

Nº05

PART 2 — IDENTITY

EVERY NUMBER
HAS A FACE

WHY PEOPLE MIGRATE · EPISODE V · GENDER PERSECUTION

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE.

When the choice to exist
becomes the **greatest crime**.

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE.

When the choice to exist becomes the **greatest crime**.

In Part 1, a woman's body ceased to belong to the woman. In this second part, identity ceases to belong to whoever lives it. It is the same physics of force — on another border, under another name, over another part of the same person.

IN THIS ISSUE • 9 VERTEBRAE +
INTERLUDE + CODA

I BEFORE THE BORDER p. 05

II THE MAP OF CRIMINALISATION p. 07

III WHO DIES, AND WHERE p. 08

IV TERRY-KAY • THREE ATTEMPTS p. 10

V THE IMPOSSIBLE PROOF p. 13

VI MAKSIM • THIRTEEN MONTHS p. 15

S ALISA • IN MEMORIAM p. 16

**♦ THE VOICE FROM THE FIELD •
GLOBAL SOUTH** p. 20

**VII THE RANKING THAT DOES NOT
EXIST** p. 21

**VIII IT'S NOT THE COUNTRY. IT'S
THE LAWYER.** p. 22

IX BEFORE LEAVING p. 25

■ INSTITUTIONAL REFERENCE

IOM • UNHCR • GENDER-BASED PERSECUTION

Persecution based on **sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTI+)** is one of the five realities recognised by IOM under the "gender persecution" category — alongside violence against women, sexual violence in conflict, harmful practices, and systemic intra-family violence.

In **65 countries**, this identity is a crime. In **12**, it is punishable by death. In all the others, fear precedes the law.

SOURCE: ILGA WORLD • HUMAN DIGNITY TRUST •
UNHCR GUIDELINES N° 9

Who holds the authority
to decide
who you may be?

S • CODA P. 26

**IT WAS NEVER
ABOUT FLEEING.**

EDITORIAL OPINION • KIN

— A MIGRATION THAT BEGAN INSIDE THE HOME

There is a table. There is a new silence. And there is a chair that nobody yet knows where it will stand tomorrow.

OPENING • MECHANISM BEFORE BORDER

THIS TEXT IS NOT ABOUT LGBTI+.

It is about a mechanism.

The mechanism by which a human trait — the way someone loves, dresses, recognises themselves, was born — passes from private aspect to reason for public persecution.

This mechanism does not distinguish geographies. It does not distinguish religions. It does not distinguish ideologies.

It exists where the law authorises it, and it exists where the law was never written.

And where fear precedes the law, migration begins before any border is crossed.

— — KIN EDITORIAL, PART 2

— FIVE REALITIES • ONE CATEGORY

IOM and UNHCR classify five distinct realities under "gender persecution": **violence against women and girls; persecution based on sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTI+); sexual violence in armed conflict; harmful practices** (mutilation, forced marriage, "honour crimes"); and **systemic intra-family violence**.

Part 1 of this episode dealt with the first. This part deals with the second. The others remain open for the editions to come.

IOM GLOSSARY ON MIGRATION, 8TH ED. • UNHCR GUIDELINES N° 9

In Part 1, the body ceased to belong to the person.
Now, identity does too.

THE QUESTION THAT ORGANISES THIS PART

WHO HOLDS THE AUTHORITY TO DECIDE WHO YOU MAY BE?

In Part 1 we asked *who controls the body?* — and the answer pointed to nameable aggressors: the husband, the trafficker, the algorithm, the State. Here the question shifts, and the answer shifts with it. It is not always the State that expels first. Often, the first persecutor *lives inside the home*.

THE DISPLACEMENT THAT BEGINS INSIDE

FEAR PRECEDES THE LAW.

In 65 countries, a sexual orientation or gender identity is a crime. In 12 of those countries, it is punishable by death. But before the law reaches any body, fear has already occupied the space where that life could have happened.

It exists in the teacher who learns not to speak of themselves.

In the doctor who never mentions the partner.

In the family who teaches the child to hide.

In the city that learns silence as a method of survival.

Long before the law imprisons anyone, the law has already forced thousands to imprison themselves within.

This is where identity-based persecution differs from all others. No external aggressor is required. The expectation of one is enough.

LGBTI+ migration has an anatomy of its own: **the first border to be crossed lies inside the home itself** — the family of origin is, frequently, the first persecutor. Not the second. Not the accomplice. The first.

