Pride in our future: Victoria’s LGBTIQA+ strategy 2022–32 – summary

Accessible

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# Introduction

**Victoria’s first whole-of-government LGBTIQA+ strategy outlines our plan to drive equality and inclusion for Victoria’s diverse LGBTIQA+ communities in all government work over the next decade.**

This document is a summary of the full strategy, which can be found at [Pride in our future: Victoria’s LGBTIQA+ strategy 2022–32](https://www.vic.gov.au/pride-our-future-victorias-lgbtiq-strategy-2022-32) <https://www.vic.gov.au/pride-our-future-victorias-lgbtiq-strategy-2022-32>.

Just over one in 20 adult Victorians openly identify as being LGBTIQA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual).[[1]](#footnote-2) LGBTIQA+ Victorians are valued members of our community who add to our diversity and make Victoria a better place to live.

LGBTIQA+ Victorians also face higher levels of discrimination, stigma and exclusion, which can lead to poorer health, economic, social and mental health outcomes than other Victorians.

Many people within LGBTIQA+ communities who live with other forms of inequality or discrimination, such as LGBTIQA+ people of colour, asylum seekers, refugees, people of faith or sex workers are less visible. This overlapping and interconnecting of identities is often called ‘intersectionality’.

LGBTIQA+ voices are at the heart of Victoria’s first LGBTIQA+ strategy. The Victorian Government asked Victorians what they would like the focus of the government’s work with LGBTIQA+ Victorians to be for the next 10 years. Through the generosity of more than 1,600 LGBTIQA+ Victorians, their families, advocates and allies, organisations and the broader community, we developed Victoria’s first 10-year LGBTIQA+ strategy to improve the lives of LGBTIQA+ communities.

# Delivering on the vision

The Minister for Equality will lead the LGBTIQA+ strategy with the support of all other Victorian ministers and their departments. The Commissioner for LGBTIQA+ Communities will continue to engage with community and represent community perspectives as we develop and deliver actions. The Victorian Government’s LGBTIQA+ Taskforce will continue to provide community advice and oversight for delivering actions and tracking outcomes.

LGBTIQA+ communities’ voices are embedded in the design and delivery of reforms, with opportunities for community to participate in and lead these changes.

We will develop an outcomes framework to measure the impact the strategy is having on LGBTIQA+ Victorians, tapping into existing government outcomes measures and building new data points that reflect LGBTIQA+ outcomes.

Finally, we will report back to all Victorians each year across the strategy’s 10-year lifetime and develop a dedicated LGBTIQA+ strategy webpage to keep the community updated on our progress.

# Framework for change

Although the Victorian Government holds many of the levers to drive LGBTIQA+ equality in Victoria, we all have a part to play. The LGBTIQA+ strategy provides the vision and pathway to drive the long-term and systemic change we need.

## Vision

All Victorians feel safe, are healthy, have equal human rights and can live wholly and freely.

LGBTIQA+ Victorians experience the benefits of full participation in economic, educational, political, community and social areas at all stages of life.

Victoria leads the way in LGBTIQA+ equality, celebrating culture, community and taking sustained, enduring and measurable action.

## Priority areas

The actions we commit to in this strategy are organised around four priority areas:

1. Priority area 1 – equal rights and freedoms
2. Priority area 2 – equitable, inclusive and accessible services
3. Priority area 3 – visibility to inform decision making
4. Priority area 4 – safe, strong and sustainable communities.

## Victorian Government actions

The actions taken as part of the strategy aim to drive a range of intermediate and long-term outcomes to improve the lives of LGBTIQA+ Victorians.

## The Victorian LGBTIQA+ ecosystem

The actions we take as the Victorian Government are only one part of the ecosystem that affects LGBTIQA+ people’s lives. This ecosystem includes:

* LGBTIQA+ communities
* LGBTIQA+ organisations and their projects
* government and non-government organisations
* the broader Victorian population.

# Priority area 1: Equal rights and freedoms

**Strengthening existing legal protections for LGBTIQA+ Victorians and ensuring we create laws with an equity lens will benefit all community members.**

Not having equal rights or not making laws that ensure equal rights means LGBTIQA+ people can’t live with confidence that they get the same protections and opportunities as other people. For many in the LGBTIQA+ community, Victorian laws and legal institutions continue to be sources of trauma. This might be due to past wrongdoings, present inequalities or through a lack of recognition and inclusion.

We will look at relevant laws where previous policy decisions or unintended consequences have meant that LGBTIQA+ people have not received fair treatment. We will also ensure new laws are responsive to LGBTIQA+ experiences and potential impacts on LGBTIQA+ communities.

