

RSTP Bulletin

June 29th, 2018

Fleeing Home due to Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

In many countries and cultures, members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and two-spirited (LGBTQ2) community face discrimination, persecution and violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. This often leaves many LGBTQ2 people vulnerable, with no choice but to flee their home countries for one that is safer. While some leave, those who can't flee because of economic or social barriers stay. They suffer in silence and attempt to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity in an attempt to avoid danger, further compounding their vulnerability. Even those who escape, are still not safe, as host countries may welcome refugees, but discriminate against LGBTQ2 people.



Members of the LGBTQ2 community who are also migrants or refugees, demonstrate to demand better recognition in The Hague, on 5 September 2017 (AFP)

LGBTQ2 persons are subject to imprisonment in more than 73 countries and to the death penalty in five countries (Iran, Mauritania, Rep. of Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and parts of Nigeria and Somalia) based on laws against same-sex relationships and activities. For this reason, sponsoring LGBTQ2 refugees to Canada is of the utmost importance.

For more information persecution based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity, visit: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/refugees/persecution-based-on-sexual-orientation-andor-gender-identity/>.



Click on the map to view where criminalization, protection and Recognition laws are enacted around the world.

LGBTQ2 Person and the Definition of a Refugee



An asylum seeker from Uganda covers his face with a paper bag in order to protect his identity as he marches with the LGBTQ2 Asylum Support Task Force during the Gay Pride Parade. ©2013 Reuters

As a Membership in a Particular Social Group

Although sexual orientation, gender identity or expression is not explicitly referred to in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugee as grounds for persecution, it is widely accepted and recognized that violence against LGBTQ2 persons is one of the major forms of persecution experienced by the community. In the context of refugee status and asylum, the person in a refugee-like situation must establish that they have a well-founded fear of being persecuted due to their membership in a particular social group, in this case as an LGBTQ2 person.

[#RSTPWithLGBTQ2Refugees](#)



How Can You Sponsor LGBTQ2 Refugees



You can sponsor a LGBTQ2 person through the Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) Program. BVOR refugees have been identified overseas by the UNHCR, and have been approved by the Canadian government.

Under BVOR, the Canadian government will share nearly half the sponsorship costs of the refugees' first year in Canada. The refugee/refugee family will arrive within 6 to 12 weeks of your application. RSTP will help match you with a suitable refugee and guide you through the sponsorship process.

For more information on the BVOR program, contact our BVOR Worker at bvor@rstp.ca

LGBTQ2 Refugees you can sponsor through the BVOR Program

There are **14** available **LGBTQ2** BVOR Refugees in the RSTP Matching Database waiting for sponsors!

Including

REFUGEE PROFILE #: **1278-06-18**

FAMILY SIZE: **1**

Linked Refugee Profile **1277-06-18**

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: **Iraq**

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: **Turkey**

A 27 year old Iraqi woman with limited education, good English language skills and some work experience as a babysitter and waitress. She was persecuted in her home country due to her sexual orientation. Her partner is a linked refugee (BVOR refugee profile number 1277-06-18). It is recommended that they resettle together. They would appreciate the assistance of a sponsor in the community of settlement.

REFUGEE PROFILE #: **1258-05-18**

FAMILY SIZE: **1**

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: **Syria**

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: **Egypt**

This 38 year old single Iranian man is highly educated and can speak English. He has worked as a plastic surgeon and pathologist in his home country. He once lived in the USA for almost 10 years. He prefers to be settled in Toronto as it is close New York where his friend lives. He cannot return to his home country for fear of his safety stemming from his sexual orientation and imputed political opinion.

REFUGEE PROFILE #: **1331-06-18**

FAMILY SIZE: **1**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: **Family in Vancouver, but not in contact.**

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: **Iran**

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: **Turkey**

This single Iranian male has 3 years of education, and has worked as a mechanic and making repairs. He has family in Vancouver, BC. While he is not in contact with his family, he would still prefer to settle in Vancouver. He has been persecuted in his home country based on his sexual orientation and could benefit from the aid of a sponsor.

REFUGEE PROFILE #: **1299-06-18**

FAMILY SIZE: **1**

Linked Refugee Profile **1298-06-18 (Partner)**

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: **Syria**

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: **Lebanon**

A 34 year old Syrian man whose partner is a linked BVOR refugee (BVOR refugee profile number 1298-06-18). Neither can return to Syria for fear of their safety due to their sexual orientation. He has 9 years of education, and wants to continue his education. They would prefer an English speaking

community such as Toronto or the surrounding area, but are happy to settle elsewhere.

REFUGEE PROFILE #: 1274-06-18

FAMILY SIZE: 1

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Somalia

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: Kenya

This single Somali man with no children has no work experience, speaks a little English and has an informal Grade 7 education. He has few resettlement needs, but is a survivor of violence and may benefit from counselling support. He cannot return to Somalia for fear of his safety due to his sexual orientation. He would appreciate the assistance of a sponsor during his resettlement in Canada.

REFUGEE PROFILE #: 1224-05-18

FAMILY SIZE: 1

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Somalia

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: Kenya

This 54 year old single Somali man living in Nairobi, Kenya is a survivor of violence based on his sexual orientation. He has some work experience in a meat packing company in Kenya, which will help him find similar work in Canada. He has no relatives here and is happy for assistance from sponsors after arrival in his new home. He cannot return to his country of origin based on his sexual orientation and conflict in his country.

REFUGEE PROFILE #: 1204-05-18

FAMILY SIZE: 1

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Syria

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: Lebanon

A 32 year old Syrian refugee living in Lebanon has English and some teaching skills. Discriminated against because of his sexual orientation (LGBTQ2). He is well educated and will easily become established in his community of settlement.

REFUGEE PROFILE #: 1182-05-18

FAMILY SIZE: 1

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Syria

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: Lebanon

A 26 year old Syrian man residing in Lebanon with work experience as a tailor/ dressmaker/hatter. He is unable to return to his home for fear of his safety stemming from his sexual orientation. He is travelling alone and has no family ties in Canada. A sponsor would foster successful resettlement in Canada as well as ease any language difficulties.

If you are interested, log in to the RSTP Matching Database with your username and password: cathcrosscultural.sharepoint.com/rstp



Rainbow Refugee walking in the 2016 Pride parade.

Rainbow Refugees

You can also sponsor LGBTQ2 refugees through the Rainbow Refugee Assistance Project. In 2011, the Government of Canada announced a blended refugee sponsorship initiative to encourage the sponsorship of refugees who are persecuted on the basis of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Now known as the Rainbow Refugee Assistance Program (RRAP), this initiative began as a three-year pilot (2011-2014) and has been extended annually. The current contract expires March 31, 2020.

For more information on sponsoring refugees through the Rainbow Refugee Program Visit: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/special-initiatives/lgbt-refugee-sponsorship-pilot-project/>



Refugee
Sponsorship
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Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

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