

No more,  
no less:  
just like  
everyone  
else!

# UNION GUIDE TO SEXUAL DIVERSITY AND GENDER PLURALITY



No more,  
no less:  
just like  
everyone  
else!

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HOLDING OUR GROUND

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INTRODUCTION

It sometimes seems as if members of **sexual and gender minorities**, also called **LGBT+ communities**, have already won all their important battles. And recent decades have certainly been marked by major advances in **LGBT+ rights**.

Such milestones include the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1969, the recognition of same-sex parenthood in 2002 followed by same-gender marriage in 2005, the explicit mention of **gender** and the inclusion of **gender identity** and **gender expression** as prohibited bases of discrimination in Québec’s Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms in 2016, and official recognition for **non-binary** people in 2022.

As societies, Québec and Canada can be proud of the progress made, and of the labour movements’ active involvement in these fights for social justice.

However, the current situation is increasingly alarming. The rise of the political right, including the far right, has led to a marked

erosion of **trans** people’s rights in Canada and elsewhere in the world, particularly the United States. This rollback of legal protections is unfolding in a context that is dangerous not only to members of the LGBT+ community but to all marginalized groups, including women, Indigenous people, racialized people, immigrants, and those experiencing poverty. Today more than ever, vigilance and solidarity are needed to push back against these multiple attacks.

We are witnessing an insidious normalization of emboldened speech and acts, including acts of violence, that are homophobic, transphobic, misogynist, and racist. The Québec government’s recently stated intention to “take a position on questions related to gender identity,” after having recognized such

identities in the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, is highly troubling. Transphobic and homophobic demonstrations occur periodically in Québec as elsewhere, and a recent study reports that hostile attitudes are on the rise among young people.

Our workplaces are not immune to the rise in **homophobia** and **transphobia**, along with sexism and racism. Too many LGBT+ people still prefer to stay in the closet (dissemble their **sexual orientation** or gender identity). Research has shown that **microaggressions**, discrimination, exclusion, harassment, and other forms of violence encountered by LGBT+ workers negatively impact their physical and mental health as well as their ability to be open and feel a sense of belonging in the workplace, including in their union.

The labour movement must continue to expose these attacks from the right, implement new initiatives to raise awareness of disinformation, denounce all forms of discrimination at work, and fight for the rights of marginalized people.

Nothing is more central to our mission than inclusiveness in the workplace and solidarity in the union.



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# CELEBRATING OUR GAINS, HOLDING OUR GROUND

The history of LGBT+ struggles in Québec and Canada has been the story of a long march toward legal and social equality, in order to obtain the same rights—no more, no less—as everyone else. What follows is a brief overview of this struggle.

TO LEARN MORE, see the timeline on LGBT+ activism and rights in Québec (in French) created by the UQAM Research Chair on [Sexual Diversity and Gender Plurality](#), to which the CSN contributes, namely through research projects such as SAVIE-LGBTQ.

## 1 CRIMINALIZATION: A COLONIAL LEGACY

**IN PRE-COLONIAL TIMES**, most indigenous nations in North America had conceptions of sex, gender, and gender roles that were much more fluid and inclusive than what we see today. European colonization by France, Britain, Spain, and other countries changed this situation. Repressive laws brought from these colonizing countries forbade same-sex relationships and sometimes even wearing clothes of the “opposite sex.”

**ENACTED IN 1841**, the first law<sup>1</sup> in Canada criminalizing same-sex relationships remained in force until 1969.<sup>2</sup> Even after these relationships were decriminalized, people continued to be prosecuted under other laws. For example, in 1976, two men in Toronto were arrested and charged with gross indecency for simply kissing in public. The same law was used to justify common and often violent police raids on gay bars, which did not end until 1994.<sup>5</sup>

## 2 FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS PROTECTED BY CHARTERS

**SINCE 1977**, Québec’s Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms has prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation.<sup>4</sup> The Canadian Human Rights Act<sup>5</sup> was not amended until 1996, in response to a Supreme Court judgment (Egan v. Canada).<sup>6</sup> Gender identity and expression were added as prohibited grounds for discrimination in 2016 in Québec<sup>7</sup> and in 2017 at the federal level.<sup>8</sup>

Notes 1 to 26 in the overview refer to the timeline on LGBT+ activism and rights in Québec at: <https://chairedspg.uqam.ca/ligne-temps/>

## 3 SEX, GENDER, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION: AN EVOLVING SCIENTIFIC CONSENSUS

**UNTIL 1973**, **homosexuality** and bisexuality were treated as mental disorders by the medical establishment.<sup>9</sup> It would take another 40 years, until 2013, for “gender identity disorder,” a diagnosis used to pathologize people with trans identities, to be removed from the list of mental disorders.<sup>10</sup> However, **gender dysphoria** is a diagnosis still in use today. Although it does not apply to all trans people, it is a required diagnosis to access gender-affirming care (medical **transition**). Today, health professionals who provide gender-affirming care must adhere to rigorous standards based on the current scientific consensus.

