



ISSUE BRIEF

Immigration + LGBTQ Communities in the United States

May 2026



Liberty Hill Foundation sponsored the development of this issue brief.

CALL TO ACTION

The last several years have marked a disturbing uptick in violent rhetoric and actions against immigrant communities across the United States. ICE's occupations of Los Angeles, Minneapolis, and Washington, D.C. in the past year have illustrated the corrosive impact of xenophobia in our communities and the people we love. The forced detention and deportation of children and families, along with the threats of harassment, assault—and even murder—is a constant heartbreak. These realities exacerbate the profound challenges that queer and trans immigrants face. To make matters worse, queer and trans immigrants are often excluded from ongoing public discourse about immigrant justice.

Despite the pain of this moment, the demonization of immigrants, queer and trans people, and people of color is a playbook as old as time. We've been here before - and we've won. This means that the philanthropic sector has a powerful history to draw from and to inform our way forward. This is a time for philanthropy to not back away but move in solidarity with queer and trans immigrant movements across the United States.

Philanthropy has a role to play for people living with these intersecting identities and investing in the transformation of how we understand the opportunities for movement and philanthropic partnership. This is a time for us to think beyond the next grant cycle because building a world where we are all free demands a generational funding approach for our movement ecosystem. It's time our grantmaking reflected this mindset.

The data offered below helps illustrate the realities that queer and trans immigrant communities face in their home countries, as well as here in the U.S. I urge you to use this information as a case making tool to help advance new visions of philanthropy that prioritize grassroots organizations and collective action led by people with lived experience. Queer and trans immigrant movements are pivoting right now—they are not waiting for permission or a strategic refresh to meet the needs of their loved ones and broader communities; they are doing the life-saving work necessary to protect communities on the frontlines. We can do the same.

Shane Murphy Goldsmith

President/CEO

Liberty Hill Foundation

IMMIGRATION + LGBTQ COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

In recent years, the rise of restrictive immigration policies alongside a surge in anti-transgender legislation and anti-trans and anti-immigrant rhetoric from those in power have created a uniquely precarious environment for LGBTQ immigrants in the United States. Additionally, governments in several regions have advanced laws that limit asylum protections, criminalize same-sex relations, or narrow the legal recognition of gender identity, often framing these measures around national security or cultural values, though they are widely recognized as part of an authoritarian playbook. **For LGBTQ immigrants—particularly transgender individuals—these overlapping policies can compound vulnerability, exposing them to heightened risks of violence, discrimination, and inadequate access to healthcare both in their countries of origin and within host nations, as described in this issue brief.** In detention settings, for example, trans individuals may be placed in facilities that do not align with their gender identity, increasing the likelihood of abuse like sexual assault. Additionally, barriers to legal recognition and social services can prevent them from securing stable housing, employment, or medical care. The result is a layered system of exclusion that not only undermines human rights protections but also forces many LGBTQ+ immigrants into cycles of marginalization and invisibility.

Isa Noyola (she/her/ella)

Director, Border Butterflies Project

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LGBTQ Immigrants in the United States

- **As of 2021, there are over 1.2 million LGBTQ immigrants in the United States**, comprising 3% of all immigrants in the country. **Of LGBTQ immigrants in the U.S., 23% are undocumented**, which is just slightly higher than the proportion of all immigrants who are undocumented.¹
 - Of all documented LGBTQ immigrants, roughly 39% are Latinx, 32% are Asian or Pacific Islander, and 6.2% are Black. In contrast, undocumented LGBTQ immigrants are more likely to be Latinx (76%) and less likely to be Asian or Pacific Islander (13%) or Black (2.9%).² Similarly to undocumented immigrants in general, undocumented LGBTQ immigrants are more likely to come from Latin American countries due to geographic proximity and historic migration patterns. For immigrants coming from Central and South American countries, increasing crime, economic downturns, and political persecution are significant drivers of migration to the U.S.³
 - Undocumented LGBTQ immigrants are more often male and younger than all undocumented immigrants.⁴
 - According to a study of undocumented young adults in the San Francisco Bay Area, they faced stigma and concealment due to their lack of status by the State, but they experienced lack of acceptance within their families due to their queerness.⁵
- **The number of same-sex couples where one or both partners are U.S. immigrants has nearly doubled since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Defense of Marriage Act in 2013.** It is estimated that 128,500 same-sex couples in the U.S. include at least one foreign-born partner. Compared to immigrants in different-sex couples, immigrants in same-sex couples were more likely to immigrate from wealthier, more democratic countries, such as Belgium, Australia, and the Netherlands.⁶

