



# Report on the 2024 Education International Quadrennial Survey on LGBTI+ Rights in Education



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## About Education International:

Education International represents organisations of teachers and other education employees across the globe. It is the world's largest federation of unions and associations, representing thirty million education employees in about four hundred organisations in one hundred and seventy countries and territories, across the globe. Education International unites teachers and education employees.



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**Content Warning:** This report contains content that may be distressing, including mentions of suicide, homophobia, and transphobia.

# Table of Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Context and Purpose of the study	3
2. Methodology	4
<i>Methods</i>	4
<i>Instruments and Procedures</i>	4
<i>Participants</i>	4
<b>Findings</b>	<b>6</b>
Section 1: A challenging political context for unions	6
1. <i>Great disparities between contexts in participating countries</i>	6
2. <i>Political and public opposition against LGBTI+ rights in several countries</i>	8
Section 2: Union understanding of LGBTI+ issues as it relates to education	12
1. <i>Perceived situation of LGBTI+ teachers and ESP</i>	12
2. <i>Relevance of LGBTI+ issues within the union</i>	14
Section 3: Union activities and structures in favour of LGBTI+ rights	17
1. <i>Change starts from within the union</i>	17
2. <i>Advocacy Work &amp; Research</i>	18
3. <i>Support to individual LGBTI+ teachers, ESP, and students</i>	19
4. <i>Awareness-raising, trainings and teaching materials</i>	20
5. <i>Collaborations</i>	21
6. <i>Unions who do not conduct LGBTI+ rights work</i>	22
7. <i>Plans for future LGBTI+ activities</i>	22
Section 4: Union perceptions of Education International's LGBTI+ work	23
1. <i>Knowledge of EI's LGBTI+ work and presence in LGBTI+ spaces</i>	23
2. <i>Satisfaction with EI's LGBTI+ work</i>	23
3. <i>Information flow from EI to unions</i>	25
4. <i>Importance of the process</i>	25
Section 5: Challenges & Needs of the unions	25
1. <i>External challenges</i>	25
2. <i>Internal challenges</i>	26
3. <i>Needs expressed by unions</i>	26
a) <i>Learning from others</i>	27
b) <i>Training and information</i>	28
c) <i>Resources</i>	28
4. <i>Perspectives and priorities for the future</i>	29
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>31</b>
Section 1: Recommendations for EI member organisations	31
Section 2: Recommendations for Education International	31
<b>Annex</b>	<b>33</b>
Annex 1: Questionnaire	33
Annex 2: Interview Grid	42

## Figures

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Figure 1. Survey responses in EI regions (n=114)	4
Figure 2. Perceived acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual as well as trans and intersex teachers and ESP (n=114)	12
Figure 3. PA Index for lesbian, gay, bisexual as well as trans and intersex teachers and ESP in EI regions (n=114)	12
Figure 4. Relevance of LGBTI+ activities (n=114)	14
Figure 5. Knowing at least one LGBTI+ person and perceived importance of LGBTI+ activities (n=114)	15
Figure 6. Unions that carry out advocacy or research activities to support LGBTI+ rights at national level (n=114)	18
Figure 7. Advocacy and research activities according to union size (n=114)	18
Figure 8. Advocacy and research activities in detail (n=114)	19
Figure 9. Promotion of non-discrimination in employment for LGBTI+ teachers and ESP (n=114)	20
Figure 10. Cooperations with other organisations (n=114)	21
Figure 11. Plans to increase LGBTI+ activities (n=114)	22
Figure 12. Plans to increase LGBTI+ activities by region (n=114)	22
Figure 13. Plans to increase LGBTI+ activities by union size (n=114)	22
Figure 14. Unions' satisfaction with EI activities on LGBTI+ (n=114)	23
Figure 15. Satisfaction with EI activities on LGBTI+ by EI regions (n=114)	24
Figure 16. Satisfaction with EI activities on LGBTI+ by union size (n=114)	24
Figure 17. Unions' needs for increased LGBTI+ activities (n=114)	27
Figure 18. Unions' needs for increased LGBTI+ activities in EI regions (n=114)	27
Figure 19. Activities EI should focus on (n=114)	28

## Education International Glossary

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**Bisexual:** *A term to describe people who are emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender (UNFE, 2024)*

**Cisgender:** *refers to individuals who identify as the gender which was assigned to them at birth, often referred to as “cis man” or “cis woman”.*

**Deadname:** *the deadname of a transgender person refers to the name given to them at birth and related to their assigned gender.*

**Gay:** *A generic term to describe people who are emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted to people of the same gender. While it is more commonly used to describe men, some women and non-binary people may also identify as gay (UNFE, 2024).*

**Gender:** *Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate, typically for men and women. These attributes, opportunities, and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context / time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities (UN Women Training Centre, 2024).*

**Gender Expression:** *The way in which people externally portray gender through actions and appearance, including dress, speech and mannerisms. Some terms to describe gender expression include masculine, feminine and androgynous (UNFE, 2024)*

**Gender Identity:** *Gender identity refers to how an individual feels about their own gender. Individuals may identify as male, female or as something else and their gender identity may or may not be the same as the sex that they were assigned*

at birth. Everyone has a gender identity and expresses their gender in a unique and personal way (*Plan International, Transform Education, UNGEI, and UNICEF, 2021*).

**Heterosexual:** A term that refers to a man whose romantic, emotional and/or physical attraction is to women or vice-versa, often referred to as “straight” (*UNFE, 2024*).

**Homophobia:** Any form of prejudice or hostile attitude towards those who are attracted to people of the same gender (*UNFE, 2024*).

**Intersex:** Intersex people are born with sex characteristics (such as sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, hormonal patterns and/or chromosomal patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies (*OCHCR, 2024*).

**Lesbian:** A term to describe women who are emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to other women (*UNFE, 2024*).

**Lesophobia:** Any form of prejudice or hostile attitude towards those who are lesbians.

**LGBTI+ :** An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and other people with sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics that are perceived not to conform to social norms (*UNFE, 2024*).

**Non-binary:** A term used to describe a person whose gender identity falls outside the male-female gender binary. This term can encompass a wide variety of gender experiences, including people with a specific gender identity that is neither exclusively man nor woman, people who identify as two or more genders (bigender, pangender or polygender) and people who do not identify with any gender (agender). Non-binary people may or may not also describe themselves as trans, gender queer or gender fluid (someone whose gender is not fixed over time) (*UNFE, 2024*).

**Sex:** Sex refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male. While these sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive, as there are individuals who possess both, they tend to differentiate humans as males and females (*World Health Organization, 2024*).

**Sexual Orientation:** A person’s romantic, emotional and/or physical feelings or attraction to people of the same, different or more than one gender. This encompasses heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, and a wide range of other expressions of sexual orientation (*UNFE, 2024*).

**Transgender:** People who identify as transgender are people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be at birth. “Trans” is often used as shorthand for transgender (*National Center for Transgender Equality, 2024*).

**Transition:** (gender) transition refers to the social and/or medical processes to change one’s gender expression or body in order to accord to one’s own internal sense of gender identity. Transition may involve medical treatments but does not always.

**Transphobia:** Any form of prejudice or hostile attitude towards transgender people, including denying their gender identity or refusing to acknowledge it (*UNFE, 2024*).





# Foreword

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**B**uilding on the principles of equality and non-discrimination enshrined in the EI Constitution, EI has long acknowledged and denounced the discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex, teachers, education support personnel (ESP), and students, as well as all other persons whose sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression differ from the social norm (LGBTI+). EI and our member organisations have worked to promote LGBTI+ rights both within the education union movement and broader society at local, national, regional and global levels.

EI's Quadrennial survey on LGBTI+ Rights provides a wealth of information and about the work member organisations are carrying out to advocate for LGBTI+ rights in education.

We thank all the member organisations who participated in this survey. The response rate was unprecedented at 113 complete responses from unions, with strong engagement across EI's regions. This is the highest response rate of any EI LGBTI+ survey to date, nearly doubling since it was last completed in 2014 before our 8th World Congress, and reflects the importance that unions afford to our role in defending and promoting the rights of LGBTI+ students, teachers, and ESP. I also wish to extend my gratitude to the research team for their thoughtful collaboration and sincere dedication to the report.

A few issues particularly caught my attention while reading the report although the entire study deserves a close read.

Globally, LGBTI+ activists and their allies are experiencing a tidal wave of pushback for their work, even hard-fought advances and granted rights can quickly be taken away as anti-democratic and fascist powers increasingly target EI's LGBTI+ members and their allies. The education sector has been a specific focus of this

regressive activity, putting LGBTI+ lives and livelihoods at further risk.

There are harrowing instances of discrimination, harassment, and violence against LGBTI+ teachers, ESP, students, and their defenders in all EI regions. As we spend most of our time in our places of work, our LGBTI+ members have the right to be themselves at work, free from intolerance, discrimination, harassment, or violence.

Despite this, education trade unions tend to express more progressive views than the government of the countries where they operate. Although there is a strong need for increased capacity building and knowledge sharing between unions, most participating unions want to increase their work on LGBTI+ issues and believe that LGBTI+ issues are important for unions to address.

A first step for all unions is to consider how to make their union more inclusive to their LGBTI+ members and this Report offers clear Recommendations on how to do so. To that end, building inclusive trade unions is imperative to our goal of trade union renewal.

We encourage you to read the survey and consider how union examples and stories are relevant to your contexts, and discuss the conclusions and recommendations within your union. Education unions can, and must, play a key role in the struggle for equal rights and quality education for all.

EI continues to send a strong and clear message to our LGBTI+ members and their allies: we see you, stand with you, and join you in the fight for the recognition and realisation of your human rights.



David Edwards  
General Secretary



# Introduction

## 1. Context and Purpose of the study

*« All teachers and students should be free to teach and learn in a safe and inclusive environment that respects LGBTI rights »* 2019  
EI Resolution on Securing LGBTI Rights

Since its creation in 1993, Education International (EI) has acknowledged and strived to counteract the discrimination and harassment experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) teachers, education support personnel (ESP), and students, as well as all other persons whose sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression differ from the social norm. Several resolutions have been adopted and actions have been taken to promote LGBTI+ rights both within the education union movement and within broader society at local, national, regional and global levels. This quadrennial survey on LGBTI+ rights is one of a series of surveys or reports on LGBTI+ issues and rights in the education sector developed by the organisation since 2001. The previous report was developed in 2014 (published in 2015). In 2018, EI seized the opportunity of the 25-year anniversary to review the policies and structures established, as well as the initiatives undertaken over the last quarter century, to promote and advance LGBTI+ rights.

The 2024 Quadrennial Survey thus aims to provide an informative cross-section of union policies, advocacy points and current educational challenges, together with selected case studies which seek to advance EI's work furthering and protecting LGBTI+ rights in and through education.

The objectives of this survey were to:

- Gain understanding of the work unions are doing to support LGBTI+ rights in education (towards teachers and students) and in favour of LGBTI+ rights within their respective organisations;
- Review key developments, including progress on achieving equality and inclusion in education;
- Describe and discuss the challenges unions face when working, or aspiring to work, on LGBTI+ rights in education, particularly in contexts of anti-gender and anti-LGBTI+ movements;
- Gain insights on the ways EI can better support member organisations in this regard.

As we will see in the methodology chapter, a significant number of unions participated in this survey, with increased participation when compared to previous editions. This report has five sections. Section 1 sets the political context in which unions do, or do not, address LGBTI+ rights. This is key in order to understand unions' knowledge and perception of the topic as well as their activities. Recent political shifts that affect unions' work as well as anti-gender and anti-LGBTI+ movements are exemplified. Section 2 addresses unions' understanding of LGBTI+ issues in general and how they relate to the education sector in particular. We note that one decade after the last survey, unions' interest in working on LGBTI+ issues has increased. Section 3 of the report outlines the activities that unions implement to further LGBTI+ rights. Section 4 then goes on to focus on the

perception that unions have of EI's work on LGBTI+ issues: how aware they are of the work, whether they have engaged in EI spaces and how satisfied they are with it. The final and fifth section addresses the main challenges that unions experience when implementing LGBTI+ activities as well as their expressed needs. This section is followed by recommendations for education unions and EI.

## 2. Methodology

### Methods

Two methods were used for this survey: a quantitative online questionnaire and semi-structured qualitative interviews. For the first time, the LGBTI+ Survey included a questionnaire which was separate from the other parts of the Equality and Diversity Survey, and included a qualitative part, allowing more in-depth data.

### Instruments and Procedures

While the 2024 questionnaire included some questions from the previous LGBTI+ survey, effort was made towards a more nuanced understanding of LGBTI+ issues, e.g. by implementing separate questions for sexual orientation (LGB issues) and gender identity (TI issues). Furthermore, a focus on the unions' political and legal contexts was included. The questionnaire (attached in Annex 1) consisted of single choice, multiple choice and open-ended questions, and took respondents around 20 minutes to complete. A pilot questionnaire was sent to selected member organisations across regions to verify readability and relevance. The quantitative data was prepared and analysed using Microsoft Excel. In addition to the data gathered by the questionnaire, we cross-referenced information provided by EI regarding union size.

Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews with union representatives. Survey respondents were asked whether they were interested in participating in an interview and a purposeful sampling was thereafter performed to ensure regional representation. An interview guide was designed (Annex 2) which included sections on country context, union actions regarding LGBTI+ rights, challenges, needs and perception of EI's LGBTI+ work. Interviews lasted between 1 and 1.5 hours and were recorded and partially transcribed with key verbatim. Due to connection problems, one interview was conducted via WhatsApp chat. After transcription, thematic coding was performed manually. Verbatim in Spanish and French were translated to English for the purpose of the report.

### Participants

The questionnaire was sent to all 383 EI member organisations in the five regions and official languages of EI (i.e., English, Spanish and French). There were 114 valid responses to the survey (complete responses without logical errors). It thus reached 29.8% of member unions. Compared to the last LGBTI+ Survey by EI, the number of responses almost doubled from 59 to 114. Not only was the outreach of the 2024 survey greater, but also the distribution between the regions was more balanced, as shown in Figure 1. The highest percentage came from Europe (31.5%, n=36), followed by Africa (24.6%, n=28) and Asia-Pacific (19.3%, n=22).

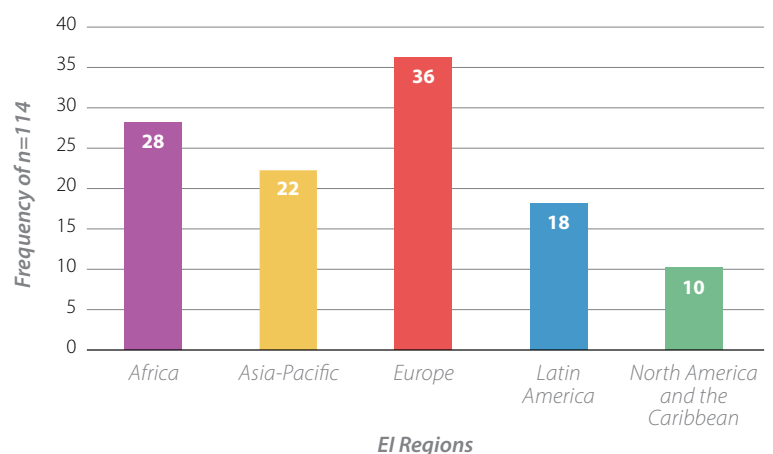


Figure 1. Survey responses in EI regions (n=114)

15.8% (n=18) of responses came from Latin America, and the smallest proportion from North America and the Caribbean (8.8%, n=10).