**SINCE 2020** in Québec, and 2021 federally, “conversion therapies” seeking to “correct” a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity have been prohibited by law.<sup>11</sup> Over the years, such “therapies” have been responsible for harming the physical and mental health of many victims.

## 4 RECOGNITION OF FAMILIES

**PRIOR TO 2002**, parents of the same sex or gender were not legally recognized. For example, if two women used assisted fertilization to have a child, only the one who gave birth would be recognized as the child’s parent. The child had no legal relationship with their second parent, who enjoyed none of the associated protections such as support payments in case of separation, visiting rights, or inheritance rights. In 2002, Québec adopted a law recognizing same-sex parents which also established the institution of civil unions, which are available to all couples of any gender.<sup>12</sup>

**IN 1999**, Québec became the first jurisdiction in the world to recognize common-law partnerships for same-sex couples.<sup>13</sup> Canada followed suit in 2001.<sup>14</sup> A federal law allowing marriage between two persons of the same sex was finally adopted in 2005,<sup>15</sup> following court decisions in British Columbia, Ontario, and Québec.



# PEOPLE WHO ARE TRANS OR NON-BINARY: RECENTLY RECOGNIZED FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

**MOST LEGAL CHANGES** affecting the rights of **trans people** and **non-binary people** are relatively recent. In 2013, in an important first step, transgender individuals were allowed to legally change their first name and **sex designation** without undergoing **medical treatments** (hormonal or surgical).<sup>16</sup> This was a landmark victory: not all trans people feel the need to transition medically, nor is it possible for everyone (for health reasons). For many trans people and non-binary people, the ability to have identification documents aligned with their true identity provides physical and mental health protections while also simplifying everyday interactions. In 2016, this right was extended to individuals under 18 years of age.<sup>17</sup> Legal recognition of non-binary identities<sup>18</sup> did not come until quite later, in 2022, following a ruling by the Superior Court of Québec. This legislative change also recognized **trans parenthood** and clarified the status of **same-sex parenthood** under several pre-existing laws (e.g., the *Act Respecting Labour Standards* and the *Act Respecting Parental Insurance*).

## THE CSN IN THE FIGHT FOR LGBT+ RIGHTS

**THE CSN** did not stand at the sidelines while LGBT+ communities fought for their rights. In 1988, the CSN formed a working group<sup>19</sup> which, a year later, became the committee now known as the Confederal LGBT+ Committee. In 1996, the Fédération du commerce-CSN led the way by negotiating the inclusion of same-sex domestic partnerships in their collective agreement,<sup>20</sup> before this was required by law. In 1998, the CSN was a founding member of a coalition aimed at recognizing such partnerships, the Coalition pour la reconnaissance des conjointes et des conjoints de même sexe.<sup>21</sup> And in 2002, the CSN supported the establishment of civil unions as well as new parenthood rules that recognize both same-sex parents in a family.<sup>22</sup> In 2003, the CSN was again active in the fight for LGBT+ rights, supporting marriage rights for same-sex couples.<sup>23</sup>

**IN 2009**, the Québec government published a policy to combat homophobia, the *Politique québécoise de lutte contre l'homophobie*.<sup>24</sup> The CSN was a founding member of the Collectif de travail LGBT, a group of experts and advocacy organizations that provided input during the development of the government's first action plan to combat homophobia (*Plan d'action gouvernemental de lutte contre l'homophobie 2011-2016*).<sup>25</sup> Other government action plans have since been released, including most recently a plan to combat transphobia, and the CSN continues to exert pressure for the measures it considers necessary.

**CURRENTLY**, the CSN is active in a provincial roundtable against homophobia and transphobia in schools, cégeps and universities (Table nationale de lutte contre l'homophobie et la transphobie des réseaux de l'éducation), which has produced the document *Support and inclusion measures for trans and non-binary individuals in the work environment – Guide for employers and unions*.<sup>26</sup>

**THE CSN** also analyzes the wording of collective agreements and supports its federations in this area. (For more information, see the section "What is an inclusive collective agreement?" in page 13.)



## LOOKING AHEAD

**THE STRUGGLE** for fundamental rights for LGBT+ people has resulted in some major steps forward. Nonetheless, now more than ever before, we must remain vigilant and show solidarity as ongoing attacks around the world chip away at these hard-won gains. In Alberta, for example, political interference has hindered access to medical care for trans youth, in violation of the standards of care recommended by medical science. In Italy, among other setbacks, same-sex parents have been stripped of parental rights; in the United States, there has been a dramatic rollback of protections against discrimination for trans people; in Russia, the use of LGBT+ symbols has been criminalized outright; and the list goes on. The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and **Inter-sex** Association (ILGA World) warns of a drastic erosion of rights around the world.

