

Mapping Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans & Queer Migrant Needs in Surrey, BC

A Report Commissioned by DIVERSEcity



SFU



DEPARTMENT OF
GENDER, SEXUALITY,
AND WOMEN'S STUDIES
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Language Usage



For the purposes of this project, the term newcomer is used to broadly define the target population that is examined in the research and throughout this report. This term was chosen as it operates to include the varying legal and social classifications used in relocation to Canada, whether by choice: migrant, immigrant (economic, family & humanitarian), temporary or permanent resident, and forced relocation: refugee, asylum seeker. Although using this broad-based term, newcomer, we recognize that key differences exist which affect access to services and resources essential for wellbeing and integration.

There are many limitations in the use of western-centric terminology, which are further discussed in the findings section of this report. However, because the targeted respondents of the research were service providers working in Surrey, the acronym LGBTQ+ was used as it highlights the mainstream vocabulary that was most accessible for front line workers and service providers in this region. The research team was mindful that western conceptions of sexuality, gender and sexual behavior do not necessarily represent individuals from varying ethno-cultural communities. Therefore the use of definitions within the acronym LGBTQ+ was avoided when in dialogue with newcomers.



This research was commissioned by DIVERSEcity to ascertain the needs of LGBTQ+ migrants, refugees, and newcomers in Surrey, BC. Additionally we were requested to map any existing services. DIVERSEcity, a Surrey-based community resources society, asked us to determine what services specifically geared for LGBTQ+ migrants and refugees were needed but not yet available in Surrey. This was for a number of reasons, including Surrey's growing population, the number of newcomers included in it, and changing discourses around being LGBTQ+ and being a newcomer. There was also concern about how, even though Surrey is the fastest-growing part of the Lower Mainland, the majority of LGBTQ+-centred services are in Vancouver (see maps in appendix).

Surrey is the fastest-growing part of the Lower Mainland, with many young people and young families.⁽¹⁾ This large, young population also includes many migrants and refugees ⁽²⁾. We recognized that the people of Surrey will also include LGBTQ+ people, and that some will fall into both the “newcomer” and “LGBTQ+” categories.

These developments are happening in the larger context of changing discourses about privilege and exclusion regarding what it means to be LGBTQ+, what it means to be a newcomer to Canada, and how the Greater Vancouver Area should respond to both questions. While we have observed that many Canadians consider acceptance of LGBTQ+ people to be a point of pride, the “mainstream” movement is nevertheless facing challenges from less-privileged lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals who do not seem themselves reflected as the norm. These may include, but are not limited to, LGBTQ+ immigrants and people of colour. Furthermore, the movement is also being challenged by transgender and gender non-conforming individuals for ignoring their specific needs and difficulties⁽³⁾:

Meanwhile, the debates around the currently arriving newcomers have been similarly heated. While we have long observed that many Canadians consider welcoming newcomers to be a point of pride, many newcomers have been labelled as “dangerous.” A survey of Canadian history will reveal that this trend of distinguishing “desirable” newcomers from “undesirable” newcomers is a long-standing one.⁽⁴⁾

Particular scepticism, if not outright hostility, has often been a public response to the government resettling refugees in particular. As refugee claimants must successfully prove that they have a “well-founded fear of persecution” due to political activities or various categories of identity (which will be further discussed), there is a popular notion that most refugee claims are “bogus” and that most nevertheless succeed. Neither of these ideas is true⁽⁵⁾. However, the suspicion they create, along with the expected narratives of how claimants should act, gives them great power to determine who is and is not admitted to Canada as a refugee⁽⁶⁾.

The LGBTQ+ newcomer experience can include fulfilling a popular narrative or not, privilege or the lack thereof, and multiple intersecting barriers. **Recognizing the multiple barriers that LGBTQ+ newcomers may face in settling and fully participating in Canadian society, and understanding their larger social and political contexts, were the most important understandings we drew from this project.** We also recognized the disconnect between the growth happening in Surrey and the location of the majority of LGBTQ+ centered services, and how even though many mainstream newcomer settlement services are located in Surrey, they are not necessarily LGBTQ+-friendly. This gap must be addressed as current trends continue.

The social climate surrounding the exclusion of newcomer LGBTQ+ migrants and refugees from the mainstream LGBTQ+ movement is explained above. The following points to the material and specific difficulties of LGBTQ+ newcomers and migrants as articulated by a settlement organization's report⁽⁷⁾ and an academic paper⁽⁸⁾.

1

Lack of adequate resources and services: there was an absence in services catered towards the LGBTQ+ immigrant community, including a lack of safe spaces and representation within organizations;

Lack of training, education, and awareness: there was a colossal gap in the awareness, both for organizational staff and the greater community, of LGBTQ+ issues, settlement challenges, and the overall impacts on people coming from various intersections of privilege or lack thereof;

2

3

Gaps within the government, funding, and policies: several policies and laws create various barriers for the LGBTQ+ immigrant community. There was not enough financial help for and recognition of specific medical needs of transgender folks. Furthermore, unrealistic timelines for asylum claims were presented;

Barriers in employment and housing: currently, no trans-specific refugee housing spaces are provided. There is difficulty in finding safe and affordable housing for LGBTQ+ migrants. There exist racism and discrimination for employment and housing based on accent, skin colour, and sexual orientation and gender identity;

4

5

Barriers in language: Western thoughts and language do not reflect the whole world's point of view of LGBTQ+ people and their lives; furthermore, academic terms created barriers between academics and newcomers;

Barriers in transit and border security: there was scrutiny in public spaces, and even transit police officers report on illegal immigrants, which can provide a significant barrier to newcomers' participation;

6

7

Gaps in mental health care: there is not enough mental health support for LGBTQ+ newcomers

Lack of community: LGBTQ+ newcomers suffer from loneliness, feeling unable to belong to either their ethnic groups or mainstream LGBTQ+ groups

8

9

Lack of safe spaces: settlement sites usually do not feel and look welcoming for LGBTQ+ newcomers ⁽⁹⁾.

