

## Rainbow Workplaces: Our commitment to equality for LGBTIQ workers

Document adopted by the 19<sup>th</sup> industriAll Europe Executive Committee  
Online meeting, 14-15 April 2021 | 2021/128

IndustriAll European Trade Union is committed to equal treatment and respect for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender, intersex and queer/questioning workers (LGBTIQ). There is urgent need to address discrimination in the workplace as well as in society at large. According to the latest European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights LGBTI report<sup>1</sup>, one in four (26 %) respondents hide being LGBTIQ at work. 21 % felt discriminated against at work in the year before the survey. 10 % felt discriminated against when looking for work. Significantly higher shares of trans (35 %) and intersex respondents (32 %) felt discriminated at work.

The LGBTIQ Equality Strategy, published by the European Commission in November 2020, highlights the importance of non-discrimination, inclusion and diversity at the workplace.

Trade unions have a role to play here and beyond: By challenging prejudice and discrimination at work, unions will also help defeat it in society.

IndustriAll European Trade Union affiliated organisation pledge to:

- Publicly commit to LGBTIQ equality – for their own staff, members, workers and everyone else
- Not allow any form of discrimination, bullying, harassment or inappropriate jokes and have a policy in place to deal with violations
- Review our own staff and recruitment policies
- Use neutral language as far as possible (see Annex I)
- Review all forms (registration forms, personnel files, etc.), online, digital or hard copy, if they offer to choose a gender other than “male or female”
- Provide gender-neutral facilities (changing rooms and toilets) whilst retaining single sex facilities for those who want to use them
- Include equality and diversity statements in our missions
- Have policies in place for employees in transition<sup>2</sup>
- Encourage and create LGBTIQ networks at the workplace and among union members
- Offer training on LGBTIQ equality for staff and members

---

<sup>1</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: A long way to go for LGBTI equality; Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2020; [https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/fra-2020-lgbti-equality-1\\_en.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2020-lgbti-equality-1_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> People transitioning from the gender assigned to them by birth to the gender they identify may need time off for medical treatment. Most workers will want to stay in the same job during and after transition, but some workers, especially ones who deal with the public or clients, may want to change roles within the organisation when they transition. Email-addresses, staff records, etc. may have to be changed.

- Express our solidarity: celebrate the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (LGBTI+ phobia) on 17 May, take part in pride marches, etc.

IndustriAll European Trade Union pledges to work with shop stewards, works councils, companies to:

- Review all current collective agreements to make sure they do not discriminate. For example, where time off is offered for specific circumstances such as bereavement, domestic emergencies, illness of children or dependents, weddings / registrations of partnership this should equally apply to rainbow families. Same sex partners must have the same benefits as heterosexual partners, e.g. the right to parental leave.
- Negotiate equalities policies aimed at ending discrimination against LGBTIQ in the workplace
- Negotiate specific agreements on supporting any employee who is transitioning
- Ensure staff and managers are trained on equality
- Negotiate a harassment policy that includes gender identity and gender expression
- Work with employers to ensure they have fair recruitment and selection processes such as advertising, interview and selection
- Ask employers to update their policies and procedures to include non-binary identities and to remove unnecessary gendered language
- Ask employers and organisations provide gender-neutral facilities
- If a workplace has a dress code: Many workers prefer dress codes that don't differentiate by gender, so you may be able to negotiate a change there. If gendered dress codes must remain, try to negotiate flexibility for non-binary members.

Diversity and inclusion are not about political correctness. It's about appreciating the skills, knowledge and personal attributes of everyone we work with. It's about valuing differences and everybody's contribution to the richness of the organisation and society.

## ANNEX I:

**Promote inclusive language***Preferred pronouns*

Many non-binary people prefer to use non-gendered pronouns like *they* instead of *he* or *she*. It's increasingly common and acceptable to ask people what their preferred pronouns are and use them. Pronouns may also be communicated in email signatures.

*Gender-neutral language*

Many gendered words and phrases have non-binary alternatives which are simple and easy to remember. Here are a few common ones.

<i>Binary language</i>	<i>Non-binary inclusive language</i>
He/she	He/she/they
Open to both genders	Open to all genders
Dear Sir/Madam	To whom it may concern
Brother/sister	Sibling or brothers/sisters/siblings
Men and women	People/everyone
Husband/wife	Spouse, partner

*Forms and surveys*

When asking for someone's gender on a form or survey, include non-binary options.

- List *Mx* as an option alongside *Mr*, *Mrs*, *Miss*, or *Ms*, as well as other titles like *Dr* or *Rev*.
- Do you identify as: *female* / *male* / *in another way* / *prefer not to say*?

## ANNEX II:

**Glossary**<sup>3</sup>Bodies, gender and gender identities

**Cisgender/cis:** people whose gender (identity) corresponds to the sex they were assigned at birth

**Gender:** refers to the socially constructed categories assigned to individuals on the basis of their apparent sex at birth

**Gender binary:** the spectrum-based classification of gender into the two categories of either man or woman based on biological sex

**Gender identity:** refers to an inner sense of oneself as man, woman, masculine, feminine, neither, both, or moving around freely between or outside of the gender binary

**Genderqueer/Non-binary gender:** a gender identity that does not conform to traditional gender norms and may be expressed as other than woman or man, including gender neutral and androgynous

**Gender questioning:** not necessarily an identity but sometimes used in reference to a person who is unsure which gender, if any, they identify with

**Intersex:** an umbrella term that refers to individuals who have anatomical, chromosomal and hormonal characteristics that differ from medical and conventional understandings of male and female bodies. Intersex people may identify as either men, women or non-binary

**Sex:** a person's sex is made up of anatomical, chromosomal and hormonal characteristics. Sex is classified as either male or female at birth based on a person's external anatomical features. However, sex is not always straightforward as some people may be born with an intersex variation, and anatomical and hormonal characteristics can change over a lifespan

**Transgender/Trans/Gender diverse:** umbrella terms used to refer to people whose assigned sex at birth does not match their internal gender identity, regardless of whether their internal gender identity is outside the gender binary or within it

Sexual orientations

**Asexual/ace:** a sexual orientation that reflects little to no sexual attraction

**Bisexual:** an individual who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of the same gender and people of another gender. Bisexuality does not necessarily assume there are only two genders

**Gay:** an individual who identifies as a man and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as men

**Heterosexual:** an individual who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to the opposite gender

**Lesbian:** an individual who identifies as a woman and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as women

**Pansexual:** an individual whose sexual and/or romantic attraction to others is not restricted by gender. A pansexual may be sexually and/or romantically attracted to any person, regardless of their gender identity

---

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/lgbtiq-communities>

**Queer:** a term used to describe a range of sexual orientations and gender identities. Although once used as a derogatory term, the term queer now encapsulates political ideas of resistance to heteronormativity and homonormativity and is often used as an umbrella term to describe the full range of LGBTIQ+ identities.

### Societal attitudes/issues

**Cisnormativity:** assumes that everyone is cisgendered and that all people will continue to identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

**Heteronormativity:** the view that heterosexual relationships are the only natural, normal and legitimate expressions of sexuality and relationships

**Heterosexism:** describes a social system that privileges heteronormative beliefs, values and practice

**Homophobia and biphobia:** refer to negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about people who are not heterosexual

**Transphobia:** refers to negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about transgender/trans and gender diverse people