

Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes

Project Report

**Exploring Diversity in an Interstitial
Urban Locale: The LGBTQ+
Communities of Spanish Ceuta**

Dr Hendrik J. Kraetzschmar

Prof Richard Cleminson

Dr Andrew Delatolla

Mr Pablo Núñez Díaz

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This report is dedicated to all members of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities, many of whom have volunteered their precious time to discuss with us at times highly personal experiences of queer life in the city. Thank you! We very much cherished our conversations with each one of you and are immensely grateful for the time you spent answering our many questions.

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From left Andrew Delatolla, Hendrik Kraetzschmar, Richard Cleminson & Pablo Nuñez

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Executive Summary

This report presents a first comprehensive sociological account of the LGBTQ+ communities of Spanish Ceuta. The report was commissioned by the *Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes* and produced by a team of researchers from the University of Leeds including Dr Hendrik Kraetzschmar, Prof Richard Cleminson and Dr Andrew Delatolla. In its findings, the report draws on two field visits to Ceuta in June and September 2022 and a total of 32 semi-structured interviews conducted with members from the city's lesbian, gay and bisexual communities as well as with representatives from local trade unions, political parties, youth organisations, healthcare providers and the local and national governments.

The starting premise of this report is the *interstitial* character of Spanish Ceuta which we detect not only in the city's geographic disconnect from mainland Spain and its land border with, and cultural connections to, Morocco, but in the economic, cultural and religious diversity that mark its society and position it at the intersection of North Africa and Europe and the Global South and North more broadly. Homing in on the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities, this report seeks to uncover whether, and if so, how this interstitial character has had any bearing on local life experiences in the city. Aspects of LGBTQ+ life thus explored include early adolescence and coming out experiences, perceptions of safety and well-being in the city, including experiences of LGBTQ+phobia, practices of, and attitudes towards, public displays of affection, out- and in-migratory intentions, the availability of safe spaces as well as organised LGBTQ+ advocacy and activism.

In summary, this report

- ❖ affirms an epistemological position that emphasises the subjective experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals in Ceuta and elsewhere, each carrying value and significance in their own right,
- ❖ recognises the limited representativeness of the data (small sample size) and thus the need to avoid any stereotyping and/or engaging in broader generalisations,
- ❖ showcases the diversity of attitudes towards the city extant among Ceutans identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual, including on queer life,
- ❖ presents evidence to suggest that for many factors such as locality, family context, religion/religiosity trigger/heighten minority stress, particularly with regards to coming out processes, perceptions of safety and anonymity in the city, public displays of affection and out-migratory intentions,
- ❖ critically reflects on the absence of dedicated safe spaces in the city for the LGBTQ+ communities, and on current plans for the establishment of several LGBTQ+ associations,

- ❖ highlights the limited availability of dedicated services for the local LGBTQ+ communities, including a hotline, and questions the absence of city-wide relationship and sex education in secondary school settings.

In its conclusion, the report presents several recommendations for improving queer life in the city, most notably with regards to the establishment and activities of an LGBTQ+ association and its involvement with local healthcare providers and educational institutions in raising LGBTQ+ awareness and levels of service provision for its communities.

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List of Abbreviations

AMLEGA	Asociación Melillense de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales
IEC	Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes
INGESA	Instituto Nacional de Gestión Sanitaria
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
PDA	Public display of affection

Introduction

1.1. Research Agenda and Questions

Ceuta is an unusual place: while its legal status as a Spanish enclave makes the city part of Europe, it is geographically part of North Africa. As such, the city exists at the intersection of politics, culture, language and religion that distinguish Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), making Ceuta a distinctive place of coexistence, intercultural exchange and tension. The territory is therefore not merely at the Spanish/European periphery but is actually a centre of subtle cultural fusion where Spanish and European features merge with influences of the Moroccan and Arab-Islamic spheres as well as the wider MENA.

As Ceuta is a Spanish autonomous city, the constitutional and legal framework of the mainland applies as the sovereign law of the land, Rights guaranteed under the European Convention of Human Rights are fully applicable to all Ceutan inhabitants. Hence there is legal protection for LGBTQ+ individuals against discrimination and, as in the rest of Spain, they are accorded equal rights, including marriage and adoption rights. This legal situation is in stark contrast to the legal environment in neighbouring Morocco — as in fact in most states of the MENA region as well as those of Sub-Saharan Africa — where same-sex sexuality remains a criminal offence, socially transgressive and delinquent from a religious standpoint.¹

This research programme aims to investigate LGBTQ+ communities in Ceuta, an urban enclave that, being marked by its peripheral location off the coast of mainland Spain, is decidedly *interstitial* in character. Homing in on this interplay between peripherality and interstitiality, the project seeks to understand how the combination of these characteristics influences the lives of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ population, particularly with regards to expressions of sexuality, identity, community and social organisation. By interstitial, we refer to the geographic, legal, social, economic, cultural and religious trademarks that characterise Ceuta's state of in-betweenness. The definition thus takes into account, but also moves beyond, the mere fact that the territory is geographically disconnected and relatively remote from mainland Spain (so too are, in fact, the Balearic Islands), being situated in Morocco/North Africa. It recognises the religious-cultural influences of Islam and Christianity, as well as the minority

¹ Girijashanker, S. and D.W. Leebron. *Activism and Resilience: LGBTQ Progress in the Middle East and North Africa. Case Studies from Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia*. OutRight Action International Publication (2018). Available at: <http://www.suarakita.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Activism-and-Resilience-LGBTQ-Progress-in-the-Arabic-speaking-States-in-the-Middle-East-and-North-Africa-Region.pdf>; Figueredo, M. A. *An Examination of Factors that Catalyze LGBTQ Movements in Middle Eastern and North African Authoritarian Regimes*. Diss. Portland State University (2015).

Hindu and Jewish religions, which position the enclave at the junction of Europe and the MENA. It also takes account of socio-economic realities that demarcate the Global South and North with the enclaves at the intersection of both economic spheres. Most importantly, it considers manifestations of social, economic, cultural and religious diversity, which in the case of Ceuta are apparent in the denominational and ethnic composition of their local populations (~40% of the population are Muslims, compared to 2.3% in mainland Spain) as well as the segregation of residential areas along class and religious lines and the conflation of religious-cultural influences in an emphasis on the widely evoked spirit of intra-communal coexistence (referred to by some as “convivencia”).²

It is this interstitial quality of Ceuta that renders the enclave qualitatively distinct from other ordinary towns and cities on the Spanish mainland and informs the formulation of two principal research objectives:

1. To understand how LGBTQ+ individuals negotiate the complex relations between nationhood, subjectivity, religion, and sexuality in the interstitial urban locale of Ceuta.
2. To explore how the interstitial nature of Ceuta engenders or impedes self-identification with the queer communities and affects the everyday lives of Ceutans identifying as LGBTQ+.

The research programme is pathbreaking both on empirical and theoretical grounds. Empirically, it offers new insights into LGBTQ+ life in Ceuta. To date, LGBTQ+ issues in the enclave remain decidedly underresearched, although some work was recently conducted in the neighbouring Spanish city of Melilla by Rafael Robles Reina Inmaculada Alemany-Arrebola, and Miguel Ángel Gallardo-Vigil.³ Their work – which has yet to be replicated in Ceuta – focusses on broader societal attitudes towards homosexuality in Melilla and is hence qualitatively distinct from our focus on the lived experiences and activities of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities. The empirical insights obtained from the Ceutan case will form the basis for the formulation of a set of testable hypotheses to be subsequently explored against evidence from other interstitial locales, such as can be found, e.g., in Melilla, the French

² Moffette, D. "Muslim Ceuties, Migrants, and Porteadores: Race, Security, and Tolerance at the Spanish-Moroccan Border". *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 38.4 (2013), pp. 601-622; Moffette, D. "Convivencia and Securitization: Ordering and Managing Migration in Ceuta (Spain)". *Journal of Legal Anthropology* 1.2 (2010), pp. 189-211; González Enriquez, C. "Ceuta and Melilla: Clouds over the African Spanish Towns. Muslim Minorities, Spaniards' Fears and Morocco–Spain Mutual Dependence". *The Journal of North African Studies* 12.2 (2007), pp. 219-234.

³ Reina, R. R., I. Alemany-Arrebola, and M.A. Gallardo-Vigil. "Actitudes prejuiciosas hacia las personas homosexuales en estudiantes universitarios en Melilla". *MODULEMA. Revista científica sobre Diversidad Cultural* 1 (2017) pp. 165-186.

overseas departments of Mayotte, Réunion or French Guyana and the Dutch overseas municipalities of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Sada.

Importantly, the research programme contributes to theory-development by opening up a new direction in the study of LGBTQ+ peripheries and peripheralisation. Over the past decade, this literature has made significant strides in decentering and decolonising LGBTQ+ studies away from its onus on the metropolises of the Global North to understanding queer life in ordinary towns and cities as well as rural locales. As part of this shift in focus, scholars have warned against the production of simple urban-rural binaries and highlighted the need for new insights into local manifestations of queer subcultures, norms, and communities that can be found in these non-metropolitan settings and how these interact with globalised LGBTQ+ models and discourses.⁴ Adding a layer of complexity to this debate, our research programme promises to enrich this evolving field of scholarship a) by problematising further the centre-periphery dichotomy in the context of Ceuta which, while geographically remote from the 'queer' metropolises of Spain/EU, has acted historically as a local hub and 'safe haven' for LGBTQ+ individuals from Morocco and further afield, and b) by focussing attention onto a hitherto neglected sub-set of peripheral locales – the *interstitial* enclave or overseas territory – and their impact on the construction of LGBTQ+ sexualities, identities and social organisation.

1.2. Research Design and Methodology

This research programme was designed as a pilot case study with a purposefully narrow investigative remit on Ceuta and its LGBTQ+ communities. The rationale behind this choice of case design was twofold. First, taking account of the dearth of empirical research on this minority demographic in Ceuta, it allowed the project team to focus on exploring in-depth key aspects of LGBTQ+ life in the autonomous city and thus generate new insights. Second, based on the materials generated, it enabled the project team to formulate a set of tentative theoretical propositions on LGBTQ+ life in peripheral interstitial locales, which the team will test and develop further as part of a more extensive comparative research programme involving a wider range of interstitial settings such as can be found in neighbouring Melilla and some of the European overseas territories off the coast of Africa, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

⁴ Stone, A.L. "The Geography of Research on LGBTQ Life: Why Sociologists should Study the South, Rural Queers, and Ordinary Cities". *Sociology Compass* 12.11 (2018); Hartal, G. "Becoming Periphery: Israeli LGBT" Peripheralization". *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 14.2 (2015); Brown, G. "Urban (Homo) Sexualities: Ordinary Cities and Ordinary Sexualities". *Geography Compass* 2.4 (2008), pp. 1215–1231.

Empirical data was gathered employing qualitative methods, involving in-depth conversations with members of the local LGBTQ+ communities as well as relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions and organisations. Qualitative data collection tools were selected given their propensity to best capture the subjective experiences of Ceutans identifying as LGBTQ+, as well as the interstitial setting within which these are shaped. As Mark and Stoker underscore, qualitative methods are particularly appropriate for such research as they are good 'at capturing meaning, process and context'.⁵

As is required by the University of Leeds, prior to start of the research programme the project team prepared and submitted for approval a rigorous ethical review, detailing how we ensure the dignity, safety and anonymity of all our research participants throughout, and how we guarantee all data gathered is stored securely and treated confidentially.

Interviews and Field Visits

Over the course of the past two years, the project team conducted a total of 38 interviews with 32 research participants. These included 20 members of the local LGBTQ+ communities as well as 12 representatives from a diverse range of public bodies, comprising political parties, trade unions, youth associations, the teaching profession, public health and educational government departments as well as local government and assembly officials. Table 1 below provides an overview of the public bodies interviewed.

Table 1: Interviews with Public Bodies/Organisations

Governmental Institutions	Non-Governmental Institutions/Organisations
Ministerio de Trabajo y Económica Social; Dirección Provincial Ceuta	Comisiones Obreras de Ceuta
Ministerio de Educación y Formación Provincial, Dirección Provincial Ceuta	Consejo de la Juventud de la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta
Consejería de Sanidad, plan sobre SIDA, VIH y otras ITS	Ceuta Ya (Ceuta Now)
Instituto Nacional de Gestión Sanitaria (INGESA)	Roja Directa
Diputado del Grupo Partido Socialista Obrero Español	

Most of the interviews with members of the local LGBTQ+ communities (14 out of 22) were conducted virtually by members of the project team between November 2020 and May 2022. The remaining eight interviews, as well as those with representatives from various public bodies, were conducted on site in June and September 2022. Interviews lasted on average between 30 minutes and two hours

⁵ March, D. and G. Stoker. *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Palgrave Macmillan (2002), p. 199.

and covered a broad range of subjects relevant to probing LGBTQ+ life experiences in Ceuta. These included questions on:

- a) childhood, schooling and coming out experiences,
- b) (sexual) identity, sense of belonging and community,
- c) Ceuta as a place of residence compared to mainland Spain,
- d) personal safety and experiences of homophobia,
- e) social organisation and activism, as well as on
- f) education and public service provision.

Appendix A at the bottom of this report provides a sample set of semi-structured questions used for interviews with members of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities whilst Appendix C offers a full list of the research participants interviewed, including the date and location of these interviews.

All interviews followed a semi-structured setup. This meant that whilst pre-determined questions were set, there was flexibility to the order in which they were asked as well as their phrasing. We opted for this interviewing technique because it offered an opportune structure for us to explore a set of topic areas deemed relevant to our investigation, without however closing-down any opportunities for the discussions of new and/or different ideas, thoughts and issues by our research participants. For research participants from the LGBTQ+ communities the semi-structured interviews were accompanied by a short questionnaire collating information amongst others on a participant's age, place of birth and residence, educational attainment, employment, income, religiosity, as well as (self-defined) sexual and gender identities. The questionnaire is attached in Appendix B of this report and some of its key findings are presented in the following section.



Project team visit to the Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes, September 2022.

Funded by the *Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes* (IEC), the research involved two field visits to Ceuta which were organised by our local team member Pablo Nuñez. The field visits offered the project team a vital opportunity to get to know and explore first-hand the geography of the city, its urban configuration, neighbourhoods, and LGBTQ+ communities. As spelled out in our funding application to the IEC, the first visit (12-18 June 2022) was undertaken by Drs Kraetzschmar and Delatolla and largely dedicated to data gathering in the form of semi-structured interviews. A second field visit then followed in September 2022 (12-17 September) which included Prof Cleminson and again Drs Kraetzschmar and Delatolla. This time the focus of the visit revolved around the presentation of our preliminary findings to members of the LGBTQ+ communities as well as the wider public. To this end we organised a closed workshop on Thursday 15 September 2022 at the *Consejo de la Juventud de la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta* to which we invited all our LGBTQ+ research participants as well as any other interested members of the community, and which was dedicated to initiating a frank and open discussion about our findings. Our decision to limit attendance to members of the LGBTQ+ communities was informed by a desire to provide a confidential and safe space for community members to critically engage with our preliminary findings. The workshop was attended by eight members of the local LGBTQ+ communities and engendered a vivid debate, particularly on issues around wider societal acceptance of LGBTQ+ people in Ceuta.



LGBTQ+ in Ceuta workshop, September 2022

To engage the wider Ceutan public with our research finding, the project team also conducted two rounds of press interviews with journalists from local newspapers. These interviews appeared in *El Foro de Ceuta* on 16 September 2022 (<https://elforodeceuta.es/ceuta-un-enclave-unico-de-coexistencia-intercultural-para-la-comunidad-lgtbiq-segun-la-universidad-de-leeds/>) and in *El Faro de Ceuta* on 18 September 2022 (<https://elfarodeceuta.es/diversidad-sexual-ceuta-busca-mas-tolerancia/>).⁶

LGBTQ+ Research Participants

Upon commencing the research programme, the project team set itself the stated ambition of exploring LGBTQ+ life experiences to their fullest in order to generate findings that are largely reflective/representative of the diversity marking its communities. Cognisant of Ceuta's unusual demography, this meant we not only sought to interview a sample of research participants from across all letters of the LGBTQ+ denominator as well as across generations and socio-economic standing, but from across the different religious denominations making the city their home (Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Jewish faiths).