As described above, there are numerous hardships that LGBTQ+ migrants in Canada are faced with: lack of training, education, gaps with the government, employment, housing and mental health, and lack of community and safe spaces. They experience issues related to their sexual orientation or gender identity on top of their difficulties as migrants. Most important to this research, LGBTQ++ migrants in Surrey face challenges as the few existing services are not in Surrey. This is the most important challenge for DIVERSEcity to keep in mind as they aim to fill this gap.

The Research Team

The team are all Graduate students in the Department of Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University. This research was conducted as part of Professor Marchbank's class in Gender, Violence and Resistance. It received Ethics Approval from the SFU Research Ethics Board. Research was conducted from February, 2016 to June, 2016.

Team Members

Sim Badesha
Lia Bishop
Kate Ellison
Charis Lippett
Masashi Yoshida

Project Supervisor: Professor Jen Marchbank



Canadian Immigration Law and LGBTQ Population

Canada prides itself in being, and is praised as, a nation of immigrants. The federal government has often stressed the importance of immigration as a vital part of Canadian society⁽⁹⁾. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's mandate states that immigration is necessary to "support our humanitarian tradition and draws the best from the world to help build a nation that is economically, socially and culturally prosperous." (2016). To compensate the falling birthrate and the increasing social program costs, and to boost the Canadian economy, Canada needs to accept immigrants and refugees.

General Immigration Categories to Canada

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (s.c. 2001, c. 27) defines three main objectives on which the federal immigration programs are assumed. The first is "economic"; this type is expected to contribute to Canadian economy (such as skilled workers and business immigrants). This economic category consists of 65% of the overall incoming immigration population. The second is "social": the type of people who accompany or reunite family members of the immigration applicant (such as family class immigrants). The third is "humanitarian": this type refers to refugees and other asylum seekers who face "well-founded fear of persecution" in their home countries. The second and the third categories are non-economic migrants, and they constitute the remaining 35% of the overall immigrant population⁽¹⁰⁾.

LGBT and Immigration Laws in Canada

For lesbian and gay non-Canadians who have Canadian partners, it is possible to immigrate to Canada as spouses through the family class immigration. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) recognizes same-sex partners of Canadians as potentially eligible candidates of sponsorship, or common law relationships or conjugal relationships (which means exceptional circumstances prevent cohabitation).

Furthermore, from early 1990s, LGBT individuals who face severe persecution based on sexual orientation and gender identity may qualify as a refugee to Canada (for humanitarian purposes). Canada adopts the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)'s Guidelines on International Protection No.9: Claims to Refugee Status based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity, and accepts refugee claims of individuals who may face "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership of a particular social group (gender identity and sexual orientation apply to "the particular social group)."

Methodology

Overview

The project team conducted a comprehensive literature review which included a review of local community-based studies and research within and beyond the Surrey area. Stakeholder groups (DIVERSEcity) were consulted and provided the research team with internal publications and identified problem areas known by internal staff through working with clients. Consultation meetings were held with program managers and research team members to identify all potential barriers to the research aims and additional agency contacts for further investigation. This inside knowledge and understanding of settlement programs and services for immigrants, migrants and refugees provided a rich foundation in preparation of the research.

A diversity analysis is vital for appreciating the unique social, cultural and political locations of individuals within immigrant and refugee populations across the province. LGBTQ+ newcomers not only experience additional barriers in securing their needs but may find difficulty negotiating their identity within the narrow frameworks used to define sexual orientation and gender expression in mainstream western society. The project team desired to employ an inclusive and intersectional study model that recognizes the barriers some participants would have in partaking in this project given non-inclusive language practices and personal safety risks pertaining to the research's focus. It was equally important to be aware of the realities of positionality and to address the issues of power imbalances among participants and researchers. For this reason, the project team conducted all face-to-face interviews and surveys in the location of the participants' choice. Although anonymity could not be guaranteed within focus groups, all participants were guaranteed confidentiality in data management and publication. Synonyms were given to all participants, unless the individual expressed preference in using their legal name. Respondents of surveys, interviews, focus group questions were required to sign a confidentiality agreement and were asked to read the mandates of the research project prior to any research undertaking. Due to accessibility and confidentiality concerns and at the request of some participants, the research team extended accessibility by offering interviews and surveys to be completed via telephone or email.

Roles

Research conducted by: Sim Badesha, Lia Bishop, Kate Ellison, Charis Lippett, Masashi Yoshida

Written by: Lia Bishop, Kate Ellison, Charis Lippett, Masashi Yoshida

Edited & Layout by: Charis Lippett

Supervised by: Professor Jen Marchbank

Participants

The targeted participants were service providers, community stakeholders, organization representatives and LGBTQ+ newcomers themselves. A referral, snowball sampling technique was employed given the difficulty of locating and recruiting potential subjects. This technique was particularly beneficial among service providers who knew of specific individuals with professional or personal experience and expertise the region.

Stages of Data Collection

The stages of data collection can be compartmentalized into two distinct arenas. The first stage involved standard methodological techniques in qualitative research studies. 35 individuals were consulted and responded to questions through focus groups, interviews and surveys. This stage also included asset mapping exercises, informal consultations with community stakeholders and a strong review of relevant literature. The

“...cultural competency in service providers; support in coming out and negotiating what that looks like.; help in understanding what rights are (sic) as an LGBTQ+ person.”

second stage of research involved an ethnographic study model that utilized a conversational approach. During this stage, a strong community knowledge base was generated through partaking in community-based activities, academic conferences and that also utilized the situational knowledge of respondents, community partners and research team members throughout these settings.

Asset Mapping

Research team members conducted several inventories of the relevant agencies and key resource stakeholders for both LGBTQ+-specific and immigration/ settlement needs in Surrey, BC. To begin, three distinct categorical lists for mapping strategies were created:

1. Immigrant and refugee settlement stakeholders in Surrey, BC;
2. LGBTQ+ services and resources in Surrey, BC;
3. LGBTQ+-specific newcomer resources and services in Surrey, BC and Metro Vancouver.

