Stonewall



LGBTQ+ Life in Scotland: 2026



Stonewall is a charity campaigning, supporting and advocating for Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans+ and Queer people.

We will work until every person who is LGBTQ+ is living free from discrimination, prejudice and inequality, making our shared future safer, fairer and more prosperous.

Stonewall is a diverse and inclusive organisation, underpinned by values that have helped us achieve decades of life-changing impact for LGBTQ+ people.

Our objectives, set out in our strategy *In Courage and Unity, Is Hope*, are to provide leadership to navigate turbulence for LGBTQ+ issues; to shape a policy and legislative agenda focused on improving LGBTQ+ lives; and to develop safe and inclusive places where everyone can work, play and succeed throughout their lives.

We will not rest until everyone, everywhere has equal rights.

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FOREWORD

Simon Blake OBE



In our strategy *In unity and courage, is hope* we committed to ensuring data and evidence drives all of our work. I am therefore delighted to present our new report *LGBTQ+ Life in Scotland: 2026*.

We last published research of this depth in 2018. If you, like me, are a before and after person, that was before Covid. So much has happened since then and so it was important we ask lesbian, gay, bi, trans+ and queer people in Scotland about their lives now.

Working with YouGov, we asked almost 600 people in Scotland about their families, their safety, their health, their work and money. And importantly about their hopes and fears in the years ahead. I am delighted that we now have the most comprehensive picture of the experience of the LGBTQ+ community in Scotland for almost a decade.

The good news first.

Nearly half of the people we spoke to believe acceptance of LGBTQ+ people is higher than it was ten years ago. Those who are open with family and friends overwhelmingly feel accepted by them. Fewer people are hiding who they are at work than those that are open. Three in four people who use LGBTQ+ community spaces find them welcoming. None of this happened by accident. It came from decades of campaigning, from pushing for changes to the law, and from millions of ordinary acts of courage: coming out at work, at the school gate and at the family dinner table.

But progress is not the same as arrival and there is so much more to do.

Half of the LGBTQ+ community feel pessimistic and worried about where equality is heading, and only a quarter feel optimistic. Importantly when we last asked, optimism outweighed pessimism by a wide margin. Something has shifted, and many people in our communities are now anxious, even fearful. Fewer than one in four believe politicians take our rights seriously. Just over one in four trust the police, the courts and government bodies to protect them. That should be a wakeup call for every single one of us.

For trans+ people, the picture is even starker. Eight in ten are pessimistic about the future, and some avoid streets, bars and gyms, and even their own families, to stay safe. That is a dark stain on our shared humanity.

When we asked what LGBTQ+ campaigning should prioritise over the next ten years, trans+ rights was the most common answer.

Some of the statistics are harder still. More than half of LGBTQ+ people have considered suicide at some point in their lives. Take that in.

Just as in 2017, fewer than half would feel comfortable holding a partner's hand in the street.

These findings must not be a reason to despair. They are a heat-map. They show where legal changes have improved lives and where they have not yet reached people. They also show where changes have hurt our community.

They show why LGBTQ+ equality must remain a priority for all politicians.

They remind us that those in our community most likely to be left behind must shape what comes next including trans+ people, disabled people, people of colour, asylum seekers and refugees and people of faith. The findings also show us that those things that make the biggest difference to people's lives – being able to be yourself and being accepted by the people around you – are within our collective power to change.

LGBTQ+ Life in Scotland: 2026 reflects what many of us instinctively feel: there has been genuine progress towards achieving equality for the LGBTQ+ community, but that progress is not experienced equally by all of us. For trans+ people in particular things feel worse not better, and for the whole community the future looks uncertain.

We are standing at a crossroads: we must continue working for positive change as the political and cultural climate poses new and real risks to our freedoms and our families. Some of the data in this report makes for tough reading, and it should sharpen our resolve to unite for change.

This report looks both backwards and forwards. It provides important data as we work to create a safe and equal world for all LGBTQ+ people to live, work and thrive.

My ask is that you work with us to make sure the next report tells a better story. That means all of us understanding what this data tells us and being determined to act. Thank you to everyone who took the time and energy to share their experiences with us, sometimes in painful detail. Together you have given us a clear picture of who we are and what we need.

As I say often, 15-year-old me who was in awe of the people who had the courage to found Stonewall would never have believed the progress in his lifetime. 52-year-old me cannot believe how much further we still have to go to realise our vision of a world where everyone, everywhere has equal rights.



SIMON BLAKE OBE
CEO, Stonewall

LGBTQ+ equality must remain a priority for all politicians

Executive summary

LGBTQ+ Life in Scotland: 2026 examines the lives of LGBTQ+ people across the nation, documenting experiences of equality, belonging, safety, health, work, and future planning. The first major report of its kind from Stonewall since 2018, it reveals that many believe acceptance has increased over the last ten years, while also finding significant pessimism about the future.

This report provides comparative analysis with UK-wide data presented in *LGBTQ+ Life in the UK: 2026*, highlighting notable variations in some areas of life. It shows that while outcomes are often more positive than the UK average, too many LGBTQ+ people in Scotland are experiencing discrimination in public, at the workplace, and in accessing healthcare.

Respondents in Scotland reported lower incidence of discrimination in public compared with the UK average, but it remains unacceptably high with one in ten experiencing discrimination in some settings in the last year. A smaller number of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland adjusted their behaviour to avoid hostility in public, but less than half said that they would be comfortable holding their partner's hand in the street.

Reported trust in state institutions, including police, courts, and the government, to protect LGBTQ+ rights was highest of all the nations. Yet, Scotland also had the highest reported levels of pessimism about the future of LGBTQ+ equality, and the greatest share of people saying that they believed that acceptance is lower than ten years ago.

Consistent with UK-wide findings, mental health and wellbeing in Scotland are a particular concern for LGBTQ+ people, who report far worse outcomes than the general population, and the data on suicidal ideation is stark. Mental health support remains out of reach for too many, and around half who do try to access NHS support say it is difficult.

At work, around a fifth of respondents reported experiencing certain types of negative behaviour due to their LGBTQ+ identity in the last year, and only half took action in response to incidents.

Our data also shows that the greatest burden of inequality often falls on the more marginalised within our community, including those with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and trans+ people, and marginalised groups consistently report heightened levels of discrimination in Scotland.

While the national picture may be challenging, it is positive to discover that LGBTQ+ people generally report feeling accepted by their immediate social networks. Most find friends, family, and their LGBTQ+ community to be sources of support and belonging.

Our data also reveals that LGBTQ+ people in Scotland are making plans for their future in greater numbers than the UK average, and slightly more LGBTQ+ people are making advance plans for their care needs in older age. However, too many are still encountering barriers in planning for their futures.

Many believe acceptance has increased over the last ten years, but there is significant pessimism about the future

Together, the evidence presented in this report suggests there has been progress made toward the goal of achieving equality for LGBTQ+ people in Scotland over the last decade, but as challenges have arisen – notably organised opposition to trans+ rights and the proliferation of an anti-rights rhetoric – progress feels fragile as we look to the future.

In the face of these challenges, policymakers must now renew their commitment to LGBTQ+ equality so that solutions to the issues highlighted in this report are found, and that the progress made is safeguarded, built on, and extended to all LGBTQ+ people in every part of Scotland.

Key findings

1 Equality - progress, challenges, and the state

- 44% of all LGBTQ+ people believed that acceptance was higher than ten years ago, compared with 38% who believed acceptance was lower.
- Over half (51%) of LGBTQ+ people were pessimistic about the direction that LGBTQ+ equality is going in the UK, rising to 81% of trans+ people.

2 Belonging - family, friends, and community

- Two-thirds (65%) of LGB+ people were open about their sexual orientation to family, with 87% to friends. Among trans+ people about their gender identity, these figures were 54% and 87%.
- Most LGB+ respondents felt accepted by family (96%) and friends (99%) they were open to. 96% of trans+ people felt accepted by friends.

3 Safety - discrimination, crime, and abuse

- 8% of LGBTQ+ people reported that they had ever been questioned about their sex assigned at birth when using single-sex spaces, rising to 25% of trans+ people. 11% of lesbians also reported this.
- Of those who experienced a potentially criminal incident in the last year, 26% believed that it might have been motivated by their sexual orientation, while 7% believed their gender identity might have been a factor.

