



# LGBTQIA+ Country Guide

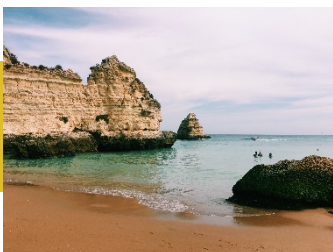
For the LGBTQIA+ community, studying abroad can be an opportunity to learn more about yourself and identity within the global context. Experience a different culture, gain new skills and expand your worldviews. Concepts of identity and the way in which LGBTQIA+ individuals are perceived vary from country to country and within regions of the same country. This guide is a compilation of country-specific information and resources for many locations where Chapman students go abroad. The information includes links to laws, social attitudes, in-country organizations, new sources, and city guides. While the sources cited in this guide are reputable, students are encouraged to do additional research and consider the questions listed on the last page in order to select the right program and location for them.



## Countries and Regions Included in this Guide

Argentina	Hong Kong	Portugal
Australia	Ireland	South Africa
Botswana	Israel	South Korea
Bulgaria	Italy	Spain
Chile	Japan	Sweden
China	Jordan	Taiwan
Costa Rica	Morocco	Thailand
Czech Republic	Netherlands	United Arab Emirates
France	New Zealand	United Kingdom
Germany	Norway	Vietnam
Greece		

- Tips for Electronic Communication
- Questions to consider when selecting a study abroad program
- General World LGBTQIA+ Country Information





## LGBTQIA+ Country Information

### Argentina

- Same-sex marriage as well as same-sex couple adoption are legal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- At the federal level, there is no general law prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation but there are laws against homicide and assaults ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Buenos Aires, the capital, has a relatively welcoming climate towards the LGBT community. Homophobia, especially against gay men, is prevalent in rural areas (Kelly, 2009, as cited by [LGBT Student Guide for Education](#)).
- Legal and social climate significantly vary by region ([LGBT Student Guide for Education](#)).
- 13% somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that being LGBTI should be a crime ([ILGA, 2016](#)).
- About 88% felt they would not feel concerned (8% somewhat uncomfortable; 5% very uncomfortable) if a neighbor were gay or lesbian ([ILGA, 2016](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Argentina](#)

### Australia

- State and social attitude towards the LGBT community is generally more progressive than in the US ([LGBT Student Guide for Education](#)).
- Same sex marriage is legal as of December 2017. Passage came just three weeks after Australians voted in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage ([Pew Forum](#)). Discriminatory treatment of same-sex sexual acts under the criminal law remains a problem across a small number of states in Australia.
- LGBT marriage equality legislation was stalled and the Safe Schools education inclusion program faced opposition by the current Liberal-National Government ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Tolerance levels vary by region, and cities are generally more accepting of the LGBT community than rural areas ([LGBT Student Guide for Education](#)).
- Depending on the destination, LGBT travelers to Australia may even find themselves more comfortable being "out" than they do at home ([LGBT Student Guide for Education](#)).
- Most LGBT organizations are concentrated in the Victoria region between Melbourne and Sydney, site of the [Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras](#), one of the largest LGBT events in the world ([LGBT Student Guide for Education](#)).
- Regardless of the high acceptance levels, students should still research LGBT-relevant current events before traveling. Students may also want to enjoy LGBT celebrations and events while in Australia ([LGBT Student Guide for Education](#)).
- Resources
  - [Gender Centre](#) (Services for the Transgender and Gender Diverse Community)
  - [Gay and Lesbian Tourism Australia](#)
  - [A Definitive Timeline of LGBT+ Rights in Australia](#)
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Australia](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Australia Gay Rights](#)
  - [Sydney Star Observer](#)



## Botswana

- Botswana decriminalized same-sex relationships in a ruling in June 2019 ([CNN.com](#))
- Social Attitudes towards homosexual relationships in Botswana typically leans more progressive and liberal side

## Bulgaria

- Homosexuality is legal in Bulgaria, but gay culture remains discreet and homophobia widespread. Same-sex relationships have no legal recognition. ([Lonely Planet](#)).
- News Sources
  - [BulGayRia](#)
  - [Rainbow Europe](#)

