

Professionals' attitudes and knowledge on the specific needs of LGBTQI+ migrants & refugees

Transnational Report –
Cyprus, Greece, Italy,
Poland, Spain, Germany



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@nclusion

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INTRODUCTION

The present report was developed in the framework of the project “**@nclusion: Fostering inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants at local level**”. It summarises the main findings of the desk and field research on this topic conducted in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Germany and presented in six corresponding National Reports. This report also provides recommendations for actions and measures to foster changes in attitudes, work ethics and procedures of professionals working in the field, including professionals from (a) migrant organizations and communities, (b) LGBTQI+ organizations, and (c) local authorities, in order to promote the integration of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees at local level.

The report illustrates the findings from the desk and field research conducted at a transnational level for this project. A separate section outlines the research methodology used to identify and survey the sample. The report initially presents a brief overview of the national context in the six target countries (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Germany), offering context for the subsequent analysis of the field research results. More detailed information – including aspects related to existing policy and legislative frameworks, the national context regarding attitudes and stereotypes toward LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, and the methods, practices, local plans, and strategies for developing more inclusive national policies – can be found in the respective National Reports, which are available online on the project website at <https://inclusionproject.eu/>.

The second part of the current report presents the key findings of the field research performed by the partners in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Germany. Three online questionnaires (one for each target group) were distributed to the partners' members and networks in the respective countries. The aim of the surveys was to identify attitudes and stereotypes towards LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees and their needs for integration at local level, and a total of **608 responses** were collected. In addition, all partners conducted a total of **60 in-depth interviews** with LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees to gather their views and needs for support that can enable their integration in local communities.

The final section of the report outlines the main conclusions through the comparative study of the findings seeking to identify the main gaps and needs in knowledge and sensitization of migrant organizations and communities, LGBTQI+ organizations and local authorities, and provide suggestions on transnational level. These suggestions will form the basis for the development of the @nclusion Training and Sensitization programmes for migrant organizations and communities, LGBTQI+ organizations and local authorities, as well as guide the next activities of the project.

1. The @nclusion project

The project “@nclusion: Fostering inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants at local level”, funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (2021-2027) of European Commission, will be implemented in **Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Germany** from **01/04/2024** to **31/3/2027** (36 months).

The @nclusion consortium consists of 10 organisations, representing 6 countries:

1. Nicosia Development Agency (ANEL) – Cyprus (project coordinator)
2. Center for Social Innovation (CSI) – Cyprus
3. SYMPLEXIS – Greece
4. Greek Forum of Migrants (GFM) – Greece
5. Association of Sicilian Municipalities (ANCI Sicilia) – Italy
6. CESIE ETS – Italy
7. Municipality of Wrocław - Wrocław Center for Social Development (MoW) – Poland
8. Foundation Ukraine (FUA) – Poland
9. Alzira City Council – Spain
10. NGO NEST Berlin (NEST) – Germany

The @nclusion project aims to **build cooperation and coordination among local authorities, migrant organizations and communities, LGBTQI+ organizations and other CSOs supporting the rights of migrants and LGBTQI+ persons** in order to support the implementation of local integration strategies that promote LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees' inclusion in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany. In this regard, the objectives of the project are the following:

- To increase awareness and know-how of local authorities on challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, as well as existing good and bad integration practices
- To enhance the understanding & sensitization of migrant organizations and communities & LGBTQI+ organizations on including LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background.
- To increase synergy and cooperation between LGBTQI+ organizations, migrant organizations & communities and local authorities.
- To develop and implement local integration strategies for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.
- To increase access to information LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant and refugee backgrounds about practices and services in the host countries.

The project's objectives will be achieved through the of the following main activities:

- Identification of the needs for changes in attitudes and processes towards LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.
- Capacity building and sensitization programme for (a) 300 staff, volunteers, members of migrant organizations and communities, (b) 300 staff, volunteers, members of LGBTQI+ organizations, and (c) 300 staff of local authorities.

- Implementation of rainbow buddies' schemes for 300 newly arrived migrants and refugees.
- Cooperation between local authorities, LGBTQI+ organizations, migrant organizations and communities and other CSOs in local action planning.
- Information portal on local services for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background in several languages.
- Dissemination and awareness raising actions.

The main results expected from the implementation of the @nclusion project are:

- at least **300 staff, volunteers, members of migrant organizations and communities** (and other CSOs supporting migrants) with increased understanding of challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant and refugee background and increased acceptance;
- at least **150 staff, volunteers, members of migrant organizations and communities** (and other CSOs supporting migrants) with knowledge and experience in supporting newly arrived LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background as mentors ('rainbow buddies');
- at least **300 staff, volunteers, members of LGBTQI+ organizations** with increased understanding of challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background and increased acceptance;
- at least **150 staff, volunteers, members of LGBTQI+ organizations** with knowledge and experience in supporting newly arrived LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background as mentors ('rainbow buddies');
- at least **300 staff of local authorities** with new awareness and know-how on the challenges faced by LGBTQI+ migrants, and good and bad practices for their integration, as well as decreased stereotypes, increased understanding and acceptance of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background;
- **6 local authorities** with enhanced cooperation with LGBTQI+ organizations, migrant organizations & communities and other relevant CSOs for integrated approach towards LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees;
- at least **6 new or revised local integration strategies, action** plans, policies, measures addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants developed and implementation initiated
- at least **300 newly arrived LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background** supported on integration issues and processes (through rainbow buddies' schemes);
- at least **40.000 persons** reached through all dissemination activities, materials & digital tools.

2. Terminology

To ensure greater clarity and a shared understanding, it is essential to define several terms used in this report. The LGBTQI+ acronym represents a broad spectrum of identities, genders, backgrounds, and experiences, each with distinct needs that call for tailored responses.

- **Lesbian:** a woman who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to women (ILGA Europe, 2015).
- **Gay:** a man who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to men. Gay is sometimes also used as a blanket term to cover lesbian women and bisexual people as well as gay men. However, this usage has been disputed by a large part of the LGBTI community and gay is therefore **only** used here when referring to men who are emotionally and/or sexually attracted to men (ILGA Europe, 2015).
- **Bisexual:** when a person is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to persons of more than one gender (ILGA Europe, 2015).
- **Trans:** is an umbrella term, which includes those people who have a gender identity, which is different to the gender assigned at birth. It includes multiple gender identities, such as trans man, trans woman, non-binary, agender, genderqueer, genderfluid, etc. (TGEU, 2016).
- **Queer:** Has become an academic term that is inclusive of people who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender - includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans people. Traditionally the term “queer” was an abusive term and therefore for some still has negative connotations. Many LGBT+ persons however have reclaimed the term as a symbol of pride (ILGA Europe 2015).
- **Intersex:** Intersex persons are born with sex characteristics (such as chromosomes, genitals, and/or hormonal structure) that do not belong strictly to male or female categories, or that belong to both at the same time (Ghattas, 2015).
- **Plus (+) sign:** The 'plus' is used to signify all of the gender identities and sexual orientations that are not specifically covered by the other six initials.

To further enhance clarity and consistency, the report defines several key terms related to the migration or refugee background of LGBTQI+ individuals as follows:

Asylum-seekers: An asylum-seeker is someone who is seeking international protection. In case of a negative decision, they must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any alien in an irregular situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds (UNHCR, n.b).

Refugees: A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee conflict or persecution and has crossed an international border to seek safety. They cannot return to their country without risking their life or freedoms. It is a legal term that carries with it certain protections that refugees are entitled to (UNHCR, n.b).

Migrants: Under the umbrella term ‘migrants’ fall a number of well-defined legal categories of people as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law. The term ‘migrants’ reflects the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from their place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons (IOM, n.b).

Second generation: A person who was born in and is residing in a country that at least one of their parents previously entered as a migrant (Migration and Home Affairs, n.b).

RESEARCH OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

1. Research objectives and methodology

The @nclusion **desk and field research** in **Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Germany** was conducted between **June 2024 and January 2025** as part of the project's Work Package 2 (WP2), entitled "Identification of needs for changes in attitudes and processes towards LGBTQI+ migrants & refugees".

The overall aim of this WP is to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the views and needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background – but also the attitudes and knowledge gaps of migrant organizations and communities, LGBTQI+ organizations and local authorities in terms of inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

Symplexis, as the WP2 leader, developed in collaboration with all project partners a methodological guide (**D2.1**) to support the desk and field research conducted in the partner countries. This methodological guide included guidance for the performance of the research analysis on the attitudes of (a) migrant organizations and communities, (b) LGBTQI+ organizations, (c) local authorities, as well as the assessment of their level of knowledge on the specific needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds in the community. In addition, it provided a set of rules and useful instructions, including definition of research questions, methods, procedures and tools in order to guide the data collection and the analysis of the results. The document also provided ethical practices for conducting research, guaranteeing that all research activities address issues relevant to security, ethics and individuals' rights. In addition, Symplexis developed and delivered a preparatory training for the professionals who were involved in the research activities in order to enhance the level of trust of the participants during the field research.

The desk research was conducted in all partner countries **from June to October 2024** and included a targeted literature review and collection of secondary data from existing reports, studies, policy papers, guidelines, and legislation published on national or EU level, as well as by universities, associated partners, CSOs, specialized research institutions and international organizations. The aim of the literature review was to provide deeper insights into attitudes and stereotypes towards LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

The field research was performed in the six countries mentioned above in the form of **online surveys** (questionnaires) and **semi-structured interviews**. The online surveys were conducted in all partner countries from **June 2024 to January 2025**. The questionnaire developed for the purposes of the project, entitled 'Needs for Changes in Attitudes and

Processes Towards LGBTQI+ Migrants & Refugees', was translated and adapted into Greek, Italian, Polish, Spanish, and German, and was subsequently distributed online (e.g., via Google Forms). Three surveys were performed in each country, one for each group of professionals targeted, namely:

- a) staff, volunteers, and members of **migrant organizations and communities**
- b) staff, volunteers, and members of **LGBTQI+ organizations**
- c) staff, volunteers, and members of **local authorities**

The survey questionnaire consisted of 12 questions designed to assess key aspects related to the inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background to the local communities. Respondents were asked to provide their input through closed questions (e.g., selecting among responses such as 'yes,' 'probably yes,' 'no,' or 'probably no', 'I do not know') and to recall information via multiple-choice responses. The survey focused on aspects such as the challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds across all partner countries; challenges encountered by professionals providing services to this group; and the obstacles faced by these professionals during service delivery. Additionally, it examined the skills, abilities, and competencies of service providers, as well as the training topics they were interested in participating. At the beginning of the questionnaire, respondents were presented with an information sheet and consent form. They had the option to complete the survey anonymously, with the freedom to withdraw at any time. All responses were kept strictly confidential.

All questionnaires were distributed online, emailed to all partner organizations' members and networks, and shared through social media channels and the organizations' official accounts in the respective countries. As a result, a total of **163 responses** were collected from representatives of **migrant organizations and communities** across all six countries. More specifically, 20 responses were received from Cyprus, 31 responses were received from Greece, 37 from Italy, 25 responses were received from Poland, 30 responses were received from Spain and 20 from Germany. With regard to **LGBTQI+ organizations**, a total of **132 responses** were collected. These included 32 responses from participants in Cyprus, 20 responses from Greece, 7 from Italy, 20 responses from Poland, 30 responses from Spain, and 23 from Germany. Finally, a total of **313 responses** were collected through the questionnaires targeting **local authorities**. More specifically, 20 responses were collected in Cyprus, 20 responses in Greece, 52 responses in Italy, 145 responses in Poland, 55 responses in Spain, and 21 responses in Germany.

In addition, as part of the field research, the partners conducted a total of **60 in-depth interviews** with LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background across the six countries. The interviews, including 10 participants in Cyprus, 10 in Greece, 4 in Italy, 10 in Poland, 15 in Spain, and 11 in Germany, were performed between **September and January 2025**.

The interviews were conducted with a diverse group of participants from various migration backgrounds, each with different experiences regarding their social inclusion. The @nclusion semi-structured interview questions followed the themes used for the questionnaires, with the aim of enabling participants to reflect on their actual experiences and needs for support that can enable their integration in local communities.

2. Research limitations

The participant selection process was based on the networks and memberships of project partners and stakeholders, with criteria such as professional experience in supporting LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant and refugee background, and, in some cases, familiarity with the challenges faced by this group. In addition, sample sizes varied across countries, so the findings cannot be generalized.

In some cases, the data was self-reported, which may lead to socially desirable responses or the underrepresentation of certain individuals. Additionally, individuals who are less engaged in research or less visible within networks may be underrepresented, despite their significant contributions. The majority of respondents, particularly in Greece and Germany, represented urban-based organizations, which created a gap in the results regarding attitudes toward migrants and refugees between rural and urban areas.

In some participating countries, particularly Cyprus, Greece, and Italy, identifying and engaging participants for interviews was challenging, mainly due to the reluctance of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds to share their experiences. Fears of disclosing their sexual identity and migration status, along with potential risks to their stay, employment, or accommodation, contributed to this hesitation.

Furthermore, the lack of research and statistics on the intersectional needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees across the six target countries often led to presenting information separately—either about migrants and refugees or LGBTQI+ individuals—and, where available, specifically about LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background.

These factors indicate that while the findings are valuable, they may not fully capture the diversity of experiences and attitudes of professionals working with LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Despite these challenges, the combination of purposive selection and convenience sampling has provided valuable findings. While the results offer insights into key issues, they should be interpreted with caution.

The following pages provide a summary of the main findings of the desk research in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Germany. For more insight into the results of each country, you can read the full national reports, which are available online on the project website: <https://inclusionproject.eu/>.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT: FACTS AND FIGURES

1. Key figures and statistics on the inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background

Desk research across the six target countries reveals that despite some progress and a gradual shift in perceptions and attitudes towards LGBTQI+ individuals in recent years, substantial challenges persist (FRA, 2024). While LGBTQI+ individuals are more open about their LGBTQI+ identities, discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) continues to be widespread (FRA, 2024). Additionally, LGBTQI+ individuals seeking protection in Europe face further difficulties and discrimination because of the intersection¹ between being an LGBTQI+ individual and having a migrant or refugee background.

In all target countries, there is a notable lack of comprehensive data and specialized research that thoroughly examines the multifaceted experiences and complex challenges encountered by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds as they go through the processes of social inclusion. These challenges often stem from a combination of factors such as discrimination, lack of tailored support services, and difficulties in accessing essential resources like education, housing, employment, and healthcare.

Large-scale studies, such as the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' (FRA) 2024 report, provide valuable insights into the overall situation. The FRA's 2019 and 2024 surveys reveal that LGBTQI+ individuals in all six countries face significant barriers in accessing essential services like healthcare and education, driven by discrimination and a lack of targeted support. Particularly concerning trends are observed in Greece, Cyprus, and Italy. The 2024 FRA report found that in Greece, 28% of LGBTQI+ individuals experienced discrimination in employment or while seeking work in the year preceding the survey. Additionally, 45% reported discrimination in at least one area of life during the same period, highlighting the systemic nature of these challenges. The situation in Cyprus reveals even higher levels of discrimination. According to the same report, 37% of LGBTQI+ respondents in Cyprus faced employment-related discrimination—nearly double the EU-27 average of 19%. Furthermore, half of the respondents reported experiencing discrimination in daily life, a figure that significantly exceeds the EU-wide average of 37% (FRA, 2024). Similarly high percentages were reported in Cyprus in 2019, when 49% of respondents reported discrimination in at least one

¹ Intersectionality: 'ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/ identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination' (EIGE, n.d).

area of life in the year before the survey, exceeding the 42% EU average. (FRA, 2019). Italy also reported alarming levels of discrimination. The 2024 FRA report found that 37% of LGBTQI+ individuals in the country faced employment-related discrimination, while 50% encountered prejudice in everyday life—both figures standing well above EU averages. These findings suggest systemic barriers to equality and inclusion in both employment and daily interactions. This worrying trend underscores the pervasive fear and stigma that compel individuals to hide their true identities. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach, including stronger legal protections, societal awareness campaigns, and targeted support for marginalized communities

The research highlights the primary challenges identified across the six partner countries, with all of them emphasizing that a significant barrier to developing effective policies for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds is the lack of comprehensive data. Greece and Cyprus, for instance, do not maintain official statistics on this population, which hampers evidence-based policymaking, despite hosting a significant number of migrants and refugees. Cyprus hosts approximately 34,000 migrants, with 3.7% recognized as refugees (EUROSTAT, 2024). In Greece, as of December 2024, the recorded figures are: 258,085 EU citizens, 32,572 individuals with temporary protection residence permits, 496,107 third-country nationals, and 83,895 recognized refugees with active residence permits, bringing the total documented migrant and refugee population to 870,659. This does not include the population without legal documentation (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2024). Similarly, Spain does not collect disaggregated data on LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant background, although it is estimated that approximately 7% of Spain's migrant population—nearly 600,000 individuals—identify as LGBTQI+ (VV.AA., 2023). In Poland the Office for Foreigners does not provide data on asylum applications related to sexual orientation or gender identity. By 2019, there are two known cases of granting refugee status due to persecution on the basis of sexual orientation (to a citizen of Morocco and a citizen of Uganda) and one due to persecution on the basis of gender identity (a citizen of Belarus) (Mazurczak, A., Mrowicki, M., & Adamczewska-Stachura, M., 2019). In 2024, the Legal Intervention Association reported two more cases of granting international protection on the basis of homosexual orientation (a citizen of Turkmenistan and a citizen of an African country) (SIP, 2024). In Italy, while NGOs actively monitor issues related to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds, official data collection tends to prioritize emergency and security concerns, often overlapping SOGIESC subjects with issues such as deviance and/or the need for protection from criminal offenses. Civil society organizations have become the primary source of information in Italy due to the lack of large-scale quantitative studies meeting high standards of reliability (De Rosa, E., Inglese, F., 2020). In Germany, the Lesbian and Gay Association estimates that 60,000 of the 1.6 million refugees registered since 2016 identify as LGBTQI+ (Tschalaer, M., 2020). Across all six countries, the limited availability of detailed data on LGBTQI+ individuals with migrants and refugee backgrounds weakens the foundation for effective policy development and implementation.

Discrimination and intolerance toward LGBTQI+ individuals, including refugees and migrants, persist across the six countries, with varying degrees of severity. Cyprus reports some of the highest levels of discrimination. Nearly 49% of LGBTQI+ individuals in Cyprus experience discrimination in at least one area of life (FRA, 2024). The GBPI reveals that Cypriots are less tolerant toward foreigners, homosexuals, and unmarried parents than their European counterparts. Only 38.4% of respondents in Cyprus consider homosexuality acceptable, highlighting deep-seated societal prejudices. These biases, coupled with limited awareness-raising efforts, contribute to widespread discrimination and the perception of homosexuality as taboo (F&M Global Barometers, 2024). In Spain, housing discrimination affects 40% of LGBTQI+ migrants, who struggle to access safe and adequate accommodation (CEAR, 2023). In Germany, despite the country's progressive stance on LGBTQI+ rights, derogatory attitudes towards homosexual and bisexual people persist across various population groups, with men tending to exhibit more negative attitudes compared to women (Ipsos, 2024). In Greece, the lack of safe and suitable housing leaves individuals vulnerable to further abuse and violence in reception centers and camps. Many LGBTQI+ refugees feel compelled to hide their sexual orientation and gender identity out of fear of marginalization. Additionally, systemic gaps, procedural issues, a lack of specialized personnel, and inadequate medical and psychosocial assessments contribute to these challenges (Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2023). In Italy, as vulnerabilities increase and multiply, individuals interact with a growing number of institutional and non-institutional actors, significantly raising their risk of discrimination. Multiple levels of discrimination can occur in interactions with local services, such as the Police Bureau, as well as in seemingly neutral spaces like adult education centers (Rosati et al., 2021). These findings underscore the pervasive nature of discrimination across the six countries, regardless of the progress made in LGBTQI+ rights.