THE GLOBAL MAP • 2026

65

COUNTRIES WHERE LGBTI+ IDENTITY IS A CRIME • ILGA WORLD, 2026

12

COUNTRIES WHERE IT IS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH
ACTIVE ENFORCEMENT IN 7 • LEGAL POSSIBILITY IN 5

37

COUNTRIES THAT FORMALLY GRANT ASYLUM ON THIS GROUND • UN WOMEN, 2024

65 COUNTRIES CRIMINALISE.

37 PROTECT.

28 GAPS WHERE LIFE UNFOLDS WITHOUT ANY FORMAL WAY OUT.

In 2025, for the first time in nearly a decade, the number of countries that criminalise grew again.

— ILGA WORLD, JUNE 2026 UPDATE

If I keep on being who I am,
I cannot keep on being where I am.

— PHRASE GATHERED IN THREE INDEPENDENT INTERVIEWS, THREE COUNTRIES, THREE DECADES



WHERE THE LAW WRITES FEAR

A GEOGRAPHY OF CRIMINALISATION.

Criminalisation is not ideological. It is not regional. It is not a "Global South issue". It is a mechanism that cuts across continents, religions and political systems — and one that hardened in several countries at once between 2023 and 2026.

DEATH PENALTY · 12 COUNTRIES

Active enforcement (7): Iran · Saudi Arabia · Yemen · Nigeria (12 northern states / Sharia) · Mauritania · Brunei · Uganda (since 2023).

Legal possibility (5): Afghanistan · Pakistan · Qatar · Somalia · United Arab Emirates.

LIFE IMPRISONMENT OR +10 YEARS

Life: Gambia · Guyana · Sudan · Tanzania · Zambia · Sierra Leone.

10–20 years: Malaysia (20 + caning) · Kenya (14) · Ghana · Papua New Guinea · Jamaica (10 + hard labour) · Sri Lanka.

■ NOTE · ILGA WORLD 2026

"States and security forces continue to create barriers to the exercise of rights of LGBTI people." Criminalisation is not a legacy of a past that is dissolving. It is a legal technology that grew again in 2025 for the first time in almost a decade.

— SOURCE: ILGA WORLD · PRIDE MONTH REPORT 2026

RECENT HARDENING · 2023–2026

Uganda — death penalty enacted, 2023.

Russia — LGBTQ+ movement classified as an "extremist organisation", 2023.

Burkina Faso — new Family Code criminalises same-sex acts, September 2025.

Niger — new Charter of Refoundation and new Penal Code criminalise "LGBTQIA+ practices", May 2025 and June 2026.

Senegal — penalties increased from 1–5 to 5–10 years, March 2026.

Ghana — expansive law against sexual and gender diversity, May 2026.

Slovakia — Constitution amended to ban legal recognition of gender, November 2025.

India — self-ID removed from Transgender Rights Act, March 2026.

RECENT DECRIMINALISATIONS

Botswana — criminalising article struck from Penal Code, April 2026.

Saint Lucia — criminalisation overturned by the High Court, July 2025.

Dominica — decriminalisation, 2024. **Namibia** — 2024.



THE SCALE OF WHAT CAN NO LONGER BE DENIED

WHO DIES, AND WHERE.

Between 1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025, **281 murders** of trans and gender-diverse people were recorded worldwide. Since 2009, the documented total exceeds **5,322**.

These are only the cases the press reported and an organisation was able to verify. TGEU itself warns: *the real number is substantially higher*.

Brazil has led this list for 18 consecutive years. It concentrates 30% of all global cases. A trans person is murdered in the country every three days.

This is not a matter of "a country that criminalises": Brazil does not criminalise. What appears here is **the difference between state persecution and social persecution** — a culture that kills without needing a law to authorise it.

TGEU • TRANS MURDER MONITORING 2025

281

MURDERS RECORDED • OCT 2024 - SEPT 2025

90%

OF THE VICTIMS WERE TRANS WOMEN OR TRANSFEMININE PEOPLE

88%

WERE BLACK OR BROWN TRANS PEOPLE

68%

OCCURRED IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

14%

WERE ACTIVISTS AND MOVEMENT LEADERS — UP FROM 6% IN 2023. DOUBLED IN TWO YEARS.

■ DEEKSHITHA GANESAN • TGEU POLICY MANAGER

"Over the past two years, murders of trans activists and movement leaders have doubled. This rise is a deliberate attempt to silence those who defend freedom and equality. These killings are the most extreme consequence of a political discourse that dehumanises trans people."

