "An Investigation into the Home Office's Handling of Asylum Claims Made on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation"*, Home Office.
- Lewis, R. (2014). "Gay? Prove it": The politics of queer anti-deportation activism. *Sexualities*, 17(8), 958-975. doi: 10.1177/1363460714552253
- Lewis, R., & Naples, N. (2014). Introduction: Queer migration, asylum, and displacement. *Sexualities*, 17(8), 911-918. doi: 10.1177/1363460714552251
- Ritchie, J. and Lewis, J. (2014). *Qualitative research practice*. London [u.a.]: SAGE.
- Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

# GREECE

## Key objective of the country report

The present executive summary comprises the main points of the “Report on the findings and the activities of the project titled “Epsilon - Equipping Professionals for Supporting LGBT Refugees”, which is written in the Greek language. It is part of the Epsilon Educational Resources - Final eBook, which integrates the 2 year learning and practical results of the project, bringing together its theoretical and practical results, including its pilots, training and on the ground learning from each participating country and Europe. The Epsilon project which is implemented by a consortium of five organisations from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Greece, Cyprus and Italy it is co-financed by the Erasmus+ European Programme. The project focuses on one of the most vulnerable groups in modern Europe, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) immigrants and refugees. Responding to the increasing need for professionals and volunteers’ training who work with LGBT immigrants and refugees across Europe, Epsilon has developed a training programme for those who work with LGBT immigrants and refugees aiming at the improvement of the provision of services to the aforementioned group of people. The present document describes the main findings coming from the research on the topic carried out in Greece as well as the results from the pilots of the face-to-face adult education programme.

## Methodology

The findings presented at this report were collected as follows:

- The findings from the research on LGBT refugees and migrants in Greece were collected through qualitative research which included a) desk research on the topic, focusing on relevant Greek and European resources and b) face to face interviews with four (4) professionals and volunteers were conducted and with three (3) LGBT refugees.
- The findings from the 2 pilots of the Epsilon educational programme attended by 13 professionals in total, were collected through the evaluation questionnaires, which were distributed at the end of the training. These questionnaires among others were assessing the level of knowledge about LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers, refugees and migrants prior and after the training, if their expectations from the training were met, participants’

opinions about the training event and the trainers, the appropriateness of the training methodologies as well as the appropriateness of the time dedicated to each topic.

# Key findings

## **A. From the research on LGBT refugees and migrants in Greece**

### *Findings from the literature review*

Very little data was found in scientific literature focusing on LGBT immigrants and refugees in Greece, which is reasonable, given that the phenomenon of immigration is recent in modern Greece, while the arrival of refugees and immigrants in Greece intensified over the past two years. No population statistics could be detected concerning LGBT immigrants and refugees. As mentioned by OLKE (OAKE, 2006), LGBT immigrants experience multiple discrimination, because, in a society where Greek citizens have the absolute majority, they experience double stigma as LGBT and as “foreigners”.

On the basis of Presidential Decree 141 (2013), LGBT people are offered the opportunity to request international protection (asylum), as long as they are persecuted in their home countries for their sexual orientation or gender identity. Also, there are no precise figures on LGBT refugees/asylum seekers countries of origin in Greece, but it is reasonable to assume that the majority of them come from wider Middle East countries, which are too hostile towards LGBT people. Based on Αλεξανδρή and Μάζης article (2016), generally LGBT immigrants /refugees do not request that they stay in Greece, but see it as a transit country.

### *Findings from the fieldwork*

The settlement process of LGBT immigrants and refugees is not significantly different from all the others’ regarding the typical part. Neither they receive some kind of different immigration status. On the other hand, it was observed that their sexual orientation increases the likelihood of granting asylum, particularly in cases where LGBT applicants come from countries, in which, if sexual orientation or gender identity deviates from the norm, it is considered as a criminal offence resulting even in death penalty.

As regards LGBT immigrants and refugees status in Greece nowadays, generally it is not much different from the rest immigrants and refugees’ status, meaning that they live in the same camps, under the same conditions. However, LGBT refugees and immigrants face various problems due to their sexual orientation, like social exclusion, verbal and physical aggression by their compatriots and foreigners and even rape attempts in accommodation structures have been reported.

As for the LGBT reasons for immigration in Greece, firstly mentioned were the difficulties and the persecutions they experience in their home countries, because of their sexual identity. In their countries they cannot live and express themselves freely, they have difficulty in finding a job, they often become victims of violence and their lives are at risk.

LGBT immigrants and refugees feel much safer and comfortable in Greece compared to their home countries, in particular when they come from countries where their life is in danger either because of their sexual orientation or due to a prevailing state of war in countries such as Syria. Obviously, conditions in Greece are not perfect for LGBT people but in comparison with their countries, LGBT immigrants and refugees feel much better.

Professionals who work with LGBT immigrants and refugees have increased educational needs. To begin with, the growing need for training related to gender identity and sexual orientation was cited. Next, it is important that professionals are trained around issues concerning immigrants and refugees’ culture as well as how they perceive the concept of LGBT and traditional gender stereotypes prevailing in their countries. In addition, the need for training on issues regarding LGBT rights was reported, because there is poor knowledge not only from the relevant services but also from organisations assisting refugees and immigrants. Special emphasis was placed on the need for training volunteers as well as support staff.

## **B. From the face-to-face adult education programme in Greece**

The face-to-face adult education programme which was developed in order to increase the knowledge and build/improve the capacity of the professionals and volunteers who work with LGBT immigrants and refugees was piloted in two organisations in Athens, on the 18th and the 23rd of May 2018.

The 1st pilot included staff from the NGO DIOTIMA, an organisation which focuses on the prevention and the combating of gender based violence. This is an organisation which works with migrants and refugees, providing psychosocial services and support. The participants of the training included social workers, psychologists, cultural mediators and administrative staff.

The 2nd pilot involved staff from the international NGO Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders) and included health promoters and cultural mediators.

In general, the overall evaluation of the training was very positive and participants mentioned that the training materials are very suitable for both professionals and volunteers working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and for those working with LGBTIQ+ people.

According to their evaluation, all 13 participants mentioned that the training has met their expectations. Participants were asked to estimate their knowledge about LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers, refugees and migrants prior to the training and after the training on a scale from 1 to 10. The average score before the training was 6,15 and the respective score after the training was 7,92. Overall their opinion about the training was very good (7 participants) and good (6 participants). When participants were asked to evaluate the trainers, 8 of participants considered the trainers “very good”, 4 of them considered the trainers “good”, whereas 1 of them answered that his/her opinion about the trainers is “regular”. Besides, all participants found that the training methodologies were appropriate. 11 of the participants found that the time dedicated to each topic was appropriate, whereas 2 had the opposite opinion.

# **Key recommendations for national and EU policy, research and practice**

## **A. At national level**

LGBT immigrants and refugees living in Greece face many difficulties and barriers. They belong to one of the most vulnerable groups of our times given the increase in the number of immigrants and refugees and the refugee crisis across Europe in recent years. They have been accommodated to a country which is called upon to deal with this phenomenon without any previous experience and which has assumed the heavy burden of the immigration and refugee crisis. It is therefore expected that they experience the same difficulties and problems addressed by the rest of refugees. At the same time, LGBT people settle in a country where inequalities and discrimination against LGBT continue to exist, while phenomena of homophobia are particularly acute in recent years. Thus, LGBT immigrants and refugees in Greece constitute one of the most marginalized groups, although most of them feel much safer in Greece than in their home countries, where they experience many difficulties due to their sexual orientation. For that reason, LGBT refugees and immigrants in Greece need more support and assistance, in order to be socially and culturally integrated and make a fresh start under safe and dignified conditions. At the same time, it is very important for them to be supported and served by professionals who are very aware of their situation and their particular needs. The Epsilon training programme has been a very good step in increasing the knowledge and improving the skills of the professionals and volunteers working with LGBT refugees and migrants in Greece.

Based on the above mentioned issues as well as on the experience from KMOP participation as a partner organisation

in the Epsilon project, the following key recommendations are suggested at national level:

- Improvement of accommodation structures and living conditions of LGBT refugees and immigrants, so as they feel safe
- Provision of personalised psychological and social support, considering the special needs of LGBT people, aiming at coping with problems they face, as well as integrating them into the new reality, society and country. Particular emphasis should be laid on Trans people who experience more difficulties, not only during the application for asylum process but also during their stay in the host country.
- Development of training and counselling programmes, based on special needs and skills of LGBT refugees and immigrants in order to be integrated in the job market.
- Introduction and implementation of specific methodologies and guidelines which concern reception and support of LGBT refugees and immigrants
- Information and awareness-raising of wider society regarding this particularly vulnerable group
- Continuous training for all professionals and volunteers coming into contact with LGBT refugees and immigrants.

## **B. At EU level**

At an EU level, all partner organisations should participate in similar strategic partnerships, in the frame of the Erasmus+ or other similar Programmes, in order to expand their knowledge and expertise on the topic. Besides, they should build on and follow up on the results of the Epsilon project by implementing similar activities addressed to professionals and volunteers working with LGBT refugees and migrants across Europe.

# References

Αλεξανδρής, Π. & Μάζη, Μ. (2016, Ιανουάριος). LGBT Πρόσφυγες και Μετανάστες. *Antivirus (65)*, 32-37. Ανακτήθηκε από <http://avmag.gr/60350/antivirus-65/>

ΟΛΚΕ - Ομοφυλοφιλική Λεσβιακή Κοινότητα Ελλάδας. (2006). Το πρόγραμμα της ΟΛΚΕ. Ανακτήθηκε 22 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <https://www.olke.org/το-πρόγραμμα-της-ολκε/>

Προεδρικό Διάταγμα 141/2013. «Προσαρμογή της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας προς τις διατάξεις της Οδηγίας 2011/95/ΕΕ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 13ης Δεκεμβρίου 2011 (L 337) σχετικά με τις απαιτήσεις για την αναγνώριση και το καθεστώς των αλλοδαπών ή των ανιθαγενών ως δικαιούχων διεθνούς προστασίας, για ένα ενιαίο καθεστώς για τους πρόσφυγες ή για τα άτομα που δικαιούνται επικουρική προστασία και για το περιεχόμενο της παρεχόμενης προστασίας (αναδιατύπωση)». ΦΕΚ Α 226/21.10.2013. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου

2017, από <http://www.et.gr/index.php/2013-01-28-14-06-23/search-laws>



# ITALY

## 1. Key objective of the country report

The reasons that lead people to leave their native Country for new destinations are numerous and different: not only economic reasons, but also, for example, religious, cultural, ethnic, political. Among these, there is undoubtedly the need to avoid the violation of the human rights in the native Country, including the denial of living free and express their own sexual orientation and gender identity.

In the last years the migration topic is one of the main problems for the European Union and in recent time the member States started to pay interest to the needs and problems of the particular category of LGBTIQ+ migrants, with specific attention to asylum seekers and refugees<sup>1</sup>.

In fact, according to the latest ILGA report on homophobia (2017), 72 Countries worldwide criminalise same-sex relationships and the situation in these Countries remains critical for LGBTIQ+ people, who are deprived of the freedom to live their sexual orientation and gender identity, sometimes also with the death. It is therefore probable that many of these people decide to join to the flow of migrants that leave their Country coming to Europe in search of a better life.

States started to understand that this category of migrants have different, specific problems and needs, related to the violation of rights often suffered in the native Country. The difficulties involve also isolation, social exclusion and discrimination experienced in the host Country and implemented by the States, by the local community and also by other non LGBTIQ+ migrants.

Considering that, it is essential to increase the studies and knowledge about this particular sample of population, developing procedures specifically designed, and implementing the level of knowledge of professionals and volunteers working closely with them.

For this reason EPSILON was born, a two-year Erasmus+ project which has the aim to bridge the gap in knowledge and skills in professionals and volunteers working with LGBTIQ+ migrants.

The objective is increasing the level of awareness about needs and problems of this particularly vulnerable group,

---

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this chapter the terms:

- “LGBTIQ+” is an acronym used to refer comprehensively to the whole community of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Intersexual, Asexual and Queer people and others
- “LGBTIQ+ migrants”, unless otherwise stated, includes both the category of asylum seekers and refugees and the category of migrant people coming in Europe for other reasons

subject to a high risk of multiple discriminations and social emargination, both because of their LGBTIQ+ and migrant background. In fact, according to the Report of the Parliamentary Committee “Jo Cox” on intolerance, xenophobia, racism and hate phenomena (2017) in the Italian pyramid of hate, migrants and LGBTIQ+ people are at the top.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the few changes occurred in the Italian context since the beginning of the project, comparing this research with that one in the previous EPSILON report (Gavrielides, 2016).

An analysis of the field work realised in the first part of the project (Output 1- O1) and a review of the previous literature are followed by an analysis of the results of a face-to-face training course for professionals and volunteers working with LGBTIQ+ people and migrants (Output 2 - O2). Finally, the implications that the results of the EPSILON project will have on policies and practices, both at national and European level, are evaluated.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Methodology of the O1

The O1 is the result of a qualitative and quantitative research of secondary and primary type.

The secondary research consisted in the collection of data, information and practices from the literature with the purpose of describing the national context in terms of state of the art. In this national chapter the secondary research has the aim of updating the Italian framework described in the previous EPSILON report.

Information and data were obtained through the use of Internet in general and specifically through the use of databases such as Google Scholar, Academia.edu and Researchgate.

The research was conducted through the combination of key terms such as “Discrimination”, “Asylum seekers”, “Refugees”, “Migrants”, “Sexual orientation”, “Gender identity”, “LGBT”, “SOGI” including their synonyms and derivatives, both in Italian and in English. The articles taken into consideration are those referred to the Italian context or generally referred to the theme treated but useful for the national research.

The primary research consisted in 1 focus group with 5 LGBTIQ+ migrants, 7 individual interviews with LGBTIQ+ migrants and 4 individual interviews with professionals working with migrants or LGBTIQ+ migrants or in general in the field of migration.

Finally, the questionnaire “Comfort in social situation”, developed by Ph. D. Mary E. Kite from Ball State University and translated in Italian language, has been administered by the means of an online survey with the aim of investigating the aptitudes of the LGBTIQ+ community members towards some minorities.

### 2.1. Methodology of the O2

The O2 consisted in a primary qualitative and quantitative research.

The research was conducted using data and information derived from the face-to-face 7 hours training who took place in Bologna, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2018.

17 people participated in the training, including researchers, social workers (both volunteers and professionals) and LGBTIQ+ activists from several Italian Regions.

The general structure was elaborated by all the partners involved in the project and successively readapted to country specific contexts. In particular, each partner developed an *ad hoc* section in order to describe their own country situa-

tion when it comes to SOGI claims<sup>2</sup>. As established in the handbook, given the double target of the project, the training is built to be readapted according to the level of expertise of the participants and their belonging to a professional or volunteering environment which already entails some of the preliminary information included in the training.

The participants in the training held in Bologna were of mixed backgrounds regarding SOGI asylum claims. For this reason, the training was delivered as a whole, giving priority to module 1 (“Being LGBTIQ+”) and 2 (“LGBTIQ+ Asylum seekers and refugees”). Due to the limited timeframe, module 3 (LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Environments for Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees) was addressed mainly by using practical activities.

## 3. Key findings

### 3.1. From the research

Regarding data, the Italian situation has remained the same compared to that one described in the first report: there is a lack of statistical information about LGBTIQ+ migrants in general and LGBTIQ+ asylum seeker and refugees in particular. No information is collected regarding the number of SOGI requests and the few data found in the previous report are excessively dated. In fact, they concern the period before the increase of migratory flows (from 2014 onwards): the territorial commissions in Italy do not release data regarding the reason why people submit the asylum application (Lanni, 2017).

On the contrary, in the years 2017-2018 it has been possible to observe an increase of initiatives and services dedicated to the protection of LGBTIQ+ migrants’ rights, with particular attention to asylum seekers and refugees. These services are in addition to those provided by the associations already mentioned in the previous report (MigraBo Bologna<sup>3</sup> and Il Grande Colibri<sup>4</sup>):

- **Pink Refugees<sup>5</sup>**, a group of support born in 2017 in Verona, within the Pink Club LGBTIQ+ association, for sharing experiences of isolation and discrimination and discussing about the topic of LGBTIQ+ migrants
- **Arcigay<sup>6</sup> and Migranet project**. Arcigay is an LGBTIQ+ association active for several years in the field of social inclusion, protection and promotion of LGBTIQ+ migrants’ rights, with a specific focus on asylum seekers and refugees. It operates on the national territory with several help desks for LGBTIQ+ migrants and with the Migranet project it has the aim to expand the field of work of these help desks in terms of new activities, support services and network enhancement
- In 2017, **Caleidos Social Cooperative** has arranged two apartments in Modena for the reception of LGBTIQ+ asylum seeker (“Immigrati gay, un rifugio per 14 persone”, 2017)
- **“Migro perché sono”<sup>7</sup>**, second edition of seminar cycle held between February and April 2018, organised by the University of Bologna, on the topic of LGBTIQ+ migrants

Regarding good legal practices related to SOGI applications, the previous report highlighted the positive practices used by the Italian system for the recognition of international protection:

<sup>2</sup> SOGI claims are request based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

<sup>3</sup> An association with the purpose of helping LGBTIQ+ migrants to integrate in Italy in general and in the LGBTIQ+ world in particular, also assisting asylum seekers in the international protection procedure for SOGI reasons ([www.migrabo.wordpress.com](http://www.migrabo.wordpress.com)).

<sup>4</sup> A voluntary association in favour of LGBTIQ+ people who wants to bring out the importance of differences (ethnic, cultural, religious, etc.) that intersect those related to sexual orientation and gender identity ([www.ilgrandecolibri.com](http://www.ilgrandecolibri.com)).

<sup>5</sup> [www.circolopink.it/cases/pink-refugees](http://www.circolopink.it/cases/pink-refugees)

<sup>6</sup> [www.arcigay.it](http://www.arcigay.it)

<sup>7</sup> [www.giurisprudenza.unibo.it/it/corsi/insegnamenti/insegnamento/2017/425257](http://www.giurisprudenza.unibo.it/it/corsi/insegnamenti/insegnamento/2017/425257)

- Not considering relevant if homosexual acts, although punishable, are not prosecuted in the native Country<sup>8</sup>
- Not necessary to verify that the asylum seeker has resorted to the protection of his native state when homosexuality is persecuted by non-state actors
- Not considering relevant to have maintained behaviour of “discretion” regarding sexual orientation and gender identity in the native Country
- No medical consultation to determine the sexual orientation of asylum seekers: only documentary evidences (if available) or asylum seekers’ declaration
- Being married does not preclude the concession of the international protection for SOGI reasons
- International protection has been granted even in the case of late disclosure<sup>9</sup> (Jansens & Spijkerboer, 2011).

However, with the introduction of the Law Decree No. 13/2017, converted with amendments by Law No. 46/2017, the situation for LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers could worsen, because the law introduces some counter-productive elements: the abolishment of the appeal judgement for applicants that have received a refusal (art. 6, par. 11, let. g); the video-taping of the testimony (Article 6, par. 1, let. c) which limits the possibility of a face-to-face comparison between the appellant and the judge.

As highlighted by the results of interviews and focus groups reported in the previous report, there are still strong problems related to effective social inclusion and full freedom to live sexual orientation and gender identity: the fear of openly living and revealing one’s own sexual orientation or gender identity within the reception centres, the communities (often not inclined to accept homosexual practices because contrary to the native country vision), but also to themselves, due to the experiences lived in the home Country; often, the lack of a continuous support by operators adequately trained and sensitised on the topic in all the phases of the reception path.

### **3.2. From the face-to-face adult education programme**

The pilot training took place in Bologna on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, involving 17 participants from several Italian Regions.

The participants had different backgrounds, from researchers and social workers (both volunteers and professionals) to LGBTIQ+ activists.

The overall evaluation of the training is very positive: almost 95% of the participants rated the training as “Good” or “Very good” and only one person rated it as “Regular”.

Participants enjoyed the possibility to discuss case studies and that they could share experiences between each other. In particular, most of them appreciated learning through practical activities rather than a frontal class.

From the feedback of the participants emerged how essential it has been for them to come across other organisations and other experiences, in order to confront each other especially regarding the good practices already in use or the ones that could be implemented.

Given the abovementioned mixed background of the participants, the overall knowledge (on a scale from 1 to 10) before the training was delivered shows that almost 60% of the participants self-evaluated themselves with a sufficient/good knowledge level (answers from 6 to 10), while a percentage slightly above 40% said their knowledge was insufficient (answers from 1 to 5).

At the end of the training the total of the sufficient/good knowledge level increased to almost 95%, with a growth of 35% points. Regarding the time dedicated to the topics, 30% of the participants stated it was not sufficient, saying they

<sup>8</sup> Cass. Civ., Sez. VI, sentence 20 September 2012 No. 15981

<sup>9</sup> Cass. Civ., Sez. VI, sentence 5 March 2015, No. 4522

would have preferred having more time available in order to deepen their knowledge. Furthermore, the general expectation on the training was totally respected for 70% of the participants, while the remaining 30% was only partially satisfied.

## 4. Key recommendations for national and EU policy, research and practice

In Italy far too little has been said about LGBTIQ+ migrant issue in terms of knowledge and data. However, in recent years it is possible to observe a progressive increment of good practices by the associations that deal with migrant reception and by those that deal with raising awareness on LGBTIQ+ issues.

The recommendation is therefore to invest more in the interdisciplinary study, research and monitoring of the phenomenon, also making the data of SOGI requests accessible. The greater knowledge of the phenomenon allows creating more solid foundations for the training of volunteers and professionals working with migrants, increasing the ability to adequately support LGBTIQ+ migrants.

In addition, a more in-depth knowledge, also in terms of numbers, facilitates the development of really effective practices and policies.

The EPSILON workshop should be part of the basic training of all the operators working with migrants, because it not possible to know how many migrants are LGBTIQ+. Furthermore, it should be essential to involve LGBTIQ+ refugees in the training for properly understanding the needs of this vulnerable group.

In order to raise awareness the existence of migrants LGBTIQ+ issue and favour their integration in the local community it could be also useful to promote the EPSILON training among LGBTIQ+ associations.

A critical point emerged from the feedbacks of participants in the training is that often members of Territorial Commissions don't have sufficient LGBTIQ+ issues knowledge. For this reason, it could be important to raise awareness and promote training initiatives also for them.

Another fundamental step is certainly to strengthen the collaboration between LGBTIQ+ organisations and associations that deal with migrants, creating common practices of networking and information sharing.

Finally, there is the need to improve and encouraging the exchange of experiences between colleagues of the same organisation, in order to transform the internal comparison into a useful tool for the increase of work awareness and of the abilities of case managing.

# References

Camera dei deputati (2017). *La piramide dell'odio in Italia. Commissione "Jo Cox" su fenomeni di odio, intolleranza, xenofobia, e razzismo. Relazione finale*. Retrieved from [http://www.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/leg17/attachments/shadow\\_primapagina/file\\_pdfs/000/007/099/Jo\\_Cox\\_Piramide\\_odio.pdf](http://www.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/leg17/attachments/shadow_primapagina/file_pdfs/000/007/099/Jo_Cox_Piramide_odio.pdf)

Gavrielides T., edited by (2017). *Supporting and Including LGBTI Migrants. Needs, Experiences & Good Practices*, IARS publication. Retrieved from <http://www.epsilonproject.eu/e-books/>

ILGA: Carroll A. & Mendos L. R. (2017, May). *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2017: A world survey of sexual orientation laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition*. Retrieved from [https://www.ilga.org/downloads/2017/ILGA\\_State\\_Sponsored\\_Homophobia\\_2017\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.ilga.org/downloads/2017/ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2017_WEB.pdf).

"Immigrati gay, un rifugio per 14 persone". *Giornata contro l'Omofobia, Caleidos e Arcigay firmano un'intesa. Il bilancio dello sportello Lgbt* (2017, 18 May). *Gazzetta di Modena*. Retrieved from <http://gazzettadimodena.gelocal.it/modena/cronaca/2017/05/18/news/immigrati-gay-un-rifugio-per-14-persone-1.15358784>

Jansens S. & Spijkerboer T. (2011). *Fleeing Homophobia - Asylum Claims Related to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Europe*. Amsterdam: COC Nederland/Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Retrieved from <https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/fleeing-homophobia-asylum-claims-related-to-sexual-orientation-an>

Lanni A. (2017, May). *L'omofobia e i rifugiati Lgbt*, UNHCR. Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.it/risorse/carta-di-roma/fact-checking/lomofobia-rifugiati-lgbti>

# NETHERLANDS

This summary and conclusions contain the most important results and recommendations of the Epsilon programme in the Netherlands. Epsilon is a cooperative of Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Great Britain and the Netherlands to jointly increase professionals' and volunteers' knowledge, skills and awareness of LGBT issues so they in turn are better able to support LGBT asylum seekers and refugees. We began with exploratory fieldwork and literature searches and continued with face-to-face training and e-learning. The results of the project have been implemented in various ways.

## Methodology

In this programme we focus on LGBT asylum seekers, people who came to the Netherlands or other European countries and are still waiting for their residence status, and on 'newcomers', refugees of non-Dutch or non-European origin with a legal residence status, who fled to the Netherlands during the last two years.

The main question of the Epsilon study *'What are the needs of LGBT asylum seekers and refugees, and of the professionals and volunteers who work with them, with regard to increasing the support for and acceptance of those LGBT people, and which interventions are known to contribute to this? Do the people involved feel these interventions work, and what could work according to literature?'* has been explored by means of:

- A literature study in which we examined which good practices exist with regard to supporting LGBT asylum seekers and refugees and what literature says regarding what works to increase the acceptance of LGBT asylum seekers and refugees.
- A field study for which we interviewed seven LGBT asylum seekers (3) and refugees (4) about their experiences with and need of support and acceptance, and put the same questions to seven professionals and six volunteers working with LGBT asylum seekers and refugees in two focus group sessions.

In the Netherlands the Epsilon programme has been implemented by means of:

- Face-to-face training of 23 professionals who work with asylum seekers and refugees
- E-learning by 200 participants in Europe
- A final conference to share all the experiences and knowledge we gathered.
- Participation in several meetings in the Netherlands, such as workshops in a conference on LGBT asylum seekers on 6 October 2017 in Amsterdam, and sessions with Rainbow cities in the Netherlands

- Articles published on websites of Movisie, KIS (Knowledge platform Integration & Society) and LGBT organisations, and in newsletters (e.g. PinkLink)
- Social media, for instance the Epsilon project Facebook group, where knowledge and experiences were shared. The Advisory Board of the Epsilon project, with a large group of Dutch participants, made a major contribution to this.

In addition to the Dutch project partners of Movisie, Dutch participants (including target group experts by experience) contributed in project meetings, conferences and by testing the Epsilon project training. The Epsilon project also increased the network of people in the Netherlands who work with LGBT asylum seekers and refugees. Now they know how to contact one another if they have questions in this field.

Following are the most important results of the literature study, the field study and the implementation.

## Results of the field study

The most important results of the field study among LGBT asylum seekers and refugees and the professionals and volunteers working with them are: provide information on the procedure in the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), train IND staff and professionals and volunteers who support LGBT asylum seekers and refugees, emphasize the importance of discretion, shelter venues should have clear directives, separate shelters can provide safety, more diverse staff, support LGBT asylum seekers and refugees with psychological and social problems.

The following points for improvement to increase acceptance were mentioned: the participation statement ought to be signed earlier, before the residence permit is received, the IND should be aware that LGBT discrimination also exists in the Netherlands, COA should make clear what they do about the non-acceptance of LGBT asylum seekers and refugees, when the safety of LGBT people in shelter cannot be guaranteed a separate shelter is the only solution, and already during shelter it should be made clear that LGBT is part of Dutch society.

## Results of the literature study

From the literature study we found that having LGBT feelings may be an important reason to flee, for homosexuality is a crime in 77 countries in the world. Someone with LGBT feelings will not automatically receive a residence permit in the Netherlands; IND looks at individual cases and takes into account the situation in the country of origin and the personal story. However, it is not always obvious that an asylum seeker openly shares his or her LGBT feelings. In shelters LGBT people may still feel or be unsafe. The major problems LGBT people with a refugee story experience are psychological problems and social exclusion.

The most important recommendations for professionals and volunteers to increase support to LGBT asylum seekers and refugees are: make sure that staff and volunteers know about LGBT and cultural backgrounds, build a trusting relationship, relate to the 'language' of the asylum seeker or refugee, build an atmosphere of LGBT friendliness, get LGBT asylum seekers and refugees in touch with each other and with other LGBT people, refer to (interest) organisations that support LGBT asylum seekers and refugees, intervene in unsafe situations, name LGBT explicitly in the safety and anti-discrimination protocol, distinguish which methods work in sharing knowledge, give LGBT asylum seekers and refugees a realistic picture of the situation in the Netherlands, offer information online and in several languages, create safety in case of threats or violence, and pay attention to LGBT in the integration of status holders.

A number of methods may work well in promoting acceptance of LGBT asylum seekers and refugees. (1) Using personal stories of LGBT people (2) Films with personal stories of LGBT people that allow non-LGBT people to share feelings and develop empathy (parasocial interaction theory) (3) Films showing friendships between LGBTs and non-LGBTs with the same cultural origin as viewers (extended interaction theory) (4) To prepare for a face-to-face meeting with a LGBT person, it works to ask participants to imagine meeting an LGBT person and that it was a positive contact (imaginary contact) (5) Communicating a positive social standard regarding LGBT. This is done by asking non-LGBT persons with



authority to speak out in favour of acceptance of LGBT people and by saying that increasing numbers of people from their own ethnic group have started to think more positively about LGBT or that they will not tolerate discrimination of LGBT people (social norm).

There are several good practice examples in the Netherlands for support to, and sometimes also acceptance of, LGBT asylum seekers and refugees. Please see the overview in 'References'.

## Results of the implementation

The face-to-face training was an important part of the implementation. The most important results of the face-to-face training / pilots at COA and *VluchtelingenWerk* are that participants have become aware of what it is to be LGBT, understand sexual preference and gender identity, know what being LGBT means in an asylum procedure, are familiar with the asylum procedure for LGBT asylum seekers in the Netherlands and the importance of international protection, and have learned about sex workers and international protection and the link between sex work and migration.

They also learned and practiced conducting conversations about being LGBT, how to pose the right questions and how to identify and counteract homophobia, transphobia and discrimination. They also learned what works to promote acceptance of LGBT among newcomers, have reflected on how to guard their own personal boundaries, and what the involvement of bicultural LGBT (friendly) colleagues may contribute.

All participants will continue to work with what they have learned during the training. They have indicated a wish to pay further in-depth attention to several topics.

The implementation also consisted of an E-learning for 200 participants in Europe, a final conference in which all experience and knowledge obtained was shared and the sharing of knowledge through various meetings in the Netherlands, various articles and through social media.

The Epsilon project also increased the network of people working with LGBT asylum seekers and refugees in the Netherlands.

## Recommendations for the Netherlands and for Europe

- **In the institutions that decide on asylum procedures (policy) and implement them, staff members need to be trained in working with LGBT asylum seekers and refugees**

They need to be informed about LGBT people and their cultural backgrounds. They should know how to pose questions regarding sexual preference and gender identity without crossing their respondents' boundaries, they need to be aware that not everyone may be familiar with our Constitution and the safety to express LGBT feelings, and moreover they should promote discretion.

- **Shelter locations should radiate positive views regarding LGBT**

Newcomers' shelters should demonstrate that LGBT people are part of Dutch society. It may help to explicitly mention LGBT people as a target group in the safety and anti-discrimination protocol and to have one contact person per location.

- **Training staff of shelters (for instance COA) increases support for LGBT asylum seekers and refugees**

In a training course on support for LGBT people, shelter staff can learn more about how to identify and support LGBT people, and how to increase the acceptance of LGBT people.

- **Present LGBT asylum seekers and refugees with a realistic view of LGBT people in the Netherlands and provide information**

LGBT newcomers themselves often are not sure what is happening to them and could use help to better understand themselves and the situation of LGBT people in the country of arrival (for instance the Netherlands).

- **Bicultural LGBT-friendly staff and bicultural LGBT people may increase support**

A more diverse workforce – both professionals and volunteers – in organizations working with asylum seekers and refugees, provides opportunities for improvement, because these people will be better able to understand the situation and the context of both LGBT and non-LGBT asylum seekers.

- **Increased acceptance can be achieved by emphasizing sympathy, empathy and the social norm**

Providing information to newcomers with the aim to increase LGBT acceptance is more likely to be successful if the emphasis is on sympathy, empathy and a positive social norm.

- **Be very aware of homophobic members of staff and do not let them work with LGBT people** In Europa (also in the Netherlands) LGBT discrimination is still the case, also with people who work with asylum seekers and refugees, including judges, lawyers, civil servants and interpreters. Be aware and take action against it.

- **When the safety of LGBT people in a shelter cannot be guaranteed, create separate shelters**

When the shelter is unsafe for LGBT asylum seekers and refugees, it is important to create separate shelters. Consider mixing single mothers and LGBT people, or separate shelters for LGBT people with private access.

# References

Elferink, J. & Van Hoof, J. (2016). [LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen, een handreiking met feiten, verhalen en goede voorbeelden voor vrijwilligers, professionals en gemeenten](#). Utrecht: Movisie.

Felten, H. (2016). [Rainbows & refugees. Verkennend onderzoek naar wat werkt bij het vergroten van de acceptatie van LHBT voor vluchtelingen](#). Utrecht: Kennisplatform Integratie & Samenleving.

Pierik, C., Boote M. & Van Hoof, J. (2015). [De kastdeur op een kier. Seksuele en genderdiversiteit in multicultureel Nederland](#). Utrecht: Movisie.

Pierik, C., Meintser, N. (2008). [Dubbel en dwars. Naar hulpverlening-op-maat voor allochtone jongeren \(m/v\) met homoseksuele gevoelens](#). Utrecht: Movisie.

Pierik, C., Rothuizen, J. (2010). [Ketenaanpak voor migranten met homoseksuele gevoelens. Toolkit voor gemeenten, lokale organisaties en hulpverleners](#). Utrecht: Movisie.

[www.mensenrechten.nl/toegelicht/homoseksualiteit-een-asielgrond](http://www.mensenrechten.nl/toegelicht/homoseksualiteit-een-asielgrond)

[www.coc.nl/informatie-over-cocktail-maatjesproject](http://www.coc.nl/informatie-over-cocktail-maatjesproject)

[www.transgendernetwerk.nl/projecten/meldpunt-transgender-vluchtelingen/](http://www.transgendernetwerk.nl/projecten/meldpunt-transgender-vluchtelingen/)

[www.politie.nl/themas/roze-in-blauw.html](http://www.politie.nl/themas/roze-in-blauw.html)

[www.lgbtasylumsupport.nl](http://www.lgbtasylumsupport.nl)

[www.stichtingsecretgarden.nl](http://www.stichtingsecretgarden.nl)

[www.veiligehavenamsterdam.nl](http://www.veiligehavenamsterdam.nl)

[www.respect2love.nl](http://www.respect2love.nl)

[www.queerwelfare.nl](http://www.queerwelfare.nl)

[www.pharos.nl](http://www.pharos.nl)

[www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl](http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl)

[www.coa.nl](http://www.coa.nl)

[www.ind.nl](http://www.ind.nl)

[www.movisie.nl](http://www.movisie.nl)

## **Organisations cooperating in the project:**

- COC Nederland
- Het Cocktail Maatjes project van COC
- COA

- Transvisie
- VluchtelingenWerk

Through these organisations respondents (LGBT asylum seekers and refugees and professionals and volunteers working with them) have been interviewed. Respondents remain anonymous.

# CYPRUS

Cyprus is a country that ranks quite low in the national, legal, and political human rights situation of LGBTIQ+ individuals. In Cyprus, homophobia manifests itself in public debate and in daily micro aggression, without any known consequences, even though there is legal framework governing it, while at the same time positive LGBTIQ+ role-models are absent. One can find discrimination at different layers of the daily life such as family, workplace and political life, both in terms of ethnic origin, colour of the skin, religion, and sexual orientation

In a society, where the numbers of young, non-EU migrants and refugees is growing, and which is gradually transforming into a society more open to diversity, issues relating to LGBTIQ+ migrant and refugees has never been more urgent. The challenge now is for the pace of social reform to catch up with the rate of migration and societal demands of LGBTIQ+ people. Informing and educating the public in general, but particularly professionals or volunteers that come in contact with LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees in Cyprus is an imperative need, and the role of Epsilon project is even greater.

Through this report, needs are identified and suggestions made, which summarize the project's work and implementation in a way where the results are relevant, timely and useful to the project's target group.

## Key objective of the country report

Based on the principles of equality, respect, solidarity and freedom of expression, the Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology (CARDET) has been implementing since September 2016 the Epsilon Project, 'Equipping Professionals for the Support of LGBTI Refugees and Migrants', funded by the Erasmus + European Program Union. With this project, CARDET stands for once more on the side of the LGBTIQ+ community, advocating for, and defending the rights of a very sensitive population group, that of LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants.

The aim of this report is to highlight the problems faced by LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers, refugees and migrants and to address the need to provide specialized support to LGBTI refugees as well as better training to professionals (interpreters, legal and social workers) who come in contact with them. The report integrates the two year learning and practical results of Epsilon Project in Cyprus. In particular the paper brings together theoretical and practical results of the project including its pilots, training and on the ground learning from Cyprus. It includes policy recommendations and best practices for those serving migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

# Methodology

The method section of this report details how the initial literature review and fieldwork were conducted (O1), the research and training methods used (O2 and O3) and all important procedures that were followed in a way where the final results are relevant, timely and useful to the project's target group (E4 and Epsilon Advisory Board and Local Partnerships).

To complete the literature review **(O1)** CARDET researched reports, studies, statistics, laws and policies of the state. The literature was selected based on the data availability on the subjects of LGBTIQ+ issues and migration in Cyprus from the relevant competent authorities, and other recent, updated and legitimate sources such as appropriate government departments, relevant national and European organizations as well as international organizations. To complete the fieldwork CARDET organized a Focus Group meeting as well as individual interviews with LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees.

The 1-day training-pilot **(O2)** was implemented on a face-to-face basis at the CARDET's offices in Nicosia. The pilot took place on 7 May 2018, and twelve individuals representing a variety of governmental and non-governmental sectors attended the pilot. CARDET used the training session not only as an opportunity to provide some units of the Epsilon training adult education program but also as a mean to discuss in depth with the representatives from all governmental and non-governmental organizations and enrich their knowledge and expertise about the real needs of LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees .

The open educational and training e-resource **(O3)** was promoted through CARDET's website and social media accounts but also in various events as well (conferences, workshops etc.) CARDET has a constant communication with all the users and all partner organizations to answer questions and provide any kind of assistance regarding the on-line training course and the e-learning platform. Moreover in the 1-day training we devoted a whole session for the participants to navigate into the Epsilon E-learning platform, create their personal accounts and to get familiar with the English and Greek versions of the e-resource. Finally CARDET continuously try to contact interested governmental and non- governmental organizations for a possible presentation on the E platform and the E educational training e-resource.

In total thirty-five individuals participated at the national closing conference (E4) for the Epsilon Project which was held on Friday, June 1,2018, at the Classic Hotel, in Nicosia, Cyprus. The conference entitled "LGBTI Refugees: Rights, Practices and Policy Recommendations for introducing an Awareness and Integration Framework in Cyprus" and engaged key figures and stakeholders from a variety of governmental and non-governmental organizations for example: representatives of Cypriot public services, embassies, organizations that help refugees ,civil society organizations, academics, international organizations and agencies, media, educators and the general public. LGBTIQ+ refugees attended the conference as well and share their own personal stories.

The conference focused on the various problems and challenges faced by LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers today like: the double stigma, the real needs of LGBTIQ+ refugees and the urgent need for training of professionals (government officials, police officers, social workers, interpreters, lawyers and other stakeholders) who come in contact with them.

CARDET prepared evaluation questionnaires that were filled out by all participants and speakers and the feedback was indeed very good. The conference was considered by many successful and productive and very well organized, both logistically and in terms of its contents (reports, panels, etc.) Generally it was a very important initiative given the fact the increased number of refugees coming to Cyprus and applying for asylum based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity.

Moreover it is important to notice that CARDET implemented activities regarding Epsilon Project in the framework of **Cyprus Pride Festivals 2017 and 2018.**

Five professionals and volunteers working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were selected as the **Epsilon**

**Advisory Board in Cyprus**, ensuring the rightful and smoothly implementation of the programme. Moreover for better results and outcomes CARDET successfully collaborated for the needs of this project **with local key non-governmental organizations** active on Migrants, Refugees and LGBTIQ+ issues, like the UNHCR Cyprus, Cyprus Refugee Council, Council Aware and ACCEPT LGBTI Cyprus. Strong indicator of success is also the fact that CARDET cooperated in this project with the only **LGBTIQ+ led migrant and refugees associations** in the island, LGBT Philipinas Cyprus and Refugee Association Cyprus.

## Key findings

'Epsilon' Project, is consider by all relevant actors one of the most prominent LGTBIQ+-led projects in the island. During the two years implementation in Cyprus the following key findings, key points, policy recommendations and suggestions were identified.

The crucial question that arose from the project's implementation was:

### Is Cyprus a good destination for LGBTIQ+ migrants, refugees and asylum seekers?

- Statistics about the number of LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees in Cyprus, or even LGBTIQ+ Cypriots, are missing from the annual state statistics sets.
- In general the Cypriot society has a long way to go to be considered tolerant to diversity, with evidence of discrimination on the basis of race as well as sexual orientation and gender identity.
- However considerable societal and legal steps have been made during the past couple of years in Cyprus with regards to combating inequality in relevance to sexual orientation and gender identity such as the criminalization of homophobic and transphobic rhetoric and incitement to violence or hatred which constitutes an important step.
- Moreover since 2015, the public incitement of violence against LGBTIQ+ has also been criminalized as homophobic hate speech. In other words, it is now a criminal offense to engage in violence against someone on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity
- At the same time the recent historic civil union bill (November 2015) indicates a subtle change for the better as regards human rights and marks the beginning of social change in a society that will soon be asked to make space and accept these couples as its members. The bill also shows how far Cyprus has come since decriminalizing same-sex sexual relations in 1998.

## Summary of Key points

- Cypriot society remains conservative on issues of diversity and sexuality.
- LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees are all living in a 'double closet'/ facing a 'double stigma' and are reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation to their own communities and consequently to the local population .Even the local LGBTIQ+ community is afraid of 'Coming Out'.
- Racist remarks in the public debate continue and are a common phenomenon even if they have been criminalized
- The Orthodox Church of Cyprus has taken a clear anti-LGBTIQ+ attitude in many cases.
- The media continue to show migrants and refugees, particularly Muslims with a negative lens, and link them with problems such as rising unemployment and crime, while being characterized as homophobic in an "adhesive" degree.
- There has also been an increase in violence against immigrants.
- Migrants remain stuck in limbo, condemned in social marginalization (Continuous Discrimination by all services and the general public)

- Lack of specialised information for LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees
- The state services are yet to adopt a gender-mainstreaming approach.
- Lack of Legal & Psychosocial support for LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees.
- NGOs are accusing even judges, immigration and reception professionals and police officers of being xenophobic and not having adequate training.

**Cyprus is not a country that easily provides asylum.**

**Regarding LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers it is worth noting that:**

- There is an increase in the number of refugees who have fled due to their sexual orientation or gender including refugees who have survived sexual and gender based violence/torture has been recorded.
- At the same time there is an increase in cases granted refugee status based on sexual orientation, gender, SGBV/T which is very encouraging.
- However the lack of systematic and comprehensive data on the number and types of claims makes it difficult to assess the overall recognition rate. (Refugee Status Recommendation)
- All professionals involved in the asylum procedure are often not equipped to deal with so-called SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) claims.
- Procedures (identification, assessment) and Services for LGBTIQ+ refugees including survivors who survived SGBV/T are underdeveloped - specific protection needs are not be met adequately.
- Lack of effective referral systems for procedural guarantees – reception conditions
- Lack of specialized services and/or medical treatment

## Key recommendations for national and EU policy, research and practice

- Develop a database/statistics on the number of LGTBIQ+ people in Cyprus
- Recognition of the need to develop a policy with regard to issues concerning LGBTIQ+ society as well as immigrants. These policies can have some parallel lines touching on issues of integration and equality that are independent of sexual orientation, as well as different nationalities, religions
- Tremendous need for training adult educators, professionals and individuals working with LGTBIQ+ migrants / refugees, asylum seekers
- Interactive workshops and targeted seminars for professionals and volunteers : make them think about how others feel.
- Cultural Sensitivity trainings: to leave room for understanding the cultural impact of LGBTI refugees on revealing their sexual orientation
- Need to resolve key problems relating mainly to the trans and intersex communities in Cyprus.
- Need for the setup of a National Committee for LGBTIQ+ Matters
- Need to change the law criminalizing homophobic and transphobic rhetoric after it emerged that this, as it stands, does not work correctly.



- Need for Multidisciplinary support: legal/justice, psychosocial, health, safety and security
- Need for examination of LGBTIQ+ asylum claims by trained examiners who have been evaluated on issues of discrimination and biases – Ensure referrals
- A rights-based approach: empowering the individuals and communities to exercise their rights
- Empowerment of sexual and gender minorities

# References

- Αδάμου, Μ. (2018). Η ζωή των μεταναστών στην Κύπρο | News. [online] Sigmalive.com. Available at: <http://www.sigmalive.com/simerini/news/484248/i-zoi-ton-metanaston-stin-kypro> [Accessed 3 Jul. 2018]
- Δημητρίου, Μ. (2018). Ο διπλός στιγματισμός, και οι ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγες στην Κύπρο – 24h.com.cy. [online] 24h.com.cy. Available at: <http://24h.com.cy/2018/06/o-diplos-stigmatismos-kai-oi-loati-prosfyges-stin-kypro/> [Accessed 10 Jun. 2018]
- ECRI. (2016). ECRI Report on Cyprus (fifth monitoring cycle). Strasbourg: European Commission against Racism and Intolerance Secretariat.
- ILGA Europe. (2016). Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe. Belgium: ILGA Europe.
- Republic of Cyprus Asylum Service. (2016, 1 4). Republic of Cyprus Asylum Service: Statistical Data. Ανάκτηση από [http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/asylum/asylumservice.nsf/asylumservice18\\_en/asylumservice18\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/asylum/asylumservice.nsf/asylumservice18_en/asylumservice18_en?OpenDocument)
- Republic of Cyprus Statistical Service. (2015). Demographic Report 2015. Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus

# **NATIONAL REPORTS**

# UNITED KINGDOM

Maija Linnala  
The IARS International Institute

## Abstract

This national chapter has been produced on behalf of the IARS International Institute as part of the Epsilon project that seeks to draw on the experiences of LGBTI migrants in order to develop educational and training resources to support organisations in providing better services to LGBTI migrants. The key aim of the project was to improve the adult education provision in the UK by designing and implementing a user-led methodology and evidence-based, user-led educational tools.

Our methodological framework consisted of literature based research, fieldwork and consultation of the LGBTI Advisory Board, and training tools, which included an e-learning platform and a face-to-face training. Our research findings were derived from both qualitative and quantitative data.

Our literature review considered three main areas of interest: the treatment of LGBTI migrants by the UK Visa and Immigration; continued conflicts between sexual and gender identity and home culture acceptance, and; barriers to acceptance within the UK gay scene. As one of our main findings from the fieldwork, we identified that LGBTI migrants feel more comfortable receiving immigration support from LGBTI specialist organisations rather than organisations providing specifically immigration support. In regards to the LGBTI Advisory Board, their input in the training tools has been one of the key strengths of the project. Overall, the training tools were positively received and reviewed by all the participants.

Some of our key implications and recommendations for the UK and Europe included: better equalities awareness within the LGBTI scene, LGBTI groups should receive immigration training, immigration support organisations and solicitors should receive training to increase their LGBTI sensitivity, the Epsilon project should be part of the basic training for all service providers, revision of the LGBTI asylum claim process, review and amend country information and investments in ESOL and Identity Support. Finally it may be concluded that we expect our findings to contribute to a more equal and fair Europe, where LGBTI refugees and migrants are better treated and integrated in the European countries.

# Introduction

This chapter is the final output of the Epsilon project in the UK. Epsilon is a two-year Erasmus + KA2 European project (2016-2018), which seeks to draw on the experiences of Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans-gender and Intersex (LGBTI) migrants in order to develop educational and training resources to support organisations to provide better services to LGBTI migrants. The Epsilon project responds to two current and urgent educational needs in Europe relating to:

- a) The rise in migrant and refugee numbers; and
- b) The persistent inequality and persecution of the LGBTI groups.

The project aims to increase the knowledge, skills and awareness of all those adult professionals who come in contact with LGBTI refugees and migrants by:

- Sharing, developing and transferring innovative practices in education targeting professionals and volunteers working in services for LGBTI asylum seekers, refugees and migrants;
- Developing innovative, evidence-based, user-led educational tools in order to raise adult learners' awareness and sensitivity to the needs of LGBTI asylum seekers, refugees and migrants;
- Design and pilot, evidence-based, user-led effective strategies for enhancing basic skills for adult learners;
- Helping target groups to challenge their own biases and improve their skills in providing tailored and culturally sensitive services.

In order to follow the Erasmus KA2 objectives, the Epsilon project aims to improve adult education provision in the UK, Italy, Greece, the Netherlands and Cyprus through innovative learning allowing other European countries to replicate its findings and educational tools.

## Background

72 countries around the world criminalise individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation, and in 45 of these countries the law is applied to women as well as men. Furthermore, homosexuality is still punishable by death in eight countries (ILGA 2017). Many individuals, who are seeking asylum on the grounds of sexuality or gender identity in the UK, have been discriminated against, harassed, beaten, raped and tortured, because of their sexual and / or gender identity being illegal in their country of origin. Due to multiple layers of discrimination, LGBTI asylum seekers are highly marginalised in the society, and often isolated from their communities and families. Many experience feelings of profound shame due to internalised homophobia, which impacts on their ability to present their asylum claims.

Over the past 10 years, there has been an increasing focus on the treatment of LGBTI refugees and asylum-seekers, resulting in the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) publishing its official guidelines on claims relating to sexual orientation and gender identity in 2012, and the European Union recognising sexual orientation as a cause of persecution in Article 10 of the EU Asylum Qualification Directive 2011 (UNHCR, 2012; EU, 2011).

In terms of seeking asylum in the UK, the UK government has only recently started to record the numbers of asylum claims based on LGBTI persecution. As a result, it is difficult to estimate the numbers of applications on these grounds. However, figures from the Home Office suggest that between July 2015 and March 2017, 3,535 asylum claims based on sexual orientation were made, and 884 of these were granted asylum based on their sexual orientation, which equates to 25 per cent (Home Office, 2017). In contrast, according to UKLGIG (2013) only 18 lesbian and gay men were granted asylum in 2008, and respectively, 25 were granted asylum in 2009. In 2010 the numbers jumped up to 70 before decreasing to 47 in 2013. UKLGIG (2013) commented that 98 to 99 per cent of LGBTI asylum seekers had been refused

asylum and told to go back, often to violently homophobic countries, such as Iran and Uganda (UKLGIG, 2013).

For gay women the situation is worse as they tend to face double discrimination due to their sexuality and their gender. When UKLGIG (2010) reviewed 15 cases of gay female asylum seekers, which were turned down, they found out that internal relocation was seen as a viable option for ten of the cases despite four cases involving forced marriage, and eight cases involving rape, domestic violence or the threat of honour crimes. There seems to be very little recognition of how gay women can experience gender based violence as a form of persecution by family members. Overall, there seemed to be an assumption that anti-gay laws do not apply to gay women (UKLGIG 2010).

Despite the increased attention, LGBTI asylum seekers are still among the most vulnerable groups in the society. The nature of the persecution these asylum seekers commonly experience often results in deep trauma. Making matters worse, they then have to endure an un-empathetic asylum process, which too often draws the wrong conclusions. Furthermore, they may face bullying, abuse and harassment in immigration detention centres in the UK.

## Outline of the chapter

This national chapter looks at the Epsilon project in the two years following the literature review, fieldwork and the establishment of the LGBTI Advisory Board; the implementation of a pilot programme of training for professionals working with LGBTI migrants, and its online equivalent. The first section of the chapter introduces the aims and objectives of the Epsilon project, and it is then followed by a background to the LGBTI migration in the UK. The second section discusses the methodological framework of the project implementation by presenting the qualitative, quantitative and sampling strategy of the project in the UK. The third section demonstrates the key findings from the literature review, fieldwork, LGBTI Advisory Board, and the training tools. The fourth section presents the key practical and policy implications on both the national and European level. Finally, this national chapter concludes with a summary of the Epsilon project in the UK.

# Methodology

This section outlines the methodological framework for the two year Epsilon project in the UK by introducing and justifying the methods used, and by discussing the sampling strategy. Our methodology consisted of a literature review, fieldwork, establishment of an Advisory Board, and training tools, which included an e-learning platform and a face-to-face training. Our research findings are derived from both qualitative and quantitative data.

## Qualitative Strategy

The overall aim of the literature review was to analyse the national context in terms of LGBTI migration in the UK. It aimed to capture the experiences of LGBTI migrants attempting to navigate the UK asylum process whilst trying to settle and build their lives in a new country. Our literature review consisted of a collection of the current academic research and reports from frontline organisations, including research conducted by Stonewall, UKLGIG and Women For Refugee Women. The rationale behind the choice of the organisations was evident, as the above-mentioned organisations predominantly specialise on the treatment of LGBTI asylum seekers by the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) and its predecessor, the UK Border Agency.

The overall aim of the fieldwork was to understand the challenges both the LGBTI migrants and the organisations providing support to LGBTI migrants face in the UK. Furthermore, it aimed to identify good practices that can be built upon. Our fieldwork research was qualitative in nature, and the sample was acquired by using a non-probability sampling method. In total, we conducted 11 semi-structured interviews with both professionals working in the sector and with LGBTI migrants themselves.

One of the core principles of the IARS International Institute is user involvement both in the design and implementation of its projects. This belief was shared by all the Epsilon partners, and in line with our ethos we set up an Advisory Board made up of LGBTI migrants and refugees, alongside academics and professionals working in the field. The overall aim of the LGBTI Advisory Board was to bring together LGBTI migrants, professionals and academics to help guide and direct the Epsilon project. Furthermore, the Advisory Board aimed to strengthen the user-led and needs-based aspects of the project.

The LGBTI Advisory Board was set up at the beginning of the project through referrals from the partner organisations, and IARS has been coordinating the Board's quarterly meetings; sharing project updates; and providing the Board an opportunity to input into every phase of the project. Currently the Advisory Board is made up of 22 individuals from across five countries, and it includes academics, psychologists, social workers, students and LGBTI campaigners.

## Sampling Strategy and Sampling Numbers

As one of the main types of non-probability sampling, convenience sampling was considered the most suitable sampling method for selecting the participants for our project. The rationale behind the choice of the sampling method was apparent, as the sample is simply available to the researcher by the virtue of its accessibility (Ritchie and Lewis, 2014; Bryman, 2004). In other words, this sampling method allowed the sample to be self-selected, as the participants themselves can decide whether to participate in the research (Bryman, 2004; Gray 2018).

An introductory e-mail was sent out to both LGBTI and Immigration organisations. Interviews were then conducted with the staff from respondents, who indicated willingness to participate. The staff interviewed then acted as gate-keepers to LGBTI migrants offering assurances of the project's legitimacy and sending out personalised invitations to individuals or setting up the interviews directly. As such, the research could not have been possible without the engagement and support of: MindOut in Brighton; LGBTI Centre Leicester; Mosaic Youth in London; Asylum Aid and Dorset LGBTI Equality Network.

In terms of the sample size, a number of factors were considered, such as the available time and resources, relevance to the research, non-response rate and ethical considerations (Silverman, 2011; Bryman 2004). Due to the relatively small population size and the sensitivities around the potential involvement in participating in the project, it was highly unlikely to attain a large-scale study. However utilising this particular sampling method has enabled the sample to cover the breadth of the country.