## Chile

- Civil unions for same sex couples was legalized in January 2016 ([Slattery, 2017](#)).
- In January 2017, President Michelle Bachelet opened a public discussion on same-sex marriage as a step toward a same-sex marriage bill. If the bill passes, it will become the sixth country in Latin America where same-sex couples can get married. ([Dittrich, 2017](#))
- Despite movement toward legalization, LGBT youth in Chile feel scared due to anti-LGBT violence ([Brocchetto, 2017](#)).
- There is a law prohibiting discrimination for employment based on sexual orientation ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- In May 2019, the Chamber of Deputies approved a bill for the comprehensive reform to the adoption system in Chile that would enable joint adoption for same-sex couples. The bill must be approved by the House of Senators so that it can take effect ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Resources
  - [Map of LGBT Friendliness in Latin America](#)
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Chile](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Chile](#)

## China

- China doesn't have organizations directly and actively opposed to LGBTQ rights, but the country remains deeply prejudiced against LGBTQ people and relationships. A major challenge that LGBTQ people have is the concern that their identity might be exposed and harm educational and job opportunities. You may not find support for a homosexual or bisexual lifestyle in many study abroad locations outside of more liberal enclaves like Hong Kong, Shanghai, or other coastal cities and may not meet many (openly) gay peers. ([DiversityAbroad.com](#))
- Impacted by this movement, the subject of LGBT rights has become a hot topic in mainland China ([Wu, 2017](#)).
- Over the years, attitudes toward the LGBT community have generally moved from taboo to tolerance ([ILGA, 2019](#)). It depends on the location, however ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- An annual [Shanghai Pride](#) event began in 2009.
- At the political level LGBT rights are still largely ignored ([Speelman, 2013](#)).
- As of April 2010, homosexual relations are legal in China, though there is still no national recognition of same sex partnerships or gay adoption rights ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- There is an absence of non-discrimination laws ([Guilbert, 2015](#)). For example, China's Labor Law discrimination in employment on the basis of ethnicity, religion, and sex is illegal, but it is not against the law to discriminate based on sexual orientation and gender identity ([ILGA, 2019](#).)
- A same-sex couple married overseas became the first in Beijing to be named as each other's legal guardian, a status which can be considered fairly similar to a civil union. More than 10 LGBT couples in other cities (such as



Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu) have gone through similar procedures. However, the guardianship appointment process for same-sex couples is said to be too complex and time-consuming, as well as a sign of the Chinese government's "Three NO's" policy on LGBT issues: "No approval, no disapproval, and no promotion" ([ILGA, 2019](#)).

- The cultural pressure to continue the family line has led many gay men (and presumably lesbians as well) to enter heterosexual marriages, creating a subculture of unhappy men and women trapped in loveless marriages ([Collateral Damage: Neither Comrades nor Spouses, 2010](#); [LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- Resources:
  - [Beijing LGBT Center](#)
    - [Facebook Page](#)
  - [Global Gayz China](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation – China](#)
  - [DiversityAbroad.com – China](#) (Tips for LGBTQ Students)
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: China](#)
  - [Huffington Post: China LGBT Rights](#)
  - [Huffington Post: China Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: China](#)

## Costa Rica

- Same-sex marriage is legal in Costa Rica as of May 2020. Costa Rica is the first country in Central America and sixth country in Latin America to legalize same-sex marriage. ([AP News, 2020](#)).
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- There is general loyalty to the anti-LGBT Catholic Church and *machismo*, both of which breed homophobia ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- The capital, San Jose, is more socially liberal and friendly to the LGBT community ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Costa Rica](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Costa Rica Gay Rights](#)

## Czech Republic

- The legal and social climate in the Czech Republic is relatively LGBT-friendly compared to other parts of Eastern Europe ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- Discrimination in employment, social security and healthcare, education, access to and the supply of goods and services (including housing) on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Same-sex civil unions (but not same-sex adoption) were made legal in 2006 ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- There is an annual August [Prague Pride](#) event that began in 2011 and the long-running [Mezipatra Queer Film Festival](#) in the fall ([Chauvin, 2015](#)).
- Since the majority of the population are non-religious or atheistic, there is little religious opposition against the LGBT community ([Chauvin, 2015](#)).
- Regardless of the high acceptance levels, students should still research LGBT-relevant current events before traveling ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Czech Republic](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Czech Republic](#)



