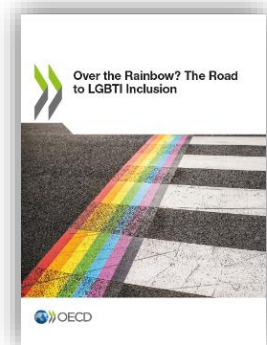


Ensuring that LGBTI people – i.e. lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender and intersex individuals – can live as who they are without being discriminated against or attacked should concern us all. Discrimination against LGBTI people remains pervasive. It harms the LGBTI population, but also the wider society. It lowers investment in human capital due to bullying at school, as well as poorer returns on educational investment in the labour market. It reduces economic output by excluding or under-valuing LGBTI talents in the labour market and impairing their mental and physical health, hence their productivity. The report **Over the Rainbow? The Road to LGBTI Inclusion** provides a comprehensive overview of the extent to which laws in OECD countries ensure equal treatment of LGBTI people, and of the complementary policies that could help foster LGBTI inclusion.



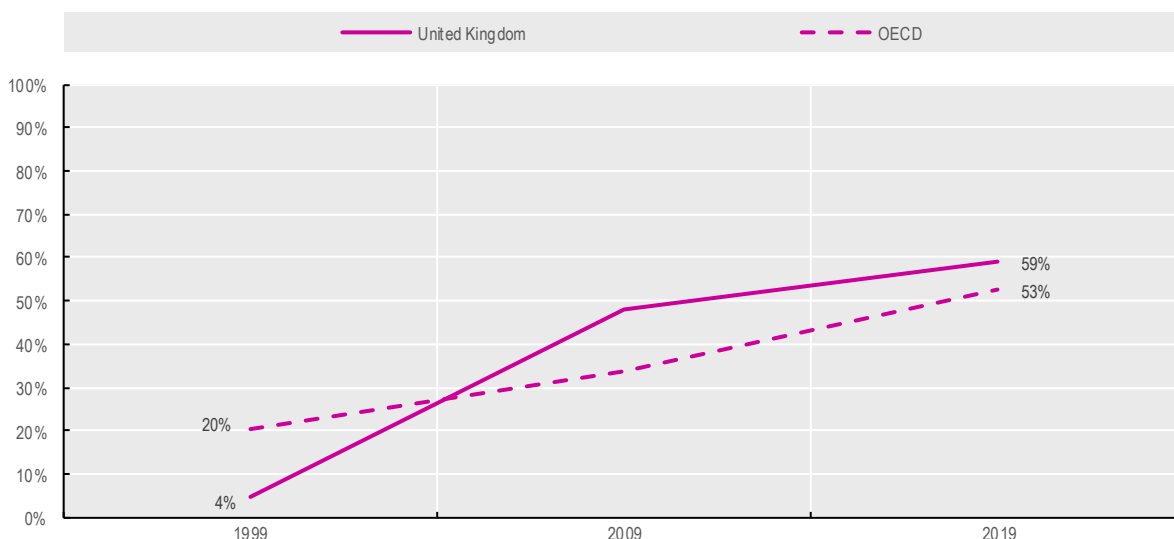
Legal LGBTI inclusivity in the United Kingdom

Levels and trends in legal LGBTI inclusivity

Legal LGBTI inclusivity is defined as the share of laws that are in force among those critical to ensure equal treatment of LGBTI people. The United Kingdom is one of 17 countries in the OECD that have most legal protections for sexual and gender minorities. These countries are characterised by an above-average performance regarding both their level of legal LGBTI-inclusivity as of 2019 and their progress in legal LGBTI-inclusivity between 1999 and 2019 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The strides made by the United Kingdom over the past two decades have been spectacular

Evolution of legal LGBTI inclusivity between 1999 and 2019 in the United Kingdom and OECD-wide



Note: Legal LGBTI inclusivity refers to the percentage of LGBTI-inclusive laws that have been passed, among a basic set of laws defined based on international human rights standards.

