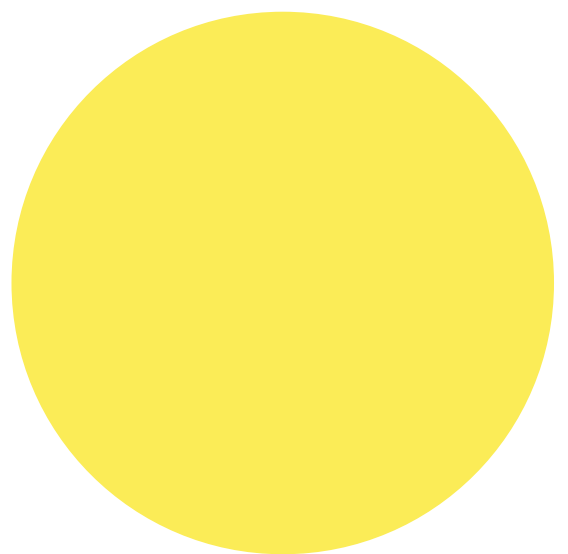# Non-binary people's experiences in the UK
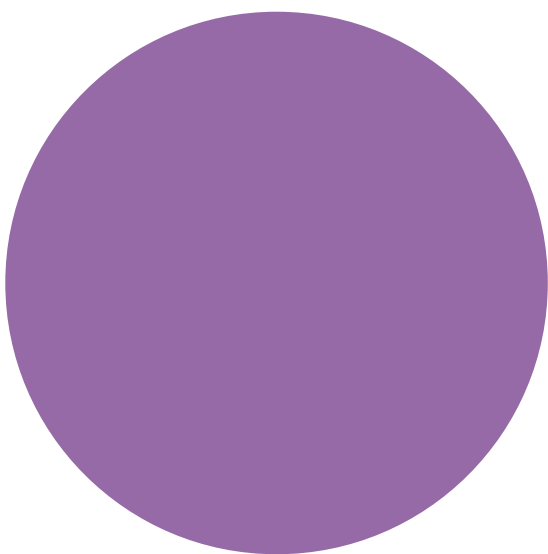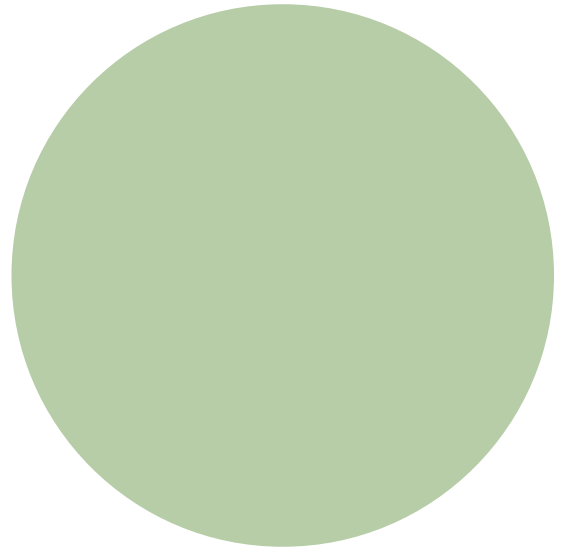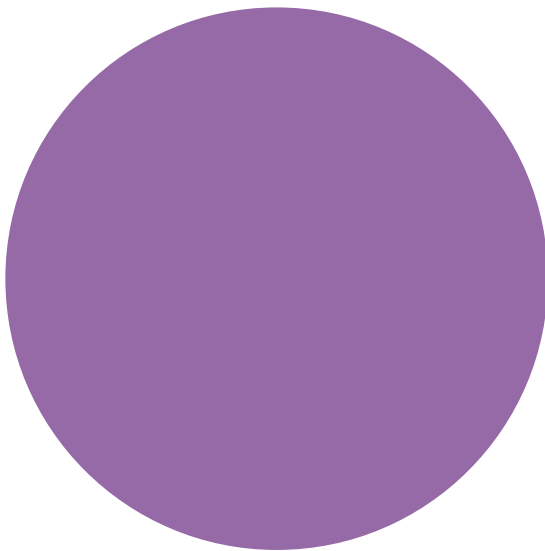
Scottish
Trans

Equality
Network

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This report details the findings of a survey run for non-binary people by the Scottish Trans Alliance over the course of nine weeks from 15th July – 16th September 2015. The survey was open to anyone in the UK who identified as non-binary, which for the purpose of this survey was defined as:

> "identifying as either having a gender which is in-between or beyond the two categories 'man' and 'woman', as fluctuating between 'man' and 'woman', or as having no gender, either permanently or some of the time."

The survey focused on three main areas; experiences of using services, experiences of employment, and views on legal gender recognition.

There is a lack of existing research into the experiences and views of non-binary people as a distinct group. Although research engaging with trans people has often been inclusive of non-binary people, this survey was intended to investigate their specific needs and views. In particular, there is much less visibility and awareness of non-binary trans people in the general public compared to binary trans people, and non-binary people are not protected to the same extent by UK legislation. As a result, we considered this survey important in researching whether there are specific problems and difficulties for this population.

During the period when the survey was open, a response to a petition to reform the Gender Recognition Act 2004 sent to the UK Parliament reached over 30,000 signatures[1]. A response was issued by the Ministry of Justice, that amongst other things, directly made reference to non-binary people:

1. https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/104639

"Non-binary gender is not recognised in UK law. Under the law of the United Kingdom, individuals are considered by the state to be of the gender that is registered on their birth certificate, either male or female.

"Under the Gender Recognition Act, the Gender Recognitions Panel is only able to grant a certificate to enable the applicant to become either male or female. The Panel has no power to issue a certificate indicating a non-binary gender.

"The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination if it arises from their being perceived as either male or female. We recognise that a very small number of people consider themselves to be of neither gender. We are not aware that that results in any specific detriment, and it is not Government policy to identify such people for the purpose of issuing non-gender-specific official documents." [2]

The Ministry of Justice response highlighted further that there is a lack of evidence for whether non-binary people face "specific detriment" due to their identities, particularly in relation to existing protections, or lack of protections, in current legislation. This report will provide a starting point in improving this gap in existing knowledge, and demonstrate that non-binary people in the UK are certainly facing specific detriment.

METHODOLOGY

A survey method was decided on as a suitable way of reaching a large number of people. The survey was designed over the course of a number of redraftings, and focuses on areas that we know anecdotally to be important to non-binary people through the Scottish Trans Alliance's ongoing engagement work. A last draft of the survey was tested by eight non-binary people unconnected to the organisation, and final revisions made based on their recommendations.

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2. https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/104639

The survey was available to complete online, and was hosted on SurveyMonkey. It was publicised extensively via our social media platforms, website and mailing lists. Flyers were also handed out at major events during the time the survey was open, including Pride Glasgow, Free Pride Glasgow, and Trans* Pride Brighton. We also reached out to other organisations across the UK (such as trans groups, LGBT+ community groups and third sector organisations) to ask them to publicise the survey, and relied on word of mouth from many social media users to disseminate it as widely as possible. The survey was available in a paper format, although no participants contacted us to request this version.

The survey had 1,401 responses. The data was filtered to remove any responses from people who didn't identify as non-binary, responses from outside of the UK, any responses where people had only answered demographic questions, but no questions about their experiences, and any duplicate responses. This left a sample size of 895 people. Throughout this report, the particular number of respondents to individual questions will be specified, so it is clear how many people subsequent statistics refer to.

The report presents all quantitative findings as percentages, in order to make them as accessible as possible. Figures quoted in the text are sometimes rounded to the nearest percent, so this means in some cases numbers may not total 100. Many of the quantitative findings are expanded on using the qualitative responses of participants. We have aimed to include as many direct quotes as possible (although spelling mistakes have been corrected for ease of reading), to ensure that the voices of participants are highlighted. Qualitative questions were analysed using narrative analysis, and grouped into common themes where possible.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHO DID WE REACH?

- 895 people responded to the survey

- 63% identified as non-binary, 45% as genderqueer, 37% as trans/transgender, 31% as genderfluid and 28% as agender

- 65% considered themselves to be trans, whilst 15% did not, and 20% of respondents were unsure

USING SERVICES

- 34% had been told services did not know enough about non-binary people to help them, and 11% had been refused services or had services stop because they were non-binary

- 65% of people felt that services were never inclusive of non-binary people in the images and posters they display, or language they use in forms, leaflets and information

- The lack of visibility and inclusion of non-binary people in services impacted them in the following ways:

  - 84% felt their gender identity wasn't valid

  - 83% felt more isolated or excluded

  - 76% had lower self-esteem

  - 65% had poorer mental health

  - 63% were less likely to access services

EMPLOYMENT

- Only 4% of respondents always felt comfortable sharing their non-binary identity at work – compared to 52% who never felt comfortable

- People worried about the following if they were to share their non-binary identity at work:

    - 90% worried their identity wouldn't be respected

    - 88% worried it would make their work environment more difficult

    - 55% worried it would impact on their career progression

LEGAL RECOGNITION

- 64% of respondents would like to have their legal gender/sex on official documents (including birth certificates, passports and drivers licences) recorded as something other than 'male' or 'female', 16% were unsure, 14% would like to change it on some documents but not others, and 6% do not want this option

DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER IDENTITY

Table 1: How would you describe your gender identity in English? (tick as many as apply)

Responses	Number	Percent of Cases
Non-binary	563	62.9%
Genderqueer	400	44.7%
Trans / Transgender	333	37.2%
Genderfluid	277	30.9%
Agender	253	28.3%
Transmasculine	133	14.9%
Androgyne	127	14.2%
Other	116	13.0%
Non-gendered	97	10.8%
Woman	92	10.3%
Unsure	74	8.3%
Trans woman	73	8.2%
Don't Define	66	7.4%
Demigirl	64	7.2%
Demiboy	60	6.7%
Bigender	60	6.7%
Transman	59	6.6%
Neutrois	59	6.6%
Genderfuck	58	6.5%
Do not have any gender identity	54	6.0%
Transfeminine	48	5.4%
Man	47	5.3%
Transsexual	44	4.9%
Cross-dressing person	41	4.6%
Third-gender	34	3.8%
Polygender	28	3.1%
Transvestite	25	2.8%

Respondents were allowed to choose multiple options to let us know the terms they used to describe their gender identity in English. The most frequently selected response was 'non-binary', with 63% of the sample using this term. This would seem to suggest that 'non-binary' remains a good choice of umbrella term for people who don't identify simply as men or women, or who have no gender identity. However, considering this was the term used to promote the survey, it is also possible that those who identify directly with it were more likely to participate. The next most selected response was 'genderqueer' at 45%, followed by 'transgender/trans' with 37%, 'genderfluid' with 31% and 'agender' with 28%.

13% of the sample said that they used 'Other' terms to describe their gender identity in English. The table below shows all answers given that were greater than 1% of the sample.

Table 1a: How would you describe your gender identity in English?: Other

Gender Identity	Number of Cases	Percent of Respondents
Gender Neutral	9	1%
Femme	9	1%
Genderflux	7	1%
Queer	7	1%

Only a very small proportion of respondents, 3%, used non-English words to describe their gender identity (n 881). Initially, we considered asking only one question about describing gender identity, and including some non-English words within the multiple choice options. However, it was felt that as we did not have a great enough knowledge of the many ways people may describe their gender identities in other languages, that it was better to ask a second question, where people who answered yes were able to specify the terms they used.

FIXED OR FLUID?

Table 3: Would you describe your gender identity (or absence of gender identity) as constant and fixed, or is it fluid and changing?
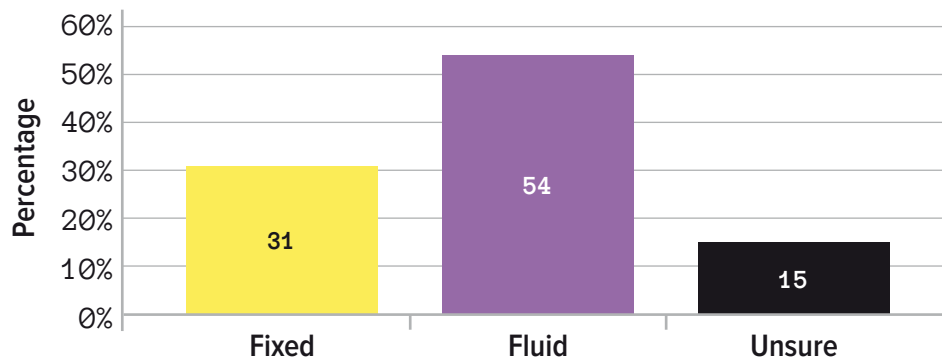
54% of respondents described their gender identity as fluid, 31% described it as fixed, and 15% were unsure (n 887). This question allowed people to write greater detail about the way they perceived their gender identity.

Respondents who described their gender identity as 'fluid and changing'

12% of respondents who described their gender identity as fluid and changing talked about how their gender expression related to their gender identity (n 475). Within these responses, there was a mixture of people whose gender expression changed to reflect their gender identity at the time, people whose gender expression changed but did not necessarily reflect their identity, and people whose gender expression stayed constant despite their identity changing:

> "The gender itself is very fluid, but I normally stick with a more masculine expression as I am more comfortable using male facilities most of the time (i.e. most of the time I identify as transmasculine). I experience gender as a kind of cloud, so whatever I feel like at one moment is often different from the next."

> "For me it's about having a non-binary gender identity which essentially means my own sense of gender fluctuates. Some days I feel more masculine, some days more feminine. Some days this varies by the hour. Some days it is so strong that my gender presentation is completely out of synch with my identity. Other days it is far less so and my gender presentation is more in line with my identity. There is no rhyme or reason to it and it is unpredictable."

Thirteen respondents talked about how their gender identity changed based on circumstances – 3% of all respondents describing their gender identity as fluid (n 475). In particular, people talked about how their personal relationships with and the reactions of other people could change their gender identity, as well as how different environments changed the way they felt about their gender:

> "Sometimes I feel more masculine/feminine to reflect someone else's needs (so technically I change a little for them, but I'm okay with it)... often it's in line with their sexuality if I'm interested in them, but sometimes it depends on other small factors, like the activity we're doing."

> "It changes on a daily basis based on my mood, attitude, feelings, environment and the attitude of others."