## France

- President Macron, who was elected in April 2017, is an advocate of equal rights for the LGBT community. His campaign manifesto included an entire section devoted to addressing issues the LGBT community faces. ([McCormick, 2017](#))
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation and sexual identity is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Homosexual civil partnerships, marriages, joint adoption, and second parent adoption are legalized ([ILGA, 2019](#)). However, social attitudes toward the LGBT community vary, and the opposing minority is very vocal, especially on social media, when it comes to anti-LGBT sentiments ([Marquis, 2017](#)).
- In 2010, France became the first country in the world to remove transsexualism from the list of mental disorders ([Faure, 2010](#)). Then in 2016, it became legal for transgender individuals to change their names without a sex-change operation, which required extensive medical and psychiatric evaluations ([BBC, 2016](#)). However, they are still required to go to court to recognize their gender change ([BBC, 2016](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: France](#)
  - [Huffington Post: France Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: France](#)

## Germany

- In June 2017, Germany enacted legislation allowing same-sex couples to wed. ([Pew Forum](#))
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Same-sex civil partnerships and second parent adoption rights are recognized at the national level ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Though Germany is considered fairly progressive when it comes to LGBT rights, there is still strong opposition among the population. Areas such as Bavaria that are linked closely to the Catholic Church may tend to be more conservative and less welcoming toward the LGBT community. Many urban areas, such as Berlin, are liberal and welcoming toward the LGBT community. ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#))
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Germany](#)
  - [LGBT Germany](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Germany](#)

## Greece

- 2014: to criminalize the incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence based on sexual orientation. Incitement to violence based on sexual orientation is set forth. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- In employment, discrimination against sexual orientation and gender is prohibited. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- December 2015 confers gender-neutral partnership rights, and limited coparenting provisions. This law does not grant the possibility for same-sex couples to adopt. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- May 2018 - grants same-sex couples the right to foster children, but not to adopt. As reported by local media, the Greek Prime Minister explained that “fostering provides for the return of the child to its natural parents, who must retain contact with the child during its fostering time. It would not be an exaggeration to say that fostering is an act of altruism, solidarity, and service of those who choose it” ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- News Sources:
  - [Greek Greece Reporter \(LGBT tag\)](#)
  - [Pink News: Greece](#)



## Hong Kong

- Hong Kong has a different culture than mainland China. Though there is no legal support, unlike mainland, Hong Kong has a strong and visible LGBTQ community. [This blog](#) is helpful to get a better sense of the culture in Hong Kong.
- The 2017 ‘Policy Agenda’ of the Hong Kong SAR government avoided promising a SOGIE non-discrimination law, promising instead special training of personnel and the drafting of “a charter on non-discrimination of sexual minorities for voluntary adoption by relevant organizations and individuals”. ([ILGA, 2017](#))
- In June 2019, the Court of Final Appeal held that it was discriminatory for the government to bar same-sex partners from spousal benefit.<sup>10</sup> This concluded a four-year legal battle by the plaintiffs, after the High Court’s decision in their favor was overruled by the Court of Appeal in June 2018.<sup>11</sup> In September 2019, the Hong Kong Court of Appeals called for an immediate review of the laws and policies that discriminate against same-sex couples.<sup>12</sup> However, the following month, the Court of First Instance upheld Hong Kong’s ban on same-sex marriage. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).

## Ireland

- Citizens can legally change gender through a simple process that does not require medical documentation. Non-binary individuals are still not legally recognized, however. ([Jackman, July 2017](#)).
- Prime Minister Leo Varadkar took office in June 2017, being the first openly gay head of government in Ireland ([Jackman, July 2017](#)).
- Many colleges have implemented gender-neutral bathrooms ([Jackman, June 2017](#)).
- Discrimination in employment, housing, provision of goods and services, and non-religious educational establishments on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- In 2015, Ireland legalized same-sex marriage on a national level ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Ireland](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Ireland](#)
  - [Irish Central: LGBT](#)

## Israel

- Israel has some of the most advanced LGBTQ rights in the Middle East
- Tel Aviv has hosts Pride parades ([Gay Tel Aviv Guide](#))
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of “sexual tendencies” is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- There is no specific law recognizing marriage but through case law, same-sex cohabitants have rights equivalent to married couples, including joint adoption ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Tel Aviv <https://www.gaytelavivguide.com/>
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Israel](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Israel Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Israel](#)
  - [Keshet UK](#)



