

# Progress Made. Renewed Efforts Required.

**A Shadow Report of Ireland's  
First National LGBTI+  
Inclusion Strategy**

**FULL REPORT**  
JANUARY 2024



**LGBT  
IRELAND**

For Inclusion  
For Equality  
For Everyone

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## FOREWORD

On behalf of LGBT Ireland, I am delighted to present this important report. The formation of the first National LGBTI+ Strategy was a milestone moment for Ireland's LGBTI+ community. After wide consultation and examination, this is our assessment of that plan.

As the title notes a lot of progress has been made since 2019, but a renewed effort is now required to fulfil the outstanding actions and to address new challenges. I hope this report will be a useful tool in the formation of the second National LGBTI+ Strategy.

Finally, I would like to thank the authors and commenters for all their work.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Paula Fagan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

CEO of LGBT Ireland



## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The authors would like to acknowledge the extensive engagement from the government departments, state agencies and LGBTQI+ community organisations. Their cooperation made this project possible. We would like to particularly thank Dr Chris Noone, lecturer at the University of Galway and a Board Member of NXF, for his expert advice and guidance.

## **CITATION**

LGBT Ireland, *Progress Made. Renewed Efforts Required. A Shadow Report of Ireland's First National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy* (Dublin: LGBT Ireland, 2024).

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## **SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The formation of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy (the Strategy) in 2019 was a significant step forward in the engagement between the State and LGBTI+ people in Ireland. For the first time, there was a coordinated, cross-departmental plan to respond to the unique needs and challenges of the entire LGBTI+ community.

The Strategy, which included 108 actions, was envisioned to run to 2021 but was extended to 2023, following the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic. During this time there was a change of government, and responsibility for the coordination of the Strategy moved from the Department of Justice to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. This was just two of the challenges faced during the implementation period.

This shadow report seeks to measure and evaluate the impact of the Strategy from a community perspective. The formation of the report was led by LGBT Ireland with input from a wide range of stakeholders. The contents of the report have been shaped based on feedback from various LGBTQI+ community organisations, government departments and state agencies.

The report examines all 108 actions and provides an objective overview of the progress made. This is followed by subjective analysis and commentary. Each action has been assigned a grade from A – F based on the progress made. Each of the outcomes has also been assigned a score based on the average score of the actions that made up that outcome. An overall grade (C+) is an average of the score of the 108 actions. It is clear from this score and the individual assessments that significant progress has been made on a number of fronts, however, renewed efforts are needed to ensure the outstanding actions are completed.

The analysis of the report highlights the success of the public consultation that was undertaken in advance of the Strategy formation. However, it's not clear what steps were taken between the conclusion of the public consultation and the publication of the Strategy. It also notes some of the structural flaws, including how some actions were not specific, concrete or measurable. The report also provides a comparison between Ireland and two high performing countries in terms of LGBTI+ rights namely Denmark and Malta.

The report concludes with 10 recommendations. These call for a second National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy that takes a whole-life approach and is informed by research, public consultation and international best practice. In particular, the next Strategy should focus on intersectional issues and the needs of trans, non-binary and intersex people. Finally, the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the next Strategy must be reviewed, and a new approach should be adopted. Crucially the next Strategy needs enhanced human and financial resources to ensure all outcomes are achieved. By working together, with renewed

energy and effort we can reach the collective goal of making Ireland the best place in Europe to be LGBTI+.

## OUTCOMES REPORT CARD

*These grades are based on the extent to which the agreed actions were implemented.*

### Visible and Included

1. LGBTI+ people are made positively visible across all sectors of society.	C
2. Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work.	C
3. Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people.	D
4. Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy.	B
5. Public policy is inclusive of LGBTI+ perspectives and avoids heteronormative assumptions.	D
6. Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people.	C
7. The positive contribution of the LGBTI+ community to Irish arts, culture and sport is highlighted and the history of the LGBTI+ movement preserved.	C
8. Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ friendly tourist destination.	C

### Treated Equally

9. LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred.	A
10. Equality legislation provides explicit protection to transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people.	C
11. Same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law.	A
12. Transgender people are supported and administrative processes are streamlined while maintaining a person's privacy.	B
13. Supports are provided to those at higher risk of multiple discrimination and double marginalisation including LGBTI+ older people, migrants, Travellers, people with disabilities and LGBTI+ prisoners.	C

### Healthy

14. Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the	B
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identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions.	
15. Health policy takes consideration of the needs of all population groups including the LGBTI+ community.	B
16. Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations.	B
17. The LGBTI+ community, particularly the MSM population of Ireland are made aware of the risks of contracting HIV and other STIs and of the importance of regular testing.	A
18. People living with HIV in Ireland are supported and not stigmatised.	C
19. People wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice.	F
20. Better data is available on the prevalence of intersex conditions in Ireland and consideration given to appropriate clinical governance in the context of international evidence and guidelines.	F
<b>Safe and Supported</b>	
21. Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it.	B
22. LGBTI+ victims of crime are appropriately supported and included in mainstream service provision underpinned by formalised consultation structures with An Garda Síochána and other relevant agencies.	B
23. LGBTI+ asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the International Protection Process and Direct Provision System.	B
24. The practice of conversion therapy in Ireland is investigated and followed up with appropriate counter measures.	B
25. Ireland continues to raise the issue of LGBTI+ rights at an international level and supports Human Rights Defenders and civil society groups in embassies and overseas missions.	A
26. LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence.	B
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>C +</b>

## SECTION II: INTRODUCTION

### *Background*

On 28 November 2019, Ireland launched its first-ever National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. This Strategy included 108 governmental actions that aimed to promote LGBTI+ inclusion, protect the rights of the LGBTI+ community, and improve LGBTI+ well-being and quality of life.<sup>1</sup> The Strategy was initially developed to last until 2021, but with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Strategy was extended until the summer of 2023.<sup>2</sup>

The Strategy was developed by the Department of Justice and Equality with the advice of a Strategy Consultative Committee, which consisted of various government and NGO representatives. In making the Strategy, the department took into account the feedback from a series of public consultations that took place around Ireland from November 2018 to February 2019. These consultations were interactive workshops hosted by LGBTI+ experts and researchers in Cork, Dublin, Dundalk, Galway, and Limerick. Specific workshop sessions were held to hear the concerns of the trans and intersex community, Travellers, asylum seekers, migrants and refugees, and the disabled community.

The final 108 actions were organised into 26 overarching objectives, which in turn were sorted into four broad thematic pillars: Visible and Included; Treated Equally; Healthy; and Safe and Supported.

To help implement the Strategy, in 2020, the Department of Justice and Equality allocated a fund of over €900,000 to support equality and LGBTI+ initiatives.

In 2020, responsibility for implementing the Strategy was shifted from the Department of Justice to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY).

*Is there still a need for a National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy in 2023? With the first National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy coming to a close, is there any reason to have a second Inclusion Strategy?*

In 2022, 582 hate crimes were reported to the Gardaí, a 30% increase from 2021. Sexual orientation was the discriminatory motive in 22% of cases, the second highest after race. This matches a general trend in Europe. According to ILGA Europe, 2022 was the most violent year for LGBTQ+ people in a decade. In Ireland, 75% of LGBTI survey respondents reported being verbally abused because of their identity, while one in five reported being punched, hit, or physically attacked in public because of their sexual orientation or gender

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/6b2ad0-launch-of-irelands-national-LGBTI+-inclusion-strategy-2019-2021/>

<sup>2</sup> DCEDIY note that the Strategy will remain in place until a successor is developed.

identity.<sup>3</sup> 87% of surveyed LGBTQ youth have seen or experienced anti-LGBTQ hate or harassment on social media this past year.<sup>4</sup>

According to the CSO, 33% of LGBTI+ people experienced discrimination over the previous two years – making the LGBTI+ people one of the most discriminated groups in Irish society.<sup>5</sup>

Ireland has the worst healthcare for transgender people in the European Union.<sup>6</sup> Ireland's wait times to receive trans healthcare, from requesting a specialist to seeing one, can last anywhere from 2.5 to 10 years, by far the longest waiting time in the EU;<sup>7</sup> out of a potential 12 points on providing trans healthcare Ireland scored just one point given for at least nominally providing healthcare.<sup>8</sup>

Far-right protesters have been agitating across the island. Most notably, people engaged in campaigns of hate and harassment have targeted public libraries in Dublin, Cork, and elsewhere, objecting to the inclusion of new LGBTI+ materials in the library collections – a measure that the 2019-2023 Inclusion Strategy helped bring about.<sup>9 10 11 12 13</sup>

A new national Strategy is needed not just to close the long-standing and unacceptable gaps in legal protections and resource provisions for LGBTI+ people but also to shore up the positive changes that have occurred for this community over the past three decades.

#### *Why is there a need for a shadow review of the 2019-2023 Inclusion Strategy?*

The formation of the first National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy was an important step forward for engagement between the government and the LGBTI+ community. The government alone can't measure the impact of this development. This Shadow Report aims to be an independent, community-led review of the progress made over the last four years. The goal is to ensure the views of civil society are captured in a coordinated way and that the government is held to account for the commitments it made. This report also aims to

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.belongto.org/support-our-work/advocacy/lgbtq-research/the-lgbtireland-report/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.belongto.org/87-of-lgbtq-youth-report-hate-and-harassment-online/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/ed/equalityanddiscrimination2019/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/health/2022/10/31/ireland-ranked-worst-for-transgender-healthcare-in-eu/?>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/dublin/2023/04/06/protesters-enter-swords-library-to-oppose-lgbtq-books-for-young-people/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/2023/07/31/library-protests-cork-mayor-calls-on-gardai-to-step-up-their-game/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/education/2023/04/03/libraries-at-centre-of-culture-wars-as-protesters-try-to-remove-lgbtq-books-for-young-people/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/2023/07/17/minister-condemns-targeting-of-library-staff-after-protests-over-lgbtq-literature/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://gcn.ie/anti-lgbtq-protesters-kerry-library-drag-storytime/>

spotlight successes. We hope that this report will also inform the creation of the next Strategy because bold actions are needed to ensure LGBTI+ equality is delivered.

#### *A note on acronyms*

You will note throughout this report a variety of acronyms are used to refer to the community. These include, but are not limited to: LGBT, LGBTI, LGBTQ, LGBTQI+, LGBTQIA+. There is no community consensus on the best acronym to use. Therefore, when referring to organisations and their work we endeavour to use the acronyms used by that organisation. In addition, when referencing research, we endeavour to use the acronym used in that study as this is an indicator of who was included in this research. We acknowledge the complexity of this approach may lead to minor errors and questions for readers.

### **SECTION III: METHODOLOGY**

The shadow review process began in June 2023. The central document used was the LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy Tracker developed by the Department of Justice, and adopted by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY), to keep track of the Strategy's progress. In this tracker, each government department participating in the Inclusion Strategy periodically provided updates on each action assigned to it. Each department then graded their progress on each action using a colour-coded "traffic light" system. "Black" represented that no progress on the action had been completed; "red" represented significant delays; "orange" represented minor delays; "green" represented that progress on an action was on track; and "blue" represented that an action had been completed.

When the review began, the tracker had been last updated in March of 2023. During the review, an updated tracker was provided to the Steering Committee in late July 2023. This report was updated to reflect the changes in the updated tracker.

Using a combination of the departmental updates from March and July 2023, parliamentary questions, news articles, and government publications, a University of Oxford Masters Student and LGBT Ireland intern, James Morrison, reviewed the government actions. In the initial review, the tracker's original "traffic light" system was retained, although each department's self-evaluation was disregarded, and Mr Morrison re-graded each action. This initial evaluation was the jumping-off point for an organisation-wide review, where additional input and information was solicited, and actions were re-graded appropriately.

After this second review, some knowledge gaps remained. To fill these gaps, LGBT Ireland met with several NGO stakeholders who had more intimate knowledge of the progression of specific actions. These stakeholders included Belong To LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland, the Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI), the Irish National Teachers' Organisation

(INTO), Intersex Ireland, HIV Ireland, IBEC and independent equality expert Niall Crowley. Feedback and comments on the progress of the actions were noted.

Incorporating all these information sources, a “progress” narrative for each of the 108 actions of the Inclusion Strategy was written. This section is written as objectively as possible. It records the facts as known, to the best ability of LGBT Ireland, based on the resources the organisation was given access to.

Following each progress section is an “analysis” section. This section provides subjective commentary on the progress of each action, notes on changed governmental or social contexts, and suggestions for improvement. These sections are substantively the views of LGBT Ireland, although the views and commentary of other organisations are incorporated throughout.

For the final paper, LGBT Ireland adopted a letter grading system. This grading system is similar to that used by the Children’s Rights Alliance in their annual government report card, which was seen as best practice<sup>14</sup>. This grading system is broken down below:

- A: Excellent progress, action made a real difference in the lives of LGBTI+ people.
- B: Good progress, with positive results for LGBTI+ people.
- C: Satisfactory progress, but LGBTI+ people still left wanting.
- D: A barely acceptable performance, with little or no positive impact on LGBTI+ people.
- E: Unacceptable progress. Steps are being taken in the wrong direction. Absolutely no positive impact for LGBTI+ people.
- F: No progress. Outcomes for LGBTI+ people have gotten worse.
- N/A: No grade; mutual agreement to not progress the action.

Each action was given a letter grade. The grades for each individual action within that objective were averaged together to calculate the objective grade. To do this, each grade was given a numerical value: A = 95; B = 85; C = 75; D = 65; E = 55; F = 45. If the average for the objective fell within the 90-100 range, it was awarded an A; 80-89.99 a B; 70-79.99 a C; 60-69.99 a D; 50-59.99 an E; 49.99 and below an F. The overall grade (C+) is an average of all the actions.

An initial draft of this report was circulated to NGOs working in the areas covered by the Inclusion Strategy in September of 2023. These NGOs provided feedback and opinions on each action's progress narrative, analysis, and grading. This feedback was incorporated into a new draft, and grades were finalised.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://childrensrights.ie/whats-new/latest-publications/report-card/>

The final draft of this report was presented to government departments in October 2023. Departments were given an opportunity to issue corrections and feedback on the draft. Corrections and re-grading were done accordingly. The final report is the work of LGBT Ireland.

## SECTION IV: GOVERNMENT ACTION REVIEW

### PILLAR ONE: VISIBLE AND INCLUDED

#### OUTCOME 1: LGBTI+ PEOPLE ARE POSITIVELY VISIBLE ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY.

**Grade: C**

Overview: In this area, outcomes have been mixed at best. While progress has been made and new initiatives have been started, many actions still need to be completed, and backward steps were made in some areas.

**Action 1.1: Conduct a public awareness campaign to positively represent LGBTI+ identities and contributions to Irish Society.**

**Reporting department: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)**

**Grade: C**

#### *Progress*

In May of 2023, DCEDIY launched a public awareness campaign with the slogan “looking back, moving forward.”<sup>15</sup> The campaign was designed to spark a national conversation about the progress made on LGBTI+ rights and the work that still needs to be done to ensure LGBTI+ equality.

So far, two press statements have been issued. One at the beginning of the campaign that included a photo shoot with Minister O’Gorman and six participant interviews representing the diversity of the LGBTI+ community. A second statement was issued in late June that included photos of both the Minister and the Taoiseach. The campaign was limited to social and other online media. The analytics from the campaign are being collected.

#### *Analysis*

This campaign was restricted to online and social media and did not include physical media, like posters, billboards, or print advertising. Generally, press releases, social media announcements, and interviews are a good start but also low-hanging fruit. For better performance on this action, the government should have been willing to put more resources into this campaign. Moreover, the Inclusion Strategy launched in 2019, but a public awareness campaign only came to fruition four years later, just as the Inclusion Strategy ended.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/09501-look-back-moving-forward-together/#>

## **Action 1.2: Identify key large-scale events each year to promote LGBTI+ visibility.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

### *Progress*

The Live Out Loud campaign launched on 11 October 2020, International Coming Out Day. The campaign sent out an open call for creative submissions from LGBTI+ young people to showcase the positive contributions of LGBTI+ young people. The event was live-streamed from the National Opera House in Wexford on Friday, 25 June 2021. The event featured songs, poems, spoken word pieces, dance performances, and art pieces by Irish youth reflecting on their identity as LGBTI+ people in Ireland today. The event was hosted by Stephen Byrne and featured the Irish indie rock band Pillow Queens.<sup>16</sup> The department also cited the social media campaign identified in Action 1.1.

### *Analysis*

The Live Out Loud campaign was a promising start for this action. However, the action specifies that key large-scale events should be carried out each year to promote LGBTI+ visibility. Since Live Out Loud concluded in 2021, there currently appears to be no movement to restage the event or create some other annually occurring event.

Although large-scale events for Pride occur each year, these events are primarily brought about thanks to the efforts of non-profits or other non-governmental organisations and should not be considered in grading this action.

Additionally, large-scale events celebrating LGBTI+ identity should occur throughout the year, not just during Pride.

## **Action 1.3: Develop and implement further actions to support the positive portrayal and representation of LGBTI+ identities in broadcast media.**

**Reporting department: Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and media (DTCAGSM)**

**Grade: E**

### *Progress*

RTÉ has an LGBTQ+ employee resource group and continues to educate its workforce about LGBTI+ issues through awareness-raising workshops.<sup>17</sup>

RTÉ has a diversity, equity, and inclusion group that helps RTÉ promote relevant content that speaks to the diversity of Ireland. This includes promoting content relevant to the

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<sup>16</sup> This whole paragraph from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/fea91-live-out-loud-celebrating-LGBTI+-youth-national-online-campaign-announced-on-coming-out-day/>

<sup>17</sup> Inclusion Strategy

LGBTI+ community. For the past three years RTÉ created a pride section each June, focusing on a variety of LGBTI+ issues and promoting a wide range of Pride-related events throughout Ireland.<sup>18</sup> This pride section is periodically updated throughout the year with news articles, articles focusing on queer culture and art, and columns featuring queer voices.

On 15 June 2022, Dublin Pride announced that it was terminating its media partnership with RTÉ due to the anti-trans rhetoric promoted on the Liveline radio programme hosted by Joe Duffy.<sup>19</sup>

The new Coimisiún na Meán was formed on 15 March 2023, and a Gender, Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity Strategy is being developed to bolster the positive portrayal and representation of LGBTI+ identities in the media.

### *Analysis*

Concerning this action, there is some progress and some regression. RTÉ's efforts to promote LGBTI+ identities in broadcast media are noted, particularly during Pride month. The Joe Duffy controversy was deeply disappointing and demonstrated irresponsibility by RTÉ in platforming anti-trans rhetoric. This incident has led to a sharp decline in trust for RTÉ amongst the LGBTI+ community.

This action is marked down because further work should be done to promote LGBTI+ voices beyond RTÉ. With the creation of the Coimisiún na Meán,<sup>20</sup> there is a new tool that the government can use to institute new media guidelines protecting LGBTI+ people from discrimination and targeted attacks on the airwaves. The Commission can also take on a new role in helping to promote media that celebrates LGBTI+ identities and gives space to LGBTI+ creators.

**Action 1.4: Coordinate a series of events and communications to support positive messaging around Pride and festivals nationwide and, more broadly, to promote LGBTI+ visibility, awareness, and expertise.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

### *Progress*

Concerning this action, the department again highlighted its work on hosting the Live Out Loud: Celebrating LGBTI+ Youth event, held on 25 June 2021.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.rte.ie/eile/lgbtq/>

<sup>19</sup> Draft meeting notes July 2022

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.cnam.ie/>

It also pointed to its EDI working group established in March 2023, which helps to develop EDI initiatives and EDI challenges. The Network helped organise the department's participation in Pride 2023 and held workshops on allyship and LGBTI+ history. The group also procured lanyards and pins for the department and procured pride flags for the Miesien and Montague Buildings.

### *Analysis*

This action and action 1.2 go hand-in-hand. As stated in the analysis of 1.2, the success of the Live Out Loud event is noted. However, hosting one event for the 5-year Strategy doesn't fulfil this action's stipulation that there be a *series* of events celebrating LGBTI+ voices. Moreover, there is little support from government agencies for events celebrating the LGBTI+ community outside of Pride month.

Hopefully, the establishment of the new EDI working group will lead to more diverse communications inside and outside of Pride Month.

