



Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Nigeria: Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics

Version 4.0

June 2025

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Executive summary

The Constitution provides for equality and non-discrimination but does not include specific protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex people and people of other minority sexual orientations and gender identities (LGBT+).

Same-sex sex between men is criminalised and punishable by up to 14 years' imprisonment under secular laws. Islamic law (sharia), which applies to Muslims in the 12 northern states, criminalises same-sex sexual acts both between men and between women. The maximum penalty in all 12 states for men for 'sodomy' is death. Penalties for 'lesbianism' range from death to flogging and imprisonment.

A secular law criminalises same-sex marriage, the registration of 'gay clubs, societies and organisations' and public displays of 'same sex amorous relationship[s]'. The law does not acknowledge trans rights, and the gender expression of trans people is criminalised in some states through vagrancy laws that prohibit cross-dressing. Legal gender recognition is not available. There is no provision in the law specifically for intersex people and the law does not protect against non-consensual medical procedures to alter their sex characteristics.

There is limited information on the number of arrests, prosecutions and convictions under anti-LGBT+ laws. NGOs have documented tens of cases per year in which LGBT+ people have been arrested on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. NGOs note the actual figures may be higher because of under-reporting. Many reported cases involved the arrest of multiple people. The police and Islamic police (in the northern states) harass the LGBT+ community, and the police sometimes subject LGBT+ people to beatings, blackmail, extortion, sexual assault or rape, and torture. Few secular cases make it to court. Sharia courts have imposed at least 4 death sentences since 2022 but there is no evidence that these have been carried out. Eight people referred to by sources as men, but who may be trans women, were publicly flogged for cross-dressing in 2023.

Anti-LGBT+ sentiment is widespread. There are reports of death threats, lethal violence, mob attacks, blackmail, extortion and kidnapping by non-state actors against LGBT+ people, although the scale, frequency and extent of such treatment is unclear. LGBT+ people also experience mixed treatment by their families, with many facing discrimination and forced 'conversion therapy'.

LGBT+ people report discrimination and barriers in accessing education and healthcare, obtaining accommodation, and in employment.

LGBT+ people form a particular social group within the Refugee Convention.

LGBT+ people are likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm from state and/or non-state actors.

Protection is not likely to be available.

Internal relocation is not likely to be viable.

Where a claim is refused, it is not likely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

All cases must be considered on their individual facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate they face persecution or serious harm.

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Assessment

Section updated: 19 June 2025

About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of **whether, in general**:

- a person faces a real risk of persecution/serious harm by state or non-state actors because of the person's actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression and/or sex characteristics
- the state (or quasi state bodies) can provide effective protection
- internal relocation is possible to avoid persecution/serious harm
- a claim, if refused, is likely or not to be certified as 'clearly unfounded' under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

This note provides an assessment of the situation of actual and perceived lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people and people of other minority sexual orientations and gender identities (LGBT+). Sources often refer to LGBT+ people collectively, but the experiences of each group may differ. Where information is available, the note will refer to and consider the treatment of each group discretely.

Decision makers **must**, however, consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

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1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

1.1 Credibility

- 1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), the [Asylum Instruction on Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).
- 1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check, when such a check has not already been undertaken (see [Biometric data-sharing process \(Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process\)](#)).
- 1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person's claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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1.2 Exclusion

- 1.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons to apply one (or more) of the exclusion clauses. Each case must be considered on its individual facts.
- 1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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2. Convention reason(s)

- 2.1.1 Actual or imputed particular social group (PSG).
- 2.1.2 LGBT+ people form a PSG in Nigeria within the meaning of the Refugee Convention because they share an innate characteristic or a common background that cannot be changed, or share a characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that a person should not be forced to renounce it **and** have a distinct identity in Nigeria because the group is perceived as being different by the surrounding society.
- 2.1.3 Although LGBT+ people form a PSG in Nigeria, establishing such membership is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed is whether the person has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of their membership of such a group.
- 2.1.4 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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3. Risk

3.1 Risk from the state

- 3.1.1 Actual or perceived LGBT+ people are likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm from the state.
- 3.1.2 There is no specific information about state treatment of sexual minorities who may not identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex (LGBTI) in

the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)). However, given there is no general indication of positive treatment of sexual minorities, and in the wider context of prevailing state attitudes and treatment, these groups are likely to face the same risk as LGBTI people.

- 3.1.3 If an LGBT+ person is not 'out' about (or conceals) their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, consider why this is the case. If it is because the person fears persecution or serious harm and this is well-founded, they are likely to require asylum or humanitarian protection.
- 3.1.4 The Constitution provides protections for citizens' fundamental rights such as equality and non-discrimination but does not include specific protections against discrimination in areas such as employment, healthcare, housing and education for LGBT+ people (see [Constitutional and other rights](#)).
- 3.1.5 Each strand within Nigeria's criminal law – federal law, state-level law and customary or religious law – has a role in criminalising consensual same-sex sexual activity (see [Legal context](#)).
- 3.1.6 The Criminal Code is silent in regard to women but criminalises same-sex sexual acts between men, for which the maximum sentence is 14 years' imprisonment. The Penal Code, which applies in the 12 northern states, prohibits sexual intercourse between men, which is punishable with up to 14 years' imprisonment and a fine. A secular Penal Code reportedly in force in Kaduna state prohibits 'unnatural offences' such as 'sodomy' and 'lesbianism', which carry a prison sentence of up to 21 years and a fine (see [Criminal and penal codes](#)).
- 3.1.7 Islamic law (sharia) penal codes, which apply to Muslims in the 12 northern states, criminalise same-sex sexual acts both between men and between women. The maximum penalty in all 12 states for men for the crime of liwat (sodomy) is death. In Kano and Katsina the maximum penalty for 'lesbianism' is death, while in the other 10 states it is punishable by flogging and imprisonment of up to 6 months (see [Sharia \(Islamic law\)](#)).
- 3.1.8 The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA), which went into effect in 2014, bans marriage or civil union for same-sex couples and prohibits the registration of 'gay clubs, societies and organisations'. It also criminalises 'the public show of same sex amorous relationship directly or indirectly'. This provision applies to men and women (see [Same-Sex Marriage \(Prohibition\) Act \(SSMPA\)](#)).
- 3.1.9 The law does not acknowledge rights for trans people, and legal gender recognition is not available (see [Constitutional and other rights](#) and [Other legislation](#)). The gender expression of trans people is criminalised in some states through vagrancy laws that prohibit cross-dressing, but according to one source – the Human Dignity Trust, an NGO – the police have stated that cross-dressing is not a crime under the Penal Code (see [Criminal and penal codes](#) and [Other legislation](#)).
- 3.1.10 There is no provision in the law specifically for intersex people (see [Constitutional and other rights](#) and [Other legislation](#)). The law does not protect against non-consensual medical procedures to alter their sex characteristics (see [Other legislation](#)). Sources suggest non-vital surgery is performed on intersex people, particularly children, but there is limited information on frequency. Kano state reportedly sponsored operations on 7

intersex people in 2021 (see [Surgeries on intersex people](#)).

- 3.1.11 There is no ban on ‘conversion therapy’ – a range of actions that try to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity (see [Other legislation](#)). Some sources suggest the police and the hisbah (Islamic or religious police) have used it to ‘rehabilitate’ detainees (see [‘Conversion practices’](#)).
- 3.1.12 In 2023, the government rejected recommendations made under the UN’s Universal Periodic Review for decriminalising offences relating to sexual orientation and gender identity, saying that it rejected ‘foreign impositions capable of damaging the social fabric of the nation’. There are no politicians who are ‘out’, and politicians are rarely openly supportive of LGBT+ rights for fear of a backlash (see [Government and political leaders](#)).
- 3.1.13 There is limited information on the scale, frequency and nature of enforcement of laws containing anti-LGBT+ provisions. The government does not publish figures on the numbers of arrests and prosecutions by category of crime and no other source systematically documents the application of the anti-LGBT+ laws. However, NGOs have documented tens of cases per year in which LGBT+ people – mostly, but not exclusively, gay men – have been arrested for alleged offences relating to their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. NGOs note the actual figures may be higher because of under-reporting. The Human Dignity Trust, while not providing figures, describes such arrests as ‘frequent’. Many cases reportedly involve the arrest of multiple people. It is likely that factors such as stigma and fear of reprisals deter reporting of arrests, and sources suggest those arrested often co-operate with police demands for bribes or ‘bail’ to secure their release without being ‘outed’. According to the US State Department, in 2023, ‘many’ LGBT+ people caught engaging in same-sex sexual activity reported that security officials demanded bribes (see [Other legislation](#) and [Arrests, detention and treatment by the secular security forces](#)).
- 3.1.14 Sources indicate the police and the hisbah subject the LGBT+ community to harassment and that they sometimes assault LGBT+ people when making arrests. The police sometimes ‘parade’ suspects in live social media broadcasts even though the High Court has ruled that such parades are unconstitutional. The police sometimes subject LGBT+ people to beatings, blackmail, sexual assault or rape, and torture. There is some evidence to suggest the police particularly target LGBT+ people with low socioeconomic status, including through mass arrests, but ignore, or sometimes provide paid security for, LGBT+ events held in affluent neighbourhoods (see [Arrests, detention and treatment by the secular security forces](#) and [Enforcement of sharia provisions and attitude of the hisbah \(morality police\)](#)).
- 3.1.15 The police reportedly use provisions in the Cybercrimes Act 2015, which does not explicitly refer to LGBT+ people, to target members of the LGBT+ community, particularly those involved in online activism or discussions on sexual orientation, gender expression and identity and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC). The sources consulted do not provide information on arrests, prosecutions or convictions of actual or perceived trans people for vagrancy offences (see [Other legislation](#) and [Arrests, detention and treatment by the secular security forces](#)).

- 3.1.16 Sources indicate cases under the secular legal system rarely reach court, with police releasing many of those arrested once they have extorted large bribes or 'bail'. No convictions for offences under the SSMPA have reportedly been made since the Act came into force in 2014. Isolated cases have reached court but the charges have been dismissed. At state level, courts have reportedly convicted defendants on the basis of the Penal Code. The sources consulted do not provide information on the number of convictions or the nature of any penalties imposed (see [Convictions and sentencing of LGBT+ people under the secular criminal law](#)).
- 3.1.17 One source – the Women Initiative for Sustainable Empowerment and Equality (WISE), an NGO – reports that the hisbah have greater powers than the federal police to monitor people's relationships and raid gatherings, and that LGBT+ people cannot secure 'bail'. Sharia courts actively enforce sharia provisions against same-sex activity involving Muslims, but trials are reportedly held in secret and information on the numbers of cases, proceedings and outcomes is limited. The USSD reports that capital punishment (which cannot be imposed for same-sex activity under secular law) for 'sodomy' or 'lesbianism' under sharia law has never been carried out, while ILGA World, a global LGBT+ organisation, suggests death sentences have been carried out but 'only rarely'. In 2022, a sharia court in Bauchi state reportedly sentenced 3 men convicted of 'homosexual acts' to death by stoning but the sentence could not be carried out until ratified by the state governor. Eight people – referred to by sources as men, but who may be trans women – who were convicted of wearing female clothing at a wedding were reportedly flogged in public on the premises of the hisbah in Kano state in 2023. A media source reported that a man was sentenced to death by stoning for homosexuality by a sharia court in Bauchi state in May 2024. The sources consulted do not provide further information on the status of the 2022 and 2024 Bauchi cases (see [Enforcement of sharia provisions and attitude of the hisbah \(morality police\)](#)).
- 3.1.18 The government permits the operation of a number of civil society groups that support LGBT+ people despite the SSMPA criminalising the registration of 'gay clubs, societies and organisations'. However in order to register, these groups describe their missions as relating to matters such as health or legal services rather than support for the LGBT+ community. According to a media source, an NGO promoting LGBT+ rights in Kano left the northern state in 2024 after the state governor ordered a crackdown on such groups (see [Registration and operation of civil society organisations](#)).
- 3.1.19 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), [Asylum Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

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3.2 Risk from non-state actors

- 3.2.1 Actual or perceived LGBT+ people are likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm from non-state actors.
- 3.2.2 There is no specific information about societal treatment of sexual minorities who may not identify as LGBTI in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)). However, given there is no general indication of positive treatment of sexual minorities, and in the wider context of prevailing societal attitudes and

treatment, these groups are likely to face the same risk as LGBTI people.

- 3.2.3 If an LGBT+ person is not 'out' about (or conceals) their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, consider why this is the case. If it is because the person fears persecution or serious harm and this is well-founded, they are likely to require asylum or humanitarian protection.
- 3.2.4 The population of Nigeria is approximately 230 million, around 54% of whom are Muslim. Around 46% are Christian. There is no information on the number of LGBT+ people (see [Demography](#)).
- 3.2.5 Nigeria is a culturally and religiously conservative country, where the large majority of people hold negative views of same-sex relations (see [Public opinion](#)). Muslim, Christian and Igbo traditional religious leaders oppose LGBT+ rights and preach against them, reinforcing negative societal attitudes (see [Religious leaders and institutions](#)). One source, a Nigerian online news outlet focusing on human rights, suggests that members of the Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups, which predominate in the south of the country and have greater exposure to Western culture, have more progressive attitudes to LGBT+ people than the Hausa-Fulani in the north, but that even Yoruba and Igbo people are unlikely to fully accept the LGBT+ community (see [Violence, intimidation, discrimination and extortion](#)).
- 3.2.6 There is limited information on the scale, frequency and nature of societal treatment of LGBT+ people, with most reporting provided by NGOs. Sources indicate they face a range of discriminatory treatment because they are perceived to be different. A Nigerian NGO working with partner organisations across the country reports having documented 490 cases of human rights violations perpetrated by non-state actors against LGBT+ people, as well as 21 cases of violations perpetrated by both state and non-state actors, in the period December 2023 to August 2024. The NGO reports that the nature of the cases ranged from harassment to murder. Although these figures are low in the context of the general population, cases are likely to be under-reported due to factors such as societal attitudes and fear of arrest. The NGO observes that the number of reported cases per year has been steadily rising since it began documenting violations following enactment of the SSMPA in 2014 (see [Violence, intimidation, discrimination and extortion](#)).
- 3.2.7 Laws in force in Nigeria do not offer protection against discrimination based on SOGIESC (see [Constitutional and other rights](#)). LGBT+ people reportedly face discrimination in accessing services, including education and healthcare generally (in relation to HIV/AIDS specifically), and in accessing employment and housing (see [Education](#), [Healthcare](#), [Employment](#) and [Housing](#)).
- 3.2.8 There are reports of death threats, lethal violence, mob attacks, blackmail, extortion and kidnapping against LGBT+ people, although the scale, frequency and extent of such treatment is unclear. In some cases such violations happen after the victim is initially lured online, in a phenomenon known in Nigeria as 'kito'. Sources report 3 trans people were killed in August 2024 (see [Violence, intimidation, discrimination and extortion](#)).
- 3.2.9 In a recent survey of gay and bisexual men in Benue state, almost 70% of respondents whose families were aware of their sexual orientation said their families were 'supportive' or 'very supportive' of their orientation. Another survey found that more than 40% of LGBT+ respondents nationwide had experienced 'conflict or issues' with family members based on their

SOGIESC. Family members reportedly often violate the rights of LGBT+ relatives through invasion of their privacy, forceful eviction and subjection to ‘conversion practices’ including ‘corrective rape’. Families and communities sometimes regard intersex traits as a curse or bad omen, leading some people to hide or abandon intersex children (see [Family treatment and societal norms](#)).

- 3.2.10 Sources report there are a number of NGOs operating in Nigeria, providing assistance and support to LGBT+ people. Several such organisations were reportedly doxed (had personal identifying information maliciously published online), harassed, targeted and threatened in 2024, and some northern-based groups had to go into hiding. Big cities such as Lagos reportedly have a small number of cafes, restaurants and hotels where the owners and clientele do not object to the presence of LGBT+ people (see [Organisations providing support to the LGBT+ community](#)).
- 3.2.11 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status, Asylum Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

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4. Protection

- 4.1.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from the state, they are unlikely to be able to obtain protection.
- 4.1.2 A person who has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from a rogue state actor and/or a non-state actor is unlikely to obtain protection from the state. This is because in general, the state is able but not willing to offer effective protection.
- 4.1.3 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status, Asylum Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

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5. Internal relocation

- 5.1.1 Where an LGBT+ person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from state or non-state actors, internal relocation is unlikely to be viable.
- 5.1.2 Nigeria is a large, culturally and ethnically diverse country with a population estimated to be around 230 million. The majority live in urban areas including the large cities of Abuja and Lagos. Freedom of movement is generally possible, though is sometimes hindered by insecurity and criminality in some parts of the country (see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Internal relocation](#)).
- 5.1.3 However, official and societal hostility towards, and discrimination against, LGBT+ people is widespread, and it is unlikely to be reasonable for them to relocate (see [Internal relocation](#)).
- 5.1.4 For further guidance on assessing internal relocation and the factors to be taken into account, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) the [Asylum Instruction on Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

6. Certification

- 6.1.1 Where a claim from an adult male, including those who are perceived to be or identify as male, is refused, it must be considered for certification under section 94(3) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 as Nigeria is listed as a designated state in respect of men only. Such a claim must be certified under section 94(3) if you are satisfied it is clearly unfounded.
- 6.1.2 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 6.1.3 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

Country information

About the country information

This section contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment which, as stated in the [About the assessment](#), is the guide to the current objective conditions.

The structure and content follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before **15 April 2025**. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

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7. Demography

- 7.1.1 The Central Intelligence Agency in their [World Factbook](#), last updated 31 March 2025, stated that as of 2024, Nigeria had an estimated population of almost 236.75 million¹. The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) provided a slightly different figure, reporting that as of 2024, the population stood at 229.2 million².
- 7.1.2 The CIA World Factbook gave the following percentages for religious affiliation in Nigeria, based on 2018 estimates:
- Muslim: 53.5%
 - Roman Catholic: 10.6%
 - other Christian: 35.5%
 - other 0.6%³
- 7.1.3 For more information on religious affiliation, including geographical distribution of religious groups, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Internal relocation](#).
- 7.1.4 There was no information on the estimated population of LGBT+ people in Nigeria, in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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8. Legal context

8.1 Constitutional and other rights

- 8.1.1 The [Constitution](#) provides that ‘every citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law’ (section 17)⁴.

¹ CIA World Factbook, [Nigeria](#) (People and Society), updated 31 March 2025

² UNFPA, [World Population Dashboard - Nigeria](#), no date

³ CIA World Factbook, [Nigeria](#) (People and Society), updated 31 March 2025

⁴ PLAC, [Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 ...](#) (section 17), 13 March 2024

- 8.1.2 Section 15 prohibits ‘discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, status, ethnic or linguistic association or ties’, but does not refer explicitly to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics⁵.
- 8.1.3 Section 17 continues: ‘The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that ... all citizens, without discrimination on any group whatsoever, have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment ... [and] there are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons’⁶. Section 16 states: ‘The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring ... that suitable and adequate shelter ... [is] provided for all citizens.’⁷
- 8.1.4 The online database of ILGA World, ‘a worldwide federation of more than 2,000 member organisations from 170 countries campaigning for the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people’⁸, stated in its Nigeria section (ILGA World Database 2025), updated 2025, that to the best of ILGA World’s knowledge, laws in force in Nigeria do not offer protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics in the following areas:
- employment
 - health
 - housing
 - education
 - provision of goods and services⁹
- 8.1.5 The ILGA World Database 2025 also stated that to the best of ILGA World’s knowledge, the following are not legally available:
- marriage or civil unions for same-sex couples
 - joint adoption or second parent adoption for same-sex couples
 - name changes or gender marker changes in identification documents¹⁰
- 8.1.6 For information on criminalisation of same-sex marriage and civil unions, see [Same-Sex Marriage \(Prohibition\) Act](#), below.
- 8.1.7 Regarding trans and intersex people, ReportOUT, a UK-based non-governmental organisation, in an article updated 13 June 2024 (ReportOUT article 2024), observed: ‘Without legal acknowledgment of their gender identity, trans and intersex people face numerous obstacles that significantly hinder their engagement. This often translates to difficulties in obtaining identification documents like; voters card, party ID, especially one that accurately reflects their gender, which are essential for voting, running for office, and participating in other civic activities. As a result, many trans and

⁵ PLAC, [Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 ...](#) (section 15), 13 March 2024

⁶ PLAC, [Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 ...](#) (section 17), 13 March 2024

⁷ PLAC, [Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 ...](#) (section 16), 13 March 2024

⁸ ILGA World, [ILGA World: welcome!](#), no date

⁹ ILGA World Database, [LGBTI Rights in Nigeria](#), 2025

¹⁰ ILGA World Database, [LGBTI Rights in Nigeria](#), 2025

intersex individuals are effectively disenfranchised.’¹¹

- 8.1.8 Similarly, Outright International, in an article on its website (Outright intersex article 2024), dated 28 October 2024, reported: ‘Nigeria’s legal and policy frameworks ... do not recognize or protect intersex individuals. There are no laws safeguarding their rights or addressing their unique needs. This lack of recognition extends to basic rights, including the ability to obtain identification documents that reflect their authentic gender identity and access to healthcare without discrimination.’¹²
- 8.1.9 Regarding freedom of assembly and association, the Constitution provides: ‘Every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular he may form or belong to any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of his interests ...’¹³.
- 8.1.10 For information on the law governing registration and operation of LGBT+ organisations, see [Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act](#).

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8.2 Criminal and penal codes

- 8.2.1 For information on the legal system, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Actors of protection](#).
- 8.2.2 ILGA World, in a report, ‘Our Identities Under Arrest’ (ILGA World identities report 2023), dated 30 November 2023, based on various sources, stated: ‘Nigerian criminal law is built of an array of diverse legal frameworks. State-level, federal, and customary or religious law play varying roles in the criminalisation of consensual same-sex sexual acts ...’¹⁴
- 8.2.3 Similarly, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in their ‘General Country of Origin Information Report Nigeria’ (Netherlands MoFA COI report 2023), dated 31 January 2023, based on various sources including a fact-finding mission to Nigeria in October 2022, stated: ‘Matters related to sexuality do not fall exclusively within the purview of federal law: states are able to make and apply their own laws ... The states of southern Nigeria generally rely on the Criminal Code Act for their state laws.’¹⁵
- 8.2.4 Section 214 of the Criminal Code Act provides:
‘Any person who-
(1) has carnal knowledge of any person against the order of nature; or ...
(3) permits a male person to have carnal knowledge of him or her against the order of nature;
is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for fourteen years.’¹⁶
- 8.2.5 Section 215 criminalises attempts to commit the offences outlined in section 214¹⁷.

¹¹ ReportOUT, [Democracy and LGBTQI+ Rights in Nigeria ...](#), updated 13 June 2024

¹² Outright International, [Embracing Realities of Sex Development ...](#), 28 October 2024

¹³ PLAC, [Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 ...](#) (section 40), 13 March 2024

¹⁴ ILGA World, [Our Identities Under Arrest \(2023\)](#) (page 97), 30 November 2023

¹⁵ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#) (page 51), 31 January 2023

¹⁶ WIPO Lex, [Criminal Code Act \(Chapter 77\), Nigeria](#) (section 214), 1990

¹⁷ WIPO Lex, [Criminal Code Act \(Chapter 77\), Nigeria](#) (section 215), 1990

- 8.2.6 Section 6 of the Criminal Code Act states: ‘When the term “carnal knowledge” ... is used in defining an offence, it is implied that the offence, so far as regards that element of it is complete upon penetration.’¹⁸
- 8.2.7 Professor Anthony N Nwazuke of the Faculty of Law, Ebonyi State University, in a paper published in 2016, stated: ‘The phrase “against the order of nature” has been defined in *Mogaji v. Nigerian Army* [(SC 204/2004) [2008] NGSC 11 (7 March 2008)]¹⁹ to mean anal intercourse.’²⁰
- 8.2.8 Section 217 of the Criminal Code provides:
‘Any male person who, whether in public or private, commits any act of gross indecency with another male person, or procures another male person to commit any act of gross indecency with him, or attempts to procure the commission of any such act by any male person with himself or with another male person, whether in public or private, is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for three years.’²¹
- 8.2.9 Victor Oluwasina Ayeni, senior lecturer in law at Adekunle Ajasin University in Ondo state, in his chapter in a book published in January 2017, observed: ‘The Code however fails to define what constitutes [an] act of “gross indecency”’.²²
- 8.2.10 Regarding judicial interpretation of ‘gross indecency’, Ita George Mbaba, Justice of the Nigerian Court of Appeal, in the Nigerian case of *Bala v State* (2022), quoted an earlier judgment by the Court of Appeal in the case of *Ali v Kano State* (2018), which stated: ‘... acts of gross indecency includes any unlawful sexual activity or behaviour short of penetration of the penis.’ In *Bala v State*, the threshold for gross indecency was met in the case of a man who broke into the room of a minor ‘of unsound mind’ at night with the intention of having ‘sexual intercourse or unlawful carnal’ and touched the minor’s leg. The minor’s cries attracted attention and the man was apprehended²³.
- 8.2.11 The Netherlands MoFA COI report 2023 stated: ‘Lagos state has its own Criminal Law of Lagos State (2011). This criminalises “indecent acts” (Section 134) and “indecent practices” (Section 136). These “acts” and “practices” are not defined in law and are therefore subject to interpretation and abuse by the authorities and judges.’²⁴
- 8.2.12 Regarding northern Nigeria, the ILGA World identities report 2023 stated: ‘Across the North of the country ..., the Penal Code (Northern States) Federal Provisions Act (1959) (usually referred to as the “Penal Code”) applies as both federal and state law in the states that succeeded the colonial Northern Region.’²⁵
- 8.2.13 There was no full copy of the Penal Code in the sources consulted for this note (see [Bibliography](#)).

