



# LGBT

Refugees & Migrants:

the situation in GREECE AND in EUROPE

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## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE? BEING MIGRANTS AND LGBTIs

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## Italy – Key data



- Italy: country receiving **high migration flows** – first arrival country
- statistic **data** on SOGI claims are not collected
- LGBTI asylum seekers → are considered an “**social at-risk category**”
- Concerning the SOGI claims for international protection, Italy is actually considered as a **good practice as far as the judicial review process is concerned** . (Fleeing Homophobia)

## Italy – Existing supports

- Growing attention but still no dedicated shelters in the protection system
- Some initiatives:
  - dedicated web pages (such as “Il Grande Colibrì”)
  - help desks in some of the local offices of the national association ARCIGAY
  - MIGRABO LGBTBI

# Italy – Literature review

Very few results (only one significant study from Pozzoli & Lelleri, which dates back to 2009):

- LGBTI migrants **might be forced to hide being homosexual with the originating family and social networks**. Consequently *"there is an high risk of losing the support – crucial in migration- of the fellow countrymen network"*.
- **Double risk of discrimination:** *"a series of obstacles: biases, socio- economical differences, 'cultural' differences, etc.*
- On the other hand, this could be balanced by seeking support in the LGTBI community, **building solidarity networks, "not homo-ethnical, but for example, homo-sexual"**.

# Italy – Field research methodology



- focus group with **5 LGB** from migrant backgrounds (3 men and 2 women) – **Syria, Venezuela, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria**
- **7 individual interviews** to refugees not available to share their own experience with the group or who are no longer living in Italy (two transsexuals, one lesbian women and four homosexuals men) – **Bangladesh, Palestine, Morocco, Iran, Tanzania, Algeria, Pakistan**
- **3 interviews to privileged witnesses** (a national expert of LGTBI migrations, a lawyer with an expertise in international protection requests and an operator in the field of the asylum seekers reception).

## Italy – Field research

- **linguistic and cultural barriers:** often support workers are **not able to explain** what does it means to ask for asylum for persecutions based on sexual orientation in a way that can be actually fully understood by asylum seekers.
- **legal operators have inadequate training** (be they ONG operators or lawyers) to effectively support their clients in the process.
- Feeling of unsafety in shelters: for most LGBTI **the only solution to feel safe is actually to conceal their own gender identity or their own sexual orientation**

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Project Coordinator



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