— TGEU — TRANS MURDER MONITORING 2025

THE CURVE NOBODY WANTS TO SEE

TWENTY THOUSAND REQUESTS IN A SINGLE YEAR.

In 2025, Rainbow Railroad — the Canadian organisation that assists LGBTQI+ people fleeing persecution — received **more than 20,000 requests for help**. It is the highest number in twenty years of operation. A **51%** increase over the previous year.

The requests come from more than seventy countries. From Uganda to the United States. From Iran to Brazil. From Russia to Jamaica.

The curve does not describe the problem. It describes our awareness of it.

Each request is a person who discovered that Rainbow Railroad exists. Thousands more never will. Many will die without anyone knowing they were calling for help.

RAINBOW RAILROAD • 2025

20K+

REQUESTS FOR HELP IN 2025 • 20-YEAR
HISTORIC HIGH

+51%

GROWTH COMPARED TO 2024

45,000+

LGBTQI+ PEOPLE SUPPORTED SINCE FOUNDING

"We're seeing spikes in anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment, like the recently passed legislation in Uganda that authorises criminal charges against those who support LGBTQI people. But sometimes we forget that LGBTQI people exist everywhere, in every crisis, regardless of what is happening in the world."

— DEVON MATTHEWS • CHIEF PROGRAMS OFFICER, RAINBOW RAILROAD • JUNE 2026

IV

JAMAICA → CANADA • THE MECHANISM THAT NEARLY WORKED

TERRY-KAY. THREE ATTEMPTS.

We begin with her because the mechanism worked — almost. And it is in the *almost* that one learns the pattern before seeing its failures.

Terry-Kay Walker grew up in Jamaica — a country where violence against LGBTQ+ people is endemic and where the police often join the attacks or ignore them.

One night, on her way home from a fashion show in New Kingston, she was shot in the leg. In 2024, she received an anonymous message with a video of a trans friend being brutally murdered. The message said: *"I know where you live and you're next."*



AI IMAGE

Each post-it stuck to a page is a night of study. It is the statistical difference between 10% and 53% approval. It is what Terry-Kay had, and others did not.

THREE ATTEMPTS IN THREE YEARS

THE MECHANISM DEPENDED ON THREE COUNTRIES.

THREE ATTEMPTS

1st • 2024 — Flight to Amsterdam. Refused at the gate for lack of a return ticket.

2nd — Via Bogotá, Colombia. Approved under the U.S. P-1 programme for LGBTQ+ refugees at the end of the Biden administration. When Trump took office, the programme was eliminated *"overnight"*.

3rd • December 2025 — Canada. Approved via the Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR) Programme. She landed in Toronto.

Three geographies. Two federal programmes. One political window that closed. Had any of the three failed, she would be hiding today in Jamaica — or dead.

■ TERRY-KAY WALKER • TORONTO, 2026

"Being someone from the streets, you go through so much that nothing breaks you. I was in a place where I was hiding who I am, running from the police, running from the general population. I dreamed of reaching a better place for myself. Where I could work in any job I wanted. And show up as I am. Dressed as a woman."

— CITYNEWS TORONTO • JUNE 2026

■ CURRENT REGULATORY RISK

CANADA • BILL C-12

In March 2026, Canada passed Bill C-12, imposing a **one-year** deadline for asylum claims after arrival. Cases like Terry-Kay's — which crossed 18 months and three countries — would hardly survive the new rule. Rainbow Railroad lost, in the same year, critical funding from the Canadian government.

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF CANADA • RAINBOW RAILROAD STATEMENT 2026

On the other side of the desk,
**someone who has never lived your life
will decide whether it is true.**

V THE GOVERNING VERB

THE IMPOSSIBLE PROOF.

When a person reaches an asylum country carrying an identity that was a crime in the country of origin, they face a brutal paradox: they must prove they are who they say they are. And the only available proof is their own word. And the word meets a system built around disbelief.

The verb is not *to be*. It is not *to have been*. It is not *to live*.

It is **to prove**. And, deeper still, **to perform**.

Because the system does not ask for documentary proof — it asks that the person present their identity in terms the officer recognises as authentic.

A gay man must signal as gay. A trans woman must signal sufficient femininity. A Moroccan lesbian who had children with a man must explain why that does not invalidate her lesbianism.

It is not to prove who one is. It is to prove one is in the way they expect.

One country persecutes for conforming too closely to the stereotype. The other rejects for not conforming closely enough. The identity is the same. The system is different. The mechanism, inverted, operates on the same logic.

