



# Report on the Review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

## Final Report

May 2024

mazars

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Ireland's first National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 was published on 28th November 2019.

The Strategy was developed in order to set out a strategic approach to addressing the needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland. It was a very ambitious Strategy with significant cross-Departmental commitment to improving the lives of LGBTI+ people in Ireland. While Ireland has taken great strides in progressing equality for LGBTI+ people in recent years, many challenges still remain, and unfortunately harassment and discrimination are still commonplace. The Strategy set out to improve the lives of LGBTI+ people through 108 actions set out across four pillars – Visible and Included; Treated Equally; Healthy; and Safe and Supported. It considered a range of needs across various sectors, including health, employment, education and more.

The Strategy was developed for the period 2019 to 2021, however due to the onset and significant disruption caused by Covid-19, the period of the Strategy was extended and it will remain in place until the successor Strategy is developed.

## Methodology

Mazars were commissioned by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to conduct an independent review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. The main goal of the Review was to inform the development of the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy and it was structured in two parts.

- Part 1 – to determine if the actions under the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy have been achieved and to understand why (if any) actions have not been achieved, and;
- Part 2 – to identify key priority areas for inclusion in the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

Our approach to this independent review included a range of activities, including:

- A stakeholder survey;
- Consultation meetings and focus groups with a range of stakeholders, including the Steering Committee, Reporting Department Representatives, LGBTI+ community members and other LGBTI+ stakeholders
- Desk based review of information and evidence provided
- An independent assessment of the extent to which specific actions in the Strategy have been delivered based on evidence of that delivery. This assessment, by necessity involved a significant degree of judgement whereby it was necessary to consider the work undertaken to deliver each action and to determine whether that action could be considered to have been fully, partially or not achieved. Whilst our assessment has been informed by all of the work conducted as part of our review and the information provided by stakeholders, the assessment set out in this Report is that of Mazars
- National and international research, an overview of which is presented in Section 5.3 of this Report
- Review of 11 international LGBTI+ strategies, an overview of which is presented in Section 5.4 of this Report
- Consideration of suggested priority areas for the next National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy
- Consideration of other factors as they may apply to the next National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy including a whole of lifecycle approach, intersectionality, and key recommendations as they relate to improvements in implementation, governance, and monitoring systems;

- Development of this draft report, setting out our assessment of what has been achieved and not achieved and the reasons why, in addition to key suggested priority areas for consideration in the next National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy;

This Review was carried out in the period August 2023 to January 2024 and was a point in time independent assessment at January 2024. A Review Sub-Committee was established to review our draft Report on behalf of the full Steering Committee and provide comments. The feedback from this Review Sub-Committee was considered and has been reflected where appropriate in finalising this Report.

More detail on the approach to Part 1 and Part 2 of our Review is set out in Section 4.1 and 5.1 respectively.

## Part 1: Review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

Our Review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy was based on consultation with the Steering Committee and relevant Reporting Department Representatives through a survey and a series of one-to-one meetings; review of evidence and information provided to demonstrate achievement of actions; and finally the allocation of a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) rating to each action by the Mazars team on an independent basis as follows:

- **Achieved (green)**: The evidence / information available suggests that the action has been achieved in full
- **Partially Achieved (amber)**: The evidence / information available suggests that the action has been achieved in part as some progress has been made towards achieving the action, however gaps remain
- **Not Achieved (red)**: The evidence / information available did not indicate that any material progress has been made towards achieving the action

It is important to emphasise the independent evidence-based nature of this Review. Our assessment of actions and application of RAG rating was based on the provision of evidence by Reporting Departments. Where it has not been possible to obtain sufficient evidence to support our assessment of the implementation of an action, a conclusion of Not Achieved has been made.

It is also important to note that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or target outcomes were not established for the actions in the original Strategy, meaning that it has not been possible to assess the outcomes or impact that the Strategy has had. This Review therefore focused on assessing the achievement of actions as opposed to the outcomes associated with the actions.

Overall, of the 108 actions included in the Strategy across the four Pillars, this Review has found that 58 (54%) of the actions have been fully **Achieved**, 31 (29%) have been **Partially Achieved** and 19 (17%) are considered **Not Achieved**. Overall this indicates that the Strategy has made very good progress towards achieving 83% of what it set out to achieve.

The summary results of our Review are set out under each of the Pillars below and are outlined in detail throughout Section 4.2 of this Report.

### Pillar 1 – Visible and Included

There are eight Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 1 and a total of 39 actions.

Of the 39 actions included in Pillar 1, our independent review of the actions concluded that 13 (33%) have been **Achieved**, 15 (39%) have been **Partially Achieved**, and 11 (28%) were **Not Achieved**.

At an overall level, very good progress has been made across Pillar 1, with significant progress made for 72% of actions. Some key areas of progress noted under Pillar 1 include:

- An LGBTI+ Community Services Fund has been established and since 2020 a total of 123 LGBTI+ projects have been allocated over €4 million in funding support through this fund. Since 2019, €200,000 has been allocated annually by the Department of Rural and Community Development, with a further €183k allocated (total €383,000) in 2023 to provide services to LGBTI+ organisations nationwide targeting marginalised people experiencing exclusion on account of their LGBTI+ identities.
- A Research Sub-Committee has been established within the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to deliver a programme of research on various LGBTI+ related issues. This body of research, coupled with the ongoing development of an Equality Data Strategy, will contribute to addressing critical gaps in data and understanding of issues within the LGBTI+ community.
- Visibility of LGBTI+ people has been enhanced within library collections with the addition of 320 new titles (a total of 3,083 additional copies) to the libraries since 2019.
- The education curriculum has been enhanced to reflect greater inclusivity of LGBTI+ lives, through the recently updated Junior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) which came into effect in September 2023.

Despite these positive developments, gaps remain in terms of the delivery of actions under this Pillar.

Of particular note is Outcome 2, which was focused on ensuring that Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people, where five of the 11 actions were deemed not achieved. While progress has been made in integrating equality, diversity and inclusion into workplace practices and policy, there was less progress in providing information to employers on how they can create a more inclusive environment for LGBTI+ people.

Other areas under this Pillar that could have been further advanced include hosting of additional LGBTI+ events, particularly outside of the standard Pride events; ensuring public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people; mapping and developing community supports; engaging with rural communities with respect to LGBTI+ issues; supporting representation of LGBTI+ people in art and culture; and provision of training to service providers.

Further detail on the assessment of actions under this Pillar can be found in Section 4.2 of this Report.

## Pillar 2 – Treated Equally

There are 5 Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 2 and a total of 17 actions. Of the 17 actions included in Pillar 2, our independent review of the actions concludes that 11 (65%) have been **Achieved**, 4 (23%) have been **Partially Achieved**, and 2 (12%) are considered **Not Achieved**.

At an overall level, excellent progress has been made across Pillar 2, with significant or partial advances made in 88% of actions. Of the five Outcomes in this Pillar, strong or very strong progress was made on the actions in three of these. Some key developments under Pillar 2 include:

- Legislation has been progressed in a number of areas, with particular advancements in the area of same sex parentage. This includes commencement of a number of elements of the Children and Family Relationship Act 2015 relating to the rights of children conceived through donor embryos and the declaration of parentage. In addition, adoptive legislation now allows couples to choose who will avail of adoptive leave, enhancing the rights of male same-sex couples. The Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Bill has been progressed to the fourth stage of the legislative process.
- The Free Legal advice Centre (FLAC) launched a new LGBTQI+ advice clinic in 2022 with funding under the LGBTI+ Community Services Fund.
- A range of in-reach supports have been developed within prisons to support LGBTI+ prisoners, including provision of LGBTI+ related titles and information booklets in prison libraries and provision of equality and diversity training to prison officers.

- A public consultation on the review of the Equality Acts was facilitated in 2021 and a report on this consultation was prepared by DCEDIY and published in June 2023.

Despite the progress made across a breadth of areas under Pillar 2, gaps were noted with respect to the provision of support to transgender people through streamlining administrative processes for those who have been awarded a Gender Recognition Certificate. In addition, little progress has been made in the provision of support programmes and measures for intersectional groups, however it is noted that research has been undertaken into intersectionality and this is a positive foundation upon which supports can be developed in the future.

Further detail on the assessment of actions under this Pillar can be found in Section 4.2 of this Report.

### Pillar 3 – Healthy

There are 7 Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 3 and a total of 31 actions. Of the 31 actions included in Pillar 3, our independent review of the actions concludes that 19 (62%) have been **Achieved**, 6 (19%) have been **Partially Achieved**, and 6 (19%) are considered **Not Achieved**.

At an overall level, good progress has been made across the Outcomes in Pillar 3, with significant or partial advances made in 81% of actions. Of the seven Outcomes in this Pillar, strong or very strong progress was made on the actions in four of these. Key developments noted under this Pillar include:

- A range of initiatives were progressed within the area of sexual health and strong progress was noted in this area overall, including the launch of a free national STI home testing service; expansion of community HIV programmes; expansion of condom distribution services; roll-out of a national PrEP programme; delivery of targeted sexual health information and awareness raising campaigns for at risk groups; and increased availability of the HPV vaccine.
- Enhanced provision of LGBTI+ awareness training to health and social care professionals.
- A revised individual risk based approach to blood donation has been developed, whereby a personal assessment is conducted of each donor’s eligibility to donate blood based on sexual history and associated risk, resulting in a more inclusive system for LGBTI+ donors.

Despite significant advancements in a range of health outcomes, a number of important gaps were noted.

Outcome 19, which aims to ensure that people wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice, has seen very poor progress. All four of the actions relevant to this Outcome were deemed Not Achieved. It is noted that a new Clinical Lead for Transgender Services was offered a position in December 2023 and has since been appointed after a long and challenging recruitment process. We understand that this individual will lead the development of a model of care and implementation plan for transgender healthcare in Ireland. Of significance to the progression of these actions is the WHO endorsement of the new ICD 11, which came into effect globally in January 2022. ICD 11 has moved gender affirming care away from being a mental health led service, stating that “trans related and gender-diverse identifies are not conditions of mental ill-health, and that classifying them as such can cause enormous stigma”.<sup>1</sup> Despite such a significant global development in the classification of transgender health services, there has been no real progress on this matter in Ireland. It is likely of great concern to the Transgender community in Ireland that the trans health services have failed to progress to any significant extent under the life of this Strategy.

In addition to this notable gap in progress across transgender healthcare, gaps were also evident in the development of a greater understanding of the prevalence of intersex conditions. Separately to this Strategy, some research into intersex has been conducted by DCU, and subsequently we understand that the recently published *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland*<sup>2</sup> study (April 2024) also covers the healthcare experiences of the intersex community (this research was published subsequent to the completion of our fieldwork for this

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organisation (2022) *Gender incongruence and transgender health in the ICD*. Available:

<https://www.who.int/standards/classifications/frequently-asked-questions/gender-incongruence-and-transgender-health-in-the-icd>

<sup>2</sup> Higgins A; Downes C; O’Sullivan K; de Vries J; Molloy R; Monahan M; Keogh B; Doyle L; Begley T; Corcoran P (2024) *The National Study on the Mental Health and Wellbeing of the LGBTQI+ Communities in Ireland*. Trinity College Dublin and Belong To LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/app/uploads/2024/04/FINAL-Being-LGBTQI-in-Ireland-Full-Report.pdf>

Review). However there remains a body of work to be delivered by Government to build on and develop the knowledge and understanding of intersex conditions in Ireland.

Further detail on the assessment of actions under this Pillar can be found in Section 4.2 of this Report.

#### Pillar 4 – Safe and Supported

There are 6 Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 4 and a total of 21 actions. Of these 21 actions, our independent review of the actions concludes that 15 (71%) have been **Achieved** and 6 (29%) have been **Partially Achieved**.

At an overall level, significant progress has been made across the Outcomes in Pillar 4 with no actions considered **Not Achieved**. Some key developments noted under this Pillar include:

- The Criminal Justice (Incitement of Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill was brought forward in 2022 which, once enacted, will foster greater levels of protection for LGBTI+ within legislation.
- An Garda Síochána have introduced a number of measures including an online system for reporting hate crimes, enhanced systems for tracking and reporting on instances of hate crime, widespread provision of hate crime training to Gardaí and increasing the number of Diversity Officers within the force in order to enhance communication channels between An Garda Síochána and members of the LGBTI+ community.
- A Research report was commissioned by DCEDIY in 2022 to explore the issue of conversion therapy in Ireland, and in 2023 the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth committed to banning conversion therapy practices in Ireland and preparation of legislation is now underway albeit still in the early stages.
- The National Standards for Accommodation offered to people in the protection process were adopted in 2021, and Ireland has adopted the UNHCR's "*Difference, Stigma, Shame, Harm*" (DSSH) Model and provided training to IPO staff to ensure that applications that indicate Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) claims are assessed in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- Transport operators have taken steps to promote inclusion within their sector, including sponsorship of Pride events, hosting of Pride initiatives, public awareness campaigns and delivery of training programmes to staff on LGBTI+ matters.
- Ireland continues to participate in international developments with respect to promoting and protecting LGBTI+ rights

Despite the overall progress made under Pillar 4, it is important to note that safety continues to be a significant concern for members of the LGBTI+ community. While our Review of this Pillar indicates a number of developments, it will likely remain as a critical area for consideration in the successor Strategy.

Further detail on the assessment of actions under this Pillar can be found in Section 4.2 of this Report.

#### Part 1: Conclusion

The Strategy included 108 actions to be delivered across 26 outcomes, which involved significant effort and commitment from a range of Government Department and public bodies to deliver, not to mention the additional support and input from LGBTI+ NGOs where relevant. It was a highly ambitious first Strategy which aimed to deliver across a wide range of areas. Overall, of the 108 actions across the four pillars, this Review has found that 58 (54%) actions had been achieved at the date of our Review, with a further 31 (29%) considered partially achieved. This indicates that good progress has been made towards achieving 83% of what the Strategy set out to achieve. This is a strong result by any standard, given the level of ambition the Strategy encompassed.

However, the Strategy set out to enhance safety, fairness and inclusivity, and despite the implementation of a significant number of actions across the four Pillars, it is clear that more work is required and concerns remain amongst members of the LGBTI+ community around their safety and equality in society. Indeed,

some consultees suggested that the situation in Ireland is getting worse, and that some specific groups within the broader LGBTI+ community (e.g. transgender) feel this more than others.

## Part 2: The Successor Strategy

Part 2 of this Review was focused on identifying priority areas for inclusion in the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. There were a number of inputs to this process including stakeholder consultation and engagement; national and international LGBTI+ research; review of LGBTI+ strategies from other jurisdictions; and finally the RAG assessment of the current National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

Consolidating the information gathered from the four distinct inputs to this Review, the following areas emerged strongly as areas that require further consideration as part of the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

**Broadening Provision of and Access to Essential Healthcare Services:** Some vital health related areas of focus were identified as priorities for the successor Strategy. Of particular focus and concern is the critical need for development of transgender healthcare services in line with international best practice given the little progress in this areas during the current Strategy. Other healthcare priorities include the provision of information and education on lesbian healthcare and a greater focus on provision of mental health supports.

**Progressing the Needs of Intersex People:** Consideration of how the successor Strategy can make a meaningful impact on the lives of intersex people, with the need to build on the current knowledge-base with respect to intersex people through further research identified as a critical first step in this process.

**Supporting LGBTI+ People in Rural Areas:** The needs of LGBTI+ people in rural areas emerged as a significant issue, and suggested priorities to address this included organising more events for LGBTI+ persons outside of Dublin / urban areas; increasing the visibility of LGBTI+ persons outside of Dublin; and promoting community for LGBTI+ persons in rural areas.

**Supporting LGBTI+ Elderly and Older People:** Provision of support to older members of the LGBTI+ community emerged strongly as a key priority for inclusion in the successor Strategy. Older LGBTI+ people can experience feelings of shame and isolation, and those in care homes or navigating the healthcare system often struggle to identify themselves as LGBTI+ in these settings.

**Addressing Intersectionality:** The consultation process repeatedly identified the need for greater understanding of intersectional needs amongst LGBTI+ people and the introduction of targeted measures to address these needs.

**Addressing Discrimination, Hate and Violence:** The prevalence of LGBTI+ hate crimes, hate speech and the spreading of misinformation and harmful narratives was highlighted on multiple occasions during the consultation process with evidence of an overall concern for safety among members of the LGBTI+ community. Despite very positive progress being made on delivering the actions related to Pillar 4 which focuses on Safety in the current Strategy, this area still remains a priority for the successor Strategy.

**Enhancing Education and Awareness:** Our consultation process indicated that there remains a critical and ongoing need for education and awareness and provision of positive and accurate messaging with regard to the LGBTI+ community. Education needs span the full lifecycle of the general population and appropriate methods of reaching the broader population must be considered as part of the successor Strategy.

**Continued Provision of LGBTI+ Training for Professionals:** Consultation participants raised the need for ongoing provision of specific LGBTI+ training for professionals who engage with LGBTI+ people, including healthcare workers, social workers, An Garda Síochána, housing officers and those working in Direct Provision, prison officers, teachers and those working in relevant NGOs.

**Implementation of Legislation:** A number of gaps in legislation were highlighted for prioritisation as part of the successor Strategy, including legislation relating to hate crime, surrogacy and equal parenting rights, conversion therapy, gender recognition for under 18s and non-binary people, and banning sex normalising surgeries on intersex children.

**Funding for LGBTI+ Services and Supports:** The consultation process identified the need for longer term funding commitments for LGBTI+ services and supports in order to safeguard them and ensure continued future sustainability.

**Progressing Data and Research:** While research and data was identified as an area that experienced progression during the Strategy, the need to further expand and enrich LGBTI+ data and research arose throughout our consultation process.

Further information on each of the above Themes is provided in Section 5.6 of this Report.

## Recommendations

On the basis of the work conducted over the course of this Review incorporating our independent analysis and the input of stakeholders, we make the following recommendations to support development of the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. The following presents our summarised recommendations and these are set out in more detail in Section 6.

1. The successor Strategy should give careful consideration as to how it will best respond to the themes identified in Part 2 that emerged strongly as key gaps and priorities over the course of this Review.
2. The successor Strategy should take a whole of lifecycle approach, as is typically the case with LGBTI+ strategies internationally.
3. The successor Strategy should focus on how it can make the biggest impact in key priority areas through a reduced number of more focused and targeted actions.
4. The actions deemed “not achieved” as part of this Review should be reviewed in detail and their relevance considered for the successor Strategy. In addition, all proposed actions for the successor Strategy should be subject to a detailed prioritisation process.
5. The strategy should be supported by a clear strategy implementation framework including clearly prioritised actions; actions should be linked to national policy and/ or legislation; maximum impact or highest urgency actions should be prioritised; clear and tangible key performance indicators (KPIs) that are Outcome based should be developed; and an annual action plan should be developed to support focus on specific actions on a year by year basis.
6. The consultation process for the successor Strategy should focus on gaining a deep understanding of the intersectional needs of LGBTI+ people.
7. The approach to the development and operation of the Steering Committee should be considered carefully in line with good practice in Governance, including an annual schedule of in-person and online meetings; a formal suite of Management Information; and a formal Sub-Committee structure.
8. The successor Strategy should be treated as a living document in practice, and ongoing consideration should be given to whether the actions remain relevant over the life of the Strategy. A formal mid-term review should be undertaken by an independent third party.
9. A repository of knowledge should be developed to minimise disruption to strategy implementation and oversight where changes occur to Steering Committee membership and to manage instances of changing resources in the delivery of actions.
10. Each action included in the successor Strategy should be mapped to a national policy driver or legislative requirement to ensure that action owners prioritise it in the context of their other competing priorities.

## Acknowledgements

Mazars would like to thank the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) as well as the members of the Strategy Steering Committee, Research Sub-Committee, Review Sub-Committee, and consultation participants for their time and valuable contribution to this Review.

# List of Acronyms

## List of Acronyms

The following table provides an overview of the acronyms referenced throughout the report.

AHR	Assisted human reproduction
CPD	Continuing professional development
CSEAS	Civil Service Employee Assistance Service
CSF	Civil Society Fund
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DAHR	Donor-assisted human reproduction
DBEI	Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (now known as Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DEduc	Department of Education
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DH	Department of Health
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DJE	Department of Justice and Equality
DoJ	Department of Justice
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (now known as Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform)
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
DSGBV	Domestic, sexual and gender-based violence
DSP	Department of Social Protection
DSSH	Difference, stigma, shame, harm
DTCAGSM	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
DTransport	Department of Transport
EAS	Employee Assistance Service
EGLCC	European LGBTIQ Chamber of Commerce
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EDI	Equality, diversity and inclusion
ERC	Equal Rights Coalition
ESP	Emigrant Support Programme
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
FIDH	International Federation for Human Rights
FLAC	Free Legal Advice Centres
FPSHP	Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion
gbMSM	Gay, bisexual and other men-who-have-sex-with-men
GDO	Garda Diversity Officer
GHN	Gay Health Network
GIST	Gender identity skills training
GNDU	Garda National Diversity Unit
GOSHH	Gender, Orientation, Sexual Health, HIV
GP	General Practitioner

HCCC	Higher Certificate in Custodial Care
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HPSC	Health Protection Surveillance Centre
HPV	Human papillomavirus
HMPPS	HM Prison and Probation Service
HSE	Health Service Executive
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
IHREC	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
ILGA	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
IPAS	International Protection Accommodation Services
IPO	International Protection Office
IPS	Irish Prison Service
IRFU	Irish Rugby Football Union
KPI	Key performance indicator
LCDCs	Local Community Development Committees
LGBTI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
MIS	Migrant Integration Strategy
MPOX	Monkeypox
MSM	Men who have sex with men
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCDS	National Condom Distribution Service
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSAI	National Standards Authority of Ireland
NSHS	National Sexual Health Strategy
NSQF	National Quality Standards Framework
NSWG	National Strategy for Women and Girls
NTA	National Transport Authority
NTRIS	National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy
NXF	National LGBT Federation
OOH	Out-of-home
OPW	Office of Public Works
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
PAS	Public Appointments Service
PEP	Post exposure prophylaxis
PrEP	Pre-exposure prophylaxis
RAG	Red-Amber-Green
RPO	Recruit Prison Officer
RSE	Relationship and Sexual Education
SHA	Sexual health advisor
SHCPP	Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme
SMT	Senior management team
SOGI	Sexual orientation and gender identity
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
SPSV	Small public service vehicle
STIs	Sexually transmitted infections
TGEU	Transgender Europe
ToR	Terms of Reference

TENI	Transgender Equality Network Ireland
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO	World Health Organisation
WRC	Workplace Relations Commission
WTE	Whole time equivalent



# 1 Introduction and Background

## 1.1 Introduction to the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

Ireland's first National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 was published on 28th November 2019. It was developed following the launch of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020. The Strategy built upon existing equality policy and is situated within the framework of safeguards provided by Ireland's equality legislation.

The Strategy was developed in order to set out a strategic approach to addressing the needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland. It was a significant cross-Departmental commitment to improving the lives of LGBTI+ people in Ireland. While Ireland has taken great strides in progressing equality for LGBTI+ people in recent years, many challenges still remain, and unfortunately harassment and discrimination are still commonplace. The Strategy set out to improve the lives of LGBTI+ people through 108 actions across four pillars – Visible and Included; Treated Equally; Healthy; and Safe and Supported – and considered a range of needs across various sectors, including health, employment, education and more.

The Strategy was developed for the period 2019 to 2021, however due to the onset and significant disruption caused by Covid-19, the Strategy will remain in place until the successor Strategy is developed.

## 1.2 Background, Methodology and Scope

Mazars were commissioned by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to conduct an independent review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. The main goal of the Review was to inform the development of the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy and is structured in two parts.

- Part 1 – to determine if the actions under the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy have been achieved and to understand why (if any) actions have not been achieved, and;
- Part 2 – to identify key priority areas for inclusion in the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

Our approach to delivering on the above requirements included a range of activities, including:

- A stakeholder survey;
- Consultation meetings and focus groups with a range of stakeholders, including the Steering Committee, Reporting Department Representatives, LGBTI+ community members and other LGBTI+ stakeholders
- Desk based review of information and evidence provided
- An independent assessment of the extent to which specific actions in the Strategy have been delivered based on evidence of that delivery. This assessment, by necessity involved a significant degree of judgement whereby it was necessary to consider the work undertaken to deliver each action and to determine whether that action could be considered to have been fully, partially or not achieved. Whilst our assessment has been informed by all of the work conducted as part of our review and the information provided by stakeholders, the assessment set out in this Report is that of Mazars
- National and international research, an overview of which is presented in Section 5.3 of this Report
- Review of 11 international LGBTI+ strategies, an overview of which is presented in Section 5.4 of this Report
- Consideration of suggested priority areas for the next National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

- Consideration of other factors as they may apply to the next National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy including a whole of lifecycle approach, intersectionality, and key recommendations as they relate to improvements in implementation, governance, and monitoring systems;
- Development of this draft report, setting out our assessment of what has been achieved and not achieved and the reasons why, in addition to key suggested priority areas for consideration in the next National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy;

This Review was carried out in the period August 2023 to January 2024 and was a point in time independent assessment at January 2024. A Review Sub-Committee was established to review our draft Report on behalf of the full Steering Committee and provide comments. The feedback from this Review Sub-Committee was considered and reflected where appropriate in finalising this Report.

### **1.3 Acknowledgements**

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### **1.4 Limitations**

This Report has been prepared for the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and is provided in accordance with the terms and conditions of our consultancy agreement with DCEDIY as of August 2023. Mazars assumes no responsibility in respect of or arising out of or in connection with this report to parties other than DCEDIY.

The work on which the assessment and recommendations have been made was undertaken in the period August – December 2023 and should be considered in that context. We have relied on explanations given to us and sought to validate them with independent sources where possible. However, we must emphasise that the exercise conducted was not an audit and hence does not provide the same level of assurance as an audit. Our review was limited in nature and may not necessarily disclose all significant matters relating to the implementation of the actions set out in the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. We have however satisfied ourselves that explanations received are consistent with other information furnished to us. The work conducted by Mazars was limited in scope and nature and was based solely on the activities set out above in Section 1.2.



## 2 Review Context

Ireland has come a long way in terms of LGBTI+ rights and inclusion. 2023 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Sexual Liberation Movement, the first Irish LGBTI+ group, and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexual acts in Ireland. Some more recent developments include the publication of the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy in 2018, Ireland becoming the first country in the world to introduce full marriage equality by popular vote in 2015, and the enactment of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 which allows people over 18 to self-declare their own gender identity. However, despite the great strides that have been made in Ireland in terms of LGBTI+ rights and inclusion, challenges remain.

The *LGBTIreland Report*<sup>3</sup> (2016) shows that LGBTI+ individuals however, remain at high risk of victimisation in society, with 75% of LGBTI people having been verbally abused in the past. This report also brings to light that instances of physical harassment continue to be a frequent occurrence, with 29% of gay men and 24% of transgender and intersex people reporting having been physically attacked in public, and a further 15% of LGBTI people experiencing sexual violence.

Since the *LGBTIreland Report* was published in 2016, it appears that instances of discrimination and hate are still prevalent in Ireland and indeed may have increased. CSO data from 2019 indicates that 33.2% of LGBTI+ people over the age of 18 experienced discrimination in the previous two years.<sup>4</sup> This was the highest representation of all categories reported on, followed by persons from non-white ethnic backgrounds (33.1%), unemployed people (30.2%) and non-Irish (26.7%). Garda Hate Crime figures from 2023 show that sexual orientation was the third highest reported category of hate crime, after race and nationality.<sup>5</sup> Anti-LGBTI+ protestors with far-right ideologies have become increasingly vocal in recent years in inciting hate and discrimination.<sup>6</sup> ILGA Europe note the rise in anti-LGBTI+ hate crime, the rise in transphobic speech and hostile media reporting observed in Ireland in their 2023 Annual Report<sup>7</sup>. We understand that more recent research on “*Being LGBTI+ in Ireland*” has been undertaken and a report on the findings of this research was published on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024, however this was subsequent to the completion of the fieldwork of this Review.

A 2022 *Belong To* survey<sup>8</sup> found that 87% of LGBTQ+ youth have seen or experienced anti-LGBTQ+ hate and harassment on social media in the past year. Further, 13% of LGBTI+ people considered leaving their job as a result of negative treatment, and 4.5% actually did so<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). “*The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland.*” Dublin: GLEN and BeLoNG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Central Statistics Office (2019) *CSO Statistical Release – Equality and Discrimination – Quarter 1 2019*. Available: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/ed/equalityanddiscrimination2019/>

<sup>5</sup> An Garda Síochána (2023) *Hate Crime and Hate Related Incidents*. Available: <https://www.garda.ie/en/information-centre/statistics/hate-crime-statistics.html>

<sup>6</sup> Hilliard, M.; Johns, N., (2023) *Staff at Swords library confronted by protesters over LGBTQ+ books*. Irish Times. Available: <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/dublin/2023/04/06/protesters-enter-swords-library-to-oppose-lgbtq-books-for-young-people/>

<sup>7</sup> ILGA Europe (2023). *2023 annual review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe and Central Asia*. Available: <https://www.ilga-europe.org/report/annual-review-2023/>

<sup>8</sup> Clancy, H. (2023). *87% of LGBTQ+ youth report hate and harassment online*. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/87-of-lgbtq-youth-report-hate-and-harassment-online/>

<sup>9</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). “*The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland.*” Dublin: GLEN and BeLoNG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>.

Although research suggests a range of challenges facing LGBTI+ people in Ireland, recent studies by IPSOS<sup>10</sup> and the National LGBT Federation<sup>11</sup> (NXF) have reported a broad acceptance of LGBTI+ identities. However, the NXF research demonstrated a clear difference in support for identities, beliefs and policies that pertain to gay men and lesbian women, compared to bi, trans, non-binary and intersex people, while the IPSOS study observed poorer attitudes to transgender people than other equality groups (with the exception of Travellers and Roma). Differences in the mental health of different groups of LGBTI+ people were also observed in the *LGBTIreland Report*<sup>12</sup>, with intersex people having the highest scores for depression, anxiety and stress followed by transgender and bisexual people.

These challenges relating to the inclusion, equality, health, and safety for LGBTI+ individuals in Ireland emphasise the need for a joined up policy approach in Ireland and underline the importance of what the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 set out to achieve and the importance of the next Strategy.

While considerable progress has been made, the LGBTI+ community in Ireland today continue to face a range of challenges. Robust actions coupled with significant cross-Government collaboration and commitment will be required as part of the successor Strategy to ensure that LGBTI+ people in Ireland are treated equally and with respect in all aspects of their lives.

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<sup>10</sup> Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (2023). *Survey on people in Ireland's attitude towards diversity*. Government of Ireland. Available:

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

<sup>11</sup> Noone. C., Hoey, H., Costa, E., Keogh, B., Buggy, C., & Browne, K. (2022). *Across the spectrum: attitudes towards minoritised genders and sexualities in Ireland*. Irish National LGBT Federation. Available: <https://www.nxf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NXF-Across-the-Spectrum.pdf>

<sup>12</sup>Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>



## 3 The National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

### 3.1 Strategy Overview

Ireland’s first National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 was published on 28th November 2019, following the launch of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020. The Strategy was built on pre-existing equality policy and is situated within the framework of safeguards provided by Ireland’s equality legislation.

#### Vision

A safe, fair and inclusive Ireland where people are supported to flourish and to live inclusive, healthy and fulfilling lives, whatever their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics.

#### Mission

To promote inclusion, protect rights and to improve quality of life and wellbeing for LGBTI+ people enabling them to participate fully in Ireland’s social, economic, cultural and political life.

#### Thematic Pillars, Strategic Outcomes and Actions

The Strategy set out 26 strategic outcomes under four thematic pillars: (1) visible and included; (2) treated equally; (3) healthy and (4) safe and supported.

Thematic Pillar	Strategic Outcome
Pillar 1: Visible & Included	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society</li> <li>2. Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their ‘authentic selves’ to work</li> <li>3. Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people</li> <li>4. Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy</li> <li>5. Public policy is inclusive of LGBTI+ perspectives and avoids heteronormative assumptions</li> <li>6. Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people</li> <li>7. The positive contribution of the LGBTI+ community to Irish arts, culture and sport is highlighted and the history of the LGBTI+ movement preserved</li> <li>8. Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ friendly tourist destination</li> </ol>
Pillar 2: Treated Equally	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred</li> <li>10. Equality legislation provides explicit protection to transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people</li> <li>11. Same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law</li> <li>12. Transgender people are supported and administrative processes are streamlined while maintaining a person’s privacy</li> <li>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</li> </ol>
Pillar 3: Healthy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions</li> </ol>

Thematic Pillar	Strategic Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. Health policy takes consideration of the needs of all population groups including the LGBTI+ community</li> <li>16. Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations</li> <li>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</li> <li>18. People living with HIV in Ireland are supported and not stigmatised</li> <li>19. People wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice</li> <li>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</li> </ul>
Pillar 4: Safe & Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it</li> <li>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</li> <li>23. LGBTI+ asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the International Protection Process and Direct Provision System</li> <li>24. The practice of conversion therapy in Ireland is investigated and followed up with appropriate counter measures</li> <li>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</li> <li>26. LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence</li> </ul>

Table 1: Thematic Pillars and Strategic Outcomes Included in the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021

These 26 outcomes were translated into 108 actions. The Strategy was developed using a whole of Government approach, with responsibility for the 108 actions assigned to relevant Government Departments. The Strategy was extended until the summer of 2023 to facilitate the implementation of a number of actions which were delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It will remain in place until the successor Strategy has been developed.

### 3.2 LGBT Ireland Shadow Report

LGBT Ireland is a national support service for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender people and their families and friends. In 2023, LGBT Ireland developed a report titled *“Progress Made. Renewed Efforts Required. A Shadow Report of Ireland’s First National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy”* which was published in January 2024.

The LGBT Ireland Shadow Report sought to measure and evaluate the impact of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy from a community perspective. The Report evaluated each of the 108 actions included in the Strategy, providing an overview of progress made followed by analysis and commentary from LGBT Ireland.

To evaluate the actions, LGBT Ireland undertook a desk-based review of departmental updates included in the Strategy “tracker” document and other publicly available information such as parliamentary questions, news articles, and government publications. In addition, LGBT Ireland met with several NGO stakeholders who had a more intimate knowledge of the progression of certain actions. Based on this information, a “progress” narrative was then attributed to each of the 108 actions in the Strategy, followed by an “analysis” section which provides additional commentary.

The Shadow Report used an A-F grading system for each action as follows:

Grading Definition	No. of Actions
A: Excellent progress, action made a real difference in the lives of LGBTI+ people.	34
B: Good progress, with positive results for LGBTI+ people.	23
C: Satisfactory progress, but LGBTI+ people still left wanting.	21
D: A barely acceptable performance, with little or no positive impact on LGBTI+ people.	21
E: Unacceptable progress. Steps are being taken in the wrong direction. Absolutely no positive impact for LGBTI+ people.	3
F: No progress. Outcomes for LGBTI+ people have gotten worse.	5
N/A: No grade; mutual agreement to not progress the action.	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>

Table 2: Grading System used in the Shadow Report

Based on the grades attributed to each action, average grades were used to produce a score for each of the 26 Outcomes. An overall grade of C+ was determined for the progress of the Strategy as a whole.

