

# Advancing LGBTIQ+ Equality in Europe.

## The Role of Equality Bodies in Access to Housing and other Goods and Services

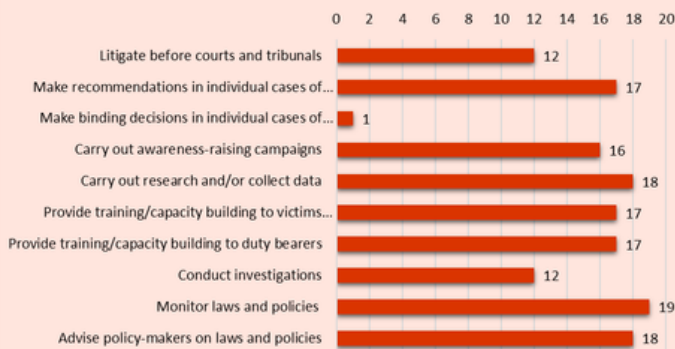


### State of Play

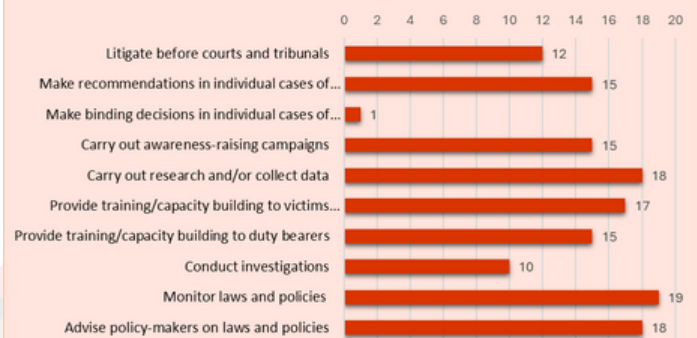
LGBTIQ+ persons continue to experience discrimination when accessing goods and services, such as cafes, restaurants, bars or nightclubs, in shops or when in contact with public services. Discriminatory refusals of access to goods and services are sometimes defended by perpetrators on the basis of **their right to religious freedom**. Furthermore, LGBTIQ+ individuals are faced with significant barriers when trying to rent or purchase housing. Often, **the SOGIESC ground intersects with a number of other grounds**, such as sex, age, disability, religion or belief as well as ethnic background.

There is no specific EU legislation covering discrimination in access to housing and other goods or services on the SOGIESC grounds. The Horizontal Directive would prohibit discrimination in access to goods and services, including housing, on the ground of sexual orientation, and limited protection for trans persons can be provided under the ground of sex and in the framework of the Gender Goods and Services Directive.

#### Equality Bodies in Action Goods and services



#### Equality Bodies in Action Housing



Out of the 29 Equality Bodies surveyed for this report:

#### In the field of goods and services

- 23 Equality Bodies have a mandate on **sexual orientation**,
- 24 on **gender identity**,
- 20 on **sex characteristics**,
- 19 on **gender expression**.

#### In the field of housing

- 23 Equality Bodies have a mandate on **sexual orientation**,
- 25 on **gender identity**,
- 20 on **sex characteristics**,
- 18 on **gender expression**.

### Good Practices

The **Ombud for Equal Treatment in Austria** has empowered individuals to stand out against discrimination in online forms requiring users to choose a binary form of address. The Ombud provided [a sample letter](#) for users to contact the service providers, offered (legal) support for those affected, and published [recommendations](#) for incorporating gender diversity and using gender-sensitive language in the service sector's online forms.

The **Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson in Lithuania** investigated a case where a trans man was charged a higher price for a 'female' haircut at a beauty salon, concluding that the pricing practice was discriminatory and violated the dignity of the client.

The **Equality Ombudsman in Sweden** successfully investigated a case of sexual orientation discrimination where a music studio cancelled a recording session for a gay client, resulting in the studio being ordered to pay compensation after admitting to the discriminatory act in court.