

Research Series

The Economic Case for LGBT+ Inclusion in the Caribbean



Open
For
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About Open For Business

Open For Business is a coalition of global companies making the case that inclusive and diverse societies are better for business and better for economic growth. The purpose of the coalition is to advance LGBT+ rights globally. Open For Business coalition partners share a deep-rooted commitment to diversity and inclusion in their own workplaces, and they are concerned about the spread of anti-LGBT+ policies in many countries in which they operate.

The coalition has live regional programs in the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, and East Africa, with a program in South East Asia in development. Each of these programs works with local civil society partners to mobilize advocates in local business communities and facilitate data-driven advocacy.



About this Report

Purpose

In addition to being a human rights mandate, combating homophobia and transphobia is also an economic and business imperative. However, the data to make this case more actionable for interested stakeholders remains largely unavailable. Having made this argument on a global level, as well as in Kenya and four countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Open For Business now focuses on the English-speaking Caribbean to understand the economic cost of LGBT+ exclusion. In order to do so, the research team conducted large-scale mixed-methods data collection – culminating in the largest LGBT+ dataset in the region at the time of writing. This report then examined those micro-level data and used pre-existing macroeconomic models to offer a range of estimates on the economic cost of LGBT+ exclusion. Open For Business found that this cost is tremendous, as are the benefits to economies and businesses when the rights and inclusion of LGBT+ people are promoted.

Who is it for?

- For policymakers considering how to promote economic growth, particularly economic recovery strategies following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For statisticians and economists needing to promote more robust data collection and/or inclusive economic development strategies.
- For corporations in the private sector that seek new ways to employ talent and bolster business outcomes, and revitalize operations following the pandemic.
- For LGBT+ civil society organizations that believe in a complementary approach to human rights and see great potential in promoting economic empowerment.
- For international organizations – whether those that concentrate on general economic development or those that focus on LGBT+ inclusion specifically – to help them understand this emerging pathway.

Methodology

The research and report used mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative) research in order to estimate the cost of LGBT+ exclusion in 12 Caribbean countries. This included:

- A literature review of key LGBT+ publications and research in the countries of focus, as well as a literature review on LGBT+ migration and LGBT+ tourism.
- A survey of LGBT+ people in the Caribbean as well as LGBT+ members of the Caribbean diaspora, gathering information from 2,167 respondents.
- A survey of potential tourists to the Caribbean region, including those who are LGBT+ as well as heterosexual and cisgender, drawing on responses from 1,435 respondents.
- In-depth interviews with 21 business and civil society leaders to uncover the extent of labor-market discrimination and the business rationale that companies employ when purposefully advancing LGBT+ issues in the workplace, including the benefits that this inclusion brings.
- Further analyses of pre-existing data sets, including measures of stigma associated with same-sex issues in the Caribbean, LGBT+ legal barometers, economic development data, and tourism data.

Call for Evidence

Global data gaps on LGBT+ people remain a significant concern, serving to increase the invisibility of the community while also limiting effective interventions. In the 12 countries of focus, these data gaps are equally astounding. To combat this invisibility, we have led data collection throughout the Caribbean and among its diaspora. These micro-level data are inherently powerful, while also providing the knowledge needed to deliver a range of estimates on the macroeconomic cost of LGBT+ exclusion. As this process is well grounded in substantial data collection, we present the final estimates with greater assurance.

Who are the Authors?

Phil Crehan is an Independent Consultant and works with Open For Business as Principal Investigator for the Caribbean Local Influencer Program, and served as lead author for this report. **Liam Rezende** serves as a Trustee with Open For Business, and works with EY as Global Talent and D&I, Brand, Marketing & Communications Lead. **Dr. John Wolf** is Assistant Dean for the New Jersey Institute of Technology, as well as Lead Data Scientist on this research. **Peter Jordan** is an Independent Consultant, and also Head of Insights at TOPOSOPHY, and was part of the research team. **Ceren Altincekic** is a Data Scientist at Mars Petcare, and is a contributing author on this report. **Jon Miller** is Founder, Chair and Executive Editor of Open For Business. **Kathryn Dovey** is the Executive Director of Open For Business. Thanks also go to Paul Donaldson, Director at Brunswick Group, for his analysis of Vanderbilt University LAPOP data. Finally, special thanks also go to Harry Brooks for editing this report, as well as Dr. Michael Martell for his review.

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Participatory Research

Open For Business utilized a number of participatory research methods to create this report. This provides assurance that the research was informed by LGBT+ leaders in the region, and thus is appropriate for their overall advocacy strategies, as well as guided by academics and others to ensure analytical rigor. This was achieved predominantly through dialogue with the following three stakeholder groups:

The Program Advisory Board was created to convene experts from civil society, academia, business and economic development to guide the research process. Through this process, Open For Business ensured that the research was grounded in local realities and guided by the highest ethical and academic standards. This board was, and continues to be, instrumental to these goals. The experts included:

- Caleb Orozco, Executive Director, United Belize Advocacy Movement (UniBAM)
- Kenita Placide, Founder and Executive Director, Eastern Caribbean Alliance for Diversity and Equality (ECADE)
- Alexis D'Marco, Founding Director, The D M A R C O Organization; Executive Director, United Caribbean Trans Network (UCTRANS)
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- Mariette Vidal, Program Officer within the Department of Social Inclusion, Organization of American States
- Dr. Michael Martell, Assistant Professor, Bard College
- Mohamed Q. Amin, Founder and Executive Director, Caribbean Equality Project

Community Partners

This research also benefited from additional Community Partners, who contributed and guided various aspects of this research. They included:

- Kadeem Khan, Associate Research Manager, Data for Good at Facebook
- Miranda Alexander, Founder, President and Project Director, Caribbean Community in Philadelphia
- Cracey Annatola Fernandes, Guyana Trans United
- Jake Fagan, Product & Social Impact Leader
- Angeline Jackson, Founder and Executive Director, Quality of Citizenship Jamaica
- Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays (J-FLAG)
- Élyse Marcellin, WOMANTRA
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- Anil Persaud, Managing Director, EQUAL Guyana
- Colin Robinson, Director of Imagination, CAISO – In memoriam
- Brandy Rodriguez, Trinidad & Tobago Transgender Coalition
- Joel Simpson, Founder and Managing Director, Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD)
- Matt Skallerud, President, Pink Media
- John Tanzella, President, IGLTA
- Jessica St. Rose, United and Strong
- Adrien Gaubert, Co-Founder & CMO, myGwork

Finally, the Research Advisory Board played a crucial role by providing guidance and feedback on the research, particularly regarding the economic and business case for LGBT+ inclusion and rights. Special thanks go to Dr. Lee Badgett and Dr. Felicity Daly. The full Research Advisory Board consists of the following:

The Open For Business Research Advisory Board

The work of Open For Business is supported by a Research Advisory Board, which provides ongoing guidance and feedback, and helps to ensure the economic case for LGBT+ inclusion is comprehensive and up to date.

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Executive Summary

Combating homophobia and transphobia are economic and business imperatives, in addition to being a human rights mandate. This report sets out the data that demonstrates these imperatives for 12 countries in the English-speaking Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago¹.

The challenges that LGBT+ people in the Caribbean confront on a daily basis can be stark: state-sponsored homophobia and transphobia are prevalent, as is social stigma. As just two examples, nine of the 12 focus countries criminalize same-sex intimate acts, and none of them allows a change of sex or gender marker on state identification. Yet until now robust datasets on the extent and impact of these challenges have remained limited. Open For Business has thus undertaken significant mixed-methods data collection in order to deliver a range of estimates on the macroeconomic cost of exclusion. The findings are strong, and the costs are significant.

Many cultural and social movements in the Caribbean are encouraging an empowered outlook for the LGBT+ community. In this large and diverse region, civil society, the private sector and sometimes the courts are leading progressive change. This research taps into that momentum by also capturing the benefits of LGBT+ inclusion, couched in economic, business and social terms. The following seven patterns emerge as the strongest findings:

1. LGBT+ exclusion in the English-speaking Caribbean costs between USD 1.5 billion and USD 4.2 billion per year – between 2.1 and up to 5.7% of its collective GDP.

By identifying the extent of diminished human capital, health disparities, labor output, experiences of violence, and constraints on tourism, Open For Business now presents the extent of LGBT+ exclusion in 12 countries in the Caribbean. In addition to being a significant human rights concern, LGBT+ legal and social exclusion carry specific economic tolls that all must pay.

2. Tourism in the Caribbean is diminished by anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma, at a cost of between USD 423 million and up to USD 689 million, or 0.57-0.93% of its regional GDP.

In the countries of focus, overall tourism contributes up to 14% of GDP. For the first time, Open For Business research revealed that 18% of travelers would not visit the region, predominantly because of anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma – thus, state-sponsored homophobia and transphobia have clear financial costs. Inversely, data also showed a significantly stronger likelihood of tourists visiting a country after it adopts pro-LGBT+ policies.

3. Brain drain: LGBT+ skilled workers migrate and stay in more open societies – leading to lost human capital, productivity and output, as well as reduced competitiveness.

By also focusing on the LGBT+ Caribbean diaspora, Open For Business has found that those who leave are more likely to be economically productive than those who stay. For this diaspora, migration is driven by discriminatory laws and negative attitudes, which also act as disincentives to return. This depletes the productivity and competitiveness of the Caribbean, showing an LGBT+ brain drain. Together, survey and interview data show the tremendous economic impact of anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma.

4. In the Caribbean, our analyses showed a strong relationship between rights for LGBT+ people and GDP as well as GNI (gross national income) per capita.² Additionally, support for marriage equality also has a relatively strong correlation to GDP.

Globally, there is a strong correlation between the rights of LGBT+ people and economic growth. Open For Business has found a similar correlation specific to the Caribbean, in addition to measures of LGBT+ acceptance and economic growth. This aligns with global findings that suggest the legal and social inclusion of LGBT+ people likely influences and helps overall economic growth, and is bolstered by our new quantitative data showing that LGBT+ inclusion likely leads to stronger human capital outcomes and stronger economic output.

5. Countries that decriminalize same-sex acts likely benefit from increased labor productivity.

This is the result of decreased labor market discrimination: LGBT+ people in non-criminalized environments are more likely to avoid occupational segregation, avoid workplace harassment and stay in their workplaces longer– all with associated higher productivity. In addition, countries that no longer criminalize same-sex intimate acts seem to have fewer challenges in schools and less violence against LGBT+ people.

6. The largest survey of its kind has shed new light on LGBT+ lives in the Caribbean and its diaspora.

By working with partners throughout the region, Open For Business has identified numerous economic development challenges for the LGBT+ Caribbean community – including within the family, schools, labor markets, healthcare, housing, and financial services. Additionally, this survey found high levels of violence with a diminished capacity to seek justice.

7. Our data show the extent of LGBT+ occupational segregation in the labor market, with negative impacts on economic and business outcomes.

LGBT+ occupational segregation works on two axes: first by pushing workers into the informal sector or entrepreneurship, and second by keeping them out of higher-paying, senior-level jobs in the formal sector. This represents a complex and inefficient misallocation of labor, with detrimental impacts on businesses and the economy. Yet many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from the region, as well as multinational corporations (MNCs), have their own incentives to combat occupational segregation, and see great benefits of LGBT+ inclusion.

¹ Representing the bulk of the Caribbean Community and Common Market, CARICOM.

² GNI comprises GDP plus overseas earnings minus foreign earnings in the domestic economy.

A Brief Introduction to the Research

This report presents the largest primary research exercise ever undertaken into LGBT+ lives in the Caribbean, and the participation of LGBT+ people in the economy and in the workplace. The analysis is based on both quantitative and qualitative methods: alongside interviews with business leaders and employees in the region, data collection included two surveys – of LGBT+ people in the Caribbean as well as the LGBT+ Caribbean diaspora, and prospective tourists to the Caribbean.



Sources of quantitative and qualitative data

Survey 1 was conducted among the LGBT+ community across the 12 target Caribbean countries, culminating in 2,167 participants. It informed the analysis of lost economic performance outlined in Part 1 and the labor market analysis in Part 3. Aside from employment outcomes, it also captured important aspects of individual life outcomes, including an examination of the family, education, health, housing, financial services, violence, and access to justice. This survey was also conducted among the LGBT+ Caribbean diaspora, and perhaps for the first time confirms the substantial brain drain that results from anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma in the region, enabling the quantification of legal and attitudinal “push” factors driving migration. This dataset provides rich sources of insight into the lives of LGBT+ people in the region, and more in-depth analysis will be published subsequently.

Survey 2 was conducted among prospective tourists to the Caribbean (both LGBT+ and heterosexual and cisgender people), predominantly from the UK, US, and Canada, and drew responses from 1,435 participants. It informed the analysis of the tourism industry by showing a strong link between homophobia and transphobia in destination countries and the likelihood of international travelers visiting. For perhaps the first time, this shows that tourists are aware of LGBT+ exclusion in destination countries and will spend their money accordingly. This provided Open For Business with a deeper understanding of the cost of anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma, as well as the added financial benefit when countries adopt pro-LGBT+ policies.

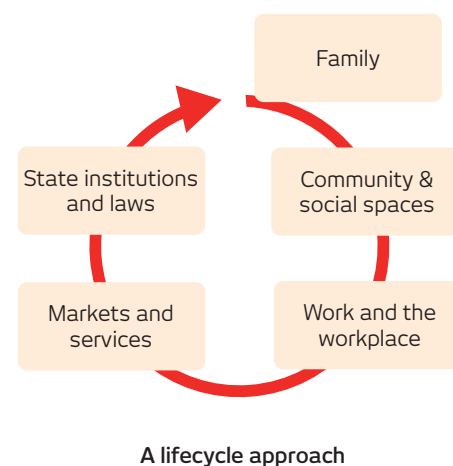
The **interviews** consisted of 21 semi-structured and in-depth conversations. Predominantly, this focused on business leaders throughout the private sector, including: ANSA McAL, Citibank, Insight MMC, Massy Group, NextDecade, Open Current, PWC, Regency Recruitment and Resources Limited, RF&G Insurance, Sandals, and Scotiabank. Additionally, representatives from two chambers of commerce participated, including the American Chamber of Commerce and the Energy Chamber of Commerce, both in Trinidad and Tobago. Finally, LGBT+ leaders from the civil society sector also participated, including UNIBAM, UCTRANS, and TransWave Jamaica.

Interviewees were selected to reflect a diversity of factors. Primarily, they were chosen among the more influential industries that drive the GDPs of economies within the region – especially financial services, banks, tourism, and oil and gas. Additional consideration was given to reflect other factors, including the size and scope of their employer (multinational vs. regional vs. domestic), their seniority within the business and their location within the Caribbean, as well as more identity-driven characteristics, including their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, and age.

The conceptual framework underlying this research is driven by a lifecycle approach. A lifecycle allowed Open For Business to understand, more holistically, the challenges of LGBT+ people and the corresponding impacts of those challenges throughout a lifetime – particularly in light of stigma, discrim-

inatory laws, exclusion, or violence. Survey 1 was based on the themes of family, education, health, employment, housing, financial services, violence, justice, and a specific component for the diaspora. The findings were powerful and showed us the extent of the challenges the LGBT+ community faces and corresponding impacts throughout their lifetime.

The next section dives deeper into these findings, particularly in the areas of the family, education, health, employment, violence, and justice. Towards the end, we also dive deeper into Survey 2 on tourism, all to examine the economic performance of the Caribbean in regards to LGBT+ issues. Within each area, and due to discrimination and exclusion, there are measurable social and economic losses that can be found at the level of the individual, community and country – allowing us to estimate its aggregate and macroeconomic impact.



A lifecycle approach

Part 1: Economic Performance

The Economic Impact of LGBT+ Discrimination

The interpersonal and structural challenges that LGBT+ people face as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI) create a penalty for individuals, communities, society, and the economy alike. As seen below, the costs are tremendous. This section primarily used quantitative data from two surveys focused on the Caribbean, as well as pre-existing legal barometers and public opinion polls, to deliver a range of estimates on the economic impact of LGBT+ discrimination, exclusion, and violence. It is possible to look at this from several angles:

LGBT+ discrimination and exclusion in the English-speaking Caribbean costs between USD 1.5 billion and up to USD 4.2 billion per year – or 2.1 to 5.7% of the region’s GDP.

By examining the extent and loss of human capital, health disparities, lost productivity and output, violence, and constraints on tourism, this report has estimated the economic cost of LGBT+ exclusion in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Systematic challenges in the family and schools, as well as greater health disparities, significantly limit the human capital of LGBT+ people in the region.

By comparing the LGBT+ sample to the heterosexual and cisgender sample, as well as the diaspora sample from Survey 1, we have shown the loss of human capital, largely due to homophobia and transphobia. Diminished human capital has specific economic costs, and we examined those estimates through family exclusion, challenges in schools, and health outcomes.

Various survey data show that violence against LGBT+ people in the Caribbean costs 0.51–1.6% of the region’s GDP – or between USD 383 million and up to USD 1.2 billion.

In addition to being a grave human rights challenge, violence against LGBT+ people also limits their socioeconomic outcomes and increases aggregate costs on society at large. Our survey data and other datasets confirmed that LGBT+ people in the Caribbean are significantly more vulnerable to violence. By examining only two dimensions – self-harm and interpersonal violence – we can measure their larger economic impact.

Tourism in the Caribbean is diminished by LGBT+ discrimination – an annual loss between 0.57 to 0.93% of its regional GDP, or between USD 423 million and up to USD 689 million.

Tourism is one of the Caribbean’s most influential and lucrative sectors, contributing up to 14% of its GDP with more than 7 million visitors in one year alone (UNWTO, 2019). Anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma heavily influence the desirability of regional destinations for international tourists. Our survey data showed that 18% of LGBT+ people won’t visit the Caribbean due to state-sponsored homophobia and transphobia. Inversely, up to 60% of the overall sample would visit a country in the region, but only after it passed pro-LGBT+ policies.

Descriptive Statistics – Survey 1

As this section relied heavily on the findings from the first survey, we now provide a brief examination of those who participated. The end of this section will provide descriptive statistics on Survey 2 regarding tourism. Tables 1, 2 and 3 provide a breakdown of some demographic factors, including residency.