## Quantitative Strategy

The overall aim of the training tools was to increase the knowledge and the skills of professionals, and ultimately, build up their capacity to better respond to the needs of LGBTI refugees. Our research was conducted by utilising quantitative data derived from an e-learning online platform and from a face-to-face training. The training tools were both piloted, and the online training aims to reach 200 adult learners across Europe. The face-to-face training was conducted with nine participants, who were professionals, volunteers, researchers, activists, social workers and senior level management working with asylum seekers and refugees.

# Key Findings

## Literature Review

As our literature review aimed to understand the lived experiences of LGBTI migrants attempting to navigate the UK asylum system whilst trying to settle and build their lives in a new country, our research considered three main areas of interest. These included: the treatment of LGBTI migrants by the UKVI; the continued conflicts between sexual and gender identity and home culture acceptance; and, the barriers to acceptance within the UK gay scene.

## *The Treatment of LGBTI Asylum Seekers by the UK Visa and Immigration*

The project in the UK raised several concerns in regards to the treatment of LGBTI asylum seekers by the UKVI. Our research identified the UKVI as 'passively homophobic' by highlighting the impact of a perceived default position, in which claims were being made on false grounds. There seemed to be little awareness on the part of the UKVI of the situation in claimants' home countries and that the Home Office thought that it was acceptable to send people back to countries, where they are likely to be victims of violence and abuse.

In regards to seeking asylum in the UK, one of the main reasons for refusal of granting asylum by the immigration officers seems to be the default belief that if a claimant could live a discreet lifestyle, they should be sent back home. UKLGIG (2013) found that two thirds of asylum seekers, who were told to go back home, were also told that they could safely relocate to another part of their home country where people were unaware of their sexual orientation (UKLGIG, 2013).

The following thinking is further exemplified by the lack of Home Office information about the levels of human rights abuses against gay men and women in various countries around the world. Even where there are no laws criminalising same-sex behaviour, persecution can still exist (UKLGIG, 2010), and this also means that persecution is particularly hard to prove (Allman et al., 2007; Shuman and Bohmer, 2014). The paradoxical situation is that the higher the threat of persecution, the more hidden someone keeps their lifestyle. Yet, the more hidden they keep their lifestyle; the harder it is to prove the risk of persecution.

Another key reason for refusals relates to the credibility of the claimants, as the Home Office do not believe the claimants' account of their sexual or gender identity. This has put an incredible burden of proof on to asylum seekers, who have to endure intrusive questioning to prove something that is extremely private and personal. For instance, many asylum seekers do not disclose everything at their initial screening meeting due to internalised homophobia (UKLGIG, 2015).

In addition to the credibility of the claimants, there is a concern over the scepticism of the immigration officers, who question the claimant's gender identity or sexuality. UKLGIG (2010) found that 48 per cent of refusals were due to the lack of evidence to prove the claimant's sexuality. This has led to overly intrusive questioning about claimant's sex life (Lewis, 2014; UKLGIG, 2010). The pressure to prove their sexuality has often led to both male and female claimants using video footage of their sexual encounters as evidence in their cases (Lewis, 2014; Shuman and Bohmer, 2014).

In regards to detention, the UK is the only EU state that has not signed up to the EU Return Directive, and as a result, migrants with irregular status can be detained indefinitely. As of 30 June 2016, 3,418 migrants were detained in detention centres and prisons, including 340 gay women (Women for Refugee Women, 2016; UKLGIG, 2015). Between November 2015 and March 2016, Stonewall and UKLGIG conducted 22 in-depth interviews with LGBTI asylum seekers, who were in detention for up to 18 months. They concluded that LGBTI asylum seekers face a high level of discrimination and violence in detention centres. LGBTI migrants are subject to harassment from fellow detainees, and staff, who often lack any understanding of LGBTI issues (Lewis and Naples, 2014),

## *The Impact of Conflicts between Sexual /Gender Identity and Home Culture in the UK*

Even after navigating the immigration system LGBTI migrants face a considerable challenge when trying to settle in the UK. These pressures include trying to reconcile religious, cultural and friendship networks from back home that are often at odds with the individual's sexual identity; as well as navigating the UK LGBTI scene.

For many new migrants the support of family networks in the host country is vital as they look to settle in their new environment. However, LGBTI migrants often face the choice of accessing this support and keeping their sexuality hidden or 'coming out' and facing rejection. This is made even more problematic when LGBTI migrants have a deep commitment to their faith, which is often hostile to their sexual orientation (Doyal, Papparini, and Anderson, 2008). Although, research suggests that opinions soften the longer migrants remain in the UK, religious affiliation can cause negative attitudes to remain (Fitzgerald et al., 2014; Röder and Lubbers, 2016). As a result, many LGBTI migrants live



double lives (El-Tayeb, 2012).

### *Issues with Inclusivity of Migrants within the UK 'Gay Scene'*

Moving to the UK is not necessarily the liberating experience that many once thought it was. Mai (2012) comments that media portrayals lead many LGBTI migrants to see the UK as a utopia of freedom, where they are will be able to finally be themselves. However, the limitations put on them by their immigration status, their lack of English skills and non-recognition of their pre-existing professional qualifications means this is far from the truth (Mai, 2012). LGBTI migrants often feel obliged to feel happy that they have arrived at a safe place civilised place, yet their treatment and experiences of living in the west are often far from satisfying (Murray 2014). One of the initial barriers to this freedom relates to difficulties accessing the UK gay scene.

Many LGBTI spaces within cities have been crafted around a white privilege based on cosmopolitan consumption that assumes a particular level of income (El-Tayeb, 2012; Haritaworn, 2012; Harris, 2016; Mai, 2012; Martin and Manalansan, 2005; Rushbrook, 2002). This means that LGBTI migrants often lack the necessary economic capital to engage with their host country's LGBTI culture. Thus, LGBTI migrants find themselves in a situation where they are; unable to fully and freely integrate into diaspora from their home culture due to the fear of persecution and rejection (Röder and Lubbers, 2016), unable to integrate fully into the mainstream host culture due to their immigration status, and lastly, unable to assimilate into the host LGBTI culture due to the prohibitive costs (Alexander, 2018).

## Fieldwork

In regards to the challenges the LGBTI migrants and organisations trying to support them face, the data collected from our fieldwork broadly mirrored the findings of the literature review. This was evident in relation to the impact of the UKVI's procedures on the wellbeing of LGBTI migrants, and in terms of the struggles that migrants still face in reconciling their cultural and sexual identity when settling in the UK. In addition, it was also apparent from the data that LGBTI migrants may feel more comfortable receiving immigration support from LGBTI specialist organisations rather than those set up to specifically provide immigration support. Other key findings from the fieldwork and consultation data included:

### *Concerns over the UK Visa and Immigration's treatment of LGBT migrants*

According to our fieldwork data, jurisprudence is still not being applied. For instance, if an asylum claimant indicates that he or she would like to keep their sexuality discreet when back in their home country, the UKVI case managers are still refusing asylum on this basis. Discreetness regarding one's sexuality does not provide grounds for case dismissal. Our fieldwork also identified a failure to assess the second pair of eyes policy. Although, Asylum Aid welcomed the process of getting a second case manager to review all LGBTI asylum claims to ensure a correct decision is being made, there is no data to assess whether this process is improving the decision making process.

In addition, inaccurate Home Office Country policy and information notes became evident during our fieldwork. A key reason for wrong asylum decisions being reached is the amount of inaccurate Home Office Country policy and information notes. For example, Blue Diamond, which is a Nepalese LGBTI Human Rights Organisation, has written to the UKVI Director General to inform about the human rights abuses suffered by the LGBTI community in Nepal. However, over a year later the UKVI have not responded and still consider Nepal a safe country to return. However, the extract below by one of participants demonstrate the reality:

We have the rights in Nepal, but we don't have to live with the law do we, we have to live with society and with our family.  
(John – LGBTI migrant from Nepal)

There was a pervasive sense from both professionals working in the sector and LGBTI migrants themselves that the UKVI unfairly discriminate against LGBTI claimants. One respondent, who coordinates an LGBTI network and advises on LGBTI immigration identified the situation as the UKVI being 'passively homophobic.' This would manifest itself in several ways, such as the assumption of false claims, out-dated and stereotypical views on homosexuality, the willing-

ness to send claimants back to dangerous areas and leave them in limbo, the use of detention, and no recognition that people move for love.

There is a feeling that... You are guilty until proven innocent. (*Dennis – Co Manager, LGBTI Centre Leicester*)

Because your sexuality is different to everyone else's that's the only thing people think you are. You're so different that your difference is you. (*Joan – LGBTI Migrant*)

They were physically assaulted repeatedly by other women in detention due to her non-gender conformity and were repeatedly told that they would end up in hell. (*Jason – Service Manager, Mind Out*)

## *Cultural and Integration Issues*

Alongside the procedural concerns on how the UKVI operate, there were also concerns raised with more cultural and integration issues. Similarly to the literature review, our fieldwork also identified a conflict between cultural and sexual identity. Even after arriving in the UK, the LGBTI migrants face considerable conflict and discrimination from both their host and home culture. One participant described the situation as:

[You] are being rejected because of who you are by your home country and family and then rejected by the country that is meant to protect you. (*Lukasz – LGBTI migrant and Centre Manager, Mosaic Youth*)

Another concern raised from the fieldwork was the need for ESOL Support, as without adequate English many LGBTI migrants do not have the skills and confidence to connect to networks beyond those of their home culture. All the LGBT migrants interviewed spoke about the fact that accessing the right kind of support was almost impossible without adequate language skills, as demonstrated by the extract below:

It makes finding those resources a lot more difficult, let alone LGBTI resources. (*Joanna LGBTI migrant from Mexico*)

## *Service Delivery Concerns*

There were two main concerns regarding current service delivery, which were raised by service providers in addition to the challenge of securing enough funding to match the demand for services. Many of the organisations raised issues relating to the added strain that the shrinking state social service sector has placed on their own delivery, with their staff having to deal with increasing numbers of clients with complex needs. Furthermore, the LGBTI organisations identified that their asylum work has increased significantly over recent years, despite their organisations not being set up to deal with such issues. The data suggests that LGBTI asylum seekers feel more comfortable being supported by LGBTI rather than asylum organisations. There were also indications that LGBTI claimants feel that their case will be considered more credible if they are supported by an LGBTI organisation.

## *Discrimination within asylum specialist services*

Staff at LGBTI specialist organisations commented that one of the key reasons why more and more LGBTI asylum seekers are seeking support from them rather than asylum specialist organisations was due to the perceived discrimination that they may be subject to or have received. There were two main reasons for this, including the employment of asylum seekers and refugees as staff members and volunteers and the lack of awareness by staff and volunteers.

## *Skill level of LGBTI organisations*

In regards to the skill level of the LGBTI organisations, the preference of LGBTI migrants to seek support from LGBTI-focused organisations rather than immigration-focused organisations has posed capacity issues for these organisations. All of the LGBTI organisations involved in the research indicated that this type of work was not something that they

had made a conscious decision to get involved in, but their services had developed organically through an increase in need. All organisations indicated that there had been a steady rise in the numbers of people seeking their help relating to immigration issues over recent years. This has led staff members without any specialist training or expertise having to deal with highly complex cases and be supporting asylum claimants over many years, without any specialist training or expertise.

We are a mental health service and immigration and asylum work is a very complex area, we have done very well but as it is not our core area we do not feel totally equipped, there is a gap in our expertise. I have tried to get training for our advocacy team, but with no success. (*Jason – Service Manager, Mind Out*)

## The LGBTI Advisory Board

As coordinated by the IARS International Institute, the LGBTI Advisory Board has been able to provide consistent and thorough feedback throughout the duration of the Epsilon project in order to ensure a bottom up approach for the project. The Advisory Board has contributed significantly in both the design and implementation of the project.

During the first phase, the Board provided substantial feedback on the country chapters, and it concluded that the findings clearly demonstrated the needs of each partnering country, and emphasised the common issues. Furthermore, as part of the fieldwork, the Board advised on the semi-structured interview questions for both professionals working in the sector and for LGBTI migrants. The Board emphasised the importance of the correct and consistent use of terminology and the sensitivities around the interview scenarios.

During the second phase of the project, the Board advised on the topics that should be covered in the training, and reviewed the training materials during the productions stage. The Board concluded that similarly the correct use of terminology was highly important during the training. The Board fed back extensively on the modules of the training, and provided several significant improvements. For example, they advised that the content should be interactive and tailored to each target group. In particular, the Board's input and contributions in the training tools have been one of the key strengths of the project.

## Face-to-Face Training

In order to increase the capacity of professionals to be more responsive to the needs of LGBTI migrants and as part of our training tools, we organised a CPD accredited face-to-face training day on the 10th of May 2018 at Canada Water Library, 21 Surrey Quays Rd, London, SE16 7AR.

The introductory face-to-face training was aimed for professionals and volunteers, who may come into contact with LGBTI refugees and migrants in their field of work. The training provided information on the legal frameworks to understand refugee protection and why LGBTI people may need international protection. The training also provided an introduction to SOGI Claims procedure in the UK and to some of challenges relating to specific SOGI Claims. In addition, the training stressed the importance of working together with migrant organisations and groups on LGBTI related topics. The training was delivered by two trainers to nine participants.

Overall our training tools, which aimed to increase the knowledge and skills of professionals and build up their capacity to better respond to the needs of LGBTI migrants, were positively received and reviewed by the participants. Based on the quantitative data derived from the face-to-face training, our evaluation concluded with several findings.

**Figure 1.** Knowledge levels before and after receiving training by all participants, 1=low, 10=high.

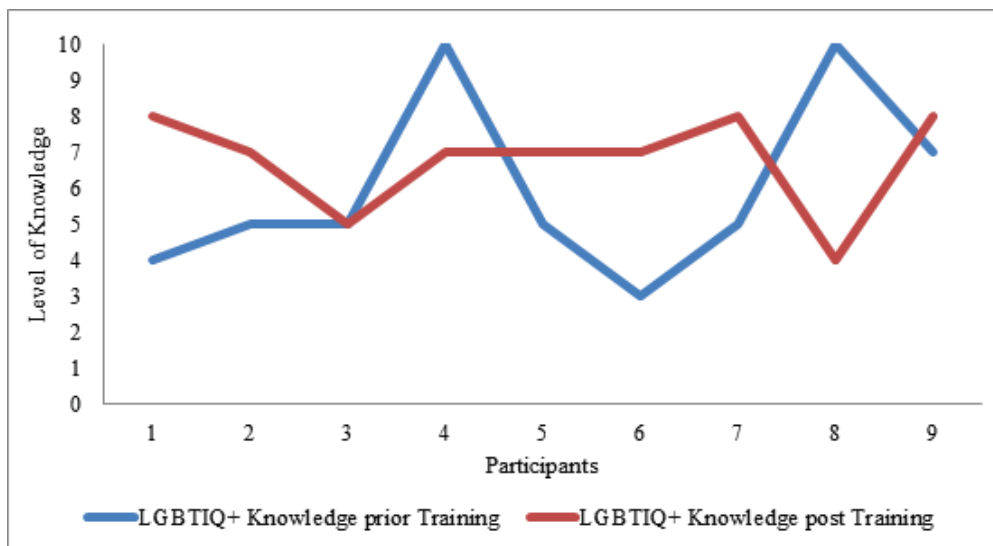


Figure 1 presents the knowledge levels about LGBTI refugees before and after receiving the training. As shown, the knowledge levels have increased steadily after the training by almost all participants. The data from two participants indicates a decrease in knowledge before and after the training. A one way of explaining this could be having a higher confidence level prior the training.

**Figure 2.** Average knowledge levels before and after receiving training by all participants, 1=low, 10=high.

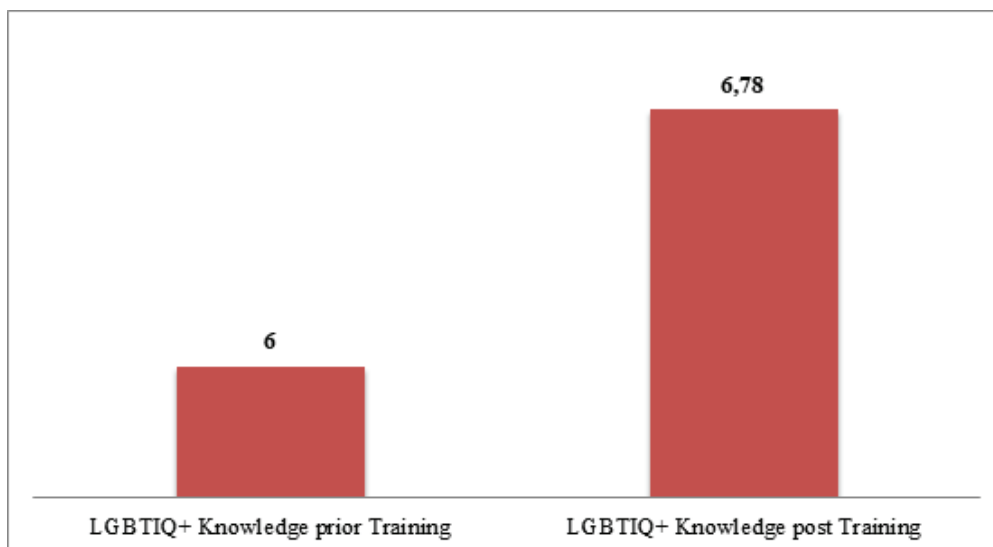


Figure 2 displays the average knowledge levels before and after the training. As demonstrated, on average the participants felt that the training has improved their knowledge on LGBTIQ+ refugees. In total, the participants' knowledge about LGBTI refugees increased 13 per cent after receiving the training.

**Figure 3.** Breakdown of the training meeting the expectations by all participants.

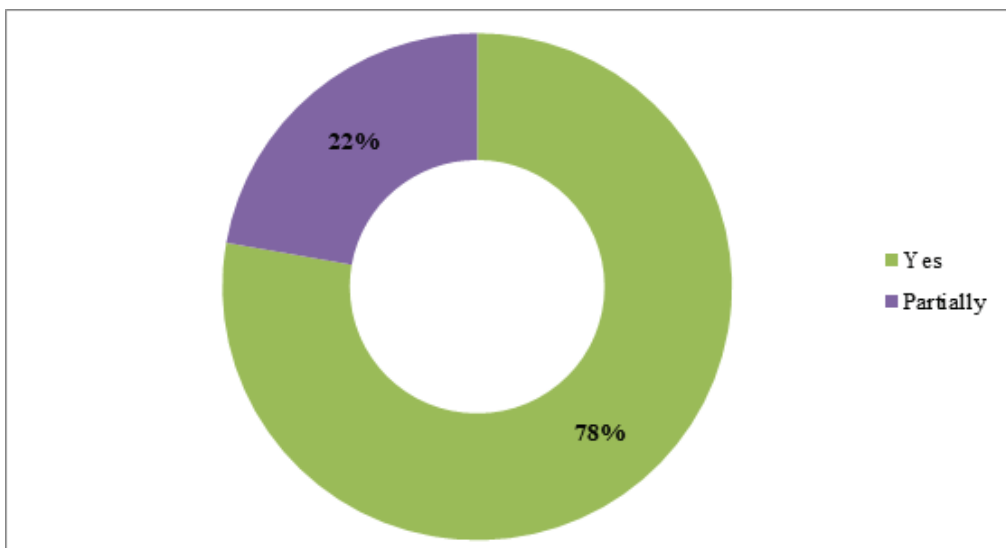


Figure 3 demonstrates the breakdown of the training meeting the participants' expectations. 78 per cent of the participants agreed that the training has met their expectations, whereas, 22 per cent agreed that the training has done so partially. Overall, none of the participants felt that the training had not met their expectations.

**Figure 4.** Overall satisfaction on the training by all participants.

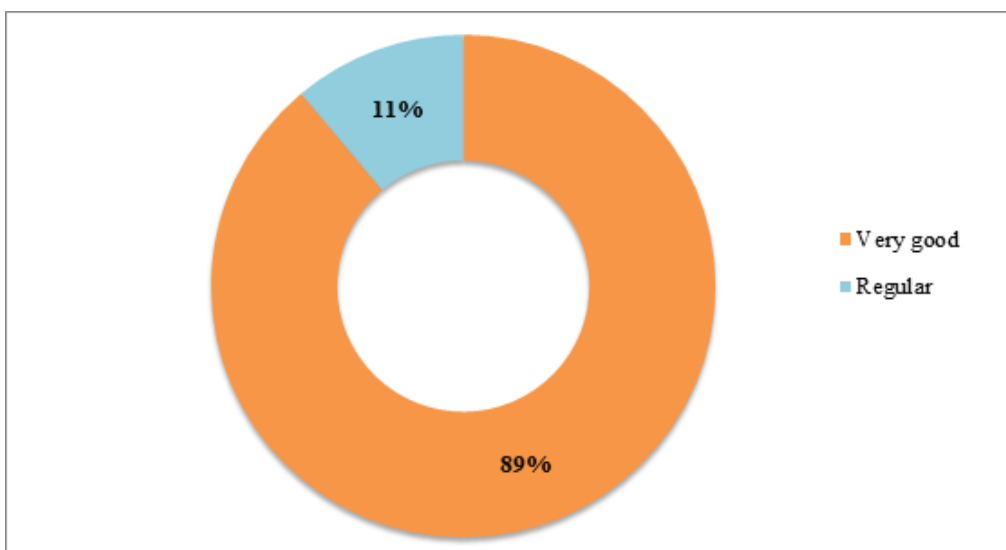


Figure 4 presents the overall satisfaction levels on the training. As indicated, 89 per cent of the participants considered the quality of the training very good, whereas, 11 per cent considered the quality of the training regular. None of the participants considered the quality as poor.

**Figure 5.** Overall satisfaction to the trainers delivering the training by all participants.

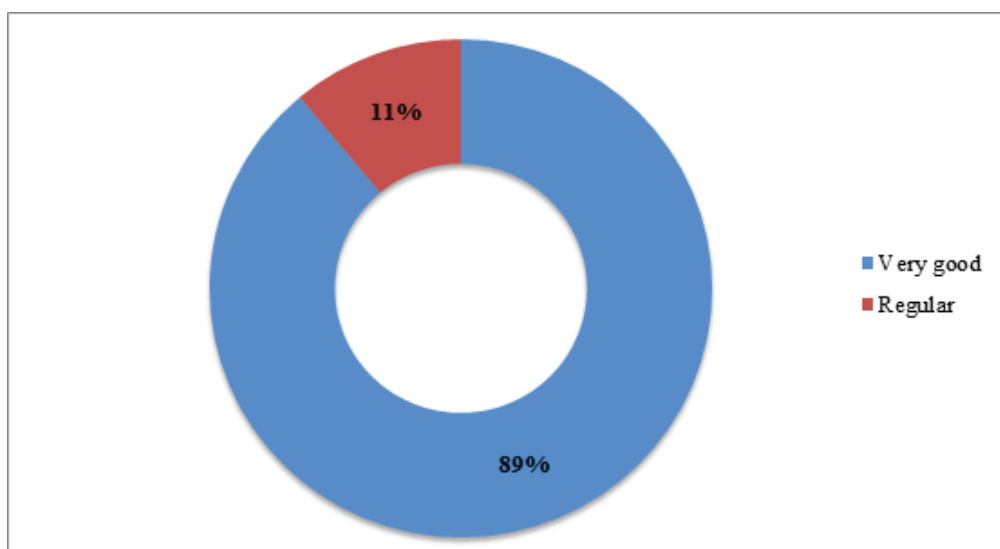


Figure 5 displays the overall satisfaction to the trainers, who delivered the training. Similarly to the quality of the training, 89 per cent of the participants considered the quality of the trainers very good. 11 per cent considered the quality of the trainers regular. None of the participants considered the quality of the trainers as poor.

**Figure 6.** Breakdown of the satisfaction to the dedicated time for the training by all participants.

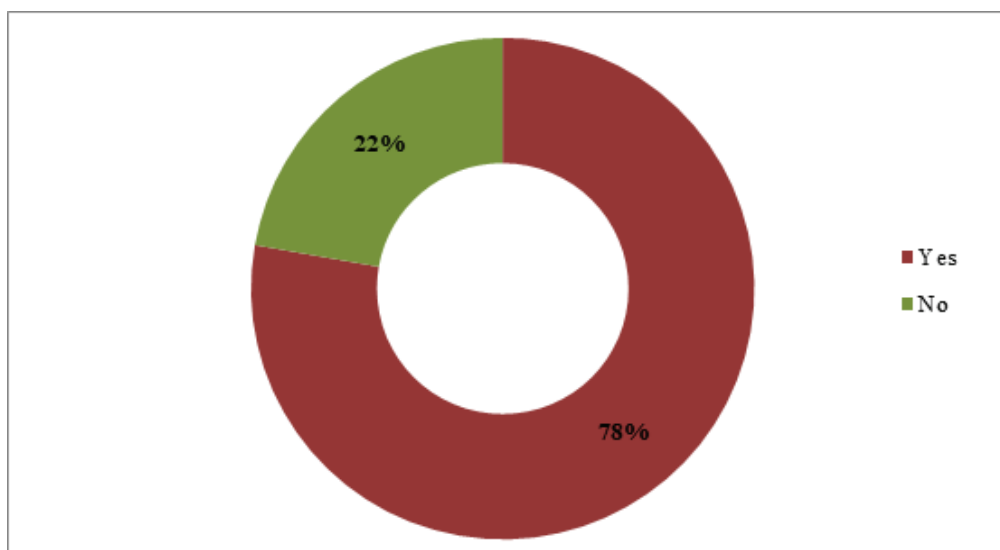


Figure 6 demonstrates the breakdown of the satisfaction to the dedicated time for training. As shown, 78 per cent of the participants considered the time dedicated for each topic was appropriate, whereas, 22 per cent did not think the dedicated time was appropriate to cover each topic. In regards to the training methodologies, all the participants agreed that the methodologies used during the training were appropriate.

## E-learning

Overall, the online training, which aimed to increase the knowledge and capacity of professionals and adult learners to improve their support for LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees and prevent discrimination and abuse towards them, was positively received and reviewed by the participants.

The e-learning platform was piloted in 2017, and it will be disseminated to 200 adult learners across Europe. The platform consists of three distinctive modules, namely *Being LGBTI*, *LGBTI Asylum Seekers and Refugees*, and *LGBTI Inclusive Environment for Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees*. The overall aims of the online training were to expose users to the changes in legislation, which point towards development; but more importantly address the areas of discrimination that the law has not been able to prevent.

In addition, the online training aimed to draw attention to the experiences and barriers faced by LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees when making claims, and to outline key procedural elements to SOGI claims, as well as providing an insight on what makes a successful application. Lastly, the online training aimed to direct participants to a diversity of support systems in the form of organisations for LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees available in the UK.

The LGBTI Advisory Board contributed significantly during the design and implementation of the online training. For instance, the Board advised on the training content and reviewed the training materials. According to the participants, some of the most positively reviewed aspects of the online training were the tailor made and interactive lectures and active learning techniques, which were recommended by the LGBTI Advisory Board.

## Key Practical and Policy Implications and Recommendations for the UK and Europe

As a result of a successful design and implementation of Epsilon project in the UK, the project and its findings have had several implications both on a national and European level. The UK project directly involved a number of LGBTI migrants and refugees in the design, delivery and monitoring of the project, which has had an important impact on the project's emphasis. In terms of our internal knowledge and experience, IARS has fundamentally increased their organisational knowledge through the cross-learning training and the two-year collaboration with European partners. Our training tools, including online and face-to-face training, have both had a significant impact on the adult learners, as the project has identified an impact gap on both national and European level in relation to LGBTI migrants and refugees.

Based on the review of the literature, fieldwork and consultation and training outcomes, our research has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed at a practical and at a policy level.

As part of our practical suggestions, we recommend:

1. *Better equalities awareness within the LGBTI scene to improve migrant integration*; although not pervasive, there were indications that the UK LGBTI Scene can be both discriminatory and exclusionary. Exclusions are usually economic, however, the discrimination is often due to prejudice especially among older generations. More work needs to be done for LGBTI migrants to be accepted within UK based LGBTI communities.
2. *LGBTI groups should receive immigration training*; more and more LGBTI specialist organisations are being called upon to help LGBTI migrants with immigration cases with very little training. This change seems to be driven by LGBTI migrants feeling more comfortable receiving support from those who understand their sexual or gender identity rather than specialist immigration organisations. This could be achieved through either face-to-face or online training.
3. *Immigration support organisations and immigration solicitors should receive training to increase their LGBTI sensitivity*; there is a perception that immigration specialist organisations are not always sensitive to LGBTI issues. This is partly due to the experiences of LGBTI migrants when accessing these services and also due to the perceived perception of LGBTI migrants who see people from their home country working for the organisation and fear that they will act in an insensitive way.
4. *The Epsilon programme should be part of the basic training for all service providers and organisations working*

*with migrants*; as it can be problematic to identify who is an LGBTI migrant, and also LGBTI migrants should be involved in the training in order to understand the needs of this vulnerable group.

As part of our policy suggestions, we recommend:

1. *Revise the way LGBTI Asylum claims are processed*; although the research has identified that the Home Office has made some progress in the way in which it handles LGBTI asylum claims, a great deal more progress is needed. Two of the main areas that need addressing urgently are the use of detention and the culture of assuming a claimant is lying.
2. *Quicker decision making*; whilst waiting for decisions on asylum and immigration decisions. LGBTI migrants are at risk of being abused physically and emotionally on top of the anxiety of having someone else decide on your future. Cases where someone is at increased risk of mental or physical harm should therefore be dealt with quicker.
3. *Review and amend country information*; there is a disparity between the experiences of asylum seekers in their home country and Home Office in country guidelines. The Home Office should update its information to better respect the experiences of LGBTI migrants, rather than simply relying on official positions of particular countries.
4. *Invest in ESOL*; a good standard of English is essential if LGBTI migrants are going to socialise outside of their home culture. Cuts to ESOL provision and the LGBTI insensitive way it can be delivered makes it difficult for those who have poor levels of English to access training courses. Additional resources should be invested to make ESOL courses more widely available and more should be done to make ESOL provision more LGBTI appropriate.
5. *Invest in Identity Support*; currently LGBTI migrants often face the prospect of adopting a western culture at the expense of their home culture and support networks in an attempt to fully embrace their sexuality or gender identity. In reality this means choosing one identity at the expense of the other. There needs to be more support to help LGBTI migrants understand how to embrace both.

## Summary and Conclusions

This national chapter has been produced on behalf of the IARS International Institute as part of the Epsilon project that seeks to draw on the experiences of LGBTI migrants in order to develop educational and training resources to support organisations in providing better services to LGBTI migrants. The key aim of the project was to improve the adult education provision in the UK by designing and implementing a user-led methodology and evidence-based, user-led educational tools.

Our methodological framework consisted of a literature based research, fieldwork and consultation of the LGBTI Advisory Board, and training tools, which included an e-learning platform and a face-to-face training. The research findings were derived from both qualitative and quantitative data. Our research considered three main areas of interest: the treatment of LGBTI migrants by the UK Visa and Immigration; continued conflicts between sexual and gender identity and home culture acceptance, and; barriers to acceptance within the UK gay scene. Similarly, the research data from our fieldwork broadly mirrored the findings of the literature review. Furthermore, our fieldwork found out that LGBTI migrants feel more comfortable receiving immigration support from LGBTI specialist organisations rather than those set up to specifically provide immigration support.

The LGBTI Advisory Board contributed significantly during both the design and implementation of the project by providing advice and review. Especially, the Advisory Board's input in the training tools has been one of the key strengths



of this project. Our training tools, including face-to-face and online training, were positively received and reviewed by all the participants.

Our research identified a number of issues that need to be addressed at a policy and a practical level. Some of our key implications and recommendations for the UK and Europe included: better equalities awareness within the LGBTI scene, LGBTI groups should receive immigration training, immigration support organisations and solicitors should receive training to increase their LGBTI sensitivity, the Epsilon project should be part of the basic training for all service providers and organisations working with migrants, revision of the LGBTI Asylum claim process, review and amend country information and investments in ESOL and Identity Support.

Through the project's various intellectual outputs, we believe that policy makers working in the field of migration, equality and diversity can increase their knowledge and experience. In order to have a long lasting impact, we expect that our findings will contribute to a more equal and fair Europe, where LGBTI refugees and migrants are better treated and integrated in the European countries.

# ANNEXES

# Annex 1

## About The IARS

### International Institute

The effective engagement of the local young people and the community is critical to the phase 2 of the project. By involving the key stakeholders, we can identify the underlying causes of the drug crime and gang activity around St James Street area and develop effectively targeted responses that may reduce the problem (Ralphs, Medina and Aldridge, 2009). IARS has a rich experience in engaging and involving young people from vulnerable backgrounds in research and evaluation. As a result of our experience, we recognise and understand the risks and the challenges of working with such groups and we have developed a range of strategies (in addition to our strong ethical standards for research outlined below) to ensure that these risks are clearly identified, defined and addressed at the early stages of the research design in order to ensure the success of our project's research objectives.

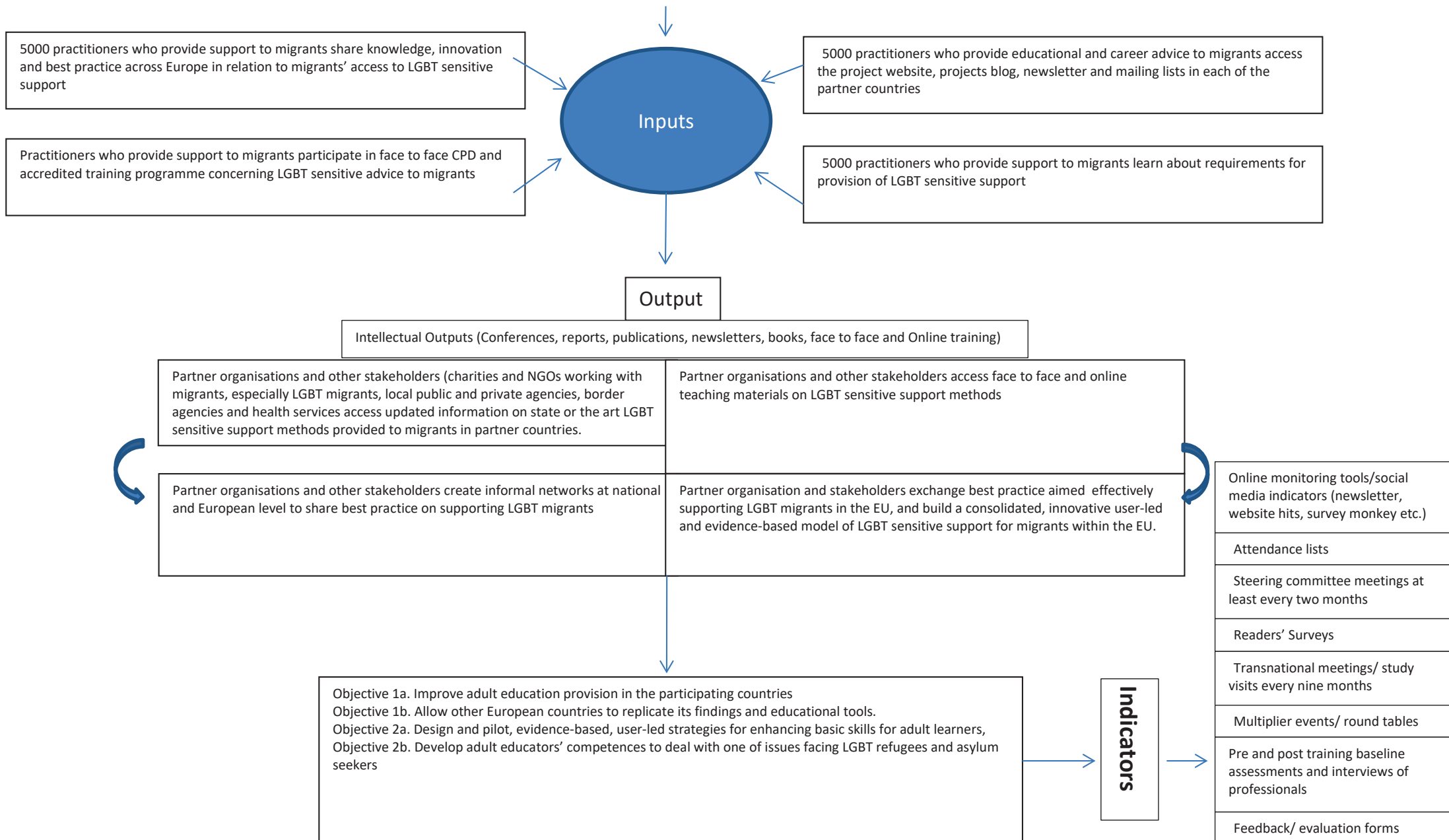
The [IARS](#) International Institute is a user-led charity with a mission to give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society. Led by its founder and Director, Professor Dr. Theo Gavrielides, and staffed with an expert and dedicated team of researchers, interns and volunteers, IARS achieves its charitable aims by producing evidence-based solutions to current social problems, sharing best practice and by supporting young people and the community to shape decision making. IARS is an international expert in user-led research, evaluation, human rights and inclusion, citizenship, criminal justice and restorative justice. We deliver our charitable mission:

- By carrying out action research and evaluation that is independent, credible, focused and current
- By acting as a network that brings people and ideas together, communicates best practice and encourages debates on current social problems
- By supporting the individual (with an emphasis on young people) to carry out their own initiatives to shape decision-making
- By being an authoritative, independent and evidence-based voice on current social policy matters
- By thorough, high quality user-led (youth-led) evaluations, increasing the effectiveness of how organisations work and deliver

IARS was set up by volunteers as a user-led and user-focused think tank with an emphasis on changing society from the bottom up through evidence. IARS' stated vision is "a society in which everyone is given a chance to actively participate in social problem solving". Our Mission is "to give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society". We do this by producing evidence-based solutions to current social problems, sharing best practice, and by supporting young people and the community to shape decision-making from the bottom-up. We believe that the best solutions to social problems are found in those who are directly affected by them. We were founded upon the principles of user & civic participation; restorative justice and dialogue; individual empowerment and responsibility.

## Annex 2 – Epsilon Project Theory of Change (ToC)

From September 2016 – August 2018 strengthen the skills of 5000 professionals in 5 partner countries through 5 partner organisations (IARS from UK, Anziani E Non Solo from Italy, KMOP from Greece, Movisie from Netherlands and CARDET from Cyprus) who provide support to EU migrants, with a focus on LGBT sensitivity



# Annex 3

## Epsilon UK Training

### Feedback Form

1. What were your expectations before attending this training?

2. Please rate your knowledge about LGBTIQ+ refugees prior attending this training giving a score from 1 to 10 (1= low, 10= high):

3. Has the training met your expectations?

Yes

No

Partially

Explain:

4. Please rate your current knowledge about LGBTIQ+ refugees giving a score from 1 to 10 (1= low, 10= high):

5. Can you list the three most important things you have learnt from this training?

#1

#2

#3

6. Overall, how was the training?

Very good

Good

Regular

Poor

7. What is your overall opinion about the trainer(s)?

Very good

Good

Regular

Poor

8. Do you think that the training methodologies used were appropriate?

Yes

No

Explain:

9. Do you think that the time dedicated to each topic was appropriate?

Yes

No

Explain:

10. Define the training workshop in 3 quick sentences:

The best of the training workshop was...

The worse of the training workshop was...

If I had chance to participate in the design of the training activities, I would...

# Annex 4

## The UK Case Study: London Friend & Say It Loud Partnership

### DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

Established in 1972 London Friend is the UK's oldest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans charity. It offers health and mental well-being support to the LGBTIQ+ community in and around London. Say It Loud was originally founded in 1994 in Uganda and then reformed in the UK, in 2010, as a London based volunteer-run peer-support group for LGBTIQ+ Refugees and Asylum seekers.

London Friend met Say It Loud during London Pride and offered them free meeting space. London Friend did not have experience working with LGBTIQ+ refugees but through collaborating with Say It Loud they saw an opportunity to make their services more inclusive. First, just by using London Friend space, members from Say It Loud started feeling more comfortable and welcomed in their premises and some started accessing counselling services offered by the organisation.

As more LGBTIQ+ refugees began to access counselling service, London Friend identified a training need to support people, who had experienced persecution and torture, and arranged training on this for counsellors as well as training on working with LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees for other staff and volunteers.

In early 2017 London Friend secured a one-year grant to support Say It Loud work. This fund enabled them to pay for a part-time Say It Loud Coordinator, who is a gay refugee from Uganda and the original founder of the group. The programme provides monthly educational workshops; a monthly social group; weekly conversational English classes; and access to counselling.

### WHAT DID THE ORGANISATION DO TO SET UP THE PROJECT AND THE KINDS OF RESOURCES THEY HAVE USED?

As more LGBT refugees began to access counselling service, London Friend identified a training need to support people, who had experienced persecution and torture, and arranged training on this for counsellors as well as training on working with LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees for other staff and volunteers.

London Friend has also been actively seeking to increase the number of LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees volunteering with London Friend. Most volunteers they have recruited are LGBTIQ+ refugees, who have been service users, progressing to volunteer following their positive experiences. They have also worked to integrate the group into wider organisational activities, such as at Pride, where they have a mix of volunteers, service users, staff and other supporters. Their group was 150 people last year, the largest ever.

## WHAT RESULTS HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED?

Through London Friend and Say It Loud partnership they were able to secure a funding for Say It Loud project, which now covers salary of the Say It Loud Coordinator (who is a gay refugee himself) on a part-time basis for one year.

London Friend also has six LGBTIQ+ refugees and four (non-European) LGBTIQ+ migrants. Volunteers are helping to deliver the asylum seeker and refugee programme, but also supporting the delivery of other services, such as weekly LGBT drop-in, and older LGBT people's support group.



# Bibliography

Alexander, J. (2018). You're so different that your difference is you. Vol: 8, *Youth Voice Journal*, page 14-31 Online ISSN: 2056-2969

Bryman, A. (2004). *Quantity and quality in social research*. London: Routledge.

Collier, B. (2007) *Country of Origin Information and Women: Researching Gender and Persecution in the Context of Asylum and Human Rights Claims*. Asylum Aid. London.

Creswell, J. and Creswell, J. (2018). *Research design*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Doyal, L., Paparini, S and Anderson, J. (2008). *Elvis Died and I was Born': Black African Men Negotiating Same-Sex Desire in London in Sexualities*. Vol. 11(1/2): 171–192 doi: 10.1177/1363460707085469

El-Tayeb, F. (2012). Gays who cannot properly be gay: Queer Muslims in the neoliberal European city. *European Journal of Women's Studies*. Vol. 19, 1: pp. 79-95.

European Union: Council of the European Union, Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted (recast), 20 December 2011, OJ L. 337/9-337/26; 20.12.2011, 2011/95/EU

Giametta, C. (2014). Rescued subjects: The question of religiosity for non-heteronormative asylum seekers in the UK. *Sexualities*. 2014 17: 583-599, doi:10.1177/1363460714526130

Gray, D. (2018). *Doing research in the real world*. London: SAGE.

Haritaworn, J. (2012). Women's rights, gay rights and anti-Muslim racism in Europe: Introduction. *European Journal of Women's Studies*. 19: 73-78, doi:10.1177/135050681142638

Harris, L. (2016). Body Control: The Neocolonial Displacement of the Multiple Minority Queer Body. *Urban Space Humanity & Society*. Vol. 40(2) 133-154 doi: 10.1177/0160597616643877

Hearn, J., Strid, S., Husu, L., and Verloo M. (2016). Interrogating violence against women and state violence policy: Gendered intersectionalities and the quality of policy in the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. *Current Sociology* DOI:10.1177/0011392116639220.

Home Office. (2014). The Home Office response to the Independent Chief Inspector's report: "An Investigation into the Home Office's Handling of Asylum Claims Made on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation". Home Office. London.

Home Office. (2017). *Asylum claims on the basis of sexual orientation*. London. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/asylum-claims-on-the-basis-of-sexual-orientation>

International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA). (2017). *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2017 - A World Survey Of Sexual Orientation Laws: Criminalisation, Protection And Recognition*. Geneva: ILGA. Retrieved from <https://ilga.org/ilga-state-sponsored-homophobia-report-2017>

- Lewis, R. (2014). *Gay? Prove it*: The politics of queer anti-deportation activism.
- Lewis, R. and Naples, N. (2014). Introduction: Queer migration, asylum, and displacement. *Sexualities*. 17: 911-918, doi:10.1177/1363460714552251
- Mai, D. (2012). The fractal queerness of non-heteronormative migrants working in the UK sex industry. *Sexualities*. 15(5/6) 570–585 doi: 10.1177/1363460712445981
- Murray, D. (2014). The (not so) straight story: Queering migration narratives of sexual orientation and gendered identity refugee claimants. *Sexualities*. 17: 451-471, doi:10.1177/1363460714524767
- Ritchie, J. and Lewis, J. (2014). *Qualitative research practice*. London [u.a.]: SAGE.
- Shuman, A. and Bohmer, C. (2014). Gender and cultural silences in the political asylum process. *Sexualities*. Vol. 17(8) 939–957 doi: 10.1177/1363460714552262
- Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- UKLGIG. (2010). *Failing The Grade: Home Office initial decisions on lesbian and gay claims for asylum*. London.
- UKLGIG. (2013). *Missing The Mark: Decision making on Lesbian, Gay (Bisexual, Trans and Intersex) Asylum Claims*. London.
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Guidelines on International Protection No. 9: Claims to Refugee Status based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity within the context of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*, 23 October 2012, HCR/GIP/12/01
- Volker, T. (2013). Ensuring Protection to LGBTII Persons of Concern. *Int J Refugee Law*. Vol.25 (1): 120-129. doi: 10.1093/ijrl/eet005

# July 2018, London (United Kingdom) Closing International Conference



[Visit the conference page](#)

Ελένη Σακελλαρίου,

Κέντρο Μέρμνας Οικογένειας και Παιδιού (ΚΜΟΠ)

## Περίληψη

Στόχος της παρούσας έκθεσης είναι να παρουσιάσει τα κύρια ευρήματα από τις δράσεις του έργου “EpsiLon - Equipping Professionals for Supporting LGBT Refugees” που υλοποιήθηκαν στην Ελλάδα, το χρονικό διάστημα από 1 Σεπτεμβρίου 2016 έως 31 Αυγούστου 2018. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, παρουσιάζονται τα αποτελέσματα από σχετική έρευνα που πραγματοποιήθηκε στην Ελλάδα, στην οποία αποτυπώνεται η τρέχουσα κατάσταση αναφορικά με τους μετανάστες και τους πρόσφυγες, καθώς και τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα, ενώ δίνεται ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στις συνθήκες ζωής και στις πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων. Επίσης, παρουσιάζονται τα αποτελέσματα από την πιλοτική εφαρμογή του εκπαιδευτικού προγράμματος του EpsiLon, η οποία πραγματοποιήθηκε σε επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές οι οποίοι δουλεύουν με ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες & πρόσφυγες/ αιτούντες άσυλο. Η έκθεση αυτή αποτελεί μέρος της ηλεκτρονικής έκδοσης Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Migrant: A European Story of Discrimination and Empowerment: Educational Resource, στην οποία περιλαμβάνονται τα κύρια ευρήματα του έργου EpsiLon από όλες τις συμμετέχουσες χώρες, δηλαδή το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο, την Ολλανδία, την Ελλάδα, την Κύπρο και την Ιταλία.

Λέξεις Κλειδιά: μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες, ΛΟΑΤ (Λεσβίες, Ομοφυλόφιλοι, Αμφισεξουαλικοί, Τρανς), ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, επαγγελματίες που εργαζονται με ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες

# Εισαγωγή

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Ύπατης Αρμοστείας του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες (UNHCR, 2017a), το 2015 έφτασαν στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση 1.015.078 μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, ενώ ο αντίστοιχος αριθμός το 2016 ήταν 362.376 άτομα. Η Ευρώπη ήρθε αντιμέτωπη με τη μεγαλύτερη μαζική μετακίνηση ανθρώπων μετά τον Β΄ Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο. Η πλειονότητα των προσφύγων και μεταναστών φτάνει στην Ευρώπη δια θαλάσσης, κυρίως στην Ελλάδα - 1.030.173 άτομα το 2015 και το 2016 (UNHCR, 2017b) - και στην Ιταλία - 335.278 άτομα το 2015 και το 2016 (UNHCR, 2017c) - και έπονται η Ισπανία, η Κύπρος και η Μάλτα. Ανάμεσα στις αιτίες μετακίνησης τόσο μεγάλου αριθμού προσφύγων και μεταναστών συγκαταλέγονται καταρχάς ο Συριακός εμφύλιος πόλεμος, η συνεχιζόμενη βία στο Αφγανιστάν και το Ιράκ, αλλά και στη συστηματική παραβίαση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στις χώρες της Βόρειας και Υποσαχάριας Αφρικής. Συνεπώς, η άσκηση βίας τόσο σε συλλογικό όσο και σε ατομικό επίπεδο είναι ουσιαστικά η κινητήρια δύναμη που αναγκάζει αυτά τα άτομα να εγκαταλείψουν τις εστίες τους. Επιπλέον, η καταπάτηση βασικών ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, όπως είναι η ελευθερία στην επιλογή σεξουαλικής ταυτότητας αποτελεί έναν ακόμα σοβαρό λόγο που οδηγεί πολλά άτομα ΛΟΑΤ (Λεσβίες, Ομοφυλόφιλοι, Αμφιφυλόφιλοι και Τρανς) να εγκαταλείψουν τις χώρες τους, δεδομένου ότι υφίστανται διακρίσεις, υπόκεινται βία και συχνά διώκονται εξαιτίας του σεξουαλικού τους προσανατολισμού.

Τα κράτη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και της σύγχρονης Ευρώπης έχουν υπογράψει Συμβάσεις και Οδηγίες που στοχεύουν στην προστασία όλων των ατόμων που διώκονται και δέχονται διακρίσεις λόγω σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού. Χαρακτηριστικά παραδείγματα είναι το δικαίωμα σεβασμού της ιδιωτικής και οικογενειακής ζωής της Ευρωπαϊκής Σύμβασης Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου (1950), καθώς και η Οδηγία 2004/83 του Συμβουλίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, σύμφωνα με την οποία όσοι αντιμετωπίζουν διώξεις για το σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό και την ταυτότητα φύλου τους χαρακτηρίζονται ως πρόσφυγες. Δεν υπάρχουν ακριβή δεδομένα για τον αριθμό των ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων και των μεταναστών στην Ευρώπη. Το Βέλγιο είναι η μόνη χώρα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης που συλλέγει και δημοσιεύει τον αριθμό των ΛΟΑΤ αιτούντων άσυλο. Το χρονικό διάστημα από το 2008 έως το 2012 έλαβε συνολικά 67.576 αποφάσεις χορήγησης ασύλου, από τις οποίες οι 2.992 ή το 4,43% βασίστηκαν στο σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό ή την ταυτότητα φύλου των αιτούντων (Gartner, 2014). Αν αυτός ο μέσος όρος παρεκταθεί στο συνολικό αριθμό των αιτούντων άσυλο στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση το 2015, θα μπορούσε να υπολογιστεί ότι ο ετήσιος αριθμός των ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων στην Ευρώπη είναι περίπου 44.000.

Οι ΛΟΑΤ αιτούντες άσυλο συχνά βρίσκονται σε επιπλέον κίνδυνο κατά τη διάρκεια του ταξιδιού τους και κατά την άφιξή τους στη χώρα όπου ζητούν άσυλο, ο οποίος μπορεί να λάβει τη μορφή παρενόχλησης, αποκλεισμού, σεξουαλικής ή άλλων μορφών βίας. Πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι τα Τρανς άτομα αντιμετωπίζουν επιθέσεις και απειλές σε ακόμα μεγαλύτερο βαθμό. Τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ υπόκεινται σοβαρό κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό, βία και παρενόχληση από τους άλλους αιτούντες, στα κέντρα υποδοχής, και ιδιαίτερα στα κέντρα φιλοξενίας (UNHCR, 2015 και Council of Europe, 2011). Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με μελέτη του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης (Council of Europe, 2011), οι ΛΟΑΤ αντιμετωπίζουν ιδιαίτερες δυσκολίες κατά τη διαδικασία της αίτησης ασύλου, λόγω ανεπαρκούς γνώσης του προσωπικού που τους εξυπηρετεί αναφορικά με την κατάσταση των ΛΟΑΤ ατόμων στις χώρες προέλευσης, ενώ σε αρκετές περιπτώσεις οι αρμόδιες αρχές μετανάστευσης θεωρούν ότι αν τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ απέκρυπταν το σεξουαλικό τους προσανατολισμό, δε θα κινδύνευαν. Τα παραπάνω έχουν, επίσης, αναγνωριστεί πρόσφατα και στην Έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου σχετικά με την κατάσταση των γυναικών προσφύγων και των αιτουσών άσυλο στην Ε.Ε. (2016) και για το λόγο αυτό τα κράτη μέλη καλούνται να θεσπίσουν διαδικασίες ασύλου και να επιδιώξουν την ανάπτυξη προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης που θα λαμβάνουν υπόψη τις ανάγκες των γυναικών με πολλαπλές περιθωριοποιημένες ταυτότητες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των γυναικών ΛΟΑΤ.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η ανάγκη για εκπαίδευση των επαγγελματιών που εργάζονται με τους μετανάστες και τους πρόσφυγες ΛΟΑΤ είναι περισσότερο επιτακτική παρά ποτέ σε Ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο. Το έργο με τίτλο “Epsilon - Equipping Professionals for Supporting LGBT Refugees” (Εξοπλίζοντας Επαγγελματίες για την Υποστήριξη ΛΟΑΤ Μεταναστών & Προσφύγων) προσπαθεί να ανταποκριθεί σε αυτή την ανάγκη, έχοντας αναπτύξει ένα εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα το οποίο απευθύνεται στους επαγγελματίες και στους εθελοντές που εργάζονται με μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, καθώς και με αιτούντες άσυλο, σε κέντρα ασύλου, στρατόπεδα, άλλα καταφύγια και στις τοπικές κοινότητες, με στόχο να κατανοήσουν καλύτερα τις ανάγκες και την ειδική κατάσταση στην οποία βρίσκονται τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ. Το εκπαιδευτικό

πρόγραμμα, που συνδυάζει τόσο κατά πρόσωπο όσο και διαδικτυακή εκπαίδευση, βασίζεται σε ερευνητικά δεδομένα, κατοπνίζοντας έτσι τις πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων. Το Epsilon υλοποιείται από πέντε (5) Ευρωπαϊκούς φορείς, το IARS International Institute, συντονιστή του έργου (Μεγάλη Βρετανία), το Movisie (Ολλανδία), το ΚΜΟΠ - Κέντρο Μέρμινας Οικογένειας και Παιδιού (Ελλάδα), το CARDET (Κύπρος) και το Anziani e Non Solo (Ιταλία).

Το έργο υποστηρίζεται και συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Πρόγραμμα Erasmus+, στο πλαίσιο της Βασικής Δράσης 2 «Συνεργασία για Καινοτομία και Ανταλλαγή Ορθών Πρακτικών» και αποτελεί μέρος των «Στρατηγικών Συμπράξεων στον Τομέα της Εκπαίδευσης Ενηλίκων». Πιο συγκεκριμένα, οι στόχοι του Epsilon συμφωνούν απόλυτα με την προτεραιότητα στον τομέα της εκπαίδευσης ενηλίκων αναφορικά με τη βελτίωση και τη διεύρυνση της παροχής ευκαιριών μάθησης υψηλής ποιότητας οι οποίες είναι προσαρμοσμένες στις ανάγκες μεμονωμένων ενηλίκων εκπαιδευομένων, μεταξύ άλλων μέσω καινοτόμων τρόπων –επικύρωσης, καθοδήγησης και εφαρμογής σε ομάδες που το χρειάζονται περισσότερο (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, 2016). Επιπλέον, το έργο συνδέεται με την οριζόντια προτεραιότητα που αφορά στην ανοιχτή και καινοτόμο εκπαίδευση, κατάρτιση και εργασία για τους νέους, ενταγμένη στην ψηφιακή εποχή, καθώς και με την προτεραιότητα της εκπαίδευσης ενηλίκων αναφορικά με τη σχεδίαση και εφαρμογή αποτελεσματικών προβλέψεων για την ενίσχυση των βασικών δεξιοτήτων και των βασικών ικανοτήτων (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, 2016).