**THESE ATTACKS**, which in the West have particularly targeted trans and non-binary individuals, speak to a broader assault on the rights won by all marginalized groups. The growing number of attacks on a woman's right to bodily autonomy is one particularly appalling example. In the face of such attacks, we must hold to the inalienable principle that fundamental rights are paramount.

**IN RESPONSE** to these alarming trends, it is time to roll up our sleeves and to work harder within our spheres of influence. Many people in our workplaces still experience discrimination and harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Others choose to remain closeted for fear of such discrimination.

**Unions must use every tool at their disposal to bring about the necessary changes in attitude to create a safe and inclusive work environment for all.**

**Effective labour actions include negotiating truly inclusive collective agreements, clearly demonstrating that we are open and welcoming to people of all stripes within the sexual diversity and gender plurality, and wholeheartedly defending the rights of LGBT+ people.**

# TAKE THE LGBT+ QUIZ!

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

TO KEEP IT INTERESTING,  
some questions  
have more than one  
correct answer.

CHOOSE THE ANSWER  
that seems right  
to you.

### NEED A HINT?

The section “Words  
to help us understand  
one another,” may  
prove helpful.

ANSWERS, ALONG WITH  
SOME FURTHER DETAILS,  
APPEAR ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

#### 1. I'M A LESBIAN. THIS MEANS...

- A. I'm a woman who is sexually attracted to other women.
- B. I'm gay.
- C. I'm homosexual.
- D. I sometimes experience homophobia.
- E. All of the above may be correct.

#### 2. I'M BISEXUAL. THIS MEANS...

- A. I'm incapable of having long-term relationships.
- B. I must still be figuring out my sexual orientation.
- C. I'm sexually attracted to both men and women, or I'm attracted to a person regardless of their gender.
- D. A, B, and C are correct.
- E. Only B and C are correct.

#### 3. I'M A TRANS WOMAN. THIS MEANS...

- A. I was assigned a male sex/gender by medical professionals at birth.
- B. I must have already had, or want to have, bottom surgery.
- C. I'm a woman.
- D. Only B and C are correct.
- E. Only A and C are correct.

#### 4. WHEN SPEAKING ABOUT A MAN WHO IS TRANS, THE BEST DESCRIPTION IS...

- A. A woman who identifies as a man.
- B. A woman who wants to become a man.
- C. A woman who wants to change herself into a man.
- D. A woman who feels that she is a man.
- E. A man who was assigned female sex/gender at birth.

#### 5. I'M A NON-BINARY PERSON. THIS MEANS...

- A. My gender identity does not match the sex/gender assigned to me at birth.
- B. My gender expression is always androgynous or neutral.
- C. My gender identity is neither male nor female, but it may be partially feminine or masculine, or neither.
- D. My gender identity is recognized by Québec law.
- E. A, C, and D are correct.

#### 6. A CISGENDER WOMAN IS...

- A. A woman who was assigned a female sex/gender at birth.
- B. A woman whose sex/gender assigned at birth aligns with her deeply felt, internal, and individual sense that she is a woman.
- C. A trans woman whose deeply felt, internal, and individual sense is that she is a woman.
- D. A man who was assigned a female sex/gender at birth.
- E. Only A and B are correct.

#### 7. I'M QUEER. THIS MEANS...

- A. I'm homosexual.
- B. I'm trans.
- C. I'm cisgender.
- D. My gender expression does not align with male or female stereotypes.
- E. All of these answers may be correct.

#### 8. ONLY LGBT+ PEOPLE CAN BE VICTIMS OF HOMOPHOBIA OR TRANSPHOBIA.

- A. True
- B. False

#### 9. THERE ARE NO LGBT+ PEOPLE IN MY WORKPLACE.

- A. True
- B. False

### ANSWERS

#### 1. THE BEST ANSWER IS “E.”

Some words have historical, emotional, or personal connotations that are perceived differently by different people. For example, one homosexual woman may be comfortable with the word “lesbian” while another may not, because it has sometimes been used in a pejorative way. It's therefore important to pay attention to the terms a person chooses to use when referring to themselves, and to use words that foster a safe environment.

#### 2. THE ONLY CORRECT ANSWER IS “C.”

Unfortunately, there are still many pervasive myths and prejudices about people who are **bisexual** or **pansexual**. Studies have shown that they face even greater discrimination than people who are **homosexual**, particularly in the workplace.