As is evident from the socio-demographic data presented below, the project team was partially successful in this quest for representativeness. On socio-demographic markers such as age, residency, educational attainment and income, our sample of research participants from the LGBTQ+ communities is relatively diverse, although of course not strictly speaking in the distribution of participants across relevant sub-categories. Regarding age and educational attainment, for instance, we were able to interview Ceutans identifying as LGBTQ+ from across the generational divide as well as those hailing from vastly different income brackets (see tables 2 & 3), thus capturing the possible impact of these two socio-economic markers on personal life experiences. The same applies to levels of educational attainment which again varies rather markedly across our sample of research participants, ranging from those without much formal education beyond high school to those holding postgraduate degrees (see table 4).

⁶ Additionally, we presented our preliminary findings to academic audiences at the British Society for Middle East Studies (BRISMES) Annual Conference in July 2022 and to the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies LGBTQ+ Network at the University of Leeds in December 2022.

Table 2: Research Participants by Age Group

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
18-29 years old	9	41.0
30-39 years old	4	18.2
40-49 years old	7	31.8
50-59 years old	1	4.5
60-69 years old	1	4.5
70-79 years old	0	0.0
80-89 years old	0	0.0

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

Table 3: Research Participants by Annual Income

<i>Income</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less than €5,000	3	17.6
€10,000 - €19,999	6	35.3
€20,000 – €34,999	3	17.6
€35,000 – €49,999	2	11.8
€50,000 – €74,999	0	0.0
€75,000 – €99,999	0	0.0
€100,000 – and above	0	0.0
Prefer not to answer ¹	3	17.6

¹ This includes participants with no earnings at the time of the interview.

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

Table 4: Research Participants by Educational Attainment

<i>Educational Attainment</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
No schooling completed	0	0.0
Primary School only	0	0.0
Secondary/High School	4	18.8
Trade/technical/vocational training	7	31.8
Bachelor's Degree	5	22.7
Master's Degree	6	27.3
Doctorate	0	0.0
Prefer not to answer	0	0.0

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

As regards to area of birth/upbringing and current residency, we managed to interview research participants hailing from the different districts of the city, including the downtown area and some of Ceuta's more suburban and peripheral neighbourhoods, as well as participants who had spent considerable time living and/or working on the Spanish mainland or elsewhere in Europe. With this data in hand, the project team was able to explore possible differences in LGBTQ+ life experiences not only across Ceuta's urban geography but between Ceuta and the rest of Spain and Europe.

Table 5: Research Participants by Area of Upbringing & Current Residency

<i>Districts</i>	Birth/Upbringing		Current Residency	
	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
District 1	2	10.0	10	47.6
District 2	2	10.0	4	19.0
District 3	0	0.0	0	0.0
District 4	1	5.0	0	0.0
District 5	3	15.0	4	19.0
District 6	5	25.0	2	9.5
Outside Ceuta	7	35.0	1	4.7

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

On identity markers, such as self-defined ethnicity and religious affiliation, meanwhile, our sample of members of the local LGBTQ+ communities is evidently little representative of Ceuta's socio-demographics (see tables 6-8). Most of our research participants, for instance, claimed European heritage (68.2%), with only a minority identifying as either Arab, African, or as having multiple ethnicities. This also applies to religious affiliation, where again a plurality of research participants professed to a Christian identity (36.4%), whilst only a minority stated they are of Muslim faith. Although it is likely that several of our research participants with Muslim backgrounds identified as atheist, the sample nevertheless significantly underrepresents Ceuta's Muslim community which accounts for about 44 percent of the total population.

Table 6: Research Participants by (Self-Defined) Ethnicity

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
African	0	0.0
Arab	4	18.2
European	15	68.2
Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity	2	9.0
Prefer not to answer	0	0.0
Other	1	4.5

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

Table 7: Research Participants by Religious Affiliation

<i>Religious Affiliation</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Atheist (do not believe in God)	6	27.3
Christian	8	36.4
Hindu	1	4.5
Jewish	0	0.0
Muslim	3	13.6
Prefer not to answer	1	4.5
Other	3	13.6

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

As is evident in tables 8 and 9, on gender and sexual orientation, lastly, the sample of research participants is also somewhat lopsided. There are noticeably more male than female respondents in

our sample, a fact that is also reflected in the distribution of participants by sexual orientation, with gay men making up half of those interviewed.

Table 8: Research Participants by Self-Defined Gender

<i>Gender</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Female	8	36.4
Intersex	0	0.0
Male	12	54.5
Non-binary	1	4.5
Transgender	0	0.0
Prefer not to answer	0	0.0
Other ¹	1	4.5

¹ Participant does not care about gender identities.

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

Table 9: Research Participants by Sexual Orientation

<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	<i>No. Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Asexual	0	0.0
Bisexual	6	27.3
Gay	11	50.0
Lesbian	4	18.2
Pansexual	0	0.0
Prefer not to answer	0	0.0
Other ¹	1	4.5

¹ One participant defined himself as heterosexual.

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

Sample Size, Limitations and Data Analysis

In line with the ethics clearance obtained from the University of Leeds, our field research in Ceuta focussed exclusively on adult members of the local LGBTQ+ population. Thus circumscribed, our sample population neither included any children and/or adolescents nor any LGBTQ+ refugees or trans-border Moroccans identifying as LGBTQ+. We are cognisant of the fact, of course, that these groups form a vital part of the fabric that makes up Ceutan LGBTQ+ life and will endeavour to explore their voices and experiences in future field visits.

We also recognise that the project was unable to follow through with maximum variation purposive sampling to ensure the sample of research participants fully reflected the diversity extant within the local LGBTQ+ communities both in terms of sexual orientation and self-defined gender as well as with regards to ethno-religious background. There were two factors that impeded us from adopting this sampling technique. For one, with no prior connection to the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities, we were reliant on Pablo Nuñez' network of pre-existing contacts as well as their willingness, through snowball sampling, to connect us to other prospective research participants. Overall, this worked well, but did

mean that in the end we interviewed many more gay men than any other members of the local LGBTQ+ communities. Second, we also faced a particular challenge in reaching out to, and encouraging the participation of, Muslim members of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities. Possibly, this is a result of the fact that for many Muslim Ceutans identifying as LGBTQ+ it is still proving difficult to lead open lives in their local communities, neighbourhoods, and families.

Whilst by the end of the second field visit the project team felt sufficiently confident it had reached an acceptable level of data saturation, with new research participants presenting little to no new thematic insight, we recognise that – given the issue of representativeness just highlighted – we face certain limitations as to how we can read and interpret this data and present our findings. Taking these limitations into account, going forward, this report will refrain from presenting any generalised assumptions about Ceuta's LGBTQ+ communities. Not only would this be tantamount to stereotyping a diverse range of non-heterosexual communities, identities, and life experiences, but – given a lack of substantive data on trans and other queer Ceutans – constitute an outright misrepresentation of our findings. Instead, we will carefully delineate the parameters of our conclusions and recommendations to refer exclusively to members of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities in the enclave.⁷ With this being an exploratory case study based on a qualitative methodology, we in fact go one step further and ascertain throughout this report our epistemological position that there is no single objective reality characterising gay, lesbian and bisexual lives in the city, and that instead we are dealing with multiple subjective life experiences that each carry value and significance in their own right.

1.3. Research Ethics

As is required by the University of Leeds, the project team submitted for approval a rigorous ethical review, detailing how we ensure the dignity and safety/anonymity of all our research participants throughout, and how we guarantee all data gathered will be stored securely and treated confidentially. The University of Leeds approved our ethics review on 22 March 2022 (FAHC 20-014) and well ahead of the June and September 2022 field visits to Ceuta.

In line with the ethics review obtained, the project team explained the purpose of our research programme to all research participants at the beginning of an interview and only recorded

⁷ We emphasise here that this limitation on the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities is an unintended consequence of our field research and by no means a reflection of our positionality towards transgender and any other queer people. We categorically deplore any form of transphobia.

conversations for which we had obtained prior verbal consent. These recordings, as well as all transcripts and completed survey questionnaires, have been stored securely on the University of Leeds OneDrive and deleted from any portable devices. All interview recordings as well as transcripts and questionnaires were anonymised to ensure the confidentiality of our research participants. This applies also to this report which will not present any information that could reveal the identity of individual research participants.

The Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Communities of Ceuta

If the Spanish national average is anything to go by, then we can speculate that out of a population of roughly 85,000 Ceutans, roughly 12 percent (or just shy of 10,000 inhabitants) identify as LGBTQ+.⁸ This, of course, is a mere ballpark figure, given that we neither have any precise census data to hand nor any breakdown of these numbers by region and/or city. It is also a figure that is likely to vary due to in-migration of LGBTQ+ refugees⁹ and out-migratory movements from within the local LGBTQ+ resident population, both of which are particularly pronounced in the Ceutan context.

This said, and factoring in these migratory dynamics, we are likely to be dealing with an LGBTQ+ population in Ceuta in the several thousands and thus with a sizeable chunk of the city's total population and one that is larger than the local Hindu and Jewish minority communities combined. Understanding the lives and challenges of the local LGBTQ+ communities is thus not simply a niche matter of interest only to its members and a select number of interested scholars and activists, but ought to be of vital concern to decision-makers and the voluntary sector in the enclave. What follows below is a first rigorous attempt at mapping the everyday life of Ceutans identifying as lesbian, gay and bisexual, their experiences of, and feelings towards, living and working in the city, as well as their social organisation. It is hoped that in so doing, this report will provide useful points of reflection and discussion not only for members of these communities, but for the local voluntary sector and policy makers, particularly with regards to shaping policy on social inclusion, public service provision and affirmative action.

⁸ According to a 2021 Ipsos survey on the issue conducted in 27 countries about 12 percent of the Spanish population self-identify as non-heterosexual. See: Burke, D. "Spain has largest non-heterosexual population in Europe". *EuroWeekly*, 24 June 2021. Available at: <https://euroweeklynnews.com/2021/06/24/spain-has-largest-non-heterosexual-population-in-europe/>.

⁹ See e.g., Anon. "La organización Kifkif exige el traslado de 120 solicitantes LGTB+ que se encuentran en Ceuta y Melilla". *El Faro de Ceuta* 30 July 2020. Available at: <https://elfarodeceuta.es/kifkif-traslado-solicitantes-lgtb/>.

2.1. Coming Out Experiences

The experience of ‘coming out of the closet’, that is the process of self-disclosure of one’s sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender to family, friends and acquaintances, is a highly individual journey that is accompanied by often a rollercoaster of emotions. For those who embark on it, it is the culmination of an (at times long) process of finding and exploring one’s own sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender and riddled along the way with both feelings of confusion, anxiety, doubt, fear and distress (maybe even shame/self-hatred) as well as a sense of relief and elation of finally being able to lead one’s life fully in the open. Research has shown, moreover, that the coming out process itself tends to be highly variable, with both personal traits (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity and individual piety) and social/environmental factors (e.g., relations with parents, geographic location, prevailing gender attitudes, available support infrastructure) affecting the timing as well as the experiences of such self-disclosure.¹⁰

In the Ceutan context too the coming out experiences of our research participants have been highly variable and uneven with regards to whom they confide in. Table 10 below highlights in this regard that, whilst most participants felt comfortable opening up to (some of) their friends and acquaintances, many have yet to disclose their sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender to members of the nuclear and/or wider family. This is particularly the case with regards to the father figure who, alongside siblings, appears least likely to learn of his son or daughter’s sexual orientation/gender identity, a finding that chimes in with research conducted elsewhere suggesting that LGBTQ+ youth have often more positive relations with their mothers, both before and after coming out.¹¹

Table 10: Coming out to Family, Friends and Colleagues

Father	13	59.0%
Mother	16	72.7%
Brothers and/or sisters	13	59.0%
Other relatives	16	72.7%
Friends	22	100.0%
Neighbours	11	50.0%
Work/colleagues	18	81.8%
None	0	0.0%

Source: Questionnaire data collated by project team.

¹⁰ See e.g., Hoffarth, M.R., and A.F. Bogaert. "Opening the Closet Door: Openness to Experience, Masculinity, Religiosity, and Coming Out among Same-Sex Attracted Men". *Personality and Individual Differences* 109 (2017), pp. 215-219.

¹¹ See e.g., Cramer, D.W., and A.J. Roach. "Coming Out to Mom and Dad: A Study of Gay Males and their Relationships with their Parents". *Journal of Homosexuality* 15.3-4 (1988), pp. 79-92.

As concerns the coming out experience itself, again, there is variability across our sample of research participants from the lesbian, gay and bisexual communities. The good news is that for most of those interviewed the experience was broadly positive whether they came out in Ceuta or elsewhere in Spain. Parents, siblings, friends and acquaintances usually expressed their full acceptance and support, and on the occasion that this was not immediately forthcoming, family members tended to eventually come round to accepting their sons and/or daughters' sexual orientation.¹²

"It was easy for me. In my family it has always been something normal, something natural. In fact, I remember that my mother has been to many (LGBTQ+) organisations and every two or three years she went to Madrid and bought us Pride flags. And in my house, it has always been something normal. So, when I realised for sure that I was bisexual, it was very easy for me to express I to my family and my friends (...)." ¹³

"I have never been in the closet. It has always been a very normal thing for me, and I have never seen it differently. I have never had a problem (....) The fact of my being homosexual has not differentiated me from the rest of my siblings, from my school mates or from work." ¹⁴

"For me personally, coming out of the closet was easy, but it was a lot harder to tell my father because he was in the Civil Guard (....), so it was harder to tell him. But otherwise, I had no problems, not with my sister or my mother or my friends. Everyone knew." ¹⁵

"With regards to my family, I didn't have to sit down at any time to tell my family I am gay, or anything, because my mother, all my siblings, have known I was gay since the day I was born." ¹⁶

"I said to my parents over lunch: 'mum, father, sister, brother – I am bisexual'. (...) I was so shocked when I said that in that moment in the past my sister said: 'don't worry brother. I know it and you can be whoever you want'. And I said: 'oh thank you'. Ah yes, my mother, my father, my sisters and brother accepted me". ¹⁷

Positive too is the suggestion made by several of our research participants that generational change is afoot with regards to coming out experiences and attitudes towards same-sex sexuality in Ceuta. Indeed, as reflected in the quotations below, it is widely thought that, unlike with the elder generations, it is much easier nowadays for LGBTQ+ individuals across the city's confessional communities to confide their sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender to friends, siblings and other younger family members without fearing any adverse reactions.¹⁸ This development is to be lauded, of course, and – if sustained by rigorous educational initiatives in local schools and colleges –

¹² Interviews with e.g., AN, IT, JA, CARM, ABM, M, PT and TC.

¹³ Interview with AN.

¹⁴ Interview with G.

¹⁵ Interview with JA.

¹⁶ Interview with PT.

¹⁷ Interview with RGS.

¹⁸ Interviews with TG, RGS, G, IT, PN, N, KL, TC and YAS.

will hopefully mean that over time it becomes progressively more straightforward for members of the LGBTQ+ communities to lead openly queer lives in the city.

