

Resistances, Movements, and Histories

OF 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITIES`

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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This paper draws connections between historical and contemporary 2SLGBTQIA+ resistances and movements to better understand the barriers and discrimination that 2SLGBTQIA+ people still face. It concludes with a section of tangible actions unions can undertake to be better allies and support 2SLGBTQIA+ people and movements.

Beginning with an explanation of the 2SLGBTQIA+ acronym and other relevant terminology, the paper delves into the social determinant of health that effect 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The section on discrimination or hatred based on sexuality and/or gender identity is divided into three stages of life: youth, adult, and senior. Social determinants of health also covers hate motivated incidents, crimes, and violence, housing insecurity, intimate partner violence, and chosen family.

The paper then provides a condensed history of 2SLGBTQIA+ people and movements in Canada. It begins with Indigenous peoples and their societies pre-contact with European colonizers. It then moves into the “LGBT Purge” which occurred from the 1950s to the 1990s and highlights several largescale police raids carried out on gay and lesbian spaces in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. The paper then explores some of the legal cases fought by 2SLGBTQIA+ activists that forced federal, provincial, and territorial governments to codify 2SLGBTQIA+ rights in law such as *Egan v. Canada*, *Vriend v. Alberta*, *M. v. H.*, and *Halpern v. Canada*. The paper touches on Bill C-4, which legally banned conversion practices, but warns that evidence indicates conversion practices still take place in Canada. The history section concludes with the 1980s AIDS epidemic and the resulting, lasting discrimination.

Segueing into contemporary 2SLGBTQIA+ resistances, the next section of the paper focuses on growing transphobia in Canada. The paper highlights some of the prominent anti-transgender figures in Canada and the ideologies that have been spread around the world. It touches on the anti-drag story time movement, the Rainbow Week of Action, and recent laws and policies that target transgender and gender-diverse youth and athletes. The paper then dispels some of the common myths about gender-affirming care and transitioning.

The final section of the paper covers other present-day considerations, including rainbow washing, intersex genital mutilation, 2SLGBTQIA+ refugee claims, and the impact of the Trump administration on 2SLGBTQIA+ people and rights.

The paper closes with a section that focuses on what unions can do and is broken into three parts: actions within unions, collective bargaining and employer relations, and lobbying and advocacy.

WHAT CAN UNIONS DO?

As with anything that concerns equity-deserving groups, 2SLGBTQIA+ people must be involved in all matters that relate to them. This means including the different groups that make up the 2SLGBTQIA+ umbrella as well as seeking out specific groups when it relates to them directly. For example, a 2SLGBTQIA+ advisory committee may have some transgender members, but when looking to take action on an issue that relates to transgender people, it's advised to seek out and engage with transgender people directly, particularly transgender people who belong to multiple equity-deserving groups.

This is not a complete list of what unions can do, but it serves as a starting point for several areas. Some of the actions recommended for unions to do internally can also apply to actions unions can take during collective bargaining and in employer relations.

Actions Within Unions

- Do an internal EDIA audit of the union and union practices, policies, and procedures (followed by routine reviews).
- Implement EDIA training that emphasizes the lived experience of 2SLGBTQIA+ people for union staff, elected positions, and members.
- Frame education on 2SLGBTQIA+ history and issues as occupational health and safety issues to ensure members know that 2SLGBTQIA+ issues are union issues.
- Foster increased awareness of the social determinants of health, and the broader social and legal context in which 2SLGBTQIA+ people live.
- Hold sector specific educationals (e.g. dementia and care for transgender and gender-diverse people for health care and care professionals).
- Create a code of conduct and anti-oppression policy.
- Ensure 2SLGBTQIA+ people are represented on all committees and working groups.
- Share materials like [NUPGE'S Diversity and Inclusion in Our Unions: Transgender and Gender-Expansive Rights Are Human Rights](#), the Canadian Labour Congress' [Workers in Transition](#), the Regenboog Network FNV's [Rainbow Checklist for Collective Labour Agreements](#), and the International Labour Organization's [Inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer \(LGBTIQ+\) persons in the world of work: A learning guide](#).
- Combat disinformation about 2SLGBTQIA+ people through all means possible. Make it clear that the anti-gender movement has no place in the labour movement.
- Enhance training for Stewards and Labour Relations Officers to better equip them to meet the needs of 2SLGBTQIA+ members. This should include a trauma-informed approach and emphasize the psychological safety of the members.
- Partner with outside organizations to offer bystander intervention training to members.
- Ensure all union offices have gender neutral washrooms.
- Showcase how the union is supportive of 2SLGBTQIA+ people in job postings and during the interview process.
- Share resources on IPV, including resources designed for 2SLGBTQIA+ people