(continued on next page)

1 Williams Institute. (2021). *LGBT Adult Immigrants in the United States*. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-immigrants-in-the-us/>

2 Williams Institute. (2021). *LGBT Adult Immigrants in the United States*. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-immigrants-in-the-us/>

3 Hook, J. V. (2025, February 6). *Analysis: Who are the immigrants who come to the U.S.? Here's the data*. PBS News. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/analysis-who-are-the-immigrants-who-come-to-the-u-s-heres-the-data>

4 Williams Institute. (2021). *LGBT Adult Immigrants in the United States*. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-immigrants-in-the-us/>

5 Bogdan, L. (2026). *Undocumented and Queer Emerging Adults*. *Emerging Adulthood*, 14(1), 5–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21676968251383959>

6 Williams Institute. (2021). *LGBT Adult Immigrants in the United States*. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Adult-LGBT-Immigrants-Feb-2021.pdf>; Hoffman, N. & Velasco, K. (2023). *Sexuality, Migration, and LGB Policy: A Portrait of Immigrants in Same-Sex Couples in the United States*. Center for Migration Studies. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/01979183231187623>

- Since Trump's first term beginning in 2017, there has been a sharp rise in anti-immigration legislation and practices, including a travel ban from several predominantly Muslim and African countries, detaining undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers awaiting court proceedings, reversing the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and constructing the border wall between the United States and Mexico. While many of these policies were reversed in 2021, Trump's second term has marked a return to anti-immigration policies.

→ **Since taking office in 2026, the Trump-Vance Administration has systematically attempted to stop or reverse as much immigration as possible through a series of changes to border policies, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) enforcement, changes to visa policies, as well as broader communications efforts to deter potential immigrants.**

Further, the Trump Administration has made significant changes to Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for migrants from countries experiencing conditions that make it unsafe to return or be deported there. Trump's push to terminate TPS for over 1 million individuals has disproportionately impacted Black migrants. Accompanied by homophobic and transphobic legislation, these actions will significantly impact LGBTQ immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.⁷

As of 2021, there are over **1.2 million LGBTQ immigrants in the United States, comprising 3% of all immigrants in the country.**

According to the latest available data, **philanthropic support for the pro-immigrant and refugee movement declined between 2023 and 2024, after an all-time funding high in 2021.**

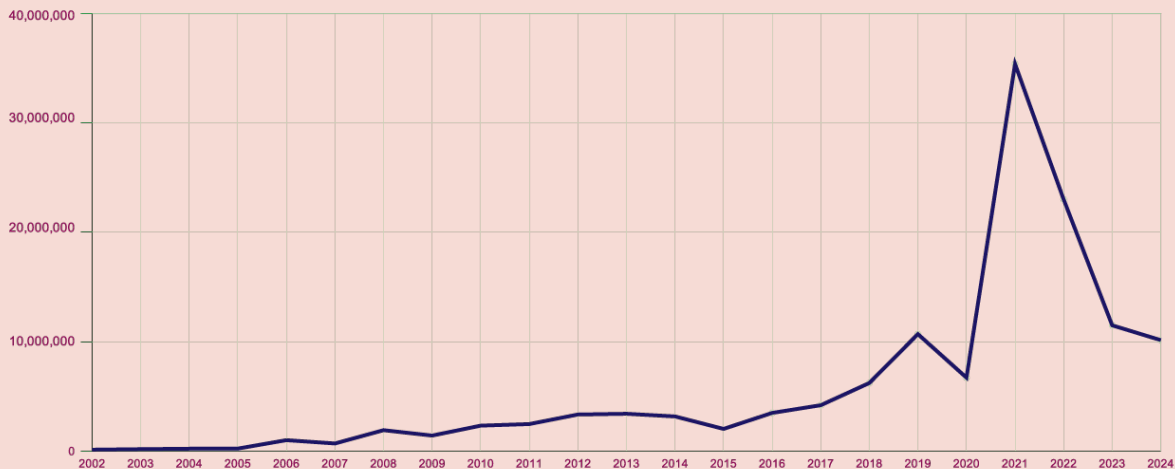
7 Hammond, E. (2025, May 17). *US immigration policies through the years: Timeline*. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/05/17/us/immigration-policies-us-history-timeline>; *The Anti-Immigrant Policies in Trump's Final "Big Beautiful Bill," Explained*. (2025, August 20). NILC. <https://www.nilc.org/resources/the-anti-immigrant-policies-in-trumps-final-big-beautiful-bill-explained/>;

