



SUPPORTIVE FRIENDS, UNPREPARED INSTITUTIONS

**The experience of LGBTQI students in Hungarian schools
based on the National School Climate Survey**

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Háttér Society, 2019

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FOREWORD

Háttér Society's Information and Counseling Hotline and Legal Aid Service have been receiving requests from clients who attend educational institutions for decades. We have been approached by LGBTQI students who were bullied or threatened by other students and got no help in their schools, but also students who were harassed by their teachers, or teachers who were worried about their students. Bullying or abuse may take place not only in schools but also summer camps and dormitories. In one case a school rejected the application of a student because the student was raised by lesbian parents; Háttér represented the student both in front of the Equal Treatment Authority and during a court procedure.

In 2015, Háttér Society, Romaversitas, the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union and the Action and Protection Foundation sent out an online survey to all high schools in Hungary as part of a research project on bias-motivated harassment in schools. The questions focused on both the prevalence of harassment in educational institutions, as well as efforts and instruments to prevent and respond to such incidents. The survey was filled by 436 schools. Some of these were also interviewed by researchers to get deeper insight. Almost half of the schools (200 institutions) reported that they are actively engaged in fighting school bullying. However, the research showed that this active engagement was often only verbal commitment: there are hardly any schools in which someone is actually responsible for preventing and responding to bullying, where incidents are registered and monitored, and in which there are policies for responding to bullying.

Even if school authorities think it is important to pay attention to bullying, a systematic handling of school bullying and especially bias-motivated school bullying is not at all common in Hungary. At the same time, data presented here show that anti-LGBTQI bullying is very much present in Hungarian schools.

The US-based organization GLSEN (glsen.org) has been conducting research on school climate since 1999. We cooperated with them in adapting the survey they use to the Hungarian context and in analyzing results.

Our aim is to put in practice the principles laid down in the law on public education in Hungary:

- public education is governed by the moral and intellectual values of knowledge, justice, order, liberty, fairness and solidarity, as well as equal treatment (...) (Article 1(2));
- the pedagogical culture of educational institutions is characterized by fostering individual treatment, the acceptance of children and students, trust, love and empathy (...) (Article 1(3)).

The legislation also requires that all schools provide "healthy and safe conditions" for education (Article 25(5)).

Students feel better, and thus study better in supportive schools that take action against bullying. Paying proper attention to bullying, being supportive, and preventing and responding to harassment deliver results. Our aim is to make teachers and other professionals working with youth able to support LGBTQI students, and create

inclusive and safe schools by preventing and responding to all forms of harassment. We are members of the Diversity Education Working Group (sokszinusegoktatas.hu) and the Network of Human Rights Educators (ejha-halozat.hu) so that we can collaborate with other organizations and professionals to make sure that adequate assistance can get to every school and every student in need of support. At present we are working on a project aiming at supporting LGBTQI victims of gender-based violence, and we cooperate with school psychologists and social workers who regularly deal with school bullying and its effects.

We are glad that there are so many teachers and students who support our work. A student told in an interview we made in 2018: “Staying invisible is not a solution. Accepting that you are a victim, and that this is the life others think you should live will not solve your problems.

Because there are other ways and there is help.” We see from the reports of students and teachers who turn to our Information and Counseling Hotline or Legal Aid Service how much strength and hope there is in these young people and their teachers who step up for themselves and others. Dozens of students and teachers helped distribute our call for participation in the survey all over the country. A trans student who negotiates their gender identity and preferred name with their teachers and school director, or a student who initiates a club for LGBTQI students and their allies in their school have immense strength – and we all have to support them, who so often fight alone in their school and make it easier for those coming after them. We would like to thank everyone for this work!

Bea Sándor
Budapest, March 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

919 participants (LGBTQI students aged between 13 and 21) completed an online survey about their experiences in school during the 2016-2017 school year, including hearing biased remarks, feeling safe, being harassed, and feeling comfortable at school. They were also asked about their academic experiences, attitudes about school, and the availability of supportive school resources helping the formation of an inclusive school environment that ensures equal access to education for all students.

The majority (82%) reported being **verbally harassed** at some point in the past year based on their personal characteristics. LGBTQI students most commonly reported experiencing verbal harassment at school because of their sexual orientation (64%) or how they expressed their gender (56%).

22% of LGBTQI students reported **physical harassment** (e.g. being shoved or pushed) because of their sexual orientation. Almost one in five LGBTQI students (18 and 19%, respectively) experienced physical harassment because of their gender identity or gender expression.

13% of LGBTQI students were **physically assaulted** (punched, kicked or injured with an object) at school because of their sexual orientation, and 10% because of their gender identity or expression.

Other forms of harassment were also present at schools: such as being deliberately excluded or being the target of rumors, sexual harassment, and cyberbullying. Most LGBTQI students had experienced the two most common

forms of relational aggression: intentional exclusion by peers and being the target of mean lies and rumors. 80% reported that they had had mean rumors or lies told about them at school; 78% had felt deliberately excluded or “left out” by other students; 28% experienced electronic harassment or cyberbullying (harassment through text messages, e-mails and social media sites). Four in ten LGBTQI students (40%) had been sexually harassed at school (e.g. experienced unwanted touching or sexual remarks directed at them). Nearly one third (30%) of LGBTQI students reported that their property had been stolen or purposefully damaged by other students at school in the past year.

Students do not always **report** school-based incidents of abuse and assault. Two thirds (66%) of LGBTQI students had never reported such incidents. 52% of those who did not report did not want to be “outed” as being LGBTQI to staff or family members by reporting such incidents, and half of them (50%) did not think school staff would have done anything about it.

Indeed, the most frequent **reaction from school staff** (52%) was that teachers told victims of harassment or assault to ignore the incident. 44% of students indicated that school staff had talked to the perpetrator and told them to stop. However, one in three (32%) reported that the teacher or other school staff had not taken any action.

Data show that the frequency and severity of victimization correlates with grade average: more severe victimization was also related to lower **academic**

achievement among LGBTQI students. Students who are regularly harassed or assaulted in school may attempt to avoid these hurtful experiences by not attending school and, accordingly, may be more likely to miss school than students who do not experience such victimization. We found that experiences of harassment and assault were, in fact, related to missing days of school. Students were more than twice as likely to have missed school in the past month if they had experienced higher levels of victimization related to their sexual orientation (41% versus 17%) or gender expression (42% vs. 17%).

Students who experience victimization or discrimination at school may feel excluded and disconnected from the school community. Students who experienced a higher severity of victimization based on sexual orientation or gender expression had lower levels of **school belonging** than students who experienced less severe victimization in school. More than half (61%) of students who experienced lower levels of victimization (never or rarely) based on their gender expression reported a positive sense of connection to their school, compared to hardly more than one third (38%) of students who experienced higher levels of victimization (sometimes, often, or frequently) based on sexual orientation.

LGBTQI students who experienced higher levels of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender expression (sometimes, often, frequently) were 1.5 times more likely to report higher levels of **depression** than those students who experienced lower levels (never, rarely): 65% vs. 39% for sexual orientation; and 64% vs. 38% for gender expression.

LGBTQI students who reported more frequent victimization regarding their sexual orientation or

gender expression also had lower levels of **self-esteem**. LGBTQI students who experienced higher levels of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender expression (sometimes, often, frequently) were less likely to report higher self-esteem than those experiencing lower levels.

The presence of **supportive teachers and other school staff** as well as the **inclusion of positive LGBTQI-related information in the curriculum** is in direct connection with students' wellbeing at school. LGBTQI students who were taught positive information about LGBTQI people, history and events were more likely to report that the general student body is more accepting of LGBTQI people; more likely to feel like they belong in their school; less likely to miss days of school because of feeling unsafe; and less likely to feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation.

LGBTQI students in schools with any type of **policy about bullying or harassment** were more likely to report that teachers intervened when homophobic or transphobic remarks were made; more likely to report incidents of harassment and assault to school staff; and more likely to report that staff intervention regarding harassment and assault was effective.

We offered the possibility of providing more detailed answers after each thematic block throughout the survey, so that LGBTQI students can describe their experiences. We quote some of these accounts and opinions throughout the report, marking quotations from students with blue.

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METHODS AND SAMPLE

Participants, students aged between 13 and 21, completed an online survey about their experiences in school during the 2016-2017 school year, including hearing biased remarks, feeling safe, being harassed, and feeling comfortable at school. They were also asked about their academic experiences, attitudes about school, involvement in school, and the availability of supportive school resources.

Youth were eligible to participate in the survey if they were at least 13 years of age, attended a primary or secondary school in Hungary during the 2016-2017 school year, and identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a sexual orientation other than heterosexual (e.g. queer) or described themselves as transgender or as having another gender identity that is not cisgender (“cisgender” describes a person whose gender identity is aligned with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth). Data collection occurred between June and September 2017.¹ ; Our advertisements promoting participation in the survey reached youth most of all through social media sites. We also used posters at popular clubs, meeting points as well

as events and festivals many students attend, and asked teachers and school principals to distribute the survey. Due to its nature, the survey was detailed and lengthy: the fact that students spent at least 30-50 minutes answering all questions shows the high level of their commitment.

2798 people began to provide answers; the final sample consisted of a total of 919 students. Students came from all counties of Hungary, and the municipality of Budapest. Table 1.1 presents participants’ demographic characteristics. More than half identified as female (57%), about half identified as gay or lesbian (57%), and most (74%) were between the ages of 14 and 18. As for their nationality, 95% marked Hungarian and 2% identified as Roma, other nationalities (Serbian, Croatian, Slovak, German, Romanian, Chinese, etc.) were marked by a fewer number of respondents (between 0.1 és 1%). Table 1.2 shows the characteristics of the schools attended by participants, and Table 1.3 shows their regional distribution.

.....

1 Data collection continued during the first two weeks of the 2017-2018 academic year. Preliminary statistical analyses did not provide any indication that these students were different in their pattern of responses from other students in the sample, indicating that the start of the new academic year likely did not have an effect on their reports of the prior academic year.

TABLE 1.1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Sexual orientation (n=919)		Age (n=919)	
Gay or lesbian	57%	13	2,5%
Bisexual or pansexual	33%	14	8%
Other sexual orientation (e.g. queer, questioning)	10%	15	14,5%
		16	19%
		17	23%
		18	17%
		19	10%
		20	5%
		21	1%
		Mean age (n=919) 16.7 years	

TABLE 1.2: SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Type of school		School size	
Elementary school	13%	Less than 200 students	6%
High school - 4 grade	32%	Between 201 and 500	38%
High school - 6 grade	12%	Between 501 and 1000	45%
High school - 8 grade	8%	Between 1001 and 1500	8%
Secondary school	28%	More than 1500 students	3%
Vocational school	7%		
Type of school by maintaining institution		Locale	
State	77%	Budapest and agglomeration	33%
Church	15%	City (more than 100.000 inhabitants)	20%
Foundation or private	8%	Town	42%
		Village	5%

TABLE 1.3: COUNTY DISTRIBUTION

Budapest	28%	Komárom-Esztergom	4%
Bács-Kiskun	5%	Nógrád	1%
Baranya	3%	Pest	7%
Békés	3%	Somogy	2%
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	5%	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	3%
Csongrád	5%	Tolna	2%
Fejér	3%	Vas	2%
Győr-Moson-Sopron	4%	Veszprém	3%
Hajdú-Bihar	5%	Zala	2%
Heves	3%	No answer	8%
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	2%		

Limitations

Because of its methodology, the survey cannot be representative, as the demographic composition of its target group, LGBTQI youth is not known. However, as discussed above, the questionnaire was distributed very widely: in addition to announcing the survey through LGBTQI community groups, LGBTQI youth-oriented social media, and youth advocacy organizations, we conducted targeted advertising on the social networking site Facebook used by many in Hungary in order to broaden our reach and obtain the widest possible sample. Advertising on Facebook allowed LGBTQI students who did not necessarily have any formal connection to the LGBTQI community to participate in the survey. However, the social networking advertisements for the survey were sent only to youth who gave some indication on their Facebook profile that they were LGBTQI. LGBTQI youth who were not comfortable identifying as LGBTQI in this manner would not have received the advertisement about the survey and may be somewhat underrepresented in the survey sample. Thus, LGBTQI youth who are perhaps the most isolated, those without a formal connection to the LGBTQI community and access to online resources and supports, and who are not comfortable identifying as LGBTQI in their Facebook profile may be underrepresented in the survey sample.

We also cannot make determinations from our data about the experiences of youth who might be engaging in same-sex sexual activity or experiencing same-sex attractions, but who do not identify themselves as LGB. These youth may be more isolated, unaware of supports available to them, or, even if aware, uncomfortable using such supports. Similarly, youth whose gender identity is not the same as their sex assigned at birth, but who do not identify as transgender, may also be more isolated and without the same access to resources as the youth in our survey.

It is also important to note that our survey only reflects the experiences of LGBTQI students who were in school during the 2015/16 school year. Lastly, the data from our survey are cross-sectional (i.e., the data were collected at one point in time), which means that we cannot determine causality. For example, although we can say that there was a relationship between the number of supportive staff and students' academic achievement, we cannot say that one predicts the other.

While considering these limitations, we can definitely say that we made all possible attempts at diverse recruitment, and our efforts have yielded a huge sample of LGBTQI students in Hungary.



PART I: EXPERIENCES OF HOSTILE SCHOOL CLIMATE FOR LGBTQI

SCHOOL SAFETY

Overall Safety at School

For LGBTQI youth, school can be an unsafe place for a variety of reasons: attending school offers a number of positive chances for socializing, however, if someone is harassed or abused, it is very difficult to stand one's ground day after day. Students in our survey were asked whether they ever felt unsafe at school during the past year because of a personal characteristic, including sexual orientation, gender, gender expression (i.e. how traditionally "masculine" or "feminine" they were in appearance or behavior), and body size or weight. As shown in Figure 1.1, LGBTQI students most commonly felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, their appearance and their gender expression: 52% reported feeling unsafe at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation; 37% reported feeling unsafe because of how they expressed their gender; and 27% felt unsafe because of their body size or weight.

When students feel unsafe or uncomfortable in school they may choose to avoid the particular areas or activities where they feel most unwelcome or may feel that they need to avoid attending school altogether. Thus, a hostile school climate can impact an LGBTQI student's ability to fully engage and participate with the school community. We asked LGBTQI students if there were particular spaces at school that they avoided specifically because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. As shown in Figure 1.2, LGBTQI students most commonly reported avoiding hallways or stairways, with more than one third of students avoiding

these spaces because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (33%). 31% of LGBTQI students also said that they avoided toilets and 27% is excluded from physical education classes as they try to avoid these.

In addition to avoiding certain areas of the school, LGBTQI students may also avoid certain school events because they feel unsafe or uncomfortable. The majority of the students (68%) had avoided extracurricular activities at school: 25% did this often and 19% sometimes. Of transgender students, there were even more (37%) who avoided extracurricular activities often or frequently. 57% of respondents had missed programs like class trips or going to the theatre at least once during the school year. 19% (28% of trans students) missed similar programs often or frequently.

There are much more students who accept same-sex attraction and bisexuality, but almost no one talks about transgender people and non-cisgender identities. People have less information, so it is much more challenging to come out as trans.

Feeling uncomfortable or unsafe at school can negatively affect the ability of students to succeed academically, particularly if it results in avoiding school or classes. When asked about absenteeism, one quarter (26%) of LGBTQI students reported missing at least one day of school during the last month of school (see Figure 1.3) because of not feeling safe.

FIGURE 1.1: FEELING UNSAFE AT SCHOOL BECAUSE OF ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Do you feel unsafe at school because of...?

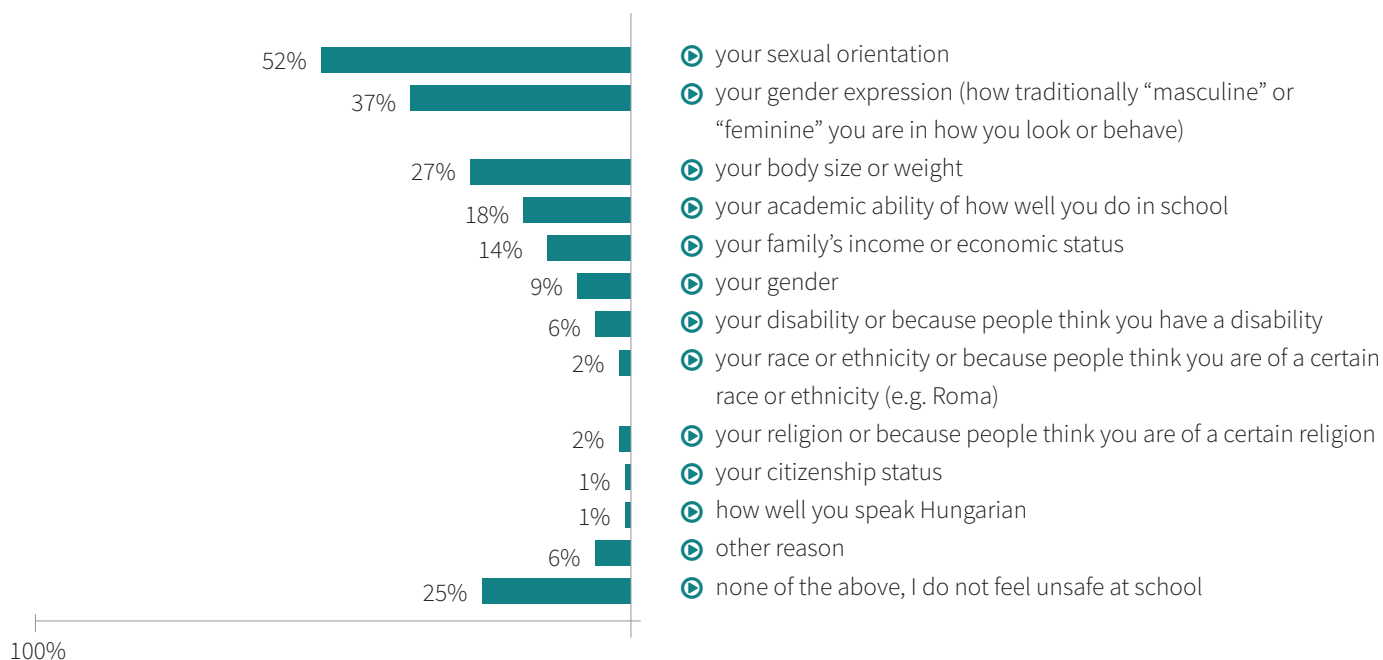


FIGURE 1.2: AVOIDING SPACES AT SCHOOL BECAUSE OF FEELING UNSAFE OR UNCOMFORTABLE

Do you avoid these spaces at school because you feel uncomfortable or unsafe in the space?