¹⁸ WIPO Lex, [Criminal Code Act \(Chapter 77\), Nigeria](#) (section 6), 1990

¹⁹ NLLI, [MAGAJI v THE NIGERIAN ARMY \(SC 204/2004\) ...](#), 7 March 2008

²⁰ Nwakuoke, A, JLP, [A Critical Appraisal ...](#) (page 69), 2016

²¹ WIPO Lex, [Criminal Code Act \(Chapter 77\), Nigeria](#) (section 217), no date

²² Ayeni, VO, PULP, [Protecting the human rights ...](#) (chapter 11, page 216), 2017

²³ LawCare Nigeria, [BALA v. STATE \(2022\)](#), 8 May 2023

²⁴ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#) (page 52), 31 January 2023

²⁵ ILGA World, [Our Identities Under Arrest \(2023\)](#) (pages 98), November 2023

- 8.2.14 According to the Netherlands MoFA COI report 2023: ‘The Penal Code (Northern States) Federal Provisions Act states in Section 284 that anyone who has “carnal intercourse against the order of nature” with “a man, woman or an animal” may be sentenced to up to fourteen years imprisonment and a fine.’²⁶
- 8.2.15 The Human Dignity Trust is ‘an international organisation using the law to defend the human rights of LGBT people’²⁷. In their Nigeria profile (Human Dignity Trust Nigeria profile 2025), updated 11 March 2025, they stated: ‘The gender expression of trans people is also criminalised.’²⁸
- 8.2.16 The profile further stated: ‘In April [2022], the House of Representatives reportedly considered a Bill which would criminalise crossdressing with up to six months’ imprisonment or a fine of N500,000 (approx. \$1,150) [GBP249.90 as of 4 April 2025]²⁹. The Bill was ultimately not passed, and the Nigerian police force has confirmed that crossdressing is not a criminal offence under the Penal Code, following calls for the arrest of prominent transgender women ...’³⁰
- 8.2.17 The Netherlands MoFA COI report 2023 stated:
 ‘Section 405(2)(e) [of the Penal Code] defines a “vagabond” as, among other things, “any male person who dresses or is attired in the fashion of a woman in a public place or who practices sodomy as a means of livelihood or as a profession”. In some states, such as Katsina and Kano, this definition is supplemented by “any female person who dresses or is attired in the fashion of a man in a public place”. Vagabonds may be sentenced to two years in prison. Section 405(3)(e) prohibits cross-dressing. In addition, the state of Kano has a Prostitution and Immoral Acts (Prohibition) Law that criminalises cross-dressing by men in addition to prostitution. This is not Sharia law and therefore applies to anyone in the Kano jurisdiction. Borno state has the Prostitution, Lesbianism, Homosexuality, Operation of Brothels and Other Sexual Immoralities (Prohibition) Law, which predates the Sharia legislation. This law imposes the death penalty for same-sex intercourse (Section 7), and one year of imprisonment or a fine of 25,000 naira [GBP12.49 as of 4 April 2025³¹] for anyone who “screens, conceals, harbours or accommodates a prostitute, lesbian or homosexual person” (Section 10).’³²
- 8.2.18 Al Jazeera, a Qatari state-owned news organisation, in an article dated 1 November 2021 (Al Jazeera article 2021), reported that legal provisions relating to cross-dressing in Nigeria ‘[hinder] the process of social transitioning, where trans people “come out” by making others aware of their gender identity – usually through changing their name and way of dressing, asserting their pronouns, and making other physical or behavioural changes.’³³
- 8.2.19 The ILGA World Database, in an undated section on Legal Frameworks, reported: ‘In 2017, Kaduna ... adopted a secular Penal Code. Under Section

²⁶ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 52), 31 January 2023

²⁷ Human Dignity Trust, [Who We Are](#), no date

²⁸ Human Dignity Trust, [Nigeria](#), updated 11 March 2025

²⁹ Xe.com, [Currency Converter](#), accessed 4 April 2025

³⁰ Human Dignity Trust, [Nigeria](#), updated 11 March 2025

³¹ Xe.com, [Currency Converter](#), accessed 4 April 2025

³² MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 52), 31 January 2023

³³ Al Jazeera, [‘I feel invisible’: The challenges of being trans](#), 1 November 2021

259 ... “unnatural offences” (defined as “sexual intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal such as sodomy, lesbianism or bestiality”) are punished with up to 21 years in prison and a fine.’³⁴

- 8.2.20 For information on the Sharia codes in force in Kano, Borno, Kaduna and other northern states, see [Sharia \(Islamic law\)](#).

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8.3 Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA)

- 8.3.1 The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act, which was signed into law in 2014³⁵, provides:

‘1. (1) A marriage contract or civil union entered into between persons of same sex: (a) is prohibited in Nigeria; and (b) shall not be recognised as entitled to the benefits of a valid marriage.

(2) A marriage contract or civil union entered into between persons of same sex by virtue of a certificate issued by a foreign country is void in Nigeria, and any benefit accruing there-from by virtue of the certificate shall not be enforced by any court of law.

‘2. (1) A marriage contract or civil union entered into between persons of same sex shall not be solemnized in a church, mosque or any other place of worship of Nigeria.

(2) No certificate issued to persons of same sex in a marriage or civil union shall be valid in Nigeria.

‘3. Only a marriage contracted between a man and a woman shall be recognised as valid in Nigeria.

‘4. (1) The registration of gay clubs, societies and organisations, their sustenance, processions and meetings is prohibited.

(2) The public show of same sex amorous relationship directly or indirectly is prohibited.

‘5. (1) A person who enters into a same-sex marriage contract or civil union commits an offence and are each liable on conviction to a term of 14 years in prison.

(2) A person who registers, operates or participates in gay clubs, societies and organisations or directly or indirectly makes public show of same-sex amorous relationship in Nigeria commits an offence and shall each be liable on conviction to a term of 10 years in prison.

(3) A person or group of persons who administers, witnesses, abets or aides the solemnization of same sex marriage or civil union, or supports the registration, operation and sustenance of gay clubs, societies, organisations, processions or meetings in Nigeria commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of 10 years of imprisonment.’³⁶

- 8.3.2 Ayodele Sogunro, postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Human Rights, Pretoria University, South Africa, contributed a chapter (Sogunro 2022) to a book, ‘Queer Lawfare in Africa: Legal strategies in contexts of LGBTIQ+

³⁴ ILGA World Database, [Criminalisation ...](#), no date

³⁵ Outright International, [Nigeria](#), no date

³⁶ Refworld, [Nigeria: Same Sex Marriage \(Prohibition\) Act, 2013](#), 17 December 2013

criminalisation and politicisation’, published in 2022. In the chapter, based on various sources, Sogunro observed that the act does not legally define ‘gay’ or ‘gay club’. Noting ‘the absence of other aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity’ in the SSMPA, he added:

‘For example, there is no direct legal mention of lesbians, transgendered persons, questioning or intersex persons – not even in passing. Instead, these other expressions of sexuality and gender are swept into the broad range of “same sex amorous relationship” irrespective of the practical reality of that description. In this way, both non-heteronormative gender identity (whether publicly or privately expressed) and non-heteronormative sexual orientation (whether actual or perceived) are legally lumped into the same categorisations and criminalised.’³⁷

- 8.3.3 Human Rights Watch, a US non-governmental organisation that monitors human rights, in an undated entry on their website, ‘#Outlawed: “The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name”’, noted that the SSMPA ‘... could lead to imprisonment solely for a person’s actual or imputed sexual orientation’ and that ‘[p]eople could face charges for consensual sexual relations in private; advocacy of LGBT rights; or public expression of their sexual orientation or gender identity’³⁸. It added: ‘The terms “same-sex marriage” and “civil union” are so broadly defined in the law that they include virtually any form of same-sex cohabitation.’³⁹
- 8.3.4 The USSD 2023 human rights report stated: ‘[T]he law criminalizing LGBTQI+ free association and assembly [the SSMPA] effectively prevented openly LGBTQI+ persons from running for office.’⁴⁰
- 8.3.5 The Centre for Health Education and Vulnerable Support (CHEVS), ‘a youth-led feminist collective advancing LGBTQI+ equality across West Africa’⁴¹, and the Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs), a Lagos-based non-governmental organisation whose mission is ‘to protect, uphold, and promote the rights and humanity of all Nigerians, especially sexual minorities ...’⁴², published a report, ‘Rights Under Arrest: Impact of the SSMPA on LGBTQI+ Individuals and Organisations’ (CHEVS/TIERs report 2024), in 2024. The report stated with regard to the SSMPA:

‘Certain parts of this law have been held unconstitutional by the Federal High Court in Nigeria. In 2020, a group of LGBTQ organisations led by TIERs challenged the constitutionality of sections 4(1), 5(2) and 5(3) of the SSMPA for violating sections 39 and 40 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and articles 9 and 10 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act. The court delivered judgement in 2022, stating that the “rights and freedoms invoked by the Plaintiff [TIERs] are universally recognized” and declaring sections 4(1), 5(2) and 5(3) of the SSMPA to be contrary to the Nigerian Constitution and nullifying the said sections. By this court decision, the sections prohibiting “gay clubs, societies and organisations” and registering or operating such organisations are now void. However, this decision has not yet been tested

³⁷ Sogunro, A, PULP, [Queer lawfare in Africa ...](#) (Towards the growth ..., page 229), 2022

³⁸ HRW, [Maps of anti-LGBT Laws Country by Country](#), no date

³⁹ HRW, [Maps of anti-LGBT Laws Country by Country](#), no date

⁴⁰ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 3), 23 April 2024

⁴¹ CHEVS, [Who We are](#), no date

⁴² TIERs, [ABOUT US](#), no date

due to the overwhelming hostile climate.’⁴³

- 8.3.6 However, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, a US-based international non-governmental organisation⁴⁴, in the Nigeria entry on their website, last updated 5 March 2025, observed: ‘The Act appears to prohibit LGBTQ clubs and organisations even without the need for presidential intervention; however, the constitutionality of this provision against freedom of assembly and association guarantees has not yet been tested ...

‘The Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act 2014 does not prohibit any advocacy for a change in the law on homosexuality ...’⁴⁵

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8.4 Sharia (Islamic law)

- 8.4.1 The USSD 2023 human rights report stated: ‘In the 12 states [see the table below] with sharia, adults convicted of engaging in same-sex sexual conduct could be sentenced to execution by stoning.’⁴⁶

- 8.4.2 The Netherlands MoFA COI report 2023 stated:

‘Although there are minor differences between the different states, Sharia penal law in all states where it is applicable prohibits “sodomy” (lihat, Sections 129 and 130) and lesbianism (sihaq, Sections 133 and 134). Penalties for sodomy can vary depending on the marital status of the man; in some states, only married men face the death penalty for sodomy. Lesbianism carries the sentence of death by stoning in Kano and Katsina states; in other states it is punishable by up to fifty lashes with the cane and up to six months of imprisonment.’⁴⁷

- 8.4.3 The ILGA World Database, in an undated section on Legal Frameworks, listed state Sharia laws and punishments for consensual same-sex sexual acts in northern Nigeria⁴⁸:

State	Authority	Liwat (sodomy)	Sihaq (lesbianism)
Bauchi	2001 ‘codified law for the implementation of Sharia law’	Married Muslim men: death by stoning Unmarried Muslim men: 100 lashes and imprisonment for up to one year	50 lashes and imprisonment for up to 6 months
Borno	Sharia Code of Borno (2001) and Council of Ulama document. For Borno state law, see	Death by stoning	Imprisonment for not less than 6 months and 12 lashes

⁴³ CHEVS/TIERS, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 12), 2024

⁴⁴ Springer Nature, [International Center for Not-for-Profit Law \(ICNL\)](#), no date

⁴⁵ ICNL, [Nigeria](#) (Legal analysis), updated 30 March 2025

⁴⁶ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

⁴⁷ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 52), 31 January 2023

⁴⁸ ILGA World Database, [Criminalisation ...](#), no date

	Criminal and penal codes		
Gombe	Sharia Penal Code Law (2001)	Married men: death by stoning Unmarried men: 100 lashes and imprisonment for up to one year	Up to 50 lashes and imprisonment for up to 6 months
Jigawa	Sharia Penal Code (2000)	Married men: death by stoning Unmarried men: 100 lashes and imprisonment for up to one year	Up to 50 lashes and imprisonment for up to 6 months
Kaduna	Sharia Penal Code Law (2002). For Kaduna's secular penal code, see Criminal and penal codes	Death by stoning	At the discretion of the qadi (Sharia court judge)
Kano	Sharia Penal Code (2000)	Married or previously married men: death by stoning Unmarried men: 100 lashes and imprisonment for up to one year	Death by stoning
Katsina	Sharia Penal Code Law (Law No. 2) (2001)	Death by stoning	Death by stoning
Kebbi	Penal Code (Amendment) Law (Law No. 21) (2000)	Death by stoning	Up to 50 lashes and imprisonment for up to 6 months
Niger	Penal Code (Amendment) Law (2000)	Death by stoning	Unclear
Sokoto	Sharia Penal Code Law (2000)	If committed by an adult: death by stoning. If committed by a minor on an adult, the adult receives up to 100 lashes and the minor receives	Up to 50 lashes and imprisonment of up to 6 months

		'correctional punishment'	
Yobe	Sharia Penal Code Law (2001)	Death by stoning	Up to 50 lashes and imprisonment of up to 6 months
Zamfara	Sharia Penal Code (2005), replacing Sharia Penal Code (Law No. 10) (2000)	Married men: death by stoning Unmarried men: 100 lashes and imprisonment up to one year	Up to 50 lashes and imprisonment of up to 6 months

- 8.4.4 Regarding cross-dressing, the Human Dignity Trust Nigeria profile 2025 stated: '... [C]ross-dressing is an offence in the twelve predominantly Muslim states in the north where sharia law runs alongside common law.'⁴⁹

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8.5 Other legislation

- 8.5.1 The ILGA World Database stated: 'To the best of ILGA World's knowledge, laws in force in Nigeria do not regulate or restrict sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression change efforts (SOGIECE), regularly known as "conversion therapies".'⁵⁰

- 8.5.2 Regarding the [Violence Against Persons \(Prohibition\) Act \(VAPP Act\) 2015](#)⁵¹, TIERs, in their 2024 Human Rights Violations Report (TIERs 2024 human rights report), dated 23 January 2025, stated:

'The VAPP Act was enacted to provide comprehensive protections against various forms of violence, including domestic violence, sexual violence, and harmful traditional practices. While the Act does not explicitly mention LGBTQIA+ individuals, it criminalizes forms of violence such as physical assault and abuse, which disproportionately affect LGBTQIA+ persons. The Act also provides a legal framework for the protection of individuals from violence, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and can be used as a basis for seeking justice in cases of violence against LGBTQIA+ persons.

'However, the implementation of this law has been inconsistent across Nigeria, with some states yet to domesticate the law, leading to gaps in its enforcement. Furthermore, in 2024, there have been ongoing legislative discussions surrounding the repeal of the VAPP Act. A proposed bill, the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Bill 2024, is currently under review in the Nigerian Senate. This bill seeks to replace the VAPP Act and expand protections against violence. However, its critics argue that repealing the VAPP Act could reverse some of the critical protections it offers, particularly for vulnerable groups such as LGBTQIA+ persons. The potential repeal of this law creates uncertainty regarding the legal recourse available to

⁴⁹ Human Dignity Trust, [Nigeria](#), updated 11 March 2025

⁵⁰ ILGA World Database, [LGBTI Rights in Nigeria](#), 2025

⁵¹ Refworld, [Nigeria: Violence Against Persons \(Prohibition\) Act, 2015 \(VAPP\)](#), 25 May 2015

survivors of violence in Nigeria, especially for sexual and gender minorities who have historically faced barriers in reporting and accessing justice. If the repeal progresses and the bill is passed, LGBTQIA+ individuals may lose a crucial tool for addressing violence, as [although] the VAPP Act did not explicitly protect LGBTQIA+ individuals, its broader scope had been used effectively to pursue justice for those affected by violence, including the LGBTQIA+ community.⁵²

- 8.5.3 Regarding the [Cybercrimes Act 2015](#)⁵³, the TIERs 2024 human rights report observed: ‘The Cybercrimes Act, introduced in 2015, was primarily designed to combat cybercrime in Nigeria. However, certain provisions within the Act have been used to target LGBTQIA+ individuals, especially those involved in online activism or discussions on sexual orientation and gender identity. Provisions related to online fraud and cyber harassment have been misapplied to intimidate and silence LGBTQIA+ advocates and digital communities ...’⁵⁴
- 8.5.4 The Guardian, a privately-owned Nigerian newspaper⁵⁵, in an article dated 12 January 2025, reported that Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu had ‘assented to Section 26 of the revised Harmonised Armed Forces Terms and Conditions of Service, which bans members of the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) from participating in activities of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Trans, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual or Agender, Two-Spirit (LGBTQIA2S+) group, as well as cross-dressing. The President signed this into law on December 16 [2024].’⁵⁶
- 8.5.5 For information on political considerations relating to the armed forces law, see [Government and political leaders](#).
- 8.5.6 Regarding LGBT+ organisations, the MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023, citing a confidential source, stated: ‘A new law, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act, introduced in order to tackle Internet fraud, makes it mandatory for landlords to screen new tenants. This makes LGBTQI+ organisations even more vulnerable, because the landlord is more likely to discover what an organisation’s activities are, and will therefore inform the police.’⁵⁷

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9. General treatment by state and non-state actors

This section contains information that refers generally to the treatment of LGBT+ people or does not clearly identify whether the actions and/or attitudes are those of the state or of non-state actors. For information on treatment that can be ascribed explicitly to either state or non-state actors, see the relevant sections below.

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9.1 Violence, intimidation, discrimination and extortion

⁵² TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (pages 14-15), 23 January 2025

⁵³ PLAC, [Cyber Crime \(Prohibition, Prevention, etc\) Act, 2015](#), 18 August 2016

⁵⁴ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 14), 23 January 2025

⁵⁵ The Guardian (Nigeria), [The Guardian restructures ...](#), 4 April 2023

⁵⁶ The Guardian (Nigeria), [Nigeria bans military personnel ...](#), 12 January 2025

⁵⁷ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#) (page 57), 31 January 2023

- 9.1.1 Bertelsmann Stiftung, a German private foundation that supports evidence based non-profit projects, publishes the [Transformation Index](#) (BTI). The BTI 2024 is based on country expert analysis of Nigeria's progress towards democracy and a market economy covering the period 1 February 2021 to 31 January 2023. It reported: 'Persecution [of LGBTQ+ people] is real, especially in Shariah states.'⁵⁸
- 9.1.2 The USSD 2023 human rights report stated: 'LGBTQI+ persons reported violence, threats (including extortion), and harassment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, including by state actors.'⁵⁹
- 9.1.3 The UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, in their 'Summary of stakeholders' submissions on Nigeria' (UNHRC stakeholders' submissions 2023), dated 10 November 2023, reported: 'JS12 stated that the LGBTQI+ community were subject to violence, aggression, blackmail, extortion, and kidnapping.'⁶⁰ See page 12 of the report for full details of the stakeholders that contributed JS (joint submission) 12.
- 9.1.4 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: 'According to human rights organisations, the main consequence of the anti-LGBTQI+ legislation is that police and civilians feel emboldened to take the law into their own hands. Members of the LGBTQI+ community are more likely to be victims of violence - including sexual assault and rape - torture, extortion and blackmail, perpetrated by civilians and vigilantes as well as by the police.'⁶¹
- 9.1.5 Also among the UNHRC stakeholders' submissions 2023 was a submission by JS21, which stated: 'LGBTQI+ persons were also impacted by the prevalence of hate crimes.'⁶² See page 12 of the report for full details of JS21 stakeholders.
- 9.1.6 MambaOnline.com, a South African privately-owned website 'which presents information, news and opinions'⁶³, in an article dated 23 November 2024, reported: 'Public shaming of LGBTQI+ individuals is not uncommon in Nigeria, both by communities and the authorities.'⁶⁴
- 9.1.7 The ReportOUT article 2024 observed:
'The barriers faced by LGBTQI+ Nigerians are manifold, ranging from discrimination and violence, both institutional and societal, creating formidable obstacles to their engagement in the political and civic process, an example being the recent nationwide #EndSARS protest, where many queer people were attacked and shut down for daring to join other citizens in protest against police brutality to which they bear the brunt of [sic]. Many queer individuals are wary of registering to vote, running for office or joining civic protests due to potential backlash, including harassment, ostracism, or even violence ...'⁶⁵
- 9.1.8 Freedom House (FH), a US-based non-government organisation that

⁵⁸ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI, [Nigeria Country Report](#) (page 12), 2024

⁵⁹ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

⁶⁰ UNHRC, [Universal Periodic Review](#) (Summary ..., paragraph 22), 10 November 2023

⁶¹ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#), (page 54), 31 January 2023

⁶² UNHRC, [Universal Periodic Review](#) (Summary ..., paragraph 23), 10 November 2023

⁶³ MambaOnline.com, [Terms of Use & Privacy Policy](#), no date

⁶⁴ MambaOnline.com, [Nigeria: Mob Beats and Humiliates Men ...](#), 23 November 2024

⁶⁵ ReportOUT, [Democracy and LGBTQI+ Rights in Nigeria ...](#), 13 June 2024

monitors freedom and democracy across the world, in their Freedom in the World 2024 report (FH FitW 2024 report), dated 29 February 2024, covering events in 2023, reported: 'Openly LGBT+ people are deterred from running for office or working to advance their political interests.'⁶⁶

- 9.1.9 For more information on running for office, see [Same-Sex Marriage \(Prohibition\) Act \(SSMPA\)](#).
- 9.1.10 Olubunmi Elizabeth Amoo, of the Community and Prevention Program Department of the Abuja-based non-governmental organisation⁶⁷ APIN Public Health Initiatives, Olaniyi Felix Sanni and Paul Olaiya Abiodun, in a paper, 'Societal, Political, and Psychological Challenges Facing MSM in Nigeria' (Amoo and others 2024), published in January 2024, reported the findings of an in-person survey conducted from 26 August to 28 September 2021 in Benue state in the North Central geopolitical region. The survey received 125 responses, 55.2% from gay men and 44.8% from bisexual men. The report stated: 'The study found that about four-fifths (83.4%) had experienced stigmatization/discrimination.' In answer to the question 'Are you afraid of letting people know your sexual identity due to stigmatization, discrimination, and violence?', 107 respondents (85.6%) replied that they were and 18 (14.4%) that they were not⁶⁸.
- 9.1.11 Amoo and others 2024 also reported that respondents had experienced the following, where more than one answer was possible:
- verbal abuse: 43 respondents (34.4%)
 - physical abuse: 66 (52.8%)
 - 'human right abuse': 27 (21.6%)
 - rape/sexual abuse: 6 (4.8%)⁶⁹

The paper did not define the above terms.

