



# COI Research Guide on LGBTIQ

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The European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe).

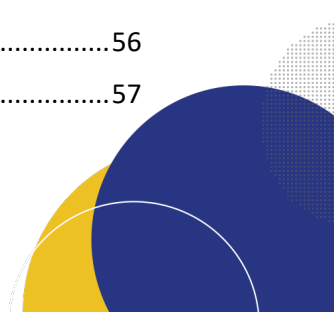
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It must be noted that the review carried out by the mentioned departments, experts or organisations contributes to the overall quality of the guide, but does not necessarily imply their formal endorsement of the final COI Research Guide, which is the full responsibility of EASO.

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# Disclaimer

This COI Research Guide was written according to the EASO COI Report Methodology (2019)<sup>1</sup>. The report is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced.

The information contained in this report has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive.

Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

Neither EASO nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained in this report.

The drafting of this guide was finalised in November 2021. More information on the methodology used for this guide can be found in the [methodology](#) section of the Introduction.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2019 EASO COI Report Methodology can be downloaded from the EASO COI Portal:  
[https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Methodology.pdf](https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019_EASO_COI_Report_Methodology.pdf)



# Glossary and Abbreviations

For a glossary of terms related to LGBTIQ or SOGI, see Chapter 2, [Glossary](#).

ACCORD	Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation
AI	Amnesty International
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
COI	Country of Origin Information
DSD	Disorders of sex development
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
EU+	Norway and Switzerland
FFM	Fact-finding mission
FTM	Female to Male
GIESC	Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IGLHRC	International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission
ILGA	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
LGB	Lesbian, gay, bisexual (persons)
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (persons)
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (persons)
LGBTIQ	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (persons)
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (persons), asexual, with ‘+’ encompassing additional communities
LGR	Legal gender recognition
MS	Member States
MSM	Men who have sex with men
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
ORAM	Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration
RSS	Really simple syndication
SGM	Sexual and gender minorities
SGN	Sexually and gender nonconforming
SOGI	Sexual orientation and gender identity
SOGIESC	Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics



SSRN	Social Science Research Network
STD	Sexually transmitted diseases
ToR	Terms of Reference
USDOS	United States Department of State

# 1. Introduction

In April 2015, EASO published a COI Research Guide on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) persons.<sup>2</sup> It was drafted by COI researchers from Belgium and The Netherlands, and by the NGO Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration (ORAM).

The COI Research Guide focused primarily on sexual orientation (LGB persons) and not on gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (transgender and intersex persons), although the glossary of terms (Chapter 2) and the list of sources (Annex II) also included these two groups. This focus on LGB was motivated by the fact that social conditions for transgender and intersex persons are often different from LGB persons. Also research into gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics might require a different set of research questions which would need some extra preparation.<sup>3</sup> Given the fact that, at that time, EU+ Member States (MS) indicated having just a few applications from transgender and intersex persons and many more on LGB, it was decided to focus on LGB.<sup>4</sup>

## Methodology update Research Guide

Since 2015, more EU+ countries have been indicating an increase in applications from transgender and intersex persons which would justify expansion of the Research Guide to LGBTIQ. Therefore in April 2020, a brief survey was sent out to the EASO Strategic Network (consisting of COI unit managers in the EU+ countries), including the following questions:

1. Which COI challenges do you meet in researching the situation of LGBTI persons? Which topics do you find particularly difficult to research and which ones easy?
2. Which particular regions or countries of origin are especially difficult to research for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)/ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex (LGBTI) issues and on which do you need more detailed information? What are the main challenges in COI research in these countries?
3. Do you use the LGB Research Guide and if so, is the guide useful to meet your challenges? Does the Guide need updating? Does the guide need expanding to include Transgender and Intersex persons?

The responses to the survey indicated a range of COI research challenges in a large number of countries of origin, and showed that the Research Guide was considered useful, especially for starting research into LGB persons. Member states were in favour of an update of the sources and the guide in general, and a majority of the member states supported expansion of the COI Research Guide to include transgender and intersex persons.

Following these outcomes, a working group of COI researchers was formed which updated the list of sources (Annex II) in the first stage. The working group consisted of COI researchers from Denmark, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands, coordinated by EASO. The group worked on the update of Annex II from December 2020 till February 2021. In addition, EASO COI staff updated the relevant content in the six chapters between June and August 2021. The COI Research Guide was reviewed by COI researchers from France and Belgium and an external organisation, the European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe). A final round of

<sup>2</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#)

<sup>3</sup> Bach, Jhana, Assessing transgender asylum claims, Forced Migration Review (FMR), vol.42, April 2013, [url](#). See also Jeffrey O'Malley et al. Sexual and gender minorities and the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDP, 2018, [url](#), pp. 25-27

<sup>4</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#)

consultations was carried out in October 2021, with comments received from ARC, ACCORD, UNHCR, and France.

Sharing knowledge, good practices and useful tools was the reason in 2014 why a guide on COI research into the situation of LGB persons was deemed useful.<sup>5</sup> These reasons are still valid for the current update of the COI Research Guide.

Differences with the 2015 COI Research Guide are: inclusion of gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics; an update of the terminology and glossary; an update of possible research questions to include LGBTIQ persons, and an update of the sources in Annex II. The original standard table of content was deemed unnecessary and skipped.

## Scope and aims of the guide

While sharing many methodological similarities with other types of COI research, reporting on the situation of LGBTIQ persons in countries of origin can be challenging for several reasons, such as variety of search terms, scarce sources, no detailed/specific information. Becoming acquainted with terminology, local contexts and types of sources, understanding relevant research questions and search terms, and obtaining alternative sources of information can better equip a researcher confronted with the difficulties of this topic.

This guide provides background knowledge as well as useful research questions, research tips and tools for researching the situation of LGBTIQ persons in countries of origin. The guide should be read in combination with Annex II, which provides an updated list of sources and their web links.

The guide focuses on researching the situation of LGBTIQ persons in countries of origin. Throughout the guide, the abbreviation LGBTIQ for ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer’ persons and the abbreviation SOGIESC for ‘sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics’ will be used, except when citing other sources that may use different acronyms (such as LGBT, LGBTI, or SOGI).

## Definitions and focus

The recent EU policy strategy<sup>6</sup> refers to sexual and gender minorities as: lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) persons. The EU defines these groups as follows:

‘LGBTIQ people are people:

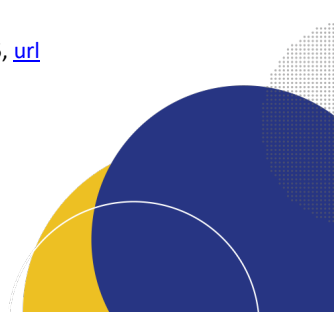
- who are attracted to others of their own gender (lesbian, gay) or any gender (bisexual);
- whose gender identity and/or expression does not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth (trans, non-binary);
- who are born with sex characteristics that do not fit the typical definition of male or female (intersex); and
- whose identity does not fit into a binary classification of sexuality and/or gender (queer).’<sup>7</sup>

In line with the EU strategy, this updated COI Research Guide encompasses all groups mentioned above and abbreviated as LGBTIQ.

<sup>5</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#)

<sup>6</sup> EC, Union of Equality: LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, 12 November 2020, [url](#)

<sup>7</sup> EC, Union of Equality: LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, 12 November 2020, [url](#), p. 3, footnote 2



Other concepts used in reference to LGBTIQ persons are sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), sexual and gender minorities (SGM)<sup>8</sup>, and sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).<sup>9</sup> For terminology and glossary, see [Chapter 2](#).

## Legal background to COI research into LGBTIQ persons

In its 2012 Guidelines<sup>10</sup> on 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, UNHCR specifies the following:

‘An applicant’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity can be relevant to a refugee claim where he or she fears persecutory harm on account of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity, which does not, or is seen not to, conform to prevailing political, cultural or social norms. The intersection of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity is an integral part in the assessment of claims raising questions of sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Harm as a result of not conforming to expected gender roles is often a central element in these claims.’<sup>11</sup>

Article 10 of the European Union (EU) qualification directive reiterates that sexual orientation may be invoked as one of the five existing persecution grounds:

‘Depending on the circumstances in the country of origin, a particular social group might include a group based on a common characteristic of sexual orientation. Sexual orientation cannot be understood to include acts considered to be criminal in accordance with national law of the Member States. Gender related aspects, including gender identity, shall be given due consideration for the purposes of determining membership of a particular social group or identifying a characteristic of such a group.’<sup>12</sup>

The EU Strategy similarly stated: ‘LGBTIQ asylum-seekers are at particular risk of discrimination, exclusion, harassment and violence, including sexual violence, in reception and detention centres, and when being interviewed. They may be deprived of appropriate legal assistance or vital healthcare, such as ongoing hormone treatment.’<sup>13</sup>

## LGBTIQ persons and persecution

LGBTIQ persons may experience persecution and discrimination in different ways, as summarised by UNHCR:<sup>14</sup>

‘Lesbians often suffer multiple discrimination due to their gender, their often inferior social and/or economic status, coupled with their sexual orientation. Lesbians are commonly subjected to harm by non-State actors, including acts such as “corrective” rape, retaliatory

<sup>8</sup> ORAM Refugee, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression: Essential Terminology for the Humanitarian Sector, n.d., [url](#). See also ORAM Refugee, ORAM SOGIE toolkit, 5 May 2017, [url](#)

<sup>9</sup> ILGA, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Programme, n.d., [2020], [url](#)

<sup>10</sup> During a roundtable in 2021, UNHCR was recommended to update the guidelines to ensure asylum procedures are sensitive to the heterogeneity, rights and needs of SOGIESC applicants for international protection. UNHCR/IE SOGI, 2021 Global roundtable on protection and solutions for LGBTIQ+ people in forced displacement, 7-29 June 2021, online, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>12</sup> EU, Directive No 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, 13 December 2011, [url](#), p. 16

<sup>13</sup> EC, Union of Equality: LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, 12 November 2020, [url](#), p. 20. See also UNHCR, Protecting persons with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities, A Global Report on UNHCR’s Efforts to Protect Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Asylum-Seekers and Refugees, December 2015, [url](#)

<sup>14</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), pp. 4-5

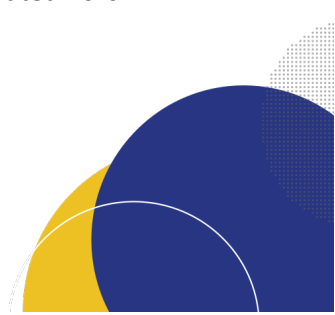
violence by former partners or husbands, forced marriage, and crimes committed in the name of “honour” by family members. Some lesbian refugee applicants have not had any experiences of past persecution; for example, if they have had few or no lesbian relationships. Lesbians may have had heterosexual relationships, often, but not necessarily, because of social pressures to marry and bear children. They may only later in life enter into a lesbian relationship or identify as lesbian.’

‘Gay men numerically dominate sexual orientation and gender identity refugee claims, yet their claims should not be taken as a “template” for other cases on sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Gay men are often more visible than other LGBTI groups in public life in many societies and can become the focus of negative political campaigns. It is important, however, to avoid assumptions that all gay men are public about their sexuality or that all gay men are effeminate. Having defied masculine privilege by adopting roles and characteristics viewed as “feminine”, gay men may be viewed as “traitors”, whether they are effeminate or not. They could be at particular risk of abuse in prisons, the military and other traditionally male dominated environments and job sites. Some gay men may also have had heterosexual relationships because of societal pressures, including to marry and/or have children.’

‘Bisexual describes an individual who is physically, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to both men and women. The term bisexuality tends to be interpreted and applied inconsistently, often with a too narrow understanding. Bisexuality does not have to involve attraction to both sexes at the same time, nor does it have to involve equal attraction to or [a] number of relationships with both sexes. Bisexuality is a unique identity, which requires an examination in its own right. In some countries persecution may be directed expressly at gay or lesbian conduct, but nevertheless encompass acts of individuals who identify as bisexual. Bisexuals often describe their sexual orientation as “fluid” or “flexible”.’

‘Transgender describes people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the biological sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender is a gender identity, not a sexual orientation and a transgender individual may be heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual. Transgender individuals dress or act in ways that are often different from what is generally expected by society on the basis of their sex assigned at birth. Also, they may not appear or act in these ways at all times. [...] Not fitting within accepted binary perceptions of being male and female, they may be perceived as threatening social norms and values. This non-conformity exposes them to risk of harm. Transgender individuals are often highly marginalized and their claims may reveal experiences of severe physical, psychological and/or sexual violence. When their self-identification and physical appearance do not match the legal sex on official documentation and identity documents, transgender people are at particular risk.’

‘The term intersex or “disorders of sex development” (DSD) refers to a condition in which an individual is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or chromosome patterns that do not seem to fit typical biological notions of being male or female. These conditions may be apparent at birth, may appear at puberty, or may be discovered only during a medical examination. [...] An intersex person may identify as male or female, while their sexual orientation may be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or heterosexual. Intersex persons may be subjected to persecution in ways that relate to their atypical anatomy. They may face discrimination and abuse for having a physical disability or medical condition, or for non-conformity with expected bodily appearances of females and males. Some intersex children are not registered at birth by the authorities, which can result in a range of associated risks



and denial of their human rights. In some countries, being intersex can be seen as something evil or part of witchcraft and can result in a whole family being targeted for abuse.’<sup>15</sup>

## The need for COI

As people from various countries lodge applications for international protection based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and/or sex characteristics, there is a growing need for information on the situation of LGBTIQ persons in their respective countries of origin. This need has been confirmed by the European Parliament (EP) resolution of 4 February 2014 on the ‘EU roadmap against homophobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity’. In this roadmap, the EU called on asylum authorities to ensure that ‘the legal and social situation of LGBTI persons in countries of origin is documented systematically and that such information is made available to asylum decision-makers as part of COI’.<sup>16</sup> In its resolution of 14 February 2019, the EP stressed the need ‘to carry out research concerning intersex people, taking a sociological and human rights perspective rather than a medical one.’<sup>17</sup>

However, as UNHCR noted,

‘Relevant and specific country of origin information on the situation and treatment of LGBTI individuals is often lacking. This should not automatically lead to the conclusion that the applicant’s claim is unfounded or that there is no persecution of LGBTI individuals in that country. The extent to which international organizations and other groups are able to monitor and document abuses against LGBTI individuals remain limited in many countries. Increased activism has often been met with attacks on human rights defenders, which impede their ability to document violations. Stigma attached to issues surrounding sexual orientation and/or gender identity also contributes to incidents going unreported. Information can be especially scarce for certain groups, in particular bisexual, lesbian, transgender and intersex people.’<sup>18</sup>

UNHCR added: ‘Where there is a lack of country of origin information, the decision maker will have to rely on the applicant’s statements alone.’<sup>19</sup>

In the following section, such COI research challenges will be further discussed, based on EASO’s April 2020 survey.

## COI Research challenges

Over the past few decades, attitudes toward LGBTIQ have significantly changed in many parts of the world. LGBTIQ have advocated and obtained recognition of their human rights, such as the right to non-discrimination and the right to private and family life.<sup>20</sup> However, some countries have faced a rise in homophobia and others have failed to decriminalise or have further criminalised sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.<sup>21</sup> It is in this context that some LGBTIQ persons

<sup>15</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), pp. 4-5

<sup>16</sup> EP, European Parliament resolution of 4 February 2014 on the Roadmap against homophobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (P7\_TA(2014)0062), 4 February 2014, [url](#)

<sup>17</sup> EP, European Parliament resolution of 14 February 2019 on the rights of intersex people, 2018/2878(RSP), 14 February 2019, [url](#)

<sup>18</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), p. 17

<sup>19</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), p. 17

<sup>20</sup> EC, Union of Equality: LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, 12 November 2020, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>21</sup> ILGA, State-Sponsored Homophobia, 2020, 15 December 2020, [url](#)

flee their countries of origin and apply for international protection in EU+ countries on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and/or sex characteristics (SOGIESC).<sup>22</sup>

EASO's April 2020 survey on challenges and COI needs showed several challenges in researching the situation of LGBTIQ persons in countries of origin:

## Terminology

The terminology to categorise LGBTIQ persons is varying across sources and countries. LGBT, sexual minorities, SOGI, sexual and gender minorities, homosexuality, men who have sex with men (MSM) are examples of terminology used in different sources. A broad concept as LGBTIQ, often used in international publications, may in reality not refer to all groups covered in this concept but refer only to some categories such as gay men and lesbian women.

It is therefore important to grasp the terminology used in various countries to refer to LGBTIQ people and different populations under the 'LGBTIQ umbrella'.

COI research can be impacted by a researcher's cultural background, bias or taboos. Also, the researcher may apply 'western-based' categories to different cultural settings (e.g. 'third gender' in Asia). Therefore, cultural variations in use of LGBTI terminology/local vocabulary and the expressions of sexual orientation and gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics should be taken into account in order to conduct research in an effective and objective manner.<sup>23</sup>

## Finding sources

The survey indicated the challenge of finding reliable, representative and unbiased sources. On some countries, western or western-oriented LGBTIQ organisations publishing in the English language are overrepresented, particularly on countries where local support organisations are unknown or suppressed or represent only a part of the LGBTIQ community, or where SOGIESC is criminalised or repressed. Local NGOs may report mainly on individual examples of discrimination or only in the big cities. Or they report only in the local language which is often inaccessible for the EU+ COI researcher.