#### 3. THE BEST ANSWER IS “E.”

When a baby is born, a medical professional checks a box for female (F) or male (M) based on observation of its genitals. This is a person's sex/gender assigned at birth. In the case of trans individuals, their true gender identity does not align with the **sex/gender assigned at birth**. Some trans people feel a deep need to modify certain characteristics of their body (called a medical transition), but this is not always the case.

#### 4. THE CORRECT ANSWER IS “E.”

It's important to avoid using expressions like “become” or “change into,” since the experience of transition can be different for everyone. For many people who are trans, the gender identity that they feel has not changed, and the process of “coming out” about their identity (social **transition**) is not about changing gender but it is a transition towards open self-affirmation. Furthermore, details about people's bodies and medical histories are personal and confidential and thus fall under a person's right to privacy.

#### 5. THE BEST ANSWER IS “E.”

Non-binary gender identity is recognized in many parts of the world, including in Indigenous cultures, and has been recognized in Québec since 2022. As with all gender identities, it is not necessarily associated with a person's gender expression.

#### 6. THE BEST ANSWER IS “E.”

“Cis” is a prefix that means “on the same side as.” For example, a **cisgender** woman is a person whose gender identity, as well as the sex and gender assigned at birth, are both female.

#### 7. THE BEST ANSWER IS “E.”

The term “**queer**” originated as a slur against people who did not conform to gender expectations. The LGBT+ community has since reclaimed this word and given it a positive connotation. “Queer” serves as an umbrella term that may include any kind of sexual minority and all possible genders.

#### 8. THE ANSWER IS “FALSE.”

Homophobic or transphobic “jokes” are frequently used to denigrate other people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. If you witness someone displaying such attitudes or behaviours, it is important to respond swiftly and firmly, because silence makes us complicit.

#### 9. THE ANSWER IS “FALSE.”

We should never make assumptions about a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. That means it's important to foster an open and inclusive environment, even when you believe you are with people “like yourself.” Even if your co-workers do not belong to a sexual or gender minority, they may have family or friends who do.





# FOSTERING INCLUSION AND SOLIDARITY IN THE WORKPLACE

## HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA AT WORK

### WHERE WE STAND TODAY

It is an unfortunate fact, even today, that **homophobia** and **transphobia** are alive and well in our workplaces. Studies show that, overall, LGBT+ people, especially those who are trans or non-binary, face inequities at work in terms of:

**Pay or total compensation**

**Over-qualification**

**Atypical work schedules**

**Psychological harassment, microaggressions and violence.**



Unsurprisingly, such problems take a toll on workers' physical and mental health, job satisfaction, engagement, and right to equality. Further, these problems may be present regardless of whether or not the person has come out about their sexual orientation or gender identity. For example, a recent study has shown that most people do not come out about their sexual orientation at work or do so with only a few co-workers. Though choosing not to come out may have negative impacts (stress, hypervigilance, etc.), it is sometimes seen as the only way to protect oneself in an environment that is hostile to sexual and gender diversity.

### BENEFITS OF AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR EMPLOYEES

An inclusive workplace environment promotes the well-being of members of sexual and gender minorities by allowing them to come out safely, while strengthening their sense of belonging to their team. An environment that allows employees to come out will also promote recognition of their spousal and family status, and entitle them to related benefits (family leave, family group insurance plan, etc.).

### HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENTS AND THEIR IMPACTS

Harassment and discrimination against LGBT+ persons at work can take many forms. It may originate from senior management or supervisors, customers, or co-workers. Forms of harassment and discrimination can include:

**Using sexual stereotypes that are crude, demeaning, or offensive.**

**Asking intrusive questions about a person's sex life or bodily characteristics.**

**"Outing" a person's sexual orientation or gender identity without their consent.**

**Limiting a person's ability to express themselves or isolating or ignoring a person.**

**Making fun of someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, misgendering them deliberately.**

**Spreading rumours or humiliating a person.**

**Words or actions that demean LGBT+ people in general, even if they do not target one person specifically.**

It is critical that employers take both preventive and corrective measures to address these forms of discrimination, because behaviours like these can rapidly turn into harassment or be otherwise harmful to health and safety at work.

In practice, even if they appear unintentional, minor, or "all in good fun," these kinds of vexatious behaviours have a tangible and stigmatizing effect on the people who are targeted. Failing to act can cause a work environment to deteriorate and become toxic.

### LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Québec's *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the right to a workplace free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression (section 10). Québec's *Act Respecting Labour Standards* guarantees a work environment free from psychological harassment, including homophobic or transphobic harassment (section 81.19), while the *Act Respecting Occupational Health and Safety* states that "every worker has a right to working conditions that have a proper regard for [their] health, safety and physical and mental well-being" (section 9). Furthermore, section 51 of the same law requires employers to "take the necessary measures to protect the health and ensure the safety and physical and mental well-being of [their] workers." It is therefore up to the employer to prevent the situations described above, and to stop them if they occur. The union's role is to represent its members, keep them informed, and ensure that the employer fulfills their legal obligations.