- 9.1.12 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 was based on 89 responses to an online survey conducted in April and May 2024, semi-structured interviews with 13 people with knowledge of LGBT+ issues and a literature review. According to the methodology for the survey, 'the findings from the survey apply to the respondents and are not representative of all LGBTIQI+ people in Nigeria.'⁷⁰ The report stated:

'In this survey, we asked: "Between 2014 and now, have you experienced any form of extortion, intimidation, theft, blackmail, kidnapping, or any violence or harassment that caused you to spend some money based on your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and or sex characteristics?" ... All respondents answered this question, with 44 people (49.5% of respondents) confirming they had experienced at least one form of these violations and 45 people (50.6%) saying they had not ... Many respondents have lost money to the actions of these perpetrators, individuals and groups of individuals or state actors like the police ...'⁷¹

⁶⁶ FH, [Freedom in the World 2024](#), 29 February 2024

⁶⁷ APIN Public Health Initiatives, [APIN – Public Health Initiatives](#), no date

⁶⁸ Amoo, OE, and others, JPH, [Societal, Political, and Psychological ...](#) (page 100), January 2024

⁶⁹ Amoo, OE, and others, JPH, [Societal, Political, and Psychological ...](#) (page 101), January 2024

⁷⁰ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 19, 47), 2024

⁷¹ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 39-42), 2024

- 9.1.13 The CHEVS/TIERs report provided examples involving each type of perpetrator but did not specify the proportion of total violations committed by state actors and non-state actors, respectively. It did not indicate when within the 10-year period the violations occurred⁷².
- 9.1.14 The CNN article 2024 stated that a female kito (online entrapment) victim it reported on was:
- ‘one of thousands of queer Nigerian women, men, and non-binary people subjected to a practice known locally as “kito”, according to data shared by multiple organizations with CNN ...
- ‘A clear sense of scale [of “kito” attacks] is difficult to obtain, experts explained. Local nonprofit WHER [Women’s Health and Equal Rights] told CNN they helped 1,871 victims of kito from 2018 to 2022, including 590 people identifying as women, while Nigeria-based online media advocacy group Pride TV shared that they have helped 1,253 people since 2020, ranging from 180 to almost 500 people per year, of which around half (524) identified as women.
- ‘In 2023 alone, TIERs shared that they helped 65 men, women, intersex and trans people in Nigeria who were targets of kito attacks in which they were physically abused. Two of them identified as women. The nonprofit also shared that more than 550 people were blackmailed and extorted, many of whom were first targeted online.
- ‘Damola Bolaji, TIERs’ advocacy and communications officer, told CNN that these numbers reflect just a fraction of attacks that have happened during these timeframes, because, as she pointed out, the data only reflects attacks in Lagos – and only attacks that have been reported. Figures will be higher across Nigeria, Boloji explained, and among queer women, who are less likely to report them or share their experiences because they face more stigma than gay or bisexual men due to having not met the expectations placed on them by society to get married and have children, [sic] Those with children fear losing them if their sexuality is revealed.’⁷³
- 9.1.15 For more information on social expectations, see [Family treatment and societal norms](#).
- 9.1.16 Similarly, Context, in an article dated 29 April 2024 (Context ‘kito’ article 2024), stated: ‘Legal experts suggest numbers [of ‘kito’ attacks] could be even higher than reported. “Kito victims hardly report their assaulters because of fear,” said Clinton Mabilo, a human rights lawyer based in Warri, Delta state.’⁷⁴
- 9.1.17 The CNN article 2024 also reported that according to Walter Ude, creative director of the Kito Diaries website and Kito Alerts Instagram page, where LGBT+ people share their accounts of being targeted, ‘Between 2018 and 2022, both platforms have received 403 reports of queer people being kitoed ... including 89 reports from individuals identifying as women.’⁷⁵
- 9.1.18 The TIERs 2024 human rights report collated reports of violations against actual or perceived LGBT+ people documented and verified by 24 partner

⁷² CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 39-42), 2024

⁷³ CNN, [Gay women in Nigeria: The dangers of finding love online](#), 29 January 2024

⁷⁴ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians using apps like Grindr caught in dating traps](#), 29 April 2024

⁷⁵ CNN, [Gay women in Nigeria: The dangers of finding love online](#), 29 January 2024

organisations across Nigeria⁷⁶. Describing the violations as ‘multilayered’, it explained: ‘... [S]tatistics show that the rights, dignity and well-being of LGBTQIA+ [Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual] Nigerians are disregarded and trampled upon on both individual and systemic levels. This is made possible by the continued existence of discriminatory laws and regulations, as well as the generally hostile culture that deems LGBTQIA+ people subhuman.’⁷⁷

9.1.19 The TIERs 2024 human rights report also stated:

‘Since TIERs’ first official publication in 2014 of 124 documented cases of human rights violations in the immediate aftermath of the SSMPA, reported cases have steadily risen, with 556 cases of violation - affecting 850 victims - recorded in the 2024 reporting period of December 2023 to August 2024. These figures represent only a fraction of the true scale of violations. Fear of “outing,” reprisals, and societal rejection silences many victims, leaving numerous cases unreported. Although there seems to be a decline in the number of cases recorded in 2024 in comparison to 2023, which recorded 996 cases of violation affecting 1694 victims, this is due to the reporting period (December to August) adopted for this year’s report ...’⁷⁸

9.1.20 For the full TIERs methodology, including a list of the 24 partner organisations, see p19 to 20 of the [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#)⁷⁹.

9.1.21 The TIERs 2024 human rights report presented a graph, reproduced below, to show the number of documented cases of human rights violations due to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) from 2014 to August 2024. It noted that the sharp rise in the number of cases reported in 2023 was partly due to an increase in the number of partner organisations, but commented that ‘the data also reflects the normalisation of violence against people for their real or perceived SOGIESC’⁸⁰.



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⁷⁶ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 19), 23 January 2025

⁷⁷ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 25), 23 January 2025

⁷⁸ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 19), 23 January 2025

⁷⁹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 19), 23 January 2025

⁸⁰ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 22), 23 January 2025

⁸¹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 21), 23 January 2025

9.1.22 The TIERS 2024 human rights report listed the following violations and the number of occurrences:

- assault: 241
- assault and battery: 129
- blackmail: 173
- conversion practices: 10
- discrimination: 54
- emotional abuse: 1
- extortion: 89
- forced confinement: 9
- harassment: 118
- invasion of privacy: 56
- kidnapping: 12
- ‘kito’ (‘typically involv[ing] a perpetrator luring a victim through online platforms under [false] pretences, [followed by] kidnapping, assault, battery, humiliation, invasion of privacy, outing, extortion, blackmail, and sexual assault in some cases’⁸²): 84
- outing: 46
- sexual assault: 72
- sexual harassment: 10
- theft: 33
- threat to life: 31
- murder: 3⁸³

9.1.23 For data from the TIERS 2024 human rights report on:

- arbitrary arrest, unlawful detention and mass arrest, see [State attitudes and treatment](#)
- mob violence, see [Violence and discrimination: general](#)
- forced marriage, see [Family treatment and societal norms](#)
- forceful eviction and unlawful dismissal, see [Access to services and employment](#)

9.1.24 Regarding subgroups within the LGBT+ community, the TIERS 2024 human rights report stated that the 850 people violated during the reporting period belonged to the following subgroups:

- cis men: 649
- cis women: 73
- trans women: 60

⁸² TIERS, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 22), 23 January 2025

⁸³ TIERS, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 9), 23 January 2025

- non-binary: 47
- trans men: 12
- queer: 5
- intersex: 4⁸⁴

9.1.25 The TIERs 2023 human rights report noted that as in previous TIERs human rights reports, disproportionately lower reporting of abuse and violence towards women, trans people and intersex people did not indicate lower prevalence of violations 'but rather emanates from intricate societal frameworks that have engendered multifaceted layers of oppression. This intricate web of oppression has, in turn, fostered a pronounced culture of reticence concerning the disclosure or discourse of matters and transgressions impacting these specific groups.'⁸⁵ The TIERs 2024 human rights report did not contain any statement to this effect⁸⁶.

9.1.26 According to a confidential source cited in the Netherlands MoFA COI report 2023, 'Transgender people were more vulnerable [to violations] because the change in the expression of their gender identity is so visible.'⁸⁷

9.1.27 Regarding the type of perpetrator, the TIERs 2024 human rights report provided the following data for the 556 cases recorded in the reporting period:

- state actors: 46
- non-state actors: 490
- both state and non-state actors: 21⁸⁸

The report did not explain why the sum of these figures (557) exceeded the number of cases recorded.

9.1.28 The TIERs 2024 human rights report further stated: 'Lesbian, bisexual, and queer women are also susceptible to Kito. The perpetrator is often revealed to be someone in a law enforcement uniform, who proceeds to publicly humiliate, verbally abuse, blackmail, assault, and extort them.'⁸⁹ Similarly, the CNN article 2024 provided 2 examples of 'kito' attacks on women in which the perpetrator was a man dressed in military uniform⁹⁰. The TIERs 2024 human rights report and the CNN article 2024 did not explicitly state whether perpetrators dressed in uniform were state actors.

9.1.29 Regarding variations in treatment depending on location and other factors, Hivos, 'an international development organization guided by humanist values'⁹¹, in an article dated 27 July 2023, reported: 'The prevailing legal system, customs and religion in the country, and particularly in the North, ... present obstacles for queer women ...'⁹²

⁸⁴ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 34), 23 January 2025

⁸⁵ TIERs, [2023 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 8), 31 October 2024

⁸⁶ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#), 23 January 2025

⁸⁷ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#) (page 55), 31 January 2023

⁸⁸ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 9), 23 January 2025

⁸⁹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 22), 23 January 2025

⁹⁰ CNN, [Gay women in Nigeria: The dangers of finding love online](#), 29 January 2024

⁹¹ Hivos, [Vision and values](#), no date

⁹² Hivos, [The WISE women of Nigeria](#), 27 July 2023

- 9.1.30 Privately-owned Nigerian online newspaper Kakaaki Reporters focuses on human rights issues⁹³. In an article dated 4 October 2024 (Kakaaki Reporters article 2024), it observed:
- ‘Nigeria’s ethnic diversity also plays a role in shaping attitudes toward LGBTQ+ individuals. In the northern regions of Nigeria, where the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group dominates and Sharia law is implemented, homosexuality is not only taboo but also punishable by death. In contrast, southern regions like Lagos, home to the Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups, exhibit more progressive attitudes due to their exposure to Western culture, but even here, the LGBTQ+ community is far from fully accepted.’⁹⁴
- 9.1.31 The TIERs 2024 human rights report stated that violations were reported in 29 states, with Katsina, Kogi, Taraba and Borno recording the least and Lagos, Niger, Enugu and Abuja (Federal Capital Territory) recording the most⁹⁵. The report presented only absolute case numbers and did not provide frequencies relative to each state’s population.
- 9.1.32 Referring to the executive director of Equality Triangle for Health and Peoples Development Initiative⁹⁶, a health research institution focusing on marginalised communities⁹⁷, the CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated: ‘Rashidi W. [surname not provided] also explained that the likelihood of violation of queer people’s rights increases based on where they live, their gender identities and expression – “if effeminate as a cisgender man or transgender person or nonbinary person or if masculine as a cisgender woman. The risks increase based on identifiers.”’⁹⁸
- 9.1.33 The TIERs 2024 human rights report stated that violations were reported in 29 states, with Katsina, Kogi, Taraba and Borno recording the least and Lagos, Niger, Enugu and Abuja (Federal Capital Territory) recording the most⁹⁹.
- 9.1.34 Regarding intersex people, the MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023, citing a confidential source, stated: ‘Intersex people could be accused of witchcraft for having both male and female genitalia.’¹⁰⁰
- 9.1.35 TIERs published a report, ‘An Exploratory Study on Knowledge Practices of Healthcare Professionals and Families of Intersex Persons in Nigeria’ (TIERs intersex report 2024), on their website on 1 November 2024. The report, which did not specify a reporting period, stated that 415 health professionals and 250 medical students participated in the study, as well as an unspecified number of intersex adults and their families. The study was conducted across the country’s 6 geopolitical zones at 7 federal teaching hospitals and 3 private or missionary hospitals¹⁰¹. It stated that when asked whether intersex people are cursed, the 415 healthcare professionals who participated responded as follows:

⁹³ Kakaaki Reporters, [About Us](#), no date

⁹⁴ Kakaaki Reporters, [The Impact of Homophobia On The Nigerian Film Industry](#), 4 October 2024

⁹⁵ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 9), 23 January 2025

⁹⁶ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 48), 2024

⁹⁷ African Research Nexus, [Institution: Equality Triangle for Health ...](#), no date

⁹⁸ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 58), 2024

⁹⁹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 9), 23 January 2025

¹⁰⁰ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#), (page 56), 31 January 2023

¹⁰¹ TIERs, [An Exploratory Study On Knowledge Practices ...](#), (pages 10, 13), 1 November 2024

- yes: 13 (3.1%)
- no: 199 (48.0%)
- maybe: 23 (5.5%)
- don't know: 180 (43.4%)¹⁰²

9.1.36 For information on:

- geography, demography and socioeconomic data, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Internal relocation](#)
- variation in state treatment and societal treatment, respectively, according to geographical and socioeconomic factors, see [Arrests, detention and treatment by the secular security forces](#) and [Violence and discrimination: general](#)
- access to healthcare, see [Healthcare](#)
- public opinion across society, see [Public opinion](#)

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9.2 'Conversion practices'

- 9.2.1 The German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), in their 'Briefing Notes cw45/2023' (BAMF brief of November 2023), dated 6 November 2023, based on various sources, reported: 'On 18.12.22 the Islamic Hisbah police arrested 19 Muslim men and women who were intending to celebrate a homosexual couple's marriage. According to reports in the media they were not punished but underwent a form of counselling.'¹⁰³ The brief did not state explicitly whether the counselling constituted a form of 'conversion practice'.
- 9.2.2 In relation to the mass arrest in Gombe in October 2023, the Human Dignity Trust Nigeria profile 2025 stated: 'Local lawyers reportedly raised concerns that 23 individuals remained in detention a month later, and there was a risk of some individuals being subjected to conversion therapy in a "rehabilitation" centre. It is not clear whether these individuals were subjected to conversion therapy or whether they are still in detention.'¹⁰⁴
- 9.2.3 CNN, in an article dated 29 January 2024 (CNN article 2024), reported: 'Practices that attempt to convert a person's sexual orientation or their gender identity are common in Nigerian society, across its various religious groups, and can include psychological, medical or religious "treatments" that may either be forced or voluntary.'¹⁰⁵
- 9.2.4 Xtra Magazine, a Canadian privately-owned digital publication¹⁰⁶, in an article dated 7 July 2023, reported: 'Forced marriage as conversion therapy continues to happen in the present day. To save face, queer people can be forced by their families to marry someone of the opposite sex, believing that marriage will serve as a "cure."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² TIERs, [An Exploratory Study On Knowledge Practices ...](#) (page 33), 1 November 2024

¹⁰³ BAMF, [Briefing Notes cw45/2023](#), (page 7), 6 November 2023

¹⁰⁴ Human Dignity Trust, [Nigeria](#), updated 11 March 2025

¹⁰⁵ CNN, [Gay women in Nigeria: The dangers of finding love online](#), 29 January 2024

¹⁰⁶ Xtra Magazine, [About us](#), no date

¹⁰⁷ Xtra Magazine, [The harsh reality of conversion therapy in Nigeria](#), 7 July 2023

- 9.2.5 Outright International published a report on ‘conversion practices’, ‘Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities’ (Outright International ‘conversion practices’ report 2022), in July 2022, based on a research project that began in 2019¹⁰⁸. The report did not specify the end date for the research. The report incorporated the findings of research conducted in Nigeria by TIERs involving 2,011 LGBT+ respondents, 24 psychology lecturers, 7 psychiatrists and 16 religious leaders from various denominations. Some of the lecturers and psychiatrists were employed by federal universities and federal hospitals, respectively¹⁰⁹.
- 9.2.6 The report stated: ‘49% of 2011 respondents to the survey said that they had undergone conversion practices, defined as efforts to change or suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity, while 51% said that they had not experienced conversion practices. 36% of 1216 respondents stated that they knew someone who had undergone conversion practices.’¹¹⁰
- 9.2.7 The report also stated that when asked about the form of ‘conversion practice’ experienced, 1,072 respondents replied. The report did not state whether this figure included respondents providing information about the experiences of people known to them, or whether multiple answers were possible. Their responses were as follows:
- religious rituals (including exorcisms, prayer or laying of hands): 59%
 - physical deprivation (including fasting and use of medications): 28%
 - individual talk therapy: 25%
 - being beaten/tortured: 19%
 - forced marriage: 8%
 - group talk therapy: 8%
 - institutionalised (live-in): 6%
 - don’t know: 6%
 - ‘corrective’ rape: 5%
 - other: 4%
 - aversion therapy: 2%¹¹¹
- 9.2.8 The TIERs 2024 human rights report explained that ‘corrective rape’ ‘is rooted in the misguided belief that sexual violence can alter a woman’s sexual orientation’¹¹².
- 9.2.9 In the Outright International ‘conversion practices’ report 2022, 1,062 respondents indicated who initiated the ‘therapy’. The report did not state whether this figure included respondents providing information about the experiences of people known to them. The report indicated that only one response was possible in the survey and that the data therefore does not fully reflect cases where 2 or more groups initiated the practice. The

¹⁰⁸ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 5), 19 July 2022

¹⁰⁹ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 7, 22), 19 July 2022

¹¹⁰ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 19), 19 July 2022

¹¹¹ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 19), 19 July 2022

¹¹² TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 34), 23 January 2025

responses were as follows:

- parents: 45%
- yourself: 23%
- friends/acquaintances: 12%
- religious organisation: 11%
- educational institution: 3%
- other: 7%¹¹³

9.2.10 Regarding who the facilitator of the ‘conversion practice’ was, 1,052 responses were received. They indicated that the practice was facilitated by the following:

- religious leader: 48%
- family: 24%
- health practitioner: 8%
- mental health practitioner: 7%
- other: 14%¹¹⁴

9.2.11 In relation to findings from the survey of psychologists and psychiatrists, the Outright International ‘conversion practices’ report 2022 stated:

‘All the lecturers surveyed indicated their awareness of the fact that homosexuality has been removed from the DSM [Diagnostic and Statistical manual of Mental Disorders, a widely consulted guidebook published by the American Psychiatric Association¹¹⁵] and 87.5% agreed that conversion practices have been proven to be ineffective.

‘Three out of seven psychiatrists surveyed disclosed that their institutions offer conversion practices to “correct” diverse sexual orientation and gender identity. These institutions that offer such practices are Synapse Psychological Services, Abuja; University Teaching Hospital, Jos; and the Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital, Yaba.

‘Six out of seven psychiatrists indicated that they have never attempted to treat LGBTQ people to “correct” their sexual orientation and gender identity. However, one out of seven of the psychiatrists surveyed stated that they had tried to treat LGBTQ persons including those younger than 18 years of age seeking to correct their sexual orientation or gender identity.’¹¹⁶

9.2.12 For information on:

- subsection of detainees to ‘conversion practices’, see [‘Conversion practices’ following arrest](#)
- societal ‘conversion practices’, see [Religious leaders and institutions](#) and [Family treatment and societal norms](#)
- ‘corrective rape’, see [Violence and discrimination: lesbians and bisexual](#)

¹¹³ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 21), 19 July 2022

¹¹⁴ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 21), 19 July 2022

¹¹⁵ Psychology Today, [DSM](#), no date

¹¹⁶ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 22), 19 July 2022

9.3 Surgeries on intersex people

- 9.3.1 The USSD 2023 human rights report stated: ‘Surgeries were sometimes performed on children and nonconsenting adult intersex persons.’¹¹⁷ It did not provide further information on this statement.
- 9.3.2 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: ‘According to a confidential source, in the case of intersex children, the doctor, in consultation with the parents, would sometimes decide to amputate part of the genitalia; this is also known as intersex genital mutilation.’¹¹⁸ It did not provide further information about the frequency with which this occurred.
- 9.3.3 The Outright intersex article 2024 reported: ‘The medical community in Nigeria often views intersex variations as conditions that must be “corrected”. It stated: ‘Nonconsensual surgeries and hormone treatments are common ...’, adding that pressure to conform to gender norms ‘often lead[s] to harmful medical interventions such as uninformed and nonconsensual surgeries on infants and young children ...’¹¹⁹
- 9.3.4 Non-governmental organisation Intersex Nigeria, in a report based on a study of 8 medical practitioners and 31 intersex people in 2022 (Intersex Nigeria diversities report 2022), stated: ‘The medical practitioner respondents did not believe that “corrective” surgery performed on intersex children violated their right to autonomy and physical integrity. 100% of the medical practitioners asserted that genetically, there are two sex[es] and intersex persons must be treated at birth and assigned a gender so they can fit into society. This is at variance with their response that the rights of intersex persons are taken into cognizance during the process of corrective surgery ...’¹²⁰
- 9.3.5 It also reported: ‘... [O]ne of the professionals told the researchers “there are no negative consequences for surgeries ... It is easier to construct the female genitalia than the male genitalia. All that needs to be done is to sit with the parents and educate them to know which one to choose.”’¹²¹
- 9.3.6 Similarly, TIERS intersex report 2024 stated: ‘One respondent [an intersex person or family member of an intersex person] added that doctors usually assign genders based on what was easier for them to carry out during surgery, without consulting the patients, which they felt was wrong.’¹²²
- 9.3.7 Regarding payment for surgery, Nigerian Tracker, a Kano-based, privately-owned online news platform¹²³, in an article dated 22 April 2021, reported: ‘Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje disclosed his administration’s decision to establish Hermaphrodite Centre for those with intersex complications, while partnering with the TETFund Centre of Excellence, at Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto (UDUS). He made the disclosure while receiving 7

¹¹⁷ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

¹¹⁸ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#) (page 56), 31 January 2023

¹¹⁹ Outright International, [Embracing Realities of Sex Development ...](#), 28 October 2024

¹²⁰ Intersex Nigeria, [Beyond the Binary ...](#) (page 56), 2022

¹²¹ Intersex Nigeria, [Beyond the Binary ...](#) (page 53), 2022

¹²² TIERS, [An Exploratory Study On Knowledge Practices ...](#) (page 13), 1 November 2024

¹²³ SignalHire, [Nigerian Tracker News Overview](#), no date

people, from the Centre, who were sponsored by the state government and underwent successful surgical operations, at a special session with all members of the state Executive Council, held at Africa House, Government House, Kano, Wednesday.

‘[Governor Ganduje added:] “All the seven people were operated free of charge. The state paid all the bills. So anybody with similar case should please come forward and get our attention. We have already ordered [a search for more intersex people to undergo surgery].

‘Governor Ganduje disclosed that, “We are now starting to establish similar Centre in Kano, in partnership with the Centre of Excellence, Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. We are institutionalising the process and intervention. Our concern is always the health and happiness of our people.”

9.3.8 There was no more recent information on sponsored surgeries on intersex people, in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

9.3.9 For more information on:

- the study methodology for the TIERs report, see pages 8 and 9 of the [TIERs intersex report 2024](#)
- healthcare for intersex people, see [Healthcare](#)
- attitudes of healthcare professionals, see [Healthcare](#) and [Violence and discrimination: Intersex people](#)

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10. State attitudes and treatment

10.1 Government and political leaders

10.1.1 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 observed: ‘The Nigerian government sees homosexuality as a sexual behaviour, not an orientation.’¹²⁴

10.1.2 The Nigerian government, in the ‘National report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21’ as part of the UN’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, dated 15 December 2023, stated: ‘The 3rd Cycle UPR recommendations in respect of decriminalizing offences relating to sexual orientation and gender identity were rejected by the country. The position of the Government is that the country’s stance in respect of the matter is dictated by societal mores and values and the rejection of foreign impositions capable of damaging the social fabric of the nation.’¹²⁵

10.1.3 Outright International, in an undated Nigeria Country Overview on their website, stated: ‘Government officials regularly make public comments denigrating LGBTIQ individuals, contributing to Nigeria’s pervasively anti-LGBTIQ sentiment.’¹²⁶

10.1.4 The ReportOUT article 2024 reported: ‘There are no openly LGBTQI politicians, and those who might be sympathetic to LGBTQI rights often remain silent due to fear of backlash.’¹²⁷

¹²⁴ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 57), 31 January 2023

¹²⁵ UNHRC, [Universal Periodic Review](#) (National report, section E), 10 November 2023

¹²⁶ Outright International, [Nigeria](#), no date

¹²⁷ ReportOUT, [Democracy and LGBTQI+ Rights in Nigeria ...](#), 13 June 2024

10.1.5 According to the ILGA World Database:

'In October 2023, controversy unfolded around the "Queen Primer", a schoolbook with historical roots dating back to the 19th century which had been in use in Nigeria's education system for decades, causing a media frenzy and parliamentary debates. The uproar centred on the book's inclusion of the term "gay", with House of Representatives members alleging a "covert attempt" to introduce an "immoral culture" in schools. A parliamentary session resulted in a unanimous resolution urging federal scrutiny and censorship, proposing criminalising the sale and use of this book, which was criticised as "unlawful" and "immoral" and blamed for moral decay in Nigeria ...

'In response to the uproar, Kano State promptly banned the "Queen Primer." The government directed schools to cease using the book, leading to the swift seizure of 1,200 copies by the Kano State Films and Censorship Board ...',¹²⁸

10.1.6 The ILGA World Database added that in February 2024, the Ministry of Education hosted a roundtable in Abuja which proposed revisions to the book instead of an outright ban¹²⁹.

10.1.7 For further information on schools, see [Education](#).

10.1.8 Tribune Online, the online edition of the privately-owned Nigerian Tribune¹³⁰, in an article dated 8 July 2024 (Tribune Online article 2024), reported: 'Kano State Governor Abba Yusuf has reaffirmed his administration's stance against recognising and accepting LGBTQ rights ...'¹³¹

10.1.9 Referring to a trade pact signed by Nigeria, which another newspaper had erroneously reported would require signatories to support LGBT rights¹³², the Tribune Online article 2024 continued: "'The state government will not accept any agreement that promotes the activities of gays and lesbians, as it contravenes the norms and values of the people of Kano and breaches the state's moral standards,'" [state commissioner for information, Baba] Dantiye stated', conveying Yusuf's stance¹³³.

10.1.10 For information on Governor Yusuf's directive on LGBT+ advocacy in Kano state, see [Registration and operation of civil society organisations](#). For more information on the Samoa Trade Agreement, see [Media and social media](#).

10.1.11 Privately-owned online news outlet¹³⁴ the Daily Champion, in an article dated 12 January 2025, reported that former Senator Shehu Sani wrote on his official X handle: 'Banning the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah [‘notoriously sinful cities in the biblical book of [Genesis](#) ... [t]raditionally ... associated with homosexual acts'¹³⁵] from the Nigerian Military is a welcome and commendable action.' It noted that the statement by Sani, a member of the main opposition party¹³⁶, the People's Democratic Party, was made in

¹²⁸ ILGA World Database, [LGBTI Rights in Nigeria](#), 2025

¹²⁹ ILGA World Database, [LGBTI Rights in Nigeria](#), 2025

¹³⁰ Tribune Online, [About Us](#), no date

¹³¹ Tribune Online, [Why LGBT will not be accepted in Kano — Gov Yusuf](#), 8 July 2024

¹³² Daily Trust, [Samoa Agreement: Our apology](#), 4 July 2024

¹³³ Tribune Online, [Why LGBT will not be accepted in Kano — Gov Yusuf](#), 8 July 2024

¹³⁴ National Accord Newspaper, [Chief Iwuanyanwu: The success story ...](#), 16 October 2024

¹³⁵ Encyclopaedia Britannica, Editors, [Sodom and Gomorrah ...](#), updated 25 April 2025

¹³⁶ Within Nigeria, [PDP Nigeria | Peoples Democratic Party](#), 25 November 2024

apparent reference to the ban on same-sex activity in the military signed into law by President Tinubu in December 2024¹³⁷.