## **Action 1.5: Explore opportunities for the appropriate inclusion of LGBTI+ lives in the curriculum as part of curriculum review at both primary and senior-cycle levels.**

**Reporting department: Department of Education**

**Grade: C**

### *Progress*

According to the Department of Education, the curriculum at primary and post-primary levels is intended to be inclusive to all learners, regardless of gender, socio-economic background, race, or faith, and aims to be inclusive, equitable, and diverse. A new Primary Curriculum framework was launched in March 2023. This includes "Inclusive Education and Diversity" as a principle. The framework notes that "Inclusive education celebrates diversity and responds to the uniqueness of every child."<sup>21</sup>

The Senior Cycle is in the process of being redeveloped. The reform effort will include the development of new subjects and revised curricula for all existing subjects. Inclusion will play a role throughout the process. In addition, public consultations on curriculum development are ongoing.

### *Analysis*

The outcome of this action was still pending, post the conclusion of the extended Strategy timeframe. The department notes that the Senior Cycle review will take a number of years to finish.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/249810/7004299e-83a5-4e52-8220-9192fe4116cb.pdf#page=null>

No evidence has been provided to show that LGBTI+ voices will be adequately addressed within either curriculum. LGBTI+ issues are subsumed into the broad category of “EDI” and “Inclusion.” This leaves room for LGBTI+ issues to be neglected.

LGBTI+ voices and identities need to be included across the curriculum. History classes should consider the contributions of LGBTI+ people to Irish history and cover the formation of the Irish LGBTI+ movement up till the present day. English literature classes should include LGBTI+ authors and novels that deal seriously with LGBTI+ issues. Even in senior cycle biology classes, gender and biological sex should be treated as variable and complex phenomena that do not necessarily conform to traditional (often non-scientific) understandings of those concepts.<sup>22</sup> See 1.6 for comments re SPHE & RSE.

**Action 1.6: Include LGBTI+ matters in the Relationship and Sexual Education curriculum review.**

**Reporting department: Department of Education**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

This review was completed and LGBTI+ matters were included.

*Background and additional information*

In 2020, the Programme for Government committed to re-developing the Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE) and Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) curricula across primary and post-primary schools. As part of this effort, the government committed to making both programmes inclusive of LGBTI+ relationships and identities. A review of both curricula was undertaken in 2019 and noted that students identified LGBTI+ issues and sexual orientation as the most important topics currently missing from the curriculum.<sup>23</sup>

In 2022, the Minister for Education announced the provision of a new postgraduate programme to upskill registered post-primary teachers teaching SPHE/RSE. The first cohort of 34 teacher participants commenced in January 2023. There will be capacity for a minimum of 70 teachers for the January 2024 intake. In addition, between March and May, over 400 teachers attended a seminar on the new specifications for Junior Cycle SPHE.

Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying 2023-2027 was published in December 2022. The Implementation Plan accompanying Cineáltas outlines a number of actions relating to SPHE/RSE. Action 2.11 commits to reviewing and updating the primary and post-primary SPHE/RSE curriculum to ensure that it includes, in an age-appropriate manner, a number of

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/gender-continuum>

<sup>23</sup> <https://ncca.ie/media/4319/report-on-the-review-of-relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse-in-primary-and-post-primary-schools.pdf> 17

areas including LGBTI+ identities. An updated, LGBTI+ inclusive SPHE/RSE curriculum for Junior Cycle students was published in July 2023, and roll-out of the updated curriculum commenced for First Year students in September 2023.

On 12 July 2023, the NCCA published its draft curriculum Senior Cycle SPHE/RSE for a final consultation.<sup>24</sup> The NCCA stated that “the draft curriculum states that, the learning outcomes should be taught in a way that LGBTQ+ identities, relationships, and families are fully integrated and reflected in teaching and learning, as opposed to being addressed within stand-alone lessons.”<sup>25</sup> This integrated approach is welcome, as the NCCA previously noted that “[an unintegrated] approach misses the opportunity to apply an inclusive lens to teaching the entire curriculum and risks ‘othering’ LGBTQ+ people and presenting them as a homogenous group. An integrated and nuanced approach is required in teaching about LGBTQI+ identities and experiences.”<sup>26</sup> Once finalised, this updated SPHE/RSE curriculum will be rolled out to Senior Cycle students from September 2024. Following the Cineáltas Implementation Plan, a draft of the updated SPHE curriculum for primary schools is to be published for consultation in Q1 2024, with the intention of rolling out the new curriculum from September 2025.

In the interim, before the new curricula go into effect, the NCCA is developing guidance for SPHE and RSE classes. Within this effort, LGBTI+ perspectives are a “strong theme” and “very much on the mind of the SPHE/RSE development groups.”<sup>27</sup>

### *Analysis*

This action is complete, and the report has been published.

### *Additional Analysis*

The curricula review shows strong and promising progress, and the NCCA seems to take seriously the necessity of including LGBTI+ perspectives in the RSE and SPHE curricula.

Going forward, one point of concern relating to this action is implementation. Having LGBTI+ perspectives included in the curricula is a fantastic first step, but curricula inclusion means little if the presentation of the material to students needs to be improved. In the 2019 report, ideal RSE and SPHE instructors should be “open,” “understanding,” and “non-judgemental.”<sup>28</sup> There is some question about whether teachers in schools can adopt this demeanour, particularly if teaching on LGBTQ+ topics is considered to be at odds with the

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/new-leaving-cert-sex-education-curriculum-will-fully-integrate-lgbtq-relationships/a667706585.html>

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*

<sup>26</sup> <https://ncca.ie/media/4319/report-on-the-review-of-relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse-in-primary-and-post-primary-schools.pdf> 56

<sup>27</sup> Tracker

<sup>28</sup> <https://ncca.ie/media/4319/report-on-the-review-of-relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse-in-primary-and-post-primary-schools.pdf> 22

school ethos. Indeed, in the 2019 report, many parents stressed that the RSE and SPHE curricula should be compatible with a “Catholic ethos.”<sup>29</sup> Teachers will need support from their school management if they are to effectively deliver the curriculum. Moreover, even if that support does exist, there needs to be robust training so that teachers unfamiliar with LGBTI+ issues have the vocabulary and fluency necessary to present these issues in a comprehensive, inclusive, and non-judgemental way. The new courses are therefore welcome. There also needs to be LGBTI+ resources in school libraries.

Finally, Belong To’s 2022 School Climate Report highlights ongoing issues with the wider school environment. 76% of LGBTQ+ students said they felt unsafe in school.<sup>30</sup> 69% of students reported hearing other students make derogatory, homophobic remarks frequently in school; this number was 50% for transphobic remarks.<sup>31</sup> 63.9% of surveyed students had been verbally harassed for their sexual orientation; 61.9% for their gender expression. One in four students had been physically harassed because of their sexual orientation, while one in five has been physically harassed because of their gender expression.<sup>32</sup> While a number of policies, programmes and procedures have been put in place, including Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying, further commitments are needed to make schools safe for LGBTI+ youth.

**Action 1.7: Take account of the needs and interests of LGBTI+ people in libraries’ collections development and acquisitions policy in line with the National Strategy for Public Libraries 2018-2022. Under the Health Ireland at your Library initiative, compile an LGBTI+ reading list and update it on an ongoing basis and examine opportunities for the enhancement of stock to support the LGBTI+ community.**

**Reporting department: Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

The Local Government Management Agency compiled a list of 80 LGBTI+ titles for inclusion in the Healthy Ireland at Your Library (HlaYL) collection, which spoke to a wide range of ages. This was a collation of suggestions from the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP), Belong To, TENI, the INTO LGBT+ Teachers group and library staff.

In the autumn of 2021, 14 titles were added to the collection, with one copy of each of the titles added to each of the 330 library branches across the country. In 2022, additional titles were purchased from the HlaYL list; currently, work is ongoing considering the purchase of further titles. In addition to these efforts, libraries have their selection policies for purchasing books, and through this process, some libraries have purchased LGBTI+ titles

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid 37

<sup>30</sup> [https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-School-Climate-Survey\\_Full-Report.pdf](https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-School-Climate-Survey_Full-Report.pdf) 4

<sup>31</sup> Ibid 5

<sup>32</sup> Ibid 6

that go beyond the HlaYL list.<sup>33</sup>

A new public library strategy 2023-2027 *“The Library is the Place”* was published in July 2023. The document contains 66 actions across three core themes of People, Spaces and Connections. One of the actions is a commitment to work with the Department of Health, the HSE and the health sector to further develop the HlaYL programme.

*Analysis:* This inclusion of LGBTI+ resources in libraries has attracted the ire of far-right protestors. In Dublin,<sup>34</sup> Cork,<sup>35</sup> and elsewhere,<sup>36</sup> groups such as the Irish Education Alliance and the Parents’ Rights Alliance have been encouraging individuals to enter libraries and subject library staff to “bullying and harassment” because of the inclusion of LGBTI+ materials in the library collection. In the course of this abuse, library staff have been accused of being “groomers,” “paedophiles,” and “freemasons,”<sup>37</sup> and have been filmed without their consent. These videos are then uploaded online and often include a donation link where individuals can donate to these anti-LGBTI+ efforts.<sup>38</sup>

In response to these protests, some branches have stood firm in their commitment to LGBTI+ inclusion. Others have reclassified some LGBTI+ titles to limit access.<sup>39</sup>

Real progress has been made in this area. However, the vehemence of the far-right pushback threatens that progress, so it is important going forward that libraries are provided with robust support from the Gardaí and the Local Authorities so that they are not left to contend with this tide of hatred alone.

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<sup>33</sup> All of this taken directly from the tracker

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/education/2023/04/03/libraries-at-centre-of-culture-wars-as-protesters-try-to-remove-lgtbq-books-for-young-people/?>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/2023/07/12/cork-city-councillors-voice-support-for-library-staff-targeted-by-protests/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://gcn.ie/anti-lgbtq-protests-ireland-us-far-right/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/2023/07/12/cork-city-councillors-voice-support-for-library-staff-targeted-by-protests/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://gcn.ie/anti-lgbtq-protests-ireland-us-far-right/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/education/2023/04/03/libraries-at-centre-of-culture-wars-as-protesters-try-to-remove-lgtbq-books-for-young-people/?>

**OUTCOME 2: IRISH WORKPLACES ARE INCLUSIVE OF LGBTI+ PEOPLE AND SUPPORT THEM IN BRINGING THEIR 'AUTHENTIC SELVES' TO WORK.**

**Grade: C**

Overview: Over the lifetime of the Strategy, concrete steps have been taken to make workplaces more inclusive, particularly within the civil and public sectors. More work must be done to ensure that trans and non-binary inclusion and participation increases.

**Action: Further develop and implement LGBTI+ Inclusive recruitment practices across the public sector in conjunction with the Public Appointments Service (PAS) Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.**

**Reporting department: Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDPR)**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

In the 2024 Civil Service Renewal Strategy, there is a commitment to equality of opportunity for all people and to building a more diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects Ireland's diversity.

PAS has voiced a commitment to recruiting a diverse workforce, with three areas of focus:

- 1) Developing better knowledge and understanding of who works in the civil service;
- 2) Creating more inclusive and equitable processes for all candidates; and
- 3) Leading by example in creating and encouraging clients to foster more inclusive workplaces.

From 2019-2021, the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) reviewed the civil service's equality data by analysing over 1,000 civil and public service competitions. Moreover, in 2022, an ED&I diagnostic review of PAS's operations took place and the 98 recommendations to drive inclusion from that review are currently being implemented. PAS is currently working to publish data-driven, evidence-based equality data reports regularly to make public the composition of the civil service workforce. These data reports are intended to help organisations identify and address inequality of access, discrimination, and under-representation. This year's Civil Service Engagement survey will ask equality monitoring questions that capture LGBTI+ community membership.

During the Pride@Work conference held in May 2023, PAS hosted a stall to promote careers in the civil service for LGBTQ+ individuals and held a panel discussing the importance of equality monitoring data.

On OneLearning, the Civil Service Learning and Development Shared Service, staff are given the opportunity to take part in a self-guided eLearning module focused on Equality and Human Rights, developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. This module has been completed by 2,060 staff. A new module, “Equality and Human Rights: Understanding Your Role” was launched in January 2023 and has been completed by 180 staff.<sup>40</sup>

The department has worked to provide advice to other government departments and public sector organisations on EDI strategy and policy, including the CSO, DFA, Marine Institute, Department of Health, the Oireachtas Services, Health Service Executive HR team, An Garda Síochána, European Personnel Selection Office, and the Department of Justice.

### *Analysis*

There is a real commitment on the part of the PAS and the Civil Service to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion among its workforce. The data-based approaches on the composition of the Service from a diversity perspective are welcome, especially now that the Civil Service Engagement survey asks explicitly specifically about LGBTI+ identities.

One area of critique is that so many issues get captured in the broad umbrella of “equality, diversity, and inclusion” that sometimes no one issue receives the full attention and care that it deserves. Going forward, updates on how specifically LGBTI+ identities and inclusion are addressed in EDI efforts are encouraged.

Considering the OneLearning modules, these are a welcome first step. However, there is concern that there is no requirement that Civil Services engage in these learning opportunities. Moreover, there is reason to believe that staff do not engage as deeply with LGBTI+ issues in an online setting as they might if the Civil Service held in-person training sessions with local groups that could better speak to the specific and local issues surrounding LGBTI+ inclusion and recruitment in the Civil Service.

**Action 2.2: Ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion is a core feature of organisational and HR strategy and subject to ongoing review.**

**Reporting department: DPENDPR**

**Grade: C**

### *Progress*

Progress on this action is largely captured in the narrative presented in Action 2.1, above. However, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is included as a priority for the Civil Service in the Civil Service Renewal Plan 2030 and Better Public Services - Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy.

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<sup>40</sup> Parliamentary Question

### *Analysis*

As noted in Action 2.1 above, it is welcome to see that EDI has been captured as a priority in the Civil Service, but concrete steps on how to achieve that value are not laid out.

Additionally, “EDI” is a broad umbrella, so it is unclear what steps are being taken to specifically promote the well-being of LGBTI+ individuals.

Concerning the action itself, it could be clearer and easier to measure. It’s difficult to assess what successful completion looks like. Going forward for the next Inclusion Strategy, it will be important to include goals and actions that are concrete and measurable.

**Action 2.3: Integrate diversity and inclusion perspectives into Civil Service workplace policy and practices including leadership training, PMDS, induction, and customer service training.**

**Reporting department: DPENDPR**

**Grade: C**

### *Progress*

OneLearning is the Civil Service Learning and Development Shared Service Centre based in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. A number of OneLearning Courses have been developed, and each of these courses considers EDI. In 2021 four new courses were procured, focusing specifically on EDI for staff, managers, and senior leaders. Other EDI courses are provided that focus on issues in customer service and management practices.

These courses include:

- Equality and Human Rights – understanding your role (215 learners completed)  
Managing for an Inclusive Workforce (183 learners completed)
- Authentic and Inclusive Leadership (164 learners completed)
- Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service – IHREC eLearning (3,595 learners enrolled)

Each month, at least one Health and Wellbeing webinar is hosted that sometimes focuses on EDI. In June 2023, three of these webinars were hosted that specifically focused on LGBTI+ people and LGBTI+ issues.<sup>41</sup>

### *Analysis*

These courses are a good first step, but many of them are opt-in rather than required for civil servants, as a result only a small percentage of the 40,000 civil servants availed of the training on offer. Further in-person training hosted by local groups focused on LGBTI+ issues is preferable to online training. Anecdotally, some civil and public servants have expressed a

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<sup>41</sup> PQ

concern about needing to be culturally competent about LGBTI+ issues and these concerns are better addressed in an in-person rather than an online setting.

#### **Action 2.4: Develop a Civil and Public Service-wide LGBTI+ Employee and Ally Network**

**Reporting Department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

##### *Progress*

This action was assigned to DCEDIY in March of 2023. The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Network for DCEDIY staff was created that same month. This network will review the current DCEDIY EDI draft strategy, develop EDI initiatives to address EDI challenges and take positive actions to champion EDI.

This group has managed DCEDIY's participation and awareness-building around Pride in 2023. Once training has been completed, it will move on to staff focus groups.

There has been some engagement with relevant stakeholders in starting a civil and public service-wide LGBTI+ ally network. This network will be developed more fully once EDI work has progressed.

##### *Analysis*

While it is recognised that steps towards producing the LGBTI+ Employee and Ally Network have occurred, there has been five years in which this network could have been created, and the network is still in the process of being made. Indeed, in the future, it will be essential to dedicate the appropriate financial and human resources necessary to make this network happen.

This said, the large civil service participation in recent Pride events by both community members and allies from various departments is noted and warmly welcomed and shows that even in the absence of a formal civil service and public-wide network, the LGBTI+ community in the civil and public service is visible and valued.

**Action 2.5: Utilise the Corporate Social Responsibility Stakeholder Forum to advance LGBTI+ workplace inclusion amongst private sector employers and to raise awareness of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy through the available Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) channels. Integrate diversity and inclusion perspectives into Civil Service workplace policy and practices including leadership training, PMDS, induction, and customer service training.**

**Reporting department: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE)**

**Grade: D**

### *Progress*

In 2020, the National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) concluded. Before 2020, and essentially prior to the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, some work was done on LGBTI+ inclusion. In the second National Plan on CSR 2017-2020, the workplace was one dimension of focus, and under this dimension, some best practice initiatives were covered, including diversity, equity, and inclusion measures. Diversity and Inclusion was a theme under the CSR Work Programme in 2019/20. The Strategy was mentioned in the annual progress report for 2020.

Since 2020, there hasn't been another Corporate Social Responsibility plan, with the pandemic serving as an obstacle to the progression of this action.

Some initiatives are underway at the Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment that seek to comply with new EU and international regulations focusing on how businesses promote human rights issues.

### *Analysis*

Progress has yet to be made on this action. When explicitly asked about its progress on this action, the department cited efforts that had been undertaken before the creation of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. This lack of progress has been attributed to the pandemic, although for the past two years, the severest effects of the pandemic have abated without much progress on this action. The department cites work currently occurring at the Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment, but these efforts are focused on the introduction of EU regulation and are not designed to meet the commitment set out in this action. A new approach is warranted if this action is carried over to the next Strategy.

**Action 2.6: Develop an employers' toolkit for use in both public and private sectors to promote workplace inclusion, building on prior good practices such as the Diversity Champions programme.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

### *Progress*

In November 2021, DCEDIY held a preliminary meeting with IBEC to discuss the development of such a toolkit. Before this action progresses, DCEDIY is waiting for the publication of its Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and for further progress on its EDI work.

### *Analysis*

As of September 2023, there hasn't been any progression on this action. In 2022, IBEC, with support from TENI, published its guidance note on gender identity and expression in the workplace. Some preliminary work on this area has also been done by the Employers for

Change group. It should be noted that there is a gap in resourcing for LGBTI+ workplace training and education, in particular for quality-assured, in-person training.

**Action 2.7: Provide information and guidelines to employers to remind them of their obligations with regards to equality and antidiscrimination laws. Advise on ways of providing a safe and supportive working environment for LGBTI+ people, particularly in relation to transgender people.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

This action is similar to 2.6, and progress is similar. A preliminary meeting was held with IBEC, and before this action is progressed, the department is waiting for the publication of the DCEDIY Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

*Analysis*

Similar to 2.6, progress has yet to be made on this action and similarly, there needs to be more funds allocated to disseminating information to employers on creating supportive workplace environments. There may be a role for the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission in promoting employers existing obligations under the Equality Acts.

**Action 2.8: Develop guidance for transgender people to support their continued participation in the workplace, particularly during their time of transitioning.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

This action is similar to Actions 2.6 and 2.7 and progress is similar.

*Analysis*

Same commentary as Actions 2.6 and 2.7.

**Action 2.9: Promote the wellbeing of school and centre for education personnel, including LGBTI+ personnel in the context of the implementation of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023.**

**Reporting department: Department of Education**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

The Department of Education offers an Employee Assistance Service (EAS) for all school staff. This free service includes a wide range of supports, including a confidential 24/7 helpline, short-term counselling, a wellbeing portal, webinars, podcasts and blogs. It also

provides advice and support to managers to help them deal with health and well-being issues in the workplace. In 2022, EAS hosted an event on LGBTQ+ workplace & family support. In 2023, EAS hosted an event to celebrate Pride Month.

### *Analysis*

According to the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), in 2020, only 18% of LGBTI+ union members in the Republic and 12% in the Northern Ireland had declared their orientation to the school community. This translates to 4,000 Irish teachers who do not feel comfortable coming out at school.<sup>42</sup> These teachers did not come out for fear that it would damage their career prospects, and actively avoided talking about their personal lives to colleagues to avoid being outed.<sup>43</sup> Some LGBTI+ teachers report that school principals had told them that "under no circumstances" could they disclose their identities to parents.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, 89% of teachers had not received LGBTI+ inclusion and support training.<sup>45</sup>

Teachers have said that the Department of Education needs to provide real resources and support LGBTI+ teachers. When the department does institute new policies, more must be done to translate these policies into on-the-ground support.

