LGBTQI INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STUDY

iglyo©

About IGLYO

IGLYO – The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth & Student Organisation is the largest LGBTQI youth and student network in the world with over 100 member organisations in 40 European countries.

As a youth development organisation, IGLYO builds the confidence, skills and experience of LGBTQI young people to become leaders in equalities and human rights work. Through cross-cultural ex- change and peer learning, IGLYO also creates a powerful collective of youth activists across Europe and beyond, fostering values of international solidarity. Furthermore, IGLYO ensures the voices and experiences of LGBTQI young people are present and heard by decision-makers at European and international levels. IGLYO achieves these outcomes through international trainings and events, targeted capacity building programmes, online learning and resources, and digital story-telling and campaigning.

IGLYO aibsl is registered as a non-governmental organisation in Belgium
(No d'entreprise: 808808665).

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Published in 2021 by IGLYO (The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Youth & Student Organisation), Chaussée de Boondael 6, Brussels B-1050, Belgium

Ávila Rodríguez, Rubén (2021). *LGBTQI Inclusive Education Study.* Brussels: IGLYO.

Printed in Belgium

Government of the Netherlands

This report has been produced with the financial support of the Dutch Ministry of Education Culture & Science and the Rights Equality and Citizenship (REC) programme 2014-2020 of the European Union.

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"I actually was kind of an outsider for the rest of high school (...) I was alone, just kind of trying to survive."

(Panromantic queer, 24)

FOREWORD

In 2018, IGLYO released the LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report and Index to provide the first comprehensive account of LGBTQI inclusive laws, policies and practices in state schools across the Council of Europe region. The main purpose of these resources was to draw attention to examples of good practice and to highlight the significant gaps that still existed.

To better understand how such protections, or lack thereof, are translated into lived experience for LGBTQI young people, IGLYO set itself an equally ambitious challenge: to gather the experiences of LGBTQI school learners and create an in-depth European wide report. Such research already exists on a national level for some Member States, but European-wide data which provides a snapshot of the current situation across the region was lacking.

In the beginning, we didn't realise how ambitious we were being, expecting a few thousand completed surveys at best. In the end, the figure was over 17.000 valid responses, with over 70% aged 13 -17 years. Not only does the report, therefore, provide a detailed account of LGBTQI learners experiences across Europe, the results give us an insight into what's happening in our schools right now rather than historically. The volume of responses alone tells us how important an issue this is for LGBTQI young people and the results reveal that, despite significant improvements in policy and practice in several Member States, verbal harassment and bullying remain a reality for the majority of LGBTQI learners. Over two thirds of respondents had experienced harassment and over a quarter experienced it on a regular basis. The results also reinforce the point that bullying no longer happens solely in or around school but is often experienced online. 62% of respondents had directly experienced online bullying and 86% had witnessed it directed to others.

The research delves much deeper than these headline results, carefully detailing the different experiences of learners segregated by sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, documenting many of the additional obstacles that trans, non-binary and intersex young people also face, from a lack of guidance for school staff on how to support students who are transitioning, to names, gender markers and pronouns being disrespected. The report also goes beyond bullying and harassment to reveal widespread gaps within school curricula and teacher knowledge in relation to LGBTQI people, which all feed into negative and unsupportive environments for learners.

While we genuinely hoped that this generation of LGBTQI young people were having a better experience of school and benefitting from the substantial improvements made by several Member States in relation to inclusive education policy and practice, the results fall far short of this wish. Instead, they provide an urgent reminder of what still needs to be achieved to ensure that all learners feel safe, supported and included within our schools.

Euan Platt
Executive Director
November 2020

"I'm quite angry at the system, because everyone says you can be whoever you want, you can be free, you can express yourself at school. And then if you try to be different, you get backlash. So, it's not true."

(Pansexual, non-binary intersex, 19)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

IGLYO would like to express its sincere thanks to everyone who helped in carrying out the LGBTQI Inclusive Education Survey and Interviews. This project is the culmination of time, effort, expertise, and support from many different individuals, organisations and institutions. While it is not possible to name everyone, we would like to specifically thank the following.

Participants

This study would not have been possible without the contributions of over 17.000 young individuals living across Europe, who spared time to participate in either the survey or in the interviews for this research. We want to thank them in the first place for generously sharing their personal experiences and for reflecting with us on how to create a safer and more supportive inclusive education environment for LGBTQI youth.

Partners and education experts

We also want to thank our European partners who have been involved in different stages of this process, providing invaluable input in the design of the survey and interviews, and helping us disseminate the call for participation: Eleni Tsetsekou, Council of Europe Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit (CoE SOGI Unit); Yongfeng Liu and Eunice den Hoedt, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO); Sophie Aujean, the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe); Leo Mulio Álvarez, Transgender Europe (TGEU); Dan Christian Ghattas, Organisation Intersex International Europe (OII Europe); Anna Widegren, European Youth Forum (EYF); and Ferre Windey, Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU); and the team of the LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey.

IGLYO Member Organisations and country experts

The majority of translation work undertaken for this report was provided on a voluntary basis by individuals who work or volunteer for LGBTQI civil society organisations in the field of education. Without dedicated and knowledgeable people in each country, IGLYO would have been unable to produce such a comprehensive review. IGLYO would especially like to acknowledge the participation of the following organisations and country leads in the translation and dissemination of the survey: Pro LGBT (Albania), Trans Kids (Belgium), Budapest Pride (Hungary), Cassero LGBT Center (Italy), Asociacija LGL (Lithuania), MGRM (Malta), Fundacja Trans-fuzja and KPH (Poland), Rede Ex Aequo (Portugal), Skeiv Ungdom (Norway), NGO Fulcrum UA and NGO Insight (Ukraine), FELGTB (Spain), and Mosaic LGBT Youth Centre and LGBT Youth Scotland (United Kingdom).

Funders

IGLYO would like to express our sincere thanks to the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture & Science and the Rights Equality and Citizenship programme 2014-2020 of the European Union for jointly funding this project.

Qualitative Researcher

IGLYO worked with Eleanor Formby to conduct and transcribe the interviews for this project. We thank her for providing us with the narratives that helped us to provide a better picture of the lived experiences of young LGBTQI young people in European schools.

“Please change something. We are screaming, and nobody hears us”

(Straight, trans man, 17)

INTRODUCTION

Everyone has the fundamental right to education, health and well-being. All forms of discrimination or violence in schools are an obstacle to such fundamental rights. In particular, school bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics (henceforth, SOGIGESC-based bullying) is one of the most widespread problems occurring within educational institutions. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming and intersex youth are often at increased risk of experiencing bullying and harassment in schools.[1,2] While there is still no global comprehensive report, data from several countries suggest that LGBTQI youth are significantly more likely to be bullied or cyberbullied at school, and to experience physical assault than learners who identify or are perceived to be heterosexual and gender conforming.[3,4]

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) recently conducted an online survey to explore discrimination and violence experienced by LGBTQI individuals.[5] More than half of the young people who completed the questionnaire (aged 15 to 17) felt discriminated against in several areas of life, most predominantly in education. This share was even higher for trans (69%) and intersex (65%) respondents of the same age. In the same vein, young people were more likely to hide or disguise their sexual orientation or gender identity out of fear of violence. The results also revealed that respondents aged 15 to 24 experienced higher rates of harassment, with over half of these aggravations involving someone from school, college or university, meaning educational institutions remain an unsafe space for many young people.

Harassment and bullying are often the most visible manifestations of the discrimination faced by LGBTQI youth in schools. Heightened exposure to this type of violence is associated with increased probability of absenteeism and negative health outcomes, such as lower self-esteem or higher levels of depression. There are, however, far more complex matters at the core of the problems underlying SOGIGESC-based school harassment.

Despite the progress made by many Council of Europe Member States on inclusive education, most school curricula and learning materials do not convey positive messages and some include negative representations and stereotypes of LGBTQI people, which risks seeding misinformation and fuelling hate against the community. Although the latest Eurobarometer[6] shows that the vast majority of European citizens would support curricula discussing sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics, less than a third of the countries across Europe have implemented affirming inclusion of LGBTQI identities and realities across curricula.[7,8] The above cited *EU LGBTI Survey II* shows that, for respondents aged 15 to 17, these identities are addressed positively or neutrally in only 13% and 19% of cases respectively. In contrast, 10% of the people who completed the survey said teachers addressed LGBTQI issues negatively, while 47% indicated they were never addressed.[5]

Further to this, teachers and school staff in Europe lack access to adequate training to prevent and address SOGIGESC-based violence or to include LGBTQI content in their lessons. Although the situation has improved over the last decade, only 1 in 3 LGBTQI youth have received systematic support or protection during their school time,[5] resulting in a significant barrier to creating an inclusive environment for all learners.

1. UNESCO (2019). *Behind the numbers: ending school violence and bullying.* Paris: UNESCO.
2. UNESCO (2020). *Global Education Monitoring Report 2020. Inclusion and education: All means all.* Paris: UNESCO.
3. UNESCO (2016). *Out in the Open: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.* Paris: UNESCO.
4. Kann, L., Olsen, E., McManus, T., Harris, W. et al. (2016). Sexual identity, sex of sexual contacts and health-related behaviors among students in Grades 9-12 - United States and Selected Sites, 2015. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.* (CDC) Surveillance Summaries.
5. FRA (2020). *A long way to go for LGBTI equality.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
6. Special Eurobarometer 493 (2019) Discrimination in the EU.
7. IGLYO (2017). *LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report.* Brussels: IGLYO.
8. Council of Europe (2018). *Safe at school: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or sex characteristics in Europe.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

The lack of training and clear guidance for school staff leads to them feeling uncomfortable with the topic of sexual and gender diversity and may contribute to the perpetuation of negative messages about sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (implicitly or explicitly). This situation may also add to a hostile school climate for LGBTQI learners.[8]

In 2016, IGLYO launched the **LGBTQI Inclusive Education Project** to explore the different dimensions of discrimination and violence faced by LGBTQI youth in schools, and to assess the extent to which European governments were implementing policies to ensure education was safe, inclusive and supportive for all. The first edition of the LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report provided qualitative data on areas such as law, policy, teacher training and curricula in each Council of Europe Member State to highlight both good practices and areas that require further attention by policymakers.[9]

Among other findings, the shortage of data on discrimination and harassment at schools was identified as one of the main areas for improvement. Most Council of Europe Member States fail to monitor the prevalence of discrimination and harassment in schools on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and variations in sex characteristics. This suggests a lack of understanding or a reluctance to recognise the serious and harmful impact of SOGIGESC-based violence from governments and policymakers. While national school climate surveys have been conducted recently in several countries by civil society organisations, there was no European wide survey to highlight more general trends across the region.

In 2019, IGLYO designed the **LGBTQI Inclusive Education Study** to address this need. The aim of this research is to examine the lived experiences of young people and to explore the current situation of inclusive education in European schools. IGLYO, as a youth-led organisation, believes young people should examine and discuss school policies and practices that might play a role in creating more negative or positive experiences for LGBTQI learners. To this end, we created an online survey that was translated into 15 different languages, with over 17.000 participants (aged between 13 and 24) completing the questionnaire. Complementary to the survey, IGLYO conducted 20 interviews to further explore the topic of inclusive education.

This report outlines selected key findings from both the survey and the interviews. The main intention of this document is to raise awareness of the experiences of LGBTQI learners in European countries among policymakers, legislators, educators, and human rights advocates. This data should help regional, national and local civil society organisations in their advocacy work for creating a more inclusive education system.[10] It provides them with much needed evidence of the situation across Europe to assess the impact of national policy framework on inclusive education and to explore the best ways to improve the situation for LGBTQI learners.

8. Council of Europe (2018). *Safe at school: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or sex characteristics in Europe.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
9. FRA (2016). *Professionally Speaking: Challenges for achieving equality for LGBT people.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
10. Due to the volume of data and limited capacity, this document cannot provide a comprehensive analysis of the survey and the interviews. To obtain further information about any of these resources, do not hesitate to get in touch with IGLYO by sending an email to education@iglyo.com.

METHODOLOGY
LGBTQI Inclusive Education Survey

How was the survey designed?

The survey was designed by IGLYO in consultation with a steering committee of experts who had previously worked on similar projects internationally. The committee was comprised of policymakers, governmental representatives, civil society organisations, academics and other relevant stakeholders.[11] The questionnaire included content about LGBTQI young people's lived experiences of school and their enjoyment of the fundamental right of education. The first two sections covered their experiences of discrimination and harassment. The following components included questions about school curricula, teacher training, and support systems for students. Finally, a section on gender recognition at school was included for those respondents who were trans, non-binary, or gender non-conforming.[12]

Given the lack of national data on discrimination and harassment in educational settings, an online survey was considered the best way to access a large number of respondents, and to meet the specific challenges that apply to surveying LGBTQI youth and underaged respondents. The online element allowed respondents to provide anonymous and confidential responses and facilitated the participation of those who do not wish to disclose being LGBTQI. The internet is also the most accessible tool for this age group, which made the survey especially relevant to the respondents.