## Italy

- Same-sex civil partnership is recognized at a national level, but marriage is not ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Italy's LGBT movement is impacted by the strong presence of the Roman Catholic Church combined with the progressive trends of the European Union ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- Social attitudes toward the LGBT community throughout Italian cities are generally welcoming ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- Rome hosts an annual [Pride festival](#) as well as LGBT-friendly establishments ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Italy](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Italy LGBT Rights](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Italy Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Italy](#)
  - [Italia Mia: Italian Gay News in English](#)

## Japan

- According to Kaneko (2010), as cited by [LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#), fashion trends have brought about general cultural acceptance of more fluid physical expressions of gender. For example, many fashion-forward Japanese heterosexual men have adopted fads such as long hair and skirts and kilts, which has blurred the lines of gender-related stereotypes.
- In March 2017, Japan updated the Basic Policy for the Prevention of Bullying, which protects sexual and gender minority students ([ILGA, 2017](#)).
- Also in March 2017, the first openly transgender man was elected to office. The first openly transgender woman was elected to office back in 2003. ([Rook, 2017](#))
- A study found that over 60% of the 6000 teachers surveyed thought LGBT issues should be included in educational curriculums. Despite this data, the Japanese government decided not to include LGBT issues in near-future curricula, which means it may be another 10 years (2027) before these issues can be taught as part of the curriculum. ([Jackman, 2017](#))
- The above survey results also showed that more than half of LGBT students faced homophobic bullying at school. ([Jackman, 2017](#))
- Although same-sex civil relationships are legal, marriages are not ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)). As of March 2015, Shibuya is the only district in Japan that recognizes same-sex marriage ([Kageyama, 2015](#)).
- In recent years, same-sex couples have filed a series of lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of Japan's ban on same-sex marriage. In September 2019, a member of the National Diet called for a revision of the Constitution of Japan to extend marriage rights to same-sex couples.
- Various cities and city wards have recognized civil partnerships by issuing partnership certificates, including Sapporo (2017), Fukuoka (2018) and Osaka (2018). In September 2019, a court ruling determined that domestic partners of the same sex should be covered, to a certain extent, by the same legal protections afforded to common-law marriages.
- Tokyo hosts an annual [Rainbow Pride](#) event.
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Japan](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Japan Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Japan](#)
  - [Japan Times: LGBT News](#)



## Jordan

- Same-sex sexual activity is legalized in Jordan, making the country more advanced in comparison to other countries in the Middle East. However, people can be punished for public affection according to the morality code. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Legislation does not represent social acceptance. The LGBTQ community commonly faces harassment and discrimination. In the capital of Amman, there is a growing underground LGBTQ scene, however, it is subdued. There are places in Amman known in the LGBTQ scene to be hip, young, and gay-friendly including Blue Fig Cafe and Books@cafe, located on Rainbow Street. ([DiversityAbroad.com - Jordan](#))
- A 2013 Pew Research poll showed that 97% of the population rejected homosexuality ([The Global Divide on Homosexuality, 2013](#)).
- In 2016, an LGBT-focused magazine called [My.Kali](#) was published in Arabic for the first time, though it had been live in English for eight years previously. It received much criticism from Jordanians. It was shut down by the government authorities in June 2016. ([Lieber, 2016](#); [Beresford, 2017](#))

## Morocco

- It is advised that gay couples refrain from public displays of affection and seek out gay-friendly communities. Police may leave foreign gay men alone. However, Moroccan gay men face difficulty with the law, may be looked down upon and rejected by their families, dismissed with the Maghrebi Arabic slur *zamel*. ([Hoare, 2015](#))
- Same sex acts are punishable by a penalty between a month and ten years imprisonment (Van Der Westhuizen, 2009. ([ILGA, 2019](#)). These laws often apply only to male-to-male sexual acts and include no penalties for lesbian acts.
- Resources
  - [Gay Travel in Morocco: An Overview](#)
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Morocco](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Morocco](#)

## Netherlands

- LGBTQ rights in the Netherlands are some of the most progressive in the world ([Duffy, 2017](#)).
- The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Adoption by same-sex couples as well as second parent adoption are legal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Discrimination in employment, housing, social services, health care, cultural affairs or education on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Amsterdam hosts an annual [Gay Pride canal parade](#).
- Amsterdam is home to the [Homomonument](#), a commemorative piece to honor those who identified as gay and lesbian during WWII and lost their lives. It also commemorates those who have been oppressed and persecuted since then. Next to the Homomonument sits Pink Point, Amsterdam's official gay and lesbian information kiosk. ([I Amsterdam](#))
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: Netherlands](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Netherlands](#)