“Social media are talking so much about that [LGBTQ+ issues] and you can be on TikTok, and you can see a lesbian couple. And I see my sisters saying that and it is normal, you know.”¹⁹

“I can see many people of my age or older who are like me, but are still in the closet, having a heterosexual family and pretending they are not homosexual. But the young people here are mostly more openly homosexual without having the stereotypes in the way they act.”²⁰

“If their family members are much older, it is harder for them to accept it, but for young people, new parents, they are accepting their children more and they are not rejecting them.”²¹

“My siblings accept it. They realised by themselves that I like women and they always accepted me (....) They will support me and will be there for me. In contrast, my mother, well, I have tried many times (...) For her it is something very difficult, she cannot tolerate it. It would give her a heart attack.”²²

“In the 1980s and 1990s, conservative ideas were even stronger [in Ceuta] than they are right now. In both communities, being gay was hard and this was forcing people to hide themselves from others, even assuming roles that were not according to their identity. Gay people even had girlfriends or pushed themselves to marry and create heterosexual families (...) From the 1990s and 2000s this changed completely. The gay community became really popular, and it gained a lot of support from society (....). Now you can see Muslim gays. When I was a child this was something rare, something really complicated to see. And on the European Christian side of society, you can be freely gay. You will have the recognition of society in general. You can get out of the closet.”²³

“I have a 13-year old sister, and since I realised I was LGBT and since she was born, I have always thought that when she was old enough I would talk to her normally about all of this, and anything she asked me I would answer normally, because that’s what I wish others had done for me, and they did not. So, my sister is 13 years old now, and she could sit here with you and answer on behalf of the LGBT community, even better than me.”²⁴

Alongside such broadly positive experiences we also encountered, however, many accounts of instances where members of the LGBTQ+ communities have either not come out yet, particularly to their own parents, or whose coming out experiences had been described as very difficult, even traumatic. KL, N, K, TG and YAS all revealed to us that they have yet to come out to their parents, and we learned from several other research participants, who themselves may be out, that they too know of family members, friends and acquaintances in Ceuta who remain in the closet.²⁵ As KL noted, ‘I am

¹⁹ Interview with TG.

²⁰ Interview with IT.

²¹ Interview with G.

²² Interview with N.

²³ Interview with PN.

²⁴ Interview with KL.

²⁵ Interviews also with e.g., ABM, IT, RGS and N.

still in the closet with my family. (...) Now, all my friends know, obviously, but my family don't know."²⁶ According to some of our respondents, in fact, it is not unheard of for members of the LGBTQ+ communities to enter heterosexual relationships and start families, thus to never reveal their true sexual orientations and/or self-defined gender.²⁷ Although hard to verify, if correct, these accounts present a picture of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities in which many of its members feel unable still to disclose their sexual/gender identities and lead fully open queer lives.

"In Ceuta, aside from my family and how they judge me, I have had friends from the Muslim community who have judged me very much and who have caused me a lot of stress and anxiety (....) Because I come from a Muslim family, it is as if that gives them more of a right to judge me than anyone else."²⁸

"There are more hidden people among the Muslim community [in Ceuta] (....) When there is a Muslim gay/lesbian coming out, openly, and they suffer the rejection from their community, they come to the other side to be protected, or to feel identified, or feel comfortable. That is why to be gay or lesbian and Muslim is harder in Ceuta than not being Muslim."²⁹

"In the Muslim culture, it is true that I have seen that there is a problem and yes, it is true that the Muslim boys I know have not managed to come out of the closet. Never."³⁰

"I have friends on the peninsula who have been able to come out perfectly to their family, and here in Ceuta as well, and they are Muslim. So, I don't think it has anything to do with it. I think it is a personal issue. It depends on the person, and the way in which he/she approaches their own culture."³¹

"It was very hard for me, especially on a personal level, because I did not know what was happening to me. No one had ever explained being LGBTQ to me. (...) I had never met a gay person or a lesbian, nothing. I mean, I did not have any knowledge about anything, so I did not know what was happening to me. So, it was quite complicated for me, especially, to come to terms with it."³²

"I don't know what I am going to do. In some way, I want to get out of the closet, but I don't know what the consequence will be. (....) They [her family] will see me differently. I have good relations with my family. I always help them, and I am always with my family. I am a good student (...) And my mother never had problems with me so it is like, I don't know which way it is going to develop once I come out of the closet."³³

Within our sample of research participants, several reasons were cited as mitigating against self-disclosure towards family and/or friends. For a significant number of those interviewed, cultural factors loom large, with references being made to issues of religion and religiosity and their adverse effects on acceptance of same-sex sexuality. According to many of our Muslim and non-Muslim

²⁶ Interview with KL.

²⁷ Interview with e.g., IT.

²⁸ Interview with N.

²⁹ Interview with PN.

³⁰ Interview with M.

³¹ Interview with KL.

³² Ibid.

³³ Interview with TG.

participants, this is particularly the case for members of the local Arab/Muslim community, many of whom are thought to not only struggle reconciling faith and sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender (thus experiencing a form of internalised homophobia), but with homophobic attitudes in their nuclear families and wider communities, particularly from amongst the older generations.³⁴ Coming out in such circumstances is hence deemed difficult, if not impossible, unless one is prepared to sever all ties with the family and/or move away from the city.

As with any such culturalist claims, these narratives, are of course, in danger of depicting an entire community with a rather broad brush. They hence ought to be read with care and will require further critical scrutiny and unpacking, particularly as we interviewed only a relatively small sample of LGBTQ+ members from the Muslim community. They also need to be read against the fact that we have several accounts of research participants citing difficult coming out experiences for members from the Hindu and Christian communities.³⁵ Rather than it being a broader cultural issue, it thus appears to us that parental/familial conservatism and individual levels of religiosity, irrespective of religious denomination, are key culprits in shaping an individual's willingness or otherwise to self-disclose their sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender.

Gender too might play a role in this process. When asked on the matter, several of our research participants noted a marked difference particularly between gay men and lesbian women when it comes to disclosing their sexual orientation, asserting that it appears to be overall easier for men to come out than for women. This chimes in with our experience of meeting members from the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities, where many more lesbian women than gay man reported still being in the closet. Short of references to patriarchy and expectations around motherhood for women, no defining reasons were named, however, by our research participants for this difference.³⁶

The coming out experiences thus described – whilst giving us a good first sense of the situation in Ceuta and the difficulties for some in this process – is circumscribed, of course, by the limited number of LGBTQ+ participants interviewed. In actual practice we may reasonably expect, therefore, that the reality of disclosure as well as the motives underpinning non-disclosure of one's sexual orientation are much more diverse than depicted here. It is also not entirely clear from the data as to whether our

³⁴ Interviews with M, RGS, TC, YAS, N, PN, IT, K, KL, PT and A.

³⁵ Interviews with JA and K.

³⁶ Interviews with e.g., YAS and PN.

participants' accounts of their coming out experiences in Ceuta are any different from elsewhere in Spain. Responses on this front ranged from those who categorically denied the existence of any such differences, comparing Ceuta to any mid-sized town in mainland Spain, to those pointing at Ceuta's unusual social demographic, the city's proximity to Morocco and its cultural influences on parts of the population as well as to broader (societal/institutional) conservatism as barriers to leading openly queer lives.³⁷

2.2. Daily Life in Ceuta

Adult life brings with it all sorts of challenges, from the everyday household, family and work pressures to the bigger picture issues of finding employment and love, navigating social relations and friendships, dealing with physical and/or mental health concerns as well as with questions of life and death. In this research we were interested in exploring what adult life is like in Ceuta for the local LGBTQ+ communities. Specifically, we wanted to understand whether Ceutans identifying as LGBTQ+ experience any distinctive stresses/challenges above and beyond the ones most of us face in daily life, and connected to their sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender, and whether these stresses are in any form or shape tied to the enclave's distinctive demography and its unusual location as a frontier town bordering Morocco and geographically disconnected from mainland Spain. To this end we queried our research participants on broader perceptions of life in Ceuta – including their likes and dislikes of the city - as well as more specifically on issues pertaining to their sense of personal security, experiences of discrimination and LGBTQ+phobia, their willingness to show affection in public, and thus disclose their minority identity, as well as their future plans in the enclave. For those research participants who have lived in mainland Spain or abroad, moreover, we encouraged comparisons between their lives in Ceuta and elsewhere.

Within the relevant literature, the distinctive stress alluded to above is widely known as minority stress. It defines a unique type of distress experienced by members of marginalised/stigmatised minority groups (sexual, racial and ethnic) and is thought to be triggered by societal prejudices and discrimination from within dominant societal group(s) towards the minority group(s). In those exposed, minority stress can adversely affect their mental health, physical wellbeing and behaviour.³⁸ Stressors commonly associated with sexual/gender minorities include experiences and/or incidents of

³⁷ Interviews with JA, AN, A, G, N, TG and KL.

³⁸ Stammwitz, M. and J. Wessler. "A Public Context with Higher Minority Stress for LGBTQ* Couples Decreases the Enjoyment of Public Displays of Affection". *PLOS One online* 16.11 (2021). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0259102>.

“physical attacks, verbal (harassment), and para-verbal societal marginalization (e.g., a disapproving looks or spitting on the floor)” towards LGBTQ+ individuals.³⁹ In the Ceutan case, these stressors were widely reported by our sample of gay, lesbian and bisexual research participants and - alongside factors such as the enclave’s size, demography and lack of LGBTQ+ safe spaces - clearly impacted their views of the city, perceptions of safety and anonymity, public displays of affection (PDA) and out-migratory intentions.

In the following pages, we first examine wider perceptions of Ceuta as a place of residence, showcasing the breadth of views expressed within the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities on adult life in the enclave. This is then followed by a discussion of some of the distinctive stresses flagged by research participants and the impact they have had on their everyday lives. Although here again experiences are highly personal, certain commonalities/trends can be noted, particularly around experiences of homophobia, attitudes towards PDA and out-migratory intentions.

Broader Views on Ceuta

As was to be expected, for most of our research participants life in Ceuta constitutes a mixed bag, containing distinct advantages as well as disadvantages. Whilst some interviewees appeared utterly content and settled in the city, - citing amongst others job and relationship security⁴⁰ -, most felt that life in the enclave was not without its drawbacks. Quite a few participants, in fact, considered Ceuta a transient place they are determined to leave as soon as possible/feasible.

This said, broadly speaking members from the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities voiced appreciation for what they perceived as the city’s overall high living standards, its agreeable topography, and distinctive societal characteristics. Figure 1 below visualises some of these positive connotations, featuring key terms used by our sample of participants in association with Ceuta.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Interviews with e.g., G, C, IT and KL.

Figure 1: Research Participants ‘Likes’ about Ceuta ⁴¹



As concerns general living conditions, for instance, much was made of the city's small commutable size, with research participants noting that 'it is a cosy place'⁴², one that allows you to 'easily move throughout the city without spending hours in a car or on the bus'⁴³ and where 'everything is within reach'⁴⁴, including basic amenities, outdoor leisure facilities (mountains, sea and beaches), friends and family.⁴⁵ Others again, lauded the general quality of life to be had in the city as well as its cultural diversity, describing Ceuta as a 'pleasant and nice place to live',⁴⁶ and rich when it comes to its multiculturalism, manifest in the co-existence of the territory's Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Hindi communities.⁴⁷

Much of this positive commentary was accompanied, however, by at times strongly felt misgivings towards some of the city's geographic and societal givens. These concerns were raised both specifically in relation to Ceuta itself and in comparison to living experiences elsewhere in Spain and/or Europe.

⁴¹ This word cloud draws on answers provided by 11 research participants, which corresponds to the number of interviewees who responded to a question about general likes about Ceuta. The word cloud was set to contain a maximum of 40 words and the minimum frequency of words was set to 2.

⁴² Interview with KL.

⁴³ Interview with IT.

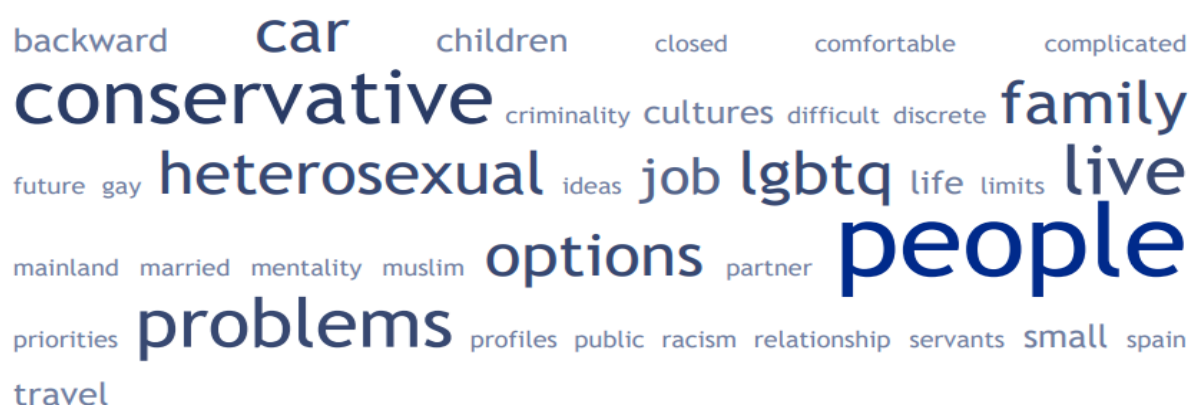
⁴⁴ Interview with JA.

⁴⁵ Interviews with e.g., JA, M and PN.

⁴⁶ Interview with C. See also interviews with G and KL.

⁴⁷ Interviews with JA, M and TC.

Figure 2: Research Participants' Dislikes about Ceuta⁴⁸



As transpires from the word cloud presented in Figure 2, most of our interviewees described Ceutan society as deeply conservative, with some going so far as to label it 'closed', 'underdeveloped', or 'inhibiting'.⁴⁹ For some, this societal conservatism was tied to the prevalence of heteronormative attitudes and lifestyles, including traditional family life, which were thought to complicate local acceptance and integration of the city's sexual/gender minorities.⁵⁰ Religious orthodoxy (across the religious spectrum) as well as the rise of right-wing nationalism were widely considered as feeding this societal conservatism, but so too was the perception of Ceuta as a garrison town with a 'military mentality' that is deemed largely traditionalist.⁵¹ Amongst many of our Muslim research participants, moreover, the geographic proximity to Morocco and the prevalence of strong cross-border familial ties were depicted as sustaining conservative attitudes towards same-sex sexuality/gender minorities amongst parts of the Arab-Ceutan population.⁵²

On the questions of whether this conservatism differs from mainland Spain, and if so how, our research participants expressed several, at times contradictory, viewpoints. For some, no such differences were detectable at all, suggesting that similar sized towns on the mainland are no less conservative and that the real difference resided between the country's smaller towns and its larger metropolitan centres.⁵³ Others again took the view that because of Ceuta's multid denominational

⁴⁸ This word cloud draws on answers provided by 10 research participants, which corresponds to the number of interviewees who responded to a question about general dislikes about Ceuta. The word cloud was set to contain a maximum of 40 words and the minimum frequency of words was set to 2.

⁴⁹ Interviews with A, JA and KL.

⁵⁰ Interviews with IT and PN.

⁵¹ Interview with PT.

⁵² Interviews with ABM, N and YAS.

