

# INSIGHT REPORT HIGHLIGHT

Worldwide: Overview of risks for LGBTQ+ individuals

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International SOS security teams across the globe have examined the legal framework and social attitudes that largely shape, in 2021, the risks faced by members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning (and more, LGBTQ+) community.

In this Insight Report Highlight, they provide a global overview of recent trends and notable developments as well as recommendations to manage associated risks.

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*This extract is taken from our detailed Security Insight Report, exclusively available to International SOS premium intelligence subscribers.*

*The full report highlights recent trends and pinpoints notable developments in Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, Europe and the CIS, and the Middle East and North Africa regions.*



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### INTRODUCTION

We cannot emphasise enough that being forewarned is being forearmed. Nothing replaces researching your destination and enquiring about specific conditions in the country or countries you are planning to visit, or reside in, while bearing in mind the distinction between legal framework and social attitudes, which can diverge. A relatively permissive legal framework can induce excessive complacency when caution should, in fact, be exercised due to more conservative social attitudes.

In addition to this, our research shows that, in some locations, the COVID-19 pandemic has created additional difficulties for LGBTQ+ individuals. This has materialised in different ways: from misinformation to challenges raised

for transgender individuals by the enforcement of gender-based lockdowns. Those are new by nature and need to be properly identified, and factored into, any risk assessments.

We have also observed that substantial differences in social attitudes persist between urban centres and rural areas, the latter still tending to be more conservative and less tolerant of LGBTQ+ identities: risks are therefore not monolithic across a country. They can also vary over time, as shown by the anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric that can arise temporarily or periodically as a result of far-right political parties either attaining power or deploying a populist discourse to reach it.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO MANAGERS

**Below are some of our recommendations to manage associated risks to protect the safety and security of your LGBTQ+ employees:**

- Managers should ensure that workforce are briefed on any anti-LGBTQ+ legislation and hostile cultural attitudes at their destination or country of residence. Managers should also encourage them to review our detailed Additional Advice for LGBTQ+ travellers as well as any alerts published by International SOS on significant developments in their country of residence or at their destination.
- LGBTQ+ employees should be made aware that there is a credible risk of harassment or, in rare cases, legal implications if they draw attention to their sexuality in some countries. This risk is heightened for transgender individuals. In those environments, LGBTQ+

individuals should consider avoiding drawing attention to themselves or their profile through public displays of affection, by their dress or the display of accessories that indicate their sexual orientation, by their behaviour, or by expressing opinions on gay rights issues in public.

- Particularly in countries where the risk of being targeted because of their sexual orientation is higher, LGBTQ+ workforce should maintain a low profile at all times and exercise heightened vigilance and awareness of their surroundings, including attention to possible signs of being followed. If employees receive unusual attention or are victims of abusive remarks, they should ignore provocations and leave the area immediately. It is advisable to not stick to a set routine to mitigate the risk of a planned attack.



**The Insight Report series** provides our experts' insights and advice on events or situations which may require our clients' attention due to their potential impact on the risk environment. It covers a variety of themes under Global Insight, Natural Disasters and Climate Insight, Geopolitical Insight, Elections Insight, Crisis Insight, Conflict & Terrorism Insight and Country Profile Insight.

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### Enquiries

**For further information about the assessments or recommendations in this report and/or to learn how we can support your organisation to build a resilient workforce, please contact us via the enquiry form:**

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