In addition to measuring and evaluating the 108 actions, the Report set out a number of recommendations for the development of the successor Strategy. Recommendations relating to taking a whole-life approach, including specific and measurable actions, allocating resources to improving outcomes for specific groups, addressing intersectional gaps, and updating the approach to monitoring and evaluation are included amongst others.

The Shadow Report represents a comprehensive and detailed body of work completed by LGBT Ireland with the input of stakeholders and is a valuable point of reference for the Department in the development of the successor Strategy.

It is important to note that the work carried out by Mazars was conducted independently of and on a separate basis to the Shadow Report. In order to provide an independent assessment, Mazars did not seek to place reliance on the Shadow Report but examined every action set out in the original strategy, discussed each action with its owner and secured independent information and evidence to allow us to determine the extent to which the action was implemented in full or in part. Mazars did not examine, nor were we asked to examine the impact of the actions in question.

A fundamental difference between the Shadow Report and this Report is the basis of assessment used. The Shadow Report assessed actions on the basis of progress and the perceived difference that the action had made on the lives of LGBTI+ people (i.e. the outcome), whereas this Report is focused on an assessment of whether or not actions have been achieved, regardless of the outcome or difference they made.

# Part 1: Review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

# 04

## 4 Part 1: Review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

### 4.1 Approach to Part 1

The purpose of Part 1 of this Review is to assess the achievement of the actions in the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy under the four pillars, factoring in any notable elements that enabled achievement of the actions, highlighting any challenges and barriers to achieving the actions, and noting any changes in environment that may have had an impact on the delivery of the actions during the lifetime of the Strategy.

The following methodology was applied to Part 1 of our Review for the purpose of assessing the actions:

1. A survey was developed which asked Reporting Department Representatives to self-assess whether or not their relevant actions have been achieved, and to provide baseline information on how actions have been progressed.
2. Following the review of information submitted in the survey, a meeting was held with the relevant representative(s) from each Reporting Department to discuss the information provided and request any further relevant supporting information and evidence that we deemed necessary.
3. Supporting information and evidence were reviewed in detail, and additional independent research was undertaken where necessary.
4. Following a thorough analysis of all information provided, progress on actions was classified using a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) Rating as follows:
  - **Achieved (green)**: The evidence / information available suggests that the action has been achieved in full
  - **Partially Achieved (amber)**: The evidence / information available suggests that the action has been achieved in part as some progress has been made towards achieving the action, however gaps remain
  - **Not Achieved (red)**: The evidence / information available did not indicate that any material progress has been made towards achieving the action.

It is important to emphasise the independent evidence-based nature of this Review. Our assessment of actions and application of RAG rating was based on the provision of robust evidence by Reporting Departments. Where it has not been possible to obtain sufficient evidence to support our assessment of the implementation of an action, a conclusion of Not Achieved has been made.

It is important to note that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or target outcomes were not established for the actions in the original Strategy, meaning that it has not been possible to assess the outcomes or impact that the Strategy has had in each action area. This Review is therefore focused on assessing the achievement of actions as opposed to the achievement of the outcomes or target outcomes associated with the actions.

The next section sets out our high-level assessment of the achievement of the actions in the Strategy. A more detail analysis is included in Appendix 1.

### 4.2 Assessment of Actions

Overall, of the 108 actions included in the Strategy across the four Pillars, this Review has found that 58 (54%) of the actions have been fully **Achieved**, 31 (29%) have been **Partially Achieved** and 19 (17%) are considered **Not Achieved**.

The following sections set out the RAG summary of the 108 actions, broken down by Pillar, based on Mazars' independent analysis. A more detailed assessment of each action is included in Appendix 1.

### Pillar 1: Visible and Included

There are eight Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 1 and a total of 39 actions. Of the 39 actions included in Pillar 1, our independent review of the actions concludes that 13 (33%) have been **Achieved**, 15 (39%) have been **Partially Achieved**, and 11 (28%) are deemed **Not Achieved**.

At an overall level, very good progress has been made across the Outcomes in Pillar 1, with significant or partial advances made in 72% of actions. Some areas of advancement noted under Pillar 1 include:

- An LGBTI+ Community Services Fund has been established and since 2020 a total of 123 LGBTI+ projects have been allocated over €4 million in funding support through this fund. Since 2019, €200,000 has been allocated annually by the Department of Rural and Community Development, with a further €183k allocated (total €383,000) in 2023 to provide services to LGBTI+ organisations nationwide targeting marginalised people experiencing exclusion on account of their LGBTI+ identities.
- A Research Sub-Committee has been established within the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to deliver a programme of research on various LGBTI+ related issues. This body of research, coupled with the ongoing development of an Equality Data Strategy, will contribute to addressing critical gaps in data and understanding of issues within the LGBTI+ community.
- Visibility of LGBTI+ people has been enhanced within library collections with the addition of 320 new titles (a total of 3,083 additional copies) to the libraries since 2019.
- The education curriculum has been enhanced to reflect greater inclusivity of LGBTI+ lives, through the recently updated Junior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) which came into effect in September 2023.

Despite these positive developments, gaps remain in terms of the delivery of actions under this Pillar.

Of particular note is Outcome 2, which was focused on ensuring that Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people, where five of the 11 actions were deemed not achieved. While progress has been made in integrating equality, diversity and inclusion into workplace practices and policy, there was less progress in providing information to employers on how they can create a more inclusive environment for LGBTI+ people.

Other areas under this Pillar that could have been further advanced include hosting of additional LGBTI+ events, particularly outside of the standard Pride events; ensuring public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people; mapping and developing community supports; engaging with rural communities with respect to LGBTI+ issues; supporting representation of LGBTI+ people in art and culture; and provision of training to service providers.

A summary assessment is provided in the table below, with further detail on the rationale for the assessment of each individual action included in Appendix 1.

OUTCOME 1: LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
1.1 Conduct a public awareness campaign to positively represent LGBTI+ identities and contributions to Irish Society.	DCEDIY	Achieved
1.2. Identify key large-scale events each year to promote LGBTI+ visibility.	DCEDIY	Partially achieved
1.3. Develop and implement further actions to support the positive portrayal and representation of LGBTI+ identities in broadcast media.	DTCAGSM	Partially achieved
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.	DCEDIY	Partially achieved
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.	DEduc	Partially achieved
1.6. Include LGBTI+ matters in the Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE) curriculum review.	DEduc	Achieved
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 Healthy 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.	DRCD	Achieved

### Outcome 1 Review Summary

Outcome 1 was focused on the positive visibility of LGBTI+ people across all sectors of society.

#### Actions were deemed achieved as follows:

- Action 1.1: The Looking Back, Moving Forward awareness campaign was delivered in 2023.
- Action 1.6: LGBTI+ matters have been included in the Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE) curriculum review.
- Action 1.7: Greater visibility and inclusion of LGBTI+ content noted in public libraries with the addition of 320 new titles (a total of 3,083 additional copies) to the libraries since 2019.

#### Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:

- Action 1.2: The Department notes that whilst one large-scale event has taken place in 2019 in the form of the Live Out Loud event, the Minister and other members of Government have attended a large number of Pride events and as such consider the action to have been Partially Achieved.

OUTCOME 1: LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 1.3: The Coimisiún na Meán has only recently been formally established on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and has committed to ensuring diverse representation in broadcast media, however this remains to be seen.</li> <li>Action 1.4: While the Pride festival continues to promote positive LGBTI+ messaging to the broader community and a number of high profile activities and attendances at Pride events were noted, there was limited focus given to the identification of other large-scale events that could positively portray LGBTI+ people and communities.</li> <li>Action 1.5: While some initial developments have taken place to include LGBTI+ lives in the junior and senior cycle curriculum, this work remains ongoing and has yet to be finalised.</li> </ul>		

Table 3: Summary Assessment of Outcome 1

OUTCOME 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
2.1. Further develop and implement LGBTI+ inclusive recruitment practices across the public sector in conjunction with PAS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.	DPER	Partially achieved
2.2. Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is a core feature of organisational and HR strategy and subject to ongoing review.	DPER	Achieved
2.3. Integrate diversity and inclusion perspectives into Civil Service workplace policy and practices including leadership training, PMDS, induction, and customer service training.	DPER	Achieved
2.4. Develop a Civil and Public Service wide LGBT+ Employee and Ally Network.	DCEDIY	Not achieved
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 channels.	DBEI	Not achieved
2.6. Develop an employers' toolkit for use in both the public and private sectors to promote workplace inclusion building on prior good practice such as the Diversity Champions programme.	DCEDIY	Partially achieved

**OUTCOME 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their ‘authentic selves’ to work**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars’ Independent RAG Assessment
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.	DCEDIY	<b>Not achieved</b>
2.8. Develop guidance information for transgender people to support their continued participation in the workplace, particularly during their time of transitioning.	DCEDIY	<b>Not achieved</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.	DEduc	<b>Achieved</b>
2.10. To further build LGBTI+ awareness and inclusive practices amongst SMEs and micro enterprises, develop LGBTI+ information events and/or learning modules for inclusion in LEO and Enterprise Ireland Diversity & Inclusion training programmes.	DBEI	<b>Partially achieved</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 to include LGBTI+.	DBEI	<b>Not achieved</b>

**Outcome 2 Review Summary**

Outcome 2 was focused on ensuring that Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 2.2: Equality, diversity and inclusion is a core feature of organisational and HR strategy as set out under the Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy and Better Public Services – Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy.
- Action 2.3: Inclusion of diversity and inclusion perspectives into Civil Service workplace policy and practices through embedding these components across a breath of training initiatives.
- Action 2.9: Promoting the wellbeing of school and centre for education personnel, including LGBTI+ personnel through the provision of Employee Assistance Services to all staff.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 2.1: While efforts to reflect EDI in recruitment practices have been noted, a specific focus on LGBTI+ was not evident.
- Action 2.6: A trans and non-binary toolkit for inclusive recruitment practices was funded by DCEDIY and launched in November 2023. This is a positive contribution however as it was limited to trans and non-binary it does not fully meet the objectives of this action.

OUTCOME 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 2.10: Building LGBTI+ awareness and inclusive practices amongst SMEs and micro enterprises. The absence of evidence of specific LGBTI+ content in training materials was noted, although it is recognised that EDI was a common theme.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 2.4: The intended Civil and Public Service wide LGBT+ Employee and Ally Network has not yet been developed.</li> <li>Action 2.5: The Corporate Social Responsibility Stakeholder Forum has not been utilised to advance LGBTI+ workplace inclusion amongst private sector employers, and we understand that the Forum was in fact dissolved in 2020.</li> <li>Action 2.7: Information and guidelines for employers as described by this action have not been developed. We note that a trans and non-binary toolkit was funded by DCEDIY and launched in November 2023, and this is a positive step. Consideration might be given to how this toolkit can be adapted and further developed to progress delivery of this actions relating to workplace inclusion.</li> <li>Action 2.8: No guidance information has been developed for transgender people.</li> <li>Action 2.11: A system of diversity certification for SMEs has not been developed, however we note that it was established that this action is not currently feasible and was intentionally not progressed.</li> </ul>		

Table 4: Summary Assessment of Outcome 2

OUTCOME 3: Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
3.1. Take measures to ensure the availability of suitable diversity training for civil service staff in customer facing roles.	DPER	<b>Achieved</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.	DCEDIY	<b>Not achieved</b>
3.3. Take practical measures to increase the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings.	DCEDIY	<b>Not achieved</b>

OUTCOME 3: Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people
<b>Outcome 3 Review Summary</b>
Outcome 3 was focused on ensuring public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people.
<b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 3.1: Diversity training is available for civil service staff, with a range of EDI courses available to all staff on the OneLearning platform.</li> </ul>
<b>Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 3.2: While a public recognition marker was developed under the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy, the roll out was not progressed under the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.</li> <li>Action 3.3: Limited progress was made on increasing the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings in the broader sense, however it is noted that separately the Department of Education updated their School Design Guide for Sanitary facilities which will ensure that school bathrooms will include self-contained cubicles with their own doors</li> </ul>

Table 5: Summary Assessment of Outcome 3

OUTCOME 4: Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
4.1. Develop and implement an LGBTI+ research programme based on gaps and priorities identified in consultation with LGBTI+ NGOs and the landscape analysis of existing research and data commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.	DCEDIY	<b>Achieved</b>
4.2. Address LGBTI+ data gaps in tandem with the work being done to advance data mapping and use in the Migrant Integration Strategy.	DCEDIY	<b>Partially achieved</b>
4.3. Establish a baseline of public attitudes and acceptance of LGBTI+ identities through a National Survey.	DCEDIY	<b>Achieved</b>
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 2026 census.	DCEDIY	<b>Partially achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 4 Review Summary</b>		
Outcome 4 was focused on the availability of better information on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people to support development of effective policy in Ireland.		
<b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b>		

OUTCOME 4: Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 4.1: An LGBTI+ research programme was developed, with a range of areas of research actively progressed and published over the course of the Strategy.</li> <li>Action 4.3: A baseline of public attitudes and acceptance of LGBTI+ identities was established through delivery of the IPSOS Survey on People in Ireland’s Attitude Towards Diversity (2023).</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 4.2: The Department notes that whilst an Equality Data Strategy has not yet been finalised or published, work to address the data gaps is ongoing and will be included in the final strategy to advance data mapping and use.</li> <li>Action 4.4: Efforts have been made by the action owner to enhance the collection of disaggregated data on the LGBTI+ population and encourage inclusion of a question on sexual orientation / gender identity in the Census. We understand that relevant Census questions will be piloted this year with a view to them being included in the 2027 Census, and a body of work is ongoing in relation to progressing this action.</li> </ul>

Table 6: Summary Assessment of Outcome 4

OUTCOME 5: Public policy is inclusive of LGBTI+ perspectives and avoids heteronormative assumptions		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars’ Independent RAG Assessment
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.	DCEDIY	<b>Partially achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 5 Review Summary</b>		
<p>Outcome 5 was focused on ensuring public policy is inclusive of LGBTI+ perspectives and avoids heteronormative assumptions.</p> <p><b>Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 5.1: It is noted that while many public strategies and documents include EDI considerations, those that include reference specifically to LGBTI+ needs are very limited. However we acknowledge the efforts of DCEDIY to encourage the inclusion of LGBTI+ related matters through consultation input.</li> </ul>		

Table 7: Summary Assessment of Outcome 5

OUTCOME 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	DCEDIY	<b>Not achieved</b>
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.	DCEDIY	<b>Achieved</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.	DRCD	<b>Achieved</b>
6.4. Implement [Action 6 of] the National Sports Policy 2018-2027 in a manner that is inclusive of LGBTI+ people.	DTCAGSM	<b>Partially achieved</b>
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.	DTCAGSM	<b>Achieved</b>
6.6. Engage with existing networks within the farming sector to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and to combat rural isolation.	DAFM	<b>Not achieved</b>

**Outcome 6 Review Summary**

Outcome 6 was focused on ensuring community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 6.2: Over €1 million was allocated by DCEDIY to support 26 LGBTI+ projects in 2023. While this is positive, it is worth noting the annual nature of the funding means that continuous funding is not guaranteed.
- Action 6.3: €383.000 was allocated by DRCD to support an additional 48 LGBTI+ projects in 2023.
- Action 6.5: The Irish Sports Monitor has been updated to enable assessment of levels of active and social participation in sport among the LGBTI+ community. However it is noted that LGBTI+ participation is measured and reported on collectively, and therefore the ability to assess the levels of participation of individual groups within the LGBTI+ community is less effective.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 6.4: Some progress was noted in terms of implementing Action 6 of the National Sports Policy 2018-2027 (which relates to developing initiatives to address participation in sport), including the development of a Diversity and Inclusion Policy by Sport Ireland that sets out a number of objectives to foster inclusion in sport, and the delivery of the #LetsGetVisible campaign over the last three years. However less progress was noted in enhancing inclusivity of the trans

**OUTCOME 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people**

and non-binary community. Guidance for trans and non-binary inclusion in sport remained in draft at the time of this review. We understand that it has since been published on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024, however this was subsequent to the completion of our fieldwork for this Review.

**Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:**

- Action 6.1: Despite an early scoping exercise, digital mapping of LGBTI+ community services and funding has not been progressed.
- Action 6.6: No progress has been made in relation to engaging with existing networks within the farming sector to promote LGBTI+ inclusion.

Table 8: Summary Assessment of Outcome 6

**OUTCOME 7: The positive contribution of the LGBTI+ community to Irish arts, culture and sport is highlighted and the history of the LGBTI+ movement preserved**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	DTCAGSM	<b>Achieved</b>
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.	DTCAGSM	<b>Not achieved</b>
7.3. Use the Business to Arts programme to fund LGBTI+ artists and promote positive visibility.	DTCAGSM	<b>Not achieved</b>
7.4. Support a nation-wide week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival in 2020.	DTCAGSM	<b>Partially achieved</b>

**Outcome 7 Review Summary**

Outcome 7 was focused on the positive contribution to Irish arts, culture and sport and ensuring it is highlighted and that the history of the LGBTI+ movement is preserved.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 7.1: Evidence of cultural institutions proactively fostering engagement with the LGBTI+ community have been noted, with a number of examples of engagement presented.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 7.4: While we note that a nation-wide week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival did not take place in 2020 due to Covid restrictions, the delivery of other LGBTI+ events and initiatives of relevance were noted.

**Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:**

- Action 7.2: There was no evidence of an LGBTI+ history and culture research think tank being created. We note that the Department intends to continue to facilitate networks and expertise sharing among the national cultural institutions.
- Action 7.3: The Business to Arts programme has not yet been used to specifically fund LGBTI+ artists, although we understand that this is currently being considered. It is worth noting that it is not within the remit of the Department to instruct an independent charitable organisation on how to use the Business to Arts programme and as a result delivery of this action is outside of the Department’s direct control.

Table 9: Summary Assessment of Outcome 7

OUTCOME 8: Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ friendly tourist destination		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars’ Independent RAG Assessment
8.1. Integrate LGBTI+ perspectives into Fáilte Ireland’s ‘Service Excellence’ training provision for tourism providers and into any upcoming review of policy or standards.	DTCAGSM	Partially achieved
8.2. Address LGBTI+ inclusion in the finalisation of Fáilte Ireland’s Festival Development Strategy.	DTCAGSM	Partially achieved
8.3. Raise the profile of, and explore initiatives and opportunities to, promote Ireland further as an LGBTI+ friendly destination.	DTCAGSM	Partially achieved
<b>Outcome 8 Review Summary</b>		
Outcome 8 was focused on ensuring Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ friendly tourist destination.		
<b>Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 8.1: We note that Fáilte Ireland’s Service Excellence training (now known as Introduction to Customer Care) on the Fáilte Ireland Learning Hub reflects content relating to diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>• Action 8.2: Fáilte Ireland has developed a Festivals Strategy and it provides for inclusion and diversity.</li> <li>• Action 8.3: Some progress was noted in raising the profile of and promoting Ireland further as an LGBTI+ friendly destination however evidence of initiatives in this space was limited.</li> </ul>		

Table 10: Summary Assessment of Outcome 8

## Pillar 2: Treated Equally

There are 5 Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 2 and a total of 17 actions. Of the 17 actions included in Pillar 2, our independent review of the actions concludes that 11 (65%) have been **Achieved**, 4 (23%) have been **Partially Achieved**, and 2 (12%) are considered **Not Achieved**.

At an overall level, excellent progress has been made across the Outcomes in Pillar 2, with significant or partial advances made in 88% of actions. Of the five Outcomes in this Pillar, strong or very strong progress was made on the actions in three of these. Some key developments under Pillar 2 include:

- Legislation has been progressed in a number of areas, with particular advancements in the area of same sex parentage. This includes commencement of a number of elements of the Children and Family Relationship Act 2015 relating to the rights of children conceived through donor embryos and the declaration of parentage. In addition, adoptive legislation now allows couples to choose who will avail of adoptive leave, enhancing the rights of male same-sex couples. The Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Bill has been progressed to the fourth stage of the legislative process.
- The Free Legal advice Centre (FLAC) launched a new LGBTIQI+ advice clinic in 2022 with funding under the LGBTI+ Community Services Fund.
- A range of in-reach supports have been developed within prisons to support LGBTI+ prisoners, including provision of LGBTI+ related titles and information booklets in prison libraries and provision of equality and diversity training to prison officers.
- A public consultation on the review of the Equality Acts was facilitated in 2021 and a report on this consultation was prepared by DCEDIY and published in June 2023.

Despite the progress made across a breadth of areas under Pillar 2, gaps were noted with respect to the provision of support to transgender people through streamlining administrative processes for those who have been awarded a Gender Recognition Certificate. In addition, little progress has been made in the provision of support programmes and measures for intersectional groups, however it is noted that research has been undertaken into intersectionality and this is a positive foundation upon which supports can be developed in the future

A summary assessment is provided in the table below, with further detail on the assessment of each individual action included in Appendix 1.

<b>OUTCOME 9: LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Reporting Department Responsible</b>	<b>Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment</b>
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.	DBEI	<b>Achieved</b>
9.2. Provide tailored legal advice and advocacy to LGBTI+ people via a specialised legal advice clinic	DCEDIY	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 9 Review Summary</b>		
Outcome 9 was focused on ensuring that LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred.		
<b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b>		

**OUTCOME 9: LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred**

- Action 9.1: The WRC actively worked with a number of LGBTI+ NGOs to develop and share social media content promoting the role of the WRC in this context.
- Action 9.2: The FLAC LGBTI+ free legal clinic was launched in May 2022.

Table 11: Summary Assessment of Outcome 9

**OUTCOME 10: Equality legislation provides explicit protection to transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	DCEDIY	Partially achieved

**Outcome 10 Review Summary**

Outcome 10 aims to ensure that equality legislation provides explicit protection to transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 10.1: A public consultation on the review of the Equality Acts was facilitated in 2021 and a report on this consultation was prepared by DCEDIY and published in June 2023. As specified in this action, transgender, intersex, and gender non-conforming people are discussed in this report.

Table 12: Summary Assessment of Outcome 10

**OUTCOME 11: Same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
11.1. Commence Parts 2 & 3 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.	DH	Achieved
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 2015.	DoJ	Achieved
11.3. Commence outstanding sections of Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 relating to donor-conceived children.	DCEDIY	Achieved

OUTCOME 11: Same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
11.4. Commence outstanding sections of Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.	DoJ	Achieved
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.	DSP	Achieved
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.	DH	Partially achieved
11.7. Bring forward legislative proposals to provide for adoptive leave and benefit for male same sex adoptive couples.	DCEDIY	Achieved

**Outcome 11 Review Summary**

Outcome 11 aims to ensure that same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 11.1: Parts 2 & 3 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 were commenced on 4 May 2020.
- Action 11.2: The Rules of Court to allow a declaration of parentage under section 21 or 22 of the CFR Act Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 came into operation on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020.
- Action 11.3: The outstanding sections of Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 relating to donor-conceived children were commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
- Action 11.4: The outstanding sections of Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 were commenced 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020, excluding section 177 which was repealed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.
- Action 11.5: The Department of Social Protection engaged with LGBT Ireland to develop relevant guidance on birth registration of donor conceived children and participated in two information events hosted by LGBT Ireland.
- Action 11.7: The Family Leave and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021 was commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 11.6: The Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Bill is currently at the fourth stage of the legislative process.

Table 13: Summary Assessment of Outcome 11

<b>OUTCOME 12: Transgender people are supported and administrative processes are streamlined while maintaining a person’s privacy</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Reporting Department Responsible</b>	<b>Mazars’ Independent RAG Assessment</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.	DSP	<b>Achieved</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.	DCEDIY	<b>Not achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 12 Review Summary</b>		
<p>Outcome 12 aims to ensure that transgender people are supported and administrative processes are streamlined while maintaining a person’s privacy.</p> <p><b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 12.1: The recommendations of the Review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 were presented to the Houses of the Oireachtas in November 2019.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 12.2: We note that little progress has been made to streamline administrative processes across Departments for transgender people. It is positive that some public bodies including the Passport Office and the Department of Social Protection have made their own internal changes to enhance relevant processes, however there was no evidence of a collaborative effort for cross-Departmental streamlining of services or enhanced interconnectivity between public bodies where a person has obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate.</li> </ul>		

Table 14: Summary Assessment of Outcome 12

<b>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</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Reporting Department Responsible</b>	<b>Mazars’ RAG Independent Assessment</b>
13.1. Design and implement programmes and measures to address intersectional discrimination in partnership with NGOs and target communities.	DCEDIY	<b>Not achieved</b>

**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**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' RAG Independent Assessment
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.	DHLGH	<b>Achieved</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.	DoJ	<b>Partially achieved</b>
13.4. Provide LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity training to staff, including RPOs, general training to all staff as part of CPD and targeted training to particular Officers, where an operational need exist.	DoJ	<b>Partially achieved</b>
13.5. Consider the provision of 'in-reach' LGBTI+ community supports, peer supports, and provision of LGBTI+ informational/recreational literature (for LGBTI+ prisoners).	DoJ	<b>Achieved</b>

**Outcome 13 Review Summary**

Outcome 13 aims to ensure that supports are provided to those at higher risk of multiple discrimination and double marginalisation.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 13.2: The National Quality Standards Framework for homeless services set out that service users must be treated equally with respect to gender and sexual orientation. These were adopted in 2019.
- Action 13.5: A range of “in-reach” supports were made available to LGBTI+ prisoners, including provision of LGBTI+ related titles and information booklets in prison libraries.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 13.3: The placement and accommodation policy remains in draft format and is specifically focused on people who are transgender and people whose gender expression differs from the gender assigned at birth, as opposed to the broader LGBTI+ population. On the basis that the policy has not yet been finalised or published, this action is deemed partially achieved.
- Action 13.4: Equality and diversity training is provided to Recruit Prison Officers as part of their stage 1 training and covers equality on the grounds of gender and sexual orientation, and transgender training was provided to Irish Prison Service staff in 2021. However this has not been incorporated into CPD.

**Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:**

- Action 13.1: No programmes and measures have yet been introduced to address intersectional discrimination, however we note that positive efforts have been made to progress research to gain a deeper understanding into intersectional experiences and needs of LGBTI+ people.

Table 15: Summary Assessment of Outcome 13

### Pillar 3: Healthy

There are 7 Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 3 and a total of 31 actions. Of the 31 actions included in Pillar 3, our independent review of the actions concludes that 19 (62%) have been **Achieved**, 6 (19%) have been **Partially Achieved**, and 6 (19%) are considered **Not Achieved**.

At an overall level, good progress has been made across the Outcomes in Pillar 3, with significant or partial advances made in 81% of actions. Of the seven Outcomes in this Pillar, strong or very strong progress was made on the actions in four of these. Key developments noted under this Pillar include:

- A range of initiatives were progressed within the area of sexual health and strong progress was noted in this area overall, including the launch of a free national STI home testing service; expansion of community HIV programmes; expansion of condom distribution services; roll-out of a national PrEP programme; delivery of targeted sexual health information and awareness raising campaigns for at risk groups; and increased availability of the HPV vaccine.
- Enhanced provision of LGBTI+ awareness training to health and social care professionals.
- A revised individual risk based approach to blood donation has been developed, whereby a personal assessment is conducted of each donor's eligibility to donate blood based on sexual history and associated risk, resulting in a more inclusive system for LGBTI+ donors.

Despite significant advancements in a range of health outcomes, a number of important gaps were noted.

Outcome 19, which aims to ensure that people wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice, has seen very poor progress. All four of the actions relevant to this Outcome were deemed Not Achieved. It is noted that a new Clinical Lead for Transgender Services was offered a position in December 2023 and has since been appointed after a long and challenging recruitment process. We understand that this individual will lead the development of a model of care and implementation plan for transgender healthcare in Ireland. Of significance to the progression of these actions is the WHO endorsement of the new ICD 11, which came into effect globally in January 2022. ICD 11 has moved gender affirming care away from being a mental health led service, stating that "trans related and gender-diverse identifies are not conditions of mental ill-health, and that classifying them as such can cause enormous stigma".<sup>13</sup> Despite such a significant global development in the classification of transgender health services, there has been no real progress on this matter in Ireland. It is likely of great concern to the Transgender community in Ireland that the trans health services have failed to progress to any significant extent under the life of this Strategy.

In addition to this notable gap in progress across transgender healthcare, gaps were also evident in the development of a greater understanding of the prevalence of intersex conditions. Separately to this Strategy, some research into intersex has been conducted by DCU, and subsequently we understand that the recently published *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland*<sup>14</sup> study (April 2024) also covers the healthcare experiences of the intersex community (this research was published subsequent to the completion of our fieldwork for this Review). However there remains a body of work to be delivered by Government to build on and develop the knowledge and understanding of intersex conditions in Ireland.

A summary assessment is provided in the table below, with further detail on the assessment of each individual action included in Appendix 1.

<sup>13</sup> World Health Organisation (2022) *Gender incongruence and transgender health in the ICD*. Available:

<https://www.who.int/standards/classifications/frequently-asked-questions/gender-incongruence-and-transgender-health-in-the-icd>

<sup>14</sup> Higgins A; Downes C; O'Sullivan K; de Vries J; Molloy R; Monahan M; Keogh B; Doyle L; Begley T; Corcoran P (2024) *The National Study on the Mental Health and Wellbeing of the LGBTQI+ Communities in Ireland*. Trinity College Dublin and Belong To LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/app/uploads/2024/04/FINAL-Being-LGBTQI-in-Ireland-Full-Report.pdf>

OUTCOME 14: Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	HSE	Partially achieved
14.2. Implement sexual health promotion training for professionals in the youth and other sectors, those working with at risk-groups, and for parents.	HSE	Partially achieved
14.3. Provide LGBTI+ awareness training to staff working in mental health services nationally.	HSE	Achieved
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.	HSE	Achieved
<b>Outcome 14 Review Summary</b>		
<p>Outcome 14 aims to ensure that healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions.</p> <p><b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 14.3: This LGBTI+ awareness training is available on HSELand and available to all HSE staff which includes mental health services staff.</li> <li>Action 14.4: The LGBT Champions programme specifically targets health and social care professionals working with older people.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 14.1: While training was promoted and widely available within the HSE through HSELand, no other platforms widely accessed by HSE staff were identified and it was not made available on other platforms within the HSE or externally. We also note that LGBTI+ Awareness training was not incorporated into HSE staff induction training.</li> <li>Action 14.2: A range of training programmes incorporating sexual health promotion training targeting professionals working with youths and other at risk groups are provided, however we are not aware of the development of any sexual health promotion training that targets parents. We understand that the HSE provide parent information books that direct parents to BeLonGTo Youth Services for LGBTI+ related guidance and advice.</li> </ul>		

Table 16: Summary Assessment of Outcome 14

**OUTCOME 15: Health policy takes consideration of the needs of all population groups including the LGBTI+ community**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
15.1. Update the National Sexual Health Strategy in 2020 and include the needs of the LGBTI+ community.	DH	Partially achieved
15.2. Implement the universal, gender neutral, HPV vaccination programme.	DH	Achieved
15.3. Include consideration of the needs of different population groups including the LGBTI+ community in the development of standards for STI services.	HSE	Not achieved
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.	DH	Achieved
15.5. Under the National Drug Strategy, 'Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery - a health led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025, improve the capacity of services to accommodate the needs of people who use drugs and alcohol from specific communities including the LGBTI+ community.	DH	Achieved
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.	HSE	Partially achieved

**Outcome 15 Review Summary**

Outcome 15 aims to ensure that the needs of the LGBTI+ community are considered in health policy.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 15.2: A universal, gender neutral, HPV vaccination programme has been live since September 2019.
- Action 15.4: A revised individual risk based approach was introduced in November 2022.
- Action 15.5: A Community Services enhancement fund of €2m was launched in 2022 to enhance community-based drug and alcohol services, 25% of which is dedicated to women, ethnic minorities and the LGBTI+ community.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 15.1: Drafting of the new National Sexual Health Strategy began in July 2023 and remains ongoing at this time.
- Action 15.6: The Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion is an introduction to holistic sexual health promotion. While it includes a section on LGBT+, we understand that this is

intended to be at the level of awareness raising. The programme does not focus on any particular sub-demographics such as the specific needs of lesbian and bi-sexual women. However, we understand and it is worth nothing that the HSE SHCPP has funded and co-developed a booklet “Sexual Wellbeing and Intimate Relationships for LBQ Women” to address some of the needs of this population group.

**Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:**

- Action 15.3: The development of standards for STI services has not been progressed.

Table 17: Summary Assessment of Outcome 15

**OUTCOME 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
16.1. Fund the HPV vaccine rollout plan in line with NIAC policy, including funding for vaccine nurses in 2019 and 2020.	HSE	Achieved
16.2. Develop and provide Sexual Health Advisor training for nurses across public STI/HIV services, student health services, prison and addiction services and primary care.	HSE	Partially achieved
16.3. Establish a Health Advisors' network to support the role of sexual health advisors.	HSE	Achieved
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)	HSE	Achieved
16.5. Incorporate a clinical information and guidelines section on STI testing and management for health care professionals on <a href="http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie">www.sexualwellbeing.ie</a>	HSE	Achieved
16.6. Update information annually on the management of genital infections for GPs through the HSE antibiotic prescribing website.	HSE	Partially achieved

**Outcome 16 Review Summary**

Outcome 16 aims to ensure that sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 16.1: The HPV vaccine plan has been rolled out and additional nursing posts have been funded.

