

EU LGBTI survey II

A long way to go for LGBTI equality

Country data – Belgium



Survey in a nutshell

- The online survey draws on 140,000 responses from across 30 countries – the then 28 EU Member States (including the United Kingdom), Serbia and North Macedonia.
- The results from the survey present the largest international LGBTI survey of its kind.
- In-depth detailed results for Belgium and other countries can be found in FRA's [online data visualisation tool](#).
- See our [methodology Q&A](#) for more about how FRA did the survey. Results based on a small number of responses are statistically less reliable. Thus, results based on 20 to 49 unweighted observations in a group total or based on cells with fewer than 20 unweighted observations are noted in parentheses. Results based on fewer than 20 unweighted observations in a group total are not published.
- Follow #LGBTIsurvey across social media
- Respondents' quotes from Belgium also included.

Symbols

- ↑ Shows that the result in the country is **above** the EU-28 average
- ↓ Shows that the result in the country is **below** the EU-28 average
- Shows that the result in the country is **the same or at similar** levels (+/-5%) with the EU-28 average
- No Member State breakdown

Openness about being LGBTI

"We avoid holding hands or kissing in the street for fear of reprisals. There is always someone to stare at you and make you feel uncomfortable." (Belgium, Lesbian woman, 31)

- ↑ 66% avoid often or always holding hands with their same-sex partner in Belgium. For the EU-28, it is 61%.

- ➔ 37% in Belgium avoid often or always certain locations for fear of being assaulted. For the EU-28 it is 33%.
- ↑ 60% are now fairly or very open about being LGBTI in Belgium. For the EU-28 it is 47%.

Discrimination

"When I applied for a job, I was told that people did not mind that I am gay, but that they would prefer it not to be shown to (international) clients." (Belgium, Gay man, 25)

- ➔ 18% felt discriminated against at work in the year before the survey in Belgium. For the EU-28 it is 21%.
- ➔ Discrimination affects many areas of life, such as going to a café, restaurant, hospital or to a shop. Overall, in Belgium in 2019 39% felt discriminated against in at least one area of life in the year before the survey. For the EU-28, it was 42%.

Harassment & violence

- ➔ 42% in Belgium say they were harassed the year before the survey. The EU-28 is 38%.
- 1 in 5 trans and intersex people were physically or sexually attacked in the five years before the survey, double that of other LGBTI groups.
- ➔ 14% in Belgium had been attacked in the 5 years before the survey. The EU-28 is 11%.

Reporting of hate-motivated violence and discrimination

- ↑ 20% went to the police in Belgium to report physical or sexual attacks. It is 14% across the EU-28.
- ↑ 16% reported their discrimination experiences to an equality body or another organisation in Belgium. For the EU-28, it is 11%.

Intolerance and prejudice

"The results of the recent elections in Belgium have scared me. The extreme right-wing party has received a lot of votes and they are known to be unacceptable in terms of LGBT + affairs. It is painful to see a country like Belgium going backwards in such a way." (Belgium, Gay man, 23)

- ↓ 31% in Belgium say that LGBTI prejudice and intolerance has dropped in their country in the last five years. It is 40% across the EU-28.
- ➔ 32% in Belgium say that prejudice and intolerance have risen. This is 36% for the EU-28.
- ↑ 55% in Belgium believe their national government effectively combats prejudice and intolerance against LGBTI people. For the EU-28, it is 33%.

Schooling

"I wanted to talk about my trans person status when I was still going to school (...) I talked to my sports teacher and she just told me not to tell anyone else, to keep hiding it (...) I stopped school a few weeks after this event." (Belgium, Trans man, 21)

- Among young people (18-24), less people (41%) hide being LGBT at school. In 2012, it was 47%.
- ↑ 36% of LGBTI students (15-17 years old) in Belgium say were hiding being LGBTI at school. This was 30% in the EU-28.
- ➔ 50% of LGBTI students (15-17 years old) in Belgium say that in school someone often or always supported, defended or protected their rights as an LGBTI person. This was 48% in the EU-28.
- ➔ 64% of LGBTI teenager respondents (15-17 years old say) in Belgium their peers or teachers have often or always supported LGBTI people. In the EU-28 this was 60%.
- ↑ 43% of LGBTI of teenager respondents (15-17 years old) in Belgium say their school education at some point addressed LGBTI issues positively or in a balanced way. In the EU-28 this was 33%.

Selected quotes from LGBTI Survey II respondents

"I think I rarely experience discrimination because I have a steady relationship with a person of the opposite sex. That is why my bisexuality is 'invisible' and often ignored or not taken seriously." (Belgium, Bisexual woman, 24)

"As a person with a moderate to severe physical disability, I sometimes experience strong isolation within the lgbtqi community itself. Without meaning, the community can also be very discriminating internally. (Belgium, Gay man, 27)