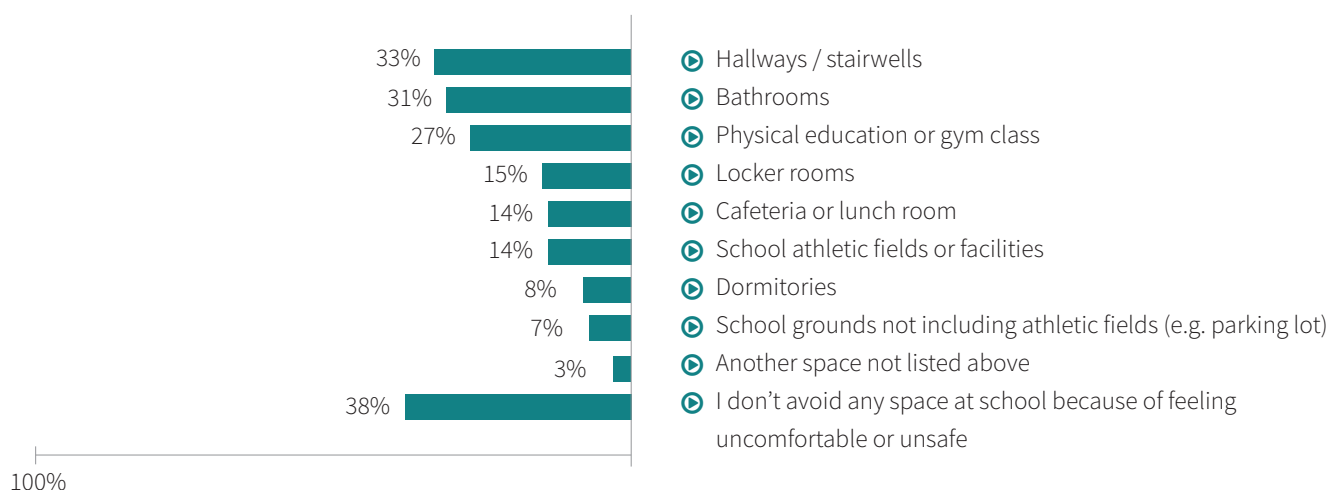
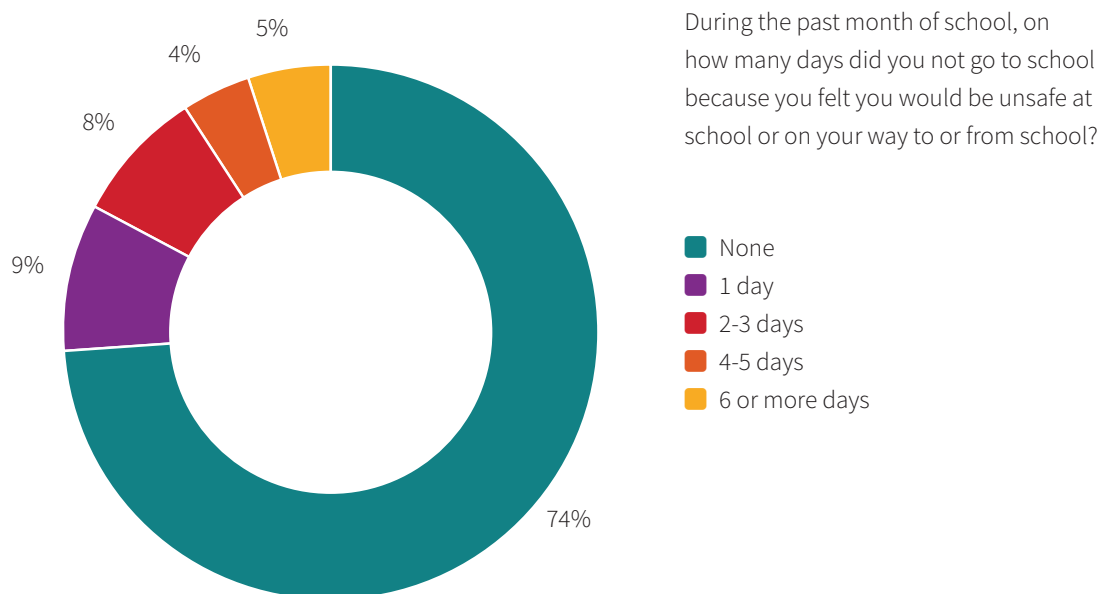


FIGURE 1.3: NUMBER OF DAYS THAT LGBTQI STUDENTS MISSED SCHOOL BECAUSE OF FEELING UNSAFE OR UNCOMFORTABLE



EXPOSURE TO BIASED LANGUAGE

Homophobic, sexist, racist, and other types of biased language can create a hostile school climate for all students. We asked LGBTQI students about their experiences with hearing anti-LGBTQI and also other types of biased remarks while at school. Because homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression are specifically relevant to LGBTQI students, we asked students in our survey additional questions about school staff's use of and responses to hearing these types of anti-LGBTQI language.

Homophobic remarks. We asked students about the frequency of hearing homophobic remarks (e.g. the Hungarian equivalents of "faggot," "lesbo" and other words also often used as swear words for objects). As shown in Figure 1.4, 96% of LGBTQI students heard such remarks in school. More than half (51%) of them reported hearing other students make these derogatory remarks often or frequently in school. In this regard, significant differences can be seen between schools based on their location (the size of cities, towns or villages) and also school types:

- in Budapest, 44% of students heard such remarks often or frequently; in cities with more than 100.000 inhabitants 48% of respondents, in smaller cities 55% of students, and in towns and villages 80% of students had the same experience;

- in high schools 44% of students, in secondary technical schools 50% and in vocational schools 67% of students heard homophobic remarks often or frequently during the school year.

We also asked students who heard homophobic remarks in school how pervasive this behavior was among the student population. As shown in Figure 1.5, one quarter of LGBTQI students who heard homophobic remarks at school (25%) reported that these types of remarks were made by most of their peers. In addition, more than two thirds (70%) of students reported ever hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers or other school staff (see Figure 1.6).

Hearing pejorative remarks in school can obviously have negative effects on students. We asked the LGBTQI students in our survey how bothered or distressed they were by these remarks. 73% found them bothering (44% "pretty much" or "extremely" bothering). (See Figure 1.7.)

Students who reported hearing homophobic remarks at school were asked how often teachers or other school staff were present and, if so, how often they intervened. As shown in Figure 1.8, homophobic remarks were most often made when teachers or school personnel were not present. Only 20% of students said staff were present

always or most of the time. However, even if they were present, teachers and school staff most often did not intervene when homophobic remarks were made. As shown in Figure 1.9, 26% reported that these school personnel intervened most of the time or always, and 35% reported that staff never intervened.

One would expect teachers and school staff to bear the responsibility for addressing problems of biased language in school. However, students may also intervene when hearing biased language, especially given that school personnel are often not present during such times. Other students' willingness to intervene when hearing this language may be another important indicator of school climate. However, only 15% of students reported that their peers intervened always or most of the time when hearing homophobic remarks, and 51% said that their peers never intervened (see also Figure 1.9).

The majority of LGBTQI students report rampant use of homophobic remarks in their schools, and this behavior contributes to a hostile learning environment for this population. Infrequent intervention by school authorities when hearing biased language in school sends a message to students that homophobic language is tolerated. Furthermore, school staff may themselves be modeling

poor behavior and legitimizing the use of homophobic language: most students (70%) also heard school staff make homophobic remarks at some time.



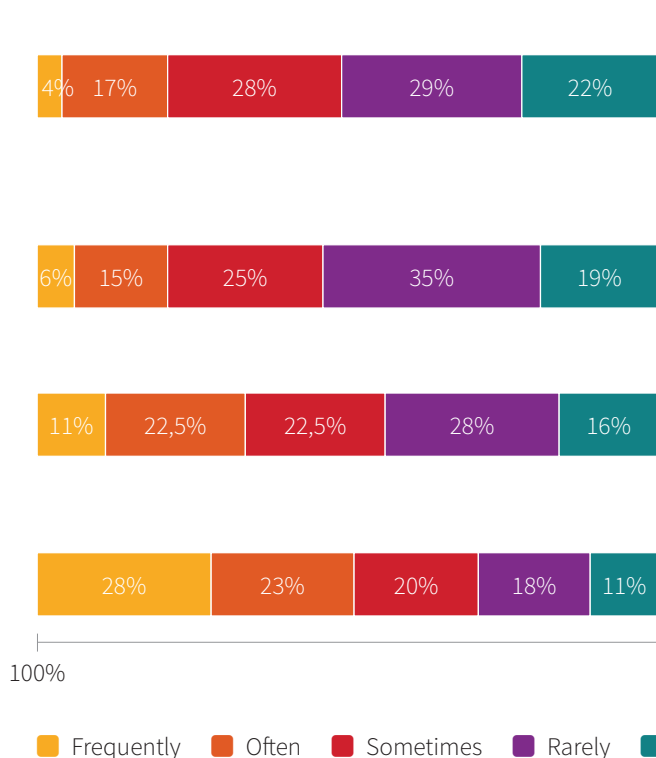
One of our teachers keeps making hurtful sexist and / or homophobic remarks as he thinks these are funny.

They treat it as a joke, which is so degrading. Not only students but also teachers say these homophobic things. I have not been attacked either verbally or physically, but I often feel like I am only a subject of jokes. They think it is totally absurd to be attracted to someone of the same sex, so they keep laughing at it.

In the high school I used to attend there were people who made jokes of me. They created a hostile environment in which being gay was only a joke to be laughed at by 30+ people. So I think teachers should be sensitized to not treat this as a joke or as something embarrassing, but really deal with it.

How could this be improved? If teachers were accepting, if we could talk about the subject openly, and if hurting LGBTQI people would have more dire consequences, and people were not allowed to throw about the word "faggot" like a ball at a PE class.

FIGURE 1.4: FREQUENCY OF HEARING ANTI-LGBTQI REMARKS AT SCHOOL



- How often have you heard other homophobic remarks used in school (such as "faggot," "dyke," or "queer" used in a negative manner)?
- How often have you heard comments about students not acting "masculine" enough?
- How often have you heard comments about students not acting "feminine" enough?
- How often have you heard negative remarks about transgender people (such as "tranny" and "he/she") used in your school?

Several accounts by students show that support from peers plays a significant role in their lives even if (or especially if) they are not accepted in other environments.

My classmates were surprised, but they took it naturally. I have never been treated unequally or discriminated. Indeed, if other students use word like “gay” or “faggot” at school, for both one another and objects, my classmates often tell them to stop because I might find it offensive. Our

teachers are not homophobic either, but even if they were, my classmates would tell them not to say such things.

For me it was a huge relief when my classmates found out that I was gay. Previously I had been so stressed, I could not really connect to others. But when I came out I realized that they really didn’t mind. Indeed, they take me in now. I became a real member of the class.

FIGURE 1.5: PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MAKING HOMOPHOBIC REMARKS

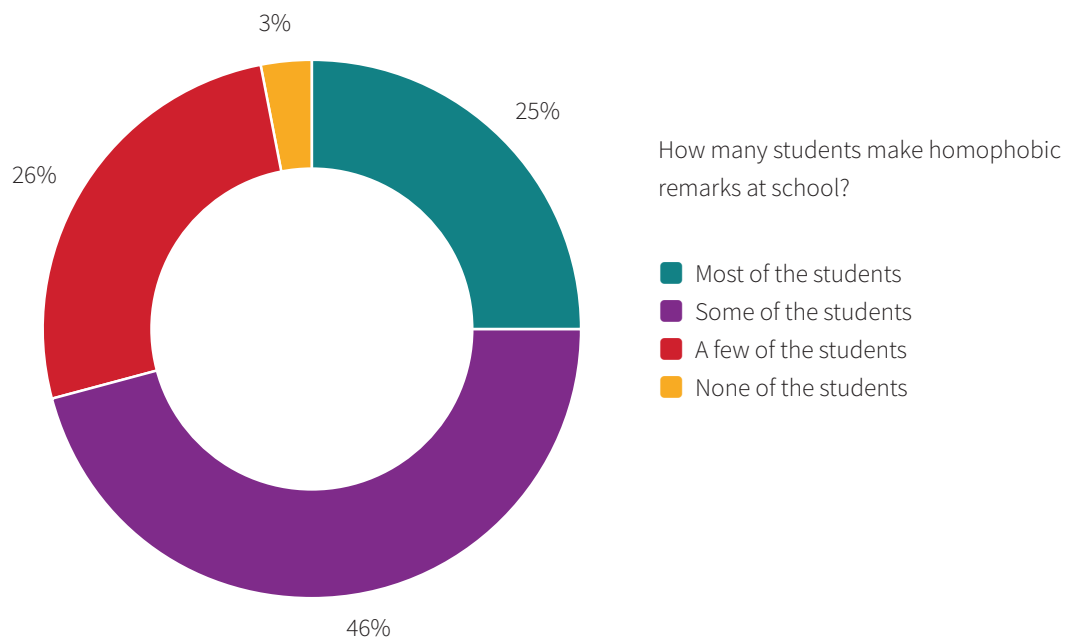


FIGURE 1.6: FREQUENCY OF HEARING HOMOPHOBIC REMARKS FROM SCHOOL STAFF

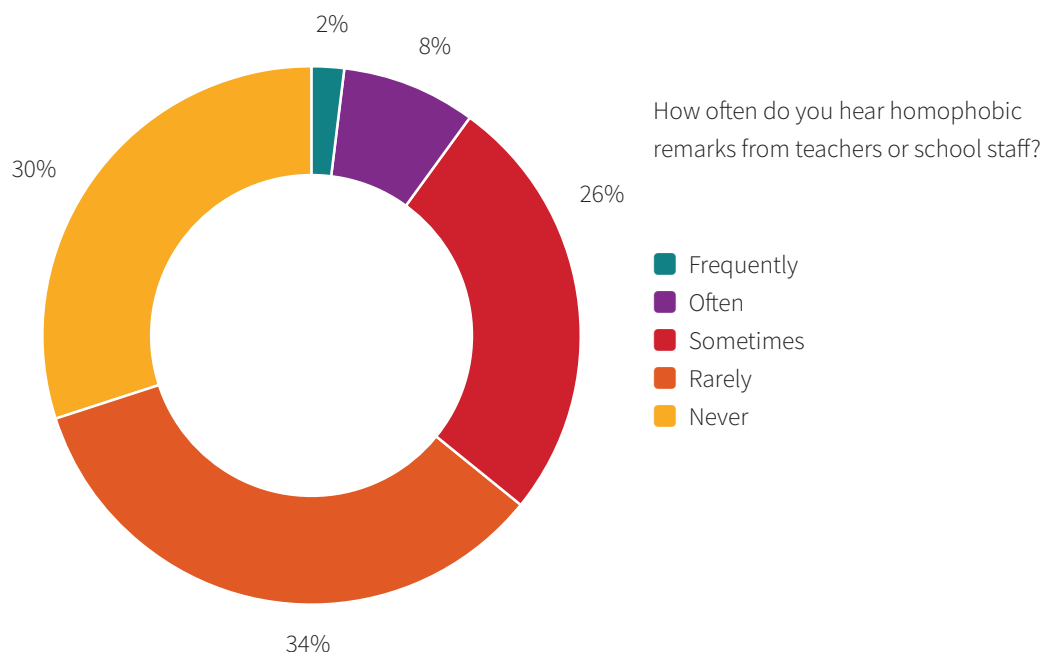


FIGURE 1.7: BEING BOTHERED OR DISTRESSED WHEN HEARING HOMOPHOBIC REMARKS

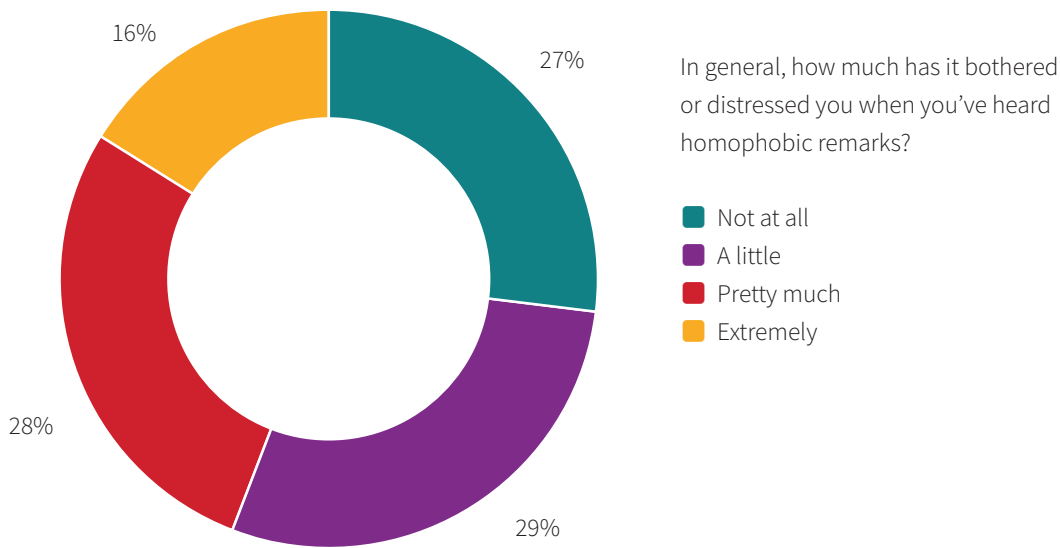


FIGURE 1.8: PRESENCE OF TEACHER OR OTHER SCHOOL STAFF WHEN HEARING HOMOPHOBIC REMARKS

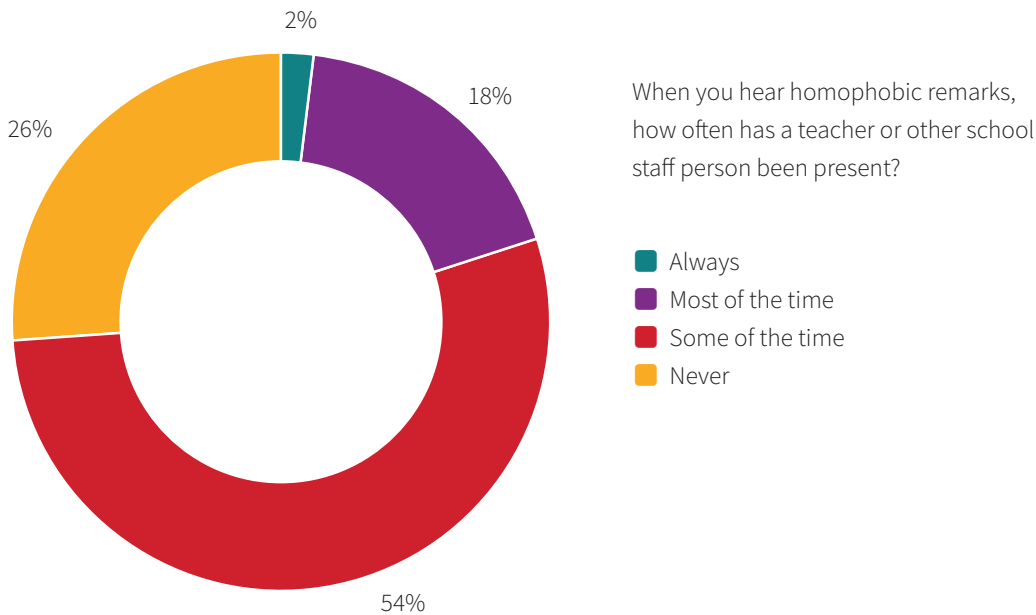
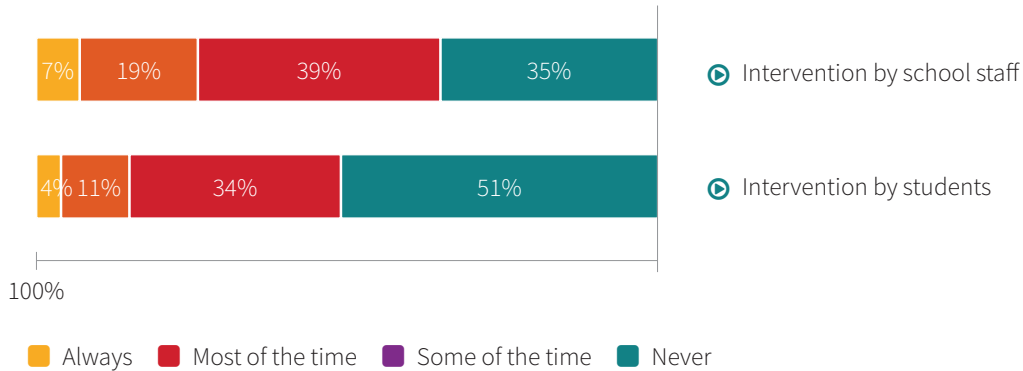


FIGURE 1.9: FREQUENCY OF INTERVENTION REGARDING HOMOPHOBIC REMARKS BY SCHOOL STAFF AND STUDENTS



Negative remarks about gender expression

Society often imposes norms for what is considered appropriate expression of one's gender. Those who express themselves in a manner considered to be atypical may experience criticism, harassment, and sometimes violence: transgressing norms related to gender roles is strongly sanctioned. Thus, we asked students two separate questions about hearing comments related to a students' gender expression — one question asked how often they heard remarks about someone not acting "masculine" enough, and another question asked how often they heard comments about someone not acting "feminine" enough.