OUTCOME 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 16.3: The Health Advisors' network has been established and is operational.</li> <li>Action 16.4: Initiatives introduced within STI clinics to improve capacity included the roll out of a range of STI home-testing initiatives to free up capacity in STI clinics.</li> <li>Action 16.5: A clinical information and guidelines section on STI testing and management for health care professionals is available online on the HSE Antibiotic Prescribing website.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 16.2: Sexual Health Advisor training was provided by Staffordshire University from 2018-2022 (excluding 2021 due to Covid), however this has now been discontinued.</li> <li>Action 16.6: A number of the information resources for GPs available online have not been updated since 2021. While the HSE report that all resources were updated in 2023, they acknowledge that these are not yet available on the website and attribute the reason for this to staffing constraints.</li> </ul>

Table 18: Summary Assessment of Outcome 16

OUTCOME 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		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
17.1. Deliver targeted outreach sexual health programmes and campaigns to at risk groups.	HSE	Achieved
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.	HSE	Achieved
17.3. Expand condom distribution services, with initial focus targeting those most at risk.	HSE	Achieved
17.4. Expand community HIV testing to populations at higher risk for HIV, mainly MSM and migrants, through NGO partners.	HSE	Achieved
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.	HSE	Achieved
17.6. Continue to promote and adapt key social media, community and social venue messages for STI testing/condom usage through www.Man2Man.ie.	HSE	Achieved

**OUTCOME 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**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
17.7. Develop and implement national campaigns around prevention of HIV and other STIs such as RespectProtect on Twitter and Man2Man website.	HSE	<b>Achieved</b>
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.	HSE	<b>Achieved</b>
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.	HSE	<b>Achieved</b>

**Outcome 17 Review Summary**

Outcome 17 aims to ensure 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.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 17.1: Programmes and campaigns such as MPOWER, the National Condom Distribution Service, HSE Sexual Wellbeing campaign among others are ongoing.
- Action 17.2: Sexualwellbeing.ie, social media posts, washroom advertisements in bars, restaurants and third level campuses, third level road show campaigns, and TV campaigns promoting condom usage have all been noted.
- Action 17.3: Condom distribution has expanded from 409,000 in 2018 to over 1 million in 2022. 439,000 condoms were distributed to NGOs including HIV Ireland, Sexual Health West, TENI and GOSHH suggesting that at risk groups are availing of this service.
- Action 17.4: Community testing takes place through HIV Ireland, Sexual Health Centre Cork, GOSHH and Sexual Health West and reports show that the majority of HIV tests were among gbMSM with 946 tests performed. Migrants coming from a country with high HIV prevalence, as per WHO definitions, accounted for 99 tests.
- Action 17.5: The gbMSM Health Committee was first established in 2019 and has since been replaced by a new multisectoral gbMSM Sexual Health Working Group.
- Action 17.6: The HSE have an ongoing partnership with Gay Health Network (GHN) to fund the Man2Man Programme. In 2022, platforms used to promote Man2Man campaigns included digital and poster washroom displays at social and support venues, positioning on Google Search and through social media and hook-up sites.
- Action 17.7: The HSE Sexual Wellbeing twitter/X account: @\_respectprotect regularly posts/reposts sexual health promotion content, including posts related to the promotion of STI testing, consent, posts concerning Irish Aids day in June, free home STI testing, and reposting

OUTCOME 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		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
<p>tweets from the Man2Man Programme account such as PEP awareness for those who have been exposed to HIV and awareness of European Testing Week in May. The Man2Man website runs a number of campaigns relevant to prevention of HIV and other STIs or infections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 17.8: The study of the readiness of public STI clinics to implement pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has concluded and the report was published on <a href="http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie">www.sexualwellbeing.ie</a> in 2019.</li> <li>Action 17.9: A national HIV PrEP programme was launched in November 2019 with 30 approved PrEP services operating nationally.</li> </ul>		

Table 19: Summary Assessment of Outcome 17

OUTCOME 18: People living with HIV in Ireland are supported and not stigmatised		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	HSE	<b>Achieved</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Outcome 18 Review Summary</b></p> <p>Outcome 18 aims to ensure people living with HIV in Ireland are supported and not stigmatised.</p> <p><b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 18.1: A campaign to address HIV stigma was launched in January 2020 aligned to the Fast Track Cities initiative. It is reported that work remains ongoing to launch another HIV stigma campaign which is expected to coincide with World Aids Day in 2024.</li> </ul>		

Table 20: Summary Assessment of Outcome 18

OUTCOME 19: People wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	HSE	<b>Not achieved</b>
19.2. Continue to develop transgender health services for children and adults in Ireland with a clear transition pathway from child to adult services.	HSE	<b>Not achieved</b>
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.	DH	<b>Not achieved</b>
19.4. Provide clear guidelines to health practitioners on referral pathways for trans young people and their families to specialised services.	DH	<b>Not achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 19 Review Summary</b>		
<p>Outcome 19 aims to ensure that people wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice.</p> <p><b>Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 19.1: This action calls for the recruitment of a number of staff across a range of specialisms to support transgender care. While it is noted that an offer was made to a Clinical Lead for Transgender Services in December 2023 and this person is expected to take up this position shortly. While this is a positive starting point, no other specialist staff have yet been appointed.</li> <li>• Action 19.2: The Review did not present any evidence of the development of transgender health services for children and adults in Ireland during the Strategy period. We understand that the newly appointed Clinical Lead will take a leading role in the development of transgender health services.</li> <li>• Action 19.3: The Review did not present any evidence of the development of a seamless and integrated service for those people who present to the Irish health service with gender identity issues.</li> <li>• Action 19.4: The Review did not present any evidence of the provision of clear guidelines to health practitioners on referral pathways for trans young people and their families to specialised services.</li> </ul>		

There was very poor progress made overall on the actions within this outcome. Addressing transgender healthcare needs is a critical priority that must be addressed and considered as part of the successor Strategy.

Table 21: Summary Assessment of Outcome 19

<b>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.</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Reporting Department Responsible</b>	<b>Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment</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.	DH	<b>Not achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 20 Review Summary</b>		
Outcome 20 aims to ensure that 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.		
<b>Actions were deemed not achieved as follows:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 20.1: A scoping exercise on intersex conditions in Ireland was not undertaken by the Department of Health as per this action. It is worth noting that a separate piece of research on intersex people was conducted by DCU in 2022, and the healthcare needs of Intersex people are also considered in the more recent Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland study published in April 2024 (this research was published subsequent to the completion of our fieldwork for this Review). While this research is a positive starting point, the Government could consider building on this to aid greater understanding in this area.</li> </ul>		

Table 22: Summary Assessment of Outcome 20

#### Pillar 4: Safe and Supported

There are 6 Strategic Outcomes under Pillar 4 and a total of 21 actions. Of these 21 actions, our independent review of the actions concludes that 15 (71%) have been **Achieved** and 6 (29%) have been **Partially Achieved**.

At an overall level, significant progress has been made across the Outcomes in Pillar 4 with no actions considered **Not Achieved**. Some key developments noted under this Pillar include:

- The Criminal Justice (Incitement of Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill was brought forward in 2022 which, once enacted, will foster greater levels of protection for LGBTI+ within legislation.
- An Garda Síochána have introduced a number of measures including an online system for reporting hate crimes, enhanced systems for tracking and reporting on instances of hate crime, widespread

provision of hate crime training to Gardaí and increasing the number of Diversity Officers within the force in order to enhance communication channels between An Garda Síochána and members of the LGBTI+ community.

- A Research report was commissioned by DCEDIY in 2022 to explore the issue of conversion therapy in Ireland, and in 2023 the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth committed to banning conversion therapy practices in Ireland and preparation of legislation is now underway albeit still in the early stages.
- The National Standards for Accommodation offered to people in the protection process were adopted in 2021, and Ireland has adopted the UNHCR’s “*Difference, Stigma, Shame, Harm*” (DSSH) Model and provided training to IPO staff to ensure that applications that indicate Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) claims are assessed in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- Transport operators have taken steps to promote inclusion within their sector, including sponsorship of Pride events, hosting of Pride initiatives, public awareness campaigns and delivery of training programmes to staff on LGBTI+ matters.
- Ireland continues to participate in international developments with respect to promoting and protecting LGBTI+ rights.

Despite the overall progress made under Pillar 4, it is important to note that safety continues to be a significant concern for members of the LGBTI+ community. While our Review of this Pillar indicates a number of developments, it will likely remain as a critical area for consideration in the successor Strategy.

A summary assessment is provided in the table below, with further detail on the assessment of each individual action included in Appendix 1.

<b>OUTCOME 21: Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Reporting Department Responsible</b>	<b>Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment</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.	DoJ	<b>Partially achieved</b>
21.2. Update the Garda Pulse system to include a “Hate Crime” tag and subcategories including sexual orientation and gender identity.	DoJ	<b>Achieved</b>
21.3. Implement a fully functioning on-line system for reporting Hate-Crime.	DoJ	<b>Achieved</b>
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.	DoJ	<b>Achieved</b>
21.5. Commence the publication of statistics for recorded incidents of hate crime.	DoJ	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 21 Review Summary</b>		

Outcome 21 aims to ensure that Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 21.2: The Garda Pulse system has been updated to allow a hate discriminatory motive to be recorded where necessary.
- Action 21.3: A fully functioning on-line system for reporting Hate-Crime has been established.
- Action 21.4: Recording of hate crime has presented opportunities for these to be tracked and reported on with data available from 2021 and 2022 at the time of this Review. An increase of 121 reported incidents of hate crime was noted from 2021 to 2022, however it is difficult to determine whether this increase is due to an increase in instances of hate crime or if it is “owing to the more open relationship that has been developed” as set out in Action 21.4.
- Action 21.5: Hate crime statistics are published on the Garda website.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 21.1: The Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022 is currently at the eighth stage of the legislative process. Given that the legislation has not yet been enacted, this action is considered partially achieved.

Table 23: Summary Assessment of Outcome 21

**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**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
22.1. Provide updated training to members of An Garda Síochána on issues affecting the LGBTI+ community.	DoJ	Achieved
22.2. Ensure that there are open channels of communication between members of the LGBTI+ community and specially trained members of An Garda Síochána.	DoJ	Achieved
22.3. Incorporate LGBTI+ focused considerations in the implementation of the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence.	DoJ	Achieved

**Outcome 22 Review Summary**

Outcome 22 aims to ensure that LGBTI+ victims of crime are appropriately supported and included in mainstream service provision, and particularly calls for formalised consultation structures with An Garda Síochána and other relevant agencies.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 22.1: Over 86% of Garda members and Garda staff have completed an online Hate Crime Training Course. In addition, there are now 586 Diversity Officers, an increase from 130 in 2021.
- Action 22.2: Diversity Officers are located throughout every Garda Division providing increased accessibility and open channels of communication between members of the LGBTI+ community and specially trained members of An Garda Síochána.
- Action 22.3: LGBTI+ considerations have been incorporated into the second and third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence (DSGBV), with the third Strategy highlighting that members of the LGBTI+ community are a group at higher risk of DSGBV, including young men being trafficked for prostitution.

Table 24: Summary Assessment of Outcome 22

**OUTCOME 23: LGBTI+ asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the International Protection Process and Direct Provision System**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	DCEDIY	Partially achieved
23.2. Finalise and adopt the national standards for accommodation offered to people in the protection process.	DCEDIY	Achieved
23.3. Continue to work with the UNHCR to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor/Review the handling of applications relating to sexual orientation and/or gender identity within the International Protection Process</li> <li>• As part of ongoing training programmes, ensure updated LGBTI+ cultural competence training is rolled out to staff working within the International Protection Office (IPO).</li> </ul>	DoJ	Achieved

**Outcome 23 Review Summary**

Outcome 23 aims to ensure that LGBTI+ asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the International Protection Process and Direct Provision System.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 23.2: The National Standards for Accommodation offered to people in the protection process were adopted in 2021.
- Action 23.3: The Difference, Stigma, Shame, Harm (DSSH) model, endorsed by the UNHCR has been adopted by Ireland, and is designed to help international protection applicants to provide a detailed narrative and to be a sensitive and appropriate way of assessing credibility in Sexual

Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) claims. IPO staff are trained on the DSSH model to support assessment of applications and further training is provided periodically to IPO staff on issues such as sexual violence.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 23.1: Development of an IPAS LGBTI+ Resident Policy is currently underway and the policy remains at early drafting stage.

Table 25: Summary Assessment of Outcome 23

**OUTCOME 24: The practice of conversion therapy in Ireland is investigated and followed up with appropriate counter measures**

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
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.	DCEDIY	<b>Achieved</b>
24.2. Informed by the findings of the above research, develop an appropriate package of measures for implementation in response.	DCEDIY	<b>Partially achieved</b>

**Outcome 24 Review Summary**

Outcome 24 aims to ensure that the practice of conversion therapy in Ireland is investigated and followed up with appropriate counter measures.

**Actions were deemed achieved as follows:**

- Action 24.1: The research into conversion therapy practices in Ireland is now finalised and the report was published in 2023.

**Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:**

- Action 24.2: The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth announced his intention to ban conversion therapy practices and a draft General Scheme and Heads of Bill have been prepared. We understand that developing legislation of this complex and sensitive nature can take considerable time, and therefore the legislation is not yet finalised. On this basis this action is considered partially achieved.

Table 26: Summary Assessment of Outcome 24

<b>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</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Reporting Department Responsible</b>	<b>Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment</b>
25.1. Continue to integrate the promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTI+ individuals into Ireland's foreign policy.	DFA	<b>Achieved</b>
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.	DFA	<b>Achieved</b>
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.	DFA	<b>Achieved</b>
25.4. Support outreach to LGBTI+ members of our diaspora through funding initiatives such as the Emigrant Support Programme.	DFA	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Outcome 25 Review Summary</b>		
<p>Outcome 25 aims to ensure that 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.</p> <p><b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 25.1: Ireland's commitment to promoting the rights of LGBTI individuals is demonstrated in a number of relevant policies and documents, including The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World; A Better World Ireland's Policy for International Development; the third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019 - 2024); and Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020 – 2025.</li> <li>• Action 25.2: A range of initiatives were noted. Ireland joined the Equal Rights Coalition in 2019. An Taoiseach attended the 78<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly for an event titled "15 years LGBTI Core Group: milestones and challenges"; and Ireland participated in dialogue with the UN Human Rights Council Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.</li> <li>• Action 25.3: The Department of Foreign Affairs provides funding to ILGA - the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, and also supports other human rights organisations whose work addresses LGBTI+ rights such as Front Line Defenders and the International Federation for Human Rights.</li> <li>• Action 25.4: The Emigrant Support Programme continues to fund LGBTI+ organisations that provide support to Irish emigrants abroad.</li> </ul>		

Table 27: Summary Assessment of Outcome 25

OUTCOME 26: LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence		
Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Independent RAG Assessment
26.1. Continue to provide training for transport operators and taxi drivers that includes an LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity component.	DTransp	Partially achieved
26.2. Continue to promote equality policies and complaints mechanisms amongst the travelling public.	DTransp	Partially achieved
26.3. Enhance data collection on equality / discrimination complaints by transport operators.	DTransp	Partially achieved
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.	DFA	Achieved
<b>Outcome 26 Review Summary</b>		
<p>Outcome 26 aims to ensure that LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence.</p> <p><b>Actions were deemed achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 26.4: Advice on being LGBTQI+ abroad is available on the Know Before You Go website managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions were deemed partially achieved as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 26.1: Provision of Pride at Work training to staff by TFI and Bus Eireann was noted, in addition to engagement with a number of transport operators with the Centre for Diversity on the provision of EDI training. Irish Rail hosted an ED&amp;I Conference in 2023 attended by 50 employees from various roles and levels across the organisation. These are positive developments however there was limited evidence of provision of LGBTI+ specific training within the taxi sector.</li> <li>Action 26.2: In 2023, the NTA launched their <i>Destination: Inclusion</i> campaign for Pride, and the small public service vehicle (SPSV) / Taxi newsletter issued by the NTA included reference to Pride and highlighted that Transport for Ireland are proud sponsors of Dublin LGBTQ+ Pride 2023. This demonstrates promotion of equality for LGBTI+ people. We did not note any promotional efforts relating to raising complaints.</li> <li>Action 26.3: The Department notes that whilst a consolidated Customer Contact centre is not yet live, work is ongoing and it is intended that this will enhance data collection on equality / discrimination complaints by transport operators.</li> </ul>		

Table 28: Summary Assessment of Outcome 26

### 4.3 Strategy Implementation

This section considers the implementation structures and approach to the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy and the factors that supported the achievement of actions and those that acted as a barrier to achievement. The effectiveness of Strategy implementation was considered as part of this Review from two perspectives as follows:

1. The Strategy Steering Committee
2. Implementation of Actions

#### The Strategy Steering Committee

A Strategy Steering Committee was established to oversee implementation of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. The Steering Committee comprises 39 members from Government Departments, public bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), particularly those that work with and represent LGBTI+ people. The Committee was chaired by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, and meetings were held 3-4 times per year. The Terms of Reference and full membership of the Steering Committee are included in Appendix 2.

On the basis of our assessment of the overall structure and operation of the Steering Committee, we make the following observations:

- The Steering Committee was very large, comprising 39 members from across a wide range of organisations. Large diverse steering committees can be problematic in that they can inhibit decision making, hinder progress and impact on the efficacy of detailed discussions. They are often difficult vehicles through which progress can be made and progress monitored. The Strategy included 108 actions across 26 discreet outcomes. The actions covered a wide range of topics and issues and were very diverse in nature further compounding the ability of the Committee when more detailed discussions on a topic specific basis were required. This analysis is supported by discussions with Steering Committee members, many of whom commented that the size of the Committee was too large to allow for meaningful discussion of actions or to be a forum that appropriately drives implementation.
- There was limited use of Sub-Committees within the overall Steering Committee. Sub-committee structures can be a powerful mechanism to ensure greater focus and progress on component parts of a strategy or to allow a committee to delegate to a sub-committee when focus is required on a specific activity. Where the full Steering Committee is responsible for all activities, a large committee can be too unwieldy to function effectively, and this is where smaller formal Sub-Committees can add great value. A Research Sub-Committee was developed within DCEDIY and feedback from members indicates that this smaller structure was very effective and meaningfully progressed relevant research actions. Outside of the Research Sub-Committee, we are not aware of any further formal Sub-Committees having been established. Some steering committee structures implement delegated sub committees or groups by action area, theme or function, where those groups in turn report back and are accountable to the main steering committee on a periodic and scheduled basis. The main steering committee can delegate operational responsibility for a specific task or activity but must remain ultimately responsible for the implementation of the Strategy.
- Steering Committee meetings took place 3-4 time per year. The Covid-19 pandemic meant that these meetings were largely conducted online. While this was beneficial in enabling meetings to continue throughout the pandemic and also supports easier participation from members across Ireland, a fully online structure can undermine the normal discursive benefits to be achieved from physical in-person meetings. Physical meetings better facilitate whole of Committee discussions particularly where groups are large. They also allow for side-bar / emergent discussions to develop among smaller groups and help to build relationships between Committee members. The online setting is not as conducive in supporting these factors. Feedback from the Committee indicates that 43% of the Steering Committee consider that the frequency of meetings was too few to enable adequate oversight of the Strategy, in particular where they were online meetings. Again, this is

where the introduction of Sub-Committee structures can be beneficial, as additional shorter and more focused Sub-Committee meetings can be introduced to ensure actions keep progressing in the interim periods between full Committee meetings.

- In order for any Steering Committee to successfully oversee implementation of a strategy, it is critical that the Committee works collectively as a single oversight body with the ultimate aim of driving strategy implementation. This means that Steering Committee members must act collectively in the overall best interest of the Strategy and must have a concern for implementation across the full breadth of actions. Some of the feedback received throughout the review process suggests that in some cases members were only concerned for actions relevant to their own area and had less interest or concern for actions that were the responsibility of other members. Our survey indicated limited awareness or understanding across the Steering Committee as to whether or not actions had been achieved, partially achieved or not achieved, with high portions of respondents consistently indicating that they were not sure whether or not specific actions were achieved (up to 71% of respondents in some cases). As the monitoring and oversight body for the Strategy, we would have expected greater levels of awareness among Steering Committee members as to the status of actions and specific areas where progress has been made. Ongoing periodic and scheduled reporting to the Steering Committee as the main oversight body using a specific structured set of KPIs would be useful in this regard. This might include work undertaken by action, reports from sub committees, an action RAG (open, closed, partial) or similar so that all Steering Committee members as the main governance group responsible were in a position to oversee and contribute to the discussion on the progress of the strategy at a whole of strategy level.
- Some general feedback from Steering Committee members on the overall effectiveness of the Steering Committee is set out below. This information was gathered through consultation and the stakeholder survey.
  - Over half of the Steering Committee survey respondents agreed that the Steering Committee structure was an effective structure to oversee implementation of the strategy
  - 74% of the Steering Committee survey respondents agreed that the purpose was clearly defined while nearly 65% felt this purpose was understood by all members.
  - 79% of Steering Committee members considered that committee members were committed to the Strategy and its implementation. However, feedback highlighted that those who were responsible for fewer actions were at times prioritising other elements of their work rather than actions in the Strategy.
  - The larger representation of Dublin based members compared to members from other locations was identified as a challenge, as was inclusion of non-action owners on the Committee.

## Implementation of Actions

A Strategy with 108 actions to be coordinated and delivered across a range of Government Departments in a 3-5 year period presents a lot of complexities in terms of implementation.

Each action was assigned ownership to a relevant Government Department, referred to as the Reporting Department for the purposes of this Review. The Reporting Department was considered the ultimate action owner and thus it was the responsibility of the Steering Committee member from each Reporting Department to report back to the Committee on the progress of their actions. Delivery of the actions may have taken place by means of other public bodies or agencies under the Reporting Department's remit. In many cases, these other organisations were also represented on the Steering Committee.

On the basis of our review of implementation of the actions, we make the following observations:

- It is important to reiterate that our review of the LGBTI+ National Inclusion Strategy identified that progress had been made on 83% of the 108 actions set out in the Strategy (i.e. either achieved or partially achieved). This indicates strong progress on implementation overall, despite the complexities involved in coordinating delivery of such a large number of actions across a diverse range of areas among multiple Government Departments. This can be considered to be significant progress in the context of any strategic plan
- It was noted that the Strategy lacked formal Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by which to measure the achievement of the strategy. A Traffic Light system was instead used to monitor progress and report back to the Steering Committee. KPIs identify the ultimate targets or outcomes being sought and set the expectations in terms of delivery of actions. KPIs can be a very effective tool in assessing the achievement of actions and the overall success of the Strategy. Developing KPIs also helps to ensure that actions are achievable by considering at an early stage the expected outcomes that should be achieved by delivering the action. Some KPIs could be defined at outcome/ output or even input level. Where KPIs are not defined, it can be unclear what is expected to be achieved by the action and this can cause confusion and challenges to effective implementation.
- The level of complexity of actions in the Strategy varies significantly, from those that are relatively straightforward to deliver to those that are extremely complex and require a large ongoing body of work to achieve them over a much longer timeframe. The ease of implementation of the actions included in the Strategy therefore varies significantly, and whether an action was achieved or not does not always directly correlate to the level of effort put into progressing it by the action owners, for example:
  - Actions relating to the implementation of legislation must follow a defined legislative process which can slow down delivery of the action. In addition, at the point of strategy development, some actions were already further along the journey towards commencement of legislation than others and therefore not all were starting from an equal base.
  - In some cases, inter-dependencies exist between actions and it may prove more challenging to deliver certain actions when other related actions have not yet been progressed. An example of where sequencing potentially caused issues is Outcome 19 which relates to the provision of timely access to healthcare services for transgender people. The four actions in this Outcome were deemed not achieved, however it perhaps may have been more challenging to appropriately progress actions 19.2, 19.3 and 19.4 prior to the appointment of the Clinical Lead for Transgender Services, which was a key part of the delivery of action 19.1. A Clinical Lead was offered a position in December 2023 and has since been appointed following a long and challenging recruitment process for this post, and we understand that this individual will be tasked with developing a model of care for transgender healthcare in Ireland. That being said, we do however acknowledge the lack of progress in transgender healthcare over the life of this Strategy which is likely to be of considerable concern to the transgender community. This critical area must be treated with utmost priority in the development and delivery of the successor Strategy.
  - Our review also identified a number of actions that were outside of the direct control of the Reporting Department and therefore posed considerable difficulties in terms of that Department delivering the action. Some examples include Action 3.3 relating to increasing the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings, and Action 5.1 relating to the inclusion of LGBTI+ consideration in the development or review of public sector policy. In these cases the Reporting Department, while ultimately responsible for delivery of the action, was limited in its ability to control or influence whether or not progress was made.

Bearing the above points in mind, there does not appear to have been any formal prioritisation process to identify those actions that should be progressed in advance of others or those actions that should receive greater priority over others due to their potential impact or outcome, or indeed those that may have been more urgent than others. Assessing the actions using a prioritisation

framework that considers factors such as the level of priority and the ease of implementation, in advance of finalising the strategy, can help to ensure that the most important actions are being progressed to maximise the impact and success of the Strategy.

- Many of the delivery channels or ways in which the actions can be delivered are typically complex, in some instance comprising three layers – i.e. delivery by an Agency, who are in turn acting on behalf of a Department, who are in turn responsible to the Committee. The responsibility for delivery rests at the Reporting Department level despite the fact that many actions are delivered at the Agency level (e.g. the Department of Justice are the Reporting Department responsible for actions being delivered by An Garda Síochána). This structure can be challenging, as delivery of the action on the ground is at arm’s length from discussions that may be taking place at the Steering Committee, and vice versa. As such the Steering Committee may not have adequate oversight of the real progress of the action on the ground or the complexities or challenges of delivery. Feedback received from Committee members reinforces this point. Some Committee members suggested that there was an inconsistency between what was being reported to the Committee with respect to the progress on actions versus the actual position on the ground.
- The link between actions included in the Strategy and policy or legislation is not always clear. Where there is a clear policy or legislative driver informing or supporting an action it is often easier to get traction on it. Furthermore where no clear funding source (new or existing) has been identified, it can also mean that implementation owners struggle to prioritise the implementation of the action from existing resources. Where a clear policy or legislative driver exists and can be linked to an action (either the action or its target outcome) this can significantly increase the likelihood of the action being prioritised and thus implemented.
- Changes in the external environment added a range of complexities to the delivery of actions. Covid-19 had a significant impact as the country moved through periods of lockdown, meaning that some actions could not be progressed (e.g. hosting large-scale events). In addition, the pandemic meant that there was a significant shift in priorities within Government Departments as each Department worked to respond to the impact of the pandemic across all aspects of their work. In addition, the restructuring of Government Departments also posed additional challenges with regards to ownership of the Strategy itself (which transferred from the Department of Justice and Equality to the newly established Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth) in addition to the transfer of ownership of individual actions. Such changes are likely to have impacted continuity in the delivery of actions and resulted in loss of knowledge.
- The Strategy notes that it is a “living document that can be modified as the needs arise” and that the Committee will make “recommendations on actions to be added or changed to respond to evolving needs”. A mid-term review of the Strategy was intended however we understand that it did not take place and in practice no changes were made to the actions set out in the original Strategy. We do note however that action owners were re-defined following reorganisation of Government departments. A mid-term review would have provided an opportunity to reflect on the progress of actions and to consider any re-prioritisation, removal or reframing of specific actions given the passage of time, change in external environment and evolution of national policy.
- Some general feedback from Steering Committee members on the implementation of actions is set out below. This information was gathered through consultation and the stakeholder survey.
  - Overall, 52% of Steering Committee survey respondents agreed and 22% disagreed that the Steering Committee successfully drove the implementation of actions. Some respondents indicated that the Committee appeared to be a tick-box structure that lacked real oversight and drive of implementation of the actions.

- 17% of Steering Committee survey respondents disagreed that the Steering Committee was kept up to date with actions that were not progressing and took appropriate action where necessary to address this.
- 17% of Steering Committee survey respondents disagreed that KPIs were agreed and reviewed by the Steering Committee and 13% disagreed that KPIs were monitored and reviewed regularly to track progress on actions.
- In addition to the broader observations above, based on our assessment of the actions some other specific factors that supported the achievement of actions and those that acted as barriers to the achievement of actions have been identified. These are included below.

### *Factors Supporting the Achievement of Actions*

- The establishment of Sub-Groups / Sub-Committees of the Steering Committee (where used) – e.g. the Research Sub-Committee – provided more focus and a smaller forum to successfully progress a reduced number of actions.
- The establishment of internal working groups / fora / implementation teams within Reporting Departments (or including representatives from their Agencies etc.) where actions could be discussed and collaboratively progressed. These structures were typically more informal structures developed at local Department level to support implementation, as opposed to formal sub-structures of the Steering Committee.
- The inclusion of people with particular knowledge and expertise relevant to the area of focus within Sub-Groups / working groups.
- Where participants had an interest in and commitment to the actions they were involved in the delivery of.
- Where participants were familiar with the context in which the action was developed and understood the need it was trying to address. There were instances in our consultation where newer staff struggled to progress actions where they did not have this context from earlier stages of the Strategy development process.
- Where actions were aligned to policy or with work already ongoing with respect to an issue and therefore delivery of the action could be easily incorporated into the ongoing work of a team / organisation.
- Having the Steering Committee chaired by the Minister seemed to provide greater levels of accountability and commitment from Committee members to ensure actions were progressing.

### *Barriers to the Achievement of Actions*

- The large number of actions included in the Strategy and the inability to progress everything within the timeframe of the Strategy.
- The inclusion of very broad and in some cases poorly worded actions that lacked clarity, focus and direction, thus causing confusion for the action owner in terms of what was expected, particularly where newer staff members inherited actions.
- Lack of clarity on how urgent some actions were over others, resulting in difficulties prioritising actions appropriately and perhaps resulting in important actions not making as much progress as they should have.
- Changeover of staff within Departments, particularly change of Steering Committee membership.
- Staff resource shortages within Departments and Agencies responsible for delivery.
- Competing priorities to be delivered by each Department / Agency / Public body.
- The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown which resulted in shifting priorities for a number of Departments.
- The absence of key performance indicators (KPIs).

- The large size of the Steering Committee and limited use of Sub-Committee structures / smaller working groups, which made it difficult for members to seek support and ask questions relevant to their action(s) in such a large formal forum that was Chaired by the Minister.
- Limited follow up or challenge from the Committee on actions that were not progressing as expected.
- Where a single Department was responsible for progressing an action that required significant input to and commitment from a range of other Departments. The action owner's ability to progress these actions was often limited in these instances and delivery was often outside of their control.

### *Changes in Context*

Some key contextual factors have also been noted as causing challenges for achieving actions.

The Strategy was launched in November 2019, and just four months later, Ireland entered into the first lockdown due to the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Not only did this alter ways of working with non-essential workers forced to work from home, it also significantly altered the priorities of many Government Departments as the focus turned to responding to the pandemic. In many cases this led to a reallocation of resources and de-prioritisation of other commitments, and in some cases delivery of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy actions suffered as a result. Certain actions were also specifically impacted by the pandemic, for example those focused on hosting events and festivals etc., as it was not possible to progress with these under strict Covid guidelines. While the impact of Covid-19 is acknowledged, it cannot be universally accepted as a reason that some actions have not progressed. The Strategy was subsequently extended, and normal operations have long since returned.

A change in Government and significant reorganisation of Government Departments also occurred during life of the Strategy. The Strategy was originally the responsibility of the Department of Justice and Equality, however the reorganisation of Departments resulted in the reallocation of the Strategy to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. In addition, the Unit responsible for oversight of the Strategy also changed several times during the life of the Strategy. This reorganisation had an impact on ownership of actions which also transferred in many cases.

More recently, Ireland has been facing a significant housing crisis and homeless figures have reached record highs. In December 2023, over 13,300 people were accessing emergency accommodation in Ireland.<sup>15</sup> This crisis, coupled with the stark increase in asylum seekers (an increase of 415% between 2021 and 2022<sup>16</sup>), has resulted in significant demands for housing and accommodation in Ireland that often cannot be met. This presents great risks for these vulnerable groups who are often stigmatised. A similar shift in the narrative around the LGBTI+ community, particularly in relation to transgender people, has had a considerable impact on the feelings of safety among members of this community and this was highlighted during our consultation process.

These factors are of particular concern to the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, given the vulnerabilities already faced by these groups and the intersectional discrimination likely encountered by those whom identify as LGBTI+. These contextual changes are key factors that should be considered and reflected on as part of the successor Strategy.

### *Evaluation of Processes of Implementation of Three National Equality Strategies*

In 2022, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) commissioned an independent report on the processes of implementation of the three national equality strategies, those being (1) the Migrant Integration Strategy (MIS), (2) the National Strategy for Women and Girls (NSWG) and (3) the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS). The Report titled "*Realising the Promise of*

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<sup>15</sup> Peter McVerry Trust (2023). Available: <https://homelessnessinireland.ie/homelessness-in-ireland/>

<sup>16</sup> UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency (2023) *Ireland Fact Sheet February 2023*. Available: <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/640747d47.pdf>

*National Equality Policy: An Evaluation of the Processes of Implementation of Three National Equality Strategies*<sup>17</sup> was published in May 2023. The Report sought to assess the extent to which the processes used to implement these three equality strategies were effective.

The Review of the implementation structures for the three Equality Strategies highlighted a number of issues that have again been raised as part of this Review of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. Factors such as:

- The size of the Steering Committees
- The large number of actions included in each (76, 139 and 149 actions respectively)
- Inclusion of vague or unclear actions
- Unsatisfactory use of indicators
- Limited challenging of actions that were not being progressed
- Staff changes within Departments and through restructuring
- Loss of knowledge due to high levels of turnover of representatives on the Steering Committee

The review of the equality strategies set out a number of recommendations to support more effective implementation, and many of these are of great relevance to the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy also and consideration should be given when designing the implementation process for the successor Strategy. The specific recommendations of relevance will be referenced in Section 6 of this Report.

#### **4.4 Part 1 Conclusion**

The vision of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy is for “A safe, fair and inclusive Ireland where people are supported to flourish and to live inclusive, healthy and fulfilling lives, whatever their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics.” There is no doubt that this is a very ambitious vision for a strategy that was originally intended to span only three years.

The Strategy included 108 actions to be delivered across 26 outcomes, which involved significant effort and commitment from a range of Government Department and public bodies to deliver, not to mention the additional support and input from LGBTI+ NGOs where relevant. Overall, of the 108 actions across the four pillars, this Review has found that 58 (54%) actions have been achieved, with a further 31 (29%) considered partially achieved. This indicates that good progress has been made towards achieving 83% of what the Strategy set out to achieve. This is a strong result by any standard.

That being said, the Strategy set out to enhance safety, fairness and inclusivity, and despite the implementation of a significant number of actions across the four Pillars, our research and consultation process suggests that there remains considerable concerns among members of the LGBTI+ community around their safety and equality in society. Indeed in some cases there are suggestions that the situation is getting worse, and that some specific groups within the broader LGBTI+ community (e.g. transgender) feel this more than others. It is impossible to measure the achievement of the Vision itself, and even if all actions were deemed fully achieved it would still be impossible. There will always be variations in opinion and the lived experience of one person or group and others. However, the reality is that despite achievement of a large number of actions, the perceived outcomes of these actions for the LGBTI+ community may not have been as successful as envisaged. The Vision is aspirational and is something to continue to strive for in the longer term rather than being considered something that can be achieved over the life of a 3-5 year strategy.

While the strategy has been challenging to implement in parts, good progress has been made overall. The challenges identified provide learnings that can be considered in the development of the successor Strategy.

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<sup>17</sup> Kavanagh, L., Sweeney, L., Farahani, Z., Radomska, A. & Bailey, I. (2023). *Realising the promise of equality policy: An evaluation of the processes of implementation of three national equality strategies*. Dublin: Centre of Excellence Services



## 5 Part 2: The Successor Strategy

### 5.1 Approach to Part 2

Part 2 of this Review was focused on identifying priority areas for inclusion in the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, given that the current Strategy is now reaching the end of its term. There were a number of inputs to this process including:

- **Stakeholder consultation and engagement:** This included a stakeholder survey, two focus groups (one with the Steering Committee and one with members of the LGBTI+ community and other stakeholders) and one-to-one consultations with Reporting Department Representatives. It is important to note that this was not a full and comprehensive consultation process for the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, it was undertaken to gain some preliminary insight into the issues that might be of concern for the successor Strategy. We understand that a full and comprehensive consultation process will take place at a later stage to inform the development of the successor Strategy.
- **National and international LGBTI+ research:** A desk-based review of national and international research was undertaken, in order to identify the key themes, gaps and priorities to be considered for inclusion in the successor strategy.
- **Review of LGBTI+ Strategies from other jurisdictions:** Some of the other jurisdictions explored included the European Commission, Malta, Iceland, Sweden, Canada, Denmark, France, The Netherlands, and Norway. The focus of the review was on identify key themes, gaps and priorities that might be relevant to Ireland, in addition to exploring how LGBTI+ strategies across other jurisdictions address the needs of LGBTI+ people spanning their entire lifecycle.
- **The RAG assessment of the current National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy:** This included consideration of the actions that have been achieved and not achieved, and any areas that lacked progress under the last Strategy and may need greater prioritisation in the successor Strategy. Particular consideration was given to the actions deemed not achieved and a preliminary assessment of whether or not these should be considered for inclusion in the successor Strategy was undertaken.

