



LGBTIQ+ population of Aotearoa New Zealand: 2023

Findings from the 2023 Census, supplemented by data from the Household Economic Survey and General Social Survey



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Purpose and scope

LGBTIQ+ population of Aotearoa New Zealand: 2023 presents information from the 2023 Census of Population and Dwellings about Aotearoa New Zealand's LGBTIQ+ populations. This is supplemented with information from the Household Economic Survey (HES) year ended June 2023 and the General Social Survey (GSS) 2023.

The intent of this report is to give an overview of the data available and discuss key findings across a broad range of topics. We start by exploring demographic and cultural information about LGBTIQ+ people in chapters 1 and 2. In chapter 3 we focus on disability for LGBTIQ+ populations, which is a topic of particular interest following the release of LGBTIQ+ statistics from the Household Disability Survey in early 2025. In chapters 4 and 5 we explore education and training as well as work and income. Chapter 6 focuses on subjective measures of wellbeing and looks briefly at census data on smoking. Chapter 7 looks at housing, including tenure, costs, and conditions, with a spotlight on severe housing deprivation (homelessness). We end the report by exploring families and households of LGBTIQ+ people in chapter 8.

We are aware there is significant interest in further detail for many of the topics covered and we encourage researchers and interested parties to get in touch with [Customised data services](#) or apply to access the [Integrated Data Infrastructure](#) (IDI) if applicable.

Summary of key points

Chapters in this report are organised by topic. Within each chapter, we explore trends for the LGBTIQ+ population as well as individual groups within that population. We also disaggregate by other demographic factors – for example, age and ethnicity – where relevant and possible. At the end of each chapter, we provide a summary of some of the key findings in that chapter. Below, we provide a short summary of key points for the overall LGBTIQ+ population and three general subpopulations.

LGBTIQ+ population

172,383 people, 4.9 percent of usually resident adults

- The LGBTIQ+ population had a younger age distribution (median age 31.0 years) than the non-LGBTIQ+ population (47.7 years).
- The 20 to 24-year age group had the highest counts and proportions of LGBTIQ+ people overall. Of those aged 20 to 24, 11.9 percent were LGBTIQ+, comprising 17.7 percent of the overall LGBTIQ+ population.
- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to live in major urban areas, even when accounting for the younger age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population. In major urban areas, 5.9 percent of the population was LGBTIQ+.
- The proportion of the population who were LGBTIQ+ varied across ethnic groups.
- 5.2 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population indicated they could speak te reo Māori in the 2023 Census, compared with 3.3 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population.
- LGBTIQ+ people can use New Zealand Sign Language at a higher proportion than the non-LGBTIQ+ population.
- According to the 2023 Household Disability Survey, the LGBTIQ+ population were more likely to be disabled (29 percent) than the non-LGBTIQ+ population (17 percent).
- 15 and 16-year-old LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to be studying full time and more likely to be in part-time study.
- LGBTIQ+ people aged 18 years and over were more likely to be studying (full or part time) than their non-LGBTIQ+ peers.
- Between ages 15 and 34 years, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be employed part time and less likely to be employed full time than non-LGBTIQ+ people.
- LGBTIQ+ people had higher representation in lower income bands and lower representation in higher income bands.
- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to engage in helping someone who is ill or has a disability. They were also more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to help or volunteer.
- LGBTIQ+ young people (15 to 19 years) were less likely to be living as a child in a family (still living at home with parents) than non-LGBTIQ+ young people – 95.2

percent at 15 to 47.1 percent at 19 for LGBTIQ+ people living as a child in a family, compared with 95.6 percent at 15 to 61.5 percent at 19 for non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Sexual minorities

144,960 people, 4.1 percent of usually resident adults

- People with a minority sexual identity (gay or lesbian, bisexual, or another sexual identity different from heterosexual or straight) made up the largest proportion of the LGBTIQ+ population in the 2023 Census data.
- Bisexual women made up just over one-third of the entire LGBTIQ+ population.
- The gay and lesbian population had an older median age than the bisexual and other sexual identity population, though still younger than the heterosexual or straight population.
- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to hold postgraduate qualifications, and this difference was most pronounced for sexual minorities.
- For similar age groups, gay and lesbian people tended to earn slightly more than heterosexual or straight people, while bisexual people and people with other sexual identities earned less.
- Across age groups, bisexual people and people with other sexual identities were also more likely to be unemployed than gay and lesbian people.
- Across all life-cycle age groups, people with minority sexual identities were less likely to live in a home that was owned or held in a family trust.
- Cisgender 15 to 19-year-olds with minority sexual identities seemed to be more likely to have moved out into a flatting or living-alone arrangement (that is, to not be in a family nucleus) than transgender and non-binary people with minority sexual identities. Bisexual cisgender people aged 15 to 19 were the least likely to be living in their family home (or as 'children' in a family).
- Sexual minorities were less likely to be parents than heterosexual or straight people.

Transgender and non-binary people

26,097 people, 0.7 percent of usually resident adults

- Transgender and non-binary people made up a smaller proportion of the overall LGBTIQ+ population than people with minority sexual identities.
- Transgender and non-binary people were much more likely to have minority sexual identities than cisgender people. For cisgender people, 91.7 percent of men and 88.7 percent of women reported being heterosexual or straight. Whereas only 53.5 percent of transgender men, 56.0 percent of transgender women, and 17.5 percent of transgender people of another gender reported a heterosexual or straight sexual identity.
- While transgender and non-binary people generally had a younger age distribution than cisgender people, heterosexual or straight transgender and non-binary people had an age distribution that was much more similar to non-LGBTIQ+ people than any other LGBTIQ+ subgroup.
- Transgender women had a slightly older age distribution and a higher median age (36.2 years) than transgender men (32.2 years) and transgender people of another gender (26.6 years).
- Young transgender women (15 to 19 years) were the least likely to be studying of any gender or sexual minority group of the same age group.
- Transgender and non-binary people tended to earn less and had higher unemployment rates than cisgender people.
- Transgender and non-binary people were more than three times more likely to have experienced some form of discrimination in the past 12 months than non-LGBT+ people.
- Transgender and non-binary people aged 15 to 19 years were slightly less likely to have moved out of home than cisgender people with minority sexual identities.
- Transgender and non-binary people (of any gender) who were heterosexual or straight had similar rates of being in a 'parent' role in a household as non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Those who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics

15,039 people, 0.4 percent of usually resident adults

Data on people who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics is more limited in this report than that of other populations within the wider LGBTIQ+ group. This is due to data quality issues, which are further explained in the section, [About the data](#).

Some key points from the data for this population include:

- people who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics were more likely to also belong to a transgender and non-binary subgroup or a sexual minority, compared with the overall adult population
- people who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics were more likely to be disabled than those who know they were not born with a variation of sex characteristics
- looking at median income, people who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics tended to earn less than those who know they were not born with a variation of sex characteristics.

Introduction

For several years, a key focus for Stats NZ has been better reflecting Aotearoa New Zealand's LGBTIQ+ populations in official statistics and supporting improved representation in the wider data system. After key updates to our data and statistical standards in 2019 and 2021, the 2023 Census was the first census to collect this data.

'LGBTIQ+' stands for 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and other gender and sexual minorities (represented by the +)'. For an individual to be LGBTIQ+ in the 2023 Census data they could identify as:

- a sexual minority (gay, lesbian, bisexual, or another sexual identity that was not heterosexual or straight)
- transgender or non-binary (their gender identity was different from their sex assigned at birth, including identifying as a gender other than man or woman)
- being born with a variation of sex characteristics, also known as intersex.

Individuals could also belong to multiple groups, for instance, transgender and lesbian.

In this report, we generally use the term 'LGBTIQ+' when referring to data from the 2023 Census as this reflects the variables covered in the questions asked. When we talk about data from the Household Economic Survey (HES) and General Social Survey (GSS), we use the term 'LGBT+' as these surveys do not collect data on whether someone was born with a variation of sex characteristics.

We also understand that 'rainbow' is a common term for referring to complex and diverse LGBTIQ+ communities in New Zealand. However, it is not a widely recognised term internationally, and it does have different uses in different contexts. Therefore, we generally use the term 'LGBTIQ+' in this report.

Limitations and challenges with collecting LGBTIQ+ data

We acknowledge that 2023 Census statistics may represent an undercount of all those with lived experience of sex, sexual, and/or gender diversity. This may be due to non-response to

the census or the specific LGBTIQ+-related questions, the terms we used, and/or the way in which we asked questions.¹

Many cultures also do not distinguish between the concepts of gender, sex, variations of sex characteristics, or sexual orientation in the way the statistical concepts used in the census did. In New Zealand, Māori and Pasifika identities often span more than one of these domains. ‘Takatāpui’, for example, is a term that embraces “all Māori who identify with diverse genders, sexualities, and sex characteristics such as whakawāhine, tangata ira tāne, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, non-binary and queer” (Kerekere, 2021). Pasifika identities such as fakaleitī and fa’afafine are also understood within their own cultural reference points.

There is enormous variation in the lived experiences of individuals within LGBTIQ+ communities. This is another complicating factor in the collection and interpretation of data about these groups, and it has implications for looking at data about the LGBTIQ+ population as a whole. The experience of a minority sexual identity (for instance, being gay) does not necessarily lead to commonality of experience with someone with a minority gender.

Readers are therefore cautioned that this data should not be viewed as an exhaustive picture of the full experience of gender and sexual diversity in New Zealand. Some experiences are likely to be more visible than others.

The data and insights in this report have been produced using census and survey response only. Levels of response can vary across demographic groups, and findings across these groups only represent those who responded.

It is also important to note that where LGBTIQ+ status intersects with other demographic factors – such as minority ethnic groups – numbers of subpopulations can become very small.

¹ See Appendix 1 for the questions about LGBTIQ+ concepts used in the 2023 Census.

In some cases where we wanted to make comparisons with other smaller demographic populations, the numbers were too small to look at individual LGBTIQ+ subpopulations, so looking at the data for the LGBTIQ+ aggregate population was useful. Where this was the case, it is important to bear in mind the heterogeneity of this wider group and use caution when drawing any conclusions or making any generalisations about the population as a whole.

The social and historical context for LGBTIQ+ populations

We caution readers to keep the broader social and historical context for LGBTIQ+ populations in mind when interpreting findings for these groups. Criminalisation and pathologisation of LGBTIQ+ individuals and identities in the past have had lasting effects in social, health, and economic domains for these groups at the population level (Badgett et al, 2024).

The effects of systemic discrimination may be apparent in socio-demographic data about LGBTIQ+ communities. For instance, Stats NZ released 2023 Census data on severe housing deprivation that showed that LGBTIQ+ people experienced high rates of severe housing deprivation. International studies often show lower rates of employment, education, income, and home ownership – factors that may contribute to housing deprivation – for people identifying as sexually or gender diverse; the effect is particularly strong for those who identify as gender non-conforming (Badgett, Carpenter, Lee, & Sansone, 2024; Stacey, 2024). For more information on the rates of severe housing deprivation for LGBTIQ+ people, see [2023 Census severe housing deprivation \(homelessness\) estimates](#).

The potential compounding effect of belonging to more than one minority group, and the complex impact of discrimination in multiple areas of one's life must be considered when interpreting data for these groups. Negative outcomes for LGBTIQ+ groups should not be attributed to inherent characteristics, nor should these outcomes be viewed as inevitable.

The same factors have contributed to a historic lack of data for and about LGBTIQ+ populations. The responsibility to produce this data has often lain with LGBTIQ+ communities themselves. We acknowledge those organisations that have worked, and continue to work, within the community to fill those data gaps.

This report aims to provide further insight into the experiences of New Zealand's LGBTIQ+ population and inspire others to engage with the data. Researchers and organisations are encouraged to engage with census data through [Aotearoa Data Explorer](#), to apply to make further use of available data by contacting [Customised data services](#), or to apply for access to the [Integrated Data Infrastructure \(IDI\)](#) if applicable.

Appendix 2 lists a number of resources, services, and support organisations related to issues raised in this report.

About the data

The data used in this report primarily comes from the 2023 Census, supplemented by additional data from other Stats NZ surveys that collect information relevant to LGBTIQ+ populations, namely the Household Economic Survey (HES) and the General Social Survey (GSS).

2023 Census data on LGBTIQ+ populations

Variables and terms used

The 2023 Census LGBTIQ+ population was compiled using information from four key variables: gender, sex at birth, sexual identity, and variations of sex characteristics. Two additional variables were derived: cisgender and transgender status and an overall LGBTIQ+ indicator. These variables have their own classifications and output categories.

[Gender, sex, and LGBTIQ+ concepts in the 2023 Census](#) has more detailed information about these concepts. This page also contains links to further information about the data, such as relevant data standards. A similar group of variables are used in some household surveys. Key differences to be aware of are explained later in this chapter, [LGBT+ data from the Household Economic Survey and General Social Survey](#).

In this report we use terms that are slightly different from the formal output categories of LGBTIQ+-related variables. This is to improve understanding and readability, and to align with general preferences of those represented in the data.

For each LGBTIQ+ variable, the table below lays out its output categories and the terms we use to describe the data in this report.

LGBTIQ+ output categories and terms used in this report

Variable	Output category	Term used in this report
Cisgender and transgender status	Level 1	
	Transgender	Transgender and non-binary
	Cisgender	Cisgender
	Level 2	
	Transgender male	Transgender man
	Transgender female	Transgender woman

	Transgender person of another gender	Transgender person of another gender
	Cisgender male	Cisgender man
	Cisgender female	Cisgender woman
Sexual identity	Heterosexual	Heterosexual or straight
	Homosexual	Gay or lesbian
	Bisexual	Bisexual
	Sexual identity not elsewhere classified	Another/other sexual identity or other sexual identities
	Prefer not to say	Prefer not to say
Variations of sex characteristics	Yes (the respondent knows they were born with a variation of sex characteristics)	Born with a variation of sex characteristics
	No (the respondent knows they were not born with a variation of sex characteristics)	Not born with a variation of sex characteristics
	Don't know	Don't know
	Prefer not to say	Prefer not to say
Rainbow/LGBTIQ+ indicator	Level 1	
	LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+
	Not LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+ or Non-LGBTIQ+
	Level 2	
	Another gender	Another gender/A gender different from man or woman
	Homosexual, bisexual, or sexual identity not elsewhere classified	Sexual minority/-ies or minority sexual identity
	Transgender	Transgender and non-binary
	Persons who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics	Those born with a variation of sex characteristics

A note on transgender and non-binary data

The ‘transgender and non-binary population’ in this report refers to those who reported a gender that was different from their sex recorded at birth. This included transgender men, transgender women, and those who reported another gender that was not exclusively man or woman (including non-binary, agender, or gender non-conforming).

It is important to note that the population represented in the category ‘another gender’ is not one and the same as the transgender and non-binary population, although they were included in it. The way that transgender status was derived in the 2023 Census is shown

below. The groups that made up the overall transgender and non-binary population are noted with '(TNB)'.

Cisgender and transgender status derivation

Gender response	Sex at birth response	Derived cisgender and transgender status
Male	Male	Cisgender man
	Female	Transgender man (TNB)
Female	Male	Transgender woman (TNB)
	Female	Cisgender woman
Another gender	Male	Transgender person of another gender (TNB)
	Female	
	Missing response	

Sometimes, we report on detailed transgender groups (transgender man, transgender woman, and transgender person of another gender). Other times, data is presented for the 'transgender and non-binary' category as a whole.

Age in the census data

The LGBTIQ+ population in the census comprises those aged 15 years and over.

In general, the LGBTIQ+ population is younger than the non-LGBTIQ+ population, which is described in detail in [1: Population structure](#).

This impacts outcomes for topics that are reliably age dependent, such as income or employment. No census data in this report has been age adjusted; however, much of it is broken down by age group instead.

Overall interpretation of differences between the age-total LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations should consider the potential impact of differences in underlying age distributions.

Time series

As the 2023 Census was the first New Zealand census to collect information to identify the LGBTIQ+ population, time-series data was not available for reporting.

Confidentialisation and percentages

The 2023 Census confidentiality rules have been applied to the 2023 Census data in this report. These rules protect the confidentiality of individuals, families, households, dwellings, and undertakings in 2023 Census data. Counts are calculated using fixed random rounding and suppression of sensitive counts. Individual figures may not always sum to stated totals.

Percentages are calculated from confidentialised counts and may not sum to exactly 100 percent. Smaller percentage breakdowns of a population may not sum to the stated percent value of the population they sit under.

Some data in the report uses the rainbow/LGBTIQ+ indicator, and other data uses the source variable (sexual identity, cisgender and transgender status, gender, and variations of sex characteristics). Totals from the rainbow/LGBTIQ+ indicator for a population may be slightly different from summed totals from the source variables due to confidentialisation.

For further information about the confidentiality rules applied to 2023 Census data, see [Applying confidentiality rules to 2023 Census data and summary of changes since 2018 and 2013 Censuses.](#)

The census combined model

The 2023 Census used a combined model that combined census responses with alternative data sources. More information on this is available in [Using a combined census model for the 2023 Census.](#)

However, alternative data was not sourced for the ‘rainbow/LGBTIQ+ indicator’, ‘cisgender and transgender status’, ‘sexual identity’, or ‘variations of sex characteristics’ variables within the 2023 Census. This means where people have been identified as belonging to the LGBTIQ+ population, the information has solely been sourced from people’s census responses. Because this report focuses on the LGBTIQ+ population, tables and figures included in this report exclude people who did not provide a valid response for the relevant LGBTIQ+ concepts.

Data quality

Stats NZ assesses data quality for concepts and provides data-quality ratings across three metrics: data sources and coverage, consistency and coherence, and accuracy. More detail about this process can be found in [Data quality assurance in the 2023 Census](#).

As mentioned above, output data for the concepts produced on the LGBTIQ+ population did not use alternatively sourced data or statistical imputation to fill missingness. As a result, their coverage was only from received census form responses, leading to quality ratings of 'poor' for the data sources and coverage metric. The lowest-quality rating across all three metrics was taken as the overall quality rating for a variable, so all LGBTIQ+-related variables have overall ratings of 'poor'. This was consistent with other concepts only produced from census form responses for the 2023 Census. Ratings for consistency and coherence, and accuracy, for LGBTIQ+ concepts range from 'poor' to 'very high'. Data sources and coverage ratings of 'poor' may obscure other data quality aspects, and it's important for users to know that this data is fit for use.

For detailed information and recommendations for use, see each variable's [Information by concept](#):

- [Cisgender and transgender status - 2023 Census: Information by concept](#)
- [Sexual identity - 2023 Census: Information by concept](#)
- [Variations of sex characteristics - 2023 Census: Information by concept](#)
- [Rainbow/LGBTIQ+ indicator - 2023 Census: Information by concept](#)

Restrictions on variations of sex characteristics data

Due to data quality issues for the variations of sex characteristics concept, some restrictions have been placed on the output of data on this concept. More information about this is available in the information by concept publication linked above.

The information collected for this concept is included within the overall derived LGBTIQ+ population. However, we have restricted some breakdowns of output data for the variations of sex characteristics variable and for the group of people who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics within the rainbow/LGBTIQ+ indicator level 2 category.

The population of interest (those born with a variation of sex characteristics) was very small, and analysis showed that the quality of data for this concept had likely been impacted by some level of respondent error. The responses likely made in error are not evenly spread across the total population and are particularly for people within the level 1 'Asian' ethnic group and the overseas born population. Because of this, the ability to accurately compare some differences in the population of interest across a number of standard breakdowns has been impacted.

As a result, the output of this concept is restricted to the national geographic level, and the outputs will not be disaggregated by age, ethnicity, birthplace, languages spoken, religious affiliation, and years since arrival in New Zealand. Further to these formal restrictions, analysis undertaken for this report showed secondary impacts of this quality issue across other topics. We have only included findings for those born with a variation of sex characteristics where we have a high level of confidence.

LGBT+ data from the Household Economic Survey and General Social Survey

The Household Economic Survey (HES) and the General Social Survey (GSS) collect information on gender, sex at birth, and sexual identity, in alignment with the same data standards as the 2023 Census. However, they do not collect information on variations of sex characteristics, as current survey sample sizes would prevent usable insights for this very small population. Hence, the overall rainbow population from these surveys is described as the 'LGBT+' population.

The data collection for the 2023 GSS started on 15 May 2023 and finished on 21 April 2024. For the 2023 HES, the collection period ran from July 2022 to June 2023. The LGBT+ population for HES included all those aged 18 years and over. GSS data, as with the census data, included all those aged 15 years and over.

LGBT+ data from the HES and GSS samples has been age adjusted, which allows comparison of two populations when they have different age distributions. There are a range of topics represented in the HES and GSS that reliably vary with age (such as income or housing

quality). The size of these samples prevents disaggregation by detailed age groups, as we can with census data. Age adjustment allows for more accurate comparison of outcomes between the aggregate LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ populations without their different underlying age distributions affecting what is seen.

We used the direct method of age adjustment for the survey data presented in this report. This method changes the amount that each age group contributes to the overall rate in each community so that the overall rates are based on the same age structure. Adjustment is accomplished by first multiplying age-specific rates by age-specific weights. The weights are the total number of people in each age group. These products are summed across the age groups and the sum is divided by the total population to give the age-adjusted rate. We used five-year age groups for HES, and 10-year age groups for GSS. As the *Wellbeing statistics: 2023* data release was not age adjusted, some figures in this report may not align with those published in the official release.

These surveys are sample surveys, meaning only some of the population was surveyed, unlike a full-field enumeration census where all of the population was surveyed.² Because of this, there is likely to be a difference between an estimated value from one of these samples and the 'true' population value. The size of this difference is estimated and termed 'sample error'.

In this report, sample errors in graphs are presented as 95 percent confidence intervals. That is, we are 95 percent confident that the 'true' population value lies in the range of the estimate +/- the sample error.

Sample error tends to increase as the sample size decreases; therefore, as the LGBT+ population is a subset of the total population, the sample error on these estimates can be large. Sample error increases further when the LGBT+ population is further broken down by other characteristics. When comparing the estimates for different groups, the sample error on the estimates should be considered. For this data, we say there is a difference between two figures if the size of the difference is greater than the sample error. For the GSS, a

² The achieved sample size for the HES year ended June 2023 was about 14,100 households. The achieved sample size for the 2023 GSS was just over 7,800 households.

further test is done to ensure the changes are real and not a product of their associated sample errors. When we say there is no difference between two figures, that does not mean they are identical – it simply means that we cannot say with statistical confidence the difference truly exists.

1 Population structure

This section focuses on the overall structure of Aotearoa New Zealand's LGBTIQ+ population, including the sizes of the different groups that made up this population, as well as the age distributions of these groups and their geographical distribution across New Zealand.

The 2023 Census found that 172,383 (4.9 percent) usually resident adults (defined as people aged 15 years and over) belonged to the LGBTIQ+ population. This population was made up of a number of groups, identified from different questions collected in the 2023 Census, including:

- 144,960 people (4.1 percent) who reported a minority sexual identity, comprising:
 - 47,631 (1.4 percent) who were gay or lesbian – including 20,382 women, 25,365 men, and 1,887 people of another gender
 - 78,300 (2.3 percent) who were bisexual – including 57,348 women, 17,739 men, and 3,213 people of another gender
 - 19,026 (0.6 percent) who had another sexual identity – including 10,614 women, 4,158 men, and 4,254 people of another gender
- 26,097 (0.7 percent) transgender and non-binary people, comprising:
 - 5,013 (0.1 percent) transgender men
 - 5,736 (0.2 percent) transgender women
 - 15,348 (0.4 percent) transgender people of another gender
- 15,039 (0.4 percent) people who reported they were born with a variation of sex characteristics.

When engaging with findings in this report, it's important to keep in mind the relative sizes of the different groups that make up the LGBTIQ+ population in 2023 Census data. The sexual minority subgroups comprised a large proportion of the overall LGBTIQ+ population, particularly bisexual women who made up roughly one-third of the overall LGBTIQ+ population. Transgender people of another gender constituted the majority of the overall transgender and non-binary group. It was possible for individuals to belong to more than one group within the LGBTIQ+ population, which is discussed later in this chapter.

The 2023 Census data shows that there were clear differences in age structure and location of usual residence for the overall LGBTIQ+ population compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population. The LGBTIQ+ population had a much younger median age and was more concentrated in major urban areas. Similar characteristics in age and location of LGBTIQ+ populations have been reported in official statistics internationally (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022; National Records of Scotland, 2024; Office for National Statistics, 2023a; Office for National Statistics, 2023b; Statistics Canada, 2024).

There were also major differences in age structure and location of usual residence across some of the different groups that made up the LGBTIQ+ population, and these are discussed below.

Differences between the overall age structure of the LGBTIQ+ population and the total population, and differences in age structures between LGBTIQ+ groups, should be considered when interpreting or drawing conclusions from 2023 Census data on LGBTIQ+ populations.

We have previously released estimates of the sizes of the LGBT+ population and its subgroups using Household Economic Survey data (Stats NZ, 2021; Stats NZ, 2022). Data from the 2023 Census has produced population counts for the overall LGBTIQ+ population, sexual minorities, and gender minorities that are consistent with previously published estimates.

Unlike the Household Economic Survey, the 2023 Census collected data on people born with a variation of sex characteristics, and statistics from this data were the first we published for this group.

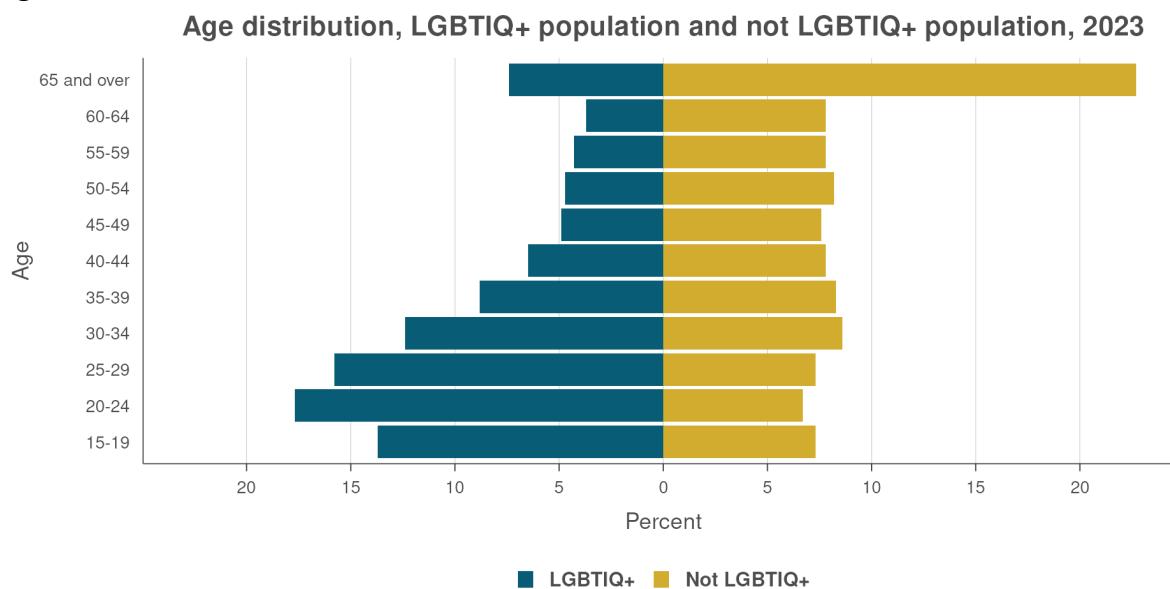
Age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population

The LGBTIQ+ population was generally younger than the non-LGBTIQ+ population, however there was some variation between subgroups.

Figure 1.01 shows the age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population. The LGBTIQ+ population had a median age of 31.0 years, compared

with 47.7 years for the non-LGBTIQ+ population.³ The largest five-year age group in the LGBTIQ+ population was the 20 to 24-year age group, which constituted 17.7 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population. The largest five-year age group for the non-LGBTIQ+ population was the 30 to 34-year age group, which constituted 8.6 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population.

Figure 1.01



This data is for the LGBTIQ+ and not LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Figure 1.02 shows the proportion of LGBTIQ+ people within each five-year age group. The proportion of LGBTIQ+ individuals peaks at 11.9 percent for the 20 to 24-year age group and declines noticeably for the older age groups. This shows that someone in the 20 to 24-year age group was more than twice as likely to be a part of the LGBTIQ+ population than someone in the general adult population in New Zealand. These are common ages when many people develop increased independence, possibly leaving or having left home and participating in tertiary education or the workforce.

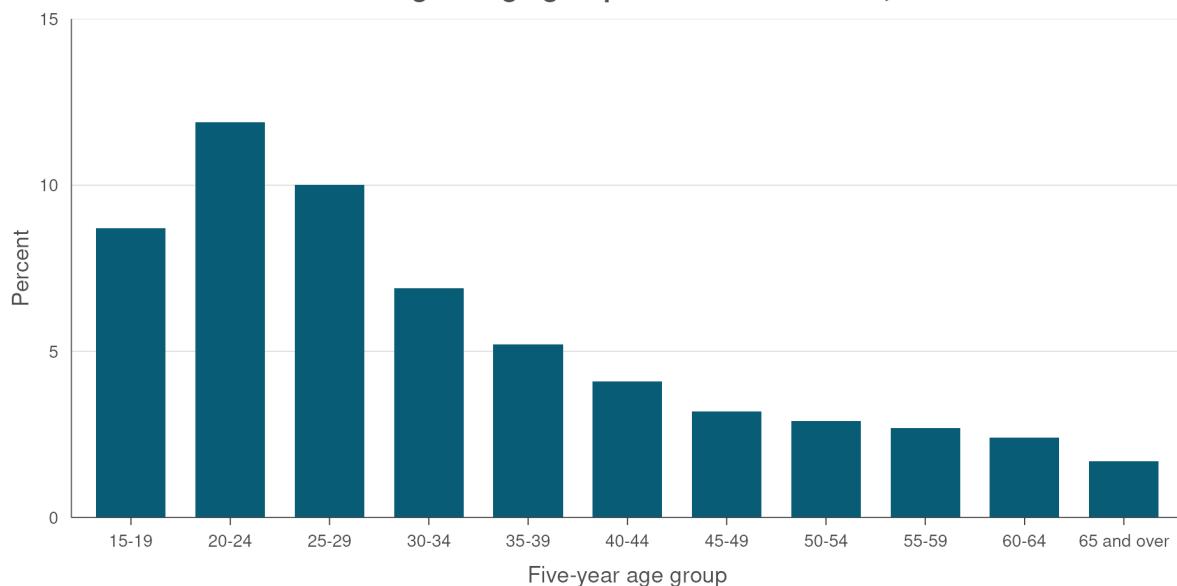
The overall younger age distribution aligns with trends observed internationally (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022; National Records of Scotland, 2024; Office for National Statistics,

³ The median age of the non-LGBTIQ+ population is notably higher than the median age of the total New Zealand population in the 2023 Census reported elsewhere (38.1). This is because it is for people aged 15 years and over rather than all ages.

2023b; Statistics Canada, 2024), often attributed to the liberalisation of attitudes and policies over time in social, economic, political, and legal spheres.

Figure 1.02

Percentage of age group who were LGBTIQ+, 2023



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

The difference in age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population when compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population (or indeed the general population as a whole) is referenced throughout this report as a potential influence on other trends and outcomes seen in the data.

Figure 1.03 shows the age structure of the different transgender and non-binary populations – these being transgender men, transgender women, and transgender people of another gender. The transgender women population was relatively evenly distributed, with a higher median age of 36.2 years when compared with 32.2 years for transgender men and 26.6 years for transgender people of another gender. The 15 to 19-year age group was the largest five-year age group for transgender men (23.2 percent) and transgender women (13.5 percent), while the 20 to 24-year age group was the largest for transgender people of another gender (22.8 percent).

Figure 1.03

Age distribution, transgender and non-binary populations, 2023



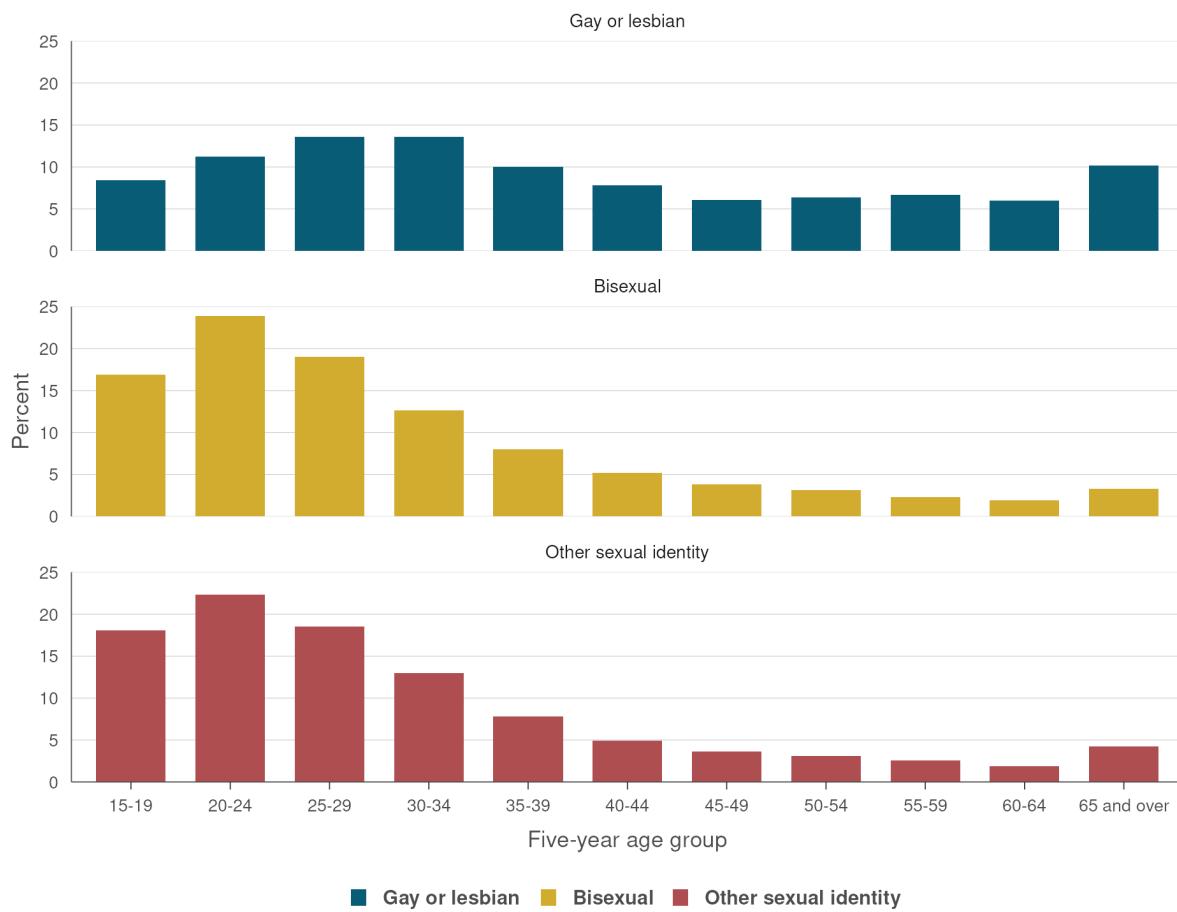
This data is for the transgender and non-binary census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Figure 1.04 shows the overall age structure for the non-heterosexual subgroups of gay or lesbian, bisexual, and other sexual identity. Notably, the 20 to 24-year age group was the largest for the bisexual and other sexual identity populations, similar to the detailed transgender groups and the overall LGBTIQ+ population. However, the gay or lesbian population was less skewed towards younger ages than other minority sexual identities and peaked between 25 to 29 years and 30 to 34 years, with a comparatively smaller peak. A larger proportion of the gay or lesbian population were in the older age groups, compared with the other minority sexual identities. This was reflected in the median age of 36.4 years for the gay or lesbian population, compared with 27.2 years for the bisexual population, and 27.5 years for people with other sexual identities.

Figure 1.04

Age distribution, sexual minorities, 2023



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over with minority sexual identities.

Stats NZ census

In summary, the data shows that the LGBTIQ+ population was much younger than the non-LGBTIQ+ population, with the highest counts and proportion of the overall LGBTIQ+ population being within the 20 to 24-year age group. There was some variation within subgroups. The transgender women and gay or lesbian population groups had different age structures, with higher median ages than their comparable groups within the LGBTIQ+ population and the LGBTIQ+ population overall.

Relationship and overlap between LGBTIQ+ subgroups

It is important to note that cisgender and transgender status, and sexual identity, are two separate concepts in the census. While the LGBTIQ+ indicator census variable combines this information to present data for the LGBTIQ+ population as a whole, someone within the LGBTIQ+ population can belong to a gender minority, a sexual minority, or both. Presenting

data cross-tabulated by cisgender and transgender status and sexual identity shows some important features of the relationship between these groups, as illustrated in figures 1.05 and 1.06.

Figure 1.05 shows the sexual identities of each cisgender and transgender population. A higher proportion of all transgender and non-binary subgroups belonged to a sexual minority group, compared with cisgender men and women.

The group who had the highest proportion of heterosexual or straight people were cisgender men, at 91.7 percent, followed by cisgender women at 88.7 percent. The proportion of heterosexual or straight responses for the transgender and non-binary populations was 53.5 percent for transgender men and 56.0 percent for transgender women. In contrast, 17.5 percent of transgender people of another gender reported a heterosexual or straight sexual identity.

Levels of 'prefer not to say' in response to the sexual identity question were also higher for all transgender and non-binary subgroups compared with cisgender subgroups, with the highest level being for transgender people of another gender at 16.7 percent.

Figure 1.05



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Figure 1.06 shows the cisgender and transgender status of each minority sexual identity. Breaking down the sexual minority subgroups by cisgender and transgender status, some major differences can be observed. More than half of the gay or lesbian population were

cisgender men at 52.4 percent. In contrast, all other sexual identities comprised a higher proportion of cisgender women. The bisexual category had the highest proportion of cisgender women, with 72.5 percent.

Transgender people of another gender comprised a much larger proportion of the other sexual identity group, making up 22.7 percent of this group overall, compared to a much smaller proportion of other groups, such as 4.1 percent of bisexual people.

Figure 1.06

Minority sexual identities by cisgender and transgender status, 2023



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over with minority sexual identities.

Stats NZ census

People who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics were also more likely to belong to a transgender and non-binary subgroup, or a sexual minority, compared with the overall adult population.

Across the transgender and non-binary and sexual minority subgroups, people who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics made up:

- 2.6 percent of transgender women
- 1.7 percent of transgender men
- 1.8 percent of transgender people of another gender
- 0.8 percent of gay or lesbian people
- 0.6 percent of bisexual people
- 1.0 percent of people with another sexual identity.

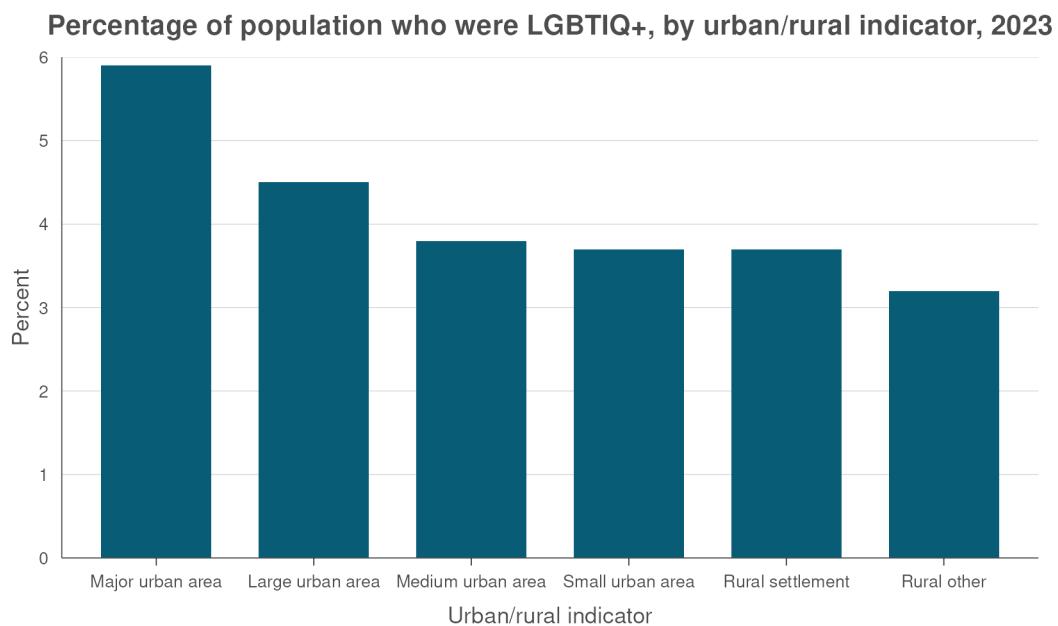
In summary, when interpreting findings in this report, keep in mind that there was a high level of overlap across some of the reported data for the detailed LGBTIQ+ groups, particularly for transgender people of another gender and people with other sexual identities.

Location of the LGBTIQ+ population

The following section explores the distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population and how this differs across different locations throughout New Zealand.

Figure 1.07 shows the percentage of the population who were LGBTIQ+, by urban/rural indicator. It shows that major urban areas had the highest proportion of the LGBTIQ+ population, at 5.9 percent. The more rural an area, the lower the proportion of the population that was LGBTIQ+, with the smallest rural areas, 'rural other', only having 3.2 percent of the adult population belonging to the LGBTIQ+ population.

Figure 1.07



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Major urban areas had a younger overall population than the average age distribution across New Zealand. However, even when accounting for the different age distributions across area types, the LGBTIQ+ population was still more likely to be residing in a major urban area compared with the average person within their age group.

Figure 1.08 shows the percentage of each regional council population who were LGBTIQ+. There were differences in the proportion of adults who belong to the LGBTIQ+ community across regional council areas. The five regional councils with the highest proportions of LGBTIQ+ people were Wellington (7.6 percent), Otago (5.7 percent), Canterbury (5.0 percent), Auckland (4.9 percent), and Nelson (4.8 percent). The most populous region, Auckland, had 57,324 LGBTIQ+ people, making up one-third of New Zealand's total LGBTIQ+ population. This is similar to the distribution of the adult population overall.

Figure 1.08

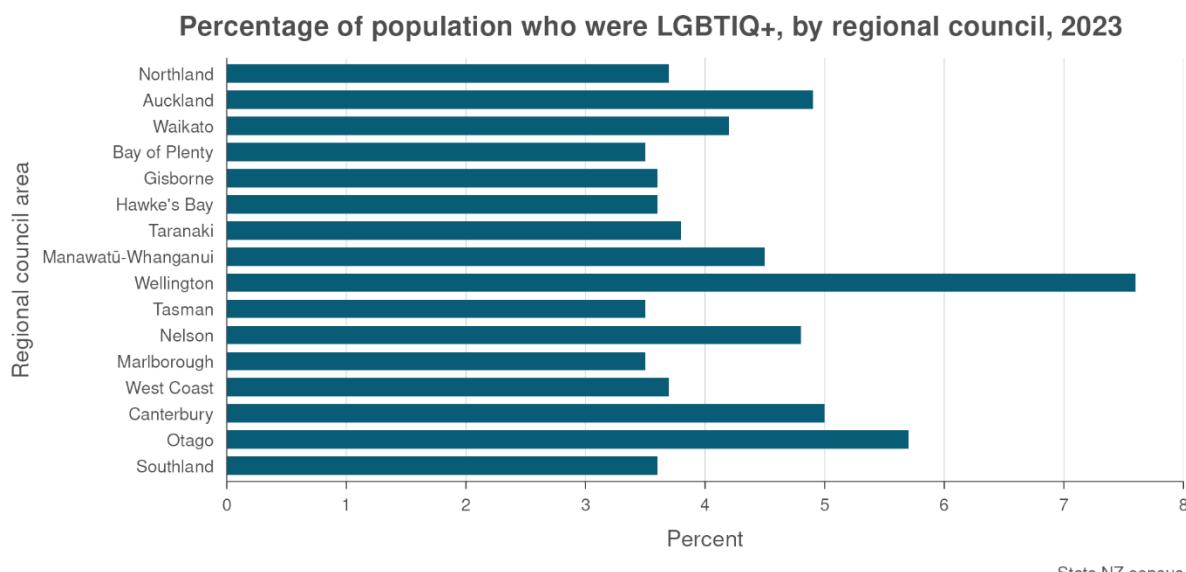
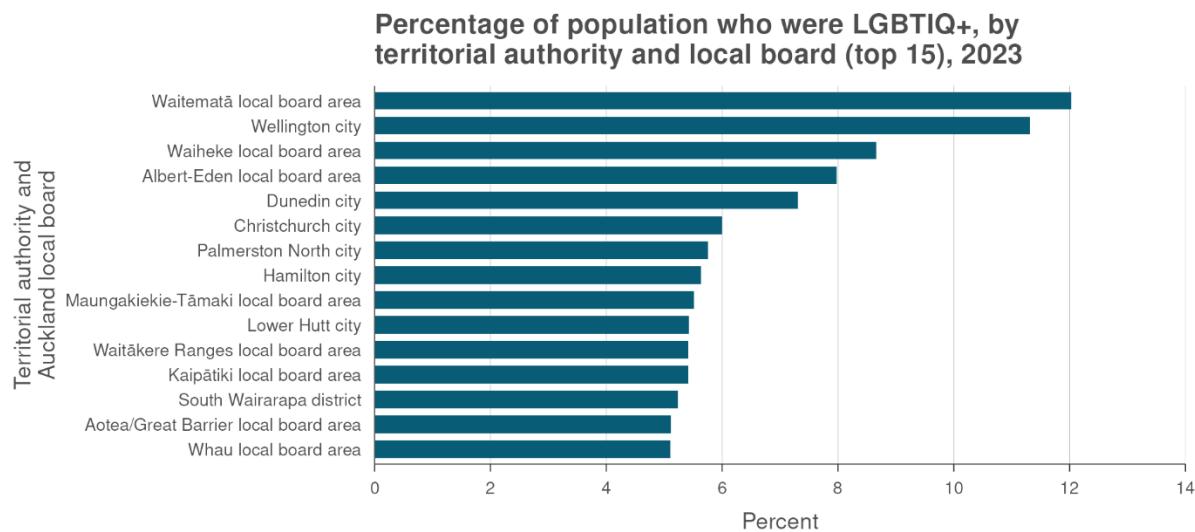


Figure 1.09 shows the 15 territorial authorities and Auckland local boards with the highest proportion of their population who were LGBTIQ+. Some territorial authorities and Auckland local boards had a much higher proportion of the resident population who were LGBTIQ+, compared with at the regional level. This could suggest that the LGBTIQ+ population may be more clustered in some areas within a region. The five territorial authorities and Auckland local boards with the highest proportions of LGBTIQ+ people were Waitematā local board (12.0 percent), Wellington city (11.3 percent), Waiheke local board (8.7 percent), Albert-Eden local board (8.0 percent), and Dunedin city (7.3 percent).