Η παρούσα έκθεση αποτελεί μέρος της ηλεκτρονικής έκδοσης *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Migrant: A European Story of Discrimination and Empowerment: Educational Resource*, στην οποία περιλαμβάνονται τα κύρια ευρήματα του έργου Epsilon από όλες τις συμμετέχουσες χώρες. Στην εθνική έκθεση παρατίθενται τα αποτελέσματα από την έρευνα που πραγματοποιήθηκε στην Ελλάδα από τον Φεβρουάριο έως τον Μάιο 2017, στην οποία αποτυπώνεται η τρέχουσα κατάσταση αναφορικά με τους μετανάστες και τους πρόσφυγες, καθώς και τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα, ενώ δίνεται ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στις συνθήκες ζωής και στις πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων. Επίσης, παρουσιάζονται τα αποτελέσματα από την πιλοτική εφαρμογή του εκπαιδευτικού προγράμματος του Epsilon, η οποία πραγματοποιήθηκε σε επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές οι οποίοι δουλεύουν με ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες & πρόσφυγες/ αιτούντες άσυλο. Τέλος, με βάση τα ευρήματα από τις δράσεις, διατυπώνεται μια σειρά προτάσεων πολιτικής και δράσεων σε εθνικό και Ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο.

## Μεθοδολογία

Τα ευρήματα που παρουσιάζονται στην παρούσα έκθεση προέκυψαν ως εξής:

Έρευνα για τους ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες στην Ελλάδα: τα ευρήματα της έρευνας προέκυψαν από ποιοτική έρευνα που περιελάμβανε, αρχικά, ανασκόπηση της υπάρχουσας ελληνικής αλλά και διεθνούς βιβλιογραφίας. Στη συνέχεια, συλλέχθηκαν δεδομένα μέσω διεξαγωγής ατομικών συνεντεύξεων με τέσσερις (4) σχετικούς επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές καθώς και με τρεις (3) ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες.

Πιλοτική εφαρμογή του εκπαιδευτικού προγράμματος του Epsilon: τα ευρήματα από την εν λόγω δράση προέκυψαν από τα ερωτηματολόγια αξιολόγησης που διενεμήθηκαν μετά από τις δύο (2) εκπαιδεύσεις, στις οποίες συμμετείχαν συνολικά 13 άτομα. Τα ερωτηματολόγια, μεταξύ άλλων, αποτιμούσαν το επίπεδο γνώσης των συμμετεχόντων σχετικά με τους ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ αιτούντες άσυλο, πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες πριν και μετά την εκπαίδευση, ενώ διερευνούσαν εάν εκπληρώθηκαν οι προσδοκίες τους από την εκπαίδευση, τις απόψεις των συμμετεχόντων σχετικά με την εκπαίδευση και τους εκπαιδευτές, την καταλληλότητα των εκπαιδευτικών μεθοδολογιών καθώς και του χρόνου που αφιερώθηκε σε κάθε θέμα.

## Ευρήματα από την έρευνα για τους ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες στην Ελλάδα

Στόχος της εν λόγω έρευνας είναι η αποτύπωση της τρέχουσας κατάστασης αναφορικά με τους μετανάστες και τους πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα, καθώς και η παράθεση κάποιων στοιχείων που αφορούν τα ΛΟΑΤ άτομα στην Ελλάδα.

Επιπλέον, η έρευνα επικεντρώθηκε στις συνθήκες ζωής και στις πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα. Τα σημαντικότερα ευρήματα που προέκυψαν από τη βιβλιογραφική ανασκόπηση μπορούν να συνοψιστούν ως εξής:

- Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Απογραφής του 2011 (Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή, 2014α), ο μεταναστευτικός πληθυσμός ανέρχεται στις 912.000 και αποτελεί το 8,4% του συνολικού πληθυσμού της χώρας. Ως προς την εθνοτική προέλευση των αλλοδαπών στην Ελλάδα, παρατηρείται κυριαρχία των Αλβανών (52,7%) και έπονται οι Βούλγαροι (8,3%), οι Ρουμάνοι (5,1%) και οι Πακιστανοί (3,7%), ενώ καταγράφεται και ένα ποσοστό που ανέρχεται στο 11,9% και αφορά προέλευση από λοιπές χώρες και με αδιευκρίνιστη ή χωρίς υπηκοότητα.
- Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη ειδική έρευνα της Ελληνικής Στατιστικής Αρχής (2014β), ο κύριος λόγος μετανάστευσης στην Ελλάδα είναι η αναζήτηση εργασίας (48,0%), ενώ οι οικογενειακοί λόγοι είναι η δεύτερη αιτία μετανάστευσης (27,6%). Ακολουθούν «άλλοι» λόγοι (6%), ένα ποσοστό 3,4% δήλωσε ότι «είχε βρει δουλειά στην Ελλάδα και ήρθε για να εργαστεί», το 1,2% ήρθε για να σπουδάσει και το 0,3% ήρθε στην Ελλάδα για λόγους διεθνούς προστασίας, αίτησης ασύλου.
- Η χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση στην Ελλάδα και τα μέτρα λιτότητας έχουν επηρεάσει σε σημαντικό βαθμό και τη ζωή των μεταναστών. Το ποσοστό ανεργίας των μεταναστών είναι πολύ υψηλότερο σε σχέση με το αντίστοιχο των Ελλήνων, αφού σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα στοιχεία της Eurostat (2016) το ποσοστό ανεργίας για το 2015 ανερχόταν στο 30,5% για τους μετανάστες, ενώ για τους Έλληνες στο 24,5%.
- Το 2015, αυξημένος αριθμός προσφύγων και μεταναστών άρχισε να μετακινείται προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, μέσω της Μεσόγειου ή της Νοτιοανατολικής Ευρώπης, κυρίως μέσω της Ελλάδας και της Ιταλίας, προκειμένου να ζητήσουν άσυλο ως επί το πλείστον σε χώρες της Κεντρικής και Βόρειας Ευρώπης. Ως γνωστό, η Ελλάδα, αποτελώντας το νοτιοανατολικό σύνορο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, κλήθηκε να διαχειριστεί την είσοδο ενός τεράστιου αριθμού προσφύγων και μεταναστών, οι περισσότεροι εκ των οποίων προέρχονται από τη Συρία που μαστιάζεται από τον εμφύλιο πόλεμο και άλλες χώρες που βιώνουν ταραχές και συρράξεις.
- Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Ύπατης Αρμοστείας του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες (UNHCR, 2017b), το 2015 έφτασαν 856.723 πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα, όταν το 2014 ο αντίστοιχος αριθμός ανερχόταν στις 41.038. Το 2016 ο αριθμός των προσφύγων που έφτασαν στην Ελλάδα ήταν 173.450. Από τους προσφάτως αφιχθέντες, το 42,1% είναι άνδρες, το 21,1% είναι γυναίκες και το υπόλοιπο 36,8% αντιστοιχεί σε παιδιά.
- Είναι αξιοσημείωτο ότι η πλειονότητα των προσφύγων θεωρεί την Ελλάδα χώρα διέλευσης (transit) και όχι χώρα τελικού προορισμού. Μόλις το 0,4 των προσφύγων θέλει να παραμείνει στην Ελλάδα, ενώ το 68% των προσφύγων θέλει να μεταβεί στη Γερμανία, το 5,8% στη Σουηδία, το 4,5% στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο, το 4,1% στη Γαλλία και το 3,4% στην Ολλανδία (Ένωση Περιφερειών Ελλάδας και Κάπα Research, 2016).
- Ο αριθμός των ατόμων ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα δεν μπορεί να προσδιοριστεί, αφού, όπως επισημαίνεται από τους Μπαλούρδο και Μουρίκη (2012), στοιχεία ως προς τον αριθμό τους θεωρούνται «προσωπικά» και προστατεύονται από την Ελληνική Αρχή Προστασίας Δεδομένων Προσωπικού Χαρακτήρα. Επιπλέον, η πλειονότητα των ατόμων ΛΟΑΤ φοβάται να αποκαλύψει το γενετήσιο προσανατολισμό της, καθώς η στάση της ελληνικής κοινωνίας απέναντι στην ομοφυλοφιλία είναι αρκετά εχθρική.
- Παρόλο που τα τελευταία χρόνια η ελληνική κοινωνία έχει αρχίσει να αποδέχεται τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ σε μεγαλύτερο βαθμό και υπάρχει μια σειρά από νόμους κατά των διακρίσεων που τα προστατεύουν, τα εν λόγω άτομα αποτελούν μια από τις ευπαθείς κοινωνικές ομάδες και εξακολουθούν να πέφτουν θύματα ενός ατελούς και με παραλήψεις νομικού καθεστώτος και να υφίστανται παντός τύπου



διακρίσεις που απέχουν της όποιας ίσης μεταχείρισης (Πετροπούλου, 2011).

- Σύμφωνα με το Ευρωβαρόμετρο (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, 2015), οι διακρίσεις λόγω σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού (γκέι, λεσβία, αμφισεξουαλικός/-ή) και ταυτότητας φύλου (διεμφυλικός –τρανς- ή τρανσέξουαλ) αποτελούν τους πιο διαδομένους τύπους διακρίσεων στην Ελλάδα με ποσοστά 71% και 73% αντίστοιχα, ενώ ο αντίστοιχος μέσος όρος της ΕΕ των 28 είναι 58% και 56%.
- Επιπλέον, είναι χαρακτηριστικό ότι, σύμφωνα με την πιο πρόσφατη έρευνα του FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [Οργανισμός Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης] (2014b), η οποία διεξήχθη το 2012, σχεδόν οι μισοί από τους ερωτώμενους ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα (48%) έχουν αντιμετωπίσει διακρίσεις ή και παρενόχληση εξαιτίας του σεξουαλικού τους προσανατολισμού, τους προηγούμενους 12 μήνες από το έτος συγγραφής της έρευνας.
- Οι διακρίσεις που υφίστανται τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ είναι εμφανείς τόσο στην ιδιωτική (προσωπική και οικογενειακή) τους ζωή, όσο και στη δημόσια (επαγγελματική, εκπαιδευτική, κοινωνική). Πιο συγκεκριμένα, σύμφωνα με τον Συνήγορο του Πολίτη (2014), τα άτομα με «διαφορετικό» σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό συχνά υφίστανται εξευτελιστική συμπεριφορά από προϊσταμένους ή συναδέλφους τους (παρενόχληση). Για το λόγο αυτό, τα άτομα αυτά συνήθως αποφεύγουν να δηλώσουν το σεξουαλικό τους προσανατολισμό στο χώρο εργασίας. Επιπλέον ο σεξουαλικός προσανατολισμός μπορεί να αποτελέσει λόγο αποκλεισμού από την πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση ή την επαγγελματική εξέλιξη (Συνήγορος του Πολίτη, 2014). Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη έρευνα του Ευρωβαρόμετρου (2015), στην Ελλάδα τόσο ο σεξουαλικός προσανατολισμός του υποψηφίου (ΛΟΑ) όσο και η ταυτότητα φύλου του υποψηφίου (διεμφυλικός -τρανς- ή τρανσέξουαλ) μπορεί να αποτελέσουν μειονέκτημα για έναν υποψήφιο, όταν μια εταιρεία θέλει να προσλάβει κάποιον και έχει να επιλέξει μεταξύ δύο υποψηφίων με ίδιες δεξιότητες και προσόντα, σε αρκετά υψηλό ποσοστό (38% και 44% αντίστοιχα), σε σχέση με τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο (28% και 34% αντίστοιχα).
- Έπειτα, όπως επισημαίνεται από τον Συνήγορο του Πολίτη (2014), ένα πεδίο στο οποίο καταγράφονται σημαντικά προβλήματα για τους ΛΟΑΤ είναι ο χώρος της εκπαίδευσης, τόσο σε σχέση με την ενημέρωση και ευαισθητοποίηση εκπαιδευτικών και μαθητών, όσο και ως προς την ενδοσχολική βία (ομοφοβικό bullying). Αυτό επιβεβαιώθηκε και από σχετική έρευνα πεδίου (ΚΜΟΡ - Family and Childcare Centre & Municipality of Neapoli – Sykies, 2016), όπου η πλειονότητα των ΛΟΑΤ συμμετεχόντων ανέφερε τουλάχιστον ένα περιστατικό διάκρισης, εκφοβισμού και ρατσιστικής συμπεριφοράς κατά τη διάρκεια της σχολικής ή/και φοιτητικής ζωής.
- Γενικότερα, τα περιστατικά βίας και επιθέσεων εις βάρος των ΛΟΑΤ ατόμων είναι πολύ έντονα. Μάλιστα, είναι ανησυχητικό ότι, όπως επισημαίνει και ο Συνήγορος του Πολίτη (2013), έχουν αυξηθεί τα φαινόμενα ρατσιστικής βίας στην Ελλάδα, ιδίως στις περιπτώσεις που αυτή συνδυάζεται με οργανωμένη και συστηματική δράση ακραίων ομάδων σε βάρος μελών ευπαθών ή αποκλεισμένων κοινωνικών ομάδων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των ΛΟΑΤ. Είναι αξιοσημείωτο ότι 263 από τα 1.000 άτομα που συμμετείχαν στην έρευνα του FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014b) ανέφεραν ότι βίωσαν περιστατικά σωματικής/ σεξουαλικής επίθεσης ή βίαιης απειλής, τους τελευταίους 12 μήνες, ενώ το 26% των συμμετεχόντων θεωρεί ότι αυτό οφείλεται εν μέρει ή αποκλειστικά στο γεγονός ότι θεωρήθηκαν ότι είναι ΛΟΑΤ. Επιπλέον, 21% των ερωτώμενων ΛΟΑΤ δέχτηκαν παρενόχληση με κίνητρο το μίσος. Ακόμα, στην ίδια έρευνα καταγράφηκαν 973 περιστατικά παρενόχλησης ανά 1.000 ΛΟΑΤ άτομα τους προηγούμενους 12 μήνες της έρευνας, ενώ ως προς το είδος της παρενόχλησης το 36% αφορούσε λεκτικές προσβολές, το 5% μη λεκτικές προσβολές, το 57% αφορούσε και τα δύο προαναφερθέντα είδη και το 3% κάτι άλλο. Είναι δε αξιοσημείωτο ότι μόλις το 2% των συμμετεχόντων ανέφεραν ένα τέτοιο περιστατικό στην Αστυνομία.
- Πάρα πολλά άτομα ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα να αποκρύβουν το σεξουαλικό τους προσανατολισμό, ακόμα και από το οικογενειακό τους περιβάλλον. Το 58% δήλωσε ότι δεν είναι ποτέ «ανοιχτά» ΛΟΑΤ, ενώ μόλις το 7% ανέφερε ότι είναι πάντα «ανοιχτοί» απέναντι στους άλλους ως προς τον σεξουαλικό τους



προσανατολισμό (FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014b).

- Ιδιαίτερη αναφορά πρέπει να γίνει στα άτομα που ανήκουν στην κατηγορία των Τρανς τα οποία πλήττονται περισσότερο από τις διακρίσεις, από απόρριψη από τις οικογένειές τους και δημόσιο εξευτελισμό, δεδομένων και των έντονων πατριαρχικών αξιών και των έμφυλων στερεοτύπων που επικρατούν στην Ελλάδα (KMOP - Family and Childcare Centre & Municipality of Nearoli – Sykies, 2016). Σύμφωνα με την Πανευρωπαϊκή έρευνα για τους Τρανς, το 86% των συμμετεχόντων θεωρεί ότι οι διακρίσεις είναι διαδεδομένες στην Ελλάδα για ένα άτομο Τρανς (FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014a). Εξάλλου, σύμφωνα με την ίδια έρευνα, οι Τρανς στην Ελλάδα αντιμετωπίζουν πολλές διακρίσεις όταν αναζητούν εργασία (31%), αλλά και όταν εργάζονται (29%). Είναι δε συχνό το φαινόμενο αρνητικών σχολίων και αρνητικής αντιμετώπισης στο χώρο εργασίας, καθώς στην Ελλάδα μόνο το 29% των ερωτώμενων Τρανς ανέφερε θετικό εργασιακό κλίμα σε σχέση με τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ, κατά τη διάρκεια των 5 ετών που προηγήθηκαν της έρευνας, σε αντίθεση με το μέσο όρο των συμμετεχουσών χωρών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στην έρευνα, που ξεπερνάει το 50% (FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014a). Παρομοίως, τα Τρανς άτομα στην Ελλάδα αντιμετωπίζουν αρνητικό κλίμα και στο σχολείο, σε ποσοστό 51%, σύμφωνα με την ίδια έρευνα. Το 7% δήλωσε ότι έχει δεχτεί βία υποκινούμενη από μίσος και το 21% έχει δεχτεί παρενόχληση με κίνητρο το μίσους τους τελευταίους 12 μήνες. Το 32% αποφεύγει να εκφράσει το φύλο του/της, ενώ το 43% αποφεύγει συγκεκριμένους χώρους από φόβο επίθεσης, απειλής ή παρενόχλησης (FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014a).
- Ελάχιστα δεδομένα βρέθηκαν από τη βιβλιογραφία που να εστιάζουν σε ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα, κάτι που είναι εύλογο, δεδομένου ότι το φαινόμενο της μετανάστευσης είναι πρόσφατο στη σύγχρονη Ελλάδα, ενώ η άφιξη προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην Ελλάδα εντάθηκε τα τελευταία δύο χρόνια. Δεν μπόρεσαν να εντοπιστούν δημογραφικά στοιχεία ως προς τους ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες.
- Όπως αναφέρεται στην ΟΛΚΕ (2006), οι μετανάστες ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα βιώνουν πολλαπλές διακρίσεις, αφού, μέσα σε μία κοινωνία όπου πλειοψηφούν οι Έλληνες πολίτες, υφίστανται διπλό στίγμα, ως ΛΟΑΤ και ως «ξένες» και «ξένοι». Ταυτόχρονα, κάποιος από αυτούς δεν έχουν από τους συμπατριώτες τους στήριξη ή συμπαράσταση, καθώς η σεξουαλική τους ταυτότητα είναι ακόμη λιγότερο αποδεκτή στις χώρες καταγωγής τους από ό,τι στην ελληνική κοινωνία. Είναι πολύ συχνό φαινόμενο οι μετανάστες που έχουν γεννηθεί και/ή έχουν μεγαλώσει στην Ελλάδα να κρύβουν το σεξουαλικό τους προσανατολισμό γιατί μπορεί να μη γίνονται αποδεκτοί από τους ομοεθνείς τους. Ακόμα, είναι σύνηθες να κρύβουν και την εθνική τους ταυτότητα ακόμα και σε άτομα της ΛΟΑΤ κοινότητας, καθώς έχουν αναφερθεί περιπτώσεις όπου έχουν υποστεί ρατσιστική αντιμετώπιση, λόγω της καταγωγής τους, όπως επισημαίνεται και σε πρόσφατη έρευνα για τους ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες (Αλεξανδρή και Μάζη, 2016). Βέβαια, σύμφωνα με την ίδια έρευνα, οι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες στην Ελλάδα νοιώθουν πιο ελεύθεροι να εκφραστούν και να κάνουν ό,τι θέλουν σε σχέση με τη χώρα τους.
- Επιπλέον, δεν υπάρχουν δεδομένα ως προς τον αριθμό των ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων και αιτούντων άσυλο στην Ελλάδα. Σύμφωνα με το Προεδρικό Διάταγμα 141 (2013) αναφορικά με τις απαιτήσεις για την αναγνώριση και το καθεστώς των αλλοδαπών ή των ανιθαγενών ως δικαιούχων διεθνούς προστασίας, στο άρθρο 10, παράγραφο δ., αναφέρεται ότι «κατά την αξιολόγηση των λόγων της δίωξης, οι αρμόδιες αρχές εξέτασης και απόφασης, λαμβάνουν υπόψη ότι...ανάλογα με τις συνθήκες που επικρατούν στη χώρα καταγωγής μία ιδιαίτερη κοινωνική ομάδα μπορεί να περιλαμβάνει ομάδα που βασίζεται στο κοινό χαρακτηριστικό του φύλου, της ηλικίας, της αναπηρίας ή της κατάστασης υγείας ή του σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού».
- Βάσει του παραπάνω διατάγματος, παρέχεται η δυνατότητα στα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ να αιτηθούν προστασίας ασύλου, εφόσον στις χώρες τους διώκονται εξαιτίας του σεξουαλικού τους προσανατολισμού ή



της ταυτότητας φύλου. Όπως αναφέρουν πηγές της Υπηρεσίας Ασύλου, «σε αρκετές περιπτώσεις η κοινωνική αυτή ομάδα υφίσταται διώξεις και βασανιστήρια στις χώρες καταγωγής της είτε από κρατικούς φορείς είτε από μη κρατικούς. Η δίωξη εξαιτίας της σεξουαλικής προτίμησης ή/και της έμφυλης ταυτότητας αποτελεί λόγο διεθνούς προστασίας και η Υπηρεσία Ασύλου έχει αναγνωρίσει σε πρώτο βαθμό πλείστες όσες τέτοιες περιπτώσεις εφαρμόζοντας το διεθνές, ευρωπαϊκό και εθνικό δίκαιο» («Οι «διαφορετικοί» πρόσφυγες που ψάχνουν νέα ζωή», 2017).

- Δεν υπάρχουν ακριβή στοιχεία ως προς τις χώρες προέλευσης των προσφύγων/ αιτούντων άσυλο ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα, αλλά είναι λογικό να συμπεράνει κανείς ότι η πλειονότητα αυτών προέρχεται από χώρες της ευρύτερης Μέσης Ανατολής, οι οποίες είναι ιδιαίτερα εχθρικές προς τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ. Στο άρθρο «Οι «διαφορετικοί» πρόσφυγες που ψάχνουν νέα ζωή» (2017), παρέχονται ενδεικτικά στοιχεία της Υπηρεσίας Ασύλου, από το 2014 έως σήμερα, σύμφωνα με τα οποία τουλάχιστον 34 άτομα αναγνωρίστηκαν ως πρόσφυγες λόγω δίωξης εξαιτίας του σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού, της σεξουαλικής προτίμησης ή της έμφυλης ταυτότητάς τους, έπειτα από αίτηση που κατέθεσαν στο Περιφερειακό Γραφείο Ασύλου Αττικής. Η πλειονότητα των αιτούντων ήταν από το Ιράν και ακολουθούν οι πρόσφυγες από τη Συρία, το Καμερούν και την Υεμένη.
- Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο των Αλεξανδρή και Μάζη (2016), γενικά οι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες/πρόσφυγες δε ζητούν να μείνουν στην Ελλάδα, αλλά την χρησιμοποιούν ως χώρα πέρασμα.

Από την έρευνα πεδίου διερευνήθηκε περαιτέρω η κατάσταση των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα. Συγκεκριμένα:

- Ως προς τη διαδικασία εγκατάστασης των μεταναστών και προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα., αρχικά οι μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες κάνουν μια εγγραφή στην Υπηρεσία Ασύλου, δίνοντας τα στοιχεία τους και παίρνουν μια προσωρινή κάρτα όπου ουσιαστικά τους θέτει σε ένα νόμιμο καθεστώς, όπου μπορούν να αναγνωριστούν. Στη συνέχεια, ανάλογα με την κατάστασή τους και εφόσον επιθυμούν να παραμείνουν στην Ελλάδα, κάνουν αίτημα για άσυλο και ορίζεται μια ημερομηνία συνέντευξης, Μετά τη συνέντευξη, αν η απόφαση είναι θετική, παίρνουν το άσυλο, που αυτό σημαίνει ότι μπορούν να διαμείνουν μόνιμα στην Ελλάδα και ότι μπορούν να δουλέψουν. Επιπλέον, εκδίδουν διαβατήριο, μπορούν να ταξιδέψουν στην υπόλοιπη Ευρώπη αλλά με τουριστική βίζα, δηλαδή μπορούν να μείνουν μέχρι 3 μήνες, όχι να δουλέψουν σε άλλη χώρα της Ευρώπης, ενώ δεν μπορούν να επιστρέψουν στην χώρα καταγωγής τους με το διαβατήριο αυτό, δηλαδή μπορούν να πάνε παντού εκτός από εκεί. Η διαδικασία εγκατάστασης των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων δε διαφέρει από αυτή των υπολοίπων ως προς το τυπικό κομμάτι. Ούτε λαμβάνουν κάποια διαφορετική κατάσταση μετανάστευσης. Επισημάνθηκε, όμως, ότι ο σεξουαλικός προσανατολισμός τους ενισχύει τις πιθανότητες να πάρουν άσυλο, ειδικά στις περιπτώσεις που οι αιτούντες ΛΟΑΤ προέρχονται από χώρες όπου ο σεξουαλικός προσανατολισμός ή η ταυτότητα φύλου αν είναι διαφορετικά από τη νόρμα, αυτό θεωρείται ποινικό αδίκημα που μπορεί να επιφέρει ακόμα και θανατική ποινή.
- Αναφορικά με την κατάσταση των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα σήμερα, οι επαγγελματίες ανέφεραν ότι σε γενικές γραμμές δε διαφέρει από αυτή των υπολοίπων μεταναστών και προσφύγων με την έννοια ότι μένουν στους ίδιους καταυλισμούς, υπό τις συνθήκες που ισχύουν για όλους. Ωστόσο, οι ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες αντιμετωπίζουν διάφορα προβλήματα, λόγω του σεξουαλικού τους προσανατολισμού, όπως περιθωριοποίηση, λεκτικές και φυσικές επιθέσεις από τους ομοεθνείς τους και αλλοεθνείς, ακόμα και απόπειρες βιασμού στις δομές φιλοξενίας έχουν αναφερθεί. Για το λόγο αυτό, συχνά δίνεται προτεραιότητα στα άτομα ΛΟΑΤ στο να βρουν κάποια ασφαλή δομή. Επίσης, αναφέρθηκε ότι είναι σύνθηρες οι ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες να κρύβουν τη σεξουαλική τους ταυτότητα για την αποφυγή επιθέσεων ή ακόμα και γιατί είναι διστακτικοί απέναντι στις αρχές.
- Οι περισσότεροι μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες που έρχονται στην Ελλάδα είναι συνήθως από τη Συρία. Επίσης, προέρχονται από το Ιράκ, το Πακιστάν, το Αφγανιστάν αλλά και από χώρες της Βόρειας

Αφρικής. Οι επαγγελματίες που συμμετείχαν στις συνεντεύξεις δεν μπορούσαν να προσδιορίσουν τις χώρες προέλευσης των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων, αλλά εκτιμούν ότι δε διαφέρουν από αυτές των υπολοίπων. Σε ό,τι αφορά τους λόγους μετανάστευσης των ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα, αναφέρθηκαν καταρχάς οι δυσκολίες και οι διώξεις που βιώνουν στις χώρες τους, λόγω της σεξουαλικής τους ταυτότητας. Στις χώρες τους δεν μπορούν να ζήσουν και να εκφραστούν ελεύθερα, δυσκολεύονται να βρουν εργασία, ενώ συχνά είναι θύματα βίας και κινδυνεύει η ζωή τους. Επισημάνθηκε, ωστόσο, από τους επαγγελματίες ότι η Ελλάδα δεν αποτελεί για την πλειονότητα των ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων και μεταναστών ο τελικός προορισμός εγκατάστασης, αλλά ένα πέρασμα στις χώρες της Κεντρικής Ευρώπης.

- Οι συμμετέχοντες επαγγελματίες συμφώνησαν ότι οι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες αισθάνονται πολύ πιο ασφαλείς και άνετα στην Ελλάδα σε σχέση με τις χώρες τους, ειδικά όταν προέρχονται από χώρες που κινδυνεύει η ζωή τους είτε λόγω του σεξουαλικού τους προσανατολισμού είτε λόγω της εμπόλεμης κατάστασης που επικρατεί σε χώρες όπως είναι η Συρία. Σαφώς δεν είναι τέλειες οι συνθήκες στην Ελλάδα για τα ΛΟΑΤ άτομα, αλλά συγκριτικά με τις χώρες τους, οι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες αισθάνονται πολύ καλύτερα.
- Οι επαγγελματίες ανέφεραν τη Colour Youth - Κοινότητα LGBTQ Νέων Αθήνας και το Σωματείο Υποστήριξης Διεμφυλικών ως τις κύριες ΛΟΑΤ οργανώσεις που υποστηρίζουν ενεργά τους ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα. Επιπλέον, αναφέρθηκαν και άλλες οργανώσεις που εστιάζουν κυρίως σε μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, στους οποίους περιλαμβάνονται και ΛΟΑΤ άτομα, όπως η International Rescue Committee, η Solidarity Now, η Praksis, οι Γιατροί του Κόσμου, το Εθνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες, το ΚΜΟΠ. Στο ερώτημα αν γνωρίζουν συγκεκριμένα προγράμματα και πρωτοβουλίες που εφαρμόζονται στην Ελλάδα και που υποστηρίζουν τους ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες αναφέρθηκε το πρόγραμμα «Safe Refugee / Ασφαλής Πρόσφυγας» της Solidarity Now<sup>1</sup>, καθώς και το πρόγραμμα «Πες το σ' εμάς» της Colour Youth - Κοινότητα LGBTQ Νέων Αθήνας<sup>2</sup>. Επίσης, έγινε αναφορά σε μια σελίδα στο Facebook, το LGBTQi Refugees Welcome, όπου ουσιαστικά δίνουν πληροφορίες σε LGBT πρόσφυγες ή μετανάστες για το πού να απευθυνθούν και συγχρόνως διοργανώνουν διάφορες δράσεις (πάρτι, κ.λπ.) για να μαζέψουν χρήματα.
- Σε ό,τι αφορά τις ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων σε σχέση με την υποστήριξή τους και την αποδοχή τους στην Ελλάδα, οι επαγγελματίες επισήμαναν τη συχνή ανάγκη για προστασία αυτών των ατόμων ακόμα και από τις ίδιες τις κοινότητές τους που μπορεί να είναι εχθρικές απέναντί τους. Κατά τ' άλλα, οι ανάγκες τους δε διαφέρουν από αυτές των υπολοίπων μεταναστών και προσφύγων και αφορούν την ανάγκη τους για στέγαση, για εργασία, να μάθουν την ελληνική γλώσσα, καθώς και για πολιτισμική προσαρμογή και ένταξη.
- Οι επαγγελματίες, όταν καλούνται να εξυπηρετήσουν ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες αντιμετωπίζουν τις εξής προκλήσεις: προβλήματα ουσιαστικής επικοινωνίας, λόγω της γλώσσας. Ακόμα και όταν παρεμβαίνει διαπολιτισμικός μεσολαβητής ή διερμηνέας τα εμπόδια δεν ξεπερνώνται, καθώς πολλοί ΛΟΑΤ είναι καχύποπτοι απέναντί τους. Επιπλέον, συχνά δεν υπάρχει εμπιστοσύνη απέναντι στους επαγγελματίες, φοβούνται να εκφραστούν και τους αποκρύπτουν πολλές πληροφορίες σε σχέση με τις ανάγκες τους, κάτι που οφείλεται στην κακοποίηση που πολλοί έχουν υποστεί στις χώρες καταγωγής τους. Επίσης, οι επαγγελματίες ανέφεραν ότι συχνά είναι δύσκολο να εντοπίσουν τα ΛΟΑΤ άτομα ανάμεσα στους μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες που εξυπηρετούν, αφού συνήθως κρύβουν επιμελώς τη σεξουαλική τους ταυτότητα.
- Οι επαγγελματίες που εξυπηρετούν μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες ΛΟΑΤ έχουν αυξημένες εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες. Καταρχάς, αναφέρθηκε η μεγάλη ανάγκη για κατάρτιση σε θέματα ταυτότητας φύλου και σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού. Έπειτα, είναι σημαντικό για τους επαγγελματίες να εκπαιδευτούν σε

1 <https://www.solidaritynow.org/safe-refugee/>

2 <http://colouryouth.gr/pes-to-se-emas/>

θέματα που αφορούν την κουλτούρα των μεταναστών και των προσφύγων, καθώς και για το πώς αντιλαμβάνονται αυτοί τις έννοιες ΛΟΑΤ, καθώς και τα έμφυλα στερεότυπα που επικρατούν στις χώρες τους. Ακόμα, αναφέρθηκε η ανάγκη εκπαίδευσης σε θέματα που αφορούν στα δικαιώματα των ΛΟΑΤ, καθώς υπάρχει ελλιπής γνώση τόσο από τις αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες αλλά και από τις οργανώσεις που εξυπηρετούν πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες. Έμφαση δόθηκε και στην ανάγκη εκπαίδευσης των εθελοντών, καθώς και των επαγγελματιών που δεν έχουν κάποια ειδικευση.

- Οι ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες που συμμετείχαν στις συνεντεύξεις προέρχονται από τη Συρία και αποφάσισαν να εγκαταλείψουν τη χώρα τους τόσο λόγω του εμφύλιου πολέμου όσο και εξαιτίας της καταπίεσης που βίωναν ως ΛΟΑΤ, αφού έκρυβαν το σεξουαλικό τους προσανατολισμό, ακόμα και από την οικογένειά τους. Η Ελλάδα δεν ήταν η χώρα που είχαν επιλέξει αρχικά για να εγκατασταθούν, καθώς επιθυμούσαν να μεταβούν και να εγκατασταθούν στη Γερμανία. Λόγω των περιοριστικών μέτρων ως προς τη μετάβαση των προσφύγων στις λοιπές Ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, τελικά αναγκάστηκαν να υποβάλουν αίτημα για άσυλο στην Ελλάδα, κάτι που είχε θετική έκβαση για τη μία συμμετέχουσα, ενώ οι υπόλοιποι δύο ακόμα αναμένουν την απόφαση. Η όλη διαδικασία ήταν ιδιαίτερα αγχωτική, ωστόσο όλοι επισήμαναμ την πολύ καλή προσέγγιση του προσωπικού της Υπηρεσίας Ασύλου, καθώς και την υποστήριξη από ΜΚΟ που βοηθάνε πρόσφυγες και ΛΟΑΤ.
- Δε γνωρίζουν από πού προέρχονται οι περισσότεροι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες που βρίσκονται στην Ελλάδα, σίγουρα, όμως, μπορούν να εντοπίσουν πολλούς από τη χώρα τους, καθώς και από χώρες της Μέσης Ανατολής. Σαφώς η σεξουαλική διαφορετικότητά τους και τα κοινωνικοπολιτικά προβλήματα που απορρέουν από αυτή αποτελούν σοβαρό λόγο μετεγκατάστασης σε οποιαδήποτε Ευρωπαϊκή χώρα, όπου τα ΛΟΑΤ άτομα έχουν περισσότερες ελευθερίες και δικαιώματα. Δε θεωρούν ότι η Ελλάδα αποτελεί πρώτη επιλογή των ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων και μεταναστών, λόγω των δυσμενών οικονομικών συνθηκών που επικρατούν στη χώρα. Τόνισαν, ωστόσο, ότι η Ελλάδα είναι μια φιλική χώρα τόσο για τους πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες όσο και για τους ΛΟΑΤ.
- Θεωρούν ότι οι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και οι πρόσφυγες μπορούν να εκφράσουν καλύτερα τα συναισθήματά τους στην Ελλάδα σε σχέση με τις χώρες τους, παρόλα αυτά, οι συμμετέχοντες δήλωσαν ότι νιώθουν διστακτικοί στο να εκφραστούν ελεύθερα ως προς τη σεξουαλικότητά τους. Αυτό που θα τους βοήθαγε στο να ενταχθούν στην κοινωνία είναι να βρουν μια δουλειά και να μάθουν την ελληνική γλώσσα.
- Επισήμαναν, τέλος, ότι θεωρούν αναγκαία την εκπαίδευση των στελεχών των υπηρεσιών που απευθύνονται σε ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες. Πρέπει να εκπαιδευτούν τόσο ως προς το πώς να προσεγγίζουν τα άτομα αυτά, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα πολιτισμικά χαρακτηριστικά τους, όσο και ως προς την κατανόηση των ιδιαίτερων αναγκών τους ως ΛΟΑΤ άτομα.

# Ευρήματα από την Πιλοτική εφαρμογή του εκπαιδευτικού προγράμματος του EpsiLon

Το εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα του EpsiLon στοχεύει στη βελτίωση των γνώσεων και των ικανοτήτων των επαγγελματιών και των εθελοντών που εργάζονται με ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, ώστε να παρέχουν καλύτερες υπηρεσίες σε αυτούς. Έχει αναπτυχθεί λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τόσο τις πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤ μεταναστών και προσφύγων όσο και τις εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες των επαγγελματιών και εθελοντών. Έχει δε σχεδιαστεί ώστε να παραδίδεται τόσο δια ζώσης όσο και διαδικτυακά. Αποτελείται από τις ακόλουθες τρεις (3) εκπαιδευτικές ενότητες, οι οποίες περιλαμβάνουν επιμέρους κεφάλαια:

Εκπαιδευτική ενότητα	1. ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ άτομα
Κεφάλαια	1.1 – Βιολογικό φύλο, κοινωνικό φύλο, σεξουαλικός προσανατολισμός, σεξουαλική ταυτότητα και ταυτότητα φύλου: τι είναι, πώς διαφέρουν και πώς αλληλεπιδρούν μεταξύ τους;
	1.2 - ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+: ορολογία και ορισμοί
	1.3 - Διεμφυλικές ταυτότητες και άτομα που δεν συμβιβάζονται με το κοινωνικό τους φύλο
	1.4 - Διαφορές μεταξύ ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ ταυτοτήτων και ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ συμπεριφορών (MSM και WSW) μέσα από μία διαπολιτισμική προοπτική
	1.5 - Δικαιώματα των ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ στην Ελλάδα
Εκπαιδευτική ενότητα	2. ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ αιτούντες άσυλο και πρόσφυγες
Κεφάλαια	2.1 – ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+φοβία και διακρίσεις ενάντια σε άτομα ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+: γιατί τα ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ άτομα ενδεχομένως να χρειάζονται διεθνή προστασία;
	2.2 - Αιτήσεις ασύλου στην Ελλάδα που στηρίζονται στο σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό και την ταυτότητα φύλου
	2.3 - Αμφισεξουαλικοί, μεσοφυλικοί, κούιρ, και ασέξουαλ αιτούντες άσυλο: επιπτώσεις του να μην είναι ΛΟΤ κάποιος/α που κάνει αίτηση για λόγους σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού και ταυτότητας φύλου
	2.4 – Εργάτες του σεξ και διεθνής προστασία: εξαλείφοντας το στίγμα
	2.5 - Πώς να συζητήσετε για θέματα ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ με άτομα που προέρχονται από διαφορετικά πολιτισμικά περιβάλλοντα.
	2.6 - Διεθνείς ορθές πρακτικές σχετικά με την προσέγγιση, τη στήριξη και την προστασία ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ αιτούντων άσυλο σε δομές φιλοξενίας (με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στα διεμφυλικά άτομα)
	2.7 - Πώς να υποβάλλετε ερωτήσεις σε θέματα σεξουαλικών προτιμήσεων [σεξουαλικής ταυτότητας] και ταυτότητας φύλου χωρίς να υπερβαίνετε τα όρια των άλλων και να τους κατηγοριοποιείτε βάσει στερεοτύπων (σύμφωνα με τις οδηγίες της Ύπατης Αρμοστείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τους Πρόσφυγες )
Εκπαιδευτική ενότητα	3. ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ περιβάλλον χωρίς αποκλεισμούς για μετανάστες, αιτούντες άσυλο και πρόσφυγες
Κεφάλαια	3.1 – Πώς μπορούμε να προωθήσουμε συμπεριληπτικά περιβάλλοντα για μετανάστες σε ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ οργανισμούς;
	3.2 – Πώς μπορούμε να αναγνωρίσουμε και να αντιμετωπίσουμε την ομοφοβία και το ρατσισμό ανάμεσα στους συναδέλφους μας;
	3.3 - Πώς να ενισχύσετε την αποδοχή των ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ ατόμων από το σύνολο των (μη-ΛΟΑΤ) νεοαφιχθέντων μεταναστών & προσφύγων
	3.4 - Πώς να διαχειριστείτε τα προσωπικά σας όρια
	3.5 - Πώς να προσλάβετε και να προωθήσετε άτομα με διττή πολιτισμική ταυτότητα φιλικά προς τους ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ και ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ άτομα με διττή πολιτισμική ταυτότητα στις ΜΚΟ / μελέτη περίπτωσης
	3.6 – Πώς να εργαστείτε με συνδέσμους και κοινότητες μεταναστών για ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ ζητήματα

Καθώς το εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα του Epsilon απευθύνεται αφενός σε επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές που εργάζονται στον τομέα της μετανάστευσης και αφετέρου σε αυτούς που απασχολούνται στον τομέα της υπεράσπισης και της υποστήριξης των ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ ατόμων, μπορεί να παραδοθεί είτε εξολοκλήρου είτε τμηματικά. Το ΚΜΟΠ επέλεξε να εφαρμόσει πιλοτικά το εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα σε δύο οργανώσεις και σε στελέχη που ανήκουν στις ανωτέρω κατηγορίες.

Η πρώτη εκπαίδευση πραγματοποιήθηκε στην Αθήνα, στις 18 Μαΐου 2018, στο Κέντρο Γυναικείων Ερευνών και Μελετών «Διοτίμα», κέντρο εξειδικευμένο σε θέματα φύλου και ισότητας, που εστιάζει στην πρόληψη και στην αντιμετώπιση της έμφυλης βίας, ενώ οι μετανάστες και οι πρόσφυγες συγκαταλέγονται στις ομάδες τις οποίες υποστηρίζουν και παρέχουν υπηρεσίες. Στην εκπαίδευση συμμετείχαν 7 στελέχη, συμπεριλαμβανομένων κοινωνικών λειτουργών, ψυχολόγων, πολιτισμικών διαμεσολαβητών και διοικητικού προσωπικού. Δεδομένου ότι οι συμμετέχουσες ήταν ήδη εξοικειωμένες με τις έννοιες και τις θεματικές της πρώτης εκπαιδευτικής ενότητας, η εκπαίδευση περιορίστηκε στις ενότητες 2 «ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ αιτούντες άσυλο και πρόσφυγες» και 3 «ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ περιβάλλον χωρίς αποκλεισμούς για μετανάστες, αιτούντες άσυλο και πρόσφυγες».

Η δεύτερη εκπαίδευση πραγματοποιήθηκε στην Αθήνα, στις 23 Μαΐου 2018, στα γραφεία του ΚΜΟΠ και σε αυτήν συμμετείχαν 6 στελέχη της διεθνούς ΜΚΟ «Γιατροί Χωρίς Σύνορα». Οι εκπαιδευόμενοι αποτελούνταν από πολιτισμικούς διαμεσολαβητές και σύμβουλους υγείας που έρχονται σε καθημερινή επαφή με μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες.

Γενικά, η αξιολόγηση της εκπαίδευσης ήταν πολύ θετική και από τους 13 συνολικά συμμετέχοντες. Οι συμμετέχοντες επεσήμαναν ότι τα εκπαιδευτικά υλικά είναι πολύ κατάλληλα τόσο για επαγγελματίες όσο και για εθελοντές που εργάζονται με μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες και αιτούντες άσυλο, καθώς και για όσους εργάζονται με ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ γενικά. Επιπλέον, ανέφεραν ότι η εκπαίδευση ανταποκρίθηκε στις προσδοκίες τους. Οι συμμετέχοντες κλήθηκαν να εκτιμήσουν τις γνώσεις τους σχετικά με τους ΛΟΑΤΙΚ+ αιτούντες άσυλο, πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες πριν από την εκπαίδευση και μετά την εκπαίδευση σε κλίμακα από το 1 έως το 10. Το μέσο σκορ πριν από την εκπαίδευση ήταν 6,15 και το αντίστοιχο αποτέλεσμα μετά την εκπαίδευση ήταν 7,92, που σημαίνει ότι το πρόγραμμα συνέβαλε στη βελτίωση των γνώσεων τους. Συνολικά, η γνώμη τους για την εκπαίδευση ήταν «πολύ καλή» (7 συμμετέχοντες) και «καλή» (6 συμμετέχοντες). Όταν οι συμμετέχοντες κλήθηκαν να αξιολογήσουν τις εκπαιδευτριες, 8 από αυτούς τις αξιολόγησαν ως «πολύ καλές», 4 τις θεώρησαν «καλές», ενώ 1 απάντησε ότι η γνώμη του/της για τις εκπαιδευτριες είναι «μέτρια». Τέλος, όλοι οι συμμετέχοντες διαπίστωσαν ότι οι μεθοδολογίες εκπαίδευσης είναι κατάλληλες, 11 από αυτούς διαπίστωσαν ότι ο χρόνος που αφιερωνόταν σε κάθε θέμα ήταν επαρκής, ενώ 2 είχαν την αντίθετη γνώμη.

# Συμπεράσματα και προτάσεις πολιτικής σε εθνικό και Ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο

## Σε εθνικό επίπεδο

Οι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες που ζουν στην Ελλάδα αντιμετωπίζουν πολλές δυσκολίες και εμπόδια. Ανήκουν σε μια από τις πιο ευάλωτες ομάδες της εποχής δεδομένης της αύξησης του αριθμού των μεταναστών και προσφύγων, καθώς και της προσφυγικής κρίσης στην Ευρώπη τα τελευταία χρόνια. Έχουν εγκατασταθεί σε μια χώρα που καλείται να διαχειριστεί το φαινόμενο αυτό μη έχοντας πρότερη εμπειρία και στην οποία έχει πέσει το μεγαλύτερο βάρος της μεταναστευτικής και προσφυγικής κρίσης, άρα είναι επόμενο να βιώνουν τις ίδιες δυσκολίες και προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζουν και οι υπόλοιποι πρόσφυγες. Συγχρόνως, ως άτομα ΛΟΑΤ εγκαθίστανται σε μια χώρα στην οποία οι ανισότητες και διακρίσεις εναντίον των ΛΟΑΤ εξακολουθούν να υφίστανται, ενώ τα φαινόμενα ομοφοβίας είναι ιδιαίτερα έντονα τα τελευταία χρόνια. Συνεπώς, οι ΛΟΑΤ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα αποτελούν μια από τις πιο περιθωριοποιημένες ομάδες, παρόλο που οι περισσότεροι από αυτούς αισθάνονται πιο ασφαλείς στην Ελλάδα από ό,τι στις χώρες τους στις οποίες βιώνουν πολλές δυσκολίες λόγω του σεξουαλικού τους προσανατολισμού. Για το λόγο αυτό, οι ΛΟΑΤ πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες στην Ελλάδα έχουν επιπλέον ανάγκη για υποστήριξη και βοήθεια, ώστε να ενταχθούν τόσο κοινωνικά και πολιτισμικά και να κάνουν ένα καινούριο ξεκίνημα υπό ασφαλείς και αξιοπρεπείς συνθήκες. Ταυτόχρονα, είναι πολύ σημαντικό να υποστηρίζονται και να εξυπηρετούνται από επαγγελματίες που γνωρίζουν πολύ καλά την κατάστασή τους και τις ιδιαίτερες ανάγκες τους. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, το εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα Epsilon αποτελεί ένα πολύ καλό βήμα για την αύξηση της γνώσης και τη βελτίωση των δεξιοτήτων των επαγγελματιών και των εθελοντών που εργάζονται με τους πρόσφυγες και τους μετανάστες ΛΟΑΤ στην Ελλάδα.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω και βάσει της εμπειρίας του ΚΜΟΠ από τη συμμετοχή του στο έργο Epsilon, παρατίθενται οι ακόλουθες προτάσεις:

- Βελτίωση των δομών φιλοξενίας και των συνθηκών διαβίωσης των ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην Ελλάδα, ώστε να νιώθουν ασφαλείς.
- Εξατομικευμένη ψυχολογική και κοινωνική υποστήριξη, που να λαμβάνει υπόψη τις ιδιαίτερες ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤ ατόμων, στοχεύοντας στην αντιμετώπιση των προβλημάτων που τους απασχολούν, καθώς και στην ένταξή τους στη νέα τους πραγματικότητα, κοινωνία και χώρα. Ιδιαίτερη έμφαση πρέπει να δοθεί στα άτομα Τρανς που βιώνουν περισσότερες δυσκολίες, τόσο κατά τη διαδικασία αίτησης ασύλου όσο και κατά τη διαμονή τους στη χώρα εγκατάστασης.
- Ανάπτυξη προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης και συμβουλευτικής, βάσει των ιδιαίτερων αναγκών και των δεξιοτήτων των ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων και μεταναστών, προκειμένου να ενταχθούν στην αγορά εργασίας.
- Εισαγωγή και εφαρμογή συγκεκριμένων μεθοδολογιών και κατευθυντήριων οδηγιών που αφορούν στην υποδοχή και την εξυπηρέτηση ΛΟΑΤ προσφύγων και μεταναστών.
- Ενημέρωση και ευαισθητοποίηση της ευρύτερης κοινωνίας σχετικά με την ιδιαίτερα αυτή ευάλωτη ομάδα.
- Συνεχής εκπαίδευση των επαγγελματιών και των εθελοντών που παρέχουν υπηρεσίες σε μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες ΛΟΑΤ, καθώς και σε αυτούς που απλά έρχονται σε επαφή μαζί τους.

## Σε Ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο

Σε επίπεδο Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, προτείνεται όλες οι οργανώσεις εταίροι του έργου να συμμετέχουν σε παρόμοιες στρατηγικές συμπράξεις, στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος Erasmus+ ή άλλων συναφών προγραμμάτων, προκειμένου να διευρύνουν τις γνώσεις και την εμπειρία τους πάνω στο θέμα. Συγχρόνως, θα πρέπει να επεκτείνουν και να παρακολουθήσουν περαιτέρω τα αποτελέσματα του έργου, υλοποιώντας παρόμοιες δράσεις που απευθύνονται σε επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές που εργάζονται με τους πρόσφυγες και τους μετανάστες ΛΟΑΤ σε όλη την Ευρώπη.

# Βιβλιογραφικές Αναφορές

Αλεξανδρής, Π. & Μάζη, Μ. (2016, Ιανουάριος). LGBT Πρόσφυγες και Μετανάστες. *Antivirus* (65), 32-37. Ανακτήθηκε από <http://avmag.gr/60350/antivirus-65/>

Council of Europe. (2011). *Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. Retrieved February 22, 2017, from <http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/publications>

Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή. (2014α). Απογραφή Πληθυσμού-Κατοικιών 2011: Δημογραφικά και Κοινωνικά Χαρακτηριστικά του Μόνιμου Πληθυσμού της Χώρας Σύμφωνα με την Αναθεώρηση των Αποτελεσμάτων της Απογραφής Πληθυσμού-Κατοικιών 2011 στις 20/3/2014. Ανακτήθηκε 10 Μαρτίου 2017, από <http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SAM03/>

Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή. (2014β). Ειδική Έρευνα για τη Θέση στην Αγορά Εργασίας των Μεταναστών και των Άμεσων Απογόνων τους. Ανακτήθηκε 10 Μαρτίου 2017, από <http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/pop>

Ένωση Περιφερειών Ελλάδας & Κάπα Research. (2016). Έρευνα-Μελέτη της ΕΝ.Π.Ε. για το προσφυγικό-μεταναστευτικό. Ανακτήθηκε 28 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <http://www.enpe.gr/meletesprogrammata/2016/03/31/ereina-meleti-tis-enpe-gia-to-prosfigiko-metanasteitiko-refygees-survey-english-fluechtlinge-umfrage-deutsch.aspx>

Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή. (2016). Οδηγός Προγράμματος *Erasmus+ 2016*. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <https://www.iky.gr/el/eggrafa-eplus/odigos-eplus>

Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή. (2015). Ειδικό Ευρωβαρόμετρο 437: Διακρίσεις στην ΕΕ το 2015. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2077>

Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο. (2016). Έκθεση σχετικά με την κατάσταση των γυναικών προσφύγων και των αιτουσών άσυλο στην ΕΕ (2015/0000(INI)). Ανακτήθηκε 24 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A8-2016-0024+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL>

Eurostat. (2016). *Migrant Integration Statistics – Labour Market Indicators*. Retrieved March 10, 2017, from [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migrant\\_integration\\_statistics\\_%E2%80%93\\_labour\\_market\\_indicators](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migrant_integration_statistics_%E2%80%93_labour_market_indicators)

FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2014a). *Being Trans in the EU - Comparative analysis of the EU LGBT survey data*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved February 22, 2017, from <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/being-trans-eu-comparative-analysis-eu-lgbt-survey-data>

FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2014b). *EU LGBT survey - European Union lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender survey - Main results*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved February 22, 2017, from <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/eu-lgbt-survey-european-union-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-survey-main>



Gartner, J. L. (2014). (In)credibly Queer: Sexuality-based Asylum in the European Union. *Humanity in Action*. Retrieved March 1, 2017 from <http://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledgebase/578-in-credibly-queer-sexuality-based-asylum-in-the-european-union>

KMOP - Family and Childcare Centre & Municipality of Neapoli – Sykies. (2016). *Transnational and Comparative Research on Homo-and Transphobia in Small and Medium Cities across Europe: Thessaloniki City Report*. Unpublished manuscript.

Μπαλούρδος, Δ. & Μουρίκη Α. (Επιμ.) (2012). Καταπολέμηση των Διακρίσεων: Τάσεις, Προκλήσεις, Πολιτικές. Αθήνα: Παπαζήση. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από [http://ekke.gr/ocd/?page\\_id=18](http://ekke.gr/ocd/?page_id=18)

Οι «διαφορετικοί» πρόσφυγες που ψάχνουν νέα ζωή. (2017, 6 Μαρτίου). *Newsbeast*. Ανακτήθηκε 10 Μαρτίου 2017, από <http://www.newsbeast.gr/greece/arthro/2604379/i-diaforetiki-prosfiges-pou-psachnoun-nea-zoi>

ΟΛΚΕ - Ομοφυλοφιλική Λεσβιακή Κοινότητα Ελλάδας. (2006). Το πρόγραμμα της ΟΛΚΕ. Ανακτήθηκε 22 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <https://www.olke.org/to-proγραμμα-tis-olke/>

Πετροπούλου, Ε. (2011). Νομική κατάσταση των ατόμων με ομοερωτικό σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <https://www.olke.org/κειμενα/νομική-κατάσταση-των-ατόμων-με-ομοερω/>

Προεδρικό Διάταγμα 141/2013. «Προσαρμογή της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας προς τις διατάξεις της Οδηγίας 2011/95/ΕΕ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 13ης Δεκεμβρίου 2011 (L 337) σχετικά με τις απαιτήσεις για την αναγνώριση και το καθεστώς των αλλοδαπών ή των ανιθαγενών ως δικαιούχων διεθνούς προστασίας, για ένα ενιαίο καθεστώς για τους πρόσφυγες ή για τα άτομα που δικαιούνται επικουρική προστασία και για το περιεχόμενο της παρεχόμενης προστασίας (αναδιατύπωση)». ΦΕΚ Α 226/21.10.2013. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <http://www.et.gr/index.php/2013-01-28-14-06-23/search-laws>

Συνήγορος του Πολίτη. (2014). Ποιον έχω απέναντί μου: Οδηγός διαφορετικότητας για δημοσίους υπαλλήλους με σκοπό την καταπολέμηση των διακρίσεων. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <https://www.synigoros.gr/?i=stp-el.leaflets#diaforetikotita>

Συνήγορος του Πολίτη. (2013). Το φαινόμενο της ρατσιστικής βίας στην Ελλάδα και η αντιμετώπισή του. Ανακτήθηκε 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2017, από <https://www.synigoros.gr/?i=stp-el.eidikesektheseis&yearFilter=2013&page=1>

UNHCR. (2017a). Mediterranean Situation. *Refugees Operational Data Portal*. Retrieved March 3, 2017 from <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>

UNHCR. (2017b). Mediterranean Situation: Greece. *Refugees Operational Data Portal*. Retrieved March 3, 2017 from <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>

UNHCR. (2017c). Mediterranean Situation: Italy. *Refugees Operational Data Portal*. Retrieved March 3, 2017 from <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5205>

UNHCR. (2015). *Protecting Persons with Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities: A Global Report on UNHCR's Efforts to Protect Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Asylum-Seekers and Refugees*. Retrieved March 3, 2017 from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/566140454.html>

# May 2017, Athens (Greece)

## Supporting and Including LGBTi Migrants: Needs, Experiences and Good Practices International Conference



[Visit the conference page](#)

Maria Cantiello e Manuela Tagliani  
Anziani e non solo società cooperativa sociale

## Abstract

EPSILON è un progetto europeo Erasmus+ KA2 di durata biennale (2016-2018), nato allo scopo di sopperire al gap di conoscenze e capacità dei professionisti e volontari che lavorano con i migranti e nell'ambito dell'associazionismo LGBTIQ+ in merito al tema specifico dell'accoglienza e dell'inclusione sociale delle persone di origine straniera che si riconoscono in identità LGBTIQ+.