Twenty-three unions asked for their country or territory to remain anonymous, nine of which are based in Africa, five in Europe, four in North America and the Caribbean, three in Asia-Pacific, and two in Latin America. In these instances, the regions of the anonymised unions are referenced in this report.

Twelve union representatives from different countries, staff or union-elected members, participated in semi-structured qualitative interviews. All regions were represented in the interviews: three were held for Africa, three for Asia and the Pacific, three for Europe, two for Latin America and one for North America and the Caribbean. These participants are also anonymised in this report.

# Findings

## Section 1: A challenging political context for unions

### 1. Great disparities between contexts in participating countries

There are great disparities regarding political, socio-cultural and legal contexts in the countries represented in the Survey, ranging from LGBTI+ persons having the same (or almost) legal rights and protection as heterosexual and cisgender<sup>1</sup> persons, to having some but limited rights, to being heavily discriminated against, stigmatised and even criminalised. A general overview of these different contexts is key to understanding the possibilities that unions have when working on LGBTI+ issues and the social and cultural norms that are prevalent in the societies from which union representatives speak.

Of the 114 questionnaire respondents, 41 stated that it is illegal in their country to be in a same-sex sexual relationship. 59 state that same-sex marriage is illegal in the country, in 42 respondents operate in countries where there are no same-sex civil unions, 46 in countries where it is not possible to change your first name and gender marker on official documents.

The survey did reach a high proportion of unions working within countries that criminalise same-sex relations. When cross checking the responses with secondary information, it turned out that some of the respondents perceive the legal framework of their country as more restrictive than it is. This was also reflected in the interviews where one representative perceived same-sex relations to be illegal although they have never been criminalised in the country.

The fact that not all respondents know about the legality of same-sex sexual relations within their own context shows

that in some cases, more expertise on the topic is needed. If unions assume same-sex relations to be illegal – even if that is not the case – it will likely interfere with their plans to increase activities on LGBTI+ issues.

From the interviews, we gather that LGBTI+ persons in **Iceland** and **Canada** have equal rights to live as a couple, have a family, participate freely in society and employment. Transgender persons can change their gender marker without going to court. The representative from the Icelandic union *Kennarasamband Islands* (KI) stressed that equality is one of six focus elements in schools and should guarantee for all children to receive classes on LGBTI+ issues, even if this part of the equality law is not fully implemented. While LGBTI+ rights are strong in Canada, regional disparities do exist, and family rights previously caused public debate in the region of **Quebec**. While these rights meet little opposition today, other topics, particularly transgender rights, are present in the public debate.

Both **Costa Rica** and **Argentina** uphold LGBTI+ human rights through anti-discrimination legislation, with marriage, civil unions and adoption being open to same-sex couples, as well as the right to transition<sup>2</sup> without medical or court procedures. In the case of **Argentina**, the country has become a « *reference for the Latin American continent* », according to the representative interviewed from *Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina* (CTERA), particularly after passing the Gender Identity Law, which gives transgender persons self-determination and recognises non-binary identities on identification documents, among other rights.<sup>3</sup>

1 **Cisgender** refers to individuals who identify as the gender which was assigned to them at birth

2 **(gender) transition** refers to the social and/or medical processes to change one's gender expression or body in order to accord to one's own internal sense of gender identity. Transition may involve medical treatments but does not always..

3 See also **ILGA World** <https://database.ilga.org/argentina-lgbti> and <https://database.ilga.org/costa-rica-lgbti>

In **Italy**, LGBTI+ rights are considered insufficient by interviewed union representatives: civil unions exist but same-sex couples are not allowed to marry and face challenges in obtaining parental rights. LGBTI+ issues remain culturally taboo, and episodes of violence and discrimination are met with complicit silence. In fact, the *Federazione Lavoratori della Conoscenza CGIL* (FLC-CGIL) representative noted that « *the law is a little bit more advanced than society, but really doesn't guarantee equal opportunities* ». Regional differences exacerbate the situation. For example, some local authorities allow same-sex parents to access parental rights through their court-system:

« *It's always hard for families because they always have to demonstrate something. Unless they are lucky and live in a city or area where municipalities are more 'understanding' so to say, otherwise they always have to go through courts (...) it's very uncertain.* » FLC-CGIL, Italy

In **Sri Lanka** the situation of LGBTI+ rights is limited but complex as consensual same-sex sexual acts are illegal while transgender persons have the right to legally change their gender (following a medical diagnosis). As shown by this dialogue between the interviewer and the *Union of Sri Lanka Teachers Solidarity* (USLTS) representative, transgender persons have become more visible in society while homosexual persons remain strongly stigmatised:

USLTS representative: « *In the ancient times, [transgender persons] didn't come forward, it was a shame to them, but now (...) [being] transgender is normal, they come forward, come to the media and talk to the other people also, they come forward and fight for their rights now, but earlier they wanted to hide (..) they didn't come out. (...) Lesbian and gay in Sri Lanka, because of our culture, that's not accepted.* »

Interviewer: *Transgender persons are more accepted than lesbian*

*and gay persons?*

USLTS representative: « *According to our culture.* »

USLTS, Sri Lanka

In several countries represented by the unions participating in the interviews, LGBTI+ persons have no legal rights or face significant legal discrimination. The situation appears most serious in **Kiribati**, where consensual same-sex sexual relations are criminalised and LGBTI+ persons have no legal rights. Nevertheless, the union representative noted progress over the last five years, indicating that the government has taken steps to recognise and support the traditional Kiribati LGBTI+ community, known as the *binabinaine*<sup>4</sup>, by allowing them to organise as a community, to perform and organise beauty contests. As a result of this growing acceptance the *Kiribati Union of Teachers'* (KUT) representative thinks it has become easier to be LGBTI+, despite social rejection remaining strong:

« *[Before LGBTI+ persons] weren't very visible. Once the government recognised [them], the topic became more visible. (...) The government knows that every person has a right, so they are working towards that right. But most people don't care about these people's rights. (...) [they] don't agree with [LGBTI+ persons / binabinaine or Bimba], in accordance to the culture (...) but they leave them on their own, only (...) once you have one of your family who wants to be like that, who is a male and wants to act like a girl, then the family don't accept that (...) the Bimba, they don't agree with that.* » KUT, Kiribati

In three countries represented in the interviews, **Madagascar, Benin** and **another African country which has**

4 mostly gay and bisexual men and transgender women. « *Gender diversity can be seen in people known as binabinaine and binabinamwane, who may behave and live as the gender opposite that assigned at birth. The civil society organization Boutokaan Inaomataia ao Mauriia Binabinaine Association works to end violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression in Kiribati, particularly for binabinaine.* » See <https://outrightinternational.org/our-work/pacific/kiribati> The BIMBA Inc. is an organisation officially established in 2016 founded by Binabinaine (gay men, bisexual men, and transwomen) for support of their human rights and health/wellbeing. See <https://www.facebook.com/bimbakiribati/>

**been anonymised**, homosexuality is not criminalised but LGBTI+ persons have no rights, as confirmed by data from the ILGA WORLD Database<sup>5</sup>. Transgender persons are unable to legally change their gender, and same-sex couples are not legally recognised. Interviewees illustrated this sociocultural and legal situation. LGBTI+ persons face strong societal rejection and are « *penalised by society* » (FEKRIMPAMA, Madagascar). The Beninese union representative explained that LGBTI+ persons are not generally accepted in the country and are considered by many as not belonging in Beninese society:

*« We are in a traditional society in Benin, we are African, traditional society, so the society does not see how these kinds of tendencies will prosper in the country... (...) most people in Benin think that these [LGBTI+] people, or at least this tendency, should not arise in our society. (...) [LGBT+ persons] hide everywhere. »* SNEP, Benin

## **2. Political and public opposition against LGBTI+ rights in several countries**

In the questionnaire, 36.8% of union representatives state that there have been major changes in the national context in terms of LGBTI+ issues (advances or setbacks) within the last 5 years, affecting the organisations' work. Some unions report the implementation of LGBTI+ friendly laws such as same-sex marriage in **Costa Rica**, the *Gender Recognition Reform Bill* in **Scotland**, legislation on gender autonomy in **Iceland**, or the decriminalisation of same-sex relationships (**anonymous country, North America and the Caribbean**).

An **anonymous union in an African country** expressed their concern in the questionnaire regarding the rise of the right-wing governments and the increasing anti-trans sentiments from political figures. As deduced from the open-ended questions, in some countries LGBTI+

issues are used as political leverage between left-wing and right-wing political parties, where the latter tend to refer to LGBTI+ as an « *ideology* », rather than as people, as noted by one union in **Poland**. While unions express concern for this tendency, this also means that LGBTI+ issues have a strong presence in the political discourse within their respective contexts. Although the presence of LGBTI+ issues in political discourse is polarising and in some cases hostile towards LGBTI+ persons, it leads to a stronger interest in the topic from unions.

Overall, unions responding to the questionnaire also tend to express more progressive views than the government of the country they are operating in. Respondents expressed this by critiquing conservative governments, political officials or laws, as can exemplarily be seen in the quote below from the *Education and Science Workers' Union* (EGITIM-SEN) in **Türkiye**. It is important to note that some unions that participated in the survey are situated in countries that still criminalise same-sex sexual relations.

*«In recent years, due to the increasing anti-LGBTI policies and discourses of the political power, our union's work for the defence of LGBTI rights has increased. »*  
EGITIM-SEN, Türkiye

In addition to recent political shifts empowering decision-makers unsupportive of LGBTI+ rights, other conservative anti-LGBTI+ and anti-gender groups are prevalent in many - if not most - countries who participated in the Survey, even those where LGBTI+ persons benefit from strong legal protection and rights.

Challenges that come with emerging groups actively opposing LGBTI+ rights are mentioned in the open-ended questions of the questionnaire, as shown in the examples from respondents in **Canada** and the **United Kingdom** (UK) below:

*«The "parental rights" movement has gained in strength and momentum from Eastern to Western Canada. CTF/FCE suggests that other EI Member Organisations*

<sup>5</sup> ILGA WORLD database: <https://database.ilga.org/benin-lgbti> and <https://database.ilga.org/madagascar-lgbti>



*might want to examine case studies which could inform EI advocacy around protections for LGBTI+ young people.* » Canadian Federation of Teachers, CTF/FCE, Canada

*«There have been tensions around gender identity issues. Scotland attempted to pass through a Gender Recognition Act that was vetoed by the UK government. There [has] also been stalling by the UK government around updating legislation [in] this area, and banning conversion therapy as they promised they would. There has just been a set of guidance on 'gender-questioning children' that has been rafted for the Department for Education in England that appears to violate safeguarding principles and equalities legislation. The 'culture wars' are constantly being invoked to sow division, and we are constantly having to fight against this.* » National Education Union, NEU, UK

In the interviews, recent political changes which negatively affect LGBTI+ rights were also mentioned by union representatives in **Italy, Argentina** and **Costa Rica**. According to the Italian union representatives, the current far-right government is strongly opposed to advancing LGBTI+ issues, thus reinforcing conservative forces in a society that is vocally against LGBTI+ rights. Similarly, the Argentinian ultra-right government, which came into office in December 2023, has started attacking human rights legislation. The President openly opposes previously enacted human rights legislation, including a law requiring gender training of public servants and another permitting gender-neutral identity cards. Additionally, human rights defenders are being scapegoated and offices and homes of human rights activists have been attacked. According to the CTERA representative, the official anti-rights discourse has resulted in a growing movement of misogynist, homophobic, lesbophobic and transphobic discourse on social media, which materialises in acts of psychological, physical, material and even

sexual violence. In consequence, the union fears that what has been achieved as a result of collective struggles, advocacy, and achievements under previous governments is now at risk of being dismantled.

*« At this moment, LGBT rights, human rights, and the rights of citizens in general are in imminent danger since the democratic arrival of the government of Javier Milei, of the ultra-right, who is not only attacking the State, but also rights, and particularly the feminist, trans-feminist and LGBT movements. (...) The president has issued a Decree of Urgent Necessity, in which many of the struggles and laws that are iconic and are an example for all of Latin America are put at stake. »*  
CTERA, Argentina

In the questionnaire, a union in **Poland** reported a political shift in government, with specific officials referring to LGBTI+ people in an offensive and discriminatory manner. The interviewed *Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego* (ZNP) representative also emphasised that conservative politicians and other conservative groups maintain deep ties to the Catholic Church and to other conservative religious groups, opposing both LGBTI+ rights, abortion and comprehensive sexuality education in schools. Public media outlets contribute by publishing portraits of LGBTI+ teachers and circulating hate speech by politicians. In fact, according to the union representative, there was more space to discuss gender and LGBTI+ issues in Poland at the beginning of the 2000s, before the government campaign against 'gender ideologies'.

*« [Conservative groups] talk about 'gender ideologies' and LGBT ideologies, and our [nation's] President did a campaign saying that [LGBTI+ persons] are not people (...) [that] they are [an] ideology, and [that] we should be a country who says 'no' against this stupid ideology, which destroys families and all traditional values, and it was massively supported*

*by church. (...) They are absolutely against the modern sexuality education, they limit the topics from schoolbooks about non heteronormative students, children, about these topics, it couldn't exist, only the catholic attitude to the problem is acceptable. (...) in the last 8 years the government blocked the opportunity for schools working with NGOs [non-governmental organisations] organising [comprehensive] sexuality education also for students whose parents accept this and want it. »*  
ZNP, Poland

Similarly, interviewees from other unions also reported movements who oppose LGBTI+ rights which, according to them, are strongly connected to ideas about the 'traditional family' and opposition to gender equality and bodily autonomy, particularly concerning abortion. By opposing the rights of transgender youth, the teaching of LGBTI+ issues in schools, and by engaging in hate speech against LGBTI+ teachers and students, these movements have a direct impact on the education sector, the work of the unions and may also influence governmental policies.

For example, in **Japan**, conservative « *citizen* » groups oppose LGBTI+ rights, including marriage and family equality, on the grounds that such rights would « *destroy Japanese society* » since a « *family consists of father, mother and children.* » According to the *Japanese Teacher's Union* (JTU) this context affects teachers' possibilities to address LGBTI+ rights in class:

*« Even if some educators want to teach about same-sex marriage or LGBTI rights there are citizen groups, there is a backlash, sometimes they go to the school and they condemn the relevant teachers. »* JTU, Japan

The connection between the opposition of rights to bodily autonomy (abortion and comprehensive sexuality education) and LGBTI+ rights are strong in many countries. In **Italy**, movements opposing

such rights are organised under the banner of pro-life movements, which, according to FLC-CGIL is « very misleading because indeed they are pro-discrimination, very actively, quite violently, (...) and strongly against for instance the recognition of gay couples in relation to adoption and in relation to children in general. They always put forward the issues of the 'natural family' » meaning a cis man and a cis woman with children. The FLC-CGIL representatives further stressed that these movements now oppose one of the latest achievements of the union: a national worker's agreement that recognises the rights of transgender students and teachers to be referred to by their chosen gender and name. This agreement, which was passed thanks to FLC-CGIL's persistent advocacy, is considered very advanced for the Italian context but is now being challenged by anti-abortion organisations who are « *strongly trying to attack, even legally, schools that are implementing this agreement.* »

The link between opposing abortion and LGBTI+ rights is also clear in the following example from **Madagascar**, where abortion is illegal under all circumstances and LGBTI+ persons have no rights. A pro-abortion bill was proposed to the Malagasy parliament in 2021 and in the debates that followed a member of parliament mentioned LGBTI+ issues, even though the bill did not pertain to LGBTI+ issues, stating that « *it's not the Malagasy practice to recognise LGBTI+ issues* ». As a result, the interviewed FEKRIMPAMA (*Fédération Chrétienne des Enseignants et Employés de l'Éducation*) representative had gotten the impression that the bill somehow also addressed this topic.

