

Hate Crime Report 2021



Supporting LGBT+
victims of hate crime

Luke Hubbard

the LGBT+ anti-abuse charity



Acknowledgements

With thanks to Mel Stray, Cerys Bradley and Nick Antjoule.

About Galop

Galop is the UK's LGBT+ anti-abuse charity. For the past 39 years we have provided advice, support and advocacy to LGBT+ victims and campaigned to end anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse.

Galop works within three key areas: hate crime, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. Our purpose is to make life safe, just, and fair for LGBT+ people.

We work to help LGBT+ people achieve positive changes to their current situation, through practical and emotional support, to develop resilience, and to build lives free from violence and abuse.

Credits

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LGBT+ hate crime is disproportionately on the rise in the UK, and this report shows that the majority victims are not being given the help and support that they need. We know, from working with LGBT+ victims of hate crime every day, how profound the effects of suffering abuse and violence based on who you are can be.

When someone experiences abuse as a result of their identity, access to advice, information, advocacy, emotional support, and practical assistance are absolutely vital in ensuring their ongoing safety and wellbeing.

However, local support services remain sparse, particularly outside the major cities, and LGBT+ people face a postcode lottery in the help that they receive. This report shows that some LGBT+ victims, where they do reach out for help, feel let down by the response they receive.

We cannot allow LGBT+ victims of hate crimes to feel ignored, or be faced with long journeys in order to find help. We call on commissioners and policy-makers, nationally and locally, to understand the impact of anti-LGBT+ hate crime on its victims, and to provide better access to specialist community-based services for those targeted.

We hope the findings and recommendations of this report will act as a springboard for action. My thanks to Luke Hubbard, Mel Stray and Nick Antjoule for producing this report and the rest of the Galop team who work hard every day to make life safe, just and fair for LGBT+ people.

Leni Morris, Chief Executive



This report presents evidence about the needs and experiences of LGBT+ communities facing hate crime.

It includes analysis of an online community survey of 1166 LGBT+ people, and 15 interviews, which both asked about experiences of hate crime and interactions with services.

The research found that a large proportion of LGBT+ individuals have experienced hate crime, with many experiencing this on a regular and repeated basis. These incidents included verbal abuse, online abuse, harassment, doxing, blackmail, sexual and physical violence.

As a result of their victimisation, respondents reported a series of negative impacts and consequences, which included physical injuries (e.g. cuts, bruises and broken bones); feelings of sadness, fear, anger, shame and humiliation; mental health issues; and financial issues through being unable to work or having to move.

Respondents also reported changing their appearance and rarely leaving the house as a way of reducing their risk of further victimisation.



Given the vast array of impacts on LGBT+ victims of hate crime, it is unsurprising that many victims required some form of support.

Support needed included emotional support (e.g. having someone to talk to or help address the psychological and/or emotional impact of their experience), practical assistance (e.g. financial support, crime prevention measures), advice and information (e.g. their rights), and advocacy (e.g. to ensure their case is dealt with). Despite this, respondents discussed a range of issues they faced when trying to access support, such as not knowing where to access support, experiencing long delays, accessibility issues and a lack of appropriate support services. Consequently, many LGBT+ individuals who wanted support were unable to access it. However, it is also important to note that some victims did not require support as they dealt with the issue themselves, just wanted to move on, or were supported by friends and family.

Very few respondents reported their experiences of LGBT+ hate crime to the police or other relevant agencies which demonstrates that LGBT+ hate crime remains significantly underreported.

The results presented here suggest that homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, acephobia and intersexphobia remain a substantial part of the lives of LGBT+ people, which can have significant consequences for those targeted. Despite high levels of support need, many LGBT+ individuals face a number of barriers to accessing a range of support services, meaning that they are unable to access or obtain the support that they need to help them overcome the effects and impact of their victimisation.

To improve upon this situation, there needs to be increased availability and access to LGBT+ specific support services, which this research shows are much better placed than generic support services to attend to the needs of LGBT+ victims. This can only be achieved through increased funding for such services, as well as an increase in referrals to these support agencies and better awareness of the provision of those services amongst the LGBT+ community.

3 Key findings

Prevalence

Two-thirds (64%) of respondents had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse.

Of those that had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse:

- **9 in 10** had experienced verbal abuse (92%).
- **3 in 10** had been subject to physical violence (29%).
- **2 in 10** had experienced sexual violence (17%).

Impact

- **Over 9 in 10** of respondents were negatively impacted by their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse (94%).
- The impacts and consequences experienced were wide-ranging and included physical injuries, emotional and psychological impacts, financial costs and behaviour changes.

3 Key findings

Support needs

- Only **1 in 3** respondents who wanted or needed support (58%) were able to access it (21%).
- Respondents needed a range of support:
 - 45% required emotional support.
 - 23% needed advice and information.
 - 21% required advocacy.
 - 12% needed practical assistance.
- However, the majority were unable to access this support:
 - Only 15% received emotional support.
 - Only 9% obtained advice and information.
 - Only 4% received advocacy.
 - Only 4% obtained practical assistance.
- **8 in 10** respondents who accessed LGBT+ specific support were satisfied with the service they received (80%), compared to only **4 in 10** respondents who accessed generic support (38%).

Reporting

- Only **1 in 8** respondents reported their experiences to the police (13%).
- **Less than half** of respondents who reported to the police were satisfied with the response they received (46%).
- Fewer than **1 in 10** respondents reported to additional agencies such as local authorities (5%), housing providers (4%) and medical services (7%).