Table 1: Age, Race and Ethnicity by Cohort

Demographics	CARICOM	Non-CARICOM
Sample Composition (%)	92.7	7.3
Age (years)	28.5 (± 15.9)	31.5 (± 9.8)
Ethnic & Racial Identification (%)		
Afro-Caribbean	55.7	59.5
Caucasian	6.1	13.9
Chinese	2.4	6.3
Indo-Caribbean	13.8	18.4
Indigenous	2.7	5.1
Latino or Hispanic	9.1	5.1
Mixed	18.5	13.3
Other	4.4	4.4
Portuguese	1.3	4.4
Syrian/Lebanese	0.6	0.0

N = 2,167

Table 2: Country of Residence in the Caribbean and Diaspora

Country	%
Antigua and Barbuda	2.0
Bahamas	7.2
Barbados	5.0
Belize	27.9
Dominica	1.3
Grenada	2.2
Guyana	4.5
Jamaica	13.1
St. Kitts and Nevis	3.2
St. Lucia	3.2
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	1.7
Trinidad and Tobago	28.5

N = 2,009

Canada	14.6
United Kingdom	5.7
United States	55.7
Other	24

N = 158

Table 3: Identification as LGBT+ or Heterosexual and Cisgender

Identification	CARICOM (%)	Non-CARICOM (%)
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Queer (LGB)	76.8	79.7
Transgender or Non-Binary (Trans)	13.1	9.5
Heterosexual & Cisgender (Hetero-Cis)	10.1	10.8

The Cost of LGBT+ Discrimination, Exclusion, and Violence: a Closer Look

By aggregating micro-level data on the impacts of different forms of exclusion using established macroeconomic models, we were able to take a more detailed look at the overall costs of homophobia and transphobia in the Caribbean. The following charts tally these dimensions and supporting evidence on the economic losses associated with anti-LGBT+ laws as well as stigma. These estimates predominantly relied on data collected by Open For Business in addition to other LGBT+ datasets in the region, as well as general population and economic development data from the World Bank and other international organizations.

We start by exploring our survey data regarding challenges in the family and in schools. These dimensions are the two main ways of acquiring human capital – defined as the knowledge, skills, and health that people amass throughout the lifetime, which allow them to realize their potential, gain wealth and contribute more productively to society (World Bank, 2021). Due to the remarkable challenges that LGBT+ people face in just these two areas alone, the costs are significant. The section after will focus on health disparities to utilize an established macroeconomic model to quantify the cost of diminished human capital, as well as lower productivity.

Family and education: For many LGBT+ people, violence and exclusion begins in the family and impacts their well-being, mental health, socioeconomic status, and opportunities in life. These challenges can then follow them into schools, as they are vulnerable to bullying and other forms of exclusion. Together, these challenges diminish their ability to accumulate human capital.

The family unit is an exceptionally important part of life because it is inextricably tied to social and economic empowerment, as well as emotional well-being. It is also where children are first taught societal gender norms, as well as other powerful social norms (e.g. religious norms, so-called traditional values, etc.). Generally, these norms also fuel stigma against non-normative sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). For LGBT+ children and youth, this becomes problematic when they are held to such strict expectations – often reinforced with severe punishments, which lead to diminished physical and mental health, as well as socioeconomic outcomes.

Data from our survey demonstrated such challenges are common in the Caribbean (and reiterated in our interview data, see *Part 3: The Workplace Perspective* for more). LGBT+ participants experienced significant discrimination or exclusion in their families, and overwhelmingly due to their SOGI. The penalty was clear – in descending order: diminished mental health, coercion, cut off from financial resources, kicked out of the house, and forced into so-called “conversion therapy.” By comparison, they fared significantly worse than the heterosexual and cisgender sample, showing that it was the participant’s SOGI that drove these challenges. (In this section, the LGBT+ Caribbean and diaspora samples are roughly on par, which lends weight to the “push” factors that drive LGBT+ migration later on in life – see *Economic Focus 1: Brain Drain* for more). Table 4 shows all this in depth.

Some responses to open-ended questions showed the extent of familial challenges when their SOGI became known. One respondent spoke of being coerced into staying closeted: “I was forced to live in secret and hide my identity and act heterosexual at all times.” For others, the penalty was expulsion: “I was kicked out of my house, and my mom then went to report how I ran away so the police would then take me to a social worker who then gave me talk about how not to be a lesbian because it is not the will of God.” For others, this culminated in severe physical violence, by being “beaten till I couldn’t move for almost a week.”

Open For Business Survey 1 Data

Table 4: Challenges and Impact in the Family, by Cohort

Familial Challenges	CARICOM (%)			Non-CARICOM (%)
	LGB	Trans	Straight-Cis	
I have experienced discrimination or exclusion from my family.	45.6	57.2	17.7	45.6
This discrimination or exclusion was a result of my sexual orientation, gender identity.†	84.1	83.4	25.0	90.3
As a result of this discrimination or exclusion: †				
I have felt feelings of shame or struggled with mental illness.	78.7	84.1	52.8	80.6
I was coerced or forced into a heterosexual romantic relationship.	16.4	23.8	8.3	15.3
I was denied the ability to live openly LGBT.	55.3	59.6	8.3	43.1
I was deprived of financial resources.	13.4	20.5	13.9	8.3
I was disinherited.	9.8	14.6	11.1	8.3
I was kicked out of the house.	13.8	22.5	11.1	9.7
I was forced into so-called "conversion therapy".	14.1	11.9	0.0	5.6

N = 2,167

† among those indicating agreement with the statement "I have experienced discrimination or exclusion from my family."

Once LGBT+ youth leave the family to attend school, the challenges then continue. In the Caribbean, LGBT+ respondents reported significantly higher levels of discrimination or exclusion in schools, overwhelmingly due to their SOGI. As a result, this led to more coercion to act like their sex as assigned at birth, diminished ability to access programs, unfair treatments from teachers (39% and 51% for LGB and transgender respondents, respectively), and significantly more experience of harassment or bullying (57% and 68% for LGB and transgender respondents, respectively).

As a result of these challenges, diminished mental health was the harshest and most prevalent impact for LGBT+ respondents. This was summed up by one participant in response to an open-ended question: "I feel totally ashamed of myself and unhappy." For another, it was even starker, with "thoughts of dropping out or suicide." The LGBT+ sample in the Caribbean fared worse than the heterosexual and cisgender sample in the Caribbean, and by virtue of their SOGI.

Overall, prevalent challenges in the family and in schools have drastic impacts on the accumulation of human capital. This next section examines another component of human capital – health – and alongside lower productivity, we extrapolate what that means for macroeconomic costs.

Health Disparities: Legal, institutional, and attitudinal barriers create health disparities among LGBT+ people, which have larger economic costs due to their diminished human capital and also lower productivity. By analyzing just two dimensions of health - depression and HIV - we estimate the macroeconomic impact due to LGBT+ exclusion.

Around the world, inadequate or exclusionary healthcare systems and practitioners mean that LGBT+ people experience disproportionately lower health outcomes compared with the general population (Valfort, 2017). Minority stress and daily microaggressions can create further health penalties, as do acts of aggression such as interpersonal violence (Valfort, 2017). Legal, institutional and attitudinal barriers lead to specific health disparities for LGBT+ people, especially depression and anxiety, and for gay and bisexual men as well as transgender women, this increases vulnerability to HIV.

In the Caribbean, our data from Survey 1 and various other public health data showed depression and anxiety – and especially HIV – to be a major concern for individuals and communities, society, and the economy. By looking at just these two dimensions of health, we estimate the cost of LGBT+ discrimination and exclusion to be between **USD 699 million and USD 2.1 billion, or 0.9–2.8% of its regional GDP**. In order to estimate the macroeconomic costs of LGBT+ health disparities, this section relied on the methodology as created by Dr. M.V. Lee Badgett for the World Bank on the economic costs of LGBT+ exclusion and stigma in India (Badgett, 2014). For more details, as well as LGBT+ population estimates in the Caribbean, see Appendix A.

Our survey captured the frequent challenges faced in the family, schools, workplace, and in relation to violence. This frequently led to diminished mental health outcomes, with anxiety commonplace. From this, we were able to demonstrate the prevalence of depression and anxiety among LGBT+ people by comparing outcomes to the heterosexual and cisgender sample, as well as to the general population as shown in the Global Burden of Disease project (Global Health Data Exchange, 2019). We found the prevalence of depression and anxiety to be **three times and six times more prevalent** than in the heterosexual and cisgender sample as well as the general population sample, respectively.

Globally, the HIV epidemic has a disproportionate impact on gay and bisexual men, other men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender women, and other key populations. In the Caribbean, the context is severe, with some research estimating a prevalence rate among the general population around 1.2% (Dunbar), while other data suggests the highest prevalence in the Americas, between 1.9% and 3.1% (UNFPA). Due to a confluence of discriminatory laws, social stigma, inadequate health systems, and other forms of violence, HIV prevalence among MSM and transgender women are exceptionally high (Dunbar, 2021; Garcia, 2014). In some cases, as many as one in three MSM is HIV+, as is the case in Jamaica (CARIMIS). As a result, public health experts estimate that **25% of all HIV cases regionally** resulted from transmission via MSM and transgender women (Dunbar, 2021; Beyrer, 2013; UNAIDS, 2018).

It is important to note the structural barriers that make gay or bisexual men, MSM, and transgender women vulnerable to HIV. The legal, institutional, and attitudinal barriers they face often limit information on HIV prevention, including safe sex practices and supplies, thus fueling vulnerability to HIV while also diminishing access to testing. These factors also increase risks of other forms of exclusion or violence in addition to diminishing access to an adequate standard of care (CARIMIS, 2014).

In order to extrapolate these larger costs on the economy, we must first explain a popular measure. As a highly used measure in public health, the disability-adjusted life year (DALY) reflects the total years of life lived with a disability, as well as the years of life lost due to that health condition. When used in relation to economic development, it reflects the cumulative years of lost economic output. This report used the DALY in regards to health disparities and violence outcomes, and as guided by the Badgett/ World Bank methodology.

In order to quantify this cost, we found the total DALYs of these two dimensions among the general population, and multiplied them by LGBT+ population estimates (depression and anxiety) or by the HIV transmission rate of the two key populations (25%), in order to calculate the likely overall LGBT+ DALYs within the larger region. From there, we multiplied by the high- and low-end prevalence rates (see above in bold) of the likelihood of experiencing each issue (while also subtracting the estimate itself to account for the hypothetical scenario whereby LGBT+ people had the same DALYs as the general population) to get excess DALYs. With HIV, and since the two key populations are vulnerable to transmission even without homophobic or transphobic-motivated determinants, we can't assume that completely reducing LGBT+ challenges would necessarily lower their transmission rate to be on par with the general population. Rather, in the calculation we reduced the MSM and transgender women's excess DALYs to 75% to bring them on par with the prevalence of the population of those living with HIV in the region. Please see Appendix A for more information on both calculations.

Finally, and as described in the Badgett/World Bank methodology as well as the World Health Organization's (WHO) methodology, we multiplied this number by 1x GNI and 3x GNI to measure the larger impact on society (regional GNI per capita is USD 13,034). Altogether, we estimate that depression and anxiety, and especially HIV, costs the Caribbean **between 0.9% and 2.8% of its regional GDP** as demarcated by low- and high-end GNI extrapolations. These estimates are higher when compared to similar research endeavors, precisely because HIV is so prevalent in the region and especially among the two key populations.

Costs Associated with Health Disparities

Table 5: Depression, Anxiety and HIV as Driven by LGBT+ Exclusion

Health Disparity	Calculation	1x GNI per capita	3x GNI per capita
Depression and Anxiety			
Total DALYs due to mental health, generally	91,343		
LGBT+ prevalence low estimate 4.5%	4,110		
LGBT+ prevalence high estimate 6%	5,480		
Low estimate of excess DALYs (x3 minus 4,110)	8,220	USD 107,139,480	USD 321,418,440
High estimate of excess DALYs (x6 minus 5,480)	27,400	USD 357,131,600	USD 1,071,394,800
HIV			
Total DALYs, generally	140,031		
HIV Transmission: MSM and TG women	25%		
DALYs for MSM & TG	35,008		
Excess DALYs (75% of 35k)	26,256	USD 342,220,704	USD 1,026,662,112
Totals			
	Low estimate	USD 449,360,184	USD 1,348,080,552
	High estimate	USD 699,352,304	USD 2,098,056,912
Per cent of Regional GDP		0.61%	1.8%
		0.94%	2.8%

Sources:
 Depression and Anxiety: Open For Business Survey 1 data, The Global Burden of Disease project, World Health Organization country data on DALYs. Sources - HIV: Lancet, UNAIDS, Global Burden of Disease, UNFPA. Both estimates based on Badgett/World Bank macroeconomic model (see Sources)

Labor market discrimination: Legal, institutional, and attitudinal barriers also create challenges for LGBT+ people seeking to attain and sustain formal sector work. By analyzing a wage gap between LGBT+ people and the general population, we extrapolated the larger economic costs due to their diminished productivity and output.

In the region, the impact of labor market discrimination against LGBT+ people has clear economic and business impacts – up to 0.37% loss on its collective GDP, or more than USD 272 million. Due to prevalent attitudinal and institutional barriers, this limits their opportunities to access formal-sector work, while also diminishing their workplace productivity. Part 3 will examine this occupational segregation in more detail and from the perspective of employers. This section now examines data from Survey 1 to measure the penalty of being LGBT+ in the workplace – as measured by wage gaps when compared to the general population – and how to extrapolate the impact of lost productivity as aggregate macroeconomic costs. This section again used the Badgett/World Bank methodology to estimate the larger cost of lost productivity (Badgett, 2014). Only a brief explanation of this methodology is now provided; for a closer examination of this model, see Appendix A.

In order to estimate the larger cost, we followed four steps. First, we established that LGBT+ people in the Caribbean experience labor market discrimination specifically due to their SOGI. Table 6 below shows the extent of this capture and along many dimensions. As a point of comparison, heterosexual and cisgender participants from the Caribbean fared much better, and, to a smaller extent, so did the Caribbean diaspora. This shows that labor-market discrimination is more prevalent in the region and is based on SOGI.

Open For Business Survey 1 Data

Table 6: Challenges and Impact of Labor Market Discrimination, by Cohort

Labor Market Challenge	CARICOM (%)			Non-CARICOM (%)
	LGB	Trans	Straight-Cis	
I have experienced discrimination or exclusion at work or when applying for a job	18.9	25.8	11.3	19.0
This discrimination or exclusion was a result of my sexual orientation, gender identity†	80.5	86.8	21.7	63.3
As a result of this discrimination or exclusion: †				
I didn't get the job I applied for	42.1	48.5	65.2	33.3
I didn't get a promotion	22.9	19.1	39.1	30.0
I was fired or contract not renewed	17.1	20.6	17.4	3.3
I was forced to act as my sex assigned at birth	19.9	44.1	4.3	6.7
I was deprived of work opportunities	16.4	25.0	8.7	10.0
My partner couldn't access certain benefits	12.3	14.7	0.0	10.0
I was harassed	36.3	48.5	21.7	30.0

N = 2,167

† among those indicating agreement with the statement "I have experienced discrimination or exclusion at work or when applying for a job."

Second, we determined the existence of an LGBT+ wage gap in the region. Due to a lack of SOGI-disaggregated data in the Caribbean, we utilized the data in Survey 1 from Belize to find an 11% wage gap when comparing the LGBT+ sample to the average annual income of the general population in the same country (excluding outliers, the average LGBT+ wage is BZ 12,142, divided by the general population average wage of BZ 13,610, equals 0.89). Belize was an ideal benchmark due to the high number of survey respondents, which provided a more representative sample (n=560) as well as its state statistical agency providing average annualized income for men and women (SIB, 2019). 11% is precisely in line with global literature, as seen in a meta-analysis on the effects of sexual orientation on earnings in numerous countries (Klawitter, 2014) – but to express caution we also utilized 10% in low-end estimates and in line with the Badgett/World Bank methodology.³

From there, the third step was to determine the sum of employed workers in the region (as measured by men and women, noting the impact of binary gender in the labor market), as well as average annualized earnings to give more precise estimates on wages accrued directly from work. In the region, only the statistical agency of Jamaica provided average earnings of its citizens in 2013 (SIJ, 2013), providing a good estimation to incorporate into lower-end estimates. Similarly, we again chose annual income from Belize to guide the calculation for higher-end estimates (here, the higher-end estimate is more appropriate since income may also include non-wage sources of money).

Finally, and through low- and high-end estimates, we multiplied the average wage loss by the likely percentage of LGBT+ people by the sum of all employed people, all multiplied by average earnings/income, in order to generate estimates on labor productivity lost by LGBT+ people. One final step was to extrapolate these findings onto larger economic output, since labor wages only constitute part of total economic output (Badgett, 2014). We did this by utilizing data from the latest year available via the International Labour Organization (ILO) on eight of the 12 countries of focus, including those in the formal sector and the self-employed – see Appendix A for more information. On average, this came to 56% as wage share of total output (ILO, 2017), which we utilized in order to deliver the final range of lost costs.

In aggregate, we estimate that between **USD 32 million (0.04% of regional GDP)** and **USD 272 million (0.37% of regional GDP)** is lost annually due to the impact of LGBT+ labor market discrimination on lost economic output.

Costs Due to Lower Productivity

Table 7: Wage Gaps and Impact on Labor Output

Data Source	Calculation	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Survey 1 "Employment" and "Demographics"	(A) Average wage or productivity loss	10%	11%
Various research (see Appendix A)	(B) LGBT+ Prevalence	4.5%	6%
World Bank/ILO country data (regional aggregate)	(C) Employed men	1,892,692	1,892,692
World Bank/ILO country data (regional aggregate)	(D) Employed women	1,526,560	1,526,560
Country data (regional range)	(E) Average of earnings/income, annualized	USD 1,167 (Jamaica)	USD 6,756 (Belize)
Badgett/World Bank methodology	Lost labor = A*B* (C+D)*E	17,956,202	152,463,079
	Calculated from wage share of output	56%	56%
Total estimate in USD		\$32,064,647	\$272,255,499
Total estimate in % of regional GDP		0.04%	0.37%

Sources: Open For Business Survey 1 data, World Bank Country Data, ILO Country Data, Belizean and Jamaican state statistical agencies. Based on Badgett/World Bank macroeconomic model (see Sources).

³ As reiterated, this will likely be higher for transgender people, noting the extent of labor market discrimination and occupational segregation.

Violence: Combating homophobic and transphobic-motivated violence is a pressing human rights concern. Of the many impacts this violence has on LGBT+ people, one of them is a diminished socioeconomic status, which carries larger societal and economic tolls. By analyzing interpersonal violence and self-harm, we estimate these larger economic costs.

Hate-motivated violence against LGBT+ people remains one of the most pressing human rights challenges of our time. The scope of this challenge should not be underestimated, as it can leave significant impacts on physical and mental health, sometimes inducing lifelong trauma, or sometimes culminating in homicide. In the Caribbean, homophobic and transphobic violence are prevalent, as captured in data from Survey 1 and interviews, as well as pre-existing datasets.

Aside from being a grave human rights challenge, other effects of violence can be captured through socioeconomic impacts on individuals, which have aggregate tolls on society at large. This section examined various sources of survey data on violence perpetrated by others and self-harm, and returned to the DALY measurement within the overall calculation of extrapolating the larger cost of violence against LGBT+ people, as guided by the Badgett/World Bank (Badgett, 2014) macroeconomic model.