⁵³ Interview with JA.

society, conservative social attitudes, particular amongst the Muslim population, were less pronounced in the enclave than elsewhere in Spain. Both these viewpoints were contradicted, however, by many others who felt that, on the whole, Ceutan society was more 'closed-minded' and socially conservative than Spanish society at large, particularly also when it comes to attitudes towards sexual/gender minorities. Perceptions for why this might be the case were manifold and ranged from references to the conservative influences of Morocco on Ceutan Muslims and the city's strong military presence to assertions about inter-faith rivalries and conservative outbidding between Ceuta's four principal religious denominations.⁵⁴

"I think that Ceuta is a bit more conservative than the mainland. It depends, if on the mainland you are in a big city the things are different. But if you live in a village, I think it is more or less like Ceuta."⁵⁵

"I have said that in Ceuta it [homosexuality] is a little more accepted, because as there are different cultures mixing. People are not as closed-minded. But if you go to areas of, for example, Madrid, where many Arabic people live, I don't know in what areas, in what district, and you will find terrible things. (...) And I think that in Ceuta people are more tolerant. And that's it, that in Ceuta, in this aspect, maybe it's a little more modern. The Arab people are more modern, - let's say it like that -, than in other places. They are more tolerant (...)." ⁵⁶

"Oh yeah, yeah, for example here it's politics. Its politics. For example, there are more people that follow a more conservative line right now [in Ceuta] than other cities in Spain."⁵⁷

"Man, there's quite a big difference. Because it is true that here in Ceuta, well it is very small. It is a town and the people seem to be a little more closed-minded, more homophobic compared to on the peninsula, from my point of view."⁵⁸

"Here [in Ceuta] it is very closed. Because with Morocco and here, I don't know. It is so Muslim here in Ceuta. In Valencia I don't see that."⁵⁹

Ceuta's remote location across the straights of Gibraltar and its small size, lastly, also featured prominently as negatives in the broader reflections on city life by our research participants. For some, these givens were tied to the city's political economy and the limited employment opportunities available in the private sector.⁶⁰ Others again noted the limited leisure opportunities on offer in the city, including venues catering specifically to the LGBTQ+ communities, as well as the overall

⁵⁴ Interviews with e.g., RC, TG and A. This view was also shared by the JT, the CEO of *Roja Directa* (Red Direct), one of Andalucía's foremost LGBTQ+ association, who asserted that in his experience Ceuta presents as a more conservative place than mainland Spain and that this is tied to the enclave's location and proximity to Morocco.

⁵⁵ Interview with IT.

⁵⁶ Interview with PT.

⁵⁷ Interview with TC.

⁵⁸ Interview with JA.

⁵⁹ Interview with TG.

⁶⁰ Interview with A.

monotony of life in the enclave, with one participant stating that ‘you have a sense that Ceuta is always the same, every day is the same’.⁶¹ With mainland Spain in mind some, in fact, berated the additional travel (boat or helicopter) and costs involved in reaching even nearby queer metropolises such as Torremolinos or Malaga for weekend outings.⁶²

Perceptions of Individual Anonymity

In LGBTQ+ literatures and queer imagery, discourses on anonymity mostly home in on the digital sphere, exploring the pros and cons of online anonymity on dating platforms/chatrooms such as Craigslist, reddit, grinder and others. Although nowadays widely stigmatised, particularly amongst users of such dating sites, studies investigating this phenomenon have sought to present a nuanced conceptualisation of anonymity, allowing for constructive engagement with the myriad of motives underpinning the decision calculus by LGBTQ+ individuals to remain digitally obscure. As Lingel notes, amongst others, these can range from more sanguine/justifiable drivers of anonymity, such as an ability to experiment with one’s identity and sexual preferences and/or the need for personal safety in culturally restrictive settings, to those being driven by malign intent.⁶³

Within the context of this study too some reference has been made to the prevalence of anonymity on Spanish dating platforms, with research participants pointing at a notable absence of personal information and photos on many online profiles. Although hard to verify, this prevalence is widely attributed by our participants to the socially restrictive attitudes amongst some communities in Ceuta and neighbouring Morocco, where same-sex sexuality remains illegal.⁶⁴

More significantly than this in our sample of gay, lesbian and bisexual Ceutans is, however, engagement with a meaning of anonymity that a) pertains exclusively to the physical sphere and b) is perceived as uniformly positive in its connotations. What we mean here are references to anonymity (or the lack thereof) which are evoked by our research participants in relation to population size and geography, with direct comparisons being drawn between Spain’s larger metropolitan areas and the geographic isolation and relatively small size of Ceuta. Much of this comparison revolves around a

⁶¹ Interview with IT. Interviews also with A and G.

⁶² Interviews with AN, G, M and TC.

⁶³ See e.g., Lingel, J. “A Queer and Feminist Defense of Being Anonymous Online”, *Proceedings of the 54th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (2021); Kendall, L. “Meaning and Identity in ‘Cyberspace’: The Performance of Gender, Class, and Race Online”, *Symbolic Interaction* 21.2 (1998), pp. 129-153; Kennedy, H. “Beyond Anonymity, or Future Directions for Internet Identity Research”. *New Media & Society* 8.6 (2006), pp. 859–876.

⁶⁴ Interviews with A, ABM, IT and TC.

perceived absence of sufficient personal anonymity in the enclave, with research participants berating the fact that there are few places (if any) in the city that can be frequented without encountering any familiar faces, be they family members, friends, friends of friends or study/work colleagues.

“Ceuta is very small. We all know each other so it is like ‘look, the daughter of such-and such is a lesbian’. So there is a big difference. I have been in Madrid a lot and independently of whether or not we are Muslim, there is, well, it is as if nobody knows you, and they judge you less.”⁶⁵

In Ceuta, since it is a small city, practically everyone knows one another, whether that is seeing each other on the street or through contacts of acquaintances. This is the only negative thing about a small city that, at the end of the day, everything is more gathered together.”⁶⁶

“Because [in the big cities] they have something we cannot have in Ceuta, which is anonymity, meaning that you can go to areas where people of your circle do not know you.”⁶⁷

“In Ceuta, we meet the other person, because if you walk in the street you say ‘hello’ to the other person 4, 5, 6, 7 or 10 times to 10 different people because it is such a small city.”⁶⁸

“People always see you and always control you where you go, with whom you go. Like everybody here in Ceuta knows everybody. And if it is not my friend, it is the family of my friend (...). I think I am very controlled here.”⁶⁹

“Here in Ceuta, we feel like we are in a small town. So, you know what happens in a small town. People always gossip and tell things about others’ lives.”⁷⁰

Whilst not necessary an issue *per se*, amongst our sample of gay, lesbian and bisexual Ceutans this lack of anonymity in public was clearly of concern and perceived as a detriment to their ability of openly expressing themselves for who they are in town. For many, in fact, particularly those still in the closet, this lack of anonymity in public (and with it the absence of a dedicated safe LGBTQ+ space in town, something we will return to in due course) caused heightened feelings of vulnerability and isolation, thus shaping their behaviour in the city and out-migratory intentions. Indeed, as will be demonstrated below, this inability to retain a modicum of anonymity in the city precluded many of our research respondents from engaging in any public displays of affection and/or solidified longer term plans for relocation to urban metropolises on the Spanish mainland which, being much bigger in size and population, were widely deemed as affording the safety of obscurity desired to freely develop and express one’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

⁶⁵ Interview with N.

⁶⁶ Interview with M.

⁶⁷ Interview with PN.

⁶⁸ Interview with RGS.

⁶⁹ Interview with TG.

⁷⁰ Interview with ABM.

Experiences of Homophobia

Homophobia, although arguably on the wane, remains commonplace in societies across the Western democratic world, including in Spain where, according to recent polling on the subject, 41 percent of those surveyed reported having been harassed on grounds of their sexuality.⁷¹ Following Miravet, Amat and Garcia-Carpintero, we define homophobia “as a dislike, fear, avoidance and denial of homosexuality”⁷² that includes the display of negative attitudes and behaviours towards people who are, or thought to be, lesbian, gay or bisexual.⁷³ Despite Spain’s progressive legislation on same-sex sexuality, homophobia remains an issue of concern in both the public and private domains, including most notably in the education and sports sectors, the workplace, in right-wing political quarters and within family settings.⁷⁴ For victims of homophobic abuse, any such experience can be very stressful (even traumatic) and have serious repercussions on their physical and mental health, precipitating heightened levels of distress, anxiety and/or depression, social alienation and isolation as well as internalised self-rejection.

In Ceuta too, homophobia appears to remain an issue of concern. This is evident from the oral testimonies of our research participants and their accounts of experiencing homophobic attitudes and incidents during childhood, adolescence and in adult life. Less evident, however, is the scale of this homophobia and how Ceuta compares on this front to towns and cities across the rest of Spain. Such information might be discernible from official hate crime statistics but cannot be gauged from our data which draws on qualitative methodologies and is based on a limited sample size. Mindful of these limitations, we stress here that the findings presented below are not to be treated as representative of the entire Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities, but rather as a snapshot of some of the views and experiences of homophobia encountered by our research participants, and their impact on the daily life and wellbeing of those affected.

⁷¹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. “EU LGBTI Survey II: A long way for LGBTI equality. Country data – Spain”, *Publishing Offices of the European Union* (2020).

⁷² Moliner M., A.F.A. Lidón, and A.A. Garcia-Carpintero. “Teenage Attitudes towards Sexual Diversity in Spain”. *Sex Education* 18.6 (2018), p. 689.

⁷³ See also: Stonewall, List of LGBTQ+ terms. Available at: www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/information-and-resources/faqs-and-glossary/list-lgbtq-terms.

⁷⁴ See e.g., Moliner, Lidón and García-Carpintero. “Teenage Attitudes towards Sexual Diversity in Spain”, pp. 689-704; Carreño, B. “Far-right Vox Challenges Spain's Acceptance of LGBT Rights”. *Reuters* 24 May 2019; McKinney, C. “Tackling Homophobia in Spain's Football Culture: Changing the Discourse Through Art and Social Media”. *Cincinnati Romance Review* 49 (2020).

When it comes to experiences of homophobia (and transphobia) in Ceuta, three observations stand out in our sample of gay, lesbian and bisexual Ceutans. Firstly, - a handful of interviewees apart⁷⁵ -, most of them reported having been the target of and/or witness to homophobic incidents and that these incidents ranged from homophobic commentary and verbal abuse to physical attacks.⁷⁶ Recounting a recent homophobic episode AN noted in this regard, for instance, that she was privy to a friend of hers being “spat at for holding hands with another girl, her partner. People started to shout at them”⁷⁷. Whilst much of this abuse appears to have taken place in public, reference was also made to experiences of homophobia in schools, the workplace and at home.⁷⁸ Secondly, much of what is being reported by our research participants passes as cognitive and/or cultural homophobia, where rejection of homosexuality largely derives from beliefs that it is somehow ‘unnatural’, ‘sinful’ and/or ‘undesirable’. The quotations below offer a window into these types of homophobic attitudes.

“In the first Pride we did with the Youth Council of Ceuta, there was an episode, because we got permission from the city to put a Pride flag on the Statue of the Constitution. And there was a man who passed by and started shouting: ‘you should be ashamed. How could you put that on the Constitution. Shame on you!’”⁷⁹

“My aunt, who is thirty years old – that is, she is young – said ‘but aren’t homosexuals depraved?’. And my mother, feeling supported – and despite the fact that, separately, she says something different to me – began to agree with her, and then they attacked me: ‘they are deprived, you can’t have children like that’, etc.”⁸⁰

“I decided to tell my mother. Then my mother started crying and told me that it was a disgrace (...). My father did not say a word to me. My mother said “you want to be like a woman, you are going to become a woman. You are going to cook, wash your clothes. You don’t exist for me. You are dead.”⁸¹

“Well, the precise reason I decided not to tell him was because my father had always been the typical type of person to make homophobic comments, like “he’s a fucking faggot” and ‘he must be a faggot.’”⁸²

“I am really afraid because I don’t know whether there are parents [in my class/school] who can use that I am gay to make me feel a bad teacher, or I can have some problems because of their opinion.”⁸³

Thirdly, and lastly, in many of the personal testimonials we collated during our field research a narrative on homophobia was presented that connected the phenomenon directly to the city’s geo-

⁷⁵ Research participants reporting to have not personally experienced any/much homophobia in Ceuta include CARM, MB, C, IT and PT. IT noted in this regard, for instance: “I did not have a problem being gay all these years living here. (...) No- one came up to me to say something or no one offended me.”

⁷⁶ Interviews with A, AN, ABM, N, K and RGS.

⁷⁷ Interview with AN.

⁷⁸ Interviews with e.g., K, AN, YAS, N, and PN.

⁷⁹ Interview with KL.

⁸⁰ Interview with N.

⁸¹ Interview with A.

⁸² Interview with JA.

⁸³ Interview with ABM.

cultural context. Indeed, whilst some gay, lesbian and bisexual Ceutans contended that in their view/experience homophobia cuts across religious communities and neighbourhoods,⁸⁴ many others felt that this was not the case, arguing instead that homophobic attitudes and incidents were more probable in some of the city's peripheral neighbourhoods as well as amongst members of specific communities. For TC, for example, "in the city centre it is not common to suffer those things", with A concurring that "in Principe and Los Rosales, there is more homophobia than, for example, in the centre or in Monte Hacho."⁸⁵ Others were more explicit yet, tying heightened levels of homophobia not only to certain areas of the city, but to its Arab/Muslim population, thus presenting a culturalist account of the phenomenon (see quotations below).⁸⁶ These culturalist narratives were presented by members of both the local Christian and Muslim communities and were thought to be tied to the prevalence of 'ultra-conservative' attitudes among the latter as well as to the presence of strong Moroccan influences on cultural and religious stigmas towards same-sex sexuality.⁸⁷ This said, many of these accounts also recognised that homophobia constituted a minority view and that across the board it appeared to be on the wane, with the younger generations showing greater openness towards the LGBTQ+ communities.⁸⁸

"I saw how Arabic people in the street said to me 'gay', but with bad words. (...) I was feeling so bad. I cannot walk in the street so relaxed with my girlfriend or my boyfriend. I want to be free. And they don't understand that because they are so closed minded. And the family explained to her son, or even her son and her son and her son, that being gay, or lesbian or transsexual or bi – whatever colour you want in the LGBTQ+ - it is so bad, because you cannot kiss another man if you are a man, or kiss another girl, if you are a girl or you cannot be a girl if you are a man or you cannot be a man, if you are a girl and it is so closed minded."⁸⁹

"I see it [homophobia] as something particular to Muslims, above all in El Principe. For example, it is closest to the border. And in El Principe I have been with a gay friend and when we sat down, we were spat at. We have had things thrown at us and more... because it has a very closed mentality. I am not saying that all Muslims are the same, because that is not the case at all, absolutely not. But they don't acquire that deconstructive way of thinking (...) They are very closed, and who you are bothers them."⁹⁰

"I think that on the outskirts of the city, perhaps, there are more Muslims, for example, and they have a different religion, and they have a different point of view on these kinds of issues. So, perhaps, people suffer more homophobic behaviours if you live on the outskirts of the city. Probably, it will be almost impossible for a child to speak to her parents about their sexual preference. Perhaps, I don't know. But, I think in the city centre there are more Christians and probably they are more open minded. For sure, this is my impression."⁹¹

⁸⁴ Interviews with K, ABM, PN and PT.

⁸⁵ Interviews with TC and A. Also interviews with YAS, RGS and IT.

⁸⁶ Interviews also with AN and IT.

⁸⁷ Interviews also with N, K, TG and RGS.

⁸⁸ Interviews with AV, JA, M, MB, AN, G, RGS and PT.

⁸⁹ Interview with RGS.

⁹⁰ Interview with N.

⁹¹ Interview with Y.

“The social and emotional discrimination has a lot to do with the fact that we are connected to Morocco. As far as I know, the majority of Muslims on the peninsula do not have the mentality that they have here”.⁹²

“There are a lot of homophobic, lesbophobic and transphobic attitudes among part of the society, mainly on the Muslim part of society.”⁹³

“I have Muslim friends. They know about my sexuality, and they are normal. From my generation, there are also people who are homophobic because they are so Muslim, so homophobic. (...) It is going to be better, but for a Muslim person it is always going to be very difficult.”⁹⁴

“And of course, usually, the older Arab men see it (being gay) as really bad. Although, a sibling or someone might secretly see them and help them, I do not say otherwise, even the mother might, because my friends who are changing, their mothers help them secretly. But only as long as the father doesn’t find out. But almost always, for an Arab man, there is always more rejection. But almost always, for an Arab man, there is more rejection.”⁹⁵

It is important to note here that, - whilst respecting the views expressed by some of our research participants and presenting them in this report for accuracy’s sake and to showcase their sociological significance in elucidating local perceptions on homophobia -, we as academics are weary of any culturalist narratives, be it in Ceuta or elsewhere. Clearly, there is a danger in such narratives of othering/stigmatising an entire community, which is not only unhelpful, but all too often a one-sided representation of an otherwise much more complex reality involving factors such as socio-economic status and education.

