



HRC

Study Guide

HRC-2024

LGBTQ+ RIGHTS IN THE SPORTS
LANDSCAPE

CHAIRS: Beatriz Monge y
Mariana Quesada

INDEX

Disclaimer: This study Guide of HRC, on the topic of The LGBTQ+ Community in the sports landscape, is merely a guide for your research, and it shall not replace it. This being said, the contents of the study guide include:

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LETTER FROM YOUR CHAIR

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to this year's SPMUN Human Rights Committee! My name is Beatriz Monge, and I am in tenth grade. I have participated in many Model United Nations Conferences throughout these past few years and I have represented many different delegations and participated in different committees, although in this occasion I have the honor of serving as a chair. Hopefully you are as excited as I am as we begin this wonderful experience!

I understand that participating in these types of activities can be a bit intimidating, especially when debating alongside older students. However, these experiences are wonderful opportunities to step out of your comfort zone, connect with new people, and uncover new skills. My goal is to create a supportive environment where everyone feels comfortable and valued.

I am quite enthusiastic about the topic we will be addressing, as it is very relevant for our world today. I encourage everyone to be respectful of each other, as well as of the topic at hand. Passionate debates are a natural part of MUN, and such conversations should be approached with open minds and mutual respect.

Should you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mariana or me. We are here to support you and ensure that you have an amazing experience! I am looking forward to a fantastic session and hope you make the most of this exciting opportunity.

Best regards, your chair,
Beatriz Monge

LETTER FROM YOUR CO-CHAIR

Dear Delegates,

I hope this letter finds you well and with enthusiasm as we approach the start of our SPMUN of this year! My name is Mariana Quesada, and as your co-chair, I couldn't be more excited to welcome you to our committee: Human Rights in LGBTQ+. As I have already been in the UNHRC committee in ninth grade, I promise to try to give you the best experience in and out of the debate table as I can.

This year's UNHRC topic is very relevant since it is the only topic that addresses the need for diversity and inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community in the sports landscape. The importance and popularity of this subject have increased over the last decade as more athletes from the LGBTQ+ community have come out and spoken about the challenges that they face in the sports world. It is also a very delicate topic because the main purpose is to help the LGBTQ+ community while also being respectful and fair with those that are not a part of this community. Recognizing their importance is essential to ensuring support and addressing their concerns. I encourage you to research the topic further than just reading this guide; it will make you even more confident while speaking.

I have to congratulate you because you chose to participate in this experience. And I assure you that SPMUN isn't just about the debate; it is also about growth; it will help you with your communication skills, your confidence when talking in public, and other abilities. Even if you're shy or worried about what you want to say, I encourage you to take a risk and participate in the debate; it not only will boost your confidence, but it will also make the debate more dynamic and fun. Everyone makes mistakes and has awkward moments, so don't be scared. Also, please do not hesitate to reach out to Beatriz or me; we are here to support you.

Wishing you the best of luck, your chair,
Mariana Quesada

GLOSSARY

Gender binary | A system in which gender is constructed into two strict categories of male or female. Gender identity is expected to align with the sex assigned at birth and gender expressions and roles fit traditional expectations.

Gender dysphoria | Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify.

Gender expression | External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, body characteristics or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Homophobia | The fear, hatred of or discomfort with people who are attracted to members of the same sex.

Sex assigned at birth | The sex, male, female or intersex, that a doctor or midwife uses to describe a child at birth based on their external anatomy.

Transgender | An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any sexual orientation. Therefore transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

Transitioning | A series of processes that some transgender people may undergo in order to live more fully as their true gender. This typically includes social transition, such as changing name and pronouns, medical transition, which may include hormone therapy or gender affirming therapies, and legal transition, which may include changing legal name and sex on government identity documents. Transgender people may choose to undergo some, all or none of these processes.

Cisgender | denoting or relating to a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex registered for them at birth; not transgender.

ABOUT THE TOPIC

The Human Rights Council is the main intergovernmental body within the United Nations responsible for human rights. Established in 2006 by the General Assembly, it is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe. The committee is the body of 18 independent experts that monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by its States parties.

The Committee's work promotes the enjoyment of civil and political rights, resulting in numerous changes of law, policy and practice. As such, it has improved the lives of individuals in all parts of the world. It continues to strive to ensure all the civil and political rights guaranteed by the Covenant can be enjoyed in full and without discrimination, by all people.