Finally, a backlash against LGBTI+ rights are also seen in countries with strong legal protection of LGBTI+ persons. For example, in **Canada**, the CSQ (*Centrale des Syndicats du Québec*) representative stressed that despite lesbian, gay or bisexual people being generally well accepted, issues concerning gender identity, particularly trans persons' rights, are regularly up for discussion in the region. Moreover, the law allowing

transgender students aged 14 and above to determine their preferred name and pronouns used in school - without parental consent or notification - has met resistance, including by some teachers who argue that this limits their freedom of speech and their autonomy. In addition, a recent controversy arose when a non-binary union member's employer communicated that they had asked to be addressed by the gender-neutral honorific Mx<sup>6</sup>, causing a media storm and opposition by some parents. As a response to this situation, the government commissioned an 'Elder committee on trans identity'- in which none of the three experts are LGBTI+ persons - raising the concern by CSQ that transgender rights may be at risk.

Similarly, in **Iceland**, where LGBTI+ rights are legally protected, small but strong anti-gender and anti-LGBTI+ movements are mobilising against LGBTI+ rights by targeting a bill combatting online hate speech directed towards LGBTI+ people and migrants in the name of 'freedom of speech'. They are also actively opposing children being taught about gender equality and transgender issues in schools:

*« It's very difficult because they are parents of schools who come into the schools and demand that everything will be taken down from the walls, every rainbow flag and everything. »* KI, Iceland

6 Mx is an English-language neologistic honorific that does not indicate gender and is used as an alternative to gendered honorifics, Mrs, Mr, Ms.

## Section 2: Union understanding of LGBTI+ issues as it relates to education

### 1. Perceived situation of LGBTI+ teachers and ESP

To better understand the situation of LGBTI+ teachers and ESP, unions were asked in the questionnaire how accepted lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) teachers or trans and intersex (TI) teachers are within their respective context (see Figure 2). A relatively high proportion of the respondents' state that they do not know: 19 respondents (16.7%) do not know about the situation for LGB teachers, and 24 (21.1%) don't know about the situation for TI teachers.

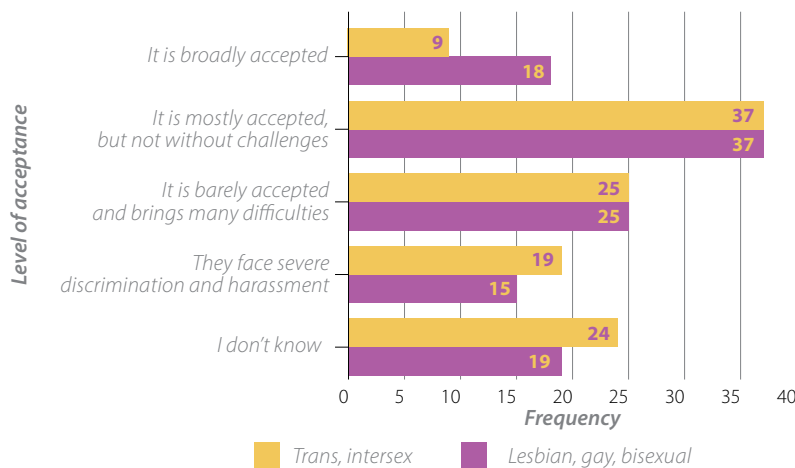


Figure 2. Perceived acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual as well as trans and intersex teachers and ESP (n=114)

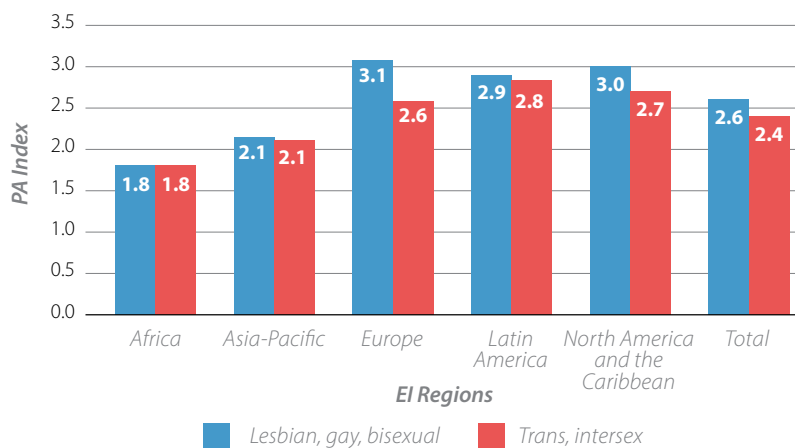


Figure 3. PA Index for lesbian, gay, bisexual as well as trans and intersex teachers and ESP in EI regions (n=114)

Based on the data, we calculated an index for perceived acceptance (PA Index) on a scale from 1 (=severe discrimination) to 4 (=broadly accepted)<sup>7</sup>. A higher index means the assumption of a higher acceptance of LGB or TI teachers and ESP. Across all EI regions, this index is 2.6 for LGB teachers and 2.4 for TI teachers, meaning that the unions expect LGB teachers to be more accepted than TI teachers.

The PA Index makes it possible to compare the results between EI regions, as shown in Figure 3. The lowest perceived acceptance for both LGB and TI teachers is in the African region with an average LGB and TI PA Index of 1.8, followed by the Asia-Pacific region with an average LGB and TI PA Index of 2.1. The perceived acceptance varies the most between LGB teachers and TI teachers in the European region, with a LGB PA Index of 3.1, and a TI PA Index of 2.6. In Latin America, the LGB PA is 2.9 and an TI PA is 2.8, and North America and the Caribbean an LGB PA is 3.0 while the TI PA is 2.7. Therefore, the difference between the Total PAs can mainly be contributed to responses from the European and the North America and Caribbean regions.

From the qualitative data it is clear that knowledge of LGBTI+ issues differ and is partly related to the general social context in which unions work. In regions where the LGBTI+ community has legal recognition and rights, unions have more knowledge of LGBTI+ issues and are more aware of the presence of LGBTI+ persons both among teachers, ESP, and students. When speaking about the situation regarding LGBTI+ in education, union representatives focus primarily on teachers and ESP, but some also mention students.

As a result of identifying LGBTI+ teachers and ESP as a visible part of the

<sup>7</sup> To calculate the index, the response "They face severe discrimination and harassment" has been coded with the value 1, "It is barely accepted and brings many difficulties" with the value 2, "It is mostly accepted, but not without challenges" with the value 3 and "It is broadly accepted" with the value 4 – for LGB and TI teachers separately. The higher the value of a union, the higher the perceived acceptance of LGB or TI teachers. The PA Index of a region is the average of the unions that responded to the survey within that region.

membership, CTERA, **Argentina**, considers LGBTI+ rights to be an integral part of the fight for worker's rights. Responding to the needs of the, albeit relatively small, LGBTI+ teaching community is also seen as crucial by JTU (Japan), who has experience in supporting LGBTI+ union members, and argued that LGBTI+ activities could even be an opportunity to counteract the current membership decline: « *If members from the LGBT (community) know that we work hard for them they would join us (laughter)* » JTU, **Japan**.

In **Poland**, the union representative stressed that LGBTI+ teachers fear coming out, resulting in a lack of comprehensive data on the status of LGBTI+ rights within the Polish education system:

*« If you don't have, amongst teachers, people who openly say, 'I am lesbian, I am gay' you can't expect that it happens with students (...) sometimes they [students] are more ready to [come out] than the adults, because the pressure on teachers, from the local society, is incredibly high. »* ZNP, Poland

The **Icelandic** union was the only interviewed union to report that being an openly gay, lesbian, transgender or intersex teacher is « *no problem* ». In other contexts, social stigma, (risk of) discrimination, and violence could explain why few teachers are open about being LGBTI+.

For example, **Italian** FLC-CGIL recalls that a transgender teacher was outed after having taught for many years and experienced so much verbal violence and discrimination that she committed suicide. In **Costa Rica**, discrimination and violence particularly affects transgender persons who, in some schools, face harassment by colleagues, are misgendered and called by their deadname<sup>8</sup>, despite the legal recognition. The *Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de la Educación Costarricense* (SEC) representative explains:

*« There are homosexual teachers,*

*there are homosexual caretakers and so on, maybe the population tends to tolerate them a little more, but not trans people. »* SEC, Costa Rica

In contrast, in **Sri Lanka**, transgender persons are relatively more recognised than LGB persons, which is reflected in the awareness that the union representative has of LGBTI+ persons. While they do not know of any LGBTI+ people among their union members - « *Maybe they are, but (...) they don't come forward.* » - USLTS works with the national union for transgender workers and reports that trans students are sometimes visible in higher education.

In countries where the legal frameworks do not recognise the rights of LGBTI+ persons, such as **Madagascar**, **Kiribati** and **Benin**, it is not surprising that union representatives do not know of any (or very few) LGBTI+ teachers and union members.

*« that type of people, LGBTI, doesn't exist in our union (...) If there are such people who ask to join our union there is no problem, if they follow the conditions of recruitment of members for our union. »*  
FEKRIMPAMA, Madagascar

Nevertheless, in **an anonymised African union**, a transgender person was interviewed. In this difficult legal and social context the fact that the interviewee is part of the LGBTI+ community probably explains that they recognise the presence of many LGBTI+ persons in their country's education system, despite these persons remaining mostly « *closeted*<sup>9</sup> ». In fact, one of the priorities that the interviewee sees for the union work on LGBTI+ rights is to « *help [LGBTI+ persons] understand themselves as [union] members (...) and be comfortable, because we have [LGBTI+ members] but they are in a closet. Even at school we have [them] but they are left behind because they are in a closet.* » The interviewee also shared their personal experience as a transgender youth in school.

8 the deadname of a transgender person refers to the name given to them at birth and related to their assigned gender.

9 Being in the closet refers to an LGBTI+ person not being open about their LGBTI+ identity, not being « out ».

In certain contexts, the situation is hostile not only for LGBTI+ teachers, but also for those who wish to teach topics such as comprehensive sexuality education, gender equality and LGBTI+ issues. In **Poland**, disciplinary procedures have become common, and several teachers have lost - or left - their jobs over such matters, resulting in a lack of autonomy and growing fear. Speaking about a kindergarten teacher who taught gender issues in her classes and was met with forceful opposition from conservative parents and the Polish Church:

*« The hate was so strong against her that she said that she never wanted to have something to do with the educational system. She couldn't feel safe on the streets at some moments when the pressure was particularly strong against her. »* ZNP, Poland

Despite **Iceland** being portrayed as a safe place for LGBTI+ teachers and LGBTI+ rights being part of the curricula under 'equality', teachers who address LGBTI+ issues face similar difficulties:

*« Now the teachers are afraid of the parents and the society (...) there are many teachers that talk about [LGBTI+ equality] in the schools, we know that they are very aware that it has to be implemented in all teaching because it's part of [the Icelandic school] focus elements. »*  
 KI, Iceland

Finally, in **Italy**, schools are competing for pupils because of the demographic decline, putting pressure on teachers who wish to teach gender and sexual diversity issues: *« the pedagogical choices of teachers are limited by families who might have conservative approaches ».*

## 2. Relevance of LGBTI+ issues within the union

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate how important they personally think it is to have

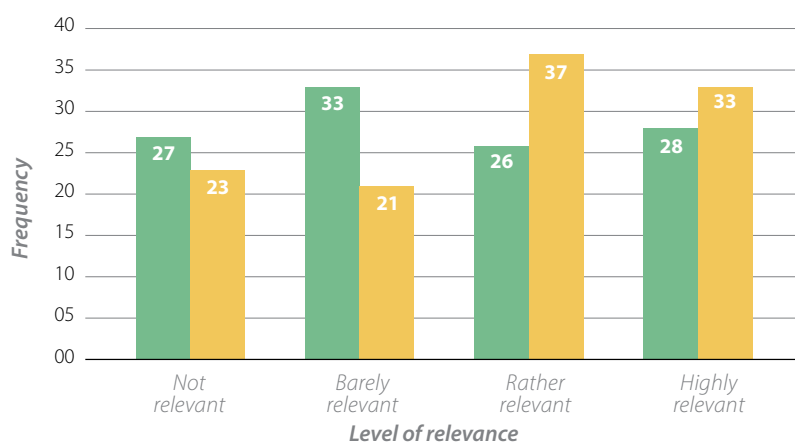
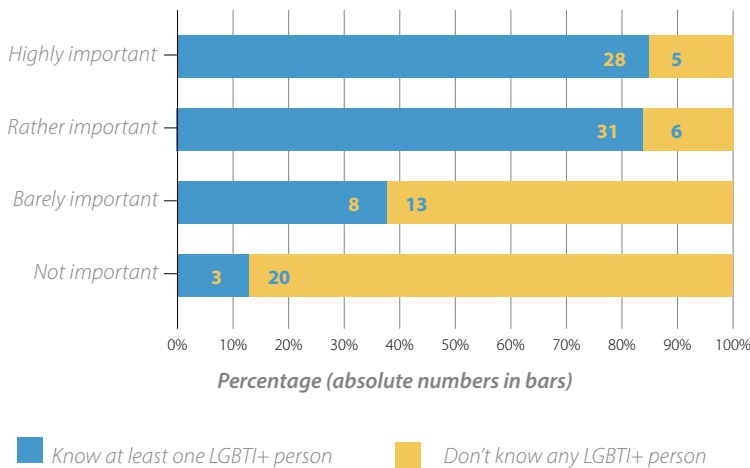


Figure 4. Relevance of LGBTI+ activities (n=114)

LGBTI+ activities within the union – this will subsequently be called general importance or relevance. Furthermore, they were asked how present LGBTI+ activities are in current union activities, which we call relevance in current activities. Overall, the general importance of LGBTI+ issues within the unions is higher than the presence of the topic in current activities, as shown in Figure 4.

When asked how relevant LGBTI+ issues are in their current union activities, more than half of the respondents (52.6%) state that they are not or barely relevant, while 47.4% state they are rather or highly relevant. Nevertheless, when then asked how important it is, in their opinion, that the organisation has activities around LGBTI+ issues, only 38.6% think that this is not or barely important, while 61.4% think that it is rather or highly important.

When asked if they knew at least one openly LGBTI+ person in their staff or within their active members, 70 respondents (61,4%) answered yes. As Figure 5 shows, this correlates with a higher perceived importance of LGBTI+ activities within the union. As shown in the bar graph below, respondents who know at least one LGBTI+ person perceive the importance of LGBTI+ activities as higher than respondents who don't know any LGBTI+ people. On a scale from 1 (=not important) to 4 (=highly important), the overall average importance is 2.7 throughout the sample. Respondents who know LGBTI+ people within staff or members state an average importance of 3.2 – compared to an average importance



**Figure 5. Knowing at least one LGBTI+ person and perceived importance of LGBTI+ activities (n=114)**

of 1.9 by respondents who do not know an openly LGBTI+ person within their staff or members. The correlation between those characteristics can go both ways: it is likely that the perceived importance increases with the presence of LGBTI+ persons; at the same time, a high perceived importance of LGBTI+ issues can also lead to a more active recruitment of LGBTI+ people within staff and members. An interdependence between both factors is probable.

