

# **TRANS DISCRIMINATION IN EUROPE**

**A TGEU ANALYSIS OF THE  
FRA LGBTI SURVEY 2019**





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### **Trans Discrimination in Europe. A TGEU analysis of the FRA LGBTI Survey 2019.**

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# SUMMARY

The present report presents selected data from the LGBTI Survey 2019 conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) with a focus on the 20.933 trans respondents. This is the largest survey on trans people in Europe.



This report discusses the socio-demographic situation, life satisfaction, level of openness, experiences with trans-specific legal and medical procedures, and exposure to discrimination, violence, and harassment. It aims at reducing the gap regarding available data on the lived experiences of trans people in Europe.

In 2019, FRA published a first overview of the findings without details of the trans sample or an intersectional analysis. This report takes an intersectional approach by focusing on the experiences of those trans people who are further impacted by racism, ableism, homophobia, xenophobia, poverty, or childcare-duties.

Trans people in the survey tended to be young, non-binary, non-religious, and non-

heterosexual. We found that young and non-binary respondents were less happy and less open about their gender identity. Both groups had less opportunity to access essential procedures, such as legal gender recognition and trans-specific healthcare, which are related to the level of life satisfaction.

The employment situation of trans people in general, and disabled trans people, trans women, and racialised trans people in particular, shows the need for more dedicated efforts to bring them out of unemployment, low-paying jobs, and unpaid work. Trans people with migrant and/or ethnic minority backgrounds and trans parents require special attention to mitigate their increased risk of becoming homeless or facing housing difficulties.

Discrimination is rampant in all areas of life, but trans people are uniquely affected whenever they need to show identity documents. Trans women experience the highest level of harassment, while young trans people face shockingly-high numbers of physical attacks. Meanwhile, for harassment amongst members of a religious group, trans Jews reported the highest level of harassment.

The findings in this report underline how diverse trans people are and highlight the need for dedicated measures to account for this diversity.

Moreover, they should be a wake-up call to improve and rigorously enforce EU and national measures to better trans people's legal and socio-economic situation. If taken on with vigour, the EU LGBTI Strategy can be an important tool to advance the position of trans people in the EU, with dedicated projects such as outlawing hate crime and hate speech, focused action under the European Social Fund+ (ESF+), as well as other EU funding programmes and the forthcoming EU Equality Bodies Directive.

# KEY FINDINGS

- 1.** Trans respondents are **less satisfied** with their lives (5,6) than the EU average (7,3) and a bit less if compared with seven years ago (6). Legal and medical transition frameworks and life satisfaction correlate: better facilities in a country makes it more likely for the trans population to be open about their gender identity and, finally, to be happier.
- 2.** Most trans people in the survey identify as **non-binary**. Their experiences and perspectives differ fundamentally from those of trans women and trans men. A great majority of non-binary respondents (96%) had not obtained legal gender recognition or accessed trans-specific healthcare.
- 3.** Trans respondents are rather **young**. Young trans people score the lowest in life satisfaction. 3 in 4 teenagers (76%) have gotten attacked, making trans youth (15-17 years) the most hassled out of all age groups surveyed. Moreover, an alarming 5% of them had already experienced homelessness.
- 4.** **1 in 3 trans persons is out about** their gender identity. Young and non-binary people are the least open about their gender identity.
- 5.** Trans people are more likely to be **unemployed** (8%) or out of the workforce (43%) than the average population (6-7% and 27%, respectively). Having a migrant or ethnic minority background makes it more likely to be in unpaid occupations. Disabled trans people and, in particular, disabled trans women, are more likely to be unemployed. Trans men are more likely to be amongst the working poor.
- 6.** More than half of trans migrants/those with an ethnic minority background (59%) experienced some form of **homelessness**. Trans parents are also more likely to face housing difficulties.
- 7.** 1 in 4 trans respondents is a **parent**. This is remarkable given the decades of legal provisions and societal pressure to remain childless. However, 22% of them are not legal guardians to their children, which leads to structural barriers. Trans women are the least likely to have legal guardianship of their biological children. These are alarming findings also from the perspective of the children and their wellbeing.

8. At least 1 in 4 respondents had experienced **discrimination** in central aspects of their lives. The most unsafe space is in **healthcare** (30-46%), with an alarming 3% reporting physical and sexual violence, and **education** (25-39%). **Showing one's identification documents** often results in discrimination for trans people (20-32%), but not for cis LGB respondents.

9. Trans people are far more likely than their cis LGB peers to get in-person **harrasment**, with 1 in 3 reporting this. Trans women receive the highest amount of harassment and **violence**: 55% reported harassment and 1 in 4 experienced violence. Trans minors are the most likely of all age groups surveyed to get harassed. Amongst all religious subpopulations, Jewish trans people (68%) get the most harassed.

10. The most common **reason for not reporting to the police** is the belief that the police could not or would not do anything about it. This is striking given that trans victims of violence know the perpetrator(s) in every other case, making a conviction more probable.

11. Trans people tend to be far less likely to be **religious**: 63% are non-believers in contrast to 16% of the average population. For those who are religious, their level of openness about their gender identity is strongly related to their religion. The overwhelming majority of the trans population is **not heterosexual**: 89% stated a different sexual orientation.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

- EU member States should ensure appropriate **legal and policy framework** for trans people:

- Legal gender recognition procedures need to be quick, transparent, accessible based on self-determination and accessible without age barriers.

For more recommendations on legal gender recognition, see [TGEU \(2016\) Toolkit “Legal Gender Recognition in Europe.”](#)

- Quality trans-specific healthcare needs to be made available based on informed consent and accessible through public insurance coverage.

For more recommendations on human rights compliant frameworks on trans-specific healthcare, see [TGEU \(2019\) Guidelines to Human Rights-based Trans-specific Healthcare.](#)

- Both legal and medical pathways need to be accessible, particularly for non-binary and young trans people.
- As long as gender markers are mandatorily-registered, governments should introduce “x” or other alternatives to “male” and “female”.

## FOCUS ON TRANS YOUTH

- EU and national policy makers should immediately act on the dire situation of trans **youth**, especially trans minors. Schools, social and family services, healthcare providers, and the police need to be sensitised as a matter of urgency. These institutions need to implement effective policies to create a safe, welcoming, and empowering environment for trans and gender-diverse children and youth. Discrimination, by peers or adults alike, should be met with zero tolerance. Government actors as well as civil society organisations representing and servicing the trans population need to better account for the needs of non-binary people.

## TARGET THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE MOST MARGINALISED

- To improve the **socio-economic position** of vulnerable trans people, the EU should ensure that provision of public funding, including from the ESF+, European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), is conditional to being trans-inclusive. Targeted funding should be set aside specifically to support trans people in finding and remaining in stable employment and housing, especially trans women, disabled trans people, trans people with a migration background, and trans parents.
- Employers should adopt affirmative action policies to target and employ trans people, especially trans women, disabled, and racialised trans people. Where this is not possible, employers should use anonymised processes to minimise discrimination in early stages of the recruitment.

- National governments should establish and implement appropriate strategies to prevent discrimination on grounds of gender identity and gender expression in employment and occupation, both in the public and the private sector as well as by third sector service providers.

For more recommendations on improving the socio-economic position of trans people, see [TGEU \(2021\) \*Trans & Poverty. Poverty and economic insecurity in trans communities in the EU.\*](#)

- As a matter of priority, the EU, national governments, and municipalities should fund trans organisations that are supporting trans people to find **housing** and employment, focusing especially on the most marginalised groups within the trans community.

For more recommendations on ending homelessness amongst trans people, see [TGEU \(2021\) \*Coming Home: homelessness among trans people in the EU.\*](#)

## CURB DISCRIMINATION

- National governments and civil society should ensure trans people know their rights to protection and non-**discrimination**.
- National governments should include gender identity and gender expression as protected grounds in anti-discrimination legislations for all areas of life, including access to employment, healthcare, education, housing, goods, and services.
- Any future Directive on Equality Bodies should ensure national Equality Bodies include gender identity and gender expression into their mandates and take an intersectional approach to prevent and combat discrimination.

## COMBAT VIOLENCE

- EU Member States should **criminalise discrimination** motivated by gender identity.
- The EU should **extend the list of EU crimes** by hate crimes, including those motivated on grounds of gender identity.
- National governments should include gender identity and gender expression as a **bias motivation in hate crime and hate speech legislation**. To date only 12 EU Member States have done this.
- The EU and national governments should ensure a **trans-sensitive implementation of the EU Victims' Rights Directive**. This should include structures for proper prevention, protection and support measures for trans victims of crime.

- National governments should **decriminalise all aspects of sex work** with meaningful involvement of sex worker communities;
- The EU and national governments should set up **funding** programmes for trans community organisations that provide psycho-social, legal, and physical (shelters) support to trans victims of harassment and violence, especially focusing on trans women, disabled, racialised, and minor trans people.

For more recommendations on how to end violence against trans people, see [TGEU \(2021\) Policy brief: Europe and Central Asia must do more to protect the lives of trans people.](#)

## CONDUCT FURTHER RESEARCH

- The FRA survey design does not allow a sensible analysis of the experiences of racialised trans people. A newly-found awareness of Europe's role in benefiting from institutionalised racism globally has brought a sharpened interest into the lived experiences of racialised communities in the region. Any future research on trans people, or indeed the general population, needs to reflect this. Studies should differentiate between migrant and ethnic minority backgrounds. To meaningfully engage Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and migrant trans communities as well as ensure future research is targeted and reflects the needs and experiences of these communities, any design and implementation should involve them.



# INTRODUCTION

Throughout the last years, trans people have gained rights and visibility that were unthinkable a few decades ago. The World Health Organisation (WHO) no longer considers trans identities as mental illnesses. More trans people than ever are able to come out publicly. Never have more trans people in Europe been able to self-determine their gender identity and be recognised as such by the state.

At the same time, many people still don't personally know a trans person, which makes them vulnerable to misinformation and manipulation. We observe a trend of cross-border anti-equality rhetoric and organising targeting the human rights of trans people. More broadly, this threatens women, human rights, and open societies. Trans people and the LGBTI community is, for some, just the entry-point to push societies away from democracy.

Hence it is more important than ever to shed light on the lives of trans people in Europe and to collect data on their experiences. 20.933 trans people from the EU, UK, Northern Macedonia, and Serbia participated in the second and largest LGBTI survey conducted by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). Albeit not representative, it remains the largest trans survey in Europe to date. This report presents data from FRA's 2019 LGBTI survey and focuses on the human rights situation of trans people in the EU, UK, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

Within this report we discuss experiences of trans people in regard to violence, harassment, discrimination, access to legal and medical transition, and life satisfaction. The general data is presented with an intersectional focus. We aim to acknowledge the diversity among trans people in Europe and bring light to the disproportionate impact of violence, harassment, and discrimination faced by trans people who are marginalised on intersecting and multiple grounds.