No country's record of protecting and promoting civil and political rights is perfect. As a result, the Committee's task is to encourage each State party to:

- Maintain in place those laws, policies and practices that enhance the enjoyment of these rights
- Withdraw or suitably amend those measures that are destructive or corrosive of Covenant rights
- Take appropriate positive action when a State party has failed to act to promote and protect these rights
- Consider appropriately the effects in terms of the Covenant of new laws, policies and practices that a State party proposes to introduce in order to ensure that it does not regress in giving practical effect to Covenant rights.



INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

For millions of people around the world, sports embody our ideals of equality, fairness, perseverance, discipline and integrity. On the field, court or track, in the ring, on the ice, or in the stands, we transcend our differences in the spirit of honest competition and perseverance. But in too many places, sports are not always a safe or affirming space for aspiring LGBTQ+ athletes.

Heteronormativity from professional sports to children's athletics, can be seen as the dominant paradigm in sports culture. It is defined as the view of heterosexuality as the standard or preferred sexuality, and this exclusive way of thinking is often taken to the extreme in sports culture, which subsequently places an emphasis on hegemonic masculinity.

Concerns about transgender athletes competing in championships and the Olympics have grown over the years. There is ongoing debate about how the policies of these organizations address issues of fairness and inequality while trying to prevent harm.

Women's sports categories have been particularly affected, as some argue that transgender women, who are biologically male, have physical advantages over cisgender women. This has led to claims that cisgender women face unfair competition and difficulties, including sharing facilities like locker rooms with transgender women.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) have faced scrutiny regarding their policies and the requirements for transgender athletes in women's categories.

Many athletes have expressed concerns about competing against those who may retain physical advantages and the challenges of sharing spaces with transgender women.

Transgender women often use hormone therapy to reduce testosterone levels and alter physical traits. However, more research is needed to fully understand the impact of hormone therapy on athletic performance and to establish fair policies. Current studies offer mixed results on whether hormone therapy completely negates any advantages gained from earlier testosterone exposure.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Homophobia in sports:

The prevalence of heteronormative thinking in athletics has led to a sports culture that is traditionally highly intolerant to homosexuality. It has been noted that male adolescents who participated in popular sports, such as football, basketball, and baseball are significantly more likely to hold homophobic attitudes than other peers their age.

In professional sports leagues, homosexuality remains largely stigmatized in the four major North American professional sports leagues. Jason Collins of the NBA, along with Carl Nassib and Michael Sam of the NFL, have come out while actively playing, and a small number of athletes have come out after their careers such as Wade Davis and Kwamw Harris.

This same trend can also be found in England's Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), as a recent ad campaign devised by the PFA against homophobia failed because no professional football player was willing to associate themselves with the advertisement. The trend is also prevalent among English Football fans, as a recent study published in 2018 demonstrates that among live attendance fans, the use of homophobic slurs is extremely common.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association announced its support of LGBT student-athletes, coaches, and administrators in intercollegiate athletics. Since then, the association has been defending its core values of equality, inclusion, fairness, and respect in regard to all people involved in NCAA sports and events.

The defense of these values has very publicly come into play in determining host cities for championship events. The NCAA expressed concern over Indiana's Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the hosting of the 2015 Men's Basketball Final Four Tournament, and it banned North Carolina from hosting championship events until 2019 after it passed the Public Facilities Privacy and Security act.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Olympic policies:

Eligibility criteria must be set to regulate the participation in the women's and men's categories, The establishment and implementation of such criteria should be carried out as a part of a comprehensive approach grounded on the respect for internationally recognized human rights, robust evidence, and athlete consultation. In so doing, precaution should be used to avoid causing harm to the health and well-being of the athletes. These criteria are formulated by the International Federation and other sports organizations, they are drafted with the specific needs of high-level organized sports competitions in mind, The general principles of inclusion and non-discrimination reflected below should be promoted and defended at all levels of sports.

1. Inclusion

1.1. Everyone, regardless of their gender identity, expression, or sex variations should be able to participate in sport safely and without prejudice.

1.2. Measures should be implemented to make sporting environments and facilities welcoming to people of all gender identities.

1.3. Sports organizations should work together to advance inclusion and prevent discrimination based on gender identity and/or sex variations, through training, capacity building and captains that affected stakeholders inform.

1.4. Mechanisms to prevent harassment and abuse in sports should be further developed by taking into account the particular needs and vulnerabilities to transgender people and people with sex variations.