## New Zealand

- In 2013, New Zealand became the first country in the Asia-Pacific region to legalize marriage between two people regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. This also included same-sex couple adoption and second parent adoption ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- In July 2017, the Parliament issued a formal apology for the country's historical anti-LGBT laws ([Duffy, 2017](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News: New Zealand](#)
  - [Huffington Post: New Zealand Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Oceania](#)

## Norway

- Norway is one of the most LGBT-friendly countries that gay tourists can visit ([Mapes, 2017](#)). Children can have their sexual identity reversed on their birth certificates, passports, and any official document without a formal medical diagnosis ([Taylor, 2017](#)).
- Norway generally views gay couples holding hands or sharing a kiss in public as norms ([Mapes, 2017](#)).
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Same-sex marriage has been legal since 2009 ([Taylor, 2017](#)).
- Major gay events in Norway: the Rabalder Sports Cup, the Scandinavian Ski Pride, Gay Week, the Parodi Grand Prix, and the Oslo Pride Festival ([Mapes, 2017](#)).
- King Herald of Norway gave a speech in September 2016 saying, "Norwegians are girls who love girls, boys who love boys, and girls and boys who love each other" ([Associated Press, 2016](#)).
- News Sources
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Norway](#)

## Portugal

- 2016 - established that same-sex couples enjoy all the adoption rights of different-sex couples. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- 2004 - The sixth constitutional revision incorporated the prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation to the Constitution of Portugal. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- In September 2019, the Portuguese Parliament passed Law 83, which forbids discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- 2009 - Labor Code explicitly protect the status of sexual orientation. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- 2010 - allows for marriage of persons of the same-sex. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- [LGBTQ Nation: Portugal](#)



## South Africa

- Cape Town is the most popular destination for LGBT tourists in South Africa. It is referred to as “Pink City” and the gay capital of the continent of Africa ([Jordan, 2014](#)).
- “In 1996, South Africa became the first country in the world to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation” ([Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, 2015](#)).
- A 2013 Pew Research poll showed that 61% of the population rejected homosexuality. This was low compared to other countries in Africa, such as Kenya (90%), Uganda (96%), Ghana (96%), Senegal (96%), and Nigeria (98%). ([The Global Divide on Homosexuality, 2013](#))
- In 2014, South Africa elected the first openly gay, black man—Zakhele Mbhele—as Member of Parliament ([Staff Reports, 2014](#)).
- Although the law allows people to legally change their gender on official documents, there are many who have been denied this right ([Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, 2015](#)).
- Same-sex marriages and adoption are legal ([Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, 2015](#)).
- Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Class stratification often impacts level of acceptance for the LGBT community; those who are in higher socioeconomic classes may not experience as much prejudice as those in lower classes ([Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, 2015](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Pink News South Africa](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: South Africa](#)

## South Korea

- Male and female homosexual relationships are legal but same-sex civil unions, marriages, and partnership benefits are currently not legally recognized ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- There is no protection against discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation ([ILGA, 2019](#)). Political stigma is elevated in the military, in which gay men are banned from engaging in homosexual activity and can be punished by up to two years imprisonment according to the military penal code ([Associated Press, 2017](#)).
- South Koreans in the LGBT community are more likely to be “out” around friends than in the public sphere. However, in “kijicho’on,” or areas near military bases that the government has specifically designated for tourists, the social stigma is somewhat suspended. In these areas, there are different legal standards compared to the rest of the country as well. ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#))
- In 2014, Seoul’s mayor, Won Soon Park, did not acknowledge the Seoul Charter of Human Rights, which outlined protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. According to the Korea Times and Advocates, the government’s delay in adopting the charter was apparently due to major objections by conservative Christian groups ([Kim, 2014](#)).
- After rejecting an application by a gay couple who had married abroad and sought recognition of their relationship, the National Human Rights Commission of South Korea said that it does not “deny” same-sex marriage but must conduct a review before marriage equality can be recognized.
- News Sources
  - [Huffington Post: South Korea Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: South Korea](#)



