



# ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

**Attitudes towards Minoritised Genders and Sexualities in Ireland**



# ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

**Attitudes towards Minoritised Genders and Sexualities in Ireland**

Dr Chris Noone, John Hoey,  
Erick Costa, Dr Brian Keogh,  
Dr Conor Buggy & Prof Kath Browne



**Copyright remains the property of the authors under the following license: This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.**

To view a copy of this license,  
visit [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)  
or send a letter to  
Creative Commons,  
PO Box 1866,  
Mountain View,  
CA 94042, USA.

*This report is published by the  
**National LGBT Federation**  
and funded by the **Tides Foundation**.*

## ABOUT THE NXF

Established in 1979, the National LGBT Federation (NXF) publishes Gay Community News (GCN) and campaigns for the equal rights of, and to combat discrimination against, LGBT people in Ireland and internationally.

GCN is Ireland's longest-running free national monthly publication for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. The remit of GCN is to give its readers access to a greater sense of community, to educate and inform them about political issues pertinent to their lives, to disseminate information about LGBT community initiatives, to champion Irish LGBT rights, to celebrate and support Irish LGBT culture, and to entertain – all free of charge.

NXF also organises the GALAS, an awards ceremony to honour lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people and organisations for their contributions to Irish society, and the Road to Equality exhibition, which charts the history of LGBT rights in Ireland.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE NXF BOARD

We are proud to be publishing this research documenting a recent snapshot of the spectrum of attitudes towards sexuality and gender and towards LGBT+ communities in Irish society. The results show that there is much to celebrate and yet still much for which our communities must fight. The NXF is committed to both the celebration of our past and our progress and the fight for progress still to come.

### **NXF Board:**

Gavin Hennessy (Chair), Emily Brennan, Brendan Byrne, Siobhan Curran, Claire Egan, Hayley Fox-Roberts, Steve Jacques, Caroline Keane, Adam Long, Mary McAuliffe, Conor McCarthy, Anna Nolan, Chris Noone, Rob Partridge, Steve Sands.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research had three main objectives:

1.

**To assess attitudes towards different groups of people within the LGBT+ community**, including Lesbian women, Gay men, Bisexual people, Trans people, Non-binary people and Intersex people;

2.

**To assess beliefs about gender and sexuality;** and

3.

**To assess support for policies** relevant to, and supportive of, the LGBT+ community.

These objectives were addressed in a descriptive study using a mixed-methods cross-sectional survey design. Over 700 participants from the general public completed the online survey. Ethical approval to conduct this research was granted by the University College Dublin Human Research Ethics Committee.

The results of both the quantitative and qualitative data suggest a broad acceptance of LGBT+ identities and a desire to not judge, categorise or prescribe how LGBT+ people live. However, the clear difference in support for identities, beliefs and policies that pertain to groups that are often seen as more normative, specifically Gay men and Lesbian women, compared to those that may be perceived as more transgressive of gender norms, such as Bi, Trans, Non-binary and Intersex people, is a central theme in this report.

Despite the disparities in attitudes described above, there was strong support for beliefs that reflected more complex views of sexual identity and gender than traditional binary perspectives. For example, it is important to note that almost three-quarters of the participants agreed that gender is a complicated issue and does not always match biological sex. In addition, the majority of participants endorsed beliefs that gender is not binary. There was also strong support for the beliefs that gender should not determine one's choice of partner and that sexual identity does not necessarily have distinct boundaries. Both the qualitative and quantitative data suggested a preference for seeing people as individuals rather than homogenous members of categories.

For each of the policy goals that were presented, the majority indicated support. There was particularly strong support for progressing hate crime legislation, parental rights, education about LGBT+ issues and resourcing of the LGBT+ community.



**Chapter 1**

INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Less than 30 years ago, a significant proportion of Ireland's LGBT+ community was criminalised, while the rest of the community suffered from stigma legitimised by these laws (Mc Donagh 2017). Ireland has experienced significant progress since then in extending rights and resources towards its LGBT+ communities.

This progress is the product of, and likely a contributor to, a positive trajectory in public attitudes towards LGBT+ individuals. However, this progress has not benefited all LGBT+ communities equally (e.g. deficits in Trans healthcare; access to gender recognition for Non-binary people) and the level of public support in Ireland for current policy goals relevant to the LGBT+ community is unclear. There is also evidence internationally that attitudes towards LGBT+ communities differ (Lewis 2017). A number of factors may explain these inequalities including norms about sexual identity, norms about gender identity and the extent to which different sexual and gender minority groups are visible in society – all of which is usually enforced by institutions of government, religion, education and civil society (Worthen 2020). This report presents the findings of a survey that examined these issues through a survey that was conducted in April 2021. In advance of later chapters describing the methodology and results of this survey, this chapter provides a summary of what is known about how attitudes towards different LGBT+ communities differ, the way in which different beliefs about sexual identity and gender norms contribute to these differences, the role of contact and visibility and how these issues affect support for policy goals relevant to the LGBT+ community.



## 1.2 Attitudes towards minoritised sexual and gender identities

In recent decades, public attitudes towards LGBT+ identities have become more positive in many countries, including Ireland (Wilson 2020). For example, the LGBT Ireland report showed that 75% of survey participants believed that lesbian, gay and bi identities were “normal” in 2015. There has also been a shift in the discussion of negative attitudes towards minoritised sexual identities. Where such discussions formerly focused on pathologising gay, lesbian and bi+ identities as a result of mental illness, they now tend to focus on prejudicial beliefs regarding the legitimacy of demands for change from gay, lesbian and bi+ people, the existence of discrimination against people on the basis of sexual identity, and the exaggeration of the significance of sexual identity (e.g. opposition to “identity politics”; (Morrison 2003). More recent research has also identified the emergence of more ambivalent forms of prejudice, in the context of gay men at least, such as “romanticised homoprejudice” where positive stereotypes are held and enforced, and “paternalistic homoprejudice” where overly sympathetic attitudes emphasise powerlessness and diminish pride in one’s sexual identity (Brooks et al., 2019). It is also important to note that attitudes towards different sexual identities tend to depend on the age and gender of those surveyed, the gender of the target of the attitude and the extent to which the target of the attitude conforms to gender norms and stereotypes about sexual identity (Worthen 2012). For example, older people and men tend to have more negative attitudes towards sexual identity minorities than women (van den Akker 2012; Ciocca 2016; Cragun 2014; Higgins et al. 2016), gay men tend to be perceived more negatively than lesbian women in some contexts (Bettinsoli, Suppes, and Napier 2020), especially those who do not conform with masculine stereotypes (Iacoviello et al. 2020; Kiebel 2019), and bi+ people tend to be perceived more negatively than lesbian women and gay men both within and beyond the LGBT+ community (Dodge 2016; Toews 2020). Even across disparate cultures, these negative attitudes are driven by heteronormativity – the belief that adhering to heterosexuality and binary gender identities and roles is the only natural way of forming relationships (Bettinsoli et al. 2020; Harbaugh 2015). There is compelling evidence that negative attitudes and behaviours towards gay, lesbian and bi+ people lead to

increases in stress that drive disparities in mental health outcomes compared to the cis heterosexual population – as described by Minority Stress Theory (Adelman et al. 2021; Meyer 2003) social dominance orientation (SDO).

There has been significantly less progress in depathologising transgender and non-binary identities (Prunas 2019). While issues of importance to the wellbeing of gay, lesbian and bi+ people primarily have come to be seen through the lens of human rights or diversity and inclusion, trans and non-binary wellbeing is still mostly framed as a medical issue (Cannoot 2019). Attitudes towards trans and non-binary people tend to be more negative than attitudes towards cisgender gay, lesbian and bi+ people (Lewis 2017). Non-binary people tend to be perceived particularly negatively, by both cis straight people and other members of the LGBT+ community (Worthen 2021). There appears to be an awareness of the discrimination faced by trans people in Ireland among the general population with 50% of those surveyed for a Eurobarometer report agreeing that such discrimination is widespread here (Eurobarometer 2019). These negative attitudes towards trans and non-binary people are driven by traditional gender norms that view gender as binary and cisnormativity – the assumption that all people (or most people) are cisgender (i.e. their gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth). Lack of visibility and contact can also maintain negative attitudes towards minorities and, in Ireland, just 16% of a representative sample of the population reported having a friend or acquaintance who is transgender compared to 66% who reported having a friend or acquaintance who is gay, lesbian or bi+ (Eurobarometer 2019). In addition to imbalances in personal contact with minoritised sexual identities and minoritised gender identities, trans and non-binary people are also less present in the media and popular culture more broadly compared to gay, lesbian and bi+ people (Lewis 2017). In addition, trans and non-binary people have to contend with much more structural stigma than gay, lesbian and bi+ people as there remains significant deficits in access to rights like healthcare and gender recognition in Ireland. Structural stigma and minority stress are key determinants of the mental health disparities between trans and non-binary people and cisgender people (Bränström and Pachankis 2021).

The narrative of progress that has been presented thus far in this chapter is not the only lens through which attitudes towards LGBT+ communities should be discussed. Oppositions to LGBT equalities and rights have not disappeared and can be seen as gaining traction through things like Freedom of Speech in 'no platforming' debates and parental rights in discussions of sex education (Nash and Browne, 2020). In addition, trans and non-binary people are targeted by a wide variety of people, including those who would be supportive of other rights (like same sex marriage and abortion) in order to reinforce the gender binary, cisnormativity and the pathologisation of minoritised gender identities (Earles 2019; Pearce, Erikainen, and Vincent 2020; Winter 2019). These actions, and those of other groups that oppose LGBT+ rights more generally and seek to "reassert the superiority and centrality of hetero- and gender-normative individuals and families", have been studied in critical work that defines these actions as "heteroactivism" (Nash & Browne, 2020, p. 2). This qualitative work does not account for the prevalence of these arguments and groups, which may be disproportionately represented in these debates.

In summary, while attitudes towards the LGBT+ community as a whole may in some senses be much more positive than in the past, this progress has not benefited all LGBT+ communities in Ireland, with those that pose the most direct challenge to gender norms, such as Bi+ people, trans people and non-binary people, subject to more negative attitudes and experiences. In parallel, resistances to LGBT+ identities and community persist and continue to develop in ways that are important to understand. It is important to consider also how attitudes and resistance towards different LGBT+ identities may intersect with other prejudices such as racism, classism, ageism and anti-Traveller prejudice. Introducing legislation that protects, supports and provides resources as appropriate to LGBT+ communities not only reduces structural stigma, but may also have a positive effect on attitudes towards the minoritised group that benefits – as has been the case with marriage equality in Europe and the US (Abou-Chadi 2018). Before concluding this chapter, we will further consider this relationship between attitudes towards LGBT+ communities and support for relevant policies.

### 1.3 Support for policies relevant to the LGBT+ community

The decriminalisation of sex between men in 1993 was the first legislative change in Ireland achieved by LGBT+ activism. Since then, discrimination on the basis of sexual identity has been made illegal through the Employment Equality Act (1998; with the removal of an exception for schools with a religious ethos in 2015) and the Equal Status Act (2000), civil partnership was legislated for in 2011, and marriage equality and a form of gender recognition being made legal in 2015. There has also been progress in the access to, and recognition of, parenting by same-sex couples, culminating in both parents in a same-sex couple being automatically listed on their children's birth certificates since 2019. There is generally a high level of public support for these policies that have been introduced to support the LGBT+ community in Ireland (Higgins et al. 2016).

Despite this progress, there are many issues of relevance to the wellbeing of Ireland's LGBT+ communities that have yet to be resolved through legislation or policy. These include the enactment of effect hate crime legislation, access to gender recognition, the prohibition of so-called conversion therapy, the asylum process for LGBT+ people, the inclusion of LGBT+ topics in school curricula, the ability to donate blood for men in our community and the provision of adequate resources to our community. However, awareness of and support for these issues among the Irish population is unclear and may be an issue of concern given that the LGBT Ireland survey found that one in three participants agreed that "equality has been achieved for LGB people" and over half agreed that "being LGB today is no longer really an issue" (Higgins et al. 2016).

In general, people with positive attitudes towards LGBT+ communities tend to support progress in terms of relevant legislation and policy (Abou-Chadi 2018). It is also true that living in contexts where there are laws and policies that support LGBT+ people increases support for further progression in this area (Kaufman and Compton 2021) there has been a cultural shift in attitudes toward same-sex marriage in the USA. While there has been a great deal of focus on attitudes toward same-sex marriage, there is less research on attitudes toward LGBT discrimination and legal protections against discrimination, especially post-Obergefell.

Methods: This study uses data from the American Values Survey conducted in November 2015 and state-level data on LGBTQ equality to examine attitudes toward same-sex marriage and LGBT protections post-Obergefell. Results: Attitudes are generally supportive of LGBT rights though a substantial minority (about 40%). Again, support is not even across different LGBT+ communities. A study in the US has documented lower levels of support for anti-discrimination policies for transgender people compared to support for similar policies for gay, lesbian and bi+ people (Lewis 2017) but it is unclear whether this is the case for Ireland. Conservatism tends to be associated with negative attitudes towards LGBT+ communities and less support for relevant policies (Kaufman and Compton 2021) there has been a cultural shift in attitudes toward same-sex marriage in the USA. While there has been a great deal of focus on attitudes toward same-sex marriage, there is less research on attitudes toward LGBT discrimination and legal protections against discrimination, especially post-Obergefell. Methods: This study uses data from the American Values Survey conducted in November 2015 and state-level data on LGBTQ equality to examine attitudes toward same-sex marriage and LGBT protections post-Obergefell. Results: Attitudes are generally supportive of LGBT rights though a substantial minority (about 40%). However, contact and visibility are key factors that interact with people's political orientations to increase support for LGBT+ supportive policies across the political divide (Kordsmeier, Tumblison, and Song 2019)

Ultimately, the development of laws and policies that support LGBT+ people are still taking place in the context of heteronormativity and cisnormativity so the extent to which both attitudes and policies improve in society is limited by this. In the following chapters, we present current data on public attitudes towards LGBT+ communities in Ireland, interactions with LGBT+ people, support for heteronormative and cisnormative beliefs, and agreement with laws and policies that support LGBT+ people. We hope this data can inspire further efforts to improve the lives of those belonging to LGBT+ communities across Ireland.

**PLEASE NOTE: some of the open-ended responses that we present in the following chapters are offensive and will be upsetting to people reading this report, especially members of the LGBT+ community. Please ensure that support is available if you feel that you will be affected and do not read the comments in chapters 3-5 where the negative comments are clearly identified in the headings.**



**Chapter 2**

METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This research had three main objectives:

- 1.** To assess attitudes towards different groups of people within the LGBT+ community, including Lesbian women, Gay men, Bisexual people, Trans people, Non-binary people and Intersex people;
- 2.** To assess beliefs about gender and sexuality; and
- 3.** To assess support for policies relevant to, and supportive of, the LGBT+ community.

This chapter will describe the methods used to achieve these objectives.

### **2.2 Participatory Design**

We held a workshop with nine members of our LGBT+ community with diverse backgrounds to gather insights on how to achieve the above objectives. We recruited the participants for this workshop through our social media channels. The workshop participants contributed their ideas about how to ensure that the survey was accessible and inclusive, the content of the survey and how the survey results should be communicated. While we could not implement all of these ideas, we are deeply grateful for this input from the community, which shaped the design of the survey.

## 2.3 Measures

The survey was compiled using Qualtrics software and a data provider that holds a GDPR compliant email database of approximately 80,000 people resident in the Republic of Ireland disseminated the survey link.

The survey consisted of 46 items and completion time was approximately 10 minutes. To take part in the survey, participants had to be:

- over the age of 18, and
- be a resident of the Republic of Ireland.

### Demographics

The survey gathered data about the age of the participants, their gender, whether they lived in a rural or urban area, and their level of education.

### The Feeling Thermometers

This measure required participants to rate their feelings towards members of 8 specific LGBT+ communities (i.e. Lesbian women, Gay men, Bisexual women, Bisexual Men, Trans women, Trans men, Non-binary people and Intersex people). Explanations were provided for each of these terms. During this task, the participants were asked to think of an imaginary thermometer. The warmer or more favourable they felt towards the group, the higher the number they were asked to give on a sliding scale, ranging from 0 to 100. The colder the feeling towards the group, the lower the number. A neutral or ambivalent feeling towards the group would score 50. This approach to measuring attitudes towards groups is common in psychology and political science (Nelson 2008).

### The Heteronormative Attitudes & Beliefs Scale (Habarath 2015)

This scale measures beliefs and attitudes about heterosexuality being the only normal and acceptable mode of sexual identity and compliance with culturally determined sex, sexuality and gender roles. Participants rated 16 items on a Likert scale from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 7 (*strongly disagree*). The scale consists of two eight-item subscales:

**1. Essential Sex and Gender Subscale.** This scale measured the beliefs that there are only two sexes, male and female, and that gender is the same thing as sex. It also explored if participants found gender to be a complicated issue that may not match with a person's biological sex and the belief that gender can be learned from society.

**2. Normative Behaviour Subscale.** This scale measured heteronormative attitudes and expectations towards sex, relationship and gender roles. Views such as the importance of acting according to gender roles and the acceptability of same-sex relationships were examined.

### The Sexual Orientation Beliefs Scale (Arseneau et al. 2013)

This instrument was designed to measure a broad range of beliefs (as opposed to attitudes) about sexual identity. Participants were asked to rate 35 statements on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to investigate four key themes related to beliefs surrounding sexual identity:

**1. Discreteness.** This consisted of six items to reflect the notion that sexual identity is typified by clear boundaries between categories. For example, the belief that if a person belongs to one group, then they cannot belong to another. Participants were also asked whether they believed that sexuality is fluid.

**2. Naturalness.** This consisted of 11 items reflecting belief in the theory that sexual identity is biologically based and therefore intrinsic to a person and not chosen, is unchanging and unable to be altered, and is stable across cultures.

**3. Homogeneity.** Participants were asked six questions to assess the belief that there is interconnectedness, unity and coherence among group members of any sexual identity.

**4. Informativeness.** Eight items in the questionnaire measured the extent to which people believe that a person's sexual identity can reveal a lot about them.

### Policy Support

We selected 10 potential policy changes that are relevant to the LGBT+ community and assessed support for them. Each policy was prefaced by the phrase "The government should..." and participants could then indicate their agreement with each statement on a Likert scale from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 7 (*strongly disagree*).

### Interactions

We asked participants to indicate the frequency with which they interact with people who they know are members of the LGBT+ community. One question focused on interactions with people who are Lesbian, Gay or Bi. Another question focused on interactions with people who are Trans. There were four options for indicating the frequency of their interactions: Never, Rarely, Occasionally and Frequently.

### Qualitative Questions

Three open-ended questions were included in the survey at the end of each section. These were: "Please tell us more about the beliefs about gender and sexuality that you have indicated above", "Please tell us more about your thoughts on policies that are supportive of the LGBT+ community" and "Please tell us more about your interactions, or lack thereof, with LGBT+ people".

## 2.4 Ethics

This study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of University College, Dublin (UCD). Two members of the research team are based in UCD and they prepared the relevant documentation for submission to the HREC.

