

Side Event HRC59: LGBTIQ+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers

During the 59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, ALO co-organized a side event on LGBTIQ+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers, held at the Geneva Graduate Institute in collaboration with the For Displaced People Network (FDPN), the Liminality Research Project, and the Equal Asia Foundation. The event brought together leading experts, researchers, and community-led organizations to highlight the urgent protection needs of LGBTIQ+ displaced people across regions and to discuss the systemic barriers they face throughout the asylum process.

The panel featured Graeme Reid, UN Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), who presented his new report on LGBTIQ+ displaced persons, outlining global trends, risks, and state obligations. Shirin Heidari from the Liminality Project discussed the critical role of research and evidence in advancing protection and shaping inclusive policies, while Renée Dixon (FDPN) and Ryan from Equal Asia emphasized the central role of LGBTIQ+ refugee-led organizations in providing support, driving advocacy, and filling gaps left by traditional humanitarian systems.

The discussion was moderated by Artemis Akbary, Executive Director of ALO, who highlighted the intersection of conflict, displacement, and SOGIESC-based persecution, as well as the need for stronger international cooperation and recognition of queer refugee experiences. The event underscored the importance of centering LGBTIQ+ refugees in global advocacy efforts and advancing policies that ensure safety, dignity, and meaningful inclusion for displaced communities worldwide.