The report provides a clear view of the harsh reality of trans lives in Europe today. Trans people who self-identify as part of a minority in terms of disability and as part of an ethnic minority experience even more violence, harassment, and discrimination. **Trans people are not safe in Europe. But make no mistake: this report also speaks to trans people's resilience, dignity, courage, and resolve.**

The relevant institutions and society at large have a collective responsibility to ensure that all its members are leading safe, healthy, and productive lives, free from violence, harassment, and discrimination. EU Commission president Ursula von der Leyen proclaimed the EU to be a Union of Equality also for trans people: "Because being yourself is not your ideology. It's your identity. And no one can ever take it away."<sup>1</sup> So let this be a call to action for all of us. Human dignity and human rights can never be optional in a Union of Equality.

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission. (2020) *State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen at the European Parliament Plenary*. 16 September 2020

The report focuses on the experiences of trans people with violence, harassment, and discrimination. Using an intersectional perspective, the report also acknowledges the effects of structural, institutional, and societal violence and reviews the intersections between race/ethnicity and migration, sexual orientation, age, (dis)ability, religion, economic position, experiences of homelessness, parenthood, among others. It highlights that, although all trans people are at increased risk of violence, harassment, and discrimination, trans people with intersecting marginalised experiences are at greatest risk.

The data showed some expected and unexpected results. An online survey needs to be treated with caution as it has the tendency to reach those better off. Still, it is the largest dataset on trans people in Europe to date, providing precious insights. We have definitely not exhausted all of the information available and invite community-driven research to further explore it so we can better understand the lives of trans people in Europe today.

This research would not have been possible without the support and collaboration with ILGA-Europe. In 2020, TGEU and ILGA-Europe teamed up for a project to retrieve and extract data from the survey for further publications on the different subpopulations, which was a precondition for this report. We thank Niamh Sheehan and Casper Kurpan for their insightful and respectful analysis and extraction of data on which this report is based. We also gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Sandra Sevic.

We hope this report helps us better understand the diverse perspectives and needs of trans people, particularly those most marginalised. We hope it inspires activists, policy makers, civil servants, professionals working with trans people, academia, the media, and the wider public to learn more about trans people, increase efforts to advance trans equality, and thus contribute to a Union of Equality for all.

# METHODOLOGY

## DATA DESCRIPTION

In 2019, FRA conducted its second<sup>2</sup> online survey on the experiences of LGBTI people in the European Union. 140.000 people from 30 countries participated. With 20.933 trans respondents, it is the largest trans survey in Europe. The FRA report “A long way to equality” presents the findings of the study. However, a detailed report on the trans population and an intersectional analysis were missing.

In 2021, TGEU and ILGA-Europe commissioned two statisticians, Niamh Sheehan and Casper Kurpan, to retrieve the original data set from FRA and extract relevant information for further research. From the sample, subsets were created according to sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics. These subsets were lesbian women, gay men, bisexual people, trans people, and intersex people. This report builds mainly on the extracted data relating to the trans respondents of the survey. Other subgroups allow to understand the experiences of respondents based on other demographic characteristics such as age (young people and older people), religion, parenthood types, education level, employment status, those who have experienced housing difficulties, those who are struggling to make ends meet, persons with disabilities, and those with an ethnic/migrant minority background. The groups were defined and operationalised following discussions between ILGA-Europe and TGEU.

We have used the category of ethnic/migrant background with caution. It follows the FRA categorisation, even though it lumps together very distinct perspectives and experiences of migrants and racialised people. Further research is needed to better understand the experiences of both groups, separating race/ethnicity from migration status.

The method of data collection (online survey) results in somewhat biased data, which need to be kept in mind when reading this report. Respondents needed to have access to a computer and internet, which set up a socio-economic threshold. Respondents must also have had the capacity to interact with technology, read the questions, and engage with a long questionnaire. Its online nature might also explain why respondents were on average young. Moreover, the way the survey was promoted through LGBTI civil society and gay online dating sites (snowball sampling) meant that people without access to such community structures are also less likely to have come across the survey. The survey is thus far from being representative. These shortcomings call for further research with better reach and accommodation to the needs of people who are facing economic difficulties, are illiterate, neurodiverse, or who have little exposure to LGBTI community resources.

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<sup>2</sup> See the first EU LGBT survey: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2014) *Being Trans in the EU - Comparative analysis of the EU LGBT survey data*.

## LGBTI COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

### WEIGHTS EXPLAINED

In order to ensure that the responses were as representative of the population as possible, the data was weighed when conducting the analysis. FRA took several measures to compensate for potential exclusion, non-participation, and selection biases due to an imbalance across LGBTI categories, age, and countries. It built on a recent UK population survey to control for age, used estimates from “The Intersex Initiative” in the United States to estimate the intersex population, and calculated the trans and LGBTI population in a given country based on estimates. Sheehan and Kurpan found the *“weights constructed by FRA are thorough and well-justified and as such [decided to] apply them throughout the analysis in place of developing our own.”*

## POPULATIONS

### TRANS RESPONDENTS IN FRA'S SURVEY

FRA's 2019 LGBTI survey targeted persons who self-identify as being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or intersex. The survey collected reliable data on the experiences of violence, harassment, and discrimination on three grounds, namely sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics. In this report, we focus our analysis only on the experiences of trans respondents.

The language people use to define their gender is not only diverse, but also constantly changing. In FRA's survey, the term “trans” is used as a broad umbrella term that includes all those who are transgender, non-binary, gender variant, polygender, agender, gender-fluid, cross dressers, transsexual, men and women with a transsexual past, and other terms. FRA's

statisticians created a subset of non-cisgender respondents based on self-identification and presented the results of the survey by grouping them into three categories: trans women, trans men, and non-binary people.

In the report, we use the term “trans” when referring to all trans respondents. When referring to different groups of trans respondents by gender, we differentiate among trans women, trans men, and non-binary people (NB). This report will refer to “non-binary” to include all respondents who opted for cross-dressing, non-binary, genderqueer, gender-fluid, agender, poly-gender, or “Other, please specify” in the survey. This approach allows us to acknowledge that the lived experiences of trans women, trans men, and non-binary people are different. Apart from disaggregating results by gender, we do it by other relevant respondent's characteristics. Using an intersectional perspective, we want to acknowledge that a trans person's **ethnic/migrant minority background, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, age, or their religious affiliation** may differently impact their experiences. Because of this, subgroups based on the above variables were created, allowing us to assess a person's gender identity in relation with the other categories.



## KEY DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY<sup>3</sup>

### GENDER EXPRESSION

“refers to people’s manifestation of their gender identity to others, by for instance, dress, speech and mannerisms.

People’s gender expression may or may not match their gender identity/ identities, or the gender they were assigned at birth.”

### GENDER IDENTITY

“refers to each person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms. Some people’s gender identity falls outside the gender binary, and related norms.”

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

“refers to each person’s capacity for profound affection, emotional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender.”

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<sup>3</sup> From the *The Yogyakarta Principles*.



**PART I.**  
**TRANS PEOPLE IN EUROPE:**  
**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS**



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# PART I.

## TRANS PEOPLE IN EUROPE: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

Trans people are a diverse group, not only in terms of their gender identity, but also regarding other personal characteristics. In Part I we want to explore how trans people in Europe live, taking the opportunity of a rich and large data set on trans experiences. In this chapter, we present results concerning trans respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. Disaggregation of results by gender and other respondent's characteristics allows for better understanding of the differences among groups of trans respondents.

Following that, we will learn about the experiences of legal and medical transition as well as life satisfaction (Part II), and finally enter into a presentation of trans people's experiences with violence, harassment, and discrimination (Part III).

### GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Overall, 20.933 trans people in Europe participated in FRA's 2019 LGBTI survey. Trans women accounted for one quarter of the trans population (28%), just the same way as trans men did (21%). Those who identified as non-binary accounted for more than half of the total number of trans respondents (51%). Interestingly, almost 90% of the trans respondents indicated not being heterosexual, and they affiliated with either being lesbian, gay,

bisexual, or having another sexual orientation. **Trans women experienced more violence than any other group**, in the timeframe of both 5 years and 1 year before the survey period (25% and 23%, respectively). Regardless of the gender of the victim, men were the perpetrators of the violence in over 80% of the cases. Among the trans respondents that experimented harassment on multiple grounds, **48% reported to be harassed because of their gender identity and expression, 47% reported harassment because of their sexual orientation, and 20% reported harassment because of their sex. Trans women and trans feminine people reported the highest amounts of harassment (55%).**

### AGE

Around 42% of trans respondents were between the ages of 15 and 30, while only 14% were over the age of 50. In recent years, visibility of trans individuals and communities has been increasing and with it came significant improvements in research methodology that allow us to better count members of gender minorities.<sup>4</sup> In both Europe and the US, these two factors have been driving two clear demographic trends: 1) the share of people who self-identify as trans or gender nonconforming is increasing over time; and 2) this trend is likely to continue, given that there is a higher share of people who self-identify as trans or

<sup>4</sup> Reisner, Sari L.; Kerith J. Conron; Scout; Kellan Baker; Jody L. Herman; Emilia Lombardi; Emily A. Greytak; Alison M. Gill; Alicia K. Matthews. (2015). "Counting" Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Adults in Health Research: Recommendations from the Gender Identity in US Surveillance Group. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 2, 34-57.

<sup>5</sup> Ehrensaft, Diane. (2017) Gender nonconforming youth: current perspectives. *Adolescent health, medicine and therapeutics*, 8, 57-67.

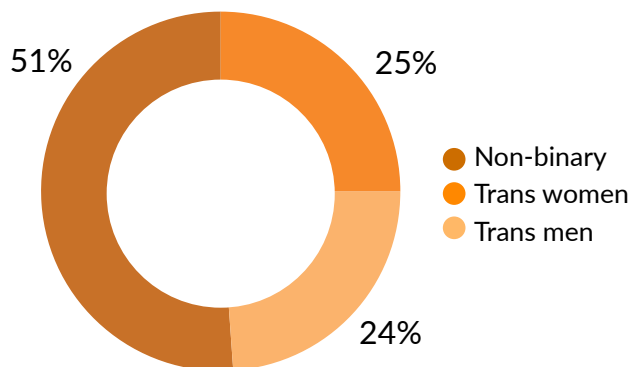
gender nonconforming among the younger generations.<sup>5</sup> These trends are clearly reflected in figure 1. It is important, however, to highlight that, although the younger generations seem to be more comfortable questioning their gender identity and the cis-norm, they still lack systemic, legal, and cultural support for their gender identity.

