

Statistics on LGBTIQ Inclusion in Norway



The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is responsible for collecting and systematizing knowledge, research and statistics on the living conditions of LGBTIQ people. We also monitor attitudes to LGBTIQ people and issues in the population. This pamphlet shows some of the statistics we have available.

Statistics on LGBTIQ inclusion in Norway

There is no regular data collection on LGBTIQ people or issues in Norway. Sexual orientation, gender identity and expressions, and sex characteristics are currently not included as background variables in any official statistics, regular national surveys or register data. Norway also does not have a population and housing census.

Data on the living conditions and discrimination experiences of LGBTIQ people is collected from single-standing surveys and reports. As of 2019, two living conditions surveys have been conducted; one in 1999 (Hegna, Kristiansen, and Moseng, 1999) and another in 2013 (Anderssen and Malterud, 2013) – the latter study was nationally representative. A third living conditions survey is to be completed in 2020.

There have been three nationally representative survey studies on the general population's attitudes towards LGBTIQ people, issues, and rights – the first in 2008 (Anderssen and Slåtten, 2008), the second in 2013 (Anderssen and Slåtten, 2013), and most recently in 2017 by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family Affairs.

There have also been a wide range of single-standing studies that inform us of the living conditions of LGBTIQ people in Norway, which we make use of to gain further understanding into the quality of life of these groups.



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How many people in Norway are LGBTIQ?

We do not have an exact figure of how many people in Norway are lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex, or queer. We do, however, have surveys that can suggest some estimates. Results depend on how surveys formulate questions of sexual orientation, and **the estimates vary between fewer than 100,000 and more than 500,000 lesbian, gay, and bisexual people in Norway**. While estimating the numbers of trans and intersex people is more challenging, this pamphlet includes some approaches to this. We have no indicators that address the number of queer people in Norway, due to differing uses of this term.

Why measure the number of LGBTIQ people?

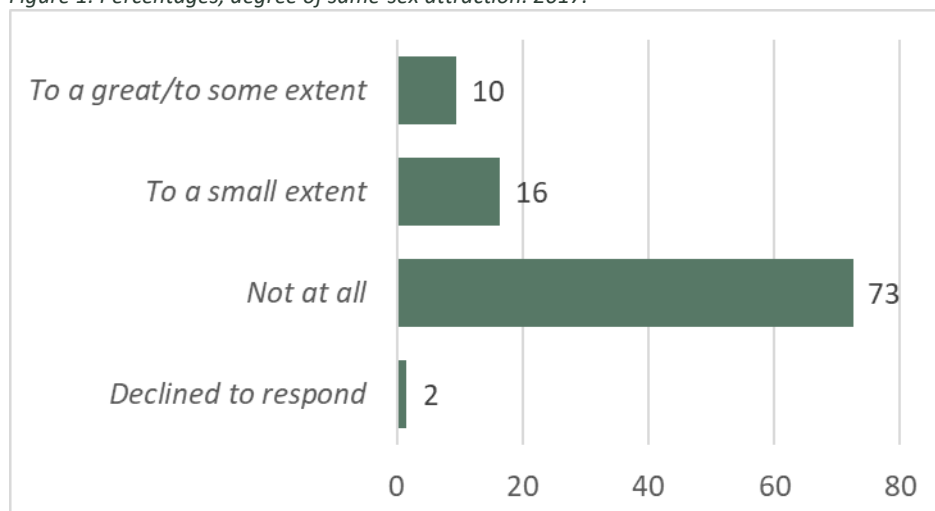
From the different studies presented in this pamphlet we can conclude that **there is no definitive answer to the question of how many people in Norway are LGBTIQ** – not least, because there are more people who break with norms related to gender and sexuality than those who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex or queer. **Some may not feel an attachment to just one identity, and others feel no need to define themselves at all.** How we define ourselves may also vary according to time and place. In any case, it is important to ensure that it is possible to break with prevailing norms of gender and sexuality without experiencing discrimination. To that end, knowledge about the LGBTIQ population and their living conditions is needed.

Estimated numbers of gay, lesbian and bisexual people

Depending on how surveys ask questions about sexual orientation, estimates range from fewer than 100,000 to more than 500,000 lesbian, gay, and bisexual people in Norway.

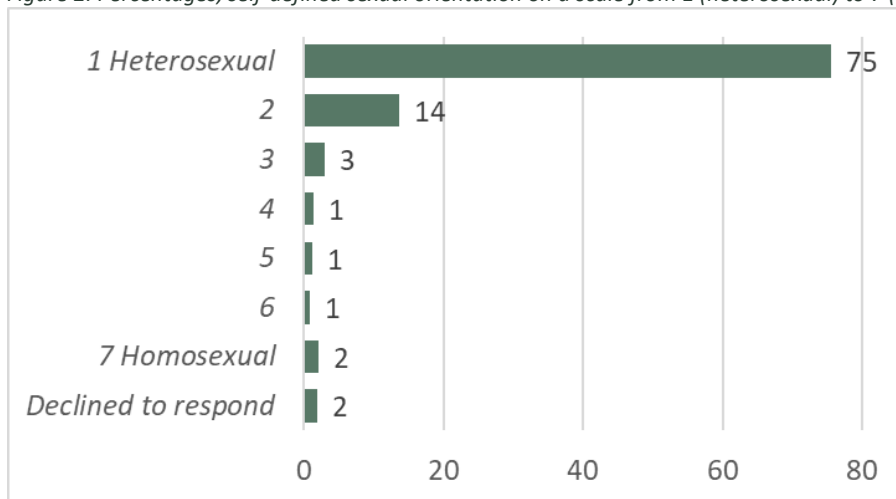
The 2017 attitudes survey indicates that **around one-tenth of the population is attracted to people of their own gender to at least some extent.**

Figure 1: Percentages, degree of same-sex attraction. 2017.



When asked about sexual orientation on a scale, moreover, from 1 = entirely heterosexual to 7 = entirely homosexual, **1 in 4 define themselves as something other than “entirely heterosexual”**.

Figure 2: Percentages, self-defined sexual orientation on a scale from 1 (heterosexual) to 7 (homosexual). 2017.



Sexual orientation and other background variables

There appears to be a **relationship between sexual orientation and age, education level, and region:**

- More young people than older people report being attracted to people of the same gender.
- Those with higher education levels, and those living in Oslo, are more likely to be attracted to people of their own gender.
- It also appears that the share of people who identify as something other than heterosexual has gone up over time: Eighty percent identified as entirely heterosexual in 2008, whereas 75 percent did so in 2017.

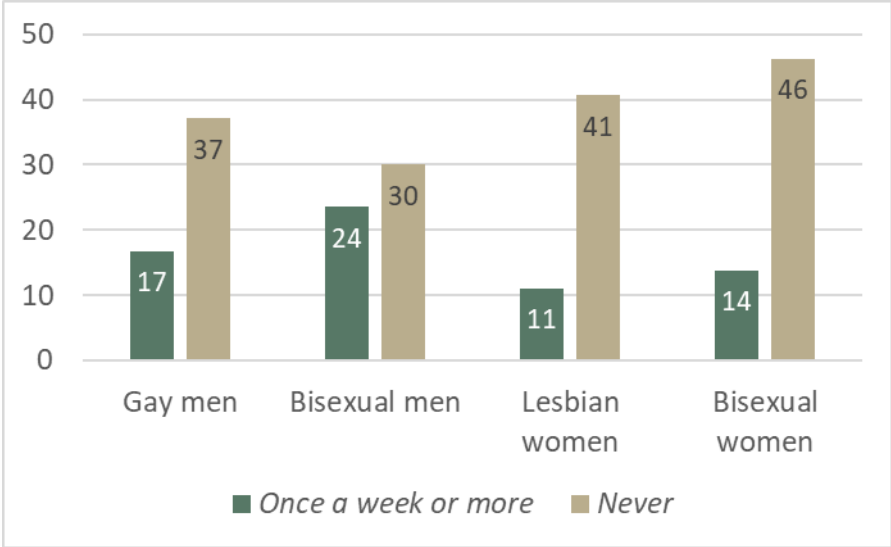
How many are out?

Historically and until recently, LGBTIQ people have been at risk of punishment or medical diagnoses. Homosexuality was criminalized until 1972 – and Norway did not remove the medical diagnosis of “transvestitism” until 2010. Breaking with norms of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender characteristics may still be linked to shame and taboo and hiding one’s sexual orientation or gender identity is not merely a thing of the past.

Gay and bisexual men hide their sexual orientation more

Men hide their sexual orientation more than women.

Figure 3: Percentages of lesbian, gay, and bisexual men and women who actively hide their sexual orientation weekly/never. 2013.



While there may be several explanations for this difference, one reason might be that **attitudes to masculinity and femininity differ**: Transgressing norms of masculinity and maleness might incur stronger social sanctions than breaking with female gender stereotypes. In this, the LGBTIQ field is linked to issues of gender equality.

Estimated numbers of trans and intersex people

How many are trans/transgender?

Because different studies of trans people use different criteria for who counts as trans, estimates vary. **Estimated numbers of trans people in Norway range from 20,000 to 260,000**, depending on whether the questions used relate to gender dysphoria or to gender ambivalence, respectively (van der Ros, 2013).

Legal gender recognition

Since July 1, 2016, Norway has allowed change of legal gender by personal declaration. Up to and including the first quartile of 2019, the Norwegian Tax Authority received and registered 1,560 applications to change legal gender. This number includes cases that were closed due to lacking confirmation from the applicant (24 percent), as well as a few cases where the application was ultimately denied. (Numbers obtained directly from the Ministry of Health and Care Services).

How many are intersex?

There are different estimates for the number of people with a variation in sex development, depending on which variations are included under the umbrella concept. When all variations are included, just under 2 percent of the population are estimated to have an intersex condition (Blackless et. al., 2000). **In Norway, this would amount to around 100,000 people.** Diseth (2008) estimates that around 300 babies are born with a variation in sex development in Norway each year. Of these, there are 10–12 whose sex cannot be immediately established at birth (ibid.).

“Intersex” and “Variation in sex development”

“Intersex” is an umbrella term for people born with a variation in sex development. It is used by the UN, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, and international LGBTI organizations such as ILGA. The medical concept for this group is “disorders of sex development” (DSD). From a human rights perspective, it has been argued that the medical terminology may have inadvertent negative consequences by pathologizing normal variations in sex (Lundberg, et.al., 2018). “Variation in sex development” is used to harmonize the medical and the human rights perspectives (Ministry of Children and Equality, 2016).

According to van Lisdonk (2014) there is little, if any, sense of belonging or group identity based on variations in sex development. Most participants in that study wanted to distance themselves from the community of interests of LGBT people that has arisen in a human rights perspective, as they did not consider sexual orientation and gender identity to be relevant for their situation. People with a variation in sex development and the LGBTIQ movement may still have some interests in common. All groups may want to expand our framework for understanding gender, to promote self-determination and normalization related to gender variation, and to prevent and hinder discrimination of people who break with gender norms. From an LGBTIQ perspective, including intersex entails, among other things, being open to gender/sex diversity, and working for acceptance of this. There are also several examples of intersex people and activists participating in or working closely with the LGBTIQ movement.

Marriage, divorce, and rainbow families

Norway has allowed same-sex couples to marry since 1 January 2009, when the Marriage Act was amended. Before this, same-sex couples who wanted legal recognition of their relationship could form civil partnerships that were regulated by the Partnership Act of 1993.