In countries where LGBTIQ-support organisations can not freely operate, they may act under the disguise of health or social organisations. However, the survey also noted that non-specialised sources (e.g. general health or rights-based organisations) when interviewed on the situation of LGBTIQ persons by a European COI researcher, sometimes felt pressured to speak out in favour of LGBTIQ persons, in situations where they would prefer a neutral stance for political reasons.

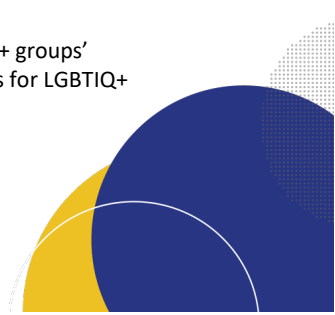
Another challenge noted is how to interview oral sources on sensitive issues such as SOGIESC, without endangering or offending them. Finally, a good practice is to include academic sources such as anthropological studies which may expand the scope of the research.

## Scarce, incomplete, contradictory or general COI

Even if the amount and quality of information on the situation of LGBTIQ in countries of origin has increased since the early 1990s, it often remains scarce, incomplete and general in nature. This poses challenges to COI researchers and ultimately to case workers/decision-makers in the thorough examination of applications for international protection.

<sup>22</sup> EC, Union of Equality: LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, 12 November 2020, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>23</sup> See also a recommendation to UNHCR to 'adopting a culturally sensitive approach, relying on local LGBTIQ+ groups' expertise, data collection and research'. UNHCR/IE SOGI, 2021 Global roundtable on protection and solutions for LGBTIQ+ people in forced displacement, 7-29 June 2021, online, [url](#), p. 12





The situation of LGBTIQ people in some countries may be poorly documented for various reasons. The social taboo associated with this group, and/or the state policy, may lead to (self- or state) censorship and leave many incidents of persecution or human rights violations against LGBTIQ people unreported; the capacity of international and local groups to monitor and document abuse is limited in many countries. Information provided by sources can be biased, sensational or contradictory.

While sources may use a broad definition of LGBT/LGBTI/LGBTIQ persons or SOGI/SOGIESC, their information does not always refer to all persons covered by this definition, but may be limited to the situation of only one group, most often gay men. It is often more difficult to find specific information in public sources on lesbian, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer persons.<sup>24</sup>

The survey indicated that COI sources sometimes generalise the situation in a certain country without giving specific examples or providing statistical data. Finding reliable information on areas outside the capital or other big cities may be difficult, as well as information on the treatment (abuses and violations) of persons from the LGBTIQ community by society and family. Documenting state persecution – when prosecution is rare or when it is hidden in vague charges – can also be difficult. Also gathering information on whether a law, which may be discriminatory against LGBTIQ persons, is applied in practice (including charges, trials and convictions) may be challenging.

Additionally, COI tends to focus on the situation of LGBTIQ people in general. Yet this can be heavily influenced by individual factors and intersecting identities such as gender, disability, socioeconomic status, religion, geography, social network, attitude of the family and (non)conformity<sup>25</sup> to the prevailing norms.<sup>26</sup> These factors may not always be covered by general reports on LGBTIQ persons. COI research should focus as much as possible on the specific situation of the applicant's identity. The researcher should be conscious of both how individual circumstances of the applicant can vary, as well as how broader elements found in general information can be relevant for more than one group. For example, male-to-male same sex activity may be seen or treated differently under the law and by society than female-to-female same sex activity.

The survey also noted that in countries where a conflict is going on, relevant incidents of violence against LGBTIQ persons are not always registered as such; also the reason for the violent assault may be blurred in the violent context of the conflict.

In light of the above challenges, the COI researcher may be confronted with a lack of information or lack of specific elements on the situation of LGBTIQ persons. However, scarcity or absence of information does not automatically mean that their situation is not problematic.

## Target groups and use of the guide

The guide should serve the needs of both experienced and inexperienced COI researchers<sup>27</sup>, as well as caseworkers conducting COI research on the situation of LGBTIQ people. Additionally, it may assist lawyers, legal aid providers and judges working in the asylum procedure.

<sup>24</sup> Kempen, W. van, and Ortiz, A., Transcript from the margins, September 2021, [url](#), pp. 10-11. See also UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), p. 6; EC, Legal gender recognition in the EU, June 2020, [url](#); OII, OII Intersex network [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>25</sup> Non-conformity means: Failure or refusal to conform to a prevailing rule or practice. See: [url](#)

<sup>26</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#)

<sup>27</sup> In the guide, the terms 'COI researcher' or 'COI specialist' will be used to refer to a person who provides COI services to support asylum practitioners. COI researchers collect, select and validate COI and often draft COI products. They also conduct research into COI-related matters in order to check facts, events or situations and to build up knowledge on a particular country. See also EASO, COI Report Methodology, 2019, [url](#)

The guide should be consulted in conjunction with EASO's 2019 Country of Origin Information Report Methodology<sup>28</sup> which provides the general framework for COI methodology and quality standards.

## Structure and content of the COI Research Guide

Chapter 2 discusses terminology in more detail and provides a glossary of the most occurring terms.

Chapter 3 provides a set of research questions.

Chapter 4 gives an overview of types of sources available and provides guidance on information provided by types of sources.

Chapter 5 examines search terms and online research tools and tips.

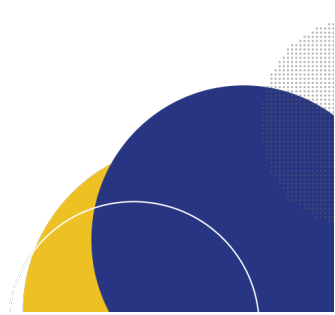
Chapter 6 gives guidance when limited time is available to research the situation of LGBTIQ in a particular country or when limited or no information can be found.

Annex I is a research and quality checklist that summarises the main COI principles and quality standards described in the guide.

Annex II provides a list of sources and their web links. Sources have been divided into 'types' and each source is briefly described.

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<sup>28</sup> EASO, COI Report Methodology, 2019, [url](#)



## 2. Terminology and glossary

### Introduction

As terminology regarding LGBTIQ is so varied and non-standardised, understanding the importance of the use of certain terms is essential when researching and writing about this topic. This will assist COI researchers in identifying search terms when conducting online research. It will also help the researcher in interviewing local oral sources. Knowing which terms to use can make a significant difference to the outcome. We will see in Chapters 4 and 5 the practical bearings of grasping LGBTIQ terminology.

### Basic concepts

Firstly, it is important to become acquainted with the different concepts at stake. Five distinct, yet related, notions can be distinguished, taken together in the acronym SOGIESC (sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression and sex characteristics):<sup>29</sup>

Sexual orientation refers to each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender.

Gender Identity refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.

Gender expression refers to a person's presentation of the person's gender through physical appearance – including dress, hairstyles, accessories, cosmetics – and mannerisms, speech, behavioural patterns, names and personal references. Gender expression may or may not conform to a person's gender identity.<sup>30</sup>

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men.<sup>31</sup>

Sex refers to the biological characteristics used to define humans as female or male. The sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive. A sex marker is the legal sex appearing on identity documents and birth certificates.

Sex characteristics refers to each person's physical features relating to sex, including genitalia and other sexual and reproductive anatomy, chromosomes, hormones, and secondary physical features emerging from puberty.<sup>32</sup>

Secondly, there is no uniform terminology relating to diverse SOGIESC. In the languages of origin of many applicants for international protection, terminology is scarce and general, or may have

<sup>29</sup> CoE, Because words matter, Glossary on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and sex characteristics, n.d., [2020], [url](#). For more information on transgender persons, see EC, Legal gender recognition in the EU, June 2020, [url](#); Kempen, W. van, and Ortiz, A., Transcript from the margins, September 2021, [url](#), pp. 10-11. For more information on persons with intersex condition, see OII, OII Intersex network [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>30</sup> ICJ, The Yogyakarta Principles Plus 10, 10 November 2017, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>31</sup> CoE, Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), ETS 210, 11 May 2011, [url](#), Article 3(c)

<sup>32</sup> ICJ, The Yogyakarta Principles Plus 10, 10 November 2017, [url](#), p. 6

negative connotations. In some cultures, the terminology used does not correspond to the LGBTIQ identities (see the example of Senegal below). In addition, concepts, attitudes and terminology are not static and may change over time.<sup>33</sup>

## Variations in concepts and terms

Concepts and terms regarding diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics vary across (sub-) cultures, countries/regions, and may change over time. Terms can also vary from person to person and even differ in different contexts.<sup>34</sup> Bear in mind that some words considered offensive in some countries/cultural contexts may not be in others. Therefore caution is advised regarding the used terminology, especially when consulting media sources.

The 2015 EASO Research Guide noted:

‘In many languages reference to homosexuality is associated with taboo and/or shame. Generally, the more powerful the taboo, the more scarce the terminology is. Accordingly, in those cultures, widely read newspapers and electronic media in the native language tend to use derogative and non-nuanced terms to describe LGB. Different terms may exist for sexually ‘active’ and ‘passive’ partners in men who have sex with men (MSM). The ‘active’ partner is usually regarded as less ‘negative’ and sometimes not even homosexual whereas the sexually ‘passive’ partner is often seen as more ‘negative’, the ‘real’ homosexual. Where positive, affirmative terms appear, they are far more likely to be found in foreign-language press and more often in electronic media appealing to foreigners, ‘Westernised’ local populations and LGB diaspora communities.’<sup>35</sup>

UNHCR pointed to the fact that ‘not all applicants will self-identify with the LGBTI terminology and constructs as presented above or may be unaware of these labels. Some may only be able to draw upon (derogatory) terms used by the persecutor. [...] men who have sex with men do not always identify as gay.’<sup>36</sup> UNHCR added: ‘It is also important to be clear about the distinction between sexual orientation and gender identity. They are separate concepts and, as explained above at paragraph 8, they present different aspects of the identity of each person.’<sup>37</sup>

A research project amongst Latin American transgender persons seeking asylum pointed to the fact that COI on the situation of LGBTI persons

‘is scarce and insufficient and mostly addresses the larger LGBTI group in general with little attention to specific subgroups. This situation is likely to be even more pronounced for trans persons, given the late inclusion of gender identity as an asylum motive in the asylum context. The near absence of trans-specificity is exacerbated by the lack of COI that could support such differentiation and specificity.’<sup>38</sup>

The researchers concluded that:

‘the failure to differentiate trans persons from the wider LGB group led to the mistaken projection of anti-discrimination provisions regarding a person’s sexual orientation onto trans persons in the majority of cases. Moreover, the consequences of a lack of trans-specific rights in legislation and provisions in many countries, in particular with respect to

<sup>33</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>34</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 14. See for example ORAM, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression, n.d., [17 April 2016], [url](#)

<sup>35</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>36</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>37</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>38</sup> Kempen, W. van, and Ortiz, A., Transcript from the margins, September 2021, [url](#), p. 11

legal gender recognition and the incarceration of trans women with men, was not taken into account.’<sup>39</sup>

ORAM, indicating that ‘one’s choice of SOGI terminology is a strong indication of one’s background, perspective and identity’ provided the following ‘Contextual examples of SOGI terminology usage in five languages’:

‘English: Someone from the West might comfortably self-identify as gay, while another might use the same word derisively.

French: In some parts of the Western Francophone world, sexually and gender diverse individuals are reclaiming the term *pédé*, a derogatory word for gay, and using it as a positive self-identifying term. A self-identifying gay man from France may proudly refer to himself as *pédé* as a means of appropriating the term as positive.

Turkish: A Turkish man who identifies as gay may refer to himself as *nonoş*, a purely derogatory term, to combat the expression’s derisive nature. Like members of the Western LGBTI communities appropriated the once negative term queer, some members of Turkish LGBTI communities refer to themselves using pejorative terms.

Farsi: An Iranian man who identifies as gay may refer to himself as *ham.jens.bahz* (همجنسباز), a derogatory Farsi term used to describe men who are perceived to be effeminate and/or to have sexual or romantic relationships with other men. Within his social circle in Iran, this man may never have been exposed to any respectful terminology regarding his self-identity.

Arabic: A Syrian man may refer to himself as *shaz* (شاذ), a derogatory Arabic word literally meaning abnormal reflecting the understanding of homosexuality he acquired in Syria. Like the Iranian man described above, the Syrian man may in fact identify as gay even though he uses self-deprecating terminology.’<sup>40</sup>

The EASO 2015 Research Guide provided the following examples of ‘disparate, complex and distinct uses of terminology’ – most examples refer to terminology of gay men:<sup>41</sup>

The standard Arabic word for gay is *mithli* (*mithlyy*), meaning ‘the same’.<sup>42</sup> Since the end of the 20th century, the positive term *junusiya misliya* (‘the Arabic equivalent of the word homosexuality’) has been used by some academics and journalists. The website Mdc provides also Arabic words for bisexuality, sexual orientation, gender orientation, intersexuality and several more.<sup>43</sup>

According to the Arabic translator of the magazine Bint en Nas: ‘The known expressions in formal or classical Arabic are negative and degrading: *shouzouz jinsi* (unnatural or abnormal sexuality), *loowat* (the homosexual act among men, in reference to the story of Prophet Lot in the Bible or Lut in the Koran), and *sihaq* (the homosexual act among women).’<sup>44</sup> The derogative *LuuTii* or *Luti* (referring to the Biblical/Koranic story of Lot) is often used in common speech, according to a source. ‘In Arabic, *sadj*, meaning peculiar, is now a common label for a homosexual person. *Shudhudh jinsi*, which means sexual perversion, became shorthand for homosexuality.’<sup>45</sup> The word gay is also translated as *shaath* (شاذ), literally meaning deviant, or ‘pervert’.<sup>46</sup> ‘Local dialects have many different words that

<sup>39</sup> Kempen, W. van, and Ortiz, A., Transcript from the margins, September 2021, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>40</sup> ORAM, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression:, n.d., [17 April 2016], [url](#), p. 9

<sup>41</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>42</sup> Ganly, Katharine, Arab world: Trouble for gay travels in the Muslim world [Blog], posted on 15 July 2009, [url](#)

<sup>43</sup> Mcd (Moscas de Colores), Gay Dictionary, Arabic, Junusiya Misliya, n.d., [url](#). See also Bint el Nas, Glossary of Arabic terms, July 2003, [url](#)

<sup>44</sup> Bint el Nas, Glossary of Arabic terms, July 2003, [url](#)

<sup>45</sup> Palmer, Bryan, How do you say gay in Arabic?, 16 August 2012, [url](#).

<sup>46</sup> Ganly, Katharine, Arab world: Trouble for gay travels in the Muslim world [Blog], posted on 15 July 2009, [url](#)

are all perceived as quite offensive such as *Zamel* (in Morocco), *Khawell*, *Khaniith*, *Manyak* and *Sjadh*, which are used in common speech but sometimes also in the local press.’<sup>47</sup>

Sources indicate that in Turkey, the term ‘lubunya’ is commonly used by LGBT persons for self-identification.<sup>48</sup>

Mark Canavera, a humanitarian aid worker, activist and writer wrote: ‘In Uganda, self-identifying sexual and gender minorities (including trans, gay, lesbian, some bisexual persons and allies) commonly use the quasi-affectionate Swahili-derived term *kuchu* to describe themselves and one another.’<sup>49</sup>

The EASO 2015 COI Research Guide noted:

‘In Senegal, MSM sometimes use the terms *ibbi* and *yoos* to refer to themselves and one another, where *ibbi* refers to the ‘feminine’ or ‘receptive’ partner and *yoos* refers to the ‘male’ or ‘dominant’ sex partner. Others avoid these stereotyped gender roles altogether. Outsiders do not know or do not use these terms. Instead, they most commonly use the now pejorative *goor jigeen* (literally man-woman) and/or *pédé* (considered by many as derogatory French slang for ‘pederast’) for gay men and gender-nonconforming persons.’<sup>50</sup>

The EASO 2015 COI Research Guide further explained that

‘socio-economic factors, foreign language and access to electronic communication play an important role in the terms a person is likely to use. For example, educated, wealthy, urban, and well-travelled individuals are far more likely to use terms such as ‘gay,’ ‘lesbian’ ‘bisexual’ and ‘transgender’ than their rural, uneducated, poor and untravelled counterparts. This is likely a reflection of a desire to identify with recognised LGB concepts and communities, equivalents of which do not exist in many societies.