# everyone FOSTERING INCLUSION AND SOLIDARITY IN THE WORKPLACE else!



## WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT?

Collective agreements should be made inclusive to ensure that all employees see themselves reflected in the language used. The agreement's wording must also avoid any ambiguity that an employer might interpret in a manner that deprives LGBT+ persons of their rights. For example, a clause about paternity leave should be written to make it clear that it also applies to a parental couple consisting of two women. Legislative amendments passed in 2022 changed the terminology used for parental rights in Québec. For example, instead of referring to "the father or mother" of a child, the law now refers to "the father, mother, or parent." This explicitly allows for the inclusion of a non-binary parent. Collective agreements must be consistent with the new legal wording.

### THE EMPLOYER'S ROLE

Creating a more welcoming and inclusive work environment positively impacts the organization as a whole, because promoting respect as a fundamental organizational value can also improve productivity and retention of LGBT+ employees.

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure an open and inclusive work environment by taking appropriate preventive or corrective measures. The following are some examples of concrete actions that an employer can take, ideally in collaboration with the union. Of course, the type and size of the organization may affect the choice of strategy.

#### ✓ What is my employer doing?

- ☐ Offers awareness-raising activities for the entire organization or provides regular training about the realities experienced by LGBT+ persons.
- ☐ Uses **inclusive language** in all communications (memos, emails, forms, etc.).
- ☐ Has established an organizational culture that respects every individual's preferred name and pronoun.
- ☐ Has created a joint labour-management committee to address the experiences of LGBT+ persons to understand the specific needs of these communities.
- ☐ Has appointed a member of management or HR as a resource person for questions on sexual diversity and gender plurality.
- ☐ Provides a group insurance plan that recognizes same-sex domestic partnerships and covers gender-affirming care.
- ☐ Has a policy that affirms the inclusion of LGBT+ people and establishes zero tolerance of homophobia and transphobia.
- ☐ Explicitly addresses sexual diversity and gender plurality in company policies (policies on harassment, **sexual violence**, etc.).
- ☐ Has agreed to an inclusive collective agreement (SEE TOP OF NEXT PAGE ON THIS ISSUE.).
- ☐ Publicly supports LGBT+ causes and marks important days (e.g., May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia).
- ☐ Provides access to gender-neutral washrooms and change rooms alongside gender-segregated facilities (SEE BOTTOM OF NEXT PAGE ON THIS ISSUE.).
- ☐ Ensures that interview and hiring processes are fair and equitable for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- ☐ Offers an Employee Assistance Program that provides respectful and competent professional services that are welcoming, respectful, and supportive to LGBT+ people.

### THE UNION'S ROLE

The union is there to make sure that the employer fulfills their obligations, and to seek remedies when necessary. It can also work to promote an environment that fosters diversity. The union keeps its members informed and raises awareness about their rights at work, including workplace harassment, and provides training on these subjects. The union has a duty to represent all its members, including—it ought to go without saying—LGBT+ people. To do this effectively, the union must have a clear understanding of LGBT+ employees' issues in the workplace. The following are some examples of concrete actions that a union can take. Of course, the size of the union will affect the choice of strategy.

#### ✓ What is my union doing?

- ☐ Has assigned a member of the union's executive committee to be responsible for LGBT+ issues.
- ☐ Has created a union-only LGBT+ committee and consults it on the specific needs of LGBT+ communities.
- ☐ Is represented on the labour-management LGBT+ committee, if one exists.
- ☐ Exerts pressure on or collaborates with the employer, depending on the situation.
- ☐ Uses inclusive language in communications with union members and the employer.
- ☐ Publicly supports LGBT+ causes and communicates the union's position (e.g., via logos or posters on the union notice board, addressing LGBT+ issues in public speeches, etc.).
- ☐ Ensures that the collective agreement is inclusive (see the box above on this issue).
- ☐ Disseminates information and, where possible, offers training on LGBT+ issues and rights, particularly family rights.
- ☐ Has formed partnerships with LGBT+ community organizations.
- ☐ Has updated union rules and regulations to use inclusive language.

Defending the rights of LGBT+ people and speaking up loud and clear in solidarity with LGBT+ causes are good ways to promote greater involvement by LGBT+ people in union affairs.

