

# Preparing to go Abroad:

## Gender + Sexuality

### Questions to consider before going abroad:

The more research you do beforehand, the more prepared, comfortable, and safe you will be!

- **Do I want to openly express my sexual orientation and/or gender identity while abroad?** - Likely will depend on the answers to the other questions.
- Does my right to be LGBTQIA+ in the U.S. conflict with the religious or cultural values and traditions of my host country?
- What are the laws regarding LGBTQIA+ and gender equality in my host country?
- Are there safety considerations that I should be aware of?
- What are gender relations typically like in my host country?
- What is considered typical male and female social behavior in my host culture?
- What is the social perception of members of the LGBTQIA+ community in my host country?
- What roles do transgender people play in my host culture?

### Questions to consider while abroad:

- How will I keep myself safe while I'm abroad? Should I come out to my host family or my roommates?
- What are the cultural norms for dating and friendship in my host country?
- What kinds of LGBTQIA+ resources are there in my host country? What kinds of communities or support networks exist?
- What is the LGBTQIA+ population like in my host country? How large and visible is it? How do they represent themselves?
- What are the terms and definitions used in my host country to talk about LGBTQIA+ issues?

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### Resources:

#### Pre-Program Country Research

- [Equaldex](#): Gives an overview of laws, discrimination, and public opinion relating to sexual orientation and gender
- [DestinationPride.org](#)
- Diversity Abroad's [Culture & Diversity Destination Guide](#)
- Gender Equality by Country: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gender-equality-by-country>

#### Safety & General Info

- [IGLTA](#): Provides free travel resources and information while continuously working to promote equality and safety within LGBTQ+ tourism worldwide.
  - [LGBTQ+ Safety Guide](#)
  - [Travel Guides by Country](#)
  - [Travel Tips for Transgender, Genderqueer and Non-Binary Wanderlusters](#)
- IES Abroad: [LGBTQIA+ & Ally Resources](#) - Links to resources (general and country-specific, also identity-based resources for race and ethnicity) and student stories.
- Transgender Equality: [Knowing Your Rights – Airport Security](#)

### Building Community:

- Before you go: Network with others on your program and others going abroad in general.
- Research your specific region – gay bars, queer community centers, events, etc.
  - Pride Calendar: <https://www.gaypridecalendar.com/>
  - Meetup.com
- Dating apps – keep safety in mind. Catfishing is a legitimate concern in some regions!