

# SWISS LGBTIQ+ PANEL

2021 SUMMARY REPORT



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# FOREWORD

The year 2021 has brought many changes for individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, and other sexual or gender minorities (LGBTIQ+) in Switzerland. In December 2020, the Swiss parliament voted in favor of easing legal gender change and legalizing same-sex marriage. Yet, the decision to legalize same-sex marriage (including artificial insemination, joint adoption, and facilitated naturalization) was not unanimous, leading to a national referendum. In September 2021, 64% of Swiss voters voted in favor of same-sex marriage. While this is a major milestone toward greater equality of LGBTIQ+ individuals, particularly members of gender minorities still face many legal challenges. Furthermore, LGBTIQ+ individuals in Switzerland still face prejudice and discrimination, which became more pronounced in the run-up to the referendum. We initiated the **Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel** in 2019 with the goal to assess how political and social changes affect LGBTIQ+ individuals in Switzerland. The panel covers personal experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals (support, discrimination, coming out), emerging topics in the Swiss context (same-sex marriage, facilitated name change, COVID-19), as well as actions to advance the legal situation in Switzerland. Each year we have a core section assessing a set of fixed questions which allows us to examine potential changes over time (e.g., support, discrimination, coming out) and additional sections assessing the current situation (e.g., legal changes) and topics that our participants consider relevant (e.g., being LGBTIQ+ and belonging to (an) additional minority/minorities).

In 2021, we launched the **third wave of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel**. To account for the specific challenges (e.g., legal situation, discrimination) that different subgroups of the LGBTIQ+ community face, we designed – as in the previous waves – different versions of a web questionnaire that were tailored to sexual minorities (i.e., individuals with a minority sexual orientation such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or pansexual people) and gender minorities (e.g., individuals identifying as trans or intersex)<sup>1</sup>. Finally, interested cis-heterosexual individuals were also invited to participate in the survey. All versions were translated into German,

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<sup>1</sup> Sexual orientation and gender identity are distinct, so people can be members of both sexual and gender minorities. To keep the survey duration uniform, we have assigned people to one version of the questionnaire. However, there was an option to fill in the version for both sexual and gender minorities.

French, Italian, and English. Thanks to the help of many LGBTIQ+ organizations, magazines, and individuals who widely shared our study on different media, 3'080 people replied to our questionnaire from January 2021 to the end of June 2021. This document presents a summary of the key findings of the survey.

# GLOSSARY<sup>2</sup>

<b>Asexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who experiences limited to no sexual attraction.
<b>Bisexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who is attracted to more than one gender. Distinct from pansexual, which includes attraction to people regardless of gender.
<b>Cis woman</b>	Someone who was assigned female at birth and identifies and lives as a woman.
<b>Cis-heterosexual</b>	Used in this report to refer to people whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth (i.e., who are not members of gender minorities) and who are exclusively attracted to another gender.
<b>Cis man</b>	Someone who was assigned male at birth and identifies and lives as a man.
<b>Coming out (public)</b>	When a person first tells someone about their sexual orientation or gender identity.
<b>Gay man</b>	A man who is attracted to other men.
<b>Gender identity</b>	A person's internal sense of their own gender.
<b>Gender identity – Other</b>	An umbrella category used to describe individuals who choose 'other' as the category for their gender identity. In this category, participants reported, for instance, identifying as agender, gender fluid, gender questioning, queer, demiboy, or as not identifying with any gender.
<b>Gender minority members</b>	Individuals with a minority gender identity such as trans or intersex people.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that the definitions belong to the community and might change over time.

<b>Heterosexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who is exclusively attracted to another gender. Also referred to as straight.
<b>Homosexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.
<b>Intersex</b>	An umbrella term for people with sex characteristics (hormones, chromosomes, and external/internal reproductive organs) that differ to those typically expected of men or women.
<b>Joint adoption</b>	A term used to describe adoption by two partners.
<b>Lesbian woman</b>	A woman who is attracted to other women.
<b>LGBTIQ+</b>	An abbreviation used to refer to all people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, or as having any other minority sexual orientation or gender identity.
<b>Minority sexual orientation</b>	Used in this report to refer to anyone not identifying as heterosexual. This includes individuals identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, etc.
<b>Non-binary</b>	An umbrella term used to describe gender identities where the individual does not identify (exclusively) as a man or a woman. There are many categories included within this, such as agender, genderqueer, and gender fluid. Some non-binary people may identify as trans, others may not.
<b>Pansexual</b>	A term used to describe a person who is attracted to people regardless of gender.
<b>Same-sex marriage</b>	A term used to describe the legal union between two people of the same gender.
<b>Sexual minority members</b>	Individuals with a minority sexual orientation such as homosexual (gay, lesbian), bisexual, or pansexual people.

<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Describes who a person is emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted to.
<b>Sexual orientation – Other</b>	An umbrella category used to describe individuals who choose ‘other’ as the category for their sexual orientation. In this category, participants mentioned, for instance, identifying as asexual, demisexual, fluid, polysexual, heteroflexible, homoflexible, queer, questioning, as well as not liking categories.
<b>Trans</b>	Umbrella term used to describe individuals who have a gender identity that is different to the gender assigned at birth. Non-binary people may or may not consider themselves to be trans.
<b>Trans Woman</b>	Someone who was assigned male at birth but identifies as a woman.
<b>Trans Man</b>	Someone who was assigned female at birth but identifies as a man.
<b>Queer</b>	A term used mainly by people who identify with a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
<b>Questioning</b>	The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

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# **THE SWISS LGBTIQ+ PANEL**