4 Health - services, mental health, and wellbeing

- 17% of LGB+ people said that healthcare staff lacked understanding of LGB+ health needs, while 33% of trans+ people experienced the same for trans health needs.
- More than half (53%) of all LGBTQ+ people had ever considered suicide, and 18% had attempted suicide.

5 Work - inclusion, discrimination, and finances

- Almost a third (31%) of LGBTQ+ people had hidden or disguised their identity at work during the last year.
- One in ten LGBTQ+ people had experienced negative comments or conduct from colleagues (10%) and customers or clients (10%) on account of their LGBTQ+ identity in the last year.

6 Future - financial planning, family formation, and older age care

- Half (50%) of LGBTQ+ people do not have confidence in being financially secure in retirement.
- Around a third (37%) of LGBTQ+ people have confidence that care providers would understand their needs as an LGBTQ+ person.

Introduction

In 2017, Stonewall commissioned YouGov to survey LGBTQ+ people on their experiences of everyday life across key areas such as health, home and community, work, and university. More than 5,000 LGBTQ+ people generously shared their experiences, which formed the basis of a series of reports, *LGBT in Britain*, published between 2018 and 2020.

This was a landmark series, cited widely by those in the sector and beyond. It was also published in a markedly different political climate. Since then, LGBTQ+ people have faced growing pressures, and as we experience increasing threats both to our community and to broader civil society, there is a perception among many that life has become more challenging.

LGBT in Britain was also released at a time when published data on LGBTQ+ people was limited. Following its release, the evidence base has grown through the UK Government's National Survey in 2018, the Censuses of 2021/22, and research by LGBTQ+ and other organisations. We know more about the needs and wants of the LGBTQ+ community than ever before, but as this report reflects, this doesn't always translate into action from policymakers.

Almost a decade on, it is time to build on the legacy of *LGBT in Britain*, renew our evidence base, and establish how life has changed for LGBTQ+ people since 2017. *LGBTQ+ Life in the UK: 2026* identifies where there has been progress, where issues remain, and where emerging challenges demand action.

As with *LGBT in Britain*, this new series includes a report specifically focussed on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland, reflecting Stonewall's commitment to advancing LGBTQ+ equality in Scotland. This report, *LGBTQ+ Life in Scotland: 2026*, exists as a supplement to the UK-wide findings. We make comparisons between the UK-wide data and the data generated through the Scottish sample to identify where there are notable differences in experiences between the nations, but the findings of this report stand alone.

Since *LGBT in Britain*, the acronym we use to refer to our community has changed, and it is right that the title of this new report reflects this. *LGBTQ+ Life in Scotland: 2026* better represents Stonewall's inclusive approach to securing equality for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer+ people across the nation.

This new series includes a report specifically focussed on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland

The data underpinning this report, once again generated in collaboration with YouGov, is rich and expansive. It allows us to understand where experiences are similar across the LGBTQ+ population, as well as where outcomes differ between parts of the community. Throughout the report, we present these differences wherever possible, recognising that the LGBTQ+ population is not monolithic.

This report is divided into six substantive chapters, each covering a different theme. These are:

- Equality – progress, challenges, and the state;
- Belonging – family, friends, and community;
- Safety – discrimination, crime, and abuse;
- Health – services, mental health, and wellbeing;
- Work – inclusion, discrimination, and finances;
- Future – financial planning, family formation, and older age care.

LGBTQ+ Life in the UK: 2026, including its Scottish and Welsh companion reports, is just one way we are meeting our strategic objective of shaping policy and legislative change through evidence. However, their value extends beyond these reports: their findings add to existing evidence on LGBTQ+ experiences in the UK, and will inform our work in the coming years to ensure all LGBTQ+ people are safe, equal, and thriving.

Scottish legal and policy context

In the decade since Stonewall last surveyed LGBTQ+ people on their experiences of life in the UK, governments at both the central and devolved levels have increasingly included sexual orientation and gender identity in policymaking, and there have been progressive legislative reforms which have advanced LGBTQ+ equality in Scotland.

While there has not been a comprehensive LGBTQ+ action plan, Scottish Government in 2023 adopted its Non-Binary Equality Action Plan, setting out actions to achieve equality for non-binary people in Scotland.[1] Moreover, the Census of Scotland conducted in 2022 strengthened our understanding of the LGBTQ+ community, with data being collected on sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time.

As in Westminster, laws aimed at addressing the historic injustice of the criminalisation of same-sex activity were also adopted in Scotland in the last decade.[2] Additional initiatives included addressing the dismissal of LGBTQ+ people from merchant ships in 2017,[3] and the 2023 Etherton review into systemic abuse and criminalisation of LGBTQ+ people in the UK armed forces.[4]

Progressive laws have also been adopted to address contemporary harms to LGBTQ+ people. The *Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021* strengthened protections against hate crime on the grounds of sexual orientation, transgender identity, and variations in sex characteristics.[5]

In employment, the *Equality Act 2010* was a landmark piece of legislation which built on existing law to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and 'gender reassignment' at work. While the impact of this law is significant, its interpretation has been the subject of legal challenge. The April 2025 Supreme Court ruling, outlined below, and subsequent updates to statutory and non-statutory guidance have created challenges for organisations who want to operate in an inclusive way. More recently, the *Employment Rights Act 2025* strengthened workplace rights for LGBTQ+ people, including greater protections against third-party harassment.[6]

In health policy, an HIV Action Plan was adopted in 2023,[7] six years after PrEP – a highly effective HIV prevention drug – was rolled out by NHS Scotland in 2017,[8] while blood donation rules for men who have sex with men have been relaxed in recent years.[9] In education, Scotland became the first country in the world to embed LGBTQ+ inclusive education in the curriculum.[10] Meanwhile, in 2022 the Church of Scotland voted to allow ministers and deacons to conduct same-sex marriages.[11]

In the area of family planning, the 2024 amendment to the *Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act* modernised processes related to the donation of sperm and eggs, including allowing those living with HIV with an undetectable viral load to make donations to known recipients.[12] Access to survivor's pension benefits for same-sex couples was equalised through a 2017 Supreme Court ruling,

There is an opportunity for Scottish Government to build on the advances made in the last ten years and to renew its commitment to LGBTQ+ equality

addressing historic discrimination in this area.[13]

At the same time as these advances, tensions on trans+ rights erupted in the legal and policy space. Scottish Government attempted to make advances in legal recognition of gender identity, adopting the *Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill* in 2022 before it was controversially blocked by UK Government.

Scotland has also notably seen landmark court cases originate in the country, leading to the Supreme Court in *For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers* ruling in April 2025 that the definition of 'sex' for the purposes of the *Equality Act 2010* refers to 'biological' sex.[14] In May 2026, the Equality and Human Rights Commission published its long-awaited updated Code of Practice for Services, Public Functions, and Associations in an attempt to clarify how service providers should implement the ruling.[15] This was one of the most consequential developments on LGBTQ+ rights in recent history, and its ramifications are yet to be fully felt.

Together, the picture of the last decade is mixed, and there have been both substantial advancements made towards LGBTQ+ equality, as well as setbacks. There is an opportunity for Scottish Government to build on the advances made in the last ten years and to renew its commitment to LGBTQ+ equality as we look to the future.