Various survey data show that violence against LGBT+ people in the Caribbean costs between 0.51% and 1.6% of the region's GDP – or between USD 383 million and USD 1.2 billion. Noting the diminished access to justice that LGBT+ people experience, especially when trying to report violence to the police or other officials, the regional macroeconomic cost could be higher. This is nonetheless a strong starting point, and this section provides a brief examination of its calculation. For more information, see Appendix A.

Estimates on overall DALYs regarding self-harm and interpersonal violence among the general population were extrapolated from the Global Burden of Disease project (Global Health Data Exchange, 2019). To focus just on self-harm of LGBT+ people, data were utilized from six in-depth data collection efforts on LBQ women and trans-masculine persons, which overlapped with half of our countries of focus (n=823) (Carillo, 2020; Guybow, 2020; I Am One, 2020; Mohammed, 2020; Moses, 2020; Petal, 2020). Thus, the calculations below regarding population estimates were cut in half, noting their subjects of focus.

With this dataset, researchers asked specifically if participants had tried to take their own life in the past year, which allowed a direct comparison to country data via the Global Burden of Disease project. From this, LBQ women and trans-masculine persons were dozens of times more likely to have recently attempted suicide. To be cautious, we utilized a prevalence rate from the US that drew upon larger datasets and minimized potential bias: around **six times the likelihood** (synthesizing research from The Trevor Project & Herman, 2019). On this point, it is not the diversity of SOGI that makes LGBT+ people inherently more likely to consider or attempt suicide, but rather society's maltreatment that acts as a negative determinant on mental health. This is especially in the Caribbean where there can be a high level of multiple negative social drivers (Brown, 2017).

Regarding interpersonal violence, our survey data showed the LGBT+ sample experienced significantly more violence than the heterosexual and cisgender sample, and along many dimensions. For example, 46% of the LGB and 59% of the transgender Caribbean sample had experienced physical or verbal harassment (versus only 5% of the heterosexual and cisgender sample), and due to their SOGI. From this data, we were able to provide a range of estimates on being more likely to experience violence, by comparing to the heterosexual and cisgender sample in the survey (**three times more likely**) and by comparison with the general population country data via the Global Burden of Disease project (**seven times more likely**).

We then multiplied the total overall DALYs by the low- and high-end population estimates, to reach an estimated range of LGBT+ self-harm and violence-specific DALYs throughout the region. Next, we multiplied those numbers by the lower- and higher-end prevalence (see above in bold) of LGBT+ people being more likely to have attempted suicide or experienced violence (while also subtracting the estimate itself to account for the hypothetical scenario whereby LGBT+ people had the same DALYs as the general population), to get low- and high-end excess DALYs. Finally, and as reiterated in the Badgett/World Bank methodology and the WHO, we multiplied those excess DALYs by either one times or three times the GNI per capita, in order to show the true aggregate cost on society (USD 13,034).

Finally, we emerged with a range of four estimates on the macroeconomic cost of self-harm and interpersonal violence against LGBT+ people in the Caribbean. Noting the sheer under-reporting of hate-motivated violence, Open For Business used the high-end estimates (from GNI low and high extrapolations) in providing these estimates: **between USD 383 million and USD 1.2 billion.**

Costs Associated with Violence

Table 8: Select Caribbean Data on Suicide Attempts and Interpersonal Violence

Violence Committed	Calculation	1x GNI per capita	3x GNI per capita
Suicide Attempts or Self-harm			
Total DALYs due to self-harm, generally	27,582		
LBO and trans-masculine prevalence low: 2.25%	621		
LBO and trans-masculine prevalence high: 3%	827		
Low estimate excess DALY (x6 minus 621)	3,105	USD 40,470,570	USD 121,411,710
High estimate excess DALY (x6 minus 827)	4,135	USD 53,895,590	USD 161,686,770
Interpersonal Violence			
Total DALYs due to interpersonal violence, generally	70,125		
LGBT+ prevalence low: 4.5%	3,156		
LGBT+ prevalence high: 6%	4,208		
Low estimate excess DALY (x3 minus 3,156)	6,312	USD 82,270,608	USD 246,811,824
High estimate excess DALY (x7 minus 4,208)	25,248	USD 329,082,432	USD 987,247,296
Totals			
	Low estimate	USD 122,741,178	USD 368,223,534
	High estimate	USD 382,978,022	USD 1,148,934,066
Per cent of Regional GDP		0.17%	0.5%
		0.51%	1.6%

Sources:

Suicide Attempts: COC Netherlands examination of LBO women and trans-masculine persons throughout the Caribbean, including Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago (see Sources for Carillo, Guybow, I am One, Mohammed, Moses, and Petal citations); Global Health Data Exchange, Global Burden of Disease Tool; The Williams Institute (Herman, 2019); The Trevor Project. Sources – Interpersonal Violence: Open For Business Survey 1 data; Global Health Data Exchange, Global Burden of Disease Tool. Methodology based on Badgett/World Bank macroeconomic model (see Sources).

Tourism: As Caribbean countries begin to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, they must address systemic constraints on tourism goals, and their ability to attract international visitors. The existence of anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma heavily reduces the likelihood of international tourists choosing to visit - both LGBT+ and heterosexual and cisgender people alike. By analyzing our survey data, we estimated this larger economic cost.

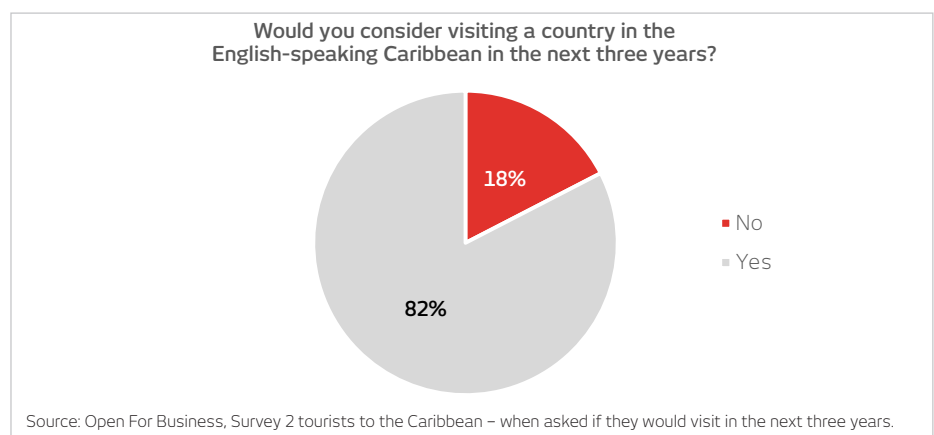
Tourism is one of the Caribbean's most influential and lucrative sectors, contributing up to 14% of its GDP with more than 7 million visitors in one year alone (UNWTO, 2019). As the COVID-19 pandemic has spread throughout the region in 2020 and 2021, it has been a complete game-changer for the tourism sector by halting global travel and virtually cutting off one of the region's largest sources of income. As the Caribbean tourism sector emerges from this unprecedented situation, it is under pressure to become more competitive, appeal to more diverse audiences, and become more aligned with global goals on sustainability.

The existence of anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma heavily influence the desirability of countries in the region for international tourists, which has significant impacts on tourism companies, businesses that depend on the tourism sector, and the economic performance of the region. Survey data show that this could cost the Caribbean up to USD 689 million, or 0.93% of its regional GDP due to losses associated with direct and indirect tourism.

To varying degrees, some of the industries and businesses in the tourism sector have addressed these issues in an effort to accommodate LGBT+ customers, attempting to provide a safe experience (see more in *Economic Focus 2: Tourism*). Much less attention is given to the intersection of state-sponsored homophobia or transphobia and how that translates into international reputation, which could impact global visitors. Our survey has begun to fill in these knowledge gaps by focusing on likely tourists to the region – both LGBT+ as well as heterosexual and cisgender people – and their travel preferences and patterns, particularly in regards to LGBT+ issues. In tandem with the findings of our other data collection, it's clear that anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma greatly impact tourism, giving us ways to estimate that cost.

A total of 1,435 respondents participated in our survey, mostly prospective tourists from the US, Canada, and the UK⁴ and mostly identified as LGBT+ (91%) but also heterosexual and cisgender (9%). Regarding past travel, more than 59% had already visited the region, especially the Bahamas, Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, and St. Lucia, and mainly for vacation/holiday (77%). When asked if they would visit the English-speaking Caribbean in the next three years (and excluding any challenges to travel associated with COVID-19 restrictions), 18% of the sample said they would not, predominantly due to issues of LGBT+ exclusion but also as a result of the potential threat to their personal safety.

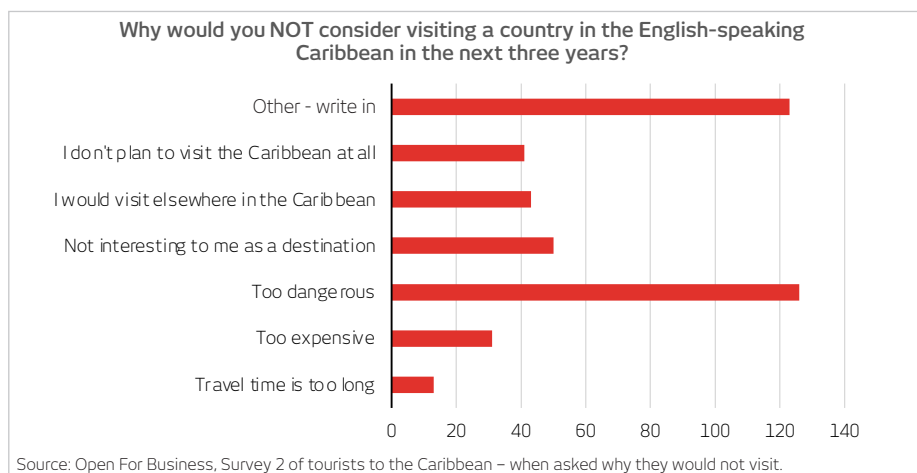
Open For Business Survey 2 Data



Overwhelmingly, out of the 145 write-in responses that described their reasons not to travel to the region, **133 people listed anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma**. This was succinctly expressed by a participant explaining their reason not to visit, which they said was due to a "lack of LGBTQ+ rights and protection." Further, this impacts their perception of being able to travel safely: "I am gay, and I don't feel safe there." But for some, the worry over their safety was not hypothetical, but rather a reality they experienced during a prior trip to the region: "I encountered severe homophobia on my only trip," said one. Yet for others, the larger Caribbean (not just CARICOM) is a desirable destination, but the pull of other countries that are perceived as more tolerant won out: "I'm gay, and the risk is too high. I have been to Cuba and would happily return." This was also a serious concern for

⁴ The survey was specifically disseminated to these three countries to be in line with overall tourism patterns to the region.

Open For Business Survey 2 Data



transgender participants, as one participant said the region is “not very trans friendly.” The negative impact of LGBT+ exclusion is clear, as summarized by another participant on their reason not to visit the region again: “anti-gay policies. No other reason. Which is sad, because I have loved being there in the past.”

Importantly, there was also a positive finding from the tourism theme of our research: international travelers are significantly more likely to visit a country after a government adopts pro-LGBT+ policies. In our survey, we asked all respondents if they would visit before or after a country (using the hypothetical example of Barbados) were to legalize same-sex unions. For both LGBT+ and heterosexual respondents, **60% of the entire sample would visit, but only after the government passed a pro-LGBT+ policy.** In fact, they were also significantly less likely to visit before the government passed such a policy (i.e. 45% of the entire sample was not likely to visit before the hypothetical policy passed). This shows a tremendous economic benefit for passing pro-LGBT+ policies in relation to the potential for attracting international tourists.

To focus just on an estimation of lost costs, we followed the methodology as established by Open For Business in 2019. First, we used UNWTO data from 2019 on all visitors to the 12 countries of focus, as well as all their receipts (USD 10.4 billion) – just over 7 million tourists. Data from the UNWTO and tourism boards from six countries show that overwhelmingly they were from the US, Canada, and Europe (and in line with our survey demographics). We estimate that up to 8% of global travelers are LGBT+, based on global data and from previous reports (Open For Business, 2019) – and we thus focus on this smaller demographic. From our survey data, we used the 18% prevalence of those who would not visit due to anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma, which results in a figure of up to 101,318 people.

Next, we multiplied that number by the average receipts per tourist (the average across the region is USD 1,511). However, as our sample had budgeted an average of twice as much⁵, we multiplied 101,318 people by USD 3,022 to see that the missing LGBT+ demographic would have contributed more than USD 300 million. One last step was to determine the indirect impact of those receipts, since tourism indirectly supports numerous industries and sectors (and particularly for our sample, who was more likely to explore the community). We thus used low-end “Tourism Multiplier” estimates to see the larger impact – established as 1.38 in Jamaica (Pratt, 2015) and 2.25 for the Bahamas (Horvath, 1999).

⁵ This is also in line with other research and our interview data, which suggests that LGBT+ tourists are higher-spending, see *Economic Focus 2: Tourism* for more.

Using survey data, we estimate this cost to be between **USD 423 and USD 689 million lost – 0.57 to 0.93% of the region’s total GDP**, due to anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma.

Measuring Losses in Tourism

Table 9: The Impact of Anti-LGBT+ Laws and Stigma on Destinations

Travel to the Region	Numbers	Estimates
Tourism Patterns (UNTWO, Tourism Boards)		
Total stay-over arrivals to the Caribbean, 2018*	7,036,000 persons USD 10.43 billion receipts 14% of regional GDP	
Average receipts/tourist**	USD 1,511	
LGBT+ travellers to Caribbean: 8% estimate (Open For Business, 2019)	562,880 persons	
Open For Business Data		
Survey data: will go (82%)	1,191 people	
Survey data: will not go (18%)	244 people	
Average budget/person	\$2,000 – 4,000	
Calculations		
Estimating 18% of larger LGBT+ Caribbean arrivals, not going	101,318 persons	
Multiply estimate by (twice) the average receipts/tourist	101k persons x USD 3,022=receipts lost	USD 306,182,996
Multiply by low- and high-end Tourism Multiplier	Jamaica (1.38) and Bahamas (2.25)	USD 422,532,534 – USD 688,911,741
	Estimated Loss	USD 688,911,741
	% of Regional Tourism Receipts	4.1 - 6.6%
	% of Regional GDP	0.57 - 0.93%

Source:
Open For Business Survey 2 data, Open For Business Kenya report (see Sources), UNWTO International Tourism Highlights, UNWTO 2020 Compendium of Tourism Statistics, Tourism Boards of Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines

* Most data are either from 2018 or 2019. Dominica's latest dataset was from 2015.

** Excluding Guyana, as the tourism outlier and noting how few survey participants traveled there prior, nor intend to.

LGBT+ Exclusion in the Caribbean Carries High Costs

By utilizing data collected through Open For Business, as well as pre-existing datasets, we examine health disparities, labor market discrimination, experiences of violence, and constraints on tourism to give a range of estimates on the cost of LGBT+ exclusion in the region.

Table 10: Combined Macroeconomic Impact

Four Dimensions	Numbers
Total Amount	USD 1.5 billion - 4.2 billion
Total as a % of GDP	2.1 - 5.7%

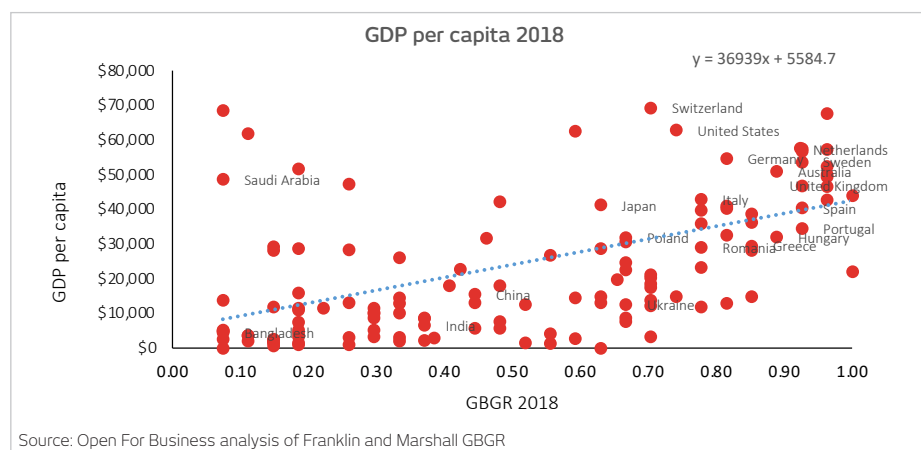
The Benefits of LGBT+ Inclusion: Economic Growth

When LGBT+ people are meaningfully included, stronger economic outcomes follow. When the legal barriers that previously barred entry are dismantled, and when growing tolerance translates into newfound entry in society, people thrive and the economy benefits. The following three sets of correlation analyses examine strong relationships between the law and growth (measured by GDP and GNI), attitudes and growth (measured by GDP), and the impact of laws on outcomes in life (using Open For Business Survey 1 data). Although they only show correlations, together they strongly suggest causal relationships, again giving more credence to the idea that inclusive societies fare better economically - as reiterated by the World Economic Forum (Lopez-Claros, 2015) and others.

There is a strong correlation between legal inclusion and economic growth: countries with more rights for LGBT+ people also have higher GDP and GNI per capita.

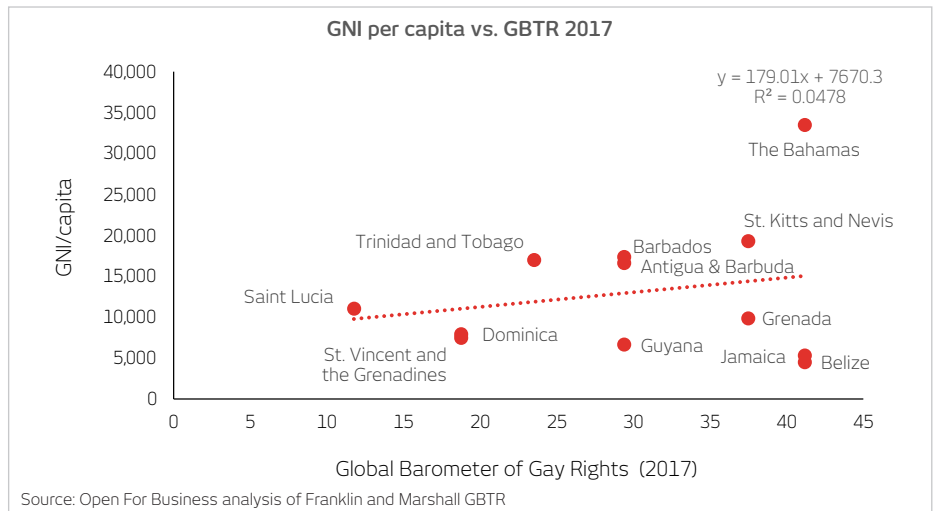
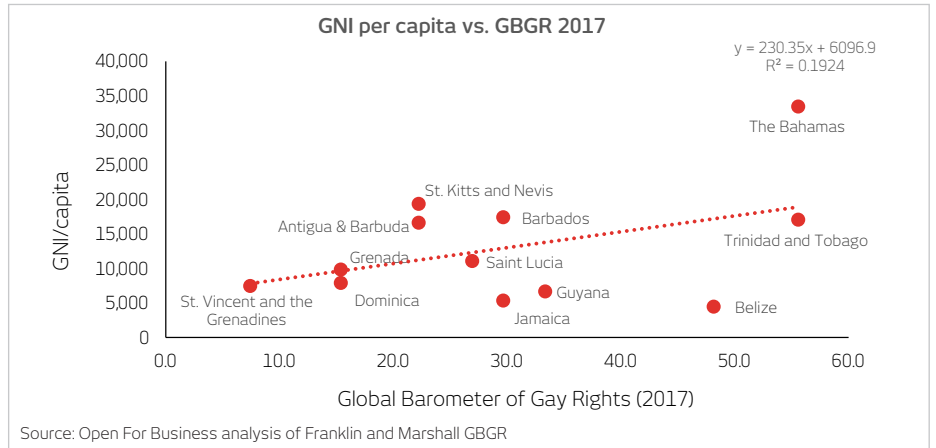
Globally, there is a strong statistical relationship between legal rights for LGBT+ people and economic growth. Examining 132 countries from 1966 to 2011, researchers found that as one right is enacted, there is an associated increase of USD 2,000 in GDP per capita – even after controlling for some other key factors (Badgett, 2019). This research also suggested a mutually enforcing link between said rights and economic growth, suggesting cyclical causality.

