

Foreword

For more than a decade, the OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs (ELS) has been deeply involved in helping OECD countries be more inclusive of their increasingly diverse components thanks to its work on gender equality, ageing and employment, the labour market integration of youth, the inclusion of disabled people, or the integration of immigrants and their families. Since 2016, following a Call to Action signed by 12 member countries, ELS is also spearheading the OECD work on the inclusion of LGBTI people, i.e. lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender and intersex individuals.

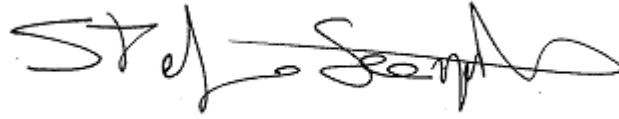
The first major output of this project was released in the 2019 edition of *Society at a Glance* whose special chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the size and the socio-economic situation of sexual and gender minorities in OECD countries. This analysis reveals that anti-LGBTI discrimination remains pervasive and hampers the economic prospects and mental health of millions. In order to address this issue that hurts, not only the LGBTI population directly, but also the society at large, it is critical to implement laws and policies aimed at ensuring equal treatment of LGBTI individuals. Supporting countries to progress in this direction is precisely the purpose of the present report *Over the Rainbow? The Road to LGBTI Inclusion*. By providing the first comprehensive overview of the extent to which laws in OECD countries ensure equal treatment of LGBTI people, and of the complementary policies that could help foster LGBTI inclusion, this report allows assessing achievements and remaining challenges.

The key findings are encouraging. The road to LGBTI inclusion is *not* over the rainbow: *all* OECD countries have been making progress over the last two decades, and even some countries that used to perform poorly have become much more inclusive of LGBTI people. That said, there is still a long way to go: on average, OECD countries have passed only half of the legal provisions critical for the inclusion of LGBTI people.

While advancing the LGBTI inclusion agenda may sometimes be challenging, this report provides new evidence of its association not only with acceptance and quality of life of LGBTI people themselves, but also with gender equality and economic development. Countries that have passed the most legal protections for LGBTI people also show, on average, more than double the share of women in parliament compared with countries where legal LGBTI inclusion is the lowest, a one-third increase in female labour force participation, and a 30% decrease in the gender wage gap. These top-performing countries are also characterised by a real GDP per capita that is more than USD 3 000 higher.

To help OECD countries continue making significant progress towards LGBTI inclusion, this report also identifies what can be done beyond passing LGBTI-inclusive laws. Analysis of good practices and nationwide action plans currently in force in one third of OECD countries highlights several complementary measures, including enforcement mechanisms to make LGBTI-inclusive antidiscrimination, hate crime/hate speech and asylum laws truly effective, policies aimed at fostering a culture of equal treatment in education, employment and health care, and actions to create and maintain popular support for LGBTI inclusion. In addition, LGBTI-inclusive laws should be accompanied by a strong push to make LGBTI individuals better represented and more visible in national statistics.

This report is not the end but, rather, a step in our continuous support to OECD countries in their journey towards full inclusion of LGBTI individuals. In a context where the current COVID-19 pandemic is disproportionately harming under-privileged people in our societies, its guidance is more essential than ever.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stefano Scarpetta', with a stylized, flowing script.

Stefano Scarpetta

Director, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs

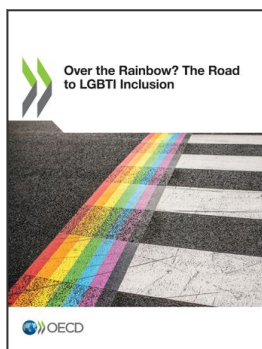
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