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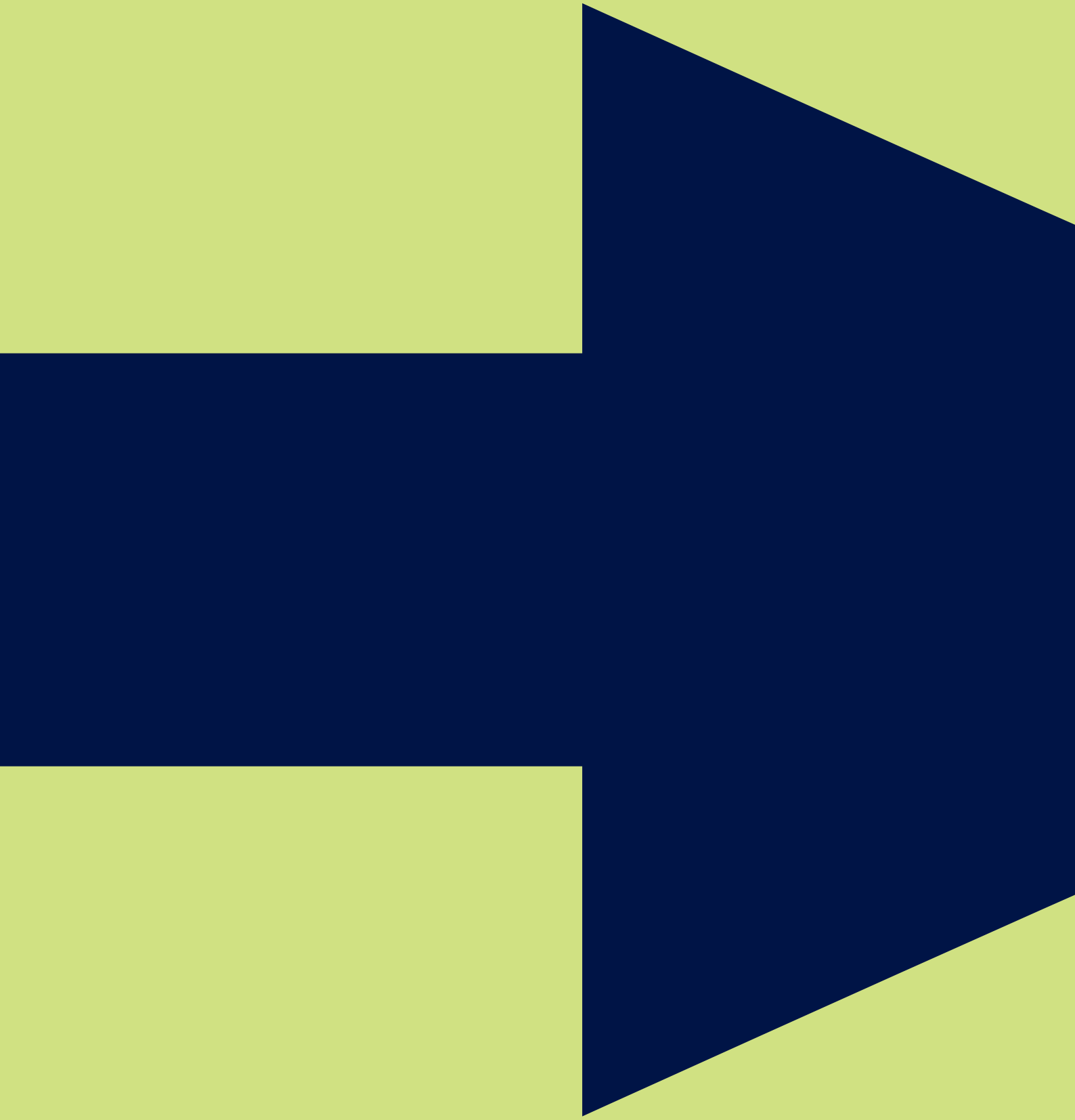
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SECTION 1

Equality - Progress, Challenges, and the State

Progress over the last decade

When asked whether acceptance of LGBTQ+ people in the UK was higher, lower, or about the same compared with ten years ago, just under half of respondents in Scotland said they believed that acceptance was higher (44%) compared with over a third saying that acceptance was lower (38%).[16]

This finding is lower than the UK average (48% higher, 31% lower). In fact, Scotland is the part of the UK with the highest proportion of people believing that acceptance has fallen compared with a decade ago.

As with the UK-wide data, trans+ people were much more likely to believe that acceptance was lower: 66% of trans+ people in Scotland said they believed acceptance was lower (19% higher) compared with 58% of trans+ people in the UK as a whole (26% higher).

Asked to identify the most significant improvement in LGBTQ+ equality over the last ten years, the individual factors most frequently referenced by LGBTQ+ people in Scotland were same-sex marriage (24%, n=142) and increased acceptance (15%, n=89).[17] For instance:

> *Since gay marriage, gay people are very integrated and in culture without much second thought*
>
> gay cisgender man, 18-24

> *There has been massive movement in the acceptance of LGBTQ+ over the past 10 years led mainly by the youth who are much more accepting of LGBTQ+ people*
>
> gay cisgender man, 55-64

When grouping individual factors most frequently mentioned in response to this question under thematic headings, the themes with the highest number of responses were 'law reform and legal rights' (n=155), 'social inclusion' (n=89), and 'public visibility' (n=61).[18]

Almost half reported being pessimistic about the future of LGBTQ+ equality

Present-day challenges

Despite more of our sample feeling that there has been an increase in acceptance of LGBTQ+ people in the last decade, the data suggests there is a perception that progress towards equality has stalled.

As with the overall UK results, optimism about the future of LGBTQ+ equality was low, with around a quarter reporting that they were optimistic (24%), while half reported being pessimistic (51%).[19]

Pessimism was higher amongst younger people than older cohorts: for instance, 61% of those 35-44 were pessimistic, compared with 35% of those 65+. Consistent with the UK average, trans+ people were highly pessimistic (81%).

Asked for the biggest challenge currently facing LGBTQ+ equality, over a quarter of respondents identified opposition to trans+ rights as a challenge (29%, n=172).

Trans+ rights (n=210)	Political (n=157)
Trans (n=172)	Government (n=18)
Transphobia (n=50)	Politicians (n=57)
	Reform (n=30)
	Right (wing) (n=100)

Table 1. Biggest challenges currently facing LGBTQ+ equality by theme

Over a quarter of respondents identified opposition to trans+ rights as a challenge

The next most popular challenge identified was the political right (17%, n=100).[20] These align with the challenges identified by the UK-wide sample. Table 1 outlines the challenges most frequently selected by respondents in Scotland grouped by theme.

Our data also identified an apparent trust deficit between LGBTQ+ people and the state, which may also be contributing to this pessimism about LGBTQ+ equality in Scotland:

- Half of LGBTQ+ people said they distrust state institutions such as police, courts, and government bodies (51%), while 27% expressed trust.[21]
- 39% disagreed that laws, policies, and guidance protect the rights of LGBTQ+ people, while 36% agreed.[22]
- More than half disagreed that politicians take the rights of LGBTQ+ people seriously (53%), while 23% agreed.[23]

Trust was higher among the Scottish sample compared with the UK average by four percentage points across each metric. Older people were more likely to have faith in the state to protect LGBTQ+ rights than younger cohorts.

Future priorities

Finally, we asked our sample to identify what the priority for LGBTQ+ advocacy should be in the next ten years. In line with the challenges identified above, respondents most frequently identified 'trans' issues as the priority (25%, n=147).[24] For instance:

> *Trans rights are the number one priority at the moment. Attacks on trans people are a wedge to try and start breaking the rights we've managed to get through struggle*

bisexual cisgender man, 35-44

> *Ensuring trans people can be included, belong and valued in all areas of society*

gay cisgender man, 25-34

The next most popular responses were 'acceptance' (8%, n=47) and 'equality' (8%, n=46). In terms of themes, the groupings most frequently cited were 'trans+ rights' (n=147) and 'law reform and legal rights' (n=97), followed by 'social inclusion' (n=47) and 'education' (n=34).

16 C2. Do you feel that acceptance of LGBTQ+ people in the UK is higher, lower, or about the same compared with ten years ago?

17 C3. Looking back at the last ten years, in your opinion, what, if anything, do you think is the most significant improvement in LGBTQ+ equality in the UK?

18 For readability, questions C3-5 in this section report individual coded responses mentioned by at least 3% of total respondents (n=18) and themes mentioned by at least 10% of respondents (n=60). Theme counts represent the number of respondents who mentioned at least one factor in that theme and do not equal the sum of all factors due to some respondents mentioning more than one. Coding captures synonyms and related words.

19 C1. How optimistic or pessimistic do you currently feel with the direction LGBTQ+ equality is going in the UK?

20 C4. In your opinion, what is currently he biggest challenge facing LGBTQ+ equality in the UK?

21 C6. To what extent, if at all, do you trust or distrust state institutions, such as the police, courts, and government bodies, to protect the rights of LGBTQ+ people?

22 C7_1. I feel that laws, policies, and official guidance protect the rights of LGBTQ+ people.

23 C7_2. I feel that politicians take the rights of LGBTQ+ people seriously.

24 C5. Looking ahead to the next ten years, in your opinion, what, if anything, do you think should be the priority in advocating for LGBTQ+ equality in the UK?



SECTION 2

Belonging - Family, Friends, and Community

Family and friends

Asked to what extent they were open about their sexual orientation, two thirds of LGB+ people said they were open with family (65%), with 46% being 'fully open'. This is similar to the findings for the overall UK sample (67% open, 42% 'fully open'). Almost nine in ten were open with friends (87%), in line with the UK findings (88%).[25]

Gay men and lesbians were more likely to be open about their sexual orientation with family and friends compared with bisexuals.