During the interviews, several interviewees further emphasised that education unions can play a key role in favouring inclusivity, respect for diversity and human rights, including LGBTI+ rights, in education and in broader society, by advocating for more inclusive policies and laws, defending LGBTI+ teacher's workers' rights and supporting LGBTI+ teachers and students in case of discrimination.

*« Schools at different levels (...) are terrains for struggle, for cultural and political struggle that we [as a union] want to fight for, in order for future generations to be sensitive to those issues. »* FLC-CGIL, Italy

*« It seems to me personally that we are very well placed, the unions, to do this work, because we are not the government, (...). we are in all the workplaces, where interactions and problems with co-existing, - among other things regarding LGBTI+ issues - arise (...) Is this the priority of the CSQ? I*

*can't say that this is the priority as such. But if the CSQ - and this is the case - defends the political, economic, social interests of its members, well then it will come automatically. »* CSQ, Quebec

In fact, as the coordinator of a national network against homophobia and transphobia in education, the CSQ is a key player in advancing LGBTI+ rights not only in education but in the broader Quebec society (discussed further below). Similarly, as the only Icelandic education union, working in a context where LGBTI+ persons have strong legal protection, KI continues to advocate in favour of the equality curricula being implemented in schools and to support LGBTI+ teachers who face hate speech.

LGBTI+ rights are seen by some union representatives as a new(er) topic for their context, to be addressed in addition to other human rights issues that have traditionally held more space, such as in Japan for example with caste (« Burakumin ») and disability. In Sri Lanka, the USLTS did not yet start to formally work on LGBTI+ but the union has the intention to do so as they recognise that *« [LGBTI+ persons] must have the same right to have the education and to do the same jobs, government jobs »*

The Polish union expressed that LGBTI+ issues are important for their union and is a part of the work they are doing in favour of bodily autonomy (such as abortion rights) and combating patriarchy. However, they note that the actual work is very limited in the current political context, given that LGBTI+ teachers and union members are afraid of being open about their identities and addressing these matters openly.

The link between gender equality issues and LGBTI+ issues were sometimes unclear in some contexts, which makes it challenging to determine how to take on LGBTI+ issues, as can be seen by this example from the Malagasy union:

*« [LGBTI+ issues are] gradually entering the questions discussed*

*within our union. (...) we discussed what kind of LGBTI+ we should discuss, so that's why we brought forward the gender question, the question of equality between men and women, but regarding how shall I say, gay, bi, or transgender people, at the moment it's not the moment to discuss that... »*  
FEKRIMPAMA, Madagascar

Some interviewed union representatives working in countries where LGBTI+ rights are strongly violated, have very limited knowledge of LGBTI+ persons and express a negative or distorted perception of LGBTI+ people (or parts of the group). They do not consider LGBTI+ rights to be a priority for them or do not wish to promote LGBTI+ issues. Some showed discomfort at the topic of LGBTI+ issues in education.

For example, one interviewed union representative<sup>10</sup> shared that they provide

<sup>10</sup> This quote has been anonymised to protect the interviewee and the union

information on the existence of LGBTI+ persons in trainings for their union members, with the help of information that they had found on the internet and using only examples of LGBTI+ persons in other countries. When asked for more details on the content and message of the training, they recalled having told union members that LGBTI+ persons « *exis[t] elsewhere* » and could « *come to their [country]* ». In consequence, the representative encouraged teachers to « *be prepared* » for the possibility of having children who are LGBTI+ and told them that they must « *watch the children carefully* » and protect them from « *goi[ng] to the other side* », in other words from 'becoming LGBTI+'. They further explained to the interviewer that when a child grows up, they can « *choose* » for themselves but that teachers must « *protect* » children since LGBTI+ persons are not accepted in their society. Furthermore, when asked what would happen if an LGBTI+ teacher arrived in their union, they explained that such person would not be rejected, and on the contrary « *protected* », but showed clear discomfort when imaging such a situation, perceived as awkward and difficult in their context. Moreover, this union representative argued that LGBTI+ issues would be more suitably addressed in their country by « *social* » stakeholders such as NGOs, since the union doesn't have the necessary information and knowledge of LGBTI+ issues and doesn't know which rights should potentially be defended for LGBTI+ persons.

Another union representative,<sup>11</sup> in a county where LGBTI+ rights are strongly limited, spoke about LGBTI+ persons being more present and accepted in their society, sharing the example of a member of the group, possibly a transgender woman, recently joining a union activity. While the representative stated that they accepted that the feminine presenting person was « *acting like a woman* » and wanted to sleep in the women's room, they spoke about them using masculine nouns and pronouns and recalled the situation with amusement.

<sup>11</sup> This quote has been anonymised to protect the interviewee and the union

## The situation with regard to Intersex rights -

When analysing the data from the Survey with regard to perception and knowledge of LGBTI+ issues between members of the LGBTI+ community, a difference becomes clear, including among unions who work in progressive contexts and do significant work on LGBTI+ rights. Most notably, intersex issues can be identified as a topic that is largely invisible.

In the questionnaire, 36% of unions wish for more information on intersex issues and the rights in education.

Among the unions participating in interviews, none works directly on intersex issues and most had limited knowledge of these issues, which were sometimes confused with transgender issues, particularly concerning their relevance to education.



Several examples also show that interviewed union representatives in difficult contexts perceive LGBTI+ issues as something that is 'imported' from « [outside] civilisation[s] ».<sup>12</sup>

### Section 3: Union activities and structures in favour of LGBTI+ rights

In the questionnaire, the union representatives were asked about specific activities around research, advocacy, non-discrimination in employment, LGBTI+ specific trainings and teaching materials, as well as union structures and written agreements. Interestingly, the unions are overall most active when it comes to advocacy and visibility of LGBTI+ persons on a national level – but less so when it comes to support of specifically LGBTI+ friendly school environments or the improvement of employment for LGBTI+ teachers. In the following subsections, we will provide more details on the unions' activities in the various areas.

Among the interviewed unions, two-thirds conduct work in favour of LGBTI+ rights, the exception being unions who work in difficult social and legal contexts (Benin, Madagascar, Kiribati). In some cases, such as Poland, the current political context has led to a decrease in activities.

#### 1. Change starts from within the union

Naturally, one of the first steps in putting LGBTI+ work on union agendas is to ensure that the issue is recognised as a priority internally and that the LGBTI+ community is represented within the union.

When asked whether they had an advisory committee, network or other structure on LGBTI+ issues, only one in five surveyed unions (21.9%) responded positively. While the majority of unions do not have such committees, some unions have advanced and well-established structures with focus

on LGBTI+ issues, as the example below shows:

«The Education Institute of Scotland (EIS) Equality Committee is supported by an LGBT Sub-Committee that advises on LGBT issues in education and the workplace, informed by members of our LGBT Network. The EIS Equality Strategy has a separate section on LGBT equality, with objectives related to learning and knowledge, developing LGBT members' voice, and representing LGBT issues nationally» EIS, Scotland

Similarly, few interviewed unions gave examples of such formal structures. An exception is the **Quebecois** union CSQ who conducts LGBTI+ work through their gender diversity committee which is internal to the union. Within the internal committee, CSQ strives to adapt union processes to foster inclusivity through measures such as the revision of the ethical code to identify unequal practices regarding speaking time, use of language and documentation produced by union committees. In **Japan**, the JIU representative has the ambition to create a formal LGBTI+ network with a designated budget, similar to what they have seen in another partner union. In **Iceland**, the union does not have a separate LGBTI+ committee but runs this work under a broader Equality umbrella.

Almost one in three unions responding to the questionnaire (30.7%) includes LGBTI+ people in their constitution, bylaws, resolutions or other policy frameworks. For example, INTO from **Ireland** has a LGBTI+ inclusive writing guide for all official documents, JIU from **Japan** specifically mentions the protection and promotion of LGBTI+ rights in schools in their policy documents and NAPTOSA from **South Africa** has a constitution that requires a certain number of people in leadership positions to be part of minority groups. 29.0% of unions currently have a contact person specifically for LGBTI+ issues. Similarly, the staff or elected union members participating in the interviews are sometimes specifically in charge of LGBTI+ issues for their union, but none

<sup>12</sup> This quote has been anonymised to protect the interviewee and the union

of their unions have a full-time staff member dedicated exclusively to such issues.

Furthermore, the **Argentinian** union representative stressed that the work to ensure the « *institutionalisation of a gender perspective* », both at a central union level and in the local offices, and the representation of the LGBTI+ community, as well as other minority communities, was not without challenges as « *the union is not above the patriarchal order* » (CTERA, Argentina).

Unions also address LGBTI+ issues on the agenda for internal trainings or meetings. For example, in an African union, the interviewee who is transgender, raises visibility on LGBTI+ issues within the union to try to make other union members feel more comfortable about being out as LGBTI+ persons, as shown in this dialogue with the interviewer:

« *We are trying to make them understand themselves so that they can be out of the closet.* »

Interviewer: How? What type of actions are you taking?

« *I normally give my story of coming out though it was not easy and I (...) had no support from my family.* »

Interviewer: You talk openly about this in the union? To raise awareness?

« *Yes I do. (...) After the meeting I normally have a slot where I will tell them I need to say something about LGBTI.* » Anonymous union, Africa

## 2. Advocacy Work & Research

Amongst those answering the questionnaire, a considerable proportion of unions (42.1%) already carry out advocacy or research activities to support LGBTI+ rights at a national level. Figure 6 shows the proportion of unions in different EI regions that already participate in or initiate such activities. The highest proportion can be found in Latin America, followed by Europe,

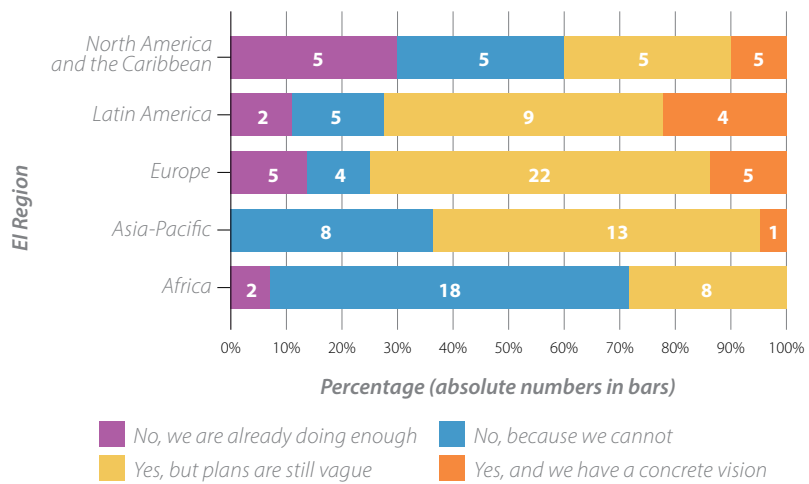


Figure 6. Unions that carry out advocacy or research activities to support LGBTI+ rights at national level (n=114)

North America and the Caribbean and Asia-Pacific – with the lowest proportion in Africa. Activities on LGBTI+ issues in the African region are particularly difficult to carry out due to legal and political challenges. Nonetheless, two unions in the region are actively supporting LGBTI+ rights at a national level, one of them being a large union in South Africa and the other one a small union that required their country of operation to stay anonymous.

Advocacy and research activities in unions correlate with the size of the unions. The unions were grouped by size: Small unions with less than 5.000 members, medium unions between 5.000 and 20.000 and large unions above 20.000, creating 3 size groups with similar numbers of respondents. The results show that larger unions are more likely to carry out LGBTI+ advocacy and research activities than smaller ones as can be seen in Figure 7. As discussed further below, the small unions

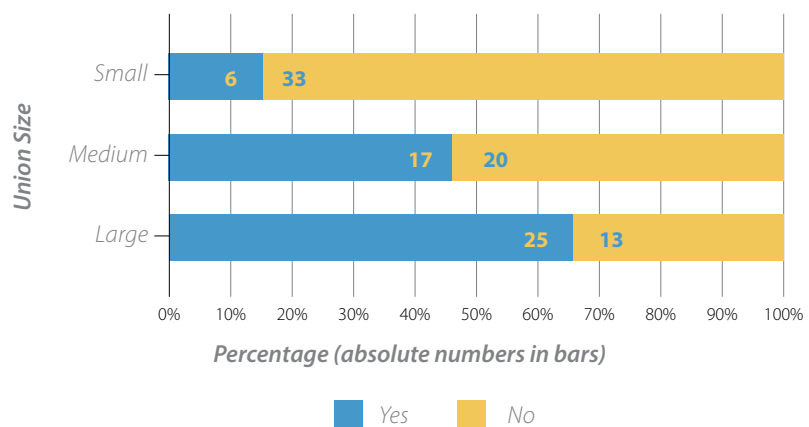


Figure 7. Advocacy and research activities according to union size (n=114)

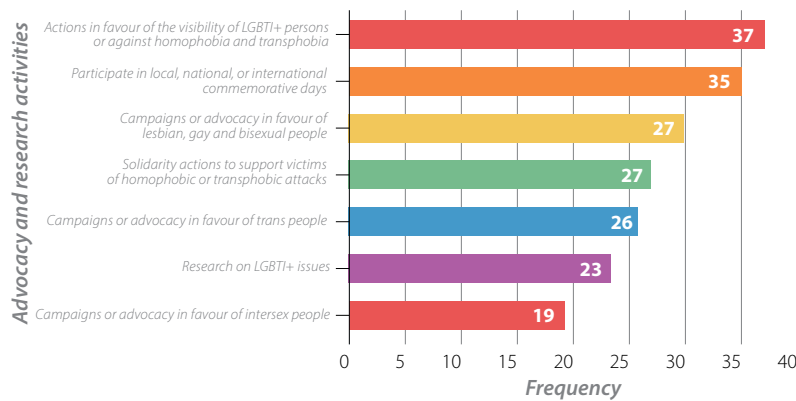


Figure 8. Advocacy and research activities in detail (n=114)

are typically in a more challenging financial situation than the medium or large ones.

Across all unions, the most common advocacy and research activity on LGBTI+ issues on a national level are actions in favour of the visibility of LGBTI+ people or against homophobia and transphobia, followed by participation in commemorative days, which was also highlighted by interviewees. 23 of 114 unions carried out their own research on LGBTI+ issues, and 19 organised campaigns or advocacy in favour of the rights of intersex people. The full list of activities can be found in the bar graph below, ranked by frequency.