Legal protections for LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants also vary widely. Germany revised its asylum service directive to eliminate the "discretion requirement" and adopted a national action plan to promote gender and sexual diversity (Echte Vielfalt, 2024). Additionally, in June 2023, Germany's state-level interior ministers committed to enhancing the prevention of anti-LGBTQI+ hate crimes and violence (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2023). By contrast, Italy's legislative framework, while relatively strong in defending victims of homophobia and racism, suffers from weak implementation. The Italian government has made limited efforts to address LGBTQI+ issues, highlighting a gap between legal provisions and their practical enforcement (Prearo, M., Martorano, N., 2020). Most of the participating countries are ranked in the middle or lower categories of ILGA-Europe's 2024 Rainbow Europe Map and Index, which assesses the legal and policy environments for LGBTQI+ individuals across 49 European countries. Among them, Spain ranks 4th, Greece 6th, Germany 11th, Cyprus 29th, Italy 36th, and Poland 42nd (ILGA-Europe, 2024). The legal and policy frameworks will be examined in greater detail in the next chapter.

Overall, the research across the six countries reveals common challenges, including insufficient data collection, persistent discrimination, and the uneven implementation of legal

protections for LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants. Despite progress in some countries, widespread barriers to accessing essential services and a lack of targeted integration programs remain critical issues. By addressing these gaps, the six countries can better support this vulnerable population and foster greater inclusivity in their societies.

2. Existing policy and legislative frameworks

The research across the six participating countries identifies both advancements and shortcomings in each country's approach to protecting and supporting this vulnerable population. Greece has made significant progress in recent years, particularly by recognizing sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender characteristics as protected grounds under hate crime and hate speech legislation (Law 4285/2014, Law 4436/2016). More recently, Greece adopted a new law granting same-sex couples the right to marry and adopt children, aligning their rights with those of heterosexual partners (Law 5089/2024). However, these legislative advancements are fragmented, and significant gaps persist in addressing the unique needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. The Greek migration code lacks adequate provisions for the reception and integration of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds, creating systemic barriers (Transgender Support Association, 2023). Additionally, LGBTQI+ individuals are not officially recognized as a vulnerable group requiring protective measures in accommodation centers (Law 4939/2022). While legislation guarantees education access for all children regardless of their migration background, practical challenges such as understaffing, language barriers, and high dropout rates leave many children with migrant or refugee background excluded (ECRE, 2024).

In Cyprus, progress began with the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1998, a milestone achieved under pressure from the European Court of Human Rights (European Court of Human Rights, 1993). Anti-discrimination laws were introduced in 2004 to prohibit workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation (Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation Law). Further advancements were made in 2015 with the legalization of civil partnerships for same-sex couples concerning financial and accommodation issues and the criminalization of incitement to hatred based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Law No. 184-1, Law No. 87(I)/2015). However, Cyprus still lacks explicit recognition of gender identity discrimination, and hate crimes motivated by homophobia or transphobia are not formally acknowledged (ECRI, 2016).

Spain stands out for its comprehensive legal framework prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, anchored in the General Equal Treatment Act of 2006 (Government of Spain, 2003). The government has also implemented policies such as the National Action Plan for Sexual and Gender Diversity, aimed at promoting LGBTQI+ inclusion (Gobierno de España, 2020). Despite this robust framework, regional disparities and resource limitations hinder the effective implementation of these policies. Challenges persist in

ensuring equitable access to essential services like health care and housing for LGBTQI+ migrants.

Germany has established strong legal protections, including progressive hate crime and hate speech laws, particularly the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity as aggravating factors (ILGA-Europe, 2024). The country has also made progress in legal gender recognition and asylum policies for transgender individuals (ILGA-Europe, 2024). More recently, the 2023 Self-Determination Law facilitates easier name and gender changes, while the General Equal Treatment Act continues to provide broad protections (Human Rights Watch, 2024b). However, the research highlights the need for greater recognition of trans parenthood, enhanced hate speech legislation, and more robust asylum laws to support LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds effectively (ILGA-Europe, 2024).

Poland's approach to LGBTQI+ rights is marked by significant deficiencies. The country lacks a cohesive migration policy, which has resulted in the absence of targeted measures for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background (Łodziński & Szonert, 2023). This inadequacy is reflected in Poland's position on the ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map, where it ranks last among EU countries. The ranking underscores the absence of legal protections and the limited social inclusion for LGBTQI+ individuals (ILGA-Europe, 2024).

Italy offers some protections for LGBTQI+ asylum seekers through systems such as the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) and legislation addressing the reception of individuals with special needs (Law no. 189/2002, Legislative Decree no. 142/2015). However, these protections are inconsistently applied due to varying decision-making processes and insufficient training for officials (SOGICA, 2020). Additionally, Italy does not have explicit legal provisions addressing violence against LGBTQI+ individuals as hate crimes. This omission limits the justice system's ability to address bias-motivated violence effectively (Pannarale, L. & Armigero, 2021).

Overall, the research highlights significant disparities in the policy and legislative frameworks across the six countries. While countries like Germany and Spain have developed relatively robust systems for protecting LGBTQI+ individuals, others, such as Poland and Italy, face substantial gaps that undermine their ability to safeguard LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. In Greece, although LGBTQI+ policies and laws have improved—such as those regarding marriage and gender changes on IDs—LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees do not receive the same treatment as their local counterparts.

Common challenges across these countries include inconsistencies in policy implementation, insufficient legal recognition of LGBTQI+ issues, and inadequate training of professionals. These findings underscore the urgent need for coordinated efforts to strengthen legal protections, enhance policy implementation, and address the unique vulnerabilities faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

3. Challenges, prejudices and stereotypes

The research reveals that LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Spain, Germany, and Italy experience profound and systemic challenges shaped by intersectional discrimination. These difficulties stem from the overlapping effects of sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, and migrant status, creating compounded barriers to equality and inclusion (UCLA, 2022). While certain challenges are shared across the participating countries, national contexts—including legal frameworks, societal attitudes, and institutional capacities—introduce significant variations.

Legal protections for LGBTQI+ individuals vary considerably across the six countries. In Cyprus and Poland, for instance, the absence of comprehensive legal frameworks leaves LGBTQI+ individuals especially vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion (Mizielińska, J. 2022; Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, 2019a; IOM, 2023). In Spain and Germany, however, significant challenges persist in translating existing protection mechanisms into effective local action. This disparity underscores the urgent need for harmonized policies that address both legal and institutional barriers, ensuring protections are effectively implemented as actionable support mechanisms.

Asylum systems across all six countries suffer from structural deficiencies and cultural insensitivities, exacerbating the marginalization of LGBTQI+ applicants. In Greece, for example, asylum seekers often face invasive questioning and are compelled to conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity due to fears of mistreatment (Greek Transgender Support Association, 2021). Greece reports inadequate vulnerability assessments and inappropriate placements in reception facilities that fail to meet the unique needs of LGBTQI+ individuals (Diotima and other civil society organizations, 2023; AIDA, 2022). In Italy, despite the availability of numerous manuals, informational sheets, and relevant legislation—which also reference international conventions and UN guidelines—there is a lack of training on the proper application of these regulations. Addressing these systemic shortcomings necessitates specialized training for professionals and the adoption of inclusive, culturally sensitive protocols.

Access to healthcare presents significant challenges across the six countries, particularly for transgender individuals. In Spain and Greece, LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds often avoid seeking medical assistance due to untrained providers and the lack of LGBTQI+ inclusive services (VV.AA., 2022; Solomon, 2023; Médecins Sans Frontières, 2023). Similarly, in Italy, institutional transphobia and widespread mistrust of healthcare providers discourage transgender refugees from seeking essential treatments (Coletta, 2021). In Cyprus and Poland, healthcare discrimination remains pervasive, with many LGBTQI+ individuals concealing their identities to avoid mistreatment (IOM, 2023; Skrzypczak, E., Bilarzewska, J., & Niebudek, A 2022). Additionally, language barriers and the absence of cultural mediators in countries such as Greece, Poland and Italy further hinder equitable healthcare access

(UNHCR, 2022). These challenges emphasize the pressing need for culturally competent, LGBTQI+-inclusive healthcare services, supported by adequate resources and training.

Housing remains a critical challenge for LGBTQI+ migrants, who often face unsafe living conditions, homelessness, and discrimination upon arrival at reception centers. In Spain and Germany, in particular, the lack of cultural services and LGBTQI+-inclusive housing options is especially evident during the arrival process. Reception centers, for example, often fail to provide safe spaces for LGBTQI+ individuals (CEAR, 2023; FELGTB, 2020). These deficiencies contribute to broader marginalization, leaving many LGBTQI+ individuals without access to safe and supportive living environments.

Workplace discrimination is widespread across all six countries. In Cyprus and Poland, high levels of stigma and societal discrimination force LGBTQI+ individuals to conceal their identities in professional settings, severely limiting economic opportunities (en.philenews, 2024; ECRI, 2016). Addressing these barriers requires targeted interventions, such as workplace sensitization programs, to promote inclusivity and foster economic empowerment.

LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds also face significant challenges integrating into LGBTQI+ communities. In Italy and Spain, cultural and religious biases within migrant communities often exacerbate the struggles of LGBTQI+ individuals, who must navigate discrimination related to both their sexual or gender identity and their ethnic background (Prearo, M., Martorano, N., 2020). Xenophobia and cultural biases further hinder integration, highlighting the need for comprehensive community-level strategies to promote inclusion (IOM, 2024).

A persistent challenge across all six countries is the lack of institutional capacity and data on LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Service providers and local authorities often lack the necessary training to address intersectional challenges. In Germany and Spain, the absence of intersectional approaches in policy development and service provision represents a critical gap (FRA 2024; Graglia, M, 2020; Rosati et al., 2021). Furthermore, insufficient data and research, particularly in Italy and Poland, hinder the creation of evidence-based policies and equitable resource allocation (Andrade, Danisi, Dustin, Ferreira, Held, 2021; Graglia, M., 2020; Ferrara et al., 2021).

Societal attitudes play a pivotal role in shaping the experiences of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. In Cyprus, Poland, and parts of Italy, conservative social norms, reinforced by religious institutions and media narratives, create hostile environments for LGBTQI+ individuals (Trimikliniotis & Karayanni, 2008; ILGA Europe, 2024; FRA, 2024). In Greece, LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face double discrimination and hostility, even from professionals who are meant to support them, as they carry their own prejudices (Held, 2022). By contrast, urban areas in Spain and Germany demonstrate higher levels of acceptance, although prejudices persist within some migrant communities (VV.AA., 2022; German Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency, 2017; Ipsos, 2024).

The findings highlight the multifaceted challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds across Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Spain, Germany, and Italy. Despite variations in legal frameworks and societal attitudes, common challenges emerge, including systemic gaps in service provision, intersectional discrimination, and insufficient institutional capacity. Addressing these issues requires coordinated and sustained efforts at local, national, and transnational levels, including enhancing institutional training for service providers and fostering collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the equitable allocation of resources. By prioritizing intersectionality and inclusivity, governments and organizations can create environments that protect the rights, dignity, and well-being of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, advancing the shared goal of inclusive societies.

4. Main gaps and needs in knowledge and awareness

The research uncovers significant gaps hindering the inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. These challenges are shaped by intersecting factors, including insufficient awareness among stakeholders, societal prejudices, and systemic inadequacies. While some barriers are common across the countries, their roots and manifestations vary, reflecting unique societal, institutional, and systemic dynamics. Addressing these issues requires tailored, coordinated solutions (AIDA, 2022; IOM, 2023a).

In Cyprus LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face multiple challenges, exacerbated by societal prejudices, insufficient legal protections, and a lack of public awareness. Discrimination is prevalent in various sectors, including employment, healthcare, housing, and public information. Factors such as the absence of culturally competent services, gaps in knowledge among healthcare providers, and discriminatory practices in housing contribute to their marginalization (IOM, 2023a). Additionally, the lack of public information campaigns addressing LGBTQI+ rights further deepens the barriers they face (Trimikliniotis & Karayanni, 2008). These challenges highlight the need for targeted interventions to address the intersectional issues facing LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees, with a focus on enhancing awareness, legal protections, and access to support services.

Greece faces challenges stemming from a lack of comprehensive research and data on intersectional discrimination. This deficiency undermines the ability to assess and address the specific protection needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. As a result, inconsistent vulnerability assessments, inadequate safe housing, and insufficient mental health and trauma support persist (Heinrich Böll Stiftung, December 2023; ECRE, 2024). Hostile public discourse surrounding refugees in recent times, coupled with instances of racism and xenophobia, has further exacerbated their marginalization (Gazzetta, 2020). Institutional reforms and public advocacy are urgently needed to foster inclusivity.

In **Poland** the knowledge and sensitization needs of organizations supporting LGBTQI+ migrants vary, requiring tailored training. Local authorities often lack studies and experience, leading to gaps in understanding self-definition, cultural perceptions of gender and sexual

orientation, and targeted support. While some cities like Wrocław and Kraków have implemented training for city officials, these efforts remain sporadic and depend on local initiatives. There is no systemic national approach to increasing awareness among public institutions, highlighting the need for broader, structured solutions (Nowicka, M. et al., 2024; Intercultural Dialogue Wrocław, 2024).

In **Spain**, fragmentation among key stakeholders significantly hinders effective inclusion. Migrant organizations often lack an understanding of intersectionality, while LGBTQI+ organizations primarily focus on sexual and gender rights, with limited awareness of migration-specific challenges (IOM, 2023). Local authorities also face training deficits in human rights and intersectional approaches. Addressing these challenges requires cohesive strategies for capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and coordinated policymaking.

Germany struggles with gaps in training and awareness across sectors. Migrant organizations often lack an understanding of the unique vulnerabilities faced by LGBTQI+ individuals, while LGBTQI+ organizations frequently have limited cultural sensitivity and understanding of asylum processes (Steimel, 2016; Gonzalez Benson, O., 2020). Local authorities also exhibit insufficient knowledge of non-refoulement obligations and inclusive housing policies for LGBTQI+ refugees. Targeted interventions and a coordinated support system are essential to bridge these gaps.

In **Italy**, systemic legal shortcomings impede progress. The legal framework does not adequately address gender identity and expression in anti-discrimination measures, creating a vacuum that jeopardizes the safety and visibility of LGBTQI+ individuals during asylum applications (Pannarale, L., & Armigero, L., 2021; Caroli, P., 2023). Additionally, stakeholders within the protection system lack specialized training, compounding these challenges (Coletta, 2021; Ferrara et al., 2021). Comprehensive legal and procedural reforms are essential to safeguard the rights and well-being of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.

Despite these challenges, promising practices have emerged. In Cyprus, the HelpRefugeesWork platform connects refugees with employment opportunities while educating employers about refugee rights (AIDA, 2022). Similarly, in Poland, staff members of the national Office for Foreigners and local officials working in the area of social welfare in Wrocław, received training on LGBTQI+ issues, intercultural competence, and the legal and social challenges faced by this population. In Wrocław, representatives of the majority of local institutions and public services receive training on intercultural competencies within the long-term programme. These initiatives illustrate the potential for localized solutions but remain sporadic, lacking the systemic reach necessary for broader impact (Intercultural Dialogue Wrocław, 2024).

Overall, the research highlighted that intersectionality emerges as an essential framework for addressing these challenges, emphasizing the need to consider the overlapping and interconnected identities of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in the development of inclusive

policies and practices. In Spain, the lack of intersectional understanding among migrant and LGBTQI+ organizations underscores the importance of integrated approaches (IOM, 2023). Similarly, in Italy, the absence of explicit legal protections for gender identity and expression highlights the need to incorporate intersectionality into national and regional policies (Graglia, M., 2020; Pannarale, L., & Armigero, L., 2021).

To address these gaps, key actions include comprehensive training for stakeholders, public awareness campaigns to combat prejudices, and collaboration between migrant organizations, LGBTQI+ groups, and local authorities to develop an effective response.

5. Main risks and intersectional vulnerabilities faced by the LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background

The research outlines the primary risks and vulnerabilities faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds across the six participating countries—Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Spain, Germany, and Italy.

Discrimination and Social Prejudices

LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face significant levels of discrimination and prejudice in all six countries, which manifest in various forms such as hostility, harassment, violence, and exclusion from multiple societal spheres.

In Cyprus, for instance, the Orthodox Church, which holds considerable influence, openly expresses anti-LGBTQI+ views, impacting public opinion and hindering broader societal acceptance (FRA, 2009). In Spain prejudices and stereotypes within migrant organisations, LGBTQI+ organisations and local authorities have a profound impact on the inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees creating additional barriers to the integration of these people into society (VV. AA, 2022).

In Poland, LGBTQI+ individuals, including migrants, report limited freedom to disclose their identities in the public sector, fearing social stigmatization and mistreatment (Poniat, R., & Skowrońska, M. 2021).

In Germany and Italy, issues of exclusion and invisibility persist within both migrant and LGBTQI+ organizations, with significant barriers to safe housing and inclusive healthcare services. While some legal protections exist for LGBTQI+ individuals, their enforcement remains inconsistent, particularly at the local level (Tschalaer, M. 2020; Lernen aus der Geschichte, 2016; Jazmati, Z. 2020). In Cyprus, despite the national equality body extending its mandate, pervasive social biases and a lack of awareness about complaint mechanisms discourage many LGBTQI+ individuals from utilizing these systems (ILGA EUROPE, 2024).

Greece and Spain also report significant gaps in legal protection. In Greece, there has been a rise in hate crimes targeting LGBTQI+ migrants, but many victims hesitate to report these incidents due to fear of secondary victimization (RVRN, 2024). In Spain, there is discrimination

against LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds, and there are insufficient mechanisms to ensure that many LGBTQI+ individuals are aware of their rights (CEAR, 2022; IOM, 2023).

In Germany and Italy, the research underscores the need for standardized vulnerability assessments and protection strategies in asylum seeker accommodation centers, as practices vary significantly across different regions (Jansen, S., Spijkerboer, T., 2013; Amato, P., 2019; Graglia, M., 2020).

Employment Discrimination

LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background encounter considerable challenges in securing stable employment, primarily due to intersectional discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and migrant status. In Cyprus, over 37% of LGBTQI+ individuals report experiencing discrimination in the workplace (en.philenews, 2024). Similarly, in Poland and Germany, LGBTQI+ individuals—including migrants—face heightened stigmatization and mistreatment when they disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity in the public sector. This discrimination not only impacts economic stability but also reinforces broader social exclusion, limiting opportunities for LGBTQI+ migrants to integrate into their new communities (Poniat, R., & Skowrońska, M., 2021; Tschalaer, M., & Held, N., 2019).

Healthcare

LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds experience significant barriers to accessing culturally sensitive and inclusive healthcare services, particularly in areas such as gender-affirming care. In Cyprus, for example, there is a noticeable gap in medical knowledge and resources related to gender-affirming care (AIDA, 2022). In Italy, healthcare campaigns are predominantly designed for heterosexual individuals, often overlooking the specific needs of LGBTQI+ migrants (Pannarale, L., & Armigero, L., 2021; SOGICA, 2020). Germany and Spain report similar challenges, with difficulties in accessing mental health services tailored to the trauma experienced by LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants (German Federal Government, 2022; Beobachtungsstelle Gesellschaftspolitik, 2022; FRA, 2024; CEAR, 2022). In Greece, LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds avoid seeking care, leading to untreated mental health conditions like anxiety, depression, and PTSD (Solomon, 2023). The lack of accessible, culturally competent healthcare services exacerbates the vulnerability of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds leaving many without the necessary support to address their unique health needs.

Housing

Securing safe and affordable housing is a major challenge for LGBTQI+ migrants, with many facing discrimination from landlords and a lack of targeted housing support programs. In Cyprus, refugees and beneficiaries of international protection report struggling to secure private housing due to high rents and landlord discrimination (AIDA, 2022). In Germany, LGBTQI+ migrants are at risk of physical and psychological harm in reception centers and

housing facilities where homophobia and transphobia are prevalent (Stiller, M., & Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik, P., 2022). This underscores the need for specialized accommodations to ensure the safety and well-being of LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants.

