
PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE REPORT BY THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION'S STUDY ON LEGISLATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND INTERSEX STATUS ('Study'):

Community Business calls upon Hong Kong Government to introduce anti-discrimination legislation on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status

Hong Kong, 4 February 2016 – Community Business, a not-for-profit organisation focusing on responsible business and a thought leader on Diversity & Inclusion, supports the recommendations of the [report](#) released on 26 January 2016, commissioned by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and conducted by the Gender Research Centre of the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (GRC), on legislation against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status in Hong Kong.

“Kudos to the EOC and GRC for this comprehensive and in-depth Study which engaged a wide range of stakeholders in the community, examined the experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals, and reviewed comparative legislation in other jurisdictions. The Study provides an evidence-based foundation on which to move forward the dialogue on the introduction of legislation against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status in Hong Kong,” said Mrs. Fern Ngai, CEO of Community Business.

The report documents evidence of widespread discrimination faced by LGBTI individuals in the areas of employment, education, and provision of services, with LGBTI individuals having little or no means of redress given the lack of legal protection against discrimination. Encouragingly, the Study reports a shift in attitude among the Hong Kong public over the last 10 years, with increasing support for legislation.

The findings are in line with Community Business' own LGBT Climate Study 2011-2012 which surveyed the general attitudes of the working population towards the subject of LGBT as well as the experiences and perspectives of LGBT employees themselves in Hong Kong.

Mrs. Ngai continued, “Particularly, 59% of respondents in our representative study back in 2012 believed that it is the responsibility of the Government to promote greater inclusion on the subject of LGBT in Hong Kong. If Hong Kong is to truly be ‘Asia’s World City’, discrimination of any kind should not be tolerated – it not only hurts the individuals being discriminated against, but it impacts on Hong Kong’s ability to attract and retain the best talent.

We call on the Hong Kong Government to take timely and concrete measures to introduce legislation against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. We concur with the Study which emphasizes

that it is no longer a question of whether legislation should be introduced, but to move forward, focus should be on the scope and content of legislation.”

Call to Action

On top of the [call to action](#) that Community Business has recently made in response to the **Report by the Hong Kong Government Advisory Group on Eliminating Discrimination Against Sexual Minorities**, the organisation calls upon the Government to:

1. Review the findings and recommendations made by the EOC Study to develop a timeline with concrete actions to introduce legislation against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. As recommended by the Study, this should start with a comprehensive public consultation to enable all stakeholders to express their views and play a part in the formulation of the legislation.
2. Extend the duties and powers of the Equal Opportunities Commission under the existing four anti-discrimination Ordinances* to include grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status.
3. Amend the current discriminatory immigration policy to recognise foreign registered same-sex partnerships and marriages for immigration purposes.
4. As Hong Kong's largest employer, lead by example by creating an inclusive workplace for its LGBT employees.
5. Participate in the Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Inclusion Index and communicate its progress on LGBT workplace inclusion publicly to set an example for all Hong Kong companies.

**Note: The existing four anti-discrimination Ordinances are [Sex Discrimination Ordinance](#), [Disability Discrimination Ordinance](#), [Family Status Discrimination Ordinance](#) and [Race Discrimination Ordinance](#).*

For more information about Community Business' work on LGBT workplace inclusion, refer to: <http://www.communitybusiness.org/LGBT/index.html>

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About the Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Inclusion Index

The Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Inclusion Index is the first and only benchmark on workplace inclusion practices and initiatives for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) employees in Asia. Launched by Community Business in 2015, it is a pioneering initiative that provides companies in Hong Kong with a credible and robust tool to assess, progress and promote their efforts towards LGBT inclusion. For more information, please visit www.communitybusiness.org/hklgbtindex.

The Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Inclusion Index will be offered every other year, to give organisations sufficient time to make progress on their LGBT inclusion strategies. The next iteration will cover the calendar years of 2015 and 2016 and nominations will be open in Q4 2016.

About Community Business

Community Business is a not-for-profit organisation (Hong Kong Charity Number 91/6560) whose mission is to lead, inspire and support businesses to have a positive impact on people and communities. Recognised as a thought leader in corporate responsibility and diversity and inclusion in Asia, Community Business conducts research, facilitates networks and events, leads campaigns and provides consultancy and training. With a focus on Responsible Business, our work is aligned to 5 mission-led themes:

- Investing and supporting local communities
- Tackling inequality in the workplace
- Ensuring happy, healthy, and engaged employees
- Promoting social inclusion
- Building responsible business leadership

Founded in 2003 and based in Hong Kong with a presence in India and the United Kingdom, Community Business works with companies of all sizes and from diverse industries across Asia, harnessing the power of business to drive social change. For more information, please visit <http://www.communitybusiness.org>.