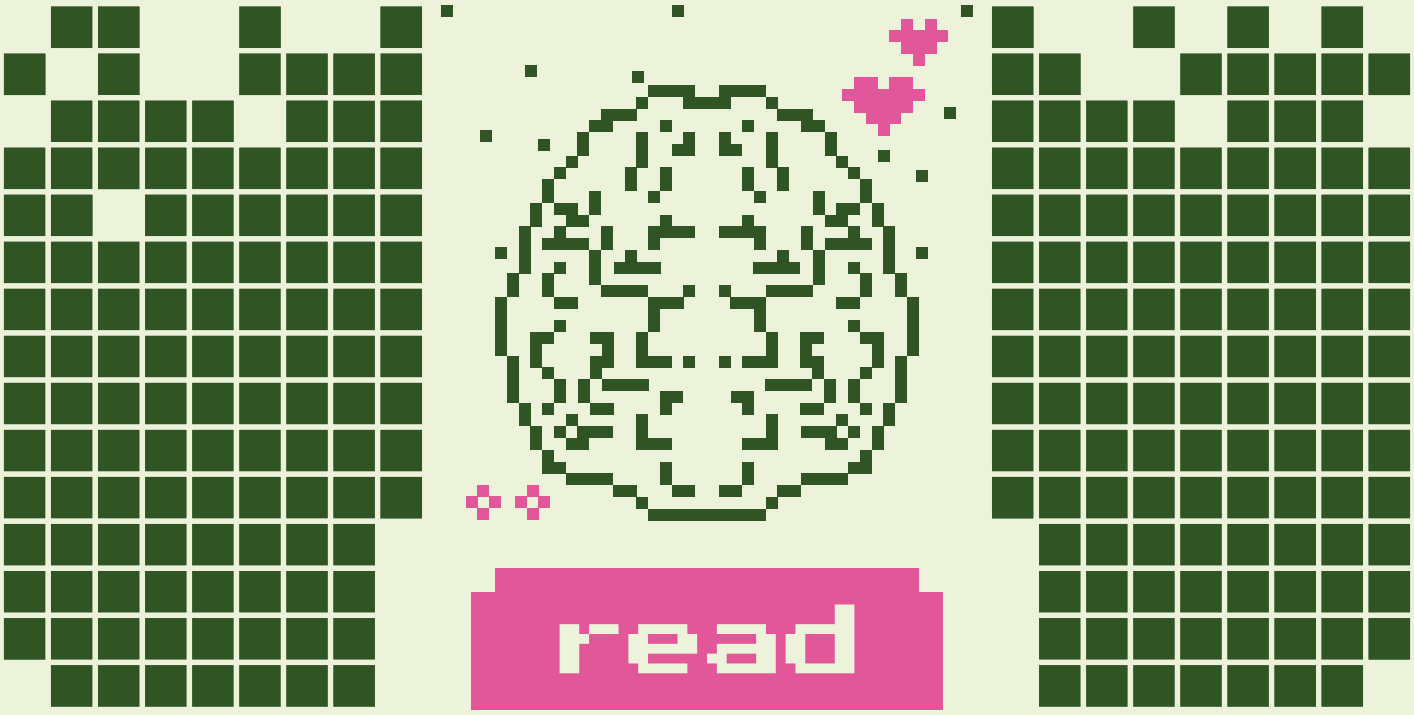
NATIONAL STUDY ON THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF LGBTIQ+ YOUTH IN UKRAINE



Embassy of Finland, Kyiv
Посольство Фінляндії, Київ

точка опори
fulcrum

The project is implemented with the support of the Local Cooperation Fund of the Embassy of Finland in Ukraine

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Survey on the Wellbeing and Safety of LGBTIQ+ Youth in Ukraine covered 525 respondents aged 13–24. The data is not statistically representative of all LGBTIQ+ youth in Ukraine due to non-probability online recruitment; however, it covers youth from most regions of the country and allows for the identification of key trends, risks, and needs.

The results show that the experiences of LGBTIQ+ youth are shaped by the simultaneous impact of war, discrimination, the social environment, and access to support. 85.0% of respondents reported experiencing at least a moderate psychological impact from the war, and 37.4% often or constantly fear for their safety due to the war. At the same time, the war does not displace problems related to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI): in open-ended responses, youth describe a combination of wartime danger with homophobia and transphobia, the need to conceal their identity, legal uncertainty, and social isolation.

Victimisation[1] is a common and often cumulative experience. Over the course of just three months, 56.0% of respondents experienced at least one of the seven studied forms of negative treatment at least several times, ranging from verbal abuse and social exclusion to threats, cyberbullying, and physical aggression. 38.3% of the sample encountered at least two forms of victimisation, and 24.4% faced at least three. Separately, 39.8% of respondents reported experiencing sexual violence or unwanted sexual acts against them during their lifetime.

School is the most problematic institutional environment. Only 41.7% of school students feel safe at their educational institution, compared to 65.4% of university and college students. Over the past month, 26.4% of school students missed classes at least once due to fear or danger of bullying. More than half of school students (53.8%) rate their peers as intolerant of LGBTIQ+ people, and 52.5% rate teachers and school administration the same way. Transgender and non-binary youth are particularly vulnerable: only 42.7%

[1] Victimisation is the experience of being subjected to negative treatment, harassment, discrimination, bullying, threats, or violence by other individuals. In this study, victimisation refers to specific forms of negative experience reported by respondents: verbal abuse based on gender identity and/or sexual orientation, ridicule or humiliation, spreading rumours or lies, intentional ignoring or social exclusion from a group, threats, cyberbullying, as well as physical aggression or damage to personal property.

feel safe in educational institutions, 24.4% have missed classes due to fear of bullying, and 56.0% rate teachers and administration as intolerant.

The work environment is generally assessed more positively: 71.1% of employed respondents feel safe at work. However, this result should not automatically be interpreted as a high level of inclusiveness. Only 26.1% are aware of an anti-discrimination policy at their workplace, and 55.3% reported that no one at work knows about their sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI).

Concealment of gender identity and/or sexual orientation is an important risk management strategy. 28.0% of students consciously conceal their identity at their educational institution; among employed respondents, this figure is 35.0%. Concealment is closely linked to a lower sense of safety. The family environment is even more complex: 54.7% of respondents consider openness in the family to be dangerous, and among those whose family members do not know about their identity, this figure reaches 77.1%. Nearly a third of not fully out respondents fear violence or being thrown out of their home if their identity or sexual orientation is disclosed.

The data also shows a serious gap between the need for assistance and its effectiveness. Almost half of those who did not report discrimination or violence to anyone believed that no one could help; a third feared disclosing their identity by doing so. Among those who sought help, only 6.7% reported a complete resolution of the problem, while the most common outcome was being listened to without further action.

The psychological burden is high: over the past week, 74.3% often or repeatedly had difficulty concentrating, 66.1% experienced sadness, 62.5% anxiety, and 54.9% loneliness. Psychological difficulties are significantly more common among youth with recurring experiences of victimisation and among those who do not feel like they belong in their environment.

At the same time, 92.4% of respondents intend or rather intend to continue their education or professional development, although 28.8% doubt they will be able to realise these plans. Over 60% intend to remain in Ukraine for the next three years. Therefore, the main practical conclusion of the study lies in providing safe access to already existing educational, psychological, social, and labour institutions, supplemented by specialised LGBTIQ+-friendly support routes where general systems are unable to guarantee confidentiality and safety.

Key priorities:

- effective responses to bullying in schools;
- training for educators and psychologists to work with LGBTIQ+ adolescents and youth;
- confidential mechanisms for reporting cases of bullying, discrimination, etc.;
- accessible LGBTIQ+-friendly psychological assistance, especially for minors;
- clear referral pathways to LGBTIQ+ organisations;
- support for youth who cannot safely disclose their identity to their family;
- simple, inclusive procedures for transgender and non-binary youth;
- implementation of basic anti-discrimination practices by employers.



INTRODUCTION

The wellbeing and safety of LGBTIQ+ youth are important indicators of human rights compliance, social cohesion, and societal inclusiveness[2]. Young people whose sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or sex characteristics differ from societal expectations often face discrimination, stigmatisation, violence, and social exclusion[3]. Such factors can significantly impact their mental and physical health, access to education, employment, medical, and social services, as well as their overall sense of safety and life prospects[4].

In the context of Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine, these challenges take on new dimensions. Forced displacement, economic instability, psychological strain, the breakdown of social ties, and loss of access to services affect all youth, however, LGBTIQ+ young people often experience additional risks associated with discrimination, concealing their identity, a lack of support from family or community, and insufficient consideration of their needs in public policy and humanitarian response.

Despite the gradual expansion of public discussion regarding LGBTIQ+ rights, comprehensive studies dedicated specifically to the wellbeing and safety of LGBTIQ+ youth remain insufficient worldwide. In Ukraine, systematic research into the experiences of LGBTIQ+ youth began only in recent years. In 2018, the first **National School Environment Survey in Ukraine (2016/2017)[5]** was presented, documenting for the first time at the national level the scale of bullying, discrimination, and safety risks faced by LGBTIQ+ students in schools. The study revealed high levels of verbal and physical violence, the prevalence of homo- and transphobic hate speech, as well as the negative

[2] Sotevik, L. (2026). 'People need support and society needs change': vulnerability and collective agency in queer youth organization. *Journal of Youth Studies, 29(2)*, 207–221. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2024.2419926

[3] Stańczykiewicz, B., & Senczyszyn, A. (2024). *Bullying of LGBTQ+ children and adolescents in schools: Understanding the phenomenon, consequences, and international standards with a focus on the Polish context. Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 15, Article 1493745. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2024.1493745

[4] Kosciw, J. G., Palmer, N. A., Kull, R. M., & Greytak, E. A. (2013). The Effect of Negative School Climate on Academic Outcomes for LGBT Youth and the Role of In-School Supports. *Journal of School Violence*, 12(1), 45–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2012.732546

[5] National School Environment Survey (2019). https://knowledge.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/doslidzhennya-2.pdf

impact of the school environment on young people's psychological well-being and educational outcomes.

The next stage was the **National School Environment Survey in Ukraine in 2020**[6], published in 2021. It not only evaluated changes following the adoption of Ukrainian legislation to combat bullying, but also demonstrated that, despite certain positive shifts, the school environment remained unsafe for the majority of LGBTIQ+ teenagers, while the scale of discrimination, bullying, and psychological pressure required further systemic changes.

Thus, this report is a logical continuation of a series of national studies on the situation of LGBTIQ+ youth in Ukraine. It presents the results of a national survey and provides an analysis of key indicators characterising the socio-demographic profile of respondents, their level of well-being, sense of safety, experiences of discrimination and violence, mental health status, social support, openness regarding their identity, as well as access to services and resources. We hope that the presented data will serve as an important foundation for developing evidence-based policies and practices aimed at creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment in which every young person in Ukraine can realise their potential, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.



[6] National School Environment Survey 2020 (2021). https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pCcH4AFaKsfLcOBlEwtt_jpvbXO-XApV/view

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Data Collection and Analysis Method

The study was conducted in the form of an anonymous online survey using the Google Forms platform between March and the end of July 2026. Young people aged 13 to 24 living in Ukraine, including internally displaced persons and those residing in temporarily occupied territories, were invited to participate. A screening mechanism based on age and target group eligibility was included at the beginning of the questionnaire. Individuals who did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded from the survey.

The questionnaire was distributed through targeted recruitment across various communication channels aimed at youth. The survey link was disseminated via social media, partner non-governmental organisations, educational institutions, educators, and influencers working with youth audiences. This approach allowed for the inclusion of young people from various regions of Ukraine and diverse social groups.

A total of **601** completed questionnaires were received. After applying the inclusion criteria, the final dataset comprised **525** questionnaires completed by LGBTIQ+ youth who met the age criteria of the study. This dataset was used for further statistical analysis.

The questionnaire included questions regarding socio-demographic characteristics, educational and employment status, the impact of the war on daily life, experiences of discrimination, bullying, and violence, sense of safety, psychological well-being, social support, access to LGBTIQ+-friendly services, as well as openness regarding sexual orientation or gender identity. For respondents who were studying or working, conditional skip logic was applied, displaying only the relevant thematic blocks.

The survey was completely anonymous. No personal data that could identify study participants was collected. Before starting the questionnaire, each individual received information regarding the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the right to refuse to answer any question or stop taking the survey at any point without any negative consequences. Upon completing the questionnaire, respondents were

provided with a list of organisations and services to contact for psychological, legal, or social support. Additionally, the survey concluded with an open-ended question allowing respondents to share further details regarding their personal experiences. Open-ended comment fields were also included in a number of thematic questions, making it possible to supplement quantitative results with qualitative testimonies.

The collected data was processed using descriptive statistics methods. The analysis relied on frequency distributions, comparisons across groups, and the analysis of relationships between the key indicators of the study.

At the same time, the study results should be interpreted taking into account the specifics of the sample selection. The recruitment method used relies on non-probability sampling gathered through open online engagement via partner networks and social media. Accordingly, the **findings do not claim statistical representativeness for all LGBTIQ+ youth in Ukraine**, however, they serve as an important source of information on the experiences of a large cohort of young LGBTIQ+ individuals from various regions of the country and make it possible to identify the key trends, challenges, and needs of this community in the context of the full-scale war.