DOCUMENTED CASES • QUESTIONS ASKED

To a Moroccan lesbian: to narrate in detail how her rape occurred, and how she felt during sexual relations with a man.

To a gay man from Benin: when he said his sexual life was private, the refusal was used as evidence of falsity.

To a gay man in a formal hearing: repeated questions about the position he and his partner were in bed when his father found them.

Greek study • 60 rejected cases: in 28, decision-makers used stereotypes such as "does not attend pride parades" as grounds for denial.

— REFUGEE LAW INITIATIVE • JULY 2024

The system demands openness.
Trauma produces silence. Silence
is read as a lie.

— KIN EDITORIAL • PART 2

NUMBERS THAT DO NOT RESEMBLE EACH OTHER

THE SAME IDENTITY, THREE DIFFERENT OUTCOMES.

There is no "global asylum system" for claims based on sexual orientation and gender identity. There are as many systems as there are countries. And the outcomes of essentially equivalent claims vary in ways that only chance — or the officer of the day — can explain.

62%

APPROVAL IN SEXUAL-
ORIENTATION CLAIMS

UNITED KINGDOM • 2023

1,377 CLAIMS • HOME OFFICE

96%

REJECTION IN SOGI CLAIMS

SWEDEN • 2020-2023

1,360 DECISIONS ANALYSED •
RFSL

19%

RECOGNITION AT HIGHER
INSTANCES

EUROPEAN UNION • 2024

EUAA • AGGREGATED DATA

KRI INSTITUTE

These three numbers appear in countries frequently listed together as part of the same democratic Europe. United Kingdom, Sweden and the aggregated European Union. Three destinations any LGBTI+ refugee from Iran or Uganda would initially consider equivalent.

They are not. And the distance between them cannot be explained by legal differences — all three recognise sexual orientation as valid grounds for asylum. The distance exists because, inside each system, **the impossible proof is read differently by the same sources of doubt**: a Swedish officer decides 96 times out of 100 that the person is lying. A British officer decides 62 times out of 100 that they are telling the truth.

■ DECLARED RULE • EU ASYLUM OFFICER

"Protection is granted for what the person is, not for what they did."

— REFUGEE LAW INITIATIVE BLOG • 2024

The sentence sums up the system. Protection through identity. But the identity must be proven. And proving the identity — without falling into the performance the system demands, with the trauma the system does not know how to read — is impossible.

VI

RUSSIA → U.S. • WHEN THE DESTINATION USES THE SAME METHOD

MAKSIM. THIRTEEN MONTHS.

Maksim Borisov, 22 years old, fled Russia after the anti-LGBTQ+ laws became increasingly oppressive. He arrived in the United States believing the worst was behind him.

He was detained in one of the most notorious migrant-detention centres in the United States, in Arizona. He spent **thirteen months** inside.

As an openly gay man, he became a permanent target. Without protection — neither from other detainees, nor from the system holding him there. He described systematic sexual extortion against trans detainees in exchange for protection. He himself was threatened with rape by a guard if he refused to sign a voluntary deportation order.

He walked out free in March 2026. He speaks publicly because *"the people still inside cannot"*.

The destination country used the same methods as the country of origin — isolation, threat, humiliation. What changed, for the one who fled?



AI IMAGE

■ MAKSIM BORISOV • MARCH 2026

"He calls it his breaking point. And he reached it. He wants people to know he is not the exception. He is the pattern."

— MIGRANT INSIDER • MARCH 2026

■ THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

MIGRANT DETENTION IN THE U.S.

Multiple reports document patterns of abuse: excessive solitary confinement, complaints involving LGBTQ+ detainees, systematic sexual extortion. The system operates outside ordinary criminal law: no sentence, no deadline, no due process.

SOURCE: ACLU • HRW • MIGRANT INSIDER

IN MEMORIAM

ALISA.

17 YEARS · 2025



ALISA.

17.

She arrived at **16** at a refugee camp in the north of the Netherlands. She was fleeing Russia, where her identity had ceased to be tolerated.

She could not stay in an adult camp. She was a minor. She was placed there anyway.

In her first month, she was raped — according to reports documented by the Dutch organisation that assisted her. Nobody followed up.

She needed hormone therapy. The Dutch waiting list is more than two years. She did not get it.

She needed psychological support. She did not get it.

She had a legal guardian — the Netherlands has an institution for unaccompanied refugee minors. Alisa could not reach hers.

Over almost a year, she developed schizophrenia. She began to self-harm. She began to use drugs.