We also asked respondents how accepted they felt by those they were open to about their sexual orientation: 96% felt some level of acceptance by family, and 99% by friends. LGB+ people in Scotland were more likely to say they felt 'fully' accepted (67%) by family than the UK average (59%).[26]

Among trans+ people, just over half were open about their gender identity with family (54%), while 87% were open with friends.[27] 96% of trans+ people felt accepted by friends in relation to their gender identity.[28] Again, these are comparable with UK averages.

Two thirds of LGB+ people said they were open about their sexual orientation with family

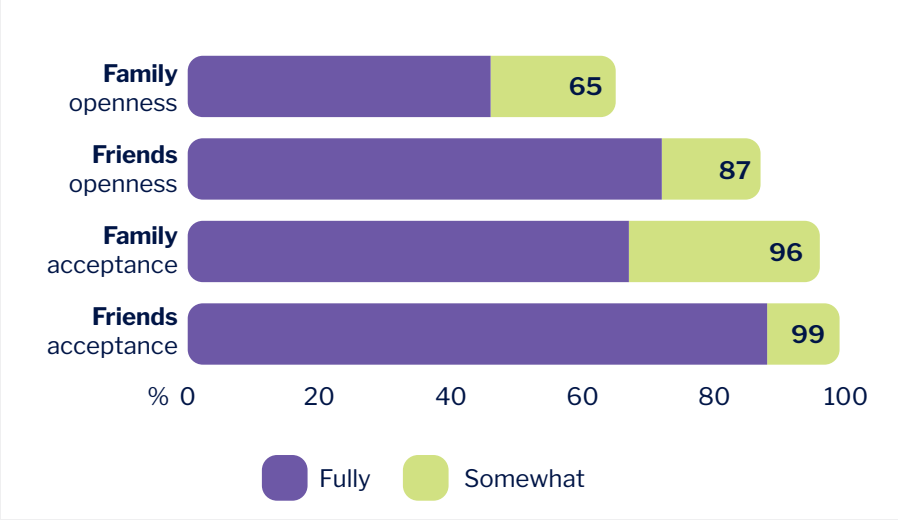


Chart 1. Openness and acceptance of sexual orientation among family and friends

Parental experiences

We invited LGBTQ+ people who are parents or guardians to share their experiences of raising children and any impact their identity had on this experience. Sentiment analysis found that, of the 70 respondents who shared experiences, the largest group reported neutral experiences (n=45), meaning that respondents believed their experience of parenthood was not impacted by their LGBTQ+ identity. In many cases, however, this was because they were not perceived as LGBTQ+, either because they were not open about their identity, or because they were in heterosexual presenting relationships.[29]

A smaller selection (n=9) of people shared negative experiences. For instance:

> *Criticism and discrimination came from estranged family members and the Catholic Church*

gay cisgender man, 65+

> *Some discrimination when using services as a parent (assumptions about two-parent families and exclusion/ judgement about not being a heterosexual two-parent family), some social awkwardness*

lesbian cisgender woman, 35-44

Meanwhile, some (n=8) reflected on the positive impact that being an LGBTQ+ person can have on parenting:

> *As the step-parent of children (now adults) I feel that I was fully accepted as a co-parent by both my partner and the children's heterosexual mother. My children's friends and their families have known about mine and their father's sexuality and have not acted negatively towards us. Our openness about our relationship and the creation of a safe space to discuss things allowed some of our children's friends to use us as sounding boards for their own worries*

gay cisgender man, 65+

> *My partner's children seem so much more well informed about queer identities and I hope they feel confident about expressing themselves when and if the time comes. They were quick to adjust to a new name and different pronouns, showing that prejudice is taught, not inherent to us as human*

bisexual transgender woman, 35-44



LGBTQ+ community spaces

We asked our sample to reflect on their experiences of attending LGBTQ+ community spaces and groups. This revealed that under one third of the sample in Scotland did not attend these spaces (31%), slightly lower than the overall findings for the UK (35%).[30]

Trans+ people (39%) were more likely than cisgender LGB+ people (30%) to say that they did not attend LGBTQ+ community spaces. Older people were also more likely not to attend (65+: 45%) than younger people (25-34: 25%).

Of those who did attend LGBTQ+ community spaces and groups, feelings were generally positive: 75% found these spaces welcoming, compared with just 8% finding them unwelcoming. Those with disabilities reported them to be unwelcoming at a higher rate (12%) than those without (6%).

In line with UK-wide findings, 18% of people in Scotland said they had ever experienced discrimination in LGBTQ+ community spaces/ groups. Discrimination was higher than average for people of faith (23%), trans+ people (22%), and bisexual women (22%). 23% of those who currently attend these spaces reported experiencing discrimination.[31]

Three quarters of people who attended LGBTQ+ community spaces found them welcoming

25 D1. To what extent, if at all, are you open about your sexual orientation among... D1_1. Your family / D1_2. Your friends.

26 D3. Thinking about the people you are open to about your sexual orientation among these groups... To what extent, if at all, do you feel accepted by them in relation to your sexual orientation?

27 D2. To what extent, if at all, are you open about your gender identity among... D2_1. Your family / D2_2. Your friends.

28 D4. Thinking about the people you are open to about your gender identity among these groups...To what extent, if at all, do you feel accepted by them in relation to your gender identity? D4_2. Your friends.

29 J4. Please can you tell us more about your experiences of raising children as an LGBTQ+ person, including any experience of discrimination you or your children have faced because of your sexual orientation and/or gender identity, or any positive.

30 N1. Thinking about your local LGBTQ+ community, for example LGBTQ+ venues, LGBTQ+ community and exercise groups, or pride events...To what extent do you consider it a welcoming or unwelcoming environment?

31 N2. Have you experienced any discriminatory treatment in your local LGBTQ+ community, such as LGBTQ+ venues, LGBTQ+ community and exercise groups, or pride events, because of your... Sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, sex assigned at birth, age, faith or religion.

SECTION 3

Safety - Discrimination, Crime, and Abuse

Discrimination in public life

When asked about their experiences of discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity in public life in the last year, the settings where discrimination was reported most often in absolute numbers were travelling on public transport (n=50), in hospitality venues (n=44), and in shops (n=40).[32]

However, these results are impacted by how often people visit each setting, with the highest levels of discrimination being in the most frequently visited settings. When analysing only those who were in each setting in the previous year, the settings where discrimination was most frequently experienced proportionally were live sport events/bars (11%), public transport (10%), and education institutions (9%).

This suggests that reported levels of discrimination in Scotland are lower in proportional terms than the UK averages, however some caution should be exercised given the smaller sample size in Scotland. The settings broadly correlate with UK findings, with some variance in proportional terms.

Discrimination was reported most often in shops, public services, public transport, and hospitality venues