Education

LGBTQI+ identities and experiences are largely absent from school curricula in the six countries, which results in a lack of visibility and support for LGBTQI+ youth. In Cyprus, both teachers and students lack visible LGBTQI+ role models, which creates an environment where LGBTQI+ students often face harassment and bullying without adequate institutional support (Trimikliniotis and Karayanni, 2008). Poland reports similar challenges, with LGBTQI+ students facing hostile environments and a lack of access to supportive resources within the education system (Górska, P., 2021; Poniak, R., & Skowrońska, M, 2021). The absence of LGBTQI+-inclusive education contributes to social exclusion and psychological distress for LGBTQI+ youth.

Mental Health

The intersection of migration status, sexual orientation, and gender identity places LGBTQI+ migrants at heightened risk of social exclusion, psychological stress, and mental health challenges. In Cyprus and Spain, the lack of accessible and culturally competent mental health services exacerbates these vulnerabilities, leaving many LGBTQI+ migrants without the necessary support to cope with their trauma and isolation (en.philenews, 2024; FRA 2024; CEAR, 2022). In Germany, an important issue is access to mental health support services tailored to the trauma experienced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background (German Federal Government, 2022; Beobachtungsstelle Gesellschaftspolitik, 2022). This mental health burden is compounded by the additional challenges of navigating migration, discrimination, and exclusion. In Greece, mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and substance abuse are prevalent among LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. These issues are often aggravated by the lack of inclusive healthcare and psychosocial support, especially for undocumented populations (Solomon, 2023).

The research underscores that discrimination and exclusion experienced by LGBTQI+ individuals are not only rooted in their sexual orientation and gender identity but are also influenced by factors such as migration status, ethnicity, and societal norms. These challenges underline the urgent need for comprehensive, inclusive, and targeted policies and support systems to address the complex and multi-faceted nature of these challenges.

6. Methods, practices, local plans and strategies for developing more inclusive policies

The key methods, practices, and local plans for developing more inclusive policies for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background across the six countries reveal a mix of

national-level strategies, local initiatives, and civil society-driven efforts, with varying degrees of progress and remaining challenges.

In **Cyprus**, the country has approved the creation of a National Strategy for LGBTQI+ equality, which aims to reform legislation and create a unified approach across state services (ILGA database, 2024). This is a significant step, as the strategy will contribute to establishing European standards and a coordinated framework for addressing LGBTQI+ equality. Additionally, Cyprus has seen collaborative events between companies and civil society organizations focused on LGBTQI+ rights in the workplace (CyprusMail, 2024). This suggests an emerging partnership between the public and private sectors to promote LGBTQI+ inclusion. Furthermore, advocacy efforts by Accept LGBTI Cyprus have led to plans to expand access to transgender healthcare, including the establishment of a dedicated medical center (ILGA EUROPE, 2024). This represents progress in addressing the specific needs of the transgender community within the LGBTQI+ migrant population.

In **Greece**, the LGBTQI+ Equality Strategy 2021-2025 recognizes the increased risks faced by LGBTQI+ asylum seekers and refugees, and provides recommendations for their protection and support (Prime Minister cabinet 2021; Colour Youth, 2021). This suggests a growing awareness of the unique challenges encountered by LGBTQI+ individuals within the broader migrant and refugee population. However, the National Strategy for the Social Integration of Asylum Seekers and Beneficiaries of International Protection does not include any provisions for LGBTQI+ migrants (Ministry of Immigration and Asylum, 2022). This highlights a gap in the integration framework, where the specific needs of LGBTQI+ migrants are not being adequately addressed. On a positive note, the Municipal Council of Athens has announced the opening of the first shelter for LGBTQI+ homeless people, in collaboration with LGBTQI+ organizations (Info migrants, 2019). This demonstrates a local-level initiative to provide safe and inclusive housing for LGBTQI+ individuals facing homelessness although the shelter has not yet been established.

In **Poland**, civil society organizations like the Azyl Library, Campaign Against Homophobia, and Kultura Równości Association have provided various forms of support for LGBTQI+ refugees from Ukraine (Jastrzębska, 2022; Bieleninik, 2022; Intercultural Dialogue Wrocław, 2024). These efforts by non-governmental actors highlight the important role of community-based initiatives in addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. However, a review of available strategic documents on city websites shows that LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background are not identified as a separate group needing targeted support in the local plans/strategies addressing multicultural diversity (Gdańsk City Portal, 2024; Poznań City Council, 2023). This suggests a significant gap in the formal recognition and inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background within local integration frameworks, which stems from the above-mentioned lack of systemic and legal recognition.

In **Spain** various initiatives have been implemented to support LGBTQI+ individuals' inclusion. The Generalitat Valenciana launched programs like the Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities

(2016–2020) for labor inclusion and the Comprehensive Plan for Affective-Sexual and Gender Diversity (2020) in education (Generalitat Valenciana, 2020). Additionally, Decree 77/2014 prevents discrimination in public housing (Generalitat Valenciana, 2014). Nationally, the Government of Spain introduced the Action Plan for LGBTQI+ Equality (2021–2024) to improve professional training and the National Plan for Social Inclusion (2013–2020) to support migrant integration Government of Spain (2013).

In **Italy**, the National LGBTQI+ Strategy 2022-2025 highlights the need for the implementation of listening and reception centers for LGBTQI+ individuals facing discrimination or social distress (Ferrara, 2019; Pannarale, L., & Armigero, L., 2021; SOGICA, 2020). This recognition of the specific support needs of LGBTQI+ individuals is an important step. At the local level, initiatives like Casa Marcella, A Casa di Ornella, and the Rise the Difference project have emerged to provide safe housing and support for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Additionally, the Pink Refugees project and the I-Care project have aimed to provide legal assistance, support, and workplace inclusion for LGBTQIA+ migrants and refugees (Graglia, M., 2020; Arcigay Palermo, 2018; Volonterio, 2024; Frasca, M. 2023). These local-level initiatives demonstrate a growing recognition of the need for tailored support and advocacy for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

In **Germany**, the Federal Government aims to protect vulnerable groups, including LGBTQI+ individuals, by implementing measures such as integrating LGBTQI+ topics in integration and language courses and sensitizing asylum process stakeholders (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2022). This indicates a commitment to addressing the specific needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background through targeted interventions within the broader integration process. Additionally, several Federal States have implemented formal protocols to identify particularly vulnerable asylum seekers, including LGBTQI+ individuals, though the effectiveness of these measures is limited (Stiller, M. & Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik, 2022). This suggests an attempt to improve the identification and support of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, but the challenges in implementation highlight the need for further refinement and resourcing of these initiatives.

Overall, while some progress has been made, significant gaps and challenges remain in effectively identifying, supporting, and protecting this vulnerable population. Further policy reforms, community engagement, and institutional collaboration are needed to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

7. Evaluating capacity building and sensitization programmes

The research conducted across the six countries – Poland, Spain, Germany, Cyprus, Italy and Greece – highlights critical gaps and opportunities in the inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. While various initiatives have been implemented, there is a

clear lack of comprehensive, national, and tailored strategies that address the specific challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background.

Cyprus

Cyprus has made limited progress in terms of national programs specifically targeting individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds (UNHCR Cyprus, 2016; European Commission, 2023). Broader asylum and migration initiatives, such as "Strengthening Asylum in Cyprus" and "Supporting Reforms to Strengthen Labour Markets," do not address the intersectional challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals (European Commission, 2023). The lack of tailored support for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds represents a significant gap in policy and underscores the need for more inclusive and specialized strategies to address their unique challenges.

Greece

In Greece, capacity building and sensitization programs for LGBTQI+ migrants are fragmented and often disconnected from a state strategy. These programs are typically project-based, provided by civil society and international organizations, and focus on specific target groups with limited duration. Notable activities include seminars for civil society executives (Diotima, 2024), specialized training for mental health professionals (Babel, 2023), and workshops on LGBTQI+ terminology and discrimination elimination (Generation 2.0, 2016). Programs also address social inclusion, such as training for public service providers and local authorities (Symbiosis, 2023), and public awareness campaigns like Athens Pride (Athens Pride, 2024). However, these initiatives lack sustainability and evaluation, making it difficult to assess their long-term effectiveness and impact.

Poland

In Poland, policies and strategies tend to treat migrants as a homogenous group, overlooking the diversity of their experiences, including those of LGBTQI+ individuals (Office for Foreigners, 2024). Despite efforts to create conditions for effective integration between migrants and the host society, the recognition of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background remains insufficient, with local integration strategies lacking to address their specific challenges (City of Gdansk Portal, 2024; City Council of Poznan, 2023). LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds were only briefly mentioned in official documents as requiring support to reduce labour market discrimination underscoring the absence of targeted policy or action to address their unique needs. There is a significant opportunity to enhance security and inclusion by addressing discriminatory attitudes and creating better integration pathways for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds within local communities.

Spain

Spain has made notable progress in addressing the intersectional complexities faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, particularly through training and awareness-raising programs (IOM, 2023; FRA, 2024). These initiatives aim to provide comprehensive training on sexual and gender diversity, specifically targeting local authority organizations and migrant communities. The Generalitat Valenciana and the Government of Spain have advanced LGBTQI+ inclusion, though challenges remain in ensuring the consistent implementation and broader reach of these initiatives (FELGTB, 2020; CEAR 2022). While awareness programs designed to transform attitudes and reduce prejudices have been successful in removing some barriers, their uneven application leaves gaps in addressing the distinct needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

Italy

Activities in Italy, led by Croce Rossa Italiana, focused on creating safe spaces in refugee centers, equipping professionals to address the unique challenges faced by LGBTQI+ asylum seekers, and promoting inclusive policies (*Rainbow Welcome! Practical Guide for Social Workers and Field Operators*, 2022). The *Rainbow Welcome!* project, co-funded by the EU until August 2022, sought to enhance the reception and support of LGBTQI+ refugees through improved legal frameworks, shelter training, and advocacy efforts.). The project also produced the *Rainbow Welcome! Practical Guide for Social Workers and Field Operators*, which offers strategies for professionals working with LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers, addressing their unique vulnerabilities due to sexual orientation, gender identity, and migration status. A significant part of this approach involves ensuring intercultural sensitivity and avoiding the imposition of Western labels, recognizing that LGBTQI+ individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds may have different experiences and expressions of identity. Advocacy and public awareness campaigns like #RainbowWelcome is critical in raising the visibility of LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers' struggles and pushing for more inclusive policies at all levels of government.

Germany

Germany has introduced capacity-building and sensitization programs aimed at improving the protection of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background (Human Rights Watch, 2024a; Queer Refugees Welcome, n.d.). These programs focus on the needs of both migrant and LGBTQI+ organizations, local authorities, and asylum services, striving to enhance safety, reduce discrimination, and increase participation of LGBTQI+ individuals in migrant support programs and a decline in reports of discrimination within these organizations (EUAA, 2023; German Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency, 2017). These efforts have led to notable achievements, including increased LGBTQI+ participation and higher satisfaction levels among refugees. Nevertheless, challenges remain in securing adequate resources and establishing robust evaluation methods to assess the programs' effectiveness (German Federal Government, 2022). Sustained investment is essential to ensure the enduring success of LGBTQI+ inclusion initiatives in Germany.

Across all target countries, there is a critical need for more inclusive policies, targeted capacity building programs, and robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds receive the support and protection they require.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE ONLINE SURVEYS WITH PROFESSIONALS

1. Representatives of migrant organizations/communities

1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1.1.1 Age

A total of **163 professionals** from migrant organizations across all participating countries responded to the survey. Of the total sample, 12% (n = 20) of respondents were from Cyprus, 19% (n = 31) from Greece, 23% (n = 37) from Italy, 15% (n = 25) from Poland, 18% (n = 30) from Spain, and the remaining 12% (n = 20) from Germany. The majority of participants were aged between 25 and 39 years (**53.4%**), followed by those aged 40 to 54 years (**27%**), 18 to 24 years (**12.3%**), and 55 and above (**6.7%**). Table 1 below presents the age distribution of survey respondents across the six participating countries. The data indicate a broad age range of participants across all six countries with a significant predominance of participants aged 25–39 years.

Table 1: Participants' age range per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q1. Age group							
18-24	0.0%	1.2%	0.6%	3.7%	4.9%	1.8%	12.3%
25-39	10.4%	12.9%	8.6%	9.2%	6.7%	5.5%	53.4%
40-54	1.8%	3.7%	9.8%	2.5%	4.9%	4.3%	27.0%
55+	0.0%	0.6%	3.7%	0.0%	1.8%	0.6%	6.7%
I'd rather not answer	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%

Source: @nculsion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.1.2 Gender

Out of the total sample, most of the participants (62%) identified themselves as women, while 31.3% identified themselves as men. Additionally, 3.7% identified as non-binary, and the remaining 3% chose not to answer the question. Table 2 highlights the predominance of women in the survey. Among the different countries, Spain reported the highest percentage of participants identifying as men, with 14 out of 30 respondents (46.7%).

Table 2: Participants' gender per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q2. Gender Identity							

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Man	3.7%	7.4%	6.7%	1.2%	8.6%	3.7%	31.3%
Woman	8.0%	10.4%	16%	14.1%	6.1%	7.4%	62.0%
Non-binary	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.6%	3.7%
I'd rather not answer	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.6%	3.0%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.1.3. Educational background

In total, across all six participating countries, participants working for migrant organizations demonstrated a high level of education. The majority had attained either higher education (36.8%) or postgraduate degrees (28.8%), with an additional 6.7% holding a PhD. A lower percentage of participants had completed primary (9.2%) or secondary education (8%).

Table 3: Participants' educational backgrounds per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q3. Educational backgrounds							
Primary education	0.0%	1.2%	5.5%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	9.2%
Secondary education	0.6%	0.6%	1.2%	1.2%	4.3%	0.0%	8.0%
Tertiary education	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
Higher education	1.8%	6.1%	9.8%	11.7%	2.5%	4.9%	36.8%
Postgraduate	9.8%	8.6%	0.0%	1.2%	2.5%	6.7%	28.8%
Phd graduate	0.0%	0.6%	5.5%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	6.7%
Education continuing	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.6%	1.8%	0.6%	4.9%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	3.1%
Prefer not to say	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.1.4 Geographical area

In terms of geographical distribution, the vast majority of respondents across all six countries are from urban areas (89.5%), while only 10.5% come from non-urban areas. Among the participating countries, Spain has the highest representation of respondents from non-urban areas, with 9 out of 30 respondents (30%), indicating a relatively more balanced urban-rural participation.

Table 4: Participants' Geographical area per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q4. Geographical area							
Urban	12.3%	18.5%	21%	13.6%	13%	11.1%	89.5%
Non-Urban	0.0%	0.6%	1.2%	1.9%	5.6%	1.2%	10.5%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.1.5 Role in the Organization

The roles of respondents vary significantly across countries, reflecting diverse professional backgrounds. The most common role was administrative duties related to migrants' and refugees' inclusion, accounting for 20% of the total participants. Other notable roles included

providing social support (11.3%), and adult or youth education (8.1%). Notably, 26.3% of respondents across all participating countries selected the “Other” category, highlighting roles primarily related to project activities, specialized support functions, or context-specific responsibilities (Table 5).

Table 5: Participants’ role in the organization per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q5. Role in the organization							
Administrative duties related to migrants’/ refugees’ inclusion	1.9%	5.6%	1.9%	4.4%	0.6%	5.6%	20%
Providing legal counselling/support	0.6%	0.0%	1.3%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%
Providing psychological support	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	1.3%	3.8%
Providing social support (including basic information about rights and obligations, interconnection and referral to other organizations, bodies etc.)	2.5%	4.4%	1.9%	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%	11.3%
Career counselling	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%
Adult or youth education	2.5%	1.3%	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%	1.9%	8.1%
Medical /nursing care	0.0%	0.6%	1.9%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	3.1%
Meeting basic necessities (accommodation, food, clothing)	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	1.9%	0.6%	3.1%
Cultural sector	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	1.9%	0.6%	0.6%	5%
Activities to counteract discrimination”	0.6%	1.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	3.1%
Municipal administrators;	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%
Municipal Social service employees	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
Employee of an SAI centre manager	0.0%	0.0%	10%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10%
Other, please specify	3.1%	3.1%	2.5	6.9%	9.4%	1.3%	26.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.1.6 Experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ individuals with a migrant and refugee background

The respondents across all participating countries come from diverse backgrounds and have varying levels of expertise in providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. The majority of the respondents (58.3%) reported having provided support services to LGBTQI+ migrants

and refugees, while 25.2% stated they had not, and 16.6% were uncertain about whether they had offered LGBTQI+-specific support services.

On a national level, the highest level of engagement was found in Greece, where 83.9% (26 out of 31 respondents) confirmed their experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. This was followed closely by Germany, with 75% (15 out of 20 respondents) affirming their experience in this area. Notably, in Italy, 15 out of 37 respondents (40%) reported that they have no experience working with LGBTQI+ individuals with a migrant and refugee background, while in Poland, 6 out of 25 respondents (24%) were uncertain.

Regarding the length of experience, the answers vary across the six countries with the majority of the total respondents demonstrating that they had been providing support services for 0–3 years (58.9%), followed by 4–7 years (26.3%) (Table 6).

Table 6: Participants’ experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q6. Have you ever provided support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees							
Yes	8.6%	16.0%	8.6%	7.4%	8.6%	9.2%	58.3%
No	3.1%	1.2%	9.2%	4.3%	5.5%	1.8%	25.2%
I do not know	0.6%	1.8%	4.9%	3.7%	4.3%	1.2%	16.6%
Q6.1. If “yes” for how many years							
0-3	11.6%	14.7%	7.4%	10.5%	6.3%	8.4%	58.9%
4-7	0.0%	10.5%	4.2%	1.1%	4.2%	6.3%	26.3%
8-11	1.1%	1.1%	2.1%	0.0%	2.1%	2.1%	8.4%
12-16	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	3.2%
17-20	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	2.1%
More than 20	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.2 NEEDS FOR CHANGES IN ATTITUDES & PROCESSES TOWARDS LGBTQI+ MIGRANTS & REFUGEES

1.2.1 Challenges/problems regarding LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees’ social inclusion

Participants were asked about the challenges LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face in their social inclusion. As presented in Table 7, the majority (60.1%) of respondents across the six participating countries agreed that these individuals experience significant difficulties, while 26.4% responded "probably agree," reflecting some uncertainty. A small percentage disagreed or were unsure (i.e., did not know), and 3% could not definitely confirm these challenges.

Among the participating countries, Greece had the highest percentage of agreement, with 26 out of 31 respondents (83.9%) acknowledging these challenges, followed by Cyprus, where 14 out of 20 respondents (70%) shared the same perceptions. In Italy, 17 out of 37 participants

(45.9%) indicated that such challenges "probably exist," suggesting some uncertainty, while in Poland, 7 out of 25 participants (28%) remained neutral, indicating a lack of consensus or awareness on the issue.

When examining specific challenges, institutional and sociocultural challenges are recognized as the main challenges to the social inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants across all participating countries, with the double stigma and discrimination based on ethnic origin and sexual orientation, gender identity, or biological sex characteristics being the most frequently reported issue (83%). Other key barriers included inadequate or non-existent state care for LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees (61.0%), insufficient civil society support (39.0%), and a lack of professional skills and training to address LGBTQI+ migrants' specific needs (46.8%). Remarkably, 46.1% of respondents highlighted that many LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees lack awareness of their rights, further complicating their social inclusion (Table 7).

These findings indicate that respondents across all participating countries recognize the significant barriers to social inclusion faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds; or at least acknowledge the possibility of such challenges, albeit with varying levels of certainty. Addressing these challenges requires effective, comprehensive strategies that focus on raising awareness, tackling stereotypes, increasing institutional support, providing training for professionals and updated materials, and revising curricula to include gender and migration related issues.