- 10.1.12 Leo Igwe, a board member of Humanists International, in an opinion piece published on 14 January 2025 by Sahara Reporters, ‘an online community of international reporters and social advocates’¹³⁸, commented with reference to the same ban: ‘President Tinubu issued this ban to appease the anti-gay public and power base. He did this to reassure anti-LGBT Nigerians that his government would not cave in to pressure from the West to recognize homosexuality, as once rumored ... [T]he Nigerian law already prohibits homosexuality and, in 2015, same-sex marriage. So, this ban is unnecessary. What legislative value is it adding?’¹³⁹

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10.2 Arrests, detention and treatment by the secular security forces

- 10.2.1 The Human Dignity Trust Nigeria profile 2025 stated: ‘There is substantial evidence of the [secular and sharia anti-LGBT+] law being enforced in recent years, with LGBT people being frequently subject to arrest, individually or on mass [sic] ...’¹⁴⁰
- 10.2.2 The ILGA World identities report 2023 stated: ‘... [B]etween 2022 and 2023 ILGA World has identified and compiled over 80 individual examples of criminal enforcement and State-targeting, many of which involve several victims, though ... the true number of incidents is certainly much higher.’¹⁴¹
- 10.2.3 The TIERs 2024 human rights report documented 12 cases of arbitrary arrest, 10 instances of mass arrest and 21 cases of unlawful detention¹⁴².
- 10.2.4 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated: ‘In this survey, we asked: “Between 2014 and now, have you been arrested and/or detained by the police or any other law enforcement agency due to your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and or sex characteristics? If yes, could you share the details of what happened?”’ The report did not explicitly state how many of the 89 survey respondents replied that they had been arrested or detained, but it provided 3 examples, including one in which a gay man and a blackmailer became involved in an altercation and both men were arrested. In all 3 examples, the respondents stated they had been released on bail after a payment was made to the police¹⁴³.
- 10.2.5 Regarding payment of bribes and bail, the USSD 2023 human rights report stated: ‘Many LGBTQI+ persons reported security officials asked for bribes after being caught engaging in “homosexual activities.”’¹⁴⁴
- 10.2.6 The Netherlands MoFA COI report stated: ‘The reason why few or no LGBTQI+ cases go to court is that it is not generally in the interests of either the police or the suspects. Police officers generally prefer to be bribed, and members of the LGBTQI+ community almost always cooperate in order to

¹³⁷ Daily Champion, [Tinubu's ban on alleged homosexuality in military ...](#), 12 January 2025

¹³⁸ Sahara Reporters, [Sahara Reporters](#), no date

¹³⁹ Sahara Reporters, [How Does Ban On Homosexuality Benefit Nigeria? ...](#), 14 January 2025

¹⁴⁰ Human Dignity Trust, [Nigeria](#), updated 11 March 2025

¹⁴¹ ILGA, [Our Identities Under Arrest \(2023\)](#) (page 99), 30 November 2023

¹⁴² TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 14), 23 January 2025

¹⁴³ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 44-45), 2024

¹⁴⁴ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

keep their sexual orientation secret. The arresting of LGBTQI+ people is seen by the police as very lucrative, as the penalties for homosexual behaviour are high and those who are arrested are very willing to pay. In general, especially in the south, action is mainly taken when a politician wants to make a statement.¹⁴⁵

10.2.7 For more information on:

- court cases, see [Convictions and sentencing of LGBT+ people](#)
- politicians' attitudes, see [Government and political leaders](#)

10.2.8 Similarly, in the CHEVS/TIERs report 2024, Olumide M commented about changes since the enactment of the SSMPA as follows: 'What has changed is that back then, a lot of the attacks were by hoodlums and local vigilantes, with some police in rural or low-income areas. Things started changing when the police realised they could make money from attacking parties and we started getting police attacking parties, and when they arrest you, you have to bail yourself and bribe them ...'¹⁴⁶

10.2.9 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 included comments by Remi M, a 'key informant' about whom it provided no further information. It quoted them as saying: '[T]he SSMPA engineered mass arrests – more than existed before 2014 – as law enforcement realised how much they could extort [from LGBTQI+ people. It became this game of licensed extortion for them.'¹⁴⁷

10.2.10 Context, the media platform of the Thomson Reuters Foundation, an independent charity¹⁴⁸, in an article dated 17 November 2023 (Context mass arrest article 2023), quoted 'prominent Lagos lawyer' Chizelu Emejulu as saying that stringent bail conditions were often imposed in cases of mass arrest 'to serve as punishment to any LGBTQI person who would dare to be public expressive of their sexual orientation and gender identity.'¹⁴⁹

10.2.11 In an article dated 3 March 2025 (Context article 2025), Context reported:

"LGBTQI individuals are often perceived as easy targets for extortion and harassment by the police, (and most) don't really know their rights and the contents of the SSMPA law, so these corrupt officers exploit that ignorance," Peter said.

"I can't remember any month (when) we are not dealing with reports of police harassment and extortion in our organisation. It happens all the time."

'The sums of money police allegedly solicit can have "severe financial consequences" on a disadvantaged minority that already is under economic pressure, Peter added.'¹⁵⁰

10.2.12 For more information on police corruption, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Actors of protection](#).

10.2.13 Regarding arbitrary arrests, the Associated Press news agency, in an article dated 27 October 2023 (AP article 2023), featured comments by Okechukwu

¹⁴⁵ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 53), 31 January 2023

¹⁴⁶ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 57), 2024

¹⁴⁷ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 60), 2024

¹⁴⁸ Thomson Reuters, [Social Impact](#) (Our foundation), no date

¹⁴⁹ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians targeted at parties in "wedding" arrests - lawyer](#), 17 November 2023

¹⁵⁰ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians recount police abuses under 'weaponised' law](#), 3 March 2025

Nwanguma, head of the Rule of Law and Accountability Advocacy Centre, a non government organisation which advocates for police reform in Nigeria. It quoted him as saying: 'They (law enforcement authorities) are exploiting the law to target people whether or not they are queer ... There is a tendency to target them based on assumptions or allegations, not based on any investigation.'¹⁵¹

10.2.14 The UN Human Rights Council, in the 'Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review for Nigeria', dated 26 March 2024, stated that one recommendation, from the United States, was for Nigeria to '[e]nd the arbitrary arrest and detention of LGBTQI+ persons'.¹⁵²

10.2.15 Regarding mass arrests, the Context mass arrests article 2023 reported that according to lawyer Emejulu, who it noted had represented many of those detained following such arrests: 'Nigerian authorities are using a 2014 anti-LGBTQ+ law that bans same-sex weddings to raid parties and publicly parade those arrested as a form of deterrence ...

'He said a tactic used in [a mass arrest at a Lagos birthday party in 2018] and subsequent arrests by authorities was to violate the right to the presumption of innocence by "parading" the arrested in front of the media.

"This singular act always compromises the safety and security of the suspects," he said.'¹⁵³

10.2.16 The AP article 2023 quoted Isa Sanusi, director of Amnesty International Nigeria, as telling AP that blanket arrests and media parades were discriminatory and risked endangering people for their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity¹⁵⁴.

10.2.17 The USSD 2023 human rights report stated:

'On June 24, police arrested 24 persons perceived to be LGBTQI+ at a private party in Abuja.

'On August 27, police in Delta State raided a "white party" organized by the LGBTQI+ community and detained more than 200 individuals. Police alleged the event was a same-sex wedding, but some civil society organization representatives stated authorities had fabricated this allegation to justify the raid. By September 28, all detainees were released on bail, although charges were pending at year's end.'¹⁵⁵

10.2.18 Reporting on the same incident, the Associated Press news agency, in an article dated 27 October 2023, stated: '... [T]he suspects were paraded in front of cameras in a live social media broadcast despite a ruling by a Nigerian high court last year that pretrial media parades violate the nation's constitution. One of those paraded said he was at the hotel for another engagement. Another suspect said he does not identify as a gay individual and was arrested while on his way to a fashion show.'¹⁵⁶

10.2.19 AI, in their State of the World's Human Rights 2024, dated 24 April 2024,

¹⁵¹ AP, [Mass arrests target LGBTQ+ people in Nigeria ...](#), 27 October 2023

¹⁵² UNCHR, [Universal Periodic Review](#) (Working group report, paragraph 152.326), 26 March 2024

¹⁵³ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians targeted at parties in "wedding" arrests - lawyer](#), 17 November 2023

¹⁵⁴ AP, [Mass arrests target LGBTQ+ people in Nigeria ...](#), 27 October 2023

¹⁵⁵ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

¹⁵⁶ AP, [Mass arrests target LGBTQ+ people in Nigeria ...](#), 27 October 2023

documented the Delta state incident and also reported on a further case of mass arrest: 'On 22 October [2023], 59 men and 17 women were arrested at Duwa Plaza shopping mall, Gombe, Gombe state, for allegedly holding a gay birthday party and planning to hold a gay wedding.'¹⁵⁷ Reuters news agency, in an article dated 23 October 2023, reported that the arrests were made by Nigeria's paramilitary agency, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps¹⁵⁸.

- 10.2.20 Regarding violations against LGBT+ suspects and detainees by the police and other security forces, the UNHRC stakeholders' submissions 2023 reported that, according to JS21: 'It was typical that following arrests and detention by the police, LGBTIQ+ persons faced torture and cruel, unhuman, or degrading treatment to coerce them to confess to being homosexual.'¹⁵⁹
- 10.2.21 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: 'According to a confidential source, people arrested for being in a same-sex relationship were often assaulted by those who made the arrest. This could be the police, but also a vigilante group ... Confinement in a cell by the police was sometimes the only way to prevent someone from being beaten to death. This was more common in the north than in the south.'¹⁶⁰
- 10.2.22 The BTI 2024 reported: 'Security forces and vigilante groups frequently abuse LGBTQ+ individuals ...'¹⁶¹
- 10.2.23 Referring to the mass arrest in Delta state in October 2023, TIERs, in their 2023 Human Rights Violations Report, dated 31 October 2024, stated: 'The detainees were forcefully coerced to have their anus and rectum examined, with pictures taken by the police officers.'¹⁶²
- 10.2.24 Amoo and others 2024 reported that when asked, 'Have you ever been beaten up by the police or a government official?', 26, or 20.8%, of the 125 respondents in its survey of gay and bisexual men in Benue state replied that they had, while 99, or 79.2%, responded that they had not¹⁶³.
- 10.2.25 The Human Dignity Trust Nigeria profile 2025 reported that individual and mass arrests are 'often accompanied by police violence and brutality'¹⁶⁴.
- 10.2.26 Regarding police interpretation and application of the law, the USSD 2023 human rights report observed: 'Facially neutral laws, such as those against "unlawful assembly" and "public nuisance," were disproportionately applied against LGBTQI+ persons or those perceived to be LGBTQI+ ... '¹⁶⁵
- 10.2.27 ILGA World, in a report dated 30 May 2024 (ILGA World laws report 2024), based on various sources, stated:
- 'On 25 January 2024, the Nigeria Police Force ... issued a press release in response to a social media video where several individuals disclosed their LGBTQ identities. The statement announced arrest orders against all

¹⁵⁷ AI, [The State of the World's Human Rights 2024](#), 23 April 2024

¹⁵⁸ Reuters, [Nigeria's paramilitary raids birthday party for gay people, 76 arrested](#), 23 October 2023

¹⁵⁹ UNHRC, [Universal Periodic Review](#) (Summary ..., paragraph 23), 10 November 2023

¹⁶⁰ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#) (page 54), 31 January 2023

¹⁶¹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI, [Nigeria Country Report](#) (page 12), 2024

¹⁶² TIERs, [2023 Human Rights Violations Report](#), 31 October 2024

¹⁶³ Amoo, OE, and others, JPH, [Societal, Political, and Psychological ...](#) (page 101), January 2024

¹⁶⁴ Human Dignity Trust, [Nigeria](#), updated 11 March 2025

¹⁶⁵ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

persons featured in the video and provided explanations on the legal framework regarding “unnatural offences” and “same-sex marriage” in Nigeria, implying that “identifying as queer” was unlawful. The Police Force also urged Nigerians to report “all suspicious activities related to unnatural offences or same-sex marriage” and provide crucial information to aid police efforts to enforce the law. Local groups criticised the statement for, among other reasons, stretching the scope of the legislation in force.’¹⁶⁶

- 10.2.28 In relation to variations in state treatment depending on geography and socioeconomic factors, the CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 included comments by Olumide Makanjuola, director of programmes at Initiative Sankofa d’Afrique de l’Ouest (West Africa Sankofa Initiative, an LGBT+ rights organisation¹⁶⁷). The report stated: ‘Olumide M explained that ... “[t]he way people organise [LGBT+] community events in Victoria Island, Ikoyi or Lekki [affluent, cosmopolitan neighbourhoods of Lagos¹⁶⁸ ¹⁶⁹] will not be the same way someone else will organise in Asaba or Warri [in Delta state].” As he shared, mass arrests have targeted primarily people with lower socio-economic standing, like in Egbeda [a Lagos suburb], Lagos, Bauchi [in the North East] and Warri.’¹⁷⁰
- 10.2.29 The report also stated: ‘The societal reliance on classism can help “protect” queer people with this social capital. Vincent E. [a pharmacist and Tiktok influencer¹⁷¹] relayed that [an LGBT+] party he attended in 2022 had police protection: “There were police vans outside, and bouncers at the gate. It was [a party with] maximum security. And it was hosted in a massive space and not hush-hush at all.” In cases like this, as long as organisers can sort law enforcement officials, they would protect for the duration of the event.’¹⁷² The report explained in a footnote that ‘sort’ meant ‘Bribe or pay law enforcement’¹⁷³.
- 10.2.30 Regarding subgroups within the LGBT+ community, the MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: ‘There was very little information about the state’s treatment of transgender and intersex people who are open about their sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.’¹⁷⁴
- 10.2.31 For more information on:
- variations in treatment, see [Violence, intimidation, discrimination and extortion](#) and [Violence and discrimination: general](#)
 - geography, demography and socioeconomic data, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Internal relocation](#)
 - efforts by the National Human Rights Commission to reduce arbitrary arrest, unlawful detention and other human rights violations by the security forces against the LGBT+ community, see [Oversight mechanisms](#)

¹⁶⁶ ILGA World, [Laws on Us: A global overview of legal progress ...](#), 30 May 2024

¹⁶⁷ ISDAO, [A just and inclusive West Africa ...](#), no date

¹⁶⁸ Nigeria Property Centre, [Victoria Island \(VI\) ...](#), no date

¹⁶⁹ Expat Arrivals, [Lifestyle in Lagos](#), no date

¹⁷⁰ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 57-58), 2024

¹⁷¹ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 56), 2024

¹⁷² CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 58), 2024

¹⁷³ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 58, footnote 219), 2024

¹⁷⁴ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#), (page 55), 31 January 2023

10.3 Convictions and sentencing of LGBT+ people under the secular criminal law

10.3.1 The MoFA Nigeria COI report stated: ‘Relatively few cases against LGBTQI+ people have actually come before a court. Since the SSMPA entered into force in 2014, no convictions have been made on the basis of this federal law ... However, convictions were made on the basis of legislation at state level, on the basis of the Penal Code ...’¹⁷⁵

10.3.2 For information on:

- reasons why few cases against LGBT+ people reach court, see [Arrests, detention and treatment by the secular security forces](#)
- state-level convictions under sharia law, see [Enforcement of sharia provisions and attitude of the hisbah \(morality police\)](#)

10.3.3 BAMF, in their ‘Briefing Notes Summary: Nigeria – January to June 2024’, dated 30 June 2024, stated:

‘Media report that on 12.04.24, a Nigerian court sentenced transgender woman Okuneye Idris Olanrewaju, better known by her stage name Bobrisky, to six months in prison for throwing banknotes of the local currency, the Naira, into the air at public events, with videos of this going viral on social media. This custom, known as "spraying", is peculiar to weddings and other large celebrations. Nigerian courts consider it a criminal offence, especially as the notes that fall to the ground might be stepped on. As a rule, however, no prosecution takes place. What is special about the Bobrisky case is not only that she was brought to court at all, but also that she was sentenced to the maximum prison sentence of six months. Media report that Bobrisky is expected to serve this sentence in a prison for male inmates. However, an appeal against the judgement is possible.

‘Human rights activists criticise the guilty verdict and denounce the selective enforcement of laws. Many see the harsh judgement in connection with Bobrisky's nationwide popularity on social media as a successful transgender person ...’¹⁷⁶

10.4 Enforcement of sharia provisions and attitude of the hisbah (morality police)

10.4.1 With reference to the sharia provision that same-sex activity is punishable by stoning to death in the 12 northern states, the USSD 2023 human rights report stated: ‘Authorities actively enforced this law, but capital punishment was never carried out.’¹⁷⁷

10.4.2 The ILGA arrests report 2023 stated: ‘... [T]he possibility of execution from the Sharia Courts of 12 states in the northern parts of the country makes for an especially dire circumstance for local SOGIE communities. That said, it appears that death sentences have been carried out only rarely.’¹⁷⁸ The report did not provide data or examples in relation to this statement.

10.4.3 Also, with reference to sharia courts, it reported: ‘The processes and

¹⁷⁵ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 55), 31 January 2023

¹⁷⁶ BAMF, [MILo Migrations - Infologistik](#) (Briefing Notes Summary, page 10), 30 June 2024

¹⁷⁷ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

¹⁷⁸ ILGA, [Our Identities Under Arrest \(2023\)](#) (page 98), 30 November 2023

outcomes of these courts remain hard to access. Indeed, at a sodomy trial in January 2014 in the state of Bauchi's Tudun Alkali Upper Sharia Court, an angry mob reportedly stormed the premises demanding that the accused be sentenced to death ... Since then, according to a local source, "the sodomy trials have been going on in secret in another location and the trial dates are never made public". Often, the line between extrajudicial violence and effective, official criminal enforcement is blurred.¹⁷⁹

- 10.4.4 According to the MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023, sharia courts convicted members of the LGBT+ community. It stated:

'The Initiative for Equal Rights reported in 2017 that convictions had been made on the basis of the Sharia Penal Codes. A confidential source indicated that this information was still current during the reporting period, but that precise information was difficult to provide, as access to information about what happened in Sharia courts was harder to obtain than in the case of civil courts ... In June 2022, three men, including a seventy-year-old, were arrested for homosexual acts in the northern state of Bauchi. They were sentenced to death by stoning by a Sharia court. The governor needs to ratify this sentence in order for it to be executed. This had not yet happened by the end of the reporting period.'¹⁸⁰

- 10.4.5 There was no more recent information on whether the sentence had been ratified, in the sources consulted for this note (see [Bibliography](#)).

- 10.4.6 The BAMF brief of November 2023 reported:

'On 31.10.23 a sharia court of the Hisbah police unit in the northern state of Kano sentenced eight men to ten lashes for the offence of cross-dressing ... According to reports in the media, the men were arrested at a wedding at which they were allegedly wearing feminine attire. The court reportedly further sentenced the men to three months in prison, should they be unable to pay bail ... The floggings were carried out in public on the premises of the Hisbah police on 31.10.23 ...'¹⁸¹ It is possible that those sentenced were trans women although this is not explicitly stated in the BAMF account, based on Nigerian and other newspaper reports.

- 10.4.7 Tribune Online, in an article dated 11 May 2024, stated: 'A Sharia Court in Ningi headquarters of Ningi LGA [local government authority] in Bauchi state has sentenced a middle-aged man to death by stoning for the offence of homosexuality, having been found guilty of the offence as charged.'¹⁸²

There was no information on subsequent developments in the Ningi case, in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

- 10.4.8 The Netherlands MoFA COI report 2023 stated: 'In the northern states, where Sharia law exists, laws against LGBTQI+ people are enforced by the morality police (hisbah).'¹⁸³ It also quoted a confidential source as stating that those arrested by the hisbah for being in a same-sex relationship could be assaulted by the hisbah making the arrest¹⁸⁴.

¹⁷⁹ ILGA, [Our Identities Under Arrest \(2023\)](#) (page 98), 30 November 2023

¹⁸⁰ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 53), 31 January 2023

¹⁸¹ BAMF, [Briefing Notes cw45/2023](#), (page 7), 6 November 2023

¹⁸² Tribune Online, [Bauchi: Sharia Court sentences man to die](#), 11 May 2024

¹⁸³ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 52), 31 January 2023

¹⁸⁴ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 54), 31 January 2023

10.4.9 The Hivos article 2023 reported on an interview with Nnedinma Ulanmo, co-founder and executive director of the Women Initiative for Sustainable Empowerment and Equality (WISE), 'a lesbian bisexual, queer and transgender organization based in Northern Nigeria'¹⁸⁵. The article quoted Ulanmo as saying: 'The Hisbah interferes with people's private lives – they even know who is still single. They're allowed to do a whole lot more than the government-mandated police force.

'For example, they raid your parties ... With the Nigerian police you can secure bail, but not with the Hisbah. We worked with safety organizations to try and change this, but it will take a while before we can be safe from the police.'¹⁸⁶

10.4.10 Sahara Reporters, in an article dated 9 July 2024, reported:

'Idris Ahmed Gama, the head of Hisbah's medical unit in Kano State, passionately advocated for the equal treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) individuals in Nigeria.

'Speaking in a video clip, Gama shared his personal journey and evolving perspective on LGBTQ issues. "My first encounter with this situation was very shocking," Gama began, reflecting on his initial exposure to LGBTQ matters. "But now, having experienced it again, I realise they are people like me, human beings deserving of respect and dignity," he continued ...

'Gama emphasised the importance of inclusivity, likening LGBTQ individuals to family: "I see them now as my sisters and brothers," he stated emphatically.

'When asked about the handling of LGBTQ persons in Nigeria, Gama stressed parity with other community members: "They should be treated with the same respect and consideration as any other Nigerian," he insisted ...

'Gama however called on lawmakers to review existing laws: "Our legislators must consider amendments to ensure equal rights for all Nigerians, including LGBTQ individuals," he urged, highlighting the need for legislative reform.

"... I thank the organisers [WISE, who held a workshop¹⁸⁷] for allowing me to represent Hisbah, an organisation that understands the importance of inclusivity," he remarked ...'¹⁸⁸

10.4.11 Tribune Online, in an article dated 9 July 2024, reported that the video of Gama had gone viral on social media and that Gama had been arrested by the hisbah for expressing the opinion that arrests of LGBT people are a violation of their human rights¹⁸⁹. It stated: '... Gama explained that he was invited to a workshop via WhatsApp on women's empowerment where a paper was presented on human rights. He disclosed that after the program, during an interview, he mentioned the LGBTQ acronym without knowing its full meaning.

'He denied being a member of any group or association advocating LGBTQ rights, and that he was only invited to a workshop by a group named Women

¹⁸⁵ Hivos, [The WISE women of Nigeria](#), 27 July 2023

¹⁸⁶ Hivos, [The WISE women of Nigeria](#), 27 July 2023

¹⁸⁷ Tribune Online, [Kano Hisbah official arrested for condemning arrest ...](#), 9 July 2024

¹⁸⁸ Sahara Reporters, [Hisbah Top Official In Kano, Idris Gama Advocates ...](#), 9 July 2024

¹⁸⁹ Tribune Online, [Kano Hisbah official arrested for condemning arrest ...](#), 9 July 2024

Initiative for Sustainable Empowerment and Equality (WISE) ...

'He appealed for leniency and promised not to associate with WISE in the future.'¹⁹⁰

- 10.4.12 There was no information on further developments in Gama's case, in the sources consulted for this note (see [Bibliography](#)).

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10.5 Response to crimes against LGBT+ people

- 10.5.1 For general information about the criminal justice system, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Actors of protection](#)
- 10.5.2 The AP article 2023 quoted lawyer Chizelu Emejulu as saying: 'When we get the perpetrators [of attacks against LGBT+ people] arrested, the consistent thing we have noticed is that people always claim their victims are queer and once they say that, the police begin to withdraw from these cases.'¹⁹¹
- 10.5.3 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: 'Individuals who reported LGBTQI+-related violence at the hands of civilians ran the risk of themselves subsequently falling victim to assault and/or extortion by the police.'¹⁹²
- 10.5.4 For more information on assaults and extortion by the police, see [Arrests, detention and treatment by the secular security forces](#).
- 10.5.5 Similarly, Context, in an article last updated on 14 August 2024, quoted comments by Olumide Makanjuola of Initiative Sankofa d'Afrique de l'Ouest. It stated: 'Reporting these crimes [against LGBTQ+ people or those perceived to be LGBTQ+] often isn't an option, because LGBTQ+ victims fear that the police might prosecute them rather than their attacker, said Makanjuola ... A lack of trust in the justice system encourages victims to give into extortion rather than report it, he said.'¹⁹³
- 10.5.6 Regarding the police response to 'kito' (online entrapment) cases, BBC News, in an article dated 3 August 2022, reported:
- 'Police in Nigeria have urged victims of a same-sex dating app scam to come forward to give evidence. But they have refused to offer them the assurance of an amnesty in a country that criminalises gay relationships ...
- On Sunday, six people were arrested for allegedly blackmailing those who signed up to the gay dating app ... The arrests were made after someone complained that he had been blackmailed ...' The article added that the suspects had been detained in a sting operation¹⁹⁴.
- 10.5.7 Minority Africa, a digital publication whose coverage focuses on minority groups, in an article dated 8 June 2024 (Minority Africa justice article 2024), reported:
- 'When Chinedu, another victim of Kito [online entrapment] heard his blackmailer had been arrested and taken to the police station, he thought he would get justice for the humiliation he suffered. At the police station, Chinedu said he was shocked at how quickly the police turned against him

¹⁹⁰ Tribune Online, [Kano Hisbah official arrested for condemning arrest ...](#), 9 July 2024

¹⁹¹ AP, [Mass arrests target LGBTQ+ people in Nigeria ...](#), 27 October 2023

¹⁹² MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#), (page 54), 31 January 2023

¹⁹³ Context, [Job losses, rising attacks: 10 years of Nigeria's anti-LGBTQ law](#), updated 14 August 2024

¹⁹⁴ BBC News, [No Nigeria amnesty guarantees for gay dating app victims](#), 3 August 2022

when the man who had blackmailed him told them it was a “gay affair” and that Chinedu had refused to pay him after having sex with him ...