These three categories allowed the research team to identify private and public organizations in Surrey currently offering programs, services and resources that cater to both migrant needs and the LGBTQ+ community without the error of being mutually exclusive. This assessment tool was also developed to assist researchers in evaluating and identifying gaps in regional service options, as well as to develop a resource list of any underutilized programs or services available to LGBTQ+ migrants/ refugees in Surrey.

The research team created three large paper maps of Surrey that were tagged with the geographical location of each identified agency/resource per category. The result was three distinct maps which acted as visual aids for identifying both hubs and barren areas of community resources for newcomer LGBTQ+ populations. The maps were then synchronized into computer-based mapping software that can be easily updated for future use and knowledge sharing. There were additional

benefits to the creation of visual asset maps. First, the research team was able to discover service agencies that amalgamate in specific neighbourhoods throughout the city for immigrants and refugees and/or LGBTQ+ persons. Second, it was immediately apparent that zero LGBTQ+-newcomer specific services currently exist in the City of Surrey. This information informed appropriate questions in forthcoming survey and interview the methods to address this identified gap. Third, the visual gap in resources allowed the research team to investigate from the service providers' perspective, what specific services or needs agencies should be implemented.

Survey

After the database of target participants was created, a survey was developed for service providers to obtain information on any known programs and services available for LGBTQ+ newcomers internal or external to their agency. The survey also included questions of the workers' knowledge expertise and understanding of LGBTQ+ newcomer needs. Surveys were distributed to service providers in person and conducted over the telephone. The results of the surveys will be discussed in the findings portion.

Focus Groups

To gain access to a substantial quantity of service providers at one time, focus groups were arranged through supervisors at the agency/ DIVERSEcity that would accommodate the limited time capacities of service providers working in the settlement and client-based field. The focus group questions proceeded in a semi-structural platform and facilitators welcomed the organic dialogue that stemmed from interest areas that ensued. Foundational to the strength of the focus groups was the variety of professional positions of participants; a multitude of specializations in settlement service including language, mental health and social integration, contributed to the rich knowledge-base of resource and services that newcomers require. Equally important, a transparent dialogue surrounding the knowledge and expertise limitations that service providers have of LGBTQ+ newcomers needs proved an unexpected benefit to the focus group method. These findings will be discussed in greater length in the findings section.

“So obviously there’s a huge gap [no LGBTQ+ services] I know I’ve met students whom I’m sure would need something...even some of their parents. I’m quite sure...we need a way for these parents and their kids to be approached softly.”

Interviews

Interviews allowed access to service providers, community developers and professionals who have direct or indirect experience within or beyond the settlement service sector. Interviews were also conducted with knowledgeable community activists, LGBTQ+ newcomers and professionals with varying degrees of related experience or expertise in this area. The referral method proved exceptionally useful in this capacity, especially for reaching private citizens with some level of lived experienced and situated knowledge that would otherwise be inaccessible.

Individual interviews were conducted at the discretion of the researcher and participant. Some of these interviews were conducted via the telephone or email, while others were done in the professional setting of the interviewee.

Situational Knowledge

The levels of professional and personal connections within the research team added to the critical analysis that framed the project's aims and goals. It was equally important that LGBTQ+ newcomer representation extend to exist within the research team. For the research team, it was imperative that the personal narratives of individuals were heard in an accessible format. This meant that members extended research tactics to meet newcomers within their communities and to participate in the activities and dialogues that were already being had.

Beyond focus groups and interviews, research project members gathered data from community conversations, such as expert forums, events and dialogues within and beyond the City of Surrey. This conversational method allowed research team members to pull data from their own unique professional and social locations adding to the current knowledge base around LGBTQ+ newcomer services and needs. Two members of the project team are LGBTQ+ newcomers, bringing to the project's frame their first hand experiences of the challenges LGBTQ+ newcomers face. The project supervisor is a LGBTQ+ migrant living and working in Surrey for over 10 years and with her partner founded an organization that caters to the needs of LGBTQ+ youth. The team also includes an international student with professional and personal connections to LGBTQ+ newcomer communities outside of Surrey. Two of the members have professional positions directly within multicultural and settlement services outside of the Surrey area which helped make existing connections beyond the Surrey region. Further, all research project members have some academic, professional and/or personal knowledge of the issues that LGBTQ+ communities currently face.



Surrey Pride, 2011

Findings

The research provides evidence that resources do not exist in Surrey to support LGBTQ+ newcomer needs, nor does there exist an adequate and accessible knowledge base for service providers to help attend the needs of this client base. Focus groups and interview participants stated repeatedly that the principal barrier they face in offering adequate resources and programs for LGBTQ+ newcomers is the requirement for additional support and lack of trained or qualified staff. Several participants also expressed concern in being able to identify what might be the best solutions for LGBTQ+ newcomers requiring specific resources across the needs spectrum. It was observed that service providers were unsure if efforts needed to be concentrated in offering LGBTQ+ newcomers segregated programming or integrating LGBTQ+ support services into regular programming services. More generally, the key findings can be classified into three distinctive areas of need:

- 1 LGBTQ+ specific services within settlement agencies (language & culture specific)
- 2 Training for Front Line Workers
- 3 Services for LGBTQ+ migrants in Surrey (medical, religious, support groups, etc).

Lack of Accessible LGBTQ+ specific services within settlement agencies:

Service providers expressed the need for internal programs and services that would cater to the needs of LGBTQ+ newcomers. Although such services exist beyond Surrey, many immigrants, migrants and refugees experience transportation and accessibility barriers to attend services in neighbouring cities. Locating resources within Surrey-based settlement and community agencies not only assists to accommodate these barriers, but potentially increases the breadth of opportunities for community and educational engagement for LGBTQ+ newcomers, their families and service agents.

Language and translation was identified as a barrier in developing such services. This was noted as especially true for parents and families who are not fluent in English. Accommodating language needs for families may include the provision of translated educational tools and training settlement workers who can speak with families in their native language.