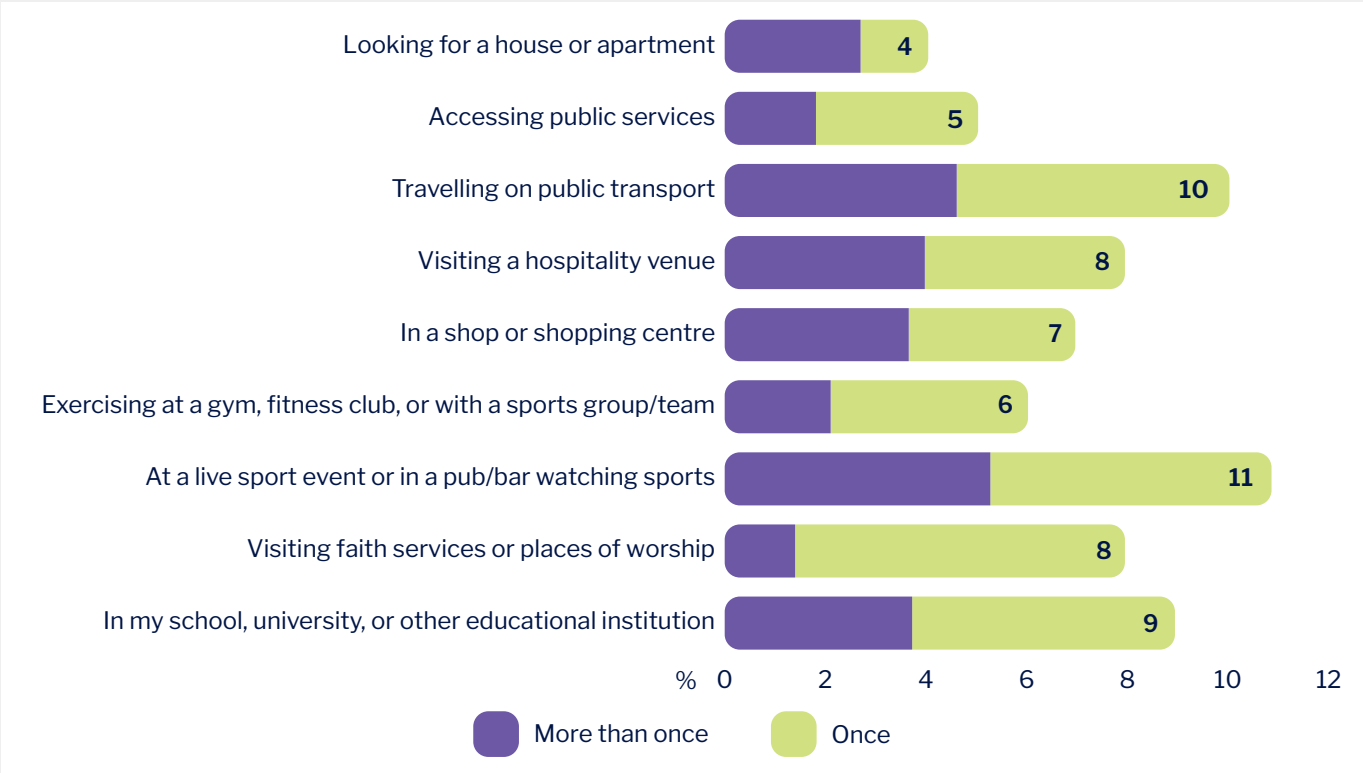


Chart 2. Discrimination in public settings during the last year (% of those in each setting)

Navigating hostility in public settings

We asked respondents how comfortable they feel in a number of public settings, and whether they avoid situations or adjust their behaviour for fear of discrimination. This revealed that:

- 45% of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland would feel comfortable walking down the street holding their partner's hand, with almost a third being uncomfortable (30%). Discomfort was much higher among gay men (58%) than lesbians (26%) or bisexuals (14%).[33]
- Almost seven in ten people said they feel safe travelling on public transport (68%), with just 11% disagreeing. Trans+ people were less likely to feel safe (50%) than cisgender LGB+ people (70%).[34]
- Just 16% believed public sporting events are welcoming for LGBTQ+ people. 36% disagreed, in line with the UK average (37%).[35]

Use of avoidance measures was generally lower in Scotland compared with the UK average. For instance, LGBTQ+ people in Scotland said that they avoided certain streets at a lower rate (15%) than the UK average (22%).[36]

Trans+ people were significantly more likely to report using avoidance measures in every situation compared with cisgender LGB+ people. For instance, 42% of trans+ people in Scotland said that they adjusted the way they dress in public compared with 16% of cisgender LGB+ people.[37]

Single-sex spaces

The use of single-sex spaces is an area that has become highly politicised across the UK in recent years, and our data suggests that some LGBTQ+ people are avoiding using these spaces: 10% of all LGBTQ+ people in Scotland say they avoid these spaces.[38]

When using these spaces, 8% said they had ever been questioned about their sex assigned at birth. Lesbians were more likely (11%) than gay men (3%) and bisexual people (9%) to have experienced this. A quarter of trans+ people reported ever having been questioned about their sex assigned at birth when using these spaces (25%).[39] For instance:

> ***Was at a football game, going to the toilet and the woman following behind me stated that this was the ladies toilet. I told her I knew that and she started to say well how would I know you were a woman etc. I felt so uncomfortable***

lesbian cisgender woman, 65+

> ***Challenged/glared at using the toilets in Ikea. Didn't particularly bother me but upset my wife, who was with me at the time***

gay/lesbian genderqueer person, 45-54

> ***I accessed a public toilet which is attached to a community centre. I used the women's bathroom - I am of the female sex. A man, who appeared to belong to the community centre, had a look in the bathroom area and questioned my presence there. He kept pointing out that it was a women's bathroom. I am non-binary and do tend to dress more masculine. I told him that I was in the right bathroom but he did not believe me and got unpleasant about it***

bisexual non-binary person, 45-54

Less than half of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland would feel comfortable walking down the street holding their partner's hand

Hate crime and online abuse

We asked our respondents whether they experienced any of a list of potentially criminal incidents in the last year: 32% of LGBTQ+ people had experienced some type of incident. Most commonly experienced were verbal harassment (17%) and sexual harassment (12%).[40]

Of those that had experienced an incident, 26% believed that the incident might have been motivated by their sexual orientation, while 7% believed their gender identity might have been a factor.[41]

The qualitative responses below demonstrate some of the incidents experienced by LGBTQ+ people and the impact that it had:

> *I was attacked by a group of men not far from where I live on my way home from a night out with friends. This made me change a lot about the way I present in public, the way I dress, the way I walk, using headphones. It left me with a fear of leaving my house and I stayed inside for two weeks, this attack happened 3 months ago and the fear of leaving my house persists*

gay/lesbian non-binary person, 25-34

> *I got called a homophobic slur on the bus which made me feel very scared and unsafe for the rest of that journey. I am now much less comfortable on public transport than I was before*

asexual non-binary person, 25-34

Asked what action they took in response to the incident, almost nine in ten took no action (89%), while just 7% reported to police.[42] This is considerably lower than the UK average where 18% reported to police, but caution should be exercised due to the low base. Some respondents reflected on the police response to incidents in qualitative responses:

> *I feel that the attitude of the police when it comes to hate crime is always "There is nothing we can do"*

gay cisgender man, 25-34

> *Experienced homophobia at a football match. Reported it to stewards and police on site. The stewards were lovely and supported, so were the police. The man in question ended up with a caution, which I felt was fair under the circumstances*

bisexual cisgender woman, 35-44

When asked whether respondents had experienced homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic abuse online, including on social media, in the last month, the findings broadly reflected the UK averages: 6% of LGB+ people had experienced homo/biphobic abuse directed at them (7% UK), while 34% had experienced indirect abuse (36% UK).[43]

Among trans+ people, 15% had experienced direct transphobic abuse in the last month (17% UK), while three quarters had experienced indirect abuse (75%), higher than the UK average (64%).

Conversion practices

Incidence of conversion practices was lower among the Scottish sample compared with the UK average, with 0.5% of LGBTQ+ people ever having undergone conversion practices, and 2.5% being offered but not undergoing them. In the UK, these figures were 1% and 4%.[44]

These figures were higher among trans+ people (1% undergone, 7% offered), those from a religious background (1% undergone, 2% offered) and those with disabilities (1% undergone, 2% offered).

32 E1. During the last year, have you personally felt discriminated against because of your sexual orientation and/ or gender identity in any of the following situations?

33 E3_1. I would feel comfortable walking down the street while holding my partner's hand.

34 E3_9. I feel safe travelling on public transport.

35 E3_2. Public sporting events are a welcoming space for LGBTQ+ people.

36 E3_4. I avoid certain streets because I do not feel safe as an LGBTQ+ person there.

37 E3_5. I adjust the way I dress when I go out in public because I fear discrimination/ harassment.

38 E3_7. I avoid using single sex spaces such as public toilets or changing rooms.

39 E4. Have you ever been questioned about your sex assigned at birth when accessing single sex spaces such as public toilets or changing rooms?

40 F1. During the last year, have you personally experienced any of the following types of incidents?

41 F2. Thinking about the most recent incident, was there anything about the incident that made you think it MIGHT have been motivated by any of these factors?

42 F3. Thinking about the most recent incident you experienced which you believe was motivated by your sexual orientation and/ or gender identity. Who, if anyone, did you report this incident to?

43 F7. Thinking about your online activity, including using social media, during the last month have you experienced any of the following?

44 G1. Have you ever been offered, or have you undergone conversion practices in an attempt to change, 'cure' or suppress your sexual orientation and/ or gender identity?