In cultures where LGB live in social isolation and deep taboo, they may use many different terms to describe themselves and one another. They may even lack terminology to describe their own sexual orientation or gender identity altogether, especially if they do not have access to foreign-language media. [...] Depending on the level of taboo and/or shame in any given country, LGB may avoid self-identifying terms altogether.’<sup>51</sup>

Elsewhere, in Russia for example, the authorities and the media barely use the taboo word homosexuality in Russian but less explicit formulations such as “non-traditional sexual relationships”<sup>52</sup> or “non-standard sexual orientation”.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>47</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>48</sup> World (The), The secret language of Turkey's LGBT community, 14 January 2015, [url](#); Reuters, For Turkey's LGBT+ community, discrimination said to loom large, 6 July 2021, [url](#)

<sup>49</sup> Canavera Mark, The Kuchu Beehive [Blog], posted on 2 August 2010, [url](#)

<sup>50</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 14. The positive appropriation of a pejorative epithet like the word ‘queer’, ‘faggot’ or ‘pédé’ by its target(s), is debated in academic and non-academic writings in English as ‘linguistic reclamation’ and in French ‘le retournement du stigmaté’. See for example, Wheeler, André, “Why I’m reclaiming the homophobic slur I used to fear” The Guardian, 9 March 2020, [url](#) or Lorriaux, Aude & Pédeau, Marc, “Oui, «PD», c’est homophobe”, Slate, 8 April 2016, [url](#)

<sup>51</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), pp. 14-15. See also ORAM, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression, n.d., [17 April 2016], [url](#)

<sup>52</sup> Article 19, Russia: Federal laws introducing ban of propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships, June 2013, [url](#), Human Rights Watch, No Support Russia’s “Gay Propaganda” Law Imperils LGBT Youth, 11 December 2018, [url](#)

<sup>53</sup> Canada: IRB, Russia: The availability of state protection to homosexuals (January 2002 - July 2004), 22 July 2004, [url](#)

## Glossary

Below, in addition to the [basic concepts](#) explained in this chapter, a glossary of most commonly used SOGIESC- and LGBTIQ-related terms are presented in alphabetical order.<sup>54</sup>

**Bisexual:** A person who is physically, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to men and women (or rather, more than one gender). A bisexual identity does not necessarily equate to equal sexual attraction to both genders.

**Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity and gender expression match the sex assigned at birth and the social expectations related to their gender.

**Gay:** Gay refers to a person who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to people of the same gender. It traditionally refers to men, but other people who are attracted to the same gender or multiple genders may also define themselves as gay.

**Gender:** refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men.

**Gender-based violence:** Violence directed against a person based on the person's gender.

**GIESC:** Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics

**Homophobia:** a matrix of cultural and personal beliefs, opinions, attitudes and aggressive behaviors based on prejudice, disgust, fear and/or hatred directed against homosexual individuals.

**Homosexual:** person who is attracted to people of the same sex/gender.

**Intersex:** Intersex individuals are born with sex characteristics (sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, hormonal structure and/or levels and/or chromosomal patterns) that do not fit the typical definition of male or female. The term “intersex” is an umbrella term for the spectrum of variations of sex characteristics that naturally occur within the human species. Some, but not all, intersex individuals also identify as transgender.<sup>55</sup>

**LGBTI:** An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people.

**LGBTIQA+:** lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (persons), asexual, with ‘+’ encompassing additional communities

**Lesbian:** A woman whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to other women.

**MSM:** An acronym for ‘men who have sex with men’ but do not necessarily identify as gay or bisexual. The term is often used in the health field in general and in HIV/AIDS/STD prevention in particular.

**Non-binary:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity is not encompassed or represented by ‘man’ or ‘woman’. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.<sup>56</sup>

**Non-conformity:** Non-conformity refers to a situation in which one does not follow the norm, when one is perceived as different because of the characteristics one has or is believed to have, by nature,

<sup>54</sup> Based on ILGA, ILGA-Europe glossary, October 2015, [url](#); CoE, Because words matter, Glossary on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and sex characteristics, n.d., [2020], [url](#); EC, Legal gender recognition in the EU, June 2020, [url](#); EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), pp. 15-17; see also ORAM, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression, n.d., [17 April 2016], [url](#)

<sup>55</sup> EC, Legal gender recognition in the EU, June 2020, [url](#). For more information on intersex persons, see: OII, OII Intersex network [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>56</sup> European Commission, Legal gender recognition in the EU, 2020, [url](#), p.vii



choice or experience. In the SOGIESC context, it is when one's behaviour, appearance, identity or experience differs from the gender-based expectations that society has of that person.

**Queer:** A largely academic term that is inclusive of people who are not heterosexual. It includes lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-persons. 'Queer' was formerly used in Anglophone countries to taunt and degrade LGB people, and its use is still considered objectionable by some.

**SGM:** sexual and gender minorities.

**SGN:** An acronym for 'sexually and gender nonconforming'. An umbrella term used to refer to individuals whose sexual practices, attractions, and/or gender identity and expression are different from the societal expectations based on their assigned sex at birth. It is intended to be a broader term than LGBTI. The term was coined to describe sexual and gender minorities in the refugee context, referencing the underlying cause for their persecution and avoiding rigid classifications like LGBTI.

**SOGI:** A generic term referring to sexual orientation and gender identity.

**SOGE:** A generic term referring to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

**Trans or transgender:** An umbrella term for people who have a gender identity that is different to the sex assigned at birth, and for people who wish to portray their gender identity in a different way to the sex assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, gender-queer, gender-fluid, non-binary, crossdresser, trans man, trans woman and several others.

**Trans man:** A term used to describe someone who was (most likely) assigned female at birth but who identifies as a man. Some also will use FTM (an abbreviation for female-to-male), although this term is considered outdated or offensive by some.

**Trans woman:** A term used to describe someone who was (most likely) assigned male at birth but who identifies as a woman. Some also will use MTF (an abbreviation for male-to-female), although this term is considered outdated or offensive by some.

**Transphobia:** Transphobia is a matrix of cultural and personal beliefs, opinions, attitudes and aggressive behaviors based on prejudice, disgust, fear and/or hatred directed against individuals or groups who do not conform to or who transgress societal gender expectations and norms.<sup>57</sup>

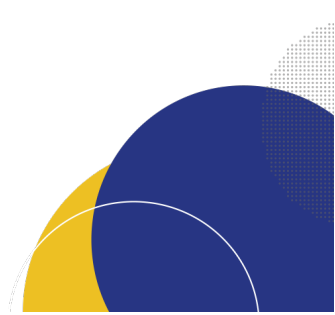
**Transsexual:** an older term that originated in the medical and psychological communities. The term is still preferred by some people who have permanently altered – or seek to alter – their bodies through medical interventions (including but not limited to hormones and/or surgeries). Unlike transgender or trans, transsexual is not an umbrella term.<sup>58</sup>

**Cross-dresser:** Cross-dresser describes a person who regularly, although part-time, wears clothes mostly associated with the opposite gender to her or his birth gender. **Transvestite** is an older term replaced by the term cross-dresser and seen by some people as derogatory term. Only to be used if the person self-identifies as transvestite.

**WSW:** An acronym to refer to 'women who have sex with women' but do not necessarily identify as lesbian or bisexual. The term is often used in the public health context, and in HIV/AIDS/STD prevention in particular.

<sup>57</sup> Transrespect versus Transphobia worldwide, Terminology, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>58</sup> ILGA, ILGA-Europe glossary, October 2015, [url](#)



## 3. Research questions

### Introduction

Not all COI products on the situation of LGBTIQ people take the form of COI reports. Some may consist of brief responses to specific queries, or a chapter in a more general report on a country of origin. Regardless of the form of the COI product, a number of essential topics and research questions can guide the researcher in their work to ensure relevance, balance and comprehensiveness of the final product.

This chapter provides a suggestion for relevant topics for a 'query subject' or for terms of reference (ToR) of a COI product on LGBTIQ. For each topic, research questions are provided to guide the COI specialist in their work. These questions are not exhaustive and some will probably remain unanswered. They should be viewed as examples aiming to guide the researcher rather than as a complete and mandatory list.

### Research topics and COI questions (non-exhaustive)

#### Legal framework

Legal framework	<b>Research topics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Laws specifically concerning LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ Laws specifically concerning same-sex acts, homosexual behaviour and/or same sex relations</li> <li>➤ Laws granting rights (or specifically denying rights) to same-sex couples</li> <li>➤ Laws granting legal recognition of the gender identity of transgender and/or intersex persons</li> <li>➤ Laws protecting LGBTIQ persons against discrimination, harassment, violence, etc.</li> <li>➤ Laws concerning LGBTIQ organisations</li> <li>➤ General anti-discrimination provisions</li> </ul>
	<b>Research questions</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there laws targeting sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics, LGBTIQ persons or organisations?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. What are the provisions, penalties, etc.?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Are there laws targeting same-sex acts/behaviour?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. Is there a difference in the legal consent between heterosexual and homosexual acts?</li> <li>2.2. Does the law differentiate between sexual acts between men and acts between women?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	2.3. Are there specific laws for minors <sup>59</sup> ?
	2.4. Are there any laws prohibiting content that promotes diverse SOGIESC?
	3. Are there laws targeting transgender, transsexual or intersex persons? For example, laws concerning cross-dressing, gender affirming treatment/ surgery, legal gender recognition, specific law for minors, prohibition of content that promotes SOGIESC?
	4. Are legal provisions granting trans and intersex people legal gender recognition (LGR) and gender affirming treatment/surgery available and accessible to these people?
	5. Is the right to change gender legally dependent on compulsory, mutilating and irreversible surgery? Is it based on procedures that can be experienced by trans persons as humiliating (e.g. by medical professionals or judicial officials)? Or is the right to change gender identity legally based on a procedure of self-determination?
	6. Are there laws specifically protecting or granting rights to LGBTIQ persons, such as the right to marry, adopt children, or legal gender recognition, prohibition on intersex genital mutilation, or are there laws that specifically rule this out?
	7. Are there laws targeting LGBTIQ organisations? Or prohibiting health organisations to cater for SOGIESC-related health issues?
	8. Are LGBTIQ persons mentioned in the constitution, or in national anti-discrimination laws?
	9. Do anti-discrimination provisions state that discrimination is prohibited on any ground? Or do such provisions list specific grounds on the basis of which discrimination is prohibited? If so, are sex/gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression included?
	10. Is there a discussion about (further) criminalisation or decriminalisation of SOGIESC?

<sup>59</sup> For more information on LGBT children, see: UNICEF, Position Paper: Eliminating Discrimination Against Children and Parents Based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity, November 2015, [url](#)

## Application of the law

Application of the law	<b>Research topics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Application of the laws specifically concerning LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ Discriminatory application of other laws towards LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ Social impact of laws against LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ State protection for LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ Discussion on criminalisation/decriminalisation of SOGI</li> <li>➤ Chronology of major cases of arrests, prosecution and detention of LGBTIQ persons</li> </ul>
	<b>Research questions</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there cases of persons being arrested, prosecuted and detained, in accordance with the existing anti-LGBTIQ legislation?</li> <li>2. Is the government actively prosecuting LGBTIQ persons and, if so, based on which laws and to what extent? Is appeal possible and, if so, has it been granted? Can the accused benefit from judicial assistance? Give examples.</li> <li>3. Are other laws (concerning, for example, public order, public indecency, the registration of organisations) not specifically mentioning LGBTIQ persons used against them? Is there discrimination towards LGBTIQ persons in the application of other such laws?</li> <li>4. Is the result of the existing laws and/or their application that LGBTIQ do not have access to protection if they are threatened or if they are victims of crime, persecution or discrimination?</li> <li>5. Are there major cases of arrests, prosecution and detention, including arbitrary detentions by the police? When transgender persons are arrested, is their imprisonment based on the sex assigned at birth?</li> <li>6. What recourse is available through the legal system for a person who experiences discrimination, violence or harm because of their LGBTIQ identity? Is it effective in practice? Do police make arrests and do courts issue punishments in such cases?</li> <li>7. In practice, do LGBTIQ persons report/seek/ask for protection by law enforcing agencies and/or the justice system when needed? Are there barriers to reporting?</li> <li>8. Are laws been used to protect the rights of LGBTIQ? Are there cases of complaints introduced by victims of LGBTIQ-phobic violence/ discrimination? Have there been important judgments granting rights to LGBTIQ persons?</li> <li>9. Are there state or NGO services available to specifically support/protect LGBTIQ persons who are victims of crime, including provision of legal aid services, shelters, counselling?</li> </ol> <p>If relevant, specify that a list is never exhaustive and indicate which period it covers; and give examples where relevant.</p>

## Treatment by state actors

Treatment by state actors	<b>Research topics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Treatment of LGBTIQ persons by state officials (other than arrest, prosecution and detention, e.g. access to and treatment in employment, education, health)</li> <li>➤ Political climate toward LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ Restrictions on LGBTIQ organisations</li> <li>➤ Chronology of major incidents against LGBTIQ people involving state actors (e.g. hate speech, instigation to violence, documented abuse)</li> </ul>
	<b>Research questions</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are LGBTIQ persons subjected to discrimination, exclusion, extortion, insults, intimidation, harassment, threats, aggression, violence, blackmail or other actions by the authorities (police, intelligence, state health authorities) and, if so, to what extent?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. Are such incidents registered and reported on? Give examples.</li> <li>1.2. Is any help/support given to victims of LGBTIQ-phobic violence?</li> <li>1.3. When transgender persons are arrested, is their imprisonment based on the sex assigned at birth (considered a violation of their human rights)?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. What is the position of political actors towards LGBTIQ persons?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. Is the subject of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics discussed in politics by national, regional or local leaders? And what is the political discourse on LGBTIQ matters?</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Are there any restrictions regarding the registration and daily activities of LGBTIQ organisations?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. Is there discriminatory application of NGO laws to LGBTIQ organisations?</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Are there major incidents involving state actors (if deemed relevant for the report)?</li> </ol> <p>Specify that a list is never exhaustive and indicate which period it covers, and give examples where relevant.</p>

## Treatment by non-state actors

Treatment by non-state actors	<b>Research topics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Societal attitudes towards LGBTIQ people (e.g. hostile public opinion, violence, public hate speech)</li> <li>➤ The role of religion (or cults, brotherhoods, etc.) and the position of organised religions and religious leaders towards SOGIESC</li> <li>➤ Depiction of SOGIESC and LGBTIQ persons in the media</li> <li>➤ Treatment of LGBTIQ people by fellow citizens and family members</li> <li>➤ Access to healthcare, including in relation to HIV/AIDS and hormone therapy for transgender persons, for LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ The application of 'conversion therapy'</li> <li>➤ Chronology of major incidents against LGBTIQ people involving fellow citizens</li> </ul>
	<b>Research questions</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are societal attitudes in general towards LGBTIQ persons (e.g. hostile public opinion, violence, public hate speech)?</li> <li>2. Are there any international, regional, national or local opinion polls concerning LGBTIQ persons, or SOGIESC? Are the polls indicative of any visible change?</li> <li>3. What is the general role of religion (or cults, brotherhoods, etc.) in the country?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. In what way does it influence the treatment of LGBTIQ persons?</li> <li>3.2. What have local religious leaders said about the subject?</li> <li>3.3. Is there any visible change in religious views or attitudes in the past few years?</li> <li>3.4. Are there religious leaders/people who are in favour of LGBTIQ rights? If so, to what extent and how is this expressed?</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. How are sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics or LGBTIQ persons depicted in the national media?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1. Is there room for the views of LGBTIQ persons or are the views of people who reject diverse SOGIESC or LGBTIQ people predominant in publications?</li> <li>4.2. Are there any people from the LGBTIQ community who function as role models?</li> <li>4.3. Are there openly LGBTIQ characters visible on television, in theatre or in movies?</li> <li>4.4. Are there or have there been specialised periodicals, magazines or websites on SOGIESC or LGBTIQ persons and/or run by LGBTIQ? Give examples.</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. How are LGBTIQ persons treated by other citizens?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1. What is the influence of traditional values on the daily life of LGBTIQ (e.g. are LGBTIQ expected to engage in heterosexual marriages)?</li> <li>5.2. Have there been cases of honour killings, discrimination, (corrective) rape, exclusion, extortion, blackmail, aggression, violence, expulsion, genital mutilations, 'corrective' (forced/coerced) therapy and, if so, to what extent? Are such incidents registered and reported on? Give examples.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<p>5.3. Are there any notable differences in treatment and situation in society between gay, lesbian and bisexual persons?</p> <p>5.4. What is the situation of gender minorities (transgender and intersex people or people with a different gender expression)?</p> <p>5.5. Mention incidents of (mis) treatment by fellow citizens.</p> <p>6. Do LGBTIQ people have access to basic services, such as health care (including in relation to HIV/AIDS and hormone therapy for transgenders), education and employment?</p> <p>6.1. What is the social climate towards, and treatment of, LGBTIQ persons who have HIV/AIDS?</p> <p>Specify that a list is never exhaustive and indicate which period it covers, and give examples where relevant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
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## Social life

Social life	<b>Research topics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ General climate and openness around and towards LGBTIQ people</li> <li>➤ Self-image and self-identification and expression</li> <li>➤ Geographical differences in attitudes and sexual/gender diversity</li> <li>➤ Terminology used to describe LGBTIQ persons</li> <li>➤ LGBTIQ organisations (including possibility to operate openly)</li> <li>➤ Meeting places and events for LGBTIQ persons</li> </ul>
	<b>Research questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a social stigma or taboo concerning diverse SOGIESC or LGBTIQ persons?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there examples of outspoken LGBTIQ persons and, if so, to what extent are they known to the general public? What is the context wherein this person is out in public?</li> <li>○ When looking at the socio-economic context of LGBTI-persons, is there a difference in their situation within the country and/or within the different populations under the 'LGBTIQ umbrella'?</li> <li>○ Is there a geographical divide or difference in approach e.g. an urban/rural divide?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What local terms are used to designate SOGIESC or LGBTIQ persons?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there different terms used for sexually active or passive partners? Who uses those terms? What is their connotation?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are there organisations representing LGBTIQ persons?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are they officially registered and recognised? Are the leaders of those organisations known activists? Are the organisations known to the general public? What about their visibility?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are there local, national, regional or international human rights organisations reporting on the situation of LGBTIQ persons?</li> <li>• What is known of the social life of LGBTIQ persons?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there known meeting places and events, such as demonstrations or parades? Can they meet in public? Are there safe spaces where they can meet such as squares, bars, hotels, beaches?</li> <li>○ Is there information in how far LGBTIQ persons feel they can openly express their sexual orientation and gender identity or expression?</li> <li>○ Do they use social media to meet? Which international, national or local internet sites, including dating sites, are generally used by LGBTIQ persons in the country concerned?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 4. Types of sources

As indicated above, even if the volume and quality of information on the situation of LGBTIQ persons has improved, finding specific and balanced information remains challenging for COI researchers.

