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Another look. Forced migration and LGBTQI identity. Dany Carnassale (Ca' Foscari University of Venice) and Jonathan Mastellari (Chairman of IAM)

The topic of migration for reasons related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity is still poorly known. When approaching this topic, it is commonly given importance to the different geopolitical situations of countries that have laws that support LGBTQI communities and those that condemn these communities, leading to forced migrations and different forms of social stigmatization (Carnassale 2020). Even if there is no official data about this yet, this phenomenon is becoming increasingly visible and significant, questioning scientific research, but also policies and actions of support currently existing.

In scientific literature, the gender-sensitive approach to the migration studies (Mahler, Pessar 2003) has only recently begun to focus on the experiences and peculiarities of the LGBTQI forms of mobility (Carnassale 2013).

As regards third sector associations and companies, in the past years many awareness-raising initiatives have taken place, which have led to a greater consciousness about the needs, expectations and desires of LGBTQI migrants, particularly of those who deal with asylum procedures and make requests for international protection.

The topic discussed during the seminar shows the challenges to the theories and the policies – which often imagine the forms of mobility as heteronormative – and on the other side, those that the people working in the reception procedures and on the third sector must face, which remind the importance of cooperation between home and host countries, and furthermore the importance of education on the legal and social-sanitary side for those who work in contact with migrants.

On both sides, a great potential comes from the ethnography of migrations (Capello, Cingolani, Vietti 2014) and of institutions (Sòrgoni 2011), but also from the research paths which explore and question the governance policies in relation to gender and sexuality (Pinelli 2019; Ciabbarri 2020).

Dany Carnassale is a post-doctoral researcher at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. Since 2010 he has dedicated his studies to international migrations of those who leave the territories where only hetero/cis-normativity is accepted. More generally, he is interested in the transnational development of gender and sexuality and the socio-politic implications of human rights.

Jonathan Mastellari is chairman of the IAM association (Intersectionalities And More). Since 2012, he is interested in the international needs of the LGBTI community and particularly, in migrations and international protection requests for reasons related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity. He has previously worked in the Mattei first reception centre in Bologna for three years.