SECTION 4

Health - Services, Mental Health, and Wellbeing

Discrimination in healthcare settings

When asked whether they had experienced any negative incidents when accessing healthcare which they believe was due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, a significant minority of respondents in Scotland reported that they had. However, these were lower than the UK average in every instance.[45]

Under one in ten LGBTQ+ people in Scotland reported that they had experienced discriminatory or negative remarks (7%) or discriminatory treatment (9%) by healthcare staff. Furthermore, 19% reported experiencing questions about their identity that made them uncomfortable, while 5% had been outed without their consent.

Trans+ people were considerably more likely than cisgender LGB+ people to say that they had experienced each situation when accessing healthcare. For instance, 6% had been forced or pressured to take medical tests, three times higher than for cisgender LGB+ people (2%), while 11% of trans+ people reported being refused care which they believe was due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, compared with 1% of cisgender LGB+ people.

Beyond more overt incidents of discrimination, some LGBTQ+ people often find that healthcare services are not sensitive to their needs. To this end, one in six LGB+ people in Scotland reported that, in their experience, healthcare staff lacked understanding of specific LGB+ health needs (17%). This was higher among lesbians (22%) and people with disabilities (24%).

A third of trans+ people reported that in their experience healthcare staff lacked understanding of specific trans+ health needs (33%), slightly lower than the UK average (39%).

Against this backdrop, 11% of LGBTQ+ people reported that they had avoided treatment for fear of discrimination. This rises to more than four in ten trans+ people in Scotland (43%).

One in six LGB+ people in Scotland reported that, in their experience, healthcare staff lacked understanding of specific LGB+ health needs

Personal wellbeing

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) regularly measures personal wellbeing through the Annual Population Survey against four metrics on a 0-10 scale: life satisfaction, worthwhileness, happiness, and anxiety.[46] We included these same questions within our survey to assess the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people against the general population. The results for the three positive metrics are illustrated by Chart 3.

This analysis reveals that reported personal wellbeing is higher among LGBTQ+ people in Scotland than the UK LGBTQ+ average, but remains below the general population by over one point per metric.

Feelings of anxiety were found to be higher for LGBTQ+ people in Scotland (4.6) compared with the UK general population (3.2).[47]

Chart 3. Personal wellbeing in the general population and LGBTQ+ community (0-10)

6.1

Life satisfaction among LGBTQ+ people

General population = 7.5

6.4

Worthwhileness among LGBTQ+ people

General population = 7.8

6.2

Happiness among LGBTQ+ people

General population = 7.4

Over half of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland reported that they had ever considered suicide

Impact of LGBTQ+ identity on mental health

Asked what impact, if any, experiences related to their sexual orientation or gender identity had on their mental health in the previous year, more than four in ten LGB+ people said there was no impact (43%). 19% said the impact was positive, while 15% said negative. These findings are broadly in line with the UK average.[48]

Among trans+ people, over a third believed that experiences related to their gender identity had a negative impact on their mental health (36%), while just 17% said the impact was positive.[49] In Scotland, trans+ people were less likely to say there was a negative impact than the UK average (41%), and more likely to say there was no impact (25%) compared with the UK average (18%). Nonetheless, the data points to a divergence in the experience of cisgender LGB+ and trans+ people also seen in the UK-wide sample.

Suicidal ideation and attempts

Elevated rates of suicidal ideation and attempts within the LGBTQ+ community are well-documented, and the findings in Scotland align with our UK-wide findings which affirm this heightened risk of suicidal ideation and attempts.

Over half of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland reported that they had ever considered suicide (53%),[50] while just under a fifth had attempted suicide (18%), lower than the UK average (22%).[51]

Suicidal ideation was higher among women, with 56% of LB+ women having ever considered suicide and 19% attempting suicide, compared with 44% and 15% of GB+ men, respectively. Bisexual people were also more likely to have considered (62%) or attempted (20%) suicide compared with gay and lesbian people (41%, 17%).

As with the UK-wide findings, trans+ people reported having considered suicide (75%) and attempting suicide (29%) at elevated rates.

Access to mental health services

This data points to a significant issue with mental health and wellbeing in the LGBTQ+ community, and a clear case for accessible mental health support. However, our findings suggest that many are struggling to access appropriate care.

In Scotland, 20% reported that they accessed mental health support through the NHS in the last year, compared with 21% UK-wide. 9% attempted but were unable to access support, which is roughly consistent with the UK average. A smaller number had accessed private mental health services (15%) and charity or community-based services (8%) during the last year.[52]

Women were more than twice as likely as men to experience being unable to access mental health support: 11% of LB+ women reported this compared with 5% of GB+ men. Trans+ people were more likely to experience issues accessing support (19%) compared with cisgender LGB+ people (8%).

Asked how easy or difficult NHS mental health services were to access, half of those who accessed or attempted to access them in the last year said it was difficult (51%).[53]

The primary reason given for this was long waiting times (65%), with 'my GP was not supportive' being the second most popular reason (26%). 6% of LGB+ people were worried about discrimination or lack of understanding on account of their sexual orientation.[54] As one respondent put it:

> ***Mental health services are not fit for purpose especially for LGBTQ+ people. They have not been funded at all level that meets demand and what is provided is appropriate for individual need [sic]. Training for practitioners is not up to date and does not meet the needs of diverse people***
>
> bisexual cisgender woman, 55-64

45 H1. Have you ever experienced any of the following situations when using or trying to access healthcare services, which you felt was because of your sexual orientation and/ or gender identity?

46 Office for National Statistics, *Personal well-being in the UK QMI, 2025*. https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/methodologies/personalwellbeingintheukqmi.

47 I8_4. Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

48 I1. On balance, during the last year, to what extent, if at all, has your mental health been affected by experiences relating to your... I1_1. Sexual orientation.

49 I1. On balance, during the last year, to what extent, if at all, has your mental health been affected by experiences relating to your... I1_2. Gender identity.

50 I2. Have you ever considered attempting suicide?

51 I3. Have you ever attempted suicide?

52 I4. During the last year, have you accessed, or tried to access, any mental health services for any reason, for example, talking treatments such as counselling or therapy, or other specialist mental health services, through any of the following pathways?

53 I5. How easy or difficult was it for you to access NHS mental health services?

54 I6. Why was accessing NHS mental health services difficult in the last year?

SECTION 5

Work - Inclusion, Discrimination, and Finances

Looking for work

We asked respondents to identify which factors related to being LGBTQ+ are important to them when deciding where to work. In total, 72% of all LGBTQ+ people we surveyed selected at least one factor as an important consideration when deciding where to work.[55] The factors most frequently selected were:

- Feeling able to be open about my sexual orientation (54%);
- Transparent workplace equality policies (53%);
- Seeing examples of LGBTQ+ inclusion on the organisation's website, published materials, and communications (38%);
- Seeing senior management who are LGBTQ+ (31%);
- Seeing senior management represented on diversity, equality, and inclusion networks, groups and sub-committees (29%).

There was no divergence between the factors selected in Scotland and the UK as a whole.

When invited to reflect on their experiences as an LGBTQ+ person in the workplace, some respondents highlighted the value of inclusion policies, but only if they are bought into by senior management:

> *My employer spoke to myself when it came to writing their transitioning at work policy. This was later described as being the best written policy by the director of HR as it was written with someone with the life experience of being trans*

lesbian transgender woman, 45-54

> *There is some performative visible inclusion of LGBT+ people at my workplace but no actual evidence of awareness amongst management or colleagues; people put pronouns in their email signatures but no one ever actually respects people's pronouns*

bisexual non-binary person, 25-34

Of those currently in work, almost a third reported that they had hidden or disguised that they were LGBTQ+ in the previous year

Openness at work

Two-thirds of all LGB+ people are open about their sexual orientation in their workplace (67%), but just four in ten reported that they are 'fully open' about their identity (43%). Bisexuals were much less likely to be open (51%) than gay and lesbian people (83%).[56]

Of those currently in work, almost a third reported that they had hidden or disguised that they were LGBTQ+ in the previous year (31%), while 6% reported that they were encouraged to hide or disguise their identity.[57]