Being aware of the range of sources available and resorting to alternative sources and channels of information can greatly contribute to a researcher's capacity to investigate the topic. Knowledge of specific terms - as described in Chapter 2 - can also help to locate more in-depth information while the use of certain online tools can increase efficiency.

This chapter aims to give an overview of the types of sources available, and give guidance on information provided by types of sources.

The chapter does not intend to list and describe sources of information on the situation of LGBTIQ, such a list is provided in Annex II. Therefore the sources cited below should only be regarded as illustrative and this chapter should be read in conjunction with Annex II.

### Variety of sources<sup>60</sup>

As in any other type of research, when reporting on the situation of LGBTIQ persons, a COI researcher should use, as much as possible, a variety of sources (i.e. multiple sources of different types) to ensure that a balanced picture is obtained.

Some sources may have a strong advocacy stance, while others may not be comprehensive or specific enough. As with any other COI research, it is therefore important to include sources within or outside the population concerned.

Below are the types of sources that can be used for COI research on LGBTIQ:

- Governmental bodies
- International non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- International specialised (LGBTIQ) NGOs
- Local NGOs
- United nations (UN) bodies
- EU bodies
- Other regional international bodies
- Academia/research institutes or centres
- Media (general and specific)
- Social sciences journals/medical journals or studies
- COI portals and social media as platforms of sources.

While investigating the conditions of LGBTIQ persons, sources should be assessed in the same way as when conducting any other type of COI research. The researcher should carefully examine the sources taking into account the context in which they operate, as well as their reliability.

For more information on **source selection and validation**, see:

EASO, Country of Origin Information Report Methodology, June 2019,

[https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Methodology.pdf](https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019_EASO_COI_Report_Methodology.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> This section is mainly based on Chapter 4 of the 2015 EASO COI Research Guide and has been slightly adapted.

## Governmental bodies

Many government reports on the human rights situation in countries of origin include a section on the situation of LGBTIQ. Yet in most cases these sections provide rather general information, which may be an informative starting point but should be completed by more specialised sources. The United States Department of State (USDOS, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor), for example, in its annual reports on human rights practices, provides a chapter (section 6) on 'Acts of Violence, Criminalization, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity', and 'HIV and AIDS Social Stigma'.<sup>61</sup>

Other country reports - produced by the COI units of national asylum administrations<sup>62</sup> or by national ministries<sup>63</sup> - often include a section on LGBTIQ in their publications. In addition, some COI national units conduct fact-finding missions (FFMs) in countries of origin. Some of these missions may include, in their terms of reference, the situation of LGBTIQ people or are entirely focused on this topic (see the section on [FFMs](#)).

## International NGOs

Some international NGOs have expanded their mandates to include the protection of LGBTIQ persons. Organisations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) or Amnesty International (AI), while not specialised in SOGIESC issues, provide in some way or another (reports, news, videos, etc.), information on the conditions of LGBTIQ people in countries of origin. HRW has a specific 'LGBT rights programme' and has developed a specific webpage on LGBT rights<sup>64</sup> where one can access news releases, reports and commentaries, and subscribe to RSS feeds. Amnesty International publishes research reports on the situation of LGBTIQ and has a specific page devoted to sexual and reproductive rights.<sup>65</sup>

## International specialised NGOs

Other sources have specialised in providing specific information on SOGIESC and/or LGBTIQ. Unlike the non-specialised sources, these tend to monitor on a regular basis the situation of LGBTIQ persons in countries of origin. They often benefit from a network of local contacts that assists them in gathering information.<sup>66</sup>

For instance, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA World), is an umbrella organisation of more than 1 700 member organisations from 160 countries and territories<sup>67</sup>, campaigning for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex rights. ILGA World publishes an annual report (State Sponsored Homophobia Report, available in several languages) which constitutes a world survey of laws prohibiting same-sex activity between consenting adults.<sup>68</sup> ILGA World also publishes an annual Trans Legal Mapping Report on 'the impact of laws and policies on trans persons in 143 UN member States'.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>61</sup> For example, US, USDOS, 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 30 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>62</sup> For example, Belgium, CGRA (Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons), COI reports, n.d., [url](#); France, OFPRA (Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons), Les publications de l'Ofpra, n.d., [url](#); DIS (Danish Immigration Service), Country reports, n.d., [url](#); UK Home Office, Country policy and information notes, Last updated 14 May 2021, [url](#); please note these CPINs also contain assessment/guidance by a national asylum administration and only the separate COI sections can be considered a COI source.

<sup>63</sup> For example, The Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Documenten, n.d., [url](#) (search for: Ambsbericht);

<sup>64</sup> HRW, LGBT Rights, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>65</sup> AI, Sexual and Reproductive rights, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>66</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 25

<sup>67</sup> ILGA, World member organisations, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>68</sup> ILGA, State sponsored homophobia report, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>69</sup> ILGA World, Trans Legal Mapping Report 2019, September 2020, [url](#)

The ILGA World website<sup>70</sup> also provides (amongst others) press releases on topics and countries of origin, annual reports on laws on trans persons and maps on sexual orientation laws around the world.

The regions of ILGA World are Pan Africa ILGA, ILGA Asia<sup>71</sup>, ILGA-Europe<sup>72</sup>, ILGA Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)<sup>73</sup>, ILGA North America and the Caribbean<sup>74</sup>, and ILGA Oceania (Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and Pacific islands)<sup>75</sup>. Regional organisations are formed by ILGA World members within each region and registered as an independent legal entity. These regional organisations publish country specific, thematic or general regional reports on the situation of LGBTIQ people.

For instance, ILGA-Europe developed Rainbow Europe.<sup>76</sup> Rainbow Europe is ILGA-Europe's annual benchmarking tool, which ranks 49 countries in Europe on their LGBTI equality laws and policies.<sup>77</sup> In addition, ILGA-Europe has an annual publication documenting legal, political and social developments in 54 countries. It is a report tracking key positive and negative developments in relation to LGBTIQ equality and human rights in Europe and Central Asia.<sup>78</sup>

Outrights Action International, previously called the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) is an international organisation dedicated to 'research, document, defend, and advance human rights for LGBTIQ people around the world'.<sup>79</sup> It also provides information and research reports by country, and the so-called 'Shadow Reports' on the situation of LGBTIQ people.<sup>80</sup> These reports are submitted to committees of independent experts reporting, at the UN level, on governments' human rights obligations in order to counterbalance official government reports. For more information on the UN as a source of information, refer to the section below on [UN bodies](#).

ORAM Refugees (Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration) is an international organisation which 'protects and empowers LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees globally, creating sustainable and systemic change.'<sup>81</sup> ORAM produces COI reports including information on legal and protection environments as well as relevant information on factors including family structure, socioeconomic conditions and religion. In 2016 ORAM launched a toolkit containing a terminology dictionary in five different languages.<sup>82</sup>

Specialised NGOs specifically focusing on one group of sexual minority or gender identity or expression are, for example, Transgender Europe<sup>83</sup>, Female to Male (FTM) International<sup>84</sup>, and OII Intersex Network.<sup>85</sup>

A COI researcher may also consider consulting organisations focusing on health issues and legal rights which may provide useful COI on LGBTIQ. See Annex II for sources on health topics.

<sup>70</sup> ILGA, Resources, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>71</sup> ILGA-Asia [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>72</sup> ILGA-Europe [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>73</sup> ILGA-LAC [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>74</sup> ILGA North America and the Caribbean [website], n.d.,

<sup>75</sup> ILGA Oceania, [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>76</sup> ILGA, Rainbow Europe [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>77</sup> Rainbow Europe [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>78</sup> ILGA Europe, Annual Review 2021, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>79</sup> Outright International [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>80</sup> Outright International, Shadow reports, n.d., [url](#)

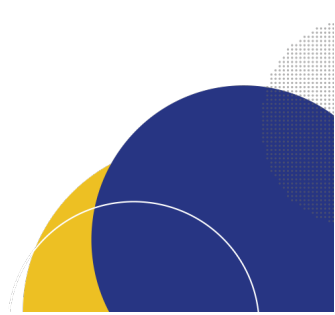
<sup>81</sup> ORAM Refugee, [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>82</sup> ORAM, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression, n.d., [17 April 2016], [url](#)

<sup>83</sup> Transgender Europe, [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>84</sup> FTM International [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>85</sup> OII Intersex Network [website], n.d., [url](#)



Note that specialised sources may not represent all LGBTIQ and SOGIESC topics. Some may focus on specific sub-groups (e.g. gay men) or specific aspects of LGBTIQ rights (e.g. access to housing). Some of these sources may also have a strong stance on advocacy.

## Local NGOs

Many COI researchers consider local organisations in countries of origin to be useful and trustworthy sources of information, as they have a presence on the ground and are aware of sociocultural sensitivities and realities. Moreover, these sources may use the locally acceptable terms for LGBTIQ, which can give the researcher guidance on which search terms to use.<sup>86</sup>

Some local organisations may specialise in, or may have integrated in their mandate, defending LGBTIQ rights. On the other hand, local human rights organisations do not always integrate LGBTIQ in their target groups for various reasons. This situation underscores the necessity of consulting a wide variety of sources, but also to be aware and investigate further the reasons for not integrating LGBTIQ as their target groups or maybe in disguise, which in itself may be indicative of the situation on the ground. Important is also to verify if a local NGO is representative for the situation of all LGBTIQ persons; not all LGBTIQ perceive their situation in the same way.

Note that ILGA World and regional organisations, on its webpage, provide a list of member-organisations which can help to identify local groups.<sup>87</sup> [Social media](#) can also be a good tool to identify local organisations when local NGOs do not maintain a webpage.

## UN bodies

UNHCR has published guidelines on SOGI-related claims<sup>88</sup> and on age, gender and diversity – of which SOGI is part as well.<sup>89</sup> UNHCR also published a Policy on the Prevention of, Risk Mitigation and Response to Gender-based Violence, in 2020, where issues related to LGBTIQ are covered.<sup>90</sup>

Various UN human rights bodies, such as the ‘Human Rights Council’ and the ‘Committee on Enforced Disappearances’, under the umbrella website of the ‘Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights’ (OHCHR)<sup>91</sup>, publish reports that may contain valuable information on the human rights situation of LGBTIQ people.

UN special rapporteurs, working groups or special representatives, also integrate SOGIESC in their reports.<sup>92</sup> In many cases, information published by these UN human rights bodies is obtained during visits to the countries of origin.

The UN Human Rights Council created the mandate of Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (also referred to as the Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity, or the ‘IE SOGI’).<sup>93</sup> The Independent expert on sexual orientation and gender identity publishes thematic annual reports and country visit

<sup>86</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 26

<sup>87</sup> ILGA, ILGA World member organisations, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>88</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, [url](#)

<sup>89</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity, 8 March 2018, [url](#)

<sup>90</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR Policy on the Prevention of, Risk Mitigation and Response to Gender-based Violence, 2 October 2020, [url](#)

<sup>91</sup> UN, OHCHR, Universal Periodic Review, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>92</sup> A number of Special procedures are relevant to the question of sexual and gender minorities’ rights, such as the special rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, or the working group on enforced or involuntary disappearances. For more information on these procedures, see: ARC International, UN Special procedures: A Guide For Advocates Working On Human Rights Relating To Sexual Orientation And Gender Identity, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>93</sup> UN, OHCHR, Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity [website], n.d., [url](#)

reports, which covers situation of LGBTI people in the given country. UN OHCHR's webpage dedicated to the Independent Expert on SOGI lists these reports.

As it may be a lengthy process to search for UN reports covering the situation of LGBTIQ, one can consult the Outright International (previously called IGLHRC) website. Here all relevant UN publications are collected under Reports and sub-tab Research.<sup>94</sup>

## EU bodies

Less known to COI researchers is that some European Union institutions or fora, such as the EU Parliament (Subcommittee on Human Rights<sup>95</sup>) and the Intergroup on LGBT Rights<sup>96</sup>, can provide information on LGBTIQ, whether it is in the form of reports, press releases or links to other sources. Note that the website of the EU Parliament Subcommittee on human rights has a search option that facilitates the retrieval of relevant documents.<sup>97</sup>

## Other regional international bodies

Other regional international bodies, such as the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe (CoE)<sup>98</sup> and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)<sup>99</sup> can also provide information on LGBTIQ, whether it is in the form of reports, press releases or links to other sources. For instance, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is a human rights monitoring body which specialises in questions relating to the fight against racism, discrimination (included on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics), and intolerance in Europe; it prepares reports and issues recommendations to Member States.<sup>100</sup> ECRI's country monitoring approach places all Council of Europe member states on an equal footing. The work is organised in five-year cycles, covering eight to 10 countries per year.<sup>101</sup> OSCE ODIHR carries out annual reportings on various hate crimes, including bias against sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>102</sup>

## Academia/Research institutes or centres

Academics can be a very useful source of information because they have in-depth knowledge of key issues as a result of field studies. They may also benefit from a network of contacts in the countries of origin. Often, academics specialise in a specific region or country or are affiliated with a particular programme within a university or research institute. For instance, the Faculty of Law of the University of Toronto offers an international human rights programme that includes a 'Sexual diversity' section.<sup>103</sup> There are many more universities with departments focused on SOGI or LGBTIQ, such as Yale University which offers LGBT studies.<sup>104</sup> These specialised programmes or studies can offer helpful publications as well as links to other sources. They can also help a COI

<sup>94</sup> Outright International, Reports, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>95</sup> EP, Subcommittee on Human rights (DROI), n.d., [url](#)

<sup>96</sup> 'The Intergroup on LGBT Rights' is an informal forum for Members of the European Parliament who wish to advance and protect the fundamental rights of LGBT people. See EP, LGBTI Intergroup, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>97</sup> European Parliament, Subcommittee on Human rights (DROI), n.d., [url](#)

<sup>98</sup> CoE, ECRI [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>99</sup> OSCE-ODIHR, Hate Crime Reporting, n.d., [url](#)

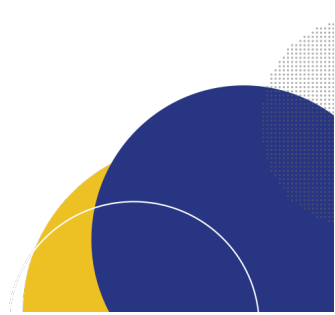
<sup>100</sup> CoE, ECRI [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>101</sup> CoE, ECRI, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, n.d., [url](#), p.3

<sup>102</sup> OSCE-ODIHR, Hate Crime Reporting, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>103</sup> University of Toronto/Faculty of Law, International Human Rights Programme, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>104</sup> Yale University, Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender studies, n.d., [url](#)





researcher to identify an academic or researcher on a particular country of origin who can be contacted by e-mail or telephone.

Research institutes/centres, such as the Pew Research Center also publish relevant studies or surveys. It has a specific research topic on Gender & LGBT.<sup>105</sup> In 2013 and 2019, the Pew Research Center also published surveys concerning the acceptance of homosexuality in 39 (2013), and 34 (2019) countries.<sup>106</sup>

## Media (general and specific)

Reports in local and international media can assist in documenting the situation of LGBTIQ and especially the societal attitude towards them. It is impossible, however, to give an exhaustive overview of media that could potentially provide information on the conditions of LGBTIQ persons in countries of origin.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, searching local media can give a good insight into the concepts used to refer to LGBTIQ and of the societal attitude towards them.

A few websites specialise in delivering news related to LGBTIQ, such as Pink News, which is described as the 'Europe's largest gay news service'.<sup>107</sup> Bear in mind that specialised media may sometimes use information collected from the Internet, without verifying the original source. As for any other types of sources, information should be cross-checked.

## Social science journals/Medical journals studies or centres

The situation of LGBTIQ persons in many countries is intertwined with the legal, social, religious and familial spheres, making it more difficult to investigate. Occasionally, social science journals publish articles/studies portraying the situation of LGBTIQ from an anthropological or sociological perspective, which is often lacking in the general country or human rights reports.

Aggregators of social science journals can assist in covering a wide range of journals. The Social Science Research Network (SSRN) website features research papers that can be downloaded.<sup>108</sup>

Medical journals or studies can constitute an interesting source of information when it comes to the perception of LGBTIQ and access to services, as their analyses often go beyond a purely medical perspective.