# IMPORTANT METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

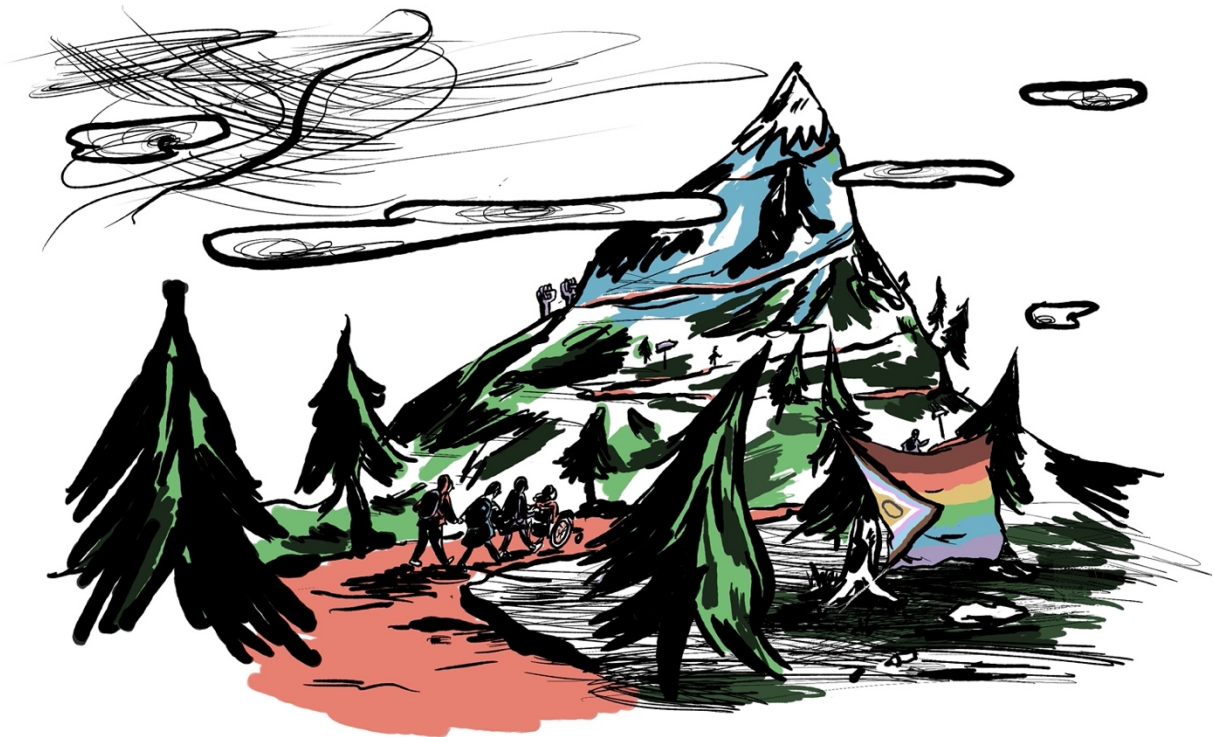
*Before interpreting the results of this report, please read these important methodological notes.*

The third survey of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel was hosted online for 6 months. An online survey was considered the best way to reach out to many LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual respondents and allowed respondents to provide anonymous and confidential responses. Individuals who voluntarily participated in our study were mostly re-contacted via e-mail or informed by LGBTIQ+ and other organizations through posts, articles, newsletters, and chats. Hence, please note that our sample was self-selected and not randomly selected. However, due to our large number of participants, **we can now represent diverse LGTBIQ+ people from all levels of education, all age groups, and all cantons of Switzerland.** Please note, however, that most cis-heterosexual individuals who participated in this survey heard about the survey from LGBTIQ+ individuals (although some university students took part as well) and are generally more supportive of LGBTIQ+ issues than the general Swiss population. **This implies that responses by cis-heterosexual individuals displayed in the present report are particularly NOT representative of the cis-heterosexual population.** Please be aware of this when interpreting the results displayed in this report.

# KEY FINDINGS

- The Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel represents a wide range of sexual orientations, gender identities, age groups, educational levels, and people from all cantons and language regions.
- Also in 2021, LGBTIQ+ people monitor their outing carefully. For example, one out of three sexual minority members were not out at the workplace or in the university context. In the school context, half of the sexual minority members concealed their identity. These numbers were even more pronounced among gender minority members, where more than 2 out of 3 people were not out in the school, work, or university context.
- A valuable source of support for both members of sexual and gender minorities are friends and other LGBTIQ+ individuals.
- While the Covid-19 pandemic reduced the amount of contact that people had, about 7% of the sexual minority members and 15% of the gender minority members experienced physical violence within the last year. These findings demonstrate that hate crimes due to people's sexual orientation and/or gender identity should be systematically assessed by public entities.
- The LGBTIQ+ community has been facing specific challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. LGBTIQ+ youth did not receive the support they needed, safe spaces were not available, and gender minorities had medical treatment postponed or even canceled.
- As in previous years, members of gender minorities reported more discrimination, less support, and less well-being compared to sexual minorities. These robust findings clearly indicate that initiatives to protect those most vulnerable within the LGBTIQ+ community are still needed.

- Bi- and pansexual people experience more discrimination and report more negative affect such as sadness and helplessness compared to homosexual people. Rejection and stereotypes from both the wider society and the LGBTIQ+ community were directly associated with this health gap and call for action to increase the visibility and inclusion of bi- and pansexual people.
- Many participants believed that easing legal gender change was an important step forward, but that many more steps are needed. Some participants were, however, worried about trans adolescents who grow up in an unsupportive environment.



# THE RESULTS

In this section, we relay some of the main findings from the 2021 survey. Because different versions of the questionnaire were tailored to members of sexual minorities, members of gender minorities, and cis-heterosexual participants, we will present the findings for the three groups separately.

# WHO RESPONDED?

In total, 3'080 individuals participated in the 2021. A summary of participants' sexual orientation, gender identity, age group, geographical area, education, and religion is presented in Table 1 below.

*For example, 52.7% respondents (1'623 people) identified as homosexual, 14.0% (431 people) as bisexual, 8.4% (258 people) as pansexual, 19.0% (584 people) as heterosexual, 1.9% (59 people) as asexual, and 4.1% (125 people) as another sexual orientation (demisexual, questioning, queer, and other).*

Table 1. Who responded?

Participants by Sex. Orien.	TOTAL	HOMO-SEXUAL	BISEXUAL	PANSEXUAL	HETERO-SEXUAL	ASEXUAL	OTHER
%	100	52.7%	14.0%	8.4%	19.0%	1.9%	4.1%
N	3'080	1'623	431	258	584	59	125
Participants by Gender	CIS WOMAN	CIS MAN	TRANS WOMAN	TRANS MAN	NON-BINARY	OTHER	
%	45.0%	41.9%	2.1%	1.9%	7.2%	1.9%	
N	1'386	1'290	65	58	223	58	
Participants by Age group	Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Over 60	
%	8.6%	38.9%	18.8%	12.6%	12.5%	8.6%	
N	264	1'198	579	388	385	263	
Participants by Geo area	GERMAN	FRENCH	ITALIAN	ROMANSH	BILIN-GUAL		
%	72.6%	21.8%	2.4%	0.5%	2.7%		
N	2'236	670	75	16	82		
Participants by Education	NO UNI	UNI DEGREE	OTHER				
%	45.0%	50.0 %	5.1%				
N	1'372	1'523	154				
Participants by Religion	ATHEIST	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT	JEWISH	MUSLIM	BUDDHIST	OTHER
%	59.0%	13.7%	15.9%	0.3%	0.7%	1.1%	9.2%
N	1'799	416	489	10	22	34	281

Note. Percentages have been rounded and may not add up to 100%.