How was the survey promoted?

The survey was promoted using a social media campaign ('*Let's talk about our schools*').[13] It was essential to successfully reach out to young learners from around Europe. Additionally, it was important not to influence or bias the survey responses in any way, and to receive a high number of responses from people who are often the least protected in the LGBTQI community (i.e. trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming or intersex). This was mainly achieved through a combination of design elements and narratives and partnering up with key organisations to disseminate the survey.

IGLYO worked in collaboration with 14 organisations to promote the survey. The following IGLYO members and partners translated and/or distributed the survey: Pro LGBT (Albania), Trans Kids (Belgium), Budapest Pride (Hungary), Cassero LGBT Center (Italy), Asociacija LGL (Lithuania), MGRM (Malta), Fundacja Trans-fuzja and KPH (Poland), Skeiv Ungdom (Norway), NGO Fulcrum UA and NGO Insight (Ukraine), and LGBT Youth Scotland (United Kingdom). Some key LGBTQI European network organisations (i.e. OII Europe, Transgender Europe and the LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey) also distributed the survey and shared the posts on their social media platforms.

11. The first meeting was attended by the following experts in the field of LGBTQI inclusive policies or school-based work: Eleni Tsetsekou, Council of Europe SOGIE Unit; Yongfeng Liu and Eunice den Hoedt, UNESCO; Sophie Aujean, ILGA-Europe; Dan Christian Ghattas, OII Europe; Eliza Byard and Joe Kosciw, GLSEN; Anna Widegren, European Youth Forum; Ferre Windey, OBESSU; Euan Platt and Rubén Ávila, IGLYO. IGLYO then relied on the expertise of some of these members to assess their work in further stages of the project and included feedback from other key stakeholders who could not attend the first meeting. We want to specially thank Leo Mulio Álvarez (TGEU) who could not attend the first meeting but provided in-depth feedback to the original questionnaire.
12. The final version of the survey can be found at iglyo.com/education/inclusive-education-survey
13. A report of the social media campaign can be found at iglyo.com/education/inclusive-education-campaign

Who took part in the survey?

The survey was addressed to young people aged 13 to 24 years old who were currently at school (or had recently finished) at the time of filling in the questionnaire. It was released in 15 languages[14] and was hosted online for 9 weeks. This survey is the largest piece of research conducted by a European civil society organisation to provide a picture of the lived experience of LGBTQI youth in schools. Although the results presented in this report reflect only the experiences of the individuals who completed the questionnaire, IGLYO took a number of steps to ensure that the survey covered a good sample of all European regions, age groups and LGBTQI communities.

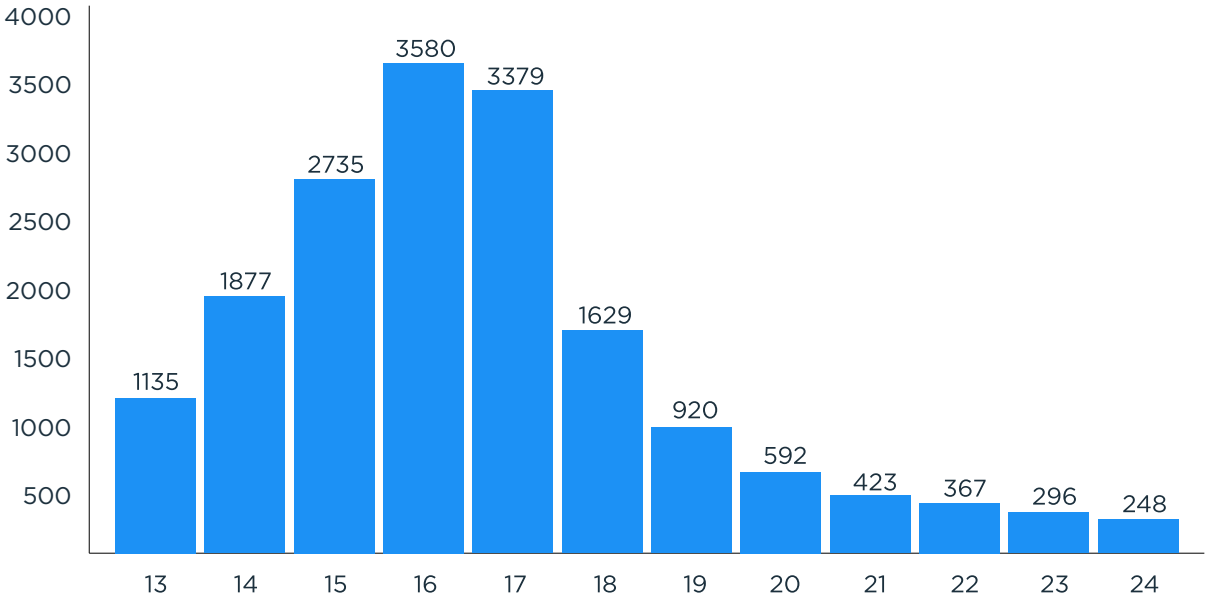
The dataset was checked for internal consistency. Some responses were excluded because they were internally inconsistent or aimed to distort the results (i.e. contained mocking comments in the open fields). The responses from those who completed the survey without taking the minimum time to read the questions were also disqualified. Finally, responses from outside the European region were not taken into account in the data analysis.

In total, IGLYO received 17.181 valid responses from individuals aged 13 or over who attended school in a Council of Europe Member State and self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming or intersex. The figures below offer a breakdown of the sample in relation to their age, the country in which they went to school, and their sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics.

Age

The questionnaire and its social media campaign were aimed at young people who were attending or had recently attended high school. The majority of respondents were 13 to 18 years old (83%) at the time of completing the survey. For the purpose of data analysis, respondents aged 19 and 20 will be considered as a single age group (1.512), and those aged 21 to 24 will be reflected in another group (1.334). **Figure 1** shows the distribution of age for all respondents.

Figure 1: Age of survey respondents



14. The survey was disseminated in the following European languages: Albanian, English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian.

Country

Most respondents attended school in one of the countries in which the survey was actively disseminated: United Kingdom (2.276), Hungary (1.923), Poland (1.538), Germany (1.270), France (1.220), Ukraine (1.101), Lithuania (1.046), Spain (1.013), Italy (940) and Norway (779). The other five countries in which the questionnaire was widely promoted received fewer responses: Romania (274), Albania (157), Portugal (145), Malta (107), Russia (40). **Table 1** offers an overview of all respondents. For the purpose of the data analysis, this report will only include specific information related to Council of Europe Member States with over 700 responses. IGLYO will work with its member organisations to publish specific files for each of the contributing countries.

Table 1: Sample size by country in which respondents attended school

Country	N	Percent
UK	2.276	13.2%
Hungary	1.923	11.2%
Poland	1.538	9.0%
Germany	1.270	7.4%
France	1.220	7.1%
Ukraine	1.101	6.4%
Lithuania	1.046	6.1%
Spain	1.013	5.9%
Italy	940	5.5%
Norway	779	4.5%
Finland	470	2.7%
Greece	289	1.7%
Sweden	285	1.7%
Romania	274	1.6%
Belgium	262	1.5%
Serbia	234	1.4%
Latvia	223	1.3%
Croatia	209	1.2%
Estonia	164	1.0%
Czech Republic	160	.9%
Albania	157	.9%

Country	N	Percent
Denmark	150	.9%
Portugal	145	.8%
Turkey	136	.8%
Netherlands	133	.8%
Switzerland	120	.7%
Malta	107	.6%
Austria	106	.6%
Ireland	99	.6%
Iceland	78	.5%
Bulgaria	65	.4%
Slovenia	47	.3%
Russia	40	.2%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	30	.2%
North Macedonia	22	.1%
Macedonia	19	.1%
Luxembourg	18	.1%
Cyprus	17	.1%
Kosovo	6	.0%
Montenegro	6	.0%
Slovakia	3	.0%
Andorra	1	.0%
Total	**17.181**	**100%**

Sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics

The survey included three questions designed to explore respondents' sexual orientation[15], gender identity and gender expression[16], and sex characteristics[17]. Based on their answers, respondents were then distributed into eight main categories: trans[18] men, trans women, non-binary[19] and gender non-conforming[20] people, intersex[21] people, lesbian cis[22] women, bisexual and pansexual cis women, gay cis men and bisexual and pansexual cis men.

Respondents could be identified as belonging to more than one category (for instance, a respondent could self-identify as a lesbian trans woman or as a pansexual trans non-binary and intersex person). For the purpose of data analysis, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics were given priority to sexual orientation. This allowed IGLYO to collect more information on trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming and intersex people who are often underrepresented in research about the experiences of LGBTQI people. The experiences of respondents who are intersex and trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming were taken into account for each of these categories when conducting the data analysis. **Table 2** shows the self-reported identities that have been used to segregate data.

Table 2: Self-reported identities, based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics

Description	N	Percent
Trans men	1.773	10,3%
Trans women	947	5,5%
Non-binary and gender non-conforming people	2.053	11,9%
Intersex people and people with variations in sex characteristics	307	1,8%
Lesbian cis women	1.870	10,9%
Bisexual and pansexual cis women	5.501	32,0%
Gay cis men	3.881	22,6%
Bisexual and pansexual cis men	881	5,1%

15. Participants could self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or heterosexual. Respondents were also given the possibility to use another label to describe their sexual orientation.
16. Participants could self-identify as trans women, trans men, non-binary and gender non-conforming, cis women or cis men. Respondents were also given the possibility to use another label to describe their gender identity and expression.
17. Participants were asked whether they were intersex people or people with variations in sex characteristics. Respondents were given an explanation about what that means. For further information, see the final version of the survey: iglyo.com/education/inclusive-education-survey
18. *Trans* and *transgender* are umbrella terms used to describe people whose gender identities are different to the sex assigned at birth. Trans people may use one or more terms to refer to their gender identities (for instance, trans woman, trans man, transgender, gender-queer, gender-fluid or non-binary).
19. *Non-binary* is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identities are not encompassed or represented by the social binarism of 'man' and 'woman'.
20. *Gender non-conforming* is a term used to describe people whose gender expressions differ from the cultural norms prescribed for people of a particular gender.
21. Intersex people are born with sex characteristics (i.e. sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, hormonal structure and/or levels and/or chromosomal patterns) that do not fit the typical definition of male or female. Intersex is an umbrella term for the spectrum of variations of sex characteristics that naturally occur within the human species. Some, but not all, intersex people also identify as trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming.
22. Cisgender or cis is a term used to describe people whose gender identities are the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

LGBTQI Inclusive Education Interviews

How were the interviews designed?

The interviews aim to provide concrete examples of the reality for LGBTQI young people in schools today and to explore examples of resilience in the lives of these young people. IGLYO prepared the initial questionnaire and updated it based on feedback from other international organisations (TGEU and OII Europe). Some academics also provided feedback on the original questionnaire.

The script of the interview included questions exploring respondents' experiences of SOGIGESC-based violence and their personal practices of resilience against those experiences. It also explored the extent to which LGBTQI young people received support from their teachers and other school staff, peers and families. Finally, the script incorporated some other questions on school curricula and inclusive policies. The outline also contained a specific section to explore participants' experiences concerning their gender identities and gender expressions. A different script was created to interview intersex people and those with variations in sex characteristics.[23]

Who participated in the interviews?

The first set of interviews was conducted during an IGLYO event in October 2018. Additional participants were sourced online by inviting some of the respondents of the survey to contact IGLYO if they wanted to share their experiences in more detail. A separate call was launched on social media platforms. Likewise, members who participated in the research were asked to provide IGLYO with contacts. Finally, other international civil society organisations contributed to the selection of LGBTQI young people as well.

Participants had to be over 18 by the time the interview was conducted. They were contacted by email from October to December 2019. Once the study was presented and they had agreed to participate, a qualitative researcher conducted online interviews with them.[24] The intention was to create a similar atmosphere to a face-to-face interview without undue exposure, since most of the participants expressed concern over this eventuality.

23. The final versions of the interview outlines and the informed consent forms can be found at iglyo.com/education/inclusive-education-interviews
24. O'Connor H, Madge C, Shaw R and Wellens J (2008) Internet-based Interviewing. In: Fielding N, Lee RM, and Blank G (Eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods,* London, Routledge, pp. 271–289.

IGLYO conducted a total of 20 interviews. **Table 3** shows a summary of participants' age, sexuality, gender and country of residence.

Table 3: Age, country and self-reported identities, based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics.