‘Chinedu, other victims, and gay rights activists who had offered to testify against [the suspect, Emmanuel] Nwana ... all abandoned the case when they noticed the officers in charge had turned against them. The policemen were no longer interested in the crime reported but in their sexuality, said James, a gay-rights activist ...

“All the witnesses ran away,” he said. “I was lucky to escape when the police said they would do a sodomy test on us. They want to check our anus to see if it has been penetrated. Emmanuel was pointing at everyone and calling us his gay sexual partners because he knew the case would turn on us if he said that.”¹⁹⁵

- 10.5.8 The Minority Africa justice article 2024, in which names were changed to protect identities, also reported that because of their reluctance to report crimes to the police, some kito victims turn instead to civilian activists who engage paramilitaries on their behalf, to help the victims obtain justice and recover money extorted from them. Referring to one such activist, the article stated: ‘Joel’s means typically do not involve the Nigerian police, which is one of the reasons his clients trust him. He works with another security agency, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), a paramilitary organisation founded in 1967, who, on the conditions that their fuel costs are covered, provide the boots and muscles needed to arrest the blackmailers when he eventually tracks them down.’¹⁹⁶
- 10.5.9 According to the CHEVS/TIERs report 2024, Walter U (surname not provided), founder of Kito Diaries, an online platform that documents kito cases and alerts users to the identities of suspects, and his team ‘[do] not trust the police to act against any of the perpetrators as the police’s actions towards queer people generally and the team, including Walter U in the course of his work, have been threatening’¹⁹⁷. It quoted Walter U as saying: ‘I’ve had the police work with someone we were exposing [for kito actions], and the police were threatening me. It doesn’t ordinarily occur to me to involve the police in these issues, given their behaviour towards queer people. In some cases where cases need the force of the uniform, I’ve had a few queer police officers who try to intervene, but there are no random calls to a police station for help.’¹⁹⁸
- 10.5.10 The TIERs 2024 human rights report observed: ‘As with the Kito cases, survivors [of harassment from passersby, ‘area boys’ and neighbourhood vigilante groups] are denied redress due to state-sanctioned homophobia and the criminalization of LGBTQIA+ rights.’¹⁹⁹
- 10.5.11 The same report stated: ‘... [R]eporting [cases of ‘corrective rape’] is risky due to the country’s criminalization of same-sex relationships, which discourages LBQTI+ women from seeking justice or support out of fear of legal consequences’. It observed that, as a result, ‘[m]any survivors face

¹⁹⁵ Minority Africa, [“I have forgiven him”: Queer Nigerian victims ...](#), 8 June 2024

¹⁹⁶ Minority Africa, [“I have forgiven him”: Queer Nigerian victims ...](#), 8 June 2024

¹⁹⁷ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 60-61), 2024

¹⁹⁸ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 61), 2024

¹⁹⁹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 22), 23 January 2025

significant psychological trauma'²⁰⁰.

10.5.12 Regarding the response to crimes against trans people, the USSD 2023 human rights report stated that following an attack on a trans woman in August 2023, in which the culprit forced the victim to transfer money to his bank account, 'The man was charged with crimes related to theft and assault. The case was pending at year's end.'²⁰¹

10.5.13 Privately-owned²⁰² media outlet Africanews, in an article last updated 13 August 2024, reported that the police had launched an investigation into the death of a trans TikToker known as 'Abuja Area Mama'²⁰³.

There was no information on any developments in the investigation, in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)). For more information on Abuja Area Mama's death, see [Violence and discrimination: trans people](#).

10.5.14 Lawyer Chizelu Emejulu, in an article published on 18 January 2024 by Openly News, an LGBT+ global digital platform provided by the Thomson Reuters Foundation²⁰⁴, recounted having represented a trans 'kito' victim who reported to the police in August 2023 that she had been beaten and robbed. He stated that they charged the perpetrator with assault and theft, and the case came to court. He observed:

'As a lawyer who focuses on LGBTQ+ rights, I know cases like this one — an assault against an LGBTQ+ person — rarely makes it to court ... Part of why these cases don't make it to court is because of a founded fear by LGBTQ+ victims that police will ignore them at best, or revictimise them at worst ... It's become a catch-22: victims are too scared to speak out, and lawyers like me rarely have cases that can assure them coming forward is worthwhile.'²⁰⁵

10.5.15 Describing the 'kito' case as representing 'significant progress', Emejulu reported: '... [A]s a trans woman, Abeni was treated with the utmost respect in a Nigerian courtroom. The magistrate who presided over the case respected Abeni's right to [a] fair hearing, regardless of her gender identity. Her identity was not weaponised against her, nor was the case turned into a debate about the idea of "transness."²⁰⁶ He added: 'Abeni's case resulted in a settlement out of court on Jan. 9 ... While the case hasn't provided a legal precedent, it has set a personal precedent: a fresh approach to the way I do my work. It has renewed my hope to be able to use the Nigerian judicial system to protect LGBTQ+ people[.]'²⁰⁷

10.5.16 The Punch, a privately-owned Nigerian newspaper²⁰⁸, in an article dated 24 April 2024, reported that TIERS had issued a statement about the arrest of a 10-member kito gang. According to the article, part of the statement read: 'On March 17, 2024, the Nigerian Police apprehended a ten-member Kito gang in Lagos State, Nigeria. The gang was arrested at Ikate and taken to

²⁰⁰ TIERS, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 34), 23 January 2025

²⁰¹ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

²⁰² Euronews, [About us](#), no date

²⁰³ Africanews, [Police order investigation into the murder ...](#), updated 13 August 2024

²⁰⁴ Openly News, [About Us](#), no date

²⁰⁵ Openly News, [OPINION: As a lawyer in Nigeria, one trans woman ...](#), 18 January 2024

²⁰⁶ Openly News, [OPINION: As a lawyer in Nigeria, one trans woman ...](#), 18 January 2024

²⁰⁷ Openly News, [OPINION: As a lawyer in Nigeria, one trans woman ...](#), 18 January 2024

²⁰⁸ The Punch, [About us](#), no date

Special Squad 1, Police Headquarters in Ikeja.²⁰⁹ The article reported that TIERS had appealed to the police to ensure that the gang were brought to justice²¹⁰.

10.5.17 In an apparent reference to the same case, the Context ‘kito’ article 2024 reported that the police ‘were reportedly alerted because an officer had family ties to one of the gang’s victims.

“If one of the victims wasn’t affiliated with a law enforcement agent, it may not have gotten (this far),” [TIERS director of programmes, Chindimma] Ike, ... said.

‘A police spokesman confirmed that eight men were arrested in Lagos, and the men were due to face charges of kidnapping, extortion and rape in a court in May.’²¹¹

10.5.18 There was no information on any further developments in the Lagos state case, in the sources consulted for this note (see [Bibliography](#)).

10.5.19 Lawyers for Lawyers, an Amsterdam-based independent, non-political foundation that ‘promotes and preserves the independence of the legal profession worldwide’²¹², in an article on their website dated 5 November 2024 (Lawyers for Lawyers article 2024), reported that a Nigerian lawyer using the pseudonym Mr Stone told Lawyers for Lawyers in an interview that because a growing number of lawyers were representing LGBT+ clients and litigating successfully, more such clients were becoming willing to take cases to court²¹³.

There was no information on any specific convictions of perpetrators of attacks against LGBT+ people, in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

10.5.20 For more information on:

- law enforcement and the judicial system, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Actors of protection](#)
- lawyers, see [Legal services](#)

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10.6 Oversight mechanisms

10.6.1 The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is an independent national institution for the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights²¹⁴. In their 2022 annual report, dated 25 May 2023, the NHRC stated:

‘The Commission collaborated with Centre for Population Initiatives (CPHI) in training law enforcement officers on Enhancing Protection for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersexual (LGBTQI) + Communities: sensitizing State and Local security outfits on vulnerable population and ensuring that their rights are protected. It was held at Enugu on 16 to 19 March, 2022. There was a follow-up training on 16 June, 2022 in Abuja. The objectives of the training are as follows:

²⁰⁹ The Punch, [Group raises alarm over online kidnapping gang](#), 24 April 2024

²¹⁰ The Punch, [Group raises alarm over online kidnapping gang](#), 24 April 2024

²¹¹ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians using apps like Grindr caught in dating traps](#), updated 29 April 2024

²¹² Lawyers for Lawyers, [Over Lawyers for Lawyers](#), no date

²¹³ Lawyers for Lawyers, [Defying the Odds: Lawyer Battling discriminatory ...](#), 5 November 2024

²¹⁴ NHRC, [Overview](#), no date

‘a. To improve LGBTQI+ individual understanding of their human rights and availability of services that protects such rights.

‘b. To reduce human rights violations such as arbitrary arrest, unlawful detention, ill-treatment and extortion.’²¹⁵

10.6.2 TIERs, in an entry on its website dated 2024, reported:

‘On the 13th of December 2024, The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs), in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), successfully hosted the 10th Annual Human Rights, Sexuality, and the Law Symposium in Abuja at the NHRC headquarters. This landmark event, held in commemoration of International Human Rights Day, provided a crucial platform to address the realities of human rights violations experienced by marginalised groups and vulnerable key populations across Nigeria.’²¹⁶

10.6.3 In relation to intersex people, Intersex Nigeria, in a report dated October 2024 (Intersex Nigeria visibility report 2024), observed:

‘The recognition and promotion of the right of intersex persons fall under the mandate of NHRC, especially through its complaints and other protective mechanisms. Unfortunately, intersex persons in Nigeria have not been positioned to fully employ this human rights mechanism. While the NHRC is aware of the stigma, discrimination and human rights violations faced by intersex persons in Nigeria, the mechanism has not made any stride in the specific protection of the rights of intersex persons. The key reasons highlighted include the failure on the part of affected persons to make individual reports of discrimination, violence, and stigmatization to the NHRC.

‘The Commission recognizes IGM [intersex genital mutilation], the right to education, and the right to privacy, access to healthcare and freedom from discrimination as some of the most common human rights violations against Intersex persons. However, there are legal gaps. While identifying the gaps in the current legislative framework for the protection of intersex persons in Nigeria, the NHRC affirms that there are no intersex persons-specific regulations, policies, or guidelines and this constitutes a challenge in the protection and promotion of human rights of intersex persons.’²¹⁷

10.6.4 Regarding other oversight bodies, the Context article 2025 reported:

‘An official at the Police Public Complaints Committee (PPCC), which investigates allegations of police abuse, said few [LGBT+] complainants file the formal petitions required to investigate.

“‘We’ve gotten a few of these complaints in the past about people claiming they were extorted from and harassed by the police because they thought they were gay or dressed in a certain homosexual way,” said Jude Adedeji of the PPCC.

‘He acknowledged that the risk of repercussions likely deterred victims.

“‘It’s basically fear of stigmatisation or fear of getting outed in the course of the investigation,” Adedeji said. “We do thorough investigations, and some Nigerians have attested to (abuses and) have gotten justice after they

²¹⁵ NHRC, [2022 Annual Report](#) (page 31), 25 May 2023

²¹⁶ TIERs, [TIERS IN 2024](#), 2024

²¹⁷ Intersex Nigeria, [Visibility, Inclusion and Recognition of Intersex ...](#) (page 7), October 2024

submitted their case to us.”²¹⁸

- 10.6.5 The same article referred to a complaints unit at the Delta state police. It quoted a complaints unit official as saying that the unit had received no reports of police demanding bribes from LGBTQ+ people²¹⁹.
- 10.6.6 Regarding pretrial parades of suspects, Human Rights Watch, in an article dated 30 August 2023, reported that although the Federal High Court found in 2022 that such parades were unconstitutional, Delta state police livestreamed mass arrests at a purported gay wedding on the force’s official Facebook page. The article commented that police continued to parade suspects ‘with total impunity’²²⁰.
- 10.6.7 For more information on:
- mass arrests, see [Arrests, detention and treatment by the security forces](#)
 - oversight mechanisms, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Actors of protection](#)

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11. Societal attitudes and treatment

11.1 Public opinion

- 11.1.1 Sogunro 2022 commented: ‘The debate on sexual orientation in the Nigerian political context has always been initiated and concluded by politicians and religious leaders whereas issues of the economy, public corruption and security are often the content of citizen protests and debates. Sexual orientation rarely forms content of public concern until political or religious influence triggers it as a distraction from more problematic areas.’²²¹
- 11.1.2 Analytics firm Gallup conducted a global survey in 2022, published in June 2023, in which respondents were asked: ‘Is the city or area where you live a good place or not a good place to live for gay or lesbian people?’ In Nigeria, where 1,000 face-to-face interviews were conducted between 21 September and 16 October 2022, 5% of respondents selected ‘Good place’²²². For the full methodology, see [Country Data Set Details](#)²²³.
- 11.1.3 Afrobarometer, a pan-African, non-partisan research network²²⁴, in their ‘Nigeria Round 9 summary of results’, published 26 August 2022, based on a survey of 1,600 adult Nigerians conducted between 5 and 31 March 2022²²⁵, reported that when asked how they would feel about having ‘homosexuals’ as neighbours, their responses were as follows:
- strongly dislike: 77.1%
 - somewhat dislike: 8.1%
 - would not care: 6.8%

²¹⁸ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians recount police abuses under 'weaponised' law](#), 3 March 2025

²¹⁹ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians recount police abuses under 'weaponised' law](#), 3 March 2025

²²⁰ HRW, [Nigerian Police Arrest Dozens for Alleged Gay Wedding](#), 30 August 2023

²²¹ Sogunro, A, PULP, [Queer lawfare in Africa ...](#) (Towards the growth ..., page 228), 2022

²²² Gallup, [Majority Worldwide Now Say Their Area Is Good for Gay People](#), 21 June 2023

²²³ Gallup, [Country Data Set Details](#), no date

²²⁴ Afrobarometer, [What we do](#), no date

²²⁵ Afrobarometer, [Nigeria Round 9 summary of results](#), 22 August 2022

- somewhat like: 3.4%
 - strongly like: 3.3%
 - refused: 0.6%
 - don't know: 0.7%²²⁶
- 11.1.4 Pew Research Center, a US-based non-profit, non-partisan 'fact tank'²²⁷, in an article dated 27 November 2023, reported the results of surveys in 32 countries on attitudes to same-sex marriage. In a survey of 1,050 Nigerian adults conducted between 27 March and 23 April 2023²²⁸, 92% of respondents said they strongly opposed same-sex marriage, while 5% responded that they somewhat opposed it²²⁹. It observed that opposition to same-sex marriage was almost equal among Christians and Muslims, at 97% and 98%, respectively²³⁰. Support for same-sex marriage stood at 2%, the lowest figure among the countries surveyed²³¹.
- 11.1.5 The TIERs 'Social Perception Survey on LGBTQI+ Report' (TIERs social survey report 2024), dated December 2024, was based on a survey of 1,500 Nigerian adults conducted for TIERs by polling company NOIPolls in October 2024²³². It reported that when asked whether homosexuality is natural, 90% of respondents answered 'No' and 8% answered 'Yes', while the remaining 2% said they were unsure or did not respond²³³.
- 11.1.6 According to the TIERs social survey report 2024, when asked how comfortable they would be having a friend who identified as LGBTQI+, the respondents answered as follows:
- very uncomfortable: 56%
 - uncomfortable: 35%
 - neutral: 4%
 - comfortable: 4%
 - very comfortable: 1%²³⁴
- 11.1.7 The report also stated that when asked how comfortable they would be having a neighbour who identified as LGBTQI+, the respondents answered as follows:
- very uncomfortable: 54%
 - uncomfortable: 35%
 - neutral: 7%
 - comfortable: 5%

²²⁶ Afrobarometer, [Nigeria Round 9 summary of results](#) (page 69), 22 August 2022

²²⁷ Pew Research Center, [About Pew Research Center](#), no date

²²⁸ Pew Research Center, [Country-Specific Methodology](#), no date

²²⁹ Pew Research Center, [Global views of same-sex marriage vary widely](#), 27 November 2023

²³⁰ Pew Research Center, [Global views of same-sex marriage vary widely](#), 27 November 2023

²³¹ Pew Research Center, [Global views of same-sex marriage vary widely](#), 27 November 2023

²³² TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 6), December 2024

²³³ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 10), December 2024

²³⁴ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 13), December 2024

- very comfortable: 1%²³⁵
- 11.1.8 It reported that when asked how comfortable they would be interacting with an acquaintance who identified as LGBTQI+, respondents answered as follows:
- very uncomfortable: 52%
 - uncomfortable: 35%
 - neutral: 35%
 - comfortable: 4%
 - very comfortable: 1%²³⁶
- 11.1.9 The percentage of respondents who stated that they were ‘neutral’, ‘comfortable’ or ‘very comfortable’ having a friend or neighbour who was LGBT+ or interacting with someone who identified as LGBT+ remained consistent across geopolitical zones and age groups. However, people in the north were more likely to be ‘very uncomfortable’ having a friend or neighbour who was LGBT+ or interacting with someone who identified as LGBT+ than those in the south²³⁷.
- 11.1.10 The TIERs social survey report 2024 further stated: ‘... [R]espondents were asked if they support the criminalization of homosexuality in Nigeria. The poll findings showed that 66 percent said yes and the North East zone had more respondents who made this assertion [84%].’²³⁸
- 11.1.11 According to the report, respondents were asked: ‘Do you believe LGBTQI+ persons should have access to the same basic rights (dignity, freedom of speech, housing, health, wages, etc.) as everyone else?’ It reported that 43% responded ‘Yes’, 52% responded ‘No’ and 5% did not answer²³⁹.
- 11.1.12 For information on the survey’s findings on attitudes to LGBT+ family members, see [Family treatment and societal norms](#).
- 11.1.13 Regarding public awareness and understanding of LGBT+ issues, Sogunro 2022 noted: ‘... [A] majority of Nigerians are not aware of – or even interested in – the issues generating these debates [on LGBT+ issues], and even where they support the law, they are not aware of the contents, relying simply on their religious notions of sexuality and popular political rhetoric.’²⁴⁰
- 11.1.14 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated that in an interview in May 2024, Michael A (no surname provided, an LGBT+ rights activist, executive director and founder of an LGBT+ organisation with a focus in eastern Nigeria²⁴¹) commented: ‘[A]llies are vital, and the [existence] of the SSMPA has helped us improve on gaining allies over time. More people see that this is not merely a bedroom situation but a human rights discussion.’²⁴²
- 11.1.15 Regarding bisexual people, the Bisi Alimi Foundation, a charity registered in

²³⁵ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 13), December 2024

²³⁶ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 13), December 2024

²³⁷ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 13), December 2024

²³⁸ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 17), December 2024

²³⁹ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 24), December 2024

²⁴⁰ Sogunro, A, PULP, [Queer lawfare in Africa ...](#) (Towards the growth ..., pages 229-230), 2022

²⁴¹ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 48), 2024

²⁴² CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 55), 2024

England and Wales that ‘aim[s] to work towards a Nigeria where everyone is equal irrespective of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity’²⁴³, in a blog post dated 23 September 2024, observed:

‘In a country where the understanding of sexuality is based on the binary of “gay” and “straight,” bisexual people are often regarded as greedy, promiscuous, confused, unfaithful, or emotionally detached. Bisexual men for example, often face rejection from heterosexual women, who label them as “gay” for being attracted to men. On the other hand, gay men view bisexual men as not being “gay enough.” Similarly, bisexual women are fetishized by heterosexual men, and often perceived as “not gay enough” by lesbians. This bias intensifies when bisexual individuals end up with someone of the opposite sex. Their identities are almost always completely dismissed. These experiences often lead to deep feelings of isolation, forcing some to stay in the closet or conform by “picking a side.”’²⁴⁴

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11.2 Violence and discrimination: general

11.2.1 The TIERs 2024 human rights report stated:

‘LGBTQIA+ people consistently face harassment from passersby, area boys, and neighbourhood vigilante groups who profile and subject them to hate speech, verbal abuse, physical and sexual assault, mob violence, and extortion. Feminine men, masculine women, transgender men and women, and gender non-conforming people are more susceptible to this form of violation from non-state actors.’²⁴⁵ The Oxford Dictionary of African Politics, published online in 2019, explained that ‘area boys’ is ‘[a] term used in Nigeria to describe groups of typically young men who set themselves up as informal security guards ... but often use the control that this gives them to engage in petty criminal activity such as drug dealing and extortion.’²⁴⁶

11.2.2 According to the CHEVS/TIERs report 2024, Kanyinsola B (surname not provided, an LGBTQI+ rights activist and human rights programs officer at TIERs²⁴⁷), also identified ‘area boys’ as being among the perpetrators of attacks on LGBT+ people²⁴⁸. The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 quoted Kanyinsola B as saying: ‘The Nigerian society will have you work tirelessly to be rich because, as a queer person, some areas are not safe for you to stay, and this is a common thing. You cannot [safely] live in places like Şomolu [a densely populated area of Lagos²⁴⁹], where you would always run into [area] boys who will keep beating you up and extort you.’²⁵⁰

11.2.3 Regarding mob violence, TIERs, in their 2024 human rights report, documented 28 instances of mob violence against LGBT+ people during the reporting period December 2023 to August 2024²⁵¹.

11.2.4 Regarding intimate partner violence against LGBT+ people, the TIERs 2024

²⁴³ BAF, [About Us](#), no date

²⁴⁴ BAF, [Celebrating Bisexual Identity and Addressing Bi-Erasure](#), 23 September 2024

²⁴⁵ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 22), 23 January 2025

²⁴⁶ Oxford Dictionary of African Politics, [Area boys](#), 2019

²⁴⁷ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 50), 2024

²⁴⁸ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 57), 2024

²⁴⁹ NaijaSpider, [Area Guide: Shomolu, Lagos](#), 12 July 2024

²⁵⁰ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 58), 2024

²⁵¹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 24), 23 January 2025

human rights report stated that, among other things: ‘... [I]ntimate partners take advantage of ... state-sanctioned ... homophobia and stigma to enact continuous violence against their victims.’²⁵²

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11.3 Violence and discrimination: lesbians and bisexual women

- 11.3.1 The CNN article 2024 observed: ‘When it comes to women, multiple experts told CNN that these [‘kito’] attacks are typically more severe and sexual in nature ...’²⁵³ The article quoted Remi Makinde, interim executive director of TIERs, as saying that bisexual women and lesbians may also be subjected to ‘corrective rape’²⁵⁴.
- 11.3.2 For more information on ‘corrective rape’, see [‘Conversion practices’](#) and [Family treatment and societal norms](#).
- 11.3.3 The Women’s Health and Equal Rights Initiative (WHER), which promotes the rights and wellbeing of lesbian, bisexual and queer women²⁵⁵, in an entry on their website dated 10 December 2024, reported: ‘Gender-based violence (GBV) against lesbians, bisexual, and queer (LBQ) women in Nigeria remains devastatingly pervasive, and yet is rarely spoken about. Orthodox traditions and laws in Nigeria that police queer identities constrain LBQ women to live in silence about the violence and discrimination they experience.’²⁵⁶
- 11.3.4 The TIERs 2024 human rights report observed: ‘... [I]ntimate partner violence is another concern among queer in Nigeria though it often goes unreported due to societal stigma and the lack of safe, supportive resources specifically tailored for queer individuals.’²⁵⁷
- 11.3.5 For more information on societal norms, see [Family treatment and societal norms](#).

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11.4 Violence and discrimination: gay and bisexual men

- 11.4.1 BBC News, in an article dated 15 May 2023, reported on a ‘kito’ attack on a gay man called Mohammed, perpetrated by a group of men who beat him, recorded him naked and demanded money from him. The article stated: ‘According to a group of activists who work with the LGBT community in Nigeria, around 15 to 20 people contact them each week with similar stories to Mohammed.’²⁵⁸
- 11.4.2 Queer Majority, ‘a project of the American Institute of Bisexuality, a ... nonprofit organization’²⁵⁹, in an article dated 27 January 2025, reported: ‘In November of 2024, four gay men were beaten and chased out of Benin city in the Nigerian state of Edo by an angry mob. In October, a gay couple from Port Harcourt in Rivers State was paraded and assaulted in public,

²⁵² TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 22), 23 January 2025

²⁵³ CNN, [Gay women in Nigeria: The dangers of finding love online](#), 29 January 2024

²⁵⁴ CNN, [Gay women in Nigeria: The dangers of finding love online](#), 29 January 2024

²⁵⁵ WHER, [WHER](#), no date

²⁵⁶ WHER, [Did you know? Gender-Based Violence \(GBV\) Also Affects LBQ ...](#), 10 December 2024

²⁵⁷ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 34), 23 January 2025

²⁵⁸ BBC News, [The Nigerians lured into a trap and blackmailed for being gay](#), 15 May 2023

²⁵⁹ Queer Majority, [About](#), no date

surrounded by hostile bystanders, simply for being gay.’²⁶⁰

11.4.3 Amoo and others 2024 reported that of the 125 respondents in their survey of gay and bisexual men in Benue state, 31 (24.8%) reported experiencing stigmatisation or discrimination ‘often’ from their community²⁶¹.

