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# 2023 SWISS LGBTIQ+ PANEL

SUMMARY REPORT



**Acknowledgement:**

We thank Leo Theissing, Raja Liechti, and Debra Lanfranconi for their support writing the report and conducting the analyses. We also thank Lena Scheiwiller for the design. We thank all the LGBTIQ+ associations, magazines, and individuals for sharing and promoting our survey and all respondents for making this report possible.

# **SWISS LGBTIQ+ PANEL**

## **2023 SUMMARY REPORT**

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# FOREWORD

**In 2023, many discussions have brought issues related to the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, and queer/questioning (LGBTIQ+) individuals to the forefront.** These discussions encompass a range of topics, including the ban on conversion therapies at different levels and the increasing visibility of trans and non-binary individuals in the media. Questions around these issues were part of the 2023 annual survey of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel.

**In the fifth wave of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel,** we present five central themes from our annual survey. First, we provide insights into the survey participant's characteristics, demographic distribution, and annual report information, such as discrimination and coming out. Second, we highlight key findings related to **conversion therapies**. Third, we share reported **hate crime statistics**, including reporting to the police and the victims' experiences. Fourth, we present key statistics regarding **name and gender marker changes** in various areas. Finally, we provide information about **LGBTIQ+ individuals' health and well-being**.

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 (e.g., gay, lesbian, bisexual, or pansexual people) and gender minorities (e.g., trans or intersex people). Interested cis-heterosexual people were also invited to participate in the survey. Please note that people can be both sexual and gender minority members. To reduce the time spent answering the survey, participants only completed one version of the questionnaire. All versions were translated into English, German, French, and Italian. Thanks to the support of many LGBTIQ+ organizations, magazines, and people who shared our study widely through different media channels, 2'812 people replied to our questionnaire from January 2023 to September 2023. **In the present report, we focus on the key findings for sexual minorities, gender minorities, and cis-heterosexual people.**

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# THE RESULTS

In the following sections, we relay some of the main findings of the 2023 survey.

## WHO RESPONDED?

In total, 2'812 people participated from January 2023 to September 2023: 1'825 filled out the sexual minority version of the questionnaire, 648 the gender minority version, and 339 the cis-heterosexual version. Table 1 below displays a summary of participants' sexual orientation, gender identity, age group, geographical area, and education.

Note: You can find definitions of the terms we use to describe our sample on our [homepage](#).

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the survey respondents

Participants by	TOTAL	HOMO-SEXUAL	BISEXUAL	PAN-SEXUAL	HETERO-SEXUAL	ASEXUAL	OTHER
Sex. Orien. %	100	42.3%	18.7%	12.3%	13.1%	5.7%	8.0%
N	2'812	1'190	525	346	367	159	225

Participants by	CIS WOMAN	CIS MAN	TRANS WOMAN	TRANS MAN	NON-BINARY	OTHER
Gender %	39.8%	33.4%	4.3%	3.8%	15.0%	3.6%
N	1'120	940	121	108	423	100

Participants by	INTERSEX	ENDOSEX (NOT INTERSEX)
Intersex %	1.0%	99.0%
N	28	2'784

Participants by	Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Over 60
Age group %	8.3%	40.0%	24.8%	12.4%	8.3%	6.3%
N	232	1'124	698	347	232	177

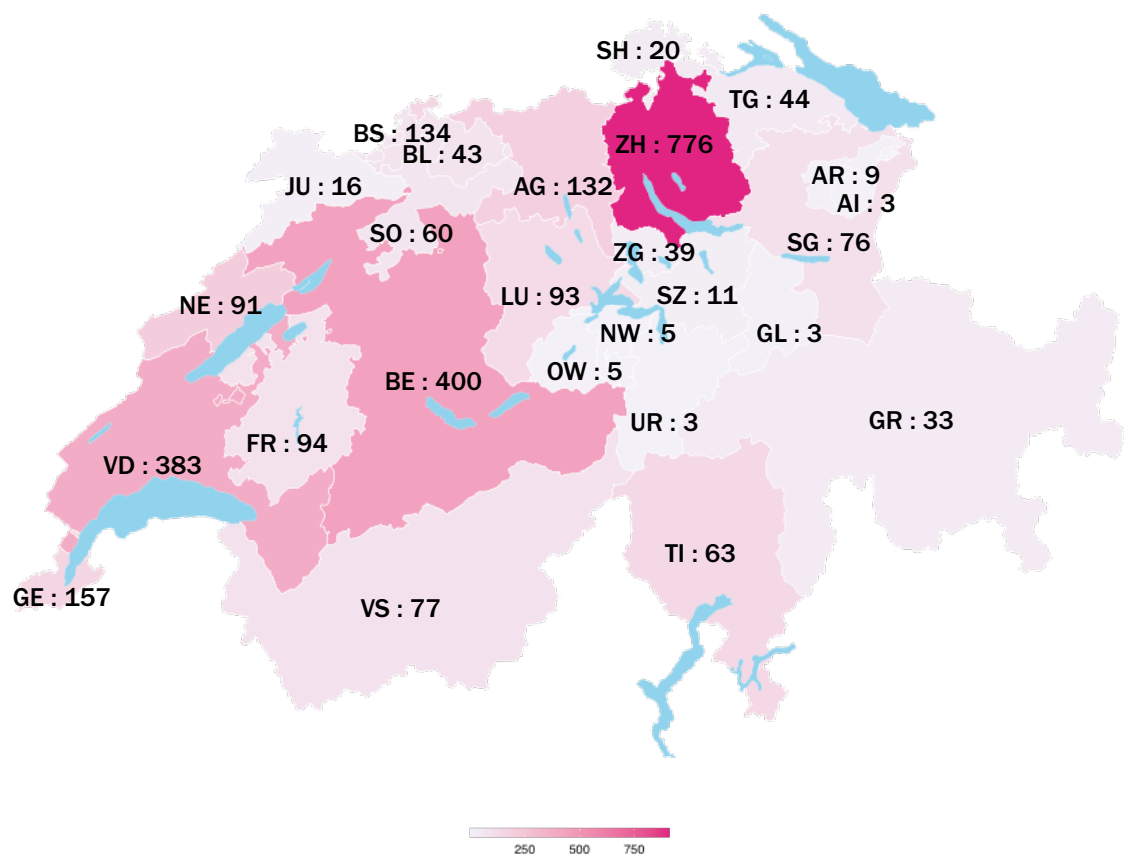
Participants by	GERMAN	FRENCH	ITALIAN	ROMANSH	BILINGUAL
Geo area %	65.9%	27.6%	2.4%	0.5%	3.5%
N	1'854	777	68	15	95