**Action 2.10: To further build LGBTI+ awareness and inclusive practices amongst SMEs (small enterprises) and micro enterprises, develop LGBTI+ information events and/or learning modules for inclusion in LEO and Enterprise Ireland Diversity & Inclusion training programmes.**

**Reporting department: DETE**

**Grade: B**

### *Progress*

Enterprise Ireland raises LGBTI+ awareness through its leadership development programmes. These programmes include New Frontiers (for entrepreneurs) Leadership4Growth (for CEOs), Attracting & Retaining Talent, Spotlight on Skills, and Enterprise Ireland's Future of Work Guide.

In early 2023, Enterprise Ireland ran a pilot HR Forum with 30 SME clients that focused on purpose-driven inclusive growth and EDI. This Forum will also be run with a new group of SMEs later in 2023. This pilot programme is designed to raise awareness of inclusive practices in accordance with the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

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<sup>42</sup> <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/education/teachers-fear-for-job-prospects-if-they-reveal-lgbt-identity/40286877.html>

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/education/teachers-fear-for-job-prospects-if-they-reveal-lgbt-identity/40286877.html>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/education/teachers-fear-for-job-prospects-if-they-reveal-lgbt-identity/40286877.html>

### *Analysis*

There has been genuine willingness from Enterprise Ireland to make good on its commitments to the LGBTI+ National Inclusion Strategy, and we hope this effort continues.

**Action 2.11: The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) to develop a system of diversity certification for SMEs to independently verify that a company is 51% diverse-owned and managed. Categories of ownership under this certification scheme is to include LGBTI+ people.**

**Reporting department: DETE**

**Grade: No grade – agreed to not proceed with proposed action**

### *Progress*

It was not possible to complete this action. After scoping with other similar models internationally, it was found that actions such as this one usually originate through the Chambers of Commerce. By mutual agreement, it was agreed that this goal was unrealistic. There was no capacity to progress this action with the Chambers within the duration of the strategy.

The time and effort put forth by the NSAI in trying to complete this action is noted.

### *Analysis*

This action was not possible to implement. For the next LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, care should be taken in the development phase to ensure that the agreed actions are implementable.

### **OUTCOME 3: PUBLIC SPACES ARE SAFE AND WELCOMING OF LGBTI+ PEOPLE.**

**Grade: D**

Overview: Limited progress has been made on the three key actions. There is a sense in the community that some public spaces have become more unsafe and less welcoming. A renewed effort is needed here.

**Action 3.1: Take measures to ensure the availability of suitable diversity training for civil service staff in customer-facing roles.**

**Reporting department: DPENDPR**

**Grade: C**

#### *Progress*

This action relates strongly to the progress made in Action 2.3 above. OneLearning continues to engage with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and PAS to develop courses focused on EDI.

#### *Analysis*

To reiterate commentary from Action 2.3, there was no evidence of in-person training, and it is unclear how the online training content was developed. There is no evidence of community input or partnership in delivering this content.

**Action 3.2: Coordinate the roll-out of a public recognition marker denoting LGBTI+ friendly service provision, particularly in rural and other hard-to-reach communities.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

#### *Progress*

Progress has yet to be made on this action. The postponement was attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some other government bodies, including the HSE, have their own systems to address this need. For example, HSE staff members can wear a “rainbow badge” that signals that the staff member is aware of the challenges the LGBTI+ community faces in accessing healthcare.<sup>46</sup> HSE staff members who complete the LGBT awareness training facilitated by CHO5/HSE South East Community Healthcare (CHO5/SECH) receive a LGBTI+ awareness sticker and table top card with information on LGBTI+ services to signal an LGBTI+ friendly service.

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/camhs/linn-dara-inpatient-unit/hse-rainbow-badge.html>

In the absence of uniform government action, a private entity (Certified Proud) has emerged that provides this service on a fee-pay basis. There is no clear training requirement before being certified, and no information is provided on how compliance is monitored.<sup>47</sup>

#### *Analysis*

There is a clear need for a public recognition marker with clear standards and requirements. In-person training is necessary so that these services know how to deal with situations as they arise. Finally, a general government policy is needed to ensure cohesion for these markers across different government bodies.

### **Action 3.3: Take practical measures to increase the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

#### *Progress*

This action has yet to see much progress, and this has been attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Education considered the feasibility of adding gender-neutral or single-stall bathrooms and changing rooms in school design guidelines. Design guidance has been revised based on this review. In the future, all sanitary facilities will be provided in robust, safe, secure single units with full-height walls and doors. Urinals will no longer be provided.

#### *Analysis*

Attributing a lack of progress to the COVID-19 pandemic is not particularly convincing more than a year on from the crisis. Reviewing school guidance is a welcome first step, but it is only that. Moreover, this action stipulates that gender-neutral toilets should be provided in all public buildings. There has been no information on efforts to add gender neutral bathrooms to public buildings that are not schools.

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<sup>47</sup> <https://www.certifiedproud.com/>

**OUTCOME 4: BETTER INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON THE POPULATION AND NEEDS OF LGBTI+ PEOPLE IN IRELAND TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE POLICY.**

**Grade: B**

Overview: Commendable research work has been undertaken to better understand the needs of LGBTI+ people. These research outputs will help to shape future policy responses. Good groundwork has also been made to improve how LGBTI+ data is captured. This will have a long-lasting positive impact.

**Action 4.1: Develop and implement an LGBTI+ research programme based on gaps and priorities identified in consultation with LGBTI+ NGOs and the landscape of existing research and data commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The department has commissioned a number of reports and studies focused on closing gaps in research and data for the Irish LGBTI+ population. Completed studies include research considering conversion practices in Ireland.<sup>48</sup> The report on LGBTI+ people in international protection has been published. A first draft on the support needs of the parents of LGBTI+ children has been submitted. Work is being done to fund a study on LGBTI+ identities and ageing. A study concerning LGBTI+ people with disabilities has received funding from the department, with the report being released in 2024. A mechanism to recognise the preferred gender of those under 16 is also being studied. The department also part-funded a Trinity College Dublin LGBTI+ health survey, with results hopefully coming out soon.

*Analysis*

Excellent progress was made on this action, and the level of engagement from research officials in the department is highly commended.

**Action 4.2: Address LGBTI+ data gaps in tandem with the work being done to advance data mapping and use in the Migrant Integration Strategy.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

The Central Statistics Office, with the help of DCEDIY, is working on developing a National Equality Data Strategy to fill some of these gaps. The Strategy hopes to improve the collection, disaggregation and use of all equality data, including gender, and allow for better

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<sup>48</sup> [https://nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie/news/assets/pdf/TCD\\_Conversion\\_Practices\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](https://nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie/news/assets/pdf/TCD_Conversion_Practices_Full_Report.pdf)

monitoring of the impact of policies and initiatives and help inform the analysis of the Equality Budgeting initiative. The Working Group has conducted a consultation on a draft strategy and is continuing to meet to finalise the Strategy.<sup>49</sup>

*Analysis:* While progress on the National Equality Data Strategy is welcome, significant work needs to be done to ensure that LGBTI+ data is correctly captured and analysed by the CSO and others. For example, the recent sexual violence report merges gay men and lesbian women into one category and bi+ men and women into another. Men and women within the LGBTI+ communities have vastly different experiences of sex, sexuality, and sexual violence, and these must be taken into account; as such, separate categories in this instance are necessary.<sup>50</sup>

Goring forward there is a need for a national LGBTQI+ sexual health and lifestyle study that compares LGBTQI outcomes to those of heterosexuals.

**Action 4.3: Establish a baseline of public attitudes and acceptance of LGBTI+ identities through a National Survey.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

DCEDIY worked with IPSOS MRBI to develop a baseline of public attitudes towards all equality groups, including LGBTI+ people. The survey considered acceptance of LGBTI+ identities. This survey was published this past year, although the survey received no media coverage.<sup>51</sup>

As part of the Being LGBTQ+ in Ireland Survey (2022-2023), Dr. Agnes Higgins et al are also currently conducting a public attitudes survey.

*Analysis*

The national attitudes towards diversity survey was successfully completed and showed that 89% of the public was comfortable with two women living together as a couple, 88% for two men living together as a couple, 79% for a transgender man, 79% for a transgender woman, and 80% for someone who does not identify as male or female. It was a disappointing that the survey did not receive more media attention, going forward, focusing on the publicity would be an improvement.

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<sup>49</sup> Information from DCEDIY

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-svsad/sexualviolencesurvey2022adultexperiences/keyfindings/>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/262032/7adc792f-7eb8-4027-90d7-0e556d277449.pdf#page=null>

**Action 4.4: Ensure that disaggregated data on the LGBTI+ population and their needs is collected in national surveys where relevant and consider including a question on sexual orientation/gender identity in the 2027 census.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

The Census is considering questions that capture sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics. The Minister wrote to the CSO and asked for priority consideration of these questions for the 2027 Census.

*Analysis*

The active consideration of new Census questions on gender, sex characteristics, and sexual orientation is a very welcome development; however, the final wording of these questions must be based on a broad consultation of members of the LGBTI+ community. To that end, research should be undertaken in advance of the Census 2027 to provide a better understanding of the complex issues that these questions raise. These issues include, but are not limited to, worries about confidentiality, the fear of disclosure, and issues around underreporting stemming from these two issues. Moreover, this research should inform how the CSO interprets and analyses the subsequent Census data. One positive and concrete step that can be taken in the short term is to make the 2027 Census confidential. In addition, significant work will need to be done to educate everyone on the need and value of these new Census questions.

## OUTCOME 5: PUBLIC POLICY IS INCLUSIVE OF LGBTI+ PERSPECTIVES AND AVOIDS HETERONORMATIVE ASSUMPTIONS.

**Grade: D**

Overview: A detailed review of public policies, in particular departmental strategy statements found limited inclusion of LGBTI+ issues or actions.

**Action 6.1: Utilise the Equality and Human Rights Public Sector Duty to take account of LGBTI+ considerations in the development or review of public sector policy, to be informed by targeted consultation where necessary.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

### *Progress*

In 2020, the various government departments were asked to take this action into account when devising their strategies for the 2021-2023 period. Specific mention was given to the Defence Forces Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which was also to specifically work on this action.

A review of the 2021-2023 statements of strategy for the Garda<sup>52</sup> and the Departments of Agriculture<sup>53</sup>; DCEDIY<sup>54</sup>; Defence<sup>55</sup>; Education<sup>56</sup>; Enterprise, Trade, Employment<sup>57</sup>; Environment, Climate and Communications<sup>58</sup>; Finance<sup>59</sup>; Foreign Affairs<sup>60</sup>; Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation, and Science<sup>61</sup>; Health<sup>62</sup>; Housing, Local Government,

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/publications/policing-plans/strategy/garda-strategy-statement-2019-2021-2-1-20.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/132123/4f4f5b51-523e-4bf4-a9cf-84e724eafb40.pdf#page=null>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/126240/9b26a859-a2b1-4073-97b4-fcbde62e771f.pdf#page=null>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/132861/1de8006e-3f03-45d0-af2e-3bc497862c06.pdf#page=null>; <https://www.military.ie/en/public-information/defence-forces-families/gender-diversity-equality/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/136245/0f16238d-ce2e-4da9-8511-a871327b4e2d.pdf#page=null>

<sup>57</sup> <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/publication-files/statement-of-strategy-2023-2025.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/127968/8d7238fb-143d-4a18-a3a9-2bb634383c96.pdf#page=null>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/260013/0d0eff64-6d58-425f-b3f1-10365cb61852.pdf#page=null>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/aboutus/DFA-Statement-of-Strategy-2023-2025.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/125743/0d1fe077-ba66-4ba9-977d-4f0a2f3b0ef1.pdf#page=null>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/125397/10ca01a6-78c7-4d0e-ad66-ce1457fdc2cc.pdf#page=null>

and Heritage<sup>63</sup>; Justice<sup>64</sup>; Public Expenditure and Reform<sup>65</sup>; Rural and Community Development<sup>66</sup>; Social Protection<sup>67</sup>; Taoiseach<sup>68</sup>; Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media<sup>69</sup>; and Transport<sup>70</sup> all show scant mention of LGBTI+ issues or actions. Indeed, only DCEDIY, the Department of Defence (in their Inclusion Strategy), Foreign Affairs, and Health even include the phrase “LGBTI+” in their strategy. Moreover, the Department of Health only mentions in LGBTI+ issues in reiterating its commitment to the LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. However, every Department does make a least passing mention of a commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

### *Analysis*

While inclusion of the Human Rights and Equality Public Sector Duty in the Strategy was a welcome step forward, this action has produced disappointing results.

There needs to be more action by government departments to implement the public sector duty. This contrasts with some local authorities, colleges and other bodies that have taken the duty more seriously.

Departments should explicitly mention the groups they intend to capture under “EDI”. Suppose LGBTI+ considerations are to genuinely be a policy consideration. In that case, there needs to be explicit mention of how the departments intend to further LGBTI+ policy programs for their staff and the people they serve, and concrete steps of how those ends will be achieved need to be outlined.

In the future, there is a need for a stronger focus on implementing the public sector duty - not as a proofing mechanism but as a mainstreaming measure. More significant guidance and training are needed for government departments on addressing and reporting. The public sector duty must be evidence-based, and more research is required. There is scope for the development of a tool or template on implementing the public sector duty from an LGBTI+ perspective. This could be an action for the next strategy.

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<sup>63</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/132766/4fffe5de-7e61-4361-8d94-aca8962905e3.pdf#page=null>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/218835/fc26e535-5caf-45f5-9edb-0d0989345d05.pdf#page=null>

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/119557/ff7df5d2-10e6-4c25-8308-5584444b354c.pdf#page=null>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/262299/abcda01a-9319-48b1-bfd0-a120c5ae072b.pdf#page=null>

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/127611/9cd7c1dc-642c-4156-a88c-135f1361492d.pdf#page=null>

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/128542/7efacf45-61dd-4311-a828-371936391e52.pdf#page=null>

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/181413/6f44c4a8-b7d8-4a4b-b0b2-2aed4502593b.pdf#page=null>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/126377/ebfa4476-a97f-41ad-875e-e87a22fa7eb0.pdf#page=null>

## **OUTCOME 6: COMMUNITY SUPPORTS ARE MORE WIDELY AVAILABLE TO LGBTI+ PEOPLE.**

**Grade: C**

Outcome: The actions that make up this outcome have produced mixed results. The increased funding for community services is particularly welcome, while the exclusion of trans people from sports is a cause of particular concern.

**Action 6.1: Undertake a digital mapping of LGBTI+ community services and funding, which takes into account multiple intersectional factors with a view to addressing gaps.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: D**

### *Progress*

Work on this action had been started but was not completed due to ‘competing priorities’ within the department.<sup>71</sup> The work is to be reviewed and rescheduled.

### *Analysis*

This action should be a priority for the next LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. Currently, there are significant gaps in services, and to better understand those gaps, it is essential to take stock of the resources that are currently available. Items that should be mapped are LGBTI+ work by family resource centres, youth groups, community centres, and rural prides.

Digital geo-mapping has been very successful around the Ukrainian refugees in Ireland. The digital mapping went live in late 2022 and maps much information about the refugee population. Considering this, it is clear that the technology templates exist within DCEDIY and could be converted to LGBTI+ services.

**Action 6.2: Increase funding for LGBTI+ community services to ensure existing LGBTI+ services are sustainable and that funding is available to develop additional services based on the gaps identified in the mapping exercise.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: B**

### *Progress*

A call for funding was successfully launched by Minister O’Gorman on 22 June 2022, and a 2023 call for funding was launched on 23 June. For the funding call this year €900,000 was made available to LGBTI+ organisations. There were two funding schemes. Scheme A

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<sup>71</sup> Inclusion tracker

supports new LGBTI+ initiatives and/or helped existing LGBTI+ organisations maintain and enhance existing services and initiatives. Scheme B provides small grants to organisations for small projects that promote LGBTI+ visibility.<sup>72</sup>

Between 2020 and 2022, the LGBTI+ Community Services fund has supported 97 LGBTI+ projects with a total funding of over €3.4 million.

#### *Analysis*

This fund made a huge difference to many LGBTI+ organisations and allowed them to maintain their existing and vital services and initiatives – this cannot be emphasised enough. However, although this fund has been hugely beneficial, there is still some room for improvement: the fund needs to be provided on a multiannual basis, and there has been some frustration with the timing of the announcements, specifically that they were delayed by months resulting in real funding issues for community organisations. Consideration should be given to changing how this fund is administered, including the possible outsourcing to Pobal.

**Action 6.3: Take measures to ensure that existing community infrastructure is inclusive and welcoming to LGBTI+ people and consider the provision of pop-up LGBTI+ services.**

**Reporting department: DRCD**

**Grade: C**

#### *Progress*

In 2019, €200,000 from the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) was allocated to local authorities (LAs). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a slowdown in expenditure by LGBTI+ groups. The department is following up on outstanding expenditure reports and hopes to receive them all by 31 December 2023. A second funding call is planned.

#### *Analysis*

This funding allocation is welcome. A lot of work remains to be done to ensure all existing community infrastructure is inclusive of LGBTI+ people. There is also scope for the creation of additional pop-up LGBTI+ services.

**Action 6.4: Implement Action 6 of the National Sports Policy 2018-2027 in a manner that is inclusive of LGBTI+ people.**

**Reporting department: Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (DTCAGSM)**

**Grade: E**

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<sup>72</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/65be5-minister-ogorman-announces-2023-LGBTI+-community-services-funding-call/>

## *Progress*

Action 6 of the National Sports Policy regards the inclusion of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups in sports activities in Ireland.

In May 2022, Sport Ireland published its report on Diversity and Inclusion in Sport.<sup>73</sup> This strategy is meant to provide a strategic direction for its work concerning diversity and inclusion, and the LGBTI+ community and the organisations representing them are valued as stakeholders in that process. The strategy specifically considers the challenges faced by the LGBTI+ community and offers concrete actions to help promote inclusion in sports.

Work is underway at Sport Ireland to develop guidance on trans and non-binary inclusion in sport. A period of consultation was commenced in late 2022.

For the years 2021<sup>74</sup>, 2022<sup>75</sup>, and 2023<sup>76</sup> Sport Ireland and Sporting Pride worked together on the *#LetsGetVisible* campaign to promote LGBTI+ visibility and representation in Irish sport during Pride Month. The campaign was supported by the National Governing Bodies of Sport and Local Sports Partnerships across Ireland.<sup>77</sup> An additional LGBTI+ Inclusion in sport event is planned for 21 October 2023 on the Sport Ireland Campus to build on Sport Ireland's partnership with Sporting Pride and engagement with the broader LGBTI+ community and allies.

There has been significant regression in the promotion of sports participation for transgender people. Specifically, the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) has explicitly banned transgender women from participating in women's games.<sup>78</sup> Basketball Ireland requires trans women to undergo genital reassignment surgery before puberty, which is not only completely impossible but also entirely unethical.<sup>79</sup> The Ladies Gaelic Football Association requires blood testosterone testing.

*Analysis:* The efforts of Sport Ireland to promote LGBTI+ inclusion is noted, particularly for cisgender queer men and women. However, in this area, it will be particularly important to make sure that the efforts outlined in the Diversity and Inclusion in Sport policy translate

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<sup>73</sup> <https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/document/2022-05/Sport%20Ireland%20Policy%20on%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion%20in%20Sport.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.irishsport.ie/sport-ireland-and-sporting-pride-letsgetvisible-campaign-dublin-pride-health-and-wellbeing-week/>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.sportireland.ie/news/sport-ireland-and-sporting-pride-launch-letsgetvisible-campaign-in-support-of-the>

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.volleyballireland.com/latest-news/lets-get-visible/>

<sup>77</sup> Tracker

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/sport/rugby/2022/08/10/irfu-excludes-transgender-women-from-participation-in-contact-rugby/>

<sup>79</sup> [https://sportlomo-userupload.s3.amazonaws.com/uploaded/galleries/638\\_uploaded/95018c9ef1d5fd7fcc966377fef28cea8e731ce.pdf](https://sportlomo-userupload.s3.amazonaws.com/uploaded/galleries/638_uploaded/95018c9ef1d5fd7fcc966377fef28cea8e731ce.pdf)

into real change on the ground and that concrete resources and policies are put in place to welcome LGBTI+ people into sport. At present, there are no metrics and no specific or direct funding for LGBTI+ or racial and ethnic minorities in sport.