Each of these inputs are discussed in turn in the following sections.

### 5.2 Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement

As part of this engagement, in considering the successor Strategy, we undertook some preliminary stakeholder consultation, which included a stakeholder survey, two focus groups and one-to-one consultations with Reporting Department Representatives on the Steering Committee. It is important to note that this was not a full and comprehensive consultation process for the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, it was rather intended to gain some initial insight into the key themes, gaps and priorities that might be of concern for the successor Strategy. We understand that a full and comprehensive consultation process will take place at a later stage in the formation of the successor Strategy. Some of the key themes and priority areas emerging from our consultation process are outlined below:

- **Safety:** Safety remains an ongoing concern for members of the LGBTI+ community, with many consultation participants referencing the rising prevalence of far-right ideologies and extremist views. Discrimination, hate and violence remain a feature of daily life for many LGBTI+ people. Some suggested priorities to be addressed in the next Strategy include combating the rise of hate speech

online; taking firm action to address far-right ideologies; and encouraging prominent public figures and leaders (such as the Taoiseach) to publicly denounce LGBTI+ discrimination, hate and violence.

- **LGBTI+ Healthcare:** Addressing the healthcare needs of the LGBTI+ community emerged strongly throughout consultation as a key area of focus for the future strategy, and the following suggested priorities were identified by consultation participants:
  - Advancing transgender healthcare
  - Development of an LGBTI+ specific health strategy
  - Greater emphasis on the provision of mental health supports, including specifically tailored LGBTI+ mental health services and services designed to support people who have experienced conversion therapy.
  - While it was noted that sexual health services have advanced over recent years, consultees highlighted the need to broaden the provision of PrEP to accommodate increased demands due to the revised WHO eligibility guidelines, and further enhance condom distribution services at a national level.
  - A focus on lesbian healthcare also emerged through consultation, with calls for provision of enhanced information and guidance for both healthcare providers and lesbians themselves with a focus on eliminating health myths (e.g. myths that lesbians do not require cervical screening / smear tests).
  
- **Visibility:** The importance of LGBTI+ people being visible in society was emphasised during consultation. Suggested priorities include:
  - Development of a communications strategy to deal with LGBTI+ misinformation
  - Continued inclusion of LGBTI+ education materials in libraries
  - Publicising and promoting the work of the Government / Minister in relation to LGBTI+
  - Enhancing public visibility and celebration of LGBTI+ outside of Pride
  
- **Rural / Urban Divide:** Consultation participants highlighted a number of challenges associated with being a member of the LGBTI+ community in rural areas, including feelings of isolation and loneliness due to a lack of community events and venues. Some specific priorities highlighted for consideration for the future strategy relate to the provision of community spaces for LGBTI+ people across all counties, enhancing LGBTI+ visibility in rural areas (e.g. local / regional events, community LGBTI+ gatherings etc.) and enhancing access to sexual health supports and services across all counties.
  
- **Education and Awareness:** The need to build awareness and educate the public on LGBTI+ matters was regularly raised in consultation, particularly in the context of the rise of the far-right. Suggested priorities relating to education and awareness include:
  - Provision of information and guidance to parents on the matter of LGBTI+ rights in Ireland
  - Provision of targeted public education on transgender issues with a view to combatting anti-trans rhetoric
  - Awareness raising initiatives across the immigrant population about LGBTI+ diversity
  - Engagement with the Catholic Church and other religious communities on LGBTI+ matters
  - Developing broader awareness and understanding of intersectionality among the general population
  - Educating LGBTI+ people on the dangers associated with online dating apps
  
- **Training for Professionals:** The need to train a range of professionals on LGBTI+ awareness and LGBTI+ issues emerged strongly throughout consultation as an area of focus for the successor Strategy, and the following suggested priorities were identified:
  - Provision of training to Gardaí on hate crime legislation (once enacted) and other LGBTI+ specific concerns
  - Provision of LGBTI+ awareness training to all healthcare workers (including those in care homes) and inclusion of a specific focus on mental health in training content

- Provision of LGBTI+ awareness training to all public-facing employees
  - Measurement of the success of LGBTI+ awareness training to understand if the content and methods used are effective
- **Intersectionality:** In considering the future strategy, there was a strong consensus among consultation participants that more must be done to address the needs of intersectional members of the LGBTI+ community. From the small portion of intersectional LGBTI+ members engaged throughout our short consultation process, some initial areas of focus have been suggested.
    - **LGBTI+ Asylum Seekers:** Priorities identified include development of a specific LGBTI+ support group for asylum seekers with support meetings hosted online to enable broad access across all locations; the introduction of measures to protect LGBTI+ asylum seekers in IPAS accommodation from fellow inhabitants who hold LGBTI+ phobic views; and provision of legal advice and access to legal services for asylum seekers.
    - **LGBTI+ People with a Disability:** Suggested measures included increasing partnership between the disabled and the LGBTI+ communities; and increasing funding of LGBTI+ groups to expand their accessibility to disabled LGBTI+ people.
  - **Rights and Legislation:** Ensuring equal rights for LGBTI+ people and progressing legislation was a common theme in consultations facilitated during the review process. Under this theme, progressing legislation to ban conversion therapy was a common focus and the suggestion to lobby / campaign for a conversion therapy ban in Northern Ireland as part of this process was identified. Other legislation identified as a priority to progress during the next strategy include gender recognition legislation for under 18s and non-binary people, hate crime legislation, and legislation relating to equal parentage rights.
  - **Educational Environments:** Providing education on LGBTI+ matters in school was considered important to encouraging greater levels of inclusion in educational environments, and would further act as a protective measure against the rise of anti-LGBTI+ rhetoric on social media. Some other priorities relevant to schools and education relate to the provision of LGBTI+ education in school curricula, and greater visibility and representation of LGBTI+ identities as part of general curricula. For third level learners, greater integration of LGBTI+ awareness training into college courses, particularly those related to healthcare, social work, and other public-facing professions was deemed important.
  - **Funding for Civil Society:** Consultation participants highlighted a number of challenges associated with funding for LGBTI+ NGOs and their services, including the repetitive application process for “drip” funding and the provision of once-off payments which prevent continued investment in services over longer periods. Some specific priorities highlighted for the future strategy relate to the provision of multi-annual funding for NGOs to enable long term commitment to “big ticket” items that have greater impact, and commitment to maintain and grow the LGBTI+ Community Services Fund.
  - **Data and Research:** A number of priority areas relating to improving data and research in the next strategy were identified by participants during consultation. It was suggested that improving data and research and in turn further developing our understanding of the LGBTI+ community would allow issues faced by the LGBTI+ community to be better addressed. Suggested research and data priorities include enhancing the breadth of data on LGBTI+ matters to develop an evidence base, undertaking a continuous programme of LGBTI+ research, and committing to a national longitudinal research on LGBTI+ issues, repeated at regular intervals.

- **Transgender and intersex specific:** Transgender and intersex people were identified by consultation participants as a group that require specific attention in the successor strategy. It was suggested that trans and intersex issues have not been addressed or progressed as much as those relating to lesbian, gay and bi-sexual people. Improving transgender healthcare arose as a key area of focus during consultation, particularly focusing on developing a system for youth trans health services. Other suggested priority areas for transgender specific actions include updating forms to ensure inclusivity by including gender identity as well as sex, and placing a focus on how trans lives are shown in the media to address increasingly negative rhetoric. Specific actions relating to intersex include raising awareness among healthcare professionals on the rights and needs of intersex people and considering legislation to ban sex normalising surgeries on intersex children.
- **Whole of Life-cycle:** There was general consensus amongst consultation participants that a successor strategy should take account of everyone’s needs, aligning with a whole of life-cycle approach. However, some priorities arose during consultation relating to a specific life-stage and these are outlined below.
  - **Young People Specifically:** Priority areas highlighted by consultation participants for LGBTI+ youth in Ireland include educating young people on issues relating to consent as they explore their sexual orientation, providing non-alcohol based community spaces and initiatives for LGBTI+ young people, and the safety of young people using dating apps, particularly young men.
  - **Older People Specifically:** Challenges arising during consultation related to being an older LGBTI+ person in Ireland include older people experiencing shame about being LGBTI+ and hiding their identity from doctors or care home staff out of fear. Suggested priorities to combat these challenges include considering the development of “gay / queer” nursing homes, providing training for workers in care homes, and understanding and addressing the multi-faceted needs of the ageing LGBTI+ population.

### 5.3 National and International LGBTI+ Research

In considering the future Strategy, we undertook a review of relevant Irish and international LGBTI+ research and literature to determine the key themes, gaps and priorities that might be considered for inclusion as part of the successor Strategy.

This section provides a high level overview of the work conducted. It is not intended to represent a complete literature review or synopsis of all available research reports which exist, rather it seeks to provide the salient points and common themes arising from the research in the context of the development of a future strategy for Ireland.

The research reviewed spanned a range of topics relevant to the lives of LGBTI+ people living in Ireland today. A list of the research and other reports reviewed as part of this exercise is included in the Bibliography at the end of this Report.

The main topics of relevance that emerged from this research are set out below.

- **Acceptance and Support:** Poor levels of acceptance and support within society, family, school, work and sporting environments have been identified across the breadth of research reports reviewed as posing considerable challenges for LGBTI+ individuals. The LGBT Ireland study found that acceptance by others was frequently cited as a key source of happiness among LGBTI+ people, and where this is absent it can act as a barrier to LGBTI+ people coming out.<sup>18</sup> The study shows that support from family, friends and others, and more accepting attitudes towards LGBTI+ people in

<sup>18</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>.

society are considered to enable people to come out. This suggests that it remains important that measures are taken to enhance education and awareness among the general population to enable greater levels of acceptance and inclusion of LGBTI+ people within their family and social circles.

- Following on from the above point which demonstrates that levels of acceptance remains a challenge for members of the LGBTI+ population generally, other research suggests that there are variations in the attitudes of the general population to specific groups within the LGBTI+ population. A number of studies have identified poorer attitudes towards transgender (and in some cases non-binary and intersex) people when compared to gay, lesbian and bi-sexual.<sup>19 20 21 22</sup> This demonstrates that within the broader LGBTI+ community, there are some groups who are more likely to face greater struggles around feeling accepted. This is an important consideration for the successor Strategy as it demonstrates the need to tailor some actions to address the specific challenges associated with individual groups, and a specific focus on educating people around transgender issues may be required.
- **Safety:** The research also strongly demonstrates an ongoing concern among the LGBTI+ population around personal safety, with instances of discrimination, harassment, hate and violence continuing to feature in their everyday lives both in Ireland and internationally. Instances of verbal abuse, physical abuse, online abuse, sexual abuse or violence, threats etc. are widely reported among the LGBTI+ population.<sup>23 24 25 26</sup> In Ireland, only one in three LGBTI people feel safe showing affection or holding hands in public, and only 40% of transgender people feel safe expressing their gender identity in public.<sup>27</sup> More recently in Ireland, a rise in a far right anti-LGBTI+ narrative has become more prevalent with recent reports of homophobic attacks on public transport<sup>28</sup> and a campaign of protests at public libraries against inclusion of LGBTI+ titles<sup>29</sup>. In addition a recent widely reported murder case involving a transgender teen in the UK<sup>30</sup> further evidences and substantiates the safety fears of LGBTI+ people, demonstrating that safety remains a considerable concern for members of the LGBTI+ community as they go about their daily lives.

<sup>19</sup> Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (2023). *Survey on people in Ireland's attitude towards diversity*. Government of Ireland. Available: <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/262032/7adc792f-7eb8-4027-90d7-0e556d277449.pdf#page=null>

<sup>20</sup> Noone, C., Hoey, H., Costa, E., Keogh, B., Buggy, C., & Browne, K. (2022). *Across the spectrum: attitudes towards minoritised genders and sexualities in Ireland*. Irish National LGBT Federation. <https://www.nxf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NXF-Across-the-Spectrum.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Haynes, A. and Schweppe, H. (2019). *Ireland and our LGBT Community*. Available: <https://hdl.handle.net/10344/8065>

<sup>22</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> MacNeela, P., Dawson, K., O'Rourke, T., Healy-Cullen, S., Burke, L., Flack, W. F. (2021). *Report on the National Survey of Staff Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish HEIs – Summary of Survey Findings*. Higher Education Authority. Available: <https://hea.ie/policy/gender/national-survey-of-the-experiences-of-students-in-relation-to-sexual-violence-and-harassment/>

<sup>25</sup> MacNeela, P., Dawson, K., O'Rourke, T., Healy-Cullen, S., Burke, L., Flack, W. F. (2021). *Report on the National Survey of Student Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions – Summary of Survey Findings*. Higher Education Authority. Available: <https://hea.ie/policy/gender/national-survey-of-the-experiences-of-students-in-relation-to-sexual-violence-and-harassment/>

<sup>26</sup> McBride, R.-S., Neary, A., Gray, B., and Lacey, V. (2020). *The post-primary school experiences of transgender and gender diverse youth in Ireland*. Limerick: University of Limerick and the Transgender Equality Network of Ireland. Available: [https://teni.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/0309-UL-Report-Body\\_online.pdf](https://teni.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/0309-UL-Report-Body_online.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Power, J. (2022). *Man (26) assaulted in suspected homophobic attack on Dublin Bus*. The Irish Times. Available: <https://www.irishtimes.com/crime-law/2022/08/16/man-26-assaulted-in-suspected-homophobic-attack-on-dublin-bus/>

<sup>29</sup> Fitzgerald, C. (2023) *Explainer: Why is the far-right targeting Ireland's libraries?* The Journal. Available: <https://www.thejournal.ie/library-protests-ireland-6135746-Aug2023/>

<sup>30</sup> Pidd, H. (2024). *Teens who murdered Brianna Ghey (16) sentenced to minimum of 22 and 20 years*. The Irish Times. Available: <https://www.irishtimes.com/world/uk/2024/02/02/teenagers-who-murdered-brianna-ghey-16-sentenced-to-minimum-of-22-and-20-years/>

- **Rural / Urban Divide:** The research conducted as part to our Review suggests that LGBTI+ people in rural areas report additional challenges, including feelings of isolation, loneliness, fear and stress<sup>31 32</sup>, and note the poor availability of services and supports in their locality when coming out as being particularly challenging.<sup>33</sup>
- **Mental Health:** Mental health challenges continue to be reported as being more prevalent among members of the LGBTI+ community compared with the general population. The LGBT Ireland report demonstrates higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression among LGBTI+ people, with 14-18 year-old LGBTI+ teens four times more likely to indicate severe or extremely severe levels than similar age groups in the general population.<sup>34</sup> This particular study also found that within the LGBTI+ population, intersex people have the highest levels of depression, anxiety and stress followed by transgender and bisexual people. A recent study of LGBTI+ life during lockdown further indicated that LGBTI+ people reported higher impacts on their mental health than the general population, with feelings of greater isolation and loneliness widely reported.<sup>35</sup>
- **Training for Professionals:** The importance of appropriate LGBTI+ training for professionals and service providers who engage with members of the LGBTI+ community is also widely reported in the literature reviewed. The professions that were identified as benefiting from such training include teachers and other staff in educational settings<sup>36 37 38 39</sup>, healthcare providers<sup>40 41</sup>, and service providers who work with other minority or at risk groups (for example, homeless people, asylum seekers etc.)<sup>42 43</sup>. More generally, the provision of LGBTI+ awareness training in workplaces,

<sup>31</sup> LGBT Ireland and NXF (2020). *LGBTI+ Life in Lockdown – Snapshot of Survey Findings*. Available: <https://lgbt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Life-In-Lockdown-271120.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> LGBT Ireland and NXF (2020). *LGBTI+ Life in Lockdown – Snapshot of Survey Findings*. Available: <https://lgbt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Life-In-Lockdown-271120.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> MacNeela, P., Dawson, K., O'Rourke, T., Healy-Cullen, S., Burke, L., Flack, W. F. (2021). *Report on the National Survey of Staff Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish HEIs – Summary of Survey Findings*. Higher Education Authority. Available: <https://hea.ie/policy/gender/national-survey-of-the-experiences-of-students-in-relation-to-sexual-violence-and-harassment/>

<sup>37</sup> MacNeela, P., Dawson, K., O'Rourke, T., Healy-Cullen, S., Burke, L., Flack, W. F. (2021). *Report on the National Survey of Student Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions – Summary of Survey Findings*. Higher Education Authority. Available: <https://hea.ie/policy/gender/national-survey-of-the-experiences-of-students-in-relation-to-sexual-violence-and-harassment/>

<sup>38</sup> McBride, R.-S., Neary, A., Gray, B., and Lacey, V. (2020). *The post-primary school experiences of transgender and gender diverse youth in Ireland*. Limerick: University of Limerick and the Transgender Equality Network of Ireland. Available: [https://teni.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/0309-UL-Report-Body\\_online.pdf](https://teni.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/0309-UL-Report-Body_online.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> Vaughan, E., Harrington, A., Költő, A., Kelly, C., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2022). *LGBTI+ Youth in Ireland and across Europe: A two-phased Landscape and Research Gap Analysis: Summary Report for the Research Sector*. Dublin: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

<sup>41</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Sartori, S. (2022) *Unveiling Inequality – Experiences of LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma: A peer-research project to explore and make visible the experience of exclusion of LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma*. National Action Group for LGBTI+ Traveller and Roma Rights. Available: <https://lgbt.ie/publications/unveiling-inequality-experiences-of-lgbti-traveller-roma-full-report/>

<sup>43</sup> Quilty, A., Norris, M. (2020). *A qualitative study of LGBTIQ+ youth in homelessness in Ireland*. Focus Ireland.

particularly to HR managers and other general managers, was also deemed important as was sensitivities around transgender issues.<sup>44</sup>

- **Intersectionality:** There is a very clear theme throughout the research reviewed that intersectionality poses additional complexities for members of the LGBTI+ community who face discrimination on multiple grounds – for example, elderly LGBTI+ people, those who are also Traveller or Roma, those with a disability, asylum seekers and members of religious communities. Such groups are also often at greater risk of physical and sexual violence, experience homelessness or temporary homelessness as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and may be inclined to hide their LGBTI+ identity out of fear of additional discrimination.<sup>45 46</sup> Such intersectional LGBTI+ people also report greater mental health challenges.<sup>47</sup>
- **Educational Environments:** Educational environments (schools, colleges and universities) continue to pose challenges for LGBTI+ people, where discrimination, harassment, hate, violence and sexual violence remain prevalent.<sup>48 49 50</sup> Transgender and gender diverse (TGD) young people in secondary schools are reluctant to come out for fear of marginalisation and where transition has occurred, trans people continue to experience transphobic comments and bullying from both students and staff.<sup>51</sup> Research suggests that the provision of LGBTI+ information and education in schools, colleges and university environments is lacking in Ireland, with a gap in education around transgender and gender non-conforming identities particularly noted.<sup>52</sup>
- **Legislation:** Finally, a number of studies highlighted a range of vital areas where legislation must be introduced and / or progressed, including legislation relating to conversion therapy<sup>53 54 55</sup>, gender

<sup>44</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>.

<sup>45</sup> Sartori, S. (2022) *Unveiling Inequality – Experiences of LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma: A peer-research project to explore and make visible the experience of exclusion of LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma*. National Action Group for LGBTI+ Traveller and Roma Rights. Available: <https://lgbt.ie/publications/unveiling-inequality-experiences-of-lgbttraveller-roma-full-report/>

<sup>46</sup> Quilty, A., Norris, M. (2020). *A qualitative study of LGBTQI+ youth in homelessness in Ireland*. Focus Ireland.

<sup>47</sup> LGBT Ireland and NXF (2020). *LGBTI+ Life in Lockdown – Snapshot of Survey Findings*. Available: <https://lgbt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Life-In-Lockdown-271120.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> Higgins, A; Doyle, L; Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F and Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>.

<sup>49</sup> MacNeela, P., Dawson, K., O'Rourke, T., Healy-Cullen, S., Burke, L., Flack, W. F. (2021). *Report on the National Survey of Staff Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish HEIs – Summary of Survey Findings*. Higher Education Authority. Available: <https://hea.ie/policy/gender/national-survey-of-the-experiences-of-students-in-relation-to-sexual-violence-and-harassment/>

<sup>50</sup> MacNeela, P., Dawson, K., O'Rourke, T., Healy-Cullen, S., Burke, L., Flack, W. F. (2021). *Report on the National Survey of Student Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions – Summary of Survey Findings*. Higher Education Authority. Available: <https://hea.ie/policy/gender/national-survey-of-the-experiences-of-students-in-relation-to-sexual-violence-and-harassment/>

<sup>51</sup> McBride, R.-S., Neary, A., Gray, B., and Lacey, V. (2020). *The post-primary school experiences of transgender and gender diverse youth in Ireland*. Limerick: University of Limerick and the Transgender Equality Network of Ireland. Available: [https://teni.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/0309-UL-Report-Body\\_online.pdf](https://teni.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/0309-UL-Report-Body_online.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> Vaughan, E., Harrington, A., Költő, A., Kelly, C., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2022). *LGBTI+ Youth in Ireland and across Europe: A two-phased Landscape and Research Gap Analysis: Summary Report for the Research Sector*. Dublin: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

<sup>53</sup> ILGA Europe (2023). *2023 Annual review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe and Central Asia*. Available: <https://www.ilga-europe.org/report/annual-review-2023/>

<sup>54</sup> Noone, C., Hoey, H., Costa, E., Keogh, B., Buggy, C., & Browne, K. (2022). *Across the spectrum: attitudes towards minoritised genders and sexualities in Ireland*. Irish National LGBT Federation. <https://www.nxf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NXF-Across-the-Spectrum.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Keogh, B., Carr, C., Doyle, L., Higgins, A., Morrissey, J., Sheaf, G. and Jowett A. (2023). *An exploration of conversion practices in Ireland*. School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin.

recognition<sup>56 57</sup>, hate crime<sup>58 59</sup>, recognition of legal parentage<sup>60</sup> and greater protection of the rights of intersex people<sup>61</sup>.

## 5.4 International LGBTI+ Strategies

As part of our research, we reviewed a range of LGBTI+ strategies from other countries in order to identify and understand the themes and priorities being addressed internationally as a means of informing the next strategy for Ireland.

A total of 11 international LGBTI+ strategies were reviewed. This included the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy (2020-2025) developed by the European Commission, in addition to 10 LGBTI+ strategies developed by specific countries (Northern Ireland, Malta, Iceland, Sweden, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Norway).

It is important to note that variations of the LGBTI+ acronym were encountered through our international research, including LGBT+, LGBTQ+, LGBTIQ+, LGBTI. However, for the purpose of reporting on a consolidated basis, we have used the LGBTI+ acronym as is used in the Irish context, however it is intended that use of this acronym covers all other variations.

Collectively, these international LGBTI+ strategies present a broad range of strategic priorities which have been consolidated and summarised below for the purpose of reporting:

- **Safety:** All strategies reviewed placed a strong emphasis on addressing the issue of safety among LGBTI+ people. Objectives and actions typically focused on eliminating discrimination, hate and violence, with some strategies also specifically highlighting issues around domestic violence<sup>62</sup> within LGBTI+ relationships. Some examples include providing grants to organisations that support LGBTI+ victims of honour-based or domestic violence<sup>63</sup>, establishing meeting places between the police and LGBTI+ people<sup>64</sup>, projects focused on preventing dating violence among LGBTI+ teens, and publishing an annual review of criminal consequences of anti-LGBTI+ crimes<sup>65</sup>.
- **Visibility:** The representation and visibility of LGBTI+ people in society, in addition to a recognition of their contribution to culture and heritage and their participation in sport were also common areas of focus across all strategies reviewed. Areas of focus include research to understand what encourages and prevents LGBTI+ participation in sport<sup>66</sup>, provision of funding for libraries and

<sup>56</sup> ILGA Europe (2023). *2023 Annual review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe and Central Asia*. Available: <https://www.ilga-europe.org/report/annual-review-2023/>

<sup>57</sup> Noone, C., Hoey, H., Costa, E., Keogh, B., Buggy, C., & Browne, K. (2022). *Across the spectrum: attitudes towards minoritised genders and sexualities in Ireland*. Irish National LGBT Federation. <https://www.nxf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NXF-Across-the-Spectrum.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> ILGA Europe (2023). *2023 Annual review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe and Central Asia*. Available: <https://www.ilga-europe.org/report/annual-review-2023/>

<sup>59</sup> Noone, C., Hoey, H., Costa, E., Keogh, B., Buggy, C., & Browne, K. (2022). *Across the spectrum: attitudes towards minoritised genders and sexualities in Ireland*. Irish National LGBT Federation. <https://www.nxf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NXF-Across-the-Spectrum.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> Bracken, L. (2021). *LGBTI+ parent families in Ireland: Legal recognition of parent-child relationships*. Irish Research Council.

<sup>61</sup> Ní Mhuirthile, T., Feeney, M., Duffy, M., Staines, A. (2022). *Mapping the lived experiences of intersex/variations of sex characteristics in Ireland: Contextualising lay and professional knowledge to enable development of appropriate law and policy*. Dublin City University.

<sup>62</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>63</sup> Government of Sweden (2022). *Action plan for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTIQ people*.

<sup>64</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>65</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>66</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

archives in the area of LGBTI+ heritage<sup>67</sup>, and supporting occasions such as the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia and Pride<sup>68</sup>.

- **LGBTI+ Healthcare:** All international strategies reviewed sought to address the health needs of LGBTI+ people, with a view to achieving greater inclusivity of LGBTI+ people and equal access to healthcare for all. A specific focus on mental health and sexual health was typically noted across all international strategies, with many also including specific actions targeting the healthcare needs of transgender and intersex people. Examples of the breadth of actions and initiatives being undertaken internationally include provision of respectful and appropriate medical care to lesbian and bisexual women<sup>69</sup>, creating a grant scheme for mental health<sup>70</sup>, expansion of health services offered to trans people<sup>71</sup>, creation of an intersex health interdisciplinary team<sup>72</sup>, and reviewing medical practices for children born with differences in sex development<sup>73</sup>.
- **Rights and Legislation:** There was a common theme around protecting the rights of LGBTI+ people with all strategies reviewed including some actions relating to progressing these rights or developing legislation for the benefit of LGBTI+ people. A number of areas where legislation is being advanced were noted, including banning conversion therapy<sup>74</sup>, legislating for hate crimes and hate speech<sup>75</sup>, enhancing legislation in relation to gender recognition<sup>76 77</sup>, reviewing of blood donation eligibility procedures<sup>78</sup>, enhancing equality and discrimination legislation<sup>79</sup>, and strengthening the role of equality bodies<sup>80</sup>.
- **Intersectionality:** There was a common tendency across all strategies reviewed to consider the intersectional needs of LGBTI+ people. Specific actions were noted in relation to migrants, asylum seekers, disabled people, members of religious groups and ethnic minorities.
  - *Migrants:* Areas of focus in other strategies include the improved access to sexual health services for migrants<sup>81</sup>, working with civil society organisations to promote acceptance of sexual diversity within refugee and migrant communities<sup>82</sup>, and extending legal gender recognition to migrants<sup>83</sup>.
  - *Asylum seekers:* Areas of focus in other strategies include creation of transfer procedures between asylum shelters in the case of anti-LGBTI+ discrimination<sup>84</sup>, producing guidelines for asylum centres on how to address needs of LGBTI+ asylum seekers<sup>85</sup>, and developing a glossary of LGBTI+ terms in various languages for use by interpreters<sup>86</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Gender & LGBTI equality policy plan 2018-2021*.

<sup>68</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>69</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>70</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>71</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>72</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>73</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>74</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>75</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>76</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>77</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>78</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

<sup>79</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>80</sup> European Commission (2020). *LGBTIQ equality strategy 2020-2025*.

<sup>81</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>82</sup> Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Gender & LGBTI equality policy plan 2018-2021*.

<sup>83</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>84</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>85</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

<sup>86</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

- *Members of religious groups:* Areas of focus in other strategies include provision of regional and local courses on LGBTI+ for religious communities<sup>87</sup> and collection of data on attitudes towards LGBTI+ people in religious communities<sup>88</sup>, and support for activities of national networks of LGBTI+ Christians<sup>89</sup>.
- *Disabled people:* Areas of focus in other strategies include ensuring the visibility of LGBTI+ persons with a disability in awareness campaigns<sup>90</sup> and the facilitation of communication between government and LGBTI+ and disability NGOs<sup>91</sup>.
- *Ethnic minorities:* Areas of focus in other strategies include researching complex discrimination against LGBTI+ people from ethnic minority backgrounds<sup>92</sup> and providing funding for counselling services for LGBT people with ethnic minority background<sup>93</sup>.
- **Funding for Civil Society:** Eight strategies included actions relating to the funding of civil society organisations with a view to enhancing their capacity to provide vital services and supports for LGBTI+ people. Funding dedicated to specific initiatives relating to suicide prevention targeted at young LGBTI+ people<sup>94</sup>, provision of additional supports for LGBTI+ victims of domestic violence<sup>95</sup>, availability of meeting places for young LGBTI+ people<sup>96</sup>, and funding for Pride events<sup>97</sup>.
- **Workplaces:** Eight strategies highlighted workplace inclusion and ensuring equal employment opportunities for LGBTI+ people. Areas of focus include clarifying rules on facilities access for trans people in the workplace<sup>98</sup>, raising awareness among employee unions and employer associations<sup>99</sup>, and integrating LGBTI+ perspectives in labour market research<sup>100</sup>.
- **Data and Research:** Seven international strategies focused on enhancing LGBTI+ data and research in order to further develop understanding of the LGBTI+ community and particular issues faced by its members. Similar to Ireland, the strategies included actions relating to inclusion of questions in the Census<sup>101</sup>, gathering of disaggregated data<sup>102</sup> and addressing data gaps in order to enhance understanding on the socio-economic situation of the LGBTI+ population.<sup>103</sup> In addition, other actions identified specific research priorities, including research to enhance the understanding of living conditions of intersex people<sup>104</sup>, the wellbeing of LGBTI+ disabled people and LGBTI+ elders<sup>105</sup>, community-led policy research<sup>106</sup>, and the challenges and stigma relating to “coming out”<sup>107</sup>.

<sup>87</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government’s action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>88</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government’s action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>89</sup> Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Gender & LGBTI equality policy plan 2018-2021*.

<sup>90</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>91</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>92</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government’s action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>93</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

<sup>94</sup> Government of Sweden (2022). *Action plan for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTIQ people*.

<sup>95</sup> Government of Sweden (2022). *Action plan for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTIQ people*.

<sup>96</sup> Government of Sweden (2022). *Action plan for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTIQ people*.

<sup>97</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>98</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>99</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>100</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

<sup>101</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada (2022). *Canada’s first federal 2SLGBTQI+ action plan*.

<sup>102</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>103</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>104</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

<sup>105</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>106</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada (2022). *Canada’s first federal 2SLGBTQI+ action plan*.

<sup>107</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

- **International LGBTI+ Visibility:** Six strategies included actions with an international focus, such as placing emphasis on the rights on LGBTI+ people in foreign policy<sup>108</sup>, opposing the development of new LGBTI+-phobic legislation<sup>109</sup>, emphasising cooperation with LGBTI+ activists in other countries<sup>110</sup>, encouraging the depathologisation of trans identities and intersex bodies<sup>111</sup>, and ensuring fair access to humanitarian assistance measures irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity<sup>112</sup>.
- **Educational Environment:** The education environment was encountered in five of the 11 strategies reviewed, with objectives and actions focused on enhancing inclusivity in schools, colleges and universities. In addition, actions aimed at developing educational curricula to reflect LGBTI+ issues were also noted in three international strategies. Areas of focus include improving sex education that includes LGBTI+ identities<sup>113</sup>, running campaigns to foster inclusion for LGBTI+ students<sup>114</sup>, production of guidance materials for schools concerning challenges faced by LGBTI+ children or children of LGBTI+ parents<sup>115</sup>, and conducting a study of the well-being of LGBTI+ children and youth in school<sup>116</sup>.
- **Privacy and Family Life:** Four strategies focused on the rights of LGBTI+ people to privacy and family life, including actions relating to the adoption and celebration of diverse family structures. Areas of focus in other strategies include engaging children from rainbow families in public consultations<sup>117</sup>, training staff who issue adoption licences to avoid discrimination against LGBTI+ couples<sup>118</sup>, and conducting a review of family law regulations to achieve a more gender-neutral and egalitarian regulation of parenthood<sup>119</sup>.
- **Education and Awareness / Training for Professionals:** The need for greater education and awareness of the general public was often addressed hand-in-hand with the need for training of professionals in the international strategies, and was noted in four of the 11 strategies reviewed. Areas of focus for training include management personnel in the public sector<sup>120</sup>, care staff and activity staff who work with older LGBTI+ people<sup>121</sup>, police<sup>122</sup>, healthcare professionals<sup>123</sup>, and raising awareness among staff within the media industry of balanced LGBTI+ representation in media and advertising<sup>124</sup>.
- **Rural / Urban Divide:** Three strategies placed a focus on providing supports and services to LGBTI+ people in more rural communities outside of larger cities and LGBTI+ people in agricultural industries. Areas of focus in other strategies relevant to LGBTI+ people in rural and agricultural

<sup>108</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>109</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>110</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>111</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>112</sup> Federal Foreign Office of Germany (2021). *LGBTI inclusion strategy for foreign policy and development cooperation*.

<sup>113</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government's action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>114</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>115</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

<sup>116</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>117</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>118</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>119</sup> Government of Sweden (2022). *Action plan for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTIQ people*.

<sup>120</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>121</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2018). *Action plan to promote security, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBTI people*.

<sup>122</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>123</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>124</sup> Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Gender & LGBTI equality policy plan 2018-2021*.

communities include supporting LGBTIQ+ events organised in rural areas<sup>125</sup>, providing funding to allow community organisations to enhance support for LGBTIQ+ people in rural areas<sup>126</sup> and conducting a survey on the attitudes to and situation of LGBTIQ+ people within fisheries and agriculture industries<sup>127</sup>.

