



The SOGICA newsletter: Issue 18 (2 December 2024)

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

The SOGICA project was completed in October 2020 but the work hasn't ended. Since our September 2022 update, there have been some positive developments and a number of new resources we would like to share with you.

Impact and knowledge transfer

- In July 2023, the SOGICA article by Dustin, M. and Ferreira, N., '[Improving SOGI Asylum Adjudication: Putting Persecution Ahead of Identity](#)', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Volume 40, Issue 3, September 2021, pp. 315–347, was cited by the **Canadian Federal Court in [Mohammed v. Canada](#)** (*Citizenship and Immigration*), 2023 FC 956. This SOGICA work interrogates a number of different SOGI asylum decision-making guidelines and models, and was used by the Canadian Federal Court to support the application for judicial review of a Ghanaian bisexual claimant who had been denied international protection on grounds of lack of credibility. We were extremely happy that our work had a positive impact on the life of a SOGI asylum claimant!
- In June 2023, SOGICA's team leader, Nuno Ferreira, participated in a follow-up meeting of the '[2021 Global Roundtable on Protection and Solutions for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer \(LGBTIQ+\) Persons in Forced Displacement](#)', organised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Independent Expert on Protection Against Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (UN IE SOGI) (by invitation), in Geneva, Switzerland. Following that meeting, the UNHCR published the document '[Protecting LGBTIQ+ people in situations of forced displacement: A Stocktaking on UNHCR progress since the 2021 Roundtable](#)'.
- In May 2024, the SOGICA project was nominated for the University of Sussex Research Impact Awards, under the "Impact on public policy" category.
- In September 2024, Nuno offered the keynote speech 'Unravelling the knot of credibility assessment in SOGIESC asylum' at the '[Believe it or not](#)' Conference, organised by The Striking Sirens in Amsterdam - congratulations to the organisers for the wonderful event!
- Between 2022 and 2024, Nuno was a member of the core team leading the production of the European Union Agency for Asylum's new '[Practical Guide on Applicants with diverse Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities, Gender Expressions and Sex Characteristics](#)'. Nuno helped draft the sections on the legal framework and data collection. This is the first time that such extensive and thorough guidance on SOGIESC asylum data collection is directed at national authorities across the EU. There will be a launch event early 2025.

Publications (since autumn 2022)

2024

- Held, N. and Apata, A., '[Intersections of gender, sexuality and "race" in queer asylum claims](#)', in Jane Freedman and Glenda Santana de Andrade (eds.), *Research Handbook on Asylum and Refugee Policy*, Elgar, pp. 239-250 (Chapter 15)

2023

- Ferreira, N., '[Utterly unbelievable: The discourse of "fake" SOGI asylum claims as a form of epistemic injustice](#)', *International Journal of Refugee Law* Volume 34, Issue 3-4, October/December 2022, 303–326
- Ferreira, N., '[Better late than never? SOGI asylum claims and "late disclosure" through a Foucauldian lens](#)', *Journal of International Law and Foreign Affairs* 27(1), 17-56

2022

- SOGICA project, '[Queering Asylum in Europe: A Short Overview](#)', September 2022 [PowerPoint presentation available on the SOGICA YouTube channel]

All publications by the SOGICA team and individual members can be found on the SOGICA website [publications page](#). If you would like access to any of these publications and they are not publicly accessible, please [email us](#) and we will be happy to send them to you.

Submissions to UK parliament

- SOGICA Project, [Submission](#) to the UK Parliament's Justice and Home Affairs Committee's '[Family migration](#)' inquiry, 12 September 2022 [report with references to SOGICA contribution available here: UK House of Lords Justice and Home Affairs Committee, '[All families matter: An inquiry into family migration](#)', 2023]
- SOGICA Project, [Submission](#) to the UK Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights' '[Human Rights of Asylum Seekers in the UK](#)' inquiry, 13 December 2022

Database

The [SOGICA database](#) continues to be updated and now has 1570 items, including academic articles, NGO reports, official documents, judicial decisions and other items relevant to SOGIESC asylum. Keep sending us any suggestions!

Sister project

Some of the SOGICA team members (Nuno Ferreira and Moira Dustin) along with several team members have carried out the project "Negotiating Queer Identities Following Forced Migration (NQIfFM): A Comparative Study of Iranian Queer Refugees Living in Turkey, the UK and Canada", which explores the experiences of people who have left Iran to escape persecution or discrimination on grounds of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

The main outputs of the NQIfFM project include a co-authored book, four journal articles, and a documentary. We also already published:

- the **poetry collection "Rainbows on Rugged Terrains: Poetics of Queer Iranians in Exile"** to support and guide asylum claimants in their journeys to safer locations - you can buy a paper copy or download a free digital copy from the publisher's website [here](#).
- the **podcast "[Sima's Story](#)"**: Sima left Iran more than ten years ago and has been living in Turkey since then. In this podcast, she reflects on how she sees her sexuality and gender. She tells us about her experiences of oppression and boundaries, but also of fluidity and liberation. This is Sima's journey through and across identities.

You can read more about the project through the [NQIfFM website](#), and by following the project's social media channels available via the website. The excellent documentary will be made publicly available soon!

Other news...

- The article Pullen, C., & Franklin, I. (2024). "['We're in this together' - NGO advocacy and LGBTQ+ asylum claimants: Intimate/care citizenship as co-presence and imagined equality](#)", in *Sexualities*, refers to the [SOGICA book](#) as a "landmark publication".
- The [Queer Judgments Project](#) re-imagines, re-writes and re-invents, from queer and other complementing perspectives, judgments that have considered SOGIESC issues. The first output of the project - an edited collection with 26 judgments and commentaries - will soon come out with Counterpress and be available [here](#). It will include a re-imagining of two cases on SOGIESC asylum: one contribution by Alex Powell that revisits the judgment of the UK Supreme Court *HJ (Iran) & HT (Cameroon)* and another contribution by Carmelo Danisi and Nuno Ferreira that revisits the judgment of the Court of Justice of the EU in *X, Y and Z*.

- Moira Dustin, with Christel Querton at the University of the West of England, co-convenes the network, Women in Refugee Law (WiRL), bringing together asylum seeking and refugee women, senior and early career scholars, practitioners, policymakers and activists from all states and jurisdictions to re-centre the study of refugee women within refugee law, policy and practice. WiRL welcomes new members – please visit the website to find out more.

Finally ...

Please feel free to [email us](#) with any questions you have about the SOGICA project, or any news which you would like to share.

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