Source: OECD (2020), *Over the Rainbow? The Road to LGBTI Inclusion*, Chapter 3. [Download data from [Statlink](#)]

Legal LGBTI inclusivity in the United Kingdom rose from 4% in 1999 to 59% in 2019, thereby showing that even countries that used to perform poorly can become high achievers (Figure 1). As of 2019, the United Kingdom performs better than the OECD average concerning laws protecting LGBTI individuals against violence (Figure 2). Hate crime and hate speech explicitly based on sexual orientation is criminalised throughout the United Kingdom, while physical and verbal violence motivated by bias against a person's gender identity and intersex status are also viewed as an aggravating circumstance in Scotland. Moreover, persecution (or a well-founded fear of persecution) based on sexual orientation and gender identity is explicitly recognised by the United Kingdom as a valid reason for granting asylum.

The United Kingdom's achievements in addressing the unique challenges faced by same-sex couples have also been extraordinary (Figure 2). In 2005, the United Kingdom allowed same-sex couples to register their partnership and granted them many of the pecuniary rights to which different-sex married couples were entitled. In 2014, England, Scotland and Wales legalised same-sex marriage. Northern Ireland followed suit in 2019. On top of being granted full legal recognition of their partnerships, UK same-sex couples are also treated on an equal footing relative to different-sex couples concerning access to adoption and assisted reproductive technology.

How could the United Kingdom further improve legal LGBTI inclusivity?

UK transgender individuals are allowed to change their gender marker in the civil registry but conditioned on a gender dysphoria diagnosis. Yet, the trend OECD-wide is to fully de-pathologise this process. Moreover, the United Kingdom is not one of the eight OECD countries that allow for a non-binary gender option in the civil registry to ensure recognition of transgender and/or intersex individuals who do not self-identify as either female or male. By alleviating the pressure to assign an intersex baby into one of these two categories, this legal provision would also contribute to reduce the perceived need for unconsented medically unnecessary sex-normalising interventions on intersex minors (Figure 2). Therefore, further improving legal LGBTI inclusivity in the United Kingdom could entail: (i) basing legal gender recognition on self-determination; and (ii) granting transgender and intersex individuals access to a non-binary gender option in the civil registry.

Policies to foster LGBTI inclusion in the United Kingdom, beyond LGBTI-inclusive laws