4 Recommendations



- Dedicated funding to enable delivery of specialist hate crime services to those in need, providing support, advice and advocacy.
- Increased referral of LGBT+ victims to specialist support services by police and other agencies.
- A national campaign to increase awareness of available specialist support.
- Quality improvements to frontline and investigative police responses toward anti-LGBT+ hate crimes.
- Efforts by authorities to work with LGBT+ communities to understand and address the barriers faced by those facing hate crime in accessing assistance and support.



This section outlines the nature and extent of violence and abuse directed towards members of the LGBT+ community.

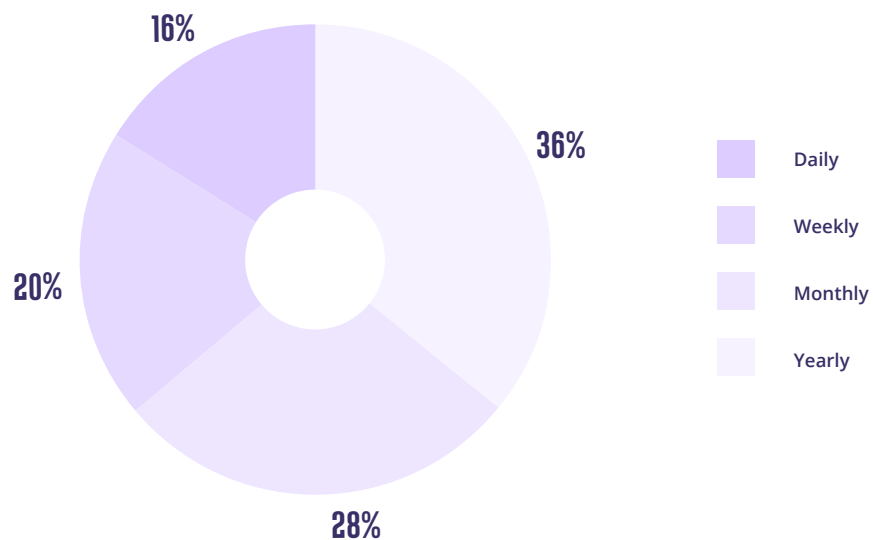
For many respondents, LGBT+ hate crime was something they experienced on a regular basis. These incidents ranged from verbal and online abuse & harassment to physical and sexual violence, suggesting that LGBT+ hate crime remains a persistent and insidious problem.



Prevalence

64% of respondents had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse, whilst 36% had not (*n*=1123).

Figure 1. How often do you experience anti-LGBT+ violence/abuse? (*n*=520)



Respondents who had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse were asked how often they experienced this. Almost a fifth of respondents experienced violence and abuse daily (16%), more than one-third experienced it at least weekly (36%), and almost two-thirds experienced it at least monthly (64%).

Whilst some respondents experienced anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse relatively infrequently (e.g. yearly), for the majority of participants it was a regular and frequent occurrence. For these LGBT+ individuals, such incidents were a routine and common feature of their everyday lives.

“ It’s hard to mention just one incident, I am abused all the time [so] they just all blur into one. ”

“ It’s literally all the time and every day, I can’t avoid it. ”

5 Scale



Types of abuse

Respondents who had been subject to anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse experienced a range of different offences.

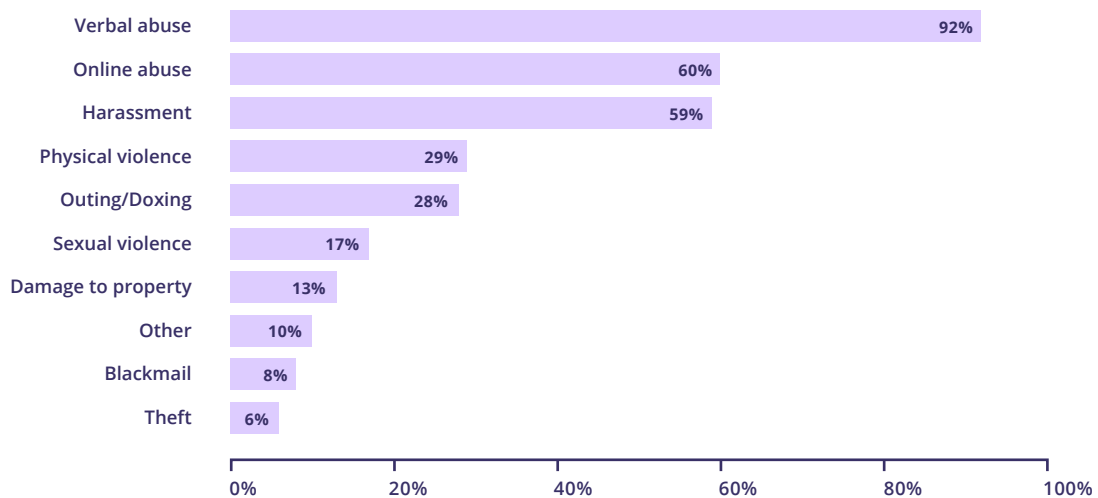
1 Outed: Revealing the sexual or gender identity of a person, often without their permission.

2 Doxed: The publishing of private or identifying information about a particular individual, typically with malicious intent.

The most commonly experienced form was verbal abuse (92%), followed by online abuse (60%) and harassment (59%). 29% of respondents had been subject to physical violence, 28% had been subject to outing¹ or doxed² and 17% had experienced sexual violence. 13% had their property damaged, 8% had been blackmailed and 6% had something stolen from them.

This data illustrates that the most commonly experienced forms of abuse experienced by LGBT+ individuals are verbal acts which are intended to offend, humiliate, intimidate, demean or frighten someone (e.g. abuse and harassment), rather than physical acts (e.g. violence).