A Guide to the Countries on Trump's Travel Ban List | Council on Foreign Relations. (2026, January 14). <https://www.cfr.org/articles/guide-countries-trumps-travel-ban-list>; Temporary Protected Status (TPS): An Overview. (2026, March 13). American Immigration Council. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/temporary-protected-status-tps-overview/>

LGBTQ + Immigration Philanthropic Landscape

- From 2019-2021, funding for anti-immigrant organizations rose dramatically, complemented by campaigns such as Fox News' anti-LGBTQ and anti-immigrant rhetoric.⁸ This rise in funding can likely be attributed to increased anti-immigration advocacy as a response to the Biden-Harris Administration's policies supporting immigration and refugee resettlement. The majority of organizations that received increased funding lobby, advocate, and influence state legislators to pass anti-immigrant policies. **As a result, in the 2023-2024 legislative session, 365 anti-immigrant legislative proposals were introduced at the state level—152% (or 220) more than had been introduced during the 2021-2022 session.**⁹
- **According to the latest available data, philanthropic support for the pro-immigrant and refugee movement declined during this same period.** In 2021, funding for LGBTQ organizations focused on immigrants and refugees spiked to an all-time high of \$35.4 million, largely due to increased attention to LGBTQ asylum seekers fleeing persecution and the implementation of U.S. anti-immigration policies enacted in 2020.¹⁰ However, while investments have grown incrementally since 2002, the spike in funding that occurred during the tail-end of the Trump-Pence Administration was only temporary and dropped significantly by 2023, as funding has since decreased to \$10.2 million in 2024.¹¹

Funding to LGBTQ Immigrant & Refugee Communities Over Time, 2002-2024



8 Yeeda, S. (2025, December 2). *The Rise of Regressive Philanthropy in the 21st Century*. NCRP. <https://ncrp.org/2025/12/the-rise-of-regressive-philanthropy-in-the-21st-century/>

9 Andrade, M. M., & Serrano, R. (2025). *A New Wave of Hate*. League of United Latin American Citizens. https://lulac.org/a_new_wave_of_hate/

10 Yeeda, S. (2025, December 2). *The Rise of Regressive Philanthropy in the 21st Century*. NCRP. <https://ncrp.org/2025/12/the-rise-of-regressive-philanthropy-in-the-21st-century/>; Nguyen, P. T., Bergdoll, J., Ackerman, J., Osili, U., & Kou, X. (2025). *2025 LGBTQ+ Index*. <https://hdl.handle.net/1805/51229>

11 Throughout this issue brief, all LGBTQ grant data from U.S. foundations are from Funders for LGBTQ Issues' Annual Resource Tracking Reports. For more information, please see: Lawther, A., Luffy, S., et. al. (2025). *2023 Resource Tracking Report: LGBTQ Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations*. Funders for LGBTQ Issues. <https://lgbtfunders.org/research-item/2023-tracking-report/>

From 2022 to 2024, only **1-1.5%** of total funding awarded for LGBTQ communities were awarded each year to address the specific needs of **TGNCNBI immigrants and refugees.**

- In 2023, philanthropic funding for LGBTQ communities and causes from foundations based in the U.S. dropped 22% from the previous year, or nearly \$49 million less than the total funding awarded in 2022.¹²
 - Specific funding for transgender, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary (TGNCNBI) communities declined even further from the year before—by 24% from \$48.2 million in 2022 to \$36.4 million in 2023.¹³
 - **From 2022 to 2024, only 1-1.5% of total funding awarded for LGBTQ communities were awarded each year to address the specific needs of TGNCNBI immigrants and refugees.**¹⁴

LGBTQ Grant Funding for TGNCNBI Immigrants and Refugees, 2022-2024		Funding	# Grants	% of Total LGBTQ \$
	2024	\$ 1,767,455	31	1%
2023	\$ 3,159,206	31	1.5%	
2022	\$ 2,745,968	30	1.1%	

12 For more information, please see: Lawther, A., Luffy, S., et. al. (2025). *2023 Resource Tracking Report: LGBTQ Grant-making by U.S. Foundations. Funders for LGBTQ Issues.* <https://lgbtfunders.org/research-item/2023-tracking-report/>