The quantitative results are reflected in the qualitative data as most interviewed unions implement advocacy work in favour of LGBTI+ rights. For example, the **Argentinian** union CTERA participates actively in advancing the legal rights of LGBTI+ persons by influencing legislative work and supporting cases against hate crimes. In the current context of political backlash, since the election of the far-right government in 2023, the union is working together with other organisations to construct « *unity and political strength to confront these actions that are detrimental to the rights that we achieved and have fought for in the streets, in the classrooms, in pedagogical policy and in politics in general.* »

Despite the challenging national legal context in which they work, the anonymous African union, led by a transgender person, carries out advocacy activities in schools, making it the only interviewed union working in

a hostile context to conduct advocacy and awareness-raising work. The union representative tells school principals « *[there] are some learners and teachers who are lesbians and gays in schools, they [the principals] should help them to be comfortable and let them to say their views about their gender. (...) Some do understand while others react that [being LGBTI+ is] a choice, [it]s not God's will.* »

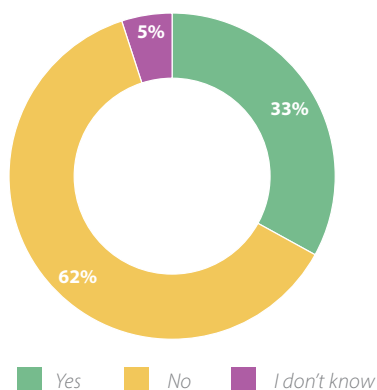
In the current political context of **Poland**, it has become increasingly challenging to openly work on LGBTI+ issues. Nevertheless, the union tries to continue to advocate in favour of LGBTI+ rights and support the collection of data on LGBTI+ persons in education, in partnership with NGOs and academics.

Finally, in **Iceland**, the union does not conduct any general advocacy work on LGBTI+ issues since the legal system is already advanced. Instead, they focus on ensuring the implementation of current laws, particularly in favour of gender issues being included in the school curricula, and on supporting teachers who face adverse consequences for having taught issues related to LGBTI+ issues.

### 3. Support to individual LGBTI+ teachers, ESP, and students

As organisations ensuring worker's rights in the education sector, EI member unions support individual LGBTI+ teachers, ESP, and students. Nonetheless, the majority of unions (62.3%, n=71) state that they currently do not carry out any specific

work to promote non-discrimination in employment for LGBTI+ teachers and ESP (see Figure 9). According to the quantitative data, only 19 out of 114 unions have supported at least one case of discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment tribunals, while 8 unions have supported at least one case of discrimination based on being transgender or intersex.



**Figure 9. Promotion of non-discrimination in employment for LGBTI+ teachers and ESP (n=114)**

34 unions (29.8%) have used the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention No. 190 in their organisation's activities around LGBTI+ issues. 47 respondents (41.2%) state that they have not used the ILO Convention No. 190 in that context, 20 (17.5%) are unsure if it was used, and another 13 (11.4%) state that they do not know this convention.

Moreover, 14 unions have negotiated LGBTI+ specific clauses in their collective bargaining agreements. FLC-CGIL, **Italy**, mentions for example parental leave for parents of all genders, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, the **Philippines**, mentions clauses on gender-specific dress codes, and the NEU, **UK** mentions compassionate leave for caring or funerals for same-sex couples.

While few interviewees mentioned formal cases going to tribunal, several unions have actively supported LGBTI+ teachers and ESP when their rights have been infringed upon. For example, JTU (**Japan**) supported a transgender woman in a procedure against her employer. Fortunately, the case was resolved without legal procedure, which the interviewee believes could have had a negative impact

on the person given the cultural context. Stressing the importance of grassroots approaches to identifying and responding to the needs of LGBTI+ persons, Italy's FLC-GIL has put in place local help desks for teachers and students who wish to discuss issues related to gender identity and sexual orientation. Their objective is to create safer environments in education by providing protection against discrimination whenever and wherever it occurs.

#### **4. Awareness-raising, trainings and teaching materials**

38 of the 114 unions that responded to the questionnaire carried out LGBTI+ specific training activities for members. 19 produced LGBTI+ specific teaching materials and another 15 provided their members teaching material produced by other parties.

A few interviewed unions have implemented workshops or trainings on LGBTI+ issues for their union members but it was unclear whether any of them had made these topics a consolidated part of their broader training program.

In **Costa Rica**, SEC organises workshops and trainings for union members, including workshops facilitated by LGBTI+ persons, with positive outcomes on union members' understanding of the topic. The union has also organised trainings for teaching staff and developed a manual for teachers who wish to commemorate May 17<sup>th</sup> (*International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia*), which includes « *all the procedures, characteristics, terminology, that allow teachers to take this manual on [this] day or week (...) so that they can talk about the issue with their students* ». **Argentina's** CTERA representative emphasises that publishing tools, such as teaching materials and booklets, is a way to ensure that the union's expertise on LGBTI+ issues benefit the entire educational community. To them, it is key that teachers know how human rights legislation relates to their own situations and that this knowledge informs the approach they have towards their students. Other unions, such as JTU (**Japan**), have not organised

specific LGBTI+ trainings but have addressed issues around how to teach LGBTI+ students and how to ensure the rights of LGBTI+ teachers during broader gender equality seminars.

## 5. Collaborations

Collaborations with other stakeholders seem to play an important role in unions' LGBTI+ rights work. Figure 10 shows how frequently unions cooperate with other organisations. Out of 114 unions, 44 (38.5%) currently cooperate with LGBTI+ advocacy groups. Interestingly, cooperations with unions for other professions are slightly more common than those with other teachers' unions, 35 EI members (30.7%) cooperate with such unions, compared to 33 (28.9%) for collaborations with other teachers' unions. However, only 8 unions (7.0%) cooperate with UN mechanisms around LGBTI+ rights and even less (7 unions, 6.1%) cooperate with the *International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association*, ILGA<sup>13</sup>.

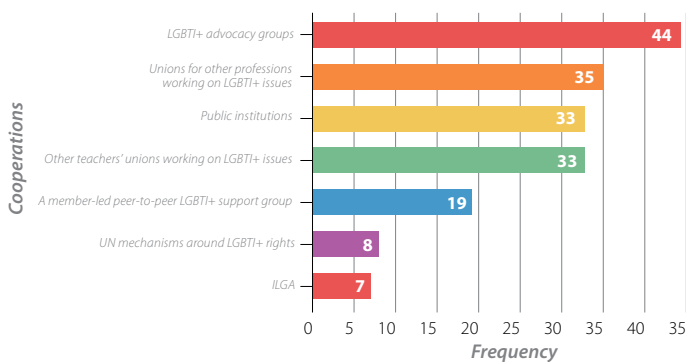


Figure 10. Cooperations with other organisations (n=114)

Among the interviewed unions, all those who are implementing work on LGBTI+ issues collaborate with other stakeholders to do so, including civil society, other unions, governmental and academic institutions. They stress that building alliances, particularly with LGBTI+ organisations, is vital for their work.

In the Quebec region of **Canada**, the *National Forum Against Homophobia and Transphobia in Education Network*,

of which CSQ is the founder and coordinator, gathers members from the regional Ministry of Education, parental organisations, school districts, trade unions, as well as LGBTI+ NGOs, to influence policies and practices within the broader education system. CSQ stressed that LGBTI+ NGOs provide specific expertise and play a key role in advancing the work as multi-stakeholder partnerships ensure representation of different perspectives: « *When we leave the [meeting of] the [Network], we are very confident that we have a good vision of the situation. [Without civil society organisations] we would not have this perspective which really comes from the field, from the community (...) we would not have the full picture* ». Moreover, as a larger union, the network also provides the possibility for CSQ to support individual LGBTI+ NGOs who often have more limited resources.

The collaboration has led to strong outputs. In a context where LGB rights are generally accepted while transgender rights face continued opposition, the Network has developed two manuals specifically on transgender issues: one for employers and unions on how to support and include trans and non-binary persons in the workforce and another for schools on how to support trans and non-binary youth. Despite these tools resulting in some negative reactions, including from union members, the CSQ representative stresses the necessity of ongoing awareness-raising and training on LGBTI+ issues both within and beyond the union.

Several unions also collaborate with feminist organisations, including Argentinian CTERA whose collaboration with Afro-feminist organisations enable them to organise trainings where issues of racial equality intersect with issues of LGBTI+ rights. Regional collaborations were mentioned by CTERA who stressed the importance of such partnerships in Latin America where many countries face similar challenges: « *this rise of the extreme right, this rise of hate speech, this rise of systematic attacks and persecution of trade union leaders* ».

13 <https://ilga.org/>

Finally, some unions also collaborate with research institutes in developing or distributing surveys, workshops and trainings.

### 6. Unions who do not conduct LGBTI+ rights work

Among the interviewed unions, the majority of those who work in contexts hostile to LGBTI+ persons currently do not undertake any actions in favour of LGBTI+ rights. Reasons stated were that they do not have enough information on the topic, do not know any LGBTI+ teachers/union members, and do not identify LGBTI+ issues as a priority for their union.

The exception is a union who, acknowledging that LGBTI+ persons exist and are becoming more present in their society, has raised awareness of the existence of such persons in member trainings. Such training moments aim to keep teachers « *up-to-date* » and for them « *not [to be] surprised to encounter [LGBTI+ persons]* », (see also section 3). They stressed that when addressing the issue of LGBTI+ issues nine out of ten union members were surprised.

### 7. Plans for future LGBTI+ activities

Among the surveyed unions, the majority, 66 out of 114 (57.9%), are planning to increase their LGBTI+ activities (see Figure 11) – 11 of those already have a concrete vision on how they want to achieve that. However, 36 state that they cannot

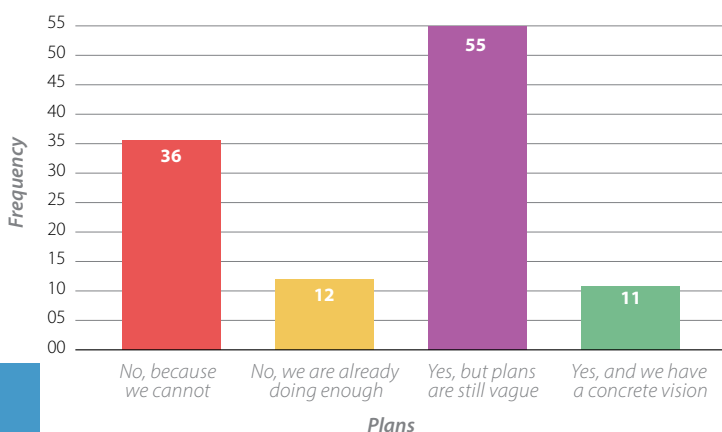


Figure 11. Plans to increase LGBTI+ activities (n=114)

increase their activities on LGBTI+ issues, although they would like to. Half of these organisations (18) are based in African countries, 8 in Asia-Pacific, 4 in Europe and 3 in Latin America and in North America and the Caribbean. Only 12 unions (10.5%) state that they are not planning to increase their activities around LGBTI+ issues because they are already doing enough, 5 of which are based in Europe, 3 in North America and the Caribbean, and 2 in Asia-Pacific and in Latin America.

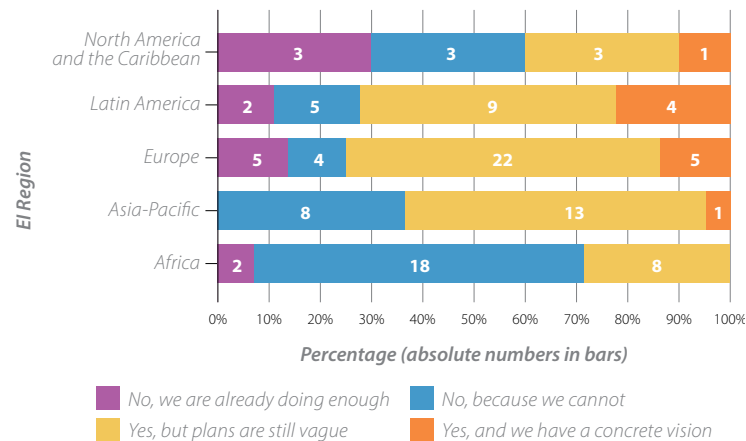


Figure 12. Plans to increase LGBTI+ activities by region (n=114)

Figure 12 shows differences in future plans between EI regions. In Europe, Latin America and Asia-Pacific, the vast majority of unions plan to increase their activities on LGBTI+ issues. In North America and the Caribbean as well as in Africa, the majority of participating unions have no such plans.

Union size also correlates with plans to increase activities on LGBTI+ issues, as shown in Figure 13. While 76.3% of the large unions and 64.9% of the medium unions plan to increase their activities, either with a concrete vision or with vague plans, only 33.3% of the small unions

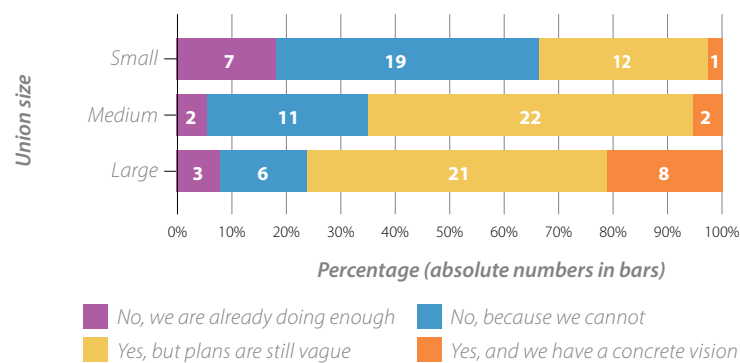


Figure 13. Plans to increase LGBTI+ activities by union size (n=114)

plan to do so. Furthermore, 48.7% of the small unions state that they are unable to increase their LGBTI+ activities.

## Section 4: Union perceptions of Education International's LGBTI+ work

### 1. Knowledge of EI's LGBTI+ work and presence in LGBTI+ spaces

There was no question in the questionnaire regarding the general knowledge of EIs LGBTI+ work. The important increase in the number of respondents of the LGBTI+ Survey, compared to previous Quadrennial Surveys, could be seen as an indication that this information reached more unions, but is likely to be influenced by many other factors.

When asked in interviews about EI's work on LGBTI+ issues, unions expressed limited awareness but showed great interest in learning more. Those who knew about specific parts of the work or had participated in LGBTI+ spaces gave very positive feedback.

On the one hand, the union representative from CTERA (**Argentina**), who themselves identify as LGBTI+, is aware of and has benefited from the LGBTI+ work of EI's regional office. They mentioned documentation, campaign materials and meetings where the gender and LGBTI+ perspectives were promoted as having had a particularly important impact for their union and for the Latin American region. In contrast, the **Costa Rican** union representative explained that, while they were aware of other areas of EI's work, they had only learned about the LGBTI+ actions at the time of the survey. For example, they were unaware of the 2021 EI Latin American report which provided an overview of the state of LGBTI+ rights in the education union movement across the continent and was published by the regional office based in Costa Rica.

Union representatives from **Sri Lanka** and **Japan** have participated in regional

or international LGBTI+ EI seminars and provided positive feedback from these gatherings. The former, who participated in two EI seminars on LGBTI+ issues, share that these seminars had been key for their understanding of and commitment towards LGBTI+ rights:

*« [The seminars] were very interesting because actually I didn't know of these [LGBTI+] people; because of our culture, you know, they were hidden actually. (...) when we participated in those conferences I [realised] that there are people like this and [that] they have the same rights. (...) [before] we [had] heard about these people but (...) it was not so open. »*

USLTS, Sri Lanka

This example shows the importance that EI LGBTI+ conferences can have on raising awareness and creating motivation among union representatives to advance LGBTI+ rights. The importance of representation of LGBTI+ communities in these spaces is further highlighted by the Japanese union representative who is actively ensuring LGBTI+ members are part of JTU's delegation for EI's next Congress. Nevertheless, most interviewees, including those from unions that have well-developed LGBTI+ programmes, have never participated in any of EI's LGBTI+ spaces and have limited knowledge of their existence, even when having participated in one or more World Congresses or other equality activities. Upon learning about these spaces during interviews, several representatives express interest in participating.

