Irish LGBT emigration

Resource list

November 2026

The story of Irish LGBT emigration has yet to be written.

'Poverty, Lesbians and Gay Men' (1995) study has a very good chapter on Emigration and Migration, it's on www.eoin-collins.ie

'Lesbian and Gay Visions of Ireland' (1995) has three chapters on Emigration, it's on my website www.kieranrose.ie

It is interesting to note how strongly emigration featured in the above publications.

Eoin Collins was key person on both above publications and writes very well on p7-8 in introduction to 'Lesbian and Gay Visions of Ireland' about emigrating to London in 1980s, the difficulties of resolving being Irish and gay etc, see also his Oral History interview with George Gavrilis on www.eoin-collins.ie

'Queer Irish World' chapter in 'Belfastmen, An Intimate History of Life Before Gay Liberation' (2026) by Tom Hulme.

'ILGO and the St Patrick's Day Parade' in 'Diverse Communities, The Evolution of Lesbian and Gay Politics in Ireland' (1994) pages 31-33, www.kieranrose.ie

'Sexuality for Export' in 'Out for Ourselves, The Lives of Irish Lesbians and Gay Men' (1986) www.corklgbtarchive.com

'Remarkable Journey, A Resource List on Criminalisation and the Campaign for Gay Law Reform and Equality' (2023) www.kieranrose.ie

'Love in the Lav, A Social Biography of Same-Sex Desire in Ireland 1922-1972' by Averill Earls (2025) including chapter 'The Solicitor'.

'Gay and Lesbian Activism in the Republic of Ireland 1973-93' by Patrick McDonagh (2021)

Aengus O'Snodaigh TD did research on reports in Irish newspapers of Court cases relating to gross indecency and found that many men did not turn up for trial probably because they had fled the country?

'Ireland, 1912-1985, Politics and Society' (1989) by Joe Lee is very good on emigration e.g. pages 374- 387. Female emigration from Ireland was very high whereas European emigration was predominantly male (p376).

Explaining the high emigration rates of young girls Joe Lee writes, 'The more attractive British conditions included better living quarters, shorter working hours and more personal freedom.' (p377)

'The Female Experience, The Story of the Women's Movement in Ireland' (1975) by Catherine Rose, see www.kieranrose.ie

'Invented Identities? Lesbians and Gays Talk about Migration' ed by Bob Cant (1997) includes chapter by Anne Maguire of ILGO New York

'Hometowns, Gay Men Write About Where They Belong', (1991) ed by John Preston