Table 1. Sampling Characteristics

INDICATOR	VALUE
Total number of submitted questionnaires	601
Included in final analysis	525
Did not meet inclusion criteria	76
Collection method	Anonymous online survey
Platform	Google Forms
Sampling method	Targeted online recruitment
Target group	LGBTIQ+ youth aged 13–24

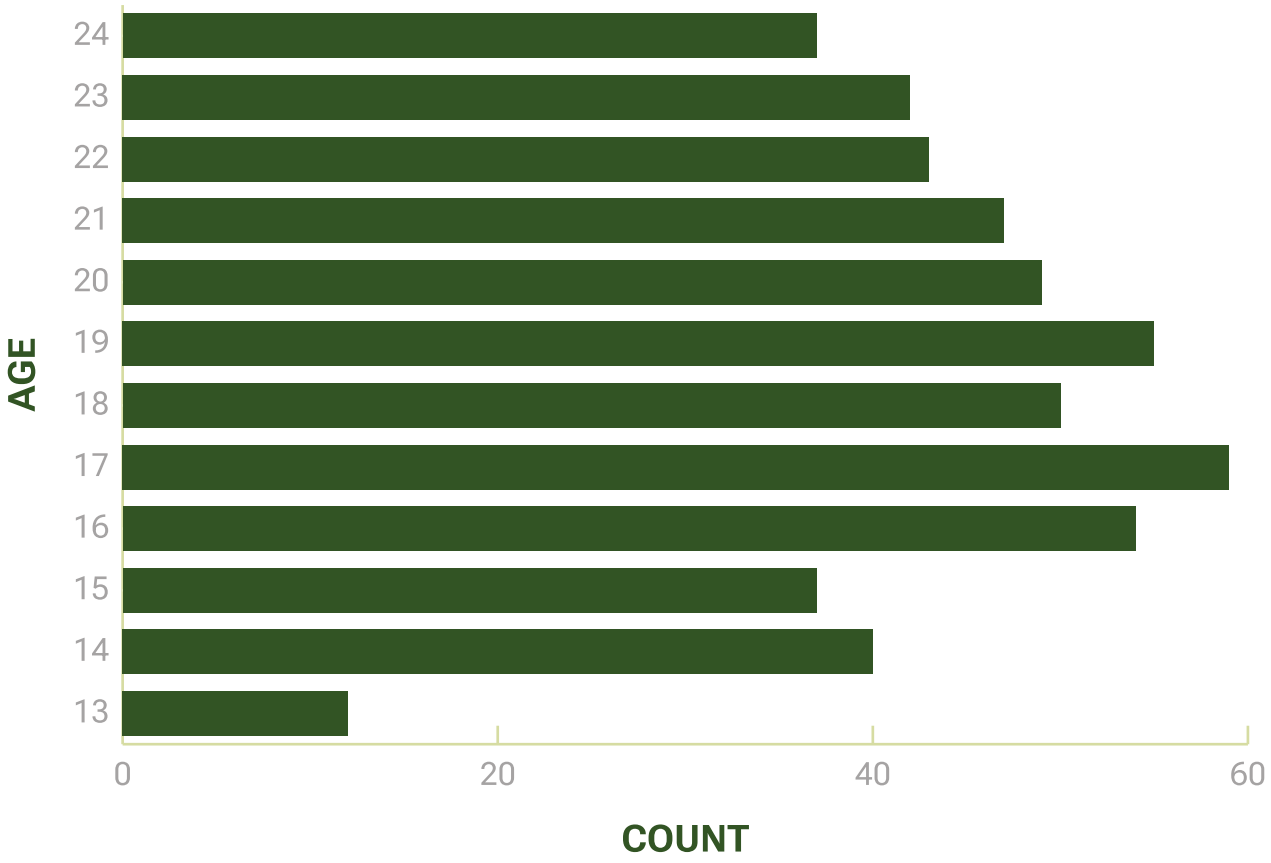
Participants' Age

The final analysis included responses from 525 LGBTIQ+ young people aged 13 to 24. The largest group comprised 17-year-olds (59 respondents; 11.2%). The proportions of 19-year-olds (55; 10.5%) and 16-year-olds (54; 10.3%) were also significant. The smallest age cohort in the sample consisted of 13-year-olds (12; 2.3%). Overall, the sample is relatively evenly distributed across age groups from 14 to 24, with slightly lower representation among the youngest respondents.

Table 2. Age Distribution

AGE, YEARS	NUMBER	SHARE, %
13	12	2.3
14	40	7.6
15	37	7.0
16	54	10.3
17	59	11.2
18	50	9.5
19	55	10.5
20	49	9.3
21	47	9.0
22	43	8.2
23	42	8.0
24	37	7.0
Total	**525**	**100.0**

Fig. 1. Age Distribution



Geographic Distribution

At the time of the study, the vast majority of participants lived in government-controlled territory of Ukraine (521 respondents). Additionally, 4 respondents reported residing in temporarily occupied territories.

By settlement type, urban youth made up the largest share of the sample. A total of 320 individuals (61.0%) lived in cities, and an additional 137 (26.1%) resided in regional centers. Rural areas were home to 68 respondents (12.0%). Isolated responses mentioned living in urban-type settlements, next to a regional center, or combining residence and daily life between urban and rural areas.

The geography of the study encompassed most regions of Ukraine. The largest number of responses was received from youth residing in the city of Kyiv (133 respondents; 25.3%), as well as Lviv (60; 11.4%), Kyiv (46; 8.8%), Dnipropetrovsk (36; 6.9%), and Kharkiv (31; 5.9%) regions. Odesa (22; 4.2%), Vinnytsia (21; 4.0%), Poltava (18; 3.4%), and Ivano-Frankivsk (17; 3.2%) regions were also notably represented.

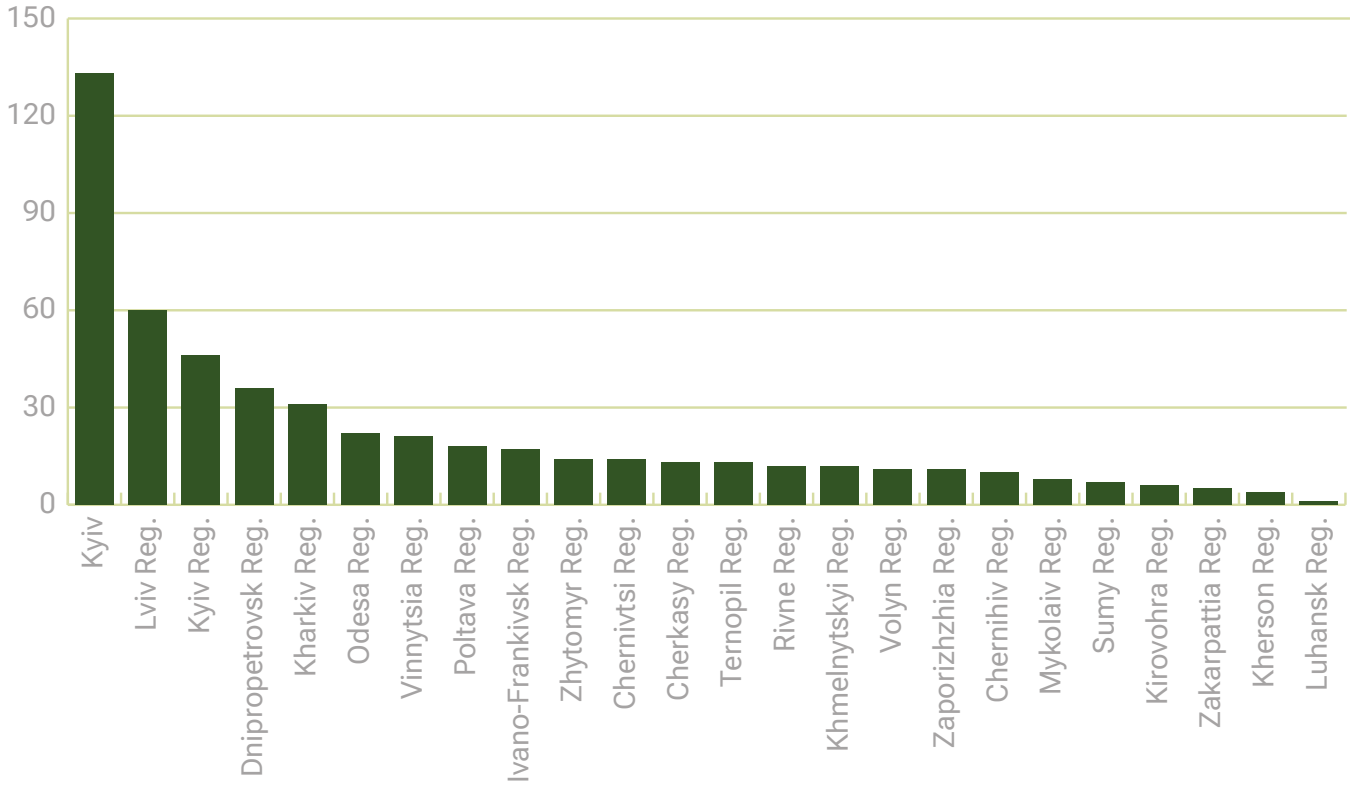
Table 3. Area of residence

AREA	NUMBER
Government-controlled territory of Ukraine	521
Temporarily occupied territory	4
Total	**525**

Table 4. Type of settlement

TYPE OF SETTLEMENT	NUMBER
City	320
Regional center	137
Rural area	68
Total	**525**

Fig. 2. Area of residence



Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

One of the goals of the study was to capture the diversity of experiences among LGBTIQ+ youth in Ukraine. The findings demonstrate that research participants represent a wide spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities, reflecting the internal diversity of the LGBTIQ+ community.

The majority of the sample comprised cisgender women (277 respondents; 52.8%). The second largest group consisted of cisgender men (84; 16.0%). At the same time, transgender and non-binary youth accounted for a significant portion of the sample: 74 individuals (14.1%) identified as non-binary, 39 (7.4%) as transgender men, and 22 (4.2%) as transgender women. Additionally, 8 respondents (1.5%) identified as genderfluid. Among the open-ended responses, self-identifications such as agender, genderqueer, queer, intersex man, transmasculine/demiboy, and others were also reported. Due to the small number of such responses, they were grouped into the category "Other gender identities, sexual orientations, and sex characteristics".

As for sexual orientation, the most common was homosexual (lesbian – 124; 23.6% and gay – 69; 13.1%), followed by bisexual (173 respondents; 33.0%) and pansexual (78; 14.9%). Additionally, 33 individuals (6.3%) identified their sexual orientation as asexual, and 9 (1.7%) as heterosexual. In open-ended responses, omnisexual, demisexual, aromantic, greysexual, queer, and other sexual orientations were also represented.

It is worth noting that the study included all individuals who self-identified as LGBTIQ+, regardless of their specific sexual orientation or gender identity. For this reason, the responses regarding sexual orientation also include participants who identified as heterosexual. In most such cases, these are transgender or gender-diverse individuals, for whom heterosexual orientation is fully compatible with belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community.

Table 5. Gender identity

GENDER IDENTITY	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Cisgender woman	277	52,8
Cisgender man	84	16,0

GENDER IDENTITY	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Non-binary person	74	14,1
Transgender man	39	7,4
Transgender woman	22	4,2
Genderfluid person	8	1,5
Other gender identities, sexual orientations, and sex characteristics*	17	3,2
Hard to answer / Not specified	4	0,8
Total	**525**	**100.0**

** "Other gender identities, sexual orientations, and sex characteristics" category includes various open-ended self-identifications, each represented by a small number of respondents.*

The obtained results confirm that LGBTIQ+ youth in Ukraine constitute a heterogeneous group. This diversity provides an important context for the subsequent analysis of experiences with discrimination, bullying, psychological well-being, the impact of the war, and access to support.

Table 6. Sexual orientation

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Bisexual	173	33.0
Homosexual (women)	124	23.6
Pansexual	78	14.9
Homosexual (men)	69	13.1
Asexual	33	6.3
Heterosexual**	9	1.7

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Other and multiple self-identifications**	35	6.7
Undecided / Exploring their orientation	4	0.8
Total	**525**	**100.0***

*** This category includes individuals who self-identified as LGBTIQ+ through their gender identity (specifically transgender and gender-diverse people), even though they identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual.*

**** The category "Other and multiple self-identifications" includes demisexual, aromantic, queer, combined, and other self-identifications, as well as responses that could not be assigned to the main categories due to their small number.*

Intersectional characteristics and additional factors influencing well-being and safety

To better understand intersectionality, the questionnaire included questions about additional life circumstances that could potentially influence experiences of safety, access to support, and interactions with others. Responses were based on self-reported experience, without requiring official documentation or a formal diagnosis. Respondents were able to select multiple response options.

More than half of the survey participants – 278 individuals (53.0%) – indicated that none of the listed additional characteristics applied to them. At the same time, 143 respondents (27.2%) reported having a disability or long-term/chronic health condition, including mental health conditions. It is important to consider that this wording encompassed a significantly broader range of conditions than officially certified disability. Therefore, this indicator should not be interpreted as the prevalence of disability among the surveyed youth.

A total of 70 respondents (13.3%) indicated that they were internally displaced persons, while 60 (11.4%) reported financial difficulties, including a lack of funds to cover basic needs. 28 individuals (5.3%) reported special educational needs or the requirement of additional learning accommodations. Sixteen respondents (3.0%) each reported belonging to an ethnic or national minority, and residing in a temporarily occupied territory, regularly crossing the line of contact, or having close ones living there. Additionally, 19 individuals (3.6%) chose the "Prefer not to answer" option.

In open-ended responses, individual participants also mentioned neurodivergence, health conditions, parental control, having close relatives in the military, and other circumstances.

Thus, for a significant portion of LGBTIQ+ youth, life experience is shaped at the intersection of sexual orientation and/or gender identity with other social, economic, health-related, and war-related circumstances. Considering these factors is essential for the subsequent analysis of discrimination, bullying, psychological well-being, and access to support, as the combination of multiple characteristics and life circumstances can create specific needs and forms of vulnerability.

Table 7. Additional characteristics that may affect experiences of safety and access to support (N = 525)

CHARACTERISTICS	NUMBER	SHARE, %
None of the above applies	278	53.0
Disability or long-term/chronic health conditions, including mental health	143	27.2
Internally displaced person (IDP)	70	13.3
Financial difficulties, specifically lack of funds for basic needs	60	11.4
Special educational needs / Need for learning accommodations	28	5.3
Prefer not to answer	19	3.6
Living in temporarily occupied territory / Regularly crossing the line of contact / Having close ones there	16	3.0
Belonging to an ethnic or national minority	16	3.0

Note. Respondents could select multiple response options; therefore, the sum of the percentages exceeds 100%.

THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON EVERYDAY LIFE

The full-scale war has become a defining context for the lives of most survey participants. Therefore, prior to analysing experiences of bullying, discrimination, and psychological well-being, the study examined how the war has impacted the daily lives of LGBTIQ+ youth.

Relocation

More than two-fifths of respondents reported being forced to change their place of residence, at least temporarily, due to the war. Among the standard response options, 110 individuals (21.0%) indicated internal displacement within Ukraine, while 109 (20.8%) reported temporary relocation abroad. At the same time, 288 respondents (54.9%) stated that they had not moved. Additionally, 16 participants provided open-ended responses, and two did not answer this question.

The open-ended responses indicate that relocation was often more complex than the main response options captured. Some youth described multiple stages of relocation, such as initial evacuation abroad followed by a return to a different region in Ukraine, temporary internal relocation, or returning to their hometown after safety conditions improved. Thus, for many young people, forced mobility was a prolonged and multi-step experience.

Impact of the War on Education and Work

The war has also significantly affected the ability of some youth to study or work. A total of 183 respondents (34.9%) reported partially losing access to education or employment, while 14 individuals (2.7%) lost access completely. At the same time, 317 participants (60.4%) stated that they had not lost such access. Additionally, 8 respondents described their experience in open-ended answers, and three did not respond to this question.

The open-ended responses show that the impact of the war on education and work was not limited to the complete or partial loss of formal access. Respondents mentioned shifting to remote learning, the impossibility of in-person classes due to safety conditions, power outages and internet

disruptions, temporary breaks in their studies, and difficulties balancing work and study under prevailing security conditions.

Sense of Safety and the Psychological Impact of the War

The vast majority of LGBTIQ+ youth fear for their personal safety due to the war at least occasionally. Most frequently, participants indicated that they feel such fear sometimes (243 respondents; 46.3%) or often (152; 29.0%). Additionally, 44 individuals (8.4%) reported experiencing this fear constantly. Meanwhile, 74 respondents (14.1%) almost never feel afraid for their safety due to the war, and only 10 (1.9%) never experience it. Two respondents did not answer this question.