Newcomers may find their own definitions of sexuality, sexual relationships and gender expression are not represented or accessible within mainstream definitions and social practices in western culture. In this regard, culturally-specific knowledge and vocabulary should also be integrated into services that represent conceptualizations and social norms within minority ethno-cultural communities. This is especially important in the coming-out process for newcomers who must

negotiate among the social norms, beliefs and expectations of their own cultural communities and that of mainstream, western society.

Appropriate Training for Front Line Workers:

Participants of focus groups demonstrated a desire for additional training regarding LGBTQ+-specific education. Many participants suggested that internal trainings or workshops of LGBTQ+ issues would serve for better understanding of the unique challenges that LGBTQ+ newcomers face and their corresponding individual needs. Within this scope, there were suggestions from front line workers of wanting to hear from newcomers about their personal experiences and needs. It was observed that the personal experiences and voices of LGBTQ+ newcomers appear to be missing from the knowledge base of service providers working in settlement and community services. They felt this would help inform the unique vulnerabilities that some refugees and forced migrants face having left countries where personal safety was threatened due to nonconforming sexual identity and/or gender expression. In this case, anti-oppressive service care for individuals who have experienced abuse, discrimination and harm due to their sexual orientation was also recommended. Service providers acknowledged these gaps in services and recommend that incorporating lived experienced and situated knowledge into future trainings to be vital in adequately addressing the needs of LGBTQ+ newcomers in Surrey.



“I’m not aware of any such services, and that’s a big deal.”

Service providers also expressed a need to have better knowledge access of the existing support services in Surrey and surrounding areas that caters to LGBTQ+ newcomers. In order to better serve clients, coherent and systematic information about different services and service providers, as well as gaining relevant contacts and connections to connect clients to these specific services, is a key need that should be addressed.

Services for LGBTQ+ newcomers in Surrey

In the focus group conducted with service providers, participants noted five key areas where services specific to LGBTQ+ migrants is lacking: Medical and health care; Community and Group support; Family support for LGBTQ+ migrants; School involvement in support programs; Spiritual and religious connection. These gaps in service were identified by service workers who have LGBTQ+ newcomer clients and they stated there exist limited programs and expertise to pass on to their clients in the Surrey region.

More broadly, participants understood that the lack of LGBTQ+-friendly services negatively affected their clients sense of belonging. Service providers determined that clients often feel unsafe when accessing medical services from health care professionals, and that the school district should play a more active role in the social integration of LGBTQ+ newcomer youth in Surrey. A key need identified by service providers was community and group support services for LGBTQ+ newcomers and their families. According to participants, clients have moved away from Surrey due to the lack of support. This information points to the important certainty these specific services are currently being

sought and are an integral aspect of creating a welcoming community.

The evidence gathered throughout the research suggests there is a major gap in services for LGBTQ+ newcomers in the City of Surrey. Researchers were unable locate any agency or community group that publicly offers support services for this demographic and the team also struggled in locating service providers who had a well-rounded knowledge base of care etiquette for LGBTQ+ newcomers. This finding is concerning as many front line workers had clients they knew would benefit from the support such services would offer. This also puts service providers in the predicament of being unable to address the needs of their clients with certainty or the ability to refer clients to programs that are accessible to them and their families.



Members of Youth 4 A Change, Surrey.

Recommendations

1

Recognize & acknowledge that a lack of services for LGBTQ+ newcomers in Surrey negatively impacts their settlement experience.

2

Provide internal programs and services catering to LGBTQ+ newcomers within agencies in Surrey

3

Provide staff and services and service providers with education on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of LGBTQ+ newcomers. This should include culturally-specific knowledge and vocabulary and incorporate lived experience of LGBTQ+ newcomers

4

Address service gaps for LGBTQ+ newcomers in Surrey, Specifically:

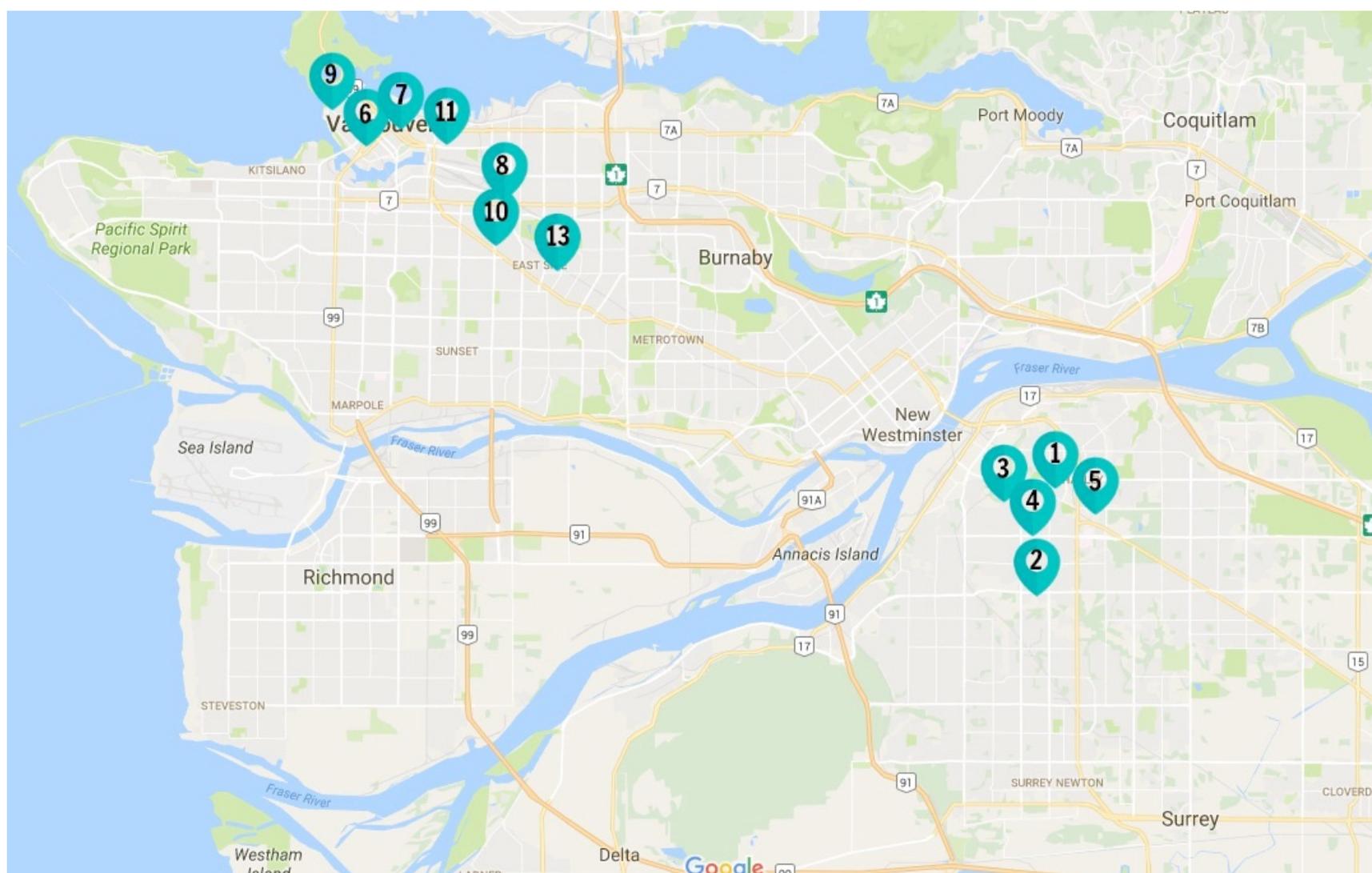
- a) medical and health care
- b) community and group support
- c) family relationships of LGBTQ+ newcomers
- d) support programs in schools
- e) spiritual and religious needs.

