

Are These the “Safest” Countries for LGBTQIA+ Travelers?

Highlights

- **Worldwide: The Netherlands, Malta, Norway, Spain, and the United Kingdom;**
- **Africa: South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Botswana, and Djibouti;**
- **Asia & Oceania: New Zealand, Australia, Israel, Thailand, and Nepal;**
- **Americas: Uruguay, Canada, Colombia, Argentina, and Brazil;**
- **Europe: The Netherlands, Malta, Norway, Spain, and the United Kingdom.**

"Which are the safest countries for LGBTQIA+ travelers in 2024?" – UniK SEO’s Digital PR Department has collected and analyzed the latest data on this subject to provide an answer to this question.

To do so, the team at UniK SEO broke down the most recent numbers from the Homophobic Climate Index – HCI (2018), the Travel Safety Index – TSI (2022), and the changes in LGBTQIA+ rights observed between 1991 and 2019 worldwide.

Methodology

To find an answer to the aforementioned question, the following equation was proposed:

$$\text{LGBTQIA+ Travel Safety Index} = 0.33 * \text{LGTBQIA+ Rights Index} + 0.33 * \text{HCI} + 0.33 * \text{TSI}$$

This formula cross-analyzes the data retrieved from the aforesaid indices for each country, thus creating the following three variables:

1. LGBTQIA+ Rights Index: This index assesses the extent to which lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and other people outside the conventional categories of sexuality and gender have the same rights as heterosexual and cisgender individuals. It combines 18 individual policies, such as the legality of same-sex relationships, marriage, and gender reassignment. Higher values suggest more rights and negative values vice versa.

2. HCI: This index incorporates institutional and social components related to homophobia.

It is based on the level of enforcement of legislation that criminalizes, protects, or recognizes same-sex relationships.

3. TSI: This index is based on the combined results of surveys, crime statistics, and legal data related to travel safety.

Finally, the data was adjusted to the top theoretical possible score for each of the three indicators – in this case, our variables, to obtain a maximum score of 100. The result is a "final score" comparing the data from each nation to establish a relative level of safety for LGBTQIA+ travelers. The calculations involved multiplying the weight of each variable by the respective value found in the database and then summing up all the values.

Note: To prevent bias, the three variables were given the same "weight" or relevance. The LGBTQIA+ Rights Index was included in the formula on an opposite basis, considering that, unlike the other two variables, the higher the value, the better the ranking.

The countries were then ranked according to this new "LGBTQIA+ Travel Safety Index (LGBTQIA+ TSI)," scored on a scale of 0 to 100, the latter being the best possible score.

Table 1

WORLDWIDE					
Country	Area/Continent	Normalized LGBT+ Rights Index 2019	Normalized HCI [Index Purpose]	Normalized TSI [Index Purpose]	LGBTQIA+ TSI
The Netherlands	Europe	88.04	2.25	98.46	93.8
Malta	Europe	100.00	20.36	97.60	91.5
Norway	Europe	87.33	3.31	93.14	91.5
Spain	Europe	84.07	6.04	92.80	89.4
United Kingdom	Europe	87.92	11.12	93.83	89.3
Belgium	Europe	82.07	7.69	93.14	88.3
Finland	Europe	87.09	6.63	85.59	87.8

WORLDWIDE (continued)					
Country	Area/Continent	Normalized LGBT+ Rights Index 2019	Normalized HCI [Index Purpose]	Normalized TSI [Index Purpose]	LGBTQIA+ TSI
Denmark	Europe	81.58	2.96	86.96	87.6
France	Europe	81.07	8.05	92.28	87.6
Uruguay	Latin America	87.33	9.11	86.79	87.5

The top 10 “safest” countries for LGBTQIA+ travelers worldwide, according to the UniK SEO Agency formula.

Table 2

AFRICA					
Country	Area/Continent	Normalized LGBT+ Rights Index 2019	Normalized HCI [Index Purpose]	Normalized TSI [Index Purpose]	LGBTQIA+ TSI
South Africa	Africa	87.68	28.40	84.39	80.4
Mozambique	Africa	39.98	49.23	49.23	46.2
Angola	Africa	43.52	87.34	70.84	41.9
Botswana	Africa	30.99	65.92	51.11	38.3
Djibouti	Africa	34.67	69.23	36.88	33.8
Mauritius	Africa	26.55	61.54	36.88	33.6
Namibia	Africa	25.76	68.05	42.54	33.1
Mali	Africa	34.67	72.54	36.36	32.5
Burkina Faso	Africa	28.69	77.28	38.25	29.6
Gabon	Africa	22.71	78.93	37.74	26.9

The top 10 “safest” countries for LGBTQIA+ travelers in Africa, according to the UniK SEO Agency formula.

