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## Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel - 2020 Summary Report

Hässler, Tabea ; Eisner, Léila

**Abstract:** This is a summary report of the 2020 survey of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel. The Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel, a longitudinal study assessing the situation of LGBTIQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, and queer) individuals in Switzerland in an annual manner, is led by Léila Eisner and Tabea Hässler. Each annual survey covers emerging topics in the Swiss context (e.g., legalization of same-sex marriage), personal experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals (e.g., support, discrimination, coming out, experiences in the school context) as well as action to change the situation in Switzerland. We believe that the insights of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel have high practical relevance for LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual individuals, people in the educational context, LGBTIQ+ and other non-profit organizations, practitioners, and policymakers aiming at promoting the health and integration of LGBTIQ+ individuals.

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# SWISS LGBTIQ+ PANEL

2020 SUMMARY REPORT



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Tabea Hässler & Léila Eisner

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Final written report by Dr. Tabea Hässler (University of Zurich) and Dr. Léïla Eisner (University of Lausanne) with the support of Raja Liechti and Edith Häsler. The principle authors contributed equally to the work.

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# FOREWORD

In Switzerland, individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, and other sexual or gender minorities (LGBTIQ+) still face prejudice, discrimination, and structural inequalities. The situation, however, is changing. In February 2020, 63.1% of Swiss voters approved the extension of the anti-discrimination law to protect sexual minorities from discrimination based on their sexual orientation. In September 2020, the national council approved a project to simplify the process for trans or gender-variant persons to change their gender in official records. In addition, further legal changes (e.g., legalization of same-sex marriage) are currently being discussed in the government. Due to these rapid changes, it is important to assess (and communicate about) changes in the situation of LGBTIQ+ individuals over time.

To achieve this goal, we initiated the **Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel** in 2019: An annual survey about the situation of LGBTIQ+ individuals in Switzerland. The panel covers personal experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals (support, discrimination, coming out), emerging topics in the Swiss context (protection against discrimination, simplification of administrative procedure to change legal identity documents to match experienced gender, legalizing same-sex marriage), as well as actions to advance the legal situation in Switzerland. Each year we will have a core section assessing a set of fixed questions which allows us to examine potential changes over time (e.g., support, discrimination, coming out) and additional sections assessing the current situation (e.g., legal changes) and topics that our participants consider relevant (e.g., school).

Shortly before 2020, we launched the **second wave of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel**. To account for the specific challenges (e.g., legal situation, discrimination) that different subgroups of the LGBTIQ+ community face, we designed different versions of a web questionnaire that were tailored to sexual minorities (i.e., individuals with a minority sexual orientation such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or pansexual people) and gender minorities (e.g., individuals identifying as trans or intersex).<sup>1</sup> Further, interested cisheterosexual individuals were also invited to

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<sup>1</sup> Sexual orientation and gender identity are distinct, so people can be members of both sexual and gender minorities. In order to keep the survey duration uniform, we have assigned people to one version of questionnaire. However, there was an option to fill in the version for both sexual and gender minorities.

participate in the survey. All versions were translated into French, German, Italian, and English. Thanks to the help of many LGBTIQ+ organizations, magazines, and individuals who widely shared our study on different media, 1'792 people replied to our questionnaire from December 2019 to July 2020. This document presents a summary of the key findings of the survey.

# GLOSSARY<sup>2</sup>

<b>Asexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who does not experience sexual attraction.
<b>Bisexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who is attracted to more than one gender. Distinct from pansexual, which includes attraction to people regardless of gender.
<b>Cis female</b>	Someone who was assigned female at birth and identifies and lives as a woman.
<b>Cis-heterosexual</b>	Used in this report to refer to people whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth (i.e., who are not members of gender minorities) and who are exclusively attracted to another gender.
<b>Cis male</b>	Someone who was assigned male at birth and identifies and lives as a man.
<b>Coming out (public)</b>	When a person first tells someone about their sexual orientation or gender identity.
<b>Gay man</b>	A man who is attracted to other men.
<b>Gender identity</b>	A person's internal sense of their own gender.
<b>Gender identity – Other</b>	An umbrella category used to describe individuals who choose 'other' as the category for their gender identity. In this category, participants reported, for instance, identifying as agender, gender fluid, gender questioning, drag queen, queer, demiboy, or as not identifying with any gender.
<b>Gender minority members</b>	Individuals with a minority gender identity such as trans or intersex people.

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<sup>2</sup>Please note that the definitions belong to the community and might change over time.

<b>Heterosexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who is exclusively attracted to another gender. Also referred to as straight.
<b>Homosexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.
<b>Intersex</b>	An umbrella term for people with sex characteristics (hormones, chromosomes, and external/internal reproductive organs) that differ from those typically expected of a male or female individual.
<b>Joint adoption</b>	A term used to describe adoption by two partners. Contrary to stepchild adoption, joint adoption by same-sex parents is currently not legal in Switzerland.
<b>Lesbian woman</b>	A woman who is attracted to other women.
<b>LGBTIQ+</b>	An abbreviation used to refer to all people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, or as having any other minority sexual orientation or gender identity.
<b>Minority sexual orientation</b>	Used in this report to refer to anyone not identifying as heterosexual. This includes individuals identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, etc.
<b>Non-binary</b>	An umbrella term used to describe gender identities where the individual does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. There are many categories included within this, such as agender, genderqueer, and gender fluid.
<b>Pansexual</b>	Attraction to people regardless of their gender.
<b>Same-sex marriage</b>	A term used to describe the legal union between two people of the same gender.
<b>Sexual minority members</b>	Individuals with a minority sexual orientation such as homosexual (gay, lesbian), bisexual, or pansexual people.

- Sexual orientation** Describes who a person is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to.
- Sexual orientation - Other** An umbrella category used to describe individuals who choose 'other' as the category for their sexual orientation. In this category, participants mentioned, for instance, identifying as asexual (partly with romantic attraction), demisexual, fluid, polyamorous, polysexual, heteroflexible, homoflexible, queer, questioning, as well as not liking categories.
- Trans** Umbrella term used to describe individuals who have a gender identity that is different to the gender assigned at birth. Non-binary people may or may not consider themselves to be trans.
- Trans women** Someone who was assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman.
- Trans men** Someone who was assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man.
- Queer** A term used mainly by people who identify with a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
- Questioning** The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.



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# THE SWISS LGBTIQ+ PANEL

# IMPORTANT METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

*Before interpreting the results of this report, please read these important methodological notes.*

The second survey of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel was hosted online for 7 months. An online survey was considered the best way to reach out to a large number of LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual respondents and allowed respondents to provide anonymous and confidential responses. Individuals who voluntarily participated in our study were mostly re-contacted via e-mail or informed by LGBTIQ+ and other organizations through posts, articles, newsletters, and chats. Though the number of respondents to the survey was large, we still need to be careful when interpreting the data and extrapolating from the findings. The sample was self-selected and is **not representative of the entire LGBTIQ+ population in Switzerland**. In particular, LGBTIQ+ individuals who are/were not connected to LGBTIQ+ organizations or not “out” are probably less represented in our study. These people may have different experiences to those who are connected to the LGBTIQ+ scene. In addition, most cis-heterosexual individuals who participated in this survey heard about the survey from LGBTIQ+ individuals (although some university students took part as well) and might generally be more supportive of LGBTIQ+ issues than the general Swiss population. **This implies that responses by cis-heterosexual individuals displayed in the present report are particularly NOT representative of the cis-heterosexual population.** Please be aware of this when interpreting the results displayed in this report.

# KEY FINDINGS

- LGBTIQ+ individuals in Switzerland still face structural inequalities, experience discrimination, and don't feel fully accepted everywhere. These inequalities are more pronounced among gender minority members, who report particularly high levels of structural inequalities. Furthermore, 16% of gender minority members and 8% of sexual minority members reported having been physically attacked because of their gender identity/sexual orientation in the year before the survey.
- Both sexual and gender minority members reported that people reacted more positively to their coming out than what they expected beforehand. One reason for this overestimation of negative reactions is that one's sexual orientation/gender identity is concealable and that we often lack information about others' opinions. Hence, it is essential that allies indicate their support (e.g., inclusive policies and messages) to foster a climate of inclusion in which LGBTIQ+ individuals feel safe to come out.
- A valuable source of support for both members of sexual and gender minorities are friends and other LGBTIQ+ individuals. While most sexual minority members feel supported by their family members, evidence is more mixed among gender minority members: some are supported by their family, while others experience discrimination.
- Even though LGBTIQ+ students are particularly vulnerable, sexual orientation and gender identity are often not covered in school. Half of the youngest participants (under 21 years of age) report that LGBTIQ+ issues were not at all addressed during their entire school period. This disregard of LGBTIQ+ topics stands in stark contrast to the needs of LGBTIQ+ pupils and students, who indicated that greater inclusiveness, greater visibility, and greater support from teachers and classmates would have helped them.
- The vote on extending the anti-discrimination law and the discussion surrounding it led to mixed emotions. While many participants reported feeling relieved and happy, some felt sad that one-third of people voted against the extension. Further, many gender minorities reported feeling left out.
- Different subgroups within the LGBTIQ+ spectrum report challenges such as being medicalized, neglected, or not seen as a valid identity. These challenges stem not only from the general society but also from within the LGBTIQ+ community.