## COI portals

COI portals offer a single entry point to searching COI from various sources. They are particularly useful at the initial stage of research as they allow COI specialists to rapidly retrieve relevant COI from multiple sources.

The EASO COI Portal is a gateway to COI produced by EU+ states and EASO in the context of asylum procedures. It also provides selected COI authored by EU institutions, such as the European Parliament and the External Action Service (EEAS). It has an extensive search function. COI produced by other organisations (non-governmental organisations, international organisations, research

<sup>105</sup> The Pew Research Center is a 'nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the world, and conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, media content analysis as well as other empirical social science research'. See Pew Research Center, About Pew Research Center, n.d., [url](#); Pew Research Center, Gender & LGBT, 25 May 2021, [url](#)

<sup>106</sup> Pew Research Center, The Global Divide on Homosexuality Persists, 25 June 2020, [url](#)

<sup>107</sup> Pink News, [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>108</sup> SSRN, [website], n.d., [url](#)



institutes, etc.) is not collected in the Portal since such information can be easily accessed via other complementary COI platforms such as [ecoi.net](#).<sup>109</sup>

Ecoi.net<sup>110</sup> is a publicly available portal gathering up-to-date COI from a wide range of sources. It provides assisted search functions that can help in selecting the right search terms. UNHCR's Refworld used to gather COI as well but since 2019 it is focusing on legal information.<sup>111</sup>

## Social media

Finding useful contacts in countries of origin, or following up on very local situations can be a difficult task for COI researchers. Social media (YouTube/blogs/Facebook/Instagram/Twitter) can assist by helping to:

- identify local groups (NGOs);
- get in contact with local informants;
- follow up on local events (e.g. demonstrations, local NGO activities, arrests).

Social media can be especially useful for countries where local organisations do not develop or maintain their own websites. As local NGOs, in some cases, give access to more specific and updated information than mainstream human rights organisations, reaching out to these local NGOs can prove invaluable. In a later section on 'oral sources', we will see how local NGOs can be approached to obtain information.<sup>112</sup>

Some blogs specialise in LGBTIQ. For example, 'Erasing 76 crimes' is a blog which provides posts, articles and references on '76 countries' anti-gay laws and the struggle to repeal them'. The blog also publishes on arrests and trials of LGBTIQ persons.<sup>113</sup> ARC International, which advocates for LGBTIQ rights, also hosts an online 'electronic network' that focuses on international advocacy, discussions and strategies related to sexuality, sexual rights, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.<sup>114</sup> While these blogs often have strong advocacy stances, their posts can be a good way both to obtain up-to-date and specific information and to identify other sources.

Access to certain information (via Facebook, for instance) often requires a specific account however, which then raises the issue of self-identification. Some EU+ countries and organisations have developed guidelines on how to use social media.<sup>115</sup>

Attention should be paid to the risk of harming local contacts or LGBTIQ communities in the country of origin when raising SOGIESC issues in social media. In some countries, a person may be put at risk simply for being contacted by a researcher who is looking for information on LGBTIQ and SOGIESC.

As with any other type of COI research, social media should be used with caution. Given the unregulated nature of social media, some will invariably lack the traditional quality criteria that guide

<sup>109</sup>The EASO COI Portal is accessible from [url](#)

<sup>110</sup> Ecoi.net is a publicly available portal gathering up-to-date COI relevant in procedures for international protection. It is maintained by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) and Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration (Germany). See: Ecoi.net [portal], n.d., [url](#)

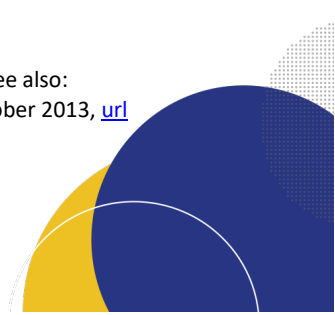
<sup>111</sup> UNHCR, Refworld [portal], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>112</sup> Note that ILGA provides a directory of LGBTI member organisations which can help to identify local groups. ILGA World Member Organisations, n.d., [url](#). DEVDIR, a directory of development organisations, can also be a useful tool to identify local NGOs. See: DEVDIR, [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>113</sup> Erasing 76 crimes [blog], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>114</sup> ARC International, SOGI Listserv, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>115</sup> EASO, Tools and tips for online COI research, June 2014, [url](#). For the use of social media in COI research, see also: Austrian Red Cross/ACCORD, Researching country of origin information - Training manual, 2013 edition, October 2013, [url](#)



the work of COI researchers (e.g. neutrality, objectivity, and protection of personal data) and their final products (e.g. reliability, traceability and transparency).

- For more information on the use of social media in COI, see:
  - EASO COI Report Methodology, June 2019: [https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Methodology.pdf](https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019_EASO_COI_Report_Methodology.pdf)
  - Austrian Red Cross/ACCORD, Researching country of origin information - Training manual, 2013 edition, October 2013 <http://www.coi-training.net/handbook/Researching-Country-of-Origin-Information-2013-edition-ACCORD-COI-Training-manual.pdf>
  - EASO Judicial practical guide on COI, 2018: [https://easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/judicial-practical-guide-coi\\_en.pdf](https://easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/judicial-practical-guide-coi_en.pdf)
- For further guidance on searching social media, see also: EASO, Tools and tips for online COI research, EASO practical guide series, June 2014 <http://easo.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Tools-and-tips-for-online-COI-research2.pdf>

## Non-online sources

While valuable information may be available from online sources, one should explore other channels of information as they can yield specific and in-depth information. These include:

- Books, magazines
- Conferences/workshops
- Documentaries/films
- Fact-finding missions
- Oral sources.

We will highlight some of these channels of information-gathering in the sections below.

### Books, magazines

Unfortunately there are too many paper books and magazines on LGBTIQ to provide a useful overview. These sources are sometimes accessible online through open sources.

### Conferences/Workshops

Conferences or workshops on the situation of LGBTIQ can be a valuable occasion to collect information from different sources and to establish contacts with experts or counterparts. COI specialists in some EU+ COI units attend such events. Often, they produce a summary of the main discussions and/or presentations, which can provide useful pieces of COI. For example, in July 2020 the four-year research project Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Claims of Asylum: A European human rights challenge (SOGICA) organized its final conference which provided some useful COI.<sup>116</sup> ILGA World organises an annual conference.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> SOGICA, Final conference, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>117</sup> ILGA, World Conference, n.d., [url](#)

## Documentaries/Films

Documentaries or films on the situation of LGBTIQ people in countries of origin can be an efficient way to grasp complex situations. The website of LGBT Net provides a list of films/documentaries on the life of LGBT in various countries of the world.<sup>118</sup> Movies that Matter is another platform where one can access films and documentaries dealing with human rights and justice, including the situation of LGBTIQ. The platform offers a search function.<sup>119</sup>

## Fact-Finding Missions

As mentioned previously, some asylum administrations (often the COI unit) in EU+ countries conduct Fact-Finding Missions (FFMs) to collect specific information on the topic of LGBTIQ/SOGIESC. In some instances, the missions focus exclusively on the topic, in others, it is one among many.

The missions are an opportunity to collect information from the field and to establish and/or reinforce a network of contacts. In some cases, the missions may be limited in duration, location and in the number and type of interviewees yet invaluable information can be collected. In other cases, interviewees from local NGOs are part of a country-wide network and are able to report extensively on the situation in other parts of the country.<sup>120</sup> Most FFMs publish a report, which often also contain the fully signed-off transcripts of the interviews it conducted.

Given the sensitivity of the subject in some countries, collecting information on the topic of LGBTIQ in the field, and reporting about it, may prove difficult. In 2014, Lifos – the Centre for Country of Origin Information and Analysis (COI unit of the Swedish Migration Agency) – has identified the following challenges or limitations<sup>121</sup>:

- Reporting on norms: While information on laws and their application is often easily accessible, collecting information related to religion, school, family, societal/gender norms or intimate relations can be far more difficult.
- Choosing the appropriate terminology: Terms carry different values in different countries and can also have different values in different contexts in the same country. Delegations have to be prepared before the FFM about the terminology to be used and should be explicit about it while drafting the report.
- Endangering LGBTIQ individuals/communities: Speaking about LGBT issues, in some contexts, can harm local contacts or LGBT communities in the country.
- Unbalanced findings: The collected information is not always representative of all local situations as delegations tend to obtain information related to urban and educated individuals. Furthermore, information often concerns gay men to the exclusion of lesbians and other LGBT persons.
- Language: Translating interview notes from English to a national language can prove difficult since words may carry different meanings and values from one language to the other<sup>122</sup>.

<sup>118</sup> LGBT net, Magazines, books and films, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>119</sup> Movies that Matter, Home, n.d., [url](#). 'Movies that Matter wants to open eyes for human rights. Our core tasks are the screening of human rights related films and the stimulation of screenings of human-rights films.'

<sup>120</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 33.

<sup>121</sup> EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 33. Source: Swedish Migration Agency, Lifos, e-mail, December 2014.

<sup>122</sup> For example, in some local contexts, the term 'gay men' is less prejudiced than 'homosexual men'; yet, when translating into Swedish, the Swedish terms for 'gay men' appears to be more prejudiced than the Swedish words for 'homosexual men'. EASO, Researching the situation of lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons (LGB) in countries of origin, April 2015, [url](#), p. 33. Source: Swedish Migration Agency, Lifos, e-mail, December 2014.

## Oral Sources

When a COI researcher cannot obtain information from an FFM or when limited written information is available, contacting oral sources by e-mail, by telephone, or during a face-to-face meeting can be a useful way to gather information.

Yet oral sources can also be hard to find. In the absence of organisations that openly defend LGBTIQ persons or raise issues related to SOGIESC in certain countries of origin, it can be a challenge to identify a local source that does so covertly. Several strategies can be used to tackle that problem.

As mentioned under the section on social media and FFMs, caution must always be exercised so as not to put oral sources at risk by contacting them for information on LGBTIQ issues.

### How to find oral sources

As indicated in previous sections, some specialised NGOs, such as ILGA World<sup>123</sup>, provide information and contact details on local groups. Other specialised NGOs — whether domestic or regional — can be useful in helping to find local contacts. This can also be true of LGBTIQ journals which often have local correspondents. Reports on the situation of LGBTIQ persons may also indicate names of local organisation. Social media, as mentioned previously, can serve to trace local organisations and their contact details.

In other instances, oral sources can be found through organisations focusing on the fight against HIV/AIDS. In many countries where discussion of LGBTIQ is taboo, the topic can to some extent be approached through a health/medical lens. As almost all HIV/AIDS organisations have a ‘men who have sex with men’ (MSM) component – whether explicit or unstated – they are either knowledgeable about the situation of LGBTIQ persons – or at least of MSM – or know someone who is. Keep in mind that in countries where the subject is taboo, some people might be very suspicious or uncomfortable talking about it. One strategy is to contact these professionals through a third party, such as an organisation that has trusted partnership with local organisations. A European-based sexual and gender minority rights and/or HIV/AIDS organisation funding activities in African or Middle Eastern countries can, for example, refer the researcher to a local source. The *Centre de ressources francophones sur le VIH/sida en Afrique*, for instance, provides a list of local African NGOs working in the field of HIV/AIDS.<sup>124</sup> Note that often the identification of a source will have a snowball effect: the first source will connect the researcher with one or two other sources and so on.

Local human rights organisations can sometimes offer information about the situation of LGBTIQ persons. However, this is not always the case, as prevailing taboos on SOGIESC can make such organisations hesitant or unwilling to provide information. Moreover, some countries have been criminalising the mere discussion of SOGIESC. Thus, one should not assume that lack of awareness or silence about problems is an indication of their absence.

### How to contact them

Where LGBTIQ is a taboo subject, it can be even more important for the researcher to make a telephone call instead of, or in addition to, sending an e-mail. When doing so, it is essential to take time to clearly explain which organisation the COI researcher is working for and for what purpose information is being collected.

The researcher should bear in mind that the contacted persons might not use the same terminology as the researcher. As mentioned in Chapter 2 on terminology, some sources may avoid the terms ‘homosexual’ or ‘LGBTIQ,’ which they find negative and/or ‘Western’ in nature. In order to gather the most correct and useful information, the researcher should describe in clear and unequivocal

<sup>123</sup> ILGA, ILGA World member organisations, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>124</sup> ELSA, Centre de ressources francophones sur le VIH/sida en Afrique [website], n.d., [url](#)

terms what information is needed and take note of local sensitivities and terminology, which are key to fully comprehend the situation.

When contacting the person, it is also important to check the following points:

- Is any part of the information obtained confidential?
- Can the name of the source be mentioned in a public document? Explain to the source what 'public' means in your country: will the document be available online or will it solely be used in and by asylum authorities or other stakeholders in the asylum process?
- If the person wishes to remain anonymous, can the organisation represented by this person be quoted? If not, can the organisation be described, and, if so, how?

When contacting a non-binary or transgender person, be aware to ask how they wish to be addressed and described. Human Rights Campaign provides a useful guide on how to report on transgender people, such as: 'Note that many non-binary individuals use the singular "them" and "their" rather than "she" or "he," in addition to other pronouns (e.g., ze, zir, etc.).'<sup>125</sup>

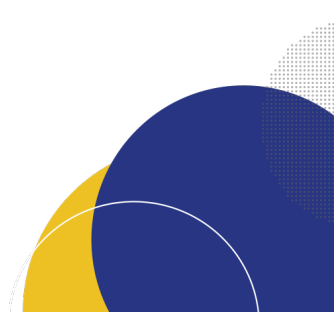
If the information is transmitted by phone, video call or during a face-to-face meeting, it is good practice to:

- ✓ send a transcript of the conversation to the source for validation;
- ✓ verify with the source whether the information provided in the transcript is correct;
- ✓ make sure the information (or better the transcript) is safe to publicise.

Bear in mind that in countries where LGBTI persons are repressed and where diverse SOGIEGC or advocacy for LGBTIQ rights is criminalised, sources and their organisations could be in danger if openly quoted.

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<sup>125</sup> Human Rights Campaign, HRC's Brief Guide to Getting Transgender Coverage Right, n.d., [url](#)



## 5. Research tools and tips<sup>126</sup>

### Keywords/Search terms

Often, in COI research the use of relevant search terms, their broadening or narrowing, will be key to producing results. When investigating the situation of LGBTIQ persons in countries of origin, this will be even more essential given the variety of terms used, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Terminology).

It is recommended to start with wider terms, which may include:

- ✓ homosexual;
- ✓ gay;
- ✓ lesbian;
- ✓ bisexual;
- ✓ transgender or trans (person);
- ✓ intersex;
- ✓ LGBT, LGBTI, LGBTIQ;
- ✓ sexual orientation;
- ✓ gender expression;
- ✓ gender identity;
- ✓ sex characteristics;
- ✓ SOGI/SOGIE/SOGIESC

This first step might put you on track and help you to identify more specific and local concepts that will eventually allow you to narrow your search. Not all languages offer comparable terms for the abovementioned English terms. Local words to translate those terms might not even exist.

Search operators such as AND, OR, NOT, wildcards, truncations (in which a word ending is replaced by a symbol) can be useful when dealing with such variations in concepts and expressions. For instance, with the search functions of the COI portals Ecoi.net<sup>127</sup> and the EASO COI portal<sup>128</sup>, the asterisk \* placed within or after a query term the asterisk is used for truncation or wildcard. On Ecoi.net, the tilde ~ after the word is used for spelling variations .

For instance, **homo\***, will retrieve documents containing: homosexual, homosexuals, homosexuality, homophobic, homophobia, homoerotic as well as the German words *homosexuell*, *Homosexualität*, or the French words *homosexuels*, etc. However, your search string should also include other relevant terms, such as 'gay men' or 'gay man'. Similarly, a search for **lesb\***, will call up documents containing: lesbian, lesbians, the French 'lesbienne' and the German Lesbe and lesbisch.

Note that Ecoi.net offers a 'moderated search' which helps to narrow or to broaden a search. Whenever the user searches for a word included in the COI thesaurus, the 'moderated search' suggests broader, narrower and related terms. Ecoi.net also has a Search help in which wild cards, combining search terms and many more search tips are given.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>126</sup> This section is based on Chapter 5 of the 2015 EASO COI Research Guide and slightly adapted

<sup>127</sup> Ecoi.net, [portal], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>128</sup> EASO, COI portal, n.d., [url](#) (click on Advanced search and Search tips)

<sup>129</sup> Ecoi.net, Search help, n.d., [url](#)

For more tips on searching COI, see the 2020 Asylos/ARC Foundation COI handbook, chapter 'Practical COI research tips'.<sup>130</sup>

## Online tools

To increase research efficiency, the following specific online tools<sup>131</sup> can be used:

- Customised search, such as Google custom search, enables the limitation of a search to selected web sources.
- Alerts services allow monitoring situations in specific countries of interest on a particular subject by predefining queries with selected keywords, a region or country, and language. The researcher can then receive regular updates. Many of the gay news services, such as Gay star news and Pink news, offer the possibility to register for alert services.
- RSS (Really Simple Syndication) allows subscription to updates on selected websites.
- Social bookmarking tools, such as Diigo,<sup>132</sup> Raindrop<sup>133</sup> or Elink<sup>134</sup>, enable users to better organise bookmarks and share sources of information with others. Some of these tools need subscription for full functionality.<sup>135</sup>
- Twitter/Facebook allows you to follow selected researchers or organisations for the latest news. See also section [Social media](#).