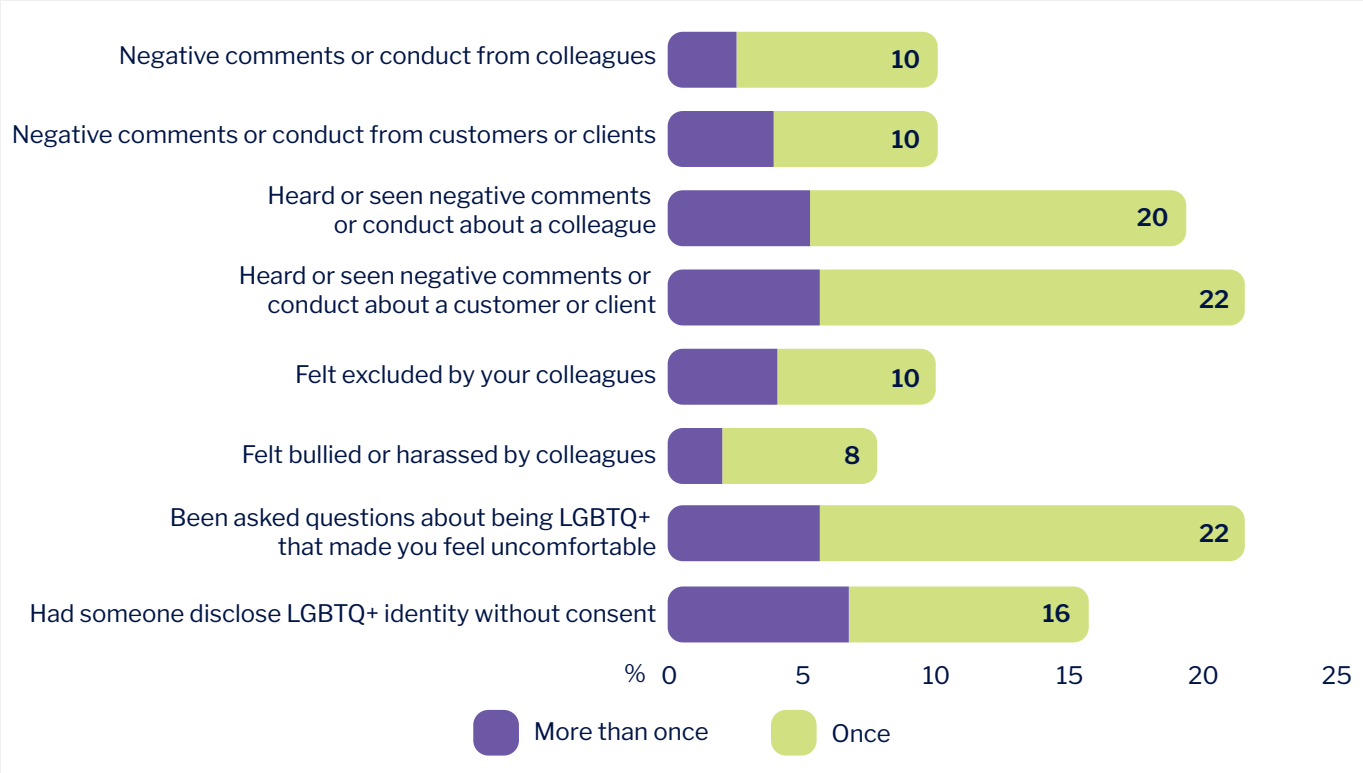


Chart 4. Experiences of discrimination, exclusion, and harassment in the workplace

Discrimination at work

We asked all those currently in work whether they had experienced any incidents based on their sexual orientation or gender identity in the workplace in the last year.[58] Chart 4 illustrates the types of incident most frequently experienced.

The qualitative responses to this question expanded on incidents. For instance:

> *My experience is that I saw someone had written homophobic and transphobic slurs on a Staff Pride Network poster in a staff room. I spoke to the management office and they said they would take it down, but said they wouldn't say anything to remind colleagues about conduct just in case "removing the poster is enough". They also asked me to contact the staff pride network to get new posters, rather than doing this themselves*

bisexual cisgender woman, 25-34

> *I have previously been discriminated against as a bisexual woman. My grievance was upheld. I have been less open about my sexual orientation in subsequent jobs as raising a grievance is stressful*

bisexual cisgender woman, 45-54

For some, being LGBTQ+ was also experienced as a barrier to career progression: 5% felt they did not get a job or promotion during the year because they are LGBTQ+, while 2% felt they lost a job for this reason.

On balance, incidents of workplace discrimination, exclusion and harassment were reported at roughly the same rate in Scotland as the UK average.

Asked how they responded to these incidents, half said that they did not take any action (49%), consistent with the UK average (52%). 11% of respondents reported their most recent incident to a line manager, 9% to senior management, and 1% to human resources, while 1% of people raised a formal grievance.[59]

The most frequent reasons given for not reporting workplace incidents were 'I felt it wasn't worth it or nothing would happen or change' (39%) and 'I thought it was too minor, not serious enough or happens all the time' (24%). One in five said that 'I thought my employer wouldn't take it seriously enough' (19%). Almost one in six said they did not report because 'I didn't want to reveal my sexual orientation and/or gender identity' (16%).[60]

Financial security

83% of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland said they were worried about the cost of living, slightly lower than the UK average (86%). LB+ women were more likely to agree (85%) than GB+ men (78%), while bisexual people were even more likely (87%). Over nine in ten trans+ people agreed (93%). People with disabilities (89%) were more likely than those without disabilities (78%) to be worried about the cost of living.[61]

LGBTQ+ people in Scotland were also more likely to say that they had enough money to make ends meet (61%) compared with the UK average (55%). A third of trans+ people said they did not have enough to make ends meet (33%), compared with 19% of cisgender LGB+ people.[62]

Our sample in Scotland was also more likely to say that their rent/mortgage payments were affordable to them (48%) than the UK average (43%).[63]

83% of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland said they were worried about the cost of living

55 M1. Which, if any, of the following factors related to being LGBTQ+ are important to you when deciding where to work? If you are retired/ not looking to work, please imagine that you were. (Please select all that apply).

56 D1. To what extent, if at all, are you open about your sexual orientation among... D1_3. People at your workplace.

57 M3. During your employment in the last year, have you experienced any of the following?

58 M3. During your employment in the last year, have you experienced any of the following?

59 M4. You said you have experienced at least one of these incidents at work because you are LGBTQ+. Thinking about the most recent incident you experienced, which action(s), if any, did you take? (Please select all that apply).

60 M6. You did not say you reported the most recent incident to your employer...Why was this? (Please select all that apply).

61 L1_1. I am worried about the cost of living.

62 L1_2. I have enough money to make ends meet.

63 L1_3. My current rent or mortgage payments are affordable for me.

SECTION 6

Future - Financial Planning, Family Formation, and Older Age Care

Family formation

Asked about their desire to have children and interest in family formation services, more than half of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland said they do not have a desire to have children (59%). Of those who are already parents, 73% do not want any more children. Trans+ people were more likely to not want children (71%).[64]

A quarter of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland want children at some point (25%): 7% currently want children, while 18% want children in the future. These figures were broadly in line with the UK average.

Uptake of family formation services was roughly in line with the UK average across each of the pathways surveyed. The pathways with greatest overall uptake were IUI/IVF (2%) and fertility preservation (2%), followed by fostering (1%) and adoption (1%). 11% of lesbians had used or supported a partner using IUI/IVF services in Scotland.[65]

More than half of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland said they do not have a desire to have children

Financial planning

We asked respondents about their confidence in their future financial security. Half of the LGBTQ+ people in Scotland that we surveyed said that they do not have confidence in being financially secure in retirement (50%), with just over a quarter expressing confidence (28%). Disagreement was higher among LB+ women (57%) than GB+ men (39%), particularly bisexual women (66%). Trans+ people were also more likely to lack confidence (63%).[66]

One way to boost confidence in financial security might be through accessing professional advice from financial planners, such as advice on tax, inheritance, pensions, or wills. To this end:

- Overall, LGBTQ+ people were more likely to agree that they would have confidence in accessing planning advice (41%) than to disagree (31%). However, LB+ women (38%), bisexual people (40%), and trans+ people (44%) were all more likely to disagree.[67]
- Around half of LGBTQ+ people agreed that they would be comfortable seeking advice from professional advisors (53%), with one in five disagreeing (20%). Trans+ people were more likely to disagree (37%).[68]

We also examined LGBTQ+ retirement expectations to understand how they shape long-term financial planning. Overall, LGBTQ+ people in Scotland generally expect to live to pension age: 58% agreed, while 15% disagreed. People with disabilities (41%) and those with mental health conditions (42%) were much less likely to agree.[69]

More than six in ten LGBTQ+ people in Scotland would prefer care at home

Older age care

Around one third of respondents in Scotland said that they believe they could rely on their existing family and social network to support their future care needs (33%), in line with the UK average (32%).[70]

GB+ men were less likely to agree with this (27%) than LB+ women (41%), with confidence among gay men actually reversed: 32% disagreed compared with 25% agreeing. Trans+ people were much less likely to agree (21%) than cisgender LGB+ people (35%). Agreement was also lower among people with disabilities (27%) compared with those without (35%).