Respondents who described their gender identity as 'constant and fixed'

12% of respondents who said they had a fixed gender identity talked about how they did not have a gender identity, and this was a fixed experience for them (n 275):

> "I have identified as agender/genderless for several years. I recognise gender is something other people experience – for me, however, it just isn't there. I'm quite comfortable with this aspect of myself, and those who I'm close to know I prefer neutral pronouns, but in day-to-day life I have to present as a woman and use she/her pronouns."

> "Gender as a model makes no sense of my experience at all – though I'm perfectly fine with it working for other people. So I don't have a gender identity."

> "I feel it as an absence of gender, identifying with neither male nor female nor any of the other non-binary identities."

Seventeen people explained that their gender identity is fixed, but their gender expression or presentation changes – this is 6% of all those who said they had a fixed gender identity (n 275):

> "My gender identity of genderqueer is fixed. My feelings about how that presents change on a regular basis and the presentation can be quite different, leading to external confusion."

> "But that doesn't feel like something changing, it all feels like me. Just like other people feel like dressing up some days and wearing sweats another. I suppose that's because traditional gender roles feel performative and irrelevant to me, because I am very much None Of The Above, so I just do as I please. But it's not fluidity, really."

> "It's the same day-to-day (just slightly more to the feminine side of the centre of the gender spectrum, though I was AMAB). How I choose to express that varies. Sometimes I wish to look more masculine or feminine, but it's more like 'ooh, I haven't worn that item in my wardrobe for a while' rather than I need to wear something to better capture my identity."

Both people with fluid and fixed gender identities talked about how their gender expression may fluctuate, and how this can be either directly linked or not linked at all to their internal sense of self. This would seem to suggest the importance of thinking about how both identity and expression of gender can impact on non-binary people.

BEING TRANS

Table 4: Do you consider yourself to be trans?
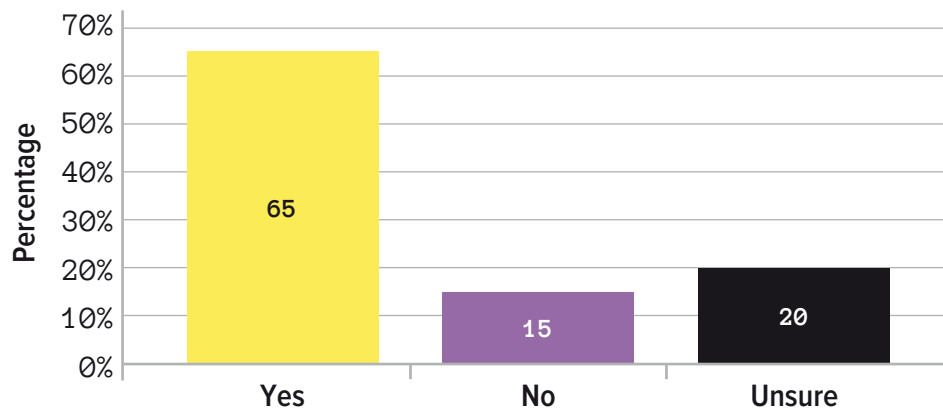
65% of respondents said they considered themselves to be trans, with 20% 'unsure' and 15% answering 'no' (n 893). This question allowed people to write greater detail about whether or not they considered themselves to be trans.

This section details respondents who answered 'no' or 'unsure' because many organisations, services and individuals use the term trans to be inclusive of non-binary people. By focusing on why 15% of respondents did not consider themselves to be trans and 20% were unsure, some insights can be provided into tensions around the use of trans as an umbrella term.

Respondents answering 'no' or 'unsure'

9% of the people who answered 'no' or 'unsure' to this question said they had answered in this way because they did not feel they were "trans enough" (n 311). A number of reasons were given for this; the most common being that they didn't experience transphobia, or that they felt that they were appropriating the term from binary trans people:

> "The only difference between a trans man and a cis man is that trans men experience gatekeeping, street harassment, transition, transphobia and all that jazz. I don't tend to experience this stuff, and I am therefore not comfortable using the word."

"Whilst I am sometimes bothered by my gender I don't feel like I can claim the title 'trans'. I feel like I would be taking it away from people who feel genuine dysphoria whereas some days I'm completely fine with being seen as female. I also feel no need to transition. I would not be against any other non-binary person identifying as trans, I think it's very personal."

"I also feel kind of appropriative if I use it, because I know I don't face nearly the same problems as, say, trans women – I maybe get people going, 'Oh that's not real, you're making it up for attention', but I don't get treated as though I'm disgusting, and I've never experienced any violence or threats of violence because of my gender."

"I'm AFAB and pass as female so I don't feel comfortable including myself under the trans label, as I'm not exposed to violence or extreme social difficulties regarding my gender. Technically I would say I'm trans, but I feel like I'm a bit of a fraud or have it 'too easy' and don't want to impose myself on trans spaces."

"I still partly identify with the gender I was assigned, which makes it difficult for me. I know I am 'technically' trans, as I am not cisgender, but this association with my assigned gender makes me feel like I'm not 'trans enough' to be trans. if that makes sense."

Fifteen people said that they either didn't consider themselves to be trans or were unsure because they had not changed their gender presentation from the one expected from the gender assigned to them at birth, or because they were often read as their assigned gender at birth. This is 5% of those who answered 'no' or 'unsure' (n 311):

"I am not trans in that I do still frequently (though begrudgingly) inhabit my female identity in public realms where I am not confident that my agender identity will be welcomed, accepted, or acknowledged."

"However I am female assigned at birth, largely femme presenting, and no longer feel any major dysphoria with my body, so am unsure if I am welcome in trans spaces or if my friends would judge me for using trans as a self-identifier."

> "I feel that I am not trans because I'm not doing anything to change my sexual characteristics or gender presentation."

Fifteen people said that they either didn't consider themselves to be trans or were unsure because they didn't feel that they were undergoing any type of transition. Many of these respondents specifically mentioned that they felt their lack of medical interventions, or their lack of desire for medical interventions, meant that they didn't identify as trans. This is 5% of those who answered 'no' or 'unsure' (n 311):

> "This might be because I don't feel like I have transitioned or changed from one gender to another. But I just don't feel connected to the word or the community."

> "I worry about calling myself trans as I haven't had hormones or surgery."

> "I have not undergone any gender reassignment procedures and I do not present as the opposite gender to my birth gender."

Fourteen people said that they either didn't consider themselves to be trans or were unsure because they had felt that the term trans reinforced binary ideas of gender, or only applied to trans men and trans women. This is 5% of those who answered 'no' or 'unsure' (n 311). Of these fourteen people, six said they preferred "trans*" to describe them, as they felt the * made it more inclusive of non-binary people:

> "A lot of the dialogue surrounding trans issues and trans people is mostly or entirely orientated towards binary trans people and I feel like the experience and issues of being non-binary are markedly different from being binary trans. However I do identify with the trans community and I feel trans in the sense of not being cis."

> "I know some people do, since the definition of trans is 'a gender different to the one you're assigned at birth', but being transgender is often considered in light of the binary – male to female and vice versa."

> "I feel trans is often understood to mean on a journey from male to female. I know that it is also intended to include others but it's easier to explain my gender identity if I describe myself as genderqueer."

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Table 5: How would you describe your sexual orientation?

	Responses	
	Number	**Percent of Cases**
Queer	472	52.7%
Pansexual	283	31.6%
Bisexual	250	27.9%
Asexual	168	18.8%
Other	165	18.4%
Lesbian	88	9.8%
Gay	87	9.7%
Unsure	79	8.8%
Heterosexual	42	4.7%

Queer was the most frequently selected word to describe people's sexual orientation, with 53% of the sample selecting this. Almost a fifth of the sample (18%) described their sexual orientation as 'Other'. The table below shows all answers given that were greater than 1% of the sample.

Table 5a: How would you describe your sexual orientation: 'Other'

	No. of Cases	Percent of Respondents
Demisexual	29	3%
Panromantic	21	2%
Grey-asexual	17	2%
I don't use labels / it's hard to define	11	1%

INTERSEX STATUS

88% of respondents said they did not consider themselves to be intersex, with 8% answering 'unsure' and 4% answering 'yes' (n 894).

AGE

Table 7: How old are you?
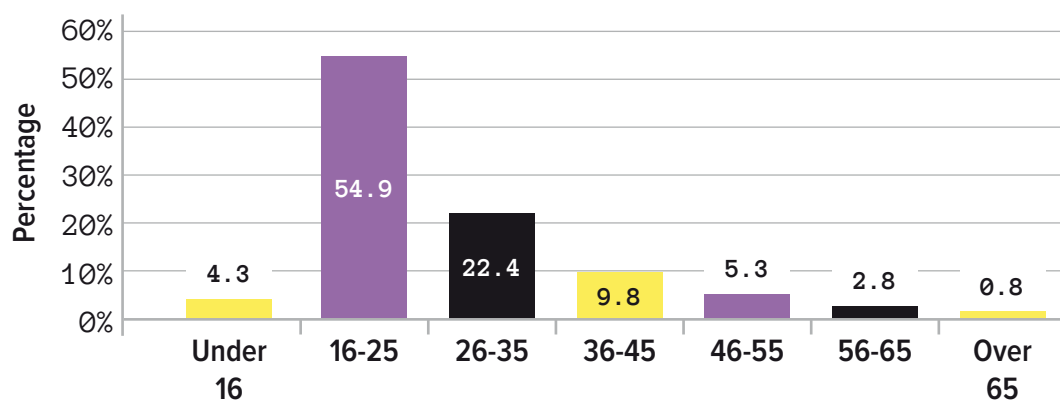
Our respondents were significantly younger than the general population of the UK, with 59% aged 25 and under (n 894), compared to 31% of the UK population who are under 24 (UK Census, 2011). Conversely, only 8% of respondents were aged 46-65 (n 894), compared to 26% of the UK population who are aged 45-64 (UK Census, 2011). 32% of our respondents were aged 26-45 (n 894), which was closer to the UK average of 27% of the population aged 25-44 (UK Census, 2011).

Only 1% of respondents were over 65, compared to 16% of the UK population (UK Census, 2011). This means that older people's voices are underrepresented in the findings of this report.

One possible explanation for this could be the methods used to reach participants and publicise the survey, which were largely online. Another possible explanation is that identifying as non-binary is still relatively new (within a UK context), so people who have been aware of the possibility of identifying in this way from a younger age are more likely to.

ETHNICITY

Table 8: How would you describe your ethnicity?

Responses	Number	Percent
White Scottish / English / Northern Irish / Welsh / British	753	84.3%
Any other White background, please specify	57	6.4%
White Irish	18	2.0%
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background, please specify	15	1.7%
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	14	1.6%
Any other ethnic group, please specify	9	1.0%
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	6	0.7%
Black / African / Black British: African	4	0.4%
Asian / Asian British: Indian	3	0.3%
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	2	0.2%
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	2	0.2%
Asian / Asian British: Pakistani	2	0.2%
Asian / Asian British: Chinese	2	0.2%
Black / Caribbean / Black British: Caribbean	2	0.2%
Any other Black / African / Caribbean background, please specify	2	0.2%
Asian / Asian British: Bangladeshi	1	0.1%
Any other Asian background, please specify	1	0.1%

93% of respondents were from White backgrounds (n 893). This compares to 85% of the population of England and Wales, and 96% of the population of Scotland (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011). 4% of respondents were from mixed ethnic groups (n 893). This compares to 2% of the population of England and Wales, and 0.4% of the population of Scotland (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011). 1% of respondents were from Asian/Asian British backgrounds (n 893). This compares to

8% of the population of England and Wales, and 3% of the population of Scotland (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011). 1% of respondents were from Black/Black British backgrounds (n 893). This compares to 3% of the population of England and Wales, and 0.7% of the population of Scotland (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011). 1% of respondents were from any other ethnic group (n 893). This compares to 1% of the population of England and Wales, and 0.3% of the population of Scotland (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011).

These figures demonstrate that this report underrepresents the voices of people from Asian/Asian British backgrounds in particular, and also those from Black/Black British backgrounds. If further research into the experiences of non-binary people in the UK were to be taken forward, it would be of particular value to focus on non-binary people of colour, to ensure that research is reaching, including and reflecting their views.

RELIGION & BELIEF

Table 9: How would you describe your religion or belief (tick all that apply)?

|	**Number**	**Percent of Cases**
No religion	622	70.0%
Pagan	114	12.8%
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	98	11.0%
Any other religion, or combination or religions (please specify below)	78	8.8%
Buddhist	33	3.7%
Jewish	11	1.2%
Hindu	3	0.3%
Muslim	2	0.2%
Sikh	2	0.2%

The vast majority of respondents, 70%, said that they had no religion (n 888). This is significantly higher than the general population, with only 25% of people in England and Wales and 37% of people in Scotland saying that they had no religion (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011). Due to the high percentage of respondents that said they had no religion, people with religious beliefs are likely to be underrepresented in this report.

Two religions or beliefs were overrepresented in our respondents compared to broader population data. These included the 22% of respondents who described their religion or belief as 'Other', including 13% of respondents who described their religion or belief as 'Pagan' (n 888). This compares to only 0.4% of the population of England and Wales, and 0.3% of the population of Scotland who selected 'Other' religions or beliefs (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011). 4% of respondents also described their religion as 'Buddhist' (n 888). This compares to 0.4% of the population of England and Wales, and 0.2% of the population of Scotland who describe their religion in this way (UK Census 2011, Scottish Census 2011).

DISABILITY

Table 10: Do you consider yourself to be disabled or have a long term health problem?
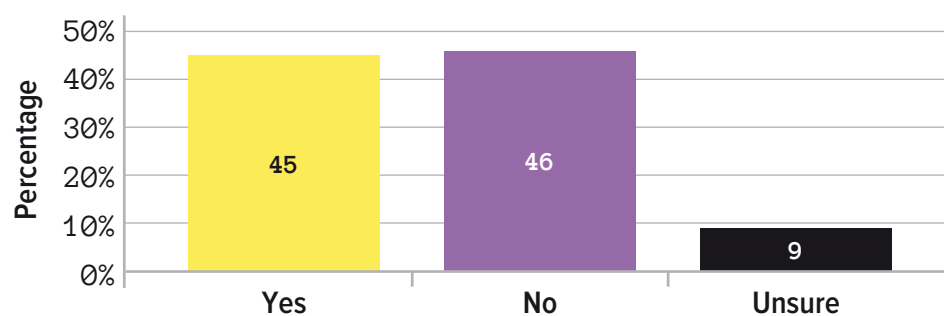
45% of respondents considered themselves to be disabled or have a long term health problem, and 9% were unsure (n 891). This is a large proportion of respondents, particularly in comparison to population-wide data, with 17.9% of people in England and Wales considering themselves to be affected by a long term health problem (UK Census, 2011).