In figure 2 we can see how people between the ages of 15 and 30 express their gender identity or desired gender through their physical appearance the least.<sup>6</sup> The statistical analysis indicates that there are significant differences among all the age groups, but these age ranges (15-30) are clustered together and behave similarly in matters of expressing their gender. Lack of economic stability, emotional immaturity, and lack of life experiences are likely to decrease self-confidence. The fear of being socially excluded by their peers most certainly affects younger trans people stronger than their older peers. It could be that the pressure of a cisnormative culture can easily influence the decision of these age groups to hide their gender identity more than in other groups. Thus, what we see is a **growing population of people whose basic needs are not met within the current legal and cultural frameworks.**

One of the essential legal provisions (young) trans people need is the ability to have documents showing their name and self-determined gender. In Europe, only nine countries feature self-determination models that are compliant with human rights. Recognition for non-binary people is possible in

only two countries: Iceland and Malta.

**Figure 1.**  
Identity groups in the trans sample (%)



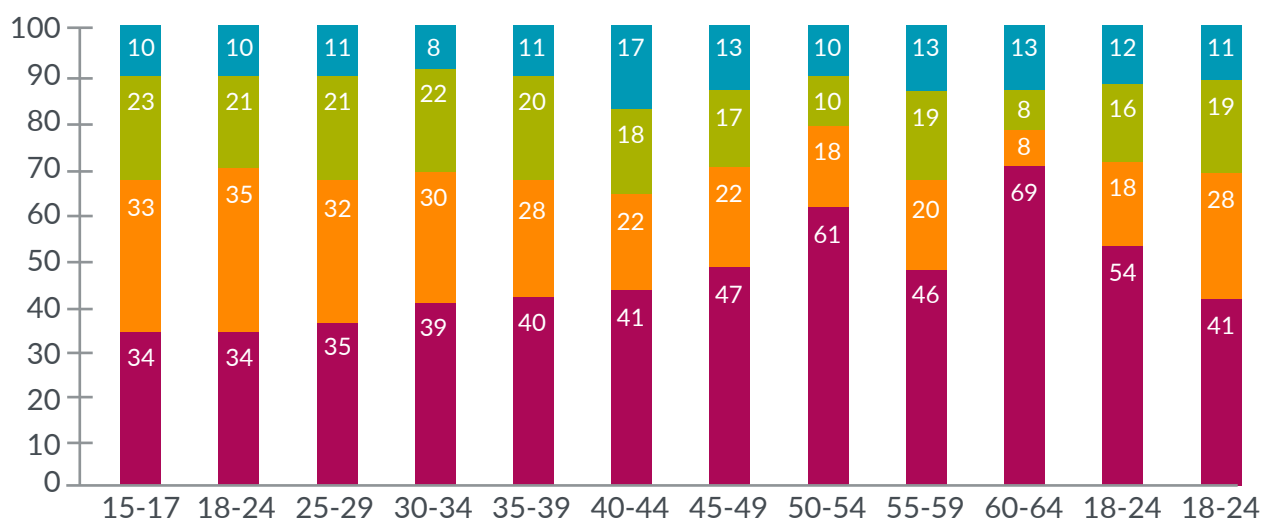
**Notes:** The EU-28 aggregate includes the United Kingdom (UK).  
**Questions:** A2 What sex were you assigned at birth?  
 A3 How would you describe yourself today?  
 A6 Are/were you a trans person? The term trans is used in this survey as a broad umbrella term that includes all those who are transgender, non-binary, gender variant, polygender, agender, gender-fluid, cross dressers, transsexual, or men and women with a transsexual past, and other terms. A6\_1 How would you describe your current gender identity?  
 N = 20933, weighted results.  
**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

**Trans respondents between the ages of 15 and 17 experienced the most harassment. 45% of trans people between the ages of 25 and 29 experienced sexual violence,** being the most affected age group by this form of violence in the trans sample. Trans youth between 15 and 17 reported being attacked the most, with 76% of their population experiencing attacks of a non-sexual nature.

<sup>6</sup> It is also important to remember that the data collection strategy could have biased the results into having a higher younger population, and therefore, a more significant number of trans people identified as non-binary.

**Figure 2.**

Respondents that avoided expressing their gender through their physics according to their age (%).



Do you avoid expressing your gender through your physical appearance?

- Don't know
- Not applicable
- Never
- Rarely
- Often
- Always

**Notes:** The EU-28 aggregate includes the United Kingdom (UK).

**Questions:** TR7 Do you avoid expressing your gender (or your desired gender) through your physical appearance and clothing for fear of being assaulted, threatened or harassed. A1 How old are you?

N = 20933, weighted results

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

## MIGRANT AND ETHNIC MINORITY BACKGROUND

By 2019 there were over 38 million immigrants in Europe (around 5% of the EU population). Over 95% of them were from Asia, Africa, or Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>7</sup> *“Non-EU immigrants face greater challenges in the labour market, the housing market, and in schools. They are more likely to be affected by poverty and over-qualification.”*<sup>8</sup> Gender also has an impact on the positive inclusion of a migrant person in Europe. Zaragoza indicators pointed out that

foreign-born women and mothers, in particular those born in non-EU countries, are especially marginalised.<sup>9</sup>

No study, however, has previously assessed the quality of life or the percentage of migrants who are trans. Table 1 shows that about 8% of trans respondents self-identify as a part of a migrant and/or ethnic minority. According to Huddleston,<sup>10</sup> discrimination also has a big

<sup>7</sup> IOM. (2020) *World Migration Report*; Eurostat. *Migration and migrant population statistics*.

<sup>8</sup> Huddleston, Thomas, Jan Niessen, & Jasper Dag Tjaden. (2013). *Using EU indicators of migrant integration for home affairs. Final report for Directorate-General for home affairs*. p. 5, 15.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

impact on the inclusion of migrants. Therefore, discrimination on the basis of gender, gender identity, race, and migration status could all push trans respondents into a marginalised position. Trans people with an ethnic minority background also reported the most violence both 5 years and 1 year before the survey (26% and 13%, respectively). It is of great relevance to highlight that migrant and racialised experiences are not the same, and this percentage represents a heterogeneous group with two different life experiences that might intersect.

## DISABILITY

Table 1 shows that disabled trans people

represent 12% of the trans sample. This value corresponds to average figures in the EU population (14,5%). Being disabled has an impact on the levels of employment and capacity to make ends meet, which we will address further ahead.

It is also relevant to highlight that the survey does not clearly define what disability is. It also does not specifically address neurodiversity. People who have neurodivergent features may need special accommodations at work or school. This also means that an online survey can potentially exclude another part of the population due to being neurodiverse. With an estimate of 15-20% of the adult global population<sup>11</sup> being neurodiverse, future research on trans people should pay attention to this socio-demographic characteristic.

**Table 1.**

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in FRA's survey (%)

Selected Characteristics		All trans respondents
Self-identify as migrant/ Ethnic minority	yes	8
	no	92
Self-identify as disabled	yes	12
	no	88
Religious Affiliation	No Religion	63
	Christian - Catholic	13
	Christian - Protestant	5
	Christian - Orthodox	4
	Christian - Other	2
	Islam	1
	Hindu	<1
	Jewish	1
	Budhist	2
	Sikh	<1
	Other	9
Prefer not to say	<1	

<sup>11</sup>Doyle, Nancy. (2020). Neurodiversity at work: a biopsychosocial model and the impact on working adults, *British Medical Bulletin*, Volume 135, Issue 1, September 2020, Pages 108-125.



Education (including those who are still pupils and students)	No formal	1
	Primary	3
	Lower	12
	Upper	29
	Post-Secondary	12
	Bachelor	21
	Masters	18
	Doctorate	4
Household's ability to make ends meet	With great difficulty	10
	With difficulty	13
	With some difficulty	26
	Fairly easy	27
	Easy	17
	Very easily	8
	Prefer not to say	<1
Main Activity (current situation)	Paid work	39
	Self employed	10
	Unpaid/Volunteer	1
	Unemployed	8
	Student, pupil	27
	Retired	3
	Unable to work due to long-standing health problems	6
	Fullfilling domestic tasks	1
	Compulsory Military services or civilian service	<1
	Other	4
Prefer not to say	<1	

**Questions:** A10-A12; H1,H2, H12, H13, H14 H15, H16, H18, H19, H20, H21

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

Trans people who are disabled also reported the most violence 5 years and 1 year before the survey (22% and 13%, respectively).

## RELIGION

Many people turn to religion or spirituality when faced with external or internal turmoil, such as a global pandemic or when discovering one's gender identity. Overall, the majority of trans respondents are not religious (63%). However, **every third trans respondent indicated a religious affiliation, with the majority being of Christian belief.** The high percentage of trans non-believers stands in contrast to the EU average of 13,6%.<sup>12</sup> Trans respondents who are older, as well as those with a migrant or ethnic minority background, are more likely to have a religious affiliation, according to this survey. For example, half of trans men in the age group 25 and older, and overall half of trans men with a migrant or ethnic minority background, have a religious affiliation. Among trans respondents with a religious affiliation, the majority are Christian (63%, and among them half are Catholic) and few are Buddhist (2%), Muslim (1%), Jewish (1%), Hindu (< %), or Sikh (< 1%).

These findings should trigger religious leaders and faith groups across Europe to open their hearts, minds, and religious places to the trans members in their communities. A religious trans person should not have to feel conflicted over having a diverse gender identity and being of a certain religion or belief. Religious trans people should not have to feel shame, not belonging, and damnation. Similarly, for human rights actors, these findings might serve as a reminder that civil and religious liberties must not be pitched against each other. A trans person of faith needs to be able to enjoy both fundamental rights - their gender identity and their religion.