Age	No.
19	4
20	4
21	3
22	2
23	2
24	4

Country	No.
Croatia	2
Czech Republic	1
Finland	1
Ireland	1
Italy	3
Lithuania	1
Malta	1
Poland	2
Spain	2
UK	4
Ukraine	2

Self-reported sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics
Asexual demiromantic, genderqueer
Bisexual, cisgender man
Bisexual, cisgender woman (x2)
Bisexual, trans non-binary masculine
Gay, cisgender man (x3)
Lesbian, cisgender woman (x3)
Panromantic, demisexual queer
Pansexual, cisgender woman
Pansexual, non-binary
Pansexual, non-binary intersex
Pansexual, queer
Pansexual, trans non-binary masculine
Queer, cisgender woman
Straight, intersex man
Straight, trans woman
Lesbian

What methodology has been used to analyse the interviews?

Participants were invited to be interviewed online. Before the interview took place, participants had to sign an online informed consent. The interview lasted between 45-60 minutes per participant. After this meeting, IGLYO produced a transcript per interviewee. This text was returned to participants and a deadline was set for them to provide any feedback. Participants could change whatever they wanted and give final approval to the text. After introducing the participant modifications and additions, a final version of the document was sent to participants.

Twenty final narratives were produced for the purpose of this research. These texts summarise the interviewees' points of view about bullying and harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and variations in sex characteristics, and discuss their standpoint on inclusive education. Each text develops different topics selected and approved by the participants. In such a way, participants were not treated as subjects for investigative purposes but as actors implicated in inclusive education whose discourse would be equally considered. These conversations have been used to complement the survey analysis, and will be found as quotes across this report. An in-depth analysis of the interviews will be carried out at a later stage.

KEY FINDINGS

Experiences of school bullying based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics.

Key Findings

- 8 in 10 respondents have witnessed some sort of negative remarks regarding LGBTQI identities.
- Over two thirds of respondents have been the target of negative remarks based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics at least once, with 1 in 4 respondents experiencing verbal harassment on a regular basis.
- Trans people and gay cis men reported higher rates of verbal harassment, both based on their (actual or perceived) sexual orientation (86%) and gender identity (87%).
- Although teachers were sometimes, usually or always present in over half of the incidents of verbal harassment, respondents stated that they tended not to mediate (less than 7% intervened usually or always).
- 1 in 2 LGBTQI respondents reported having experienced bullying at least once (broader than being insulted or being the target of name calling).
- Trans women have experienced bullying most frequently, followed by trans and gay cis men.
- The vast majority of LGBTQI learners reported having witnessed or experienced online bullying.
- Regardless of the grounds of harassment, the majority of the learners who had experienced bullying never reported those incidents to anyone.
- Less than 15% of respondents reported their experiences of bullying to any school staff systematically. The main reasons behind this is that they thought or knew school staff would not intervene.

School violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics is a global problem, and bullying is one of the most common forms of this type of violence all across Europe.[27] School bullying includes psychological harassment (such as repeated name calling), physical harassment (such as hitting, kicking or intentional injuring) and social exclusion (performed by isolating someone or spreading rumours about them). This section outlines selected findings on the experiences of school violence and harassment of LGBTQI learners, and the extent to which people would report these incidents.

27. UNESCO (2016). *Out in the open: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.* Paris: UNESCO.

Negative remarks against LGBTQI people

"I had a really hard time at school. People would constantly call me names or throw things at me. Teachers didn't really do much to help, to be honest. Partly because they didn't know. I remember this time when someone would come and start teasing me. I would face them. And then they'd threaten me. They'd go after me, call me names, insult me or even kick me after school. It was a very difficult moment for me."

(Pansexual trans woman, 19)

Insults and verbal abuse against LGBTQI people create a hostile learning environment. Regardless of who is the target of the provocation, they contribute to producing an unsafe space for all learners, while direct experiences of verbal harassment, especially when they are repeated over time, may lead to more serious consequences. The first section of the survey asked respondents whether they had witnessed or experienced negative remarks on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or variations in sex characteristics.

Specifically, we asked LGBTQI learners to assess the frequency in which negative remarks were made using sexual orientation as a ground to discriminate other people because they were (or were perceived to be) gay, bisexual or pansexual (i.e. insults like "faggot", "dyke", "pervert"). We also asked participants to identify how often they had seen gender identity and gender expression used as a ground to discriminate against other people because they were (or they were perceived to be) trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming (i.e. insults like "sissy", "tomboy", "tranny", etc.). Finally, we asked participants about the extent to which they had perceived intersexphobic comments, defined as negative attitudes and feelings towards people who are believed to possess biological sex traits that are not typically male or female (i.e. remarks based on someone's body like "your boobs are too big or too tiny", "you have too much hair", "you have too many muscles", etc.).

As indicated in **table 4**, the vast majority of respondents had witnessed negative comments related to people's sexual orientation (83,4%) or gender identity and gender expression (71,4%), either sometimes or on a regular basis (quite often or very often). Moreover, **table 5** shows that over half the respondents (67,2%) have been verbally harassed, with almost a quarter (24%) experiencing such verbal harassment on a regular basis. Almost half of respondents were also verbally harassed based on their gender identity and gender expression, with 17,9% experiencing that type of harassment frequently.

Table 4. Frequency of people who heard negative remarks addressed to others, based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (%)

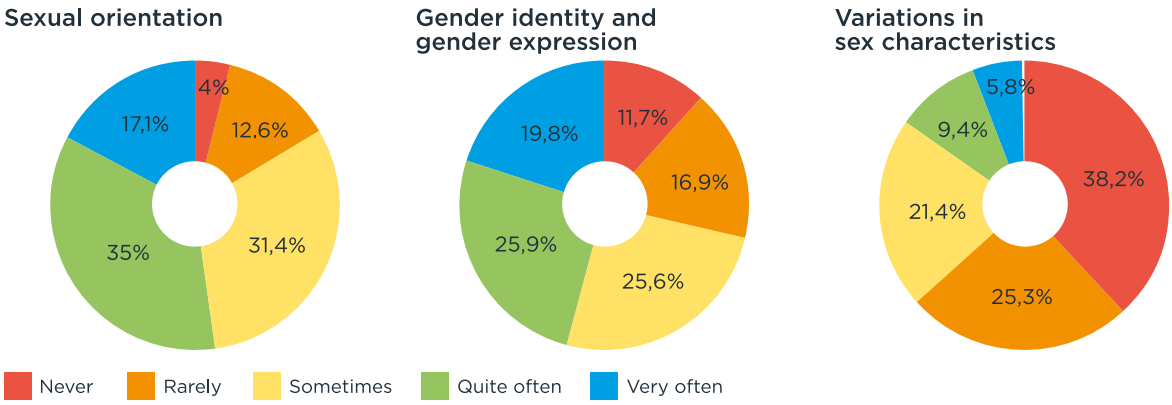


Table 5. Frequency of people who heard negative remarks addressed to them, based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (%)

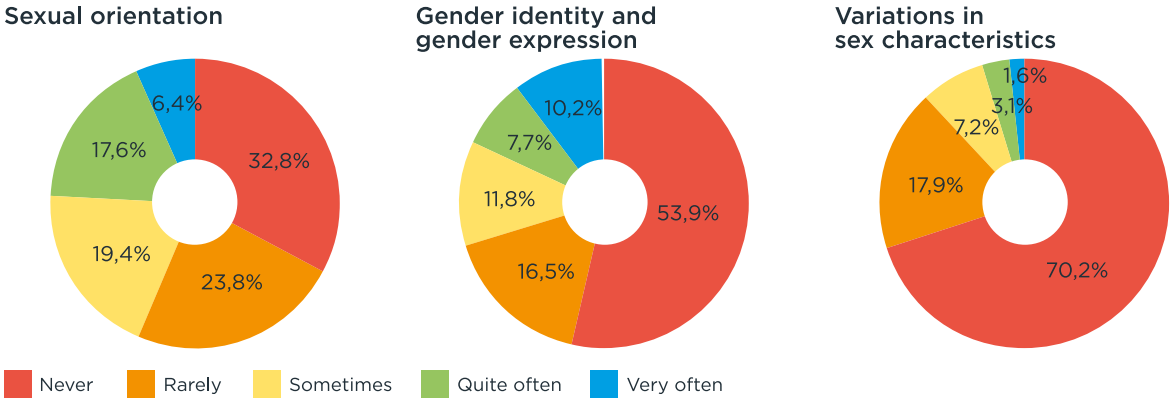


Table 6 provides a breakdown of the verbal harassment people have experienced in relation to their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics. Trans women have directly experienced negative comments (as addressee) most frequently, based on both their (actual or perceived) sexual orientation (86,5%) and gender identity (87,2%). Gay cis men have also experienced a high number of negative comments directly, based on their sexual orientation (65,3%).

Trans men and non-binary people also experienced a significant number of negative remarks or insults based on their gender identity (64,6% and 56,4%, respectively). Strikingly, only 14,6% of gay cis men and 4,2% of trans women have never experienced negative remarks based on their (actual or perceived) sexual orientation, and only 4,6% of trans women and 18,6% of trans men based on their gender identity.

Finally, nearly a third of the intersex respondents have experienced negative remarks based on their sex characteristics, although they have mostly received negative remarks based on their (actual or perceived) sexual orientation (42,3% sometimes, quite often or very often).

Table 6. Frequency of people who have been the target of negative remarks, based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (%)

Frequency	Trans men	Trans women	Non-binary	Gay cis men	Bisexual cis men	Lesbian cis women	Bisexual cis women	Intersex
Sexual orientation								
Never	21,9	4,2	34,5	14,7	30,1	38,4	51,4	31,6
Rarely	21,3	3,7	27,0	20,0	29,3	29,9	26,3	26,1
Sometimes	21,7	5,6	24,5	20,8	23,8	22,0	16,3	20,5
Quite often	29,5	84,6	9,4	26,3	11,9	7,1	4,9	13,0
Very often	5,6	1,9	4,6	18,2	4,9	2,6	1,1	8,8
Gender identity and gender expression								
Never	18,6	4,6	43,6	60,8	65,9	61,4	67,9	45,1
Rarely	16,9	3,9	22,5	13,7	18,0	20,2	16,4	21,2
Sometimes	18,6	4,3	19,3	8,3	10,0	11,9	10,2	18,0
Quite often	33,6	2,6	8,9	4,1	3,6	4,7	4,0	7,8
Very often	12,4	84,6	5,6	13,0	2,4	1,9	1,5	7,8
Variations in sex characteristics								
Never	76,5	93,5	68,4	55,2	76,6	76,8	73,9	45,9
Rarely	10,4	3,8	15,3	35,6	11,2	12,3	13,8	21,5
Sometimes	8,2	1,0	10,1	5,4	8,0	6,2	7,8	16,6
Quite often	3,5	1,3	4,0	2,2	3,3	3,4	3,1	7,5
Very often	1,3	0,5	2,2	1,6	0,9	1,3	1,4	8,5

Teachers and other school staff play a vital role in creating a safe environment for all students. Whether school staff intervene or not upon hearing negative remarks based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics has an important impact on the school climate for LGBTQI learners. Those respondents who had experienced SOGIESC-based verbal harassment on a regular basis were asked if teachers or other school staff were present when they were called names and if they did anything to address the issue. Although teachers were present in over half of the incidents, respondents stated that they tended not to mediate (less than 3% always intervened), as shown in **tables 7** and **8**.