No matter their positionality, experiences of homophobia amongst our sample of gay, lesbian and bisexual Ceutans are real and a cause of significant personal distress and anxiety. For many, indeed, the fear of homophobic attacks plays on their mind when outdoors and adversely affects their perception of safety in the city and, as we shall highlight below, their willingness to engage in any public displays of affection with their partners.⁹⁶ For some, these feelings of insecurity have been exacerbated by particular political actors in the locality, such as Vox and its anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric. For some these stresses are, in fact, so severe that they have caused significant alienation from family and friends as well as internalised self-loathing, with one participant insinuating that “(...) the one in the wrong is me, because everyone agrees that it is not ok what I think, what I feel.”⁹⁷

⁹² Interview with N.

⁹³ Interview with PN.

⁹⁴ Interview with TG.

⁹⁵ Interview with PT.

⁹⁶ Interviews with K, A, IT, ABM and RGS.

⁹⁷ Interview with N.

Public Displays of Affection

As several recent studies have elucidated, public displays of affection (henceforth PDA), including for example holding hands, hugging, kissing, caressing or massaging, can be hugely beneficial not only for the personal wellbeing of the individuals involved but for the overall health of their relationship, boosting relationship satisfaction.⁹⁸ For same-sex couples, moreover, expressing PDA is also thought to carry societal relevance, with some studies suggesting that an increase in public visibility helps foster broader societal acceptance of LGBTQ+ people, whilst others have tied heightened visibility to growth in LGBTQ+phobia and discrimination.⁹⁹

Not all same-sex couples are, of course, comfortable and/or willing to publicly engage in physical acts of affection, even in socio-political contexts where LGBTQ+ friendly legislation is in place (e.g., equal marriage, adoption) as is the case in Spain, including Ceuta. One reason for any such hesitancy might be generational, with younger same-sex couples possibly finding it easier than those of older generations to engage in PDA, given recent progressive changes in law and societal attitudes towards same-sex sexuality and relationships. Minority stress as well can come into play in deterring LGBTQ+ individuals and same-sex couples from publicly sharing affection.¹⁰⁰ Minority stress describes a unique type of distress experienced by members of marginalised/stigmatised minority groups (sexual, racial, ethnic). It is triggered by societal prejudices and discrimination prevalent within the dominant societal group(s) and can, in those exposed, adversely affect their mental health, physical wellbeing and behaviour.¹⁰¹ Common stressors associated with sexual/gender minorities and their willingness to engage in PDA include experiences/incidents of “physical attacks, verbal (harassment), and para-verbal societal marginalization (e.g., a disapproving look or spitting on the floor)” towards LGBTQ+ individuals.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Gullledge, A.K., M. Hill, Z. Lister, and C. Sallion. “Non-Erotic Physical Affection: It’s good for you”, in L’Abate, L. (ed.) *Low-Cost Approaches to Promote Physical and Mental Health: Theory, Research and Practice*. Springer, New York (2007), pp. 371-384.

⁹⁹ See e.g., Kent E. and A. El-Alayli. “Public and Private Physical Affection Differences between Same-Sex and Different-Sex Couples: The Role of Perceived Marginalization” *Interpersona* 5.2. (2011), pp. 149–67; Hocker L., K. Kline, C. J. Totenhagen and A. K. Randall. „Hold my Hand: Associations Between Minority Stress, Commitment, and PDA for Same-Gender Couples”. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* (2021). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075211020501>.

¹⁰⁰ Brady, J.P. “The Effects of Perceived Danger, Fear of Heterosexism, and Internalized Homonegativity on Public Displays of Affection Among Gender and Sexual Minorities”. *College of Science and Health Theses and Dissertations*. (August 2017), pp. 1–79; Kent and El-Alayli. “Public and Private Physical Affection Differences between Same-Sex and Different-Sex Couples”, pp. 149–67.

¹⁰¹ Stammwitz and Wessler. “A Public Context with Higher Minority Stress for LGBTQ* Couples”.

¹⁰² Ibid.

Research has shown, amongst others, that the degree to which LGBTQ+ individuals and couples perceive/experience minority stress, and with it a willingness to engage in PDA, is context-bound, that is contingent on the type of social context frequented. Exploring the differential impact of social context on LGBTQ+ couples' willingness to express PDA, a recent large-N study by Michelle Stammwitz and Janet Wessler has shown, for instance, that city centres with their mix of societal attitudes, including those disapproving of same-sex sexuality, are perceived as more harmful/hostile than a university campus, where social attitudes are thought to be more progressive. Consequentially, LGBTQ+ couples were more likely to show PDA on university campuses than in city centres.¹⁰³

In Ceuta too, there is evidence to suggest that minority stress plays into our research participants' willingness to engage in PDA, and that perceptions of minority stress are context-bound. Whilst some of our interviewees voiced absolutely no inhibitions in showing public affection, this constituted a minority, with most research participants expressing more differentiated attitudes towards PDA that appear to have been shaped by variance in perceived/experienced levels of minority stress across public contexts.

"If I feel I want to kiss my boyfriend, I am going to kiss him".¹⁰⁴

"I am not a person who kisses in public, because I don't like that one (...). But to hold the hand of my partner, yeah, there is no problem, none."¹⁰⁵

For some, for instance, Ceuta's downtown area is evidently regarded as a safer (less harmful/hostile) societal context to express PDA than some of the city's peripheral (and more socially conservative) neighbourhoods. Heightened minority stress tied to ones' proximity to the family home, fears of being outed to family members and/or the local community as well as exposure to LGBTQ+ phobia in the enclave's more peripheral areas, particularly in El Principe, were all named by our research participants as informing this differential.

"Because the experience that I have of Príncipe, for example, is that there are many people who have to hide and there are people who can't express themselves freely. They do not express themselves in their neighbourhoods. And once they go to other areas of Ceuta, to the centre, or El Morro, or another area, they can express themselves freely. But they cannot in their neighbourhood."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with ABM.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with TC.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with AN.

“But I think that in specific parts of Ceuta I would not hold the hand of my partner or having some kinds of behaviours that might be offending people that live there. But in the city centre, I think, no, there is no problem being more affectionate, being, you know, free to express yourself in more affectionate ways.”¹⁰⁷

“I have heard that there are people who, sometimes, when they have gone through certain areas, they have stopped holding hands, or have separated (...)”¹⁰⁸

Others, meanwhile, drew much wider comparisons, offering up perceptions of Ceuta as overall constituting a significantly more harmful social context to express PDA than some of the principal cities in mainland Spain, including e.g., Bilbao, Cadiz, Granada Madrid or Malaga.¹⁰⁹ For these research participants then, differences in the level of perceived minority stress between the enclave’s centre and periphery are either deemed insignificant, or of less relevance than those between Ceuta as a whole and other urban centres on the peninsula, although we did not probe any further in which areas of these urban settings they would engage in PDA safely. One of the key stressors named by those adhering to this position concerns the small size of the enclave and with it the lack in anonymity no matter what part of the city you frequent. This is juxtaposed to what many participants perceive as the advantages permitted by Spain’s urban metropolises where same-sex sexuality enjoys greater visibility and acceptance. Common to many participants’ statements was the assertion that cities larger than Ceuta and the distance from Ceuta to these cities on the mainland afforded LGBTQ+ individuals’ greater personal anonymity and greater freedoms to express PDA. In interpreting these responses, however, it must be considered that individuals referred to these more tolerant spaces in general and did not remark on personal experiences in different districts of the city. It is, of course, quite possible that in outlying neighbourhoods and indeed in the centre of such cities LGBTQ-phobia was present and could also be experienced.

“For instance, in Madrid it is nowadays completely normal to see couples of the same gender holding hands in public. And in Ceuta it is still something – I will say – extraordinary. You can see it, but it is not that common.”¹¹⁰

“For example, I’ve lived here in Ceuta and I have lived on the Peninsula and I have the reflection [of the two]. It is true that in Ceuta, as I have said, I go down the street and people notice, because I see them notice. On the Peninsula, I go down the street and I can hold hands. If I want to give my partner a kiss I can. In Ceuta, if I go down the street holding hands people stare a lot. It is not like on the Peninsula where they move on. It is very normal and here in Ceuta this normality doesn’t exist. Several times I have heard comments about me holding hands with my boyfriend.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Interview with IT.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with M.

¹⁰⁹ Interviews with RGS, PN, N and JA.

¹¹⁰ Interview with PN.

¹¹¹ Interview with JA.

“It is like I was saying before that the people here hide. In contrast, if you go to Madrid, or if you go to Malaga, you will see couples holding hands freely. It is another environment. People don’t look at you, they don’t...really, you don’t go around expecting a reaction, because the majority normalise it. There will be the odd stupid man – or stupid woman – around but, normally, no.”¹¹²

Mainland Flight

As transpires throughout this report, Ceuta carries many of the push and pull factors associated in the LGBTQ+ literatures with migratory rural-urban mobilities. With its roughly 85,000 inhabitants, Ceuta presents as a small regional city with limited higher education, employment and recreational opportunities, as well as a citizen population that, - shaped by the municipality’s geographic disconnect from mainland Spain, its history as a garrison town in close proximity to Morocco and its distinctive multicultural set-up, - has been characterised by most of our research participants as more closed-minded and socially restrictive in attitudes towards homosexuality than Spain’s larger urban centres.¹¹³ In line with rural-urban migratory intentions and/or trends observed elsewhere, it is thus to be expected that the larger cities on the mainland (such as e.g. Malaga, Cadiz, Granada, Barcelona, Madrid) exert a strong pull factor on (adolescent) members of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities not only because they offer a wider spectrum of educational and career opportunities, but because they afford queer individuals greater freedom and anonymity to develop their sexual/gender identities, sense of belonging and relations away from the preying eyes of family and their (close-nit) local communities.¹¹⁴

Data from our sample of gay, lesbian and bisexual research participants reveal that, while geographical mobility has been commonplace, it is neither uniform nor one-directional, with out-migration towards larger cities on mainland Spain being accompanied by several instances of reverse movement into Ceuta. This appears to insinuate that migratory intentions and dynamics amongst the local LGBTQ+ communities are less straightforward than assumptions about ‘razor-sharp’ rural-urban binaries and rural out-migratory movements may suggest, although we recognise, of course, that any such conclusions must be caveated by our small sample size and the absence of any first-hand evidence from Ceutans who left and presently reside outside the city.

¹¹² Interview with N.

¹¹³ Interviews with e.g., PT, RGS and CARM.

¹¹⁴ For a succinct review of the relevant literature see e.g. Thorsteinsson, E.B., et al. “Sexual Orientation and Migration Intentions among Rural, Exurban and Urban Adolescents in Iceland”. *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 24.1 (2022), pp. 31-47.

With these limitations in mind, several observations can be presented with regards to the migratory experiences and intentions specific to our cohort of gay, lesbian and bisexual research participants, as well as the (local) pull factors underpinning them. Concerning migratory experiences, we first note that a significant proportion of those interviewed - no less than 40 percent –were in fact not born in Ceuta but moved across from mainland Spain or from further afield either at a young age or later on in life. Two principal drivers explain this in-migration to Ceuta. For those who moved in young age, in-migration was largely involuntary and driven by parents returning to their home cities and/or taking up employment in the enclave.¹¹⁵ Adult in-migration, meanwhile, was again either mostly work-related or driven by love, with participants entering relationships with local residents, thus making Ceuta their home.¹¹⁶ Experiences of out-migration are commonplace too, with numerous research participants (36 percent) reporting extensive periods of time spent in mainland Spain,¹¹⁷ and/or referencing acquaintances who they knew had left Ceuta for life on the peninsula.¹¹⁸ Whilst the drivers cited for this out-migration were largely aspirational and related to study and work purposes, references were also made in these personal testimonials to wanting to experience more vibrant urban LGBTQ+ life. In their second-hand account of migratory movements among fellow LGBTQ+ Ceutans, moreover, our research participants noted that – hailing from different religious denominations – most of them left (or felt forced to leave) Ceuta largely due to a lack of acceptance of their sexuality and/or self-defined gender within their families and local communities.¹¹⁹ A sample of these second-hand accounts is provided in the textbox below.

“If you speak, most of the time, LGBTQ people here in Ceuta, they want to leave. And a lot of them living in Ceuta, they go to the mainland because they feel free on the mainland. They feel that they have more opportunities, that they will have a better life than in Ceuta (...). In other places they have more options of having a gay life or being free. [They] don’t feel that they are judged and feel themselves. I think the main reason is this one that LGBTQ people leave Ceuta.”¹²⁰

“There are many people who have left Ceuta to escape and to develop a life in freedom.”¹²¹

¹¹⁵ Interviews with N, RGS and CARM.

¹¹⁶ Interviews with IT, SH, Y, PT, G and MB.

¹¹⁷ Interviews with A, ABM, K, PN, JA, KL, YAS and TC. All these participants did eventually return to Ceuta, however, where they are currently resident. Reasons cited for their return are multiple but were for many largely driven by a desire to move back home and/or close to their immediate families.

¹¹⁸ Interviews with K, YAS, IT, PT and TC. This fact was also corroborated by the CEO of Roja Directa (Red Direct), who reported knowing of numerous Ceutans who moved to Malaga or Torremolinos to lead openly queer lives. Interview with Jesús Tomillero.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Interview with IT.

¹²¹ Interview with PN.

"I think that here, for example, there are a lot of gay people who are going to leave because (...) here they cannot form relationships and things like that. So, they have to move on from here."¹²²

When it comes to future migratory intentions, in turn, the desire for out-migration from Ceuta, whilst not uniform, was strongly present in the aspirations of about half of our research participants, and here most notably among the younger generations.¹²³ Internal deliberations on whether or not to contemplate any such move revolved mostly around some of the factors already highlighted, and were for the most part not directly tied to our participants' sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender. Barriers against relocation widely referenced within our sample included work commitments, close attachment to family and friends, including caring responsibilities for elderly parents, as well as broader feelings of rootedness in, and belonging to, the city and local community.¹²⁴ LGBTQ+ activism, meanwhile, and a desire to help better local visibility and acceptance of the queer community in Ceuta were hardly considered, playing on the mind of only one of our research participants in her desire to remain in the city.¹²⁵ Push factors, as well, revolved primarily around better educational and employment opportunities on the mainland as well as broader aspirations of experiencing (cultural/social) life elsewhere in Spain, although we were here also able to detect some connect between sexual orientation/gender identity and migratory intentions (see second textbox below).¹²⁶ Indeed, as several of our research participants noted, particularly those still in the closet, sexual/gender identity and an inability to lead openly queer lives in Ceuta due to conservative attitudes within their families and communities, play into their plans for a future life outside the enclave.¹²⁷

"At the moment I am happy in Ceuta. But it is true that I have thought about [moving] many times, and the reason is simply that I might like another city a lot, and I might love to live there."¹²⁸

"My sexuality does not play a role in my decision about where I can live. The economy is the more important [driver] for me. It is the economy and the city because I need to live in a city that I like. (...) And the connection with the world. That is important to me."¹²⁹

"(...) If I were to leave Ceuta, it would be because I could no find any job opportunity, that I could not find any way to develop my life, and then I would consider going to another city."¹³⁰

¹²² Interview with TC.

¹²³ Those expressing a desire to leave Ceuta included TG, YAS, JA, PN, IT, M, N, RGS, TC, KL and JA.

¹²⁴ Interviews with e.g., K, C, PN, AV, ABM and KL.

¹²⁵ Interview with AV.

¹²⁶ Interviews with e.g. A, ABM, C, PN, TC, IT and KL.

¹²⁷ Interviews with e.g. A, YAS, N and TG.