Figure 1.09



The 15 areas with the highest proportion of the adult population who were LGBTIQ+ are shown.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Table 1.01 shows the regional variation in the proportion of the LGBTIQ+ population by cisgender and transgender status. Cisgender men comprised the largest share of regional LGBTIQ+ populations in the Auckland region, at 34.8 percent, followed by Southland region at 30.6 percent.

Table 1.01

Regional council	Cisgender man	Cisgender woman	Transgender man	Transgender woman	Transgender person of another gender
	Percent				
Northland	28.1	58.2	3.7	3.3	6.8
Auckland	34.8	50.8	2.7	3.6	8.1
Waikato	28.1	56.3	3.5	3.7	8.3
Bay of Plenty	27.2	57.1	3.7	3.9	8.1
Gisborne region	25.7	59.2	3.9	4.7	6.8
Hawke's Bay	28.3	56.8	3.4	3.5	7.9
Taranaki	26.0	56.5	4.3	4.7	8.6
Manawatū-Whanganui	27.5	56.7	3.5	3.1	9.2
Wellington	28.7	55.1	2.3	2.7	11.2
Tasman	25.5	56.8	4.6	3.3	10.4
Nelson	26.1	58.0	3.2	2.9	9.9
Marlborough	26.8	56.9	2.9	4.1	8.9
West Coast	27.3	57.0	4.4	3.4	8.2
Canterbury	30.5	54.0	2.8	3.3	9.4

Otago	27.4	58.3	2.5	2.6	9.2
Southland	30.6	51.9	4.3	4.3	9.0
Note: This data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.					
Source: Stats NZ census					

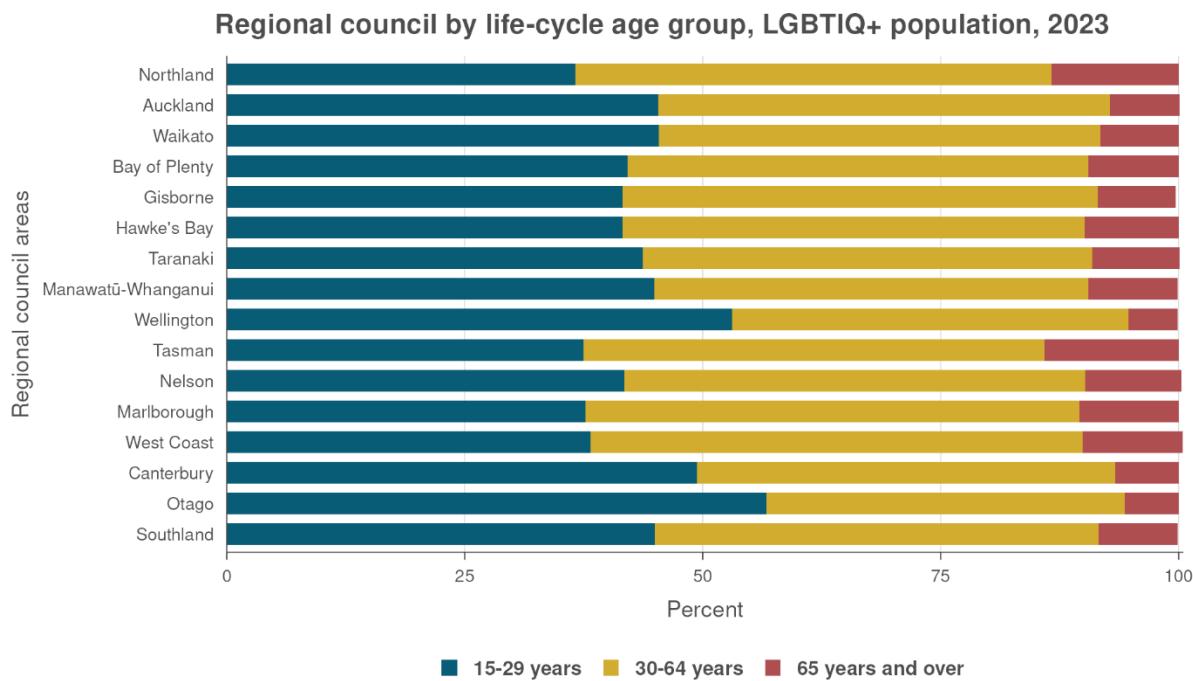
Table 1.02 shows the regional variation in the proportion of the LGBTIQ+ population by sexual identity. Auckland region had the highest proportions of the LGBTIQ+ population with a sexual identity of heterosexual or straight (16.1 percent) and gay or lesbian (30.4 percent). Otago region had the highest proportion of the population who were bisexual, at 53.2 percent. The Gisborne and Manawatū-Whanganui regions had the highest proportion of people with another sexual identity, at 13.1 percent, closely followed by the Wellington region, at 13.0 percent.

Table 1.02

Sexual identity by regional council, LGBTIQ+ population, 2023					
Regional council	Heterosexual or straight	Gay or lesbian	Bisexual	Other sexual identity	Prefer not to say
	Percent				
Northland	11.8	29.3	45.6	11.0	2.3
Auckland	16.1	30.4	41.0	9.8	2.7
Waikato	12.9	26.3	47.0	11.1	2.7
Bay of Plenty	12.9	28.6	44.8	10.6	3.0
Gisborne	13.1	23.9	47.2	13.1	2.9
Hawke's Bay	13.2	27.0	46.1	10.6	3.0
Taranaki	12.4	25.4	48.7	10.6	3.0
Manawatū-Whanganui	10.0	26.6	47.5	13.1	2.7
Wellington	6.2	28.1	50.8	13.0	1.9
Tasman	13.0	27.5	45.7	10.7	3.4
Nelson	10.8	25.3	50.2	10.8	2.7
Marlborough	11.3	25.0	48.8	11.8	3.4
West Coast	11.3	26.3	47.4	12.3	2.7
Canterbury	11.0	26.9	48.2	11.5	2.4
Otago	7.4	24.2	53.2	12.9	2.2
Southland	15.0	23.8	47.4	10.8	3.2
Note: This data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.					
Source: Stats NZ census					

The age structure of the LGBTIQ+ population in New Zealand also varied by region. Figure 1.10 shows the life-cycle age group distribution for the LGBTIQ+ population in each regional council. More than half of the LGBTIQ+ population in Otago and Wellington were within the 15 to 29-year age group – Otago with 56.7 percent and Wellington with 53.1 percent. As shown in figure 1.08, these were the two regions with the highest proportion of LGBTIQ+ people overall.

Figure 1.10



This data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Summary

The Introduction to this report discussed the heterogeneity of the LGBTIQ+ population. This chapter has described age and location-based differences observed in this population when compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population. The chapter has also explored the intersection of and variation within the different subgroups of the LGBTIQ+ population.

As later chapters in this report investigate different demographic, social, and economic concepts in relation to this community, it's important to reflect on the trends described in this chapter and how these trends may underlie other more complex concepts. There are several factors to consider that may contribute to differences observed between LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations.

Here are some of the key findings in this chapter:

- The groups that make up the total LGBTIQ+ population (172,383 people) vary in size, with the majority of the LGBTIQ+ population belonging to a sexual minority (144,960 people).
- Roughly 1 in 3 LGBTIQ+ people within the LGBTIQ+ population were bisexual women (57,348 people).
- The LGBTIQ+ population had a younger age distribution, with a median age of 31.0 years, compared with 47.7 years for the non-LGBTIQ+ population.
- The 20 to 24-year age group had the highest counts and proportions of LGBTIQ+ people overall. Of those aged 20 to 24, 11.9 percent were LGBTIQ+, comprising 17.7 percent of the overall LGBTIQ+ population. There was some variation from this for the detailed LGBTIQ+ subpopulations, including for transgender women and gay or lesbian people.
- Transgender and non-binary people were more likely to belong to a sexual minority than non-LGBTIQ+ people, and sexual minorities were more likely to be transgender or non-binary than non-LGBTIQ+ people.
- People born with a variation of sex characteristics were more likely to be transgender or non-binary or belong to a sexual minority than non-LGBTIQ+ people.
- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to live in major urban areas, even when accounting for the younger age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population. In major urban areas, 5.9 percent of the population was LGBTIQ+.
- The Wellington region had the highest proportion of all regional populations who were LGBTIQ+ people (7.6 percent), while the Auckland region had the highest number of LGBTIQ+ people (57,324).
- The age structure of the LGBTIQ+ population varied across regions. More than half of the LGBTIQ+ populations in Wellington and Otago were aged 15 to 29.

2 Ethnicity and culture

In Aotearoa New Zealand, LGBTIQ+ people exist across all ethnicities, cultures, and communities.

As outlined in the introduction to this report, the terms and labels used in official statistics to collect data on LGBTIQ+ communities (such as transgender and non-binary, bisexual, or LGBTIQ+ itself) don't always resonate with everyone, especially across cultural contexts. We acknowledge the importance of non-western, culturally specific concepts of gender, sex, and sexual identity, which exist outside of the frameworks used in New Zealand's official statistics.

In New Zealand, Māori and Pacific identities often span more than one of these domains. 'Takatāpui', for example, is a term that embraces "all Māori who identify with diverse genders, sexualities, and sex characteristics such as whakawāhine, tangata ira tāne, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, non-binary and queer" (Kerekere, 2021). Pacific identities such as fakaleitī and fa'afafine are also understood within their own cultural reference points.

In the 2023 Census, questions on gender and sexual identity offered a place for respondents to specify a term that described their identities. Although we were unable to release data about these terms as official statistics,⁴ this information provides valuable insight and is useful in informing future reviews of the standards that govern data collection in these areas. Takatāpui and fa'afafine were the most common terms people used to describe a non-western culturally specific identity when answering the gender and sexual identity questions.

Research in New Zealand shows that acceptance and support of LGBTIQ+ people and identities also varies widely – not only between ethnic and migrant communities, but also within religious contexts and across generations. (Human Rights Commission, 2020; Human Rights Commission, 2024). When engaging with data about LGBTIQ+ people, it is necessary to apply an intersectional lens to understand some of the complexity in the data. An

⁴ Because write-in responses were optional, the regularity of common terms cannot be treated like a statistical proportion of the population.

intersectional lens recognises that people can experience overlapping systems of discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, religion, and other factors.

This section gives an overview of some of the broader ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds for the LGBTIQ+ population within New Zealand, with a spotlight on the LGBTIQ+ Māori population. We also explore levels of ability to have a conversation about everyday things in te reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language.

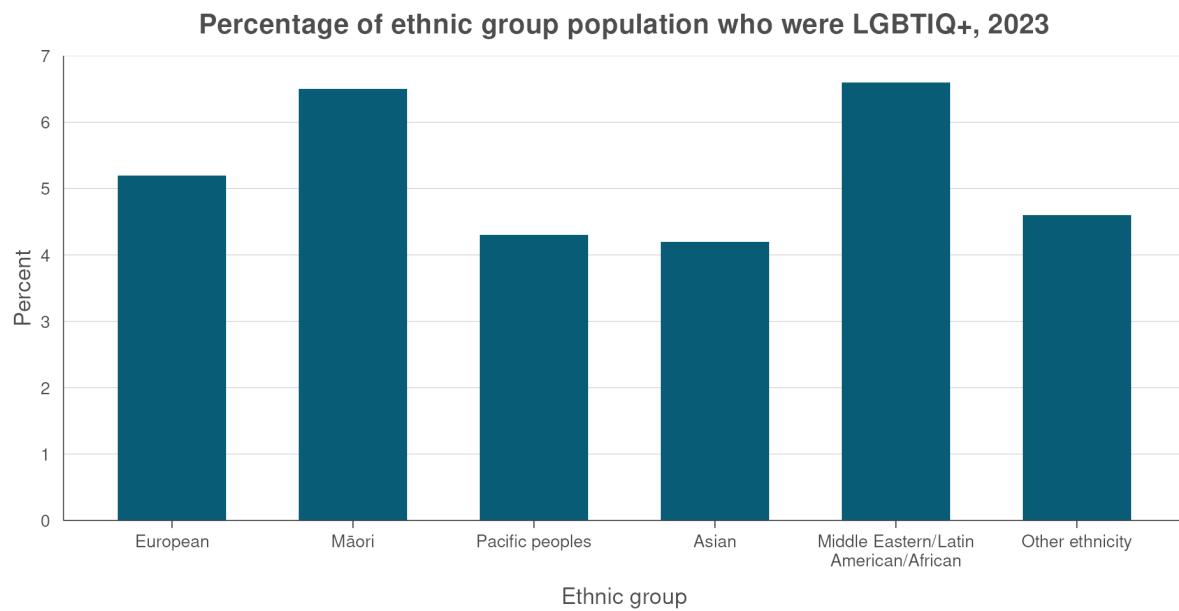
LGBTIQ+ groups across ethnic groups

This section looks at the distribution of LGBTIQ+ people across ethnic groups. For the contextual reasons stated above, it is important to remember that both the LGBTIQ+ and ethnicity questions in the 2023 Census were self-identified measures. Any correlation between ethnicity and LGBTIQ+ status should not be interpreted as an intrinsic characteristic of either group.

Figure 2.01 shows the percentage of each level 1 ethnic group who were LGBTIQ+. The proportion of the population who were LGBTIQ+ varied across ethnic groups, ranging from 4.2 to 6.6 percent for the highest level of the ethnic classification.⁵ The two level 1 ethnic groups with the highest proportion of LGBTIQ+ people were MELAA (Middle Eastern/Latin American/African), at 6.6 percent, and Māori, at 6.5 percent. These overall proportions were impacted by the age structure of the different level 1 ethnic groups, as shown in table 2.01. Of those with a European ethnic group, 5.2 percent were LGBTIQ+, which given their large share of the overall population, means that around 130,000 people, or 75.5 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population belonged to the level 1 European ethnic group.

⁵ For more information on ethnicity classification levels see the [Statistical Standard for ethnicity V1.0.0](#).

Figure 2.01



People may belong to more than one ethnic group. This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Table 2.01 shows that for all level 1 ethnic groups, the proportion of people who were LGBTIQ+ was higher for those aged 15 to 29 years than the other life-cycle age groups. Of those aged 15 to 29 years, the European ethnic group had the highest proportion belonging to the LGBTIQ+ population, at 12.4 percent. The lowest proportion across all level 1 ethnic groups and life-cycle age groups was the European ethnic group aged 65 years and over, with only 1.5 percent belonging to the LGBTIQ+ population.

Table 2.01

Ethnic group	15–29 years	30–64 years	65 years and over	15–29 years	30–64 years	65 years and over
	Count			Percent		
European	65,112	54,999	9,996	12.4	4.2	1.5
Māori	16,335	12,900	1,152	10.3	5.1	2.1
Pacific peoples	5,340	4,359	414	5.8	3.6	1.8
Asian	10,302	13,776	1,599	6.6	3.5	2.6
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	1,746	2,193	105	10.5	5.4	2.9
Other ethnicity	477	1,122	207	8.7	4.3	2.7

Note: People can identify with more than one ethnic group and will be counted in each group they give as a response. The count data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over. The percent data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Table 2.02 shows some further differences in the proportion of LGBTIQ+ people within the more detailed level 2 groups of the ethnicity classification. Within Pacific peoples, Samoan (4.2 percent) and Tongan (3.7 percent) had lower proportions of their population who were LGBTIQ+. Within the Asian ethnic group, a much lower proportion of the Indian ethnic group (2.7 percent) were LGBTIQ+, which was also the lowest proportion overall. Within the MELAA ethnic group, the Latin American category had the highest proportion of the ethnic group populations who were LGBTIQ+, at 8.4 percent.

Proportions of LGBTIQ+ people for detailed ethnic groups can also be viewed in the [Place and ethnic group summaries tool](#).

Table 2.02

Percent of level 2 ethnic group population who were LGBTIQ+, 2023	
Level 2 ethnic group	Percent
European ndf	6.3
New Zealand European	5.1
Other European	6.8
Māori	6.5
Pacific peoples ndf	5.8
Samoan	4.2
Cook Islands Māori	5.6
Tongan	3.7
Niuean	5.3
Tokelauan	4.8
Fijian	4.7
Other Pacific peoples	5.3
Asian ndf	4.2
Southeast Asian	5.0
Chinese	5.4
Indian	2.7
Other Asian	4.2
Middle Eastern	5.3
Latin American	8.4
African	5.5
Other ethnicity	4.6

Note: People can identify with more than one ethnic group and will be counted in each group they give as a response.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

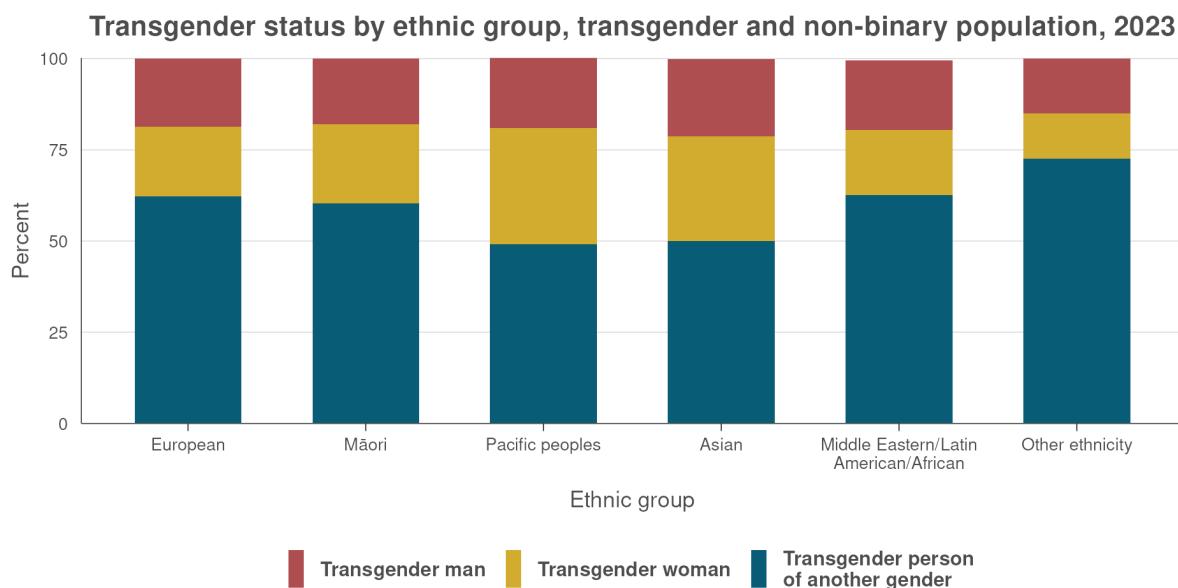
Acronyms: nfd stands for not further defined

Source: Stats NZ census

Figure 2.02 shows the percentage breakdowns of transgender status for transgender and non-binary people in each level 1 ethnic group. We have excluded breakdowns for cisgender people to avoid obscuring differences for these groups of interest across ethnic groups.

Differences were observed for the distribution of transgender and non-binary people within level 1 ethnic groups, with higher proportions of transgender women amongst Pacific peoples (31.9 percent) and the Asian ethnic group (28.7 percent). This proportional difference was observed alongside a corresponding lower proportion of transgender people of another gender for the Pacific peoples and Asian level 1 ethnic groups.

Figure 2.02



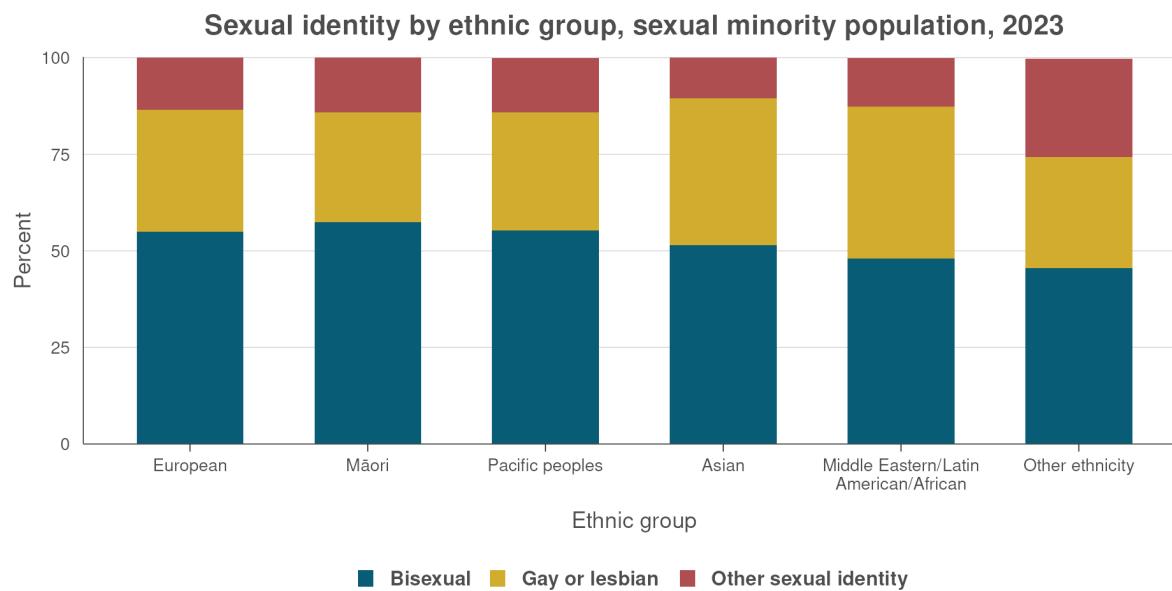
People may belong to more than one ethnic group. This data is for the transgender and non-binary census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Figure 2.03 shows the percentage breakdowns of sexual identity for people with a minority sexual identity in each level 1 ethnic group. We have excluded heterosexual or straight to avoid obscuring differences for these groups of interest across ethnic groups. Small differences can be observed for the proportions of sexual minority groups by level 1 ethnic groups. The proportion of people who were gay or lesbian was the highest for the

MELAA ethnic group, with 39.4 percent. The proportion of bisexual people was the highest for the Māori ethnic group, with 57.5 percent, and the proportion of other sexual identities was the highest in the 'Other ethnicity' ethnic group, at 25.5 percent.

Figure 2.03



People may belong to more than one ethnic group. This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over with minority sexual identities.

Stats NZ census

Languages spoken

In this section, we look at the rate at which people could speak te reo Māori and use New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), the two official languages in law alongside the de facto official language of English. There are many other languages spoken in New Zealand, and while exploration of this distribution for LGBTIQ+ people was out of scope of this report, we welcome research and data requests to explore this further. We focus on these two languages because of the concerted policy and planning efforts surrounding them in recent years, and the interest in seeing how these efforts have been reflected in LGBTIQ+ communities and spaces.

In the 2023 Census, 5.3 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population indicated they could speak te reo Māori, compared with 3.3 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population. The younger age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population, as well as the higher proportion of people belonging to the Māori ethnic group within the LGBTIQ+ population could be contributing factors to this difference.

These findings are supported by the GSS, which showed that a higher proportion of LGBT+ people could speak some level of te reo Māori in day-to-day conversation, with 71.7 percent of LGBT+ able to speak at least a few words or phrases of te reo Māori, compared with 60.3 percent of non-LGBT+ people. The GSS also showed that 66.4 percent of LGBT+ people agreed or strongly agreed that the Government should encourage and support use of te reo Māori, compared with 53.1 percent of non-LGBT+.

Similarly, 2023 Census data indicates a difference between the proportion of LGBTIQ+ people who can hold an everyday conversation in New Zealand Sign Language (1.3 percent), compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population (0.5 percent). Factors to consider here could include the difference in disability status for the LGBTIQ+ population within the 2023 Census dataset, and the degree to which LGBTIQ+ people reported caring for disabled people in their homes, which are covered later in this report.

LGBTIQ+ Māori

Note that the following information makes use of ethnic group data, a measure of self-identified cultural affiliation, which is different from Māori descent data.⁶ The LGBTIQ+ Māori population, like the overall LGBTIQ+ population within the 2023 Census dataset, was only comprised of people who responded to the individual census forms. Given this, the LGBTIQ+ Māori ethnic group population reported here may differ from the overall Māori ethnic group population from the 2023 Census.

We refrain from referring to this population as the ‘takatāpui’ population. We are aware that not all people who belong to both the LGBTIQ+ population and the Māori ethnic group resonate with this term, and we also acknowledge that the statistical standards do not include takatāpui as a distinct category. Where ‘takatāpui’ was given as a written response to the gender question, it was coded to the ‘another gender’ and ‘transgender person of another gender’ categories and was represented in the data about minority genders. When it was given as a written response to the sexual identity question, it was coded to ‘other sexual identity’ and was represented in the data about minority sexual identities. The

⁶ Māori descent refers to whether a person is biologically descended from Māori. Māori ethnic group refers to a person’s self-identified cultural affiliation to the Māori ethnic group. For more information, see [Māori and iwi population concepts in the 2023 Census](#).

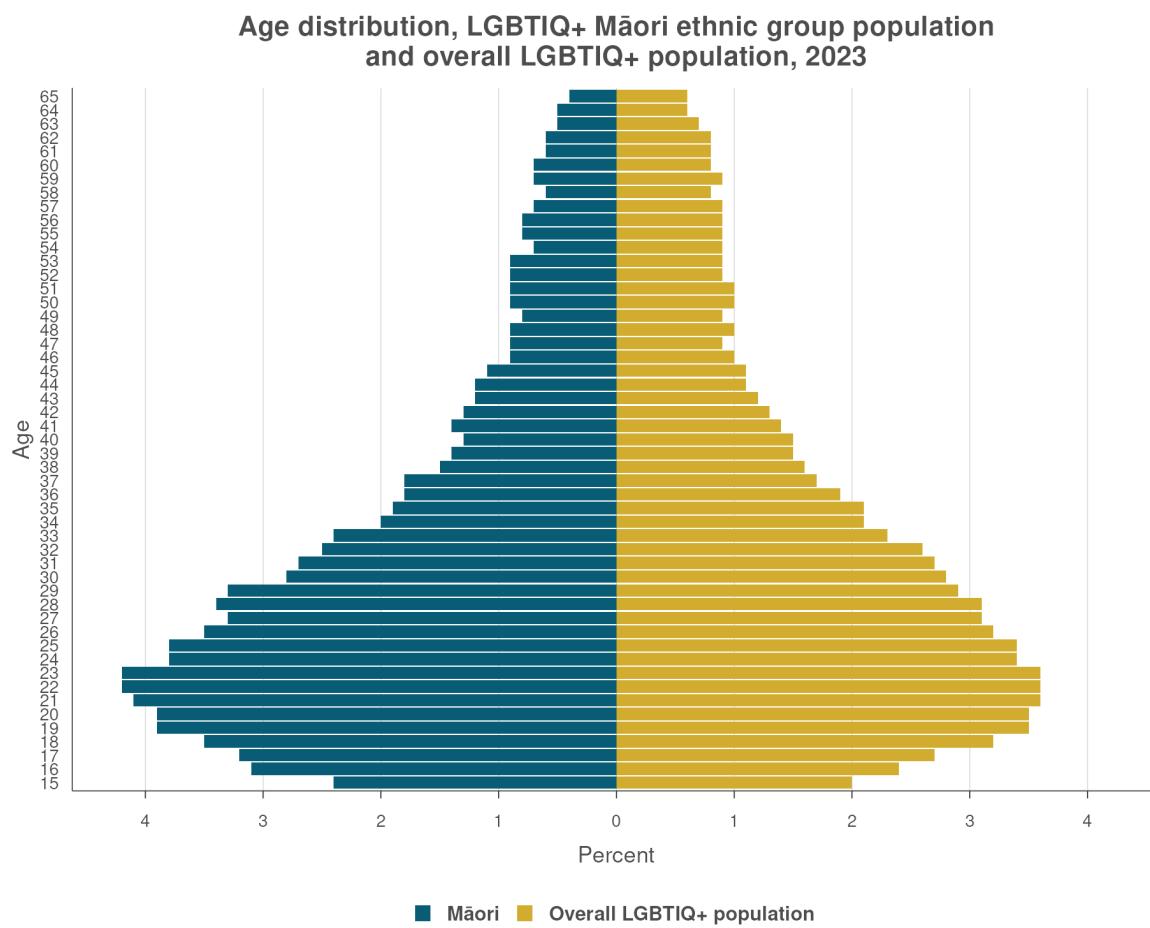
bilingual individual form used ‘he takatāpui (arā, he tāne moe tāne, he more wahine moe wahine rānei)’ as the translated term for gay or lesbian on the sexual identity question.

People who ticked this option would be counted as gay or lesbian in the output data.

For more data on LGBTIQ+ Māori, including iwi Māori data, and LGBTIQ+ people of Māori descent, see publications by [Te Whata](#).

Figure 2.04 compares the age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ Māori population with the overall LGBTIQ+ population. The age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ Māori ethnic group is similar to the overall LGBTIQ+ population in that there is a clear younger skew, however LGBTIQ+ Māori were more strongly concentrated in younger ages. For both Māori and the overall LGBTIQ+ population, the peak is between 21 and 23 years old. For the overall LGBTIQ+ population, the same proportion of the population were 21, 22, and 23 years old (3.6 percent each). A larger proportion of the LGBTIQ+ Māori population were 21 to 23 years old; 22 and 23-year-olds comprised 4.2 percent of the population each, and 21-year-olds were 4.1 percent of the LGBTIQ+ Māori population. This is likely due to the Māori population generally being younger compared with the overall population.

Figure 2.04



The age distribution was calculated including people over 65. The y-axis does not display over 65 to reduce the size of the graph. This data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in the Māori ethnic group and for the overall LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Table 2.03 shows that similarly to the general population, Māori had much larger proportions of people with minority sexual identities in the transgender and non-binary groups than in the cisgender group. There were also much larger proportions of transgender and non-binary people in the sexual minority groups than in the heterosexual or straight group. In general, these breakdowns were highly comparable with those provided for the general population in [Chapter 1: Population structure](#).

Table 2.03

Cisgender and transgender status by sexual identity, Māori ethnic group population, 2023					
Cisgender and transgender status	Heterosexual or straight	Gay or lesbian	Bisexual	Other sexual identity	Prefer not to say
	Percent				
Cisgender	86.7	1.6	3.4	0.7	7.6

Cisgender man	90.6	1.8	1.2	0.4	6
Cisgender woman	83.4	1.5	5.2	0.9	9
Transgender and non-binary	30.2	11.9	18.1	22.1	17.8
Transgender man	52.7	8.8	15.1	8.4	15.5
Transgender woman	56.7	11.2	10.1	5.4	16.6
Transgender person of another gender	14.8	13	21.7	31.7	18.8
Note: This data is for the Māori ethnic group census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.					
Source: Stats NZ census					

Table 2.04 shows that for people within the Māori ethnic group, those who were LGBTIQ+ were slightly more likely to speak te reo Māori than non-LGBTIQ+.

Table 2.04

Percentage of Māori ethnic group population who can speak te reo Māori, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023	
LGBTIQ+ status	Percent
LGBTIQ+	22.3
Not LGBTIQ+	20.9
Note: This data is for the Māori ethnic group census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.	
Source: Stats NZ census	

Birthplace

Table 2.05 below shows that 30.0 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population in the 2023 Census was born overseas, compared with 33.5 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population being born overseas. Of the overseas-born population, 4.4 percent were LGBTIQ+, compared with 5.1 percent for the NZ-born population.

Table 2.05

Birthplace	Birthplace (born overseas indicator) and LGBTIQ+ status, 2023						
	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	
							Count
NZ born	120,546	2,233,008	70.0	66.5	5.1	94.9	Percent (of LGBTIQ+ status)
							Percent (of birthplace)

Overseas born	51,669	1,123,866	30.0	33.5	4.4	95.6
Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.						
Source: Stats NZ census						

As table 2.06 shows, across the broad geographic regions, there were differences for the overseas-born population:

- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be born in Australia compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people (8.3 percent compared with 4.8 percent).
- LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to be born in the Pacific Islands compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people (6.9 percent compared with 12.8 percent).
- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be born in North America compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people (7.4 percent compared with 2.9 percent).
- LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to be born in Asia compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people (37.3 percent compared with 41.0 percent)

Table 2.06

Birthplace	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Count		Percent	
Australia	4,266	53,880	8.3	4.8
Pacific Islands	3,552	143,433	6.9	12.8
United Kingdom and Ireland	10,860	225,675	21.0	20.1
Europe (excluding United Kingdom and Ireland)	3,516	70,224	6.8	6.2
North America	3,807	32,925	7.4	2.9
Asia	19,269	460,509	37.3	41.0
Middle East and Africa	4,431	112,272	8.6	10.0
Other	1,968	24,948	3.8	2.2

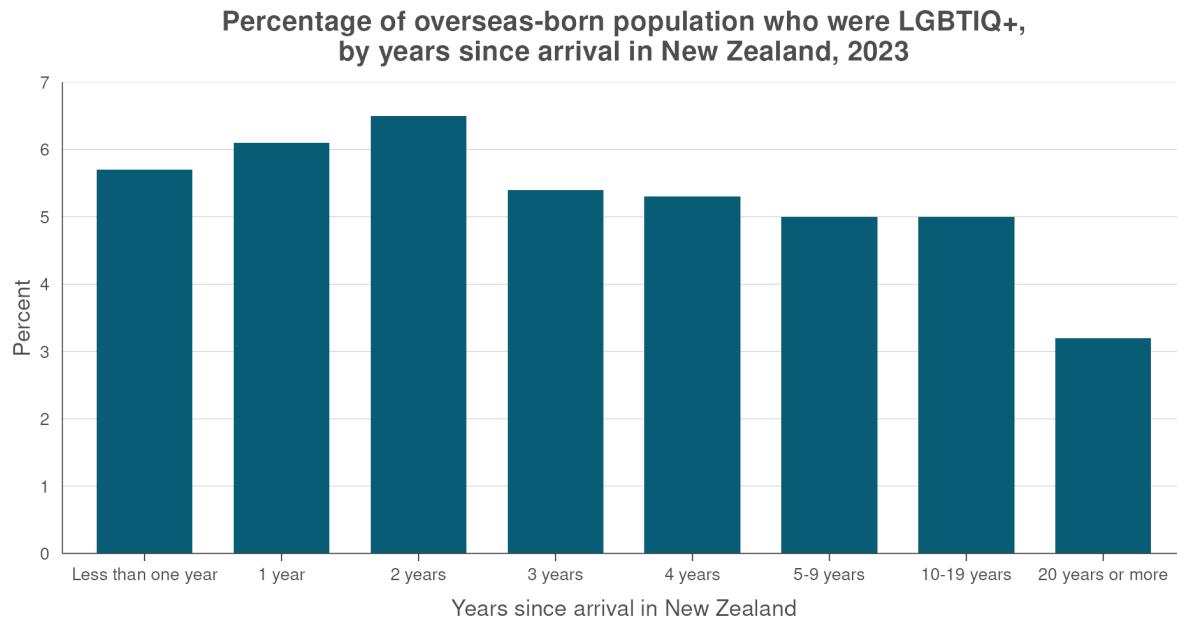
Note: This data is for the overseas-born census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Figure 2.05 shows the percentage of people born overseas who were LGBTIQ+, by years since arrival in New Zealand. This graph indicates that a relatively stable proportion of more recent migrants to New Zealand belonged to the LGBTIQ+ population. For people who arrived in New Zealand 0 to 19 years before the 2023 Census, the proportion of the

population who were LGBTIQ+ ranged from 5.0 percent to 6.5 percent. People who arrived two years before the 2023 Census were most likely to be LGBTIQ+, at 6.5 percent. People who arrived more than 19 years before the 2023 Census were the least likely to be LGBTIQ+, at 3.2 percent.

Figure 2.05



This data is for the overseas-born census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Religion

Religious affiliation and belief have played a critical role in shaping societal attitudes about LGBTIQ+ identities. Many LGBTIQ+ people have a complex relationship with faith, sometimes involving estrangement from family, community, or both (Human Rights Commission, 2024; Yee et al, 2025). This can have lasting impacts on mental health, a sense of belonging, and spiritual wellbeing (Human Rights Commission, 2024). Yet, there is a growing movement to reconcile LGBTIQ+ identities and doctrine within faith communities.

This section briefly explores the religious identities of LGBTIQ+ people. It includes breakdowns by ethnic group, noting that religious affiliation can often be strongly influenced by ethnicity and culture.

Across life-cycle age groups, we can see differences in religious affiliation for the LGBTIQ+ groups of transgender and non-binary people, and sexual minorities, compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people (table 2.07).

For those aged 15 to 29 years, transgender and non-binary people and people with minority sexual identities were less likely to have a religious affiliation compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people. In 2023, 70.9 percent of transgender and non-binary people and 77.4 percent of sexual minorities aged 15 to 29 years had no religion, compared with 57.8 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people in the same age group. For those aged 30 to 64 and 65 and over, sexual minorities were most likely to have no religion, and transgender and non-binary people were similar to the non-LGBTIQ+ population. Transgender and non-binary people were most likely to object to answering across all age groups compared with sexual minorities and non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Table 2.07

Religious affiliation, by life-cycle age group, selected LGBTIQ+ populations and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023				
Life-cycle age group	Religious affiliation	Transgender and non-binary	Minority sexual identity	Not LGBTIQ+
		Percent		
15–29 years	No religion	70.9	77.4	57.8
	Buddhism	0.8	0.8	0.9
	Christian	8.2	9.2	24.8
	Hinduism	0.7	0.6	3.3
	Islam	0.6	0.4	1.9
	Judaism	0.5	0.3	0.1
	Māori religions, beliefs, and philosophies	0.8	0.8	1.0
	Spiritualism and new-age religions	4.9	2.3	0.2
	Other religions, beliefs, and philosophies	4.5	3.4	2.6
	Object to answering	8.5	5.0	7.4
30–64 years	No religion	50.7	66.9	50.8
	Buddhism	1.7	1.7	1.4
	Christian	20.2	17.2	31.3
	Hinduism	2.3	1.1	3.6
	Islam	1.4	0.5	1.5
	Judaism	0.3	0.3	0.1
	Māori religions, beliefs, and philosophies	1.4	1.4	1.0
	Spiritualism and new age religions	3.2	2.7	0.4
	Other religions, beliefs, and philosophies	5.1	3.2	2.3
	Object to answering	14.2	5.6	7.8
65 years and over	No religion	34.0	49.5	35.0
	Buddhism	1.2	2.0	0.8

Christian	41.5	35.6	50.7
Hinduism	1.6	1.0	1.3
Islam	0.9	0.3	0.4
Judaism	c	0.5	0.1
Māori religions, beliefs, and philosophies	0.9	0.8	0.7
Spiritualism and new-age religions	0.5	1.6	0.3
Other religions, beliefs, and philosophies	1.3	1.4	0.7
Object to answering	18.3	7.6	9.9

Note: People may identify with multiple religions and will be counted within each religious affiliation they give as a response. This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Symbols: (c) confidential

Source: Stats NZ census

Christian religions were the most common for people to affiliate with across all age groups for transgender and non-binary people, minority sexual identities, and non-LGBTIQ+ people. For 15 to 29-year-olds, the proportion of transgender and non-binary and sexual minorities who affiliated with Christian religions was less than half that of the non-LGBTIQ+ population (8.2 percent and 9.2 percent, respectively, compared with 24.8 percent). Despite being less likely to affiliate with a religion overall, a higher proportion of transgender and non-binary people and sexual minorities affiliated with spiritualism and new age religions, and other religions, beliefs and philosophies, compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people. For transgender and non-binary people under 65 this was especially pronounced, with 4.9 percent of 15 to 29-year-olds and 3.2 percent of 30 to 64-year-olds affiliated with spiritualism and new age religions, compared with 0.2 percent and 0.4 percent of the respective age groups for non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Across the level 1 ethnic groups, there were differences in religious affiliation for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people, shown in table 2.08. LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to have a religious affiliation compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people across all level 1 ethnic groups. As affiliating with a religion is less common for younger age groups, the younger age structure of the LGBTIQ+ population across all level 1 ethnic groups likely contributes to this difference. European and Māori LGBTIQ+ people were most likely to affiliate with no religion, compared with the other ethnic groups. LGBTIQ+ Pacific peoples were more likely to affiliate with a Christian religion (40.5 percent), compared with the other LGBTIQ+ people across level 1 ethnic groups. This is consistent with the higher levels of Christian religious

affiliation for the Pacific peoples ethnic group overall (65.2 percent for non-LGBTIQ+ Pacific people).

Table 2.08

Religious affiliation by ethnic group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023							
Religious affiliation	LGBTIQ+ status	European	Māori	Pacific peoples	Asian	MELAA	Other ethnicity
		Percent					
No religion	LGBTIQ+	73.9	67.2	43.9	49.6	57.1	47.8
	Not LGBTIQ+	56.2	54.4	21.9	32.1	29.9	37.3
Buddhism	LGBTIQ+	0.6	0.4	0.2	7.2	0.9	1.0
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.2	0.1	0.1	6.1	0.3	0.5
Christian	LGBTIQ+	13.1	13.9	40.5	21.2	19.7	17.8
	Not LGBTIQ+	33.2	26.7	65.2	28.1	39.4	33.9
Hinduism	LGBTIQ+	0.1	0.1	0.7	8.4	0.1	0.3
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.1	0.1	0.7	16.8	0.1	0.8
Islam	LGBTIQ+	0.1	0.2	0.4	3.4	7.3	0.8
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.1	0.1	0.6	5.5	18.7	1.7
Judaism	LGBTIQ+	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	3.7	0.3
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.1
Māori religions, beliefs and philosophies	LGBTIQ+	0.4	5.6	1.5	0.1	c	0.5
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.3	6.9	0.7	0.0	0.1	0.2
Spiritualism and new age religions	LGBTIQ+	2.6	2.1	1.2	0.6	2.7	5.0
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.7	1.1
Other religions, beliefs and philosophies	LGBTIQ+	3.2	2.7	2.1	4.9	3.4	8.1
	Not LGBTIQ+	1.1	1.0	0.7	6.6	1.9	3.6
Object to answering	LGBTIQ+	6.0	8.3	9.8	4.9	5.6	18.9
	Not LGBTIQ+	8.5	10.7	10.1	4.8	7.6	20.9

Note: People may identify with multiple religions and will be counted within each religious affiliation they give as a response. People can identify with more than one ethnic group and will be counted in each group they give as a response. This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Acronyms: MELAA is Middle Eastern/Latin American/African

Symbols: (c) confidential

Source: Stats NZ census

Summary

This chapter has explored how LGBTIQ+ status intersects with other demographic concepts and identities. As stated earlier, we are aware of the limitations of the 2023 Census questions, as well as the statistical and data standards themselves in capturing the full range

of gender and sexual diversity. This is salient in the case of culturally specific, non-western, concepts of gender, sex, and sexuality.

This chapter builds on [Chapter 1: Population structure](#) to provide a grounding for later chapters where we disaggregate other social outcomes (for instance, education and income) by both LGBTIQ+ status and other demographic factors.