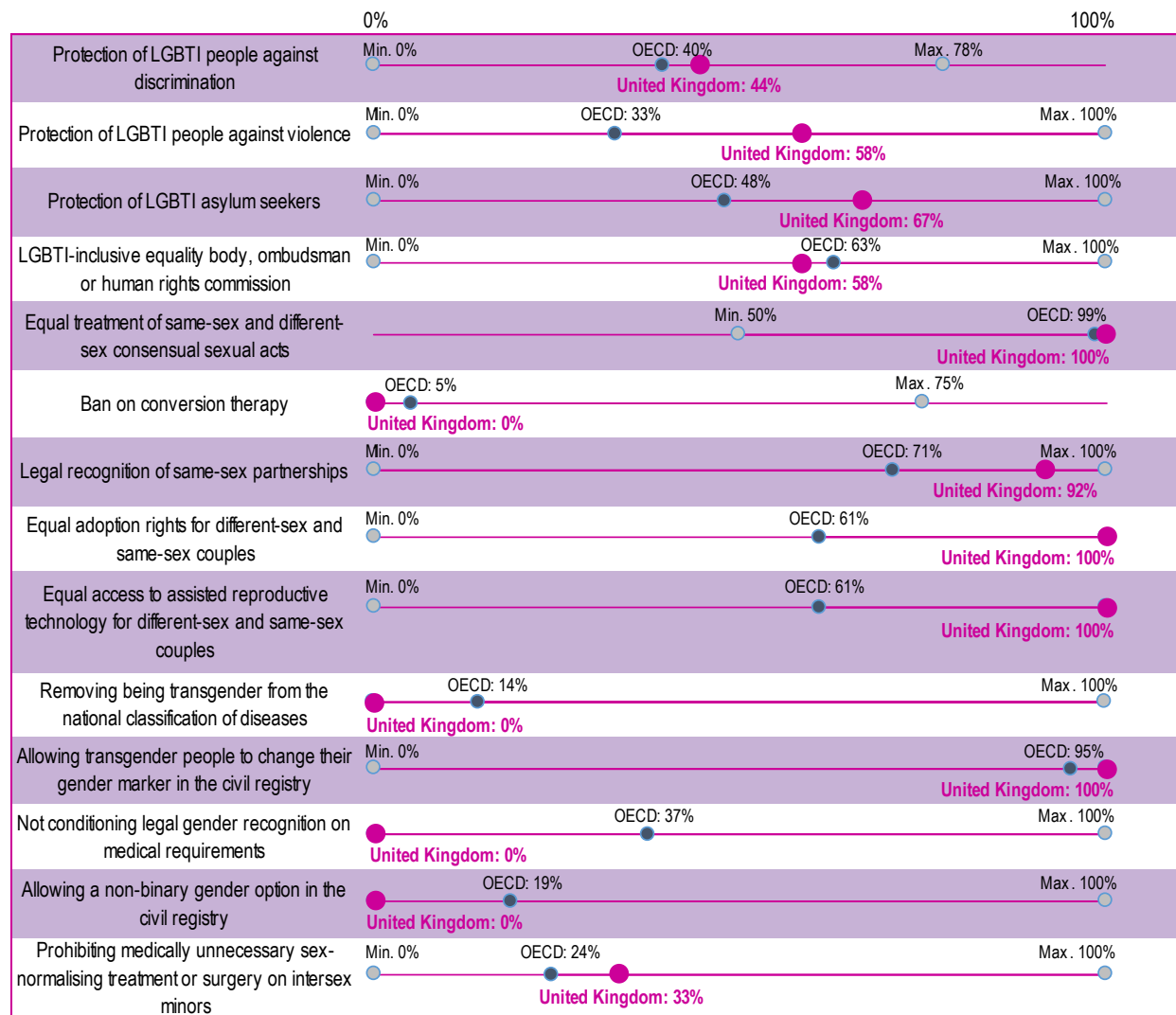
LGBTI-inclusive laws should come along significant efforts to make LGBTI individuals better represented and visible in national statistics. Without appropriate data collection, policymakers aiming to improve LGBTI inclusion will continue to do so with little if any relevant information. The United Kingdom is a leader in this field. Subject to Parliamentary approval, Great Britain should become the first OECD country in 2021 to include both a question on sexual orientation and a question on gender identity in its census.

It would also be important that the United Kingdom be or remain active in the following complementary policy areas that are viewed as key by ongoing national actions plans aimed at strengthening LGBTI inclusion:

Policy #1	Policy #2	Policy #3
Enforcing LGBTI-inclusive antidiscrimination, hate crime/hate speech and asylum laws, e.g. through training police officers on properly dealing with hate crimes targeting LGBTI people	Fostering a culture of equal treatment in education, employment and healthcare, beyond enforcing laws prohibiting discrimination in these fields, e.g. through a whole-school approach to tackle LGBTI-phobic bullying	Creating and maintaining popular support for LGBTI inclusion, e.g. through well-designed awareness-raising activities among the general public.

Figure 2: How the United Kingdom compares

Legal LGBTI inclusivity as of 30 June 2019 in the United Kingdom and OECD-wide, by component



Note: Figure 2 presents the components that serve to compute the average level of legal LGBTI inclusivity reported in Figure 1 as of 30 June 2019. The component "Protection of LGBTI people's civil liberties" is missing since it shows no cross-country variation: no legal provision in OECD countries explicitly restricts the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association of sexual and gender minorities. Legal LGBTI-inclusivity attached to each component can vary between 0% and 100%. For instance, a level of legal LGBTI inclusivity in the United Kingdom equal to 44% regarding the protection of LGBTI people against discrimination means that four of the nine antidiscrimination provisions critical to protect LGBTI people are in force in the United Kingdom as of 2019. "Min." refers to the score of the bottom-performing OECD country(ies) while "Max." refers to the score of the top-performing OECD country(ies). These values are specified except when they coincide with the score of the United Kingdom.

Source: OECD (2020), *Over the Rainbow? The Road to LGBTI Inclusion*, Chapter 3. [Download data from [Statlink](#)]

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