

Advancing LGBTIQ+ Equality in Europe. The Role of Equality Bodies in **Education**



State of Play

Common forms of discriminatory treatments against LGBTIQ+ people and challenges for the LGBTIQ+ community in the field of education are: **difficulties in being openly LGBTIQ+ at school**, being **victims of bullying**, **facing challenges when accessing bathrooms and changing rooms**, and **non-inclusive and biased school curricula**. Equinet Members noted that in education discrimination on SOGIESC can **intersect with gender, disability, and race**, with particular challenges for LGBTIQ+ Roma students.

While without the adoption of the Horizontal Directive, there is no binding EU legislation protecting LGBTIQ+ people against discrimination, recommendations for more inclusivity in education have been advanced by, for instance, the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

Equality Bodies in Action

Education



Out of 29 Equality Bodies surveyed for this report:

- 23 have a mandate on **sexual orientation**,
- 23 on **gender identity**,
- 19 on **sex characteristics**,
- 18 on **gender expression**.

Good Practices

The **Equality Ombudsman in Sweden** investigated a harassment case where a teacher refused to respect a student's gender-neutral pronouns, finding discrimination and failure to act on the complaint. The education provider paid 150,000 SEK in compensation as requested by the Ombudsman.

The **Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality in Portugal** published a [guide for educators on preventing SOGIESC-based bullying and ensuring equality for LGBTI+ students](#).

The **Ombudsperson for Gender Equality in Croatia** addressed complaints about school materials that depicted harmful stereotypes against the LGBTIQ+ community. The Ombudsperson issued a warning and recommended training on gender equality, prompting the school to organize human rights lectures for teachers.