

# Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32

## Summary



# Introduction

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

This document is a summary of the full strategy, which can be found at [www.vic.gov.au/victorian-lgbtqi-strategy](http://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-lgbtqi-strategy).

Just over one in 20 adult Victorians openly identify as being LGBTIQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer).<sup>1</sup> LGBTIQ+ Victorians are valued members of our community who add to our diversity and make Victoria a better place to live.

LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ communities who live with other forms of inequality or discrimination, such as LGBTIQ+ 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'.

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



<sup>1</sup> The Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 estimates that 5.7 per cent of Victorian adults are LGBTIQ+. 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.

## Delivering on the vision

The Minister for Equality will lead the LGBTIQ+ strategy with the support of all other Victorian ministers and their departments.

The Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities will continue to engage with community and represent community perspectives as we develop and deliver actions.

The Victorian Government's LGBTIQ+ Taskforce will continue to provide community advice and oversight for delivering actions and tracking outcomes.

LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ Victorians, tapping into existing government outcomes measures and building new data points that reflect LGBTIQ+ outcomes.

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



# Framework for change

Although the Victorian Government holds many of the levers to drive LGBTIQ+ equality in Victoria, we all have a part to play. The LGBTIQ+ 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.

LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ equality, celebrating culture, community and taking sustained, enduring and measurable action.

## Priority areas

Areas of reform that organise our actions to realise the vision.



**Priority area 1**

Equal rights and freedoms



**Priority area 2**

Equitable, inclusive, and accessible services



**Priority area 3**

Visibility to inform decision making



**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 LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

## The Victorian LGBTIQ+ ecosystem

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

- LGBTIQ+ communities
- LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ people can't live with confidence that they get the same protections and opportunities as other people. For many in the LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ people have not received fair treatment. We will also ensure new laws are responsive to LGBTIQ+ experiences and potential impacts on LGBTIQ+ communities.

## Actions we will deliver



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



Develop and deliver the LGBTIQ+ Justice Action Plan to improve outcomes for LGBTIQ+ Victorians



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



Deliver improved police responses to LGBTIQ+ communities, including implementing the Victoria Police LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan and providing access to LGBTIQ+ awareness and sensitivity training for Victoria Police staff



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



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

## Signs of impact

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



LGBTIQ+ Victorians will know and understand their rights and have safe avenues to resolve issues when they arise. LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ experiences of discrimination from 34.2 per cent.<sup>2</sup> This statistic compares with 15.6 per cent of the general Victorian population.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 34.2 per cent of LGBTIQ+ adults experienced discrimination or were treated unfairly by others in the last year. This statistic is not only related to LGBTIQ+ based violence, but all forms of discrimination experienced by LGBTIQ+ 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.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



## 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, LGBTIQ+ Victorians use a range of Victorian Government services. LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ people.

### Early actions we will deliver



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



Embed LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ inclusive, including supporting resources



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

## Actions we will deliver over the life of the strategy



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



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



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



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



Co-design services with LGBTIQ+ communities and organisations

## Signs of impact

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



LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ people attempting suicide in the past 12 months. We want to see it fall from the current 5.2 per cent of LGBTIQ+ adults and 9.4 per cent of young LGBTIQ+ Victorians.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Hill AO, et al. 2021c, Writing themselves in 4: the health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ young people in Australia. Victoria summary report, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, 10.



## Priority area 3: Visibility to inform decision making

Improving LGBTIQ+ data collection to build evidence will enable us to get a better picture of how LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ 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



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



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



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



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

### Actions we will deliver over the life of the strategy



Support data collection across government to be inclusive and appropriate



Increase diverse LGBTIQ+ representation on Victorian Government boards



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



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

### Signs of impact

All LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ visibility to inform decision making.



We will increase LGBTIQ+ voices and experiences across government, and LGBTIQ+ people will feel comfortable engaging with data channels. LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ 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.<sup>5</sup> 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



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



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



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

### Actions we will deliver over the life of the strategy



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



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



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

<sup>5</sup> 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.

## Signs of impact

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



LGBTIQ+ 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 LGBTIQ+ communities and diversity will grow.

To track progress, we want to see LGBTIQ+ people's feeling of their value in society increase from the current 41.4 per cent.<sup>6</sup>

## 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 LGBTIQ+ strategy.

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.

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Authorised and published by the Victorian Government,  
1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, October 2023.



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ISBN 978-1-76130-416-3 (pdf/online/MS word)

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<<https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-lgbtqi-strategy>>