## Actions we will deliver under priority area 1

Deliver on the Government’s commitment to narrow religious exceptions under the **Equal Opportunity Act 2010**

Reform anti-vilification laws to respond to the needs of LGBTIQA+ Victorians

Implement the **Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021**

Support specialist legal services for LGBTIQA+ Victorians who experience discrimination and disadvantage associated with their sexuality or gender identity

Develop and deliver the **LGBTIQA+ justice action plan** to improve outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Victorians

Deliver improved police responses to LGBTIQA+ communities, including implementing the Victorian Police **LGBTIQA+ inclusion strategy and action plan** and providing access to LGBTIQA+ awareness and sensitivity training for Victoria Police staff

## Signs of impact under priority area 1

To know we are on the right track to achieving equal rights and freedoms for LGBTIQA+ Victorians, this priority area will see actions that support LGBTIQA+ communities to feel safe in their everyday lives.

LGBTIQA+ Victorians will know and understand their rights and have safe avenues to resolve issues when they arise. LGBTIQA+ Victorians will have autonomy over their bodies and the law will reflect and protect their gender and sexuality. By achieving these things, we can help drive down LGBTIQA+ experiences of discrimination from 34.2 per cent.[[2]](#footnote-3) This statistic compares with 15.6 per cent of the general Victorian population.[[3]](#footnote-4)

# Priority area 2: Equitable, inclusive and accessible services

**Services should be approachable, welcoming, safe and inclusive for all Victorians throughout their journey and when moving between services.**

Like all Victorians, LGBTIQA+ Victorians use a range of Victorian Government services. LGBTIQA+ people must be able to access the services that meet their needs. Their experience through Victorian Government services should result in improved life outcomes.

We must remove barriers to access, including anticipated discrimination, and improve inclusiveness across all sectors and in all areas of government service delivery. All government services, and the people delivering them, must be able to recognise the needs and services required for LGBTIQA+ people.

## Early actions we will deliver under priority area 2

Improve the understanding of LGBTIQA+ specialist and mainstream services in the provision of adequate supports for LGBTIQA+ communities

Embed LGBTIQA+ voices in the diverse communities’ mental health and wellbeing framework and governance model

Implement **(I) am Equal: Future directions for Victoria’s Intersex community** with resources and supports to improve the health and wellbeing of people with an intersex variation

Ensure relationship, sexuality and consent education is LGBTIQA+ inclusive, including supporting resources

Develop LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing action plan to improve health and wellbeing outcomes

Improve LGBTIQA+ inclusion in family violence and sexual assault sector, including addressing key service gaps and strengthening LGBTIQA+ capability

Improve public fertility care access for LGBTIQA+ families by delivering on recommendations from the Review of Assisted Reproductive Treatment in Victoria

Support LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment practices, including resources and supports for employers

Implement the recommendations of the review into decriminalising sex work in Victoria

Support young LGBTIQA+ people to foster connections with peers and older LGBTIQA+ communities

Build the capacity of Jobs Victoria service providers to support pathways to employment for LGBTIQA+ jobseekers

## Actions over the life of the strategy for priority area 2

Develop LGBTIQA+ inclusive resources and provide targeted access to LGBTIQA+ inclusion training for mainstream services

Improve LGBTIQA+ inclusion in government-funded mainstream services through the implementation of best practice standards for service delivery

Co-design services with LGBTIQA+ communities and organisations

Support the capability building and sustainability of the LGBTIQA+ community-led sector to continue support for LGBTIQA+ Victorians

Support health and wellbeing supports for trans and gender diverse communities in Victoria, through clinical and peer support services

## Signs of impact under priority area 2

We will know we are on track for success in building equal, inclusive and accessible services against this priority area when LGBTIQA+ people have improved health and wellbeing.

LGBTIQA+ people will access the services they need when they need them and their experience will be positive. Services they access will reflect their diverse perspectives and needs.

A key sign will be that LGBTIQA+ people feel treated with dignity and respect when using government services. By achieving these things, we want to see a reduction in the number of LGBTIQA+ people attempting suicide in the past 12 months. We want to see it fall from the current 5.2 per cent of LGBTIQA+ adults and 9.4 per cent of young LGBTIQA+ Victorians.[[4]](#footnote-5)

# Priority area 3: Visibility to inform decision making

**Improving LGBTIQA+ data collection to build evidence will enable us to get a better picture of how LGBTIQA+ Victorians experience all parts of their lives.**

The Victorian Government and the service delivery organisations it funds collect data to understand community need.

Data collection must include suitable and inclusive options that reflect how LGBTIQA+ people choose to identify. Staff collecting this data must be trained, comfortable and capable to ask the right questions in the safest way. This will help LGBTIQA+ people to feel safe and willing to share their personal information.

We will also be transparent with data, to ensure we hold government and funded programs and services to account and can show they are meeting the needs of all Victorians.