13 For more information, please see: Lawther, A., Luffy, S., et. al. (2025). *2023 Resource Tracking Report: LGBTQ Grant-making by U.S. Foundations. Funders for LGBTQ Issues.* <https://lgbtfunders.org/research-item/2023-tracking-report/>

14 For more information, please see: Lawther, A., Luffy, S., et. al. (2025). *2023 Resource Tracking Report: LGBTQ Grant-making by U.S. Foundations. Funders for LGBTQ Issues.* <https://lgbtfunders.org/research-item/2023-tracking-report/>

LGBTQ Refugees and Asylum Seekers Globally

- As of 2024, **there are 36.8 million refugees worldwide**. However, the exact number of LGBTQ+ refugees is unknown as this data is not universally collected.¹⁵
- **Currently, 65 countries criminalize same-sex acts either by law or practice. Seven out of the 10 most common countries of origin for refugees and asylum seekers entering the U.S. have such criminalization laws.** As of 2023, only 37 countries formally granted asylum based on discrimination or persecution due to sexual orientation or gender identity, particularly when it would be unsafe to return to their country of origin.¹⁶

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15 Ari Shaw. (2025). Impact of US Refugee Admissions Overhaul on LGBTQI+ Refugees. *Williams Institute*. Retrieved April 8, 2026, from <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/refugee-cap-impact-lgbtqi/>

16 *Criminalisation of consensual same-sex sexual acts | ILGA World Database*. (2026). <https://database.ilga.org/criminalisation-consensual-same-sex-sexual-acts>; United Nations Women. (2023). *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2023*. United Nations. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2023>; Ari Shaw. (2025). Impact of US Refugee Admissions Overhaul on LGBTQI+ Refugees. *Williams Institute*. Retrieved April 8, 2026, from <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/refugee-cap-impact-lgbtqi/>

*Throughout the asylum process, many LGBTQ individuals face **unsafe detention conditions, retraumatizing treatment, and other forms of violence or discrimination.***

- LGBTQ refugees face countless barriers in their country of origin, transit countries, and destination when fleeing persecution. They have often endured violence, harassment, and discrimination in their home countries, vulnerability in transit countries, and difficulty gaining refugee status or claiming asylum when authorities do not recognize persecution based on sexuality or gender identity as a legitimate reason to be granted asylum. Throughout the asylum process, many LGBTQ individuals face unsafe detention conditions, retraumatizing treatment, and other forms of violence or discrimination.¹⁷

17 Ari Shaw. (2025). Impact of US Refugee Admissions Overhaul on LGBTQI+ Refugees. *Williams Institute*. Retrieved April 8, 2026, from <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/refugee-cap-impact-lgbtqi/>; Nora Noralla. (2025, August 13). *Data, Directions, Gaps, and Recommendations: A Review of the Current State of Literature on Queer Forced Displacement | Rainbow Railroad*. <https://www.rainbowrailroad.org/stories/data-directions-gaps-and-recommendations-a-review-of-the-current-state-of-literature-on-queer-forced-displacement>

*LGBTQ+ asylum seekers
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**Legal Petitions for LGBTQ
Immigrants and Asylum
Seekers in the U.S.**

- As of January 2026, ICE's detainee population is estimated to be 73,000. Many detained persons lack adequate legal representation, which is critical to be released or secure relief.¹⁸
- **LGBTQ asylum seekers face additional barriers to being granted asylum in the United States.** Over the last 30 years, LGBTQ asylum claims have been denied due to biases in immigration courts, where authorities decide that a claim of persecution based on sexual orientation or gender identity is not credible, that LGBTQ asylum seekers must be “out” to qualify for asylum, that discrimination does not qualify as persecution, or that their country of origin does not explicitly criminalize identities or behaviors.¹⁹
 - An example of the arbitrary way in which asylum is granted is a recent scenario where three LGBTQ Iranians fled their home country to the U.S. due to rejection and abuse by family members and persecution by Iranian officials. One of them was granted asylum, but the other two had their claims denied and remained detained, despite all three cases sharing several similarities. Refugee resettlement processes are often lengthy, forcing them to claim asylum out of necessity to avoid being deported to unsafe conditions in their home countries.²⁰