Figure 2. What types of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse have you experienced? (n=523)



5 Scale



Respondents described experiencing a range of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse:

“ I was verbally abused and outed to people at my place of education, resulting in my partner being scared her family would find out about her sexuality, and me to feel extremely unsafe and anxious on campus. ”

“ Me and my [trans] child were threatened, humiliated and verbally abused by male drinkers outside a busy pub on the main street. ”

“ I’ve been attacked three times in London by gangs of youths shouting homophobic and racist abuse. On one occasion I was nearly stabbed. I always move to the other side of the street whenever I see youths approaching me. ”

“ I was surrounded in the street by a group of young lads, asked if I wanted weed and then they asked “are you gay? are you a gay boy”, they tried to touch my body, and made me feel really intimidated, nervous, scared and threatened. I was on my own and was up against a group of lads so obviously I had to say nothing back and try to walk on as fast as I could. ”

“ I was at a conference about the Gender Recognition Act when a group of people, who were upset about the proposed changes, turned up to disrupt the conference. They took photos of us to try and out people on social media and [took] our names and car details [which were on our parking permits]. Since then I have had a significant increase in transphobic related abuse; repeated damage to my car, doors kicked in, scraping down the side. ”

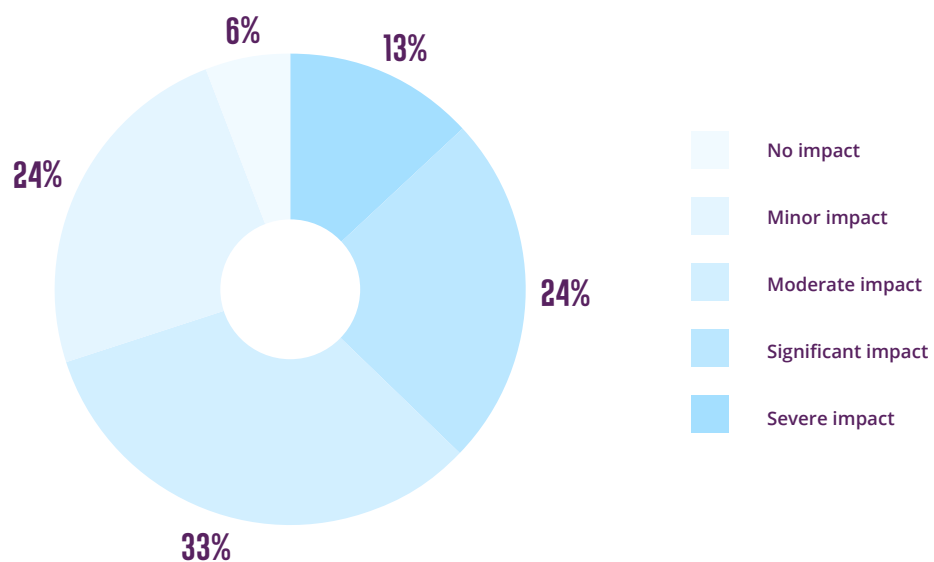
Having discussed the nature and extent of LGBT+ hate crime, this next section seeks to document the impact and consequences of this form of victimisation.

Participants reported experiencing a range of physical, emotional, psychological, behavioural and financial impacts following their victimisation, with the majority of respondents experiencing some form of impact.

Level of impact

Participants were asked what impact their most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse had upon them.

Figure 3. What impact did your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence and/or abuse have on you? (n=525)



The vast majority of LGBT+ participants were impacted in some way by their most recent experience of violence and abuse (94%), with only 6% of respondents reporting to have not been impacted at all. Of those that were impacted, 1 in 4 reported a minor impact (24%), 1 in 3 reported a moderate impact (33%), another 1 in 4 reported a significant impact (24%), with just over 1 in 10 reporting a severe impact (13%).

This means that just over one third of respondents were either significantly or severely impacted by their experiences of hate crime and that the vast majority of participants (94%) were impacted in some way by their victimisation.

Types of impact

Participants described a range of physical and emotional impacts arising from their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse.

Physical impacts were often the result of physical attacks, the impact of which ranged from scratches, bruises and sprains to cuts, lost teeth and broken bones.

“ I was attacked, they kicked me in the back and punched me, they shouted abuse at me and stole my phone and they broke my back. ”

“ He punched me in the face twice and broke my temple and broke my nose. ”

“ I ended up losing teeth due to an assault. ”

For some respondents, physical impacts were long-term and debilitating:

“ I still have to walk with crutches because there is no feeling in my right leg and it gives way on me, so I have to use crutches so I don't fall over. ”

Emotional and psychological impacts included fear, shock, sadness, anger, shame, helplessness, isolation, loneliness, embarrassment, humiliation, and feeling worthless.

6 Impact & Consequences

“ It made me feel ashamed of who I am. ”

“ It made me feel incredibly upset, I cried for days. ”

“ I [was] angry and useless for the rest of the day. ”

Participants also indicated that they developed mental health issues such as breakdowns, depression, anxiety, PTSD, paranoia, panic attacks and sleep deprivation.

“ I suffer from PTSD, anxiety and depression. I get flashbacks, because I am still in pain, it's like a constant reminder of what happened, and it doesn't go away. ”

“ It affects mental health very badly. I become extremely anxious and depressed. ”

“ I get frequent panic attacks. ”

“ Going through verbal abuse in the real world really sets me back in terms of mental health. ”

6 Impact & Consequences

For some participants, who already had mental health issues, their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse had made their conditions worse or triggered past issues.

“ I have gender dysphoria and the attacks have made it much worse. Sometimes I can't get it out of my head for days. ”

“ At the beginning of April last year I was attacked and severely beaten in an unprovoked violent attack. As a prominent member of my local queer community verbal harassment is common, and often this has emotional effect bringing back memories of previous incidents. ”

Some respondents explained that their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse resulted in suicidal thoughts, with a small number of participants acting upon these thoughts.