Collective Bargaining and Employer Relations

- Encourage employers to deliver training on gender, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, and sexuality to foster an inclusive and healthy workplace. Stress that employers must set the tone that anti-2SLGBTQIA+ discrimination and harassment is not acceptable in the workplace.
- Create resources for employers on what work-related items may need to be modified to support a worker in transition (e.g. forms, email address, name tag, security credentials, etc.).
- Work with employers to create a workplace transition plan that can be tailored for individual use by workers who are transitioning. Plans should be worker-led and include items like using different pronouns, what information they wish to share, who will communicate relevant details to other workers, etc. The goal should be to help the worker transition socially—at their own pace and according to their preferences—at work in a safe environment.
- Encourage employers who employ workers in public serving positions to enact policies that take a trauma-informed approach and prioritize the psychological safety of clients. Adequate training for workers should be attached to those policies.
- Use gender neutral language in collective agreements whenever possible (e.g. change maternity/paternity leave to parental leave).
- Prior to bargaining, engage with 2SLGBTQIA+ members and include their needs in bargaining proposals (e.g. paid leave for workers to access gender-affirming care).
- Strengthen anti-discrimination clauses in collective agreements to include specific protections for 2SLGBTQIA+ members.
- Encourage employers to create gender neutral washrooms and change rooms.
- Bargain for more inclusive forms of family leave and bereavement leave that recognizes families of choice.
- Push employers to enact mechanisms so workers can provide feedback on whether they have the tools and supports they need to produce quality work.
- Embody equity, as opposed to equality, understanding that different members have different needs, and therefore must be treated differently for there to be an equality of outcome.
- Encourage public service employers to create resources for people with disabilities on their rights when accessing specific public services (e.g. health care).

Lobbying and Advocacy

- Lobby provincial governments to expand public coverage of gender-affirming care (including non-medical funding e.g. travel costs).
- Lobby provincial governments to bring more specialized surgeons and gender-affirming health care providers to the provinces.
- Lobby provincial governments to include 2SLGBTQIA+ topics in social science, history, and health and physical education curriculums.
- Lobby the federal government to collect the required data to create more intersectional analyses on 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

- Lobby the federal government to create programs for the prevention of conversion practices and supports for the survivors of conversion practices. These should include low cost and low barrier mental health services and culturally sensitive, trauma-informed support that meets the needs of intersecting identities.
- Lobby governments to build more social housing and shelters, and fund housing support services for 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Particular attention should be paid to housing and shelters for transgender, gender-diverse, and Two-Spirit people.
- Lobby governments to take a “housing first” approach to address social and health issues.
- Lobby governments to create 2SLGBTQIA+ wings in publicly funded care homes. This should come with culturally appropriate, trauma-informed training for workers.
- Lobby governments to implement the Calls for Justice from the *Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*.
- Lobby governments to adopt the recommendations of the 2SLGBTQIA+ Sub-Working Group of the *MMIWG2SLGBTQIA+ National Action Plan*.
- Lobby governments to adopt the Calls for Miskotahâ from the Women of the Métis Nation’s report *Métis Perspectives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQ2S+ People*.
- Lobby governments to adopt Calls for Justice from the Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami’s *National Inuit Action Plan on Missing and Murdered Inuit Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People*.
- Support organizations that have launched legal challenges against anti-2SLGBTQIA+ legislation—particularly anti-transgender and anti-gender-diverse legislation.
- Support organizations that support 2SLGBTQIA+ people, particularly organizations that work with 2SLGBTQIA+ people from other equity-deserving communities and in rural areas.
- Support the Indigenous-led MMIWG2S+ Database Project.

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