Table 7. Frequency of school staff presence when someone was getting insulted, by grounds of verbal harassment (%)

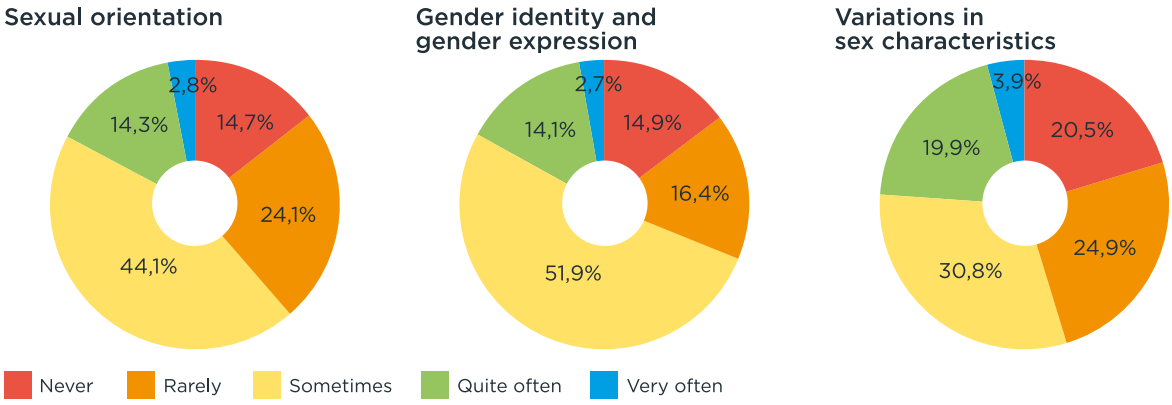
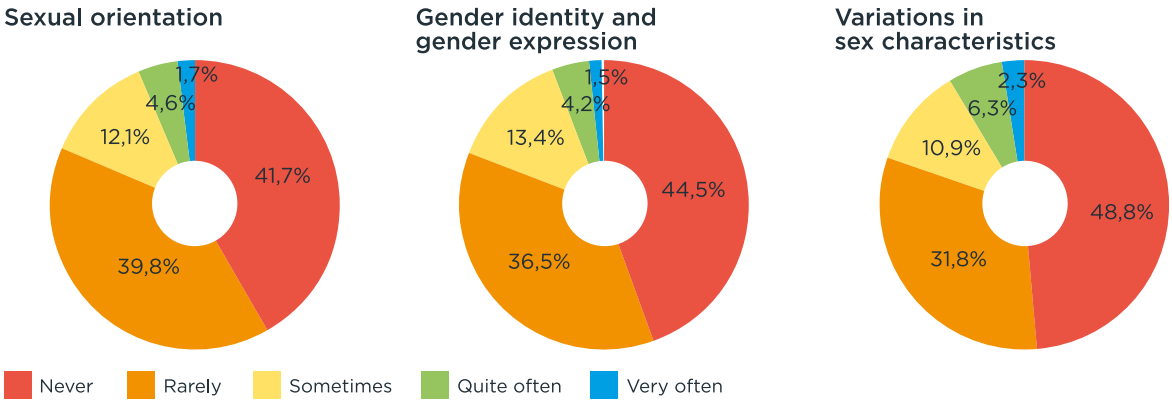


Table 8. Frequency of school staff intervention when someone was getting insulted, by grounds of verbal harassment (%)



Bullying and harassment

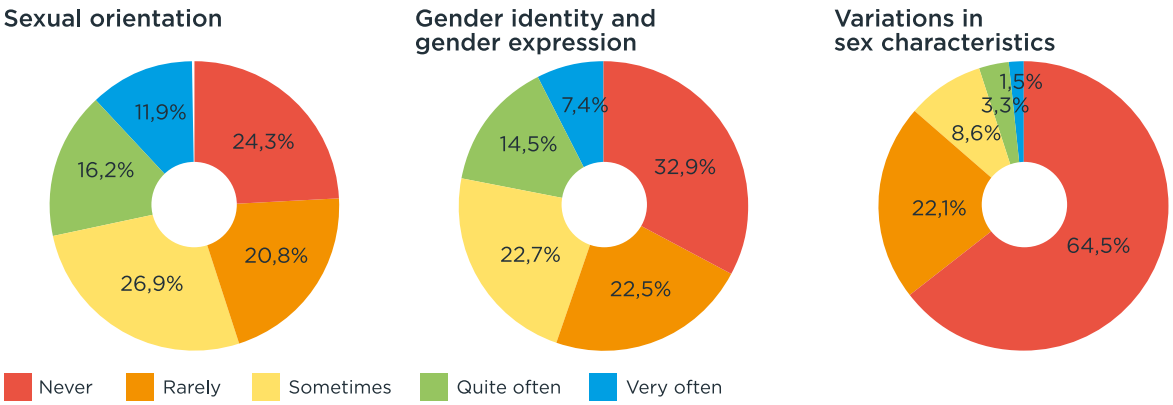
"I did not feel safe at all in my middle school and my primary school, and I was bullied a lot. I was really bullied. Part of it is definitely because I seemed gay. And yeah it was scary. I didn't feel safe. And I didn't feel safe with my friends, even. Even with my friends I felt like... they either had no idea about these issues and so didn't accept them or were just outright intolerant and homophobic."

(Bisexual, trans non-binary masculine, 20)

School bullying and harassment goes beyond experiencing negative remarks based on assumed sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics. Although there is no standard definition, UNESCO characterises bullying as an aggressive behaviour that involves unwanted negative actions, is repeated over time, and is grounded in an imbalance of power.[28] Verbal abuse makes up a considerable percentage of school SOGIGESC-based bullying, but bullying also includes physical aggressions, emotional manipulation and social exclusion repeated over time. We asked participants if they had experienced or witnessed any acts of bullying. The survey did not define specific forms of bullying, allowing respondents to consider every experience they might describe as such.

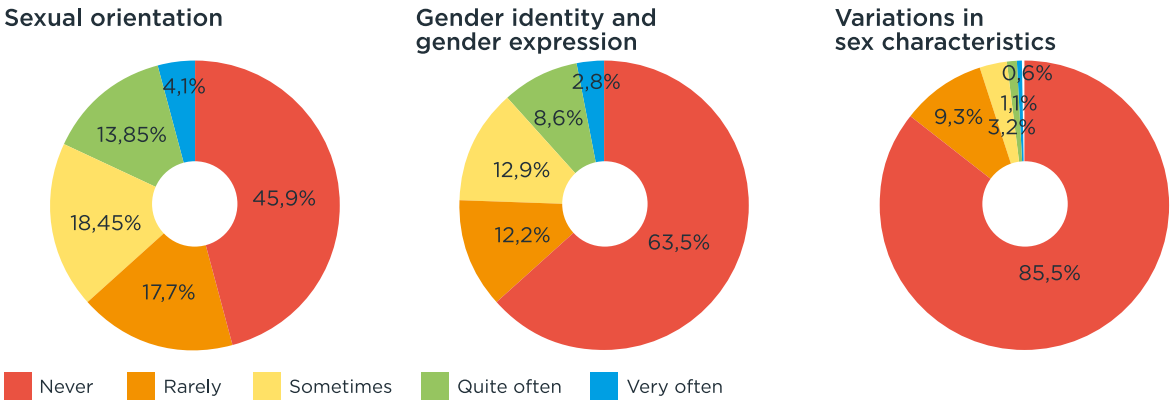
As shown in **table 9**, 75,6% and 67% of respondents had witnessed bullying behaviour based on someone else's (actual or perceived) sexual orientation or gender identity and gender expression respectively, and 28,1% and 21,9% had witnessed it frequently (quite often or very often). Bullying based on variations of sex characteristics was the type of harassment perceived to be less present, witnessed by only 35,5% of all respondents, most likely because there is less awareness about this form of harassment.

Table 9. Frequency of people that witnessed school bullying addressed to others, based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (%)



28. UNESCO (2019). *Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying.* Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Table 9. Frequency of people that experienced school bullying addressed to them, based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (%)



One in two LGBTQI respondents (54,2%) report having ever experienced bullying (broader than receiving insults or being the target of name calling) based on their assumed sexual orientation, and one in three (37%) based on their gender identity and gender expression.

Table 10 shows again shows trans women as the group that experienced bullying based on their perceived sexual orientation most frequently (89,6%), followed by gay cis men (58,2%) and trans men (50,5%). Bullying on grounds of someone's gender identity is especially high for trans and non-binary people (90% for trans women, 59% for trans men and 44,6% for non-binary and gender non-conforming people), and on sex characteristics for intersex respondents (39,7%).

By contrast, the share of respondents that have never experienced bullying based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics is very low: 6% for trans women, 25% for gay cis men and trans men, 49% for non-binary people, 48% for intersex people and bisexual cis men, 54% for lesbian cis women and 66% for bisexual cis women.

Table 10. Frequency of people who have experienced bullying, based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (%)

Frequency	Trans men	Trans women	Non-binary	Gay cis men	Bisexual cis men	Lesbian cis women	Bisexual cis women	Intersex
Sexual orientation								
Never	32,8	6,7	49,1	24,9	48,5	54,4	66,2	47,6
Rarely	16,7	3,7	19,9	16,9	21,7	20,2	18,4	20,5
Sometimes	17,2	51,2	18,2	26,7	15,3	14,9	10,0	13,0
Quite often	27,2	36,3	7,4	24,5	9,8	7,8	4,0	10,1
Very often	6,1	2,1	5,5	7,0	4,7	2,7	1,3	8,8
Gender identity and gender expression								
Never	24,9	6,1	55,2	70,2	75,4	72,1	78,8	57,0
Rarely	16,1	2,5	18,0	8,6	14,5	14,4	11,3	15,0
Sometimes	17,1	37,7	14,6	17,3	5,9	8,9	6,3	14,3
Quite often	31,6	51,0	7,6	2,2	2,6	3,2	2,7	5,5
Very often	10,4	2,7	4,7	1,6	1,5	1,5	0,9	8,1
Variations in sex characteristics								
Never	85,4	95,3	82,7	78,1	87,5	90,6	90,3	60,3
Rarely	7,8	2,9	9,2	16,8	7,9	6,4	6,1	17,7
Sometimes	4,6	0,7	5,8	3,3	3,1	1,7	2,3	11,1
Quite often	1,4	0,6	1,5	0,9	0,9	0,9	1,0	6,2
Very often	0,8	0,6	0,8	0,9	0,6	0,4	0,3	4,6

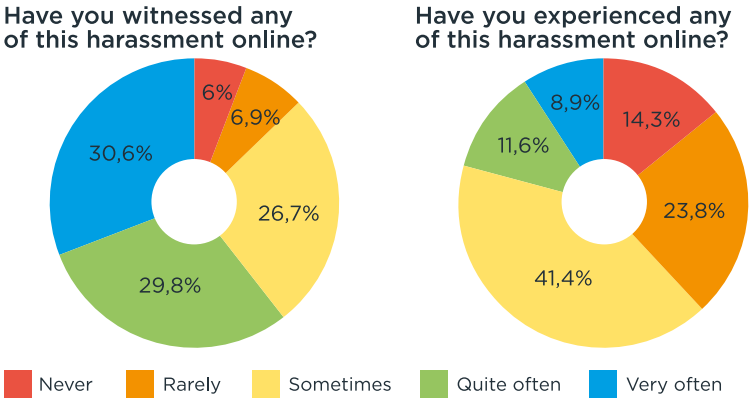
Online bullying

"Me and my boyfriend were having death threats at one specific school... I took all the screenshots and posted them on Facebook to show everyone what we go through. I didn't hide the names, I didn't hide anything. And I posted it." **(Pansexual, non-binary intersex, 19)**

Online bullying or cyberbullying has been defined as a type of psychological harassment grounded in hurtful online behaviour. It includes being the target of demeaning social media posts or receiving insulting or threatening instant messages or emails. Online bullying also refers to being treated in a hurtful way through mobile phones (texts, calls, video clips) or online (email, instant messaging, social networking, chatrooms). The survey asked respondents who had witnessed or experienced bullying whether any of the behaviour happened online.

Table 11 shows that the vast majority of LGBTQI learners reported having experienced or witnessed online bullying. Respondents identified this type of bullying more frequently when it has been addressed to others (87%) than when it has been addressed to themselves (62%). Over 20% of respondents who had experienced bullying, reported being the target of this type of online harassment on a regular basis (quite often or very often).

Table 11. Frequency of people that witnessed or experienced online bullying (%)[29]



29. The frequencies shown in this table only take into account people who had reported having witnessed or experienced some sort of bullying on a regular basis (sometimes, quite often or very often).

Reporting school violence

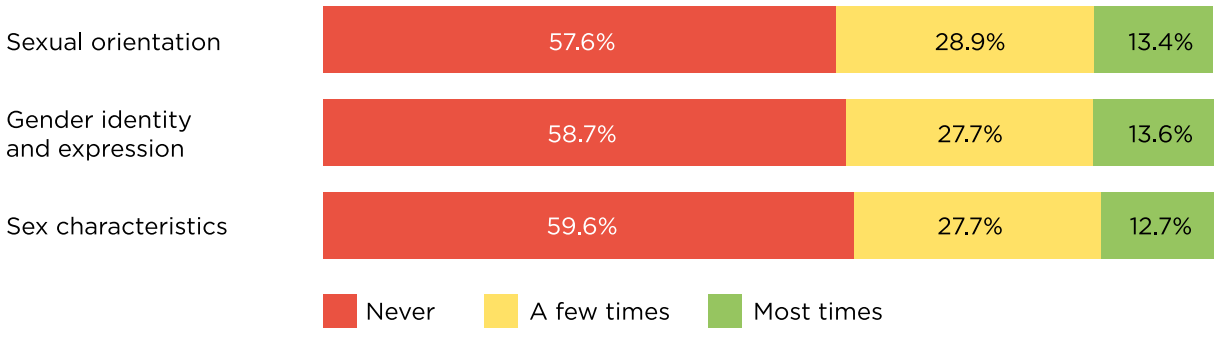
"Most of the times we wouldn't tell teachers about it. I think they were aware somewhat of it. But the issue was that quite a lot of us weren't out at that time. So, if we'd gone to the teachers and tell them 'we've been homophobic bullied', then we would have had to come out to the teachers, and they might have told to our parents. So, we were very careful about it."
(Pansexual queer, 21)

Safe, inclusive and supportive school environments should put in place effective mechanisms and procedures to report any act of SOGIGESC-based harassment and school staff should be trained to ensure that students affected by this type of violence can report incidents in confidence, without having to disclose their sexual orientation, gender identity or variations in sex characteristics against their will. The survey asked respondents who had experienced any type of bullying[30] if they had reported those incidents to any school staff. Those that had not reported such incidents were asked why.

