

STONEWALL WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX 2022

EMPLOYER FEEDBACK REPORT

NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE

SUMMARY

Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index is about recognising the work that goes into creating LGBTQ+ inclusive workplaces in the UK. By ensuring all LGBTQ+ people feel safe and welcomed in the workplace, we can create an inclusive culture that allows everyone the freedom to be themselves without fear.

This report will guide you through your submission by detailing our feedback to each section of the criteria and ending with our findings from the Staff Feedback Questionnaire (if applicable). We'll highlight what you've done well and focus on improvements for the future.

We understand that the last two years have been a difficult time for everyone, especially as we adapt to new working practices, so we greatly appreciate the time you took to continue your inclusion journey and to complete your submission. We recognise the commitment it takes to put a submission together and you should feel incredibly proud of what you've achieved in a challenging year.

The Workplace Equality Index is an opportunity to measure, progress and celebrate the work you're doing to make your organisation a better place for LGBTQ+ employees. From new policies to Pride events, leadership briefings to updating your training - each small change can make a big difference to our communities.

We hear incredible stories every year of workplaces making real impact, transforming the environments we work in every day. We know it's not easy work, but every day we move closer to a world in which LGBTQ+ people are free to be their true selves.

Thank you so much for taking part, and I hope we continue to work together over 2022.

Nancy Kelley, she/her, Chief Executive Officer

Northern Ireland Civil Service ranked 233 with a score of 54.5 out of 200

Northern Ireland Civil Service has been awarded a silver award

Section	Marks available	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, but not awarded
1) Policies and benefits	17	13	9.5	3.5
2) The employee lifecycle	22	13	3.5	9.5
3) LGBTQ+ employee network group	26	20	16.5	3.5
4) Empowering individuals	20	8.5	5.5	3
5) Leadership	18	6.5	5.5	1
6) Monitoring	20	5.5	0	5.5
7) Supply chains	17	4	0	4
8) External engagement	40	17	12	5
Staff Feedback Questionnaire	20	n/a	2	n/a

† When marking, sometimes our markers spot evidence that counts towards questions you didn't claim. In those cases, we award the points anyway.

SECTORAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

We understand the different challenges organisations face may depend on the sector and location they are based in. That's why we separate this data out, allowing organisations to benchmark themselves against others in a similar field or part of the UK.

We know that regulatory frameworks, budgetary constraints, organisational size, and the geographical spread of a workforce can all be factors in creating or removing barriers to inclusion.

Each sector and location has its own unique challenges. We can support you to face these challenges and achieve the best outcomes for your organisation.

Northern Ireland Civil Service ranked 35 in the Government & Regulators sector

Northern Ireland Civil Service ranked 5 in employers headquartered in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Civil Service ranked 46 in employers that operate in Northern Ireland

MARGINALISED OR UNDER-REPRESENTED LGBT GROUPS

This section focuses on those within our community whose stories and experiences we rarely get to hear. By breaking down this data, we aim to show you how you are progressing with this work.

Bi erasure and biphobia are real problems. They create a culture of stigmatisation, and many bi people are still wary about being open about their bi identity in the workplace.

Transphobia and anti-non-binary discrimination are areas of concern for many workplaces, with staff feeling scared and unable to be their authentic selves around colleagues.

We all have multiple facets of our identities, and many of us experience different forms of marginalisation and discrimination, such as racism and ableism. These experiences also affect many LGBTQ+ people at work. Tackling one form of marginalisation requires tackling them all: ending misogyny and making work welcoming for people of faith, for example, are important for making sure all LGBTQ+ people feel welcome.