Participants by	NO UNI	UNI DEGREE	OTHER
Education %	38.5%	56.0%	5.4%
N	1'082	1'575	153

Participants by	ATHEIST	CATHOLIC	PROTES-TANT	JEWISH	MUSLIM	BUDDHIST	OTHER
Religion %	66.0%	11.3%	12.5%	0.8%	0.5%	1.1%	7.8%
N	1'855	317	352	22	14	30	220

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

People from all Swiss cantons participated in our survey, with an overrepresentation of respondents from Zurich. Figure 1 below represents the distribution of our participants by cantons. Lighter colors indicate cantons with less respondents, and darker colors cantons with more participants.



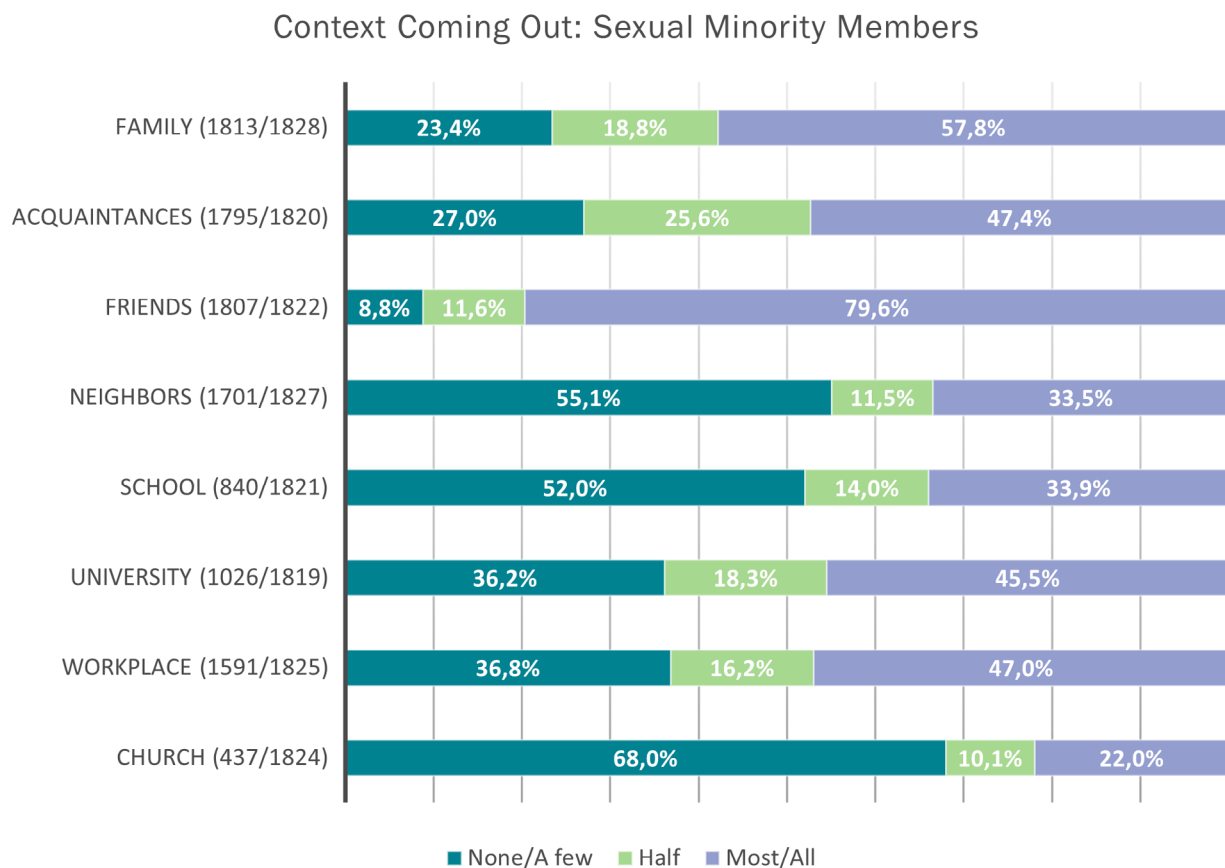
**Figure 1.** Overview of Panel Participants per Canton

# COMING OUT

## CONTEXT OF COMING OUT

As in previous years, survey respondents were asked in which contexts they were out and among how many people. We grouped the answers into three categories, depending on the amount of people respondents were out to: (1) None or a few people, (2) Approximately half of the people, and (3) Most/all people. The results are shown separately for sexual minority members (see Figure 2) and gender minority members (see Figure 3).