This question allowed people to write greater detail about whether they considered themselves to be disabled or have a long term health problem. 283 people left additional comments, many of whom gave specific details. The table below shows the distribution of types of disability or long term health problem people mentioned.

Table 10a: Do you consider yourself to be disabled or have a long term health problem? Comments:

Type of disability/ long term health problem	No. of Cases	Percent of Yes / Unsure responses
Mental health	194	40.5%
Physical health	105	21.9%
Neurodiversity	85	17.7%

LOCATION

Table 11: Where do you live?
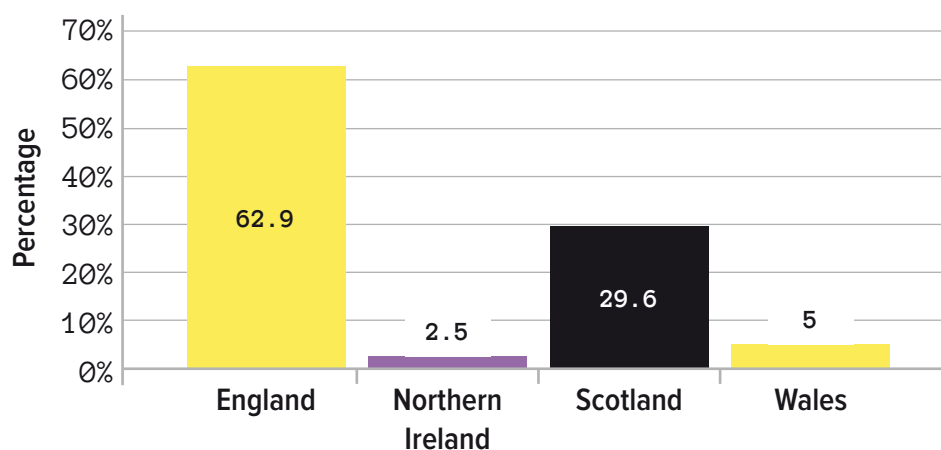
Respondents living in Scotland were over-represented, comprising 30% of our sample. This is likely because our organisation is based in Scotland, so we have more engagement with Scottish non-binary people, and other services in Scotland were more likely to share our survey due to our professional links with them.

Scotland makes up only 8.4% of the UK's total population (UK Census, 2011). A similar level of engagement from across the UK as we had from Scotland would have led to a sample size of 3,154 non-binary people. As no self-selecting survey is going to reach the entirety of the population it is aimed at, we can estimate that there are many thousands of people living in the UK who identify as non-binary.

Table 12: How would you describe the area where you live?
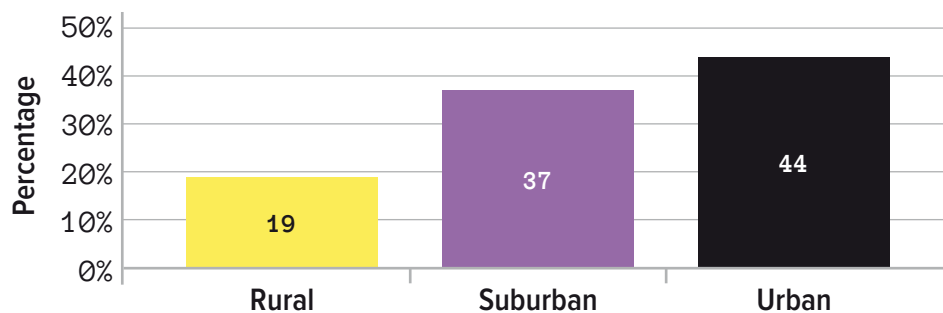
Amongst respondents, there was a fairly even spread of those who said they lived in urban areas (44%), those who lived in suburban areas (37%), and those who lived in rural areas (19%) (n 890).

EXPERIENCES OF USING SERVICES

84% of respondents felt their gender identity wasn't valid, 83% felt more isolated and excluded, 76% felt that they had lower self-esteem and 65% felt they had poorer mental health due to the lack of representation of people like them within services (n 809).

DO YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE SHARING YOUR NON-BINARY GENDER IDENTITY?

The first question in this section of the survey asked participants if they felt comfortable sharing their non-binary gender identity with a range of different services:

- LGBT services

- Police

- GP

- Sexual health services

- Mental health services

- General NHS services (i.e. hospital appointments)

- Education (i.e. school, college, university)

- Other public services

- Charities/voluntary orgs

The data showed that generally non-binary people did not feel comfortable sharing their identities with services. We filtered out respondents who answered 'I don't use these services' to produce the following information.

The only services where non-binary people felt comfortable about being out was in LGBT services, where 72% of respondents 'always' or 'usually' felt comfortable sharing their non-binary identity (n 743).

The service where people felt the least comfortable being open about being non-binary was with the police, with 69% of respondents saying they 'never' felt comfortable sharing their identity (n 568). This is important in considering the monitoring and reporting of hate crimes, as non-binary people are not comfortable being honest about their gender identity with the police.

Throughout health services, people reported feeling uncomfortable being open about their non-binary identity. This was particularly true of general NHS services, where 60% of respondents 'never' felt comfortable (n 824), as well as with GPs where 50% of respondents said they 'never' felt comfortable (n 846). This would suggest that non-binary people have little confidence that health services will respect their identities, and that more training is needed for staff working in these settings.

This question allowed people to write greater detail about whether or not they felt comfortable being out as non-binary whilst accessing various services. There were four main themes to the text responses left by participants.

Being non-binary isn't always relevant

The most common theme amongst responses to this question was that respondents felt their non-binary identities often weren't relevant to the services they were seeking to access. Because of this, they weren't out, or would only come out, when engaging with services where being non-binary was important to the overall reason they were there. This represented 12% of people who left additional comments to this question (n 196) and 3% of the sample:

> "I am out, living as a non-binary person, but I don't bring it up in situations where it's not relevant and might cause me hassle or detract from what's actually happening."

> "I don't often find myself in a situation where my gender identity is relevant beyond the use of pronouns which I tend to overlook for the sake of simplicity."

> "In situations where it's not 'linked' to my gender identity, I probably would just deal with being misgendered if it was a short encounter."

I am not out about being non-binary

The next largest group of respondents said that they weren't out generally in their lives, so they may not be comfortable sharing their non-binary identity in any situation, not only with services. This represented 9% of people who left additional comments to this question (n 196) and 2% of the sample:

> "I have told only a few close friends of my gender identity because I am terrified of the truth about myself, that I will not be accepted. People finding out about my gender is one of my biggest fears."

> "I have not come out to my parents/family yet, as they are not very accepting of trans people (and almost certainly do not believe in non-binary identities), and thus am not comfortable disclosing my non-binary identity to the vast majority of people, in case my parents find out from them."

Presenting as a trans man or trans woman is easier

The next most common theme was respondents who said they felt it was easier to present as a binary trans person when accessing services, or to not correct service providers who assumed they were binary trans people. The main reason cited for this was that people had a greater understanding of the needs and identities of trans men and trans women. This represented 8% of people who left additional comments to this question (n 196) and 2% of the sample:

> "I sometimes feel comfortable saying I'm trans, but I'm not comfortable bringing up that I'm not exactly a trans man, in case no one takes my maleness seriously. This means I present slightly more masculine in terms of style than I would prefer, so that people can perceive my gender and don't misgender me."

"I find that most services can just about cope with the idea that you are transgender (that is something I am happy to disclose with all of the above services), but being non-binary is still beyond a lot of people's comprehension."

"I quite often present as a binary trans man when accessing services because people respond a lot better and tend to make more of an effort to use the right pronouns and treat me respectfully. I've found that a lot of people don't understand being told you are non-binary and can get quite aggressive and interrogative."

"Often people haven't heard the term so it is easier to use trans* because people and services are generally aware of this word but have a different idea of what it means to how I identify."

The fact that people felt more comfortable presenting as a trans man or trans woman, rather than a non-binary trans person, indicates that there is a perception amongst some non-binary people that binary trans identities are better understood, and that binary trans people are treated better by services. This would suggest the importance of increasing training for service providers around non-binary identities and how to include them in provision, as well as indicating that anti-discrimination laws should be extended to specifically include non-binary people, so that they can feel confident that they won't face discrimination when accessing services.

It depends on the individual in a service

Some respondents said that they normally decided whether or not to share their non-binary identity based on the individual they were dealing with, rather than the overall service they were accessing. This was 5% of people who left additional comments to this question (n 196) and 1% of the sample.

AVOIDING SITUATIONS

Table 13: Have you ever avoided any of the following situations because of a fear of being harassed, being read as non-binary, or being outed (people finding out you're non-binary)? (Tick as many as apply)

	Number	Percent of Cases
Public toilet facilities	466	55.2%
Gyms	356	42.2%
Clubs or social groups	329	39.0%
Other leisure facilities	281	33.3%
Work places / opportunities	273	32.3%
Interacting with public services	259	30.7%
Retail spaces (i.e. shops)	257	30.5%
Public transport	206	24.4%
Education	179	21.2%
Church / synagogue / temple or other religious institution	171	20.3%
Public spaces (e.g. parks)	143	16.9%
Cultural or community centres	108	12.8%
Pharmacy	71	8.4%
None of the above	183	21.7%

Some of the spaces non-binary people were most likely to avoid were ones which are often gender-segregated, such as public toilet facilities (55%), gyms (42%), other leisure facilities (33%) and retail spaces (31%) (n 844).

Public toilets

The situation that was most frequently mentioned by respondents as one which they avoided or where they had explicitly negative experiences were public toilet facilities. 4% of all people who answered the question (n 844) and 17% of people who wrote additional comments (n 208) described their experiences of using these. Some examples of things people said about using public toilet facilities were:

"Public toilets are impossible to navigate. I often appear masculine but often don't get read as male. So I'm anxious about using men's toilets because what if they read me as female, and anxious about women's toilets because what if I'm read as male and get into trouble and have someone complain to management or something. Whichever toilets I use it feels like a stealth mission to get in and out as quickly as possible. If someone enters the loos while I'm in there I will hide in the cubicle until they have gone or are in the cubicle themselves. In the men's I try to hide my chest. In the women's I try to hide my stubble. I will always opt for the disabled where possible."

"Public toilets are an absolute nightmare for me. I'm too nervous to use men's toilets but have been thrown out of women's toilets before now."

"Toilets are a constant issue! I present as masculine and usually use the men's, but I prefer unisex cubicles. It's quite scary using the men's, I'm always nervous that I'm going to be questioned."

I am not perceived as non-binary

The next most frequently mentioned theme by respondents leaving additional comments to this question was that they weren't perceived as non-binary; either seen as their gender assigned at birth or another binary gender. This was 4% of all people who answered the question (n 844) and 16% of all those who left additional details (n 208):

"I am still very femme presenting, so while I might internally cringe when I'm referred to as 'she', the chances of me being outed purely from my appearance are pretty low."

"I'm almost always taken to be cis male, and 'he' pronouns are acceptable, so I can go under the radar most of the time."

"The way I've experienced it, not many people know about non-binary gender, so I haven't really had a fear of being harassed. But as my gender expression primarily leans towards the opposite gender I was born, (because as I said earlier it causes me less dysphoria and more comfort) I'm pretty sure people who don't personally know me assume I am the gender I mostly look like and express myself as."

I change the way I express my gender

3% of all people answering this question (n 844), and 11% of those who left additional comments (n 208), said that they changed their gender expression or presentation in order to feel more comfortable accessing these spaces:

> "I have never avoided a *situation* because of this but have instead avoided doing other things (e.g. dressing how I would like; asking for preferred pronouns to be used etc.) to avoid this."

> "Some of the above services are services which I would engage with sometimes, however I would for example choose not to wear a binder or present in a way which would cause me to potentially be read as non-binary. This includes retail spaces, education, other public services (e.g. a community choir), work, leisure facilities, and some public spaces. This may be due to fear of being outed through meeting someone who does not know me as non-binary (e.g. meeting a work colleague in a public space, as I have only ever heard transphobic sentiments expressed at work); alternatively it might be due to anxiety over how people will treat me in general."

I am concerned about not being read as non-binary

2% of all people answering this question (n 844), and 8% of those who left additional comments (n 208), said that they avoided services or situations due to not being read or accepted as non-binary:

> "I'm only out to a handful of people, and to everyone else I'm read as a butch woman. That, combined with the general ignorance about the existence of non-binary people mean that I experience anxiety around 'what if I slip up' and general discomfort due to knowing that people look at me and class me as 'woman' in their heads, e.g. if a shop staff member needs to get my attention they will call me 'madam', rather than specific fears that I will be outed."

> "I have avoided seeing my doctor and getting the health care I need because I do not think he will take me seriously as a non-binary person. I already struggle with anxiety about doctors. The fact that the UK government does not recognise non-binary people further works to discourage me from getting the help I need."

> "For me, the fear is not 'being read as non-binary' but 'NOT being read as non-binary' – i.e. being incorrectly read as my assigned gender. I have avoided situations because of this fear, especially phone calls."

> "Quite the opposite – I would *like* to be read as non-binary rather than constantly misgendered. Although I don't know how accepting people would be – but if anything, I've sometimes avoided social settings where there are people I don't know, because I know they'll misgender me and that I'll have to either come out to them (and face not being accepted and probably having to explain what my gender means and answer awkward questions) or put up with being misgendered."

Changing rooms

2% of all people answering this question (n 844), and 8% of those who left additional comments (n 208), mentioned negative experiences or fears of using changing rooms (either in leisure facilities or shops):

> "There are many gender segregated areas in our world where it is unsafe. I refuse to allow myself to be stopped from using them for that reason. Gym changing rooms are particularly unsafe, however, and I use the disabled changing area."

> "You don't realise how many shops have gendered changing rooms until you want to try on clothing that doesn't match your presentation."

> "I don't use the gym or swimming pool as changing rooms scare me."

Other things mentioned by people included:

Worried about harassment due to their gender presentation making them seem 'queer' or being read as a binary trans person:

"I have been subject to harassment on the tube (gender queer), on the street (ethnicity and queer) and in LGBT bars (ethnicity). At work I was harassed about being queer but I reported it and now it is okay."

"I think this question is somewhat complicated by how unorthodox elements in individual gender presentation get read by the general public as more of a sort of generalised queerness or otherness – I don't worry about people recognising specifically that I'm non-binary, it's more that I give off enough obvious signs that I'm not a Respectable Heterosexual."

