



LGBT IN BRITAIN

HOME AND COMMUNITIES

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FOREWORD

For many LGBT people, coming to terms with their sexual orientation or gender identity is all about learning self-acceptance. It's not an easy thing to do, so getting positive affirmation from family, friends and our communities can make all the difference in helping us to be happy and confident in our true selves.

Sadly, this report, part of Stonewall and YouGov's state of the nation LGBT in Britain series, reveals that the support of LGBT organisations, groups, venues, alongside loved ones, friends and peers isn't always what it should be.

Society is changing. The vast majority of LGBT people are open to at least some of their friends, and nearly half of us are open to everyone in their family. This means that many more of us can be ourselves with the people who matter most to us, which is critical for our confidence and sense of well-being.

But the picture is mixed. Bi people in particular feel unable to be open about their identities with friends and family: they're four times more likely not to be open with anyone in their family than gay men and lesbians. That's a particularly depressing figure given how marginalised bi people can often feel; the sense of isolation, of invisibility, behind these figures is hard to truly comprehend.

And what of our intimate relationships? Again, the picture is far from encouraging.

This report shows that more than one in ten LGBT people have been abused by a partner in the last year. These rates rise further for trans people, as well as disabled and black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people. Alarming figures like this demonstrate that domestic abuse services must be accessible to all LGBT people, and particularly to those who are more likely to experience abuse.

Seeing as family, friends and even partners might not always offer the love and support that they could, it's no surprise that local LGBT institutions loom large in the life of many LGBT people. LGBT bars, venues and support services are a lifeline and provide community for many. Happily, two thirds of LGBT people who go out in their local LGBT community feel it's a welcoming environment. That's all down to the countless LGBT organisations doing fantastic work across Britain, many of which are run by volunteers with huge passion and commitment - but limited resources.

Even so, individuals, communities, organisations and venues both large and small, including Stonewall, have some hard truths to face. The report found that half of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people experienced discrimination in their local LGBT community because of their ethnicity. One in eight LGBT people of faith and one in four LGBT disabled people whose activities are 'limited a lot' because of a health problem or disability have also encountered prejudice based on their identities. Which means some LGBT spaces are inaccessible to the very people who may need them most. And that includes bi and trans people; a third of trans people and a quarter of bi women have experienced discrimination within the LGBT community.

It's unacceptable and inexcusable that such discrimination exists in a community so often celebrated – not least by itself - for its diversity and tolerance. But, shocking though these findings are, they also present a huge opportunity - if we're willing to take it.

This is a wake-up call to reach out. To listen and learn from each other. To ensure that the wealth of different identities within the LGBT community is not only fully represented but truly celebrated. We'll be a richer, stronger, happier LGBT community when it includes us all. We're in this together.

Ruth Hunt, Chief Executive

THE STUDY

Stonewall commissioned YouGov to carry out a survey asking more than 5,000 lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) people across England, Scotland and Wales about their life in Britain today.

This report, part of a series based on the research, investigates the specific experiences of LGBT people at home, in LGBT communities and in their faith communities. The study reveals the extent to which LGBT people still lack support from family members and that many LGBT people don't feel able to be open about their sexual orientation and gender identity. It also looks at how inclusive LGBT specific places are and investigates incidences of discrimination within LGBT communities.

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KEY FINDINGS

At home

- Only **half** of lesbian, gay and bi people (46 per cent) and trans people (47 per cent) feel able to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity to everyone in their family.
- **Three in ten** bi men (30 per cent) and almost **one in ten bi** women (8 per cent), say they cannot be open about their sexual orientation with any of their friends, compared to **two per cent** of gay men and **one per cent** of lesbians.
- **More than one in ten** LGBT people (11 per cent) have faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year. This increases to **17 per cent** of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people.

Experiences in LGBT communities

- **Half** of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people (51 per cent) have experienced discrimination or poor treatment from others in their local LGBT community because of their ethnicity. This number rises to **three in five** black LGBT people (61 per cent).
- **More than a third** of trans people (36 per cent) have experienced discrimination or poor treatment in their local LGBT community because of being trans.
- **One in four** LGBT disabled people (26 per cent) whose activities are 'limited a lot' because of a health problem or disability have experienced discrimination or poor treatment in their local LGBT community because of being disabled.

Experiences in faith communities

- **A third** of lesbian, gay and bi people of faith (32 per cent) aren't open with anyone in their faith community about their sexual orientation. **One in four** trans people of faith (25 per cent) aren't open about their gender identity in their faith community.
- **Only two in five** LGBT people of faith (39 per cent) think their faith community is welcoming of lesbian, gay and bi people.
- **Just one in four** LGBT people of faith (25 per cent) think their faith community is welcoming of trans people.

AT HOME

While many LGBT people are now able to be open about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity and are supported by their family and friends, too many are still unable to be open with family members and can face a lack of support. A concerning number of LGBT people experience domestic abuse within their own personal relationships.