Findings from this survey demonstrate that negative remarks about someone's gender expression were pervasive in schools. Overall, as shown in Figure 1.4, half of LGBTQI students reported hearing either type of remark about someone's gender expression often or frequently at school (54% about not being "masculine" and 44% about not being "feminine" enough). The frequency of remarks about students not acting "masculine" enough was significantly higher than the frequency of remarks about students not acting "feminine" enough, which suggests that "policing" of gender expression is more common for masculinity about male students than femininity among female students.

When asked how much of the student population made these types of remarks, 25% of students reported that only one or two students made such remarks, but 71% experienced this from more students, and 21% of students reported that most of their peers made negative remarks about someone's gender expression (see Figure 1.10). In addition, 74% of LGBTQI students reported that they heard these types of remarks from teachers and other school staff – 16% frequently or often (see Figure 1.11). As with intervention regarding homophobic remarks, the majority of LGBTQI students in Hungary reported that neither staff nor students usually respond when these comments are made: 12% reported that teachers or school staff intervened always or most of the time and 14% reported that other students intervened always or most of the time (see Figure 1.12). More than half (51%) of LGBTQI students never saw school staff intervene.

Negative remarks about transgender people

Similar to negative comments about gender expression, people may make negative comments about transgender people because they assume they pose a challenge to "traditional" ideas about gender. Therefore, we

asked students how often they heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people (e.g. "aberrant" or "he-she"). 72% of LGBTQI students in our survey reported hearing these comments, more than one quarter (29%) frequently or often (see also Figure 1.4).

The pervasiveness of anti-LGBTQI remarks is a concerning contribution to hostile school climates for all LGBTQI students. Any negative remark about sexual orientation, gender, or gender expression may signal to LGBTQI students that they are unwelcome in their school communities, even if a specific negative comment is not directly aligned to the individual sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression of the LGBTQI student who hears it.

Other types of biased remarks at school

In addition to hearing anti-LGBTQI remarks at school, hearing other types of biased language is also an important indicator of school climate for LGBTQI students. We asked students about their experiences hearing racist remarks (e.g. about people of African or Asian origin, "migrants" and also Hungarian Roma people), sexist remarks (e.g. when a girl is called a whore, girls' bodies and appearance are commented upon, or people talk about girls as inferior to boys), negative remarks about other students' ability (e.g. "idiot" or "retarded"), negative remarks about other students' body size or weight, and negative remarks about other students' religion. For most of these types of remarks, LGBTQI students in our survey reported that they were commonplace at their schools (see Figure 1.13). Almost three-quarters (74%) of students heard sexist remarks or negative comments about a student's ability at school often or frequently, and more than two-thirds (69%) had heard racist remarks in school often or frequently at school.

They look at LGBTQI people as a joke. So when one of the boys does not manage to do something or misbehaves, the PE teacher tells that he is a "fag." They are also sexist. When it comes up in class, a teacher mentions that someone was gay, everyone thinks it is just so funny. I would say that students are neutral: they do not want to hurt others, but they do not stand up for those who are abused either. They also often joke about the Holocaust, and I have been the only one who tells them to stop. No one else has raised their voice, not even the ones who find this hurtful. There are classes in which poorer students are laughed at.

FIGURE 1.10: PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MAKING NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT GENDER EXPRESSION

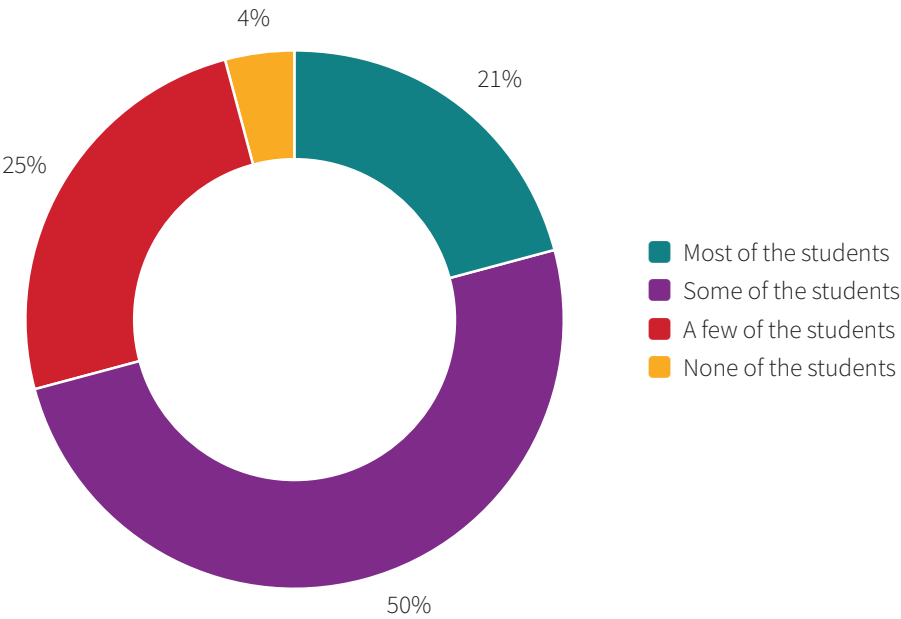


FIGURE 1.11: FREQUENCY OF HEARING NEGATIVE REMARKS ABOUT GENDER EXPRESSION FROM SCHOOL STAFF

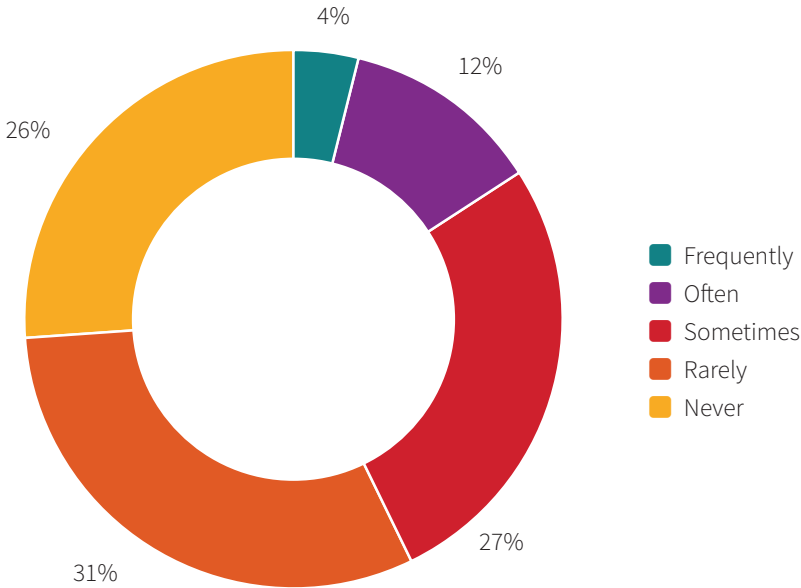


FIGURE 1.12: FREQUENCY OF INTERVENTION REGARDING NEGATIVE REMARKS ABOUT GENDER EXPRESSION BY SCHOOL STAFF AND STUDENTS

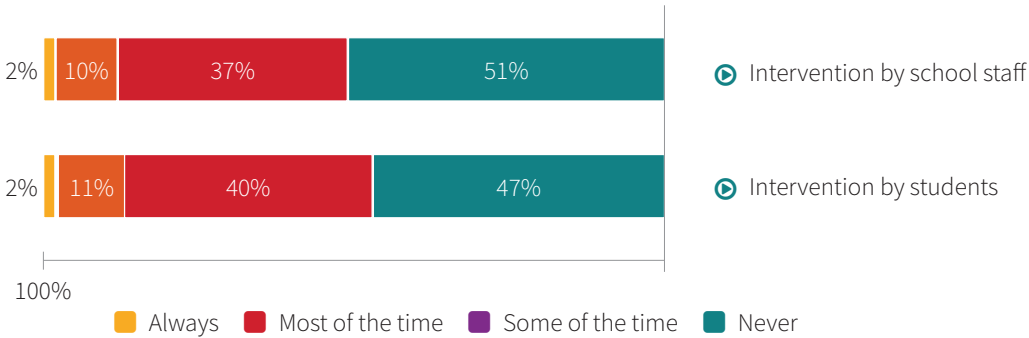
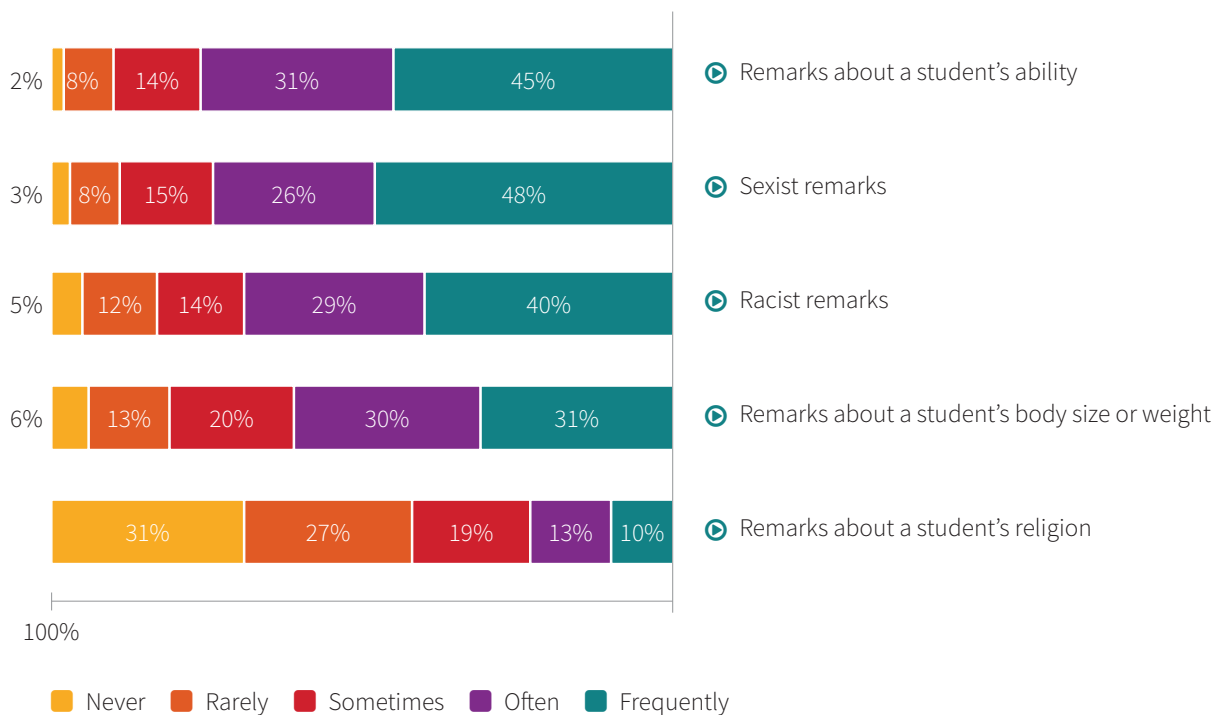


FIGURE 1.13: FREQUENCY OF OTHER TYPES OF REMARKS AT SCHOOL



EXPERIENCES OF HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT AT SCHOOL

Hearing anti-LGBTQI remarks in school can contribute to feeling unsafe at school and create a negative learning environment. However, direct experiences with harassment and assault may have even more serious consequences on the lives of these students. We asked survey participants how often (“never,” “rarely,” “sometimes,” “often,” or “frequently”) they had been verbally harassed, physically harassed, or physically assaulted at school during the past year specifically because of a personal characteristic, including sexual orientation, gender, gender expression (e.g. not acting “masculine” or “feminine” enough), disability, and race/nationality.

Verbal Harassment

Students in our survey were asked how often in the past year they had been verbally harassed (e.g., being called names or threatened) at school specifically because of personal characteristics: sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, and race/nationality. The majority (82%) reported being verbally harassed at some point in the past year based on any of these personal characteristics. LGBTQI students most commonly reported experiencing verbal harassment at school because of their sexual orientation or how they expressed their gender (see Figure 1.14). Almost two-thirds of LGBTQI students (64%) had been verbally harassed because of their sexual orientation;

nearly one-fifth (19%) experienced this harassment often or frequently; more than half of LGBTQI students (56%) were also verbally harassed at school because of their gender expression; nearly one-fifth (18%) reported being harassed for this reason often or frequently.

Physical Harassment

22% of LGBTQI students had been physically harassed (e.g. shoved or pushed) at some point at school during the past school year based on their sexual orientation. 18% and 19% respectively had been physically harassed at school because of their gender identity or gender expression (Figure 1.15).

Physical Assault

13% of LGBTQI students were assaulted at school because of their sexual orientation; 10% were assaulted at school because of how they expressed their gender, or their gender identity: they were punched, kicked, or injured with an object (Figure 1.16).

My classmates found out I was gay in 5th grade. They were not open-minded. They beat me up, threw objects at me, and so on. I began 6th grade at another school, but I was also beaten up while I was on my way home. It was reported to the police. I had to go to yet another school, but the boy who had attacked me kept threatening me. I tried to commit suicide several times.

FIGURE 1.14: FREQUENCY OF VERBAL HARASSMENT AT SCHOOL IN THE PAST YEAR

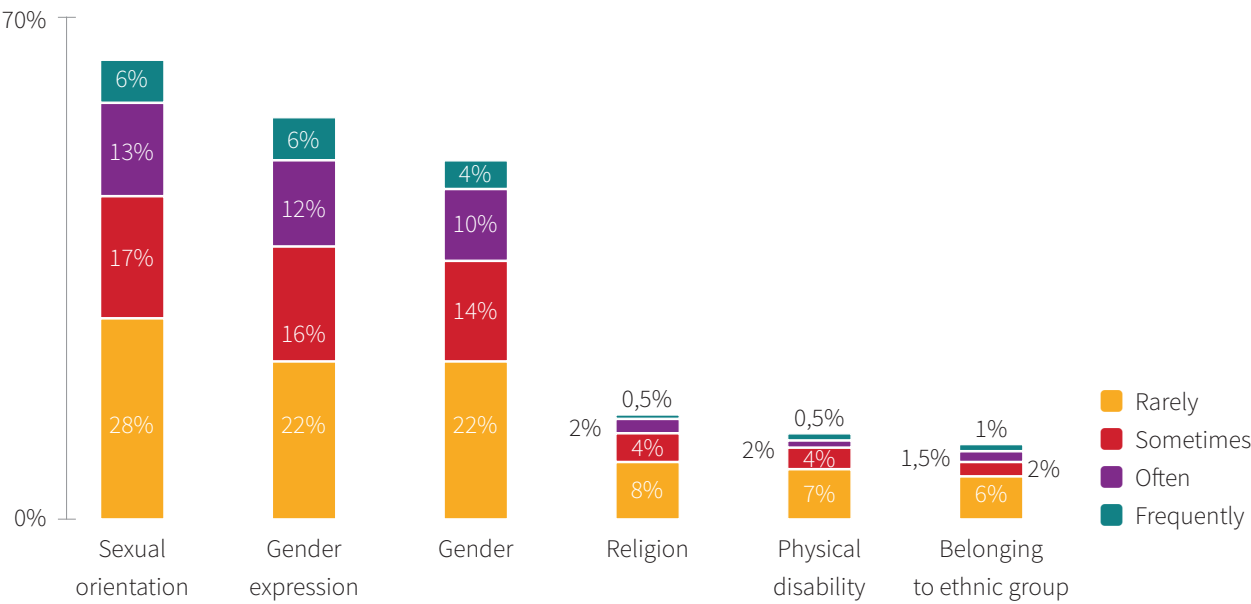


FIGURE 1.15: FREQUENCY OF PHYSICAL HARASSMENT AT SCHOOL IN THE PAST YEAR

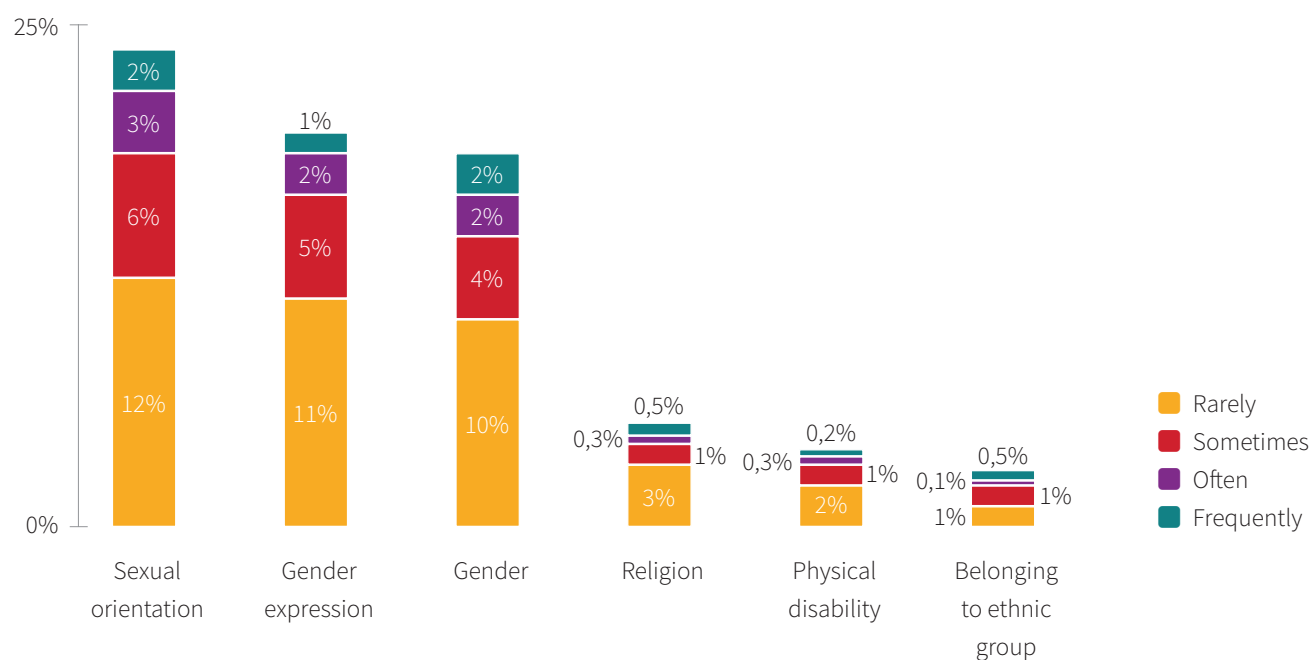
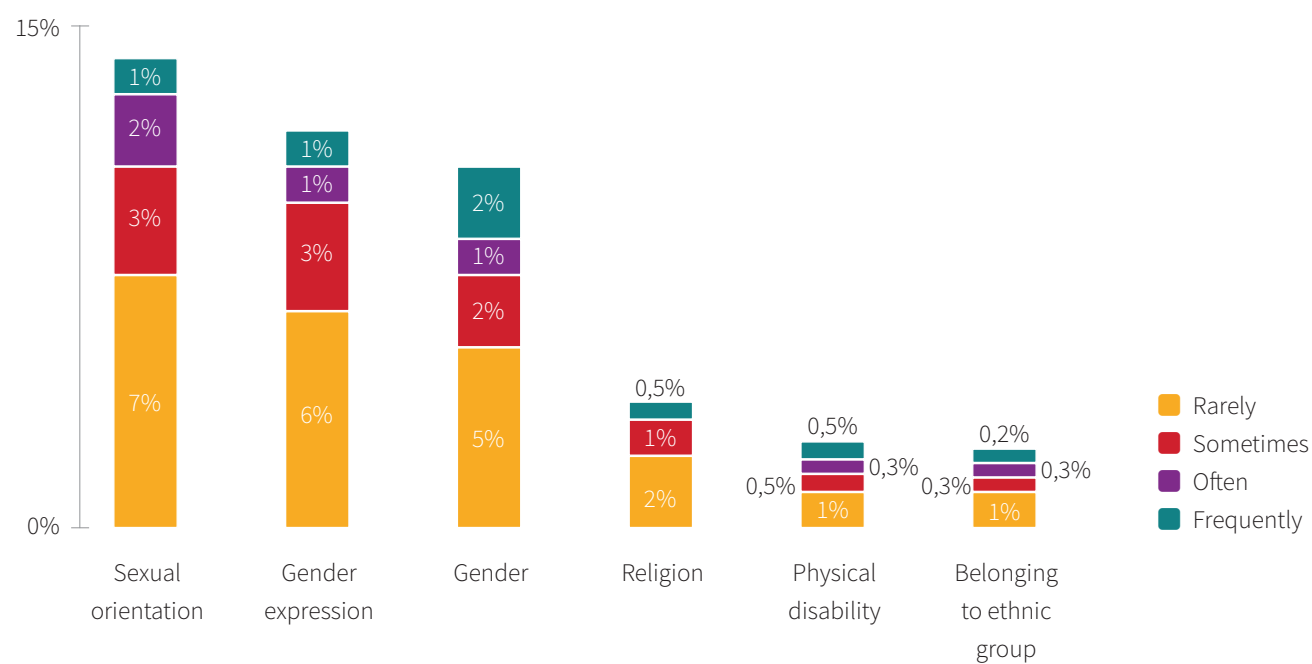