# THE RESULTS

In this section, we relay some of the main findings from the 2020 survey. Because different versions of the questionnaire were tailored to sexual minorities' and gender minorities' rights, we will, in what follows, present the findings of sexual minority, gender minority, and cis-heterosexual respondents separately.

# WHO RESPONDED?

In total, 1'792 individuals participated in the 2020 survey: 1'276 filled out the sexual minority version of the questionnaire, 188 the gender minority version, 13 both the sexual and gender minority versions, and 315 the cis-heterosexual version. A summary of participants' sexual orientation, gender identity, age group, geographical area, education, and religion is presented in Table 1 below.

*For example, 50.3% respondents (902 people) identified as homosexual, 15.9% (285 people) as bisexual, 9.5% (171 people) as pansexual, 17.8% (319 people) as heterosexual, 2.1% (38 people) as asexual, and 4.3% (77 people) as another sexual orientation (demisexual, questioning, queer and other).*

Table 1. Who responded?

Participants by	TOTAL	HOMO-SEXUAL	BISEXUAL	PANSEXUAL	HETERO-SEXUAL	ASEXUAL	OTHER
<b>Sexuality %</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50.3%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>1'792</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>77</b>
Participants by	CIS FEMALE	CIS MALE	TRANS FEMALE	TRANS MALE	NON-BINARY	OTHER	
<b>Gender %</b>	<b>51.5%</b>	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	
<b>N</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>37</b>	
Participants by	Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Over 60	
<b>Age group %</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>44.0%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	
<b>N</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>98</b>	
Participants by	GERMAN	FRENCH	ITALIAN	ROMANSH	BILINGUAL		
<b>Geo area %</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>		
<b>N</b>	<b>1'122</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>52</b>		
Participants by	NO UNI	UNI DEGREE	OTHER				
<b>Education %</b>	<b>40.2%</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	<b>6.25%</b>				
<b>N</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>112</b>				
Participants by	ATHEIST	CATHOLIC	PROTES-TANT	JEWISH	MUSLIM	BUDDHISM	OTHER
<b>Religion %</b>	<b>58.3%</b>	<b>15.2%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>1'044</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>139</b>

Note. Percentages have been rounded and may not add up to 100%.

In Table 2, we show the sample composition in greater detail, separating out respondents by both sexual orientation and gender identity. The numbers in brackets represent trans participants.

*For example, the second line can be read as follows: There are 50 bisexual male participants, 7 of them are trans. There are 213 bisexual female participants, 10 of them are trans. There are 18 bisexual non-binary participants and 15 of them are trans. There are 4 bisexual participants who do not identify as either female, male, or non-binary and 2 of them are trans.*

Table 2. Sample Composition

Sexual Orientation/ Gender identity	Male	Female	Non-binary	Other
Heterosexual	89 (8)	225 (2)	5 (5)	0 (0)
Bisexual	50 (7)	213 (10)	18 (15)	4 (2)
Pansexual	31 (13)	90 (6)	39 (32)	11 (9)
Homosexual	502 (12)	371 (10)	20 (7)	9 (4)
Asexual	3 (2)	25 (4)	7 (6)	3 (3)
Other	12 (0)	32 (1)	20 (18)	13 (9)
Total	687 (42)	956 (33)	109 (83)	40 (27)

Note. In brackets: Individuals identifying as trans.

# SECTION 1: COMING OUT

## COMING OUT EXPECTATION VS. REALITY

Respondents to the survey were asked to indicate how they thought members of different groups would react to their coming out. They were then asked to indicate how members of these different groups actually reacted to their coming out. Sexual minority and gender minority participants could indicate values from 1 (*Very negative*) to 7 (*Very positive*). Therefore, a higher number indicates more positive expectations/reactions. Results are displayed in Figure 1 (sexual minorities) and Figure 2 (gender minorities). Please note that we included only the people who outed themselves in the relevant context (e.g., 1'113 of 1'289 sexual minority participants outed themselves among their family). In general, results indicate that sexual minority and gender minority participants expected that their friends would react more positively to their coming out than others. This pattern was also found for actual reactions to the coming out. Notably, however, patterns indicate that sexual and gender minority participants expected that the reactions to their outing would be more negative than they actually were across all groups.

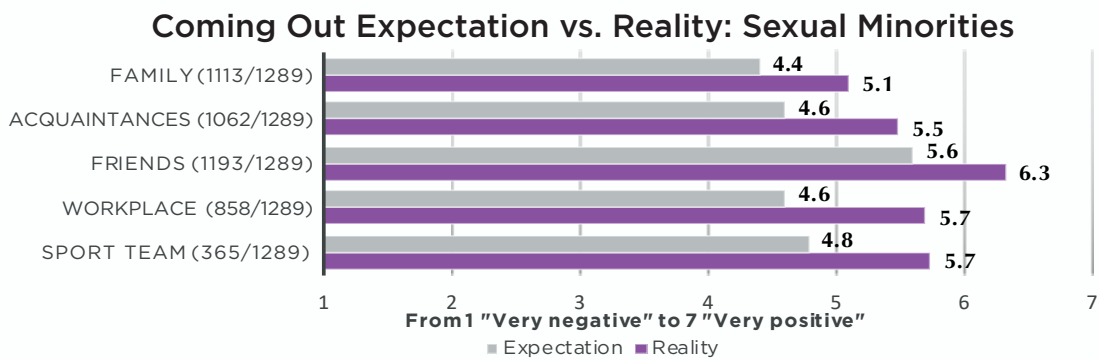


Figure 1. Coming Out Among Sexual Minorities: Expected Versus Real Reaction

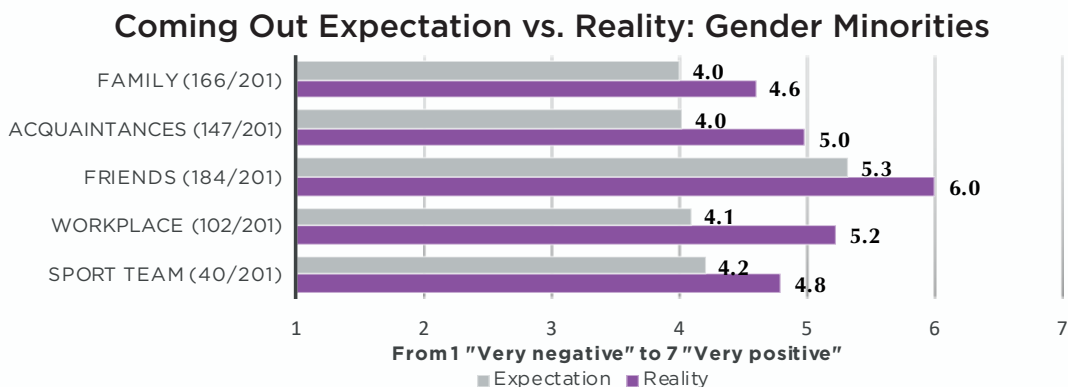


Figure 2. Coming Out Among Gender Minorities: Expected Versus Real Reaction



## CONTEXT OF COMING OUT

Next, respondents in the survey were asked in which contexts they were out and among how many people. Importantly, one’s sexual orientation/gender identity (e.g., one’s trans identity) might not always be relevant. To illustrate, once trans individuals transitioned, some might not feel the need to reveal that they are trans (since they pass as the gender they identify as). However, this measure still provides a valid estimate for how openly people can talk about their identity and current relationship/activities. We grouped the answers into three categories: (1) Being out to none or a few people, (2) approximately half of the people, and (3) most/all people. The results are shown separately for sexual minority (see Figure 3) and gender minority members (see Figure 4). Please keep in mind that respondents could also choose that a context was not applicable for them (e.g., if they do not visit a church or any other religious setting). Therefore, the valid number of responses vary widely between contexts.

Sexual minority group members (see Figure 3 below) were out among most of their friends followed by their family. Half of the respondents for whom the categories acquaintances, university, workplace, and sport were applicable were openly out to most/all people. However, half of the respondents did not come out in the school context and more than half among their neighbors. Finally, two-thirds of the respondents for which the category church/religious organization was applicable were not out in this context.