Encouragingly, **four in five** lesbian, gay and bi people (80 per cent) are open about their sexual orientation to at least some people in their family. This includes **half** of lesbian, gay and bi people (46 per cent) who feel able to be open to everyone in their family. Equally, **half** of trans people (47 per cent) feel able to be open about their gender identity to everyone in their family.

I feel I can live openly as a gay man without anyone questioning or objecting to it. It is just not an issue for me, my friends, or my family. Theodore, 70 (London)

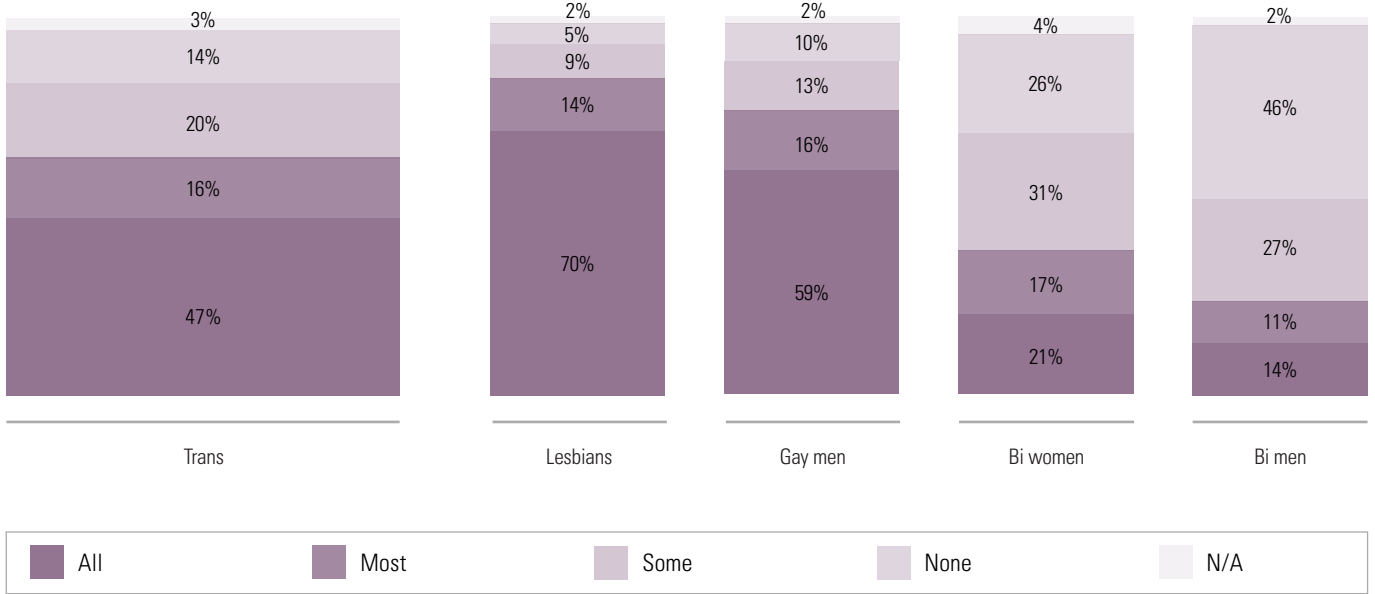
When I was 18, 21 years ago, I came out to my parents, and you'd have thought the world ended. But last year, they were there at our wedding, cheering and crying along with everyone else. My Dad made a really emotional speech about how happy my husband made me. Hearts and minds can be won but we need to keep going. Liam, 39 (Wales)

I now feel I can be open about who I am instead of needing to pass as straight and hide my true identity. I don't necessarily tell everyone I meet, but I don't have to hide it. I grew up in a very homophobic environment, but my parents are slowly changing their views on same sex marriage and other LGBT rights, even though their church is still very homophobic. Catherine, 25 (East Midlands)

About five years ago, my sister, whom for many years was not really accepting of my sexuality, came forward to say sorry, because her husband helped her see it differently. They are in their 40s, Bengali and Muslim. My sister is now teaching and promoting to her three young boys about gender politics and being anti-homophobic. Zara, 30 (London)

I came out this week to my family and I feel like ten years ago, this may have been a lot harder and some family members may have been less accepting. Felix, 21 (West Midlands)

To how many people in your family are you open about your sexual orientation or gender identity?



However, many still aren't able to be out with family members. **A third** of bi people (32 per cent) aren't open about their sexual orientation to anyone in their family, compared to **eight per cent** of lesbians and gay men.

Having lived as a straight man all my life it is virtually inconceivable that I would admit to my family that I am bisexual. Nash, 61 (South East)

Being bisexual means finding yourself excluded by gay people and straight people in social settings. I only tell my friends about my sexuality, meaning it is hidden from my family and my work colleagues. Bisexuality is a hidden sexuality through people's lack of acceptance. Kendra, 32 (Scotland)

Lesbian, gay and bi people living in small towns or cities are more likely not to be open about their sexual orientation to anyone in their family than lesbian, gay and bi people living in large towns and cities, **20 per cent** and **14 per cent** respectively.