The psychological impact of the war presents an even more pronounced picture. A total of 446 respondents (85.0% of the total sample) assessed its impact on their psychological well-being as moderate, rather strong, or very strong. Specifically, 86 individuals (16.4%) reported a very strong impact, 136 (25.9%) reported a rather strong impact, and the largest group – 224 respondents (42.7%) rated it as moderate. Conversely, 64 individuals (12.2%) indicated that the war has almost no impact on their psychological well-being, and only 14 (2.7%) stated that it has no impact at all.

In other words, the full-scale war is an integral part of the daily experience of LGBTIQ+ youth. The experience of the war and one's sexual orientation and gender identity frequently interact, shaping a complex overall experience for young LGBTIQ+ individuals.

How the War Changes the Everyday Experience of LGBTIQ+ Youth: Insights from the Respondents Themselves

To gain a deeper understanding of how the full-scale war interacts with the specific experiences of LGBTIQ+ youth, participants were asked an open-ended question: **"What is the most difficult aspect of your life as an LGBTIQ+ young person during the war?"** In total, 296 participants provided detailed answers. Since a single response could address several distinct issues, individual entries could be assigned to multiple thematic categories simultaneously during thematic analysis.

One of the cross-cutting themes is the coexistence of the general danger of war with the fear of homophobia and transphobia. A portion of the responses describes a situation where, alongside the threat of russian attacks, occupation, and other consequences of the war, respondents must also assess the risk of negative reactions or aggression from their immediate social environment: **"The fact that, despite russia, I still have to fear my own fellow citizens"**[7]. Another respondent articulated a similar thought as: "Fear for my safety not only because of russians, but also because of my fellow citizens".

Another prominent theme is the need to conceal one's sexual orientation or gender identity and constantly monitor how visible it is to others. Respondents describe continually evaluating their surroundings, monitoring their behaviour, and being unable to openly display affectionate relationships: **"On top of the general stress of war, I constantly need to filter my behaviour. When my beloved person, my partner, has to remain just a friend or sister to the rest of the world. When we go on a date or an event, we cannot simply be ourselves, because in public places we often attract unwanted attention or get harassed. This forced invisibility and constant monitoring of every gesture or look is extremely emotionally exhausting"**.

A distinct theme in the responses was the use of the war as an argument to postpone addressing equal rights for LGBTIQ+ people. Respondents feel that their issues are considered secondary compared to the war, and that discussions about rights and social acceptance are viewed as ill-timed. **"The worsening oppression of the LGBTIQ+ community against the backdrop of events in the country. Disregard for me as a member of society. Like, our problems aren't a priority when the country is at war, and that the military isn't protecting people like us anyway"**.

Another response directly connects this discourse to the issue of equal rights: "The legal inability to be together (get married). If something happens to my partner, legally we are nobodies to each other, and nothing can be done. Also, the question of the "relevance" of acceptance toward the community (pushback like "why talk about this now, it's not the right time")".

A related, yet analytically distinct theme is the lack of legal recognition for same-sex partnerships. Responses mention marriage, the legal status

[7] This and all subsequent italicised quotes are taken directly from the survey and have been minimally edited for readability; for the most part, the respondents' original phrasing has been preserved in full to ensure the most accurate representation of the content and context of their answers.

of partners, the ability to make decisions in cases of injury or death, and other rights that, under wartime conditions, cease to be abstract. One respondent formulated the issue as follows: **"I am not protected by the law. I understand that if something happens to me or my partner, all decisions will be made by our parents"**. In another response, the wartime dimension of this problem is explained in greater detail: **"I cannot register a marriage with my partner because we are of the same sex. Consequently, with the war and military actions, we don't know what might happen. One of us could end up in the hospital or even die. And the other would have no possibility of visiting the hospital or obtaining a death certificate, because to the state, we are strangers to each other"**.

These responses demonstrate how the war materialises the consequences of legal inequality. What under other circumstances might be perceived as a matter of legal or symbolic recognition becomes, under wartime conditions, directly tied to injury, death, medical decision-making, and the legal status of one's loved one.

Another important theme concerns loneliness and the difficulty of finding a supportive network, partners, and other LGBTIQ+ individuals. In some responses, loneliness is directly linked to the need to conceal one's identity: **"Hiding who I am from everyone, always being alone in this regard, a lack of privacy and peace of mind about my own life. There is never a moment where you can just live peacefully with it"**.

Other respondents emphasise the lack of support in their everyday social environments: **"Finding support and understanding in an ordinary environment, rather than only in specially established organisations; because of this, the feeling of loneliness really weighs heavily"**.

Family relationships also emerge in the responses as a critical issue. Particularly telling is the contradiction between the heightened need for closeness during wartime and the impossibility of being fully open with one's closest relatives: **"Being honest with family at a time when family and closeness matter most. Not being afraid to be yourself and openly speak about who you are"**.

This theme directly complements the quantitative findings of the study (see subsequent sections), which revealed high levels of identity concealment at home and a fear of negative reactions from family. Under wartime conditions, this situation acquires added significance: precisely when the need for close

social ties and support increases, a portion of LGBTIQ+ youth cannot be fully open even with those closest to them.

A distinct set of issues is linked to mobilisation, military registration, and interaction with military institutions. This experience is particularly distinct for transgender youth.

One trans man says: "As a trans guy, my reality involves a constant fear of being detained by the Territorial Recruitment Centre, having my identity exposed, and, as a result, facing violence of any kind".

Another respondent highlights a different challenge: **"The fear that being a transgender woman will be perceived as a ploy to evade mobilisation"**

Indeed, for transgender youth, interaction with military institutions can carry specific risks: unwanted disclosure of transgender identity, fear of violence, issues with documentation, and the suspicion that being transgender might be viewed as an attempt to avoid military service.

At the same time, it is important not to convey the impression that all respondents perceive the impact of the war through the prism of sexual orientation or gender identity. A portion of the youth noted that they do not see such a specific intersection and feel that the burden is equally difficult for everyone. These responses demonstrate the heterogeneity of LGBTIQ+ youth experiences and caution against the assumption that sexual orientation or gender identity necessarily dictates how the war is perceived. For some young people, the universal consequences of the war remain central and are not connected to their SOGI.



EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING, AND VIOLENCE

Educational and Professional Environments of the Study Participants

The next section of the report analyses the experiences of discrimination, bullying, violence, and the sense of safety among LGBTIQ+ youth across various spheres of daily life.

Given that the study encompassed youth aged 13 to 24, participants were at different stages of their education and professional lives. Some were attending general secondary education institutions, while others were pursuing vocational or higher education, working, or combining work with study. A few participants were serving in the military, volunteering, seeking employment, or transitioning between graduating high school and entering higher education.

To reflect real-life circumstances as accurately as possible, the questionnaire allowed respondents to select multiple options regarding their current status. Consequently, the categories below are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages do not total 100%.

Nearly half of the study participants, 247 individuals (47.0%), indicated that they were studying at a university, college, or other educational institution. Additionally, 145 respondents (27.6%) were attending school. At the same time, 183 participants (34.9%) reported being employed. At least 80 participants (15.2% of the sample) were combining higher or vocational education with employment, and 9 respondents (1.7%) were balancing school attendance with work. Meanwhile, 36 individuals (6.9%) selected the option "neither working nor studying"; some clarified in open-ended answers that they were currently looking for a job or had recently completed their studies.

This diversity of life situations means that the same individual could simultaneously encounter different forms of discrimination or violence both in educational settings and at work. For this reason, the subsequent analysis is organised not by the participants' formal statuses, but by the environments in which these experiences occurred.

The following subsections first examine the experiences of LGBTIQ+ youth in educational settings, including general secondary, vocational, professional pre-higher, and higher education institutions. Following this, the experiences of those who work or combine employment with their studies are analysed separately. This approach allows for a more precise assessment of the specifics of each environment and helps identify how discrimination, bullying, and violence manifest within them.

Table 8. Educational and Employment Status of Study Participants

CURRENT STATUS	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Studying at a university, college, or other educational institution	247	47.0
Employed	183	34.9
Attending school	145	27.6
Neither working nor studying	36	6.9

Note. Respondents could select multiple answers; therefore, the sum of the percentages exceeds 100%.

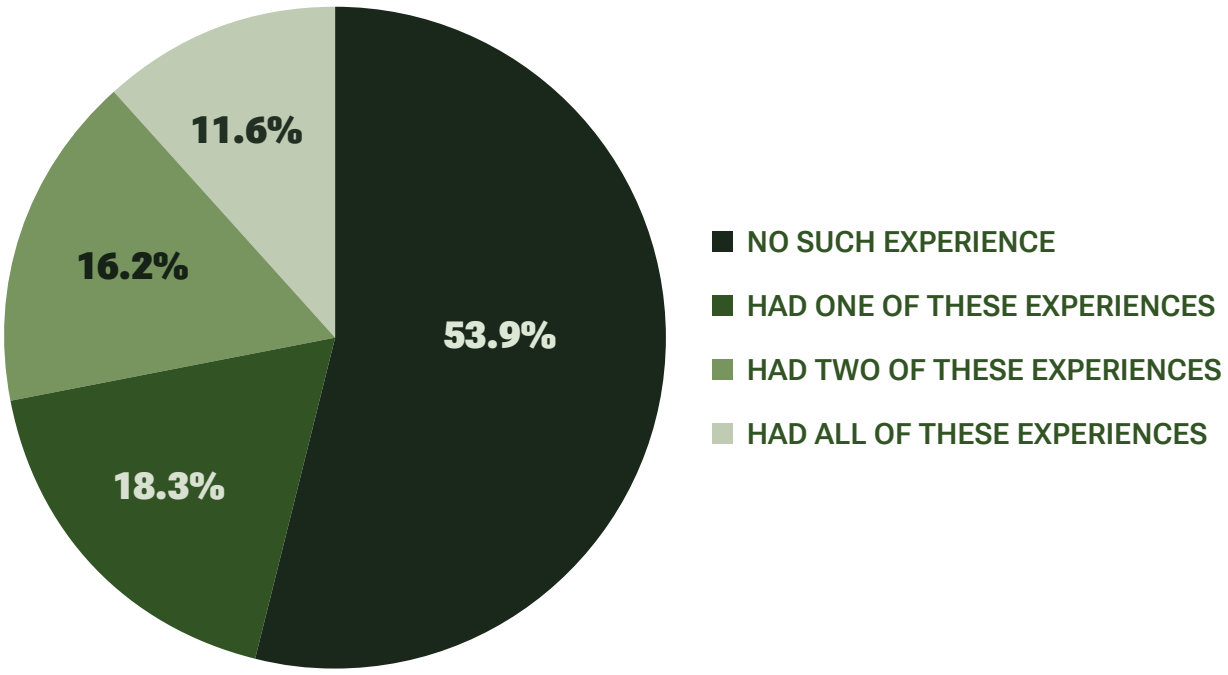
Cumulative Experience of Verbal Discrimination and Humiliation

An analysis of these three forms of negative experience combined demonstrates that they overlap to a significant degree. Study participants were asked **how frequently over the past three months they had been: 1) verbally abused due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, 2) mocked or humiliated, and 3) subjected to rumours or false information spread about them**. To evaluate recurring negative experiences, the analysis included instances where respondents indicated that such occurrences took place 3-4 times, often, or constantly. According to this criterion, over the past three months alone, 242 individuals (46.1% of the sample) experienced at least one of these three forms of mistreatment repeatedly. Moreover, 146 respondents (27.8% of the total sample) experienced at least two of the three forms, while 61 individuals (11.6%) faced all three.

Table 9. Cumulative Experience of Negative Treatment over the Past 3 Months

NUMBER OF NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES	NUMBER	SHARE, %
None of the three forms	283	53.9
One form	96	18.3
Two forms	85	16.2
All three forms	61	11.6
Total	**525**	**100.0**

Over the past three months, you have been 1) verbally abused due to LGBTQI+ identity, 2) mocked or humiliated, and 3) targeted by gossip or false information about you



Social Exclusion, Threats, Cyberbullying, and Physical Aggression

Beyond verbal abuse, ridicule, and rumour-spreading, the survey covered other forms of mistreatment, ranging from social exclusion and cyberbullying

to threats and physical aggression, over the three months before participating in the study.

Deliberate ignoring or exclusion from a group. Over a fifth of respondents – 119 individuals (22.7%) reported that over the past three months, they had been intentionally ignored or excluded from a group at least 3–4 times. Specifically, 67 individuals (12.8%) encountered this 3–4 times, 38 (7.2%) experienced it often, and 14 (2.7%) faced it constantly. Thus, 52 participants (9.9%), or approximately one in ten young people surveyed, experienced social exclusion often or constantly. At the same time, 285 respondents (54.3%) stated that they had never encountered such an experience during the specified period.

Table 10. Experience of Deliberate Ignoring/Exclusion

FREQUENCY OF DELIBERATE IGNORING/EXCLUSION	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Constantly	14	2.7
Often	38	7.2
Occurred 3-4 times	67	12.8
Almost never	121	23.0
Never	285	54.3
Total	**525**	**100.0**

Threats. Threats were a less prevalent, yet significantly more severe, form of negative experience. Fifty-eight respondents (11.0%) reported receiving threats at least 3-4 times over the past three months. For 39 individuals (7.4%), this occurred 3-4 times; for 15 (2.9%), it happened often; and 4 respondents (0.8%) reported facing constant threats. Thus, 19 individuals (3.6%) encountered threats on an often or constant basis. Meanwhile, the overwhelming majority – 374 respondents (71.2%) stated that they had not been threatened during the specified three-month period.

Table 11. Experience of Receiving Threats

FREQUENCY OF THREATS	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Constantly	4	0.8
Often	15	2.9
Occurred 3-4 times	39	7.4
Almost never	93	17.7
Never	374	71.2
Total	**525**	**100.0**

Cyberbullying. Negative experiences in the digital environment remain noticeably prevalent. A total of 118 respondents (22.5%) experienced cyberbullying in the form of messages, comments, or posts at least 3-4 times over the past three months. Specifically, 75 individuals (14.3%) reported 3-4 such instances, 37 (7.0%) experienced cyberbullying often, and 6 (1.1%) faced it constantly. Thus, 43 respondents (8.2%) encountered cyberbullying on an often or constant basis. Meanwhile, 289 individuals (55.0%) had never experienced cyberbullying during this period.

Physical aggression and property damage were the least prevalent among the examined forms of victimisation; however, the recorded figures remain substantial given the severity of such experiences. Over a three-month period alone, 30 respondents (5.7%) reported experiencing physical aggression, specifically pushing or hitting and/or damage to personal property at least 3-4 times. For 18 individuals (3.4%), this occurred 3-4 times; 10 (1.9%) encountered such experiences often; and 2 (0.4%) faced them constantly. In total, 12 individuals (2.3%) reported frequent or constant physical aggression or property damage.

Overall Experience of Victimisation Over the Past Three Months

To evaluate the cumulative experience of negative treatment, we analysed seven forms of victimisation: verbal abuse based on SOGI, ridicule or humiliation, spreading rumours or lies, deliberate ignoring or group exclusion, threats, cyberbullying, and physical aggression or personal property damage. The results show that **294 respondents (56.0% of the sample)** experienced at least one of the seven forms of victimisation at least several times over the past three months. At the same time, 231 individuals (44.0%) did not report any of these forms occurring with such frequency.

