

Meeting Ten of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy Committee

Minutes

1 March 2023

Present:

Minister Roderic O'Gorman	(Chair) Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)
Brendan O'Loughlin	Department of Social Protection
Patrick Hargadon	Department of Social Protection
Breda Farrell	Department of Transport
Caitriona Nic Conmara	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
Siobhan Greene	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
Sylvia Shannon	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
Aongus McGrane	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
Enda Hughes	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
Amelia Ni Laoi	Department of Foreign Affairs
Grainne Collins	Research and Evaluation, DCEDIY
Gaelle Izabelle	Department of Agriculture and Marine
Gerard Harty	Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment
Ian McCarthy	Department of Education
Margaret McCarthy	Department of Education
Jane O'Connor	Department of Rural and Community Development

Padraig Sweeney	Department of Rural and Community Development
Rosemarie Tobin	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Caroline Moran	Department of Defence
Paula Kelliher	Department of Defence
Laura Cooney	Department of Justice
Karen O'Connor	Department of Health
Gillian Treacy	Department of Health
Joseph Doyle	Health Service Executive (HSE)
Maeve O'Brien	Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme - HSE
Lieutenant Leanne Nolan	Irish Defence Force
Ciara Sugrue	Fáilte Ireland
Connor King	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
David Joyce	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Sam Owens	IBEC
Felicity Ryan	National Transport Authority
JP Weadick	Irish Prison Service
Ailsa Spindler	Gay Project
Cameron Keighton	AMACH!
Chris Noone	National LGBT Federation (NXF)
Cillian Flynn	Goshh
Jamie Kenny	Dublin Pride
Kate Moynihan	Lesbians in Cork (LINC)
Jordan Harel	OutWest
Neasa Candon	BeLong To
Oisín O'Reilly	Outhouse
Pádraig Rice	LGBT Ireland
Stephen O'Hare	HIV Ireland
Tina Kolos Orban	Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)
Zbyszek Zalinski	RTE

Secretariat:

Sinéad McEvoy	DCEDIY
Louise Ward	DCEDIY
Jean McGrath	DCEDIY
David Noctor	DCEDIY

Item 1 & 2– Introduction and Agreement of Draft Agenda and Draft Minutes

- The Minister welcomed everyone to the meeting. It agreed that the draft agenda was in order and it was adopted by the Committee.
- There were no amendments to the draft minutes of the ninth meeting of the LGBTI+ National Inclusion Strategy Steering Committee.

Item 3 - DCEDIY Public Awareness Campaign – Jean McGrath

- Jean McGrath from DCEDIY provided an overview of the planned public awareness campaign to be launched in time for Pride 2023.
- The main themes of the campaign will be: Growing up in Ireland in 2023 as a member of the LGBTI+ Community; the experiences, perspectives, and achievements of the older LGBTI+ Community; recognising the support from allies, friends, family and the people of Ireland; the challenges moving into the future for the LGBTI+ community. The campaign will largely be on social media.
- Details on the campaign were circulated to the Committee in advance of the Steering Group Meeting with a request to provide feedback.
- Padraig Rice (LGBT Ireland) and Neasa Candon (BeLong To) highlighted concerns regarding the use of social media and suggested the use of other forms of media, including local radio.
- Jean McGrath highlighted that the scope of the campaign was limited due to budget constraints and existing commitments.

Item 4 - Update from Gráinne Collins of DCEDIY on the LGBT+ Research Programme

- Grainne Collins of the Research and Evaluation Unit provided the group with an update on the Departments overall LGBTI+ research programme:
 - Study on the Practice of Conversion Therapy in Ireland, this research report was launched by Minister O’Gorman on Friday 17 February, 2023.
 - Survey of LGBTI+ Residents in International Protection Accommodation Centres. The final draft report is currently subject to peer review.
 - Supports for the parents of LGBTI+ and Questioning Youth. This report is delayed.
 - Understanding Ageing in the LGBTI+ Population. Contract in negotiation.
 - The Department has funded a research report on LGBTI people with a disability, using Trinity health survey. This report will be completed in 2024.
 - Recognising Preferred Gender for Under 16s in Ireland. Research currently being carried out by a team from Maynooth University and the University of Cambridge.
 - The Department is working with IPSOS MRBI to shape a baseline of public attitudes to all equality groups and this survey covers acceptance of LGBTI+ identities. A final report is expected by the end of April 2023.
 - Dr Ní Mhuirthile (DCU) gave a presentation to the research subcommittee in relation to research on “Mapping the Lived Experiences of Intersex/Variations of Sex Characteristics in Ireland”.
- The Minister informed the Committee that work on drafting legislation to prohibit the practice of Conversion therapy in Ireland will commence shortly.
- Padraig Rice (LBGT Ireland) noted that the Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022 provides for legal

definitions of gender and sexuality. Mr. Rice noted that they link to definitions within the Equal Status Act and proposed that amendments be made.