Here are some key findings in this chapter:

- The proportion of the population who were LGBTIQ+ varied across ethnic groups, ranging from 4.2 to 6.6 percent for the highest level of the ethnic classification. The two level 1 ethnic groups with the highest proportion of LGBTIQ+ people were MELAA (Middle Eastern/Latin American/African), at 6.6 percent, and Māori, at 6.5 percent.
- 5.2 percent of those with a European ethnic group were LGBTIQ+, which, given their large share of the overall population, means that around 130,000 people, or 75.5 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population, belonged to the level 1 European ethnic group.
- 5.3 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population indicated they could speak te reo Māori in the 2023 Census, compared with 3.3 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population.
- LGBTIQ+ people were also able to hold an everyday conversation in New Zealand Sign Language at a higher proportion (1.3 percent), compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population (0.5 percent).
- The age distribution of the Māori ethnic group LGBTIQ+ population was similar to the overall LGBTIQ+ population, although slightly younger.
- Of all people born overseas, LGBTIQ+ people were slightly over-represented in those born in Australia and North America, and slightly under-represented in those born in Asia and the Pacific Islands.
- Transgender and non-binary people, and people within a sexual minority, were less likely to have affiliation with a religion than non-LGBTIQ+ people across all life-cycle age groups.
- Transgender and non-binary people, and people within a sexual minority, were less likely to be Christian than non-LGBTIQ+ people across all life-cycle age groups, however this was still the largest religious group.

- Transgender and nonbinary people, and people with a sexual minority were more likely to have affiliation with spiritualism and new age religions, and other religions, beliefs and philosophies, compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people across all life-cycle age groups.
- Transgender and non-binary people were the most likely to object to answering the religious affiliation question, compared with sexual minorities and non-LGBTIQ+ people across all life-cycle age groups.
- Christianity was the largest religious group across all level 1 ethnic groups for both the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people. However, LGBTIQ+ people had lower levels of Christian religion than non-LGBTIQ+ people across all level 1 ethnic groups.

3 Disability and activity limitations

This section focuses on disability and activity limitations for the LGBTIQ+ population using data from the 2023 Census. The 2023 Census collected information about disability (referred to as 'Activity limitations') using the [Washington Group Short Set on Functioning \(WGSS\)](#).

This set of questions asks about difficulty experienced with the following activities:

- seeing (even if wearing glasses)
- hearing (even if using a hearing aid)
- walking or climbing stairs
- remembering or concentrating
- washing all over or dressing
- communicating in usual language.

A person was considered disabled in the 2023 Census if they had a lot of difficulty with or could not do at least one of these activities. In the census, having a lot of difficulty with or being unable to do an activity is referred to as having an 'activity limitation'. A person can have more than one activity limitation.

The WGSS does not include all disabled people. For example, it does not ask directly about difficulties related to mental health, socialising, pain, fatigue, learning, or intellectual function. It is designed to be a short set of questions that could be included in surveys such as a census that collect a range of information. The census should not be used to estimate disability prevalence because it undercounts the disabled population.

In this chapter, 'disability' and 'disabled people' are used to refer to the census 'disabled' group, rather than all disabled people.

The Household Disability Survey (HDS) is currently the only official source of disability prevalence estimates for Aotearoa New Zealand. The HDS also produces data for LGBTIQ+

populations, and released insights from this data in early 2025 (see [Disability statistics: 2023](#)).

The HDS is different from the census in two key ways: it is a sample survey, and it aims to identify all disabled people. Because of this aim, the HDS uses a much longer question set than the WGSS used in 2023 Census; the 2023 HDS used a question set based on the Washington Group Extended Set of questions.

The HDS found that 29 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population was disabled, and this rose to 31 percent after age-adjustment (Stats NZ, 2025a).

However, because the HDS is a sample survey, estimates are accompanied by sample errors and estimates for small population groups, such as the disabled LGBTIQ+ population, are often unreliable. As such, the LGBTIQ+ population was sometimes unable to be disaggregated in analysis using data from the HDS. Because of its large scale, the census does not have the same limitations as a sample survey. For this reason, data from the census was used in this chapter to provide insights about disability and activity limitations for the LGBTIQ+ population.

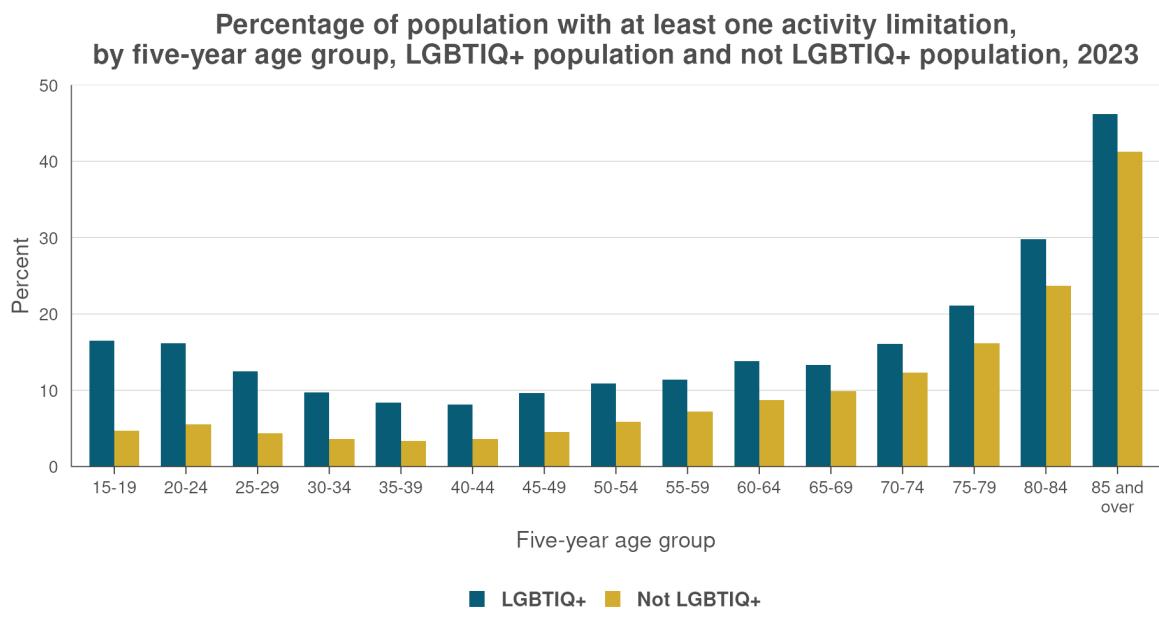
Disability status

Similarly to findings in the HDS, data from the 2023 Census indicates the LGBTIQ+ population were more likely to be disabled, compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population. For the LGBTIQ+ population, 13.0 percent had at least one activity limitation in the 2023 Census data, compared with 7.8 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population. For the overall population, the proportion of people who were disabled increased as age increased. However, the LGBTIQ+ population was, on average, much younger than the non-LGBTIQ+ population. This suggests that young LGBTIQ+ people were substantially more likely to be disabled than their non-LGBTIQ+ counterparts.

Figure 3.01 shows the percentage of each five-year age group that had at least one activity limitation for the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations. The graph shows the LGBTIQ+ population was more likely to be disabled than the non-LGBTIQ+ population across all age groups. For both LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations, older age groups were more likely

to be disabled, and this increased steadily from 40 years on. The difference between the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ population was most pronounced for the younger groups of people, aged 15 to 19 years (16.5 percent vs 4.7 percent), 20 to 24 years (16.2 percent vs 5.5 percent), and 25 to 29 years (12.5 percent vs 4.4 percent). The differences in these younger age groups were notable given that these age groups comprised a higher proportion of the LGBTIQ+ population than the non-LGBTIQ+, or overall population.

Figure 3.01

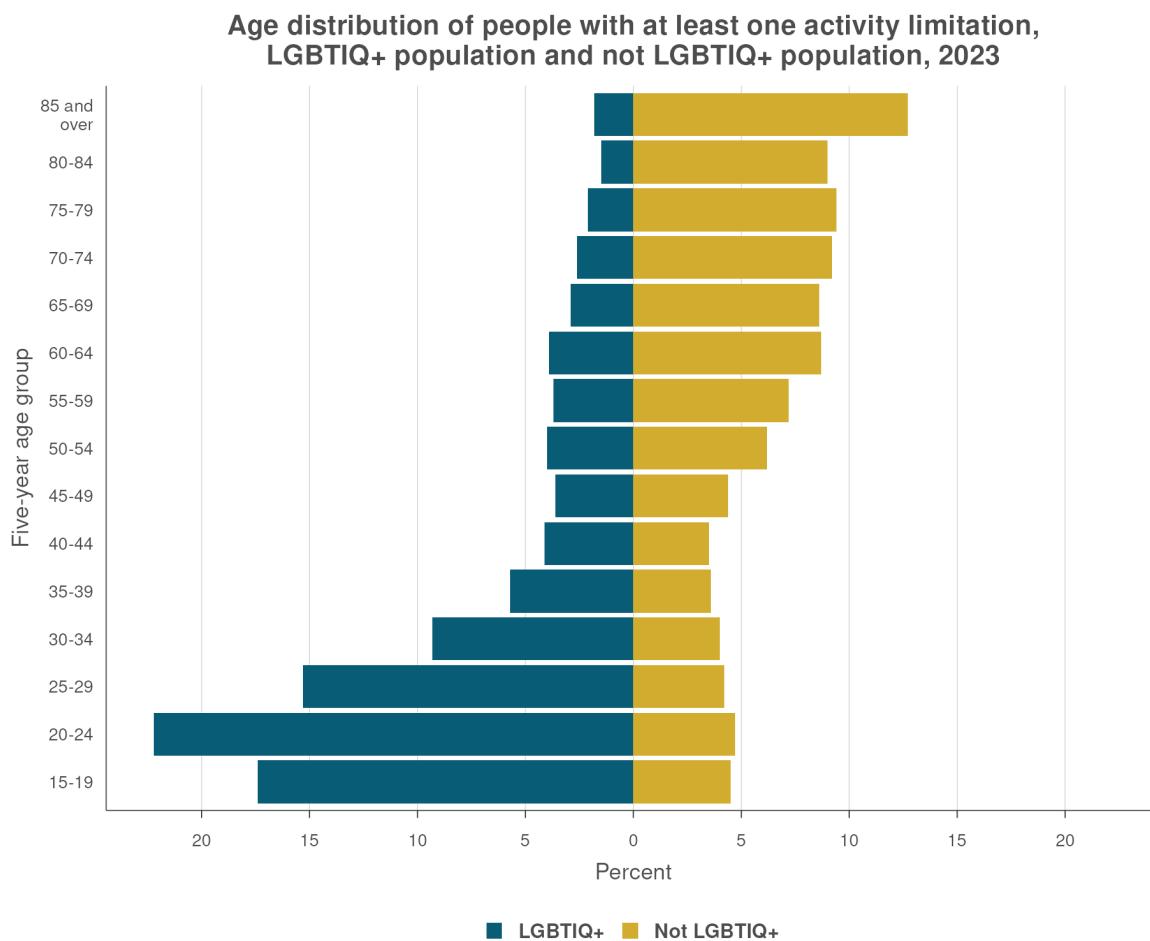


Stats NZ census

People with at least one activity limitation are classified as disabled in the 2023 Census.
This is not an official disability rate, refer to the 2023 Household Disability Survey for disability prevalence estimates.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Figure 3.02 shows the different age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ disabled population, compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ disabled population. The LGBTIQ+ disabled population is generally much younger than the non-LGBTIQ+ disabled population, with 22.2 percent of the LGBTIQ+ disabled population aged 20 to 24 years, compared with 4.7 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ disabled population.

Figure 3.02



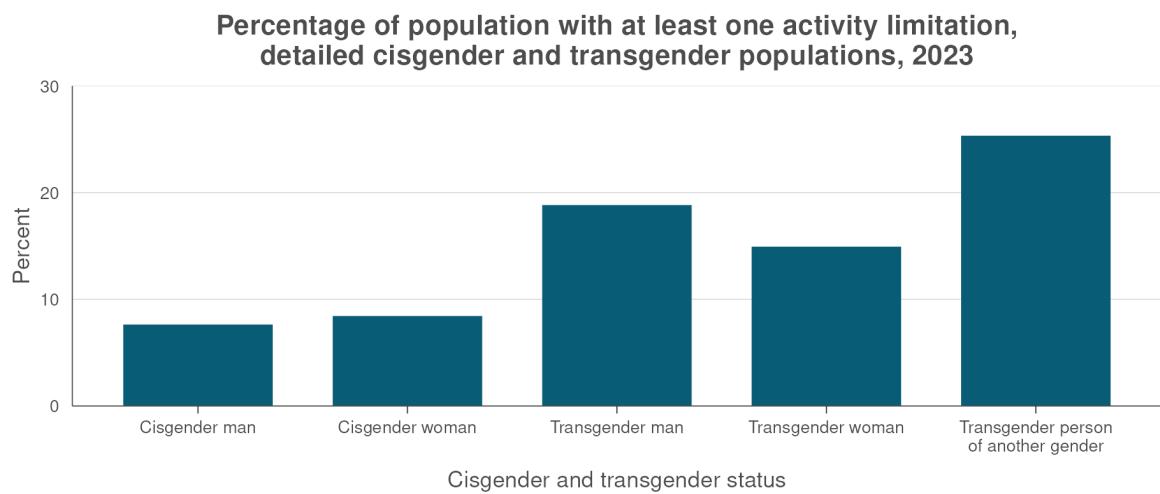
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over who had at least one activity limitation

Stats NZ census

Figure 3.03 shows the percentage of the detailed cisgender and transgender and non-binary populations who had at least one activity limitation. All transgender and non-binary groups were more likely to be disabled compared with cisgender men and women, with the highest proportion being for transgender people of another gender at 25.2 percent.

As covered in [1: Population structure](#), this group had a younger age profile than both the overall population as well as other populations within the broader LGBTIQ+ population, further highlighting the relationship between age and disability for LGBTIQ+ people.

Figure 3.03



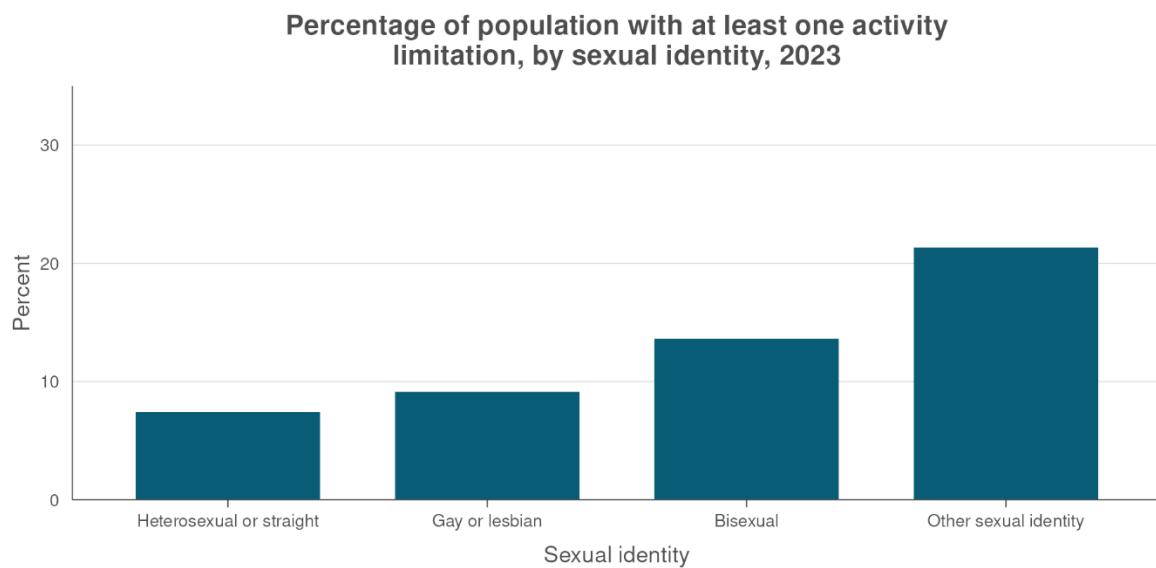
People with at least one activity limitation are classified as disabled in the 2023 Census.
This is not an official disability rate, refer to the 2023 Household Disability Survey for disability prevalence estimates.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Figure 3.04 shows that people with minority sexual identities were more likely to be disabled compared with heterosexual or straight individuals, with the highest proportion for the other sexual identity group at 21.2 percent.

As identified in [1: Population structure](#), the ‘other sexual identity’ group also had a relatively high level of overlap with the transgender people of another gender group, and an overall younger age structure than the non-LGBTIQ+ and the overall LGBTIQ+ population. Given the higher levels of disability for younger LGBTIQ+ people, and transgender people of another gender, the higher levels of disability for the ‘other sexual identity’ group was in line with these trends.

Figure 3.04



People with at least one activity limitation are classified as disabled in the 2023 Census.
This is not an official disability rate, refer to the 2023 Household Disability Survey for disability prevalence estimates.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Table 3.01 shows that people born with a variation of sex characteristics were more likely to be disabled (11.6 percent) than those not born with a variation of sex characteristics (7.6 percent).

Table 3.01

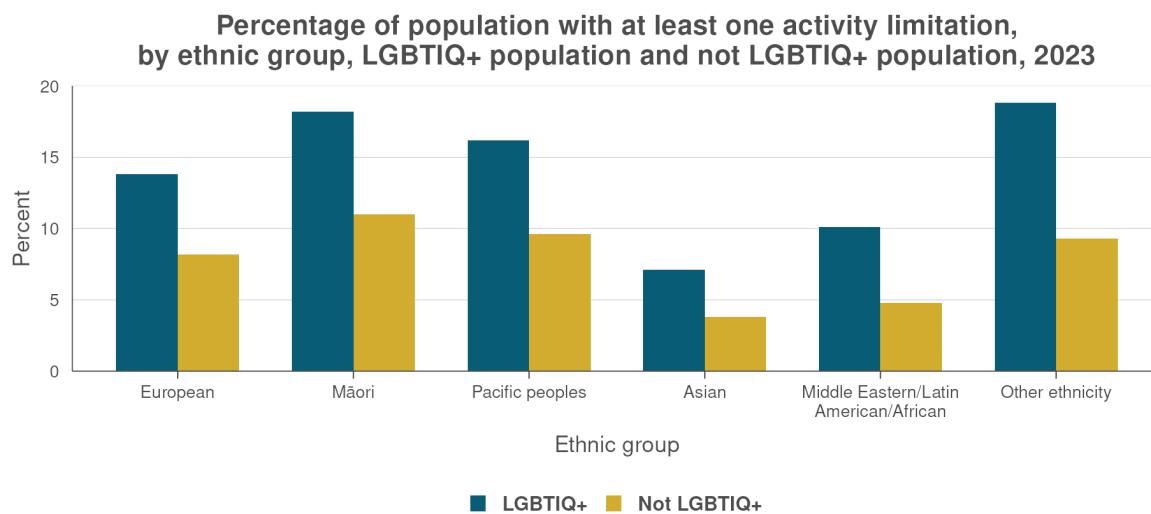
Disability status by variations of sex characteristics, 2023		
Variations of sex characteristics	Not disabled	Disabled
	Percent	
Born with a variation of sex characteristics	88.4	11.6
Not born with a variation of sex characteristics	92.4	7.6

Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Figure 3.05 shows for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people in each level 1 ethnic group, the percentage who have at least one activity limitation. The graph shows that within each level 1 ethnic group, the LGBTIQ+ population was more likely to be disabled than the non-LGBTIQ+ population. For the LGBTIQ+ population, the Māori ethnic group (18.2 percent) and other ethnicity (18.8 percent) were most likely to be disabled, while the Asian ethnic group was least likely, at 7.1 percent.

Figure 3.05



People with at least one activity limitation are classified as disabled in the 2023 Census. This is not an official disability rate, refer to the 2023 Household Disability Survey for disability prevalence estimates. People may belong to more than one ethnic group. This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over

Stats NZ census

Activity limitations

Data from the 2023 Census was also available for each of the activity limitations that were used to determine a person's disability status.

It should be noted that these measures do not provide information as to the cause of difficulty, and there may be complex drivers involved in these increased levels of difficulty. For example, the washing or dressing question is expected to capture some people with physical impairments as well as some people with neurological disorders, intellectual and cognitive disabilities, or mental health conditions. Because these were subjective self-reported measures, they may also be affected by willingness to self-report, and differences in what someone considers difficult.

Table 3.02 shows, for each activity, the proportion of people who reported each level of difficulty, for the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations. People who reported 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' for one or more activity are included within the census disabled population. The proportion of people in the LGBTIQ+ population who had any level of difficulty (as in, 'some difficulty' or higher) with seeing, remembering or concentrating, and communicating was higher than the proportion of the non-LGBTIQ+ population with any level of difficulty. Difficulty with these three activities is often associated with ageing;

however, the LGBTIQ+ population had a younger age structure than the non-LGBTIQ+ population. This might indicate differences in the interpretation of the question for the LGBTIQ+ population reporting difficulty with these activities, compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population.

Of all six activities, remembering or concentrating had the largest difference between the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations. A much lower proportion of the LGBTIQ+ population reported no difficulty remembering or concentrating, at 62.8 percent, compared with 80.3 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population – a difference of 17.5 percentage points. Communicating and seeing had the next largest differences:

- 89.9 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population reported no difficulty communicating, compared with 94.3 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population – a difference of 4.4 percentage points.
- 74.5 percent of the LGBTIQ+ population reported no difficulty seeing, compared with 78.8 percent of the non-LGBTIQ+ population – a difference of 4.3 percentage points.

Table 3.02

Activity	LGBTIQ+ status	No difficulty	Some difficulty	A lot of difficulty	Cannot do at all
		Percent			
Difficulty seeing	LGBTIQ+	74.5	22.9	2.3	0.2
	Not LGBTIQ+	78.8	19.2	1.8	0.2
Difficulty hearing	LGBTIQ+	85.5	12.9	1.4	0.2
	Not LGBTIQ+	84.1	14.0	1.8	0.2
Difficulty walking or climbing stairs	LGBTIQ+	85.1	12.1	2.5	0.4
	Not LGBTIQ+	83.6	12.7	3.1	0.6
Difficulty remembering or concentrating	LGBTIQ+	62.8	28.8	8.0	0.3
	Not LGBTIQ+	80.3	17.3	2.3	0.2
Difficulty washing all over or dressing	LGBTIQ+	94.0	4.8	0.9	0.3
	Not LGBTIQ+	94.6	4.2	0.8	0.4
Difficulty communicating	LGBTIQ+	89.9	8.7	1.3	0.2
	Not LGBTIQ+	94.3	4.8	0.8	0.2
<p>Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.</p> <p>Source: Stats NZ census</p>					

Difficulty remembering or concentrating

Given the higher proportions of difficulty remembering or concentrating for LGBTIQ+ people compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people, we look at this in more detail.

Table 3.03 shows the proportion of people reporting each level of difficulty remembering or concentrating by sexual identity and cisgender and transgender status. People with another sexual identity were more likely to report difficulties with remembering or concentrating than people who were heterosexual or straight, gay or lesbian, or bisexual. This was true for all three levels of difficulty: some difficulty, a lot of difficulty, and cannot do at all. Gay or lesbian people were the least likely sexual minority to report difficulty remembering or concentrating, although still more likely than heterosexual or straight people.

Transgender and non-binary people were more likely to report difficulty concentrating or remembering than cisgender people. This was true for all three levels of difficulty and for all transgender and non-binary groups. Transgender people of another gender were the most likely to report difficulty, with only 43.4 percent reporting no difficulty.

Table 3.03

Sexual identity and cisgender and transgender status	No difficulty	Some difficulty	A lot of difficulty	Cannot do at all
	Percent			
Heterosexual or straight	80.7	17.0	2.1	0.2
Gay or lesbian	73.2	22.0	4.7	0.2
Bisexual	56.3	34.1	9.4	0.2
Other sexual identity	44.9	39.1	15.3	0.6
Cisgender man	80.6	16.9	2.3	0.2
Cisgender woman	78.8	18.4	2.6	0.2
Transgender man	59.8	28.1	11.3	0.9
Transgender woman	67.2	24.8	7.5	0.5
Transgender person of another gender	43.4	37.0	18.7	0.9

Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

It should also be considered that the proportion of people who reported difficulty remembering or concentrating and difficulty communicating notably increased among the

general younger population between the 2018 Census and the 2023 Census. Further research into this area might investigate the causes for why this has increased, for example, it might consider: increasing awareness and recognition of neurodiversity, the impacts of COVID-19, community action to be counted in the census, changes to diagnostic age, and gender differences. The role of minority stress and discrimination in increased difficulty in remembering or concentrating and communicating for LGBTIQ+ people may be another avenue to explore.

Summary

This section outlined key differences between the LGBTIQ+ population and the non-LGBTIQ+ population in terms of the overall proportion who were identified as disabled (one or more activity limitation) in the 2023 Census and in the proportion of people who had difficulty with the six activities covered by the census.

Here are some key points from this chapter:

- Despite its younger age profile, the LGBTIQ+ population was more likely to be disabled than the non-LGBTIQ+ population. This was true across all age groups, showing that LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be disabled at any age.
- The higher rate of disability for LGBTIQ+ people was especially pronounced for younger age groups (as shown in figure 3.01) between 15 and 29 years.
- In terms of LGBTIQ+ sub-populations:
 - all transgender and non-binary populations were more likely to be disabled than the cisgender populations
 - all sexual minority groups were more likely to be disabled than heterosexual people.
- Of the six activities asked about in the 2023 Census, 'remembering or concentrating' was the activity that LGBTIQ+ people were most likely to report difficulty with.
- People born with a variation of sex characteristics were more likely to be disabled than those born without a variation of sex characteristics.
- Within the LGBTIQ+ population, the groups that were most likely to have difficulty remembering or concentrating were transgender people of another gender and

those with another sexual identity. As discussed in the population structure section, these groups had much higher proportions of individuals aged 15 to 19 and aged 20 to 24 years, compared with the overall population.

4 Education and training

This chapter investigates study participation and qualifications gained for the LGBTIQ+ population. We first look at those aged 15 to 19 years, and then at the population aged 20 years and over.

Study participation of younger LGBTIQ+ people

There is a substantial and growing body of research into LGBTIQ+ young people's experiences at school in Aotearoa New Zealand (Clark et al, 2014; Fenaughty et al, 2022; Rossen et al, 2009; Veale et al, 2019; Yee et al, 2025). Factors shown to impact school attendance and educational attainment for LGBTIQ+ young people include school policy and culture, staff support, and bullying. Patterns in LGBTIQ+ young people's schooling experiences have led to interest in the rates at which they are leaving school early, the qualifications they are obtaining, and the potential long-term effects on their higher education, job satisfaction and income, and overall wellbeing.

Due to restrictions on age breakdowns for variations of sex characteristics, we have not been able to explore young people's study participation for this group.

Study participation of those aged 15 to 19 years

Study participation in the 2023 Census was grouped into full-time study (20 hours or more a week), part-time study (less than 20 hours a week), and those not studying.⁷

LGBTIQ+ people aged 15 to 19 years were slightly less likely to be enrolled in full-time study than non-LGBTIQ+ people in the same age group (68.6 percent compared with 70.4 percent). They were slightly more likely to be enrolled in part-time study (5.0 percent compared with 3.8 percent), as well as not be studying (26.3 percent compared with 25.8 percent).

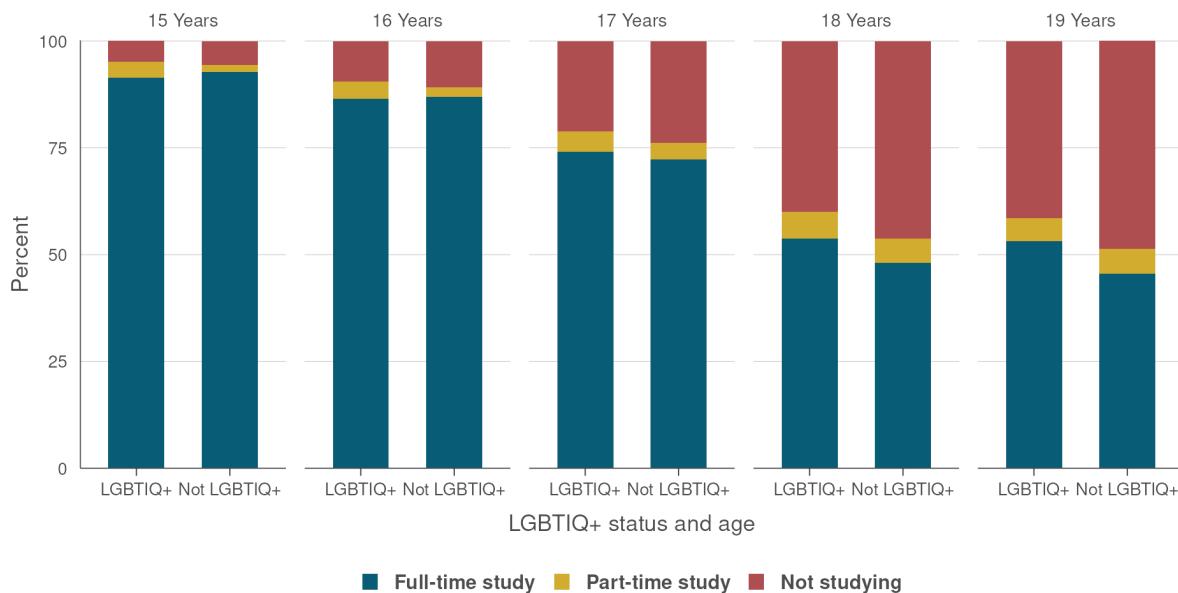
Figure 4.01 shows study participation for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people aged 15 to 19 years old, broken down by single-year age groups. LGBTIQ+ people were slightly more likely

⁷ For more information, see [Study participation - 2023 Census: Information by concept](#).

to be studying (either part time or full time) than non-LGBTIQ+ people at all ages between 15 and 19 years old. However, at younger ages (15 and 16 years), they were slightly less likely to be studying full time, and slightly more likely to be studying part time. This general trend was mirrored across level 1 ethnic groups.

Figure 4.01

**Study participation by age, for people aged 15–19 years,
LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023**



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15–19 years old.

Stats NZ census

Census data indicated that school-aged LGBTIQ+ people who were not studying may be more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ to have completed a level 3 qualification. However, the school-aged LGBTIQ+ population who were not studying was small, so strong conclusions cannot be drawn from this data. Research into the educational attainment of LGBTIQ+ young people could explore the reasons they are more likely to leave school early.

Study participation of LGBTIQ+ people aged 15 to 19 years with at least one activity limitation

Below we present data for LGBTIQ+ people aged 15 to 19 years old who were classified as disabled in the census. It is important to note that census data about activity limitations only tells part of the picture and does not capture all disabilities or all disabled people.

[3: Disability and activity limitations](#) has an important discussion on the limitations of this data.

Table 4.01 shows disabled LGBTIQ+ young people were less likely to be studying full time (60.3 percent) than non-disabled LGBTIQ+ young people (70.4 percent). However, they were more likely to be studying part time (7.6 percent compared with 4.5 percent) and to not be studying at all (32.1 percent compared with 25.1 percent).

Table 4.01

Study participation by disability status, LGBTIQ+ population aged 15–19 years, 2023			
Disability status	Full-time study	Part-time study	Not studying
	Percent		
Disabled	60.3	7.6	32.1
Not disabled	70.4	4.5	25.1

Note: This data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15–19 years.

Source: Stats NZ census

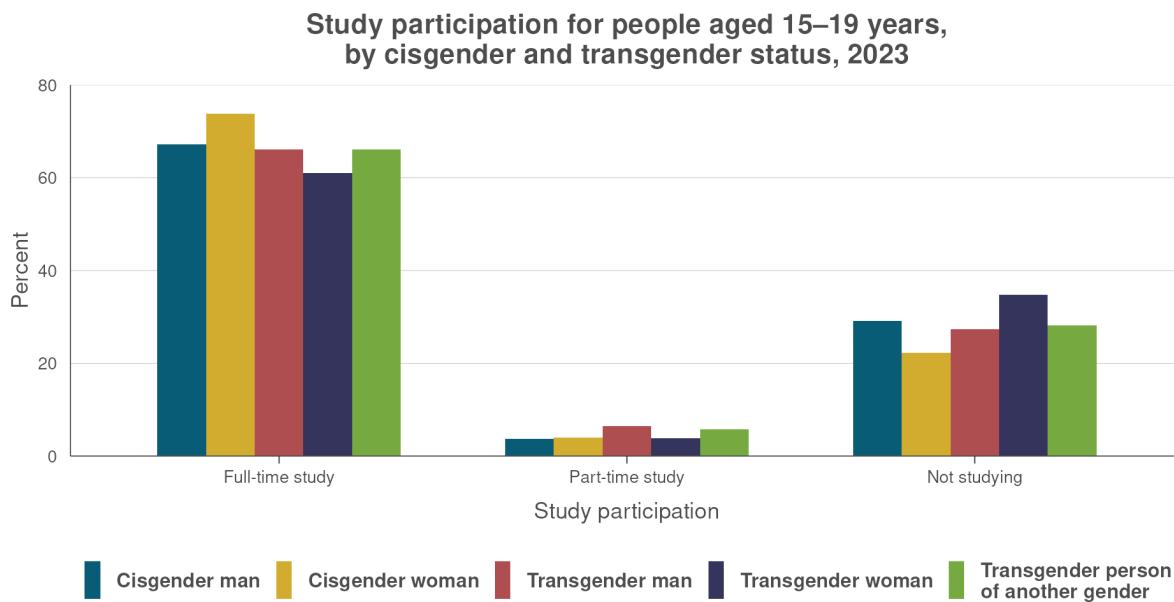
Study participation of LGBTIQ+ subgroups aged 15 to 19 years

Data shows that there were differences in study participation for transgender and non-binary groups, compared with the LGBTIQ+ population as a whole. When we look at detailed cisgender and transgender and non-binary groups, we do not disaggregate by single-year age groups because of small population sizes. We also do not provide ethnic group breakdowns in this section for the same reason.

Figure 4.02 shows the percentage breakdowns of study participation for 15- to 19-year-olds by cisgender and transgender status. Of people aged 15 to 19 years old, cisgender women were the most likely to be enrolled in full-time study (73.8 percent), and transgender women were the least likely (61.0 percent). Cisgender and transgender men, and transgender people of another gender, had similar rates of enrolment in full-time study (66.1 to 67.2 percent).

Transgender women aged 15 to 19 years were more likely not to be studying than any other detailed gender group of this age, at 34.7 percent, or more than 1 in 3. This was a higher rate than for the general cisgender population aged 15 to 19 years, and particularly higher than the rate for cisgender women (22.2 percent).

Figure 4.02



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15–19 years old.

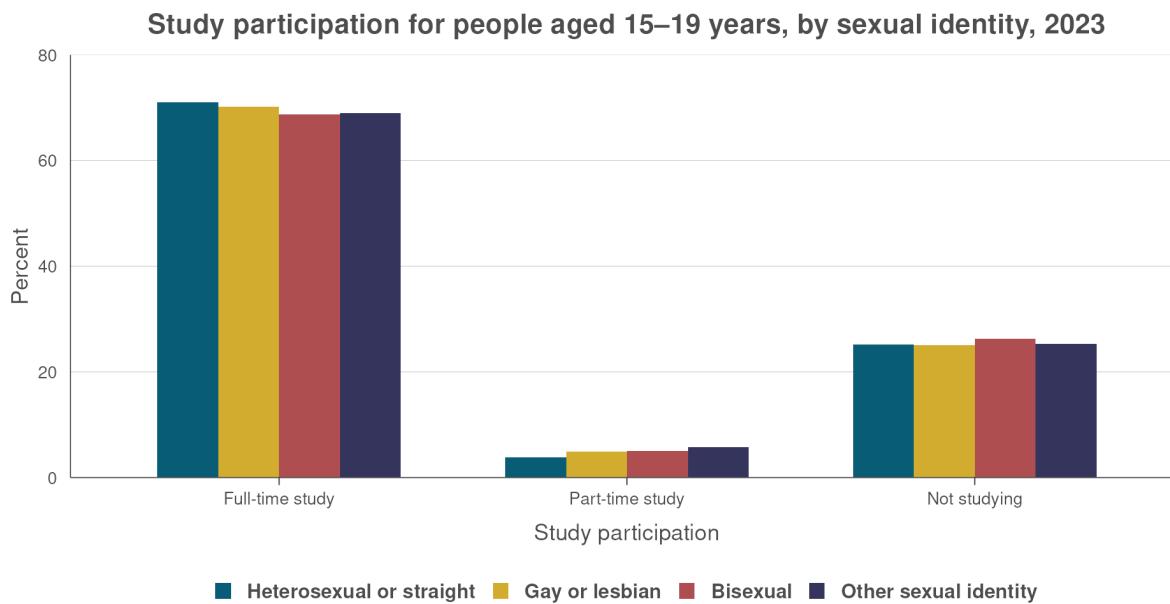
Stats NZ census

There is some evidence to suggest that transgender and non-binary young people are particularly at risk of bullying and harassment at school. The 2022 Counting Ourselves survey found that almost half (47.0 percent) of the trans and non-binary students reported they had been bullied at school in the last 12 months.

Participants in the [2022 Counting Ourselves survey](#) and trans and non-binary participants in the [Identify Survey](#) and [Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey](#) were at least three times more likely than cisgender students to have been bullied in school at least once a week in the last year (Clark et al, 2014; Fenaughty et al, 2022; Yee et al, 2025).

When disaggregating sexual minorities for the same age group, differences were far less pronounced. Figure 4.03 shows percentage breakdowns of study participation for 15- to 19-year-olds by sexual identity. There was almost no difference in study participation across heterosexual or straight people and those with sexual minorities in the 15 to 19 age group.

Figure 4.03



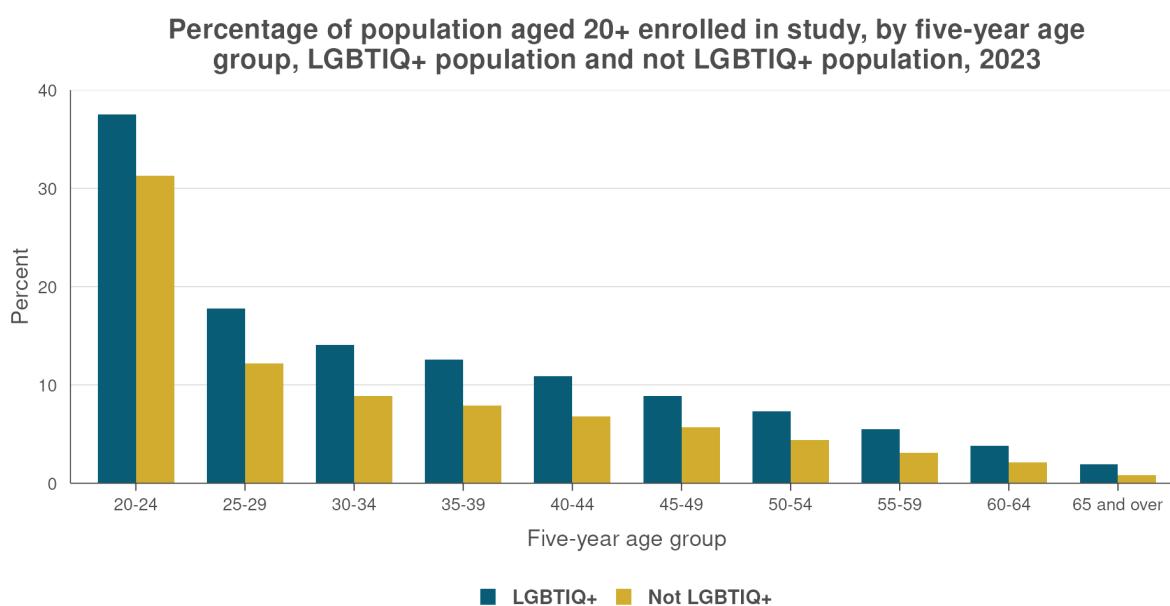
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15–19 years old.

Stats NZ census

Study participation of those aged 20 years and over

Figure 4.04 shows the percentage of people who were enrolled in study for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people in each five-year age group from 20 to 65 and over. LGBTIQ+ people in every age group 20 years and over were more likely to be studying (part time or full time) than their non-LGBTIQ+ counterparts. This was true across all age groups and ethnic groups.

Figure 4.04



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 20 years and over.

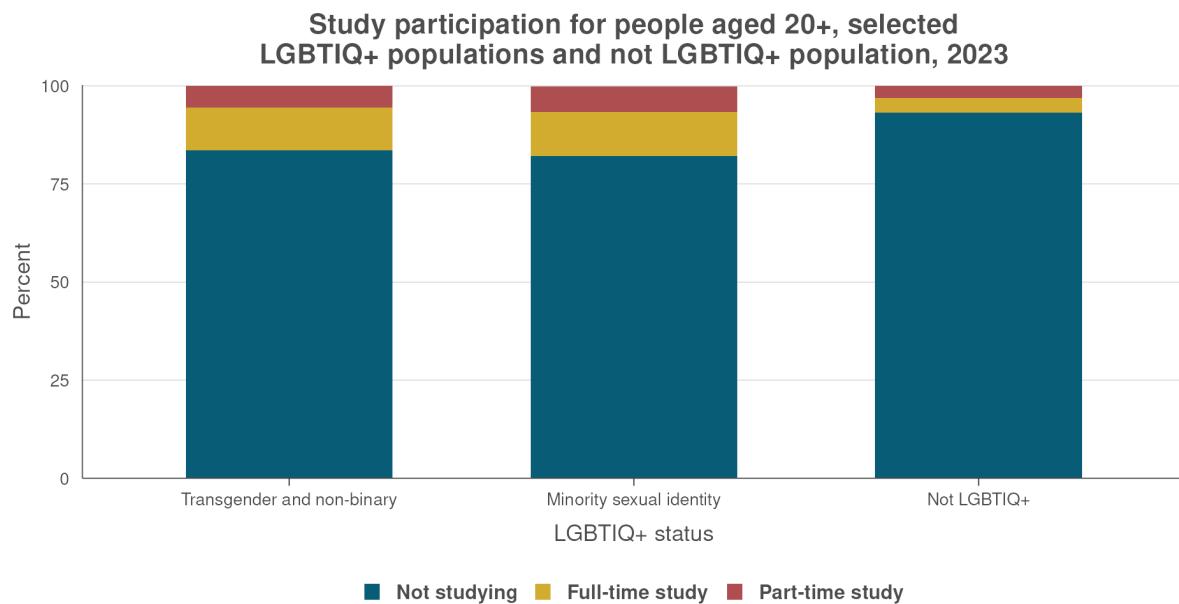
Stats NZ census

Of those aged 20 to 24 years, 29.9 percent of LGBTIQ+ people were engaged in full-time study, compared with 24.9 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people. From age 50 years and onwards, the proportion of LGBTIQ+ people engaged in full-time study was approximately double that of non-LGBTIQ+ people, and three times that for ages 65 years and above. For example, for 55 to 59-year-olds, 1.9 percent of LGBTIQ+ people were enrolled in full-time study, compared with 0.9 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people. For 70 to 74-year-olds, 0.6 percent of LGBTIQ+ people were enrolled in full-time study compared with 0.2 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people.

This trend was also present when further disaggregating the LGBTIQ+ population. For those aged 20 years and over, sexual and gender minorities were more likely to be enrolled in full-time and part-time study than their non-LGBTIQ+ counterparts in the same age group.

Figure 4.05 below shows study participation for LGBTIQ+ subpopulations aged 20 years and over.

Figure 4.05



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 20 years and over.

Stats NZ census

[Chapter 1: Population structure](#) showed there was a higher concentration of LGBTIQ+ people in major urban centres, and specifically in university towns. While higher study participation for the LGBTIQ+ population is likely linked to higher likelihood of living in

university towns, we still saw higher study participation amongst LGBTIQ+ people living in all other geographic areas (like rural areas or minor urban centres).

When looking at the persistence of this trend across demographic and geographic factors, we should consider that people who are enrolled in study may be more likely to identify as LGBTIQ+ when filling out the census. This kind of 'disclosure bias' is often proposed as a possible factor in findings of higher levels of tertiary study for LGBTIQ+ people (Badgett 2024).

Qualifications obtained by those aged 20 years and over

In 2022, we reported on the highest qualifications obtained by those in the LGBT+ population using data from the Household Economic Survey, year ended June 2021. When adjusted for age, this data showed that LGBT+ people were more likely to hold a postgraduate qualification than their peers (Stats NZ, 2022a).

[LGBT+ population of Aotearoa: Year ended June 2021](#) has more information.

The 2023 Census also showed that LGBTIQ+ people were generally more likely than their peers to hold postgraduate qualifications. Table 4.02 shows that, specifically, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to hold Master's and Doctorate degrees across all ages.