# No more, no less!

## GENDER- NEUTRAL WASHROOMS (AND CHANGE ROOMS): WHY AND HOW?

Access to a washroom is among the most basic human needs. But for people who are trans or non-binary, using these facilities can be a source of stress or even a site of daily intimidation and violence. For this reason, all workplaces should be equipped with gender-neutral facilities. And it's worth adding that gender-neutral washrooms benefit not only staff but also clients and other users. For example, they are easier to access for parents with children, or for a caregiver and the person they are assisting. The idea isn't to de-gender all sanitary facilities overnight, but rather to ensure an immediate, basic level of availability and to include gender-neutral facilities in future renovations whenever possible.



SOME NOTES ABOUT THE TERMS  
IN THIS GLOSSARY AND WHY THEY MATTER

THE CSN uses the acronym LGBT+ because this is the official name of the confederal committee. Although some of the terms below are relatively recent, the realities they describe are not. THEIR DEFINITIONS have changed over time and continue to evolve. THESE WORDS carry connotations that are historical, personal, and emotional, and will vary from person to person. A WORD is a tool for mutual understanding. It is not a straitjacket or a definitive and unchanging definition of who a person is. WHEN IN DOUBT about whether a person belongs to the LGBT+ community or to any specific category of gender identity or sexual orientation, the best practice is to rely on their self-identification.

One's self-identification of gender or sexual orientation means the manner in which a person chooses to describe their own gender identity or sexual orientation. To assert belonging to a particular group is each individual's prerogative, according to their identity and feelings, as well as their personal reflections on the terms used by others and the ideas circulating within society.

BISEXUAL (PERSON)

In the strictest sense, a person who is bisexual may be sexually attracted to both men and women. However, this definition is sometimes broadened to make it equivalent to pansexual.

CISGENDER (PERSON)

A person whose sex/gender assigned at birth aligns with their gender identity. For example, a cisgender man would have been identified as a "boy" at birth.

GENDER

According to Statistics Canada, "Gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person [...]." (*Gender of person*, Definition found in Variables, under Standards, data sources and methods, Statistics Canada website. This standard was approved as a departmental standard on October 1, 2021)

GENDER DYSPHORIA

A condition of distress and difficulty in functioning experienced by some trans people as a result of their body characteristics or of transphobia experienced during their transition (e.g., in the family, the workplace, etc.).

WORDS TO HELP  
US UNDERSTAND  
ONE ANOTHER

ALL TERMS  
IN GREEN  
AND BOLD  
IN THIS  
BROCHURE  
ARE DEFINED  
HERE.

GENDER EXPRESSION

Ways in which people present themselves (clothing, hairstyle, body language, occupation, etc.) that correspond generally to appearances and roles that society deems masculine or feminine. A person's gender expression may correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth (cisgender), or it may not (transgender). Furthermore, the gender identity that a person feels internally is not always revealed to the world by their gender expression.

GENDER IDENTITY

A person's deeply felt, internal, and individual sense of their gender (as a non-binary person, woman, or man). A person's gender identity may align with the sex/gender assigned to them at birth (cisgender) or it may not (transgender). Gender identity can change over the course of a person's lifetime, and it may or may not be reflected in the person's gender expression (transition).

HOMOPHOBIA

Homophobia includes all negative attitudes that may lead to discrimination (harassment, intolerance, violence, etc.) against a person or a group of people because of their real or perceived sexual orientation. We may define homophobia more specifically, distinguishing it as lesbophobia, gayphobia, or biphobia. Homophobia can affect any person whose appearance or behaviour does not conform to gender stereotypes.

HOMOSEXUALITY, HOMOSEXUAL (PERSON)

A homosexual person is sexually attracted to people who share their gender. People who are gay or lesbian are homosexuals.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Inclusive language uses neutral words and phrases (such as plurals and gender-neutral forms) that either list all possible genders so that no group is rendered invisible or avoid gendered terms altogether. Inclusive communication, including language and visuals, aims to represent all members of a population, whether they are women, men, or non-binary people.

INTERSEX (PERSON)

A person who is intersex possesses biological sex characteristics (genitals, internal sex organs, chromosomes, and/or hormones), often from birth, that do not correspond to the standard, traditionally binary medical classification of male and female bodies.

LGBT+ (PERSON)

An acronym that covers people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, **two-spirit**, or other identity categories related to sexual and gender minorities. Similar acronyms such as LGBTQ+, 2SLGBTQ+, and 2SLGBTQI+ are also used.



**MISGENDERING**

Referring to someone, intentionally or not, using a language that does not reflect the gender with which they identify, whether through words, expressions, names, or pronouns that are incorrect for them.

**NON-BINARY (PERSON)**

An umbrella term that includes people whose gender identity is neither male nor female. Their identity may be both male and female, partially male or female, or neither (e.g., agender).