She was transferred to an adult facility.

On the eve of her death, she confided in another refugee that she was thinking about suicide.

On a Saturday morning, other residents alerted staff at the agency responsible for reception: *Alisa was barely breathing*. An initial check was made. She was left alone.

The ambulance was only called an hour and a half later, on a second check. By the time it arrived, she was probably no longer breathing.

She never regained consciousness. She died in the intensive care unit.

It was **27 March 2025**.

Two days later, all her belongings were thrown into a skip.

The Dutch organisation that accompanied her set up, in her unit, an improvised memorial — a photo, flowers, a flag, candles. It was the only thing anyone organised in her name.

*"Lieve Alice, waar je ook bent, rust zacht."**

◆ VERIFY • LGBT ASYLUM SUPPORT

LGBT ASYLUM SUPPORT • COMMUNIQUÉ OF 30 MARCH 2025

BEFORE ALISA, THERE WERE OTHERS

Five names. One pattern. And an organisation that, in writing, asked the State for three things it never received.

HINA ZAKHAROVA

TRANS • RUSSIAN • MARCH 2023

Needed hormone therapy. Two-year waiting list. Asked for help in internal camp chats — received aggressive replies and mockery about her "desire for euthanasia". Died by suicide.

KATYA MIKHAILOVA

TRANS • MOLDOVAN • DECEMBER 2023

Beaten at home by her family. Diagnosed as transsexual by the Moldovan military — which conscripted her anyway. She fled. A single Dutch official decided, citing "safe country of origin", that the rest of the case was irrelevant. Body found on Christmas Day, in the corridor of a camp.

ANTONINA BABKINA

TRANS • RUSSIAN • JANUARY 2024

Streamer. Fled after the invasion of Ukraine. She had already been granted residency. Diagnosed with autism and schizophrenia. She was transferred to a restrictive facility against the written recommendation of the organisation

accompanying her. Died by suicide.

MIKHAIL ZUBCHENKO

BISEXUAL • RUSSIAN • 24 YEARS OLD

Applied for asylum as a bisexual man. A neighbour, afterwards: *"they face problems that turn into suicide factors and could have been prevented."*

All Russian or from neighbouring countries. All LGBTI+. All in Dutch camps. All before Alisa.

They left home to remain marginal, simply for being who they already were.

— THREE WRITTEN REQUESTS • ONE WITNESS

WHAT WAS ASKED. WHAT WAS NOT GIVEN.

From North to South, in regions far from the main urban centres, the Netherlands maintains camps for refugees. This ought to be laudable, worthy of humanitarian awards — but it is not.

They are holding sites, not shelters, in the account of many, evoking detention centres, where arms do not embrace and hands do not reach — whether those of the State, its agents, or the future.

◆ VERIFY • LGBT ASYLUM SUPPORT

The Dutch organisation that accompanied them — **LGBT Asylum Support** — had asked, in writing, three things of the Dutch State: **medical assessment on arrival; timely psychological support; access to interpreters in the refugees' language.**

It is not possible to determine whether this negligence reflects individual decisions by agents in daily contact with the victims, or whether a deeper structural problem prevents the Dutch State from acting with the proactivity the reports called for.

But according to a report issued by **LGBT Asylum Support** in **June 2026**, new victims continue to follow the same path as Alisa.

■ TRANSCRIBED VOICE • SASHA • FRIEND OF KATYA

"The Netherlands is the most favourable country for Russian LGBTQ+ refugees to obtain asylum."

The sentence is not from KIN. It is from a Russian trans refugee, a friend of Katya Mikhailova. It is the system's witness comparing two countries. If this is the best a Russian LGBTI+ person can aspire to — **five documented deaths in three years, in the same facilities** — what is the question this number is asking?

— GLOBAL VOICES • HOLOD MAGAZINE • 30 MARCH 2024

VOICES FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH · ON THE BEFORE-FLIGHT EXPERIENCE

THE VOICE FROM THE FIELD.

Three testimonies. Three corridors — Jamaica, Venezuela, Brazil. Three moments *before* the border. All gathered from public sources; all cited verbatim. None of these voices was interviewed by the KIN. All can be verified.

01

JAMAICA ·
2013

“LEAVE THE COMMUNITY WITHIN 24 HOURS, OR ELSE.”

“As I turned the corner, one of the guys said, ‘*Me no want a battyman go by my shop.*’ He got up and started to flick his knife open. When I ignored him, he said, ‘*You a battyman?*’ I started to back away and then I just turned and go back by my avenue. The guy yelled...”