Table 4.02

Highest qualification by age, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population aged 20 years and over, 2023							
Highest qualification	LGBTIQ+ status	20–29 years	30–39 years	40–49 years	50–59 years	60–69 years	70 years and over
		Percent					
No qualification	LGBTIQ+	3.7	6.2	9.3	13.6	16.5	27.7
	Not LGBTIQ+	6.3	8.2	10.2	15.1	20.3	34.0
Level 1 certificate	LGBTIQ+	3.7	5.1	5.8	8.7	9.6	10.7
	Not LGBTIQ+	4.9	5.7	6.8	11.0	13.8	14.2
Level 2 certificate	LGBTIQ+	9.5	6.5	6.0	8.5	8.8	6.5
	Not LGBTIQ+	10.9	6.4	7.2	10.1	9.9	6.6
Level 4 certificate	LGBTIQ+	29.2	11.1	10.2	7.7	6.2	5.2
	Not LGBTIQ+	26.3	10.1	9.5	7.5	6.1	4.5
Level 5 certificate	LGBTIQ+	7.6	8.3	7.7	7.8	6.5	5.6
	Not LGBTIQ+	8.5	10	9.0	9.4	9.4	7.5
Level 6 certificate	LGBTIQ+	4.8	5.4	5.7	5.0	4.9	3.4

	Not LGBTIQ+	4.4	5.3	5.4	5.5	4.9	3.5
Bachelor degree and level 7 qualification	LGBTIQ+	3.0	4.3	4.9	5.4	6.4	6.9
	Not LGBTIQ+	3.3	4.3	4.8	5.5	6.6	7.7
Postgraduate and honours degrees	LGBTIQ+	22.8	24.7	20.1	16.2	14.5	12.0
	Not LGBTIQ+	21.1	24.5	20.6	15.3	12.3	8.6
Masters degree	LGBTIQ+	7.6	11.6	11.5	9.4	8.5	5.8
	Not LGBTIQ+	6.3	9.7	9.9	7.3	5.3	3.1
Doctorate degree	LGBTIQ+	4.3	9.2	9.2	8.3	8.4	6.0
	Not LGBTIQ+	3.3	7.1	6.9	5.3	4.1	2.7
Overseas secondary school qualification	LGBTIQ+	0.3	1.7	2.9	3.0	3.2	2.9
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.2	1.2	1.6	1.4	1.3	1.2
<p>Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 20 years and over.</p> <p>Source: Stats NZ census</p>							

Qualifications of LGBTIQ+ people aged 20 years and over with at least one activity limitation

Below we present data for LGBTIQ+ people aged 20 years and over who were classified as disabled in the census. It is important to note that census data about activity limitations only tells part of the picture and does not capture all disabilities or all disabled people.

[Chapter 3: Disability and activity limitations](#) discusses the limitations of this data.

Table 4.03 shows that there were differences in the qualifications held by LGBTIQ+ disabled people and LGBTIQ+ non-disabled people aged 20 years and over. Disabled LGBTIQ+ people aged 20 years and over held no qualification at double the rate of non-disabled LGBTIQ+ people (15.4 percent compared to 7.1 percent).

Disabled LGBTIQ+ people aged 20 years and over were also more likely to hold qualifications at levels 1, 2, and 3 and levels 4, 5, and 6 as their highest, but substantially less likely to hold level 7 and postgraduate qualifications than non-disabled LGBTIQ+ people.

Table 4.03

Highest qualification by disability status, LGBTIQ+ population aged 20 years and over, 2023		
Highest qualification	Disabled	Not disabled
	Percent	
No qualification	15.4	7.1
Levels 1, 2, 3 (secondary school/basic trades)	38.8	29.5

Levels 4, 5, 6 (advanced trades/technical and business qualifications)	19.5	16.5
Level 7 (bachelors degree and graduate diplomas)	13.6	22.2
Postgraduate qualifications (honours, masters, doctorate degrees)	9.1	19.2
Overseas secondary school qualification	3.5	5.5
Note: This data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 20 years and over.		
Source: Stats NZ census		

Level of highest qualification of LGBTIQ+ subgroups

Although LGBTIQ+ people were more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to hold postgraduate qualifications, there were differences in educational attainment between LGBTIQ+ subgroups.

Figure 4.06 shows highest qualifications gained by those aged 20 years and over by LGBTIQ+ subgroups.⁸ We observe that in general, transgender and non-binary people aged 20 and over were more likely to hold a secondary school qualification as their highest qualification than sexual minorities, and this was true across age groups, ethnicities, and types of rural and urban area. Sexual minorities were least likely to have no qualification, compared with transgender and non-binary people and non-LGBTIQ+ people, and most likely to hold Bachelor's and postgraduate qualifications.

⁸ Note: The 'people who know they were born with a variation of sex characteristics' category has not been included due to data quality issues within the variable.

Figure 4.06

**Highest qualification for people aged 20+, selected LGBTIQ+ populations
and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023**



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 20 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Further disaggregating qualification data for sexual identities by cisgender and transgender status in table 4.04 below shows that the increased educational attainment of gay or lesbian people was largest for those who were cisgender, and differences were smaller for the gay or lesbian transgender and non-binary population.

Of all groups, gay or lesbian cisgender people were the most highly qualified, with 22.6 percent of this group holding a postgraduate qualification as their highest qualification. Transgender and non-binary people who were heterosexual or straight had the highest proportion of people holding no qualifications (18.6 percent), and transgender and non-binary people who were bisexual held qualifications at levels 1, 2, or 3 at the highest rate of all groups (at 39.6 percent). Regardless of cisgender and transgender status, people with sexual minorities held level 7 qualifications at similar rates, and at a higher rate than that of their heterosexual counterparts.

Table 4.04

Highest qualification, by sexual identity and cisgender and transgender status, individuals aged 20 years and over, 2023							
Sexual identity	Cisgender and transgender status	No qualification	Levels 1, 2, 3 ¹	Levels 4, 5, 6 ²	Level 7 ³	Postgraduate qualifications ⁴	Overseas secondary
		Percent					
Heterosexual or straight	Cisgender	14.7	28.3	19.4	17.6	13.6	6.4
	Transgender and non-binary	18.6	28.9	18.3	15.7	11.1	7.4
Gay or lesbian	Cisgender	7.0	26.8	16.5	22.7	22.6	4.4
	Transgender and non-binary	5.9	35.1	16.9	22.0	16.1	4.0
Bisexual	Cisgender	6.0	34.0	17.1	22.2	17.2	3.5
	Transgender and non-binary	4.5	39.6	15.6	20.2	16.8	3.1
Other sexual identity	Cisgender	7.9	31.2	16.9	21.3	19.6	3.2
	Transgender and non-binary	3.3	36.2	17.4	21.7	18.5	2.9
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secondary school/basic trades 2. Advanced trades/technical and business qualifications 3. Bachelor's degrees and graduate diplomas 4. Honours, masters, doctorate degrees 							
<p>Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 20 years and over.</p> <p>Source: Stats NZ census</p>							

Post-school qualification field of study

Table 4.05 shows that there were differences in the fields of study for post-school qualifications of LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people. Because level of attainment influences field of study, we present the data below for two groups: those who had attained a level 4 to 6 qualification as their highest qualification, and those who had attained a Bachelor's degree or higher as their highest qualification.

Of LGBTIQ+ people whose highest qualification was a level 4, 5, or 6 certificate, a notably higher proportion studied creative arts (18.5 percent of transgender and non-binary people and 15.6 percent of sexual minorities) than non-LGBTIQ+ people (4.7 percent). They were also more likely to study society and culture, food and hospitality, and information technology. Both LGBTIQ+ groups were less likely to study engineering, education, and architecture.

Sexual minorities with levels 4, 5, and 6 certificates were the most likely out of all groups represented in table 4.05 to study health (12.0 percent), and the transgender population was the least likely (9.2 percent). Sexual minorities were also more likely to study management and commerce at these levels than other groups, however non-LGBTIQ+ people were substantially more likely to study management and commerce at Bachelor level and higher.

Table 4.05

Post-school field of study, by highest post-school qualification (level 4 or higher), selected LGBTIQ+ populations and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023						
Post-school field of study	Levels 4, 5, 6 ¹			Bachelor and higher		
	Transgender and non-binary	Minority sexual identity	Not LGBTIQ+	Transgender and non-binary	Minority sexual identity	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent					
Natural and physical sciences	1.4	1.7	1.5	10.7	10.0	8.2
Information technology	5.0	3.8	2.4	6.4	3.9	4.1
Engineering and related technologies	16.2	9.7	23.2	7.1	4.8	9.5
Architecture and building	7.4	4.1	11.2	1.6	1.9	2.2
Agriculture, environmental and related studies	3.4	3.4	3.8	1.4	1.1	1.5
Health	9.2	12.0	11.2	8.9	13.1	14.6
Education	3.7	5.4	6.9	7.5	9.5	12.4
Management and commerce	11.6	18.2	17.3	11.3	12.6	22.0
Society and culture	9.8	11.3	8.2	25.6	27.9	18.4
Creative arts	18.5	15.6	4.7	18.4	14.7	6.3
Food, hospitality and personal services	10.0	12.7	6.5	0.3	0.2	0.3
Field of study not given	3.9	2.2	3.0	0.9	0.3	0.5
1. Advanced trades/technical and business qualifications						
Note: This data is for the census usually resident populations aged 15 years and over who had a post-school qualification of level 4 certificate or higher. Some people may have levels 1, 2, or 3 certificates obtained post-school – these people are not included here.						
Source: Stats NZ census						

Similarly to those with levels 4, 5, and 6 certificates, LGBTIQ+ people whose highest qualification was a Bachelors' degree or higher also studied the creative arts at much higher rates, with 18.4 percent of transgender and non-binary people and 14.7 percent of sexual minorities studying in this field, compared with 6.3 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people. Both LGBTIQ+ groups were less likely than the non-LGBTIQ+ population to study health at this level (8.9 percent of transgender and non-binary people and 13.1 percent of sexual minorities, compared with 14.6 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people). They were also less likely to study education (transgender & non-binary: 7.5 percent; sexual minorities: 9.5 percent; non-LGBTIQ+: 12.4 percent). Both LGBTIQ+ groups were much less likely to study management and commerce, with 11.3 percent of transgender and non-binary people and 12.6 percent of sexual minorities doing so, compared with 22.0 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Transgender and non-binary people were more likely to study information technology at Bachelor level and higher (6.4 percent) than sexual minorities (3.9 percent) and non-LGBTIQ+ people (4.1 percent).

Summary

This chapter looked at patterns of study participation and qualification attainment for LGBTIQ+ people. It is important to be aware of the links between the trends seen in this chapter and other demographic patterns observed for this community (for instance, the higher likelihood for LGBTIQ+ people to live in urban areas and how this might relate to rates of tertiary study).

This chapter also sets important background for the following chapter, given the close connection between educational attainment and the world of work. A key point to remember here, however, is that census data is a snapshot of a particular moment in time. The people represented in the 15 to 19 years age group who had achieved particular qualifications are not the same people who we see in the next chapter, employed and making a particular income at 20 to 24 years old, for example. While we may draw connections between patterns across two age groups to explore what an 'across time' picture may look like, we do not have longitudinal data for LGBTIQ+ populations from the census.

Here are some key points from this chapter:

- For 15 to 19-year-olds, there were slight differences in study participation for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people:
 - 15 and 16-year-old LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to be studying full time and more likely to be in part-time study.
 - LGBTIQ+ 18 and 19-year-olds were more likely to be studying both full and part time than their non-LGBTIQ+ peers.
- Young transgender women (15 to 19 years) were less likely to be studying than any other gender or sexual minority group of the same age group, at 34.7 percent not in study, or more than 1 in 3.
- Disabled LGBTIQ+ young people were less likely to be studying full time (60.3 percent) than non-disabled LGBTIQ+ young people (70.4 percent). They were more likely to be studying part time, however (7.6 percent compared with 4.5 percent). They were also more likely to not be studying at all (32.1 percent compared with 25.1 percent).
- For those aged 20 years and older, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be in full- or part-time study across all age groups.
- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to hold postgraduate qualifications, however this difference was much larger for sexual minorities than for transgender and non-binary people.
- LGBTIQ+ people were substantially more likely to obtain post-school qualifications in the field of creative arts than non-LGBTIQ+ people. They were also more likely to obtain qualifications in society and culture, food and hospitality, and information technology.
- Bachelor's qualifications or higher in health, education, and management and commerce were obtained at lower rates amongst LGBTIQ+ groups than non-LGBTIQ+ people.

5 Work and income

Understanding the working and financial lives of LGBTIQ+ people is a growing interest in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. In New Zealand, recent research has highlighted there's still progress to make towards achieving genuine inclusion of LGBTIQ+ people in the workforce, and workplace discrimination still exists in some areas (Cui, 2024).

International literature on economic outcomes for LGBTIQ+ people has shown unique patterns in income for subpopulations, namely for the transgender and non-binary population and between gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (Badgett et al, 2024). Stats NZ (2021; 2022) published findings from data collected in the Household Economic Survey (HES), showing that disposable income for the LGBT+ population, and in particular the transgender and non-binary population, was comparably lower than that of non-LGBT+ and cisgender groups.

Contributing factors are complex, and in this chapter we sometimes reference insights presented in other chapters where they may be relevant (for example, between income and rates of parenting). It is also important to account for demographic differences of the LGBTIQ+ population – such as the younger age distribution – that affect workforce participation and income.

This chapter discusses work and labour force status, occupation, income, and unpaid activities for LGBTIQ+ groups. Data in this section predominantly uses measures collected on work and income from the 2023 Census; we have added income data from the Household Economic Survey and subjective measures of work/life balance, job satisfaction, and cost-cutting behaviours from the General Social Survey.

Data on work and labour force status has not been presented for people born with a variation of sex characteristics, due to restrictions on output by age (as discussed in [About the data](#)).

However, some data on income for this population is presented in this chapter, which has had additional analysis to ensure confidence in the reported outcomes.

Work and the labour force

A useful way to provide a quick snapshot of work across a population is through work and labour force status. Work and labour force status describes whether a person was engaged in full-time or part-time employment, was unemployed, or was not in the labour force. An unemployed person was not employed but was available and seeking work. When a person was not employed and was not seeking employment, they were not in the labour force.

There are many reasons why a person might be categorised as not in the labour force, including retirement, study, or being permanently unable to work due to a disability.

It is important to note that work and labour force data is produced by both the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) and Census of Population and Dwellings (the census). Results may differ between the two datasets because of different methods and timing. We base our analysis in this chapter on census data because the HLFS does not collect LGBTIQ+ data.

Of the total LGBTIQ+ population:

- 51.8 percent were employed full-time (89,229 people)
- 17.6 percent were employed part-time (30,273 people)
- 5.0 percent were unemployed (8,598 people)
- 25.7 percent were not in the labour force (44,283 people).

Employment

Here we look at those who were employed. We investigate:

- employment status (for example whether someone was self-employed or employed by someone else)
- proportions of those in part-time and full-time work
- types of occupation.

Employment status

Table 5.01 below shows that employed LGBTIQ+ people were generally less likely to be self-employed than non-LGBTIQ+ people, either as employers or self-employed people without employees. They were instead more likely to be paid employees. The younger age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population may be a contributing factor here.

Table 5.01

Employment status, selected LGBTIQ+ populations and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023				
LGBTIQ+ status	Paid employee	Employer	Self-employed and without employees	Unpaid family worker
Percent				
Transgender and non-binary	86.1	3.1	9.5	1.3
Minority sexual identity	89.4	1.9	8.0	0.6
Not LGBTIQ+	81.4	5.6	11.6	1.4

Note: This data is for the employed census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Full- and part-time work

In the census, people who were employed full time were those who usually worked 30 or more hours per week, and those who were employed part time usually worked fewer than 30 hours per week.

Between ages 15 and 34 years, employed LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be employed part time and less likely to be employed full time than non-LGBTIQ+ people (see table 5.02). From ages 35 years to 59 years, proportions of the employed LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations working part time and full time were comparable. From age 60 years and over, employed LGBTIQ+ people were slightly more likely to be working part time than non-LGBTIQ+ people.

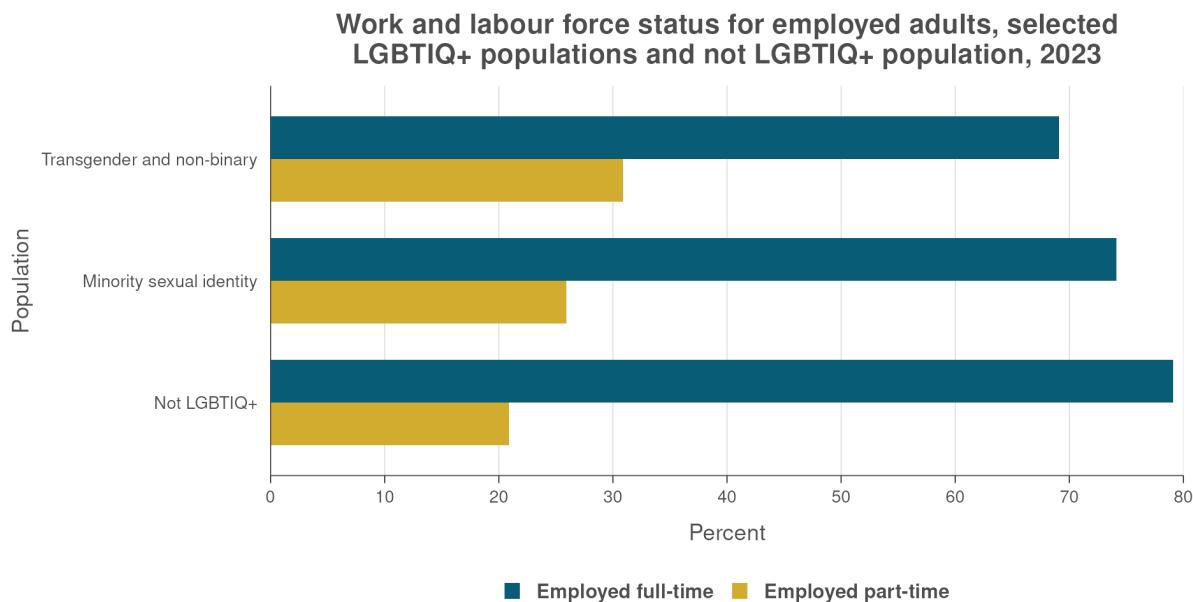
Table 5.02

Five-year age group	LGBTIQ+		Not LGBTIQ+	
	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Employed full-time	Employed part-time
Percent				
15–19 years	27.3	72.7	34.2	65.8
20–24 years	64.5	35.5	75.8	24.2
25–29 years	84.4	15.6	89.0	11.0
30–34 years	86.0	14.0	87.5	12.5
35–39 years	85.2	14.9	85.2	14.8
40–44 years	85.6	14.4	85.0	15.0
45–49 years	85.7	14.3	85.8	14.2
50–54 years	85.4	14.5	85.5	14.5
55–59 years	83.6	16.4	83.5	16.5
60–64 years	77.0	23.0	78.3	21.7

65 years and over	52.1	47.9	53.6	46.4
Note: This data is for the employed census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.				
Source: Stats NZ census				

The general higher likelihood of the LGBTIQ+ population to work part time was present for the transgender and nonbinary population and the sexual minority population. Figure 5.01 shows the percentage of employed adults who were employed full time or part time for the transgender and non-binary population, minority sexual identity population, and non-LGBTIQ+ population. Transgender and non-binary people were least likely out of LGBTIQ+ subpopulations to be working full time.

Figure 5.01



This data is for the employed census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

[Chapter 4: Education and training](#) showed that across age groups LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to engage in part-time and full-time study than their peers. Looking at the intersection of work with study participation in table 5.03, employed LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to be working full time compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people, regardless of whether they were enrolled in full-time or part-time study.

Table 5.03

Work and labour force status by study participation, for employed adults enrolled in study, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023				
Work and labour force status	Full-time study		Part-time study	
	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent			
Employed full-time	23.8	29.7	71.6	76.3
Employed part-time	76.2	70.3	28.4	23.7

Note: This data is for the employed census usually resident population aged 15 years and over enrolled in study.

Source: Stats NZ census

The General Social Survey (GSS) tells us about people's subjective rating of their work/life balance. In 2023, nearly two-thirds (63.5 percent) of employed LGBT+ people were satisfied or very satisfied with their work/life balance. Just over half (52.3 percent) of LGBT+ people felt they had the right amount of free time.

Employment of disabled LGBTIQ+ people

Below we present the proportions of LGBTIQ+ people classified as disabled in the census data who work part time and full time (see table 5.04). It is important to note that census data about activity limitations only tells part of the picture and does not capture all disabilities or all disabled people.

[Chapter 3: Disability and activity limitations](#) discusses the limitations of this data.

Across life-cycle age groups, we see that disabled LGBTIQ+ people who were employed were less likely to work full time than non-disabled LGBTIQ+ people and more likely to work part time. For LGBTIQ+ people aged 65 and over, the difference in part-time and full-time employment between disabled and non-disabled people was much less pronounced than for other age groups.

Table 5.04

Work and labour force status, by disability status and life-cycle age group, for the employed LGBTIQ+ population, 2023						
Work and labour force status	15–29 years		30–64 years		65 years and over	
	Disabled	Not disabled	Disabled	Not disabled	Disabled	Not disabled
	Percent					
Employed full-time	57.8	65.7	75.8	85.6	49.6	52.6
Employed part-time	42.2	34.2	24.2	14.4	50.4	47.5

Note: This data is for the employed LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

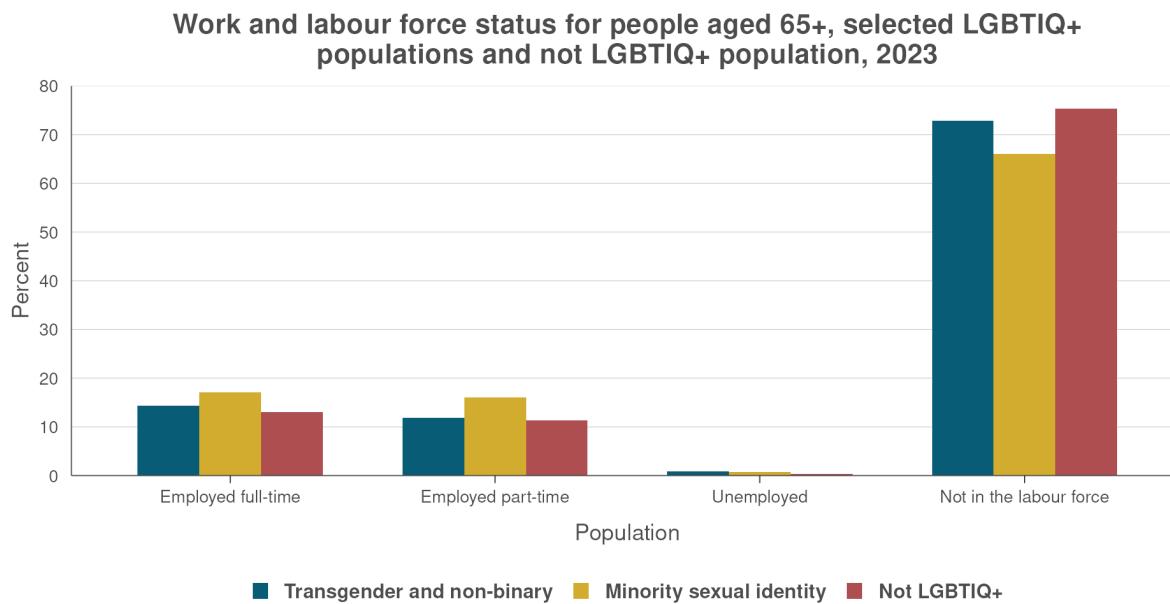
Those aged 65 years and older

Work and labour force status data from the 2023 Census showed that a higher proportion of LGBTIQ+ people aged 65 years and over were still working, at 29.5 percent, compared with 24.3 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people aged 65 years and over.

Figure 5.02 shows the work and labour force status of those aged 65 years and older across non-LGBTIQ+, transgender and non-binary, and sexual minority groups. People with minority sexual identities were the most likely to still be working, while non-LGBTIQ+ people were least likely.

Table 5.02 earlier in this chapter showed similar rates of part-time and full-time employment between LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people aged 65 years and over. However, this compared rates for the employed population. The LGBTIQ+ population aged 65 years and over was more likely to still be working in general, compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population. This means that transgender and non-binary people and people with minority sexual identities aged 65 years and over had higher rates of both full-time and part-time employment than the non-LGBTIQ+ population, when looking at the overall population in each group.

Figure 5.02



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 65 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Table 5.05 shows work and labour force status for those aged 65 years and over across different sexual identity groups and gender. For those aged 65 years and over who were employed, we see two notable features in this table:

- Heterosexual or straight women aged 65 and over were less likely to be employed part time and full time than other groups.
- There was a gender difference between part-time and full-time work distribution among all sexual identity groups. Men over 65 were more likely to be working full time than part time, and for women over 65 the reverse was true.

Table 5.05

Work and labour force status for people aged 65+, by sexual identity and gender, 2023					
Sexual identity	Gender	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Unemployed	Not in the labour force
		Percent			
Heterosexual or straight	Male/Tāne	18.7	11.9	0.4	68.9
	Female/Wahine	8.4	11.1	0.3	80.2
Gay or lesbian	Male/Tāne	19.3	15.5	0.9	64.3
	Female/Wahine	15.3	17.1	0.4	67.0
Bisexual	Male/Tāne	19.5	14.2	1.3	65.3
	Female/Wahine	14.6	19.0	c	66.1
	Male/Tāne	18.2	14.5	c	66.4

Other sexual identity	Female/Wahine	10.2	17.7	c	71.4
Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 65 years and over. Data for people of another gender has not been included due to the small population size.					
Symbols: (c) confidential					
Source: Stats NZ census					

Occupation

In this section we look at the types of occupations that employed people worked in at the time of the census. Occupation data is complex, with numerous categories, and to avoid dealing with very small numbers we analyse occupation at the highest level of aggregation available, which classifies occupations into eight main categories as seen in table 5.06 below.

For those employed, young LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to work in sales. LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to work as community and personal service workers than non-LGBTIQ+ people across all age groups. They were also more likely than the non-LGBTIQ+ population to work as professionals.⁹ This could in part be due to the higher concentration of LGBTIQ+ people in larger urban centres.

Findings from the 2022 Counting Ourselves survey suggest urban workplaces may be more accepting environments for LGBTIQ+ people (Yee et al, 2025), however, we can't speculate as to whether this could be due to higher proportions of LGBTIQ+ people in cities or a causative factor in LGBTIQ+ people choosing to live in cities.

Table 5.06 also shows that LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to work as technicians and trade workers, machinery operators and drivers, and labourers. They were also less likely to be managers due, in part, to LGBTIQ+ people's lower likelihood of being self-employed. Nevertheless, we do still see lower proportions of LGBTIQ+ people than non-LGBTIQ+ who were managers amongst paid employees.

⁹ Professionals are those who perform analytical, conceptual and creative tasks through the application of theoretical knowledge and experience in the fields of the arts, media, business, design, engineering, the physical and life sciences, transport, education, health, information and communication technology, the law, social sciences and social welfare. For more information about occupation classification see the [Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of OccupationsV1.3.0](https://www.stats.govt.nz/assets/2023/03/Australian-and-New-Zealand-Standard-Classification-of-OccupationsV1.3.0.pdf).

Table 5.06

Occupation by life-cycle age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023						
Occupation	15–29 years		30–64 years		65 years and over	
	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent					
Managers	8.3	10.4	18.6	21.1	18.3	22.0
Professionals	24.3	21.7	35.1	28.9	32.8	24.8
Technicians and trades workers	9.0	14.0	10.2	12.3	8.4	10.1
Community and personal service workers	16.7	12.5	9.2	7.7	9.2	7.5
Clerical and administrative workers	11.7	8.9	10.4	11.2	8.7	11.2
Sales workers	16.1	13.2	6.1	5.8	6.8	6.9
Machinery operators and drivers	3.1	5.5	4.1	5.7	7.2	8.0
Labourers	10.9	13.9	6.3	7.3	8.6	9.5

Note: This data is for the employed census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

The General Social Survey asked people about their job satisfaction, which showed a difference between the views of LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ people in 2023. Approximately two-thirds (67.7 percent) of employed LGBT+ people were satisfied or very satisfied with their job, compared with three-quarters (75.0 percent) of employed non-LGBT+ people.

Looking at LGBTIQ+ subgroups in table 5.07, there were some differences between LGBTIQ+ groups in the most popular types of occupations. Those with minority sexual identities were more likely than transgender and non-binary people to work as professionals, but less likely to work as labourers. Transgender and non-binary people were more likely to work as labourers, community and service workers, and sales workers than non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Table 5.07

Occupation, selected LGBTIQ+ populations and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023			
Occupation	Transgender and non-binary	Minority sexual identity	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent		
Managers	13.0	13.4	18.9
Professionals	25.8	31.7	27.0
Technicians and trades workers	10.9	8.6	12.5
Community and personal service workers	12.0	13.1	8.7
Clerical and administrative workers	10.9	11.2	10.7
Sales workers	12.0	11.0	7.5
Machinery operators and drivers	4.5	3.2	5.9
Labourers	10.9	7.8	8.9

Note: This data is for the employed census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

We can see in Table 5.08 below that gay men were more likely to work as professionals (34.5 percent) than heterosexual or straight men (23.3 percent). Heterosexual or straight men were roughly three times more likely to work as machine operators, and roughly two times more likely to work as technicians and trade workers or labourers. These occupations have tended to carry lower average wages than professionals (Stats NZ, 2022b), which could contribute to income differences seen between heterosexual or straight and gay men later in this chapter. Gay men also had relatively high rates of managerial roles compared with other sexual minorities (19.3 percent, compared with 13.6 percent of bisexual men and 11.6 of men with another sexual identity).

Gay or lesbian women, and women with another sexual identity, were also more likely to work as professionals. All women with minority sexual identities were more likely to work as labourers than heterosexual or straight women, who, for instance, were more likely to work in clerical and administrative roles. Bisexual women and women with another sexual identity were more likely to work in sales than both gay or lesbian women and heterosexual or straight women.

Within those with another gender, we see that those with a minority sexual identity were more likely to work in the professional, community and personal service, and clerical and

administrative fields than those who were heterosexual or straight, and substantially more likely to work in sales.

Table 5.08

Gender	Occupation	Heterosexual or straight	Gay or lesbian	Bisexual	Other sexual identity
		Percent			
Male/Tāne	Managers	22.7	19.3	13.6	11.6
	Professionals	23.3	34.5	28.6	27.1
	Technicians and trades workers	18.7	8.7	13.5	14.7
	Community and personal service workers	5.3	9.6	9.5	10.0
	Clerical and administrative workers	5.0	9.5	7.8	7.7
	Sales workers	5.8	9.3	9.7	9.4
	Machinery operators and drivers	9.1	3.4	6.3	7.8
	Labourers	10.2	5.7	11.1	11.5
Female/Wahine	Managers	15.4	15.3	11.2	9.9
	Professionals	32.0	33.7	30.9	33.5
	Technicians and trades workers	5.6	8.4	7.2	6.6
	Community and personal service workers	12.0	13.2	15.6	14.2
	Clerical and administrative workers	17.0	10.3	13.2	13.4
	Sales workers	9.1	8.3	12.5	12.8
	Machinery operators and drivers	2.1	3.4	2.1	2.2
	Labourers	6.8	7.4	7.4	7.5
Another gender/He ira kē anō	Managers	17.4	8.5	8.7	7.6
	Professionals	24.3	30.2	29.2	30.0
	Technicians and trades workers	15.3	8.5	7.8	8.5
	Community and personal service workers	9.0	13.8	13.4	15.4
	Clerical and administrative workers	9.7	11.6	11.9	11.7
	Sales workers	6.8	13.8	16.8	14.7
	Machinery operators and drivers	5.9	3.3	2.5	2.2
	Labourers	11.2	10.3	10.0	9.9

Note: This data is for the employed census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Unemployment

While the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) provides the official measure of unemployment for New Zealand, it does not collect LGBTIQ+ population data. Therefore, in this section we used census data to analyse unemployment levels for LGBTIQ+ groups. Measures of unemployment are given as proportions of those in the labour force (employed full time, employed part time, and unemployed). They are intended to provide an indication of differences in unemployment for the LGBTIQ+ population and are not official unemployment measures.

In the census, someone was classed as 'unemployed' if they:

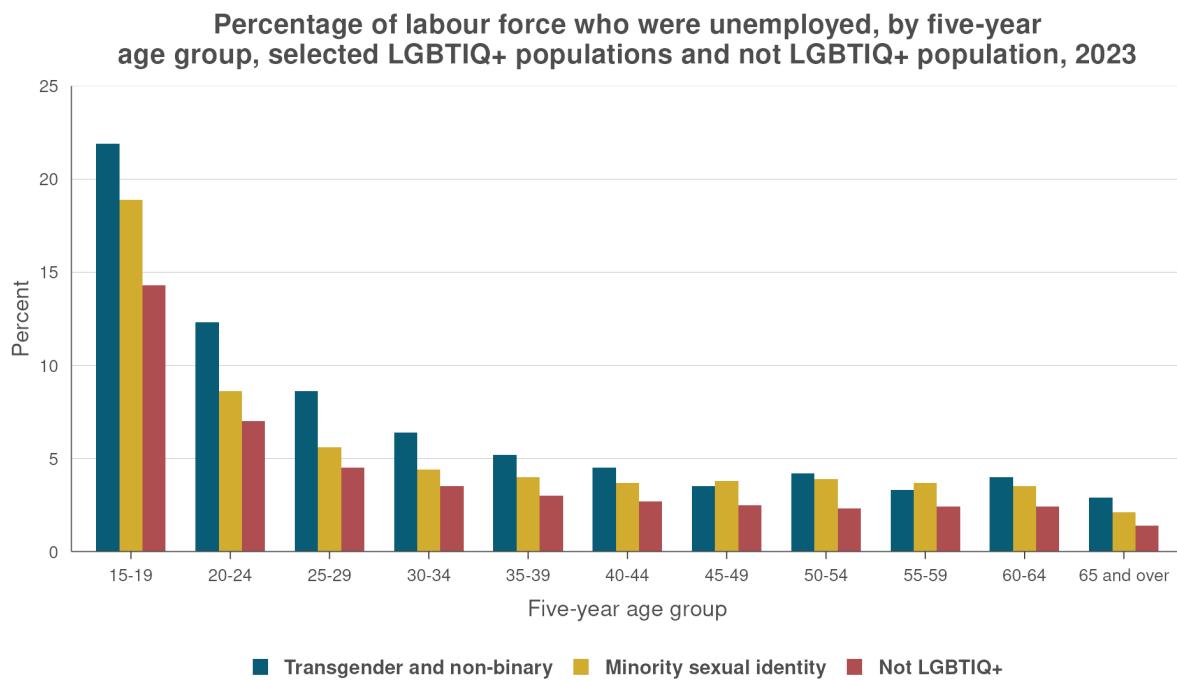
- were not employed
- had been available in the previous week to start paid work
- had been actively seeking paid work in the four weeks prior to the census.

The 2023 Census showed that 6.7 percent of LGBTIQ+ people 15 and over who were in the labour force were unemployed, compared with 3.7 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Unemployment is affected by age and location in general. As discussed in [1: Population structure](#), the LGBTIQ+ population in the 2023 Census was younger than the general population, and more likely to live in urban areas. The following disparities in proportions of those unemployed were visible across differences in location.

Figure 5.03 shows the unemployment rate from 2023 Census data for selected LGBTIQ+ populations and the non-LGBTIQ population across five-year age groups. LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be unemployed than non-LGBTIQ+ people across all five-year age groups. For those aged 15 to 44 years, this difference was larger for transgender and non-binary people than for sexual minorities. However, this was reversed for the 45 to 59-year age groups.

Figure 5.03



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in the labour force

Stats NZ census

Unemployment for disabled people

Below we present data on unemployment for disabled and non-disabled people. It is important to note that census data about activity limitations only tells part of the picture and does not capture all disabilities or all disabled people.

[Chapter 3: Disability and activity limitations](#) discusses the limitations of this data.

Looking across life-cycle age groups in table 5.09, we see that LGBTIQ+ people who were classified as disabled in the census were unemployed at higher rates than their non-disabled peers.

Both disability status and LGBTIQ+ status were observed to be associated with higher unemployment, with individuals who belonged to the disabled population and the LGBTIQ+ population unemployed at higher rates than those who belonged to just one or the other, or neither.

Table 5.09

Percentage of labour force who were unemployed, by disability status and life-cycle age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023						
LGBTIQ+	15–29 years		30–64 years		65 years and over	
	Disabled	Not disabled	Disabled	Not disabled	Disabled	Not disabled
	Percent					
LGBTIQ+	14.7	9.1	8.3	3.6	6.2	1.7
Not LGBTIQ+	13.0	7.5	6.7	2.5	3.0	1.3

Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over that were in the labour force.

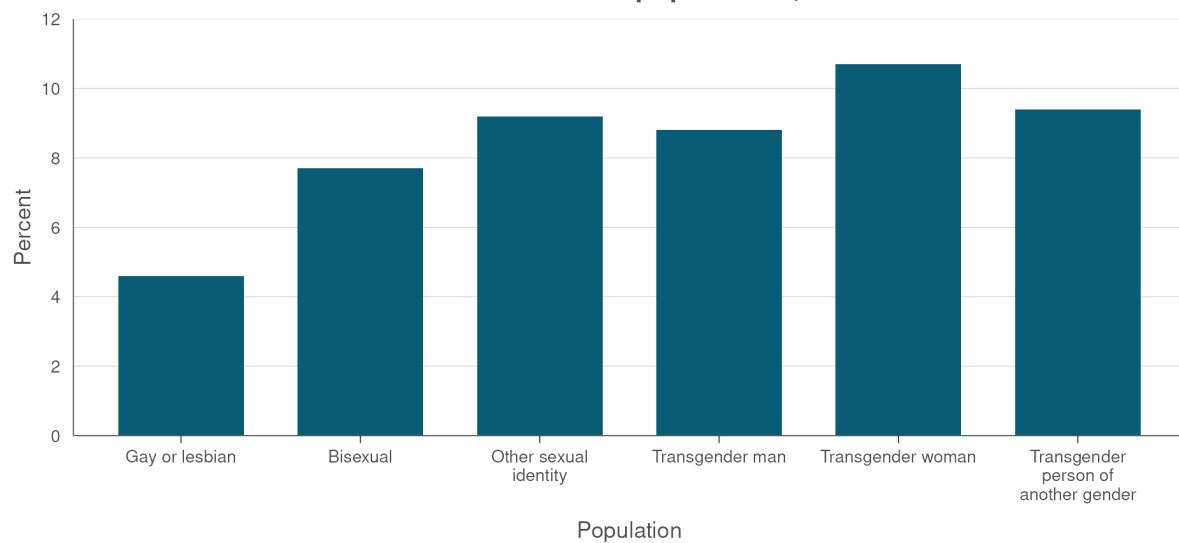
Source: Stats NZ census

Unemployment for LGBTIQ+ subpopulations

Figure 5.04 shows the unemployment rate from 2023 Census data for selected LGBTIQ+ populations. Unemployment was noticeably lower for gay or lesbian people than the other groups represented in figure 5.04.

Figure 5.04

Percentage of labour force who were unemployed,
selected LGBTIQ+ populations, 2023



People may be counted in more than one LGBTIQ+ population.

This data is for the LGBTIQ+ census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in the labour force.

Stats NZ census

Table 5.10 below shows that the differences across sexual identities observed above were present for both transgender and cisgender people. Cisgender bisexual people and those with other sexual identities were unemployed at higher rates than cisgender gay or lesbian people. Unemployment was higher for transgender and non-binary people than cisgender people regardless of sexual identity, and highest for bisexual transgender and non-binary

people. Transgender women who were bisexual were unemployed at the highest rate of all groups, at 21.3 percent.

Table 5.10

Sexual identity	Cisgender man	Cisgender woman	Transgender man	Transgender woman	Transgender person of another gender
	Percent				
Heterosexual or straight	3.3	3.7	4.0	5.8	5.4
Gay or lesbian	3.9	4.4	13.6	15.1	9.8
Bisexual	7.0	7.6	14.3	21.3	11.5
Other sexual identity	9.3	8.1	17.4	16.5	10.8

Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in the labour force.

Source: Stats NZ census

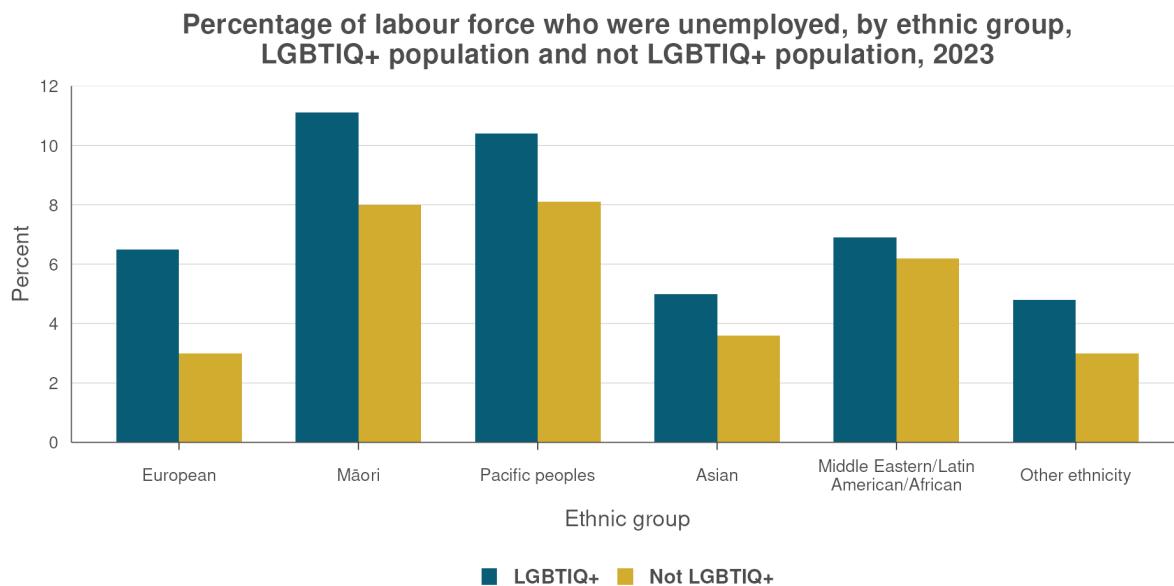
These general findings are comparable with other recently published data from the 2022 Counting Ourselves survey, which reported that 1 in 8 transgender and non-binary respondents were not in paid work and were looking for a job (Yee et al, 2025).

Unemployment across ethnic groups

Figure 5.05 shows the unemployment rate from the 2023 Census for the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations by ethnic group. The proportion of those unemployed was higher for LGBTIQ+ people across all ethnic groups, with the highest for LGBTIQ+ Māori at 11.1 percent. The largest difference between the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ population was for the European ethnic group, with the LGBTIQ+ population being more than two times as likely to be unemployed than the non-LGBTIQ+ population.

The underlying age distributions of the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations should be kept in mind when comparing rates between the two, since unemployment is generally higher for younger people.

Figure 5.05



People may belong to more than one ethnic group.

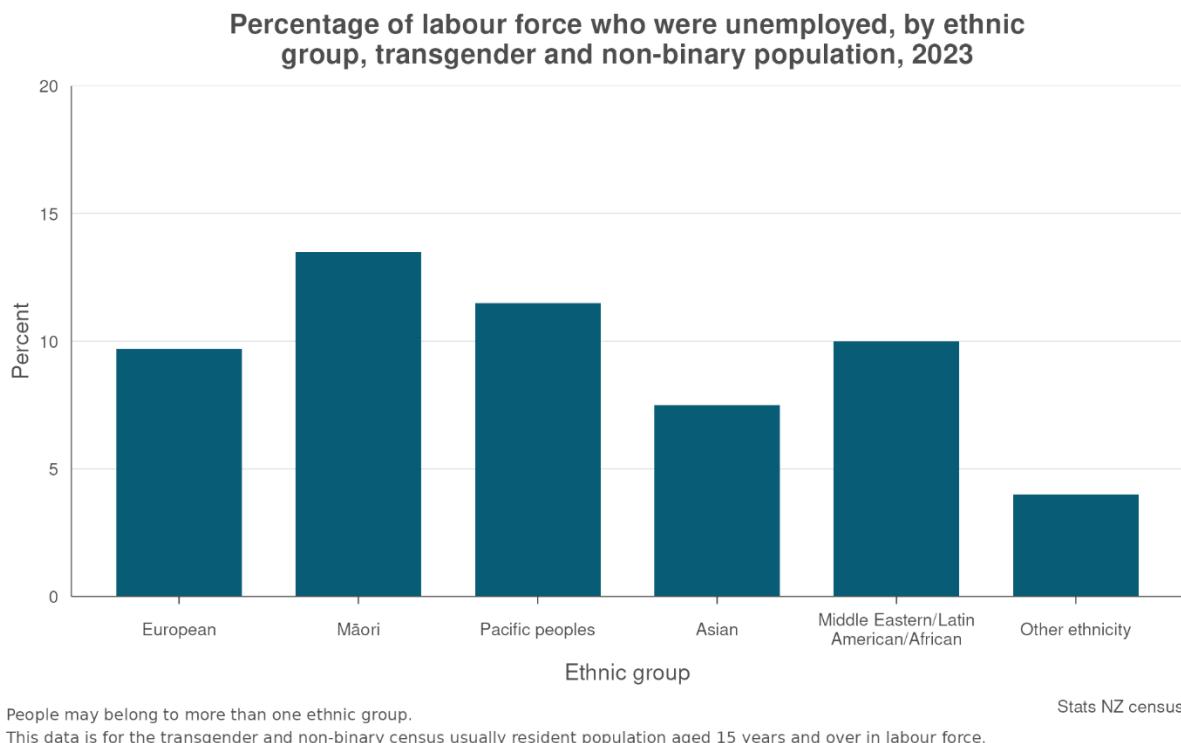
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in labour force.