Rainbow families

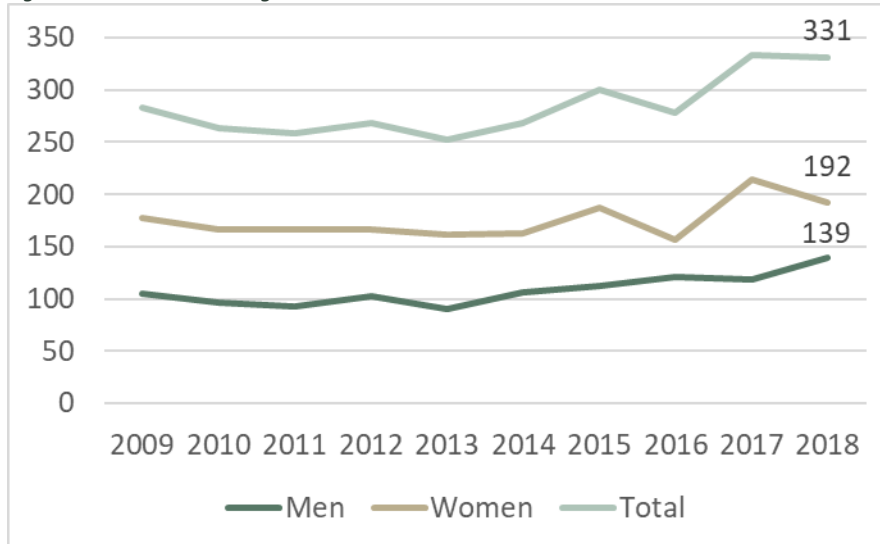
“Rainbow family” is a catch-all term for many different family constellations that fall under the LGBTIQ umbrella. This often entails expanding what we have traditionally thought of as a family. For instance, a same-sex, female couple may have a child with a friend – expanding the parental role to three people while legally speaking, a child cannot have more than two parents. Moreover, “family” may not be defined solely in terms of the parent-child constellation; friends may also be considered family. An expanded understanding of family is also taking place among heterosexual cis people – where concepts such as “yours, mine, and ours” are becoming commonplace.

These family constellations are not typically included in official statistics, which are based on marriages and partnerships and only show parenthood as it appears in formal registers. This makes it difficult to describe rainbow families statistically. Different sources can provide us with an idea of how many lesbian, gay, and bisexual people have children, but they cannot give a complete picture. Most likely, the sources presented here cover only a fraction of the children who are raised by same-sex or LGBTIQ parents or guardians.

Marriage among same-sex couples

There were 20,949 marriages in Norway in 2018. Out of these, **331 were same-sex marriages** (Statistics Norway, 2019). The number of same-sex marriages has gone up slightly since 2009.

Figure 4: Same-sex marriages. 2009-2018.



Number of children with same-sex parents

As of 1 January 2019, a total of **1,305 children aged 0–17 years live with same-sex parents who are married or in a registered partnership** (ibid.).

- 1,188 live with two female parents
- 117 live with two male parents

Step-child adoptions

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) registers the number of applications for step-child adoption from same-sex couples.

- In 2016 and 2017, it received 9 and 14 new such applications, respectively. All applications were approved.
- In 2018, the Directorate approved 13 of 15 received applications.

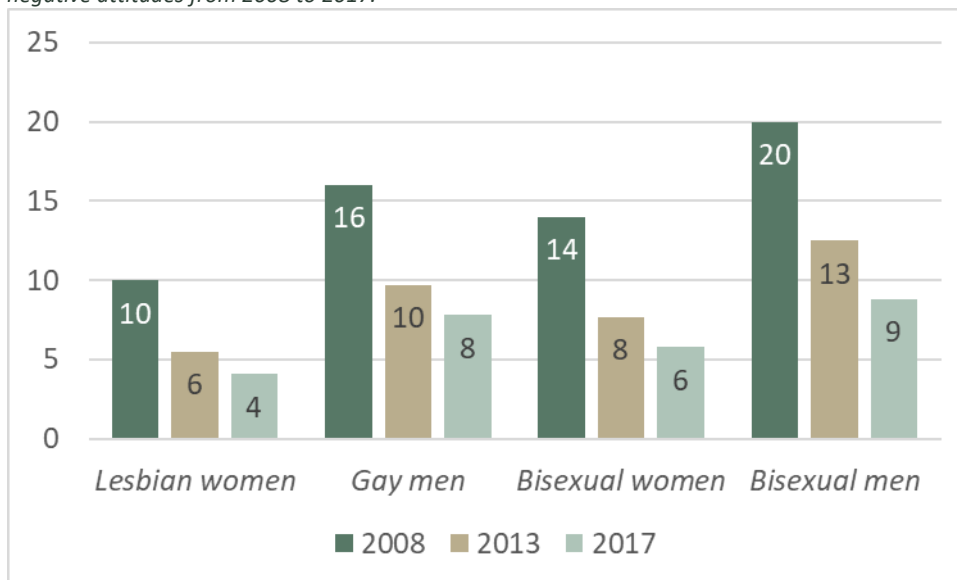
Attitudes to LGBTIQ people and issues in Norway

In part due to the relatively challenging nature of producing statistics on the living conditions and discrimination experiences of LGBTIQ persons, **the most comprehensive data available in this field comes from population surveys of attitudes.** While these data do not directly address the living conditions of LGBTIQ people in Norway, the attitudes of the majority population can be expected to impact the lives and living conditions of the minority. Measuring these attitudes may therefore serve as a proxy indicator for the situation of minority groups.

Negative attitudes to LGB people have become less common over time

The 2008, 2013, and 2017 attitudes surveys show that **Norwegians' attitudes to LGB people have become considerably more positive** over a relatively short time.

Figure 5: Percentage of people who report having negative attitudes about different sexual orientations. Development in negative attitudes from 2008 to 2017.



There is a relationship between some background characteristics and attitudes to LGBT people:

- **Men are overall more negative than women**, and the biggest gender gap is between women's and men's attitudes to gay and bisexual men.
- Negative attitudes are also more common among **elderly people**, and among **those with lower education**.
- There are minor regional variations that among other things may reflect an **urban/rural difference**. Negative attitudes to LGBT people are the least common in Oslo.
- Negativity to LGBT people is more common among **people who rarely or never interact with someone who is LGBT**.

Most people have lesbian, gay, or bisexual friends and acquaintances

The 2008, 2013, and 2017 attitudes surveys asked respondents whether they had friends or acquaintances that belonged to different minority groups. A relatively large share of the population has friends or acquaintances that they know to be lesbian/gay/bisexual. Considerably fewer have friends or acquaintances who are trans or have undergone gender affirming treatment: Whereas 73 percent report having friends or acquaintances who are LGB, approximately 1 in 10 know someone who is trans or who has undergone gender affirming treatment.

Trans people meet the most negative attitudes

More people have negative attitudes towards gender non-conforming people than towards lesbian, gay, or bisexual people. We see the most negative attitudes to transgender people who do not adhere to the gender binary: While 8 percent of the population are negative to someone who has undergone gender affirming treatment, 17 percent are negative to people "who sometimes dress and act as someone of the opposite sex".

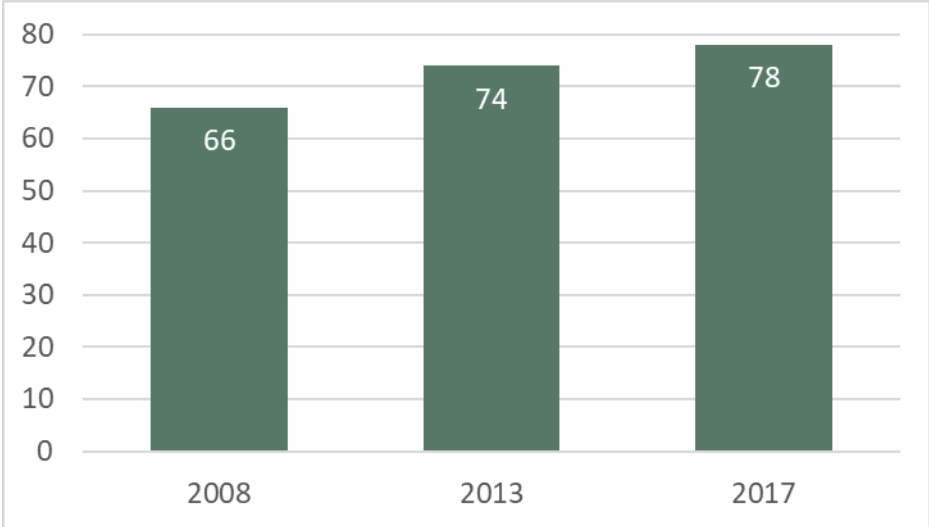
Attitudes to diversity in society

Attitudes to LGBTIQ people are part of a broader set of norms having to do with **how we view gender and gender roles, what constitutes masculinity and femininity, and how we understand sexuality and identity**. The attitudes surveys did not only ask about attitudes to LGBTI persons directly – they also asked questions about **what kind of society we want**.

Broad agreement that an inclusive society is good for everyone

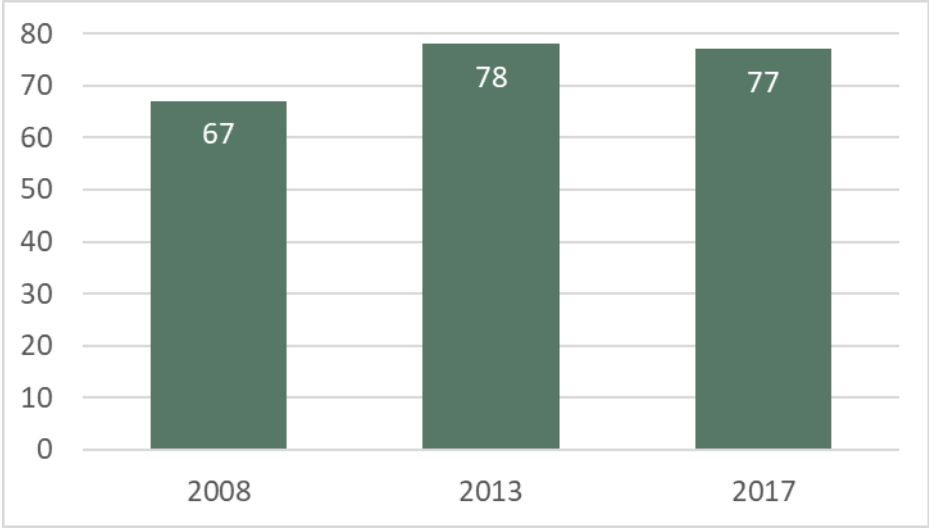
The majority agrees that everyone benefits from living in a society where lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people can be out. There is a clear increase compared to 2008, and the share is highest among the youngest respondents.

Figure 6: Agreement that everyone benefits from living in a society where lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people can be out. Percent. 2008-2017.



Most also agree that knowing about different sexual orientations is good for children; the increase over time is similar.