In this section, we used data from another legal dataset that suggests a similar relationship. Franklin and Marshall College Global Barometers offer two separate benchmarks on the rights relating to sexual orientation (GBGR) and rights relating to gender identity (GBTR). Together, the barometers give a framework to objectively document and monitor progress on the rights of LGBT+ people (Dicklitch-Nelson, 2018). In a global analysis of the GBGR alone in relation to GDP, we found a significant correlation between rights for LGB people and GDP per capita, at a point in time. The following global examination (inclusive of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago), gives context before we examine the Caribbean alone.



Focusing on the Caribbean, a strong correlation emerged regarding the association between rights and GNI per capita.⁶ Regarding rights for LGB people, the correlation is strong. This suggests that as countries implement rights for LGB people, this can translate into their economic inclusion, ultimately contributing to stronger GNI per capita growth. Specific to the rights for transgender people, there is only a small positive association.

⁶ For this calculation, we use GNI per capita due to the smaller number of countries of focus. As an average measure of wealth, it better shows this relationship due to the various and drastic changes in GDP country-to-country in the region.

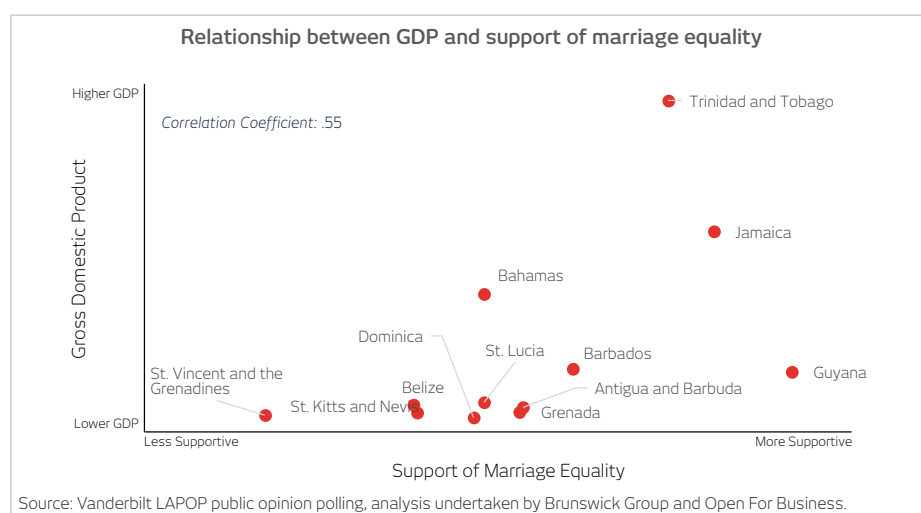


A similar correlation exists among measures of stigma: support for marriage equality is associated with higher GDP per capita, at a point in time.

Among 133 countries, data from 1990 onward demonstrates a strong statistical correlation between social acceptance of LGBT+ people and their legal inclusion (Flores, 2018). This suggested that there should also be a positive relationship between social acceptance of LGBT+ people and economic outcomes, and that acceptance helps foster meaningful economic inclusion – also as echoed in a separate global examination (Badgett, 2018). From this, and because of those greater economic contributions, we see more credibility for a causal relationship between mainstream attitudes towards LGBT+ people and economic growth. Taken together, this echoes new development ideals that inclusive societies fare better, driven in part by mainstream attitudes. Our analysis examined just this.

In the Caribbean, data-collection efforts are emerging to understand mainstream views towards LGBT+ people. One such example that provided a robust sampling framework came from Vanderbilt University, and is part of a larger polling effort on public sentiment in the Caribbean as well as Latin America and North America, titled LAPOP.⁷ On LGBT+ issues, one question especially provided an indicator on mainstream views of same-sex attracted people⁸ and ways of life: support for marriage equality.

By using these data from all 12 countries of focus, and from 2014 and 2016 alike, this showed a relatively strong correlation between support for marriage equality and GDP per capita (the correlation coefficient is .55). This positive relationship could bolster the legal and economic growth correlation, by suggesting a parallel yet connected analysis. Specifically, support of marriage equality is an indicator of tolerance, which can translate into the willingness of mainstream society (employers, educators, service providers, etc.) to more meaningfully include those they perceive to be LGB. If this holds true, it suggests that as stigma decreases against LGB people and tolerance rises, LGB inclusion in society (schools, workplaces, etc.) meaningfully translates into more human capital, labor productivity and output – all contributors to economic growth and GDP.



⁷ Uses national probability design in addition to in-person household data collection (see Sources).

⁸ This question does not examine gender identity, so we only use "LGB" terminology in this sub-section.

Countries that decriminalize same-sex intimate acts likely benefit from more human capital, increased labor productivity, and less violence

Through the legacy of colonialism in the region, legal discrimination against LGBT+ people remains in place throughout the English-speaking Caribbean. This presents clear challenges to the socioeconomic empowerment of those individuals, culminating in larger economic costs. Nine of the 12 countries of focus for this research criminalize same-sex intimate acts, among other significant legal barriers for same-sex couples, as well as lacking legal protections for transgender and other gender-nonconforming people. In fact, the F&M Barometers score all 12 focus countries as “failing” in regards to their legal frameworks for LGBT+ people, according to both its GBGR and GBTR from 2018 (Dicklitch-Nelson, 2018).

Data from our Survey 1 on the LGBT+ community in the region allowed a comparison of countries that no longer criminalize same-sex acts (Bahamas, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago), and those that still do – i.e. the rest. Since our samples were not representative of the entire LGBT+ population in each country, this analysis should not be considered definitive, and subsequent data collection should be undertaken. Nonetheless, three compelling outcomes still emerged that are important, and suggest consistently positive impacts of decriminalizing expressions of same-sex intimate acts: more success in schools, more labor market inclusion, and less violence. Ultimately, this lends more credence to the prior analyses by suggesting that legal rights foster more micro-level participation in the economy and society. Table 11 explores all three areas – and the following text explores percentage point differences between both groups, “Criminalized” vs. “Non-Criminalized.”

First, countries that no longer criminalize same-sex acts likely benefit from less challenges in school, and thus likely more human capital. For those in non-criminalized environments, we found 3.5 fewer percentage points regarding harassment and bullying in schools against LGBT+ people, when compared to those in criminalized environments. For those in criminalized environments, a higher percentage of the bullying was perpetrated by peers and teachers alike. Following this, more of those in criminalized environments experienced physical and verbal violence as well as harsher impacts on their grades and mental health. For those in non-criminalized environments, less of the sample suffered from barriers to success, and were presumably able to acquire more human capital.

Second, in countries that no longer criminalize same-sex acts, there is likely less labor market discrimination. For example, of those who experienced discrimination when applying for work or in the workplace, we found 5 fewer percentage points of those in non-criminalized environments stating it was due to their SOGI. Inversely, for those in criminalized environments who experienced discrimination, we found 8 more percentage points of people being forced to dress or act like their sex as assigned at birth, 18 more percentage points of people being harassed, and 3.5 more percentage points of people being fired. For these reasons, it’s clear why less people in criminalized environments feel able to tell all their colleagues about being LGBT+. This suggests a higher workplace penalty for those in criminalized environments, which is less severe in non-criminalized environments – also suggesting that those in non-criminalized environments stay in their workplaces longer, with associated higher productivity.

Third, countries that no longer criminalize same-sex acts likely benefit from less violence against LGBT+ people, with seemingly greater access to justice. Overall survey data showed that the LGBT+ community is very vulnerable to numerous forms of violence throughout their lives. But for those in non-criminalized environments, it can be less stark. For example, we found 5 fewer percentage points of people who experienced violence in non-criminalized compared vs. criminalized environments (47% vs. 52%).

**The Decriminalization Dividend:
Open For Business Survey 1 Data**

Table 11: Education, Employment and Justice Benefits of Decriminalizing Same-Sex Acts

Outcomes in Life	Criminalized (%)	Non-Criminalized (%)
Education		
I have been harassed or bullied in school	54.0	50.5
By peers	96.7	94.3
By teachers	29.1	26.2
The violence was physical	45.3	42.1
The violence was verbal	93.9	90.1
The violence was online via apps	15.9	10.1
As a result, my grades were impacted	40.3	34.8
As a result, my mental health has impacted	78.7	75.9
Employment		
I have experienced discrimination or exclusion in my job because of my sexual orientation, gender identity	81.3	76.3
As a result of this discrimination or exclusion:		
I was forced to act like my sex assigned at birth	28.4	20.5
I was harassed in the workplace	49.3	31.3
I was fired	20.1	16.5
I am completely out to my colleagues	10.8	14.1
I often take meaning in my work & am gainfully employed in my job	18.5	23.0
Violence, Justice		
I have experienced violence because I am LGBT	51.7	47.2
I am aware of laws or policies that protect LGBT people	14.1	30.5
I have NOT reported an experience of discrimination based on me being LGBT	84.5	81.1
I reported to the police	16.1	20.2
I reported to the courts	0.8	9.8
I can often rely on my government when in need	15.5	20.9

N = 2,009

Similar patterns emerged regarding access to justice. Specifically, the LGBT+ sample in non-criminalized environments had a good knowledge of their rights, including knowledge of policies that specifically protect them (31% vs. 14% in criminalized environments). Following from this, we found 3.5 more percentage points of people in non-criminalized environments reporting a hate-motivated crime against them, compared with those in criminalized environments. Being in non-criminalized environments seems to have positively impacted those who report, as there were 4 more percentage points of people who reported to the police, and 9 more percentage points of those who reported to the courts. Additionally, there was 5.5 more percentage points of people in non-criminalized environments reporting more trust in their governments when in need (21% vs. 15.5%).

An Examination of LGBT+ Inclusion in the Caribbean

Table 12: Correlations and Additional Links Between Rights, Stigma, and Outcomes

Form of Inclusion	Nature of Benefit	Methodology	Evidence	Outcome
Legal inclusion	Stronger economic growth	Correlation analyses	F&M Barometer data in comparison to GDP and GNI per capita	Rights for LGBT+ people are strongly associated with GDP and GNI per capita
Social inclusion	Stronger economic growth	Correlation analyses	Vanderbilt University LAPOP public polling data in comparison to GDP per capita	As support for marriage equality increases, there is a relatively strong correlation to GDP
Decriminalization of same-sex acts	Stronger education and employment outcomes; less violence and increased access to justice	Correlation analyses	Open For Business Survey 1 country-by-country comparison	Decriminalization has likely positive impacts on: Education – more human capital Employment – productivity and output, and Accessing Justice – less experience of violence, more likelihood to report violence

Source: Franklin and Marshall GBGR, Vanderbilt University LAPOP, Open For Business Survey 1 data.

Economic Focus 1: Brain Drain

Anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma have real economic costs in terms of the lost human capital and productivity of talented people who have migrated to more inclusive countries, in addition to diminishing their likelihood of returning. This diminishes competitiveness in the region, with clear costs to businesses and the economy.

Open For Business captured this phenomenon among LGBT+ people by measuring how exclusion incentivizes the migration of higher educated and more productive people, while also making it less likely that they will return to the region. The cost of this to economies in the Caribbean is tremendous and adds to the already significant challenge of migration among the general population. This section first gives context to overall migration and economic development in the region, and then examines survey and interview data on the structural and social incentives of LGBT+ migration and its economic impact – i.e. “brain drain.”

In an era of unparalleled mass migration, governments around the world face serious challenges regarding the loss of a tremendous number of people, or in other cases, significant flows of people across its borders. For countries that “host” large contingents of migrants (especially if higher income countries), the International Monetary Fund shows significant patterns of added economic growth, including labor productivity and GDP per capita (Jaumotte, 2016). Inversely, for “origin” countries with massive numbers of migrants leaving, this dynamic can create negative micro and macroeconomic cycles, ultimately depleting one of its most precious resources: the skills and knowledge of people in the country. As the World Bank writes, “for origin countries that experience extended periods of loss of scarce human capital, emigration of skilled labor represents a serious concern” (World Bank, 2019).

In the Caribbean, which experiences massive migration flows to higher-income countries, brain drain is deemed a significant concern among governments and the economic development community alike (Inter-American Development Bank, 2016). According to 2013 data from the World Bank, and when compared with the number of people still living in the region, around 46% of the entire population of the 12 countries of focus live abroad.⁹ In some countries, the number is even higher. For example, in Dominica there are more citizens living overseas than in the country itself (103%) (World Bank, 2016). Due to the profiles of those who are more likely to migrate (i.e. higher educated), the loss of human capital and impact on productivity and regional competitiveness constitute a severe brain drain. Although remittances or the accumulation of human capital elsewhere can potentially offset some of the negative effects of such migration, this is limited if there is a diminished likelihood of a return to countries of origin.

On a macroeconomic level in the Caribbean, such large flows of people have had detrimental impacts on economic growth, including slow GDP growth (sometimes even negative growth), as well as wavering foreign direct investments due to inconsistent private investment flows (World Bank, 2016). In this overall context, it’s of utmost importance to incentivize more educated and more productive citizens to stay.

Unfortunately, most of the countries of focus have instead created incentives to leave: for LGBT+ people, state-sponsored and institutionalized homophobia and transphobia contribute to the migration of LGBT+ people. Social stigma also acts to propel LGBT+ people out of the region and to host countries that are perceived as more open and inclusive. Together, anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma act as “push” factors in the short term to greatly incentivize migration, as well as long-term factors that diminish the likelihood of return. This is especially the case for those who are more geographically mobile, due to more advanced education, career pathways, income and other key socioeconomic factors. The impact of this brain drain is severe, with drags on economic growth as well as negative impacts on the private sector – as seen in the survey and interview data, discussed next.

The cross-sectional method of dissemination of Survey 1 allowed LGBT+ people in the Caribbean as well as the diaspora to participate, allowing a direct comparison of key outcomes in addition to targeting the diaspora on specific motivations to

⁹ Migration flows show large numbers of people moving to the US, Canada and the UK.

migrate. In this survey, the sample size of the diaspora is too small to extrapolate onto the entire LGBT+ Caribbean diaspora population (7.3% of the sample), and thus specific estimates on the cost of LGBT+ brain drain will not be given. However, the survey data still provided two powerful findings: first, those who migrate generally have more human capital, are more productive, and have a higher socioeconomic status – showing a skills gap when compared with those in the Caribbean. Second, they experience specific short- and long-term push factors that are driven by homophobia and transphobia. **Together, this contributes to LGBT+ brain drain.**

In total, 158 members of the LGBT+ diaspora participated in the survey, with most now living in the US, Canada, and the UK (see Table 13, “Non-CARICOM” refers to the diaspora sample). In comparison with the sample in the Caribbean, the diaspora seemed to fare better along the indicators that build human capital. In fact, on education alone, a higher percentage of the diaspora sample had received a university education (58% vs. 37% in the Caribbean). Regarding income, the diaspora sample was also in a higher bracket, which can be expected of migrants in higher-income countries. It’s still important to note that a lot more of the diaspora sample lives far above the poverty line (roughly marked at 5,000 annual in local currency), versus much more of the Caribbean sample living near that line. This strongly suggests more human capital among the LGBT+ diaspora, which holds great potential for more economic wealth as well as economic contributions. By virtue of being in a more open and inclusive environment, survey data showed that host countries are better able to invest in the initial human capital of LGBT+ migrants, which then turns into greater labor productivity and other economic benefits.

Open For Business Survey 1 Data

Table 13: Caribbean vs. Diaspora Sample, by Education and Income

	CARICOM (%)	Non-CARICOM (%)
Educational Attainment (%)		
Some secondary or vocational school	7.2	3.8
Secondary or vocational school	20.2	10.8
Some tertiary schooling	12.2	9.5
Tertiary: Non-university	14.9	5.1
Tertiary: University	37.2	57.6
Other	3.3	4.4
Income*		
Less than 5,000	26.6	11.4
5,000 - 19,999	18.2	13.9
20,000 - 49,999	15.8	25.3
50,000 - 99,999	10.1	20.9
100,000 - 149,999	5.0	8.2
150,000 or more	7.7	9.5
Prefer not to answer	16.5	10.8

N = 2,167

* in local currency (not adjusted to PPP).

One way to understand the positive impact of an inclusive environment is to examine the LGBT+ diaspora's outcomes in key areas in life: according to the survey, the diaspora sample fared consistently better along almost every dimension. For example, there were 25 fewer percentage points of the LGBT+ diaspora who experienced discrimination in schools and one-third fewer percentage points of those who experienced discrimination when accessing financial services, when compared to the Caribbean sample. Similarly, the diaspora sample was twice as likely to be openly LGBT+ at work and almost twice as likely to own a home, when compared to the Caribbean sample. This shows that when LGBT+ people of the Caribbean diaspora live in more inclusive countries, their human capital is cultivated, allowing them greater economic success (in this case, socioeconomic empowerment, productivity, and even wealth).

Another way to understand their greater human capital and impact on economic outcomes is to explore reliance on families. The LGBT+ diaspora is almost half as likely to rely on their families for resources (food, money and other basic needs) as the sample in the region. In fact, more than half of the LGBT+ diaspora sample does not rely on their family at all. Inversely, their families are much more likely to rely on them for the same needs, compared with the LGBT+ sample in the region. Although this might mimic the trends of migration in general – specifically, that migrants are able to make more money to send back home as remittances – this still shows that the LGBT+ diaspora sample was able to turn their human capital into socioeconomic growth and even financial independence, to a degree that the sample in the Caribbean could not.