In questa categoria di individui si identificano, infatti, un gruppo di soggetti particolarmente vulnerabili in quanto maggiormente esposti al rischio di essere socialmente emarginati e di subire discriminazioni multiple, sia a causa del loro orientamento sessuale e della loro identità di genere, che a causa del fatto di essere migranti.

A una prima fase di delineazione dello stato dell'arte a livello nazionale, in termini di letteratura e di analisi sul campo delle esperienze personali di migranti LGBTIQ+ e delle testimonianze di professionisti del settore (Output 1 – O1), è seguita una seconda fase di formazione con operatori e volontari che quotidianamente lavorano e hanno a che fare con migranti e/o con persone LGBTIQ+ (Output 2 – O2). In quest'ottica sono stati sviluppati una serie di strumenti didattici innovativi volti ad aumentare il livello di consapevolezza e sensibilizzazione degli operatori verso le esigenze, i bisogni e le problematiche affrontate dai migranti LGBTIQ+.

Questo capitolo italiano, oltre ad analizzare la situazione a livello nazionale, rileggendo i dati e le informazioni raccolte nel precedente report EPSILON alla luce degli eventuali cambiamenti avvenuti, analizza altresì i positivi risultati della formazione face-to-face, valutandone l'efficacia e l'influenza sulle politiche e le pratiche nazionali ed europee.

# INTRODUZIONE E BACKGROUND

Le ragioni che spingono le persone ad abbandonare il proprio paese di origine verso nuove mete di accoglienza sono le più disparate: non solo motivazioni economiche ma anche, ad esempio, religiose, culturali, etniche, politiche. Tra queste, incide indubbiamente la necessità di rifuggire la violazione o la negazione dei propri diritti nel Paese di origine, tra i quali rileva indubbiamente il diritto di vivere ed esprimere liberamente il proprio orientamento sessuale e la propria identità di genere.

Il tema delle migrazioni rappresenta per l'Europa una delle problematiche di principale interesse da alcuni anni a questa parte, tuttavia è in particolare negli ultimi tempi che si è iniziato a prestare attenzione ad una specifica categoria di soggetti migranti e alla tutela dei loro diritti, quelli LGBTIQ+<sup>1</sup>, con particolare attenzione ai richiedenti asilo e rifugiati<sup>2</sup>.

Secondo l'ultimo rapporto ILGA sull'omofobia (2017) sono 72 i Paesi nel mondo che criminalizzano i rapporti tra persone dello stesso sesso, di cui 45 criminalizzano sia le relazioni tra uomini che quelle tra donne. Seppur in calo rispetto al 2016, con Stati come il Belize e le Seychelles che nel 2016 hanno abrogato le leggi che vietavano tali relazioni (ILGA, 2017), la situazione in molti Paesi permane ancora critica per le persone LGBTIQ++Q+, che risultano private della libertà di vivere la propria identità di genere e orientamento sessuale, se non quando addirittura punite con la morte.

Si capisce dunque come mai i flussi migratori che hanno interessato l'Europa in misura crescente, seppur considerevolmente in calo negli ultimi anni<sup>3</sup>, siano caratterizzati anche dalla presenza di persone con un background LGBTIQ+ alla ricerca di Paesi nei quali vivere liberamente e senza pericoli la propria identità di genere e orientamento sessuale.

Tali individui si trovano ad affrontare una serie di problematiche di non poco conto considerato che ai rischi vissuti nel Paese di origine, ben si potrebbero sommare esperienze di isolamento, emarginazione sociale e discriminazioni, anche multiple, vissute nel Paese ospitante ed attuate sia da parte della Stato ospitante, sia da parte della comunità locale, che da parte di altri migranti non LGBTIQ+.

Per tale motivo diventa fondamentale incrementare gli studi e il sapere in merito a questo particolare campione di

<sup>1</sup> LGBTIQ+ è un acronimo utilizzato per indicare comprensivamente l'appartenenza di un soggetto alla comunità Lesbica, Gay, Bisessuale, Transessuale/Transgender, Intersessuale, Asessuale, Queer e a tutte le identità di genere e orientamento sessuale nelle quali un individuo si può riconoscere.

<sup>2</sup> L'Italia prevede tre forme di protezione a procedura unificata:

- **Protezione internazionale**, che garantisce lo status di rifugiato ai sensi della Convenzione sullo status dei rifugiati del 1951. Per rifugiato si intende il "cittadino di un Paese non appartenente all'Unione europea il quale, per il timore fondato di essere perseguitato per motivi di razza, religione, nazionalità, appartenenza ad un determinato gruppo sociale o opinione politica, si trova fuori dal territorio del Paese di cui ha la cittadinanza e non può o, a causa di tale timore, non vuole avvalersi della protezione di tale Paese, oppure se apolide si trova fuori dal territorio nel quale aveva precedentemente la dimora abituale e per lo stesso timore sopra indicato non può o, a causa di siffatto timore, non vuole farvi ritorno, ferme le cause di esclusione previste dall'articolo 10 del decreto legislativo 19 novembre 2007, n. 251" (art. 2 co. 1 lett. d del decreto legislativo n. 25/2008)
- **Protezione sussidiaria**. Per persona ammissibile alla protezione sussidiaria si deve intendere il "cittadino di un Paese non appartenente all'Unione europea o apolide che non possiede i requisiti per essere riconosciuto come rifugiato, ma nei cui confronti sussistono fondati motivi di ritenere che, se ritornasse nel Paese di origine, o, nel caso di un apolide, se ritornasse nel Paese nel quale aveva precedentemente la dimora abituale, correrebbe un rischio effettivo di subire un grave danno come definito dall'articolo 14 del decreto legislativo 19 novembre 2007, n. 251 [ad esempio: condanna a morte, tortura o altra forma di trattamento inumano o degradante, minaccia grave e individuale alla vita o alla persona di un civile], e il quale non può o, a causa di tale rischio, non vuole avvalersi della protezione di detto Paese" (art. 2 co. 1 lett. f del decreto legislativo n. 25/2008)
- **Protezione umanitaria**, una forma residuale di protezione prevista ai sensi dell'art. 5 co. 6 e dall'art. 19 del decreto legislativo n. 286/1998, il quale stabilisce che "in nessun caso può disporsi l'espulsione o il respingimento verso uno Stato in cui lo straniero possa essere oggetto di persecuzione per motivi di razza, di sesso, di lingua, di cittadinanza, di religione, di opinioni politiche, di condizioni personali o sociali, ovvero possa rischiare di essere rinviato verso un altro Stato nel quale non sia protetto dalla persecuzione".

<sup>3</sup> Secondo i dati dell'Organizzazione Internazionale delle Migrazioni, il numero di arrivi di migranti e richiedenti asilo, via terra e via mare tra gennaio e marzo 2018 (18.956) ammonta a circa la metà del numero di arrivi dello stesso periodo del 2017 (34.531). La diminuzione è dovuta in buona parte alla diminuzione del numero di arrivi in Italia: 6.296 arrivi contro i 24.292 registrati nello stesso periodo nel 2017 (IOM, 2018).

Già nel 2017 si era assistito ad un considerevole decrescimento nel numero di arrivi in Europa rispetto al 2016: 186.768 contro i ben 390.432 del 2016 ("Migration Flows – Europe", 2018)

popolazione, sviluppando procedure di accoglienza che siano calibrate appositamente in funzione di questi soggetti e tengano conto delle loro specifiche vulnerabilità, implementando il livello di conoscenze dei professionisti e dei volontari che si trovano a lavorare a stretto contatto con loro.

EPSILON, un progetto europeo di durata biennale (2016-2018), finanziato con fondi Erasmus+, è nato proprio con l'obiettivo di rispondere all'aumento dei flussi migratori regolari e irregolari in Europa e di trovare soluzioni più efficaci ai problemi connessi all'accoglienza e all'inclusione sociale dei migranti LGBTIQ+.

Il progetto mira per l'appunto a colmare il gap di conoscenze e capacità dei vari professionisti e volontari che lavorano con i migranti. A tal fine sono stati quindi sviluppati una serie di strumenti didattici innovativi volti ad aumentare il livello di consapevolezza e sensibilizzazione degli operatori verso le esigenze, i bisogni e le problematiche che affrontano quotidianamente i migranti con un background LGBTIQ+.

Si tratta infatti di una categoria di individui particolarmente vulnerabile poiché soggetta a molteplici rischi di discriminazione, tra i principali l'essere stranieri e appartenere alla comunità LGBTIQ+.

Se si vanno infatti ad analizzare gli ultimi dati raccolti all'interno Rapporto della Commissione parlamentare "Jo Cox" sull'intolleranza, la xenofobia, il razzismo e i fenomeni di odio del 2017, questi rischi risultano in tutta la loro evidenza:

*la relazione dimostra l'esistenza di una piramide dell'odio alla cui base si pongono stereotipi, rappresentazioni false o fuorvianti, insulti, linguaggio ostile "normalizzato" o banalizzato e, ai livelli superiori, le discriminazioni e quindi il linguaggio e i crimini di odio. (Camera dei deputati, 2017, p. 3)*

In questa piramide italiana dell'odio, i migranti e le persone LGBTIQ+ si pongono al vertice estremo.

Il presente capitolo ha lo scopo di analizzare i pochi cambiamenti avvenuti all'interno del contesto italiano dall'inizio del progetto, comparando il presente capitolo con quello presente nel precedente report EPSILON (Gavrielides, 2017).

Così come il rapporto precedente, anche questo capitolo analizza dati e informazioni correlate "sia a coloro che si riconoscono come LGBTIQ+ e che sono o richiedenti/titolari di protezione internazionale (rispetto ai quali il focus è soprattutto sulle problematiche inerenti la procedura di protezione e i servizi connessi), sia a [...] 'migranti LGBT' [in senso stretto], ovvero le persone che – provenienti da un Paese straniero – sono giunte in Italia per motivi diversi dalla richiesta di protezione" (Gavrielides, 2017, p. 33).

Ad una analisi e revisione della letteratura precedente segue successivamente una breve analisi del lavoro sul campo esposto all'interno del primo report EPSILON (Output 1 – O1).

In secondo luogo si analizzano i risultati derivanti dall'applicazione degli strumenti didattici elaborati nell'abito del progetto e applicati all'interno di un corso di formazione *face-to-face* per operatori dell'accoglienza, professionisti e volontari, adattato per il contesto italiano (Output 2 – O2).

Da ultimo si valutano le implicazioni che i risultati del progetto EPSILON, e in particolare l'applicazione sistematica degli strumenti didattici creati, potranno avere sulle politiche e le pratiche, sia a livello nazionale sia a livello europeo.

# METODOLOGIA

## Metodologia relativa all'Output 1

L'Output 1 è il risultato di una ricerca qualitativa e quantitativa di tipo secondario e primario volta ad indagare il tema migranti LGBTIQ+ (in questo caso il termine migranti va inteso come termine "ombrello" volto ad includere entrambe le categorie individuate in precedenza).

La ricerca di tipo secondario è consistita nella raccolta di dati, informazioni e pratiche dalla letteratura con lo scopo di descrivere lo stato dell'arte relativo al contesto nazionale. In questo specifico report la ricerca secondaria ha avuto

come obiettivo quello di aggiornare il quadro italiano rispetto a quanto descritto nel precedente rapporto EPSILON.

Informazioni e dati sono stati ottenuti attraverso l'utilizzo di Internet e, in particolare, tramite l'ausilio di specifici database quali Google Scholar, Academia.edu e Researchgate.

Le ricerche sono state condotte attraverso la combinazione di termini chiave quali: "Discriminazione", "Richiedenti asilo", "Rifugiati", "Migranti", "Orientamento sessuale", "Identità di genere", "LGBT", "SOGI" compresi i loro sinonimi e derivati, sia in italiano che in inglese. Gli articoli presi in considerazione sono stati quelli espressamente riferiti al contesto italiano o più genericamente riferiti al tema trattato, ma comunque utili per la ricerca nazionale.

La ricerca di tipo primario è consistita nella raccolta di informazioni e dati nell'ambito di 1 focus group composto da 5 migranti LGBTIQ+, 7 interviste con migranti LGBTIQ+ e 4 interviste con professionisti che lavorano a stretto contatto con i migranti o più in generale nel campo della migrazione.

Infine, con un sondaggio online tradotto in italiano è stato somministrato il questionario "Comfort in social situation", sviluppato dalla Dott.ssa Mary E. Kite della Ball State University, "al fine di indagare le attitudini della comunità LGBTIQ+ verso alcune minoranze – tra cui le persone di origine straniera – e per confermare la percezione di molti dei testimoni privilegiati intervistati rispetto ad una particolare chiusura di questo gruppo rispetto al rapporto con i migranti" (Gavrieldes, 2017, p. 35).

## Metodologia relativa all'Output 2

L'Output 2 è consistito in una ricerca qualitativa e quantitativa di tipo primario incentrata sulla raccolta dei dati e delle informazioni risultanti dalla formazione *face-to-face* che ha coinvolto diciassette partecipanti tra studiosi, operatori dell'accoglienza (volontari e professionisti) e attivisti della comunità LGBTIQ+ provenienti da diverse regioni italiane (Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Lombardia, Trentino Alto Adige, Toscana, Lazio).

La raccolta dei dati e delle informazioni è avvenuta tramite la somministrazione di due questionari al termine del *training*, uno di valutazione (Annex 1) e uno di autoverifica dell'apprendimento (Annex 2).

La formazione si è tenuta a Bologna in un'unica giornata (20 marzo 2018) per un totale di sette ore. La struttura generale del corso è stata elaborata da tutti i partner partecipanti al progetto e riadattata successivamente alla specificità del contesto italiano. In particolare, ogni Paese partner ha sviluppato e inserito una specifica sezione volta a fotografare la normativa vigente nel proprio Paese in merito alle procedure di richiesta di asilo SOGI.

Il training, suddiviso in 3 differenti moduli, è stato costruito appositamente per essere riadattato in base al livello di conoscenza dei partecipanti e alla loro appartenenza ad un ambiente lavorativo o di volontariato che implica già alcune informazioni preliminari incluse nella formazione.

Le persone che hanno preso parte al *workshop* di Bologna provenivano da contesti diversi: in parte erano operatori dell'accoglienza e in parte attivisti della comunità LGBTIQ+.

Per questo motivo il training si è svolto nella sua interezza, privilegiando tuttavia i moduli 1 (Essere LGBTIQ+) e 2 (Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati LGBTIQ+).

A causa della scarsità di tempo disponibile, il modulo 3 (Ambienti inclusivi per migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiati LGBTIQ+) è stato trattato principalmente attraverso l'utilizzo di attività pratiche unitamente alla stimolazione di discussioni e dibattiti tra i partecipanti.

I partecipanti sono stati altresì incoraggiati a condividere le loro esperienze in merito alle richieste SOGI, sviluppando così un clima di scambio, condivisione e networking riguardo le buone pratiche adottate dalle rispettive organizzazioni di appartenenza.

# I RISULTATI DEL PROGETTO EPSILON

## La revisione della letteratura e l'analisi del lavoro sul campo

Se dal punto di vista dell'attivismo locale si può notare qualche passo avanti sul tema dei migranti (in senso ampio) LGBTIQ+ dall'inizio del progetto, dal punto di vista della raccolta di informazioni e dati sul tema, la situazione, invece, non è cambiata in maniera rilevante.

Il 2017 è stato un anno dedicato alla creazione di nuovi servizi di supporto, collaborazioni e iniziative incentrate sulla tutela dei diritti dei migranti LGBTIQ+, con un occhio rivolto in particolare ai richiedenti asilo e ai rifugiati.

Per questi ultimi, infatti, come già messo in evidenza nel precedente report, la prima fase di arrivo in Italia può rappresentare un momento di gravi violazioni dei diritti umani, come maltrattamenti, violenze e vere e proprie umiliazioni sessuali (Amnesty International, 2016).

Inoltre, quando si tratta di richiedenti LGBTIQ+, le pratiche adottate non consentono di dedicare sufficiente tempo e attenzione al riempimento della domanda di asilo, necessari ad informare correttamente le persone sulla possibilità di chiedere protezione, ad esempio, perché vittime di persecuzioni basate sull'orientamento sessuale o sull'identità di genere.

In aggiunta, come si evidenziava nel precedente report, "la procedura per l'ottenimento dello status di rifugiato per questioni legate all'orientamento sessuale è particolarmente complessa, in quanto l'istruttoria di rado può fondarsi su prove documentali e inconfutabili" (Gavrielides, 2017, p. 33), poiché di fatto è complesso accertare l'identità sessuale di un richiedente, in quanto tale valutazione si basa per lo più sulle dichiarazioni dello stesso e sulla sua credibilità (UNHCR, 2012).

Dal punto di vista dei dati, la situazione italiana si presenta, come inizialmente, scarsamente attenta in tema di identificazione statistica dei migranti LGBTIQ+ e ancor meno in relazione ai richiedenti e rifugiati. In quest'ultimo caso, infatti, non vengono raccolte informazioni in merito al numero di richieste SOGI e le poche trovate risultano eccessivamente datate e comunque riguardano il periodo antecedente l'incremento dei flussi migratori (dal 2014 in poi)<sup>4</sup>: "le commissioni in Italia non rilasciano dati (a differenza di altri Paesi) sui motivi per cui le persone presentano la richiesta d'asilo" (Lanni, 2017).

Nonostante queste lacune, andando ad analizzare le principali nazionalità per richieste di asilo relative al 2017 (Tab. 1) si può osservare che su dieci, otto sono Paesi nei quali l'omosessualità è illegale e condannata addirittura, in alcuni di questi, con la previsione della pena di morte. Per cui ben si potrebbe supporre che tra questi richiedenti vi siano anche individui fuggiti dal proprio paese di origine nel tentativo di scampare alla violazione dei loro diritti umani.

**Tab. 1. Tabella che analizza le pene previste per rapporti consensuali di tipo omosessuale nei Paesi di origine dei richiedenti asilo 2017<sup>5</sup>**

PAESE DI ORIGINE	N. RICHIEDENTI ASILO ANNO 2017	RAPPORTI CONSENSUALI TRA PERSONE DELLO STESSO SESSO	PENA PREVISTA DALL'ORDINAMENTO
1. Nigeria	25.964	Illegale per uomini e donne	Reclusione fino a 14 anni o pena di morte
2. Bangladesh	12.731	Illegale per uomini	Reclusione fino a 10 anni o reclusione a vita
3. Pakistan	9.728	Illegale per uomini	Reclusione da 2 a 10 anni o reclusione a vita
4. Gambia	9.085	Illegale per uomini e donne	Reclusione fino a 14 anni o reclusione a vita

<sup>4</sup> I dati riportati nel precedente report si riferiscono al periodo 2005-2008 e contano 54 richieste, di cui 29 approvate (Jansens & Spijkerboer, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> La tabella si ispira a quella elaborata da Lanni (2017), aggiornata con i dati del Ministero dell'interno – Dipartimento per le libertà civili e l'immigrazione (2017) e di ILGA (2017).

5. Senegal	8.680	Illegale per uomini e donne	Reclusione da 1 a 5 anni e sanzione pecuniaria
6. Costa D'Avorio	8.374	Legale	Nessuna
7. Guinea	7.777	Illegale per uomini e donne	Reclusione da 6 mesi a 3 anni e sanzione pecuniaria
8. Mali	7.757	Legale	Nessuna
9. Ghana	5.575	Illegale per uomini	Reclusione da 3 a 25 anni
10. Eritrea	4.979	Illegale per uomini e donne	Reclusione

Per quanto riguarda le iniziative incentrate sulla tutela dei diritti dei migranti LGBTIQ+ è importante segnalare l'attivazione di alcuni nuovi importanti servizi, oltre a quelli forniti dalle associazioni già citate nel precedente report (tra queste, MigraBo Bologna<sup>6</sup> e Il Grande Colibri<sup>7</sup>), quali ad esempio:

- **Pink Refugees**, nato agli inizi del 2017 a Verona all'interno del Circolo Pink, un'associazione LGBTIQ+. Si tratta di un gruppo di supporto, condivisione e confronto sul tema dei migranti LGBTIQ+ che è un punto di "riferimento per tutte quelle cooperative ed enti che occupandosi di accoglienza, spesso entrano in contatto con migranti GLBT, ma non hanno a disposizione gli strumenti giusti per fare emergere un vissuto personale a volte molto sofferto. Il gruppo diventa sempre più occasione e luogo di condivisione delle, seppur rare, esperienze di isolamento e discriminazione che sono costretti a vivere anche in Italia a causa del proprio orientamento sessuale"<sup>8</sup>.
- **Arcigay<sup>9</sup> e progetto Migranet**. Arcigay, di cui si è parlato già nel precedente report, è un'associazione attiva da diversi anni nel settore dell'inclusione sociale e della tutela e promozione dei diritti dei migranti LGBTIQ+, e in particolare dei richiedenti asilo e rifugiati, attraverso alcuni sportelli espressamente dedicati.

Le sedi di Torino, Modena, Padova, Napoli, Perugia, Palermo, nel 2015, hanno supportato con attività di primo orientamento 107 richiedenti asilo LGBTIQ+ e, nel 2016, 100, di cui rispettivamente 63 e 56 hanno ottenuto una qualche forma di protezione ("Arcigay Migranet", n.d.). A questi sportelli se ne aggiungono altri, tra i quali Milano, Roma, Genova e Reggio Emilia, che ha incominciato ad operare a gennaio 2018 ("Arcigay Gioconda si schiera con i migranti Lgbti", 2018).

Con il progetto Migranet, Arcigay si è posta l'obiettivo di ampliare il campo di lavoro di questi sportelli, sia in termini di servizi che di potenziamento della rete, migliorando il sistema di supporto ai richiedenti asilo LGBTIQ+.

- **Due appartamenti** comprati con i fondi della cooperativa Caleidos ospitano dal 2017, a Modena, richiedenti LGBTIQ+ ("Immigrati gay, un rifugio per 14 persone", 2017)
- **"Migro perché sono"<sup>10</sup>**, seconda edizione di un ciclo di 8 seminari svoltisi tra febbraio e aprile 2018, organizzati dall'Università degli Studi di Bologna, sul tema dei migranti LGBTIQ+.

La nascita di queste nuove pratiche e servizi, mostra un impegno crescente verso un' "accoglienza aperta e rispettosa delle diversità" (Gavrielides, 2017, p. 42), seppur sussistano ancora forti ostacoli dal punto di vista dell'inclusione sociale e dell'accettazione da parte della società civile, ove stereotipi, pregiudizi e crimini d'odio rimangono ancora fortemente predominanti. Ne è un esempio l'annullamento del convegno "Richiedenti asilo, orientamento sessuale e identità di genere" che si sarebbe dovuto tenere presso l'Università di Verona il 25 maggio 2018, avvenuto a causa di proteste, intimidazioni e minacce da parte di gruppi di estrema destra (Berizzi, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Un'associazione che ha come scopo quello di aiutare le persone migranti LGBTIQ+ ad integrarsi in Italia e nel mondo LGBTIQ+, assistendo anche i richiedenti asilo nella procedura di protezione internazionale per motivi SOGI ([www.migrabo.wordpress.com](http://www.migrabo.wordpress.com)). Si veda Annex 3.

<sup>7</sup> "Un'associazione di volontariato a favore delle persone LGBTIQ (lesbiche, gay, bisessuali, transgender, queer e intersessuali) che vuole fare emergere e raccontare l'importanza delle altre differenze (etiche, nazionali, culturali, religiose, sociali, relazionali, sessuali...) che si intersecano con quelle legate all'orientamento sessuale e all'identità di genere" (<https://www.ilgrandecolibri.com/chi-siamo/>).

<sup>8</sup> [www.circolopink.it/cases/pink-refugees](http://www.circolopink.it/cases/pink-refugees)

<sup>9</sup> [www.arcigay.it](http://www.arcigay.it)

<sup>10</sup> [www.giurisprudenza.unibo.it/it/corsi/insegnamenti/insegnamento/2017/425257](http://www.giurisprudenza.unibo.it/it/corsi/insegnamenti/insegnamento/2017/425257)



Dal punto di vista delle buone pratiche legali correlate alle richieste SOGI di protezione internazionale, il report precedente aveva messo in evidenza le prassi positive utilizzate dalle Commissioni territoriali all'interno del contesto nazionale<sup>11</sup>, che posizionavano l'Italia tra i Paesi europei da cui trarre positivamente esempio. Ciò pur nella consapevolezza che spesso le Commissioni territoriali per il riconoscimento della protezione internazionale non hanno esperienza effettiva in merito alle necessità particolari e alle peculiarità della condizione dei migranti LGBTIQ+. Tra i fattori positivi rileva il fatto che:

- Non è considerato rilevante se nel Paese di origine gli atti omosessuali, benché punibili, non siano stati di fatto perseguiti<sup>12</sup>;
- Non è necessario verificare che il richiedente asilo abbia fatto ricorso alla protezione del proprio Stato, quando l'omosessualità è perseguitata ad opera di attori non-statali, “basta che l'omosessualità sia anche solo formalmente criminalizzata per desumere e presumere che non ci sarebbe protezione dallo Stato in caso di persecuzione ad opera di attori non statuali” (Gavrielides, 2017, p. 36);
- Non viene considerato rilevante l'aver mantenuto nel Paese di origine un comportamento riservato in merito al proprio orientamento sessuale<sup>13</sup>;
- “L'Italia non ricorre a nessun consulto o pratica medica<sup>14</sup> per determinare il reale orientamento sessuale dei richiedenti asilo. La valutazione viene fatta su prove documentali (se disponibili) o sulla sola dichiarazione del richiedente”, (Gavrielides, 2017, p. 36). I referti medici vengono eventualmente utilizzati per mettere in evidenza e provare la presenza di un trauma subito dal richiedente a causa delle persecuzioni subite in conseguenza dell'orientamento sessuale;
- L'essere sposato prescinde dal riconoscimento o meno della protezione del richiedente per motivi SOGI;
- Sono stati concessi provvedimenti di protezione anche nel caso di *late disclosure*<sup>15</sup>(Jansens & Spijkerboer, 2011).

Tuttavia, con l'introduzione del decreto-legge n. 13/2017, n. 13 (Disposizioni urgenti per l'accelerazione dei procedimenti in materia di protezione internazionale, nonché misure per il contrasto dell'immigrazione illegale), convertito con modificazioni dalla legge n. 46/2017, la situazione dei richiedenti LGBTIQ+ potrebbe di fatto peggiorare.

La legge introduce alcune disposizioni che potrebbero dimostrarsi per loro controproducenti.

La novità più controversa e discutibile è l'aver abolito il doppio grado di giudizio nel merito per le cause che hanno ricevuto diniego in Commissione territoriale (art. 6, co. 11, lett. g).

*Come da più parti affermato, la scelta del rito camerale come unico grado di giudizio di merito, unitamente alla previsione che l'udienza di comparizione è solo un'eventualità, disegna una procedura in forza della quale il giudizio sulle controversie di protezione internazionale è interamente cartolare. Il che costituisce un grave vulnus al principio del contraddittorio e della pubblicità del processo.* (Savio, 2017, p. 19)

Di non meno rilievo è anche la questione relativa all'introduzione della videoregistrazione dei colloqui (art. 6, co. 1, lett. c), utilizzata dal giudice come prova principale in caso di ricorso, che nei fatti potrebbe dimostrarsi controproducente per i richiedenti SOGI per diverse ragioni. Tra queste, va considerato che si tratta spesso di individui che vivono con estrema difficoltà emotiva e psicologica la loro sessualità e/o identità a causa dei limiti e/o delle persecuzioni subite nei Paesi di origine, per cui l'idea di veder registrata “nero su bianco” la loro storia potrebbe rappresentare un elemento potenzialmente limitativo e distorsivo della genuinità del colloquio. Occorre inoltre considerare il fatto che “*le*

<sup>11</sup> Le Commissioni territoriali sono organi amministrativi istituiti al fine di decidere in merito alle domande di protezione internazionale.

<sup>12</sup> Si veda ad esempio Cass. Civ., Sez. VI, sentenza del 20 settembre 2012 n. 15981.

<sup>13</sup> Come indicato nel precedente report, “ciò non è mai avvenuto in Italia, con la sola eccezione di un caso respinto dalla Commissione Territoriale di Bari” (Gavrielides, 2017, p. 36).

<sup>14</sup> Per approfondimenti si veda anche la recente sentenza della Corte di Giustizia dell'Unione Europea del 25 gennaio 2018, nella causa C-473/16.

<sup>15</sup> Con tale termine si fa riferimento ai casi di domande tardive di protezione internazionale per motivi SOGI. In proposito si veda, tra le altre, Cass. Civ., Sez. VI, sentenza 5 marzo 2015, n. 4522.

*cronache anche recenti attestano la perdurante estrema permeabilità dei sistemi informatici nazionali: senza adeguate contromisure attacchi mirati alle copie informatiche delle videoregistrazioni potrebbero porre in pericolo la sicurezza dei richiedenti soggetti a persecuzioni dal Paese di provenienza” (Savio, 2017, p. 15), ivi incluse le persecuzioni legate all’orientamento sessuale e all’identità di genere.*

Al di là degli aspetti normativi, come messo in evidenza dai risultati delle interviste e del focus group riportati all’interno del report precedente, esistono ancora forti problemi correlati ad un’effettiva inclusione sociale e ad una piena libertà di vivere il proprio orientamento sessuale o la propria identità di genere: la paura di vivere apertamente la propria vita sentimentale e sessuale a causa della profonda censura vissuta nei Paesi di origine; la paura di rivelare il proprio orientamento all’interno dei centri di accoglienza, ma anche all’interno della comunità di appartenenza, spesso non incline ad accettare pratiche omosessuali contrarie alla visione prospettata all’interno del Paese di origine; la frequente mancanza di un supporto continuo in tutte le fasi del percorso di accoglienza, da parte di operatori adeguatamente formati e sensibilizzati sul tema.

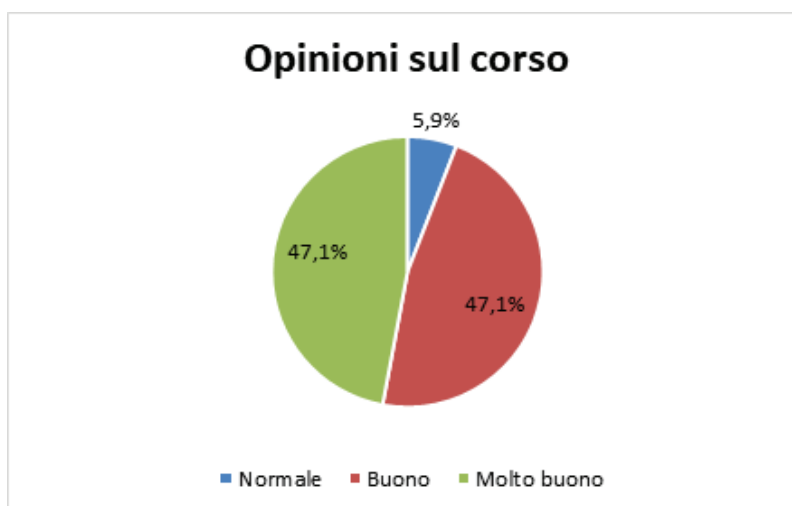
Da qui è nata la necessità di introdurre una seconda fase più pratica di formazione per adeguare la realtà locale alle difficoltà vissute da questa particolare categoria di migranti, siano questi richiedenti o meno protezione internazionale.

## I risultati dell’attività di formazione face-to-face

La sperimentazione del training che si è tenuta a Bologna il 20 marzo 2018 ha visto la partecipazione di 17 professionisti e volontari da diverse regioni italiane quali Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Lombardia, Trentino Alto Adige, Toscana, Lazio.

I partecipanti, che provenivano da differenti contesti lavorativi e di volontariato (ricercatori, assistenti sociali, operatori dell’accoglienza, attivisti della comunità LGBTQ+), hanno fornito una valutazione complessiva molto positiva: quasi il 95% di loro ha ritenuto che il training fosse “buono” o “molto buono”, mentre solamente uno di loro lo ha qualificato come “normale” (Tab. 2). Le persone che hanno preso parte al training hanno in particolar modo apprezzato l’apprendimento attraverso attività pratiche e le discussioni sui casi di studio.

**Tab. 2. Valutazione del corso di formazione EPSILON da parte dei partecipanti**

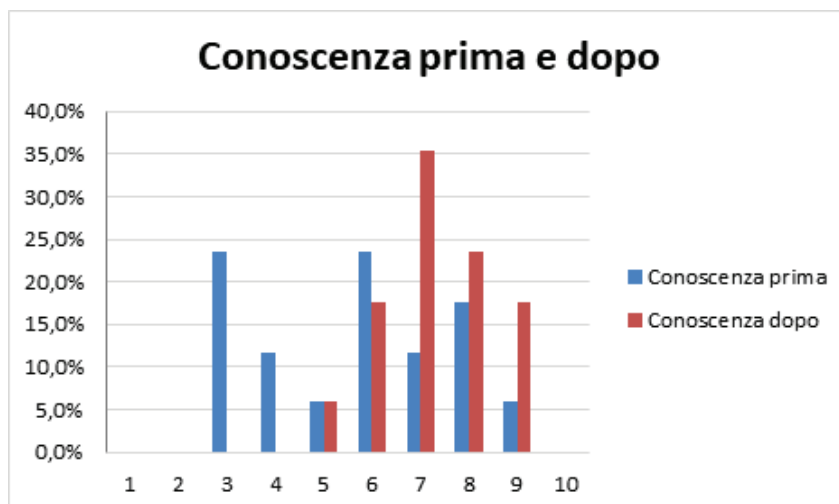


Dai commenti generali è emerso quanto sia stato per loro essenziale venire a contatto con altre organizzazioni che si occupano delle stesse problematiche, in modo da potersi confrontare vicendevolmente soprattutto sulle buone pratiche già in uso o che potrebbero essere introdotte o implementate.

Con riferimento alla conoscenza pre-formazione delle tematiche affrontate, in una scala di auto-valutazione da 1 a 10, il 60% dei partecipanti ha ritenuto di possedere una conoscenza sufficiente/buona (risposte da 6 a 10) mentre il restante 40% ha valutato che la propria conoscenza fosse insufficiente (risposte da 1 a 5).

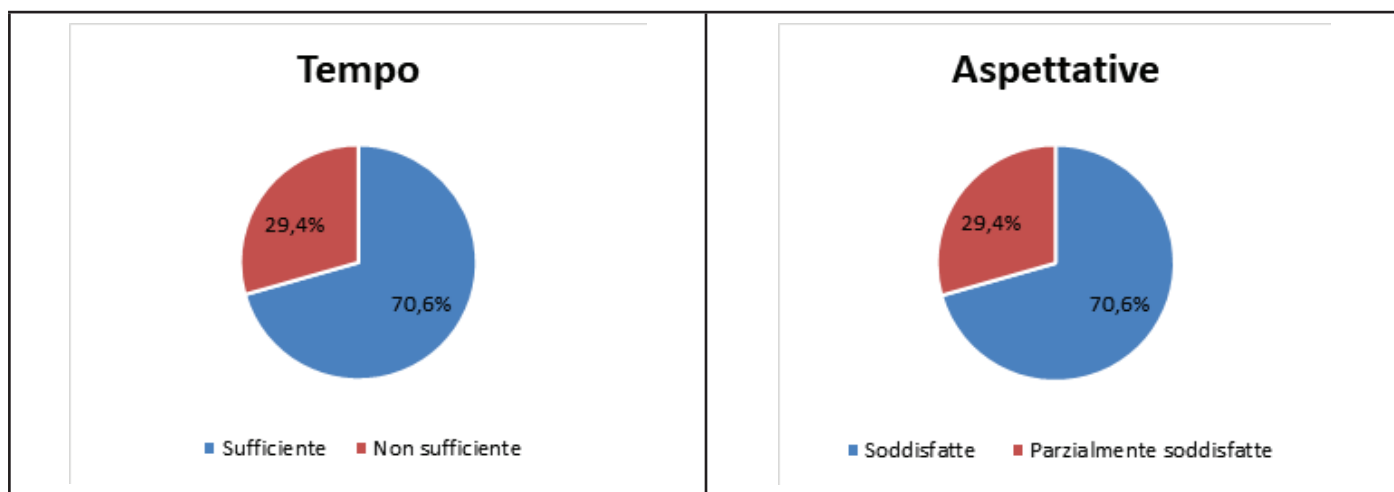
Al termine del *training* il 95% dei partecipanti (incremento di 35 punti percentuali) ha dichiarato di aver raggiunto un livello di conoscenza sufficiente/buona, mentre solo il rimanente 5% ha dichiarato un insufficiente livello di conoscenza pari a 5. (Tab. 3).

**Tab. 3. Livello di conoscenza precedente e successiva al corso di formazione EPSILON in una scala da 1 a 10, dove 1 è il minimo e 10 il massimo**



Per quanto concerne il tempo dedicato ai vari temi affrontati, per il 30% dei partecipanti è stato insufficiente, specificando che avrebbero preferito avere più ore a disposizione per approfondire i molti argomenti presentati. Ad ogni modo, le aspettative generali sulla giornata formativa sono state rispettate completamente per il 70% dei partecipanti, mentre i restanti 30% hanno ritenuto che fossero rispettate solo parzialmente (Tab. 4 e 5).

**Tab. 4. Opinione dei partecipanti in merito al tempo a disposizione per la formazione EPSILON - Tab. 5. Aspettative dei partecipanti in merito alla formazione EPSILON**



Dal corso di formazione *face-to-face* è successivamente nato un corso in *e-learning* disponibile sul sito internet di progetto all'indirizzo [www.epsilonproject.eu](http://www.epsilonproject.eu) in ciascuna delle lingue nazionali dei Paesi partner. Il corso ripropone la stessa struttura della formazione fatta ai professionisti e volontari coinvolti di persona, ampliandone ulteriormente il contenuto.

Lo scopo è quello di implementare a livello europeo il grado di conoscenze e capacità in merito al tema dei migranti LGBTIQ+ ed aumentare l'impatto potenziale del progetto.

## IMPLICAZIONI PER LE POLITICHE E LE PRATICHE EUROPEE E NAZIONALI

Sia dai risultati dell'Output 1 sia da quelli dell'Output 2 è emerso chiaramente come in Italia il tema migranti LGBTIQ+

risultati ancora scarsamente trattati, in particolare a livello di conoscenze e dati piuttosto che a livello di buone pratiche.

Infatti, negli ultimi anni si sta assistendo ad un progressivo impegno non solo da parte delle associazioni e organizzazioni che si occupano di accoglienza, ma anche e soprattutto da parte di quelle che si occupano di sensibilizzazione sui temi LGBTIQ+. Queste stanno attivando servizi di supporto e assistenza ai migranti LGBTIQ+, e in particolare ai richiedenti asilo assistendoli durante le varie fasi dell'accoglienza.

La raccomandazione è dunque quella di **investire maggiormente nella ricerca, nello studio e nel monitoraggio del fenomeno, rendendo i dati delle richieste SOGI accessibili.**

La maggiore conoscenza del fenomeno permette indubbiamente di creare basi più solide per la formazione di tutti coloro che, volontari e professionisti, entrano in contatto con questo particolare gruppo di persone. Fornendo i giusti e adeguati strumenti teorici crescerà indubbiamente la capacità di supportare adeguatamente i migranti LGBTIQ+ riconoscendo e sopperendo ai loro specifici bisogni e necessità:

*E' fondamentale che gli operatori siano in grado di identificare e superare le barriere linguistiche e – appunto – culturali alla comprensione da parte dei migranti della possibilità di richiedere protezione internazionale per motivi legati all'orientamento sessuale e all'identità di genere e che siano in grado di rappresentare correttamente come l'ordinamento giuridico e il contesto sociale italiani riconoscano e tutelino le persone LGBTI. Inoltre, sarebbe importante che gli operatori avessero consapevolezza dei contesti legali e culturali di provenienza dei richiedenti asilo in relazione alle questioni LGBTI per poter comprendere e affrontare eventuali resistenze o rischi di omofobia interiorizzata (Gavrielides, 2017, p. 41).*

La possibilità di sviluppare pratiche e politiche realmente efficaci è imprescindibile da un approfondimento maggiore del fenomeno, non solo a livello di conoscenze ma anche a livello di numeri.

Data l'impossibilità di sapere, soprattutto in fase di prima accoglienza, chi tra i migranti e richiedenti asilo appartiene alla comunità LGBTIQ+, **il training EPSILON dovrebbe essere parte integrante della formazione che gli operatori dell'accoglienza ricevono.** Così facendo, sarebbero messi in condizione di fornire informazioni precise e corrette riguardo normative e diritti e allo stesso tempo di utilizzare la terminologia appropriata attraverso una comunicazione priva di pregiudizi.

Inoltre, **dovrebbe essere essenziale il coinvolgimento dei rifugiati LGBTIQ+ nel processo di formazione degli operatori e dei volontari,** in modo da poter fornire un ulteriore grado di approfondimento e comprensione delle esigenze e delle difficoltà affrontate da questa particolare minoranza.

Uno dei punti critici emersi dai commenti dei partecipanti al *training* riguarda la scarsità di conoscenze specifiche sulle tematiche LGBTIQ+ da parte dei membri delle Commissioni territoriali. Ciò, in una procedura basata unicamente sul racconto e sulla credibilità del richiedente, comporta talvolta difficoltà nella comunicazione e nella comprensione dei comportamenti tenuti e dei racconti forniti dai richiedenti asilo. Per questo motivo potrebbe essere di grande utilità **promuovere iniziative formative dirette anche nei confronti dei professionisti che lavorano all'interno delle Commissioni.**

Altra raccomandazione importante, suggerita dai partecipanti alla formazione EPSILON, è sicuramente quella di **rafforzare la collaborazione tra le associazioni LGBTIQ+ e le organizzazioni che si occupano di accoglienza dei migranti, creando prassi comuni di lavoro in rete e di condivisione delle informazioni** e superando resistenze e rivalità reciproche.

Sempre in un'ottica di collaborazione e implementazione delle proprie capacità e conoscenze, i partecipanti hanno apprezzato molto la modalità in *networking* adottata durante il corso. Hanno messo in evidenza la necessità – in un contesto in cui il fenomeno è ancora poco noto e le pratiche non sono consolidate - di **migliorare il sistema di lavoro in rete interno e tra singole organizzazioni, favorendo lo scambio di esperienze tra colleghi,** al fine di trasformare il confronto interno in un utile strumento di accrescimento della consapevolezza lavorativa e delle abilità di gestione dei casi affrontati.

# ANALISI FINALE E CONCLUSIONI

I risultati finali del progetto EPSILON hanno messo in evidenza come il tema dei migranti LGBTIQ+ risulti ancora poco approfondito, in particolare dal punto di vista degli studi e della raccolta di dati.

Sul versante delle pratiche si è invece assistito ad un progressivo incremento delle attività di supporto predisposte a favore, in particolare, dello specifico gruppo dei richiedenti asilo e rifugiati LGBTIQ+, per i quali molte associazioni dell'attivismo locale LGBTIQ+ stanno mettendo a disposizione, in particolare negli ultimi anni, servizi specifici di assistenza al percorso di protezione internazionale SOGI e di supporto all'integrazione all'interno della comunità LGBTIQ+ e più in generale della società.

Dall'altro lato, passi avanti più timidi sono stati fatti dalle associazioni che si occupano espressamente dell'accoglienza, ove manca ancora una preparazione specifica sul tema da parte degli operatori e volontari che lavorano con i migranti. In tal senso la formazione EPSILON, creata e sperimentata nel corso del progetto, potrebbe risultare utile per colmare questi importanti gap e venire incontro alle esigenze e ai bisogni di questo specifico gruppo di migranti, migliorando di fatto anche la loro vita in termini di inclusione sociale e diminuzione delle discriminazioni eventualmente subite.

Nel complesso il *training* EPSILON ha dato buoni risultati e ci si augura che questo possa diventare uno strumento di formazione e approfondimento per tutti i professionisti e volontari che potrebbero, vorrebbero o sono già in contatto con migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo LGBTIQ+.

Il progetto rappresenta un passaggio importante dell'Unione Europea per colmare il vuoto che da molto tempo caratterizza le storie di vita delle persone LGBTIQ+ che giungono in Europa per trovare riconoscimento e soddisfazione ai propri fondamentali diritti alla vita, alla libertà, alla sicurezza, all'uguaglianza, all'autodeterminazione, ma soprattutto alla loro dignità di esseri umani.

# APPENDICE

## APPENDICE 1



### QUESTIONARIO DI VALUTAZIONE

1. Quali erano le tue aspettative prima di partecipare a questa formazione?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Puoi valutare il tuo livello di conoscenza sui richiedenti asilo, rifugiati e migranti LGBTQ+ prima di partecipare a questa formazione, dandoti un punteggio da 1 a 10 (1= basso, 10= alto)?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Il corso di formazione ha incontrato le tue aspettative

<input type="checkbox"/> sì	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> parzialmente
-----------------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------------------

Come? (spiega): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Puoi valutare il tuo attuale livello di conoscenza sui richiedenti asilo, rifugiati e migranti LGBTQ+, dandoti un punteggio da 1 a 10 (1= basso, 10= alto)? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Puoi elencare le 3 cose più importanti che hai imparato durante questa formazione?

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Complessivamente, che valutazione daresti a questa formazione?

<input type="checkbox"/> Molto buono	<input type="checkbox"/> Buono	<input type="checkbox"/> Così così	<input type="checkbox"/> Non mi è piaciuta
--------------------------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------------------	--

7. Complessivamente, che valutazione daresti ai formatori?

<input type="checkbox"/> Molto buono	<input type="checkbox"/> Buono	<input type="checkbox"/> Così cos'	<input type="checkbox"/> Non mi è piaciuta
--------------------------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------------------	--

8. Ritieni che le metodologie utilizzate durante la formazione siano state appropriate?  Sì  No

Spiega: \_\_\_\_\_



9. Ritieni che il tempo dedicato ad ogni argomento sia stato adeguato?  Sì  No

Spiega: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Descrivi il corso di formazione in 3 brevi frasi

La parte migliore della formazione è stata...

\_\_\_\_\_

La parte peggiore della formazione è stata...

\_\_\_\_\_

Se avessi avuto la possibilità di partecipare alla progettazione delle attività formative, avrei...

\_\_\_\_\_

GRAZIE DI AVER COMPILATO QUESTO QUESTIONARIO! ☺



**QUESTIONARIO DI AUTO-VERIFICA DELL'APPRENDIMENTO**

**1. Da cosa è composto l'acronimo LGBTIQ+ ?**

- L sta per \_\_\_\_\_
- G sta per \_\_\_\_\_
- B sta per \_\_\_\_\_
- T sta per \_\_\_\_\_
- I sta per \_\_\_\_\_
- Q sta per \_\_\_\_\_
- + sta per \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Gay, lesbiche e bisessuali si identificano sempre come tali? Perché?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Ritieni che le richieste di asilo basate sull'orientamento sessuale e identità di genere (SOGI) presentate da bisessuali, queers, asessuali o intersessuali vengano normalmente approvate quanto quelle fatte da LGT? Perché?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Puoi scrivere almeno due ragioni per cui i rifugiati e richiedenti asilo LGBTIQ+ possono talvolta sentire l'esigenza di lavorare nel mercato del sesso?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Perché è importante tenere a mente che le identità LGBTIQ+ assumono differenti significati in contesti culturali differenti? In cosa queste identità possono differire?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**6. Quale delle pratiche presentate sceglieresti per sperimentarla nella tua organizzazione? Perché?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Qual è il primo passo che intraprenderai per promuovere un ambiente inclusivo nella tua organizzazione?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Appendice 3

## Buona pratica:

## L'associazione MigraBO LGBTI

L'associazione MIGRABO LGBTI ([www.migrabo.wordpress.com](http://www.migrabo.wordpress.com)) nasce a Bologna nel 2012 allo scopo di supportare le persone migranti con un *background* LGBTIQ+ nel loro processo di integrazione sia all'interno della comunità italiana che della specifica comunità LGBTIQ+.

MIGRABO LGBTI è formata interamente da volontari e offre un servizio di assistenza totalmente gratuito a quei migranti che intendano presentare richiesta di protezione internazionale in Italia per cosiddetti motivi SOGI (orientamento sessuale e identità di genere).

L'associazione li supporta durante tutto il percorso di richiesta d'asilo, preparando i migranti a sostenere il colloquio di fronte alla Commissione Territoriale.

Circa 150 sono i casi che l'associazione ha preso in carico fino a luglio 2018.

Tra gli obiettivi primari di MIGRABO vi è anche quello più generale di promuovere l'inclusione delle persone migranti LGBTIQ+ attraverso l'organizzazione di attività di vario tipo, di occasioni di socialità e di confronto, nonché di momenti di ascolto e sostegno psicologico garantiti gratuitamente e nel rispetto dell'anonimato.

Importante è sottolineare che MIGRABO lavora sui temi LGBTIQ+ anche con le seconde generazioni di immigrati, promuovendo attività e incontri dedicati.

Un altro importante servizio offerto dall'associazione è quello di informazione e orientamento rivolto alle coppie LGBTIQ+ che desiderano unirsi civilmente e sono composte da un cittadino italiano e uno di origine straniera.

L'associazione partecipa inoltre a diversi progetti, contribuendo a diffondere conoscenze ed esperienze e collaborando, come avvenuto per il progetto EPSILON, alla formazione di operatori e volontari che lavorano a stretto contatto con i migranti e di coloro che operano all'interno delle associazioni LGBTIQ+.

Grazie al progetto "Universi LGBTI – Quaderni dal mondo", MIGRABO, in collaborazione con Il grande Colibri, associazione che si occupa di orientamento sessuale e identità di genere in un'ottica interculturale ([www.ilgrandecolibri.com](http://www.ilgrandecolibri.com)), ha promosso la pubblicazione di alcuni importanti documenti che hanno l'obiettivo di fornire nuove conoscenze e approfondire la condizione LGBTIQ+ nel mondo, dando altresì voce alle testimonianze dirette di quei migranti sfuggiti alle difficili situazioni vissute nei Paesi di origine.

# Bibliografia

Amnesty International (2016). *Hotspot Italia. Come le politiche dell'Unione Europea portano a violazioni dei diritti di rifugiati e migranti*, <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/EUR3050042016ITALIAN.PDF>

Arcigay Gioconda si schiera con i migranti Lgbt. Al via corsi di formazione per gli operatori dell'accoglienza e incontri di discussione (2018, 24 gennaio), Reggio Sera, <https://www.reggiosera.it/2018/01/arcigay-gioconda-si-schiera-migranti-lgbt/238267/>

Arcigay Migranet: Programma nazionale di messa in rete degli sportelli per migranti e richiedenti asilo LGBTI (n.d.), Arcigay, <https://www.arcigay.it/cosafacciamo/lotta-alle-discriminazioni/arcigay-migranet/>

Berizzi P. (2018, 18 maggio). Verona, annullato all'università il convegno sui gay sgradito ai fascisti, [http://www.repubblica.it/scuola/2018/05/18/news/verona annullato\\_all\\_universita\\_il\\_convegno\\_sgradito\\_ai\\_fascisti-196715689/](http://www.repubblica.it/scuola/2018/05/18/news/verona annullato_all_universita_il_convegno_sgradito_ai_fascisti-196715689/)

Camera dei deputati (2017). *La piramide dell'odio in Italia. Commissione "Jo Cox" su fenomeni di odio, intolleranza, xenofobia, e razzismo. Relazione finale*, [http://www.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/leg17/attachments/shadow\\_primapagina/file\\_pdfs/000/007/099/Jo\\_Cox\\_Piramide\\_odio.pdf](http://www.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/leg17/attachments/shadow_primapagina/file_pdfs/000/007/099/Jo_Cox_Piramide_odio.pdf)

Gavrielides T., a cura di (2017). *Supporting and Including LGBTI Migrants. Needs, Experiences & Good Practices*, IARS publication, <http://www.epsilonproject.eu/e-books/>

"Immigrati gay, un rifugio per 14 persone". Giornata contro l'Omofobia, Caleidos e Arcigay firmano un'intesa. Il bilancio dello sportello Lgbt (2017, 18 maggio). Gazzetta di Modena, <http://gazzettadimodena.gelocal.it/modena/cronaca/2017/05/18/news/immigrati-gay-un-rifugio-per-14-persone-1.15358784>

ILGA: Carroll A. & Mendos L. R. (2017, maggio). *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2017: A world survey of sexual orientation laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition*, [https://www.ilga.org/downloads/2017/ILGA\\_State\\_Sponsored\\_Homophobia\\_2017\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.ilga.org/downloads/2017/ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2017_WEB.pdf).

IOM (2018, marzo). *Mixed Migration Flows in the Mediterranean. Compilation of Available Data and Information*, [http://migration.iom.int/docs/Flows\\_Compilation\\_Report\\_March\\_2018.pdf](http://migration.iom.int/docs/Flows_Compilation_Report_March_2018.pdf)

Jansens S. & Spijkerboer T. (2011). *Fleeing Homophobia - Asylum Claims Related to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Europe*. Amsterdam: COC Nederland/Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, <https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/fleeing-homophobia-asylum-claims-related-to-sexual-orientation-an>

Lanni A. (2017, maggio). *L'omofobia e i rifugiati Lgbt*, UNHCR, <https://www.unhcr.it/risorse/carta-di-roma/fact-checking/lomofobia-rifugiati-lgbt>

*Migration Flows – Europe* (2018), IOM- International Organisation for Migration <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>, consultato il 29 maggio 2018

Ministero dell'Interno – Dipartimento per le libertà civili e l'immigrazione (2017). *I numeri dell'asilo. Dati asilo 2016-2017*, [http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/dati\\_asilo\\_2017\\_.pdf](http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/dati_asilo_2017_.pdf)

Savio G (2017, giugno). *La legge 13 aprile 2017 n. 46 recante disposizioni urgenti per l'accelerazione dei procedimenti in materia di protezione internazionale, nonché per il contrasto dell'immigrazione illegale. Prime riflessioni interpretative*, ASGI, [https://www.asgi.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Scheda-pratica-legge-Minniti-DEF\\_2.pdf](https://www.asgi.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Scheda-pratica-legge-Minniti-DEF_2.pdf)

UNHCR (2012, 23 ottobre). *Linee guida in materia di protezione internazionale n. 9: Domande di riconoscimento dello status di rifugiato fondate sull'orientamento sessuale e/o l'identità di genere nell'ambito dell'articolo 1A(2) della Convenzione del 1951 e/o del suo Protocollo del 1967 relativi allo status dei rifugiati*, [https://www.unhcr.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Linee\\_guida\\_SOGI\\_ITA2012.final\\_.pdf](https://www.unhcr.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Linee_guida_SOGI_ITA2012.final_.pdf)

Zabonati A. (2018, gennaio). *Rifugiati e richiedenti asilo LGBTI: il Progetto Pink Refugees*, in DEP – Deportate esuli, profughe, n. 36, 147-155, [https://www.unive.it/pag/fileadmin/user\\_upload/dipartimenti/DSLCC/documenti/DEP/numeri/n36/DEP\\_36\\_2018\\_fileunico.pdf](https://www.unive.it/pag/fileadmin/user_upload/dipartimenti/DSLCC/documenti/DEP/numeri/n36/DEP_36_2018_fileunico.pdf)

# NETHERLANDS

Jolanda Elferink & Michelle Emmen  
© Movisie, Utrecht

## Samenvatting

ONDERSTEUNING en ACCEPTATIE van LHBT ASIELZOEKERS en VLUCHTELINGEN  
de opbrengsten van het Epsilon programma in Nederland

De hoofdvraag van het Epsilon programma 'Wat zijn de behoeften van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en de professionals en vrijwilligers die met hen werken als het gaat om het vergroten van steun aan en acceptatie van deze LHBT's, en wat zijn de ervaringen met interventies die hieraan bijdragen? Werken die volgens de betrokkenen, en wat kan volgens de literatuur werken?' is allereerst onderzocht met:

- Een literatuuronderzoek waarin we nagingen welke good practices er zijn als het gaat om steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en wat de literatuur zegt over wat werkt om de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen te vergroten.
- Een veldonderzoek waarin we zeven LHBT-asielzoekers (3) en -vluchtelingen (4) interviewden over hun ervaringen met en behoefte aan steun en acceptatie en waarin we in twee focusgroepen zeven professionals en zes vrijwilligers die met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen werken dezelfde vragen stelden.