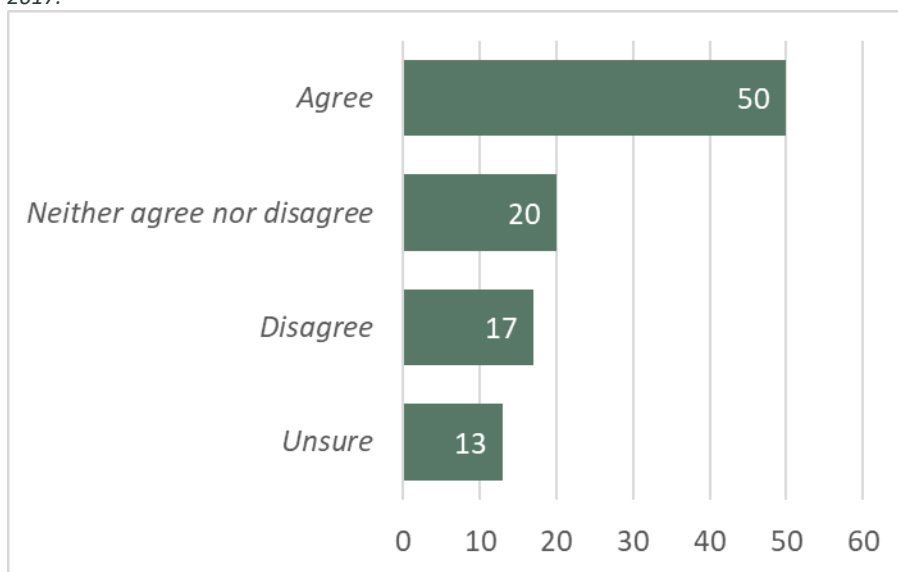
Figure 7: Agreement with the statement “it is good for children to know that some people are heterosexual while other people are gay or bisexual”. Percent. 2008-2017.



Support for the right to change your legal gender by personal declaration

Most respondents in the 2017 attitudes survey agreed that it should be possible to change your legal gender by personal declaration. Again, women were more supportive of this than were men. As many as 34 percent answered either “neither agree nor disagree” or “unsure” – which may indicate that many are not familiar enough with the topic to have formed a clear opinion.

Figure 8: Degree of agreement that people should have the right to change legal gender by personal declaration. Percent. 2017.



Attitudes towards concrete acts or situations involving LGBT people

The 2008, 2013, and 2017 attitudes surveys included questions about **concrete acts or situations involving LGBT people**, and the 2017 survey also included some questions on intersex people. While each question in isolation cannot describe people’s general attitudes towards LGBTIQ people, viewing the questions together provides insight into the general public’s attitudes. There are more people who report negative attitudes when they respond to survey questions about reactions to concrete situations compared to the survey’s more general questions about attitudes and rights. Still, these questions also provide examples of **a positive development in attitudes over time**:

28 percent of men think that sex between two men is “wrong”

- In 2008, 44 percent of the male respondents agreed with the statement “sex between two men is simply wrong”. That share has since dropped by 16 points; 28 percent of men agreed in 2017.¹
- The shares are lower as regards women who have sex with women: In 2008, 24 percent of men agreed that sex between two women was “simply wrong”. In 2017, that share was 15 percent.²

Figure 9: Agreement (men and women) with the statements "sex between two men/sex between two women is simply wrong". Percent. 2008-2017.



¹ 12 percent of women agreed in 2017.

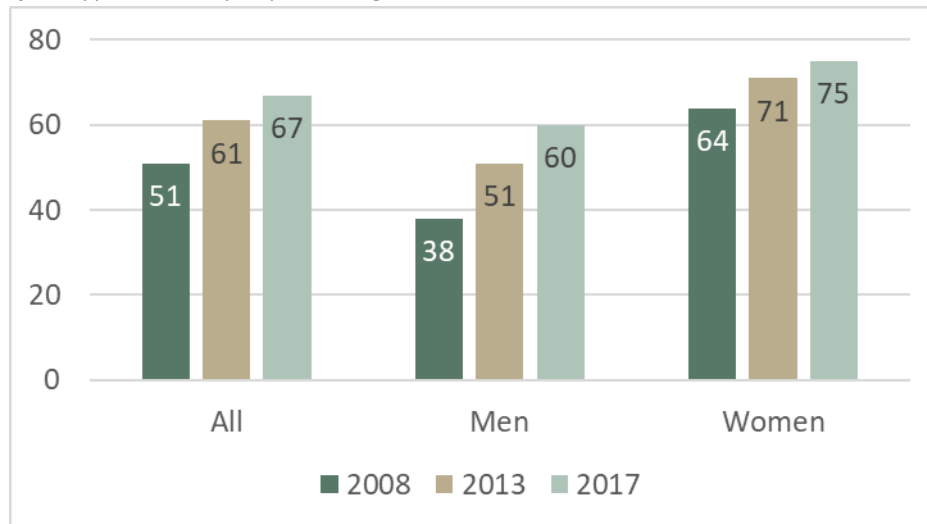
² 11 percent of women agreed in 2017.

Attitudes to family life, children, and reproduction

7 in 10 think that same-sex couples should be able to marry in church

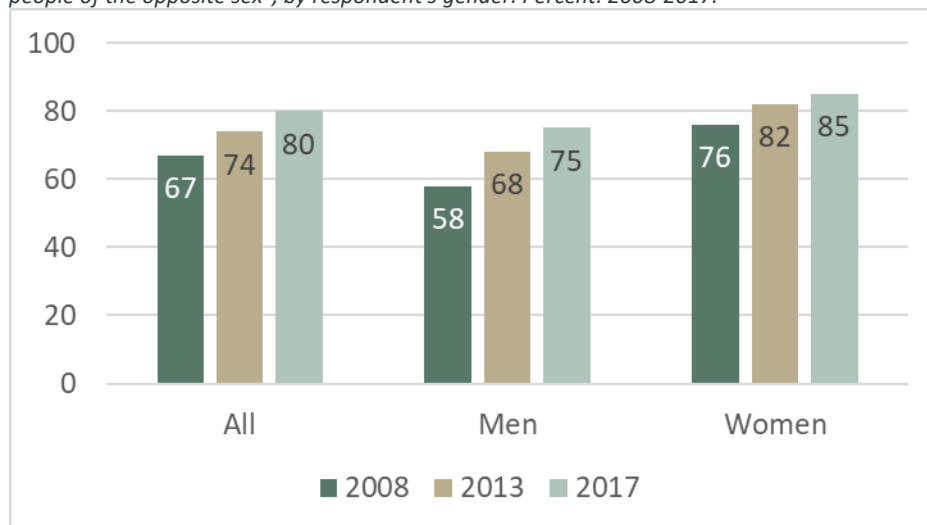
Attitudes to same-sex marriage have improved over time. Fewer women than men have negative attitudes.

Figure 10: Agreement with the statement "two people of the same sex should be able to marry in church just like two people of the opposite sex", by respondent's gender. Percent. 2008-2017.



The population is generally more positive to civil same-sex marriages than to church ceremonies. Attitudes to civil same-sex marriage have also improved over time; 8 in 10 think that same-sex couples should be able to form civil marriages just like two people of the opposite sex.

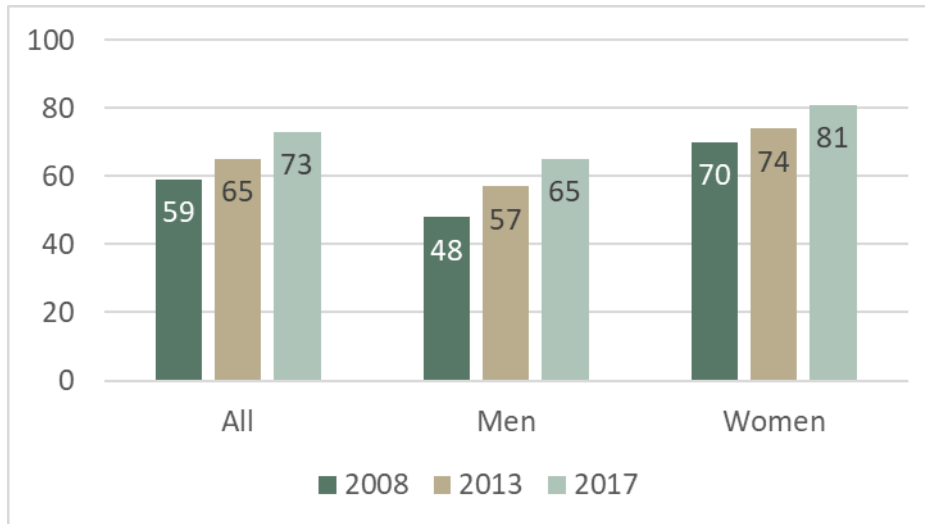
Figure 11: Agreement with the statement "two people of the same sex should be able to form civil marriages just like two people of the opposite sex", by respondent's gender. Percent. 2008-2017.



The majority thinks that same-sex couples make just as good parents as heterosexual couples

There has been an increase from 2008 to 2017 in the share who agree that sexual orientation is irrelevant to good parenthood. Women are more likely to agree to this than men are.

Figure 12: Agreement with the statement "sexual orientation is irrelevant to good parenthood", by respondent's gender. Percent. 2008-2017.



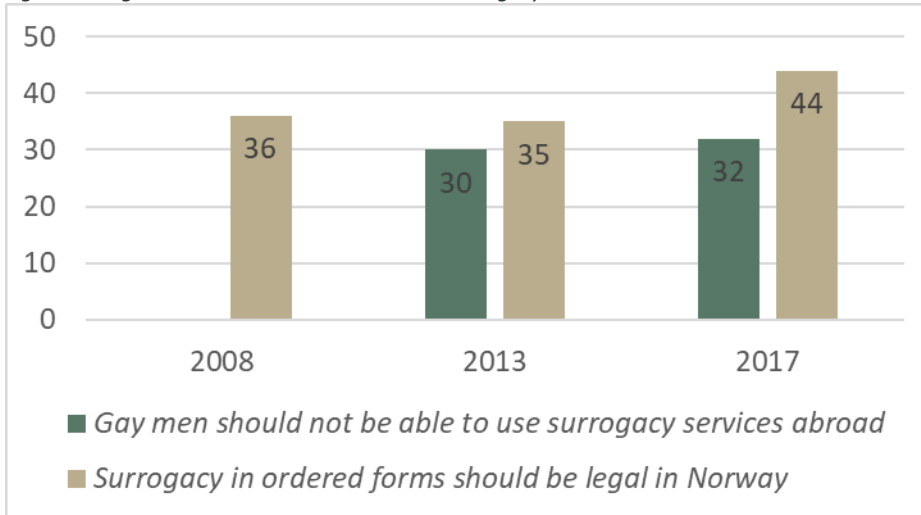
Attitudes to reproduction technology for LGBTIQ people

Changes made to the Biotechnology Act in 2009 mean that lesbian couples who live together or are married have the same right as heterosexual couples to be considered for assisted reproduction. Neither egg donation nor surrogacy is legal in Norway at the present time. Attitudes to reproduction technology do not necessarily reflect attitudes to LGBTIQ people. These questions, rather, may say more about attitudes to reproduction technology in general.

Attitudes to surrogacy have changed somewhat in recent years

Questions about surrogacy were included in the 2013 and 2017 attitudes surveys because **gay couples sometimes use surrogacy services abroad**, which links this subject to the LGBTIQ issue area. Agreement with the statement "gay men should not be allowed to use surrogacy services abroad" remained relatively unchanged from 2013 to 2017.

Figure 13: Agreement with statements about surrogacy. 2008-2017.