Additionally, the individual sentiments of the LGBT+ diaspora toward their host society further showcase their opportunity to flourish – which is connected to their ability to live as openly LGBT+. Regarding general socioeconomic sentiments, and when compared with the sample in the Caribbean, the LGBT+ diaspora worries less about incomes, feels more gainfully employed, and is more likely to rely on the government when in need. Further, they are also much less worried about telling people they are LGBT+. In fact, the LGBT+ diaspora is more than three times as likely to live openly compared with the sample in the Caribbean. Due to this general trend of feeling more at ease when living abroad, it's the host country that reaps the benefits – particularly due to the diminished likelihood of a return to the Caribbean (discussed later).

Survey data showed the negative impacts of anti-LGBT+ laws and social stigma.

In fact, the leading motivation for migrants leaving was to live openly as LGBT+ (26%), followed closely by pursuing their education (25%) and seeking greater economic opportunities (21%). More specifically, over half of the LGBT+ diaspora sample perceived laws to be a challenge to them living openly in their country of origin. Similarly, more than two in three (68%) admitted to social stigma presenting a similar challenge to living an open life in the Caribbean. More than one in four (25.3%) respondents in the diaspora reported that anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma were a primary motivation for their migration, while more than one in five (22.8%) reported it was a partially motivating factor.

Finally, anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma comingle with fewer economic opportunities in countries of origin to keep them from returning. Overall, over one in three (38.6%) will not permanently return. Of this sub-sample, 43% said this decision was due to anti-LGBT+ laws, and 47% cited stigma. To a smaller degree, specific “pull” factors also created incentives to stay, including job prospects and feeling connected to the community where they now live. In addition to pull factors associated with living in more open and inclusive environments, the long-term impact of anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma create even more powerful push factors to stay away from the Caribbean.

From the perspective of business leaders, there are also similar and frequent concerns on the impact of LGBT+ brain drain in the Caribbean. In the 21 interviews conducted for this research, more than half identified specific push factors that fuel LGBT+ migration, including: social and economic structural barriers that limit the potential of individuals in the community, discriminatory laws, and stigma. Others identified “pull” factors from host countries that incentive migration. As summarized in one interview:



I’m 100% sure that a lot of people have left the country, a lot of people who are gay have left the country because it’s easier being in a metropolitan center in Miami, or New York, or in London... On the issues around gender identity, and people who are going through transitions, and people who are trans... I guess people who are going through that probably leave the country.

Interviewees described this migration as an immense loss to business, as well as society more generally. The rate of return is seen as drastically lower for LGBT+ people who move away – again as captured in the survey of the LGBT+ diaspora. As one interviewee put it: “It’s a one-way ticket.” This then becomes a loss since businesses cannot reap the benefits when they return (for example, higher human capital and productivity).

Many business leaders remarked on the drain associated with a loss of talent as well as the resources spent on training them. This was stated succinctly in an interview:



...that’s a loss because they’re usually... really bright people who have gone. You know, people who go into those multinationals are often the people who have got the best certification in the school system; they’re bright, and they go into these organizations to get well trained. They get infused with new skills in these big organizations, they go off into the world. And if that resource doesn’t come back to the country, I think that’s a very much a net loss.”

Once they are in more open and inclusive environments, those LGBT+ people then contribute to the economic gains of the host country. Remarking on his own experience of living abroad, one business leader said: “Most of us just move away. We do amazing things elsewhere... It’s a huge brain drain”.

This is substantiated by another business leader, who, after coming out of the closet and starting a family in Trinidad and Tobago, noted her reason for permanently moving to the US: "How did it inform my decision to leave?... My children, our children, were getting to the age where I had to make a decision. Did I want them growing up in that society?" Even as a senior legal counsel in an oil company, the stifling effect of a conservative culture and workplace incentivized her family's permanent move to a more inclusive society.

In other cases, many LGBT+ people do not choose to leave for economic reasons, but rather out of necessity to flee violence and survive. This also carries serious tolls, although this section can only briefly describe them. As asylum seekers (especially in the US but also Canada), the social safety nets of host countries can be difficult to access, leaving the community in a vulnerable economic situation. This also has psychological tolls on family members who remain behind. One interviewee remarked on this very difficult situation: "It's heart-breaking because what happens is that it's tearing apart families, real families, mothers. I have cases where mothers are calling me to please find their child in Canada. It's heart-breaking."

Overall, the survey and interview data were clear on the prevalent migration of LGBT+ people from the Caribbean: discriminatory laws and social stigma act as short- and long-term push factors, specifically for those with more human capital and the ability to turn that into productivity and socioeconomic empowerment. The social, business, and macroeconomic cost to the Caribbean is tremendous.

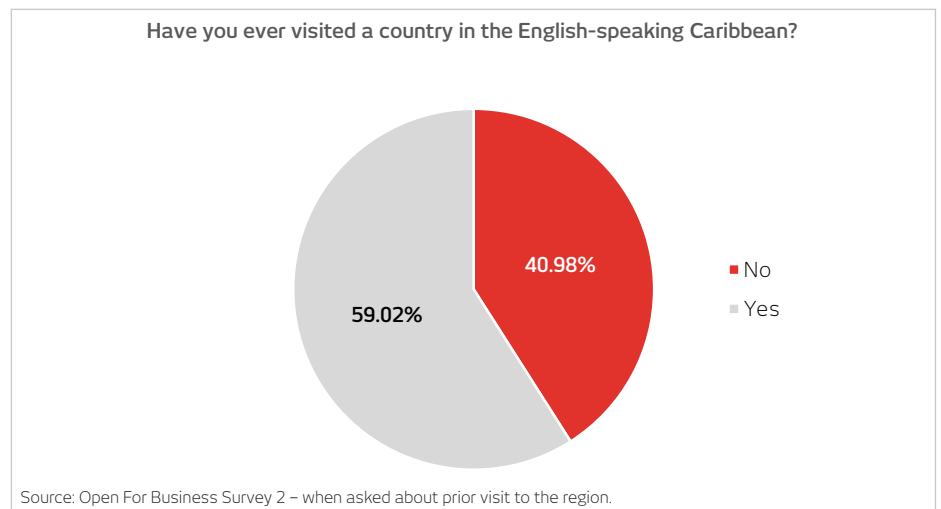
Economic Focus 2: Tourism

Emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism remains one of the most crucial sectors for the Caribbean. Yet, its laws against LGBT+ people create disincentives for international travelers to visit, creating large constraints on the sector. Open For Business data explored the relationship between anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma and the region's global appeal among tourists – and what that means for the region's economic and business performance.

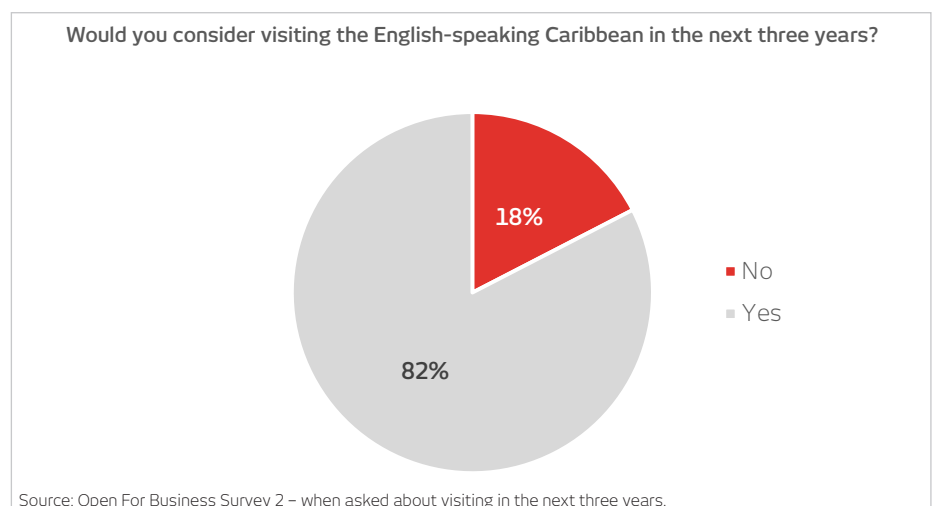
Tourism in the Caribbean is diminished by LGBT+ discrimination – an annual loss of 0.93% of its regional GDP, or up to USD 689 million (see pp. 22-24). The Caribbean is often described as the most tourist-dependent region in the world: the sector accounts for up to 14% of regional GDP (UNWTO, 2019) – a greater proportion than any other region. Yet, the economic impact of travel restrictions enacted around the world during COVID-19 has greatly impacted the Caribbean's economic performance. Looking forward, there is pressure to attract more higher-spending visitors, to broaden its appeal to more diverse consumers in its traditional source markets (e.g. US, Canada, UK) and particularly younger travellers, and to attract visitors that align with sustainable tourism objectives (e.g. those who spread their spending more widely by exploring the community). With this in mind, the impact of LGBT+ discrimination should be given serious consideration as the tourism sector identifies strategies to recover and re-launch.

Open For Business research found that 18% of travelers would not visit the region – overwhelmingly due anti-LGBT+ laws and stigma. Viewed in terms of the potential gains, decriminalisation and more accepting attitudes could potentially increase the number of people who would consider visiting the Caribbean by 18% (subsequent analyses below find this likelihood to be even greater). Countries that decriminalise and work toward inclusion early on could position themselves as LGBT+ inclusive, and could establish a strong competitive advantage in attracting these travelers.

Open For Business Survey 2 Data



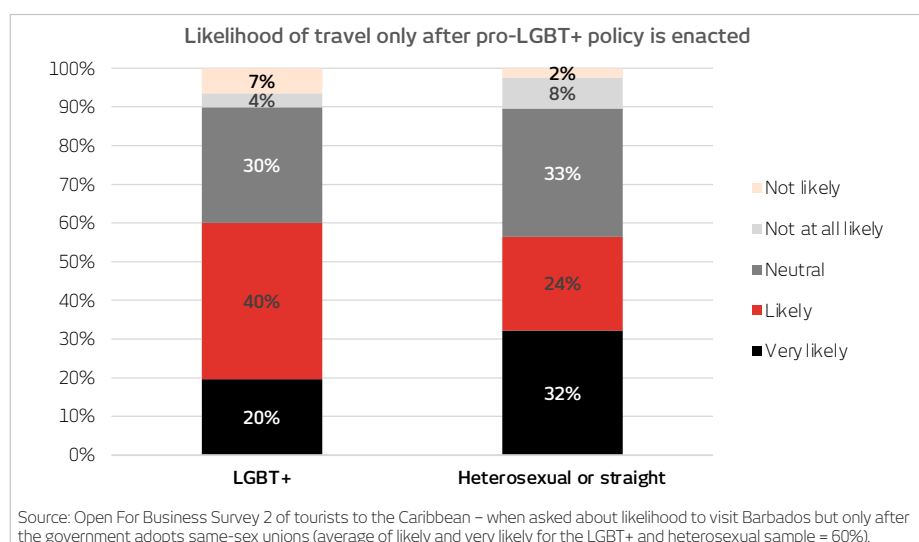
Open For Business Survey 2 Data



This discrimination and stigma makes destinations less attractive for both LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ tourists. According to research into Gen Y or Millennial travelers, younger tourists particularly prefer destinations that align with their values over “postcard and must-see” destinations (CBI, 2021). This has important implications for countries that discriminate against LGBT+ people, since this segment already accounts for 40% of global tourism (CBI, 2021).

This pattern is strongly echoed in the survey data, which captured the positive impacts on tourism when governments adopt pro-LGBT+ policies. For the first time, our survey showed overwhelming interest from the LGBT+ and heterosexual sample alike in visiting a destination, but only after a country shows support for LGBT+ people. Specifically, when the entire sample was asked if they would visit Barbados, either before or after it passed same-sex unions, **60% of the entire sample would travel there but only after the government passed said policy. By comparison, only 19% of the overall sample was likely to visit but only before the government passed the policy.** In addition to showing the positive economic impact of progressive policies, this shows the strong support of allies, which can translate into more financial benefits.

Open For Business Survey 2 Data



The impact of LGBT+ discrimination on the tourism sector is also a concern for business leaders in the region, according to our research. There are three aspects to this concern: a combination of laws and stigma creates safety risks; business opportunities are limited because companies cannot offer services tailored to LGBT+ customers; and LGBT+ consumers are seen as a higher-spending segment, yet this revenue is not always accessible.

Safety considerations for LGBT+ tourists

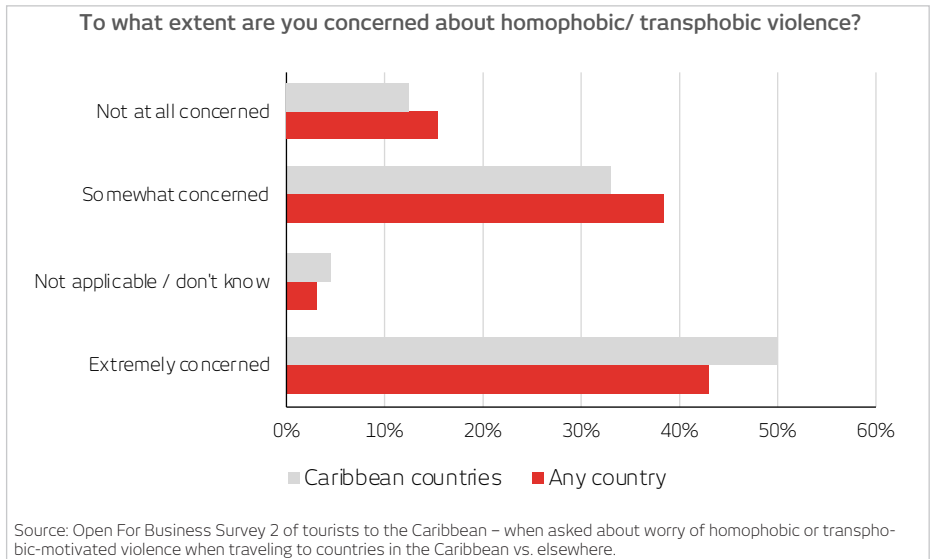
Among business leaders in the tourism sector, there was a great concern to ensure the safety and well-being of LGBT+ travelers on their trip to the Caribbean. Safety is such a concern that Sandals even offers specific guidance for its LGBT+ customers throughout the region, according to its CEO, Gebhard Rainer:



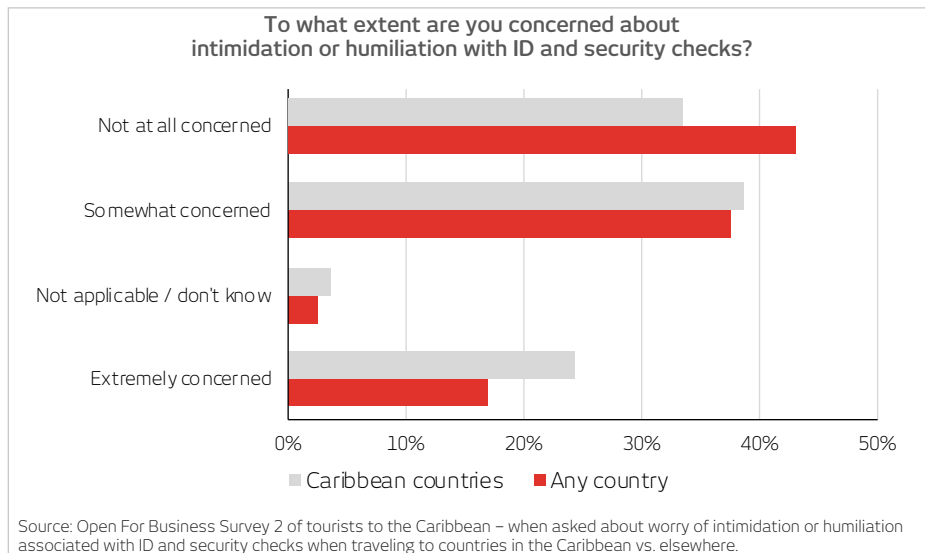
[When] you venture into the island and deeper into the country, [we] advise them 'just be careful in showing your emotions and showing your attachment. Don't walk around holding hands, for example, or don't kiss when you are in a community like that, because ... you don't know what's going to happen.'

This introduces anxiety into the experience of LGBT+ travelers and reduces their likelihood of returning. Three patterns emerge that show that LGBT+ travelers to the Caribbean are worried about travel to the region, more so than travel to other regions. From our Survey 2 on tourists, they worried more about homophobic- or transphobic-motivated violence, challenges associated with identification checks by security or police in the region, and traveling as a same-sex couple. In the latter two examples, participants were 10% more (extremely) worried than when compared with their travels elsewhere.