Regardless of the grounds of bullying, most learners never reported such incidents to anyone (over 57,6% of respondents never told any school staff). As shown in **Figure 2**, less than 15% of respondents reported it to some school staff systematically. When asked about the reasons for not reporting these incidents (**table 12**), the majority said that school staff had not done anything in previous situations (34,9%) or that they feared they would do nothing (30,2%).

Many respondents did not consider the bullying to be serious enough to report (23%) — a problem in itself — or felt ashamed about what had happened (21%) and did not want to tell anybody.

Figure 2. Frequency of respondents who reported SOGIGESC-based bullying to school staff (%)



30. We only analysed responses from those respondents who told us they had experienced bullying sometimes, quite often or very often.

Table 12. Reasons why incidents of harassment remained unreported to school staff (%)[31]

Reasons	Frequency
School staff had done nothing in previous situations	34,9
Belief that school staff would do nothing about it	30,2
Did not think harassment was too serious	23,1
I felt humiliated and ashamed	21
Reporting to school staff would have made things worse	20,3
Did not want to come out	14,2
School staff would not have been supportive	13,9
Did not feel comfortable talking to school staff or did not trust them	13,6
School staff were part of the harassment	9,3
I did not take their actions as harassment. I thought I deserved it	8,6
School staff should have known	6,1
Reported to someone else	4,8
School staff did not deserve attention	2,7

"I could definitely not tell my family. I am nowhere near ready to be out to them. I'm just too scared about what they would think of me and they would do to me." **(Gay cisgender man, 20)**

Parents and communities can also play a role in helping LGBTQI youth to feel safe and supported. The survey asked respondents who had experienced any type of bullying if they had reported these incidents to any relatives or civil society organisation. The people who had not reported these incidents were asked the reasons behind it.

Regardless of the grounds of bullying, half of respondents did not report the bullying to any relative, and over 85% did not talk to any organisation. As shown in **Figure 3**, less than 15% of respondents reported it to a relative systematically. When asked about the reasons for not reporting these incidents to a family member, most respondents said that they would not feel safe to do so or were not able to come out. Respondents also said that they felt too sad or that their family members would not be supportive. **Table 13** shows that the majority of respondents did not report to any organisation either because they did not know they could or because there were no such organisations operating in their country. Some people said that they were ashamed or scared or that they did not know they were experiencing bullying at that time.

31. The questionnaire had an open field asking respondents who did not report incidents of harassment to school staff about the reasons behind it. We conducted a qualitative analysis of all responses and they have been codified in this table.

Figure 3. Frequency of respondents who reported SOGIGESC-based bullying to relatives or civil society organisations (%)

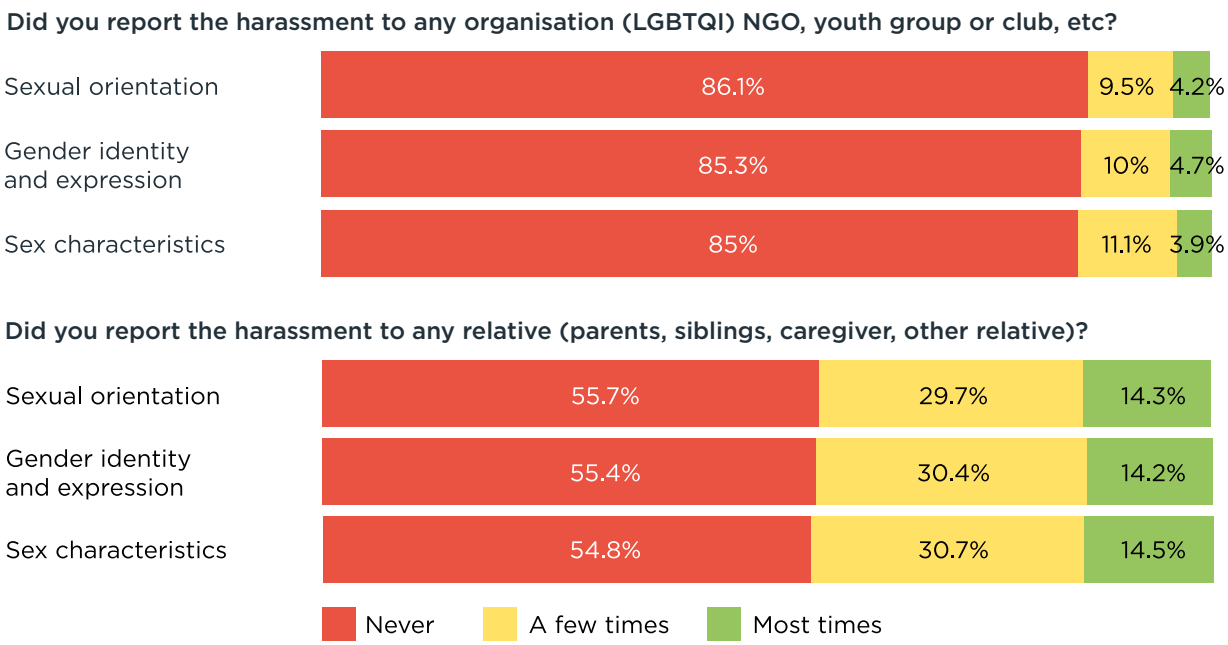


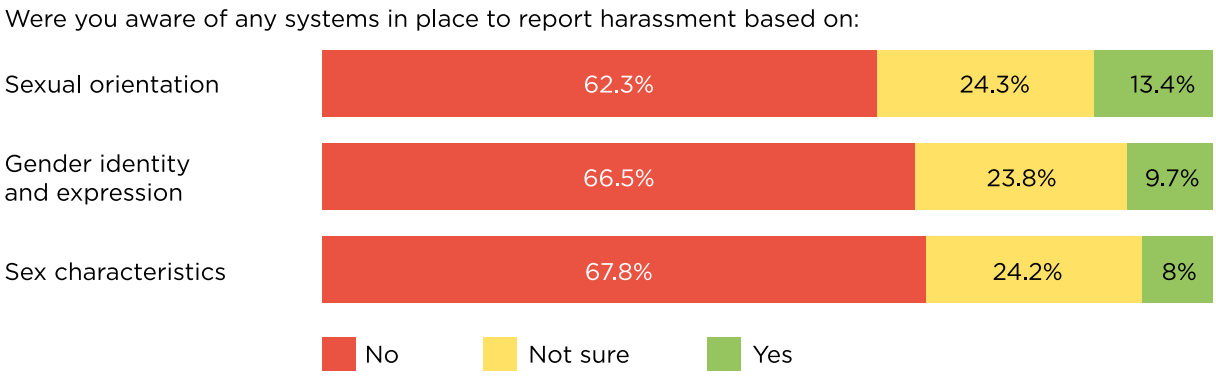
Table 13. Reasons why incidents of harassment remained unreported to relatives and civil society organisations (%)[32]

Reasons	Frequency
Relatives	
I could not trust my family	34,9
I was afraid they would judge me	29,7
I had not come out	21,8
I did not think they would have been helpful	21
I felt too sad and wanted to be isolated	20,8
They were not supportive of my sexual orientation, or gender identity and expression	20,5
It would only have made things worse	9,4
I did not feel comfortable talking to them or did not trust them	4,8
Civil society organisations	
It was hard to report to someone	20,3
I do not think there was any in my city	19,1
I did not know there were LGBTQI organisations	14,9
I did not think it was so important	10,2
I did not understand I was experiencing harassment	9
I was scared	8,3
I felt ashamed of who I was	8,3
It is hard to report to someone	8,1
I was too shy	4,9
I did not want to be seen with other LGBTQI people	2,4
I did not feel comfortable talking to them or did not trust them	1,9

32. The questionnaire had an open field asking respondents who did not report incidents of harassment to relatives or civil society organisations about the reasons behind it. We conducted a qualitative analysis of all responses and they have been codified in this table.

As shown above, learners may prefer to stay silent due to the lack of effective policies and reporting mechanisms, with clear protection for LGBTQI people. All respondents (regardless of their experiences of bullying) were asked if they knew of any systems in place to report threads or harassment on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and variations in sex characteristics. **Figure 4** shows that the majority of respondents were not aware of any systems in place to report such incidents, specially to report violence based on gender identity and gender expression, or variations in sex characteristics.

Figure 4. Awareness of policies or systems in place to report SOGIGESC-based harassment in schools (%)



LGBTQI inclusive content in schools

Key Findings

- Most people never received information on sexual orientation (52,6%), gender identity and gender expression (72,9%) or variations in sex characteristics in schools (40,6%).
- Less than 1 in 5 respondents reported having been taught positive representations of LGBTQI people.
- Over 40% of intersex people received information on sex characteristics, but this information was mainly negative for most respondents (78%).
- Over 7 in 10 respondents felt that their teachers were not open to discuss LGBTQI issues in schools.

Only a few European countries have developed inclusive and affirming curricula and have implemented mandatory teacher training on LGBTQI issues.[33] Although support from school staff and the inclusion of content on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics has increased over the last decade,[34] there are currently very few quality learning materials on these issues in use. The majority of existing materials still consist of heteronormative representations and exemplifications of traditional and binary gender roles.[35] This section outlines selected findings on the inclusion of LGBTQI identities in school curricula, and the extent to which teachers were able to bring this information to the classroom.

The assessment of the information received in school relating to variations in sex characteristics was significantly different when only taking into account the responses given by intersex people and people with variations in sex characteristics. This is likely to be related to the lack of awareness on this topic by other respondents. For this reason, this section will only include information on sex characteristics provided by intersex people and people with variations in sex characteristics.

33. IGLYO (2018). *LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report.* Brussels: IGLYO.
34. FRA (2020). *A long way to go for LGBTI equality.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
35. UNESCO (2016). *Out in the Open: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.* Paris: UNESCO.

Inclusive curricula

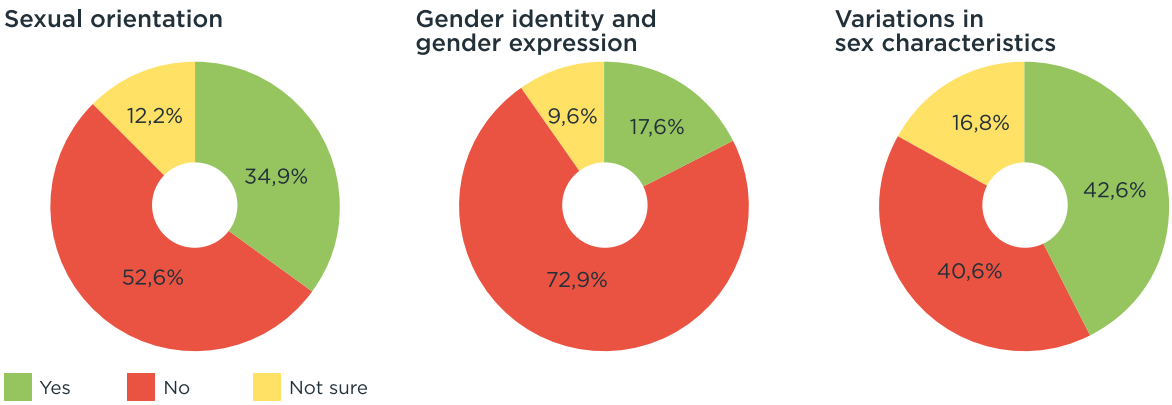
"Yes. I have to say, the education – like sex and relationships education – was dire, all the way through school. It was absolutely dire. There was not one mention of transgender individuals. There was not one mention really of same sex individuals. (...) I would have expected it to be popping up at least once. Citizenship as well – never appeared in that. I look in retrospect and I think, that was one area of my education which was so incredibly neglected."
(Pansexual, non-binary, 24)

"If it was crucial, for example in literature when some authors wrote just about gay couples or if they were executed for being gay, obviously they said that, but I don't think there was a lot more presentation, [unless] it was necessary." **(Pansexual, cisgender woman, 20)**

School curricula and learning materials should provide all students with access to non-judgmental and accurate information on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics. Biased information, often inferring pathology, and lack of positive representations of LGBTQI people have negative consequences for all learners. The survey asked respondents if they received information about sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics when they were at school, and if that information was mostly negative, neutral or positive.