Specifically, regarding transgender participation in sports, the trend of sports organisations to exclude transgender individuals, and particularly transgender women, is utterly unacceptable. There is a real need for an inclusive national policy that ensure full inclusion.

Sporting Pride and others have called for more mixed gender recreational sport that is open to all.

**Action 6.5: As part of the ongoing objective of improving understanding of the landscape of sport in Ireland and to foster better evidence-based decision making, investigate the possibility of using the Irish Sports Monitor to assess levels of active and social participation (volunteering, club membership, and attendance at sporting events) in sport among the LGBTI+ community and issues related to such participation.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: B**

#### *Progress*

In July 2019, the Irish Sports Monitor was updated and now includes a question regarding the sexual orientation of sports participants. Additional research was undertaken in 2021, and further ways to accurately assess sport participation levels in the LGBTI+ community are ongoing. It is noted that LGBTI+ people are less likely to join sports clubs.

#### *Analysis*

The commentary for this action is similar to that of Action 6.4. The dedication to research on LGBTI+ participation is noted, but work must be done to ensure that LGBTI+ people are genuinely included in sports throughout Ireland.

**Action 6.6: Engage with existing networks within the farming sector to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and combat rural isolation.**

**Reporting department: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)**

**Grade: D**

#### *Progress*

Progress has yet to be made on this action, the department cites the COVID-19 pandemic as a disrupting factor. In 2022, the department stated that this action was 'under active consideration' with a view to progressing over the near and medium term. The department has so far not taken any further action.

### *Analysis*

Yet again, the COVID-19 pandemic is not a convincing excuse not to make progress on these actions. This action should be a priority for the second iteration of the LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. LGBTI+ NGOs would be more than happy to support the department in its efforts on this front.

**OUTCOME 7: THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE LGBTI+ COMMUNITY TO IRISH ARTS, CULTURE, AND SPORT IS HIGHLIGHTED AND THE HISTORY OF THE LGBTI+ MOVEMENT IS PRESERVED.**

**Grade: C**

Overview: The work of the National Cultural Institutions and others to shine a light on the contribution of the LGBTI+ community is commendable. More coordination, in the form of the proposed Think Tank or festival, is needed to maximise the impact of this work. The contribution of a number of LGBTI+ sports people has also been celebrated.

**Action 7.1: Ensure that our cultural institutions proactively foster engagement with the LGBTI+ community and encourage national cultural institutions to contribute significantly to collecting, interpreting, and making available history and culture relating to the Irish LGBTI+ community.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The National Cultural Institutions (NCIs) have been active concerning LGBTI+ initiatives. The NCIs have offered special access tours for LGBTI+ people where they specifically discuss LGBTI+ contexts and provide forums for the public to engage with LGBTI+ arts and culture.

Examples of activities include the National Concert Hall involving the Gash Collective as it develops the programme for its Metronome series on emerging artists and music. The Gash Collective is an Irish collective and label that focuses on supporting female, trans, queer, non-binary, and other underrepresented people to get their start in music production and DJing.

The Crawford Art Gallery has acquired two works by the queer artist Stephen Doyle, which depict and are meant to prompt discussion around LGBTI+ issues. There is a video of Doyle on the Gallery's website where he explains the importance of queer representation in art collections.

Other events coordinated by the NCIs are planned as well, including a school-related event for Stand-Up Awareness Week in November 2023 in collaboration with Belong To.

*Analysis*

The NCIs have shown a real commitment to centre queer art, culture, and issues over the course of this past strategy, and hopefully, this commitment will continue.

**Action 7.2: Support the creation of an LGBTI+ history and culture research think tank to pool knowledge and resources in this area, providing support and guidance.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

To date, there has yet to be any progress on creating the think tank. The department has stated its intention to continue to facilitate networks and expertise sharing among the NCIs.

*Analysis:* The efforts of the department are appreciated, but dedicating resources to a think tank as the action stipulates would be preferable and would better facilitate information and resource sharing.

**Action 7.3: Use the Business to Arts programme to fund LGBTI+ artists and promote positive visibility.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

It should be noted that the Business to Arts Programme is an independent charitable organisation. As of August of 2023, the scheme is closed for funding.

Business to Arts has an annual awards scheme that seeks to highlight creativity, artistic achievement, social inclusion, and community-building with the support of the business community. The department provides support to Business to Arts in the form of helping to advance philanthropy and supporting the sustainability of cultural organisations.

The possibility of expanding the awards scheme to recognise LGBTI+ related work specifically has been suggested. It is currently being considered, although such an award would require a sustainable framework, a nominating and assessment procedure, and a significant volume of themed output.

*Analysis*

The creation of an LGBTI+ specific award is a sound idea to promote LGBTI+ artists and promote positive visibility. But much work remains to be done in setting up this award, and this action will have to be continued under the next Inclusion Strategy.

**Action 7.4: Support a nationwide, week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival in 2020.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: D**

### *Progress*

This event did not occur in 2020, nor has it since been rescheduled.

Some similar events have occurred that are in a same vein. IMMA hosted a Pride Set by DJ Egg on 22 June 2023, Chester Beatty ran live conversations on art during 2023 Pride, and the Crawford Art Gallery plans to host LGBTI+ tours of its exhibitions during Cork Pride.

### *Analysis*

The onset of the pandemic prevented such a festival from occurring in 2020, but there could have been more efforts on the part of the department to hold such a festival in the latter part of 2022 or sometime in 2023.

The other events mentioned are welcomed, but the coordination that a festival program provides would help increase the publicity of these individual events and foster a more robust roster of LGBTI+ focused cultural events.

**OUTCOME 8: IRELAND IS RECOGNISED AS AN LGBTI+ FRIENDLY TOURIST DESTINATION.****Grade: C**

Overview: Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ tourist destination. However, formal supports for LGBTI+ festivals from tourism bodies have been limited at best.

**Action 8.1: Integrate LGBTI+ perspectives in Fáilte Ireland's 'Service Excellence' training provision for tourism providers and into any upcoming review of policy or standards.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

In 2022, Fáilte Ireland updated the Accredited Service Excellence programme and remodelled it to an online 'Introduction to Customer Care'. This programme is accessible to all tourism businesses and employees through Fáilte Ireland's Learning Hub. The content includes LGBTI+ representation and a section on the importance of diversity and inclusion.

In 2023, over 1,100 people attended in-person customer service training which included LGBTI+ perspectives. In addition, new EDI resources have been added to the online portal and new resources have been provided to employers and senior leaders on meeting employer obligations, including a factsheet on gender diversity. Diversity and inclusion have also been integrated to the Employee Excellence Programme and Employee Surveys.

*Analysis*

The inclusion of diverse family forms in the graphics and the dedicated 'Diversity and Inclusion' section in this module is welcome. This training content could be improved by providing an explanation of LGBTI+ terminology and concrete examples of best practice. Some LGBTQI+ tourists anecdotally report that some service providers continue to presume that everyone is heterosexual - this can be an issue of concern for couples checking into hotels for example. Consideration should be given in the next strategy for a dedicated course on LGBTI+ tourism as part of Fáilte Ireland's online Learning Hub. This could be developed in partnership with LGBT NGOs.

**Action 8.2: Address LGBTI+ inclusion in the finalisation of Fáilte Ireland's Festival Development Strategy.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

Fáilte Ireland developed a revised Festival and Events Strategy. In all its letters of offer to festivals and events, Fáilte Ireland includes conditions to ensure Festival Organisers'

commitment to diversity. Furthermore, for Fáilte Ireland's newest programmes for festivals supports, which are aimed at supporting Outdoor Activity festivals, all applicants are required to support diversity and inclusion. In 2023, Fáilte Ireland supported "The Outing" with €20K financial support, and also provided mentoring. Support was also provided to Dublin Pride's participation in St Patrick's Day parade via the St Patrick's Day Festival. Fáilte Ireland has also worked with the Dublin Pride team to develop Winter Pride.

#### *Analysis*

The inclusion of a commitment to diversity from Fáilte Ireland is welcome. The direct support provided to LGBTI+ festivals and events, other than "The Outing" and Dublin Pride, appears to be very limited. This issue should be given serious consideration. In addition, with the right support, there is the possibility of Ireland hosting a large LGBTI+ sporting event such as the Gay Games.

**Action 8.3: Raise the profile of, and explore initiatives and opportunities to, promote Ireland further as an LGBTI+ friendly destination.**

**Reporting department: DTCAGSM**

**Grade: C**

#### *Progress*

As outlined for Action 8.2, for 2023, Fáilte Ireland provided funding support to "The Outing" festival held in February. Fáilte Ireland also provided funding for Dublin Pride's feature in the St Patrick's Day Parade Dublin via the St Patrick's Day Festival. Funding was also provided for Dublin Winter Pride. Tourism Ireland has also developed a new LGBTI+ Action Plan which will be rolled out in overseas markets. Tourism Ireland includes LGBTI+ content in its marketing programmes. Fáilte Ireland included a same sex couple in a TV ad.

*Analysis:* As outlined for Action 8.2, the funding provided to The Outing and Dublin Pride is welcome. However, there are dozens of other LGBTI+ Pride festivals that receive little or no support. The list of Pride festivals includes but is not limited to: Athlone, Belfast, Brod na Gealtachta, Carlow, Clare, Clonmel, Cork, Cork Trans Pride, Donegal/Inishowen, Drogheda, Dublin, Dublin Trans & Intersex Pride, Dundalk, Dungarvan, Foyle/Derry, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Leitrim, Limerick, Longford, Mayo, Mullingar, Navan, Neuro Pride, Newry Omagh/Tyrone, Pride of the Deise, Sligo, Thurles, Waterford, Westmeath, Wexford, Wicklow. If Fáilte Ireland is not the best fit for supporting community festivals, then another mechanism should be provided.

## PILLAR TWO: TREATED EQUALLY

### OUTCOME 9: LGBTI+ PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF THE SUPPORTS AND REDRESS MECHANISMS AVAILABLE TO THEM WHERE DISCRIMINATION HAS OCCURRED.

#### Grade: A

Overview: Significant progress was made with the establishment of information campaigns and the FLAC LGBTI+ Legal Advice Clinic. Both initiatives' have led to positive outcomes for LGBTI+ people.

**Action 9.1: Through an information campaign, raise awareness of the role of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) in dealing with complaints of discrimination under the Equal Status Acts and the Employment Equality Acts.**

**Reporting department: DETE**

#### Grade: B

##### *Progress*

The WRC engaged with LGBTI+ advocacy groups and produced specifically designed content that was shared over social media in December 2021 and March 2022. The content promotes awareness of what to do in cases of discrimination. Further engagement and outreach are intended.

The WRC also trained its call centre staff on what to do when someone calls in an instance of LGBTI+ discrimination.

##### *Analysis*

Good progress was made on this action. LGBTI+ advocacy groups are looking forward to working with the WRC further to conduct more campaigns in the future. However, one major caveat is that resources need to be expanded to move the campaigns beyond social media and include other mediums like billboards, posters, and print advertising space.

**Action 9.2: Provide tailored legal advice and advocacy to LGBTI+ people via a specialised legal advice clinic.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

#### Grade: A

##### *Progress*

The Free Legal Advice Clinics (FLAC) Legal Advice Clinic launched in May 2022, supported by funding from the department.

##### *Analysis*

This action was successfully completed.

<b>OUTCOME 10: EQUALITY LEGISLATION PROVIDES EXPLICIT PROTECTION TO TRANSGENDER, GENDER NON-CONFORMING, AND INTERSEX PEOPLE.</b>
<b>Grade: C</b>
Overview: The initial review has been completed but the legislative change is pending.

**Action 10.1: Review the Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts to ensure that transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex people have explicit protection within the equality grounds.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

A review of the Equality Acts is currently underway. This review will consider how aware victims of discrimination are of the legislation and what obstacles preclude or deter individuals from taking action. Moreover, this review is intended to include a review of current definitions for all grounds and is considering the Programme for Government commitment to make sure that all can use the legislation if they are discriminated against based on their gender identity.

From July to December 2021, the department accepted written submissions to a public consultation and received numerous responses. The public gave feedback on their view of the functionality and accessibility of the acts, the scope of the current grounds; whether existing exemptions should be modified or removed; and whether the legislation adequately addresses intersectionality. These submissions were then analysed by the department. Some legislative proposals arising from this review are intended to be brought forward in 2023.

*Analysis*

These are all promising first steps. However, we are still waiting for the legislative proposals to be brought forward.

<b>OUTCOME 11: SAME-SEX PARENTS ARE TREATED EQUALLY TO OPPOSITE SEX PARENTS BEFORE THE LAW.</b>
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<b>Grade: A</b>
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Overview: Most of the identified actions were fully completed resulting in real changes for same sex parents. However, significant gaps in the law remain, in particular in the area of assisted human reproduction.
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**Action 11.1: Commence Parts 2 & 3 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Parts 2 and 3 were commenced on 4 May 2020.

*Analysis*

This action was completed.

**Action 11.2: Commence Rules of Court to allow a declaration of parentage under section 21 or 22 of the CFR Act Children and Family Relationships Act 201.**

**Reporting department: Department of Justice (DoJ)**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

As stated in the inclusion tracker: "The relevant rules that have been signed by the Minister are S.I. 400 of 2020 Circuit Court Rules (Family Law - Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction) 2020 for section 22 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 and S.I. 434 of 2020 District Court Rules (Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction) Rules 2020 for section 21 of the Children and Family Relationships Act. The Circuit Court Rules came into effect on the 9 October 2020 and the District Court Rules came into effect on the 22 October 2020."

*Analysis*

This action was completed.

**Action 11.3: Commence outstanding sections of Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 relating to donor-conceived children.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The sections commenced on 20 March 2020.

### *Analysis*

This action was completed.

## **Action 11.4: Commence outstanding sections of Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: A**

### *Progress*

As stated in the inclusion tracker: “The Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 has been fully commenced since 4 May 2020. The Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) Order 2019 (S.I. No. 624 of 2019) commenced the remaining provisions of the Act for which the Minister for Justice is responsible with effect from 4 May 2020, except for section 177. Section 177 of the 2015 Act, which provided for the amendment of the Adoptive Leave Act 1995, was not commenced and was repealed by section 3 of the Family Leave and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021, with effect from 1 April 2021.”

### *Analysis*

This action was completed.

It is worth noting here that advocacy groups including LGBT Ireland, Equality for Children and Irish Gay Dads have called for the Children and Family Relationship Act to be updated to include all LGBTQI+ families. At present the majority of children born into LGBTQI+ families are still prevented from having a legal parent-child relationship with both of their parents.<sup>80</sup> There are four categories of children born through donor-assisted human reproduction who are currently prevented from forming a full legal relationship with both of their female same-sex parents. These are:

1. Children conceived with a known donor pre-May 2020
2. Children conceived in non-clinical settings
3. Children conceived outside of Ireland
4. Children born outside of Ireland

The Special Rapporteur for Child Protection, Professor Conor O’ Mahony, in his 2020 report, *A Review of Children’s Rights and Best Interests in the Context of Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction and Surrogacy and Irish Law*, said that the current framework has had a

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<sup>80</sup> 53% according to recent research by Dr. Lydia Bracken, *LGBTI+ Parent Families in Ireland: Legal Recognition of Parent-Child Relationships* (LGBT Ireland, 2021) available at <https://lgbt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/LGBTI+-Parent-Families-Report.pdf>

negative impact on children's rights to non-discrimination and to recognition of family relationships.<sup>81</sup> Fixing these gaps in the law should be a priority action for the next strategy.

**Action 11.5: Develop a targeted information campaign for the LGBTI+ community on the provisions contained in the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015, and what they mean for same sex parents and those planning parenthood.**

**Reporting department: Department of Social Protection (DSP)**

**Grade: A**

#### *Progress*

All the information to re-register a donor-conceived child was posted on the government's website.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, LGBT Ireland and FLAC helped prepare a booklet which also contains information on re-registrations.<sup>83</sup>

The General Register Office attended several information sessions hosted by LGBTI+ groups on these new provisions. These information sessions occurred on 2 April 2020 and 17 May 2021.

#### *Analysis*

The events were well-attended and informative. There was excellent engagement from the General Register Office and the Chief Registrar on this action. The Office went above and beyond to be inclusive of new same-sex parents.

**Action 11.6: Introduce legislation on Assisted Human Reproduction (AHR) which will be available to people irrespective of gender, marital status or sexual orientation subject to the provisions of the legislation, on an equal and non-discriminatory basis.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: D**

#### *Progress*

In March 2022 the Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Bill 2022 was published, and passed second stage in the Dáil, and was referred to the Select Committee on Health for third stage. At the committee stage, it is anticipated that provisions relating to international and retrospective surrogacy will be included. Parts of the published Bill could still be subject to a number of amendments.

#### *Analysis*

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<sup>81</sup> <https://assets.gov.ie/130886/e66b52d7-9d3e-4bb4-b35d-cf67f9eea9fa.pdf>

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/64a092-registering-a-birth/#how-to-re-register-the-birth-of-a-donor-conceived-child>

<sup>83</sup> [https://lgbt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020\\_CFRA\\_FAQ-1-1.pdf](https://lgbt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020_CFRA_FAQ-1-1.pdf)

Progress on this action has been painfully slow. As noted by Mr Justice John Jordan in the High Court in March 2023, it is almost a decade since the Supreme Court said that the absence of legislation in this area was "completely wrong". The High Court Judge noted the "grim reality" that the lack of legislation lays bare. Urgent action is needed in this area.

**Action 11.7: Bring forward legislative proposals to provide for adoptive leave and benefit for male same sex adoptive couples.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Family leave provisions under the Family Leave and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021 were commenced on 4 January 2021.

*Analysis*

This action was completed.

<b>OUTCOME 12: TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ARE SUPPORTED AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES ARE STREAMLINED WHILE MAINTAINING A PERSON'S PRIVACY.</b>
<b>Grade: B</b>
Overview: The review of the Gender Recognition Act was completed, and some changes have been made to improve administrative processes. Work remains on the implementation of the review and to improve processes even further.

**Action 12.1: Make a report to each House of the Oireachtas of the findings on the review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 and of the conclusions drawn from the findings.**

**Reporting department: DSP**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The report was laid before the Houses of Oireachtas on 29 November 2019.<sup>84</sup>

*Analysis*

This action was completed. Action is now needed to progress the recommendations.

**Action 12.2: Ensure that each relevant department/government body examines how, once a Gender Recognition Certificate is obtained, administrative processes can be streamlined, improving interconnection between departments, and reducing costs for replacement of official documents, while maintaining a person's privacy.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

The Department states this action was not advanced in the period. Independently of this action, some government departments have streamlined their processes. For example, the passport online application form now includes an option for updating an individual's gender marker using a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). In 2021, the Department of Social Protection revised the process for name changes. Previously trans people had to submit both a Deed Poll and a Gender Recognition Application. The Deed Poll requirement has been removed, resulting in a cheaper and more streamlined process.

*Analysis*

As outlined some administrative processes within departments have been streamlined. However, there seems to be little or no data sharing between departments as a result trans

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<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/69547/dd757168e2e44d3faa7196b4b17fc4d8.pdf#page=1>

people have to update their details separately with each agency they interact with. A more coordinated process would be beneficial.

**OUTCOME 13: SUPPORTS ARE PROVIDED TO THOSE AT HIGHER RISK OF MULTIPLE DISCRIMINATION AND DOUBLE MARGINALISATION INCLUDING LGBTI+ OLDER PEOPLE, MIGRANTS, TRAVELLERS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AND LGBTI+ PRISONERS.**

**Grade: C**

Overview: Some progress was made in the areas of LGBTI+ homeless and prison services. However, on the whole, greater resources and efforts are required to address intersectional issues.

**Action 13.1: Design and implement programmes and measures to address intersectional discrimination in partnership with NGOs and target communities.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: E**

*Progress*

The department did not advance this action during the lifetime of the Inclusion Strategy.

*Analysis*

There is a real need to address intersectional discrimination. This action should be fleshed out and carried forward to the next strategy. LGBTI+ Travellers & Roma, as well as LGBTI+ people seeking international protection and living in IPAS accommodation settings face additional struggles and risks.<sup>85 86 87</sup> These communities are at high risk of poor mental health due to living with high levels of emotional isolation, trauma and fear. They face additional barriers in reaching out to services due to actual or fear of experiences of racism. Intercultural and integration projects are required both in mainstream society, communities and service providers, as well as within the LGBTI+ sector and community. Successful examples include the Spoken Word Project which flowed from qualitative research into the lived experiences of LGBTI+ Travellers & Roma as well as intercultural Pride Festival activities and experiences as implemented by LGBT Ireland and other sectoral organisations.