Participation in the survey was anonymous. All participants were presented with a comprehensive information sheet detailing the aim of the study, the voluntary nature of participation and both their right to withdraw, and their right to have their data eliminated in the future, by using an anonymous code. Consent was implied if the participants clicked on the tab which indicated that they chose to take part in the survey. If they declined, they were navigated to the end of the study without answering any questions.

## 2.5 Survey Participants

In this section, the participants' characteristics are broken down according to age, whether they identified as a particular gender, if they lived in a rural or urban location, and their level of education. A total of 1058 participants began the survey. A substantial number of these participants dropped out after the block of demographic questions. The number of responses for each the remaining questions ranged between 702 and 758 (mean = 744).

### Age

The mean age of the sample was 46 years (SD = 13). Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 77. Table 2.1 shows this information split into separate age groups.

**TABLE 2.1. AGE GROUPS**

Age Group	n	%
18 to 35	154	20
36 to 50	327	43
51 to 65	221	29
Over 66	58	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>100</b>

### Gender

Participants were asked about their gender identity. The categories given were male, female and non-binary with an additional 'not listed here' option, which gave participants the opportunity to manually enter how they identified. Table 2.2. displays the frequency distribution of the gender of participants.

Most participants (approx. 57%) identified as female, a smaller number (approximately 42%) identified as male, while 8 participants identified as non-binary. Three participants felt that the options given did not reflect their gender identity, however, they did not specify how they identified. One participant preferred not to answer.

**TABLE 2.2. GENDER IDENTITY OF PARTICIPANTS.**

Gender	n	%
Male	326	43
Female	427	56
Non-binary	<5	
Not listed	<5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Area of Residence**

The majority of participants lived in an urban area as shown in table 2.2.

**TABLE 2.3. DISTRIBUTION OF THE AREA OF RESIDENCE.**

Area of residence	n	%
Rural	311	41
Urban	446	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Education level**

The majority of participants had either studied at third level or obtained a vocational qualification as shown in table 2.4. A small minority of participants had either no formal education or had only attended primary school.

**TABLE 2.4. PARTICIPANT'S EDUCATION LEVEL.**

Education Level Attained	n	%
No formal education completed	<5	
Primary school completed	10	1
Junior Cert completed	45	6
Leaving Cert completed	136	18
PLC/ FETAC or other non-degree qualification completed	217	29
Undergraduate degree or higher completed	350	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>100</b>

## **2.6 Data Analysis**

The data were exported from Qualtrics and imported into R Studio, a software package designed for data analysis. We prepared the data and generated visualisations to support a descriptive analysis of the responses to the Feeling Thermometers, the Sexual Orientation Beliefs Scale, the Heteronormative Attitudes and Beliefs Scale, the policy items and the interaction items.

Written responses to the open-ended questions were imported into Microsoft Excel for analysis. This process followed a descriptive qualitative approach using content analysis and each question was analysed separately with emergent codes generated from the data to reflect the question posed. Relevant responses were coded using a unit of analysis approach which meant that a number of codes were applied to some of the comments. Once this process was complete, the codes were refined, collapsed where necessary and counted. Where it was possible to do so, the code as a percentage of the overall number of codes was also calculated. The units of data that were assigned to the final overarching codes were then read and reread and a brief narrative to support a description of the content of the codes was composed and excerpts from the data used to support the narrative. Four researchers were involved in the analysis and meetings were held initially to agree on the approach in line with the aims of the research and then regularly throughout the analysis to ensure consistency. Drafts of work were read and checked for accuracy by each of the researchers.





**Chapter 3**

PUBLIC ATTITUDES

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

While the LGBT+ community is often discussed as if it is a homogenous group, there are, in reality, many LGBT+ communities. We wanted to assess the public's attitudes towards different LGBT+ communities.

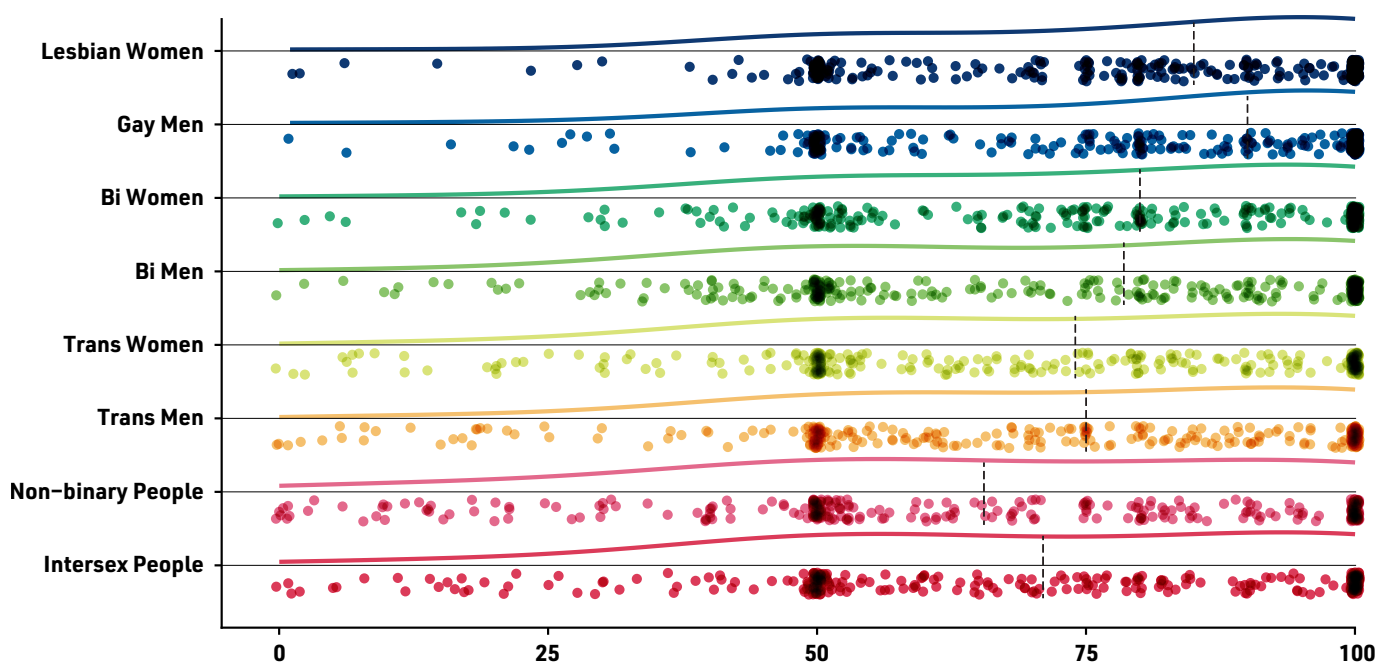
LGBT+ communities can be thought of in broad terms based on sexual identity or gender identity or in more specific ways focused on various subcultures, intersections with other identities, or in terms of behaviour (as is often done in health research).

We also examined how attitudes varied across gender, generation and frequency of interaction. Given the important role of contact and visibility in improving attitudes towards minoritised groups, we also invited participants to tell us more about their interactions with LGBT+ people.

#### **3.2 Feeling Thermometers**

We focused on attitudes towards a limited set of sexual identities and gender identities for two reasons: (1) to increase the chance that participants had a previously established attitude toward the group; and (2) to keep the survey length short and thereby ensure that participants would engage with it. We selected Lesbian women, Gay men, Bisexual women, Bisexual Men, Trans women, Trans women, Non-binary people and Intersex people as the target groups for the Feeling Thermometers and provided explanations for each identity label to ensure that the survey participants had consistent understandings of the communities about which they were being asked. To respond to the Feeling Thermometers, the participants were asked to think of an imaginary thermometer. The warmer or more favourable they felt towards the group, the higher the number they were asked to give on a sliding scale, ranging from 0 to 100.

**FIGURE 3.1. FEELING THERMOMETER VALUES REPORTED BY THE ENTIRE SAMPLE FOR EACH TARGET GROUP. EACH DOT IS AN INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE. BLACK LINES INDICATE THE MEDIAN RESPONSE.**



**TABLE 3.1. MEDIAN FEELING THERMOMETER RESPONSE FOR EACH TARGET GROUP DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER, GENERATION AND LEVEL OF INTERACTION.**

TARGET GROUP	LESBIAN WOMEN	GAY MEN	BIWOMEN	BIMEN	TRANS WOMEN	TRANS MEN	NON-BINARY PEOPLE	INTERSEX PEOPLE	
<b>OVERALL</b>	87	89	81	79	76	76	65	73	
<b>GENDER</b>	Male	80	80	78	72	65	65	56	68
	Female	96	95	90	83	83	85	74	79
<b>AGE GROUP</b>	18 to 35	90	90	90	82	80	80	71	80
	36 to 50	90	90	80	78	77	75	63	71
	51 to 66	86	88	80	77	73	73	69	73
	Over 66	83	83	67	59	58	62	54	65
<b>INTERACTIONS: LGB+ PEOPLE</b>	Never	70	76	65	53	50	50	41	43
	Rarely	67	54	58	50	50	50	50	51
	Occasionally	81	85	76	74	70	72	59	64
	Frequently	99	96	90	85	85	85	80	82
<b>INTERACTIONS: TRANS PEOPLE</b>	Never	81	81	74	60	56	58	50	51
	Rarely	85	86	80	78	72	75	68	75
	Occasionally	96	95	90	90	90	90	80	87
	Frequently	100	100	100	100	100	100	98	100

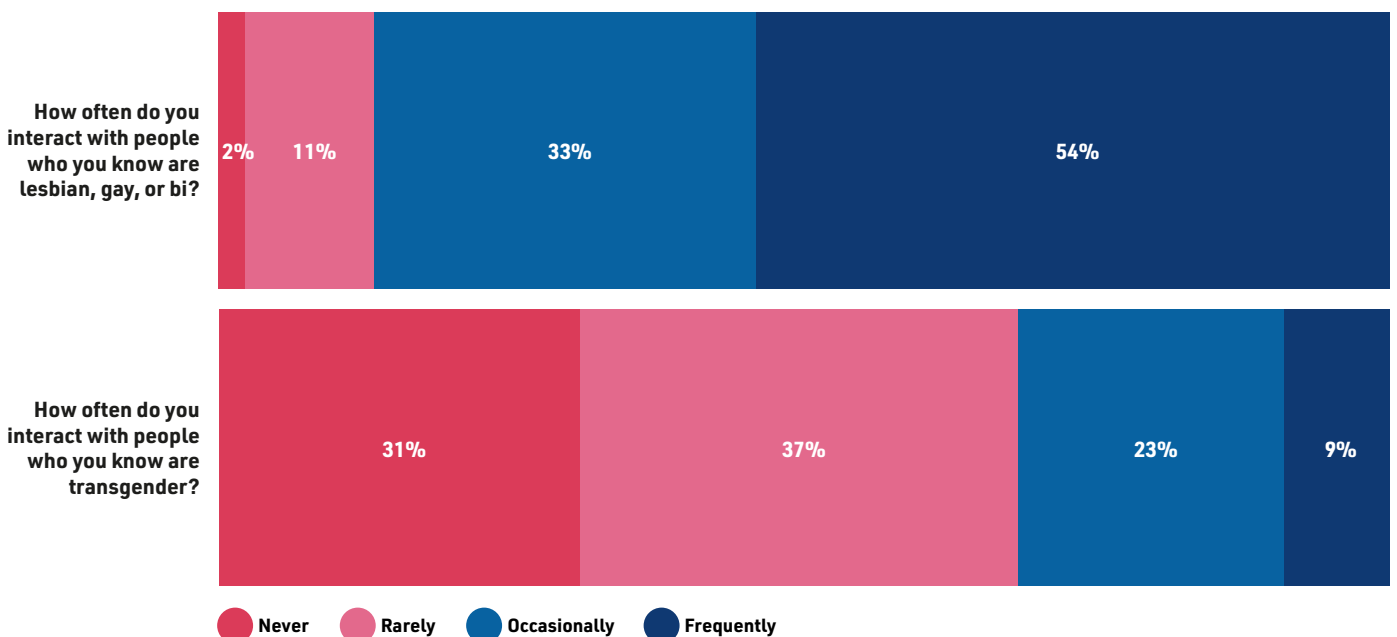
The Feeling Thermometer responses revealed that Gay men (89) and Lesbian women (87) had the most favourable median ratings. The next most favourably rated groups were Bisexual women (81) and Bisexual men (79). Trans men (76), Trans women (76) and Intersex (73) people were rated slightly less favourably. The median Feeling Thermometer response of the survey participants was lowest for Non-binary people (65). For benchmarking purposes, we also included items related to straight women and straight men and these groups received median ratings of 98 and 91 respectively. There was wide variation in the responses to each group demonstrating that people of diverse attitudes took part in the survey.

Table 3.1 shows the median responses for the overall sample, for male and female participants, for participants from different generations and for participants with different levels of interaction with LGBT+ people. There were not enough responses from people of other genders to offer valid data. In general, female participants and younger participants gave more positive responses to all target groups than their respective comparison groups, as did those with more frequent interactions with LGBT+ people. The differences across age group and interaction frequency were particularly noticeable in attitudes towards Bi, Trans, Non-binary and Intersex people.

### 3.3 Frequency of interactions

Let's take a look at how participants reported their interactions with LGBT+ people. More than half (54%) had frequently interacted with people who they know are lesbian, gay, or bisexual. A third (33%) had occasionally interacted with LGBT+ people. Just over 1 in 10 people (11%) reported that they rarely interacted with LGBT+ people, and 2% reported never having interacted with an LGBT+ person. Less people interacted with a transgender person with only 9% of participants reporting frequent interactions, while more than two-thirds of people had either never, or rarely had contact with a transgender person (31% and 37% respectively). Figure 3.2 displays the responses to how often these social interactions occurred.

**FIGURE 3.2: FREQUENCY OF INTERACTIONS.**



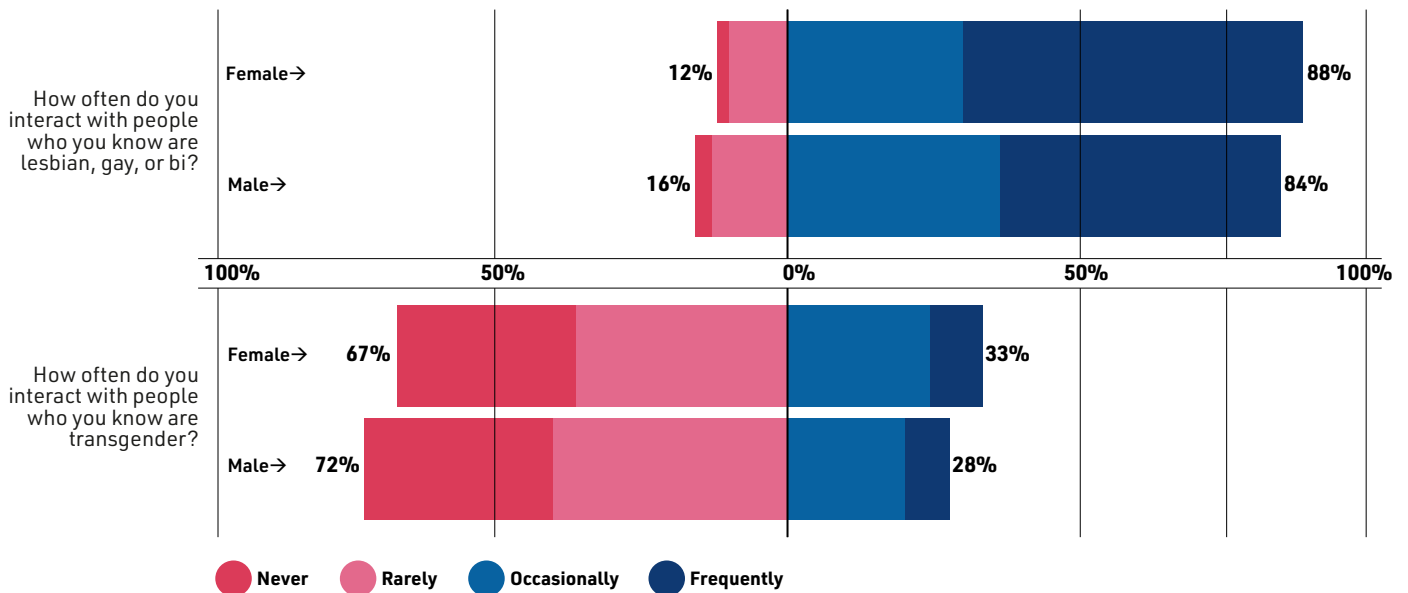
### 3.4 Frequency of interactions disaggregated by gender

Figure 3.3 shows gender differences in interaction with the LGBT+ community. Overall, only 4% more females reported occasional or frequent interactions with a lesbian, gay or bisexual person than males (88% vs. 84% respectively). Although both groups reported less frequent social contact with a transgender person, only 5% more females reported occasional or frequent interactions than males (33% vs. 28% respectively).

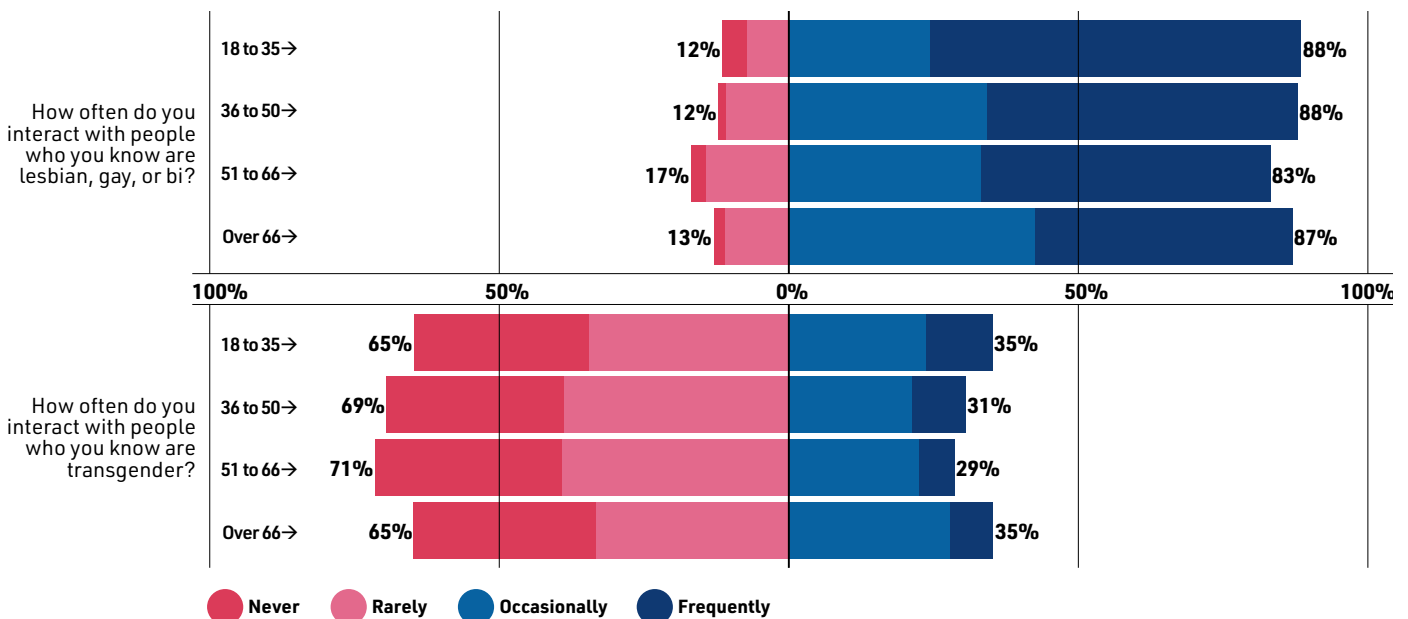
### 3.5 Frequency of interactions disaggregated by age group

The differences in frequency of interaction with Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans people across age groups were small. Figure 3.4 displays differences in interaction with LGBT+ individuals according to age group.