- **Whole-of-Lifecycle:** All international strategies reviewed took a “whole-of-lifecycle” approach, in that they were targeting the entire LGBTIQ+ population across all ages and stages of their lives. It was noted from our review that a number of strategies included actions specifically targeting the older LGBTIQ+ population or indeed younger LGBTIQ+ people. This approach recognises that the needs of LGBTIQ+ people will differ across the various life stages and ensures a more targeted approach to meeting the specific needs of the LGBTIQ+ community at various life stages.
  - Older people: Some specific actions targeting LGBTIQ+ older people include the provision of outreach programmes to foster LGBTIQ+ inclusion in day and residential centres<sup>128</sup>, development of guidelines for the elderly care sector on how to better address LGBTIQ+ inclusion<sup>129</sup>, and undertaking research into the challenges and barriers experienced by LGBTIQ+ seniors, particularly financial, psychosocial, housing, medical and legal.<sup>130</sup>
  - Younger people: While many of the actions relating to the education environments are targeting younger LGBTIQ+ people, in addition, one international strategy focused on fostering greater engagement with LGBTIQ+ children and children of rainbow families in public consultations.<sup>131</sup>
- **Key Groups:** In addition to including actions that specifically focus on intersectional groups as listed above, and younger and older LGBTIQ+ people, our review of international strategies also noted some specific actions targeting other specific groups within the LGBTIQ+ community. These were:
  - LGBTIQ+ victims of domestic violence
  - LGBTIQ+ persons engaged in Chemsex
  - Children of rainbow families
  - Elderly LGBTIQ+ people in care

## 5.5 Outstanding Actions from the Current Strategy

In considering the successor Strategy, it will be important to reflect on the areas that were partially achieved, or not achieved, as part of the current Strategy. The RAG review clearly sets out 19 actions that are deemed not achieved, and a further 31 that are considered partially achieved. This indicates that there has been positive progress (either full or partial) on 83% of the actions, however a number of gaps remain where actions were not achieved or not fully achieved.

We have undertaken a preliminary assessment of the 19 actions deemed not achieved to provide an opinion on whether these should be considered for inclusion in the successor Strategy. However, that is not to say that all of these actions should be brought forward to the second Strategy. It will remain necessary to undertake a comprehensive review of these outstanding actions as part of successor Strategy process in order to understand if they remain relevant five years after they were originally drafted and bearing in mind developments that have taken place since. This review should include consultation with relevant

<sup>125</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>126</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada (2022). *Canada's first federal 2SLGBTQI+ action plan*.

<sup>127</sup> Government of Iceland (2022). *Parliamentary resolution on a LGBTI action programme for the period of 2022-2025*.

<sup>128</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>129</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>130</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada (2022). *Canada's first federal 2SLGBTQI+ action plan*.

<sup>131</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

stakeholders, and those actions considered still to be relevant should be the subject of a prioritisation process alongside all other relevant actions identified for the successor Strategy.

As noted in Section 4, implementation of the current Strategy was challenged by the vast quantity of actions included, and therefore it might be more appropriate to focus on those actions that would provide greatest impact for LGBTI+ people, or relevant sub-cohorts, as part of the next Strategy. This should be given due consideration as part of the overall strategic prioritisation process.

Our preliminary assessment of the 19 actions deemed not achieved is set out below.

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Assessment of Relevance for Future Strategy
<b>Pillar 1: Visible and Included</b>		
2.4. Develop a Civil and Public Service wide LGBT+ Employee and Ally Network.  <b>Not achieved</b>	DCEDIY	Workplace inclusion was addressed in eight of 11 international strategies reviewed, however it did not emerge to a great extent in our research and there was limited focus on this area throughout our consultation process. It remains important that workplaces are welcoming and inclusive of the LGBTI+ community, however there has been a considerable focus on EDI more generally across Irish workplaces in recent years which may suggest that targeted LGBTI+ specific action in this area is no longer a necessity. While a network of this kind would be welcome, based on our consultation we suggest that there may be other actions of greater priority that should be considered in the successor Strategy.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: No</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 channels.  <b>Not achieved</b>	DBEI	As per 2.4 above, while a network of this kind would be welcome, based on our consultation we suggest that there may be other actions of greater priority that should be considered in the successor Strategy.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: No</b>
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.  <b>Not achieved</b>	DCEDIY	There is already a wealth of publicly available information for employers available online to support employers in navigating equality and discrimination laws and providing a safe and supportive working environment for members of the LGBTI+ community. It is not clear what additional value could be provided by DCEDIY in developing an additional information source.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: No</b>
2.8. Develop guidance information for transgender people to support their continued participation in the workplace,	DCEDIY	While there are many publicly available resources to support inclusion of transgender and non-binary people in the workplace, these

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Assessment of Relevance for Future Strategy
<p>particularly during their time of transitioning.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>		<p>are typically guides for the workplace as opposed to for the transgender person themselves. Some information directed at the transgender person is available however it is limited. Development of a comprehensive guide for transgender people to support their continued participation in the workplace and helping them to navigate the difficult transition period would be useful.</p> <p><b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b></p>
<p>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 to include LGBTI+.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DBEI	<p>The possibility of introducing an LGBTI+ verification scheme was explored during the Strategy and it was determined that this would not be possible without an Irish LGBT Chamber in place. We understand that LGBT Ireland are exploring the feasibility of establishing a Chamber in Ireland and starting a verification scheme. A diversity certification for SMEs is deemed relevant for promoting inclusion in Ireland, however it appears that the relevant underpinning structures need to be developed prior to development of a certification scheme in itself. It may be more appropriate to include actions that focus on developing these underpinning structures first and foremost.</p> <p><b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: No</b>, although consideration could be given to including an action related to developing the necessary underpinning structures should this be deemed important</p>
<p>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.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY	<p>LGBTI+ visibility and inclusivity are two important issues for the LGBTI+ community, as evidenced by our research and consultation process. The need for greater visibility and inclusivity in rural areas in particular was noted. We understand that work has been done as part of the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy to develop a public recognition marker. Rolling this out nationally would provide greater LGBTI+ visibility, particularly in rural areas where visibility is often lacking. It would also highlight inclusive and safe spaces where LGBTI+ people would feel welcome.</p> <p><b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b></p>
<p>3.3. Take practical measures to increase the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY	<p>The provision of non-gendered toilets continues to be an important concern for trans and non-binary people, and efforts to increase such availability (where possible) should be progressed. Challenges were noted in the delivery of this action, such as the difficulty in</p>

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Assessment of Relevance for Future Strategy
		<p>altering old public buildings or rented premises. In addition, the Office of Public Works are the designated body responsible for public buildings and therefore appropriate ownership of this action should be considered in progressing this action to the next Strategy.</p> <p><b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b></p>
<p>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.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY	<p>Understanding the spread of LGBTI+ community services and funding is a valuable way of identifying where such services are lacking, particularly in rural areas. During the consultation phase of this review, there was a strong consensus among participants that more must be done to address intersectional needs, and such a mapping exercise would be beneficial to understanding the availability of supports for this group, and to the wider LGBTI+ population more generally.</p> <p><b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b></p>
<p>6.6. Engage with existing networks within the farming sector to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and to combat rural isolation.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DAFM	<p>During the consultation phase of this review, the lack of community services and supports for LGBTI+ people in rural areas and the isolation and loneliness experienced by LGBTI+ people outside of urban areas was repeatedly raised as an issue. The inclusion of an action with the objective of combatting rural isolation remains highly relevant for the next Strategy, however focusing on the farming sector alone may limit engagement with other relevant networks and groups within these communities. Perhaps the action could be broadened to reflect the farming sector in addition to other relevant community networks in rural areas.</p> <p><b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b>, although we suggest it may be broadened to include other rural community networks also</p>
<p>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.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DTCAGSM	<p>The sentiment of this action could be incorporated into a broader LGBTI+ research programme of work, whereby LGBTI+ history and culture could form one strand of an overall research programme.</p> <p><b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: No</b>, but consider in the context of broader research programme of work</p>
<p>7.3. Use the Business to Arts programme to fund LGBTI+ artists and promote positive visibility.</p>	DTCAGSM	<p>Creating a mechanism to fund LGBTI+ artists and promote visibility is an important consideration for LGBTI+ people in Ireland, however this is an example of where an action</p>

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Assessment of Relevance for Future Strategy
<b>Not achieved</b>		is out of the direct control of the Government to deliver on the basis that the Business to Arts programme is an independent charitable organisation. As this funding programme is outside of the Department's and Government's direct control, we do not deem it suitable for inclusion in the next national Strategy. However, alternative mechanisms for funding LGBTI+ artists and promoting visibility might be considered.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: No</b>
<b>Pillar 2: Treated Equally</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.  <b>Not achieved</b>	DCEDIY	We understand that some individual public bodies have enhanced administrative processes in this area, however transgender people still face a fragmented approach to updating their records separately with each relevant Department or public service organisation. Streamlining processes would be beneficial.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b>
13.1. Design and implement programmes and measures to address intersectional discrimination in partnership with NGOs and target communities.  <b>Not achieved</b>	DCEDIY	Addressing intersectional discrimination was repeatedly raised in consultation as part of this Review, and emerged as a strong area of focus throughout our research and review of international strategies.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b>
<b>Pillar 3: Healthy</b>		
15.3. Include consideration of the needs of different population groups including the LGBTI+ community in the development of standards for STI services.  <b>Not achieved</b>	HSE	We acknowledge that considerable progress has been made in the area of sexual health under the current Strategy, and the development of standards for STI services is the one area where no progress was noted. The development of standards for STI services with consideration of the LGBTI+ population would be an important step forward in ensuring high quality services are maintained.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</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.  <b>Not achieved</b>	HSE	The importance of improving transgender healthcare in Ireland was a key theme identified during consultation. In order for transgender health services to be developed, it is vital that the appropriately skills and experienced specialist staff resources are in place. Very poor progress was made with respect to transgender healthcare under the

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Assessment of Relevance for Future Strategy
		current Strategy, and it therefore must be prioritised in the successor Strategy. <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b>
19.2. Continue to develop transgender health services for children and adults in Ireland with a clear transition pathway from child to adult services.  <b>Not achieved</b>	HSE	The importance of improving transgender healthcare in Ireland was a key theme identified during consultation. Very poor progress was made with respect to transgender healthcare under the current Strategy, and it therefore must be prioritised in the successor Strategy.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b>
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.  <b>Not achieved</b>	DH	The importance of improving transgender healthcare in Ireland was a key theme identified during consultation. Very poor progress was made with respect to transgender healthcare under the current Strategy, and it therefore must be prioritised in the successor Strategy. It may be beneficial to consider whether ownership of this action is better aligned with the HSE rather than the Department of Health. <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b>
19.4. Provide clear guidelines to health practitioners on referral pathways for trans young people and their families to specialised services.  <b>Not achieved</b>	DH	The importance of improving transgender healthcare in Ireland was a key theme identified during consultation. Very poor progress was made with respect to transgender healthcare under the current Strategy, and it therefore must be prioritised in the successor Strategy. It may be beneficial to consider whether ownership of this action is better aligned with the HSE rather than the Department of Health.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</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	DH	We understand that while this action was not progressed by the Department of Health during the Strategy, a separate piece of research on intersex people was conducted by DCU in 2022. There remains a need for enhanced understanding on the needs of intersex people, and while the DCU research is a positive starting point, the successor Strategy could consider building on this to aid

Action	Reporting Department Responsible	Mazars' Assessment of Relevance for Future Strategy
expert working group to develop clinical guidelines. <b>Not achieved</b>		greater understanding in this area. Further research in this area remains necessary and therefore the action remains important, however it may be necessary to reconsider the specifics of the action in light of the DCU research that has since been completed.  <b>Consider for inclusion in successor Strategy: Yes</b> , although the specifics of the action may need to be reconsidered
<b>Pillar 4: Safe and Supported</b>		
N/A – none of the actions were deemed Not Achieved under Pillar 4		

Table 29: Assessment of Relevance of 'Not Achieved' Actions for Future Strategy

Based on the assessment above, we have deemed 13 of the 19 not achieved actions as still relevant for consideration in the successor Strategy. In many cases, we have suggested tweaks or amendments to the actions which may serve to make them more relevant to the current environment given that a number of years has elapsed since these actions were originally drafted.

It is important to reiterate that our assessment was based on whether or not these actions should be *considered* for inclusion in the successor Strategy. As mentioned above, it is recommended that these actions be subjected to a detailed prioritisation process at the stage of strategy development, alongside all other potential actions that are being considered for inclusion in the successor Strategy. We recommend that the successor Strategy includes a smaller number of actions than the current Strategy, and this should be borne in mind when developing the successor Strategy and deciding on the overall suite of actions to be included.

## 5.6 Key Themes Emerging

Consolidating the information gathered from the four distinct inputs to this Review, the following areas emerged strongly as areas that require further consideration as part of the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

Theme	Summary Details
<b>Broadening Provision of and Access to Essential Healthcare Services</b>	It is noted that developments were made in some healthcare services under the current Strategy, including increased availability of the HPV vaccine, provision of home testing STI kits, condom distribution services, provision of community HIV testing and provision of PrEP. However, it is clear that less progress has been made in other vital areas and these remain significant challenges for LGBTI+ people.  <b>Transgender Healthcare:</b> A common frustration throughout the consultation process is the lack of progress in transgender healthcare services which are impacted by long waiting lists and non-existent health services for trans youths,

Theme	Summary Details
	<p>leaving trans people to self-medicate and/or seek healthcare abroad.<sup>132</sup> Transgender Europe (TGEU), funded by the EU, ranked Ireland as the worst member state for the provision of trans-specific healthcare in 2022<sup>133</sup> and the ILGA also referenced the increased barriers to healthcare as a significant challenge for trans people.<sup>134</sup> Since the last strategy was developed, the World Health Organisation has endorsed the new ICD 11, which came into effect globally in January 2022. ICD 11 has moved gender affirming care away from being a mental health led service, stating that “trans related and gender-diverse identifies are not conditions of mental ill-health, and that classifying them as such can cause enormous stigma”.<sup>135</sup> The development of policy and the provision of available and accessible healthcare for transgender youths and adults, in line with global standards for gender affirming care, must be treated as a critical priority for the next strategy.</p> <p><b>Lesbian Healthcare:</b> Healthcare for lesbian women was also identified as an area for further exploration. Consultation participants reported significant misinformation in relation to lesbian healthcare needs (e.g. myths that lesbian women do not require cervical screening / smear tests), and emphasised the need for greater education and understanding among healthcare professionals, in addition to provision of health information and guidance for lesbian women themselves.</p> <p><b>Mental Health:</b> The need for further enhancements in the area of mental healthcare was also highlighted at length in our consultation process. It was emphasised that mental health issues need a greater focus in the successor Strategy as there is a feeling that in the current Strategy, a focus on sexual health received greater priority. Particular areas of focus raised include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSE mental health services that have ring-fenced dedicated LGBTI+ provision (e.g. a mental health unit working specifically with LGBTI+ people)</li> <li>• Mental health supports for people who have been subject to conversion therapy</li> <li>• Development of mental health policies for LGBTI+ people with input from LGBTI+ people</li> </ul>
<p><b>Progressing the Needs of Intersex People</b></p>	<p>The current Strategy sets out only two actions targeting this cohort with limited progress made. Research undertaken by DCU in 2022 sought to understand the lived experience of what it means to be intersex. This research presents a number of recommendations in relation to intersex people, including those relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration of birth</li> <li>• Strengthening human rights protections</li> <li>• Ensuring that no one is subject to unnecessary medical or surgical treatment during infancy or childhood</li> <li>• Introducing a formal legal definition of “sex characteristics” and “privacy”</li> <li>• Addressing delivery and resourcing gaps in healthcare services for intersex people and their families (including psychological support, fertility support</li> </ul>

<sup>132</sup> LGBT Ireland (2024). *Progress made. Renewed efforts required. A shadow report of Ireland’s first national LGBTI+ inclusion strategy*. Dublin: LGBT Ireland

<sup>133</sup> Transgender EU (2022). *Trans health map. Availability and accessibility of trans-specific healthcare*.

<sup>134</sup> ILGA Europe (2023). *2023 Annual review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe and Central Asia*.

<sup>135</sup> World Health Organisation (2022) *Gender incongruence and transgender health in the ICD*. Available: <https://www.who.int/standards/classifications/frequently-asked-questions/gender-incongruence-and-transgender-health-in-the-icd>

Theme	Summary Details
	<p>and provision of support groups) and ensuring timely access to all relevant services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing informed and objective education curricular content on intersex / variations of sex characteristics</li> <li>• The need for national public awareness campaign about intersex / variations of sex characteristics<sup>136</sup></li> </ul> <p>This research and the associated recommendations should be given careful consideration as part of the successor Strategy to identify where the greatest impact can be achieved for this group, and additional research should be undertaken to build on further on this knowledge base. It will be critical to demonstrate a commitment to achieving meaningful progress in this area over the term of the next Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Supporting LGBTI+ People in Rural Areas</b></p>	<p>Through consultation, the needs of LGBTI+ people in rural areas emerged as a significant issue. Issues identified included the little increase in funding for LGBTI+ community services in rural and isolated areas during the Strategy, isolation and loneliness faced by LGBTI+ persons, limited support services available to people coming out in rural areas and difficulty accessing services, the shortage (or in some cases the complete lack of) LGBTI+ services in rural areas, and the stigma faced by LGBTI+ people within the farming community. Further, research by Focus Ireland identified that young LGBTIQ+ people living in rural areas are at particularly high risk of becoming homeless when they come out or transition.<sup>137</sup></p> <p>Suggested priority areas arising during consultation included organising more events for LGBTI+ persons outside of Dublin / urban areas, increasing the visibility of LGBTI+ persons outside of Dublin, and promoting community for LGBTI+ persons in rural areas through LGBTI+ meet ups, social gatherings or rural Pride events.</p>
<p><b>Supporting LGBTI+ Elderly and Older People</b></p>	<p>During consultation it was suggested that further work needs to be done to support older members of the LGBTI+ community who encounter a unique set of challenges. Many people only come out as LGBTI+ in their older years, and they can be uncertain where to turn to for support particularly where their coming out can cause upset and challenge to family members (e.g. breakdown of marriage, impact on children etc.). Older LGBTI+ people can experience feelings of shame and isolation, and this can be further exacerbated in rural areas. Older people in care homes or navigating the healthcare system can often struggle to identify themselves as LGBTI+ in these settings.</p> <p>Review of international LGBTI+ strategies identified a number of initiatives being introduced in other jurisdictions targeting older LGBTI+ people. Amongst these are the provision of training for professionals working in elder care to combat LGBT phobias or prejudice<sup>138</sup> (similar to the established LGBT Champions Programme in the Irish context); developing guidelines for the elderly care sector on LGBTIQ+ inclusion<sup>139</sup>; conducting LGBTIQ+ inclusion outreach programmes in day and</p>

<sup>136</sup> Ní Mhuirthile, T., Teeney, M., Duffy, M. and Staines, A. (2022). *Mapping the lived experiences of intersex/variations of sex characteristics in Ireland: Contextualising lay and professional knowledge to enable development of appropriate law and policy*. Dublin City University.

<sup>137</sup> Quilty, A., Norris, M. (2020). *A qualitative study of LGBTIQ+ youth in homelessness in Ireland*. Focus Ireland.

<sup>138</sup> Government of France (2020). *#France LGBT+ national action plan to promote equal rights and combat anti-LGBT+ hatred and discrimination 2020-2023*.

<sup>139</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

Theme	Summary Details
	<p>residential homes<sup>140</sup>; and building the capacity of those working and volunteering in the elderly care sector to provide inclusive care.<sup>141</sup></p>
<p><b>Addressing Intersectionality</b></p>	<p>The consultation process repeatedly identified the need for greater understanding of intersectional needs amongst LGBTI+ people and the introduction of targeted measures to address these needs. The theme of intersectionality also arose regularly throughout our review of literature and international LGBTI+ strategies.</p> <p>It will be vital for the consultation process for the successor Strategy to take a targeted approach to engaging with intersectional groups to get an accurate and thorough understanding of the specific challenges these groups face and to identify the most appropriate actions that will address their needs.</p> <p>From the small portion of intersectional LGBTI+ members engaged throughout our short consultation process, some initial areas of focus have been identified. These are by no means exhaustive and more thorough and detailed engagement will be required to fully establish the needs of these and other intersectional groups.</p> <p><b>LGBTI+ People with a Disability:</b> Suggested measures included increasing partnership between the disabled and the LGBTI+ communities; combatting ableism in the LGBTI+ community; and increasing funding of LGBTI+ groups to expand their accessibility to disabled LGBTI+ people. Internationally, strategies have included actions such as providing sexuality and relationships advisory supports to people with disabilities, facilitating communications between the Government and NGOs working with LGBTI+ and disabled people and providing training and support to families of persons with a disability on sexuality and relationships and how to approach these issues.<sup>142</sup></p> <p><b>LGBTI+ Asylum Seekers:</b> There is a reported need for greater understanding of the complex needs of LGBTI+ asylum seekers coming to Ireland. Many asylum seekers are fleeing countries out of immense fear and their LGBTI+ identity can often be a considerable contributory factor in their need to leave their home country<sup>143</sup>. The asylum process can be complex in itself, and it was suggested during the consultation process that there needs to be a dialogue between the LGBTI+ structures and supports and the structures and supports provided to asylum seekers. Of particular note also was the challenges for asylum seekers located in rural areas in Ireland, where they already feel isolated and alone as an asylum seeker in a new country but also have nowhere to turn locally for LGBTI+ supports.</p> <p>The above points were raised in consultation by people who identified themselves as intersectional LGBTI+ members of the above groups. We acknowledge that there are a number of intersectional groups that are not reflected above and we encourage thorough and targeted consultation with other intersectional groups as part of the consultation process for the successor Strategy to ensure these voices are heard.</p> <p>Other suggested groups may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTI+ members of religious communities</li> <li>• LGBTI+ Traveller and Roma people</li> </ul>

<sup>140</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>141</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>142</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>143</sup> Jansen, S and Spijkerboer, T. (2011). *Fleeing Homophobia: Asylum claims related to sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe*. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

Theme	Summary Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTI+ people from ethnic minority groups</li> <li>• LGBTI+ people living in poverty</li> <li>• LGBTI+ homeless people</li> </ul> <p>Review of international LGBTI+ strategies demonstrates considerable focus on intersectionality. Of the 10 international strategies reviewed, the term intersectionality or multiple-discrimination was explicitly mentioned in 4 of these. In the strategies that did not directly refer to intersectionality by name, it was still implied by identification of specific actions relating to LGBTI+ asylum seekers, LGBTI+ people with disabilities, etc.</p>
<p><b>Addressing Discrimination, Hate and Violence</b></p>	<p>The prevalence of LGBTI+ hate crimes, hate speech and the spreading of misinformation and harmful narratives was highlighted on multiple occasions during the consultation process with evidence of an overall concern for safety among members of the LGBTI+ community. Some consultation participants felt that such occurrences are becoming more commonplace now than they were before, and particularly referenced the damaging impact of far-right ideologies and extremist views of some small yet very vocal groups. The increased use of social media and other online platforms to incite hate was also highlighted as particularly worrying.</p> <p>The 2023 ILGA report found the deadliest rise in anti-LGBTI+ violence in over a decade in Europe and Central Asia for the year 2022, with Ireland identified for its rise in transphobic speech and prevalence of LGBTI+ hate crime.<sup>144</sup></p> <p>Suggested methods of combatting this as identified in consultations included developing a communications strategy to deal with LGBTI+ misinformation; providing parents with factual and non-biased information to engage with their children on LGBTI+ concerns; improving the response from An Garda Síochána and government leaders to LGBTI+ hate incidents; placing more responsibility on social media platforms to combat LGBTI+ hate and ensure safety online; and creating a medium for LGBTI+ people to have discussions with people that subscribe to a hateful LGBTI+ narrative.</p> <p>This is typically a common theme that features across international strategies in various forms.</p>
<p><b>Enhancing Education and Awareness</b></p>	<p>While the current Strategy undertook a number of measures to increase education, awareness and understanding of LGBTI+ people and combat misinformation, the consultation process indicates that there remains a critical and ongoing need for constant education and awareness and provision of positive and accurate messaging with regard to the LGBTI+ community. Education needs span the full lifecycle of the general population and appropriate methods of reaching the broader population must be defined and targeted.</p> <p>The importance of starting with young people was emphasised, to prevent misinformation becoming engrained in the next generation. Schools and third level environments must support this education process and the curricula must continue to be adapted and developed to effectively reflect LGBTI+ matters.</p> <p>Other specific education and awareness needs that were suggested as part of the consultation process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness campaigns aimed at parents and family members of LGBTI+ people</li> </ul>

<sup>144</sup> ILGA Europe (2023). *2023 Annual review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe and Central Asia*.

Theme	Summary Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and enhanced understanding around consent, particularly for young people exploring their sexual orientation</li> <li>• Initiatives to raise awareness around LGBTI+ diversity among the immigrant population</li> <li>• Provision of information to religious communities</li> <li>• Embedding LGBTI+ modules and content into college courses, particularly for social work / healthcare / other relevant professions that provide services to the broader population</li> <li>• Provision of information campaigns and appropriate training on new legislation that impacts LGBTI+ community</li> </ul>
<p><b>Continued Provision of LGBTI+ Training for Professionals</b></p>	<p>In addition to education and awareness, consultation participants again raised the need for ongoing provision of specific LGBTI+ training for professionals who engage with LGBTI+ people. Those particularly identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare workers</li> <li>• Social workers</li> <li>• An Garda Síochána</li> <li>• Housing officers and those working in Direct Provision</li> <li>• Prison officers</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• NGO workers (particularly on equality issues facing intersectional LGBTI+ people)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation of Legislation</b></p>	<p>A number of gaps in legislation were highlighted for prioritisation as part of the successor Strategy, including legislation relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hate crime</li> <li>• Surrogacy and equal parenting rights</li> <li>• Conversion therapy</li> <li>• Gender Recognition for young people (under 18) and non-binary people</li> <li>• Banning sex normalising surgeries on intersex children</li> </ul> <p>The successor Strategy should consider the current legislative position of each of these areas and seek to progress these as part of the successor Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Funding for LGBTI+ Services and Supports</b></p>	<p>The consultation process identified the need for longer term funding commitments for LGBTI+ services and supports in order to safeguard them and ensure continued future sustainability. It was noted that some positive developments have taken place as part of the current Strategy – one example is the establishment of the FLAC LGBTI+ legal advice clinic – however the longevity of this service is fully dependent on funding continuously being made available. At present this service is funded through DCEDIY’s LGBTI+ Community Services Fund which is competition based and awarded on an annual basis. There is a call for long term and multi-annual funding commitments for such established initiatives to ensure that they are maintained into the future.</p> <p>In addition, consultation participants called for increased availability of funding more generally for LGBTI+ services, supports and community spaces.</p>
<p><b>Progressing Data and Research</b></p>	<p>In consultation, while research and data was identified as an area that experienced progression during the Strategy, the need to expand and enrich LGBTI+ data and research arose throughout our consultation process. For some aspects of the Strategy, a lack of baseline data has made it difficult to track whether actions have</p>

Theme	Summary Details
	<p>been making a difference. For example, it is not possible to compare hate crime statistics to those 20, 10 or even 5 years ago.</p> <p>Our consultation process indicated a broad desire among LGBTI+ stakeholders for greater levels of data and research in order to enhance and enrich the knowledge and understanding of LGBTI+ related matters.</p> <p>Priority areas for the expansion of LGBTI+ data and research suggested in consultation include intersectional data and longitudinal research repeated at regular intervals. In the international landscape, research and data priorities include collecting disaggregated data<sup>145</sup> and community-led policy research<sup>146</sup>. Some topics identified internationally for further research include the barriers to accessing trans healthcare for older LGBTI+ people<sup>147</sup>, LGBTI+ people with minority backgrounds<sup>148</sup>, and LGBTI+ people in religious communities<sup>149</sup>.</p> <p>In addition, participants acknowledged that it remains difficult to quantify the size of the LGBTI+ population and the potential inclusion of questions relating to sexual orientation and gender identity in the next Census was welcomed among consultation participants. We understand that potential Census questions will be piloted this year with a view to future inclusion in the 2027 Census.</p>

Table 30: Key Themes Emerging

## 5.7 Whole of Lifecycle Approach

Review of international LGBTI+ strategies indicates that typically these strategies consider the needs of LGBTI+ people across their entire lifecycle, from childhood through to adulthood. This is in contrast to Ireland’s current position, whereby a separate LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy exists for the 0-25 age group of LGBTI+ people. This is perhaps a feature of the structure of Government Departments at the time of Strategy development. The LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy was developed by the former Department of Children and Youth Affairs, while the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy was developed by the former Department of Justice and Equality. More recent reorganisation of Departments now sees Children and Youth co-located with Equality under a newly structured Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

It is important to acknowledge that different age groups of LGBTI+ people may have different needs at various times throughout their lives, and priorities will shift throughout the lifecycle. However, many themes are common and cross-cutting, and thus are relevant and can be applied to LGBTI+ people of all age groups (e.g. access to healthcare, implementation of legislation etc.). The specifics of the actions necessary to address these broader themes within different age categories however may vary.

While international LGBTI+ strategies reviewed take a whole of lifecycle approach, most contain some actions targeted at LGBTI+ people at specific life stages, such as childhood, youth or old age. In this way, the LGBTI+ strategies reviewed are inclusive of LGBTI+ people regardless of age while understanding that people have different needs and priorities at various points in their lives.

<sup>145</sup> Government of Malta (2023). LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027.

<sup>146</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada (2022). *Canada’s first federal 2SLGBTQI+ action plan*.

<sup>147</sup> Government of Malta (2023). *LGBTIQ+ equality strategy & action plan 2023-2027*.

<sup>148</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government’s action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

<sup>149</sup> Government of Norway (2023). *The Norwegian government’s action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026*.

Our research identified some other non-LGBTI+ focused strategies that have, within a single strategic plan, taken a life stages approach to developing objectives, explicitly considering the changing needs of people at critical transition periods of their lives. In such strategies it is recognised that infants, children, young people, adults and older people tend to experience distinct changes and events in accordance with their life stage, which forms the basis of the strategy development.

In developing the successor Strategy, it is considered preferable to develop a single Strategy that addresses the needs of the entire LGBTI+ lifecycle. This is in line with the approach being taken internationally and would also align with the newly structured DCEDIY.

Taking the key overarching themes identified for the successor Strategy, these can be broadly mapped across the whole lifecycle of LGBTI+ people as follows:

Theme	Lifecycle Stage					
	Under 18	18 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 55	56-65	65+
Broadening Provision of and Access to Essential Healthcare Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Transgender Healthcare	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Lesbian Healthcare	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Mental Healthcare	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Progressing the Needs of Intersex People	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supporting LGBTI+ People in Rural Areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supporting LGBTI+ Elderly and Older People				✓	✓	✓
Addressing Intersectionality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Addressing Discrimination, Hate and Violence (both online and offline)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enhancing Education and Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• LGBTI+ Education and Awareness Campaigns Targeting General Population	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• LGBTI+ Education and Awareness Through Schools and Third Level	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continued Provision of LGBTI+ Training for Professionals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Implementation of Legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Conversion Therapy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Gender Recognition for Under 18s	✓					
• Gender Recognition for Non-Binary People	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Hate Speech	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Surrogacy and Equal Parenting Rights		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Surgeries on Intersex Children	✓					

Theme	Lifecycle Stage					
	Under 18	18 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 55	56-65	65+
Funding for LGBTI+ Services and Supports	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Progressing Data and Research	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 31: Key Themes Emerging Mapped by Lifecycle Stage

## 5.8 Policy Context

In developing a national strategy of any kind, consideration of the policy context is important. Due consideration must be given to how the successor Strategy will link with other equality strategies and relevant national policies. It is important to note that the policy structure in Ireland provides for a Youth Policy Framework. The National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy was developed on foot of the *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (2014-2020)* overarching policy framework for children and young people aged 0-24. The new framework, *Young Ireland: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028* is now in place. In developing a whole of lifecycle successor Strategy, it will be important that the youth components appropriately take account of the *Young Ireland* policy framework, and that any other relevant policies and strategies that traverse the whole lifecycle are reflected.

A report has recently been drafted on the implementation of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy (2018-2021)<sup>150</sup>, and this report should inform the development of a whole of lifecycle successor Strategy. Some lessons learned have been set out in the report, and will be relevant for consideration in developing the successor Strategy, including:

- Creation of a high level strategy statement with clearly defined outcomes, aligned to relevant policy areas
- Clearly defined and strong continuous leadership and authorities
- Creation of an annual work programme with named leads and ongoing monitoring, which is reviewed and modified as required
- Development of a formative evaluation framework
- Development of actions with input from the relevant authority, linking budgets and accreditation to compliance and implementation
- Development of both mainstream and specific actions, aligned with equality impact assessments under the Public Sector Duty
- Establishment of an Implementation Oversight Committee, with regular progress reporting
- Development of a key co-ordinating function to manage changes and transitions of responsibility and loss of knowledge
- Development of reporting systems that synchronise with other relevant strategies and their respective monitoring frameworks
- Need for a considered approach to resourcing and funding strategy implementation, including multi-year funding for ongoing activities and funding for engagement with NGOs

<sup>150</sup> Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (2024) "Final Report on the Implementation of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2021"

Further, it may be beneficial to consider any outstanding actions in the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy as part of the prioritisation process for the successor Strategy.

## **5.9 Part 2 Conclusion**

It is evident that a broad range of challenges remain for the LGBTI+ population in Ireland, and the themes included in this section are by no means an exhaustive list.

However, it is important that the successor Strategy focuses on the areas of greatest need and it may not be possible for the successor Strategy to even address all of the issues identified in this Report. Developing a strategy typically involves a process of prioritisation which results in trade-offs.

Consideration of the LGBTI+ groups as individual cohorts and at different life stages rather than as a homogenous collective may allow for more impactful actions to be identified to address the most urgent and important needs in each individual group. Consultation participants noted that in recent years, progress among the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) community can be clearly seen, particularly in areas such as marriage equality, enhanced sexual health services, and general levels of acceptance. However, those engaged noted that progress related to the needs of trans and intersex people (TI+) has been slower. Each cohort within the umbrella LGBTI+ group will be entering into the successor Strategy at a different base level, and therefore it may be helpful to take a more targeted approach in addressing the specific needs of each group individually, focusing on what would make the biggest impact to the lives of people within each group at the relevant stages throughout their lives.



## 6 Recommendations

On the basis of the work conducted over the course of this Review incorporating our independent analysis and the input of stakeholders, we make the following recommendations to support development of the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

1. The successor Strategy should give careful consideration as to how it will best respond to the following themes which emerged strongly as key gaps and priorities over the course of this Review.
  - a. Broadening provision of and access to essential healthcare services (particularly transgender healthcare, lesbian healthcare and mental healthcare)
  - b. Progressing the needs of intersex people
  - c. Supporting LGBTI+ people in rural areas
  - d. Supporting LGBTI+ elderly and older people
  - e. Addressing intersectionality
  - f. Addressing discrimination, hate and violence (both online and offline)
  - g. Enhancing education and awareness
  - h. Continued provision of LGBTI+ training for professionals
  - i. Implementation of legislation
  - j. Funding for LGBTI+ services and supports
  - k. Progressing data and research which can demonstrate the extent to which policy is delivering on target outcomes

These themes should be explored in detail through research and stakeholder consultation in order to fully understand the needs to be addressed within each area.