¹²⁸ Interview with M.

¹²⁹ Interview with RGS.

¹³⁰ Interview with AN.

“I would like to live in another city of Spain because there are more options. Ceuta is very small. You have sometimes the sense that Ceuta is always the same. Every day is the same. You don’t have a lot of things to do. All the places are the same.”¹³¹

“I want to get out. If I have the opportunity, I will. Ceuta is a good place, but if you want to live in liberty you have to leave, especially because my family. All of them live here and I do not want to involve my family in problems.”¹³²

“I was born here, and my family is from here, so it is a good place. But I think that if you want to be open-minded in your love aspect, you have to live on the mainland.”¹³³

“Well, the truth is that I don’t plan to stay in Ceuta. I am thinking of moving to Madrid, if it is possible. I don’t plan on having a future here. In fact, the further away, the better. (...) I don’t feel as if this is my place. (...) I feel like a foreigner here.”¹³⁴

Whilst they reveal fascinating insights into the life choices and future aspirations of our research participants, we reiterate that the above findings are neither deemed representative of wider migratory trends within the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities nor of the local citizen population at large. A much larger sample of participants would need to be consulted, including Ceutans who have left for good, to establish broader patterns in out-migration and the drivers behind them. All we can say therefore at this juncture is that out-migratory intentions are real and prevalent amongst a significant proportion of those gay, lesbian and bisexual Ceutans interviewed, and that for some at least these are directly tied to the prevalence of restrictive social mores towards same-sex sexuality within their families and communities. Whether Ceuta is distinctive in this regard from any small town or rural community in mainland Spain is impossible to ascertain and the subject of future enquiry.

2.3. LGBTQ+ Spaces, Organisation and Services

As of early September 2022, Ceutans identifying as LGBTQ+ have been lacking in two common spatial markers of community: the existence of an LGBTQ+ association and the presence in the city of dedicated public venues, such as bookshops, cafes, bars and/or clubs, that could serve members of the communities as a safe space to unwind, be themselves and to meet and mingle with likeminded people from the local LGBTQ+ communities. Homing in on these aspects of LGBTQ+ life and well-being in the city, this section reports on some of the views extant within the LGBTQ+ communities on the

¹³¹ Interview with IT.

¹³² Interview with TG.

¹³³ Interview with ABM.

¹³⁴ Interview with N.

need for such dedicated safe spaces, both of and online, and on attempts, presently underway, at re-establishing a LGBTQ+ association. As part of the latter, we explore attitudes towards local activism as well as the priorities for such an association. The section will conclude by reviewing the state of relationship and sex education in local schools as well as the availability of dedicated public services to members of the LGBTQ+ communities.

Physical and Virtual Spaces

Designated social spaces and commercial premises – such as beaches, parks, youth clubs, bookshops, cafes, bars and/or discotheques – offer a vital safe environment for members of the LGBTQ+ communities to socialise, show openly affection, and build, as well as share in, a sense of identity and belonging. Wherever they exist, these spaces constitute physical markers of the queer communities, embodying their presence in the locality and helping counter societal marginalisation. The onset of the cyberage has changed this somewhat, of course, with GPS-enabled dating apps and other social media (e.g., Facebook/WhatsApp/Instagram groups) now constituting a popular means for members of the LGBTQ+ communities to socialise and meet, thus lessening (to some extent) the necessity for designated queer spaces. As Sam Miles remarks “now any bar or restaurant can be a site for a first date; any home, hotel, or park can be a site for a sexual encounter. These spaces need not be gay bars or gay neighbourhoods or gay saunas, because the obstacle of ascertaining mutual interest in a potential encounter has already been tackled and successfully overcome via the online scoping undertaken.”¹³⁵

Unlike in metropolitan Spain, where queer neighbourhoods and (commercial) premises remain a trademark feature of city life and a travel destination for domestic and international tourists, it is far less common to find such spaces in the smaller cities, towns and villages across the country, where queer life often goes on without any designated LGBTQ+ premises. This is the case also in Ceuta, which offers limited possibilities for LGBTQ+ individuals to socialise physically in exclusive same-sex spaces and/or (commercial) premises. Indeed, as of 2022 the city is devoid of any queer bookshops, cultural venues, cafes, bars, clubs, beaches or parks that could offer LGBTQ+ individuals a safe space to meet and mingle with fellow members of their communities outside the gaze of a wider heterosexual/heteronormative society. The two exceptions are the city’s *Consejo de la Juventud de la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta* (Council of Youth), which – catering mostly to younger people – organises the

¹³⁵ Miles, M. “Let’s (not) Go Outside: Grindr, Hybrid Space, and Digital Queer Neighborhoods”, in A. Bitterman and D.B. Hess (eds.) *Life and Afterlife of Gay Neighbourhoods: Renaissance and Resurgence*, Springer (2021), pp. 203-220.

occasional LGBTQ+ event (e.g., film screenings) at its premises in downtown Ceuta and has been named by some of our research participants as an important space to connect with fellow members of the LGBTQ+ communities,¹³⁶ and a bar called *La Nuit* in the harbour district. Although said to be LGBTQ+ friendly, most of our research participants noted that *La Nuit* is predominantly frequented by heterosexual customers and that it hence cannot be considered a safe space for the queer communities.¹³⁷



As in smaller cities, towns and villages elsewhere, the dearth of LGBTQ+ affirmative spaces/premises in Ceuta is in all likelihood a consequence of the relatively modest size of the local queer communities rather than any wider societal objections. This said, we noted a particular poignancy to the Ceutan case, in so far as the city's physical disconnect from mainland Spain appears to engender in some a particular sense of remoteness from the country's gay metropolises.¹³⁸ Indeed, whilst for many nonurbanites on the mainland, these metropolises are often a relatively short car/train journey away, for some of our participants the felt – if not the actual – effort and distance it takes to travel (by ferry/helicopter then car/train) to any such places from Ceuta and the costs involved were seen as formidable and as impediments to regular weekend outings. Importantly also, with a significant proportion of LGBTQ+ Ceutans still believed to be in the closet, the (parent's) home does not, and/or cannot, always function as a substitute safe space for self-expression in the absence of any designated LGBTQ+ affirmative spaces/premises elsewhere. For these Ceutans then the absence of such spaces

¹³⁶ Interview with N. See also interview with KL.

¹³⁷ Interviews with A, ABM, AN, IT, JA, and PN.

¹³⁸ Interviews with e.g., IT, A, PT and PN.

is of particular concern because it renders it more difficult to identify and connect with likeminded people in the city, thus enhancing levels of minority stress due to feelings of isolation.¹³⁹

“(…) The world of the internet, applications and so on, I think it is the strongest thing at the moment to interact with people in the LGBTQ environment.”¹⁴⁰

“Well, grindr or scruff, or whatever, are always there to meet people. It is a way for people who want to keep themselves hidden from their context, to meet some other people for sexual stuff or friendships and that is why it is really used nowadays.”¹⁴¹

“They [online applications] really are the main channel of communication among the gay community of Ceuta and to connect to people from Morocco with people from Ceuta and to connect people from Ceuta with people from the mainland.”¹⁴²

“I think [dating apps] are important, if you are looking for sex. But, they are not helpful because most of [the people on these apps] are from Algeciras, Cadiz or Morocco. So, I think that the last time I used Grindr was almost three years ago. I found thirty guys, most of them without pictures and the others were from Cadiz or Morocco.”¹⁴³

“I know that they are using a lot some applications, but they are dating applications. You know, like grindr, or the Spanish one called ‘guapo’. It is very popular here and in general in Spain. But they are dating applications. But the people who are in those applications don’t even have a photo.”¹⁴⁴

“When I had apps like grindr or tinder, it was more complicated to find a Moroccan with a picture than a Christian or Jewish [person] with a picture.”¹⁴⁵

Certainly, for some of the gay, lesbian and bisexual Ceutans we interviewed, online (dating) apps compensate to some extent for this lack of physical LGBTQ+ spaces/premises in the city, particularly when it comes to connecting with likeminded individuals for sexual or friendship purpose. This, however, appears to be primarily the case for members of the local gay community, with several of our female participants stating to not be using such apps.¹⁴⁶ As highlighted in the quotations above, moreover, although widely used, even this mode of interaction is seen to carry several drawbacks, with participants reporting that most of the profiles on these dating apps have either no photos or are based outside Ceuta on the adjacent mainland. As such, they are arguably of limited use in Ceuta itself,

¹³⁹ Stammwitz and Wessler. ‘A Public Context with Higher Minority Stress for LGBTQ* Couples’.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with JA.

¹⁴¹ Interview with PN.

¹⁴² Interview with PN.

¹⁴³ Interview with ABM

¹⁴⁴ Interview with IT.

¹⁴⁵ Interview with TC.

¹⁴⁶ Interviews with AN and KL.

let alone of course as sites for information exchange and community building, for which there is often no adequate substitute to physical safe spaces.

LGBTQ+ Association

One of the more notable realities of queer life in Ceuta as of September 2022, and one closely intertwined with the lack of dedicated social spaces alluded to above, is the absence of a local LGBTQ+ association in the city. Indeed, ever since the 2011 secession of activities by *Y a ti qué*, – an LGBTQ+ advocacy group co-founded and run by Pablo Nuñez, Miguel Blanco and others –, Ceuta has been devoid of any dedicated association catering to/and advocating for the needs of the local queer communities. This contrasts markedly with Ceuta's twin enclave of Melilla, whose LGBTQ+ communities have been served by a well-established association called *Asociación Melillense de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales* (AMLEGA). Founded in 2005, over the years, AMLEGA has grown in stature and size and established itself as a respected NGO and vital provider of sexual health services to the LGBTQ+ communities and the organiser of the city's annual Pride.¹⁴⁷

In the absence of a Ceutan LGBTQ+ association, other civil organisations have over the past years stepped in and taken on some advocacy for queer rights and visibility. This includes most notably the *Consejo de la Juventud de la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta*, which has since 2017 led on the organisation of the city's annual Pride festivities and international days for the bisexual and transgender communities as well as hosted the occasional LGBTQ+ social event at its downtown premises.¹⁴⁸ Other local organisations we are aware of to have engaged in some LGBTQ+ advocacy and support for the communities include the local trade union *Comisiones Obreras de Ceuta* and some of the city's political parties.¹⁴⁹ As laudable as these activities are, they are unlikely, however, to compensate for the presence of a dedicated LGBTQ+ organisation in the city, which – as the case of AMLEGA exemplified – would establish a powerful tool to advocate for the needs and interests of the local queer communities, many of whose members are evidently still struggling to publicly assert their identities.

This assessment rings true also with our sample of lesbian, gay and bisexual Ceutans for whom the lack of an LGBTQ+ association constituted a distinct detriment to local queer life, and whose support for the establishment of such an association was overwhelming.¹⁵⁰ When asked about the focus of

¹⁴⁷ Interview with RR. See also AMLEGA webpages at: <https://www.amlega.es/>.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with AN.

¹⁴⁹ Interviews with AN and SA.

¹⁵⁰ Interviews with e.g., RC, ABM, G, KL, M, Y, RGS, YAS, AN and AV.

such an association, if it were to be established, our research participants named one/several of the following priorities:

- a) engaging in societal outreach and LGBTQ+ awareness/visibility campaigns (with the public and in educational settings),
- b) sharing information/resources with, and offering advice (mental/sexual health and other) to, members of the LGBTQ+ communities (particular to transexual/migrant communities, the youth and those in the closet),
- c) offering a community safe space for socialisation,
- d) organising the annual Pride event and other dedicated activities, and
- e) lobbying for LGBTQ+ rights and services with the autonomous administration of Ceuta and other relevant socio-political actors and organisation.

Whilst all these priorities were given due weight within our sample of LGBTQ+ Ceutans, two stood out in the frequency they were raised. They concern the need for enhancing LGBTQ+ visibility and awareness in Ceutan society and the desirability of a safe space for the queer communities. In the emphasis they received by our research participants, the two priorities tie in, of course, with some of our earlier findings presented in this report about the views held within the LGBTQ+ communities on the city as a socially conservative place, in which many still struggle to navigate their sexualities, and where it remains difficult to connect and socialise with fellow members of the communities outside the limelight of wider society.

As yet little has been advertised regarding the three initiatives which are presently underway. If successful, they will redress the current lack of an LGBTQ+ association in Ceuta and the communities' desire for stronger organised LGBTQ+ advocacy. The first such initiative is spearheaded by a group of young Ceutans active within the *Consejo de la Juventud de la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta*. Following in the footsteps of *y a ti qué*, the group seeks to establish a new LGBTQ+ association in Ceuta to be named *Tingitan Collective*. According to one of its principal advocates, the name 'Tingitan' was chosen to signal the new association's ambition of reaching out to, and supporting, not just the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities, but those in the neighbouring Moroccan municipalities of Tetouan and Tangiers as well as LGBTQ+ refugees. The association will be organisationally independent, but affiliated to the *Consejo de la Juventud de la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta*, whose premises will be used for dedicated activities and as a safe space for members of the LGBTQ+ communities to connect and socialise every

so often.¹⁵¹ Although we have not seen any drawn-up mission statement and/or statutes for this new association, we were told by those leading its creation that it will be launched imminently and that, alongside the organisation of the city's annual Pride, it will focus its activities on offering advice to the local refugee, transsexual and Muslim LGBTQ+ communities, which are deemed most marginalised and in need of advocacy and support.¹⁵²

The second local initiative currently taking shape alongside the *Tingitan Collective* is the so called *Plataforma LGBTIQ de Ceuta* (LGBTIQ Platform) which is the brainchild of the youth representative of the Ceutan branch of *Comisiones Obreras de Ceuta*. Although it has an active YouTube page and Instagram account (www.instagram.com/plataforma.lgtbiq.ceuta/) with a sizeable number of followers, it is not entirely clear whether at the time of writing this report the association has formally launched yet.¹⁵³ According to one of its founding members, the platform will operate as a non-hierarchical grassroots association and be open to LGBTQ+ Ceutans and allies of all ages and political backgrounds. Physically the platform will operate out of the *Comisiones Obreras de Ceuta*, with whom it is affiliated and whose premises/resources it will rely on for social and other activities. Other than that, the platform will however advance its agenda independently from the *Comisiones Obreras de Ceuta*, setting itself up with a much broader remit of LGBTQ+ advocacy than the trade union is currently engaged in.¹⁵⁴ Again, we have not seen any mission statement and/or statutes for this new association, but have been told that in its work it will focus on the provision of resources for, and advocacy in support of, particularly the local refugee, non-binary and transsexual communities, as well as concerning wider issues of discrimination against queer Ceutans. Some such resources are already on the platform's social media sites which, according to AV, will use to disseminate information and campaigns also to LGBTQ+ Ceutans currently living abroad (see below).¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Interview with AN.

¹⁵² Interviews with AN and KL.

¹⁵³ During an interview with one of the initiators of the LGBTIQ Platform in September 2022, the project team was told that the association was to launch imminently. Since then, however, we have not had any update on its status and activities. Interview with AN.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with AV.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

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The third and final initiative at setting up an LGBTQ+ association in Ceuta is distinctive from the former two in that, rather than being driven by local activists, it is led by *Roja Directa* (Red Direct, <https://rojadirectalgtbi.com/>), an established LGBTQ+ association operating across the Straights of Gibraltar in Andalucía and Madrid. *Roja Directa* was established in 2016 by Jesús Tomillero who shot to fame as the first openly gay football referee in Spain and whose experience of homophobia on the pitch motivated him to establish the association.¹⁵⁶ The association is not-for-profit and non-partisan and dedicated to the fight for LGBTQ+ rights and against all forms of LGBTQ+phobia in Spanish society. As such, it is engaged in a wide range of activities in support of these objectives, which include

¹⁵⁶ Interview with JT.

dedicated services for victims of LGBTQ+ phobia, a support programme for HIV+ individuals, training and awareness campaigns for the police, in schools and the field of sports, as well as the organisation of Pride events in cities and towns across Andalusia.¹⁵⁷



As part of its plans for national expansion, *Roja Directa* is currently in the process of establishing a branch organisation in Ceuta. Whilst a local director for this new branch appears to have already been named and listed on the association's webpages, it is as yet unclear to the research team when and how the branch will be formally launched and where it will be based.¹⁵⁸ According to Jesús Tomillero, CEO of *Roja Directa*, the idea is for this branch to offer the same services and activities to the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities as are currently being offered by the parent organisation in Andalucía. In his discussions with the research team, he expressed his hope that once up-and-running the branch organisation will not only provide strong advocacy of LGBTQ+ issues in Ceuta but work to improve the well-being of the local queer communities, thus reducing out-migratory intentions.