1.5. Where sports organizations choose to establish eligibility criteria to determine the participation conditions for men's and women's categories for specific contests in high-level organized sports competitions, these criteria should be established and applied in a manner that respects the principles included in this Framework. Individuals or parties responsible for issuing such criteria should be appropriately trained to ensure that these issues are handled in a manner consistent with these principles.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1.6. The design, implementation and evaluation of these measures and mechanisms should be done in consultation with a cross section of affected athletes.

2.Prevention of harm

2.1 The physical, physiological and mental well-being of athletes should be priorities when establishing eligibility criteria.

2.2 Sports organizations should identify and prevent negative direct and indirect impacts on athletes' health and wellbeing that may come from the design, implementation and or interpretation of eligibility criteria.

3.Fairness

3.1 Where sports organizations elect to issue eligibility criteria for men's and women's categories for a given competition, they should do so with a view to:

- Providing confidence that no athlete within a category has an unfair and disproportionate competitive advantage (namely an advantage gained by altering one's body or one that disproportionately exceeds other advantages.
- Preventing a risk to the physical safety to other athletes; and
- Preventing athletes from claiming a gender identity different from the one consistently and persistently used, with a view to entering a competition in a given category.

4.Non-Discrimination

4.1 Eligibility criteria should be established and implemented fairly and in a manner that does not systematically exclude athletes from competition based upon their gender identity, physical appearance an/or sex variations

4.2 Provided they meet eligibility criteria that are consistent with principle 4, athletes should be allowed to compete in the category that best aligns with their self-determined gender identity.

CURRENT SITUATION

In recent years, discussions surrounding athletic competition have become increasingly complex and nuanced, particularly when it comes to issues of gender identity and physical advantages. One significant area of controversy involves transgender athletes and the ways in which their participation can impact both competitive fairness and inclusivity. Additionally, questions arise about the physical advantages that might come from biological differences, such as muscle mass or endurance, which can further complicate the conversation. These issues are not just about rules and regulations; they touch on deeper questions of identity, fairness, and the very nature of competition itself. As society continues to grapple with these questions, finding a balance between inclusivity and fairness remains a critical challenge in the world of sports. Some examples of affected athletes are:

Lia Thomas: Lia Thomas is an American swimmer. She was the first openly transgender athlete to win an NCAA Division I national championship, having won the women's 500-yard freestyle event in 2022, before being barred from competing in women's events by World Aquatics. Thomas' career has been a part of the public debate about transgender women in sports.

After becoming the first transgender athlete to win a NCAA college title in March 2022, she lost a legal case against World Aquatics in the court of arbitration for sport – and with it any hopes of making the Paris Olympics.

The 25-year-old also remains barred from swimming in the female category after failing to overturn rules introduced by swimming's governing body in the summer of 2022, which prohibit anyone who has undergone “any part of male puberty” from participating in the female swimming category. (Ingle, 2024)

The news was welcomed by World Aquatics, who hailed it as “a major step forward in our efforts to protect women’s sport. World Aquatics remains confident that its gender inclusion policy represents a fair approach and remains absolutely determined to protect women’s sport,” (Weese, 2024)

World Aquatics introduced its new rules after Thomas beat Olympic silver medalist Emma Weyant by 1.75sec to win NCAA gold in the women’s 500-yard freestyle in 2022.

CURRENT SITUATION

In a scientific document that informed its decision, it said swimmers such as Thomas retained significant physical advantages – in endurance, power, speed, strength and lung size – from undergoing male puberty, even after reducing their testosterone levels through medication.

When the 2019 USA swimming team announced that Lia Thomas was competing alongside them, there were some concerns raised. Not only because of the unfair competition but because they were forced to share a locker room with Lia, subjecting the all-female group to changing clothes in front of a man. Many of her teammates tried to speak up about this issue as many of them had faced sexual abuse in the past and it was very triggering for them to have to change their clothes in front of a biological male. The way the university responded left a lot to desire, as they were called “transphobic” and their concerns were ignored. “There were girls who were doing everything they could to avoid undressing with men,” Scanlan told an audience of a few dozen in the Iowa Memorial Union about her experience as a former teammate of transgender NCAA Division.