“ It made me want to commit suicide. ”

“ It caused depression and anxiety to the point of attempted suicide. ”

6 Impact & Consequences

Similar to physical impacts, some emotional and psychological impacts were also found to be long-term, with some respondents being emotionally and psychologically affected long after the incident(s) had taken place.

“ I still have PTSD from being attacked and this happened over 4 years ago now. ”

“ It’s really affected my self-esteem, and is something I still struggle with today. ”

While physical impacts were often linked to physical attacks, it is important to note that a number of physical impacts were linked to the emotional impacts, such as weight and hair loss, low energy, headaches and migraines, sickness and nausea, teeth grinding and insomnia.

“ My hair has started to fall out, it’s emotionally draining. ”

“ Told by people that I was an abomination and my existence is a sin. This affected my mood and lead to insomnia. ”

“ It makes me lethargic, depressed and hopeless. My overall health is in tatters; I can barely bring myself to move most days. ”

6 Impact & Consequences

As well as being physically, emotionally, and psychologically impacted by their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse, a number of participants explained that they were also impacted financially. Respondents described having to quit their job, being unable to work, having to move house and paying for a range of treatments. For a small number of participants this resulted in them falling into debt.

“

My partner and I don't leave the house. My partner has been bullied out of jobs and faces a lot of discrimination because of who she is thus leading to financial difficulty. It has stressed her out to the point of chronic illness and I am now a carer for her. Financially it makes it difficult to be able to move to a safer area.

”

“

Every time I got it [my car] repaired, it was quite quickly getting targeted again. I think I spent slightly under £2500 before I stopped.

”

“

It impacted on all aspects of my life. I was unable to work for 7 months.

”

6 Impact & Consequences

Respondents also explained that following their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse, they had changed the way they behaved. This primarily involved either restricting their movements or altering their appearance.

“ It makes me think really carefully about what I say, do or wear to make sure it’s not too gay. ”

“ It made me afraid to go out, as I was scared I would be assaulted, [receive] more verbal abuse or worse. ”

“ Avoiding public transport, dressing differently, not going out as much, always checking escape routes. ”

“ I have had numerous people come up to me, threatening to ‘kick my face in’ if they see me out again. These incidents have severely damaged my confidence in public. I am a highly visible transgender woman. I just don’t go out as much anymore and I’m guarded with who I talk to about my trans status. ”

“ I was really scared. It made me scared to go outside for a while. ”

“ I’ve changed my daily routine to avoid walking through areas where I see people who often do it the most. ”

6 Impact & Consequences

It is important to note that the nature and extent of impacts varied among victims. For some respondents, their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse had little to no impact, whereas for other victims, who experienced similar incidents, the impact was much more severe.

Some participants described experiencing severe emotional impacts by incidents that they, and others, did not consider to be as serious as a physical attack, for example verbal or online abuse. While other participants who experienced similar incidents, were only mildly affected, if at all.

Factors that appeared to mitigate or aggravate the impact of homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, acephobic or intersexphobic hate crime were individuals' resilience, their previous experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse, and the wider context in which they experienced such abuse. This is demonstrated by the following two interview extracts:

“

I have been getting abuse for being gay for as long as I can remember and it doesn't get any easier, they all hurt just as much, and the combined impact of them can be huge. Some days I just give it up because I know I won't be able to deal with all the crap that I'm inevitably going to get just for being who I am.

”

“

I've been dealing with people harassing me about being trans for 10 years now. When I say it doesn't affect me that much it's because I've become mostly numb to it. At first it was something I feared happening [so much that] I was afraid to even socialize [and] to a point I still am. But now it's just like, 'oh you hate trans people, that's nice' and I move on.

”



Following on from detailing the impacts and consequences of LGBT+ hate crime, this section seeks to explore the support needs and experiences of victims of this form of abuse.

While respondents detailed a range of support needs following their victimisation, such as emotional support, information, or practical assistance, very few were able to access support. Many did not know where to access support from, or there was no support available to them.



Importance of support

Before going on to discuss the support needs and experiences of LGBT+ hate crime victims, it is worth noting how access to support was described as a vital way in ensuring that participants did not feel that they were “suffering alone”.

Those who accessed support described its importance in improving their well-being, helping them cope, and reducing feelings of sadness as well as anxiety and depression, and being able to overcome the negative effects of their victimisation and move on with their lives.

“ The support was absolutely incredible and got me through an incredibly difficult time when I was seriously injured after nearly a year of online threats/homophobic abuse. ”

Conversely, many of those without access to support felt “let down”, “alone”, and “ignored” which often compounded the impact of the crime.

“ I wasn’t offered any support and that was really tough. It felt as if nobody cared and that I was being silly because this little thing had affected me so badly, which made things even worse. ”

These quotes demonstrate the importance of ensuring that LGBT+ victims of hate crime have access to adequate and appropriate support in order to address the impact(s) of their victimisation.