For many young people, negative experiences were not restricted to a single manifestation. A total of 201 individuals (38.3% of the entire sample) encountered at least two different forms of victimisation, 128 (24.4%) faced at least three, and 78 (14.9%) experienced at least four. 10 respondents (1.9%) reported facing all seven forms of negative experience within a span of just three months.

Table 12. Overall Experience of Victimisation

NUMBER OF FORMS OF VICTIMISATION	NUMBER	SHARE, %
None	231	44.0
One	93	17.7
Two	73	13.9
Three	50	9.5
Four	37	7.0
Five	19	3.6
Six	12	2.3
All seven	10	1.9
Total	**525**	**100.0***

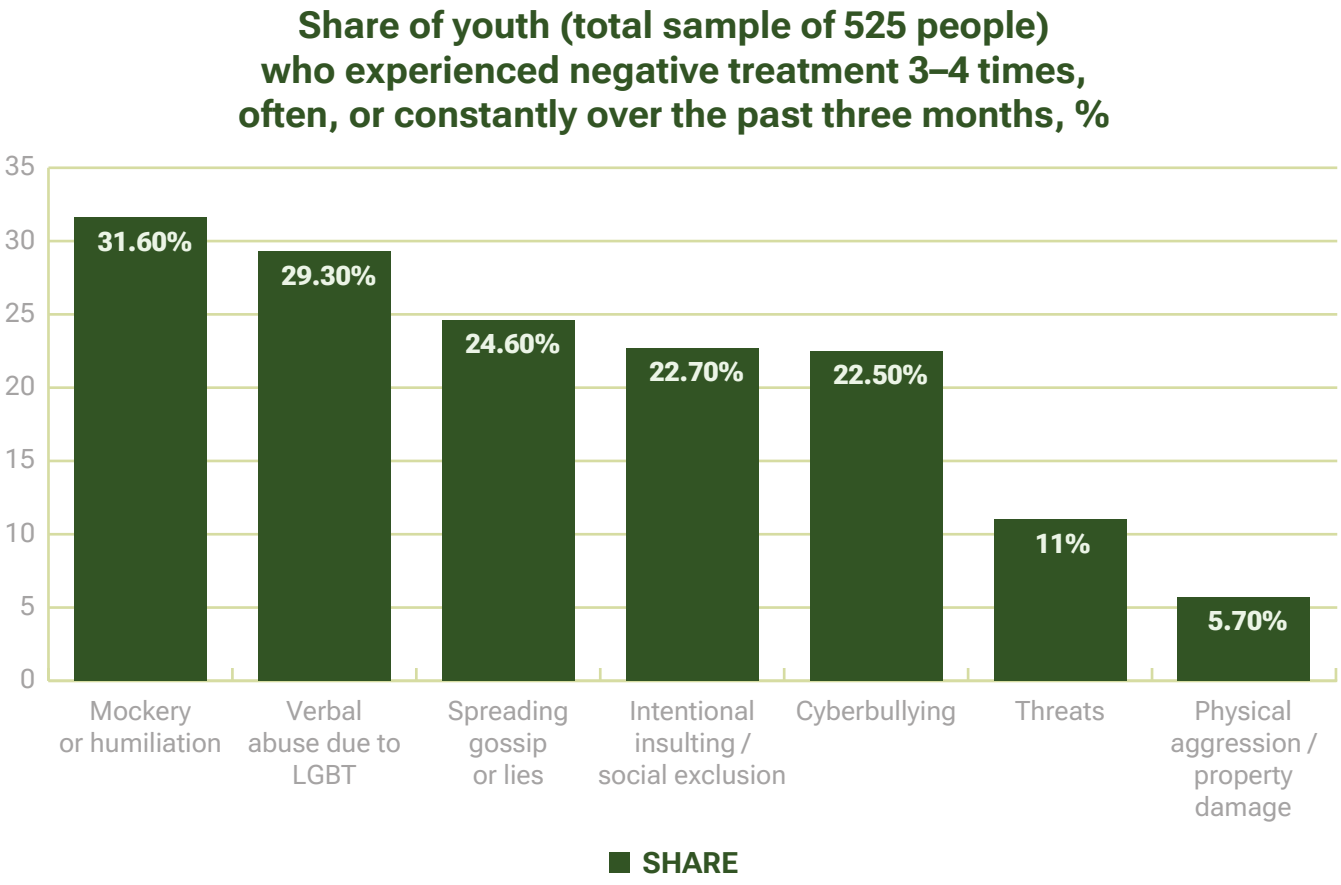
** A minor discrepancy may occur due to rounding.*

In other words, 56.0% – more than half of the surveyed LGBTIQ+ youth experienced at least one of the studied forms of victimisation within a period of just three months.

Table 13. Frequency of Negative Treatment

FORM OF NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE	≥ 3–4 TIMES, N	SHARE, %	OFTEN OR CONSTANTLY, N (%)
Ridicule or humiliation	166	31.6	43 (8.2)
Verbal abuse based on SOGI	154	29.3	42 (8.0)
Spreading rumours or lies	129	24.6	56 (10.7)
Deliberate ignoring/group exclusion	119	22.7	52 (9.9)
Cyberbullying	118	22.5	43 (8.2)
Threats	58	11.0	19 (3.6)
Physical aggression/ property damage	30	5.7	12 (2.3)

Examining individual forms of victimisation, ridicule or humiliation was the most prevalent (31.6%), followed by verbal abuse based on SOGI (29.3%). Nearly a quarter of respondents repeatedly experienced the spreading of rumours or lies (24.6%), deliberate exclusion or ignoring (22.7%), and cyberbullying (22.5%). Threats were less frequent, yet 11.0% of those surveyed reported experiencing them repeatedly. Physical aggression or property damage at least 3–4 times over three months was reported by 5.7% of the youth.



Experience of Sexual Violence and Unwanted Sexual Conduct

A dedicated section of the study addressed experiences of sexual violence and unwanted sexual conduct. Participants were asked a direct question: "Have you ever experienced sexual violence or unwanted sexual conduct?" Unlike the preceding indicators of bullying and victimisation, this question pertained to lifetime experience rather than strictly the past three months. The findings reveal a very high prevalence of such experiences. A total of 209 respondents (39.8% of the total sample) explicitly answered that they had experienced sexual violence or unwanted sexual conduct. 229 individuals (43.6%) responded "no" and an additional 74 (14.1%) selected the option "difficult to answer" (Table 14).

Notably, a significant proportion of respondents – 14.1% found it difficult to provide a definitive answer to this question. Furthermore, 13 individuals provided open-ended responses instead of selecting the suggested options. In these answers, young people described unwanted touching of intimate body parts, non-consensual kiss attempts, sexualised comments, stalking, unsolicited sharing of intimate images, sexualised actions by relatives or

peers, and experiences occurring in childhood. Notably, several respondents explicitly expressed uncertainty regarding whether the incidents they experienced qualified as sexual violence or unwanted sexual conduct.

Table 14. Experience of Sexual Violence and Unwanted Sexual Conduct

EXPERIENCE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND UNWANTED SEXUAL CONDUCT	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Yes	209	39.8
No	229	43.6
Hard to say	74	14.1
Other/open-ended responses	13	2.5
Total	**525**	**100.0**

It is worth noting that a combined total of 87 respondents (16.6%) either selected "hard to say" or formulated an open-ended response instead of a definitive "yes" or "no". This may point, among other things, to the complexity of recognising and categorising boundary violations of a sexual nature. Consequently, the 39.8% figure should be interpreted as the proportion of respondents who definitively identified their experience as sexual violence or unwanted sexual conduct, rather than an estimate of the overall prevalence of such experiences within the sample.

Regarding frequency, among the 209 respondents who explicitly reported experiencing sexual violence or unwanted sexual conduct, the largest group – 111 individuals (53.1%) indicated that it had occurred several times. Fifty respondents (23.9%) reported a single incident, while 27 (12.9%) described multiple or regular experiences, including one open-ended response of "regularly over the course of a month". Additionally, 14 individuals (6.7%) found it difficult to specify the frequency, and a few responses were missing or inconsistent with the preceding question. In other words, for the majority of those reporting such experiences, they were not isolated occurrences: at least 138 out of 209 individuals, or approximately 66%, explicitly reported multiple or repeated/regular incidents.

The experience of sexual violence or unwanted sexual conduct is unevenly distributed across the sample. Its prevalence increases significantly with age: among respondents aged 20–24, 53.2% reported such experiences, compared to approximately 30% in younger age brackets. However, this finding must be interpreted in light of the fact that the item assessed lifetime exposure, meaning older respondents had a longer period of potential risk. By gender identity, the lowest prevalence was observed among cisgender men (26.2%), whereas figures for cisgender women (42.2%), non-binary individuals (45.9%), and transgender men (43.6%) all exceeded 40%. Given the small sample sizes of certain gender subgroups, these variations should be interpreted tentatively.



Primary Perpetrators

Respondents were asked to indicate who was most frequently the perpetrator in situations of bullying, discrimination, or harassment, with the option to select multiple answers. Youth most commonly identified peers, other pupils, or students – 288 respondents (54.9% of the total sample). At the same time, a significant portion of negative experiences was connected to individuals outside immediate acquaintance circles: 234 respondents (44.6%) named online users, while 215 (41.0%) cited strangers. Experiences within the family environment are particularly notable: 182 respondents (34.7%) – more than a third of the entire sample identified family members among the perpetrators.

Less frequently, respondents named individuals holding institutional or professional positions: 75 individuals (14.3%) reported teachers or instructors, 43 (8.2%) mentioned colleagues, and 18 (3.4%) cited workplace management. However, these proportions should be interpreted taking into account the age and status of respondents, as not all sample participants are employed and some are no longer enrolled in education.

Table 15. Perpetrator Categories

PERPETRATORS	NUMBER	SHARE OF N=525, %
Peers/other pupils or students	288	54.9
Online users	234	44.6
Strangers	215	41.0
Family members	182	34.7
Teachers/instructors	75	14.3
Colleagues	43	8.2
Workplace management	18	3.4

Respondents could select multiple response options; therefore, the sum of percentages exceeds 100%. Fifty-four respondents did not answer this question; individual open-ended responses included mentions of partners, ex-partners, friends and acquaintances, healthcare workers, and other individuals.

Discrimination by Educational Staff and Workplace Management

Separately, respondents were asked how often they experienced abuse from school or educational staff, or from workplace management. Among this group, the most frequent response was "sometimes" – 38 individuals (44.7%). Fourteen other respondents (16.5%) reported that such treatment occurred often, and 3 (3.5%) indicated it happened constantly. Thus, at least 17 out of the 85 individuals (20.0%) who listed educational staff or management among perpetrators reported that these experiences were frequent or constant in nature.

Locations of Bullying, Discrimination, and Harassment

The most common location for negative experiences was online spaces, cited by 301 respondents (57.3% of the total sample). The street ranked second (204 respondents; 38.9%). At the same time, a substantial share of incidents occurred within educational environments: 148 individuals (28.2%) named classrooms or lecture halls, 142 (27.0%) cited campuses, 98 (18.7%) mentioned hallways or stairwells, and 67 (12.8%) indicated restrooms or changing rooms. Additionally, 126 respondents (24.0%) identified home, 109 (20.8%) cited public transportation, and 40 (7.6%) reported the workplace.

Table 16. Locations of bullying, discrimination and harassment

LOCATIONS OF BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT	NUMBER	SHARE OF N=525, %
Online	301	57.3
Street	204	38.9
Classrooms/lecture halls	148	28.2
Campuses	142	27.0
Home	126	24.0
Public transport	109	20.8

LOCATIONS OF BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT	NUMBER	SHARE OF N=525, %
Hallways/stairwells	98	18.7
Restrooms/changing rooms	67	12.8
Workplace	40	7.6

Multiple response options were permitted. A total of 77 respondents did not answer this question.

An analysis by age and gender identity shows that sources of negative treatment vary according to young people's life stage and gender experience. For respondents aged 13–17, peers represent a particularly significant source of negative treatment, cited by 70.3% of this age group. With the transition to young adulthood, the role of colleagues and workplace management increases, while the proportion of those naming family members remains virtually unchanged. At the same time, transgender and non-binary respondents report perpetrators across multiple distinct environments more frequently than cisgender respondents, particularly among peers and online users. Negative experiences involving family members are also especially prominent among transgender men and non-binary individuals.

Table 17. Analysis of Perpetrator Categories by Victim Age

PERPETRATORS	13–17 YEARS OLD	18–19 YEARS OLD	20–24 YEARS OLD
Peers/other pupils or students	**70.3%**	46.7%	44.5%
Family members	34.2%	36.2%	34.4%
Teachers/instructors	**17.8%**	9.5%	13.3%
Strangers	38.1%	41.9%	43.1%
Online users	**49.5%**	43.8%	40.4%
Colleagues	1.0%	3.8%	**17.0%**
Workplace management	1.0%	0.0%	**7.3%**

The most distinct pattern is peer role. Peers were named as perpetrators by 70.3% of respondents aged 13-17, whereas among those aged 20-24 this figure was 44.5%. Minors also showed slightly higher rates of negative experiences involving school and university teachers (17.8%).

With age, however, the workplace environment becomes increasingly prominent: 17.0% of 20-24-year-olds report coworkers and 7.3% report workplace management. To a large extent, this situation simply reflects changing life environments, as older youth are more likely to be employed.

The role of the family remains practically unchanged with age, with family members cited by roughly 34-36% across all three age groups. It is also worth noting that the role of online users declines somewhat with age from 49.5% among 13-17-year-olds to 40.4% among 20-24-year-olds, whereas the share of strangers, conversely, increases slightly.

Table 18. Perpetrator Categories by Victims' SOGI Characteristics

PERPETRATORS	CISGENDER WOMEN	CISGENDER MEN	NON-BINARY PERSONS	TRANS-GENDER MEN	TRANS-GENDER WOMEN
Peers/other pupils or students	50.0%	48.8%	**64.0%**	**69.2%**	**72.7%**
Family members	31.1%	25.0%	**44.0%**	**53.8%**	27.3%
Teachers/ instructors	15.4%	6.0%	18.7%	7.7%	**31.8%**
Strangers	38.9%	41.7%	46.7%	38.5%	**63.6%**
Online users	37.1%	38.1%	**64.0%**	**59.0%**	**77.3%**
Colleagues	5.7%	8.3%	12.0%	15.4%	4.5%
Workplace management	2.9%	1.2%	4.0%	10.3%	0%

SAFETY OF LGBTIQ+ YOUTH IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

A dedicated section of the questionnaire was devoted to the experiences of LGBTIQ+ youth in educational institutions. Participants were asked how safe they feel in their educational institution, whether they have had to miss classes due to fear or the danger of harassment, how they evaluate the attitudes of fellow students, teachers, and administration toward LGBTIQ+ people, and whether anti-bullying policies exist in their institutions as well as if they cover sexual orientation and gender identity.

Feeling of Safety in Educational Institution

The overall assessment of personal safety is generally positive, but not for all youth. Of the 453 respondents who answered this question, 254 individuals (56.1%) feel very or somewhat safe in their educational institution. At the same time, 138 respondents (30.5%) adopted a neutral stance – "neither safe nor unsafe", while 61 individuals (13.5%) feel somewhat or very unsafe.