Also note that specifying the web link in the search field next to the keyword, e.g., [LGBTI:http://www.refworld.com](#), serves to narrow a search in Google.

For more information related to **online COI research tools**, see: EASO, Tools and tips for online COI research, EASO Practical Guide Series, June 2014, <http://easo.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Tools-and-tips-for-online-COI-research2.pdf>.

## Collaborative tools

COI researchers from EU+ countries often work on similar topics simultaneously without knowing it. Some researchers may have conducted valuable interviews with experts on the situation of LGBTIQ or attended relevant conferences that could be useful to other researchers working on the same topic and countries of origin. Some COI units may organise FFM in the same countries of origin, a mere few weeks or months apart, without being aware of it.

Several ways to increase information sharing were developed in the past years via EASO. EU+ COI researchers can also contact colleagues via a COI query to the country-specific EASO COI Specialist network if available. They also can consult existing or planned COI products via the National Production Plans which are collected bi-annually and distributed amongst the COI networks. For some countries of origin, source lists have been developed.

<sup>130</sup> Asylos/ ARC Foundation, 2020 Country of Origin Information (COI): Evidencing asylum claims in the UK, 11 November 2020, [url](#)

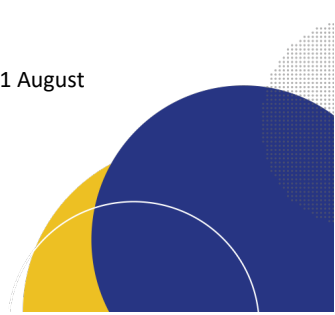
<sup>131</sup> References to specific online technologies are provided as examples only; EASO does not recommend any specific tools.

<sup>132</sup> Diigo [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>133</sup> Raindrop [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>134</sup> Elink [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>135</sup> For a discussion on some tools, see ELink, Collaborative Bookmarking Tools to Manage Your Bookmarks, 21 August 2020, [url](#)





## 6. Research limitations

### When limited time is available

A COI researcher may not have enough time to conduct in-depth research. As a result, a COI researcher may be unable to document the topics that are outlined in the suggested table of contents and to check a variety of sources. The obvious solution is to provide the requester with recent detailed reports produced by the COI unit of another asylum authority or by (non-governmental) organisations. These can often be found in the [EASO COI portal](#). Such reports are, however, not always available. This section provides some guidance to the researcher who has to work under time constraints.

#### Mention time restraints

Mention the specific research question in the introduction as well as the limited time that was allocated to the research. Ideally, an overview of the consulted sources should be given (see Chapter 3) as well as the reference period for research (e.g. focusing on sources published in the last two years). It has to be made clear that the research cannot be considered exhaustive.

Formulate the main research questions and consider which subquestions can be skipped.

Sometimes the reference period can be shortened

#### Research questions to check as a minimum:

- a) **The legal framework:** Are there laws targeting any aspects of SOGIESC or related acts/behaviour?
- b) **Application of the law:** Are there cases of LGBTIQ persons being arrested, prosecuted and detained? Is this common? Can LGBTIQ people who have been subjected to threats or acts of violence go to their authorities and benefit from state protection?
- c) **Treatment by state actors:** Are LGBTIQ persons subjected to discrimination, exclusion, extortion, insults, intimidation, harassment, threats, aggression, violence, blackmail or other actions by the authorities and, if so, to what extent?
- d) How are LGBTIQ persons treated by **non-state actors, including family, society, or other non-state groups**? If documented violations do occur by non-state actors then you will need to also consider availability of state protection.

#### Sources

Begin with a basic source checklist on your first day of research, and read/highlight the relevant information you have gathered. Identify gaps where you might have to look for more specific information/sources in more depth. Move to more country-or topic-specific sources as early as possible.

As a starting point for the legal framework, ILGA World's annual State Sponsored Homophobia Report<sup>136</sup> is a good reference. However, it is always advisable to directly check the criminal code of the country in question.

For research questions b, c and d listed above, general sources, and, occasionally, annual and/or specific human rights organisation reports, can be useful. Ecolnet<sup>137</sup> generally stores the most

<sup>136</sup> ILGA World [website], n.d., [url](#)

<sup>137</sup> Ecolnet [portal], n.d., [url](#)

recent reports and articles about from the main international human rights organisations and annual reports from government departments (e.g. USDOS). A simple Google search will often quickly lead to some useful links, using keywords/search terms such as ‘homo(sexual)’, ‘gay’, ‘lesbian’, ‘transgender’, ‘LGBT(I)(Q)’ (see [Chapter 5](#)). It is also possible to look for regional reports that often contain information at national level. If the country in question has national NGOs working on the issue, you can check whether they have recently published reports or articles.

To ensure that no recent changes and/or incidents have gone unnoticed, it is advisable to do a country search on specialist news sites. [Chapter 4](#) and [Annex II](#) suggest various sources for specialist news sites.

## When limited or no information can be found

For some countries, a very limited amount of information on the situation of LGBTIQ persons will be available. This can be the case because there is nothing to report, because the subject is highly taboo, or because nothing in language known by the COI researcher has been published and/or is available online.

It is important to indicate when limited or no information has been found on a certain subject, as well as to include a description of the attempts that were made to find that information. It may be advisable also to specify, in a disclaimer, that limited or lack of information should not be conclusive as to the merits of the claim. An introduction can be used to make the reader aware of certain issues that may be relevant. For example, there may be a general lack of (public) information on the subject or general human rights violations due to curtailment of freedom of expression or the COI may be focused mostly on a specific group of persons, such as gay young men who live in an urban environment. With this background information in mind, the reader will be better equipped to understand the outcome of the research.



## Annex I: Research and quality checklist

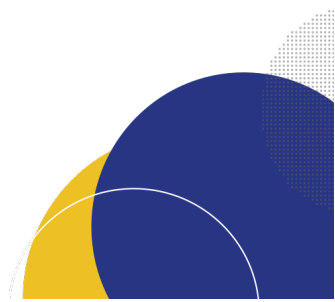
As indicated in [Chapter 4](#), researching the situation of LGBTIQ people should be conducted according to the same principles and quality standards as any other COI research. At the same time, we have seen that special guidance applies to researching the situation of LGBTIQ persons.

The below checklist summarises key elements of a research on the situation of LGBTIQ people. For each of these, we refer to the relevant chapter of the guide. The quality criteria indicated in the checklist should be read in conjunction with general COI quality standards discussed in EASO 2019 COI Report Methodology.<sup>138</sup>

RESEARCH and QUALITY CHECKLIST (non-exhaustive)	
Questions	Chapters
Do I have a good understanding of the terminology at stake?	2
Did I check if any particular local terminology is used in the country of research?	2
Did I use all possible search terms?	2 and 5
Did I exhaust all research questions (Did I refer to the list of research questions provided in the guide)?	3
Did I consult some of the sources provided in Annex II?	4 and Annex II
Did I use a variety of sources, such as:	4 and Annex II
✓ governmental?	4 and Annex II
✓ mainstream NGOs?	4 and Annex II
✓ specialised (LGBTIQ ) NGOs?	4 and Annex II
✓ local NGOs?	4 and Annex II
✓ UN bodies?	4 and Annex II
✓ EU bodies?	4 and Annex II
✓ academia/research institutes?	4 and Annex II
✓ other regional international bodies	4 and Annex II
✓ media (general and specific)?	4 and Annex II
✓ social sciences journals/medical journals or studies (HIV/AIDS)?	4 and Annex II
✓ COI portals?	4 and Annex II
✓ social media?	4 and 5
When relevant, did I use non-online sources, such as:	4
✓ books?	4
✓ conferences/workshops?	4
✓ documentaries/films?	4
✓ FFM reports/findings?	4
✓ oral sources?	4
Did I make use of alternative sources of information, such as:	4
✓ health-related sources (journals, organisations, etc.)?	
In order to look for local sources, did I:	4

<sup>138</sup> EASO, EASO COI Report Methodology, June 2019, [url](#)

✓ check via (local) HIV/AIDS organisations?	4
✓ check via specialised LGBTIQ organisations?	4
✓ check via LGBTIQ media (local correspondents)?	4
<b>Did I verify, to the extent possible, the reliability of the sources?</b>	4
<b>If I used specialised LGBTIQ sources, did I check that they represent all LGBTIQ persons?</b>	4
<b>If I contacted an oral source, did I:</b>	4
✓ ensure prior to contacting the source that the person would not be put at risk by being contacted?	4
✓ take note of local sensitivities and terminology prior to contacting the source?	3 and 4
✓ take the time to clearly explain which organisation I work for and for what purpose I am collecting information?	4
✓ describe in clear and unequivocal terms what information I am looking for?	4
✓ check whether the information provided by the source is confidential?	4
✓ check whether the name of the source can be mentioned in the COI document?	4
✓ if the person wishes to remain anonymous, ask whether the organisation represented by that person can be quoted? If not, can the organisation be described, and, if so, how?	4
✓ if the information was provided by phone or in person, send a transcript of the conversation?	4
<b>Did I contact colleagues from other COI units?</b>	4 and 5
<b>Did I check the list of COI/LGBTIQ products planned, in progress or finalised, available on the EASO COI portal?</b>	4 and 5
<b>In my final COI product, did I make sure to include an introduction/disclaimer that covers the following:</b>	3 and 6
✓ scope of the report;	Introduction
✓ sources used and possible limitations;	
✓ time constraint;	
✓ terminology and definitions of terms by the source?	
<b>In my final COI product, is the language used neutral (impartial) and objective (not influenced by opinions, emotions, biases, etc.)?</b>	Introduction
<b>Is all information provided in the report referenced (in the footnotes)?</b>	
<b>Is all information provided in the report fully referenced in the bibliography?</b>	
<b>Was my COI product quality checked by a third party?</b>	



## Annex 2: List of sources

The list below is a compilation of websites providing information on LGBTIQ and/or SOGI issues, indicating the weblink, description of the source and useful features (if available).

All links were accessed between January and July 2021.

The list has been divided into several parts:

- Specialised NGOs
- Specialised platforms/networks/portals
- Specialised regional NGOs in Africa
- Specialised regional NGOs in Arab countries
- Specialised regional NGOs in Asia
- Specialised regional NGOs in Europe
- Specialised regional NGOs in Latin America
- Non-specialised NGOs
- Non-specialised portals
- Health-related organisations
- European bodies
- UN organisations
- National asylum administrations
- Universities — research centres/institutes
- Media (specialised and non-specialised)
- Blogs
- Others

Under each subsection, the listing is provided in alphabetical order.

A list of local LGBTIQ-related NGOs by country of origin is not included as this would have constituted a lengthy collection. However, links to regional organisations that give information on the situation of LGBTIQ in Africa, Arab countries, Asia, Europe and Latin America are provided.

All sources of information, and each piece of information provided by these sources, have to be assessed carefully by COI researchers according to the COI research standards in the EASO COI Report Methodology.

The list below is not exhaustive.

## Specialised NGOs

Name	Brief description	Useful features
(The) Interface Project <a href="http://www.interfaceproject.org/">http://www.interfaceproject.org/</a>	Stories of people around the world living with intersex traits or variations of sex anatomy under the banner 'No body is shameful'	
AIC - Advocates for Informed Choices <a href="https://interactadvocates.org/">https://interactadvocates.org/</a>	US organisation with coordinated strategy of legal advocacy for the rights of children with intersex conditions or differences of sex development (DSDs)	Newsletter Annual report
ARC International <a href="https://arc-international.net/">https://arc-international.net/</a> ARC SOGI Listserv <a href="https://arc-international.net/network-development/electronic-networking/">https://arc-international.net/network-development/electronic-networking/</a>	Canadian non-profitmaking organisation working to advance LGBT rights	Links to other NGOs Links to UN documents Bulletin (news) A forum focusing on discussions and strategies related to sexuality, sexual rights, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression
Arcus Foundation: <a href="https://www.arcusfoundation.org/">https://www.arcusfoundation.org/</a>	Based in New York, US and Cambridge, UK, Arcus Foundation works globally. It partners with experts and advocates for change to ensure that LGBTQ people's rights are respected around the world	
Bi.org (previously: bisexual.org) <a href="https://bi.org/en">https://bi.org/en</a>	Project of the American Institute of Bisexuality, designed to give a voice to the bisexual community, share accurate information, answer questions, and provide resources for further learning	Publications (books, research, fact sheets, videos) Blog
FTM International - Female to Male International <a href="http://www.ftmi.org/">http://www.ftmi.org/</a>	Organisation providing information and resources on female-to-male transition (legal rights, health)	Legal information
GATE (Trans, Gender Diverse and Intersex Advocacy in Action) <a href="https://gate.ngo/">https://gate.ngo/</a>	Programs include: Depathologization of trans, gender diverse and intersex people; HIV; Socio-economic building etc.	Publications on trans and intersex persons, transphobia, health care
Human Dignity Trust <a href="http://www.humandignitytrust.org">http://www.humandignitytrust.org</a>	Human rights organisation working for the global decriminalisation of LGBT sexual identity	Information by country (law) Search function to retrieve case-law, legal analysis, UN/regional human rights mechanisms
ILGA World- International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association <a href="http://ilga.org/">http://ilga.org/</a>	Worldwide federation of more than 1 700 member organisations from 160 countries and territories campaigning for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex right	Twice-yearly updated world report <i>State-sponsored homophobia</i> Information per country Links to regional organisations

ILGLaw - International Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, and Intersex Law Association <a href="http://ilglaw.org/">http://ilglaw.org/</a>		
Kaleidoscope Trust <a href="http://kaleidoscopetrust.com/">http://kaleidoscopetrust.com/</a>	UK-based charity working to uphold the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people internationally	
Micro Rainbow International <a href="http://www.micro-rainbow.com/">http://www.micro-rainbow.com/</a>	NGO addressing the situation of poverty of LGBTI internationally	Reports Miniblogs
Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration (ORAM) <a href="https://oramrefugee.org/">https://oramrefugee.org/</a> <a href="http://portal.oraminternational.org/">http://portal.oraminternational.org/</a>	International organisation devoted to advocating for LGBTI refugees. Offices in USA and Europe but active worldwide	Reports on specific countries News Search function Online portal
OutRight Action International (was: International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC)) <a href="https://outrightinternational.org/about-us">https://outrightinternational.org/about-us</a>	Documents, defend and advance human rights violations against LGBTIQ people across the world. Permanent presence to advocate at UN Headquarters in New York for progress for LGBTIQ people	List of research reports List of reports to the UN
Rainbow Railroad <a href="https://www.rainbowrailroad.org/">https://www.rainbowrailroad.org/</a>	Rainbow Railroad is a global not-for-profit organization that helps LGBTQI+ people facing persecution based on their sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics	Annual reports Info on anti-LGBTIQ laws
StopIGM.org Stop Intersex Genital Mutilations In Children's Clinics <a href="http://stop.genitalmutilation.org/">http://stop.genitalmutilation.org/</a>	International human rights NGO of survivors and allies fighting intersex genital mutilations (IGMs) in children's clinics	
TLC ( Transgender Law Center) <a href="https://transgenderlawcenter.org/">https://transgenderlawcenter.org/</a>	The largest trans-specific, translated organization in the US Advocacy, litigation, empowering	US-focused research reports and legal work



## Specialised platforms/networks/portals

Name/Web link	Brief description	Useful features
Commonwealth Equality Network <a href="https://www.commonwealthequality.org/">https://www.commonwealthequality.org/</a>	A network of Commonwealth civil society organisations working to challenge inequality in the Commonwealth, based on sexual orientation and gender identity	List of organisations in member states of the commonwealth
Global Legal Monitor- Library of Congress <a href="https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/topic/lgbt-rights/">https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/topic/lgbt-rights/</a>	Laws on LGBTIQ rights in many countries	Legal provisions on LGBT in many countries. Search function lacking.
LGBT Net <a href="http://www.lgbtnet.dk">http://www.lgbtnet.dk</a>	Provides Danish organisations and others working in international development with knowledge about LGBTI aspects of development work	Information by country Database of resources searchable by keyword and category (country reports, surveys, magazines, books, films, etc.)
LGBTQI - International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Intersex Youth and Student Organisation <a href="https://www.iglyo.com/network/">https://www.iglyo.com/network/</a>	IGLYO – The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth & Student Organisation is the largest LGBTQI youth and student network in the world, with over 95 members in 40+ countries	Info on member organisations <a href="https://www.iglyo.com/network/members/">https://www.iglyo.com/network/members/</a>
OII - Organisation Intersex International <a href="http://oiiinternational.com">http://oiiinternational.com</a>	Decentralised global network of intersex organisations	Links to regional networks
Openly <a href="https://www.openlynews.com/">https://www.openlynews.com/</a>	Openly is a global digital platform delivering fair, accurate and impartial LGBT+ news to a world that isn't. Powered by original coverage from the Thomson Reuters Foundation, Openly also aggregates select LGBT+ news and authoritative reports from other sources.	
Transgender Europe <a href="https://tgeu.org/">https://tgeu.org/</a>	A membership-based organisation. Individuals and organisations can take part in the European and Central Asian trans movement through their membership.	A list of all >150 member organisations and 258 individual members across Europe and Central Asia in 47 different countries.