Not only have I been able to get married, but my parents came to the wedding. I did have to put up with nearly two hours of homophobic abuse from my mother the next day but, trust me, that's progress. Clara, 51 (West Midlands)

My dad still says "poofs" and uses other derogatory language. I don't fight against that. It just is. Those type of folk ain't going to change. But my niece for example is so accepting. We are getting there. Flora, 40 (Scotland)

I'm very proud of who I am. It didn't start out great. My mother was totally against me being a lesbian, to the point where I couldn't be at home and had to stay with friends. She is great now, and my partner and I go for visits all the time, and with my grandparents and great grandparents also. Rebecca, 24 (Wales)

I think my 'coming out' may have softened my family's attitudes; it's easier to accept something you don't understand if a family member you already know and love comes out as gay.
Milo, 30 (Wales)

One in seven trans people (14 per cent) aren't open about their gender identity to anyone in their family. This includes **24 per cent** of trans non-binary people, **12 per cent** of trans men and **five per cent** of trans women.

I was in denial for many years about my gender identity because I was ashamed and worried about what people would think. The wider societal awareness and acceptance of transgender people has made it easier to come to terms with myself and to come out to others. My family have found it easier to accept me after watching some of the better documentaries which have answered questions which they felt unable to ask me. Logan, 31 (Scotland)

More than nine in ten LGBT people (92 per cent) are open about their sexual orientation or gender identity with at least some friends. However, **three in ten** bi men (30 per cent) and almost **one in ten** bi women (8 per cent), say they cannot be open about their sexual orientation with any of their friends, compared to **two per cent** of gay men and **one per cent** of lesbians. Lesbian, gay and bi people aged 65+ are also more likely not to be open to any of their friends compared to younger people aged 18-24, **15 per cent** compared to **two per cent** respectively.

It hasn't affected me much personally. I have one good friend who is trans, and another who is gay among several straight friends. We all know of each other and we interact. There's no disrespect or friction of any kind. Ida, 67 (London)

I am able to be more open about my non-binary identity, I feel better supported by friends and wider communities both on and offline when I am harassed for my identity, gender or sexuality. Frances, 30 (London)

I have requested gender-free public toilets. When I have asked views from friends on this issue, I have been met with laughter or ridicule. Charlotte, 66 (South East)

Intimate partner violence

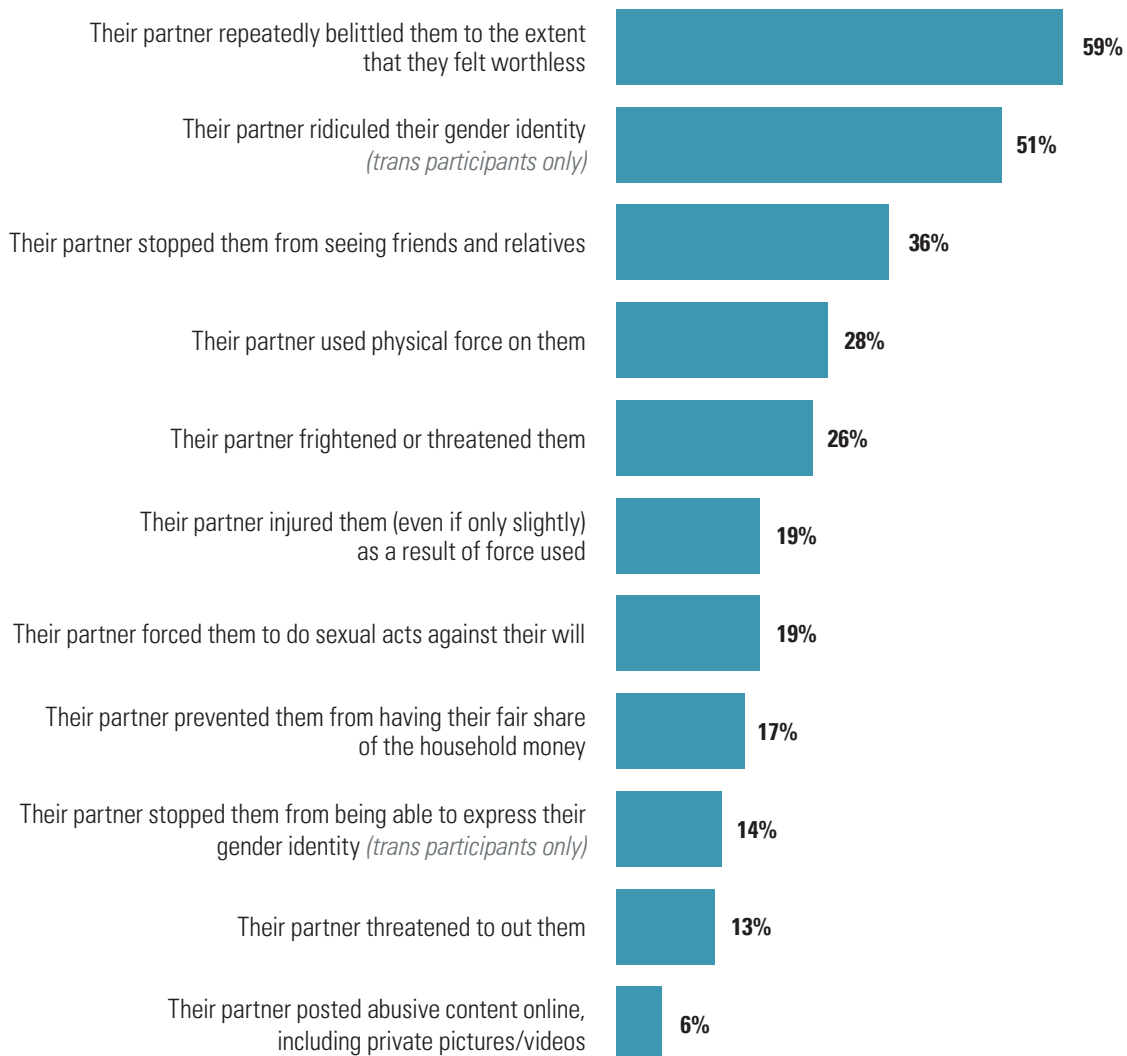
Overall, **more than one in ten** LGBT people (11 per cent) have faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year. This includes **13 per cent** of bi women and **10 per cent** of lesbians. **Twelve per cent** of bi men and **seven per cent** of gay men have experienced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year. According to the Office for National Statistics six per cent of women and three per cent of men in the general population have experienced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year.