Stats NZ census

Figure 5.06 shows the unemployment rate from the 2023 Census for the transgender and non-binary population by ethnic group. There were differences in unemployment for transgender and non-binary people across ethnic groups. Population sizes were too small to disaggregate these categories further by transgender men, transgender women, and transgender people of another gender.

Transgender and non-binary people in the Māori ethnic group were unemployed at the highest rate (13.5 percent), followed by those in the Pacific peoples ethnic group (11.5 percent). Transgender and non-binary people in the 'other ethnicity' ethnic group were unemployed at the lowest rate, at 4.0 percent.

Figure 5.06



Income

In this section we predominantly look at income data from the census, which is a measure of the total before-tax income from all sources in the 12 months ended 31 March 2023. In places we look at the distribution of this annual income from all sources in dollar bands, and in other places we look at the median annual income. Because income statistics are calculated for all adults, including those not in the labour force or unemployed, median figures calculated using census data can be lower than those calculated using other sources.

Census income data is not designed to be an independent measure of income, and so its use is limited (for example, we can't isolate income from wages or salary only). However, other surveys that are designed for this purpose (like the Household Economic Survey) are subject to sample error, which can make detailed disaggregation for LGBTIQ+ subgroups difficult. For this reason, we primarily rely on census data on income in this report, but we include a small amount of data on personal disposable income from the Household Economic Survey and some related measures from the General Social Survey.

Because income is influenced by age, it is important to look at income distributions for LGBTIQ+ groups across age groups. As mentioned earlier, the LGBTIQ+ population skews

much younger than the general population, and disparities in income for younger groups may be magnified in age-total comparisons.

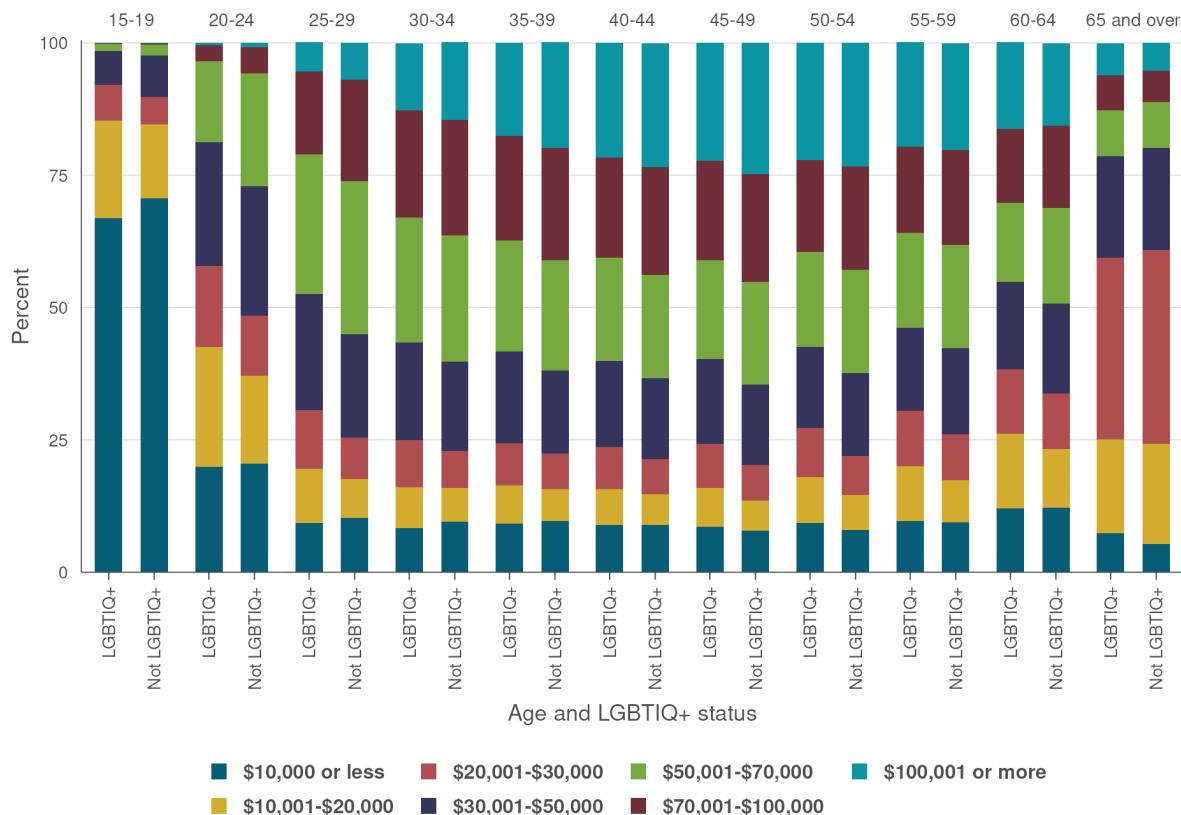
In general, LGBTIQ+ people earned less than non-LGBTIQ+ people. Looking at the LGBTIQ+ population as a whole, there is a pattern of over-representation in the lowest income bands (32.0 percent earning \$20,000 or less, compared with 24.6 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people) and under-representation in the highest income bands (21.5 percent of LGBTIQ+ people earning \$70,001 or more, compared with 27.1 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people).

Figure 5.07 compares the income distribution for the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ population across five-year age groups. The largest differences in income were among those aged 20 to 24 years, with 57.9 percent of LGBTIQ+ people in this age group earning \$30,000 or less, compared with 48.5 percent of their counterparts.

[Chapter 4: Education and training](#) shows that 29.9 percent of LGBTIQ+ people in this age group were studying full time, compared with 24.9 percent of their non-LGBTIQ+ counterparts.

Figure 5.07

Total personal income by five-year age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

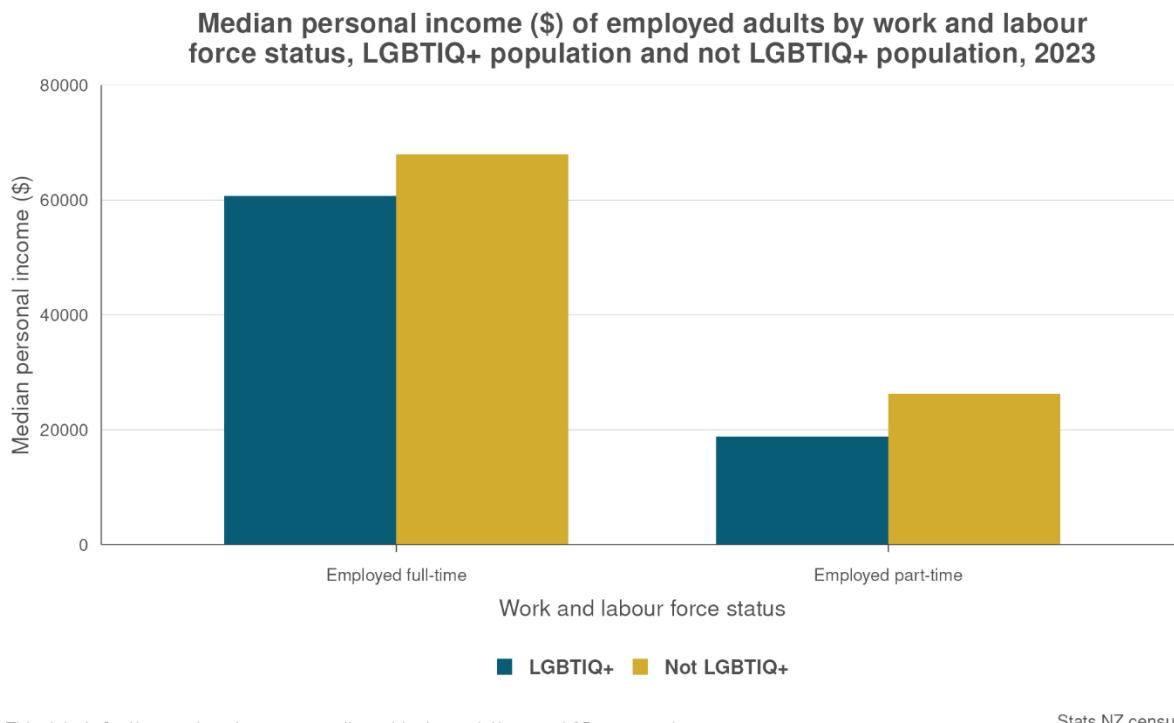
Data from the GSS might show these differences in income affecting different areas of life. For instance, LGBT+ people in the GSS reported putting up with feeling cold at a higher rate than non-LGBT+ people (35.3 percent compared with 27.5 percent), potentially indicating difficulty paying for sufficient heating. However, there were no differences in measurements of other cost-cutting behaviours, such as going without fresh fruit and vegetables or putting off going to the doctor.

The GSS also showed that more LGBT+ people had received help in the form of food, clothes, or money from a welfare/community organisation, compared with non-LGBT+ people (11.8 percent compared with 7.2 percent).¹⁰

¹⁰ LGBT+ data from the 2023 General Social Survey has been age standardised to remove age-distribution effects in analysis.

Figure 5.08 uses 2023 Census data to compare median income from all sources for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people employed full time and part time. The graph shows that this income disparity was present for both people who worked full time and people who worked part time.¹¹

Figure 5.08



In the previous section, we saw that LGBTIQ+ people were over-represented in some types of occupations and under-represented in others. The following figure (figure 5.09) shows median incomes from all sources for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people across five-year age groups who were working full time in sales occupations (as an example of an occupation type with over-representation of LGBTIQ+ people) and as technicians and trade workers (as an example of an occupation type with under-representation of LGBTIQ+ people).

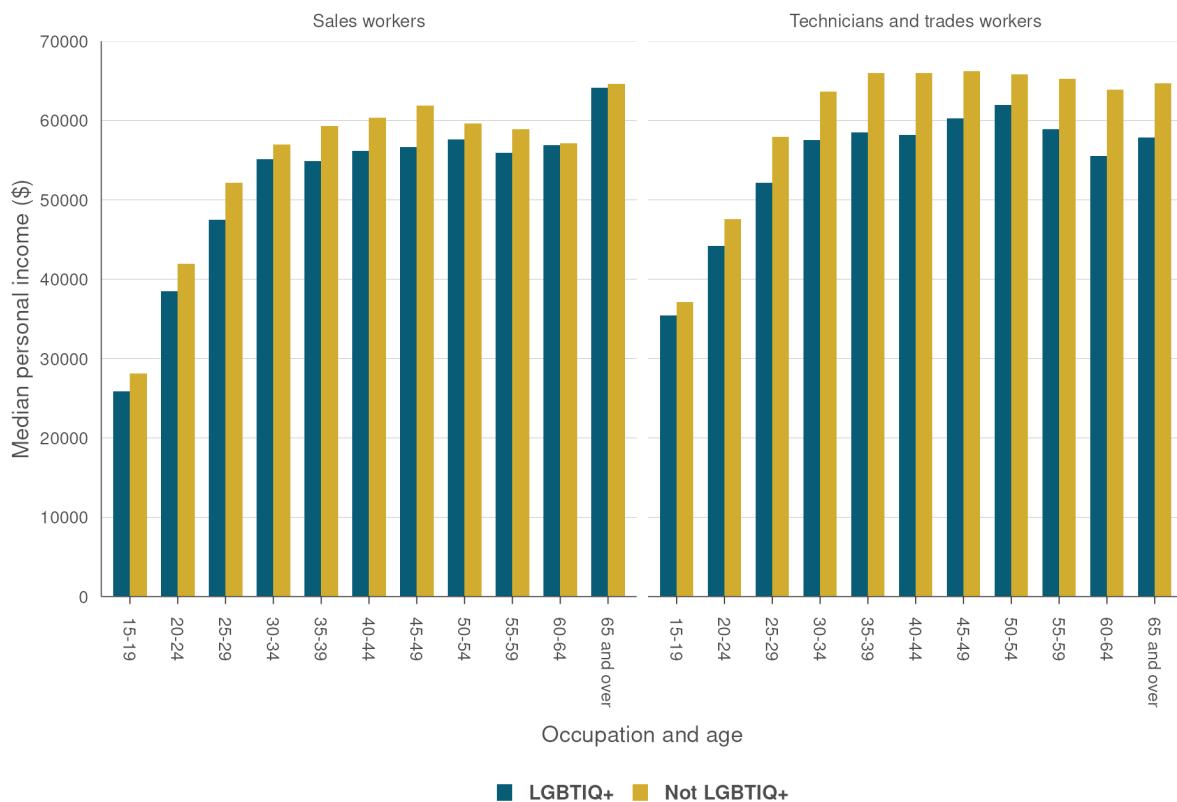
Figure 5.09 shows that after accounting for age and labour force status, LGBTIQ+ people earned less than non-LGBTIQ+ people in both sales occupations and technician and trade occupations. These types of occupations were chosen to demonstrate that differences in

¹¹ It is important to note here that data here is reflective of all sources and is not isolated to employment income only.

median income existed across occupation types, regardless of the under- or over-representation of LGBTIQ+ people within them.

Figure 5.09

Median personal income (\$) of adults employed full time in selected occupations, by five-year age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023



This data is for the employed-full-time census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in the sales workers and technicians and trades occupation groups.

Stats NZ census

Income for LGBTIQ+ people across ethnic groups

Figure 5.10 compares median income for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people by ethnic group. This shows that lower income for the LGBTIQ+ population as a whole was also consistent across ethnic groups.

Figure 5.10

**Median personal income (\$) by ethnic group, LGBTIQ+ population
and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023**



People may belong to more than one ethnic group.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

The ethnic groups with the highest and lowest median incomes were the same for the LGBTIQ+ population and non-LGBTIQ+ population. However, within ethnic groups, LGBTIQ+ people had a lower median income than non-LGBTIQ+ people for all level 1 ethnic groups. LGBTIQ+ Pacific peoples earned less than LGBTIQ+ people in other ethnic groups. Non-LGBTIQ+ Pacific peoples also had the lowest median income of the non-LGBTIQ+ population. Together with Stats NZ data published elsewhere on income across ethnic groups, we see that for ethnic groups with lower average income, there was a compounding effect for those who belong to the LGBTIQ+ population.

The comparatively low age of the LGBTIQ+ population could contribute to generally lower incomes. When disaggregated by age, income for LGBTIQ+ populations aged 30 to 64 years within each ethnic group was consistently lower than for non-LGBTIQ+ people in the same age group. There was more variability in the 15 to 29 years and 65 years and over groups. This suggests that age does not entirely explain differences in income for the LGBTIQ+ population.

Income of disabled LGBTIQ+ people

Table 5.11 provides median income figures for life-cycle age groups disaggregated by LGBTIQ+ and disability status. Note that disability status data in the census was limited and did not capture all disabilities.

[Chapter 3: Disability and activity limitations](#) has information about the limitations of this data.

These figures show that disabled people had a much lower median income than non-disabled people regardless of whether they were LGBTIQ+ or not. This was particularly pronounced for the 30 to 64-year age group, with the median income of disabled people approximately half that of non-disabled people for both the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ population.

For people who were not disabled, LGBTIQ+ people under 65 had a lower median income than non-LGBTIQ+ people. For non-disabled people aged 65 years and over, the median income of LGBTIQ+ people was slightly higher than non-LGBTIQ+ people, which may be due to this group being more likely to still be in the workforce (as presented earlier in this chapter).

However, the difference in income observed between LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people was not present for disabled people. Across all three age groups, the disabled LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations had similar median incomes. For 30 to 64-year-olds, disabled LGBTIQ+ people had a slightly *higher* median income than disabled non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Table 5.11

Median personal income (\$), by disability status and life-cycle age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023				
Life-cycle age group	LGBTIQ+		Not LGBTIQ+	
	Disabled	Not disabled	Disabled	Not disabled
	Median (\$)			
15–29 years	18,300	23,400	18,700	24,400
30–64 years	32,200	58,800	30,100	61,500
65 years and over	23,700	28,200	23,800	27,300

Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

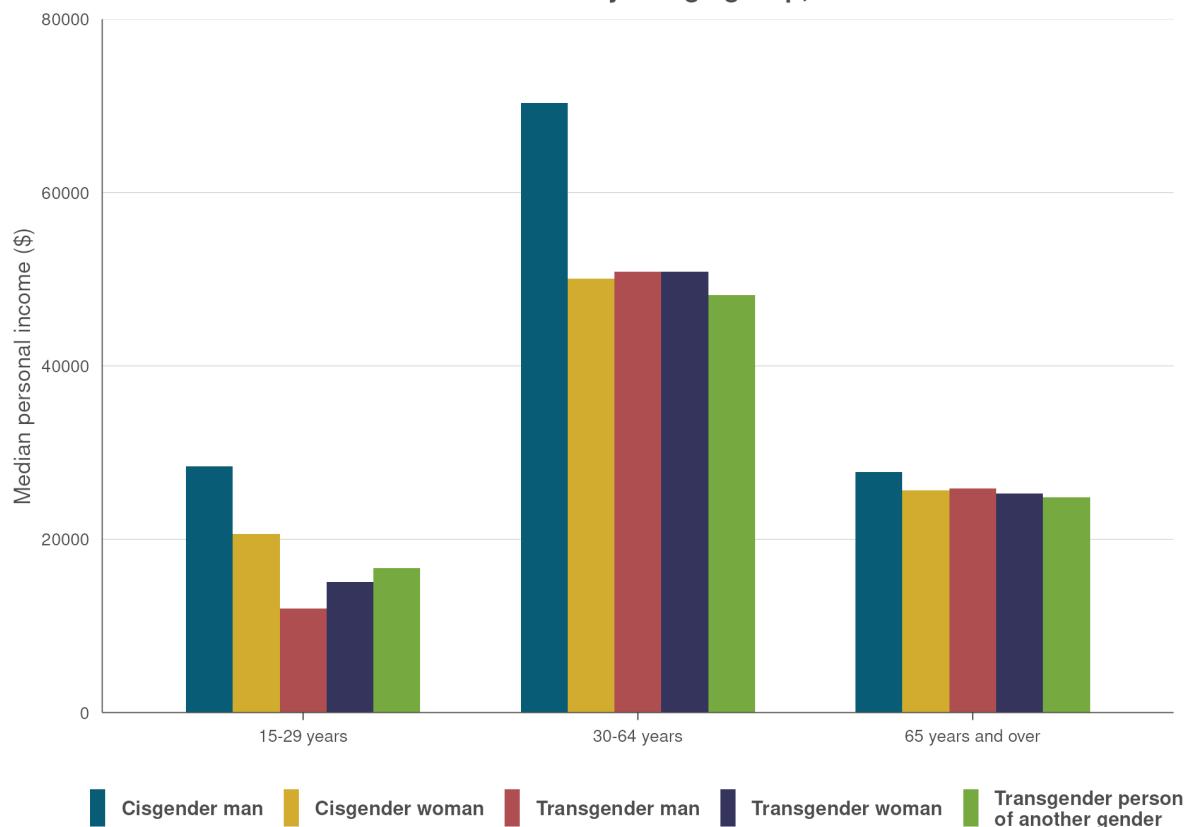
Income for gender minorities

Patterns in income between minority gender categories were also evident across age groups.

Figure 5.11 compares the median income of cisgender and transgender populations within each life-cycle age group. For those aged 15 to 29 years, all transgender and non-binary populations earned less than both cisgender populations. Transgender men had the lowest median income in this age group (\$12,000). Transgender women had a median income of \$15,100, and transgender people of another gender had a median income of \$16,700.

Figure 5.11

Median personal income (\$), by cisgender and transgender status and life-cycle age group, 2023



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

In the 30 to 64-year and 65+ age groups, the median incomes of all transgender and non-binary groups were comparable to each other and also comparable to the median income of cisgender women. Cisgender men earned the most across all age groups. The median

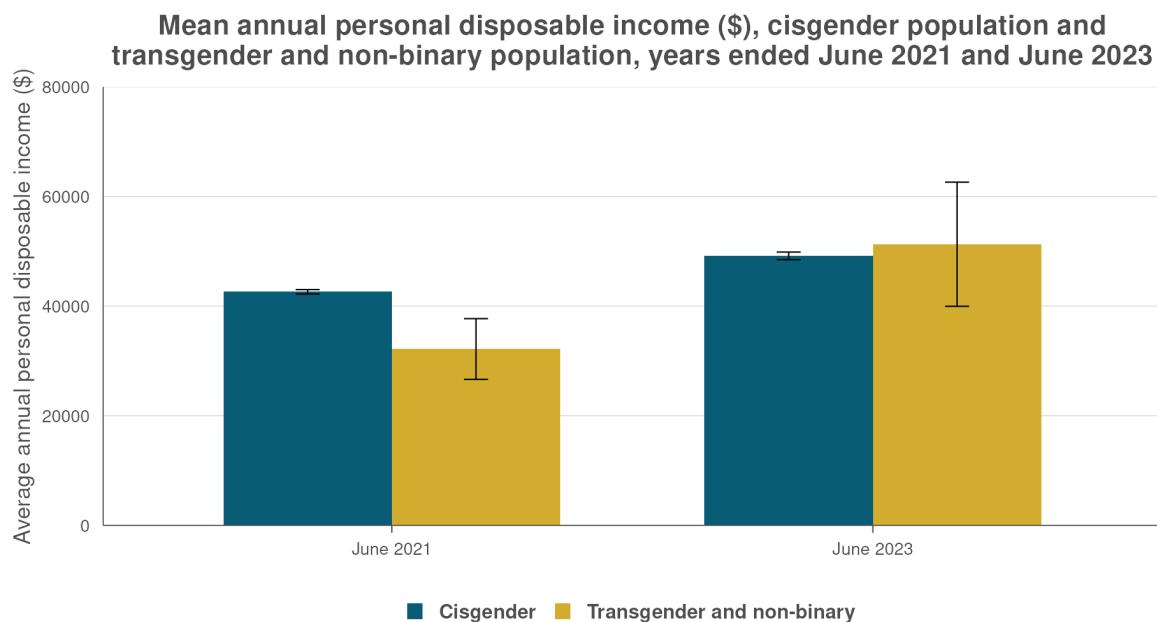
income from the census data is for all adults, not just those who are employed. As such, differences in employment between cisgender men and women are likely to affect median incomes.

Recently published median income data for transgender and non-binary groups through the 2022 Counting Ourselves survey found that in general, transgender men had a lower median annual income than non-binary people and transgender women (Yee, 2025).

Data on personal disposable income is collected in the Household Economic Survey (HES). Personal disposable income is income after housing costs are deducted, which provides insight into the amount of money people have available for other expenses. Since the last published HES release on LGBT+ populations (for the year ended June 2021), changes have been observed in the income comparisons between groups. As discussed above, income is influenced by age, and because of this we have age adjusted HES data for this topic.

Figure 5.12 shows the age-adjusted mean annual personal disposable income of the cisgender population and the transgender and non-binary population, for the years ended June 2021 and 2023. This data is from HES. In the year ended June 2023, the age-adjusted annual mean personal disposable income for the transgender and non-binary population was not different to that of the cisgender population. However, there was a difference in the age-adjusted income figures for 2021, with a mean annual personal disposable income for transgender and non-binary people of \$32,172, and a mean annual personal disposable income for cisgender people of \$42,611.

Figure 5.12



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

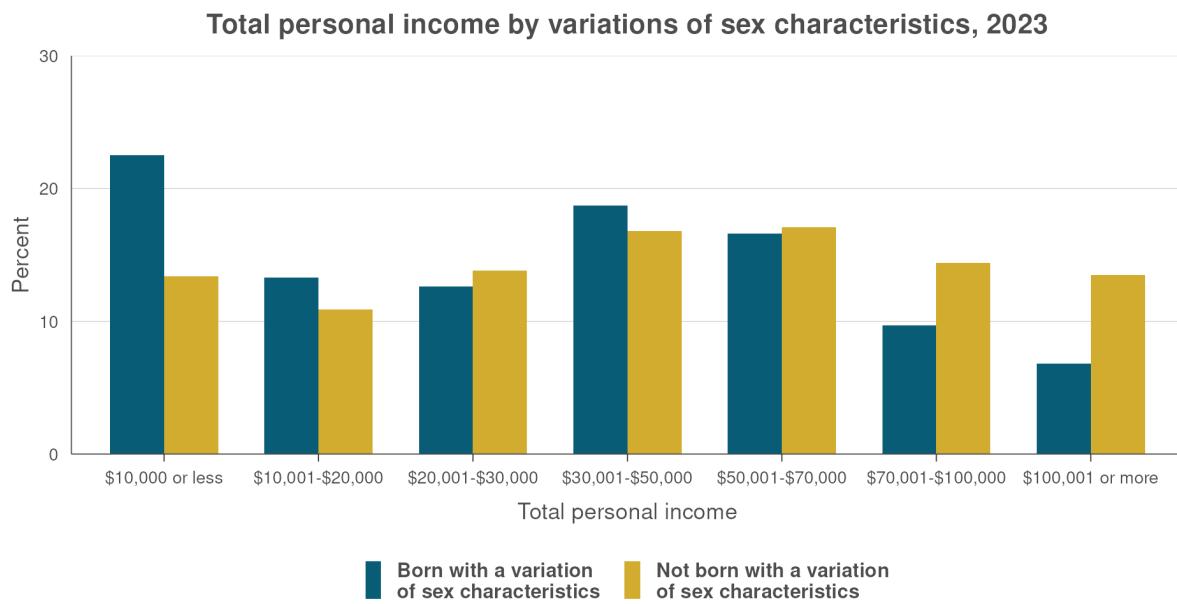
Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

There was no difference in the mean annual personal disposable income for sexual minorities compared with the heterosexual or straight population for the years ended 2021 and 2023.

Income for those born with variations of sex characteristics

Figure 5.13 compares the income distribution of people who were born with and without variations of sex characteristics. Of people who were born with a variation of sex characteristics, 22.5 percent earned \$10,000 or less, compared with 13.4 percent of people who knew they were not born with a variation of sex characteristics. Proportions of those earning in middle income bands were similar across the two groups, and people born with a variation of sex characteristics were less likely to earn in the top income bands (\$70,001 to \$100,000 and \$100,001 and over) than people who knew they were not born with a variation of sex characteristics.

Figure 5.13

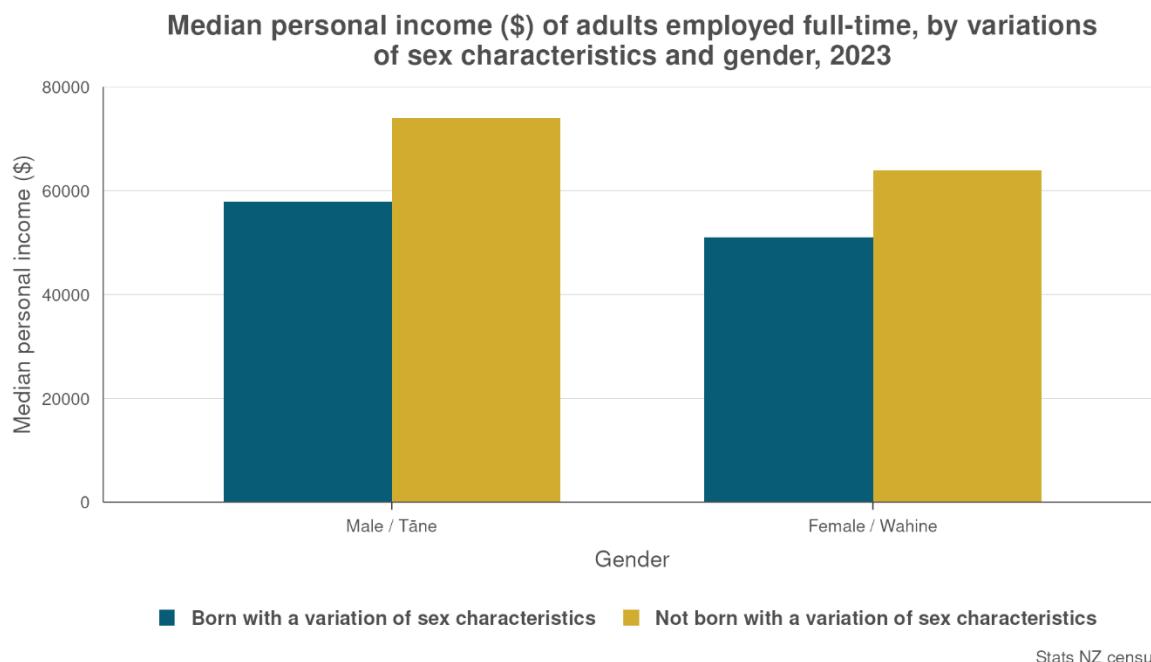


This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Figure 5.14 shows median personal income for people working full-time who were born with, and who were not born with, variations of sex characteristics, disaggregated by gender. The graph shows that within each population, men tended to earn more than women, though people born with a variation of sex characteristics, as a group, still tended to earn less than those not born with a variation of sex characteristics.

Figure 5.14



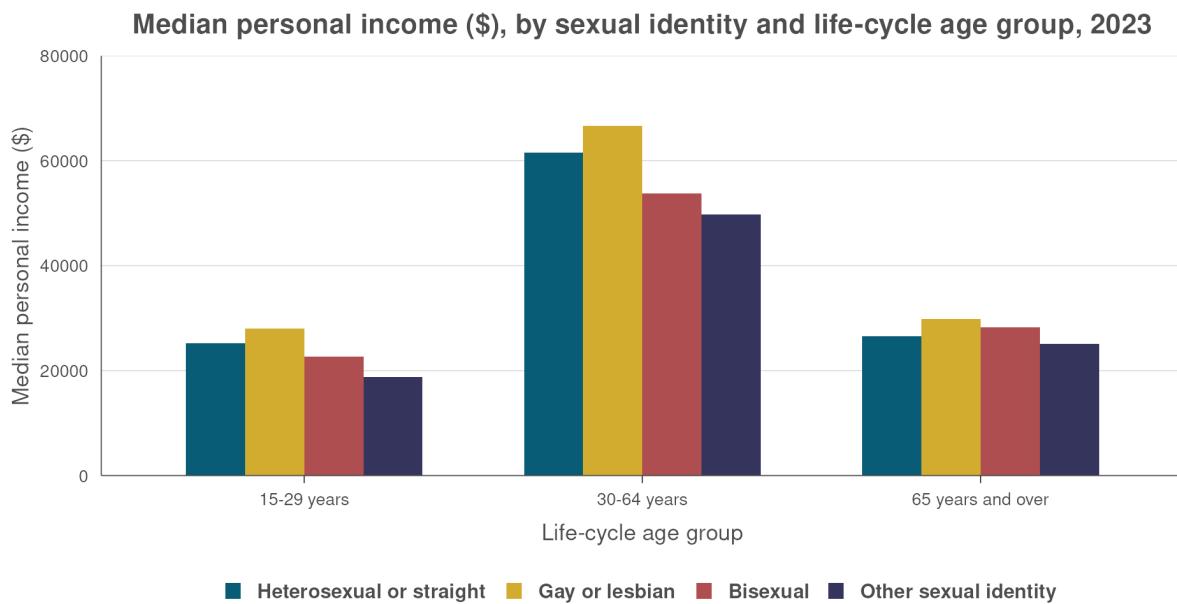
Due to the small size of the populations, median income by gender and intersex status have been produced for men and women only. This data is for the employed-full-time census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Income by sexual identity

Within sexual identity categories, bisexual people and those with other sexual identities earned the least on average, across age groups and geographies.

Figure 5.15 compares median personal income across sexual identity and life-cycle age groups. Across ages 15 to 64 years, heterosexual or straight and gay or lesbian people tended to earn more than all other groups represented. Gay or lesbian people tended to earn slightly more on average than heterosexual or straight people across all ages. This mirrors findings in literature internationally (Badgett et al, 2024). People with other sexual identities had the lowest median income across all ages.

Figure 5.15



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Table 5.12 shows that this pattern was seen in most urban and rural areas. The difference in median income between heterosexual or straight people and gay or lesbian people was largest in major urban areas (\$6,900), followed by medium urban areas (\$6,100).

Table 5.12

Median personal income (\$) by urban rural indicator, heterosexual population and gay/lesbian population, 2023

Urban rural indicator	Heterosexual or straight	Gay or lesbian
	Median (\$)	
Major urban area	47,500	54,400
Large urban area	41,900	44,600
Medium urban area	41,900	48,000
Small urban area	38,200	43,700
Rural settlement	38,700	42,700
Rural other	46,300	43,600

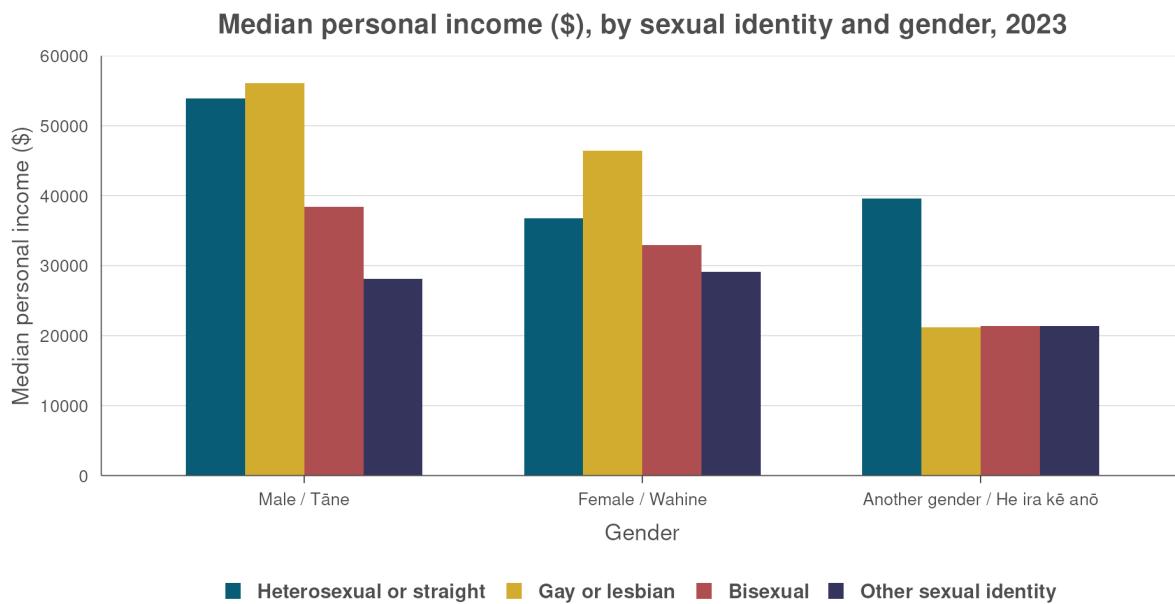
Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over who were heterosexual or straight, or gay or lesbian.

Source: Stats NZ census

Gender distributions within sexual minority populations may impact overall differences. For example, the bisexual population had a very uneven gender distribution, with 73.2 percent women, 22.7 percent men, and 4.1 percent people of another gender.

Figure 5.16 compares median personal income by sexual identity and gender. The graph shows that men and women who were gay or lesbian had a higher median income than people of the same gender with other sexual identities. However, heterosexual or straight people of another gender had a much higher median income than people of another gender with minority sexual identities.

Figure 5.16



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Gay men had the highest median annual income across all groups, at \$56,100. Of people with other sexual identities, women had the highest median income, at \$29,100. People of another gender with minority sexual identities had the lowest median incomes, at \$21,200 for gay or lesbian people, and \$21,400 for bisexual people and those with another sexual identity.

As we saw from the occupation data earlier in this chapter, gay or lesbian people were more likely than heterosexual or straight people to work as professionals, and less likely to work in technician or trade occupations or as labourers. Technician and trade occupations and labourer occupations have tended to carry lower average wages than professionals (Stats NZ, 2022b), which may partially contribute to higher incomes for gay or lesbian men and women. Factors could also include the decreased likelihood for gay or lesbian people to have dependent children in the home, as seen in [8: Families and households](#), leading to

higher earning potential or less time out of the workforce, especially for women who more frequently take time out of the workforce for childcare reasons (Ministry for Women, 2023).

Unpaid activities

In the census, we asked people about their unpaid activities over the four weeks before they completed the census. There is currently no body of research into unpaid activities of LGBTIQ+ people in New Zealand. This data highlights potential avenues for future research in this area. We highlight findings about those looking after someone who is ill or has a disability, and those volunteering through an organisation, group, or marae. We then highlight a particular finding about rates of unpaid childcare among LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ populations.

In the data, looking after someone who is ill or has a disability is represented in two ways:

- looking after a member of one's own household who is ill or has a disability
- helping someone who is ill or has a disability, who is not a member of one's own household.

Across all age groups, ethnicities, and types of urban and rural geography, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to engage in helping someone who was ill or had a disability. Figure 5.17 shows the percentages of the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations who had looked after or helped someone who was ill or had a disability, by five-year age group. This is shown separately for looking after a member of one's own household, and for helping someone who is not a member of one's own household.

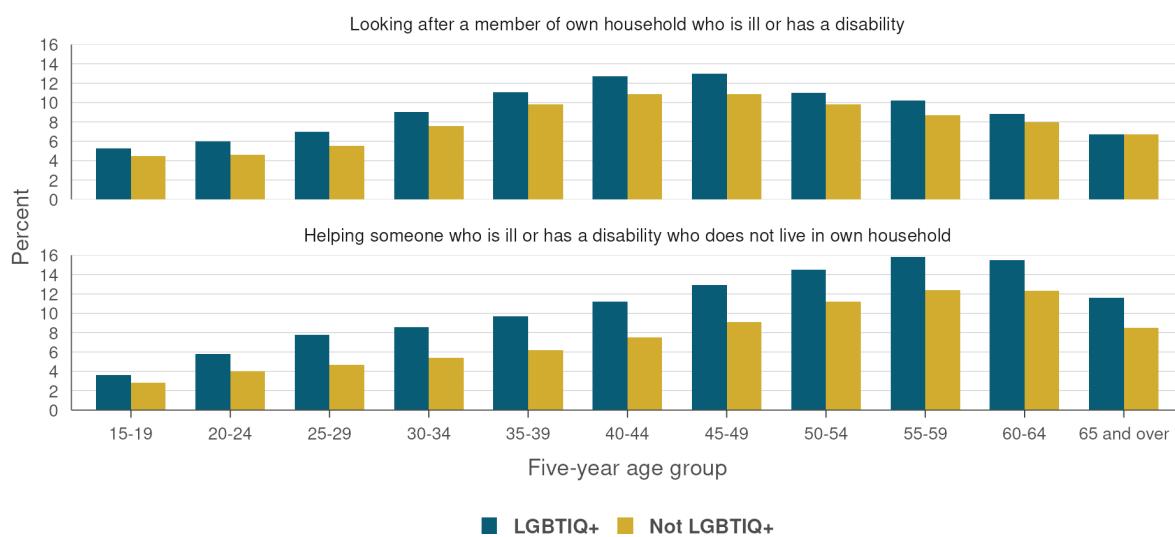
LGBTIQ+ people were more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to look after a household member who is ill or has a disability across most ages. For those 65 and over, LGBTIQ+ people and non-LGBTIQ+ people looked after ill or disabled household members at a similar rate. LGBTIQ+ people of all ages were also much more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to help someone who was ill or had a disability, who was not a member of their household. Rates of helping someone who was not a member of their own household were particularly high for LGBTIQ+ people in older age groups.

It's possible that LGBTIQ+ people being more likely to care for someone who is ill or disabled is linked to the higher rates of disability and activity limitations in the LGBTIQ+ population.

However, the census data does not provide information about the LGBTIQ+ status of the person or people being cared for.

Figure 5.17

Percentage of population who looked after or helped someone who was ill or had a disability, by five-year age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023

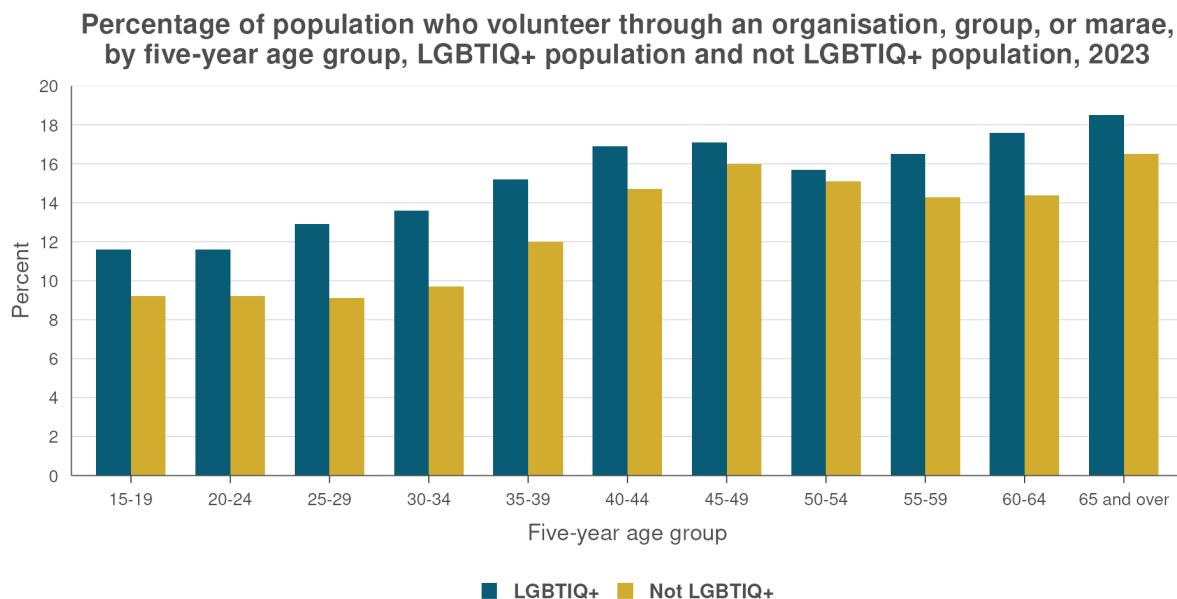


People may help both a household member and a non-household member and will be counted for both. This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Figure 5.18 compares the percentage of LGBTIQ+ and not LGBTIQ+ people in each five-year age group who had volunteered through an organisation, group, or marae. LGBTIQ+ people were also consistently more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to volunteer through an organisation, group, or marae across all age groups.

Figure 5.18



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Unpaid childcare

In the data about unpaid activities, childcare is represented in two ways:

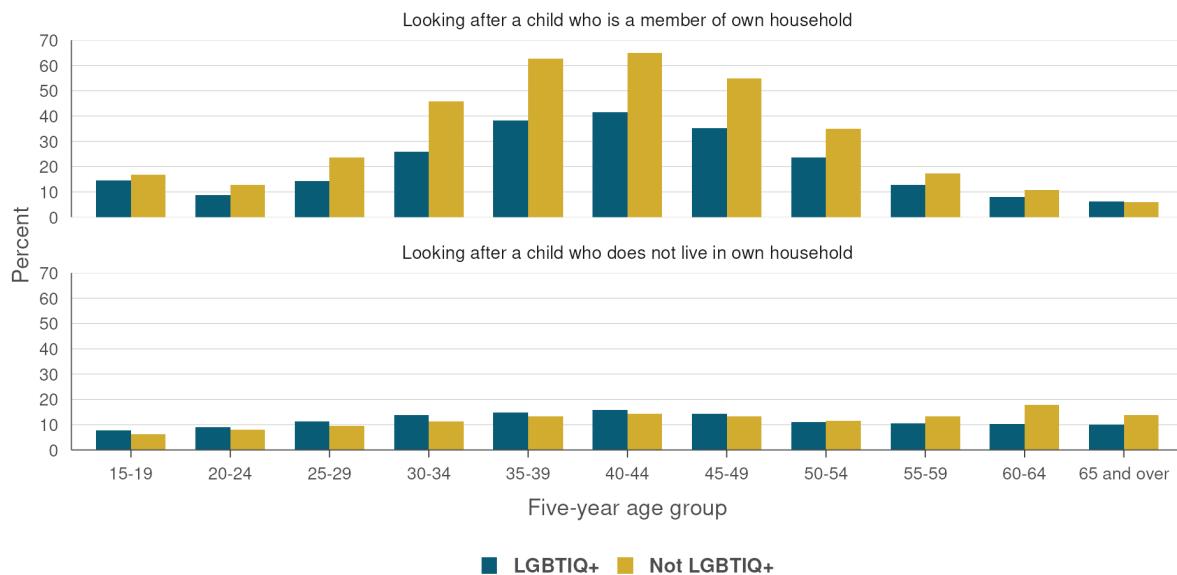
- someone looking after a child who is a member of their own household
- someone looking after a child who is not a member of their own household.

