

## **FRA's LGBTI survey**

### **Questions & Answers on the survey methodology**

This is a brief overview of how the Agency's [second LGBTI survey](#) was carried out. More details will be provided in the forthcoming Technical Report.

The survey builds on the Agency's [LGBT survey](#) in 2012. It now covers intersex people and young LGBTI people aged 15-17. North Macedonia and Serbia were also added.

See our [main findings Q&A](#) for more information on the main survey findings.

See our [DATA EXPLORER](#) for detailed information about each country.

#### **1. Who took part in the survey?**

The survey was open to individuals aged 15 years and over who self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and/or intersex.

#### **2. What questions did the survey ask?**

The survey asked respondents about a wide range of issues. These include experiences of discrimination, harassment or violence, rights awareness, openness about LGBTI identity, experiences at work and in education, life satisfaction, same-sex partnership and parenting, socio-economic and living conditions, health and wellbeing, and housing issues.

#### **3. When and where was the survey carried out?**

The survey was carried out across the 27 EU Member States, the United Kingdom, North Macedonia and Serbia between May 2019 and July 2019.

#### **4. How was the survey carried out?**

The survey builds strongly on the experience and methodology of the 2012 FRA LGBT survey. The methodology was further developed for the 2019 survey after consultation with national, European and international human rights organisations, and experts in the area. European umbrella organisations representing LGBTI people, were consulted in several phases of the project.

The survey collected data from people that self identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex through a fully anonymous open online survey tool.

The LGB categories cover respondents who self-identified as lesbian women, gay men, bisexual women or bisexual men. Trans or intersex respondents who also identified as L, G, or B are covered by the trans and intersex categories.

After an open call for tender competition, a consortium of *Agilis SA* and *Homoevolution* collected and processed the data under FRA's guidance and supervision. FRA conducted the analysis in the report.

#### **5. Why was the survey conducted online?**

FRA used online surveying as LGBTI people can be 'hard to reach' when using traditional survey methods – such as door-to-door random sampling. The online survey allowed respondents to complete the survey when and where it was most convenient for them, at their own pace, and in their national language.

The survey also allowed respondents to find out about FRA, the organisations managing the data collection, organisations that could provide victim support in their country, and how the collected data would be used. It guaranteed full anonymity and confidentiality.

## **6. How did the survey achieve participation of respondents?**

The consortium of Agilis SA and Homoevolution promoted the survey with the help of national survey contact points. These contact points worked together with civil society organisations (LGBTI and non-LGBTI) in all 30 surveyed countries and used various channels to inform about the survey and promote participation, including social media and other on- and offline channels.

## **7. How many respondents completed the survey?**

In total 139,799 people who identified themselves as LGBTI completed the survey.

## **8. Who are the survey respondents? Where are they from, what is their age?**

The respondents are 42% gay men, 20% bisexual women, 16% lesbian women, 14% trans people, 7% bisexual men and 1% intersex people.

The countries with the largest samples are Spain (14%), Germany (12%), Poland, France (both 10%) and the United Kingdom (9%). Cyprus, Luxembourg, North Macedonia and Slovenia have the smallest sample (each less than 0.5% of all respondents).

In terms of socio-demographics, respondents are predominantly young with an average age of 29. Four out of five respondents (82%) are younger than 40. Over a third are between 18-24 years and 14% are 15-17. Only 4% of respondents are over 55.

Almost half of the sample (45%) have a university education. 47% live in a big city.

About a third (37%) indicate that their households have difficulties to make ends meet, particularly intersex (52%) and trans (46%) respondents.

## **9. What does L, G, B, T, I stand for?**

- Lesbian women - women sexually and/or emotionally attracted to women;
- Gay men - men sexually and/or emotionally attracted to men;
- Bisexual people - those emotionally and/or sexually attracted to persons of more than one gender;
- Trans people - those whose gender identity or gender expression does not fully correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth;
- Intersex people - born with sex characteristics that do not strictly belong to the male or female categories or belong to both. These characteristics may be chromosomal, hormonal and/or anatomical and may be present to differing degrees.