Among the 37% of trans respondents with a religious belief, the levels of openness and freedom to express their gender identity in a physical manner appear to depend on the religion they affiliate to. From the entire subset of religious trans respondents, Hindu trans people reported the highest percentage of people suppressing the expression of their gender identity (45,8%). Among the Abrahamic religions, 27,8% of Muslim trans respondents reported always avoiding expressing their gender identity, followed by Jewish trans people and Christian trans people with 16,3% and 15,5%, respectively (Figure 3). **Within each religion, the one that displayed the highest number of harassment by their members was Judaism. 68% of Jewish trans respondents had experienced harassment, positioning them as the most harassed subpopulation among the religiously-affiliated trans respondents.**

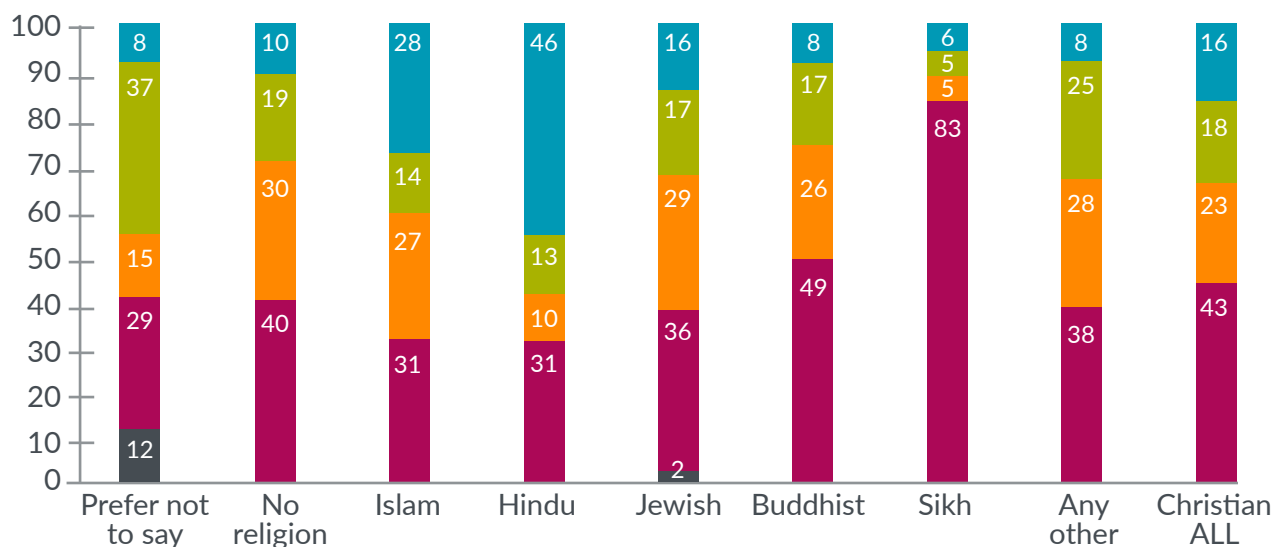
Opposite to this, 82,9% of Sikh trans people reported always expressing their gender identity through their physical appearance, followed by Buddhist trans people (48,7%).

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<sup>12</sup> European Commission. (2015) Discrimination in the EU in 2015. *Special Eurobarometer*, 437, retrieved 2 March 2019 - via GESIS

**Figure 3.**

Respondents that avoided expressing their gender through their physics according to their religion (%).



- Don't know
- Not applicable
- Never
- Rarely
- Often
- Always

**Notes:** The EU-28 aggregate includes the United Kingdom (UK).

**Questions:** TR7 Do you avoid expressing your gender (or your desired gender) through your physical appearance and clothing for fear of being assaulted, threatened or harassed. H16 What is your religion if any?

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

## EDUCATION

From the sample in the survey, trans respondents are well-educated: as many as 43% of them hold university degrees equivalent to bachelor's degree or higher. This statistic should be treated with caution, as the online nature of the survey may lead to an overly-positive outcome.

According to the data, trans people between 25 and 34 years of age do better in education than the EU average (40%).<sup>13</sup>

**Table 2.**

Highest completed level of education of the respondents in FRA's survey by selected characteristics (%)

Selected characteristics		No formal education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	Post-secondary education other than college/university	Bachelor	Master	Doctoral
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ethnic minority/migration background (self-identified)	Yes	1	3	12	20	12	25	21	6
	No	1	3	12	30	12	21	17	4
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual	1	2	12	27	11	26	18	4
	Not heterosexual	1	4	12	29	12	21	17	4

**Notes:** Out of all trans respondents (n = 20.933); weighted results. Due to rounding, percentages do not necessarily add up to 100.

**Questions:** H1 What is the highest education level achieved

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

Given the young average age of the trans respondents in the study, as many as 27% were still pupils or students when filling out the survey. Compared to other trans respondents, trans respondents of an ethnic minority/migrant background were more likely to hold a Bachelors, Masters, or PhD than their native peers. Also, heterosexual trans respondents were more likely to hold a Bachelor degree than their non-heterosexual peers. However, the differences according to sexual orientation are less pronounced for those holding a Masters or PhD (Table 2.) A potential explanation for

this is the tenacity that migrants display at the moment of finding a strategy to leave their homes of origin. In many cases, trans people from the Global South leave their countries escaping from considerably-higher levels of violence, harassment, discrimination, and poverty that they experience. First-generation migrants that come to the European continent tend to achieve higher Tertiary Education Achievements (TEA) than natives.<sup>14</sup> This would explain why trans migrants with an ethnic minority background who could respond to the online survey showed considerably higher

<sup>13</sup> Eurostat. *Educational Attainment Statistics*.

percentages of post-secondary education. However, “Socio-economic background matters: Social mobility remains modest for immigrants. Employment and education outcomes still largely depend on the parents’ socio-economic status.” More research is needed on the educational experiences of trans people with a migrant or ethnic minority background, with a particular focus on undocumented migrants.

## ECONOMIC POSITION

The level of education achieved does not necessarily translate into better employment levels or economic stability of a population. “[...] low-educated immigrants have a higher employment rate than their native-born peers. This is particularly visible in countries that have had significant low educated labour migration over the past decade. In contrast, in all countries with significant immigrant populations the highly educated immigrants have lower employment rates than the highly educated native-born.” When put together, over 36% of trans migrants or those with an ethnic minority background reported being in unpaid work, volunteer work, unemployed, unable to work, or fulfilling domestic roles. 6% reported being self-employed and 24% said they were students or pupils. Amongst trans migrants, only 27% indicated having a paid job, contrasted with 40% of their native trans counterparts who reported being in paid employment. Statistical analysis indicates that **having a migrant or ethnic minority background makes it more likely for a trans person to be** in a non-remunerated occupation.

Nearly every second trans respondent to the survey is currently employed or self-employed (49%), whereas 8% are unemployed. Currently,

43% of trans respondents are out of the workforce. This is a bleak gap in comparison to the general population. According to Eurostat, in the Euro area<sup>15</sup> the rates of unemployment oscillated between 6,3 and 7,1% in 2019 for the general population,<sup>16</sup> while 27% were out of the workforce.<sup>17</sup> These numbers are significantly lower than those for trans people in the FRA survey. **This stark correlation between gender identity and unemployment rates calls for reinforced policy and legislative efforts beyond existing legal protections in the EU.**

Most of those out of work are students or pupils (27%), some are retired (3%), and as many as one in twenty trans respondents is unable to work due to long-standing health problems (6%). This share of trans respondents who are unable to work due to long-standing health problems is much bigger when compared to LGBT respondents surveyed by FRA, where this share does not go over 1% among cis lesbian, gay, and bisexual respondents. Although lower rates of employment and self-employment among disabled trans respondents are in part due to many of them not being able to work because of long-standing health problems, trans women and disabled trans persons are also more likely than other groups to be unemployed. 10% of disabled trans people reported being unemployed, while 23% reported being unable to work due to long-standing health problems. This is significantly higher than the general disabled population: “7% of persons with no disability are unemployed, compared with 10% of those with a severe disability.”<sup>18</sup>

**Overall, 23% of trans respondents in the survey only make ends meet with (great) difficulty, but there are differences based on gender and other respondent’s characteristics.** Non-binary

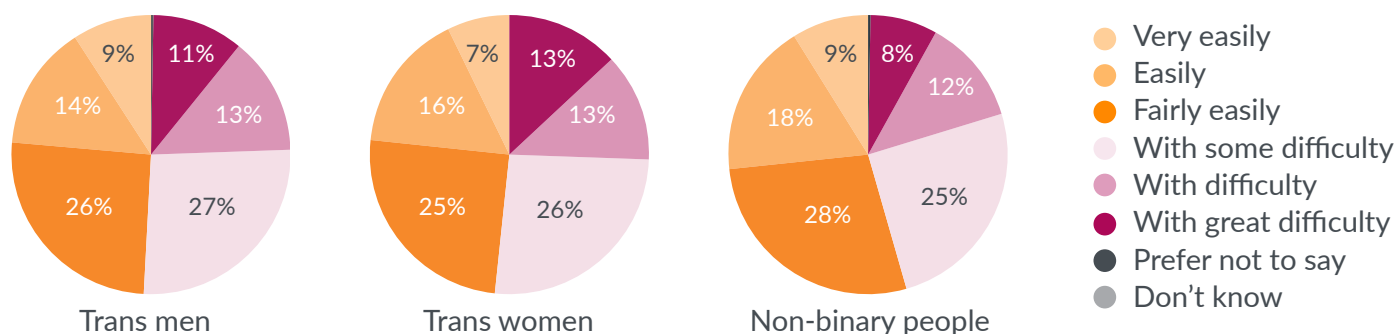
respondents appear to be doing slightly better economically than trans women and trans men. In general, **trans women and trans men, disabled trans respondents, respondents from a migrant/ethnic minority background, non-heterosexual trans respondents, and intersex trans respondents struggle somewhat more financially than others.** In this regard, **the most affected are trans respondents who have only completed lower levels of education as well as disabled trans respondents,** regardless of their gender. Finally, FRA's data suggests that employment or self-employment provides protection from poverty for most trans respondents. However, (self)employment seems to provide fewer advantages for some trans men. Compared to other (self)employed trans respondents, employed or self-employed

trans men from an ethnic minority or who are disabled struggle somewhat more financially, possibly because they are underemployed or work in lower paying jobs. **This hints towards trans men (continuing) being victims of sexism and (still) affected by the gender pay gap due to being socialised as women when it comes to education, career choices, opportunities for training, and promotion.**

The economic position of trans people is ailing and fragile. Being initially discriminated against from the educational system, many trans people cannot access the job market and have to turn to informal economies, such as sex work, in order to survive.<sup>19</sup> By doing so, several trans people, especially trans women, are exposed to forms of violence and harassment that will be discussed further in Part III.

**Figure 4.**

Levels of difficulty to make ends meet by gender identity of trans respondents.



**Questions:** A2, A3, A6, A6\_1; H20  
**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

<sup>14</sup> Flisi, Sara, Elena Claudia Meroni, & Esperanza Vera-Toscano. (2016) Educational outcomes and immigrant backgrounds. *JRC Technical Reports*, European Commission. Pages 21-23.

<sup>15</sup> The euro area consists of those Member States of the European Union that have adopted the euro as their currency.

<sup>16</sup> Eurostat. (November 2021). *Unemployment Statistics*.

<sup>17</sup> Eurostat. (June 2021). *People outside the Workforce Statistics*.

<sup>18</sup> Eurostat. (2001) *Disability and social participation report*.

<sup>19</sup> Fedorko, Boglarka and Lukas Berredo. (2017) *The vicious circle of violence: trans and gender-diverse people, migration, and sex work*. TGEU.

