



QUEER REFUGEES SUPPORT HAMBURG

ACTION GROUP

»Queer Refugees Support Hamburg« is an open action group founded by queer people in Hamburg primarily to support queer refugees. Other queer immigrants – whether documented or not – are also welcome to contact us. We use “queer” to mean homosexual (lesbian, gay), bisexual, trans* or inter* people, in short, LGBTIQ* persons whose sexual orientation and/or gender identity doesn’t conform to heteronormative precepts. This self-organised group met for the first time in September 2015.

Its members include Caucasians and PoC, different passport-holders and cis- and transgendered individuals, although the majority of activists are white, cisgendered people with German passports. We are committed to opening the group to all queer people.

WHY QUEER REFUGEES?

The need to support LGBTIQ* refugees emerges in a social context in which discrimination of LGBTIQ*s is a part of daily life. Queer refugees are further exposed and subjected to abuse and discrimination of many kinds, whether while fleeing, or on arrival, in their contact with public authorities or translators, as well as in official shelters.

NETWORKING

We rely on various forms of support, cooperation and exchange, and look forward to hearing from existing queer and non-queer groups, action groups, individuals and organisations in Hamburg, throughout the country and abroad. We are especially interested in networking in the areas of legal counselling, medical, psychological and other therapeutic care, social welfare provision, contact with administrative bodies, education, languages (both learning and translation/interpreting) and community building.

EXCHANGE

We want to learn more about the specific situations, experiences, problems and demands of LGBTIQ* refugees and immigrants. Anyone who would like to contact us regarding these or similar topics are more than welcome.

AWARENESS-RAISING

One of the group’s aims is to facilitate refugees’ contact with information centres and professional assistance. In this sense we would like to contribute to making information and assistance LGBTIQ*-sensitive to ensure that it takes into account the particular living conditions and needs of queer people who have just arrived in Hamburg and are usually alone in standing up for their rights.

TRANSLATIONS

When needed we can seek to provide contact with translators and interpreters who are familiar with the terms used when speaking about queer ways of life. For many languages, homo*, inter* and trans*sexuality is only spoken of in offensive terms and it is crucial that translators and interpreters working in refugee and asylum contexts be especially sensitive when speaking with or on behalf of queer refugees. This is particularly important since official recognition of asylum claims based on persecution related to sexual orientation in the country of origin will only be granted when the sexual orientation of the person affected is made explicit in the asylum procedure, preferably right from the start.

We are always interested in hearing from people who would like to translate or interpret.

SOCIAL MEETINGS

We organise social meetings in safe spaces for members of the group and refugees, not just for information and exchange purposes, but also as an introduction to the community, to share food and drink, socialise and relax. The dates of these gatherings are published on our website.

As from 22nd March 2016 we shall also be offering regular open meetings on Tuesdays between 4pm and 7pm in the »Kolleg-Vorraum« at the Centro Sociale in Sternstraße 2. Anyone who wishes to contact us are welcome to drop by. The entrance is a steel door directly opposite the bookstore Cohen+Dobernigg.

TANDEMS

To provide more specific support we offer tandems, where a refugee is paired with a group member and more regular contact is established. Tandem support may involve anything from showing someone the city, going out or lending an ear when needed, to accompanying someone to public offices and information centres or help with filling out forms.

GUEST ROOMS

We can try to organise guest accommodation in emergency situations. We are always happy to hear from people who can offer short-, medium- or long-term LGBTIQ*-friendly accommodation. Unfortunately we are unable to offer any financial remuneration.

ACCOMMODATION

Temporary overnight accommodation in guest rooms is, however, no solution to one basic problem that LGBTIQ* refugees constantly have to deal with: in official communal accommodation queer people are not safe from discrimination and violence. It is one of the group's aims to bring this to the attention of the authorities and lobby for a policy change that will ensure that queer refugees are given safe accommodation.

WEBSITE

www.queer-refugees-support.de

As well as personal networking, our website lists information centres and offers of assistance, which comprise a knowledge base on LGBTIQ*, migration and refugee themes.

We would be grateful if these centres and professionals also linked QRS on their websites.

CONTACT

We can be contacted at: mail@queer-refugees-support.de

Open meetings:

Tuesdays from 4pm to 7pm, »Kolleg-Vorraum,« Centro Sociale, Sternstraße 2, 20357 Hamburg

To publicise our presence, we distribute stickers with our internet address in the proximity of communal refugee shelters.