**FIGURE 3.3: FREQUENCY OF INTERACTIONS DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



**FIGURE 3.4: FREQUENCY OF INTERACTIONS DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**



### 3.6 Qualitative Analysis of Open-ended Question

We asked participants to tell us more about their interactions, or lack thereof, with LGBT+ people. There were 419 usable responses with 83% (n=348) providing details about their level of contact with LGBT+ individuals. The majority of these responses (59%; n=249) specifically mentioned interacting with LGBT+ individuals with interactions with Gay and Lesbian individuals being mentioned frequently. Among these, where it was mentioned, the respondents stated that they had LGBT+ family, friends or work colleagues and to a lesser extent, LGBT+ neighbours. Eleven percent (n=45) specifically mentioned that they knew Trans individuals while 18% (n=76) mentioned that they did not know or had never met a Trans person.

The quality of these relationships with LGBT+ people was not always mentioned, but where it was, they were either positive comments (e.g., a good or great friend) or neutral (e.g., I treat my LGBT+ friends no differently to my straight friends). A small number of the respondents who answered this question identified themselves as a member of the LGBT+ community themselves (n=27). Overall, 13% (n=55) mentioned that they had little or no interactions with the LGBT+ community. Where details were provided, this lack of interaction was not from purposeful intention but resulted from either not having LGBT+ people within their family, social and professional circles or from living in a rural location.

Seventeen percent (17% n=71) of the respondents did not provide details about their interactions with LGBT+ people. Within these comments, the participants mostly mentioned that they treat everyone the same regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identify or that they would not be always aware of an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity when they were interacting with them. Some of these comments are highlighted in the following excerpts:

*“To me we are all equal people and I prefer not to categorize gender or sexuality.”*

*“Not able to distinguish unless told and as such, I do not choose who to interact or associate with based on their identity or gender.”*

Within these responses, there were a very small number of comments that suggested that the respondents did not want or were unsupportive of interactions with members of the LGBT+ community.

### 3.7 Conclusions

The findings presented in this chapter demonstrate that there are clear disparities in attitudes towards different LGBT+ communities. They also show that attitudes towards the LGBT+ communities presented to our participants were on average positive. In line with previous findings regarding attitudes towards bisexuality, Bi+ people were rated less favourably than Gay men and Lesbian women (Roberts 2015). There was also a clear divide between attitudes towards minoritised sexual identities and attitudes towards minoritised gender identities. Trans, non-binary and intersex people had the lowest median ratings on the Feeling Thermometers. These differences in attitude deserve attention and intervention.

For all of the LGBT+ communities presented to the participants, there were gender differences how favourably they were rated. Women consistently gave more positive ratings with median differences of between 11 and 20 depending on the community being considered.

The differences in the attitudes of participants from different age groups were not as stark as those for participants of different genders, with small differences in the median ratings given by participants of different ages.

Consistent with international research, in what is likely to be a reciprocal relationship, the level of interaction that people have with LGBT+ people appears to be related to how favourably people think of LGBT+ communities (Kordsmeier et al. 2019). This may partly explain the divide between attitudes towards minoritised sexual identities and attitudes towards minoritised gender identities as most participants indicated at least occasional interaction with Lesbian, Gay or Bi+ people (87%) but less than a third of participants indicated at least occasional interaction with Trans people (32%). The differences in interactions across gender and age group were small.

These findings highlight the need for specific action to improve public attitudes towards Trans, Non-binary, Intersex and Bi+ people. There is evidence that prejudice towards these specific communities is rooted in norms regarding gender being binary – a norm that Lesbian women and Gay men are not seen as violating to the same extent (Garellick 2017). The next chapter explores this issue further as it presents findings on beliefs about gender and sexual identity.



**Chapter 4**

BELIEFS ABOUT GENDER  
AND SEXUAL IDENTITY



## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

To change or reinforce public attitudes toward LGBT+ communities, it is important to understand the beliefs about gender and sexual identity that underlie these attitudes.

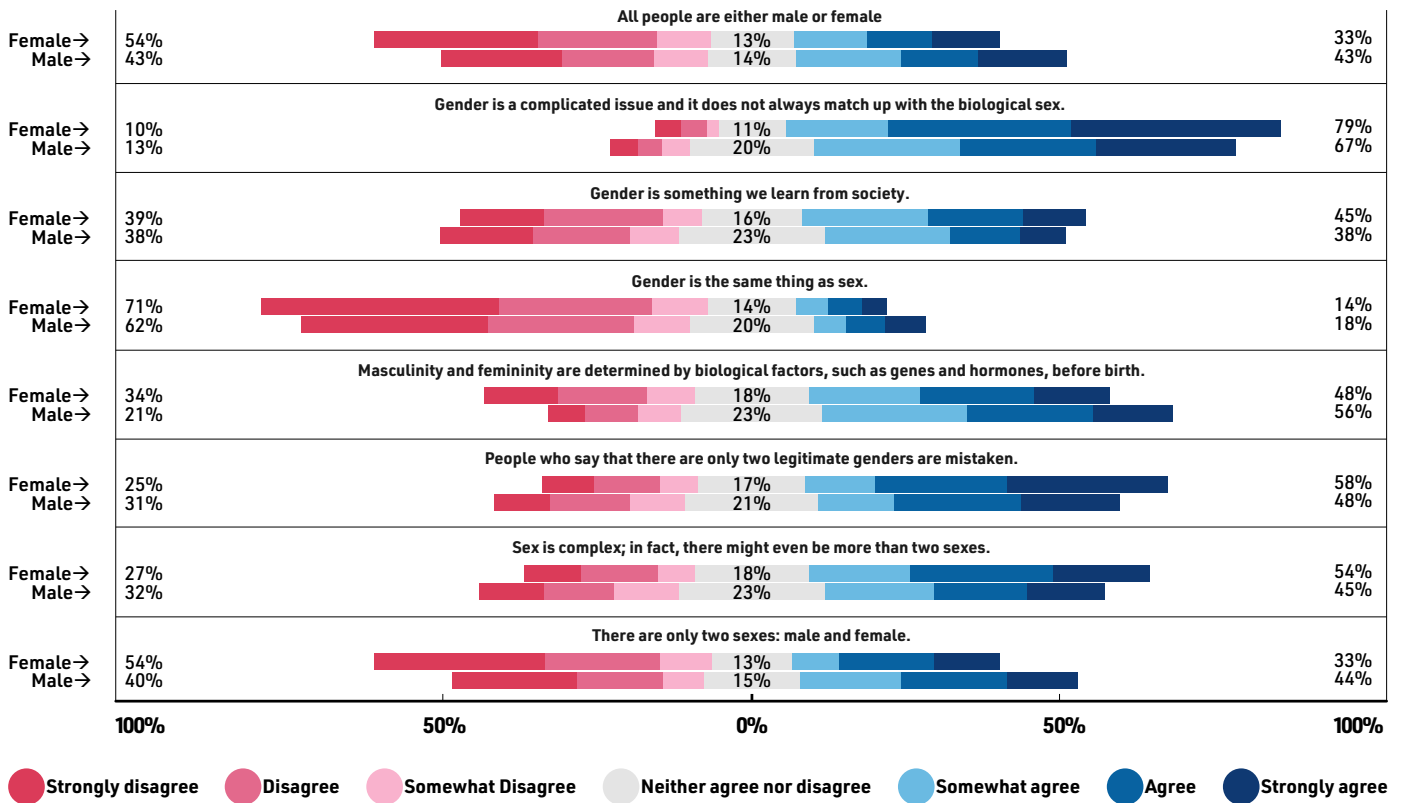
In our survey, we used psychometric questionnaires that were developed to assess these beliefs, namely the Heteronormative Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (Habarth, 2015) and the Sexual Orientation Beliefs Scale (Arsenau et al., 2013). We also asked an open-ended question that invited the participants to tell us more about their beliefs about gender and sexual identity.

### 4.2 Beliefs about Gender

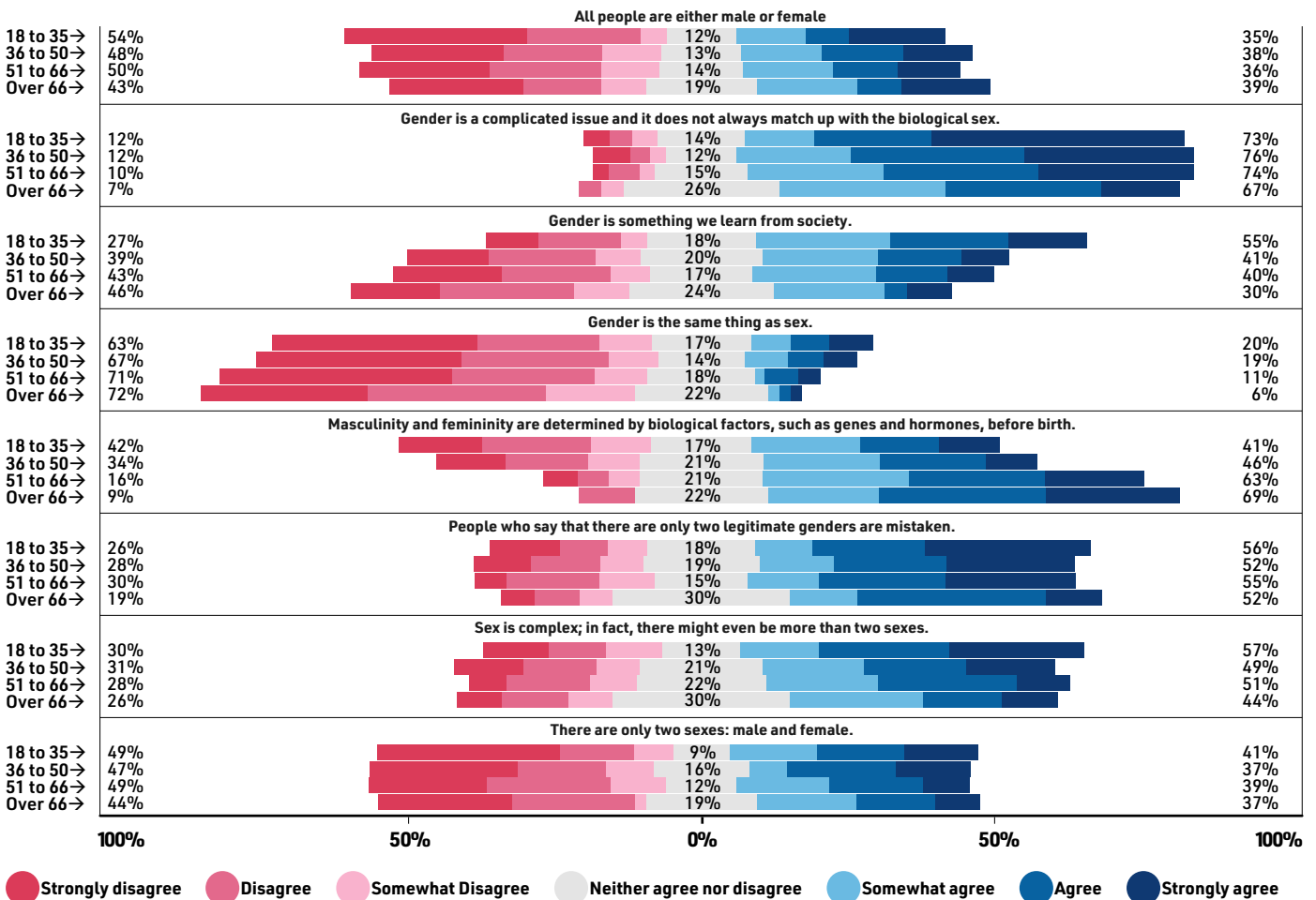
The questions on the Heteronormative Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (Habarth, 2015) broadly reflect two categories of beliefs about gender: gender essentialism and normative behaviour. Gender essentialism refers to a set of beliefs that consider biological sex to be the sole determinant of gender identity and expression. The beliefs related to normative behaviour focus on the acceptance or rejection of traditional stereotypes or expectations regarding gender roles.

Let's take a look at the responses to the questions focused on gender essentialism. Most (49%) participants disagreed that "all people are either male or female" (37% agreed) while most (54%) agreed that "people who say there are only two genders are mistaken" (27% disagreed). The majority of participants (74%) agreed that "gender is a complicated issue, and it does not always match up with biological sex". When considering whether "gender is something we learn from society", 42% of participants agreed and 38% disagreed. Just 16% of participants agreed that gender is the same thing as sex (68% agreed). A slight majority of participants (51%) agreed that "masculinity and femininity are determined by biological factors, such as genes and hormones, before birth" while 28% disagreed. Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 display how responses to these questions differed according to gender and age group respectively.

**FIGURE 4.1. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO GENDER ESSENTIALISM DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



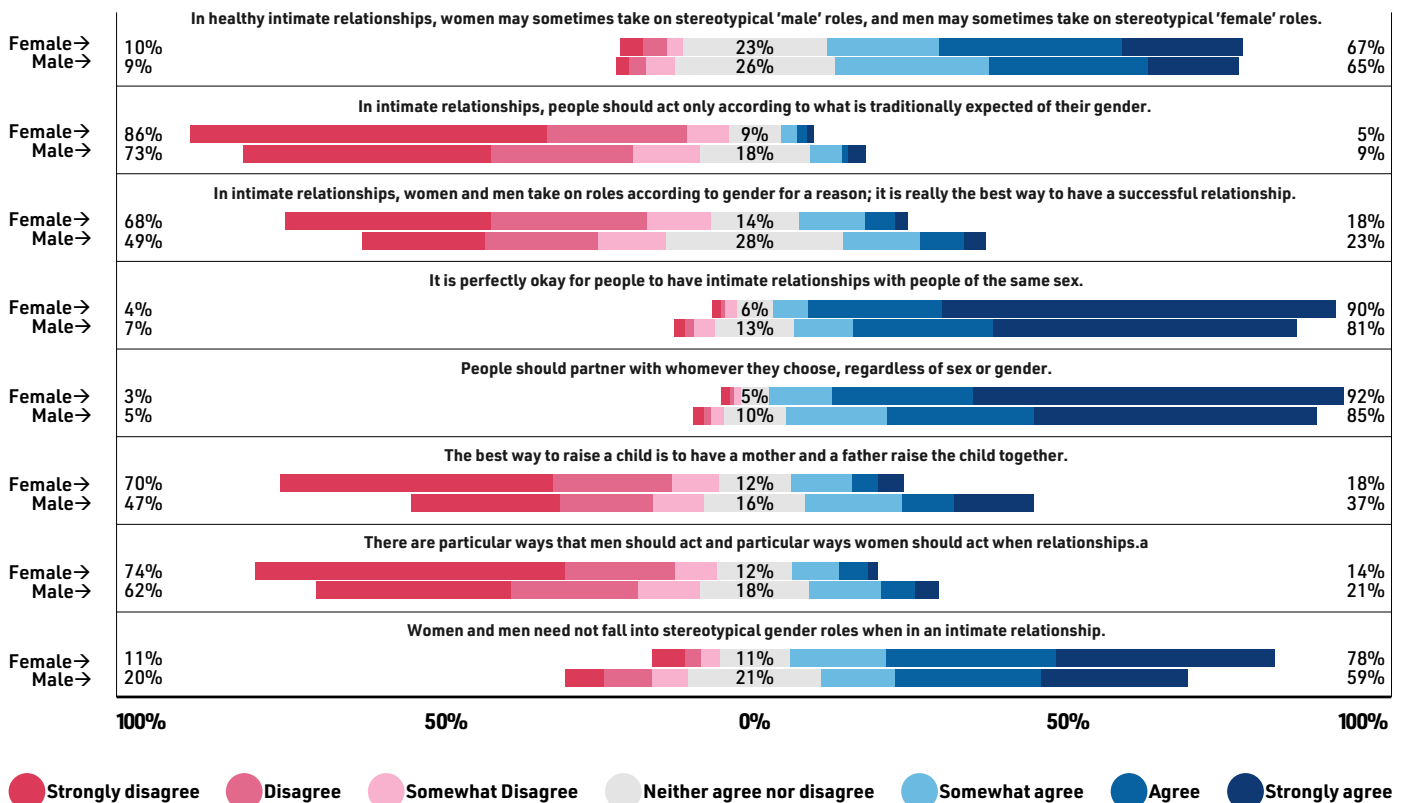
**FIGURE 4.2. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO GENDER ESSENTIALISM DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**



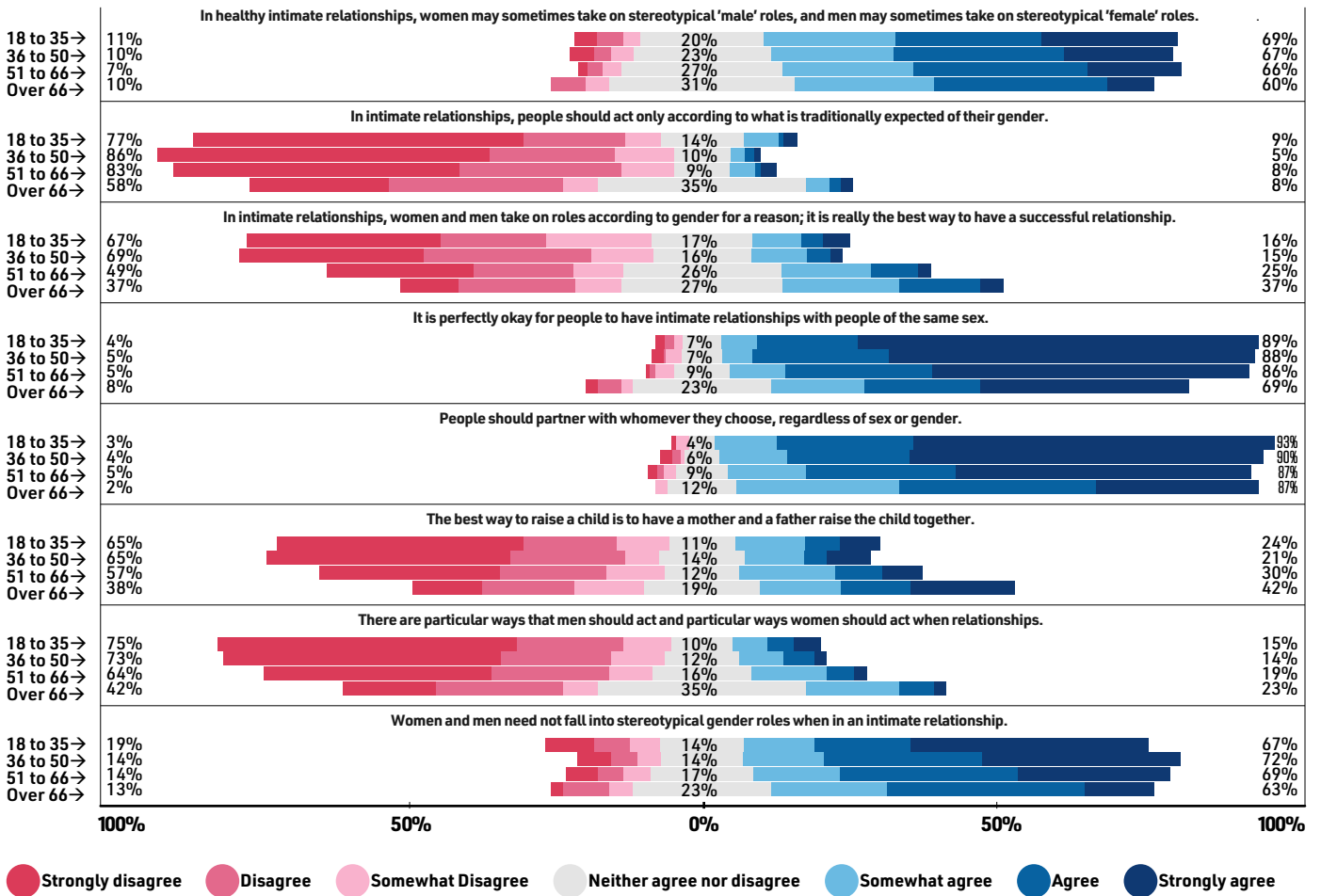
Next, we will consider the responses to questions focused on normative behaviour. Most (66%) of participants agreed with the idea that “in healthy intimate relationships, women may sometimes take on stereotypical ‘male’ roles and men may sometimes take on stereotypical ‘female’ roles” while just 10% disagreed. Similarly, 81% disagreed that “in intimate relationships, people should act only according to what is traditionally expected of their gender”, with just 7% agreeing, and 60% disagreed that this is “the best way to have a successful relationship” (20% agreed). The vast majority (86%) agreed that “it is perfectly ok for

people to have intimate relationships with people of the same sex”. Just 5% of participants disagreed with this statement. On a similar note, 89% agreed that “people should partner with whomever they choose, regardless of sex or gender” (4% disagreed). Finally, 60% of participants did not agree that “the best way to raise a child is to have a mother and a father raise the child together” with 26% agreeing with this statement. Figure 4.3 and figure 4.4 display how responses to these questions differed according to gender and age group respectively.