Northern Ireland Civil Service scored 13 on questions specific to marginalised or underrepresented LGBTQ+ identities

Northern Ireland Civil Service scored 2.5 on questions specific to bi inclusion and anti-biphobia

Northern Ireland Civil Service scored 9.5 on questions specific to trans inclusion and anti-transphobia

Northern Ireland Civil Service scored 1 on questions specific to non-binary inclusion and this strand of anti-transphobia

Northern Ireland Civil Service scored 0.5 on questions specific to intersectionality and inclusion of LGBTQ+ people who experience multiple marginalisations, such as racism and ableism

SECTION ONE: POLICIES AND BENEFITS

This section examines the policies and benefits the organisation has in place to support LGBT staff. The questions scrutinise the policy feedback process, policy content and provision of specific support.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	13	9.5	3.5
Government & Regulators	12.5	8	4.5
Headquartered in Northern Ireland	12.5	8	4.5
Silver	13.5	8	5.5
Gold	15.5	11.5	4

Across this section the Northern Ireland Civil Service have demonstrated a range of good practice. We would recommend that the organisation uses this feedback to further develop this work across their policies and benefits.

It is great to see a thorough policy review process in place, with various staff being able to contribute to this process via consultations and through engagement with the network groups, with this feedback having a positive impact on the ability of LGBTQ+ staff to feel included in your policies. To develop here, we would encourage you to detail in your evidence how feedback can be shared across the year.

It is great to see that you have a clear zero-tolerance approach to inappropriate behaviour and discrimination towards LGBTQ+ individuals in the workplace. We would recommend that you look to introduce clearer examples of homophobia and biphobia to this policy to increase confidence amongst colleagues in recognising this behaviour. Your examples of transphobia are clear and it is good to see a specific reference to non-binary identities included in your policy.

In your parental policies, it is great to see that you have made efforts to use inclusive language, including inclusive definitions of partner. To take this further, we would recommend that you replicate this work across your shared parental leave and special leave policies.

Your trans inclusion policy provides a strong framework for trans colleagues and their managers to navigate the process of transitioning in your workplace. The guidance covers the key areas we recommend employers include in a trans inclusion policy. To develop this further, we would recommend that you look to include more information around non-binary inclusion, this could include providing specific guidance for non-binary colleagues in your policies, such as facilities usage and dress code.

Finally, we recommend that employers review any additional support available to employees for LGBTQ+ inclusion. You have demonstrated some good work to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ peoples experiences of mental health, and reviewing your mental health support provisions would complement this existing work.

SECTION TWO: THE EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE

This section examines the employee lifecycle within the organisation, starting with recruitment practices and finishing with exit processes. The questions scrutinise how the organisation engages and supports employees throughout their journey in the workplace.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	13	3.5	9.5
Government & Regulators	16	7.5	8.5
Headquartered in Northern Ireland	16.5	8	8.5
Silver	17.5	6.5	11
Gold	20	12	8

When attracting new talent to the organisation, it is great to see the Northern Ireland Civil Service taking a proactive approach to ensure that LGBTQ+ people feel able to apply for opportunities. You have demonstrated good practice in using diversity job sites and their networks to reach a diverse audience, and through actively promoting the LGBT Network Group and your wider LGBTQ+ inclusion activities in job packs. We would recommend that you provide a clearer commitment to trans and non-binary inclusion in this existing work.

To support your work across this section, we would recommend that you spend some time reviewing your recruitment and induction processes. Whilst it is great to see an overall inclusive approach to this, we would recommend that you provide more detail to staff with recruitment responsibilities around the specifics of LGBTQ+ inclusion in the recruitment process – for example, this could be through providing example actions they could take to ensure LGBTQ+ people feel included in interviews. In your induction materials, we would encourage you to provide a clearer commitment to all LGBTQ+ identities (specifically trans and non-binary identities), give further detail on how new employees can get involved with the network, and actively share information about your LGBTQ+ inclusive policies.

We would recommend that you spend some time developing your all staff equalities training. We recommend that good practice is for your training to share information about your policies and legislation, provide examples of inappropriate behaviour towards LGBTQ+ people and information on how to challenge this.

Finally, you have demonstrated a range of internal communications that will effectively raise awareness of LGBTQ+ identities and experiences. We would recommend expanding your communications to provide information about non-binary identities, the use of pronouns in the workplace, and highlighting your inclusive policies.