5

Connect with organizations to provide training on LGBTQ+ issues such as Rainbow Refugee

Maps

Migrant and Refugee Services



1. UMOJA Operation

<http://umojawordpress.apps-1and1.com>

10025 Whalley BLVD, Surrey, B.C., V3T 4G1 | 604 581 5574 | info@umojaoperation.ca

Umoja Operation Compassion Society of British Columbia is a charitable organization (88642 5909 RR 0001) formed in 2002 to work with low income immigrants and refugees living in Surrey, BC. Our society seeks to help promote unity, respect, and dignity amongst minority immigrants and refugees.

2. DIVERSEcity

<http://www.dcrs.ca>

13455 76 Avenue Surrey, BC, V3W 2W3 | 604-597-0205 | info@dcrs.ca

DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society (DIVERSEcity) is a registered not for profit agency offering a wide range of services and programs to the culturally diverse communities of the lower mainland

3. Immigrant Advisory Round Table

<http://www.surreyip.ca/what-is-surrey/immigrant-advisory-round-table> | (604) 592-7059 | oshcherbyna@surrey.ca

The Surrey IAR is a group of 18 immigrants and refugees who live and/or work in Surrey. The members of the IAR come from 16 different countries, different immigration classes and professional backgrounds and have demonstrated high level of community engagement in Surrey.

4. PICS

<http://pics.bc.ca>

#205 12725 80th Avenue Surrey, BC, V3W 3A6 | 604.596.7722

Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS) Society is a registered non-profit society and has been serving the community since 1987. PICS provides a broad spectrum of programs and services which includes Employment Programs, Settlement Services, Language Services, Social Programs and Housing Services. Their services assist new immigrants, seniors, farm workers, women and youth.

5. OPTIONS

<http://www.options.bc.ca>

9815 - 140 St. Surrey, BC V3T 4M4 | 604.584.5811

Options Community Services is a non-profit society and registered charity dedicated to making a difference. They are committed to empowering individuals, supporting families and promoting community health. They aim to achieve these goals through a wide variety of programs and projects.

6. Department of Immigrants, Refugees, Citizenship

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/offices/help.asp>

1148 Hornby Street Vancouver, BC V6Z 2C3

In-person help by appointment only. Once your application has been received, IRCC will contact you to schedule an appointment if deemed necessary by the processing office.

7. Success

<http://www.successbc.ca>

28 West Pender Street Vancouver BC V6B 1R6 | 604-559-3002

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. was founded in 1973 and incorporated in 1974 as a non-profit charitable organization for the purpose of promoting the well-being of Canadians and immigrants.

8. YMCA

<https://gv.ymca.ca>

1155 East Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5T 4V5 | 604-685-8066 | connections@gv.ymca.ca

Whether you're looking to make new friends, improve your language skills or just want to get settled in your new country, the Y can ease your transition with services and supports just for newcomers.

9. ISS of BC

<https://issbc.org>

530 Drake Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 2H3 | 604-684-7498

settlement@issbc.org

Providing a variety of support services for immigrants and refugees to help them get settled, find careers and learn all they need to know about starting their new lives in Canada. They provide settlement, education and employment services for over 25,000 clients every year.

10. Battered Women's Support Services

<http://www.bwss.org>

PO Box 21503 1424 Commercial Dr. Vancouver, BC Canada V5L 5G2 | 1.855.687.1868

information@bwss.org

Battered Women's Support Services is currently translating print resources concerning violence against women, safety and empowerment in several languages.

11. VAST

<http://vast-vancouver.ca>

2610 Victoria Drive, Vancouver, BC V5N 4L2 Canada | 604-255-1881

The Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST) promotes the human rights and mental health of refugees who arrive in British Columbia with trauma as a result of torture, political violence, and other forms of persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, and political opinion. We promote mental health and healing through trauma-focused psychological counselling and community based psychosocial support for individuals and families, and promote human rights through public education and advocacy campaigns on the rights of refugees and the prevention of torture.