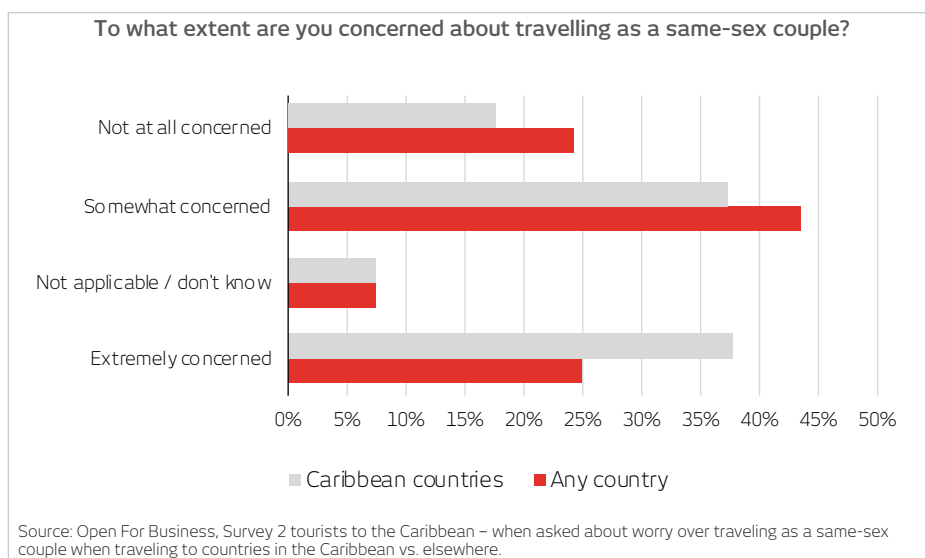
Open For Business Survey 2 Data



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Limited business opportunities

A second challenge is that businesses must navigate these laws and thus are unable to offer equal services to LGBT+ customers. For example, business leaders mentioned the missed opportunity of not being able to offer destination weddings for same-sex couples. This is not only a business loss, but also might be misunderstood in the eyes of its customers as supporting those discriminatory laws – as opposed to navigating within the limitations as best as possible. As described in the interview regarding Sandals customers in same-sex relationships:

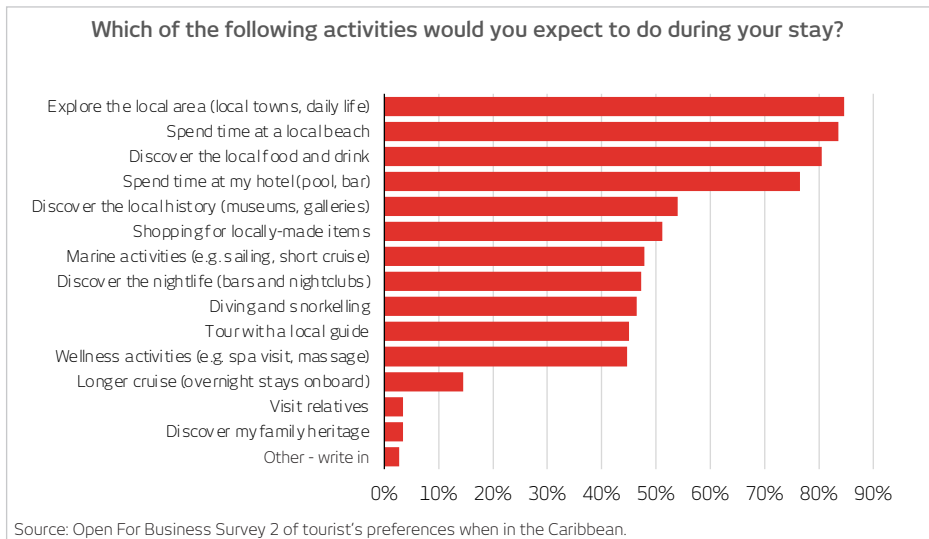
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It's very, very difficult for a gay or lesbian couple, and we are predominantly a couples resort... We do accept gay and lesbian couples, but you cannot get married, for example in Jamaica, or in most of the islands legally. It's not allowed. You can't even have a mock-up wedding per se... because that will be against what is allowed... and very difficult to explain that to people who come from nations where it's a lot more open... it's very difficult to explain to them as to why we can't accept it, because they even believe it's our policy, but it's not. It's the environment and the jurisdiction that we're working in that does not allow certain things

(Gebhard Rainer)

If these companies could offer equal services, and governments were able to address the root causes of safety concerns, the benefits would be extraordinary. In the Caribbean, it would empower LGBT+ tourists to further explore local areas and nightlife, meaning their money would be spent in local communities. Our survey confirmed that LGBT+ travelers are generally interested in exploring the community, even more so than activities associated only with all-inclusive resorts. This gives context on the spending habits and patterns of LGBT+ tourists, although it seems, for now at least, access to this spending and consumer base is greatly diminished in the region.

Open For Business Survey 2 Data



LGBT+ tourists are likely higher-spending

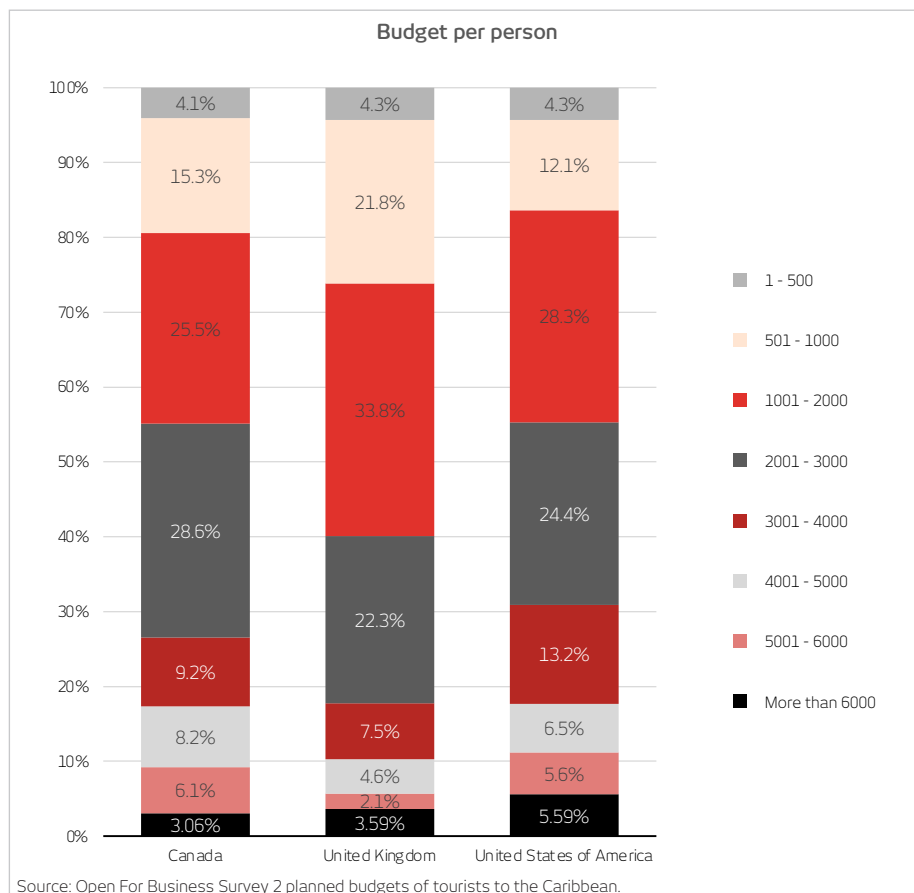
There is strong awareness from tourism companies of the spending power of LGBT+ tourists, specifically same-sex couples. Insofar as possible, this has incentivized those companies to try to attract more same-sex couples to their resorts:



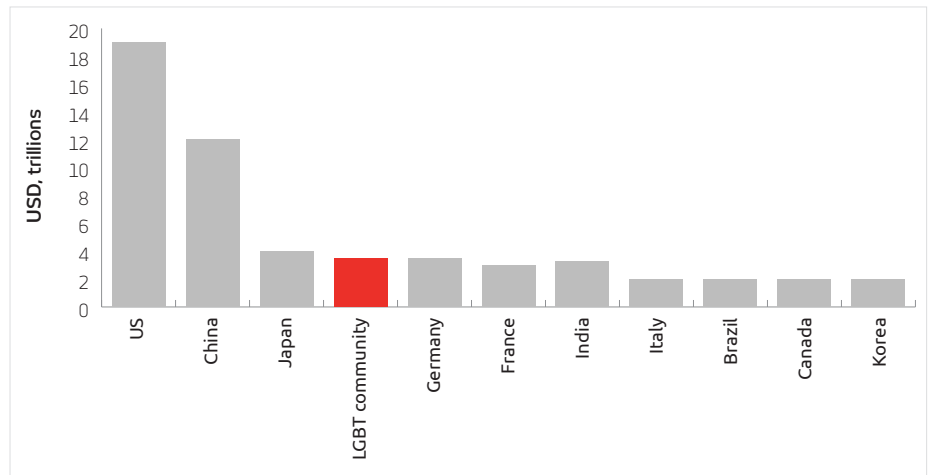
We've also seen, and it's statistically proven, that the LGBT+ community is a high-spending clientele, so the yield is much higher than you get from your [other] customers... If you look at it from purely a business perspective, then you really want to work towards promoting, towards those individuals, as well (Gebhard Rainer)

Generally, this was also captured in our survey – up to 20% of the sample budgets between 3,000 – 7,000 (local currency) per trip. According to UNWTO 2017 and 2018 data, the average tourist's receipts are USD 1,511 in the countries of focus, meaning a large portion of our sample budgets two to three times the amount of the typical traveler. The chart below shows respondents from Canada, the UK, and the US (assume local currency for each):

Open For Business Survey 2 Data



The spending power of LGBT+ consumers is large and growing, as shown in a study by Credit Suisse. Using estimates of LGBT+ purchasing power together with World Bank data, the study highlighted the global spending power of LGBT+ consumers (see chart below) – estimating it to be greater than that of Germany, UK, India, or Brazil (Credit Suisse, 2016). This report explores the lost business opportunity of LGBT+ consumers further in Business Performance (p 45).



LGBT+ spending power compared with GDP in selected countries

For tourism companies, discriminatory laws and stigma against LGBT+ people have created an environment that limits their business opportunities – both by having to offer fewer services to LGBT+ customers as well as limiting the potential pool of (likely) higher-spending consumers. This presents a great loss to those companies as well as to other companies that indirectly rely on tourism. As governments and industries emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic with economic recovery strategies that put tourism back to the center of the economy, they must address the anti-LGBT+ factors that will hinder the recovery of the tourism sector.

Part 2: Business Performance

The Business Case for LGBT+ Inclusion

Open For Business has developed a global evidence base linking LGBT+ inclusion to improved business performance – and our research finds that this applies in the Caribbean, as well.

Business leaders in the region are increasingly articulating how LGBT+ inclusion contributes to better business outcomes – and importantly, this is the case for both multinational corporations (MNCs) as well as small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that operate exclusively in the Caribbean. There is an emerging yet significant business-minded approach to addressing issues of LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace, and sometimes even in the community.

In this report we have identified several dimensions of business performance that are linked to LGBT+ inclusion in the Caribbean:

1. Attracting Talent.

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive are better able to compete for talented employees.

2. Retaining Talent.

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive have higher rates of retention of talented employees.

3. Innovation.

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive have higher levels of innovation and creativity.

4. Employee Motivation.

Individuals working in open, diverse, inclusive environments have higher levels of motivation.

5. Individual Productivity.

Individuals working in open, diverse, inclusive environments have higher quality outputs.

6. LGBT+ Consumers.

Companies that are LGBT+ inclusive are better placed to benefit from the large, growing, global spending power of LGBT+ consumers.

7. Brand Strength.

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive have greater brand appeal and loyalty with consumers who want socially responsible brands.

Why LGBT+ Inclusion Fuels Better Business Outcomes

This section explores in more depth the connections between LGBT+ inclusion and these aspects of business performance.

1. Attracting Talent

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive are better able to compete for the most talented employees.

The Caribbean is facing a “critical skills gap,” according to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB, 2017). For businesses in the region, the ability to attract talented employees is a key competitive advantage.

Unsurprisingly, this point came across strongly in the business leader interviews; however, many acknowledged the challenges that LGBT+ people experience when applying for work, and have begun to address their own attitudinal barriers in the hiring process. As one interviewee said: “You need to have access into the talent pool without any preconceived thoughts or ideas.”

The link between a diverse talent pool – inclusive of LGBT+ people – and stronger business operations was clear among participants, as discussed in another interview: “In running your business, in achieving whatever strategy you’ve laid out, hopefully [you bring] in people with the most talent. I think it’s important to promote diversity from the point of view of getting different ideas, different experiences to bring to the workplace... Actively trying to create a diverse work pool or talent pool, so that you want a man, a woman, a person with a disability, a gay person.”

Five of the business leaders noted that their positive treatment of LGBT+ staff had inadvertently caused positive ripple effects throughout the labor market. For example, by making it more comfortable to self-identify in the workplace, this has acted as a magnet for more talented LGBT+ applicants to apply. One interviewee spoke about how she wears a bracelet that identifies her as an LGBT+ ally, and how knowledge of her acceptance spread into the LGBT+ community among prospective applicants and current staff alike:



I didn’t know that little thing made a difference like that... [one] person said to me, ‘it’s the first time I feel comfortable to let you know that I’m a lesbian.’ Then, one happened, then another one happened, and so people know that, yeah, I’m the manager that is open and okay. It’s not a big deal.

2. Retaining Talent

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive have higher rates of retention of talented employees.

Employee retention is a priority in business: unnecessary turnover forces companies to spend a large amount of money recruiting and training new employees. Studies estimate that the cost of replacing an employee is between 93% and 200% of the departing employee's salary, and this applies particularly to more skilled employees (Robinson, 1997; Center for Talent Innovation, 2013; Center for American Progress, 2012).

Business leaders in the Caribbean recognize the importance of employee retention, according to the Open For Business research. They also recognise that LGBT+ discrimination results in higher turnover rates, because employees may be forced out as a result of their SOGI, or they may feel compelled to leave because the work environment is hostile. This was reiterated in Survey 1 data, with more than one in four of the LGBT+ sample being completely closeted, often due to the prevalent discrimination they experienced during the application process or in the workplace (the latter component accounting for 19% of the LGB sample and 26% of the transgender sample). Among this latter sub-set, close to one in five had already been fired in the past for being LGBT+.

The business leaders identified two main ways of countering this: first, cultivating an inclusive and respectful workplace; and second, through institutional policies.

Regarding general workplace culture, half of the business leaders articulated two ways they have promoted overall inclusion and respect, through staff trainings as well as positive messaging and reinforcement from senior management. In regards to institutional policies, interviewees spoke to more robust methods, including: policies of non-discrimination, zero-tolerance rules in regards to inappropriate behaviour, anonymous grievance mechanisms to stop harmful behaviors and to seek redress, codes of conduct that all staff must abide by, and the creation of internal metrics to determine the well-being of the workforce.

Interestingly, some of the interviewees spoke about specific LGBT+ protections or mechanisms created in the workplace, which provided a better indicator of how employers are focusing on the unique needs of LGBT+ staff in order to retain them.

Predominantly, this was manifest best through institutional policies and internal mechanisms. For example, a select few interviewees mentioned that some of their workplace policies of non-discrimination specifically include sexual orientation – as was the case with Regency Recruitment and Resources Limited, for example.

Additionally, LGBT+ employee resource groups are also becoming more prevalent, predominantly among MNCs with headquarters in North America. Whereas two interviewees mentioned such a group as taking place in the US or Canada with invitations to Caribbean country offices, Scotiabank in Trinidad and Tobago actually launched their own LGBT+ group in-country. This latter example sets a strong precedent for how country offices within MNCs and even regional SMEs can create their own internal groups to cultivate and retain the skills and productivity of LGBT+ staff.

3. Innovation

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive have higher levels of innovation and creativity.

Innovation is critical to securing and maintaining competitive advantage: it creates new markets and revenues, and it underpins productivity and profitability. Open For Business consistently finds that LGBT+ inclusive companies are more innovative, and business leaders in the Caribbean confirmed the same applies in the region.

More than half of the business leader interviews mentioned the sheer positive impact of hiring LGBT+ people, notably the innovation they bring to the business. This suggests that the workplace culture and institutional policies must align so that the person can be their whole self, and thus, most productive. As one interviewee said,



We want people to bring their whole self. You are what you are... And I don't believe that you can leave a piece of you out and be an effective human being.

As reiterated by many business leaders, the impact of empowered LGBT+ staff can be exceptional. In fact, many interviewees spoke about how these staff contribute to a healthier internal climate, contribute new methods to improve operations, and even craft marketing strategies to target and reach under-served customers (discussed later). These business leaders saw the direct connection between supporting their LGBT+ staff and how that translates into an innovative culture and products.

4. Employee Motivation

Individuals working in open, diverse, inclusive environments have higher levels of motivation.

Encouragingly, Open For Business research found that inclusive workplace cultures and policies do translate into greater individual motivation and productivity – which in turn fuels stronger business outcomes. One of the business leaders spoke about how a business can either retain a status quo of LGBT+ exclusion, or work toward inclusion, and what that means for the individual:

5. Individual Productivity

In such environments, individuals have higher quality outputs.



If you're not yourself, you over-analyze comments or statements that you may see as an attack on you, that builds your stress levels up. And so definitely that will have an impact on mental health and anything that affects mental health will affect the productivity of an employee... if people can be themselves and therefore bring their best to work, then organizations will truly benefit. Because the organization will have fully engaged employees who are happy to be there, are treated with respect and continually function and flourish.

Inversely, an inclusive and diverse environment motivates LGBT+ employees, which turns into higher quality output as well as a longer tenure in that workplace. Of the interviewees who identified as LGBT+, this was a consistent narrative for those who felt supported by their workplace. As summed up succinctly in one such interview: "This is a really cool place to work."

6. LGBT+ Consumers

Companies that are LGBT+ inclusive are better placed to benefit from the large, growing, global spending power of LGBT+ consumers.

Overall, most of the business leaders spoke of the benefits of LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace. Equally, for those who identified as LGBT+ and felt supported in their place of work, they bolstered the perspective of employers by describing their motivation to produce more and for a longer time. In the Caribbean, this shows that the private sector can do more on LGBT+ inclusion – particularly in light of growing market expectations to do so, discussed next.

In *Economic Performance* we discussed the spending power of LGBT+ consumers (pp. 41-42).

In the business leader interviews, there was some awareness that there are LGBT+ consumers in the Caribbean, although it was predominantly explored more in-depth by four interviewees in three industries that are highly reliant on a positive engagement with a broad range of the public: insurance, retail, and tourism.

Regarding insurance and retail, the business leaders spoke of similar strategies of engaging LGBT+ consumers, namely that an overall high-quality engagement of all demographics would be inclusive and sufficient. For example, RF&G Insurance tries to work with all demographics – including LGBT+ people – by utilizing an underwriting process that they base on more objective socioeconomic and market indicators, which leaves little space for their sellers to focus on any identity characteristics. As discussed in the interview:



We certainly do cater to LGBT+ consumers... Through our underwriting process, absolutely nothing would discriminate between an LGBT+ person and a heterosexual [and cisgender] person. We're happy to take in whoever needs insurance, and again, it's really looked at from an underwriting point of view. We don't really look at the person, we look at the underwriting principles and that's kind of what guides how sell insurance and who we sell it to.

At Massy, as an investment holding and management company with close to 60 companies in its system (predominantly retail), creating a welcoming environment for a diverse array of demographics creates positive ripples across all of its operations and does not alienate specific groups. In the case of a customer being treated differently due to their identity, Massy acts swiftly. In fact, when a staff member was rude to a transgender customer in Guyana, their management acted quickly to apologize to the customer and then worked with an LGBT+ organization to provide sensitivity training to its staff.

For Sandals and Insight MMC, which are in tourism and heavily reliant on an international clientele, business leaders spoke of the need to be very proactive to accommodate LGBT+ customers. The impacts of LGBT+ discrimination on the tourism sector are discussed in the *Economic Performance* section (pp. 22-24 and 36-42).

7. Brand Strength

Companies that are more diverse and inclusive have greater brand appeal and loyalty with consumers who want socially responsible brands.

Another focus for the business leaders was the importance of cultivating and sustaining a strong brand. Although consumers are inherently crucial to the branding process, cultivating strong brand appeal speaks to a more robust and in-depth process for all stakeholders in the business. Specifically, it's the creation of underlying standards and practices by which management, employees, shareholders, investors, value chains, and customers interact through business operations, and how that is sustained in the long term and then communicated to the public.

In six of the business leader interviews, cultivating and sustaining a strong brand inherently demands addressing many of the social challenges that exist in society, especially issues around sexism and racism, and to a smaller degree, homophobia and transphobia. This was so for domestic, regional and multinational corporations alike, each with their own incentives to do so. For MNCs, this came through strong brand guidelines and expectations from their headquarters in North America, which provided some support when taking meaningful steps to implement policies in the Caribbean. For domestic and regional corporations, this came through a home-grown articulation of its own brand and how they position their business within the local social and communal context – particularly on issues of gender, race, and ethnicity.