In Table 2, we show the sample composition in greater detail, separating out respondents by both sexual orientation and gender identity. The numbers in brackets represent trans participants.

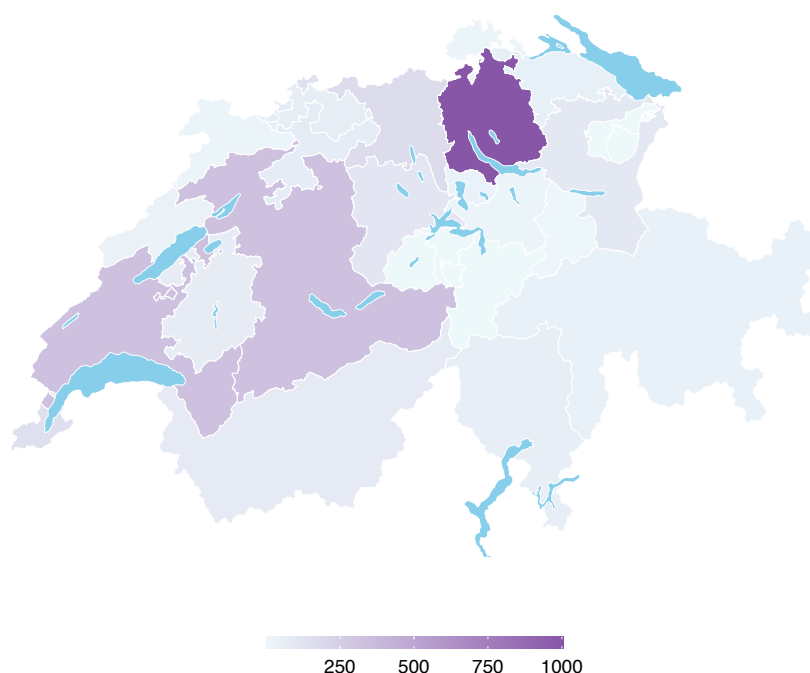
*For example, the second line can be read as follows: There are 86 bisexual men participants, 9 of them are trans. There are 296 bisexual women participants, 14 of them are trans. There are 33 bisexual non-binary participants and 25 of them are trans. There are 16 bisexual participants who do not identify as either a man, a woman, or a non-binary person and 7 of them are trans.*

Table 2. Sample Composition

Sexual Orientation/ Gender identity	Man	Women	Non-binary	Other
Heterosexual	151 (4)	429 (5)	2 (2)	2 (0)
Bisexual	86 (9)	296 (14)	33 (25)	16 (7)
Pansexual	25 (10)	137 (7)	79 (60)	17 (13)
Homosexual	1'052 (17)	503 (31)	55 (29)	13 (7)
Asexual	8 (4)	25 (4)	18 (11)	8 (4)
Other	16 (4)	59 (2)	36 (32)	14 (11)
Total	1'338 (48)	1'449 (63)	223 (159)	70 (42)

*Note.* In brackets: Individuals identifying as trans.

The Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel is growing in comparison to the previous years: more than 3'000 participants have participated in this year's survey. Due to this development, we can represent a wide range of sexual orientations, gender identities, age groups, educational levels, and be more representative of the different regions of Switzerland. Indeed, all cantons in Switzerland are represented in Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel. Figure 1 below represents the distribution of our participants by cantons. Brighter colors indicate cantons in which we have less participants, darker colors indicate cantons in which we have more participants.



*Figure 1.* Overview of panel participants



# SECTION 1:

## COMING OUT

### CONTEXT OF COMING OUT

Next, respondents in the survey were asked in which contexts they were out and among how many people. Importantly, one's sexual orientation/gender identity (e.g., one's trans identity) might not always be relevant. To illustrate, some trans individuals who socially transitioned might not feel the need to reveal that they are trans (if they pass as the gender they identify with). However, this measure still provides a valid estimate for how openly people can talk about their identity and current relationship/activities. We grouped the answers into three categories: (1) Being out to none or a few people, (2) approximately half of the people, and (3) most/all people. The results are shown separately for sexual minority (see Figure 2) and gender minority members (see Figure 3). Please keep in mind that respondents could also choose that a context was not applicable for them (e.g., if they do not study). Therefore, the valid number of responses vary between contexts.



As in previous years, people were most open about their sexual orientation among their friends and their families (see Figure 2 below). About half of the respondents for whom the categories acquaintances, university, workplace, and sport were applicable were openly out to most/all people. In contrast, half of the participants did not (or only very selectively) reveal their sexual orientation in the school context (53.0%) and among their neighbors (55.3%). Finally, two-thirds (67.7%) of the respondents for whom the category church/religious organization was applicable were not out in this context among (almost) anyone.