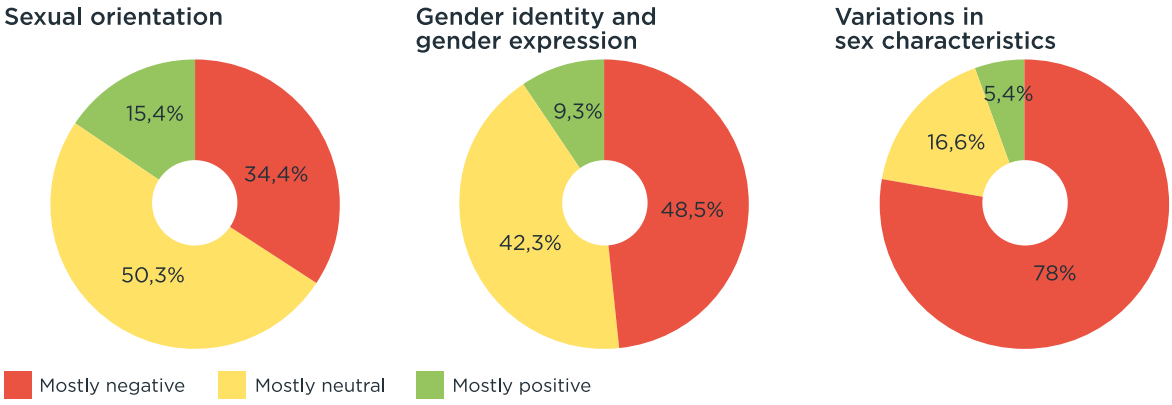
Over one third of respondents (72,9%) had not received any sort of information in school curricula on gender identity and gender expression, and over a half did not receive it on sexual orientation (52,6%). Only 40,6% of intersex respondents said that they received any type of information on sex characteristics.

Table 14. Occurrence of received information on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics (%)



As shown in **table 15**, only a low percentage of respondents had received mostly positive information on any of these topics (15,3% on sexual orientation, 9,3% on gender identity and gender expression, and 5,4% on sex characteristics). Most of the information received on sexual orientation was neutral (50,3%), while most of the information on gender identity and gender expression (48,5%) and on variations in sex characteristics (78%) was negative (i.e. biased, hostile, or pathologising).

Table 15. Frequency of the type of information received on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics (%)



Knowledge of teachers on LGBTQI identities

"We didn't have any citizenship education or things like that. So, we didn't have any education that would help us through. When I changed school and we had citizenship education, LGBTQI issues were embedded in the curricula. It was so much better, because that educated people. Especially the information that teachers would give us. That made me feel much more at ease." **(Pansexual queer, 21)**

"I made a question to a teacher. This will stay with me for the rest of my life. She asked me: 'if a little boy wanted to do ballet, how would you react?'. And she looked so disgusted. And I said: 'buy him his shoes'. I don't really care. I'm not gonna be my child's first bully. My child can do whatever they wish. And I will allow them to express themselves in any matter that they wish, as long as it's not harmful to others. And the grimmest look I got after that... I feel like it was severely unprofessional. Obviously, she's entitled to her own views, but she shouldn't push her views on other students. Especially young people who are extremely impressionable."
(Trans non-binary man, 19)

Inclusive curricula need to be brought to the classroom by teachers who have been trained to implement this content. Their confidence and knowledge on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics will translate into the school climate and will affect how LGBTQI learners feel. The survey asked participants about their own perception of the knowledge of their teachers.

Most respondents think teachers were not open to talk about sexual orientation (70,8%), gender identity and gender expression (80,9%), and variations in sex characteristics (70,2%). The following breakdown table shows how this perception is similar among the different groups of respondents, although trans, non-binary and intersex people are more likely to perceive teachers as being reluctant.

Table 16. Frequency of people who perceived that their teachers were open to discuss LGBTQI issues, based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics (%)

Frequency	Trans men	Trans women	Non-binary	Gay cis men	Bisexual cis men	Lesbian cis women	Bisexual cis women	Intersex
Sexual orientation								
Never/ Rarely	73,2	60,7	72,7	75,0	65,3	70,2	69,4	69,6
Sometimes	16,4	36,8	16,1	13,3	17,5	17,4	16,9	18,6
Usually/ Always	10,6	2,5	11,2	11,7	17,2	12,4	13,7	11,9
Gender identity and gender expression								
Never/ Rarely	84,6	96,3	82,3	82,7	71,9	79,1	77,5	78,2
Sometimes	10,0	2,2	10,7	10,1	15,0	12,5	12,9	13,9
Usually/ Always	5,5	1,6	7,1	7,3	13,1	8,4	9,6	8,0
Variations in sex characteristics								
Never/ Rarely	84,6	96,3	82,3	82,7	71,9	79,1	77,5	88,2
Sometimes	10,0	2,2	10,7	10,1	15,0	12,5	12,9	9,9
Usually/ Always	5,5	1,6	7,1	7,3	13,1	8,4	9,6	1,9

Protections and support for LGBTQI learners

Key Findings

- The majority of respondents (over 60%) are not aware of any anti-discrimination law or policy to tackle SOGIGESC-based bullying in schools.
- 1 in 3 respondents stated that there were no support systems for LGBTQI learners, and 1 in 4 that they were not sure if there were any.
- 8 in 10 respondents said that there were no school associations or youth groups for LGBTQI learners.
- Over 80% of respondents said that their schools did not direct them to any LGBTQI organisation.
- Less than 13% of respondents could access information about sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics through their schools, youth groups or LGBTQI organisations.

Anti-discrimination legislation and policies to address SOGIGESC-based bullying in schools

The education sector should establish comprehensive policies at both national and local levels to prevent and address violence in educational settings and protect the rights of LGBTQI learners.[36] Taking into consideration information provided by the Council of Europe Member States, 69% of them specifically forbid discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in education, 46% on grounds of gender identity and 4% on grounds of variations in sex characteristics[37]. Regardless of the policy used by Member States to prohibit SOGIGESC-based violence in educational settings, they should be known by LGBTQI learners to be effective. The survey asked respondents if they were aware of any anti-discrimination law, policy or action plan that would protect the rights of LGBTQI learners if they were discriminated against, harassed or bullied in schools.

As shown in **figure 5** and **figure 6**, most respondents were not aware of any law that would include sexual orientation as a protected characteristic (67,4%), gender identity and gender expression (77,5%) or variations in sex characteristics (89,9%). Similarly, most respondents were not aware of any action plan that would protect lesbian, gay or bisexual learners (70,6%), trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming learners (77,2%) or intersex learners (87,6%).

36. UNESCO (2016). Out in the Open: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Paris: UNESCO.
37. Council of Europe (2018). Safe at school: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or sex characteristics in Europe. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Figure 5. Are you aware of legislation protecting learners against discrimination based on: Sexual orientation, Gender identity and gender expression, Variations in sex characteristics

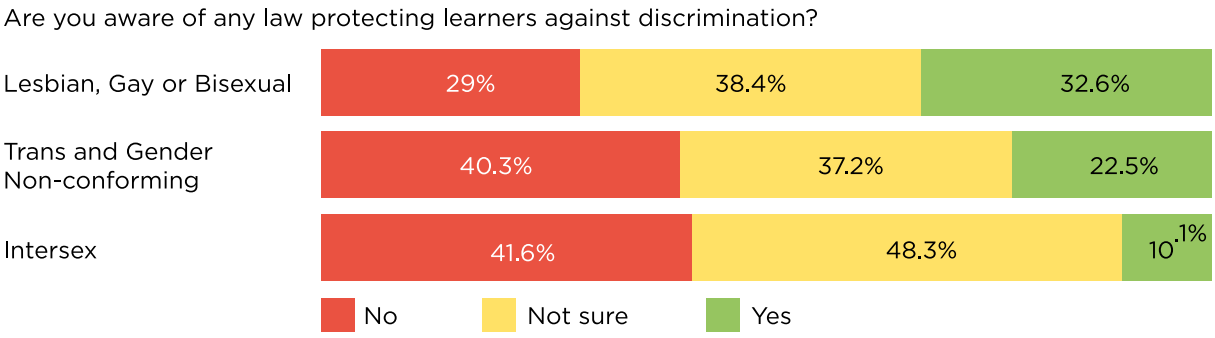
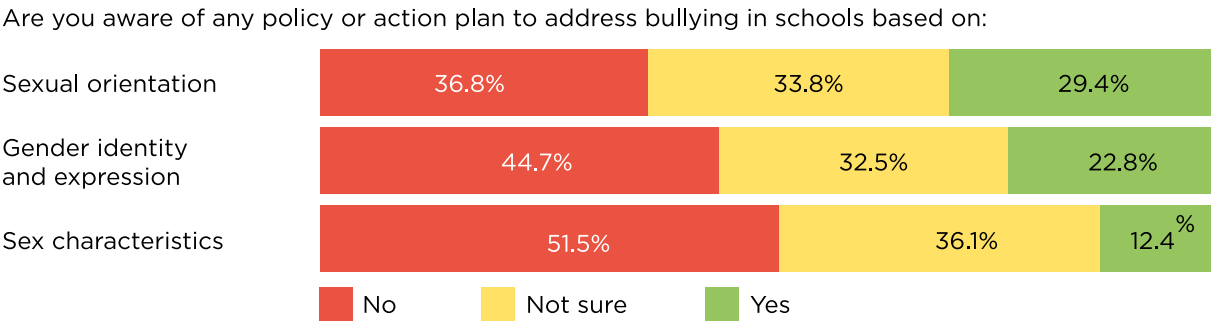


Figure 6. Awareness of policies and action plans to address SOGIGESC-based bullying in schools (%)



In 2018, IGLYO published the LGBTQI Inclusive Education Index to assess the extent to which governments had implemented legislation and policies to protect the rights of LGBTQI learners[38]. To have a better understanding of the level of awareness by LGBTQI youth who live in countries with anti-discrimination laws or national policies to tackle SOGIGESC-based school bullying, we analysed their responses to these same questions. The following figures only shows the results of respondents who live in a Council of Europe Member States that have an anti-discrimination law or an action plan to tackle SOGIGESC-based violence in schools.

38. IGLYO (2018). *LGBTQI Inclusive Education Index.* Available at http://education-index.org

Figure 7 and **figure 8** show that most respondents who live in countries with concrete measures are not aware of any anti-discrimination law or action plan, especially those respondents who live in countries with measures to protect the rights of trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming (72,6% do not know any law or think they do not exist, and 74,3% do not know any action plan or policy or think they do not exist) and intersex people (84% do not know any law or think they do not exist, and 89,9% do not know any action plan or policy or think they do not exist). This lack of awareness or misinformation means that the measures in place are not effective, as they fail to be known by those who are supposed to be protected by them or are perceived as insufficient or inexistent.

Figure 7. Awareness of anti-discrimination laws applicable to education, from countries with legislation in place (as reported in the LGBTQI Inclusive Education Index) (%)

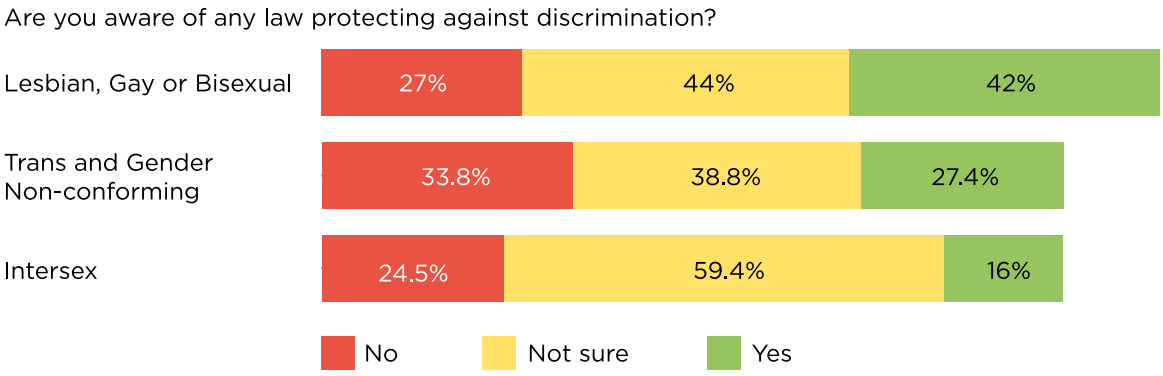
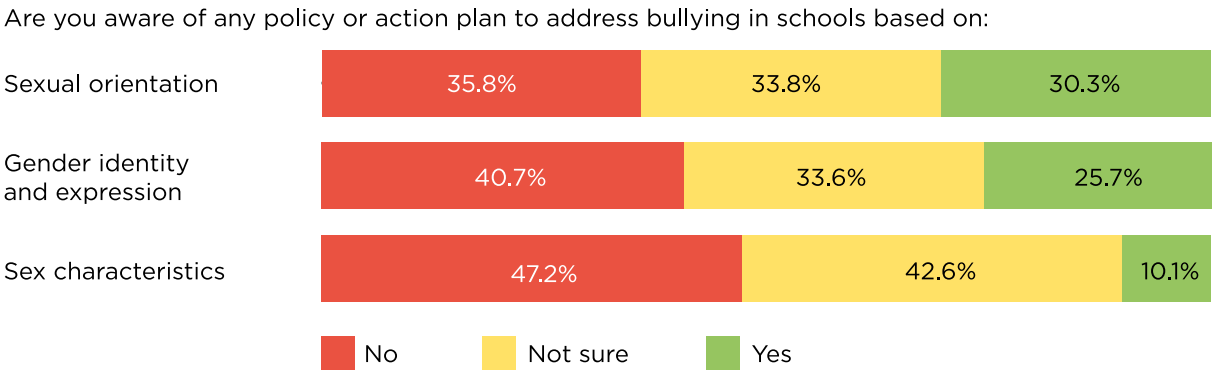