Table 7: Challenges/problems regarding LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees' social inclusion.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q7. Do LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees face challenges/problems regarding their social inclusion							
Yes	8.6%	16%	10.4%	6.1%	11%	8.0%	60.1%
Probably yes	3.1%	2.5%	10.4%	3.7%	3.1%	3.7%	26.4%
Neither yes nor no	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	4.3%	2.5%	0.0%	8.0%
Probably not	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
No	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
I do not know	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	3.1%
Q7.1. If "yes" or "probably yes", which, do you think are these challenge (select all that apply)							
Double stigma and discrimination based on ethnic origin and sexual orientation, gender identity and/ or biological sex characteristics.	12.8%	21.3%	19.1%	10.6%	7.1%	12.1%	83.0%
Inadequate or non-existent state care for the special needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees and/or the challenges they face.	10.6%	17.0%	10.6%	8.5%	7.1%	7.1%	61%
Inadequate or non-existent legal framework/recognition	9.2%	12.1%	7.8%	6.4%	4.3%	7.1%	46.8%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
The limited number or complete absence of civil society actors addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees.	6.4%	11.3%	8.5%	5.7%	2.1%	5.0%	39%
Inadequate or non-existent skills and abilities of people working in the field regarding the provision of support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.	7.8%	14.2%	7.1%	7.1%	4.3%	6.4%	46.8%
Partial or complete ignorance of the LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees regarding their rights.	7.8%	14.9%	10.6%	4.3%	2.1%	6.4%	46.1%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%	0.7%	1.4%	3.5%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.2.2 Communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

When participants were asked whether LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees face communication challenges with professionals providing support services in their organization, multiple responses were selected across the six participating countries. As shown in Table 8, participants expressed uncertainty regarding the existence of communication challenges among professionals across all participating countries. The highest percentage of participants (28.2%) indicated that communication challenges likely exist, while 17.8% confirmed their presence. Notably, 16.6% were unsure, 16% stated that no communication barriers exist, and 9.8% remained neutral.

Among the different countries, Germany had the highest rate of participants confirming communication challenges, with 7 out of 20 respondents (35%) acknowledging their existence. In contrast, no respondents in Cyprus (0%) reported such challenges. Germany also had the highest percentage of respondents who believed communication challenges *probably exist* (40%, 8 out of 20 respondents), followed closely by Cyprus (35%, 7 out of 20 respondents). In Poland, responses were evenly split between probably not and no, with 7 out of the 25 respondents (28%) selecting each option.

These findings highlight variations in the experiences of professionals across the six countries and indicate that professionals acknowledge the potential for challenges and significant barriers to social inclusion. Furthermore, it suggests a lack of clarity or awareness regarding the existence of communication challenges. This indicates that communication barriers may be present but are often overlooked or go unnoticed.

When asked about specific experiences with communication challenges, the largest share of the total respondents (45.3%) reported never having witnessed such situations. This suggests

varying levels of awareness among professionals regarding the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees across the six countries, a lack of recognition of these challenges, or even a reluctance to acknowledge them in a survey. Meanwhile, 25.3% of respondents indicated that professionals appeared distant when providing services, potentially reflecting a lack of engagement or sensitivity to the unique needs of LGBTQI+ individuals. Likewise, 25.3% noted that while professionals were friendly, they were not necessarily attentive to these specific needs, suggesting a potential gap in understanding and addressing the challenges LGBTQI+ individuals face. Conversely, 32.0% stated that professionals were both friendly and considerate of LGBTQI+ needs. While this indicates progress in some areas, it also underscores the need for further improvements in the quality and inclusivity of support services (Table 8).

The results reflect the need for further targeted training and awareness within the professional sector, to ensure that professionals demonstrate a deeper understanding and responsiveness to the specific needs of these people.

Table 8: Communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q8. Do LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees face communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services in your organization							
Yes	0.0%	3.1%	4.3%	0.0%	6.1%	4.3%	17.8%
Probably yes	4.3%	6.1%	6.1%	2.5%	4.3%	4.9%	28.2%
Neither yes nor no	1.8%	3.1%	1.2%	2.5%	0.6%	0.6%	9.8%
Probably not	3.7%	0.0%	4.9%	4.3%	3.1%	0.0%	16%
No	0.6%	4.9%	1.8%	4.3%	3.1%	1.8%	16.6%
I do not know	1.8%	1.8%	4.3%	1.8%	1.2%	0.6%	11.7%
Q8.1. If “yes” or “probably yes” have you ever been in/ witnessed a situation when a person providing a service to a LGBTQI+ migrant (select all that apply)							
Refuse to provide services to them	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	2.7%	5.3%
Provide services while being distant	1.3%	6.7%	4.0%	0.0%	13.3%	0.0%	25.3%
While they are professional/ friendly they are not interested in their needs as LGBTQI persons despite the fact that these needs may be linked to the services provided.	0.0%	4.0%	5.3%	1.3%	2.7%	12%	25.3%
They are professional/ friendly and take their needs into account	4.0%	5.3%	12%	0.0%	4.0%	6.7%	32%
I have never been in/ witnessed the situation above	4.0%	12%	16%	4.0%	2.7%	6.7%	45.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.2.3 Challenges in providing supporting services within migrant organizations

Table 9 presents the results of a question exploring participants' views on the challenges they face in providing support services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Germany. Responses from the six countries reveal considerable variation in the recognition of these challenges. Out of the total sample, 35.6% believed that professionals in their organization probably face challenges in providing support to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds, indicating some awareness of the issue, though not with complete certainty. A smaller percentage (24.5%) *confirmed* the existence of these challenges, suggesting recognition but not full consensus across all respondents. Notably, a significant percentage of respondents showed greater uncertainty: 17.8% were neutral, 11.7% believed challenges probably do not exist, and 10.4% answered *no* indicating they do not perceive any challenges.

At the national level, the majority of participants in Germany (55%, 11 out of 20 respondents) and Italy (45.9%, 17 out of 37 respondents) believe that professionals *probably* have the necessary skills, suggesting some level of uncertainty. In Spain, responses were evenly split, with 37% (11 out of 30 respondents) selecting both yes and probably yes. Notably, in Cyprus and Poland, the majority of respondents expressed greater uncertainty, with 40% (8 out of 20) in Cyprus and 28% (7 out of 25) in Poland answering neither yes nor no.

The findings indicate a high level of uncertainty among respondents across the six countries about the challenges professionals face and a lack of awareness and recognition of the underlying issues. This suggests a need for further awareness and potential training in these countries to better address the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.

The second part of the question, which asked respondents who acknowledged or *probably* acknowledged the challenges, to identify those they had witnessed or experienced, provided deeper insight into the nature of these challenges. The most frequently reported issue was a lack of knowledge, skills, and abilities among professionals, which was recognized across all countries (56.1%). This suggests that professionals may not always have the necessary training to support LGBTQI+ individuals effectively. Language and cultural barriers were also commonly suggested (48%), indicating that communication challenges are a significant obstacle in providing support services. Additionally, the lack of a clear legal or institutional framework was highlighted by 44.9% of respondents as a key issue.

These findings may suggest the need to enhance professionals' knowledge, as well as improve cultural and language competence and foster trust and cooperation between professionals and the LGBTQI+ individuals, through tailored training designed to better equip professionals in supporting LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in a cross-national context.

Table 9: Challenges in providing supporting services within the migrant organization.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q9. Do professionals providing supporting services in your organization face challenges in providing support services to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees?							
Yes	1.8%	6.7%	4.3%	2.5%	6.7%	2.5%	24.5%
Probably yes	3.1%	4.9%	10.4%	3.7%	6.7%	6.7%	35.6%
Neither yes nor no	4.9%	3.7%	2.5%	4.3%	1.2%	1.2%	17.8%
Probably not	0.0%	2.5%	4.3%	2.5%	1.8%	0.6%	11.7%
No	2.5%	1.2%	1.2%	2.5%	1.8%	1.2%	10.4%
Q9.1 If “yes” or “probably yes” which are these challenges (select all that apply)							
Incomplete or lack of knowledge, skills and abilities of professionals to support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.	5.1%	15.3%	12.2%	5.1%	8.2%	10.2%	56.1%
Limited or lack of willingness of the LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees to cooperate with professionals providing supporting services due to fear of ill-treatment, stigmatization or victimization (e.g., because they are LGBTQI +)	1.0%	9.2%	8.2%	6.1%	7.1%	6.1%	37.8%
Limited or lack of willingness of the LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees to cooperate with the professionals providing supporting services, due to fear of unwanted "disclosure" of their LGBTQI+ status	1.0%	7.1%	10.2%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	30.6%
Current framework of lack thereof legal/institutional framework	4.1%	12.2%	6.1%	6.1%	6.1%	10.2%	44.9%
Language and culture barriers	6.1%	12.2%	8.2%	4.1%	13.3%	4.1%	48.0%
Lack of cultural mediators	7.1%	6.1%	5.1%	2.0%	8.2%	3.1%	31.6%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	1.0%	3.1

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.2.4 Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

Table 10 presents the results of a question examining professionals' perceptions on the specific skills and competencies required to support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. The responses revealed a strong consensus across the six participating countries, although the level of agreement varied.

Out of the total sample, 47.9% of the participants believed that professionals need specific skills to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds, while 36.8% felt that professionals probably need these skills. A small percentage either disagreed or were uncertain, with 3.7% unable to definitively confirm the need for such skills.

At the national level, Germany had the highest percentage of respondents who agreed that professionals need specific skills (65%, 13 out of 20 respondents), while Italy had the lowest (35.1%, 13 out of 37 respondents). Additionally, the percentage of respondents who *probably* agreed (36.2% in the total sample) varied significantly, ranging from 24% in Poland (6 out of 25 respondents) to 51.3% in Italy (19 out of 37 respondents). This variation indicates a degree of uncertainty and suggests a potential gap in the specific skills and competencies needed across participating countries.

Those participants who agreed or probably agreed that specific skills are necessary, were then asked to share their views on the skills and competencies required to address the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals. The results are presented in Table 10 below. Across all participating countries, the most common response was a strong understanding of the LGBTQI+ community and its specific needs (71.8%). Knowledge of relevant legislation was also widely recognized as important (64.1%). Notably, empathy emerged as another key skill, with a significant portion of respondents identifying it as essential (64.9%).

For those who believe that professionals do not need specific skills or competencies, the most common reason given is that existing skills and abilities are already sufficient (80%).

These findings suggest the need for focused training initiatives aimed at better understanding the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals, along with a cultural awareness and legal framework component to address the intersectional challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background.

Table 10: Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q10. Do professionals providing services in your organizations need specific skills and competencies in order to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees?							
Yes	4.9%	10.4%	8.0%	7.4%	9.2%	8.0%	47.9%
Probably yes	6.1%	5.5%	11.7%	3.7%	6.1%	3.7%	36.8%
Neither yes nor no	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	0.6%	0.6%	4.9%
Probably not	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%
No	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	1.2%	0.0%	3.1%
I do not know	0.0%	0.6%	1.2%	0.6%	1.2%	0.0%	3.7%
Q10.1 If “yes” or “probably yes”, which are these specific skills? (select all that apply)							
Communication in foreign languages	3.8%	7.6%	11.5%	6.9%	12.2%	9.9%	51.9%
Basic Knowledge of relevant legislation	8.4%	14.5%	15.3%	8.4%	9.9%	7.6%	64.1%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Empathy²	6.9%	12.2%	12.2%	8.4%	12.2%	13.0%	64.9%
Organizational (time management, prioritization, action planning, decision making, problem solving, etc.)	3.1%	9.9%	7.6%	3.1%	8.4%	3.8%	35.9%
Cultural awareness and expression	8.4%	13.0%	11.5%	6.9%	5.3%	11.5%	56.5%
Knowledge about LGBTQI+ community and the needs of its representatives	9.2%	17.6%	18.3%	9.2%	6.9%	10.7%	71.8%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	4.6%
Q10.2 If they “do not” or “probably do not” what are the reasons? (select all that apply)							
There are no such special skills or abilities	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%
Professionals should not or have no obligation to have such special skills or abilities	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	6.7%
The already existing skills and abilities of the professionals are sufficient	13.3%	13.3%	6.7%	26.7%	20.0%	0.0%	80.0%
They are not interested in developing such skills or abilities	0.0%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%
Other, please specify	0.0%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.2.5 Assessing the specific skills and competencies of professionals in migrant organizations to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees

The following question asked professionals whether they believe their sector has the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. Responses varied significantly across the six participating countries. Overall, 15.3% of the total sample agreed that professionals have the required skills, while 35% probably agreed. A significant percentage (23.9%) remained neutral, 20.9% probably disagreed, and 4.3% disagreed, indicating an important level of uncertainty in the sector’s ability to provide adequate support for LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees (Table 11).

At the national level, the highest agreement was found in Germany, where 25% (5 out of 20 respondents) confirmed that professionals possess the necessary skills, followed closely by Poland, with 24% (6 out of 25 respondents). Remarkably, the majority of participants in Greece (48%, 15 out of 31 respondents), Germany (45%, 9 out of 20 respondents), and Italy (38%, 14

² Understand and relate to other people’s thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and to see the world from other people’s perspectives

out of 37 respondents) believed that professionals probably have the necessary skills, indicating some uncertainty. In Spain, a relatively large percentage (40%, 12 out of 30 respondents) selected neither yes nor no, reflecting notable scepticism on the issue.

The results suggest a relatively high level of uncertainty among the participants. This sense of uncertainty and mixed perceptions may suggest a potential gap in professionals' knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide such support, as well as an acknowledgment of the need for further training or awareness programs to strengthen professionals' ability to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.

Among those in the total sample who believe that professionals lack specific skills or competencies, the most common reason cited is the absence or limited availability of free training programs (85.4%). A low level of institutional awareness regarding LGBTQI+ needs also emerged as a significant issue (80.5%) (Table 11).

These findings underscore the importance of providing more accessible training programs and raising institutional awareness to better equip professionals in supporting LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. Addressing these gaps is crucial to enhancing inclusivity and ensuring professionals are well-prepared to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.

Table 11: Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q11. Do professionals in your sector have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees?							
Yes	0.6%	2.5%	3.1%	3.7%	2.5%	3.1%	15.3%
Probably yes	4.3%	9.2%	8.6%	4.3%	3.1%	5.5%	35.0%
Neither yes nor no	3.7%	3.7%	4.3%	3.7%	7.4%	1.2%	23.9%
Probably not	2.5%	3.1%	4.3%	3.7%	5.5%	1.8%	20.9%
No	1.2%	0.6%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	4.3%
Q11.1 If “no” or probably “not”, what is/are the reason(s) for this lack of necessary knowledge skills and abilities? (select all that apply)							
Absence or limited availability of free related training activities / programs for professionals	17.1%	19.5%	12.2%	9.8%	22%	4.9%	85.4%
Limited or lack of capacity or willingness of employers to train their employees to acquire this knowledge, skills and abilities	9.8%	17.1%	4.9%	9.8%	12.2%	4.9%	58.5%
Professionals themselves are not interested or have a limited interest in acquiring the relevant knowledge, skills and abilities	4.9%	4.9%	2.4%	2.4%	7.3%	4.9%	26.8%
Low level of awareness of the needs of the LGBTQI	14.6%	17.1%	4.9%	14.6%	22%	7.3%	80.5%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
community in the institutional context (due to e.g. no legal framework, lack of targeted services to this group etc.)							
There is no such a need to have specific Knowledge skills and abilities to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees	2.4%	4.9%	0.0%	2.4%	2.4%	0.0%	12.2%
Other, please specify	0.0%	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.9%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

1.2.6 Training activities on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany

Out of the total sample, a significant percentage of professionals across all countries (59.5%) expressed interest in training focused on supporting LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background (Table 12).

Among the participating countries, Italy reported the highest level of interest, with 26 out of 37 respondents (70%), followed by Greece with 19 out of 31 respondents (61.3%). Germany came in third, with 11 out of 20 respondents (55%) expressing interest.

Out of the total sample, the most commonly suggested training topics were the exchange of best practices for the social integration of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees from other countries (71.5%), followed by human rights abuses, discrimination, and persecution based on sexual orientation, identity, or gender in the countries of origin of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees (65.7%). Other frequently requested topics included the legal and institutional framework for combating discrimination (64.2%) and foundational LGBTQI+ terminology (e.g., sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression) (53.3%).

While perceptions of the suggested topics vary, the data highlight key subjects that are widely recognized as essential for inclusion in training materials (Table 12). These insights will shape the development of the @nclusion capacity-building program.

Among those not interested in participating in the training, the most common reasons cited were the irrelevance to their duties and a heavy workload, each mentioned by 61.5% of the total respondents (Table 12).

These findings suggest that professionals may face practical obstacles such as perceived relevance and workload constraints, which could affect their engagement with the topic and may indicate the need for engagement strategies to ensure participation and impact.

Table 12: Training activities on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q12. Would you be interested in a training activity that focuses on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants?							
Yes	6.1%	11.7%	16%	8%	11%	6.7%	59.5%
Probably yes	3.1%	6.1%	4.9%	3.1%	2.5%	4.9%	24.5%
Neither yes nor no	0.6%	1.2%	0.0%	1.8%	1.8%	0.0%	5.5%
Probably not	0.6%	0.0%	1.2%	1.8%	1.2%	0.0%	4.9%
No	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	1.8%	0.6%	4.9%
Q12.1 If “yes” or “probably yes” which of the following topics this training activity should cover? (select all that apply)							
Basic concepts - terminology (sexual orientation, gender identities, gender expression, sex characteristics, migrants, refugees, asylum, etc.)	6.6%	13.1%	16.1%	7.3%	4.4%	5.8%	53.3%
Legal Institutional Framework for racist, homophobic, transphobic, biphobic crime and discrimination	9.5%	17.5%	13.9%	8.0%	6.6%	8.8%	64.2%
Human rights abuses, discrimination and persecution on grounds of sexual orientation, identity or gender in the countries of origin of the LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees	9.5%	16.8%	15.3%	8.0%	7.3%	8.8%	65.7%
Facilitation of - increasing the access of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees to support services	7.3%	13.9%	13.1%	8.0%	5.1%	6.6%	54%
The legal status of LGBTQI + migrants and refugees in the country	8.0%	12.4%	13.1%	8.8%	5.8%	4.4%	52.6%
The social /demographic profile of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in the country	6.6%	11.7%	7.3%	6.6%	2.9%	6.6%	41.6%
Good practices of social integration of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees implemented in other countries	6.6%	18.2%	19.0%	10.9%	8.0%	8.8%	71.5%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
Q12.2 If “no” or “probably no”, can you specify the reason? (select all that apply)							
No relation with actual duties	15.4%	0.0%	23.1%	15.4%	7.7%	0.0%	61.5%
No interest in the topic	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%
Difficult workload	7.7%	0.0%	23.1%	7.7%	23.1%	0.0%	61.5%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	7.7%	15.4%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2. Representatives of LGBTQI+ organizations

2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

2.1.1 Age

A total of **132 professionals** from LGBTQI+ organizations across all participating countries responded to the survey. Of the total sample, 24.2% (**n = 32**) of respondents were from Cyprus, 15.2% (**n = 20**) from Greece, 5.3% (**n = 7**) from Italy, 15.2% (**n = 20**) from Poland, 22.7% (**n = 30**) from Spain, and the remaining 17.4% (**n = 23**) from Germany. The majority of participants were aged between 25 and 39 years (**59.8%**), followed by those aged 40 to 54 years (**26.5%**), 18 to 24 years (**6.8%**), and 55 and above (**6.1%**). Table 13 below presents the age distribution of survey respondents across the six participating countries. The data indicate a broad age range of participants across all six countries with a significant predominance of participants aged between 25 and 39 years old.