**FIGURE 4.3: RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO NORMATIVE BEHAVIOUR DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



**FIGURE 4.4. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO NORMATIVE BEHAVIOUR DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**

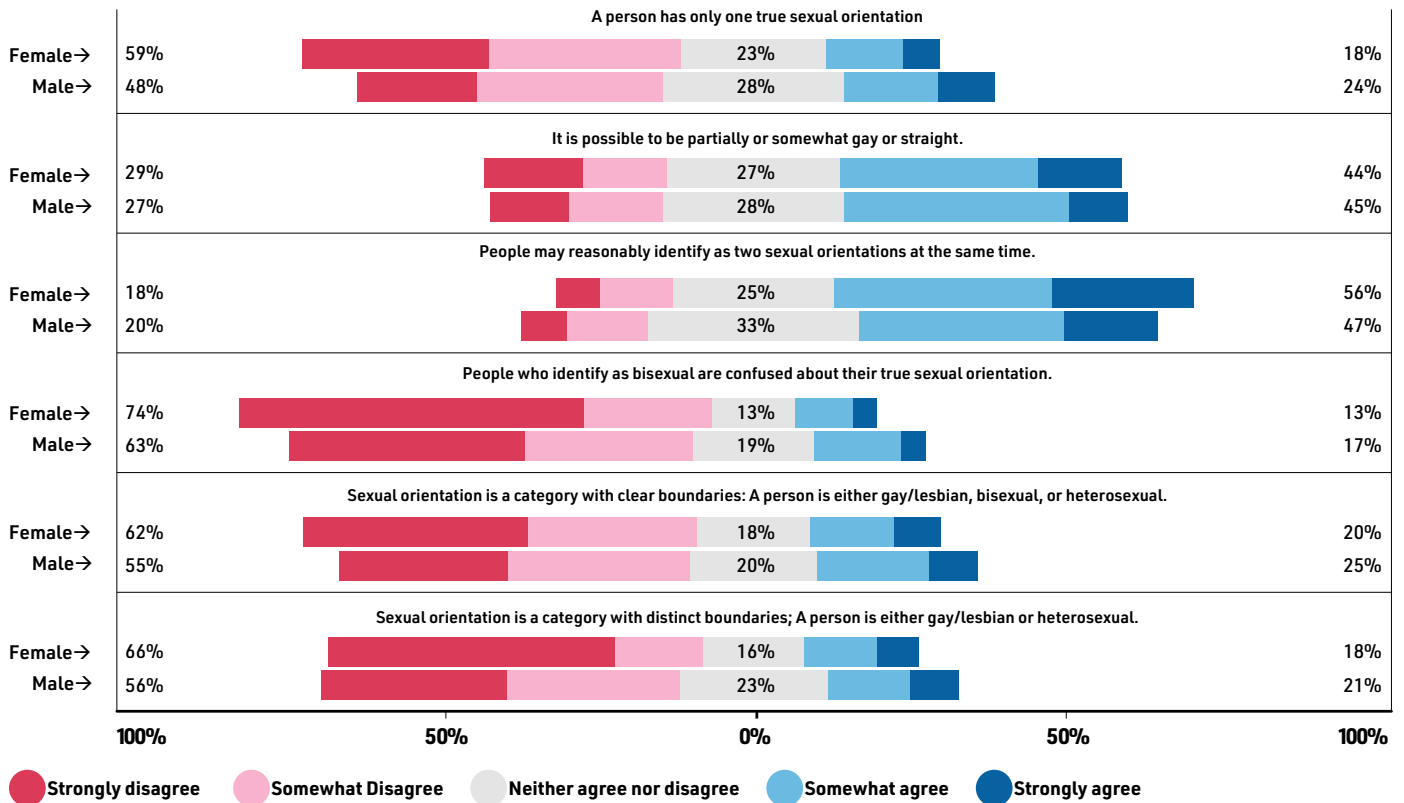


### 4.3 Beliefs about Sexual Identity

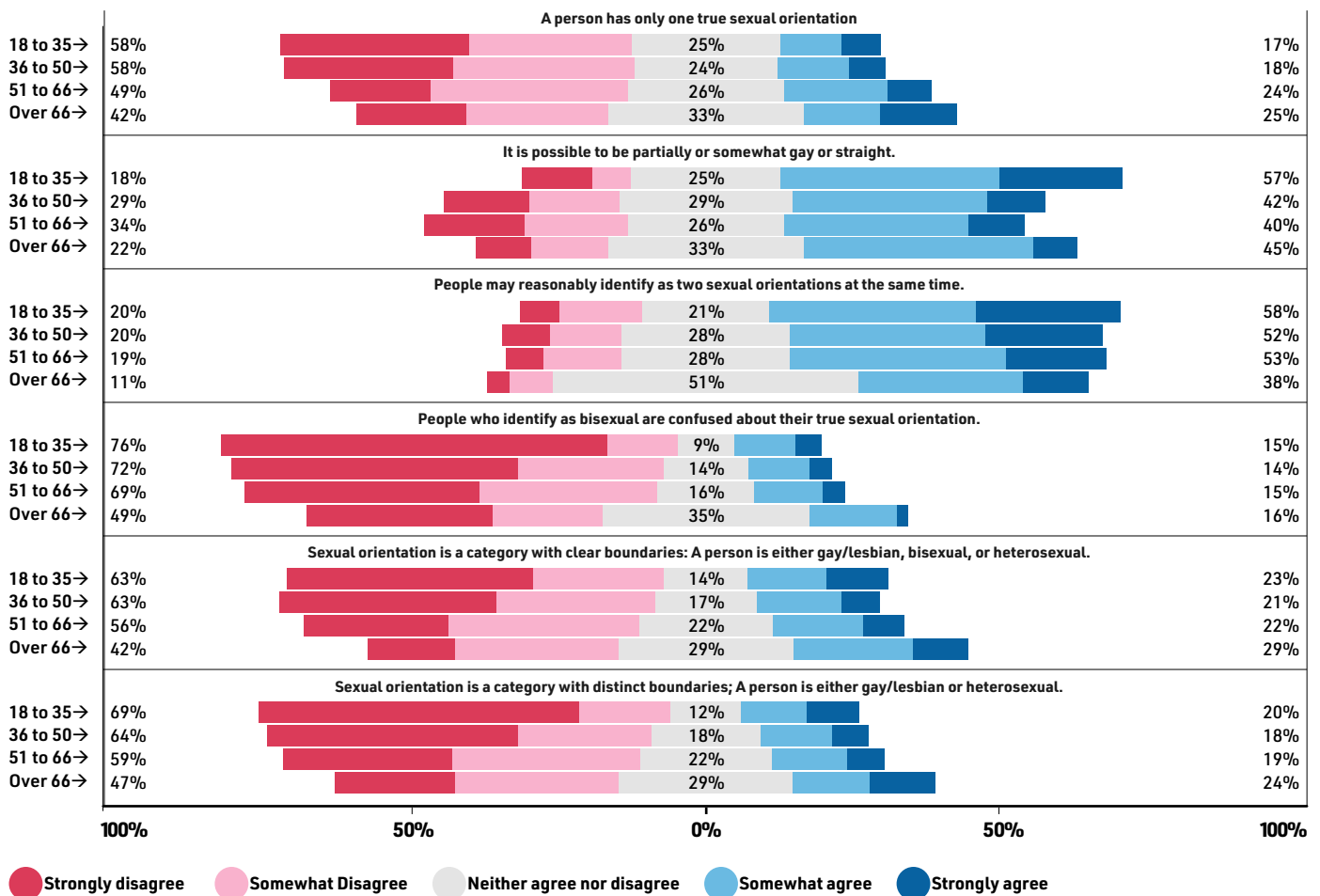
The questions on the Sexual Orientation Beliefs Scale (Arsenau et al., 2013) broadly reflect four categories of beliefs about sexual identity. The first category is referred to as discreteness and includes beliefs about the extent to which sexual identities are fixed and non-overlapping or more fluid. The second category is homogeneity and includes beliefs about whether people with the same sexual identity are considered the same as each other in other ways. The third category is informativeness and these beliefs focus on whether sexual identity is a valid indicator of character and personality. The final category is naturalness and includes beliefs about whether sexual identity is biologically based and therefore intrinsic to a person and not chosen, is unchanging and unable to be altered, and is stable across cultures.

Let's examine the responses to questions about the discreteness of sexual identity. Most participants disagreed (54%) that "a person has only one true sexual orientation" (20% agreed). 44% of participants agreed that "it is possible to be partially or somewhat gay or straight", while 28% disagreed. A majority of participants (52%) agreed that "people may reasonably identify as two sexual orientations at the same time" (19% disagreed). Just 15% of participants agreed that "people who identify as bisexual are confused about their true sexual orientation" and 69% disagreed. Finally, a majority of participants (62%) disagreed that "sexual orientation is a category with distinct boundaries" and that "a person is either gay or lesbian or heterosexual" (19% agreed). Figure 4.5 and figure 4.6 display how responses to these questions differed according to gender and age group respectively.

**FIGURE 4.5. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO DISCRETENESS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



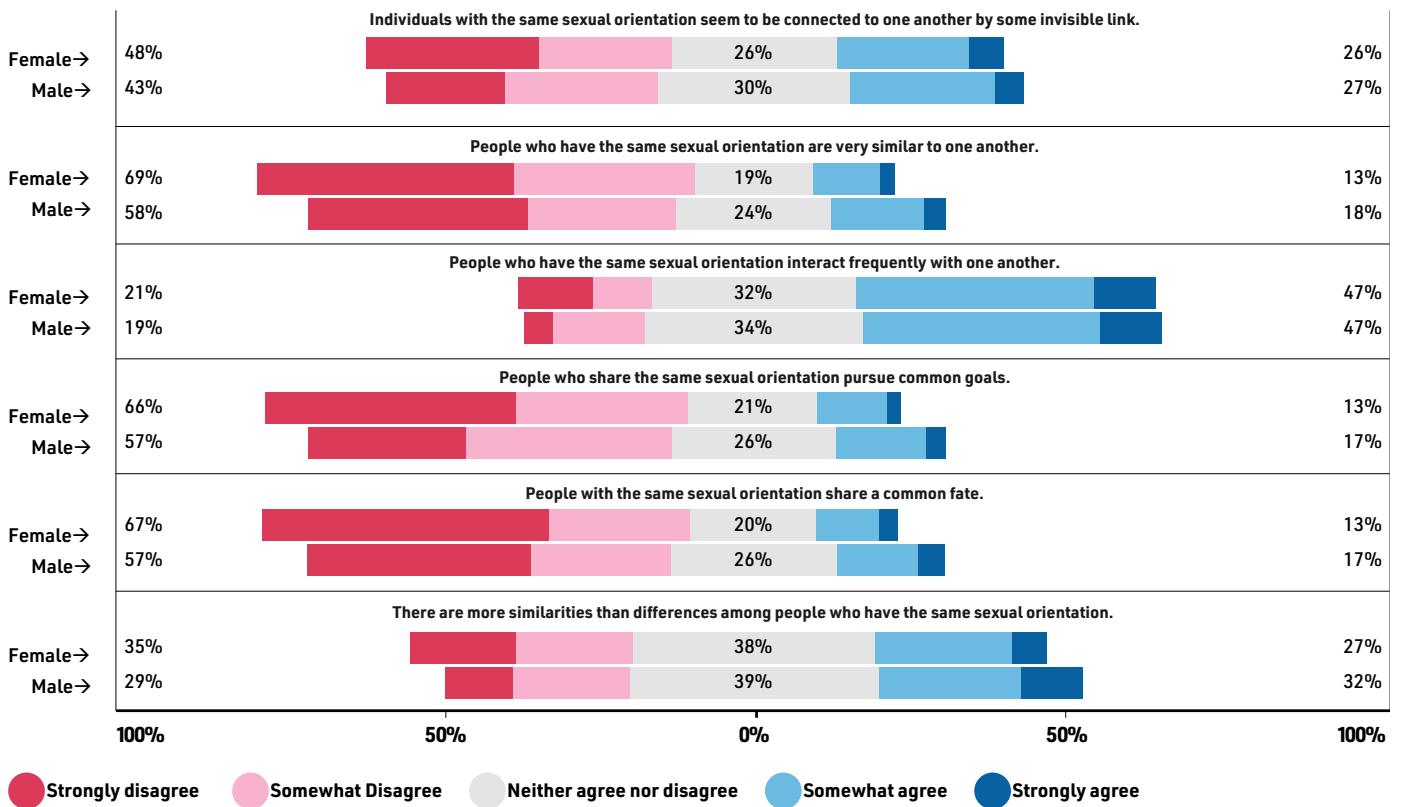
**FIGURE 4.6. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO DISCRETENESS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**



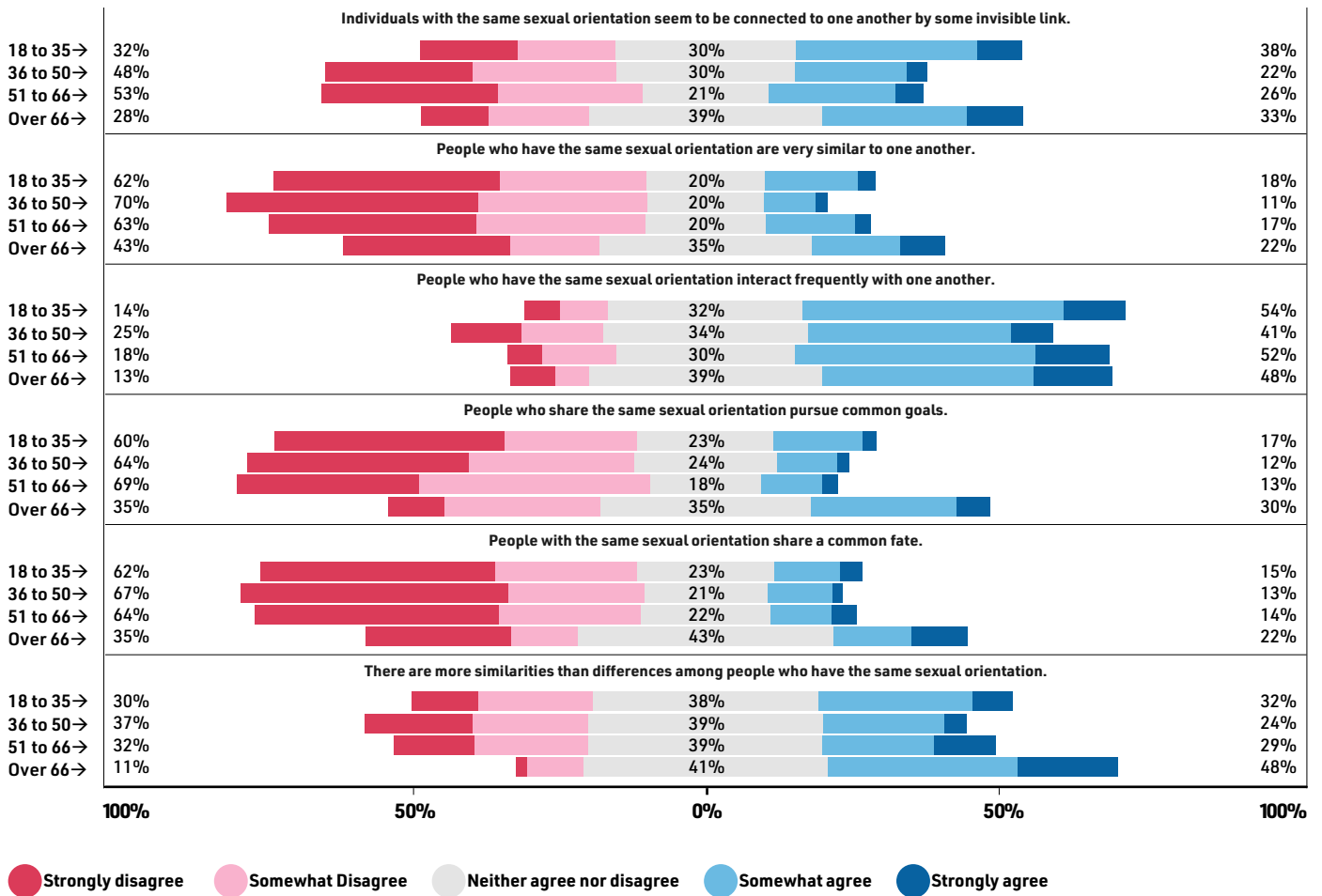
Next, we will consider the responses to questions focused on the homogeneity of sexual identity. Most participants (46%) disagreed that “individuals with the same sexual orientation seem to be connected to one another by some invisible link” but 27% of participants agreed with this statement. Just 15% agreed that “people who have the same sexual orientation are very similar to one another” while the majority (64%) disagreed. Most participants (47%) agreed that “people who have the same sexual orientation interact frequently with one another” (20% disagreed).