**QUEER (PERSON)**

A person may use the term queer to indicate that they belong to a sexual or gender minority. It is an umbrella term covering a wide range of identities. Though formerly used as a slur, it has since been reclaimed by the LGBT+ community. Some people also use it in a more political sense, as a rejection of normative binaries of sex, gender, and sexual orientation.

**SAME-SEX PARENTHOOD**

Refers to families formed by at least one parent belonging to sexual minorities.

**SELF-IDENTIFICATION (OF GENDER OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION)**

The manner in which a person chooses to describe their own gender identity or sexual orientation. To assert belonging to a particular group is each individual’s prerogative, according to their identity and feelings, as well as their personal reflections on the terms used by others and the ideas circulating within society.

**SEX DESIGNATION (M, F, OR X)**

A legal term in Québec, referring to the gender listed in the Register of Civil Status and on a person’s birth certificate (M: male; F: female; X: non-binary). A person’s sex designation may remain the sex/gender assigned to them at birth or be changed as a result of an official request made by the person. Medical treatment is not required to make such a change.

**SEX/GENDER ASSIGNED AT BIRTH**

The sex assigned to a baby at the moment of birth based on observation of their genitals, which is then recorded in the Register of Civil Status and on the birth certificate (sex designation).

**SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITIES (PEOPLE)**

“Sexual minorities” refers to everyone who is not heterosexual. “Gender minorities” refers to everyone who is not cisgender.

**SEXUAL DIVERSITY AND GENDER PLURALITY**

Sexual diversity includes all sexual orientations (e.g., homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, heterosexual, asexual, etc.) while gender plurality includes all gender identities (female, male, non-binary).

WORDS TO HELP  
US UNDERSTAND  
ONE ANOTHER

ALL TERMS  
IN GREEN  
AND BOLD  
IN THIS  
BROCHURE  
ARE DEFINED  
HERE.

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

Refers to sexual attraction to individuals of a single gender (homosexual or heterosexual orientation) or towards individuals regardless of their gender (bisexual or pansexual orientation). A person who experiences little sexual attraction to others, or no sexual attraction whatsoever, may identify as an asexual person.

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

Any form of violence that is sexual in nature or targets the sexuality of the victim, as well as any other misconduct, such as unwanted actions, words, behaviours or attitudes with a sexual element, including misconduct related to sexual or gender diversity (e.g., slurs or comments that are offensive, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic).

**TRANS (PERSON)**

A person whose sex/gender assigned at birth does not align with their gender identity (trans woman, trans man, or non-binary person). For example, a trans woman is a woman who was assigned a male sex/gender at birth.

**TRANS PARENTHOOD**

Describes a family in which at least one parent belongs to a gender minority (who is not cisgender). Not to be confused with trans-parenting, which refers to parents raising a gender variant child.

**TRANSITION, TRANSITIONING**

The highly personal process of affirming one’s gender, which may include social transition (coming out, self-identification), medical transition (one or more gender-affirming medical treatments), legal transition (change of sex designation and/or name in the Register of Civil Status), or any combination of the above.

**TRANSPHOBIA**

Transphobia includes all negative attitudes that may lead to discrimination (harassment, intolerance, violence, etc.) against people who are trans or non-binary, or who do not meet societal gender expectations of femininity and masculinity. An example of transphobia is the deliberate refusal to use a person’s preferred pronouns (e.g., she, he, or they) or chosen name.

**TWO-SPIRIT (PERSON)**

An umbrella term that encompasses a range of traditional concepts in Indigenous cultures. An identity specific to the cultures of various Indigenous nations, two-spirit refers to a person whose gender identity, spiritual identity, or sexual orientation includes both a masculine and a feminine spirit.

# FURTHER INFORMATION

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## USEFUL RESOURCES

### UNION RESOURCES

Make it stop. Campaign against  
violence and harassment  
in the workplace.  
[csn.qc.ca/agir/english/](https://csn.qc.ca/agir/english/)



CSN central councils  
[csn.qc.ca/en/about/region-  
al-councils/](https://csn.qc.ca/en/about/region-al-councils/)

CSN federations  
[csn.qc.ca/en/about/federations/](https://csn.qc.ca/en/about/federations/)

EACH CENTRAL COUNCIL AND  
FEDERATION, assign an officer  
on issues of LGBTQ+ rights. Some  
of these organizations also have  
their own LGBTQ+ committee.

Confederal LGBTQ+ committee  
[csn.qc.ca/en/about/confeder-  
al-committees/lgbt-committee/](https://csn.qc.ca/en/about/confederal-committees/lgbt-committee/)



LGBT+ toolkit - Conseil central  
du Montréal métropolitain-CSN  
(in French)  
[sway.cloud.microsoft/D2aN2b-  
FilCAzyRxf?ref=Link&loc=play](https://sway.cloud.microsoft/D2aN2b-FilCAzyRxf?ref=Link&loc=play)

ALL SORTS OF USEFUL  
RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE  
ON THIS WEBSITE:  
organizations, webinars  
and tutorials, films and TV series,  
books, podcasts, and more.