### 2. Satisfaction with EI's LGBTI+ work

Overall, as can be seen in Figure 14, unions are satisfied with EI's LGBTI+ work. The majority of surveyed unions, 75 out of 114 unions, (64.8%) are rather satisfied while 18 (15.8%) are very satisfied. Only 10

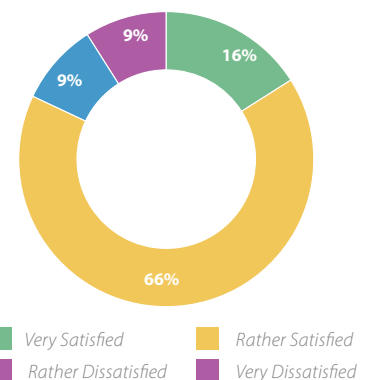
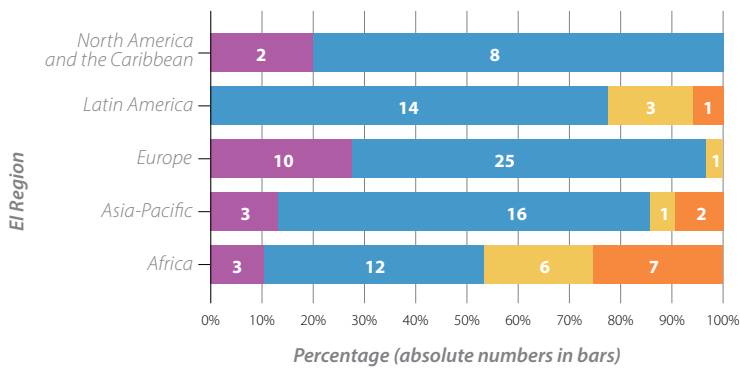


Figure 14. Unions' satisfaction with EI activities on LGBTI+ (n=114)



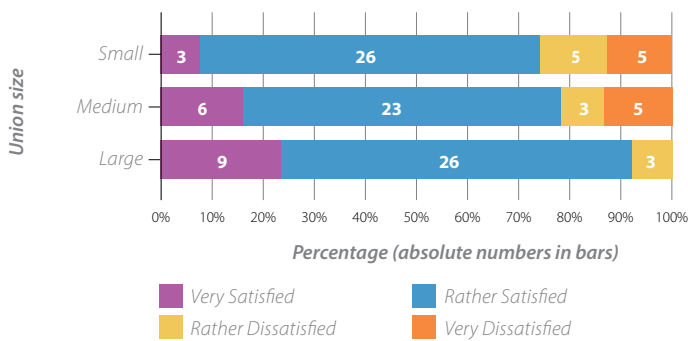
**Figure 15. Satisfaction with EI activities on LGBTI+ by EI regions (n=114)**

(8.8%) are very dissatisfied, 11 (9.6%) are rather dissatisfied.

Figure 15 shows that satisfaction varies across EI regions: while a relatively high proportion of unions in Europe and North America and the Caribbean are very satisfied, the proportion of rather or very dissatisfied unions is in comparison larger in Africa, Latin America and Asia-Pacific.

Not only the region, but also union size correlates with the satisfaction with the EI activities around LGBTI+ issues. As shown in Figure 16, smaller unions tend to be a little less satisfied than larger unions.

These results are reflected in the qualitative interviews where satisfaction with EI's LGBTI+ work differs.



**Figure 16. Satisfaction with EI activities on LGBTI+ by union size (n=114)**

Moreover, when crossing the quantitative and qualitative data there are indications that the question about satisfaction in the questionnaire may have also been interpreted differently by different respondents. For example, the **Icelandic** union had stated in the questionnaire that they were 'rather dissatisfied' with the

EI's LGBTI+ work but when asked about this during the interview they explain that they think that the work is good but that it's not visible and « *loud* », enough, and that information on how to address LGBTI+ issues in the education movement is lacking. Thus, the dissatisfaction was more about the quantity and visibility of the work than its quality. In contrast, some unions who share that they had no knowledge of EI's LGBTI+ work prior to filling in the questionnaire had stated that they were 'rather satisfied' with it.

For example, while the CSQ representative (**Quebec**) has limited knowledge of the LGBTI+ work of EI, they stressed strong interest in it and a positive vision of the impact that EI's work, and the present Quadrennial survey, could have on their own advocacy in favour of LGBTI+ rights:

*« If I can turn around and say, 'Look at Education International, who consults millions of members, millions of people who work in education around the world, look at the kind of positions that emerge! So we're not working in a vacuum here (...) surveys like the one you're doing at the moment reassure me enormously, it's saying 'when I read an EI publication, I can count on it being independent, I can count on the fact that it's serious research carried out on a vast group of people, so I think we should rely on it...' in other words, when a microphone falls under my nose and I have to speak out, it would be good if I could say (...) it's the whole world who's looking at these issues, here's where we are at, here's what the world is working on at the moment. You can join this political movement, you can take some and leave some, but it can support my members right into the classroom. »*

CSQ, Quebec

Likewise, the JTU (**Japan**) expresses appreciation of the work EI is doing on LGBTI+ issues, offering information and opportunities for unions to meet, with limited staff at both head and regional offices. The **Argentinian** union also express a particularly positive opinion



of the regional office which, according to them, plays a central role in growing and developing regional LGBTI+ policies and legal frameworks and supporting knowledge exchange between unions. Several unions emphasised that EI, as a respected international stakeholder, plays a role in influencing the position of national unions, regarding LGBTI+ rights. Even in unions functioning in difficult contexts, and currently not implementing LGBTI+ work, there was an understanding that as a global network EI should address these issues.

### **3. Information flow from EI to unions**

The data from the interviews indicate that the lack of knowledge of the work that EI is doing on LGBTI+ issues may in some cases be the result of a lack of an information flow between the person in charge of LGBTI+ issues and the person in charge of international issues within unions. For example, an interviewee, in charge of LGBTI+, testified to rarely getting the chance to collaborate with the international affairs expert and to some colleagues not even knowing what EI is: « If I don't ask [the person in charge of international affairs], I'll never know. It's a bit of a flaw in our organisation. »

Another interviewee agreed that until a recent staff change in the international office there had been limited collaboration between these two experts, leading to the person in charge of LGBTI+ issues having very limited knowledge of EI in general and their work on LGBTI+ issues specifically.

These examples of information flow issues between EI and the unions and within the unions raise the question of how to facilitate information on EI's LGBTI+ work reaching the person in charge of LGBTI+ issues within each union, in a context of language (and potentially cultural) barriers.

### **4. Importance of the process**

Several interviewees emphasised the importance of the LGBTI+ Quadrennial Survey process on their awareness of LGBTI+ issues. Some unions who are

not implementing LGBTI+ work explain that the survey has made them aware of the topic and others told the interviewer that they learned things during the interview. The Kiribati union representative perceives LGBTI+ issues as « *very new* » and explains the role that the survey has played in them learning more about the topic, understanding what LGBTI+ stands for and connecting it to their country's cultural reality (the existence of the Kiribati binabinaine community). In order to fill in the questionnaire they researched the law in their country regarding LGBTI+ persons.

*« you know the questionnaire that you sent (...) that was the first time (...) that I heard of [LGBTI+] (...) but when I went through the question I knew that it had already existed in my country (...) Once I went through the questionnaire I checked (...) what we call that [in Kiribati]. »*

KUT, Kiribati

A union representative in Benin, recalls having been surprised when seeing the topic of the survey « *at first glance [laughs], yes, because at home it's not so public like that, but internationally there's something like that...* » They filled it in as an « *exercise* » and it allowed them to « *realis[e] that, apart from what's happening here, there are other views/realities elsewhere* ».

During the interview, they also remember having been aware of parallel sessions on LGBTI+ issues at the EI Congress, but not having paid interest to them.

Several interviewees who already knew about LGBTI+ issues state that the survey and the interview has motivated them to learn more about EI's LGBTI+ work and has created a desire to engage more closely with EI and its work.

## **Section 5: Challenges & Needs of the unions**

### **1. External challenges**

As highlighted in section 3.1 (context), many unions face challenging socio-cultural and/or legal contexts, making their

work in favour of LGBTI+ rights difficult or impossible:

- National laws criminalising LGBTI+ persons or not providing them with rights;
- Far-right conservative decision-makers who oppose LGBTI+ rights;
- Anti-gender and anti-LGBTI+ mobilisation, including those supported by religious groups and addressed directly towards teachers and schools;
- Sociocultural values that do not recognise the existence of LGBTI+ persons and reject them, often in the name of the « *traditional family* »;
- A generally hostile environment against teachers who address sexual and reproductive rights and minority rights in schools.

In several contexts, recent political changes have resulted in backlash against LGBTI+ rights, as well as other human rights, requiring unions to need to prioritise the defence of acquired human rights.

## 2. Internal challenges

The Survey results show that unions face internal challenges that limit their LGBTI+ work, which include:

- Internal resistance to putting in place LGBTI+ actions or to actions addressing certain topics (such as transgender rights);
- Lack of knowledge and understanding of LGBTI+ issues and particularly of certain groups covered by the umbrella term, including intersex persons and transgender persons;
- Declining union membership, resulting in fewer resources available;
- Perception of a limited interest by union members, resulting in LGBTI+ issues not being prioritised;

- Language barriers making it difficult for union representatives to participate in international EI LGBTI+ spaces and use material produced by unions in other countries;
- In contexts where the sociocultural environment is hostile towards LGBTI+ persons: explicit homophobia and transphobia and a sense that LGBTI+ persons are not a reality, that their rights are not relevant or a priority for the union.

## 3. Needs expressed by unions

When asked in the questionnaire what they need to increase their activities on LGBTI+ issues, half of the unions (50.9%) answer that they need an expression of interest in the topic from members. It is important to note that this does not mean that members are not interested in the topic, since the members themselves have not been questioned; it only means that they have not (yet) expressed their interest in the topic. 42 respondents (36.8%) state that their union needs more expertise to increase their LGBTI+ activities, making expertise the second most required aspect. The high proportion of respondents that admitted to the lack of expertise within their union is surprising, but can be interpreted as a good sign, because it shows that unions value expertise on the topic and are open to learning more about LGBTI+ issues. Unions also expressed the need for more financial resources (41 respondents, 36.0%) to increase their LGBTI+ activities. Furthermore, 30 unions state that they need a more favourable political context, 29 need their staff to express interest in the topic and 23 need changes in their country's legal framework.

16 respondents state that they are not lacking anything to increase their activities on LGBTI+ rights, half of those are based in the African EI region, 4 in Europe and 2 in Asia-Pacific. The statement « *Nothing more is needed* » can be interpreted in different ways: It can mean that the union is indeed well equipped to implement

activities on LGBTI+ issues – or it can mean that the union does not perceive a need to implement activities, and therefore also perceives no needs. Looking into the 16 respondents, all 8 respondents from the African region that state that « *nothing is needed* » also state that it is « *not important* » for their union to have activities on LGBTI+ issues. The same applies for one union in the European region.

The expressed needs to increase LGBTI+ activities vary among regions. The figure below shows the distribution of perceived needs between EI regions.

During the interviews, the main needs expressed by interviewed unions, as related to their LGBTI+ work, were: learning from others, training and information and access to resources.

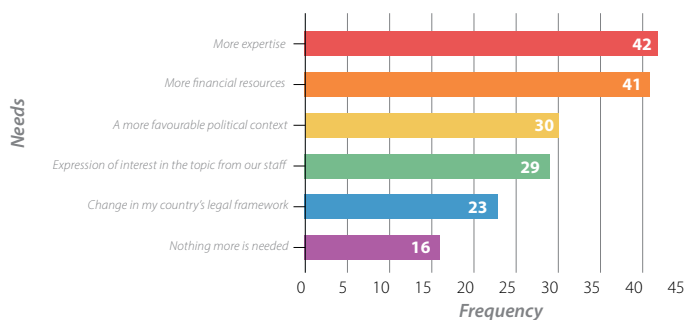


Figure 17. Unions' needs for increased LGBTI+ activities (n=114)

### a) Learning from others

A majority of the interviewed union representatives express the need and interest in learning from unions in other countries, whether in their region or internationally. They believe that EI, including the secretariat and the regional offices, could play a key role in putting in place and facilitating access to such spaces.

Study visits or conferences are mentioned as opportunities to learn more about the challenges faced in other regions, to learn about how to ensure LGBTI+ teachers' rights and to exchange resources on how to teach about LGBTI+ issues in schools.

« *If we know what other countries do we can get some ideas to work in our country too.* » USLTS, Sri Lanka

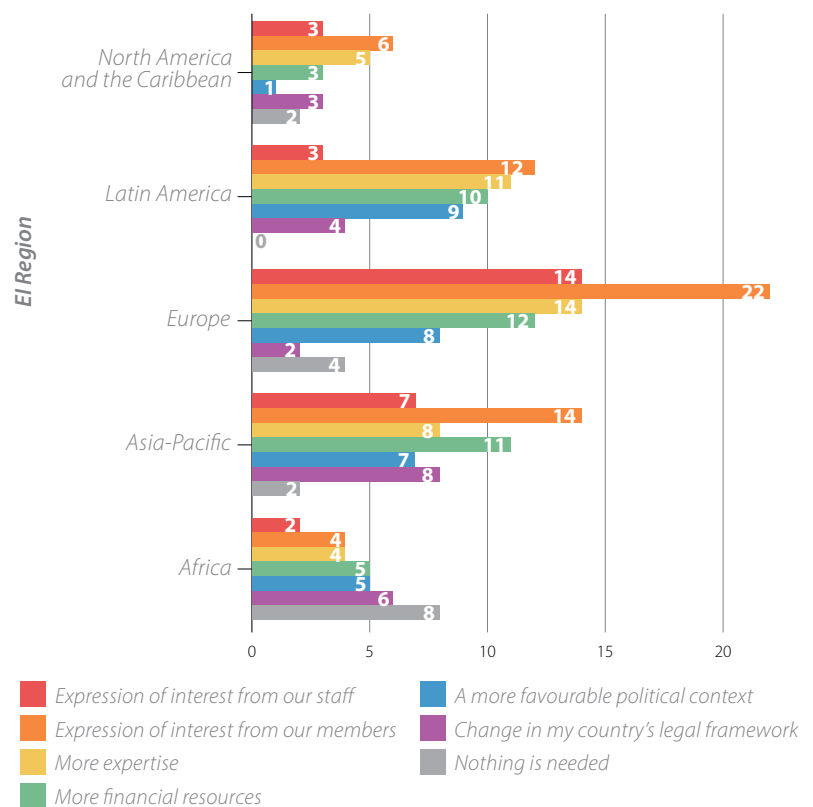


Figure 18. Unions' needs for increased LGBTI+ activities in EI regions (n=114)

The Kiribati Union of Teachers, which does not currently implement any LGBTI+ work, expressed that it would be useful to see how other countries are addressing this topic:

« *Because it's very new [in Kiribati], it's very interesting, then we can see how other countries... what other countries do (...) we can see how our union can work on that as well.* » KUT, Kiribati

Despite Iceland's national legislation being advanced on LGBTI+ issues, the KI representative emphasised that they could benefit from learning from other unions.

As highlighted previously, those unions who participated in LGBTI+ conferences had positive experiences of these spaces, gaining valuable knowledge on the situation and needs of this community.

The CSQ representatives imagine Education international creating some kind of international repertoire for LGBTI+ education policies and tools.

