

Recommendations, Strategies and Priorities for Government

For Inclusion  
For Equality  
For Everyone



As we move into a new decade, the priorities for the next Government must recognise the realities of Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Intersex+ (LGBTI+) lives in Ireland today. There is much unfinished business to achieve equality for all LGBTI+ people.

Ensuring LGBTI+ equality will require a sustained commitment by the next Government to tackle the discrimination, stigma and inequality LGBTI+ people continue to face.

This must involve the full implementation of national strategies which will advance LGBTI+ inclusion and the development of legislation and policies that fully recognise and protect our diverse community.

To achieve this LGBT Ireland and our Network Members call for:

# A strategic approach to LGBTI equality

## **The need for a strategic approach to LGBTI+ equality is two-fold.**

Firstly, many of the issues which prevent LGBTI+ people from achieving their full potential are structural in nature and require a whole of Government approach to devising solutions.

Secondly, there is a risk that, post Marriage Equality, Irish society underestimates the extent of discrimination still experienced by LGBTI+ people (recent CSO data on Equality which showed LGBTI+ people reported the highest rates of discrimination).<sup>1</sup> It is essential therefore that the two existing plans; the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy 2018 to 2020, and the LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019 to 2021, are fully resourced and implemented and a strategic approach to LGBTI+ Equality is sustained through the development of further strategies that build on these inaugural plans.

# A safe and inclusive Ireland for all LGBTI+ people

While much progress was made in the last decade advancing LGBTI+ rights, significant legal gaps remain which undermine the safety, security and inclusion of LGBTI+ people and their families.

## **Hate Speech & Hate Crime**

The level of hate Speech and hate crimes against LGBTI+ people are significant and on the rise, therefore it is imperative that the next Government urgently progress effective legislation to combat incitement to hatred and hate crimes. Measures to support LGBTI+ victims are also needed alongside the establishment of an on-line system for reporting of LGBTI+ hate crime.

## **LGBTI+ Family Rights**

In 2020 LGBTI+ headed families remain unequal, with many families facing another decade without hope of legal rights or recognition.

Law reform in this area needs to ensure that every child can establish a legal relationship with the parents who love and care for them and those parents have all the legal tools necessary to care for their child.

To achieve this, the next Government need to progress comprehensive legislation that reflects the reality of Assisted Human Reproduction (AHR) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including providing for AHR procedures undertaken abroad, retrospective recognition for children already born and home insemination.

## **Conversion Therapy**

Legislation needs to be developed to prohibit the promotion or practice of conversion therapy in Ireland. These 'therapies' are dangerous and discredited practices that falsely claim to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. Young LGBTI+ people are especially vulnerable, and an outright ban is needed to ensure we protect them.

## **LGBTI+ people in the Asylum Process**

With LGBTI+ people continuing to face widespread persecution, imprisonment and even death in many countries around the world it is imperative that our International Protection process and direct provision system are supportive and sensitive to the experiences and needs of LGBTI+ people.

To achieve this, the next Government must end direct provision and replace it with a system which focuses on Reception Centers that adhere to national standards which include strong independent oversight and enforcement mechanisms.

## **Intersex People**

To protect the personal autonomy and bodily integrity for people born Intersex, legislation needs to be developed to prohibit the practice of involuntary, non-urgent surgery and other medical treatment on intersex persons without the effective and informed consent of those concerned.

## **Gender Recognition**

To support trans, non-binary and intersex young people across Ireland to have access to the legal documents that reflect their true gender, such as passports, birth certificates and other official records, we call for the full implementation of the Gender Recognition Review Report 2018. This must include the introduction of a system of gender recognition for non-binary people, intersex people and people under 16 years old.

The LGBTI+ population continue to face significant barriers to accessing health and social care services due to a lack of understanding of their specific needs, a lack of targeted health promotion and under-resourcing of specialist services.

# A healthcare service that meets the needs of the LGBTI+ population

To reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTI+ people living in Ireland, health policy must consider the LGBTI+ population and significant investment made in:

- Training of all healthcare staff to deliver LGBTI+ inclusive care.
- Developing LGBTI+ community-based prevention and early intervention services nationwide.
- Developing quality assurance measures for the older age healthcare sector to encourage services to be inclusive of older LGBTI+ people.
- Creating Regional sexual health services for men who have sex with men (MSM) and the Trans community.
- Tackling waiting lists for Trans healthcare through the rollout of services that meet international best practice standards, with a clear pathway from child to adult services.

How we treat those most marginalised in our society reflects the true extent of our commitment to equality.



# A society that respects and supports all LGBTI+ people

There are many within the LGBTI+ community who are additionally marginalised and face multiple discrimination including LGBTI+ people who are Travellers or Roma, have disabilities, are migrants, are homeless, or are young or older people.

To achieve this, targeted measures that support intersectional needs, are required to improve the lives of those within the LGBTI+ community who experience the greatest barriers to feeling safe, respected and included.

# A public that understands why LGBTI+ rights matter

The Irish people showed their support of LGBTI+ rights in 2015 when we became the first country in the world to introduce full Marriage Equality by popular vote. This was a wonderful moment of solidarity for our community and projected Ireland as a world leader on LGBTI+ rights.

It is imperative that we stay vigilant and guard against right wing populism that is fueling anti-LGBTI+ sentiment and a regression in rights in many countries across the world.

Education is key to achieving and embedding equality and it is crucial that current and future generations of young people are educated through a school curriculum that is inclusive and celebrates LGBTI+ lives. This will require implementing the RSE curriculum review recommendations and undertaking changes to the full curriculum at both primary and senior-cycle levels. Alongside reform to our education system, broader public awareness campaigns are needed that positively represent LGBTI+ identities and educate wider society about the challenges our community continue to face.



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## About LGBT Ireland

LGBT Ireland is a national charitable organisation that works to improve the rights, visibility and inclusion of LGBTI+ people and their family members, by providing frontline support services, delivering education and training programmes and running national advocacy campaigns.

LGBT Ireland is supported by:



## Network Member Organisations

LGBT Ireland's frontline services are provided by our network of member organisations. Our network members work to improve the lives of LGBTI+ people all across the country and we are enormously grateful to them for their support and dedication to LGBTI+ equality.







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