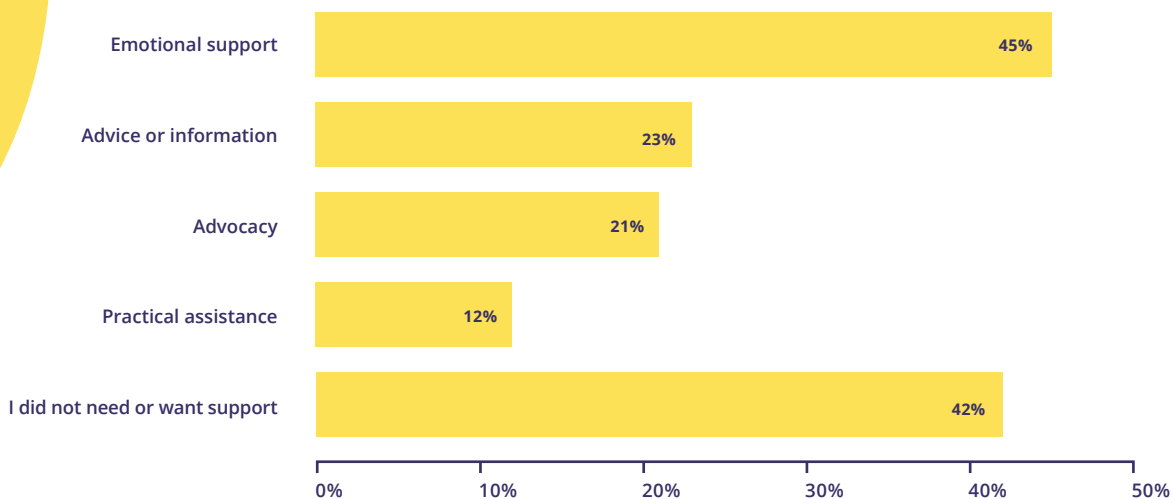


Support needs

The survey explored what support respondents required (if any), how respondents accessed support (if at all), where they sought support from, and their experiences of support services.

Survey respondents were asked whether following their most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse, they required any type of support. 45% of respondents required some kind of emotional support, 23% needed advice and/or information, 21% required advocacy and 12% required some form of practical assistance. 42% of respondents did not require any support at all.

Figure 4. Did you want or need any of the following support following your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse? (*n*=483)



7 Support



Type of support

Respondents who wanted emotional support discussed wanting someone to talk with about their experiences and feelings, as well as “needing a shoulder to cry on”.

Likewise, they wanted some help addressing the psychological and emotional impact of their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse, and help with how they might cope better, allowing them to move forward with their lives.

“ I just wanted someone to talk to about what had happened. ”

“ Emotional support to help address the feeling of powerlessness and always feeling like I’m the victim. ”

“ Help to rebuild my confidence and acceptance in myself. ”

“ I would really value some counselling to help me to cope with the homophobia I am experiencing. ”

“ Therapy to help with my PTSD. ”

“ Just someone professional I could discuss it with and my feelings about it. ”

7 Support



Practical assistance centred around financial support, help moving house, medical attention, the implementation of preventative measures to reduce the risk of further victimisation, and offering to accompany individuals to police stations and court if they were required to do so.

“ Support in helping me move as [I am] worried about repercussions as it involves a relative of a neighbour. ”

“ I needed medical assistance because of the injuries I sustained. ”

Participants who wanted advice and support wanted information about where to report to, what support was out there for them, and how they could access this.

“ Advice on reporting it to police would have helped. ”

“ I needed so much help but had no idea who or where I could turn to. ”

7 Support



For respondents who had received a poor response from the police and/or other agencies, advocacy was extremely important as this meant that their case was dealt with much more effectively and finding and accessing support was made much easier.

“ Before Galop got involved I really struggled as the police just weren't doing anything about my report and I was struggling to get support. However, when I contacted Galop that all changed. They were on to the police who were all of a sudden interested in what had happened to me and they also put me in contact with a range of support agencies to help me. Everything just seemed to slot into place.

”

However, despite a number of participants describing poor experiences of reporting to agencies and accessing support, many were unaware that advocacy services were available and did not know how they would go about accessing this kind of service.

“ I wouldn't even know how I would go about getting that kind of support [advocacy].

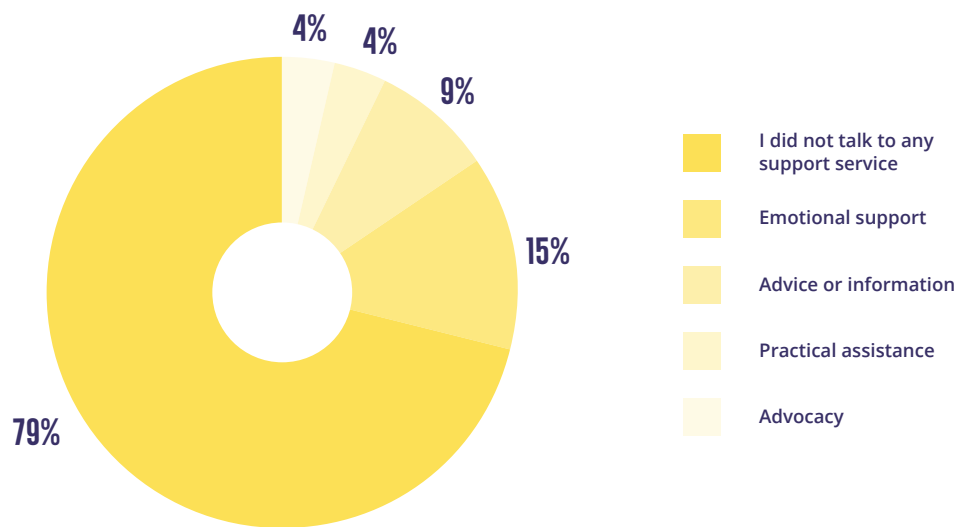
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Accessing support services

The findings above demonstrate that many victims of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse require a wide variety of support. However, despite this, many victims were unable to access the support that they needed or required.

Figure 5. Did you access a service that provided support around any of the following? (n=446)



Only **one third** of respondents that wanted or needed support were able to access it. 58% of respondents wanted or needed support, but only 21% were able to access it.