Figure 5.19 shows the percentages of the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations who had looked after a child, by five-year age group. This is shown separately for looking after a child in one's own household, and for looking after a child who is not a member of one's own household. The graph shows that for all age groups except those 65 years and over, LGBTIQ+ people were much less likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to look after a child who was a member of their household. However, between ages 15 and 49, LGBTIQ+ people were slightly more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to look after a child who was *not* a member of their household. Despite younger LGBTIQ+ people being less likely to have their own children compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people, as seen in [8: Families and households](#), this data shows that they still engage in childcare activities.

Increased care of children in other households among non-LGBTIQ+ people over age 55 may be impacted by higher likelihood of having children than LGBTIQ+ people, and therefore higher likelihood of caring for grandchildren.

Figure 5.19

**Percentage of population who looked after a child, by five-year age group,
LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023**



People may look after both children in their household and not in their household and will be counted for both.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Summary

This chapter has explored work and income, and unpaid activities for LGBTIQ+ people in New Zealand. The interaction of multiple demographic factors was evident in workforce behaviour and economic outcomes for LGBTIQ+ people.

Here are the key work and income findings for the LGBTIQ+ population:

- Employed LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be employees than non-LGBTIQ+ people, and less likely to be employers or self-employed without employees.
- LGBTIQ+ people aged 15 to 34 years were more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to work part time, and less likely to work full time. Levels of part- and full-time work for both populations aged 35 to 59 years were comparable.
- A higher proportion of LGBTIQ+ people aged 65 years and over were employed compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people in the same age group.
- The most common occupation types for LGBTIQ+ people were professionals, community and personal service workers, and sales workers. The least common types were labourers, managers, and technician and trades workers.

- LGBTIQ+ people had higher rates of unemployment across all age groups and ethnic groups. These differences were larger for transgender and non-binary people than sexual minorities.
- As a whole, the LGBTIQ+ population earned less than the non-LGBTIQ+ population – this was consistent across age groups and within occupations.
- Transgender and non-binary people generally earned less than cisgender people.
- Unlike bisexual people or those with another minority sexual identity, gay or lesbian people tended to earn more than heterosexual or straight people.
- Across all age groups, ethnicities, and types of urban and rural geography, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to engage in helping someone who was ill or had a disability. They were also consistently more likely than non-LGBTIQ+ people to help or volunteer through an organisation, group, or marae across all age groups.

6 Wellbeing

Wellbeing statistics give a picture of social wellbeing in the population of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The main source of data on wellbeing in this report is the 2023 General Social Survey (GSS). This data was based both on people's assessments of their own lives, such as how satisfied they were, and objective information, such as their labour force status. As an essential part of measuring quality of life, the OECD has produced [OECD guidelines on measuring subjective wellbeing](#).

This chapter explores key measures of subjective wellbeing, such as life satisfaction, eudaimonia (sense of life being worthwhile), and affect (how people are feeling). It also looks at other factors that influence quality of life, such as experience of discrimination, social contact, mental and physical health (including anxiety and depression statistics from the Household Economic Survey (HES)), and smoking behaviour. Appendix 2 lists a number of resources, services, and support organisations related to issues raised in this report.

While we have endeavoured to provide as much detail as possible, this data comes from sample surveys, and therefore it is not possible to produce the detailed cross-tabulations with other demographic concepts that are possible with census data.

Where sample-survey data is shown in graphs in this chapter, sample errors are presented as 95 percent confidence intervals. That is, we are 95 percent confident that the 'true' population value lies in the range of the estimate +/- the sample error. For more information about sample survey data in this report, see [About the data](#).

Neither the HES nor GSS surveys collect data on variations of sex characteristics, so there is no data on this concept from these sources.

The GSS data has been age adjusted to account for differences in the age distributions of the LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ populations. As the *Wellbeing statistics: 2023* data release was not age adjusted, some figures in this report may not align with those published in the official release. For information on the differences in age distribution for these populations, see [1: Population structure](#).

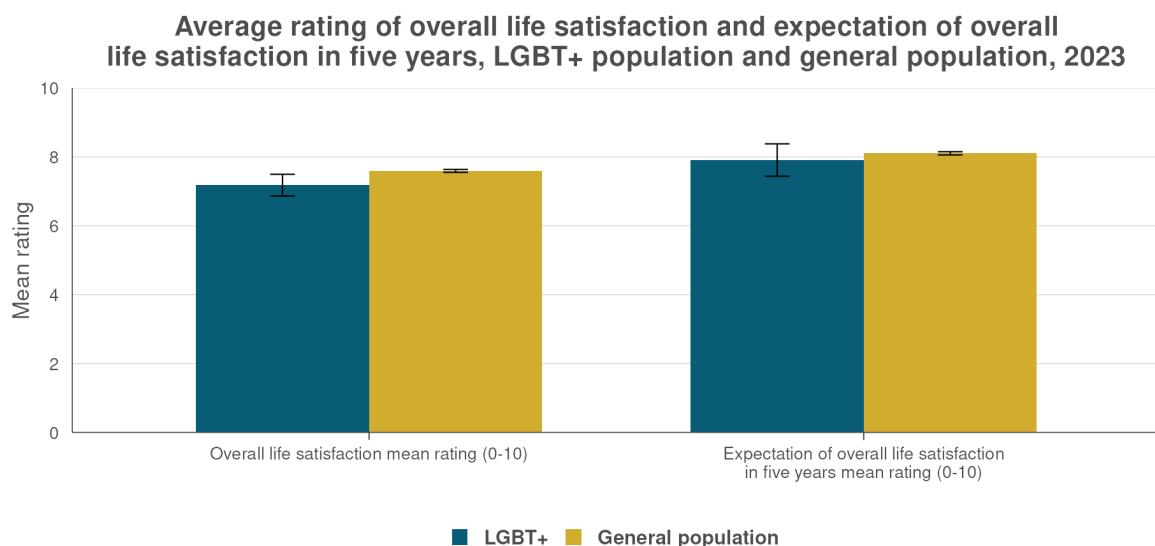
The size of the GSS sample typically does not allow for detailed breakdowns of groups within the LGBT+ population by age. This data has also been significance tested, so where a difference has been noted, that difference has been determined to be statistically significant.

[About the data](#) has more information on how sample-survey sources of this data differ to census data.

Life satisfaction

Figure 6.01 shows the average rating of overall life satisfaction and also the expectation of overall life satisfaction in five years for the LGBT+ population and the general population from age-adjusted GSS data. In 2023, LGBT+ people rated their overall life satisfaction on average (mean) at 7.2 out of 10. This was lower, on average, than the total population. However, their average expectation of life satisfaction in five years' time was not different from the total population, which could indicate similar levels of optimism for the future as the total population.

Figure 6.01



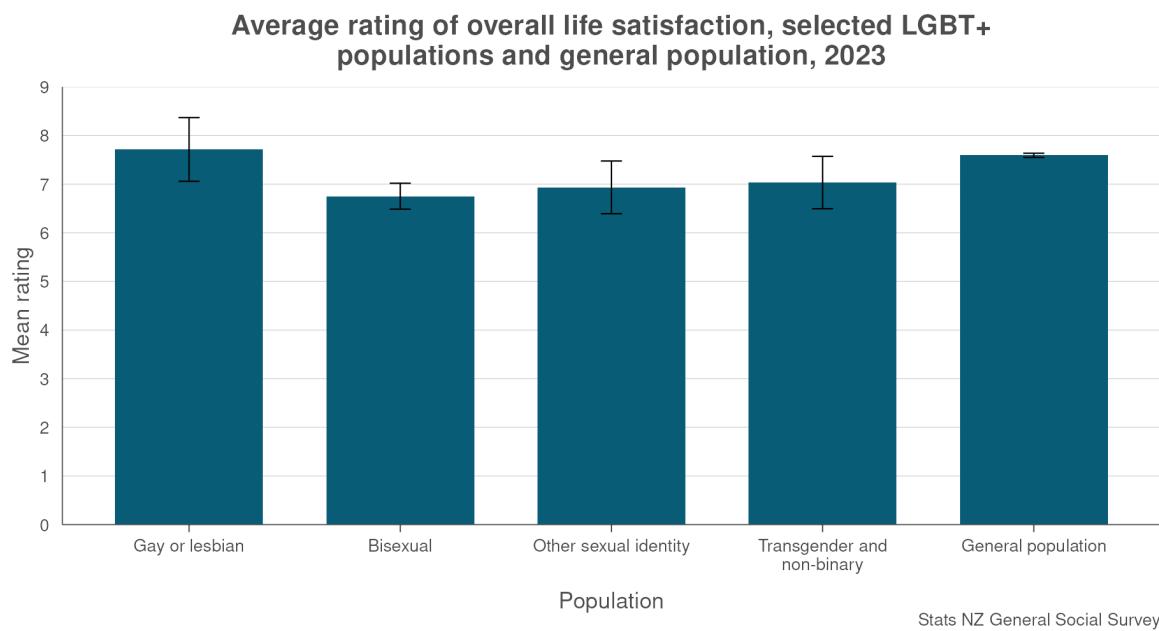
Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for usual residents in private dwellings aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ General Social Survey

Figure 6.02 shows the average rating of overall life satisfaction for selected LGBT+ populations and the general population from age-adjusted GSS data. Gay or lesbian people

rated their overall life satisfaction at a similar level on average to the general population (7.7 out of 10 compared to 7.6 out of 10), but bisexual people rated their overall life satisfaction lower than these groups at 6.8 out of 10. On average, transgender and non-binary people rated their overall life satisfaction as 7.0 out of 10, lower than the general population at 7.6 out of 10.

Figure 6.02



Estimates have been age adjusted. People may be counted as both a sexual minority and transgender and non-binary. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for usual residents in private dwellings aged 15 years and over.

Another key measure of subjective wellbeing is having a sense that what you do in life is worthwhile. LGBT+ people were on average less likely to feel things they did in their lives were worthwhile, at 7.4 out of 10, compared with 8.0 out of 10 for non-LGBT+ people.

The GSS also found differences in affect (how people were feeling) between the LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ populations. LGBT+ people reported lower average levels of happiness felt the previous day, at 6.9 out of 10 (where 0 is 'not at all happy' and 10 is 'completely happy'), compared with non-LGBT+ people, at 7.7 out of 10. LGBT+ people also reported higher average levels of anxiety felt the previous day, at 3.8 out of 10 (where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious'), compared with 2.9 out of 10 for non-LGBT+ people.

Only 70.2 percent of LGBT+ people reported finding it easy or very easy to express their identity, compared with over three-quarters of non-LGBT+ people (76.6 percent).

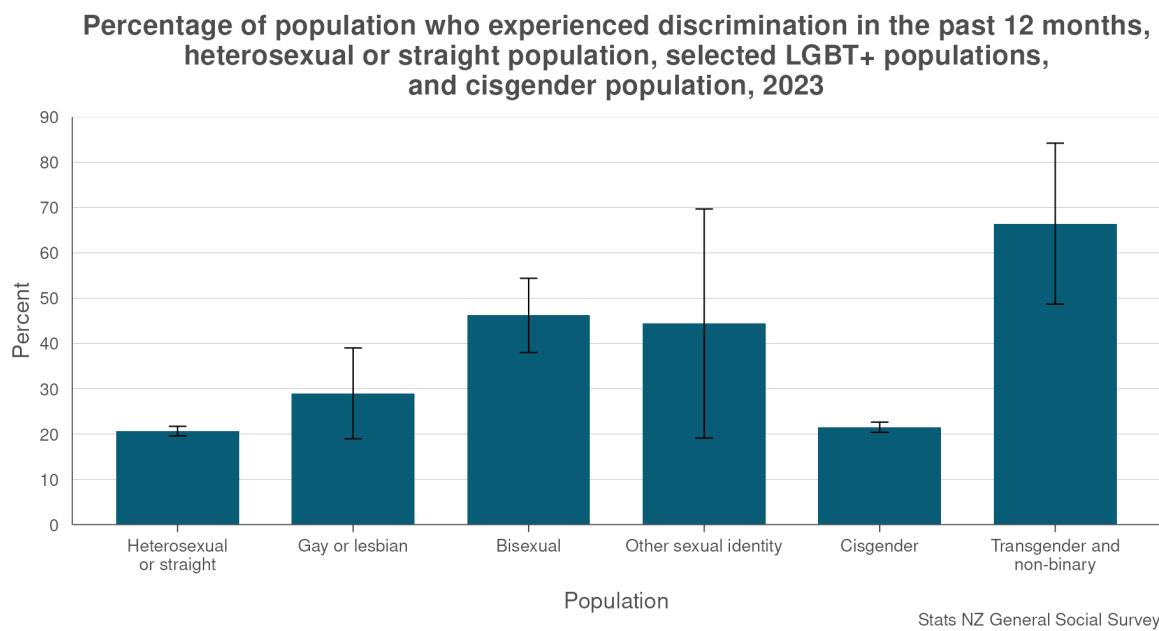
Throughout this report, where LGBT+ people experience material wellbeing challenges, these disparities were often found to be more pronounced for transgender and non-binary people and bisexual groups. This appears to be reflected in some subjective wellbeing measures. For instance, on average, bisexual people rated their sense of control as 6.5 out of 10, lower than both the total population, at 7.4 out of 10, and the whole LGBT+ population, at 6.9 out of 10.

Discrimination and trust in institutions

The GSS found that 40.3 percent of LGBT+ people had experienced some form of discrimination in the last 12 months, nearly double that of the non-LGBT+ people (20.5 percent). Figure 6.03 shows the percentage of different populations that have experienced discrimination in the past 12 months from age-adjusted GSS data. This is shown for the heterosexual or straight population, minority sexual identities, the transgender and non-binary population, and the cisgender population. The rates were higher for transgender and non-binary people (66.5 percent), compared with cisgender people (21.5 percent).

[PRISM](#), a 2020 report on human rights issues for people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions, also noted the increased experience of hate speech and hate crimes against LGBTIQ+ people (Human Rights Commission of New Zealand, 2020). Since 2020, informed by a rise in mis- and disinformation targeting rainbow people, there has been a marked increase in both hate speech and hate crime in Aotearoa (Hattotuwa et al, 2023).

Figure 6.03



Estimates have been age adjusted. People may be counted in both a sexual identity group and a cisgender/transgender and non-binary group. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for usual residents in private dwellings aged 15 years and over.

LGBT+ people had lower average levels of trust¹² in 5 of the 6 following key institutions (all except media¹³) measured in the GSS, compared with non-LGBT+ people:

- the police (6.8 compared with 7.5 out of 10)
- the courts (6.0 compared with 6.5 out of 10)
- the education system (6.0 compared with 6.3 out of 10)
- the health system (5.8 compared with 6.2 out of 10)
- parliament (4.5 compared with 5.0 out of 10).

LGBT+ people also had a lower average sense of belonging to New Zealand, at 7.8, compared with 8.2 out of 10 for non-LGBT+ people.

Research by the OECD (OECD, 2024) noted perception of discrimination as well as a sense of active participation in public discourse and decision-making (which may align with a sense of belonging) were both factors influencing levels of institutional trust.

¹² [The Living Standards Framework \(LSF\) 2021](#), by the Treasury, notes the importance of trust in both institutions and individuals for societal wellbeing.

¹³ There was no statistically significant difference in level of trust for the media between LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ people.

Despite reporting lower levels of institutional trust, there was no difference in the average level of generalised trust for people in New Zealand between LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ people.

The GSS also found no significant difference in fear of crime or assault between LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ people, despite the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey consistently showing that LGBT+ individuals experience higher levels of victimisation than non-LGBT+ individuals (NZCSV, 2022). Findings from Counting Ourselves 2022 also showed that “in the last four years, 19.0 percent of participants had received threats of physical violence because they were trans or non-binary. One in 10 (10.0 percent) had faced attempts at physical violence, and 8.0 percent experienced deliberate physical violence because they were trans or non-binary” (Counting Ourselves, 2022).

A greater proportion of LGBT+ people, compared with non-LGBT+ people, felt comfortable or very comfortable about a new neighbour who:

- was a different sexual orientation (90.6 percent compared with 84.3 percent)
- had a mental illness (67.4 percent compared with 55.0 percent)
- had a disability or long-term health condition (89.8 percent compared with 84.8 percent).

Social contact, loneliness, and support

The GSS asks questions about social contact and loneliness, including relationships with family and friends. Several recent studies of experiences of LGBT+ people in New Zealand have shown that for some, relationships with family can be fraught (Fenaughty et al, 2022; Fenaughty et al, 2023; Veale et al, 2022). In some cases, LGBT+ people may feel uncomfortable or unable to disclose their identity to their families. Some families may feel unable or unwilling to accept or support LGBT+ relatives.

Results from the recently released 2022 Counting Ourselves study illustrated the importance of family.

Having a supportive family can play a crucial role in good mental health. Participants who said most or all of their family members were supportive of their gender were twice as likely

to report very good or excellent mental health (16 percent), compared with those who said about half, most, or all of their family members were unsupportive (8 percent). (Counting Ourselves, 2022.)

It is important to note that ‘family’ was self-defined in the GSS and includes those the respondent thinks of as their family. The data discussed in this section excludes those who could not define their family or did not have a family. LGBT+ people (and others) sometimes talk about ‘chosen’ or ‘found’ family, which describes “non-biological kinship bonds, whether legally recognized or not, deliberately chosen for the purpose of mutual support and love” (Gates, 2017). Respondents in GSS could be referring to biological family, chosen family, or both.

Data from GSS showed that on average, LGBT+ people rated their family wellbeing as 7.0 out of 10, compared with 7.6 out of 10 for non-LGBT+ people.

When asked about their families:

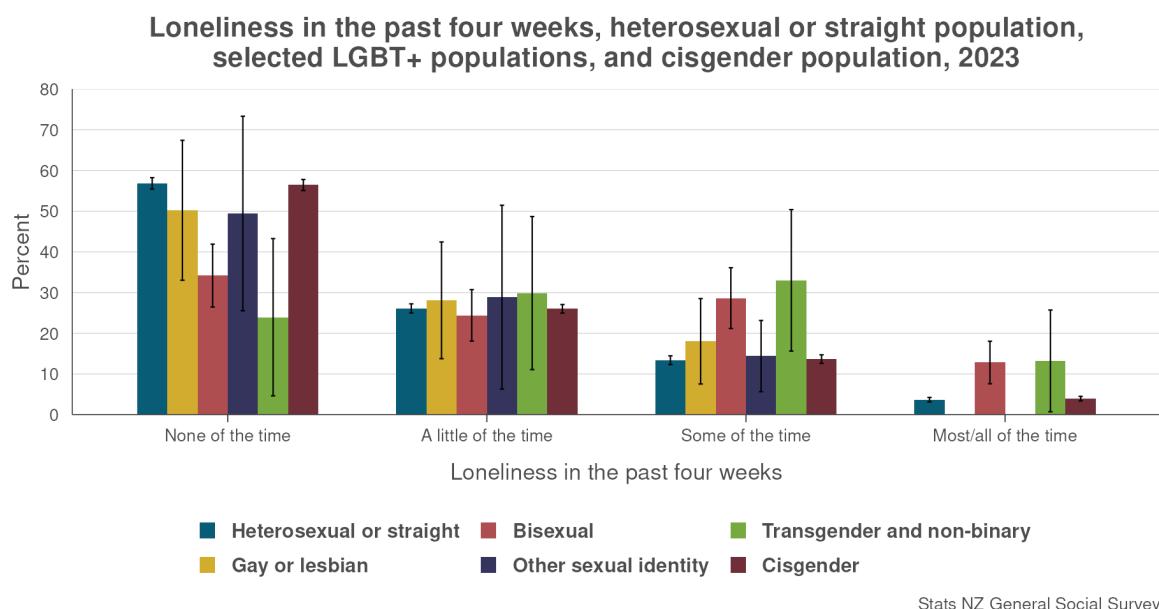
- 92.5 percent of LGBT+ people agreed or strongly agreed that in times of crisis, their family can turn to each other for support
- 91.0 percent of LGBT+ people agreed or strongly agreed that individuals are accepted for who they are
- 87.5 percent of LGBT+ people agreed or strongly agreed that their family were able to confide in one another
- 68.9 percent of LGBT+ people felt they had about the right amount of contact with family
- 68.2 percent of LGBT+ people felt they had about the right amount of contact with friends.

One-third (32.8 percent) of transgender and non-binary people had face-to-face contact with family at least once a week, which was a lower proportion than cisgender people at 58.3 percent. Rates of non-face-to-face contact (phone, video, or written conversations) with family and friends were similar between cisgender and transgender and non-binary people.

In 2023, 8.3 percent of LGBT+ people reported having felt lonely most or all of the time in the past four weeks, which was more than double the percentage of non-LGBT+ people (3.7 percent).

Figure 6.04 shows the frequency that different populations reported feeling lonely in the four weeks leading up to the survey. This is shown for the heterosexual or straight population, selected LGBT+ populations, and the cisgender population, using age-adjusted GSS data. Less than one-quarter (23.9 percent) of transgender and non-binary people never felt lonely, compared with more than half of cisgender people (56.4 percent) who never felt lonely. Bisexual people were more likely to report feeling lonely some of the time (28.6 percent) or most/all of the time (12.8 percent) than heterosexual or straight people (13.4 and 3.7 percent). They were also less likely to report never feeling lonely (34.2 percent) than heterosexual or straight people (56.8 percent).

Figure 6.04



Estimates have been age adjusted. People may be counted in both a sexual identity group and a cisgender/transgender and non-binary group. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies.

This data is for usual residents in private dwellings aged 15 years and over. Some values in this figure have been suppressed where the sample size was too small to produce reliable estimates.

Members of the LGBT+ population found it harder to ask for support.

In 2023, nearly half (48.7 percent) of transgender and non-binary people felt that it would be easy or very easy to ask for support if they felt depressed or needed someone to talk to, compared with over two-thirds (67.6 percent) of cisgender people. Nearly two-thirds (65.4

percent) of LGBT+ people felt that it would be easy or very easy to ask for support if they urgently needed a place to stay, compared with over three-quarters (76.6 percent) of non-LGBT+ people.

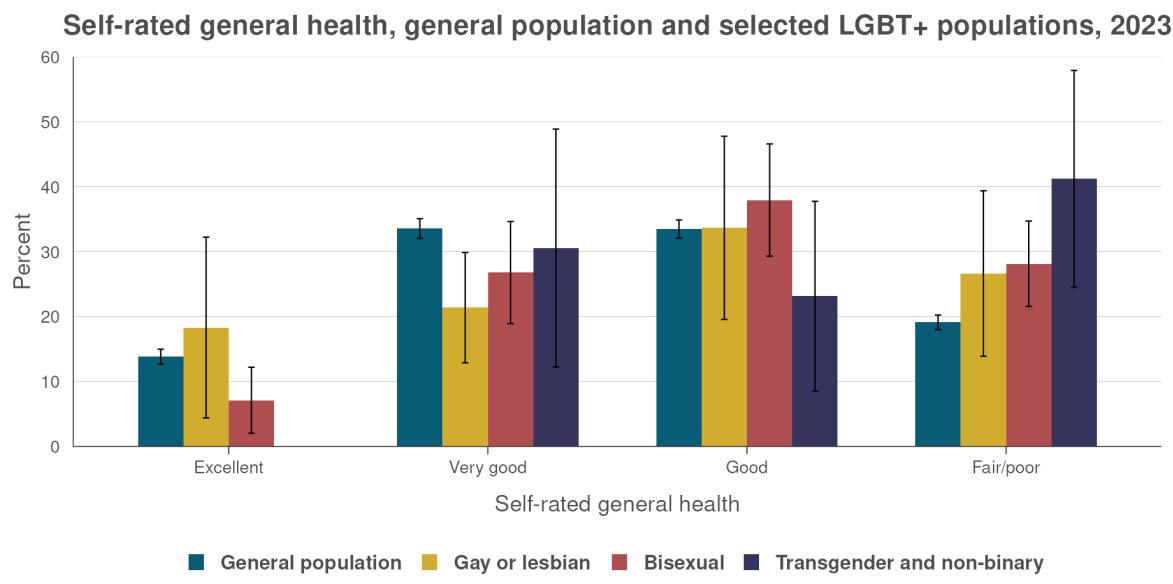
Health and mental wellbeing

This section provides a high-level view of the self-reported health and mental wellbeing of LGBT+ people. This is an area that calls for comprehensive and targeted research.¹⁴ A more in-depth picture of transgender and non-binary people's health and wellbeing can be found in the 2022 Counting Ourselves survey findings (Yee et al, 2025), including information about gender-affirming health care.

Figure 6.05 shows self-rated general health for the general population compared with selected LGBT+ populations using age-adjusted GSS data. The sizes of absolute sample errors prevent us from drawing many conclusions about significant differences. However, we do see that a higher proportion of transgender and non-binary people rated their general health as the lowest category of 'fair/poor' – 41.2 percent compared with 19.1 percent of the general population.

¹⁴ An example of research in this area is a study of sexual identity and utilisation of primary healthcare services using data from the NZ Health survey: [Sexual identity and utilisation of primary healthcare services: findings from the New Zealand Health Survey](#)

Figure 6.05



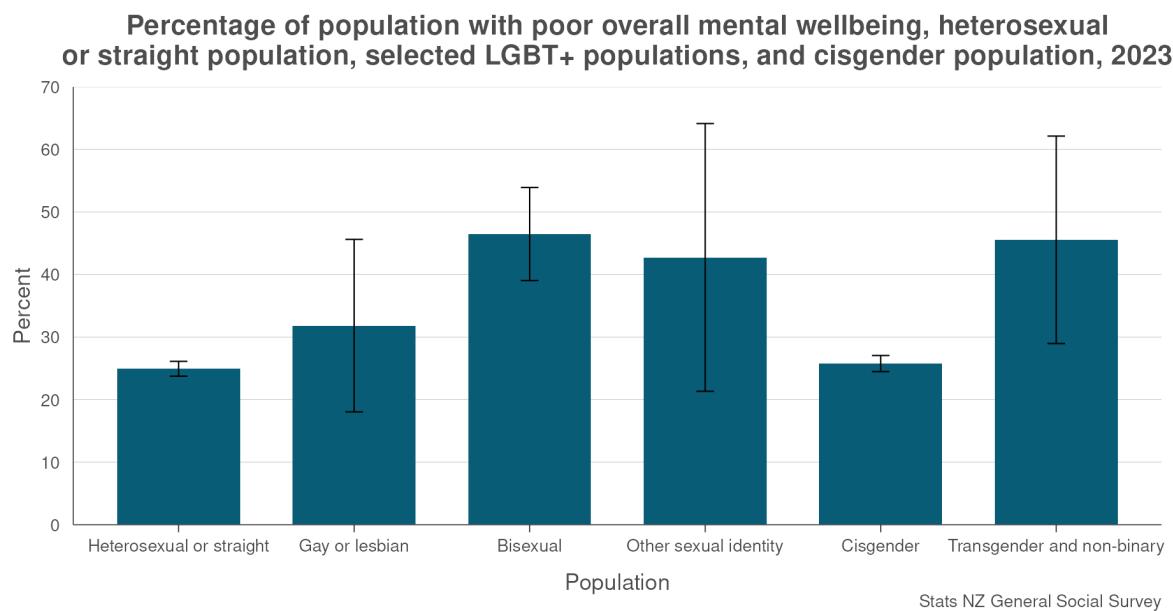
Estimates have been age adjusted. People may be counted in both a sexual identity group and a cisgender/transgender and non-binary group. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for usual residents in private dwellings aged 15 years and over. The proportion of transgender and non-binary people who reported excellent health has been suppressed because the sample size was too small to produce reliable estimates.

Stats NZ General Social Survey

Figure 6.06 shows a measure of poor mental wellbeing according to the [WHO-5 Index](#), for the heterosexual or straight population, selected LGBT+ populations, and the cisgender population, using age-adjusted GSS data. The WHO-5 was developed by the World Health Organization and measures mental wellbeing. It consists of five statements around self-reported wellbeing over the previous two weeks.

Just under half (45.6 percent) of transgender and non-binary people had poor overall mental wellbeing, compared with about one-quarter (25.8 percent) of cisgender people. A greater proportion of bisexual people (46.5 percent) had poor overall mental wellbeing compared with heterosexual or straight people (24.9 percent). There was no statistically significant difference in the proportion of gay or lesbian people who experienced poor mental wellbeing compared with the three other sexual identity groups.

Figure 6.06



Estimates have been age adjusted. Overall mental wellbeing is assessed using the WHO-5 index. Responses to the WHO-5 questions are translated to a score out of 100, with 'Poor' mental wellbeing being assigned to those who scored 51 or less. People may be counted in both a sexual identity group and a cisgender/transgender and non-binary group. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for usual residents in private dwellings aged 15 years and over.

A smaller proportion of transgender and non-binary people reported feeling cheerful and in good spirits all or most of the time in the last two weeks, at 33.7 percent, compared with 59.9 percent of cisgender people.

Bisexual people reported lower levels of waking up feeling fresh and rested, at 14.1 percent, compared with heterosexual or straight people (32.9 percent), and gay or lesbian people (40.9 percent), but were similar to other sexual identities at 17.4 percent.

Anxiety and depression status (Household Economic Survey)

The Household Economic Survey (HES) also provides data related to mental health, specifically on participants' experience of anxiety and depression. HES asks participants how often they feel anxious, nervous, or worried, as well as how often they feel sad or depressed (daily, weekly, monthly, a few times a year, or never).

In this section, we provide age-adjusted estimates, as rates of depression and anxiety differ with age. Age adjustment allows for a better understanding of the unique experiences of the LGBT+ population (that is, regardless of their age).

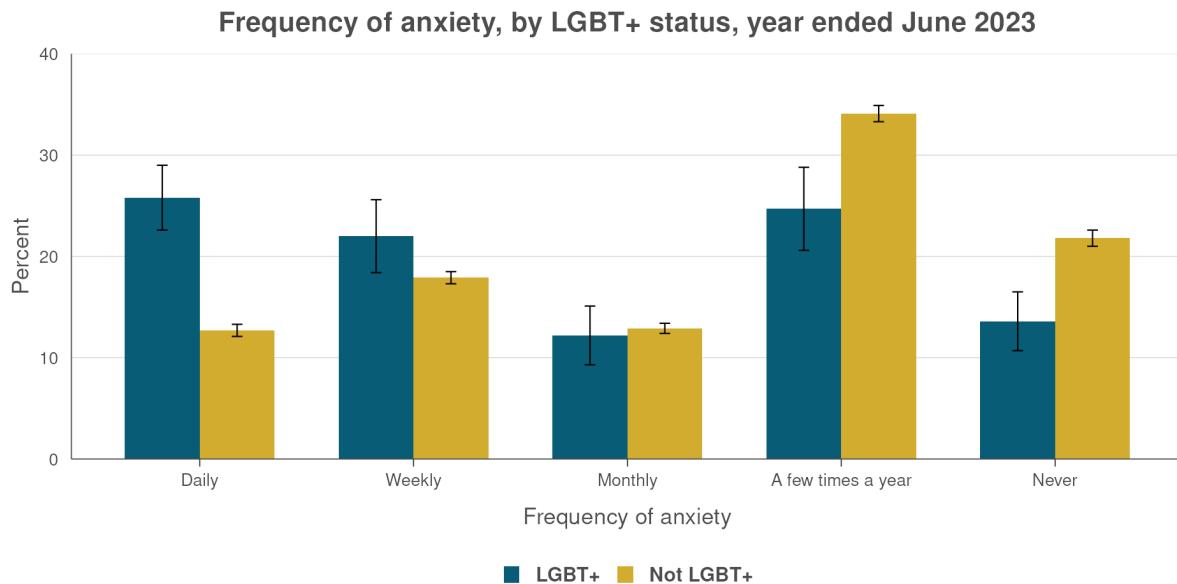
Anxiety status

Figure 6.07 shows the frequency that LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ people reported feeling anxious, nervous, or worried using age-adjusted data from HES. For simplicity, we'll refer to this as 'felt anxious' going forward. HES data showed a greater proportion of the LGBT+ population felt anxious on a regular basis, compared with the non-LGBT+ population. In the year ended June 2023:

- 25.8 percent of the LGBT+ population felt anxious daily, compared with 12.7 percent of the non-LGBT+ population
- 22 percent of the LGBT+ population felt anxious weekly, compared with 17.9 percent of the non-LGBT+ population
- 24.7 percent of the LGBT+ population felt anxious a few times a year, compared with 34.1 percent of the non-LGBT+ population
- 13.6 percent of the LGBT+ population never felt anxious, compared with 21.8 percent of the non-LGBT+ population.

There was no difference between the percentage of the LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ populations who felt anxious monthly.

Figure 6.07



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

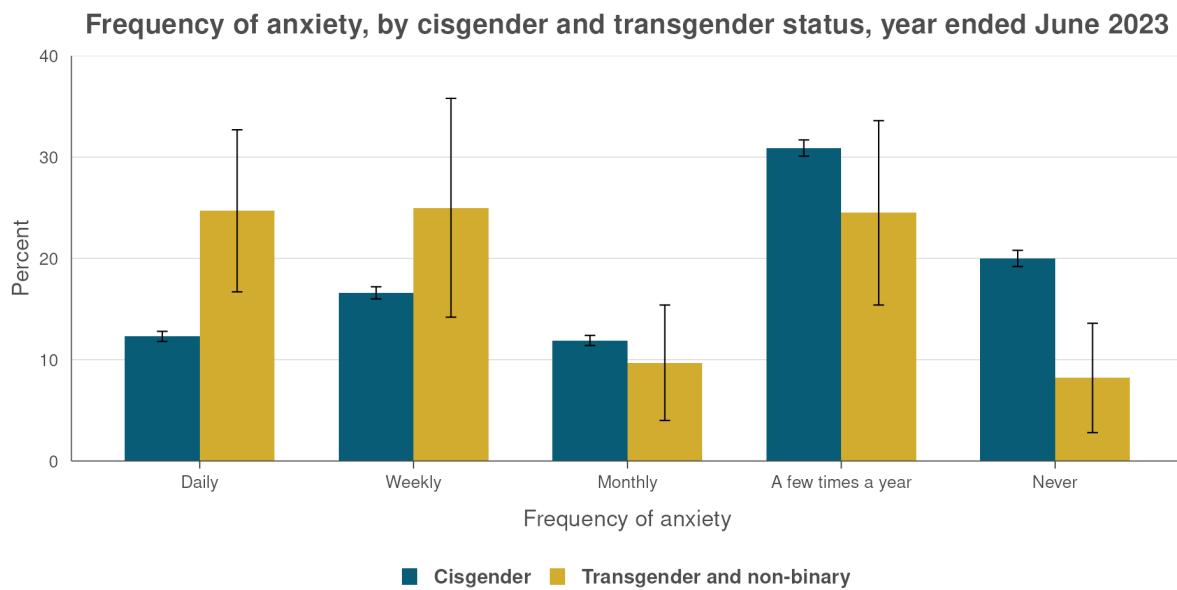
Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

Figure 6.08 shows the frequency that cisgender people and transgender and non-binary people reported feeling anxious using age-adjusted data from HES. A greater proportion of the transgender and non-binary population reported feeling anxious, compared with the cisgender population. In the year ended June 2023:

- 24.7 percent of the transgender and non-binary population felt anxious daily, compared with 12.3 percent of the cisgender population
- 8.2 percent of the transgender and non-binary population never felt anxious, compared with 20 percent of the cisgender population.

There were no differences between the percentage of the transgender and non-binary and cisgender populations who felt anxious weekly, monthly, or a few times a year.

Figure 6.08



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

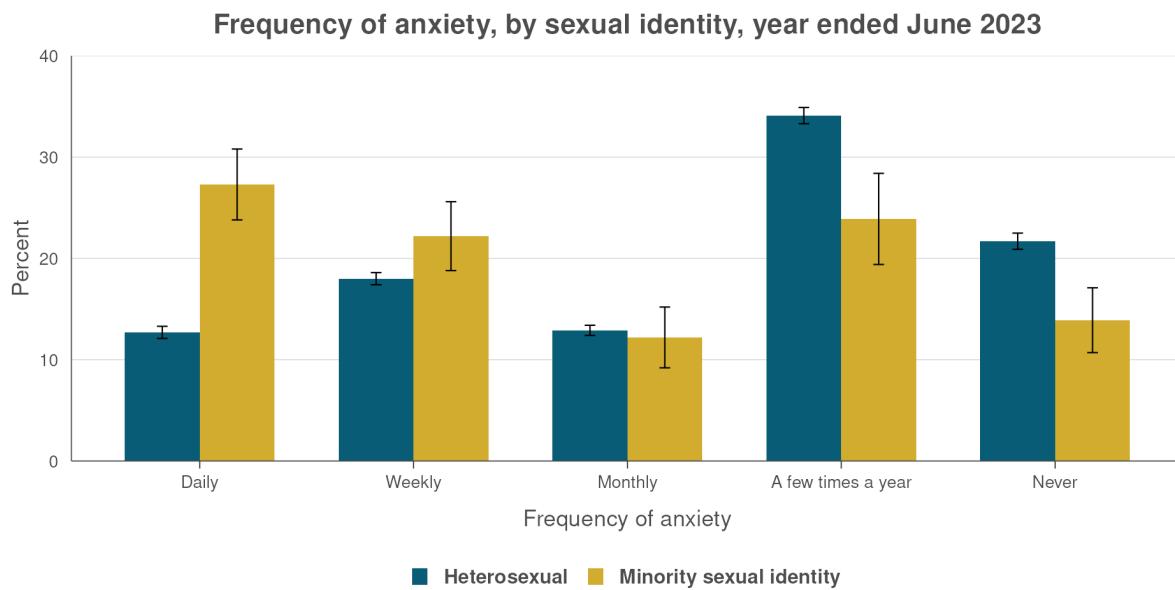
Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

Figure 6.09 shows the frequency that heterosexual or straight people and people with minority sexual identities reported feeling anxious, using age-adjusted data from HES. A greater proportion of the sexual minority population reported feeling anxious, compared with the heterosexual population. In the year ended June 2023:

- 27.3 percent of the sexual minority population felt anxious daily, compared with 12.7 percent of the heterosexual population
- 22.2 percent of the sexual minority population felt anxious weekly, compared with 18 percent of the heterosexual population
- 23.9 percent of the sexual minority population felt anxious a few times a year, compared with 34.1 percent of the heterosexual population
- 13.9 percent of the sexual minority population never felt anxious, compared with 21.7 percent of the heterosexual population.

There was no difference between the percentage of the sexual minority and the heterosexual populations who felt anxious monthly.

Figure 6.09



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

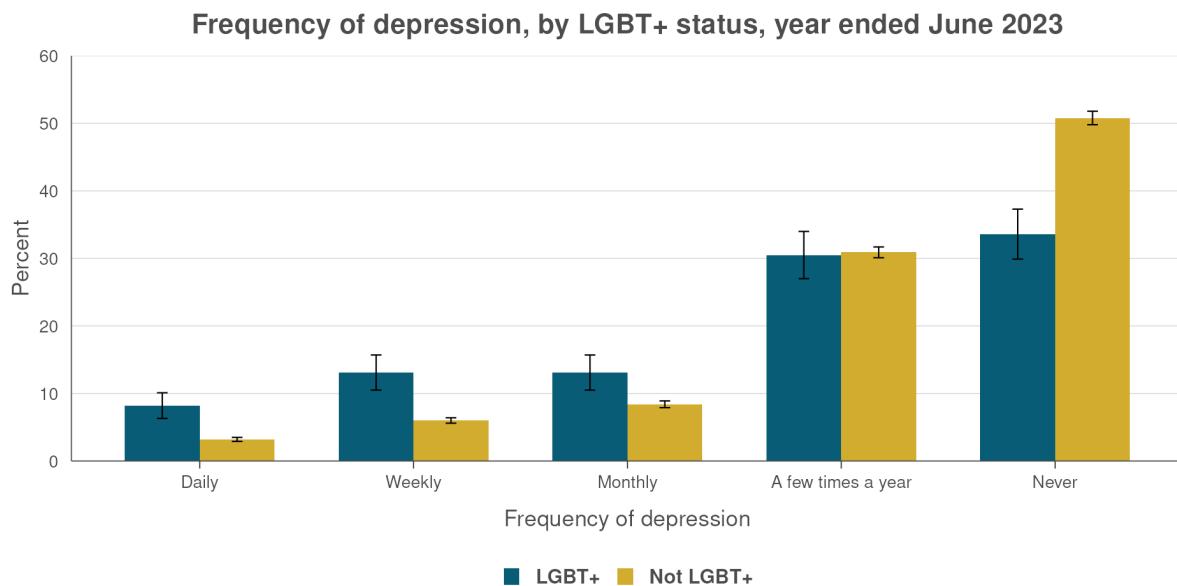
Depression status

Figure 6.10 shows the frequency that LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ people reported feeling sad or depressed, using age-adjusted data from HES. For simplicity, we'll refer to this as 'felt depressed' going forward. A greater proportion of the LGBT+ population felt depressed on a regular basis, compared with the non-LGBT+ population. In the year ended June 2023:

- 8.2 percent of the LGBT+ population felt depressed daily, compared with 3.2 percent of the non-LGBT+ population
- 13.1 percent of the LGBT+ population felt depressed weekly, compared with 6 percent of the non-LGBT+ population
- 13.1 percent of the LGBT+ population felt depressed monthly, compared with 8.4 percent of the non-LGBT+ population
- 33.6 percent of the LGBT+ population never felt depressed, compared with 50.8 percent of the non-LGBT+ population.

There was no difference between the percentage of the LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ populations who felt depressed a few times a year.

Figure 6.10



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

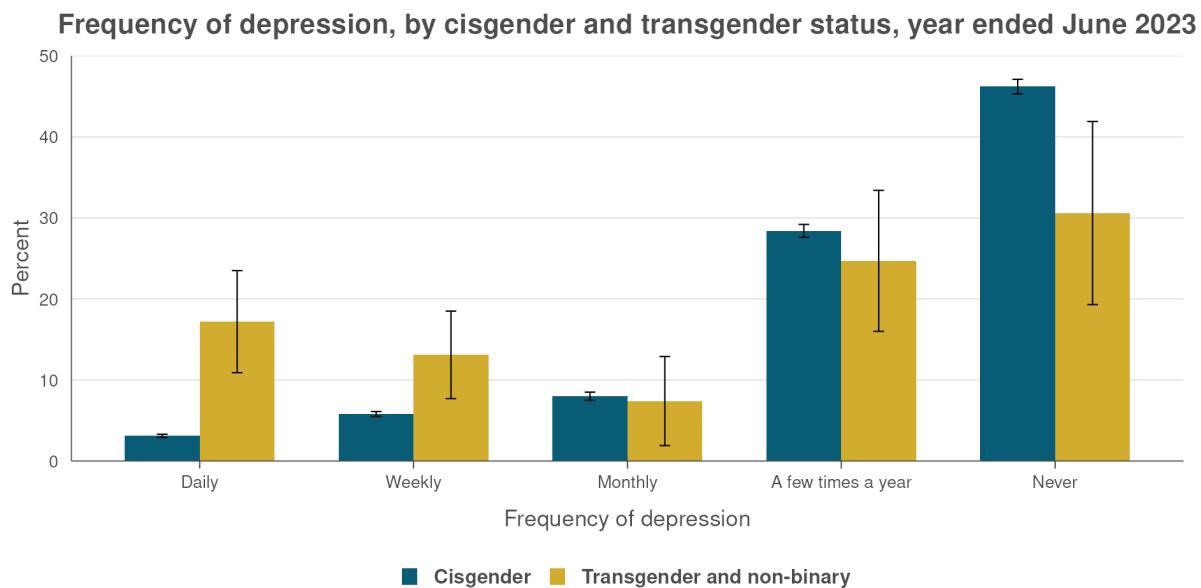
Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

Figure 6.11 shows the frequency that cisgender people and transgender and non-binary people reported feeling depressed, using age-adjusted data from HES. A greater proportion of the transgender and non-binary population reported feeling depressed, compared with the cisgender population. For the year ended June 2023:

- 17.2 percent of the transgender and non-binary population felt depressed daily, compared with 3.1 percent of the cisgender population
- 13.1 percent of the transgender and non-binary population felt depressed weekly, compared with 5.8 percent of the cisgender population
- 30.6 percent of the transgender and non-binary population never felt depressed, compared with 46.2 percent of the cisgender population.

There was no difference between the percentage of the transgender and non-binary and cisgender populations who felt depressed monthly or a few times a year.