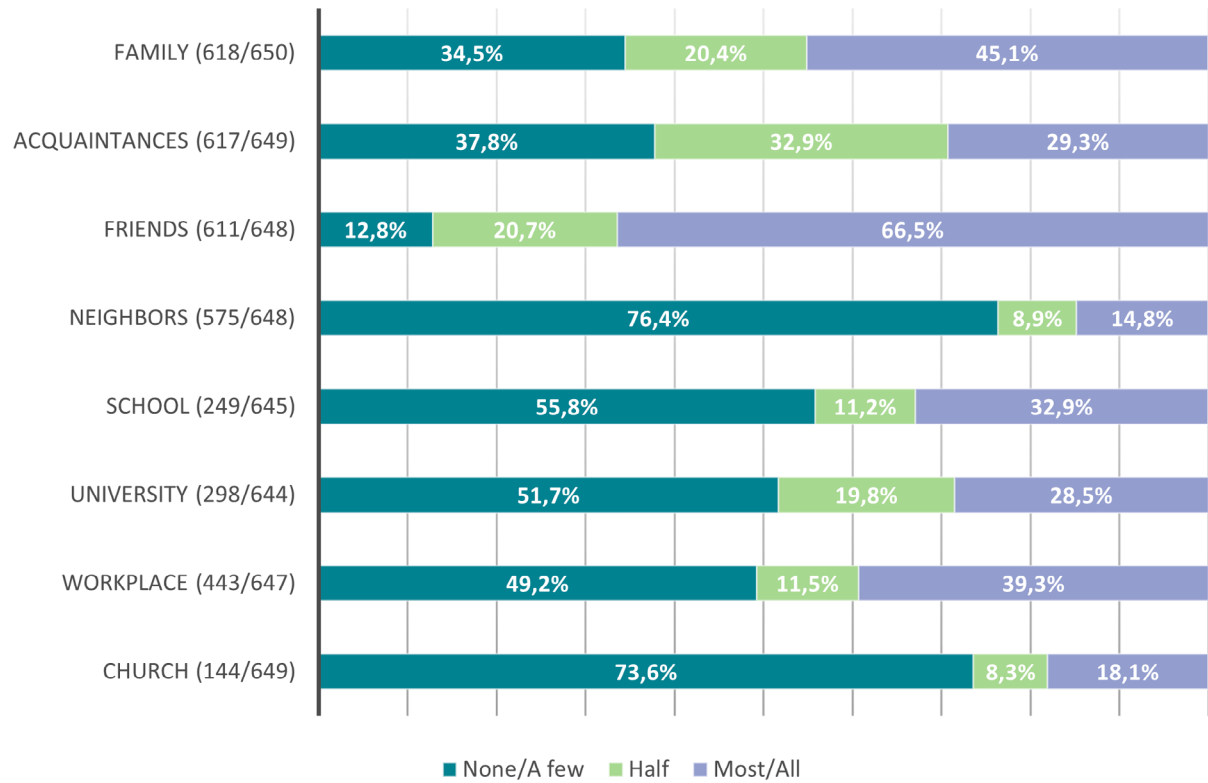
As in previous years, participants were most open about their sexual orientation and gender identity among their friends and families and most selective in the church context (see Figures 2 and 3).