11.4.4 For Amoo and others’ findings on other sources of discrimination, see [Family treatment and societal norms](#), [Education](#) and [Employment](#).

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11.5 Violence and discrimination: trans people

11.5.1 The Al Jazeera article 2021 reported: ‘In Nigeria ... little is said about trans identities mostly because there is a misconception that these identities are non-existent. As a result, trans people are often erroneously considered gay; many are exposed to homophobia as a result.’²⁶²

11.5.2 The USSD 2023 human rights report stated: ‘On August 29, a man age 27 physically assaulted a transgender woman, reportedly targeted for her identity, and forced her to transfer money into his bank account.’²⁶³

11.5.3 Minority Africa, in an article dated 4 October 2023 (Minority Africa social media article 2023), reported that when a trans woman chronicled her transition on social media and the posts went viral, ‘she had to flee her home to a different city in Nigeria because the online transphobia began to manifest physically’²⁶⁴. The article did not specify the locations involved or report on the outcome of her relocation.

11.5.4 BBC News, in an article dated 9 August 2024, reported: ‘Nigerian police are investigating the death of a Nigerian transgender TikTokker known as “Abuja Area Mama”. The beaten and bruised body of 33-year-old transgender woman was found along a highway in the capital, Abuja, on Thursday, local media report.

‘Abuja Area Mama had a loyal fan base on social media, where she posted about being transgender and her life as a sex worker ... Last year the TikTokker told of how she had been attacked and feared for her life.’²⁶⁵

11.5.5 Voice of America (VoA) is the largest US international broadcaster and is funded by the US Congress²⁶⁶. In an article dated 9 August 2024, VoA quoted Franklin Sjiogu, founder of Creme de la Creme, a Nigerian support organisation for trans and non-binary people, as saying that in addition to Abuja Area Mama’s death, ‘On Sunday [4 August 2024], one transperson was lynched in Koga state and on Monday [5 August 2024], another transperson was also lynched.’²⁶⁷

11.5.6 Regarding social transitioning, the Al Jazeera article 2021 reported in relation to a trans man who relocated to the United States: ‘Social transitioning is such a dangerous experience in Nigeria,” Tom says,

²⁶⁰ Queer Majority, [Nigeria is Leading LGBT Rights in the Wrong Direction](#), 27 January 2025

²⁶¹ Amoo, OE, and others, JPH, [Societal, Political, and Psychological ...](#) (page 101), January 2024

²⁶² Al Jazeera, [‘I feel invisible’: The challenges of being trans ...](#), 1 November 2021

²⁶³ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

²⁶⁴ Minority Africa, [Pride to Prejudice: The Nigerian queer community's ...](#), 4 October 2023

²⁶⁵ BBC News, [Abuja Area Mama, Nigerian transgender TikTokker, found dead](#), 9 August 2024

²⁶⁶ VoA, [Mission, Firewall and Charter](#), no date

²⁶⁷ VoA, [Fear grips Nigeria's LGBTQ+ community after popular cross-dresser killed](#), 9 August 2024

describing how people would yell at him on the street. “I know they are just words, but it has very real consequences for people like me because those violent words quickly turn into action if left unchallenged.”²⁶⁸

- 11.5.7 For information on treatment of trans people in educational settings, see [Education](#).

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11.6 Violence and discrimination: intersex people

- 11.6.1 Intersex Nigeria, in an advocacy manual (Intersex Nigeria advocacy manual 2024), dated June 2024, reported that ‘socio-cultural beliefs ... contribute to the exclusion and fetishisation of intersex persons, giving rise to sexual violence and other forms of sexual harassment against them.’²⁶⁹
- 11.6.2 According to the Outright intersex article 2024, ‘many intersex people are forced to hide their sex characteristics, realities, and experiences to avoid discrimination.’²⁷⁰
- 11.6.3 The TIERS intersex report 2024 stated that no families with young children receiving care in various hospitals were willing to participate in TIERS’ research ‘despite the interventions of their primary healthcare providers. This is mainly a result of the stigma and discrimination associated with non-conforming genitalia prevalent in Nigeria.’²⁷¹
- 11.6.4 Intersex Nigeria, which has offices in Lagos and Abuja²⁷², observed in their visibility report 2024:

‘Generally, the experience of intersex persons in Nigeria varies and it is largely influenced by their location. Research indicates that living in one of the cosmopolitan cities like Lagos, Abuja or Port Harcourt is socio-economically preferred. Living in Lagos can provide relief from their growing-up experience and the possible trauma of adolescence. It can give intersex people more fulfilment because of the diversity of people, cultures, and beliefs. Intersex persons growing up and living in Northern Nigeria face a different reality.’²⁷³

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11.7 Religious and traditional leaders

- 11.7.1 The Outright International ‘conversion practices’ report 2022 stated that in research conducted by TIERS: ‘All [16] religious leaders interviewed [from Christianity, Islam and the Igbo traditional religion] believed that diverse sexual orientations and gender identities are “disorders and deviation from nature and the order of God/gods.” These beliefs lead to the infliction of practices on LGBTQ individuals to achieve conformity.’²⁷⁴
- 11.7.2 For more information on ‘conversion practices’ initiated or facilitated by religious leaders, see [‘Conversion practices’](#) and [Family treatment and](#)

²⁶⁸ Al Jazeera, [‘I feel invisible’: The challenges of being trans ...](#), 1 November 2021

²⁶⁹ Intersex Nigeria, [Toolkit](#) (Strategy Advocacy Manual, page 25), June 2024

²⁷⁰ Outright International, [Embracing Realities of Sex Development ...](#), 28 October 2024

²⁷¹ TIERS, [An Exploratory Study On Knowledge Practices ...](#) (page 13), 1 November 2024

²⁷² Intersex Nigeria, [Intersex Nigeria: Advocating for Intersex People in Nigeria](#), no date

²⁷³ Intersex Nigeria, [Visibility, Inclusion and Recognition of Intersex ...](#) (page 3), October 2024

²⁷⁴ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 23), 19 July 2022

[societal norms.](#)

- 11.7.3 The UNHRC stakeholders' submissions 2023 reported: 'JS21 stated that religious institutions continued to preach homophobic and transphobic rhetoric and continued to exclude LGBTIQ+ persons from religious communities. In 2021, the Anglican Church in Nigeria issued a statement condemning the LGBTIQ+ community and comparing them to murders [sic].'²⁷⁵
- 11.7.4 Ayo Osisanwo, senior lecturer at the University of Ibadan²⁷⁶, and Matthew Alugbin, in a paper published online on 13 November 2024, observed: '... [C]ertain religious organisations, particularly those wielding significant political influence, actively engage in lobbying efforts against LGBTQ+ rights and protections. These organisations advocate against the enactment of laws such as anti-discrimination measures or the legalisation of same-sex marriage, thereby perpetuating stigma and prejudice within society. Such actions not only hinder progress towards greater acceptance and inclusion but also exacerbate the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Nigeria ... Notably, Pentecostal churches and leaders wield significant influence in shaping public discourse surrounding LGBTQ rights in the country. Many Pentecostal pastors vehemently preach against homosexuality, portraying it as a grave sin and a dire threat to traditional family values. Their sermons not only contribute to the stigmatisation of LGBTQ individuals but also reinforce harmful stereotypes and prejudices within Nigerian communities.'²⁷⁷
- 11.7.5 Privately-owned news outlet²⁷⁸ Vanguard, in an article dated 20 September 2020, stated: 'Archbishop Daniel Okoh, the President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), has urged the nation to persist in resisting the growing pressure to legalize homosexuality.'²⁷⁹
- 11.7.6 The Premium Times, a privately-owned online news platform²⁸⁰, in an article dated 19 February 2024, reported: 'Catholic Bishops in Nigeria have rejected the position of Pope Francis on the blessing of same-sex couples. The Pope had, in December [2023], approved blessings of same-sex couples by Catholic priests.'²⁸¹ It reported that in a speech delivered on behalf of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria in Abuja on 18 February 2024, the conference president, Lucius Ugorji, commented: 'Homosexual acts are of grave depravity which are intrinsically disordered and, above all, contrary to natural law.'²⁸²
- 11.7.7 Privately-owned digital news platform Lagoon News²⁸³, in an article dated 7 August 2024, stated: 'In a powerful and unambiguous address, The Most Revd Henry C. Ndukuba, the Primate of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) reaffirmed the Church's resolute stance against LGBTIQI practices during the opening of the 2024 All Anglican Clergy Conference

²⁷⁵ UNHRC, [Universal Periodic Review](#) (Summary ..., paragraph 36), 10 November 2023

²⁷⁶ ORCID, [Ayo Osisanwo ...](#), no date

²⁷⁷ Osisanwo, A, and Alugbin, M, African Identities, [Pentecostal ...](#) (pages 2-3), 13 November 2024

²⁷⁸ Vanguard, [About Us](#), no date

²⁷⁹ Vanguard, [We'll continue to resist pressure to allow sodomy - CAN President](#), 20 September 2023

²⁸⁰ Premium Times, [About Us](#), no date

²⁸¹ Premium Times, [Same-sex Marriage: Nigeria Catholic Bishops reject ...](#), 19 February 2024

²⁸² Premium Times, [Same-sex Marriage: Nigeria Catholic Bishops reject ...](#), 19 February 2024

²⁸³ Lagoon News, [Home](#), no date

held in Lagos.²⁸⁴

- 11.7.8 In an article dated 5 December 2024, Vanguard reported with reference to the National Prayer Altar, a trans-denominational prayer initiative of Christians from Nigeria and other countries²⁸⁵: ‘No fewer than 60 Nigerian clerics have called for tougher legislation against LGBTQ activities, including expanding the existing 14-year jail term to cover cross-dressing and content that promotes homosexuality. They also declared December 15, 2024, as a “National Day of Confession and Repentance” against what they described as the moral degradation of society caused by LGBTQ practices. The announcement was made during a press conference organized by the National Prayer Altar on Wednesday [4 December 2024], in Abuja.’²⁸⁶
- 11.7.9 Regarding Muslim leaders, the Whistler, a Nigerian privately-owned news outlet²⁸⁷, published an article on 4 July 2024 following an inaccurate report in another newspaper that Nigeria had signed a trade pact that required it to support LGBT+ rights²⁸⁸. The Whistler article stated: ‘The Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) reiterated its stance against same-sex marriage and LGBT rights, stating that the agreement goes against the country’s moral and religious values ... The Abuja Muslim Forum (AMF) also condemned [the signing of the agreement].’²⁸⁹
- 11.7.10 Muslim News Nigeria, a privately-owned news outlet²⁹⁰, in an article dated 21 December 2024, reported: ‘Same-sex marriage has been criminalised in Nigeria and should remain so, Jama’atu Nasril Islam (JNI), the umbrella group for the Muslim community in the country has said ... JNI described the recent promotion and activities of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) in Nigeria as worrisome and a source of concern for every right-thinking person.’²⁹¹
- 11.7.11 The Associated Press news agency, in an article dated 17 December 2024, reported:
- ‘A religious schism has turned deadly in Nigeria, with a church member fatally shot and two young children killed as homes were set ablaze, according to United Methodist News Service. The news service said the reported violence on Sunday stemmed from a schism in the worldwide United Methodist Church over its decision to repeal LGBTQ bans — and the ensuing formation of the new Global Methodist Church by breakaway conservative churches.
- ‘According to the news service, a United Methodist church member was shot and killed in a confrontation between both factions in Taraba, a state in northeast Nigeria. Homes were set ablaze, claiming the lives of two children, ages 2 and 4, of the overseer of a United Methodist school and nursery, the news service said. Another 10 church members were reported injured ...’²⁹²

²⁸⁴ Lagoon News, [Church of Nigeria Reaffirms Stand Against Same-Sex Marriage](#), 7 August 2024

²⁸⁵ Lay Faithful Trust Foundation, [Righteousness Exalts A Nation ...](#), 25 June 2023

²⁸⁶ Vanguard, [60 clerics push for stricter anti-LGBTQ laws](#), 5 December 2024

²⁸⁷ The Whistler, [Ownership/Funding Information](#), no date

²⁸⁸ Daily Trust, [Samoa Agreement: Our apology](#), 4 December 2024

²⁸⁹ The Whistler, [LGBT: Outrage As Nigeria Signs Controversial Samoa Agreement](#), 5 July 2024

²⁹⁰ Muslim News Nigeria, [Home](#), no date

²⁹¹ Muslim News Nigeria, [Don't bring same-sex marriage to Nigeria ...](#), 21 December 2024

²⁹² AP, [Deadly violence in Nigeria linked to breakup ...](#), 17 December 2024

11.7.12 Describing the UMC as ‘an international denomination with a strong U.S. presence’, the article continued: ‘While the UMC, at its general conference in May, lifted its longstanding bans on LGBTQ ordination and same-sex marriage, it also granted local conferences the right to set their own standards. The West Africa Central Conference, which includes Nigeria, restricts marriage to between a man and a woman and instructs its churches to follow national laws on LGBTQ issues, according to the news service.’²⁹³

11.7.13 Regarding ‘conversion practices’, the Outright International ‘conversion practices’ report 2022 stated that as part of its research, TIERS interviewed a total of 16 leaders from Christianity, Islam and the Igbo traditional religion. It reported:

‘Five out of the 16 religious leaders interviewed stated that they did not know anyone whose sexual orientation or gender identity changed through the use of conversion practices. Nine indicated that they knew people whose sexual orientation had changed through these practices. Four of the 16 leaders stated that they had directly administered efforts to alter a person’s sexual orientation either as part of a group or individually. The four further stated that “some stay changed, some go back.” One leader was emphatic about sharing, “I have one who is a living testimony; he is now telling others of the dangers [of homosexuality].” ...

‘The research found these methods implemented by religious leaders and institutions to include prayers, fasting, counseling/talk therapy, exorcism and deliverance, detention and isolation, and beatings, among others. While not all of these practices are physically abusive, in some instances they have lasting and invasive impacts on the victims.’²⁹⁴

11.7.14 For more information on conversion practices, see [Conversion practices](#), [Conversion practices following arrest](#) and [Family treatment and societal norms](#).

11.7.15 Regarding the attitude of traditional leaders, the Punch, in an article dated 9 March 2025, reported:

‘[Traditional leader] The Oluwo of Iwo, Oba Abdulrosheed Akanbi, has commended the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, for ending policies protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning rights ...

‘In an executive order issued immediately after his inauguration as the 48th President of the US, Trump recognized two sexes male and female, maintaining that sexes cannot be changed ... He placed a ban on transgender people from serving in the US military, just as he declared that government funds would not be used to promote gender identity any longer.

‘Commending Trump, Oluwo, in a statement by his Press Secretary, Alli Ibraheem, said the orders would restore the sanctity of humanity and bring sanity to the world’s moral practice.’²⁹⁵

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11.8 Family treatment and societal norms

²⁹³ AP, [Deadly violence in Nigeria linked to breakup ...](#), 17 December 2024

²⁹⁴ Outright International, [Converting Mindsets, Not Our Identities](#), (page 23), 19 July 2022

²⁹⁵ The Punch, [Oluwo lauds Trump on LGTB ban](#), 9 March 2025

- 11.8.1 Amoo and others 2024 stated that of the 125 respondents in their survey of gay and bisexual men in Benue state, 106 (84.8%) responded that their family were aware of their sexual identity, while 19 (15.2%) said that their family were not aware. Those whose families were aware responded as follows when asked how supportive their families were of their sexual identity:
- very supportive: 21 (19.8%)
 - supportive: 51 (48.1%)
 - indifferent: 7 (6.6%)
 - not supportive: 22 (20.8%)
 - not supportive at all: 5 (4.7%)²⁹⁶
- 11.8.2 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated:
- ‘... [W]e asked: “Between 2014 and now, have you had any conflict or issues with your family members based on your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and or sex characteristics? This can include verbal, physical, sexual and other forms of abuse, withdrawing financial support, outing, starvation and other forms of punishment, disownment, eviction from the home, and so on.” ... All respondents answered this question. Thirty-eight people (42.7% of respondents) said they had experienced these issues with family members, and 51 people (57.3%) responded negatively ...’²⁹⁷
- The report also observed that in one case, a 42-year-old gay man had been bailed out of police detention by his father²⁹⁸.
- 11.8.3 The TIERs social survey report 2024 stated: ‘... [R]espondents were asked: how would you feel if a family identified as LGBTQI+? The findings revealed that 92 percent said that they won’t be comfortable with such a family member ... Respondents with no formal education (98 percent) and incomplete primary school (100 percent) have the larger proportion of respondents who said that they won’t be comfortable with a family member that identifies as LGBTQI+.’²⁹⁹
- 11.8.4 The Intersex Nigeria visibility report 2024 stated that of 1,000 respondents to a nationwide survey, 76% ‘expressed willingness to accept an intersex family member.’³⁰⁰
- 11.8.5 The TIERS 2024 human rights report stated: ‘... [F]amily members often violate the rights of their LGBTQIA+ relatives through the invasion of their privacy, forceful evictions, and subjecting them to conversion practices, which could involve starvation, forced confinement, torture, sexual assault or talk therapy.’³⁰¹ It also reported: ‘Families and spouses often subject their queer female relatives to sexual assault intended as a tool of conversion practice to change their sexual orientation ...’³⁰²
- 11.8.6 The CNN article 2024 reported on the case of Rafiat, a lesbian who married

²⁹⁶ Amoo, OE, and others, JPH, [Societal, Political, and Psychological ...](#) (page 101), January 2024

²⁹⁷ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 35), 2024

²⁹⁸ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 36), 2024

²⁹⁹ TIERs, [Social Perception Survey Report 2024](#) (page 16), December 2024

³⁰⁰ Intersex Nigeria, [Visibility, Inclusion and Recognition of Intersex ...](#) (page 21), October 2024

³⁰¹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 23), 23 January 2025

³⁰² TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 22), 23 January 2025

a gay man ‘in an arrangement Rafiat said would allow her to be herself while conforming to societal expectations ... In addition to Rafiat, three other women told CNN that they had entered into marriages as a cover for their sexuality or had children in order to relieve some of the pressure they felt, especially from their mothers.’³⁰³

11.8.7 African Feminism, ‘a pan-African feminists digital platform and collaborative writing project’³⁰⁴, in an article dated 20 January 2025, reported on the ILGA World Conference, held in November 2024 in Cape Town, South Africa. Recounting a panel session that took place ahead of the conference, the article stated: ‘A speaker from Nigeria spoke of the LBQ women, particularly lesbians in their country, opting to marry men for safety and survival. “For queer women in my country, marriage is often a survival strategy as it provides a semblance of safety and social security in a homophobic environment. Plus, marrying a man comes with financial security which a lot of lesbians do not have,” she shared.’³⁰⁵

11.8.8 The TIERs 2024 human rights report stated: ‘The intersection of cultural expectations and legal discrimination creates an environment in which queer women are highly vulnerable ...’³⁰⁶

11.8.9 For information on the impact of societal norms on reporting of GBV against lesbians and bisexual women, see [Violence and discrimination: lesbians and bisexual women](#).

11.8.10 Regarding cross-dressing, Abuja-based Omaplex Law Firm, in an entry on its website dated 30 September 2024, based on various sources, observed:

‘Traditionally, Nigerian society adheres to strict gender roles, where clothing and behaviour are often strictly categorized as either masculine or feminine. Cross-dressing, which involves wearing attire typically associated with the opposite gender, challenges these entrenched norms and can be met with significant social resistance. In some cases, cross-dressing may be viewed as a form of rebellion against societal expectations or as a provocative act, leading to negative public perception and potential social ostracism ...

‘These societal attitudes significantly impact the enforcement of laws related to gender expression. Law enforcement and judicial authorities may interpret and enforce laws through the lens of prevailing social attitudes, potentially leading to inconsistent or discriminatory outcomes. For instance, individuals who cross-dress may find themselves disproportionately targeted by legal actions under charges related to public indecency or disturbances of public order, influenced more by social prejudices than by objective legal standards.’³⁰⁷

11.8.11 The Intersex Nigeria diversities report 2022 noted: ‘Most family members live in denial of the non-binary status of an intersex family member, and will prefer to assign them a preferred binary sex and expect the intersex persons to conform to their gender expectations. In some cases, this has led to family members referring to them as gay when they are attracted to a gender that is

³⁰³ CNN, [Gay women in Nigeria: The dangers of finding love online](#), 29 January 2024

³⁰⁴ African Feminism, [About](#), no date

³⁰⁵ African Feminism, [On the Margins: African Lesbians ...](#), 20 January 2025

³⁰⁶ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 34), 23 January 2025

³⁰⁷ Omaplex, [Gender Expression & Cross-Dressing ...](#), 30 September 2024

not the opposite of the one they have been assigned at home.’³⁰⁸

11.8.12 The Intersex Nigeria advocacy manual 2024 observed: ‘Social and cultural discrimination, exclusion, and violence against intersex persons in Nigeria are deeply rooted in various aspects of the society. Mythical, cultural, and religious beliefs label intersex persons as unnatural and an abomination.’³⁰⁹

11.8.13 The Outright intersex article 2024 stated: ‘In Nigeria, many traditional beliefs view intersex traits as a curse or bad omen. As a result, there is immense pressure to conform to societal gender norms ...

‘Intersex individuals in Nigeria face severe social stigma, often being ostracized by their families and communities. This can lead to feelings of isolation and mental health struggles ...’³¹⁰

11.8.14 In a report published in December 2024, Intersex Nigeria noted:

‘When there is still a strong cultural preference for male children, this bias often leads parents to choose a male identity for intersex children, even when medical evidence may suggest otherwise ... In many parts of Nigeria, parents are often too shy or ashamed to discuss issues related to their child’s genitalia, delaying diagnosis and treatment ...

‘Intersex conditions are sometimes considered a taboo, and people may avoid seeking help out of fear of societal judgment. Some children with ambiguous genitalia may be hidden or even abandoned due to the belief that such conditions are linked to witchcraft or spiritual attacks. There is significant social stigma around intersex individuals ...’³¹¹

11.8.15 For information on:

- Yau Daudu, traditional female-presenting men in Hausa society in northern Nigeria, see [The ‘Yan Daudu’ dilemma: Navigating a pre-Islamic queer identity in the modern world](#)
- customary ‘female husband’ marriage in the Western, South East and South South regions, see [The Woman Who Married a Woman in Igboland](#) and [Legal Implications of Same-Sex Marriage \(Prohibition\) Act, 2013 on Customary ‘Female Husband Marriage’ or ‘Woman-to-Woman Marriage’ in Nigeria](#)
- ‘conversion practices’, including forced marriage, see [‘Conversion practices’](#)

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11.9 Media and social media

11.9.1 The Rustin Times, ‘a media platform passionate about elevating conversations around LGBT+ issues across Africa and the African diaspora’³¹², in an article dated 21 February 2024, noted: ‘Analysing LGBTQ+ representation in Nigerian media reveals a complex interplay of challenges and progress. Despite persistent conservative forces, there is a

³⁰⁸ Intersex Nigeria, [Beyond the Binary ...](#) (page 42), 2022

³⁰⁹ Intersex Nigeria, [Toolkit](#) (Strategy Advocacy Manual, page 25), June 2024

³¹⁰ Outright International, [Embracing Realities of Sex Development ...](#), 28 October 2024

³¹¹ Intersex Nigeria, [Medical practices ...](#) (page 29), December 2024

³¹² Rustin Times, [About Us](#), no date

noticeable shift towards more inclusive narratives.³¹³

- 11.9.2 Freedom House, in their Freedom on the Net report 2024, covering events in 2023, stated: ‘Many LGBT+ internet users report feeling unsafe using their real names online, preferring to engage anonymously ...’³¹⁴ This statement was based on a source dated 2015 and was first included in the Freedom on the Net report 2016³¹⁵. The Freedom on the Net report 2024 also stated: ‘... [O]nline self-censorship is common among LGBT+ individuals’³¹⁶. This statement was based on a source dated 2016 and was first included in the Freedom on the Net report 2019³¹⁷.
- 11.9.3 The Minority Africa social media article 2023 observed: ‘Nine years after the [SSMPA], the queer community in Nigeria continues to grow strong by leveraging a tool as powerful as social media.’ However, it noted: ‘While social media has been a platform for LGBTQ+ Nigerians to create a community and share their experiences, they run the risk of virality which usually comes with a price.’³¹⁸ It gave an example: ‘When Ms. Fola Francis, an openly trans woman living in Nigeria, joined a trend and posted a video of her transition on TikTok, it was for her to be celebrated by her community for her resilience and acceptance of her identity ... Unfortunately, the video went viral and into harmful watchdog accounts in Nigeria, and she had to take it down due to transphobia and physical threats.’³¹⁹
- 11.9.4 The Rustin Times community article 2024 reported:
- ‘In advocating for LGBTQ+ rights in Nigeria, social media has become a fast way to create awareness, safe spaces and community for queer Nigerians where there otherwise isn’t any. Despite its outlined usefulness, there are still a lot of challenges that come with organising on social media platforms. Some of the risks involved include the possibility of having private information leaked and used for unauthorised purposes or moles getting into these groups not to learn, support or be allies but to either aggravate other members, steal information and lie about the activities and conversations being had in the group to others outside the group.’³²⁰
- 11.9.5 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 quoted Olumide Makanjuola of Initiative Sankofa d’Afrique de l’Ouest as saying in an interview: ‘Twitter [now X] became one of the most significant developments for the community because it created a space and platform for the community to [freely] express themselves ... It created that online community, and enabled visibility. More people are standing up firm and living their (queer) lives.’³²¹
- 11.9.6 In a section on increasing visibility through online advocacy, the report also stated:
- ‘In addition, in [LGBTQI+ rights activist] Michael A’s words: “There is more transgender visibility now ... With intersex people, we were not seeing much

³¹³ Rustin Times, [LGBTQ+ Representation in Nigerian Media](#), 21 February 2024

³¹⁴ FH, [Freedom on the Net 2024](#), 16 October 2024

³¹⁵ FH, [Freedom on the Net 2016](#), November 2016

³¹⁶ FH, [Freedom on the Net 2024](#), 16 October 2024

³¹⁷ FH, [Freedom on the Net 2019](#), 4 November 2019

³¹⁸ Minority Africa, [Pride to Prejudice: The Nigerian queer community's ...](#), 4 October 2023

³¹⁹ Minority Africa, [Pride to Prejudice: The Nigerian queer community's ...](#), 4 October 2023

³²⁰ Rustin Times, [Digital Activism and Community Building in Nigeria](#), 10 February 2024

³²¹ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 54), 2024

visibility as even though most people claimed to be working for all LGBTQI+ populations, the focus was on gay and bisexual men, and the LBQTI was not visible. But now, that visibility is happening.