— ERROL S. · PSEUDONYM · TO HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, KINGSTON · REPORT *NOT SAFE AT HOME*, OCTOBER 2014

02

VENEZUELA →
US → EL
SALVADOR ·
2024–25

“I’M NOT A GANG MEMBER. I’M GAY. I’M A STYLIST.”

Left Venezuela on 23 May 2024 after persecution at a State-affiliated TV channel for being gay and for refusing to endorse government propaganda. Presented himself at San Ysidro under CBP One on 29 August 2024; detained over two tattoos honouring his parents and the *Reyes Magos* festival of his hometown. Deported to CECOT on 15 March 2025 under the Alien Enemies Act. Released 18 July 2025 in a prisoner swap. In February 2026, sought asylum in Spain.

— ANDRY HERNÁNDEZ ROMERO · TO EL PAÍS (25 AUG 2025), LA TIMES (11 SEPT 2025), THE GUARDIAN (22 MAY 2026)

03

VENEZUELA →
UNITED
STATES ·
2016 → 2026

EXILE IS NOT ONLY CHANGING COUNTRY.

“Ten years ago I had to leave Venezuela and apply for asylum in the United States as a consequence of the persecution I faced for being a gay man and a human-rights defender. Over time I understood that exile is not only changing country. It also means learning to live with the certainty that a part of us will always remain in the place we had to leave.”

— YONATAN MATHEUS · SOCIAL WORKER, LGBTQ HUMAN-RIGHTS DEFENDER · WASHINGTON BLADE, 13 JULY 2026 · TRANS. FROM SPANISH BY THE KIN

04

BRAZIL ·
2025

THE NUMBERS DO NOT REPRESENT ALL THE DEATHS.

“Since 2020, I have noticed a drop in this type of news, which may be due to the invisibility of these incidents or increased underreporting. It is not possible to claim that the information and results presented here represent all homicides and violence against trans people, due to limitations during monitoring and the lack of government data.”

— SAYONARA NOGUEIRA · OBSERVATÓRIO TRANS & REDE TRANS BRASIL · TGEU · TRANS MURDER MONITORING 2025

VII

WHERE THE INDICES STOP

THE RANKING THAT DOES NOT EXIST.

There is an index of LGBTI+ rights for citizens — the ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map, published annually for more than a decade. There is not yet an equivalent index for *refugees*. And that absence is not neutral.

■ WHAT WE KNOW

65 countries criminalise LGBTI+ identity.
12 foresee the death penalty.
37 formally grant asylum on this ground.

ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map 2026 — top:

Spain (1st) · Malta (88%) · Iceland (86%)

ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map 2026 — bottom:

Russia (2%) · Azerbaijan (2%) · Türkiye (5%)

Five factors statistically increase the probability of survival (see Vertebra VIII).

Iceland is the only European country that trains asylum officers in cooperation with an LGBTI+ organisation.

■ WHAT WE STILL DO NOT KNOW

Which country is objectively the safest for an LGBTI+ refugee to reach.

How many people have died in reception camps — there is no official register.

How long, on average, the process takes in each country.

How many are rejected and returned to the persecuting country.

How many SOGI-specialised lawyers exist per country and per region.

What is the access rate to hormone therapy for trans refugees in each asylum system.

The absence of these numbers is the second layer of the problem. Until they exist, there is no way to hold anyone to account. And until anyone can be held to account, five deaths in a single facility can still be treated as "isolated cases".



NETHERLANDS • TOP 10

At least **5 documented deaths** of LGBTI+ refugees in the same facilities, over three years.



SWEDEN • TOP 15

Rejects **96% of SOGI claims** — 1,360 decisions analysed (RFSL, 2020–2023).

Criminalisation is not the only enemy of the LGBTI+ refugee. The country that presents itself as a refuge can be one too.

VIII

THE ONLY FACTOR THAT MULTIPLIES THE ODDS

IT'S NOT THE COUNTRY. IT'S THE LAWYER.

A researcher who only studies failure does not understand the mechanism. They only understand it when they also study success. The right question is not *how did some people survive* — it is *what makes a system protect an identity rather than persecute it*. And that question has an answer with numbers.