2. The successor Strategy should take a whole of lifecycle approach, as is typically the case with LGBTI+ strategies internationally. The restructuring of Government Departments which has now brought Children and Youth under the same remit as Equality further reinforces the appropriateness of this whole of lifecycle approach. Young people were not engaged directly as part of the consultation process for this Review. In developing the successor Strategy, it is important that young people are specifically invited to participate in order to ensure that their needs are adequately addressed.
3. The successor Strategy should focus on how it can make the biggest impact in key priority areas, ensuring that scarce financial and other resources are focused in their application to the areas of greatest need and impact, not based on touching lots of areas. The number of actions should be reduced so that resources can be better directed towards achieving meaningful progress where it matters most for the LGBTI+ community, and for particular cohorts within that community. While the successor Strategy should still apply a holistic approach to all groups within the LGBTI+ community, it may be necessary to put greater weight towards progressing Transgender and Intersex initiatives given that very little progress was made in these areas under the current Strategy. This recommendation echoes the sentiments of Recommendation 8 in the 2023 evaluation of national equality strategies, which suggests that “Future strategic plans should include a limited number of key priority objectives and associated actions”.
4. A comprehensive review should be undertaken of the actions that were deemed “not achieved” in the current Strategy, in order to assess whether or not these actions remain relevant and should be brought forward to the successor Strategy based on objective criteria and prioritising areas of maximum need and impact. Due consideration should be given to the current environmental context and any changes that have taken place since the action was originally developed; the feasibility of the action being delivered; if the action is the optimal way to achieve the desired outcome; and the barriers to achieving the action over the last five years. We have undertaken a preliminary

assessment of actions that could be brought forward, however all proposed actions for the successor Strategy should still be subject to a detailed prioritisation process as part of the strategy development process.

5. The strategy should be supported by a clear strategy implementation framework including the following
  - a. Clearly prioritised actions using a standard framework (e.g. impact/ ease of implementation etc)
  - b. Where possible, actions should be linked to national policy and/ or legislation to support and encourage their implementation and prioritisation by action owners
  - c. Actions should be prioritised so that those with maximum impact or urgency are prioritised over others with lower impact or urgency
  - d. Clear and tangible key performance indicators should be developed hand-in-hand with the development of the actions, and these indicators should be outcome based. Input, output or outcome based KPIs should be considered. As recommended in the 2023 evaluation of national equality strategies, if suitable KPIs cannot be identified at the time the action is being developed, then the action should not be included in the Strategy, or the action should be altered as appropriate to ensure it is clearly measurable. This recommendation reflects Recommendations 12 and 13 in the 2023 evaluation of national equality strategies.
  - e. Consideration should be given to establishing an agreed annual action plan for each year of the strategy to support focus on specific actions on a year by year basis, followed by the development of a brief progress / status report on each action prepared by the relevant Sub-Committees and shared with the wider Committee at the end of each year.
  
6. The consultation process for the successor Strategy should focus on gaining a deep understanding of the intersectional needs of LGBTI+ people. It is recommended that individual intersectional groups be specifically consulted in order to fully understand the challenges and issues associated with each group, and to identify meaningful actions that would improve the lives of intersectional LGBTI+ people. Particular intersectional groups that should be considered for consultation include:
  - a. LGBTI+ people with a disability
  - b. LGBTI+ asylum seekers
  - c. LGBTI+ members of religious communities
  - d. LGBTI+ Traveller and Roma people
  - e. LGBTI+ people from ethnic minority groups
  - f. LGBTI+ people living in poverty
  - g. LGBTI+ people living in rural areas
  - h. LGBTI+ homeless people

Other equality strategies should also be considered in this context and the actions in the successor Strategy should be congruent with the work that is taking place elsewhere.

7. The approach to the development and operation of the Steering Committee should be considered carefully in line with good practice in Governance, to include for example:
  - a. Establishment of an annual schedule of in person and online overall Steering Committee and Sub Committee meetings with a minimum of 1 annual in person meeting of the full committee
  - b. A formal suite of Management Information should be developed so that the Steering Committee receives a standard pack of information on a periodic and scheduled basis to allow them to oversee the implementation of the full strategy (including reports from the Sub Committees etc.)
  - c. A formal sub-committee structure should be introduced to support the implementation of the successor Strategy. The Strategy Committee itself should remain ultimately responsible for oversight of implementation. We suggest that sub-committees, by priority area, pillar or similar, should be established and should take responsibility for monitoring and overseeing

the actions relevant to that area and ensure they are progressing as expected. The smaller sub-committee should meet more regularly than the full Steering Committee and focus on a reduced number of actions. The sub-committee should then report back to the Steering Committee on the progress of the actions under its remit at formal Steering Committee meetings. This recommendation echoes Recommendation 6 in the 2023 evaluation of national equality strategies, which relates to the “reliance on Steering / Strategy Committees to serve multiple purposes.”

8. The successor Strategy should be treated as a living document in practice, and ongoing consideration should be given to whether the actions remain relevant over the life of the Strategy. As developments occur, the Sub-Committees should be monitoring any impacts these have on implementation of specific actions and these should be brought forward to the full Steering Committee for consideration. A formal mid-term review should be undertaken by an independent third party, with a view to identifying any risks and establishing whether the actions remain relevant and are progressing as intended. Following the mid-term review, the list of actions should be revised and published so that there is clarity on the actions that will be progressed over the remainder of the Strategy term. This recommendation echoes the sentiments of Recommendation 7 in the 2023 evaluation of national equality strategies, which encourages “dynamic” strategies and “development of mechanisms through which emerging issues or challenges can be responded to throughout the strategy cycle”.
9. Recommendation 17 of the 2023 evaluation of national equality strategies relates to minimising the potential impact of disruptions on strategy implementation, and suggests the creation of a “comprehensive repository of knowledge on the various stages of strategy development and implementation ... including decisions taken and reflections on what went well, what challenges were experienced, and how these were handled. In the context of high turnover of equality strategy committee members, this repository could minimise the disruption of losing institutional memory.” Given the challenges encountered with change of Steering Committee membership and changing resources in delivery of actions, this recommendation should also be applied to the successor National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.
10. Finally we suggest that, in the development of the actions for implementation as part of the successor Strategy, each action is mapped to a national policy driver or legislative requirement to ensure that action owners prioritise it in the context of their other competing priorities.

# Appendices

# A

## Appendix 1 – Mazars’ Detailed Assessment of Actions

### PILLAR 1: VISIBLE AND INCLUDED

Strategic Outcome 1: <i>LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society</i>		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
1.1. Conduct a public awareness campaign to positively represent LGBTI+ identities and contributions to Irish Society.	<p>The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth launched the public awareness campaign ‘Looking back, moving forward’ in May 2023. The campaign sought to start a conversation about how far Ireland has come in achieving equality for the LGBTI+ community, while also reflecting on the work that remains to be done. The Department worked with key LGBTI+ influencers from diverse backgrounds to discuss their experiences of how Ireland has progressed and what challenges remain to be addressed, and created a series of 30 second videos and 3 minute videos discussing the key themes of the campaign.</p> <p>The campaign videos were shared on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) by a range of Influencers. Campaign analytics provided showed high levels of reach, with one particular Influencer sharing the post and garnering in excess of 600k views. The Department’s press circular for this campaign also achieved a higher "open rate" than average (5% higher than typical Department press releases).</p> <p>In addition, the Live Out Loud: Celebrating LGBTI+ Youth event was hosted as part of Pride 2021, live-streamed from the National Opera House in Wexford. Hosted by Stephen Byrne, with live music from the Pillow Queens, Live Out Loud featured video contributions from LGBTI+ young people, and those who work with them. The event was streamed across the Department’s social media, as part of Dublin Pride’s Video on-Demand Platform and on the RTE culture page, and the event was available for viewing on the RTE player after the date."</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
1.2. Identify key large-scale events each year to promote LGBTI+ visibility.	<p>We note the Live Out Loud event (referenced in Action 1.1 above) took place in 2021. We understand that this is the only large-scale event hosted over the duration of the Strategy aimed at promoting LGBTI+ visibility. We further note that the Department, the Minister and the Taoiseach actively support Pride on an annual basis, attending a number of events, and that statements are routinely made in the Dáil during Pride month etc.</p> <p>We understand from our consultation with DCEDIY that a series of internal staff changes took place within the Department which meant that this action was not progressed as planned. In addition, delivery of this action was impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic given that facilitation of large scale events and gatherings was restricted for</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 1: <i>LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society</i>		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>an extended period of time. However, these restrictions were relaxed over two years ago and no further events have taken place.</p> <p>The intention of this action was to identify a range of events each year to promote LGBTI+ visibility, however the quantity of large scale events to be delivered has not been defined by the action. The Department notes that whilst one large-scale event has taken place in 2019 in the form of the Live Out Loud event, the Minister and other members of Government have attended a large number of Pride events and as such consider the action to have been Partially Achieved.</p> <p>Should an action of this kind be considered as part of the successor Strategy, it would be more beneficial if a pipeline of other events were established, outside of Pride month, so that LGBTI+ visibility could be enhanced on an ongoing basis.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
1.3. Develop and implement further actions to support the positive portrayal and representation of LGBTI+ identities in broadcast media.	<p>The new Coimisiún na Meán (Media Commission) was formally established on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and the Commission's 2023 work programme has been published. The work programme sets out the intended creation of a Gender, Equality, Inclusion and Diversity strategy for the media sector. This strategy had not yet been published at the time of this Review and the review has therefore not been able to determine whether it includes actions relevant to positively representing LGBTI+ identities in broadcast media. However the Commission's work programme commits to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in the media sector so it is hoped that when this strategy is published, LGBTI+ inclusivity will be appropriately reflected and actions will translate into practice.</p> <p>Coimisiún na Meán has only recently been established, and at the time of this review the work of An Coimisiún in relation to EDI remains in its infancy. We understand however that a draft online safety code has since been published in May 2024, on foot of Article 28b of the EU's revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive. This code was published subsequent to the completion of our fieldwork for this Review. However, we understand that this will provide for the regulation of video sharing platform services (VSPS), such as YouTube, that are under Ireland's jurisdiction within the EU. VSPS will be required to take appropriate measures to protect the general public from material containing incitement of violence or hatred, including on the basis of sexual</p>	DTCAGSM

Strategic Outcome 1: <i>LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society</i>		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>orientation. This draft online safety code has been submitted to the European Commission for review and we understand that it is intended that it will be fully adopted later this year.</p> <p>In addition to the above, it is also worth noting that RTÉ has a Pride section on its website that includes various forms of LGBTI+ relevant content, such as interviews, articles, queer history lessons and queer archives thus demonstrating efforts to include representation of LGBTI+ identities in the content they provide.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
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.	<p>This action is strongly related to action 1.2. It calls for a "series of events" and as noted above the Live Out Loud event was the only LGBTI+ event hosted during the extended strategy period (excluding Pride events).</p> <p>That being said, we acknowledge the Department's active work and positive communications around Pride and note the Minister's involvement and participation in a range of Pride events and talks including: Pride Leaders Series Interviews; the Trinity annual Pride Celebration, the Bank of Ireland with Pride event, the LGBT Ireland Pride Breakfast, in addition to meeting with a range of LGBTI+ organisations. In addition, it is worth noting that the 'Looking back, moving forward' public awareness campaign delivered as part of Action 1.1 also contributed promoting LGBTI+ visibility and awareness as per Action 1.4.</p> <p>We understand that the Department further introduced a range of measures to promote LGBTI+ visibility and awareness (e.g. rainbow lanyards and pins, Pride flags, a Pride hike etc.) through their newly established EDI working group. While these are positive and welcome steps, they are limited in their ability to promote visibility, awareness and expertise as their reach is limited.</p> <p>On this basis this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
1.5. Explore opportunities for the appropriate inclusion of LGBTI+ lives in the curriculum as part of curriculum review at both	<p>The updated Junior Cycle SPHE curriculum was published in May 2023 and introduced in schools in September 2023 for students starting first year. Sexual orientation and gender identity feature in outcomes under 'Strand 1: Understanding myself and others' and 'Strand 2: Relationships and sexuality'. The Consultation Report on the Background Paper and Brief for the Review of Junior Cycle SPHE dated February 2020 indicated that LGBTI+</p>	DEduc

Strategic Outcome 1: <i>LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society</i>		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
primary and senior-cycle levels.	<p>NGOs were involved in consultation, with BelongTo Youth Service and GOSHH Ireland listed in the organisations which made written submissions.</p> <p>It is noted that the Senior Cycle SPHE specification remains in draft following public consultation that ran from 12<sup>th</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> November. We understand that the NCCA has submitted the finalised draft specification to the Department of Education for consideration and it is intended that it will be made available to schools shortly. We understand that schools will not be expected to implement this curriculum from September 2024/2025 unless they have the capacity to do so. This is to accommodate the necessary planning and preparatory work, including teacher education and classroom resources.</p> <p>The draft specification includes a note that under Strand 2: Relationships and Sexuality, each of the learning outcomes should be taught in a way that LGBTQ+ identities, relationships and families are fully integrated.</p> <p>We further understand that development of the new curriculum specifications for primary schools to include Wellbeing (SPHE and PE) is underway, and public consultation commenced in Q1 2024. The Department reports that the new curricula will be available for the 2025/2026 school year, and that the timing and pacing of implementation from September 2025 and the supports necessary for schools are being considered by the Department, Oide, NCSE and the NCCA.</p> <p>The Department note that the work in this area is on target and meeting the timeframe that was set for it. However, as the Senior Cycle SPHE specification remains in draft, as does the primary wellbeing specification, this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
1.6. Include LGBTI+ matters in the Relationship and Sexual Education curriculum review.	<p>A Report on the Review of Relationships and Sexuality Education in primary and post-primary school was published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in December 2019. It is understood that the Minister asked that six aspects of RSE be considered, one of which was LGBTQ+ matters.</p> <p>It is noted that a number of LGBTI+ representative groups were included in consultation for the review, such as the LGBTI Youth Advisory Panel; Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI); BeLonG To; ShoutOut; Gender, Orientation, Sexual Health and HIV, Limerick. In addition, written submissions were received from a number of LGBT+ NGOs.</p>	DEduc

Strategic Outcome 1: <i>LGBTI+ people are positively visible across all sectors of society</i>		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>While the inclusion of LGBTI+ matters in the curriculum is still pending, the completion of the Relationship and Sexual Education curriculum review with the inclusion of LGBTQ+ matters suggests that this action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
<p>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 Healthy 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.</p>	<p>Review of the work undertaken to achieve this action demonstrates that strong efforts have been made to reflect the LGBTI+ needs and interests in our libraries.</p> <p>Under the Healthy Ireland at your Library initiative, "Making the 'Big Talk' many small talks" is a guide that was developed to support conversations between parents and their children about relationships and healthy sexuality development. Age appropriate reading lists have been compiled for various age groups and cover a range of topics relating to sexuality and gender, including LGTBI+ topics.</p> <p>In addition, the Public Library Resource Guide for Schools includes over 80 titles in the LGBTQ+ section.</p> <p>Library acquisitions since 2019 show an additional 320 unique LGBTI+ titles, with a total of 3,083 copies of these titles available across the national network of libraries.</p> <p>On the basis of the significant acquisition and enhanced availability of LGBTI+ titles and the development of relevant LGBTI+ reading lists as part of the Healthy Ireland at your Library initiative, our independent Review deems this action as having been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DRCD

Table 32: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 1

Strategic Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
2.1. Further develop and implement LGBTI+ inclusive recruitment practices across the public sector in conjunction with PAS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.	<p>The following was noted in relation to developing and implementing LGBTI+ inclusive recruitment practices across the public sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In December 2021 publicjobs.ie commissioned the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) to review publicjobs.ie's equality monitoring data in line with the priority in the Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Strategy 2021-2023 of developing a data driven, evidence-based diversity profile of candidates throughout the recruitment process. This Review concentrated specifically on three characteristics: gender, ethnicity, and disability. From mid-2018 onwards, the Public Appointments Service (PAS) reports that candidates have been asked to provide information on a range of characteristics including sexual orientation and it is unclear why this was not included in the review.</li> <li>• PAS commissioned an ED&amp;I Diagnostic Review which took place in 2022 and reviewed all operational recruitment, assessment and assignment processes and internal policies from an ED&amp;I perspective. This Review identified recommendations to improve PAS policies and processes from an EDI perspective.</li> <li>• PAS hosted the 'You Count: Building an Inclusive and Diverse Public Sector' conference on 14th March 2023 at Dublin Castle. The conference included speakers of local and international expertise and real life experiences of public sector colleagues from diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>• A PAS representative spoke on a panel entitled "The Data Don't Lie" at the Pride@Work June 13th 2023 conference, discussing the power of equality data to drive change in ED&amp;I in the workplace.</li> </ul> <p>EDI is referenced widely across the PAS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the reviews mentioned above, however this Review did not find any occurrences of LGBTI+ specifically mentioned. It is reported that PAS tend not to call out specific groups in strategy documents but work towards making their recruitment service more inclusive and equitable for all, whatever their backgrounds. As this action includes 'LGBTI+ inclusive recruitment practices', the efforts in the broader area of EDI suggests that this action was partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DPER

Strategic Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
2.2. Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is a core feature of organisational and HR strategy and subject to ongoing review.	<p>The current transformation priorities for the Civil and Public Service are contained in Civil Service Renewal 2030 and Better Public Services - Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy. We understand that these strategies set out the equality, diversity and inclusion goals under the respective Workforce and Workplace of the Future pillars, including ensuring EDI is regarded in organisational strategy and policy.</p> <p>We note that the Civil Service will publish Progress Reports on the status of priorities within the Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy on an annual basis. For the Better Public Services - Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy, it is expected that Public Service Bodies report on progress in their annual reports.</p> <p>The above activities indicate that this action was achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DPER
2.3. Integrate diversity and inclusion perspectives into Civil Service workplace policy and practices including leadership training, PMDS, induction, and customer service training.	<p>The Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDR, formerly DPER) reported that all OneLearning courses, where relevant, reflect Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in their content. Copies of training materials were not made available to this Review, however sample course outlines were viewed and these include themes of equality, diversity and inclusion across areas such as leadership, communications and customer service, personal and team wellbeing, and people management training categories.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DPER
2.4. Develop a Civil and Public Service wide LGBT+ Employee and Ally Network.	<p>A focus group on the development of a Civil and Public Service wide LGBTI+ Employee and Ally Network took place in January 2020. This focus group was held by the Civil Justice and Equality Policy Team, who then intended to have a more detailed proposal to put to senior management in DJE and DPER in Q1 2020. We understand that progress stalled with the onset of COVID-19.</p> <p>The action was subsequently assigned to DCEDIY in March 2023. An EDI Strategy was simultaneously being developed within DCEDIY through an EDI working group. It was decided that this should be progressed first, with a view to a DCEDIY LGBTI+ Employee and Ally Network being established. This was deemed an important step prior to moving to establish a Civil and Public Service wide network.</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>At the time of this Review, the Civil and Public Serviced wide LGBTI+ Employee and Ally Network has not been established.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	
<p>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 channels.</p>	<p>Progress was made in this area prior to the publishing the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 such as a CSR CEO/Leaders' Breakfast hosted by DBEI in conjunction with the CSR Stakeholder Forum which was held on 27th June 2019. 130 leaders from across Government, private and public sectors attended the event and panel discussions included Dublin Bus Workplace Gender Transition Policy and the rights and equality of trans people and their families by Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI).</p> <p>It is understood that the CSR Stakeholder Forum dissolved in 2020 and that the 'Towards Responsible Business Ireland National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020' that was due to finish at the end of 2020 was cut short in the Summer due to COVID and a reallocation of resources.</p> <p>Although progress towards this action can be seen before the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy was published in November 2019, this Review did not find evidence of progress made during the strategy period. It is noted that COVID-19 negatively affected plans for 2020 in this area, however the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy was extended until 2023. The restrictions faced as a result of COVID-19 were not as severe in 2021 - 2023 and work could have progressed in this area, for example through the development of a third national plan on CSR. On this basis this action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DBEI
<p>2.6. Develop an employers' toolkit for use in both the public and private sectors to promote workplace inclusion building on prior good practice such as the Diversity Champions programme.</p>	<p>DCEDIY and IBEC held preliminary discussions in 2021 regarding the development of an employers' toolkit and a scoping paper was developed. However progress on this action stalled and we understand from DCEDIY that it is intended that the EDI working group will consider this action as it progresses its work.</p> <p>It is noted that DCEDIY funded the development of an Employer Toolkit for the inclusive recruitment of trans and non-binary candidates which was launched in November 2023. However it is noted that this toolkit takes a narrower focus on trans and non-binary people only as opposed to addressing the needs of the broader LGBTI+ population as per the Diversity Champions Programme. Nonetheless this is a positive development in this area.</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>In order to further progress this action, the Department could consider how this toolkit could be adapted and developed to consider the broader LGBTI+ population.</p> <p>On the basis of the work undertaken at the time of our review, this action is deemed partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>We understand from DCEDIY that it is intended that the EDI working group will consider this action as it progresses its work.</p> <p>The recently launched Employer Toolkit for inclusive recruitment of trans and non-binary candidates again is a positive development that could be adapted and developed to advance this action.</p> <p>On the basis of the work completed at the time of our review, this action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
<p>2.8. Develop guidance information for transgender people to support their continued participation in the workplace, particularly during their time of transitioning.</p>	<p>There was no evidence of any guidance or information for transgender people having been developed. We understand from DCEDIY that it is intended that the EDI working group will consider this action as it progresses its work.</p> <p>This action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
<p>2.9. Promote the wellbeing of school and centre for education personnel, including LGBTI+ personnel in the context of the</p>	<p>It is noted that the Department of Education commenced a Wellbeing Employee Assistance Service (EAS) for all school staff in July 2020 through Spectrum Life, which includes a range of supports including free confidential helpline, free counselling, a wellbeing portal, webinars, podcasts and blogs. The EAS was extended to all school staff on a permanent basis effective from the 2022/23 school year.</p>	DEduc

Strategic Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
<p>implementation of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023.</p>	<p>There is some evidence of LGBTI+ focused events. In June 2022 an online seminar about LGBTQ+ workplace and family support was held. In June 2023, pride awareness month was highlighted in the monthly wellbeing series email from Spectrum Life and an online seminar focusing on inclusivity in the workplace, LGBTQ+ Communities and how to be more LGBTQ+ aware in our personal and professional lives was held on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Outside of pride month, an online seminar in October 2023 focusing on world mental health day, included "vibrant narratives within the LGBTQ+ community".</p> <p>The Department advised that engagement of the wellbeing series events amongst school staff is low and that the free counselling service is the most utilised EAS service amongst staff. Due to confidentiality and the sensitive nature, it is not known how many LGBTI+ staff members utilise the counselling service.</p> <p>It is understood that the EAS supports are promoted to all staff which would include LGBTI+ personnel, and on this basis the action is considered achieved. However the review did not present evidence of efforts to target promotion to LGBTI+ personnel specifically. This could be something that the Department could consider in the next strategy, perhaps by involving LGBTI+ NGOs in the promotion of wellbeing supports.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
<p>2.10. To further build LGBTI+ awareness and inclusive practices amongst SMEs and micro enterprises, develop LGBTI+ information events and/or learning modules for inclusion in LEO and Enterprise Ireland Diversity &amp; Inclusion training programmes.</p>	<p>Enterprise Ireland published its 'Emerging through Covid Guide 2021' which includes a diversity and inclusion section which includes specific reference to LGBTQ+ through the development of a D&amp;I calendar to highlight a number of dates for underrepresented groups.</p> <p>In 2023, Enterprise Ireland ran a pilot HR Forum across 30 SME clients. It is reported that this forum included a specific module focused on purpose-driven inclusive growth and diversity, equity and inclusion. It is not known if LGBTI+ awareness was specifically discussed at this forum.</p> <p>Enterprise Ireland also published its ED&amp;I statement in which it commits to being an ED&amp;I role model for all stakeholders. The organisation hosted a number of internal events to promote LGBTI+ awareness in Pride month.</p> <p>It is reported that Enterprise Ireland includes diversity and inclusion themes in their training programmes, including Leadership4Growth, Attracting &amp; Retaining Talent, SpotLight on Skills, however training materials</p>	<p>DBEI</p>

Strategic Outcome 2: Irish workplaces are inclusive of LGBTI+ people and support them in bringing their 'authentic selves' to work		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>were not available during this Review. Therefore Mazars cannot be satisfied that these training programmes build LGBTI+ awareness and inclusion practices.</p> <p>Some notable efforts have been made in relation to building EDI awareness which is encouraging, however the prevalence of LGBTI+ specific content could not be verified, apart from in the Emerging through Covid Guide. On this basis this action has been deemed partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
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 to include LGBTI+.	<p>It is understood that the NSAI discussed the possibility of running an LGBTI+ verification scheme with LGBT Ireland, the EGLCC and the German LGBT Chamber in May 2020. The outcome of this conversation was the decision that running the verification scheme without an Irish LGBT Chamber in place would not be feasible as the questions required for verification would be too intrusive without the parties already having a relationship. As such, the review did not present any evidence of the creation of a diversity certification scheme for SMEs.</p> <p>It is noted that LGBT Ireland are exploring the feasibility of establishing a Chamber in Ireland and starting a certification scheme.</p> <p>This action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DBEI

Table 33: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 2

Strategic Outcome 3: Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
3.1. Take measures to ensure the availability of suitable diversity training for civil	The civil service OneLearning courses, where relevant, reflect Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in their content. We understand that 26 new courses have been developed by OneLearning in the areas of Leadership, Customer Service and People Management which have EDI principles embedded throughout. Training	DPER

Strategic Outcome 3: Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
<p>service staff in customer facing roles.</p>	<p>materials were not made available to this Review, however sample course outlines were viewed including a customer service course which includes 'understanding the importance of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in providing service to the public' as a learning outcome.</p> <p>We understand that the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) eLearning module 'Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service' is hosted on the OneLearning system and has received 4,064 enrolments. Details of enrolments for other EDI related courses are included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and Human Rights: Understanding your Role – 350 enrolments (available since January 2023)</li> <li>• Authentic and Inclusive Leadership – 266 enrolments (available since May 2022)</li> <li>• Managing for an Inclusive Workforce – 268 enrolments (available since January 2023)</li> <li>• In June 2023, OneLearning and the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) hosted 3 Pride themes webinars for Civil Servants</li> </ul> <p>On the basis of the information provided above, this action is deemed achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>We understand that a national competition for young people to design an LGBTI+ welcome sticker for display in businesses took place in 2019 as part of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy and took place prior to the publishing of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.</p> <p>We understand that that due to COVID the rollout to businesses was delayed and that the action was not progressed further due to inadequate resources within the unit responsible. This action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
<p>3.3. Take practical measures to increase the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings.</p>	<p>It is noted that the Department of Education updated their School Design Guide for Sanitary Facilities in November 2021. The revised guidelines will ensure that school bathrooms will include self-contained cubicles with their own doors with urinals no longer required. The design make-up shows that sinks will be communal and can be seen from the corridors. The updated guidelines coincide with action 10(a) of the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy.</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 3: Public spaces are safe and welcoming of LGBTI+ people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>We note that DCEDIY undertook some initial research of Government Departments and public bodies under its remit, seeking to gain an understanding of the availability of non-gendered toilets in public buildings. However no further progress was made, and therefore this action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p>It is worth noting the challenges associated with delivering this action. Many public buildings are old and cannot be easily altered, or indeed premises may be rented as opposed to owned by public bodies and therefore alteration may not be feasible. Further, the Office of Public Works are the designated body responsible for public buildings and therefore this may not have been an appropriate action to assign to DCEDIY.</p> <p>That being said, the provision of non-gendered toilets continues to be an important concern for trans and non-binary people, and efforts to increase such availability (where possible) should be progressed. Input from OPW should be considered in this context.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	

Table 34: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 3

Strategic Outcome 4: Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
4.1. Develop and implement an LGBTI+ research programme based on gaps and priorities identified in consultation with LGBTI+ NGOs and the landscape analysis of existing research and data commissioned by the	<p>DCEDIY established a Research Sub-Committee as part of the strategy, and there is frequent engagement with LGBTI+ NGOs on the relevant research gaps to be addressed through this group.</p> <p>There have been a number of key advancements as part of the LGBTI+ research programme over the lifetime of the Strategy, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBT Ireland (2023). LGBTI+ People Living in International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) Accommodation: Best Practices and Lived Experiences</li> <li>• Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (2023). IPSOS Survey on People in Ireland’s Attitude Towards Diversity.</li> <li>• Trinity College Dublin (2022). An Exploration of Conversion Therapy Practices in Ireland.</li> </ul>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 4: Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
Department of Children and Youth Affairs.	<p>The following research was progressed in 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fenton-Glynn, Martin, Ryan. Legal Recognition of Gender for Children under 16.</li> <li>• Quality Matters. Not Being Out on Your Own: Research on the Needs and Experiences of Parents of LGBTIQ+ Children and Young People.</li> <li>• Trinity College Dublin. Mental Health in the Irish LGBTIQ+ Population with Disabilities</li> <li>• Trinity College Dublin. Being LGBT in Ireland.</li> </ul> <p>A contract was awarded in 2023 for the provision of a research study on Strategies for Promoting Straight Allyship with LGBTI+ Young People in Ireland.</p> <p>The CSO also conducted and released the Sexual Violence Survey.</p> <p>The Department has faced some challenges and setbacks in progressing research that was previously planned. Despite this, we note that research and data into LGBTI+ issues has historically been at a low base, so it is a positive development to see progress in this area. In addition, there appears to be a commitment to developing the research agenda and progressing this action on an ongoing basis. Based on the evidence of progress to date, this review considers this action achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
4.2. Address LGBTI+ data gaps in tandem with the work being done to advance data mapping and use in the Migrant Integration Strategy.	<p>We understand that an Equality Data Strategy Working Group has been established, which will develop a robust data strategy for the Public Sector in Ireland. The Working Group brings together a range of stakeholders from across Government, as well as civil society and research bodies.</p> <p>We understand that the strategy has not yet been finalised, however it is at an advanced stage and is planned for publication within the coming months. It is intended that the Strategy will provide a general approach to improving the collection, use and dissemination of equality data. It is expected that LGBTI+ data gaps will be progressed and addressed as part of this process.</p> <p>The Department notes that whilst an Equality Data Strategy has not yet been finalised or published, work to address the data gaps is ongoing and will be included in the final strategy to advance data mapping and use.</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 4: Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	Partially achieved	
4.3. Establish a baseline of public attitudes and acceptance of LGBTI+ identities through a National Survey.	<p>In 2022, the DCEDIY contracted IPSOS to run a poll of attitudes across the equality grounds. The report titled 'Survey on People in Ireland's Attitude Towards Diversity' was published in June 2023. The survey questionnaire was designed by IPSOS in conjunction with several Government departments and representatives from different civil society groups.</p> <p>It is hoped that the survey will be repeated in 2024 and will provide useful information for comparative purposes.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	DCEDIY
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 2026 census.	<p>We note that DCEDIY has provided feedback on the equality and discrimination module for the CSO Labour Force Survey for 2024, seeking greater levels of disaggregation in order to enable a better understanding of the challenges faced by different groups within the broader LGBTI+ population. The outcome of this remains to be seen.</p> <p>We understand that since 2023, the Healthy Ireland Survey has included questions relating to gender (male, female, other please specify) and sexual orientation (including heterosexual, bisexual, gay/lesbian, asexual, other please specify). In 2022, the CSO invited submissions on the content of the form for the 2027 Census. We understand that the Minister of ECDIY sent a letter to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) requesting that consideration be given to the inclusion of questions on gender identity, sexual orientation and variation of sex characteristics. Representatives from the Department have also been actively engaging with the CSO in the development of these questions and it is our understanding that there has been recent agreement that these will be piloted this year with a view to inclusion of relevant questions in the 2027 Census.</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 4: Better information is available on the population and needs of LGBTI+ people in Ireland to support the development of effective policy		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>While the final outcomes of this action remain to be seen, it is acknowledged that considerable efforts have been made to progress the component parts and a body of work is underway, and on this basis the action is deemed partially achieved.</p> <p>It is important to note the while DCEDIY can request and encourage disaggregation of data and inclusion of certain questions in the Census, the decisions on this are outside of DCEDIY's direct control.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	

Table 35: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 4

Strategic Outcome 5: Public policy is inclusive of LGBTI+ perspectives and avoids heteronormative assumptions		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty is a statutory provision, which requires public bodies to promote equality, protect human rights and eliminate discrimination in the performance of their functions. It is required to be taken into account by public bodies when developing policy or statements of strategy.</p> <p>Our review of a range of strategies indicates that limited public bodies go as far as explicitly mentioning LGBTI+ considerations as per the action, and are rather inclined to focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion instead.</p> <p>We understand from DCEDIY that they actively input into the consultation process and seek inclusion of LGBTI+ considerations in strategy and policy development by other Departments, however it appears that this request is not typically adhered to by all public bodies.</p> <p>DCEDIY themselves include explicit LGBTI+ considerations in their Statement of Strategy 2021-2023, however it is difficult for this Department to enforce inclusion of same in external public sector strategy and policy documents.</p> <p>While only a limited number of public strategies and policies include LGBTI+ specific considerations, we note the broad tendency to incorporate an EDI component, and further acknowledge the efforts of DCEDIY to encourage</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 5: Public policy is inclusive of LGBTI+ perspectives and avoids heteronormative assumptions		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>the inclusion of LGBTI+ related matters through consultation input. On this basis, this action is deemed partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially Achieved</b></p>	

Table 36: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 5

Strategic Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>Initial progress on this action commenced in 2020 and included engagement with Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI). A preliminary draft mapping document was developed (dated June 2020). No further progress was made on this action due to internal resource changes in addition to competing priorities within the department.</p> <p>On this basis, this action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
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.	<p>A key element of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy is the LGBTI+ Community Services Fund. Since 2020, the Fund has provided funding for LGBTI+ community service based projects as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2020: €700,000</li> <li>• 2021: €1.5 million</li> <li>• 2022: €1.2 million</li> <li>• 2023: €1.0 million</li> </ul> <p>Over 100 LGBTI+ projects were supported through this funding.</p> <p>We note that the action specifically calls for the funding to be allocated "based on the gaps identified in the mapping exercise" (i.e. Action 6.1). As per the above, the mapping exercise in Action 6.1 was not completed.</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>That being said, it is reassuring to see that funding for critical LGBTI+ services has been made available annually despite the mapping exercise not having been completed, and that such a large number of projects have been supported. On this basis, this action is deemed achieved.</p> <p>While this is positive, it is worth noting the annual nature of the funding which means that the long-term future commitment to the provision of such funding has not been guaranteed.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
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.	<p>Under the Dormant Account Fund Action Plan (2023), DRCD have allocated €383,000 to support LGBTI+ Community Groups as part of the social inclusion measure. The funding has been allocated to help provide services to LGBTI+ organisations nationwide targeting marginalised people experiencing exclusion on account of their LGBTI+ identities.</p> <p>Funding is administered by the Local Authorities / Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs). Example projects that are supported by the fund include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extending and creating safe spaces for drop in hours</li> <li>• Developing information and guidance tools</li> <li>• Hosting LGBTI+ Community Inclusion and Awareness Events (e.g. Gay Pride)</li> <li>• LGBTI+ awareness / sensitivity training</li> <li>• Health and Wellbeing programmes for LGBTI+ community</li> <li>• Community Social Supports for the LGBTI+ Community</li> <li>• Engaging Outreach to schools, agencies and professionals</li> <li>• Providing counselling services</li> <li>• Creating travelling pop-up centres</li> <li>• Delivering sporting programmes inclusive of the LGBTI+ community</li> </ul> <p>A recent call in October 2023 resulted in 50 funding applications, and 48 projects were allocated funding.</p>	DRCD