## Spain

- Same-sex marriage was legalized back in 2005, making Spain one of the most progressive and LGBTQ-friendly places in the world ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Homosexual marriages, joint adoption, and second parent adoption are legalized ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Discrimination in employment, social protection, social security and healthcare, education, and access to and supply of goods and services, including housing, on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal ([ILGA, 2019](#)). However, discrimination in employment based on gender identity is not banned nationwide ([Taylor, 2017](#)).
- Barcelona is one of the most gay-friendly cities in Spain ([Gay in Spain](#)). It hosts the annual [Pride Barcelona](#) festival.
- There are many LGBTQ organizations throughout the country, such as the nationwide organization Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Transsexuals and Bisexuals (FELGBT) and an organization called COGAM, which is an LGBT Center located in Madrid ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- LGBT students visiting major will find a number of LGBT-friendly establishments ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- Resources
  - [Global Gayz: Spain](#)
- News Sources
  - [Huffington Post: Spain Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Spain](#)

## Sweden

- Homosexual marriages, joint adoption, and second parent adoption are legalized ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- The law mandates equality and non-discrimination in employment, housing, social protection, social security and healthcare, and education on the basis of sexual orientation ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- Sweden is generally an LGBT-friendly country. Some people attribute this to the socially liberal nature of the Lutheran Church of Sweden. ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#))
- A huge [Stockholm Pride Festival](#) is held every year in the capital.
- Resources
  - [QX](#): LGBT news and map of LGBT-friendly establishments
- News Sources
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Sweden](#)

## Taiwan

- In May 2019, same-sex marriage in Taiwan was legalized. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- The public is generally friendly toward the LGBTQ community. You will see many gay men and lesbian women holding hands in public. There is an opposing crowd, however, so it is not always considered acceptable, and families are not always supportive of LGBTQ members. ([Smith, 2017](#) and [Barnes, n.d.](#))
- Wei-ming Temple is a Taoist place of worship filled with gay congregants. The shrine, which is located in New Taipei City, is dedicated to a deity who has watched over homosexuals for 400 years. ([Gold, 2015](#))
- There are laws against discrimination within employment and education based on sexual orientation ([ILGA, 2017](#)).
- The 2016 Taiwanese documentary feature film, Small Talk, has garnered much praise. It explores the life of Anu, a lesbian Taoist priestess. ([ILGA, 2017](#))
- Gay Star News: [Why is Taiwan the Best Place to Be Gay in Asia?](#)
- News Sources:
  - [Huffington Post: Taiwan LGBT Rights](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Taiwan Gay Rights](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Taiwan](#)



## Thailand

- Thai opinion polls have consistently favored same sex marriages. The government is currently in the process of approving a bill that will award same sex couples many of the same rights given to marriages.
- According to the 2007 Thai Constitution, discrimination on the basis of gender is illegal, but there is no clause on anti-discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity ([Being LGBT in Asia: Thailand Country Report](#)).
- Same-sex marriage is not legalized, and a traditional interpretation of gender and family structure is still the norm ([Being LGBT in Asia: Thailand Country Report, 2014](#)).
- Thailand is known for social tolerance of transgender people, such as “katoeys” or “ladyboys,” especially in the entertainment business ([Associated Press, 2015](#)). However, Thai people as a whole are not yet accepting of sexual and gender minorities but may be tolerant as long as the LGBTQ community remain within their social confines ([Being LGBT in Asia: Thailand Country Report, 2014](#)).
- Family acceptance is a major issue for the LGBT community since showing respect to parents as well as upholding a family reputation are prominent values in Thai culture ([Being LGBT in Asia: Thailand Country Report, 2014](#)).
- Most Thais associate themselves with Theravada Buddhism, a religion that has negative views of non-traditional sexual orientation and gender identity. It views them as results of a punishment from sins of past lives or as a lack of ability to control sexual tendencies and impulses. About 5% of Thai people are Muslim, and are largely populated in the southern provinces. Due to conservative and traditional views on sexual orientation and gender identity, these areas are generally not LGBT-friendly ([Being LGBT in Asia: Thailand Country Report, 2014](#)).
- An international beauty pageant for transgender people is held every year. ([Associated Press, 2015](#))
- Transgender individuals cannot change their gender on official documents ([Being LGBT in Asia: Thailand Country Report, 2014](#)).
- News Sources
  - [Huffington Post: Thailand Transgender](#)
  - [Huffington Post: Thailand Gay Rights](#)
  - [NDTV: Thailand LGBT Rights](#)

## United Arab Emirates

- 2008: Besides the possible imposition of the death penalty under Shariah Law, local Penal Codes impose harsh penalties to consensual same-sex sexual acts. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- 2012: Law on Combating Cybercrimes criminalizes the condoning, provoking or promoting of sin through the computer network or any information technology means or a website. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).
- In 2018, the Knowledge and Human Development Authority of the Dubai Government banned a textbook used in a private international school for “violating the religious and traditional norms in the UAE” because it featured a family with two mothers. ([ILGA, 2019](#)).