WITH LEGAL REPRESENTATION

45-53%

ASYLUM-CLAIM APPROVAL

WITHOUT LEGAL REPRESENTATION

10-15%

ASYLUM-CLAIM APPROVAL

5-11×

THE PROBABILITY OF SURVIVING THE
PROCESS INCREASES BY THIS MAGNITUDE
WITH A LAWYER

— SOURCE: AMERICAN IMMIGRATION COUNCIL
• VERA INSTITUTE

It is not the country. It is not luck. It is not the officer of the day. It is a lawyer — because a lawyer knows how to frame the narrative in the terms the system recognises. Knows what documentation to gather. Knows when to ask for postponements. Knows how to present trauma in a way the system can read.

Without a lawyer, the claimant faces alone a system designed for lawyers.

The question "*how do I flee?*" becomes a logistical one. **How do I reach a lawyer before a hearing whose outcome I do not control?** That moment almost always determines what comes next.

— WHAT DOCUMENTS AN IDENTITY

According to the **Immigration Equality Asylum Manual**, documentation that works goes *to the heart of what happened*: police records, medical records, sworn letters from partners, friends and family who witnessed the harm — not abstract certificates of identity. Effective documentation does not prove *who one is*. It proves *what one suffered for being it*.

IMMIGRATION EQUALITY • ASYLUM MANUAL, 3RD ED.

— WHERE PROTECTION STOPPED BEING AN EXCEPTION

THREE MECHANISMS THAT SAVE.

CANADA

330+

LGBTQ+ REFUGEES
RESETTLED

RAINBOW REFUGEE ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP

A **private-sponsorship** programme for LGBTQ+ refugees. Capacity of 50 people per year. Partnership extended through 2029.

— GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

ICELAND

ONLY

EUROPEAN COUNTRY
WITH THIS MODEL

JOINT TRAINING WITH LGBTI NGO

The only European country identified in the **ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map 2026** that trains asylum officers in **cooperation with an LGBTI organisation**. Small scale. Replicable model.

— ILGA-EUROPE • RAINBOW MAP 2026

RAINBOW
RAILROAD

45,000+

PEOPLE SUPPORTED
SINCE FOUNDING

TRANSNATIONAL EMERGENCY NETWORK

Combines emergency relocation, legal support and financial assistance. In 2025 it received more than **20,000 requests** — a 20-year historic high.

— RAINBOW RAILROAD

— WHAT THE THREE HAVE IN COMMON

REPLICABLE STRUCTURES.

The three models share a common denominator: **someone treats the person as a person before the system treats them as a case.** A private sponsor. An officer trained by those who understand. A network that responds before the caseworker decides.

Each of these mechanisms exists today, is replicable, and is underfunded. Each could welcome ten times more people if there were political pressure to make it happen.

■ EDITORIAL RULE • KIN

KIN does not study only the mechanisms of harm. It studies the mechanisms of protection with the same rigour. Because if we only study violence, we describe a world without exit. If we only study happy stories, we surrender to easy inspiration.

But if we study the mechanisms that *statistically increase* the probability of protection — we produce useful knowledge.

— KIN METHOD • PROPOSED ADDITION TO CHAPTER II

IX

A FLOW OF ACTIONS, NOT A CLOSED PATH

WHAT CAN BE DONE BEFORE LEAVING.

This is not a manual. It is a compass. The full manual — step by step, country by country, with verified contacts — is published in the Manuals section at www.kin.institute. Only the anchors are given here.

■ 01 • DOCUMENT BEFORE LEAVING

Every piece of evidence of what happened — police records, messages, threats, letters from acquaintances — filed on encrypted cloud storage (Proton Drive) and shared via secure channel (Signal). What stays at home may not survive the departure.

■ 03 • KNOW THAT ONLY 37-42 COUNTRIES

Formally grant asylum on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. Not all democratic countries do. Knowing the list saves the cost of trying where there is no legal solution — and lets you channel resources.

■ 05 • DO NOT LIE IN THE PROCESS

Even omissions — if discovered — invalidate the entire claim. If something is hard to say, say it to the lawyer first, so the framing can be prepared. The system punishes contradictions, not fragility.

■ 02 • CONTACT ORGANISATIONS BEFORE FLEEING

Rainbow Railroad, GRAM, Immigration Equality, Rainbow Migration, HIAS, Tahirih Justice Center. The moment to contact them is *before* the moment of desperation. After, it is harder.

■ 04 • LAWYER BEFORE THE FIRST INTERVIEW

This is the point that changes everything. Never accept an asylum interview without representation. Many NGOs refer to pro bono lawyers. A lawyer before the interview turns 10-15% into a 45-53% probability.

■ 06 • BUILD A NETWORK BEFORE ISOLATING

After arrival, isolation is the second persecutor. Community — even small, even only linguistic — reduces the risk of the camps doing the rest of the work. Alisa did not have that.