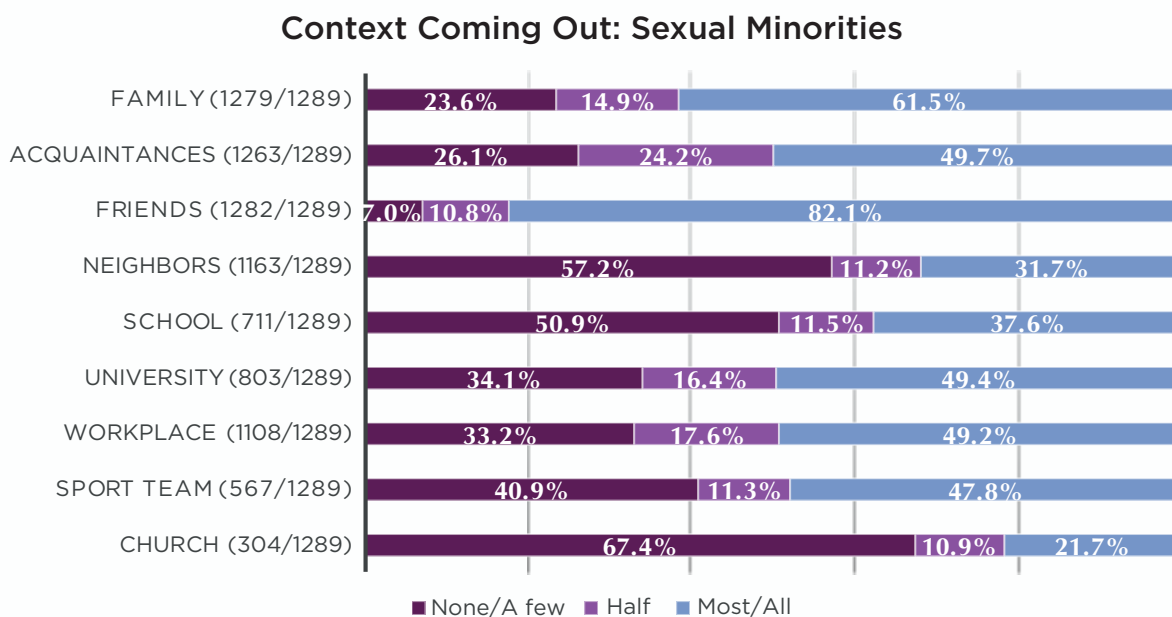


Figure 3. Context of Coming Out Among Sexual Minority Members

Members of gender minorities (see Figure 4 below) were on average less likely than sexual minority members to reveal their gender identity. Two-thirds of respondents were out to most/all of their friends, while one fifth was not out among their friends at all. Almost half of the gender minority respondents were out among most/all family members, while more than one third chose not to out themselves to family members. In the workplace, university, school, sport, and church contexts as well as among their neighbors, gender minorities were particularly guarded: between half and two-thirds of respondents did not reveal their gender identity to (almost) everyone.

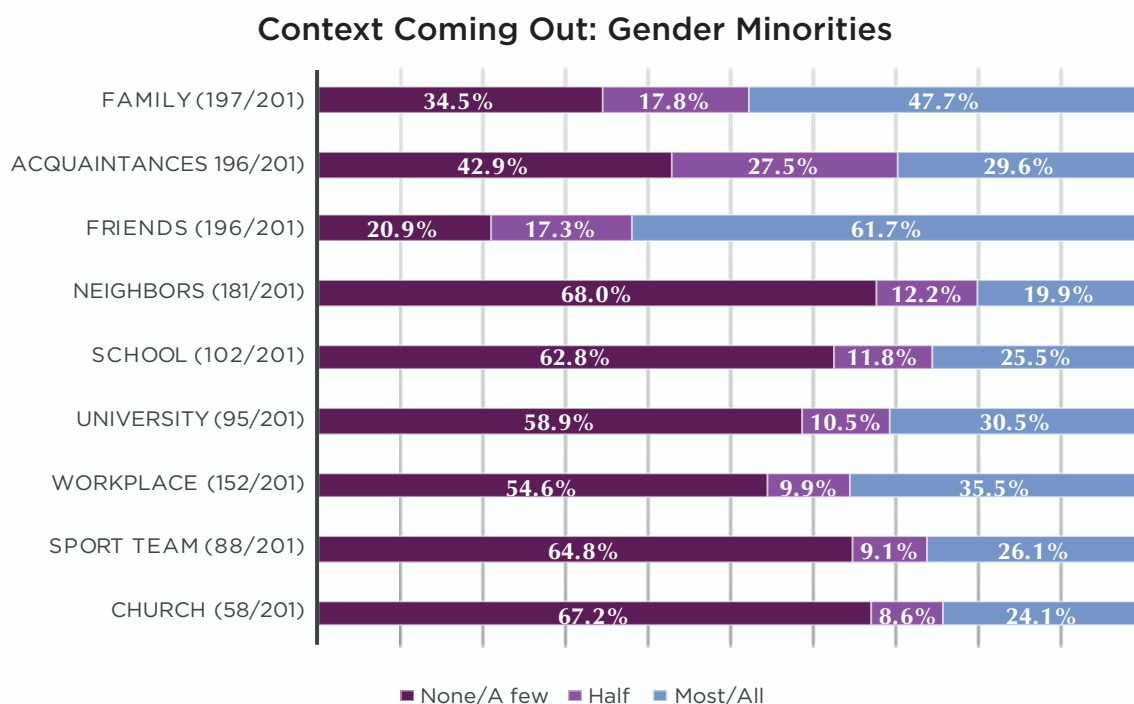


Figure 4. Context of Coming Out Among Gender Minority Members

## SECTION 2: SUPPORT AND EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION

### SUPPORT BY DIFFERENT GROUPS

In this section, we present findings related to support and experienced discrimination. First, members of sexual and gender minorities were asked to indicate how supported they felt in different contexts (see Figure 5). Respondents could choose values from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Totally*) or that a context was not applicable for them (e.g., if they do not participate in any sports). Thus, higher numbers correspond to higher perceived support. Please note that valid numbers of responses vary widely between contexts (from 267 to 1'264 responses for sexual minorities and 52 to 194 for gender minorities). For instance, the level of felt support from the church context reported in Figure 5 corresponds to answers from 267 sexual minority participants for whom the church context was relevant/applicable.

Both members of sexual and gender minorities reported that they felt most supported by their friends, followed by the LGBTIQ+ scene, and their families. Respondents reported mixed support from their neighbors, school, university, workplace, and sports team, and felt little support from their church/other religious settings. Overall, members of gender minorities felt less supported than members of sexual minorities.

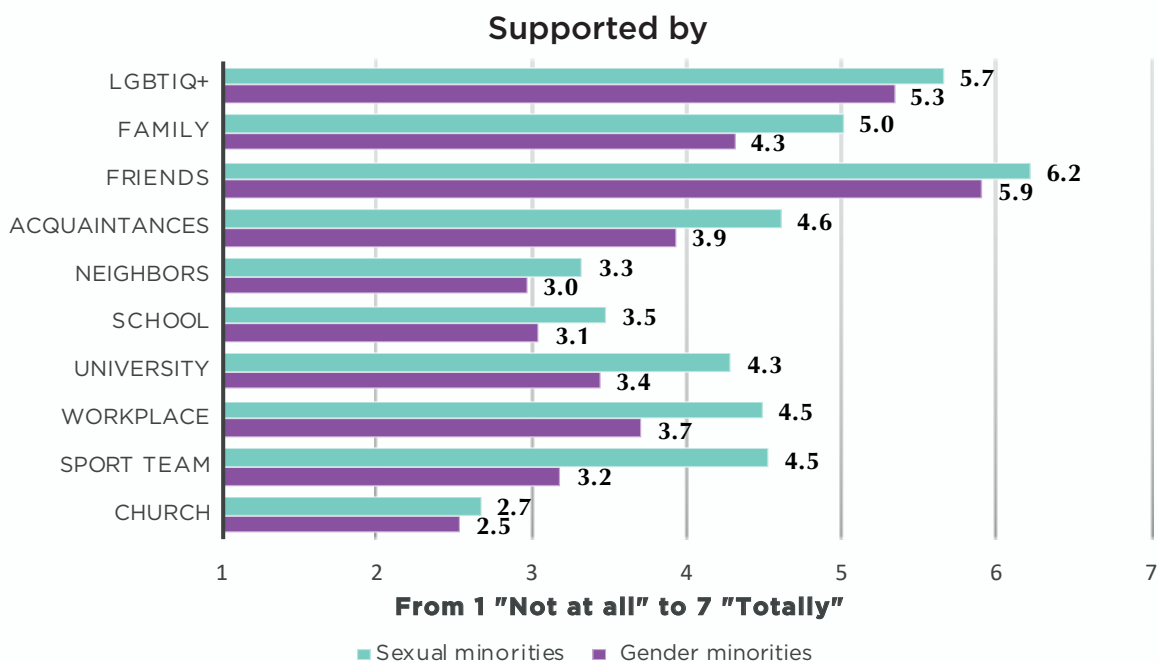


Figure 5. Support by Social Group

## EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION

Next, members of sexual and gender minorities were asked to indicate how often they experienced different types of discrimination in the past 12 months. We grouped the answers into two categories: yes, experienced discrimination in the past 12 months vs. no, experienced no discrimination in the past 12 months. In Figure 6, we report the proportion of people who experienced a particular form of discrimination. Based on previous feedback from our participants, we added unwanted disclosure and being stared at in public spaces.