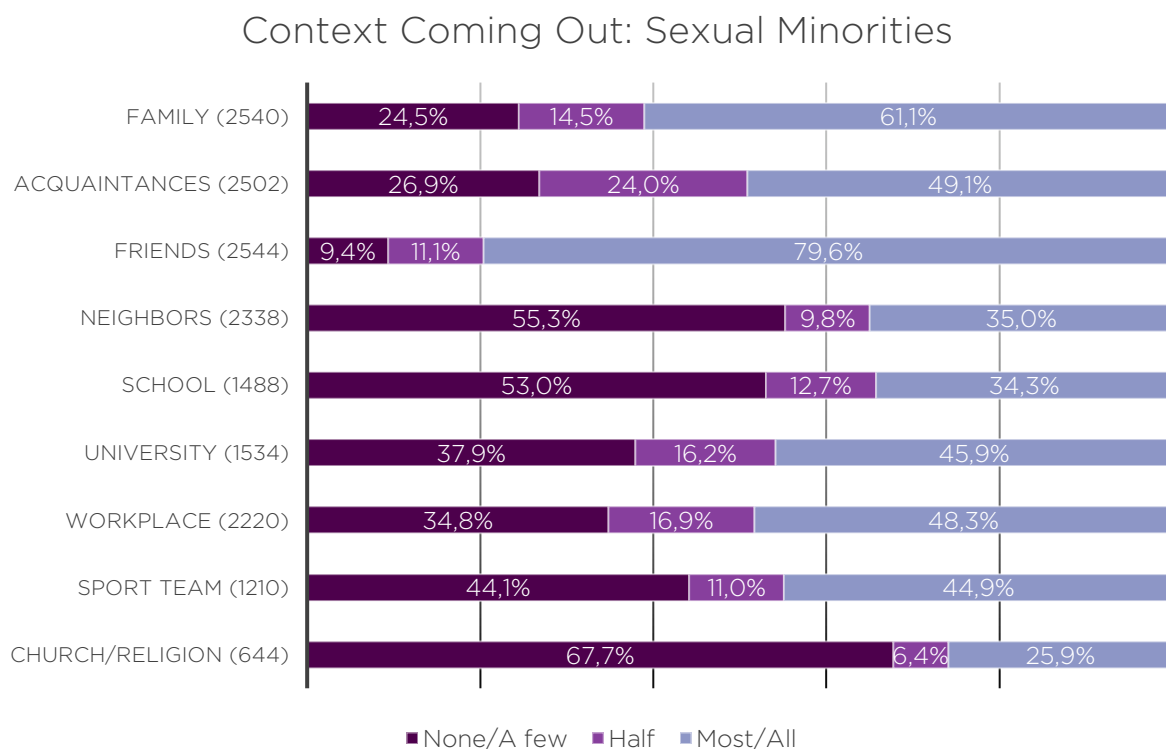


Figure 2. Context of Coming Out Among Sexual Minority Members

Members of gender minorities (see Figure 3 below) were on average less likely than sexual minority members to reveal their gender identity. Approximately two-thirds (61.3%) of respondents were out to most/all of their friends, while one fourth (24.9%) was not out among their friends at all. Less than half (43.9%) of the gender minority respondents were out among most/all family members, while almost as many (41.1%) chose not to out themselves to their family members. In the workplace, university, school, sport, and church contexts as well as among their neighbors, gender minorities were particularly guarded: between half and two-thirds of respondents did not reveal their gender identity to (almost) everyone.

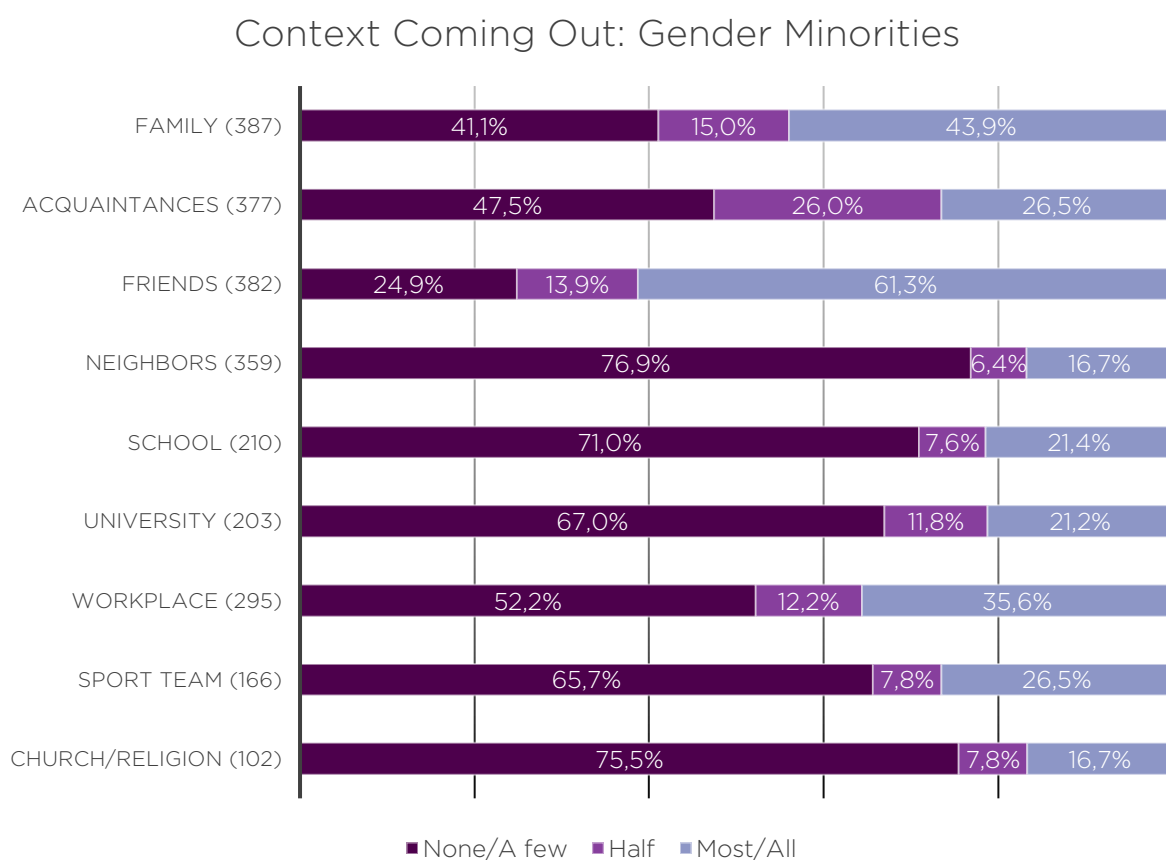


Figure 3. Context of Coming Out Among Gender Minority Members

## SECTION 2:

### SUPPORT AND EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION

#### SUPPORT

In this section, we present findings related to support and experienced discrimination. First, members of sexual and gender minorities were asked to indicate how supported they felt in different contexts (see Figure 4). Respondents could choose values between 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Totally) or that a context was not applicable for them (e.g., if they do not participate in any sports). Thus, higher numbers correspond to higher perceived support. Please note that valid numbers of responses vary widely between contexts.

Both members of sexual and gender minority reported that they felt most supported by their friends, followed by the LGBTQ+ community. While sexual minority participants felt that they were supported by their family, this was much less the case for gender minority participants. Further, sexual minority and gender minority respondents reported little to some support from their neighbors, school, university, workplace, and sports team, and felt little support from their church/other religious settings. Overall, members of gender minorities felt less supported than members of sexual minorities.