## Specialised regional NGOs — Africa<sup>139</sup>

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Africa Gay Rights (Association) <a href="https://www.africa-gay-rights.org/">https://www.africa-gay-rights.org/</a>	Platform of exchanges, testimonies and information for African LGBT. Africa Gay Rights is an initiative of a group of African LGBT activists supported by the “Rainbow House of the province of Luxembourg (Belgium)	List of partner associations, news, press review
African Human Rights Coalition <a href="https://www.africanhrc.org/">https://www.africanhrc.org/</a>	African Human Rights Coalition (AHRC) works with LGBTI communities and individuals in and from African countries seeking to claim and defend their human rights, with advocacy, resources and direct services	Newsletters/blogs Legal info Reports Advocacy
AMShEr - African Men for Sexual Health and Rights <a href="http://www.amsher.org/">http://www.amsher.org/</a>	Coalition of 18 MSM/LGBTI-led organisations in Africa Focuses on policy, law, health	‘Projects’ page with links to reports, news, etc. <a href="https://amsher.org/all-amsher-projects/">https://amsher.org/all-amsher-projects/</a>
ARSRC - Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre <a href="http://www.arsrc.org/">http://www.arsrc.org/</a>	Part of Ford Foundation initiative, ‘Global Dialogue of Sexual Health and Well-Being’	Magazines, Monographs, Articles, Seminar papers
CAL - Coalition of African Lesbians <a href="http://www.cal.org.za/">http://www.cal.org.za/</a>	Coalition of 14 organisations in 10 Sub-Saharan African countries to advance justice for lesbian and bisexual women and trans-diverse persons	Reports News Search function Statements
CEPEHRG (Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights, Ghana) <a href="https://www.cepehrg.net/about-us/">https://www.cepehrg.net/about-us/</a>	combating the impact of AIDS and promoting equality and diversity in Ghana. Providing human rights education and HIV awareness through interactive theater	Resources include news blogs, information on human rights and legal rights
ELSA - Centre de ressources francophones sur le VIH/sida en Afrique (Plateforme Ensemble luttons contre le sida en Africa) <a href="https://plateforme-elsa.org/">https://plateforme-elsa.org/</a>	Platform of five French NGOs active in the struggle against HIV/AIDS in Africa via the support of local NGOs	List of local LGBT/HIV-AIDS NGOs by country (statistics, description of NGOs, contact details) <a href="https://plateforme-elsa.org/associations-africaines-du-reseau-elsa/">https://plateforme-elsa.org/associations-africaines-du-reseau-elsa/</a>
GALA - Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action <a href="http://www.gala.co.za">http://www.gala.co.za</a>	Centre for LGBTI culture and education in Africa	Reports, books and other publications
Gender DynamiX (Transgender) <a href="http://www.genderdynamix.org.za/">http://www.genderdynamix.org.za/</a>	African-based organisation solely focusing on the trans and gender diverse communities	Research articles/reports Conference presentations and papers, podcasts

<sup>139</sup> A list of West African LGBTQ organisation can be found in: We Exist, Mapping LGBTQ Organizing in West Africa, 2016, [http://www.lgbt.net/dk/database/doc\\_download/260-we-exist-mapping-lgbtq-organizing-in-west-africa](http://www.lgbt.net/dk/database/doc_download/260-we-exist-mapping-lgbtq-organizing-in-west-africa)

Heinrich Böll Stiftung — East and Horn of Africa – Gender & democracy <a href="https://ke.boell.org/index.php/en/gender-democracy">https://ke.boell.org/index.php/en/gender-democracy</a>	German Green Political Foundation that conducts and supports civic educational activities worldwide. Gender is one of the themes on which the foundation focuses	Links to publications
HRAPF (Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum) <a href="https://www.hrapf.org">https://www.hrapf.org</a>	HRAPF (Uganda) is a non-governmental human rights advocacy organisation whose mission is to promote respect and protection of human rights of marginalised persons and Most at Risk Populations through enhanced access to justice, research and advocacy, legal and human rights awareness, capacity enhancement and strategic partnerships	Resource center: Annual reports Laws and policies Legal and political analyses Court judgements Human rights advocate magazine Paralegal magazine
IDNOWA (Interfaith Diversity Network of West Africa) <a href="https://itdnowa.org/">https://itdnowa.org/</a> Based in Ghana	Building bridges across all religions/faiths and changing attitudes towards LGBTIQ people. We dialogue with faith based groups, communities, influence institutions, foster self-acceptance through education, debates, advocacy and information dissemination.	Research and documentation Blog posts
Library of Congress – chart of criminal laws on homosexuality <a href="https://www.loc.gov/law/help/criminal-laws-on-homosexuality/african-nations-laws.php">https://www.loc.gov/law/help/criminal-laws-on-homosexuality/african-nations-laws.php</a>	Laws on Homosexuality in African Nations (2014)	The chart summarizes the treatment of homosexuality in the laws of 49 African nations (2014)
Pan Africa ILGA <a href="https://panafricailga.org/">https://panafricailga.org/</a>	African branch of ILGA	Annual reports, newsletters Podcasts, Articles Conferences
Queer African Youth Network (QAYN) - <a href="https://qayn.org/en/">https://qayn.org/en/</a>	QAYN is a queer and feminist organization founded in 2010 with the aim of establishing an extensive support network to promote the well-being and safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people in West Africa	The website is both in English and in French It claims to be an “autonomous movement led by lesbians, queer women, trans* and gender non-confirming young activists”
Rights Africa <a href="https://rightsafrika.com/">https://rightsafrika.com/</a>	Website for the African Human Rights Media Network. The network publishes and distributes news articles, videos, features, and commentaries about Africa that educate readers and viewers about the struggles of minorities, including sexual minorities, for respect and recognition of their human rights	News on LGBTIQ by region of Africa Also items on health, arts, people
TIERS (The Initiative for Equal Rights) <a href="https://theinitiativeforequalrights.org/">https://theinitiativeforequalrights.org/</a>	A Nigeria-based registered non-for-profit organisation. Activities focus on Human rights, Sexual health and capacity building	Annual reports documenting human rights violations in Nigeria Social perception survey

## Specialised regional NGOs — Arab countries

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Al Bab.com LGBT rights in Arab countries <a href="https://al-bab.com/lgbt-rights-arab-countries">https://al-bab.com/lgbt-rights-arab-countries</a>	LGBT rights in Arab countries	Information by country
Arab Foundation for Freedoms and Equality <a href="https://afemena.org/">https://afemena.org/</a>	LGBTIQ+ activist organisation working across the MENA region	Publications News
MOSAIC <a href="https://mosaic-mena.org/">https://mosaic-mena.org/</a>	Founded by legal and health experts that conduct research and advocate for policy reform in areas of SOGIESC and LGBTIQ+ in Lebanon and the MENA region	Publications Blog Visual publications
Rainbow Street <a href="https://www.rainbow-street.org/">https://www.rainbow-street.org/</a>	International protection organisation for LGBTQ people in the Middle East & North Africa	News

## Specialised regional NGOs — Asia

Name	Brief description	Useful features
APTIN - Asia Pacific Transgender Network <a href="https://weareaptin.org/">https://weareaptin.org/</a>	Mission to enable trans and gender diverse people in the Asia Pacific region to organise and advocate across many areas that affect our lives	Reports (under 'Resources')
Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM) <a href="http://www.apcom.org/">http://www.apcom.org/</a>	NGO representing and working with a network of individuals and community-based organisations across 35 countries in Asia and the Pacific. Prioritises HIV issues that affect the lives of MSM and transgender people	Annual report
Asian and Pacific Islander Queer Women and Transgender Community (APIQWTC) <a href="http://www.apiqwtc.org/">http://www.apiqwtc.org/</a>	Group of Asian and Pacific islander queer women and transgender people in the Bay Area, who are building communities together	Events Resources
Being LGBT in Asia <a href="https://www.usaid.gov/asia-regional/being-lgbt-asia">https://www.usaid.gov/asia-regional/being-lgbt-asia</a>	USAID program initiative to support Asia's LGBTI people	Country reports
ILGA Asia - Asian Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association <a href="https://www.ilgaasia.org/">https://www.ilgaasia.org/</a>	ILGA Asia is the Asian Regional branch of ILGA, representing more than 100 member organisations	

## Specialised regional NGOs — Europe

Name	Brief description	Useful features
ALDARTE - Centro de atención a gays, lesbianas y transexuales de Bizkaia. <a href="http://www.aldarte.org">www.aldarte.org</a>	Centro de estudios y documentación por las libertades sexuales. Spanish research centre on LGBTI	
FELGTB (Federación estatal de lesbianas, gays, transexuales y bisexuales) <a href="http://www.felgtb.org">www.felgtb.org</a>	Spanish organisation based in Madrid	Reports, News
ILGA Europe <a href="https://www.ilga-europe.org/">https://www.ilga-europe.org/</a>	European branch of ILGA, Worldwide federation of 1 100 member organisations from 110 countries campaigning for LGBTI rights	List of LGBTI organisations in 45 European countries 'Rainbow Europe': benchmark tool rating 49 European countries on LGBTI equality laws and policies
NELFA - Network of European LGBTIQ* Families Associations <a href="http://nelfa.org/">http://nelfa.org/</a>	NELFA was created to unite European associations of LGBT parents and their children under one umbrella organisation. Subsequently, NELFA added "intersex" and "queer".	
OII - Europe <a href="https://oiieurope.org/">https://oiieurope.org/</a>	European branch of Organisation Intersex International	Good Practice map Europe <a href="https://oiieurope.org/good-practice-map-2019/">https://oiieurope.org/good-practice-map-2019/</a>
TGEU - Transgender Europe <a href="https://tgeu.org/">https://tgeu.org/</a>	TGEU is network of different organisations of working to combat discrimination against trans people and support trans people rights	Trans Rights Europe Index, reports

## Specialised regional NGOs — North America

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Human Rights Campaign <a href="http://www.hrc.org">http://www.hrc.org</a> <a href="http://www.hrc.org/topics/international">http://www.hrc.org/topics/international</a>	US civil rights organisation working to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans- gender people	Contains an international page with news, reports, maps of various countries
TLC ( Transgender Law Center) <a href="https://transgenderlawcenter.org/">https://transgenderlawcenter.org/</a>	The largest trans-specific, trans-lesbian organization in the US Advocacy, litigation, empowering	US-focused research reports and legal work

## Specialised regional NGOs — Latin America

Name	Brief description	Useful features
CIDH – Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos <a href="http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/informes">http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/informes</a>	Violencia contra personas Lesbianas, Gay, Bisexuales, Trans e Intersex en América	Reports News Activities
CEJIL (Centro por la Justicia y el Derecho Internacional) · Center for Justice and International Law) <a href="https://www.cejil.org/en">https://www.cejil.org/en</a>	A human rights organisation in the Americas	publications and material on International Justice search function
CISAS (Centro de Información y Servicios de Asesoría en Salud) <a href="https://cisasnic.org/">https://cisasnic.org/</a>	Spanish language organisation on health in Latin America	Info on HIV/AIDS
ILGALAC <a href="http://ilgalac.org/en/international-lesbian-gay-bisexual-trans-and-intersex-association-for-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/">http://ilgalac.org/en/international-lesbian-gay-bisexual-trans-and-intersex-association-for-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/</a>	Latin America and the Caribbean branch of ILGA World	
Latin American Center on Sexuality and Human Rights (CLAM) <a href="http://www.clam.org.br/en">http://www.clam.org.br/en</a>	CLAM aims to produce, organise and disseminate knowledge about sexuality from a human rights perspective in order to help fight gender inequality and contribute to the struggle against the discrimination of sexual minorities in the region	News Publications
Sin Violencia LGBTI (Red Regional de Información sobre Violencias LGBTI en América Latina y el Caribe) <a href="https://sinviolencia.lgbt/non-violence-lgbti/">https://sinviolencia.lgbt/non-violence-lgbti/</a>	Information system about LGBTI violence in Latin America and Caribbean population	Reports

## Health-related organisations

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Bridging the gaps <a href="https://hivgaps.org/">https://hivgaps.org/</a>	Organisation working through 21 key population projects in 16 countries Information on this site will not be updated anymore (last update: 12/2020)	Reports News Blog, video Links to local and regional partners
CAPS - Centre for AIDS prevention studies <a href="https://prevention.ucsf.edu/">https://prevention.ucsf.edu/</a>	The centre (UC San Francisco) conducts research to prevent new HIV infections, improve health outcomes among those infected and reduce disparities	Reports Surveys
Erasing 76 Crimes <a href="https://76crimes.com/">https://76crimes.com/</a>	Blog on the 76 countries' anti-gay laws and the struggle to repeal them	Info on HIV/AIDS
Frontline AIDS <a href="http://www.aidsalliance.org/">http://www.aidsalliance.org/</a>	A global partnership working in over 40 countries, taking local, national and global action on HIV, health and human rights	Search function
Global Commission on HIV and the Law <a href="http://www.hivlawcommission.org/">http://www.hivlawcommission.org/</a>	An independent body, convened by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	E-library with a collection of resources and publications on subjects related to the findings and recommendations of the Global Commission on HIV and the Law Research/ discussion papers Press releases
MPACT – Global action for gay men's health & rights <a href="https://mpactglobal.org/">https://mpactglobal.org/</a>	Was founded in 2006 as The Global Forum on MSM and HIV (MSMGF)	Publications
UNAIDS - Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS <a href="https://www.unaids.org/en">https://www.unaids.org/en</a>	Member of the United Nations Development Group. It advocates for accelerated, comprehensive and coordinated global action on the HIV/AIDS epidemic	Information by country Press centre Reports
US AID <a href="https://www.usaid.gov/LGBTI">https://www.usaid.gov/LGBTI</a>	Advancing LGBTI-Inclusive Development by supporting and assisting marginalized and vulnerable populations	Research on LGBT
WPATH - World Professional Association for Transgender Health <a href="http://www.wpath.org/">http://www.wpath.org/</a>	International multidisciplinary professional association to promote evidence-based care, education, research, advocacy, public policy and respect in transgender health	Research



## Non-specialised NGOs

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Amnesty International, Sexual and Reproductive rights [webpage], n.d., , <a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/sexual-and-reproductive-rights/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/sexual-and-reproductive-rights/</a>	Topical page of Amnesty International website on LGBTI rights	Does not provide links to specific reports (use search function to retrieve information)
CCPR Centre - Centre for Civil and Political Rights <a href="http://ccprcentre.org/">http://ccprcentre.org/</a>	The Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR Centre) envisions a world where the civil and political rights are protected, respected and fulfilled for everyone without discrimination. Legal Framework is ICCPR - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	State reports on civil and political rights Information by country
Equal Rights Trust <a href="https://www.equalrightstrust.org/">https://www.equalrightstrust.org/</a>	Based in UK, it has established projects and partnerships in more than 45 countries ranging from Azerbaijan to Zambia. Supporting civil society combatting discrimination through reform and implementation of equality law.	Country-specific and thematic reports addressing discrimination and inequality <a href="https://www.equalrightstrust.org/equal-rights-trust-reports">https://www.equalrightstrust.org/equal-rights-trust-reports</a>
FIDH International Federation for Human Rights - LGBTI rights <a href="https://www.fidh.org/en/issues/lgbt-rights/?debut_articles=8#pagination_articles">https://www.fidh.org/en/issues/lgbt-rights/?debut_articles=8#pagination_articles</a>	Topical page of FIDH website on LGBT	Website with reports and news mostly in French and English but also in Spanish, Arab and Farsi
Heartland Alliance International <a href="https://www.heartlandalliance.org/heartland-alliance-international/">https://www.heartlandalliance.org/heartland-alliance-international/</a>	International programs in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, on vulnerable groups, human trafficking, armed conflict, access to justice, stigma-free HIV care,	News and media blog posts Research reports
HRW - Human Rights Watch - LGBT rights <a href="https://www.hrw.org/topic/lgbt-rights">https://www.hrw.org/topic/lgbt-rights</a>	Topical page of Human Rights Watch website on LGBT	Reports News (LGBT rights) Videos
ICJ - International Commission of Jurists Theme: SOGI <a href="https://www.icj.org/themes/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity/">https://www.icj.org/themes/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity/</a>	NGO working to promote and protect human rights through the rule of law. The website contains publications on SOGI	
Open Society Foundation - LGBTI <a href="http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/topics/lgbti">http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/topics/lgbti</a>	Human rights foundation. Also works to combat discrimination by empowering lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex communities to promote and defend their human rights	Reports Events Articles

Rights in exile programme (ex-Fahamu refugee programme) <a href="https://www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-lgbti">https://www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-lgbti</a> <a href="https://www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-country-list">https://www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-country-list</a>	Programme created to provide access to knowledge, nurture the growing refugee legal aid and advocacy movement in all countries and encourage active sharing of information as well as expertise among legal practitioners throughout the world	Information by country
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## Non-specialised COI portals