Figure 6.11



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

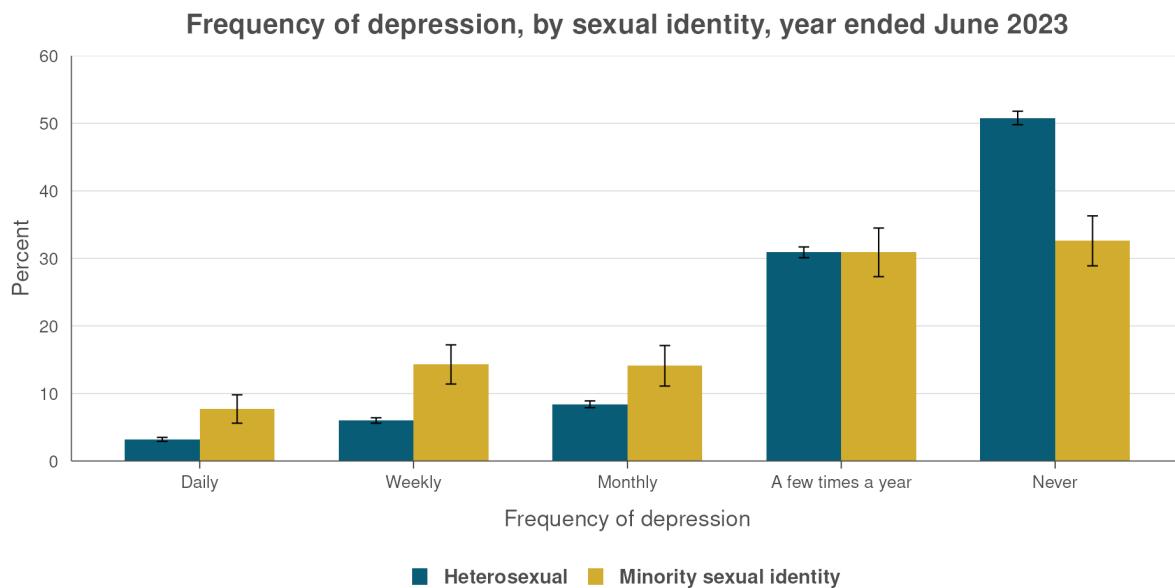
Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

Figure 6.12 shows the frequency that heterosexual or straight people and people with minority sexual identities reported feeling depressed, using age-adjusted data from HES. A greater proportion of the sexual minority population reported feeling depressed, compared with the heterosexual population. In the year ended June 2023:

- 7.7 percent of the sexual minority population felt depressed daily, compared with 3.2 percent of the heterosexual population
- 14.3 percent of the sexual minority population felt depressed weekly, compared with 6 percent of the heterosexual population
- 14.1 percent of the sexual minority population felt depressed monthly, compared with 8.4 percent of the heterosexual population
- 32.6 percent of the sexual minority population never felt depressed, compared with 50.8 percent of the heterosexual population.

There was no difference between the percentage of the sexual minority and the heterosexual populations who felt depressed a few times a year.

Figure 6.12



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

Smoking behaviour

The 2023 Census collected information on cigarette smoking behaviour, which we look at here for LGBTIQ+ people. We have chosen to explore smoking in this section because of its connection to quality of life as well as health outcomes.

It is important to note that this data specifically refers to the smoking of tobacco cigarettes and does not include vaping, other forms of consuming tobacco, or the smoking of non-tobacco substances in a cigarette.¹⁵

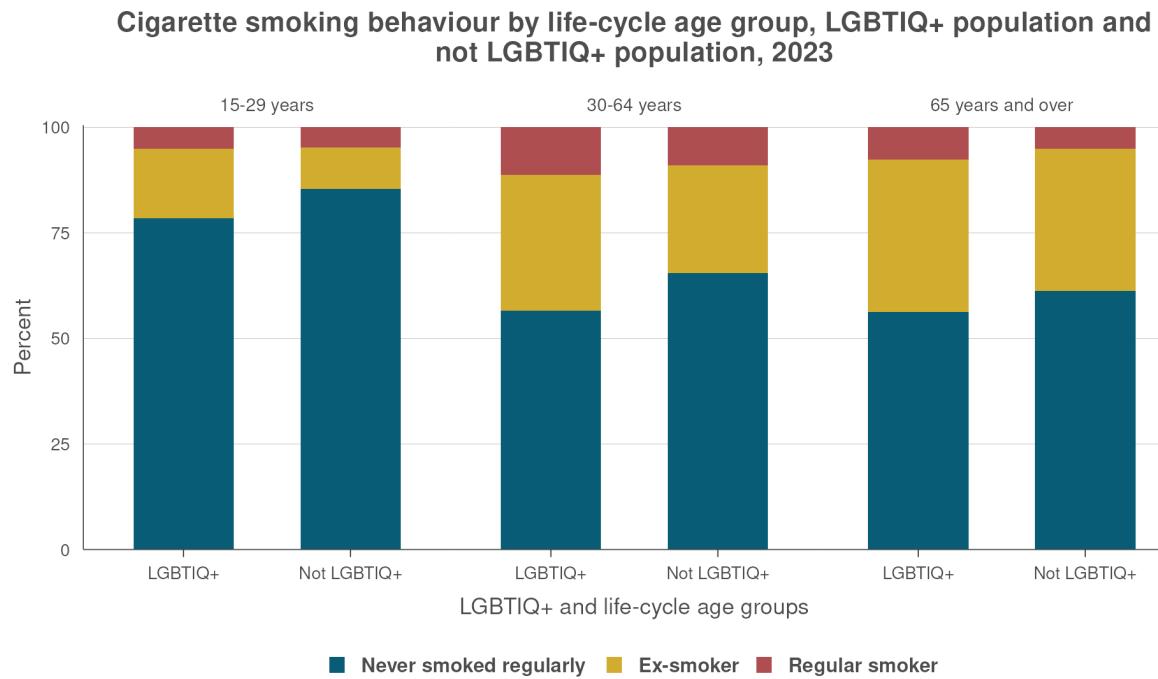
Data from the 2023 Census showed that in general, LGBTIQ+ people were slightly more likely to be regular smokers (8.2 percent of LGBTIQ+) or ex-smokers (25.0 percent) than non-LGBTIQ+ people (7.2 percent and 24.0 percent, respectively). Conversely, 66.8 percent of LGBTIQ+ people had never smoked, compared with 68.8 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Younger people are generally much less likely to be smokers or ex-smokers. So it's surprising that LGBTIQ+ people have a higher smoking rate given they are a younger population. Figure

¹⁵ For more information about smoking data in the census, see [Cigarette smoking behaviour - 2023 Census: Information by concept](#)

6.13 compares cigarette smoking behaviour for the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ population across life-cycle age groups. Young LGBTIQ+ people were slightly more likely to be regular smokers than young non-LGBTIQ+ people, however they were much more likely to be ex-smokers. This pattern was also present for older age groups. This pattern persists across ethnicities (see table 6.03 below).

Figure 6.13



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Looking at sexual identity in table 6.01, we see a similar pattern, with heterosexual or straight people less likely to have ever smoked than sexual minorities across all life-cycle age groups (see table 6.01).

Table 6.01

Cigarette smoking behaviour, by life-cycle age group and sexual identity, 2023				
Life-cycle age group	Sexual identity	Regular smoker	Ex-smoker	Never smoked regularly
		Percent		
15–29 years	Heterosexual or straight	4.6	9.8	85.6
	Gay or lesbian	5.5	15.7	78.8
	Bisexual	5.0	17.9	77.1
	Other sexual identity	4.2	14.8	81.1
30–64 years	Heterosexual or straight	8.7	25.9	65.4

	Gay or lesbian	11.2	34.0	54.8
	Bisexual	11.1	37.0	51.9
	Other sexual identity	10.5	32.3	57.3
65 years and over	Heterosexual or straight	5.0	34.1	60.8
	Gay or lesbian	8.1	43.0	48.9
	Bisexual	8.4	40.5	51.0
	Other sexual identity	9.0	32.1	59.3
<p>Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.</p> <p>Source: Stats NZ census</p>				

For transgender people, rates of smoking tended to be fairly similar, regardless of gender.

For cisgender people however, smoking rates varied a lot more depending on gender.

Cisgender men were more likely to be current or ex-smokers than cisgender women. Across life-cycle age groups, cisgender women were consistently the least likely to have ever smoked (see table 6.02).

Data has not been presented on smoking for people born with variations of sex characteristics in this chapter, due to restrictions on output by age for this population.

Table 6.02

Cigarette smoking behaviour, by life-cycle age group and cisgender and transgender status, 2023				
Life-cycle age group	Cisgender and transgender status	Regular smoker	Ex-smoker	Never smoked regularly
		Percent		
15–29 years	Cisgender man	6.2	11.0	82.7
	Cisgender woman	3.4	9.7	86.9
	Transgender man	4.5	12.7	82.7
	Transgender woman	4.9	12.0	82.9
	Transgender person of another gender	5.1	14.6	80.2
30–64 years	Cisgender man	10.7	26.6	62.8
	Cisgender woman	7.6	25.0	67.4
	Transgender man	12.1	25.1	62.6
	Transgender woman	11.1	28.7	60.2
	Transgender person of another gender	9.6	31.5	58.9
65 years and over	Cisgender man	5.6	39.3	55.1
	Cisgender woman	4.8	28.8	66.4
	Transgender man	5.9	32.4	62.2

	Transgender woman	6.8	27.9	65.0
	Transgender person of another gender	9.1	28.6	62.3

Note: This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Across all level 1 ethnic groups, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to be current or ex-smokers, although the difference was very small for Māori and Europeans (see table 6.03). It is important to consider, when looking at this data, the compounding effect for minority stress for people who belong to multiple minority groups.

Table 6.03

Cigarette smoking behaviour by ethnic group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023

Ethnic group	Regular smoker		Ex-smoker		Never smoked regularly	
	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent					
European	7.3	6.5	27.0	27.6	65.7	65.9
Māori	14.9	15.4	32.0	30.8	53.1	53.8
Pacific peoples	15.1	12.9	24.6	19.5	60.3	67.6
Asian	5.0	3.9	11.1	8.3	83.9	87.8
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	6.0	4.7	21.8	15.0	72.1	80.2
Other ethnicity	9.5	7.1	30.6	28.0	60.0	65.0

Note: People can identify with more than one ethnic group and will be counted in each group they give as a response.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Summary

This section has provided an overview of some of the data available on wellbeing and mental-health-related topics for LGBT+ people. Due to the nature of the data being from sample surveys, we were unable to provide detailed demographic breakdowns to the same degree that we have in previous chapters on other topics. Nevertheless, some trends emerge that may relate to other topics.

Here are some key insights from this chapter:

- While LGBT+ people rated their current overall life satisfaction lower, on average, than the total population, their expectation of life satisfaction in five years' time was not different from the total population.
- LGBT+ people reported lower average levels of happiness (6.9 out of 10) and higher levels of anxiety (3.8 out of 10) on the previous day than non-LGBT+ people (7.7 and 2.9 out of 10, respectively).
- 40.3 percent of LGBT+ people experienced some form of discrimination in the past 12 months, almost double that of non-LGBT+ people (20.5 percent).
- LGBT+ people rated their family wellbeing lower on average (7.0 out of 10) than non-LGBT+ people (7.6 out of 10).
- Transgender people were more likely to have poor overall mental wellbeing, compared with cisgender people. Bisexual people were more likely to have poor overall mental wellbeing, compared with heterosexual people.
- A greater proportion of the LGBT+ population reported feelings of anxiety (25.8 percent) and/or depression (8.2 percent) on a daily basis, compared with the non-LGBT+ population (12.7 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively).
- Data from the 2023 Census showed that, in general, LGBTIQ+ people were slightly more likely to be regular smokers or ex-smokers than non-LGBTIQ+ people.
- General trends for smoking for LGBTIQ+ people persisted across age and ethnic groups.

7 Housing

Existing research in Aotearoa New Zealand about housing for LGBTIQ+ people highlights clear inequities in housing quality, housing stability, and housing deprivation. LGBTIQ+ people have been shown to experience uninhabitable homes, discrimination in the rental market, and instability and homelessness at higher rates than their peers. This is particularly true for LGBTIQ+ young people, LGBTIQ+ Māori, LGBTIQ+ disabled people, and transgender and non-binary people (Fraser, 2023; Fraser, 2024; Roy et al, 2021; Yee et al, 2025).

This chapter looks at housing tenure, housing costs, housing quality, and housing stability and deprivation for the LGBTIQ+ population from the 2023 Census data. It is supplemented by data on the LGBT+ population from the Household Economic Survey (HES) and the General Social Survey (GSS). We look at topics for LGBTIQ+ subgroups and intersections with other key populations.

Housing outcomes for individuals vary substantially by age, so 2023 Census data presented in this chapter has been separated by life-cycle age groups (people aged 15 to 29 years, 30 to 64 years, and 65+ years). Data has not been presented on people born with a variation of sex characteristics in this chapter, due to restrictions on output by age.

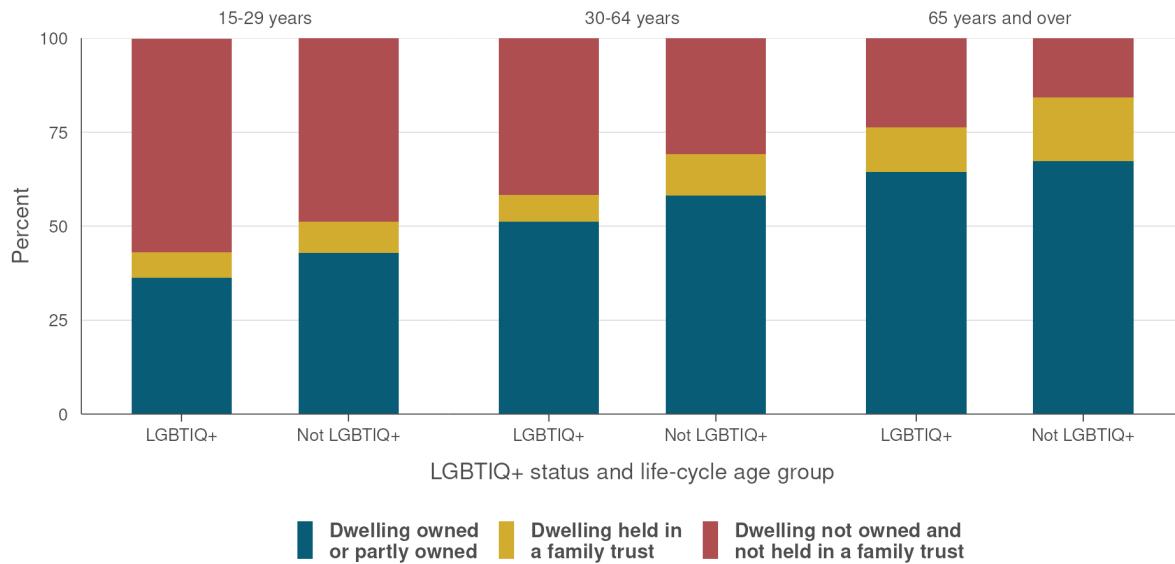
Tenure of household

The census collects information on tenure of household, which categorises whether the dwelling was owned or held within a family trust by a member of the household (owner-occupied), or neither. This is different from individual home ownership, which identifies the individual(s) in a household who own the dwelling.

Figure 7.01 shows percentage breakdowns of tenure of household for the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations across life-cycle age groups. The LGBTIQ+ population were less likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling across all age groups. The highest proportion of LGBTIQ+ people living in a non-owner-occupied household were young people aged 15 to 29 years at 56.9 percent, which compares with 48.8 percent for non-LGBTIQ+ 15 to 29-year-olds.

Figure 7.01

Tenure of household by life-cycle age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023

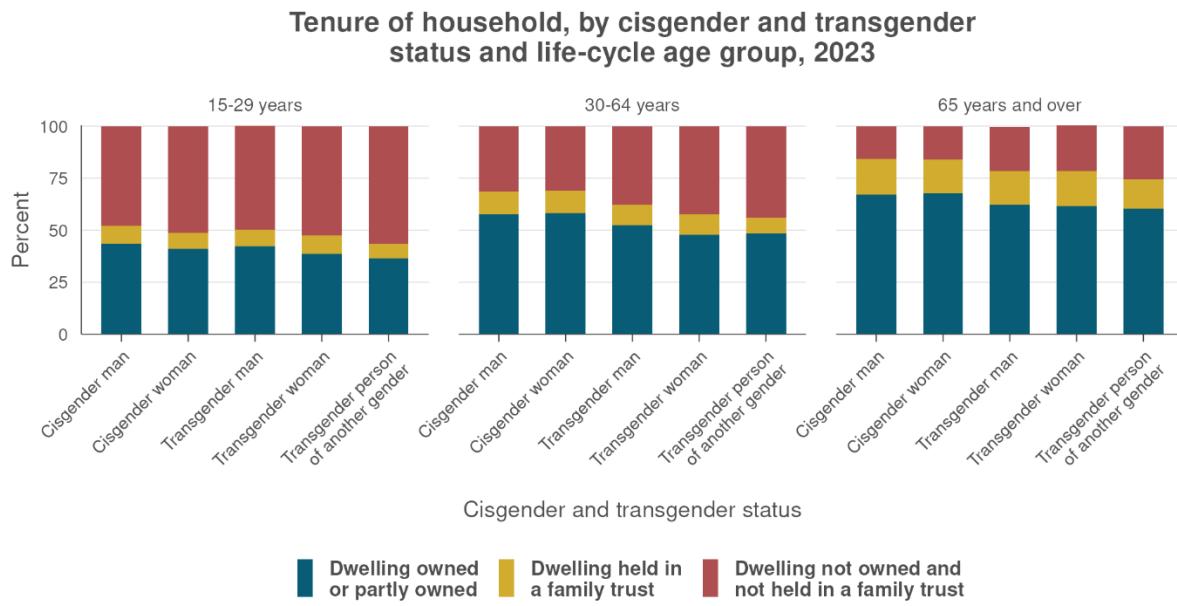


This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Figure 7.02 shows percentage breakdowns of tenure of household for detailed cisgender and transgender populations across life-cycle age groups. This graph shows further differences across the detailed transgender and non-binary groups, compared with the cisgender groups. For people aged 30 to 64 years and 65 years and over, transgender men, women, and people of another gender were less likely to live in an owner-occupied home, compared with cisgender men and women.

Figure 7.02



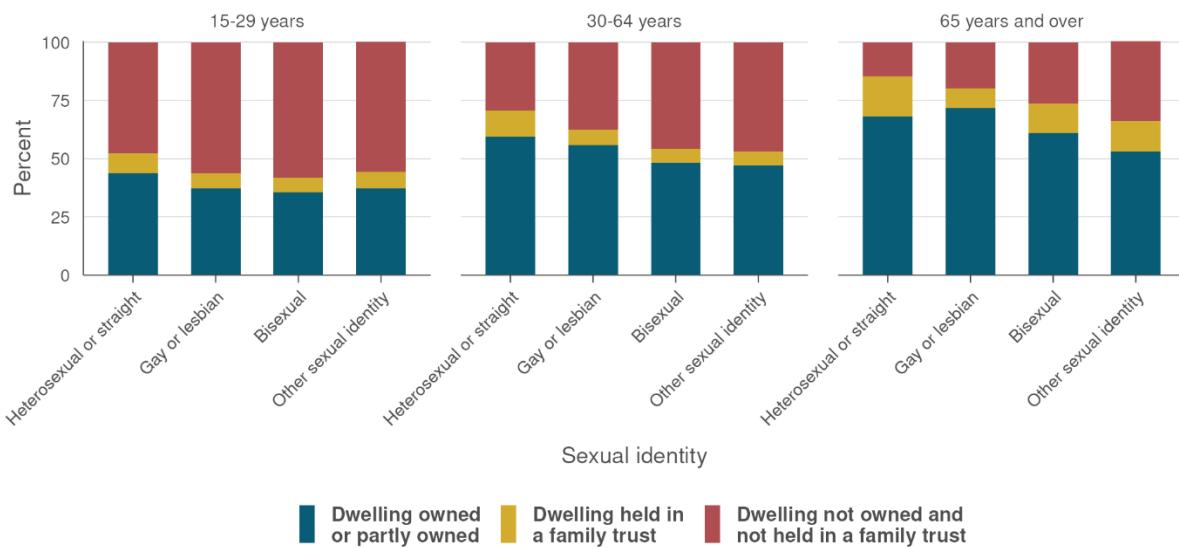
This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Figure 7.03 shows percentage breakdowns of tenure of household for sexual identities across life-cycle age groups. This graph shows that there were also differences across age groups for different sexual identities. Across all age groups, people with minority sexual identities were less likely to live in a home that is owned or held in a family trust. Across the sexual minorities, levels of living in an owner-occupied home were similar for those aged 15 to 29 years, but for the older age groups, gay or lesbian people were more likely to live in an owner-occupied home than the other sexual minorities.

Figure 7.03

Tenure of household, by sexual identity and life-cycle age group, 2023



This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Gay and lesbian people aged 65 years and over were more likely to live in a dwelling that was owned, compared with all other sexual identities, including heterosexual or straight. However, they had a lower proportion living in a home held in a family trust than heterosexual or straight people aged 65 and over. As such, a higher proportion of gay and lesbian people aged 65 and over lived in a dwelling not owned or held in a family trust, compared with heterosexual or straight people aged 65 and over.

Across all age groups, bisexual people and people with other sexual identities were least likely to live in an owner-occupied home. The largest differences can be seen among 30 to 64-year-olds. People with another sexual identity aged 30 to 64 years had the highest rate of living in a dwelling not owned and not held in a family trust, at 47.0 percent. This was similar for bisexuals, at 45.7 percent, but higher than gay or lesbian people, at 37.6 percent, and all were higher than for heterosexual or straight people, at 29.4 percent.

Housing costs

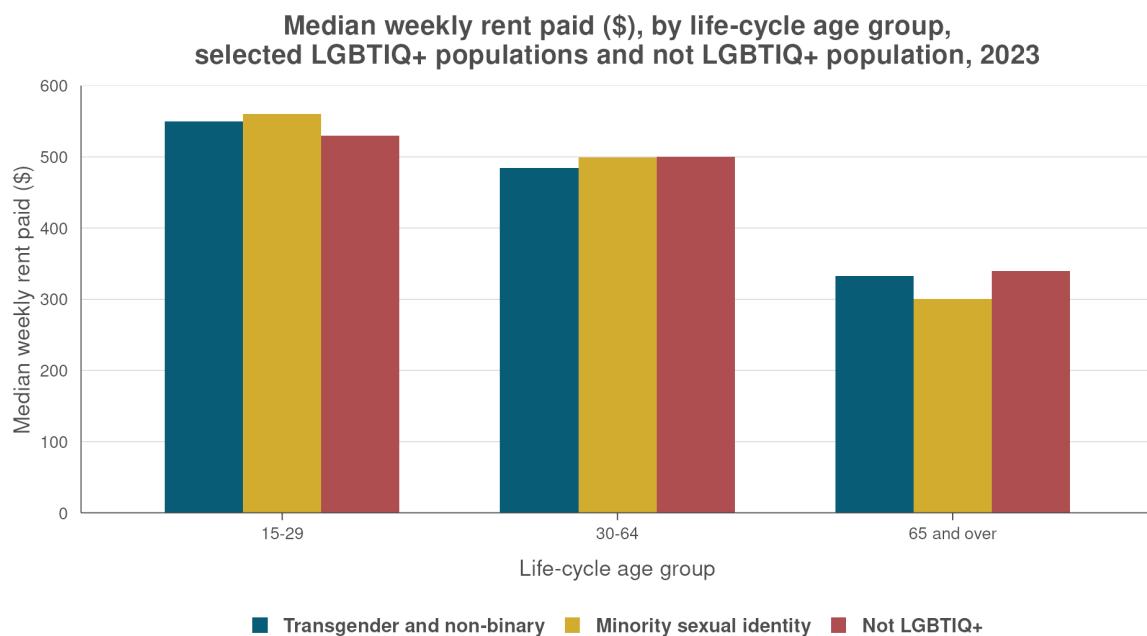
In this section we look at housing costs through measures by the census and the Household Economic Survey (HES).

Weekly rent

Above we saw that LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to own their home or have their home held in a family trust. The decreased rate of home ownership among LGBTIQ+ people encourages us to look at rent paid for this group. The census measures weekly rent paid by household.

Figure 7.04 shows the median household weekly rent paid (\$) for selected LGBTIQ+ populations and the non-LGBTIQ+ population across life-cycle age groups. For those aged 15 to 29 years, transgender and non-binary people and sexual minorities paid a higher weekly median rent (\$550 and \$560 respectively), compared with the non-LGBTIQ+ population (\$530). For those aged 30 to 64 years, people with minority sexual identities, and non-LGBTIQ+ people paid the same median weekly rent (\$500), and transgender and non-binary people paid a slightly lower median rent (\$480). For those aged 65 years and over, people with minority sexual identities paid the lowest weekly median rent (\$300), while transgender and non-binary people and non-LGBTIQ+ people paid a similar weekly rent (\$330 and \$340 respectively). Data on median rent is affected by a large number of factors, including sector of landlord, number of bedrooms, and higher costs in major urban areas.

Figure 7.04



This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in rented occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Mean annual housing costs

The Household Economic Survey (HES) measures mean annual housing costs. Housing costs include expenditure on rent, mortgages (principal and interest repayments), property rates, and building-related insurance.

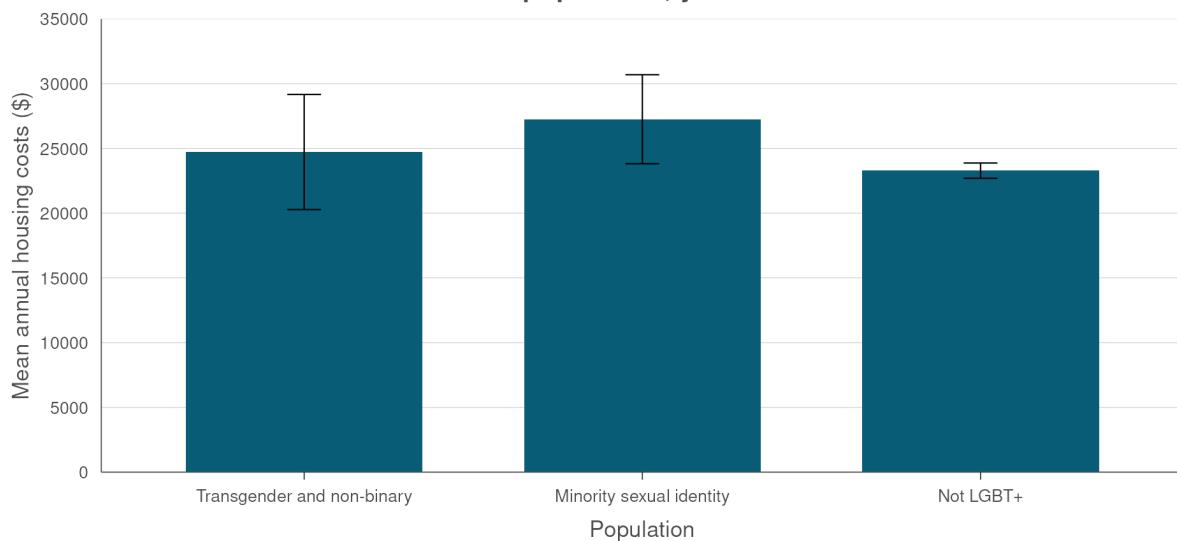
When analysing HES data about the LGBT+ population for the year ended 2023, we age-adjusted the data to account for differences that might be solely attributable to the underlying age structures of the LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ populations. This data is not broken down by tenure of household, due to small population sizes.

Figure 7.05 shows mean annual housing costs for selected LGBT+ populations and the not LGBT+ population using age-adjusted HES data. In the year ended June 2023, mean annual housing costs were higher for the LGBT+ population (\$26,893 annually) than they were for the non-LGBT+ population (\$23,285). Sexual minorities also reported higher average housing costs (\$27,255 annually) than heterosexual or straight people (\$23,297).

While we see these differences in housing costs between groups, the General Social Survey (2023) found that subjective affordability of housing was similar across all groups (LGBT+ groups and non-LGBT+ groups).

Figure 7.05

Mean annual housing costs (\$), selected LGBT+ populations and not LGBT+ population, year ended June 2023



Estimates have been age adjusted. Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies. This data is for people in private dwellings aged 18 years and over.

Stats NZ Household Economic Survey

There were no significant differences between the average annual housing costs for cisgender and transgender and non-binary individuals. Smaller populations often have larger error margins associated with them, which can make it difficult to discern a true difference.

We see across chapters in this report that several factors are likely at play when we observe differences in socio-economic outcomes for LGBT+ people. For example, the LGBT+ population were more likely to live in urban centres and were more likely to rent, which may affect their housing costs.

Housing quality: Dampness, mould, and amenities

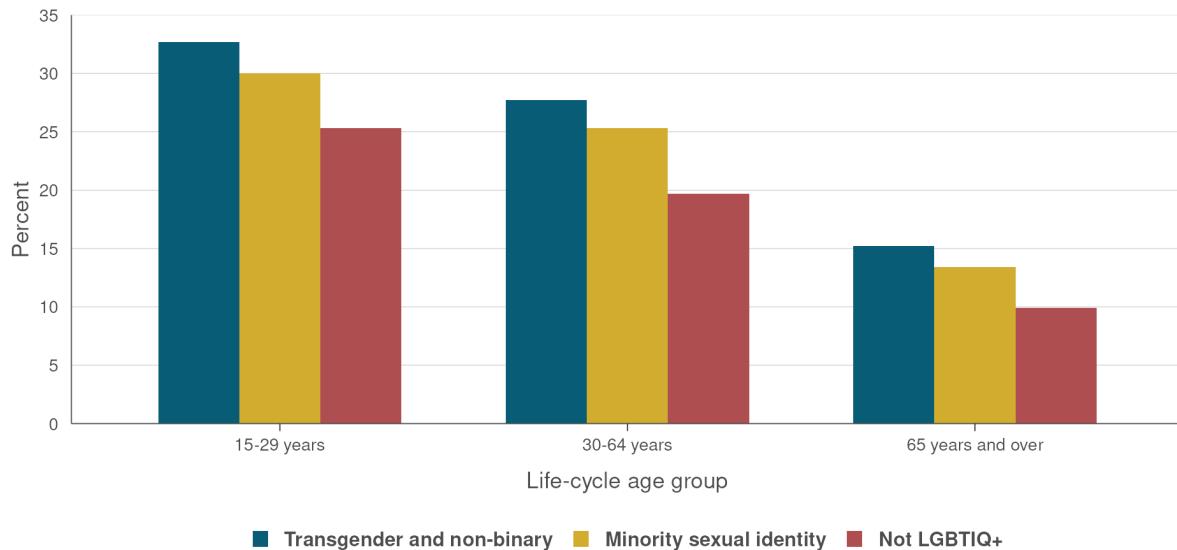
The census provides information on three dimensions of housing quality: dampness, mould, and access to basic amenities. Dampness and mould in housing are topics of interest because of their short- and long-term impact on health (Howden-Chapman, 2021; Stats NZ, 2020; World Health Organization, 2018).

Dampness

Figure 7.06 shows the percentage of selected LGBTIQ+ populations and the not LGBTIQ+ population who lived in a home that is sometimes or always damp, across life-cycle age groups. Across all age groups, transgender and non-binary people and sexual minorities were more likely to live in a damp home than the non-LGBTIQ+ population. Across all of the groups of transgender and non-binary people, sexual minorities, and non-LGBTIQ+ people, people were less likely to live in a damp home for older life-cycle age groups.

Figure 7.06

Percentage of population who lived in a home that is sometimes or always damp, by life-cycle age group, selected LGBTIQ+ populations and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Differences observed for dampness between LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people were not consistent across level 1 ethnic groups as shown in table 7.01. Māori and Pacific peoples had similar rates of living in a damp home for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people. The largest difference was for European people – 26.2 percent of European LGBTIQ+ people lived in a home that is sometimes or always damp, compared with 16.4 percent of European non-LGBTIQ+ people. This larger difference is likely due to the comparatively older age structure of the European non-LGBTIQ+ population.

Table 7.01

Percentage of population who lived in a home that is sometimes or always damp, by ethnic group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023		
Ethnic group	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent	
European	26.2	16.4
Māori	35.6	32.8
Pacific peoples	37.2	37.3
Asian	20.6	16.5
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	27.1	21.4
Other ethnicity	25.6	17.8

Note: People can identify with more than one ethnic group and will be counted in each group they give as a response.
 This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in occupied private dwellings.

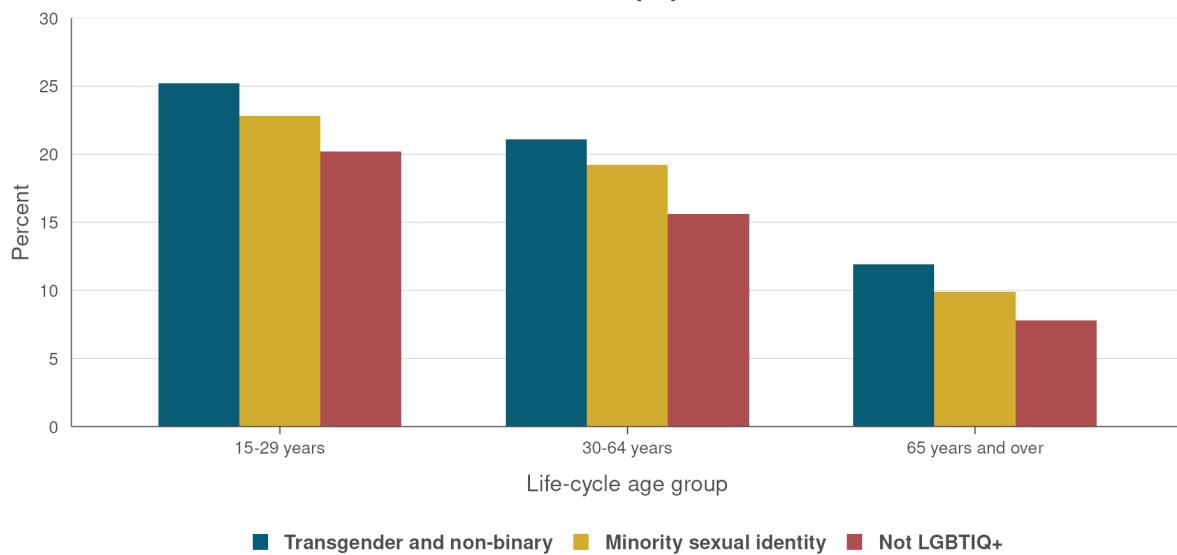
Source: Stats NZ census

Mould

Figure 7.07 shows the percentage of selected LGBTIQ+ populations and the not LGBTIQ+ population who lived in a home that is sometimes or always mouldy, across life-cycle age groups. Similar to results in figure 7.06, across all age groups, transgender and non-binary people and sexual minorities were more likely to live in a mouldy home than the non-LGBTIQ+ population. Across all of the groups of transgender and non-binary people, sexual minorities, and non-LGBTIQ+ people, people in older life-cycle age groups were less likely to live in a mouldy home.

Figure 7.07

Percentage of population who lived in a home that is sometimes or always mouldy, by life-cycle age group, selected LGBTIQ+ populations and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Differences observed for mould between LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people were not consistent across level 1 ethnic groups as shown in table 7.02. Māori and Pacific peoples had similar rates of living in a mouldy home for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people. The largest difference was for European LGBTIQ+ people – 19.6 percent lived in a home that is sometimes or always mouldy, compared with 12.3 percent for European non-LGBTIQ+ people. This larger difference is likely due to the comparatively older age structure of the European non-LGBTIQ+ population.

Table 7.02

Percentage of population who lived in a home that is sometimes or always mouldy, by ethnic group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023		
Ethnic group	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent	
European	19.6	12.3
Māori	28.2	26.4
Pacific peoples	32.0	34.2
Asian	17.5	14.3
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	20.9	17.7
Other ethnicity	20.5	13.6

Note: People can identify with more than one ethnic group and will be counted in each group they give as a response. This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over in occupied private dwellings.

Source: Stats NZ census

Dwelling amenities

Access to basic amenities indicates what basic services and structures (for example, cooking facilities, shower or bath, and electricity) are available inside an occupied private dwelling. The amenities need to be in working order to be counted.

As shown in table 7.03, transgender and non-binary people aged 30 years and over were least likely to have access to all basic amenities. Other differences include that for people aged 15 to 29 years, transgender and non-binary people and sexual minorities were more likely to have access to all amenities, compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people. For people aged 65 and over, transgender and non-binary people and sexual minorities were less likely to have access to all amenities than non-LGBTIQ+ people. A range of factors likely influence these differences, including higher rates of LGBTIQ+ people living in urban areas (which generally have better access to amenities) and differences in living within an owner-occupied home.

Table 7.03

Percentage of population with access to all basic amenities, by life-cycle age group, selected LGBTIQ+ populations and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023

Life-cycle age group	Transgender and non-binary	Sexual minority	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent		
15–29 years	94.4	95.1	92.3
30–64 years	89.8	93.7	93.3
65 years and over	90.0	93.8	95.3

Note: Basic amenities asked about in the census were cooking facilities, tap water that is safe to drink, kitchen sink, refrigerator, bath or shower, toilet, and electricity supply. This data is for the transgender and non-binary, minority sexual identity, and not LGBTIQ+ census usually resident populations aged 15 years and over in occupied private dwellings.

Source: Stats NZ census

Housing stability and deprivation

Housing stability and deprivation is a key area of interest for the LGBTIQ+ population in New Zealand. Nearly 1 in 5 (19.0 percent) participants in Counting Ourselves 2022 reported

having experienced homelessness. Participants reported personal safety concerns and financial difficulties due to being trans or non-binary, which made their housing situation unstable in the past four years. According to the UN housing adequacy framework, “housing is not adequate if its occupants do not have a degree of tenure security which guarantees legal protection against forced evictions, harassment and other threats” (United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council, 2013).

In this section we look at how long people have lived at the address they were living at in the 2023 Census to understand how frequently LGBTIQ+ people may be moving house. We then look at severe housing deprivation, which is a measure we reported on in our [2023 Census severe housing deprivation \(homelessness\) estimates](#).

Here we look at this measure in more detail for LGBTIQ+ subgroups.

Table 7.04 shows that LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to have lived at their usual residence for shorter periods of time than non-LGBTIQ+ people. This was true for LGBTIQ+ people in both owner-occupied and not owner-occupied dwellings. For people living in a non-owner-occupied dwelling, 41.6 percent of LGBTIQ+ people had lived there for less than one year, compared with 31.5 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people – a difference of 10.1 percentage points. For people living in owner-occupied dwellings, 3.4 percent of LGBTIQ+ people had lived there for 30 years or more, compared with 9.1 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people – a difference of 5.7 percentage points. The younger age of the LGBTIQ+ population was likely a contributing factor to this.

Table 7.04

Years at usual residence by tenure of household, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023				
Years at usual residence address	Dwelling owned or in a family trust		Dwelling not owned or in a family trust	
	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent			
Less than one year	16.6	9.8	41.6	31.5
1 year	7.1	5.0	13.3	10.5
2 years	11.7	9.0	14.1	13.7
3 years	7.9	6.8	8.0	8.9
4 years	5.9	5.5	4.7	6.0
5–9 years	19.4	20.9	10.8	15.5
10–14 years	11.1	12.7	3.7	6.1
15–19 years	9.6	10.1	1.7	3.2
20–24 years	5.4	7.3	1.0	2.0
25–29 years	2.0	3.8	0.4	0.8
30 years or more	3.4	9.1	0.7	1.8

Note: This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in occupied private dwellings.

Source: Stats NZ census

Severe housing deprivation (homelessness)

Homelessness is defined by Stats NZ as “a living situation where people with no other options to acquire safe and secure housing are: without shelter; in temporary accommodation; sharing accommodation with a household; or living in uninhabitable housing” (Stats NZ, 2015).

In 2013, University of Otago researchers developed a means to operationalise this definition and develop estimates of severe housing deprivation/homelessness using a combination of census data, supplemented by a small amount of admin data (Amore et al, 2013). This methodology has been revised slightly in 2023 (Stats NZ, 2024a). For more information, see [Severe housing deprivation \(homelessness\) estimates – updated methodology: 2023 Census](#).

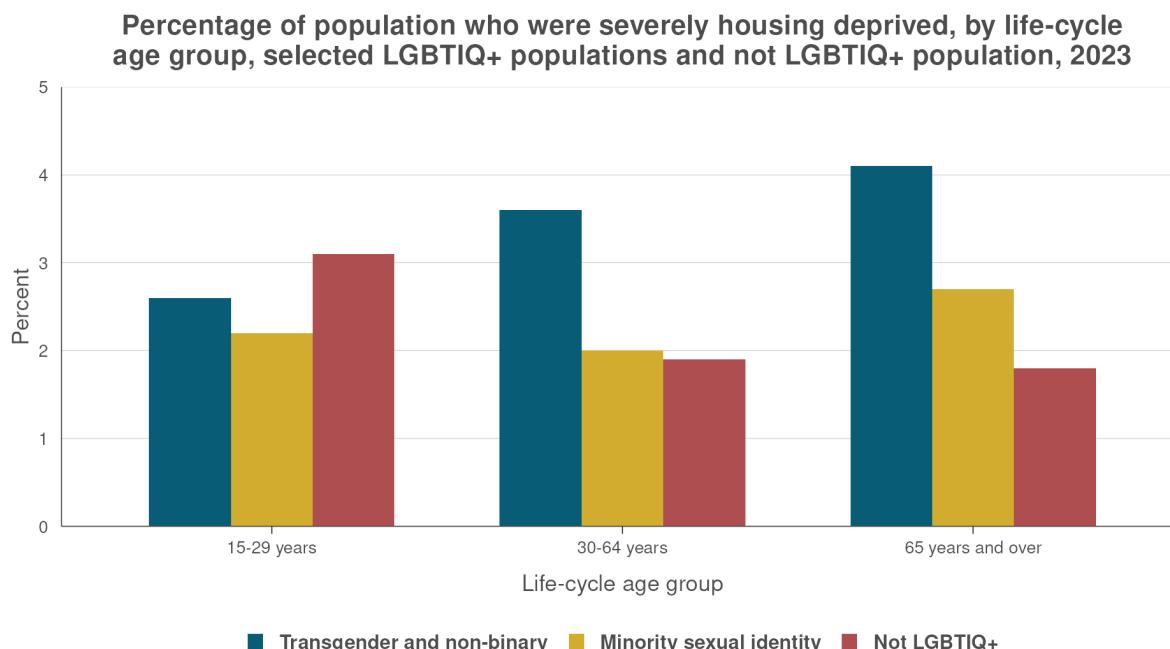
[2023 Census severe housing deprivation \(homelessness\) estimates](#) was published by Stats NZ in late 2024. This release included some key statistics for the LGBTIQ+ population as a

whole, and found that 2.6 percent of LGBTIQ+ people aged 15 years and over faced severe housing deprivation (Stats NZ, 2024b).

Note that undercounting is likely to affect all categories of severe housing deprivation. In 2023, the severe housing deprivation status of 355,299 people could not be determined. As the LGBTIQ+ population identified in the census depended on a census response, there is undercounting of the LGBTIQ+ population as well. Therefore, it is likely that the number of the LGBTIQ+ population experiencing homelessness will also be an undercount.

Figure 7.08 shows the rate of severe housing deprivation for selected LGBTIQ+ populations and the non-LGBTIQ+ population across life-cycle age groups. The highest levels of severe housing deprivation were for transgender and non-binary people aged 30 to 64 years (3.6 percent) and aged 65 years and over (4.1 percent). For those aged 15 to 29 years, non-LGBTIQ+ people had higher levels of severe housing deprivation (3.1 percent) than transgender and non-binary people and sexual minorities.

Figure 7.08



This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Stats NZ census

Differences observed for severe housing deprivation between LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people were not consistent across level 1 ethnic groups, as shown in table 7.05. Māori and Pacific peoples had similar rates of severe housing deprivation for LGBTIQ+ and non-

LGBTIQ+ people. For the European, Asian, and other ethnicity ethnic groups, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to experience severe housing deprivation. The comparatively younger age structures of the Māori and Pacific peoples ethnic groups, and the younger age structure of the LGBTIQ+ population overall, is likely a factor in the smaller differences for the Māori and Pacific peoples ethnic groups across LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people.

Table 7.05

Percentage of population who were severely housing deprived, by ethnic group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023		
Ethnic group	LGBTIQ+	Not LGBTIQ+
	Percent	
European	1.7	1.2
Māori	4.3	4.1
Pacific peoples	6.7	6.8
Asian	3.7	2.8
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	3.2	4.0
Other ethnicity	2.5	1.5

Note: People can identify with more than one ethnic group and will be counted in each group they give as a response.
This data is for the census usually resident population aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Summary

Housing of LGBTIQ+ people is an important and growing field of research and policy interest. In this chapter, we have used 2023 Census data and HES data to explore the topics of housing tenure, costs, condition, and severe housing deprivation for LGBTIQ+ people in New Zealand.

Key disparities across these topics were observed:

- The LGBTIQ+ population were less likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling than the non-LGBTIQ+ population, a pattern which persisted across age groups.
 - Transgender and non-binary people were less likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling than cisgender people across all life-cycle age groups.
 - People with a minority sexual identity were less likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling than heterosexual people across all life-cycle age groups.