Table 19. Feeling of safety in educational institution

FEELING OF SAFETY IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	NUMBER	SHARE OF RESPONSES, %
Rather safe	64	14.1
Somewhat safe	190	41.9
Neither safe nor unsafe	138	30.5
Somewhat unsafe	55	12.1
Very unsafe	6	1.3
Total	**453**	**100.0**

In other words, approximately one in seven young people who answered the question directly characterises their educational environment as unsafe.

Furthermore, nearly an additional third describes it as neither safe nor unsafe. An even more specific indicator is missing classes due to fear or the danger of harassment. Respondents were asked about the month immediately preceding their participation in the survey. Out of the 452 individuals who answered, 82 (18.1%) had missed class at least once for this reason. For 42 individuals (9.3%), this occurred 1-2 times; for 21 (4.6%), several times; and 19 respondents (4.2%) reported doing so frequently.

Attitudes of Peers and Fellow Students

Assessments of peer tolerance are rather polarised. Of the 455 respondents, 145 (31.9%) characterise fellow pupils or students as somewhat or very tolerant toward LGBTIQ+ people. Almost an identical share – 147 respondents (32.3%) view them as somewhat or very intolerant. The largest single group – 163 individuals (35.8%) describe peer attitudes as neutral.

Table 20. Assessment of pupil/student tolerance

TOLERANCE ASSESSMENT	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Very tolerant	33	7.3
Somewhat tolerant	112	24.6
Neutral attitude	163	35.8
Somewhat intolerant	115	25.3
Very intolerant	32	7.0
Total	**455**	**100.0**

This aligns well with the previous finding, where peers were the most frequently cited category of perpetrators, particularly among the youngest respondents.

Attitudes of Teachers and Administration

Evaluations of teachers and school administration are significantly more negative. Among 452 respondents, only 75 individuals (16.6%) consider them to be very or somewhat tolerant toward LGBTIQ+ people. In contrast, 216 individuals (47.8%), nearly half, rate them as somewhat or very intolerant. A further 161 respondents (35.6%) describe their attitude as neutral.

Thus, judging by the data, the issue within the educational environment is not limited to peer bullying. On the contrary, adults and institutional actors are evaluated by respondents as less tolerant toward LGBTIQ+ individuals.
Out of 453 respondents, 203 individuals (44.8%) reported that their educational institution has an anti-bullying policy. Sixty-one individuals (13.5%) answered that no such policy exists, while 189 respondents (41.7%) do not know whether one exists at all.

Sample Variations

When comparing pupils with students enrolled in universities, colleges, or other higher or vocational education institutions, the school environment appears noticeably less safe and less tolerant. Out of 145 pupils, between 141 and 144 individuals answered the relevant questions; among the 247 students, this number ranged from 242 to 246. Three respondents simultaneously indicated both a school and another educational institution; thus they are present in both groups.

Table 21. Differences by Type of Educational Institution

INDICATOR	SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY/ COLLEGE
Feel very/somewhat safe	**41.7%**	**65.4%**
Feel very/somewhat unsafe	**19.4%**	**10.2%**
Missed classes due to fear of harassment ≥1 time in the last month	**26.4%**	**14.3%**
Missed classes frequently	**6.9%**	**2.0%**
Perceive peers as tolerant	**9.1%**	**45.5%**

INDICATOR	SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY/ COLLEGE
Perceive peers as intolerant	**53.8%**	**19.8%**
Perceive teachers/administration as tolerant	16.3%	20.2%
Perceive teachers/administration as intolerant	**52.5%**	**39.7%**
Aware of the availability of an anti-bullying policy	53.8%	43.9%
Unaware of whether such a policy exists	28.7%	45.5%

The biggest difference concerns peer attitudes. Only 9.1% of pupils evaluate other pupils as tolerant toward LGBTIQ+ people, whereas among university and college students, this figure rises to 45.5%. At the same time, 53.8% of school students view their peers as intolerant, compared to 19.8% in higher and vocational education institutions.

This disparity is also reflected in direct perceptions of safety. At school, only 60 out of 144 respondents (41.7%) feel safe, compared to 161 out of 246 students (65.4%). Their environment is considered unsafe by 19.4% and 10.2%, respectively.

The behavioural indicator is even more telling: 38 out of 144 school pupils (26.4%) had missed class at least once in the past month due to fear or the danger of bullying, compared to 35 out of 245 university students (14.3%). Frequent class skips for this reason were reported by 6.9% of school pupils compared to 2.0% of university students.

Regarding teachers and administration, the difference is smaller, but also unfavourable to schools: 52.5% of school pupils rate staff as intolerant toward LGBTIQ+ people, compared to 39.7% of university students. At the same time, only 16.3% of school pupils and 20.2% of university students evaluate staff positively. Thus, even in higher education, the attitudes of adult institutional actors are evaluated far worse than those of peers.

A second cross-section – by gender identity – also reveals systematic inequality. For comparison, clearly defined categories were isolated: 361 cisgender and 142 transgender, non-binary, and genderfluid respondents. Open-ended or ambiguous self-identifications were excluded to ensure analytical purity.

Table 22. Variations Across SOGI

INDICATOR	CISGENDER YOUTH	TRANS/ NON-BINARY YOUTH
Feel safe	**61.6%**	**42.7%**
Feel unsafe	10.6%	**18.5%**
Missed classes due to fear ≥1 time	15.2%	**24.4%**
Missed classes frequently	2.9%	**7.3%**
Perceive peers as tolerant	31.9%	31.7%
Perceive peers as intolerant	28.7%	**38.9%**
Perceive staff as tolerant	16.6%	17.6%
Perceive staff as intolerant	44.2%	**56.0%**
Aware of the availability of an anti-bullying policy	46.6%	39.8%
Unaware of whether such a policy exists	40.5%	44.7%

Among cisgender youth, 61.6% feel safe at their educational institution, compared to only 42.7% of transgender and non-binary respondents. Respectively, 10.6% and 18.5%, report feeling unsafe.

Similarly, 24.4% of transgender and non-binary respondents missed class due to fear or the danger of bullying in the past month, compared to 15.2% of cisgender respondents. Frequent class skips due to fear occur more than twice as often among trans and non-binary youth – 7.3% versus 2.9%.
An interesting nuance involves the assessment of peers. The share of those who consider them tolerant is nearly identical, approximately 32% in both groups. However, transgender and non-binary youth are significantly more likely to explicitly characterise their peers as intolerant: 38.9% versus 28.7%.

Accordingly, cisgender respondents are more inclined to take a neutral stance.

The strongest divergence again concerns adults: 56.0% of transgender and non-binary youth consider teachers and administration intolerant toward LGBTIQ+ people, compared to 44.2% of cisgender respondents. At the same time, positive evaluations are almost identically low – 17.6% and 16.6%, respectively. Thus, transgender and non-binary participants do not simply view staff positively less often, they are more likely to have grounds to evaluate them directly in a negative light.



LGBTIQ+ YOUTH SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Overall, working LGBTIQ+ youth evaluate the safety of their work environment quite positively. Among the 180 respondents who answered this question, 128 individuals (71.1%) feel very or somewhat safe at work. Specifically, 38 individuals (21.1%) feel very safe, and 90 (50.0%) feel somewhat safe.

At the same time, 41 individuals (22.8%) selected a neutral response, "neither safe nor unsafe". Eleven individuals (6.1%) explicitly characterised their workplace environment as somewhat or very unsafe.

This is a noticeably more positive picture than in educational institutions, where 56.1% of respondents who answered the question reported feeling safe, compared to 71.1% at work. The contrast is particularly noticeable when compared to schools, where only 41.7% of surveyed pupils felt safe.

The picture is significantly less positive regarding institutional protection mechanisms. Among the 180 working respondents who answered this question, only 47 individuals (26.1%) are aware of the availability of anti-discrimination policies in their workplace. Sixty individuals (33.3%) reported that no such policies exist, while the largest group – 73 individuals (40.6%) do not know whether they exist at all.

Among **183 working respondents, 179** answered the question regarding experiences of workplace discrimination. **Twenty-two individuals (12.3% of those who responded)** explicitly reported discrimination by colleagues and/or management. Specifically, **21 individuals (11.7%)** noted discrimination by colleagues, and **8 (4.5%)** by management. Some respondents experienced both.

Table 23. Workplace Experiences of Discrimination

WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES	NUMBER	SHARE AMONG 179, %
Discrimination by colleagues	21	11.7
Discrimination by management	8	4.5

WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES	NUMBER	SHARE AMONG 179, %
Either of these two forms of discrimination	**22**	**12.3**
No one at work knows about LGBTIQ+ identity	99	**55.3**
Hard to say	16	8.9

Overall, the workplace environment is rated by working LGBTIQ+ youth as safer than the educational one: 71.1% of respondents feel very or somewhat safe at work. At the same time, institutional protection guarantees remain insufficiently visible: only 26.1% are aware that an anti-discrimination policy exists at work. Among those who know such a policy exists, 57.4% report that it explicitly covers sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

However, it is important to note that 99 out of 179 working respondents (55.3%) selected the response "No, because no one knows about my identity". In other words, the seemingly low proportion of direct workplace discrimination does not necessarily signify that the work environment is inclusive. For more than half of the working respondents, the absence of such experiences is at least partially tied to the fact that their LGBTIQ+ identity is unknown at work.

Discrimination and Safety in Educational Institutions and Workplaces: Open-Ended Responses

The open-ended responses complement the quantitative findings on safety in schools, universities, and workplaces, revealing a significantly broader spectrum of situations and highlighting substantial heterogeneity within institutional environments: alongside reports of staff inaction or direct participation in discrimination, there are examples of schools and universities where the administration actively creates a safe environment for LGBTIQ+ youth.

The open-ended responses indicate that in the school environment, negative attitudes can surface long before a direct coming out. A key signal for young people is how their classmates talk about LGBTIQ+ people in general or about other openly out students. One respondent explains why she hesitates to

be open: **“There’s no bullying in my class, but when a female classmate transferred to another school and the other girls found out she was a lesbian, they started spreading horrible gossip and rumours about her. I am afraid of this”**. Another participant describes a similar dynamic: openly negative attitudes are not directed at her personally, but the experience of another LGBTIQ+ student provides sufficient information about the potential consequences of coming out: **“Now she is only mentioned disparagingly, laughed at, and sometimes people ask about her fate only to discuss it in class later. If I came out, I would share the same fate”**.

This provides a clearer understanding of the link between the school environment and identity concealment. A young person does not necessarily have to become a target of bullying themselves to realise that openness carries risks. The behaviour directed toward other LGBTIQ+ students sets the boundaries of permissible visibility for everyone.

At the same time, some responses describe significantly more severe forms of victimisation. One respondent recalls experiencing verbal humiliation, sexualised threats, social exclusion, and a lack of adult intervention all at once: **“constant use of homophobic slurs and “Soviet” jokes about lesbians; threats of rape “so that I’d be normal”; ignored by teachers when complaints were made; [...] being kicked out of the girls’ changing room “because we don’t want perverts in here”**.

In one of the most serious cases described, homophobic violence resulted in a physical injury: **“In February, a classmate broke my arm because “there’s no place in Ukraine for people like you, you’d better just drop dead” [...] and to this day, I’m scared to run into him”**.

Particularly alarming are the responses in which teachers, instructors, or school psychologists fail to fulfil a protective function. This involves not only ignoring reports of bullying, but in some cases, direct adult participation in creating a hostile environment.

A transgender respondent, recalling their school experience, writes: **“None of the teachers, nor even the school psychologist, supported me or did anything about the bullying. They didn’t even try. And some of the teachers even joined in”**.

Another young person describes the experience of reaching out directly to an educational psychologist: **“An educational psychologist (holding a**

senior position) at the institution is completely ignorant of the existence of LGBTIQ+ and is homophobic [...] He listened to my pleas for help with a "disgusted" face and responded with passive aggression".

Not all negative experiences take the form of open insults or aggression. In the university setting, respondents describe social exclusion following the disclosure of their sexual orientation or gender identity. One student shares: **"At university, I was excluded from my group after confessing to a girl, whom I had previously considered a friend, that I was a lesbian. [...] After that, people from that group started ignoring me not just outside of classes, but even during lectures"**.

Another respondent describes a situation where his gender identity became the subject of a group discussion without his participation: **"A collective discussion of my identity by a university teacher in my absence, with my entire group, regarding how they feel about me and who I am"**.

For transgender youth, the institutional environment creates specific risks yet it can also substantially mitigate them. In the open-ended responses of transgender youth, the role of how an institution responds to gender identity is particularly pronounced. Negative experiences include misgendering, refusal to recognise identity, bullying, and the need to give up on demanding respect for one's gender. One respondent describes sheer exhaustion from having to constantly advocate for themselves: **"It's been more than half a year since I gave up on demanding respect for my gender, so, I guess because I keep quiet about it, the people around me are gradually forgetting about it too"**.

At the same time, there are also responses describing positive experiences. A transgender student describes transferring to a new school: **"When I got transferred to this school, the administration was surprisingly supportive of me and my situation; they asked me where I would feel more comfortable regarding restrooms, changing rooms, and technology class (which is divided by sex) [...] everything turned out very well, and I had no conflicts with the school at all"**.

There are fewer open-ended descriptions of the workplace environment, which reflects the age distribution of the sample. At the same time, they point to a somewhat different set of challenges. In the workplace, reports focus more frequently on jokes, gossip, unwelcome curiosity about private life, social exclusion, and concerns regarding professional evaluation. One asexual respondent says: **"I experienced a certain degree of**

misunderstanding at work when it turned out that behind my back, my colleagues were somehow bothered by my lack of sexual experience (I'm asexual) and I didn't even realise my personal life was a topic of conversation in the smoking area".

Another respondent describes sexualised comments from a supervisor regarding her relationship with an ex-partner: **"I work at the same company as my ex now, and not only do many colleagues make jokes about it and ask questions which I've already gotten used to but one of the managers once started joking about why my "friend isn't coming by", asking "aren't you keeping her up at night, what are you guys doing at night over there, come on, tell me", and so on"**. Particularly telling is how this response ends: **"Though right now it feels like it was no big deal and I made it all up"**.

That is, everyday sexualised or homophobic comments can become so normalised that the individual themselves doubts whether they have the right to frame the experience as a problem.

Another response draws attention to the possibility of discrimination even without direct disclosure of identity: "Singling someone out and bullying them at work isn't necessarily tied directly to harassment based on orientation or gender identity. Even without knowing this fact, they can clearly sense otherness, and this unfairly impacts how professional competence is evaluated".

The responses also demonstrate that anticipated discrimination shapes one's professional future even before an individual directly experiences it. For instance, a transgender respondent writes: **"Probably the hardest part will be finding a job with a decent salary, especially when the active period of trans transition starts. [...] what I fear most is people's judgment"**. Or another response: **"Money. Hormone therapy, a psychologist, medical services, lab tests, all of this is expensive. And I"m scared to look for a job; what if they suspect something? What if the employer isn't tolerant?"**

That is, the impact of the workplace environment is not limited to documented cases of discrimination among those who are already employed. The anticipation of potential discrimination can influence job choices, the willingness to be open, and young people's visions of their own professional future.