"I have worried about being harassed because people think I'm a binary trans person, but I genuinely don't think public awareness of non-binary-ness is high enough for me to worry about someone being hateful specifically because they think I'm non-binary."

Experiencing misogyny due to being read as a woman:

"My appearance does not betray my gender identity (perceived as cis). So I'm just subject to plain ol' sexism."

"I pass as female, so I just have to deal with the usual misogynistic harassment."

A number of respondents highlighted sexual health clinics as a place they specifically avoided due to the gendered assumptions that might be made about them. In fact, 31% of respondents told us they don't use sexual health services – the highest number for any service asked about other than the police (n 883).

Some people talked about the difficulty of engaging with sports if you are a non-binary person:

"I have been aggressively labelled as female in sports facilities e.g. when starting fencing lessons they would only let me wear the female breast form chest guard despite my having had top surgery and clearly having a flat chest (incidentally the person running the group was an off duty local doctor who knew my situation and therefore should have known a lot better. I suspect that he was doing it on purpose to humiliate me)."

> "I'm now unsure of where I fit in the sporting community, as this is a very distinct gender binary."

Some people talked about how mental health problems compounded their concerns about fears of harassment and avoiding certain situations.

EXPERIENCES IN SERVICES

Table 14: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following whilst accessing services (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Felt that you had to pass as male or female to be accepted?	632	80.2%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you by mistake?	527	66.9%
Been asked questions about non-binary people that made you feel like you were educating them?	386	49.0%
Had someone use terms to describe your gender associated body parts (e.g. genitals, chest, etc.) that made you feel uncomfortable?	332	42.1%
Experienced silent harassment (e.g. being stared at / whispered about) for being non-binary?	269	34.1%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you on purpose?	264	33.5%
Heard that non-binary people are not normal?	259	32.9%
Felt that being non-binary hurt or embarrassed your family?	145	18.4%
Been made fun of or called names for being non-binary?	105	13.3%
None of the above	43	5.5%

A huge majority of respondents had negative experiences whilst accessing services in the last five years, with only 5.5% of respondents saying that hadn't experienced any of the scenarios we asked them about (n 788).

The most common negative experiences were feeling that you had to pass as male or female to be accepted, with 80% of respondents saying this, and 67% of respondents saying that they had the wrong name or pronoun used for them by mistake (n 788). This reflects the earlier findings around people feeling uncomfortable being out to services as non-binary, and once again indicates the need for greater training for services to increase understanding and visibility of non-binary people.

A lack of understanding about non-binary people is apparent from some of the more common experiences. For example, 49% of respondents had been asked questions about non-binary people that made them feel like they were having to educate someone, 42% had terms used to describe gender associated body parts that made them feel uncomfortable, and 40% had heard that non-binary people were not normal (n 788).

People also reported experiencing harassment or discrimination, with 34% having had the wrong name or pronoun used for them on purpose, 34% having experienced silent harassment, and 13% having been made fun of or called names for being non-binary (n 788).

Table 15: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following while accessing services (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Been told services don't know enough about non-binary people to help you?	278	34.1%
Been refused service or have services stopped because you are non-binary?	90	11.0%
None of the above	516	63.3%

More than a third of respondents had been told that services didn't know enough about non-binary people to be able to help them, and 11% of respondents had services refused or stopped because they were non-binary (n 844). This demonstrates a wide-spread problem within services in both their knowledge and treatment of non-binary people.

These findings further highlight the importance of greater training for service providers around diverse gender identities, as well as the need to ensure that non-binary people are explicitly protected from discrimination in equality legislation. Considering the number of people who said they were not comfortable being out to services, the fact that 11% of respondents have had services refused or stopped would indicate that a high proportion of those who are out about their identities may have experienced this.

EXPERIENCES IN PUBLIC SPACES

Table 16: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following whilst in public spaces (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Felt that you had to pass as male or female to be accepted?	717	82.9%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you by mistake?	614	71.0%
Heard that non-binary people are not normal?	602	69.6%
Been asked questions about non-binary people that made you feel like you were educating them?	555	64.2%
Experienced silent harassment (e.g. being stared at / whispered about) for being non-binary?	500	57.8%
Had someone use terms to describe your gender associated body parts (e.g. genitals, chest, etc.) that made you feel uncomfortable?	471	54.5%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you on purpose?	399	46.1%
Felt that being non-binary hurt or embarrassed your family?	382	44.2%
Been made fun of or called names for being non-binary?	371	42.9%
None of the above	26	3.0%

An even greater number of respondents had had negative experiences in public spaces than they had in services. Only 3% of respondents had not experienced any of the scenarios we asked them about (n 865).

The number of people who had faced harassment or discrimination was notably higher in public spaces than it was in services, with 58% of

respondents experiencing silent harassment, 43% of respondents having been made fun of or called names for being non-binary, and 46% having the wrong name and pronoun used for them on purpose (n 865).

Again, a lack of understanding of non-binary people was apparent from the responses, with 70% having heard that non-binary people were not normal, and 64% having been asked questions about non-binary people which made them feel like they were educating others (n 865).

PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SERVICES

Before the questions asking about experiences of physical and sexual violence, there was a question allowing participants to skip this section if they would prefer not to answer them. 74% of respondents chose to answer the questions (n 884).

Table 17: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following while accessing services (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Experienced physical intimidation and threats for being non-binary?	25	6.1%
Experienced sexual harassment (e.g. cat calling, being propositioned) because you are non-binary?	25	6.1%
Been sexually assaulted because you are non-binary?	10	2.4%
Been hit or beaten up for being non-binary?	6	1.5%
None of the above	369	90.2%

90% of respondents had not experienced any physical or sexual violence whilst accessing services due to being non-binary. Physical intimidation and sexual harassment were the most common things experienced by respondents, with 6% reporting having experienced these (n 409).

PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN PUBLIC SPACES

Table 18: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following in public spaces (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Experienced sexual harassment (e.g. cat calling, being propositioned) because you are non-binary?	209	34.7%
Experienced physical intimidation and threats for being non-binary?	194	32.2%
Been sexually assaulted because you are non-binary?	75	12.5%
Been hit or beaten up for being non-binary?	64	10.6%
None of the above	332	55.1%

Respondents' experiences of physical and sexual violence were significantly worse in public spaces. 32% had experienced physical intimidation and threats, and 35% had experienced sexual harassment because of their non-binary identity (n 602). 13% reported being sexually assaulted due to being non-binary (n 602).

LANGUAGE ON FORMS

Table 19: Do you feel that forms you need to fill in when using services allow you to accurately describe your gender identity?
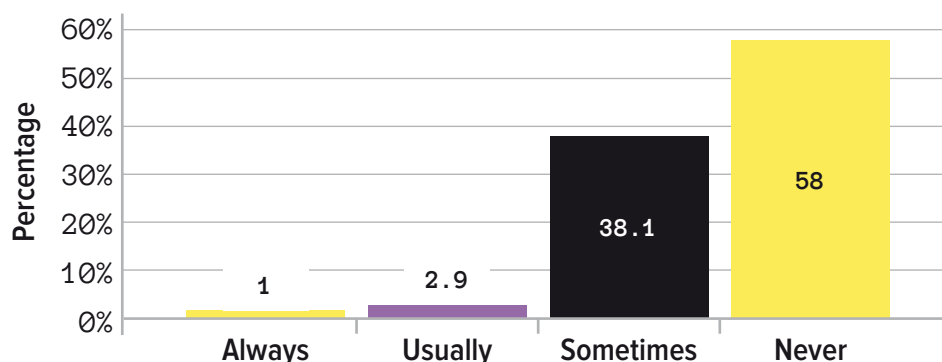
Only a tiny number of respondents felt that they were usually or always able to accurately describe their gender identity when filling in forms to access services – 4% (n 867). Conversely, 58% of respondents felt that they were never able to accurately describe their gender identity on forms.

Table 20: What could services change about forms to make it easier for you to accurately describe your gender identity?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Allow you to write your own answer to describe your gender identity	618	74.5%
Have a third 'Other' gender tickbox option	566	68.3%
Not ask questions about gender identity on forms	513	61.9%
Other (please specify)	69	8.3%

Respondents were largely in favour of all of our suggestions for how forms could be changed to make describing their gender identity easier, although the most popular choice was 'Allow you to write your own answer to describe your gender identity' with 75% of people selecting this (n 829).

This question allowed people to write greater detail about what services could change about forms to make it easier for them to describe their gender identity. 174 respondents left additional comments, with some main themes emerging:

Titles

9% of those leaving additional comments highlighted that titles on forms were a problem, and would prefer there to be a greater range available – particularly Mx (n 174).

Sex or gender?

9% of those respondents leaving additional comments mentioned that they felt forms often weren't clear on whether they were asking about 'sex' or 'gender' (n 174). Some respondents felt that it was ok to ask about 'sex', particularly if this was in medical settings, although other respondents still felt that this was inappropriate to ask about:

> "If a form needs to know about biological sex (for medical reasons etc.), ask that separately. I don't mind stating that I'm biologically female if that is relevant, but I hate having to put my gender as female so that someone can infer my sex and thus my medical needs from that."

> "Gender should only be asked for when it's absolutely necessary; sex never asked about, only discussed in person with a doctor in regards to medical treatment needs."

> "Or if it is medical forms and they truly have to know physicality then have it as 'sex' rather than gender, even though labelling bodies as 'male' and 'female' is gross too."

I don't like the option 'Other'

7% of those leaving additional comments (n 174) expressed that they would not feel comfortable selecting "other" as a way to describe their gender identity – either because they found this to be othering, non-inclusive, or still not accurately describing their gender identity:

> "I find the 'other' box alongside two binary options completely inadequate and 'othering' – like being non-binary should not be considered normal."

> "Would rather an 'other' than nothing at all, however the word other is quite literally othering! So it's better than nothing but not great. Also if they have to use other, then being given the added option to specify is welcomed."

> "'Other' makes me very uncomfortable, and I find it dehumanising. Being able to accurately describe myself, or not have to state in the first place, are both far more preferable, but I will always tick 'other' rather than my assigned binary gender."

> "It also still doesn't feel that great, because 'other' makes it sound like I'm weird. It also still doesn't actually tell anyone about my gender."

Questions about gender should be optional

6% of respondents leaving additional comments said that questions about gender on forms should be optional, or alternatively there should be a 'prefer not to say' option (n 174):

> "Prefer not to say is important as trans people (including non-binary) should never have to out themselves as being trans when it's not necessary, but that shouldn't mean they have to lie."

The other things that people mentioned in this section were:

- Asking about pronouns can be just as important as asking about gender identity

- Concerns about confidentiality

- Including an intersex option when asking about sex

- Concerns about being open about being non-binary

DESCRIBING YOUR GENDER IDENTITY TO SERVICES

Table 21: How often have you felt you needed to describe your gender identity in a way that was not completely accurate when completing forms to access services?

Table 22: In which services has this happened?

	Number	Percent of Cases
GP	604	76.9%
Education (i.e. school, college, university)	597	76.1%
General NHS services	580	73.9%
Other public services	505	64.3%
Mental health services	454	57.8%
Sexual health services	321	40.9%
Charities / voluntary orgs	315	40.1%
Police	214	27.3%
LGBT services	196	25.0%

Table 23: When has this happened?

	Number	Percent of Cases
In the last day	57	7.2%
In the last week	198	25.1%
In the last month	223	28.3%
In the last six months	162	20.6%
In the last year	116	14.7%
More than a year ago	32	4.1%

As can be seen from Table 22 and Table 23, non-binary people encounter problems with accurately describing their gender identity on forms across all services, and this is a continuing problem, with 81% of respondents having to describe their gender identity in a way that wasn't accurate within the last six months (n 788).

Table 24: Why did you feel that you needed to describe your gender identity in a way that was not completely accurate when completing forms to access services (tick as many as apply)?
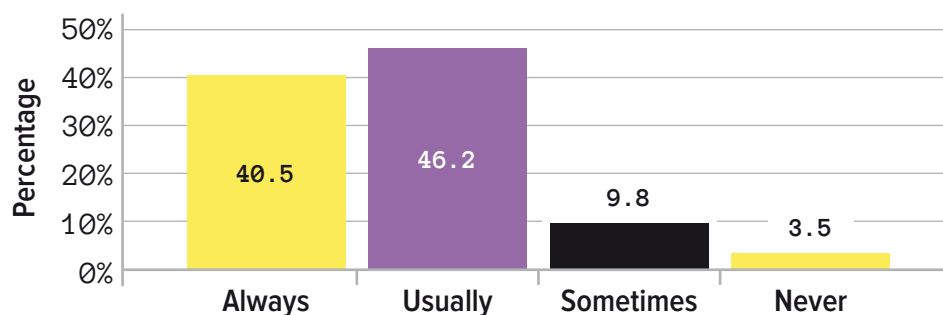
	Number	Percent of Cases
Because forms had not been designed inclusively	687	85.9%
It seemed like the easiest option	516	64.5%
Worried your identity wouldn't be respected	506	63.3%
Worried you would experience direct harassment / discrimination	323	40.4%
Worried you would be denied access to services	259	32.4%
The gender I chose reflected part of my identity	215	26.9%
Other (please specify)	39	4.9%

86% of respondents stated that it was a lack of inclusive design that meant they were unable to describe their gender identity accurately on forms when accessing services (n 800).

However, people were also concerned about facing discrimination or a lack of understanding about their gender identities, with 65% saying it seemed like the easiest option, 63% saying they were worried their identity wouldn't be respected, 40% saying they were worried they would face direct harassment/discrimination and 32% saying they were worried they would be denied access to services (n 800). These findings

further highlight the importance of greater training for services providers around diverse gender identities, so that non-binary people feel confident about being welcomed and treated well if they are open about their genders.

27% of respondents said that selections they make on forms reflect part of their gender identity (n 800). This is important when considering making changes to ensure services are able to accurately collect data on people's gender identities. As many non-binary people who have fluid identities may identify as a man or a woman part of the time, services should take care to word questions and provide options that allow people to accurately and confidently describe their gender.