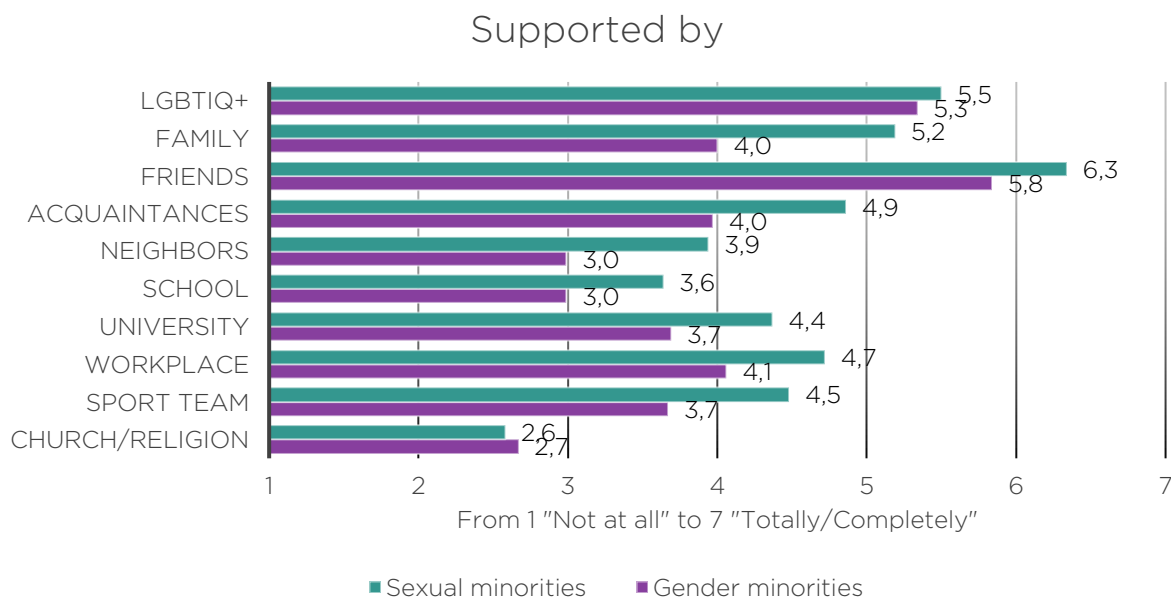


Figure 4. Support by Social Group

## EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION

Next, members of sexual and gender minorities were asked to indicate how often they experienced different types of discrimination in the past 12 months (see Figure 5). We grouped the answers into two categories: yes, experienced discrimination in the past 12 months vs. no, experienced no discrimination in the past 12 months. Most members of both sexual and gender minorities reported that they have been exposed to jokes and that they have been stared at in public spaces. A large majority of members of gender minorities furthermore reported structural discrimination (80.8%), that their gender identity was not taken seriously (76.4%), and that they were socially excluded because of their identity (53.8%). Importantly, 14.5% of gender minority members and 6.7% of sexual minority members reported having been the target of physical violence within the last year. When comparing individual subgroups, lesbian, bi-, pansexual women as well as trans and non-binary participants reported experiencing relatively high levels of sexual harassment by men. Further, particularly non-binary participants reported experiencing very high levels of structural discrimination and social exclusion.

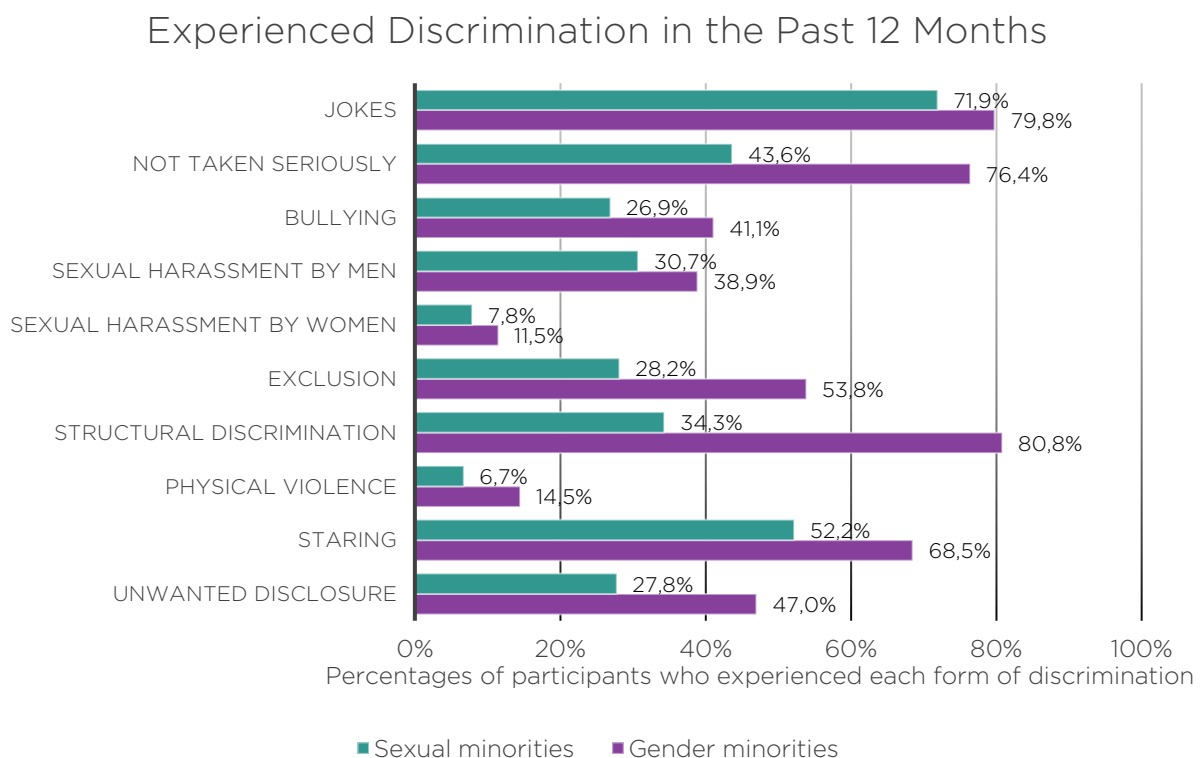
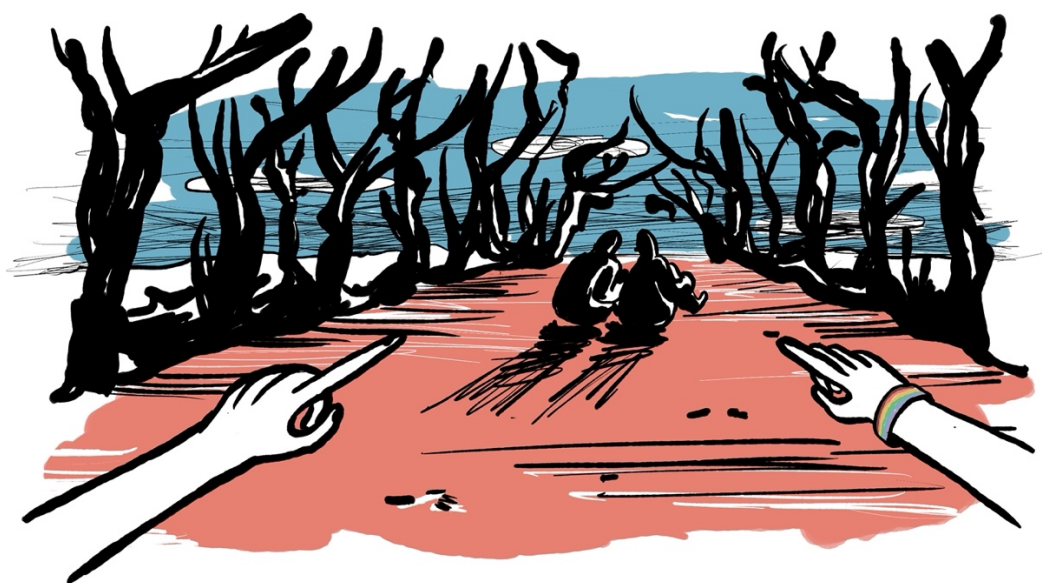