The business leader interviews demonstrate a growing awareness that their collective business community influence may be expected to meaningfully address anti-LGBT+ laws that exist in their communities – both because it detracts from better business outcomes as well as being a moral imperative. However, there is now a significant worry that doing so will lead to a backlash in society, a worry so prevalent that many of them are waiting for another corporation to truly take that “first step.” Even for the business leaders who see LGBT+ issues as important to the strength of their brand appeal, they are still hesitant to take meaningful steps:



I feel companies generally walk that very thin line and try to stay neutral. It is only when society becomes more accepting then I feel companies will venture out in terms of the public promotion or the public advocacy.

This was again reiterated in another interview, with some added hope for select corporations:



In terms of actually... going out and being part of a public campaign... if it happened and somebody else organized it, and they were asked to support it, they would probably go along.

There is a tremendous opportunity in the region for the growing LGBT+ business voice to galvanize those corporations that are right at that line by highlighting both the business case and the moral imperative.

Part 3: The Workplace Perspective

Occupational Segregation



So our culture... there's a machismo element and there's also the religious conservatism, and I think those two things are probably the biggest barriers culturally to LGBT+ inclusion.

Interviewee

Occupational segregation refers to the filtering of select identity groups into various parts of the labor market, and describes how some demographic groups can be over- or underrepresented in various occupations. This is not driven by merit or talent, but rather by the biases of employers. When this filtering is permitted within the labor market, what emerges is a complex misallocation of labor, which limits the socioeconomic empowerment of those groups and lowers labor output and productivity.

The data collected in the Caribbean by Open For Business confirmed that occupational segregation propels LGBT+ people into the informal sector. In addition, even for those who can secure employment in the formal sector, it serves to keep them out of higher-paying, senior-level jobs (for more on this conceptual framework, see Appendix B).

Occupational segregation is driven by the biases and stereotypes of employers, and is often allowed to thrive due to missing legal and institutional protections. Biases and stereotypes can be so prevalent that they're better understood as social stigma – i.e. disgrace, shame or dishonor associated with a particular circumstance, characteristic or person. Understanding these negative attitudes is important, as they often drive and mitigate the terms by which mainstream views allow LGBT+ people to take part in society. As the World Bank notes:



Attitudes matter... because they are a barometer of people's potential behaviour... they can determine how society treats these groups, how these groups engage with society, and how the policies that aim to improve their status are implemented.

World Bank, 2013

Stigma is often fueled by, and becomes manifest through, numerous mechanisms, including: a strict societal enforcement of "traditional values," which only acknowledge heterosexual, cisgender identities; a medical establishment that classifies LGBT+ people through the lens of a pathology and as "sick"; or even disgust from members in a community toward non-normative expressions of SOGI. However, the remainder of this sub-section focuses on two drivers of stigma that consistently arose in the bulk of interviews: religion and gender norms.

Religion and the Workplace



The moral panic that exists is driven by the Church.

Interviewee

As is the case in other regions, the link between Christianity – the Catholic and Protestant Church (the Church) – and stigma against LGBT+ people in the Caribbean is astounding: two-thirds of all participants noted the stifling impact of the Church on the inclusion of LGBT+ people in society, particularly its hold on governmental laws and policies to uphold a status quo of exclusion. For example, it has been widely reported that the Church exerts influence over elected officials to scrap bills from becoming law that would give protections to LGBT+ people – as was the case recently in Belize. Remarking on parliamentarians in Belize, one participant said “I just think that a lot of them are deathly scared of the religious interests in their constituency.”

The power of the Church extends into the private sector. Sometimes this can influence the perspective of managers who hire, as well as the culture of a workplace, to keep LGBT+ people out of the professional domain. One participant noted how religious that many workplaces are, sometimes even starting out the day with a Christian prayer. For the more religious-infused workplaces, this has empowered a base of some employers to discriminate against the LGBT+ community: “If you listen to religious leaders, the Bible condemns you if you are gay. So as a result, it’s perfectly ‘acceptable’ to discriminate against gay people because the Bible says that’s fine.”

Gender Norms and the Workplace

The prevalence and persistence of traditional gender norms is another driver of stigma, according to Open For Business research. By sheer number of references (28 mentions from 12 interviewees), this emerged as the most significant driver of occupational segregation. When examining traditional notions of gender norms, they can be understood as society's articulation and enforcement of standards by which men and women must act in the public and private domains.

Traditional gender norms reinforce narrow views of sexuality (strictly heterosexual and reproductive) as well as the expression of gender (associated with the binary definition of biological sex) which are often inherently problematic for LGBT+ people. According to the survey data, gender norms are cultivated within and enforced by the family unit, with 46% of LGB respondents and 57% of transgender respondents reporting discrimination within the family, overwhelmingly due to them being LGBT+. Outside of the natal family and within the community, gender norms are also taught and perpetuated in schools, religious settings, in the media, and through numerous other social spaces – often to the detriment of LGBT+ people who cannot or do not abide by them.

This has created an atmosphere in which gender norms are also upheld in the workplace in the Caribbean – which acts as a barrier to the hiring and retaining of LGBT+ people. A meta-analysis of all pertinent data from OECD countries confirmed that, on average, applicants who have a marker of being gay or lesbian on their resume are half as likely to be invited for an interview, when compared with the general population (Valfort, 2017). This was more prevalent among transgender applicants, as found in separate research in Washington, DC (Rainey, 2015) as well as New York City (Make the Road New York, 2010).

But even when there is no overt signaling or identification as LGBT+, there are still ways in which applicant's unconscious or non-conforming expressions manifest during the hiring processes. More than half of the business leaders noted the most important mechanism of exclusion for LGBT+ people in the workplace: one's presentation of self – particularly, their presentation and expression of non-normative SOGI. In other words, employment options remain available for LGBT+ applicants who can completely pretend to be heterosexual and cisgender – i.e. for those who remain "closeted." For those who break outside of these restrictions, formal-sector employment remains limited. Data from Survey 1 show LGBT+ people are adopting this strategy, with a high percentage in the closet: almost 26% of the entire sample are not at all out in the workplace, and close to 42% are only partially out.

For those who cannot or do not conform to the strict expectations of employers regarding gender norms, this was described as the main factor that drives the LGBT+ community out of the workplace. Again, data from Survey 1 underscored this point in the Caribbean: close to one in five LGB respondents and more than one in four transgender respondents have experienced such discrimination in the past, overwhelmingly due to being LGBT+. The corresponding impacts were severe, including high percentages of respondents reporting not getting the job (close to half), not getting a promotion (around one in five), termination (also around one in five), harassment (well over one in three), and more.

Barriers to Workplace Opportunities

Even before arriving to the labor market, many participants noted the significant challenges associated with social stigma, violence, legal discrimination, and more, which ultimately coningle and limit the opportunities of LGBT+ people in life. All of these findings are also reiterated in the analyses of our survey data, including: family, homelessness, education, violence, and a lack of legal protections. Together, these challenges restrict their ability to enter the labor market on equal footing with everyone else.

For many, these challenges begin in the family: participants noted just how much the family unit enforces strict gender norms and expectations, which is problematic for LGBT+ family members who cannot or will not conform to them. For this contingent, the impacts can be serious:



They're often kicked out of their homes. They can't find apartments, they can't find places to live because of their parents, landlords who don't want anything to do with them and then employers don't want to have anything to do with them.

Even for those who are not kicked out of the home, this stigma has serious repercussions on mental health, the ability to accrue wealth, access to financial services, and can even lead to an estranged social standing within the community – all linked to diminished job prospects later on. These patterns bolster the findings from our Survey 1: more than half of the LGBT+ sample experienced discrimination or exclusion in the family. Of this sub-set, more than three in four had mental health impacts, close to one in five were deprived of financial resources, and more than one in ten were disinherited. This was succinctly summed up in an interview:



If you have no family support, you're already poor; you don't have any high level of education, and no economic network.

Regarding education, family challenges can also combine with challenges in school settings to create specific vulnerabilities for LGBT+ youth, ultimately to the detriment of job prospects later on. For example, some transgender people are so bullied due to their gender identity that they have little choice but to drop out to protect their well-being. One participant noted that because of this bullying:



Many trans people don't complete their high school education, which means that they [will not have] the high school diploma to apply for a job... Many trans people don't have the family support to continue their education if they missed out on that opportunity as a child... This is compounded by early school dropout rates and by family members who reject and isolate trans people within the family.

Challenges within the family and schools thus mix to create another barrier to formal-sector employment.

Violence against LGBT+ people is yet another tremendous challenge that occurs on many levels of society, which ultimately impacts their ability to secure formal-sector work. As seen in the survey data, 46% of LGB participants and 59% of transgender participants have experienced some form of violence, and many of the interviewed participants also reiterated the extent of this violence against the community. This can impact how they attain work:



When you mix violence with economic opportunity, it translates into a trauma-informed approach to accessing jobs. It translates into a trauma-based approach to the value of education and it de-motivates people from seeking the best opportunities they have.

Combined, all of these factors create challenges in securing and sustaining work. The current employment prospects for our LGBT+ Caribbean sample were also precarious, with only 55% of the LGB sample having full- or part-time employment, and 45% of the transgender sample having the same.

Having established the magnitude of the economic cost of LGBT+ exclusion across the Caribbean and the increasing awareness of this lost opportunity among the region's business leaders, we now turn to diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives within the region – which are on the rise. We examine the approaches that are gaining traction, as well as highlight the limitations of current strategies and how these shortcomings might be addressed. We find a growing demand and awareness among business leaders for said initiatives, which sets a hopeful standard by which an LGBT+ business voice can tap into and cultivate.

The Rise of D&I in the Caribbean



Sandals has come a long way, and today we make sure that we have diversity and inclusion as part of our approach, both in the way we hire, as well as the way we train, and the way we talk, and the way we deal with people from an executive leadership point of view

*Gebhard Rainer,
CEO, Sandals*

In two-thirds of all interviews with business leaders, D&I was heralded as something that is inherently important to society as well as the workplace. D&I was discussed as the navigation of a myriad of identity characteristics within socioeconomic hierarchies, including: gender equality, race and ethnicity, and religion, among some others. LGBT+ issues arose in the interviews as the latest component of this D&I conversation.

Although the interviewees had no mutually agreed-upon definition of D&I within the workplace, the business leaders still came to a generally similar definition. As one interviewee summed up their view of D&I:



Regardless of what a person looks like, their religion, their sexual orientation, their gender, marital status, age, weight, ability, or physical ability or physical disability, that they are given the same opportunities to enter the workforce... they're given the same opportunity to enter, and the same opportunity to contribute, and the same opportunity to progress... Diversity and inclusion is making sure that we provide that support, whether more support or hands-on support, or more obvious support for people who have been excluded historically.

Like their counterparts elsewhere, Caribbean business leaders seek clarity on a number of D&I-related questions:

- Whether or not to include general D&I components, targets or quotas in the hiring process
- Exactly how to retain talented people through a D&I approach
- To what degree LGBT+ people should be visible in D&I initiatives

These discussions showed a strong home-grown articulation of D&I, as couched squarely within Caribbean cultures. For example, D&I was especially discussed among many SMEs, including Sandals, RF&G Insurance, Open Current, ANSA McAL, and the Energy Chamber of Commerce – all corporations and associations that were created in the region predominantly with domestic or regional operations. Currently, the decentralized definition of D&I, combined with a growing business demand to learn how to operationalize it in culturally appropriate ways (especially on LGBT+ issues), presents a tremendous opportunity for the growing LGBT+ voice in the region to cultivate an even more diverse and inclusive business environment.

The bulk of the interviewees recognized the value of D&I in the workplace – not as an act of charity nor an externally imposed requirement, but rather something that leads to better business outcomes. Predominantly, D&I was framed as a matter of talent, ultimately supporting a more open workplace that cultivates innovation as well as increased output, and lower costs on training new staff due to better staff retention. As one interviewee noted, “It’s looking quite different now... we’re embracing and celebrating that people come from different backgrounds and having a different mind-set and a different approach that will actually deliver better work.”

Conclusion

This report has provided an evidence base on the social and economic realities of LGBT+ people across the English-speaking Caribbean. At times, the picture that emerged was stark: systemic legal and institutional barriers combine with attitudinal factors to create significant challenges for LGBT+ people in the family, in schools, in attaining better health outcomes, in the labor market, and in regards to violence, and seeking justice. For many, this has created strong push factors that drive their migration while also diminishing their likelihood of returning to the Caribbean. Altogether, this has translated into a national and regional reputation that diminishes the likelihood of international tourists choosing to visit – both LGBT+ as well as heterosexual and cisgender people alike. Due to these and other reasons, we estimate that **LGBT+ exclusion costs the region between USD 1.5 billion and USD 4.2 billion per year – from 2.1% and up to 5.7% of its collective GDP.**

The impact on the economy and business is clear – showing that the need to combat homophobia and transphobia are economic and business imperatives, in addition to being a moral mandate. As the LGBT+ civil society community and other stakeholders throughout the Caribbean lead more progressive change, Open For Business is confident that these data and our analyses can strengthen this advocacy, and help build a business and economic voice that works toward a truly fair and inclusive environment for all.

Methodology and Sources

A: General Economic Indicators, LGBT+ Population Estimates, and Calculating Macroeconomic Costs

The following chart lists the 12 countries of focus and their 2019 population sizes, as well as GDP and other economic indicators there were used in calculating the macroeconomic estimates on LGBT+ exclusion. As opposed to using data from 2020 or 2021, data from 2019 were utilized to avoid a skewed examination due to the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Snapshot of Caribbean Economic Indicators from 2019

Country	GDP (USD)	GNI per capita (USD)	Population	(#) Employed Men Employed Women	Classification
Antigua & Barbuda	1.66 billion	16,600	97,118	31,688 31,380	High Inc.
The Bahamas	13.58 billion	33,460	389,482	118,832 110,645	High Inc.
Barbados	5.21 billion	17,380	287,025	78,784 76,686	High Inc.
Belize	1.88 billion	4,480	390,353	109,554 68,438	Upper Middle Inc.
Dominica	582.4 million	7,920	71,808	25,069 21,127	Upper Middle Inc.
Grenada	1.21 billion	9,840	112,003	42,250 35,839	Upper Middle Inc.
Guyana	5.17 billion	6,630	782,766	187,932 121,102	Upper Middle Inc.
Jamaica	16.46 billion	5,320	2.95 million	813,076 689,782	Upper Middle Inc.
Saint Lucia	2.12 billion	11,020	182,790	55,816 52,498	Upper Middle Inc.
St. Kitts and Nevis	1.05 billion	19,290	52,834	10,824 11,024	High Inc.
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	824.7 million	7,460	110,589	33,818 24,133	Upper Middle Inc.
Trinidad and Tobago	24.27 billion	17,010	1.39 million	385,049 283,906	High Inc.
	Total GDP in region: 74.02 billion	Average GNI per capita: 13,034	Total Population 6.82 million		

Source: World Bank Country Data. Grenada labor force estimates derived from ILO ILOSTAT using 2015 data. Dominica labor force estimates derived from an ILO country report in 2018, using national data from 2013. Antigua and Barbuda labor force estimates are also derived from an ILO country report in 2018, using national data from 2011. Labor force participation for St. Kitts and Nevis are utilized from 2016 data via the government's Department of Statistics.

As is the case in almost every country around the globe, reliable estimates on the size of the LGBT+ community are almost non-existent in the 12 countries of focus. This is a recurring and problematic knowledge gap that will continue to stymie better interventions, as well as limit the collective visibility and representation of LGBT+ people. However, numerous research efforts from the World Bank and think tanks have utilized HIV prevalence statistics among two key populations that overlap with the LGBT+ community, men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women, to provide an estimate on how large a segment of the LGBT+ population might be. This has established a reliable precedent whereby we can utilize a range of estimates to extrapolate collected data (and other research) within pre-established macroeconomic models, in the overall effort to quantify the cost of LGBT+ exclusion.

Regarding HIV, key population estimates of MSM and transgender women, two reliable analytical efforts have emerged. First, the Caribbean Vulnerable Communities (CVC) and University of Birmingham (U.B.) in the US have utilized numerous techniques in order to provide some of the most reliable estimates in Belize and five countries within the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). In both contexts, this included a combination of methods that multiply likely population rates based on mobile app technology or survey data, all to triangulate an estimate. In Belize, researchers estimate that among the male population aged between 15 and 64, there are likely 5-5.9% of the population that are MSM, while for transgender women, this is between 0.4-0.5% of the same overall

age demographic (Waters, 2018). This suggests there might be around 6,791 MSM and transgender women (Waters, 2018). In the OECS countries, the average population estimate for MSM and transgender women was 4.5% in five countries of focus (4.6% in AG; 4.6% in GD; 3.45% in VC; 5.55% in KN; and 4.08% in LC) (Waters, 2018).¹⁰ This suggests there might be as many as 11,755 MSM and transgender women throughout five countries in the OECS.

Similarly, UNAIDS produces progress reports – Global AIDS Response Progress Reports (GARPR) – which offer some population estimates on the two key populations (see Sources). Estimates from the Bahamas, Barbados, and Jamaica are included in our synthesis of estimates.

Another common practice of the World Bank and other research outfits is to apply LGBT+ population estimates from the US, where estimates are considered reliable due to the methods utilized by researchers. In the US, there are numerous population-based surveys that ask, among many issues relating to health or socioeconomic status, the respondent's SOGI and self-identification as LGBT+, providing some of the best estimates at a nationally representative level.

When synthesizing many of those surveys, in 2011 the Williams Institute estimated that 3.5% identify as LGB and 0.6% identify as transgender (Gates, 2011; Flores, 2016). However, as the aforementioned surveys have become more nuanced in scope and execution of data collection, trends in the US show more people identifying as LGBT+, from 4.5% in 2017 to 5.6% in 2020 (specifically, 5.2% LGB and 0.6% transgender)

(Jones, 2021). Both latter estimates are derived from the Gallup Daily Tracking Survey, and due to their methods used (random sampling across the US) they are considered reliable. Thus, the 5.6% estimate is included below to provide a triangulation of the likely LGBT+ population estimates throughout the CARICOM Caribbean.

¹⁰ Open For Business utilized 2018 World Bank data to turn the report's numbers into percentages.