‘ ... Rashidi W shared that: “Social media has helped us blow [the lived experiences and discrimination] into the open. Before the adoption of social media, some issues would not even come to our attention as organisations if they happened in places with no LGBTQ+ organisations serving the needs of people. Information is flowing at a swift rate now.”³²²

- 11.9.7 Regarding misinformation, Human Rights Watch, in their World Report 2025, covering events in 2024, stated: ‘In June, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community in Nigeria faced backlash after a newspaper article falsely suggested that the country had legalized same-sex relationships through an agreement with the European Union (EU).’³²³
- 11.9.8 Referring to the same agreement – a trade pact signed by Nigeria in June 2024 that makes no reference to LGBT+ rights or same-sex relationships³²⁴ – the TIERs 2024 human rights report stated: ‘Technology-facilitated targeting of LGBTQIA+ individuals and organizations ... was heightened this year due to the misinformation around Nigeria’s signing of the SAMOA Agreement and the activities of anti-rights influencers ... Intolerant, misinforming and divisive rhetoric against LGBTQIA+ people by popular online individuals is on the rise, leading to increased harassment and blackmail of LGBTQIA+ people online and offline.’³²⁵
- 11.9.9 The same report stated: ‘The 2024 reporting period was marked by widespread misinformation and targeted harassment of LGBTQIA+ individuals. False narratives about the Samoa Trade Agreement, signed by Nigeria, fuelled hate speech and online abuse. Social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook became arenas for doxing and digital harassment.’³²⁶
- 11.9.10 BBC News, in an article dated 11 July 2024, reported that following the spread of misinformation about the Samoa Agreement: ‘Female Nigerian TikTokers who post pictures of themselves with other women - even if a sister or friend - have also become the target of homophobic abuse with derisive comments condemning their supposed sexual orientation.’³²⁷
- 11.9.11 For information on the targeting of specific civil society organisations following the spread of misinformation about the Samoa Trade Agreement, see [Registration and operation of civil society organisations](#)

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12. Access to services and employment

12.1 Healthcare

- 12.1.1 For general information on healthcare, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Medical treatment and healthcare](#).

³²² CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (page 55), 2024

³²³ HRW, [World Report 2025](#), 16 January 2025

³²⁴ BBC News, [Samoa Agreement: Nigeria-EU deal sparks false claims ...](#), 11 July 2024

³²⁵ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 23), 23 January 2025

³²⁶ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 10), 23 January 2025

³²⁷ BBC News, [Samoa Agreement: Nigeria-EU deal sparks false claims ...](#), 11 July 2024

12.1.2 The USSD 2022 report stated: 'LGBTQI+ persons persistently faced stigma, discrimination, and barriers to accessing basic health care. These included limiting physical access to facilities, challenges communicating with health-care providers, discriminatory or negative attitudes among health-care workers, and higher user fees.'³²⁸ The USSD 2023 report stated: 'LGBTQI+ persons reported discrimination in ... access to healthcare based on their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.'³²⁹ It did not give a reason for the change.

12.1.3 Context, in an article dated 26 July 2023 (Context healthcare article 2023), observed:

'For LGBTQ+ people in Nigeria, where having same-sex relations can incur a jail sentence, a trip to the doctor can be traumatic, deterring many from seeking medical care - especially for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). As well as deterring many LGBTQ+ Nigerians from seeking medical care, widespread homophobia means healthcare professionals lack training on how to deal with health issues affecting the community, rights campaigners said.

"The dynamics for this discrimination sometimes appear from a place of misinformation," said Adeyinka Shittu, a healthcare professional specialising in sexual health issues who has worked for several international aid organisations.

'Without health awareness campaigns, LGBTQ+ people themselves can also be ashamed to seek help in clinics - sometimes turning to potentially dangerous "cures" bought online or from unqualified underground doctors, activists said. Transgender and non-binary people, who identify as neither male nor female, face even greater obstacles, said Matthew Blaise, an activist who founded the Obodo Nigeria rights group.

"Healthcare systems have no provisions for them, like gender-affirming healthcare, or even psychological therapy," said Blaise, who identifies as non-binary.'³³⁰

12.1.4 The article also reported:

'... [P]oor understanding of the community's particular health needs mean even LGBTQ+ people do not know treatment is available, said Ugochukwutuberem Nnamdi, a sexual health activist from eastern Nigeria who campaigns about HIV. "A lot of queer people are not aware that they can treat HIV to an undetectable level," he said, referring to the antiretroviral medicines that can control the virus and prevent onward sexual transmission to other people ...

'Education campaigns would encourage people to overcome their fear of discrimination to seek help and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medication, in turn limiting the risk of the virus's spread, Nnamdi said.

'Rights campaigners say health workers should be offered sensitization programmes and training to help ensure equal healthcare access and eliminate the discrimination LGBTQ+ patients face, including offensive

³²⁸ USSD, [2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 20 March 2023

³²⁹ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

³³⁰ Context, [For LGBTQ+ Nigerians, visiting the doctor can be traumatic](#), 26 July 2023

language.

‘Seeking to build wider understanding of community members’ needs, LGBTQ+ groups have forged links with medical centres that offer gender-affirming care for trans people. Blaise’s organisation fundraised to supply items such as chest binders.’³³¹

12.1.5 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated:

‘We assessed respondents’ experiences in accessing healthcare services in Nigeria from the question: ‘Between 2014 and now, have you experienced any discrimination or violence in getting healthcare services in Nigeria, whether in public or private hospitals, due to your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and or sex characteristics?’ The report stated that ‘27 people (30.3% of respondents) ... said they had experienced discrimination or violence in various ways ranging from attitudinal bias, verbal harassment, denial of access to healthcare services to talk therapy in attempts at conversion practices. In one case, the knowledge that they could experience such discrimination prevented the respondent from visiting any hospital ...

‘... LGBTQI+ individuals who conceal their identities or conform to gender stereotypes may face less discrimination and violence compared to those who are open about their identities. Consequently, this likely influenced the survey finding, where a larger subset of respondents (69.7%) reported not experiencing discrimination in healthcare settings. Additionally, many LGBTQI+ individuals, particularly transgender people, avoid seeking both preventative care and treatment for urgent or life-threatening conditions. This avoidance stems from their experiences and the awareness that supportive and sensitive services for the LGBTQ+ population are scarce among healthcare providers.’³³²

12.1.6 The TIERs 2024 human rights report observed:

‘Many healthcare providers deny services or offer substandard care to LGBTQIA+ individuals due to biases and fear of legal consequences, especially when the individual is perceived to be “violating” societal norms or laws. High rates of HIV among men who have sex with men (MSM) are a particular concern. Fear of persecution or being outed keeps many from accessing testing, treatment, and preventive measures like PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis). Without access to these essential services, we record higher rates of untreated HIV and other infections spread unchecked within these communities ...

‘[H]ealthcare providers may lack the knowledge to provide inclusive HIV care and gender affirming care which prevent effective public health campaigns targeting key populations like MSM and transgender persons. This results in higher HIV transmission rates in the LGBTQIA+ community, as individuals are either not tested or are diagnosed too late. Furthermore, the lack of knowledge and social support for PrEP and HIV care contributes to increased community-wide vulnerability.’³³³

12.1.7 Regarding mpox, Michael Kunnuji, professor in the Department of Sociology,

³³¹ Context, [For LGBTQ+ Nigerians, visiting the doctor can be traumatic](#), 26 July 2023

³³² CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 25 to 27), 2024

³³³ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 35), 23 January 2025

University of Lagos³³⁴, Megan Schmidt-Sane, Akanni Lawanson, Ayodele Jegede, Olufunke Adegoke, Hayley MacGregor and Syed Abbas published an opinion piece on 21 March 2025 on the website of the Institute of Development Studies, which is hosted at the University of Sussex. Referring to research conducted in Nigeria from 1 September 2022 to 1 March 2023³³⁵, they noted:

‘[Gay and bisexual men who have sex with men, GBMSM] who had symptoms of mpox sought care from key population-friendly sexual and reproductive health service facilities (e.g., ‘one stop shops’) which they have come to trust ... If and when they were referred to public health facilities that are meant to be better equipped to treat mpox patients, GBMSM would prefer not to visit these facilities, and those who did complained of stigma. Some of them resorted to self-treatment with antibiotics and herbal remedies ... Nigeria’s homophobic legal and social environment limits or even prevent policymakers and programme implementers from partnering with and centring the GBMSM community in its national response ...’³³⁶

12.1.8 Regarding mental health, the TIERS 2024 human rights report stated: ‘In Nigeria, where mental health support is already limited, the added stigma around LGBTQIA+ identities means that those in need often don’t seek help.’³³⁷

12.1.9 On the undated homepage of their website, TIERS reported that as a certified health service provider they operated a sexual health clinic offering services ‘tailored to marginalized individuals [and] people living with HIV’, among others. It also stated: ‘We provide psychosocial counselling and services to [LGBT+] community members via a one-on-one counselling session and also via our emergency hotlines.’³³⁸

12.1.10 Regarding women, the Hivos article 2023 quoted WISE’s Ulanmo as saying:

‘Our research at WISE found that LBQ women do not get to speak about their physical and mental health because they’re afraid of discrimination if they speak openly. They can’t tell their health provider about their sexual orientation and consequently miss out on tailored treatment.

‘Let’s say a lesbian woman comes in to the doctor’s office to talk about painful periods. She’d prefer a different treatment than birth control pills because she’s not at risk of getting pregnant. Our SRHR [sexual and reproductive health and rights] system should provide affirming and accessible care for all, but we’ve seen doctors suggest having sex with her respective husband to ease menstrual pain instead.

‘I got sick a while ago and went to my doctor’s office. They kept insisting I bring my (presumably male) partner in to be treated as well. They assumed I had an STI [sexually-transmitted infection], which I didn’t. I had to explain I hadn’t been with a man. This discomfort and exclusion can make people avoid getting the care they require.’³³⁹

³³⁴ ResearchGate, [Michael KUNNUJI](#), no date

³³⁵ IDS, [The Multi-Country Mpox Outbreak: Livelihoods, Vulnerability ...](#), no date

³³⁶ Kunnuji, M, and others, IDS, [Learning from an evolving public health ...](#), 21 March 2025

³³⁷ TIERS, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 19), 23 January 2025

³³⁸ TIERS, [Homepage](#), no date

³³⁹ Hivos, [The WISE women of Nigeria](#), 27 July 2023

12.1.11 Regarding trans people, Waimar Tun, research associate with the Population Council in New York³⁴⁰, Julie Pulerwitz, Elizabeth Shoyemi, Anita Fernandez, Adepeju Adeniran, Franklin Ejiogu, Olusegun Sangowawa, Krista Granger, Osasuyi Dirisu and Adebola A Adedimeji, in a paper published on 12 July 2022, reported the findings of interviews and focus group discussions held with trans women, trans men, civil society organisations and healthcare staff in Lagos in March 2021 to determine how stigma influenced trans people's experiences with HIV services. The authors stated:

'Three main findings emerged. First, gender identity disclosure is challenging due to anticipated stigma experienced by transgender persons and fear of legal repercussions. Fear of being turned in to authorities was a major barrier to disclose to providers in facilities not affiliated with a transgender-inclusive clinic. Providers also reported difficulty in eliciting information about the client's gender identity. Second, respondents reported lack of sensitivity among providers about gender identity and conflation of transgender men with lesbian women and transgender women with being gay or men who have sex with men, the latter being more of a common occurrence. Transgender participants also reported feeling disrespected when providers were not sensitive to their pronoun of preference. Third, HIV services that are not transgender-inclusive and gender-affirming can reinforce stigma. Both transgender men and women spoke about experiencing stigma and being refused HIV services, especially in mainstream public health facilities, as opposed to transgender-inclusive CSO [community service organisation] clinics.'³⁴¹

12.1.12 Regarding intersex people, the MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: 'The intersex community experienced discrimination in accessing health care.'³⁴²

12.1.13 The Outright intersex article 2024 reported: 'Intersex individuals face significant challenges in accessing ... health care ... Medical professionals frequently lack the training needed to appropriately care for intersex patients, resulting in harmful treatments.'³⁴³

12.1.14 The TIERs intersex report 2024 stated:

'Most health professionals (88.9%) had heard about the term intersex ... A little above half (54.7%) of the health professionals interviewed had sufficient knowledge on intersex, while 45.3% had a poor understanding of the condition.

'A vast majority of the medical students recruited into the study (84%) had heard of the term intersex, and their most typical source of information was the internet 74%. This source was followed by medical books (59.6%). In assessing medical students' knowledge of "intersex" and its variants, about half of those surveyed (50.4%) had adequate knowledge, while 49.6% had insufficient knowledge on the subject.'³⁴⁴

12.1.15 The TIERs intersex report 2024 also observed: '... [A] vast majority (90.6%) of the [healthcare] respondents report[ed] positive attitudes towards intersex

³⁴⁰ ResearchGate, [Waimar TUN](#), no date

³⁴¹ Tun, W, and others, JIAS, [A qualitative study of how stigma ...](#) (page 21), 5 May 2022

³⁴² MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#), (page 56), 31 January 2023

³⁴³ Outright International, [Embracing Realities of Sex Development ...](#), 28 October 2024

³⁴⁴ TIERs, [An Exploratory Study On Knowledge Practices ...](#) (pages 10-11), 1 November 2024

persons based on the findings of the quantitative research. Respondents in the qualitative survey stated to the contrary – that most healthcare professionals had a poor attitude (discrimination, insensitivity, lack of knowledge and awareness, abuse of rights and autonomy) in dealing with intersex persons.³⁴⁵

12.1.16 The report further stated:

‘The qualitative interviews [with intersex adults and their families] revealed that some respondents understood intersex as a condition in which a person is born with reproductive sexual anatomy that doesn’t seem to fit the typical recognition of being identified as male or female. Interviewees described their sources of information on the conditions as being very limited ... Interviewees also expressed dissatisfaction with the level of knowledge of health professionals on the condition. They reported that many health professionals who were relied on to provide information lacked in-depth knowledge about intersex and its variants, showed a lack of empathy and tended to use them for experiments (without their consent).

‘The experience shared by most respondents was that they grew up with an assigned gender at birth but started manifesting features of a different sex during puberty. Case studies described the discovery period of their condition as challenging and embarrassing. For instance, they felt awkward and confused because their genitals did not fit into the binary male-female anatomies. Many respondents admitted living in denial, becoming more reserved, were depressed, and one case study reported contemplating suicide. Their experiences with healthcare professionals contributed to these experiences.

‘The majority were not satisfied with the care received from the health care providers, which was characterised by the lack of privacy and discriminatory treatment. Case studies also disclosed that doctors consultants arbitrarily used them to make examples for their students or made a public show of their bodies ...³⁴⁶

12.1.17 The Intersex Nigeria visibility report 2024 stated: ‘The surveyed demographic consistently referenced expensive and unaffordable diagnosis. The diagnosis of intersex variations often involves comprehensive genetic and hormone testing, imaging, and consultations with specialists. These procedures can be expensive and are usually not covered by insurance — more importantly, the availability of insurance options is not widespread in Nigeria especially among marginalized communities.³⁴⁷

12.1.18 For information on:

- surgeries on intersex people, see [Surgeries on intersex people](#) and [Sponsored surgeries on intersex people](#)
- attitudes of healthcare professionals to intersex people, see [Violence, intimidation, discrimination and extortion](#)

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³⁴⁵ TIERs, [An Exploratory Study On Knowledge Practices ...](#) (page 31), 1 November 2024

³⁴⁶ TIERs, [An Exploratory Study On Knowledge Practices ...](#) (pages 13-14), 1 November 2024

³⁴⁷ Intersex Nigeria, [Visibility, Inclusion and Recognition of Intersex ...](#) (page 27), October 2024

12.2 Employment

- 12.2.1 According to the USSD 2022 human rights report: ‘LGBTQI+ persons ... faced barriers in obtaining employment ...’ It did not provide details of the scope or nature of the barriers. The USSD 2023 human rights report stated, without providing further information, that LGBT+ people reported discrimination in employment³⁴⁸.
- 12.2.2 The Rustin Times, in an article dated 28 February 2024, reported: ‘Queer youths often face additional hurdles in securing corporate jobs due to discriminatory hiring practices. Homophobia and transphobia remain pervasive in many workplaces, hindering queer individuals from accessing equal opportunities for employment.’³⁴⁹
- 12.2.3 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated:
- ‘In this survey, we asked: “Between 2014 and now, have you experienced any form of discrimination in your employment or business and/or violence or harassment in the workplace based on your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and or sex characteristics? This includes denial of job opportunities, harassment from employers, colleagues and clients, and so on.” ... Twenty-one people (23.6%) said they had been discriminated against in the workplace based on their SOGIESC [Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics] identities, and 68 people (76.4%) said they had not ... Many LGBTQI+ strive to keep their identities hidden [regarding employment] to prevent discrimination and harassment.’³⁵⁰
- 12.2.4 The Intersex Nigeria advocacy manual 2024 reported:
- ‘Research shows that access to employment in Nigeria is challenging for intersex persons in Nigeria due to widespread discrimination and societal stigma surrounding intersex variations. There are no workplace policies and legal protections addressing the rights of intersex individuals as is common in informal economies. As a result, intersex individuals face barriers when seeking employment and experience discrimination during the hiring process or while on the job.
- ‘Discrimination in the workplace against intersex persons in Nigeria takes various forms, including direct rejection during job applications due to physical intersex variations, unequal treatment in terms of job assignments, promotions, or benefits, and even harassment from coworkers or employers. Employers largely hold misconceptions or biases about intersex individuals, leading to exclusion from job opportunities based on their intersex status rather than their qualifications and abilities.’³⁵¹

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12.3 Education

- 12.3.1 The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in their ‘Country of Origin Information Report Nigeria’, dated 31 March 2021, based on various sources, stated that according to one confidential source, ‘[E]ducation is a

³⁴⁸ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

³⁴⁹ Rustin Times, [Navigating the Cost of Living Crisis: The Impact ...](#), 28 February 2024

³⁵⁰ CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 30-31), 2024

³⁵¹ Intersex Nigeria, [Toolkit](#) (Strategy Advocacy Manual, page 25), June 2024

slightly safer environment for LGBTI people than many other places in Nigeria.³⁵² It reported that, according to another confidential source, there were ‘known cases’ of LGBT+ students having been expelled from school because of their sexual orientation³⁵³.

- 12.3.2 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC)’s query response ‘Nigeria: Treatment of individuals with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) and their family members by society and authorities ... (2020–November 2022)’, dated 2 November 2022, stated: ‘According to a country information report on Nigeria by the Netherlands’ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken), one “confidential” source reported that LGBT+ students have been expelled from school due to their sexual orientation, while another noted that education spaces are a “slightly safer environment” (Netherlands Mar. 2021, 71).’³⁵⁴
- 12.3.3 The Rustin Times, in an article dated 10 February 2024 (Rustin Times community article 2024), reported that Alexandra Maduagwu, TIERs’ human rights programme officer, who identifies as a non-binary lesbian, recalled of their experiences in an all-girls’ secondary school: ‘The people who presented masculine were called blokes and there were a lot of rules on what a bloke could do or not do because of how we presented. We were punished regularly by the school authorities because of the assumption that we were lesbians ...’³⁵⁵
- 12.3.4 Fair Planet, ‘a global non-profit social enterprise and solutions media organisation’ that reports on human rights issues, among other things³⁵⁶, in an article dated 6 July 2024, chronicled the experiences of a Nigerian trans woman called Liber. It reported:
- ‘After surviving the taunts of her secondary school classmates, she decided to “find her people” at university. “I was 15 and had just gotten into university. I was ready to explore,” she recalled. “I felt like I was finally in a place where people saw the world as I did and experienced the same things I experienced, so it felt really comforting. I was tired of battling so much.”
- ‘For Liber, being in a university where everyone was free to be themselves and there were no teachers wielding the same authority as secondary school teachers, embracing herself felt natural and unforced ...
- ‘... [T]he relative freedom she [has] encountered at university has its limits. “I never let my guard down, not even in my own room. I am always conscious of my environment,” Liber said.’³⁵⁷
- 12.3.5 LGBTQ Nation, a California-based, privately-owned online news magazine³⁵⁸, in an article dated 12 November 2024 (LGBTQ Nation article 2024), reported: ‘In Nigerian boarding schools, students aged 12 to 18 often gang up on their queer classmates, and beat them up, while school

³⁵² MoFA, [Country of origin information report Nigeria](#) (page 71), 31 March 2021

³⁵³ MoFA, [Country of origin information report Nigeria](#) (page 71), 31 March 2021

³⁵⁴ IRBC, [Responses to Information Requests](#), 2 November 2022

³⁵⁵ Rustin Times, [Digital Activism and Community Building in Nigeria](#), 10 February 2024

³⁵⁶ Fair Planet, [Solutions Journalism for Human Rights and the Environment](#), no date

³⁵⁷ Fair Planet, [Trans in Nigeria: “I never let my guard down”](#), 6 July 2024

³⁵⁸ LGBTQ Nation, [About LGBTQ Nation](#), no date

authorities enable this behavior.’³⁵⁹ It gave an example from 2021 of a student having been expelled from school, together with an unspecified number of other pupils believed to be gay, after his classmates attacked him for writing a love letter to a boy in his class³⁶⁰.

12.3.6 The TIERs 2024 human rights report stated: ‘Lara was discriminated against by lecturers who claimed she had not attended classes or written any exams thus she could not graduate. She had been outed as transgender in her second year and faced harassment and discrimination from lecturers as a result. The lecturers claimed to never have seen her before, despite her having attended all her classes where she faced transphobic microaggressions from the lecturers.’³⁶¹

12.3.7 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated:

‘We asked the question: “Between 2014 and now, have you experienced any discrimination in your education based on your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and or sex characteristics? This includes bullying, verbal abuse, outings, and punishments like physical abuse, suspension, and expulsion.” ... 75.3% of respondents answered “Yes” and 24.7% said “No.” ... The forms of discrimination in educational settings reported in this survey included blackmail and extortion, verbal abuse, bullying, attempts at physical abuse, and outing.’³⁶²

12.3.8 TIERs, in an entry on their website, reported that in 2024: ‘TIERs offered legal counsel to a queer man who faced harassment and threats from a gang member at his school, as well as to a trans woman denied her academic results by her institution despite attending classes.’³⁶³

12.3.9 The Intersex Nigeria diversities report 2022 stated: ‘66% of [the intersex respondents] started experiencing discrimination from school, 24% did not experience discrimination in school, 5% did not experience discrimination because those at school did not know they were intersex, and another 5% wrote that they were bullied in school.’³⁶⁴

12.3.10 Noting that intersex people face ‘significant challenges’ in accessing education, the Outright intersex article 2024 stated: ‘Intersex children in schools often experience bullying, leading many to drop out ...’³⁶⁵ It did not provide further information on this statement.

12.3.11 The Intersex Nigeria visibility report 2024 stated: ‘... [A] majority of the [5] intersex persons interviewed reported that they were either forced to drop out of school or their education was hindered due to negative peer pressure and societal stereotyping ... Furthermore, they reported facing problems in accessing sanitation, including toilets, showers and changing rooms as students, especially in boarding houses and in higher education school hostels.’³⁶⁶

12.3.12 Regarding educational materials, ILGA World, in their Submission to the UN

³⁵⁹ LGBTQ Nation, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians are living at the mercy of mob justice](#), 12 November 2024

³⁶⁰ LGBTQ Nation, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians are living at the mercy of mob justice](#), 12 November 2024

³⁶¹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 30), 23 January 2025

³⁶² CHEVS/TIERs, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 27-28), 2024

³⁶³ TIERs, [TIERs IN 2024](#), 2024

³⁶⁴ Intersex Nigeria, [Beyond the Binary ...](#) (page 42), 2022

³⁶⁵ Outright International, [Embracing Realities of Sex Development ...](#), 28 October 2024

³⁶⁶ Intersex Nigeria, [Visibility, Inclusion and Recognition of Intersex ...](#) (page 25), October 2024

Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, dated 9 February 2024, stated: ‘... [T]he House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution in October 2023, urging the Federal Government to review and censor “immoral” educational materials. The criminalization of distributing materials mentioning terms such as “gay” underscores a worrying inclination to suppress any positive discussions around LGBTI issues within educational settings.’³⁶⁷

- 12.3.13 For more information on the federal resolution on educational materials, see [Government and political leaders](#).

