IOM BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG
EQUALCITY PROJECT UPDATE - FEB 2021
CREATING SAFE(R) SPACES FOR LGBTQI+ MIGRANTS

2020 has been a particularly challenging but very fruitful and inspiring year with great progress in the Equalcity project. After months of research, interviews and surveys with frontline workers and migrants, the project partners successfully developed 4 toolboxes that aim at tackling sexual and gender-based violence against migrants. The tools have all been carefully reviewed by a panel of thematic experts who contributed to making them sustainable, comprehensive and duplicable to various EU contexts (read more).

The 4 EU partner cities included in this project — Brussels, Luxembourg, Rome, Gothenburg — will continue their efforts in 2021 with key moments ahead such as the thematic workshops with the 35 trainee cities of the project (see map).

This project update focuses on the activities in Brussels where RainbowHouse develops a toolbox that aims at creating safe spaces for LGBTQI+ migrants. For information on the other toolboxes, click below:

Migrant women and girls / Unaccompanied Migrant Children / Migrant parents and families

INTRODUCTION TO THE LGBTQI+ TOOLBOX

Rainbowhouse Brussels, with the support of equal.brussels, is developing a toolbox to address SGBV against LGBTQI+ people (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, Queer and Intersex people +) from migrant communities. The objective of the toolbox is to support urban frontline services to set up safe spaces and improve existing urban services to better serve LGBTQI+ migrants. In this context, "migrant community" is understood as everyone perceived as being from a migrant background, from asylum seekers and refugees to diaspora members from 2nd and 3rd generation.

The Brussels RainbowHouse shelters various LGBTQI+ organizations of the Brussels region. It is a safe haven where LGBTQI+ people can receive information on available legal, social, psychological & medical assistance.

Equalcity website — LGBTQI+ toolbox
aida@rainbowhousebrussels.org

AÏDA YANCY, RAINBOWHOUSE BRUSSELS

"Safer spaces for LGBTQI+ people from a migrant background mean safer spaces for all people from a migrant background regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or sexual characteristics, and for all LGBTQI+ people whether from a migrant background or not...

...Creating safe(r) spaces for a minority of multi-marginalized people actually ends up leading us to better cater to the needs of a majority of users."

Aïda
RainbowHouse

UPDATE FROM RAINBOWHOUSE BRUSSELS ON THE TOOLBOX

We have passed the halfway mark of the project and the first version of our toolbox will soon be piloted. The biggest challenge we had to face was to cater to the very specific while vastly diverse needs of both frontline workers of urban services and LGBTQI+ people from a migrant background (taking into account the fact that some frontline workers are also LGBTQI+ and from a migrant background!).
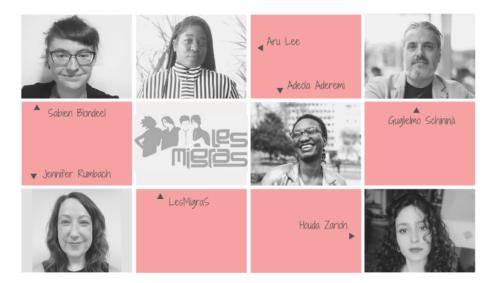
Our core focus of these last months has been to make sure that this toolbox is both useful in content while useable in format (the target being workers with a lot to do and very little time on their hands). To achieve this, we have chosen accessible language and a simple "topic-answer" format. As for the content, rather than trying the impossible task of giv-

ing a foolproof recipe of how to act when meeting someone who combines a specific set of identities, we have chosen to focus on ways to adjust one's attitudes and behaviors to become as safe as possible in multicultural contexts. We look forward to testing these tools, getting more feedback, and presenting our results!

This toolbox contains:

- 1 training manual
- Practical guidelines & standard operating procedures
- 1 awareness raising strategy

This project is funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

Meet the Experts
Toolbox LGBTQI+ Migrants

- Sabien Blondeel
- Aru Lee
- Adeola Aderemi
- Guglielmo Schininà
- Jennifer Rumbach
- LesMigraS
- Houda Zarioh

THE EXPERT PANEL

Each toolbox developed in the project has been carefully reviewed by a diverse panel of thematic experts. The experts brought a wide variety of expertise and insights on the comprehensiveness, duplicability and practical use of the tools in other EU contexts.

The experts involved in the project include field specialists, activists, academics, and specialized city services.

Through this project update, we would like to **warmly thank** all of the Equalcity experts for their involvement in the project!

Consult the experts' profiles per toolbox on our underline.

2021

ROLL-OUT OF TRAINING

At the start of 2021, RainbowHouse Brussels will launch the piloting of the training tools across frontline services in Brussels. Trainers and frontline workers will be trained on topics linked to the creation of safe(r) spaces for LGBTQI+ people with a migrant background. Participants will be asked to evaluate the tools created. This evaluation will help to tailor the tools further and to ensure that they are adapted to the beneficiaries' needs before publication.

BOZAR, equal.brussels and Vice created a video project together, highlighting the role of family for LGBTQI+ people, the relation with the family of origin, the importance of the chosen family, and rainbow families.

Watch

TRAINEE CITIES—LGBTQI+ MI-

- Association for Legal Intervention (PL)
- Copenhagen (DK)
- Dona Daria (NL)
- Ghent (BE)
- Hannover (DE)
- Heraklion (GR)
- ILGA (PT)
- Leuven (BE)
- Local Councils' Association (MT)
- Milan (IT)
- Namur (BE)
- Nuremberg (DE)
- Paris (FR)
- Piraeus (GR)
- Toulouse (FR)
- Turin (IT)
- Vienna (AUT)

THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

This summer, the thematic workshops will take place and will gather the project's 35 trainee cities/organizations around the table to discuss the project toolboxes! This event will be interactive and insightful and will allow for trainee cities to network and provide feedback on the training manual developed by RainbowHouse.

Trainee cities indeed play a crucial role in this project! Based on their feedback, the tools will be fine-tuned before translation.

- Partner (pilot) cities
- Trainee cities
- Trainee organizations

Any questions on your role as TRAINEE CITY?

https://belgium.iom.int/equalcity-trainee-cities

STAY TUNED!

https://belgium.iom.int/equalcity

Or **contact** Elisabeth Palmero
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