Figure 5. Types of Experienced Discrimination

A master's thesis by Cynthia Thöni (supervised by Dr. Tabea Hässler and Dr. Léila Eisner) examined the experiences of bi- and pansexual people using part of the 2021 Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel data. Our 2021 data indicate that bi- and pansexual people (compared to homosexual people) were much more likely to report that others did not take their sexual orientation seriously (72.9% of bi- and pansexual participants vs. 34.2% of homosexual participants).

Results indicate that many bi- and pansexual people are confronted with stereotypes such as that they 'cannot decide' or that their 'sexual orientation is just a phase'. Importantly, bi- and pansexual people do not only experience rejection and marginalization from heterosexual people, but also from within the LGBTIQ+ community, which highlights the precarious position of bi- and pansexual individuals. For example, some bi- and pansexual people reported that homosexual people sometimes do not want to date them or do not view them as equal members of the LGBTIQ+ community. Furthermore bi- and pansexual people report being marginalized, which is reflected for example in the discussions around same-sex marriage, which are mainly focusing on lesbian women and gay men. Importantly, findings of additional analyses also indicate that experiencing (and perceiving) that heterosexual and homosexual people do not consider bi- or pansexuality as a "valid" or "true" sexual orientation was directly associated with experiencing more negative affect such as sadness and helplessness. Thus, it seems crucial to offer bi- and pansexual people more support and visibility.



## CONTEXTS OF DISCRIMINATION

Because we know that discrimination can occur in many different situations, we wanted to get a better understanding of the contexts in which LGBTIQ+ people feel discriminated against. Respondents could choose values between 1 (Never) to 7 (Very often) or that a context was not applicable to them. We grouped the answers into two categories: yes, experienced discrimination in the past 12 months in this context vs. no, did not experience discrimination in the past 12 months in this context. Keep in mind that numbers of responses vary widely between contexts (from 930 to 2'241 responses for sexual minorities and 69 to 335 for gender minorities). Gender minorities reported experiencing more discrimination in all contexts assessed (see Figure 6). Most gender minority participants reported that they experienced discrimination by their family (65.8%), in public spaces (63.8%), from legal institutions (57.1%), at their workplace (57.0%), in the hospital (56.1%), by acquaintances (55.9%), at the university (52.8%), and at school (50.8%). Compared to the other contexts, more members of sexual minorities reported that they experienced discrimination in public spaces (46.6%), by their acquaintances (32.5%), at their workplace (32.4%), and by their family (30.2%).