**Action 13.2: Ensure that the rights and diversity of LGBTI+ service users are respected and promoted as part of the National Quality Standards Framework for homeless services.**

**Reporting department: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

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<sup>85</sup> Sartori S. (2022), Unveiling Inequalities - Experiences of LGBTI+ Traveller and Roma, National Action Group for LGBTI+ Traveller and Roma Rights.

<sup>86</sup> LGBT Ireland & Irish Refugee Council (2022) Believe Me Or Not, But I Am Who I Am

<sup>87</sup> Noone, C.; Magugliani, N; Sugrue, R.; LGBT Ireland (2023) LGBTI+ people living in International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) accommodation: best practices and lived experiences.

In 2020 a new National Quality Standards Framework was introduced for homeless services. Standard 1.1 stipulates that the rights and diversity of each service user are respected and promoted. A key feature of this Standard is that the service respects users on the basis of their gender and sexual orientation.

In July 2022, it was reported at the LGBTI+ Strategy Steering Committee meeting that extensive public consultations were taking place ahead of the Youth Homelessness Strategy with particularly vulnerable cohorts, like LGBTI+ individuals. At this meeting, it was emphasised that more resources should be put towards research on LGBTI+ homelessness and that there was a need for better LGBTI+ resources and staff training.

In the Youth Homelessness Strategy, published November 2022, members of the LGBTI+ community were identified as being at increased risk of homelessness.<sup>88</sup> Participants in the consultation process emphasised the importance of having LGBTI+ services available. Moreover, the report found that LGBTI+ youth in homeless services saw those services as often unsatisfactory, with some individuals disguising their identities due to their fears for their personal safety and to avoid stigma while seeking safe accommodation.<sup>89</sup> LGBTI+ young people are particularly vulnerable to homelessness due to familial rejection of their identity. This is particularly true for transgender youth and members of the Traveller community.<sup>90</sup>

In order to combat this problem, the Strategy committed to offering LGBTI+ Youth Homelessness Training Workshops for service providers to ensure a better understanding of LGBTI+ issues and the various forms of discrimination associated with them. It also committed to developing privacy and safety strategies for young LGBTI+ people using emergency accommodation, with input from those individuals, which could then be implemented by service providers.

### *Analysis*

The National Quality Framework was updated, which was the bulk of this action. Going forward for the next Inclusion Strategy, the commitments outlined in the Youth Homelessness Strategy should be included, and other specific actions to tackle LGBTI+ homelessness should be explicitly addressed. It's worth noting that a number of meetings have taken place between homeless services, LGBTIQ+ NGOs and state services about future steps that could be taken to address LGBTI+ homelessness.

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/239255/99c987df-4439-4bc2-8730-be614eae1e2e.pdf#page=null>

<sup>89</sup> Ibid 50

<sup>90</sup> Ibid 51.

**Action 13.3: Develop a placement and accommodation policy to reflect and build upon existing good practice in the accommodation of vulnerable prisoners including LGBTI+ people.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

Most of the progress cited on this action by the department refers to Rule 63 of the Prison Rules 2007. This rule stipulates that a prisoner may be kept separate from other prisoners who are reasonably likely to harm him or her, so far as it is practicable and given permission by the prison authorities.

A new extension to Limerick Prison has opened this year and has enhanced accommodation for female prisoners and specifically the LGBTI+ community.

A policy on the care and management of transgender prisoners is being finalised in consultation with stakeholders.

*Analysis*

The department cites the Prison Rules 2007 in its progress update, but seeing as how the strategy does not consider actions taken before 2019, this update will be set aside.

It is important that the proposed policy is advanced with input from stakeholders.

**Action 13.4: Provide LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity training to staff, including Recruit Prison Officers (RPOs), general training to all staff as part of Continual Professional Development (CPD) and targeted training to particular Officers, where an operational need exists.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

New prison officers are required to undergo Equality & Diversity training LGBTI+ sensitivity training as part of their general onboarding training (over 1,000 since 2018). This is not required for established prison officers; however, established officers are strongly encouraged to attend the training.

An awareness-raising presentation by TENI was published on PRIMIS, the Irish Prison Service (IPS) intranet platform, that offers vocabulary, definitions, statistics, relevant legislation, and support actions for transgender prisoners. IPS intends to consult with the non-binary community in the future. Moreover, an awareness item was circulated to all staff in relation to interaction with transgender people in the prison community.

Anecdotally, the LGBTI+ inclusion training is going well. There is hope that the professional training college will eventually capture concrete statistics on learning outcomes.

#### *Analysis*

While the inclusion of training is welcome. It is important that training materials are updated and refreshed, and that in-person training is provided. The introduction of the new proposed policy would provide an opportunity to retrain staff on these issues.

**Action 13.5: Consider the provision of ‘in-reach’ LGBTI+ community supports, peer supports, and provision of LGBTI+ informational and recreation literature for LGBTI+ prisoners.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: B**

#### *Progress*

Prison libraries include informational and recreational literature dealing with LGBTI+ issues and themes, including a monthly magazine and fiction and non-fiction titles. The prisons are also exploring options to be more inclusive, including audio options, visual imagery, books with larger font sizes, and titles for different literacy levels.

#### *Analysis*

There seems to be promising results on this action. Going forward, it would be beneficial to see specifically what and how many titles are made available to prisoners, and how frequently those materials are updated – LGBTI+ issues are always evolving, and sometimes do so quickly, so it is important that materials are updated on a regular basis. There is also scope for organisational in-reach.

## PILLAR THREE: HEALTHY

### OUTCOME 14: HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND PRACTITIONERS ARE TRAINED TO UNDERSTAND THE IDENTITIES AND NEEDS OF THEIR LGBTI+ PATIENTS AND TO AVOID MAKING HETERONORMATIVE ASSUMPTIONS.

**Grade: B**

Overview: A significant number of healthcare providers have received training in different forms. These training programmes should continue to be scaled up to ensure adequate training opportunities are available to all healthcare staff.

**Action 14.1: Promote the uptake of the e-learning LGBTI+ training module as part of the Health Service's eLearning and Development portal (HSELand) under the Sexual Health Promotion Training Strategy. Include the module in the HSE's staff induction programme and make it available for hosting on other platforms as appropriate.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

#### *Progress*

There are three LGBT eLearning programmes.

- 'LGBT+ Awareness Training' developed by LGBT Ireland and the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP), which is available on HSE Land. As of 1 June, 2023, 8,806 people have completed this training.
- 'An Introduction to Transgender Awareness in Healthcare' developed by TENI and funded by the HSE National Office of Suicide Prevention, which is also available on HSE Land.
- 'LGBT Awareness Training' Online and in person training facilitated by CHO 5/SECH. From January to June 2023, 216 people have completed this LGBT training.

An LGBTI+ training/resource needs survey was conducted in June 2023 to identify gaps for future training and resource development concerning LGBTI+ issues. 758 people completed the survey.

#### *Analysis*

The numbers completing the eLearning are encouraging. eLearning is a good foundation for becoming proficient on LGBTI+ issues, but it is not enough – eLearning should be complemented with in-person sessions where possible. Additionally, there is a need for IT access/assistance for staff at work so that they can complete the online training successfully.

SHCPP has been proactive in promoting eLearning opportunities and have been excellent partners throughout the creation and uptake process.

**Action 14.2: Implement sexual health promotion training for professionals in the youth and other sectors, those working with at-risk-groups, and for parents.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

The HSE National Social Inclusion Office has a number of resources on its microsite that it continually updates and distributes. This also includes training opportunities outlined in 14.1 as well as in-person Gender Identity Skills Training in CHO 5.

*Analysis*

Same commentary as Actions 14.1.

**Action 14.3: Provide LGBTI+ awareness training to staff working in mental health services nationally.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) continues to fund LGBT Ireland and TENI, who are working to provide awareness training to staff working in mental health services. Moreover, the National Social Inclusion Office shares relevant information and training opportunities in relation to LGBTI+ inclusion with its networks which include mental health professionals.

*Analysis*

The importance of LGBTI+ training for those working in mental health services can't be understated. We know from research that because of homophobia / transphobia and discrimination mental health outcomes for LGBTI+ people are poorer.<sup>91</sup> It is crucial therefore that staff are well trained and resourced to meet the specific needs of the community.

**Action 14.4: Support the co-production of guidance and training materials aimed at health and social care professionals working in older persons' services to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to meet the needs of older LGBTI+ people in their care.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

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<sup>91</sup> LGBTIreland (2016)

### *Progress*

LGBT Ireland runs The LGBTI+ Champions Programme, funded by the HSE SECH. Training sessions for the Age Friendly Programme Managers for Health and Social Care professionals have been scheduled throughout 2023. 38 new Champions were trained between January and June of 2023. 60 champions attended a networking event on 26 April 2023 that focused on HIV and ageing, as well as a panel discussion with HIV activists.

Moreover, LGBT Ireland has also been collaborating with the Irish Hospice Foundation and the All-Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care to host a Bereavement Support Event for Older LGBTI+ people. The HSE National Social Inclusion Office is also collaborating with HSE communications, HSE digital content and HSE Diversity, Equality and Inclusion – amongst other partners – in the development of Inclusive Content Guidelines which will cover topics on LGBTI+ inclusive language.

### *Analysis*

The LGBTI+ Champions Programme has been successful so far and there is an excellent opportunity to scale the programme up going forward. However, to do this and even to maintain the current pace of activities, increased resourcing is required.

<b>OUTCOME 15: HEALTH POLICY TAKES CONSIDERATION OF THE NEEDS OF ALL POPULATION GROUPS INCLUDING THE LGBTI+ COMMUNITY.</b>
<b>Grade: B</b>
Overview: A number of significant policy developments were made including changes to blood donation rules and the expansion of the HPV programme. It's important that emerging issues like chem sex are given the same level of consideration.

**Action 15.1: Update the National Sexual Health Strategy (NSHS) in 2020 and include the needs of the LGBTI+ community.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

Crowe Ireland has completed and published their review of the NSHS.<sup>92</sup> It includes a number of recommendations from LGBTI+ stakeholders on how to improve the next iteration of the NSHS. The department is planning on publishing the next NSHS strategy in the fourth quarter of 2023.

*Analysis*

The review of the NSHS strategy was welcome however, engagement with community organisations could be improved. More must be done to ensure the voices of LGBTQI+ people, community groups and civil society organisations are included in the strategy formation process.

**Action 15.2: Implement the universal, gender neutral, HPV vaccination programme.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The gender-neutral HPV vaccination is fully operational and underway. The vaccine continues to be administered.

*Analysis*

This action has successfully been achieved and continues to be run smoothly.

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<sup>92</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/248743/fb604c71-d193-4dfe-af87-eac4594479f2.pdf#page=null>

**Action 15.3: Include consideration of the needs of different population groups including the LGBTI+ community in the development of standards for STI services.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

Limited information is available on the current status of this action. The department says that a new model of care is in progress but has been delayed due to staffing issues. The HSE SHCPP has limited capacity within its clinical team to progress this at the moment. The recruitment of the Programme Manager for the Clinical Team has been stalled by the recruitment ban in the HSE.

*Analysis*

Those working on LGBT sexual health report good engagement with officials on this issue. The exact outcome of the engagement is as yet unclear.

**Action 15.4: Keep the restrictions on blood donations from men who have sex with men under review to ensure that they are in line with international best practice.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Potential blood donors are now individually assessed. This individualised risk assessment commenced on 28 November 2022 and continues to operate well.

*Analysis*

This action has been completed.

**Action 15.5: Under the National Drug Strategy, 'Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery' – a health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2005 – improve the capacity of services to accommodate the needs of people who use drugs and alcohol from specific communities including the LGBTI+ community.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

A €2 million fund to enhance community-based drug and alcohol services was announced in 2022; €500,000 of this fund was set aside for LGBTI+ people, women, and ethnic minorities.

### *Analysis*

There is a huge need for increased resources in this area. Recreational drug use is two times higher among LGBTI+ people compared to the general population.<sup>93</sup> There are also emerging issues such as chemsex which must be addressed. Resource allocation should match the need. It is not clear how much of the €500,000 was spent on LGBTI+ projects.

**Action 15.6: Ensure, through the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion for professionals, that a holistic, person-centred approach to sexual health, covering all genders as well as risk factors, is adopted, thereby ensuring that the needs of lesbian and bisexual women are appropriately addressed.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

### *Progress*

The HSE SHCPP and HSE Health Promotion & Improvement deliver the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion nationally. This is an introduction to holistic sexual health promotion. The course covers a variety of topics focused on sexual health, including having an increased knowledge around sexual health issues and having a better understanding of sexual health in the Irish context.<sup>94</sup> Topics include sexual health, sexual rights and inequalities, gender, sexual orientation and inclusive practice, intimacy and sexual pleasure, sexual consent, the role of sexual health promotion policy, and more. The section regarding LGBT+ is at the level of awareness raising.

### *Analysis*

This course is a good foundation for these issues, although more material that focuses on sexual health issues for queer women would be welcome. A better-skilled workforce results in better outcomes for the community.

In 2022, SHCPP collaborated with the Sexual Health Centre and LINC to fund and develop a new resource, 'Sexual Wellbeing & Intimate Relationships for Lesbian, Bisexual & Queer Women'.

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<sup>93</sup> LGBTI+reland (2016)

<sup>94</sup> <https://goshh.ie/fpshp/>

<b>OUTCOME 16: SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES ARE ADEQUATELY RESOURCED AND AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT IRELAND INCLUDING IN RURAL LOCATIONS.</b>
<b>Grade: B</b>
Overview: Impressive and commendable levels of innovation have been shown in the expansion of the HSE free national home STI testing service. Meanwhile, the lack of training for sexual health advisors is a cause of real concern.

**Action 16.1: Fund the HPV vaccine rollout plan in line with National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) policy, including funding for vaccine nurses in 2019 and 2020.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

This action refers to the HPV vaccine rollout within sexual health services. These vaccines are being provided through public STI/HIV services for gay and bisexual and men who have sex with men as well as people living with HIV.

*Analysis*

This project is ongoing.

**Action 16.2: Develop and provide Sexual Health Advisor (SHA) training for nurses across public STI/HIV services, student health services, prison and addiction services, and primary care.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: D**

*Progress*

Between 2018 – 2022, the SHA course was delivered by Staffordshire University. The HSE SHCPP facilitated 78 individuals to attend the course. However, Staffordshire University has now stopped facilitating the course.

*Analysis*

There is a real deficit of Sexual Health Advisors. The absence of access to training will make this situation worse.

**Action 16.3: Establish a Health Advisors' network to support the role of sexual health advisors.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

### *Progress*

A Sexual Health Advisors network is in place and operational.

### *Analysis*

This action has been completed.

**Action 16.4: Work with public STI clinics to identify and implement solutions to enhance efficiencies, thus improving capacity within current resources particularly in relation to reducing waiting lists, increasing walk-in availability, and patient care pathways (e.g., self-taken screening for asymptomatic patients).**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

### *Progress*

In 2021 the HSE piloted a free home STI testing service. Following a successful evaluation and ring-fenced funding, the HSE launched a free national home STI testing service in October 2022. The National Condom Distribution Service provides free condoms with home STI test kit orders.

### *Analysis*

The free home STI testing has been a great success so far.

This action references reducing waiting lists. There are some questions about the reliability of waiting list data. As a result, it is hard to measure the level of unmet need for STI and PrEP services. Another method is needed.

**Action 16.5 and Action 16.6: Incorporate a clinical information and guidelines section on STI testing and management for healthcare professions on [www.sexualwellbeing.ie](http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie); update information annually on the management of genital infections for GPs through the HSE antibiotic prescribing website.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

### *Progress*

Both of these actions were incorporated into the HSE's antibiotic prescribing website.<sup>95</sup>

### *Analysis*

Ideally, the information mentioned in Action 16.5 would also be incorporated onto the [www.sexualwellbeing.ie](http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie) website as the action originally stipulated.

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<sup>95</sup> <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/gp/antibiotic-prescribing/conditions-and-treatments/genital/genital-conditions.html>

**OUTCOME 17: THE LGBTI+ COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY THE MSM POPULATION, ARE MADE AWARE OF THE RISKS OF CONTRACTING HIV AND OTHER STIS AND OF THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR TESTING.**

**Grade: A**

Overview: When the State and civil society work well together, the outcomes for the community are greatly enhanced. Nowhere is this more evident than in the area of sexual health promotion. The Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme must be commended for its partnership approach and the positive outcomes it produces.

**Action 17.1: Deliver targeted outreach sexual health programmes and campaigns to at-risk groups.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The HSE SHCPP supported the establishment of the Mpower programme within HIV Ireland which was launched in 2020 and funding arrangements are in place with HIV Ireland and Sexual Health Centre Cork for the continued delivery of outreach work for gay and bisexual men.

The National Condom Distribution Service is still in operation and outreach and promotion work is being done. There are ongoing funding arrangements between the SHCPP and the Gay Health Network (GHN) concerning the promotion and development of Man2Man.

There is an ongoing partnership with Cairde to provide sexual health information on [www.healthconnect.ie](http://www.healthconnect.ie). The information is also provided in Arabic, Mandarin, Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian. The HSE contraception, STI, PrEP, and HIV treatment guides for service users are available in multiple languages.

*Analysis*

Very good collaborations and partnerships are in place. This work continues to have a real positive impact for the community. This work needs ongoing funding and support to update campaigns and to respond to needs as they arise.

**Action 17.2: Promote sexual health and 'safer sex' public advertising campaigns to encourage sexually active adults to have safer sex and include advice on contraception and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

### *Progress*

An ongoing nationwide Sexual Wellbeing campaign, developed by HSE SHCPP) for the 18–30-year age group, promotes a variety of sexual health and ‘sexual health’ messages in public advertising campaigns. This includes targeted advertising across a variety of channels, including Out of Home (OOH), digital display, video on-demand advertising, social media, Google Search, TV and in person events in third level campuses. The campaign creative highlights condom use and awareness of free home STI testing service among a variety of other messages. The campaign also raises awareness of [Sexualwellbeing.ie](https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie) as a source of information.

The Man2Man campaign for gay, bi, and other men who have sex with men (gbMSM) aged 18+ promotes safer sex (including condoms) and STI testing among gbMSM and promotes [Man2Man.ie](https://www.man2man.ie) as a source of information on safe sex. Messages are promoted on an ongoing basis across the platforms.

### *Analysis*

This was a robust information campaign, and one that other campaigns mentioned in this report could learn from. There was wide online media coverage and a significant investment in print and in-person media.

**Action 17.3: Expand condom distribution services, with initial focus targeting those most at risk.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

### *Progress*

The National Condom Distribution Service continues to operate. A report on the Service was published in 2021 and 2022.<sup>96 97</sup> In total, 439,450 condoms and 259,603 lubricant sachets were ordered by organisations across Ireland in 2021. In 2022, this increased to 1,015,420 condoms and 618,660 lubricant sachets.

Condoms are distributed through public sector bodies, NGOs, colleges as well as bars and clubs.

### *Analysis*

The Condom Distribution Service is a very important and well-functioning programme. The introduction of a postal service is a welcome innovation.

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<sup>96</sup> [https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/research/research-reports/ncds-2021\\_final.pdf](https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/research/research-reports/ncds-2021_final.pdf)

<sup>97</sup> [https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/national-condom-distribution-service/national-condom-distribution-overview/national-condom-distribution-service\\_annual-report\\_2023\\_final.pdf](https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/national-condom-distribution-service/national-condom-distribution-overview/national-condom-distribution-service_annual-report_2023_final.pdf)

**Action 17.4: Expand community HIV testing to populations at higher risk for HIV, mainly MSM and migrants, through NGO partners.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

Community HIV testing is ongoing. It is delivered by a range of community partners including MPower (Dublin), Sexual Health Centre (Cork and Kerry), GOSHH (Limerick), Sexual Health West (Galway). Tests are provided in a variety of locations, including bars, clubs, community centres and NGO offices. MPower also provides self-testing.

*Analysis*

This is another important programme that is operating well. However, community testing is limited geographically and not available nationwide. The introduction of HIV self-tests is a welcome innovation.

**Action 17.5: Advance the establishment of an MSM Health Committee in 2019 by the Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) and targeted campaigns and messages through website and social media.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

A MSM Health Committee was established. In 2023, this was transformed into the new gbMSM Sexual Health Working Group. The first meeting of the Working Group was held in May 2023. An action plan is currently being developed.