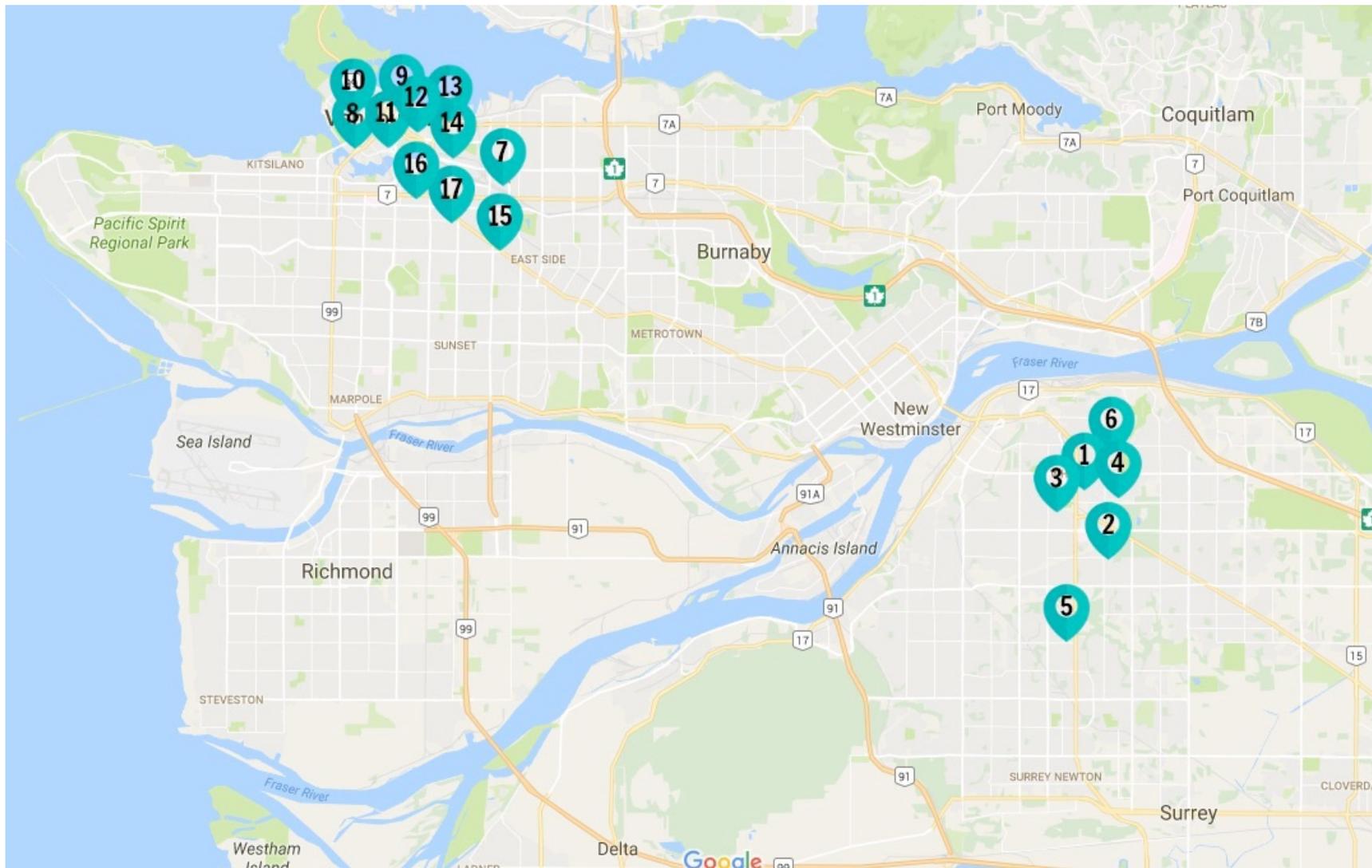
12. Bridge Clinic

3425 Crowley Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V5R 6G3

http://www.vch.ca/locations-and-services/find-health-services/?program_id=102

The Bridge Clinic provides public health screening and short-term primary health care for sponsored refugees and refugee claimants until they find a family doctor in their community. Interpreters are available for booked appointments.

LGBTQ+ Community and Cultural Services



1. Pacific Community Resource Society - Youth 'Free to B Me'

<http://www.pcrs.ca>

13479 76 Ave, Surrey BC V3W 2W3 | 604-412-7950 | mailbox@pcrs.ca

Pacific Community Resources is an award-winning, accredited, not-for-profit society serving Lower Mainland communities since 1984. They host this drop-in for LGBTQ+ youth, Wednesday, 6-8.30 pm at the Newton Youth Resource Centre.

2. School District 36

<https://www.surreyschools.ca>

14033 - 92 Avenue Surrey, B.C. Canada V3V 0B7 | 604-596-7733

Safe and Caring Schools: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

3. EPAMA

<http://www.epama.ca> | epama@gaysurrey.com

P.O. Box 33557 Central City P.O. 10151 King George Hwy, Surrey BC V3T 5R5

The Mandate of the Empire of The Peace Arch Monarchist Association undertakes the study of and play roles of the Monarchy, educates the community in general about how the Monarchy works. By

playing the game of Court the society is mandated to raise awareness of the GLBTQ community, fundraises for charities within its Empire as mandated in the attached by laws. Studies heraldry, issue proclamations and titles as in an Empire or Court under the UK/Russian Historical Courts. They host social and support events in Surrey.

4. Surrey Pride

<http://www.surreypride.ca>

PO Box 22 10688 King George Blvd. Surrey, B.C. Canada V3T 4W4 | surreypride@outlook.com

The 1st Surrey Pride Festival was held at Sullivan Hall in July 1999. At the time, the organization was named “Out in Surrey Rainbow Cultural Society” (OIS). Under that title, the organization played a significant role in fundraising specifically for GLBTQ charities, awareness and advocacy for GLBTQ rights in Surrey and the Lower Fraser Valley.

5. Youth for A Change

www.youth4achange.com

13479 76 Ave, Surrey, BC | sylviatraphan@yahoo.ca

A group of young lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* and queer youth (13-21) who want to make a difference in the lives of youth. They are activists, advocates, and educators.