Het Epsilon programma is op basis van dit onderzoek ontwikkeld en in Nederland geïmplementeerd door middel van een:

- Face-to-face training aan 23 professionals die met asielzoekers en vluchtelingen werken
- E-learning aan 200 deelnemers binnen Europa
- Een slotconferentie waarin alle opgedane ervaring en kennis is gedeeld
- Via deelname aan diverse bijeenkomsten in Nederland, zoals het verzorgen van workshops op een conferentie over LHBT-asielzoekers op 6 oktober 2017 in Amsterdam en op bijeenkomsten met Regenboogsteden in Nederland
- Via diverse artikelen op de websites van Movisie, KIS (Kennisplatform Integratie & Samenleving) en LHBT-organisaties en via nieuwsbrieven (zoals PinkLink)
- Via Social Media, zoals binnen een Facebook-groep van het Epsilonproject, waarin kennis en ervaringen werden uitgewisseld. De Advisory Board van het Epsilonproject, waarin relatief veel Nederlandse deelnemers zitten, heeft hieraan ook een belangrijke bijdrage geleverd.

De belangrijkste aanbevelingen voor Nederland en Europa zijn:

- In organisaties waar de asielprocedure bepaald en uitgevoerd wordt, moeten medewerkers getraind worden in het werken met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen;
- Opvanglocaties moeten LHBT-vriendelijkheid uitstralen;
- Opvangmedewerkers moeten training krijgen over hoe zij LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen kunnen steunen;
- LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen moeten realistische informatie krijgen over LHBT's in het aankomstland;
- Biculturele LHBT-vriendelijke medewerkers en biculturele LHBT's zijn nodig in het personeelsbestand van organisaties die met asielzoekers en vluchtelingen werken omdat zij de steun voor LHBT's te vergroten;
- Acceptatie van LHBT's onder nieuwkomers vergroot je door in te zetten op inleving, empathie en een positieve sociale norm ten aanzien van LHBT's;
- Laat geen homofobe medewerkers met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen werken;
- Wanneer de veiligheid van LHBT's in de opvang niet gewaarborgd is, ga dan voor aparte opvang

# Introductie

Een vlucht weg uit je thuisland is nooit zonder risico's. Als je daarnaast lesbische, homo-, bi- en/of transgendergevoelens (LHBT) hebt, krijg je vaak te maken met ernstige sociale uitsluiting en geweld, in kampsituaties en opvangcentra, en daarmee behoor je tot één van de meest kwetsbare groepen in Europa.

Verbetering is mogelijk door de inzet van goed geëquipeerde professionals en vrijwilligers, die de behoeften van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen signaleren, ondersteuning bieden en werken aan het vergroten van de acceptatie van LHBT's. Professionals en vrijwilligers die met asielzoekers en vluchtelingen werken, hadden vaak niet genoeg in huis. Zo signaleerden ze de ondersteuningsbehoeften niet en wisten ze niet altijd hoe het gesprek aan te gaan over LHBT-gevoelens. Ze hadden daarnaast niet genoeg vaardigheden om cultureel sensitieve voorzieningen in te richten waarin LHBT's geaccepteerd worden.

Het Epsilon project is een samenwerking tussen Italië, Cyprus, Griekenland, Groot-Brittannië en Nederland om juist die kennis, vaardigheden en het bewustzijn van professionals en vrijwilligers te vergroten. Zodat zij op hun beurt LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen beter ondersteunen. We startten het project met verkennend veldwerk en literatuuronderzoek en werkten toe naar een face-to-face training en e-learning. Ook zijn de uitkomsten van het project op verschillende manieren geïmplementeerd. In dit Ebook lees je over de opbrengsten van het Epsilon programma.

## Begripsbepaling

Binnen Epsilon focusten we op LHBT-asielzoekers, mensen die naar Nederland of Europa zijn gekomen en nog in afwachting zijn van hun verblijfstatus en op 'nieuwkomers', vluchtelingen met een legale verblijfstatus, die niet van Nederlandse of Europese afkomst zijn en recentelijk, in de laatste 2 jaar, naar Nederland zijn gevlucht.

### *Definitie asielzoeker*

Asielzoekers zijn mensen die vanuit hun eigen land zijn gevlucht vanwege vrees voor vervolging, die verzocht hebben om (juridische en fysieke) bescherming in een ander land, maar nog geen uitsluitel hebben.

### *Definitie vluchteling*

Vluchtelingen, ook wel nieuwkomers, zijn mensen die vanuit hun eigen land zijn gevlucht vanwege vrees voor vervolging, die in de afgelopen 12 maanden internationale bescherming en de status van vluchteling toegekend hebben gekregen.

## Leeswijzer

Voorafgaand aan deze introductie gaven we een korte samenvatting van het Ebook. We vervolgen dit Ebook met hoofdstuk 2 over de methoden die we hebben ingezet om tot dit Ebook te komen. In hoofdstuk 3 lees je over de opbrengsten van het Epsilon programma in Nederland; we delen de bevindingen van het onderzoek en van de implementatie in de vorm van de Epsilon training. In hoofdstuk 4 doen we aanbevelingen op Nederlands en Europees niveau. In hoofdstuk 5 vind je onze conclusies, in hoofdstuk 6 de bijlagen en hoofdstuk 7 bestaat uit de bronnen die we gebruikten.

# Methodologie

De hoofdvraag van het onderzoek waarmee Epsilon is gestart, luidt:

*Wat zijn de behoeften van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en de professionals en vrijwilligers die met hen werken als het gaat om het vergroten van steun aan en acceptatie van deze LHBT's, en wat zijn de ervaringen met interventies die hieraan bijdragen? Werken die volgens de betrokkenen, en wat kan volgens de literatuur werken?*

We beantwoordden deze hoofdvraag aan de hand van vier subvragen:

1. *Wat zijn de behoeften van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en professionals en vrijwilligers als het gaat om het vergroten van steun aan deze LHBT's?*
2. *Wat zijn bestaande good practices voor het steunen van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen?*
3. *Wat zijn de behoeften van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en professionals en vrijwilligers als het gaat om het vergroten van de acceptatie van LHBT's?*
4. *Wat werkt volgens de literatuur in de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen?*

## Onderzoeksmethoden

Voor het Epsilon onderzoek voerden we literatuuronderzoek uit en deden veldwerk. In het literatuuronderzoek gingen we na welke *good practices* er zijn als het gaat om steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen, we beschreven er twee uitgebreid (subvraag 2). Ook onderzochten we wat de literatuur zegt over wat werkt om de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen te vergroten (subvraag 4). In het veldwerk hielden we zeven interviews met LHBT-asielzoekers (n=3) en -vluchtelingen (n=4) over hun behoefte aan steun (subvraag 1) en hun behoefte aan acceptatie (subvraag 3). In twee focusgroepen met professionals (n=7) en vrijwilligers (n=6) gingen we na wat hun behoeften zijn in het vergroten van steun aan (subvraag 1), acceptatie van (subvraag 3) LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en ervaringen met *good practices* (subvraag 2).

## Implementatie

Voor de implementatie van Epsilon werkten we met zelfreflectievragen tijdens de training en geanonimiseerde evaluatieformulieren achteraf, met zowel kwantitatieve als kwalitatieve vragen, analyseerden we.

## Onderzoekseenheden

Voor het veldwerk hebben we respondenten geworven via ons netwerk van organisaties en mensen in Nederland die werken met de doelgroepen asielzoekers, vluchtelingen en LHBT's, en de overlap daarin. Onze steekproef zag er als volgt uit:

- 7 respondenten die LHBT én asielzoeker (3) of vluchteling (4) zijn. We interviewden 7 homomannen tussen de 25 en 34 jaar, waarvan er twee afkomstig uit Armenië, één uit Jordanië, één uit Libanon, één uit Nigeria, één uit Iran en één uit Tanzania;
- 7 professionals van een COA-locatie in Nederland en 6 vrijwilligers van het Cocktailproject die met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen werken.

Voor de Epsilon implementatie hebben we wederom geworven via ons netwerk. We gaven twee dagen in company training aan:

- Een groep van 7 medewerkers van Vluchtelingenwerk Amstel tot Zaan die allemaal werken met vluchtelingen;
- Een groep van 16 medewerkers van verschillende COA-locaties in Nederland.

# Bevindingen

## Bevindingen vanuit veldwerk

### Steun ontvangen en steun bieden

Zes van de zeven LHBT's die we interviewden ervoeren in de asielprocedure bij de IND weinig tot geen steun in het praten over hun LHBT-zijn. Vragen over seksuele tactieken – vragen over hoe jij seks hebt – gingen zelfs over hun grenzen heen. Eén respondent heeft pas twee maanden na aankomst in Nederland zijn advocaat durven vertellen dat hij op mannen valt. De respondenten erkennen allemaal dat openhartig praten over LHBT-zijn nodig is, maar tegelijkertijd heel erg moeilijk:

*'Het gehoor met IND, ja, ik moest openhartig praten, maar het is mij amper gelukt, het is heel moeilijk om zo'n stap te maken om erover te praten. Ik bedoel je moet altijd je best doen om het te verbergen en hier is het andersom: je moet bewijzen, het aantonen.'*

LHBT-vluchteling

In de opvang van het COA ervaren onze respondenten niet altijd dat ze veilig zijn. Geen van allen zijn zij open (geweest) over hun LHBT-zijn naar andere bewoners. Eén respondent voelt zich wel gesteund, wat vooral komt doordat hij een eigen kamer heeft, wat voor veiligheid en privacy zorgt. Een deel van de COA-medewerkers zet zich pro actief in om met asielzoekers en vluchtelingen gesprekken te starten over LHBT-zijn. Zij zetten dan in op: interesse, oprecht luisteren, rust en privacy scheppen, vertrouwen geven, niet in een open ruimte zitten, het onderwerp niet benoemen maar wel beschrijven, bevestigend antwoorden, bekrachtigen door te herhalen en open vragen stellen. Zij ervaren dat je als COA-medewerker makkelijker signaleert dat je met een LHBT-asielzoeker of -vluchteling te maken hebt als je zelf LHBT bent. Weinig COA-medewerkers zijn open over hun LHBT-zijn, omdat zij zich daar niet altijd veilig in voelen. Alle COA-medewerkers schakelen bij onveilige situaties de politie in en vaak wordt er dan een overplaatsing, van de bewoner die voor de onveilige situatie zorgt of de LHBT-er, naar een andere COA-locatie geregeld. Als het COA-medewerkers duidelijk is dat een bewoner worstelt met LHBT-zijn, verwijzen ze op grond van een samenwerkingsconvenant door naar het COC, waar LHBT's zich naar hun idee beter van gaan voelen, omdat zij daar gelijkgestemden ontmoeten. Alle zeven LHBT's die we interviewden hebben ervaring met steun vanuit LHBT-belangenorganisaties in Nederland. Bijna allemaal ervaren ze steun van deze belangenorganisaties. De vrijwilligers van het Cocktailmaatjes-project, die sociale steun bieden aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen, ervaren dat nieuwkomers met hen leren praten over LHBT-zijn. Wat helpt, is dat zij door hun gelijkwaardigheid – ze zijn zelf ook LHBT – snel een gelijkwaardige vertrouwensband opbouwen die dat praten makkelijker maakt.

### Vergroten van steun

De LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen, professionals en vrijwilligers die we spraken, noemen samen negen verbeterpunten die de steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen vergroot:

1. Zorg voor informatie over de procedure bij de IND en zorg dat asielzoekers en vluchtelingen kennis nemen van onze Grondwet en artikel 1 zodat zij weten dat zij vrijuit kunnen praten.
2. Train de IND-ambtenaren in het afnemen van gehoren bij LHBT's zodat zij weten hoe ze vragen over seksuele oriëntatie zouden moeten stellen en voorkom zo dat zij alleen checken op geloofwaardigheid en stereotypen waardoor zij LHBT's die niet enorm worstelen met hun LHBT-zijn niet geloven.
3. Wees er zeker van dat in de gehoren bij LHBT's geen homofobe ambtenaren of tolken betrokken zijn die LHBT's niet accepteren omdat dat invloed heeft op het gehoor en de uitkomst ervan.



4. Stel discretie voorop wanneer asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen met jou hardop durven te praten over LHBT-zijn. Het ergste dat zo iemand kan gebeuren is dat er, vaak met goede bedoelingen, iemand bijgehaald wordt om te vertalen en dat wordt als zeer onveilig ervaren.
5. Wanneer COA-medewerkers de tijd nemen om te luisteren naar LHBT's en doorvragen naar hun behoeften kunnen ze deze mensen hun eigen regie teruggeven en tegelijkertijd meer steun bieden. Training over steun bieden aan LHBT's of een themadag kan hierbij helpen.
6. Richtlijnen voor het steunen van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen moeten centraal door COA bepaald worden, zodat het aanwezig zijn van onder meer voorlichtingsmateriaal en posters in de opvang niet afhangen van de locatiemanager. In die richtlijn kan je opnemen dat de contactpersoon Veiligheid op elke locatie verantwoordelijk is voor het borgen van dit eenduidige LHBT-beleid op die locatie.
7. Het categoriseren van de opvang kan veiligheid bieden. Denk aan een aparte opvang met eigen toegang voor LHBT's.
8. Een meer divers personeelsbestand helpt om in de ondersteuning beter te kunnen aansluiten.
9. LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen begrijpen zelf vaak weinig van wat LHBT-zijn is en kunnen ondersteuning gebruiken in zichzelf beter begrijpen, onder meer waar het gaat om psychische en sociale problemen die zij vaker hebben dan niet-LHBT's. Een interactieve workshop of een seminar is een geschikte manier.

#### Non-acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen

COA-medewerkers zien non-acceptatie van LHBT's in hun opvang terug in pesten en geweld, zoals homofobe uitlatingen, van mannen, vrouwen én kinderen in de rij bij het melden, maar ook punaises in bedden van LHBT's. Zij hebben wel een idee van hoe schadelijk het is, maar weten niet altijd wat er aan te doen. Verdrietig vinden ze het voor LHBT's die naar Nederland komen, omdat ze denken dat de acceptatie hier groot is. En dan krijgen ze te maken met pesten en geweld, vaak al bij de noodopvang net na aankomst, waar weinig privacy is en LHBT's volgens COA-medewerkers nog onveiliger kunnen zijn. De LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen beschrijven hetzelfde: in Nederland zijn, op zoek naar veiligheid, en dat je dan in de opvang van het COA alsnog met zoveel spanning moet leven, is het moeilijkst.

#### Vergroten van acceptatie

De LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen, professionals en vrijwilligers die we spraken, noemen samen vijf verbeterpunten die de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen vergroot:

1. De participatieverklaring is volgens onze respondenten een goed idee, maar zou eerder getekend moeten worden, namelijk voordat de verblijfsvergunning er komt.
2. De IND moet zich er bewust van zijn dat er ook in Nederland sprake is van LHBT-discriminatie onder rechters, advocaten, ambtenaren en tolken en niet met hen in zee willen gaan.
3. Het COA moet duidelijker laten zien wat zij doen aan de non-acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. Bijvoorbeeld door medewerkers en tolken te screenen op of zij LHBT's accepteren, maar ook door strenger op te treden tegen pesten en geweld. COA-medewerkers zouden duidelijker willen zijn tegen bewoners: als je niet met LHBT's kan samenleven dan ben je niet op de juiste plek; accepteren is geen keuze.
4. Als de veiligheid van LHBT's in de opvang niet gewaarborgd kan worden, is aparte opvang de enige oplossing.
5. Al in de opvang moet duidelijk zijn dat LHBT onderdeel is van samenleven in Nederland. COA-medewerkers hebben steun van hun management en bestuur nodig om het LHBT-thema te betrekken in hun leerpaden, om de regenboogvlag een plek te geven op de locaties en om eenduidig voorlichtingsmateriaal als posters en training te kunnen aanbieden. Het COA moet uitstralen dat LHBT oké is en dat we er over praten met elkaar.

# Bevindingen vanuit literatuuronderzoek

## LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen in Nederland

Het hebben van LHBT-gevoelens kan een belangrijke reden zijn om te vluchten. In 77 landen ter wereld is homoseksualiteit strafbaar. Er staan bijvoorbeeld gevangenisstraffen op of de doodstraf. Om in veiligheid en vrijheid te kunnen leven, ontvluchten LHBT's hun land. In Nederland voert de Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst (IND), onderdeel van het Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie, de asielprocedure uit. Iemand met LHBT-gevoelens krijgt niet per definitie een verblijfsvergunning in Nederland; de IND bekijkt iedere casus individueel en neemt de situatie in het herkomstland en het persoonlijke verhaal mee in de beoordeling. In totaal voert het IND in aanloop naar die beoordeling, samen met een tolk, drie gesprekken met asielzoekers. Het derde en laatste gesprek, dat het nader gehoor heet, is belangrijk omdat de asielzoeker daarin vertelt waarom hij of zij asiel aanvraagt. Op dat moment is het belangrijk dat iemand aangeeft dat hij of zij vlucht vanwege seksuele voorkeur of genderidentiteit en daarom asiel aanvraagt. Het is echter niet vanzelfsprekend dat een asielzoeker open is over zijn of haar LHBT-gevoelens: bij een autoriteit in een verhoor toegeven dat je LHBT-gevoelens hebt, wordt als onveilig ervaren. Tijdens de asielprocedure regelt het COA (Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers) de opvang die bestaat uit onderdak, leefgeld en toegang tot basisvoorzieningen zoals gezondheidszorg. In de opvang wonen LHBT's samen met mensen die negatief en agressief reageren op hen en lopen het risico op buitensluiting, pesten, bedreiging en mishandeling. De meeste LHBT's houden hun LHBT-zijn voor zich uit angst dat ze gediscrimineerd worden. Ze leven met de vrees dat hun geheim ontdekt wordt en ervaren discriminatie in de opvang. Dit alles heeft gevolgen. De belangrijkste problemen die LHBT's met een vluchtverhaal ervaren zijn psychische problemen, waaronder angst, slapeloosheid, stress, depressieve klachten, zelfmoordgedachten en -pogingen en wantrouwen. Daarnaast zitten ze vaak in een sociaal isolement; ze zijn veel alleen, ontvangen geen steun van anderen en kampen met eenzaamheid.

## Wat werkt in het vergroten van steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen

De belangrijkste tips aan professionals en vrijwilligers voor het vergroten van steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen zijn: zorg dat medewerkers en vrijwilligers kennis hebben op het gebied van LHBT en de culturele achtergrond, bouw een vertrouwensrelatie op, sluit aan bij 'de taal' van de asielzoeker of vluchteling, straal uit dat de organisatie LHBT-vriendelijk is, breng de LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen in contact met elkaar en andere LHBT's, verwijs door naar (belangen)organisaties die LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen ondersteunen (zorg voor een goede sociale kaart en werk samen), grijp in bij onveilige situaties, noem LHBT's expliciet in het protocol voor veiligheid en antidiscriminatie, onderscheid welke methoden werken bij voorlichting, vertel LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen realistisch over de situatie in Nederland, bied informatie online en in verschillende talen, zorg voor veiligheid als er sprake is van dreiging en geweld (en werk hierbij ook samen met partners op het gebied van veiligheid, zoals de politie) en besteed aandacht aan LHBT bij de inburgering van statushouders.

## Wat werkt in vergroten van de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen

De Nederlandse overheid voert al jaren een LHBT-emancipatiebeleid om discriminatie en geweld tegen LHBT's te verminderen. Sinds kort zijn er ook voor vluchtelingen en asielzoekers voorlichtingen, in azc's en soms in de noodopvang. Movisie onderzocht welke technieken onder welke voorwaarden effectief zijn in het vergroten van de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. De belangrijke voorwaarde waaraan voldaan moet worden – wat voor voorlichting je ook gaat inzetten – is dat de interventie wordt uitgevoerd op een moment dat vluchtelingen niet te veel andere dingen aan hun hoofd hebben waardoor er beperkte mogelijkheid is om zich in te leven in een ander. Voorlichting voor vluchtelingen met een verblijfsstatus is kansrijker dan voorlichting voor asielzoekers die nog met hun asielprocedure bezig zijn.

Een aantal technieken kunnen goed werken. (1) De eerste is het inzetten van ervaringsverhalen van LHBT's met veel emotie, zodat vluchtelingen die niet LHBT-zijn zich kunnen inleven en empathie voor hen kunnen krijgen (*contacttheorie*). De LHBT's die hun ervaringen vertellen, moeten wat betreft religie, cultuur en leeftijd goed aansluiten bij de mensen aan wie zij hun verhaal vertellen. (2) Een tweede techniek die kan werken, zijn films met persoonlijke verhalen van LHBT's waarin mensen die niet LHBT-zijn zich kunnen inleven en waar zij empathie voor kunnen krijgen

(*parasociaal contacttheorie*). (3) Een derde techniek zijn films met vriendschappen tussen LHBT's en niet-LHBT's van dezelfde culturele afkomst als de kijker. Een goede band of vriendschap laten zien – of hierover vertellen – tussen een niet-LHBT persoon uit de eigen groep en een LHBT kan ook werken (*extended contact theorie*). (4) Als voorbereiding op een echte ontmoeting met een LHBT-persoon, werkt het goed om de deelnemers zich te laten voorstellen dat ze een LHBT ontmoeten, en dat dit contact positief verloopt (*denkbeeldig contact*). (5) Een vijfde techniek die kansrijk is, is het communiceren van een positieve sociale norm over LHBT's. Dat doe je door personen met gezag en autoriteit die zelf niet-LHBT zijn zich uit te laten spreken voor de acceptatie van LHBT's en door te zeggen dat steeds meer mensen uit de eigen etnische groep positiever gaan denken over LHBT of dat zij discriminatie van LHBT's niet tolereren (*sociale norm*).

### Good practices in Nederland

Er zijn in Nederland meerdere good practices voor de steun aan, en soms ook voor de acceptatie van, LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. Voorbeelden zijn het Cocktail maatjesproject, Transvisie (voor transgender vluchtelingen), LGBT Asylum support, Stichting Secret Garden, Veilige Haven, Respect2Love Academy, Queer Welfare, De Prisma groep, Roze in Blauw Nederland (RiB NL, het aanspreekpunt voor LHBT's voor binnen en buiten de politie) en sinds 2017 is de App Rainbow Refugees NL beschikbaar voor LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen, ontstaan vanuit een samenwerking van organisaties, het bevat allerlei relevante informatie. Het COA heeft een landelijke werkgroep met medewerkers van verschillende COA-locaties die werken aan de steun aan, en de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. Movisie, kennis en aanpak van sociale vraagstukken, en Pharos, expertisecentrum gezondheidsverschillen, zijn landelijke instituten die advies en kennis geven aan professionals en vrijwilligers die te maken hebben met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland behartigt de belangen van vluchtelingen en asielzoekers in Nederland.

## Bevindingen vanuit de implementatie van Epsilon

### Face-to-face training / pilots

De Epsilon face-to face training is als pilot in Nederland bij het COA (Centraal Orgaan opvang asielzoekers) en VluchtelingenWerk gegeven. Bij het COA namen er 16 deelnemers deel en bij VluchtelingenWerk 12 deelnemers. Ze waren via de contactpersonen van het COA en VluchtelingenWerk geworven. In beide groepen ging het om praktijkwerkers, mensen die in hun dagelijks werk ondersteuning bieden aan asielzoekers en vluchtelingen. Bij beide organisaties bestond de training uit 2 dagdelen.

De face-to-face training bestaat uit drie hoofdmodules: 1. LHBT zijn. 2. LHBT asielzoekers en vluchtelingen. 3. LHBT inclusieve omgeving voor migranten, asielzoekers en vluchtelingen, met daaronder submodules, casestudies en interactieve oefeningen gerelateerd aan de specifieke module. Dit alles staat ook beschreven in een handboek dat ook beschikbaar is op [www.epsilonproject.eu](http://www.epsilonproject.eu). Van alle hoofdmodules zijn zowel bij het COA als bij VluchtelingenWerk onderdelen gegeven in een op maat gemaakt Nederlands draaiboek.

### Voorbeelden van onderdelen van de face-to-face training in Nederland

Check in: met welke twee vragen zit jij hier & Kennismaking: wie heeft net als ik...

LHBT zijn

Over seksuele voorkeur & gender identiteit

Wat LHBT zijn betekent in een asielprocedure

Over de asielprocedure voor LHBT-asielzoekers in Nederland & belang van internationale bescherming

Sekswerkers en internationale bescherming

Over het verband tussen sekswerk en migratie

In gesprek over LHBT-zijn

Hoe stel je de juiste vragen

Homofobie, transfobie en discriminatie herkennen & tegengaan

Over de negatieve gevolgen en wat jij er aan kan doen

Acceptatie LHBT onder nieuwkomers vergroten

Wat werkt in het vergroten van acceptatie LHBT's door andere nieuwkomers

Persoonlijke grenzen bewaken

Wat zijn persoonlijke grenzen en hoe ze te bewaken

Het belang van biculturele LHBT (vriendelijke) collega's

Wat betrokkenheid van biculturele LHBT (vriendelijke) collega's oplevert

### VluchtelingenWerk

VluchtelingenWerk biedt begeleiding tijdens de asielprocedure, bij werk & integratie en bij gezinshereniging. Ze hebben hierbij ook met LHBT-asielzoekers te maken. Soms houden deze LHBT-asielzoekers hun LHBT-zijn verborgen en soms zijn zij er open over. Bij VluchtelingenWerk had de face-to-face training als belangrijk doel LHBT bij asielzoekers te kunnen herkennen als dit nodig is, bijvoorbeeld bij psych-sociale problemen, de ondersteuning te kunnen bieden die past of eventueel te kunnen doorverwijzen, bijvoorbeeld naar LHBT-organisaties die ondersteuning kunnen bieden.

### COA

Het COA (zie ook kader) biedt opvang aan asielzoekers en zoals eerder genoemd komt het daar ook voor dat LHBT-asielzoekers juist open zijn over hun seksuele identiteit, omdat ze bijvoorbeeld eindelijk in een land zijn waar ze er open over kunnen zijn, of het juist verborgen houden, bijvoorbeeld omdat ze zich nog steeds niet veilig genoeg voelen. De training bij het COA had dezelfde inhoud en doel als bij VluchtelingenWerk, maar er was extra aandacht voor het vergroten van de veiligheid binnen de opvang en het voeren van gesprekken met LHBT-asielzoekers.

## Wat doet het COA in Nederland?

De taken van het COA zijn vastgelegd in de Wet Centraal Orgaan opvang asielzoekers (Wet COA). In artikel 3 van deze wet is vastgelegd dat:

1. Het COA is belast met:

- De materiële en immateriële opvang van asielzoekers;
- Het plaatsen van asielzoekers in een opvangvoorziening;
- Het plaatsen van asielzoekers op gemeentelijke opvangplaatsen en het betalen van bijdragen aan de desbetreffende gemeente ten behoeve van de kosten van deze opvang;
- Werkzaamheden met betrekking tot de bemiddeling bij de uitstroom van verblijfsgerechtigden als bedoeld in artikel 60a, onderdeel a, van de Huisvestingswet naar door burgemeester en wethouders beschikbaar gestelde huisvesting;
- Door onze minister aan het COA op te dragen andere taken die samenhangen met de opvang van asielzoekers.

2. Onze minister kan het COA taken als bedoeld in het eerste lid opdragen met betrekking tot andere categorieën vreemdelingen.

3. Bij regeling van onze minister kunnen regels worden gesteld met betrekking tot verstrekkingen aan asielzoekers en andere categorieën vreemdelingen als bedoeld in het tweede lid. Hieronder valt:

- Opvang van asielzoekers. Het COA vangt asielzoekers op en huisvest hen in locaties van het COA, totdat over hun asielerzoek is beslist door de Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst (IND) en de rechter deze beslissing heeft getoetst.
- Geven van begeleiding en informatie aan asielzoekers. Asielzoekers zijn verantwoordelijk voor eigen keuzes. Het COA begeleidt hen daarbij. Het COA stimuleert zelfstandigheid, initiatief en zelfontplooiing van asielzoekers, zodat zij zelf in staat zijn vorm te geven aan hun toekomst in Nederland of elders.
- Leveren van goederen aan asielzoekers. Het COA levert onder andere beddengoed en de eerste inrichting van de kamer aan asielzoekers.
- Uitbetalen van weekgeld aan asielzoekers. Het uitbetalen van weekgeld is vastgelegd in de Regeling Verstrekkingen Asielzoekers (Rva).
- Verwerven, beheren en sluiten van opvanglocaties. Het COA is verantwoordelijk voor de beschikbaarheid van voldoende opvangplaatsen voor asielzoekers die zijn toegelaten tot de asielprocedure. Het COA realiseert opvanglocaties in heel Nederland en onderhandelt daarover met gemeenten.
- Handhaven van de veiligheid in de opvanglocaties. COA-medewerkers zijn getraind in conflictbeheersing. Er zijn 24 uur per dag beveiligingsmedewerkers op een opvanglocatie aanwezig.
- Uitvoeren van de Regeling verstrekkingen bepaalde categorieën vreemdelingen (Rvb). Deze regeling voorziet bepaalde categorieën rechtmatig in Nederland verblijvende vreemdelingen in de noodzakelijke bestaansvoorwaarden.

### Uitkomsten

De uitkomsten van de face-to-face training / pilots zijn dat de deelnemers hebben geleerd over wat het kan betekenen om LHBT te zijn, zij hebben geleerd over seksuele voorkeur & gender identiteit en weten wat LHBT zijn betekent in een asielprocedure. Ook weten zij meer over de asielprocedure voor LHBT-asielzoekers in Nederland & het belang van internationale bescherming en over sekswerkers, internationale bescherming en over het verband tussen sekswerk en migratie.

Op praktisch niveau hebben zij geleerd en geoefend hoe je gesprekken kunt voeren over LHBT-zijn, hoe je de juiste vragen stelt en homofobie, transfobie en discriminatie kunt herkennen & tegengaan. Ook hebben zij geleerd wat werkt bij de acceptatie van LHBT onder nieuwkomers, hebben zij gereflecteerd op hoe zij persoonlijke grenzen kunnen bewaken en wat betrokkenheid van bi culturele LHBT (vriendelijke) collega's oplevert.

23 deelnemers hebben het evaluatieformulier ingevuld en 17 daarvan hebben de score 'goed' aan de training als geheel gegeven. Daarnaast waren er nog 3 scores 'heel goed' en 3 score 'voldoende'. Voor de volledige kwantitatieve scorelijst, zie bijlage V.

Verder gaven de deelnemers in de evaluatieformulieren vooral aan zich meer bewust te zijn van wat het betekent om LHBT-asielzoeker of vluchteling te zijn en daarom beter passende ondersteuning te kunnen bieden. De interactieve oefeningen werden vooral als prettig en leerzaam ervaren. Deelnemers gaven ook aan de behoefte te hebben om dieper op de verschillende onderwerpen in te gaan. De training behandelt nu veel onderwerpen, waardoor er relatief weinig tijd is om aan één onderwerp veel aandacht te besteden. Zowel het COA als VluchtelingenWerk gaven aan het geleerde in de training verder te gaan toepassen.

### E-learning

Voor de ondersteuning en acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen heeft Movisie samen met de partners in het Epsilon-project een e-learning ontwikkeld voor professionals en vrijwilligers die met hen werken. Deze e-learning is gebaseerd op de face-to-face training, inclusief het bijbehorende handboek, en bestaat ook uit de drie modules: 1. LHBT zijn. 2. LHBT asielzoekers en vluchtelingen. 3. LHBT inclusieve omgeving voor migranten, asielzoekers en vluchtelingen. Elke module bestaat uit meerdere submodules met inhoudelijke kennis, casussen en oefeningen. De e-learning kan in zijn geheel of gedeeltelijk worden gedaan. De modules zijn beschikbaar in verschillende talen: Engels, Nederlands, Italiaans en Grieks. Er is ook een volledig handboek in het Engels beschikbaar. Bij afronding van de e-learning krijgt de deelnemer een certificaat. De e-learning is te vinden op <https://elearning.epsilonproject.eu/>

### Verdere implementatie

Verder is het Epsilonprogramma in Nederland geïmplementeerd via:

- Een nationale slotconferentie waarin alle opgedane ervaring en kennis is gedeeld
- Bijdragen aan diverse bijeenkomsten in Nederland, zoals het verzorgen van workshops op een conferentie over LHBT-asielzoekers op 6 oktober 2017 in Amsterdam en op bijeenkomsten met Regenboogsteden in Nederland
- Diverse artikelen op de websites van Movisie, KIS (Kennisplatform Integratie & Samenleving) en LHBT-organisaties en via nieuwsbrieven (zoals PinkLink)
- Via Social Media, zoals binnen een Facebook-groep van het Epsilonproject, waarin kennis en ervaringen werden uitgewisseld. De Advisory Board van het Epsilonproject, waarin relatief veel Nederlandse deelnemers zitten, heeft hieraan ook een belangrijke bijdrage geleverd.

Ook hebben Nederlandse deelnemers (waaronder ervaringsdeskundigen uit de doelgroep), naast de Nederlandse projectpartners van Movisie, een bijdrage geleverd aan projectmeetings, conferenties en het testen van de training van het Epsilonproject.

# 4 Aanbevelingen

Het Epsilon-project heeft diverse inzichten opgeleverd die tot de volgende aanbevelingen hebben geleid, voor zowel Nederland als Europa:

## Aanbevelingen voor Nederland en Europa

- **Binnen de organisatie die de asielprocedures uitvoeren, moeten de medewerkers getraind worden in het werken met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen**

Zij moeten kennis hebben van LHBT's en hun culturele achtergrond, aansluiten bij 'de taal' die zij gebruiken om hun seksuele voorkeur en genderidentiteit aan te geven en uitstralen dat zij LHBT-vriendelijk zijn. Zij moeten weten hoe ze vragen over seksuele voorkeur en genderidentiteit stellen zonder dat ze daarbij de grenzen van de ander overschrijden, zij moeten zich ervan bewust zijn dat onze Grondwet en de veiligheid om LHBT-gevoelens te uiten niet voor iedereen bekend is en ten slotte moeten zij discretie voorop stellen: als een LHBT-asielzoeker met jou hardop durft te praten over LHBT-zijn betekent dat niet dat hij of zij uit de kast wil komen bij anderen.

- **Opvanglocaties moeten LHBT-vriendelijkheid uitstralen**

In de opvang voor nieuwkomers moet duidelijk zijn dat LHBT's deel uitmaken van de Nederlandse samenleving. Management en bestuur van opvanglocaties moet eenduidig zijn in hun LHBT-beleid en faciliteren in onder meer voorlichtingsmateriaal, posters en een regenboogvlag voor iedere locatie. Het helpt om LHBT's als doelgroep expliciet te noemen in het protocol voor veiligheid en antidiscriminatie en om per locatie één medewerker aanspreekpunt te maken.

- **Trainen van opvang-medewerkers (bijvoorbeeld van het COA) vergroot steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen**

In een training over het steunen van LHBT's kunnen opvang-medewerkers meer leren over hoe zij LHBT's kunnen signaleren, hoe ze het gesprek aan kunnen gaan in 'de taal' van de nieuwkomer met een juiste manier van doorvragen naar behoeften die de nieuwkomer zijn eigen regie laat behouden, hoe ze LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen in contact kunnen brengen met elkaar en andere LHBT's, hoe ze op basis van een goede sociale (roze) kaart door kunnen verwijzen naar (belangen)organisaties die ondersteuning bieden, hoe ze ingrijpen bij onveilige situaties, informatie kunnen aanbieden en aandacht kunnen besteden aan het communiceren van een positieve norm over het accepteren van LHBT's.

- **Vertel LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen realistisch over LHBT's in het aankomstland (bijvoorbeeld Nederland) en geef informatie**

LHBT-nieuwkomers begrijpen vaak zelf niet wat er met ze aan de hand is en kunnen ondersteuning gebruiken in het beter begrijpen van zichzelf en de situatie van LHBT's in het aankomstland (bijvoorbeeld Nederland). Het is belangrijk om aan te sluiten bij 'de taal' van de asielzoeker of vluchteling en om informatie over omgaan met psychische en sociale problemen en informatie over ontmoetings-mogelijkheden online en in verschillende talen aan te bieden.

- **Biculturele LHBT-vriendelijke medewerkers en biculturele LHBT's kunnen steun vergroten**

Een meer divers personeelsbestand bij de organisaties – dat geldt voor professionals, maar ook voor vrijwilligers – die met asielzoekers en vluchtelingen werken, is een verbeterkans, omdat deze mensen de situatie en context van waar de LHBT- en niet-LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen vandaan komen begrijpen en in hun ondersteuning goed kunnen aansluiten. Deze ervaringsdeskundige medewerkers kunnen de kennis van de culturele achtergrond van nieuwkomers vergroten bij hun collega's.

- **Acceptatie vergroten doe je door in te zetten op inleving, empathie en de sociale norm**

Voorlichting geven aan nieuwkomers met het doel om de acceptatie van LHBT's te vergroten, is kansrijk als je inzet op inleving, empathie en een positieve sociale norm. Denk aan (films met) ervaringsverhalen van LHBT's die wat betreft religie, cultuur en leeftijd goed aansluiten met veel emotie zodat niet-LHBT's zich kunnen inleven en empathie voor hen kunnen krijgen. Het communiceren van een positieve sociale norm door personen met gezag en autoriteit en zeggen dat steeds meer mensen uit de eigen etnische groep positiever denken over LHBT's werkt ook. Voorlichting voor vluchtelingen met een verblijfsstatus is kansrijker dan voorlichting voor asielzoekers die nog met hun asielprocedure bezig zijn.

- **Wees scherp op homofobe medewerkers en laat hen niet met LHBT's werken**

In Europa (waaronder) Nederland is er nog altijd sprake van LHBT-discriminatie, ook onder de mensen die met asielzoekers en vluchtelingen werken waaronder rechters, advocaten, ambtenaren en tolken. Wees je daar bewust van en treed op.

- **Wanneer je veiligheid van LHBT's in de opvang niet kunt waarborgen, ga dan voor aparte opvang**

Wanneer de opvang voor LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen onveilig is, is categoriseren van de opvang belangrijk. Denk aan het mixen van alleenstaande moeders met LHBT's of aan een aparte opvang voor LHBT's met een eigen toegang.



# 5 Conclusies

Deze conclusies omvatten de belangrijkste uitkomsten van het Epsilon programma in Nederland. Dit Ebook is het eindproduct van het Epsilon project waarin we in een samenwerking tussen Italië, Cyprus, Griekenland, Groot-Brittannië en Nederland de kennis, vaardigheden en het bewustzijn van professionals en vrijwilligers vergrootten als het gaat om het steunen van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en het vergroten van hun acceptatie. We startten het project met verkennend veldwerk en literatuuronderzoek en werkten toe naar een face-to-face training en e-learning. In dit Ebook lees je over de opbrengsten van het Epsilon programma. Binnen dit programma focussen we op LHBT-asielzoekers, mensen die naar Nederland of Europa zijn gekomen en nog in afwachting zijn van hun verblijfstatus en op 'nieuwkomers', vluchtelingen met een legale verblijfstatus, die niet van Nederlandse of Europese afkomst zijn en recentelijk, in de laatste 2 jaar, naar Nederland zijn gevlucht.

De hoofdvraag van het Epsilon onderzoek *'Wat zijn de behoeften van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en de professionals en vrijwilligers die met hen werken als het gaat om het vergroten van steun aan en acceptatie van deze LHBT's, en wat zijn de ervaringen met interventies die hieraan bijdragen? Werken die volgens de betrokkenen, en wat kan volgens de literatuur werken?'* is onderzocht met:

- Een literatuuronderzoek waarin we nagingen welke *good practices* er zijn als het gaat om steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen en wat de literatuur zegt over wat werkt om de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen te vergroten.
- Een veldonderzoek waarin we zeven LHBT-asielzoekers (3) en -vluchtelingen (4) interviewden over hun ervaringen met en behoefte aan steun en acceptatie en waarin we in twee focusgroepen zeven professionals en zes vrijwilligers die met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen werken dezelfde vragen stelden.

Het Epsilon programma is in Nederland geïmplementeerd door middel van een:

- Face-to-face training aan 23 professionals die met asielzoekers en vluchtelingen werken
- E-learning aan 200 deelnemers binnen Europa
- Een slotconferentie waarin alle opgedane ervaring en kennis is gedeeld
- Via deelname aan diverse bijeenkomsten in Nederland, zoals het verzorgen van workshops op een conferentie over LHBT-asielzoekers op 6 oktober 2017 in Amsterdam en op bijeenkomsten met Regenboogsteden in Nederland
- Via diverse artikelen op de websites van Movisie, KIS (Kennissplatform Integratie & Samenleving) en LHBT-organisaties en via nieuwsbrieven (zoals PinkLink)
- Via Social Media, zoals binnen een Facebook-groep van het Epsilonproject, waarin kennis en ervaringen werden uitgewisseld. De Advisory Board van het Epsilonproject, waarin relatief veel Nederlandse deelnemers zitten, heeft hieraan ook een belangrijke bijdrage geleverd.

Verder hebben Nederlandse deelnemers (waaronder ervaringsdeskundigen uit de doelgroep), naast de Nederlandse projectpartners van Movisie, een bijdrage geleverd aan projectmeetings, conferenties en het testen van de training van het Epsilonproject.

Het Epsilonproject heeft tevens het netwerk vergroot van mensen die met LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen in Nederland werken, zij weten elkaar nu makkelijker te vinden bij vragen hierover.

De conclusie van het literatuuronderzoek, het veldonderzoek en de implementatie volgen hieronder.

## Conclusie literatuuronderzoek

De conclusie van het literatuuronderzoek is dat het hebben van LHBT-gevoelens een belangrijke reden kan zijn om te vluchten, in 77 landen ter wereld is homoseksualiteit strafbaar. Iemand met LHBT-gevoelens krijgt niet per definitie een verblijfsvergunning in Nederland; de IND bekijkt iedere casus individueel en neemt de situatie in het herkomstland

en het persoonlijke verhaal. Het is echter niet vanzelfsprekend dat een asielzoeker open is over zijn of haar LHBT-gevoelens. In de opvang kunnen LHBT's zich nog steeds niet veilig voelen of niet veilig zijn. De belangrijkste problemen die LHBT's met een vluchtverhaal ervaren zijn psychische problemen en sociaal isolement.

De belangrijkste tips aan professionals en vrijwilligers voor het vergroten van steun aan LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen zijn: zorg dat medewerkers en vrijwilligers kennis hebben op het gebied van LHBT en de culturele achtergrond, bouw een vertrouwensrelatie op, sluit aan bij 'de taal' van de asielzoeker of vluchteling, straal uit dat de organisatie LHBT-vriendelijk is, breng de LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen in contact met elkaar en andere LHBT's, verwijs door naar (belangen)organisaties die LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen ondersteunen, grijp in bij onveilige situaties, noem LHBT's expliciet in het protocol voor veiligheid en antidiscriminatie, onderscheid welke methoden werken bij voorlichting, vertel LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen realistisch over de situatie in Nederland, bied informatie online en in verschillende talen, zorg voor veiligheid als er sprake is van dreiging en geweld en besteed aandacht aan LHBT bij de inburgering van statushouders.

Een aantal technieken kunnen goed werken bij de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. (1) Het inzetten van ervaringsverhalen van LHBT's (2) Films met persoonlijke verhalen van LHBT's waarin mensen die niet LHBT-zijn zich kunnen inleven en waar zij empathie voor kunnen krijgen (parasociaal contacttheorie). (3) Films met vriendschappen tussen LHBT's en niet-LHBT's van dezelfde culturele afkomst als de kijker (extended contact theorie). (4) Als voorbereiding op een echte ontmoeting met een LHBT-persoon, werkt het goed om de deelnemers zich te laten voorstellen dat ze een LHBT ontmoeten, en dat dit contact positief verloopt (denkbeeldig contact). (5) Het communiceren van een positieve sociale norm over LHBT's. Dat doe je door personen met gezag en autoriteit die zelf niet-LHBT zijn zich uit te laten spreken voor de acceptatie van LHBT's en door te zeggen dat steeds meer mensen uit de eigen etnische groep positiever gaan denken over LHBT of dat zij discriminatie van LHBT's niet tolereren (sociale norm).

Er zijn in Nederland meerdere good practices voor de steun aan, en soms ook voor de acceptatie van, LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. Voorbeelden zijn het Cocktail maatjesproject, Transvisie LGBT Asylum support, Stichting Secret Garden, Veilige Haven, Respect2Love Academy, Queer Welfare, De Prisma groep, Roze in Blauw Nederland (RiB NL, het aanspreekpunt voor LHBT's voor binnen en buiten de politie) en sinds 2017 is de App Rainbow Refugees NL beschikbaar voor LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen. Het COA heeft een landelijke werkgroep die werken aan de steun aan, en de acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. Movisie, kennis en aanpak van sociale vraagstukken, en Pharos, expertisecentrum gezondheidsverschillen, zijn landelijke instituten die advies en kennis geven aan professionals en vrijwilligers die te maken hebben met LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland behartigt de belangen van vluchtelingen en asielzoekers in Nederland.

## Conclusie veldonderzoek

De belangrijkste uitkomsten van het veldonderzoek onder LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen en professionals en vrijwilligers die met hen werken zijn: zorg voor informatie over de procedure bij de IND, train IND-ambtenaren en professionals en vrijwilligers die LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen ondersteunen, wees er zeker van dat in de gehoren bij LHBT's geen homofobe ambtenaren of tolken betrokken zijn, stel discretie voorop, opvanglocaties moeten met duidelijke richtlijnen komen, het categoriseren van de opvang kan veiligheid bieden, een meer divers personeelsbestand, ondersteun

LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen bij psychische en sociale problemen.

Bij het vergroten van acceptatie worden de volgende verbeterpunten genoemd: de participatieverklaring zou eerder getekend moeten worden, namelijk voordat de verblijfsvergunning er komt, de IND moet zich er bewust van zijn dat er ook in Nederland sprake is van LHBT-discriminatie, COA moet duidelijker laten zien wat zij doen aan de non-acceptatie van LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen, als de veiligheid van LHBT's in de opvang niet gewaarborgd kan worden, is aparte opvang de enige oplossing en al in de opvang moet duidelijk zijn dat LHBT onderdeel is van samenleven in Nederland.

## Conclusie implementatie

De face-to-face training was een belangrijk onderdeel van de implementatie. De belangrijkste uitkomsten van de face-to-face training / pilots bij het COA en VluchtelingenWerk zijn dat de deelnemers kennis hebben genomen van wat het betekent om LHBT te zijn, geleerd hebben over seksuele voorkeur & gender identiteit, weten wat LHBT zijn betekent in een asielprocedure, bekend zijn met de asielprocedure voor LHBT-asielzoekers in Nederland & belang van internationale bescherming en geleerd hebben over sekswerkers en internationale bescherming en over het verband tussen sekswerk en migratie.

Verder hebben zij geleerd en geoefend hoe je gesprekken kunt voeren over LHBT-zijn, hoe je de juiste vragen stelt en homofobie, transfobie en discriminatie herkennen & tegengaan. Ook hebben zij geleerd wat werkt bij de acceptatie van LHBT onder nieuwkomers, hebben zij gereflecteerd op hoe zij persoonlijke grenzen kunnen bewaken en wat betrokkenheid van biculturele LHBT (vriendelijke) collega's oplevert.

Alle deelnemers gaan verder aan de slag met wat zij geleerd hebben in de training. Ook hebben zij aangegeven behoefte te hebben aan dieper in te kunnen gaan op de verschillende deelonderwerpen.

Verder bestond de implementatie uit een E-learning aan 200 deelnemers binnen Europa, een slotconferentie waarin alle opgedane ervaring en kennis is gedeeld en is via deelname aan diverse bijeenkomsten in Nederland, diverse artikelen en social media kennis gedeeld.

Het Epsilonproject heeft tevens het netwerk vergroot van mensen die met LHBT-asielzoekers en vluchtelingen in Nederland werken.

# Bijlagen

# Bijlage 1

## Format good practices

### 1. Hoofdvraag verkennend onderzoek

Wat zijn de behoeften van LHBT-vluchtelingen en de professionals en vrijwilligers die met hen werken als het gaat om het vergroten van steun aan en acceptatie van deze LHBT's, en wat zijn de ervaringen met interventies die hieraan bijdragen? Werken die volgens de betrokkenen, en wat kan volgens de literatuur werken?

### 2. Subvraag voor de beschrijving van good practices

Wat zijn bestaande good practices voor het steunen van LHBT-vluchtelingen?

### 3. Format voor het beschrijven van good practices

#### 1. **Ontwikkelgeschiedenis**

*Wanneer zijn jullie met deze aanpak gestart?*

*Waarom, welk probleem pakken jullie dan aan?*

*Hoe was de doelgroep betrokken bij de ontwikkeling?*

*Hoe zag de aanpak er bij de start uit, en hoe nu?*

#### 2. **Doelen**

*Welke doelen willen jullie met je aanpak bereiken?*

#### 3. **Doelgroep**

*Voor welke doelgroep willen jullie die doelen bereiken?*

#### 4. **Aanpak**

*Hoe ziet jullie aanpak er precies uit: wie doet wat wanneer waar?*

#### 5. **Bereik en ervaringen**

*Hoeveel mensen bereikten jullie tot nu toe met jullie aanpak?*

*Wat zijn de ervaringen tot nu toe met jullie aanpak?*

#### 6. **Blik op de toekomst**

*Wat zijn de plannen voor jullie aanpak in de toekomst?*

# Bijlage 2

## Topiclijst interviews

### Topiclijst voor de één-op-één interviews met LHBT-vluchtelingen

#### 1. Beeld van de persoon

Leeftijd, land van herkomst, hoe lang in Nederland, welke letter van LGBT en informeren hoe de respondent erbij zit.

#### 2. Ervaringen met steun

Vluchteling én LHBT-zijn kan heel lastig zijn, omdat je kwetsbaar bent. Steun van mensen om je heen is dan erg belangrijk. Om te praten over dingen die je lastig vindt, maar ook om je te helpen met het zoeken naar een woonplek, vrienden maken, etc. Professionals en vrijwilligers kunnen je steunen, tijdens je vlucht en nadat je in Nederland arriveert. Ik wil graag weten wanneer jij (geen) steun hebt ervaren en wat je behoeften zijn: als jij het mocht bepalen, hoe zou steun aan jou er dan uitzien?

- A. Heb jij meegemaakt dat je behoefte had aan steun, maar dat die er niet was? Kun je beschrijven wanneer dat was, met wie je was, waar je behoefte aan had?
- B. Heb jij steun ervaren van mensen om je heen? Wanneer, van wie? Hoe zag die steun eruit, en hoe voelde die steun voor jou?
- C. Als jij het mocht bepalen, hoe zou steun aan jou er dan uitzien? Terugblikkend en vooruitblikkend.

#### 3. Ervaringen met een best practice

Gelukkig zijn er aanpakken die de steun aan LHBT-vluchtelingen willen vergroten. Jij hebt zelf ervaring met ... en ik ben benieuwd wat je daarvan vindt. We geven je antwoorden niet door aan de projectorganisatie, dus je kunt eerlijk zijn.

- A. Hoe ben je met ... in contact gekomen, en waarom ging je deelnemen?
- B. Wat vind je van ... Ervaar je meer steun? Van wie, wanneer, hoe, wat doet die ander dan?

#### 4. Ervaringen met vergroten van acceptatie

De acceptatie van LHBT-vluchtelingen is helaas helemaal niet vanzelfsprekend en levert moeilijke situaties op. Non-acceptatie kan betekenen dat je als LHBT gepest wordt, geweld meemaakt en moet overleven.

- A. Heb jij een dergelijke situatie meegemaakt? Zo ja, kan je iets vertellen over de situatie die je het meest is bijgebleven? Waar was je, wat deed je, wat dacht je, wat voelde je, wat deden anderen en wat was de afloop?
- B. Als jij het mocht bepalen, hoe was deze situatie dan geweest? Wie deed wat, en wat was de afloop?

# Bijlage 3

## Topiclijst focusgroepen

### Topiclijst voor de focusgroepen met professionals en vrijwilligers

#### 1. Beeld van de groep

Leeftijden, landen van herkomst, iets over je taken, waarom met deze doelgroep werken en informeren hoe de respondenten erbij zitten.

#### 2. Ervaringen met steun

Vluchteling én LHBT-zijn kan heel lastig zijn, omdat de combinatie zo kwetsbaar is. Steun van mensen om je heen is dan erg belangrijk. Om te praten over dingen die lastig zijn, maar ook om te helpen met het zoeken naar een woonplek, vrienden maken, etc. Jullie als professionals en vrijwilligers kunnen die steun bieden. We zijn benieuwd wanneer je die steun hebt geboden, hoe dat voor je was en wat je behoeften zijn: als jij het mocht bepalen, hoe zou steun aan LHBT-vluchtelingen er dan uitzien?

- A. Hoe signaleer je en begin je het gesprek met een asielzoeker of vluchteling over dat hij/zij mogelijk LHBT is?
- B. Heb jij steun geboden aan een LHBT-vluchteling? Kan je een situatie die je het meest is bijgebleven beschrijven? Wanneer was het, met wie, wat deed je, wat voelde je, wat deed de ander, hoe pakte die steun uit?
- C. Heb jij weleens geen steun geboden aan een LHBT-vluchteling? Wanneer, waar, met wie, wat deed je, wat voelde je, wat deed de ander en hoe pakte het niet bieden van steun uit?
- D. Als jij het mocht bepalen, hoe zou steun aan LHBT-vluchtelingen er dan uitzien?
- E. Wat heb jij als professional / vrijwilliger nodig om die steun te kunnen bieden?

#### 3. Ervaringen met een best practice

Gelukkig zijn er aanpakken die de steun aan LHBT-vluchtelingen willen vergroten. Jij hebt zelf ervaring met ... en ik ben benieuwd wat je daarvan vindt.

- A. Hoe ben je met ... in contact gekomen, en waarom ging je deelnemen?
- B. Wat vind je van ... ervaar je dat je steun kunt bieden aan LHBT-vluchtelingen? Aan wie, wanneer, hoe ziet die steun eruit, en wat doet het de ander?

#### 4. Ervaringen met vergroten van acceptatie

De acceptatie van LHBT-vluchtelingen is helaas helemaal niet vanzelfsprekend en levert moeilijke situaties op. Non-acceptatie kan betekenen dat je als LHBT gepest wordt, geweld meemaakt en moet overleven.

- A. Heb jij een dergelijke situatie meegemaakt? Zo ja, kan je iets vertellen over de situatie die je het meest is bijgebleven? Waar was je, wat deed je, wat dacht je, wat voelde je, wat deden anderen en wat was de afloop?
- B. Als jij het mocht bepalen, hoe was deze situatie dan geweest? Wie deed wat, en wat was de afloop? Wat werkt volgens jou om acceptatie te vergroten?
- C. Wat heb jij als professional / vrijwilliger nodig om die acceptatie te vergroten?