Ceuta thus appears to be on the cusp of a significant change in the status quo for the local LGBTQ+ communities with the return of possibly not just one, but multiple dedicated associations advocating for their rights and needs. This is to be welcomed and should increase the communities' visibility in the enclave as well as the support/services on offer for its members, including the establishment of a dedicated safe space in the city. This said, the research team also foresee some challenges ahead, which the initiators of the three initiatives may want to consider going forward. For one, we would

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. See also the association's website for information on its activities.

¹⁵⁸ Despite several attempts, the project team was unfortunately unable to schedule an interview with the local representative of *Roja Directa*. See listed members of governing board of *Roja Directa* at https://rojadirectalgtbi.com/?fbclid=IwAR2Bi8gmPFB5_yfweTzbKDloZjzQzisTVk-sGtchgUjgFroSA1zHOABk9HM.

question whether Ceuta needs three distinctive LGBTQ+ associations, with evidently some overlap in their stated objectives (e.g., on the organisation of Pride; LGBTQ+ awareness campaigns). There is a real danger here that, if created, the three organisations will compete not only for members, but for limited human and financial/funding resources in a city that has by some of our research participants been described as lacking in associative spirit.¹⁵⁹ This challenge is likely to be of particular concern in the cases of the *Tingitan Collective* and *LGBTQ+ Platform*, whose initiators do not appear to see eye-to-eye and are hence unlikely, for the time being at least, to engage in collaborative endeavours.¹⁶⁰ The two latter initiatives will also have to tackle their association with third parties and the implications this brings with it. For the founders of the *Tingitan Collective* the issue will be how to move the association beyond its rootedness in youth activism and to emerge as an attractive representative and advocate of the interests of all ages and backgrounds within the LGBTQ+ communities. For the *LGBTQ+ Platform*, in turn, it will have to prove its self-declared non-partisan status by showcasing its critical distance from *the Comisiones Obreras de Ceuta*, which could be deemed problematic to many prospective members/followers of the group. For *Raja Directa*, in turn, the challenge will be to develop a branch organisation and activities that are sensitive to the distinct context of Ceuta and to forge close working relations with other Ceutan LGBTQ+ activists from the two local initiatives and other relevant partners.

Finally, we advise that due consideration should be given to how the presence of up to three distinct LGBTQ+ associations will impact the development of vital working relations with external (funding) bodies and partners both in and outside government. Our concern here is that local government departments and public service providers will find it incessantly difficult to identify authoritative partners from within the LGBTQ+ communities (without causing rivalry and conflict between them) with whom to develop long-term collaborative relations, including e.g., through the provision of dedicated services and/or the development of local equality policies.

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Public Services and Education

In as diverse a city as Ceuta, the provision of inclusive public services and education is key in fostering societal cohesion and equitable accessibility to these services for all members and communities of society. This applies also to the LGBTQ+ communities whose members may face distinctive challenges accessing such services in the care, employment and other public sectors, such as e.g., limited awareness of the availability of any dedicated (information) services and programmes offered and/or

¹⁵⁹ Interviews with e.g., PN and CLE.

¹⁶⁰ Interviews with AV and AN.

fear (or experiences of) prejudice and discrimination. As part of our investigation into LGBTQ+ lives in Ceuta, the project team spoke to several professionals working in the public sector to ascertain levels of LGBTQ+ inclusivity and service provision in local health care and employment programmes.¹⁶¹ In our conversations with health care professionals, for instance, we encountered general goodwill towards the local LGBTQ+ communities, though limited – if any – awareness campaigns and/or programmes targeting its members specifically. This is particularly pertinent on HIV/STD prevention and testing, which is offered by the city through the *Consejería Sanidad, plan sobre SIDA, HIV y otras ITS*, yet which does not include any specific programmes for members of the LGBTQ+ communities.¹⁶² On employment too, there are currently no local programmes in place for members of the local LGBTQ+ communities, even though it is recognised that some of its constituent groups, such as e.g., transsexual men and women, would benefit from targeted intervention and support.¹⁶³

In the education sector, as well, there is a sense that more could and should be done to raise broader awareness of, and facilitate support for, pupils identifying as LGBTQ+. In line with national education policy, Ceutan schools and teachers exercise a high degree of autonomy when it comes to curriculum design and implementation.¹⁶⁴ This is the case also for relationship and sex education, which – rather than being a standalone subject - is commonly taught across a range of disciplines, including e.g., biology, ethics and/or philosophy. It is our understanding from conversations with participants in the teaching profession that the manner sex education is covered (if at all) in these disciplines, including references to same-sex sexualities and gender identities, and whether LGBTQ+ awareness days/months are being celebrated (such as e.g., Pride or International Transgender Visibility Day) is entirely dependent on the leadership of a school and its teaching body.¹⁶⁵ Whilst LGBTQ+ issues have and are being taught in schools and classes across Ceuta – often through invited external speakers and workshops – ¹⁶⁶, there are some where this is not the case.

For many of our research participants this patchwork in the delivery of relationship and sex education has meant that during their time in (secondary) school they did not receive any adequate teaching on issues of same-sex sexuality and gender identity and/or support.¹⁶⁷ This appears to have been particularly the case for LGBTQ+ Ceutans in their 30s and above, who not only reported instances of

¹⁶¹ Interviews with CLE, CAR, AC and PS.

¹⁶² Interview with CLE.

¹⁶³ Interview with PS.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with AC.

¹⁶⁵ Interviews with ABM, PC, AC and GST.

¹⁶⁶ Interviews with JA and CLE.

¹⁶⁷ Interviews with M, TC, YAS, ABM, AV and TG.

homophobia (and homophobic bullying) in schools but failed to receive from teachers the necessary knowledge and support to understand and accept their own emotions and identities.¹⁶⁸

“In Ceuta, there are no classes dedicated to sex education.”¹⁶⁹

“The sex education in school is no sex education.”¹⁷⁰

“No [on sex education], not at all. In fact, if there was, I would not have had that problem. I am someone who defends that in Ceuta and in Spain, the issues of women, feminism etc. should be included in education from an early age.”¹⁷¹

“HK: You mentioned that you went to a Catholic school. Was there any sex education and did they teach about same-sex relationships?

TC: No, no, no.

AD: So, no sex education at all?

TC: No.”¹⁷²

Nowadays it is much easier, of course, for young adolescents to obtain information on LGBTQ+ issues through social media, including on role models and the availability of support services. Moreover, if national trends are anything to go by, there is also evidence to suggest that same-sex sexuality is receiving ever more sustained and positive coverage in Spanish schools. A recent EU-wide survey of LGBTQ+ teenagers found, for instance, that in Spain no less than 74 percent of those interviewed felt that their peers and teachers are ‘often or always’ supportive of LGBTQ+ rights and issues. This said, the same survey also revealed, however, that only 40 percent of respondents had received any LGBTQ+ education in school and that about the same percentage of queer pupils still felt unable to reveal their sexual orientation and/or self-defined gender to teachers and peers.¹⁷³ These are significant percentages and mandate a doubling up of efforts in Spanish school to raise LGBTQ+ awareness and acceptance beyond current levels. They also chime in with our impressions from Ceuta, where LGBTQ+ issues appear to not be uniformly taught across the territory’s schools, and where many of our research participants, particularly from conservative familial backgrounds, remain in the closet.

¹⁶⁸ Interviews with e.g., A, YAS, PN, KL and RC.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with AV.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with ABM.

¹⁷¹ Interview with KL.

¹⁷² Interview with TC.

¹⁷³ See European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. “EU LGBTI Survey II: A long way for LGBTI equality. Country data – Spain”. Luxembourg: *Publishing Offices of the European Union* (2020). Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/lgbti-survey-country-data_spain.pdf.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This report offered a comprehensive first attempt at understanding LGBTQ+ life in Spanish Ceuta; a city that - alongside neighbouring Melilla - remains largely off the radar in Spanish and international queer studies despite its unusual geography and socio-demographics, rendering it in many ways distinctive from similar sized urban locales on the Spanish mainland. In our conclusion to this report, we offer a brief summary reflection of our key research findings before presenting several tentative recommendations which, we hope, will spark a wider debate within the LGBTQ+ communities and amongst policy makers and other interested third parties on how to best enhance the communities' visibility, acceptance and social inclusion within Ceutan society.

Three broad themes transpired from our investigation into LGBTQ+ life in Ceuta. First, that queer life experiences in the city are multifaceted and complex, with research participants holding vastly different views on Ceuta as a place of residence as well as a space that is accepting of, and inclusive towards, the LGBTQ+ communities. As we reported here, there appears to be a real divide between those who feel settled in the city and describe it as offering a high standard of living, both personally and professionally, and those who have little positive to say about Ceuta, berating its remote location, lack of employment opportunities and/or recreational offerings, and thus contemplating out-migration. At some level, this divide may simply be down to individual lifestyle preferences and choices, although we did note some generational dynamics too, with those in secure jobs and relationships expressing overall greater satisfaction with city life than many of our younger research participants who felt far less secure about their professional and personal futures in the enclave.

The complexity of lived experiences alluded to above also shines through when it comes to our research participant's sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Indeed, here again we encountered vastly different life stories. For some these were characterised by broadly positive coming-out experiences and few, if any, significant experiences of minority stress. For many others, however, they were marked by at times significant challenges featuring self-doubt and internalised homophobia as well as difficulties in disclosing one's sexual/gender identities to family, friends and in public. At the time of writing, quite a few of our research participants remain, in fact, still closeted. Factors that according to our investigation are likely to have impacted this differential included a research participant's upbringing and family background, his/her/their place of residency (city centre vs. peripheral neighbourhoods), socio-economic class as well as levels of religiosity.

Second, this research also noted a certain disjuncture between perceptions of community and belonging amongst LGBTQ+ Ceutans and the reality on the ground. Indeed, although there clearly exists a shared desire for greater community and inclusion amongst our gay, lesbian and bisexual research participants, to date little is available on the ground in terms of exclusive LGBTQ+ commercial venues and spaces that could facilitate such a coming together of its members. Nor is there, at the time of writing, an LGBTQ+ association that could advocate for the community and offer a safe space for its members to exchange information and/or socialise outside the preying eyes of the wider public.

Third and finally, we highlighted the patchwork of relationship and sex education currently on offer in Ceutan schools as well as the limited availability of dedicated services to the LGBTQ+ communities as an impediment to wider social inclusion as well as to the provision of much needed support for those who remain stigmatised and marginalised within their families and local communities.

This then takes us to our recommendations, which we hope will constitute useful stimuli for discussions within Ceuta's LGBTQ+ communities as well as the relevant local and national government agencies and public sector bodies. Cognisant of our own positionality in this research as external investigators and having spent only limited periods of time in Ceuta, we formulated these recommendations in all humility, acknowledging that rights activism and change are best advocated by local stakeholders and grounded in local knowledge and experiences.

With this in mind, we propose the following, particularly in relation to the establishment of a local LGBTQ+ organisation and the development of LGBTQ+ services:

1. For the establishment of one, but at most two, dedicated LGBTQ+ organisation(s) in Ceuta. We believe that one strong local LGBTQ+ organisation is preferable, as it would offer a clear point of reference for the local and Spanish governments as well as other civil associations in the city and averts any dangers of duplication, competition and inter-organisational conflict. Of the current initiatives being developed, we see particular promise in the establishment of a branch organisation of *Roja Directa* in Ceuta. As an established LGBTQ+ organisation in Andalusia, *Roja Directa* brings to the table a wealth of experience of queer advocacy, a networked community of activists and know-how which could be deployed instantaneously in Ceuta and to the greatest possible effect.

2. For any LGBTQ+ organisation to retain full functional independence from any local political parties and/or other public entities, such as trade unions, rights- and youth associations, and for it to operate out of premises not tied to any such third parties. This is to ensure the organisation is attractive to, and deemed representative of, the widest possible cross-section of members identifying as LGBTQ+ in Ceuta, thus maximising its potential for growth and outreach.
3. In case of the existence of multiple LGBTQ+ organisations, for there to be clearly delineated areas of competence and priorities so as to avoid duplication of services and unnecessary competition for funding sources. Such division of labour should not preclude, of course, collaboration and this is to be encouraged on areas of mutual concern/interest such events such as e.g., the hosting of Ceuta Pride or other social events.
4. For any LGBTQ+ organisation to work closely together with key local and national government departments and local (mental & physical) health care providers to enhance the visibility and well-being of the communities as well as the level of services provided to them. Based on our findings from field work in Ceuta, we see significant room for improvement for LGBTQ+ awareness and service delivery particularly in the realm of primary and secondary education as well as the health care sector (see also points 7 & 8).
5. For any local LGBTQ+ organisation to operate out of its own premises and ideally offer a dedicated safe space where members of the local queer communities can meet and socialise on a regular basis. Given the lack of commercial LGBTQ+ premises in the city, we believe it is essential that a dedicated safe space for the communities is created and an LGBTQ+ organisation would be perfectly placed to offer and maintain such a space. This can be in the form of a 'queer café', a multi-functional events room or a library and would/could be particularly attractive as a space to socialise and exchange experiences/information for those members of the LGBTQ+ community who remain largely in the closet.
6. For any LGBTQ+ organisation to lead on 'space claiming' in the city through the organisation of regular outings for members of the queer communities in commercial premises, such as local cafes/cinemas and/or bars and clubs. Space claiming entails the process of turning largely heteronormative public and/or commercial premises into known LGBTQ+ friendly spaces through regularised frequenting of these premises. It requires solid planning and assurances from the premises in question that their visits are welcome, but if successful, would significantly widen the number of explicitly LGBTQ+ friendly venues operating in the city beyond La Nuit.

7. For any LGBTQ+ organisation to establish and sustain close working relations with key local public service providers to identify the needs of the Ceutan LGBTQ+ communities and develop relevant infrastructure of support services, information materials and (training) programmes for both the local queer communities as well as the wider population. As highlighted in this report, at present there are limited such dedicated services available, and one of the key reasons thereof is the absence of an LGBTQ+ organisation that can lobby on behalf, and collaborate with, the relevant public sector institutions in the development of such services. Areas we deem of particular relevance in this regard concern secondary education and public health.

7.1. On education, we propose that close collaborative ties are established the Provincial Directorate of the Spanish Ministry of Education (as well as individual schools) to explore the need for and further development of curricular and co-curricular activities and materials to raise LGBTQ+ awareness in primary and secondary school settings across the city. Tying in with the central government's new education law (LOMLOE 2023) and its emphasis on inclusivity and diversity, a sustained effort should be undertaken to raise the quality, consistency and scope of such provisions and ensure that schools across Ceuta engage on LGBTQ+ issues. A local LGBTQ+ organisation could/should be a catalyst for initiating such initiatives and for lobbying and supporting relevant local stakeholders in their production and implementation.