FIGURE 1.16: FREQUENCY OF PHYSICAL ASSAULT AT SCHOOL IN THE PAST YEAR



EXPERIENCES OF OTHER TYPES OF HARASSMENT AND NEGATIVE EVENTS

In our survey, we also asked LGBTQI students how often they experienced other types of harassment and other events in the past year, such as being deliberately excluded or being the target of rumors, sexual harassment, and cyberbullying.

Relational aggression. Research on school-based bullying and harassment often focuses on physical or overt acts of aggressive behavior; however, it is also important to examine relational forms of aggression that can damage peer relationships, such as spreading rumors or excluding students from peer activities. We asked participants how often they experience two common forms of relational aggression: being purposefully excluded by peers and being the target of mean rumors or lies. As illustrated in Figure 1.16, the vast majority (80%) of LGBTQI students in our survey had mean rumors or lies told about them at school (and 29% experienced this often or frequently). 78% had felt deliberately excluded or “left out” by other students, and 32% experienced this often or frequently.

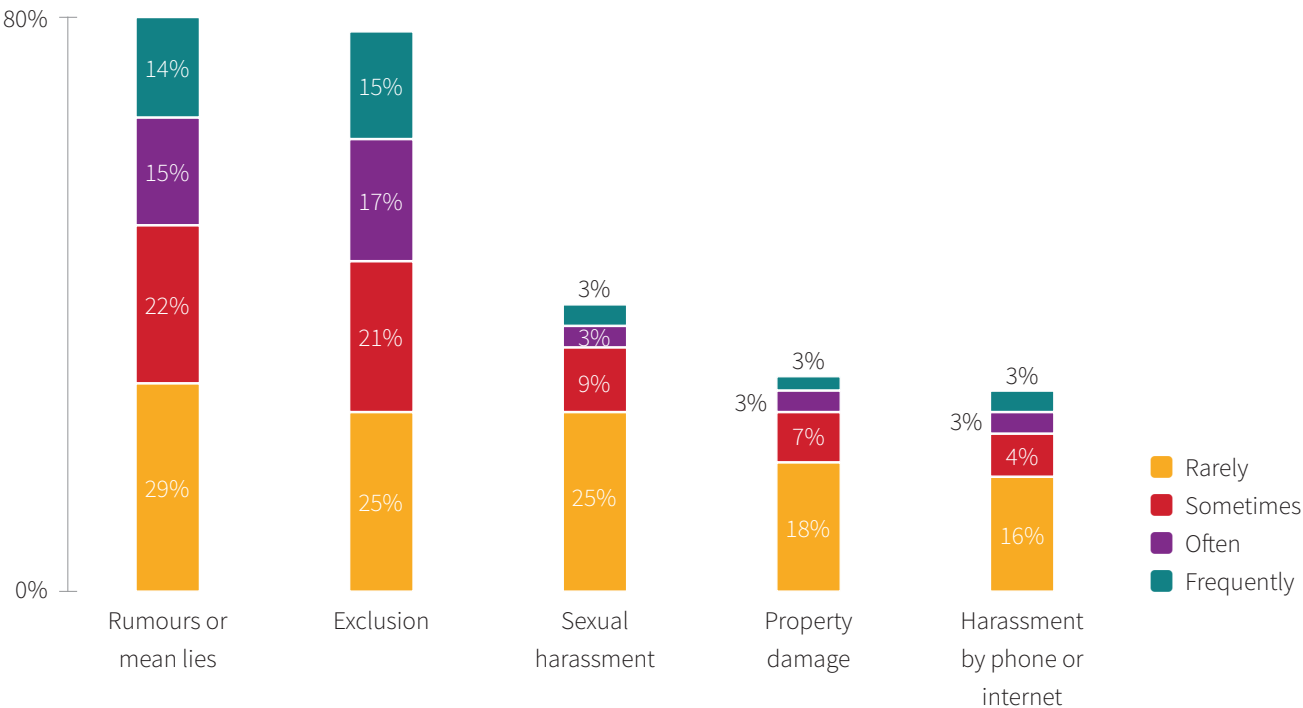
Electronic harassment or “cyberbullying.” Electronic harassment (often called “cyberbullying”) implies using an electronic medium, such as a mobile phone or Internet

communications, to threaten or harm others. In recent years there has been much attention given to this type of harassment, as access to the Internet, mobile phones, and other electronic forms of communication has increased for many youth. We asked students how often they were harassed or threatened by students at their school via electronic media (e.g. text messages, e-mails, Instagram, Twitter or Facebook). 28% of LGBTQI students reported experiencing this type of harassment in the past year, and 6% had experienced it often or frequently (see also Figure 1.17).

Sexual harassment. Survey participants were asked how often they had experienced sexual harassment at school, such as unwanted touching or sexual remarks directed at them. As shown in Figure 1.16, 4 in 10 LGBTQI students (40%) had been sexually harassed at school.

Property theft or damage at school. Having one’s personal property damaged or stolen is yet another dimension of a hostile school climate for students. Nearly one third (30%) of LGBTQI students reported that their property had been stolen or purposefully damaged by other students at school in the past year (see Figure 1.17).

FIGURE 1.17: FREQUENCY OF LGBTQI STUDENTS EXPERIENCING OTHER TYPES OF HARASSMENT IN THE PAST YEAR



REPORTING OF SCHOOL-BASED HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

When harassment and assault occurs in school, we expect the teachers and school personnel to address the problems effectively. However, students may not always feel comfortable reporting these events to school staff. In our survey, we asked those students who had experienced harassment or assault in the past school year how often they had reported the incidents to school staff. As shown in Figure 1.18, two thirds (66%) of LGBTQI students never reported the harassment of physical assault they had experienced at school. Only one third 34% of these students ever reported incidents to staff, and only 12% indicated that they regularly reported incidents of harassment or assault to school staff (“most of the time” or “always”).

We asked the students who said that they had never reported victimization to school personnel to indicate what reasons they had for not reporting. As shown in Figure 1.19, LGBTQI students mostly commonly said that they did not want their teachers or their family to know that they are LGBTQI (52%). At the same time, half of the students (50%) did not think school staff would take any action.

Students in our survey who said that they had reported incidents of victimization to school staff were also asked how effective staff members were in addressing the problem. As shown in Figure 1.20, only 40% of students

believed that staff responded effectively (“somewhat effective” or “very effective”) to their reports of victimization. We also asked these students what were the responses from school staff when they last reported these incidents (see Figure 1.21). The most common reaction (52%) was that staff told the student concerned to ignore what had happened. 44% of the students experienced that staff talked to the perpetrator and tried to convince them to stop harassment. 32% reported that staff did nothing to solve the problem.

Of these most common responses, only one (talking to the perpetrator) appears to be an appropriate or potentially effective intervention for in-school victimization.

Given that family members may be able to advocate on behalf of the student with school personnel, we also asked students if they reported harassment or assault to a family member (i.e., to their parent or guardian or to another family member). Less than half of the students (37%) said that they had ever told a family member (see Figure 1.18). 63% never did that. Students who had reported incidents to a family member were asked how often a family member had talked to school staff about the incident, and almost two-thirds (63%) said that the family member had ever addressed the issue with school staff (see Figure 1.22).

FIGURE 1.18: FREQUENCY OF LGBTQI STUDENTS REPORTING HARASSMENT OR ASSAULT

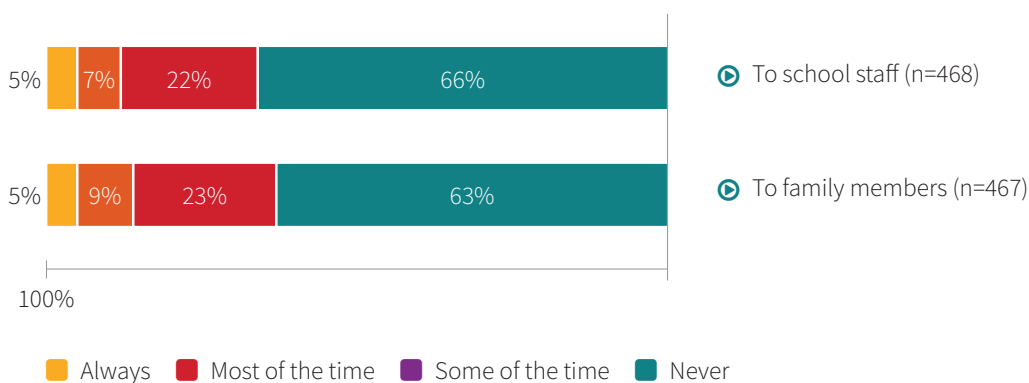


FIGURE 1.19: REASONS STUDENTS DID NOT REPORT VICTIMIZATION TO THE SCHOOL

(percent of those who did not always report victimization)

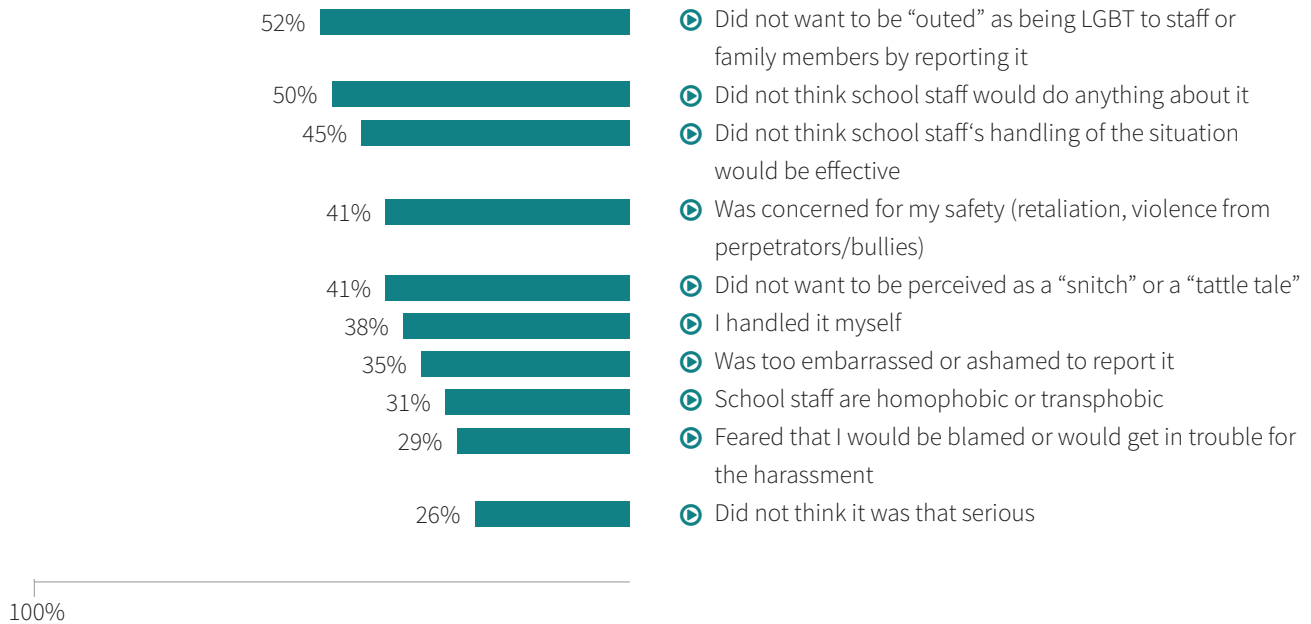


FIGURE 1.20: PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL STAFF’S RESPONSE TO THE REPORTING OF VICTIMIZATION

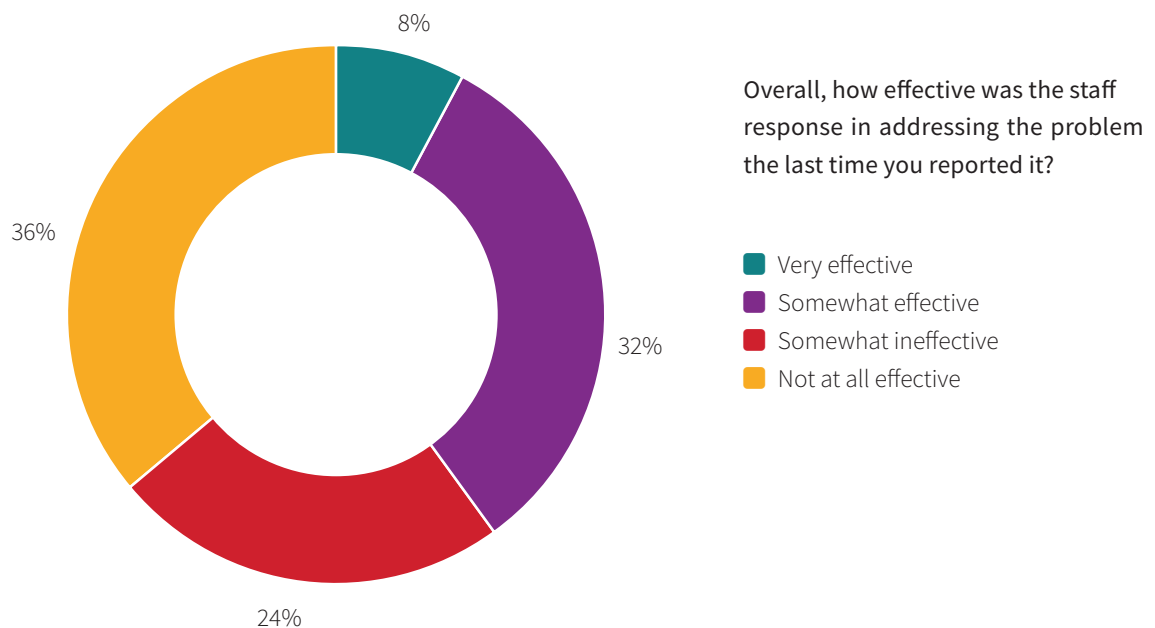


FIGURE 1.21: SCHOOL STAFF RESPONSE TO MOST RECENT INCIDENT OF VICTIMIZATION

(Percent of those who ever reported victimization to school staff)