Table 3

AMERICAS					
Country	Area/Continent	Normalized LGBT+ Rights Index 2019	Normalized HCI [Index Purpose]	Normalized TSI [Index Purpose]	LGBTQIA+ TSI
Uruguay	South America	87.33	9.11	86.79	87.5
Canada	North America	77.19	16.57	100.00	86.0
Colombia	South America	81.35	24.73	75.64	76.6
Argentina	South America	68.68	22.01	78.90	74.4
Brazil	South America	74.02	26.75	72.56	72.5
United States	North America	64.63	29.35	80.10	71.1
Ecuador	South America	75.37	34.08	73.41	70.9
Bolivia	South America	70.11	44.62	72.56	65.4
Chile	South America	45.91	38.11	87.82	64.6
Mexico	North America	58.95	30.41	63.98	63.5

The top 10 “safest” countries for LGBTQIA+ travelers in the Americas, according to the UniK SEO Agency formula.

Table 4

ASIA & OCEANIA					
Country	Area/Continent	Normalized LGBT+ Rights Index 2019	Normalized HCI [Index Purpose]	Normalized TSI [Index Purpose]	LGBTQIA+ TSI
New Zealand	Oceania	86.85	17.51	89.71	85.5
Australia	Oceania	79.50	27.34	86.96	78.9
Israel	Asia	63.13	39.17	72.04	64.7
Thailand	Asia	58.58	49.82	56.78	54.6
Nepal	Asia	51.81	69.47	65.35	48.7
Japan	Asia	45.83	54.91	48.54	46.0

ASIA & OCEANIA (continued)					
Country	Area/Continent	Normalized LGBT+ Rights Index 2019	Normalized HCI [Index Purpose]	Normalized TSI [Index Purpose]	LGBTQIA+ TSI
Mongolia	Asia	46.62	62.01	54.37	45.9
Georgia	Asia	45.95	64.62	55.23	45.1
Philippines	Asia	40.65	46.51	42.37	45.0
South Korea	Asia	39.85	69.47	50.94	40.0

The top 10 "safest" countries for LGBTQIA+ travelers in Asia & Oceania, according to the UniK SEO Agency formula.

Table 5

EUROPE					
Country	Area/Continent	Normalized LGBT+ Rights Index 2019	Normalized HCI [Index Purpose]	Normalized TSI [Index Purpose]	LGBTQIA+ TSI
The Netherlands	Europe	88.04	2.25	98.46	93.8
Malta	Europe	100.00	20.36	97.60	91.5
Norway	Europe	87.33	3.31	93.14	91.5
Spain	Europe	84.07	6.04	92.80	89.4
United Kingdom	Europe	87.92	11.12	93.83	89.3
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Finland	Europe	87.09	6.63	85.59	87.8
Denmark	Europe	81.58	2.96	86.96	87.6
France	Europe	81.07	8.05	92.28	87.6
Portugal	Europe	81.94	20.12	95.71	85.0

The top 10 "safest" countries for LGBTQIA+ travelers in Europe, according to the UniK SEO Agency formula.

Key Findings

This brief report on the safest countries for LGBTQIA+ travelers in 2024 reveals some surprising results:

- Although traditionally LGBTQ-friendly countries such as The Netherlands, Malta, Norway, Spain, and the UK top the global list, the study also highlights unexpected leaders in different regions;
- Mozambique and Angola stand out in Africa, overtaking some better-known “safe havens”;
- In Asia and Oceania, Nepal's inclusion in the top five is remarkable, given its recent history with LGBTQIA+ rights;
- Similarly, Uruguay leads in the Americas, demonstrating significant advances in LGBTQIA+ safety, compared to larger nations like the United States.

These rankings were based on a comprehensive formula that considered several variables, such as LGBTQIA+ rights, the HCI, and the TSI.

Sources

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UniK SEO is a digital marketing agency in Lisbon, Portugal, specializing in SEO, SEM, and Content Strategy, helping businesses increase their visibility on search engines, with a special focus on niche markets.

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