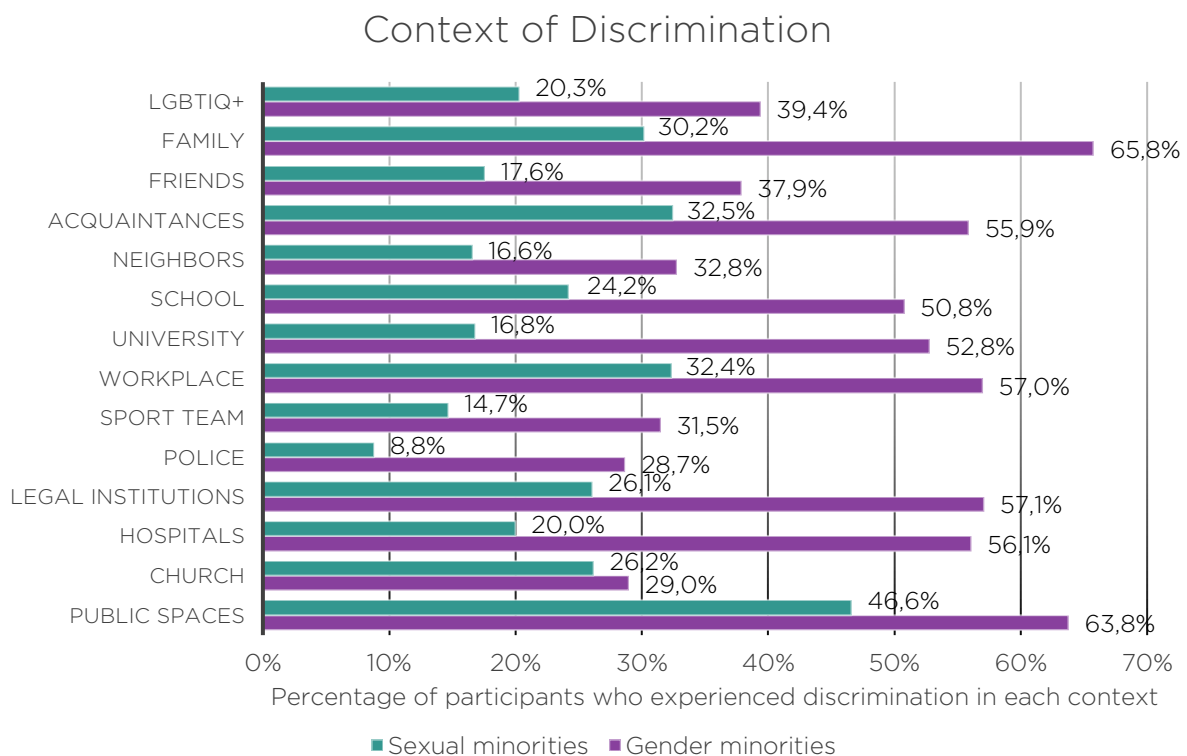


Figure 6. Context of Discrimination



# SECTION 3:

## COVID-19

The years 2020-2021 have been special years for our participants as they have been marked by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the 2021 survey, we therefore asked participants specific questions about their experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic. We asked LGBTIQ+ participants to indicate what specific challenges they experienced being an LGBTIQ+ individual, while we asked cis-heterosexual participants about their Covid-19-related challenges in general. Gender minority members were more likely to report that they experienced specific challenges such as: interruption/postponing of treatment, intolerant family, lack of support, and isolation. Overall, 14.1% of the gender minority participants indicated that the Covid-19 pandemic interfered with them getting medical treatment because of their gender identity/being intersex (e.g., hormone treatment, surgery). Below, you can find some selected answers for sexual minority, gender minority, and cis-heterosexual participants.

*"... I have been unable to see my boyfriend for almost a year due to international restrictions and, as a doctor, I was directly impacted in my professional life by the pandemic, which has affected my psycho-social mood..." - 28-year-old gay cisgender man*

*"As I live in a very long-term stable relationship; I think this helped avoid the typical challenges some would experience during pandemic such as feeling lonely, which I didn't. What I also could avoid were existential fear, since my job and income is very safe..." - 46-year-old pansexual cisgender woman*

*"All our safe spaces and events have been closed and cancelled. It's hard to stay in contact with queer people that I've seen at least weekly before. Testing for STIs became harder at some points (closed testing centres, limited appointments) in fear of Covid-19 and because swabs were needed for Covid-19 tests. Also, some campaigns for cheap testing were cancelled." - 27-year-old gay cisgender man*

*"Being stuck at home with my homophobic parents at home, without them knowing I am part of a sexual minority and therefore it hurts when they insult anyone in the community. Also, feeling trapped because I cannot be independent yet, but the situation sometimes gets unbearable." - 21-year-old bisexual cisgender woman*



*"Being in a social media bubble where my vision of the world is based around the LGBTIQ+ accounts I follow and the general algorithms giving me a biased representation of the outside world in which people are not as accepting and open. Knowing this, when the world will open again there will be a big culture shock along with frustration. On the other hand, as a femme presenting lesbian, the lack of unwanted male attention is refreshing and creates more opportunity for self-expression!" -22-year-old lesbian cisgender woman*

*"Social isolation (overall but also related to contact with other LGBTIQ+ people), lack of access to support (e.g., trans\* specific support groups), being stuck at home with parents who do not fully understand."  
- 17-year-old gay non-binary person*

*"Restricted access to healthcare professionals, which limits access to hormones replacement therapy, psychologist, gender-affirming surgeons, etc." - 32-year-old pansexual non-binary person*

*"I was lucky enough, that my medical treatment and my surgery was scheduled for a time, when the pandemic had a little break. But I was really nervous, if I could have my top surgery or if I would have to live with the dysphoria another year or two." - 28-year-old pansexual trans man*

*"Except for the loss of the trans community (no more in person get togethers etc.). I actually didn't experience specific challenges for being trans. I didn't have to leave my queer bubble that is my shared home, so I wasn't misgendered or disrespected as much as I usually am."  
- 23-year-old asexual non-binary person*

*"Not being able to go to university. It is my first year and I was very excited to start my student life, but sadly it isn't how I expected it to be. The tough part is not being able to make new friends and feeling like I'm the only one experiencing certain things, although many people would feel that way (nervousness and fear of exams)." - 21-year-old heterosexual cisgender woman*

*"I moved to Switzerland shortly before the pandemic and it was a difficult time to make friends and meet new people. I have also been struggling with the mental health issues of my partner."  
- 27-year-old heterosexual cisgender woman*

## SECTION 4:

### WELL-BEING

In this section we report on respondents' subjective well-being. We asked sexual and gender minority members as well as cis-heterosexual respondents about both their positive affect (i.e., feeling enthusiastic, happy, and satisfied) and their negative affect (i.e., feeling sad, ashamed, helpless, and dejected) in the last 12 months (see Figure 7). This allowed us to compare the well-being between the respondents. Values range between 1 (Very rarely) to 7 (Very frequently), thus higher numbers indicate both higher positive and negative affect. As in the previous years of our panel, cis-heterosexual respondents and members of sexual minorities do not significantly differ in positive affect and negative affect, while members of gender minorities report less positive affect and more negative affect. This indicates that members of gender minorities feel worse off than both cis-heterosexual individuals and members of sexual minorities. Further, the gap between gender minority participants and the other groups seems to have increased in the past year. One reason might be the specific challenges faced by gender minority participants during the Covid-19 pandemic, as indicated above.



Figure 7. Well-being

# SECTION 5:

## SITUATION IN SWITZERLAND

This year, the Swiss parliament voted in favor of easing legal gender change. Trans people who are least 16 years old will therefore be able to change their gender on identity documents by making a declaration at civil registry offices without the involvement of a doctor or a court. Adolescents, however, need parental consent. Many participants believed that easing legal gender change was an important step forward, but that many more steps are needed. While they were happy about this decision in general, some participants were worried about trans adolescents who grow up in an unsupportive environment.