Synthesis of LGBT+ Population Estimates

	OECS (5)	Bahamas	Barbados	Belize	Guyana	Jamaica	TT	US	Confident Range
CVC/U.B.	4.5 MSM, TG			5.4 – 6.4 MSM, TG					4.5 – 6.4 % MSM, TG
UNAIDS GARPR		11 MSM	2.6 MSM			4.39 MSM			6 % ave. MSM
Williams Institute								4.1 – 4.5 –LGBT	4.5 – 5.6 % LGBT
Gallup								5.6 LGBT	
Estimates used by Open For Business: 4.5 – 6% LGBT+									

Methodology for estimating costs associated with health disparities/violence outcomes due to LGBT+ challenges (Badgett, 2014):

1. Find the general population DALYs in each country in the Caribbean, for each aspect of health disparities or violence outcomes.
2. Estimate the LGBT+ DALYs would see if there were similar levels of disparities as the general population in the absence of LGBT+ challenges.
3. Estimate the current number of DALYs via LGBT+ people by finding prevalence rates in survey data.
4. Calculate excess DALYs specifically due to homophobia or transphobia, by subtracting the overall number in step two from the overall number in step 3. With HIV, we reduce the excess DALYs of MSM and transgender women to be on par with the HIV+ population in the region. This was based on the UNFPA estimate that up to 3% of the region is living with HIV, and that reducing homophobic and transphobic-motivated barriers would bring the two key populations transmission rates on par with that group (as opposed to the entire general population, since they are still more vulnerable to HIV). Taking into account the HIV prevalence among the general population as well as the prevalence of the key populations, calculations show that between 25-15% reduction would suffice, and we cautiously chose 25% - and the excess DALYs were adjusted accordingly.
5. Multiply the number of DALYs by one to three times per capita income to calculate lost economic output, as recommended by the World Health Organization.

Methodology for estimating costs associated with labor due to LGBT+ discrimination (Badgett, 2014):

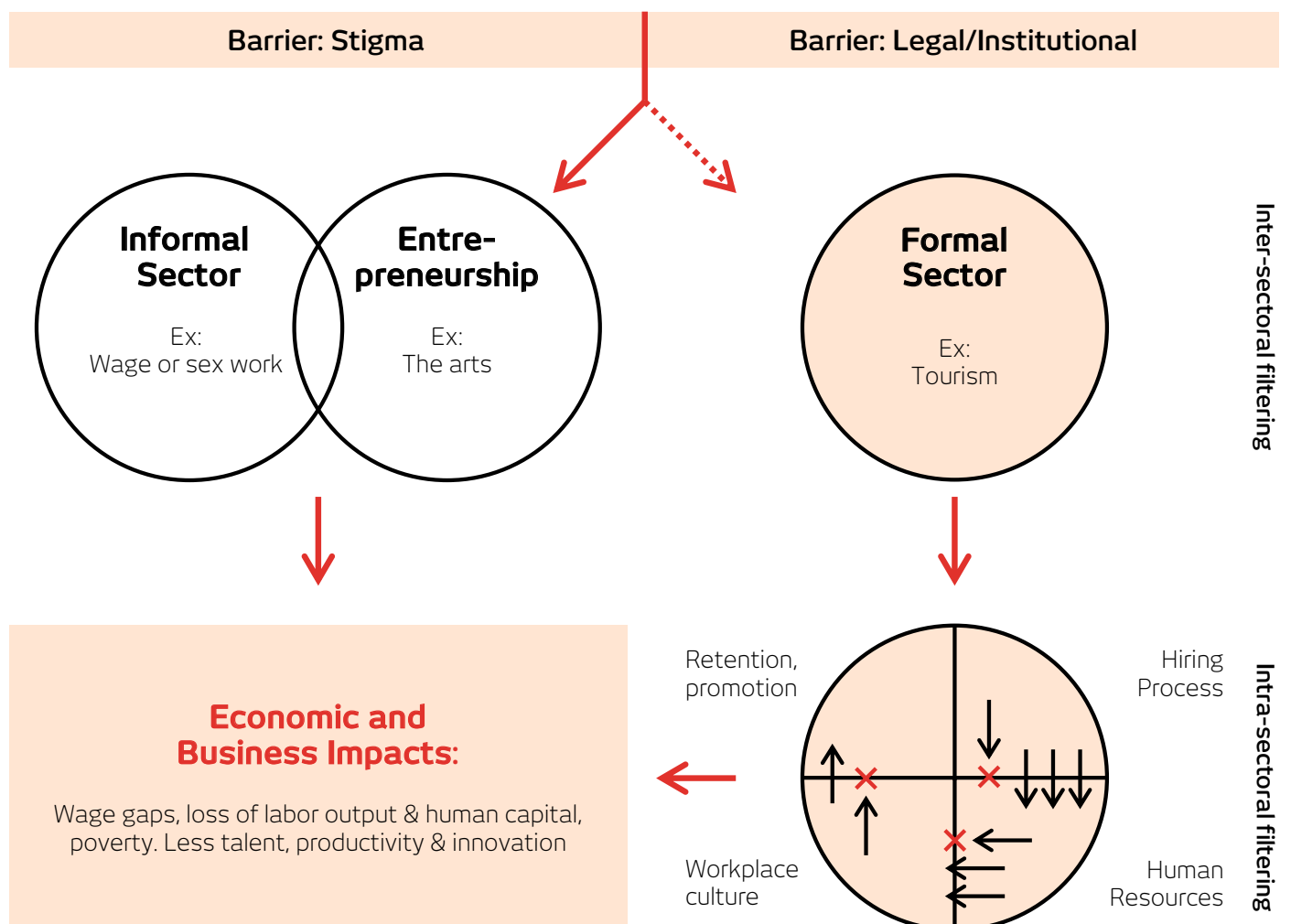
1. Find the average wage or productivity loss between LGBT+ people and the general population, using survey data to evaluate wage gap (11% using data from Belize).
2. Determine the sum of employed (cisgender male and female) workers in the region, as well as average earnings per year. Regarding average earnings, only in Jamaica data was available, from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica. Average income data were collected through the state statistical agency in Belize. See Sources for Jamaican and Belizean statistical agencies.
3. Multiply the overall number in step 1 by the likely percentage of LGBT+ people, and then multiply that by the sum of all employed people. Finally, multiply that number by the average earnings/income.
4. Finally, using the wage share of total output, extrapolate that number onto larger economic output. Aggregate wage share of total output was utilized from the ILO (data were not available for Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, and St. Kitts and Nevis). This provided us with 56% on average of eight countries of focus (ILO, 2017).

Methodology for estimating tourism costs due to LGBT+ laws and stigma:

1. Determine the amount of tourists that arrived to the region, particularly from the US, Canada, and the UK, tallied by the UNWTO and six tourism boards in the region.
2. Determine the number of LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ people that did not travel to the region due to anti-LGBT+ laws, using Survey 2 data.
3. Multiply the total number by the average receipts per tourist. Receipts are calculated from UNWTO data, on average USD 1,511.
4. Multiply the number of lost arrivals by the average tourism receipt per arrival to calculate the direct money lost due to anti-LGBT+ policies. We multiply by twice the average receipts, USD 3,022, to account for our sample that budgeted twice the typical tourist.
5. Because tourism has a multiplier effect on economic growth (e.g., through supporting local business, providing employment, etc.), multiply the direct amount lost from arrivals by a "tourism multiplier." We utilize 1.38 for Jamaica and 2.25 for the Bahamas.

B: A Conceptual Model of LGBT+ Occupational Segregation

As discussed, occupational segregation describes how some demographic groups can be over- or underrepresented in various occupations based on their identity – not driven by merit or talent, but rather by the biases of employers. As one segment of the overall research, the research team developed this conceptual model of LGBT+ occupational segregation, in order to develop indicators by which data would show that LGBT+ people face inter- and intra-sectoral challenges in the labor market, driven by stigma and a lack of legal/institutional policies. Through Survey 1 and the interviews, the conceptual labor model was confirmed and showed how occupational segregation pushes LGBT+ people into the informal sector, and even for those who can secure employment in the formal sector, keeps them out of higher-paying, senior-level jobs. This then creates specific and measurable impacts at the level of the individual, community, workplace, and economy – and is thus a business and economic imperative to address.



C: Methodology and the Research Process

With this research, Open For Business has presented a range of estimates on the macroeconomic cost of LGBT+ exclusion in the Caribbean, informed and well-grounded by its own data collection as well as pre-existing data. Starting in April 2020, the research team began a multi-tiered research process to deliver these findings.

First, the team convened a group of volunteers comprised of national and regional NGOs, LGBT+ leaders, academics, business leaders and representatives of the Organization of American States, and more, to engage in participatory research. Titled the Program Advisory Board (PAB), the group guided the research and worked to ensure safe and ethical approaches to data collection, applicability of research questions, and a more robust implementation of overall findings. Other community partners joined this effort at various stages of the project.

Second, and in order to inform the scope of the research, the team compiled a literature review of all LGBT+ research in the CARICOM Caribbean, as well as regional and global literature on LGBT+ issues and: economic development; economic inclusion; labor market discrimination and occupational segregation; tourism; migration and brain drain; access to education, healthcare, financial services and justice. Focusing on the Caribbean, the team uncovered the most pressing LGBT+ data gaps regarding the themes that contribute to social and economic development: human capital, health outcomes, labor output, brain drain, and tourism. With input from the PAB, the team then created a Conceptual Framework to guide the research, concluding with three methodologies of data collection in order to reach four demographics.

Following this, the team created two surveys (via Alchemer) and the interview guide for the interviews. With the first survey on LGBT+ outcomes in the Caribbean and diaspora, the team was guided by the survey instrument from World Bank research on LGBT+ people in Thailand, as well as followed the themes as prioritized by the UNDP and World Bank Social Inclusion Index and also the World Bank macroeconomic model on the cost of LGBT+ exclusion in India (see Sources). Questions specific to COV-

ID-19 were adapted from concurrent global surveys on the LGBT+ community and the pandemic, as created by a multi-disciplinary group, the COVID Disparities Working Group.¹¹ Regarding the second survey on prospective tourists, the team worked with a tourism and LGBT+ travel expert, Peter Jordan, to create a new survey. Finally, an interview guide was created based on themes of LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace and the role of the private sector as agents of change in the communities they work. Both surveys were piloted from July to November 2020, and the final instruments incorporated feedback from stakeholders in the Caribbean, US, UK, Canada, and elsewhere.

For the surveys, data collection started November 5, 2020 and concluded March 16, 2021. Survey 1 was disseminated online through two separate methods, both utilizing a convenience sampling technique. First, it was sent to all members of the Program Advisory Board – especially UNIBAM, ECADE, UCTRANS, and Pride Bahamas – and Community Partners to disseminate to their networks. Additionally, the team paid for dissemination through Facebook Campaigns (which also included ads on Instagram) from December 10-20, 2020 by using targeted ads to those who follow LGBT+ content. For those who clicked on the ad, they were directly sent to the survey link. For the tourism survey, community partners helped disseminate the survey to their networks, especially I Love Gay Travel, IGLTA, and MyGWork. Virgin Atlantic gave significant support by sending the link through their LinkedIn and Twitter channels on two different occasions. Additionally, Attitude Magazine provided visibility to the survey through an article published on their site, written by Peter Jordan. Finally, the team again paid for dissemination through Facebook Campaigns (which also included ads on Instagram) from January 25-30, 2021 and targeted women who followed LGBT+ content in order to try and balance the male to female ratio of respondents. Both surveys included the chance to win an Apple Watch through a prize draw, available only to participants who completed the survey and went to an external site (managed via Google Forms) to fill in personal contact information. Data collection for the qualitative portion started

on September 1, 2020 and concluded February 5, 2021 with 21 interviews across the Caribbean.

Data analyses took place predominantly in March – May 2021. This involved a number of steps. First, the research team cleaned the quantitative data from Survey 1 as well as analysed the responses from open-ended questions. Similarly, the quantitative data from Survey 2 was also cleaned and analysed, including in that the responses from open-ended questions. Finally, the team had the 21 interviews transcribed using Rev.com and utilized NVivo software to analyze it, employing a process of open and axial coding for a rigorous analysis. Finally, the analyses and paper went through a peer review from the Research Advisory Board and Program Advisory Board.

¹¹ See: <https://www.tech4hiv.org/covid/tag/Disparities>

D: F&M Global Barometers Methodology

The F&M Global Barometers are human rights barometers that measure the extent to which countries are protecting or persecuting of their sexual and gender identity minorities. The Global Barometer of Gay Rights (GBGR®) consists of 27 items operationalized from international human rights principles and focuses on the human rights of sexual minorities (reference 1). The Global Barometer of Transgender Rights (GBTR™) is the sister barometer to the GBGR, consisting of 15 items that measure concerns specific to gender identity minorities (reference 2).

The F&M Global Barometers provided a framework for objectively documenting and uniformly monitoring and analyzing global progress towards the human rights protection of LGBT individuals. They are the first-of-their-kind measures that allow for countries to be compared on their LGBT human rights performance on a uniform scale, on the same human rights issues, and across multiple years.

The Global Barometers rank countries on a scale of 0 to 100 percent based on their protection or persecution of LGBT individuals. It employs binary variables,

0 or 1, to score items. Each item in the Global Barometers is weighted equally. A country will receive one point if evidence supports the item in the affirmative and a zero if in the negative. For example, the item "No death penalty for sexual orientation" would receive a one if there is no death penalty for sexual orientation, but if the country has the death penalty for sexual orientation, it would receive a zero.

The latest Global Barometers dataset ranked 203 countries based on their protections for SOGI minorities on a scale of A - F:

GBGR/GBTR Category	GBGR/GBTR Score	Corresponding Human Rights Report Card Grade	Grade Definitions
Protecting	90-100%	A	Excellent
Tolerant	80-89%	B	Very Good
Resistant	70-79%	C	Average
Intolerant	60-69%	D	Unsatisfactory
Persecuting	0-59%	F	Failing

The items are grouped into five dimensions:

- Dimension I: De jure protections
- Dimension II: De facto protections
- Dimension III: LGBT rights advocacy
- Dimension IV: Socio-economic rights
- Dimension V: Societal persecution

The above grouping allows for broad-based analysis of not only a country's legal protections for LGBT minorities but also its protections in practice, the state of grassroots civil society activism, and societal safeguards (or lack thereof) against violence targeted toward LGBT individuals.

A distinctive feature of the Barometers is that the data is triple-verified. The triple-verification process is extensive and rigorous, employing to date 50+ peer review experts from over 40 countries to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the Global Barometers dataset.

GBGR scorecard

Item Number	Global Barometer of Gay Rights Scorecard
DE JURE PROTECTION OF SEXUAL MINORITIES	
1	No death penalty for sexual orientation
2	No life sentence for sexual orientation
3	No prison term for sexual orientation
4	No criminalization of sexual orientation
5	Hate crimes legislation includes sexual orientation
6	Sexual minorities are not restricted or banned from serving in the military
7	Civil unions for sexual minorities are allowed
8	Same-sex marriage is allowed
DE FACTO (CIVIL & POLITICAL) PROTECTION SEXUAL MINORITIES	
9	Freedom from arbitrary arrest based on sexual orientation
10	Head of state supports legalization of homosexuality
11	Head of state supports same-sex civil unions/same-sex marriage
12	Majority of citizens are accepting of homosexuality
13	Hate speech laws include sexual orientation
14	Sexual minorities have the right to privacy
15	Sexual orientation does not prejudice the right to a fair trial
LGBT RIGHTS ADVOCACY	
16	LGBT organizations are allowed to legally register
17	LGBT organizations exist
18	LGBT organizations are able to peacefully and safely assemble
19	LGBT pride events are allowed by the state
20	Security forces provide protection to LGBT pride participants
SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS	
21	Fair housing anti-discrimination laws include sexual orientation
22	Workplace anti-discrimination laws include sexual orientation
SOCIAL PERSECUTION	
23	No known acts of murder against sexual minorities
24	No known acts of violence against sexual minorities
25	Crimes based on sexual orientation are reported to police
26	Same-sex couples are allowed to jointly adopt
27	Individuals are not discriminated against in access to medical treatment because of their sexual orientation

GBTR scorecard with two additional items to be introduced in the 2018 dataset

Item Number	Global Barometer of Transgender Rights Scorecard
DE JURE PROTECTION OF GENDER IDENTITY MINORITIES	
1	Country has legal recognition of gender identity
2	No criminalization of gender identity
3	Gender minorities are allowed to serve in the military
4	No physiological alteration requirement for gender identity recognition
5	No psychiatric diagnosis requirement for gender identity recognition
DE FACTO (CIVIL & POLITICAL) PROTECTION OF GENDER IDENTITY MINORITIES	
6	No arbitrary arrest based on gender identity
LGBT RIGHTS ADVOCACY	
7	LGBT organizations are allowed to legally register
8	LGBT organizations exist
9	LGBT organizations are able to peacefully and safely assemble
10	LGBT pride events are allowed by the state
11	Security forces provide protection to LGBT pride participants
SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS	
12	Fair housing anti-discrimination laws include gender identity
13	Workplace anti-discrimination laws include gender identity
SOCIAL PERSECUTION	
14	No known acts of murder against gender minorities
15	No known acts of violence against gender minorities
16	Crimes based on gender identity are reported to police
17	Individuals are not discriminated against in access to medical treatment because of their gender identity

For more information, please contact the F&M Global Barometers: Lead contact: Dr. Susan Dicklitch-Nelson, gbgr@fandm.edu.

E: Ethics and Safety

The research team adhered to the following three sets of principles, as well as consistent collaboration with partners, in order to undertake ethical and safe data collection.

Open For Business Principles for Business Action

Do no harm. This is a guiding mantra of organizations that are concerned with human rights and social issues and requires an open and ongoing dialogue with civil society organizations representing the communities that will be impacted by the actions.

Nothing about us without us. Any advocacy undertaken on behalf of LGBT+ communities should respect the self-determination of those communities and should ensure the full and direct participation of those representing them.

Never assume. The context of LGBT+ inclusion can be complex and easily misunderstood by those outside of the community. Civil society organizations are deeply embedded in local contexts and can help accurately identify what aims business can strive for.

Locally led, globally supported. Actions in support of LGBT+ inclusion should be led by local senior executives of a company, with support from the global leadership and a clear worldwide commitment to LGBT+ inclusion.

The long view. Prioritize creating sustainable mechanisms for continued dialogue across stakeholders on LGBT+ inclusion, rather than specific near-term outcomes.

Belmont Report Principles

Open For Business also adhered to the principles articulated by the Belmont Report, notably: respect (informed consent and no persuasion), beneficence (sharing in the likely benefits of the research, and maximizing benefit and minimizing risk), and justice (refraining from exploiting the data and sharing in its dissemination with participants and community) (Belmont).

Ethics Guidelines for Internet-mediated Research

Open For Business also adhered to these guidelines, as derived from the British Psychological Society and apply the following standards to data collection through online means: (1) respect for the autonomy, privacy, and dignity of individuals and communities; privacy online; valid consent; avoiding deception of participants; and the right of participant withdrawal. (2) Scientific integrity. (3) Social responsibility. (4) And maximizing benefits and minimizing harm (BPS, 2017). These guidelines are especially pertinent to the Open For Business proposed online survey methods.

Finally, the research was guided by consistent collaboration in order to ensure the research was informed by the community and pertinent to advocacy strategies. This included continuous engagement with the OFB Research Advisory Board, the Program Advisory Board, and Community Partners. Through this consistent engagement, collaboration and partnership, this research was participatory in nature and scope.

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