SECTION THREE: LGBTQ+ EMPLOYEE NETWORK GROUP

This section examines the work of your LGBTQ+ employee network group. The questions scrutinise the support the group is given by the organisation, its commitment to inclusivity, and the activities it carries out.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	20	16.5	3.5
Government & Regulators	18.5	13.5	5
Headquartered in Northern Ireland	21.5	16	5.5
Silver	20	14	6
Gold	23.5	19	4.5

The LGBT Network group at the Northern Ireland Civil Service has undertaken a variety of activities which will no doubt be having a positive impact on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people and allies across the organisation. This work is underpinned by a strong terms of reference and support from the organisation to achieve this.

It is great to see a range of valuable support being provided by the Northern Ireland Civil Service to the network to allow for it to effectively achieve its objectives; from having a budget to encouraging the commitment of time, this will allow the network to support an inclusive culture across the organisation.

We would recommend that the network focuses attention on raising awareness of non-binary identities and issues, and around intersectional LGBTQ+ inclusion. The network has already made some headway into this, with a range of activities focusing on the experiences of age, parenthood, and gender for LGBTQ+ people. A next step could be to explore issues related to LGBTQ+ and race, faith, and disability. To support this work, we would encourage you to explore how the network can create a strategy to engage with these diversity strands, and embed an intersectional approach as a way of working.

The network has demonstrated good support for colleagues (regardless of LGBTQ+ identity) through resources and by providing reps to give support on LGBTQ+ issues. We would encourage you to develop this further by considering how the network can give support to colleagues around reporting bullying and harassment. It is great to see that in the network's structure there is a clear commitment to ensuring all LGBTQ+ people are included, we would recommend that you communicate this regularly.

Finally, as well as exploring how the network can put on more events, we look forward to seeing how your bi and trans advisory group supports the network group's activities. This is an important step to ensure all LGBTQ+ people feel seen and included by the network, and it will increase the scope and impact of its work.

SECTION FOUR: EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

This section examines the process of engaging individuals to create an LGBT inclusive culture at the organisation. The questions scrutinise how the organisation empowers LGBT and non-LGBT employees to step up as change makers and allies.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	8.5	5.5	3
Government & Regulators	11.5	7	4.5
Headquartered in Northern Ireland	9	6.5	2.5
Silver	13	7.5	5.5
Gold	16.5	12.5	4

We would recommend spending some time developing your work around empowering individuals. Whilst it is great to see development opportunities being promoted, we would recommend that you consider how these are accessible to employees at all levels of the organisation.

It is great to see that you have profiled a range of workplace stories to all staff on your intranet pages. The profiles around LGBTQ+ people aged over 50 and your profile of an out lesbian colleague are particularly good examples of this work. We would recommend that you take this work further in future to share a broader range of experiences in the next year.

You have demonstrated a good resource to support all cisgender staff to become trans allies – the resource evidence provides clear actions individuals can take, as well as helpful information for them to consider. We would encourage you to explore how you could further strengthen this resource by developing further information about non-binary identities.

Finally, we would recommend that you use the great template for trans allyship to develop your broader allyship activities, particularly supporting non-LGBTQ+ people to become allies to LGBTQ+ people, and non-bi people to become bi allies. We would encourage you to explore how you can adapt this existing resource to provide clear information about all LGBTQ+ identities. We would recommend that the information provides allies the opportunity to understand the issues that LGBTQ+ communities experience, as well as the actions they can take, to drive an inclusive culture across the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

SECTION FIVE: LEADERSHIP

This section examines how the organisation engages senior leaders and line managers in their responsibility to set an LGBT-inclusive culture. The questions scrutinise how the organisation empowers senior leaders, the individual actions senior leaders take, and how all line managers are encouraged to recognise LGBT inclusion as key to their role.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	6.5	5.5	1
Government & Regulators	9.5	6	3.5
Headquartered in Northern Ireland	8.5	5	3.5
Silver	10	5.5	4.5
Gold	13.5	9	4.5

Leaders at all levels of the organisation play a key role in establishing an inclusive culture. It is great to see leaders at the Northern Ireland Civil Service engage with LGBTQ+ equality (and inclusion more broadly). The challenge for the organisation is to increase the scope and impact of this work over the coming year.