“At the NCAA championship, there was a girl ... and she found a janitor's closet with a dirty mop that she chose to change into to avoid undressing next to (Thomas),” Scanlan said “She did that because she felt like she had to. ... She said, ‘I don't want any distractions. I don't want to worry about it. I don't want to feel unsafe. I'm going to do what I can to make myself comfortable.’ “And that's what most girls did the entire season.” (Roberts, s. f.)

Imane Khelif: About a month ago, not a single day passed without Imane Khelif's name making headlines. One of the most significant scandals of the Paris Olympics—already controversial in many ways —involved the Algerian boxer who had previously been disqualified from the World Championships by the International Boxing Association (IBA). The disqualification was based on a test that revealed the presence of the male Y chromosome, which was considered to give her an unfair advantage over her biological female competitors. A similar scandal surrounded the Taiwanese boxer Lin Yu-ting, with both athletes winning in their respective events at the Olympics: Khelif in the women's light-welterweight and Yu-ting in the women's featherweight.

CURRENT SITUATION

Khelif is one of two boxers allowed to compete in the women's tournament despite having been excluded from last year's World Championships by the International Boxing Association (IBA) for failing to comply with eligibility criteria. As explained by IBA President Umar Kremlev, a test performed on the two athletes indicated that they have XY chromosomes, characteristic of biological males, thus disqualifying them as women.

She was found in the spotlight after her opponent Luca Hámori withdrew from the contest and refused to shake hands, claiming injustice, at the Paris Olympics. The Hungarian Boxing Association said prior to the bout it would send letters of protest to the International Olympic Committee and Hungary's Olympic committee criticizing Khalifa's ability to participate at the Olympics.

The protest from the Hungarians came two days after Khelif's first opponent, Angela Carini, withdrew from their match after a punch to the nose. Carini cried after the match and she would not pass judgment on the matter of her opponent's eligibility, according to the Associated Press, and told reporters she had never felt a punch like one of the strikes she sustained from Khelif.

Khelif's participation at the Olympics has been a subject of intense scrutiny after she was disqualified after the 2023 International Boxing Association's World Boxing Championships for allegedly failing to meet eligibility requirements for the women's competition, though the International Olympic Committee has defended her right to compete in the Paris games and called the IBA's decision arbitrary.

IBA president Umar Kremlev told reporters this week the test administered on Khelif showed elevated testosterone levels—a statement that appeared to contradict a July 31 IBA statement stating Khelif was not subject to a testosterone exam for the World Boxing Championships and was instead put through a separate test that found she had competitive advantages over other women athletes.

The IBA, which is not recognized by the IOC over transparency issues, has said the specifics of the test are confidential—though Kremlev alleged to Russian news agency TASS last year Khelif had XY chromosomes (Kremlev did not disclose testing details or evidence for the claim).

CURRENT SITUATION

Michael Phelps: He is a former competitive swimmer. He is the most successful olympian of all time with a total of 28 medals. He has been criticized because of certain physical traits that give him a certain advantage over other athletes. Swimmers have been known for having long torsos and “short” legs than the average person. Phelps has a torso of a man who’s 2 meters tall and the legs of a man 20 cm shorter. His large chest which enables him to power himself through the water. It also means his legs produce less drag (or water resistance) with each stroke

Like many swimmers, Phelps has hyperextended joints, but his double-jointed ankles bend 15% more than his rivals. Paired with size 14 feet, his legs act like flippers, thrusting him through the water. He is also hyper-jointed in the chest. That means he can kick from his chest instead of just his ribs, giving him more force with each stroke. Double-jointed elbows allow Phelps to create more downward thrust in the water. His large hands also act like paddles.

Our bodies produce lactic acid in response to high intensity activity, and lactic acid makes you tired and sore. Most people need a rest period to flush the lactic acid out of their muscles before they can perform again.

Researchers have found that Phelps produces half the lactic acid of his competitors. These low levels of lactic acid mean Phelps can recover quickly, which can be especially helpful when pushing through grueling training sessions

Hannah Arensman and Austin Killips: Arensman was fourth on that Hartford winter’s day, two seconds adrift of Austin Killips, who this month sparked a global furor by becoming the first transgender cyclist to win a globally-sanctioned stage race, at the Tour of the Gila in New Mexico. She had reasons for believing it had not been a fair fight, given that Killips carried all the residual benefits of male puberty – larger bones, stronger muscles, longer levers, greater lung capacity – and only took up the sport in 2019 after embarking on hormone therapy, writing a blog about the transition process under the name “Oestro Junkie”.