There was a clear preference expressed for receiving care at home rather than in a residential care setting: 63% of LGBTQ+ people in Scotland expressed this, with greater agreement coming from trans+ people (72%) and GB+ men (67%).[71]

If required to receive care in a residential setting, eight in ten said they would be comfortable sharing with LGBTQ+ people with a sexual orientation or gender identity different to their own (80%).[72]

Meanwhile, two thirds expressed comfort with the idea of living with non-LGBTQ+ people (68%).[73]

Consistent with the UK-wide findings, older people reported lower levels of comfort with both of these options. For instance, among those aged 55-64, 74% said they would be comfortable with other LGBTQ+ people, while 62% said they would be comfortable living with non-LGBTQ+ people. These figures are 84% and 73% among those 25-34, respectively.

Trans+ people were much less likely to express comfort with living with non-LGBTQ+ people in a residential setting (44%) compared with cisgender LGB+ people (71%).

Around half of our sample reported that they would be comfortable being open about their sexual orientation or gender identity to care providers (53%). Trans+ people reported comfort with this at a lower rate (41%).[74]

Confidence that providers would understand their needs as an LGBTQ+ person does not match up

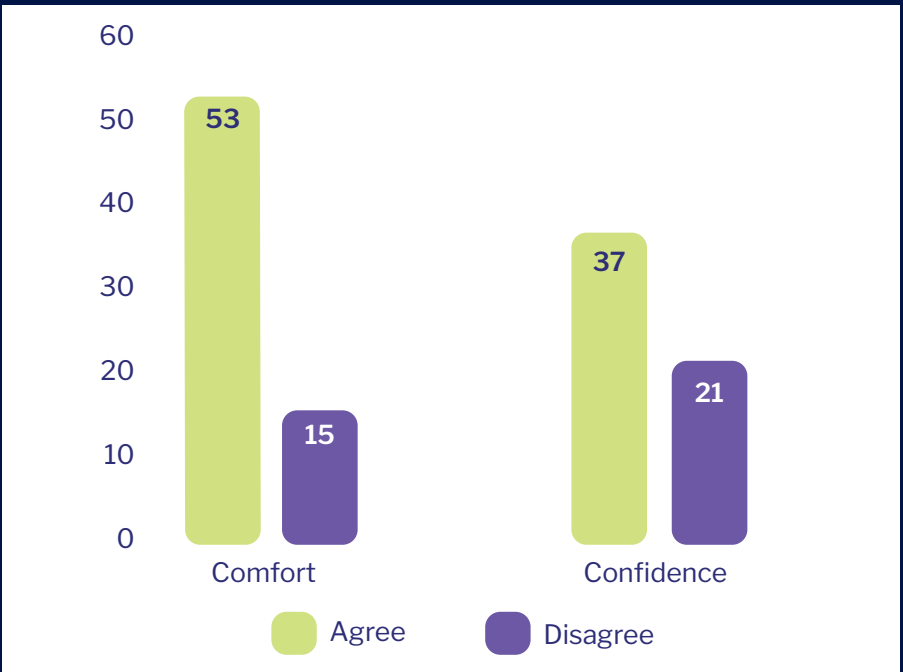


Chart 5. Comfort in being open and confidence that care needs would be understood

with this, however, with just 37% agreeing and 21% disagreeing.[75]

What is clear is that LGBTQ+ people want their care to be affirmative: 66% agreed that care being designed to validate and support their needs and experiences was important to them. Almost all of the trans+ people we sampled said the same (96%).[76]

Finally, just 6% in Scotland said that they had made specific plans for their future care needs, slightly higher than the UK average (4%). Four in ten had thought about future care needs but not made any plans (40%), while half had not given it thought (51%).[77]

Even among older cohorts, future planning for care needs was low: 22% of those 55-64 had made plans, rising to 38% of those 65+. This was significantly higher than the UK average, however, where these figures were 12% and 23%, respectively.

---

64 J2. Do you currently or ever want to have children? If you already have children, please think about whether you want any more.

65 J1. Have you accessed services related to any of the following family formation pathways, either personally or supporting a partner?

66 L1_4. I am confident about being financially secure in retirement.

67 L1_6. I feel confident accessing financial planning advice (e.g. for tax, inheritance, pensions, wills).

68 L1_7. I would be comfortable eeking financial advice from a professional advisor.

69 L1_5. I expect to live until the age at which I can claim a pension.

70 K2_1. I can rely on family, partner, and/or friends to support my future care needs.

71 K2_2. I would prefer to receive care in my own home than in a residential care setting.

72 K3_2. Living alongside LGBTQ+ people with a different sexual orientation or gender identity to me in a residential care home.

73 K3_1. Living alongside non-LGBTQ+ people in a residential care home.

74 K3_3. Being open about my sexual orientation and/or gender identity to care providers (in your own home or in a residential care home).

75 K4_2. I feel confident that care providers would understand my needs as an LGBTQ+ person.

76 K4_1. It is important to me that the care is LGBTQ+ affirmative (i.e. designed to validate and support the specific needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ people).

77 K1. Thinking about any age-related care needs you may have in the future, which of the following best applies to you?

Methodology

Stonewall commissioned YouGov to administer a survey of LGBTQ+ people on their experiences of life in the UK. This survey was developed in early 2026. It adapts and builds on a survey administered in 2017 which formed the basis of Stonewall's *LGBT in Britain* reports published in 2018-2020.

Participants were selected at random through YouGov's online panel of 2.5+ million individuals. Screening questions were used to ensure that participants identified as LGBTQ+. Fieldwork was conducted online from 25th March – 27th April 2026.

This report only includes data from the sample of Scottish respondents to the survey. The total sample size in Scotland is 599 adults. This includes:

- 286 gay/lesbian people, 258 bisexual people, and 53 people with an 'other' sexual orientation;
- 534 cisgender LGB+ people and 65 trans+ people;
- 292 men, 258 women, and 49 people with a non-binary or 'other' gender identity.

Quotas were set during sampling and the final sample has been weighted to be representative of LGBTQ+ adults in the UK. Cisgender LGB+ adults were weighted to match Census data by sexual orientation, sex assigned at birth, age, region, ethnicity, and education level. Transgender adults were weighted to match Census data by sex assigned at birth, age, and region. The total results were then weighted together by cisgender/transgender identity to reflect LGBTQ+ adults across the UK.

Tables containing quantitative and qualitative data were supplied by YouGov. Additional thematic and sentiment analysis of qualitative data was conducted by Stonewall using NVivo. Qualitative responses are cited verbatim and are not adjusted for grammar, however spelling is corrected where necessary. Quotes may be condensed for brevity.

The terminology used to describe different demographics, including ethnicity and disability, reflects the terms used by YouGov in its data collection.

Figures based on fewer than 50 people are not considered statistically reliable and are not reported. Figures based on more than 50 people are reported, however some caution should be exercised on bases lower than 100.

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was conducted by YouGov plc. All figures cited in this report are based on data provided by YouGov. YouGov bears no responsibility for the presentation of the data in this report.

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Design: Dan Robinson, danrobinson.uk

Glossary

Term	Definition
Cisgender	Someone whose gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth
Gender identity	A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else, which may or may not correspond to their sex assigned at birth
Intersex	A term used to describe a person who has biological attributes of both male and female sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal or medical assumptions about what constitutes male or female
LGBTQ+	An acronym commonly used to describe people who are lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace
LGB+	We use this acronym to refer to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or have a sexual orientation other than heterosexual
Non-binary	A term for people whose gender doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely
Sex assigned at birth	The categories of male and female, which are assigned to a person on the basis of their primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. This may be referred to as assigned male at birth (AMAB) or assigned female at birth (AFAB)
Sexual orientation	A person's sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with romantic orientation, this forms a person's orientation identity
Transgender (trans)	A term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Sometimes shortened to trans
Trans+	An umbrella term to describe all people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Includes transgender, non-binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, bigender, gender non-conforming and agender people or indeed inclusive of any of the other ways people define their gender. This term is also inclusive of intersex people who have natural diversity in sex characteristics





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