One in five trans people and non-binary people (both 19 per cent) have faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last

year. This includes **21 per cent** of trans men and **16 per cent** of trans women.

One in six LGBT people aged 18-24 (17 per cent) have faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year. Black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people are more likely than white LGBT people to experience domestic abuse from a partner, **17 per cent** compared to **11 per cent**. **One in seven** LGBT disabled people (15 per cent) have experienced domestic abuse in the last year.

LGBT people who have experienced domestic abuse in the last year:



Homelessness

Almost one in five LGBT people (18 per cent) have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. This number increases to **almost three in ten** LGBT disabled people (28 per cent) compared to **more than one in ten** LGBT people who aren't disabled (11 per cent). **One in four** trans people (25 per cent) have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives, compared to **one in six** LGB people who aren't trans (16 per cent).

LGBT people in category C2DE (lower income households) are more likely than LGBT people in category ABC1 (higher income households) to have experienced homelessness, **25 per cent** compared to **15 per cent**.

One in four non-binary people (24 per cent), **20 per cent** of LGBT women and **15 per cent** of LGBT men have experienced homelessness.

Recommendations

For families and friends of LGBT people:

- If you're struggling with accepting or understanding a family member's sexual orientation or gender identity, seek support from others in similar situations. There are parents and friends' groups, both online and offline. You can find links to these groups on Stonewall's **What's in My Area** online database or by calling **Stonewall's Information Service**.
- Find out more. Using outdated language or concepts can make your LGBT family and friends feel excluded and misunderstood, even if that isn't your intention. If you don't know the right words to use or want to understand more about the issues facing LGBT people, then find out more. Ask your LGBT family member about the language and pronouns they'd like you to use and try to follow their lead. You can also find a glossary of terms and advice for parents on Stonewall's **website**.
- Be vocal in your support for LGBT equality, whether or not you have LGBT friends or family members who are open about their sexual orientation or gender identity. If your family and friends can see this, they're more likely to feel confident to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Join Stonewall's *Come Out for LGBT* campaign at **www.stonewall.org.uk/comeoutforlgbt**.

For UK Government:

- Consult with LGBT people and organisations to ensure the Domestic Violence and Abuse programme of work and Act is inclusive of LGBT people's needs.
- Ensure that enough sustainable funding is available for domestic violence support services to meet demand, including specialist providers that have experience with LGBT issues.

For domestic violence and homelessness support services:

- Develop and advertise services that are inclusive of LGBT people drawing on best practice from other LGBT-inclusive services.
- Provide training for all staff on meeting the specific needs of LGBT service users.

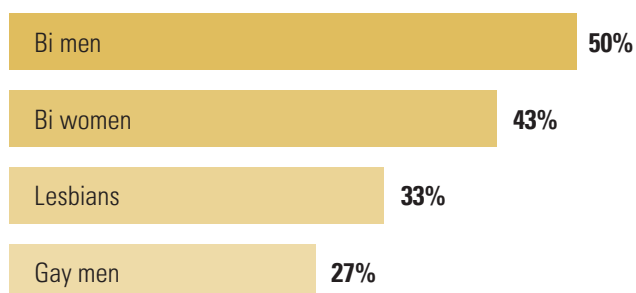
EXPERIENCES IN LGBT COMMUNITIES

Local LGBT communities are important social networks for many LGBT people, where they feel welcome, supported and able to be themselves. However, many LGBT people don't consider their local LGBT specific spaces welcoming and some even have experienced discrimination and poor treatment from other LGBT people because of their identity.