Strategic Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>On the basis of the allocation of funding to a broad range of LGBTI+ related projects to support community infrastructure development, and the active follow up by the Department to ensure the funds are being spent on LGBTI+ related initiatives as planned, this action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
6.4. Implement [Action 6 of] the National Sports Policy 2018-2027 in a manner that is inclusive of LGBTI+ people.	<p>Action 6 of the National Sports Policy relates to developing initiatives to address participation in sport across a number of groups, including the LGBTI+ community. The following developments have been noted relevant to action 6.4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In May 2022 Sport Ireland published its Policy on Diversity and Inclusion in Sport. The policy specifically considers the challenges faced by the LGBTI+ community as identified in the Irish Sports Monitor. The policy sets out objectives to foster inclusion in sport.</li> <li>• Sport Ireland in conjunction with Sporting Pride have ran the #LetsGetVisible campaign in 2021, 2022, and 2023 to promote LGBTI+ visibility and representation in Irish sport during Pride Month. In October 2023, the first #LetsGetVisible inclusion event was held at the Sport Ireland Campus.</li> <li>• Guidance for trans and non-binary inclusion in sport remained in draft at the time of this review. We understand that it has since been published on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024, however this was subsequent to the completion of our fieldwork for this Review.</li> </ul> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DTCAGSM
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	<p>In 2019 a new question was introduced to the Irish Sports Monitor asking respondents to categorise how they perceive their sexual preferences. This allowed for analysis of participation in sport by sexual identification.</p> <p>In 2021 additional research was undertaken; participation in sport and club membership amongst LGBTI+ community was measured as were perceptions of inclusivity in sports clubs among different minority groups, including LGBTI+.</p> <p>This action has been achieved. However it is noted that LGBTI+ participation is measured and reported on collectively, and therefore the ability to assess the levels of participation of individual groups within the LGBTI+ community is less effective.</p>	DTCAGSM

Strategic Outcome 6: Community supports are more widely available to LGBTI+ people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
participation (volunteering, club membership and attendance at sporting events) in sport among the LGBTI+ community and issues related to such participation.	<b>Achieved</b>	
6.6. Engage with existing networks within the farming sector to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and to combat rural isolation.	<p>We understand that due to the pandemic, resourcing constraints, change in Committee membership, and department prioritisation, limited development has been made in this area. It is reported that early discussions are currently being held and that the Department hope to plan physical events that promote LGBTI+ inclusion and combat rural isolation in 2024.</p> <p>This action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DAFM

Table 37: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 6

Strategic Outcome 7: The positive contribution of the LGBTI+ community to Irish arts, culture and sport is highlighted and the history of the LGBTI+ movement preserved		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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	<p>A number of positive examples of cultural institutions proactively fostering engagement with the LGBTI+ community have been noted. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Concert Hall involved the Gash Collective as it developed the programme for its Metronome series on emerging artists and music. The Gash Collective is an Irish collective focused on providing a platform for female and LGBTQ+ DJs and producers.</li> </ul>	DTCAGSM

Strategic Outcome 7: The positive contribution of the LGBTI+ community to Irish arts, culture and sport is highlighted and the history of the LGBTI+ movement preserved		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
collecting, interpreting and making available history and culture relating to the Irish LGBTI+ community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Crawford Gallery created a special LGBTQ+ Gallery Trail for visitors to follow to celebrate Cork Pride Festival. The Gallery also acquired two works by the queer artist Stephen Doyle, and hosted an LGBTQ+ Tour of its exhibitions with a drag act named Candy Warhol on 3rd August.</li> <li>Since 2019, the Mother Pride Block Party takes place in June on the grounds of the National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts &amp; History, Collins Barracks, Dublin 7.</li> <li>The Chester Beatty Library hosted an online Pride conversation on art on 28th June 2023 and IMMA hosted a Pride Set by DJ Egg on 22 June 2023.</li> </ul> <p>These initiatives demonstrate positive engagement between cultural institutions and the LGBTI+ community with a number of examples provided, and therefore this action is deemed to be achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
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.	<p>The review did not identify any evidence of the creation of an LGBTI+ history and culture research think tank, therefore this action is considered not achieved.</p> <p>While we note that the Department rated this action as partially achieved, in the narrative provided it was acknowledged that there has not yet been any progress in creating a think tank, however the Department intends to continue to facilitate networks and expertise sharing among the national cultural institutions.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DTCAGSM
7.3. Use the Business to Arts programme to fund LGBTI+ artists and promote positive visibility.	<p>We understand that the Business to Arts Programme is an independent charitable organisation and that the Department provides support to Business to Arts in the form of helping to advance philanthropy and supporting the sustainability of cultural organisations.</p> <p>The Department reports that the possibility of expanding the awards scheme to recognise LGBTI+ related work specifically is currently being considered, however at the time of this Review this had not been progressed.</p> <p>This action therefore has not been achieved.</p>	DTCAGSM

Strategic Outcome 7: The positive contribution of the LGBTI+ community to Irish arts, culture and sport is highlighted and the history of the LGBTI+ movement preserved		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>It is worth noting that it is not within the remit of the Department to instruct an independent charitable organisation on how to use the Business to Arts programme and as a result delivery of this action is outside of the Department's direct control.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	
7.4. Support a nation-wide week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival in 2020.	<p>We understand that the week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival did not occur in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic, nor has it since been rescheduled.</p> <p>However, this Review has seen evidence of some relevant events that took place during the Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2019, the Mother Pride Block Party takes place in June on the grounds of the National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts &amp; History, Collins Barracks, Dublin 7.</li> <li>• Chester Beatty Library hosted an online Pride conversation on art on 28th June 2023.</li> <li>• Crawford Gallery hosted an LGBTQ+ Tour of its exhibitions with a drag act named Candy Warhol on 3rd August.</li> <li>• IMMA hosted a Pride Set by DJ Egg on 22 June 2023</li> </ul> <p>Although the nation-wide week-long LGBTI+ History and Culture Festival did not take place, the other initiatives presented over the over the course of the Strategy suggest that some positive efforts were made in this area and therefore this is deemed partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DTCAGSM

Table 38: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 7

Strategic Outcome 8: Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ friendly tourist destination		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
8.1. Integrate LGBTI+ perspectives into Fáilte Ireland's 'Service Excellence' training provision for tourism providers and into any upcoming review of policy or standards.	<p>We understand that the Service Excellence Training has since been remodelled to an "Introduction to Customer Care" course, and that this is available to all tourism businesses and employees through Fáilte Ireland's Learning Hub. We note that Fáilte Ireland's Service Excellence training (now known as Introduction to Customer Care) on the Learning Hub reflects content relating to diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>We also understand that over 1,100 people attended in-person customer service training in 2023 which includes LGBTI+ perspectives. Further it is reported that additional EDI resources have been added to the online portal, including a fact sheet on gender diversity.</p> <p>It is also reported that Fáilte Ireland include conditions relating to commitment to diversity in its letters of offer relating to festivals and events.</p> <p>The above indicates positive progress, however we note the emphasis is on diversity and inclusion rather than specifically focusing on LGBTI+ perspectives. In addition, we have not been provided with any information relating to the inclusion of LGBTI+ perspectives into any reviews of policies or standards.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DTCAGSM
8.2. Address LGBTI+ inclusion in the finalisation of Fáilte Ireland's Festival Development Strategy.	<p>Fáilte Ireland has developed a Festivals Strategy and it provides for inclusion and diversity. However, there was no specific reference to LGBTI+ inclusion and therefore this action is deemed partially achieved. We understand that this Strategy is expected to be updated in the near future. Direct reference to LGBTI+ inclusion might be considered in this context.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DTCAGSM
8.3. Raise the profile of, and explore initiatives and opportunities to, promote Ireland further as an LGBTI+ friendly destination.	<p>The following activities have been noted in relation to promoting Ireland further as an LGBTI+ friendly destination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Ireland posted a promotional article on LGBTQIA+ weddings in Ireland in December 2023</li> <li>• Fáilte Ireland provides funding support to the Outing Festival, a music, matchmaking and queer arts festival held in February and also fund Dublin's Pride feature in the St. Patrick's Day parade</li> </ul>	DTCAGSM

Strategic Outcome 8: Ireland is recognised as an LGBTI+ friendly tourist destination		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is reported that Tourism Ireland has developed a new LGBTI+ Action Plan which will be rolled out in overseas markets. However, this Review has not viewed this action plan or been provided with any information regarding its contents.</li> </ul> <p>While some examples of efforts to promote Ireland as an LGBTI+ friendly destination have been noted, it is hoped that the reported LGBTI+ action plan can facilitate further progress in this area. Given that this Action Plan has not been provided for this Review, we cannot verify its existence or substantiate its contents. On this basis this action has been deemed partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	

Table 39: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 8

## Pillar 2: Treated Equally

Strategic Outcome 9: LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>It is understood that the WRC engaged with advocacy groups such as LGBT Ireland, BeLonG To, TENI and Gay Project Cork to develop and share social media content promoting the role of the WRC in supporting people who believe they have suffered discrimination either in work or the provision of services. This content is also distributed by the WRC on their social media and website. It was advised that analytics were not available for this campaign.</p> <p>The WRC tracks the number of calls received under the general heading "discrimination", however we were advised that it is not possible to define 'discrimination' to more specific grounds such as LGBTI+. In their Annual report 2022, the WRC reported a 16% increase in complaints received related to Discrimination, Equality &amp; Equal Status between 2021 and 2022.</p>	DBEI

Strategic Outcome 9: LGBTI+ people are aware of the supports and redress mechanisms available to them where discrimination has occurred		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>It is noted that LGBT Ireland provided training for WRC Infoline agents during the strategy period which included tips on making your service LGBTI+ inclusive, an explanation of key terms, and a discussion on the timeline of LGBT+ rights in Ireland.</p> <p>The completion of the above activities in relation to raising awareness of the role of the WRC in dealing with complaints of discrimination suggests that this objective has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
9.2. Provide tailored legal advice and advocacy to LGBTI+ people via a specialised legal advice clinic.	<p>The FLAC LGBTQI+ free legal clinic was officially launched on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022, with attendance from the Minister of ECDIY. As per the FLAC website, this is a pilot LGBTQI+ free legal clinic to meet the specific needs of the gay and trans community. We understand that funding was initially provided until the end of August 2023, however DCEDIY have confirmed that the clinic remains live and has been allocated funding again under the 2023 funding call. While it is the view of DCEDIY that the clinic will remain active for the long term, this cannot be guaranteed due to the competitive nature of the project fund under which its funding is secured. At this time of this Review however, this action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY

Table 40: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 9

Strategic Outcome 10: Equality legislation provides explicit protection to transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
10.1. Review the Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts to ensure that transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people have explicit	<p>We understand that a public consultation on the review of the Equality Acts was facilitated in 2021. A report on this consultation was prepared by DCEDIY and published in June 2023. As specified in this action, transgender, intersex, and gender non-conforming people are discussed in this report.</p>	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 10: Equality legislation provides explicit protection to transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
protection within the equality grounds.	<p>We note that DCEDIY hoped for legislative proposals to be brought forward in 2023, however progress has been slower than anticipated given the complex nature of the review. On this basis, this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	

Table 41: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 10

Strategic Outcome 11: Same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
11.1. Commence Parts 2 & 3 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.	<p>The then Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD, signed the commencement orders and regulations for Parts 2 and 3 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 on Monday 4th November 2019. Parts 2 and 3 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 are concerned with the rights of children conceived through the use of donor embryos or gametes.</p> <p>The Child and Family Relationship Act 2015 commenced on 4 May 2020, with regulations made under the Act commencing on 5 May 2020 suggesting that this action was achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DH
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 2015.	<p>It is understood that Statutory Instrument No.434/2020 - District Court (Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction) Rules 2020 prescribes procedure under section 21 of the Children and Family Relationship Act 2015 for a declaration of parentage, on the application of the mother of the child and the person who was, at the time when the DAHR procedure was performed, the intending parent of the child and was the only intending parent of the child.</p> <p>The rules of S.I. No.434/200 came into operation on 22nd October 2020, suggesting that this action was achieved.</p>	DoJ

Strategic Outcome 11: Same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<b>Achieved</b>	
11.3. Commence outstanding sections of Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 relating to donor-conceived children.	<p>The S.I. No. 80/2020 - Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 (Commencement) Order 2020 appointed the 4th May 2020 as the date on which the following provisions of the Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 came into operation:</p> <p>"Section 3(a) of the 2017 Act in so far as it amends section 3 (1) of the Adoption Act 2010 to insert the following definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "donor-conceived child";</li> <li>• "father"; and</li> <li>• paragraph (b) of "relevant non-guardian".</li> </ul> <p>Section 3(b) of the 2017 Act in so far as it amends section 3(1) of the 2010 Act to insert a new paragraph (b) into definition of "parent"."</p> <p>This action is therefore achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
11.4. Commence outstanding sections of Children and Family Relationships Act 2015.	<p>We understand that 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.</p> <p>Section 177 of the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015, which provided for the amendment of the Adoptive Leave Act 1995, was repealed by section 3 of the Family Leave and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021, with effect from 1 April 2021.</p> <p>The above developments indicate that this action was achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DoJ

Strategic Outcome 11: Same sex parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>The Department of Social Protection developed guidance and forms in relation to the registration of donor-conceived children as per the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 and this was published on the Department's website. The Department further engaged productively with LGBT Ireland on relevant matters, including participating in a panel discussion at an LGBTI+ Family Rights Event in May 2021 to explain the legislation and birth registration process.</p> <p>On this basis, this action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DSP
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.	<p>The Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Bill was introduced to the Dáil and is currently at the fourth stage of the legislative process. We understand that progress has slowed due to the decision to insert significant new provisions in respect of the regulation of international surrogacy and past surrogacy arrangements into the Bill.</p> <p>Mazars requested clarity regarding whether the legislation will provide for AHR to be available to people irrespective of gender, marital status and sexual orientation. It was advised that the legislation is still going through the legislative process and is not yet enacted. However, it is expected that the legislation will not discriminate based on gender, marital status or sexual orientation.</p> <p>The Bill remains at Fourth Stage/Report Stage suggesting that this action has been partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DH
11.7. Bring forward legislative proposals to provide for adoptive leave and benefit for male same sex adoptive couples.	<p>We understand that the Family Leave and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2021 allows for all adopting couples to be able to choose which parent may avail of adoptive leave, including male same-sex couples who were previously precluded due to an anomaly in legislation. This legislation was commenced on 4th January 2021, therefore this action is achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY

Table 42: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 11

Strategic Outcome 12: Transgender people are supported and administrative processes are streamlined while maintaining a person's privacy		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>The Report to the Oireachtas on the findings of the Review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 was issued to the Oireachtas on 29th November 2019. This action was achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DSP
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.	<p>Some individual public bodies and Departments have enhanced their administrative processes for individuals who have obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate. Examples include the Passport Office and the Department of Social Protection. However, collaboration between Departments and public bodies to collectively streamline services and enhance interconnection between Departments has not occurred. As a result transgender people face a fragmented approach to updating their records separately with each relevant Department or public service organisation.</p> <p>This action is considered not achieved.</p> <p>It is important to note that this action will require significant cross-Departmental collaboration and commitment in order to meaningfully progress, and it will be difficult for any one action owner to drive this without the commitment of other Departments to progress this issue.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY

Table 43: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 12

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
13.1. Design and implement programmes and measures to address intersectional discrimination in partnership with NGOs and target communities.	<p>As part of its research programme, DCEDIY has funded research into intersectional experiences of LGBTI+ people. Examples include LGBTI+ people with a disability, LGBTI+ people living in International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) accommodation, and IPSOS MRBI survey on public attitudes to all equality groups. This is a positive step towards enhancing the broader understanding of issues associated with intersectionality among the LGBTI+ population. However, at this point we are not aware of any programmes or measures designed or implemented to address intersectional discrimination, therefore this action is deemed not achieved.</p> <p>The challenges associated with intersectionality have arisen frequently throughout our consultation process as part of this Review and therefore this topic should be explored in further detail as part of the consultation process for the successor strategy.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
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.	<p>The National Quality Standards Framework (NSQF) for homeless services was introduced in 2020. The Framework includes 26 Standards. The very first standard (Standard 1.1) sets out that "the rights and diversity of each service user are respected and promoted", and states that "Service users are treated with dignity and respect, their equality is promoted and the service respects their age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, family status, civil status, race, religious beliefs or member of the travelling community". The Standards do not explicitly reference LGBTI+ service users, however it is considered reasonable that inclusion of the nine equality grounds appropriately encompass this group, and it is further positive to incorporate this into the first standard, thereby setting the underpinning basis for the following 25 standards.</p> <p>In addition to the above, it is worth noting that the more recent Youth Homeless Strategy 2023-2025 (aimed at 18-24 year olds) has two actions specifically aimed at supporting LGBTI+ young people (Actions 19 and 20). These actions are a positive development further ensure that the rights and diversity of LGBTI+ service users are respected and promoted for this particular age cohort.</p> <p>This action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DHLGH

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>The review was provided with samples of literature reviewed by the Irish Prison Service (IPS) to inform the development of a placement and accommodation policy, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various online articles related to transgender prisoners</li> <li>• A number of documents prepared by HM Prison &amp; Probation Service (HMPPS) relating to transgender prisoners</li> <li>• Research papers on the accommodation/rights of trans prisoners</li> <li>• The Yogyakarta Principles: Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity</li> <li>• UNODC: Mapping of good practices for the management of transgender prisoners, literature review</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A representative from IPS and a representative from TENI met on 22 May 2023 to discuss Trans Inclusion within the IPS.</li> <li>• Evidence of the IPS' consultation with HM Prison and Probation Service and the Tasmanian Prison Service related to the placement of transgender prisoners was provided.</li> <li>• The IPS received a submission from the non-profit organisation 'The Countess' on 21st June 2023 on the policy on the management of transgender prisoners.</li> <li>• On Friday 5th May 2023, a press release for the Irish Prison Service announced the construction of a new 50 space female prison which will provide an additional 22 female spaces. The press release does not reference female accommodation, however the IPS report that transgender females with Gender Recognition Certificates are, have been and may be accommodated in the new premises.</li> </ul> <p>The placement and accommodation policy remains in draft format with consideration of the activities above. It is also noted that the draft policy is specifically focused on people who are transgender and people whose gender expression differs from the gender assigned at birth, as opposed to the broader LGBTI+ population.</p> <p>On the basis that the policy has not yet been finalised or published, this action is deemed partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DoJ

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
13.4. Provide LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity training to staff, including RPOs, general training to all staff as part of CPD and targeted training to particular Officers, where an operational need exist.	<p>We understand that Equality and Diversity Awareness training is provided to all Recruit Prison Officers (RPOs) in Semester 1 of the Higher Certificate in Custodial Care (HCCC), which is the initial induction training for RPOs. Included in this training is the Public Sector and Human Rights Duty, with a discussion of the nine grounds including gender and sexual orientation. It is reported that over 1,100 RPOs have received this training since 2018.</p> <p>TENI provided 'Trans 101' training for the Irish Prison Service on 15th April 2021 and this presentation was subsequently published on PRISM, the IPS intranet platform, alongside some 'dos' and 'don'ts' when communicating with a transgender person. TENI's website and social media were linked as sources for additional information for IPS staff.</p> <p>We understand that there was engagement in 2020 between the IPS and ShoutOut to begin an LGBTQIA+ training collaboration. This did not progress due to COVID as staff were not in a position to attend any training other than essential, legislatively required, health and safety training. The IPS advise that further engagement is planned for 2024.</p> <p>While the above indicates that some positive developments in the provision of LGBTI+ related training, we understand that the one-day CPD format which is in place only facilitates health and safety related subjects which present a risk to the organisation. Therefore, other subjects such as ED&amp;I are not currently on the CPD timetable, and as such this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DoJ
13.5. Consider the provision of 'in-reach' LGBTI+ community supports, peer supports, and provision of LGBTI+ informational/recreational literature (to LGBTI+ prisoners)	<p>The following was noted as evidence of provision of 'in-reach' LGBTI+ community supports, peer supports, and provision of LGBTI+ informational/recreational literature to prisoners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We note that the IPS orders LGBTI related titles on an ongoing basis, e.g. new titles or requests, but highlight LGBTI+ book collections by creating Pride displays to promote visibility during Pride month each year.</li> <li>We understand that a brochure from BeLonG To titled 'Coming out as you' is available in hard copy in Dublin Prison Libraries.</li> </ul>	DoJ

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IPS provide an in-house information brochure produced for Pre-Release prisoners with contact details for LGBT supports.</li> <li>• TENI presented training to the IPS related to the equitable treatment of transgender individuals within the prison system in April 2021. This presentation was subsequently uploaded to the internal PRiSM portal, alongside a list of some Dos and Don'ts regarding trans individuals.</li> <li>• A team member from the Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Unit at IPS met with TENI in May 2023 to discuss Trans Inclusion within the IPS.</li> </ul> <p>The completion of the above activities in relation to the provision of LGBTI+ supports and literature suggests that this action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	

Table 44: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 13

### PILLAR 3: HEALTHY

Strategic Outcome 14: Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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	<p>The HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) launched a new LGBTI+ eLearning course "LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion Training: the basics" on HSELand on 15th August 2019. In the period December 2019 - December 2023 the HSE reports 10,803 completions of the course.</p> <p>The "LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion Training: the basics" course is promoted within the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion (FPSHP) course run nationally with a reported c200 participants. In addition, the course has been promoted internally at LGBTQIA Awareness presentations.</p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 14: Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
<p>Training Strategy. Include the module in the HSE's staff induction programme and make it available for hosting on other platforms as appropriate.</p>	<p>In addition, a course specifically focused on trans healthcare is also available on HSELand - "An introduction to Transgender awareness in healthcare".</p> <p>In regard to making the eLearning course available for hosting on other platforms, no other platforms widely accessed by HSE staff were identified and it was not made available on other platforms within the HSE. It is reported that one request from An Garda Síochána for permission to adapt LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion Training: The Basics' was received by the HSE. However it is reported that this did not progress.</p> <p>We note that the 'LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion Training: the basics' module is not part of the induction programme for HSE staff. It was reported that this was not feasible given that the induction programme is not standardised due to the broad range of training requirements across the HSE.</p> <p>On this basis, this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
<p>14.2. Implement sexual health promotion training for professionals in the youth and other sectors, those working with at risk-groups, and for parents.</p>	<p>We understand that no specific sexual health promotion training has been created in this area, however elements of other training are applicable to this action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2020 the 'In the Know' Facilitator Manual – A guide to delivering sexual health and wellbeing training to young gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men' was developed through a partnership between BeLonGTo Youth Services, Sexual Health centre Cork and HSE SHCPP.</li> <li>In 2021 the 'In the Know' online training course was developed which is a 6 session sexual health programme for youth workers and other educators to deliver to young gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men (gbMSM). This course was developed through a partnership between BeLonGTo Youth Services, Sexual Health Centre Cork and HSE SHCPP and it is reported that it has a total of 5,336 subscribers.</li> <li>It is noted that the HSE SHCPP fund Outhouse to deliver 4x six session Personal Development Courses per annum to circa 60 participants. We understand that these sessions are specifically designed for gay, bisexual, queer, trans men and MSM and that the course content contains themes relevant to sexual health promotion.</li> </ul>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 14: Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HSE National Social Inclusion Office also funds the Gender Identity Skills Training (GIST) which is a 3 day in person training that focuses on upskilling professionals working with trans youth and adults.</li> </ul> <p>There has been broad progress made in the provision of sexual health promotion training as part of a number of training courses. However we are not aware of any sexual health promotion training specifically targeting parents which is a gap in the delivery of this action as specified in the Strategy. We understand that the HSE provide parent information books that direct parents to BeLonGTo Youth Services for LGBTI+ related guidance and advice. This action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
14.3. Provide LGBTI+ awareness training to staff working in mental health services nationally.	<p>The HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) launched a new LGBTI+ eLearning course "LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion Training: the basics" on HSELand on 15th August 2019. This training is available to all staff on HSELand.</p> <p>In the period December 2019 - December 2023 the HSE reports 10,803 completions of the course.</p> <p>The HSE National Social Inclusion Office also funds the Gender Identity Skills Training (GIST) which is a three day in person training that focuses on upskilling professionals working with trans youth and adults.</p> <p>The training is available to all staff which includes mental health service staff, but unfortunately it has not been possible to identify the portion of staff in mental health services that are engaging in these training programmes. It is reported that the training is promoted internally within the mental health channels.</p> <p>On the basis that the training is available to all HSE staff nationally, the action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE
14.4. Support the co-production of guidance and training materials aimed at health and social care professionals working in older persons' services to	<p>The LGBT Champions Programme provided by LGBTIreland and funded by the HSE, is a programme targeted towards health and social care professionals working and supporting older people. 63 LGBT Champions were trained in the period June to September 2023. In addition, the Programme attends events, and had an information stand at Nursing Homes Ireland Conference, Irish Pharmacy Union Conference, Alone Community Impact Network Event, and other regional health and social care networking events.</p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 14: Healthcare providers and practitioners are trained to understand the identities and needs of their LGBTI+ patients and to avoid making heteronormative assumptions		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
ensure they are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to meet the needs of older LGBTI+ people in their care.	<p>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, which will make a positive contribution towards the care of and engagement with older LGBTI+ people throughout the health services. Given that the LGBT Champions Programme is specifically focused on health and social care professionals working and supporting older people, this action is deemed achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	

Table 45: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 14

Strategic Outcome 15: Health policy takes consideration of the needs of all population groups including the LGBTI+ community		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
15.1. Update the National Sexual Health Strategy in 2020 and include the needs of the LGBTI+ community.	<p>We understand that renewal of the National Sexual Health Strategy (NSHS) was delayed by COVID and its subsequent extension to the end of 2022. It is noted that drafting of the new NSHS began in July 2023. In a July 2023 press release, the Minister of State with Responsibility for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy, noted that the new Strategy is linking in with other key policy areas including LGBTI+.</p> <p>Drafting of the new Strategy follows a report on the review of the National Sexual Health Strategy by Crowe Ireland published in March 2023. This report contains 32 recommendations, of which several are of particular relevance to the needs of the LGBTI+ community, such as the sexual health needs of transgender people, the reduction of chemsex, and the HIV Fast-Track Cities Initiative.</p> <p>As the NSHS was not updated during the strategy period, this action is rated partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DH
15.2. Implement the universal, gender neutral,	<p>We understand that since September 2019, boys have been offered the HPV vaccine. For girls, the HPV vaccine has been offered in their first year of secondary school since 2010.</p>	DH

Strategic Outcome 15: Health policy takes consideration of the needs of all population groups including the LGBTI+ community		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
HPV vaccination programme.	<p>It is noted that since September 2019, the HPV vaccination programme has been available to every child in first year of secondary school, irrespective of gender indicating that this action was achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
15.3. Include consideration of the needs of different population groups including the LGBTI+ community in the development of standards for STI services.	<p>We understand that the development of standards for STI services has been delayed due to lack of capacity within the responsible team and no progress has been made at the time of this Review. This action is therefore deemed not achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	HSE
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.	<p>On 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022, the Irish Blood Transfusion Service introduced individualised donor risk assessment, whereby an assessment of each donor’s eligibility to donate in relation to sexual history and risk is conducted, rather than applying risks associated with specific populations.</p> <p>It is understood that this system is more individualised and inclusive while maintaining the safety of the blood supply. Similarly, in 2021, the UK changed their blood donor eligibility rules to be based on a more individualised assessment rather than on a risk assigned to a group or population.</p> <p>On this basis this action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DH
15.5. Under the National Drug Strategy, 'Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery - a health led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025, improve the capacity of services to accommodate the needs of people who use drugs and alcohol from specific	<p>A Community Services enhancement fund of €2m was launched in 2022 to enhance community-based drug and alcohol services. 25% (€500k) of the funding allocation was dedicated to increasing access to and the provision of drug and alcohol services for women, ethnic minorities and the LGBTI+ community.</p> <p>There is currently no breakdown provided in relation to funding specifically for the LGBTI+ community.</p> <p>This action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DH

Strategic Outcome 15: Health policy takes consideration of the needs of all population groups including the LGBTI+ community		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
communities including the LGBTI+ community.		
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.	<p>The Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion (FPSHP) was designed to promote positive sexual health, with due regard to the prevention and treatment of sexual ill health. The FPSHP is aimed at professionals and seeks to integrate sexual health promotion into the core work of diverse disciplines within the health, education, youth and community sectors, thus taking a holistic approach to sexual health by supporting the networking and integration of the various sectors and disciplines.</p> <p>The Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion is an introduction to holistic sexual health promotion. While it includes a section on LGBT+, we understand that this is intended to be at the level of awareness raising. LGBT+ is covered as a whole and does not focus on any one demographic such as lesbian or bisexual women. As a result this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p>It is worth noting that in 2022, an LBQ resource was developed through a partnership of the Sexual Health Centre Cork, LINC and the HSE SHCPP - Sexual Wellbeing &amp; Intimate Relationships for Lesbian, Bisexual &amp; Queer Women. This resources is available on the LINC, Sexual Health Centre Cork and SHCPP websites. This resource is not a component of the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion for professionals, however is available online to all.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	HSE

Table 46: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 15

Strategic Outcome 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
16.1. Fund the HPV vaccine rollout plan in line with NIAC policy, including funding for	HPV vaccine is available for gay, bisexual, men who have sex with men and trans women, and is being provided through public STI and HIV services. It is further noted that:	HSE

**Strategic Outcome 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations**

Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department																																				
vaccine nurses in 2019 and 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 2017 to 2019, SHCPP provided funding for 3 WTE vaccine nurses.</li> <li>From 2020, the vaccine nurse posts were incorporated into the PrEP funding and continued as recurring posts within that.</li> <li>In 2020, the number of vaccine nurses funded increased to 5 WTE.</li> <li>In 2021, this increased to 5.5 WTE and in 2022 this increased to 6.5 WTE. It is understood that most of the smaller services do not have a dedicated vaccine nurse, but vaccine is provided and is part of any nurses role.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>HPV Vaccine Doses Provided</u></b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NATIONAL</th> <th>STI Clinics - gbMSM (doses provided)</th> <th>Adult HIV Clinics (doses provided)</th> <th>Total number of doses provided</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2016</td> <td>0</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017</td> <td>1234</td> <td>57</td> <td>1291</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>3215</td> <td>432</td> <td>3647</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>6412</td> <td>1685</td> <td>8097</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020</td> <td>3350</td> <td>940</td> <td>4290</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021</td> <td>5126</td> <td>827</td> <td>5953</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022</td> <td>6084</td> <td>930</td> <td>7014</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>25421</b></td> <td><b>4876</b></td> <td><b>30297</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	NATIONAL	STI Clinics - gbMSM (doses provided)	Adult HIV Clinics (doses provided)	Total number of doses provided	2016	0	5	5	2017	1234	57	1291	2018	3215	432	3647	2019	6412	1685	8097	2020	3350	940	4290	2021	5126	827	5953	2022	6084	930	7014	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25421</b>	<b>4876</b>	<b>30297</b>	
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Strategic Outcome 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
16.2. Develop and provide Sexual Health Advisor training for nurses across public STI/HIV services, student health services, prison and addiction services and primary care.	<p>It is understood that Sexual Health Advisor training for nurses was provided in 2018 - 2020 and in 2022 (training did not run in 2021 due to Covid pandemic). The course allowed for 20 places per year and from 2019 and any nurse could apply to participate, including those in student health services, prisons etc.</p> <p>While provision of the training is a positive step, the places available are limited which impacts the availability of SHA trained nurses. It is further noted that this course is no longer available due to the retirement of the facilitators at Staffordshire University.</p> <p>We understand that discussions are ongoing as to how the provision of training in this area can be continued, e.g. through nursing programmes, online modules etc. It is also worth noting that the SHA is not a role in itself, it is a competency acquired through training and can be delivered by general nurses as a component part of their role where relevant training has been provided. Any future delivery of the SHA training should therefore consider how participation in the training could be maximised.</p> <p>On the basis that the SHA training is not in operation at the time of this Review, this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	HSE
16.3. Establish a Health Advisors' network to support the role of sexual health advisors.	<p>The Sexual Health Advisors (SHA) Network was established by sexual health advisors working in Ireland and is operational. We understand that there are 25 members of the core SHA group and 46 members in the network in total (including core group). It is noted that the HSE Sexual Health Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) provide some annual funding to the association for administration, meetings and conference participation.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE
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,	<p>The free national home STI testing service was launched in October 2022 following a pilot in 2021 in three counties; Dublin, Cork and Kerry. It is reported that 91,123 were ordered in 2022 and over 100,000 kits have been ordered in 2023 (to end November). The service is now reaching the target of 10,000 orders per month.</p> <p>The evaluation report of the 2021 pilot found that the online STI testing service added an estimated 33% to testing capacity in the pilot areas.</p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
increasing walk-in availability and patient care pathways (e.g. self-taken screening for asymptomatic patients)	<p>In September 2023, the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) reported an increase in Gonorrhoea and chlamydia notifications nationally, with 20% of gonorrhoea notifications and 36% of chlamydia notifications in 2023 first being identified through the home testing service.</p> <p>It is reported that the home testing service is allowing clinics to focus on those with more complex care needs. This action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
16.5. Incorporate a clinical information and guidelines section on STI testing and management for health care professionals on <a href="http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie">www.sexualwellbeing.ie</a>	<p>A clinical information and guidelines section on STI testing and management for health care professionals is available on the HSE Antibiotic Prescribing website titled "Approach to an STI consultation in Primary Care".</p> <p>The action intended for the content to be incorporated on <a href="http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie">www.sexualwellbeing.ie</a>, however the HSE reported that GPs and healthcare professionals are more likely to refer to the alternate website which is why it has been included here instead.</p> <p>On the basis that these clinical guidelines are available online to healthcare professionals, this action is considered in the broader sense to be achieved. However, in order to enhance access, it may be appropriate to include a link to the guidelines on <a href="http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie">www.sexualwellbeing.ie</a> also as per the original action.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE
16.6. Update information annually on the management of genital infections for GPs through the HSE antibiotic prescribing website.	<p>Information on the management of genital infections for GPs is available on the HSE antibiotic prescribing website. The date of last review included on each genital condition webpage as follows (at the time of this Review):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acute Epididymo-orchitis: Reviewed December 2021</li> <li>• Acute Prostatitis: Reviewed December 2021</li> <li>• Bacterial Vaginosis: Reviewed June 2021</li> <li>• Chlamydia Trachomatis: Reviewed August 2022</li> <li>• Gonorrhoea: Reviewed November 2022</li> <li>• Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) - Reviewed June 2021</li> <li>• Trichomoniasis: Reviewed June 2021</li> <li>• Candida, Genital Thrush: Reviewed November 2021</li> </ul>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 16: Sexual health services are adequately resourced and available throughout Ireland including in rural locations		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anogenital Warts: Reviewed June 2021</li> <li>Syphilis: Reviewed June 2021</li> <li>Genital Herpes: Reviewed June 2021</li> <li>Shigellosis: Reviewed July 2023</li> </ul> <p>While the HSE report that all resources were updated in 2023, they acknowledge that these are not yet available on the website and attribute the reason for this to staffing constraints.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	