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12.4 Housing

- 12.4.1 According to the USSD 2022 human rights report, LGBT+ people ‘faced barriers in ... securing housing’³⁶⁸. The USSD 2023 human rights report stated that LGBTI people reported discrimination in housing³⁶⁹. The reports did not provide further information on these statements.
- 12.4.2 Amoo and others 2024 stated that of the 125 respondents in their survey of gay and bisexual men in Benue state, 77 (61.6%) reported having experienced being denied housing, while 48 (38.4%) said they had not³⁷⁰.
- 12.4.3 The Los Angeles Blade, ‘Southern California’s LGBTQ News Source’³⁷¹, in an article dated 10 June 2024, stated:
- ‘[Nigeria’s] systemic discrimination [towards queer people] is starkly evident in the housing sector, where visibly queer people face significant barriers and prejudices that deny them the fundamental right to safe and secure housing ...
- ‘... [F]or many LGBTQ+ Nigerians, the search for housing is a journey marked by rejection and prejudice. Landlords and housing agents frequently deny rentals to openly queer people or those they suspect are queer.
- ‘A common experience shared by many queer people is being evicted without notice once their sexual orientation or gender identity becomes known ... This precarious existence forces many into substandard living conditions, or in some cases, into homelessness.’³⁷²
- 12.4.4 The CHEVS/TIERs report 2024 stated:
- ‘In this research, we asked respondents – “Between 2014 and now, have you experienced any form of discrimination in getting housing based on your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and or sex characteristics? This includes denial of renting a house/apartment, forced eviction, harassment from neighbours and landlords, and so on.” ... All respondents answered this question, with 14 people (15.7%) affirming that they had experienced at least one form of SOGIESC-based discrimination in getting housed and 75 people (84.3% of respondents) saying that they had not ... Many instances of eviction arise from the actions of neighbours ...

³⁶⁷ ILGA World, [Submissions ...](#) (expert on SOGI, page 6), 9 February 2024

³⁶⁸ USSD, [2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 20 March 2023

³⁶⁹ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

³⁷⁰ Amoo, OE, and others, JPH, [Societal, Political, and Psychological ...](#) (page 101), January 2024

³⁷¹ Los Angeles Blade, [Los Angeles Blade, LGBTQ News for Los Angeles](#), no date

³⁷² Los Angeles Blade, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians still struggle with housing discrimination ...](#), 10 June 2024

‘While specific actions may not be directly homophobic, adherence to cisheteronormative norms negatively impacts LGBTQI+ people. For instance, Toun [‘a 30-year-old cisgender lesbian woman living in Abuja’] could not get an apartment with her partner as the owners “told us they can only give the house to married couples.”’³⁷³

- 12.4.5 TIERS, in an entry on their website, reported that in 2024: ‘Our advocacy extended to cases of wrongful eviction, such as supporting a queer woman and her son in recovering rent after being attacked by their neighbors and caretaker.’³⁷⁴ It did not provide information on the number of cases of wrongful evictions.

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12.5 Legal representation

- 12.5.1 The Lawyers for Lawyers article 2024 reported that because the SSMPA criminalises LGBT+ advocacy, ‘This makes the work of lawyers an incrementally perilous feat as the carrying out of their professional duties, defence of their clients, may come to be seen as “advocating” for LGBTQIA+ rights and thus criminalised ...’³⁷⁵ Referring to an interview by Lawyers for Lawyers with a lawyer using the pseudonym Mr Stone, the article stated:

‘Mr. Stone expressed the inequality in treatment him and his colleagues representing LGBTQIA+ individuals have been victims of, highlighting how, whilst the preliminary assumption in court is that of a lawyer having the duty to defend all individuals irrespective of their situation, and to do so adequately, when representing individuals with an LGBTQIA+ identity, this basic hypothesis is not respected. Mr. Stone claimed that “when you represent a murderer the court will not believe that you yourself are a murderer, but when you represent a member of the LGBTQIA+ community you will be seen as you yourself being part of that community as well. This will then influence their whole decision and the image they have of you.” Mr. Stone shared how this meant their ability to guarantee a fair trial for their client is overshadowed by these underlying biases; how society’s, and judges’, personal beliefs intrude the courtroom and judgments. Mr. Stone exemplifies this by sharing how legal arguments in court are sometimes centred on discrediting the lawyer. He further shared how this did not only occur in cases concerning gender and sexual identity but also in cases isolated from this plight, when opposing counsel, knowing that the judge and/or audience are for example very religious, used the lawyer’s past work on LGBTQIA+ cases to discredit them. Opposing counsel has often referred to him as the “gay lawyer” in court ...

‘According to Mr. Stone, the difference in treatment of lawyers representing LGBTQIA+ cases does not seem to stop in the courtroom but extends to the police system. Mr. Stone notably shared how this stigmatisation impaired his credibility as a lawyer: “The truth is, if you’re a lawyer representing such cases, you must always be very careful. If the police assumes that you and your client share the same identity, they will threaten you with arrest alongside your client.” ...

³⁷³ CHEVS/TIERS, [Rights Under Arrest](#) (pages 33-34), 2024

³⁷⁴ TIERS, [TIERS IN 2024](#), 2024

³⁷⁵ Lawyers for Lawyers, [Defying the Odds: Lawyer Battling ...](#), 5 November 2024

‘... He describes how he needs to fight cultural perceptions that people have of him ... Given the social stigma in Nigeria, this can lead to dangerous situations, including harassment and threats ...

‘Despite such challenges, a growing number of lawyers are taking up these cases in Nigeria. Mr. Stone shared how he is witnessing some real change within the Nigerian legal community, a growing willingness to take up the defence of these marginalised populations and fighting for the right to justice for all ...’³⁷⁶

12.5.2 The Intersex Nigeria visibility report 2024 stated: ‘Intersex persons and their families are also unable to access ... legal services’³⁷⁷. It did not provide further information on this statement.

12.5.3 According to the undated homepage of the TIERs website, the organisation has in-house lawyers and external lawyers and provides pro-bono legal aid services to those who have experienced human rights violations in all states of the country³⁷⁸.

12.5.4 Minority Watch, in an undated entry on its website, stated:

‘We offer legal representation to LGBTQI+ individuals facing various challenges, such as discrimination, violence, wrongful arrests, and human rights violations based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.

‘Minority Watch also uses strategic litigation and advocacy to bring about legal and policy reforms, working with government institutions, lawmakers, and human rights organizations to repeal discriminatory laws, implement inclusive policies, and develop legal frameworks that protect and empower LGBTQI+ individuals in Nigeria.’³⁷⁹

12.5.5 Lawzana, which maintains an online global database of lawyers, featured an undated listing for Abuja-based A A Abdullahi Law Firm on its website. According to the listing, the firm’s family law services included: ‘Same-Sex & LGBT: Legal representation and advice for family law matters specific to the LGBT community.’³⁸⁰ Another undated Lawzana listing, for Lagos-based Gavel & Grey Legal Practitioners, stated: ‘Same-Sex & LGBT Family Law: Specializing in the unique legal challenges and considerations of same-sex couples and LGBT families.’³⁸¹

12.5.6 WHER, in an entry on its website dated 15 April 2025, stated:

‘The Women’s Health and Equal Rights (WHER) Initiative is inviting applications for its Paralegal Training Program — designed to strengthen grassroots legal and mental health support for the LBQ-GNC [gender non-conforming] community across Nigeria ...

‘This program is more than a training — it’s a pathway to becoming an active agent for change and protection of human rights for lesbian, bisexual, queer women, intersex, transgender, and gender nonconforming persons ... 10 successful candidates who pass the exam will be officially appointed as

³⁷⁶ Lawyers for Lawyers, [Defying the Odds: Lawyer Battling discriminatory ...](#), 5 November 2024

³⁷⁷ Intersex Nigeria, [Visibility, Inclusion and Recognition of Intersex ...](#) (page 5), October 2024

³⁷⁸ TIERs, [Homepage](#), no date

³⁷⁹ Minority Watch, [About Us](#), no date

³⁸⁰ Lawzana, [A A Abdullahi Law Firm](#), no date

³⁸¹ Lawzana, [Gavel & Grey Legal Practitioners](#), no date

WHER Paralegals.³⁸²

12.5.7 For more information on:

- lawyers, see [Response to crimes against LGBT+ people](#)
- general availability of legal services and legal aid, see the Country Policy and Information Note [Nigeria: Actors of protection](#)

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13. Visibility, activism, support and events

For information on visibility and activism on social media platforms, see [Media and social media](#).

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13.1 Registration and operation of civil society organisations

13.1.1 Referring to the law in general rather than a specific statute, the USSD 2023 human rights report stated: ‘Rights groups reported the law had a significant chilling effect on free association.’³⁸³ This statement was repeated from the USSD 2022 human rights report³⁸⁴.

13.1.2 The USSD 2023 human rights report also stated that because of laws restricting activities supporting LGBT+ people, ‘Multiple NGOs with objectives of interest to LGBTQI+ persons ... operated legally by pursuing related goals, such as providing legal advice or HIV and AIDS awareness.’³⁸⁵

13.1.3 Similarly, Sogunro 2022 observed: ‘... [A] great number of organisations working on queer rights are registered as sexual and reproductive health organisations ... Only very recently did local queer organisations begin to probe into rights contestation spaces, for example, by documenting violations and reporting these to the National Human Rights Commission or law enforcement authorities. However, considering that the Nigerian legal environment continues to be hostile, much of the rights contestation work is being done at the regional level, before the African Commission on Human Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) ...’³⁸⁶

13.1.4 Intersex Nigeria, which is registered as the Center for Healthcare Development and Youth Empowerment³⁸⁷, in their stakeholder submission for the fourth cycle of the UPR, dated 2023 (Intersex Nigeria UPR submission 2023), reported: ‘... [R]egistering our organisation as Intersex Nigeria was flatly rejected by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), citing “Intersex” is a term against public policy ...’³⁸⁸

13.1.5 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: ‘Like LGBTQI+ people, LGBTQI+ organisations can experience problems with the wider community. For example, it can be difficult to rent an office because the landlord does not want to accommodate an LGBTQI+ organisation.’³⁸⁹

³⁸² WHER, [Call For Applications: WHER Paralegal Training Program](#), 15 April 2025

³⁸³ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 2b), 23 April 2024

³⁸⁴ USSD, [2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 2b), 20 March 2023

³⁸⁵ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (section 6), 23 April 2024

³⁸⁶ Sogunro, A, PULP, [Queer lawfare in Africa ...](#) (Towards the growth ..., page 221), 2022

³⁸⁷ Intersex Nigeria, [Universal Periodic Review Fourth Cycle – Nigeria ...](#) (page 1), 2023

³⁸⁸ Intersex Nigeria, [Universal Periodic Review Fourth Cycle – Nigeria ...](#) (page 2), 2023

³⁸⁹ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#), (page 57), 31 January 2023

- 13.1.6 For information on the law requiring landlords to screen new tenants, see [Other legislation](#).
- 13.1.7 The TIERs 2024 human rights report stated:
 ‘Several organizations, including TIERs, HAHAI [Hope Alive Health Awareness Initiative], AIHI [Achievers Improved Health Initiative], Heartland Alliance, Education as a Vaccine, WISE and INCREASE [International Centre for Sexual Reproductive Rights] were doxed [had their personal identifying information maliciously published online³⁹⁰], harassed, targeted, and threatened for daring to work toward the advancement [of] human rights and health of LGBTQIA individuals in Nigeria. Northern-based organizations were traced to their offices by groups instigated by online hate speech and misinformation, which led them to shut down operations and go into hiding.’³⁹¹
- 13.1.8 The Kano Times, a Nigerian privately-owned online newspaper³⁹², in an article dated 8 July 2024, reported:
 ‘The Women Initiative for Sustainable Empowerment and Equality (WISE), an NGO promoting LGBT rights in Kano, has abruptly left the state following Governor Yusuf’s order to crack down on their activities, according to a source close to the group who spoke to Prime Time News on condition of anonymity ...
 ‘The governor’s directive came after a report by Kano Times about WISE allegedly promoting same-sex marriage.
 ‘Another source close to WISE revealed that the group had been targeting young people, especially girls, and that some pictures showed them distributing reading materials to public schools under the guise of promoting gender equality, but secretly advocating for LGBT rights.’³⁹³

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13.2 Organisations providing support to the LGBT+ community

- 13.2.1 The MoFA Nigeria COI report stated with reference to advocacy organisations: ‘As during the previous reporting periods, these organisations provided legal support and health care services to LGBTQI+ people. They also investigated human rights violations, provided information about homosexuality to non-LGBTQI+ communities, provided safety training to LGBTQI+ people, managed LGBTQI+ media platforms, provided psychosocial support to LGBTQI+ people and mediated between LGBTQI+ people and their families.’³⁹⁴
- 13.2.2 The TIERs 2024 human rights report stated: ‘Organisations like the Initiative for Gender Equality and Sexual Reproductive Health (IGE-SRH) are working to advocate for LBQTI+ rights and provide much-needed safe spaces and counselling services. However, these services are limited and often struggle against pervasive societal and legal challenges.’³⁹⁵

³⁹⁰ UK Government Security, [Doxing](#), no date

³⁹¹ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 23), 23 January 2025

³⁹² Kano Times, [About Us](#), no date

³⁹³ Kano Times, [WISE Leaves Kano Amidst Governor's Directive ...](#), 8 July 2024

³⁹⁴ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report ...](#), (page 57), 31 January 2023

³⁹⁵ TIERs, [2024 Human Rights Violation Report](#) (page 34), 23 January 2025

13.2.3 Below is a selection of organisations that support the LGBT+ community in Nigeria. It is not intended to be exhaustive:

- the [Care & Dignity Foundation](#), which supports trans women in rural Nigeria
- the [Creme de la Creme House of Fame Foundation](#), which aims to improve the lives of trans people
- the [Women's Health and Equal Rights Initiative](#), which promotes the rights and wellbeing of lesbian, bisexual and queer women
- [Rainbow Alliance Nigeria](#), an LGBT+ network that works to reduce homophobia and promote access to shelter facilities
- [Intersex Nigeria](#), which advocates for intersex people
- [NoStrings Development Initiatives](#), an organisation that promotes the visibility of LGBT+ Nigerians

13.2.4 The Context 'kito' article 2024 stated: 'Nigeria's LGBTQ+ community is fighting back against kito, creating online forums to expose perpetrators and warn others.' It provided 3 examples: Kito Diaries, JP Crime Fighter and Splendid Love³⁹⁶.

13.2.5 For information on:

- TIERs' partner organisations, see pages 54 to 57 of the [TIERs 2024 human rights report](#)
- ILGA World member organisations in Nigeria, see [Member organisations – ILGA World](#)

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13.3 Pride and other events

13.3.1 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: 'According to a source, the number of LGBTQI+ events is increasing, but always behind closed doors for security reasons and because of the risk of being arrested.'³⁹⁷

13.3.2 Similarly, Hivos, in a blog post on its website, dated 26 June 2024, quoted Hivos employee working Nigeria as saying: 'Here in ... Lagos, we almost never have major events. Sometimes Pride is celebrated behind closed doors, but a public Pride is too risky.'³⁹⁸

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13.4 Communities and venues

13.4.1 The MoFA Nigeria COI report 2023 stated: 'In the big cities such as Lagos there are a few cafés, restaurants and hotels where the owners and the clientele have no problem with the presence of LGBTQI+ people.'³⁹⁹

13.4.2 Minority Africa, in an article dated 11 May 2024, reported: '... [T]he underground ballroom scene provides a community for queer Nigerians to discreetly gather to express themselves through dance, fashion and

³⁹⁶ Context, [LGBTQ+ Nigerians using apps like Grindr caught in dating traps](#), 29 April 2024

³⁹⁷ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 58), 31 January 2023

³⁹⁸ Hivos, [Chioma about Pride in Nigeria](#), 26 June 2024

³⁹⁹ MoFA, [General Country of Origin Information Report](#) (page 58), 31 January 2023

language.⁴⁰⁰

13.4.3 BBC News, in an article dated 27 June 2024, stated:

‘The location of the celebratory ball had to be kept a secret. This was a queer event and in Nigeria, anything that is dedicated to embracing this culture is in danger ...

‘The organisers of the Fola Francis Ball – named in honour of a transgender woman who died last year – only released the venue details with just hours to go before it opened. But this did not deter the more than 500 people who turned up in a district close to the thriving waterfront area of Nigeria’s commercial heartland, Lagos.

‘A thumping bassline could be heard through the door and crossing the threshold felt like stepping into an alternative reality. Inside was Lagos’s queer community, the venue, a cloak shielding them from the world outside.’⁴⁰¹

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13.5 LGBT+ representation in culture

13.5.1 Sogunro 2022 observed: ‘... [S]ome queer activists and organisations have started to mainstream their work by intersecting with and engaging other issues including art and literature ...’, among other things⁴⁰².

13.5.2 Minority Africa, in an article dated 1 July 2023 (Minority Africa article 2023), reported: ‘In the last few years, there has been an increase in films, books, and artworks telling the Nigerian queer experience. But despite telling Nigerian stories, they are often unavailable to consume in Nigeria, from films like *Ife*, which was censored in Nigeria, to bookshops not stocking queer books.’⁴⁰³

13.5.3 The Kakaaki Reporters article 2024 commented:

‘The Nigerian film industry is a microcosm of the larger Nigerian society, and filmmakers face immense pressure to adhere to societal norms, which often excludes any positive or neutral representation of LGBTQ+ individuals. Homophobia in Nigeria is not only cultural and religious but also institutional, making it almost impossible for filmmakers to address LGBTQ+ topics without risking backlash, censorship, or even legal consequences. In a nation where public opinion is heavily shaped by religious and cultural values, any film that touches on LGBTQ+ themes risks being condemned or banned. Filmmakers who dare to address such issues are often viewed as promoting “Western values,” a label that has its own stigma in a country proud of its cultural identity. This societal pressure has led to self-censorship within Nollywood, as filmmakers avoid storylines that challenge homophobic norms ...

‘Nollywood’s adherence to traditional values means that many LGBTQ+ narratives are either completely absent or presented negatively, often perpetuating harmful stereotypes. As a result, the industry lags behind in

⁴⁰⁰ Minority Africa, [The glitter and the grit: Inside Nigeria’s queer ballroom subculture](#), 11 May 2024

⁴⁰¹ BBC News, [Nigeria’s underground queer ballroom scene](#), 27 June 2024

⁴⁰² Sogunro, A, PULP, [Queer lawfare in Africa ...](#) (Towards the growth ..., page 230), 2022

⁴⁰³ Minority Africa, [A Wa Nibi: Archiving the Queer Experience ...](#), 1 July 2023

terms of inclusivity, both within the African continent and globally ...

‘The few filmmakers who dare to explore LGBTQ+ themes often do so at great personal and professional risk, facing ostracism from both industry peers and the public ...

‘Ultimately, the future of LGBTQ+ representation in Nollywood will depend on the willingness of filmmakers to challenge the status quo, as well as the evolving attitudes of Nigerian society.’⁴⁰⁴

13.5.4 The Minority Africa article 2023 reported: “I curated A Wa Nibi to give a home to queer arts that are often rejected and sent to Western communities where mostly White people consume them,” says Matthew Blaise, curator of A Wa Nibi, an archival project dedicated to preserving the Nigerian queer experience ... The exhibition, which was held on the 28th and 30th of April [in Lagos], highlighted the lived realities of contemporary queer Africans through photography and experimental visual art ...’⁴⁰⁵

13.5.5 In an article dated 24 January 2024, Minority Africa reported:

‘Queer joy, as a movement, seeks to radically depart from the doom and gloom historically associated with queer media to tell stories that uplift and inspire ... In 2023, Daniel Orubo and Opemipo “Ope” Aikomo, a pair of Nigerian creatives, set out to bring together writers from across Nigeria with a deceptively simple project in mind. Writing realistic stories about queer people that, above all else, simply feel good.

‘The result was a refreshing re-interrogation in eight short stories of the many faces of queer joy in Nigeria. From starstruck lovers reuniting at a book festival in Lagos to a hookup that gradually turns into something more passionate and intimate, *A Feel-Good Book* is a breathtaking celebration of the joy all around that will leave you feeling inspired and enthralled.’⁴⁰⁶

13.5.6 CNN, in an article dated 19 June 2024, reported:

‘Since its inception in 2011, Lagos Fashion Week has been a twice-yearly highlight of the African fashion calendar, a multi-day showcase attracting the continent’s top design houses, big name sponsors, as well as an international audience.

‘... Lagos Fashion Week quickly established itself as an inclusive space for marginalized communities and unconventional brands to be seen and heard. For more than a decade, Nigerian label Orange Culture has staged catwalk shows featuring male models in skirts, makeup, or wearing ribbons down the runway as a way of provoking conversations about how fashion can be used to break down gender norms.

‘Over the past few years however, members of the LGBTQ community in Nigeria say Lagos Fashion Week’s inclusive stance has come under pressure amidst a growing culture of hostility towards non-binary and gay people in the country ...’⁴⁰⁷

13.5.7 Erasing 76 Crimes is a privately-owned news site that ‘focuses on the human toll of dozens of countries’ anti-LGBTI laws and the struggle to repeal

⁴⁰⁴ Kakaaki Reporters, [The Impact of Homophobia On The Nigerian Film Industry](#), 4 October 2024

⁴⁰⁵ Minority Africa, [A Wa Nibi: Archiving the Queer Experience ...](#), 1 July 2023

⁴⁰⁶ Minority Africa, [This Nigerian anthology on queer joy ...](#), 24 January 2024

⁴⁰⁷ CNN, [The Nigerian fashion labels feeling forced to show in private](#), 19 June 2024

them'⁴⁰⁸. In an article dated 6 January 2025, they reported: 'Prina Boo is gaining attention as Nigeria's first androgynous model. By blending masculine and feminine traits, Prina is navigating the modeling industry on their own terms, sparking conversations about gender expression and individuality.'⁴⁰⁹

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⁴⁰⁸ Erasing 76 Crimes, [About - Erasing 76 Crimes](#), no date

⁴⁰⁹ Erasing 76 Crimes, [Nigeria's first androgynous model Prina Boo ...](#), 6 January 2025

Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

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Terms of Reference

The 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Legal context - considering laws that protect and/or discriminate - constitution, criminal, penal and civil codes, Sharia and caselaw - applicable to
 - general anti-discrimination provisions (and inclusion or absence of reference to LGBT+ people)
 - (being) a LGBT+ person
 - same-sex sexual behaviour
 - same-sex couples, including civil union and marriage
 - gender reassignment/transition, and recognition of gender identity of trans persons
 - LGBT+ organisations
 - relevant significant court cases and caselaw

State attitudes and treatment

- statements made by government figures and public officials
 - government policies/programmes that assist or discriminate against LGBT+ people
 - how the law is applied (including discriminatory application non-LGBT+ specific laws). Numbers:
 - arrests and detentions
 - prosecutions, convictions, acquittals
 - restrictions/enforcement of law against LGBT+ organisations
 - other state treatment, such as
 - harassment
 - blackmail
 - extortion
 - bribery
 - corrective therapy
- access to public services
 - education
 - healthcare
 - employment
 - justice
- state protection

- description of security forces and their capabilities, including any specific units with remit to protect LGBT+ people
 - response and assistance provided, including arrests and prosecutions of persecutors, witness protection, assistance in relocation
 - oversight mechanisms and organisations, complaints process, investigations, outcomes and penalties
- geographic, socio-economic or other factors affecting variation in attitudes/treatment
- **Societal attitudes and treatment**
 - public opinion/views/surveys, including anti-LGBT+ movements and public demonstrations
 - prevailing cultural and family attitudes to male/female relationships, family and non-conforming behaviour
 - religious group attitudes, statements and actions
 - media representation, language and discourse
 - treatment by the public, including family members
 - shunning and stigma
 - harassment and violence, including mob attacks and gender-specific forms such as corrective rape
 - accessing accommodation, education, employment and healthcare
 - geographic, socio-economic or other factors affecting variation in attitudes/treatment
- **LGBT+ communities and groups**
 - size and location of LGBT+ population
 - presence, projection and location of openly LGBT+ persons and communities into public life
 - numbers, aims and location of openly LGBT+ communities
 - services, meeting places and events, such as bars, restaurants and Gay Pride
 - operation, activities and restrictions of LGBT+ civil society and other supportive groups or associations, including websites
 - geographic, socio-economic or other factors affecting behaviour of individuals and groups.
- **Freedom of movement**
 - legal freedoms/restrictions, including documentation
 - safety of movement
 - vulnerabilities of different groups

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Version control and feedback

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **4.0**
- valid from **21 June 2025**

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section

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Changes from last version of this note

Updated COI and assessment.

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Feedback to the Home Office

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The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support them in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

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