One in four LGBT people (23 per cent) attend LGBT-specific venues or events in their local community at least once a month. Black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people are about twice as likely to attend LGBT specific venues or events as white LGBT people, **45 per cent** compared to **22 per cent**.

However, a **third** of LGBT people (35 per cent) say they never attend LGBT specific venues or events. **Half** of LGBT people (50 per cent) living in rural areas never attend LGBT specific

I never attend LGBT-specific venues and events in my local community



venues or events, compared to a **third** of LGBT people (32 per cent) living in urban areas. Bi people are most likely to say they never attend.

Two thirds of LGBT people (67 per cent) consider their local LGBT community to be welcoming.

I may not be out to everyone, but through social groups I have found friends who identify as LGBT with whom I'm open with. Without these friends I may not be as confident and comfortable about being bi as I am today. Zola, 28 (East of England)

Pride events are the highlight of my year and I absolutely love them. Hugo, 22 (Yorkshire and the Humber)

However, **almost a third** of LGBT people (32 per cent) have experienced some form of discrimination or poor treatment from others in their local LGBT community.

I don't understand why there is the use of the word community. It does not and has not ever felt like being in a community. Jerome, 60 (West Midlands)

*Walking into gay bars and drag queens are making jokes directed at me because I'm black on more than one occasion is pretty unwelcoming. Then shrugging it off by saying 'I'm not racist, I have a colour TV'.
Kasim, 25 (South East)*

I was kicked out of a LGBT support organisation for bringing up concerns of my trans friends. Nora, 35 (South East)

Mainstream LGBTQ spaces exclude people of colour, migrants and disabled people. Although I usually feel safe, I understand that this is contingent, and my sexuality remains 'othered' by mainstream culture. Sylvia, 20 (South East)

Half of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people (51 per cent) have experienced discrimination or poor treatment because of their ethnicity from others in their local LGBT community. This number rises to **three in five** black LGBT people (61 per cent).

Casual racism is common place in LGBT bars and clubs. LGBT community events, unless people of colour specific, are largely white attended and white led. This can feel exclusive. Feelings of being the 'visible other' aren't nice and discourage me from attending events. Dalia, 32 (North West)

In an LGBT bar, on more than one occasion, drunk people have come over to pet my hair and ask inappropriate questions regarding my race. Abebi, 34 (Scotland)

The gay village and Pride aren't welcoming towards people of colour. The drag queens shout after us calling us Beyoncé or Whoopi Goldberg, which we took lightly at first but now it's really embarrassing every time it happens as it brings a lot of attention to us and the other people in the club will start to join in. Last year at Pride some guy bumped into me by accident and when he realised I was black he said "ew" and wiped his arm off in front of me. I don't go out as often anymore because of this. Lara, 28 (North West)

One in eight LGBT people of faith (12 per cent) have experienced discrimination and poor treatment from other LGBT people in their local LGBT community because of their faith. This includes **almost one in ten** LGBT people of Christian faith (9 per cent) and **one in five** LGBT people of other faiths, including Islam, Sikhism and Judaism (21 per cent).

LGBT spaces tend to be very white-dominated. I'm not a Muslim but am often mistaken for one and there's an Islamophobic feel in the air, whether expressed verbally or implied. There is a general disbelief that someone not-white, or just South Asian, can be LGBT. Questions about my sexuality and family and community that wouldn't necessarily be asked of White British peers. Priya, 21 (London)

LGBT events are generally hostile towards openly religious people, particularly Jews and Muslims in my opinion. Amber, 19 (Wales)

Among some LGBT people there is a complete lack of understanding that one can be Christian and gay. Kian, 67 (Scotland)

I guess it's the usual micro-aggression, "but you're Muslim, how can you be gay?" I get from all types of people. Sometimes you think you're safe when you find inclusive LGBT groups, but even then I get it from all sides; from white people for not being white, from brown people for not being brown enough, from Muslim LGBT people for not being Muslim enough. Zara, 30 (London)

I have found that some heterosexual people as well as some lesbians have looked down on me as a bisexual person. They felt I was indecisive in being unable to pick a 'straight' or 'gay' path. I have found that especially upsetting coming from LGBT people because I thought their ideology was inclusive.

Molly, 28 (London)

More than one in four bi women (27 per cent) and **almost one in five** bi men (18 per cent) have experienced discrimination or poor treatment from others in their local LGBT community because of their sexual orientation, compared to **nine per cent** of lesbians and **four per cent** of gay men.