### QUÉBEC COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Conseil québécois LGBT  
[conseil-lgbt.ca/](https://conseil-lgbt.ca/)

Fondation Émergence  
[fondationemergence.org/](https://fondationemergence.org/)

Interligne  
[interligne.co/en/](https://interligne.co/en/)

Aide aux trans  
du Québec (ATQ)  
[aideauxtrans.com/en](https://aideauxtrans.com/en)

The LGBTQ+ Family Coalition  
[familieslgbt.org/en/](https://familieslgbt.org/en/)

Alterhéros  
[alterheros.com/en/alterheros-2/](https://alterheros.com/en/alterheros-2/)

### OTHER QUÉBEC RESOURCES

Bureau de lutte contre  
l'homophobie et la transphobie  
(Government of Québec)  
[facebook.com/BLCHT/?lo-  
cale=fr\\_CA](https://facebook.com/BLCHT/?locale=fr_CA)

Research Chair on Sexual  
Diversity and Gender Plurality  
(UQAM)  
[chairedspg.uqam.ca/](https://chairedspg.uqam.ca/)

Table nationale de lutte contre  
l'homophobie et la transphobie  
des réseaux de l'éducation  
[tablehomophobietransphobie.org/](https://tablehomophobietransphobie.org/)

### REGIONAL RESOURCES

#### ABITIBI- TÉMISCAMINGUE

Coalition d'aide à  
la diversité sexuelle  
[coalitionat.qc.ca/en/](https://coalitionat.qc.ca/en/)

#### BAS- SAINT-LAURENT

Uniphare  
[uniphare.com/](https://uniphare.com/)

#### QUÉBEC-CHAUDIÈRE- APPALACHES

Alliance Arc-en-ciel  
[arcencielquebec.ca/](https://arcencielquebec.ca/)

Divergenres  
[divergenres.org/](https://divergenres.org/)

GRIS-Chaudière-Appalaches  
[grischap.org/](https://grischap.org/)

GRIS-Québec  
[grisquebec.org/](https://grisquebec.org/)

Réseau d'allié.e.s  
de Charlevoix  
[arcencielquebec.ca/rac/](https://arcencielquebec.ca/rac/)

#### CŒUR DU QUÉBEC

GRIS-Mauricie-  
Centre-du-Québec  
[grismcdq.org/](https://grismcdq.org/)

Trans-Mauricie-  
Centre du Québec  
[transmcdq.com/](https://transmcdq.com/)

#### CÔTE-NORD

Centre d'intervention  
le Rond-Point  
(une intervenante LGBTQ+)  
[lerondpoint.ca/](https://lerondpoint.ca/)

#### ESTRIE

GRIS-Estrie  
[griestrie.org/](https://griestrie.org/)

TransEstrie  
[transestrie.org/en/home/](https://transestrie.org/en/home/)

#### GASPÉSIE- ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELINE

LGBT+ Baie-des-Chaleurs  
[rocjim-cdc.org/lgbt-baie-des-  
chaleurs/](https://rocjim-cdc.org/lgbt-baie-des-chaleurs/)

Le réseau pour la diversité  
sexuelle et de genre -  
Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine  
[cisss-gaspesie.gouv.qc.ca/  
soins-et-services/reseau-  
des-allie-e-s-des-diversites-  
sexuelles/](https://cisss-gaspesie.gouv.qc.ca/soins-et-services/reseau-des-allie-e-s-des-diversites-sexuelles/)

#### MONTÉRÉGIE

Granby Divers-Gens  
[diversgens.org/en/](https://diversgens.org/en/)

Le JAG organisme LGBTQ+  
[lejag.org/](https://lejag.org/)

#### MONTRÉAL

GRIS-Montréal  
[gris.ca/en/](https://gris.ca/en/)

List of organizations in the  
CCMM-CSN toolkit  
[sway.cloud.microsoft/D2aN2b-  
FilCAzyRxf?ref=Link&loc=play](https://sway.cloud.microsoft/D2aN2b-FilCAzyRxf?ref=Link&loc=play)

#### OUTAOUAIS

Jeunesse idem  
[jeunesseidem.org/](https://jeunesseidem.org/)

Trans Outaouais  
[transoutaouais.com/](https://transoutaouais.com/)

#### SAGUENAY- LAC-ST-JEAN

Diversité 02  
[diversite02.ca/](https://diversite02.ca/)



