# ‘Alarming Rates’ of Sexual Assault and Violence Against LGBTQ+ Asylum Seekers in Northern Ireland



A recent report has revealed that one in four LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in Northern Ireland have been victims of sexual assault while in migrant accommodation. Conducted by the Law Centre NI and Rainbow Refugees NI, the study surveyed current and former LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and was released during Refugee Week.

The report found that 26% of respondents had experienced sexual assault, while 78% reported various forms of abuse or violence in their accommodation. Additionally, 30% had been subjected to physical violence.

The report calls for the establishment of 'safe houses' specifically for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers, similar to existing provisions for single women and individuals with disabilities. Separate housing for trans people already exists in practice.

Liz Griffith from the Migration Justice Project at Law Centre NI expressed optimism that the report's recommendations could lead to significant changes. The organizations aim to collaborate with housing provider Mears and other stakeholders to enhance the safety and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ asylum seekers.

Recommendations also include quickly relocating LGBTQ+ individuals away from abusers and identifying LGBTQ+ asylum seekers during the initial needs assessment.