I am being treated as though I'm faking it because I'm bisexual but currently with a partner of the opposite sex.
Jordan, 27 (North West)

Bisexuality is misunderstood within the LGBT community and sometimes you can be treated as just confused. Abeni, 22 (West Midlands)

As a feminine bisexual woman, I have often been 'read' as straight and therefore frowned upon in LGBTQ spaces. For example, I was once refused entry to a famous London LGBTQ bar while in a group with friends who were mostly queer men of colour, and have received sarcastic comments from staff members at a local LGBTQ club. I believe very strongly that many LGBTQ spaces are not welcoming to people of colour, older trans people and visibly disabled people, and have heard many testimonies to this effect e.g. fetishization, rude comments, not being allowed into clubs by door staff, not having events that cater to your needs, being misgendered or assumed to be heterosexual. Sylvia, 20 (South East)

Older LGBT people have experienced discrimination or poor treatment because of their age in their local LGBT community. **One in five** LGBT people aged 55-64 (21 per cent) and more than **one in four** LGBT people aged 65+ (28 per cent) say they have experienced this.

Help stop discrimination to older members of the LGBT community, especially by the younger members. For example, in a personal advert a younger person need to only state 'No over 40' not derogatory things like 'No old wrinkly grandads'. Roman, 57 (East of England)

I feel the entire gay scene is aimed at those in their 20s. I don't feel the gay community in my city caters for older gay people at all. I'm a 48-year-old lesbian and my best friend is a 45-year-old gay man. Neither of us feel we're welcome in the gay bars and clubs. Francesca, 48 (North East)

One in four LGBT disabled people (26 per cent) whose activities are 'limited a lot' because of a health problem or disability, and **seven per cent** of LGBT disabled people whose activities are 'limited a little', have experienced discrimination or poor treatment from others in their local LGBT community because they're disabled.

I have Acquired Cerebellar Ataxia - a disability which not only affects your mobility, but also your speech. Bouncers would frequently not let me in places because they thought I was drunk. Jasper, 33 (West Midlands)

At pride in 2015 I was walking slowly because of my disability and other pride goers were rude to me about it. I think they said something like hurry up when they were behind me, then started laughing. Kai, 20 (South East)

Being autistic means that a lot of LGBT communities aren't easily available to me and that people have questioned whether my orientation is a by-product of my disability rather than a thing of its own. Louis, 32 (South East)

Remember that it's not just white cis abled people who are LGBT+. I am an Arab, ex Muslim, autistic, mentally ill, poor brown girl who is also bi. No LGBT+ supports me or accommodates, I am invisible to you.
Asha, 21 (North West)

More than a third of trans people (36 per cent) have experienced discrimination and poor treatment in their local LGBT community because of being trans.

I find that the gay village can be incredibly transphobic. I have been groped in bars because people wanted to 'see if I had the parts'. This makes me feel unsafe and I don't enjoy going out. Luca, 22 (North West)

There are no gender-neutral toilets in most LGBT bars I visited. Harper, 40 (West Midlands)

There was evidence of transphobic abuse and discriminatory attitudes against trans people in some of the responses to this study:

I am becoming very tired indeed of the list of initials which keeps being added to the initial G. We shall be having one for gay disabled dwarves next. Edwin, 76 (South East)

Whilst I try to be sympathetic to trans issues, they are not my issues and I don't see why I should be othered, judged or discriminated against for not espousing the trans cause or embracing transsexuals as part of my community. Stanley, 34 (Scotland)

I am ashamed to say that I do not like the inclusion of trans people in LGB politics. Abigail, 58 (Scotland)

While a shocking number of LGBT people have experienced discrimination and poor treatment from others in their local LGBT communities, many LGBT people stand up for each other, demand more inclusivity and want LGBT venues and events to be welcoming environments for all LGBT people.

We need to tackle transphobia, which seems to become increasingly violent the more visibility the trans community has. Also challenging racism and Islamophobia within the LGBT+ communities, because I think QTPOC and LGBT+ Muslims are still excluded in a lot of ways. Erin, 24 (South East)

More work on trans rights is vital. Trans people are still being murdered and taking their own lives at a horrible rate. I'd like to see more work with LGBT people from religious and ethnic minorities. Tackling bi-phobia from within the LGBT movement is also important. Jenson, 37 (East Midlands)

I think the difficulty with achieving true equality for LGBT people is that so much of the discrimination they receive is the product of intersecting prejudice or ideas about what it means to be a woman or a man. LGBT people who are not 'British' enough (i.e. are not white, Christian, English-speaking, etc.) may be discriminated upon even by other LGBT people or for a combination of their race/ethnicity/religion and their sexual preference or identity. The same can be said for LGBT people who are also disabled. Gender roles also have a huge impact on LGBT rights as by the very definition of being LGBT a person is refusing to conform to heteronormativity and traditional gender roles. Rose, 31 (Scotland)

Recommendations

For LGBT organisations, community groups and venues:

- Ensure that black, Asian and minority ethnic, disabled, bi and trans people, and LGBT people of different ages and faiths, are represented on the board, the staff and volunteer team and in decision-making structures within your organisation. This shouldn't be tokenistic, but a genuine attempt to ensure that your organisation is inclusive of the diversity of LGBT communities.
- Recognise that discrimination exists within LGBT communities, as it does in society as a whole, and ensure that your organisation has a policy to tackle discrimination and abuse of all kinds, including that experienced by bi and trans people in LGBT spaces. Communicate this policy clearly to all those involved with your service.
- Access anti-discrimination training to help you examine current practice and to develop and implement new policies.
- Collect diversity data on the people who use your service or interact with your organisation to identify any areas of the LGBT community who are under-represented. Monitoring must be worded and formatted correctly. For example, when asking about gender, people should be able to describe their gender in their own words.
- Develop meaningful partnerships with other non-LGBT community groups, for example black, Asian and minority ethnic or disability groups, to learn from each other, support each other's work, share information and resources or run joint projects, campaigns and training.
- Explore developing groups or services designed for and led by people from identities that are currently under-represented or lack visibility. This should be additional to, not instead of, inclusion within the organisation.
- Choose venues and plan events that are accessible to all parts of the LGBT community. This may require diversity training for staff and volunteers; adjusting the structure

or logistics of an event to make it accessible for disabled people; producing publicity in different languages; using different venues that are not just pubs or clubs; or taking into account the dietary requirements of different faiths.

For everyone within LGBT communities:

- Listen to others within the LGBT community, whose sexual orientation or gender identity may be different to your own. Find out more by reading up online and challenge your own assumptions. Be aware that other people's lives and experiences may be very different to your own, especially if they suffer multiple levels of discrimination due to other elements of their identity, such as their faith, ethnicity or age.
- Find out about and support organisations which represent different groups within the LGBT community, for example black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT networks, faith groups, disability or older people's groups. Find groups on Stonewall's **What's in My Area** online database or encourage your group to add a listing.
- If you hear people making negative comments or using hurtful or abusive language about any aspect of someone's identity in LGBT spaces, or in wider society, challenge it if it's safe to do so. If it's online, report it.
- Be vocal in your support for LGBT equality for all. Join Stonewall's *Come Out for LGBT* campaign at www.stonewall.org.uk/comeoutforlgbt

EXPERIENCES IN FAITH COMMUNITIES

LGBT people of faith report that some faith communities are LGBT inclusive and provide LGBT people with a welcoming space to worship and practice their faith. However, many LGBT people of faith still don't feel welcome in their faith community and therefore don't feel able to be out to anyone in their community. Many voice a need for more LGBT inclusive services and faith groups.

Three in ten LGBT people of faith (29 per cent) take part at least once a month in a collective activity connected with their faith, such as attending a place of worship or taking part in local faith-based groups. This number includes **17 per cent** of LGBT people of faith that take part in such activities at least once a week or more often.

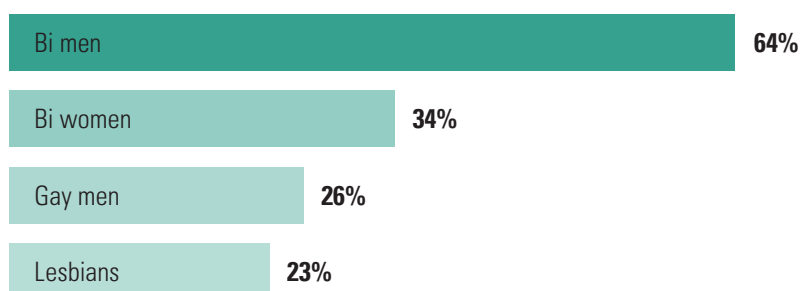
A third of lesbian, gay and bi people (32 per cent) aren't open with anyone in their faith community about their sexual orientation. **One in four** trans people of faith (25 per cent) aren't open about their gender identity.

I wish I could go to church and be open about my sexuality - I am NOT equal as far as the church is concerned. Eleanor, 65 (South East)

Only **two in five** LGBT people of faith (39 per cent) think their faith community is welcoming of lesbian, gay and bi people.

And just **one in four** LGBT people of faith (25 per cent) think their faith community is welcoming of trans people.

LGB people who aren't out to anyone in their faith community



I was told that I was not welcome to join a local church as I was married to a woman. He said he had to think about the rest of his church and unless we repented and became celibate we needed to leave.

Karen, 35 (Wales)

I was reading the literature in the church I visited that said they provided money to groups that campaign against the rights of LGBT people. Luke, 43 (West Midlands)

I think that there is a pressure amongst the Islamic community, which I am a part of, to pursue heterosexual partnerships. Many Muslims who I know seem to stress that it's not a sin to be gay, but to have sexual intercourse with a woman as a woman would not be permissible in my religion. Aisha, 24 (South East)

My church says it accepts and includes me but there is not a publicly affirming statement yet. Agatha, 50 (Wales)

I wasn't allowed in church, as I was told it was for the use of heterosexual people only. Norris, 51 (West Midlands)

I believe in God and used to often attend Catholic church but I now feel unable to as my priest is very open with his negative opinions on the thought of being non-heterosexual. Olga, 19 (Scotland)

I'm an orthodox Jew. My rabbi knows and his wife knows but I was told not to tell anyone else as the congregation are mostly elderly and wouldn't understand. I told a couple who are close Jewish friends and they told me that they don't agree with my 'life choice' but still love me, but could I please not do anything gay around their children and if I get a partner I wasn't to introduce them. Esther, 47 (Yorkshire and the Humber)

More than a third of LGBT people of faith (36 per cent) have access to LGBT inclusive faith groups within their faith community. LGBT people of faith in rural areas are less likely to have access to inclusive faith groups than LGBT people living in urban areas, **28 per cent** compared to **38 per cent** respectively.