A large majority of both members of sexual and gender minorities reported that they have been exposed to jokes, felt that their sexual orientation/gender identity has been not taken seriously, and that people stare at them in public spaces. A large majority of members of gender minorities furthermore reported structural discrimination, unwanted disclosure, and social exclusion. Importantly, 16% of gender minority members and 8% of sexual minority members reported having been the target of physical violence within the last year. When comparing individual subgroups, lesbian, bi-, and pansexual women as well as trans respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment by men, while this seems to be less of a problem for gay men.

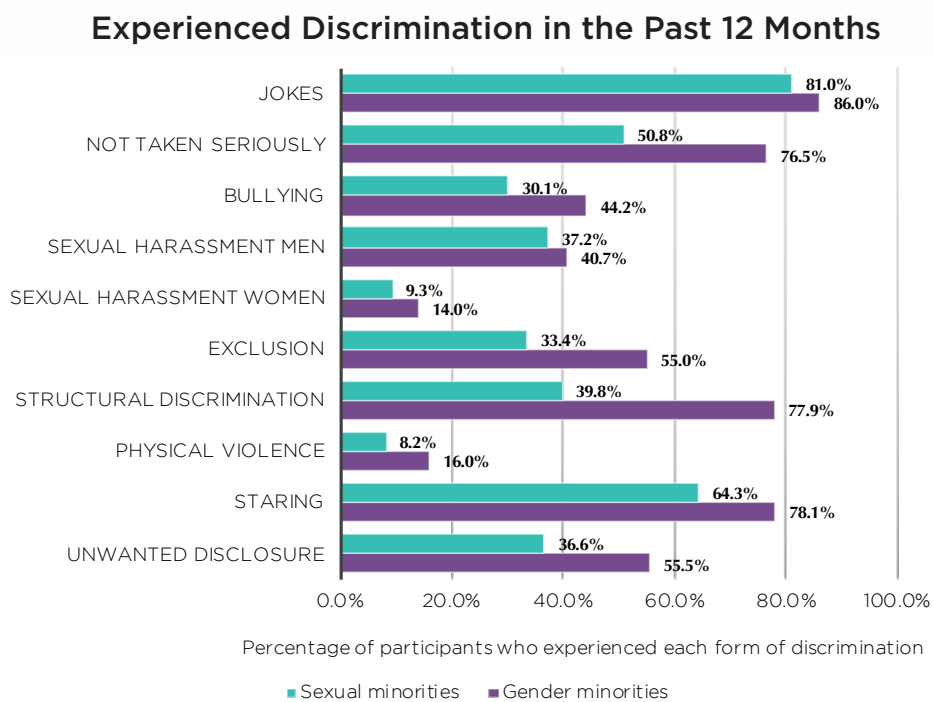


Figure 6. Types of Experienced Discrimination

## CONTEXTS OF DISCRIMINATION

Because we know that discrimination can occur in very different situations, we wanted to get a better understanding of the contexts in which LGBTIQ+ individuals feel discriminated against. Again, respondents could choose values from 1 (*Never*) to 7 (*Very often*) or that a context was not applicable to them. Please keep in mind that numbers of valid responses vary widely between contexts (from 338 to 1'207 responses for sexual minorities and 47 to 181 for gender minorities). Members of gender minorities reported experiencing more discrimination in all contexts assessed (see Figure 7). Gender minority participants reported that they sometimes experience discrimination by legal institutions, in school, university, the workplace, church/other religious settings, hospitals, public spaces, and by their families (all means around 3). Members of sexual minorities reported that they more often experienced discrimination in public spaces, church, and by legal institutions (all means above 2) than in other contexts.

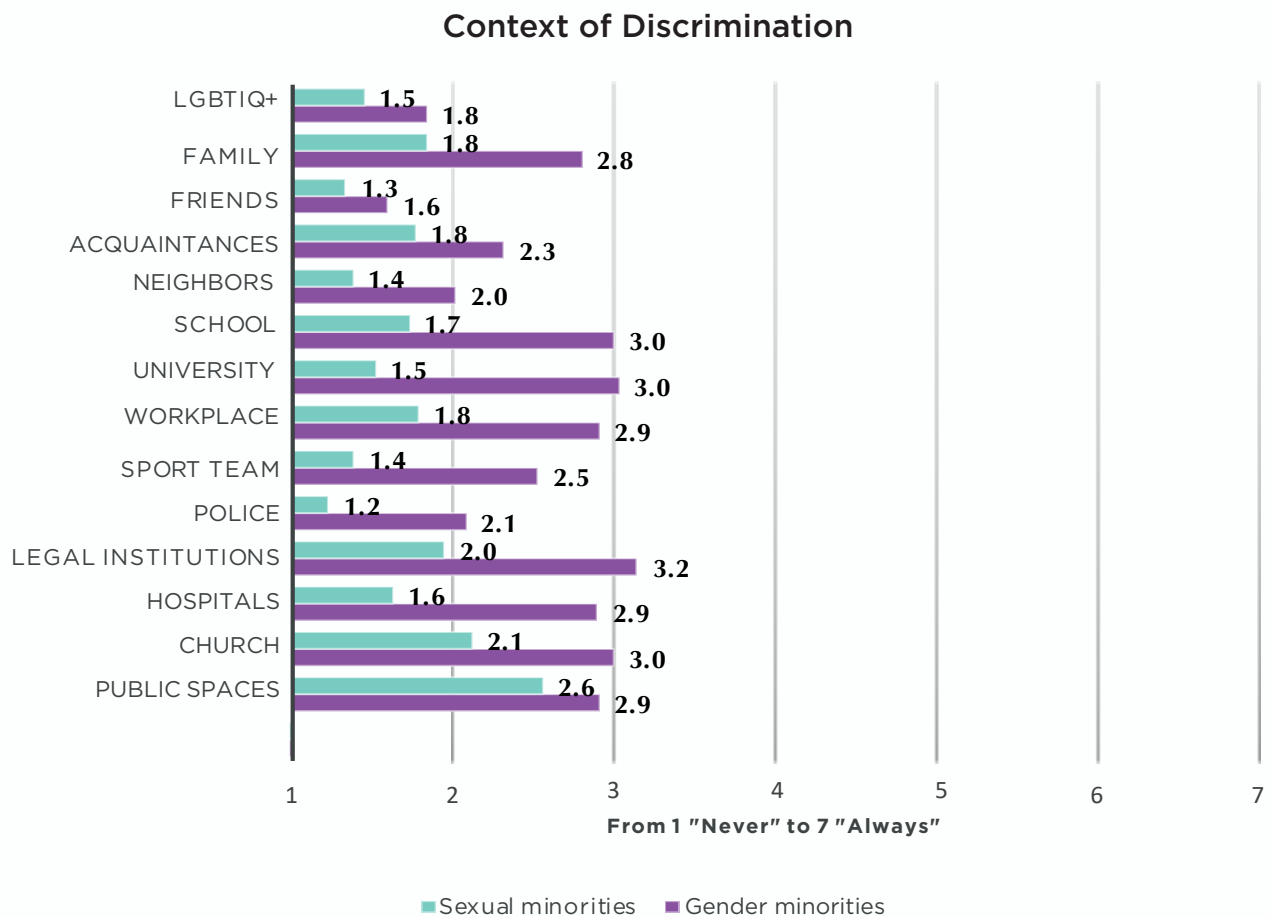


Figure 7. Context of Discrimination

# SECTION 3: SCHOOL CONTEXT

## EXPERIENCES AT SCHOOL

Last year, we asked participants to indicate what topics we should address in the future. The school context was one of the most named. Therefore, we decided to add a section on experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals at school. Participants were asked to indicate whether the topics of sexual orientation and/or gender identity were addressed at school. In general, both topics were rarely addressed at school: A majority of the participants (64.4%, 1'153 persons) indicated that neither sexual orientation nor gender identity were addressed at school. Only 6.4% (115 persons) of participants indicated that both sexual orientation and gender identity were addressed. Another 21.3% (381 persons) indicated that sexual orientation but not gender identity was discussed at school, while 1.3% (24 persons) indicated that gender identity but not sexual orientation was discussed at school. Finally, 6.5% (116 persons) indicated being unsure. Because the situation has changed over time, we looked at the differences in responses between age groups (under 21, 21-30, 31-40, over 40 years old). Results displayed in Figure 8 indicate that sexual orientation and to a lesser extent gender identity are increasingly discussed at school. Yet, 50% of the youngest respondents still report that sexual orientation and gender identity have not been discussed at all in school.

