



FRA Press Release

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What does it mean to be transgender in the EU today?

The alarming reality of what it is like being transgender in the EU today is revealed in a new report by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Violence and discrimination are common. Many hide their identity, are marginalised, and live in isolation or even fear.

"Everyone has the right to be themselves. However, in reality many trans people live in fear as society is often intolerant and ignorant of trans people and their needs," says FRA Director [Morten Kjaerum](#). *"Our research shows that trans people live noticeably better lives where Member States are aware of the problems and have developed policies to protect and support them. The EU and all Member States should follow this lead so all trans people can be themselves in all walks of life."*

The report points to how trans people experience frequent discrimination and victimisation, harassment and disrespect, drawing on the responses to FRA's wider [EU LGBT survey](#). Some difficulties that trans people particularly face include:

- **Repetitive violence:** Over two in five trans respondents, who were victims of violence, indicate that this happened three or more times during the year before the survey. Such findings point to the need to improve policies to combat hate-motivated violence and harassment by specifically protecting against transphobic hate crime and improving awareness among police of how to deal with such hate crime.
- **Fear of being yourself:** One third of all trans respondents avoid expressing their gender identity through the way they look or dress for fear of being assaulted, threatened or harassed. Half of the trans respondents avoid places particularly public places, like on the street, in squares or in parking lots, because of these fears. Almost one in five respondents avoid being open even in their own home. EU action and national responses should be strengthened and address gender identity and gender expression to better protect trans people. Member States should also ensure legal gender recognition in identity documents, without the need to resort to medical intervention or divorce, to help trans people enjoy their fundamental rights.
- **Discrimination in employment, education and healthcare:** One in three trans respondents felt discriminated against when looking for a job or at work. These findings point to the need to ensure that laws to protect against discrimination include explicitly gender identity. Employers should consider diversity training to improve awareness of trans issues; schools should provide a safe environment for trans pupils and objective

information about gender identity and gender expression; and in healthcare, medical professionals should be made aware of the healthcare needs of trans people.

The analysis also shows that young and unemployed trans people, and those from the lowest income strata are more likely to report experiences of discrimination, harassment and violence.

The report also provides evidence that where action plans, positive measures and equality policies combating discrimination are well developed and implemented, trans people are more open and can live a better life.

To read the report, see: [Being Trans in the European Union: Comparative analysis of EU LGBT survey data](#)

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Notes to editors:

- The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is mandated to provide evidence-based advice to EU and national decision makers, thereby contributing to more informed and better targeted debates and policies on fundamental rights.
- Over 93,000 LGBT people, aged 18 or above, from all across the EU completed the online survey. Of these 6,597 self identified as transgender. For background on how the survey was carried out see the [technical report](#).
- This report uses 'trans' as a short-hand term to refer to persons whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex assigned at birth. The term can cover many gender identities. The survey listed a number of such sub-categories: transsexual, transgender, cross dresser, gender variant, queer or differently gendered people.
- FRA has conducted socio-legal research since 2007 on the fundamental rights of LGBT people. See FRA's [LGBT web section](#) for more information.