*Analysis*

The Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme were widely praised by a number of stakeholders for their engagement, dedication and innovative approaches.

**Action 17.6: Continue to promote and adapt key social media, community, and social venue messages for STI testing/condom usage through [www.Man2Man.ie](http://www.Man2Man.ie).**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Campaigns were ongoing on social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and gay/bisexual male hook-up apps. Another platforms used was Gay Community News. Campaigns promoted how and where individuals could get STI testing or access testing at home, promoted the use of condoms, explained the importance of consent, and

promoted the use of PEP. Additionally, the campaign promoted resources where individuals could learn more about PrEP as well as general harm reduction practices.

#### *Analysis*

Again, the campaigning around these issues and the work of Man2Man and MPOWER was excellent. The effectiveness of these campaigns was starkly illustrated by Ireland's robust response to the Mpox outbreak in 2022. The outbreak was very quickly contained in part thanks to effective information campaigns.

### **Action 17.7: Develop and implement national campaigns around the prevention of HIV and other STIs such as RespectProtect on Twitter and the Man2Man website.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

#### *Progress*

This action overlaps with Actions 17.2 and 17.6.

#### *Analysis*

This action shows that, for the next Inclusion Strategy, it would be good practice to streamline actions so that overlap is minimised.

### **Action 17.8: Conclude the study of the readiness of public STI clinics to implement pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in line with the Standards for Service Delivery of HIV PrEP to clarify capacity and resource requirements across public STI services in Ireland and inform resource allocation.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: A**

#### *Progress*

The report was published in 2019.<sup>98</sup>

#### *Analysis*

This action was completed.

### **Action 17.9: Complete the plan for the delivery of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) nationally following a positive recommendation arising from the HIQA health technology assessment.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: B**

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<sup>98</sup> [https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/research/research-reports/assessing-the-preparedness-of-public-sti-clinics-for-hiv-prep-implementation\\_final.pdf](https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/research/research-reports/assessing-the-preparedness-of-public-sti-clinics-for-hiv-prep-implementation_final.pdf)

### *Progress*

This service is currently being provided. The multisectoral PrEP working group was re-established in 2023, chaired by the HSE SHCPP. The guidelines and information resources for PrEP users were updated in 2023. A PrEP e-learning module for health care professionals is under development. The purpose of this e-learning module is to increase the number of healthcare providers with the skills to provide PrEP. The WHO changed the recommended inclusion criteria for PrEP, which has increased eligibility.

### *Analysis*

Much work has been done to deliver the PrEP programme. However, serious issues remain with access to PrEP. At present, it is practically impossible to access PrEP in Dublin and significantly challenging elsewhere. This is an issue of real concern. Without critical mass the community benefit is lessened. Clinical capacity has been identified as the key issue.

<b>OUTCOME 18: PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV IN IRELAND ARE SUPPORTED AND NOT STIGMATISED.</b>
<b>Grade: C</b>
Overview: HIV stigma continues to be an issue. More work is needed to address this issue.

**Action 18.1: Develop a HIV stigma campaign with a strong focus at the city level for the cities that sign up to the fast-track cities initiative. The aim of the national stigma campaign will be to raise awareness around HIV transmission, the effectiveness of HIV treatment for people living with HIV to live a healthy life as well as prevent onward transmission, and to promote HIV testing, so that people living with undiagnosed HIV can be linked into treatment services promptly.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

A working group was established for the development of the HIV stigma campaign with the gbMSM community. The campaign is currently being developed. A repeat of the National Stigma Campaign is being planned for 2024.

*Analysis*

This action remains a work in progress. Tackling HIV stigma is an important issue.

*Background*

Fast-Track Cities is an international initiative to end new cases of HIV by 2030. Prior to the launch of the National LGBTI+ Strategy, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Dublin signed up to the initiative.

**OUTCOME 19: PEOPLE WISHING TO TRANSITION THEIR GENDER HAVE TIMELY ACCESS TO TREATMENT THAT ACCORDS WITH INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE.**

**Grade: F**

Overview: The government's failure to provide adequate access to trans healthcare is a cause of grave concern. Outcomes in this area are disimproving as the waitlists grow and services diminish. This failure is having a very significant impact on people's mental and physical health. The outstanding actions must be progressed as a matter of real urgency. The recruitment of a new Clinical Lead for Transgender Services (Model of Care and Implementation Plan Development Lead for Transgender Care) is noted.

**Actions 19.1 Recruit additional specialised staff in this area including endocrinologists, social workers, speech and language therapists, senior psychologists, clinical nurse specialist, and administrative support officers.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: F**

*Progress*

No evidence that additional staff were hired. The post for a Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist with a special interest in gender identity is due to be advertised again.

*Analysis*

Very serious failures to employ the additional staff as promised, thus failing to ensure timely access to care in line with international best practice.

**Actions 19.2 Continue to develop transgender health services for children and adults in Ireland with a clear transition pathway from child to adult services.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: F**

*Progress*

At present, there is no youth service, so it is impossible for this action to progress. There has been a near complete breakdown of pathways and access to care for young people.

*Analysis*

The absence of services for young people is a real failure and undermines health and wellbeing. The lack of services leaves young trans people and their families without any support and facing increasing mental health challenges. Young trans people are more likely to experience self-harm and suicidal ideation<sup>99</sup> and the lack of dedicated service to provide

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/connecting-for-life/publications/lgbt-ireland-report.html>

mental health support, access to life-saving puberty blockers, and parental support increases this risk and danger to their lives and wellbeing.

Waiting lists for adult services continue to grow. This has resulted in an increase in self-medicating, reliance on services abroad and very real issues with the quality of transition and quality of care.

The current model of care is outdated and does not incorporate WPATH and WHO guidance both of which advocate for an informed consent model, the depathologisation of trans identities, and the shift of gender-affirming care into sexual health services rather than psychiatric services. A new model of care is urgently required.

**Actions 19.3 Develop a seamless and integrated service for those people who present to the Irish health service with gender identity issues through the time limited Gender Identity Steering Committee. Chaired by the Clinical Lead in Mental Health, the Steering Committee has defined terms of reference, a time frame within which it will operate and clear reporting relationships, and its membership includes experts in the area, representatives from paediatric services, adult services (both endocrinology and psychiatry), advocacy groups and service users.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: F**

*Progress*

None.

*Analysis*

As above.

**Actions 19.4 Provide clear guidelines to health practitioners on referral pathways for trans young people and their families to specialised services.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: F**

*Progress*

None.

*Analysis*

It is crucial that the next strategy prioritises the development of trans healthcare services in line with WPATH and WHO guidelines. This must include a move to an informed consent model of care with GPs involved in prescribing. It must also include the hiring of additional specialist endocrinologists.

**OUTCOME 20: BETTER DATA IS AVAILABLE ON THE PREVALENCE OF INTERSEX CONDITIONS IN IRELAND AND CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO APPROPRIATE CLINICAL GOVERNANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE AND GUIDELINES.**

**Grade: F**

Overview: As with trans healthcare, the failure to make progress on intersex actions is a cause of deep concern. Significant human rights concerns remain unaddressed. This constitutes a failure on the part of the state.

**Action 20.1: Conduct a scoping exercise on Intersex conditions in Ireland to determine and document prevalence, current practice, clinical governance and compare against international evidence and guidelines. This scoping exercise will include key recommendations which may include the establishment of an expert working group to develop clinical guidelines.**

**Reporting department: Department of Health**

**Grade: F**

*Progress*

None.

*Analysis*

It is a shame that no progress on this action has been made, considering the invisibility of the intersex community at present. Such a scoping exercise is vital if intersex people in Ireland are to be given the respect and health care they deserve.

## PILLAR FOUR: SAFE AND SUPPORTED

### OUTCOME 21: IRELAND HAS STRONG LEGISLATION AND SUPPORTS IN PLACE TO COMBAT HATE CRIME AND ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO REPORT IT.

**Grade: B**

Overview: Notable progress was made in the area of hate crime data collection and online reporting. In addition, new hate crime legislation is currently before the Oireachtas. In 2022, reported hate crimes increased by almost 30%. These issues must be addressed.

**Action 21.1: Bring forward legislative proposals to ensure that incitement to hatred and hate crimes against LGBTI+ people are adequately addressed in our laws.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: C**

#### *Progress*

The Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022 was introduced in the Dáil in November of 2022. As of January 2024, the bill is at committee stage in the Seanad. The Coalition Against Hate Crime has proposed several amendments to strengthen the bill.

#### *Analysis*

The introduction of the Bill is welcomed, and it is important that it is enacted and commenced by the end of this term.

The necessity of this measure is illustrated by the 582 hate crimes reported to the Gardaí in 2022, a 30% increase from 2021. Many more hate crimes went unreported and undiscussed. According to ILGA Europe, last year was the most violent year for LGBTQ+ people in Europe this past decade. From Irish research,<sup>100</sup> 75% of LGBTI+ survey respondents reported being verbally abused on account of their identity, while one in five reported being punched, hit, or physically attacked in public based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. According to Belong To, 87% of surveyed LGBTQ+ youth have seen or experienced anti-LGBTQ+ hate or harassment on social media this past year.<sup>101</sup>

In addition to the Hate Crime Bill, the Coalition Against Hate Crime, as well as individual organisations like LGBT Ireland, have called for a National Action Plan on hate crimes. Such a strategy should include training for everyone in the criminal justice system including Gardaí, judges, and the DPP; more community Gardaí who build up trust with affected communities; improved monitoring, reporting, and data collection; better victim supports;

<sup>100</sup> <https://www.belongto.org/support-our-work/advocacy/lgbtq-research/the-lgbtireland-report/>

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.belongto.org/87-of-lgbtq-youth-report-hate-and-harassment-online/>

national awareness campaigns; targeted education; addressing the root causes of hatred with targeted educational programmes; and other preventive measures to increase tolerance and acceptance in Irish society.

**Action 21.2: Update the Garda Pulse system to include a “Hate Crime” tag and subcategories including sexual orientation and gender identity.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The Garda Pulse system was updated to include a Hate Crime tag and takes note of anti-LGBTI+ violence. The Garda National Diversity and Integration unit monitors Hate Crime nationally and regularly promotes the Online Hate Crime reporting facility on Garda social media channels.

*Analysis*

This action has been completed.

**Action 21.3: Implement a fully functioning on-line system for reporting hate crime.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The online hate crime tool has launched and is available online.<sup>102</sup>

*Analysis*

This action has been completed.

**Action 21.4: Significantly increase reporting of hate crimes to An Garda Síochána by members of the LGBTI+ community owing to the more open relationship that has been developed.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

The Garda have made efforts to develop a closer relationship with the LGBTI+ community. They have hosted LGBTI+ Network Dialogue Days, the Garda National Diversity and Integration Unit (GNDIU) has met with LGBTI+ stakeholders concerning high-profile homophobic assaults, and the Gardaí support Pride events across Ireland.

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<sup>102</sup> <https://www.garda.ie/en/reportahatecrime/>

For the launch of the Hate Crime Reporting facility, the Gardaí collaborated with TENI to release a promotional video about the service. A spokesperson from LGBT Ireland was present for the public launch of the Online Hate Crime Reporting System.

Finally, the Garda National Diversity Forum was created in July 2020 to hear the concerns of diverse communities within the Irish public. The Forum met ten times between July 2020 and March of 2023.

Moreover, Garda members and staff continue to complete the Online Hate Crime Training course. As of 15 June 2023, completion rates were 86%. The Gardaí also participated in the Civil Society and Academia Collaboration in Combating LGBTQ hate Crime. They also presented at a public meeting on hate crimes against LGBTI+ people.

*Analysis:* There is room for improvement in the relationship between the Gardaí and the LGBTI+ community. Specifically, regarding the far-right protests in the summer of 2023, the Gardaí have disappointingly not been as supportive of the LGBTI+ community as they could be. While hate groups have harassed librarians and taken over public spaces, the Gardaí have not prevented the intimidation. Rather, they wilfully adopt a “both-sideism” approach, saying that far-right protestors and LGBTI+ counter-protestors and allies are equally out of line. But the fact remains that one side consists of hate groups and the other side consists of people simply asking to have their rights respected. The Gardaí’s non-intervention erodes the trust that the LGBTI+ community has in them.

**Action 21.5: Commence the publication of statistics for recorded incidents of hate crime.**

**Reporting department: DOJ**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

On 22 August 2021 the Gardaí published hate crime figures for the first time. These figures will be published annually and include a breakdown of discriminatory motives, including gender and sexual orientation.

*Analysis*

This action has been completed.

**OUTCOME 22: LGBTI+ VICTIMS OF CRIME ARE APPROPRIATELY SUPPORTED AND INCLUDED IN MAINSTREAM SERVICE PROVISION UNDERPINNED BY FORMALISED CONSULTATION STRUCTURES WITH AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA AND OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES.**

**Grade: B**

Overview: Improvements have been made in the area of training and policy. However, much work remains to be done to ensure LGBTI+ victims of crime are properly supported.

**Action 22.1: Provide updated training to members of An Garda Síochána on issues affecting the LGBTI+ community.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

The Garda National Diversity unit plans to continue its program of Garda Diversity Officer Training through the end of 2023. Nationally there are 481 Garda Diversity Officers.

Online Hate Crime training commenced for all Garda personnel in 2022 and continues to the present day. Six training videos were created for Garda Diversity/Culture Awareness training in collaboration with LGBT Ireland and Outcomers.

Over 1,000 Garda personnel have completed a Human Rights in Policing course. This course also involves unconscious bias training.

Finally, a revised Hate Crime / Diversity and Cultural Awareness training is being completed by all Trainees going through the Garda College.

*Analysis:* The high rates of online training are noted and commended. However, as with so many of these trainings, in-person is preferable to online, and the necessary resources to achieve this should be procured.

This training still has some gaps and there is some room for improvement in Garda practices. In March 2022 some cases were brought against men cruising in Marks and Spencer's, and several of the defendants accused the Gardaí of entrapment.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> <https://gcn.ie/gay-men-arrest-dublin-public-toilets-dark-ages/>

**Action 22.2: Ensure that there are open channels of communication between members of the LGBTI+ community and specially trained members of An Garda Síochána.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

The Garda National Diversity & Integration Unit (GNDIU) serves as a liaison between the LGBTI+ community and Garda Diversity Officers (GDOs) who help implement the community's feedback and/or address the community concerns. As of summer 2023, there were 481 GDOs in service. The official list of officers is available on the Garda website.

In the high-profile, homophobic Sligo murders, the GNDIU engaged with LGBTI+ stakeholders concerning the assaults and offered advice and support to the community.

*Analysis*

There was good engagement on this action, however, the GDO model needs to be evaluated to make sure that the end results are genuine improvements in policing concerning minority identities and that the public actually feels that difference.

**Action 22.3: Incorporate LGBTI+ focused considerations in the implementation of the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual, and Gender-based Violence.**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Some mention is made of LGBTI+ couples in the Second National Strategy<sup>104</sup>, although it is in passing. It does, however, acknowledge that domestic partner violence is being recognised more and more in the community, and talking about those issues within the community is being destigmatised.

The Third National Strategy deals with these issues more at length and recognises that it must reflect the needs and lived experiences of victims and survivors who hold a multitude of identities. It also acknowledges that some forms of discrimination faced by some groups, including the LGBTI+ community, can make domestic violence more likely. A specialised group focusing on the intersectional needs of survivors has been formed and will advise on all interventions to make sure that they have an intersectional lens.

*Analysis*

Domestic and gender-based violence is just starting to be recognised and understood in the LGBTI+ context, and many queer people are not equipped to deal with or recognise

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<sup>104</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/135520/bafad2ff-d225-4798-82e2-ec4936a879c0.pdf#page=null>

domestic violence. Going forward, some sort of public information campaign on this point would be welcome and would go a long way in helping LGBTI+ people that find themselves in situations of domestic violence. Also, the next LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy should make sure that it dovetails with the goals of the Third Domestic and Gender Based Violence Strategy.

**OUTCOME 23: LGBTI+ ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE SUPPORTED AND TREATED SENSITIVELY WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION PROCESS AND DIRECT PROVISION SYSTEM.**

**Grade: B**

Overview: While some progress has been made in the area of policy development, standards and training. Many serious issues remain to be addressed including the quality of accommodation, access to information and levels of support provided.

**Action 23.1: Develop a broad LGBTI+ policy, including a transgender accommodation policy, to promote equality, take account of self-determined identity, and to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all residents is promoted.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

The department has funded research on how to make the International Protection process more inclusive. A draft policy has been circulated internally for review.

*Analysis*

The research was published in September 2023. The recommendations should form part of the full policy response.

**Action 23.2: Finalise and adopt the national standards for accommodation offered to people in the protection process.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

The department is working with the Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA) to implement HIQA's monitoring of the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) centres, using the national standards adopted in 2019 and put into effect in 2021.<sup>105</sup> The standards set guidelines for how individuals should be treated within the international protection process and take note of individuals that are more vulnerable, including members of the LGBTI+ community.

The department is in the process of updating the National Standards to reflect the transfer of functions from the Department of Justice to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth. Before HIQA begins monitoring the National Standards will be republished.

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<sup>105</sup> <https://assets.gov.ie/47450/759252006e2747468add977c9447fcbb.docx>

### *Analysis*

While it would have been nice to have seen more progression on this action, it must be recognised that the switch from the Department of Justice to the DCEDIY significantly hindered progress.

It should also be noted that, as with any guidelines, it is important they do not just exist on paper but actually translate into improved quality of services for LGBTI+ members (and all people) within the protection process. The report of LGBTI+ Residents of International Protection Accommodation Service should be consulted as this action continues to progress.

**Action 23.3: Continue to work with the UNHCR to monitor and review the handling of applications relating to sexual orientation and/or gender identity within the International Protection Process; and, as part of the ongoing training programmes, ensure updated LGBTI+ cultural competence training is rolled out to staff working within the International Protection Office (IPO)**

**Reporting department: DoJ**

**Grade: A**

### *Progress*

In 2023, the IPO arranged four training courses for the fourth quarter of 2023, which will be delivered by the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre to caseworkers and panel members who will be assessing Sexual Orientation Gender Identity (SOGI) claims. This training includes interview techniques that ground and support applicants; what trauma looks like and how it can manifest; grounding techniques; beliefs and attitudes about rape and trauma; dynamics of domestic abuse; the impact of cultural beliefs and attitudes; and many more. The IPO also added a new layer to the quality assessment for SOGI cases in 2021. The Difference, Stigma Shame, Harm (DSSH) model is also used.

Twenty newly appointed Tribunal Members received training on evidence and credibility assessment and on dealing with vulnerable appellants as part of their induction training held in June of 2023.

### *Analysis*

It is vitally important that all interviewers understand general LGBTI+ issues as well as the specific cultural and religious contexts encountered in countries and regions from which individuals seek protection. It is also important that training in trauma informed practice is provided. Interviewers should also be provided with training on decision-making in the context of LGBTI+ cases, including consideration of international law, and best practice, and case law. In addition, LGBTI+ interview standards should be established and published.

**OUTCOME 24: THE PRACTICE OF CONVERSION THERAPY IN IRELAND IS INVESTIGATED AND FOLLOW UP WITH APPROPRIATE COUNTERMEASURES.**

**Grade: B**

Overview: This remains a live issue. While the research was published in 2023, the promised legislation remains outstanding.

**Action 24.1: In the context of the commitment in the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy regarding the promotion or practice of conversion therapy, continue research to establish the extent to which the practice is occurring in Ireland and review international best practice in responding which will also include legislative responses in other countries.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

A report on conversion therapy practices in Ireland has been published.<sup>106</sup> The study was carried out by the Trinity College Dublin School of Nursing and Midwifery. The research provides insight into what conversion therapy looks like in the Irish context and considers the growing body of international research on conversion practices. The report has established that conversion practices do take place in Ireland.

*Analysis*

The report is informative and comprehensive and will serve as an excellent resource in passing legislation banning conversion practices.

**Action 24.2: Informed by the findings of the above research, develop an appropriate package of measures for implementation in response.**

**Reporting department: DCEDIY**

**Grade: C**

*Progress*

A plan to draft legislation banning conversion practices is a current priority of the government for 2023, and work on this action is ongoing. Considering the complex and sensitive nature of the legislation, the government is considering underpinning policy issues in order to best protect vulnerable members of society. Currently key legal issues are being identified, and a legislative proposal will be brought forward shortly. The legislative process will then determine progress of the action.