## United Kingdom

- The United Kingdom is generally progressive when it comes to the political and legal rights of the LGBT community ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- Same-sex marriage, joint adoption, second parent adoption are legal in England, Scotland and Wales, but not in Northern Ireland ([ILGA, 2017](#); [McCormick, 2017](#)).
- London, England has many LGBTQ-friendly establishments ([LGBT Student Guide for Education Abroad](#)).
- Resources
  - [Stonewall](#): LGBT organization in England, Scotland, and Wales
- News Sources
  - [Pink News UK](#)
  - [Huffington Post: United Kingdom LGBT](#)
  - [LGBTQ Nation: United Kingdom](#)



## Vietnam

- A survey carried out in December 2016 showed that 45% of Vietnam's population supported the legalization of same-sex marriage, while 25% opposed it. (ILGA, 2016)
- Homosexuality is not criminalized, but discrimination is common in the home, the workplace, and in schools ([Mosbergen, 2015](#)).
- LGBT youth are often victims of bullying and the older generation is generally not accepting of the LGBT community ([Lomelin, 2016](#)).
- Gay couples are not recognized or protected by law ([Mosbergen, 2015](#)).
- Traditional norms keep the LGBT community from openly sharing their sexuality with family members ([Mosbergen, 2015](#)).
- Transgender people are unable to legally change their gender designation and may face difficulty with officially changing their names ([Mosbergen, 2015](#)).
- News Sources
  - [LGBTQ Nation: Vietnam](#)

If traveling to a country where the climate is hostile for people who are LGBTQ+, follow these tips if you plan on writing a blog or communicating electronically:

- Get a VPN and use that for all communications and sensitive web browsing. PIA ([privateinternetaccess.com](#)) is an option.
- Encrypt your hard drive and phone. Set a secure password.
- Use a computer with an encrypted SD card as an external drive. Store any sensitive data on this drive and remove it when not using it.
- Reach out to other visible and active LGBT people on Facebook. They can be a great resource.
- Make sure people know where you are and how to get ahold of you at all times. Use "share my location" on your phone at all times with people whom you trust and provide them all with numbers of the Embassy, Advisors and contacts where you are. For example, this can be useful if you are somewhere that is raided by police and someone can contact the U.S. Embassy on your behalf to tell them where you are.
- Don't overlook the value of the US Embassy. They can really help out when you need it.



### Questions to consider when selecting a study abroad program:

1. How open will I be about my sexual orientation and/or gender identity with my in-country staff, professors, peers, host family and others?
2. How important is it to me to find other LGBTQIA+ students and friends while abroad? What are my expectations about seeking and finding community?
3. What are the cultural attitudes and police attitudes toward sexual orientation and gender identity in my host country?
4. What are considered typical male and female social behaviors and customary gender relations in the host country?
5. Do I prefer a single or shared room, and/or access to gender-neutral restrooms?
6. Are equipped/supportive doctors and mental health practitioners available in my host country?
7. Will I need access to any medications or supplies? Are they available in my host country? If not, will I need any additional documentation to travel with my medication or supplies?
8. If I am transitioning, will I need to update my passport to reflect my gender?

### General LGBTQIA+ Country Information about Countries

- [DiversityAbroad.com](https://diversityabroad.com)
- [ILGA: 2019 Sexual Orientation Laws in the World – Overview Map](#)
- [ILGA: 2017 Sexual Orientation Laws in the World – Protection Map](#)
- [ILGA: 2017 Sexual Orientation Laws in the World – Recognition Map](#)
- [ILGA: 2017 Trans Legal Mapping Report](#)
- [Gay Star News](#)
- [Human Rights Watch: Africa](#)
- [Human Rights Watch: Americas](#)
- [Human Rights Watch: Asia](#)
- [Human Rights Watch: Europe/Central Asia](#)
- [Human Rights Watch: Middle East/North Africa](#)