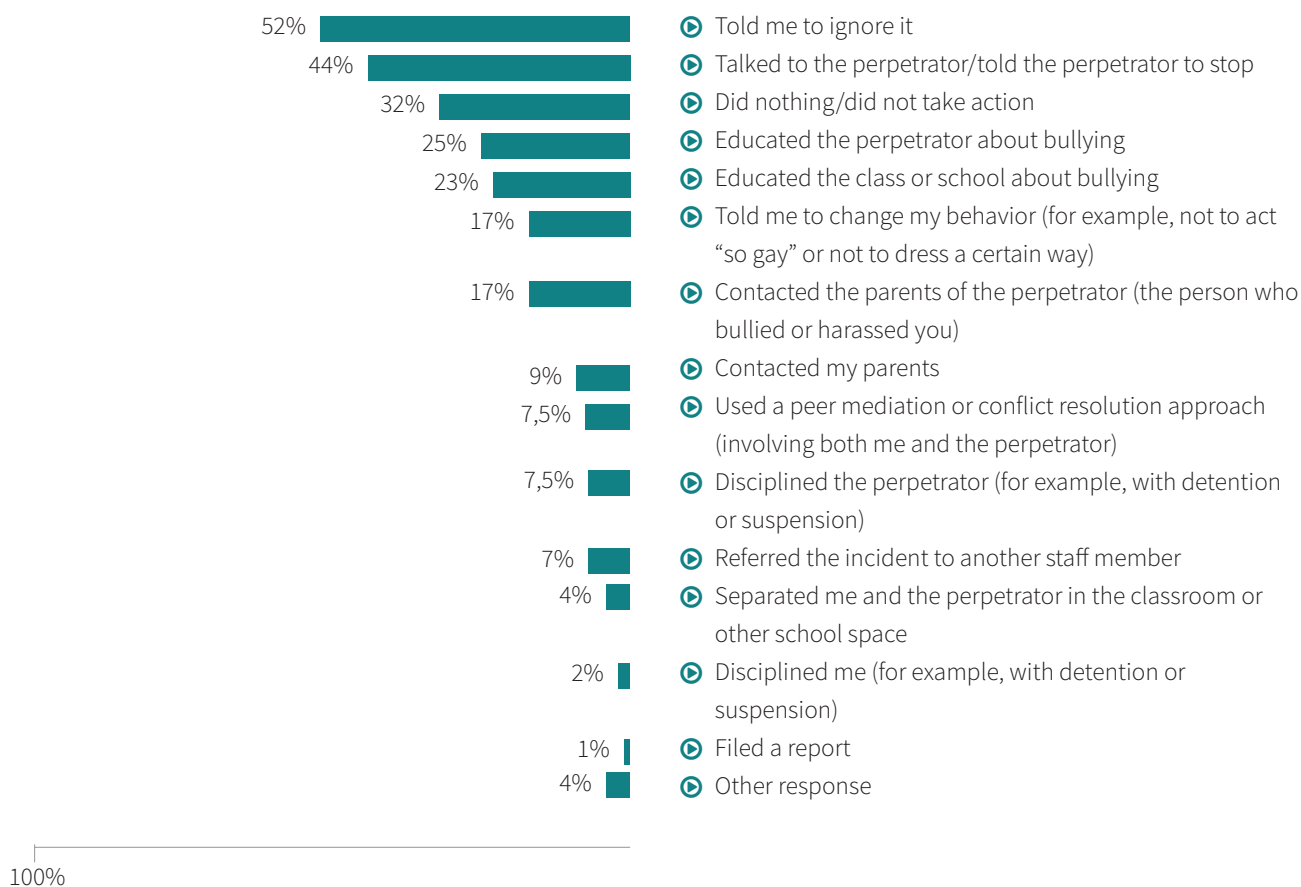
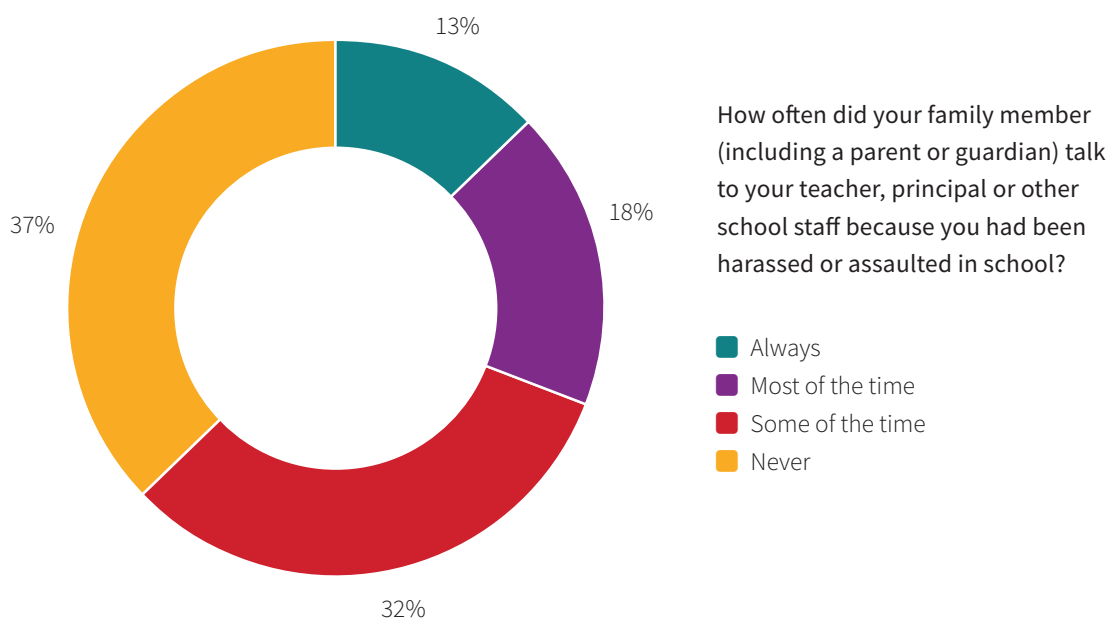


FIGURE 1.22: FREQUENCY OF A FAMILY MEMBER SPEAKING WITH SCHOOL STAFF ABOUT THE HARASSMENT OR ASSAULT





HOSTILE SCHOOL CLIMATE AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Although all students have an equal right to education, LGBTQI students can face a variety of obstacles to academic success and opportunity. Given the hostile climates encountered by LGBTQI students, it is understandable that some students might have poorer outcomes in school. In this section, we examine in closer detail the educational experiences of LGBTQI students, particularly how they might be affected by hostile school climate.

Educational Aspirations and Future Plans

In order to examine the relationship between school climate and educational outcomes, we asked students about their aspirations with regard to post-secondary education, including plans to graduate versus dropping out of school, as well as their highest level of expected educational attainment.

When asked about their aspirations with regard to post-secondary education, only 2% of LGBTQI students said

they did not plan on finishing secondary school, and 7% planned to finish only secondary school and not continue their education. 58% plans to get a college or university degree (see Figure 1.23). It is important to note that the survey only included students who were in school during the 2016-2017 school year. Thus, the percentage of LGBTQI students not pursuing post-secondary education would be higher with the inclusion of students who had already left high school without finishing.

Those students who planned on postgraduate education had lower levels of victimization than students who were only planning on finished secondary school or vocational school (see Figure 1.24).

Academic Achievement

More severe victimization was also related to lower academic achievement among LGBTQI students. As shown in Figure 1.25, LGBTQI students who had higher levels of victimization because of their sexual orientation

or gender expression reported lower grades than for students who experienced less harassment and assault. For example, 47% and 49% of LGBTQI students who experienced lower levels of verbal harassment due to sexual orientation or gender expression (never or rarely) reported high achievement (4s and 5s, or mostly 5s) compared to 37% of LGBTQI students who experienced higher levels (sometimes, often, or frequently).²

Absenteeism

Students who are regularly harassed or assaulted in school may attempt to avoid these hurtful experiences by not attending school and, accordingly, may be more likely to miss school than students who do not experience such victimization. We found that experiences of harassment and assault were, in fact, related to missing days of school.³

Sense of School Belonging

The degree to which students feel accepted by and a part of their school community is another important indicator of school climate and is related to a number of educational outcomes. Students who experience victimization or discrimination at school may feel excluded and disconnected from their school community. In order to assess LGBTQI students' sense of belonging to their school community, survey participants were given a series of statements about feeling like a part of their school and were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements.⁴

41% of LGBTQI students (48% of transgender students) felt excluded at school. 47% told they did not make

friends easily at school, and half (50%) of them felt they did not belong at the school. In church schools, an even higher proportion, 60% of LGBTQI students felt they did not belong.

As illustrated in Figure 1.27, students who experienced a higher severity of victimization based on sexual orientation or gender expression had lower levels of school belonging than students who experienced less severe victimization in school.⁵ For example, more than half (61%) of students who experienced lower levels of victimization (never or rarely) based on their sexual orientation or gender expression reported a positive sense of connection to their school, compared to 38% of students who experienced higher levels of victimization (sometimes, often, or frequently).

Well-being

Being harassed or assaulted at school may have a negative impact on students' mental health and self-esteem. Given that LGBTQI students are at increased likelihood for experiencing harassment and assault in school, it is especially important to examine how these experiences relate to their wellbeing. LGBTQI students who reported more severe victimization regarding their sexual orientation or gender expression had higher levels of depression,⁶ than those who reported less severe victimization (see Figure 1.28). For example, LGBTQI students who experienced higher levels of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender expression (sometimes, often, frequently) were 1.5 times more likely to report higher levels of depression than those students who experienced lower levels (never,

2 The relationship between grade average and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. Victimization based on sexual orientation: $r = -.14$, $p < .01$; Victimization based on gender expression: $r = -.13$, $p < .001$.

3 The relationship between missing school and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. Victimization based on sexual orientation: $r = .31$, $p < .001$; victimization based on gender expression: $r = .32$, $p < .001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

4 Items assessing school belonging were taken from the 2012 survey of the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment: <http://www.oecd.org/pisa>.

5 The relationship between school belonging and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. Victimization based on sexual orientation: $r = -.33$, $p < .001$; Victimization based on gender expression: $r = -.32$, $p < .001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

6 Depression was measured using the 20-item Likert-type CES-D depression scale, which includes such items as "During the past week, I felt hopeful about the future." Higher levels of depression are indicated by a cutoff at the mean score of depression: students above the mean were characterized as "Demonstrating Higher Levels of Depression."

rarely): 65% vs. 39% for sexual orientation, and 64% vs. 38% for gender expression. ⁷

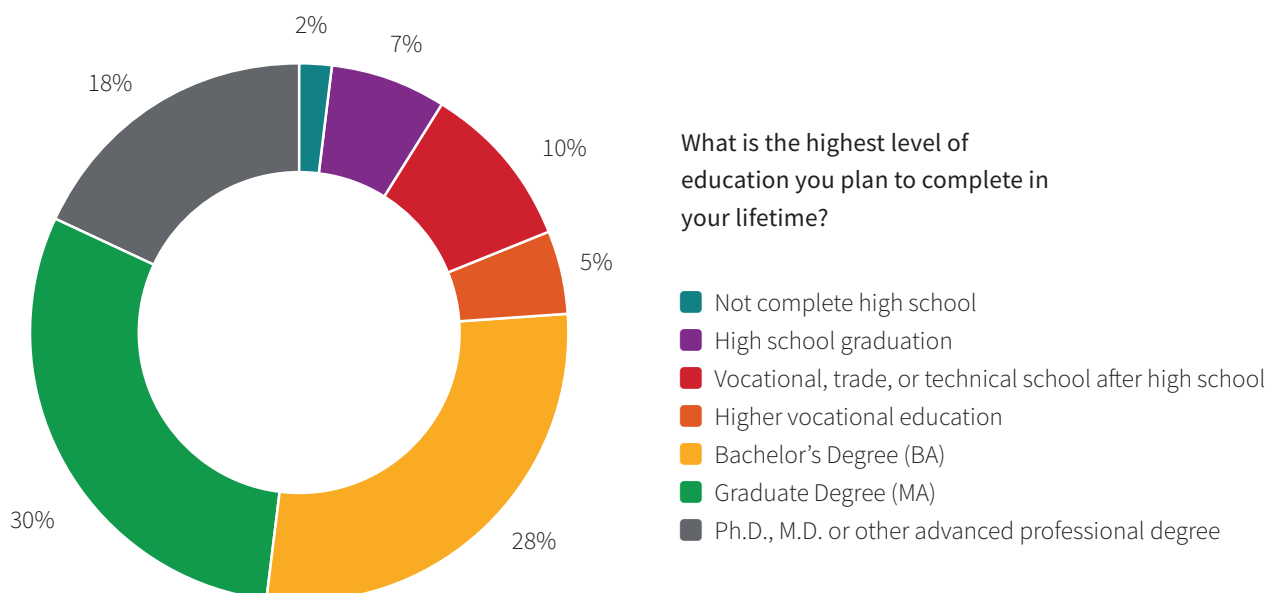
LGBTQI students who reported more frequent victimization regarding their sexual orientation or gender expression also had lower levels of self-esteem (see Figure 1.29). ⁸

LGBTQI students who experienced higher levels of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender expression (sometimes, often, frequently) were less likely to report higher self-esteem than those experiencing lower levels: 40% vs. 56% for gender expression; 44% vs. 54% for sexual orientation. ⁹

Overall, these findings illustrate that direct victimization in less welcoming schools, where LGBTQI students are more exposed to harassment and violence based in their sexual orientation and / or gender identity or gender expression, lead to more negative educational outcomes and poorer wellbeing for LGBTQI students.

In order to ensure that LGBTQI students are afforded a supportive learning environment and educational opportunities, school communities and education authorities should work to prevent and respond to bias-motivated harassment in schools. In Part II of this report, we will examine the availability of supports in school that may benefit the educational experience for LGBTQI students.

FIGURE 1.23: EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF LGBTQI STUDENTS



7 The relationship between depression and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. Verbal harassment based on sexual orientation: $r = .31, p < .001$; Verbal harassment based on gender expression: $r = .32, p < .001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

8 Self-esteem was measured using the 10-item Likert-type Rosenberg self-esteem scale, which includes such items as “I am able to do things as well as most people.” Positive and negative self-esteem are indicated by a cutoff at the score indicating neither positive nor negative feelings about oneself: students above this cutoff were characterized as “Demonstrating Positive Self-Esteem.”

9 The relationship between self-esteem and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. Verbal harassment based on sexual orientation: $r = -.14, p < .001$; Verbal harassment based on gender expression: $r = -.17, p < .001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

FIGURE 1.24: EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF VERBAL HARASSMENT

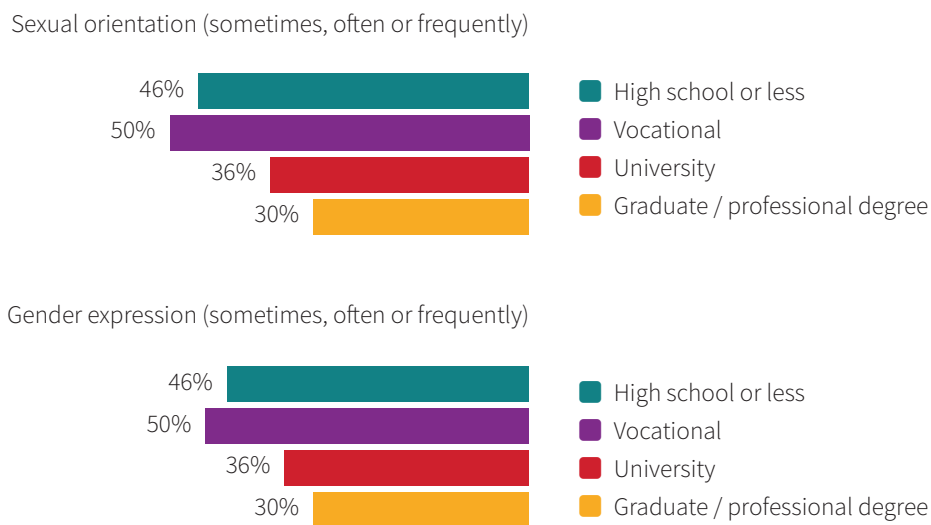


FIGURE 1.25: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND VICTIMIZATION

(percent of students who reported receiving “4s and 5s” or “mostly 5s”)

Sexual orientation
Gender expression

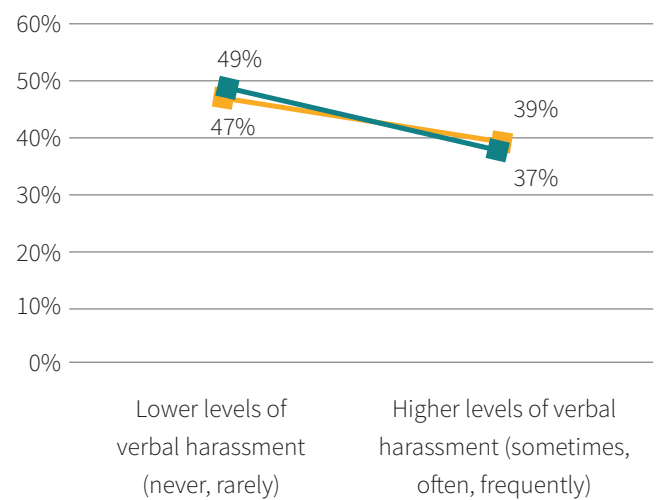


FIGURE 1.26: MISSING SCHOOL AND THE SEVERITY OF VERBAL HARASSMENT AT SCHOOL

(percent of students who missed at least one day of school in the past month)

Sexual orientation
Gender expression

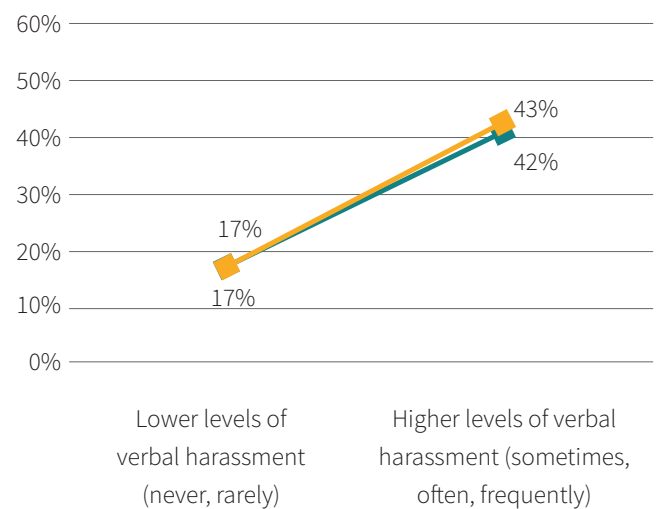


FIGURE 1.27: SCHOOL BELONGING AND VERBAL HARASSMENT

(percent of students reporting above average levels of school belonging)

■ Sexual orientation
■ Gender expression

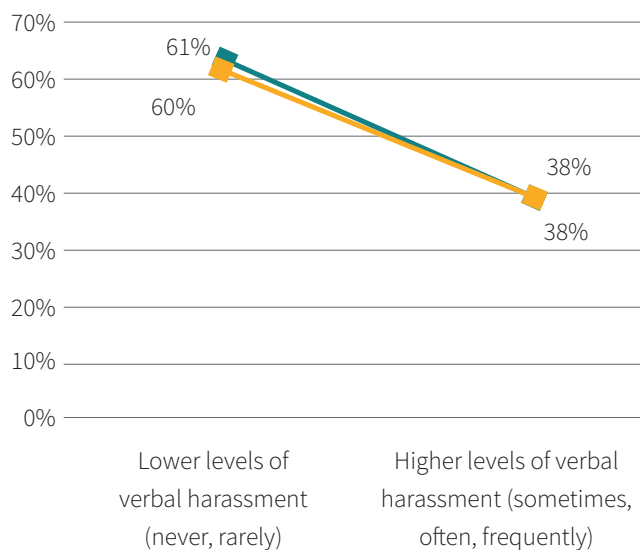


FIGURE 1.28: DEPRESSION AND VERBAL HARASSMENT

(percent of students reporting above average levels of depression)

■ Sexual orientation
■ Gender expression

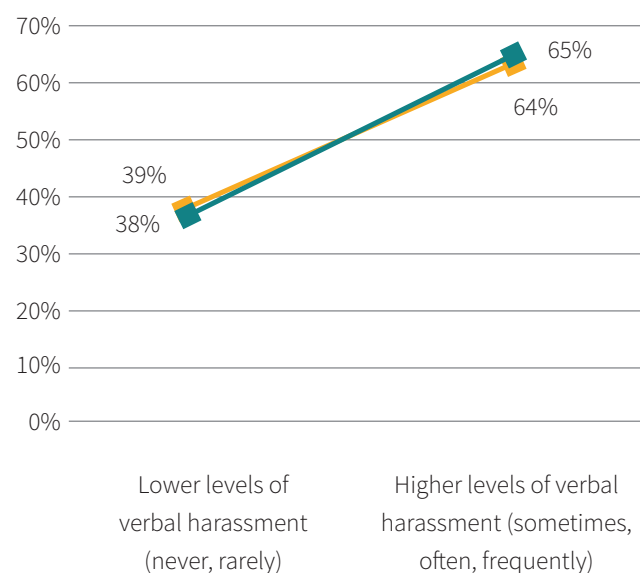
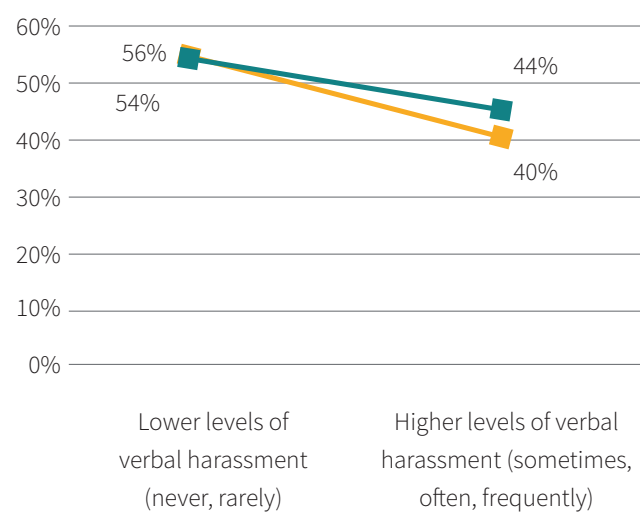


FIGURE 1.29: SELF-ESTEEM AND VERBAL HARASSMENT

(percent of students reporting above average levels of self-esteem)

■ Sexual orientation
■ Gender expression



PART II: SCHOOL-BASED RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL-BASED RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

LGBTQI students may not have the same types of support from peers at their schools and in their communities. As shown in Figure 2.1, less than half (39%) of LGBTQI students in Hungary reported that other students at school were accepting of LGBTQI people (“somewhat accepting” or “very accepting”). Furthermore, as shown in Figure 2.2, few LGBTQI students report having access to programs or groups for LGBTQI youth outside of school. Yet the vast majority (82%) of LGBTQI students in our survey reported that they have at least one other LGBTQI peer at their school (see Figure 2.3.) The availability of resources and supports in school for LGBTQI students can be extremely important for this population of youth.