## **10. Are the results representative?**

The online survey allowed all interested LGBTI people – with access to the internet (at home, at work, or elsewhere) – to take part. However, an opt-in online survey does not in principle deliver a random probability sample that would fulfil the statistical criteria for representativeness. To mitigate this inherent problem of opt-in online surveys, comprehensive weighting methodology was developed and applied to achieve better estimates and a more faithful picture of the situation. This allows to balance out and compensate for over and under-representation of some LGBTI groups, including age groups, in the sample and between countries.

Although the results cannot be considered as representative of all LGBTI people in the EU, they constitute by far the largest collection of empirical evidence on discrimination and hate crime against LGBTI people worldwide since FRA's first survey in 2012.

### **11. How was the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of respondents assured?**

FRA used several measures to guarantee data security, privacy and confidentiality of the survey respondents. The survey did not collect personal data that could be used to identify an individual – such as name, address or date of birth. All data collected, including respondents' anonymous answers regarding personal experiences, perceptions, and views of discrimination and hate crime victimisation, were stored securely and kept confidential, according to European data protection law.

Throughout the survey, respondents had access to detailed information on how the data provided by them will be stored and processed.

No respondent can be identified in the survey results. The answers were combined with those of others who took part in the survey and only anonymous statistical data are used for the report. The data collection and the analysis process were performed without reference to any personal or sensitive data capable of identifying people. The survey also contained an 'open' response option where respondents could write more about their experiences. The report includes quotes from this open response option, but none of the quotes allow for the identification of any individual.

### **12. Could non-LGBTI people complete the survey?**

In a survey, online or not, it is not possible to verify the authenticity of respondent's answers. The survey aimed to identify what LGBTI people themselves think and experience. Therefore, the survey started with a self-identification question that allowed only those identifying themselves as LGBTI to continue. In addition, there were a number of survey questions to filter and secure the participation of LGBTI people.

Taking part in the survey could require up to 45 minutes, which would also likely dissuade non-genuine respondents. As past surveys have shown, responses in almost all cases are genuine, given the time and attention needed to complete a detailed questionnaire in a coherent manner, and taking into account various reliability checks that were done.

Before data analysis, FRA checked the responses for consistency. If there were specific contradictions/inconsistencies, and failures in various other survey checks, the cases were removed from the dataset. The controls included checks for 'speeders' (those who completed the survey too quickly), and internally highly inconsistent answers, which could reflect efforts to distort the results. The responses were assigned a combined quality score and were deleted if they failed to meet data quality standards. After such checks, 1,822 responses (1.3 %) were excluded from the final dataset of the 139,799 survey responses that were kept for the analysis.

### **13. Are the two surveys comparable?**

Online surveys do not always allow direct comparability of all their results over time.

The new survey builds strongly on FRA's [first EU LGBT survey](#) in 2012. However, it is wider in scope. In addition to the categories in the 2012 survey, the 2019 survey includes intersex people, respondents from Serbia and North Macedonia, as well as 15-17 year olds.

FRA compared the results with respect to differences in selected indicators between the 2012 and 2019 surveys, where possible. FRA did this by developing comparable datasets for the 2012 and 2019 surveys. This included data only for LGBT people over 18 years old from the 2019 survey, excluding the intersex category that was not surveyed in 2012, as well as respondents in Serbia and North Macedonia, and LGBTI youth.

FRA also applied appropriate weighting methods to maximise comparability between the 2012 and the 2019 survey.

**14. Will the survey data be publicly available?**

FRA aims to make the microdata and full dataset available later in 2020 or in early 2021.

**15. How much did the survey cost? Why should taxpayers pay for this?**

The external contracts for the 2019 LGBTI survey in 30 countries cost €500,000. An online survey represents the most cost effective method for documenting the experiences of LGBTI people. In the absence of alternative data sources on LGBTI people, surveys like this are an important source of information for the EU and its Member States. The data collected can be used to assess the impact of policies and legislation. In addition, EU-wide surveys of this nature are relatively cost efficient in comparison with national surveys, and have the added benefit of providing data for several countries.

**16. Can you put a ranking of countries based on the results? Which country is doing best/worse?**

FRA does not rank EU Member States in its reports. However, people can use the survey's [DATA EXPLORER](#) to see individual countries' results relative to other countries with respect to specific survey questions.