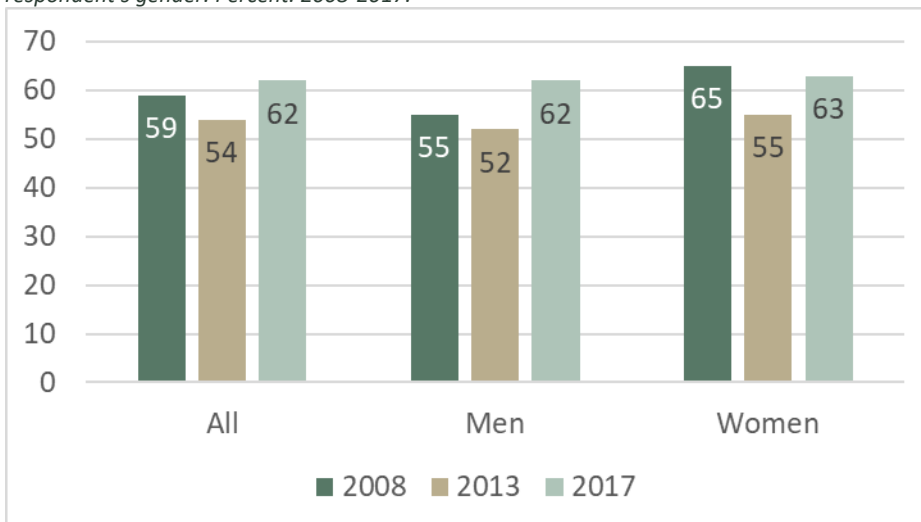


More men than women are negative to surrogacy for gay men (37 percent and 27 percent). However, both men and women have become more inclined to agree that surrogacy in ordered forms should be made legal in Norway (42 percent and 46 percent). We do not know if this difference relates to one of the questions referring to gay men; it may also be the case that more people agree that insofar as surrogacy occurs, it ought to be done in Norway and “in ordered forms”.

Increased agreement that egg and sperm donations are ethical equivalents

Compared to attitudes to surrogacy, **more people agree that egg and sperm donations should be understood as ethically the same thing**. There is almost no difference between men and women.

Figure 14: Agreement with the statement "egg donation and sperm donation should be seen as ethical equivalents", by respondent's gender. Percent. 2008-2017.

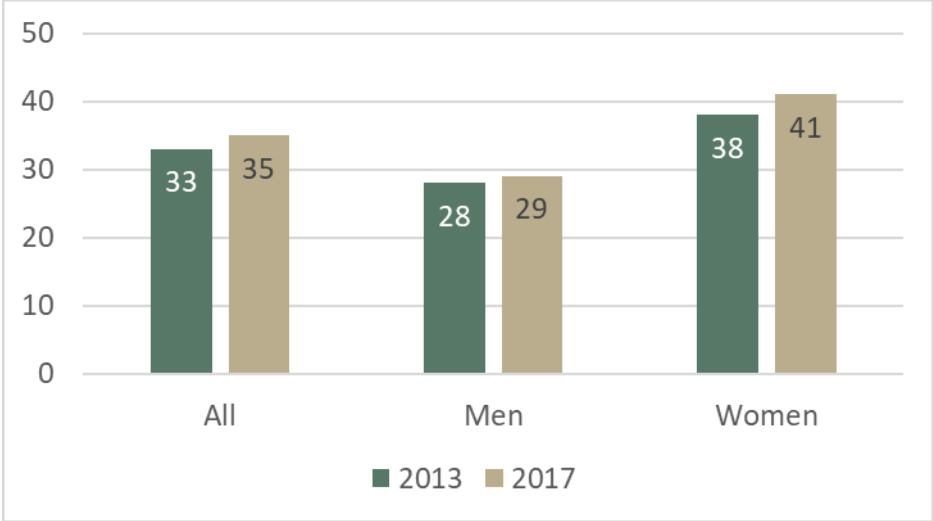


It is illegal to donate eggs in Norway, whereas sperm donation has been legal since the 1930s.

Unless there are medical reasons, it is illegal to freeze eggs and sperm in Norway. The Biotechnology Act has not hindered the storing of sperm from persons who undergo male-to-female gender affirming treatment. The act does not, however, allow for the freezing of unfertilized eggs from female-to-male patients.

The 2013 and 2017 attitudes surveys asked whether people who are about to have gender affirming medical treatment should get to freeze sperm or eggs so that they could have biological children later. **Compared with attitudes to surrogacy and egg donation, a smaller share of the population agrees that persons undergoing gender affirming treatment should be given this opportunity.**

Figure 15: Agreement with the statement "people who are about to change sex should be able to freeze their eggs and sperm so that they can have biological children later", by respondent's gender. Percent. 2013-2017.



Attitudes have changed in parallel with important developments in society

There have been several legal changes that concern LGBTIQ people and issues since the 2008 attitudes survey. In 2009, same-sex couples gained the right to marry, as well as rights to assisted reproduction and adoption. Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression was banned in 2014. This ban on discrimination was continued in the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act of 2017. Intersex people are also protected from discrimination through the Act's preparatory works. In 2016, a new law entered into force that made it possible to change your legal gender by self-determination, without either a medical diagnosis or gender affirming treatment.

Through media, TV, and the public sphere in general, LGBTQ people and to a lesser extent intersex people have become a more visible part of the public conversation over the last decade. This may have contributed to attitudinal changes, and it may – like the attitudes surveys themselves – be a signal that attitudes to LGBTIQ people have become more positive or accepting.

School and education

Educational attainment

No administrative data on the educational attainment of LGBTIQ people in Norway is available. In the 2013 living conditions survey (Anderssen and Malterud, 2013), higher shares of gay men and lesbian women had higher education compared to heterosexual or bisexual men and women, respectively. Compared with administrative data on the overall population, however, respondents in that study were much more likely to have a higher education regardless of their sexual orientation – meaning that the results are unlikely to be representative.

Bullying and harassment in schools

We have no national survey data on the bullying experiences of LGBTIQ students. However, **a 2015 study showed gay-related name calling to be prevalent in Norwegian schools** (Slåtten, et.al., 2015). The study asked 14- and 15-year olds about whether they had used gay-related slurs with different acquaintances in the past week.

- 54 percent of boys had called a friend a gay-related slur in the past week, and 20 percent had used such a word to describe someone that they thought was gay. 30 percent had used gay-related nicknames on someone they did not think was gay.
- Girls were less likely to have used such words than boys – but still, 30 percent of girls had called a friend gay in the past week.

LGB pupils experience more bullying than heterosexual pupils

In 2009, **a survey on school bullying found that bisexual and gay pupils experienced more bullying than heterosexual pupils.** (Roland and Auestad, 2009). “Bullying” included both face-to-face harassment and bullying via mobile phone/the Internet.

- The share of 10th graders who were bullied 2 to 3 times each month or more was 7 percent for heterosexual boys, 24 percent for bisexual boys, and 48 percent for gay boys.
- Gay boys were also the most likely to report that they engaged in bullying others.
- For the girls in this survey, the corresponding figures were 6 percent for heterosexual girls, 12 percent for bisexual girls, and 35 percent for lesbian girls.³

³ Because the number of responses is low, this study only gives a tenuous indication of the prevalence of bullying based on sexual orientation.

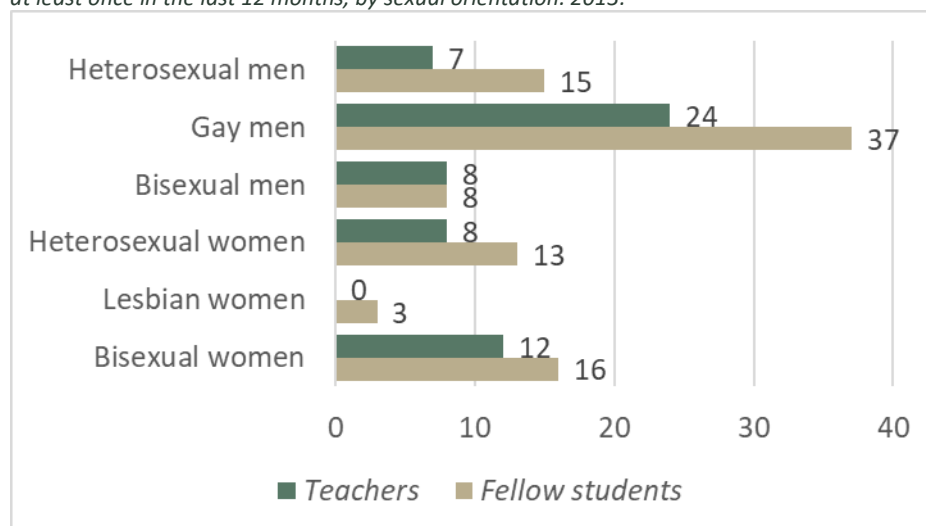
Trans people may be particularly exposed to bullying in school

In a qualitative study from 2013, transgender informants describe being faced with two possible choices in school: either hide their gender identity or have their school life be marred by bullying, harassment, and violence. Many trans people experience puberty as very difficult – both because of their surroundings' expectations that they adhere to the gender binary and because difficult questions of their own identity are manifesting with full force (van der Ros, 2013).

Harassment in higher education

Respondents to the 2013 living conditions survey were asked whether they had been harassed at their place of education by a teacher/lecturer or by a fellow student in the last 12 months (Anderssen and Malterud, 2013). **Gay men were the most likely to have experienced harassment.**⁴

Figure 16: Percentages of respondents who have been harassed by teachers or by fellow students at their place of education at least once in the last 12 months, by sexual orientation. 2013.



⁴ There were relatively few students in the survey sample, and these figures must be interpreted with caution.

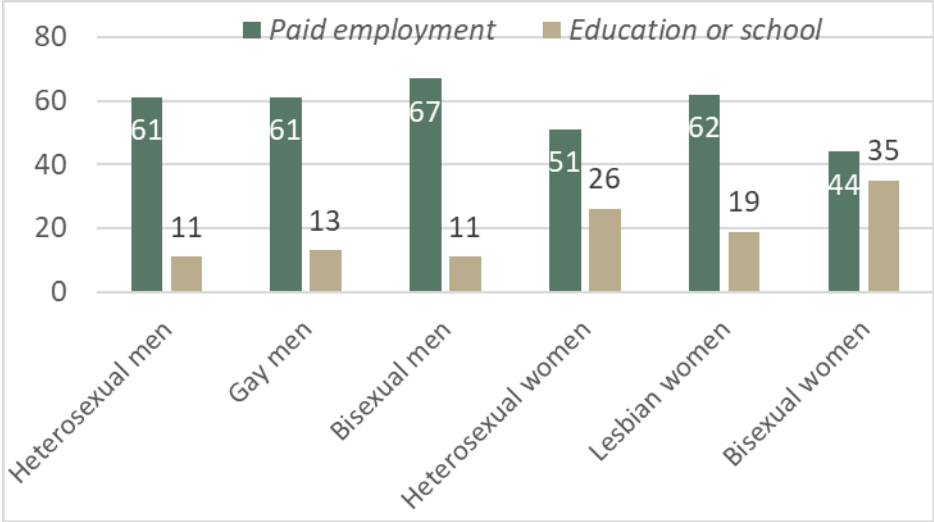
Working life

Employment rates

The 2013 living conditions survey also asked about work participation. While the numbers reflect a somewhat skewed sample, they do indicate that **gay and lesbian people have at least as high rates of participation in the labour market as heterosexual men and women.**

- Bisexual women had the lowest employment rate, but also the highest share of students; likely, because bisexual women in the study were considerably younger than other groups.

Figure 17: Shares who are in paid employment or who are students. 2013.



Trans people and labour participation

The workplace can be a difficult arena for trans people. In Norway, a 2013 interview-based study relays stories of trans people who had experienced being “squeezed out” of their job (van der Ros, 2013). Trans people experience more workplace discrimination than gay and lesbian people do, and there are several international studies that show extensive unemployment among trans people (see Bakkeli and Grønningsæter, 2013).