**Figure 2.** Context of Coming Out Among Sexual Minority Members



### Context Coming Out: Gender Minority Members



**Figure 3.** Context of Coming Out Among Gender Minority Members

## **CONVERSION THERAPIES**

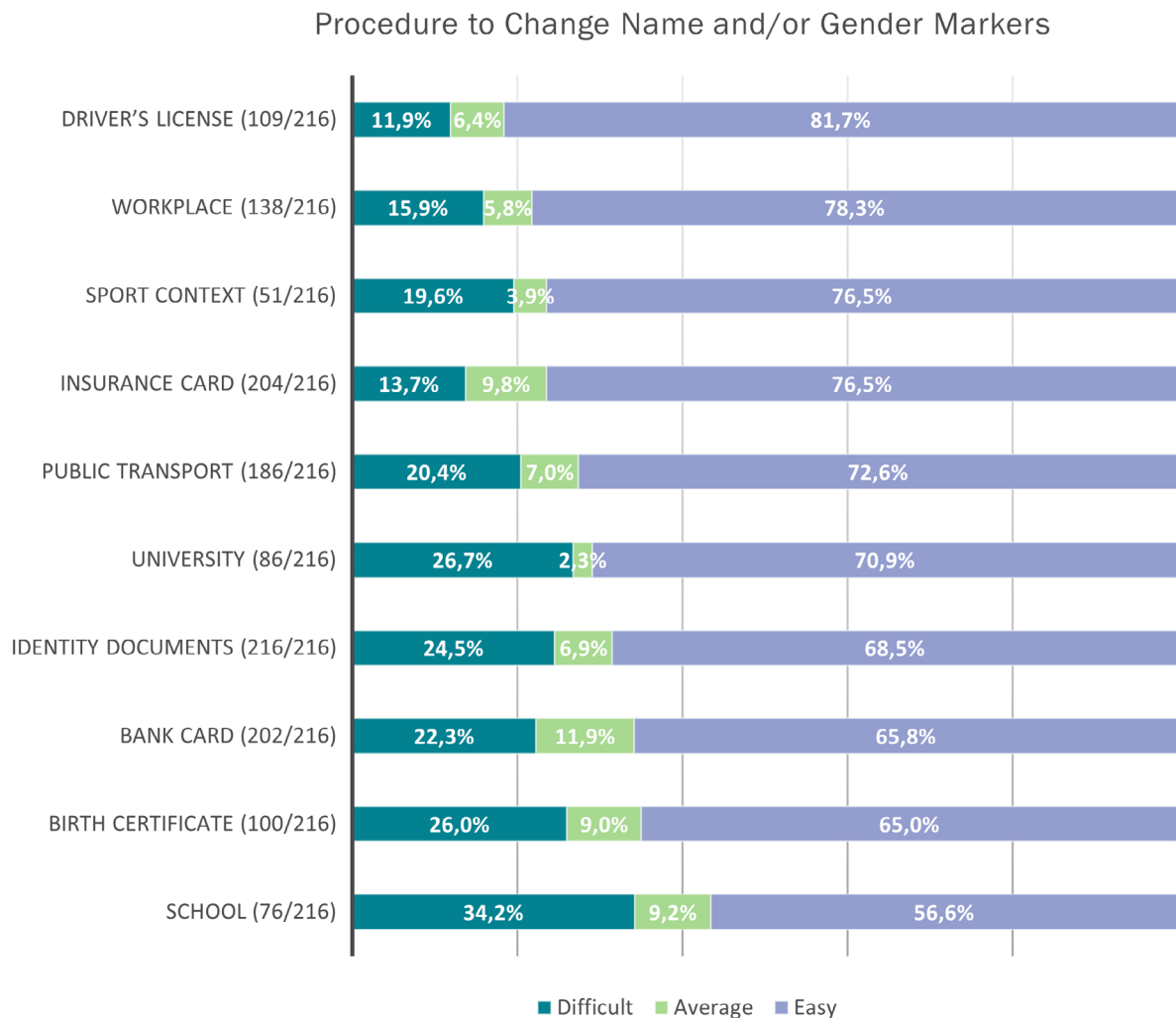
At both national and regional levels, various measures are being taken to ban conversion therapies. Recognizing the limited data on the depth of this issue, we introduced questions about conversion therapies in this year's survey. Participants were asked if they had experienced any attempts to alter or conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity. The findings show that 9.5% of the participating sexual minority members and 15.5% of gender minority members reported having participated in any efforts that have attempted to change or suppress their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

## **GENDER MARKER AND NAME CHANGES**

Since January 2022, the process of changing gender markers (gender and name) on official documents has been facilitated for trans and intersex individuals. Among our gender minority participants, 45.1% reported successfully changing their name and/or gender marker, while 3.4% did not manage to do so, despite attempting. Additionally, 33.6% expressed the intention to change their name and/or gender marker in the future, 3.8% had no plans to change, and 14.2% provided another response.

To better understand the experiences of those attempting to change their names, we asked individuals who had either changed or tried to change their name and/or gender marker to rate the degree of difficulty of the process. We categorized the responses into three groups: (1) Difficult, (2) Neither Difficult nor Easy, and (3) Easy.

The findings indicate that the process was easiest for driver's licenses, while proving more challenging in educational contexts and official documents (refer to Figure 4 for details).