Table 13: Participants' age range per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q1. Age group							
18-24	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	4.5%	1.5%	6.8%
25-39	22.7%	11.4%	1.5%	6.8%	7.6%	9.8%	59.8%
40-54	1.5%	3.0%	2.3%	7.6%	8.3%	3.8%	26.5%
55+	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	2.3%	2.3%	6.1%
I'd rather not answer	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.1.2 Gender

Across all participating countries, the total sample was evenly split, with 43.2% identifying as men and 43.2% as women. Additionally, 12.9% identified as non-binary, and 0.8% chose not to answer the question (Table 14). On a national level, Cyprus had the highest percentage of female respondents, with 21 out of 32 (65.6%), while Germany had the highest percentage of male respondents, with 9 out of 23 (39.1%).

Table 14: Participants' gender per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q2. Gender Identity							
Man	6.8%	3.8%	3.8%	9.8%	12.1%	6.8%	43.2%
Woman	15.9%	8.3%	1.5%	2.3%	8.3%	6.8%	43.2%
Non-binary	1.5%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%	1.5%	3.8%	12.9%
I'd rather not answer	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.1.3. Educational backgrounds

In total, across all six participating countries, the participants working for LGBTQI+ organizations demonstrated a high level of education. The majority had attained either higher education (36.8%) or postgraduate degrees (25%) (Table 15).

Table 15: Participants' educational backgrounds per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q3. Educational backgrounds							
Primary education	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%
Secondary education	3.8%	1.5%	0.0%	2.3%	2.3%	0.0%	9.8%
Tertiary education	3.8%	0.0%	1.5%	0.8%	6.8%	0.8%	13.6%
Higher education	7.6%	4.5%	3.0%	9.1%	6.1%	8.3%	38.6%
Postgraduate	6.8%	8.3%	0.8%	1.5%	2.3%	5.3%	25.0%
PhD graduate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	1.5%
Education continuing	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	1.5%	1.5%	5.3%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.8%	2.3%
Prefer not to say	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	3.0%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.1.4 Geographical area

In terms of geographical distribution, the vast majority of the respondents across all six countries are from urban areas (84.8%), while only 15.2% come from non-urban areas.

On a national level, Cyprus has the highest representation from non-urban areas (28.1%) among the participating countries, indicating a relatively more balanced urban-rural participation (Table 16).

Table 16: Participants' Geographical area per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q4. Geographical area							
Urban	17.4%	14.4%	5.3%	13.6%	17.4%	16.7%	84.8%
Non-Urban	6.8%	0.8%	0.0%	1.5%	5.3%	0.8%	15.2%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.1.5 Role in the Organization

The roles of respondents varied significantly across countries, reflecting a wide range of professional backgrounds. The most common role was administrative duties related to migrants' and refugees' inclusion, representing 17.4% of all participants. Other prominent roles included providing social support (15.2%), adult or youth education (12.9%), and activities aimed at counteracting discrimination (10.6%) (Table 17).

Table 17: Participants' role in the organization per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q5. Role in the organization							

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Administrative duties related to migrants'/ refugees' inclusion	3.8%	1.5%	0.0%	3.0%	0.8%	8.3%	17.4%
Providing legal counselling/support	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	3.8%
Providing psychological support	2.3%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%	9.8%
Providing social support (including basic information about rights and obligations, interconnection and referral to other organizations, bodies etc.)	3.8%	0.8%	3.0%	3.0%	2.3%	2.3%	15.2%
Career counselling	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%
Adult or youth education	2.3%	1.5%	0.0%	3.8%	3.8%	1.5%	12.9%
Medical /nursing care	1.5%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%
Meeting basic necessities (accommodation, food, clothing)	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	4.5%
Cultural sector	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%	0.0%	3.0%
Activities to counteract discrimination"	2.3%	1.5%	1.5%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.6%
Municipal administrators;	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	2.3%
Municipal Social service employees	1.5%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	3.0%
Employee of an SAI centre manager	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other, please specify	2.3%	2.3%	0.0%	3.0%	9.1%	0.0%	16.7%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.1.6 Experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

Respondents from all participating countries come from diverse backgrounds and have varying levels of experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. The majority (68.9%) reported having provided such support, while 22% indicated they had not, and 9.1% were unsure if their services specifically targeted LGBTQI+ individuals.

When examining engagement across countries, Germany showed the highest level of engagement, with 91.3% (21 out of 23 respondents) confirming their experience in supporting LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Cyprus followed with 69.4% (25 out

of 32 respondents). In Italy, all seven respondents reported having experience working with LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

Regarding the length of experience, the answers vary across the six countries with the majority demonstrating that they had been providing support services for 0–3 years (65.9%), followed by 4–7 years (15.4%) (Table 18).

Table 18: Participants’ experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q6. Have you ever provided support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees							
Yes	18.9%	9.8%	5.3%	9.1%	9.8%	15.9%	68.9%
No	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%	4.5%	10.6%	0.8%	22.0%
I do not know	2.3%	2.3%	0.0%	1.5%	2.3%	0.8%	9.1%
Q6.1. If “yes” for how many years							
0-3	25.3%	18.7%	3.3%	8.8%	2.2%	7.7%	65.9%
4-7	4.4%	0.0%	2.2%	3.3%	0.0%	5.5%	15.4%
8-11	1.1%	0.0%	2.2%	1.1%	1.1%	7.7%	13.2%
12-16	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%
17-20	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%
More than 20	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	2.2%	3.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.2 NEEDS FOR CHANGES IN ATTITUDES & PROCESSES TOWARDS LGBTQI+ MIGRANTS & REFUGEES

2.2.1 Challenges/problems regarding LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees’ social inclusion

Participants were asked about the social inclusion challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. As shown in Table 19, the majority of respondents across the six participating countries (74.2%) agreed that LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face significant challenges in this regard. An additional 12.9% *probably agree*, indicating some uncertainty. A smaller percentage of participants (4.5%) were neutral, while 3% and 2.3% believed that these challenges “probably do not” or “do not” exist, respectively. Another 3.0% of participants did not know whether such challenges exist (Table 19).

Among the participating countries, Greece reported unanimous agreement, with all 20 respondents (100%) acknowledging that LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face significant challenges regarding their social inclusion. Italy followed closely, with 85.7% (6 out of 7 respondents) agreeing, and Germany had 78.3% of participants (18 out of 23 respondents) agreeing. In Poland, 25% (5 out of 20 respondents) believed that LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees probably face such challenges.

When examining the specific challenges faced by LGBTQI+ migrants across all participating countries, institutional and sociocultural barriers were identified as the main obstacles to their social inclusion. The most frequently reported issue was double stigma and discrimination based on ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or biological sex characteristics,

mentioned by 85.2% of respondents. Other key barriers included inadequate or non-existent state care for LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees (66.1%) and lack of professional skills and training to address the specific needs of LGBTQI+ migrants (55.7%). Notably, 51.3% of respondents pointed out that many LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees are unaware of their rights, which further hinders their social inclusion (Table 19).

These findings indicate that respondents acknowledge the challenges and significant barriers to social inclusion faced by LGBTQI+ migrants in all implementing countries or acknowledge the potential for such challenges. The findings may also suggest a lack of clarity regarding these challenges, resulting in uncertainty about how they are experienced or addressed.

Effective and comprehensive strategies that focus on raising awareness, tackling stereotypes, increasing institutional support, providing training for professionals and updated materials, as well as revising curricula to include gender and migration related issues are required in order to address these challenges.

Table 19: Challenges/problems regarding LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees' social inclusion.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q7. Do LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees face challenges/problems regarding their social inclusion							
Yes	17.4%	15.2%	4.5%	9.1%	14.4%	13.6%	74.2%
Probably yes	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	3.8%	3.0%	12.9%
Neither yes nor no	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%	0.8%	4.5%
Probably not	1.5%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	3.0%
No	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	2.3%
I do not know	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.8%	0.0%	3.0%
Q7.1. If "yes" or "probably yes", which, do you think are these challenge (select all that apply)							
Double stigma and discrimination based on ethnic origin and sexual orientation, gender identity and/ or biological sex characteristics	14.8%	14.8%	5.2%	13.9%	18.3%	18.3%	85.2%
Inadequate or non-existent state care for the special needs of LGBTQI + migrants and refugees and/or the challenges they face	10.4%	13.0%	4.3%	12.2%	9.6%	16.5%	66.1%
Inadequate or non-existent legal framework/recognition	7.8%	11.3%	0.9%	9.6%	5.2%	13.9%	48.7%
The limited number or complete absence of civil society actors addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees	4.3%	9.6%	2.6%	5.2%	7.0%	12.2%	40.9%
Inadequate or non-existent skills and abilities of people working in the field regarding	6.1%	9.6%	3.5%	8.7%	13.9%	13.9%	55.7%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
the provision of support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees							
Partial or complete ignorance of the LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees regarding their rights	8.7%	10.4%	1.7%	9.6%	11.3%	9.6%	51.3%
Other, please specify	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	2.6%	9.6%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.2.2 Communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background

When participants were asked whether LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face communication challenges with professionals providing support services in their organizations, responses varied across the six participating countries. As shown in Table 20, there was a general consensus on the existence of communication challenges among professionals. Of the total sample, 33.3% believed these challenges exist, while 19.7% likely acknowledged them. Additionally, 6.1% remained neutral, and 16.7% believed that such challenges do not exist.

Among the participating countries, Cyprus reported the highest level of agreement on the existence of communication challenges, with 14 out of 31 respondents (43.8%) acknowledging them, while Poland had the lowest (15%). A significant share of respondents in Italy (28.6%, 2 out of 7) and Greece (25%, 5 out of 20) believed these challenges do not exist. Likewise, 21.9% of respondents in Cyprus (7 out of 32) and 21.7% in Germany (5 out of 23) also denied the existence of such challenges. In contrast, Spain had the lowest percentage of respondents denying communication challenges (3.3%, 1 out of 30). Additionally, in Poland 5 out of 20 respondents (25%) were unsure, indicating some uncertainty regarding the presence of these challenges.

These findings highlight variations in the experiences of professionals across the participating countries. Despite the high level of recognition of communication challenges, a significant percentage of participants suggest uncertainty regarding the existence of such challenges. This indicates that communication barriers may be present but are often overlooked or go unnoticed.

When respondents who agreed that communication challenges (probably) exist were asked about specific experiences, 40% suggested witnessing professionals who showed little or no interest in addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals. In contrast, 35% observed professionals who were both friendly and considerate of LGBTQI+ needs. This suggests that while many professionals demonstrate openness and support, gaps in awareness and understanding may still hinder effective assistance for LGBTQI+ individuals. Notably, 30% of respondents suggested that they had never witnessed such situations, which may indicate

varying levels of awareness among professionals, a lack of recognition of these challenges, or even reluctance to acknowledge them in a survey setting (Table 20).

The results indicate a need for further training or awareness to ensure that professionals demonstrate a deeper understanding and responsiveness to the specific needs of these people.

Table 20: Communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q8. Do LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees face communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services in your organization							
Yes	10.6%	5.3%	0.0%	2.3%	9.1%	6.1%	33.3%
Probably yes	4.5%	3.0%	2.3%	3.8%	1.5%	4.5%	19.7%
Neither yes nor no	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%	1.5%	6.1%
Probably not	0.8%	0.8%	1.5%	3.0%	6.8%	0.0%	12.9%
No	5.3%	3.8%	1.5%	1.5%	0.8%	3.8%	16.7%
I do not know	2.3%	1.5%	0.0%	3.8%	2.3%	1.5%	11.4%
Q8.1. If “yes” or “probably yes” have you ever been in/ witnessed a situation when a person providing a service to a LGBTQI+ migrant (select all that apply)							
Refuse to provide services to them	5.7%	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%	4.3%	10%	28.6%
Provide services while being distant	2.9%	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%	12.9%	0.0%	21.4%
While they are professional/ friendly they are not interested in their needs as LGBTQI persons despite the fact that these needs may be linked to the services provided	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	15.7%	8.6%	40.0%
They are professional/ friendly and take their needs into account	4.3%	2.9%	7.1%	5.7%	2.9%	12.9%	35.7%
I have never been in / witnessed the situation above	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%	2.9%	5.7%	0.0%	30%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.2.3 Challenges in providing supporting services within LGBTQI+ organizations

Table 21 presents the results of the question examining participants' views regarding the challenges they face in providing support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Germany. Multiple answers were selected across the six participating countries, and the data reveal significant variation in the recognition of the challenges faced by professionals in these countries.

Out of the total sample, 37.9% believe that professionals in their organization probably face challenges in providing support services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee

backgrounds, indicating an acknowledgment of potential difficulties. The percentage of respondents who confirm the existence of these challenges (32.6%) is very close to those who answered that challenges probably exist suggesting that while there is recognition, there remains a lack of clarity or complete acknowledgment among all respondents. The remaining responses indicate varying levels of uncertainty: 12.9% remained neutral, 11.4% believe that challenges in providing support services likely do not exist, and 5.3% stated that such challenges do not exist.

At the national level, the highest acknowledgment of potential difficulties was found in Italy and Germany, where 42.9% (3 out of 7 respondents) and 39.1% (9 out of 23 respondents), respectively, confirmed the existence of these challenges. Notably, in Spain, 46.7% (14 out of 30 respondents) suggested that such challenges probably exist, followed by Poland with 45% (9 out of 20 respondents). Greece had the highest percentage of respondents indicating that these challenges probably do not exist (20%, 4 out of 20 respondents).

The findings indicate a mix of certainty and uncertainty among respondents across the six countries about the challenges professionals face and a lack of awareness and recognition of the underlying issues.

The second part of the question asked respondents who acknowledged that these challenges (probably) exist to identify those they had witnessed or experienced, providing further insight into their nature. The most commonly reported challenge across all participating countries was language and cultural barriers (61.3%), highlighting the significant communication difficulties in providing support services. Another frequently mentioned challenge was professionals' incomplete or insufficient knowledge, skills, and abilities in supporting LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees (55.9%). Additionally, a key challenge identified was the limited willingness or reluctance of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees to cooperate with support service professionals (36.6%). This reluctance often stems from fears of ill-treatment, stigmatization, or victimization, particularly related to their LGBTQI+ identity.

These findings may suggest the need to enhance professionals' knowledge, as well as improve cultural and language competence and foster trust and cooperation between professionals and LGBTQI+ individuals, through tailored training designed to better equip professionals in supporting LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in a cross-national context.

Table 21: Challenges in providing supporting services within the LGBTQI+ organization.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q9. Do professionals providing supporting services in your organization face challenges in providing support services to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees?							
Yes	9.1%	5.3%	2.3%	3.0%	6.1%	6.8%	32.6%
Probably yes	7.6%	5.3%	1.5%	6.8%	10.6%	6.1%	37.9%
Neither yes nor no	3.8%	0.0%	0.8%	3.0%	3.0%	2.3%	12.9%
Probably not	3.0%	3.0%	0.8%	2.3%	0.8%	1.5%	11.4%
No	0.8%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	0.8%	5.3%
Q9.1 If “yes” or “probably yes” which are these challenges (select all that apply)							

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Incomplete or lack of knowledge, skills and abilities of professionals to support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees	12.9%	9.7%	3.2%	8.6%	12.9%	8.6%	55.9%
Limited or lack of willingness of the LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees to cooperate with professionals providing supporting services due to fear of ill-treatment, stigmatization or victimization (e.g., because they are LGBTQI+)	6.5%	9.7%	1.1%	6.5%	9.7%	3.2%	36.6%
Limited or lack of willingness of the LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees to cooperate with the professionals providing supporting services, due to fear of unwanted "disclosure" of their LGBTQI+ status	2.2%	6.5%	3.2%	8.6%	6.5%	5.4%	32.3%
Current framework of lack thereof legal/institutional framework	6.5%	5.4%	0.0%	8.6%	9.7%	6.5%	36.6%
Language and culture barriers	5.4%	9.7%	3.2%	10.8%	17.2%	15.1%	61.3%
Lack of cultural mediators	2.2%	6.5%	0.0%	4.3%	11.8%	4.3%	29.0%
Other, please specify	0.0%	1.1%	0.0	1.1%	1.1%	2.2%	5.4%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.2.4 Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

The following question, presented in Table 22, explored professionals' perceptions regarding the need for specific skills and competencies to support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. While varying levels of agreement were observed across the six participating countries, there was a strong overall consensus on the importance of these skills. Among the total sample, 50.8% of respondents confirmed the need for specific skills, while 32.6% indicated that such a need was likely. A lower percentage of respondents either disagreed or probably disagreed or were uncertain, while 5,3% reported that they did not know.

Among the participating countries, Germany had the highest percentage of respondents confirming the need for specific skills (50.8%, 14 out of 23 respondents), while Italy had the lowest (28.6%, 2 out of 7 respondents).

Respondents who agreed or likely agreed that specific skills are necessary, were then asked to share their views on the skills and competencies required to address the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals. The results are presented in Table 22 below.

Out of the total sample, the most prevalent response was communication in foreign languages (66.4%). Basic knowledge of relevant legislation was also widely recognized (65.5%). Notably, knowledge about the LGBTQI+ community and the needs of its members was identified as another key skill, with a significant share of respondents considering it essential across the participating countries (64.5%).

These high percentages among our sample confirming the need of specific skills may suggest a strong agreement on the importance of certain skills and may indicate the recognition of a skills gap among professionals in the six implementing countries.

Among those who believe professionals do not need specific skills or competencies, the most common reason suggested across the total sample is that existing skills and abilities are already sufficient (75%).

These findings suggest the need for focused training initiatives aimed at better understanding the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals, along with a cultural awareness and legal framework component to address the intersectional challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background.

Table 22: Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q10. Do professionals providing services in your organizations need specific skills and competencies in order to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees?							
Yes	13.6%	8.3%	1.5%	5.3%	11.4%	10.6%	50.8%
Probably yes	6.8%	6.8%	3.8%	3.8%	7.6%	3.8%	32.6%
Neither yes nor no	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.8%	1.5%	5.3%
Probably not	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%	0.8%	3.0%
No	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.8%	3.0%
I do not know	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	1.5%	0.0%	5.3%
Q10.1 If “yes” or “probably yes”, which are these specific skills? (select all that apply)							
Communication in foreign languages	12.7%	7.3%	3.6%	8.2%	18.2%	16.4%	66.4%
Basic Knowledge of relevant legislation	7.3%	13.6%	4.5%	10.9%	12.7%	16.4%	65.5%
Empathy³	5.5%	10.0%	4.5%	3.6%	15.5%	14.5%	53.6%
Organizational (time management, prioritization, action planning, decision)	5.5%	3.6%	1.8%	6.4%	10.9%	8.2%	36.4%

³ Understand and relate to other people’s thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and to see the world from other people’s perspectives

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
making, problem solving, etc.)							
Cultural awareness and expression	5.5%	9.1%	3.6%	6.4%	12.7%	13.6%	50.9%
Knowledge about LGBTQI+ community and the needs of its representatives	7.3%	14.5%	4.5%	7.3%	16.4%	14.5%	64.5%
Other, please specify	0.9%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.9%	5.5%
Q10.2 If they “do not” or “probably do not” what are the reasons? (select all that apply)							
There are no such special skills or abilities	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	37.5%
Professionals should not or have no obligation to have such special skills or abilities	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	37.5%
The already existing skills and abilities of the professionals are sufficient	12.5%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	0.0%	75.0%
They are not interested in developing such skills or abilities	25.0%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	0.0	0.0%	37.5%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.2.5 Assessing the specific skills and competencies of professionals in LGBTQI+ organizations to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background

The results in the following question – where participants were asked if professionals in their sector have the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide support services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background – demonstrate a relatively high level of uncertainty among the six participating countries. In the total sample, 27.3% of the participants confirmed that professionals have the necessary skills, while 25.8% indicated they likely do. In contrast, 15.9% remained neutral, 19.7% probably disagreed, and 11.4% disagreed (Table 23).