We would recommend that you develop this work further by diversifying the opportunities available to your leadership team to understand the importance of LGBTQ+ inclusion. It is great to see that the organisation has invested in inclusive leadership training over the past year, and a next step could be to invest in further opportunities such as bi, trans, and non-binary specific learning for your senior leaders. However, it is great to see that the reverse mentoring scheme has been developed and launched, and we look forward to seeing the increased impact of this as it is rolled out further in the coming year.

It is great to see your leaders engaging with LGBTQ+ issues across the Northern Ireland Civil Service, particularly in terms of communicating messages on the importance of LGBTQ+ inclusion. In future submissions, we would encourage you to diversify this further and work towards senior leaders sharing strong messages about the importance of bi inclusion, trans inclusion, and non-binary inclusion specifically. There are many further ways that senior leaders can engage with LGBTQ+ inclusion, such as through reviewing LGBTQ+ monitoring reports, or by engaging with internal and external events.

Finally, to support development across this section, we would encourage you to explore how you can thread diversity and inclusion through your recruitment process for leaders and line managers. This could include having a question or competency requirement in your job descriptions about diversity and inclusion (inclusive of LGBTQ+ inclusion) to ensure that leaders recognise the importance of inclusion in the workplace. To support this, and to ensure that diversity and inclusion is embedded in the workplace, you could look to introduce inclusion-specific objectives to the appraisal process for leaders and line managers to ensure that values are being lived.

SECTION SIX: MONITORING

This section examines how the organisation uses monitoring to understand the representation and experiences of its LGBT employees. The questions scrutinise data collection methods, analysis, and outcomes.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	5.5	0	5.5
Average: Government & Regulators	9.5	3	6.5
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland	6.5	3.5	3
Average: Silver	8.5	2.5	6
Average: Gold	12	5	7

Monitoring exercises are crucial for understanding the experiences of your LGBTQ+ employees and responding to their needs.

Whilst it is great to see that there has been some diversity monitoring of staff across the Northern Ireland Civil Service, we would recommend that you undertake a review of your approach to ensure that the information you collect is as helpful as it can be to inform your LGBTQ+ inclusion interventions. To start out here, we would recommend updating your sexual orientation and gender questions to be more inclusive of all LGBTQ+ identities, and considering introducing a trans status monitoring question.

Once you have updated your questions, we would recommend that you focus your attention on expanding the range of reporting you undertake. Whilst it is good to see that you have collected data on your recruitment processes to consider what barriers are in place for candidates based on their gender and sexual orientation, we would recommend that you are clearer in terms of the actions you have taken as a result of this analysis.

Beyond recruitment monitoring, we would encourage you to use your monitoring data to understand the experiences of your LGBTQ+ staff in terms of employee satisfaction and pay gaps. This will allow you to identify whether discrepancies exist in the experiences of your LGBTQ+ staff compared to non-LGBTQ+ staff. We would recommend that you break down different experiences in the LGBTQ+ community (e.g., by comparing bi responses to lesbian and gay responses).

To help increase declaration rates, and further improve the accuracy of your reporting, we'd recommend that you actively communicate the importance of monitoring, how this data is handled, and what actions have come from previous monitoring activities. By explaining some of these key areas, your staff should have more confidence in the processes you undertake and will be more likely to complete their monitoring data on your systems. To assist with gathering accurate data, we would recommend that you provide definitions of bi, trans, and non-binary within your data collection form(s) to build understanding of what these terms mean.