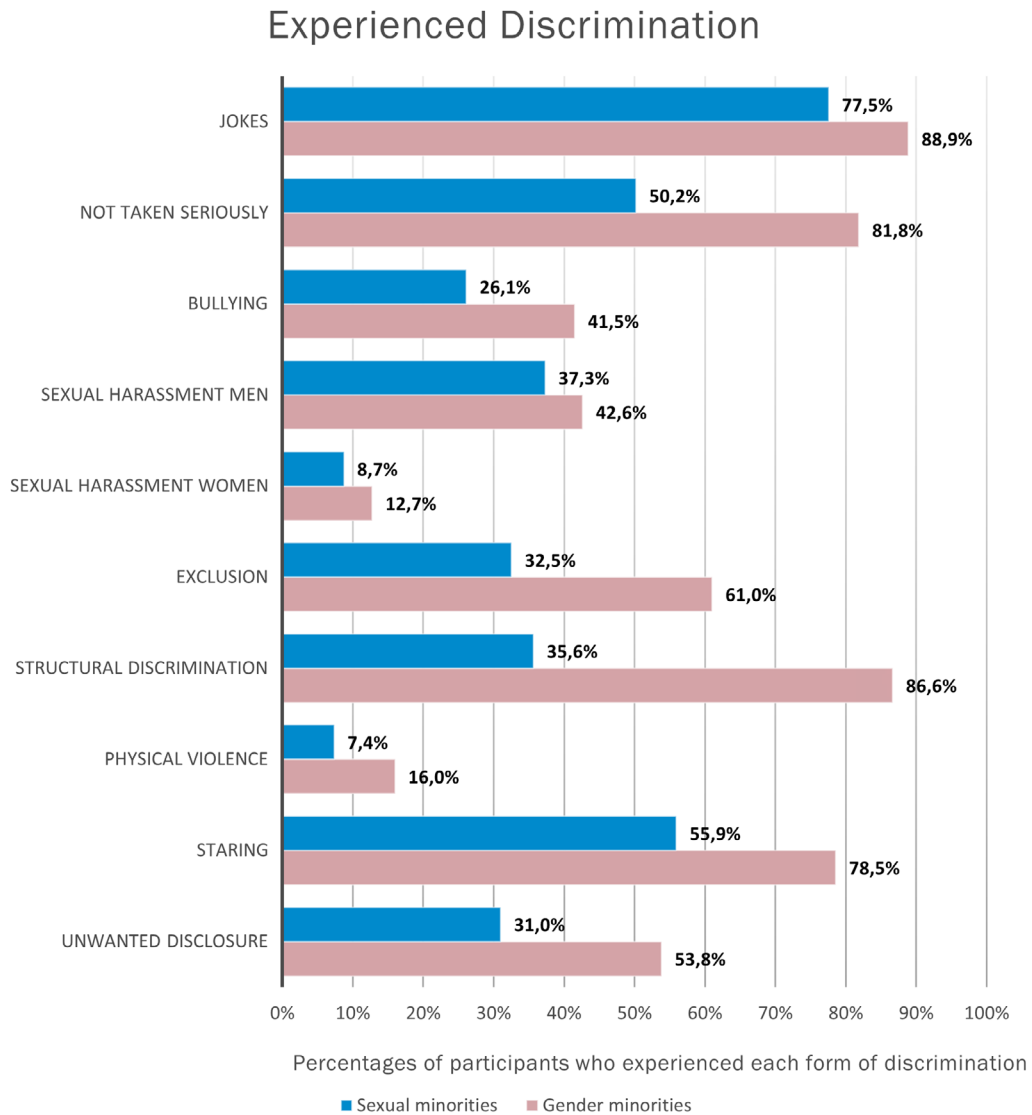
**Figure 4.** Difficulty Ratings for Name and/or Gender Change Processes Across Various Documents

In the open text responses, many individuals explained their difficulties with the recent name change law. While some respondents experienced a smooth procedure, others recounted instances of misgendering or unprofessional conduct during the process, and, therefore, have suggested better training for the staff. Several people also conveyed difficulties associated with accommodating changes from other countries, such as Italy, Portugal, France, or Germany.

Individuals identifying as non-binary, intersex, or falling outside the binary spectrum criticized the restricted options available for altering gender markers to “m” or “f”. They advocated for the introduction of more choices or the elimination of gender markers altogether. Notably, individuals seeking to change only their name without altering their gender marker cannot benefit from the new law and must instead navigate various cantonal name change laws. These individuals are asked to provide multiple documents proving the use of the new name which is perceived as challenging since most institutions do not permit a name change before the completion of a legal name change. Moreover, the associated costs range from 200 to 600 Swiss Francs – on top of the fees for the identification documents, etc. Particularly for intersex, trans, and non-binary people with a low income, expenses up to 600 Francs are perceived as expensive and unaffordable.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

Next, as in the past years, both sexual and gender minority members were asked to indicate how often they had experienced different types of discrimination in the past 12 months (see Figure 5). We grouped the answers into two categories: (1) Yes, experienced discrimination and (2) No, experienced no discrimination.



**Figure 5. Forms of Experienced Discrimination**

## **HATE CRIMES AND INTERACTIONS WITH THE POLICE**

Another central theme in this year's survey was experiences of hate crimes among sexual and gender minority members. We therefore asked participants to indicate whether they had experienced a hate crime based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or intersex status. For sexual minority members, 10.7% indicated that they had personally been the target of a hate crime, with an additional 11.8% being unsure, while 77.6% reported having not faced such incidents. Among those who had experienced a hate crime, only 26.4% reported it to the police. Turning to gender minority members, the results were even more pronounced. 17.7% reported having experienced a hate crime, 21.8% were unsure, and 60.5% had not faced such a situation. Similarly, among those who had encountered hate crimes, only 22.1% reported it to the police. The reasons behind the decision not to report the crime were multifaceted. A prevalent theme was the lack of trust in law enforcement and the pervasive fear of facing further discrimination.

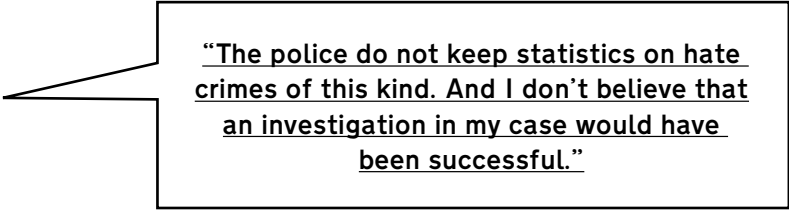
"I have not been treated well  
by the police so far."

"Threats to my life and physical  
violence were dismissed when I was  
younger, I don't trust them with the  
discrimination I face on top today."