Among the different countries, Cyprus had the highest percentage of professionals confirming that they possess the necessary skills, with 40.6% (13 out of 32 respondents), closely followed by Germany at 34.8% (8 out of 23 respondents). Poland and Greece showed notable scepticism, with 35% (7 out of 20 respondents) in Poland and 30% (6 out of 20 respondents) in Greece indicating they likely lack these skills. Additionally, Germany reported a significant level of uncertainty, with 39.1% (9 out of 23 respondents) indicating that they probably have the necessary skills. On the other hand, Poland had the highest percentage of respondents who believed they probably did not possess the required skills (35%, 7 out of 23 respondents).

The findings indicate a sense of uncertainty and mixed perceptions among the participants, which may suggest a potential gap in professionals' knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide such support, as well as an acknowledgment of the need for further training or awareness programs to strengthen professionals' ability to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. Furthermore, it may suggest a disconnection between professionals and the organizations they belong to, indicating the need for enhanced communication within these organizations.

Among those who believe professionals lack specific skills or competencies, the most common reason reported across the total sample is a low level of awareness regarding the needs of the LGBTQI+ community within the institutional context (78.7%). Additionally, the absence or limited availability of free training programs was mentioned by 63.8% of respondents. Another key factor identified was the limited capacity or unwillingness of employers to provide training for their employees to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities, also cited by 63.8% of respondents (see Table 23).

These findings highlight the need for more accessible training programs and increased institutional awareness to improve professionals' ability to support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. Addressing this gap is critical to enhancing inclusivity and preparing professionals to effectively address LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees needs.

The findings suggest that there is an urgent need to improve professionals' skills to better integrate gender and migration issues and communicate these changes among the organization and other actors in the field. Addressing this gap is critical to enhancing inclusivity and preparing professionals to effectively address LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees needs.

Table 23: Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q11. Do professionals in your sector have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees?							
Yes	9.8%	3.8%	1.5%	2.3%	3.8%	6.1%	27.3%
Probably yes	6.1%	3.8%	0.8%	3.8%	4.5%	6.8%	25.8%
Neither yes nor no	1.5%	2.3%	1.5%	3.8%	4.5%	2.3%	15.9%
Probably not	3.0%	4.5%	0.8%	5.3%	5.3%	0.8%	19.7%
No	3.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	4.5%	1.5%	11.4%
Q11.1 If “no” or probably “not”, what is/are the reason(s) for this lack of necessary knowledge skills and abilities? (select all that apply)							
Absence or limited availability of free related training activities / programs for professionals	17.0%	10.6%	2.1%	6.4%	21.3%	6.4%	63.8%
Limited or lack of capacity or willingness of employers to train their employees to	10.6%	14.9%	4.3%	4.3%	19.1%	10.6%	63.8%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
acquire this knowledge, skills and abilities							
Professionals themselves are not interested or have a limited interest in acquiring the relevant knowledge, skills and abilities	6.4%	10.6%	0.0%	2.1%	10.6%	8.5%	38.3%
Low level of awareness of the needs of the LGBTQI+ community in the institutional context (due to e.g. no legal framework, lack of targeted services to this group etc.)	12.8%	14.9%	4.3%	10.6%	23.4%	12.8%	78.7%
There is no such a need to have specific Knowledge skills and abilities to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees	8.5%	2.1%	0.0%	4.3%	6.4%	0.0%	21.3%
Other, please specify	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	2.1%	0.0%	6.4%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

2.2.6 Training activities on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany

Overall, a significant percentage of professionals across all countries (59.1%) expressed interest in training activities focused on supporting LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants, in contrast to 22% of respondents who were not interested in such training activities (Table 24).

On the national level, Cyprus (81.3%, 26 out of 32 respondents) and Greece (80%, 16 out of 20 respondents) reported the highest interest in training programs, followed by Italy at 71.4%. In contrast, Poland (30%, 6 out of 20 respondents) and Germany (30.4%, 7 out of 23 respondents) showed considerably lower interest. A notable percentage of respondents in both Germany (39.1%, 9 out of 23 respondents) and Poland (30%, 6 out of 20 respondents) expressed a likely interest in participating in such training.

These findings suggest a clear recognition of the value or the potential value of training activities to better address the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background and promote inclusivity.

The most frequently suggested training topics included the legal and institutional framework addressing racist, homophobic, transphobic, and biphobic crimes and discrimination (66.4%), as well as human rights violations, discrimination, and persecution based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression in the countries of origin of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees (60.7%). Additionally, respondents highlighted the need for training on successful

social integration practices implemented in other countries (57.9%) and the legal status of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in the host country (56.1%).

The findings highlight the clear consensus in all six countries for comprehensive training and effective integration strategies to address stereotypes and promote a more inclusive community. Despite the variability in the perceived importance of the suggested topics, the data indicate that there are certain topics that are popular and universally recognised as important to include in training material, and this will guide the design of the @nclusion capacity building programme.

Among those who were not interested in participating in training, the most common reasons suggested were a heavy workload (53.3%) and a perceived lack of relevance to their duties (40%) (Table 24).

These findings suggest that professionals may face practical obstacles such as perceived relevance and workload constraints, which could affect their engagement with the topic and may indicate the need for engagement strategies to ensure participation and impact.

Table 24: Training activity on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q12. Would you be interested in a training activity that focuses on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants?							
Yes	19.7%	12.1%	3.8%	4.5%	13.6%	5.3%	59.1%
Probably yes	4.5%	2.3%	0.8%	4.5%	3.0%	6.8%	22.0%
Neither yes nor no	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	7.6%
Probably not	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%	0.0%	3.0%
No	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	2.3%	2.3%	3.0%	8.3%
Q12.1 If “yes” or “probably yes” which of the following topics this training activity should cover? (select all that apply)							
Basic concepts - terminology (sexual orientation, gender identities, gender expression, sex characteristics, migrants, refugees, asylum, etc.)	12.1%	7.5%	2.8%	6.5%	11.2%	2.8%	43.0%
Legal Institutional Framework for racist, homophobic, transphobic, biphobic crime and discrimination	15.0%	12.1%	3.7%	8.4%	22.4%	4.7%	66.4%
Human rights abuses, discrimination and persecution on grounds of sexual orientation, identity or gender in the countries of origin of the LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees	18.7%	13.1%	3.7%	3.7%	14.0%	7.5%	60.7%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Facilitation of - increasing the access of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees to support services	10.3%	14.0%	4.7%	7.5%	11.2%	5.6%	53.3%
The legal status of LGBTQI + migrants and refugees in the country	13.1%	9.3%	2.8%	7.5%	13.1%	10.3%	56.1%
The social /demographic profile of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in the country	6.5%	9.3%	2.8%	8.4%	12.1%	6.5%	45.8%
Good practices of social integration of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees implemented in other countries	10.3%	14.0%	4.7%	4.7%	14.0%	10.3%	57.9%
Other, please specify	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	4.7%
Q12.2 If “no” or “probably no”, can you specify the reason? (select all that apply)							
No relation with actual duties	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	13.3%	0.0%	40.0%
No interest in the topic	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%
Difficult workload	13.3%	6.7%	0.0%	20.0%	13.3%	0.0%	53.3%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3. Representatives of local authorities

3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

3.1.1 Age

A total of **313 professionals** from local authorities across all participating countries responded to the survey. Of the total sample, 6.4% ($n = 20$) of respondents were from Cyprus, 6.4% ($n = 20$) from Greece, 16.6% ($n = 52$) from Italy, 46.3% ($n = 145$) from Poland, 17.6% ($n = 55$) from Spain, and the remaining 6.7% ($n = 21$) from Germany. The majority of participants were aged between 40 to 54 years old (**46.6%**), followed by those aged 25 to 39 years (**32.6%**), 55 and above years (**16.6%**), and 18-24 years (**2.9%**). Table 1 below presents the age distribution of survey respondents across the six participating countries. The data indicate a broad age range of participants across all six countries with a slight predominance of participants aged 40-54 years.

Table 25: Participants' age range per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q1. Age group							
18-24	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	1.0%	0.3%	2.9%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
25-39	2.9%	2.2%	3.5%	15.7%	5.1%	3.2%	32.6%
40-54	3.2%	3.2%	5.8%	24.6%	7.7%	2.2%	46.6%
55+	0.3%	1.0%	7.0%	3.5%	3.8%	1.0%	16.6%
I'd rather not answer	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.1.2 Gender

Out of the total sample, most participants (71.9%) identified as women, while 24.9% identified as men. Additionally, 1.0% identified as non-binary, and the remaining 2.2% chose not to answer the question. Table 26 highlights the predominance of women in the survey (Table 26).

Table 26: Participants' gender per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q2. Gender Identity							
Man	1.6%	1.3%	5.1%	8.9%	4.5%	3.5%	24.9%
Woman	4.8%	5.1%	11.2%	35.1%	12.8%	2.9%	71.9%
Non-binary	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.3%	1.0%
I'd rather not answer	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	1.6%	0.3%	0.0%	2.2%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.1.3. Educational backgrounds

In total, across all six participating countries, the participants working for local authorities demonstrated a high level of education. The majority had attained either higher education (52.7%) or postgraduate degrees (25.9%), with an additional 4.8% holding a PhD. A lower percentage of participants (9.6%) had secondary education while 2.2% selected "Other," and 0.3% preferred not to disclose their educational background (Table 27).

Table 27: Participants' educational backgrounds per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q3. Educational backgrounds							
Primary education	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Secondary education	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	2.2%	0.3%	1.0%	3.8%
Tertiary education	0.6%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%	2.9%	3.5%	9.6%
Higher education	1.6%	2.2%	10.2%	27.8%	9.6%	1.3%	52.7%
Postgraduate	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	10.2%	3.8%	0.3%	25.9%
PhD graduate	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	3.2%	0.3%	0.6%	4.8%
Education continuing	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.3%	0.0%	2.2%
Prefer not to say	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.1.4 Geographical area

In terms of geographical distribution, the vast majority of respondents across all six countries are from urban areas (92.7%), while only 7.3% come from non-urban areas (Table 28). On the

national level, Germany has the highest representation from non-urban areas (19%, 4 out of 21 respondents) among the participating countries, indicating a relatively more balanced urban-rural participation.

Table 28: Participants' Geographical area per country.

		Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q4. Geographical area	Urban	5.4%	6.1%	14.7%	44.7%	16.3%	5.4%	92.7%
	Non-Urban	1.0%	0.3%	1.9%	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%	7.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.1.5 Role in the Organization

The roles of respondents vary significantly across countries, reflecting diverse professional backgrounds. The most common role was municipal administrators, accounting for 39.9% of the total sample. Other notable roles included municipal social service employees (12.1%) and administrative duties (8.3) (Table 29).

Table 29: Participants' role in the organization per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q5. Role in the organization							
Administrative duties related to migrants'/refugees' inclusion	0.3%	1.6%	1.6%	1.9%	1.6%	1.3%	8.3%
Providing legal counselling/support	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	1.0%	1.3%	2.9%	6.4%
Providing psychological support	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%	2.2%
Providing social support (including basic information about rights and obligations, interconnection and referral to other organizations, bodies etc.)	0.0%	1.3%	0.3%	1.3%	0.0%	1.6%	4.5%
Career counselling	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Adult or youth education	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	2.2%	1.3%	0.0%	4.2%
Medical /nursing care	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Meeting basic necessities (accommodation, food, clothing)	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%	0.3%	1.9%
Cultural sector	1.0%	0.3%	0.6%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%
Activities to counteract discrimination	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.3%	1.6%
Municipal administrators	2.2%	1.3%	4.2%	25.6%	6.7%	0.0%	39.9%
Municipal Social service employees	1.3%	0.3%	6.7%	3.2%	0.6%	0.0%	12.1%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Employee of an SAI centre manager	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
Other, please specify	0.6%	0.6%	0.3%	4.5%	3.2%	0.0%	9.3%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.1.6 Experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

Respondents across all participating countries come from diverse backgrounds and have varying levels of expertise in providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. Among the total sample, 31.6% reported having provided support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees, while 53.4% had not, and 15.0% were uncertain (Table 30).

Engagement levels varied by country, with Germany reporting the highest involvement (90.5%, 19 out of 21 respondents), followed by Italy (42.3%, 22 out of 52 participants). In contrast, engagement was lower in Poland (22.8%, 33 out of 145) and Spain (29.1%, 19 out of 55 participants).

Regarding the length of experience, most professionals providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees had been involved for 0–3 years (65.7%), followed by 4–7 years (30.3%). A smaller percentage (9.1%) reported having 8–11 years of experience (Table 30).

Table 30: Participants' experience in providing services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees per country.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q6. Have you ever provided support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees							
Yes	0.3%	2.6%	7.0%	10.5%	5.1%	6.1%	31.6%
No	4.2%	2.9%	8.6%	28.1%	8.9%	0.6%	53.4%
I do not know	1.9%	1.0%	1.0%	7.7%	3.5%	0.0%	15.0%
Q6.1. If "yes" for how many years							
0-3	0.0%	11.1%	12.1%	32.3%	4.0%	6.1%	65.7%
4-7	1.0%	6.1%	5.1%	4.0%	6.1%	8.1%	30.3%
8-11	0.0%	2.0%	3.0%	0.0%	1.0%	3.0%	9.1%
12-16	0.0%	1.0%	2.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	5.1%
17-20	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	4.0%
More than 20	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.2 NEEDS FOR CHANGES IN ATTITUDES & PROCESSES TOWARDS LGBTQI+ MIGRANTS & REFUGEES

3.2.1 Challenges/problems regarding LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background social inclusion

Participants were asked to share their views on the challenges LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees face in terms of their social inclusion. As shown in Table 31, out of the total sample, the highest percentage of respondents (41.2%) agreed that these individuals experience significant

difficulties. Additionally, 31.6% responded *probably yes*, indicating recognition of these challenges but with some uncertainty. In contrast, a lower percentage remained neutral (5.8%), while 5.8% and 4.5% stated that such challenges *probably do not* or *do not* exist, respectively. Notably, 11.2% of respondents were unsure, reflecting a level of uncertainty on the issue (Table 31).

Among the participating countries, Germany had the highest level of agreement, with 76.2% (16 out of 21 respondents) confirming the existence of challenges, followed closely by Greece at 75% (15 out of 20 respondents). In contrast, Italy had the lowest level of agreement, with only 15.9% (23 out of 52 respondents) acknowledging these challenges. Additionally, uncertainty was particularly notable in Poland, where 18.6% of respondents were unsure about the existence of such challenges.

These findings indicate that respondents recognize the challenges and significant barriers to social inclusion faced by LGBTQI+ migrants in all implementing countries or acknowledge the possibility of such challenges, expressing a level of uncertainty.

When examining specific challenges, institutional and sociocultural barriers emerge as the primary obstacles to the social inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants across all participating countries. The most commonly reported issue was the experience of double stigma and discrimination based on ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or biological sex characteristics, reported by 74.1% of the total sample. Additionally, 52.6% highlighted the partial or complete lack of awareness among LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees regarding their rights as another major barrier. Another significant challenge identified was the inadequate or non-existent skills and abilities of professionals in providing the necessary support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees, reported by 36.8% of the participants.

To address these challenges requires effective, comprehensive strategies that focus on raising awareness, tackling stereotypes, increasing institutional support, providing training for professionals and updated materials, and revising curricula to include gender and migration related issues.

Table 31: Challenges/problems regarding LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees' social inclusion.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q7. Do LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees face challenges/problems regarding their social inclusion							
Yes	2.9%	4.8%	10.5%	7.3%	10.5%	5.1%	41.2%
Probably yes	2.6%	1.6%	4.8%	17.6%	3.5%	1.6%	31.6%
Neither yes nor no	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	0.6%	0.0%	5.8%
Probably not	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	4.8%	0.3%	0.0%	5.8%
No	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	1.0%	0.0%	4.5%
I do not know	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	8.6%	1.6%	0.0%	11.2%
Q7.1. If "yes" or "probably yes", which, do you think are these challenge (select all that apply)							
Double stigma and discrimination based on	6.1%	6.1%	4.4%	30.7%	18.4%	8.3%	74.1%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
ethnic origin and sexual orientation, gender identity and/ or biological sex characteristics							
Inadequate or non-existent state care for the special needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees and/or the challenges they face	4.8%	5.7%	7.9%	13.6%	10.5%	6.1%	48.7%
Inadequate or non-existent legal framework/recognition	2.2%	2.2%	3.1%	17.5%	6.1%	3.1%	34.2%
The limited number or complete absence of civil society actors addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees	2.6%	1.8%	3.1%	5.7%	7.9%	2.6%	23.7%
Inadequate or non-existent skills and abilities of people working in the field regarding the provision of support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees	3.5%	3.5%	2.6%	10.1%	10.5%	6.6%	36.8%
Partial or complete ignorance of the LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees regarding their rights	5.3%	3.5%	7.5%	12.7%	16.2%	7.5%	52.6%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%	1.8%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.2.2 Communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background

When participants were asked about whether LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face communication challenges with professionals providing support services in their organizations, responses varied across the six participating countries. As shown in Table 32, there was considerable uncertainty about the existence of communication challenges. Overall, 15.7% of the total sample believed that communication challenges exist, while 22% acknowledged that they likely exist. Conversely, 23.3% felt that communication challenges probably do not exist, and 10.2% stated that such challenges do not exist. Notably, 22% of respondents indicated that they were unsure.

Among the participating countries, Germany had the highest acknowledgment of communication challenges, with 38.1% (8 out of 21 respondents) recognizing their presence to some extent. In contrast, Poland reported the lowest acknowledgment, with only 5.5% (8 out of 145 respondents) identifying such challenges. In Spain, responses were evenly split, with 27.3% (15 out of 55 respondents) selecting either 'agree' or 'probably agree'. Notably, Cyprus

also reported considerable uncertainty, as 35% (7 out of 20 respondents) expressed uncertainty in fully confirming the extent of these challenges.

These findings indicate varying levels of awareness among professionals when addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds in the six countries. They also suggest uncertainty regarding the existence of communication challenges, indicating that such barriers may be present but often go unnoticed, or that differing perceptions of these challenges exist among participants in the different partner countries.

When asked about specific experiences with communication challenges, 54.2% of those who acknowledged or likely acknowledged these challenges across all partner countries reported never having encountered or witnessed such situations (Table 32). This suggests varying levels of awareness among professionals regarding the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds across the six countries. It may also indicate a lack of recognition of these challenges, limited access to services by LGBTQI+ individuals, or reluctance to acknowledge such issues in a survey. Another interesting observation reported by participants is that while professionals may be friendly, they often lack interest in the specific needs of LGBTQI+ individuals, despite these needs being directly related to the services provided (24.6%). This highlights a gap in engagement and sensitivity. Conversely, 22.9% of respondents noted that professionals were both friendly and attentive to LGBTQI+ needs, suggesting progress in some areas but also emphasizing the need for further improvements in service quality (Table 32).

The results reflect the need for further targeted training and awareness within the professional sector, to ensure that professionals demonstrate a deeper understanding and responsiveness to the specific needs of these people.