6. Pride Lounge and the Flamingo

<https://www.facebook.com/prideloungeflamingo/>

10768 King George Blvd, . V3T 2X7 Surrey, BC | (604) 581-6969

Surrey's FIRST LGBTQ+ Licensed Club that hosts LGBTQ+ social and entertainment events.

7. Prism

https://www.vch.ca/media/LBGTQ2sDropin_group.pdf

377 East 2nd Avenue Vancouver, BC V5T 1B9 | prism@vch.ca

Prism is Vancouver Coastal Health’s clinical, education, information and referral service for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and Two Spirit (LGBTQ+2S) communities.

8. Transgender Health Information Program (THiP)

<http://transhealth.phsa.ca>

1290 Hornby Street, Vancouver | 604.734.1514 | transhealth@vch.ca

BC-wide information hub providing information about gender affirming care and supports, is in the process of integrating with the Trans Care BC program at PHSA.

Consultation continues with transgender communities, clinical experts, and other stakeholders about how best to create and expand services to better support communities across the province.

9. Out in Schools

<http://outinschools.com>

405-207 W Hastings St, Vancouver, BC V6B 1H7 | 604.844.1615 | info@outinschools.com

Out in Schools brings fresh and relevant films into classrooms to facilitate dialogue about the reality of LGBTQ+ youth experience. Youth learn the impacts of homophobia, transphobia and other forms of discrimination. They walk out of a presentation with a fresh perspective and commitment to step up to stop bullying.

10. Trans Alliance Society

<http://www.transalliancesociety.org>

1170 Bute Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6E 1Z6 | 1 (800) 825-2405

Trans Alliance Society (TAS) is a registered non-profit with the British Columbia government and is governed by the society act and its constitution. The aims, goals and mission statements associated with Trans Alliance Society (TAS) are enshrined in our Constitution and our website. We broadly summarize these as transgender support, education, outreach and advocacy.

11. HIM

<http://checkhimout.ca>

310-1033 Davie St. Vancouver BC, V6E 1M7 | 604 488 1001 | office@checkhimout.ca

Dedicated to strengthening the health and well-being of gay men. HIM involve and engage gay men to improve foundations of their physical, sexual, social and mental health through research-based, community-minded, volunteer-driven activities. Their materials and programs are for adults and deal with gay sexuality positively and explicitly.

12. Qmunity

<http://qmunity.ca>

1170 Bute Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 1Z6 | (604) 684-5307 ext. 100 | resource@qmunity.ca

LGBTQ+ organisation creating a world where everyone is free from discrimination, included, and celebrated for who they are through community activities, groups, and support.

13. PFLAG Canada

<http://www.pflagvancouver.com/>

1-888-530-6777 | info@pflagvancouver.com

They provide support for all family members and friends. PFLAG work to create an environment of understanding so our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender children can live with dignity and respect.

14. Vancouver Pride Society

<http://www.vancouverpride.ca>

1080 Howe Street, Suite 304 Vancouver, BC V6Z 2T1 | 604-687-0955

What started as a courageous and peaceful protest in 1978 has become one of the most grandiose, spirited and outspoken celebrations of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pride ever.

15. Catherine White Holman Wellness Centre

<http://www.cwhwc.com>

#202-1193 Kingsway, Vancouver BC, V5V 3C9 | 604 442-4352 | contactus@cwhwc.com

Provides low-barrier wellness services to trans and gender diverse people, including primary health care, occupational therapy, nutritionist, community kitchen, counselling, legal support, art group, yoga and advocacy. Clinics are offered twice a month; medical appointments need to be made online or by phone in advance.

16. Sher Vancouver

<http://www.shervancouver.com> | shervancouver@hotmail.com

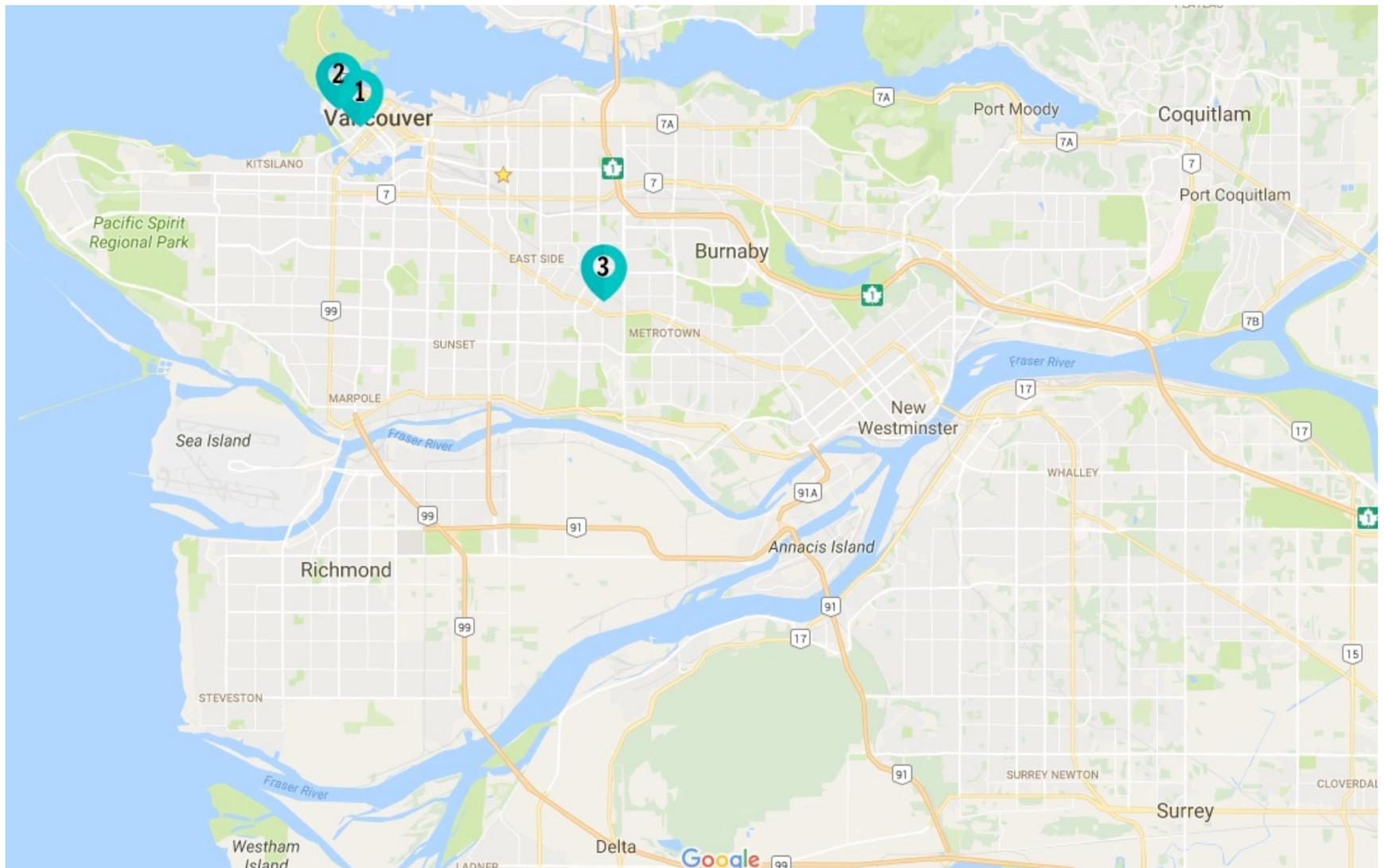
Sher Vancouver is a social, cultural and support organization for LGBT South Asians and their friends, families, and allies. Sher provides information, referral, peer support, social activities, and outreach presentations in the community to combat bullying, racism, and other forms of discrimination.

