

Written Submission for the
Pre-Budget Consultations in
Advance of Canada's Federal
Budget 2020

Submitted by
Egale Canada



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Recommendations from Egale Canada

Recommendation 1: That the government review the recommended policy reforms in Egale's National LGBTQI2S Action Plan and take immediate action to amend their outdated and discriminatory policies to advance Canada's economic development.

Recommendation 2: That the government mandates inclusive policies and training across each of the 12 sectors in Egale's National LGBTQI2S Action Plan.

Recommendation 3: That the government update outdated data collection terminology to be more inclusive for research across the 12 priority areas in the national action plan and engage community organizations in the research implementation, collection and reporting process.

Recommendation 4: Egale firmly recommends the federal government establish an LGBTQI2S Action Plan Implementation Fund of \$12 million over two years to be allocated to civil society organizations.



Founded in 1986, Egale is Canada's national LGBTQI2S human rights organization. Egale works to improve the lives of LGBTQI2S people in Canada and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues by informing public policy, inspiring cultural change, and promoting human rights and inclusion through research, education, awareness and legal advocacy. Egale's vision is a Canada, and ultimately a world without homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and all other forms of oppression so that every person can achieve their full potential, free from hatred and bias.

Recently, Egale launched the National LGBTQI2S Action Plan, which addresses 12 priority areas that impact LGBTQI2S people in Canada. Along with each priority area, there are tangible action items for the federal government to prioritize over the next 2-4 years. *The recommendations contained in the action plan are a result of extensive literature reviews, assessments of current policy and legislation, and community consultation.*

The 12 priority areas of LGBTQI2S inclusion in Canada are;

- Healthcare
- Mental Health
- Poverty Reduction
- Housing and Homelessness
- Employment Access
- Education
- Sports Inclusion
- Seniors
- Justice Reform
- Intersex Rights
- Asylum System reform
- International Assistance

Egale Canada firmly recommends that Canada invest and prioritize strategies, programs and policies that ensure inclusion and human rights for sexual orientation and gender identity/expression minorities in the upcoming budget. The following brief focuses on key investments and actions Canada must make to advance LGBTQI2S rights.

In moving forward with the action plan recommendations, not only will the federal government be acknowledging the work that civil society organizations are currently undertaking to advance gender equality and LGBTQI2S inclusion, it will also be maintaining its position as a global leader and partner in advancing LGBTQI inclusion.

Within the National LGBTQI2S Action Plan, there are core areas where the federal government can begin to advance specific and measurable actions to drive inclusion and/or support civil society in advancing LGBTQI2S inclusion across Canada.

Statistics





Discrimination Costs Dollars

(Recommendation 1)

There are a number of policies and legislative reforms across the 12 sectors where the federal government can take immediate action to advance social inclusion. Priority should be given to intersex human rights, federal regulations on conversion therapy, and regulations around blood donation for MSM (men who have sex with men) and trans people.

Gender-based and LGBTQI2S discrimination in social institutions matters for economic growth. Previous empirical studies (Ferrant, 2015) demonstrate that gender inequality in outcomes is bad for growth, especially when it comes to gender disparities in education and labour (OECD, 2012). There are a number of policies and regulations driving these results. The most pertinent of which are discriminatory laws, policies and biases that perpetuate stereotypes and mind-sets and undermine LGBTQI2S inclusion efforts. By shaping and influencing norms of acceptable behaviour and power relations between the sexes, discriminatory social institutions are additional key issues for economic growth by determining the economic choices and empowerment opportunities available for LGBTQI2S people. (OECD, 2016)

By dismantling the discriminatory policies laid out in Egale's action plan, the federal government will be advancing inclusion on a foundational level across our society and culture in Canada resulting in higher economic returns.

Access is Everything

(Recommendation 2)

Establishing more inclusive policies and mandating inclusion trainings across each of the 12 sectors in Egale's National LGBTQI2S Action Plan will help to both increase LGBTQI2S inclusion in the workforce, and remove some of the barriers-to-access that LGBTQI2S people face when seeking out support services (physical health, mental health, employment, etc...).



The World Bank released a case study in 2012 on LGBTQ discrimination, which showed that the cost of discrimination across health and labour alone can be as high as 1.7% of annual GDP. LGBTQI2S people in Canada are vital contributors to economic growth.

The LGBTQI2S market in Canada is between \$90 to \$100 billion dollars, or “about 7.2% of Canada's GDP”, and **workplaces that are supportive of LGBTQI2S employees witness a 22% increase in team productivity and represent a 17% increase in LGBTQI2S employee retention** (Pichett, n.d.). By supporting healthy and safe workplaces for LGBTQI2S people across various sectors, Canada's economy has an opportunity to increase two-fold as LGBTQI2S people also become more adequately supported out of poverty.

This same example applies when looking at access to healthcare – a major contributor to potential labour loss and added health costs down the road. The estimated economic burden of mental illness and substance use across Canada annually are \$51 billion dollars and \$38.4 billion dollars. Overall, health disparities for LGB people in Canada (not including transgender people) calculated an annual loss of 500 million to 2.3 billion. When considering costs related to healthcare, criminal justice, and lost productivity the cost of excluding LGBTQI2S people becomes insurmountable.

The federal government can take immediate action on developing inclusive policies to help offset this cost burden through implementing recommendations laid out in Egale's National LGBTQI2S Action Plan.

The Numbers Say it All, Unless They Don't

(Recommendation 3)

We commend the federal government for actions taken to date to include sexual orientation and gender minorities in data collection. Throughout the development of the National LGBTQI2S Action Plan, one of the most common themes was a lack of Canada-based research regarding LGBTQI2S inclusion across each of the 12 sectors.

Through an extensive literature review, Egale has found that comprehensive data across all 12 sectors in the National LGBTQI2S Action Plan are lacking adequate



inclusive data of LGBTQI2S people. Lack of inclusive data is particularly apparent in sectors including healthcare, mental health, poverty reduction and workplace inclusion. The tracking of data is intrinsically tied to improving Canada's economic growth as laid out in the previous sections.

Although the federal government has taken on many new initiatives to include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression minorities in areas such as Statistics Canada's report on police reported hate crimes, it is essential that the government continue to include civil society and community-based LGBTQI2S organizations in the collection process.

Take Action by Giving Credit

(Recommendation 4)

In the recent mandate letters, Minister Chagger has been tasked by the PMO to:

"Consult civil society representatives of LGBTQ2 communities to lay the groundwork for an LGBTQ2 action plan that would guide the work of the federal government on issues important to LGBTQ2 Canadians."

Egale's National LGBTQI2S Action Plan, not only aligns with a number of the priorities laid out in Minister Chagger's recent mandate letter, but it also identifies additional opportunities for the government to work with civil society to further LGBTQI2S inclusion in Canada.

Through the establishment of an LGBTQI2S Action Plan Implementation Fund, your government will be effectively engaging with civil society organizations by supporting the community to advance and prioritize the work that is needed to build a more inclusive Canada.

Thank you!