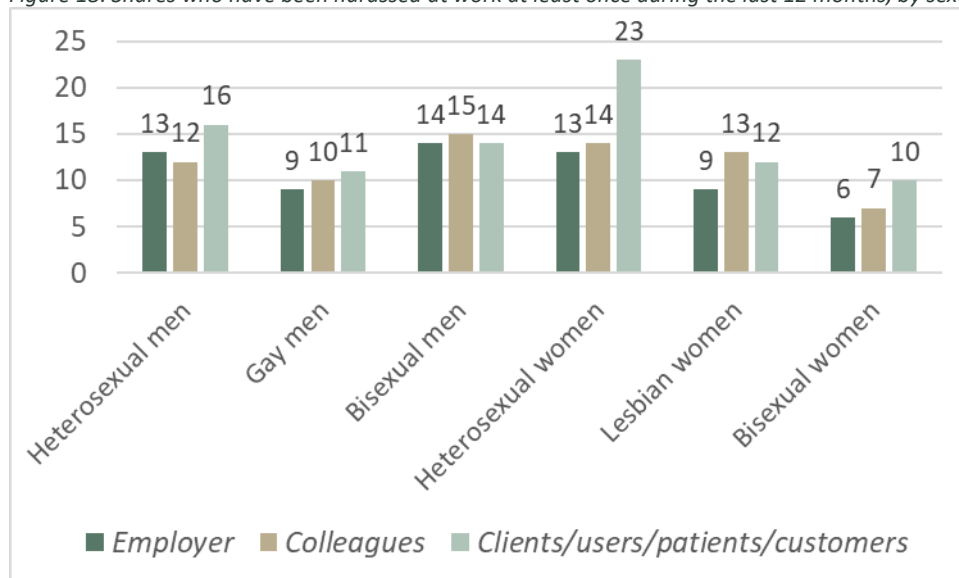
Work environment, harassment, and workplace discrimination

Questions from the 2013 living conditions survey that have to do with work environment and workplace harassment can provide an indication of the extent to which lesbian, gay, and bisexual people experience working life as inclusive. We have no corresponding data on trans and intersex people.

All groups experience workplace harassment

Across sexual orientations and genders, all groups had experienced some harassment at work. Somewhat fewer lesbian and bisexual women appear to have been subjected to harassment than their heterosexual counterparts. Among the men who took part in the survey, a somewhat smaller share of gay men had experienced harassment at work as compared to hetero- and bisexual men. Nearly 1 in 4 straight women reported having experienced harassment from clients, users, patients, and/or customers.

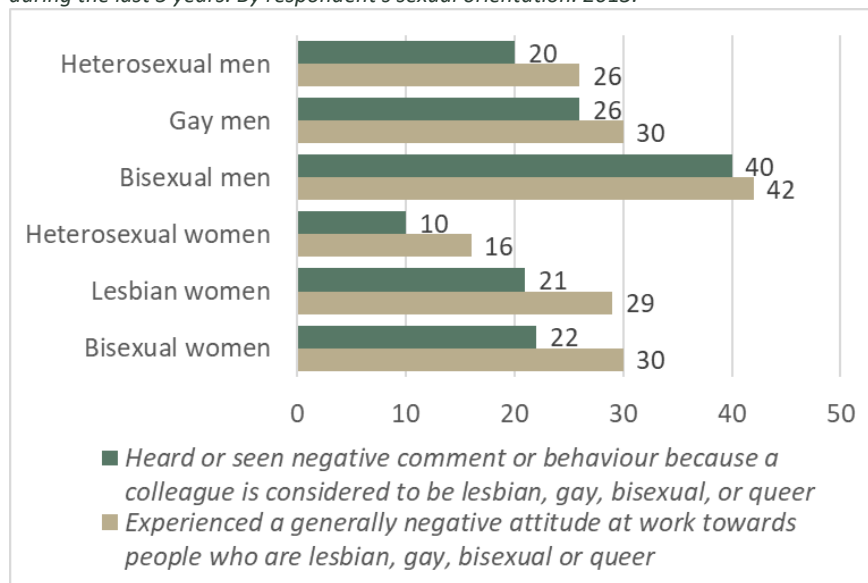
Figure 18: Shares who have been harassed at work at least once during the last 12 months, by sexual orientation. 2013.



Men experience more negative behaviours and attitudes towards LGB people at work

- 30 percent of gay men and 42 percent of bisexual men have **experienced a generally negative attitude towards lesbian, gay, or bisexual people at work**. The corresponding share for heterosexual men is 26 percent. The figures suggest that men have more negative attitudes to LGBTIQ people in working life than women do.
- Bisexual men are also the group where **the largest share have observed negative behaviours and attitudes at work**. A possible reason may be that colleagues are less inclined to temper any references to LGBTI people around bisexual people because they assume that they are straight. Bisexual men are the least open about their sexual orientation, and they are also the LGB group towards which the largest share of the population has negative attitudes (see p. 9).

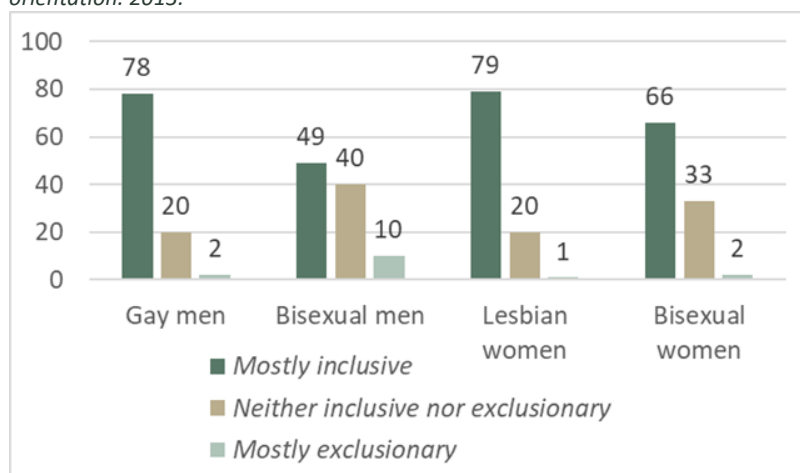
Figure 19: Shares who have observed negative behaviour or have experienced negative attitudes to LGB people at work during the last 5 years. By respondent's sexual orientation. 2013.



Fewer bisexuals experience their workplace as inclusive

Roughly 80 percent of lesbian women and gay men experienced their workplace as mostly inclusive. Corresponding shares were considerably lower for bisexual women and men.

Figure 20: Experience of work environment with respect to being gay/lesbian/bisexual/queer, by respondent's sexual orientation. 2013.



LGBT experiences with hate speech in the workplace

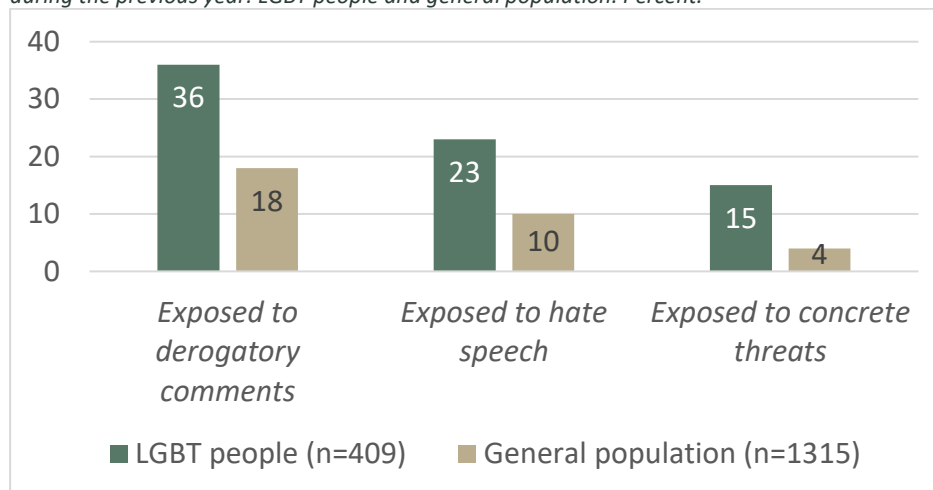
According to a 2019 study of hate speech and harassment experiences, the workplace is second to the Internet as the most common arena for such experiences (Fladmoe, 2019).

Fladmoe did not find significant differences between LGBT people and other respondents to his study when it came to experiences with derogatory and hateful speech, nor with exposure to concrete threats. Moreover, there were no significant differences in the shares who had observed hate speech or concrete threats at their workplace. Independent of sexual orientation or gender expressions, few respondents had experienced hate speech or similar behaviour at work.

- Near 1,5 percent of LGBT respondents had experienced hate speech based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; among non-LGBT respondents, virtually none had experienced this.
- Another study by the same research group showed that when looking at several arenas where hate speech may occur, LGBT people were four times as likely as non-LGBT people to have been targeted by hate speech directed at group signifiers (Fladmoe, Nadim, and Birkvad, 2019). These studies suggest that although LGBT people do experience hate speech, the workplace is not typically an arena for this.

Fladmoe (2019) concludes that when it comes to hate speech, the workplace stands out in that the experiences of LGBT people are not that different from those of the general population. A possible explanation for this may be that factors of the workplace are more decisive to whether hate speech occurs than sexual orientation.

Figure 21: Shares who have been exposed to what they consider to be derogatory speech, hate speech, and concrete threats, during the previous year. LGBT people and general population. Percent.



Employers have a duty to work actively for inclusion

An LGBTIQ perspective on working life means ensuring that the workplace is inclusive to everyone. Since 2014, this has been stated in the “duty to promote equality” in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. The Act obligates public authorities and employers to work actively to prevent discrimination against and to ensure the inclusion of LGBTIQ people.

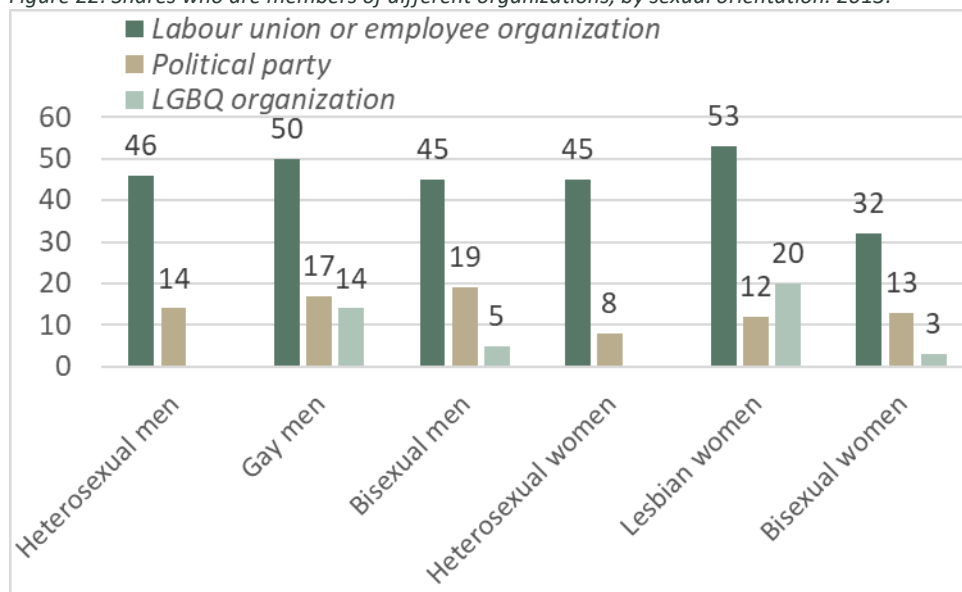
Political and Civic participation

According to the 2013 living conditions survey, there is little difference between LGB and heterosexual people when it comes to participation and leisure activities. LGB people are somewhat more likely than heterosexual people to be active in various organizations; otherwise, heterosexual and LGB people are mostly equal in their degree of participation.

More lesbian and gay people are unionized; more LGB people are members of a political party

- Compared to heterosexual women and men, lesbian women and gay men were somewhat more likely to be members of a labour union. While bisexual women had the lowest rate of unionization, this group of respondents to the 2013 living conditions survey were younger than the others, and many were still students. The age skew may be significant to several of the results regarding participation.
- Gay and bisexual men also had somewhat higher rates of political party membership than heterosexual men.

