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# DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



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A BRIEF ON  
THE INCLUSION OF  
LGBTQI AND GENDER  
NON-CONFORMING  
PEOPLE IN THE  
ACHIEVEMENT OF  
THE SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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## **SDG 8:**

*Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.*

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 establishes that everyone has the right to full employment and decent work, with equal pay, in safe working environments.



# HOW LGBTQI AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLE ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND

An important principle of the SDGs is that no one shall be left behind. Still, LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people are discriminated against in the workplace and are denied employment because of who they are. In order for SDG 8 to be achieved, specific issues faced by LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people in the labour force. The barriers to inclusion must be addressed. These barriers include or are rooted in:

**Unequal workplace participation:** Employment is considered one of the most important factors in reducing poverty. However, LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people are discriminated against in recruitment processes. For example, trans women are half as likely to get call-backs when applying for jobs in comparison to cis women.

**Discrimination in the workplace:** Studies in China, South Africa, and Chile have shown that between 20-30 percent of LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people report that they have experienced harassment in the workplace because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics. To avoid mistreatment and violence many choose to hide their identities or change their physical appearance.

#leave  
no one  
behind

**Unequal pay:** In comparison to the general population, LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people earn lower wages. Due to structural discrimination, they are overrepresented in lower-wage sectors and miss out on raises and promotions because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics. Trans people and intersex people as well as LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people of colour are among the subgroups with the lowest income.

**Exclusion due to inconsistent identity documents:** A lack of accurate identity documents often leads to trans and gender non-conforming people being discriminated against during recruitment processes. Additionally, when it is not possible to amend IDs, trans and gender non-conforming people may not be able to produce updated certificates and diplomas. Documents which are required for many employment opportunities.

# A TIME FOR ACTION

In order to ensure decent work for all, and fully live up to the commitment that no one should be left behind, the world's leaders must act now. RFSL recommends:



Adopt laws and policies that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual characteristics in the workplace and in recruitment processes.



Provide public education programmes with the aim to combat stigma and reduce discrimination against LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people.



Develop and implement swift, transparent, and accessible legal procedures for amending name and gender marker in all relevant documents, to ensure that trans people are not misgendered and excluded from employment opportunities.



Ensure LGBTQI inclusion in initiatives for promoting access to the labour market, focusing on underrepresented groups such as trans and gender non-conforming people.



Where safe and possible, track the payment gap between LGBTQI and non-conforming people and the general population on a regular basis.



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# USING THE 2030 AGENDA FRAMEWORK

The 2030 Agenda provides an opportunity for activists and organisations to shape the international development agenda. Here are some tips on how to engage with government agencies and non-governmental organisations to advocate for programmes and policies inclusive of LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people's rights.



Find out if your country has a national action plan for the implementation of the SDGs. Use this as an entry point for discussion with decision-makers.



Work in broad coalitions and find allies who work intersectionally. Look into possibilities of working with ECOSOC accredited organisations, like RFSL, to enable access to UN spaces and conferences.



Spread awareness and create visibility by generating data, research, and reports focusing on issues relevant for LGBTQI and gender non-conforming people. Use inclusive and accessible language.

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**THE GLOBAL GOALS**  
For Sustainable Development

# PROMOTING LGBTQI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS SINCE 1950

The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Rights (RFSL) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1950. Our vision is: An equal world where all LGBTQI people's human rights are respected and where no one is left behind.

## GET IN TOUCH

Are you interested in learning more about how you can work with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda?

Read more at [rfsl.se/international](https://rfsl.se/international) or email us at [forbund@rfsl.se](mailto:forbund@rfsl.se).

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