18 Mobile Pathways. (2026, January 29). *NCG Habeas Petitions Presentation*. Northern California Grantmakers. <https://ncg.app.box.com/s/zy3vqi2tpo9gzdxirt4afzf46occki85>; Camilo Montoya-Galvez. (2026, January 16). *ICE's detainee population reaches new record high of 73,000, as crackdown widens—CBS News*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ices-detainee-population-record-high-of-73000/>; Westervelt, E. (2026, March 23). *Mapping ICE's expanding footprint, and the communities fighting back*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2026/03/23/g-s1-114107/ices-growing-detention-footprint-and-the-communities-fighting-back>

19 Connie Oxford. (2025). *LGBTQI+ Asylum Cases in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals*. *MDPI*, 6(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/sexes6030039>

20 Rebekah Wolf. (2026, January 30). *LGBTQ Iranians Sought U.S. Asylum, But Now Face Deportation*. *American Immigration Council*. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/iranians-lgbtq-asylum-deported/>

Conditions and Treatment of LGBTQ Immigrants in Detention

- Asylum seekers in the U.S. often face detention upon their arrival or while awaiting their hearings. LGBTQ asylum seekers in particular face violence, assault, and abuse in detention centers.²¹
- Many detained LGBTQ individuals face sexual or physical abuse due to their queer identity, or face homophobic, transphobic, and racist verbal abuse. Many have reported receiving no medical care or insufficient medical care, and have been denied essential medication such as HIV treatment or gender-affirming services such as hormone therapy.²²
- **Transgender people are regularly detained in facilities that do not match their gender identity, making them vulnerable to violence and abuse both from authority figures and other cisgender detainees.** The Trump Administration’s 2025 Executive Order “Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism And Restoring Biological Truth To The Federal Government,” mandates that anyone in federal custody, including immigration detention, be placed in facilities matching their sex assigned at birth.²³
 - Transgender women are regularly held in men’s immigration detention facilities and face sexual assault and harassment by male detainees and guards, when such abuse is often what drove them to leave their home countries. Transgender women often reported that guards refused to protect them when they were abused, and they were often forced to sleep and shower in the same communal areas as male detainees.²⁴

(continued on next page)

21 National Immigrant Justice Center. (2024). “No Human Being Should Be Held There”: The Mistreatment of LGBTQ and HIV-Positive People in U.S. Federal Immigration Jails. <https://immigrantjustice.org/research/report-no-human-being-should-be-held-there-the-mistreatment-of-lgbtq-and-hiv-positive-people-in-u-s-federal-immigration-jails/>

22 National Immigrant Justice Center. (2024). “No Human Being Should Be Held There”: The Mistreatment of LGBTQ and HIV-Positive People in U.S. Federal Immigration Jails. <https://immigrantjustice.org/research/report-no-human-being-should-be-held-there-the-mistreatment-of-lgbtq-and-hiv-positive-people-in-u-s-federal-immigration-jails/>; Marquez-Velarde, G., Miller, G. H., Aldana Marquez, B., Shircliff, J. E., & Suárez, M. I. (2024). Transgender in Detention: Victimization Experiences in Immigration Facilities. *Transgender Health*, 9(6), 591–600. <https://doi.org/10.1089/trgh.2022.0083>

23 National Immigrant Justice Center. (2024). “No Human Being Should Be Held There”: The Mistreatment of LGBTQ and HIV-Positive People in U.S. Federal Immigration Jails. <https://immigrantjustice.org/research/report-no-human-being-should-be-held-there-the-mistreatment-of-lgbtq-and-hiv-positive-people-in-u-s-federal-immigration-jails/>; Marquez-Velarde, G., Miller, G. H., Aldana Marquez, B., Shircliff, J. E., & Suárez, M. I. (2024). Transgender in Detention: Victimization Experiences in Immigration Facilities. *Transgender Health*, 9(6), 591–600. <https://doi.org/10.1089/trgh.2022.0083>; The White House. (2025, January 21). Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism And Restoring Biological Truth To The Federal Government. *The White House*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/>

24 *US: Transgender Women Abused in Immigration Detention* | Human Rights Watch. (2016, March 23). <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/03/23/us-transgender-women-abused-immigration-detention>

Transgender people are regularly detained in facilities that do not match their gender identity, making them vulnerable to violence and abuse both from authority figures and other cisgender detainees.