Figure 22: Shares who are members of different organizations, by sexual orientation. 2013.



More lesbian women are members of an LGBQ organization

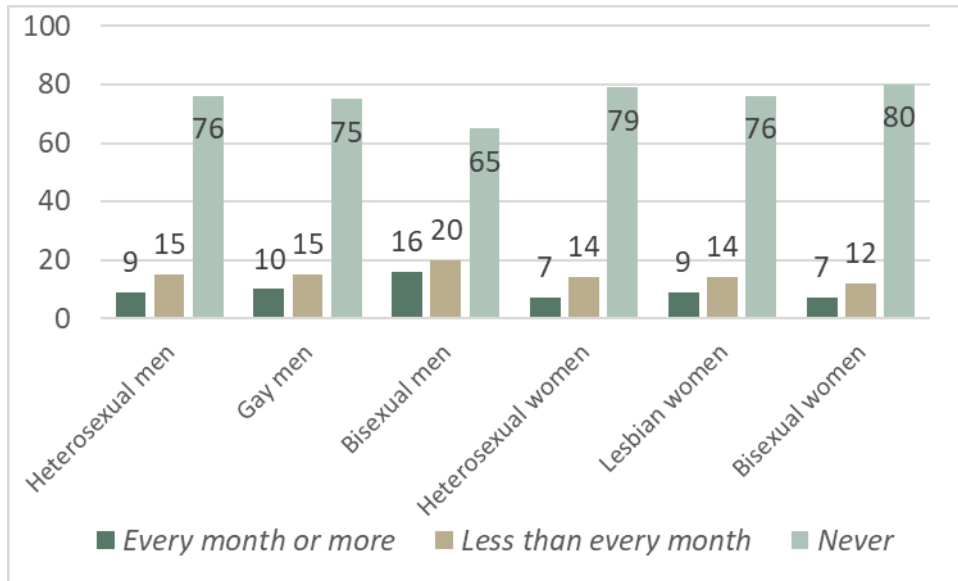
A minority of LGB people belong to an LGBQ organization.

- The group with the largest share who belong to such an organization is lesbian women.
- Bisexual women have the lowest share of LGBQ organization members.
- We see the same pattern among gay and bisexual men.

Religious meetings and organizations

Relatively few Norwegians are active in religious communities. Compared to heterosexual people, gay, lesbian, and bisexual people had slightly higher rates of participation in religious gatherings and associations in 2013.

Figure 23: Shares who attended a religious meeting, gathering, congregation, etc. every month or more, by gender and by sexual orientation. 2013.



Health

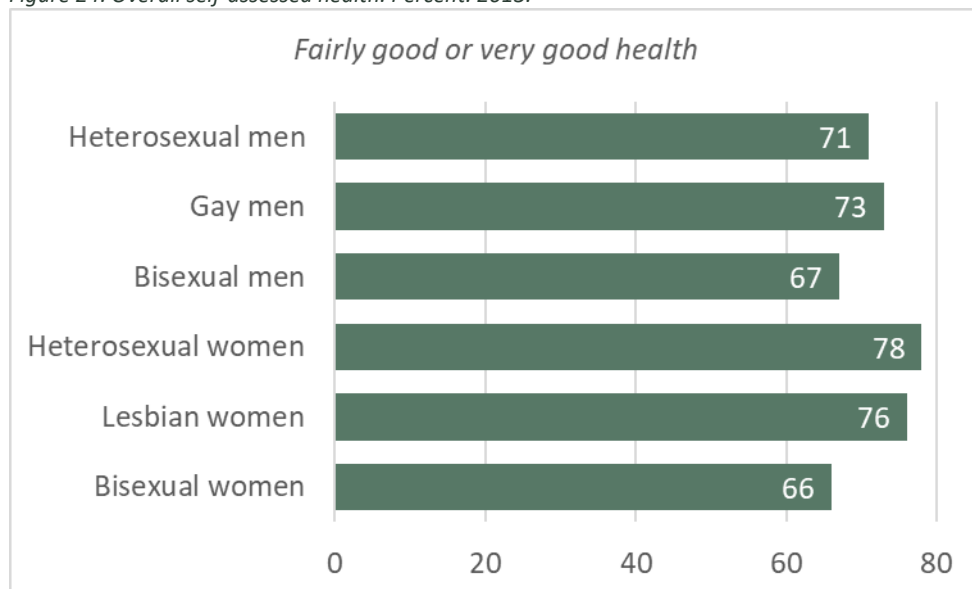
Data presented here mostly stems from the 2013 *Sexual orientation and living conditions* survey (Anderssen and Malterud, 2013), which addresses the living conditions of LGB people. We do not yet have quantitative survey data about the health and living conditions of transgender people in Norway, but a new quantitative living conditions survey is to be published in 2020. While there is little statistical knowledge on the health of trans and intersex people in Norway, Norwegian and Swedish research indicates that transgender people experience major health challenges, as well as difficulties in accessing healthcare services (van der Ros, 2013; Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2015). An interview-based study of the living conditions of intersex people in Norway was published in 2019 (Feragen et al., 2019).

Self-assessed health

Most lesbian, gay, and bisexual people in the living conditions survey assessed their own health as good.

- There were only marginal differences between gay and heterosexual men, or between lesbian and heterosexual women.
- Somewhat fewer bisexual respondents reported fairly or very good health.

Figure 24: Overall self-assessed health. Percent. 2013.



Mental health and wellbeing

While most lesbian, gay, and bisexual respondents in the 2013 survey reported good self-assessed health, **the share reporting mental health challenges was considerably larger in these groups** than it was among heterosexuals.

Symptoms of depression and anxiety

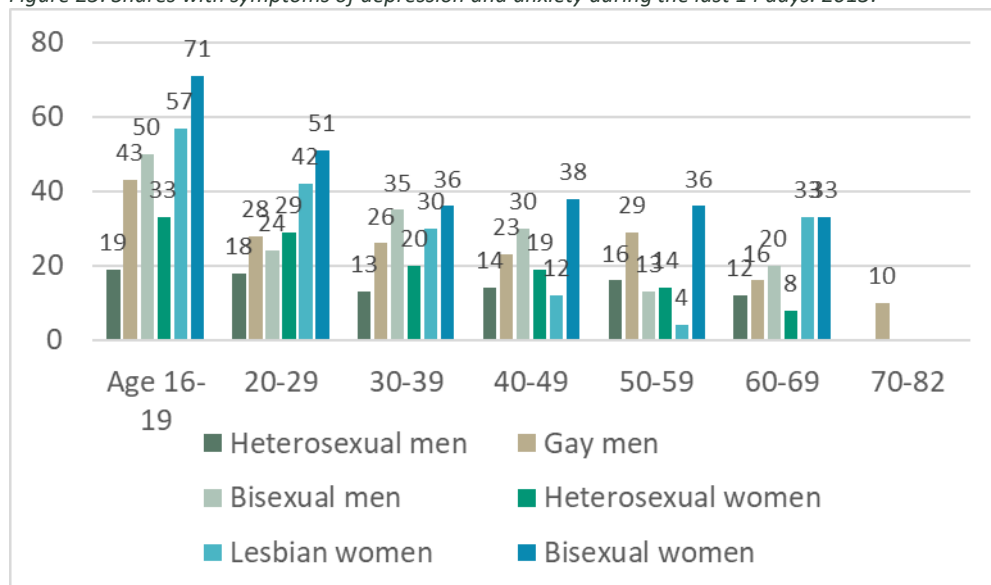
Larger shares of LGB respondents experienced symptoms of depression and anxiety. The share was larger among bisexual women than among lesbian women, and among lesbian women than among heterosexual women. More bisexual and gay men than heterosexual men experienced symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Bisexual women are most likely to experience symptoms of anxiety/depression

A larger share of bisexual women experienced symptoms of depression and anxiety. Although respondent groups become quite small when the numbers are broken down by age and sexual orientation, **the results may suggest that having a different sexual orientation than the majority population can negatively impact mental health.**

- Regardless of gender or sexual orientation, the youngest respondents reported the poorest mental health.

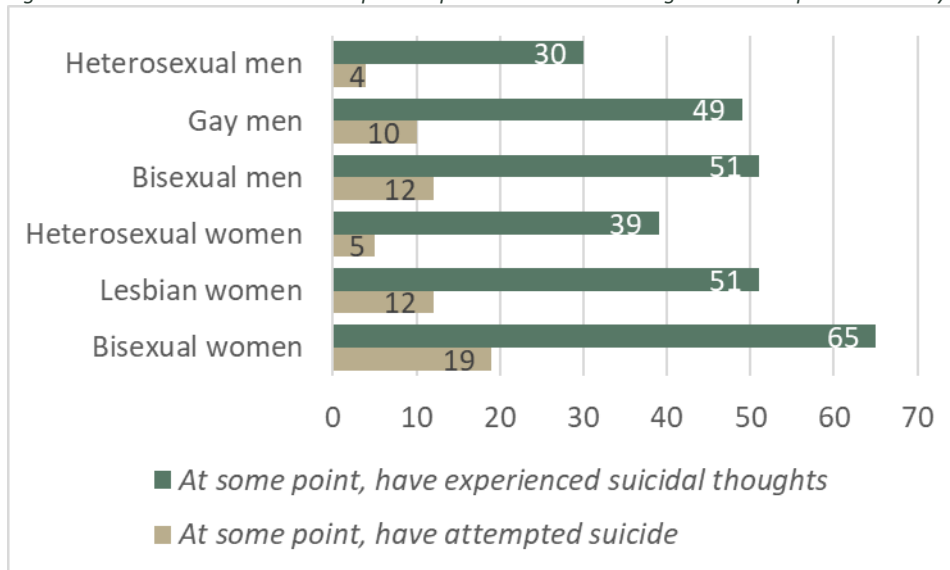
Figure 25: Shares with symptoms of depression and anxiety during the last 14 days. 2013.



Suicide attempts are more common among LGB people

The LGB respondents were far more likely than the heterosexual respondents to have attempted suicide.

Figure 26: Shares who have at some point experienced suicidal thoughts or attempted suicide. By sexual orientation. 2013.

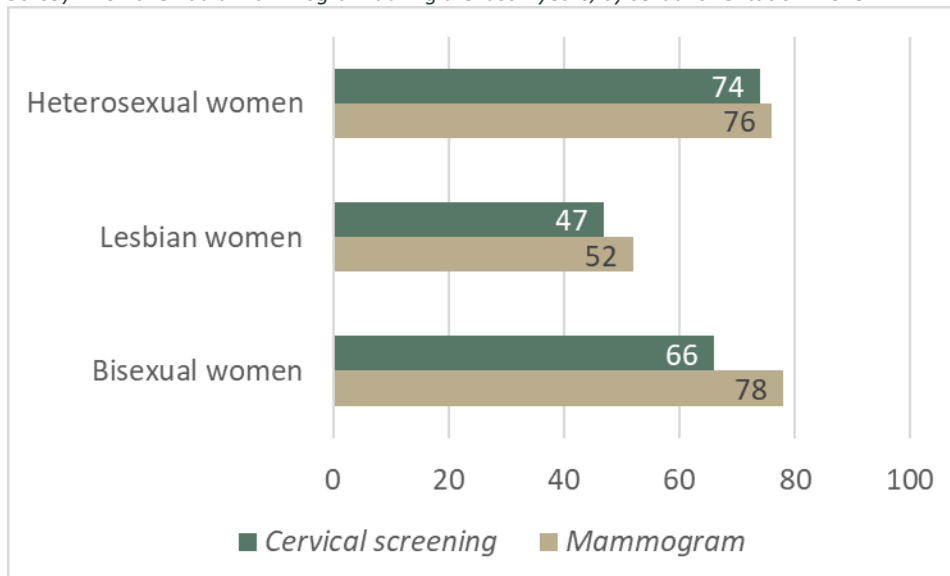


Somatic health

Use of cervical and breast cancer screenings

Compared to heterosexual women, **fewer lesbian and bisexual women participate in preventative screenings for cervical and breast cancer:**

Figure 27: Percentages of women (age 25-67) who have had a cervical screening during the last 3 years, and women (age 50-69) who have had a mammogram during the last 2 years, by sexual orientation. 2013.