INCLUSION & VISIBILITY

Table 25: Do you feel that services are inclusive of non-binary people in the images and posters they display, the language that they use in forms, information and leaflets etc.?
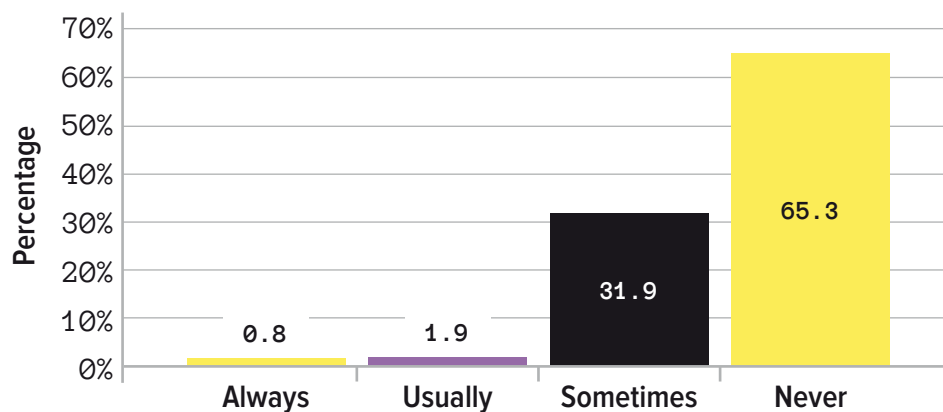
65% of respondents felt that services were never inclusive of non-binary people through their use of imagery, language and information (n 825). Only 1% said they felt they were always inclusive, and only 2% said they were usually inclusive (n 825).

Table 26: Does lack of non-binary visibility and inclusion in services impact on you in any of the following ways (tick all that apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Felt that your gender identity wasn't valid	681	84.2%
Feeling more isolated or excluded	670	82.8%
Lower self esteem	618	76.4%
Poorer mental health	523	64.6%
Less likely to access services	507	62.7%
Poorer physical health	171	21.1%
Drug and alcohol misuse	114	14.1%
In another way (please specify)	91	11.2%
None of the above	23	2.8%

The table above demonstrates the serious and significant impact that a lack of visibility and inclusion in services has on non-binary people. This was particularly the case around non-binary people's emotional wellbeing, with 84% feeling their gender identity wasn't valid, 83% feeling more isolated and excluded, 76% feeling that they had lower self-esteem and 65% feeling they had poorer mental health due to the lack of representation of people like them within services (n 809).

63% also said they were less likely to access services because of this lack of visibility and inclusion, which means that non-binary people may be less likely to engage with health services, education, and other hugely important institutions due to feeling excluded from provision (n 809). This could explain why 21% felt that they had poorer physical health due to a lack of visibility and inclusion in services – they may have been unwilling to access the support they needed due to services not feeling welcoming (n 809).

INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES

Table 27: Do you have negative experiences when accessing services due to other aspects of your identity (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Sexual orientation	405	53.0%
Disability	206	27.0%
Age	145	19.0%
Race / ethnicity / nationality	42	5.5%
Religion / belief	41	5.4%
No for all of the above	249	32.6%

This question asked respondents about other aspects of their identity that they felt had caused them to have negative experiences when accessing services. Although 33% said they felt that none of these things had a negative impact on their use of services, 53% felt that their sexual orientation had led to negative experiences, and 27% felt that their disability meant they had negative experiences (n 764). 19% felt they had negative experiences due to their age, and 5% feeling this way about their religion/belief (n 764). 6% felt that their race/ethnicity/nationality had impacted negatively on their experiences – an extremely high number when you consider that only 16% of respondents to the survey were not from White British backgrounds (n 764). These are important considerations as people may face intersectional forms of discrimination when accessing services, and any recommendations for improving non-binary people's use of services need to be mindful of the ways that other aspects of their identity may also be contributing to negative experiences.

This question allowed people to write greater detail about the way that other aspects of their identity had caused them to have negative experiences when accessing services. 107 respondents left additional comments, with some main themes emerging:

Sexual orientation

Many respondents mentioned that heterosexist assumptions meant they had negative experiences, 15% of all those who left additional comments (n 107). These seemed to be particularly common when accessing sexual health services:

> "I have always had a negative experience at sexual health clinics because I have had (and tell them about) sexual encounters with people of different genders. This happened before I transitioned, and even though I've never used a label to describe my sexuality."

> "Talking sexual health with doctors gets awkward when they automatically default to asking me about condoms when I say I'm sexually active and assume I have a 'boyfriend'. It's always assumed that I'm straight."

> "I once had a nurse who was doing a cervical smear test state that she would be very gentle because I wasn't used to penetration. I have no idea why she thought that. It wasn't true and I hadn't said anything to let her think that. She was trying to be kind to me. I assume she must have assumed my masculinity meant I didn't have sex like that. Once again I was very embarrassed."

> "I've not been harassed for my sexual orientation when accessing services, but it is always assumed that I am straight, and that assumption makes it feel like being straight must be 'the normal thing to be' so it makes me feel strange and isolated."

Eight respondents specifically mentioned negative experiences due to being asexual:

> "I am not open about my sexual orientation when accessing medical services because I've heard too many stories from other asexual people of medical professionals trying to 'fix' their orientation, even though it wasn't brought up in the context of it being a problem."

> "As an asexual person I'm always worried about mentioning that (and never do) in case that part of my identity is pathologised."

> "'Asexual' is rarely an option on sexual orientation monitoring forms – also when doctors/psychologists don't know what asexuality is they can pathologise it and see it as a problem."

Seven respondents specifically mentioned negative experiences due to being bisexual:

> "Some people/professionals seem to struggle enough with bisexual/queer identities. When I self-described myself as non-binary and bisexual to a mental health nurse, she asked if I was therefore attracted to 'men, women and transgender people' which kind of baffled me."

> "There's a lot of bi-erasure around. I'm read as female and my partner is cis male thus we must be heterosexual. If we challenge this it often raises eyebrows."

> "Being bisexual basically makes you invisible or sexually promiscuous, confused, greedy, people get angry at you for not choosing, people come on to you for being bi and assume you are overly sexual, ask inappropriate questions about your sexual activity, how you like to have sex, with who you have sex, ask for stories about sexual activities with the same gender etc. etc., complete invalidation. It's negative experiences surrounding my bisexuality that I am usually on guard about."

Disability

Nine people specifically mentioned mental health when talking about negative experiences whilst accessing services:

> "I have a history of mental health issues including self-harm. Some of my experiences in A&E have been unpleasant with doctors/nurses being unsympathetic. At worst it included nurses carrying out treatments roughly, without regard for the pain it caused. A nurse has also said to me that I deserved a smack for ending up in hospital due to injuries from self-harm."

> "My mental health diagnoses are often a barrier in being able to access physical health care: a lot of genuine health issues are dismissed as being down to anxiety."

Autism and Aspergers was mentioned by six respondents as a reason they had negative experiences whilst accessing services:

> "I'm autistic and people treat me as though I'm stupid or a troublemaker. Any representation on autism boards is tokenistic. I have difficulties explaining my needs and tend to appear angry without realising."

> "Ironically, this seems to be more of an issue with doctors, who should really know better."

Two respondents mentioned difficulties in reading forms provided by services due to their disability:

> "And colour-blindness makes reading most printed material a case of 'is this really worth the effort'. Even if text can be distinguished I can't read bar charts or maps that needlessly rely on minute colour changes."

> "Many services forms are not dyslexia friendly."

Two respondents mentioned difficulties in contacting services if this was only possible by phone; something that they felt was not very accessible.

Age

Within those respondents who gave further detail of their negative experiences, there was a mixture between people who felt they had negative experiences due to being younger, and people who felt they had negative experiences due to being older. Of the seventeen people who talked in further depth about their negative experiences due to age in the comment box, twelve referred to being younger and three to being older:

> "My age is the biggest issue because teenagers are almost never taken seriously and treated like idiots simply for our age despite the fact that a lot of teenagers are quite mature."

> "When you get older you become invisible."

> "Intersectionality is hell, obviously. I look young (I'm 23 but look maybe 19) and people think that my inability to do a lot of things is because I'm young and stupid rather than disabled and mentally struggling, and judge me accordingly."

Other themes mentioned

Eight respondents mentioned that they experienced misogyny due to being perceived as women:

> "I've also experienced negative interactions as a result of being read as a woman, by mental health services."

> "Because I am often read as female, there's misogyny to contend with too."

Four respondents mentioned that they had negative experiences due to being non-monogamous:

> "I *have* had some negative experience when disclosing that I'm polyamorous, however. Namely the doctor at my hospital's GUM clinic who told me that 'we don't approve of too many numbers, but as long as [your partner's] just stick with you it might be alright' instead of giving actual practical sexual health advice..."

> "Polyamory: Sexual health services and family planning – my having multiple relationships, and my husband also having a girlfriend. Having it conflated with cheating, or having it be assumed that none of the relationships are serious. This makes it difficult to get through the 'interview' parts of doing the responsible thing and getting tested regularly."

One respondent talked about their experience in relation to both race and sexual orientation, saying:

▎ "Am black and African and gay it's hard to be considered."

OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT SERVICES

At the end of the section about services, we asked the question "Please tell us anything else you would like to about your experiences of accessing services as a non-binary person. These can be both positive and negative experiences" 211 participants left additional views.

Lack of knowledge and understanding

20% of respondents who left additional comments to this questions talked about encountering a lack of knowledge and understanding when accessing services and being out as non-binary, or not feeling able to come out due to anticipating this (n 211). A number of people said that they felt that lots of services weren't aware that non-binary people exist, and in particular health services were cited as examples of poor knowledge and understanding about non-binary identities:

▎ "Going for a necessary contraceptive procedure – the doctor who was just about to perform a very painful, intimate procedure asked me why I'd had top surgery but wasn't a man – when I tried to explain he told me that it was 'too complicated' and shushed me."

▎ "I wrote my gender as agender on a form at a sexual health clinic (it was a write-in box) and the receptionist ripped it up and told me to come back when I'd grown up."

▎ "I would like more mental health practitioners to be aware of gender identities and non-binary identities, and how your gender can affect your mental health. I've been medicalised for depression for over seven years now and no one understands it at all."

> "I do not feel confident accessing services as a non-binary person. It is an identity which is constantly delegitimised, and because it is not recognised as a valid gender identity by most people, it is very easy to discount. I feel that, aside perhaps from LGBTQ specific services and *maybe* other equal rights causes such as disability charities or organisations promoting the rights of other marginalised groups, disclosing my gender identity is likely to cause discrimination, if not overt then at least covert."

Services actively reinforce the gender binary

4% of people who gave us further thoughts on their experiences of using services said that they felt that services actively reinforced the gender binary, through the way they were structured or through their intake procedures (n 211):

> "There's an intense pressure to 'pass' when using services. There's a serious fear that if I don't 'look binary', I will be denied access to services. I've had this happen on various occasions because I could not prove that I was 'biologically permitted' (a direct quote) to be using a specific service."

> "The way services are set up and the makeup of society in general makes it particularly hard to not be a binary person. In other words, people always expect you to be one or the other, and that's for both sexuality and gender."

Some services are willing to change when you engage with them

Two respondents said that they had encountered services who had been happy to make adjustments to make them more inclusive to non-binary people once they had expressed dissatisfaction with part of the service:

> "Some organisations are very quick to take on feedback about their forms, literature, or procedures so as to become more inclusive of non-binary people. Even though they weren't perfect to start with, and required some educating, those organisations that are willing to learn and adapt are a lot more welcoming."
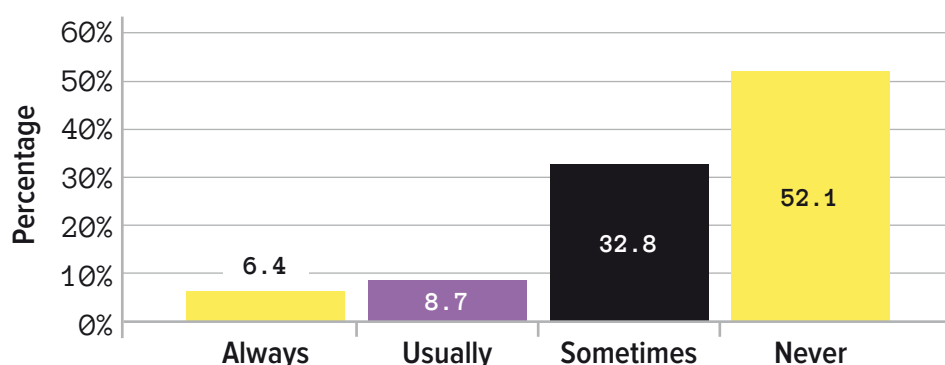
EMPLOYMENT

"The idea of "looking trans" at work put me off going on hormones. If I didn't have to worry about what people would think at work, I would probably want to transition far more than I am actually planning to. I need a job. I need to pay my rent. I need to eat. I don't think I'd be able to take the kind of comments and looks and treatment I'd get at work if I went on hormones – if I could even get a job in the first place. It makes me so sad."

The first question in this section asked whether participants had been in full-time or part-time paid or voluntary work within the last five years. 75% of respondents had been in work during this period (n 765). The remaining questions reflect the answers of the 575 respondents who had been in work during the past five years.

COMFORTABLE SHARING YOUR NON-BINARY IDENTITY

Table 28: Do/did you feel comfortable sharing your non-binary gender identity at work?

Only 6% of respondents 'always' felt comfortable sharing their non-binary identity at work (n 574). Conversely, 52% 'never' felt comfortable, with only 9% saying 'usually' and the remaining 33% saying 'sometimes' (n 574). This demonstrates that employment remains a place where a huge number of non-binary people feel insecure in being open about their identities.

WORRIES ABOUT SHARING NON-BINARY IDENTITY

Table 29: Do/have you worried about any of the following consequences if you share your non-binary identity at work (tick all that apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Worried your identity wouldn't be respected	514	89.5%
Worried that it would make your work environment more difficult	506	88.2%
Worried it would impact on your career progression	313	54.5%
Other (please specify)	93	16.2%
I have / had no worries about sharing my non-binary identity	28	4.9%

Only 5% of respondents had no worries about sharing their non-binary identity (n 574). Overall, respondents reported high levels of concerns about being open about their gender at work, with 90% worrying they wouldn't be respected, 88% feeling it would make their working environment more difficult, and 55% thinking it would impact on their career progression (n 574).

Those respondents answering 'Other' were asked to give more details. Some of the main themes that came out of their written responses were:

18% of respondents who answered 'Other (please specify)' said that they were worried that people wouldn't understand non-binary identities, and that it was easier for them to not be open about their genders (n 93):

> "People ask ignorant and difficult questions. Also it hurts and feels more dysphoric if people understand that my pronoun is different and they forget. I'd rather be misgendered out of complete ignorance than have to deal with people misgendering me on purpose or even by accident."

