

## **Annex 5: Poverty, Employment and Homelessness among LGBTQI2S**

### **Communities**

As Canada attempts to foster societal values such as diversity, inclusion, and equality, it is fundamental that the government recognizes the ways in which systems of oppression such as racism, islamophobia, anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, classism, ableism, ageism and other systems of oppression function and impact individuals on an individual, interpersonal, community, institutional, and societal level. To effectively acknowledge these forms of oppression, the government must adopt equity-based, intersectional feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches that enable political and legal decision makers to be informed on the ways marginalized populations in Canada experience stigma, discrimination, poverty, homelessness, unemployment, violence, and injustice.

Canada's long-standing colonial nation-building projects including the Indian Residential School System, the Chinese Head Tax, and Japanese Internment Camps constitute the legacy of institutional racism that continues to be evident in Canadian society with the issues of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, police carding practices, and over-surveillance and police violence in racialized and Indigenous communities. These relations of power and privilege continue to translate into the disparities of health and socio-economic outcomes among racialized LGBTQI2S persons, including lack of access to culturally safe social services, increased prevalence of both institutional and interpersonal forms of discrimination, violence, and injustice.

LGBTQI2S communities, in particular trans and gender diverse individuals, experience unemployment at disproportionate rates compared to heterosexual and cisgender individuals. An Ontario-based study found that despite over 70% of respondents completing at least some university or college education, over 50% of trans and gender diverse respondents earn less than \$15,000/year and only 37% have succeeded in obtaining full-time employment<sup>i</sup>. LGBTQI2S individuals experience additional worry that their employment may be terminated because of their LGBTQI2S identity, as 13% of respondents from an Ontario-based study reported being fired for being trans and an additional 15% were unsure if they were fired for being trans<sup>ii</sup>. As a result, economic inclusion of LGBTQI2S persons remains a crucial issue in Canada.

Egale works to improve the lives of LGBTQI2S people in Canada and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues. Egale will achieve this by informing public policy, inspiring cultural change, and promoting human rights and inclusion through research, education and community engagement.

Le Fonds Égale Canada pour les droits de la personne est le seul organisme de bienfaisance canadien voué à la promotion des droits des personnes lesbiennes, gaies, bisexuelles et trans grâce à la recherche, à l'éducation et à la mobilisation communautaire.

Access to affordable housing is another significant concern that impacts many LGBTQI2S people, especially those who are further marginalized because of their race, age, ability or gender identity. LGBTQI2S persons in Canada experience an increased prevalence of homelessness due to discrimination at individual and societal levels<sup>iii</sup>. For example, 34% of trans Ontarians live below the LICO, more than twice the rate of Canadians generally<sup>iv</sup>; and 47% of Indigenous gender diverse Ontarians live below the poverty line<sup>v</sup>. These statistics represent a larger national trend, as affordable housing and poverty become national level crises that require multipronged approaches by all levels of government to address these overarching and systemic issues.

These aforementioned forms of stigma and discrimination are embedded in accessing services within shelter systems as well as in the renters' market<sup>vi</sup>. For many LGBTQI2S youth, homelessness is attributed to violence and rejection from family as a result of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. These aforementioned forms of oppression are also experienced while LGBTQI2S people experience homelessness, as a recent Toronto-based study highlighted that racialized LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness experienced a higher prevalence of police violence and targeted police intervention<sup>vii</sup>. Moreover, LGBTQI2S youth are vulnerable to experiencing homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia from shelter staff and non-LGBTQI2S peers<sup>viii</sup>. As a result, the feeling of safety and access to adequate and affordable housing is an issue of primary importance within LGBTQI2S communities, especially for youth, seniors, Two Spirit, racialized, and disabled LGBTQI persons.

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<sup>i</sup> Bauer, G., Nussbaum, N., Travers, R., Munro, L., Pyne, J., & Redman, N. (2011). *We've Got Work to Do: Workplace Discrimination and Employment Challenges for Trans People in Ontario* (Trans PULSE E-Bulletin No. Volume 2, Issue 1) (p. 3). Ontario: Trans PULSE.

<sup>ii</sup> Bauer, G. R., & Scheim, A. I. (2015). *Transgender People in Ontario, Canada: Statistics from the Trans PULSE Project to Inform Human Rights Policy* (Trans PULSE E-Bulletin) (p. 11). London, ON: Trans PULSE Project.

<sup>iii</sup> Gaetz, S. A. (2014). *Coming of age: Reimagining the response to youth homelessness in Canada* (11). Retrieved from Canadian Observatory on Homelessness website:  
[http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/ComingOfAgeHH\\_0.pdf](http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/ComingOfAgeHH_0.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Bauer, G. R., Travers, R., Scanlon, K., & Coleman, T. A. (2012). High heterogeneity of HIV-related sexual risk among transgender people in Ontario, Canada: a province-wide respondent-driven sampling survey. *BMC Public Health*, 12(1). doi:10.1186/1471-2458-12-292

<sup>v</sup> Scheim, A., Jackson, R., James, L., Sharp Dopler, T., Pyne, J., & R. Bauer, G. (2013). Barriers to well-being for Aboriginal gender-diverse people: results from the Trans PULSE Project in Ontario, Canada. *Ethnicity and Inequalities in Health and Social Care*, 6(4), 108-120. doi:10.1108/eihsc-08-2013-0010

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vi Ibid. xlv

vii Daniel, L., & Cukier, W. (2015). *The 360 project: Addressing racism in Toronto*. Retrieved from Urban Alliance on Race Relations website:

[https://urbanalliance.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/uarrfinalsingles\\_july23.pdf](https://urbanalliance.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/uarrfinalsingles_july23.pdf)

viii Egale Canada Human Rights Trust. (2012). *“Not Under My Roof”: Homeless LGBTQ Youth in Toronto – A Needs and Supportive Housing Demand Analysis* (pp. 1–18). Toronto, ON.

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