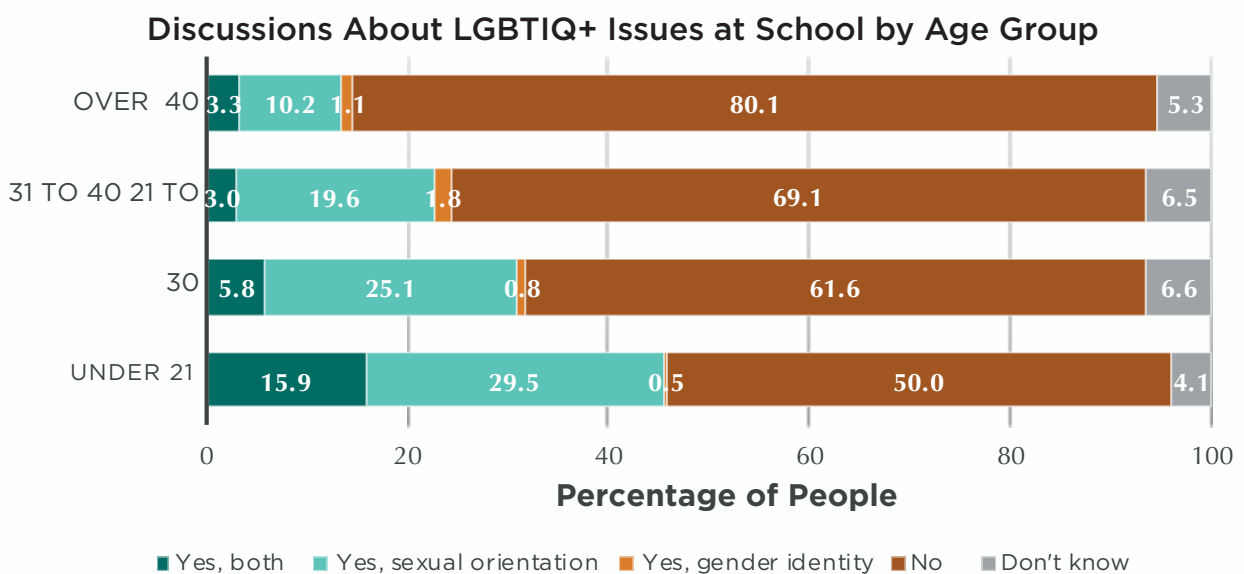


Figure 8. Discussions at School by Age Groups

## EXPERIENCES AT SCHOOL

To gather experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals at school, we asked respondents to write down their experiences belonging to a sexual and/or gender minority at school. Below, you can find some selected answers (we chose answers in the respective language; thus, the quotes differ across the English, French, German, and Italian versions of the report).

“I felt like I had to hide it. I was terrified some people would notice something was different about me.”  
- 24-year-old lesbian

“Very difficult. It was basically impossible for me to come out. It would have meant almost total social exclusion, and many, many jokes and bullying.”  
- 29-year-old bisexual man

“The school uses the gender-star (\*) between gendered nouns addressing people and I find that very important because it makes me feel seen and valid.”  
- trans non-binary person

“Being the weird one and kind of looked at as «oh she's just like that». I was excluded from parties and sexually assaulted at the ones I attended on the grounds that bisexual people want sexual encounters all the time, and that we're promiscuous.”  
- 21-year-old bisexual woman

“I was not out - got beaten up anyways.”  
- 54-year-old gay man

“The constant heteronormative assumptions by my friends made it very difficult to come out to them without feeling as if I had been lying to them, even though I hadn't been. Once, our class discussed the topic of marriage equality on a day when I was absent, and I was horrified to find out that some of my classmates had been strong opponents to it.”  
- 17-year-old gay man

“Out of hundreds of pupils, only one was publicly out and he was heavily bullied for it. It felt like a very hostile environment and not safe for coming out, so no one did. In the years after graduating, so many of my classmates did, indicating I was not the only one struggling. But none of us talked about it.”  
- 26-year-old gay man

“There is no effort made to include LGBTIQ+ people in public school. We often are seen as outsiders; no education is made about our rights and the discrimination we are victims of. Sex education classes and biology classes forget us completely. It was quite violent to have powerful people completely washing away any identity that wasn't heteronormative or binary, especially when they could have used this power and those subjects to tell other people about us. I also know it was way more violent for people who had already figured out they were part of the LGBTIQ+ community (I only identified as an ally at the time of public school).”  
- 20-year-old trans nonbinary person

“I came out during school. Most people were supportive or didn't care, and the exposure to other LGBTQ+ people definitely helped me accept myself.”  
- 16-year-old lesbian woman

## WHAT COULD HELP/COULD HAVE HELPED?

Finally, we asked respondents to indicate what helped them or what would have helped them being an LGBTIQ+ individual in school.

“It would have helped if teachers would have been more inclusive (when they were talking in general and in sex education classes) and firmly stood up against homo/trans-phobic bullying. Also, if there would have been more education around LGBTIQ+ issues in general.”  
- 22-year-old bisexual woman

“No one was visible at school: there were no gay kids, no gay teachers, no gay parents - it basically didn't exist. I don't want to think how it would have been to be a trans kid in such an environment.”  
- 33-year-old bisexual woman

“It helped that there were others who were openly out. More representation would have been nice though. Our teachers only talked about heterosexual relationships (even during lessons which would not have needed any analogies in that department) and the topic of gender identity etc. was never breached. It would have been nice to have another point of view.”  
- 21-year-old asexual woman

“Having more LGBTIQ+ role models.”  
- 28-year-old gay man

“Supportive teachers, LGBT education and awareness in school, in courses. And also LGBT presence in general. In school books, on posters or advertisement (not always show heterosexual couples) etc. Basically, VISIBILITY and a strong commitment from the school management to punish bullying/discrimination in this regard. Also, it is important for heterosexual people at school to understand what LGBT people are undergoing. This of course is not only important for LGBT but for everyone, for the society.” - 29-year-old bisexual man

“That teachers (+the media) would talk more about it in general and especially in a positive light. 90% of the time I was hearing about the LGBTIQ+ community as a child, it appeared like a problem. [...] It would have tremendously helped me to see some positive coming out stories or just older members of the LGBTIQ+ community living a happy and fulfilling life.”  
- 24-year-old lesbian woman

“[...]The teachers need to model acceptance, the staff as well, they need to prove that they have zero tolerance for abuse, mobbing, bullying, assault, sexism, racism, or other negative behaviors like that [...].”  
- 40-year-old queer woman

“My friends helped me a lot, having a community or group that you can rely on and share with. At university, knowing that there were a few queer inclusive associations was also helpful. It would have helped to hear more about us (and other minorities and oppressed communities). Inclusive and neutral language would have been great, nonbinary bathrooms too, but firstly being introduced through the class material (bio, sex ed, philosophy, history, law...) to those issues and getting out of this white binary heteronormative view of everything...”  
- 20-year-old non-binary trans person



# SECTION 4: WELL-BEING

In this section we report on respondents' subjective well-being. We asked sexual and gender minority members as well as cis-heterosexual respondents about both their positive affect (i.e., feeling enthusiastic, happy, and satisfied) and their negative affect (i.e., feeling sad, helpless, and rejected) in the last 12 months (see Figure 9). This allowed us to compare the well-being between the respondents. Values range from 1 (*Very rarely*) to 7 (*Very frequently*), thus higher numbers indicate both higher positive and negative affect. Cis-heterosexual respondents and members of sexual minorities do not significantly differ in positive affect and negative affect, while members of gender minorities report slightly less positive affect and more negative affect. This indicates that members of gender minorities feel worse off than both cis-heterosexual individuals and members of sexual minorities.