# Bijlage 4

## Evaluatieformulier

### Epsilon training

1. Wat waren je verwachtingen van deze training?

---

2. Kun je een schatting maken van je kennis over LGBTIQ asielzoekers, vluchtelingen en migranten voor het volgen van deze training met een score van 1 tot 10 (1= laag, 10 = hoog):

---

3. Heeft de training aan je verwachtingen voldaan?

Ja  nee  gedeeltelijk

hoe (toelichten): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Kun je een schatting maken van je huidige kennis over LGBTIQ asielzoekers, vluchtelingen en migranten met een score van 1 tot 10 (1= laag, 10 = hoog):

---

5. Kun je de drie belangrijkste dingen aangeven die je hebt geleerd?

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Kortom, wat is je mening over de training?

zeer goed  goed  matige  slecht

7. Wat is je algemene mening over de trainer(s)?

zeer goed  goed  regelmatig  slecht

8. Denk je dat de trainingsmethoden die we gebruikten geschikt waren?

Ja  Nee

uitleg: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Denk je dat de tijd die we voor elk onderwerp namen geschikt was?

Ja  Nee

uitleg: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Definieer de training in 3 snelle zinnen

Het beste van de training was...

\_\_\_\_\_

Minder goed van de training was...

\_\_\_\_\_

Als ik had kans om de training mede vorm te geven, zou ik... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Bijlage 5

## O2 – Pilot testing

### Summary of assessment questionnaires (quantitative)

Country	2. Knowledge / before (nr 1 to 10)	3. Expectations	4. Knowledge / after (nr 1 to 10)	6. Opinion / course	7. Opinion / trainer	8. Methodologies	9. Time
NL	5	PARTIALLY	8	VERY GOOD	VERY GOOD	YES	YES
NL	6	YES	7	GOOD	GOOD	YES	YES
NL	8	YES	8	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	7	YES	8	GOOD	REGULAR	YES	YES
NL	6	YES	9	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	3	YES	7	VERY GOOD	VERY GOOD	YES	YES
NL	3	YES	6	GOOD	GOOD	YES	YES
NL	6	PARTIALLY	7	REGULAR	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	6	PARTIALLY	7	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	5	PARTIALLY	5	REGULAR	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	9	PARTIALLY	9	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	9	PARTIALLY	9	VERY GOOD	VERY GOOD	YES	NO
NL	7	PARTIALLY	8	GOOD	GOOD	YES	YES
NL	7	PARTIALLY	7	REGULAR	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	8	YES	8	GOOD	GOOD	YES	YES
NL	5	PARTIALLY	5	GOOD	GOOD	NO	NO
NL	7	PARTIALLY	7	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	8	YES	9	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	8	YES	8	GOOD	VERY GOOD	YES	YES
NL	5	PARTIALLY	6	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	8	PARTIALLY	8	GOOD	GOOD	YES	NO
NL	8	PARTIALLY	8	GOOD	GOOD	NO	YES
NL	6	PARTIALLY	7	GOOD	GOOD	NO	NO

# Bijlage 6

## Organisaties die hebben meegewerkt

- COC Nederland
- Cocktail Maatjes van COC Nederland
- Transvisie
- COA
- VluchtelingenWerk
- LGBT asylum support
- Stichting Secret Garden
- Veilige Haven, Respect2Love Academy
- Queer Welfare
- De Prisma groep,
- Roze in Blauw Nederland
- Pharos
- Movisie

# Bronnen

## Bronnen & organisaties die meewerkten

Elferink, J. & Van Hoof, J. (2016). *LHBT-asielzoekers en -vluchtelingen, een handreiking met feiten, verhalen en goede voorbeelden voor vrijwilligers, professionals en gemeenten*. Utrecht: Movisie.

Felten, H. (2016). *Rainbows & refugees. Verkennend onderzoek naar wat werkt bij het vergroten van de acceptatie van LHBT voor vluchtelingen*. Utrecht: Kennisplatform Integratie & Samenleving.

Pierik, C., Boote M. & Van Hoof, J. (2015). *De kastdeur op een kier. Seksuele en genderdiversiteit in multicultureel Nederland*. Utrecht: Movisie.

Pierik, C., Meintser, N. (2008). *Dubbel en dwars. Naar hulpverlening-op-maat voor allochtone jongeren (m/v) met homoseksuele gevoelens*. Utrecht: Movisie.

Pierik, C., Rothuizen, J. (2010). *Ketenaanpak voor migranten met homoseksuele gevoelens. Toolkit voor gemeenten, lokale organisaties en hulpverleners*. Utrecht: Movisie.

## Geraadpleegde websites

[www.mensenrechten.nl/toegelicht/homoseksualiteit-een-asielgrond](http://www.mensenrechten.nl/toegelicht/homoseksualiteit-een-asielgrond)

[www.coc.nl/informatie-over-cocktail-maatjesproject](http://www.coc.nl/informatie-over-cocktail-maatjesproject)

[www.transgendernetwerk.nl/projecten/meldpunt-transgender-vluchtelingen/](http://www.transgendernetwerk.nl/projecten/meldpunt-transgender-vluchtelingen/)

[www.politie.nl/themas/roze-in-blauw.html](http://www.politie.nl/themas/roze-in-blauw.html)

[www.lgbtasyllumsupport.nl](http://www.lgbtasyllumsupport.nl)

[www.stichtingsecretgarden.nl](http://www.stichtingsecretgarden.nl)

[www.veilighavenamsterdam.nl](http://www.veilighavenamsterdam.nl)

[www.respect2love.nl](http://www.respect2love.nl)

[www.queerwelfare.nl](http://www.queerwelfare.nl)

[www.pharos.nl](http://www.pharos.nl)

[www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl](http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl)

[www.coa.nl](http://www.coa.nl)

[www.ind.nl](http://www.ind.nl)

[www.movisie.nl](http://www.movisie.nl)

# Organisaties die meewerkten

- COC Nederland
- Het Cocktail Maatjes van COC
- COA
- Transvisie

Via de organisaties zijn de respondenten (LHBT-asielzoekers en –vluchtelingen en professionals en vrijwilligers die met hen werken) geïnterviewd, die anoniem blijven.

Μιχάλης Ιωάννου  
Υπεύθυνος Διαχείρισης Έργου – Ερευνητής -

## Abstract

Ως μια από τις πιο εχθρικές χώρες για να ζήσει κάποιο άτομο που ανήκει στην ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινότητα (λεσβίες, ομοφυλόφιλοι, αμφιφυλόφιλοι, τρανς, ιντερσέξ,) παραμένει η Κύπρος, η οποία ανάμεσα σε 49 χώρες κατατάσσεται 30η, βαθμολογούμενη με 29% σε ό,τι αφορά τα θέματα ισότητας των ΛΟΑΤΙ ατόμων. Σύμφωνα με την πιο πρόσφατη έκθεση που συνέταξε το ILGA- Europe (2018) με τη βοήθεια και του Rainbow Index, η αναγνώριση των δικαιωμάτων της ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινότητας στη Γηραιά Ήπειρο αποτελεί ακόμη στις μέρες μας μια πρόκληση στην οποία τα κράτη και οι κοινωνίες φαίνεται πως δεν έχουν καταφέρει να ανταποκριθούν επαρκώς, μιας και αρκετές ευρωπαϊκές χώρες ίσα που περνούν τη βάση. Βάσει της ίδιας έκθεσης, η Κύπρος βρίσκεται κάτω από τον μέσο όρο των χωρών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, καταλαμβάνοντας μόλις την θλιβερή 21η θέση ανάμεσα στα 28 κράτη-μέλη, ως προς τα δικαιώματα που απολαμβάνουν τα ΛΟΑΤΙ άτομα . Σε μια κοινωνία όπου ο αριθμός των νεαρών μεταναστών και των προσφύγων αυξάνεται συνεχώς μαζί με την ομοφοβία, την τρανσοφοβία και τον ρατσισμό σε πολλαπλά επίπεδα προς οτιδήποτε διαφορετικό, τα ζητήματα που αφορούν τους ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες δεν ήταν ποτέ πιο επείγοντα.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, το Έργο “Epsilon: Εξοπλίζοντας Επαγγελματίες για την Υποστήριξη ΛΟΑΤΙ Μεταναστών και Προσφύγων )”, στοχεύει να συμβάλει στη βελτίωση της ζωής των ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών, προσφύγων και αιτητών ασύλου που αποτελούν μία από τις πιο ευάλωτες ομάδες στη σύγχρονη Ευρώπη. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, αναπτύχθηκε ένα εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα, το οποίο απευθύνεται σε επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές που προφέρουν υπηρεσίες σε πρόσφυγες στην Ευρώπη. Το εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα, που βασίζεται στις πραγματικές ανάγκες των ατόμων αυτών, θα βοηθήσει επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές, ώστε αντιμετωπίζουν καλύτερα θέματα αξιοπρέπειας, σεβασμού, ενσωμάτωσης και διακρίσεων της ομάδας στόχου.

Η έκθεση αυτή προετοιμάστηκε στα πλαίσια του τελευταίου παραδοτέου του έργου (O4 E-BOOK) και ο στόχος της έκθεσής σχετίζεται με την ανάγκη να εκφραστούν προτάσεις πολιτικής για ένα τόσο επίμαχο αλλά και ευαίσθητο θέμα όπως η βελτίωση των συνθηκών ζωής και οι πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών και προσφύγων καθώς και η εκπαίδευση των επαγγελματιών (διερμηνείς, νομικοί και κοινωνικοί λειτουργοί) που έρχονται σε επαφή μαζί τους.

Μέσα από την έκθεση αυτή, εντοπίζονται αυτές οι ανάγκες και γίνονται συγκεκριμένες εισηγήσεις που προέκυψαν από την εφαρμογή των δραστηριοτήτων του έργου. Το περιεχόμενο της έκθεσης προσαρμόστηκε και τα αποτελέσματα παρουσιάζονται με τέτοιο τρόπο ώστε να είναι όσο το δυνατόν σχετικά, κατάλληλα και χρήσιμα τόσο για τα ΛΟΑΤΙ άτομα αλλά και για τους επαγγελματίες που έρχονται σε επαφή μαζί τους.

Τέλος, με το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα, το Κέντρο Προώθησης Έρευνας και Ανάπτυξης στην Εκπαιδευτική Τεχνολογία (CARDET), στέκεται για ακόμη μια φορά, στο πλευρό της κοινότητας ΛΟΑΤΙ, παρουσιάζοντας το δικό της έργο για την προστασία και την υπεράσπιση των δικαιωμάτων μιας πολύ ευαίσθητης ομάδας πληθυσμού, αυτής των ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών και προσφύγων.

# Εισαγωγή

Τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤΙ (Λεσβίες, Ομοφυλόφιλους, Αμφισεξουαλικούς, Τρανσεξουαλς και Ιντερσεξ) υπόκεινται σοβαρές παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων τους σε πολλές κοινωνίες στον κόσμο. Ο λόγος, συχνά, είναι επειδή ο σεξουαλικός αυτός προσανατολισμός ή/και η ταυτότητα φύλου δε συνάδουν με τους πολιτιστικά καθιερωμένους κανόνες του φύλου όπως αναμένεται από πολλές κοινωνίες. Σαν αποτέλεσμα, τα ΛΟΑΤΙ άτομα διατρέχουν αυξημένο κίνδυνο βίας, κακοποίησης, διακρίσεων ή/και εκμετάλλευσης τόσο από τις χώρες από τις οποίες διώκονται, όσο και στις χώρες στις οποίες αιτούνται άσυλο.

Όσο αφορά τους ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες τα πράγματα είναι ακόμη χειρότερα. Είναι αλήθεια ότι δέχονται ρατσισμό σε πολλαπλά επίπεδα. Για παράδειγμα ένας ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγας από τη Συρία, είναι πρόσφυγας, είναι μουσουλμάνος, είναι ΛΟΑΤΙ. Βιώνει τον αποκλεισμό από τους ίδιους τους ομοεθνείς του. Γίνεται δέκτης βίας, σωματικής και λεκτικής. Συχνά γίνεται θύμα σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης. Σκεφτείτε κάποιον που έχει χάσει το σπίτι του, την οικογένειά του, να περιθωριοποιείται από τους ίδιους τους συμπατριώτες του.

Πολλές φορές οι προσπάθειες πολλών ΛΟΑΤΙ προσφύγων για να κρυφτεί ο σεξουαλικός τους προσανατολισμός ή η ταυτότητα φύλου τους, καθιστά δύσκολο για την Ύπατη Αρμοστεία να εντοπίσει τα άτομα αυτά αλλά και να τους παρέχει ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια, καθώς και το να εξασφαλίσει ότι οι διαδικασίες χορήγησης ασύλου καλύπτει επαρκώς τις ανάγκες τους αφού απαιτούνται ειδικές μορφές ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις (UNCHR, 2015).

Πολύ σημαντικό είναι ότι φέτος τον Απρίλιο, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και ο Οργανισμός για την Οικονομική Συνεργασία και Ανασυγκρότηση (ΟΟΣΑ) δημοσίευσαν έναν «κατάλογο ελέγχου» – ένα check list – των σημείων που θα πρέπει να προσέξουν οι τοπικές, περιφερειακές και εθνικές αρχές, για να αντιμετωπίσουν πιο αποτελεσματικά, τις προκλήσεις για την ένταξη των μεταναστών. Πολλά από αυτά τα σημεία, αφορούν και στο θέμα των ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών και προσφύγων. Η Επιτροπή και ο ΟΟΣΑ, συγκέντρωσαν παραδείγματα ορθής πρακτικής από μεγάλες ευρωπαϊκές πόλεις, όπως είναι λόγω χάρη η Αθήνα και το Βερολίνο, και κατέληξαν σε μια σειρά συστάσεων, για τους τοπικούς, περιφερειακούς και εθνικούς φορείς. Οι συστάσεις, επικεντρώνονται σε πολιτικές όπως η υγεία, η εργασία, η στέγαση, η εκπαίδευση, η αντιστοιχισμός των δεξιοτήτων των μεταναστών με τις ανάγκες της αγοράς εργασίας. Ειδικά ως προς το τελευταίο σημείο, η Έκθεση τονίζει το σημαίνοντα ρόλο των τοπικών αρχών και τονίζει ότι πρέπει και οφείλουν οι τοπικές αρχές να περισώσουν την αξιοπρέπεια των ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών προσφύγων, να βρουν τρόπους να κάνουν την συγκεκριμένη ευπαθής κοινωνική ομάδα κομμάτι του ευρύτερου συνόλου και να συμβάλουν τα μέγιστα στην ενσωμάτωση τους.

Η έκθεση αυτή ετοιμάστηκε στα πλαίσια του τελευταίου παραδοτέου του έργου Epsilon (Εξοπλίζοντας Επαγγελματίες για την Υποστήριξη ΛΟΑΤΙ Μεταναστών και Προσφύγων). Συνάδοντας με τον σκοπό του Key Action 2 του ταμείου Erasmus+ που αφορά την ανάπτυξη ικανοτήτων, βασικός στόχος είναι η βελτίωση της παροχής εκπαίδευσης επαγγελματιών που εργάζονται με θέματα που αφορούν μετανάστες ή/και πρόσφυγες στις συμμετέχουσες χώρες λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις ανάγκες που υπάρχουν για την καλύτερη αντιμετώπιση θεμάτων που αφορούν μετανάστες ή πρόσφυγες που ανήκουν στη ΛΟΑΤ κοινότητα. Το έργο ανταποκρίνεται σε δύο τρέχουσες και επείγουσες εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες στην Ευρώπη δηλαδή: (1) την αύξηση στον αριθμό των μεταναστών και των προσφύγων (2) τη συνέχεια της ανισότητας και δίωξης ατόμων της κοινότητας ΛΟΑΤ. Σε συνδυασμό, αυτά τα δύο χαρακτηριστικά κάνουν τους ΛΟΑΤΙ Μετανάστες και Πρόσφυγες μία από τις πιο ευάλωτες ομάδες στη σύγχρονη Ευρώπη. Το έργο μας έχει ως στόχο να συμβάλει στην αντιμετώπιση αυτού του ζητήματος με την ανάπτυξη των δεξιοτήτων και την ευαισθητοποίηση όλων εκείνων των επαγγελματιών που έρχονται σε επαφή με αυτή την κοινότητα.

Όπως θα δούμε και μέσα από την έκθεση αυτή, η Κύπρος αν και αποτελεί μια γενικά συντηρητική κοινωνία, σημαντικά βήματα έχουν γίνει όσο αφορά τα ίσα δικαιώματα των ΛΟΑΤΙ ατόμων τα τελευταία 2 χρόνια, καθώς και διάφορα γεγονότα δείχνουν την αυξανόμενη αποδοχή της διαφορετικότητας στο νησί. Αλλά η έλλειψη δημοσιευμένων αριθμών και στατιστικών του αριθμού των ΛΟΑΤΙ προσφύγων καθώς και των ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών, αλλά και γενικά της ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινότητας στην Κύπρο, καθιστά ακόμα πιο δύσκολο το έργο εκτίμησης της κατάστασης των ΛΟΑΤΙ Μεταναστών και Προσφύγων στην Κύπρο.



Επίσης στην Κύπρο του σήμερα, ακόμη βλέπουμε γκέι και αμφί άτομα να φοβούνται να μιλήσουν στους γονείς και στους φίλους τους για το ποιοι πραγματικά είναι, τρανς άτομα να αναγκάζονται να συμπεριφέρονται με το εξωτερικό φύλο στο οποίο είχαν την ατυχία να γεννηθούν και όχι με αυτό στο οποίο νιώθουν πως ανήκουν, ενώ βλέπουμε ίντερσεξ νήπια που μόλις έχουν γεννηθεί να υποβάλλονται σε αχρείαστες ιατρικές διαδικασίες πριν ακόμη μπορούν τα ίδια να εκφραστούν, για να τα δεχτεί μια κοινωνία που ζει στα δικά της πρότυπα. ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσωπα προσβάλλονται δημόσια, αλλά και πίσω από κλειστές πόρτες, ως ανώμαλοι, αρρωστημένοι και ως άτομα χωρίς αξίες. Εργοδότες μειώνουν το προσωπικό τους, ανειλικρινείς πολιτικοί πουλούν ιδέες τις οποίες ποτέ δεν έχουν σκοπό να κρατήσουν και ακόμα και η Εκκλησία της Κύπρου, με πρώτο τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Κύπρου, προτρέπει βία και σπέρνει μίσος ανάμεσα στο ποίμνιό της, ξεχνώντας πως ένα μεγάλο μέρος αυτού, αλλά και αρκετών κληρικών μη εξαιρουμένων, αποτελείται από ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσωπα.

Μπορεί σε νομοθετικό πλαίσιο, η Κύπρος βρίσκεται σε καλό δρόμο, καθώς υπάρχει η νομοθεσία για τη ρητορική του μίσους, όμως άλλο η νομοθεσία και άλλο η δίκαιη εφαρμογή της. Είναι πλέον αποδεδειγμένο όμως πως η ομοφοβία και η τρανσφοβία, κυριαρχεί στο νησί και προκαλεί πολλά κοινωνικά προβλημάτων και ανισότητες και έχει και καθαρά τεράστιο αρνητικό αντίκτυπο σε όλο το ΛΟΑΤΙ πληθυσμού του νησιού.

Βλέπουμε έτσι, ότι η ενημέρωση και η εκπαίδευση του κοινού εν γένει, αλλά κυρίως των επαγγελματιών ή των εθελοντών που έρχονται σε επαφή με ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες στην Κύπρο είναι επιτακτική ανάγκη και ο ρόλος του έργου Epsilon είναι ακόμη μεγαλύτερος. Μέσα από την έκθεση αυτή, εντοπίζονται αυτές οι ανάγκες και γίνονται συγκεκριμένες εισηγήσεις που προέκυψαν από την εφαρμογή των δραστηριοτήτων του έργου. Το περιεχόμενο της έκθεσης προσαρμόστηκε και τα αποτελέσματα παρουσιάζονται με τέτοιο τρόπο ώστε να είναι όσο το δυνατόν σχετικά, κατάλληλα και χρήσιμα τόσο για τα ΛΟΑΤΙ άτομα αλλά και για τους επαγγελματίες που έρχονται σε επαφή μαζί τους.

## Μεθοδολογία

Για σκοπούς συμπλήρωσης της αναφοράς αυτής χρησιμοποιήθηκαν οι ακόλουθες μέθοδοι, οι οποίοι περιλαμβάνουν βιβλιογραφική ανασκόπηση και εργασία πεδίου (O1), τις μεθόδους που χρησιμοποιήθηκαν για την πρόσωπο με πρόσωπο εκπαίδευση καθώς και για την διαδικτυακή εκπαίδευση (O2 και O3) , και όλες τις διαδικασίες που ακολουθήθηκαν κατά τρόπο έτσι ώστε τα τελικά αποτελέσματα να είναι σχετικά και ωφέλιμα και για τις δύο ομάδες στόχου του έργου (E4 και Συμβουλευτική Επιτροπή Epsilon και Εθνικές Συμπράξεις).

Για σκοπούς συμπλήρωσης της βιβλιογραφικής ανασκόπησης (O1) έγινε μια έρευνα αναφορών, μελετών, στατιστικών στοιχείων, νομοθεσιών και πολιτικών του κράτους. Η βιβλιογραφία επιλέχτηκε βάση των δεδομένων που είναι διαθέσιμα σχετικά με το θέμα στην Κύπρο από έγκυρες και επικαιροποιημένες πηγές, όπως αρμόδια τμήματα και υπηρεσίες, σχετικούς οργανισμούς τόσο στην Κύπρο και Ευρωπαϊκούς, αλλά και διεθνείς οργανισμούς. Για να ολοκληρωθεί η επιτόπια έρευνα, το CARDET διοργάνωσε μία συνάντηση Ομάδας Εστίασης αποτελούμενης από 5 επαγγελματίες, εθελοντές που εργάζονται ή εργάζονταν με μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες, αιτούντες ασύλου για ζητήματα που αφορούν τη ΛΟΑΤ κοινότητα και που αντιπροσωπεύουν Μη-Κυβερνητικούς Οργανισμούς για ΛΟΑΤΙ ζητήματα ή/και θέματα Μεταναστών και Προσφύγων, εξασφαλίζοντας ένα επαρκή κράμα πηγών και πληροφοριών. Τέλος διοργανώθηκαν ατομικές συνεντεύξεις με ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες για να παραθέσουν οι ίδιοι τις προσωπικές τους ανάγκες και εμπειρίες καθώς και συμβουλές και κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για το πρόγραμμα Epsilon.

Η μονοήμερη πιλοτική εφαρμογή (O2) έλαβε χώρα σε μορφή εκπαίδευσης 'πρόσωπο με πρόσωπο' στα γραφεία του CARDET στη Λευκωσία. Η πιλοτική εφαρμογή πραγματοποιήθηκε στις 7 Μαΐου 2018 και δώδεκα άτομα από διάφορους κυβερνητικούς και μη κυβερνητικούς τομείς παρακολούθησαν την συγκεκριμένη εκπαίδευση. Το CARDET χρησιμοποίησε την εκπαιδευτική πιλοτική εφαρμογή όχι μόνο ως ευκαιρία για την παροχή ορισμένων θεματικών του προγράμματος εκπαίδευσης ενηλίκων Epsilon αλλά και ως μέσο για να συζητήσει σε βάθος με τους εκπροσώπους όλων των κυβερνητικών και μη κυβερνητικών οργανώσεων και να εμπλουτίσει τις γνώσεις και την τεχνογνωσία τους σχετικά με την πραγματική ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών και προσφύγων.



Η διαδικτυακή πλατφόρμα ηλεκτρονικής μάθησης και το όλο το ηλεκτρονικό εκπαιδευτικό υλικό (Ο3) προωθήθηκε μέσω της ιστοσελίδας και των κοινωνικών μέσων ενημέρωσης του CARDET αλλά και σε διάφορες εκδηλώσεις (συνέδρια, εργαστήρια κ.λπ.). Το CARDET έχει συνεχή επικοινωνία με όλους τους εγγραφέντες χρήστες της πλατφόρμας και όλους τους εταίρους του προγράμματος για τυχόν ερωτήσεις και απορίες, καθώς και για οποιαδήποτε βοήθεια σχετικά με το ηλεκτρονικό εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα και την πλατφόρμα ηλεκτρονικής μάθησης.

Επίσης, κατά τη διάρκεια της μονοήμερης πιλοτικής εφαρμογής αφιερώσαμε μια ολόκληρη συνεδρία για τους συμμετέχοντες να πλοηγήσουν στην ηλεκτρονική πλατφόρμα Epsilon, να δημιουργήσουν τους προσωπικούς τους λογαριασμούς και να εξοικειωθούν με τις αγγλικές και ελληνικές εκδόσεις του εκπαιδευτικού υλικού που διατίθενται ηλεκτρονικά. Τέλος, το CARDET προσπαθεί συνεχώς να έλθει σε επαφή με ενδιαφερόμενους κυβερνητικούς και μη κυβερνητικούς οργανισμούς για μια πιθανή παρουσίαση τόσο για το πρόγραμμα Epsilon αλλά και της διαδικτυακής πλατφόρμας ηλεκτρονικής μάθησης.

Ο διπλός στιγματισμός και τα προβλήματα των ιδιαίτερα ευάλωτων αιτητών ασύλου με διαφορετική σεξουαλική συμπεριφορά, οι πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤΙ προσφύγων και η εκπαίδευση των επαγγελματιών (κυβερνητικών υπαλλήλων, αστυνομικών, κοινωνικών λειτουργών, διερμηνέων, νομικών και άλλων εμπλεκόμενων) που έρχονται σε επαφή μαζί τους, ήταν στο επίκεντρο της εθνικής εκπαιδευτικής ημερίδας (Ε4) που διοργάνωσε την 1η Ιουνίου 2018 το CARDET, με τη στήριξη της ACCEPT ΛΟΑΤΙ Κύπρου, στο πλαίσιο του 5ου Φεστιβάλ Υπερηφάνειας Κύπρου 2018 και του διετούς Ευρωπαϊκού Έργου Epsilon. Η ημερίδα με τίτλο «ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγες: Δικαιώματα, πρακτικές, και πολιτικές προτάσεις για εισαγωγή πλαισίου ενημέρωσης και ενσωμάτωσής τους στην Κύπρο» – χαρακτηρίστηκε από πολλούς ως μια πολύ σημαντική πρωτοβουλία, ενόψει και του γεγονότος ότι αυξήθηκαν αριθμητικά οι πρόσφυγες που έρχονται στην Κύπρο και υποβάλλουν αίτηση ασύλου, μετά που διέφυγαν από τις χώρες τους, λόγω του σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού ή της ταυτότητας φύλου τους, με πολλά από αυτά τα άτομα, να έχουν υποστεί σεξουαλική βία ή βασανιστήρια. Την ημερίδα παρακολούθησαν σημαντικοί ενδιαφερόμενοι από διάφορους κυβερνητικούς και μη κυβερνητικούς οργανισμούς, για παράδειγμα: εκπρόσωποι Κυπριακών δημόσιων υπηρεσιών, πρεσβείες, οργανώσεις που βοηθούν τους πρόσφυγες, οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, ακαδημαϊκούς, διεθνείς οργανισμούς και φορείς, μέσα μαζικής ενημέρωσης, εκπαιδευτικούς κ.τ.λ.

Πολύ σημαντικό θεωρήθηκε ότι στο συνέδριο ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγες συμμετείχαν και μοιράστηκαν τις προσωπικές τους ιστορίες με τους παρευρισκόμενους. Ο στόχος της εκπαιδευτικής ημερίδας ήταν να τονίσει την ανάγκη να εκφραστούν προτάσεις πολιτικής για ένα τόσο επίμαχο αλλά και ευαίσθητο θέμα όπως η βελτίωση των συνθηκών ζωής και οι πραγματικές ανάγκες των ΛΟΑΤΙ προσφύγων καθώς και η εκπαίδευση των επαγγελματιών (διερμηνείς, νομικοί και κοινωνικοί λειτουργοί) που έρχονται σε επαφή μαζί τους. Το CARDET διένειμε ερωτηματολόγια αξιολόγησης, τα οποία συμπληρώθηκαν από όλους τους παρευρισκόμενους και τους ομιλητές για σκοπούς ανατροφοδότησης. Η ημερίδα θεωρήθηκε από πολλούς τρομερά επιτυχημένη και παραγωγική με πολύ θετικά σχόλια για την διοργάνωση.

Επιπλέον, είναι σημαντικό να σημειωθεί ότι το CARDET διεκπεραίωσε δραστηριότητες για το πρόγραμμα Epsilon στο πλαίσιο των Φεστιβάλ Υπερηφάνειας 2017 και 2018.

Πέντε επαγγελματίες και εθελοντές που ασχολούνται με μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες και αιτητές ασύλου επιλέχθηκαν ως η Συμβουλευτική Επιτροπή του Epsilon στην Κύπρο, διασφαλίζοντας την ορθή και ομαλή υλοποίηση του προγράμματος. Επιπλέον, για καλύτερα αποτελέσματα και για τις διάφορες ανάγκες του έργου, το CARDET συνεργάστηκε επιτυχώς με εθνικούς κυβερνητικούς και μη κυβερνητικούς οργανισμούς που δραστηριοποιούνται στους τομείς των μεταναστών, των προσφύγων και των ΛΟΑΤΙ ατόμων, όπως είναι η Ύπατη Αρμοστεία του ΟΗΕ για την Κύπρο, το Κυπριακό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες, το Council Aware και η ACCEPT LGBTI Cyprus. Ισχυρός δείκτης επιτυχίας μπορεί να θεωρηθεί το γεγονός ότι το CARDET συνεργάστηκε επίσης με τους μοναδικούς οργανισμούς στο νησί που διοικούνται από μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, τον οργανισμό LGBT Philipinas Cyprus και το Refugee Association Cyprus.

# Αποτελέσματα που προέκυψαν από την υλοποίηση του Προγράμματος Epsilon στην Κύπρο

## Η Μετανάστευση στην Κύπρο σήμερα

Λόγω της γεωγραφικής θέσης του νησιού (ενεργεί ως σταυροδρόμι μεταξύ Βαλκανίων, Ανατολικής Ευρώπης και Μέσης Ανατολής), η Κύπρος έγινε ένα από τα πιο προσιτά σημεία εισόδου για μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες. Ιδικά μετά τα γεγονότα κατά τις δεκαετίες του 1950-1980, τα οποία έκαναν την Κύπρο μια χώρα από την οποία μετανάστευαν οι κάτοικοι σε άλλες χώρες για εύρεση μιας καλύτερης ζωής, η έντονη οικονομική ανάπτυξη η οποία χαρακτήριζε την Κύπρο τις δεκαετίες του 1980 και του 1990, καθώς και η ένταξη της στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση το 2004, μετέτρεψαν την Κύπρο σε ένα ελκυστικό κέντρο υποδοχής για μετανάστες (Vrasidas, Themistokleous, & Zembylas, 2012). Αυτό είναι εμφανές και από τις τάσεις της μεταναστευτικής κίνησης από το 1981-2015 οι οποίες παρουσιάζουν μια συνεχόμενη αύξηση ανά τις δεκαετίες, με την αποκορύφωση να σημειώθηκε το 2011 που η Κύπρος φιλοξένησε περισσότερους από 23 χιλιάδες μετανάστες (Republic of Cyprus Statistical Service, 2015). Η γεωγραφική θέση του νησιού, σε συνδυασμό με τις συγκρούσεις στη Μέση Ανατολή οι οποίες έχουν προκαλέσει ένα έντονο μεταναστευτικό κύμα το οποίο χαρακτηρίζει την Ευρώπη τα τελευταία 2-3 χρόνια, έχουν καταστήσει την Κύπρο σε ένα προορισμό για μετανάστες καθώς και αιτούντες ασύλου και πρόσφυγες.

Σύμφωνα με την τελευταία απογραφή πληθυσμού από την Κυπριακή Στατιστική Υπηρεσία ο πληθυσμός στις ελεύθερες περιοχές της Κύπρου υπολογίζεται σε 854,8 χιλιάδες στο τέλος του 2016 σε σύγκριση με 848,3 χιλιάδες τον προηγούμενο χρόνο, δηλαδή σημείωσε αύξηση 0,8% (Politis News: 2017). Οι κύριες χώρες προέλευσης τους είναι η Μολδαβία, η Ρουμανία, η Βουλγαρία, ο Λίβανος, η Συρία, η Ιορδανία, η Αίγυπτος, η Σρι Λάνκα, η Ινδία και οι Φιλιππίνες. Στην ίδια έκθεση τονίζεται ότι η καθαρή μετανάστευση στην Κύπρο μπορεί να ήταν θετική από το 1983 μέχρι το 2011, ωστόσο, από το 2012 μέχρι το 2015 παρατηρήθηκε αρνητική καθαρή μετανάστευση. Το 2016, όμως, η καθαρή μετανάστευση ήταν και πάλι θετική και υπολογίστηκε σε 2.499. Σύμφωνα με τη Στατιστική Υπηρεσία, καθαρή μετανάστευση είναι η διαφορά μεταξύ των προσώπων που έρχονται για εγκατάσταση στη χώρα και των μεταναστών προς το εξωτερικό.

Κατά την ίδια χρονιά (2016) σημειώθηκαν οι εξής αριθμοί σε σχέση με τη μετανάστευση: ο αριθμός των μεταναστών προς την Κύπρο (Κυπρίων επαναπατριζόμενων και ξένων που έρχονται για εγκατάσταση ή προσωρινή απασχόληση πέραν του 1 χρόνου) ήταν 17.391 κατά το 2016 από 15.183 που ήταν το 2015. (Republic of Cyprus Statistical Service, 2016). Ο δε αριθμός των μεταναστών από την Κύπρο (Κυπρίων και ξένων που έχουν μείνει στην Κύπρο τουλάχιστον έναν χρόνο) υπολογίζεται σε 14.892 για το 2016 σε σύγκριση με 17.183 το 2015.

## Τελικός προορισμός πλέον η Κύπρος για πρόσφυγες

Όσο αφορά συγκεκριμένα τους πρόσφυγες, οι αριθμοί όσο αφορά την Κύπρο παρουσιάζουν κάποια ενδιαφέροντα στοιχεία. Σύμφωνα με τα τελευταία επίσημα στοιχεία της Eurostat, η Κύπρος αποτελεί την τέταρτη χώρα αιτήσεων πολιτικού ασύλου σε αναλογία πληθυσμού (894 αιτήσεις στο ένα εκατ.) από τις 28 χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης μετά τη Μάλτα, την Ελλάδα και το Λουξεμβούργο, με διαφορά μάλιστα πολύ μικρή από τις πρώτες τρεις χώρες. (EUROSTAT:2017)

Πριν τη λειτουργία της Υπηρεσίας Ασύλου, η οποία συστάθηκε το 2004 με την ένταξη της Κύπρου στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, η Ύπατη Αρμοστεία του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες (Υ.Α.) στην Κύπρο αναγνώρισε στο σύνολο 454 άτομα ως πρόσφυγες μεταξύ του 1998 και του 2004. Ακολούθως, μεταξύ του 2004 παρουσιάζεται μια γενική αύξηση στα άτομα που αναγνωρίστηκαν ως πρόσφυγες από την Υπηρεσία Ασύλου από το 2004 μέχρι και το 2015 όπου παρουσιάζεται



μια αποκορύφωση, ενώ τουλάχιστον μέχρι τα μέσα του 2016 παρουσιάζεται μια μείωση. Η αποκορύφωση που παρουσιάζεται το 2015 μπορεί να υποτεθεί ότι συσχετίζεται με τις συγκρούσεις που κορυφώθηκαν στη Μέση Ανατολή και ιδιαίτερα στη Συρία το 2015, αλλά και με διάφορα άλλα γεγονότα που συμβαίνουν στο νότιο ημισφαίριο και στην Ασία. Αυτό μπορεί να γίνει εμφανές με την ανάλυση των χώρων προέλευσης των αιτούντων ασύλου στην Κύπρο, με το 2016 ως ενδεικτικό έτος (Ιανουάριος 2016 – Οκτώβριο 2016) όπου το σχεδόν 50% των αιτούντων προερχόταν από την Συρία, ενώ όλες οι υπόλοιπες αιτήσεις ήταν από άτομα από άλλες χώρες της Μέσης Ανατολής, Ασίας και Αφρικής (Republic of Cyprus Asylum Service, 2016).

Ταυτόχρονα μια πολύ εμφανής τάση είναι ότι τα άτομα τα οποία είναι αναγνωρισμένα με καθεστώς Συμπληρωματικής Προστασίας είναι πολύ περισσότερα από τους πρόσφυγες καθώς και από τα άτομα με αναγνωρισμένο Ανθρωπιστικό Καθεστώς, και επίσης παρουσιάζουν κορύφωση από το 2015 και μετά. Μόνο το 2017 έλαβαν καθεστώς αναγνωρισμένου πρόσφυγα 222 άτομα και άλλα 1.228 καθεστώς συμπληρωματικής προστασίας. Σημειώνεται πως στους αριθμούς αυτούς περιλαμβάνονται 154 ασυνόδευτοι ανήλικοι. Πάντως, με βάση στοιχεία της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, σήμερα στο νησί ζουν και τυγχάνουν διεθνούς προστασίας 8.500 άνθρωποι, ενώ ο αριθμός των αιτητών ασύλου ανέρχεται στα 5.300 άτομα.

Η τάση για αναγνώριση ατόμων με καθεστώς Συμπληρωματικής Προστασίας αντί με προσφυγικό καθεστώς έχει επίσης αναγνωριστεί από την ECRI, η οποία χαρακτηρίζει την τάση αυτή ως έχοντα αρνητικό αντίκτυπο στην ένταξη στην κοινωνία. Επίσης επισημαίνει ότι από το 2013 οι αιτούντες ασύλου και κρατικής βοήθειας είναι υποχρεωμένοι να ζουν στο Κέντρο Υποδοχής στην απομακρυσμένη αγροτική περιοχή της Κοφίνου (ECRI, 2016). Αυτά τα στοιχεία έχουν άμεση σχέση με θέματα που αφορούν τους ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγες, αφού η διαμονή σε απομακρυσμένο Κέντρο Υποδοχής σημαίνει ότι ακόμη περισσότερη ευθύνη εμπίπτει στους Κοινωνικούς Λειτουργούς και στα άτομα που εργάζονται στη μέριμνα για τους πρόσφυγες γενικότερα, άρα στη συγκεκριμένη ομάδα στόχο του έργου, για τη διαχείριση θεμάτων που αφορούν ΛΟΑΤΙ ζητήματα.

Είναι σημαντικό να τονίσουμε ότι σχετικά με τις αιτήσεις για παραχώρηση καθεστώτος διεθνούς προστασίας που υποβάλλονται στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία καταγράφουν αυξητική τάση τα τελευταία τρία χρόνια, η οποία, σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία του Τμήματος Αρχείου πληθυσμού και μετανάστευσης (ΤΑΠΜ:2016), ανήλθε το 2016 σε 30%, σε σύγκριση με το προηγούμενο έτος. Επίσης αυτή τη στιγμή φαίνεται να εκκρεμούν επίσης ενώπιον της Υπηρεσίας Ασύλου άλλες περίπου 2.000 αιτήσεις. Ενδεικτική είναι η σύγκριση των αριθμών των αιτήσεων που εκκρεμούσαν τον Αύγουστο του 2016 (1.212 υποθέσεις - 1.642 άτομα), με τον Αύγουστο του 2017 (2.262 υποθέσεις - 2.762 άτομα). Σε ένα μόνο χρόνο η αύξηση, με βάση τον αριθμό των ατόμων, ανέρχεται στο 68%. Αύξηση 61% παρατηρείται επίσης και στον αριθμό των αιτήσεων, οι οποίες το 2016 ανέρχονταν στις 1.307 υποθέσεις για 1.632 άτομα, ενώ τον Αύγουστο «σκαρφάλωσε» ο αριθμός στις 2.229 υποθέσεις για 2.629 άτομα.

## Κύπρος και διακρίσεις: Είναι τελικά η Κύπρος ένας καλός προορισμός για ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες;

Τόσο οι φυλετικές διακρίσεις, όσο και οι διακρίσεις με βάση την ταυτότητα φύλου και τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό αποτελούν στοιχεία που κρίνουν μια κοινωνία ως δεκτική προς τη διαφορετικότητα ή συντηρητική. Συχνά οι πολιτικές γραμμές που χαράσσονται, οι νόμοι που ψηφίζονται και οι εκδηλώσεις που οργανώνονται αντικατοπτρίζουν την κοινή γνώμη που επικρατεί σε ένα τόπο. Συνδυάζοντας τα στοιχεία που χαρακτηρίζουν τη θεματολογία του έργου Epsilon και της μελέτης αυτής, δηλαδή την καταγωγή, την ταυτότητα φύλου και τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό στο τμήμα αυτό της έκθεσης γίνεται μια ανασκόπηση της κατάστασης στην Κύπρο όσο αφορά τις διακρίσεις και εγείρει το ερώτημα: Είναι τελικά η Κύπρος ένας καλός προορισμός για ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες;

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ενάντια στον Ρατσισμό και τη Μισαλλοδοξία (ECRI) αναγνωρίζει μια βελτίωση σε ένα αριθμό πεδίων που αφορούν τον ρατσισμό και τη μισαλλοδοξία από το 2011 μέχρι το 2016, αλλά ταυτόχρονα αναφέρει κάποια θέματα τα οποία προκαλούν ανησυχία (ECRI:2016). Παράλληλα πολλά άλλαξαν στην πρόσφατη ιστορία της Κύπρου όσο αφορά και την αντιμετώπιση του σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού από την κοινωνία καθώς και από το κράτος. Για παράδειγμα, μέχρι το 1998 οι σχέσεις μεταξύ ανδρών αποτελούσαν ποινικό αδίκημα. Σε ένα μεγάλο βαθμό

μέχρι σήμερα, η Κυπριακή παραμένει μια κοινωνία συντηρητική σε θέματα σεξουαλικότητας και διαφορετικότητας όμως πολλά έχουν αλλάξει τα τελευταία χρόνια με το 2015 να είναι μια σημαδιακή χρονιά για τα άτομα ΛΟΑΤΙ στην Κύπρο (ILGA Europe, Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe, 2016)

Όσο αφορά τη νομοθεσία, ο νόμος πλέον ορίζει ρητά ότι τα ξενοφοβικά και ρατσιστικά κίνητρα για οποιοδήποτε αδίκημα συνιστούν επιβαρυντική περίπτωση. Στην Κύπρο από το 2015 έχει επίσης ποινικοποιηθεί η δημόσια υποκίνηση βίας κατά των ΛΟΑΤΙ ως ομοφοβική ρητορική μίσους. Με άλλα λόγια θεωρείται πλέον ποινικό αδίκημα η συμμετοχή σε βία εναντίον κάποιου με βάση τον σεξουαλικό του προσανατολισμό ή την ταυτότητα φύλου. Η Αρχή Ραδιοτηλεόρασης υπέβαλε επίσης μια νομική μεταρρυθμιστική πρόταση η οποία προτείνει την τροποποίηση στους ισχύοντες νόμους των μέσων ενημέρωσης και την συμπερίληψη ειδικών διατάξεων για τη διασφάλιση του σεβασμού σε σχέση με τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό και την ταυτότητα φύλου. Παράλληλα, το 2015 έπειτα από συζητήσεις που διάρκεσαν χρόνια πέρασε η νομοθεσία τόσο για το Σύμφωνο Συμβίωσης και για ομόφυλα ζευγάρια. (Είναι σημαντικό να σημειωθεί ότι μέχρι το 1998 οι σχέσεις μεταξύ ανδρών στην Κύπρο αποτελούσαν ποινικό αδίκημα) (ILGA Europe, Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe, 2016) Αυτές οι εξελίξεις σε συνδυασμό με την ειρηνική και επιτυχημένη διοργάνωση Του Φεστιβάλ Υπερφάνειας για τα τελευταία πέντε χρόνια αποτελούν σημάδια της αυξανόμενης στήριξης της διαφορετικότητας στην Κυπριακή κοινωνία (ILGA Europe, Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe, 2016).

## Η κοινή γνώμη: Πόσο κοινή είναι;

Επίσης συνδυάζοντας τα στοιχεία που χαρακτηρίζουν τη θεματολογία του έργου Epsilon και της έκθεσης αυτής, δηλαδή την καταγωγή, την ταυτότητα φύλου και τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό, πιο κάτω παρουσιάζονται τα αποτελέσματα του Ευρωβαρόμετρου του 2015 σχετικά με τις διακρίσεις. Όσο αφορά την κοινή γνώμη όπως φαίνεται από το Ευρωβαρόμετρο οι γενικές ενδείξεις δείχνουν ότι στην Κύπρο υπάρχει πολλή χώρος για βελτίωση σε θέματα που αφορούν τη δεκτικότητα της διαφορετικότητας όσο αφορά την καταγωγή και τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό.

Από όλες τις χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης των 28, η Κύπρος παρουσιάζει την μεγαλύτερη εντύπωση από τους ίδιους τους κατοίκους της ότι οι διακρίσεις με βάση τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό και την ταυτότητα φύλου είναι ευρέως διαδεδομένες. Σύμφωνα με το Ευρωβαρόμετρο, το 79% των ατόμων που ρωτήθηκαν δήλωσαν ότι πιστεύουν ότι οι διακρίσεις με βάση τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό είναι συχνές. Αυτό το ποσοστό είναι πολύ ψηλότερο από τον μέσο όρο στην ΕΕ28, το οποίο ήταν στο 58%. Όταν οι συμμετέχοντες στην έρευνα ρωτήθηκαν σχετικά με τις διακρίσεις στην Κύπρο που αφορούν την ταυτότητα του φύλου, το ίδιο ποσοστό (79%) δήλωσε ότι πιστεύει ότι είναι ευρέως διαδεδομένες και σε αυτή την κατηγορία. Αυτό το ποσοστό είναι και πάλι πολύ ψηλότερο από τον μέσο όρο στην ΕΕ28, το οποίο ήταν στο 56%. Επίσης ένα πολύ μεγάλο ποσοστό (89%) πιστεύει ότι πρέπει να παρθούν νέα μέτρα για την αύξηση του επιπέδου προστασίας των ομάδων που διατρέχουν κίνδυνο να υποστούν διακρίσεις, πολύ μεγαλύτερο από το ποσοστό που πιστεύει το ίδιο στην ΕΕ28 (58%) (European Commission, 2015).

## Πολιτικές γραμμές και πρακτικές συνέπειες

Οι παράλληλες γραμμές όμως που μπορούν να τραβηχτούν μεταξύ όλων των αποτελεσμάτων που παρουσιάστηκαν κατά της υλοποίησης του έργου Epsilon στην Κύπρο υποδηλώνουν ότι σε θεσμικό επίπεδο κάποιες θετικές αλλαγές έχουν συμβεί στην Κύπρο τα τελευταία χρόνια, υπάρχει όμως πολλή χώρος για βελτίωση. Στο κοινωνικό επίπεδο διαφαίνεται ότι η Κύπρος υστερεί ακόμη αρκετά, κάτι που μπορεί να εντοπιστεί και από την χαλαρή εφαρμογή των



θεσμικών προόδων που έχουν γίνει, καθώς και από τις υπόλοιπες πηγές που αναφέρονται στην έκθεση αυτή και οι οποίες υποδηλώνουν αυτή την αδυναμία.

Όπως δείχνουν όλα τα στοιχεία που συγκεντρώθηκαν, σε ένα μεγάλο βαθμό μέχρι σήμερα, η Κυπριακή κοινωνία παραμένει συντηρητική σε θέματα διαφορετικότητας και σεξουαλικότητας. Τα ρατσιστικά σχόλια στο δημόσιο διάλογο συνεχίζονται και αποτελούν ένα συνηθισμένο φαινόμενο έστω και αν έχουν ποινικοποιηθεί και η Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία της Κύπρου έχει πάρει μια ξεκάθαρη αντί-ΛΟΑΤΙ στάση σε πολλές περιπτώσεις. Τα ΜΜΕ συνεχίζουν να παρουσιάζουν τους μετανάστες και ιδιαίτερα τους Μουσουλμάνους με αρνητικό φακό και του συνδέουν με προβλήματα όπως την αυξανόμενη ανεργία και το έγκλημα ενώ έχουν χαρακτηριστεί ως ομοφοβικά σε ένα «κολλητικό» βαθμό. Έχει επίσης σημειωθεί αύξηση στη βία ενάντια σε μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες (ECRI, 2016).

Η ομοφοβία φαίνεται να εκδηλώνεται τόσο από το δημόσιο διάλογο όσο και από καθημερινές συμπεριφορές οι οποίες επηρεάζουν τα ΛΟΑΤΙ άτομα αρνητικά με διάφορους τρόπους. Οι τρόποι αυτοί περιλαμβάνουν την ελευθερία να εκφράσουν τη σεξουαλικότητα τους ανοιχτά, την αυτοεκτίμηση τους και στην καθημερινή τους λειτουργία ενώ επίσης η μελέτη εντόπισε περιστατικά κατάθλιψης, σκέψεις αυτοκτονίας και κινδύνου για τη σωματική τους ακεραιότητα λόγω ομοφοβικής βίας. Οι συμμετέχοντες στην έρευνα εξέφρασαν ιδιαίτερα την σοβαρή ανησυχία και πρόκληση που αποτελεί η αποκάλυψη του σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού στα μέλη της οικογένειας, ιδιαίτερα στους γονείς. Το σχολείο και ο στρατός αναγνωρίστηκαν ως μέρη όπου η συχνότητα και η σοβαρότητα περιστατικών δυσμενούς διάκρισης και εκφοβισμού λαμβάνει ιδιαίτερα ανησυχητικές διαστάσεις. Τα περιστατικά αυτά φαίνεται να επηρεάζουν δυσανάλογα τους άνδρες, καθώς φαίνεται ότι η γυναικεία σεξουαλικότητα παραμένει σε μεγάλο βαθμό αόρατη, ενώ επικρατεί δυσπιστία προς την αστυνομία και τις αρχές (Cyprus Family Planning Association & Accept-LGBT Cyprus, 2012).

Επίσης, η Κύπρος είναι μια κοινωνία η οποία έχει την τάση να χτίζει στερεότυπα γύρω από τους μετανάστες και τους πρόσφυγες. Είναι επίσης μια κοινωνία η οποία δημιουργεί διακρίσεις προς άτομα της τοπικής ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινότητας. Ως αποτέλεσμα, για τα άτομα της ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινότητας που είναι επίσης μετανάστες/πρόσφυγες τα στερεότυπα πολλαπλασιάζονται. Τα άτομα αυτά βρίσκονται κάτω μια «Διπλή στρώση τρωτότητας» ως προς τις διακρίσεις που δέχονται και διστάζουν να αποκαλύψουν τον σεξουαλικό τους προσανατολισμό στις κοινότητές τους και κατά συνέπεια στον τοπικό πληθυσμό. Η έλλειψη εξειδικευμένων πληροφοριών για τους ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και τους πρόσφυγες αναγκάζει πολλούς μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες να παραμένουν κολλημένοι στο κενό, και να καταδικάζονται σε κοινωνική περιθωριοποίηση (συνεχείς διακρίσεις από όλες τις υπηρεσίες και την κοινωνία).

Όσο αφορά τους ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγες, όλες οι αιτήσεις ασύλου, μπορούν να επηρεαστούν αρνητικά, εάν κάποιος από τους υπεύθυνους για τη λήψη αποφάσεων, δεν είναι επαρκώς ευαισθητοποιημένος και καταρτισμένος σε ΛΟΑΤΙ ζητήματα και βασίζονται σε στερεότυπα, προκαταλήψεις, ομοφοβία και ετεροσεξισμό.

Μπορεί να θεωρηθεί, ότι οι ενήλικες και οι έφηβοι που έχουν παντρευτεί ένα άτομο του αντίθετου φύλου, δεν μπορούν να αναγνωριστούν ως ΛΟΑΤΙ. Μπορεί να εξαχθεί το συμπέρασμα, ότι ένας αιτητής ασύλου δεν είναι ΛΟΑΤΙ, επειδή δεν πληροί κάποιο αυθαίρετο κριτήριο, όπως η θηλυπρεπής συμπεριφορά. Και μπορεί να απορριφθεί η αίτηση. Θεωρήθηκε λοιπόν μέσα από το έργο, ότι η κατάρτιση όλων των επαγγελματιών που έρχονται σε επαφή με ΛΟΑΤΙ άτομα, θα διασφαλίσει την ευαισθητοποίησή τους, σε θέματα που σχετίζονται με τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό και την ταυτότητα φύλου, ώστε ο καθορισμός καθεστώτος του ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγα, να γίνεται με τρόπο ασφαλή και φιλόξενο, για τους ίδιους τους αιτητές ασύλου

## Προτάσεις και Συμπεράσματα

Ένα εύρος συμπερασμάτων μπορούν να παρθούν μέσα από τα ευρήματα του έργου Epsilon, τα οποία μπορούν να καθοδηγήσουν το τι μπορεί να ζητηθεί από την Κύπρο και την ΕΕ σε πολιτικό επίπεδο. Κατ' αρχή, σε μια ασθενή κοινωνία όπως την Κυπριακή η οποία αποτυγχάνει να προστατέψει τα ίδια τα μέλη της που έχουν γεννηθεί και μεγαλώσει εκεί από ομοφοβικές διακρίσεις, νομοθεσίες όπως τον προαναφερόμενο νόμο που ορίζει ρητά ότι τα ξενοφοβικά και ρατσιστικά κίνητρα για οποιοδήποτε αδίκημα συνιστούν επιβαρυντική κατάσταση την ποινικοποίηση της δημόσιας

υποκίνησης βίας κατά των ΛΟΑΤΙ ως ομοφοβική ρητορική μίσους, αποτελούν όπλο και ασπίδα για την επίτευξη της προστασίας αυτής. Το γεγονός ότι δεν υπάρχει οποιαδήποτε γνωστή καταδίκη στην οποία το δικαστήριο να έλαβε υπόψη φυλετικά ή ομοφοβικά κίνητρα κατά τη διάρκεια απόφασης της ποινής, υποδεικνύει ότι ενώ το θεσμικό πλαίσιο υπάρχει, αυτό δεν τυγχάνει της κατάλληλης «εκμετάλλευσης» τόσο από τα θύματα των διακρίσεων όσο και από τους νομικούς τους σύμβουλους και τα θεσμικά όργανα.

Ως αποτέλεσμα το τι μπορεί να προταθεί είναι ενημερωτικές εκστρατείες καθώς και στοχευμένα σεμινάρια για να διασφαλιστεί ότι η ενημέρωση υπάρχει όσο αφορά την ύπαρξη των νομοθεσιών αυτών, για να μεγιστοποιηθούν οι πιθανότητες οι νόμοι αυτοί να τύχουν της κατάλληλης «εκμετάλλευσης». Με άλλα λόγια, άτομα που μπορεί να μην γνωρίζουν ότι η διάκριση που ασκήθηκε εναντίον τους αποτελεί ποινικό αδίκημα να το γνωρίζουν και να το εκμεταλλευτούν, καθώς επίσης και οι δικηγόροι τους.

Επιπλέον στη δράση που προτείνεται σε σχέση με την εκδήλωση ομοφοβικών καθημερινών συμπεριφορών και συνδεδεμένο με το πιο πάνω, προτείνεται μια εκστρατεία ενημέρωσης σε σχέση με την ομοφοβία που φανερά υπάρχει στον δημόσιο διάλογο και η οποία επηρεάζει τα ΛΟΑΤΙ άτομα αρνητικά με διάφορους τρόπους. Η αναγνώριση της ανάγκης για την ανάπτυξη μιας πολιτικής σε σχέση με ζητήματα που αφορούν την ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινωνία, καθώς και τους μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες εντοπίζεται στην έκθεση αυτή. Αυτές οι πολιτικές μπορούν να έχουν κάποιες παράλληλες γραμμές οι οποίες να αγγίζουν τόσο θέματα ένταξης και ισότητας ανεξάρτητης από τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό όσο και από διαφορετικές εθνικότητες, θρησκείες κλπ.