Figure 8. Awareness of policies and action plans to address SOGIGESC-based bullying in schools, from countries with policies and action plans in place (as reported in the LGBTQI Inclusive Education Index) (%)



Support systems

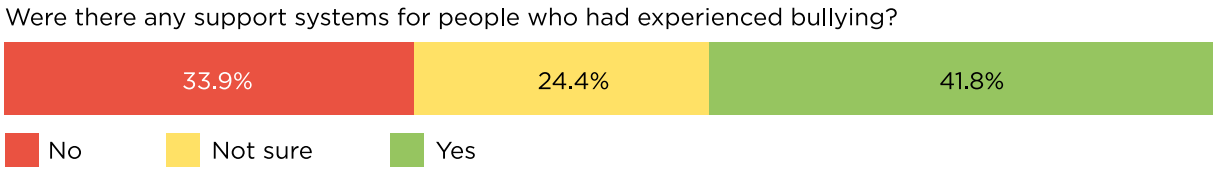
"I had my [personal] story of success because I inspired my friend and her mother who was a teacher (...) to make this Friday Rainbow happen. And it was the only school in the whole town that had this thing going on. The kids were really grateful and now they are coming out to her and talking with her about their struggles."

(Queer panromantic demisexual, 24)

Effective and reliable support systems must be in place for learners exposed to or affected by school bullying and harassment. Learners must be provided with information of where they can seek help, and support must be easily accessible and tailored to the needs of each person. In some European countries, the education sectors offer support to LGBTQI learners who are the targets of violence (including bullying), either in schools or outside of schools through referral mechanisms. The survey asked respondents if support systems were available to support those learners that had experienced bullying.

As shown in **figure 9**, the majority of respondents stated that there were no support systems (33,9%) or that they were not sure if there were any (24,4%).

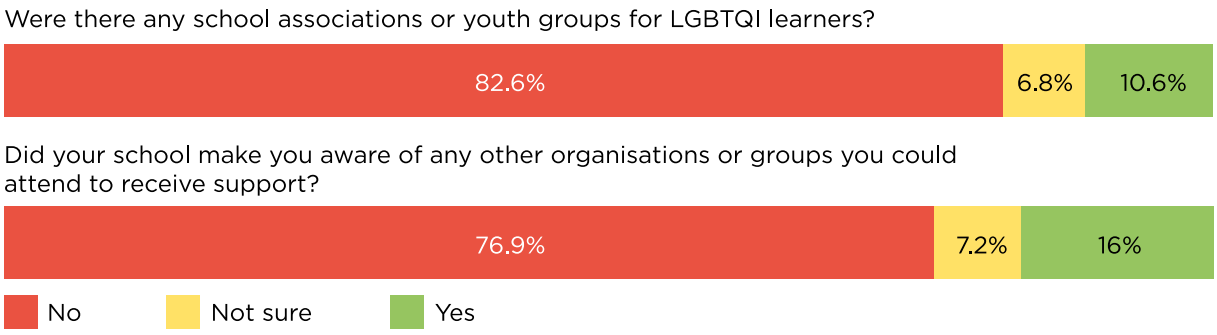
Figure 9. Awareness of support systems (%)



Civil society (including LGBTQI organisations or youth groups) can contribute to effective responses to SOGIGESC-based violence in education. Partnerships between the education sector, civil society organisations and other relevant service providers and organisations ensures that LGBTQI learners have access to adequate information. In addition to the support provided by educational institutions, learners should be signposted to relevant organisations, such as LGBTQI youth groups. The survey asked respondents if there were any schools or youth groups for LGBTQI people. Respondents were also asked if schools made them aware of other LGBTQI organisation.

Figure 10 shows that only 10,6% of respondents knew that there were school associations or youth groups for LGBTQI learners. Similarly, only 16% of respondents said that their schools directed them to LGBTQI civil society organisations.

Figure 10. Awareness of LGBTQI youth groups and organisations (%)



Information about sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics

"Everything I learned I learned from the internet. And I'm really grateful for that. Because that was the place (in which) you could find some LGBT content and support groups and other things. So, it really helped me to understand that it's normal. I think now the children that go to high school or primary school have it easier because LGBT culture is becoming more and more mainstream. So, I think that they are more likely to (...) see that it's OK to be who they are. And for me it was also a place where I could (...) see for myself that it's fine and that other people like me exist outside of that small town."

(Bisexual cis woman, 23)

Learning about diversity and about your own sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics is crucial for LGBTQI youth. Information should, therefore, be provided in different formats, and posters and leaflets should be on display in both public and more private areas of all education institutions. Schools should also signpost to online resources and LGBTQI organisations to raise awareness and encourage greater respect from all learners. The survey asked respondents where they accessed information about sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics while they were at school.

Table 17 shows that most schools did not offer any information on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics, and that most respondents could neither have access to this type of information by consulting an LGBTQI organisation or participating in a youth group.

Table 17. Access to SOGIGESC information while LGBTQI learners were at school (%)

	I accessed information by consulting an LGBTQI organisation	I accessed information by participating in a youth group	My school provided me with information
Information on sexual orientation	12,5%	5,5%	8,7%
Information on gender identity and gender expression	10,6%	4,1%	5,2%
Information on variations in sex characteristics	7,6%	3%	4,3%

Gender identity and gender expression in educational settings

Key Findings

- Over 1 in 2 trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming respondents had spoken with someone about their gender identity by the time of completing the survey, but most people had not been out publicly.
- Only 1 in 10 trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents reported that their gender identities were always respected by their teachers and other school staff. By contrast, 38,9% reported that their gender identity was never or rarely respected.
- Less than 1 in 10 trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people reported that their gender identities were always respected in school-related documentation.
- Over 80% of trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents reported problems accessing gendered spaces to match with their identities.
- Less than 5% of respondents had access to trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming guidelines when they were at school.

Many trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people become conscious of their gender identity before the age of 18.[40] Support and recognition of people's gender identities in schools is key to protecting everyone's rights to education, health and well-being. Across Europe, there is currently a lack of gender recognition procedures for children and young people in educational settings. This contributes to social exclusion and stigma, higher rates of school drop-out or lower school performance and can increase the risk of trans youth experiencing mental health issues.[41]

States should establish accessible and non-discriminatory gender recognition procedures enabling young people to have their name, pronouns and gender identities recognised in schools. This section outlines selected findings on the rights of trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people, and the extent to which schools are an inclusive and supportive space to these learners.

40. European Commission (2020). *Legal gender recognition in the EU: the journeys of trans people towards full equality.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
41. TGEU (2018). *Legal Gender Recognition and the Best Interest of the Child (policy paper)*. Berlin: Transgender Europe.

Disclosure and respect of gender identity

"So, I always tried to seem kind of [queer], and fight with that fear I had inside of me. So, I definitely tried to seem that way. I cut my hair really short and stuff. I never wore dresses. Like the stereotypical stuff. I dressed like a boy, because I thought I was a boy (...) I consciously made the decision not to tell anyone, because it seemed really, really scary."
(Trans non-binary masculine, 20)

"My school stated to me that I wouldn't be accepted at that school. They also told the other teachers that they would lose their job if they used my preferred pronouns and name. I had to go through school dreading every class as it would trigger my dysphoria and I'd end up having a breakdown." **(Bisexual, trans man, 16)**

While many trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people are in the process of realising their gender identity while at school, most respondents of the latest EU LGBTI Survey did not come out to someone until they reached their early 20s[42]. Many people feel they are forced to hide or disguise their gender identity to their school peers and teachers, due to the fear of bullying or not being supported.

The survey asked trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents if they had disclosed their gender identities to any of their peers or teachers. Over half of the respondents self-identified as trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming (56,7%) had told someone by the time of completing the survey, but most people had not been out publicly (63,2%). As reported in other studies, most people chose not to disclose their gender identities to their peers or to school staff due to the fear of being bullied or anxiety to not being supported.

42. FRA (2019). *EU LGBTI Survey II.* URL: https://fra.europa.eu/en/data-and-maps/2020/lgbti-survey-data-explorer

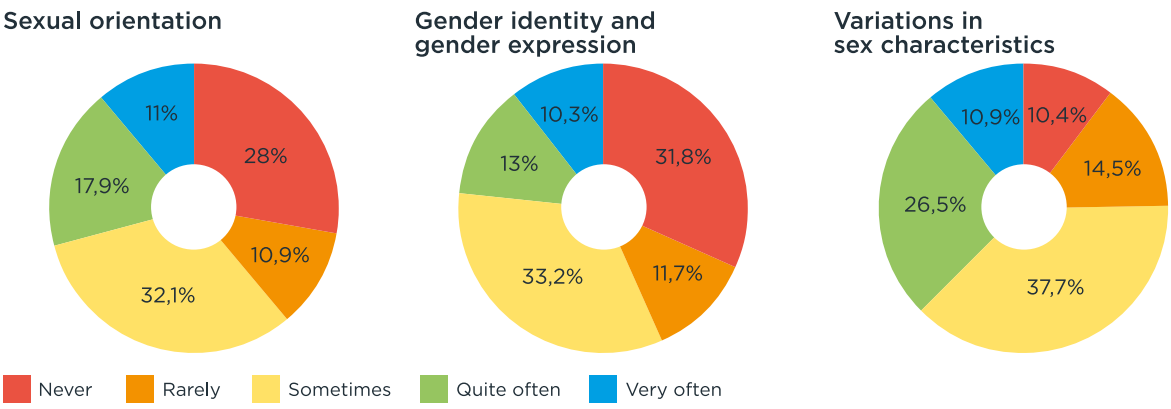
"I still just keep it [my gender identity] under wraps really. There's a handful of staff who I have told, but the thing is I've said to them: 'under all circumstances, within school, please use my deadname and use just standard male pronouns really –he/him pronouns'. Because, I said, I don't want to create a situation yet."

(Pansexual, non-binary, 24)

Respondents who had disclosed their gender identity (even to just one person) were asked to assess the extent to which their teachers, school staff and peers respected their gender identities, name and pronouns when they were at school. Only 11% of respondents felt that their gender identity was **always** respected by their teachers. Similarly, 10,3% of respondents declared that other school staff would **always** respect their name and pronouns when engaging in a conversation with them. By contrast, 38,9% of respondents declared that school staff would **never or rarely** respect their gender identity, and 43,5% reported being misgendered by other school staff (i.e. deadnaming[43] or wrong use of pronouns). The share of teachers and other school staff not using people's names and pronouns is especially high for respondents self-identified as non-binary: over 47% respondents said that their teachers and other school staff **never or rarely** respected their gender identities.

When asked about peers, respondents reported higher rates of respect: 10,9% of respondents felt that their peers would **always** respect their gender identities and 26,5% that they would do that **usually**. However, 24,9% of respondents said that their peers would **never or rarely** respect their name and pronouns, as shown in **table 18**. This figure is probably related to the high rates of violence experienced by trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people (*see 'Experiences of school bullying based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics'*).

Table 18. Frequency of people who perceived that their teachers, school staff and fellow students respected their gender identity, by using their correct name and pronouns (%)



43. Calling someone by the name they were given at birth after they changed it.

There are a growing number of learners who chose to affirm their gender while in school. To create a safe, supportive and inclusive educational space for trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people, educational policies relating to people's gender identities should be put in place enabling all learners to have their name, gender marker and pronouns recognised. These policies should also avoid binary systems, as they would exclude some gender identities.

Only 8,3% of trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents that had disclosed their gender identity reported that their gender identity was respected in all school documents. By contrast, 16,7% of respondents said that it was never respected and 32,7% said that it was only respected in a few documents. A great share of respondents who had disclosed their gender identity to someone (32,9%) said that they had not socially transitioned while they were at school, so this question did not apply to them.