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<sup>106</sup> [https://nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie/news/assets/pdf/TCD\\_Conversion\\_Practices\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](https://nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie/news/assets/pdf/TCD_Conversion_Practices_Full_Report.pdf)

### *Analysis*

Any bill prohibiting conversion practices should ensure that it provides protection for the entirety of the LGBTI+ community. This means prohibiting practices that force gender or sex characteristic conversion in addition to practices that try to change individuals' sexual orientation. Specifically, this means legislation that prohibits medical intervention before an intersex child can give informed consent as well as an effective monitoring mechanism for intersex surgery. Additionally, such a ban should consider conversion practices that specifically target disabled LGBTI+ individuals.

Finally, such a ban should open up a conversation on best-practice on mental health services in Ireland. Specifically, mental health professionals should receive mandatory training on the needs of LGBTI+ individuals so that they do not inadvertently (or deliberately) promote changing one's gender identity or sexual orientation, and so that they do not needlessly traumatise or stigmatise clients.

**OUTCOME 25: IRELAND CONTINUES TO RAISE THE ISSUE OF LGBTI+ RIGHTS AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL AND SUPPORTS HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS IN EMBASSIES AND OVERSEAS MISSIONS.**

**Grade: A**

Overview: Commendable efforts are being made to raise LGBTI+ issues internationally.

**Action 25.1: Continue to integrate the promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTI+ individuals into Ireland's foreign policy.**

**Reporting department: Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Ireland's foreign policy commitment to promoting LGBTI+ rights is identified as a priority in the "Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World" policy programme, as well as in the "A Better World" international development policy and the new Diaspora Policy for 2020-2025. Ireland protects and promotes human rights Defenders, including those focused on LGBTI+ issues. It works on LGBTI+ issues using bi- and multilateral engagement, particularly advocating for the decriminalisation of homosexuality and against criminalisation. Ireland is also part of the LGBTQI\* Voices and Perspectives in Women, Peace, and Security (WPS)" organised by the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy. Ireland was selected based on its strong record in the areas of WPS and/or LGBTQI+ rights promotion.

Additionally, diplomats actively participate in Pride parades in Ireland and similar events across the world.

*Analysis*

Ireland makes LGBTI+ issues a priority in the foreign policy space. However, the issues that Ireland tends to take up on the global stage tend to be those focused on sexual orientation. Going forward, Ireland must also actively work to promote the rights of transgender and gender-diverse individuals on the world stage, even when it is not particularly popular. However, before Ireland can take on this issue globally, we must also take steps domestically to better support the needs of our own gender-diverse population.

**Action 25.2: Support the promotion of LGBTI+ rights in our multilateral work at the UN, EU, and regional organisations such as the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) including support for resolutions, statements, and events that promote the rights of LGBTI+ people.**

**Reporting department: DFA**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Ireland highlights LGBTI+ rights issues through fora including the European Union, the UN Human Rights Council, the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

At the 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2023, Ireland signed up to joint statements on the promotion and protection of LGBTI+ rights presented during the interaction dialogue with the Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity.

During the latest session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March of 2023, Ireland as part of the UN LGBTI+ Core Group called for fuller inclusion of lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex women and girls in education and technology policies, laws, and programs.

Ireland participates in the Equal Rights Coalition, an inter-governmental coalition that is dedicated to advancing the human rights of LGBTI+ people.

*Analysis*

Ireland is an active advocate and supporter for LGBTI+ rights on the global stage. Ireland must continue to advocate loudly for LGBTI+ rights around the world.

**Action 25.3: Support engagement with human rights and civil society organisations working globally and in partner countries to promote and protect the rights of LGBTI+ people.**

**Reporting department: DFA**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

The government talks regularly with civil society groups and takes their views into account when providing inputs and recommendations on sexual orientation and gender identity issues at the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review. Some of the issues that Ireland advocates for in this space include the repeal of discriminatory laws, the implementation of comprehensive anti-discrimination policies, and ensuring equal rights for the families of same-sex couples.

Additionally, Ireland's embassy networks support LGBTI+ civil society groups and organisations and participates in Pride and other civil society-led LGBTI+ events. The embassy network has made grants of support to LGBTI+ groups in China, Brazil, Liberia, Mexico, Indonesia, and Nigeria.

#### *Analysis*

Ireland's work in this area is robust and should expand to include civil society organisations operating in other countries around the world including Russia, the Middle East and parts of Africa.

**Action 25.4: Support outreach to LGBTI+ members of our diaspora through funding initiatives such as the Emigrant Support Programme.**

**Reporting department: DFA**

**Grade: C**

#### *Progress*

Ireland's "Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025" celebrates the diversity of Ireland's diaspora and supports LGBTI+ members of that group. Through its Emigrant Support Programme, the government provides financial support to projects organised by LGBTI+ diaspora groups.

Currently, applications for the 2023-24 grant cycle are being processed, and decisions on these applications will be announced after the summer.

In the 2019 and 2020 grant cycle reports (the only two reports available online for the years where the Inclusion Strategy was active), €6,162.19<sup>107</sup> and €6,155<sup>108</sup>, respectively, were given to one group (Sydney Queer Irish). The department noted in correspondence that the London Irish LGBT+ Network received funding in 2021 and 2022 and that Vancouver Queer Irish received funding in 2022.

#### *Analysis*

It is encouraging to see that support to queer members of the diaspora are being considered in the funding scheme, but, in 2019 and 2020, only one queer diasporic group received any funding at all. This could be an outreach issue or an issue at the level of grant decisions, but either way, there is much room for growth on this action.

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<sup>107</sup> <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/globalirish/2019-Annual-Report-on-Support-for-the-Irish-Abroad.pdf> 21

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/globalirish/Irish-Abroad-Annual-Report-2020.pdf> 24

## OUTCOME 26: LGBTI+ PEOPLE CAN TRAVEL IN SAFETY AND CONFIDENCE.

**Grade: B**

Overview: Like many other outcomes this area has seen some progress and regression. While policy improvements are welcome, there has been an increase in negative experiences and assaults.

**Action 26.1: Continue to provide training for transport operators and taxi drivers that includes an LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity component.**

**Reporting department: Department of Transport**

**Grade: C**

### *Progress*

The transport operators in contact with the department continue to provide EDI training and awareness raising to their staff. These affiliated groups are Dublin Bus, Bus Eireann, Irish Rail, go Ahead Ireland, and Local Link. The National Transport Authority is a Dublin Pride partner and provide practical and operational support to Dublin Pride each year. They also take part in the Pride at Work training programme. The department worked with other Transport Operators and the Taxi industry to promote LGBTI+ awareness throughout the month of June. In recent years Dublin Bus and Irish Rail have run visible Pride campaigns in association with a particular community group; in 2023 they associated with Outhouse, and in 2021 they associated with LGBT Ireland.

At the Diversity & Inclusion Awards in 2023, Bus Eireann won the Outstanding Diversity Initiative Award. Iarnród Eireann/Irish Rail received a Silver Accreditation Award from the Irish Centre for Diversity in recognition of its success in implementing inclusive organisational practices.

LGBT Ireland provided in-person training for Dublin Bus in 2022.

Dublin Bus was ordered to pay €7,500 to a passenger in January of 2021 after a bus driver targeted a gay passenger with homophobic slurs.<sup>109</sup>

### *Analysis*

There's been good engagement on the part of transport operators concerning this action. Unfortunately, the changed context surrounding this action means that progress has been mixed. There have been an unacceptable number of hate crime incidents reported on public

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<sup>109</sup> <https://www.nova.ie/dublin-bus-ordered-to-pay-e7500-for-homophobia-aimed-at-passenger-193618/>

transport as part of a general rise in far-right, anti-LGBTI+ sentiment in recent years.<sup>110 111</sup>  
<sup>112 113 114</sup> Going forward, it will be important that Transport Operators, as part of their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training, also receive best practice training on how to deal with hate crimes and targeted harassment.

**Action 26.2: Continue to promote equalities policies and complaints mechanisms amongst the travelling public.**

**Reporting department: Department of Transport**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

The National Transport Authority continues its support of the NTA Transport Users Advisory Group. This group draws from a diverse range of backgrounds, including age, gender, and ethnicity. Additionally, its Customer Contact services are being bolstered to better monitor customer complaints and feedback, including from an LGBTI+ perspective. They are being specifically monitored in terms of poor public transport experiences.

The Authority strengthened its customer contact services by recruiting a Customer Contact Manager, which has helped improve response times and the ability to address customer questions and complaints.

*Analysis*

These are all welcome steps in ensuring that there is an accountability mechanism for people who experience discrimination and harassment on public transport services, which is especially important in the current climate.

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<sup>110</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/attacks-on-lgbtqi-people-prompt-call-for-robust-hate-crime-laws-1.4852053>

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.newstalk.com/news/real-powerless-feeling-student-faces-homophobic-harrassment-on-dublin-bus-1324170>

<sup>112</sup> [https://uk.news.yahoo.com/teenager-pleads-guilty-suspected-hate-152132573.html?guce\\_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLnNvbS8&guce\\_referrer\\_sig=AQAAAK29hQQGZTDV\\_IIB3qwcUvSmux\\_PRj3qh3394sKMtDXvmxOTaa\\_qJHzc1l0sVuYMbVEspeZQsXLQB5EQBolhMC\\_MCMNfxBSIIvgrJkHO5cP44XBGof7zhqzvfxVCurLZsm6Vrdzd5NHksOLnoCtzcYrmgNJsEwOBtOH9xMtZNtqW&guccounter=2](https://uk.news.yahoo.com/teenager-pleads-guilty-suspected-hate-152132573.html?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLnNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAK29hQQGZTDV_IIB3qwcUvSmux_PRj3qh3394sKMtDXvmxOTaa_qJHzc1l0sVuYMbVEspeZQsXLQB5EQBolhMC_MCMNfxBSIIvgrJkHO5cP44XBGof7zhqzvfxVCurLZsm6Vrdzd5NHksOLnoCtzcYrmgNJsEwOBtOH9xMtZNtqW&guccounter=2)

<sup>113</sup> <https://www.thepinknews.com/2022/08/17/ireland-dublin-bus-homophobic-hate-crime-attack-mark-sheehan/>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/crime-law/2022/08/16/man-26-assaulted-in-suspected-homophobic-attack-on-dublin-bus/>

**Action 26.3: Enhance data collection on equality / discrimination complaints by transport operators.**

**Reporting department: Department of Transport**

**Grade: B**

*Progress*

Action 26.2 dovetails with this action. Additionally, the National Transport Authority plans to establish a Consolidated Contact Centre in 2024, which will hopefully enable customers to route complaints through a single source and will help in monitoring specific categories of complaints, including complaints of LGBTI+ discrimination.

*Analysis*

Same as for Action 26.3.

**Action 26.4: Continue to provide travel advice and information for Irish citizens when travelling abroad, particularly to countries where laws and attitudes to LGBTI+ issues may affect safety and ease of travel.**

**Reporting department: DFA**

**Grade: A**

*Progress*

Ireland has a “TravelWise: Staying safe and informed while travelling abroad” Consular strategy. As part of this strategy, the department provides Irish citizens with assistance, services, and travel advice, which includes providing specific, practical advice to LGBTI+ individuals while they’re travelling abroad. This advice highlights country-specific issues of relevance to LGBTI+ individuals, including where attitudes towards the LGBTI+ community may differ from Ireland and lead to safety or harassment issues. Moreover, the department has a web page with best practices for LGBTI+ travellers.<sup>115</sup>

*Analysis*

The department is doing good work in this area and hopefully this work continues into the future.

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<sup>115</sup> <https://dfa.ie/travel/know-before-you-go/lgbt/>

## SECTION V: IRELAND AND INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

In 2023, ILGA ranked Ireland 16<sup>th</sup> in Europe for its human rights and policy protections for the LGBTI+ community, down one place from 2022. Ongoing incidents of discrimination, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and the regression in our European rankings highlight the need to make progress on LGBTI+ issues.

Ireland has much to learn from its European peers on issues affecting LGBTQI+ communities. In the past two years, several countries have made massive progress in this area: from the 2021-2022 rankings, Denmark jumped seven places, while from the 2022-2023 rankings, Spain jumped six places.

This section compares Ireland to Denmark, one of the big leapers from the past two years, and Malta, the country ranked number one for the past nine years, to identify ongoing gaps in legal protections for LGBTI+ Irish citizens. The largest gaps can be sorted into three broad categories: explicit constitutional guarantees, protection from hate crime and hate speech, and protection for the bodily integrity of intersex individuals. Progress should not be limited to these areas, but these three broad areas are where progress is most urgently needed and are the biggest obstacles to Ireland becoming the best place to be LGBTQI+ in Europe.

### *Denmark's Progress*

Denmark's meteoric rise in the rankings can be attributed to its efforts to plug the holes in its anti-discrimination legislation. Specifically, anti-discrimination legislation covering the areas of health, education, employment, and goods and services were expanded to also include sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics as protected categories. Moreover, the penal code was also revised to recognise that sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics were aggravating factors in hate crimes.

This indicates that bold legislative action on the part of Ireland can secure a similarly seismic rise, especially if new legislation takes into account the discrimination that all members of the LGBTI+ community face along the lines of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and if robust hate crime legislation is enacted.

### *Comparing Ireland to Denmark and Malta*

A full comparison of legal protections in Ireland, Denmark, and Malta was undertaken. Three broad areas of improvement stand out. These are constitutional protections, crimes outlawing hate crimes and hate speech against certain groups, and protections for intersex individuals.

On the **constitutional front**, Ireland's constitution does not provide explicit anti-discrimination protection for LGBTI+ people. In contrast, the constitution of Malta protects

fundamental rights and freedoms on the basis of both sexual orientation and gender identity.

**Hate crime and hate speech** is another area where Ireland comes up short, although this report recognises the progress of the hate crime legislation that is slowly working its way through the Oireachtas. Currently, Ireland only has protection against hate speech on the basis of sexual orientation. To improve our ranking, gaps need to be closed in the area of hate crimes on the basis of sexual orientation, hate crimes on the basis of gender identity, hate speech on the basis of gender identity, hate crimes on the basis of intersex identity; and a policy tackling hatred against intersex people. In comparison, Denmark only lacks a policy tackling intersex hatred, while Malta has legislation in place that plugs all of these gaps.

The final area is the category of **intersex bodily integrity**. Ireland lacks legislation that prohibits medical intervention before an intersex child can give informed consent, legislation that prohibits universal medical interventions; legislation that provides for an effective monitoring mechanism for intersex surgery, and legislation that provides justice and reparations for victims of intersex conversion therapy. In contrast, in 2015, Malta passed the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act that prohibits medical intervention before a child is able to provide informed consent. This is a first step that Ireland should follow.

## SECTION VI: ANALYSIS

This analysis considers the development, structure, effectiveness, and gaps in the 2019-2023 National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

### *Notes on the development and structure of the Strategy.*

The consultation from 2018-2019 to inform the creation of the Strategy was massively successful and, anecdotally at least, was one of the most extensive engagements of LGBTI+ Irish people in creating government policy. The consultation document today remains a valuable resource for policymakers. There was some disappointment in how this consultation and recommendations were transformed into the Inclusion Strategy. Questions still need to be answered as to why certain actions were adopted and others were not. It's unclear what weight was given to the community's priorities in the final drafting. This strategy formation process would have benefitted from increased transparency.

Beyond that, this review identified some structural flaws in the Strategy. Some actions were, by their nature, unachievable (example Action 2.11), while others were beyond the control or influence of the government (example Action 7.3). Greater care must be taken in future strategy formation processes to ensure that all actions are achievable and within the government's sphere of influence.

Finally, some actions were worded vaguely, and it was, therefore, difficult to assess their progress. One example is Action 13.1: "Design and implement programmes and measures to address intersectional discrimination in partnership with NGOs and target communities." It was unclear from the action what *kind* of intersectional discrimination, which NGOs or what sort of programmes and measures. This action was not progressed, and surely part of the reason was that this action provided no starting point or guidance for its achievement. In contrast, Action 16.1 reads: "Fund the HPV vaccine rollout plan in line with NIAC policy, including funding for vaccine nurses in 2019 and 2020." This is a concrete commitment on the government's part, making it more likely to be achieved and much easier for it to be assessed.

### *Notes on the effectiveness of the Inclusion Strategy.*

One issue with the effectiveness of the Inclusion Strategy is the scale or depth of the impact. Some actions were deemed to be completed through minimal action that had a minor impact in just one geographic area. For example, in Action 25.4 ("support outreach to LGBTI+ members of our diaspora through funding initiatives such as the Emigrant Support Programme"), it is true that the government has made resources available to LGBTI+ diaspora groups. But upon closer scrutiny, one learns that in 2019 and 2020 resources were only been provided to one LGBTI+ Diaspora group (Sydney Queer Irish) and that they receive just €6,000 per year, a very small portion of the overall funds made available for the

diaspora support. There is a need to support LGBTI+ diaspora in other countries and continents. To be fully effective, a certain scale of action is required.

In other areas, such as Action 12.1 (“make a report to each House of the Oireachtas of the findings on the review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 and of the conclusions drawn from the findings”) the action was completed as the report was laid, but the follow-up work of implementing the associated recommendations hasn’t taken place.

Another issue is that for some actions and for some departments, the Strategy is not the guiding policy. Instead, existing projects or initiatives are squeezed to fit the commitments made in the Strategy. For example, in Action 7.4 (“support a nationwide, week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival in 2020”), the department did not support a nationwide history and culture festival but instead cited events that National Cultural Institutions would probably have held regardless of the Strategy. These events are, of course, welcome, but the point of the Strategy is not to capture existing work but to create new programmes and projects that wouldn’t otherwise happen.

The ultimate test of the effectiveness of whether or not the Strategy generated positive change for LGBTQI+ people in Ireland. It’s clear from this report that progress has been made on a number of fronts, while a minority of other areas regressed or stalled. This aligns with the C+ grade assigned, meaning that satisfactory progress has been made, but some LGBTI+ people are still left wanting.

#### *Gaps in the Strategy and gaps in progress achieved.*

As mentioned above, several proposed actions were dropped from the consultation stage to the final draft of the Inclusion Strategy. These omissions affected some portions of the LGBTI+ community more than others, including people with disabilities, older LGBTI+ people, LGBTI+ migrants and intersex people.

Mental health for LGBTI+ people is another underrepresented area of concern. Considering that LGBTI+ young people in Ireland have twice the level of self-harm, three times the level of suicidality, and four times the level of severe stress, anxiety, and depression than their non-LGBTI+ peers, this lack of focus is unjustifiable. Indeed, only one action explicitly mentions improving mental health services for LGBTI+ people (14.3: provide LGBTI+ awareness training to staff working in mental health services nationally). There should be efforts to increase the number of mental health professionals who specifically work with LGBTI+ clients. More resources should be provided to services that provide emergency LGBTI+ services and support.

The lack of progress on the actions targeting trans, non-binary and intersex people is a real cause for concern. We know that societal acceptance of transgender people tends to be lower than for LGB people; trans healthcare barely exists in Ireland, and the State does not

recognise gender markers beyond the M/F binary. And yet, there was a regression on Outcome 19 (“people wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice”), and there was little to no progress on the two outcomes that explicitly mention Intersex people (Outcomes 10 and 20). In some areas, progress was made for LGB+ people, while things got worse for trans and non-binary people. One illustrative example of this is Action 6.4 (“implement Action 6 of the National Sports Policy in a manner that is inclusive of LGBTI+ people.”). While there have been efforts to include LGB people in sports, there has been an active effort to restrict the participation of gender-diverse people, especially transgender women. Indeed, sports organisations have started to ban transgender women from participating in sports because of their gender identity. This action shows how, with LGBTI+ inclusion, the focus tends to be on the “LGB” and not on the “TI.” This is something that needs to be addressed and remedied in future.

Finally, gaps have emerged during the life cycle of the Strategy. In many areas, the context has changed since 2019. The aftermath of the pandemic, the ongoing war in Ukraine and the rise of the far right are significant challenges that must be addressed in the next Strategy.