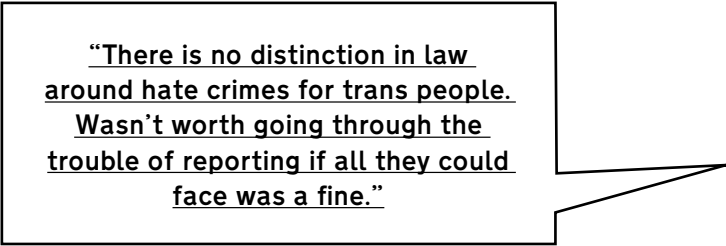
"Oral threats (no evidence), furthermore, I  
don't think the police take threats of sexual  
assault against women and trans individuals  
seriously."

"No trust, probably wouldn't  
be recorded anyway, wouldn't  
be taken seriously."

Some participants expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of reporting, citing the absence of pertinent statistics or legal protections against discrimination based on gender identity.

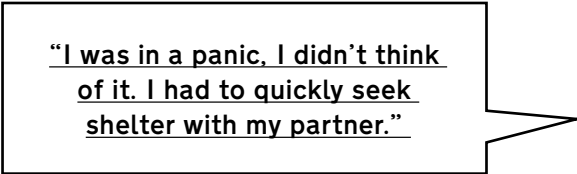


“The police do not keep statistics on hate crimes of this kind. And I don’t believe that an investigation in my case would have been successful.”

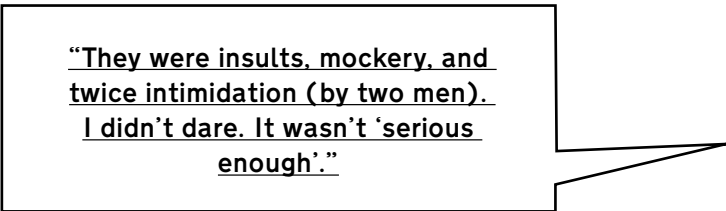


“There is no distinction in law around hate crimes for trans people. Wasn’t worth going through the trouble of reporting if all they could face was a fine.”

Additionally, some participants revealed that they had not even considered reporting the hate crime.



“I was in a panic, I didn’t think of it. I had to quickly seek shelter with my partner.”



“They were insults, mockery, and twice intimidation (by two men). I didn’t dare. It wasn’t ‘serious enough’.”

These narratives shed light on the complex dynamics surrounding the (non-)reporting of hate crimes, underscoring the need for enhanced trust-building measures, increased awareness, and a more supportive environment for those who have faced such traumatic experiences.

In our survey, we investigated in more details participants' perceptions of the police, shedding light on the complex relationship between the law enforcement system and the LGBTIQ+ community. We asked participants three key questions:

**1) Would they hide their sexual orientation or gender identity in interactions with the police due to fear of discrimination?**

The responses revealed a palpable concern among respondents. Many expressed a hesitancy to be open about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity during interactions with the police, fearing potential discrimination.

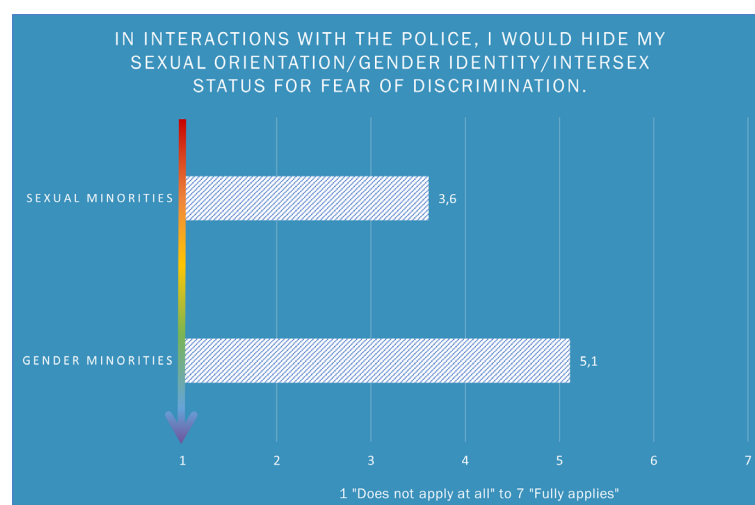
**2) Do they perceive that the police treat LGBTIQ+ individuals with less respect than cis-heterosexual people?**

The findings indicate that a substantial number of participants felt that the police does not treat members of the LGBTIQ+ community with the same level of respect than cis-heterosexual individuals.

**3) Do they perceive that sexual orientation or gender identity plays a role in interactions with the police?**

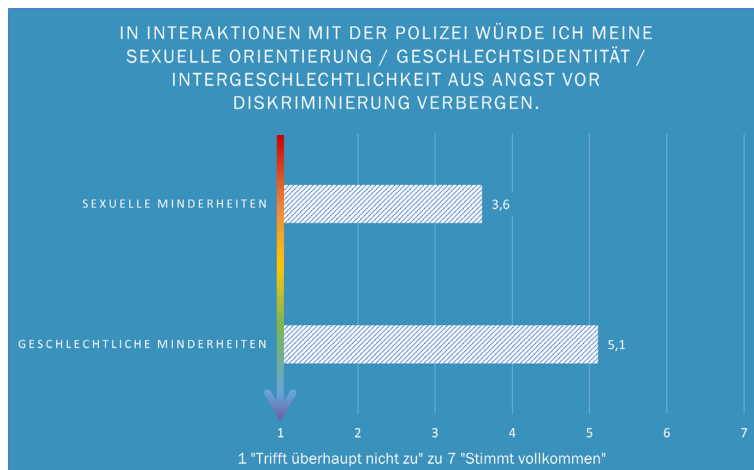
A notable proportion of participants perceived that their sexual orientation and/or gender identity indeed played a role in their interactions with the police, signaling an atmosphere where individuals feel their identity may be a factor in how they are treated.