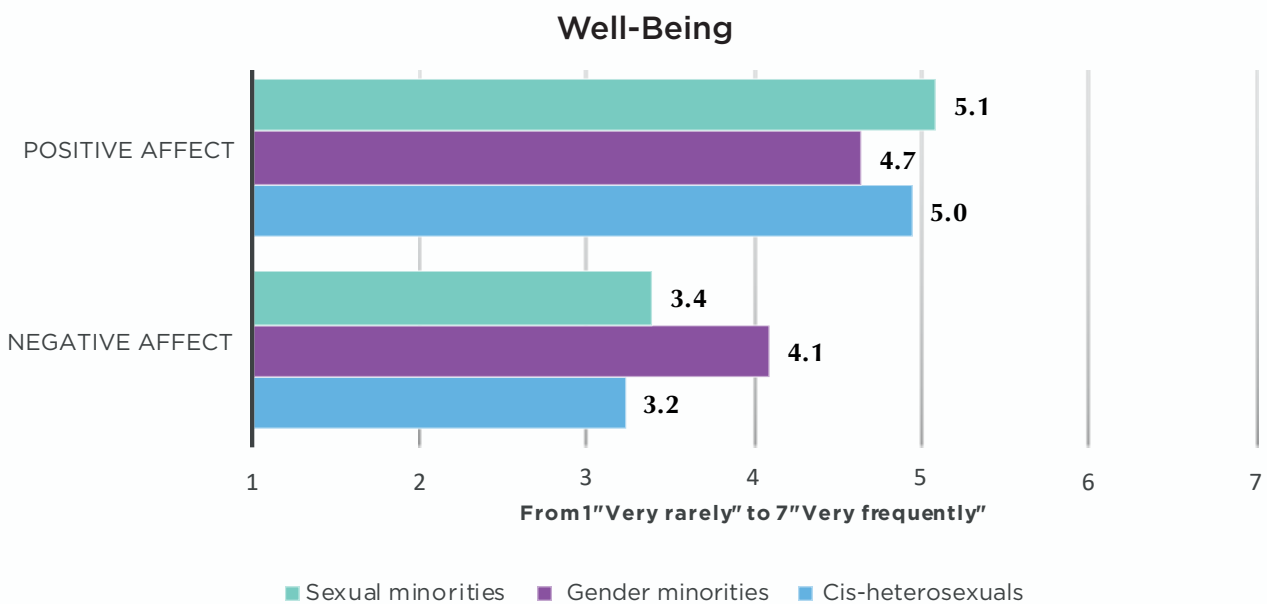


Figure 9. Well-Being

# SECTION 5: SITUATION IN SWITZERLAND

## WISH TO GET MARRIED AND HAVE CHILDREN

Currently, LGBTIQ+ individuals in Switzerland are not allowed to marry, adopt children other than the child of their partner, or use assisted procreation. Because same-sex marriage and assisted procreation are currently being discussed in the Swiss government, we asked participants to indicate whether they wish to get married (see Figure 10) and to have children (see Figure 11).

We first report the proportion of people who are not married but wish to do so. Results indicate that more than half of the sexual minority participants (55.1%, 712 people) wish to get married despite not currently being allowed to do so. Furthermore, one quarter of gender minority participants (27.7%, 51 people) wish to get married.

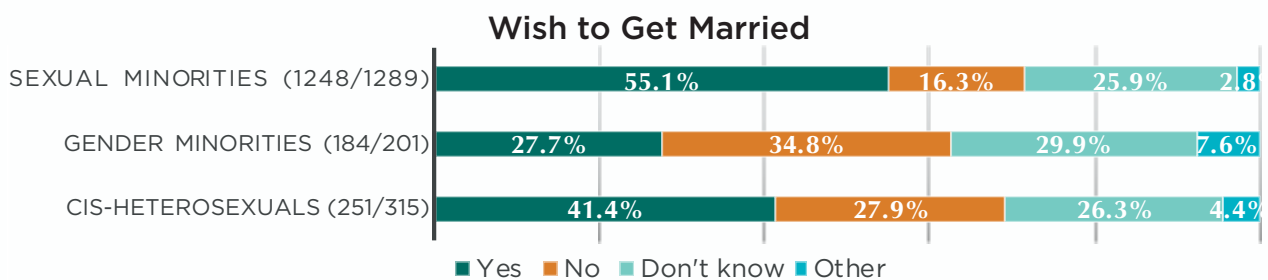


Figure 10. Wish to Get Married

Next, we report the proportion of people who currently do not have children but wish to have children. Therefore, participants who already have children were not included (9.0%, 116 sexual minority participants; 17.9%, 36 gender minority participants; and 24.8%, 78 cis-heterosexual participants). Of the childless participants, more than one third of sexual minority (35.6%, 418 people), one fifth of gender minority (21.8%, 36 people), and half of the cis-heterosexual participants (56.1%, 133 people) indicated that they want to have children.

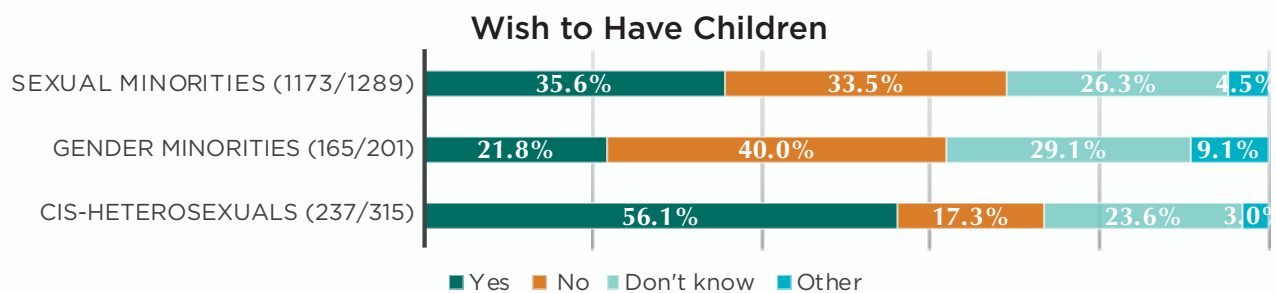


Figure 11. Wish to Have Children

## FEBRUARY VOTING: EXTENDING THE DISCRIMINATION LAW

Political changes regarding same sex marriage and assisted procreation are currently discussed in the parliament. Furthermore, 2020 saw a popular vote on discrimination. On the 9th of February 2020, 63.1% of Swiss citizens voted in favor of extending the discrimination law to include sexual orientation. Please note, however, that gender identity is still not included in this law, even though our data reveal that members of gender minorities face more discrimination than sexual minority members. We asked people who participated in our survey **before February 8th** to indicate their willingness to participate in the vote, the expected outcome of the vote, and their awareness of campaigns against and/or in favor of the law change.

We found similar patterns between sexual minority, gender minority, and cis-heterosexual participants for the expected outcome of the vote and intentions to vote. On average, participants expected that around 55.2% of Swiss citizens would vote in favor of the law (compared to 63.1% in the actual voting). Further, the vast majority (85.6%) of participants were planning to vote.

While the campaign awareness did not differ between sexual and gender minority participants, cis-heterosexual participants were less likely to have seen a campaign about the voting than LGBTIQ+ individuals. Indeed, many LGBTIQ+ participants (36.1%) only saw a campaign in favor of the extension of the law, 27.9% saw campaigns from both sides, 7.0% only saw a campaign against the extension of the discrimination law, and 29.1% did not see any campaign. Among cis-heterosexual participants, 23.3% cis-heterosexual participants only saw a campaign in favor of the extension of the law, 16.0% saw campaigns from both sides, 2.9% only saw a campaign against the extension of the discrimination law, and a majority of cis-heterosexual participants (57.8%) did not see any campaign. Thus, the topic was less salient among those individuals less directly affected by it.

## SECTION 6: POST-VOTING SURVEY

### ENGAGEMENT

The public vote on extending the anti-discrimination law allowed us to investigate the impact of political changes on both LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual individuals. We re-contacted participants one month after the public vote on anti-discrimination to answer a few additional questions. In total, 636 individuals participated in both the post-voting survey and the main survey (473 sexual minority members, 88 gender minority members, and 75 cis-heterosexual individuals). Among all three groups, over 80% reported having voted (86.5% sexual minority members, 84.1% gender minority members, and 82.7% of cis-heterosexual individuals).

Before the vote, LGBTIQ+ individuals and allies engaged in various behaviors (e.g., putting up a rainbow flag) to encourage others to vote in favor of extending the antidiscrimination law. Below, we report the proportion of participants who indicated that they engaged in the relevant activity (see Figure 12). In general, most sexual minority, gender minority, and cis-heterosexual participants reported having talked to cis-heterosexual individuals to motivate them to vote. Further, we see differences between sexual/gender minorities and cis-heterosexual participants as the latter engaged significantly less than the former.