OUTNESS, CONCEALMENT OF IDENTITY, AND SEEKING HELP

A separate section of the study was dedicated to the concealment of LGBTIQ+ identity in educational institutions, workplaces, and at home. Another set of questions addressed whether young people report instances of bullying, discrimination, and violence, whom exactly they tell, why they might refrain from seeking help, and how effective the support they receive is.

Outness and Concealment of SOGI Characteristics in Educational Institutions

Among the 389 respondents who were studying at the time of the research, 109 individuals (28.0%) explicitly indicated that they conceal their LGBTIQ+ identity at their educational institution. The largest group – 234 individuals (60.2%) – does not actively conceal it, but also does not particularly talk about it. Only 38 individuals (9.8%) explicitly stated that they do not conceal their identity. Other 8 respondents provided more complex, open-ended responses, often describing selective outness: for example, being open with friends or classmates while concealing their identity from teachers and the administration.

The difference between school and university or college is substantial. Among school pupils, 35.9% explicitly conceal their identity, while only 4.1% do not conceal it. Among university and college students, the corresponding figures are 23.5% and 13.4%. Thus, the transition to higher education is accompanied by a greater opportunity for outness, although even among university students, nearly 60% adhere to the cautious strategy of "I don't conceal it, but I don't talk about it".

This finding aligns well with the previous analysis of safety in the educational environment. Among those who explicitly conceal their identity at an educational institution, only 44.4% feel safe there, while 22.2% feel unsafe. Among those who do not conceal their identity, 86.8% feel safe, and only 5.3% feel unsafe.

This connection does not allow for establishing causality: it is impossible to determine whether young people conceal their identity because the

environment is unsafe, or whether outness becomes possible primarily in environments that are already safe. However, it clearly demonstrates that concealment and subjective feelings of insecurity are closely linked.

Concealment of Identity at Workplace

Among the 183 respondents who were employed at the time of the survey, 64 individuals (35.0%) explicitly reported concealing their SOGI in the workplace. A further 95 individuals (51.9%) do not actively conceal it, but also do not particularly talk about it. Only 21 individuals (11.5%) noted that they do not conceal their identity.

Thus, despite the workplace environment being assessed in the previous analysis as generally safer than the educational environment, only about one in nine employed young people is fully out at work.

Once again, a link is evident between outness and a sense of safety. Among those who conceal their identity at work, 60.3% feel safe, whereas among those who do not conceal it, 85.7% feel safe. The workplace environment is considered unsafe by 11.1% of those who conceal their identity; among open respondents, there were no such cases in this small subgroup.

Concealment is particularly pronounced among transgender men: 6 out of 8 employed transgender men (75%) explicitly stated that they conceal their identity at work. Due to the very small size of this subgroup, this figure must be interpreted with caution, but it may point to specific risks associated with transgender visibility in the workplace.

Reporting Cases of Bullying, Discrimination, and Violence

Participants were also asked whether they had reported instances of bullying, discrimination, or violence to anyone. A total of 263 individuals (50.1% of the sample) responded with a clear “yes”, while 226 (43.0%) answered “no”. The remainder provided open-ended responses, some of which explained that they had no such experience or that they had only shared specific incidents informally.

As expected, reporting occurs more frequently among young people with a more intensive experience of victimisation. Among those who faced at least one of the seven analysed forms of negative treatment at least 3-4 times over the past three months, 62.8% reported such incidents to someone, whereas 37.2% did not. At the same time, this indicates that more than a third of young people never reported it to anyone, even in the presence of repeated victimisation.

By gender group, reports were made more frequently by transgender men (64.9% among those who gave a definitive answer), non-binary and gender-diverse respondents (60.3%), and cisgender women (56.4%). Among cisgender men, 41.8% made reports. Among transgender women, the figure was only 23.8%, though due to the small size of this group, this indicator must be interpreted with particular caution.

Whom LGBTIQ+ Youth Trust

Friends represent the most vital source of support. Among the 263 respondents who explicitly noted that they had reported their experiences to someone, 213 individuals (81.0%) told their friends. Nearly half – 119 individuals (45.2%) turned to family members, and 82 (31.2%) reached out to a psychologist.

Representatives of educational institutions were contacted far less frequently: 55 individuals (20.9%) reported incidents to instructors, teachers, or pedagogical staff, and 20 (7.6%) to the administration of their school or educational institution. Only 10 individuals (3.8%) turned to the police or other law enforcement agencies, 9 (3.4%) to human rights organisations, and 9 (3.4%) to a workplace supervisor.

Table 24. Reporting experiences of bullying or discrimination

WHOM THEY REPORTED TO	NUMBER	SHARE OF THOSE WHO REPORTED, %
Friends	213	81.0
Family	119	45.2
Psychologist	82	31.2

WHOM THEY REPORTED TO	NUMBER	SHARE OF THOSE WHO REPORTED, %
Teachers / Instructors / Pedagogical staff	55	20.9
Educational institution administration	20	7.6
Police / Law enforcement agencies	10	3.8
Human rights organisation	9	3.4
Workplace supervisor	9	3.4

Multiple response options could be selected.

The results show a distinct preference for informal support networks over institutional ones. Young people trust friends and family far more often than schools, employers, law enforcement agencies, or human rights institutions. Particularly telling is the extremely low rate of reporting to the police, even within a sample where threats, physical aggression, and sexual violence were documented.

Why Young People Do Not Report Discrimination and Violence

Among the 226 individuals who explicitly stated that they had not reported their experiences to anyone, the most common reason was a lack of belief that help could be obtained. This response was given by 106 individuals (46.9%).

The second key reason was the fear of disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity, noted by 76 individuals (33.6%). A further 53 individuals (23.5%) cited feelings of shame or humiliation, and 12 (5.3%) cited fear of retaliation. Because multiple reasons could be selected, these factors frequently overlapped.

Table 25. Reasons for non-reporting negative experiences

REASONS FOR NON-REPORTING	NUMBER	SHARE OF THOSE WHO DID NOT REPORT, %
No feeling that anyone could help	106	46.9
Fear of disclosing identity as a result	76	33.6
Feelings of shame/humiliation	53	23.5
Fear of retaliation	12	5.3

This result is particularly important in the context of the previous analysis on identity concealment. Concealment can simultaneously serve as a defense mechanism against potential discrimination and create a barrier to receiving support after a negative experience has already occurred. To report homophobic or transphobic bullying, a young person is often forced to disclose information about their own sexual orientation or gender identity at the same time.

Does Seeking Help Make a Difference?

Finally, respondents who sought help were asked about the outcome. Among the 223 individuals who both indicated that they had told someone about their experience and provided one of the standard options regarding the result, only 15 individuals (6.7%) noted that the problem was fully resolved.

Most frequently, young people reported being listened to without any real action being taken – 71 individuals (31.8%). For 37 individuals (16.6%), the help was partial, but the problem remained. A further 26 individuals (11.7%) were advised to ignore the situation or "figure it out on their own", while 19 (8.5%) characterised the response as formal and ineffective. In 5 cases (2.2%), the situation actually worsened after seeking help. Another 50 individuals (22.4%) rated their experience as mixed or were unable to provide a definitive assessment.

Table 26. Outcome of seeking help

OUTCOME OF SEEKING HELP	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Problem fully resolved	15	6.7
Help was partial, but the problem remained	37	16.6
I was listened to, but no real action was taken	71	31.8
I was told to ignore it / figure it out on my own	26	11.7
The reaction was formal and ineffective	19	8.5
Situation worsened after reaching out	5	2.2
Hard to answer/mixed experience	50	22.4
Total	**223**	**100.0**

That is, a full resolution of the problem after seeking support is rather the exception. Even among the youth who report their experiences, only a small fraction receives help that leads to a complete resolution of the situation. Taken together, these findings reveal a vicious mechanism of vulnerability. A significant portion of LGBTIQ+ youth conceals or minimises the visibility of their identity at school or university, at work, and especially at home. When instances of discrimination or violence occur, concealment can complicate the act of seeking assistance, as reaching out itself carries the risk of unwanted disclosure. Nearly half of those who remained silent did not believe that anyone could help, while a third feared disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity as a result. At the same time, the experiences of those who did seek support partially confirm these fears: only 6.7% reported a complete resolution of the problem, whereas turning for help far more frequently resulted merely in being listened to, receiving partial assistance, or a formal reaction.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, SENSE OF BELONGING, AND VISION OF THE FUTURE

Psychological Well-Being Over the Past Week

To assess current psychological well-being, participants were asked to evaluate how frequently over the past week they experienced sadness, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and loneliness. A separate positively phrased question was asked regarding feelings of hope about their own future. Difficulty concentrating proved to be the most prevalent issue. A total of 390 individuals (74.3%) reported that they found it hard to focus 3 or more times, often, or constantly over the past week. Moreover, 106 individuals (20.2%) experienced such difficulties constantly.

The prevalence of sadness was also high. A total of 347 individuals (66.1%) reported feeling sad 3 or more times, almost every day, or constantly. Specifically, 142 individuals (27.0%) experienced sadness almost daily, and 65 (12.4%) constantly.

Frequent anxiety was reported by 328 individuals (62.5%): 99 (18.9%) experienced it 3 or more times, 142 (27.0%) often, and 87 (16.6%) constantly. That is, approximately one in six young people reported a constant feeling of anxiety over the past week.

Loneliness was somewhat less widespread, yet it still affected a significant portion of the sample: 288 individuals (54.9%) felt lonely 3 or more times, often, or constantly, including 93 individuals (17.7%) who experienced it constantly.

Table 27. Psychological well-being

INDICATOR	FREQUENT/RECURRING EXPERIENCE, N	SHARE, %
Hard to concentrate	390	**74.3**
Sadness	347	**66.1**

INDICATOR	FREQUENT/RECURRING EXPERIENCE, N	SHARE, %
Anxiety	328	62.5
Loneliness	288	54.9
Hope regarding the future	251	47.8

For negative states, responses ranging from "3 or more times" to "constantly" were classified as frequent/recurring experiences; a similar threshold was applied to hope.

The picture on hope regarding the future is more ambiguous. A total of 251 individuals (47.8%) felt hopeful at least 3 or more times, often, or constantly. At the same time, 82 individuals (15.6%) did not feel any hope regarding their own future over the past week, and another 192 (36.6%) experienced it only 1-2 times.

Sense of Belonging and the Ability to Speak Openly About Identity

In addition to emotional well-being, respondents were asked whether they feel they "belong" in their environment – at school, at university, or at work. Only 183 individuals (34.9%) somewhat or strongly agreed that they feel they belong. Virtually the same proportion – 189 individuals (36.0%) somewhat or strongly disagreed. Additionally, 153 individuals (29.1%) found it difficult to answer.

The picture regarding the ability to speak openly about one's sexual orientation or gender identity in everyday life is even more evident. Only 171 individuals (32.6%) somewhat or strongly agree that they can do so. Instead, 254 individuals (48.4%) nearly half of the sample, somewhat or strongly disagree. An additional 100 individuals (19.0%) found it difficult to answer.

Table 28. Sense of belonging in relation to psychological well-being

INDICATOR	FEEL THEY BELONG	DO NOT FEEL THEY BELONG
Frequent sadness	51.4%	79.9%

INDICATOR	FEEL THEY BELONG	DO NOT FEEL THEY BELONG
Frequent anxiety	52.5%	**76.7%**
Frequent difficulty concentrating	69.4%	**81.5%**
Frequent feelings of loneliness	37.2%	**72.0%**
Frequently feel hopeful	**55.7%**	41.8%
Unable to speak openly about identity	32.8%	**60.8%**

When comparing youth who feel they belong in their environment with those who lack this sense of belonging (Table 27), the data unfortunately do not allow us to establish a clear causal relationship. However, they demonstrate a correlation between social inclusion and psychological well-being. A sense of belonging can serve as an important resource for psychological well-being, whereas social alienation coexists with significantly higher levels of emotional distress.

Another very clear pattern emerges when comparing these results with the previously calculated integrated victimisation indicator. Among the 294 individuals who experienced at least one of the seven forms of victimisation multiple times over the past three months, psychological difficulties are more prevalent across almost all indicators.

Table 29. Victimisation and psychological well-being

INDICATOR	REPEATED VICTIMISATION	WITHOUT REPEATED VICTIMISATION
Frequent sadness	**72.4%**	58.4%
Frequent anxiety	**66.0%**	58.0%
Frequent difficulty concentrating	**79.6%**	67.5%
Loneliness	**63.6%**	43.7%
Hope regarding the future	45.9%	50.2%
Do not feel they belong	**45.6%**	23.8%

Once again, the greatest difference concerns loneliness and sense of belonging. Among youth with a recurring experience of victimisation, 63.6% frequently feel lonely, compared to 43.7% among others. The proportion of those who do not feel they belong in their environment is nearly twice as high – 45.6% versus 23.8%.

By age group, individuals aged 13-17 stand out in particular. Frequent sadness was experienced by 76.7% of this group, compared to 61.0% among those aged 18-19 and 59.2% among those aged 20–24. Loneliness is also most prevalent among the youngest participants – 61.4%, compared to 55.2% and 48.6%, respectively.

Similarly, 44.6% of 13-17-year-olds do not feel they belong in their environment, whereas among 20-24-year-olds, the figure is 29.4%.

By gender identity, consistently high rates of psychological distress are observed among non-binary and gender-diverse youth, and for certain indicators, among transgender respondents as well. For the trans group, these indicators must be interpreted with caution due to the small subsample sizes. However, the overall patterns are sufficiently consistent: non-binary, gender-diverse, and transgender youth report social alienation more frequently, while non-binary respondents also demonstrate particularly high levels of sadness, anxiety, and loneliness.

Table 30. Psychological well-being in relation to gender identity

GROUP	SADNESS	ANXIETY	CONCEN-TRATION	LONE-LINESS	NO SENSE OF BELON-GING
Cisgender women	66.1%	63.5%	74.4%	52.7%	31.4%
Cisgender men	54.8%	51.2%	61.9%	46.4%	23.8%
Non-binary / gender-diverse	**79.3%**	**73.6%**	80.5%	**65.5%**	48.3%
Transgender men	71.8%	71.8%	**82.1%**	59.0%	**56.4%**
Transgender women	63.6%	40.9%	77.3%	63.6%	45.5%

Plans to Remain in Ukraine, Educational, and Professional Plans

Despite the war and the challenges described above, the majority of respondents link their immediate future with Ukraine. 318 individuals (60.6%) definitively answered that they plan to remain living in Ukraine for the next three years. 54 individuals (10.3%) answered "no", while 137 (26.1%) are undecided.

Open-ended responses indicate that uncertainty regarding residing in Ukraine is often linked to a combination of factors rather than a single cause. Youth mention the security situation, the possibility of occupation, studying abroad, financial opportunities, legislative changes, and the human rights situation for LGBTIQ+ people.

An interesting intersection emerges with the sense of belonging: among those who intend to remain in Ukraine, 38.7% feel they belong in their environment; among those who are undecided, the figure is 33.6%; and among those who intend to leave, it is only 22.2%. This does not imply that a sense of social belonging determines migration plans, but it may serve as one of the contextual factors associated with the desire to build a future in the country. The most positive result of this section concerns the desire of youth to pursue further education and professional development.