7.2. To initiate and develop close partnerships with the Ceutan *Ministry of Health, Consumer Affairs and Government* as well as local public health providers such as the *Instituto Nacional de Gestión Sanitaria* (INGESA), *Consejería de Sanidad* and/or *Mental Health Ceuta* to ascertain ways in which these bodies may offer and develop dedicated services/campaigns for members of the local LGBTQ+ communities. Special attention in any such deliberations should be given not only to all the letters of the LGBTQ+ communities, but to the sensitivities and needs of the different denominational communities living in Ceuta. As a first step, we propose the development of an LGBTQ+ helpline, which should ideally be run by a Ceutan LGBTQ+ organisation, but in close collaboration with and connected to local physical and mental health specialist, offering information, support and referral services for members of the communities.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Questionnaire (Semi-Structured Interviews)

SECTION 1: Personal Experiences & Identity Formation			
Theme	Main Question	Follow-up Questions	Rationale
Childhood – General	1. How did you come to live in Ceuta?	<p>1.1. If you were born in Ceuta, do you have specific childhood memories of growing up in Ceuta?</p> <p>1.2. Do you think growing up in Ceuta was any different from growing up in other parts of Spain/Morocco/elsewhere? (Note: probe on e.g. other small cities/towns or urban centres)</p> <p>1.2.1. If yes, how? (ask for examples)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>1.3. If not, where did you grow up?</p>	<p>General intro question. First impressions of whether being LGBTQ matters in Ceuta and if so, how.</p> <p>Probe perceived differences between growing up in Ceuta and elsewhere in Spain, both in urban centres and other provincial towns in mainland Spain.</p> <p>Listen out for any description of Ceuta in relation to the rest of Spain/Morocco.</p>
Childhood/Adolescence - “Coming Out”	2. When did you “come out” as an LGBTQ person and how easy/difficult was it for you?	<p>2.1. Do you feel that Ceuta is a special place to grow up in as an LGBTQ person compared to mainland Spain/Morocco?</p> <p>2.1.1. If yes, how? (ask for examples)</p> <p>2.2. Do you think your “coming out” experience would have been any different elsewhere in mainland Spain/Morocco?</p> <p>2.2.1. If yes, how? (ask for examples)</p> <p>2.3. As a child, were you aware of any LGBTQ people around you?</p> <p>2.4. Did your parents or other relatives ever talk about homosexuality? (ask for examples)</p>	<p>Probes questions about gender identity and perceived differences in coming out experiences between centre-periphery</p> <p>Explores familial, cultural and other factors shaping the coming out experience</p>

Adulthood – General	<p>3. Thinking more generally about adulthood, what do you like/dislike about living in Ceuta? (Note: make sure likes and dislikes are covered)</p>	<p>3.1. Have you ever spent periods of time (travelled), or lived outside of Ceuta? (Note: if not, go to Question 3.2)</p> <p>3.1.1. If yes, where/why? (ask for examples)</p> <p>3.1.2. When thinking back to your experience of living abroad, how does it compare to your life in Ceuta?</p> <p>3.1.3. Would you consider leaving Ceuta again? Why?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>3.2. If you have never left Ceuta, have you ever thought about leaving the enclave?</p> <p>3.2.1. If yes, why/why not?</p> <p>3.2.2. If yes, where to?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>3.3. Does the location and size of Ceuta matter, and if so in what way?</p>	<p>Probes urban-periphery dichotomy in lived experiences and discourses.</p> <p>Probes perceptions of Ceuta in relation to Spain/Europe/Morocco</p> <p>Probes urban flight.</p>
Adulthood – Individual Identity/Belonging	<p>4. Do you feel Spanish or North African or both or neither of them?</p>	<p>4.1. What does it mean to you to be an LGBTQ person? (Note: question about self-perception/expression as queer)</p> <p>4.2. Would you say there are any differences between how you feel as an LGBTQ person in Ceuta compared to LGBTQ people living in the big cities, such as Madrid, Barcelona, Malaga or Seville?</p> <p>4.2.1. If so, what are they? (ask for examples)</p> <p>4.3. What is your image of typical LGBTQ people say in Barcelona, Sitges, Madrid, Paris or New York?</p> <p>4.4. Is there a stereotypical lifestyle you associate with LGBTQ life in these cities?</p> <p>4.4.1. If so, what do you like and dislike about it?</p>	<p>Probes role and significance of LGBTQ identity in a person's life.</p> <p>Probes queer stereotypes and homonormativity (5.4).</p>

		4.4.2. How closely does your own lifestyle as an LGBTQ person approximate this image?	
Adulthood – Queer Life in Ceuta	5. Does being LGBTQ affect your everyday life in Ceuta?	5.2. If yes, how? (ask for examples) 5.3. Do you feel confined/restricted in Ceuta? 5.3.1. If so, how does this affect your life as an LGBTQ person? 5.4. As someone identifying as LGBTQ, do you feel safe in Ceuta? (Note: probe also whether he/she/they think others in the community are safe) 5.4.1. How safe is it, according to you for the following communities: a) transgender b) refugees c) cross-border Moroccans? 5.5. As someone identifying as LGBTQ, do you feel you can show affection in public? 5.6. Have you personally experienced any homo-/transphobia in Ceuta? 5.7. Do you think being LGBTQ in Ceuta is any different from being queer elsewhere in Spain/Morocco? (Note: probe on both urban centres and other provincial towns/cities) 5.7.1. If yes, can you give us examples of how?	Probe aspects of queer life in Ceuta Probe discourse on LGBTQ life in Ceuta as compared to elsewhere in Spain/Europe/Morocco Probes interaction with broader Ceutan community.
SECTION 2: LGBTQ Community, Spaces and Engagement			
<i>Theme</i>	<i>Main Question</i>	<i>Follow-up Questions</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
LGBTQ Community – General	6. We will now provide you with a set of terms which we would like you to consider when thinking about Ceuta as a place for LGBTQ life compared to other cities in Spain/Europe: Empowering Welcoming Inclusive Liberal Modern Lonely Inhibiting Backward Peripheral Homophobic	6.2. How do you think LGBTQ people in the rest of Spain view LGBTQ people in Ceuta? 6.3. Is there an LGBTQ community in Ceuta and what is it like? (Note: If no, move to Questions 6.4) 6.3.1. If yes, what do you like/dislike about the community? 6.3.2. If yes, do you consider yourself a part of this community? 6.3.3. If yes, how does the local LGBTQ community compare to that in towns and cities elsewhere in Spain? ----- 6.4. If there is no local LGBTQ community, do you miss having one?	Probe Ceuta as a peripheral local of LGBTQ life/community Probe discourses adopted by local queer people around notions of centre-periphery Probes self-perceptions of Ceutan queer people in regards to mainland Spain/centre- periphery. Probes perceptions of LGBTQ community integration within broader Ceutan community (8.4).

	Conservative Racist	----- 6.5. Do you think the local LGBTQ community is regarded as a full part of the wider Ceutan community?	
LGBTQ Community – Intra-Communal Relations	7. What is your LGBTQ friendship circle like? Are you friends with any Moroccan LGBTQ people/ LGBTQ identifying refugees?	7.2. Are you friends with Muslim/Christian members of the LGBTQ community? 7.3. What comes to your mind when thinking about the notion of ‘convivencia’ in relation to the local LGBTQ community? 7.4. Is there ethnic exclusion or potentially even racism within the LGBTQ community? 7.4.1. If yes, how does it show? (ask for examples) 7.5. To what extent are cross-border Moroccan LGBTQ people part of the Ceutan LGBTQ community? 7.6. To what extent are LGBTQ identifying refugees/asylum seekers housed in CETI part of the community?	Probe intra-communal interactions/relations, e.g. between lesbians/gays etc. and across religious/cultural/national divide.
LGBTQ Community – Spaces of Engagement	8. Where do members of the Ceutan LGBTQ community meet to socialise?	8.2. Are there any dedicated physical places (e.g. bars, restaurants, parks, beaches, clubs) in Ceuta for the LGBTQ community to meet and socialise? (Note: if no, move to Question 9.3) 8.2.1. If yes, what types of spaces are they? 8.2.2. Are these LGBTQ spaces concentrated in a particular district or dispersed across Ceuta? ----- 8.3. If there are no specific LGBTQ places, how do you socialise with fellow members of the LGBTQ community? 8.3.1. How does it feel to socialise with fellow members of the LGBTQ community in non-LGBTQ places in Ceuta? 8.3.2. Would you like there to be a dedicated space for LGBTQ people to socialise? 8.3.2.1. If so, what should it look like? ----- 8.4. Do different members of the LGBTQ community socialise in different types of places? (e.g. lesbians, gay, transgender, Moroccans/Muslim, Christians, ethnicities)	Probe issues around locality of LGBTQ life in Ceuta. Probe how broader spatial segregation of communities in Ceuta impacts the LGBTQ community (11.4).

		8.5. How important are virtual spaces (e.g. FB, Whatsapp, Clubhouse, Grinder, Scruff etc.) to connect to fellow members of the Ceutan LGBTQ community?	
LGBTQ Community – Modes of Engagement	9. How is queer life celebrated in Ceuta?	<p>9.2. Do you organise an annual Pride parade or celebrations?</p> <p>9.2.1. If yes, do you participate?</p> <p>9.2.2. If yes, how inclusive are these Pride celebrations? Do all parts of the local LGBTQ participate? (Muslims/Christians, other ethnicities etc)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>9.2.3. If no, how do you celebrate gay pride in Ceuta?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>9.3. Are there any other festivals/cultural activities organised in Ceuta by and for the local LGBTQ community?</p> <p>9.3.1. If yes, what are they (ask for examples)</p> <p>9.4. Does the LGBTQ community contribute to local festivals in Ceuta?</p> <p>9.4.1. If yes, how (ask for examples)</p>	Probe levels of inclusivity of LGBTQ community.
LGBTQ Community – Challenges & Activism	10. What are the key challenges facing the LGBTQ community at this time and what challenges do you foresee in the future?	<p>10.2. Would the LGBTQ community benefit from having an organisation?</p> <p>10.3. Would you become actively involved in an LGBTQ organisation in Ceuta? Why/Why not?</p> <p>10.4. What are the most pressing issues an organisation supporting Ceutan LGBTQ people should focus on?</p> <p>10.4.1. Are there any particularly vulnerable groups within your community that require special support? (query specifically about refugees)</p> <p>10.5. Do you feel the Ceutan LGBTQ community is sufficiently supported by Spanish/Moroccan/international organisations?</p> <p>10.6. How active are you in the local, national and/or international LGBTQ community?</p> <p>10.6.1. If yes, what motivates your engagement?</p> <p>10.6.2. What are the challenges/obstacles in activism?</p> <p>10.7. As an LGBTQ person, how as the pandemic affected your life?</p>	<p>Probes levels and types of local LGBTQ organisation.</p> <p>Probes individual activism & issues facing LGBTQ community in the enclave.</p>

Appendix B: Sample Survey Questionnaire

University of Leeds *Research Project: The LGBTQ Community of Ceuta*

Project Team:

Dr Hendrik Kraetzschmar, Associate Professor, School of Languages, Cultures and Societies University of Leeds
Prof Richard Cleminson, Full Professor, School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, University of Leeds
Dr Andrew Delatolla, Lecturer, School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, University of Leeds
Pablo Nuñez, Local Team Member

1. What pronoun do you prefer? (Please select one answer)

She/her	
He/him	
They/their	
Prefer not to answer	

2. What is your age? (Please select one answer)

18-29 years old	
30-39 years old	
40-49 years old	
50-59 years old	
60-69 years old	
70-79 years old	
80-89 years old	

3. What neighbourhood in Ceuta did you grow up in?

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4. What neighbourhood in Ceuta do you currently live in?

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5. What is your residency status in Ceuta? (Please select one answer)

Spanish citizen	
Ceutan habitual resident	
Moroccan citizen	
Other European/EU citizen	
Refugee/asylum seeker	
Prefer not to answer	
Other	

If 'other', please state: _____

6. What is your ethnicity? (Please select one answer)

African	
Arab	
European	
Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity	
Prefer not to answer	
Other	

If 'other', please state: _____

7. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (Please select one answer)

No schooling completed	
Primary School only	
Secondary/High School	
Trade/technical/vocational training	
Bachelor's Degree	
Master's Degree	
Doctorate	
Prefer not to answer	

If 'other', please state: _____

8. What profession do you work in? (Please answer in the textbox below)

--

9. What is your personal yearly income? (Please select one answer)

Less than €5,000	
€10,000 - €19,999	
€20,000 – €34,999	
€35,000 – €49,999	
€50,000 – €74,999	
€75,000 – €99,999	
€100,000 – and above	
Prefer not to answer	

10. What is your current religion, if any? (Please select one answer)

Atheist (do not believe in God)	
Christian	
Hindu	
Jewish	
Muslim	
Prefer not to answer	
Other	

If 'other', please state: _____

11. How important is religion in your life? (Please select one answer)

Very important	
Somewhat important	
Not too important	
Not at all important	
Prefer not to answer	

12. What is your self-defined gender? (Please select one answer)

Female	
Intersex	
Male	
Non-binary	
Transgender	
Prefer not to answer	
Other	

If 'other', please state: _____

13. What is your sexual orientation? (Please select one answer)

Asexual	
Bisexual	
Gay	
Lesbian	
Pansexual	
Prefer not to answer	
Other	

If 'other', please state: _____

14. On this list are various groups of people. Could you please mention any that you have 'come out' to?
(Please select as many answers as appropriate)

Father	
Mother	
Siblings	
Other relatives	
Friends	
Neighbours	
Work/colleagues	
None	
Prefer not to answer	

15. Are you a member of an LGBTQ Organisation or group (Please select as appropriate)

Ceutan LGBTQ organisation	
Spanish LGBTQ organisation (e.g. FELGTB, COGAM)	
Moroccan LGBTQ organisation	
International LGBTQ organisation	
Online social fora and groups	
None	
Prefer not to answer	

If a member of one or several LGBTQ organisations, please state which: _____

Appendix C: List of Research Participants (in alphabetical order)

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Role/Position</i>	<i>Location and Date</i>
A	Research Participant	Online, 03.11.2021
ABM	Research Participant	Online, 26.02 & 11.03.2021
AC	Ministerio de Educación y Formación Provincial, Dirección Provincial Ceuta	Ceuta, 15.06.2022
AN	Research Participant	Online, 17.02.2022; Ceuta, 16.06.2022
AV	Research Participant	Ceuta, 14.06.2022 & 16.06.2022
C	Research Participant	Online, 18.02.2021
CAR	Instituto Nacional de Gestión Sanitaria (INGESA)	Ceuta, 17.06.2022
CARM	Research Participant	Ceuta, 14.09.2022
CLE	Consejería Sanidad, plan sobre SIDS, HIV y otras ITS	Ceuta, 15.09.2022
CR	Second Vice President of Ceuta	Ceuta, 15.06.2022
G	Research Participant	Online, 04.03.2021
GST	High School Teacher	Ceuta, 16.06.2022
IT	Research Participant	Online, 08.12.2020
JA	Research Participant	Online, 02.03.2021
JAF	Ceuta Ya	Ceuta, 15.06.2022
JT	Roja Directa	Algeciras, 17.06.2022
K	Research Participant	Ceuta, 15.09.2022
KL	Research Participant	Online, 16. & 27.11.2020
M	Research Participant	Online, 15.04.2021
MB	Research Participant	Ceuta, 12.06.2022
N	Research Participant	Online, 17.12.2020
PN	Research Participant	Online, 19.11.2020
PS	Ministerio de Trabajo y Económica Social, Dirección Provincial Ceuta	Ceuta, 16.06.2022
PT	Research Participant	Online, 11.10.2021
RGS	Research Participant	Online, 9. & 10.05.2022
RR	AMLEGA, Melilla	Online, 29.01.2022
SA	Diputado del Grupo Partido Socialista Obrero Español	Ceuta, 15.06.2022
SH	Research Participant	Ceuta, 12.06.2022
TC	Research Participant	Online, 03.03.2022
TG	Research Participant	Ceuta, 16.06.2022
Y	Research Participant	Ceuta, 12.06.2022
YAS	Research Participant	Ceuta, 14.06.2022