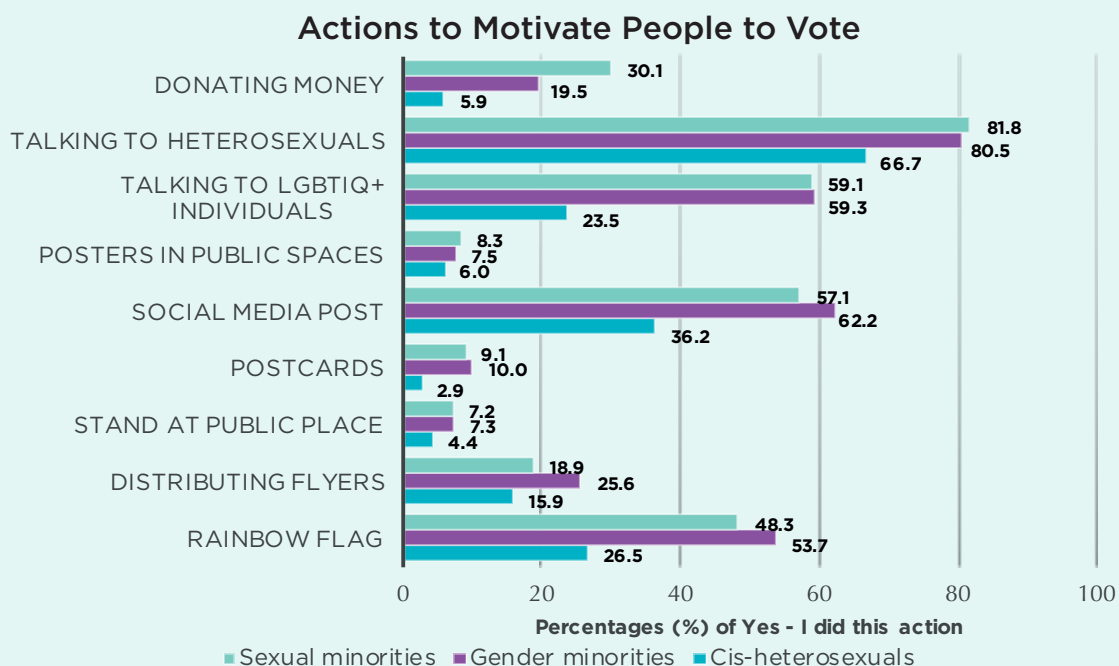


Figure 12. Actions to Motivate People to Vote - Post-voting Survey

## IMPACT OF THE VOTE AND CAMPAIGN

Next, we asked LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual participants to indicate how the political campaign around the vote as well as the outcome of the vote affected them. In general, many sexual minority, gender minority, and cis-heterosexual participants reported being relieved and/or happy about the outcome of the vote. Some were disappointed by the fact that only sexual orientation (and not also gender identity) was included in the law, while many participants reported a mixed feeling, being happy (especially about the proportion of yes in the French and Italian speaking parts of Switzerland) but still sad to see that more than 30% of people voted against the law change. For instance, someone wrote “I was really happy and relieved that the law passed. However, it is frustrating to see that there are still 37% of voters who don’t deem protection against discrimination important enough. Also, I’m angry that trans and intersex persons still won’t be protected”. Below you will find statements on how individuals perceived the impact of the campaign.

“Having a public discussion about LGBT thematic is often a moment where the people who are strongly homophobic (and LGBT-phobic) become public about their opinion, which can be very hurtful. Personally, I have the chance to have an accepting surrounding thus I had the chance to experience a lot of support. But I also experienced hate and I was once again reminded that basic human rights are sadly still neither basic nor accepted by everyone and even if it’s not the majority that is against the extension of the law, it’s enough to have a minority of homophobic people that will cause an incredible amount of damage.”  
- 25-year-old lesbian woman

“I appreciated the fact that people discussed the situation of LGBTIQIA+ people in Switzerland, I felt that we were more visible than usual.”  
- 27-year-old bisexual woman

“Some of my friends became more aware of the shockingly few rights that the LGBT community has in Switzerland (many were under the impression that anti-discrimination laws existed, and same sex marriage was legal).”  
- 19-year-old lesbian woman

“People who are not in favor of LGBTIQ+ rights tend to be relatively quiet about it most of the time, so it was very disheartening to see a political campaign against LGBTIQ+ rights in public life, however, it was also very supportive to see so many people and organizations outright stating their support for extending the discrimination law. Overall, a conflicted period.”  
- 27-year-old gay man

“As a trans and aromantic asexual individual, the results of it all did not concern me personally, since we seem to have been excluded from it early on (yes, I'm still bitter about that). But the discussions showed me once again how hateful and stupid some people are and how much I live in a bubble.”  
- 22-year-old asexual non-binary person

“It sucks to hear people (who don't know I'm queer) talk about how they planned either on voting against it or not voting at all.”  
- 27-year-old pansexual woman

“I was incredibly pleased to see my sexual orientation represented in a national campaign, the word «bisexuals» on posters at every corner <3 I was sad to see that the lack of protection for trans people was hardly mentioned.”  
- 30-year-old bisexual woman

“It gave further insights into the Swiss society's take on LGB rights.”  
- 31-year-old homosexual woman

## IMPACT OF THE VOTE ON WELL-BEING

We also assessed how the outcome of the vote impacted participants' well-being. Many challenges in 2020, such as the outbreak of Covid-19 and the debates around climate change, might have impacted people's well-being. We, therefore, asked participants to which degree their well-being was negatively or positively affected by different factors (see Figures 13, 14, 15).

In general, the large majority of sexual minority, gender minority, and cis-heterosexual participants reported being negatively affected by the outbreak of the virus and climate change. Please note that the survey was initiated in early March 2020 (right before the lockdown in Switzerland). Further, a majority of sexual minority participants (53.1%) indicated being positively affected by political changes such as voting on extending the anti-discrimination law to cover protection on the basis of one's sexual orientation. Fewer gender minority participants (42.9%) – who were not included in the antidiscrimination law– and even fewer cis-heterosexual participants (26.8%) reported being positively affected by political changes.