■ FULL MANUAL • KIN INSTITUTE

The detailed manual — in **Portuguese, English, Russian, Arabic, Farsi and Spanish** — is published at www.kin.institute/manuals, section *Asylum Claim for Identity-based Persecution*. It includes country contacts, checklists, documentation templates and verified route maps.

— THIS EDITORIAL IS THE DOOR. THE MANUAL IS THE TOOL.

IT WAS NEVER ABOUT FLEEING.

This text was not written for those who migrate because of identity. It was written for those who judge, without ever having crossed the border that a family of origin imposed. For those who vote on asylum policies without ever having waited, for two years, on a decision that depended on an officer deciding whether to believe.

KIN's mission is not to teach refugees how to flee. It is to help the host society understand **what happened before that person arrived** — and what continues to happen afterwards.

In this episode, the before began inside the home. The after, for many, began again inside a camp.

But the after also has another name. It is called lawyer. It is called network. It is called a system that decided not to repeat the method of the persecuting country.

It exists. It is rare. It is scalable.

WHAT SUSTAINS THIS EDITORIAL

PRIMARY SOURCES.

GLOBAL DATA · MAPS

ILGA World Database · Rainbow Map 2026 — global map of criminalisation and European LGBTI+ rights ranking.

Human Dignity Trust — criminalisation map.

UNHCR — Guidelines on International Protection N° 9 · Migration Experiences of People with Diverse SOGIESC, 2023.

UN Women — In Search of Safety, June 2024.

TGEU · Trans Murder Monitoring 2025 — 281 murders between Oct 2024 and Sept 2025.

Rainbow Railroad Annual Report 2025 — 20,000+ requests; +51%; 45,000+ supported since founding.

EUAA · GOV.UK · RFSL / HIV Justice Network — approval-rate data by country.

American Immigration Council · Vera Institute — legal-representation data (5–11x).

CASES · REPORTING

VERIFY · LGBT ASYLUM SUPPORT

LGBT Asylum Support NL — communiqués of 30 Mar 2025, 23 Jun 2026, 29 Jun 2026. Mr. Sandro Kortekaas (Chairman / Voorzitter · spokesperson).

Global Voices / Holod magazine — reporting on suicides of LGBTQ+ refugees in Dutch camps · 30 Mar 2024.

TDor / Trans Lives Matter — individual profiles for Alisa Serova, Antonina Babkina, Katya Mikhailova, Hina Zakharova.

The Moscow Times · PinkNews · Meduza — coverage of Alisa Serova, April 2025.

CityNews Toronto — Terry-Kay Walker case, June 2026.

Migrant Insider · Tucson Sentinel — Maksim Borisov case, March 2026.

Refugee Law Initiative Blog — July 2024.

Immigration Equality — Asylum Manual, 3rd ed.

VERIFY · LGBT ASYLUM SUPPORT

* "DEAR ALISA, WHEREVER YOU ARE, REST GENTLY." — LGBT ASYLUM SUPPORT, COMMUNIQUÉ OF 30 MARCH 2025. SENTENCE KEPT IN DUTCH IN THE BODY OF THE TEXT BY UNIQUE EDITORIAL DECISION FOR THIS EPISODE.

THE PEDAGOGICAL OFFER · EVERY READER IS A ROUTE

BRING KIN TO YOUR COMMUNITY.

The KIN Institute offers pedagogical materials adapted to different age groups, with accessible language, verified data, and an approach that honours the sensitivity of the subject.

MATERIALS BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

PRIMARY I · AGES 6-10

SAFETY, TRUST, BOUNDARIES.

Age-adapted content on personal safety, trust and the language of boundaries — for children aged 6 to 10.

PRIMARY II · AGES 11-14

EXPLOITATION, RIGHTS, DIGNITY.

Introduction to exploitation and to the framework of human rights, for adolescents aged 11 to 14.

SECONDARY · AGES 15-17

TRAFFICKING, FLIGHT, SLAVERY.

Critical analysis of human trafficking, forced migration and modern slavery, for young people aged 15 to 17.

TEACHER TRAINING

GUIDES AND LESSON PLANS.

Materials and scripts for educators to address the subject in the classroom with safety, responsibility and care.

■ REQUEST A SESSION

You can request a **session with KIN** to address this subject at your institution, school, company or association. We bring the data, the cases and the editorial methodology — in person or online, *wherever nuance is possible*.

Contact: link@kin.institute