



May 2021

Submission to the Forum on a Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament

About LGBT Ireland

LGBT Ireland is a national charitable organisation working to improve the visibility, inclusion and rights of LGBTI+ people living in Ireland. Through our national helpline, online, and face to face services we provide confidential support and information to thousands of LGBTI+ people and their family members each year. Informed by the issues and experiences raised through our frontline services, we also work extensively in the area of policy and legislative reform to ensure that LGBTI+ people's voices are heard in the policy and practice developments that effect their lives. The submission below is informed by the issues and experiences of the LGBTI+ community and their family members who contact us. As a network organisation with seven regional LGBTI+ member services, we also have a strong regional focus and the recommendations outlined below are deeply rooted in the knowledge and experience of our members working across the country.

Background

LGBT Ireland strongly believes in the value of family friendly, diverse, inclusive workplaces. Inclusive workplaces are good for all employees and particularly employees who are LGBTI+ or have LGBTI+ family members.

In research conducted by the Central Statistics Office in 2019, 33.2% of those who identify as LGBTI+ experienced discrimination, the highest rate for any group [1]. With an increase in LGBTI+ people out at work to all colleagues from 53% in 2014 to 66% in 2016, there has also been an increase in negative workplace experiences [2]. 17% of LGBTI+ people have experienced bullying, 21% have witnessed LGBTI+ bullying and 6% have skipped work to avoid negative treatment. Workplace employment discrimination in hiring LGBTI+ people also persists, with a lower likelihood of being employed (-7%) and lower earnings from labour (-4%) than non-LGBTI+ people [3].

[1] CSO, 2019.

https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/statisticalpublications/2019/500988_Ireland's_Facts_&_Figures_2019_WEB-1.pdf.

[2] National LGBT Federation, 2016. "Burning Issues 2 What's Next for LGBT Ireland"

[3] Oireachtas.ie 2019. https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/libraryResearch/2019/2019-06-28_l-rs-infographic-lgbt-community-in-ireland-a-statistical-profile_en.pdf.

Recommendations

- Integrate comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion training into mandatory workplace training.
- Implement a Leadership Programme with the aim of developing inclusivity and visibility across all staff levels.
- Establish a dedicated non/all party LGBTI+ staff Network.
- Offer inclusive healthcare leave entitlements.
- Ensure all policy includes inclusive/neutral language.
- At a minimum, introduce (or review) comprehensive policies in the following areas:
 - Employment Equality
 - Workplace Discrimination
 - Anti-bullying and Harassment (Including online and social media)
 - Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
 - Protected Disclosures
- Ongoing monitoring and auditing for policies and procedures.
- Create an advisory committee consisting of representatives from minority groups.
- Actively work to ensure diverse, intersectional representation across all staffing roles and committees.
- Ensure any organisation providing outsourced or contracted work, operates with a functioning diversity and inclusion policy including mandatory staff training in diversity and inclusion within their organisation.

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