



Our Stories



Belonging and Isolation for 2SLGBTQIA+ Newcomers in Quebec

Hanine El Mir, 2023

The Issue

The "nitty-gritty":

- ☑ interviewed 5 people;
- ☑ May-September
- ☑ 2 chose to be anonymous;

Members of the LGBTQIA+ community often feel alienated from their cultures as newcomers in Quebec or vice-versa. I asked:

- Where do they belong?
- What causes them to feel isolated?
- What can SCSC do to bolster belonging?

Findings

01 Not being able to speak the Province's language (French) puts LGBTQIA newcomers in a situation where they can't work, can't socialize, and cannot officially become residents.

02 To a lot of LGBTQIA newcomers, being queer is not something they can be in addition to their cultural background. Growing up, they were made to believe that it is a Western concept they need to shed their Eastern ideals for.

03 Coming out isn't an idea that crosses the minds of LGBTQIA newcomers here as much as back home where it's more necessary. Here, it is taken for granted in their circles that they're queer.

04 People need representation, intervention, trainings to speak-up and remind themselves that they don't need to fear their own communities. People need a place to simply exist as they are.



SAMUEL CENTRE
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Delving Deeper

One of the people interviewed mentioned that at their workplace there is a dire need for Spanish-speaking people to help the large influx of queer hispanic immigrants who come to them specifically in search of community.



“To be gay, you had to be American, or brainwashed by Americans. Surely then, I wasn’t gay” said one of the participants. “I still think deep down on certain days that I have to forget one identity in order to be the other: when I forget that I am Yemeni (nationality has been changed for privacy), I enjoy my life in Montreal much more easily.”*

People are often not exposed to these ideas and concepts in their mother tongues, making them seem foreign and distant.

Not only is it a linguistic lack, but also a lack of representation. As such, they don’t feel the need to come out here, because they can act and express themselves so freely that *“people can tell and already know.”*



“I don’t think I can live somewhere that doesn’t have immediate access to a real beach.”



“Experiences aren’t universal.”



Providing 2SLGBTQIA+ people with the safety and security of existing somewhere, freely and unconditionally in a hub or a space for them, by them.

Working with live-interpreters and translators during events to make them more inclusive of those who don’t speak English and/or French.

Gamifying Our Findings

I decided to put the results of this research into a video game. With the game I prepared to supplement this project’s findings, I hoped to amplify people’s voices through telling their stories and showing other LGBTQIA+ newcomers in Quebec that there are people just like them who have these thoughts and worries.



Game & Play as Research Creation

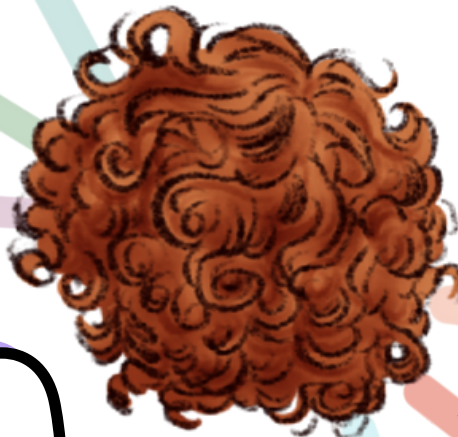


- When we play games, we imagine ourselves in the shoes of the protagonists, transform social identities, take on new roles.
- Role-play is “a media, where a person, through immersion into a role and the world of this role, is given the opportunity to participate in and interact with the contents of this world.”

You can read the full report and play the game I created exploring these findings on the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness' website.

PLAY

*In the words of Hanine,
game's matter
because...*



playing games allows
us to try on new
identities and explore
new worlds all while
having fun

**GAME CREATE:
REPRESENTATION
EMPOWERMENT
COMMUNITY
BUILDING**

You can come as you are,
be who you want to be and
have fun while doing it

*Thank
you!*

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