The majority of participants (62%) disagreed that “people who share the same sexual orientation pursue common goals” (15% agreed) and 63% disagreed that they “share a common fate” (14% agreed). Finally, when considering whether “there are more similarities than differences among people who have the same sexual orientation”, 29% agreed with this statement and 32% disagreed. Figure 4.7 and figure 4.8 display how responses to these questions differed according to gender and age group respectively.

**FIGURE 4.7. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO HOMOGENEITY OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



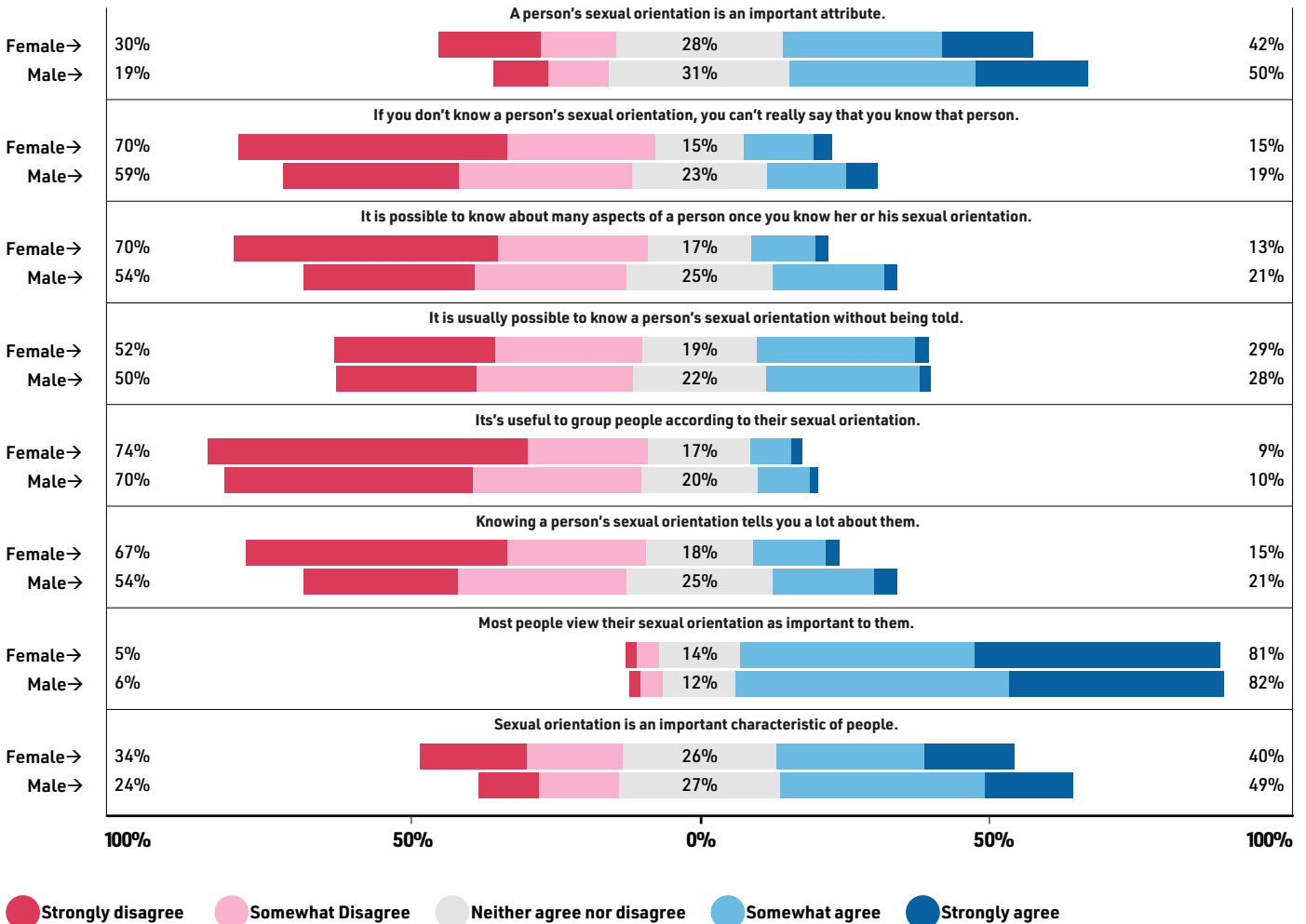
**FIGURE 4.8. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO HOMOGENEITY OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**



The next category is informativeness. Most participants (46%) agreed that “a person’s sexual orientation is an important attribute” (25% disagreed). Just 16% agreed that “if you don’t know a person’s sexual orientation, you can’t really say that you know that person” while 65% disagreed. Similarly, 16% agreed that “it is possible to know about many aspects of a person once you know her or his sexual orientation” (63% disagreed). A majority of participants (51%) disagreed that “it is usually possible to know a person’s sexual orientation

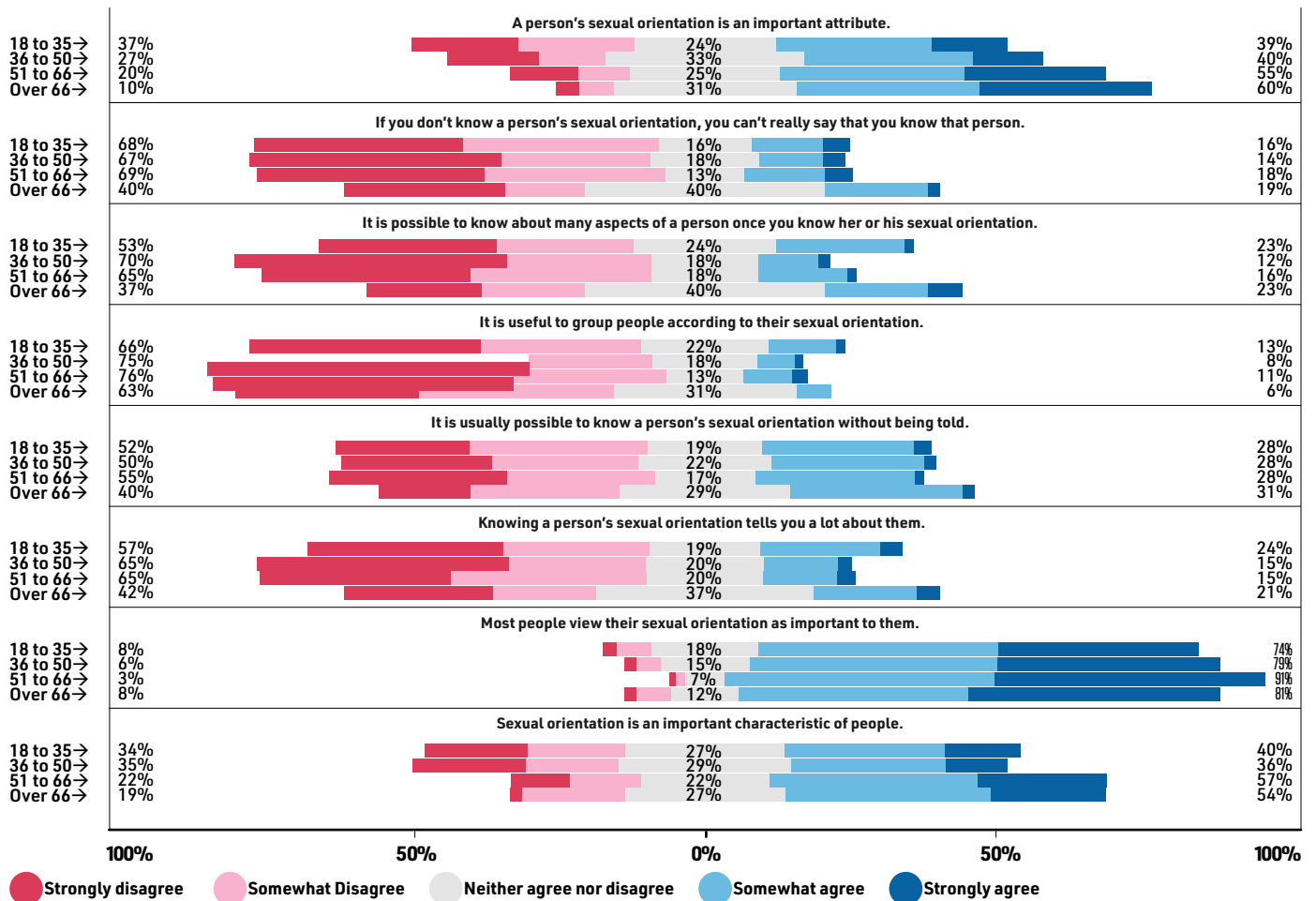
without being told” (28% agreed). Just 9% agreed that “it is useful to group people according to their sexual orientation”, while 72% disagreed with this statement. Most (62%) disagreed that “knowing a person’s sexual orientation tells you a lot about them” (17% agreed). Finally, a majority of participants (81%) agreed that “most people view their sexual orientation as important to them”, with just 6% disagreeing. Figure 4.9 and figure 4.10 display how responses to these questions differed according to gender and age group respectively.

**FIGURE 4.9. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO INFORMATIVENESS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**





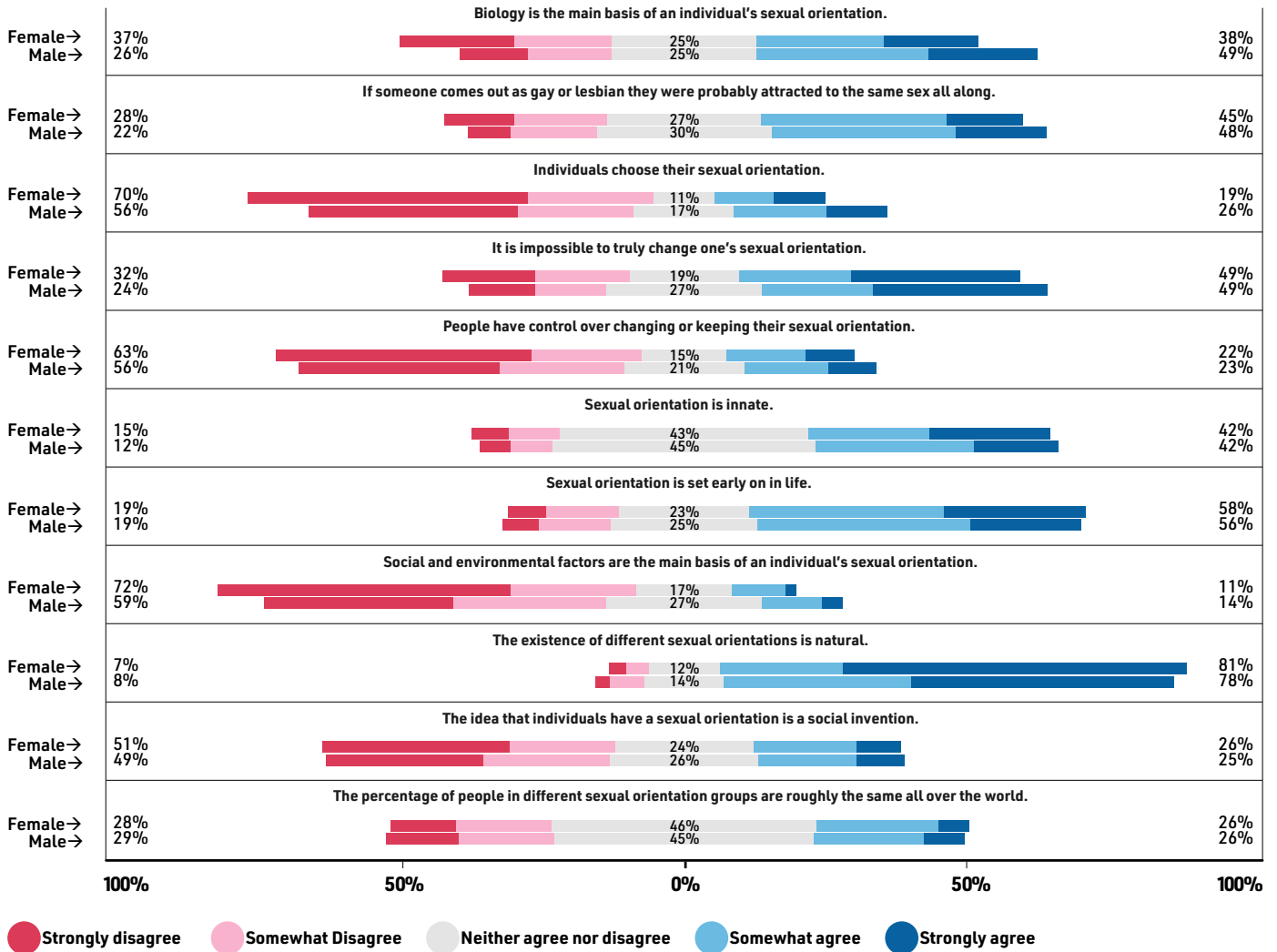
**FIGURE 4.10. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO INFORMATIVENESS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**



Finally, we will take a look at the responses to questions focused on the naturalness of sexual identity. Since some of these questions overlap substantially in content, not all of them will be described here. In response to the statement that "biology is the main basis of an individual's sexual orientation", 43% of the participants expressed agreement and 32% expressed disagreement. Most (46%) agreed that "if someone comes out as gay or lesbian they were probably attracted to the same sex all along" (26% disagreed). A majority of participants (64%) disagreed

that "individuals choose their sexual orientation" (22% agreed). Most (49%) agreed that "it is impossible to truly change one's sexual orientation", while 29% disagreed. Finally, a majority (79%) agreed that "The existence of different sexual orientations is natural" while just 7% disagreed. Figure 4.11 and figure 4.12 display how responses to all of the questions focused on naturalness differed according to gender and age group respectively.

**FIGURE 4.11. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO NATURALNESS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



**FIGURE 4.12. RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO NATURALNESS  
OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**



#### 4.4 Qualitative Analysis of Open-ended Question

There were 479 responses to an open-ended question presented after the questionnaires presented above that asked the participants to tell us more about their beliefs about gender and sexuality. Overall, the qualitative data reflects the quantitative data presented above as it suggests a broad acceptance of the LGBT+ community (n = 329). This is demonstrated in table 4.1 where the majority of responses that could be categorised indicated that people sought to avoid judgement of other people (n=92) and that people should be allowed to love who they want and live how they want (n = 86). Moreover, there were explicitly pro-Trans comments that emphasised gender inclusions (n = 279).

For example, some participants told us:

*“Each person has a right to choose and live the way they prefer without judgement as long as they are not interfering with anyone else. Everyone is equal regardless of gender or sexual orientation. I strongly believe everybody is entitled to be in love and relationships with the sex they choose. We all deserve to be happy we only get one life. I believe that once people are loving and caring towards each other, gender and sexual orientation should not be an issue. I believe that it does not really matter what combination of sexual orientations go to make up a true & loving relationship, provided that they are good for, and to each other.”*

*“As long as it happens in the bedroom, I don't care with who and what. Each person should have equal respect and opportunity regardless of sexuality or gender. Sexual orientation and gender identity has more biological and genetic reason than pure sexual pleasure. I judge a person on their actions, not their sexuality or gender identity. Everyone should have the same rights. No one should be treated differently because they are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or even disabled. I believe there is no abnormal in gender and sexual orientation. We need to stop judging and assuming. Avoid hate, try to understand; if you can't then mind your own business.”*

Participants also acknowledged the complexity and individuality of sexualities and gender (n=46). Alongside this, 15 responses indicated confusion about the complexity, terms, identities and words, often expressing a lack of understanding about them. These responses often indicated a desire to learn, and as this response shows, not seeking to force people into boxes but worrying about the effects they might have on marginalised LGBT+ communities:

*“Honestly all the new terms for gender and sexuality are confusing to me... it's not up to me to tell them what box to fit in or who they are.”*

Learning about the complexities of identities, labels and communities can lead to confusion and fears regarding 'saying the wrong thing'. However, the data pointed to a clear desire to learn, to be inclusive and to develop further understandings more broadly.

**TABLE 4.1. CATEGORIES OF OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES.**

Count	Categories
92	No judgement
86	Live/love how/who you want
69	Against LGBT generally
49	Against trans/gender non-conformity
46	Complex/ no boxes
15	Don't understand
13	Change move away from Oppressive society/ religion/government
139	Other uncategorisable responses (including don't know)

### **Opposition to LGBT+ inclusions**

It is sometimes assumed that negative attitudes to LGBT+ people are 'dying out', or indeed do not exist after the recent referenda. They can also be seen as 'imported' as LGBT+ identities and lives were once seen. It is important to note that these attitudes do exist in Ireland, what they focus on and how they might be addressed, if at all. Therefore, this section outlines some key points from the data that reflected opposition to LGBT+ communities, even though it was clear that they were a minority. As table 4.2 indicates, there remains opposition to LGBT+ inclusion, including oppositions to the LGBT+ community more generally (n=69), specific opposition to Trans and Non-binary identities and gender non-conformity (n=49). These data demonstrate that opposing Trans and Non-binary identities and gender non-conformity can be the case even where people are supportive of same-sex marriage. **They may be difficult to read and care should be taken with regards to how this affects LGBT+ people and their allies when engaging with this section.**

Table 4.2 shows a breakdown of how people voiced their opposition. It shows the broad categories that people felt, which range from understanding sexuality as something that should be used to exclude people, seeing 'homosexuality' as a sin, and bisexuality as 'deceptive', to understanding sexual and gender difference as a 'mental illness' and that people are confused or pushed into it. Some participants saw sexuality as innate, but then went on to say that it is something that should be resisted. This links to battles around conversion therapy based on the view that sexual orientation and gender identity can and should be changed. For this respondent, they are framed through suffering and exploitation that is 'validated' by society:

*“There isn't a single mention of mental illness in all this gender waffle. These poor people are suffering and there are insidious groups exploiting them. They need help not pandering and validation to this insanity.”*

Arguments from the no side of the marriage equality referendum in 2015 were also apparent, particularly around children:

*“My belief is that a man and a woman is the strongest and only true relationship in which to raise children, however, lesbian and gay couples could be allowed to adopt a child or children with supervision.”*

These arguments see 'lesbian and gay couples' as less than heterosexual couples rather than a danger to children per se. This is important because it shows that those who hold negative attitudes do so in different ways that are not all about seeing homosexuality as 'evil' or 'sinful'. Recent discussions around the 'privileges' apparently afforded to LGBT+ people could also be seen in the data:

*“I feel that others want and seek attention. Why don't we straight people have a heterosexual day? We are happy with ourselves and not confused.”*

Here the argument for a 'heterosexual day' is demeaning of LGBT people in terms of 'seeking attention' and also seeing heterosexual people as not needing it because they are 'happy' and 'not confused'. Indicating a lack of understanding, or perhaps a denial, of the purposes of Pride.

Overall, the data indicates a range of opinions within those who hold beliefs that can be seen as against LGBT+ lives and rights. This range of views is important to acknowledge, alongside the fact that they continue to exist as an element of Irish society, albeit a minority according to both the qualitative and quantitative data in this research.