- It was noted that a review of the Equality Acts was currently underway within the Department and that Mr. Rice could share any observations through the Secretariat for consideration by the Department.

Item 5 - HSE actions 2023 – Joe Doyle

- Joe Doyle from the HSE presented an overview of the work of the HSE in relation to the LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy and outlined the coordination role of the National Social Inclusion Office (NSIO) in relation to actions within the strategy.
- There has been a lot of progress in terms of training to date and an LGBTI+ and DSGBV Health Coordinator has also been recently appointed.
- Mr Doyle noted that the HSE met with Dr. Cass on her recent visit to Ireland and that the HSE is to develop an updated model of care for the treatment of gender dysphoria.
- Neasa Candon (BeLong To) sought clarification regarding the interim plan for clients while the model of care was being put in place.
- The HSE continues to refer children and young people to the NHS for specialist psychological supports. However, since November 2022, the Tavistock centre no longer receives direct referrals. All referrals to the NHS are now triaged by a Board and directed to new centres in the NHS. There are two early adopter / first stage centres in the NHS: one is in Manchester and other in London.
- Oisín O'Reilly (Outhouse) enquired as to the percentage of staff who had completed training and whether such data was available. Joe Doyle indicated that numbers were available, but not the percentage.
- The Minister informed the Committee that he had met with Dr Cass during her visit to Ireland.

Item 6 - Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme - Maeve O'Brien, Interim Programme Lead

- Maeve O'Brien from the SHCPP presented an overview of the work of the SHCPP in relation to the LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.
- Stephen O'Hare (HIV Ireland) complemented the SHCPP on its work in particular in relation to the self-test programme, while also noting the long waiting lists for the PrEP programme.
- Maeve highlighted that there was a high demand for the PrEP clinic and over 5,000 clients had accessed it to date.

Item 7 Update from Department of Social Protection on recommendations from review of Gender Recognition Act – Brendan O'Loughlin

- Brendan O'Loughlin from the DSP provided an update in relation to the recommendations from the review of the Gender Recognition Act and proposed amendments to Act.
- Margaret McCarthy (Department of Education) sought clarification regarding the timeline for the passage of legislation in relation to proposed amendments. Brendan noted that the Bill was still at Committee stage.
- Tina Kolos Orban (TENI) asked if the Department of Social Protection had plans to make the Bill available to the public. Brendan informed the meeting that this would happen when it goes to public consultation stage.
- The Minister raised the possibility that the Heads of Bill may not be on the current committee's working list as they had been submitted to previous Dail. **Action:** Brendan O'Loughlin agreed to follow up on this and revert with an update.

Item 8 - Traffic Light Report

- Pdraig Rice (LBGT Ireland) raised concerns with the accuracy of some information in the tracker. **Action:** The Minister noted that the Secretariat would ensure that the tracker would be revised for the next meeting to address concerns raised.

Item 8 - AOB

- The Minister informed the Committee that he had sent a letter to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in regards to the next census, as part of the public consultation process. The Minister requested consideration be given to the inclusion of questions in the census on gender identity, sexual orientation and variation of sex characteristics. These are being considered by the CSO in line with their consultation process.
- Margaret McCarthy (Department of Education) requested a copy of this letter. **Action:** Minister replied that this would be arranged.
- Neasa Candon (BeLong To) informed the Committee of a number of issues, including challenges to the provision of LGBTI+ literature in library services for children and young people. The teaching of gender issues in schools was also highlighted.
- The Minister noted the increase in hateful content on social media and highlighted current work in relation to the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022, Hate Crime Legislation and the National Action Plan on Bullying.

Item 9 - Thank you and close

- The Minister thanked Committee members for attending and looked forward to seeing all members at the next meeting.