A further difficulty is that because of experiences or fears of discrimination, harassment and even physical assault, many LGBTQI students are not out at school: 16% reported that none of their schoolmates and 60% that none of their teachers know about their being LGBTQI. Even more students going to church schools reported that none of their teachers know about their being

LGBTQI (76%). While 11% of students came out to all or most of their teachers, this ratio is only 4% in church schools.

This is a church school, so both the school director and the teachers are expected to be hostile toward LGBTQI people. I still have one or two teachers who are supportive, despite the pressure. After all, the Bible and Jesus promote supportive attitudes. I think most of my schoolmates would not mind if someone came out. But then the news would spread, and if someone from the leaders found out, an out student would have to leave this school, I guess.

There are several key resources that may help to promote a safer climate and more positive school experiences for students: school personnel who are supportive of LGBTQI students, LGBTQI-inclusive curricular materials, and school policies for addressing incidents of harassment and assault. Thus, we examined the availability of these resources and supports among LGBTQI students.

FIGURE 2.1: PERCEPTIONS OF GENERAL STUDENT ACCEPTANCE OF LGBTQI PEOPLE

In general, how accepting do you think students at your school are of LGBTQI people?

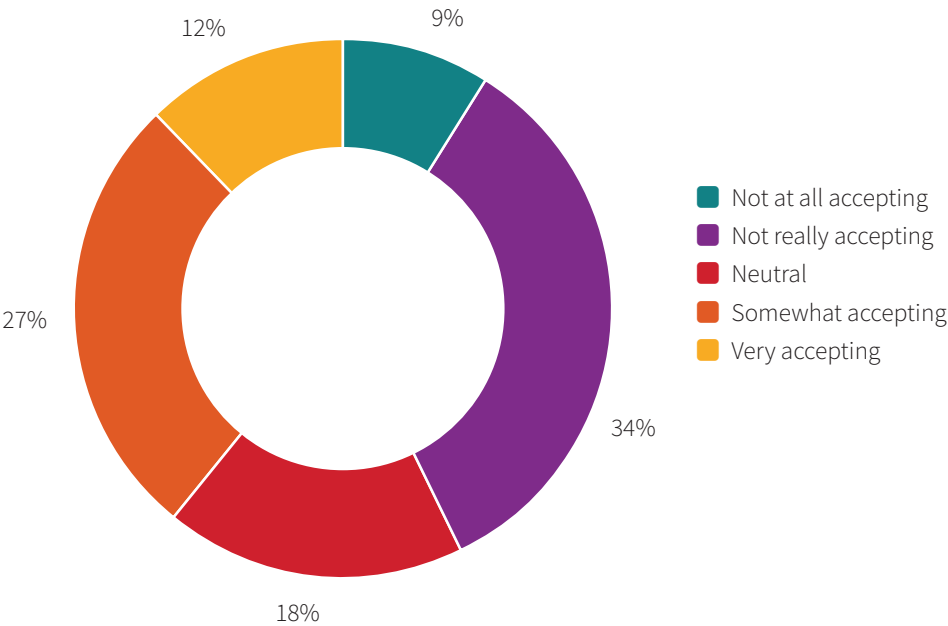


FIGURE 2.2: AVAILABILITY OF AND PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS OR GROUPS FOR LGBTQI YOUTH

How often do you attend a program or group for LGBTQI youth outside of your school?

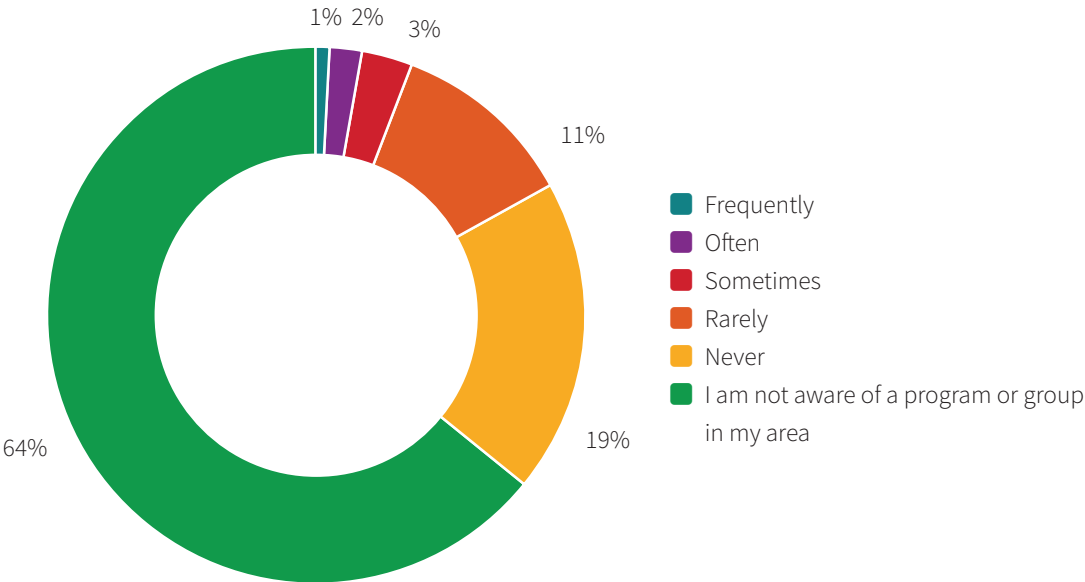
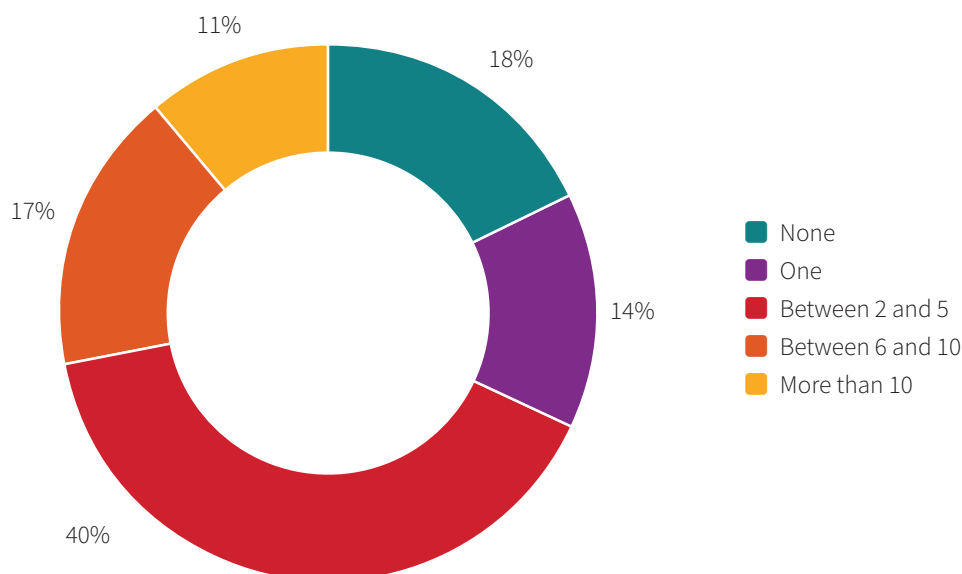


FIGURE 2.3: NUMBER OF OTHER LGBTQI STUDENTS AT SCHOOL

How many LGBTQI students are there in your school that you know of?



Supportive School Personnel

Supportive teachers and other school staff serve as an important resource for LGBTQI students. Being able to speak with a caring adult in school may have a significant positive impact on the school experiences for students, particularly those who feel marginalized or experience harassment. In our survey, most LGBTQI students (79%) identified having at least one school staff member whom they believed was supportive of LGBTQI students at their school (see Figure 2.4). Fewer students (25%) reported that they had many staff (6 or more) at their schools who were supportive.

To understand whether certain types of school personnel were more likely to be seen as supportive, we asked LGBTQI students how comfortable they would feel talking one-on-one with various school personnel about LGBTQI-related issues. Figure 2.5 illustrates the level of comfort that LGBTQI students reported having with speaking to various types of school personnel. Students

would be most comfortable talking to school mental health professionals (psychologists or social workers): half of students (52%) said they would be “somewhat comfortable” or “very comfortable” with talking about LGBTQI issues to these staff.¹⁰ In addition, 40% of LGBTQI students said that they would be comfortable speaking with their home class teacher, which was also higher than all other types of school personnel except for mental health professionals. LGBTQI students were least comfortable speaking with their deputy director and their director.

The vast majority of students had never had a positive or helpful conversation with teachers and other staff. Of those who had had such conversations, students more commonly had had a positive conversation with a teacher (52%), their home class teacher (*osztályfőnök*) (24%), and the school’s mental health personnel or social worker (18%).¹¹

10 Mean differences in comfort level talking to school staff across type of school staff member were examined using repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance, and percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. The multivariate effect was significant, Pillai’s Trace = .48, $F(9, 849) = 86.42$, $p < .001$. Univariate analyses were considered significant at $p < .05$. The mean for mental health personnel was significantly higher than all others, and the mean for home class teacher was higher than all others except mental health personnel. The means for vice director and director were lower than all others and were not significantly different from one another.

11 Mean differences in the frequency of talking to school staff about LGBTQI issues across type of school staff member were examined using repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance, and percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. The multivariate effect was significant, Pillai’s Trace = .31, $F(9, 869) = 43.61$, $p < .001$. Univariate analyses were considered significant at $p < .05$. Means were significantly different except: a) dormitory teacher, school health personnel, and librarian were not different from each other; b) school health personnel was also not different from physical education teacher/trainer, and c) director and vice director were not different from each other.

FIGURE 2.4: NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF WHO ARE SUPPORTIVE OF LGBTQI STUDENTS IN SCHOOL

How many teachers and other school staff persons are supportive of LGBTQI students at your school?

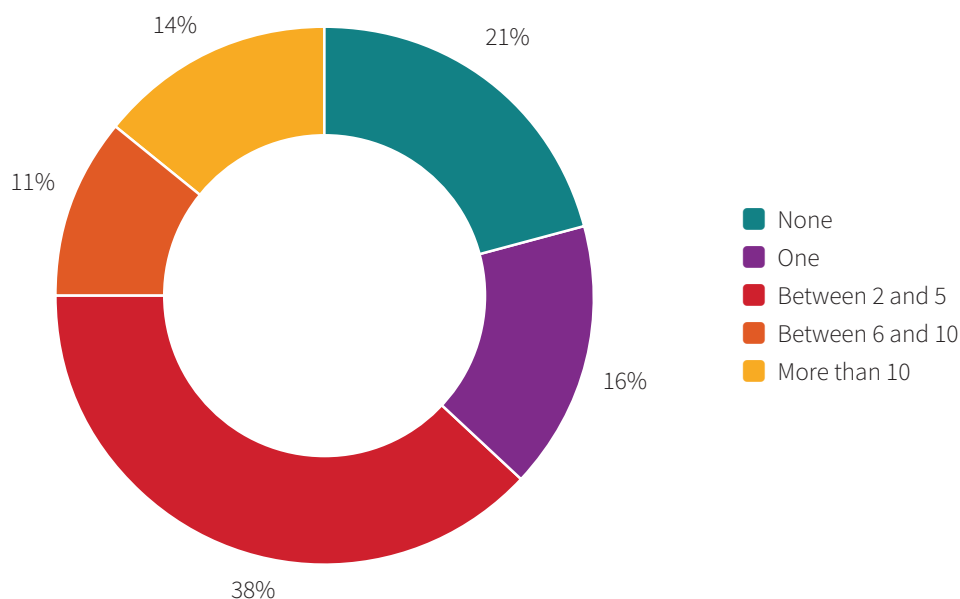


FIGURE 2.5: COMFORT SPEAKING WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL ABOUT LGBTQI ISSUES

In general, how comfortable would you be talking to the following people at your school, one-on-one, about LGBTQI issues?

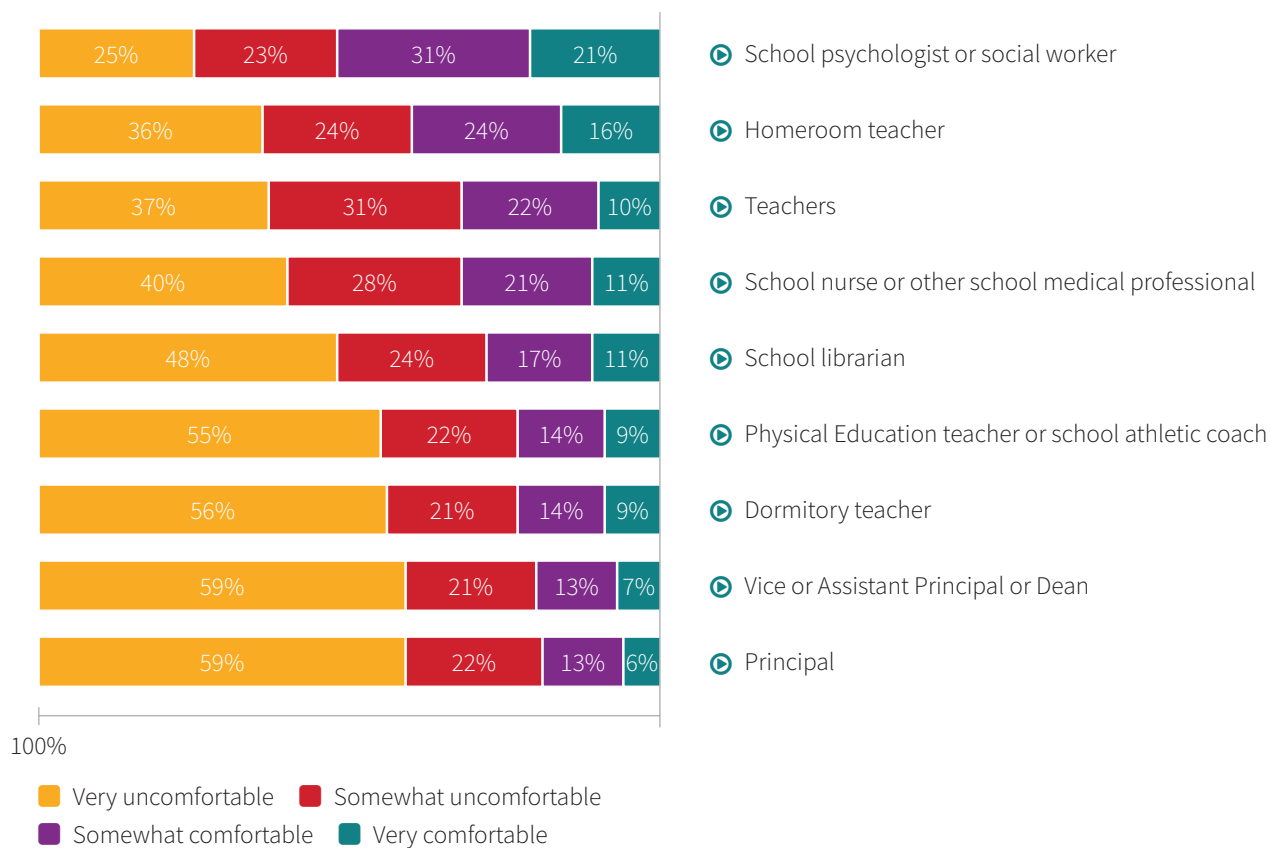
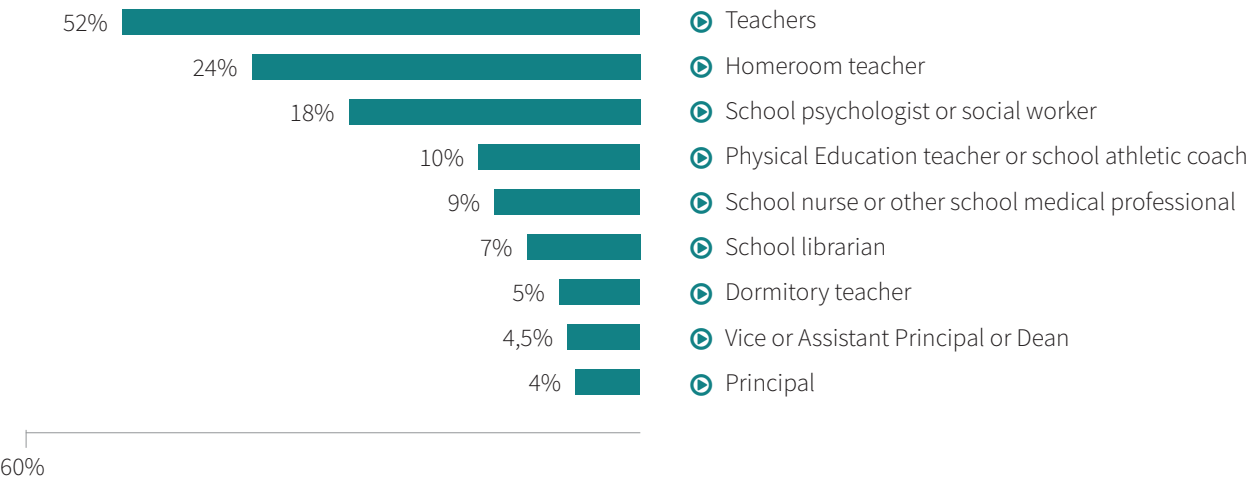


FIGURE 2.6: SCHOOL PERSONNEL WITH WHOM STUDENTS HAVE HAD A POSITIVE OR HELPFUL CONVERSATION ABOUT LGBT ISSUES

(percent reporting having at least one conversation in the past school year)



I hope one day I can go to a school where I like going, where I don't have to feel the pressure and face discrimination all the time because I am gay.

I could share anything with my home class teacher. He was nice and open-minded. I respect him a lot.

In my high school it was the school director who stopped those who were hostile to LGBTQI people. And he was one hundred percent successful. He explained why hostility was problematic.

Inclusive Curricular Resources

LGBTQI student experiences may also be shaped by inclusion of LGBTQI-related information in the curriculum. Learning about LGBTQI historical events and positive role models may enhance their engagement with the school community and provide valuable information about the LGBTQI community. Students in our survey were asked whether they had been exposed to representations of LGBTQI people, history, or events in lessons at school. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) said that they had been taught nothing about LGBTQI issues in school



(see Figure 2.7), and nearly a quarter (22%) said that they had only been taught negative information. Among the students who had been taught positive things about LGBTQI-related topics in school, the issue came up most often in Hungarian language and literature and communication classes, followed by home class. Table 2.1 shows class subject and the percent of students who had been taught positive information at all, but also shows the percent of students in the entire sample who had had positive information taught in each subject area. For example, among the small percentage of students who had been taught any positive information about LGBTQI issues, 54% had said it was in Hungarian language and literature and communication, but only 7% of all 919 students in the sample had been taught positive LGBTQI information in those classes. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 2.8, hardly a third (32%) of LGBTQI students would feel at least somewhat comfortable discussing LGBTQI issues in class.