LGBTQ Immigrants' Access to HIV/AIDS Services, Including PrEP

- **For most detained queer and transgender individuals, conditions in detention centers result in new and increased mental health issues while in detention and afterwards.**²⁵

→ Despite mandates that solitary confinement only be used as a last resort, ICE officials and detention center staff regularly subject queer and transgender individuals to solitary confinement. These practices have been found to often target or punish LGBTQ individuals under the guise of protection, leading to prolonged solitary confinement. The fear of solitary confinement also results in people being scared to report abuses to detention staff.²⁶

- **LGBTQ immigrants face barriers to accessing HIV services, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).** Often, cost and lack of health insurance (particularly for undocumented immigrants) prevent them from accessing PrEP or knowing how to access PrEP assistance programs. Surveys of immigrant Latino men who have sex with men (MSM) found that stigma around homosexuality, communication challenges, and embarrassment at reaching out for help prevented them from accessing PrEP or other HIV services.²⁷

→ Immigrant transgender women face increased barriers to services. Many transgender Latina women faced transphobia in their home countries, resulting in their avoidance of healthcare systems in the U.S. due to fear of mistreatment. Additionally, the fear of deportation, particularly for those protected under DACA, has led to transgender Latina immigrants delaying their transition and avoiding other health services, including HIV prevention.²⁸

25 National Immigrant Justice Center. (2024). "No Human Being Should Be Held There": The Mistreatment of LGBTQ and HIV-Positive People in U.S. Federal Immigration Jails. <https://immigrantjustice.org/research/report-no-human-being-should-be-held-there-the-mistreatment-of-lgbtq-and-hiv-positive-people-in-u-s-federal-immigration-jails/>

26 National Immigrant Justice Center. (2024). "No Human Being Should Be Held There": The Mistreatment of LGBTQ and HIV-Positive People in U.S. Federal Immigration Jails. <https://immigrantjustice.org/research/report-no-human-being-should-be-held-there-the-mistreatment-of-lgbtq-and-hiv-positive-people-in-u-s-federal-immigration-jails/>

27 Brooks, R. A., Nieto, O., Rosenberg-Carlson, E., Morales, K., Üsküp, D. K., Santillan, M., & Inzunza, Z. (2024). Barriers and Facilitators to Accessing PrEP and Other Sexual Health Services Among Immigrant Latino Men Who Have Sex with Men in Los Angeles County. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 53(9), 3673–3685. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-024-02928-z>

28 Aguayo-Romero, R. A., Valera, G., Cooney, E. E., Wirtz, A. L., & Reisner, S. L. (2025). "When Somebody Comes into This Country and You Are Trans on Top of That Is Like You Got... Two Strikes on You": *Intersectional Barriers to PrEP Use Among Latina Transgender Women in the Eastern and Southern United States. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 22(5), 659. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph22050659>

Gaps in research about LGBTQ immigrants and refugees in the U.S.

- **Research on LGBTQ immigrants and refugees in the United States is heavily focused on cisgender queer men and women. While recent years have seen increased attention on transgender individuals in immigration research, there is still a lack of evidence about the experiences of intersex, non-binary, and asexual immigrants and refugees in the U.S.**²⁹
- Black LGBTQ asylum seekers from African and Caribbean countries also face unique challenges navigating the U.S. immigration system while simultaneously dealing with racism and anti-LGBTQ stigma. However, there is minimal research focused on this group as they make up a smaller proportion of LGBTQ immigrants in the U.S.³⁰
- Beginning in 2021, Congress mandated that ICE publish biweekly reports on transgender, intersex, or gender nonconforming individuals held in custody. However, the Trump Administration has omitted the required reporting requirements for transgender detainees, contributing to the growing lack of data about transgender immigrants and refugees in the United States.³¹

Research on the experiences of intersex, non-binary, and asexual immigrants and refugees is lacking.

29 Nora Noralla. (2025, August 13). *Data, Directions, Gaps, and Recommendations: A Review of the Current State of Literature on Queer Forced Displacement | Rainbow Railroad*. <https://www.rainbowrailroad.org/stories/data-directions-gaps-and-recommendations-a-review-of-the-current-state-of-literature-on-queer-forced-displacement>

30 Nnaji, C., Green, A., & Weeks, N. J. (2025). How US Grassroots Organizations Confront the Global Anti-LGBTQ+ Crisis and Support LGBTQ+ Asylum Seekers. *American Journal of Public Health*, 115(4), 466–468. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2024.307949>

31 *ICE is Excluding Data on Transgender People in Detention*. (2018, July 7). Vera Institute of Justice. <https://www.vera.org/news/ice-is-excluding-data-on-transgender-people-in-detention>