## Early actions we will deliver under priority area 3

Develop an LGBTIQA+ strategy outcomes framework to measure impact and progress

Support key LGBTIQA+ data and research to build the evidence base for effective and inclusive services

Improve Victorian Government data standards and support resources, including for funded services

Support tools and training for Victorian public service senior leaders to create LGBTIQA+ inclusive workplaces

## Actions over the life of the strategy for priority area 3

Support data collection across government to be inclusive and appropriate

Continue the work of the Commissioner for LGBTIQA+ communities as a crucial role in advocating for improved LGBTIQA+ outcomes across government

Ongoing support for LGBTIQA+ communities’ voice to government, such as the LGBTIQA+ Taskforce and other advisory groups

Increase diverse LGBTIQA+ representation on Victorian Government boards

## Signs of impact under priority area 3

All LGBTIQA+ communities will have access to data they can use to show clear evidence for need. This will help us know we are having an impact and building LGBTIQA+ visibility to inform decision making.

We will increase LGBTIQA+ voices and experiences across government, and LGBTIQA+ people will feel comfortable engaging with data channels. LGBTIQA+ people will see an increase in policies and services designed with their needs in mind.

We will track the number of Victorian Government departments and agencies employing LGBTIQA+ inclusive data collection in government initiatives, programs and services.

# Priority area 4: Safe, strong and sustainable communities

**LGBTIQA+ people are a proud part of the Victorian community. By creating inclusive communities, we are making sure there is a place for all Victorians to be proud and live their life to the fullest.**

For many LGBTIQA+ people, being a part of community is a valued and positive part of life. It leads to better physical and mental health outcomes.[[5]](#footnote-6) By targeting LGBTIQA+ discrimination, stigma and abuse before it happens, we can remove the influences that we know lead to poorer health and wellbeing outcomes for LGBTIQA+ people and create a stronger, more cohesive community.

By promoting representations and celebrations of LGBTIQA+ communities across all parts of life we will drive understanding, visibility and acceptance.

We will also build the profile and sustainability of LGBTIQA+ organisations, businesses and leaders so they can influence and lead positive change. A critical feature of this is ensuring LGBTIQA+ people have agency and Aboriginal community members can practise self-determination.

## Early actions we will deliver under priority area 4

Deliver a statewide awareness raising campaign to celebrate and raise awareness of LGBTIQA+ experiences, including diverse communities

Support LGBTIQA+ events to celebrate LGBTIQA+ diversity and increase community connections

Review Victorian public service workforce inclusion policies to identify improvements

Increase LGBTIQA+ employment opportunities in government-funded major transport infrastructure initiatives and projects

Drive a centralised approach to support LGBTIQA+ Victorian public service employees through the Victorian Public Sector Commission

## Actions over the life of the strategy for priority area 4

Develop a plan to ensure LGBTIQA+ inclusion is embedded in the design of safer public spaces

Continue to support the capacity of professional and community sports to be LGBTIQA+ inclusive

Continue our commitment to improve LGBTIQA+ inclusion in government policies, programs and services

## Signs of impact under priority area 4

To achieve safe, strong and sustainable LGBTIQA+ communities, LGBTIQA+ people will see their identities embraced and celebrated. Understanding of LGBTIQA+ diversity will increase – both in and between LGBTIQA+ communities, and within the broader Victorian

LGBTIQA+ Victorians, no matter where they live in the state, will feel safer and more confident to lead and contribute to their communities. The Victorian community support for and knowledge of LGBTIQA+ communities and diversity will grow.

To track progress, we want to see LGBTIQA+ people’s feeling of their value in society increase from the current 41.4 per cent.[[6]](#footnote-7)

# **Definitions**

We recognise the diversity of Aboriginal people living throughout Victoria. While the terms ‘Koorie’ or ‘Koori’ are commonly used to describe Aboriginal people of southeast Australia, we have used the term ‘Aboriginal’ to include all people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who are living in Victoria.

Some data mentioned in this document is limited because it does not always account for the experiences of people with an intersex variation. For this reason, we sometimes use the term ‘LGBTQ+’ to reflect the research’s limitations.

The words ‘our’ and ‘we’ used throughout this document refer to the Victorian Government.

For a more complete list of definitions, please refer to the full LGBTIQA+ strategy.

To receive this document in another format, email the Equality Unit <equality@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

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1. The Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 estimates that 5.7 per cent of Victorian adults are LGBTIQA+. Source: Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI) 2020, The health and wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria: findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017, State of Victoria, Melbourne, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. 34.2 per cent of LGBTIQA+ adults experienced discrimination or were treated unfairly by others in the last year. This statistic is not only related to LGBTIQA+ based violence, but all forms of discrimination experienced by LGBTIQA+ people. Source: VAHI 2020, The health and wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria: findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017, State of Victoria, Melbourne. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. 5 Hill AO, et al. 2021c, Writing themselves in 4: the health and wellbeing of LGBTQA+ young people in Australia. Victoria summary report, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Hill AO, et al. 2020, Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Respond ‘yes, definitely’ to feeling valued by society. Source: VAHI 2020, The health and wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria: findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017, State of Victoria, Melbourne. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)