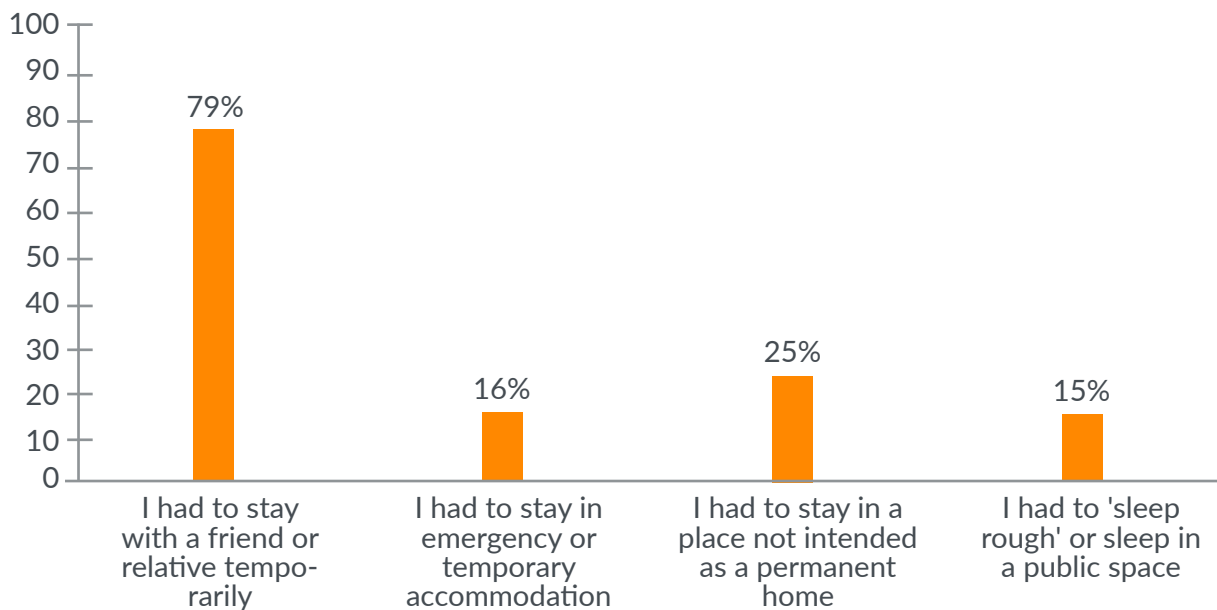
## HOUSING

One in four trans respondents in the survey has never experienced housing difficulties, with not much difference based on gender. 79% of those who experienced some form of difficulty

said they had to stay temporarily with their friends or relatives, many had to stay in a place not intended as a permanent home such as an emergency or temporary accommodation, or they had to sleep in a public space (Figure 5).

**Figure 5.**

Respondents who have experienced housing difficulties, by type of housing difficulty (%)



**Notes:** Out of all trans respondents who experienced housing difficulties (N = 5.046); weighted results.

**Questions:** H21 Have you ever experienced any of the following housing difficulties:

Respondents were able to chose multiple options.

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

Trans and non-binary people face discrimination and abandonment from early ages. Trans youth that are misunderstood and neglected by their parents often run away from home, escaping physical, emotional, and psychological violence; or are simply kicked out of home by their own parents. **5% of trans minors in the survey said they had experienced homelessness in some form.** This is particularly alarming

since they are more likely to be on their own, without parents or family members (in contrast to other homeless children). Those who are forced to sleep in public spaces or in places not intended for housing are even more vulnerable to abuse. Sleeping in emergency or temporary accommodation, or in shelters is also very common among trans and non-binary people, especially trans youth.<sup>20</sup> This can be

<sup>20</sup> Shelton, Jama. (2015). *Transgender youth homelessness: Understanding programmatic barriers through the lens of cisgenderism*. *Children and Youth Services Review*, Volume 59, Pages 10-18, ISSN 0190-7409; Shelton, Jama, Robbie Stakelum, & S.J. Dodd. (2020). *LGBTIQ Youth Homelessness in Europe: Findings from a Survey of FEANTSA Membership Organisations*. FEANTSA, True Colors United, and the Silberman Center for Sexuality and Gender at Hunter College.

highly dangerous, as they are forced to live in transphobic environments that can easily turn violent and volatile.

Previous research conducted in Europe and in the US indicate that some trans people avoid shelters, even when they need them. When they do use them, trans people may experience discrimination and denial of services. They are often forced to stay in facilities where they are segregated according to their assigned sex at birth, causing disparities between them and other users and leading to trans and non-binary people to experience alarmingly amounts of harassment, physical, and sexual violence.<sup>21</sup>

Safe housing and availability of appropriate gender-sensitive services are a basic necessity to ensure trans people can break a cycle of homelessness, poverty, and violence. Trans-led organisations and community-driven drop-in centres are often the first point of contact. As a society that cares for human rights, we must ensure that, first, mainstream service providers welcome trans people holistically and, second, that community responses are adequately resourced.

One of the most alarming statistics shown in this section is **how often trans people with migrant or ethnic minority backgrounds, and trans parents experience housing difficulties.** The relationship between parenthood and

housing difficulties will be addressed further ahead in this report. As for trans people with migrant or ethnic minority background, almost 59% experienced at least one type of housing difficulty. Statistical analysis indicates that there is a strong and significant correlation between ethnicity or migrant status and access to housing among trans respondents. This is a clear depiction of how racism and/or xenophobia can intersect with gender identity. It affects the quality of life of trans people of colour and pushes them into homelessness.

5% of those aged between 15-17 years reported housing difficulties. **Among trans respondents who make ends meet (very) easily, only 15% have never experienced housing difficulties. Among those who make ends meet with great difficulty, every other trans respondent had experienced housing insecurity at some point in their life (51%). Finally, trans respondents in the 25-49 age group are more likely than either younger or older trans respondents to have experienced housing difficulties.**

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<sup>21</sup> Grant, Jaime M., Lisa A. Mottet, Justin Tanis, Jack Harrison, Jody L. Herman, & Mara Keisling. (2011) *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey* [Internet]. Vol. 25. National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Washington, DC.



## PARENTHOOD

Trans people in Europe have been forced to give up their biological ability to become a parent for decades. Until today, trans people in 10 countries in Europe – Cyprus, Czechia, Finland, Latvia, Romania, and Slovakia of the EU member States, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Serbia – must show evidence that they have undertaken a process of sterilisation or are otherwise incapable of reproducing in order to obtain legal gender recognition.

**Overall, every fifth trans respondent (19%) in FRA's survey is a parent.** Given the strong barriers to becoming a parent, this number gives hope. Most trans parents in the survey are their children's biological parents and legal guardians (75%). The fact that **every fifth trans parent in FRA's survey (22%) is not their children's legal guardian indicates that trans parents face barriers in accessing or keeping their parental rights. Trans women are somewhat disproportionately affected** in this regard. 13% of trans men and 9% of non-binary respondents who are biological parents are not legal guardians of their children; for trans women, this number is 20%.

9,5% of trans parents reported difficulties making ends meet, and over **27% of reported having difficulties finding housing at some point in their lives.** Given the impact the socio-economic situation of parents has on children, these figures are alarming.



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**PART II.**  
**TRANS PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES:  
TRANS-SPECIFIC NEEDS  
AND REQUIREMENTS**



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# PART II: TRANS PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES: TRANS-SPECIFIC NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS

## LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

The recognition of one's identity by the state and society is fundamental for the healthy development of a person's self-esteem, as well as for an efficient and productive participation in society. Identification documents matching one's self-chosen name and gender marker are a pre-condition for accessing other basic rights and freedoms.<sup>22</sup> This is particularly true for further marginalised groups, such as asylum seekers, homeless, poor, racialised (keyword: racial profiling), and trans people engaging in informal economies, who more often engage with and depend much more on public authorities. Encounters that usually require some sort of identity recognition, particularly random ID checks by police on the street, tend to affect racialised people more. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the necessity to frequently show one's vaccination status and ID has made navigating public spaces a minefield for many trans people.

25 EU member States provide some form of legal or administrative gender recognition procedure. Out of these, only 8 member States base the process on self-determination; the remaining ones require abusive medical and surgical interventions, including sterilisation (5 EU member States). Only Malta and Iceland<sup>23</sup> recognise a person's self-determined non-binary gender identity. Finally, Hungary does not allow legal gender recognition at all.

In total, 78% of trans respondents indicated not having legally changed their gender. **Every fifth trans respondent had obtained legal gender recognition (16%) or was in the process of doing so (7%); 21% indicated they wanted to obtain LGR in the future. While about half of trans women (43%) and trans men (54%) had obtained LGR, hardly any of their non-binary peers had done so (3%).**

The often strictly gendered and medicalised parameters have a special impact on non-binary people. Governments must immediately initiate reform to ensure LGR procedures actually serve non-binary people, thus serving the largest (growing) trans population.

Access to legal gender recognition correlates substantially with having access to any type of physical interventions (hormonal replacement therapy, gender affirming surgery, among others). 89% of trans respondents who had NOT changed their gender marker legally had also not performed any type of physical interventions, while 82% of trans respondents who had their gender marker changed had done some kind of physical intervention. Given the strong history of forced medical interventions for legal gender recognition, this is no surprise. For the respondents who had legally changed their gender marker, only every third (32%) had no physical intervention

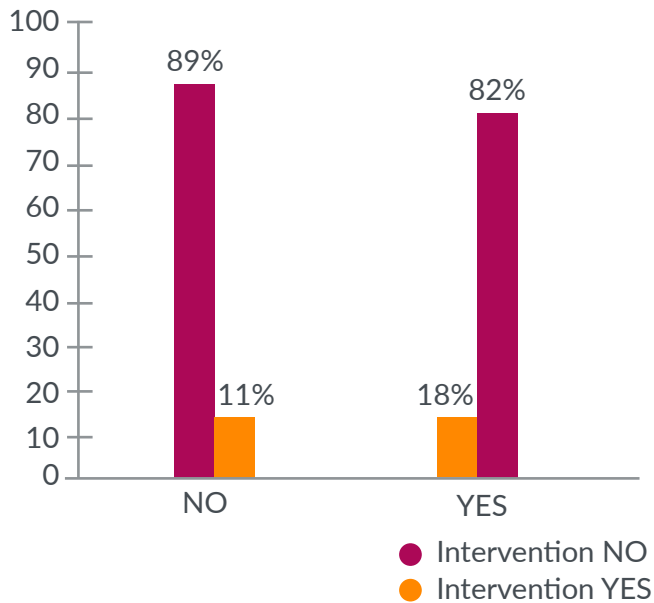
<sup>22</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers. (2020) *Legal Gender Recognition in the EU: The journeys of trans people towards full equality*.

<sup>23</sup> Iceland is not an EU member State.

performed. It needs to be seen whether this number will change with more EU member States ceasing forced medical interventions as a requirement for legal gender recognition.