Examining Figures 6, 7 and 8 (see below), it becomes apparent that a considerable number of individuals within the LGBTIQ+ community do not feel safe or respected in their interactions with the police. The rainbow arrow in the figures symbolizes a scenario where one's LGBTIQ+ status would not impact their interaction with law enforcement, emphasizing the stark contrast between this ideal and the perceived reality revealed by the survey findings.

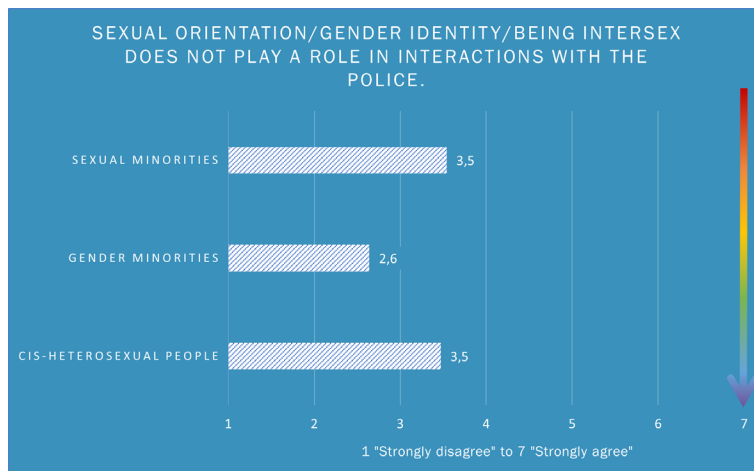


**Figure 6.** Openness with Police: Fear of Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity/Intersex Status





**Figure 7.** *Perceived Respect: Differential Treatment by Police toward LGBTIQ+ Individuals*

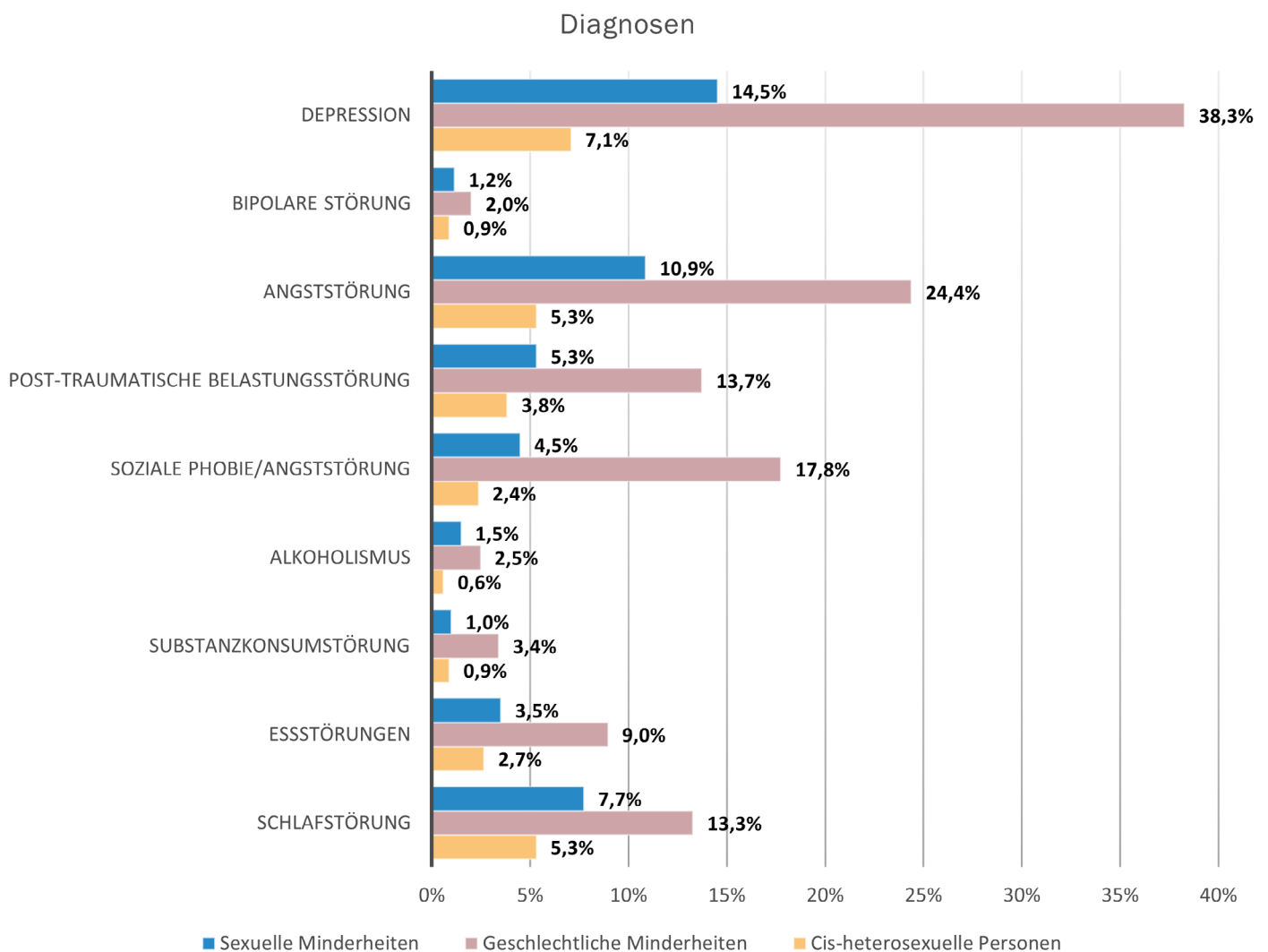


**Figure 8.** *Impact of Identity: Perception of Sexual Orientation/ Gender Identity/Intersex Status' Role in Police Interactions*

## HEALTH

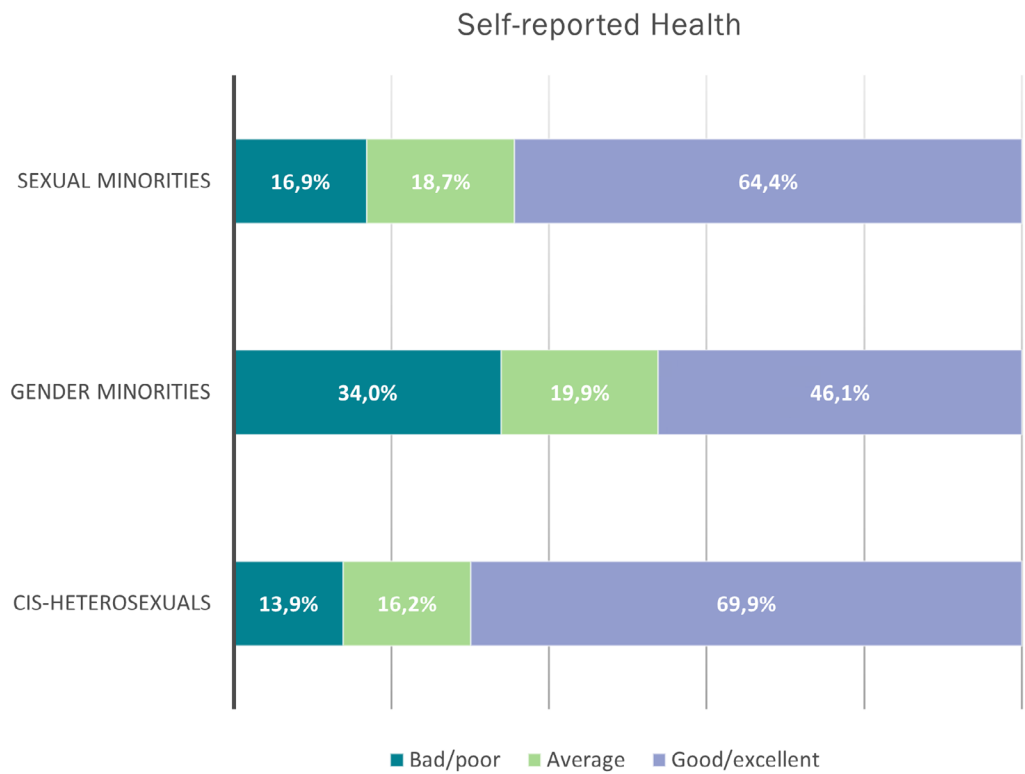
Finally, another theme of this year's survey was participants' health. We asked individuals about various health conditions diagnosed by a healthcare provider. The results, displayed in Figure 9, reveal the proportion of participants reporting each condition, categorized by cis-heterosexual, sexual minority, and gender minority groups.

LGBTIQ+ participants, particularly those who identify as trans or intersex, are more likely to have been diagnosed with various conditions. This trend is especially pronounced for conditions like depression and anxiety disorders. For example, sexual minority participants were two times, and gender minority participants were five times more likely, to report depression compared to cis-heterosexual participants. These findings highlight the importance of understanding and addressing the unique health challenges faced by different segments of the community.



**Figure 9.** Diagnosed Conditions Among Different Groups

Finally, participants were asked to rate their health within the past 12 months. We grouped the answers into three categories: (1) Bad or poor health, (2) Neither bad nor good health, and (3) Good or excellent health. As in past years, results displayed in Figure 10 reveal a health gap – one out of seven cis-heterosexual participants (13.9%), one out of six sexual minority members (19.6%), and one out of three gender minority members (34.0%) reporting a “poor health”.



**Figure 10.** *Self-reported Health*

# THANK YOU

Thank you very much for reading our report and supporting our research. Thanks to all the people completing our surveys, we can use the results of the Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel to work on various scientific articles, master's theses, and outreach work through talks and workshops. We hope we can support you through our work, too. If you want to know more about our annual work, you can check out our [homepage](http://www.swiss-lgbtqi-panel.ch) (www.swiss-lgbtqi-panel.ch) or our social media accounts. There, you can explore our fact sheets, research, interviews and talks we gave for the media, companies, universities, and at international conferences, and much more.

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Please cite the report as:  
Eisner, L. & Hässler, T. (2024).  
Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel - 2023 Summary Report.  
<https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/5tz6u>

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