17. Salaam Vancouver

<https://www.facebook.com/Salaam-Canada-153766412578/>

Salaam Vancouver's Queer Muslim Community is a Vancouver based support group for practicing and non-practicing queer Muslims. They are part of Salaam Canada which is a network of Queer Muslim Communities across Canada. Salaam Vancouver provides Peer Counseling, advocacy, refugee and immigration support as well as social, cultural and educational events for Muslims who are lesbians, gays, bisexuals or transgendered, those questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Settlement and LGBTQ+ Services



1. Rainbow Refugee

<http://www.rainbowrefugee.ca>

1170 Bute St, Vancouver, BC V6E 1Z7 | info@rainbowrefugee.ca

Founded in 2000, Rainbow Refugee Committee (RRC) is a Vancouver based community group that supports people seeking refugee protection because of persecution based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV status. Rainbow Refugee Committee engages in outreach and public education on LGBTQ/HIV+ refugee issues. RRC is member driven and all volunteer.

2. LEGIT

<http://www.legit.ca>

1170 Bute Street Vancouver, BC V6E 1Z6 | legitvancouver@gmail.com

LEGIT is an organization of volunteers helping same-sex couples who wish to live together in Canada. Many of them are couples who have been successful in settling in Canada. LEGIT are not lawyers. They hope this information is helpful and supportive. It is not intended to be legal advice.

3. I-Belong

<http://mosaicbc.org>

5902 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V5J 1H2 | 604 438 8214 | info@mosaicbc.org

MOSAIC Settlement Workers are professionals who are ready to help support your transition to Canada, and to the Greater Vancouver Area community. They have supported thousands of newcomers to Canada. Their programs are designed to support Permanent Residents of Canada and Convention Refugees. Their services are free.

References

LGBTQ+ refers to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer

Lesbian: Term used to describe female identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female identified people.

Gay: Term used to refer to homosexual loving communities as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual; 2) Term used in some cultural settings to specifically represent male identified people who are attracted to other male identified people in a romantic, erotic, and/or emotional sense.

Bisexual: A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to males/men and females/women. This attraction does not have to be equally split between genders, and there may be a preference for one gender over others.

Transgender (TG): An umbrella term describing a diverse community of people whose gender identity differs from that which they were designated at birth; 2) Expressions and identities that challenge the binary male/female gender system in a given culture; 3) Anyone who transcends the conventional definitions of man and woman and whose self-identification or expression challenges traditional notions of male and female.

Trans*: Umbrella term, originated from Transgender (see above). Used to denote the increasingly wide spectrum of identities within the gender variant spectrum. The asterisk is representative of the widest notation of possible trans* identities. Aimed at promoting unification among gender variant communities by placing focus on gender transgression over specific identity labels, genders, or bodies. SOGI stands for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity; and they represent two important aspects of the human sexuality (<http://www.iraqueer.org/what-is-sogi.html>)

Sexual Orientation: Refers to an individual's physical attraction to others. "Gay," "Lesbian," "Bisexual," "Asexual," "Queer," and "straight" are all examples of sexual orientations. “ “

Gender Identity: Refers to the socially constructed characteristics of a person. How a person identify themselves depending on a various of aspects such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of people. It varies from society to society and can be changed as it's socially constructed. “ “

Refugee: a person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is located outside of their home country. Refugee claimant or Asylum Seeker: a person who has fled their country and is asking for protection in another country. We don't know whether a claimant is a refugee or not until their case has been decided.

Immigrant: a person who has settled permanently in another country.

Permanent resident: a person granted the right to live permanently in Canada. The person may have come to Canada as an immigrant or as a refugee. Permanent residents who become Canadian citizens are no longer permanent residents.

Temporary resident: a person who has permission to remain in Canada only for a limited period of time. Visitors and students are temporary residents, and so are temporary foreign workers such as agricultural workers and live-in caregivers.

Migrant: a person who is outside their country of origin. Sometimes this term is used to talk about everyone outside their country of birth, including people who have been Canadian citizens for decades. More often, it is used for people currently on the move or people with temporary status or no status at all in the country where they live.

Newcomer: A newcomer is an immigrant or refugee who has been in Canada for a short time, usually less than 3 or 5 years.

(Sources: <http://www.newyouth.ca/immigration/settlement-services/what-immigrant-refugee-newcomer-undocumented-person>
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