CURRENT SITUATION

Hannah Arseman said to The Telegraph on May 19th 2023: “Here was somebody who wouldn't keep up very well with the elite guys, but who was doing fine keeping up with the elite women. It was disappointing, knowing that Killips was taking hormones to suppress testosterone. Every woman in these races has trained so hard to be there. There aren't very many of us. Yes, it is exciting to receive payouts equal to the men's, to see women's numbers grow. But then to have a biological male jump in and start taking our records? There is no fairness to it.”

“I had no desire to be anywhere near Killips, it became more and more difficult for me to hang around the finish line to congratulate my rivals, because Killips would be there, parading around in front of the cameras. It was sickening. What are you celebrating? You just beat women, and there's a clear unfair advantage. (Arseman, 2023)

As it stands, the policy of the International Cycling union is that biological males can race as women so long as they prove they have reduced their testosterone serum levels below 2.5 nanomoles per liter over a two-year period. The average testosterone level for a woman is between 0.5 and 2.4 nmol/l.



POSITION OF EACH DELEGATION

World Aquatics

Just under a year ago, World Athletics announced that it would prohibit athletes who have gone through male puberty from participating in women's world rankings competitions.

"Those regulations are here to stay, and if we have to defend them, we will, and we'll defend them on the basis that it is absolutely vital that we protect, we defend, we preserve the female category."

When the ruling was announced in March of last year, Coe said that the decision came after deliberation with groups including World Athletics member federations, the Global Athletics Coaches Academy and the International Olympic Committee, as well as representative transgender and human rights groups.

International Olympic Committee (IOC)

For the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics, the new guidelines require transgender women to have completed their transition before the age of 12 to be eligible to compete in the women's category. This rule is intended to prevent any perceived unfair advantages that might arise from undergoing male puberty. In addition, at least 10 Olympic sports have restricted the participation of transgender athletes. These include sports like athletics, cycling, swimming, rugby, rowing, and boxing.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

The NCAA's policy on transgender athletes is based on an approach that aligns with guidelines from national governing bodies. This policy was updated in 2022 to align with the U.S. Olympic Committee, requiring transgender athletes to meet specific testosterone levels determined by each sport. But now, the NCAA is under pressure to impose a political law on transgender athletes that makes progressives and conservatives happy. This law banned trans women from competing in women's sports.

POSITION OF EACH DELEGATION

United States

The United States is in a mixed position because of the federal stance and the state policies and popular opinion. The federal stance supports the inclusion of transgender athletes in sports according to their gender identity. In 2022, the department of education proposed to ensure protections for transgender students in sports. However, this does not mandate uniform policies across all states or levels of competition. The state policies assure that many U.S states have proposed laws restricting transgender athletes participation, specifically women's in female's sports. Also the popular opinion affects especially when the majority of Americans now (69%) than in 2021 (62%) say transgender athletes should only be allowed to compete in sports that conform with their birth gender.

Knowing this, the U.S. position at international forums like the United Nations often aligns with promoting human rights and non-discrimination, which includes advocating for the rights of transgender individuals. However, the country's internal divisions complicate this stance on the global stage.

Argentina

Argentina has been a progressive leader in terms of LGBTQ+ rights, including the rights of transgender individuals. This progressive stance also extends to sports, where the country has implemented inclusive policies to ensure the participation of transgender athletes. Some associations such as the Argentine Football Association (AFA), have begun to implement policies that allow transgender athletes to participate in competitions according to their gender identity.

France

France is generally supportive of transgender rights, aligning with its broader human rights commitments. The country has been progressive in recognizing the rights of transgender individuals, and this extends to participation in sports. French law prohibits discrimination based on gender identity, and this principle applies in sporting contexts.

POSITION OF EACH DELEGATION

Norway and Australia

Norway and Australia strongly support the inclusion of transgender athletes in sports, emphasizing that sports should be accessible to all, regardless of gender identity. The country believes that everyone should have the right to participate in sports in a manner consistent with their gender identity. Norway and Australia strongly support the inclusion of transgender athletes in sports, emphasizing that sports should be accessible to all, regardless of gender identity. The country believes that everyone should have the right to participate in sports in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

New Zealand and Germany

Both countries strongly support the rights of transgender individuals, including their participation in sports. The country's advocates for policies that promote inclusivity and respect for human rights in sports, allowing transgender athletes to compete in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

United Kingdom

The UK is committed to promoting equality and inclusivity in all aspects of society, including sports. But there are concerns regarding the potential advantages that transgender women might have in certain sports due to physiological differences. And it also emphasizes the importance of basing decisions on scientific research and medical guidelines.

