



The SOGICA newsletter: Issue 11 (16 September 2019)

Welcome to the [SOGICA project](#) newsletter.

Here is the quarterly update from the SOGICA project team – we hope you find it interesting.

SOGICA publications

We are currently part-way through drafting the SOGICA project book to be published by Springer next year, following our success in the [Annual competitive call for book proposals for the IMISCOE Springer Series](#) (as announced in the last newsletter).

In June, SOGICA submitted [written evidence](#) to the House of Lords EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee inquiry on the implications of Brexit for future UK-EU cooperation in the field of asylum and international protection.

SOGICA also contributed evidence to [UKLGIG's submission](#) to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration inspection of the Home Office's Use of Interpreters (June 2019).

All publications by the SOGICA team and individual members can be found on the [SOGICA website publications page](#).

Future events

On 17 December 2019, Carmelo will be giving a lecture titled 'Vulnerability as a "revolutionary" concept in international and European human rights law for the protection of migrants and refugees?' at the University of Bonn. The lecture is part of a series on [Arriving, Returning, or Modern Nomadism](#).

'Under the European Asylum Rainbow conference II' - Save the date! A follow-up event to the SOGICA conference in July 2019 (see below) is planned for 29 April 2020, again at Frankfurt University (Festsaal, same venue). The conference will be organised by [Dr Mengia H Tschalaer](#), University of Bristol and [Prof Uta Ruppert](#), Frankfurt University, in cooperation with the SOGICA project. The organisers are currently looking for funding for the event – please let us know if you have any ideas with regard to potential funding sources.

Recent events

In September, Carmelo spoke at [50 Years After Stonewall](#) – a conference at the University of Edinburgh – focussing on how a fair asylum system should look like for SOGI claimants in light of the most recent developments in Europe, and Nuno presented on Strasbourg SOGI asylum jurisprudence at the [UACES annual conference](#) in Lisbon.

In August, Nina presented [findings of the SOGICA project](#) at the [14th Conference of the European Sociological Association, Europe and Beyond: Boundaries, Barriers and Belonging](#), Manchester, 21 August 2019.

Thanks to everyone who came to our international conference [Under the European Asylum Rainbow: intersectional queer challenges](#) in Frankfurt, Germany on 4 July 2019 and contributed to making it such a success. The event brought together LGBTQI+ refugees and people seeking asylum, NGO workers, activists, lawyers, researchers, students and other interested parties to discuss the current situation of LGBTQI+ refugees in Germany and across Europe, and to stimulate the exchange of knowledge and experience.

The 120 participants who attended the conference came from different regions in Germany, the UK, Italy and other parts in and outside Europe (such as Thailand). Feedback received indicated that participants particularly appreciated the interactive format and the equal and safe space created, which offered everyone the opportunity to participate in the discussions and share experiences about the challenges faced. Participants also liked the intersectional and comparative approach taken, and hearing experiences about queer asylum in the UK and Italy. It was an interesting, informative and stimulating day that raised important conversations and created new networks and friendships. You can read the full conference report [here](#) and photos from the event are also uploaded on our [website](#).

Please visit the [events page](#) of the website to see what else we have been doing.

New website resources

Earlier this year, the SOGICA project, in collaboration with partner organisations, submitted [Freedom of Information requests](#) about SOGI asylum to the relevant government departments in Germany, Italy and the UK with varying degrees of success. We have now published the requests and responses on our website.

Carmelo has updated the SOGICA project [table of Italian case law](#).

We have added another 85 items to the [SOGICA database](#) since the last newsletter, and many thanks to our intern Melody Greaves for her contribution to this.

We continue to highlight individual narratives of LGBTQI+ people claiming asylum on the [Life Stories](#) section of our home page. We hope this helps us remain aware of the human cost of flawed asylum processes for the people involved. If you are seeking international protection on sexual orientation or gender identity grounds, or have done so, and would like to be involved in SOGICA, feel free to send us a story to be considered for publication on our website. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Marzia Avgeri for accepting our request to publish [her documentary on LGBTQI+ claimants in Greece](#) in this section.

Other news, including from our Project Friends

In September, 28 LGBT+ celebrities and influencers led the campaign [#LendYourVoice](#), sounding the alarm on the dangers faced by LGBTQI+ people in detention centres and asking people to sign an [online petition](#). The campaign follows the UK government's [refusal to end indefinite immigration](#) (see p. 18 of the report), as recommended by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee and [UKLGIG](#) among many others. UKLGIG's Leila Zadeh explained why it's time for a time limit on detention in [The Independent on 13 September](#).

Also in September, Metropolitan Community Church of North London launched a report by Jordan Dyck called [LGBT African Asylum Seeker Research Project Report. The findings of the LGBT African Asylum Seeker Research Project](#). The report is based on conversations with LGBT African people claiming asylum in the UK.

Jonathan Mastellari, founder and President of Intersectionalities and More ([IAM](#)) and SOGICA Project Friend, is taking part in a workshop on the 'Law of Asylum for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' that is part of a conference on the [Vulnerability of human rights in Europe and the Mediterranean](#). The event is organised by the [Centre d'Estudis Jurídics i Formació Especialitzada](#) and takes place on 3 October 2019 in Barcelona.

On 24 October, [Rosa Strippe is holding a symposium](#) in Bochum, Germany, looking at the particular challenges faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) refugees in the asylum process and during accommodation in the country's housing and communities.

[An opinion piece](#) in August by Professor Richard Mole, UCL and SOGICA Project Friend, considers why the asylum process is failing LGBT+ Russians escaping persecution.

Coinciding with British Airway's 100th birthday, Lesbian & Gays Support the Migrants have sent [100 letters](#) to the airline calling on them to stop the forcible deportation of LGBTQI people and others who have claimed asylum.

[Steve Roth has been appointed as the new Executive Director](#) of ORAM, the Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration.

In a Guardian article in July, Leila Zadeh, from UKLGIG, [responded to the judgment](#) that the UK government had wrongly returned a lesbian woman to Uganda where she risked persecution; Leila took part in a [Law Society podcast](#) the following month about asylum for LGBTQI+ people.

A [petition](#) is calling for the Swedish government to act to keep LGBT+ refugees safe. In Germany there is a [campaign](#) to stop the German authorities sending Efe back to Nigeria and a [petition](#) in Bavaria is demanding sheltered accommodation for LGBTIQ* refugees.

Getting involved

Our mailing list continues to grow and if you're reading this then you're probably already a subscriber, but please encourage colleagues and contacts who might be interested to subscribe – it's free and we send updates to subscribers every three months approximately.

Information about getting involved, including how to sign up to receive future newsletters if you are not already on our mailing list, can be found on the [Get Involved](#) section of our website.

If you know of any items that should be included on our website or in our mailings, we would be very grateful if you would send them to us, including resources that might be useful for LGBTQI+ refugees and people seeking asylum. We post regularly on Twitter and Facebook, so please let us know if you have items we should be telling people about in-between newsletter issues. And please feel free to [email us](#) with any questions or suggestions.

We would like to thank everyone who has worked with us over the summer on placements or internships for helping us to hugely expand the project's reach. Thank you Alba, Esra, Federico, Lisa, Marita, Melody, Oscar and Vitor.

The next newsletter will be in December 2019. In the meantime, please feel free to [email us](#) with any questions or suggestions.

Best wishes from [Nuno](#), [Carmelo](#), [Maira](#) and [Nina](#) at SOGICA