> "People accept 'queer'. It took long enough and too much energy to achieve that. Anything more is beyond most people's understanding at the moment."

16% of respondents who answered 'Other (please specify)' said they were worried they would face direct harassment or discrimination, including violence and bullying (n 93):

> "My current office has a problem with sexism, homophobia and some racism so I think that being out as non-binary would make me more of a target for bullying. Am already off work due to bullying around my mental disability which I have my union involved in."

> "It would open me up to violence and ridicule."

> "I work in a military base, so violence is an issue with regards to trans and queer people."

6% of respondents who answered 'Other (please specify)' were worried that they would be sacked if they were open about their non-binary identity at work (n 93).

5% of respondents who answered 'Other (please specify)' said they didn't want to feel obligated to educate people in their workplace about non-binary identities, so did not feel comfortable coming out (n 93).

WERE PEOPLE SUPPORTIVE?

We asked participants 'How supportive are/were people at work about your non-binary gender identity?' about three groups:

- Managers/Supervisors
- Colleagues
- Customers/Service Users

We removed 'N/A / I'm not out to these people' to produce the following information about how supportive these different groups were.

Table 30: Managers/Supervisors

	Number	Percent of Cases
Always	46	23.2%
Usually	61	30.8%
Sometimes	59	29.8%
Never	32	16.2%

Table 31: Colleagues

	Number	Percent of Cases
Always	37	14.9%
Usually	89	35.7%
Sometimes	102	41.0%
Never	21	8.4%

Table 32: Customers/Service Users

	Number	Percent of Cases
Always	10	7.7%
Usually	23	17.7%
Sometimes	73	56.2%
Never	24	18.5%

Managers/supervisors were the most supportive group, but still only 23% of respondents felt they were 'always' supportive (n 198). Only 15% of respondents felt that colleagues were 'always' supportive (n 249), and only 8% felt that customers/service users were 'always' supportive (n 130).

Despite managers/supervisors being the group that were most likely to 'always' be supportive, they were also considered more likely to 'never'

be supportive than colleagues about non-binary people's identities. 16% of respondents felt that managers/supervisors were 'never' supportive (n 198), whereas only 8% felt the same way about colleagues (n 249).

The majority of respondents indicated that they had mixed experiences of support from all three groups, with the largest portion selecting 'usually' or 'sometimes' – 61% for managers/supervisors (n 198), 77% for colleagues (n 249) and 74% for customers/service users (n 130).

These questions demonstrate that non-binary people have fairly mixed experiences of being out in the workplace. Even though managers/supervisors were selected as the most supportive group, it would appear that generally non-binary people do not experience high levels of support in the workplace.

EXPERIENCES IN THE WORKPLACE

Table 33: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following whilst at work (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Felt that you had to pass as male or female to be accepted?	444	79.6%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you by mistake?	292	52.3%
Had to adhere to gender stereotyped dress codes / uniforms?	288	51.6%
Heard that non-binary people are not normal?	236	42.3%
Experienced silent harassment (e.g. being stared at / whispered about) for being non-binary?	140	25.1%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you on purpose?	117	21.0%
Been made fun of or called names for being non-binary?	76	13.6%
Felt that you were overlooked to outwardly represent your workplace because of your gender identity?	70	12.5%
Felt that you were overlooked for promotion because of your gender identity?	40	7.2%
None of the above	42	7.5%

Only 8% of respondents had not experienced any of the negative situations asked about in the question (n 558). 21% had experienced harassment in the workplace by having the wrong name and pronoun used for them on purpose, and 14% had experienced bullying.

There were also issues around a lack of understanding or acceptance of non-binary people, with 42% hearing that they were 'not normal' and 25% experiencing silent harassment.

Expectations around binary identities and presentations were particularly common – 80% felt they had to pass as male or female to be accepted, and 52% had to adhere to gender stereotyped dress codes/uniforms.

This question allowed people to write greater detail about their experiences within the last five years in the workplace. 28% of respondents who left comments alongside their answers to this question (n 69) talked specifically about gendered dress codes and the impact that this had on them – the largest category talked about. As well as saying that having dress codes specifically for 'men' and 'women' could be difficult for people with non-binary identities, many people also mentioned that dress codes for 'women' were often sexist:

> "Not only are there gender specific uniforms (only male and female of course!), there are also rules on top of that on how you must wear the clothes – e.g. men must tuck their shirts in whilst women can (and are sometimes encouraged to) leave their shirts untucked."

> "At my last permanent job the boss encouraged all of the staff (cis women) to wear skirts but never explained other options that were available to us for work uniform. As I do not find skirts or dresses comfortable to wear, I was pulled up on several occasions to be told that the trousers or jeans I was wearing weren't allowed, even though all options for uniform were never explained. This lead me to feeling almost constantly dysphoric in my place of work as I was never sure what I was comfortable wearing was allowed."

> "Ugh, the pointlessly gender-modified uniform of the Navy – just sliiiightly different collars and hats – so pointless."

PHYSICAL & SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Before the questions asking about experiences of physical and sexual violence, there was a question allowing participants to skip this section if they would prefer not to answer them. 65% of respondents chose to answer the questions (n 570).

Table 34: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following whilst at work (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Experienced sexual harassment (e.g. cat calling, being propositioned) because you are non-binary?	30	8.4%
Experienced physical intimidation and threats for being non-binary?	22	6.2%
Been sexually assaulted because you are non-binary?	5	1.4%
Been hit or beaten up for being non-binary?	4	1.1%
None of the above	318	89.3%

89% had not experienced any physical or sexual violence at work due to their non-binary identity (n 356). However, 8% had experienced sexual harassment, and 6% had experienced physical intimidation and threats (n 356).

This question allowed people to write greater detail about their experiences of physical and sexual violence within the last five years in the workplace. A number of respondents said they had experienced some forms of sexual harassment or violence, but due to being perceived as women, rather than due to being non-binary.

APPLYING FOR WORK

The question about applying for work was answered by all participants, not just those who had been in employment during the last five years.

Table 35: Within the last 5 years, have you experienced any of the following whilst applying for work (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Felt that you had to pass as male or female to be accepted?	442	60.7%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you by mistake?	277	38.0%
I have not applied for work within the last five years	159	21.8%
Heard that non-binary people are not normal?	132	18.1%
Experienced silent harassment (e.g. being stared at / whispered about) for being non-binary?	131	18.0%
Had difficulty providing proof of your ability to work (e.g. because of name changes)?	99	13.6%
Had the wrong name and pronoun used for you on purpose?	85	11.7%
Had difficulty proving your qualifications?	78	10.7%
Been made fun of or called names for being non-binary?	39	5.4%
None of the above	102	14.0%

22% of respondents had not applied for work within the last five years, and 14% had not experienced any of the things we asked about (n 728). Fewer participants had experienced harassment during the application process than within employment, with 12% having the wrong name and pronoun used for them on purpose and 5% being bullied for being non-binary (n 728).

It is worth noting that a significant minority had difficulty in providing the right documents to prove their ability and eligibility to work, with 14% struggling to provide correct identification, and 11% struggling to prove their qualifications (n 728). Employers should ensure that they have policies in place to help trans applicants prove their identities. They should also ensure they are able to be flexible and understanding about the possibility of some applicants having different information recorded about them across different records.

This question allowed people to write greater detail about their experiences of applying for work within the last five years. 12% of respondents who left additional comments said they had to misgender themselves on job application forms, as they asked about gender and only provided the options of 'man' and 'woman' (n 65).

INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES

This question asked about other aspects of people's identities that had negatively impacted on them looking for work or within employment. Respondents who answered 'I have never been in employment or looked for a job' were filtered out.

Table 36: Do/did you have negative experiences when in employment or whilst looking for work due to other aspects of your identity?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Sexual orientation	169	29.6%
Disability	164	28.7%
Age	107	18.7%
Race / ethnicity / nationality	24	4.2%
Religion / belief	22	3.9%
No for all of the above	253	44.3%

The most frequently cited aspects of people's identities that had caused them negative experiences, either whilst in work or whilst applying for work, were sexual orientation, with 30% of respondents mentioning this, and disability, which 29% referenced (n 571). 19% felt their age had caused them to have negative experiences, with 4% feeling this way about their religion/belief (n 571). 4% felt that their race/ethnicity/ nationality had impacted negatively on their experiences in employment – an extremely high number when you consider that only 16% of respondents to the survey were not from White British backgrounds (n 764).

This question allowed people to write greater detail about how other aspects of their identity had led to negative experiences when looking for work or whilst in employment. 64 respondents left additional comments:

> "I didn't have a chance of promotion, and I had a lot of bullying at work, but non-binary was a small part of that. My race, my sexual orientation, my fatness and my disability had a lot more to do with it. Being non-binary was just another thing for my managers to dismiss my input on."

Mental health

Seven people explicitly mentioned mental health as a barrier to finding and keeping work – both because of how it affects them and the way it is viewed by other people. This is 11% of those who left additional comments to this question (n 64):

> "I have had to constantly hide my mental health, it's been the biggest burden to finding and keeping work."

> "I cannot put depression on my application form. I will never get to an interview. If I do get to an interview if I mention it they always find an excuse not to employ me."

> "Depressed, anxious (and having a bad work history because of these) makes it difficult enough looking for work and keeping it."

Age

Of the 107 respondents who said that they had also had negative experiences due to their age, seven left comments expanding on this. Of those seven, four mentioned they had negative experiences due to being younger people, and three due to being older people:

> "I have always felt that my age is looked at over my experience. I have five years of experience with my current employer and feel my progression has been hindered by my age."

> "Ageism is rife. At 38 I'm too old and "washed up" to get a job."

Sexism

Five respondents said they had negative experiences due to being perceived as women:

> "I had a couple of grim work experiences because the guys I was working for identified me as a woman ... most of my really bad experiences have been down to people /not/ understanding or believing that I was non-binary rather than believing it but having a problem with it."

> "I have been belittled for being female... even though I'm not..."

Immigration status

Three people mentioned their immigration status had led to negative experiences finding and keeping work:

> "I found that not being a citizen was the biggest barrier to not getting work, despite having the right to work without restriction. It was an incredibly painful experience."

OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT

At the end of the section about employment, we asked the question "Please tell us anything else you would like to about your experiences of employment or looking for work as a non-binary person. These can be both positive and negative experiences". 111 participants left additional views.

Many of the responses reiterated themes discussed earlier in this chapter. However, some people left particularly powerful quotes that explored the difficulties around juggling the desire to be open about their identities and the necessity of working to ensuring they can support themselves:

> "Working in an environment that is not inclusive of non-binary identities is exhausting and damaging to your mental health. You need a lot of support from outside work and strategies to keep yourself going throughout the day. It is hard because not only are you facing discrimination, no one sees it as that because they don't see non-binary as existing."

> "This feels like the hardest context to be 'out' – it's obviously very important to get on well with colleagues, and work is such a public environment that it's difficult to tell close colleagues without having to explain gender to the whole organisation."

> "I try to play the part when applying for work and then identify as LGBTiQ once I have the job. Generally at interviews people are more concerned about my ethnicity."

> "The idea of 'looking trans' at work put me off going on hormones. If I didn't have to worry about what people would think at work, I would probably want to transition far more than I am actually planning to. I need a job. I need to pay my rent. I need to eat. I don't think I'd be able to take the kind of comments and looks and treatment I'd get at work if I went on hormones – if I could even get a job in the first place. It makes me so sad."

LEGAL RECOGNITION

"I would feel far more comfortable if my passport, driver's license, etc., said my actual gender rather than the one I was assigned at birth. The gender on them currently feels wrong, and I feel like having my real gender on those items would be a big step in making myself and others feel more comfortable with our identities, and in making sure people in general know about and acknowledge non-binary people."

NON-BINARY INCLUSION IN LEGAL RECOGNITION

Table 37: Would you like to change your legal gender/sex* so that it is not recorded as 'male' or 'female' (i.e. on your birth certificate, passport, driver's licence etc.)?
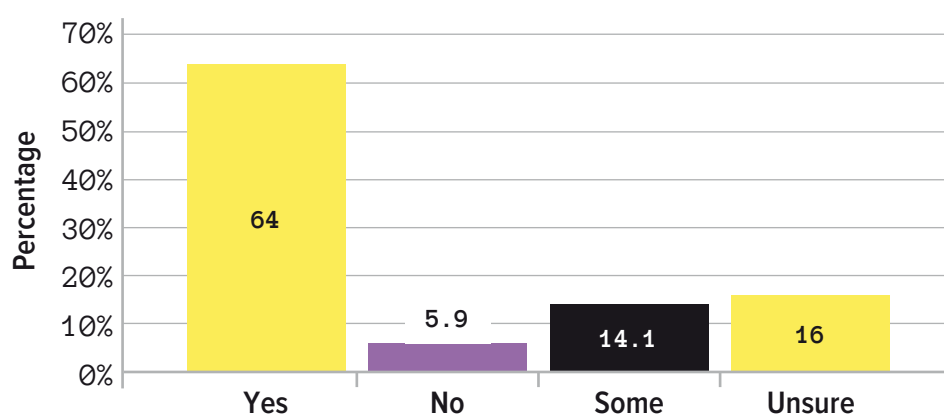
The vast majority of respondents would like to be able to have their legal gender/sex recorded as something other than 'male' or 'female' on documents, with 64% of people answering yes to this question (n 767). Only 6% of respondents said this was something that they didn't want, with the remaining 30% answering either 'on some documents but not others' (14%) or 'unsure' (16%) (n 767).

This question allowed people to write greater detail about their opinion on changing their legal gender/sex to something other than 'male' or 'female' in documents.

* UK law treats 'gender' and 'sex' as equivalent even though really they are not.

Respondents answering 'no', 'on some documents but not others' and 'unsure'

8% of those who didn't answer 'Yes' to this question highlighted concerns about their safety or facing discrimination if documents outed them as non-binary to services, employers and others (n 276):

> "At this stage, I would be concerned that this would open me up to discrimination. Once there is a lot more understanding, then absolutely – but I don't want my official documents to mark me out as 'other'. I think if this option was legally available, it would in some cases open non-binary people up to a lot of danger – if we ever *had* to declare that."

> "Given the stigma and ignorance about non-binary people, I'm personally not currently willing to make myself publicly visible as non-binary in all cases. I think it would be a very good thing to have available, but non-binary people (and trans people in general) must not be forced into officially outing themselves."