**Figure 6.**

Trans respondents that had (or did not have) physical interventions according to having changed their gender (or not).



**Notes:** (N=20.282)

**Questions:** TR8\_1 Have you had your legal name changed? TR3 Have you undergone any kind of intervention to change your body so it better matches your gender identity ?

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

If we revise the number of respondents who legally changed their gender, there are severe differences depending on the country they currently reside. Bulgaria reported the lowest percentage of trans and non-binary people who had changed their gender legally (3,5%), while Germany and the Neatherlands reported 39% of respondents with their gender legally changed. Since the FRA survey took place in 2019, it did

not reflect on the 2020 ban of legal gender recognition in Hungary affecting future and retroactive decisions.<sup>24</sup>

The data suggests a correlation between the level of openness about one's gender identity and legal gender recognition. 45% of respondents who scored 5 in the openness scale had legally changed their gender, while 96% of those who scored 0 had not. Evidently, people who are more open about their gender identity often aim to legally change their gender and achieve recognition by the State.

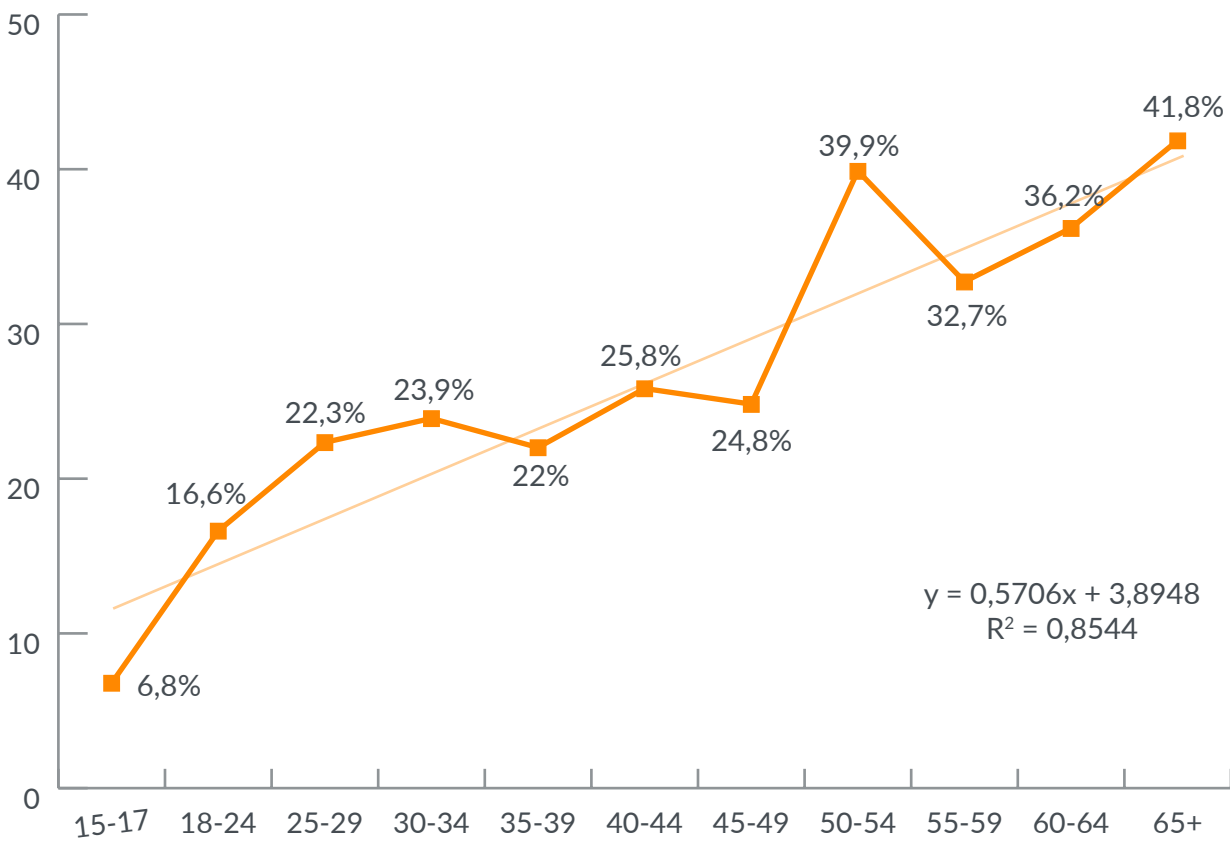
Age is another factor that strongly correlates with having officially changed one's gender: the older a person is, the more likely it is that they have obtained legal gender recognition (figure 7). For example, less than 7% of respondents between the ages of 15 and 18 had legally changed their gender, while almost 42% of people older than 65 had done the same. This might be a reflection of limited availability of LGR for minors in most countries on the one hand as well as the fact that obtaining LGR has often meant years of ordeal, which would explain why more of the elderly have had the chance to complete the process.

Although important and necessary, access to legal gender recognition does not guarantee trans people will be free from abuse, neglect, or abandonment from the system and society. Nevertheless, LGR is certainly crucial for the advancement of the legal, social, and economic situation of trans people.

<sup>24</sup> CNN. (2020) *Hungary bans people from legally changing gender*; Fedorko, Boglarka, Anwar Ogrm, and Sanjar Kurmanov. (2021) *Impact assessment: COVID-19 and trans people in Europe and Central Asia*. TGEU.

**Figure 7.**

Trans respondents who have legally changed their gender, by age group (%)



**Notes:** Age groups were 15 to 17, 18 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 39, 40 to 44, 45 to 49, 50 to 54, 55 to 60, 60 to 64, and 65+. (N = 20.933)

**Questions:** A1 How old are you?

TR8\_1 Have you had your legal gender changed?

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

## PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

Just like access to legal gender recognition, the possibility of aligning one's gender expression (closer) with one's gender identity is key for many trans people. 27% of trans respondents reported having made interventions to change their body to better match their gender identity. **Trans women (56%) and trans men (32%) were the most likely to have undergone physical interventions, while hardly any of the non-binary respondents answered in the affirmative.**

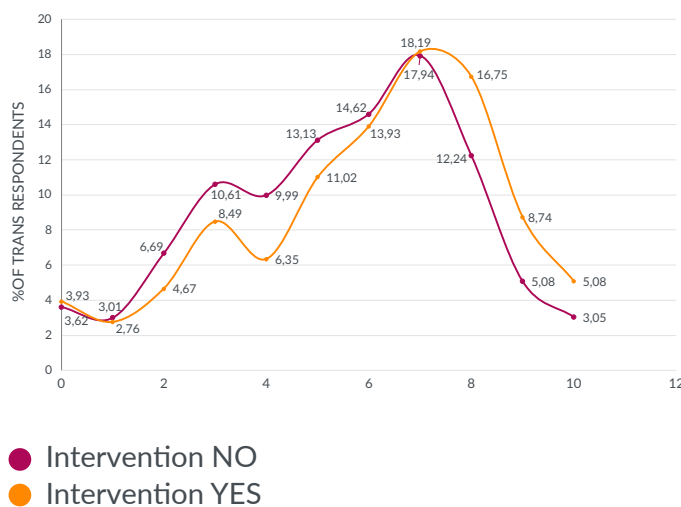
When those who had not undergone physical interventions were asked for reasons, every second respondent (49%) stated that they would not need it. **The most common inhibitors were hostile family members and social environment (24%) and economic barriers (16%).** Others were held up by not knowing where to turn to (11%), by a forced mental health diagnosis (10%), for fear of negative reactions from medical professionals (6%), or for not wanting to give up reproductive capacities (4%).

The 33% unemployed trans respondents were the most likely to have gone or having considered going abroad for gender-affirming care. One explanation might be that trans-specific healthcare (particularly surgical interventions) is expensive and healthcare coverage is often tied to having a job. Also, those having 'lower secondary education or less' (29%) were more likely to seek trans-specific healthcare abroad than trans respondents with higher education. Going abroad might hold the promise of a better deal for those in economically weak circumstances. Further research is needed on how trans healthcare choices can influence migration decisions, particularly for trans persons from a lower socio-economic position.

“From 1975 on, gender transition processes were classified as a mental disorder in diagnostic classification manuals, a classification that was removed recently from ICD, International Classification of Diseases, and continues in DSM, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Trans people in different world regions are forced to accept psychiatric diagnoses and assessment in order to get access to trans health care, subject to reparative therapies and exposed to transphobic institutional and social discrimination and violence. In many countries, gender identity laws include medical requirements, such as psychiatric diagnosis, hormone treatment, genital surgery, or sterilization.”<sup>25</sup>

**Figure 8.**

Trans respondents' level of satisfaction according to access to gender-reaffirming medical care.



**Notes:** In the X axis the levels of satisfaction oscillate from 0 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. In the Y axis the percentage of respondents who had undergone (or not) physical interventions in order to express their gender identity.

**Questions:** G2 All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Please answer using a scale, where 0 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied.

TR3 Have you undergone any kind of intervention to change your body so it better matches your gender identity?

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

<sup>25</sup> Suess Schwend, Amet. (2020) Trans health care from a depathologization and human rights perspective. *Public Health Rev* 41, 3.



## LIFE SATISFACTION

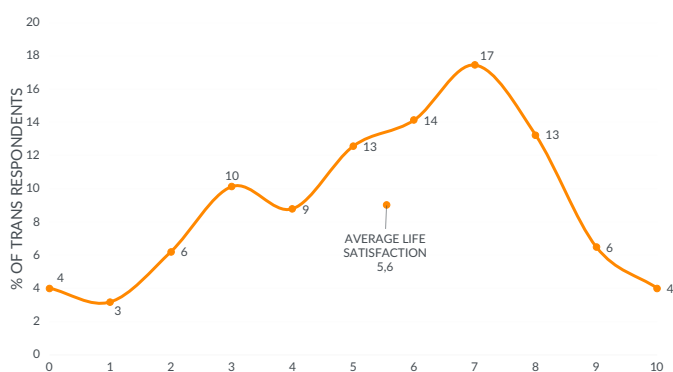
Any measurement of quality of life should include the subjective wellbeing of people. Their satisfaction levels depend on societal structures, norms, and cultural background. In the case of trans people, the recognition of their gender identities and the possibility of expressing such gender becomes fundamental for their positive inclusion in society. In cultures where the cisnorm overrules and punishes the life styles and choices of trans people and, even more, their identities, the levels of satisfaction can be substantially low, as our data analysis will show.

Overall, more than 17% of the trans respondents had a satisfaction level of 7 (figure 9). This value matches the overall levels of satisfaction of the EU in 2018.<sup>26</sup>

In this report we have seen how trans people

**Figure 9.**

Overall trans respondents' level of satisfaction.