Table 32: Communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q8. Do LGBTQI+ migrants and/or refugees face communication challenges/problems with the professionals providing supporting services in your organization							
Yes	1.6%	1.6%	2.6%	2.6%	4.8%	2.6%	15.7%
Probably yes	2.2%	1.9%	4.5%	5.8%	4.8%	2.9%	22.0%
Neither yes nor no	0.6%	1.3%	1.0%	2.9%	0.3%	0.3%	6.4%
Probably not	1.0%	1.3%	3.5%	14.1%	3.8%	0.0%	23.6%
No	0.3%	0.0%	1.6%	7.3%	0.3%	0.6%	10.2%
I do not know	0.6%	0.3%	3.5%	13.7%	3.5%	0.3%	22.0%
Q8.1. If “yes” or “probably yes” have you ever been in/ witnessed a situation when a person providing a service to a LGBTQI+ migrant (select all that apply)							
Refuse to provide services to them	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	1.7%	7.6%	11.9%
Provide services while being distant	1.7%	1.7%	0.8%	2.5%	3.4%	0.0%	10.2%
While they are professional/friendly they are not interested in their needs as LGBTQI persons despite the	1.7%	0.0%	0.8%	2.5%	11.0%	8.5%	24.6%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
fact that these needs may be linked to the services provided.							
They are professional/friendly and take their needs into account	0.0%	1.7%	6.8%	1.7%	4.2%	8.5%	22.9%
I have never been in/witnessed the situation above	5.1%	6.8%	13.6%	14.4%	9.3%	5.1%	54.2%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.2.3 Challenges in providing supporting services within the local authorities

Table 33 presents participants’ perspectives on the challenges that professionals face in providing support services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds across Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Germany. Respondents were allowed to select multiple answers, revealing significant variation in the recognition of these challenges across the six countries. Overall, 36.4% of respondents indicated that professionals in their organizations probably face challenges, suggesting an acknowledgment of difficulties but with some uncertainty. In addition, only 21.1% fully confirmed the existence of these challenges. In contrast, 14.7% of participants remained neutral, while 20.4% believed that such challenges probably do not exist. A smaller percentage (7.3%) denied the existence of any difficulties in providing support services.

At the national level, Germany had the highest acknowledgment of challenges in providing support services to LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees, with 61.9% (13 out of 21 respondents) confirming their existence. Similarly, in Greece, 60% (12 out of 20 respondents) suggested that such challenges probably exist. Italy (46.2%, 39 out of 52 respondents) and Spain (40%, 22 out of 55 respondents) also showed significant percentages in these issues. In contrast, Poland had the highest percentage of respondents who believed these challenges probably do not exist, with 34.5% (50 out of 145 respondents) expressing scepticism.

These findings may reflect a considerable amount of uncertainty among respondents regarding the challenges professionals face or lack of recognition of such challenges and varying awareness of underlying problems. This suggests a need for further awareness and training in these countries to better address the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees.

The second part of the question asked respondents who acknowledged the (likely) existence of challenges in providing services to specify the difficulties they had witnessed or experienced. Out of the total sample, the most commonly reported issue was language and cultural barriers (72.2%), highlighting communication as a major obstacle in service provision.

Additionally, a lack of knowledge, skills, and abilities among professionals was widely recognized across all countries (57.2%).

These findings may suggest the need to enhance professionals' knowledge, as well as improve cultural and language competence and foster trust and cooperation between professionals and the LGBTQI+ individuals, through tailored training designed to better equip professionals in supporting LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in a cross-national context.

Table 33: Challenges in providing supporting services within the local authority.

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q9. Do professionals providing supporting services in your organization face challenges in providing support services to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees?							
Yes	1.3%	1.3%	4.5%	3.8%	6.1%	4.2%	21.1%
Probably yes	3.2%	3.8%	7.7%	12.5%	7.0%	2.2%	36.4%
Neither yes nor no	0.6%	1.0%	1.6%	9.3%	1.9%	0.3%	14.7%
Probably not	0.6%	0.3%	1.9%	16%	1.6%	0.0%	20.4%
No	0.6%	0.0%	1.0%	4.8%	1.0%	0.0%	7.3%
Q9.1 If “yes” or “probably yes” which are these challenges (select all that apply)							
Incomplete or lack of knowledge, skills and abilities of professionals to support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees	7.2%	7.2%	7.2%	16.1%	10.0%	9.4%	57.2%
Limited or lack of willingness of the LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees to cooperate with professionals providing supporting services due to fear of ill-treatment, stigmatization or victimization (e.g., because they are LGBTQI +)	2.2%	5.6%	6.1%	8.9%	7.2%	4.4%	34.4%
Limited or lack of willingness of the LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees to cooperate with the professionals providing supporting services, due to fear of unwanted "disclosure" of their LGBTQI+ status	1.7%	4.4%	10.0%	10.0%	7.2%	8.3%	41.7%
Current framework of lack thereof legal/institutional framework	1.1%	2.2%	6.1%	8.3%	8.3%	5.0%	31.1%
Language and culture barriers	5.0%	6.1%	8.3%	25.0%	18.3%	9.4%	72.2%
Lack of cultural mediators	1.7%	6.1%	6.1%	8.3%	8.3%	8.3%	38.9%
Other, please specify	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.2.4 Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background

The following question, presented in Table 34, explored professionals' perceptions on the need for specific skills and competencies to effectively support LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. Responses varied across the six participating countries, reflecting different levels of agreement. Overall, 39.0% of the total sample confirmed that professionals require specialized skills, while an additional 39.3% responded with 'probably yes,' indicating recognition of the importance of such competencies, albeit with some uncertainty. A lower percentage (5.8%) believed that these skills were probably not necessary, while only 1.6% explicitly answered *no* (Table 34).

On the national level, Germany had the highest percentage of respondents confirming the need for specific skills, with 61.9% (13 out of 21 respondents). The highest percentage of those who indicated that these skills were probably needed was from Poland (58%).

Participants who agreed or probably agreed with the need for specific skills were then asked to identify the key competencies required to address the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals. The results, shown in Table 33, reveal that across most participating countries the most commonly mentioned skill was knowledge of the LGBTQI+ community and its specific needs (82%). Basic knowledge of relevant legislation (64.1%) also emerged as a widely recognized requirement. Notably, empathy (61.2%) was highlighted by a significant percentage of respondents as another essential skill.

For those who believe that professionals do not need specific skills or competencies, the most common reason reported is that existing skills and abilities are already sufficient (90.2%). Additionally, 18.2% of respondents felt that professionals should not be required to have such specialized skills, while 22.0% believed that no special skills are needed at all.

These findings suggest that most respondents recognize the need for tailored training to better understand the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals, including components on cultural awareness and legal frameworks, to address the intersectional challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background.

Table 34: Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q10. Do professionals providing services in your organizations need specific skills and competencies in order to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees?							
Yes	3.2%	2.9%	7.3%	13.1%	8.3%	4.2%	39.0%
Probably yes	1.6%	2.2%	7.3%	18.5%	7.0%	2.6%	39.3%
Neither yes nor no	0.3%	1.0%	0.3%	5.1%	0.3%	0.0%	7.0%
Probably not	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	5.4%	0.6%	0.0%	7.3%
No	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	4.2%	0.3%	0.0%	5.8%
I do not know	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Q10.1 If “yes” or “probably yes”, which are these specific skills? (select all that apply)							

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Communication in foreign languages	4.9%	2.9%	11.0%	32.7%	14.7%	5.3%	71.4%
Basic Knowledge of relevant legislation	4.5%	5.3%	9.0%	24.5%	13.1%	7.8%	64.1%
Empathy⁴	3.7%	4.9%	6.9%	24.5%	14.7%	6.5%	61.2%
Organizational (time management, prioritization, action planning, decision making, problem solving, etc.)	2.4%	1.2%	2.4%	7.8%	9.0%	3.7%	26.5%
Cultural awareness and expression	4.1%	5.7%	5.7%	24.1%	10.2%	6.1%	55.9%
Knowledge about LGBTQI+ community and the needs of its representatives	3.3%	6.5%	15.1%	32.7%	16.7%	7.8%	82.0%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Q10.2 If they “do not” or “probably do not” what are the reasons? (select all that apply)							
There are no such special skills or abilities	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	7.3%	7.3%	0.0%	22.0%
Professionals should not or have no obligation to have such special skills or abilities	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.9%	4.9%	0.0%	9.8%
The already existing skills and abilities of the professionals are sufficient	4.9%	2.4%	17.1%	51.2%	12.2%	2.4%	90.2%
They are not interested in developing such skills or abilities	7.3%	4.9%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	0.0%	19.5%
Other, please specify	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	7.3%	0.0%	2.4%	12.2%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.2.5 Assessing the specific skills and competencies of professionals in local authorities to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees

In the next question participants were asked if professionals in their sector have the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide support services to LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. The results demonstrate a relatively high level of uncertainty across the six participating countries. Out of the total sample, 32.9% of respondents believe that professionals in their sector possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to support LGBTQI+ individuals with a migrant or refugee background, while 27.8% believe that these professionals likely have such competencies. (Table 35). Additionally, 12.5% of respondents believed that professionals likely do not have the necessary skills and 16.0% believed that

⁴ Understand and relate to other people’s thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and to see the world from other people’s perspectives

professionals do not have the necessary skills. Furthermore, 10.9% of respondents remained neutral.

Among the participating countries, Italy had the highest percentage of professionals who likely possess the necessary skills, with 44.2% (23 out of 52 respondents), followed closely by Germany at 42.9% (9 out of 21 respondents). In contrast, both Cyprus and Spain showed notable scepticism, as 35% (7 out of 20 respondents) of the sample in Spain and 32.4% (6 out of 20 respondents) in Cyprus believed that professionals likely lack these skills.

Out of the total sample, for those who believe that professionals lack specific skills or competencies, the most commonly cited reason is the low level of awareness regarding the needs of the LGBTQI+ community within the institutional context, mentioned by 52.9% of respondents. Another significant reason is the absence or limited availability of free training programs, identified by 44.3% of respondents. Additionally, 30.7% of respondents noted the limited or lack of capacity and willingness of employers to train their employees (Table 35).

The findings indicate that although there is considerable consensus of professional competency across the participating countries, a significant percentage remain sceptical. This skepticism underscores the need for targeted professional development initiatives to address potential gaps and enhance the capacity to effectively serve LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant and refugee backgrounds. Furthermore, it may suggest the critical need for comprehensive and accessible training programs to enhance professionals' competencies in this area. The lack of awareness and training opportunities not only hampers the quality of support services but also reflects broader systemic issues within institutions. Addressing these gaps through targeted training initiatives and fostering a culture of inclusivity is essential to better serve LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant and refugee backgrounds.

Table 35: Specific skills and competencies to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q11. Do professionals in your sector have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees?							
Yes	1.3%	2.9%	8.9%	12.1%	4.5%	3.2%	32.9%
Probably yes	1.9%	0.6%	4.5%	12.5%	5.8%	2.6%	27.8%
Neither yes nor no	1.9%	0.6%	1.0%	4.5%	1.9%	1.0%	10.9%
Probably not	0.6%	1.6%	0.3%	8.0%	1.9%	0.0%	12.5%
No	0.6%	0.6%	1.9%	9.3%	3.5%	0.0%	16.0%
Q11.1 If “no” or probably “not”, what is/are the reason(s) for this lack of necessary knowledge skills and abilities? (select all that apply)							
Absence or limited availability of free related training activities / programs for professionals	4.3%	3.6%	8.6%	14.3%	12.9%	0.7%	44.3%
Limited or lack of capacity or willingness of employers to train their employees to	1.4%	1.4%	5.7%	11.4%	9.3%	1.4%	30.7%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
acquire this knowledge, skills and abilities							
Professionals themselves are not interested or have a limited interest in acquiring the relevant knowledge, skills and abilities	2.9%	3.6%	1.4%	10.7%	5.7%	2.1%	26.4%
Low level of awareness of the needs of the LGBTQI community in the institutional context (due to e.g. no legal framework, lack of targeted services to this group etc.)	5.0%	4.3%	7.1%	19.3%	14.3%	2.9%	52.9%
There is no such a need to have specific Knowledge skills and abilities to provide support services (and) to LGBTQI+ migrants or refugees	0.7%	2.1%	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%	0.0%	8.6%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

3.2.6 Training activities on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany

Overall, a significant proportion of professionals across all countries (32.9%) expressed interest in training activities focused on supporting LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants. Notably, 27.8% indicated that they would probably be interested, though with some uncertainty about the necessity of such training. In contrast, 12.5% stated that they would probably not be interested, and 10.9% remained neutral (Table 36).

On the national level, Italy (53.8%, 38 out of 52 respondents) and Germany (47.6%, 10 out of 21 respondents) reported the highest levels of interest in training programs. In contrast, Cyprus (20%, 2 out of 20 respondents) and Spain (25.5%, 14 out of 55 respondents) showed significantly lower interest. A considerable percentage of respondents from both Germany (38.1%, 8 out of 21 respondents) and Spain (32.7%, 18 out of 55 respondents) expressed a likely interest in such training. In contrast, 25% (5 out of 20 respondents) of participants in Greece and 17.2% (25 out of 145 respondents) in Poland stated they were probably not interested in participating in these programs.

These findings suggest that although there is a recognition of the value of training activities to better address the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants and promote inclusivity, a significant percentage of the participants expressed an uncertainty which may indicate a gap in awareness or that their services are not frequently accessed by LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants.

The most frequently suggested training topics was good practices for social integration of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees implemented in other countries (74.2%). In addition, participants frequently mentioned the framework for racist, homophobic, transphobic, biphobic crime and discrimination (67.9%) and the human rights abuses, discrimination and persecution on grounds of sexual orientation, identity or gender in the countries of origin of the LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees (64.7%).

Despite the variability in the perceived importance of the suggested topics, the data indicate that there are certain topics that are popular and universally recognised as important to include in training material, and this will guide the design of the @nclusion capacity building programme.

For those not interested in participating in such training, the most common reasons were the irrelevance to their job duties (62.9%) and a heavy workload (34.8%) (Table 36). Notably, 32.6% of respondents expressed a general lack of interest in the topic, suggesting a gap in awareness or indicating that their services are not frequently accessed by LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants.

These findings suggest that professionals may face practical obstacles, such as perceived relevance and workload constraints, which could affect their engagement with the topic and may indicate the need for engagement strategies to ensure participation and impact.

Overall, the findings suggest a mixed perception on the benefits and importance of such training, pointing to a potential need for clearer communication about the benefits of training initiatives for supporting LGBTQI+ refugees and migrants.

Table 36: Training activity on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
Q12. Would you be interested in a training activity that focuses on meeting & supporting the needs of LGBTQI+ refugees/migrants?							
Yes	1.3%	2.9%	8.9%	12.1%	4.5%	3.2%	32.9%
Probably yes	1.9%	0.6%	4.5%	12.5%	5.8%	2.6%	27.8%
Neither yes nor no	1.9%	0.6%	1.0%	4.5%	1.9%	1.0%	10.9%
Probably not	0.6%	1.6%	0.3%	8.0%	1.9%	0.0%	12.5%
No	0.6%	0.6%	1.9%	9.3%	3.5%	0.0%	16.0%
Q12.1 If “yes” or “probably yes” which of the following topics this training activity should cover? (select all that apply)							
Basic concepts - terminology (sexual orientation, gender identities, gender expression, sex characteristics, migrants, refugees, asylum, etc.)	3.2%	3.7%	10.5%	25.8%	10.0%	7.4%	60.5%
Legal Institutional Framework for racist, homophobic, transphobic,	3.2%	0.0%	14.2%	28.4%	15.3%	6.8%	67.9%

	Cyprus	Greece	Italy	Poland	Spain	Germany	Total
biphobic crime and discrimination							
Human rights abuses, discrimination and persecution on grounds of sexual orientation, identity or gender in the countries of origin of the LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees	4.2%	0.0%	16.3%	27.4%	11.6%	5.3%	64.7%
Facilitation of - increasing the access of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees to support services	2.6%	3.2%	15.3%	16.8%	9.5%	6.8%	54.2%
The legal status of LGBTQI + migrants and refugees in the country	2.1%	3.2%	8.4%	25.3%	11.1%	6.8%	56.8%
The social /demographic profile of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in the country	1.6%	3.2%	7.9%	17.4%	16.8%	4.2%	51.1%
Good practices of social integration of LGBTQI + migrants and refugees implemented in other countries	4.2%	4.7%	14.2%	30.5%	13.2%	7.4%	74.2%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Q12.2 If “no” or “probably no”, can you specify the reason? (select all that apply)							
No relation with actual duties	5.6%	4.5%	5.6%	31.5%	15.7%	0.0%	62.9%
No interest in the topic	2.2%	1.1%	1.1%	23.6%	4.5%	0.0%	32.6%
Difficult workload	1.1%	4.5%	1.1%	15.7%	12.4%	0.0%	34.8%
Other, please specify	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%

Source: @nclusion D2.2 National Reports for Cyprus, Greece, Italy, % Poland, Spain & Germany, 2024

MAIN RESULTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS WITH LGBTQI+ MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

The interviews were conducted with a diverse group of participants with different migration backgrounds. All 60 individuals who participated in the **@nclusion interviews in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Germany** signed consent forms, which informed them, among other things, that all findings would be recorded anonymously and that they would not be identifiable in any reports or publications. The interviewees – 10 from Cyprus, 10 from Greece, 4 from Italy, 10 from Poland, 15 from Spain, and 11 from Germany – are LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees willing to share their views and needs for support that can enable their integration in local communities.

1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND GENDER REPRESENTATION

In terms of age distribution, most participants in all six countries were between the age range of 25 and 39 years. In Poland, two participants were between 18 and 24 years old, four were in the 25-39 age group, and four in the 40-60 age group. In Germany a similar distribution was observed, with one participant being between 18 and 24 years old, one aged between 40-60 years, and the majority (8 participants) belonging in the 25-39 age group. Cyprus revealed a similar trend, with only one participant in the 18-24 range, while the rest were between 25 and 39 years old, except for one participant belonging in the 40-60 range. In Greece, four participants belonged to the 18-24 age group, six to the 25-39 group, and none was over 40 years old. In Spain six participants were in the 25-39 group and six between 40 and 60 years old. In Italy one participant was in the 18-24 range.

Regarding gender expression, all six participating countries had diverse representation. Poland included eight women and two non-binary participants. Germany had a diverse range of gender identities, including non-binary, transgender, asexual, and gender-fluid individuals. Greece included six women, two men, and two non-binary individuals. Spain had six men, seven women, and two non-binary participants. Italy, included two non-binary individuals, one transgender woman, and one woman.

Sexual orientation showed a consistently non-heterosexual identity across all six countries. In Poland, all ten participants identified as non-heterosexual. Cyprus had a similar trend, with all participants identifying as non-straight, except one who preferred not to disclose their orientation. In Italy, all participants preferred not to disclose their orientation, except one who identified as non-straight. In Greece and Germany, all participants identified as non-straight. In Spain the interviews were conducted with six gay, four lesbian, and five bisexual individuals (Rust, P. C., 1993).

2. LENGTH OF STAY IN THE HOST COUNTRY

In Poland, three participants had been residing in the country for less than 3 years, three for 3 to 6 years, three for 6 to 10 years, and one for over 10 years. In Germany, six participants had arrived within the last 3 years, three between 3 and 6 years ago, and two between 6 and 10 years ago. In Cyprus, most participants had arrived within the past 3 years. Greece presented a different pattern, with six participants having lived in the country for over 10 years, two for 6 to 10 years, and two for less than 3 years. In Spain, seven participants had arrived within the last 3 years, four between 3 and 6 years ago, and four between 6 and 10 years ago. In Italy, one participant had been residing in the country since childhood, while the other three participants had arrived between 2 to 4 years ago. This diversity in the length of residence across host countries provides a broad range of perspectives on the experiences and challenges faced by LGBTQI+ migrants in their journey toward social inclusion.

3. ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES

In all participating countries access to support services and employment opportunities differs, indicating potential gaps in service provision that could be addressed for better inclusion and assistance. In Poland, seven participants received mental health support, six received physical health and legal assistance, and four benefited from financial or educational support. In Germany, three participants received mental health support, two received employment and physical health assistance, while four received no support at all. In Cyprus participants revealed mixed experiences, with some receiving employment, mental health, and housing support, while others received none. Greece reported the highest levels of support, with eight participants receiving physical health and legal aid, seven receiving mental health support, and three receiving employment or education assistance. In Spain, ten participants received mental health support, eleven received legal aid, eight received employment assistance, and six received educational support. Participants in Italy revealed significant difficulties accessing support services due to a lack of empathy and understanding from providers, inadequate LGBTQI+ training, and language barriers. One of the participants, who lived on the margins for 18 years, only found stability after receiving NGO support.

4. CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCES OF LGBTQI+ MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES ACROSS ALL TARGET COUNTRIES

4.1. Life in the Host Country

The answers given in all participating countries reveal more or less similar challenges and barriers, mainly rooted in socio-cultural and structural factors. More specifically, despite the ongoing progress that the majority acknowledged, in Greece, responses indicate a mixed level of awareness, acceptance and rejection of LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees in the country. While urban centers tend to be more inclusive, offering a degree of safety and autonomy, rural areas and conservative neighbourhoods present significant challenges. Many participants

reported hostility, particularly from law enforcement, including arbitrary identity checks, street harassment, and even police violence during LGBTQI+ communities' events. Participants noted that this environment fosters insecurity and discourages open self-expression or displays of affection, especially in professional or public spaces.

Similarly, in Cyprus, participants described a sense of relative freedom compared to their countries of origin, but this freedom remains conditional. Participants reported that they frequently encounter racism and homophobia, which shape their daily lives and social interactions. Safety concerns, such as avoiding public spaces at night, are common. Despite Cyprus being an EU member state with human rights protections, participants note a lack of enforcement of these rights, leaving them vulnerable to societal discrimination and fostering fears of deportation. These challenges contribute to social isolation and limit their ability to fully integrate into society.

In Poland, participants described the country as offering greater freedom of self-expression compared to their countries of origin. Many LGBTQI+ migrants reported using this freedom to explore and affirm their identities, experiencing a level of acceptance in daily life. Public spaces are perceived as relatively safe, allowing individuals to dress and express themselves more openly. However, some migrants still feel the need to conceal aspects of their identities, particularly when interacting with strangers or in more conservative areas. While participants generally found the Polish society to be welcoming, occasional instances of xenophobia and homophobia serve as reminders that their safety and acceptance cannot always be guaranteed.

In Spain, many participants reported a significant improvement in their ability to live freely, attributing this to the country's inclusive legal framework and progressive social attitudes. These factors contribute to a sense of safety and acceptance that is often lacking in their home countries. However, many participants noted that this freedom is not uniformly experienced across the country. While urban centers are described as welcoming and supportive, conservative areas pose significant challenges, often requiring individuals to cautiously navigate how and when they express their identities. Despite these regional disparities, Spain is largely viewed by participants as a positive and affirming environment for LGBTQI+ migrants, offering greater opportunities for self-expression and inclusion.

In Germany, participants described a nuanced experience of living as LGBTQI+ migrants. Many appreciated the freedom to express their identities more openly, yet this is often overshadowed by feelings of social isolation. Racism and cultural stereotyping remain widespread, affecting both social and institutional interactions, such as in housing and employment. Some participants experienced a sense of exclusion based on their racial or ethnic backgrounds, while others faced hostility in their personal relationships. Although Germany provides resources for LGBTQI+ individuals, participants frequently cited challenges in accessing these services or finding spaces that cater to their diverse needs. The responses underline that, despite the country's progressive policies, societal attitudes do not always

align with these principles, creating a gap between legal protections and lived experiences. In Italy, participants reported diverse experiences regarding their integration and treatment. While some did not encounter overt discrimination, others faced considerable obstacles, including restrictive environments in reception centers and bureaucratic hurdles. One participant noted that staff at her reception center lacked the necessary open-mindedness and training to adequately support LGBTQI+ individuals. Similarly, another participant shared her prolonged struggle with marginalization before finally receiving appropriate support.

4.2. Barriers to Social inclusion: Insights on Education, Employment, Housing, Healthcare, and Support Services

Education

In Greece, all the participants noted that the lack of accessible Greek language programs poses a substantial barrier, leaving many LGBTQI+ migrants unable to fully participate in educational opportunities. In addition, many participants declared that schools are often not equipped to provide safe and inclusive environments, leading to bullying and exclusion based on both migrant status and sexual orientation. Similarly, in Cyprus, participants reported facing exclusion from extracurricular activities, physical bullying, and discouragement from pursuing higher education. In Poland, participants underlined that education is hindered by the difficulty of validating foreign qualifications, as well as financial constraints that prevent many from continuing their studies. In Spain, participants reported that the country, though more inclusive overall, suffers from bureaucratic barriers and a lack of programs designed to combine language learning with vocational training, making it difficult for LGBTQI+ migrants to transition into the job market. In Germany, like the other countries, participants highlighted the language barriers as a critical challenge towards social inclusion. In Italy, a participant highlighted the crucial role of emotional and affective education in fostering a more inclusive and accepting society. Many participants also noted that the lack of time or mental stability among migrants—many of whom work long hours or deal with migration-related trauma—further limits their ability to invest in language learning and education.

Employment

In all implementing countries, interviewees highlighted that employment remains another key area of struggle. In Greece, responses indicate that language barriers and workplace discrimination hinder LGBTQI+ migrants from securing and maintaining employment. Many participants conceal their sexual identities at work due to fears of exclusion or mistreatment. Furthermore, the lack of legal documentation exacerbates their vulnerability, increasing the risk of exploitation. In Cyprus, responses reflect similar patterns, with discriminatory practices in the workplace often disguised as the characteristics of professionalism. Participants noted that they are sometimes asked to hide markers of their identities, such as piercings, while

others are forced to work unpaid hours to keep their jobs. In Poland, responses indicate that discrimination is most evident during the hiring process, where Polish nationals are often prioritized over equally qualified migrants. Many participants noted that bureaucratic delays and visa restrictions exacerbate these challenges, making it difficult to secure long-term employment. In Spain, responses indicate that implicit biases against LGBTQI+ migrants result in limited job opportunities and precarious working conditions. Gender non-conformity often closes doors to professional advancement. In Germany, responses indicate that similar issues are faced, with participants reporting that cultural stereotypes and a lack of language proficiency hinder workplace integration. In Italy, responses indicate that employment remains a significant challenge for many. One participant, faced years of struggle before securing stable employment with NGO support. Others highlighted pervasive workplace discrimination, particularly affecting transgender individuals and those with limited language proficiency. For some, non-compliance with conventional gender norms leads to microaggressions from colleagues or supervisors.

Housing

Interviewees across all implementing countries shared insights into housing discrimination faced by LGBTQI+ migrants. In Greece, responses indicate that conservative landlords often deny housing to LGBTQI+ migrants, forcing them to rely on NGOs for support. In Cyprus, participants noted that landlords are similarly reluctant to rent to migrants, sometimes evicting them without clear explanation. In Poland, responses highlight that the housing market is especially restrictive, with advertisements frequently excluding refugees or foreigners outright. High costs, illegal rent hikes, and exploitative conditions further marginalize LGBTQI+ migrants. In Spain, responses suggest that the intersection of migrant status and LGBTQI+ identity limits access to quality housing, often relegating individuals to less desirable areas. In Italy, responses indicate that housing discrimination remains a major issue. One participant faced significant challenges securing safe accommodation, highlighting the need for better training in support organizations. Many LGBTQI+ individuals depend on NGOs, as mainstream services often fail to meet their needs. Despite Germany's robust legal protections, many participants reported similar challenges, noting that queer-friendly housing options are scarce, and some migrants are forced to live in unsafe or toxic environments due to visa restrictions or income verification requirements.

Healthcare

Responses across all implementing countries reveal common patterns of exclusion and insensitivity within healthcare systems. In Greece, many LGBTQI+ migrants avoid seeking medical care due to language barriers and discriminatory attitudes among healthcare professionals. Similarly in Italy, one participant avoided medical services due to fear of discrimination, while another reported a lack of LGBTQI+ awareness among healthcare staff, leading to uncomfortable or dismissive interactions. In Cyprus, respondents highlighted persistent challenges, citing limited improvements and significant barriers to accessing public

health services due to bureaucratic inefficiencies. In Poland, the public healthcare system is fragmented, characterized by long waiting times and frequent reports of discrimination. Some LGBTQI+ individuals experience ridicule or are misgendered by medical staff. In Spain, while the situation appears somewhat better, public institutions continue to struggle to meet the specific needs of LGBTQI+ migrants. In Germany, despite the availability of high-quality private healthcare, the public health system remains widely insensitive. Language barriers and a lack of understanding of LGBTQI+ identities further diminish trust in these services

Support Services

Responses indicate that, across all participating countries, support services from CSOs play a crucial role in bridging these gaps. Many participants in Greece noted that CSOs are often the primary source of assistance for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds, although they lack the resources to meet the community's diverse needs. In Cyprus, participants similarly rely on NGOs or other organizations for targeted support, as governmental services are largely ineffective. In Poland, responses indicate that the country's NGO sector is praised for its efforts, but the overwhelming demand for services often results in delays. In Italy, responses highlight the lack of LGBTQI+ safe spaces and specialized services. Participants emphasized the need for better support in reception centers and a stronger network of LGBTQI+ organizations to assist isolated individuals. In Spain, responses reveal that LGBTQI+ organizations provide critical aid, though public institutions frequently lack the training or resources to offer adequate support. In Germany, participants underlined that Germany's LGBTQI+ counseling centers are similarly vital but face challenges in inclusivity and accessibility, leaving some migrants without the support they need.

4.3. Societal Responses and Challenges

Community responses to LGBTQI+ migrants vary widely between countries. In Greece, responses indicate that public reactions are often critical, particularly in rural areas or professional settings. Many migrants alter their behavior to avoid discrimination. In Cyprus, responses indicate that societal attitudes remain largely conservative, with many LGBTQI+ migrants keeping interactions with neighbours or colleagues to a minimum to avoid hostility. In Poland, participants said that LGBTQI+ migrants find some solidarity within queer and migrant communities but occasionally encounter xenophobic or homophobic hostility. In Spain, respondents note that urban areas offer a greater sense of acceptance, though migrants still experience occasional public judgment. In Germany, responses highlight a mix of inclusivity within queer networks and exclusion from broader society, with racism and stereotyping forming significant barriers to integration. In Ital, responses indicate varying experiences of social acceptance. While some participants reported no direct discrimination, others felt excluded or judged. There was also a recognition that the intersection of migration and LGBTQI+ identity is often overlooked, leading to gaps in tailored support.

4.4. Recommendations for Enhancing Social Inclusion of LGBTQI+ Migrants and Refugees

Interviewees across Greece, Cyprus, Poland, Spain, Italy, and Germany, made the following specific recommendations for enhancing their social inclusion:

- **Training and sensitizing public service providers** to better understand and respond to the unique needs of LGBTQI+ migrants. In all partner countries, the majority of participants highlighted the need for training to enhance cultural competence and empathy within these services. This is crucial for fostering more respectful and supportive environments.
- **Expanding inclusive legal frameworks** to safeguard LGBTQI+ migrants from discrimination, particularly in areas such as employment, housing, and access to essential services. These protections would help ensure greater equality and security for LGBTQI+ migrants, facilitating their integration into society.
- **Mental health and wellbeing support.** Participants highlighted the urgent need for specialized services that address the intersectional needs of LGBTQI+ migrants, particularly in relation to the trauma of forced migration and the discrimination they face in their new environments. Responses indicate that access to culturally competent mental health services is a priority to help LGBTQI+ migrants manage the emotional and psychological impact of their experiences.
- **Safe spaces and community centers** specifically tailored to LGBTQI+ migrants. Many participants stressed the need for such spaces, which would offer individuals the opportunity to connect, express themselves freely, and find support in a non-discriminatory and inclusive environment, helping them build a sense of belonging in their new country.
- **Improving access to information** about available resources and services. Participants recommended increasing the visibility and accessibility of these resources, ensuring they are available in multiple languages to accommodate the diverse backgrounds of LGBTQI+ migrants.
- **Public awareness campaigns** aiming to challenge stereotypes and promote inclusivity. These campaigns would raise public understanding and acceptance of LGBTQI+ migrants, helping to reduce societal discrimination and foster a more inclusive environment.
- **Streamlining bureaucratic processes**, particularly those related to legal documentation, visas, and employment. This was indicated by participants as a critical measure to reduce barriers for LGBTQI+ migrants.
- **Greater engagement of LGBTQI+ migrants in decision-making processes.** Participants' responses suggest that ensuring that their voices are heard and their needs are accurately represented would lead to more effective policies and initiatives that better support this community.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from both the desk and field research across Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Spain, Germany, and Italy reveal a complex and multifaceted reality for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Even though some legal and policy frameworks offer a degree of protection, many systemic gaps persist, leading to widespread social and institutional discrimination. Despite some progress in recognizing the unique vulnerabilities of this population, effective implementation and intersectional approaches tailored to their needs remain limited (ILGA-Europe, 2024).

Legal and policy frameworks vary significantly across the six countries. Even in countries with relatively strong legal frameworks, such as Germany, issues persist in the effective implementation of policies at local and regional levels (Tschalaer & Held, 2019). The absence of a standardized, intersectional approach to addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds exacerbates these inconsistencies, leaving many individuals without access to critical protections.

Social and institutional discrimination remains a significant challenge in all six countries, creating substantial barriers to the inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Discrimination manifests in multiple ways, from xenophobic and homophobic attitudes in public institutions to structural barriers in accessing housing, employment, and healthcare. The findings indicate that LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds frequently experience a double stigma due to their sexual orientation or gender identity and their migration/refugee background. This intersectional discrimination is particularly pronounced in countries such as Greece, Cyprus, and Poland, where cultural and religious conservatism further deepens exclusion (Trimikliniotis & Karayanni, 2008; ILGA-Europe, 2024). The field research findings highlight that LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds often conceal their identities due to fear of violence, harassment, or discrimination, reinforcing cycles of isolation and vulnerability.

A critical gap identified in both the desk and field research is the lack of comprehensive data on LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Across all six countries, there is a severe shortage of official statistics, making it difficult to develop evidence-based policies. This lack of data weakens the ability of governments and organizations to assess the specific needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds and create targeted interventions. In many cases, the available research relies on estimates, qualitative studies, or civil society reports rather than systematic, large-scale data collection efforts.

Both desk and field research reveal the limited institutional capacity to support LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Many service providers, particularly those

working in asylum and migrant & refugee support services, lack the training and knowledge needed to address the specific vulnerabilities of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background. The field research reveals that many professionals working with migrants do not have adequate awareness of LGBTQI+ issues, while LGBTQI+ advocacy organizations often lack expertise in migration and asylum processes. This disconnect contributes to significant gaps in service provision, making it more difficult for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds to access safe housing, mental health services, and legal assistance (Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2023). The survey findings indicate that professionals providing support services often struggle with language and cultural barriers, as well as a lack of specialized training in working with LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background (UNHCR, 2022).

The research further underscores the significant mental health challenges faced by LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees. Many individuals in this group have experienced multiple forms of trauma, including persecution in their home countries, dangerous migration journeys, and discrimination in their host countries. However, mental health services that are both accessible and culturally competent remain scarce (FRA, 2009). In several of the countries studied, LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background report avoiding healthcare services altogether due to past experiences of discrimination or fear of being outed (CEAR, 2022; FRA, 2024). This further exacerbates their social exclusion and increases their vulnerability to mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

While community support networks and civil society organizations play a crucial role in assisting LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees, they often face significant financial and institutional constraints. Many LGBTQI+ organizations are underfunded and unable to meet the growing demand for services (ILGA-Europe, 2024). At the same time, migrant and refugee organizations frequently lack the expertise or training to address LGBTQI+ issues adequately. This fragmentation of services prevents the development of a coordinated, intersectional response to the challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

Overall, the research highlights the urgent need for more comprehensive and intersectional approaches to addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. While progress has been made in some areas, systemic gaps in legal protections, institutional support, and service provision continue to create significant barriers to inclusion. Without sustained efforts to improve legal frameworks, data collection, institutional training, and public awareness, LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds will continue to face disproportionate levels of discrimination and exclusion. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted strategy that incorporates legal reform, targeted capacity-building programs, and stronger collaboration between governments, civil society, and local communities.

Key needs, issues, and gaps identified

The research identified several key challenges affecting LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds across Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Spain, Germany, and Italy. One of the most significant issues is the lack of institutional capacity and specialized training for professionals who interact with LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds. Many service providers, including those in migration, asylum, healthcare, and legal sectors, lack the necessary knowledge and skills to address the unique needs of this population resulting in fragmented services and missed opportunities for comprehensive support. Respondents across all six countries highlighted low levels of awareness about LGBTQI+ issues in institutional settings, exacerbated by the absence of targeted services and legal frameworks (e.g., recognition of gender identity and protections against discrimination). Additionally, a considerable percentage of professionals expressed uncertainty about whether specific skills are required to support LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, indicating a gap in awareness and preparedness within public institutions and civil society organizations. A lack of structured, free training programs and employers' limited willingness to invest in capacity-building initiatives further reinforce these challenges. Moreover, LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds face systemic barriers to accessing essential services, including healthcare, housing, employment, and legal assistance. Discrimination, combined with language and cultural barriers, frequently prevents them from securing safe accommodation or stable work. Many LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds report fear of disclosing their LGBTQI+ status due to potential stigma, further limiting their ability to access vital support. Additionally, the absence of reliable, disaggregated data on LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds across most countries prevents policymakers from developing evidence-based policies and inclusive services. The research findings highlight that improving institutional awareness, strengthening legal protections, and investing in intersectional training programs are crucial to addressing these systemic gaps and ensuring the social inclusion and the overall well-being of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

Recommendations

Training and Capacity Building

- Public service providers, including professionals in healthcare, law enforcement, municipalities, and migration services, could benefit from mandatory training programs aimed at increasing awareness of LGBTQI+ issues and fostering cultural competence.
- Specialized training for civil society organizations, including those working with migrant and LGBTQI+ communities, may enhance their capacity to provide inclusive services.
- Incorporating LGBTQI+-specific modules in interpreter training programs could help prevent miscommunication and promote respectful engagement.

Strengthening Legal Protections

- Expanding anti-discrimination frameworks may offer greater safeguards for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds against discrimination in employment, housing, and public services.
- Introducing legal provisions recognizing gender identity and sexual orientation as valid grounds for asylum and refugee protection could contribute to more inclusive asylum policies.
- Standardizing vulnerability assessments in asylum procedures may improve the recognition of LGBTQI+-specific risks while minimizing intrusive or insensitive questioning

Administrative and Bureaucratic Reforms

- Establishing a secure, data-protected system could facilitate the collection and analysis of information on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) among migrants and refugees, while ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.
- Streamlining legal and bureaucratic procedures, such as documentation and visa applications, may help reduce administrative barriers that disproportionately affect LGBTQI+ individuals.
- Ensuring non-discriminatory policies in public administration could improve access to social benefits and services for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.

Improved Access to Information

- Enhancing the visibility and accessibility of resources may ensure that information on legal rights, social services, and support networks is available in multiple languages.
- Strengthening digital and offline outreach could help LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds become more aware of the services available to them.

Safe Spaces and Community Networks

- Developing LGBTQI+-specific shelters and safe housing options may offer better protection for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds experiencing violence or harassment in reception centers.
- Supporting the establishment of community centers could provide LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds with access to resources, social networks, and advocacy services.

Enhancing Mental Health Support for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background

- Establishing culturally competent mental health services may help address the specific needs of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, particularly those affected by trauma from forced migration and discrimination.

- Funding support programs and community-led mental health initiatives could provide LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds with safe spaces for emotional and psychological well-being.

Public Awareness and Advocacy

- Public campaigns aimed at combating stereotypes and promoting inclusivity may help challenge misconceptions about LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds in host communities.
- Promoting media representation of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds could foster greater societal understanding and counter discriminatory narratives.

Participation in Decision-Making

- Strengthening the representation of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background in policymaking may help ensure that their voices and lived experiences inform more effective policies.
- Encouraging collaboration between governments, migrant organisations and communities, LGBTQI+ organisations, and other relevant CSOs could support the co-development of strategies for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background inclusion.

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