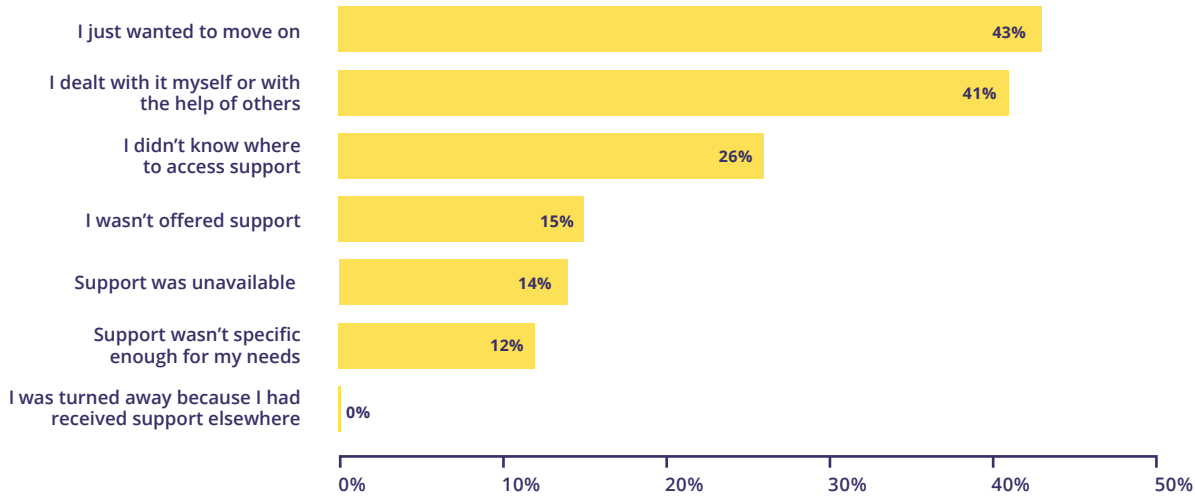
79% of respondents stated that they did not talk to any form of support service. In addition, only 15% of respondents accessed emotional support, despite 45% stating that they needed or wanted it.

Whilst 23% of respondents wanted advice or information, only 9% accessed this. Similarly, only 4% accessed practical assistance and/or advocacy, despite 12% and 21% respectively highlighting that they needed or wanted this kind of support. It would therefore appear that whilst a large number of LGBT+ victims of hate crime would like support, many are unable to access it.

7 Support



Figure 6. Why did you not talk to a service about support? (n=337)



Of those that stated they were unable to access support, 43% stated that they just wanted to move on, while 41% had dealt with it themselves. Whilst these individuals initially needed support, the difficulty they had in trying to access this meant that they were forced to deal with it themselves or with the help of others, as the following interviewees explain:

“ Support was so hard to find and access that I just got over it on my own. ”

“ By the time that I heard back it had been so long that I didn't need it anymore. ”

Additionally, 26% of respondents did not know where to access support, 15% were not offered support, 14% said that support was unavailable, and 12% explained that the support they were offered was not specific enough for their needs. No respondents were turned away because they had received support elsewhere. These findings demonstrate that those who do want some form of support following their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and/or abuse found it difficult to access the support they needed.

7 Support

Those that had formally reported their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse did seem to have a better understanding of available support. This was often because they were either referred to or told about a service. Some also worked in that field and were therefore aware of what support was available:

“ I work with victims of domestic abuse so I knew of places and people where I could go to get help. I could also ask colleagues too. ”

“ Had the police not told me about Galop, then I wouldn't have known about them. ”

This finding illustrates that those who formally report their experiences of anti-LGBT+ hate crime are much more likely to seek support because they are referred or signposted, which as the previous section demonstrated is only a small proportion of victims. Those that choose not to formally report their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse are therefore left to find and access support on their own, which as will be discussed below is often fraught with difficulties. However, those that were referred or signposted to support services still experienced issues such as referral breakdowns or response delays.

“ The police did refer me but it was ages before I heard anything, probably around a couple of months. ”

“ I was supposedly referred but when I called them up as I hadn't heard anything, they had no record of me whatsoever. ”

7 Support



A number of participants explained that whilst they did not need support immediately after the incident had occurred, they did require it later, often once they had come to terms with what had happened to them. However, due to the time-lapse, they were often unable to do so.

“ Initially I thought I didn't need support but a few months later I couldn't stop thinking about it. ”

Issues were also apparent with the availability of support. Participants explained that while they were aware of certain support services they were unable to access them because they were outside the catchment area. Issues of support availability were particularly apparent in rural areas:

“ I contacted an agency, but because they only operated in London and I lived outside, they were unable to help me. ”

“ Finding support was difficult because I don't live in a big city, I live in a small town so had to travel miles to get any help. ”

A number of participants also discussed how austerity had impacted the availability of support. Organisations had either closed down or were now offering vastly reduced services, which were often overwhelmed by demand:

“ Years ago I use to know loads of places, but many of them have shut now. Even the ones that are open don't offer as much or have to ration who they offer their services to because of all the cuts that have happened. ”

7 Support



Participants who were aware of support services and sought to access them independently sometimes experienced difficulty in doing so. Respondents described how their requests for support to mainstream services went unanswered for long periods of time, and in some cases were ignored completely.

“ I had to contact them a few times before anyone got back to me, which was very frustrating. ”

“ I sent numerous emails but never heard anything back. ”

As a result, it was left for respondents to continually follow-up with the agency to find out what was going on. For many, this gave the impression that the service did not care about their needs and were not interested in helping them.