Qatar

Qatar is a conservative Muslim-majority country where LGBTQ+ rights are limited. Homosexuality is illegal, and there is no legal recognition for transgender individuals. Qatar emphasizes the importance of maintaining traditional and religious values, including in sports. The country would likely advocate for policies that align with its conservative stance, ensuring that participation in sports aligns with gender norms as understood in Islamic principles. The transgenders athletes in this country are not respected and suffer severe discrimination.

POSITION OF EACH DELEGATION

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has a similar position as Qatar. Saudi Arabia's policies and societal norms are deeply influenced by Islamic law, which traditionally does not recognize gender transition. Saudi Arabia adheres to strict gender segregation in many aspects of public life, including sports. This segregation extends to sports facilities and competitions, which might influence their position on integrating transgender athletes. Also there is limited legal recognition of transgender individuals in Saudi Arabia, which can affect their participation in sports.

Poland and Hungary

Opinion of both countries, Poland and Hungary of transgender athletes in sports can be very complex because it has generally been conservative compared to some other European countries. Both countries tend to have conservative views on social issues, including transgender rights. This could translate into a more cautious or restrictive stance on transgender participation in sports. Poland might refer to or support guidelines set by international sports organizations, like the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which have specific criteria for transgender athletes. These criteria typically include hormone levels and transition periods. And recently, Hungary has implemented regulations that impact transgender individuals in sports.

Russia

Russia has been known for its conservative stance on LGBTQ+ rights. Russia emphasizes traditional values and may resist international pressure or recommendations on LGBTQ+ issues, including transgender rights in sports. Also Russia punishes any hint of homosexuality and does not support any athlete from the LGBTQ+ community.

POSITION OF EACH DELEGATION

China

China, as Russia, has had a conservative stance on LGBTQ+ issues, including transgender rights. However, there's been some progress in recent years. China's laws on transgender issues are relatively limited and traditional views in China may influence the acceptance and inclusion of transgender individuals in sports. There may be significant cultural resistance or lack of awareness.

Iraq

Iraq's position on LGBTQ rights is highly restrictive, with the country offering little to no legal protection for LGBTQ individuals. Same-sex relationships are not explicitly illegal under Iraq's penal code, but LGBTQ people face significant societal discrimination, violence, and persecution. Authorities have been accused of failing to protect LGBTQ individuals from attacks, including from militia groups, and often the perpetrators are not held accountable. There are no anti-discrimination laws to protect LGBTQ individuals, and same-sex marriage is not recognized. Public expression of LGBTQ identities is dangerous, with people risking harassment, imprisonment, or even death. In addition, LGBTQ individuals often face hostility from both the government and society, and they struggle to access healthcare and legal support.

In Iraq, LGBTQ individuals face significant challenges in all areas of life, including sports. There are no formal protections or policies in place that support LGBTQ athletes. The stigma and discrimination against LGBTQ individuals in society extend into sports, where openly identifying as LGBTQ can lead to exclusion, harassment, or even violence. Due to Iraq's conservative cultural and religious views, athletes who are part of the LGBTQ community tend to remain closeted to avoid backlash, both from the public and within the sports community. There are no known LGBTQ sports organizations or initiatives in Iraq, and the lack of acceptance makes it difficult for LGBTQ athletes to compete openly and safely.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

We are able to provide you with possible solutions for the making right of the situation of transgenders in sports. These possible solutions are meant to guide you throughout your research but we greatly encourage you to investigate deeper into the topic and create your own solutions to present

- **Inclusive Policies with Fairness Guidelines:** Create policies that allow transgender athletes to compete in accordance with their gender identity while establishing clear, fair guidelines. These might include specific criteria for hormone levels and transition periods to ensure competitive equity.
- **Category Adjustments:** Introduce additional categories or divisions in sports to accommodate different athletes. Not only a category for men's and women's.
- **Educational Programs:** Implement educational programs for athletes, coaches, and officials to foster understanding and respect for transgender individuals. This can help create a more inclusive environment and reduce discrimination.
- **Case-by-Case Assessment:** Establish a case-by-case assessment process for transgender athletes that considers individual circumstances and ensures that policies are applied fairly and consistently.



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