



## GMB LGBT+ Workers

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GMB campaigns and fights for better rights, pay and conditions for all LGBT+ workers.

Ensuring that equality is at the forefront of everything we do - making work and society a better, safer place for everyone - is part of our core values.

This has to include Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender worker voices, whether it's tackling homophobia in the workplace, celebrating Pride, or supporting our regional self organised LGBT+ groups.

GMB also campaigns and lobbies the government at both a local and national level on a range of equality issues. Being a member of GMB is therefore also about ensuring that LGBT+ voices are heard not just at work but also in wider society.

### Why is LGBT+ equality important?

Despite huge strides in LGBT+ equality in the last few years, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+) workers still face discrimination in the workplace because of their sexual orientation or being trans.

Our LGBT+ members tells us that many workers still face homophobic, biphobic or transphobic comments, 'jokes' based on harmful stereotypes threats, or worse - from both colleagues and customers or clients.

LGBT+ workers are disproportionately sexually harassed and, in some cases, assaulted, in comparison to non-LGBT+ workers. LGBT+ women of colour are almost three times more likely to experience sexual assault at work.

## What issues do LGBT+ workers face in the workplace?

### Being Out at Work

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Not all LGBT+ people are out to their colleagues at work or to their families. Many LGBT+ workers report being outed without permission at work or being threatened by a colleague or partner to out their sexual orientation or trans history, as a means of control.

### Sexual Assault

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The TUC reports that around one in five bisexual workers experience sexual assault at work. One in ten respondents reported being seriously sexually assaulted or raped at work. Trans women?are even more likely than other women to experience sexual assault and rape at work, with around one third of trans women reporting being sexually assaulted and over one in five experiencing serious sexual assault or rape.

### Trans Equality

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Our trans members report discrimination at work due to their gender identity. This includes colleagues deliberately calling them by the wrong name and using the wrong pronouns (i.e. saying 'she' and 'her' when the member uses 'he' and 'his' and vice versa, or refusing to use 'they/them' pronouns). Language is really important. It's the way we show and communicate respect to one another.

[Click here for more resources.](#)

## Workwear and Uniforms

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Almost a third of non-binary people and one in five trans people don't feel able to dress in workwear representing their gender expression. Some report being refused to be allowed to wear the uniform that best represents their gender identity. Other LGBT+ people find themselves pressured to wear gendered clothing at work which they would not normally choose to - for example dresses or make-up.

## Hate Crime

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The least commonly recorded hate crime in 42 of 44 forces – increased by 37% to 2,333 last year. The Home Office figures also recorded a 25% rise in offences linked to sexual orientation (14,491).

## Pay and Leadership

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A recent YouGov poll of 4,000 staff reported that LGBT+ workers are paid £6,700 per year less than heterosexual workers. Currently, 70 per cent of LGBT+ professionals say they have no senior LGBT+ people at work to look up to, a sentiment that is particularly strong for workers in the manufacturing (82 per cent) and construction (80 per cent) industries.

## How does being a member of GMB make a difference to LGBT+ workers' lives?

Our LGBT+ members tell us that being a GMB member makes a huge difference to their working lives.

### Support when you need it

On an individual basis, on average, union members get higher pay than non-members. They are also likely to get better sickness and pension benefits, more paid holiday and more control over things like shifts and working hours. This is because workers, through their union can join together to negotiate pay and conditions.

GMB is the trade union for everyone. We have members working in public services and



private companies, in full and part-time jobs. We exist to get a better deal for our members and to support you when you need help. This includes if you experience homophobia, biphobia or transphobia, or face discrimination in the workplace due to gender identity or sexual orientation.

Collectively, GMB is committed to tackling, with our LGBT+ members, structural and cultural barriers to LGBT+ workers and dismantling institutional prejudice.

## Intersectionality

GMB also recognises the additional impact on LGBT+ people in terms of the barriers created in the workplace for:

- Women LGBT+ workers and getting reasonable adjustments,
- Being a LGBT+ disabled person or person of colour (POC) can for some people have additional barriers to coming out and being active in the LGBT+ community
- Additional stereotypes and prejudice Young and BAME LGBT+ workers face

## How do I get active around LGBT+ issues in GMB?

Join GMB Shout! This is the name nationally used to refer to our regional LGBT+ self-organised groups (SOGs).

Shout! Support's members in the workplace, and branches and can provide a safe space for discussion around LGBT+ issues members This could be to do with coming out to colleagues, harassment in the workplace or how to get involved with LGBT+ campaigns. You can get active in the Shout! group or support events and open meetings.

Over the years GMB LGBT+ activists have campaigned for equal marriage, Trans equality in the workplace ending discrimination in blood donations as well supporting changes to the Gender Recognition Act – to name but a few.

Currently we are supporting the campaign to have PReP provided by the NHS (PRe-exposure Prophylaxis is the use of antiviral drugs as a strategy for HIV/AIDS prevention) making Pride events more political and representative of the LGBT+ community.

Shout! is free to join as a GMB member and the SOG aims to create a safe space to discuss and tackle issues around LGBT+ equality, wherever you work.

GMB also organises, participates and celebrates a number of events across the year including LGBT+ History Month, World AIDS day, Trans Remembrance Day and sends delegates and



motions to TUC LGBT+ Workers conference.

We support Prides up and down the British Isles including UK Black Pride and Trans Pride Brighton – if you are LGBT+ and looking for someone to do Pride with – come with us!

Last year we held our first LGBT+ national network meeting and in 2020 we will hold our first full national summit soon.

If you self-identify as LGBT+ contact your regional equality officer for more information.