> "I don't know that given another option I'd take it since it'd open me up to waaaay more headaches, at least at first. I don't have the kind of courage or emotional resilience to be an early adopter, but I'd definitely take the option if it were available, didn't cause lots of problems, and official people were educated about it and knew how to handle it."

7% of respondents who didn't answer 'Yes' to this question said that they were happy to have their 'sex' assigned at birth on some documents – particularly if this was necessary for medical services (n 276):

> "It depends on what the sex or gender information is used for. If simply for demographics, I would prefer non-binary identities be available to state; if medical, I think both gender and sex should be available to state. Doctors can use information about a patient's sex (along with medical records) to know what factors to take into account when e.g. prescribing medicine, and gender identity can be useful for mental health clinics as it is an important factor to take into account."

> "I would like my passport, ID card, all other identity statements to say a gender other than 'male' or 'female' but for my birth certificate to remain the same as I was assigned female at birth and this is my sex when I was born so personally I wouldn't ever want this changed."

> "I feel like saying I'm non-binary on medical forms wouldn't be good. The health services need to know about what body you have so they can help you. By refusing to tell them about my body, it means I'm refusing the right treatment. They don't care what I identify as, they just need to know about my insides, so they can help me as best they can."

It is interesting that a number of people highlighted concerns around health care providers having accurate information about them, and why this might require them to disclose their sex assigned at birth. Often, it is important for trans people to be able to update their health records to reflect their gender identity to ensure they are referred to correctly when interacting with these services – such as by receptionists, or when referral letters are written about them. This can have the follow-on consequence that you may not then receive the correct prompts for health checks that are issued based on the gender of your records (e.g. only women are prompted to have cervical smear tests, only men are prompted to have prostate exams etc.)

However, this would seem to indicate a problem with the existing system assuming that all people using NHS services are cisgender – and that there should be greater flexibility available to healthcare providers to ensure that they are able to acknowledge and accommodate the reality that there are transgender people under their care. Non-binary people may undergo medical transition – such as taking hormones, having chest reconstruction surgery or having genital surgery – so leaving medical records in a person's assigned sex also doesn't necessarily give medical practitioners the relevant information they need about a person.

Although any non-binary person should have the option to leave any of their records in their assigned sex if this is what they prefer,

it would not be fair for the NHS to require this in a way that may out them – particularly if this information is used as the basis for making assumptions about the type of body any given patient might have. A more flexible and inclusive system that acknowledged the reality that a person's gender does not necessarily tell you about a person's body would alleviate concerns around changing the way your gender is recorded with healthcare providers.

5% of those who didn't answer 'Yes' explicitly mentioned concerns they would have if travelling with documents that outed them as having a non-binary gender identity as a reason they would not want this recorded on passports (n 276):

> "I would want the possibility of having a binary-gendered passport as well as an accurate passport so I could, if necessary, travel to countries which would not react so well to a non-binary passport."

> "Ideally I would like to, but for personal reasons I'm not sure it would be a good idea – I have a lot of links to certain countries where transgender identities aren't recognised or are actively persecuted. I'm likely to travel to these countries a lot in the next few years, so I'm thinking this wouldn't be a good idea."

4% of those who didn't answer 'Yes' said that they identify in some way still as binary, or would prefer to do this on documents (n 276):

> "My identity most often falls in line with my assigned at birth gender, so for convenience I wouldn't change. However, I would like the option to do so."

> "That would be nice, but I don't feel I necessarily need it. In my job I live as a woman because it is easier, and I can stand up for women's rights better."

4% of those who didn't answer 'Yes' mentioned that they were unsure why the state needed to record a person's legal gender, or whether being able to have a non-binary gender recorded on documents would improve the rights of non-binary people (n 276):

> "On the one hand I would like to, on the other hand I am not really interested in what the state believes about my gender identity. I am not personally that interested in liberal politics of representation."

> "I don't know if this really means anything beyond a surface-level acceptance. What does this do to actually improve the material conditions of non-binary people."

> "I don't have enough respect for 'official' documents for them to influence my identity, am not down for the state's increased surveillance of trans people."

3% of respondents who didn't answer 'Yes' said that they wouldn't want to change their documents as they are not currently out (n 276).

Respondents answering yes

Of those people answering 'yes' to this question, many talked about how legal recognition of a gender/sex other than 'male' or 'female' would validate their identities and experiences:

> "I would feel far more comfortable if my passport, driver's license, etc., said my actual gender rather than the one I was assigned at birth. The gender on them currently feels wrong, and I feel like having my real gender on those items would be a big step in making myself and others feel more comfortable with our identities, and in making sure people in general know about and acknowledge non-binary people."

> "I really want to but I cannot as there isn't an option – I have to choose and it makes me very gender dysphoric."

> "Absolutely. I want everyone to recognise that I am not female or male."

> "I would feel real/legitimate."

> "I would like to honour my experience. Currently it is denied existence!"

- "I'm non-binary and proud, nothing would make me happier."

- "This is absolutely vital!"

- "This is something I've wanted for such a long time."

- "I would absolutely love to do that, I don't think you have any idea what that would mean to me."

HOW SHOULD WE LEGALLY RECORD NON-BINARY GENDERS?

Table 38: For you, what would be the best option(s) for changes to the way legal gender/sex is recorded on these sorts of documents (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
A third gender category recorded (such as 'Other' or 'Non-binary')	550	72.5%
For recording gender to be optional on these documents	432	56.9%
For nobody to have gender recorded on these documents	313	41.2%
Other (please specify)	53	7.0%

The most popular option for how to change the way legal gender/sex was recorded was for a third gender category to be recorded, with 73% of respondents preferring this option (n 759). However, 57% also supported the idea of recording gender to be optional, and 41% would be happy for nobody to have gender recorded on these documents (n 759).

This question allowed people to write greater detail about their opinion on changing their legal gender/sex to something other than 'male' or 'female' in documents.

Three options is not enough

3% of respondents felt that only having three categories of 'Man' 'Woman' and 'Other' would not be enough, but instead there should either be a greater range of options or the ability to write your gender in a blank field (n 759):

> "There should just be a box saying 'gender' to which you can add non-binary, male, female, none etc. which means people can specify and can put how they identify. This would also mean that male/female won't be considered the norm."

> "People should have a free text box as well as list of popular options – it's about being able to *identify* someone, that's it. Yes, gender identity helps us do this. But why should the government get to limit this. They have been challenged and as a result expand race and religion options, same for gender now."

> "Only having 'non-binary' might not be helpful either, for some people who may want more specific words used for their gender."

Other themes mentioned

Nine respondents said that 'sex' and 'gender' should be recorded separately – with people mentioning the importance of your sex being recorded for medical records.

Six respondents suggested that only someone's title or pronouns should be recorded on documents, rather than their gender.

Three respondents mentioned 'X' as a third gender option – two of whom specifically mentioned doing this for passports, as is already done in a number of other countries.

Two respondents mentioned that recording of 'sex' also needed to be changed to make this more inclusive of intersex people:

> "Having a box for sex which gives the option of male/female/intersex and an option of gender with numerous, inclusive choices."

SHOULD PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS MEN AND WOMEN ALSO HAVE THE OPTION TO NOT HAVE THEIR GENDER LEGALLY RECORDED AS MALE OR FEMALE?

74% of respondents felt that men or women should also have the option to not have their legal gender/sex recorded as 'male' or 'female' (n 763). Only 5% answered 'no' with the remaining 21% answering 'Unsure' (n 763).

It is interesting to see that the percentage of respondents answering 'yes' to this question was significantly higher than the 64% of respondents who answered 'yes' to wanting to change their own documents to a gender/sex other than 'male' or 'female' (Table 37, n 767). This would suggest that some respondents would not want their own documents changed in this way, but that they do support the idea of the option being available to others.

TITLES

92% of respondents wanted there to be changes to the options for typically gendered titles (n 762). Only 2% of respondents didn't want this, with the remaining 7% being unsure (n 762).

Table 39: For you, what would be the best option(s) for changes to title option (tick as many as apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
To allow gender neutral titles	663	86.8%
For titles to be optional	575	75.3%
For nobody to use any titles	208	27.2%
Other (please specify)	21	2.7%

87% of respondents wanted gender neutral titles to be available, with 75% also happy for titles to be optional (n 764). 27% of respondents would be happy for nobody to use any titles (n 764).

Table 40: What title do you prefer (tick all that apply)?

	Number	Percent of Cases
Mx	456	59.6%
I prefer not to use a title	344	45.0%
Ms	102	13.3%
Mr	81	10.6%
M	59	7.7%
Miss	58	7.6%
Other (please specify)	52	6.8%
Misc	31	4.1%
Ser	28	3.7%
Ind	14	1.8%
Mrs	9	1.2%
Msr	8	1.0%
Pr	8	1.0%
Mre	6	0.8%

The most popular title was 'Mx', with 60% of respondents selecting this, although 45% also said that they prefer not to use a title (n 765). As can be seen from Table 40, a wide range of titles were used by respondents, including 8% using Miss, 11% using Mr, 1% using Mrs and 13% using Ms (n 765).

7% of respondents said that they used an 'Other' title to the ones listed (n 765). Nineteen people said that they used the title 'Dr' – the vast majority said they used this title as they were doctors, although one respondent said they may use it when completing forms where there is no gender neutral option available and they have to select a title. This is 2% of all people answering the question (n 765) and 39% of all those answering 'Other (please specify)' (n 52). No other answers given in the 'Other (please specify)' field reached 1% of responses to this question (n 765).

OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT LEGAL RECOGNITION

At the end of the section about legal gender recognition, we asked the question "Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your views on non-binary legal gender recognition?" 151 participants left additional views.

Reform the Gender Recognition Act 2004

19% of respondents mentioned that as well as having recognition of non-binary genders, they felt it was important that the current process to change a person's gender legally was simplified (n 151). Some of the specific examples given were that the process should be free, should be based on self-determination, and should not rely on any medical evidence or diagnosis:

> "A complete overhaul of the entire system of gender recognition is needed – it should absolutely not be at the discretion of a panel as it is now."

> "All trans people should be able to self-define their legal gender. 'Gender recognition' plays on gendered assumptions and sexist stereotypes, and is unfair and inefficient."

> "People should be allowed to change their gender to whatever they want. This should be easy, accessible and widely publicised. It should also be free."

> "Legal recognition of gender identity – trans, non-binary, or otherwise – should never be dependent upon the experience of dysphoria. It is very possible to have a different gender identity without dysphoria and then not have access to services that are needed because of this."

Other legislative changes

14% of respondents mentioned that non-binary people also needed to be covered in anti-discrimination and equality legislation (n 151). In particular, people mentioned the Equality Act 2010 being extended, and marriage

laws being changed to reflect that someone who isn't a man or a woman may be getting married:

> "Non-binary people should be given all the same legal protections as transsexual people are at present. We are potentially subject to all the same forms of discrimination but at present have no legal protection."

> "It is essential! If people are not recognised as existing in law they cannot be protected. Also – and this is crucial – it would open up the possibility of gender *expression* rather than reassignment or even identity as a protected category. A man who wears a dress, a woman who presents in male-normative ways but IDs as a cis woman should be absolutely as protected for those things as anyone else. This would benefit both cis and trans people who express our genders in non-normative ways."

> "Same-sex marriage laws need to be changed to allow non-binary inclusion."

> "Apparently there is a law that says a spouse is allowed to legally determine a trans person's gender identity within a certain set of circumstances (if the trans person comes out during the marriage). Obviously, this is disgusting and completely unacceptable; it should never have been written into law and it needs to be removed with haste." *

> "Less dubious marriage/reproductive rights."

Increase visibility and awareness

8% of respondents mentioned that they felt non-binary people receiving legal gender recognition would increase the visibility and awareness of non-binary identities more widely (n 151):

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* The 'spousal veto' does not exist in Scotland. For more information see: http://www.scottishtrans.org/our-work/completed-work/equal-marriage/spousal-veto-amendment

"Legal recognition at least makes it possible for people like me to be part of society, to not be on the outside. It is also the best step forward towards more social acceptance and integration of non-binary identities."

"If we had legal recognition – oh my, the thought is so exciting – I wouldn't have to constantly justify the nature of my existence to almost every single person I meet. I could be free to be who I am with public bodies, my doctor, everyone."

"If there became an option to have non-binary legal recognition, more people might stop dismissing non-binary gender identities because it will be on a legal document!"

Gender does not need to be recorded legally

7% of respondents said that they felt that gender did not need to be recorded legally (n 151). Some of these respondents did feel however that as long as gender was recorded by the state, there should be more options to include non-binary people:

"I see a need for a compromise: between a long-term reduction in the reliance on legal gender recognition, and short-term recognition of non-normative genders (and simplified legal recognition of trans people)."

"I'd like to see an end to gender as a legal construct – not social or personal gender, but the government has no place in it. Until that happens though, we need the same legal recognition cisgender people and some binary transgender people have, otherwise we're not being treated equally."

"I really think fundamentally questioning whether/why we need a 'legal gender/sex' is really important and I wouldn't want it to be overlooked in favour of making more of them exist and changing how/whether they're recorded on documents. We have no notion of a "legal name"; we just have names that we use and are known by, and these can be changed at will, provided you take whatever steps necessary to satisfy the various bureaucracies you deal with in your day to day life. Why then is "legal gender/sex" such a mess?"

Passports

Seven respondents mentioned wanting to have a non-binary option for gender on their passports, with several specifically mentioning the 'X' option already offered by some other countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

Other themes mentioned

Five respondents mentioned the difficulty in including non-binary people in gender-segregated spaces. Two people specifically mentioned prisons.

Four respondents mentioned that if legal gender recognition was being reviewed or reformed, attention should also be paid to how to make this more inclusive of intersex people:

> "Currently the fact that you have to specify a legal sex on any documentation is not only transphobic and cause many problems and dysphoria for trans people but also still means that intersex people have to pick a 'sex' where they do not fit one which again adds to the idea that all intersex children born should be 'corrected' with surgery which is absolutely immoral and wrong."

Three respondents mentioned that non-binary identities were already legally recognised in other countries, and that UK legislation should follow suit.

Three respondents mentioned that they would be concerned about their safety and facing discrimination if non-binary genders were recorded.

One respondent mentioned the importance of collecting information on how many people identify as non-binary, such as through the census.

One respondent mentioned the importance of consulting with the broadest range of non-binary people on their views before reforming legal gender recognition:

> "Need to prioritise the voices of traditionally surveillanced populations of non-binary people first (especially Muslim folk)."