I am a member of a church that is positive about LGBT inclusion and even has a special service for us. I am welcomed in that church. However, as a member of the Synod (church council) I work with other churches in the region and, on a number of occasions, it has been made clear that some congregations are not so open minded. I have been told to keep quiet about who I am and when attending a service at another church with a lesbian couple we were asked if in future we could not "make it obvious" what our identity was. Nothing abusive, but very uncomfortable. Jules, 40 (North West)

A Muslim LGBT group helped me about 2/3 years ago. As I got more and more involved I realised there are a few support programmes. I also met variety of people - and was asked to be a youth LGBTQ mentor. I can see this all available online. The activity can be seen from people all over the world who are creating safe online platforms as the physical world is still too difficult. Zara, 30 (London)

More than half of LGBT people of faith (55 per cent) would like to see more LGBT inclusive groups available within their faith community. Trans people and black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people are particularly likely to express the need for more inclusive faith groups, both **66 per cent**.

Recommendations

For local faith groups:

- Recognise that LGBT people of faith, their friends and families are active within faith communities, even if they aren't currently open about their sexual orientation or gender identity within that community. Examine activities, rituals and language used in worship to see how these can better reflect and include the needs and experience of LGBT people of faith. This includes how spiritual and social support is offered both to those who are struggling to integrate their faith with their gender identity or sexual orientation and to their family members.
- Recognise that, for faith groups, becoming more LGBT-inclusive involves questioning and reframing deeply-held beliefs and practices. Look for ways to affirm LGBT inclusion that are appropriate to your community's stage in its journey, for example by inviting LGBT and pro-LGBT speakers to events, hosting discussions or using positive language about LGBT people.
- Support LGBT-inclusive groups specific to your religion or denomination and advertise their activities in places of worship, at meetings and on your website. You can find links to these groups on Stonewall's **What's In My Area** online database.

For faith leaders:

- Put forward a resolution or policy to commit to becoming a faith community that welcomes and includes LGBT people and their families. Ensure that the whole congregation understands what this means in practice. Display your resolution or policy in your place of worship. Remember that being an inclusive community goes beyond LGBT inclusion. There will be LGBT, and non-LGBT, people of faith who also experience discrimination due to other identities.
- Use the opportunities that you have to speak out for LGBT inclusion and to take responsibility for combatting discrimination within religious or denominational structures.

METHODOLOGY

Between February and April 2017, 5,375 LGBT people across England, Scotland and Wales completed an online questionnaire about their life in Britain today, which was administered by YouGov on behalf of Stonewall.

Participants were recruited through the YouGov panel and via an open recruitment that was circulated through a wide range of organisations, community groups and individuals.

The sample

- 53 per cent of respondents are from England, 24 per cent are from Wales and 23 per cent are from Scotland.
- 50 per cent are male, 41 per cent are female and eight per cent describe their gender in a different way. Different terms that respondents used to describe their gender identity include 'non-binary', 'genderfluid' and 'genderqueer'. People who used a different term to describe their gender identity are referred to as 'non-binary people' throughout the report.
- 58 per cent are gay or lesbian, 30 per cent are bi, nine per cent use a different term to describe their sexual orientation and two per cent are straight. Different terms that respondents used to describe their sexual orientation include 'pansexual' and 'queer'.
- 14 per cent said they identify as trans and another four per cent said they are unsure of whether they're trans or are questioning their gender identity.
- 35 per cent are disabled.
- 28 per cent hold a religious belief or identify as a person of faith.
- Six per cent are black, Asian or minority ethnic.

The figures have been weighted by region and age. All differences reported in the survey are statistically significant. All names in quotes have been changed for anonymity and ages have been assigned from within age bands.

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LGBT IN BRITAIN

HOME AND COMMUNITIES

When I was 18, 21 years ago, I came out to my parents, and you'd have thought the world ended. But last year, they were there at our wedding, cheering and crying along with everyone else. My Dad made a really emotional speech about how happy my husband made me. Hearts and minds can be won but we need to keep going.

Liam, 39 (Wales)

I guess it's the usual micro-aggression, "but you're Muslim, how can you be gay?" I get from all types of people. Sometimes you think you're safe when you find inclusive LGBT groups, but even then I get it from all sides; from white people for not being white, from brown people for not being brown enough, from Muslim LGBT people for not being Muslim enough.

Zara, 30 (London)

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