**Notes:** In X axis percentage of trans respondents that indicated Y levels of satisfaction (0 to 10, being 0 the lowest and 10 the highest).

**Questions:** G2 All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Please answer using a scale, where 0 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied.

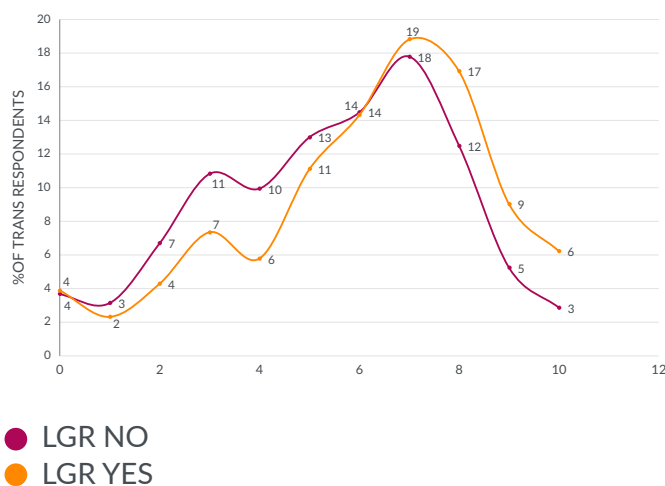
**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

from socio-demographic minority backgrounds experience greater levels of oppression. We have looked at how satisfied trans respondents were with their lives and what contributes to it.

Figure 10 shows how trans people who have had access to legal gender recognition display higher levels of satisfaction than those who have not. The same can be said about trans people who had access to gender-affirming medical care, as it is seen in figure 8. Also, age plays an important role. Those above the age of 50, seem to display the highest levels of satisfaction. On the other hand, **young trans people between the ages of 15 and 17 seem to be a lot more miserable, with a majority of them scoring life satisfaction levels of 3 (on a scale from 0-10, with 0 being very dissatisfied and 10 being very satisfied) (17%).**

**Figure 10.**

Trans respondents' level of satisfaction according to access to legal gender recognition.



**Notes:** In the X axis the levels of satisfaction oscillate from 0 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. In the Y axis the percentage of respondents who had legally changed their genders, or not.

**Questions:** G2 All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Please answer using a scale, where 0 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied.

TR8\_1 Have you changed your legal gender?

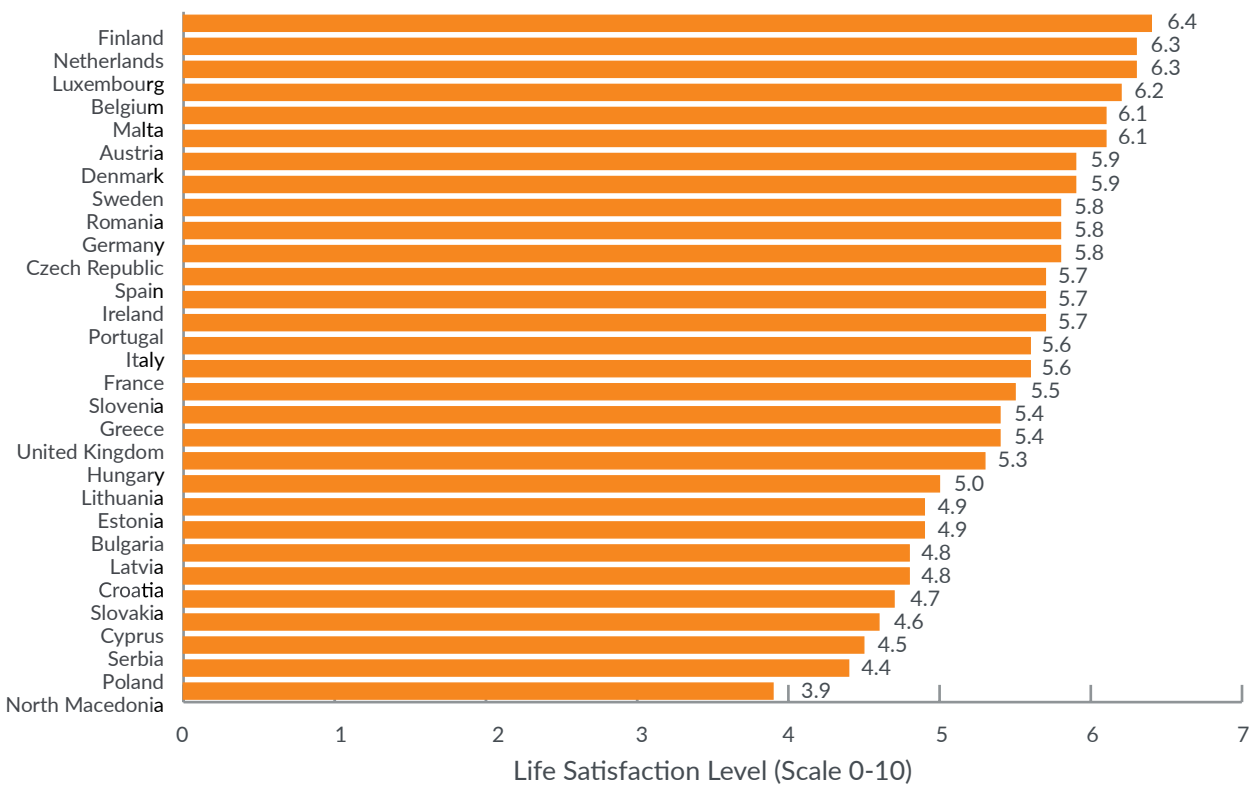
**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

<sup>26</sup> Eurostat. Overall Levels of Satisfaction.

Countries with best access to LGR and trans-specific healthcare (which allows trans people to have access to physical interventions) are the ones where trans populations display high levels of satisfaction. The Netherlands, for example, shows that over half of their trans respondents report a satisfaction level between 7 and 10. Opposite to this, North Macedonian trans respondents show alarming low numbers: 19% scored levels 4 of life satisfaction, followed by 17% scoring 0.

The gender identity of the participants barely had an impact on their levels of satisfaction. Non-binary people had a higher percentage of respondents than trans women and trans men at level of satisfaction 7, which was the overall median for trans respondents.

**Figure 11.** Average life satisfaction of trans respondents, by country (0-10)



**Notes:** The EU-28 aggregate includes the United Kingdom (UK).

**Questions:** G2 All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Please answer using a scale, where 0 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied.

A10 Please select the country where you currently live

**Source:** EU LGBTI Survey II

We also wanted to know whether life satisfaction is related to the level of openness about one's gender identity. Indeed, those who scored the highest level of openness also had high levels of satisfaction. 60% of the trans respondents who scored level 5 of openness (on a scale from 0 to 5, where 0 was the lowest level of openness and 5 the highest) described levels of satisfaction 7 to 10, while only 12% scored levels of satisfaction from 0 to 3. Based on this data, one could hypothesise that living an open life as a trans person has a positive impact on the quality of life of trans people. Finally, when comparing religions, 60% of Sikh trans respondents indicated having a life satisfaction level of 10, while almost 30% of Hindu trans respondents indicated having a life satisfaction of 0.

## LIVING OPENLY

Living openly as an LGBTI person was unthinkable for most people until very recently. Despite an increase in rights and visibility, trans people in Europe have to deal with continued historic oppression and reinforced backlash in recent years. We wanted to know how open trans people are about their gender identity and which factors influence this decision.

This dataset confirms that trans people living in countries with trans-inclusive key legislations show higher indexes of openness. **If we compare the countries that have higher scores due to better and more trans-specific key legislations<sup>27</sup> to the indexes of openness and quality of life of the trans-citizens, we see a significant correlation.** In this chapter, we will look at the

level of openness of trans respondents based on their scores on an openness scale.

Over 38% of all trans respondents reported the lowest score in the openness scale, suggesting **that around one in three trans respondents is not open about their gender identity.** This is worse for young trans people, with **nearly every second trans person in the age group of 15-17 not being out to anyone.** Other age groups reported between 31 and 38% of 0 openness. The impact of hiding our gender identity or sexuality has been reported to be dramatically harmful to the self-esteem, self-value, and confidence of people, especially during the formative years.<sup>28</sup> Migration or ethnic minority background, sexual orientation, or the (dis)ability of a person had no impact on how open they are.

However, **non-binary respondents were much less likely to be open** than trans women or trans men. This might be caused by the severe aversion to non-binary identities, which challenge the binary sex and binary gender as explained. And although non-binary identities are as ancient as any trans identity, non-binary people are prevented from being open about their identities by language, infrastructure, bureaucracy, and other systemic and cultural fences. A UK survey on non-binary people found that many of them feel they cannot use the trans support infrastructure for thinking that they “don't have it that bad” and that they felt trans services were not for them.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> TGEU. (2021) *Trans Rights Map*.

<sup>28</sup> Brennan, James Michael. (2021) *Hiding the Authentic Self: Concealment Of Gender And Sexual Identity And Its Consequences For Authenticity And Psychological Well-Being*. Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. 11789.

<sup>29</sup> Scottish Trans Alliance. (2016) *Non-binary people's experiences in the UK*.

On the other side, we have been alarmed by the strong correlations between being open and experiencing discrimination, violence, and harassment. **The higher the level of openness, the higher the level of abuse experienced by the trans respondents.** The next part of this report explores this more in depth.

**PART III.**  
**TRANS PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES:  
DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT,  
AND VIOLENCE**



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# PART III. TRANS PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES: DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND VIOLENCE

## DISCRIMINATION

Trans respondents were asked, "During the last 12 months, have you personally felt discriminated against because of being trans?" Between **20 and 32% of trans respondents reported feeling discriminated against when having to show their ID or any documentation that reveals their legal gender.** This was independent of their level of openness. In other words, having to show an ID is unsafe for trans people, no matter their individual decision to be "stealth" or open about their gender identity. However, it made a difference whether the trans respondent had access to legal gender recognition in the country where they live or not. This corroborates claims from human rights actors that legal gender recognition is an important anti-discrimination tool, helping trans people to live safer and more dignified lives.

**21 to 35% of trans respondents in all levels of openness indicated being discriminated against at a cafe, restaurant, bar, or nightclub.** However, those who said there were nearly always open also reported the highest percentage of discrimination in these places. In contrast, those trans respondents who were the least out reported also the least discrimination.