« *We really do have very different obstacles and challenges in the*

*world, but at the same time there are things that bring us together. For education. Why couldn't Education International take that place? I would be very, very happy. Then again, I've only just arrived, so it may already be doing it. (...) [It's like someone achieving a new world record in running] Once one person does it, everyone can imagine doing it. It kind of creates that effect.»*  
 CSQ, Quebec

The CTERA representative further stressed the need for strengthening the education unions LGBTI+ work at a regional level by creating collective spaces where countries facing similar realities can meet, exchange political and pedagogical strategies and receive trainings on how to implement a gender perspective, which includes LGBTI+ rights.

### b) Training and information

Many union representatives, including those well-versed in LGBTI+ issues, expressed the necessity for more information and training on LGBTI+ issues, particularly on the needs of specific groups such as transgender persons or intersex persons.

For example, the representative from FLC-CGIL in charge of LGBTI+ and other minority issues, emphasises that they would benefit from more training on specific issues, such as parental rights, and on specific communities under the LGBTI+ umbrella, so that « *each community's need is understood and met* ». Similarly, a need for more information and training on transgender and intersex issues is identified by the CSQ union representative. This seems particularly important as the union predicts that gender identity issues will take up a significant space in the public and media space in the next couple of years. Unions also stress that training educators and teachers is

needed for them to have the relevant skills to teach children and youth about LGBTI+ issues.

Some unions express a need for more data on the national situation of LGBTI+ persons in education. For example, the Benin union SNEP stresses that they currently do not have enough information on what LGBTI+ is and what the situation is in their country. Whether or not they get relevant information will influence if and how the union will address this topic in the future.

### c) Resources

Several unions express the need for additional financial or human resources to effectively work on LGBTI+ issues or further develop their current work, including conducting research, organising trainings and workshops. They also expressed a desire for more documentation from Education International.

The CSQ states that while they do not currently face a resource deficiency, additional resources for LGBTI+ issues would enhance both the quantity and quality of their work. « We could do more and go further. »

In the African anonymous union, the representative calls on EI to support them by funding campaigns on LGBTI+ issues and advocacy activities towards schools and the government.

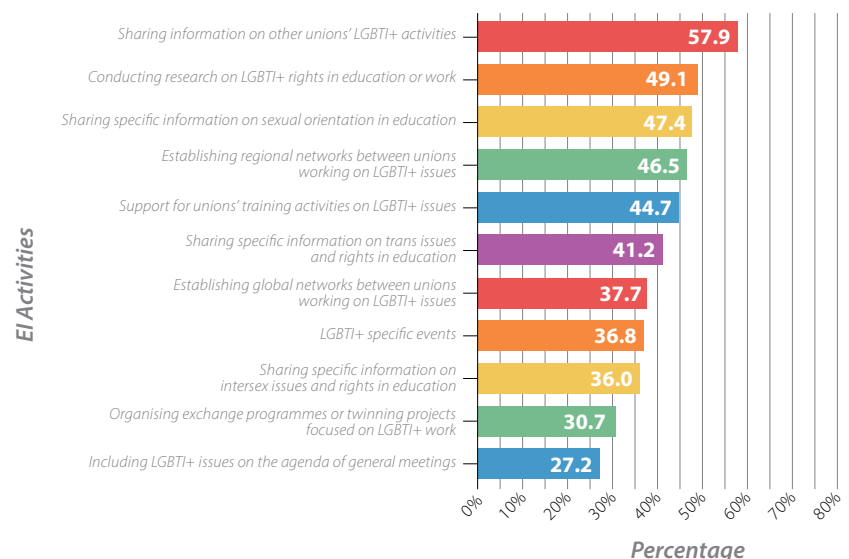


Figure 19. Activities EI should focus on (n=114)

Only the Icelandic union expresses that they have no need for further resources because their Equality committee is well-financed and has the means to do what they want to do.

#### ***4. Perspectives and priorities for the future***

In terms of perspectives, unions were asked in the questionnaire what they believe that EI should focus on. Figure 19 shows that, unsurprisingly, the most valued activity is sharing information on

other unions' LGBTI+ activities (57.9% of unions), followed by conducting research on LGBTI+ rights in education or work (47.1% of unions).

## Conclusions

This Quadrennial Survey on LGBTI+ issues was conducted at a pivotal point. It shows that there is momentum for advancing the human rights and equality of LGBTI+ persons in the education union movement: unions are interested in these issues, are putting activities in place, want to learn more and to collaborate to promote and advance the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex students, teachers and ESP to live freely, happily, and safely.

EI member organisations are spread across 178 countries and territories. Therefore, it is important to consider the specific contexts within which each union operates. We have seen that across the education union movement the contexts in terms of LGBTI+ rights vary greatly from unions working in contexts where LGBTI+ persons are criminalised, to those where LGBTI+ persons benefit from the same legal rights as cisgendered and heterosexual persons. Moreover, even in countries working in societies with progressive laws and attitudes, unions face potential backlash from conservative political movements with undeniable consequences on the unions' autonomy and work. Faced with such situations unions throughout the interviews show resilience and the motivation to

continue ensuring qualitative education, contributing to legal frameworks and ensuring safe places to study and to work for all.

Violence and discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression or sexual characteristics targets both teachers and students who are or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex. As such, it breaches the right of LGBTI+ teachers and ESP to a safe, inclusive and welcoming workplace, and of students to a safe school environment and quality education. While the scope of this report does not provide a clear idea of the prevalence of violence and discrimination against LGBTI+ teachers and students, as well as those teachers who are addressing LGBTI+ issues in their school, several unions participating in the survey have identified such situations and are actively supporting their members.

Moreover, even in challenging contexts, unions are testifying that LGBTI+ issues are becoming more and more relevant for their work. LGBTI+ students, teachers, and ESP are more visible, issues are more present in the public debate of several countries, and more people and organisations want to see a shift towards

more diverse, safe and equal societies. Unions recognise the need to prioritise LGBTI+ issues and incorporate them in their programs and advocacy work.

Nevertheless, the level of knowledge of LGBTI+ issues is clearly diverging between unions and highly related to the general sociocultural and legal context in which unions exist. Clearly, some unions have limited knowledge of LGBTI+ issues and, consequently, convey prejudiced or discriminatory opinions on LGBTI+ persons. Overall, 37% of unions responding to the questionnaire, and several unions participating in the interviews, also state that they need more expertise to implement activities on LGBTI+ issues. A vast body of literature on these issues exist, including awareness-raising material, guidelines, mappings<sup>14</sup>, tools for teachers and workers rights' unions, published by LGBTI+ civil society, academics, unions and international organisations<sup>15</sup>, including workers' organisations<sup>16</sup>.

The data show that there is a particularly strong need to improve union knowledge of intersex issues and how they relate to the education sector, even among representatives who had good understanding of other groups under the LGBTI+ umbrella. Thus, building knowledge of how being intersex can affect students' and teachers experience of education is key, including of discrimination and harassment faced by the group and how being intersex (and having undergone treatments) may affect students' school attendance and drop-out rates.

Despite EI having adopted several resolutions in favour of securing LGBTI+ rights and implementing regional and

international actions in favour of union learning and knowledge-exchange, the terminology is not well understood broadly and union members' general awareness of EIs LGBTI+ work can be improved.

Cooperations with other unions as well as civil society can be a valuable strategy to increase such expertise. Those who are just about to start or to scale-up their LGBTI+ work can learn from other unions in their own region, facing similar challenges, and be inspired by unions where there is a long history of working on such issues. Likewise, those who have acquired expertise and experience over the years recognise room for improvement and areas where they can learn from other contexts. Unions particularly express a willingness to learn from other unions within the education union movement. Regional cooperations between unions of various sizes can also be seen as a particularly interesting strategy. As expressed by participating union representatives, international and regional EI spaces have the potential to provide such learning opportunities.

Collaborations with LGBTI+ organisations also seem to play a particularly important role in raising union awareness and helping them prioritise their LGBTI+ work. Nevertheless, there is space to further develop such partnerships since many unions do not know of, or work with, national, regional or international LGBTI+ organisations. EI and its regional offices can thus play a role to facilitate cooperations between such actors.

Many unions agree that the education trade union movement has the potential to contribute to shifting societies towards more equality for LGBTI+ communities. The quantitative data also shows that 66 out of 114 unions plan to increase their activities on LGBTI+ issues. If all of them did so, these activities have the potential to reach a total of 8.2 million teachers and ESP worldwide. Due to its unique access to multipliers on various levels, Education International is in a unique position to support unions realise their plans - and improve the situation for LGBTI+ teachers, ESP, and students of all ages as well as their parents all over the world.

14 Databases include the ILGA World mapping of law and policy : <https://database.ilga.org/> and the International LGBTIQ Youth & Student Organisation, IGLYIO, (which gathers 90 organisations in Europe) provides a LGBTIQ inclusive education database of <https://www.iglyo.org/database>

15 For Europe see for example: Council of Europe (2018) Safe at school: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity/ expression or sex characteristics in Europe <https://rm.coe.int/prems-125718-gbr-2575-safe-at-school-a4-web/16809024f5>

16 See for example ILO (2022) Inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) persons in the world of work: A learning guide : <https://www.ilo.org/publications/inclusion-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-intersex-and-queer-lgbtq>

# Recommendations

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## Section 1: Recommendations for EI member organisations

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The following recommendations can be considered by education unions who wish to further develop their work in favour of LGBTI+ rights, and adapted to their specific context and resources:

- When establishing any policy or activities related to LGBTI+ rights, strive to have LGBTI+ voices shaping and participating in the work.
- Strive for representation of LGBTI+ members in governance structures and in attendance at all events, not just LGBTI+ -focused events. Ensure that unions are safe spaces.
- Collaborate with local LGBTI+ civil society organisations and/or trade unions from other sectors. They can be key allies and potentially inform you about current issues within your country's legal and political situation of LGBTI+ rights or offer training.
- Strive to use gender-inclusive language in union documents and publications if applicable. LGBTI+ and feminist organisations can provide guidelines on how to do so.
- Engage in local or national advocacy days (i.e. Pride, Days of Remembrance), whether by having local teach-ins, releasing statements, etc.
- Develop trainings and guidelines for teachers and ESP on how to teach LGBTI+ issues at different levels of the education system or on

LGBTI+ rights in the workplace and in unions. Make sure that such trainings/workshops are adapted to your local context.

- If you already have LGBTI+ sensitive teaching materials, policies, or training guides, approach other teachers' unions and EI to share it with them.
- Consider establishing a network or community for LGBTI+ members.
- Analyse which groups are currently under-represented in your LGBTI+ work, whether advocacy or trainings, and put in place measures to bridge this gap.

## Section 2: Recommendations for Education International

---

The following recommendations can be considered as Education International further develops its work in favour of LGBTI+ rights:

- Create a global LGBTI+ network to facilitate communication between education unions in different contexts. This is the best way to help unions to acquire the expertise needed and foster knowledge sharing amongst members. Cooperation should be facilitated between unions of different sizes within the same EI region to support smaller unions with limited resources.
- Identify new ways to facilitate the presence of LGBTI+ members in EI global and regional spaces and the

participation of this group when establishing LGBTI+ policies and activities.

- Identify ways to reach member organisations who do not currently work on LGBTI+ issues and support them in implementing some first actions in favour of LGBTI+ rights. This includes supporting unions understanding of the connections between gender equality and LGBTI+, for them to be able to move from working on the first to also integrating issues relating to the latter.
- Support union members who require more expertise to carry out LGBTI+ specific activities relative to their context and to the education sector by providing training, sharing good practices, research and teaching material that can be applied to their contexts.
- Create material to ensure that member organisations can access basic understanding of LGBTI+ issues and adopt the terminology EI uses in its resolutions and reports. EI regional offices should ensure that such materials and terminology are adapted to the specific cultural contexts in their (sub-)regions.
- Strengthen partnerships with international and regional LGBTI+ advocacy groups, trade unions and develop partnerships with groups addressing specific sub-groups within the umbrella, such as intersex and transgender rights' organisations.
- Increase engagement in LGBTI+ focused UN Mechanisms and share such opportunities with members.
- Be more specific about the target group of initiatives to respond better to the legal and socio-political challenges faced by different groups which are included in the political umbrella-term LGBTI+.
- Implement action-oriented qualitative research, with one piece focusing particularly on the specific needs of intersex teachers and students in the education system to be able to design specific actions targeting this group.



# Annex

## Annex 1: Questionnaire

El Quadrennial Survey Section 1: LGBTI+ rights in education

Welcome!

Education International's 10th World Congress will review key developments, including progress on achieving equality and inclusion in education and education unions. The Quadrennial Survey on Gender Equality and Diversity consists of three surveys on LGBTI+ rights, on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Gender Equality and Equity. The results of these surveys help shape the future of EI's programmatic and policy work.

This survey is focused on EI member organisations' work to further LGBTI+ rights in and through education and in trade unions.

The term LGBTI+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and additional gender identities and sexual orientations. It is used as an umbrella-term that includes people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and sex characteristics. People who are part of the LGBTI+ community not only share forms of marginalisation but are also united in a fight against homophobia and transphobia across the world. However, there are also significant differences between members of these groups. Therefore, the survey includes questions referring to union actions towards specific groups.

This survey should take you 30 minutes to complete. This survey should be completed by the individual leading your organisation's work in this area.

All information you provide in the survey will be confidential and not passed on to third parties. Your name and contact details will not be collected unless you choose to provide them. The name and country or territory of your organisation will remain anonymous unless you explicitly agree to its publication. The results will be published by EI and launched at the EI 10<sup>th</sup> World Congress in July 2024.

### PART 1: Basic Information

**1. Do you agree to participate in this survey?**

- Yes
- No

**2. What is the name of your organisation? \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Do you agree to EI referring to the name of your organisation in publications and presentations of the results?**

- Yes
- No, I want my organisation to be anonymous.

---

**4. Country or territory of operation: \_\_\_\_\_**

---

---

**5. Do you agree with EI referring to the territory of your organisation in publications and presentations of the results?**

---

- Yes
- No, I want my organisation to be anonymous.