**TABLE 4.2. SUB-CATEGORIES OF "AGAINST LGBT GENERALLY" CATEGORY.**

Sub-category
People should be excluded for their sexuality
Homosexuality immoral/a sin/unproductive
It's a mental illness and pandered to
Bisexuality is deceptive
Innate but should be challenged/resisted
People are confused by their sexuality/gender
People are pushed into it
Men and women should be together/ created for each other
Children benefit more from being raised by male and female parents
Right to belief and no one has a right to change it
Would have problem with LGBT children
Ideas about sexuality and gender, generated on the internet/fashionable/not real/forced to ignore science
Some gay/LGBT people think they are more special/ threaten to claim discrimination

### **Opposition to Trans and Non-binary Identities and Gender Non-conformity**

We separated those responses that were opposed to LGBT+ lives and rights more generally and those that were opposed to Trans and Non-binary identities and gender non-conformity. We did this because whilst there was some overlap, more often these were different people with different views. Insights into these views offer an understanding of the challenges faced by those who seek to advance Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming rights. These contestations have been particularly powerful elsewhere and understanding both that they exist and some of the forms is key to developing strategies to deal with them. These data can be difficult to read and caution and self-care is advised.

This separation was particularly important where participants told us that that they would be supportive of things like same-sex marriage and sexual difference, but not gender non-conformity:

*"A male is a man a female is a woman. Too many confused snowflakes now. Although I am comfortable with gay, lesbian and bi-sexual [sic] attractions and partnerships, I struggle with the idea that someone does not identify as being either male or female from a biological perspective. If you feel you were born in the wrong gender then you change it but must go the whole way."*

The idea that sex was a binary, that only men and women exist and that this was innate came across in the responses to this question.

*"We have politicized the issue and forgotten about genetic makeup and confused it with preference. What someone prefers to be identified as is different from someone born that in a certain way. For example, one is born a male but chooses to be identified as female, that is choice not innate."*

Yet the opinions were not straightforward, as this quote indicates, there was some acceptance for 'wrong body' transitions and also seeking to protect those who are 'vulnerable' without necessarily seeking to judge:

*“I am not qualified to say if people can be confused or mistaken at a young age, but these vulnerable people do need to be protected.”*

This opinion that people are confused and mistaken, as well as being inherently vulnerable shows a specific understanding of Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming young people. It portrays this grouping as all the same, and assumes that their gender is fixed at birth, with anything else being ‘confusion’. The supposed vulnerability and the need for protecting young people especially was linked to the presumption of gender non-conformity being something that is ‘implanted’ by others, similar to how Lesbian and Gay identities and lives were commonly viewed:

*“I think that people are quite confused about themselves. Media, society and groups are implanting ideas in the young generation.”*

Responses in this vein see Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming people as not capable of knowing their own gender and that it the ‘influence’ of others that is not creating more inclusive spaces where people can be themselves, but instead ‘implanting ideas’. This was seen as especially the case where babies were bought up in gender-neutral ways without being given a gender.

Some participants also believed that there were issues with Trans athletes, women’s spaces, and women’s prisons, in line with discussions in this area in other places. Finally, one respondent suggested that the ‘choice’ that Trans people make was a Western phenomenon, which overlooks the multiple ways in which gender is lived and organised across the globe. These participants often voiced their opinions through fear. This fear was linked directly to women and what they saw as the implications for women and children of Trans rights and inclusions.

Associating their attitudes with fear for ‘vulnerable’ people, including women and children has a particular resonance with Irish history where ongoing patriarchal structures define everyday lives, and historical atrocities are important to current debates. Rather than understanding the fight for Trans rights as part of the redressing of gendered violence, abuse and

discrimination, those who hold these views can see trans people’s rights and access to healthcare as the key contemporary problem. For example, one person linked Trans healthcare to the Magdalene laundries, rejecting the rights of children to access gender affirming care and instead seeing access to healthcare as the ‘next scandal’:

*“I believe that society and medics have absolutely no idea of the long-term consequences of the drugs being pushed onto children. Thirty years from now, I believe this will be the next Irish scandal. Having lived in Mother and Baby homes I know all about the long-term mental consequences on children of decisions made by adults.”*

The worries and fears driving these responses are locating themselves in a patriarchal Ireland that did not listen to women and children in the past. They are not only, or necessarily, being ‘imported’. This is a powerful narrative given the increasing awareness of these issues, and the desire to redress gendered abuses in the past. Framing Trans rights through these understandings seeks to create the impression that Trans inclusions are problematic and dangerous and in doing so question access to healthcare as well as rights to gender recognition.

Overall, these data show concern and worry, and some limited understanding of the key issues faced by Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming people (specifically regarding being born into the ‘wrong body’). As with negative attitudes to the LGBT+ community more broadly, there is disparity and difference within these attitudes and indications of a lack of understanding but only for some, others are well informed and clear on their views/arguments. Reflecting this, there were some within this grouping who desired to support Trans, Non-binary and gender nonconforming people, but were perhaps misguided in their understandings, alongside others who clearly held entrenched and fixed positionings on these issues.

## 4.5. Conclusions

The findings presented in this chapter suggest that the participants in our survey hold a diverse range of beliefs about gender and sexual identity. The only category of beliefs in which there was at least moderate evidence for consensus was beliefs about traditional gender norms with which there was strong disagreement from the vast majority of participants. There were also high levels of support for diversity in sexual identities and for the recognition as gender being more than binary categories based on sex. Overall, the data suggests that most participants are accepting of LGBT+ communities and hold flexible beliefs about gender and sexual identity. However, there are considerable minorities that support more traditional and rigid beliefs, particularly where gender is concerned.

Gender essentialism was a particularly polarising topic. While the majority agreed that there is a difference between gender and sex, there was no such consensus on the extent to which gender is biologically determined. In general, a greater proportion of males than females held essentialist views and most essentialist beliefs were supported to a greater extent by older participants. Similar findings have been found in previous research (Smiler and Gelman 2008). These mixed views were represented in the qualitative data where negative attitudes towards Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming people appeared to be rooted in essentialist beliefs about gender.

As previously mentioned, there was broad disagreement with traditional gender norms. However, there some specific beliefs that elicited differences according to gender. For example, 37% of men, compared to 18% of women, believed that children should be raised by a man and woman together. This belief was also a theme among the qualitative responses that expressed negative attitudes towards the LGBT+ community. In addition, a greater proportion of women (78%) than men (59%) felt that there is no need to adhere to traditional gender roles in relationships.

The majority of participants supported beliefs indicating that sexual identity can be flexible rather than fixed but, on average, approximately one in five participants held the opposite view. The differences in support for these beliefs across gender and age group were small. These beliefs were reflected in the qualitative response that emphasised discomfort with putting people into specific categories.

Support for the idea that people with the same sexual identity are the same as each other in other ways was limited. Again, the differences in support for these beliefs across gender and age group were small.

While most participants agreed that sexual identity is important for people, only a minority supported the belief that knowing someone's sexual identity can tell you a lot about them. This suggests that many participants feel that they do not rely on stereotypes about sexual identity. However, a higher proportion of males than females endorsed beliefs about the informativeness of sexual identity. In general, older participants tended to endorse informativeness beliefs to a greater extent than younger participants.

When considering the naturalness of sexual identity, most participants agreed that diversity in sexual identities is natural but there was a somewhat even divide in support for essentialist beliefs about sexual identity (i.e. that it is caused by biological factors). A greater proportion of male than female participants endorsed essentialist beliefs about sexual identity. In the qualitative responses, some of those who agreed that sexual identity is innate professed the belief that minoritised sexual identities should be resisted (e.g. through conversion therapy) and some described perceived associations with mental illness.

Overall, these findings indicate that despite low commitment to traditional gender norms among the majority of participants, there remains a diversity of beliefs regarding how genders and sexual identities are constructed. Where these beliefs underlie opposition to LGBT+ identities and communities, the data presented here may provide a foundation for more nuanced and aware responses.





## **Chapter 5**

# SUPPORT FOR POLICIES AFFECTING THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Government policy and legislation are key factors in promoting inclusion and equality for the LGBT+ community and other minority groups.

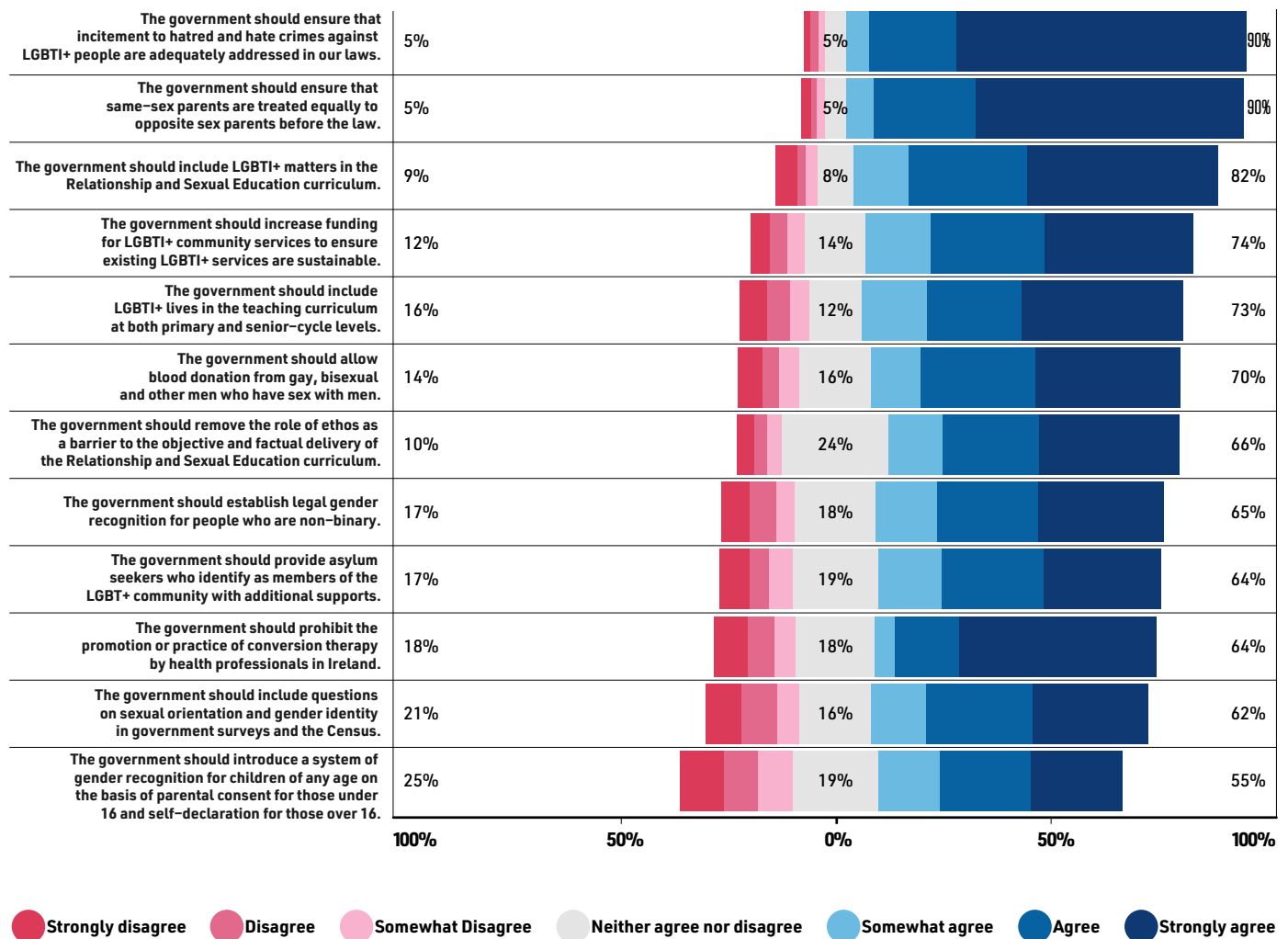
Government policy and legislation are key factors in promoting inclusion and equality for the LGBT+ community and other minority groups. Since the decriminalisation of homosexual acts in 1992, significant progress in this area has been made including the Equal Status Acts (2000-2018) and the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2015), the Marriage Equality Act (2015) and the Gender Recognition Act (2015). Current policy initiatives include the National LGBTI+ inclusion strategy (2019) and the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy (2018). Despite these advances, there are still a range of key policy and legislative issues that are important to ensure full LGBT+ inclusion and equality and the aim of this chapter is to ascertain the public's perceptions and support for these.

## 5.2 Support for selected policies that are priorities for the LGBT+ community

Figure 5.1 presents some of the key policy and legislative issues that are priorities for the LGBT+ community. There was general support for all of the policies, with most people agreeing that the government should ensure that incitement to hatred and hate crimes against LGBTI+ people should be adequately addressed in our laws (90% support). Similarly, there was strong support for the government to ensure that same sex

parents are treated equally to opposite sex parents before the law (also 90%). Support for extending gender recognition to those under the age of 18 was the lowest at 55% with 19% neither agreeing or disagreeing, suggesting that some participants may not have enough knowledge on gender recognition to be informed enough to provide an opinion. There was also strong support for allowing gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men to donate blood (70%) although 16% neither agreed or disagreed.

**FIGURE 5.1. SUPPORT FOR SELECTED POLICIES THAT ARE PRIORITIES FOR THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY.**

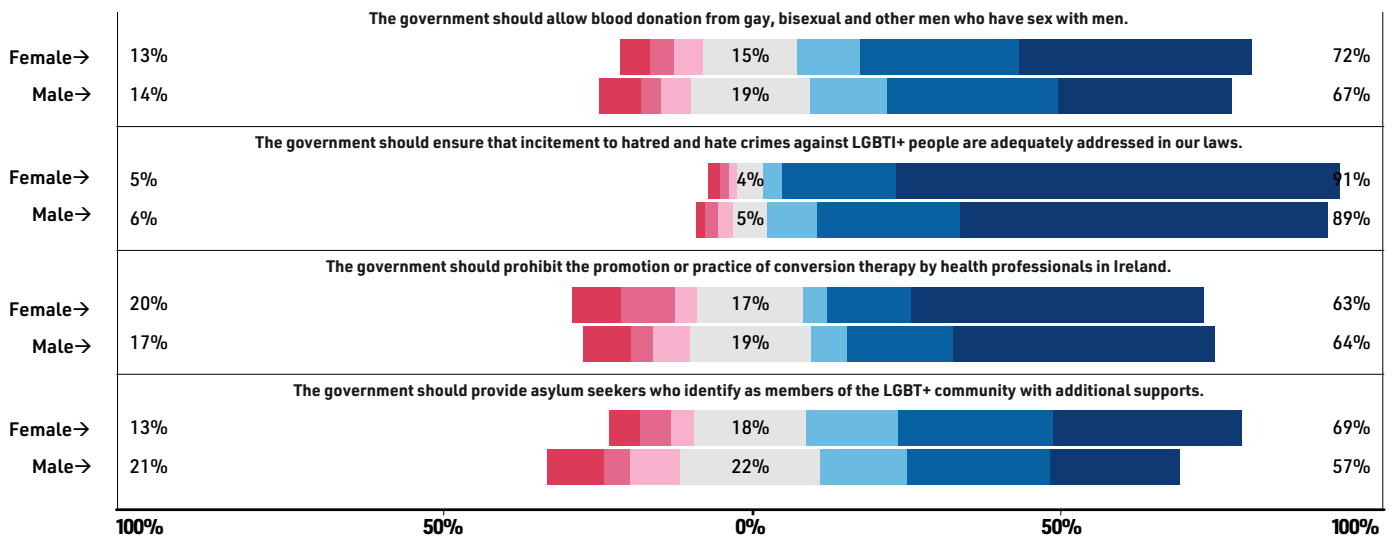


### 5.3 Gender and age group differences in support for selected policies related to discrimination

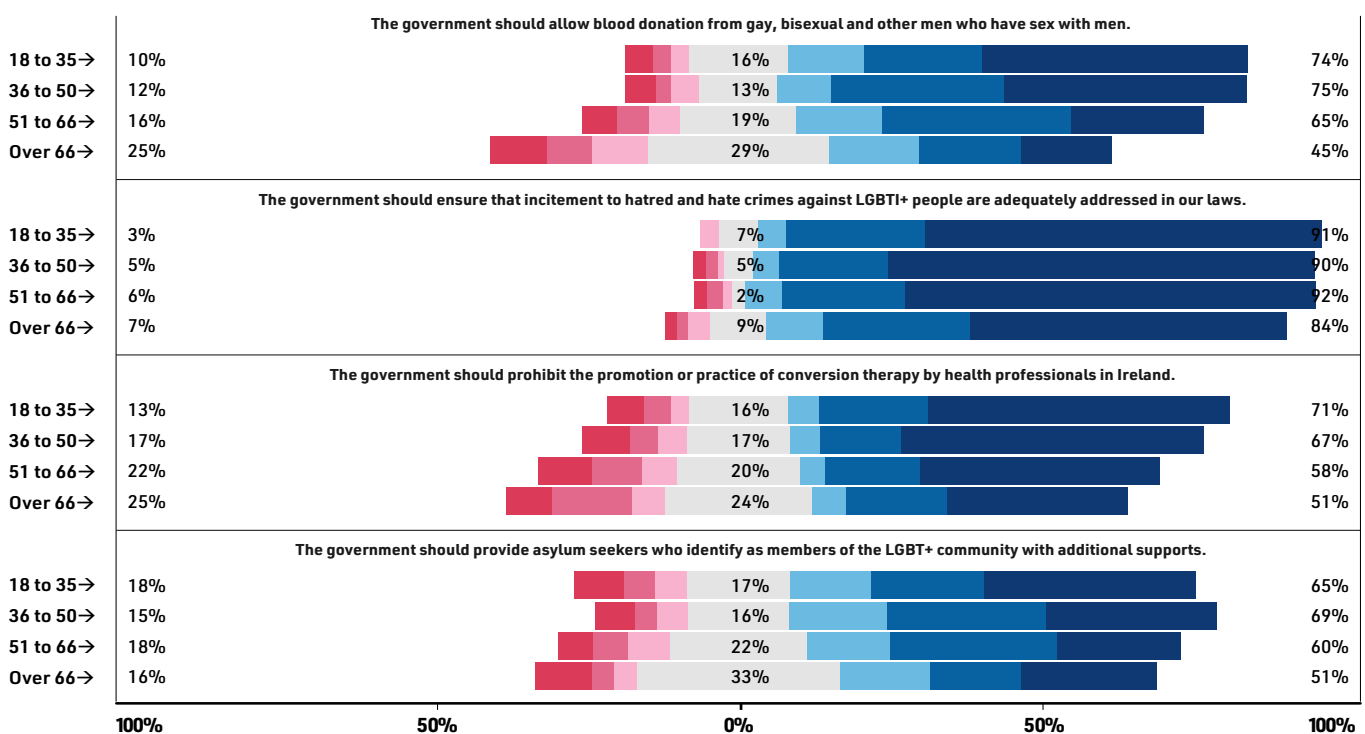
The difference in support for blood donation from Gay and Bi men across genders was just 5% but there was between 20% and 30% lower support among those aged over 66 compared to other age groups. The differences in support for hate crime across gender and age group were small. Sixty four percent (64%) of the participants agreed that the government should prohibit the practice of conversion therapy by health professionals in Ireland

Ireland and these views were consistent among men and women (see figure 5.2). Support for prohibiting conversion therapy was lowest among the oldest age group although the high number of undecided (24%) may also reflect a lack of familiarity with the practice. With regards to providing asylum seekers who identify as members of the LGBT+ community with additional supports, support was lower among men (57%) than women (69%) and there was less support among older participants than among younger participants (see figure 5.3).