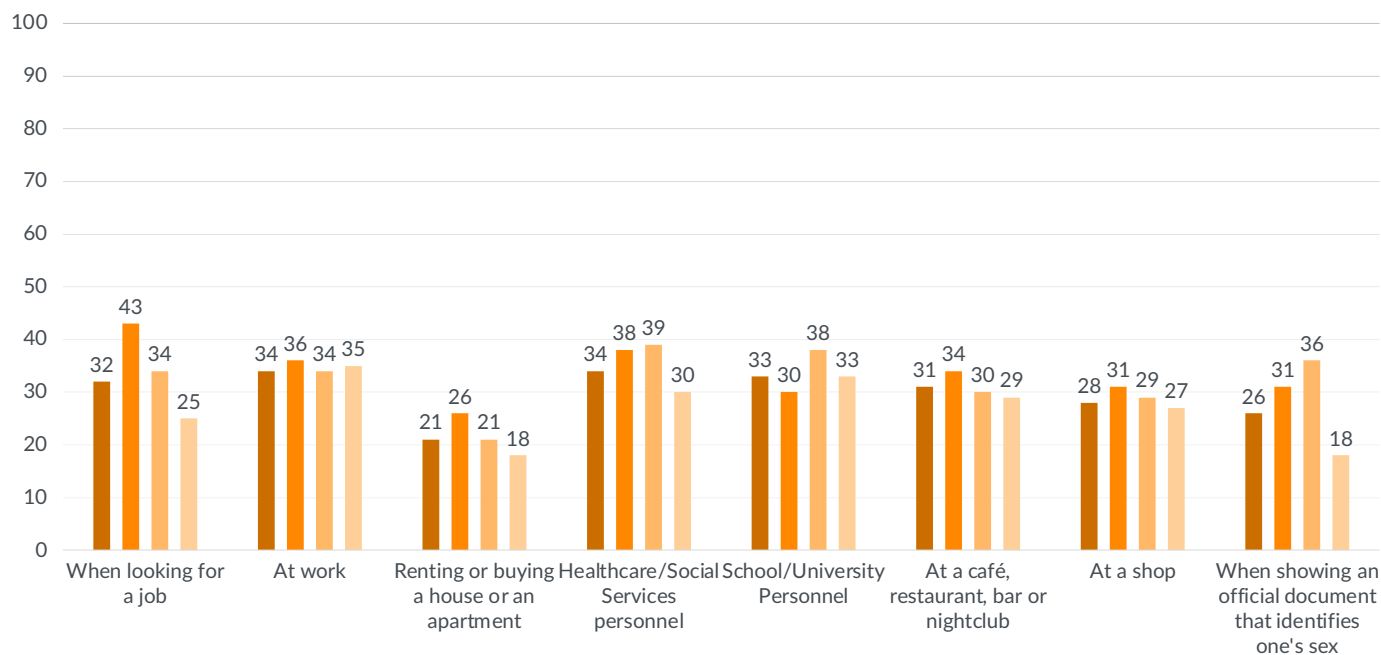
**25 to 39% of trans respondents said they had experienced discrimination by school or university personnel.** The highest percentage was among trans respondents who scored a level of openness of 4, while the lowest was experienced by trans respondents who scored a level of openness of 5. These differences in

experiences might be explained by different educational settings. In the former, the educational institution might "tolerate" a person who is out. They can be out to a considerable portion of people, but not all (openness level 4); they are more visible and thus more likely to be singled out for their gender identity. Since the educational institution does not intervene or deter those discriminating, the trans student experiences a lot of discrimination. Whereas in the second case (openness level 5) the educational setting does not only allow but welcomes trans respondents to be out by having effective policies and behaviour in place that punishes discriminatory behaviour while celebrating diversity.

**30 to 46% of trans respondents said they have experienced discrimination by a healthcare professional or a social services personnel.** The highest percentage was among trans respondents who scored a level of openness of 3, while the lowest was experienced by trans respondents who scored a level of openness of 0.

**Figure 12.**

Respondents who felt discriminated against due to being LGBTI in the 12 months before the survey, by area of social life and gender (%)



**Notes:** Out of all trans respondents who participated in the individual areas of social life in the 12 months before the survey (n = 19,267); the totals vary in individual areas of life; base for calculation does not include 'Don't know;' weighted results.

**Source:** FRA's EU-LGBTI II Survey

- All trans respondents
- Trans women
- Trans men
- Non-binary people

Everyone has the universally-recognised right to the highest attainable standard of health (Article 25 UDHR, Article 12 ICESCR, Article 5 ICERD, Article 12 CEDAW, Article 24 CRC, Article 28 ICMW, Article 25 CRPD). This includes the right to not be discriminated against on grounds of gender identity.<sup>30</sup> However, when reaching out to healthcare providers, trans people still too often face hostility, neglect, and prejudice. Providers particularly discriminate against and mistreat Black, indigenous, and people of colour, D/deaf and disabled individuals, migrants and asylum seekers, sex workers, children and older people, individuals that

belong to a low social class and/or experience state of homelessness, and/or are non-binary, non-heterosexual, intersex, and genderqueer/gender nonconforming people.<sup>31</sup> Over 24% of trans and non-binary respondents reported feeling personally discriminated against by healthcare or social services providers within the 12 months preceding the survey.

Even more concerningly, **over 3% of trans respondents reported having experienced physical or sexual violence in a healthcare setting**, and almost 25% of trans respondents have felt the need to hide their gender identity around medical staff.

<sup>30</sup> The Yogyakarta Principles (2007).

<sup>31</sup> Mulió Álvarez, Leo. (2019) *Guidelines to Human Rights-based Trans-specific Healthcare*. TGEU



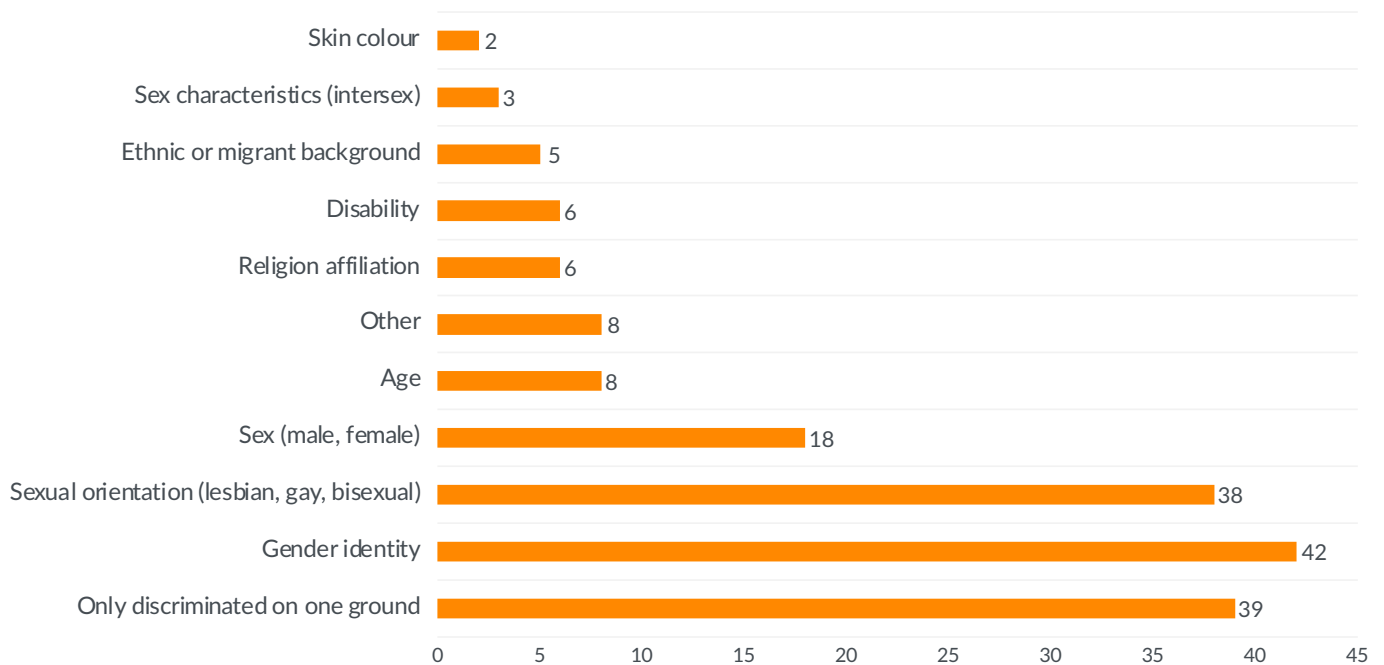
These numbers are especially unsettling since hiding one’s identity or avoiding to see a doctor until it is too late leads to worse ill-health for the individual and disproportionately higher treatment costs. Moreover, because of the medicalised history of trans identities, the attitude of medical doctors and other healthcare staff still greatly influences societal perceptions of trans people.

Luckily, in the last years, conscious healthcare service providers have joined forces to promote professional standards in service-provision to trans clients. Professional associations, such as the World Medical Association (Moscow Statement, 2015) and the European Society for

Sexual Medicine (2020) have publicly declared their support for trans self-determination. They further call upon medical professionals to act as role-models in breaking down stereotypes and advancing societal progress. The latest medical standards bring a unique boost. Implementation of the WHO’s International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) will ask healthcare providers in all EU member States to overhaul the position of trans persons in healthcare.

**Figure 13.**

Trans respondents who felt discriminated against based on multiple grounds in the 12 months before the survey (%)



**Notes:** Out of all trans respondents who were discriminated against in at least one area of social life in the 12 months before the survey (n = 12,486); weighted results.

**Questions:** C3 Thinking about the most recent incident, did you feel discriminated against for any other reason, besides being trans? Read all options and select all that apply

**Source:** FRA’s EU-LGBTI II Survey

When it comes to looking for a private house to rent or buy, **trans respondents reported being discriminated against between 16 and 30% by a public or private sales agency.**

The survey also asked, "Thinking about the most recent incident, did you feel discriminated against for any other reason besides being trans?" The purpose of this question was to address what other reasons were trans respondents being discriminated against, and how did that discrimination intersected with their openness about their gender identity. Every second trans respondent who reported not being out at all still reported having been discriminated against because of their sexual orientation. In other words, trans people are not only subjected to transphobia but also to homophobia. This is relevant for a considerable part of the trans community.

Over 50% of all trans respondents had experienced harassment in the past 12 months previous to the survey. 35% of all incidents over the past 12 months happened exclusively because of the respondent's gender identity.

In the 12 months before the survey, 34% of all trans respondents indicated that someone had made offensive or threatening comments to them and 30% said that someone had made offensive or threatening gestures or stared at them inappropriately. These two forms of harassment were the most common among the respondents.

The location where most of the recent incidents happened was the street, square, park, or other public space. In every second case the perpetrator is known. **53% of trans victims of harassment and 45% of trans victims of violence said they knew the perpetrator(s).** The main reason for not reporting the incident to the police was the victim believing they could or would not do anything.

The conclusion of this statistical analysis is that the more open trans people are about their gender identity, the more discrimination, harassment, and specially violence they experience.