334 individuals (63.6%) definitively plan to do so. Additionally, 151 individuals (28.8%) answered "rather yes, but I doubt I will manage to". Only 21 individuals (4.0%) explicitly stated that they do not intend to pursue education or professional development.

Thus, combining "definitely yes" and "rather yes", 485 individuals or 92.4% of the total sample, intend to continue their education or professional development, though nearly a third of the sample doubts their ability to realise these plans.

Summarising this section, it is possible to say that the results demonstrate a complex combination of psychological vulnerability and a future-oriented outlook. A significant portion of LGBTIQ+ youth frequently experienced sadness, anxiety, loneliness, and difficulty concentrating over the past week, while nearly half do not feel able to speak openly about their identity in everyday life.

Psychological difficulties are particularly prevalent among youth with a recurring experience of victimisation and among those who do not feel they belong in their social environment.

At the same time, these difficulties do not signal an absence of future aspirations: over 60% intend to remain in Ukraine over the next three years, and more than 90% intend to pursue education or professional development. However, nearly a third desire such development while simultaneously doubting their ability to achieve it. This points to a critical gap between the high educational and professional aspirations of LGBTIQ+ youth and their sense of safety, belonging, and confidence in their own future.



ACCESS TO LGBTIQ+-FRIENDLY SUPPORT, FAMILY SAFETY, AND TRUSTED ADULTS

The final quantitative section of the study focused on the support resources available to LGBTIQ+ youth. Respondents were asked how knowledgeable they are about LGBTIQ+ organisations and services, whether they have sought help from them, how easily they could find relevant contacts, as well as about openness and safety within the family, the presence of an adult they can fully trust, and access to LGBTIQ+-friendly psychological support. The analysis was conducted on a final sample of 525 responses.

Awareness of LGBTIQ+ Organisations and Access to Them

Almost all surveyed youth are aware, at least to some extent, of the existence of LGBTIQ+ organisations or initiatives in Ukraine. 244 individuals (46.5%) indicated that they are well aware of such organisations, while another 255 (48.6%) reported having come across information about them, though lacking detailed knowledge. Only 26 individuals (5.0%) were completely unaware of their existence.

At the same time, awareness doesn't always translate into actually seeking support. 82 individuals (15.6%) have sought help from an LGBTIQ+ organisation at least once: 38 once, and 44 on multiple occasions. The largest group of 231 individuals (44.0%) has never sought support but knows where to turn if needed. Additionally, 206 individuals (39.2%) have not sought help and would not know where to turn.

Thus, while only about 5% of youth are completely unaware of the existence of LGBTIQ+ organisations, nearly two-fifths lack a concrete pathway to seek assistance.

This same pattern is confirmed by the question on finding contact information. For 301 individuals (57.3%), finding contact information for an LGBTIQ+-friendly organisation or service would be very or rather easy. At the same time,

81 individuals (15.4%) consider this rather or very difficult, while another 143 (27.2%) were unable to assess how easily they could manage such a search.

A distinct age effect regarding access to resources can be observed here. A good awareness of LGBTIQ+ organisations is reported by 35.6% of youth aged 13-17, 44.8% of those aged 18-19, and as many as 57.3% of respondents aged 20-24. Those who have actually sought help from such organisations account for only 5.4%, 15.2%, and 25.2%, respectively. Similarly, finding contact information would be easy for 48.5% of the youngest group, compared to 65.1% of youth aged 20-24.

This suggests that the youngest LGBTIQ+ youth have the least practical access to community resources precisely during the period when they are most dependent on their family and school.

Family Openness

The results show very limited complete openness within the family environment. Only 53 individuals (10.1%) indicated that all family members with whom they reside or maintain close contact are aware of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Most commonly, the situation is partial or implicit: 168 individuals (32.0%) reported that some family members know while others do not. In 166 cases (31.6%), no one in the family knows, while another 117 individuals (22.3%) assume that their family suspects, though the topic is not openly discussed.

Even more concerning is the subjective assessment of safety. 287 individuals (54.7%) noted that they would feel rather or very unsafe being open about their identity within the family. Only 106 individuals (20.2%) characterised their family environment as rather or very safe, while 132 (25.1%) selected a neutral response.

The relationship between actual openness and perceived safety is exceptionally strong. Among youth whose family members are completely unaware of their identity, 77.1% assess openness within the family as unsafe. Among those who assume their relatives suspect, the figure is 59.0%. Among respondents with whom part of the family is aware, it drops to 41.1%.

Conversely, among those whose close family members are all aware, only 18.9% consider their family environment to be unsafe.

Among respondents who are not in a situation of full family openness, the most common reason cited is the belief that relatives will not understand, indicated by 348 individuals (74.2%). Fear of a negative reaction was named nearly as frequently by 343 individuals (73.1%).

Particularly concerning is that 143 individuals (30.5%) among those who are not fully open with their family fear violence or being thrown out of the house. Additionally, 184 individuals (39.2%) noted that they simply do not consider disclosing their identity to be necessary.

Presence of a Trusted Adult

Only 177 individuals (33.7%) indicated that they have an adult in their life – a schoolteacher, university teacher, psychologist, mentor, or relative whom they can fully trust and who supports them.

In contrast, 244 individuals (46.5%), nearly half of the sample, explicitly reported that they do not have such a person. Another 104 (19.8%) were unable to provide a definitive answer.

Among those who do have such a person, it is most frequently a relative – 102 individuals (57.6%). For 48 individuals (27.1%), this trusted adult is a psychologist or psychotherapist outside their educational institution. School or university teachers were mentioned far less frequently – 17 individuals (9.6%), a manager or senior colleague – 11 (6.2%), and a school or university psychologist – only 7 (4.0%).

Table 31. Who is a trusted adult?

WHO IS A TRUSTED ADULT*	NUMBER	SHARE, %
Relative	102	57.6
Psychologist/psychotherapist outside their educational institution	48	27.1

WHO IS A TRUSTED ADULT*	NUMBER	SHARE, %
School/university teacher	17	9.6
Supervisor or senior colleague	11	6.2
School/university psychologist	7	4.0

**Among the 177 respondents who reported having a trusted adult; multiple options could be selected.*

Among youth whose close relatives are all aware of their identity, 58.5% have such a person. Among those with whom some family members know, the figure is 45.2%. If the family only suspects, the indicator drops to 28.2%, and among youth with whom no one in the family knows, it falls to 18.7%.

Thus, young people who are forced to completely conceal their identity at home simultaneously have the least access to adult support in general. It is precisely this combination that can create a particularly high risk of isolation.

Access to LGBTIQ+-Friendly Psychological Support

Only 188 individuals (35.8%) provided a standard response indicating access to an LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologist: 90 individuals (17.1%) regularly or periodically use such services, while 98 (18.7%) have access but currently do not require assistance.

In contrast, 197 individuals (37.5%) explicitly noted that they do not have the opportunity to consult such a specialist, and another 116 (22.1%) do not know where to find one.

In other words, at least 59.6% of the sample either lack access to an LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologist or do not know where to find one.

Open-ended responses reveal additional barriers that are not fully captured by these categories: the cost of services, financial dependence on parents, fear of seeking help, doubts regarding the actual LGBTIQ+ competence of the psychologist, and previous negative experiences with specialists.

Access to psychological support increases with age. Only 28.2% of 13-17-year-olds and 27.6% of 18-19-year-olds have access to an LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologist, compared to 46.8% among youth aged 20-24. This is particularly crucial given the preceding findings: the youngest group reported danger at school, high levels of sadness, and loneliness more frequently, yet simultaneously has the lowest level of access to both LGBTIQ+ organisations and friendly psychological support.

Need for an LGBTIQ+-Friendly Psychologist or Adult Mentor

Despite limited actual access, the need for such support remains exceptionally high. Among the 520 respondents who answered this question, 379 individuals (72.9%) consider having an LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologist or adult mentor to be very or rather important.

Table 32. Importance of an LGBTIQ+-Friendly Psychologist / Mentor

IMPORTANCE OF AN LGBTIQ+-FRIENDLY PSYCHOLOGIST / MENTOR	NUMBER	SHARE OF RESPONSES, %
Very important	201	38.7
Rather important	178	34.2
Hard to say	76	14.6
Rather unimportant	44	8.5
Not important at all	21	4.0
Total	**520**	**100.0**

Particularly telling is that even among youth who lack a trusted adult in their life, 64.8% consider having an LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologist or mentor to be important. Among those who already have a supportive adult, this figure reaches 81.4%.

Non-binary and gender-diverse youth identify such support as important somewhat more frequently than other major groups – 80.5%, compared to 71.2% of cisgender women and 66.3% of cisgender men.

Overall, the results demonstrate a distinct disconnect between the need for support and actual access to it. While the vast majority of youth are aware of or have at least heard about the existence of LGBTIQ+ organisations, only 15.6% have ever sought support from them, and 39.2% do not know specifically where they could turn.

An even more pronounced gap is observed regarding adult and psychological support. Nearly half of the surveyed youth do not have an adult they can fully trust, and roughly 60% lack access to an LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologist or do not know where to find one. At the same time, nearly three-quarters consider having such a psychologist or mentor to be important.

Particularly vulnerable is the youth who conceal their identity within the family. Among those whose family members are completely unaware of their LGBTIQ+ identity, 77.1% assess openness at home as unsafe, and only 18.7% have an adult they can fully trust. For a portion of youth, concealment has a clear safety dimension: nearly a third of respondents who are not fully open fear violence or being thrown out of the house.

What Helps LGBTIQ+ Youth Feel Safe and Supported (Open-Ended Responses)

The open-ended responses demonstrate that a sense of safety for LGBTIQ+ youth is primarily associated with the presence of specific people and environments where they do not need to conceal or explain their identity. Respondents most frequently talked about their friends, partners, other LGBTIQ+ individuals, and a supportive immediate circle. At the same time, important resources include family, psychological support, LGBTIQ+ organisations and safe spaces, online communities, and, for a portion of youth, their own individual coping strategies.

The most pervasive theme is support from friends and an immediate social circle. In primary coding, mentions of friends, partners, loved ones, or community are present in more than half of all substantive responses. The ability to be among people in whose presence one does not need to monitor their own behaviour or conceal their identity is particularly crucial.

One response directly utilises the concept of "chosen family": **"The greatest support comes from "chosen families" (friends and like-minded people), grassroots initiatives, and safe spaces (community centres) where one can be oneself without fear of judgment"**. Another response very succinctly conveys the importance of an accepting social environment: **"Friends. Community. My social bubble. Volunteering gave me wonderful people with whom I can be myself"**.

This aligns well with the quantitative findings of the study, where friends were the most frequent recipients of reports regarding incidents of bullying, discrimination, and violence. Qualitative responses demonstrate that their role is significantly broader: friends cultivate an everyday space of normalcy and acceptance, rather than merely providing assistance following a negative experience.

Respondents frequently describe support not as active interventions by others, but as the normalisation of their identity. Safety is felt when sexual orientation or gender identity does not change the attitude of those around them and does not elicit a dramatic reaction.

One respondent explains: **"If people don't react drastically to my relationships and life stories, meaning without "You have a GIRLFRIEND, seriously?" – I feel safe. I feel support when I'm understood or when people show interest without judgment". Another response formulates virtually the same principle: "I think it's when people don't change their attitude toward me because of my orientation and simply accept it as a fact"**.

A second key form of support is contact with other LGBTIQ+ individuals and a sense of belonging to the broader community. This encompasses both personal interactions and community centres, support groups, events, and activism. One respondent writes: "I visit an LGBTIQ+ community centre. The community helps me hold on to the thought that I am not alone in my struggles". Another describes in detail the importance of support groups and connection with people who share similar experiences:

"Spaces for LGBTIQ+, therapy groups, support group meetings [...] Communicating with various members of the LGBTIQ+ community, sharing common struggles related to identity or orientation. It becomes easier when I feel that I am not alone".

An interesting finding is that respondents do not view support solely as

direct interpersonal assistance. The sheer visibility of LGBTIQ+ individuals, organisations, and positive attitudes toward the community holds significant meaning. For instance: **"When I see LGBTIQ+ initiatives in the streets or online, it gives me a feeling that I am not alone"**. Another response cites: **"public awareness online that this is normal, hanging up flags, creating organisations and events, support from people"**.

In other words, symbolic visibility carries a practical psychological effect. A flag, a public stance, an event dedicated to LGBTIQ+ rights, or the presence of an organisation can signal to a young person that they are not isolated and that at least part of the social environment is accepting.

For a portion of youth, online interaction serves as an important resource. This is particularly significant for those who lack access to an LGBTIQ+ community in their immediate surroundings: **"A community of online friends, ads for organisations on Instagram, and recommendations of individual like-minded accounts in my feed"**. Another response is even briefer: **"Communicating online with the queer community, understanding that I am not alone like this"**.

Although the quantitative findings demonstrated significant levels of identity concealment and perceived danger within the family environment, the open-ended responses show that a supportive family, when present, emerges as an exceptionally powerful resource. Some responses are very simple: **"I know that my dad supports me and will continue to support me"**. Another respondent describes a combination of support from friends and gradual acceptance from parents: **"My friends, they are incredibly supportive [...] Despite everything, my parents and their silent acceptance, although it's already easier for my mom now, and we talk little by little about my relationship [...]"**.

Psychologists, psychotherapists, or psychiatrists also regularly appear in the responses, though significantly less frequently than friends and immediate circles. Professional help is often mentioned alongside informal support: **"Conversations with a psychologist, friends from the community" or "Support from friends, loved ones, a psychologist"**.

Although the previous analysis revealed serious problems within the educational environment, the open-ended responses let us also see positive cases, thereby clarifying precisely what makes an educational environment

safe. One respondent describes her university experience: **“Friends. At the university, I found friends who are tolerant or part of the LGBT+ community. I feel free to speak on this topic at the university. Last year, our group gave a presentation on bullying; I brought a pride flag and talked about the problems of LGBT+ people”**.

Thus, the open-ended responses demonstrate that various sources of support – friends, partners, family, the LGBTIQ+ community, psychologists, online spaces – share a single unifying characteristic: they create an environment in which a young person can be themselves without the expectation of judgment or a negative reaction. As one respondent formulated it, it is exceptionally important for youth to **“Speak freely about what matters with one’s circle, where you can be yourself”**.

Therefore, the quantitative and qualitative results together allow for a subtle re-evaluation of the concept of “access to support”. Support for LGBTIQ+ youth cannot be limited only to raising the overall visibility of services; an equally vital protective resource is the everyday environment, in which there is no need to conceal identity, monitor one’s own behaviour, or constantly assess the risk of a negative reaction.



WHAT CHANGES LGBTIQ+ YOUTH EXPECT FROM EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND WORKPLACES

In order not only to assess existing problems but also to understand what changes the youth themselves consider necessary, an open-ended question was posed to respondents toward the end of the survey: **"What changes in schools, universities, or workplaces could improve your life?"** A total of 286 participants provided answers to this question. Thematic analysis demonstrates that youth expectations relate less to the creation of distinct privileges or special conditions for LGBTIQ+ individuals and more to ensuring basic institutional safety: effective responses to discrimination, staff competence, visibility of LGBTIQ+ topics, access to confidential support, and respect for gender identity.