Μια παράλληλη πρόταση είναι η διοχέτευση των δραστηριοτήτων διάδοσης του έργου μέσω των γνωστών «καναλιών» όπου υπάρχουν τα οποία αφορούν την ευαισθητοποίηση για ζητήματα που αφορούν την ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινότητα, χρησιμοποιώντας για παράδειγμα τις διάφορες Πορείες Υπερηφάνειας που διοργανώνονται σε όλες τις χώρες εταίρους ως την πλατφόρμα από όπου μπορούν να γεννηθούν πολλές ιδέες για προαγωγή των αξιών με τις οποίες καταπιάνεται το έργο αυτό. Το έργο μπορεί να υποστηρίξει για παράδειγμα ομάδες ΛΟΑΤΙ μεταναστών ή προσφύγων στο να ακουστεί η φωνή τους κατά τη διάρκεια αυτών των Πορειών.

Επίσης πολύ σημαντικό είναι η ανάπτυξη βάσης δεδομένων / στατιστικών σχετικά με τον αριθμό των ΛΟΑΤΙ ατόμων στην Κύπρο και η δημιουργία Εθνικής Επιτροπής για ΛΟΑΤΙ θέματα. Επιτακτική ανάγκη θεωρείται και η επίλυση βασικών προβλημάτων και δυσκολιών που σχετίζονται κυρίως με τις τρανς και ιντερσεξ κοινότητες στην Κύπρο καθώς και η ανάγκη αλλαγής του νόμου που ποινικοποιεί την ομοφοβική και την τρανσφοβική ρητορική, αφού όπως έχουμε δει, δεν εφαρμόζεται σωστά

Όσο αφορά τις ανάγκες κατάρτισης εκπαιδευτών ενηλίκων και ατόμων που εργάζονται με ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες/ πρόσφυγες κλπ, συχνά αποτελεί εμπόδιο για τους επαγγελματίες να κοιτάξουν πέρα από το σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό. Είναι σημαντικό να γίνει αντιληπτό ότι όλοι όσοι εργάζονται σε κέντρα υποδοχής και άλλες σχετικές υπηρεσίες, δεν σημαίνει αναγκαστικά ότι είναι θερμοί όσο αφορά θέματα της ΛΟΑΤΙ κοινότητας. Κατά την διάρκεια της υλοποίησης του έργου στο νησί αναγνωρίστηκε ότι υπάρχουν πολλές ανάγκες κατάρτισης εκπαιδευτών ενηλίκων, ατόμων που εργάζονται με ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες/πρόσφυγες κλπ.

Όπως φάνηκε μέσα από το πρόγραμμα είναι σημαντικό να οργανώνονται εργαστήρια με τους επαγγελματίες και άλλα άτομα που ασχολούνται με μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, να γίνουν διαδραστικές ασκήσεις οι οποίες να κάνουν τα άτομα αυτά να σκεφτούν για το πώς νιώθουν οι άλλοι. Με άλλα λόγια να λάβουν χώρα ασκήσεις οι οποίες να προωθούν την ενσυναίσθηση. Είναι επίσης σημαντικό να αναπτυχθούν στα πλαίσια αυτών των εργαστηρίων οι γλωσσικές δεξιότητες και να δίνεται προσοχή στον τρόπο που χρησιμοποιείται η γλώσσα από τους επαγγελματίες αυτούς ως προς το πώς αντιμετωπίζονται θέματα όπως το πολιτιστικό υπόβαθρο, το ψυχολογικό υπόβαθρο, να είναι η γλώσσα πολιτισμικά ευαίσθητη, να αφήνει περιθώριο για κατανόηση των πολιτιστικών επιπτώσεων που υφίστανται οι ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγες με την αποκάλυψη του σεξουαλικού τους προσανατολισμού κλπ.

Επίσης ένα πολύ χρήσιμο εργαλείο για την στήριξη των ατόμων αυτών εισηγήθηκε ότι είναι η 24ωρη γραμμή βοήθειας. Αυτό θα αποτελούσε μια ιδανική λύση στο μέλλον αντί των μηνυμάτων που εισέρχονται μέσω Facebook και τον πανικό που προκαλείται στα άτομα αυτά με την έλλειψη άμεσης απάντησης.

Τέλος, είναι πολύ σημαντικό όλες οι αιτήσεις ασύλου με βάση σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού και ταυτότητας φύλου

να εξετάζονται από εκπαιδευμένους λειτουργούς που έχουν αξιολογηθεί σε θέματα διακρίσεων και προκαταλήψεων. Μια προσέγγιση βασισμένη στα δικαιώματα: ενδυνάμωση των ατόμων και των κοινοτήτων να ασκούν τα δικαιώματά τους

## Συνοψη

Η Κύπρος είναι μια χώρα που κατατάσσεται αρκετά χαμηλά όσο αφορά την εθνική, νομική και πολιτική κατάσταση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων των ατόμων ΛΟΑΤΙ. Στην Κύπρο η ομοφοβία εκδηλώνεται στο δημόσιο διάλογο και στις καθημερινές συμπεριφορές, χωρίς κάποιες γνωστές επιπτώσεις, παρόλο το θεσμικό πλαίσιο που τις διέπει ενώ ταυτόχρονα απουσιάζουν θετικά ΛΟΑΤΙ πρότυπα. Διακρίσεις εντοπίζονται σε διάφορα επίπεδα της καθημερινής ζωής όπως στην οικογένεια, στους χώρους εργασίας, στην πολιτική ζωή τόσο ως προς την εθνική καταγωγή, το χρώμα του δέρματος, το θρήσκευμα και τον σεξουαλικό προσανατολισμό. Ενώ οι ενδείξεις παρουσιάζουν την Κυπριακή ως μια κοινωνία που παραμένει συντηρητική σε θέματα διαφορετικότητας και σεξουαλικότητας, εντούτοις σημαντικά βήματα έχουν γίνει προς το καλύτερο. Η ποινικοποίηση της δημόσιας υποκίνησης βίας κατά των ΛΟΑΤΙ ως ομοφοβική ρητορική μίσους και το γεγονός ότι ο νόμος πλέον ορίζει ρητά ότι τα ξενοφοβικά και ρατσιστικά κίνητρα για οποιοδήποτε αδίκημα συνιστούν επιβαρυντική περίπτωση αποτελούν σημαντικά βήματα. Την ίδια ώρα η νομοθεσία για το Σύμφωνο Συμβίωσης και για ομόφυλα ζευγάρια υποδεικνύει μια αλλαγή προς το καλύτερο όσο αφορά τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, και την αρχή της κοινωνικής αλλαγής σε μια κοινωνία που σύντομα θα κληθεί να αναγνωρίσει τα ομόφυλα ζευγάρια σαν μέλη της.

Σε μια κοινωνία που οι αριθμοί των νεαρών μεταναστών από χώρες εκτός ΕΕ αυξάνονται και η οποία σιγά σιγά αλλάζει και μετατρέπεται σε μια κοινωνία πιο δεκτική στη διαφορετικότητα, τα ζητήματα που αφορούν τους ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες δεν ήταν ποτέ πιο επίκαιρα. Η πρόκληση αυτή τη στιγμή είναι ο ρυθμός της κοινωνικής μεταρρύθμισης να προσαρμοστεί στο να φθάσει τον ρυθμό της μετανάστευσης και των απαιτήσεων της κοινωνίας των ΛΟΑΤΙ ατόμων που όλο και αυξάνονται σε μια προσπάθεια να εξισορροπηθούν με τα δικαιώματα των πολιτών ανεξαρτήτου του σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού. Η ενημέρωση και η εκπαίδευση του κοινού γενικότερα, αλλά και συγκεκριμένα των ατόμων που έρχονται επαγγελματικά ή εθελοντικά σε επαφή με ΛΟΑΤΙ μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες αποτελεί στην Κύπρο μια επιτακτική ανάγκη, και ο ρόλος του έργου EpsiLon είναι ακόμη μεγαλύτερος



# Βιβλιογραφία

- Αδάμου, Μ. (2018). *Η ζωή των μεταναστών στην Κύπρο* | News. [online] Sigmalive.com. Available at: <http://www.sigmalive.com/simerini/news/484248/i-zoi-ton-metanaston-stin-kypro> [Accessed 3 Jul. 2018]
- Cyprus Family Planning Association, & Accept-LGBT Cyprus. (2012). *Sexual Orientation in Cyprus: Mapping the Socio-political Climate, Experiences and Needs*. Nicosia: Cyprus Family Planning Association & Accept-LGBT Cyprus.
- Δημητρίου, Μ. (2018). *Ο διπλός στιγματισμός, και οι ΛΟΑΤΙ πρόσφυγες στην Κύπρο* – 24h.com.cy. [online] 24h.com.cy. Available at: <http://24h.com.cy/2018/06/o-diplos-stigmatismos-kai-oi-loati-prosfyges-stin-kypro/> [Accessed 10 Jun. 2018]
- ECRI. (2016). *ECRI Report on Cyprus (fifth monitoring cycle)*. Strasbourg: European Commission against Racism and Intolerance Secretariat.
- European Commission. (2015). *Special Eurobarometer 437: Discrimination in the EU in 2015*. European Union.
- iefimerida.gr, Ν. (2017). «Πνίγεται» στους μετανάστες η Κύπρος- Αυξηση 68% σε σχέση με πέρυσι [εικόνες]. [online] iefimerida.gr. Available at: <http://www.iefimerida.gr/news/383422/pnigetai-stoys-metanastes-i-kypros-ayxisi-68-se-shesi-me-perysi-eikones> [Accessed 3 Aug. 2018].
- ILGA Europe. (2016). *Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe*. Belgium: ILGA Europe.
- News, Π. (2017). *Ξανά θετική η μετανάστευση στην Κύπρο*. [online] Ξανά θετική η μετανάστευση στην Κύπρο. Available at: <http://politis.com.cy/article/xana-thetiki-i-metanastefsi-stin-kipto> [Accessed 8 Jun. 2018].
- Republic of Cyprus Asylum Service. (2016, 1 4). Republic of Cyprus Asylum Service: Statistical Data. Ανάκτηση από [http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/asylum/asylumservice.nsf/asylumservice18\\_en/asylumservice18\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/asylum/asylumservice.nsf/asylumservice18_en/asylumservice18_en?OpenDocument)
- Republic of Cyprus Statistical Service. (2015). *Demographic Report 2015*. Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus.
- Sigmalive.com. (2017). *Τελικός προορισμός πλέον η Κύπρος για μετανάστες & πρόσφυγες* | News. [online] Available at: <http://www.sigmalive.com/news/local/439787/telikos-proorismos-pleon-i-kypros-gia-metanastes-amp-prosfyges> [Accessed 3 Aug. 2017]
- UNCHR. (2015). *Emergency Handbook: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons*. Geneva: UNCHR.
- Vrasidas, C., Themistokleous, S., & Zembylas, M. (2012). *Immigration and Integration Policies in Cyprus, CARDET*. Στο V. Novotný, *Opening the Door? Immigration and Integration in the European Union*. Brussels: Centre for European Studies.

# ANNEXES

# HANDBOOK FOR TRAINERS

Authors:

IARS International Institute

Licia Boccaletti, Jonathan Mastellari – ANS

Michalis Ioannou - CARDET

Eleni Sakellariou – KMOP

Jolanda Elferink , Michel Emmen - MOVISIE

# INTRODUCTION

## About the project

The EpsiLon project is a two-year long (September 2016 – September 2018) European Project about Equipping Professionals for Supporting LGBT Migrants & Refugees. EpsiLon's key aim is to improve adult education provision in the participating countries and through this innovative learning to allow other European countries to replicate its findings and educational tools. A secondary aim is to design and pilot, evidence-based, user-led effective strategies for enhancing basic skills for adult learners, while developing adult educators' competencies to deal with one of Europe's most marginalised groups of learners, making use of new technologies and teaching outcomes.

is responding to two current and urgent educational needs in Europe related (1) the rise in migrant and refugee numbers (2) the persistent inequality and persecution of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans-gender, Intersex and Queer + groups (LGBTIQ+). LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees live in the intersection of their migration status, sexual and gender identities, which combined, these characteristics leave them at risk of multiple discrimination, making them one of the most vulnerable groups in modern Europe.

Our project aims to help addressing this issue by increasing the knowledge, skills and awareness of adult professionals and volunteers who may come in contact with LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees. According to UNHCR, in 2015, over 1.1 million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe. In 2016, this flow continues at a rate of 55,000 per month. Violence at the collective and personal level is the key driver that forces these individuals to abandon their home countries. While doing so their basic needs and human rights are compromised. This also includes their freedom to express their identity with dignity and respect; freedom to exercise their sexual orientation and right to private and family life without being at imminent risk of persecution, bullying and murder.

The EU and modern Europe have signed treaties and Directives that aim to protect individuals from persecution and discrimination on the grounds of their sexual orientation. Some of them include the Right to Private and Family Life in the European Convention on Human Rights as well as the 2004 Directive recognizing unequivocally that those who face persecution for their sexual orientation and/or gender identity qualify as refugees. The European Parliament EU (2015/2325(INI)) also called on all Member States to adopt asylum procedures and endeavor to develop training programmes sensitive to the needs of LGBTIQ+ persons, in particular women. These high-level, EU-wide policy recommendations must be followed by on-the-ground, national and local educational efforts targeted at adult professionals and volunteers who work directly with LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees. Such efforts ought to have an EU wide impact, be evidence based and user-led.

Responding to this need, EpsiLon brings together key partners from 5 European countries to develop this training programme for professionals and volunteers working with asylum seekers and refugees in asylum centres, camps, shelters and in local communities. Partner organisations come from key locations in Europe where the two cross-cutting themes of migration and LGBTIQ+ discrimination are particularly acute. While Italy, Greece and Cyprus are included as locations where little progress has been made for LGBTIQ+ rights, the Netherlands and the UK are also included as member states where some more progress have been made in terms of support services, practices and policies targeting LGBTIQ+ refugees. At the same time, Greece, Italy and Cyprus are also case studies representing countries which have received larger numbers of refugees during the so called "humanitarian crisis".

EpsiLon has adopted a user-led methodology to design educational tools responsive to the needs of LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees. This face to face training for professionals has been produced based on LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants' identified needs. The training will be promoted and delivered both internally (between partners) and externally (nationally and EU wide), and will be adapted into an online training.

EpsiLon training uses an innovative, evidence-based, user-led methodology and its contents target professionals and volunteers providing services for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in order to raise their awareness and sensitivity to the needs of all those who are also LGBTIQ+. The educational tools will enable the professionals to become familiar with LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees' pressing needs, helping them challenge their own biases and assumptions. The need for the development of such training programme is highlighted at top level by several organisations, including the UNHCR and the European Parliament.

The intellectual outputs of Epsilon are foreseen to (a) reach widely outside of the participating countries through free, online access Europe-wide (b) continue being delivered after the project's funding is finished (c) reach groups in society that would not have been otherwise able to receive the face-to-face package and in print material (d) reward and formally accredit its target audiences.

## About the training

This handbook material is designed as part of Output 2 of EpsiLon project, which consists of a face to face training for professionals working with LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants. The training is a user-led, face-to-face educational programme for adult professionals and volunteers. Its aim is to increase knowledge and skills of professionals, ultimately building their capacity to answer to the needs of LGBTIQ+ refugees, contributing to preventing abuse in centers, shelters, local communities and services dedicated to this target group.

The material will be adapted to the circumstances of each participating country and translated in local language. It will include a Certificate of attendance, a self-assessment toolkit and a list of best practices. It will also be accredited with CPD accreditation status through the IARS International Institute.

## Terminology

Although the original project proposal of EpsiLon only refers to LGBT refugees and migrants, with the intention to be as inclusive as possible, the partnership has decided to broaden its remit, therefore we now refer to the EpsiLon target group in this handbook as LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants.

LGBTIQ+ is an inclusive acronym aimed at encompassing the whole spectrum of non-normative sexual and gender identities. Trans\* is used here as an inclusive umbrella term for all people in the trans spectrum from transgender, transsexuals, to transvestites; some of whom may identify as non-binary or agender. Q\* refers to the queer non-normative spectrum of sexualities and genders, including but not limited to Asexual, Pansexual, Gender queer etc. This acronym will be used throughout all our training materials.

## EPSILON Project Advisory Board

One of the core principles of the IARS International Institute is user involvement both in the design and implementation of projects. This belief is shared by all the Epsilon partners and in line with our ethos we have set up an **Advisory Board** made up of LGBT migrants, alongside academics and professionals working in the field. A key strength of the Epsilon partnership is our ability to make the connections between users and the experts and we will be using this to help guide what we do going forward.

The board has been drawn together from all five project partners, IARS in the UK, CARDET in Cyprus, KMOP in Greece,

Movisie in Netherlands and Anziani e non solo in Italy and will interact with the project digitally through a closed Facebook group and Skype meetings. The advisory board will work with the project's partner organisations to shape the research and training that will be developed throughout the project.

Currently the advisory board is made up of 22 individuals from across 5 countries and includes academics, psychologists, social workers, students and LGBT campaigners.

The EPSILON partnership would like to thank the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Board, for their contribution as peer reviewers of this training manual:

Armin Ahmadi

Hamila Ahmed

Wouter Boulding

Maria Cantiello

Moira Dustin

Dilara Efe

John Gray

Hamoud Khamis

Ursela van Dijk

# OVERVIEW OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

## Concept of the training

The training course has been built along 3 modules, which together have a total of 19 units. This training can be delivered as a whole or through combining different modules according to the audience. Suggested alternatives for delivery include:

#A – Deliver the whole training (when addressing a more generic or mixed target audience) or

#B – Deliver module (1) plus module (3) when targeting professionals with a background in migration and asylum

#C – Deliver module (2) plus module (3) when targeting professionals with a background in LGBTIQ+ rights and/or issues.

The training contents are available in English, Italian, Greek and Dutch.

Please note that while the majority of the training contents have been developed for an European use, irrespective of the country where the training is delivered, some units are country specific. These units (namely 1.5, 2.2 and 2.5) exist in different local versions and they have been developed only in the language of the country they refer to (so for example, units 1.5, 2.2. and 2.5 referring to Italy are available only in Italian).

## Modules

The contents of the modules are the following

### Module 1 – Being LGBTIQ+

**1.1.** Sex, gender, Sexual orientation, sexual identity and gender identity: what are they, how do they differ and how do they inter-connect with each other

**1.2** LGBTIQ+: terminology and definition

**1.3** Trans-identities and gender non-conforming persons

**1.4** Differences between LGBTIQ+ identities and LGBTIQ+ behaviors (MSM and FSM) in a cross-cultural perspective

**1.5** LGBTIQ+ rights in [country] // country specific

### Module 2 – LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees

**2.1** LGBTIQ+phobia and discrimination towards LGBTIQ+: why LGBTIQ+ might need international protection?

**2.2** SOGI-claims for asylum seekers in [country] : basics of the procedure // country specific

**2.3** Bi-sexual, intersexual and asexual asylum seekers: impact on SOGI claims of not being LGBTIQ+

**2.4** Sex workers and international protection: overcoming the stigma

2.5 Support system for LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in [country] // country specific

2.6 How to talk about LGBTIQ+ related issues with people from different cultural backgrounds

2.7 International good practices on how to reach, support and protect LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in shelters (with a special focus on transgender)

2.8 How to pose questions on sexual preference and gender identity without crossing other people's boundaries (according to the UNHCR guidelines)

## Module 3 – LGBTIQ+ inclusive environment for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees

3.1 How to promote inclusive environments for migrants in LGBTIQ+ organizations

3.2 How to recognise homophobia and racism among colleagues and how to challenge it

3.3 How to increase the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ among newcomers

3.4 How to deal with personal boundaries (for example in professional/volunteer – LGBTIQ+ refugee relations)

3.5 How to engage/promote bicultural LGBTIQ+ -friendly people and bicultural LGBTIQ+ people (including 2nd generations) in NGOs // case studies

3.6 How to work with migrant associations / communities on LGBTIQ+ -related topics // case studies (one per country)

## Methodology

The content and materials of this handbook were designed collectively by the partnership. Each organization was made responsible for drafting a number of units, upon completion all units were then peer-reviewed by all members of the partnership and by members of the **Epsilon Advisory Board**.

Following the peer review process, the main author(s) incorporated feedback and fine-tuned the units of the training. The final version of the materials was pilot-tested during a train-the-trainers' activity in Athens (20th – 24th November 2017).

## Target

The Epsilon training has been designed to be an introductory training programme to raise awareness and provide understanding of basic concepts and information to professionals and volunteers working either in the field of migration and asylum (i.e. social workers, cultural mediators, educators, language teachers, intercultural workers, volunteers), in the field of advocacy and support for LGBTIQ+ (activists, social workers, volunteers), or both.

Since it does not target professionals with high levels of expertise on the topics and because of constraints relating to the duration of modules, the training is supposed to offer a basic introduction to topics discussed. This training is not intended to and cannot be considered exhaustive.



# Duration

Each module has been developed to last approximately 2 hours. This means that the entire training is supposed to last 6 hours while the combination of module 1 or 2 with module 3 will only last 4 hours.

The short duration of the training was agreed by the partnership to ensure the sustainability of the intervention after the project funding comes to an end.

# Trainers

This training has been designed to be delivered either by a trainer with background in LGBTIQ+ refugee issues or a team of trainers: one with a background in LGBTIQ+ issues and the other with a background on migration and asylum. It is highly advisable for this training to be delivered by a trainer with lived experiences of being a LGBTIQ+ refugee or migrant.

The training programme has been conceived as a combination of (short) lectures and active learning techniques, aimed to encourage discussion and critical thinking and to make sure that each participant can contribute with their own skills and experiences. It is therefore important for the trainer(s) to have good facilitation skills.

# MODULE 1 – BEING LGBTIQ+

<b>TOPICS COVERED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Unit 1.1 Sex, gender, Sexual orientation, sexual identity and gender identity: what are they, how do they differ and how do they inter-connect with each other</li><li>- Unit 1.2. LGBTIQ+: terminology and definition</li><li>- Unit 1.3 Trans-identities and gender non-conforming persons</li><li>- Unit 1.4 Differences between LGBTIQ+ identities and LGBTIQ+ behaviors (MSM and FSM) in a cross-cultural perspective</li><li>- Unit 1.5 LGBTIQ+ rights in UK – Italy – the Netherlands, Cyprus and Greece</li></ul>
<b>GENERAL GOALS:</b>	<p>To help participants to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- get the vocabulary, knowledge and tools they need to understand the meaning of trans-identities and gender non-conforming persons</li><li>- fully comprehend what the acronym LGBTIQ+ really mean</li><li>- understand that there might be a difference between a self-perceived LGBTIQ+ identity and the fact that an individual practices LGBTIQ+ behaviors</li><li>- understand why asylum seekers may not identify themselves as homosexual in the context of a LGBTIQ+ claim or not understand the western concept of "homosexual"</li><li>- have an insight on the legislation available in their own countries to protect the rights of LGBTIQ+</li></ul>
<b>DURATION</b>	2 hours
<b>MATERIAL NEEDED</b>	Pens, white board, flipchart, paper, hand-outs, PC and projector.

## Unit 1.1 Being LGBTIQ+

### OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the module, participants will be able to:

- Explain the differences between sexual orientation and sex/gender identity and expression.
- To learn relevant LGBTIQ+ concepts and terms.

### ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:

#### **Step 1: 15 MIN – Introduction to Sex and Gender**

##### **Sex & Gender: An intro**

The trainer starts by asking the participants if they know what sex and gender is and what is the difference between these two terms. The trainer can divide the group into pairs and can give participants 5 minutes for discussion.

Then the trainer shows the video 'Sex and Gender: An intro' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ago78PhUofI>

The video includes some of the most common terms defined (for example sex, gender identity, transgender etc).

##### **Understanding Sex & Gender Key Terms**

Then the trainer presents the definitions of sex, gender and gender identity and asks the participants to share whether they agree with the definitions or what else would they add to these definitions. ([see slide 4 for the proposed definitions](#))

#### **Step 2: 15 minutes - Introduction sexual orientation**

The main aim of the Step 2 is to understand the issues and the difficulties faced by LGTBQ+ community and to explain to the participants the definition of the sexual orientation and what is the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity.

Without revealing the topic of the activity, the trainer begins screening "Straight Story" trailer (trailer of a Greek Film but with English subtitles) .

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAoTVolOQx8>

This film is about an upside down world, where being homosexual is considered "normal" and heterosexual is considered "not normal".

The trainer asks each participant to turn to the person next to her/him and take a few minutes to talk about how it would feel to live in such a world and what it would feel like if they had to hide something as important and as basic as your sexual orientation. The trainer inclines the participants to think that they have to tell someone about his/her secret. Or to imagine how they feel when they hear their parents tell nasty jokes about straights at the dinner table and everyone laughed.

##### **1: Difficulties faced by LGTBQ+ community**

The trainer points out while this scenario is fictional, it mirrors the real world faced by LGTBQ+ people. The trainer now mentions some of the everyday difficulties faced by LGTBQ+ people. For example, because they are often understandably afraid to 'come out' (reveal their sexual orientation) to others, LGTBQ+ people are forced to keep many parts of their lives secret. Sometimes keeping so many secrets leads to their dropping out of school, resigning and using alcohol and other drugs.

##### **2: Sexual orientation VS gender identity**

The trainer provides the definition of sexual orientation ([slide 8](#)) and asks the participants to comment on the definition and to share their own thoughts and feedback on the definition. Finally, the trainer explains the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity. ([slide 9](#))

## Unit 1.2 LGBTIQ+: terminology and definition

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fully provide the current abbreviation of LGBTIQ+</li><li>• Understand the importance and need of using this abbreviation correctly</li><li>• To understand why the term can act as a unifying umbrella for marginalized groups</li></ul>
	<p><b>Step 1: 5 minutes</b></p> <p>Trainer gives out to the participants 7 cardboards/ or shows the letters on the <a href="#">PowerPoint presentation</a> (slide 2). Each cardboard contains a letter from the LGBTIQ+ abbreviation. The trainer asks the participants to put all letters in a row in order to form the abbreviation referring to the Queer community (like a scrabble game). After the proper formation of the LGBTIQ+ abbreviation the trainer asks the participants if they know what each letter from the abbreviation stands for.</p>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 2: 7 minutes</b></p> <p>The trainer provides the <a href="#">definitions</a> of the letters of the LGBTIQ+ abbreviation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The words are written in capitals on different papers / cardboards/PowerPoint presentation: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender and Intersex.</li><li>• Then the trainer asks participants if they have used / heard some of these words, or if they know what the words really mean.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Step 3: Presentation + Discussion ( 10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Then the trainer asks the following questions:</li><li>• What about other identities? Do you think that some identities are left out?</li><li>• Then the trainer explains to the participants the importance of using the PLUS sign (+) to the acronym.</li><li>• After the short presentation the trainer asks some questions to the participants.</li><li>• 'Why was so important to add all these new letters to the already existed LGBT abbreviation?'</li><li>• 'Lesbian, Gay, Bi. Transgender...does it matter? Do we increase marginalization and stigmatization by referring to certain people or communities as LGBTIQ+?'</li></ul>

## Unit 1.3 Trans-identities and gender non-conforming persons

<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understand the meaning of trans-identities;</li><li>• understand the meaning of gender non-conforming persons;</li><li>• understand the concepts of “gender dysphoria” and “passing privilege”;</li><li>• be aware of some questions they should never ask a trans or a gender-non-conforming person.</li></ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1: Exercise – Discussion (10 min.)</b></p> <p>The facilitator presents the inspirational video “Gender Is Over” (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ns3FcQvnnZw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ns3FcQvnnZw</a>), which was created by Gender Proud – a transgender-owned, New York-based media company dedicated to capturing the trans and gender-nonconforming experience. It takes a look at the intersection between gender identity, expression, and everything in-between.</p> <p>After allowing few minutes for reflection, the facilitator discusses with participants how they would define trans and gender-nonconforming persons.</p>
	<p><b>Step 2: Presentation ( 8 min.)</b></p> <p>The facilitator presents and explains the meaning and differences of the terms “transgender/ transgender identities” and “gender non-conforming”. Then, he/she presents the concepts of “gender dysphoria” and “passing privilege”; an inspirational video on “passing privilege” titled “Why ‘Passing Privilege’ Is A Problem In The Trans Community” is also presented (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QntGEb-KgXo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QntGEb-KgXo</a>)</p>
	<p><b>Step 3: Discussion – Presentation (7 min.)</b></p> <p>The session concludes with the video “7 Things You Should Never Ask a Trans (or Gender Non-Conforming) Person” (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bo7RufXo5hY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bo7RufXo5hY</a>) starring Hari Nef, a famous American transgender woman who is an actress, model and writer. Participants comment on the video and the facilitator concludes with a presentation of <a href="#">questions that participants should avoid asking</a> a trans or a gender non-conforming person.</p>

## Unit 1.4 Differences between LGBTIQ+ identities and LGBTIQ+ behaviors (MSM and FSM) in a cross-cultural perspective

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that there is a difference between LGBTIQ+ identities and LGBTIQ+ behaviors (MSM and FSM)</li> <li>• Read these differences in a cross-cultural perspective</li> <li>• Be aware of some examples of cultural contexts that accept LGBTIQ+ behaviors while not identifying with LGBTIQ+ identities</li> <li>• Understand the impact this could have on a SOGI claim</li> </ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1 - Presentation: 5'</b> The facilitator presents slide from <b>#1 to #7</b> (see notes beyond the slides for further information). <i>Resource available:</i> <a href="#">power point presentation Module 1_4</a></p> <p><b>Step 2 – Self-reflection exercise: 5'</b> The facilitator invites participants to self-reflect on their own situation, by replying to the questions in slide <b>#8</b>. <i>It is important to stress that answers to these questions should not be shared with anyone, it is just for self-reflection purposes.</i></p> <p>After allowing few minutes for reflection, the facilitator introduces through slide <b>#9</b> the results of a study conducted in the US that shows that the majority of people who reported same-sex behavior or desire do not identify as homosexual or bisexual. This is to show that in fact the concept of sexual behavior vs. sexual identity is common and not limited to non – western countries.</p> <p><b>Step 3 – Discussion: 5'</b> The facilitator distributes the handout called "<a href="#">Coming out</a>" and asks participants to read it individually. Then allows few minutes to discuss the questions at the bottom of the handout. The focus should be on showing with a practical example from Iran what it was explained about the concept of sexual behavior vs. sexual identity.</p>
	<p><b>Step 4 - Presentation: 5'</b> The facilitator presents slide from <b>#10 to #13</b> introducing some of the issues of sexual behavior vs. sexual identity in different cultures and in relation to possible challenges during the SOGI claim process. If necessary, the facilitator can explain that SOGI stands for "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity": these are the asylum claims which are based on alleged persecution in the country of origin based on sexual orientation or gender identity of the claimant.</p> <p><b>Step 5 – Exercise: 5'</b> The facilitator distributes the handout called <a href="#">Exercise 1_4</a> and asks participants to read it individually. Then allows few minutes to discuss the questions at the bottom of the handout.</p> <p>The focus should be on showing with a practical example two cases of SOGI claim, one by an applicant who has a clear LGBTIQ+ identity, and the other who hasn't. In the first case, the preparation of the claim would probably be easier, because there will be evidences to support it and the credibility will be strengthened. The second case, on the other hand, would probably be more complicated as harm was suffered in the private sphere, which may limit the availability of documentary evidence.</p>

# Unit 1.5 LGBTIQ+ rights in UK – Italy – the Netherlands – Greece - Cyprus

This unit is country-specific.

## Self-assessment of module 1

To reflect on what you have learnt in module 1, please answer to the following questions:

1. 'Essentially we have been told since birth that boys and men are supposed to act, think, dress, talk, walk, eat, etc different from girls and women and vice versa.' Provide your thoughts and feelings on the above statement.

---

2. What does LGBTIQ+ stand for?

L stands for \_\_\_\_\_

G stands for \_\_\_\_\_

B stands for \_\_\_\_\_

T stands for \_\_\_\_\_

I stands for \_\_\_\_\_

Q stands for \_\_\_\_\_

+ stands for \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which of the following statements are true?

(N.B: Correct answers are shown in bold)

- All transgender identified people choose to change their names and/or gender markers.
- Gender variant people may dress or act differently than what is expected of their assigned gender.
- Being transgender is a mental illness.
- It is ok to ask a trans or gender-nonconforming person "When are you going to transition?"

4. Do gay, lesbian, and bisexual people always identify as such? Why?

---

## MODULE 2 – LGBTIQ+ ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

<b>TOPICS COVERED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit 2.1. LGBTIQ+phobia and discrimination towards LGBTIQ+s: why LGBTIQ+s might need international protection?</li> <li>• Unit 2.2 SOGI-claims for asylum seekers in UK – Italy – The Netherlands and Greece: basics of the procedure</li> <li>• Unit 2.3 Bi-sexual, intersexual, queers and asexual asylum seekers: impact on SOGI claims of not being LGBTIQ+</li> <li>• Unit 2.4 Sex workers and international protection: overcoming the stigma</li> <li>• Unit 2.5 Support system for LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in UK – Italy – The Netherlands and Greece</li> <li>• Unit 2.6 How to talk about LGBTIQ+-related issues with people from different cultural backgrounds</li> <li>• Unit 2.7 International good practices on how to reach, support and protect LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in shelters</li> <li>• Unit 2.8 How to pose questions on sexual preference and gender identity without crossing other people's boundaries</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL GOALS:</b>	<p>The aim of this module is to help participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase awareness of the impact that anti-LGBTIQ+ harassment, discrimination and LGBTIQ+phobia have on asylum seekers and refugees.</li> <li>• understand the basics of SOGI Claims procedures in the partner countries</li> <li>• understand that within the cases of SOGI Claims, some can be more difficult than others. Indeed, Bi-sexual, intersexual and queer applicants can have more difficulties in documenting their situations and in convincing the Commissions of their need to be protected.</li> <li>• understand that asylum seekers might be sexually coerced and / or work as sex workers but that this should not be a ground for further discrimination and stigmatization</li> <li>• learn what kind of support system is available for LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in their country</li> <li>• be mindful of cultural differences when talking about LGBTIQ+ related themes</li> <li>• learn about international good practices on the support and the protection of LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in shelters.</li> <li>• gain an understanding of how to make questions surrounding sexual and/or gender identity without crossing other people's boundaries and falling into stereotypes</li> </ul>
<b>DURATION</b>	2 hours
<b>MATERIAL NEEDED:</b>	Pens, white board, flipchart, paper, hand-outs, PC and beamer, advice cards hand-outs (unit 2.6), Do's and Don'ts hand-outs (unit 2.8)



## Unit 2.1 LGBTQ+phobia and discrimination towards LGBTQ+s: why LGBTQ+s might need international protection?

### OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the module, participants will be able:

- To expose the daily impact of heterosexism, homophobia and transphobia on individuals, organizations and society.
- To explore examples of discrimination, LGBTQ+ phobia and racism, consider perspectives about racism by thinking / writing a story/past event, and discuss ways to eradicate racism and discrimination in different environments and society.
- To increase awareness of what LGBTQ+phobia and discrimination is.
- To understand why LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers need international protection.
- To discuss how participants can be better allies for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees.

### ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:

#### **Step 1: MIN – 10 minutes Who is a refugee?**

The trainer asks the participant if they can clearly provide the international definition of a refugee. The trainer can allow 5-6 minutes for discussion and can encourage the participants to write their own definitions.

Then, the trainer provides the official definition of who is a refugee from Article 1(A) (2) of the 1951 Convention.

The trainer asks the participants if the definition is sufficient and if they can suggest some alternations in order to make the definition more inclusive. (For example including individuals fleeing natural disasters and generalized violence, stateless individuals not outside their country of habitual residence or not facing persecution, and individuals who have crossed an international border fleeing generalized violence are not considered refugees under either the 1951 Convention or the 1967 Optional Protocol)

Finally the trainer presents the refugee definition from 1984 Cartagena Declaration as a complementary to the 1951 Convention's one.

*Available resources:* [power\\_point\\_2\\_1](#)

#### **Step 2: (20 minutes) Core international and European Law / National Policies and Standards**

The trainer will give a brief presentation about some core international and european legal instruments. In that way, the participants can be informed and gained some basic knowledge about the current legal framework.

Then trainer can ask the participants what is the situation in their country and if they know if their state has ratified the refugee convention or not.

An open discussion can be followed about future steps and what needs to be done in order to adopt more inclusive refugee criteria.

#### **Step 3: Why LGBTQ+ might need international protection?**

After the above two activities the trainer can ask the following questions:

- What is the situation regarding persons who fear persecution because of their sexual orientation or gender identity
- If an LGBTQ+ can claim asylum in another country on the ground of sexual orientation.
- And to list three reasons why LGBTQ+ might need international protection

The trainer can proposed some more questions and participants would have 10 minutes to discuss the above questions

Finally the trainer would present slide 6 and slide 7 and would ask the participants for their own additions and suggestions.

## Unit 2.2 SOGI-claims for asylum seekers in UK – Italy – The Netherlands, Cyprus and Greece: basics of the procedure

This unit is country-specific.

## Unit 2.3 Bi-sexual, intersexual, queers and asexual asylum seekers: impact on SOGI claims of not being LGT

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	By the end of the unit, participants will be able to understand the challenges of SOGI claims by BQAI
	<p><b>Introduction: 5'</b> the facilitator asks participants:</p> <p>“why do you think we need to talk about this topic?”</p> <p>“can you mention at least one specific difficulties of SOGI claims made by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bisexuals</li><li>• Queers</li><li>• Asexuals</li><li>• Intersexuals?”</li></ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1 - Presentation: 5'</b></p> <p>After having discussed the ideas of participants, the facilitator presents slide (see notes beyond the slides for further information).</p> <p><i>Resource available:</i> <a href="#">power point module_2_3</a></p> <p><b>Step 2 – Case discussion : 10'</b></p> <p>Participants read the story of Apphia Kumar, the first bi-sexual asylee in the US. (<a href="#">case scenario #1</a>). Participants are encouraged to discuss the case of bisexual asylum seekers who are often suggested to apply as gays or lesbians to increase their chances of approval (do they agree? Not? Why?). Participants can also be encouraged to discuss what would they stress in claiming asylum for a bisexual person (i.e. the specific nature of bi-sexuality, the fact that they can't simply decide to hide such an important part of who they are...).</p>

## Unit 2.4 Sex workers and international protection: overcoming the stigma

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the connections between sex work, migration and asylum seeking</li><li>• Estimate the number of asylum seekers who are involved in sex work</li><li>• Identify the key vulnerabilities of asylum seekers who are sex workers</li><li>• Understand the connections between trafficking and asylum seeking process</li></ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1 - Introduction: 5'</b></p> <p>The facilitator show this short video: <a href="https://vimeo.com/50289487">https://vimeo.com/50289487</a> and then asks participants the question in slide #2 to introduce the topic. Then it shows slide #3 and asks participants to comment on the quotes.</p> <p><i>Resource available:</i> <a href="#">power_point_2_4</a></p>
	<p><b>Step 2 – Case studies and discussion: 5'</b></p> <p>Participants are divided in three groups.</p> <p>To group #1 the facilitator distributes copies of the <a href="#">case scenario #1</a> (bisexual) , to group #2 <a href="#">case scenario #2</a> (transgender) and to group #3 <a href="#">case scenario #3</a> (gay man).</p> <p>He/she asks participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>can you identify the main vulnerabilities faced by the main characters?</b></li><li>• <b>Can you identify the interconnections between being an asylum seeker and a sex worker?</b></li></ul> <p>If time allows, one presenter per group shall then be asked to report in plenary the outcomes of the group discussion. The key message to convey is that migrant sex workers are individuals and it is difficult to make generalized assumptions without stereotyping. However, they should be offered equal opportunity and access to services in a non-judgmental way.</p>
	<p><b>Step 3 – Presentation : 5'</b></p> <p>The facilitator introduces slides from #4 to #6 (see notes beyond slides for further inputs).</p> <p>Note that when presenting slide #5 the facilitator should ask participants to <u>guess the % of asylum seekers involved in sex-work before showing the figures.</u></p> <p><i>Resource available:</i> <a href="#">power_point_2_4</a></p>

## Unit 2.5 Support system for LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in UK, Italy, the Netherlands, CYPRUS and Greece

This unit is country-specific.

## Unit 2.6 How to talk about LGBTIQ+ related issues with people from different cultural backgrounds

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	By the end of the module, participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Point to the importance of cultural differences in how people live their sexuality and sexual identities</li><li>• Explain important points and advices to bear in mind when talking about LGBTIQ+-related themes with people from different cultural backgrounds</li></ul>
<b>DURATION:</b>	20min
<b>MATERIAL NEEDED:</b>	Advice cards hand-outs & paper to take notes
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<b>Step 1: 5 MIN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trainer asks participants to discuss in pairs for 3 minutes the ways in which LGBTIQ+ identities may assume different meanings in different cultural contexts.</li><li>• Then each pair reports at least one thing they have discussed</li></ul>
	<b>Step 2: 10 MIN</b> <p>Trainers divide participants in groups and ask them to pick up one or two advice cards on: <a href="#">“How to talk about LGBTIQ+ related issues with people from different cultural backgrounds”</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask groups to read them and discuss: Why is this important? What else would you add?</li></ul>
	<b>Step 3: 5 MIN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Every group feedbacks to the wider group on what has been discussed.</li><li>• Feedback is collected using brainstorm or mind-mapping method</li><li>• Discuss any further advice that could be provided.</li></ul> <p><i>Resource available:</i> <a href="#">power_point_2_6</a></p>

## Unit 2.7 International good practices on how to reach, support and protect LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in shelters

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be aware of some good practice of reaching, supporting and protecting LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in shelters;</li> <li>• be aware of some good practice of reaching, supporting and protecting Transgender asylum seekers in shelters.</li> </ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1: Discussion – Presentation (10 min.)</b></p> <p>The sessions starts with the presentation of the video “Seeking Sanctuary” (<a href="http://www.belongto.org/service.aspx?contentid=8826">http://www.belongto.org/service.aspx?contentid=8826</a>), which is an information video about the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender refugees and asylum seekers in Ireland; the video was developed as part of the “BeLonG To LGBT Asylum Seekers and Refugees” Project. The facilitator and the participants discuss on the video. The facilitator presents the “BeLonG To LGBTIQ+ Asylum Seekers and Refugees” Project as a good practice of supporting LGBTIQ+ Asylum Seeking and Refugee Youth. The handout “<a href="#">Welcome Guide for LGBTIQ+ Asylum Seekers Refugees</a>”, which was developed within the project, is distributed to the participants.</p>
	<p><b>Step 2: Discussion (8 min.)</b></p> <p>The facilitator distributes a <a href="#">handout</a> with examples of international good practices on how to reach, support and protect LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in shelters. The handout includes national good practices from Austria, Belgium, the UK and Sweden as well as from UNHCR. In addition, the handout “<a href="#">Information for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender persons</a>”, which was developed by the Swedish Migration Board, is distributed to the participants. Participants are separated into 2 groups and discuss on the practices. The following questions can be posed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can we learn from the good practices?</li> <li>• Which of them are relevant to our country context?</li> <li>• How can we adapt them in our organization/ service/ agency?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Step 3: Discussion (7 min.)</b></p> <p>The facilitator distributes a <a href="#">handout</a> with examples of international good practices on how to reach, support and protect transgender asylum seekers in shelters. The handout includes national good practices from Austria, from Transgender Europe and from Greek Transgender Support Association. Moreover, the handout “<a href="#">Trans* Asylum Guide: A short guide for transgender and LGBTI asylum seekers</a>”, which was developed by the Greek Transgender Support Association, is distributed to the participants. Participants are separated into 2 groups and discuss on the practices. The following questions can be posed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can we learn from the good practices?</li> <li>• Which of them are relevant to our country context?</li> <li>• How can we adapt them in our organization/ service/ agency?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Step 4: Close of the session</b></p> <p>A handout with links to <a href="#">good practices from the Netherlands</a> is distributed to the participants.</p>

## Unit 2.8 How to pose questions on sexual preference and gender identity without crossing other people's boundaries

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the module, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have a clear understanding of do's and don'ts when it comes to questions on sexual and gender identity</li><li>• Explain importance of respecting people's boundaries and not falling into stereotypes about LGBTIQ+ related identities</li></ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1: 5 MIN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The trainer divides participants into smaller groups</li><li>• Groups are given a <u>few statements</u> (left column) and are asked to discuss internally and choose whether each of them is a do or don't giving an explanation for your group's decision. After that proceed to read the <u>respective card with the right answer</u> (right column) and explanation. The group guessing more right answers wins!</li></ul>
	<p><b>Step 2: 10 MIN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Groups give their answers one by one, and the respective card with the right answer and explanation is revealed subsequently.</li><li>• The group guessing more right answers wins!</li></ul>
	<p><b>Step 3: 5 MIN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wider group discussion on whether they agree with all cards and whether they would add anything further</li></ul> <p><i>Resource available:</i> <a href="https://www.epsilonproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2_8.pdf">https://www.epsilonproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2_8.pdf</a></p>

## Self-assessment of the module 2

*To reflect on what you have learnt in module 2, please answer to the following questions:*

**1.** What's something you've heard today helped you to understand better the multiple oppressions and struggles of LGBTBIQ+ refugees, asylum seekers and migrants?

---

**3.** Do you think SOGI claims made by applicants who are bisexuals, queers, asexual or intersexual are normally as successful as those made by LGT applicants? Why?

---

**4.** Can you name at least two reasons why LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees may sometimes feel the need to engage in sex-work?

---

**5.** Please give examples of how to respect boundaries and avoid reproducing stereotypes when speaking with migrants or refugees about sexual orientation and gender identity.

---

**6.** Why is it important to bear in mind that LGBTIQ+ identities assume different meanings in different cultural contexts? How do these identities may differ?

---

**7.** Which one of the presented practices would you select to be transferred in your organisation? Why?

---

**8.** Please give examples of how to respect boundaries and avoid reproducing stereotypes when speaking with migrants or refugees about sexual orientation and gender identity.

---

## MODULE 3 – LGBTIQ+ INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR MIGRANTS, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

<b>TOPICS COVERED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.1 How to promote inclusive environments for migrants in LGBTIQ+ organizations</li> <li>• 3.2 How to recognise homophobia and racism among colleagues and how to challenge it</li> <li>• 3.3 How to increase the acceptance of LGBTIQ+s among newcomers</li> <li>• 3.4 How to deal with personal boundaries (for example in professional/volunteer – LGBTIQ+ refugee relations)</li> <li>• 3.5 How to engage/promote bicultural LGBTIQ+-friendly people and bicultural LGBTIQ+s people (including 2nd generations) in NGOs // case studies</li> <li>• 3.6 How to work with migrant associations / communities on LGBTIQ+ related topics</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL GOALS:</b>	<p>The aim of this module is to help participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting inclusive environments in LGBTIQ+ organizations</li> <li>• raise awareness of participants on recognizing homophobia and racism among colleagues with empathy and to know how to challenge them.</li> <li>• increase the acceptance of LGBTIQ+s among newcomers, for example in shelters.</li> <li>• understanding the importance of respecting personal boundaries</li> <li>• developing new ideas about how to engage bicultural LGBTIQ+ / LGBTIQ+ friendly people in NGOs</li> <li>• inspire and stimulate participants to work together with migrant associations and communities on LGBTIQ+ related topics</li> </ul>
<b>DURATION:</b>	2 hours and a half / 3 hours
<b>MATERIAL NEEDED</b>	Pens, white board, flipchart, paper, hand-outs, small empty cards or post-its, case studies for module 3.5 and 3.



## Unit 3.1. How to promote inclusive environments for migrants in LGBTIQ+ organizations

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop more inclusive policies for migrants in LGBTIQ+ organizations.</li> <li>• Have a clear understanding of do's and don'ts regarding their personal attitudes and cultural biases becoming more aware of how to create more inclusive environments</li> </ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1: (5 min.) - INTRODUCTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why should we be inclusive?</li> <li>• What is the value of having a more inclusive work environment?</li> <li>• How to be more inclusive of migrants in LGBTIQ+ organizations?</li> <li>• How to communicate appropriately?</li> </ul> <p>Trainer asks participants (they could be divided into small groups) to think about the importance of working inclusive and how to involve migrants in LGBTIQ+ organizations.</p>
	<p><b>Step 2: (5 min.) – THESESES</b></p> <p>Learners discuss the issue with 2 THESESES (<a href="#">see PP/hand-out</a>)</p>
	<p><b>Step 3: (10 min.) – DO's and DONT's</b></p> <p>An 'inside and outside circle' discussion about the <a href="#">do's and don'ts</a> considering participants own attitudes and views on involving migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in LGBTIQ+ organizations.</p> <p>How does it work?          The 'inside circle' discuss the <a href="#">do's and don'ts</a> and the outside circle only listens.          After touching a shoulder of a participant of the inside circle, a participant from the outside circle can change with a participant of the inside circle.          The main focus will be: 'how can we promote inclusive environments for migrants in LGBTIQ+ organizations, what works?' The conclusion will be linked to this question.          Other topics are for example: what do we assume? What can we change in our working culture and behavior?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outcomes will be collected by the trainer and shared.</li> <li>• A general conclusion and advice will be given by the trainer.</li> </ul>

## Unit 3.2 How to recognise homophobia and racism among colleagues and how to challenge it

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the module, participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to spot LGBTIQ+phobia and racism among colleagues</li> <li>• Be aware of the negative impacts of LGBTIQ+phobia and racism among colleagues for LGBTIQ+s</li> <li>• Know how to challenge LGBTIQ+phobia and racism among colleagues</li> </ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p>Before you start with this submodule, make sure that all of the participants are aware of the definitions of LGBTIQ+phobia, discrimination and racism à write down on a flip-over if necessary (see notes in <a href="#">ppt</a> for definitions)</p> <p><b>Introduction to the theme - 5 min</b></p> <p>Make pairs and interview each other about personal experiences with homophobia, discrimination or racism in institutions (schools, workplace, hospital, dance class etc.).</p> <p>Instruct your participants to focus on the feelings during the interview (instead of thoughts, judgments ) that the other person experienced during and after homophobia, discrimination or racism took place. Did they feel angry, sad, lonely, misunderstood and so on?</p> <p><b>Stories of experiences of LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees – 5 min</b></p> <p>Read the <a href="#">stories</a> to the class – don't show them yet - and make sure you speak slowly and with a lot of compassion. Be silent for some time in between the stories and make sure there is some silence afterwards as well.</p> <p><b>Empathy exercise – 5 min</b></p> <p>After reading the stories to the participants you'll do an empathy exercise with them. Take a couple of minutes for this exercise and make sure that each participant has paper and a pen to write down the answer to the question:</p> <p>"Imagine these are your experiences... What would have been the results of these experiences for you, if you were the victim?"</p> <p><b>The results of LGBTIQ+hobia, discrimination and racism – 5 min</b></p> <p>After the empathy exercise you'll take the participants through scientifically facts about the impacts of homophobia, discrimination and racism. (<a href="#">Use slide 3 of the power point</a>) While presenting these findings to the participants, make it interactive by asking if these results were also on their empathy exercise.</p> <p><b>Ways to challenge LGBTIQ+phobia, discrimination and racism – 10 min</b></p> <p>Step 1- Brainstorm with participants ways to challenge LGBTIQ+phobia, discrimination and racism. The most important thing to do first, is to decide to be a part of the solution. Then to talk to the victim, then speak to the perpetrator and finally address the group.</p> <p>Step 2 - Form three subgroups – one will discuss about victims, one about perpetrator(s) and one about the group - and ask each group to come up with the steps to challenge LGBTIQ+phobia: what are the do's.</p> <p>Step 3 - Present all the steps on the sheet. Make this an interactive sheet by asking questions like: 'okay you'll have this talk with your colleague. In which way will you connect with them on a personal level first. And what will your confrontation sound like: what will you tell them?</p> <p><u>Option: step 4 - Roleplay to enable your participants to try out the different steps.</u></p>

## Unit 3.3 How to increase the acceptance of LGBTIQ+s among newcomers

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	By the end of the unit, participants will be able to work towards increasing the acceptance of LGBTIQ+s among newcomers, through daily work and by giving training.
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<b>Step 1: (5 min.) - INTRODUCTION</b>  Why is important to work on the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ refugees?  Most important outcomes research Epsilon ( <a href="#">slide 2</a> ); <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trainer asks participants (they could be divided into small groups) to think about the importance of working on the acceptance of LGBTIQ+s among newcomers, for example in shelters.</li></ul>
	<b>Step 2: (5 min.) – WHAT WORKS?</b>  What works for improving the acceptance in shelters and training? ( <a href="#">see PP/hand-out</a> – slide 3/4) (information is based on our research).  Providing information on LGBTIQ+ refugees with a residence status seems more successful than information to people who are still in the asylum procedure phase.  <b>Contact-theory:</b> Informing newcomers with the aim to increase the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ will be more successful when sympathy, empathy, and a positive social standard is emphasized. For instance, by using (films on) stories and experiences of LGBTIQ+ people that provide a match with regard to religion, culture and age so that non-LGBTIQ+ people are able to understand the situation themselves.  <b>Positive social norm:</b> Communicating a positive social standard by people with authority and stating that more and more people from their specific ethnic group are positive about LGBTIQ+ people also helps.
	<b>Step 3: (10 min.) – How can you increase the acceptance of LGBTIQ+s among newcomers in your organization?</b>  Each participant thinks about the answer and writes it on a post-it or small card. After, it will be shared in the group.

## Unit 3.4 How to deal with personal boundaries

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understand the importance of personal boundaries;</li><li>• deal with personal boundaries in their workplace, especially when it comes to LGBTIQ+ professionals or volunteers.</li></ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Step 1: Discussion – Presentation (10 min.)</b></p> <p>The session starts with a discussion on how the participants perceive the concept of “personal boundaries”. The facilitator defines the concept and explains the types of “personal boundaries”.</p> <p><i>Available resource:</i> <a href="#">power_point_3_4</a></p>
	<p><b>Step 2: Exercise (5 min.)</b></p> <p>The facilitator asks participants to do the “<a href="#">Boundary Exploration</a>” activity.</p>
	<p><b>Step 3: Activity - Discussion (5 min.)</b></p> <p>The facilitator distributes a <a href="#">handout with “Do’s and Don’ts”</a> on how to deal with personal boundaries when it comes to LGBTIQ+ professionals or volunteers and how to make an organisation more LGBTIQ+ friendly. The facilitator asks participants the following questions:</p> <p>Can you select 3 suggestions that you consider as the most important to your organisation/ service? Why?</p>

# Unit 3.5 How to engage/promote bicultural LGBTIQ+ friendly people and bicultural LGBTIQ+'s people (including 2nd generations) in NGOs

<p><b>OBJECTIVES:</b></p>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learnt about experiences carried out in other organizations / countries concerning the engagement of bicultural LGBTIQ+ friendly people and bicultural LGBTIQ+'s people (including 2nd generations) in NGOs</li> <li>• had the chance to reflect on if and how these experiences are transferable to their contexts / organizations</li> </ul>
<p><b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b></p>	<p><b>#1 (5 min.)</b> The facilitator introduces the concept of the importance of bicultural LGBTIQ+/friendly staff in NGOs by using the <a href="#">power point</a> (slide 2-3).</p> <hr/> <p><b>#1 (10 minutes)</b></p> <p>Divide the class into 5 groups and distribute one <a href="#">case-study</a> each.</p> <p>Ask participants to read the case and discuss into the group and to reflect on it with the goal to identify then do's to radiate that your organization is bicultural LGBTIQ+ friendly. Make it a competition: the group with the most do's will be the winner! They write their do's on post-its, the trainer collects these post-its on the wall and the group is able to see them all.</p> <p>Afterwards, you can summarize by showing the <a href="#">power point</a> (slide 4).</p> <hr/> <p><b>#3 (5 minutes)</b></p> <p>Each participant (or small groups if coming from the same organization) will have to answer to the question "How will YOU radiate that your organization is bicultural LGBTIQ+ friendly?"</p> <p>Make sure everyone writes down at least two do's in their email / agenda / task list to take action when they're back at work!</p>

## Unit 3.6 How to work with migrant associations / communities on LGBTIQ+ related topics

<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<p>By the end of the unit, participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of the importance of working together</li> <li>• Know why it works so well to work together</li> <li>• How to radiate that your organisation is working together</li> </ul>
<b>ORDER OF ACTIVITIES:</b>	<p><b>Introduction to the theme – 10 min</b></p> <p>Show part of the YouTube video ‘If heterophobia was actually real’. For example from 1:04 to 6:00 min  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnOJgDWogPI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnOJgDWogPI</a></p> <p>What is going on here? Ask your group what they see and ask until someone says something about norms. Explain about <i>social norms</i> = an expected form of behavior in a given situation</p> <p><b>Brainstorm on the possibility of different social norms – 5 min</b></p> <p>In the group discuss about your experience in working with LGBTIQ+ related topics: do you act different when you’re working with domestic LGBTIQ+s then with LGBTIQ+ migrants? Why is that?</p> <p><b>How to work together - 10 min</b></p> <p>Each person makes a list of 3 do’s for how to work together with migrant associations and communities on LGBTIQ+-related topics. Then hand out the <a href="#">case study of Maruf</a> and discuss together if there is a correspondence about what suggested in the case and what came out of the group.</p>
	<p><b>Option: how to influence social norms according to the literature – 5 min</b></p> <p><u>Slide nr. 4</u> of the power point can be presented and discussed in the group: what do they think about these suggestions? Are they applicable? Yes? No? Why?</p>

## Self-assessment of the module 3

To reflect on what you have learnt in module 3, please answer to the following questions:

1. What is the first step you will take to promote an inclusive environment in your organization?

---

2. Can you explain in your own words what is LGBTIQ+phobia?

---

3. What tips and advices would give to your colleagues regarding increasing the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants among non-LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants?