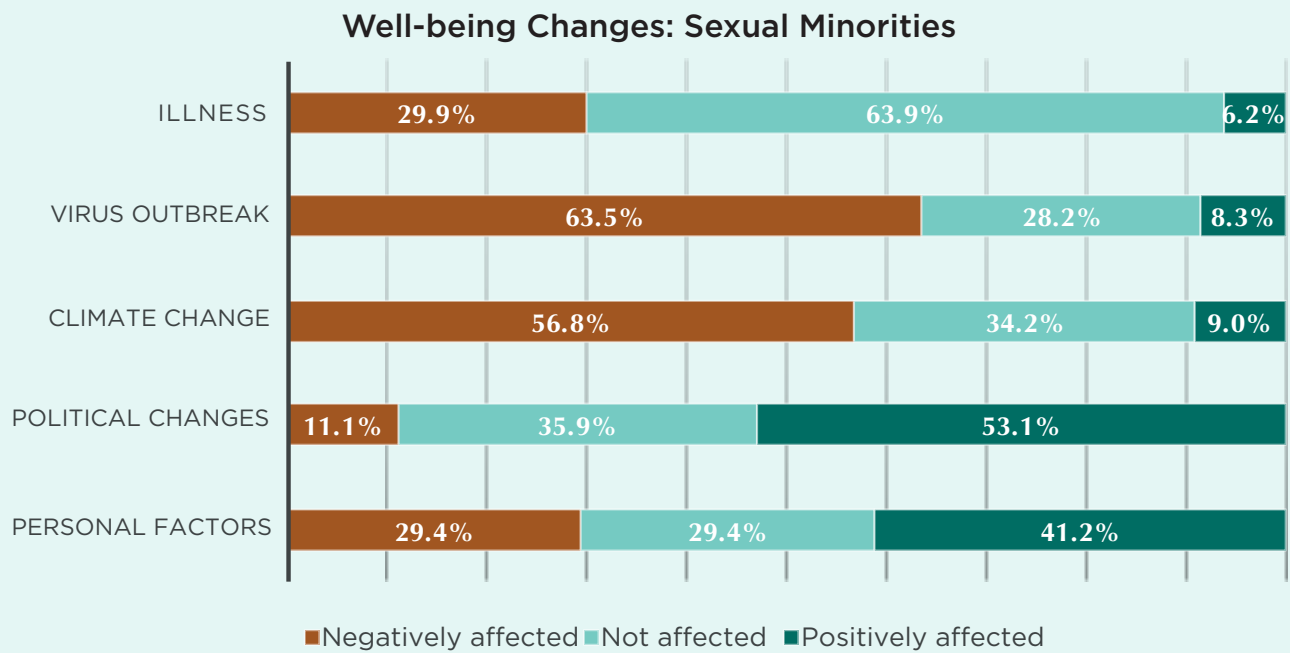


Figure 13. Changes in Well-being for Sexual Minorities – Post-voting Survey

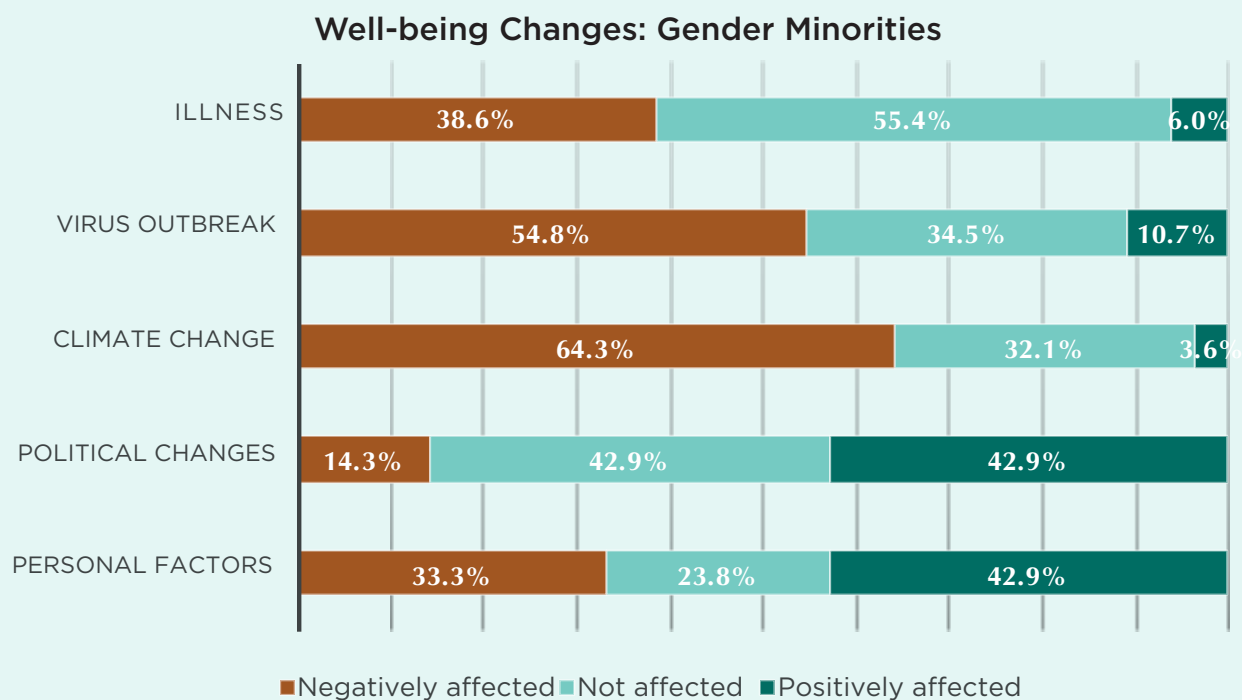


Figure 14. Changes in Well-being for Gender Minorities – Post-voting Survey

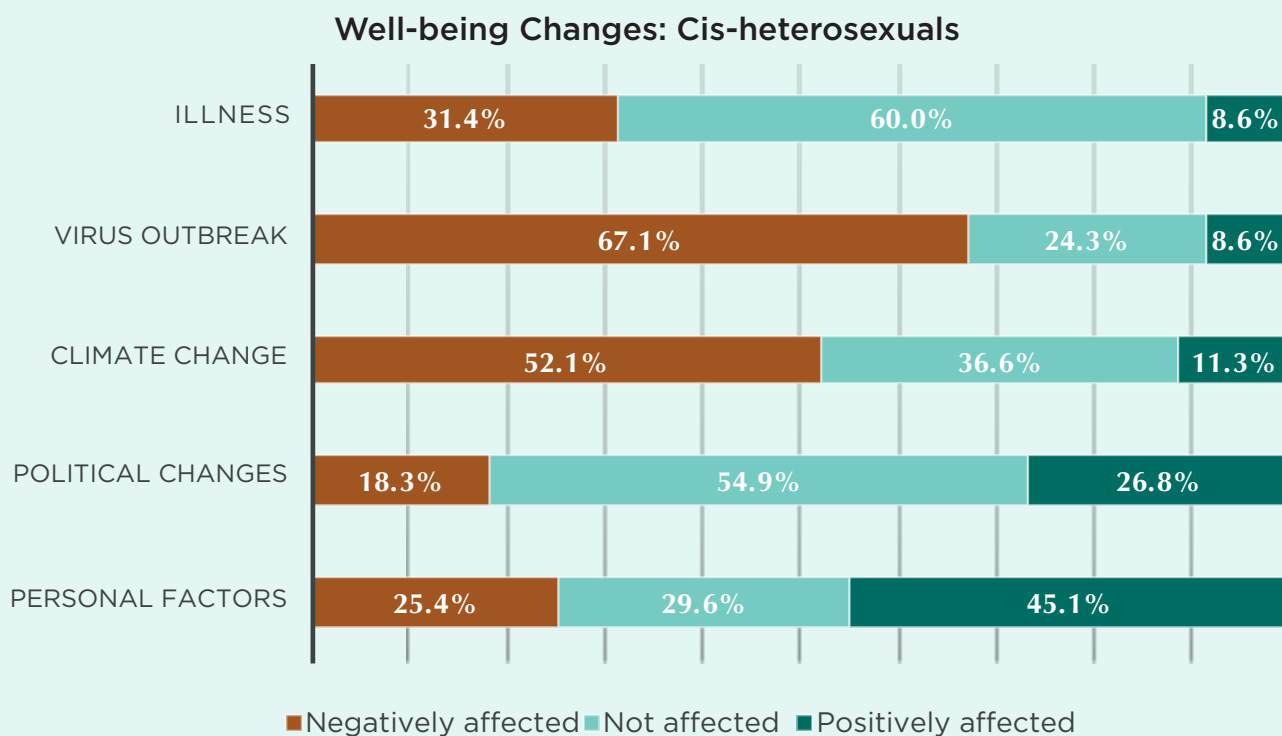


Figure 15. Changes in Well-being for Cis-heterosexual Participants – Post-voting Survey



## SECTION 7: FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The second wave of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel has been a great success thanks to the help of various LGBTIQ+ and other organizations, LGBTIQ+ magazines, student assistants, and individual efforts. In this 2020 summary report, we have provided an overview of the second wave of data collection. As in the previous wave, the data reveals that members of **sexual and gender minorities in Switzerland still face structural inequalities, experience discrimination, and do not feel fully accepted everywhere**. As in 2019, we find that these **inequalities are more pronounced among gender minority** members – such as trans and non-binary people – making them a particularly vulnerable group within the LGBTIQ+ community. This year's survey placed a specific focus on the **school context, where LGBTIQ+ individuals seem particularly vulnerable, and greater inclusiveness, visibility, and support from teachers and students are needed**. Another focus of this year's survey was the voting on extending the anti-discrimination law, which led to creative efforts to mobilize individuals but also mixed emotions. Many LGBTIQ+ individuals and cis-heterosexual allies reported feeling relieved, while some gender minority members reported feeling left out.

In the future, we would like to examine how the situation of LGBTIQ+ individuals is changing over time. We aim to report how experiences of discrimination, support, and contexts of coming out have changed since our first survey. Moreover, based on participants' answers to this year's survey about their personal experience in the LGBTIQ+ community (see selected answers on the next page), we aim to better understand **how LGBTIQ+ individuals with different backgrounds feel integrated into** the LGBTIQ+ community and **what can be done to make all people feel welcomed**. Finally, your help is vital to drawing valid conclusions. The Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel is only possible due to the support of many LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual individuals. Therefore, we want to thank you for your contribution and hope that many people will continue to participate in our panel in the future.

“I think as women we experience a mixture of homophobia and sexism where lesbians are often very sexualized / not taken seriously by men. Unfortunately, even in LGBT spaces there are sometimes guys who don't respect women's boundaries.”  
- 22-year-old lesbian woman

“Specific challenges are the high prevalence of STDs including HIV and that this is still overall not considered a big public health issue sometimes. The situation for gay men regarding adoption of children is even more difficult than for lesbian women, and there's much less support (plus surrogacy motherhoods are controversial). On the other hand, gay-cis men suffer from less systematic discrimination than (lesbian) women and/or trans people.”  
- 30-year-old gay man

“Bisexual people often aren't taken seriously, or there's a number of harmful stereotypes (being greedy, unable to decide, etc.) that can come from members of the LGBTIQ+ community or from outside that community.”  
- 25-year-old bisexual woman

“As a pansexual person some people expect of me to think of everyone as attractive or feel an attraction to everyone since it doesn't matter who and only their character.”  
- 20-year-old pansexual woman

“The biggest issue for asexuals is the medicalisation of our sexual identity. [...] Medical and mental health personnel often try to fix the wrong. It is noteworthy to say that the asexual person in question is likely to experience those things even if they are sex positive and enjoy having sex. [...] Society in general often either assumes something is wrong with us for not feeling sexual attraction or accuse us of making it all up to be special. [...]”  
- 22-year-old asexual woman

“Homosexuality in the binary experience is slowly starting to find its place in society. Yet the fluidity in sexuality as well and gender identity and all the individuals that do not associate with a clear letter (L-G-B-T) are neglected by society. Regarding the discrimination in the community, race and gender raise walls.”  
- 20-year-old non-binary queer person

“Difficulty living as our identity in «serious» social groups (workplace, university) if we haven't fully transitioned to the point where it is unnoticeable. Very hard to find romantic/sexual partners. The process of transitioning is still very blurry in terms of where to go/what is required/support groups or organizations etc. In the LGBTQ community: some gay/bi people don't see trans people as real (rare but I've seen it). Usually being trans and homosexual can be viewed badly especially lesbian trans women.”  
- 19-year-old trans man

“I think in Switzerland, people don't see nonbinary people as trans or even as a valid gender identity [...]. I have to educate my friends and family about the LGBTIQ+ community and explain my sexuality and gender identity. Furthermore, I think that cishets /society doesn't understand why certain words they use are offensive and insensitive, which is something I find sad. However, living [...] in Switzerland in general isn't the worst place for queer people and there is a friendly, warm and loving community here, even for people my age.”  
- non-binary trans person

## CONTACT DETAILS

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