Incidence and prevalence of HIV

The number of new cases of HIV infection has gone down over the last 10 years. In 2018, there were 191 new cases registered in Norway; 64 percent were men (Blystad et al., 2019). Men who have sex with men and heterosexual men travelling abroad are the most at risk. In 2018, a total of 4,382 men and 2,086 women in Norway were registered with an HIV infection. Most new cases were heterosexuals coming from abroad but there was also a considerable share of gay men. As of 31.12. 2018, approximately 1,000 persons in Norway use PrEP (ibid.).

Gender affirming medical treatment

The National Treatment Unit for Transsexualism (*Nasjonal behandlingstjeneste for transseksualisme*, NBTS) at Rikshospitalet University Hospital provide annual accounts of new patient referrals. The Unit treated 527 new patients in 2017; corresponding numbers for the years 2014–16 were 164, 293, and 331, respectively (National Treatment Unit for Transsexualism: Annual reports, 2014–2017). Moreover, a report from the Directorate of Health makes the point that many who have a right to health care in connection with gender dysphoria do not get the help that they need and want (Norwegian Directorate of Health, 2015) – meaning that patient referrals will not provide a complete picture of the health care needs of this group.

Referrals to treatment centers for 'uncertain sex development'/variation in sex development

The multiregional treatment service for uncertain sex development is located at Oslo University Hospital (OUS) and Haukeland University Hospital (HUS). The treatment service is responsible for diagnosis and treatment of some of the conditions that sort under “variation in sex development”. Over the years 2013–2016, the treatment service treated 145 patients each year. Over the years 2013–2018, the service saw between 19 and 35 new referrals per year. (Multiregional treatment service for uncertain sex development, 2014–2017)

Lifestyle habits

Lifestyle habits affect health and life span, and they impact wellbeing. In a health context, indicators such as use of tobacco, alcohol and other intoxicants, physical exercise, and BMI are often used to address lifestyle and habits that are significant to population health. **As part of the 2013 living conditions survey, Anderssen and Malterud (2013) compared a selection of lifestyle habits across sexual orientations and found that differences were generally small.**

- **Bisexual women smoke the most**, compared to other groups of women. There are no significant differences in smoking between groups of men.
- There are **few differences in alcohol use** between homosexual, bisexual, and heterosexual people. Regardless of sexual orientation, a larger share of men than women reported drinking alcohol at least once a week.
- The survey asked respondents how often they engaged in “sport or exercise that makes you out of breath or sweaty”. **Lesbian women were the most physically active**, but differences in exercise frequency between the different groups were only marginal.

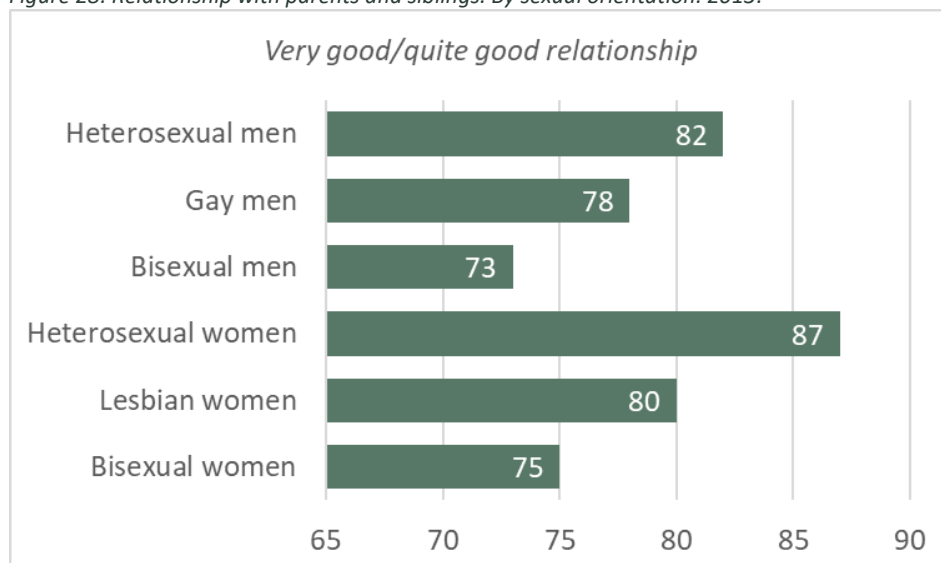
Family relationships, friendship, and loneliness

Relationships with family and friends and experiences of loneliness are central to human health and well-being, and the 2013 living conditions survey included questions about these topics. **Most LGB respondents reported having good relationships** – but the results also suggest that **some LGB people may be more vulnerable than the majority population to experiences of isolation.**

Fewer lesbian, gay, and bisexual people have a good relationship with their family

In general, larger shares of heterosexual men and women than LGB people reported having a very good or quite good relationship with their family.

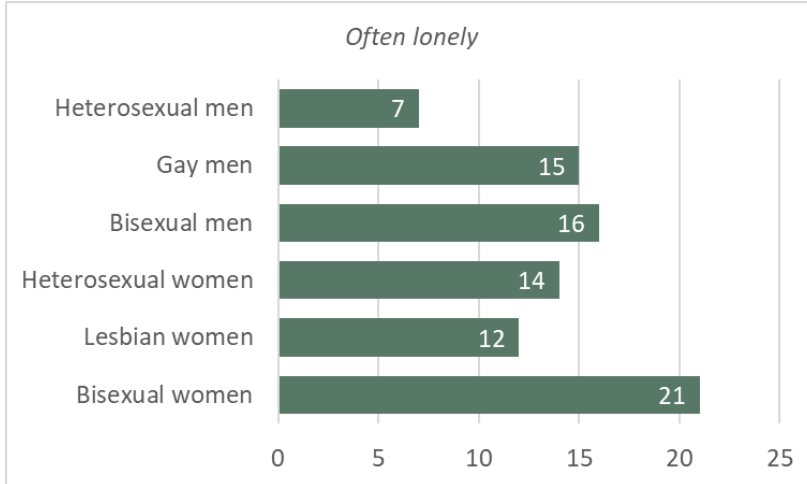
Figure 28: Relationship with parents and siblings. By sexual orientation. 2013.



Bisexual women experience loneliness more often than others

A relatively small minority of the respondents often felt lonely. **Bisexual women and bisexual men had the largest shares of lonely people.** Gay and bisexual men felt more lonely than heterosexual men did.

Figure 29: Frequency of feeling lonely, by sexual orientation. Percent. 2013.

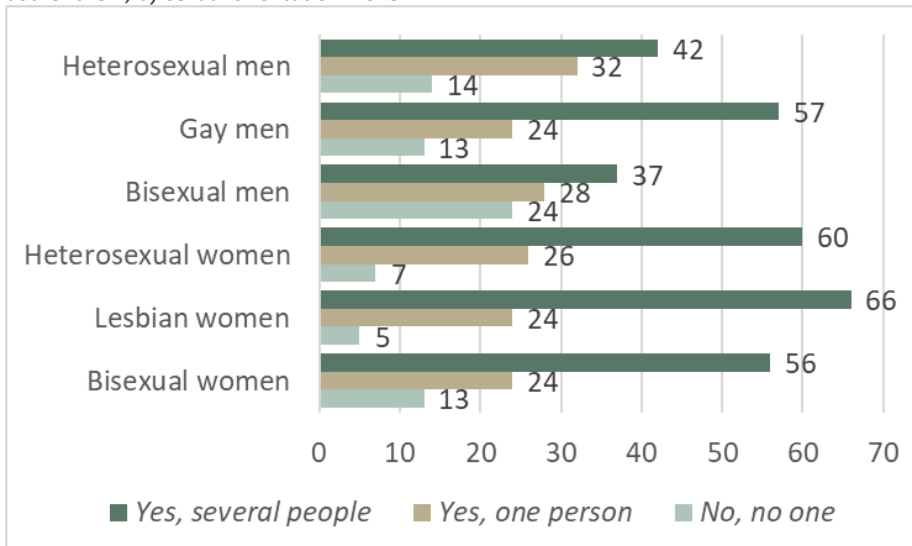


Friends and confidantes

In all groups, more than **8 in 10 people were in contact with friends at least every week.** **Slightly fewer reported having someone with whom they can talk in confidence** – and this question showed more variation between the groups:

- In general, **more women than men** said that they have someone with whom they have confidential conversations.
- **Lesbian women** had the highest share of respondents reporting that they had someone with whom they could talk in confidence.
- **Bisexual men** most often reported *not* having anyone with whom they could talk in confidence about something that troubled them deeply: 24 percent, compared to 13 percent of gay men and 14 percent of heterosexual men.

Figure 30: Shares reporting that they do (not) have anyone with whom they talk in confidence about things that really bother them, by sexual orientation. 2013.



Intersecting identities

We all have a plurality of aspects to our identity. Inhabiting more than one minority identity can affect the ways in which those identities impact your life. The section sums up available research and statistics relating to **the lives of immigrant, Sami, and LGBTIQ people with disabilities in Norway.**

Immigration to Norway because of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression

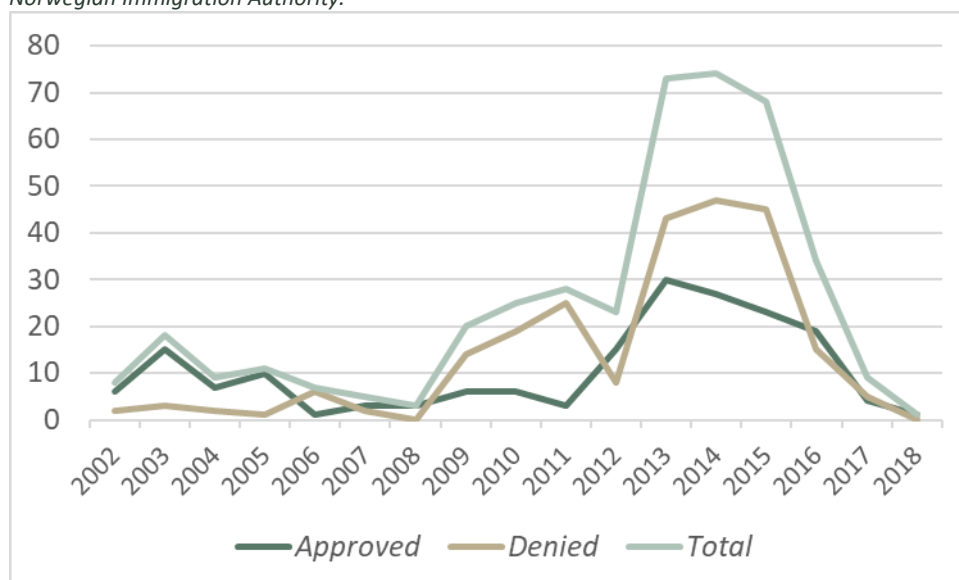
Some people immigrate to Norway because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Some come to escape oppression, violence or torture; others because they want to live in a society that is more tolerant and accepting of their LGBTIQ identity than the one they leave behind. There are many more LGBTIQ people with an immigrant background in Norway than those who have come to seek asylum. However, most statistical knowledge of this immigration is asylum related.