- Transgender and non-binary people aged 30 to 64 and 65 and over were least likely to have access to all basic amenities, compared with sexual minorities and non-LGBTIQ+ people.
- Housing conditions were worse for LGBTIQ+ people across all life-cycle age groups, with both transgender and non-binary people and those with sexual minorities reporting higher levels of dampness and mould in their homes.
- LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to have lived at their usual residence for shorter periods of time than non-LGBTIQ+ people in both owner-occupied and non-owner-occupied dwellings. The younger age of the LGBTIQ+ population likely contributes to this.
- Transgender and non-binary people aged 30 to 64 and 65 and over were the most likely to experience severe housing deprivation, compared with sexual minorities and non-LGBTIQ+ people.

8 Families and households

This chapter looks at LGBTIQ+ families and households, namely:

- living situations of younger (15 to 19-year-old and 20 to 24-year-old) LGBTIQ+ people, and
- what parenting looks like among the LGBTIQ+ population.

A household is either one person who usually resides alone, or two or more people who usually reside together and share facilities (such as for eating, cooking, or a living area; and a bathroom and toilet) in a private dwelling.

In the census, a family (or family nucleus) is defined as a couple with or without child(ren), or one parent and their child(ren), whose usual residence is in the same household. To be identified as a 'child' in a family nucleus, a person (regardless of age) will not have a partner or children of their own living in that household. We acknowledge there are limitations with this use of the data. Many different family structures and living situations exist, and the methodology used to count families in census data may not capture these accurately.

For LGBTIQ+ adults in households:

- 65.9 percent (109,776 people) lived in a one-family household (with or without other people)
- 6.6 percent (10,983 people) lived in a two-family household (with or without other people)
- 0.5 percent (909 people) lived in a three-or-more-family household (with or without other people)
- 16.3 percent (27,090 people) lived in an other multi-person household
- 10.7 percent (17,904 people) lived in a one-person household.

LGBTIQ+ young people living with family and independently

Research into LGBTIQ+ young people's experiences of familial acceptance and housing stability highlights challenges for these groups (Fraser et al, 2022). This has led to interest in census data about young LGBTIQ+ people's living situations, and in particular whether they

are leaving their family homes at higher rates or at younger ages than their peers. To investigate this, we focus on data about an individual's 'role in a family nucleus', which describes a person's role within their family – for example, spouse/partner, parent, child, or whether a person does not live in a family nucleus.¹⁶

We investigate this data for LGBTIQ+ young people as a way to gain insights about the rate at which LGBTIQ+ people may still be living in their family home (that is, occupying a 'child' role in a family nucleus) or living in another situation or family structure.

Age breakdowns for the 'variations of sex characteristics' variable have been restricted due to the data quality issue discussed in [About the data](#).

This means data for those born with variations of sex characteristics is not explored here.

Below, we look at proportions of LGBTIQ+ young people aged 15 to 19 years who were represented in the data as having a 'child' role in a family nucleus.

Table 8.01 shows the proportions of the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations across ages 15 to 19 years who hold different roles in a family nucleus. Across each age category, we saw a slightly decreased proportion of LGBTIQ+ young people living in their family home (that is, holding a 'child' role in a family nucleus), compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people of the same age. This difference increased with age.

Table 8.01

Individual's role in family nucleus by age, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 15 to 19-year-olds, 2023						
Age	LGBTIQ+ status	Parent and spouse/partner in a family nucleus	Sole parent in a family nucleus	Spouse/partner only in a family nucleus	Child in a family nucleus	Not in a family nucleus
		Percent				
15 years	LGBTIQ+	c	c	c	95.2	4.8
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.6	4.3
16 years	LGBTIQ+	c	c	0.7	92.5	6.6

¹⁶ More information about how families are counted in the 2023 Census can be found at [Families and households in the 2023 Census: Data sources, methodology, and data quality](#).

	Not LGBTIQ+	0.0	0.1	0.4	94.1	5.4
17 years	LGBTIQ+	0.2	c	2.4	88.3	9.0
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.2	0.2	1.3	91.1	7.2
18 years	LGBTIQ+	0.2	0.3	5.6	72.2	21.7
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.4	0.6	3.9	80.6	14.5
19 years	LGBTIQ+	0.5	0.5	9.9	47.1	41.9
	Not LGBTIQ+	0.9	0.9	6.3	61.5	30.3
<p>Note: This data is for people in households in occupied private dwellings aged 15–19 years old.</p> <p>Symbols: (c) confidential</p> <p>Source: Stats NZ census</p>						

The impact of proxy response by another household member (that is, a census form being filled out by another person, like a parent, on behalf of a young person) may be a contributing factor here.

Across these age groups, we saw a concurrent increase in LGBTIQ+ people not in a family nucleus compared with their non-LGBTIQ+ counterparts, and this difference widened as age increased.¹⁷ For example, of those aged 15 years, 4.8 percent of LGBTIQ+ people were not in a family nucleus, compared with 4.3 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people. By age 19 years, 41.9 percent of LGBTIQ+ people were not in a family nucleus, compared with 30.3 percent of non-LGBTIQ+ people. Further, at ages 17, 18, and 19, we observed a higher proportion of LGBTIQ+ people living with a spouse or partner than their non-LGBTIQ+ counterparts.

Together, these findings reinforce the significance of ‘found family’, which refers to people who are not biologically related, but form a close and supportive bond, and is a particularly common concept among LGBTIQ+ communities.

[Chapter 6: Wellbeing](#) discusses this concept; data from the General Social Survey investigates social contact, loneliness, and support networks.

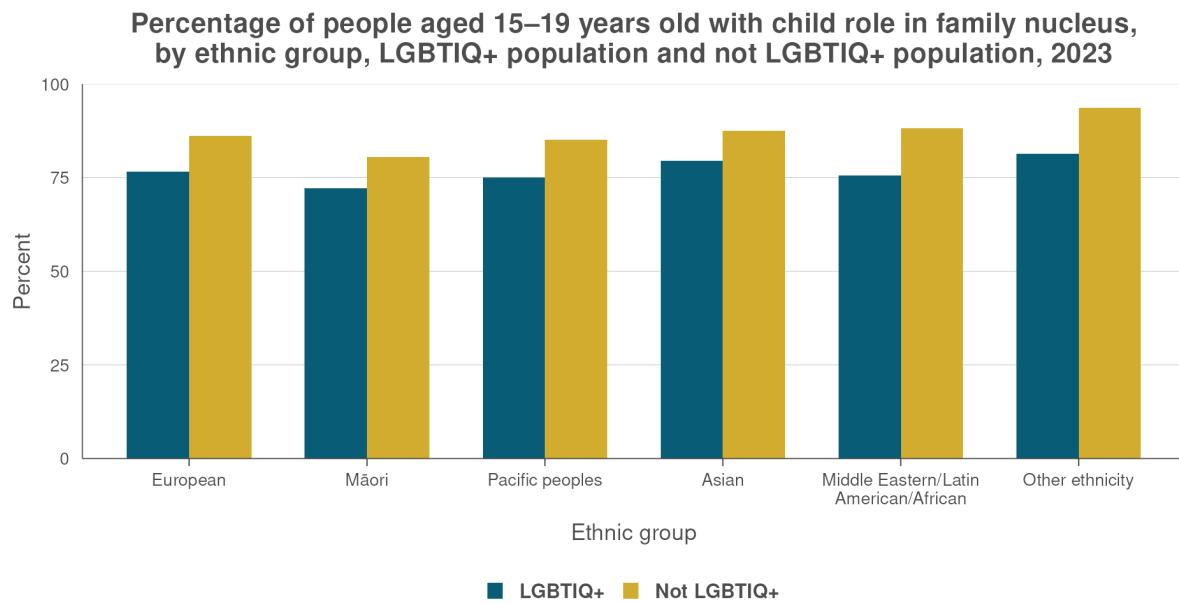
Studies such as Counting Ourselves 2022 highlight the importance of friend and partner support, especially in cases of family rejection. LGBTIQ+ people may be left more vulnerable

¹⁷ Here, ‘not in a family nucleus’ means that an individual was unable to be linked to others in their dwelling through family relationships (such as parent, spouse, or child). They may be living with others in a dwelling with whom they do not have a ‘family relationship’ as such, or they may be living alone. For more information about the classification used for this variable, see [Individual’s Role in Family Nucleus Classification V2.0.0](#).

if they lack a wider support network. As discussed in previous chapters, LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to experience some degree of economic insecurity and they are also more likely to experience housing deprivation. Research has demonstrated the importance of support networks for those experiencing economic insecurity (Hill, Hirsch, & Davis, 2020).

Figure 8.01 shows that the differences in proportions of LGBTIQ+ young people having child roles in family nuclei were evident across all level 1 ethnic groups. Across ethnic groups, the difference between proportions of LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ young people in a child role in a family nucleus ranges from 8.1 percentage points (Asian) to 12.6 percentage points (MELAA).

Figure 8.01



This data is for people aged 15–19 years old in households in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Tables 8.02 and 8.03 look at a person's role in a family nucleus by sexual identity and cisgender and transgender status for two age groups: 15 to 19-year-olds, and 20 to 24-year-olds, respectively.

For the younger cohort (those aged 15 to 19 years), transgender people were generally more likely to be living as a child in a family nucleus than cisgender people. The exception to this was transgender people who were heterosexual or straight, who were less likely to be living as a child in a family nucleus than cisgender people who were heterosexual or straight.

Bisexual people and those with another sexual identity in this age group were generally less likely to be a child in a family nucleus than gay or lesbian and heterosexual or straight people.

Table 8.02

Individual's role in family nucleus, by sexual identity and cisgender and transgender status, 15–19-year-olds, 2023						
Sexual identity	Cisgender and transgender status	Parent and spouse/partner in a family nucleus	Sole parent in a family nucleus	Spouse/partner only in a family nucleus	Child in a family nucleus	Not in a family nucleus
		Percent				
Heterosexual or straight	Cisgender	0.3	0.3	2.3	85.4	11.6
	Transgender and non-binary	c	c	5.1	80.1	14.0
Gay or lesbian	Cisgender	c	c	2.5	78.2	19.1
	Transgender and non-binary	c	c	3.9	80.2	16.3
Bisexual	Cisgender	0.3	0.3	5.2	73.2	21.0
	Transgender and non-binary	c	c	5.0	77.9	16.9
Other sexual identity	Cisgender	c	c	3.9	76.5	19.1
	Transgender and non-binary	c	c	5.4	77.6	17.1

Note: This data is for people in households in occupied private dwellings aged 15–19 years old.

Symbols: (c) confidential

Source: Stats NZ census

As shown in table 8.03, for the cohort aged 20 to 24 years, cisgender people were generally more likely to be a spouse/partner in a family nucleus than transgender and non-binary people. The only exception to this was for transgender and non-binary people who were heterosexual or straight. For those with minority sexual identities, we see higher proportions not living in a family nucleus than for heterosexual or straight people.

Table 8.03

Individual's role in family nucleus, by sexual identity and cisgender and transgender status, 20–24-year-olds, 2023						
Sexual identity	Cisgender and transgender status	Parent and spouse/partner in a family nucleus	Sole parent in a family nucleus	Spouse/partner only in a family nucleus	Child in a family nucleus	Not in a family nucleus
		Percent				
Heterosexual or straight	Cisgender	4.5	2.4	18.2	41.4	33.5
	Transgender and non-binary	2.7	2.7	18.6	42.5	33.0
Gay or lesbian	Cisgender	0.8	0.5	17.0	32.5	49.2
	Transgender and non-binary	c	c	15.7	31.9	52.0
Bisexual	Cisgender	2.8	2.7	22.5	26.6	45.4
	Transgender and non-binary	0.9	c	20.0	30.0	48.7
Other sexual identity	Cisgender	1.5	1.8	18.6	34.8	43.3
	Transgender and non-binary	c	0.9	16.5	32.8	49.6

Note: This data is for people in households in occupied private dwellings aged 20–24 years old.

Symbols: (c) confidential

Source: Stats NZ census

LGBTIQ+ parents

Data and research on LGBTIQ+ people and their experience of parenthood is relatively in its early stages. Much of the legislation that has provided a basis on which LGBTIQ+ people can (openly) form families is only a few decades old, for instance:

- Homosexual Law Reform Act 1986
- Care of Children Act 2004
- Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Act 2013
- Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationships Registration Act 2021.

Despite supportive changes in legislation over this time, there remain legal and financial considerations for LGBTIQ+ people looking to become parents, both in New Zealand and in comparable jurisdictions, such as a lack of funded fertility treatment, adoption costs, or legal costs related to surrogacy (Fertility New Zealand, 2022). The experience of, and barriers to, becoming parents for LGBTIQ+ people are as heterogeneous as the group itself,

with some facing relatively few barriers and others facing the compounded effects of multiple challenges.¹⁸

In this section, we use the same data about role in a family nucleus to look at LGBTIQ+ people occupying 'parent' roles. This data was disaggregated by sole parents and parents living with a spouse.¹⁹ We then cross-reference this data with data we have about couples, the genders of individuals in couples, and whether or not these couples had dependent children. We discuss the differences we see across these two sets of data and highlight the important limitations in using couple-based data to describe LGBTIQ+ family composition.

People aged 15 years and over who were parents in family nuclei

Table 8.04 shows the numbers of people in the LGBTIQ+, sexual minority, and transgender and non-binary populations aged 15 years and over who held a 'parent' role in a family nucleus. This included sole parents and parents who lived with a spouse or partner in their home. The role of 'parent' in a family nucleus includes those who are parents living with their adult children. People were more likely to be both a parent and a spouse, rather than a sole parent. For both types of parents, there was a much higher number of people with a minority sexual identity who were parents, compared with transgender and non-binary people.

Table 8.04

Count of parents for selected LGBTIQ+ populations, 2023

LGBTIQ+ population	Parent and spouse/partner in a family nucleus	Sole parent in a family nucleus
	Count	
LGBTIQ+	23,037	8,655
Transgender and non-binary	3,768	870
Minority sexual identity	15,111	7,227

¹⁸ We acknowledge that while barriers to parenthood exist for LGBTIQ+ people, this can also be the case for non-LGBTIQ+ people.

¹⁹ It is also important to acknowledge that census data on families and family roles is limited to the definitions described earlier in this chapter and may miss other types of family structures and parent-like roles.

Note: This data is for people in households in occupied private dwellings aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Rates of parenting were influenced by age, so to compare the proportion of parents in the LGBTIQ+ population with that of the non-LGBTIQ+ population we break the data down by life-cycle age group.

Table 8.05 shows that across all age groups, LGBTIQ+ people were less likely to be a parent and spouse/partner, compared with non-LGBTIQ+ people. However, proportions of people who were sole parents were similar across LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ populations at each age group, with LGBTIQ+ people aged 30 to 64 years slightly more likely to be sole parents (8.4 percent) than non-LGBTIQ+ people in the same age group (7.4 percent).

Table 8.05

Individual's role in family nucleus by life-cycle age group, LGBTIQ+ population and not LGBTIQ+ population, 2023

Age group	LGBTIQ+ status	Parent and spouse/partner in a family nucleus	Sole parent in a family nucleus	Spouse/partner only in a family nucleus	Child in a family nucleus	Not in a family nucleus
		Percent				
15–29 years	LGBTIQ+	3.6	2.3	19.6	37.9	36.6
	Not LGBTIQ+	7.9	2.6	17.1	48.5	23.9
30–64 years	LGBTIQ+	25.5	8.4	30.8	5.3	29.9
	Not LGBTIQ+	48.1	7.4	25.3	3.4	15.7
65 years and over	LGBTIQ+	5.4	3.3	43.8	0.2	47.2
	Not LGBTIQ+	7.1	3.8	56.3	0.2	32.6

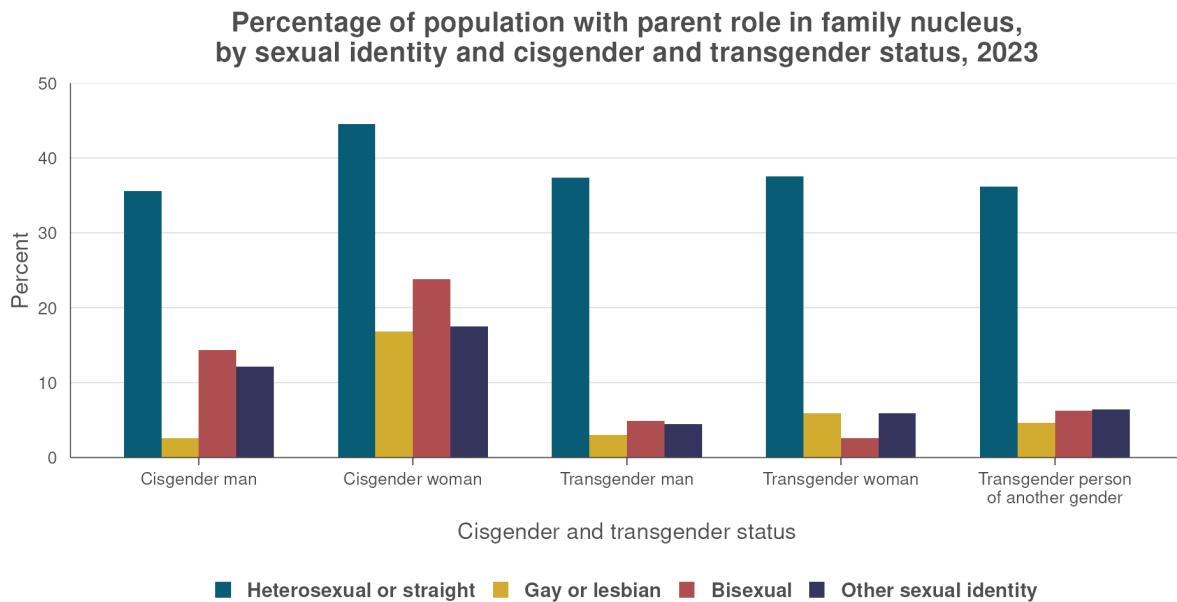
Note: This data is for people in households in occupied private dwellings aged 15 years and over.

Source: Stats NZ census

Figure 8.02 shows parenting rates by sexual identity and cisgender and transgender status (detailed groups). We see that rates of parenting across sexual identity categories differ more than across cisgender and transgender categories. However, we still see comparatively high proportions of cisgender women parenting across sexual minority groups.

Transgender and non-binary people who were heterosexual or straight had similar rates of parenting to cisgender heterosexual or straight people.

Figure 8.02



This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

It should be noted that sexual identity as measured by the 2023 Census is just one aspect of sexual orientation and cannot be used to assume characteristics of the relationships that people form, now or in the past. There was a very clear difference in rates of parenting among transgender and non-binary heterosexual or straight people, compared with transgender and non-binary people in other sexual identity groups. The ambiguity of the intersection of gender and sexual identities and what this means for relationships and parenting prevents exploration of other correlations or possible causes without further research.

The higher rates of parenting seen for transgender and non-binary heterosexual or straight people (compared with transgender and non-binary people of other sexual identities) may be impacted by age. Unlike other LGBTIQ+ subgroups represented here, the age distribution for transgender and non-binary heterosexual or straight people more closely resembles that of the non-LGBTIQ+ population. This means there were more people of and over median parenting age of 31.5 years (Stats NZ, 2025b) in this group, leading to their higher likelihood of having children.

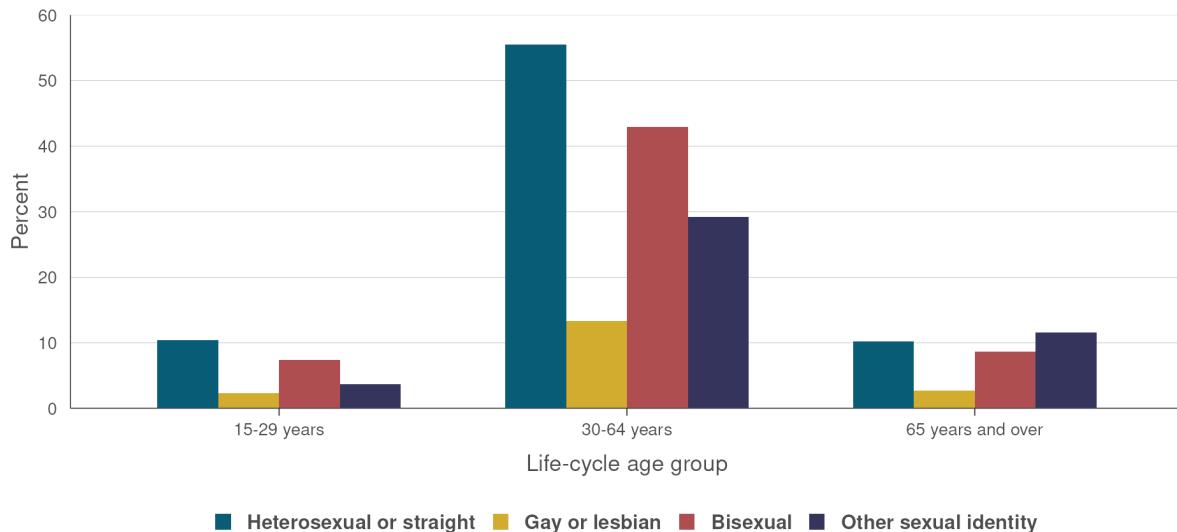
Figure 8.03 shows parenting rates by sexual identity and life-cycle age groups. Heterosexual or straight people were much more likely to be parents than people with minority sexual identities across each age group. For those in the 15 to 29 years and 30 to 64 years age groups, bisexual people were more likely to be parents than gay or lesbian people or those with other sexual identities. Gay or lesbian people were the least likely to be parents across every age group:

- at 2.3 percent for those aged 15 to 29 years (compared with 10.4 percent for heterosexual or straight people)
- at 13.3 percent for those aged 30 to 64 years (compared with 55.5 percent for heterosexual or straight people).

For these same two age groups, bisexual people were sole parents at a slightly higher rate than other groups, including heterosexual or straight people. For 15 to 29-year-olds, 3.1 percent of bisexual people were sole parents, compared with 2.4 percent of heterosexual or straight people. For those aged 30 to 64 years, 13.2 percent of bisexual people were sole parents, compared with 7.1 percent of heterosexual or straight people.

Figure 8.03

Percentage of population with parent role in family nucleus, by sexual identity and life-cycle age group, 2023



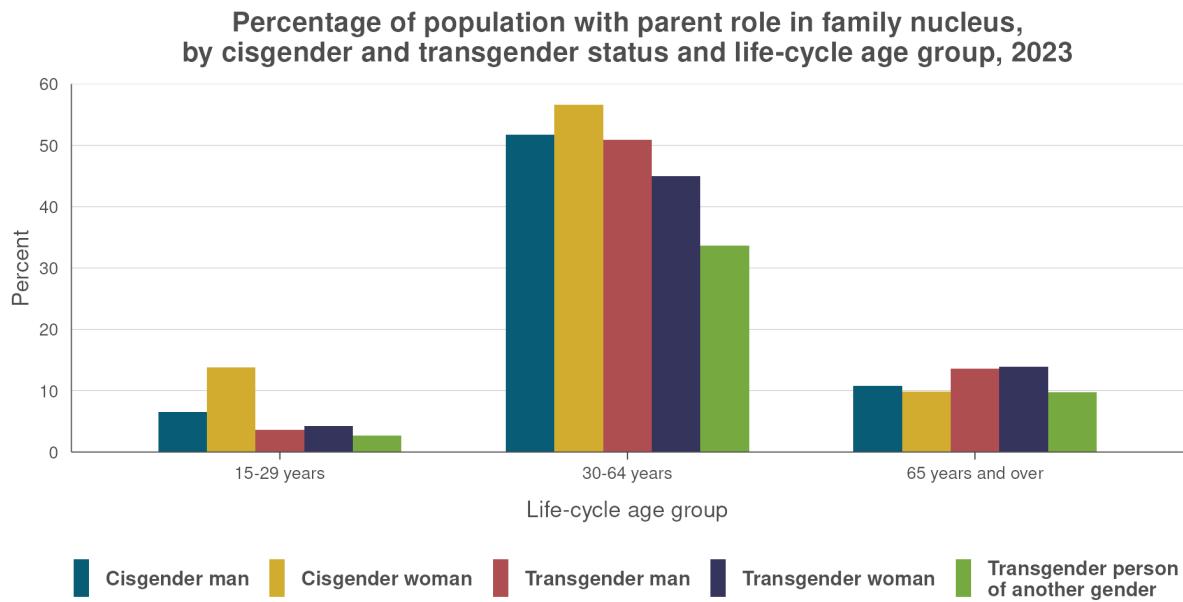
This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Figure 8.04 shows parenting rates by cisgender and transgender status and life-cycle age group.

We see that transgender and non-binary people aged 15 to 29 years were less likely to be parents than cisgender people of the same age, but differences were less pronounced for those in the 30 to 64 and 65 and over age groups. However, there were observable differences for transgender people of another gender, who were less likely to be parents than all other groups in each age group.

Figure 8.04



This data is for people aged 15 years and over in households in occupied private dwellings.

Stats NZ census

Across all age groups, transgender people were more likely to be sole parents than cisgender men, but less likely than cisgender women. Proportions of sole parents were similar across transgender and non-binary groups, with a slightly increased rate of sole parentage among transgender men in the 30 to 64 age group (8.8 percent, compared with 6.0 percent of transgender women and 6.7 percent of transgender people of another gender).

Type of couple by gender and number of dependent children

2023 Census also produced data on type of couple by gender. This variable does not contain any direct LGBTIQ+ information, as it was constructed using relationships between people in households and their genders. Nevertheless, there is some conceptual correlation between some of this variable's categories and LGBTIQ+ concepts that has led to some use of this

data as a proxy for LGBTIQ+ population in the past. We explore this here and compare findings with individually based data about parenting in the section above.

It is important to remember that the information feeding into LGBTIQ+ data primarily discussed in this report was self-identified and therefore reflective of an individual's identity. As discussed earlier, sexual identity is only one aspect of sexual orientation, and 'type of couple by gender' should not be taken as a reflection of an individual's identity.²⁰ Similarly, it is important to be aware that how individuals answered the question about gender in the 2023 Census was also a matter of self-identification. Therefore, type of couple by gender should also not be taken necessarily as a reflection of how a couple is perceived or their lived experience of the world.

The categories within 'type of couple by gender' are as follows:

- different-gender couple:
 - female-male
 - female-another gender
 - male-another gender
- same-gender couple:
 - female couple
 - male couple
 - another gender couple.

Table 8.06 shows that same-gender couples were much less likely to have dependent children than different-gender couples.²¹ This aligns with the data we saw in figure 8.03, where sexual minorities were less likely to be parents than heterosexual or straight people.

Table 8.06 shows that it is not only female-male couples who were more likely to have dependent children than same-gender couples, but also female-another gender and male-another gender couples. Of same-gender couples, male couples were most likely to not have dependent children, while female couples were most likely to have dependent

²⁰ [Framework for sexual orientation](#), which underpins the sexual identity data classification, has more information.

²¹ A dependent child in the census is a child in a family aged under 15 years or aged 15 to 17 years and not employed full time.

children. Female couples were roughly twice as likely to have dependent children, compared with male couples, for each number of dependent children category.

Even when comparing by age groups of either member of the couple, these differences persisted across 10-year age groups, so it appears that this was not due to same-gender couples being younger than different-gender couples.

Table 8.06

Number of dependent children by type of couple by gender, 2023					
Type of couple by gender	No dependent children	One dependent child	Two dependent children	Three dependent children	Four or more dependent children
	Percent				
Different-gender couple	59.8	16.1	16.7	5.5	1.9
Female-Male couple	59.7	16.1	16.7	5.6	1.9
Female-Another gender couple	66.7	15.1	12.4	4.3	1.5
Male-Another gender couple	70.1	13.9	11.4	3.2	1.5
Same-gender couple	79.5	10.3	7.1	2.2	0.9
Female couple	73.5	13.5	9.1	2.7	1.2
Male couple	87.1	6.3	4.4	1.5	0.6
Another gender couple	81.2	8.3	7.5	3.0	c

Note: This data is for couples in families in households in occupied private dwellings.

Symbols: (c) confidential

Source: Stats NZ census

Limitations of data about couples in providing information about the LGBTIQ+ population

A key limitation of using data about couples as a proxy for data about LGBTIQ+ populations is that it constitutes a clear under-representation of these populations. In the case of parenting, couples data gives us an under-representation of the number of families with LGBTIQ+ people in a parent role.

For instance, standard outputs of data about couples do not tell us about:

- the number of transgender men and women who could be in either same-gender or different-gender couples
- the sexual identity of people in couples (not only could bisexual people or people with other minority sexual identities be represented in any of these types of couples, it is also important to remember that someone in a different-gender couple may still report their sexual identity as gay or lesbian, and vice versa).

As noted earlier in this chapter, census data can only look at a narrow definition of families – that is, those who share a household. We have outlined the data available as a starting point for looking at the experiences of LGBTIQ+ parents and how LGBTIQ+ people create families. Further research might build on this data to understand more about this cohort.

The 2023 Census provided the following counts of couples with children, by type of couple by gender.

In table 8.07 below, the number of same-gender couples (4,344) and couples with a person of another gender (912 and 735) might be viewed as the total number of ‘LGBTIQ+ couples’ with children.²² Table 8.04 earlier in this chapter told us there were over 30,000 LGBTIQ+ ‘individual’ parents – over 20,000 of these parents also have a cohabiting partner. This illustrates how this data does not capture all couples where one or both partners are LGBTIQ+. The couples-with-children data exclusively captures families in which the couple is cohabiting along with the children. As previously noted, there are many family structures not represented here, both for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ families.

Table 8.07

Count of couples with children, by type of couple by gender, 2023	
Type of family by type of couple by gender	Count
Different-gender couple with child(ren)	539,139
Female-Male couple with child(ren)	537,492
Female-Another gender couple with child(ren)	912

²² We acknowledge that labelling those in same-gender couples, or couples where one person is a gender different than man or woman, as ‘LGBTIQ+’ is an entirely rudimentary approach to deriving information on LGBTIQ+ parents. This serves, however, as a useful demonstration of the inadequacy of data about couples to act as a proxy for data about the LGBTIQ+ population.

Male-Another gender couple with child(ren)	735
Same-gender couple with children	4,344
Female couple with child(ren)	3,012
Male couple with child(ren)	1,236
Another gender couple with child(ren)	93

Note: This data is for couples with children in households in occupied private dwellings.

Source: Stats NZ census

Summary

Here are the key findings in this chapter:

- LGBTIQ+ young people appear to be less likely to be living as a child in a family than non-LGBTIQ+ young people.
 - This trend persists across ethnicities and was stronger for sexual minorities than gender minorities.
- LGBTIQ+ people had generally lower rates of being in a parent role than non-LGBTIQ+ people.
 - The main predictor of lower rates of parenting seems to be belonging to a sexual minority, rather than a gender minority. Transgender and non-binary people (of any gender) who were heterosexual or straight had similar rates of parenting to non-LGBTIQ+ people.
- Rates of sole parenting were similar for LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ people. Across all sexual identities, the highest rates of sole parenting were observed for cisgender women.
- Data on type of couple by gender gives an interesting perspective on some types of family composition, however it is not sufficient to explore the full range of all families with LGBTIQ+ parents.

As stated at the beginning of the chapter, data on LGBTIQ+ families is relatively new. There is broad scope for further research to explore different types of family and household composition in more detail.

Insights on proportions of the LGBTIQ+ population and its subgroups who were parents are key to discussions in subsequent chapters as we explore housing and other economic trends for LGBTIQ+ people.

Conclusion

The inclusion of LGBTIQ+ data in Stats NZ's household surveys is the result of many years of work by LGBTIQ+ data experts, users, and community organisations alongside Stats NZ. This has involved years of iterative progress, working with household surveys, development of new data and statistical standards, and a successful first full-field enumeration census in New Zealand to collect information about LGBTIQ+ people.

One of the notable limitations of this report being the first of its kind is that it only provides a picture of a single point in time for census data, while small populations in sample surveys often have large sample error. This can limit our ability to observe small changes between estimates.

Given the younger age distribution of the LGBTIQ+ population, it is reasonable to expect we might see changes for this population as a whole over the coming years and decades. We have noted the likelihood that social attitudes, both historical and contemporary, have contributed to some of the trends found in this data. In the same way, attitudes and information will continue to play a role in shaping outcomes for communities. If these trends continue, the LGBTIQ+ population within New Zealand will likely make up a larger proportion of the population over the coming decades. It is therefore useful to understand more about how this group participates in the social and economic landscape of the country.

As we have seen throughout this report, LGBTIQ+ populations experienced disparities across many domains. They often had lower income ([5: Work and income](#)), higher housing costs, poorer housing conditions, and were more likely to experience severe housing deprivation ([7: Housing](#)). They experienced poorer mental and physical wellbeing as well as higher rates of discrimination ([6: Wellbeing](#)).

LGBTIQ+ people were also more likely to be identified in census data as disabled, particularly for younger age groups ([3: Disability and activity limitations](#)). Many of the disparities observed were exacerbated for those who were both LGBTIQ+ and disabled.

Despite challenges, the LGBTIQ+ group as a whole was also characterised by high educational attainment and levels of post high-school study ([4: Education and training](#)). This group also engages in relatively high levels of care and voluntary work ([5: Work and income](#)). There was also some evidence of hope and optimism about the future (demonstrated by expectations of life satisfaction in five years' time, in [6: Wellbeing](#)).

The data has also highlighted the heterogeneity within the LGBTIQ+ population. This is a vital consideration, particularly when considering this report as a resource for policy makers or service providers. The experiences and needs of some groups may be very different than others (as discussed in the [Introduction](#)). Individuals may also be represented in more than one of these groups, potentially leading to intersecting and complex outcomes.

Further, it is important to remember there was as much variation within the LGBTIQ+ population as there was in the population of New Zealand as a whole. LGBTIQ+ people were represented to some extent in all age groups, ethnic groups, and across geographic areas ([1: Population structure](#) and [2: Ethnicity and culture](#)). They were represented across educational and occupational fields, and income brackets. They had a range of family and living situations and experiences of parenting and caregiving ([8: Families and households](#)).

Exploring patterns for population groups is useful in understanding general trends. We must nevertheless be aware that this is a blunt tool when it comes to understanding individual experiences.

We would once again like to express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to this work, and especially to the people who have trusted us with the privilege of their data. We hope that this report contributes to the growing body of information on the lives and experiences of LGBTIQ+ people in New Zealand.

Glossary

alternative data sourcing – the use of admin data, data from previous censuses, and statistical imputation to fill gaps in census variables.

another gender – used to encompass any genders that are not male or female. This term is used in the Stats NZ gender question format and classification.

bisexual – a person who is sexually attracted to more than one sex or gender.

cisgender – refers to a person whose gender is the same as the sex recorded at their birth.

data or statistical standard – a documented protocol that provides a comprehensive set of guidelines for surveys and administrative sources collecting information on a particular topic.

distribution – how values are spread or arranged over a set of observations or outcomes.

fa'afafine and other Pacific cultural terms – Pacific communities have their own culturally specific terms relating to sexual orientation and gender identities. These concepts are more, or just as much, about familial, genealogical, social, and cultural selfhood. These include but are not limited to the following terms: Fa'afafine (Samoa and American Samoa), Leiti/Fakaleiti (Tonga), Fakafafine (Niue), Akava'ine (Cook Islands), Pina (Tuvalu), Māhū (Tahiti & Hawaii), Vakasalewalewa (Fiji), and Palopa (Papua New Guinea).

full-field enumeration – a census model that uses a survey to enumerate or count the population and dwellings, without the use of an administrative register(s).

gay – a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex or gender. More commonly used in relation to males.

gender – refers to a person's social and personal identity as male, female, or another gender or genders that may be non-binary. Gender may include gender identity and/or gender expression. A person's current gender may differ from the sex recorded at their birth and may differ from what is indicated on their current legal documents. A person's gender may change over time. Some people may not identify with any gender.

gender diverse – an umbrella term used by some people who identify outside of the male/female gender binary. Being transgender can be one way of being gender diverse, but not all gender-diverse people identify as transgender and vice versa (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020).

gender identity – refers to a person’s internal and individual experience of gender.

gender minority – refers to the groups represented in the data as transgender men, transgender women, or transgender people of another gender.

heterosexual – a person who is sexually attracted to people of a different sex or gender than their own. Straight is an alternative term.

homosexual – a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex or gender.

Alternative terms used are gay and lesbian.

intersex – an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of variations in sex characteristics. Many intersex variations are not visible or detected at birth and many people may not be aware they have an intersex variation until later in life (for example, when trying to conceive). Some people may identify as intersex, while others may see their intersex variation more as part of their medical history, rather than their identity.

lesbian – a woman who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex or gender.

LGBTIQ+ – the acronym LGBTIQ+ stands for ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and other gender and sexual minorities (represented by the +)’.

non-binary – a term to describe a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. There are many different ways that people may be non-binary.

population – any complete group with at least one characteristic in common.

sex – based on a person’s sex characteristics, such as their chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs. While typically based upon the sex characteristics observed and recorded at birth or infancy, a person’s sex can change over the course of their lifetime and may differ from their sex recorded at birth.

sex at birth – refers to the sex recorded at a person’s birth (that is, what was recorded on their birth certificate). Sex at birth may also be understood as sex assigned at birth.

sex characteristics – refer to each person’s physical features relating to sex, including genitalia and other sexual and reproductive anatomy, chromosomes, hormones, and secondary physical features emerging from puberty.

sexual minority – refers to the groups represented in the data as being gay or lesbian, bisexual, or having another sexual identity that was not heterosexual or straight.

sexual orientation – covers three key aspects: sexual attraction, sexual behaviour, and sexual identity. These are related – sexual orientation is generally based on sexual attraction; sexual attraction can result in different sexual behaviours and sexual identities (Pega et al, 2013).

sexual attraction – refers to sexual interest in another person. Sexual attraction is having sexual feelings towards someone. A person may be attracted to one specific gender or sex, to more than one gender or sex, or to no one.

sexual behaviour – how a person behaves sexually. It is whether they have sexual partners of another gender or sex, the same gender or sex, or refrain from sexual behaviour.

sexual identity – refers to how a person thinks of their own sexuality and which terms they identify with. Sexual identity terms include lesbian, gay, straight, asexual, takatāpui, bisexual, or pansexual, among others.

statistical classification – set of categories that may be assigned to one or more variables registered in surveys or administrative files and may be used in the production and dissemination of statistics. The categories are defined in terms of one or more characteristics of a particular population of units of observation. A classification may have a flat, linear structure or may be hierarchically structured, such that all categories at lower levels are subcategories of a category at the next level up. The categories at each level of the classification structure must be mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive of all objects in the population of interest.

statistical imputation – the process of replacing missing data with estimated values from a statistical process (in contrast to sourcing real values from admin or historical census data). The purpose is to provide realistic values for missing data for individuals.

straight – a person who is sexually attracted to people of a different sex or gender than their own. Heterosexual is an alternative term.

subpopulation – a subpopulation refers to a specific group within a larger population that shares distinct characteristics or traits.

takatāpui – also spelt ‘takataapui’, is a traditional Māori term that means ‘intimate companion of the same sex’. It has been reclaimed by some Māori to describe their diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex characteristics (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020).

tangata ira tāne – te reo Māori term that roughly translates as ‘trans man’.

tangata ira wahine – te reo Māori term that roughly translates as ‘trans woman’.

transgender – refers to a person whose gender is different than the sex recorded at their birth.

transgender man – refers to a man who was assigned female at birth (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020).

transgender woman – refers to a woman who was assigned male at birth (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020).

variations of sex characteristics – refers to people with innate genetic, hormonal, or physical sex characteristics that do not conform to medical norms for female or male bodies. It refers to a wide spectrum of variations to hormones, chromosomes, genitals, and/or reproductive organs.

whakawahine – is a te reo Māori term that roughly translates as ‘trans woman’. More literally, it translates as being or becoming, in the manner of spirit of a woman (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020).

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Appendix 1: 2023 Census questions on LGBTIQ+-related concepts

Examples given in this appendix are all taken from the 2023 Census of Population and Dwellings individual forms.

Gender

2023 Census online form

What is your gender?

Gender refers to a person's social and personal identity as male, female, or another gender (or genders) that may be non-binary. A person's sex at birth may differ.

male

female

another gender

Please specify:

[Empty text input field]

2023 Census paper form

3 What is your gender?

male

female

another gender. Please state:

Mark your answer like this: —

[A 4x10 grid for marking responses]

Sex at birth

2023 Census online form

What was your sex at birth?

For example, what was recorded on your birth certificate.

male

female

2023 Census paper form

4 What was your sex at birth?

For example, what was recorded on your birth certificate.

male

female

Sexual identity

2023 Census online form

Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

Sexual identity is how a person thinks of their own sexuality and which terms they identify with.

heterosexual / straight

gay or lesbian

bisexual

another identity

Please specify:

prefer not to say

2023 Census paper form

29 Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

- heterosexual / straight
- gay or lesbian
- bisexual
- another identity. Please state: _____

or prefer not to say

Variations of sex characteristics

2023 Census online form

Were you born with a variation of sex characteristics (otherwise known as an intersex variation)?

yes

no

don't know

prefer not to say

2023 Census paper form

30 Were you born with a variation of sex characteristics (otherwise known as an intersex variation)?

- yes
- no
- don't know
- or prefer not to say

Appendix 2: Resources, services, and support organisations

- [Rainbow Support Collective](#) – the Rainbow Support Collective connects peer-led LGBTQIA+ organisations who provide lifespan service delivery and peer-support services in Aotearoa. They work together on projects and advocacy to benefit rainbow people across Aotearoa.
- [Te Ngākau Kahukura](#) – a national initiative that works to improve the environments around rainbow young people to make sure they are affirming, welcoming, and non-discriminatory. Te Ngākau Kahukura offers an extensive list of support organisations, and a large amount of resource material on a variety of important LGBTIQ+ topics.
- [RainbowYOUTH](#) – a national youth-led organisation dedicated to supporting queer, gender diverse, and intersex young people, as well as their whānau and wider communities. RainbowYOUTH runs drop-in centres in Auckland, Tauranga, and New Plymouth; operates peer-support groups in Auckland, Northland, Bay of Plenty, Taranaki, and online; provides one-on-one support to young people around gender and sexuality; and publishes a range of information resources and websites.
- [InsideOUT](#) – a national organisation that works with youth, whānau, schools, and communities to make Aotearoa a safer place for all rainbow young people to live and be in. InsideOUT's work includes supporting young people running queer-straight alliances in schools, connecting rainbow young people through national and regional events, and providing professional development training.
- [Intersex Aotearoa](#) – the key intersex organisation in New Zealand. They provide information, education, and training for organisations and professionals who provide services to intersex people and their families. One of their initiatives is Intersex Youth Aotearoa, a place for intersex young people and their whānau to share information, create community, and find support.
- [Gender Minorities Aotearoa](#) – a nationwide organisation run by and for transgender people, including non-binary, intersex, and takatāpui gender-diverse people. It offers information, advocacy, and wrap-around support for transgender people of all ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds. It runs The Gender Centre in Wellington and provides online support to people across Aotearoa, including through its Facebook group Transgender & Intersex NZ.
- [Tiwhanawhana](#) – a takatāpui community group based in Wellington that welcomes people of diverse sexualities and gender identity. The kaupapa of the group is primarily for takatāpui – building community, telling stories, and leaving a legacy. One of their initiatives, takatapui.nz, is a resource hub for takatāpui and their whānau, sharing information about takatāpui identities, experiences, and history as part of te ao Māori.
- [Rainbow Path](#) – an advocacy and peer-support group for the rights of rainbow refugees and asylum seekers living in Aotearoa. It provides peer support, and links people with lawyers, rainbow and refugee organisations, and other services. The group also advocates for

rainbow refugee and asylum seeker human rights, and educates allies and health professionals about these issues.

- [Adhikaar Aotearoa](#) – an organisation that provides advocacy, education, and support for LGBTIQ+ people of colour, particularly South Asians, in New Zealand.
- [Nevertheless](#) – Nevertheless focuses on Māori, Pasifika, and takatāpui rainbow+ mental health by creating safe spaces for people to ‘be free to be heard, free to be seen, and free to be their full authentic selves without denying any part of their holistic identity out of shame or stigma’. They run Manioro community events that ‘seek to disrupt toxic narratives and challenge unhealthy stereotypes surrounding our communities through delivering educational and creative workshops for whānau and communities while increasing the visibility of our Māori and Pasifika rainbow+ peoples through storytelling, cultural performances, and panel discussions’.
- [F'INE \(Auckland\)](#) – a Pasifika organisation that provides Whānau Ora navigation support and services for Pasifika MVPFAFF+ (culturally specific Pacific gender and sexuality expressions or identities)/LGBTQI+, rainbow, and queer people and their families in the Auckland region. They provide navigational support to fanau aspiring and working towards self-determined goals.

Helplines

- 0800 OUTLINE (688 5463) – a free, nationwide phone-counselling service for LGBTIQ+/rainbow people and their whānau, staffed by trained volunteers (6pm–9pm). Free chat support is available under outline.org.nz.
- Need to talk? (1737 – free call or text) – 24/7 free, national counselling service staffed by paid counsellors.
- Lifeline (0800 543 354) – calls and text messages are answered by qualified counsellors and well-trained volunteers 24/7.
- Youthline (0800 376 633) – service available 24/7 for any young person in New Zealand, or anyone who is supporting a young person.