---

**6. What EI-regional structure is your organisation part of?**

---

- Africa
- Asia Pacific
- Europe
- Latin America
- North America and the Caribbean

---

**7. How relevant are LGBTI+ issues for your organisation's current activities?**

---

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 (=not relevant)    | 2 (=barely relevant) |
| 3 (=rather relevant) | 4 (=highly relevant) |

---

**8. In your opinion, how important is it that your organisation has activities around LGBTI+ issues?**

---

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 (=not important)    | 2 (=barely important) |
| 3 (=rather important) | 4 (=highly important) |

---

**9. Optional: Do you want to elaborate on your response to questions 7 or 8? \_\_\_\_\_**

---

## PART 2: Information about context

---

**10. In the country or territory your organisation represents: Are same-sex sexual relations legal?**

---

- yes  no  in some jurisdictions it is, in others it isn't
- I don't know

---

**11. In the country or territory your organisation represents: Is same-sex marriage legal?**

---

- yes  no  in some jurisdictions it is, in others it isn't
- I don't know

---

**12. In the country or territory your organisation represents: Are same-sex civil unions legal?**

---

- yes  no  in some jurisdictions it is, in others it isn't  
 I don't know

---

**13. In the country or territory your organisation represents: Is it possible to change your first name and gender marker on official documents for them to reflect one's gender identity?**

---

- yes  no  in some jurisdictions it is, in others it isn't  
 I don't know

---

**14. In the last five years, has there been any major changes of the national context in terms of LGBTI+ issues (advances or set-backs) that have affected your organisation's work on these issues?**

---

- yes  no  I don't know

---

**15. If yes, please elaborate: \_\_\_\_**

---

---

**16. Optional: Do you want to elaborate on the situation of LGBTI+ persons in your country? \_\_\_\_**

---

### PART 3: Organisation Plans and Needs

---

**17. Does your organisation carry out advocacy or research activities to support LGBTI+ rights at national level?**

---

- Yes  
 No

---

**18. In the last five years, has your organisation participated in any of the following research or advocacy activities at national level? (Select all that apply)**

---

- actions in favour of the visibility of LGBTI+ persons or against homophobia and transphobia (e.g., pride march, LGBTI+ history month)
- solidarity actions to support victims of homophobic or transphobic attacks
- campaigns or advocacy in favour of lesbian, gay and bisexual people
- campaigns or advocacy in favour of trans (including non-binary) people
- campaigns or advocacy in favour of intersex people
- participate in local, national, or international commemorative days (e.g. Pride Month, IDAHOBIT)
- research on LGBTI+ issues
- Others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**19. Does your organisation cooperate with ... (Select all that apply)**

---

- the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA)
- LGBTI+ advocacy groups
- a member-led peer-to-peer LGBTI+ support group
- other teachers' organisations working on LGBTI+ issues
- organisations for other professions working on LGBTI+ issues
- UN mechanisms around LGBTI+ rights
- public institutions
- other, please specify: \_\_\_\_

---

**20. Is your organisation an associate member of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA)?**

---

- yes  no  I don't know  I haven't heard about ILGA

---

**21. Does your organisation plan to increase activities around LGBTI+ issues?**

---

- No, we are already doing enough
- No, because we cannot.
- Yes, but plans are still vague.
- Yes, and we have a concrete vision.

---

**22. Optional: do you want to elaborate on question 21? \_\_\_\_**

---

---

**23. What is needed in order to increase your organisations' activities on LGBTI+ issues? (Select all that apply)**

---

- Change in my country's legal framework
- A more favourable political context
- More financial resources
- More expertise
- Expression of interest in the topic from our members
- Expression of interest in the topic from our staff
- Nothing more is needed
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**24. To what degree are you satisfied with EI's work on LGBTI+ issues?**

---

- 1 (=Very Dissatisfied)                      2 (=Rather Dissatisfied)  
3 (=Rather Satisfied)                      4 (=Very Satisfied)

---

25. *[If yes] In the last 5 years, what were the most helpful activities? \_\_\_\_*

---

---

26. *[If no] What can EI do to support your organisation's efforts on LGBTI+ issues? \_\_\_\_*

---

---

27. *Which of those activities should EI focus on? (Select all that apply)*

---

- establishing global networks between organisations working on LGBTI+ issues
- establishing regional networks between organisations working on LGBTI+ issues
- sharing information on other organisations' LGBTI+ activities (best practices)
- sharing specific information on sexual orientation in education
- sharing specific information on trans (including non-binary) issues and rights in education
- sharing specific information on intersex issues and rights in education
- conducting research / surveys on LGBTI+ rights in education or work
- hosting LGBTI+-specific events (e.g., sub-regional or regional conferences, workshops, webinars)
- including LGBTI+ issues on the agenda of general meetings
- support for organisations' training activities on LGBTI+ issues (e.g., guidelines, material, etc.)
- Organizing exchange programmes or twinning projects focused on LGBTI+ work
- other: \_\_\_\_

#### PART 4: LGBTI+ inclusive education organisations

---

28. *Do you know at least one openly lesbian, gay or bisexual person in the staff or active members of your organisation?*

---

- yes  no  I myself identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual

---

29. *Do you know at least one openly trans (including non-binary) person in the staff or active members of your organisation?*

---

- yes  no  I myself identify as

---

30. *Do you know at least one openly intersex person in the staff or active members of your organisation?*

---

- yes  no  I myself identify as intersex

---

**31. Does your organisation include LGBTI+ persons in your constitution, bylaws, resolutions, or other policy frameworks?**

---

- yes    no    I don't know

---

**32. If yes, in what way? \_\_\_**

---

---

**33. Does your organisation use gender inclusive language and terminology in its publications?**

---

- yes    mostly yes    no

---

**34. Does your organisation take initiatives against discrimination within your organisation and in favour of equal treatment to members who self-identify as LGBTI+ persons?**

---

- Yes specific initiatives on LGBTI+ members  
 Yes as part of broader anti-discrimination and diversity work  
 No  
 I don't know

---

**35. Does your organisation carry out any of the following activities (Select all that apply)**

---

- actively recruit LGBTI+ teachers and education support personnel as organisation members (specific measures)  
 actively recruit LGBTI+ teachers and education support personnel as members of staff at your organisation (affirmative hiring policy)

---

**36. Does your organisation have an advisory committee/network/structure on LGBTI+ issues?**

---

- yes    no    I don't know

---

**37. [If yes] Does this structure provide advice to the organisation leadership structure?**

---

- yes    no    I don't know

---

**38. How would you say the activities of this group changed within the last five years? They are now...**

---

- more active    less active    no change

---

**39. How would you say the funding of this group changed within the last five years? They are now...**

---

- better resourced    less well-resourced    no change

---

**40. Does your organisation have one or more official contact persons or expert(s) for LGBTI+ issues?**

---

- yes    no

---

**41. [If yes] Optional: please share their contact details for further collaboration: \_\_\_\_\_**

---

---

**42. In your organisation's activities around employment for LGBTI+ teachers and education support personnel, have you referred to the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190)?**

---

- yes    no    I don't know    I don't know the ILO Convention No. 190

## **PART 5: Schools as LGBTI+ inclusive work and educational environments**

---

**43. In the country or territory your organisation represents: Which of the following is most applicable for the situation of lesbian, gay or bisexual teachers and education support personnel?**

---

- They face severe discrimination and harassment.  
 It is barely accepted and brings many difficulties.  
 It is mostly accepted, but not without challenges.  
 It is broadly accepted.  
 I don't know

---

**44. In the country or territory your organisation represents: Which of the following is most applicable for the situation of teachers and education support personnel who do not conform with norms around gender identity?**

---

- They face severe discrimination and harassment.  
 It is barely accepted and brings many difficulties.  
 It is mostly accepted, but not without challenges.  
 It is broadly accepted.  
 I don't know

---

**45. Optional: Do you want to elaborate on the situation of LGBTI+ teachers and education support personnel in your country or territory?**

---

---

**46. Has your organisation supported at least one case of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in employment tribunals?**

---

yes  no  I don't know

---

**47. Has your organisation supported at least one case of discrimination on grounds of being trans (including non-binary) or intersex in employment tribunals?**

---

yes  no  I don't know

---

**48. Has your organisation negotiated LGBTI+-specific clauses in your organisation's collective bargaining agreements?**

---

yes  no  I don't know

---

**49. Optional: If yes, on what topics? (ex. parental leave for same-sex parents, gender affirmation leaves for trans workers...)**

---

---

**50. Does your organisation carry out any specific work to promote non-discrimination in employment for LGBTI+ teachers and education support personnel?**

---

yes  no  I don't know

---

**51. In the last five years: Has your organisation carried out any specific training activities for members related to LGBTI+ issues and non-discrimination in education?**

---

yes  no

---

**52. If yes, Were any of these topics covered in the training(s)? (Select all that apply)**

---

- general anti-discrimination or diversity including topics of LGBTI+ discrimination
- being LGBTI+ at the workplace
- same-sex and/or trans parenthood
- LGBTI+ inclusive curriculum
- bullying of LGBTI+ students
- information and legal situation for lesbian and gay people
- information and legal situation for intersex people
- information and legal situation for trans people
- How LGBTI+ intersects with other types of discrimination (e.g., migration background, race, dis/ability, etc.)
- other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_



---

**53. Has your organisation produced LGBTI+-sensitive teaching materials or resources?**

---

yes  no

no, but we provide teaching materials produced by other parties

---

**54. If yes, can you provide details? E.g., what topics are covered? For what lessons can the material be used?**

---

---

**55. Optional: Do you want to share any materials from your organisation's LGBTI+ work? Please share the link here.**

---

---

**56.**

---

We are interested in learning more about the challenges organisations face while furthering the rights of LGBTI+ persons in education via interviews. One to two organisations per region will be selected and completing this form does not guarantee interview participation.

If you want to participate or share more this topic, please leave your email address here:

Thank you for participating in Section 1: LGBTI+ rights of EI's Quadrennial Survey on Gender Equality and Diversity

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact us: [equality@ei-ie.org](mailto:equality@ei-ie.org)

## Annex 2: Interview Grid

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### Interview guide EI LGBTI+ Quadrennial Report

#### Introduction

Introducing the interviewer and the reason for the interview using the Information for participants document.

Mandatory requests:

- Consent for participating: participation is free and that interviewees can withdraw their consent at any time.
- Consent for recording: recordings will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team and will not be published.
- Consent to the publication of your organisation's name and country in the final EI report: if consent is not given only information of the region will be provided in the report.

#### Interview

---

##### **1. Presentation of the interviewee - 5 min**

---

- 1.1 - Could you briefly present your union, yourself and your role within your organisation?  
(including length working/active in the union)
- 1.2 - What are your motivations for participating in this interview on LGBTI+ rights?  
How comfortable are you discussing this subject?

---

##### **2. National context - 10 min**

---

- 2.1 - How would you describe the general context with regard to LGBTI+ rights in your country?  
(For ex, legality of same-sex relations /right to marriage / right to change your gender marker / access to gender affirming care / criminalisation of medically unnecessary treatments of intersex children, violence and harassment against LGBTI+ persons, gender back-lash, etc.)
- 2.2 - In the last five years, has there been any major changes of the national context in terms of LGBTI+ issues - in the Education sector / workers rights (progress' or set-backs) that have affected your unions work on these issues?  
Can you mention any specific progress? (ex a legal change)  
Can you mention any specific set-back? (ex a legal change, a political event)
- 2.3 - Would you say that anti-LGBTI+ and anti-gender movements are strong in your country?

2.4 - How does the political and legal frameworks on LGBTI+ issues affect the work of your union?

How would you say that this situation impacts teachers, education support personnel and students who are LGBTI+?

2.5 - In recent years, have there been any major changes within your union that has affected your work on LGBTI+? (new union leaders, changes in personnel, political positions...)

---

### **3. Union actions on LGBTI+ - 20 min**

---

Speaking about the Education union movement in general:

3.1 - Do you think that LGBTI+ issues get enough attention within the education union movement? If no, what do you think are the main barriers / challenges?

3.2 - What role do you think that education unions in general can play in advancing LGBTI+ rights in education?

Speaking about your union in particular:

3.3 - What type of actions does your union currently undertake on LGBTI+ issues?

(advocacy/lobbying? awareness-raising? organising spaces for LGBTI+ unionists? solidarity actions with LGBTI+ personnel? litigation? promotion of inclusive curricula ? ensuring safe spaces for LGBTI+ teachers and students? campaigns...? budget for LGBTI+ right's issues?)

3.4 - Who are the targets of these actions? Would you say that they equally target gay and bisexual men, lesbian and bisexual women, transgender and non-binary persons, and intersex persons ?

3.5 - Could you tell me about one specific action that you did and that was challenging.

How did you overcome the difficulties ?

What would you say worked or didn't work?

3.6 - How does your union's work on LGBTI+ intersect with your work on broader human right's issues and more specifically on gender equality, indigenous peoples' rights, minority rights?

If yes, in which ways?

If no, why do you think that is?

---

### **4. Challenges & Needs - 15 min**

---

4.1 - In your opinion, what are the main challenges that your union faces in its work on LGBTI+ issues?

within the union? within the education system ? (resources, difficulties at regional levels, difficulties with governance, staff vs member position...)

4.2 - What would you and your union need to be able to increase or improve your union's work promoting the rights of LGBTI+ persons?

4.3 - Do you feel supported in your work on LGBTI+ issues, by other unions, by the EI secretariat?

4.4 - Do you have any suggestions on how EI could better support unions like yours?

4.5 - Would you be interested in participating in study visits in unions who work on LGBTI+ issues?

If yes, what would you expect to learn from such a visit?

If no, why?

4.6 - Do you feel that LGBTI+ spaces are inclusive and accessible enough?

Would you want more of such spaces? If yes, what would they look like and at what level would they be most useful? (national, regional, subregional)

4.7 - Do you think that enough information is provided and is accessible on how to address LGBTI+ issues in the education union movement?

Do you have ideas on how access to information could be improved?

---

## **5. EI and Union spaces - 10 min**

---

Remind/Inform of EI's work on LGBTI+ rights: Publication of quadrennial surveys on Equality & Diversity issues, which include a section on LGBTI+. The latest one in 2019 "LGBTI+ Rights in the Global Education Union Movement" - which provided a historical oversight of EI's work on LGBTI+ - and the 2015 quadrennial survey - in which union members were asked about their work on LGBTI+. Several resolutions have been published on LGBTI+ rights, the latest one, "Securing LGBTI+ Rights", adopted at the 2019 congress in Bangkok. EI have proposed or participated in several spaces on LGBTI+ rights, such as the LGBTI+ Caucus (which took place before the world congresses), the EI-PSI LGBTI+ Forum, and regional events on LGBTI+ rights. EI (and its members) are also present in Regional and UN spaces, provides trainings on LGBTI+ and is a member of the LGBTI+ Working Group of the Council of Global Unions. The EI secretariat actively works on LGBTI+ rights and one staff member is in charge of this portfolio, which includes supporting union members in their LGBTI+ rights work.

5.1 - How aware are you of this work done by the Global Union Federation? How relevant do you feel that it is for your union?

5.2 - Have you or someone in your union ever participated in an EI space on LGBT (EI-PSI LGBT Forum / LGBT Caucusus / Regional events) ?

If yes, What was your experience?

If no, Why not? (resources, opposition, conditions to be able to go..)

Would you like to?

5.3 - Does your union collaborate with other unions or civil society organisations on the topics of human rights, diversity or LGBTI+?

If yes, can you tell me a bit more about these collaborations, with which organisations and on which topics?

What have you learnt from working with other organisations?

What have been the advantages of these collaborations?

Has it been challenging in any way? Which difficulties have you faced? (differences in priority, differences in understanding of LGBTI+ or worker's rights issues, political/institutional opposition, etc)

#### 5.4 - Broadening of the LGBTI+ term:

With time the Education International framework has been broadened from LGB (lesbian, gay, bisexual) to also include transgender persons and intersex persons.

Do you have any thoughts on this evolution from LGB to LGBTI+ ?

Does this change reflect in your unions work and policies? Do you feel that staff/members of your union are comfortable with all these issues? Have you faced any challenges related with this the broadening of the LGBTI+ group?

(For example, difficulties in including actions on gender expression or sex characteristics, misconceptions around transgender or intersex persons?)

---

### **6. Perspectives - 5 min**

---

6.1 - In your opinion, what are the main priorities in terms of LGBTI+ rights for your union moving forward? (is possible: for lesbian, gay and bisexual persons, transgender persons, intersex persons?)

6.2 - How do you think your union's work on LGBTI+ will evolve with regard to the evolutions within your union and within broader society ?

6.3 - Do you have anything else that you want to add?





Education International  
Internationale de l'Éducation  
Internacional de la Educación  
Bildungsinternationale



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# Report on the 2024 Education International Quadrennial Survey on LGBTI+ Rights in Education



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