At least 415 people applied for asylum on basis of sexual orientation or gender identity over the years 2002–2017

According to the Norwegian Immigration Authority (UDI), at least 415 people applied for asylum in Norway on basis of sexual orientation or gender identity in the 2012–2017 time period. The figure is based on manual counts and is therefore somewhat uncertain.

Moreover, as there may also be LGBTIQ asylum seekers who apply based on grounds other than their sexual orientation or gender identity, it is not a precise estimate of how many asylum seekers are LGBTIQ.

Figure 31: Decisions in asylum cases with sexual orientation as application grounds. Numbers obtained directly from the Norwegian Immigration Authority.



Living conditions of LGBTI people with an immigrant background

The report *Open Spaces, Closed Spaces* (Elgvin et.al., 2014) shows that LGBT people with an immigrant background may struggle to feel belonging and often feel lonely. This is particularly true for those who have not been met with acceptance by their family upon revealing their sexual orientation or gender identity. Many tell of negative reactions from their family or from their ethnic community of origin. Many also find that it is difficult to enter majority-population queer communities – where they may experience both racism and scant acceptance of their values and attitudes.

In a 2018 qualitative and quantitative study of the lives and living conditions of LGBTI people with an immigrant background in Norway, many survey respondents reported that they experienced their sexual orientation or gender identity as enriching (Eggebø et.al., 2018). However, several of the informants in the interview study spoke of growing up with a strong feeling of differentness because of gender and sexual orientation. The report has several worrying findings; for example, that respondents had been victims of sexualized violence to a far larger extent than the general population. One-quarter reported to have been raped, and 45 percent had been pressured into sexual acts. More than half also reported having had suicidal thoughts and as many as 22 percent had attempted suicide.

The report highlights three main forms of discrimination that impact this group:

- discrimination and marginalization due to their immigrant background
- discrimination because of breaking with norms for gender and sexuality
- marginalization processes where the combination of immigrant background, gender, and sexual orientation creates difficulties and challenges that are particular to this group.

Sami: A developing queer Sami community

While it is difficult to say for certain how many gay and lesbian Sami live in Norway today, a 2009 report estimated that it might be **between 1,000 and 1,500 individuals** (Grønningsæter and Nuland, 2009). This study pointed out that **the Sami gay and lesbian community in the north is small, and that few live openly** (ibid.).

Since 2009, there have been developments in both the knowledge about queer Sami and in the networks and activism among queer Sami. A report from 2018 indicates that the queer Sami community has grown in recent years, and that there is, among other things, a supportive companionship among queer Sami youth (Stubberud et.al., 2018). Løvold (2014) describes how Pride festivals have contributed to creating more visibility and inclusion, and Sàpmi Pride has been arranged every year since 2014. Moreover, the project “Queering Sàpmi” has contributed to visibility and acceptance (Bergstrøm, 2015). In 2017, there was media coverage of two newly elected members of the Sami Parliament who were both openly gay (NRK, 2017). Several years have passed since the 2009 “Gays and Lesbians in Sàpmi” study, and public attitudes to LGBTIQ people have improved considerably in Northern Norway, as they have in the rest of the country.

There is little research on the living conditions of LGBTIQ people with disabilities

Having a different sexual orientation than the majority combined with a disability, can be challenging. Queer people with disabilities tell of negative attention, bullying, and discrimination. The double minority status can bring too much visibility (Grønningsæter and Hauland, 2012). People with disabilities can experience their encounters with the LGBTIQ community as both exclusionary and welcoming, and there seems to be a gender dimension to this, where female communities are perceived as more welcoming and less body-focused than male communities (ibid.).

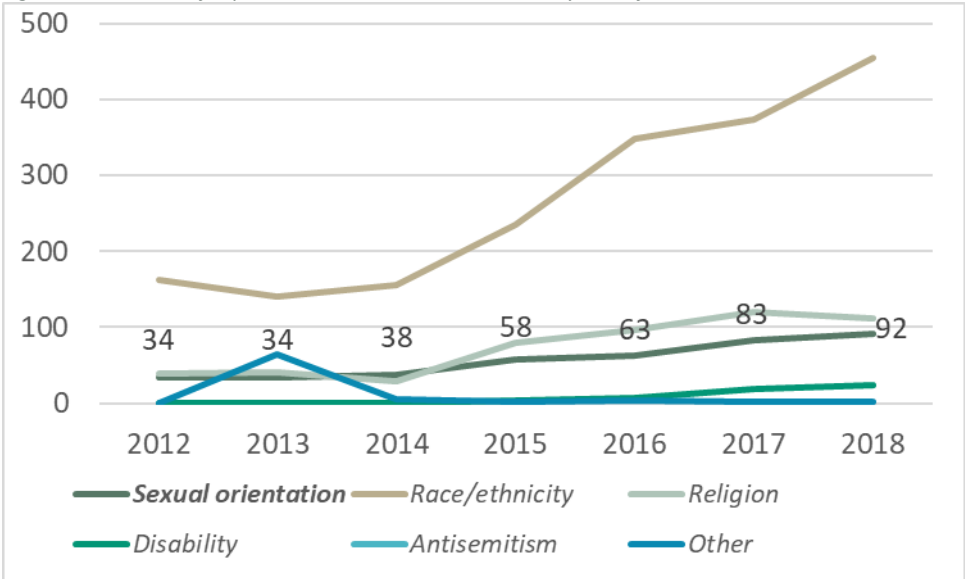
Personal safety and violence

Reported hate crimes

In 2018, there were 624 police reports of crimes registered as hate motivated in Norway. There were 699 registered “hate motives”, and **sexual orientation was registered as a motive in 92 of the police reports** (National Police Directorate, 2019). There has been an increase in the number of reports in recent years. This does not necessarily mean that there has been an increase in hate crimes; it may also mean that a larger share of cases is now reported. We cannot, however, rule out a real increase in hate crimes.

Moreover, such cases may be reported to the police but not registered as a hate crime in the police criminal case system (National Police Directorate, 2016). The Government’s LGBTI action plan includes an initiative to contribute to a common definition, and common hate crime registration routines, for all police precincts in Norway.

Figure 32: Number of reported cases with a hate motive, by basis for discrimination. 2012-2018



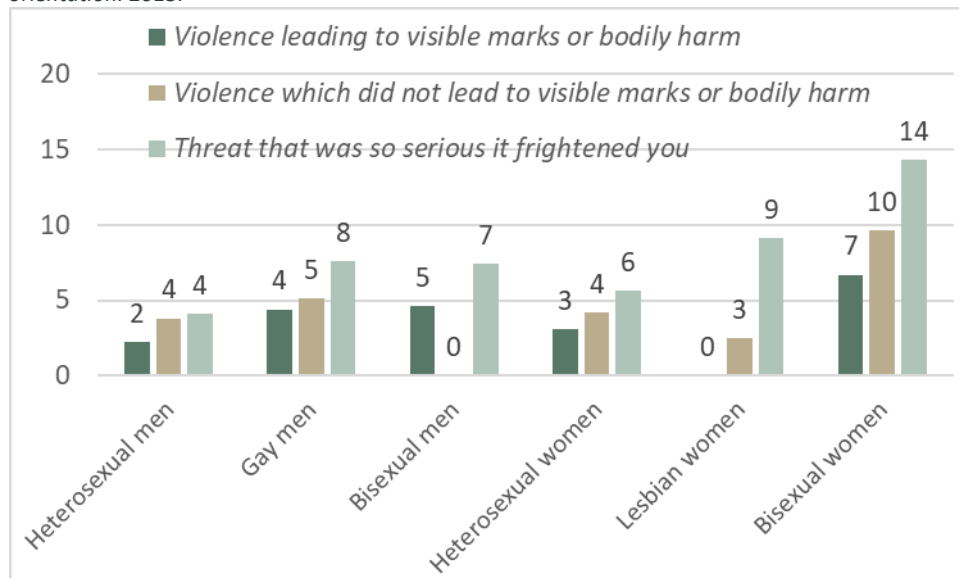
Exposure to violence

According to the 2013 living conditions survey of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, **bisexual women are more exposed to violence and threats than other groups** (Anderssen and Malterud, 2013).

Gay and bisexual men are the most exposed to violence due to sexual orientation

In the same survey, respondents who had experienced violence and/or threats were asked if they thought that this was related to their sexual orientation. The question only applied to a few, and the results should be interpreted with caution. **Gay and bisexual men were the most likely to report that they thought that their experience was related to their sexual orientation.** 42 percent of the gay men (15 men) thought this, as did 33 percent of the bisexual men (8 men).

Figure 33: Shares of men and women who have experienced violence or threats during the last 12 months, by sexual orientation. 2013.



Qualitative research shows that some groups may be more exposed than others

Young LGBT people seem to be particularly at risk of violence within the family, and they may need extra help. Some experience rejection, eviction, or physical or psychological violence from their family. Young people with an ethnic minority background, Sami youth, and young people with gender identity issues are especially vulnerable (Elgvin et.al., 2014; Grønningseter and Nuland, 2009; van der Ros, 2013).

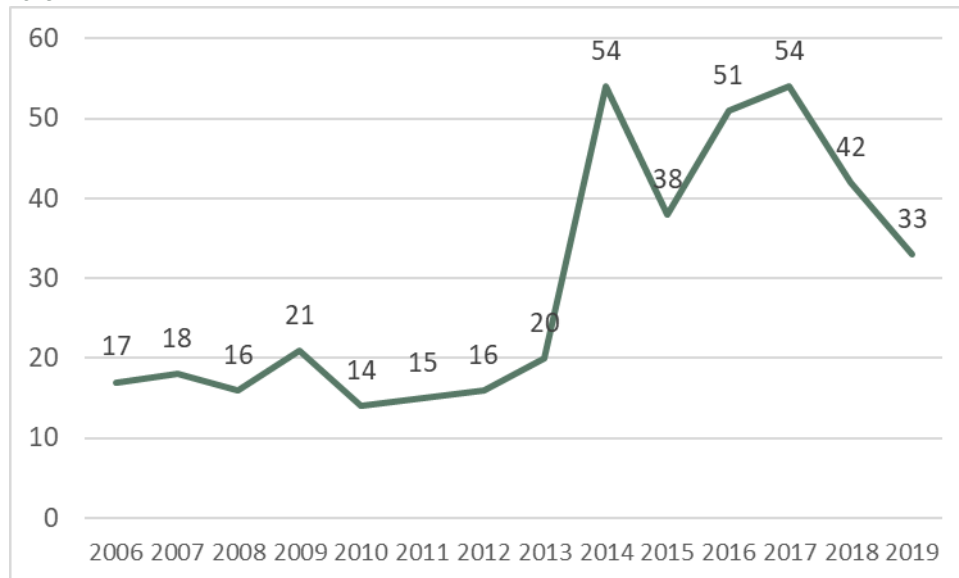
Experiences of discrimination

More gay and lesbian people than bisexual people have experienced discrimination at work, which may be connected to fewer bisexual people being open about their orientation at work (Anderssen and Malterud, 2013).

Advisory cases with the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman concerning sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman (*Likestillings- og diskrimineringsombudet*) (LDO) treated **a total of 409 advisory cases concerning sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression between 2006 and August 2019** (numbers directly obtained from the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman).

Figure 34: Number of advisory cases concerning sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression 2006-august 2019.



Possibility of underreporting

We cannot say anything specific about the prevalence of different kinds of discrimination in society based on contact with the Ombudsman. There may be different reasons why people either do or do not get in touch with the Ombudsman, having to do with e.g. language skills, knowledge of your rights, and even knowing that the entity exists. There is every reason to believe that there is considerable underreporting in this area.

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