**FIGURE 5.2. SUPPORT FOR SELECTED POLICIES RELATED TO DISCRIMINATION DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



**FIGURE 5.3. SUPPORT FOR SELECTED POLICIES RELATED TO DISCRIMINATION DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**

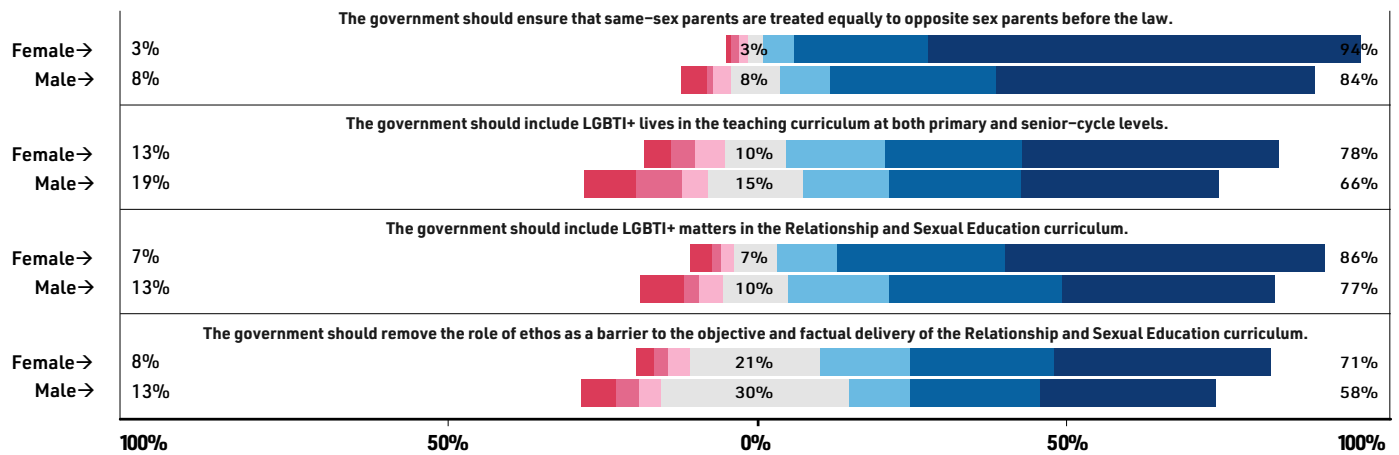


### 5.4 Gender and age group differences in support for selected policies related to education and parenting

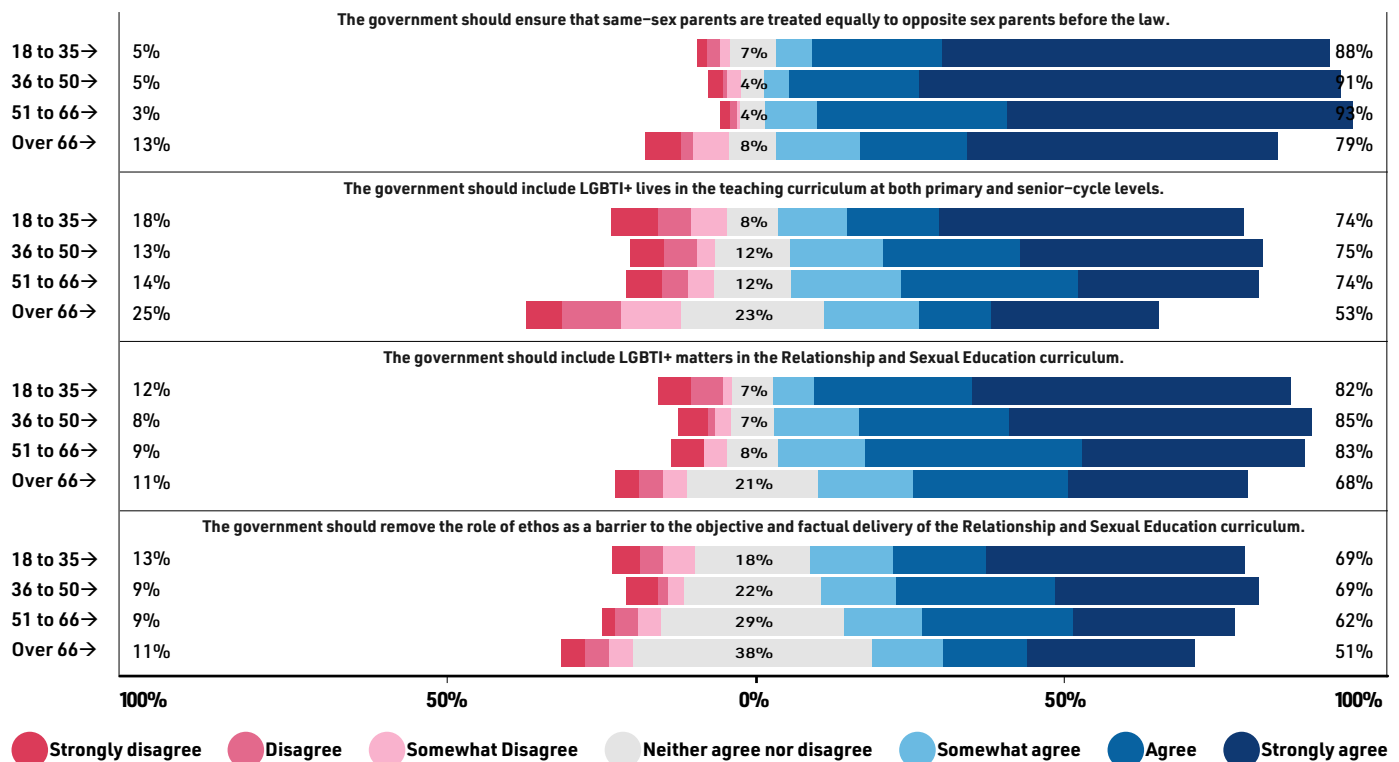
There was a 10-point difference between women and men’s support for the equal treatment of same-sex and opposite-sex parents in law (94% and 84% respectively; see figure 5.4). Support for this was between 9% and 14% lower among those aged over 66 compared to other age groups (see figure 5.5). A number of questions also sought the participants’ views on the inclusion of LGBTI+ issues in primary and second level curricula and specifically within the Relationship and Sexual

Education (RSE) curriculum. Overall, there was stronger support for both statements among women and those aged 66 and under. Participants were also asked if the government should remove the role of ethos as a barrier to the objective and factual delivery of the RSE curriculum. There was a 13-point difference between men (58%) and women (71%) in support for this policy. Support for this policy was lower among those aged between 51 and 66 (62%) and those aged over 66 (51%) compared to those aged between 18 and 35 and those aged between 36 and 50 (both 69%).

**FIGURE 5.4. SUPPORT FOR SELECTED POLICIES RELATED TO EDUCATION AND PARENTING DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



**FIGURE 5.5. SUPPORT FOR SELECTED POLICIES RELATED TO EDUCATION AND PARENTING DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**

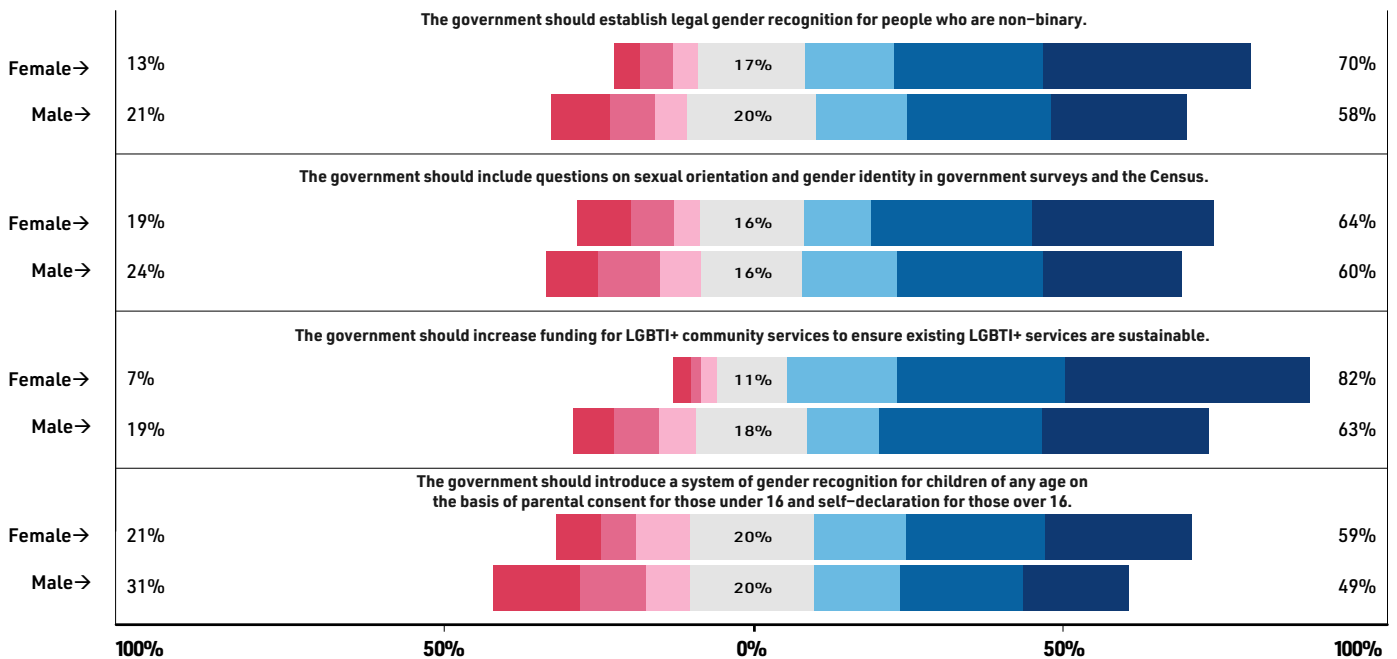


### 5.5 Gender and age group differences in support for selected policies related to government resources and services

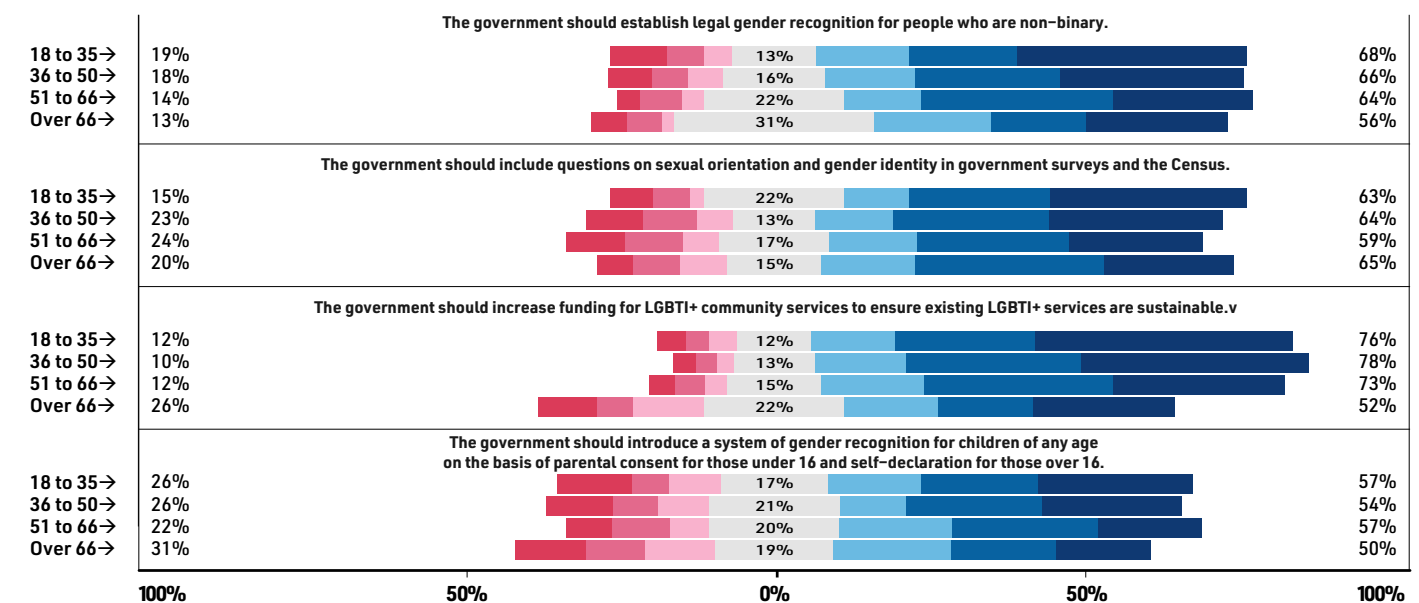
When considering legal gender recognition for people who are non-binary, men were less likely to agree than women with a difference of 12% in support (see figure 5.6). Support for this was between 8% and 12% lower among those aged over 66 compared to other age groups (see figure 5.7). Including a questions related to sexual identity and gender identity to the

census was supported by 64% of women and 60% of men. Support for this policy was between 59% and 65% across age groups with support lowest among those aged between 51 and 66. There was a 19% difference between men (63%) and women (82%) in support for increasing funding for LGBT+ services. Finally, support for extending gender recognition to those under the age of 18 was lower among men (49%) than women (59%) and between 4% and 7% lower among those aged over 66 compared to other age groups.

**FIGURE 5.6. SUPPORT FOR SELECTED POLICIES RELATED TO GOVERNMENT RESOURCES DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER.**



**FIGURE 5.7. SUPPORT FOR SELECTED POLICIES RELATED TO GOVERNMENT RESOURCES DISAGGREGATED BY AGE GROUP.**



## 5.6 Qualitative Analysis of Open-ended Question

The participants were also asked to share any additional thoughts they had about policies that are supportive of the LGBT+ community. There were 321 useable comments and within these, many participants took the opportunity to discuss more than one policy issue meaning that there were 384 different comments from 321 participants. An overview of the responses can be seen in table 5.1. **They may be difficult to read and care should be taken with regards to how this affects LGBT+ people and their allies when engaging with this section.**

**TABLE 5.1. CATEGORISATION OF PERCEPTIONS OF LGBT+ POLICIES.**

Category	Count	% of Total
General support for LGBT+ policies	175	46
Educational policies	66	17
No need for additional LGBT+ policies	48	13
Trans rights	34	9
Legal issues	32	8
Parenting	10	3
Other	19	5

Overall, the majority of responses expressed general support for any policy that supported the LGBT+ community, although there were no references to any current LGBT+ specific policy. Many of the participants viewed policy issues through an equality, rights and anti-discrimination lens and specifically mentioned that the LGBT+ community should share the same rights as everyone, be treated equally and be free from discrimination. Comments like 'live and let live', 'equal rights for all' and 'everyone should be treated the same' were common sentiments throughout the responses.

Within the responses, equality for LGBT+ people was perceived as something that society needed to work towards rather than something that has already been achieved. While there was general recognition that progress had been made in this area, there were suggestions among some of the participants that more support is needed, legislative changes are necessary and increased funding is required. The following excerpts from the comments provide a flavour of the general support expressed for the LGBT+ community:

*“LGBT+ should receive all the protection and services that all other groups do in Ireland.”*

*“Like any other minority group they should be supported.”*

*“Again, there should be no lack of resources for those based upon gender identity or sexual orientation.”*

### Legal issues

Legal issues were specifically mentioned in 8% (n=32) of the comments and many of these comments related to equality and anti-discrimination laws to ensure that LGBT+ people were treated fairly and have the same legal rights as heterosexual and cisgender people. A number of participants mentioned that all citizens should have the same rights and it is not clear if they meant that LGBT+ individuals do not need additional laws and policies to protect them. There were specific references to hate crime legislation with some of the participants calling for 'stiffer penalties' and 'zero tolerance' so that the LGBT+ community can feel safer. Concerning legislation, the responses are adequately summarised in the following excerpt:

*“It is far past the time when this should be an issue. All people should be treated the same under the law. And it should be a priority for the government to put hate crime legislation on the books.”*

### **Educational Issues**

The majority of participants who mentioned educational issues supported education about LGBT+ issues generally as part of the primary or secondary school curricula, mostly in the context of relationships and sex education. Many of the participants specifically mentioned the need for discussion around LGBT+ issues beginning from an early age as this was one way to tackle homophobia and discrimination. For example, one participant wrote:

*“Growing up LGBTQI+ can be very confusing especially at a young age so introducing education when young can be very beneficial and lead to less confusion.”*

There were also a small number of comments that referred to the school ethos and how this negatively impacted on the teachers ability to provide Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) in an objective way:

*“Ultimately, I think the RSE Curriculum in our schools needs a radical overhaul, the Government should ensure that ALL topics covered are relevant to the needs of students, comprehensive training should be provided to all teachers of RSE, and school ethos removed as a barrier and / or hiding place for Management and/ or teachers. Our students and teachers deserve this. Teachers often feel they cannot/ dare not express their deeply held views because they may be contrary to/ in conflict with the stated ethos of the school. Especially those who teach both RE and RSE.”*

However, there were a number of participants (n=12) who disagreed and believed that LGBT+ issues should not be discussed as part of the primary school curriculum. Where these views existed, it was suggested that younger children did not need this information or that they were too young to absorb or understand this information. Here, there was a sense among some of these comments that discussion around LGBT+ issues might unduly influence the child’s sexuality or confuse them in some way.

*“Although I do believe early education on these matters is important, I don’t believe it should be introduced at a primary level. Secondary level yes for sure, in first year. However, I don’t see the reasoning in introducing these complicated aspects of life to the very young, I feel this is too much on the very young mind. At the very least it should not be introduced to children below 6th class in primary schools, some of these children are still just 11 even at that.”*

Similarly, there were a small number of comments where the participants believed that sex education or the provision of information about LGBT+ issues was the parents’ responsibility and should only be provided in accordance with their wishes.

### **Trans Rights**

Nine percent (n=34) of the respondents made reference to Trans rights in their comments. Nearly half of these comments (n=15) were supportive of the Trans community and called for more support and the need for greater understanding of Transgender lives and the issues that affect them.

*“Trans people in particular need additional protection with the current frightening growth in anti-trans sentiment.”*

Specifically, some of the comments referred to the participants’ lack of knowledge and awareness within this area. Similar to the issues that were raised with general education about LGBT+ issues, some of the participants had concerns about children identifying as Trans, suggesting they were too young to make decisions like this. These comments advised caution about any approaches or interventions with individuals under the age of 18. There were also a couple of comments that supported a binary interpretation of gender and the belief that this cannot be changed.



*“If a child believes themselves to be something other than the sex they were born with they should be protected by laws and support of their parents to carry out any steps that would help them to feel more comfortable in their skin, but any surgical alterations should be kept until their late teens to early 20s to allow for puberty to complete. But anything non-surgical should be completely acceptable including hormone therapies.”*

### **Parenting**

There were a small number of comments that related to LGBT+ parenting (n=10) and in line with the survey responses, these were overall supportive of LGBT+ parents having the same legal rights and supports as opposite sex parents:

*“There should be no difference in funding/laws for LGBT parents vs parents of [the] opposite sex.”*

*“There should be safeguards for married gay couples to ensure they are recognised as parents of their children.”*

There were two comments that suggested that the best environment for raising children was with opposite sex parents.