“ After I spoke with someone on the phone, they said that someone would be in touch to set up an appointment but I didn't hear anything. It was only because I kept chasing that anything was actually done. ”

Participants also explained how they often required support in the evenings or late at night, when most services are unavailable because they are closed:

“ I guess one of the annoying things is that sometimes you need help in the evening but most places aren't open then so you have to wait until the morning or rely on your friends and family. ”

7 Support



A small number of respondents also discussed how the support they accessed was not appropriate or useful because it was not specific enough for their needs:

“

They were able to offer me counselling but that isn't what I needed, I needed therapy, something much stronger, but they didn't have that so I had to make do... I mean it was good but not as good as therapy would have been.

”

Some participants who had attempted to access support independently explained that they were not eligible for support from those services because they had not been referred or they did not meet a certain threshold.

“

One place I spoke with said they only accepted referrals and because I contacted them on my own they couldn't help me.

”

“

My friend put me in touch with an organisation about some mental health support but they had to prioritise more serious cases so there wasn't much they could do for me.

”

Respondents also explained how they often had a number of support needs, but services were unable to address all of these, requiring them to access support from a wide range of different services.

“

I was in contact with a number of services because there was so much I needed help with.

”

“

I couldn't find one service that was able to support me with everything.

”

7 Support



When services were unable to address certain needs, some were able to signpost to more appropriate services, but this was not always the case.

“ The helpline I spoke to couldn't directly assist me but knew of a few other services that potentially could, which they put me in touch with. ”

“ I couldn't find one agency that was able to help me with everything. Some were able to direct me to places that could help me with those things that they couldn't whilst others just said we can't do that and that was it. ”

Respondents who were provided with support were asked what kind of service they accessed; 44% accessed an LGBT+ charity, 11% accessed a general advice charity, and 5% accessed a general victim support charity. Of the 40% of respondents who stated other, services that they accessed included medical services such as hospitals and GP surgeries as well as websites and online support groups.

Those respondents who sought help from an LGBT+ charity did so because they felt that LGBT+ specific organisations would have a much better knowledge and understanding of their specific experiences and the distinct effect and impact that this had had upon them, and were therefore best placed to support them.

“ Galop were great because they were so knowledgeable about LGBT+ issues, which just made it so much easier as I didn't need to explain anything and we could just focus on what happened. ”

7 Support



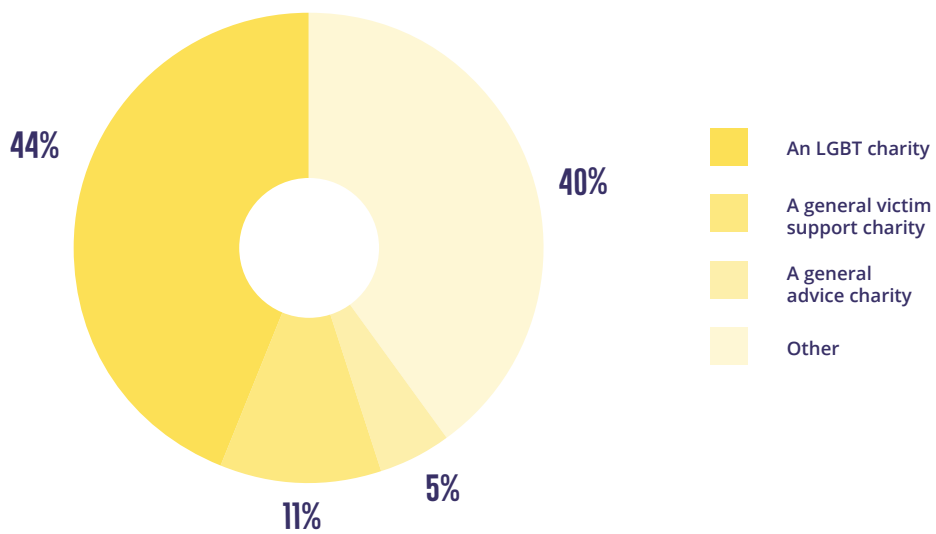
Equally, respondents were reluctant to access support from more generic support services because they did not feel that they would be able to provide support specific to LGBT+ victims, which addressed their specific and distinct needs:

“ I mean there is Victim Support, but that’s very generic, I didn’t think they would be able to help me. ”

This was a particular issue for bisexual and trans respondents from both generic and LGBT+ specific support services:

“ Nowhere I went seemed to have an understanding about trans issues, and that goes for some LGBT+ places. They were better than the more ordinary service, but it still wasn’t great. ”

Figure 7. What kind of service did you access? (n=82)

