

ILGA World Conference 2024 and the Global Equality Summit

Cape Town, South Africa | 11 – 15 November 2024

1 Context

November 2024 saw Cape Town become the temporary capital of global LGBTIQ+ advocacy. Two intertwined events took place:

- **ILGA World Conference** – the movement’s largest forum, returning to Africa for the first time in 25 years and welcoming about **1,450 delegates from more than 100 countries** under the banner “*Kwa umoja we rise*” (“Together we rise”).
- **Global Equality Summit (GES)** – convened by the **Global Equality Caucus** with Parliamentarians for Global Action, Human Dignity Trust and The Other Foundation; over **200 legislators, parliamentary staff and diplomats** met in parallel from 11 – 13 November to share legislative strategies.

Wales approaches these issues from a devolved vantage point. The **LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales** was published in February 2023, the **HIV Action Plan 2023 – 26** commits to ending new transmissions by 2030 and the **Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023** ties public contracts to social-value duties. Cape Town offered real-time evidence and partners to inform these and other policy goals.

2 ILGA World Conference

2.1 Movement-building and de-colonisation

Keynotes by **Rev. Mpho Tutu van Furth**, Kenyan youth organiser **Lebo Nkea** and UN Independent Expert **Graeme Reid** placed equality alongside anti-racism and economic justice. Workshops on funding and language politics encouraged funder to centre community-led approaches.

2.2 Intersex justice

An **Intersex Pre-Conference** analysed laws passed since 2015 in Malta, Portugal, Germany and, most recently, Kenya, that ban non-consensual surgical interventions on intersex infants. Delegates emphasised birth-registration reform and lifelong health provision—material likely to interest Members who have raised related issues on behalf of intersex constituents.

2.3 Youth leadership and education

Hundreds of young delegates contributed to the largest-ever **ILGA Youth Forum**, trading peer-education tools on inclusive curricula and mental-health support. Their

experience echoes the roll-out of Relationships and Sexuality Education across Welsh schools in 2022.

2.4 Digital security and online hate

Side-sessions titled “*Encrypting Pride*” detailed spyware threats and proposed human-rights impact assessments for surveillance exports—timely as the Senedd considers Welsh perspectives while secondary legislation to the UK Online Safety Act is developed.

2.5 Climate justice

Panels co-hosted with **Out4Sustainability** challenged climate-finance providers to integrate equality milestones, complementing the Senedd Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee’s recent call for just-transition principles across public spending.

3 Global Equality Summit – legislative exchanges and relevance to Wales

The GES drilled into the nuts and bolts of law-making. Several threads speak directly to ongoing work in the Senedd:

- **Inclusive legislation and data-driven narratives** – Opening debates, led by **Bishop Joseph Tolton** and Namibian advocate **Salen Kambinda**, stressed evidence-based framing. Their emphasis on socioeconomic dividends can inform Welsh discussions around the Equality Act public-sector duty.
- **Hate speech and political violence** – Brazilian Deputy **Duda Salabert** discussed enforcement of **Law 14.192/2021** on gender-based political violence. Her experience will be valuable to the Senedd’s Standards of Conduct Committee, which is gathering evidence on harassment and intimidation of Members.
- **Strategic litigation and decriminalisation** – Presentations from Barbados and Botswana illustrated how court victories were rapidly translated into the parliamentary repeal of discriminatory statutes. Wales, while not legislating on criminal law, can draw on these lessons when advocating for reserved-matter change at Westminster, or the devolution of these powers.
- **Economics of equality** – A UNDP briefing estimated that anti-LGBTIQ+ discrimination suppresses national GDP by about one per cent. South-African trade-union examples of gender-neutral parental-leave clauses dovetail with social-value objectives could shape upcoming procurement guidance.

- **Health equity and HIV** – Ministers from Thailand and Victoria showed >60 % reductions in new HIV diagnoses after universal PrEP access. Their model clauses on age-neutral availability will assist officials implementing Wales’s **HIV Action Plan 2023 – 26**.
- **Climate finance and vulnerable groups** – Pacific lawmakers called for explicit SOGIESC references in Green Climate Fund criteria. Although Wales’s **Optimised Retrofit Programme** was not discussed in Cape Town, it provides a domestic example of climate-resilient housing that aligns with the Senedd committee’s drive to embed just-transition principles in capital budgets.
- **Conversion practices** – Drafting clinics compared Canada’s *Bill C-4* and Spain’s national ban. The Welsh Government is currently assessing its legislative competence and potential routes—devolved or UK-wide—to implement the commitment originally contained in the Cooperation Agreement with Plaid Cymru to pursue an effective ban.

The Summit closed with the **Cape Town Declaration 2024**, a consensual pledge to pursue decriminalisation, prohibit conversion practices, embed equality in public-health and digital-safety laws, and mainstream SOGIESC metrics in climate financing. Legislators from every inhabited continent endorsed the text, underscoring the influence sub-national chambers like the Senedd can wield when acting in concert.