Table 19. Respect of people's gender identities in all school documents, assessed by replying to the question *"Was your gender identity (i.e. gender marker) and your name respected in all school documents?"* (%)

Response	
Yes, it was	8,3
Not in all of them, only in a few	32,7
No, never	16,7
To my knowledge, my gender identity did not appear in any of my school documents	9,4
I had not come out when I was at school	32,9

Gendered school facilities

"I am a trans guy, but I was assigned female at birth and that still remains in my birth certificate. In my case, I had a letter from my doctor that would let me not go to physical education, because the school did not know if I should be in the girls' physical education group or in the boys' group." **(Asexual, trans man, 16)**

"For example, I had people open doors, bathroom doors, on me when I was in the bathroom stall and shouting at me because I wasn't supposed to be in the boys' bathroom. Or if I go to the girls' bathroom, all the girls are like 'stop, look at the sign, let's make sure it's the girls' bathroom' and [go back inside] and tell me 'listen, this is the girls' bathroom, you're not supposed to be here" **(Pansexual, non-binary intersex, 19)**

Addressing gender identity and gender expression in schools is an ongoing task that needs to incorporate a proactive approach from educational institutions. This process includes not only understanding and supporting trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming learners, but also identifying areas of change at school and adjusting accordingly. Many learners are excluded from sports and other gendered activities and may feel unease with gendered spaces (such as toilets, changing rooms or showers), which only adds to the negative effects on wellbeing caused by discrimination, bullying and other unfair treatment.

Trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents that had disclosed their gender identity were asked if toilets and sports related facilities (such as showers and changing rooms) were segregated by gender. Most respondents (85%) stated that toilets were segregated by 'male' and 'female'. Only 4,9% of respondents said that they were not segregated by gender and 5,4% that they had, at least, a non-gendered option. 3,7% of participants reported that the school had enabled a specific toilet they could go to (such as a school staff toilet or a toilet for people specific mobility needs). When asked about school changing rooms and showers, most respondents (82,3%) reported that they were segregated by 'male' and 'female' and that they could not use facilities in line with their gender identity. Only 10,6% respondents said that they could use facilities in line with their gender identity, and 2,2% that the school had non-gendered spaces.

Table 20. Type of gendered spaces in schools, assessed by replying to the question *"Were toilets, school gymnasiums, changing rooms and showers segregated by gender in your school?"* (%)

Response	
Toilets	
Yes, they were segregated by 'male' and 'female'	85
Yes, but we also had access to non-gendered toilets	5,4
No, they were not segregated	4,9
They were segregated, but the school had enabled other spaces for me	3,7
Other options	1,1
School gymnasiums, changing rooms and showers	
Yes, they were segregated by 'male' and 'female', and sometimes I could not use a facility in line with my gender identity	82,3
Yes, they were segregated by 'male' and 'female', but I could use a facility in line with my gender identity	10,6
No, they were not segregated	2,2
Other options	4,9

Specific guidelines to support trans youth

"I was apparently one of the first trans people to come out at my school. I soon heard about one other trans male coming out. I was not told of any specific guidelines to support trans people. My school was very supportive, although my pronouns were sometimes forgotten by staff and students, but I was too anxious to correct them most of the time. Also, they still stated my gender as female in documents, without any mention of me being a trans male, although they listed my preferred name."

(Straight, trans man, 16)

The transition process often takes several years and requires support by school staff at every stage. This transition process might mean that young people affirming their gender adopt clothing, hairstyles and mannerisms that match their gender identities.[44] Some trans people may even decide to start undergoing hormone therapies or puberty blockers. Teachers, school counsellors and school administrators need to provide information and resources, be supportive, and facilitate inclusive environments.[44]

Trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents were asked to identify if they had been supported with the use of specific guidelines while they were at school. Only 4,7% of respondents reported having had access to specific guidelines while they were at school. Most people did not have access to any type of guidelines (68,5%) or did not know if they existed (26,8%). When asked if they were useful, most people believed that they helped them, but thought they were not always respected by school staff. Many respondents reported that they were the first openly trans people at the school, so they had to help in creating them *("Me and a few other trans people had to work with the school to get us support in school", "I was the first person to transition in the history of my high school. I had to educate my school and help them create guidelines with the information I had from other organisations").*

Table 21. Frequency of access to guidelines related to people's gender identity (%)

Were there any guidelines to support the transition process of trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people in your school?

44. See Malta's *Trans, gender variant and intersex students in schools* policy, published in June 2015: https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/Trans,%20Gender%20Variant%20and%20Intersex%20Students%20in%20Schools%20Policy.pdf

"I had a really hard time at my previous school. People would constantly call me names (...). Teachers didn't really do much to help, to be honest. Partly because they didn't know. It was a very difficult moment for me. I felt awful. (...) Then I changed to antoher school and everything was way better. Teachers used my name and pronouns. (...) It was far from perfect, but I felt much safer."

(Straight trans woman, 19)

CLOSING REMARKS

This research provides a vital insight into the current experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming and intersex learners in European schools. Based on the responses from 17.181 young learners from all across Europe, this report draws attention to the prevalence of issues faced by LGBTQI youth, such as SOGIGESC-based school bullying, the absence of inclusive curricula or school staff support, the lack of knowledge about anti-discrimination legislation and policies or support systems for LGBTQI learners and the specific limitations faced by trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming learners concerning the right to recognition of their gender identities by school staff and within school documents.

As shown in this report, SOGIGESC-based violence is a widespread problem across European schools. This problem represents a violation to the fundamental rights of education, health and well-being, and impedes Council of Europe Member States to achieve a quality education for all. The current findings reinforce the view that many LGBTQI learners are at a high risk of being bullied. Most people (eight in ten respondents) have witnessed some form of negative remarks about someone else's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics, and many LGBTQI youth have experienced some sort of bullying themselves (one in two respondents).

Regardless of the grounds of harassment, the majority of learners who have experienced bullying never reported those incidents to anyone. Only four in ten respondents have ever reported them to school staff, and less than 15% have done it systematically. One of the main reasons for not reporting these incidents is that LGBTQI learners thought or knew school staff would not intervene. Simultaneously, respondents stated that teachers tend not to mediate even if they are present in over half of the incidents of verbal harassment. The other main reason for not reporting SOGIGESC-based violence and harassment is thinking that the incident was not serious enough or feeling ashamed about what happened.

Violence and harassment are not the only barriers to quality education that LGBTQI learners experience. Despite the progress made by many European countries on inclusive education, most school curricula and learning materials neither convey positive messages nor avoid negative representations and stereotypes of LGBTQI people. This research shows that most people never received information on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics in schools. Less than one in five respondents reported having been taught positive representations of LGBTQI people systematically, and, although 40% of intersex learners received information on variations in sex characteristics, this information was mainly negative for most respondents (78%). Likewise, most learners (seven in ten respondents) feel that their teachers were not open to discuss LGBTQI content in schools.

Many Council of Europe Member States indicate that they have taken concrete measures to forbid SOGIGESC-based discrimination in educational settings and to create safe and supportive schools (i.e. anti-discrimination legislation applicable to education, anti-bullying policies or LGBTQI action plans covering measures to inclusive education). To be effective, any of the actions implemented by governments to protect the rights of LGBTQI learners should be known by everyone and made accessible. This research shows that most respondents do not know any anti-discrimination law applicable to education or any national action plan to tackle bullying on grounds of sexual orientation (seven in ten), gender identity and gender expression (almost

eight in ten), and variations in sex characteristics (almost nine in ten). This lack of awareness or misinformation means that the measures in place are not reaching those they set out to protect.

Another key element to address SOGIGESC-based violence in schools is the existence of support systems for learners that have been affected by it. This research shows that most LGBTQI learners either do not know of any support system (34% of respondents) or are not aware if there is any (24% of respondents). Similarly, only one in ten respondents knows that there are school associations or youth groups for LGBTQI learners, and 16% of respondents said that their schools directed them to LGBTQI civil society organisations.

Although many trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people become conscious of their gender identity at a very early age, most are forced to hide or disguise it to their school peers and teachers. This research shows that nearly 40% of of trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents have spoken with someone about their gender identity, but most of them have not been out publicly. Schools need to ensure that every person can enjoy the right to have their own name and gender recognised. In the absence of national legal gender recognition procedures, schools need to ensure that people's gender identities are respected by all school staff and within all documents. This research shows that one in two trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents thinks that their gender identity is never or rarely respected by teachers and other school staff. Furthermore, less than one in ten trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming respondents reported that their gender identities were respected in school-related documentation, and eight in ten reported problems accessing gendered spaces in line with their gender identities.

Limitations

This research builds up knowledge on the experiences of over 17.000 respondents across Europe. As stated in the methodology section, recruitment was done through targeted advertisement on social media (i.e. Facebook and Instagram). It is likely that most responses come from LGBTQI youth who feel comfortable with their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and variations in sex characteristics, or who feel the need to discuss their negative experiences of school.

Similar to other studies[45,46], the sample of this research includes a smaller percentage of trans women and intersex people, although the survey was advertised through the social media channels of trans and intersex specific organisations. It is possible that there is a higher level of school drop-off (not covered by the survey) or that they did not feel compelled to complete the survey for other reasons.

The survey was disseminated in 15 different languages: Albanian, English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian. Although they covered many of the official languages across Europe, LGBTQI youth who are not proficient in these languages might be underrepresented in the study or might have not been able to answer all of its questions.

Finally, this is the first time that such a survey has been carried out all across Europe. To ensure we would get enough responses, IGLYO prioritised a brief survey that could be filled in within a shorter period of time. That meant that some relevant questions concerning inclusive education had to be left out. To counter this problem, we carried out 20 interviews that could provide concrete examples of the reality faced by LGBTQI young people in schools today.

45. Kosciw JG, Clark CM, Truong NL & Zongrone AD (2020). *The 2019 National School Climate Survey. The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth in Our Nation's Schools.* New York: GLSEN.
46. FRA (2020). *A long way to go for LGBTI equality*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Recommendations

1. Protect LGBTQI young people's rights with anti-discrimination legislation and policies to tackle school bullying and harassment

LGBTQI young people are still often at a high risk of experiencing bullying and harassment in schools. IGLYO calls on Council of Europe Member States to design and implement anti-discrimination legislation and strategic national policies to tackle school bullying and harassment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics. IGLYO also calls on European institutions to develop minimum standards for the implementation of a comprehensive response to SOGIGESC-based violence in education, and asks schools to have clear and widely promoted policies and procedures on preventing and addressing homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and intersexphobic bullying.

2. Monitor the prevalence of SOGIGESC-based violence and provide information and support

Monitoring the prevalence and impact of violence at school is necessary to plan effective interventions, as well as implementing support systems for any person who has experienced SOGIGESC-based school bullying. IGLYO calls on Council of Europe Member States to implement systematic data collection to assess the extent to which LGBTQI learners are experiencing violence in schools, and to provide adequate support to implement aid services and community spaces (such as LGBTQI youth groups). IGLYO calls on schools to provide information on LGBTQI topics and signposting to online resources and LGBTQI organisations.

3. Implement inclusive curricula

Mentioning diversity across curricula works against the assumption that all people are straight and that their gender identity matches with the one they were assigned at birth. However, most school curricula do not convey positive representations of LGBTQI people. IGLYO calls on Council of Europe Member States and school systems to ensure that LGBTQI experiences are reflected across the curriculum, or that, at least, they are included in key subjects that are made mandatory for all students (such as sex and relationships education, or human rights education).

4. Work with teachers and other school staff

Teachers play a vital role in creating a safe atmosphere for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or variations in sex characteristics. Many learners, however, report that their teachers still lack the confidence and knowledge to discuss LGBTQI issues or support learners who have experienced bullying. IGLYO calls on Council of Europe Member States to create training programmes for teachers and other school staff on LGBTQI awareness and inclusion. IGLYO calls on European institutions to develop focused work on training of educational staff, and asks schools to equip their staff and train them on how to tackle homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and intersexphobic bullying and how to include SOGIGESC content in their lessons.

5. Respect learners' names and gender identities

All across Europe, there is currently a lack of attention about learners' gender identities in schools. Educational institutions need to ensure that the gender identity and chosen name of trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming and intersex people are respected by everyone and within all school related documentation. IGLYO calls on Council of Europe Member States to implement national policies to that end. IGLYO asks schools to take appropriate measures to ensure that trans, non-binary and gender non-confirming youth are supported in transitioning and that everyone has access to facilities that match their gender identities.

6. Involve LGBQTI Youth

On national, regional and school levels, all plans to make schools inclusive and supportive of LGBTQI learners should actively involve LGBTQI young people through co-design and consultation. IGLYO calls on Council of Europe Member States to include LGBTQI youth organisations and young people when designing, implementing and evaluating responses to SOGIGESC-based school bullying, and to provide adequate funding and resources, and backing at governmental level, to carry out inclusive education work in schools. IGLYO also asks schools to provide adequate resources to ensure that LGBTQI youth can build up their community spaces.