We also asked students about their ability to access information about LGBTQI issues that teachers may not be covering in class: school computers that allow access to LGBTQI-related information; textbooks or reading materials featuring information about LGBTQI issues; books in the school library, and invited speakers on human rights or minorities. These types of LGBTQI-related curricular resources were not available for most LGBTQI students in our survey, as shown in Figure 2.9. 40% of students said they had internet access to

LGBTQI-related information from their school computers, and one quarter (25%) said that they had speakers on human rights or minorities. In addition, we asked students whether they had had a class about the LGBTQI community, and if so, whether it was the “Getting to Know LGBT People” program or another program. As shown in Figure 2.10, only 7% had had the “Getting to Know LGBT People” program, and 8% had some other type of school program about the LGBTQI community invited to their school; 85% of students did not have the chance to attend sensitizing classes focusing on LGBTQI people. (The school program “Getting to Know LGBT People” has been operated by Labrisz Lesbian Association and Szimpozion Association since 2000. They hold sensitizing classes in approximately 30 schools per year, reaching 1000-1500 students.)

Schools often have programs specifically about bullying, harassment and violence. But these programs may not specifically include information about victimization directed toward students who are often commonly targeted, such as LGBTQI students. We asked students if they had ever been taught about bullying and whether it included information about LGBTQI-related bullying. As shown in Figure 2.11, half of the students reported that they had no such program at school (51%), and of those students who said they had this type of program, very few (8%) said that it included information about sexual orientation or gender identity/expression and bias-motivated harassment based on these.

FIGURE 2.7: PERCENT OF STUDENTS TAUGHT LGBT TOPICS IN SCHOOL (POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE CONTENT)

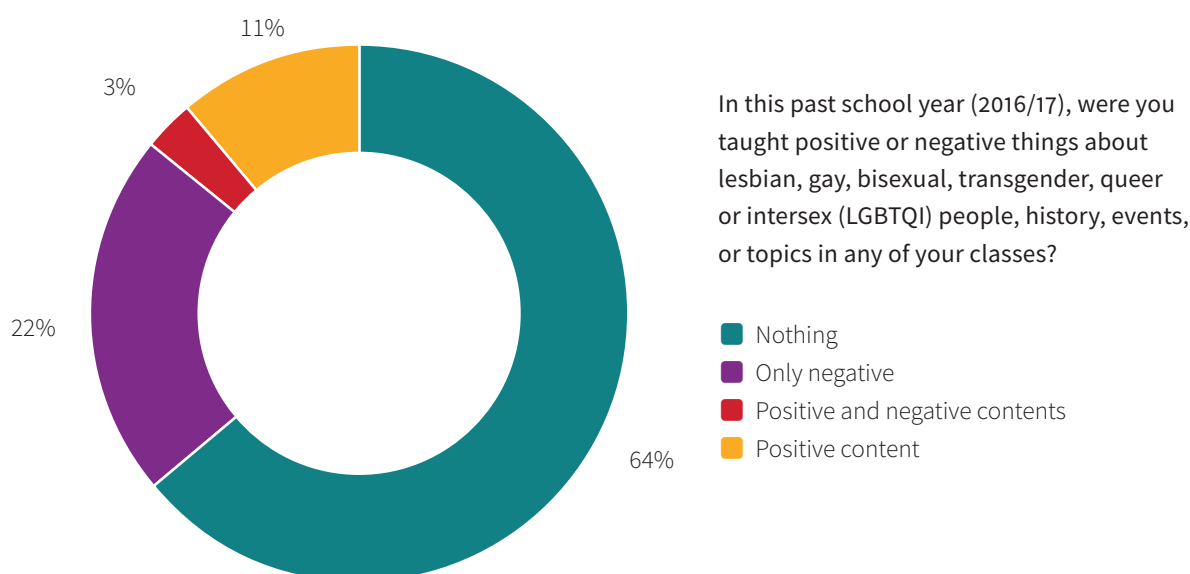


FIGURE 2.8: STUDENT LEVEL OF COMFORT RAISING LGBTQI ISSUES IN CLASS

How comfortable would you be raising LGBTQI issues in your classes?

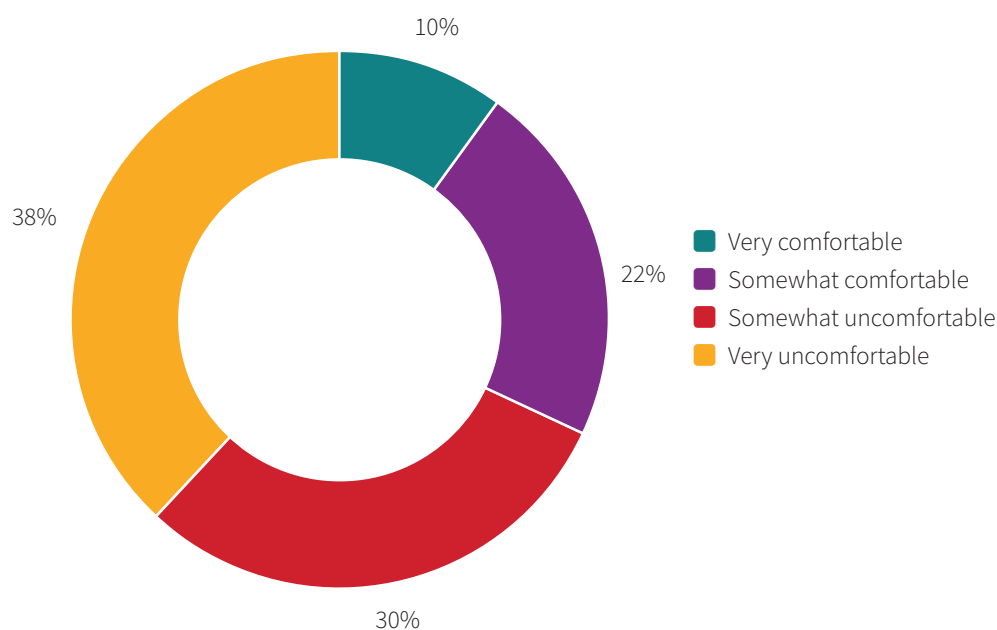


TABLE 2.1: POSITIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF LGBTQI-RELATED TOPICS IN CLASS

	% of All Students in the Survey (n = 919)	% Among Students Taught Positive LGBTQI Information at School (n = 125)
Hungarian language and literature, communication	7%	54%
Home class	5%	35%
Biology, health, nature	4%	30%
History	4%	30%
Ethics	3%	23%
Foreign language	3%	25%
Arts, drama and dance, media, visual culture	3%	21%
Morality	1%	9%
Music	1%	6%
Religious education	1%	5%
Physical education	1%	5%
Mathematics	0,5%	4%
Crafts	0,3%	2%
Other	2%	17%

FIGURE 2.9: STUDENTS’ REPORTS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF LGBTQI-RELATED CURRICULAR RESOURCES

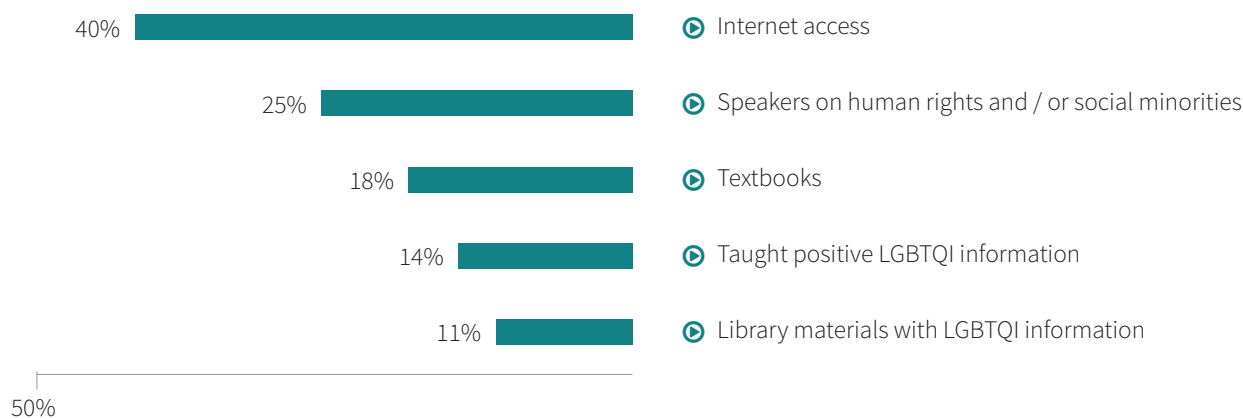


FIGURE 2.10: CLASS OR PROGRAM ABOUT THE LGBTQI COMMUNITY AT SCHOOL

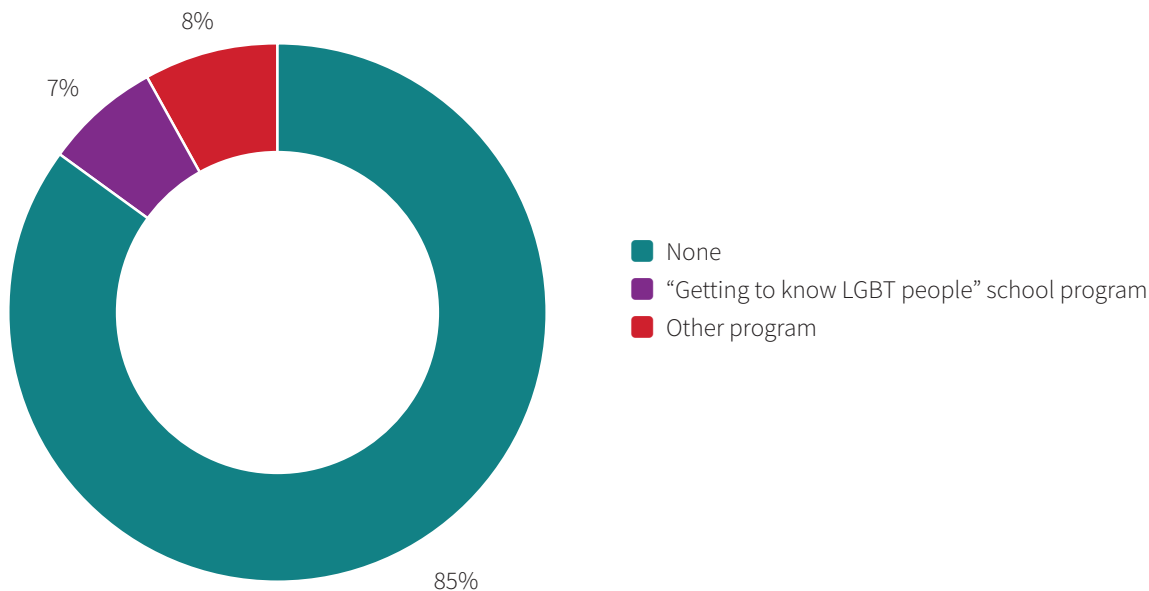
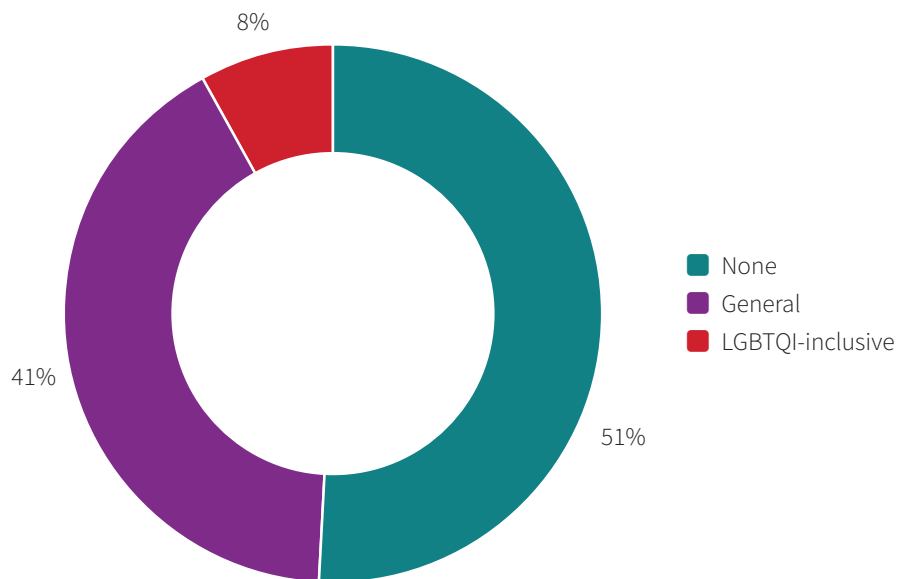


FIGURE 2.11: ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PROGRAM AT SCHOOL



School Policies for Addressing Bullying, Harassment, and Assault

School policies that address in-school bullying, harassment, and assault are powerful tools for creating school environments where students feel safe. These types of policies can explicitly state protections based on personal characteristics, such as sexual orientation and gender identity and gender expression, among others. In this report, we refer to a “comprehensive” policy as one that explicitly enumerates protections based on personal characteristics, including both sexual orientation and gender identity / gender expression. When a school has and enforces a comprehensive policy, especially one that also includes procedures for reporting incidents to school authorities, it can send a message that bullying, harassment, and assault are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Comprehensive school policies may also provide students with greater protection against victimization because they make clear the various

forms of bullying, harassment, and assault that will not be tolerated. It may also demonstrate that school administrators take student safety, including the safety of LGBTQI students, seriously.

Students were asked whether their school had a policy about in-school bullying, harassment, or assault, and if that policy explicitly included sexual orientation and gender expression. As shown in Table 2.2, the majority of students (70%) did not have any policy in their school or did not know about one, and only 1% said that their school had a policy that mentioned sexual orientation or gender expression.

My school was not hostile to the LGBTQI community. However, they did not deal with this at all either, so if anyone was hurt because of being LGBTQI, they simply turned their heads away.



TABLE 2.2: LGBTQI STUDENTS' REPORTS OF SCHOOL BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT POLICIES

No policy / Not sure	70%
Any policy	30%
Generic (includes neither sexual orientation nor gender expression / unsure if policy includes them)	29%
Includes sexual orientation only	0,1%
Includes gender identity only	0,7%
Includes sexual orientation and gender identity	0,6%

UTILITY OF SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL PERSONNEL, INCLUSIVE CURRICULAR RESOURCES AND SCHOOL POLICIES FOR ADDRESSING BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

School-based resources, such as supportive school personnel, LGBTQI-inclusive curricula, and enumerated policies for reporting bullying, harassment and assault, may help create a more positive school environment for LGBTQI students.

Supportive School Personnel

Having supportive teachers and school staff can have a positive effect on the educational experiences of any student, increasing student motivation to learn and positive engagement in school. Given that LGBTQI students often feel unsafe and unwelcome in school, having access to school personnel who provide support may be critical for creating better learning environments for LGBTQI students. Therefore, we examined the relationships between the presence of supportive staff and several indicators of school climate, finding that the presence of school staff supportive of LGBTQI students is one critical piece in improving the school climate.

Having staff supportive of LGBTQI students was directly related to LGBTQI students reporting more positive

feelings about their school and their education. As shown in Figure 2.12, students who reported having a higher number of teachers and school staff who support LGBTQI students were:

- more likely to report that the general student body is more accepting of LGBTQI people;
- more likely to feel part of their school community;
- less likely to miss days of school because of feeling unsafe; and
- less likely to feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.¹²

Having a supportive adult at school would be beneficial to any students. But for LGBTQI students who may be more isolated and may be targets of discrimination and violence, supportive adults at school may be even more important. We found that students in our survey who reported more teachers and school personnel in their schools who were supportive of LGBTQI students also reported higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of depression (see Figure 2.13).¹³

12 The relationships of supportive staff and students' feelings about school were examined through Pearson correlations. Student Acceptance: $r = .49, p < .001$; School Belonging: $r = .38, p < .001$; Feeling Unsafe Re: Sexual Orientation: $r = -.19, p < .001$; Feeling Unsafe Re: Gender Expression: $r = -.11, p < .001$; School Belonging: $r = .38, p < .001$; Missing Days of School: $r = -.13, p < .001$.

13 The relationships between student wellbeing and supportive staff were examined through Pearson correlations. Self-esteem: $r = .21, p < .001$; Depression: $r = -.25, p < .001$.

FIGURE 2.12: SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND FEELINGS ABOUT SCHOOL

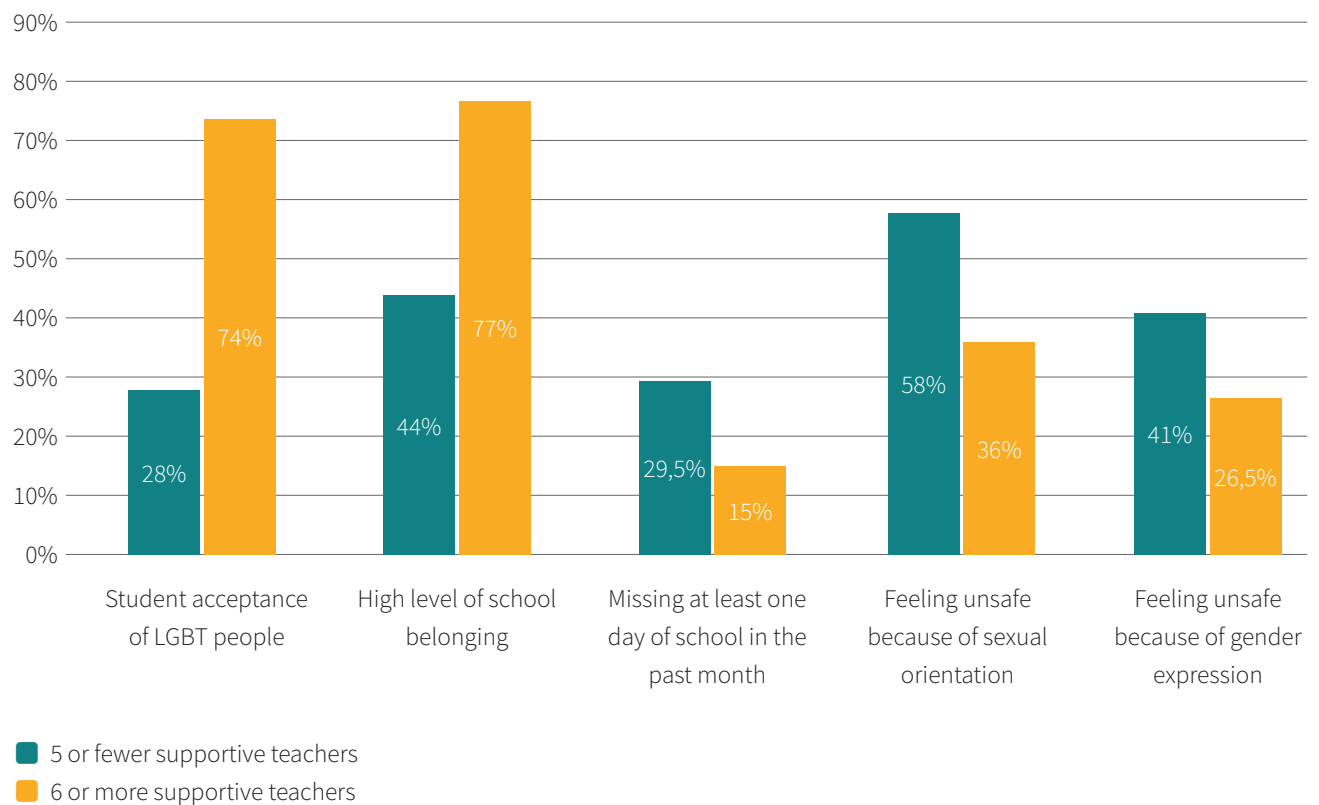
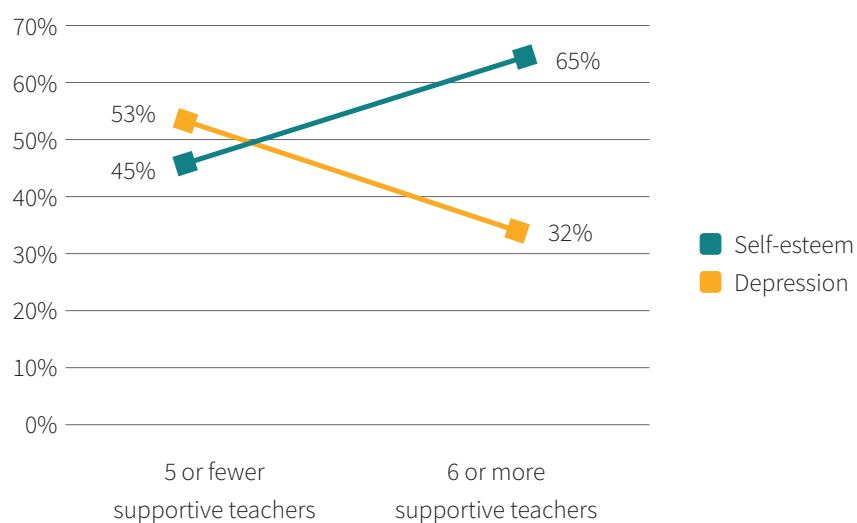