Name	Brief description	Useful features
EASO COI portal <a href="https://coi.easo.europa.eu/">https://coi.easo.europa.eu/</a>	COI platform for EU+ states national asylum administrations. It provides selected COI authored by EU+ national asylum authorities, EASO and other EU institutions (e.g. EU External Action Service).	Search function (simple/advanced) News Notification system
Ecoi.net <a href="http://www.ecoi.net/">http://www.ecoi.net/</a>	Publicly available portal gathering updated COI relevant in procedures for international protection. It is maintained by the Austrian Red Cross (ACCORD department) and Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration (Germany). Ecoi.net contains more than 380 000 documents from more than 160 sources	Country pages Search function (simple/advanced) Alert system (updates on the latest developments and newly added documents)
Refworld (UNHCR) <a href="http://www.refworld.org/">http://www.refworld.org/</a>	UNHCR's public domain protection and information database. It provides COI, but since 2019 the focus has been on legal and policy information. In 2020 its protection information platform was relaunched. It contains more than 200 000 documents	Country pages Search function (simple/advanced) Alert system (updates on new additions)



## UN organisations

Name	Brief description	Useful features
OHCHR - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights <a href="https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/Home.aspx">https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/Home.aspx</a>	OHCHR has a unique mandate from the international community to promote and protect all human rights, including the rights of LGBTI people	Human rights per issue Human rights by country Search function
OHCHR (UN Office of the High Commissioner) Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity <a href="https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/sexualorientationgender/pages/index.aspx">https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/sexualorientationgender/pages/index.aspx</a>	The Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity is mandated to explore ways to better protect persons who suffer from violence and discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity	Annual thematic reports Country visits Databases info on anti-discrimination, human rights, jurisprudence etc.
UNAIDS <a href="https://www.unaids.org/">https://www.unaids.org/</a>	UNAIDS is leading the global effort to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals.	Infographics, publications, factsheets The Key Population Atlas <a href="https://kpatlas.unaids.org/dashboard">https://kpatlas.unaids.org/dashboard</a>
UNHCR/Refworld Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity <a href="http://www.refworld.org/sogi.html">http://www.refworld.org/sogi.html</a>	Refworld documents related to sexual orientation and gender identity, including legal, policy and background information. UNHCR guidelines on international protection No. 9, 23 October 2012, <a href="https://www.unhcr.org/publications/legal/50ae466f9/guidelines-international-protection-9-claims-refugee-status-based-sexual.html">https://www.unhcr.org/publications/legal/50ae466f9/guidelines-international-protection-9-claims-refugee-status-based-sexual.html</a>	Country-specific information Case-law Links to other sources Search function

## EU bodies

Name	Brief description	Useful features
DROI - European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights <a href="https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/droi/home/highlights">https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/droi/home/highlights</a>	Protection and promotion of human rights in internal and external policies. Emphasis on ensuring coherence between all the Union's external policies (e.g. on trade, asylum and migration) and its human rights policy	Search function (*sex, *homo..) News
ECRI - European Commission against Racism and Intolerance <a href="https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance">https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance</a>	ECRI is part of the anti-discrimination department and the Directorate of Anti-discrimination within the Directorate General of Democracy (DGII) of the Council of Europe. It is a Human rights monitoring body which specialises in questions relating to the fight against racism, discrimination (including sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics).	Reports and issues recommendations to member States. ECRI's country monitoring is organised in five-year cycles, covering eight to 10 countries per year
European Parliament Intergroup on LGBT Rights <a href="https://lgbti-ep.eu/">https://lgbti-ep.eu/</a>	Informal forum for Members of the European Parliament who wish to advance and protect the fundamental rights of LGBTI people	News Links to European Parliament briefing on LGBTI Links to other sources
FRA - European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights <a href="https://fra.europa.eu/en/themes/sex-sexual-orientation-and-gender">https://fra.europa.eu/en/themes/sex-sexual-orientation-and-gender</a>	Through the collection and analysis of data in the EU, the FRA assists EU institutions and EU Member States in understanding and tackling challenges to safeguard the fundamental rights of everyone in the EU. One of the themes covered by the FRA is LGBTI and SOGI	Survey data explorer News Reports

## Other international bodies

ODIHR - OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights <a href="https://hatecrime.osce.org/what-hate-crime/bias-against-other-groups-sexual-orientation-or-gender-identity">https://hatecrime.osce.org/what-hate-crime/bias-against-other-groups-sexual-orientation-or-gender-identity</a>	Annual reporting on various hate crimes, including bias against sexual orientation or gender identity	Generating an overview of incidents in an excel sheet (select a country, select all, select export)
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## National asylum administrations

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Belgium: Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, Belgium (CGRS) & CEDOCA, COI Unit <a href="https://www.cgrs.be/en/country-information">https://www.cgrs.be/en/country-information</a>	Publications of the CEDOCA	List of publications Search by country/theme
Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) <a href="https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/country-information/Pages/index.aspx">https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/country-information/Pages/index.aspx</a>	Publications of the Research Directorate of the IRB	National documentation packages by country Responses to information requests Recent research Search function
Denmark: Danish Immigration Service <a href="https://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-GB/Words-and-concepts/US/Asylum/Country-information">https://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-GB/Words-and-concepts/US/Asylum/Country-information</a>	Publications from the Danish Immigration Service	Country reports Country notes
Finland: Finnish Immigration Service <a href="https://migri.fi/en/reports">https://migri.fi/en/reports</a>	Publications of the Finnish Immigration Service	List of publications
France: Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (OFPRA) — DIDR <a href="https://www.ofpra.gouv.fr/l-ofpra/nos-publications/les-publications-de-l-ofpra">https://www.ofpra.gouv.fr/l-ofpra/nos-publications/les-publications-de-l-ofpra</a>	Publications of the Division de l'Information, de la Documentation et des Recherches (DIDR)	Lists of recent COI reports and FFM reports
Germany: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) - -MILO <a href="https://milo.bamf.de/milop/cs.exe?func=llworkspace">https://milo.bamf.de/milop/cs.exe?func=llworkspace</a>	BAMF database. Contains COI	Information by country/theme List of publications (IZAM Publikationen)
Norway: Landinfo Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre <a href="https://landinfo.no/en/">https://landinfo.no/en/</a>	Publications of Landinfo	Search function List of publications Search by country/subject/language
Sweden: Migrationsverket/Swedish Migration Agency Lifos — Centre for Country of Origin Information and Analysis <a href="https://lifos.migrationsverket.se/lifos-aktuellt.html">https://lifos.migrationsverket.se/lifos-aktuellt.html</a>	Publications of the Centre for Country of Origin Information and Analysis	Search function
Switzerland: State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) <a href="https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/internationales/herkunftslander.html">https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/internationales/herkunftslander.html</a>	Publications of the State Secretariat for Migration	List of publications
United Kingdom: Home Office —Country policy and information (CPIN) notes <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/country-policy-and-information-notes">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/country-policy-and-information-notes</a>	Publications of the UK Home Office COI service	List of publications. Note: the CPINs consist of a COI part and policy assessments part.

## Universities — Research centres/ institutes

Name	Brief description	Useful features
American Institute of Bisexuality – Journal of Bisexuality <a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wjbi20">https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wjbi20</a>	The Journal of Bisexuality is a professional quarterly publishing both professional articles and serious essays on bisexuality and its meaning for the individual, the community, and society. Since 2001	Search function (books, journals)
Centre for Gender and Refugee Studies (CGRS) <a href="http://cgrs.uchastings.edu/#sthash.PCQC56yJ.dpuf">http://cgrs.uchastings.edu/#sthash.PCQC56yJ.dpuf</a>	Protects fundamental human rights of refugee women, children, LGBT through legal expertise and training, impact litigation, policy development, research, in-country fact-finding	Links to publications
Cornell University Law School LGTBI Clinic: Transgender Law Center <a href="https://transgenderlawcenter.org/">https://transgenderlawcenter.org/</a>		Legal information on transgenders
International Human Rights Programme, University of Toronto, Faculty of Law, <a href="https://ihrp.law.utoronto.ca/">https://ihrp.law.utoronto.ca/</a>	The Human Rights Programme offers a list of SOGI resources	Information by country (reports)
International Spectrum — University of Michigan <a href="http://internationalspectrum.umich.edu/global/worldwideorgs">http://internationalspectrum.umich.edu/global/worldwideorgs</a>	Collaborative website by the University of Michigan's International Center and the Spectrum Center. Provides information on LGBTQ	International and LGBT organisations and resources
Kinsey Institute for Research on Sex, Gender and Reproduction <a href="https://kinseyinstitute.org/">https://kinseyinstitute.org/</a>	Research institute at Indiana University working towards advancing sexual health and knowledge worldwide	Research papers
LGBT studies (LGBTS) Yale University <a href="http://lgbts.yale.edu/">http://lgbts.yale.edu/</a>	LGBTS at Yale promotes innovative interdisciplinary scholarships and teaching on the historical and contemporary experience of LGBT	Link to LGBTI organisations Links to sources
Pew Research Center <a href="#">Gender</a> & LGBT research <a href="https://www.pewresearch.org/topic/gender-lgbt/">https://www.pewresearch.org/topic/gender-lgbt/</a>	Fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the USA and the world	Articles Surveys
SOGICA (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Claims of Asylum) <a href="https://www.sogica.org/en/">https://www.sogica.org/en/</a>	A four-year research project (ended in October 2020) to produce evidence base for a more just and humane asylum process for individuals seeking refuge in Europe on the basis of their SOGI	Database <a href="https://www.sogica.org/en/sogica-database/">https://www.sogica.org/en/sogica-database/</a> Useful links <a href="https://www.sogica.org/en/useful-links/">https://www.sogica.org/en/useful-links/</a>
SSRN - Social Science Research Network <a href="https://www.ssrn.com/index.cfm/en/">https://www.ssrn.com/index.cfm/en/</a>	database of research papers	Research papers Search function
Transrespect versus Transphobia Worldwide (TvT) <a href="https://transrespect.org/en/">https://transrespect.org/en/</a>	“Transrespect versus Transphobia Worldwide” (TvT) is an ongoing, comparative qualitative-quantitative research project initiated by Transgender Europe (TGEU)	<a href="#">Trans Murder Monitoring (TMM)</a> , a systematic collection, monitoring and analysis of reported killings of

		gender-diverse/trans people worldwide. <a href="#">Legal and Social Mapping</a> , an overview of existing laws, law proposals, and actual legal and health-care practices as well as diverse aspects of the social situation relevant to gender-diverse/trans people. Interactive <a href="#">Map</a>
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## Media (specialised and non- specialised)

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Afrol News <a href="http://www.afrol.com/categories/gay_lesbian">http://www.afrol.com/categories/gay_lesbian</a>	African news	Archive search
<a href="http://www.aswatmag.com/">Aswat ( Arabic)</a> <a href="http://www.aswatmag.com/">http://www.aswatmag.com/</a>	A queer, Libertarian magazine in Arabic	Articles, blogs
Edge Media Network <a href="https://www.edgemedianetwork.com/">https://www.edgemedianetwork.com/</a>	LGBTIQ-related news	News articles on global LGBTIQ topics
Equal Eyes <a href="https://equal-eyes.org/">https://equal-eyes.org/</a>	A collection of significant, timely, and international LGBTI stories and events, highlighting issues of health, violence, culture, and legal and human rights. Equal Eyes is produced in collaboration with UNAIDS and is released twice a month.	Media Articles Searchable database of articles <a href="https://equal-eyes.org/topic">https://equal-eyes.org/topic</a>
Gay and Lesbian Alliance against Defamation (GLAAD) <a href="http://www.glaad.org/">http://www.glaad.org/</a>	Media working with print, broadcast and online news sources	News Search function
Gay Star News <a href="http://www.gaystarnews.com/">http://www.gaystarnews.com/</a>	A global LGBTI news on gay current affairs, entertainment, business & more for the gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender communities	News Search function
Global Gayz <a href="http://www.globalgayz.com">http://www.globalgayz.com</a>	Travel, culture and LGBT rights website focused on LGBT life	Information by country Search function by country
Guardian (The), LGBT Rights <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/lgbt-rights">https://www.theguardian.com/world/lgbt-rights</a> <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/society/transgender">https://www.theguardian.com/society/transgender</a>	Specific page of the UK newspaper highlighting LGBTI-rights-related news. Also page on transgender	News Links to sources
Jeem <a href="https://jeem.me/en">https://jeem.me/en</a> <a href="https://jeem.me/en/gender-sexuality">https://jeem.me/en/gender-sexuality</a>	Jeem is a project of the Goethe-Institut, aimed at Arabic-speaking youth in the region, Germany, and around the world. The website produces knowledge as well as critical and cultural content about gender, sex and sexuality that challenges and transcends the prevalent discourse of the mainstream media	Articles, blogs



Journal of Bisexuality (American Institute of Bisexuality) <a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wjbi20">https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wjbi20</a>	The Journal of Bisexuality is a professional quarterly since 2001 publishing both professional articles and serious essays on bisexuality and its meaning for the individual, the community, and society.	Search function (books, journals)
Kohl <a href="https://kohljournal.press/kohl-independent">https://kohljournal.press/kohl-independent</a>	Kohl is a Journal for Body and Gender Research. a progressive, feminist journal on gender and sexuality in the Middle East, South West Asia, and North Africa regions	Journal issues Search function
Komitid (in French) <a href="https://www.komitid.fr/">https://www.komitid.fr/</a>	French gay website (with archives of ex-Yagg webmagazine)	News (international)
Kuchu Times <a href="https://www.kuchutimes.com/">https://www.kuchutimes.com/</a>	Kuchu Times is an African initiative to provide a voice for Africa's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) community and to build an active media stream for radio, television and message forums for the exchange of news and ideas and drawing on Africa's hugely diverse cultures	Links to TV and radio programs
LGBTQNation <a href="http://www.lgbtqnation.com/">http://www.lgbtqnation.com/</a>	US LGBTQ news source	News by region Search function Blog
New Humanitarian (The) <a href="https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/">https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/</a>	Independent, non-profitmaking media organisation (previously IRIN news)	News Search function (simple/advanced) Links to articles, reports and films
Pink News <a href="https://www.pinknews.co.uk/">https://www.pinknews.co.uk/</a>	European gay news service; covers religion, politics, entertainment, finance, and community news for LGBT+ (UK/worldwide)	Information by region (UK/US/World) Search function
Têtu (in French) <a href="https://tetu.com/">https://tetu.com/</a>	French gay magazine and website	News Magazine Blog
Transat site (Eng/Arabic/Amazigh) <a href="https://transatsite.com/">https://transatsite.com/</a>	Website dedicated to gender identity issues in the Arabic language	Articles, blogs
Washington Blade <a href="https://www.washingtonblade.com/">https://www.washingtonblade.com/</a>	"America's LGBT News Source"	Online news on issues related to LGBT



## Blogs

Name	Brief description	Useful features
(A) Paper Bird <a href="http://paper-bird.net/">http://paper-bird.net/</a>	Blog by Scott Long, researcher and activist on sexual orientation/gender identity Main focus is on the Middle East	
Erasing 76 Crimes <a href="https://76crimes.com/">https://76crimes.com/</a>	Blog on the 76 countries' anti-gay laws and the struggle to repeal them	News by region Actions to free imprisoned people Positive news (upbeat) Info on HIV/AIDS

## Others

Name	Brief description	Useful features
Sexuality policy watch <a href="http://sxpolitics.org">http://sxpolitics.org</a>	Sexuality Policy Watch (SPW) is a global forum composed of researchers and activists from a wide range of countries and regions of the world. Launched in 2002 as the International Working Group on Sexuality and Social Policy (IWGSSP), in 2006 the forum changed its name to Sexuality Policy Watch	Library Research projects and analysis
The international encyclopedia of sexuality <a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/book/10.1002/9781118896877">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/book/10.1002/9781118896877</a>	A comprehensive A-Z reference with over 500 entries that define sexuality from a broad biocultural perspective and show the diversity of human sexual behavior and belief systems. Published May 2015	Information by country

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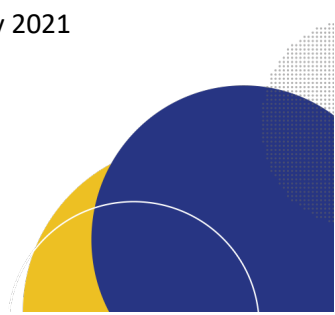
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# Terms of reference

## **Main focus of the working group in first stage (December 2020-end of January 2021):**

- Update Annex II with recent sources and weblinks. Add transgender/intersex sources where needed/possible. Integrate with chapter 4 – description of organisations as sources.
- Add other kind of sources? Academics, anthropological, historical. Not only western NGOs. Don't add highly variable or fast changing sources or information. The guide should be useful for the next couple of years.
- Overall, we change LGB into LGBTIQ or SOGI and add relevant sources (on T and I or on general sexual minorities)
- Keep the guide as practical and useful as possible. No theoretical approaches.

## **Second stage (February -March 2021) :**

- Make the guide more general: adapt to SOGI and Integrate gender identity (transgender, intersex) in the text where relevant.
- Read the guide and think where T and I can easily be added. T and I already in Glossary, Research questions, Annex II
- Adapt introduction: why now add gender identity or change to SOGI (in 2014 LGB most common asylum categories, in 2020 more T).
- Adapt challenges of researching, refer to the survey
- Chapter 2 concepts /terminology – to be considered. Not to add more concepts but integrate gender identity in it.
- Chapter 3 Research questions: include T and I
- Chapter 5-6: update sources and text where relevant.





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