Table 47: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 16

Strategic Outcome 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
17.1. Deliver targeted outreach sexual health programmes and campaigns to at risk groups.	<p>The HSE fund/conduct targeted outreach sexual health programmes and campaigns to at risk groups in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HSE SHCPP fund the MPOWER programme established under HIV Ireland for outreach work within the community of gay, bisexual and MSM.</li> <li>The National Condom Distribution Service provides condoms to organisations such as 3rd level institutions and NGOs.</li> <li>The HSE Sexual Wellbeing campaign, run by the SHCPP attends college campuses to provide information to improve sexual health awareness. It is noted that there have been 20 events since these events recommenced in October 2022 (post Covid lockdown). Information guides from Man2Man and LINC are promoted at these events.</li> <li>Information leaflets relating to sexual health, such as STI/HIV leaflets, are available in several languages from healthpromotion.ie.</li> </ul>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since 2010, there has been a partnership between GHN and the SHCPP (HSE) for the National Man2Man Programme. Man2Man provides HIV and Sexual Health information for gay and bisexual men, other MSM and the trans community. Man2man.ie reported a total of 59,900 visits in 2022.</li> </ul> <p>On the basis of the range of activity represented above, this action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
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.	<p>This Review has considered the following public advertising campaigns relevant to the promotion of sexual health and 'safer sex':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sexualwellbeing.ie - From 4th October until the end of December, the STI testing page was the best performing page on the SexualWellbeing.ie website in 2022, with 31,487 page views.</li> <li>Sexual Wellbeing informative social media posts received over 1.4million engagements on Facebook and Instagram and over 2 million video views on Snapchat in 2022. Sexual Wellbeing joined the social media site TikTok in October 2022.</li> <li>We understand that the HSE targets 17 to 30 year olds with out of home advertising placements, including 3rd level campus screens and washrooms, washrooms in pubs/clubs, on street advertising in busy nightlife areas from 6pm, gym advertising, retail locations.</li> <li>Third level roadshow campaign to promote the availability of at-home STI testing kits, as well as general sexual health awareness.</li> <li>Other campaign efforts include TV adverts promoting condom use, an STI testing video series, free services video series, 'All about contraception' video series with Dr Ciara McCarthy, 'Fact or Fiction' video series, digital display adverts focusing on key prevention messages of condom use and STI testing and the free contraception campaign.</li> </ul> <p>On the basis of the range of activity represented above, this action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
17.3. Expand condom distribution services, with initial focus targeting those most at risk.	<p>The National Condom Distribution Service (NCDS) publishes annual reports on sexualwellbeing.ie. The reports indicate the following growth in condom distribution over the last five years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018 – 409,319 condoms ordered by 67 organisations</li> <li>• 2019 – 730,439 condoms ordered by 105 organisations</li> <li>• 2020 – 445,658 condoms ordered by 64 organisations</li> <li>• 2021 – 439,450 condoms ordered by 70 organisations</li> <li>• 2022 – 1,015,420 condoms ordered by 131 organisations</li> </ul> <p>349,900 condoms were ordered by NGOs in 2022, including HIV Ireland, Sexual Health West, TENI, and GOSHH, suggesting that higher risk groups are availing of and benefiting from this service.</p> <p>According to the 2022 annual report, there has been a strong national spread (i.e. not just cities) over recent years as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022: organisations ordering condoms were based in 18 counties</li> <li>• 2021: organisations ordering condoms were based in 22 counties</li> <li>• 2020: organisations ordering condoms were based in 17 counties</li> <li>• 2019: organisations ordering condoms were based in 21 counties</li> </ul> <p>In addition, some of the organisations ordering condoms operate on a national level and distribution is therefore spread nationally.</p> <p>On the basis of the significant growth of condom distribution over the last five years, the engagement with NGOs for at risk groups with the distribution service, and the national spread of condom distribution, this action is deemed to be achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE
17.4. Expand community HIV testing to populations at higher risk for HIV, mainly	<p>The HSE funds four NGO partners in this space; HIV Ireland, Sexual Health Centre Cork, GOSHH and Sexual Health West. Monitoring of community HIV testing is done through HPSC and community HIV testing reports are available from the HSP website for 2018 - 2021.</p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
MSM and migrants, through NGO partners.	<p>In 2021, 2,327 voluntary community-based HIV tests were performed. The majority of HIV tests were among gbMSM with 946 tests performed. Migrants coming from a country with high HIV prevalence, as per WHO definitions, accounted for 99 tests.</p> <p>This action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
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.	<p>The SHCPP established the gbMSM Health Committee in 2019 and the group was operational until early 2023. It is noted that following a joint consultation between the HPSC and SHCPP, the SHCPP-led gbMSM Health Committee and HPSC-led syphilis (EIS) outbreak control group were both stood down in early 2023 and in April 2023, the SHCPP stood up a new multisectoral gbMSM Sexual Health Working Group.</p> <p>Targeted campaigns are promoted through the HSE partnership with GHN/man2man.ie.</p> <p>This action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE
17.6. Continue to promote and adapt key social media, community and social venue messages for STI testing/condom usage through www.Man2Man.ie.	<p>The HSE have an ongoing partnership with Gay Health Network (GHN) to fund the Man2Man Programme. GHN reports on campaign creative, reach and delivery of the Man2Man campaign in its annual reports.</p> <p>In 2022, platforms used to promote Man2Man campaigns included digital and poster washroom displays at social and support venues, positioning on Google Search and through social media and hook-up sites. In 2022 campaigns included STI testing, Shigella, MPOX, free condoms and lube, PrEP and mental health.</p> <p>Through Facebook and Instagram in 2022, Free Condoms and Lube was the Man2Man post with the 2nd highest reach, and STI testing had the 5th highest reach. This action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
17.7. Develop and implement national campaigns around prevention of HIV and other STIs such as RespectProtect on Twitter and Man2Man website.	<p>The HSE Sexual Wellbeing twitter/X account: @_respectprotect regularly posts/reposts sexual health promotion content, including posts related to the promotion of STI testing, consent, posts concerning Irish Aids day in June, free home STI testing, and reposting tweets from the Man2Man Programme account such as PEP awareness for those who have been exposed to HIV and awareness of European Testing Week in May.</p> <p>The Man2Man website runs a number of campaigns relevant to prevention of HIV and other STIs or infections such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proud and Prepared - a campaign in conjunction with LINC that acknowledges the significance of sexual health and well-being for everyone</li> <li>• Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) campaign</li> <li>• MPOX vaccines</li> <li>• Shigella</li> <li>• Worlds Aids Day</li> <li>• HIV PEP</li> <li>• HIV PrEP</li> <li>• STI testing</li> </ul> <p>This action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE
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	<p>The study of the readiness of public STI clinics to implement pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) concluded and a report titled "Assessing the Preparedness of Public STI Clinics for HIV-PrEP Implementation was published on <a href="http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie">www.sexualwellbeing.ie</a> in 2019. This action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
across public STI services in Ireland and inform resource allocation.		
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.	<p>Ireland established a national HIV PrEP programme in November 2019 and €5.4 million was set aside in budget 2020 to roll out the national HIV PrEP programme, managed by the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP). We understand that from Nov/Dec 2019 to Q3 2023 5,460 individuals have received a new PrEP prescription.</p> <p>PrEP information for service providers and patient information are available on sexualwellbeing.ie as well as PrEP patient information leaflets which are on offer in 6 other languages.</p> <p>There are currently 13 public PrEP services and 17 private or GP approved PrEP providers in Ireland.</p> <p>On the basis of the above this action is considered achieved overall.</p> <p>It is noted that the number of approved PrEP providers is relatively low to support national availability of PrEP, however we further understand that a PrEP e-learning module for health care professionals is under development with the purpose of increasing the number of health care providers with the skills to provide PrEP. It is proposed for this e-learning module to be live in Q1 2024.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE

Table 48: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 17

Strategic Outcome 18: People living with HIV in Ireland are supported and not stigmatised		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) launched a campaign in January 2020 to address HIV related stigma. This campaign focused on the fact that someone on effective treatment cannot pass on HIV to partners. It is noted that the campaign was launched on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020 on public transport, in social venues and college locations across the country, as well as on digital platforms.</p> <p>We have been advised that the HSE plan to run a gbMSM HIV stigma campaign alongside a new national stigma campaign in 2024, to coincide with World Aids Day.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	HSE

Table 49: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 18

Strategic Outcome 19: People wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
<p>19.1. Recruit additional specialised staff in this area including endocrinologists,</p>	<p>This action calls for the recruitment of a number of staff across a range of specialisms to support transgender care.</p>	HSE

Strategic Outcome 19: People wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
social workers, speech and language therapists, senior psychologists, clinical nurse specialist, and administrative support officers.	<p>It is noted that a Clinical Lead for Transgender Services was offered a position in December 2023 and has since been appointed. The job description of this new role includes developing and launching a Model of Care for transgender services. We understand that the filling of this post has been challenging given the niche and specialised nature of transgender services and the shortage of suitable candidates.</p> <p>While the appointment of this Clinical Lead is a positive starting point, this is the only role that has been progressed under this action which calls for recruitment of a broad range of specialists to support transgender care. We understand that now that the Clinical Lead has been appointed, attention will turn to recruiting appropriate staff specialised in other areas.</p> <p>Given that only one appointment has been made under this action, it is considered that the action has not been achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	
19.2. Continue to develop transgender health services for children and adults in Ireland with a clear transition pathway from child to adult services.	<p>The review did not present any evidence of the development of transgender health services for children and adults in Ireland during the Strategy period. As per the above, a Clinical Lead for Transgender Services was offered a position in December 2023 and is expected to take up the post shortly. We understand that it will be the responsibility of this individual to develop a new model of transgender healthcare.</p> <p>This action has not been achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	HSE
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	<p>The Final Report of the Steering Committee on the Development of Transgender Services was published in 2020. It is understood that this Steering Committee was formed in May of 2019 to address specific issues in relation to the development of Transgender Identity Services.</p> <p>The review did not present any evidence of the development of a seamless and integrated service for those people who present to the Irish health service with gender identity issues.</p>	DH

Strategic Outcome 19: People wishing to transition their gender have timely access to treatment that accords with international best practice		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>As per the above, a Clinical Lead for Transgender Services was offered a position in December 2023 and is expected to take up the post shortly. We understand that it will be the responsibility of this individual to develop a new model of transgender healthcare.</p> <p>This action has not been achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	
19.4. Provide clear guidelines to health practitioners on referral pathways for trans young people and their families to specialised services.	<p>The review did not present any evidence of the provision of clear guidelines to health practitioners on referral pathways for trans young people and their families to specialised services.</p> <p>As per the above, a Clinical Lead for Transgender Services was offered a position in December 2023 and is expected to take up the post shortly. We understand that it will be the responsibility of this individual to develop a new model of transgender healthcare.</p> <p>This action has not been achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DH

Table 50: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 19

Strategic 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.		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>A scoping exercise on intersex conditions in Ireland was not undertaken by the Department of Health as per this action. It is worth noting that a separate piece of research on intersex people was conducted by DCU in 2022. This review has determined that there is a need for enhanced understanding on the needs of intersex people.</p> <p>We further understand that a more recent study <i>Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland</i><sup>151</sup> was published in April 2024 and also covers the healthcare experiences of the intersex community (this research was published subsequent to the completion of our fieldwork for this Review).</p> <p>While both of the above are considered a positive starting point in understanding the needs of Intersex people in Ireland, the Government could consider building on this to aid greater understanding and progress in this area.</p> <p>This action has not been achieved.</p> <p><b>Not achieved</b></p>	DH

Table 51: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 20

<sup>151</sup> Higgins A; Downes C; O’Sullivan K; de Vries J; Molloy R; Monahan M; Keogh B; Doyle L; Begley T; Corcoran P (2024) *The National Study on the Mental Health and Wellbeing of the LGBTQI+ Communities in Ireland*. Trinity College Dublin and Belong To LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland. Available: <https://www.belongto.org/app/uploads/2024/04/FINAL-Being-LGBTQI-in-Ireland-Full-Report.pdf>

**PILLAR 4: SAFE AND SUPPORTED**

Strategic Outcome 21: Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
21.1. Bring forward legislative proposals to ensure that incitement to hatred and hate crimes against LGBTI+ people are adequately addressed in our laws.	<p>The Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022 was initiated on 1st November 2022. The Bill is currently before Seanad Éireann, Third Stage, where it has been since 21st June 2023. Overall, this is the eighth stage out of eleven.</p> <p>Included in protected characteristics outlined in the Bill are "gender", "sex characteristics", and "sexual orientation".</p> <p>The bill creates new, aggravated forms of certain existing criminal offences – hate crimes - where those offences are motivated by hatred of a protected characteristic. This includes sexual orientation; sex characteristics; and gender - including gender expression or gender identity. The Bill also strengthens the law around incitement to hatred - or hate speech.</p> <p>Although legislative proposals have been brought forward as per the action, given that the legislation has not yet been enacted, this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DoJ
21.2. Update the Garda Pulse system to include a “Hate Crime” tag and subcategories including sexual orientation and gender identity.	<p>As stated in the 2021 and 2022 hate crime infographics published on Garda.ie website, a new approach to the recording of hate related discriminatory motives was introduced by An Garda Síochána in October 2020. This new approach allows a hate discriminatory motive on both crime and non-crime incidents to be recorded where applicable on PULSE.</p> <p>Included in the discriminatory motives categories are sexual orientation and gender, indicating that this action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DoJ
21.3. Implement a fully functioning on-line system for reporting Hate-Crime.	<p>An online system for reporting hate crime is available on <a href="https://www.garda.ie/en/reportahatecrime/">https://www.garda.ie/en/reportahatecrime/</a></p> <p>This section of the Garda Síochána website includes a definition of a hate crime, including the nine grounds of discrimination. Victims or witnesses of a hate crime/incident are asked to complete an online report if they do not wish to make a report at a Garda station.</p>	DoJ

Strategic Outcome 21: Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>The on-line system is up and running suggesting that the action was achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>Hate crime and hate related incidents have been reported on the Garda.ie website for 2021 and 2022 and therefore data is only available for 2 years of the strategy period.</p> <p><b>2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 448 hate crimes &amp; hate related (non-crime) incidents recorded in 2021               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 389 hate crimes</li> <li>○ 59 hate related (non-crime) incidents</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sexual orientation was marked as a discriminatory motive 73 times</li> <li>• Gender was marked as a discriminatory motive 17 times</li> <li>• (Some incidents have more than one discriminatory motive)</li> </ul> <p><b>2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 582 hate crimes &amp; hate related (non-crime) incidents recorded in 2022 (448 in 2021)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 510 hate crimes (389 in 2021)</li> <li>○ 72 hate related (non-crime) incidents (59 in 2021)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sexual orientation was marked as a discriminatory motive 135 times</li> <li>• Gender was marked as a discriminatory motive 25 times</li> </ul> <p>It is noted that a third part referral reporting process is available for hate crime incidents and a copy of the referral form was viewed during this Review.</p> <p>The increase in hate crimes &amp; hate related (non-crime) incidents reported in 2022 compared to 2021 indicates that this action has been achieved. However it is difficult to determine whether this increase is due to an increase in instances of hate crime or if it is “owing to the more open relationship that has been developed” as set out in the action.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DoJ

Strategic Outcome 21: Ireland has strong legislation and supports in place to combat hate crime and encourages people to report it		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
21.5. Commence the publication of statistics for recorded incidents of hate crime.	<p>Instances of hate crime and hate related incidents have been published on the Garda.ie website for 2021 and 2022. Included in the discriminatory motives categories are 'anti-sexual orientation' and 'anti-gender'. The relevant statistics are set out in Action 21.4 above. This action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DoJ

Table 52: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 21

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
22.1. Provide updated training to members of An Garda Síochána on issues affecting the LGBTI+ community.	<p>An Garda Síochána advised that as of the 24th November 2023 the completion rate for online Hate Crime Training for all Garda members and Garda staff was 86.5%.</p> <p>Hate crime has been defined on the An Garda Síochána website as “any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to, in whole or in part, be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on actual or perceived age, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or gender”. The Garda Diversity and Integration Strategy 2019-2021 again reiterates this definition of hate crime, and further sets out the organisation’s code of ethics. Wrongful reasons for discrimination included in the code of ethics include gender, sexual orientation and gender non-conformity. The Explanatory Notes in the document specifically state that “Gender” includes gender identity, transgender, intersex, gender expression and gender exploration. While hate crime training materials in themselves have not been reviewed, the other content relating to hate crime takes into account sexual orientation and gender related issues.</p> <p>In addition to the provision of hate crime training, it is further noted that from May of 2021 to November 2023, 456 Garda members received Garda Diversity Officer training. As of November 2023 there are 586 Garda Diversity Officers (GDOs) spread throughout every Garda division in the country.</p>	DoJ

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>The Minister of DECDIY advised the following in an Oireachtas debate on 23rd June 2022: “Garda initiatives include LGBTI+ network dialogue days, a joint promotional video on online hate crime reporting, the involvement of LGBTI+ representatives in Garda diversity officer training and the ongoing human rights training Garda personnel are receiving. In addition, all trainees at the Garda Síochána College must now complete revised hate crime and diversity and cultural awareness training.”</p> <p>On the basis of all evidence available to us particularly in relation to provision of training in the area of hate crime (and taking the definitions included in the Garda Diversity and Integration Strategy) and training to develop Garda Diversity Officers, it is considered that this action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
22.2. Ensure that there are open channels of communication between members of the LGBTI+ community and specially trained members of An Garda Síochána.	<p>As at November 2023 there are 586 Garda Diversity Officers (GDOs) throughout every Garda division in the country. A list is available from the Garda.ie website including the name, rank, station, district and contact number (station phone number) for each GDO. Sexual orientation and gender are listed as strands of diversity (as per hate crime definition) on the Garda National Diversity Unit (GNDU) webpage. The GNDU was actively involved in a number of LGBTI+ related engagements during 2023.</p> <p>The number and location of GDOs indicates that open channels of communication are available between the LGBTI+ community and specially trained members of An Garda Síochána and thus this action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DoJ
22.3. Incorporate LGBTI+ focused considerations in the implementation of the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence.	<p>The Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence was launched in November 2015 and covered the period 2016-2021. As the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy was extended to the Summer of 2023, we have also considered the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence in the review of this action.</p> <p>The Second National Strategy (2016-2021) touches on LGBT considerations under a Gender Based Violence subsection.</p> <p>The Third National Strategy (2022-2026) highlights that members of the LGBTI+ community were identified as a group at higher risk of DSGBV, including young gay men being trafficked for prostitution. The Implementation</p>	DoJ

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>Plan explicitly includes LGBTQI+ consideration under four objectives (1.3.1, 1.4.4, 2.1.8, 4.1.3), indicating that this action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	

Table 53: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 22

Strategic Outcome 23: LGBTI+ asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the International Protection Process and Direct Provision System		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>Development of an IPAS LGBTI+ Resident Policy is currently underway and the policy remains at early drafting stage. The draft policy is being developed within the context of Ireland’s equality legislation, and aims to ensure that LGBTI+ International Protection applicants enjoy a safe and welcoming environment within the IPAS network. The draft policy will seek to promote equality and ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all residents is paramount within the service.</p> <p>It is also noted that research into the experience of LGBTI+ people in IPAS accommodation has been undertaken as part of DCEDIY’s LGBTI+ research programme being delivered as part of this Strategy. This research should be instrumental to developing and finalising this draft policy.</p> <p>On the basis that the policy remains in draft, this action is deemed partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
23.2. Finalise and adopt the national standards for accommodation offered to	<p>The National standards for Accommodation were finalised in 2019 by the then Department of Justice and Equality and adopted in 2021 by Minister O’Gorman. Specific reference is given to LGBTI+ concerns several times throughout the standards document, e.g.</p>	DCEDIY

**Strategic Outcome 23: LGBTI+ asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the International Protection Process and Direct Provision System**

Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
<p>people in the protection process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "2.4.8. Training areas. Management and staff receive training in the following areas: ....(f) Responding to the possible needs of (LGBTI+)"</li> <li>• "6.1.9. Children’s rights....(e) The service provider recognises that children who identify as LGBTI+ may be especially vulnerable and will proactively facilitate and support them in exercising their rights."</li> <li>• "9.1.16. Sexual health. The service provider facilitates access to sexual, reproductive and LGBT+ health and family planning and crisis pregnancy information and services."</li> </ul> <p>This action is considered achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
<p>23.3. Continue to work with the UNHCR to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor/Review the handling of applications relating to sexual orientation and/or gender identity within the International Protection Process</li> <li>• As part of ongoing training programmes, ensure updated LGBTI+ cultural competence training is rolled out to staff working within the International</li> </ul>	<p>We understand that a model called the Difference, Stigma, Shame, Harm (DSSH) model is endorsed by the UNHCR and has been adopted by Ireland, as well as Finland, Sweden, the UK, and New Zealand. The model is designed to help the international protection applicant provide a detailed narrative and to be a sensitive and appropriate way of assessing credibility in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) claims.</p> <p>It is noted that induction training is delivered to panel members and IPO staff involved in assessing applications for international protection and as part of the training on membership of a particular social group, the DSSH model is explained. LGBTI+ persons are cited as example of vulnerable persons and induction training includes presentations for dealing with specific claims (incl. sexual orientation and gender identity) and interviewing vulnerable persons. We understand that the IPO in conjunction with the UNHCR will have trained in approximately 320 caseworkers/new panel members over 7 sessions (6 days training per session) delivered throughout 2023.</p> <p>It is noted that the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre periodically deliver training to panel members and IPO staff on sexual violence. We understand that 4 sessions were delivered in 2023 to approximately 60 staff.</p> <p>It is reported that a Quality Assurance group (IPO staff/UNHCR staff) audits a selection of IPO reports on a monthly basis and that the selection criteria ensures a representative range of decisions across nationalities, bases for claims (including LGBT+ applications) and the personnel involved. Due to the sensitive nature, the review has not viewed these reports.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DoJ

Strategic Outcome 23: LGBTI+ asylum seekers are supported and treated sensitively within the International Protection Process and Direct Provision System		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
Protection Office (IPO).		

Table 54: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 23

Strategic Outcome 24: The practice of conversion therapy in Ireland is investigated and followed up with appropriate counter measures		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>In 2022, DCEDIY commissioned research into the issue of conversion therapy in Ireland. The research was undertaken by Trinity College Dublin, School of Nursing and Midwifery, and a report was published in February 2023.</p> <p>The research provides an insight into how conversion therapy practices operate in Ireland. It also includes an examination of the growing body of recent international research literature in the area. The findings of the research indicate that conversion therapy practices take place in Ireland, and has developed understanding of how these practices operate. We understand from discussions with the Department that DCEDIY continues to review international best practice in responding to the promotion and practice of conversion therapy, as it develops, including reviewing legislative responses in other countries and engagement with European experts.</p> <p>This action has been achieved and the research report has been published.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DCEDIY
24.2. Informed by the findings of the above research, develop an appropriate	On 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2023, the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth announced the intention to ban conversion therapy practices and to commence the drafting of relevant legislation. This decision was made on foot of the research undertaken into conversion therapy practices in Ireland.	DCEDIY

Strategic Outcome 24: <i>The practice of conversion therapy in Ireland is investigated and followed up with appropriate counter measures</i>		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
package of measures for implementation in response.	<p>We understand that a draft General Scheme and Heads of a Bill have been prepared and submitted to the Office of the Attorney General for consideration and advice. It is our understanding that the aim was to have the legislation passed in early 2024.</p> <p>We understand that developing legislation of this complex and sensitive nature can take considerable time, and therefore the legislation is not yet finalised. On this basis this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	

Table 55: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 24

Strategic Outcome 25: <i>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>		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
25.1. Continue to integrate the promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTI+ individuals into Ireland's foreign policy.	<p>Ireland states its commitment to promoting the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals in 'The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World'. In 'A Better World Ireland's Policy for International Development' the systemic levels of discrimination and marginalisation that members of the LGBTI+ community often experience is noted as a development challenge.</p> <p>Ireland's third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019 - 2024), launched in June 2019, recognises that women are not a homogenous group and face varied forms of discrimination such as being a member of the LGBTQI+ community.</p> <p>Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020 - 2025 set out to support LGBTQI diaspora through initiatives designed to promote inclusiveness, tolerance and respect for diversity. In the development of this strategy, a series of open consultations around Ireland were facilitated by DFA in 2019 and the opportunity to submit written submissions was provided.</p> <p>In 2019 Ireland joined the Equal Rights Coalition, an intergovernmental body of 43 Member States dedicated to the protection of the rights of LGBTI persons. The ERC provides a forum for States to work together to</p>	DFA

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>facilitate the exchange of information and best practices to create policies and actions that promote and protect the human rights and lives of LGBTI persons globally.</p> <p>The activities, policies, plans and strategies above suggest that this action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>In 2019 Ireland joined the Equal Rights Coalition, an intergovernmental body of 43 Member States dedicated to the protection of the rights of LGBTI persons. The ERC provides a forum for States to work together to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices to create policies and actions that promote and protect the human rights and lives of LGBTI persons globally.</p> <p>Leo Varadkar, Taoiseach of Ireland, attended the 78th session of the UN General Assembly in New York on 18th September 2023 for the event “15 years LGBTI Core Group: milestones and challenges”. The Taoiseach addressed the Assembly, highlighting the progress Ireland has made in terms of LGBTI+ rights and expressing concern for the reintroduction of draconian laws in some countries and the rise of violence and hatred towards LGBTI people in Ireland and abroad.</p> <p>Each year of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, Ireland has intervened in dialogue with the UN Human Rights Council Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. In each of these statements, Ireland reiterates its commitment to the promotion of LGBTI+ rights (44th, 47th, 50th, and 53rd sessions of the Human Rights Council).</p> <p>Ireland also supports LGBTI+ rights in its statements at the UN Universal Periodic Review Working Group.</p> <p>Ireland is a member of the Council of Europe and the Council's Working Group on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics held its 2nd meeting in Dublin, Ireland on 28th October 2022.</p> <p>Based on the range of activities and initiatives considered and presented above, this action is deemed achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DFA

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
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.	<p>Since 2019, the Department of Foreign Affairs has provided funding to ILGA World – the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association for their work at international and regional level in raising awareness of LGBTI rights.</p> <p>Ireland also supports other human rights organisations whose work addresses LGBTI+ rights, such as Front Line Defenders and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). The DFA has a strategic partnership agreement with Front Line Defenders and the International Federation for Human Rights is supported through the Civil Society Fund (CSF).</p> <p>Ireland's embassy network publicly support Pride events in countries including the USA, South Korea, Latvia and Spain.</p> <p>In September 2023, Ireland supported an event co-organised by UNDP and the Ministry of Justice of Viet Nam entitled “International experiences on personal and property issues of transgender persons”. In their address at the event, a representative from the UNDP in Viet Nam acknowledged the Embassy of Ireland's support and consistent commitment to inclusive governance and sustainable development in Viet Nam.</p> <p>Based on the range of activities and initiatives considered and presented above, this action is deemed achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DFA
25.4. Support outreach to LGBTI+ members of our diaspora through funding initiatives such as the Emigrant Support Programme.	<p>In 2023, the DFA reports that the Emigrant Support Programme funded the following LGBTI+ organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sydney Queer Irish (Sydney, AU): €6,001</li> <li>• London Irish LGBT+ Network (London, UK): €561</li> <li>• Vancouver Queer Irish (Vancouver, CA): €5,098</li> <li>• St. Pat's for All* (New York, USA) : €9,417</li> </ul> <p>*St. Pat's for All are not exclusively an LGBTQI+ organisation but it is their origin and the organisation are still involved in promoting inclusivity of the community today.</p> <p>Emigrant Support Programme Annual Reports are available online, with the 2020 report being the most recent publication available.</p>	DFA

Strategic 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		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2020, Sydney Queer Irish received €6,155 in a grant from the ESP and St. Pats For All received €6,678.</li> <li>In 2019 Sydney Queer Irish received €6,162.19 and St. Pats for All Parade received €7,172.31.</li> </ul> <p>It may be noted that other organisations in receipt of ESP funding provide support to Irish emigrants, which include those of the LGBTI+ community.</p> <p>The above indicates that this action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	

Table 56: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 25

Strategic Outcome 26: LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
26.1. Continue to provide training for transport operators and taxi drivers that includes an LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity component.	<p>We understand that the Department of Transport and the NTA does not have a staff training role for employees of the Transport Operators in contract with the Authority (Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann, Irish Rail, Go Ahead Ireland and Local Link) and the Authority relies on the Transport Operators to provide training to their staff relating to EDI issues/awareness.</p> <p>Transport for Ireland hosted two sessions of Pride at Work training for their staff.</p> <p>With respect to Bus Éireann specifically, a schedule of Pride Month Activities includes 4x weeks of “Work with Pride Training” which includes modules relating to the Journey of Pride; Terminology and Pronouns; Ally; and Supporting Family and Friends. Further, it is noted that all of Bus Éireann Chiefs, Heads, Senior Managers, Managers and specialists have participated in inclusive leadership training and all supervisors attended unconscious bias training. Training materials for these modules have not been viewed during this Review and it is therefore unclear whether training included an LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity component.</p>	DTransp

Strategic Outcome 26: LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>It is noted that Bus Eireann, Dublin Bus and Irish Rail work with the Irish Centre for Diversity, which is a centre that supports organisations on all aspects of EDI as well as training and specialist development programmes. In 2023, Bus Eireann also launched internal diversity and inclusion champions, and Irish Rail hosted an ED&amp;I Conference attended by 50 employees from various roles and levels across the organisation.</p> <p>It is also noted that both Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus have Transgender policies that provide comprehensive information and guidance for managers and staff.</p> <p>The information above suggests that some positive developments have been made in terms of LGBTI+ and EDI training across the transport sector, particularly by TFI, Bus Eireann and some developments in Dublin Bus and Irish Rail. We have no evidence of LGBTI+ or EDI training provision for taxi operators, therefore this action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p>In the next strategy it is suggested that the Department of Transport play a greater oversight role in ensuring that transport operators and taxi drivers receive up to date LGBTI+ awareness and sensitivity training.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
26.2. Continue to promote equality policies and complaints mechanisms amongst the travelling public.	<p>In June 2023 the National Transport Authority launched their Destination: Inclusion campaign for Pride with the objective of creating awareness that Public transport is an inclusive space where everyone is welcome. It is noted that this campaign was shared on social media, operator spaces and out-of-home (OOH) advertising.</p> <p>The Department of Transport / NTA's subsidises operators under contract have supported Pride throughout the strategy, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsorship of Pride events</li> <li>• Vehicles decorated for Pride</li> </ul> <p>The May 2023 small public service vehicle (SPSV) / Taxi newsletter issued by the NTA included reference to Pride and highlighted that Transport for Ireland are proud sponsors of Dublin LGBTQ+ Pride 2023.</p> <p>It is noted that the number of reported complaints from LGBTI+ persons are low. The Transport for Ireland website provides contact details for making complaints directly to public transport operators, rather than a single complaint mechanism. It is reported that the current systems for collecting data on EDI complaints by public transport users will be enhanced in 2024 with the establishment of a Consolidated Contact Centre for public transport in Ireland.</p>	DTransp

Strategic Outcome 26: LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence		
Strategic Objectives	Assessment and Supporting Evidence	Reporting Department
	<p>We understand that this centre will be implemented in a phased basis and will assist in monitoring specific categories of complaints, such as those from the LGBTI+ community.</p> <p>It is positive to see the NTA showing visible support for Pride. It is noted that complaints information is included on the website however there does not seem to be any ongoing effort to promote this at present. We acknowledge that this may change when the Consolidated Contact Centre is established. At this point, the action is considered partially achieved.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	
26.3. Enhance data collection on equality / discrimination complaints by transport operators.	<p>We note that the current systems for collecting data on EDI complaints by public transport users will be enhanced in 2024 with the establishment of a consolidated Customer Contact centre for public transport in Ireland. We understand that this centre will be implemented in a phased basis and will assist in monitoring specific categories of complaints, such as those from the LGBTI+ community. This is a positive first step that will likely allow for enhanced data collection on equality and discrimination complaints in the future.</p> <p>The Department notes that whilst a consolidated Customer Contact centre is not yet live, work is ongoing and it is intended that this will enhance data collection on equality / discrimination complaints by transport operators.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b></p>	DTransp
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.	<p>DFA provides basic travel advice for a number of topics on its 'Know Before You Go' website section. This includes a section on being LGBTQI+ abroad, including guidance in dealing with and preparing for differing customs and laws overseas.</p> <p>The DFA website also highlights country-specific issues relating to travel, including issues of relevance to LGBTI+ individuals. Examples include where homosexual behaviour is illegal. It is noted that travel advice is updated when necessary.</p> <p>This action has been achieved.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>	DFA

Table 57: Detailed Assessment of Strategic Outcome 26

## Appendix 2 – Steering Committee Terms of Reference & Membership

### Terms of Reference

1. The Strategy Committee (“the Committee”) shall oversee the implementation of the new Strategy, meeting 3-4 times annually.
2. The Committee shall advise Departments on:
  - a. the prioritisation of actions to be implemented under the Strategy;
  - b. data and other information relevant to the situation as regards equal treatment and inclusion of LGBTI+ people in Ireland, including application of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty;
  - c. Indicators and means of monitoring progress towards the outcomes pursued in the Strategy; and
  - d. any other relevant matters.
3. In particular, the Committee shall
  - a. agree, within 6 months of the publication of the Strategy, indicators against which progress towards fulfilment of the Strategy’s outcomes will be assessed;
  - b. advise on the development and use of a traffic light system and scorecard to monitor progress on individual actions and towards each outcome;
  - c. assess, as appropriate, whether further action is required on specific issues or if actions need to be added to the Strategy or changed to respond to changing needs, and make recommendations in this regard; and
  - d. advise on the preparation of progress reports and reviews, to include a mid-term report and a final evaluation of the Strategy after its conclusion in 2021.
4. The Committee shall be supported in its work by a Secretariat provided by the Department of Justice and Equality.
5. The Government will receive a progress report on the implementation of the strategy in Q4 each year.

## Strategy Steering Committee Membership

Representatives from the following organisations were members of the Strategy Steering Committee.

- Department of Justice LGBT+ Staff Network
- GOSHH
- Gay Project
- TENI
- Ibec
- LINC
- OutWest
- LGBT Ireland
- BeLonG To Youth Services
- HIV Ireland
- AMACH!
- ICTU
- RTÉ
- Dublin LGBTQ Pride
- Outhouse
- Gay Health Network
- Outcomers
- IHREC
- Defence Forces
- Fáilte Ireland
- Tourism Ireland
- National Transport Authority
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Department of Rural and Community Development
- Department of Social Protection
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
- Department of Education
- Department of Business Enterprise & Innovation
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Department of Defence
- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
- Department of Foreign Affairs
- Department of Health
- Health Service Executive
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- Department of Justice
- Department of Finance
- Department of Transport

## Research Sub-Committee Membership

Representatives from the following organisations were members of the Research Sub-Committee.

- LGBTI+ Policy Unit, DCEDIY (Chair and Secretariat)
- TENI
- BelongTo
- National LGBT Federation
- LGBT Ireland
- Research and Evaluation Unit, DCEDIY
- Outlook
- Gay Project
- Amach LGBT
- Outwest

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