SECTION SEVEN: SUPPLY CHAINS

This section examines how the organisation affects change in its supply chain. The questions scrutinise the steps taken to ensure suppliers are LGBT-inclusive, from tendering new suppliers to monitoring current contracts.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	4	0	4
Average: Government & Regulators	7	4	3
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland	4	0.5	3.5
Average: Silver	6.5	2.5	4
Average: Gold	10.5	7	3.5

Inclusive procurement practices help you to integrate LGBTQ+ inclusion throughout your supply chains. In this section we are looking for the ways in which you scrutinise the inclusivity of prospective suppliers in your procurement process to ensure that they are aligned to your values.

Whilst it is good to see that the Northern Ireland Civil Service has a strong code of conduct commitment that they require suppliers to sign up to when being awarded a contract, we would encourage you to detail how you scrutinise suppliers on their LGBTQ+ inclusion activities during the tendering process itself. This could include asking for specific information in the tendering process – such as asking for information about their approach to discrimination, monitoring of incidents of bullying and harassment, trans inclusion policies, or overarching diversity and inclusion strategies.

After you have awarded a contract, we would encourage you to engage with your suppliers to ensure accountability, but also share best practice and learning. This could include having a broad space in contract monitoring meetings to discuss diversity and inclusion, which would allow you to speak to suppliers about the work you are undertaking, understand the work they do in the area, and explore joint initiatives.

There are many ways to collaborate with your suppliers. This could take many forms such as participating in joint training, or by inviting suppliers to participate in your LGBTQ+ network groups activities. This is particularly important for suppliers who may engage with your service users and your staff to ensure that they staff are not only included within your organisation, but also share your values.

SECTION EIGHT: EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

This section comprises of three parts. Part 1 (Community Engagement) examines the outreach activity of the organisation and how it supports wider LGBT communities. Part 2 (Sector Engagement) examines how the organisation promotes LGBT equality to other organisations in its sector. Part 3 (Service Delivery) examines how the organisation ensures it meets the needs of any service users or customers.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	17	12	5
Average: Government & Regulators	16.5	8.5	8
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland	19	7	12
Average: Silver	19	8	11
Average: Gold	26	16.5	9.5

External engagement on LGBTQ+ inclusion is key not only for demonstrating the Northern Ireland Civil Service's commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion, but for advancing LGBTQ+ inclusion across Northern Ireland.

It is great to see the organisation engaging with LGBTQ+ community groups to understand the inequalities that the LGBTQ+ community experiences, and to receive input on broader consultations to understand how outcomes can be inclusive and supportive of LGBTQ+ communities. This is supported by a range of measures to help LGBTQ+ community organisations deliver on their work and support community members. We would encourage you to explore how you could specifically engage with bi and trans inclusion through the support you provide to community organisations.

Additionally, it is great to see a variety of social media posts to share information about the Northern Ireland Civil Service's commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion that are inclusive of bi, trans, and non-binary identities. We would encourage you to develop this work by increasing the regularity of these posts throughout the year.

In terms of next steps, we would recommend that you undertake some further work to engage with your service users in an inclusive way. You could consider a training that specifically addresses the needs of LGBTQ+ service users for those in external-facing roles. To complement this work, you could undertake a mapping exercise to understand how LGBTQ+ service users engage with the organisation – this will help you understand any barriers that LGBTQ+ service users may face and inform actions you could take to ensure an inclusive experience for all.

This work could also be complemented by a policy that clearly bans bullying and harassment between staff and service users. We would recommend that this is explicitly inclusive of instances of biphobia, homophobia, and transphobia so all stakeholders are clear about what constitutes inappropriate behaviour when engaging with your organisation.

STAFF FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of the Workplace Equality Index, employees from across the UK take part in Stonewall's Staff Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ).

The SFQ is an anonymous questionnaire that employers share with their staff. The results help us generate each employer's score and gives them a deep understanding of their employees' experiences at work.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks claimed, not awarded
Northern Ireland Civil Service	n/a	2	n/a
Government & Regulators	n/a	7	n/a
Headquartered in Northern Ireland	n/a	6.5	n/a
Silver	n/a	7.5	n/a
Gold	n/a	13	n/a