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although knowledge and understanding of trans people in the UK has undoubtedly improved in recent years, the assumption that everyone identifies as either a man or a woman, and only a man or a woman, is still central to many people's understanding of the world, and the society that we live in.

This report has explored some of the lived experiences of non-binary people in the UK – those people for whom this assumption does not reflect their sense of themselves. Unsurprisingly, it has found that navigating a society made for men and women when you are not one yourself can pose numerous problems.

Many of the findings reflect the difficulties that we know are experienced by trans men and trans women in the UK. However, it is apparent that there are a number of issues faced that are specific to this community. A lack of legal recognition leaves many people feeling invalidated. The lack of explicit legal protections leaves many people fearing discrimination. A lack of visibility and inclusion pose problems throughout services and employment, and has a significant negative impact on non-binary people's wellbeing.

Below is a list of key recommendations based on the findings of this report on how things can be changed to improve the lived experiences of non-binary people throughout the UK. The Scottish Trans Alliance have also produced a companion guidance document based on the findings of this research with more detailed recommendations for service providers and employers. This guidance document can be found at **www.scottishtrans.org/non-binary**. If you would like to request non-binary specific training, please get in touch with Scottish Trans Alliance.

SERVICES (GENERAL)

- Service providers need more education, training, and awareness around non-binary identities and some of the specific needs of non-binary people. Many respondents stated that they felt some services were completely unaware that non-binary people existed, and therefore unprepared to support them. 34% of respondents had been told that services did not know enough about non-binary people to help them.

- Forms and recording systems need to be redesigned to reflect the fact that not all service users will identify as exclusively men or women, and to include more gender neutral title options.

- Services need to ask about people's names and pronouns, and ensure that these are respected by staff, in communication about service users etc.

- Gender neutral facilities need to be provided – particularly toilets, but also changing rooms where this is applicable.

- More inclusive language needs to be used – services should think about where language they are using reinforces binary assumptions about gender and correct this – for example using 'they' rather than 'he or she', using 'parents' rather than 'mothers and fathers' etc.

- There should be a reduced emphasis on gender when this is not an important, useful, or relevant piece of information or classification for a service.

- There needs to be greater visibility of non-binary people and gender variance generally. Although there is no one way that non-binary people look, imagery used by services should reflect the huge range of gender expressions embodied by the general public, and non-binary stories should be included in literature and publications.

- Services should make fewer assumptions about people's gender – particularly that everyone identifies as only a man or only a woman. Assumptions should not be made about people's identity based on their gender expression, and services should not assume that by knowing someone is non-binary, they can make further assumptions about things such as their sexual orientation.

- Services should tackle intersecting forms of discrimination – also focusing on race, ethnicity, nationality, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender etc.

- Services should employ more non-binary people.

- Services should emphasise confidentiality when dealing with people's gender identity.

SERVICES (HEALTH)

- Sexual health services were particularly highlighted by respondents as a service that they avoided – in fact 31% of respondents said they "don't use" this service (the highest proportion of all services with the exception of the police). This was attributed to the fact that sexual health services were a place where gendered assumptions were particularly likely to be made, and also where assumptions were made about service users' sexual orientation, and the types of relationships or sex they may be having. Sexual health services must ensure that they are more knowledgeable of non-binary people and identities, of diverse sexual orientations, and of less "traditional" relationship types, and that the services they provide are inclusive of people of all genders.

- Respondents had concerns about healthcare providers having the right information about their healthcare needs if they had changed their records to reflect their gender identity. The NHS needs to ensure that it implements more flexible systems that allows

healthcare providers to realise and acknowledge the reality that a person's gender does not necessarily tell you about a person's body.

EMPLOYMENT

- Employers need more education, training, and awareness around non-binary identities and some of the specific needs of non-binary people. Many respondents stated that they felt some employers were completely unaware that non-binary people existed, and therefore unprepared to support them.

- Forms and recording systems need to be redesigned to reflect the fact that not all job applicants or employees will identify as exclusively men or women, and to include more gender neutral title options. Many respondents said that they were often deterred from applying for a job as they were only given binary options to identify their gender.

- Employers need to ask about people's names and pronouns, and ensure that these are respected by colleagues, in job interviews etc. Many people felt that pronouns should be asked about in job application packs.

- Gender neutral facilities need to be provided – particularly toilets, but also changing rooms where this is applicable.

- Employers need to have policies that deal with discrimination, harassment and bullying, and these should explicitly name and protect non-binary people. Employers also need to ensure that these policies are properly enforced within the workplace.

- Employers need to decrease gender stereotyping and assumptions in the workplace – particularly the assumption that everyone identifies as only a man or a woman. Respondents also highlighted that employers could improve in this area by decreasing the number

of staff activities targeted at men or women, and increasing the use of gender neutral language.

- Gendered dress codes should be removed. Instead, a neutral description of what types of dress are appropriate for the workplace should be provided, and all employees should be able to wear whichever of these items they feel comfortable in, regardless of their gender identity.

- Employers should work towards the explicit inclusion of non-binary people – both in advertising that they are inclusive, and also in ensuring that the culture and environment of the workplace reflects any policies that are in place.

- Employers should tackle intersecting forms of discrimination – also focusing on race, ethnicity, nationality, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender etc.

- Many non-binary people felt that the interview process was particularly stressful due to the gendered assumptions made about clothing and the lack of opportunity they may have had to let prospective employers know they identify as non-binary, or use gender neutral pronouns. This could be improved by making the application process more inclusive, and by making interviews less formal.

- Employers should be aware of, and be able to be flexible about, the fact that certain applicants may have identity documents or qualification records in more than one name and more than one gender.

GENDER RECOGNITION ACT 2004

- The Gender Recognition Act 2004 must be reformed so that people are able to be legally recognised as non-binary on their birth certificates.

- The Gender Recognition Act 2004 must be reformed to remove the psychiatric diagnosis and medical evidence requirements currently in place, and move to a system of self-determination. *

- Reforms to the Gender Recognition Act 2004 must be undertaken in a way that is inclusive of intersex people.

- The process of applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate must be free.

- The process of applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate must be made more accessible.

OTHER LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CHANGES

- The Equality Act 2010 should be reformed so that the protected characteristic 'gender reassignment' is renamed 'gender identity', and the people who share this protected characteristic are known as 'transgender people' rather than 'transsexual people'. *

- The new protected characteristic should provide protections to people based on both their gender identity and gender expression. *

- The UK Passport Agency should start issuing gender 'X' passports. *

- The Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency should start issuing gender neutral driving licences.

- Marriage law should be reformed to reflect the fact that people who are not men or women may be entering into marriages.

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* As recommended in the UK Parliament Women and Equalities Select Committee report into the findings of their Transgender Equality Inquiry.
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmwomeq/390/390.pdf

- The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 should be reformed to remove the 'spousal veto' which requires spousal consent for a person in a marriage to gain a Gender Recognition Certificate. *

- Reproductive and family law should be reformed to ensure that all trans people have access to rights in these areas.

- The Census should include an option to record your gender as non-binary.

INTERSECTIONS

- In implementing recommendations from this report, care should be taken to ensure that improvements are felt equally by all non-binary people, particularly those that are members of other marginalised groups – such as non-binary people of colour and disabled non-binary people.

- More research should be done into the experiences of non-binary people who are members of other marginalised groups.

- Increased visibility of non-binary people should be met with a commitment to ensure this visibility is reflective of the huge diversity amongst non-binary people. Visibility should not contribute to the erasure of certain parts of the community by focusing only on those who are white, able-bodied, and masculine.

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* The 'spousal veto' does not exist in Scotland. For more information see: http://www.scottishtrans.org/our-work/completed-work/equal-marriage/spousal-veto-amendment

EDUCATION

- Education in UK schools should be LGBTI-inclusive, and should acknowledge and reflect the fact that not everyone identifies as solely a man or a woman, so that all young people are able to see themselves reflected in their learning.

- Databases in education institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities should be updated so that people can be recorded as non-binary on their systems.

- Young people should be able to be recognised as non-binary without schools consulting or informing their guardians.

HATE CRIME

- 69% of respondents never felt comfortable sharing their non-binary identity with the police – this could have an impact on the likelihood of non-binary people reporting hate crime. The police should ensure that they have training around non-binary identities, and communicate publicly their commitment to tackling hate crime against non-binary people.

- Respondents reported high levels of harassment, physical violence, and sexual violence in public places. More work must be done to ensure that these types of incidents are eradicated.

SOCIAL ATTITUDES

- More work needs to be done to ensure that non-binary identities are understood, and non-binary people are respected by, the general public.

- A number of respondents were concerned about negative impacts on their lives if they decided to be legally recognised as non-binary

– an awareness raising campaign around non-binary identities should accompany the introduction of legal recognition.

- The various Governments in the UK should ensure that they continue to fund LGBTI projects that promote understanding and visibility of non-binary people.

- Media and broadcasters should ensure that the content they are producing is reflective and inclusive of the broad range of gender identities in UK society.

- Media and broadcasters should employ and give voice to non-binary people.

SPORT

- Sporting bodies, and individual sports clubs, need to have clear and accessible policies about the inclusion of non-binary people within their activities.

- Sporting bodies, and individual sports clubs, should reduce the gender segregation of sports where this is not necessary, or take steps to ensure that non-binary people are able to participate in sports where men and women compete separately.

GLOSSARY

It is important to remember that language around trans issues is constantly changing and evolving. Particularly as many terms are related to people's personal identities, the terms may be used by different people to mean different things. This is a non-exhaustive list of some of the terms used in this report and our current understandings of their definitions.

AFAB/FAAB
Assigned female at birth/Female assigned at birth.

AMAB/MAAB
Assigned male at birth/Male assigned at birth.

Assigned sex at birth
When a baby is born, a doctor will normally declare "it's a boy" or "it's a girl" based on the babies external genitals (sometimes this is not the case if a baby is born with a visible intersex condition). A baby is then expected to grow up to identify as the gender that "matches" with their body – so a baby born with a penis is expected to grow up and be a boy.

Cisgender/cis
A person who identifies with the sex they were assigned at birth. Cisgender is the word for anyone who is not transgender.

Cissexism
The set of norms in society that enforce ideas about the gender binary, and assumes that everyone will identify with their assigned sex at birth.

Cross-dressing person
A person who occasionally wears clothing and/or makeup and accessories that are not traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender binary

The dominant idea in Western society that there are only two genders ('man' and 'woman'), that all people are one of these two genders, and that the two are opposite.

Gender dysphoria

Refers to a person's sense of distress or discomfort around some aspect of their gender experience. This can be body dysphoria (i.e. a trans person who is distressed about having a penis, or a trans person who is distressed about their face or body hair), or it can be social dysphoria (i.e. a non-binary person who is distressed about people assuming they are female when they meet them, and using gendered language to refer to them).

Gender expression

Refers to all of the external characteristics and behaviours that are socially defined as either masculine or feminine, such as clothing, hairstyle, make-up, mannerisms, speech patterns and social interactions.

Gender identity

Refers to how we see ourselves in regards to being a man or a woman or somewhere in between/beyond.

Gender reassignment

The language used in the Equality Act 2010 to refer to any part of a process of transitioning to live in a different gender (regardless of whether any hormonal or surgical changes take place).

Intersex

Umbrella term used for people who are born with variations of sex characteristics, which do not always fit society's perception of male or female bodies. Intersex is not the same as gender identity or sexual orientation.

Misgender/misgendering

When somebody makes incorrect assumptions about your gender or refuses to accept your gender and uses language that makes this apparent, such as pronouns or gendered language like 'sir' or 'madam'.

Non-binary person

A person identifying as either having a gender which is in-between or beyond the two categories 'man' and 'woman', as fluctuating between 'man' and 'woman', or as having no gender, either permanently or some of the time.

Passing

Being seen or read as a certain gender. Most often, this refers to being read as the gender you identify as e.g. a trans man being read as a man. Sometimes, trans people may try and pass to avoid having to out themselves – such as a non-binary person trying to pass as either a man or woman.

Pronouns

The way someone refers to you. The most commonly used pronouns are 'she/her/hers', normally used for women, and 'he/him/his', normally used for men. Some people will use gender neutral pronouns, such as the singular 'they/them/theirs' or 'ze/hir/hirs', and some people will use a mixture of pronouns. It is not always possible to know someone's gender identity from the pronouns they use.

Transgender/trans

Equivalent inclusive umbrella terms for anyone whose gender identity or gender expression does not fully correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth. At the Scottish Trans Alliance, we use trans to refer to trans men and trans women, non-binary people, and cross-dressing people.

Transition

The process of changing the way you live in order to match up with your gender identity. Examples of transitioning include changing your name, asking people to use different pronouns for you, and changing the way you express your gender. For some people, this will involve medical treatments such as hormone therapy and surgery.

Trans man

A person who was assigned female at birth but has a male gender identity and therefore transitions to live fully as a man.

Transphobia

Discriminatory or prejudiced actions or ideas related to someone's actual or perceived gender identity or gender expression.

Trans woman

A person who was assigned male at birth but has a female gender identity and therefore transitions to live fully as a woman.
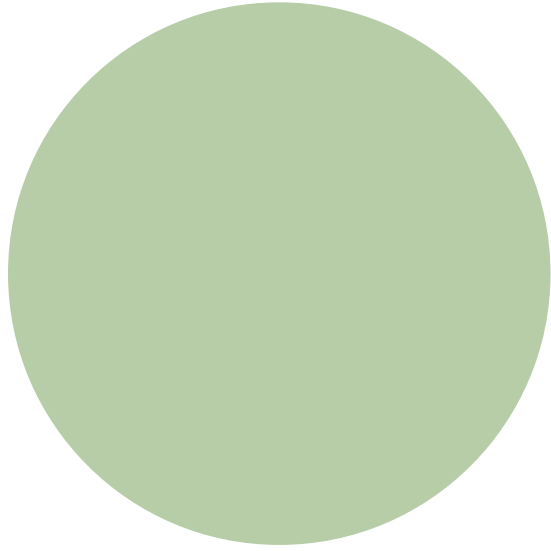
Large print

If you need this document in larger print or another format or language, please contact us on 0131 467 6039 or info@scottishtrans.org.

This document is available in PDF format on our website: www.scottishtrans.org/non-binary

Scottish Trans

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Equality Network

The Equality Network is a national lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) equality and human rights charity for Scotland.

www.equality-network.org
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