*"They are a step in the right direction, but more can be done to help and support people of gender minorities, especially young ones who can be very vulnerable." – 23 year-old, pansexual trans non-binary person*

*"More rights than most places in Europe, very nice. Clause about using other family member if parents are not supportive is a good idea though." – 26 year-old homosexual trans woman*

*"It is a good step, but unfortunately doesn't include a 3rd gender marker option (for example X) for those of us who are outside of the binary." – 28-year-old homosexual non-binary person*

*"It's a step in the right direction for people who deserve these rights." – 26-year-old bisexual cisgender woman*

*"It's quite unfortunate since it imposes an unnecessary burden on trans youth without supportive parents." – 24-year-old homosexual cisgender man*

*"I think it's a good decision. The parental consent thing is not great, but it's also in line with how the rights of minors to self-determination are currently constrained. In the future, I'd like to see the ability by younger minors to change their gender marker by themselves, and an option for a X gender marker indicating neither ..."* – 36 year-old heterosexual cisgender man

*"I support this decision and I think it is a step in the right direction." – 27-year-old heterosexual cisgender woman*

Another big step forward toward greater legal equality of LGBTIQ+ individuals was the legalization of marriage for “all<sup>3</sup>” in September 2021. The legalization of same-sex marriage included the access to artificial insemination, joint adoption, and facilitated naturalization, which have previously been denied to same-sex couples. This clear result – 64.1% of the Swiss population and all cantons voted in favor of same-sex marriage – sends an important signal that the Swiss population believes that marriage for “all” is long overdue. This widespread success was only possible because many LGBTIQ+ individuals and cis-heterosexual allies worked hand in hand to mobilize people to vote in favor of marriage for “all”. Based on empirical evidence from other countries<sup>4</sup>, we expect that the referendum should further increase the acceptance of sexual minority members but also the wider LGBTIQ+ community in the public and therefore their sense of belonging. To examine the impact of the referendum and surrounding campaigns, we conducted an additional empirical study among LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual individuals, collecting survey data and biological data (i.e., cortisol as a marker of stress levels) before, during, and after the referendum. We will summarize the findings of this additional study in a separate report.



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<sup>3</sup> Importantly not everyone – e.g., couples consisting of more than two people – can marry.

<sup>4</sup> Ofosu, E. K., Chambers, M. K., Chen, J. M., & Hehman, E. (2019). Same-sex marriage legalization associated with reduced implicit and explicit antigay bias. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(18), 8846-8851.

# SECTION 6:

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The third wave of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel has been a great success thanks to the help of various organizations, LGBTIQ+ magazines, and individual efforts. In this 2021 summary report, we have provided an overview of the third wave of data collection. As in the previous wave, the data reveals that members of **sexual and gender minorities in Switzerland still face structural inequalities, experience discrimination, and do not feel fully accepted everywhere**. As in 2019 and 2020, we found that these **inequalities are more pronounced among gender minority members** – such as trans and non-binary people – making them a particularly vulnerable group within the LGBTIQ+ community. This year's survey placed a specific focus on **Covid-19**. While both cis-heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ participants had to deal with the isolation and interruption of their normal routine, LGBTIQ+ individuals missed the possibility to visit safe spaces and peers. Further, younger LGBTIQ+ individuals suffered from being in proximity of intolerant family members. Finally, gender minority members experienced specific challenges such as interruption/postponing of treatment.

In the future, we would like to continue examining how the situation of LGBTIQ+ people is changing over time. This year's survey revealed that many participants also belong to other minority groups (see Table 3). Their statements (see selected answers on the next page) indicate specific challenges such as facing stigma from both the LGBTIQ+ community and the other minority group. We therefore want to follow up on these statements to better understand **what can be done to make all people feel welcomed in the LGBTIQ+ community**.

Finally, your help is vital to drawing valid conclusions. The Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel is only possible due to the support of many LGBTIQ+ and cis-heterosexual individuals. Therefore, we want to thank you for your contribution and hope that many people will continue to participate in our panel in the future.

Table 3. Identification with minority groups

	n	%
An LGBTIQ+ person	2'280	74.7
A person of color	74	2.4
An ethnic minority	91	3.0
A religious minority	69	2.3
A refugee	6	0.2
A migrant	107	3.5
A person with a disability/disabilities	133	4.4
None of the elements listed above	606	19.9
Other	299	9.8

In the category 'Other', participants indicated, for instance: neurodivergent; being a target of fatphobia; people with chronic illness; poor; second generation migrants. We are constantly working on our category system and will try to integrate some of the proposals in the next survey.



*"It's hard to feel a sense of belonging within queer (or feminist) groups because they tend to be overwhelmingly White. People are reluctant to talk about how people of color may experience being queer differently. It does not seem like Switzerland has given any thought to intersectionality at all."* – 28-year-old homosexual man

*"Being a person of color and female, my opinions are rarely taken as my own and equal. They are often dismissed or as a representation of the minority the listener sees. I often feel pressured into behaving a certain way so that no negative implication is reflected on my people. The definition of my people depends on what the listener/observer thinks my identity is. Also, as a Chinese woman, my sense of safety has been decreased due to Covid-19. Someone threw [...] a can of beer at me in the train at the beginning of the pandemic. I have been fearful to walk in public after sundown by myself since Jan. 2020."* – 31-year-old bisexual woman

*"I do not have the same access to citizenship due to being with a Swiss partner. My right to have separate address is prohibited. My partner is 71 and ill, I am younger. My right to freedom of movement under the EU/CH FOM law is restricted. If I left Switzerland for a few months my C permit would be withdrawn. I have known my partner since I was 19 and he 24. Some people in the Swiss gay scene (and also in the English gay scene) are against foreigners. So, they do not support equal rights for gay partners. Because of PACS many people think equality already exists."* – 64-year-old homosexual man

*"I have experienced more xenophobic discrimination in Switzerland than discrimination against being gay. Especially against people from the Balkans, also against Germans, and outspoken racism against Black people."* – 59-year-old homosexual man

*"I used to belong to a religious minority and it took many years between first coming out to my best friend and parents until I fully embraced my identity."* – 47-year-old homosexual woman

*"As a queer person with disabilities, it can be scary to interact with healthcare professionals because I worry about experiencing homophobia/biphobia/aphobia, and scary to interact with queer people because I worry that they may be ableist."* – 26-year-old biromantic asexual woman

*"Disability: Can't go to a lot of queer events / makes it harder to keep up relationships with other queer people / can't meet or talk to or share feelings and conversations with a lot of other queer people because I often CAN'T go anywhere / feel as an outsider with other disabled people, the disabled community, but also as an outsider in the queer community (mainly because the queer community is based on going to events and meeting people and knowing people, which I'm bad at)." 21-year-old bisexual agender person*

*"Being an autistic non-binary person, medical professionals are really f\*\*\*\*\* quick at denying my gender identity due to my neurodivergence. Being a trans person whose autism doesn't match up with the stereotypes associated with their AGAB, medical professionals are really quick at denying my neurodivergence. Being autistic in the trans community makes it incredibly difficult."* – 23-year-old lunettian person



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