One of the most consistent themes is the need for clear anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies that are actively enforced. Respondents repeatedly emphasise that the formal availability of a policy is insufficient if instances of homophobia, transphobia, or bullying carry no consequences.

One response combines the demand for enforceable policies with the need for staff training: **"Implementation of anti-discrimination policies where bullying or homophobia carry consequences. Training for teachers and HR specialists on inclusivity and the use of correct terminology (feminitives, pronouns)"**. Another respondent particularly emphasises the gap between formal rules and their execution: **"Working policies against bullying and discrimination would improve life. That teachers and administration were prepared to respond to hate speech and unacceptable behavior rather than ignoring it. Creating a culture of respect for diverse identities in daily communication, where one does not need to conceal oneself or constantly assess the safety of the environment, would also help significantly"**.

The need for greater awareness regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, and diversity in general appears remarkably often in the responses. Youth suggest integrating these topics into sex education, civic education, psychology, and other subjects, conducting lectures and training sessions, and ceasing to silence the existence of LGBTIQ+ people.

One respondent writes: **"The most important change is proper sex**

education for everyone. The necessity of introducing clear anti-discrimination rules, the violation of which entails at least some accountability. There is a need to change attitudes, foster empathy, discourage tolerance toward humiliation, and stop normalising outing, gossip, "jokes", and harassment".

Another response illustrates the issue of silencing LGBTIQ+ topics even when they naturally arise in educational materials: **"When at school we read about an author who had homosexual relationships, such as Oscar Wilde, his personal life is skipped over. Covering the LGBTIQ+ topic in school would help us feel better. I wish teachers wouldn't avoid it"**.

In other words, young people are calling for the normalisation of sexual and gender diversity within the standard educational process, ensuring it does not exist solely as a taboo or problematic subject.

A key theme is the competence of school and university teachers, administration, and management. Respondents repeatedly emphasise that educational efforts aimed solely at students will be insufficient if adults themselves exhibit homophobic or transphobic views or lack the knowledge to address discrimination: **"this must come comprehensively from the leadership, so that they are tolerant and teach others to be so – a fish rots from the head"**.

Another respondent describes the necessity of adult training in much greater detail: **"LGBTIQ-friendly psychologists, tolerance, and awareness among teachers on this topic [...] because before teaching children, adults must learn to view this as normal, with respect and understanding, and to call things by their right names. [...] I would also highlight a dedicated action plan for the school psychologist, social pedagogue, and teachers on how to act in situations involving bullying of this nature"**.

This is particularly critical in the context of the quantitative findings, according to which teachers and administration were assessed as less tolerant toward LGBTIQ+ individuals than peers. Open-ended responses reveal that youth expect professional competence and accountability for environmental safety from adults.

A distinct block of responses addresses the specific needs of transgender and non-binary youth. Respondents mention the use of chosen names and pronouns, the ability to refrain from using legal names prior to formal

document changes, gender-neutral restrooms, and a general elimination of automatic sex-segregation where it is unnecessary: "There absolutely must be a right to an alias in all schools, universities, and workplaces for transgender people who have not changed their legal name, in order to avoid outing and potential bullying, deadnaming, and misgendering – a stricter anti-discrimination policy".

Another respondent suggests several practical changes: **"An absence of direct homo/transphobic statements by teachers. Respect for pronoun and name changes. Rules prohibiting discriminatory statements among students (not only regarding LGBT, but in general)"**.

Another recurring request is the ability to safely report a problem and receive actual help. Respondents suggest LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologists, dedicated services, anonymous reporting channels, and independent complaint handling mechanisms.

One young person specifically proposes an anonymous format: **"[...] perhaps creating online support for others anonymously [...] So that a person can consult a specialist with their issue – not everyone can build up the courage to see a psychologist in person at school/university"**. Another response emphasises the need for such mechanisms to operate independently of the administration: **"[...] establishing bodies in schools and universities that would deal with combating violence and discrimination [...] I also know that at some universities one can file an anonymous complaint (for example, report bullying, harassment, etc.). It would be great if this were widespread and actually worked"**.

A portion of youth emphasises the importance of visible signals of institutional support: LGBTIQ+ symbols, public statements, events, student organisations, and openly LGBTIQ+ teachers or colleagues. Even a very small symbol can carry meaning: **"A slight detail in the form of a rainbow accessory on teachers, even a tiny one. This non-verbally marks a safe person"**.

Another response suggests a broader institutional signal: **"Acceptance of LGBT+ people, training sessions, providing information and explaining why this is normal and why bullying someone over this is unacceptable. It might also be good if they placed an LGBT+ flag somewhere so that others knew everyone is accepted here"**.

Some responses propose creating LGBTIQ+ clubs, groups, or other safe

spaces within educational institutions where youth could find like-minded peers and receive support. One school student explains: **"I heard that in many schools, for instance in America, there is a designated place where teenagers who are part of the community can seek help, or an "LGBT club" for students who simply want to find like-minded people and talk with others about their experience. I believe such clubs would be important for our schools as well [...]"**

At the same time, participation in such a club itself may carry a risk of outing and bullying. Thus, the establishment of LGBTIQ+ spaces must be accompanied by confidentiality and an overarching anti-bullying policy; otherwise, a formally supportive initiative could inadvertently make participants more visible and vulnerable.

Importantly, not all responses describe a need for change. A portion of working youth reports already existing safe environments, and these responses effectively illustrate which workplace characteristics enable openness. One respondent writes: **"[...] overall I have a good team with whom I don't need to lie about my fiancee, and I even have an LGBT flag hanging in my room. Our director also belongs to the community, and she is open about it as well"**.

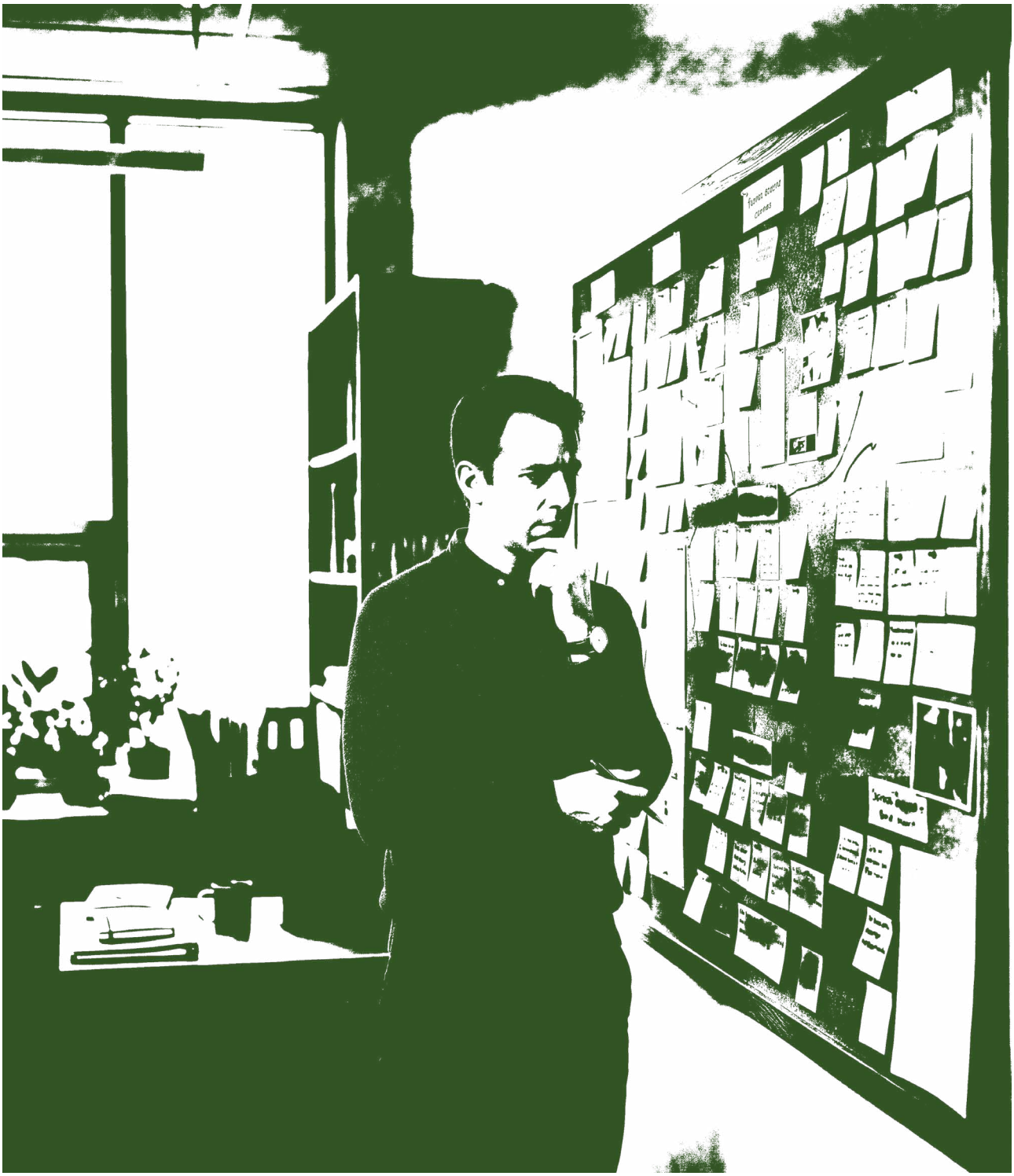
This positive case contrasts sharply with the quantitative finding, according to which more than half of working respondents stated that no one at work knows about their identity. It demonstrates that a safe work environment is characterised not merely by the absence of direct discrimination, but by the ability to remain open about routine aspects of personal life without fear of negative consequences.

Taken together, the open-ended responses indicate that young people expect significantly more from schools, universities, and workplaces than abstract "tolerance". The main demand focuses on shifting from a declarative rejection of discrimination to institutional safety, which encompasses concrete elements:

- clear rules and consequences for their violation;
- competent school and university teachers and managers;
- confidential channels for reporting issues;

- LGBTIQ+-friendly psychological support;
- respect for names and pronoun;

The inclusion of LGBTIQ+ topics in education, alongside visible signals that the institution is prepared to protect diversity.



CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the study demonstrate that the safety and well-being of LGBTIQ+ youth in Ukraine are shaped by the interaction of war, discrimination, social environment, the ability to be open about one's identity, and access to support. The full-scale war creates a general backdrop of danger and psychological stress, but for a portion of youth, this overlays existing risks associated with homophobia, transphobia, legal inequality, family rejection, and the need to monitor their own visibility.

Moreover, discrimination and victimisation are not only prevalent but often cumulative. Over half of those surveyed encountered at least one form of negative treatment multiple times within a span of just three months, and for a significant share of youth, several forms co-occurred: verbal abuse, humiliation, gossip, social exclusion, cyberbullying, threats, or physical aggression. This implies that isolated metrics do not fully capture a young person's experience; for many, it involves recurring exposure to environments where various forms of negative treatment reinforce one another.

School pupils feel safe significantly less often than university and college students, miss classes more frequently out of fear of harassment, and evaluate their peers' attitudes toward LGBTIQ+ people far more negatively. Importantly, this issue is not limited to relationships among students themselves: more than half of school students assess teachers and administration as intolerant. Open-ended responses further reveal that what matters to youth is not only their own experience with bullying, but also how the school responds to other LGBTIQ+ students, whether adults intervene, whether the psychologist can be trusted, and whether the administration is capable of creating a predictable, safe environment.

These challenges are even more acute for transgender and non-binary youth. They feel safe in educational institutions less often, miss classes more frequently out of fear of harassment, and are significantly more likely to rate teachers and administration as intolerant. At the same time, open-ended responses show that some of the necessary changes are very concrete: respect for chosen names and pronouns, prevention of unwanted outing, and the option to individually arrange the use of gendered spaces or participation in relevant activities.

The workplace environment is generally rated better than the educational environment, but here, too, positive metrics require careful interpretation. While the majority of working respondents feel safe at work, over half reported that no one at work knows about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Thus, the absence of direct discrimination does not necessarily indicate inclusivity: for a portion of youth, safety is achieved specifically through identity concealment. Open-ended responses also demonstrate that discrimination at work can take less obvious forms like jokes, sexualised comments, gossip, social exclusion, or the fear that the visibility of one's LGBTIQ+ identity might affect professional evaluations.

Identity concealment as a whole serve as one of the central risk-management mechanisms. Young people conceal or limit the visibility of their identity in educational institutions, at work, and particularly within the family. Furthermore, concealment is closely linked to a lower sense of safety. Open-ended responses indicate that this is not merely a decision of "whether or not to come out", but a constant necessity to evaluate who can be trusted, how to talk about partners, how to behave in public spaces, and how safe it is to be a visibly LGBTIQ+ individual.

More than half of respondents assess openness within the family as dangerous, and among youth whose family members are entirely unaware of their identity, over three-quarters share this view. Nearly a third of respondents who are not fully open fear violence or being thrown out of their homes. At the same time, when there is a supportive family, open-ended responses highlight it as one of the strongest resources for safety. This implies that the family cannot automatically be viewed strictly as either a resource or a source of risk: its role differs fundamentally across individual young people.

Access to support remains another critical issue. A significant portion of youth does not report discrimination or violence due to a lack of belief that anyone can help, or out of fear that reporting itself will lead to disclosure of their identity. Concerns regarding the effectiveness of assistance are partially validated by the experiences of those who sought for help: complete resolution of the issue was rare, whereas more frequently, young people were simply listened to, received partial assistance, or were left with the situation effectively unchanged.

Friends, partners, other LGBTIQ+ individuals, and supportive relatives emerge as actual sources of safety far more frequently than schools, employers,

or other formal structures. At the same time, nearly half of respondents do not have an adult they can fully trust, and approximately 60% either lack access to an LGBTIQ+-friendly psychologist or do not know where to find one. Nevertheless, almost three-quarters consider the availability of such a psychologist or mentor to be important.

Psychological well-being is also closely tied to the social environment. High levels of sadness, anxiety, loneliness, and difficulty concentrating are observed more frequently among youth with recurring experiences of victimisation and among those who feel no sense of belonging to their environment. Therefore, psychological distress should be viewed as connected to the quality of the school, family, workplace, and social environment.

At the same time, the survey findings offer no ground to depict LGBTIQ+ youth solely through the lens of vulnerability. The majority of respondents hold clear educational and professional aspirations: over 90% intend or rather intend to pursue further education or professional development, and more than 60% intend to remain living in Ukraine over the next three years. The core issue lies instead in the gap between these aspirations and the confidence in their ability to realise them. Nearly a third desire to continue their studies or professional growth but doubt that they will succeed.

Taken together, the findings indicate that a significant portion of these problems can be mitigated by making existing schools, universities, workplaces, psychological services, youth centers, and social protection mechanisms predictably safer and more accessible for LGBTIQ+ youth. At the same time, specialised LGBTIQ+ organisations and services remain critically important where general institutions cannot guarantee confidentiality, competence, or safe reporting channels.