### **Opposition to policies supporting LGBT+ communities**

There were some comments that suggested that the participants were not in favour of policies that are supportive of the LGBT+ community (n=48). The main reason cited for this, when it was provided, was the belief that everyone should be treated equally and that there was no need to single out one group over others. In some of the comments, there was a sense that having policies for one distinct group created inequalities for others. For example, one participant wrote:

*“I agree with full equality however I feel that in Ireland they [LGBT+ Community] really have equality and seeking special treatment is actually putting them above people who are straight which I don't agree with.”*

To a lesser extent within these comments (n=4) there were some that suggested that LGBT+ policies were not unimportant or unnecessary, but that there were more important things to worry about within society with one participant suggesting that:

*“We [Ireland] have bigger issues in this government system than issues of LGBT+.”*

There were also a small number of participants (n=4) that were critical of the LGBT+ community and their desire for supportive policies was perceived as excessive. One participant wrote:

*“I also believe that if ANY social grouping become too vociferous or militant, they are not going to improve their standing, and may well create a negative influence on themselves.”*

## 5.7 Conclusions

There appears to be a high level of support, in general, for the policies that participants were asked to consider in this survey. There was particularly high support for hate crime legislation, protections for LGBT+ parents and the inclusion of LGBT+ topics in the relationships and sex education curriculum. In general, support tended to be greater among females than males. Younger participants tended to indicate the highest level of support for policies that support the LGBT+ community, with significant gaps in support between the oldest and youngest groups on many policies being found. These findings also suggest that there is a minority who oppose such progress with the argument that the LGBT+ community should not be singled out for special protection. These comments reflect aspects of the concept of “modern homonegativity”, which is described as reflecting negative attitudes towards demands for change from LGBT+ communities (Morrison 2009). Overall, as demonstrated by the qualitative data, there appeared to be a consensus among survey participants that more progress is needed to support the LGBT+ community through legislative and policy change, particularly among younger participants.



**Chapter 6**

CONCLUSIONS

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a survey that was designed to assess public attitudes towards different groups of people within the LGBT+ community, to examine beliefs about sexual identity and gender, and to gauge support for specific policy goals that remain for the LGBT+ community in Ireland.

This chapter highlights key findings and the strengths and limitations of the survey that should be considered when interpreting these findings.

### **6.2 Diverse perceptions of diverse communities**

The results of both the quantitative and qualitative data suggest a broad acceptance of LGBT+ identities and a desire to not judge, categorise or prescribe how LGBT+ people live. However, the clear difference in support for identities, beliefs and policies that pertain to groups that are often seen as more normative, specifically Gay men and Lesbian women, compared to those that may be perceived as more transgressive of gender norms, such as Bi, Trans, Non-binary and Intersex people, is a central theme in this report. These differences may also relate to the divide in the extent to which participants tend to interact with people who they know are Lesbian, Gay or Bi compared to those who they know are Trans. Similar results have been found in a study from the US, where differences in attitudes towards Gay people and Trans people were related to religiosity, political partisanship, income and gender (Lewis et al., 2017).

More research is needed to identify the factors related to the differences in attitudes towards different LGBT+ communities in Ireland. One contributing factor specific to here may be the effect of the marriage equality campaign referendum on the increased visibility and acceptance of Lesbian women and Gay men, to the exclusion of other minoritised sexual and gender identities.

There was a consistent pattern of more positive attitudes among women than men across the survey. This is consistent with recent data from many other countries (Bettinsoli et al., 2020). One explanation for this pattern is that since men benefit from a heteronormative society, they may feel threatened by challenges to heteronormativity (Worthen, 2021). In addition, to benefit from a heteronormative society, men tend to conform to traditional masculine norms including anti-femininity and heterosexuality. Our survey results also suggest greater support for traditional gender norms among men compared to women. Threats to these specific norms can motivate more negative attitudes towards the identities and groups that transgress these norms. For example, research has shown that when male participants are told that men are becoming more feminine, they then report more negative attitudes towards Gay men than male participants who are told that there have been no changes in the masculinity of men across time (Iacoviello et al., 2019). In summary, commitment to the norms of masculinity is known to be associated with more negative attitudes towards LGBT+ identities and this may explain the gender differences in our results.

Together these findings suggest that conformity to traditional gender norms is still prevalent in Irish society. However, the survey also provided evidence that the majority of participants endorsed beliefs that counter traditional norms about gender and sexual identity, as we discuss next.

### 6.3 Moving beyond binaries

Despite the disparities in attitudes described above, there was strong support for beliefs that reflected more complex views of sexual identity and gender than traditional binary perspectives. For example, it is important to note that almost three-quarters of the participants agreed that gender is a complicated issue and does not always match biological sex. In addition, the majority of participants endorsed beliefs that gender is not binary. There was also strong support for the beliefs that gender should not determine one's choice of partner and that sexual identity does not necessarily have distinct boundaries. Both the qualitative and quantitative data suggested a preference for seeing people as individuals rather than homogenous members of categories.

There was less consensus on whether gender is determined biologically or something that we learn from society. Believing that gender is biologically determined has been linked to greater prejudice against Trans and Non-binary people in particular (Gallagher and Bodenhausen 2021). Therefore, the persistence of these beliefs may be a barrier to their inclusion in society.

## 6.4 Support for change

For each of the policy goals that were presented, the majority indicated support. The qualitative data also suggested that there is an awareness that of the need for progress in terms of LGBT+ rights and resources in Ireland. There was particularly strong support for progressing hate crime legislation, parental rights, education about LGBT+ issues and resourcing of the LGBT+ community.

## 6.5 Engaging with oppositions

This survey also provided the opportunity to hear the perspectives of those who oppose LGBT+ identities and rights. These oppositions can be broadly categorised as opposition to LGBT+ communities in general and specific opposition to Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming communities. The comments from those broadly opposed to LGBT+ identities and rights formed themes related to mental illness, sin, morality, special treatment and heteronormative views of relationships and parenting. Those opposed to Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming people specifically tended to express ideas that formed themes related to commitment to binary gender, disempowerment of Trans people (e.g. perceiving them as a homogenous group that is “confused” or “influenced”), fear for women and children, and a lack of understanding of the experiences of Trans, Non-binary and gender non-conforming people. It is important to note that while these themes could be identified, there was great diversity in how opposition to LGBT+ identities and rights was expressed. This reflects evidence from recent work on social polarisation in relation to changes to sexual and gender legislations and cultures as part of the Beyond Opposition project, which found that sharing concerns/opposition to certain issues related to sexuality and gender does not necessarily imply broader agreement on opposed issues (Nash, Browne, and Nablett 2020). This work, and the diversity of responses in our survey, suggest that nuanced responses to opposition are required and developing such responses can benefit from understanding how those who oppose LGBT+ identities and rights have experienced recent social and legal progress.

## 6.6 Strengths and limitations

The results of this study must be considered in light of the advantages and disadvantages of the design of the survey. The feeling thermometer approach to assessing attitudes was useful as it allowed attitudes towards different LGBT+ communities to be compared. However, this approach limited the measurement of these attitudes to one question and therefore the results may not be as accurate as an approach using multiple questions to assess different aspects of attitudes towards each target group. The questionnaires used to assess beliefs about gender and sexual identity are validated psychometric tools so this can be considered a strength of the survey. Given the nature of the survey, we cannot rule out participants giving socially desirable responses. However, the anonymous and online setup of the survey may have made socially desirable responding less likely.

While the number of participants was relatively large, they were not a random sample of the overall national population so the results may not be representative. While some of the demographic information that was collected matched census data in terms of proportions in different categories (e.g. area of residence, educational status), there was a gender imbalance – a much greater proportion of women took part in the survey than are represented in the overall population. Given the gender differences found for many of the responses in this study, with women generally providing more supportive answers than men, the overall results may be more positive than would be found in a representative sample. Older people were also underrepresented in the data. Any follow-up to this study should use a representative sampling approach to overcome these limitations. Finally, this report does not attempt to explain the attitudes, beliefs or support for policies expressed by the participants, it identifies and describes them. More work is needed on the many factors that are related to support for LGBT+ communities (e.g. political ideology, religiosity etc.) that were not measured here.

## 6.7 Final word

Participants in this survey were most likely to report positive attitudes towards different LGBT+ communities. They were most likely to believe that gender is more complicated than traditional views of gender suggest. They were most likely to view people of different sexual identities as individuals rather than categories and they were most likely to support policy goals held by the LGBT+ community in Ireland. These findings are not diminished by the fact that the survey also found opposition to LGBT+ identities and rights, nor are they indicative of a just society for LGBT+ people, their families and allies. Ongoing attention towards how attitudes and beliefs about sexual identity and gender develop over time, and how conflicts regarding them emerge, is an important responsibility for academics, civil society and policy-makers.

## REFERENCES

- Abou-Chadi, Tarik; Finnigan, Ryan. 2018. 'Rights for Same-Sex Couples and Public Attitudes Toward Gays and Lesbians in Europe'. 52(6):868-95. doi: 10.1177/0010414018797947.
- Adelman, A. L., G. H. Awad, A. Bennett, and H. Nguyen. 2021. 'The Role of Entitlement, Social Dominance Orientation, and Right-Wing Authoritarianism in the Prediction of Homonegativity for Heterosexual White Men'. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*. doi: 10.1111/asap.12245.
- van den Akker, Hanneke; van der Ploeg, Rozemarijn; Scheepers, Peer. 2012. 'Disapproval of Homosexuality: Comparative Research on Individual and National Determinants of Disapproval of Homosexuality in 20 European Countries'. 25(1):64-86. doi: 10.1093/ijpor/edr058.
- Arseneau, Julie R., Patrick R. Grzanka, Joseph R. Miles, and Ruth E. Fassinger. 2013. 'Development and Initial Validation of The Sexual Orientation Beliefs Scale (SOBS)'. *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 60(3):407-20. doi: 10.1037/a0032799.
- Bettinsoli, M. L., A. Suppes, and J. L. Napier. 2020. 'Predictors of Attitudes Toward Gay Men and Lesbian Women in 23 Countries'. *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 11(5):697-708. doi: 10.1177/1948550619887785.
- Bränström, R., and J. E. Pachankis. 2021. 'Country-Level Structural Stigma, Identity Concealment, and Day-to-Day Discrimination as Determinants of Transgender People's Life Satisfaction'. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. doi: 10.1007/s00127-021-02036-6.
- Brooks, Ashley S. ; Luyt, Russell; Zawisza, Magdalena; McDermott, Daragh T. 2019. 'Ambivalent Homoprejudice towards Gay Men: Theory Development and Validation.' 67(9):1261-89. doi: 10.1080/00918369.2019.1585729.
- Cannoot, Pieter. 2019. "'#WontBeErased": The Effects of (de) Pathologisation and (de)Medicalisation on the Legal Capacity of Trans\* Persons'. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 66:101478. doi: 10.1016/j.ijlp.2019.101478.
- Ciocca, Giacomo; Niolu, Cinzia; Dèttore, Davide; Antonelli, Paolo; Conte, S; Tuziak, Bogdan; Limoncin, Erika; Mollaioli, Daniele; Carosa, Eleonora; Gravina, G. L. ; Di Sante, S; Di Lorenzo, G. ; Fisher, Alessandra D. ; Maggi, Mario; Lenzi, Andrea; Siracusano, Alberto; Jannini, Emmanuele A. 2016. 'Cross-Cultural and Socio-Demographic Correlates of Homophobic Attitude among University Students in Three European Countries.' 40(2):227-33. doi: 10.1007/s40618-016-0554-1.
- Cragun, Ryan T. ; Sumerau, J. Edward. 2014. 'The Last Bastion of Sexual and Gender Prejudice? Sexualities, Race, Gender, Religiosity, and Spirituality in the Examination of Prejudice Toward Sexual and Gender Minorities'. 52(7):821-34. doi: 10.1080/00224499.2014.925534.
- Dodge, Brian; Herbenick, Debby; Friedman, M. Reuel; Schick, Vanessa; Fu, Tsung-Chieh Jane; Bostwick, Wendy; Bartelt, Elizabeth; Muñoz-Laboy, Miguel; Pletta, David R. ; Reece, Michael; Sandfort, Theo G. M. 2016. 'Attitudes toward Bisexual Men and Women among a Nationally Representative Probability Sample of Adults in the United States.' 11(10):1-18. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0164430.
- Earles, Jennifer. 2019. 'The "Penis Police": Lesbian and Feminist Spaces, Trans Women, and the Maintenance of the Sex/Gender/Sexuality System'. *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 23(2):243-56. doi: 10.1080/10894160.2018.1517574.
- Eurobarometer. 2019. *Discrimination in the EU in 2019*. 493. European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers.
- Gallagher, Natalie M., and Galen V. Bodenhausen. 2021. 'Gender Essentialism and the Mental Representation of Transgender Women and Men: A Multimethod Investigation of Stereotype Content'. *Cognition* 217:104887. doi: 10.1016/j.cognition.2021.104887.
- Garelick, Angela S. ; Filip-Crawford, Gabrielle; Varley, Allison H. ; Nagoshi, Craig T. ; Nagoshi, Julie L. ; Evans, Rosalind. 2017. 'Beyond the Binary: Exploring the Role of Ambiguity in Biphobia and Transphobia'. 17(2):172-89.
- Habarth, Janice M. 2015. 'Development of the Heteronormative Attitudes and Beliefs Scale'. *Psychology & Sexuality* 6(2):166-88. doi: 10.1080/19419899.2013.876444.
- Harbaugh, Evan; Lindsey, Eric W. 2015. 'Attitudes Toward Homosexuality Among Young Adults: Connections to Gender Role Identity, Gender-Typed Activities, and Religiosity'. 62(8):1098-1125. doi: 10.1080/00918369.2015.1021635.
- Higgins, Agnes, Louise Doyle, Carmel Downes, Rebecca Murphy, Danika Sharek, Jan DeVries, Thelma Begley, Edward McCann, Fintan Sheerin, and Siobhain Smyth. 2016. *The LGBTIreland Report: National Study of the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex People in Ireland*. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To.



- Iacoviello, V., G. Valsecchi, J. Berent, J. Anderson, and J. M. Falomir-Pichastor. 2020. 'Heterosexual Men's Attitudes towards Homosexuality and Ingroup Distinctiveness: The Role of Perceived Men's Feminisation'. *Psychology and Sexuality* 11(1-2):45-61. doi: 10.1080/19419899.2019.1675749.
- Kaufman, G., and D. L. Compton. 2021. 'Attitudes Toward LGBT Marriage and Legal Protections Post-Obergefell'. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* 18(2):321-30. doi: 10.1007/s13178-020-00460-y.
- Kiebel, Elizabeth; Bosson, Jennifer K. ; Caswell, T. Andrew. 2019. 'Essentialist Beliefs and Sexual Prejudice Toward Feminine Gay Men'. *67(8):1097-1117*. doi: 10.1080/00918369.2019.1603492.
- Kordsmeier, B., C. Tumilson, and G. Song. 2019. 'Ideological Orientations, LGBT Contact, and Formation of LGBT Policy Position\*'. *Social Science Quarterly* 100(3):779-92. doi: 10.1111/ssqu.12579.
- Lewis, Daniel C. ; Flores, Andrew R. ; Haider-Markel, Donald P. ; Miller, Patrick R. ; Tadlock, Barry L. ; Taylor, Jami K. 2017. 'Degrees of Acceptance: Variation in Public Attitudes toward Segments of the LGBT Community'. *70(4):861-75*. doi: 10.1177/1065912917717352.
- Mc Donagh, Patrick. 2017. "'Homosexuals Are Revolting": Gay & Lesbian Activism in the Republic of Ireland 1970s-1990s'. *Studi Irlandesi* 7:65-91. doi: 10.13128/SIJIS-2239-3978-20751.
- Meyer, Ilan H. 2003. 'Prejudice, Social Stress, and Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations: Conceptual Issues and Research Evidence'. *129(5):674-97*. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.129.5.674.
- Morrison, Melanie A. ; Morrison, Todd G. 2003. 'Development and Validation of a Scale Measuring Modern Prejudice toward Gay Men and Lesbian Women.' *43(2):15-37*. doi: 10.1300/j082v43n02\_02.
- Morrison, Melanie A. ; Morrison, Todd G. ; Franklin, Randall. 2009. 'Modern and Old-Fashioned Homonegativity Among Samples of Canadian and American University Students'. *40(4):523-42*. doi: 10.1177/0022022109335053.
- Nash, Catherine Jean, Kath Browne, and Elizabeth Nablett. 2020. *Beyond Opposition: Summary of Findings March 2020 to October 2020*. University College Dublin.
- Nelson, Shannon C. 2008. 'Feeling Thermometers'. in *Encyclopedia of Survey Research Methods*. Vol. 1, edited by P. J. Lavrakas. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Pearce, Ruth, Sonja Erikainen, and Ben Vincent. 2020. 'TERF Wars: An Introduction'. *The Sociological Review* 68(4):677-98. doi: 10.1177/0038026120934713.
- Prunas, A. 2019. 'The Pathologization of Trans-Sexuality: Historical Roots and Implications for Sex Counselling with Transgender Clients'. *Sexologies* 28(3):e54-60. doi: 10.1016/j.sexol.2019.06.002.
- Roberts, Tangela; Horne, Sharon G. ; Hoyt, William T. 2015. 'Between a Gay and a Straight Place: Bisexual Individuals' Experiences with Monosexism'. *15(4):554-69*. doi: 10.1080/15299716.2015.1111183.
- Smiler, Andrew P., and Susan A. Gelman. 2008. 'Determinants of Gender Essentialism in College Students'. *Sex Roles* 58(11):864-74. doi: 10.1007/s11199-008-9402-x.
- Toews, J. B. 2020. 'The Effect of Imagined Intergroup Contact and Need for Closure on Attitudes Toward Bisexuality'. *Journal of Bisexuality* 20(1):19-39. doi: 10.1080/15299716.2020.1732257.
- Wilson, Kath. 2020. 'Attitudes Towards LGBT People and Their Rights in Europe.' P. NA-NA in Vol. NA.
- Winter, Aaron. 2019. 'Online Hate: From the Far-Right to the "Alt-Right" and from the Margins to the Mainstream'. Pp. 39-63 in *Online Othering: Exploring Digital Violence and Discrimination on the Web, Palgrave Studies in Cybercrime and Cybersecurity*, edited by K. Lumsden and E. Harmer. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Worthen, Meredith G. F. 2012. 'An Argument for Separate Analyses of Attitudes Toward Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Men, Bisexual Women, MtF and FtM Transgender Individuals'. *68(11-12):703-23*. doi: 10.1007/s11199-012-0155-1.
- Worthen, Meredith G. F. 2020. *Queers, Bis, and Straight Lies: An Intersectional Examination of LGBTQ Stigma*. Vol. NA.
- Worthen, Meredith G. F. 2021. 'Why Can't You Just Pick One? The Stigmatization of Non-Binary/Genderqueer People by Cis and Trans Men and Women: An Empirical Test of Norm-Centered Stigma Theory'. *Sex Roles* 85(5):343-56. doi: 10.1007/s11199-020-01216-z.







**National LGBT Federation (NXF)**  
C/O GCN, the Skylab,  
2 Exchange St Upper, Dublin 2, Ireland  
+353 1 675 5025  
info@nxf.ie