FIGURE 2.13: STUDENT WELLBEING AND SUPPORTIVE TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF

(percent of students reporting above average levels of psychosocial outcomes)



Inclusive Curriculum

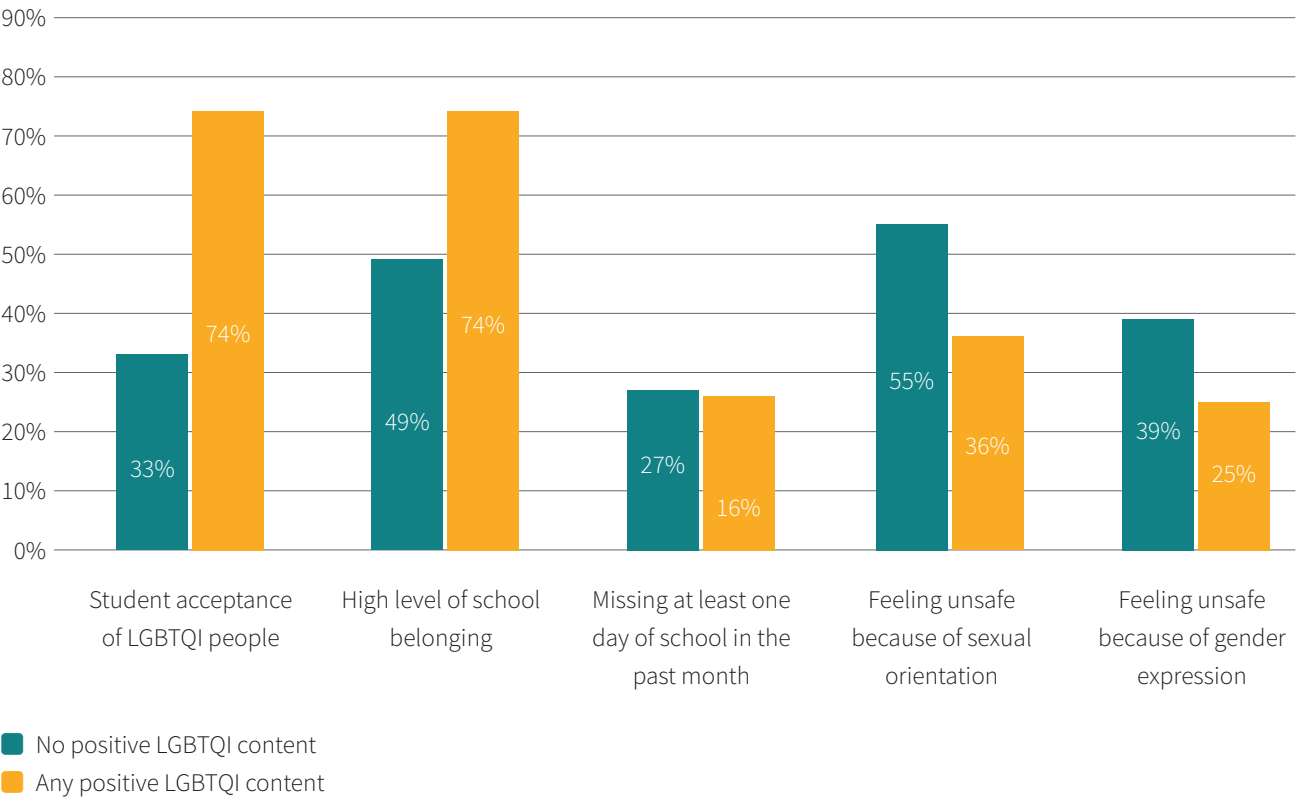
Including LGBTQI-related issues in the curriculum in a positive manner may make LGBTQI students feel like more valued members of the school community, and it may also promote more positive feelings about LGBTQI issues and persons among their peers, thereby resulting in a more positive school climate. In fact, as shown in Figure 2.14, LGBTQI students who were taught positive information about LGBTQI people, history and events were:

- more likely to report that the general student body is more accepting of LGBTQI people;
- more likely to feel like they belong in their school;
- less likely to miss days of school because of feeling unsafe; and
- less likely to feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.¹⁴

School Policies for Addressing Bullying, Harassment, and Assault

Anti-bullying/harassment policies can contribute toward protection from school harassment, including bias-motivated harassment at school. Comprehensive and inclusive anti-bullying/harassment policies may also provide school staff with the guidance needed to appropriately intervene when students use anti-LGBTQI language and when LGBTQI students report incidents of harassment and assault. These policies can also instruct students regarding their rights to a safe education and provide instruction on how to report incidents of violence. However, for LGBTQI students, school policies may be less effective if they are general and do not specifically address violence related to sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

FIGURE 2.14: POSITIVE LGBTQI CONTENT IN THE CURRICULUM AND FEELINGS ABOUT SCHOOL



14 The relationships between inclusive curriculum and the school-related outcomes were tested with Pearson correlations. Student Acceptance of LGBTQI people: $r = .32, p < .001$; School Belonging: $r = .18, p < .001$; Missing school: $r = -.09, p < .01$; Unsafe Because of Sexual Orientation: $r = -.14, p < .01$; Unsafe Because of Gender Expression: $r = -.10, p < .01$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

In Hungary, as mentioned in Part I, only a minority of LGBTQI students reported having any anti-bullying/harassment policy in their schools, and most of those who were aware of a policy reported that they did not have protections for sexual orientation or gender identity or gender expression. We examined whether the presence of any anti-bullying/harassment policy, regardless of whether it included LGBTQI-related protections, was related to the experiences of LGBTQI students in the survey. We found that the presence of a policy was related to greater feelings of safety regarding gender expression and less victimization based on gender expression for LGBTQI students. We also found that the presence of a policy was related to greater student acceptance of LGBTQI people.¹⁵

As shown in Figure 2.15, LGBTQI students in schools with any type of policy about bullying or harassment were:

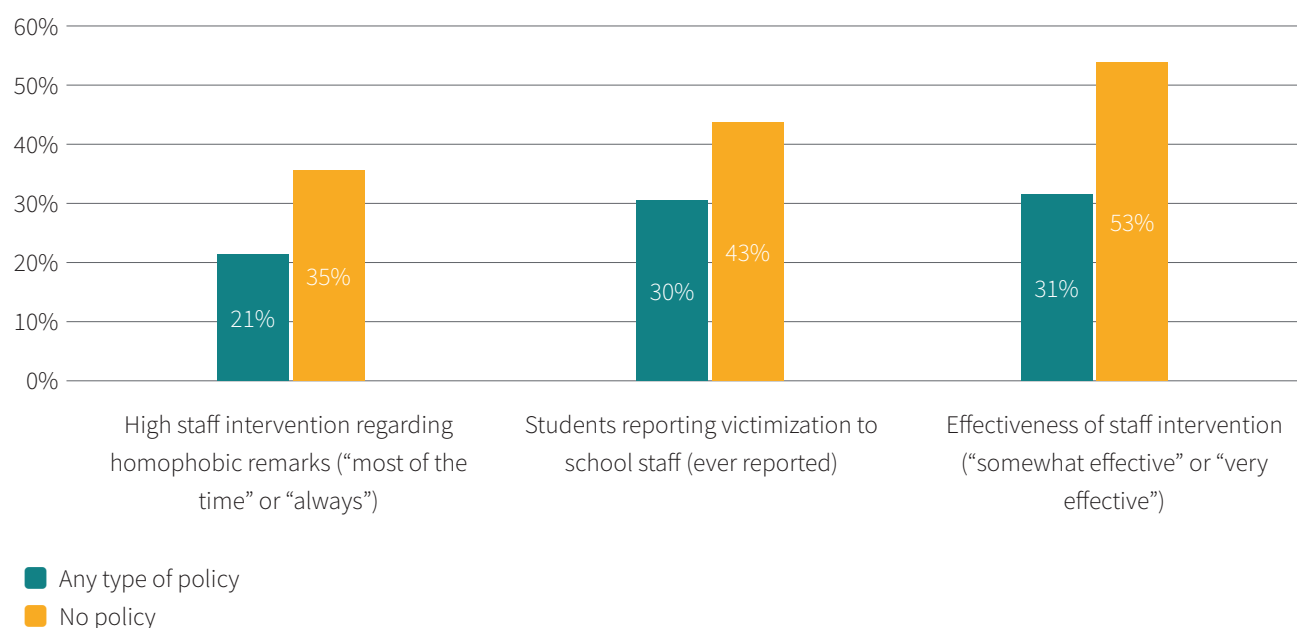
- more likely to report that teachers intervened when homophobic remarks were made;

- more likely to report incidents of harassment and assault to school staff; and
- more likely to report that staff intervention regarding harassment and assault was effective.¹⁶

These findings provide some evidence that having a policy about bullying or harassment can be helpful in creating safer school climates for LGBTQI students. Policies may provide guidance to school personnel on how to respond to anti-LGBTQI behaviors from students.

Anti-bullying and -harassment policies contribute to safer school environment for LGBTQI students. Unfortunately, few students in Hungary reported that their schools had any type of policy about bullying and harassment and even fewer reported that this policy included protections based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

FIGURE 2.15: SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING / ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICIES AND RESPONSE TO ANTI-LGBTQI INCIDENTS AT SCHOOL



15 The relationships between the presence of a policy and the school-related outcomes were tested with Pearson correlations. Verbal Harassment Re: Gender Expression: $r = -.08$, $p < .05$; Unsafe Because of Gender Expression: $r = -.09$, $p < .01$; Student Acceptance of LGBTQI people: $r = -.09$, $p < .001$.

16 The relationship between the presence of a policy and reporting and intervention were examined with Pearson correlations. Staff Intervention Re: Homophobic Remarks: $r = .14$, $p < .001$; Students Reporting Victimization: $r = .17$, $p < .001$, and Effectiveness of Staff Intervention: $r = .20$, $p < .05$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.



CONCLUSIONS

Results of the first National School Climate Survey in Hungary show that more than half (52%) of LGBTQI students in the country felt unsafe during the 2015/16 school year because of their sexual orientation, while 37% felt unsafe because of their gender identity. 64% of respondents had been victims of verbal harassment, 22% of physical harassment and 13% of physical assault during the school year. However, 66% of those who had been abused did not report the incident to anyone. Half of those who reported could not imagine that a teacher would do anything to help them, and almost one third of them (31%) thought that their teachers were also homophobic or transphobic, or that they would be blamed for being harassed (29%). Indeed, half of those who reported (52%) were told that they should ignore what had happened, 32% reported that teachers did not do anything, and only 23% told that their teacher educated the class about harassment and bullying.

Many professionals are increasingly becoming aware of the seriousness and impacts of violence in educational institutions. As the present research shows those who do not adapt to existing norms associated with sex and gender, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) students, are especially vulnerable. Bias-motivated violence because of someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, that is, homophobic or transphobic violence, is one form of bias-motivated school violence. It can take the shape of physical, sexual or psychological violence or harassment, and (like other forms of school violence) may happen at class, in the courtyard, playground, bathrooms and changing rooms, on the way to or from school, or even Internet surfaces used by the school community.

LGBTQI students who do not have access to any kind of support when they are harassed or assaulted, have lower levels of school belonging, and being harassed and abused have a direct impact on their well-being, school performance, absenteeism, educational aspirations and future plans – their life chances. Homophobic and transphobic violence have a negative impact on mental health as well: harassment and assault may lead to anxiety, stress, fear, isolation, lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, self-harm, depression and even suicide.

It is the responsibility of the educational sector to create a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. A comprehensive approach is needed so that the education sector (from policy makers to institutions) can give effective answers to homophobic and transphobic violence. Effective policies, training materials and curricula, training programs and support for school staff, supporting students and their families, the regular monitoring of violence in schools and evaluation of efforts to prevent and respond to bullying are all necessary. All concerned parties must be involved in both the prevention and the response to violence.

Effective solutions are also helped by building partnerships between the education sector and civil society organizations that have expertise in preventing and responding to homophobic and transphobic violence. With the present research, we tried to start a systematic and detailed data collection about the characteristics, prevalence and impacts of homophobic and transphobic violence, to raise awareness of the problem, and present data that serve as the basis for effective response.

On 17th and 18th May 2016, UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) organized an international ministerial meeting in Paris. The discussion entitled “Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity / expression” was attended by 18 countries. Ministers acknowledged that homophobic and transphobic violence in education is a problem that is yet to be solved in any country. They also committed to strengthen and scale up education sector responses to ensure schools are safe places where children and young people can learn free from threats and violence. Ministers affirmed the need to take effective action to address homophobic and transphobic violence in education and signed a Call

for Action by Ministers, entitled “Inclusive and equitable education for all learners in an environment free from discrimination and violence.” Hungary has not yet joined the Call for Action, even though this was recommended by the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO at the Ministry of Human Resources.

Responding to and preventing homophobic and transphobic violence in schools is crucial for the creation of a safe learning environment and the realization of human rights including the right to education and children’s rights. The right to comprehensive, quality education must be guaranteed for everyone.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The government should

- 1.1. Integrate the problem of homophobic and transphobic bullying into state-run programs aiming at safety and eliminating violence in schools.
- 1.2. Develop and accept national and school level policies to prevent and respond to violence in schools, including violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.
- 1.3. Include knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Core Curriculum and framework curricula.
- 1.4. Ensure that all textbooks and other educational materials used in public education deal with questions related to sexual orientation and gender identity in a way that respects the human dignity of LGBTQI people and fosters their acceptance and respect towards them.
- 1.5. Accept a model policy for educational institutions on how to respond to discrimination and bullying based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.
- 1.6. Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of responses to school violence (including violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression) throughout the education sector.
- 1.7. Develop a guide on school sexual education that covers the sexual, mental and physical health of LGBTQI people.
- 1.8. Define the requirements of teacher training in a way to include knowledge and competence about the social situation of minority groups and the special problems, needs and adequate supporting of youth belonging to minority groups, including LGBTQI youth.
- 1.9. Initiate awareness raising and sensitizing programs

and accredited in-service training programs for teachers, professionals working at pedagogical services, school psychologists, social workers and health professionals on the prevention and response to school violence, including violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

- 1.10. Provide moral and financial support to school awareness raising programs organized by LGBTQI civil society organizations, and promote the invitation of these programs by schools.

2. Educational institutions and those who operate them should

- 2.1. Secure an inclusive and safe educational environment, and support students who are or have been victims of school violence (including violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression).
- 2.2. Accept and implement policies (or integrate these into the existing policies) against discrimination and bullying in schools, including bullying and violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.
- 2.3. Cover the topic of sexual orientation and gender identity in their pedagogical programs and local curricula, and ensure that their pedagogical program sets the goal of inclusion of and respect for LGBTQI people.
- 2.4. Integrate the problem of homophobic and transphobic violence into their programs aiming at eliminating school violence and promoting safety in schools.
- 2.5. Prepare detailed reports of incidents of bullying: forms used should contain the time of the incident, whether it happened once or repeatedly, its venue,

its type, the protected characteristic in case of bias-motivated bullying, the source of knowledge about the incident, and the steps taken to resolve the problem. These reports should be used for the systematic and regular monitoring of school bullying.

2.6. Inform students that LGBTQI youth can turn to the school psychologist, social worker or other supporting staff if they have any problem.

2.7. Ensure that transgender students can express their gender and participate in school life according to their gender identity, including the use of their preferred name and the flexible application of rules pertaining to clothing in school.

2.8. Ensure that transgender students and school staff can use locker rooms and bathrooms in accordance with their gender identity.

2.9. Support the creation of groups organized by LGBTQI students and their allies.

2.10. Schools' leadership and teachers should openly support the inclusion of and step up against the discrimination of LGBTQI students, parents and colleagues.

2.11. Encourage peer learning, in house training and professional development all school staff about sexual orientation and gender identity.

2.12. Support the invitation of training programs operated by LGBTQI and other human rights organizations on the issue of sexual orientation and gender identity for teachers, other school staff and students.

2.13. Support the participation of their teachers, school psychologist, social worker and health professionals in awareness raising programs or accredited in-service training programs that cover the social situation of LGBTQI people and the special problems and needs of LGBTQI youth.

2.14. Conduct regular anonymous research among students on the prevalence of bullying and violence in the school, including students' needs related to these.

3. Teacher training institutions should

3.1. Review their core curriculum and ensure that it includes information upon and attitudes towards sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; ensure gaining deeper knowledge by offering optional courses on LGBTQI youth.

3.2. Ensure that their students get information about proactive action against school bullying, including existing school programs and their practical application.

3.3. Ensure that future teachers have access to the latest tools of human rights education.

3.4. Support that LGBTQI and other human rights organizations can hold lectures and workshops for students on questions related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

4. Teachers and school staff should

4.1. Let students know that they respect the human dignity of LGBTQI people by the choice of their words as well as a non-judgmental acknowledgement of LGBTQI people's existence.

4.2. Support proactive action against school bullying, including the development and implementation of policies and prevention programs.

4.3. If they are members of teachers' unions, suggest and support that more attention is directed in these organizations at responding to school bullying.

4.4. If they witness or are informed about mockery, verbal abuse or physical assault, or if students talk about LGBTQI people in a negative context, initiate discussions about the subject in cooperation with other professionals working with youth at school.

4.5. Support that LGBTQI and other human rights organizations can hold lectures and workshops in their school on topics related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.



SUPPORTING THE HUNGARIAN LGBTQI COMMUNITY SINCE 1995



Information and counselling hotline



Personal counselling



Legal aid



HIV/AIDS prevention



Archive and library



Research and training



Advocacy



Cultural and community events