

# A Global Examination of LGBT Workplace Equality Indices

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# Our Book Chapter

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<https://www.e-elgar.com/shop/gbp/handbook-on-diversity-and-inclusion-indices-9781788975711.html>

# LGBT Challenges

- Legal discrimination, few protections.
- Social stigma
- Violence
- Higher rates of poverty, challenge to livelihoods
- Occupational segregation, labor market discrimination

# Move Toward Benchmarking

- Voluntary partnerships between corporations and LGBT civil society organisations
- Benchmarking efforts have arisen in the form of workplace equality indices that track and promote corporate policies of diversity and inclusion
- Most of these indices are centred around a particular country, with a few having a global reach & participation
- Change can be achieved by focusing on the business case, encouraging participation, and a sense of healthy competition

# Our Research Rationale

- We offer one of the first cross-national analyses of various LGBT workplace equality indices
- Distinct lack of research on LGBT indices
- Interested parties are potentially missing out on key patterns, trends, emerging best practices, and common challenges
- We uncover critical observations that are based on a robust, evidence-based approach that provide insights for further research inquiry

# Scope of Indices Included

- HRC's Corporate Equality Index (CEI – U.S.)
- Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index (WEI – U.K.)
- Fulcrum's Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index (CEI – Ukraine)
- Forum's South African Workplace Equality Index (SAWEI – South Africa)
- Presente's Diversity and Equality Diagnostic (Empresas Presente – Peru)

Statement from LGBT Ukrainians in America:

<https://qua.community/news/statement-response/>

# Methodology and Analysis

- Semi-structured interviews with key informants
- Interview guide covered each index's: origin and history; methodology utilized to approach corporations and collect data; additional applications; strengths and weaknesses; and future directions for the index
- Particular questions focused on the overall reason for its being, extent of private sector participation, challenges, potential impact, and indicators

# Comparison of the Indices

We compared the strengths and weaknesses of the five indices across:

- content of the index
- approach to assessment and validation
- **ranking, benchmarking, and reward systems**
- **reach and scope of participation**
- **extent of transparency and wider applications**



# Ranking, Benchmarking, and Reward System

	USA: HRC CEI	UK: Stonewall WEI	Ukraine: Fulcrum CEI	South Africa: The Forum SAWEI	Peru: Presente D&E Diagnostic
Strength	<p><b>Visible rankings of Fortune companies, and these inform other rankings. Listed according to score overall, as well as scoring by theme.</b></p>	<p><b>Lists online top 100 ranked organizations. Awards for specific best practice areas.</b></p>	<p>High scoring organizations have choice to be published in report, ranked in order of score. Organizations can receive follow-up trainings.</p>	<p>Published report details highest achieving organizations as Gold, Silver, Bronze. Those that score below threshold are not publicly reported.</p>	<p>Final report classifies more advanced organizations as “inspurer” and less advanced as “beginner”. Organizations can receive follow-up trainings.</p>
Weakness	<p>Seems unlikely it can cover country offices of MNCs. <b>All participants are listed and visible</b></p>	<p>Increased participation has led to lower probability of getting into Top 100. Limited feedback for those not in paid program. <b>Only lists “Top 100”.</b></p>	<p><b>Given its broader remit, potentially hard to differentiate organizations specifically on LGBT issues. Only lists higher performing participants</b></p>	<p><b>Challenge to know which organizations took part and the progress each is making. Only lists higher performing participants</b></p>	<p><b>Challenge to know which organizations took part and the progress each is making. Does not list any name of participants</b></p>

# Reach and Scope of Participation

	USA: HRC CEI	UK: Stonewall WEI	Ukraine: Fulcrum CEI	South Africa: The Forum SAWEI	Peru: Presente D&E Diagnostic
Strength	<p><b>No cost to participate.</b> Focuses on large private sector organizations to ensure comparability.</p> <p><b>Participation rates have been rising.</b></p>	<p><b>No fee to take part</b> but encouraged to pay for “Diversity Champion” program.</p> <p><b>Wide range of sectors</b> represented, (at the time 2019 - rising participation).</p>	<p><b>Allied with other civil society groups</b> to help boost participation. <b>No fee</b> to participate in index or in follow-up trainings.</p> <p><b>Mostly MNCs.</b></p>	<p><b>No cost to participate.</b> Small level of participation, <b>mostly from MNCs</b>, professional/legal services, but expanding.</p>	<p><b>No cost to participate</b>, in index or follow-up trainings.</p> <p>Has seen a rise in interest and participation over last year, yet most of this comes from <b>MNCs.</b></p>
Weakness	<p><b>No focus on small/medium sized organizations.</b> Response rate difficult to track recently.</p>	<p><b>Very hefty time/resources to participate.</b> Difficulty in engaging small organizations.</p>	<p><b>Significant challenge of engaging domestic organizations.</b></p>	<p><b>Less participation from domestic organization.</b></p>	<p><b>Domestic organizations were not as interested to participate.</b></p>

# Extent of Transparency and Wider Applications

	USA: HRC CEI	UK: Stonewall WEI	Ukraine: Fulcrum CEI	South Africa: The Forum SAWEI	Peru: Presente D&E Diagnostic
Strength	<b>All methodology and indicators are online.</b> Has been <b>utilized within academic research.</b> Has <b>highly influenced indices</b> emerging in other countries.	Conducts its own analysis of data. <b>Facilitates sector-specific “knowledge sharing” networks.</b> Has <b>highly influenced indices</b> emerging in other countries.	Methodology, indicators, index findings, are available in <b>final reports, which are online.</b> <b>Findings directly feed into trainings.</b>	Methodology, report findings, and indicators are <b>available online.</b> Has <b>increased awareness and some competition among national organizations.</b>	Methodology, report, and indicators are <b>available online.</b> Findings <b>directly feed into trainings.</b> Has allowed a <b>public discussion on LGBT issues.</b>
Weaknesses	<b>Limited research on employee outcomes,</b> or changes in implementation over time.	<b>Limited information online,</b> hesitant to share indicators to the public.	<b>Index is on hiatus,</b> partly due to difficulties in engaging with potential funders/policy makers.	<b>Wider applications not apparent yet.</b> Small number of participants.	<b>Wider applications not necessarily apparent,</b> since it is now in the second year.

# Discussion

- All have ambitions to strengthen capacity for long-lasting positive change
- Yet, variation exists in extent to which systematic review is in place
- Three core areas for the future: growth, participation, lived experience
- Need to validate employer data with employee surveys and/or independent research to analyse employer data

# Conclusion

- First cross-national comparisons of LGBT workplace equality indices
- Growing appetite for change through these indices (e.g., societal)
- Still, significant challenges exist that need addressing for sustainability
- Overall, positive with a growing number of indices emerging
- More established indices can help support newer, emerging indices