RECOMMENDATIONS

For Grantmakers

- **Fund immigrant- and trans-led organizations that are advancing organizational and community safety**, as well as those that are able to conduct policy advocacy related to immigration enforcement activity and the criminalization of Black, brown, immigrant, and low-income communities, more broadly.
 - ▶ Provide resources for **immigrant-led grantees to provide legal services** (including screening, referral, and representation networks), hold Know-Your-Rights trainings, provide mental health support to first responders, and strengthen organizational capacity to respond to urgent needs of this moment.
 - ▶ Fund organizations that are **advocating against ICE and Border Patrol's use of harsh methods** to detain people, such as racial profiling, arrests at sensitive locations, arrests of individuals with no violent histories, collusion with local law enforcement authorities, unnecessary use-of-force, conducting searches without the proper warrant, lack of due process, unsafe conditions of confinement, prolonged detention, deportation without due process, deportation to third countries, etc.
 - ▶ **Invest in grantees that are led by those with lived experience** through leadership pipelines for leaders from trans- and immigrant-led organizations, physical infrastructure improvements, and technology acquisition and training.
 - ▶ Ask grantees how you can support their work with more traditional 501(c)3 partners, as well as other partners including **grassroots organizations, mutual aid networks, bail funds, and 501(c)4 organizations**.
 - ▶ Invest in **cross-state coalitions that include rural, suburban, and urban communities** because they are able to adapt interventions for each context.
 - ▶ Learn about and fund tactics including **community defense, ICE watches, rapid response funds, emergency responders** for people experiencing mental health episodes, etc. These tactics are crucial to increasing community safety.
 - ▶ Fund **independent nonprofit media outlets** that are documenting the lived experiences of those most impacted by oppression, discrimination, and violence.
- Internally, **support your staff members who may be DACA/TPS recipients or that are in mixed status families** to ensure that they have the time, resources, and support necessary to navigate this current period.
- Use the data presented in this issue brief to organize within your institutions and **make strategic funding decisions** to diversify funding sources for grantees, maximize the impact and efficacy of every grant dollar, and help stabilize support for LGBTQ and immigrant communities in the long term.
 - ▶ **Get resources as close to the ground as possible.** If you would like suggestions of community foundations and other intermediary entities through which to move resources, please contact Funders for LGBTQ Issues.

- ▶ **Support LGBTQ communities that are not funded at a level that is in line with their lived realities**, including lesbians and queer women, as well as intersex, two-spirit, bisexual, and asexual people; Black and other people of color, specifically those that are AAPI, Indigenous, or Arab Middle Eastern Muslim South Asian (AMEMSA); those that live in the U.S. territories; queer immigrants and refugees; and sex workers
- ▶ **Increase flexible, general operating support and multi-year giving** to decrease grantees' overhead expenses and demand on their staff capacity, thereby more effectively supporting grantees to achieve the long-term social change they seek to make.
- **Submit your institution's LGBTQ grantmaking data** to Funders for LGBTQ Issues to ensure that your institution's work is reflected in future Resource Tracking Reports. Please see how Funders for LGBTQ Issues uses and protects your data [here](#).
- Sign onto the **Grantmakers United for Trans Communities (GUTC) Pledge** to publicly express your foundation's support for and solidarity with trans communities and identify action steps to build a more trans inclusive workplace.
- For Grantmakers in the U.S. Southeast or with a regional commitment to the South: Learn more about how to more effectively serve LGBTQ communities in the region with support from the **Out in the South Program**.

For LGBTQ-serving Organizations

- Use the latest resource tracking data to inform your organization's programs and fundraising strategies, as well as data presented in this brief to understand the specific needs and experiences of LGBTQ immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the U.S.
- Refer to relevant reports to support your LGBTQ grantmaking and navigating the philanthropic landscape.³²
- Contact research@lgbtfunders.org if you have any questions about this research or would like to discuss ideas for how to use this information to support your work.

For Advocates & Allies

- Share these key findings with your networks, particularly those who may not be familiar with LGBTQ issues, immigration issues, or social justice more broadly.
- Connect with Funders for LGBTQ Issues (@lgbtfunders) on social media to stay informed about the latest updates in LGBTQ philanthropy.

32 Dale, E. (2026). *Funding LGBTQ+ Projects: Navigating the U.S. Philanthropic Landscape*, Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University. <https://www.arcusfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Funding-LGBTQ-Projects-Navigating-the-U.S.-Philanthropic-Landscape.pdf>