## **SECTION VII: RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. There should be a new National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy from 2024-2029 with a midpoint review in early 2027.
2. The next Strategy should take a whole-life approach. That is, the next Strategy should consider dividing actions up in part on the basis of age with specific actions for LGBTI+ young people, adults and older people.
3. A new public LGBTI+ consultation should take place to identify the needs of the community. There should be increased transparency on how the issues raised in this process are translated into the final Strategy used by the government. Additional resources should be allocated to the strategy formation process in line with the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy.
4. In developing the Strategy, more attention should be paid to international best practices, using the examples of Malta, Iceland, and elsewhere as a road map to LGBTI+ progress in Ireland.
5. Each proposed action in the next Strategy should be specific, concrete, measurable, and achievable. The Strategy should also be evidence-based.
6. Given the needs of trans, non-binary and intersex people, significant focus and resources should be allocated to improving outcomes for these communities.
7. Certain intersectional gaps within the community should be addressed with the seriousness they deserve, particularly the disabled LGBTI+ community, LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma, and LGBTI+ migrants and asylum seekers.
8. Care should be taken to align the actions in the next Strategy with existing government commitments, existing action plans, and other inclusion strategies.
9. The ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the next Strategy must be reviewed, and a new approach should be adopted. This could include subgroups that include NGOs, experts, departments and other key delivery stakeholders such as SHCPP and NOSP.
10. Adequate resources (human and financial) must be provided to ensure the next National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy is fully implemented.

## APPENDICES

### *Appendix 1: Department Report Cards*

Department of Children Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 1: LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society.</i></b>	
1.1: Conduct a public awareness campaign to positively represent LGBTI+ identities and contributions to Irish Society.	C
1.2: Identify key large-scale events each year to promote LGBTI+ visibility.	D
1.4: Coordinate a series of events and communications to support positive messaging around Pride and festivals nationwide and more broadly to promote LGBTI+ visibility, awareness, and expertise.	D
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>D</b>
<b><i>Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work.</i></b>	
2.4: Develop a Civil and Public Service wide LGBT+ Employee and Ally Network	D
2.6: Develop an employers' toolkit for use in both public and private sectors to promote workplace inclusion, building on prior good practice such as the Diversity Champions programme.	D
2.7: Provide information and guidelines to employers to remind them of their obligations with regards to equality and antidiscrimination laws. Advise on ways of providing a safe and supportive working	D

environment for LGBTI+ people, particularly in relation to transgender people.	
2.8: Develop guidance for transgender people to support their continued participation in the workplace, particularly during their time of transitioning.	D
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>D</b>
<b><i>Outcome 3: Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people.</i></b>	
3.2: Coordinate the roll-out of a public recognition marker denoting LGBTI+ friendly service provision, particularly in rural and other hard-to-reach communities.	D
3.3: Take practical measures to increase the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings.	D
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>D</b>
<b><i>Outcome 4: Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy.</i></b>	
4.1: Develop and implement an LGBTI+ research programme based on gaps and priorities identified in consultation with LGBTI+ NGOs and the landscape of existing research and data commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.	A
4.2: Address LGBTI+ data gaps in tandem with the work being done to advance data mapping and use in the Migrant Integration Strategy.	D
4.3: Establish a baseline of public attitudes and acceptance of LGBTI+ identities through a National Survey.	A

4.4: Ensure that disaggregated data on the LGBTI+ population and their needs is collected in national surveys where relevant and consider the inclusion of a question on sexual orientation/gender identity in the 2027 census.	C
<b>AVERAGE:</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 5: Public policy is inclusive of LGBTI+ perspectives and avoids heteronormative assumptions.</i></b>	
5.1: Utilise the Equality and Human Rights Public Sector Duty to take account of LGBTI+ considerations in the development or review of public sector policy, to be informed by targeted consultation where necessary.	D
<b><i>Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people.</i></b>	
6.1: Undertake a digital mapping of LGBTI+ community services and funding, which takes into account multiple intersectional factors with a view to addressing gaps.	D
6.2: Increase funding for LGBTI+ community services to ensure existing LGBTI+ services are sustainable, and that funding is available to develop additional services, based on the gaps identified in the mapping exercise.	B
<b>AVERAGE:</b>	<b>C</b>
<b><i>Outcome 9: LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred.</i></b>	
9.2: Provide tailored legal advice and advocacy to LGBTI+ people via a specialised legal advice clinic.	A

<b><i>Outcome 10: Equality legislation provides explicit protection to transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex people.</i></b>	
10.1: Review the Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts to ensure that transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex people have explicit protection within the equality grounds.	C
<b><i>Outcome 11: Same-sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law.</i></b>	
11.3: Commence outstanding sections of Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 relating to donor-conceived children.	A
11.7: Bring forward legislative proposals to provide for adoptive leave and benefit for male same sex adoptive couples.	A
<b>AVERAGE</b>	A
<b><i>Outcome 12: Transgender people are supported, and administrative processes are streamlined while maintaining a person's privacy.</i></b>	
12.2: Ensure that each relevant department/government body examines how, once a Gender Recognition Certificate is obtained, administrative processes can be streamlined, improving interconnection between departments, and reducing costs for replacement of official documents, while maintaining a person's privacy.	C
<b><i>Outcome 13: Supports are provided to those at higher risk of multiple discrimination and double marginalisation including LGBTI+ older people, migrants, travellers, people with disabilities, and LGBTI+ prisoners.</i></b>	
13.1: Design and implement programmes and measures to address intersectional discrimination in partnership with NGOs and target communities.	E

<b><i>Outcome 23: LGBTI+ Asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the international protection process and direct provision system.</i></b>	
23.1: Develop a broad LGBTI+ policy, including a transgender accommodation policy, to promote equality, take account of self-determined identity, and to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all residents is promoted.	C
23.2: Finalise and adopt the national standards for accommodation offered to people in the protection process.	C
<b>AVERAGE</b>	C
<b><i>Outcome 24: The practice of conversion therapy in Ireland is investigated and follow up with appropriate countermeasures.</i></b>	
24.1: In the context of the commitment in the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy regarding the promotion or practice of conversion therapy, continue research to establish the extent to which the practice is occurring in Ireland and review international best practice in responding which will also include legislative responses in other countries.	A
24.2: Informed by the findings of the above research, develop an appropriate package of measures for implementation in response.	C
<b>AVERAGE</b>	B
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	C

Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 1: LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society.</i></b>	
1.3: Develop and implement further actions to support the positive portrayal and representation of LGBTI+ identities in broadcast media.	E
<b><i>Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people.</i></b>	
6.4: Implement Action 6 of the National Sports Policy 2018-2027 in a manner that is inclusive of LGBTI+ people.	E
6.5: As part of the ongoing objective of improving understanding of the landscape of sport in Ireland and to foster better evidence-based decision making, investigate the possibility of using the Irish Sports Monitor to assess levels of active and social participation (volunteering, club membership, and attendance at sporting events) in sport among the LGBTI+ community and issues related to such participation.	B
<b><i>Outcome 7: The positive contributions of the LGBTI+ community to Irish arts, culture, and sport is highlighted and the history of the LGBTI+ movement is preserved.</i></b>	
7.1: Ensure that our cultural institutions proactively foster engagement with the LGBTI+ community and encourage national cultural institutions to make a significant contribution to collecting, interpreting, and making available history and culture relating to the Irish LGBTI+ community.	A
7.2: Support the creation of an LGBTI+ history and culture research think tank to	D

pool knowledge and resources in this area, providing support and guidance.	
7.3: Use the Business to Arts programme to fund LGBTI+ artists and promote positive visibility.	C
7.4: Support a nation-wide, week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival in 2020.	D
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>C</b>
<b><i>Outcome 8: Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ friendly tourist destination.</i></b>	
8.1: Integrate LGBTI+ perspectives in Fáilte Ireland's 'Service Excellence' training provision for tourism providers and into any upcoming review of policy or standards.	B
8.2: Address LGBTI+ inclusion in the finalisation of Fáilte Ireland's Festival Development Strategy.	C
8.3: Raise the profile of, and explore initiatives and opportunities to, promote Ireland further as an LGBTI+ friendly destination.	C
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>C</b>

Department of Rural and Community Development	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 1: LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society.</i></b>	
1.7: Take account of the needs and interests of LGBTI+ people in libraries' collections development and acquisitions policy in line with the National Strategy for Public Libraries 2018-2022. Under the Health Ireland at your Library initiative, compile an LGBTI+ reading list and update it on an ongoing basis and examine opportunities for the enhancement of stock to support the LGBTI+ community.	B
<b><i>Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people.</i></b>	
6.3: Take measures to ensure that existing community infrastructure is inclusive and welcoming to LGBTI+ people and consider the provision of pop-up LGBTI+ services.	C
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>B</b>

Department of Education	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 1: LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society.</i></b>	
1.5: Explore opportunities for the appropriate inclusion of LGBTI+ lives in the curriculum as part of curriculum review at both primary and senior-cycle levels.	C
1.6: Include LGBTI+ matters in the Relationship and Sexual Education curriculum review.	A
<b>AVERAGE:</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work.</i></b>	
2.9: Promote the wellbeing of school and centre for education personnel, including LGBTI+ personnel in the context of the implementation of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023.	D
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>C</b>

Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery, and Reform	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work.</i></b>	
2.1: Further develop and implement LGBTI+ Inclusive recruitment practices across the public sector in conjunction with the Public Appointments Service (PAS) Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.	B
2.2: Ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion is a core feature of organisational and HR strategy and subject to ongoing review.	C
2.3: Integrate diversity and inclusion perspectives into Civil Service workplace policy and practices including leadership training, PMDS, induction, and customer service training.	C
<b>AVERAGE:</b>	<b>C</b>
<b><i>Outcome 3: Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people.</i></b>	
3.1: Take measures to ensure the availability of suitable diversity training for civil service staff in customer facing roles.	C
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>C</b>

Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work.</i></b>	
2.5: Utilise the Corporate Social Responsibility Stakeholder Forum to advance LGBTI+ workplace inclusion amongst private sector employers, and to raise awareness of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy through the available Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) channels. Integrate diversity and inclusion perspectives into Civil Service workplace policy and practices including leadership training, PMDS, induction, and customer service training.	D
2.10: To further build LGBTI+ awareness and inclusive practices amongst SMEs (small enterprises) and micro enterprises, develop LGBTI+ information events and/or learning modules for inclusion in LEO and Enterprise Ireland Diversity & Inclusion training programmes.	B
2.11: The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) to develop a system of diversity certification for SMEs to independently verify that a company is 51% diverse-owned and managed. Categories of ownership under this certification scheme is to include LGBTI+ people.	N/A
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>C</b>
<b><i>Outcome 9: LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred.</i></b>	
9.1: Through an information campaign, raise awareness of the role of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) in	B

dealing with complaints of discrimination under the Equal Status Acts and the Employment Equality Acts.	
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>B</b>

<b>Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<i><b>Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people.</b></i>	
6.6: Engage with existing networks within the farming sector to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and to combat rural isolation.	D
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>D</b>

Department of Health	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 11: Same-sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law.</i></b>	
11.1: Commence Parts 2 & 3 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.	A
11.6: Introduce legislation on Assisted Human Reproduction (AHR) which will be available to people irrespective of gender, marital status or sexual orientation subject to the provisions of the legislation, on an equal and non-discriminatory basis.	D
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 14: Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions.</i></b>	
14.1: Promote the uptake of the e-learning LGBTI+ training module as part of the Health Service's eLearning and Development portal (HSELand) under the Sexual Health Promotion Training Strategy. Include the module in the HSE's staff induction programme and make it available for hosting on other platforms as appropriate.	B
14.2: Implement sexual health promotion training for professionals in the youth and other sectors, those working with at-risk-groups, and for parents.	B
14.3: Provide LGBTI+ awareness training to staff working in mental health services nationally.	B
14.4: Support the co-production of guidance and training materials aimed at	B

health and social care professionals working in older persons' services to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to meet the needs of older LGBTI+ people in their care.	
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 15: Health policy takes consideration of the needs of all population groups including the LGBTI+ community.</i></b>	
15.1: Update the National Sexual Health Strategy (NSHS) in 2020 and include the needs of the LGBTI+ community.	C
15.2: Implement the universal, gender neutral, HPV vaccination programme.	A
15.3: Include consideration of the needs of different population groups including the LGBTI+ community in the development of standards for STI services.	D
15.4: Keep the restrictions on blood donations from men who have sex with men under review to ensure that they are in line with international best practice.	A
15.5: Under the National Drug Strategy, 'Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery' – a health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-20205 – improve the capacity of services to accommodate the needs of people who use drugs and alcohol from specific communities including the LGBTI+ community.	D
15.6: Ensure, through the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion for professionals, that a holistic, person-centred approach to sexual health, covering all genders as well as risk factors, is adopted, thereby ensuring that the needs	A

of lesbian and bisexual women are appropriately addressed.	
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations.</i></b>	
16.1: Fund the HPV vaccine rollout plan in line with NIAC policy, including funding for vaccine nurses in 2019 and 2020.	A
16.2: Develop and provide Sexual Health Advisor (SHA) training for nurses across public STI/HIV services, student health services, prison and addiction services, and primary care.	D
16.3: Establish a Health Advisors' network to support the role of sexual health advisors.	A
16.4: Work with public STI clinics to identify and implement solutions to enhance efficiencies, thus improving capacity within current resources particularly in relation to reducing waiting lists, increasing walk-in availability, and patient care pathways (e.g., self-taken screening for asymptomatic patients.	B
16.5 and 16.6: Incorporate a clinical information and guidelines section on STI testing and management for healthcare professions on <a href="http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie">www.sexualwellbeing.ie</a> ; update information annually on the management of genital infections for GPs through the HSE antibiotic prescribing website.	B
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 17: The LGBTI+ community, particularly the MSM population, are made aware of the risks of contracting HIV and other STIs and of the importance of regular testing.</i></b>	

17.1: Deliver targeted outreach sexual health programmes and campaigns to at-risk groups.	A
17.2: Promote sexual health and 'safer sex' public advertising campaigns to encourage sexually active adults to have safer sex and include advice on contraception and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections.	B
17.3: Expand condom distribution services, with initial focus targeting those most at risk.	A
17.4: Expand community HIV testing to populations at higher risk for HIV, mainly MSM and migrants, through NGO partners	B
17.5: Advance the establishment of an MSM Health Committee in 2019 by the Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) and targeted campaigns and messages through website and social media.	A
17.6: Continue to promote and adapt key social media, community, and social venue messages for STI testing/condom usage through <a href="http://www.man2man.ie">www.man2man.ie</a> .	A
17.7: Develop and implement national campaigns around the prevention of HIV and other STIs such as RespectProtect on Twitter and the Man2Man website.	A
17.8: Conclude the study of the readiness of public STI clinics to implement pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in line with the Standards for Service Delivery of HIV PrEP to clarify capacity and resource requirements across public STI services in Ireland and inform resource allocation.	A

17.9: Complete the plan for the delivery of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) nationally following a positive recommendation arising from the HIQA health technology assessment.	B
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>A</b>
<b><i>Outcome 18: People living with HIV in Ireland are supported and not stigmatised.</i></b>	
18.1: Develop a HIV stigma campaign with a strong focus at the city level for the cities that sign up to the fast-track cities initiative. The aim of the national stigma campaign will be to raise awareness around HIV transmission, the effectiveness of HIV treatment for people living with HIV to live a healthy life as well as prevent onward transmission, and to promote HIV testing, so that people living with undiagnosed HIV can be linked into treatment services promptly.	C
<b><i>Outcome 19: People wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice.</i></b>	
19.1: Recruit additional specialised staff in this area including endocrinologists, social workers, speech and language therapists, senior psychologists, clinical nurse specialist, and administrative support officers.	F
19.2: Continue to develop transgender health services for children and adults in Ireland with a clear transition pathway from child to adult services.	F
19.3: Develop a seamless and integrated service for those people who present to the Irish health service with gender identity issues through the time limited Gender	F

Identity Steering Committee. Chaired by the Clinical Lead in Mental Health, the Steering Committee has defined terms of reference, a time frame within which it will operate and clear reporting relationships, and its membership includes experts in the area, representatives from paediatric services, adult services (both endocrinology and psychiatry), advocacy groups and service users.	
19.4: Provide clear guidelines to health practitioners on referral pathways for trans young people and their families to specialised services.	F
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>F</b>
20.1 Conduct a scoping exercise on Intersex conditions in Ireland to determine and document prevalence, current practice, clinical governance and compare against international evidence and guidelines. This scoping exercise will include key recommendations which may include the establishment of an expert working group to develop clinical guidelines.	F
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>C</b>

<b>Department of Justice</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b><i>Outcome 11: Same-sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law.</i></b>	
11.2: Commence Rules of Court to allow a declaration of parentage under section 21 or 22 of the CFR Act Children and Family Relationships Act 201.	A
11.4: Commence outstanding sections of Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.	A
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>A</b>
<b><i>Outcome 13: Supports are provided to those at higher risk of multiple discrimination and double marginalisation including LGBTI+ older people, migrants, travellers, people with disabilities, and LGBTI+ prisoners.</i></b>	
13.3: Develop a placement and accommodation policy to reflect and build upon existing good practice in the accommodation of vulnerable prisoners including LGBTI+ people.	D
13.4: Provide LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity training to staff, including Recruit Prison Officers (RPOs), general training to all staff as part of Continual Professional Development (CPD) and targeted training to particular Officers, where an operational need exists.	C
13.5: Consider the provision of 'in-reach' LGBTI+ community supports, peer supports, and provision of LGBTI+ informational and recreation literature for LGBTI+ prisoners.	B
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>C</b>
<b><i>Outcome 21: Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it.</i></b>	

21.1: Bring forward legislative proposals to ensure that incitement to hatred and hate crimes against LGBTI+ people are adequately addressed in our laws.	C
21.2: Update the Garda Pulse system to include a “Hate Crime” tag and subcategories including sexual orientation and gender identity.	A
21.3: Implement a fully functioning on-line system for reporting hate crime.	A
21.4: Significantly increase reporting of hate crimes to An Garda Síochána by members of the LGBTI+ community owing to the more open relationship that has been developed.	B
21.5: Commence the publication of statistics for recorded incidents of hate crime.	A
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 22: LGBTI+ victims of crime are appropriately supported and included in mainstream service provision underpinned by formalised consultation structures with An Garda Síochána and other relevant agencies.</i></b>	
22.1: Provide updated training to members of An Garda Síochána on issues affecting the LGBTI+ community.	B
22.2: Ensure that there are open channels of communication between members of the LGBTI+ community and specially trained members of An Garda Síochána.	B
22.3: Incorporate LGBTI+ focused considerations in the implementation of the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual, and Gender-based Violence.	A
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>B</b>

***Outcome 23: LGBTI+ Asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the international protection process and direct provision system.***

23.3: Continue to work with the UNHCR to monitor and review the handling of applications relating to sexual orientation and/or gender identity within the International Protection Process; and, as part of the ongoing training programmes, ensure updated LGBTI+ cultural competence training is rolled out to staff working within the International Protection Office (IPO)

A

**OVERALL GRADE**

**B**

Department of Social Protection	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 11: Same-sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law.</i></b>	
11.5: Develop a targeted information campaign for the LGBTI+ community on the provisions contained in the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015, and what they mean for same sex parents and those planning parenthood.	A
<b><i>Outcome 12: Transgender people are supported, and administrative processes are streamlined while maintaining a person's privacy.</i></b>	
12.1: Make a report to each House of the Oireachtas of the findings on the review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 and of the conclusions drawn from the findings.	A
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>A</b>

Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 13: Supports are provided to those at higher risk of multiple discrimination and double marginalisation including LGBTI+ older people, migrants, travellers, people with disabilities, and LGBTI+ prisoners.</i></b>	
13.2: Ensure that the rights and diversity of LGBTI+ service users are respected and promoted as part of the National Quality Standards Framework for homeless services.	A
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>A</b>

Department of Foreign Affairs	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 25: Ireland continues to raise the issue of LGBTI+ rights at an international level and supports human rights defenders and civil society groups in embassies and overseas missions.</i></b>	
25.1: Continue to integrate the promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTI+ individuals into Ireland's foreign policy.	A
25.2: Support the promotion of LGBTI+ rights in our multilateral work at the UN, EU, and regional organisations such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE including support for resolutions, statements, and events that promote the rights of LGBTI+ people.	A
25.3: Support engagement with human rights and civil society organisations working globally and in partner countries to promote and protect the rights of LGBTI+ people.	A
25.4: Support outreach to LGBTI+ members of our diaspora through funding initiatives such as the Emigrant Support Programme.	C
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Outcome 26: LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence.</i></b>	
26.4: Continue to provide travel advice and information for Irish citizens when travelling abroad, particularly to countries where laws and attitudes to LGBTI+ issues may affect safety and ease of travel.	A
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>A</b>

Department of Transport	
Action	Grade
<b><i>Outcome 26: LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence.</i></b>	
26.1: Continue to provide training for transport operators and taxi drivers that includes an LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity component.	C
26.2: continue to promote equalities policies and complaints mechanisms amongst the travelling public.	B
26.3: Enhance data collection on equality / discrimination complaints by transport operators.	B
<b>OVERALL GRADE</b>	<b>B</b>



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