---

4. How would you deal with personal/workplace boundaries, when it comes to LGBTIQ+ professionals or volunteers? (tick all those which apply)

(N.B: Correct answers are shown in bold)

- **I would respect the privacy of my co-workers that I think they might be gay/lesbian/bi-sexual.**
- I would reveal the sexual orientation of a co-worker to another just because I would know that they are both gay/lesbian/bi-sexual.
- **I would include sexual orientation in my agency's non-discrimination policy and in the agency's mission statement.**
- **I would ask questions in a non-judgmental and politically correct manner**
- (Please write down your suggestion)

-----

5 Please write down at least one action you can take to promote a more bi-cultural LGBTIQ+ friendly organisation.

---

6. Please write down your three actions you can take to work more closely with migrant associations and communities on LGBTIQ+ related topics.

---

# EVALUATION FORM

1. What were your expectations before attending this training?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Can you estimate your knowledge about LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers, refugees and migrants prior to attending this training giving a score from 1 to 10 (1= low, 10= high): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did the training event meet your expectations?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially
------------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------------

How (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Can you estimate your current knowledge about LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers, refugees and migrants giving a score from 1 to 10 (1= low, 10= high): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Can you list the three most important things you have learnt from this training?

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Overall, what is your opinion about the training event?

<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor
------------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

7. What is your overall opinion about the trainer(s)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor
------------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

8. Do you think that the training methodologies we used were appropriate?  Yes  No

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you think that the time we dedicated to each topic was appropriate?  Yes  No

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Define the training workshop in 3 quick sentences



# THE ONLINE COURSE FOR PROFESSIONALS AND VOLUNTEERS

The modules of the e-course aim to increase knowledge and skills of professionals, ultimately building their capacity to answer to the needs of LGBTIQ+ refugees, contributing to preventing abuse in centers, shelters, local communities and services dedicated to this target group.

## THE E-COURSE INCLUDES INTERACTIVE UNITS COVERING THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

Being LGBTIQ+

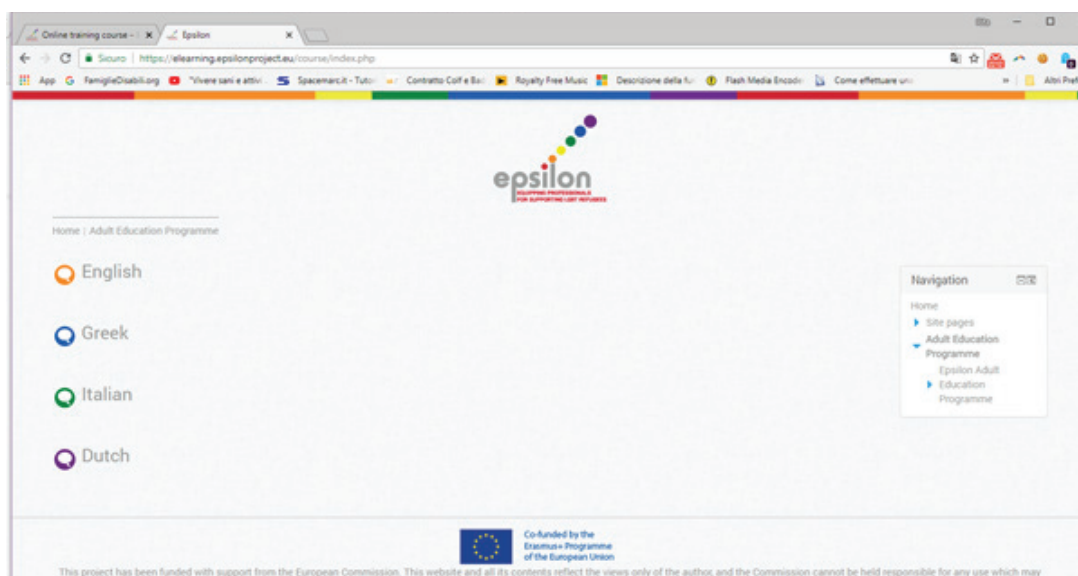
LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees

LGBTIQ+ inclusive environment for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees

## LGBT MIGRANT AND REFUGEES: INCREASE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS OF PROFESSIONALS WHO COME IN CONTACT WITH THEM.

The course is available here:

<https://elearning.epsilonproject.eu/login/index.php>



# CERTIFICATE

OF

## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The CPD Certification Service  
certifies that

**[INSERT DELEGATE NAME]**

the above named has participated  
in the following CPD activity

**Epsilon Adult Education Programme Online Training  
Course (A012287)**



CPD Provider Organisation

**IARS International Institute**

An initiative to increase standards of CPD  
provision to professionals in relevant market  
sectors

Date of CPD Activity:

No. CPD Hours / Points: 6 Hours

**CPD**  
**CERTIFIED**  
The CPD Certification  
Service

The Coach House, Ealing Green, London W5 5ER  
Email: [info@cpduk.co.uk](mailto:info@cpduk.co.uk) Web: [www.cpduk.co.uk](http://www.cpduk.co.uk)  
Tel: 020 8840 4383 Fax: 020 8579 3991



**CPD**  
**CERTIFIED**  
**The CPD Certification**  
**Service**

*The content of the following has been certified by the  
CPD Certification Service  
as conforming to  
continuing professional development principles*

**Epsilon Adult Education Programme  
Online Training Course**

**THE IARS INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE  
(1647)**

*Date:*

**August 2018**

*Certificate No:*

**A012287**

# REPORT ON THE OPENING CONFERENCE IN ATHENS

The Opening International Conference titled “Supporting and Including LGBTI Migrants: Needs, Experiences and Good Practices” was organized by KMOP on Tuesday, 9th May 2017, in Athens. The event welcomed more than 220 key stakeholders, including members of NGOs / LGBT activists, professionals, decision makers and refugees / migrants.

Coming from all political aspects and with a diverse background, major policy makers addressed the conference: Mr. Ioannis Balafas, Deputy Minister for Immigration Policy, Ms. Maria Yannakaki, Secretary General for Transparency and Human Rights, Ms. Fotini Kouvela, Secretary General for Gender Equality, and on behalf of the Municipality of Athens, Ms. Maria Stratigaki, Vice Mayor for Social Solidarity, Welfare and Equality and Mr. Lefteris Papagiannakis, Vice Mayor for Migrants, Refugees and Municipal Decentralization, as well as Mr. Iasonas Fotilas, Deputy Shadow Health Minister of New Democracy and member of the Greek Parliament.

Then, our first three speakers had the floor: Ms. Eleni Petraki, Public Relations and Communication Office, Asylum Service, Ms. Emilie Page, Protection Officer, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Ms. Monica Strand Korgerud, LGBT activist from Norway.

Next, Ms. Rosa Heimer, Equalities Projects Coordinator of the IARS International Institute (United Kingdom), presented the “Epsilon” project. Following her presentation, project partners reported on the results of the research study called “LGBT refugees and migrants in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Greece, Cyprus and Italy”.

The first panel of speakers dealt with the topic of “Reception and Support of LGBT Refugees and Migrants” with the participation of representatives from the Transgender Support Association (S.Y.D.) along with the organizations Colour Youth, Praxis, Solidarity Now, Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières) and LGBT Asylum Support Foundation.

The second panel involved LGBT refugees. Armin Armadi from the Netherlands, Jonathan Mastellari and Markin Hasan from Italy and Sam, Hossam and Moira from Greece, shared their personal stories and experiences with the audience.

Panel coordinator was Mr Thanassis Theofilopoulos, Sociologist, Project Manager (NGO Colour Youth), Board Member of the Hellenic Sociological Association.

Mr Dimitris Angelidis, a well-known human rights journalist, was the coordinator of the conference.

The conference succeeded fully to raise awareness about the situation of the LGBT refugees and migrants. Journalists of the local and national press participated at the conference. The “ERT” national TV channel covered the conference, including an interview with our international guest and speaker, Mr. Armin Ahmadi. The conference triggered several press clips as well as radio interviews.

## Evaluation of the conference

In general, the overall feedback from the conference was very positive.

According to the evaluation forms, 81% of the participants (32% strongly agreed and 49% agreed) stated that the conference covered their expectations (Figure 1).

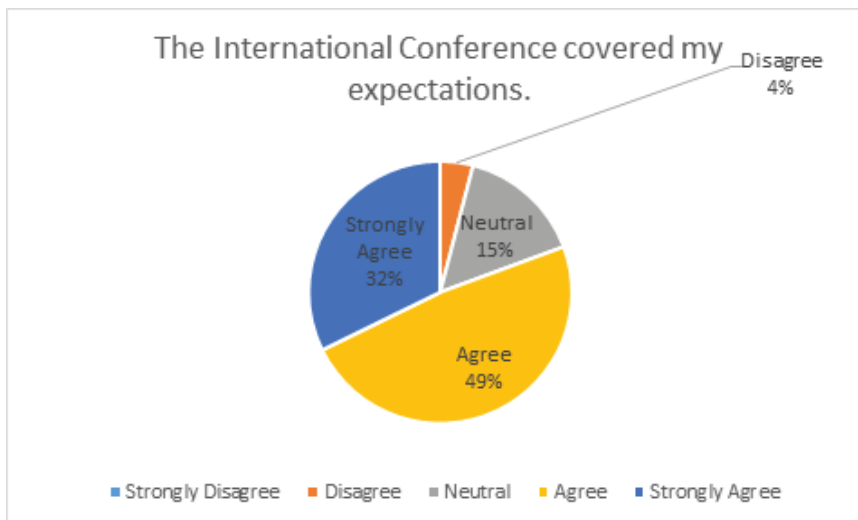


Figure 1

41% of the participants agreed and 29% strongly agreed that the Conference satisfied their professional needs, whereas some participants (23%) had a neutral view on that (Figure 2).

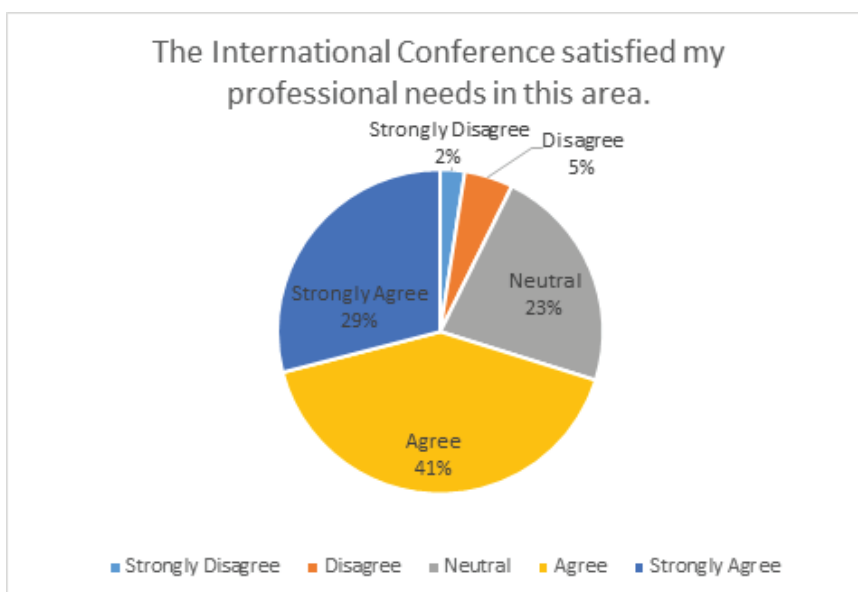


Figure 2

Moreover, 81% of the respondents (37% strongly agreed and 44% agreed) found the objectives of the conference were clearly and adequately stated (Figure 3).

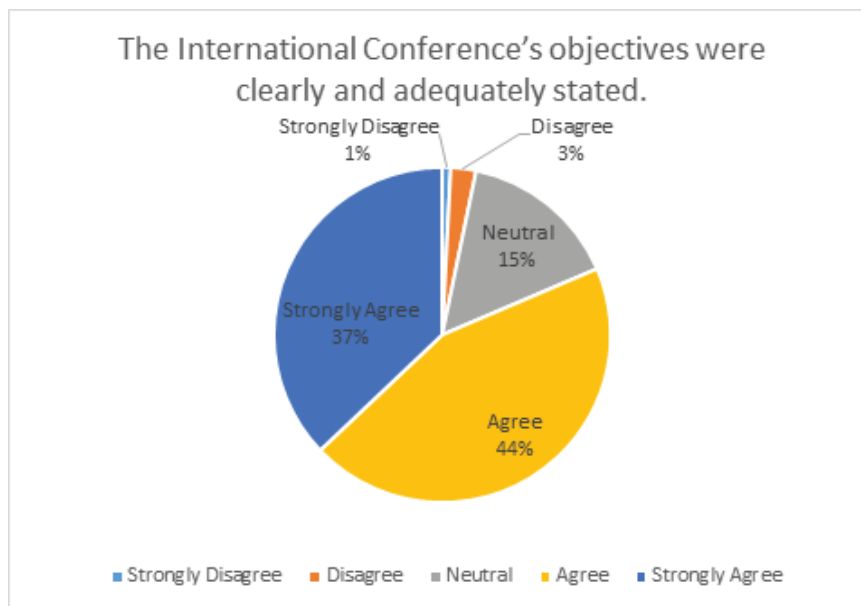


Figure 3

Besides, according to the 90% of the participants' views (41% strongly agreed and 49% agreed), the conference's content was interesting (Figure 4).

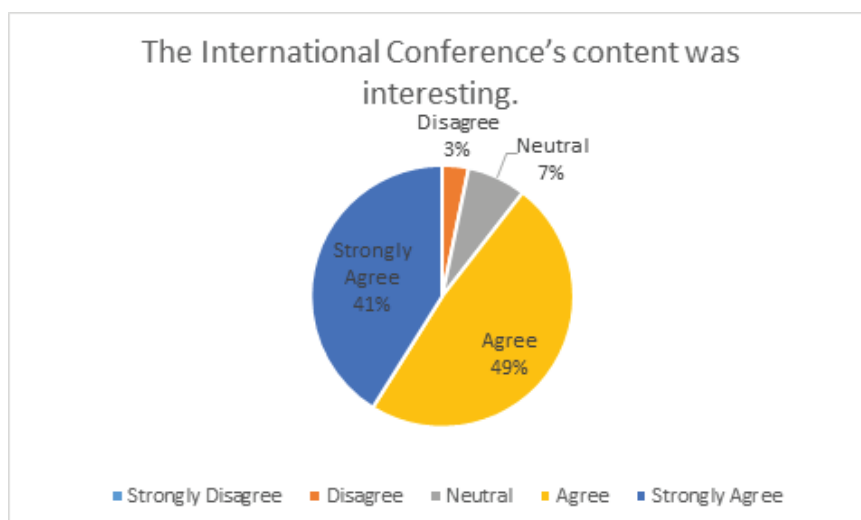


Figure 4

As for the themes discussed during the conference, the majority of the participants (35% strongly agreed and 47% agreed) believed that they were useful and relevant for their area of work (Figure 5).

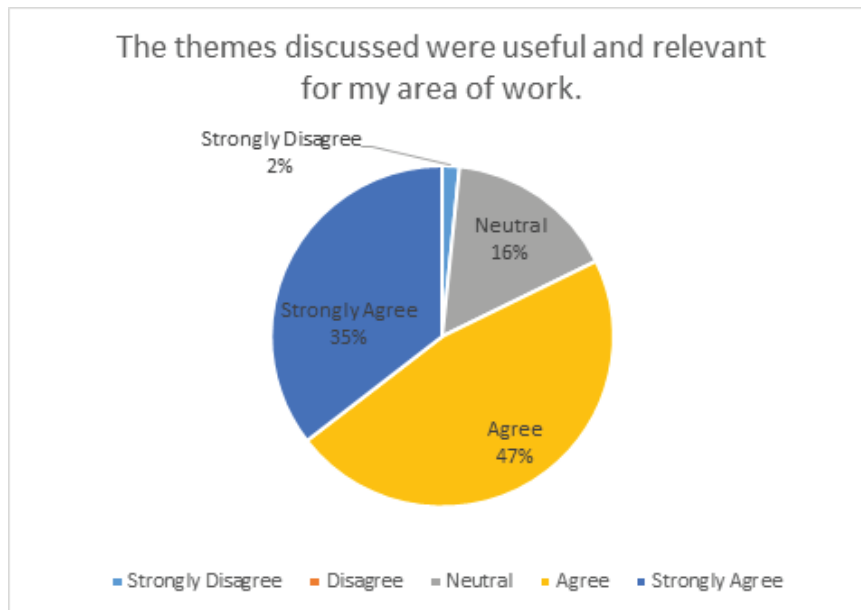


Figure 5

In addition, a high percentage of the participants (73%) agreed (41%) and strongly agreed (32%) that the level of interactivity was appropriate for the conference (Figure 6).

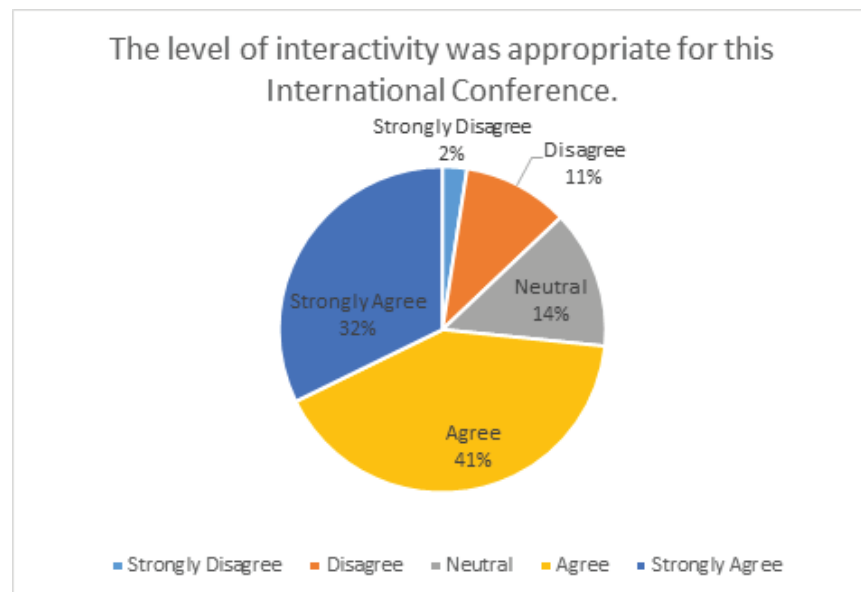


Figure 6

85% of the participants responded that the duration of the conference was right for them (Figure 7).



Figure 7

Moreover, 93% of the respondents considered the place of the conference right form them.



Figure 8



A very high percentage of the participants, i.e. 92%, expressed the view that the conference motivated them to rethink certain aspects of their area of work (Figure 9).

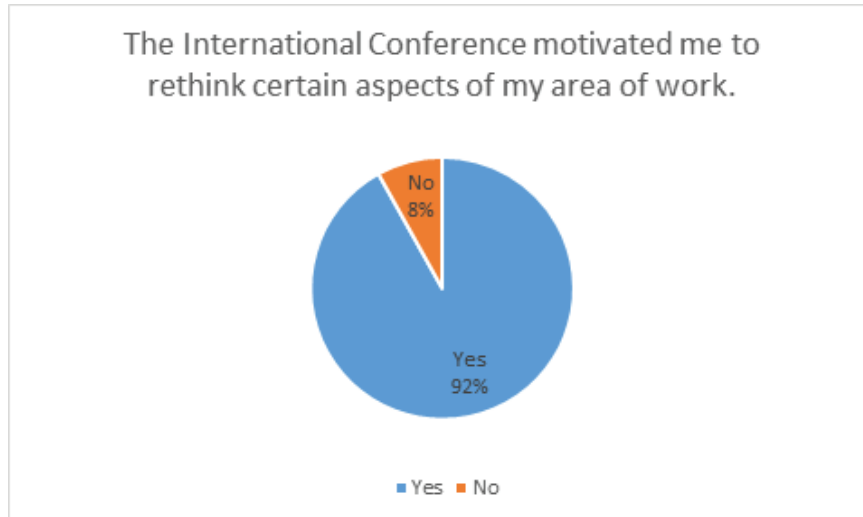


Figure 9

In addition, the time schedule of the conference was effective for the vast majority of the participants (90%) (Figure 10).

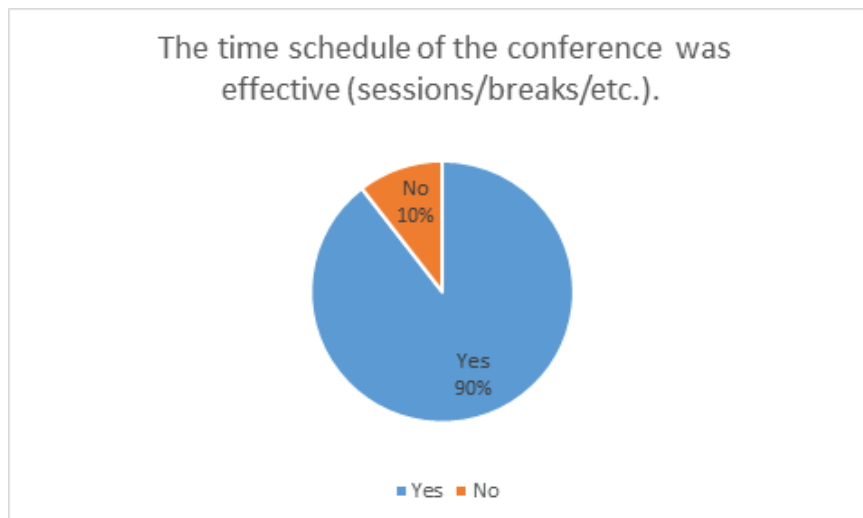


Figure 10

Also, 91% of them stated that the coordination was effective (Figure 11).

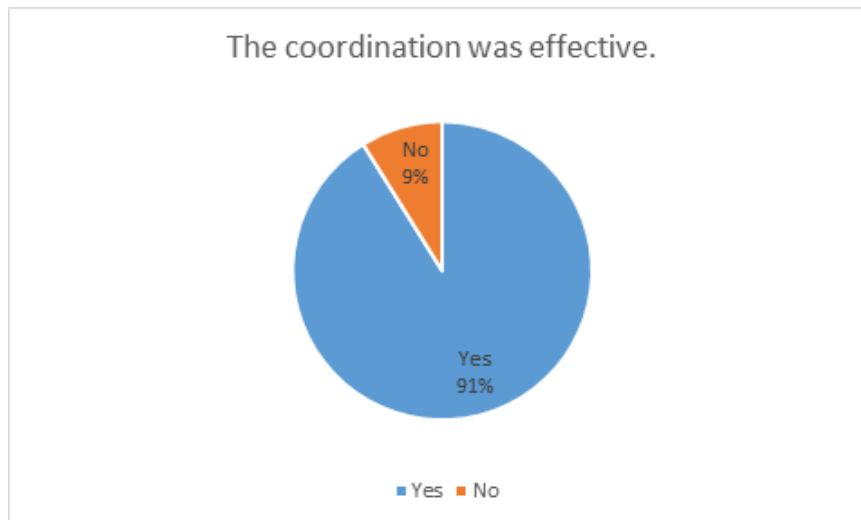


Figure 11

Moreover, 95% of the participants considered that the technical equipment used for the conference was sufficient and effective (Figure 12).

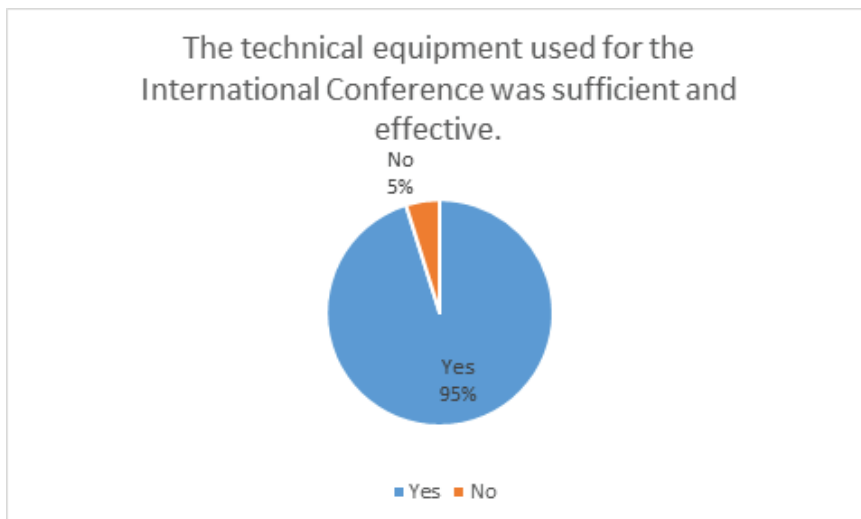


Figure 12

Besides, almost all participants (98%) appreciated the combination of local and international speakers at the conference (Figure 13).

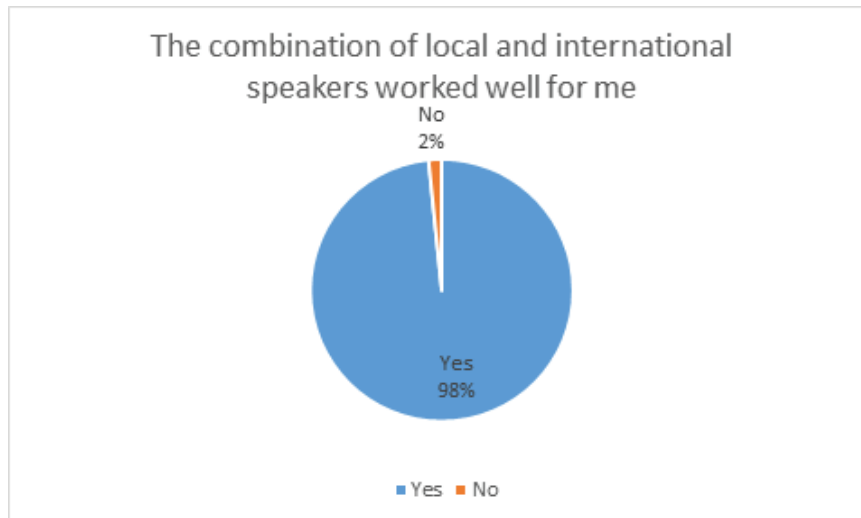


Figure 13

Finally, almost all participants (98%) agreed that the overall organisation of the international conference was effective (Figure 14).

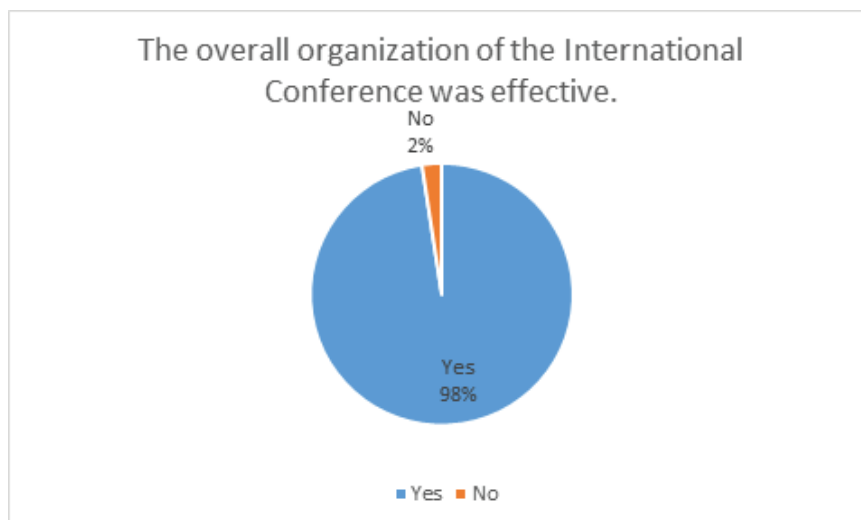


Figure 14



# REPORT ON THE CLOSING CONFERENCE IN LONDON

The IARS International Institute was proud to announce the conclusions of its two-year Erasmus+ funded LGBTQ+- led 'Epsilon' programme. Its final results were presented and debated at the Annual International conference titled *EUROPEAN COMMUNITY VOICES STRONGER TOGETHER: ABUSED AND STIGMATISED NO MORE* on 12th July at Middle Temple, Middle Temple Lane, London EC4Y 9AT.

The conference aimed to present evidence of existing gaps in service provision for LGBTQ+ migrants and those working with this particularly marginalised group. Furthermore, the conference provided decision-makers, researchers, scholars, and communities with a platform to discuss some of the biggest social policy challenges facing Britain and Europe, to exchange policy ideas, and provide evidence-based solutions.

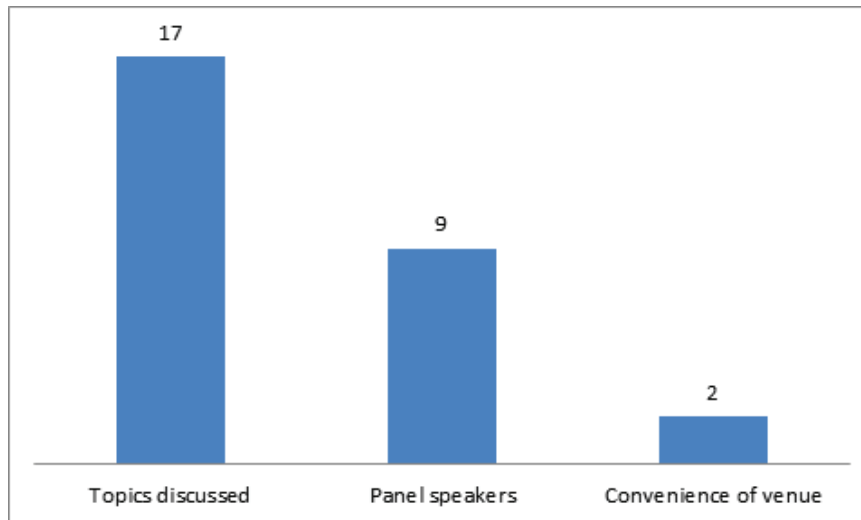
Middle Temple welcomed participants from around Europe to the conference, and Leila Zadeh and Dr Jason Schaub opened the day's programme with keynote speeches on the challenges faced by those seeking asylum in the UK and Europe. A panel discussion on Epsilon's activities around Europe shed light on the project's findings and recommendations to improve support for LGBTQ+ migrants and refugees and to provide adequate legal resources to those seeking asylum.

As the day progressed, we heard speakers Jakub Niewiński, Allan Briddock and Bartosz Kotylak deliver workshops on the intricacies of European law and LGBTQ+ rights. IARS' own Emily Lanham and Maija Linnala provided an in-depth look into the importance of public legal education and the Epsilon project's recommendations. Jonathan Mastellari, Dr Antonia Torrens and Dr Simon Aulton shed light on the user-led methodology and good practices in Greece, Cyprus and other European countries in supporting vulnerable asylum-seekers.

## Conference Evaluation

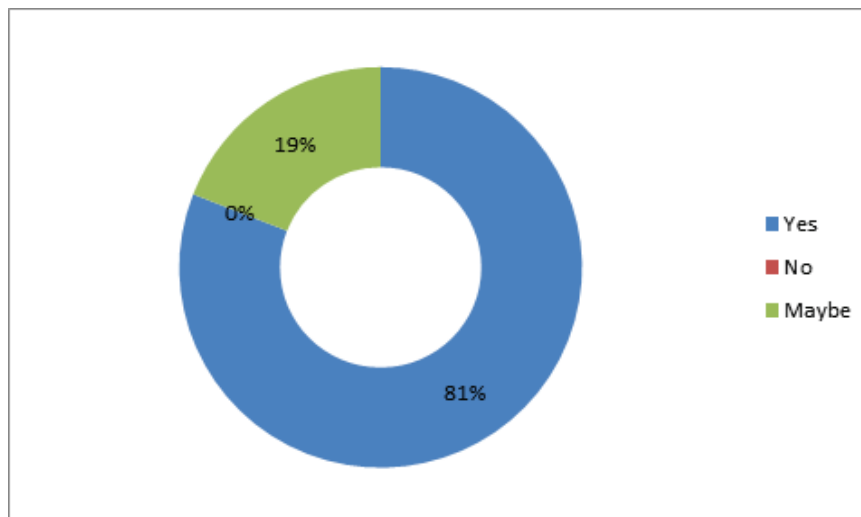
After the conference, participants filled out evaluation forms to feed back on the quality of the conference in terms of the content, impact, learning outcomes, booking and venue experiences. Overall, the conference very positively reviewed and received. In particular, the learning outcomes, the topics discussed and the venue were ranked high by all participants.

**Figure 1.** What attracted you to attend the conference?



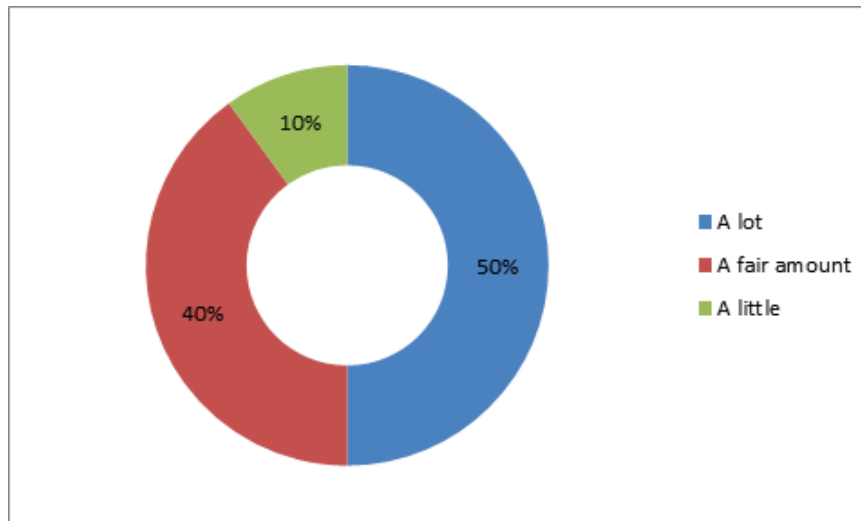
As demonstrated by figure 1, the majority of the participants were most attracted to attend the conference as a result of the topics discussed and the panel speakers. Some participants also attended due to the convenience of the venue.

**Figure 2.** Will you apply anything you learnt today in your future practice?



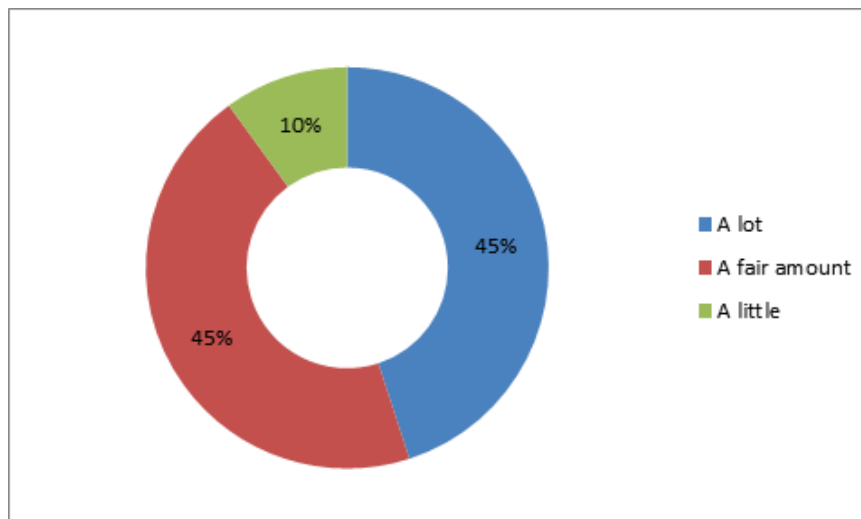
In regards to the learning outcomes, 81 per cent of the participants would apply the learning from the conference in their future practices. The rest of the participants are likely to do so.

**Figure 3a.** To what extent do you think this event has improved your knowledge about the topic discussed?



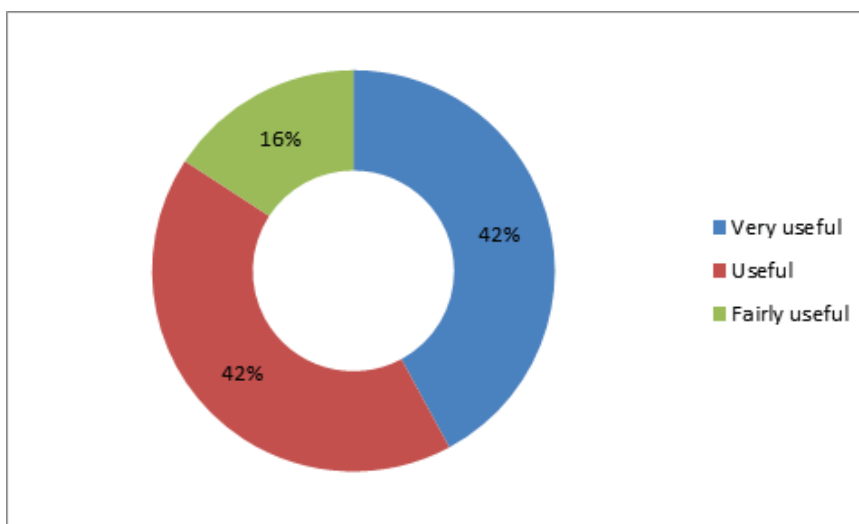
As shown by figure 3a, half of the participants thought that the conference has improved their knowledge a lot on LGBT migration and issues around the topic. Similarly, 40 per cent of the participants felt that the conference has improved their knowledge a fair amount.

**Figure 3b.** To what extent do you think this event has enhanced your knowledge around cross sector operation?



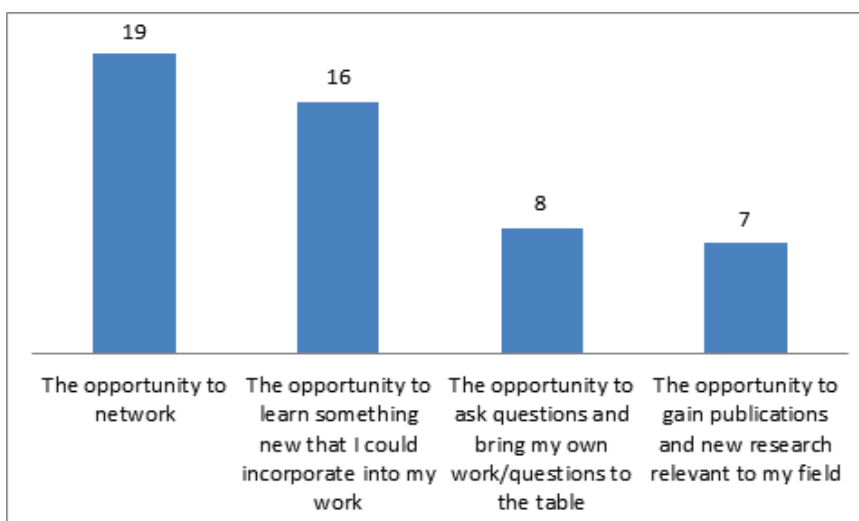
Furthermore, 90 per cent of the participants thought that the conference has enhanced their knowledge on cross sector operation a lot or a fair amount as presented by figure 3b.

**Figure 4.** How useful do you think are the material that you received at this event?



In terms of the usefulness of the material, 42 per cent of the participants considered the material handed out during the conference very useful or useful.

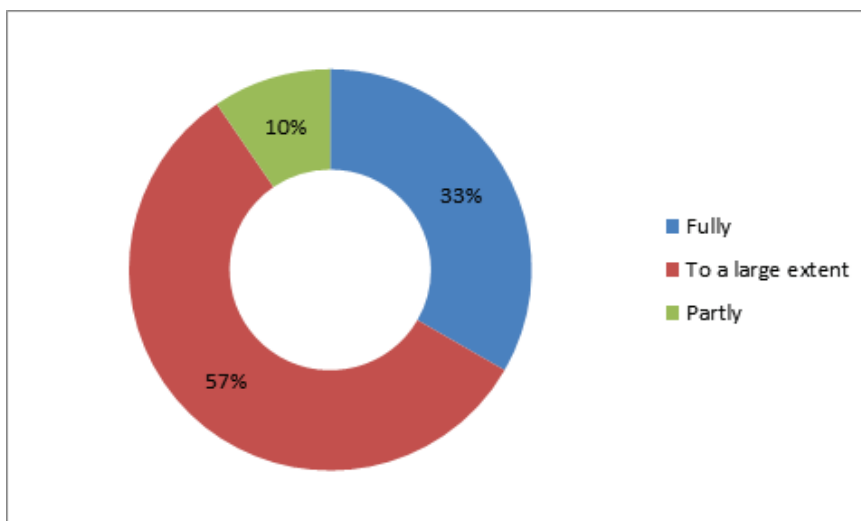
**Figure 5.** What did you hope to get out of attending today's event?



As presented by figure 5, the majority of the participants hoped to have the opportunity to network and to learn something new that could be incorporated in their work as a result of attending the conference.

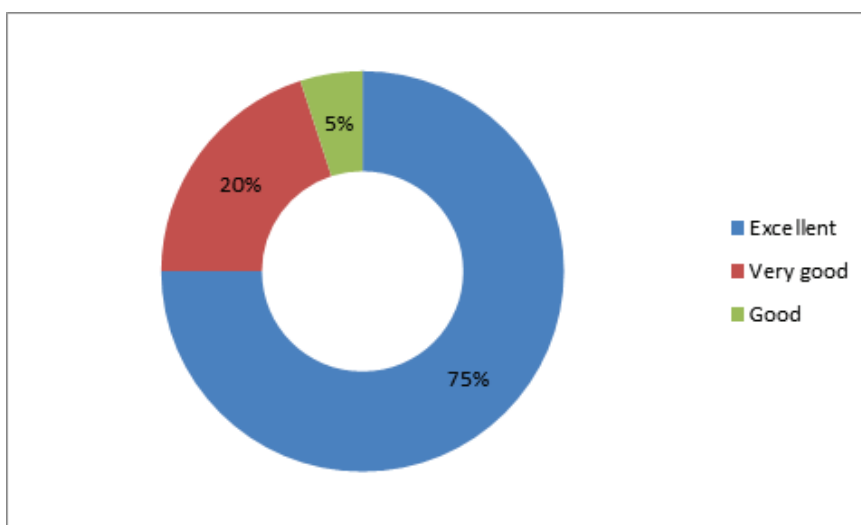


**Figure 6.** To what extent did this event meet your expectations?



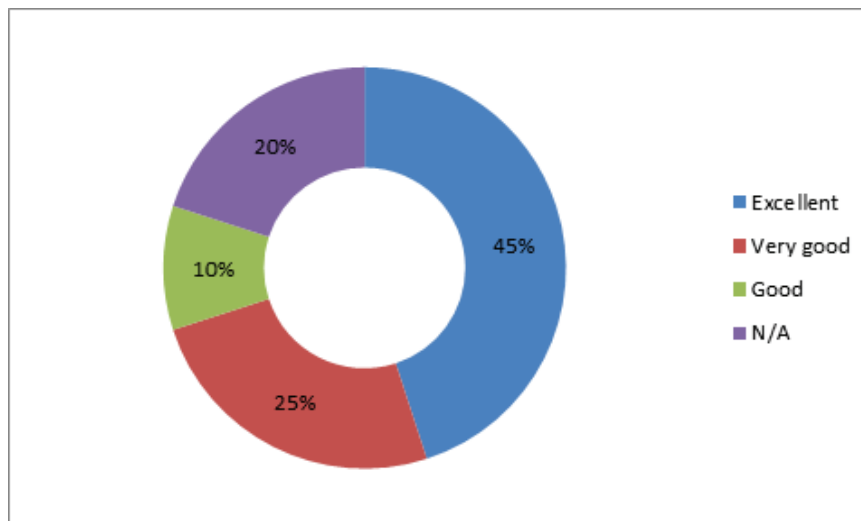
In reference to the conference meeting the expectations, 57 per cent of the participants felt that the conference had met their expectations to a large extent, whereas, a third of the participants felt their expectations had been fully met.

**Figure 7.** How would you rate the venue?



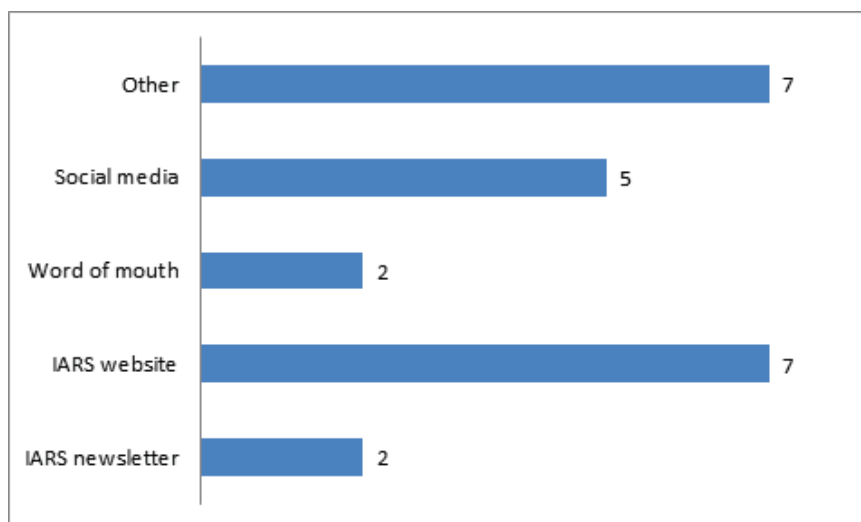
As demonstrated by figure 7, 75 per cent of the participants rated the venue excellent, and 20 per cent rated it very good.

**Figure 8.** How would you rate the event in terms of money?



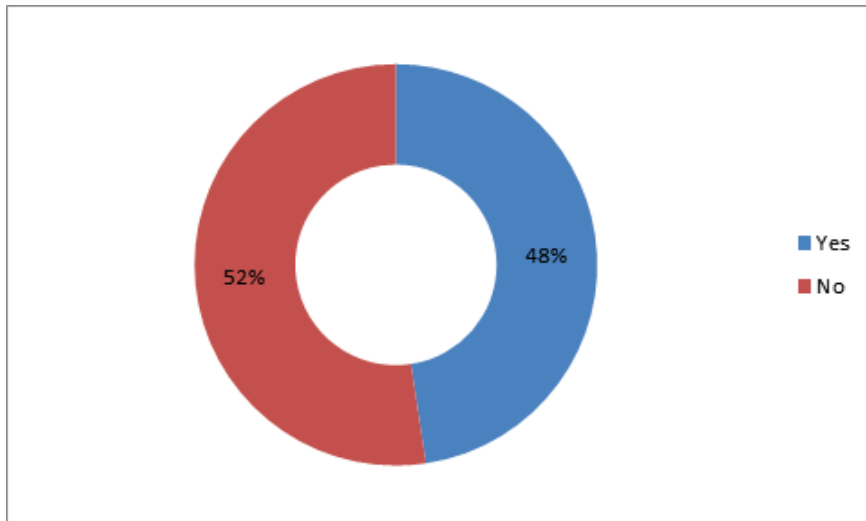
In terms of the value for money, 45 per cent of the participants considered the value excellent, and 25 per cent considered it very good. One fifth of the participants were given bursaries to attend the conference for free of charge, thus they did not answer this question.

**Figure 9.** How did you find out about the event?



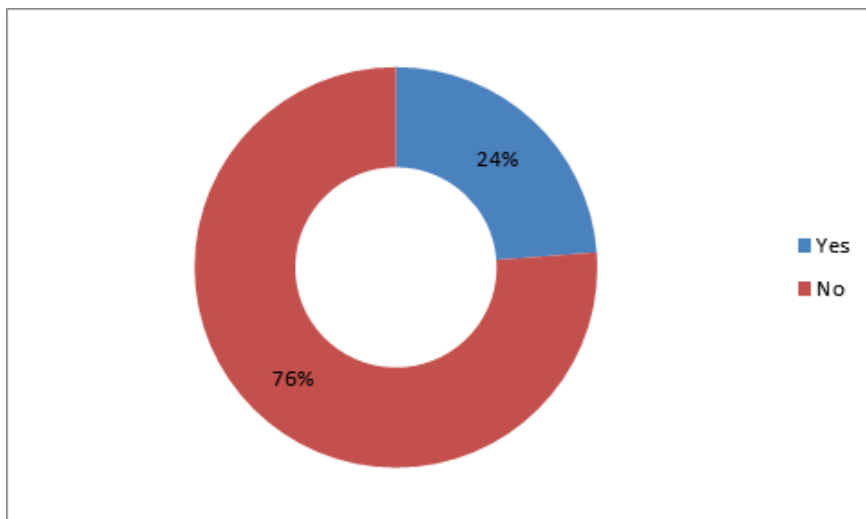
As presented by figure 9, the majority of participants found out about the conference from IARS website and from other avenues. More specifically, participants heard about it the conference from the IARS staff members.

**Figure 10.** Have you attended any previous IARS events?



As displayed by figure 10, just over a half of the participants had never attended an IARS event before, whereas 48 per cent of the participants had attended an IARS event previously.

**Figure 11.** Are you an IARS member?



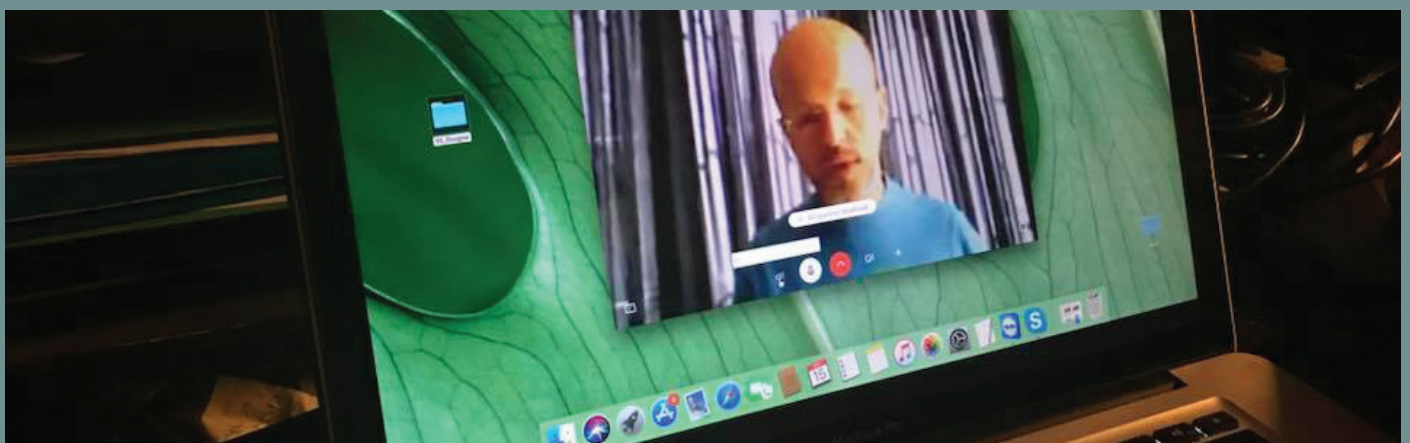
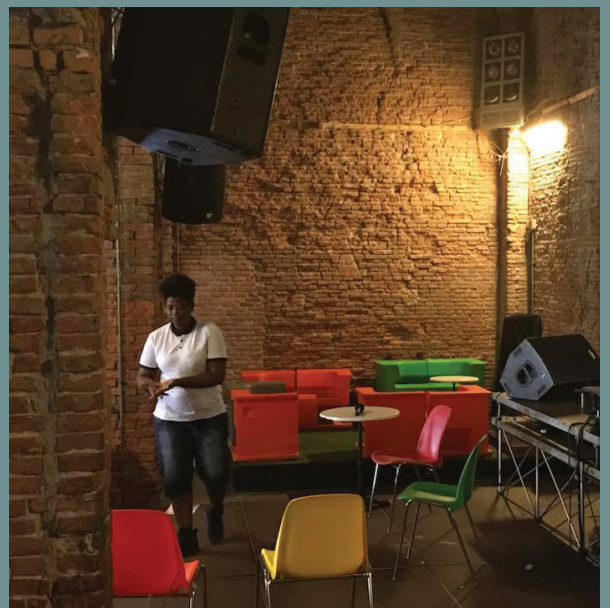
As shown by figure 11, 76 per cent of the participants were not part of the IARS membership scheme. Only 24 per cent are members of the IARS.



**GALLERY**



Supporting and Including LGBTi Migrants: Needs, Experiences and Good Practices International Conference – May 9th, 2017 / Athens



LGBTIQ+ Migrants and Asylum seekers in Italy and best practices to support them - Bologna, 15 June 2018

The “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Migrant: A European story of discrimination and empowerment” was written within the framework of the two-year Erasmus + KA2 European project (2016-2018), with the aim to raise the awareness on LGBT migrant and refugees, one of the most vulnerable groups in modern Europe. Doubtless, there’s an urgent need to address this issue by increasing the knowledge, skills and awareness of all those adult professionals who come in contact with them.

The e-Book brings new and original evidence from the UK, Netherlands, Cyprus, Italy and Greece. Each participating country conducted desk-based research and qualitative fieldwork in their respective locations. This book presents the main findings and recommendations from this research as well as the outcomes from the tools that were developed as a result of the project. This included a face-to-face and online education programme which was piloted in all partner countries and across Europe.

*Violence at the collective and personal level is the key driver that forces these individuals to abandon their homes. While doing so, their basic needs and human rights are compromised. This also includes their dignity and respect, and being free to exercise their sexual orientation, have a partner from the same sex and develop a family life. It also includes exercising this right without being killed, harmed or bullied. However, the reality is somehow different for a considerable proportion of refugees and migrants. Under EU law, individuals persecuted based on their sexual orientation and gender identity qualify for refugee status.*

Dr. Theo Gavrielides, *Epsilon Project Coordinator Founder and Director of the IARS International Institute*

*“In the aftermath of the refugee crisis that Europe is facing, I believe it is essential to have a close look to one of the most vulnerable category, namely LGBT refugees. I decided to participate in the Epsilon project to give my personal contribution in order to better understand the instances and the needs of LGBT refugees, and how we can implement good practices.”*

Epsilon Advisory Board Member

[www.epsilonproject.eu](http://www.epsilonproject.eu)

© IARS Publications, 2018