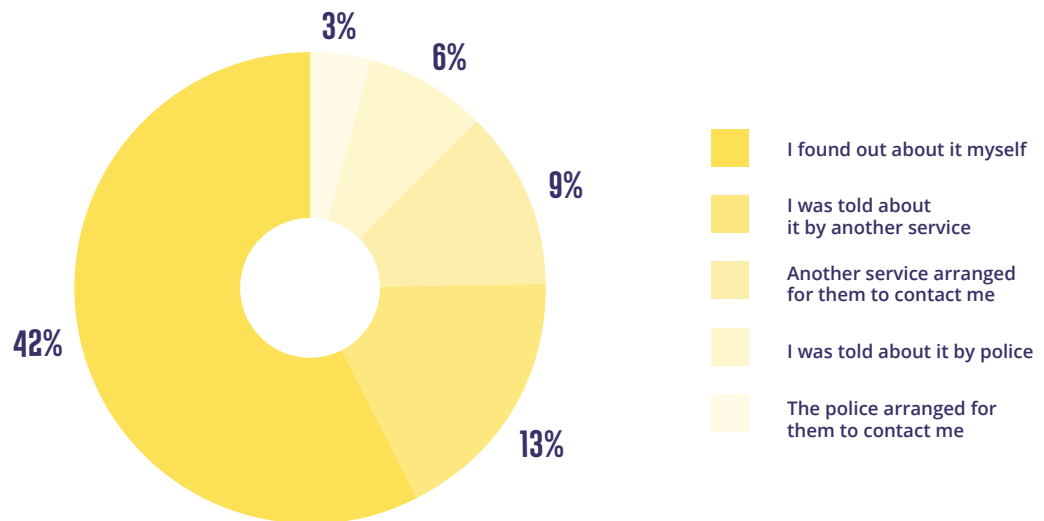


7 Support



Respondents were also asked how they found out about the support that they accessed. The vast majority of respondents (42%) found out about and accessed support by themselves. Only 13% of respondents were told about the support by another service, whilst the police informed 6% of respondents about support services and only 3% of respondents had the support arranged for them by the police.

Figure 8. How did you find out about the support service you spoke with? (n=79)



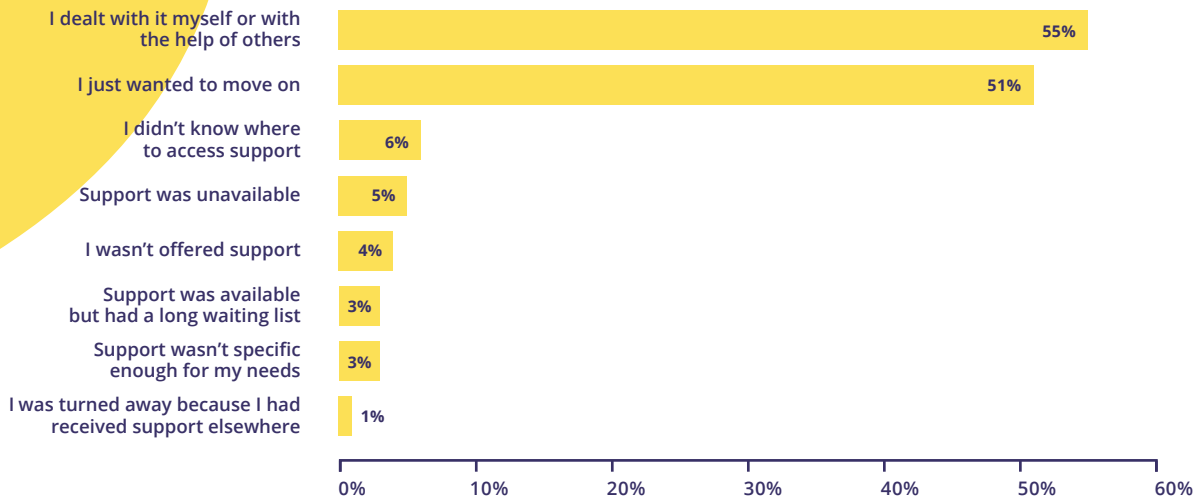
These findings are particularly concerning as agencies such as local authorities, housing, and the police, as well as others, should be connecting victims of anti-LGBT+ hate crime to the relevant support services. However, this does not appear to be the case and many victims are left to identify and seek out support themselves. This is problematic because a large number of participants are unaware of what services are available. On the other hand, it does mean that a significant proportion of individuals are managing to access support independently, without the assistance of a formal agency such as the police or local authority.



When support was not needed

Participants who indicated that they did not want or need any support following their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse were asked to explain why.

Figure 9. Why did you not want or need support following your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse? (n=196)



Just over half of these respondents stated that they did not need or want support because they had dealt with it themselves or with the help of others (55%), or that they just wanted to move on (51%). It is therefore important to understand that not all victims of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse want or require professional support, and this is perhaps connected to the nature and extent of the impact and consequences for individual victims.

7 Support



Some of these respondents described how they were supported by their friends and family and therefore did not require support from elsewhere:

“ My friends and family were a god send, they did so much to help me. Taking me to appointments, staying with me, chasing things and people up for me. Some even helped me retrace my steps to see what I could remember from that night to help the police with their investigation. ”

“ Without my Mum and boyfriend I don't know what I would have done. They really helped me through. I can't thank them enough for what they did for me. ”

A few people didn't want to access support services because they didn't know how to, or they felt the support they needed wasn't available. For some LGBT+ respondents this is less of a problem because they have familial support, but means that a particularly vulnerable group are left with hard choices and few options because they do not have familial support, and are in some cases, estranged from their family.

“ My parents aren't very accepting of me so I couldn't have gone to them about. ”

“ I had to leave home because of the abuse I got from my family. I don't speak or see them anymore, I haven't for a couple of years now. ”

7 Support



Respondents who stated that they dealt with it themselves or just wanted to move on discussed how they were able to cope on their own, highlighting personal resilience, or that they did not want to dwell on the past, something they felt would hold them back from moving on from their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse:

“ I just wanted to move on and didn't think that talking about what had happened to me for months after would help me in doing that. ”

“ I have got a thick skin, and [I'm not] overly affected by that sort of thing. ”

Finally, some participants did not believe that accessing any kind of support service would make a tangible difference to their situation.

“ I didn't think there was anything that they [support agencies] would be able to do for me. ”

“ I don't think speaking to someone like Victim Support or a similar agency would have made any difference. ”

These comments suggest that we should not assume that all victims will want or require some form of support and that we should not treat victims of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse homogeneously. Instead, each victim needs to be informed about the full range of support options available to them so that they can determine if this support would be useful in that instance. For those LGBT+ victims that do want or need some form of support, agencies should ensure that they are able to access it.

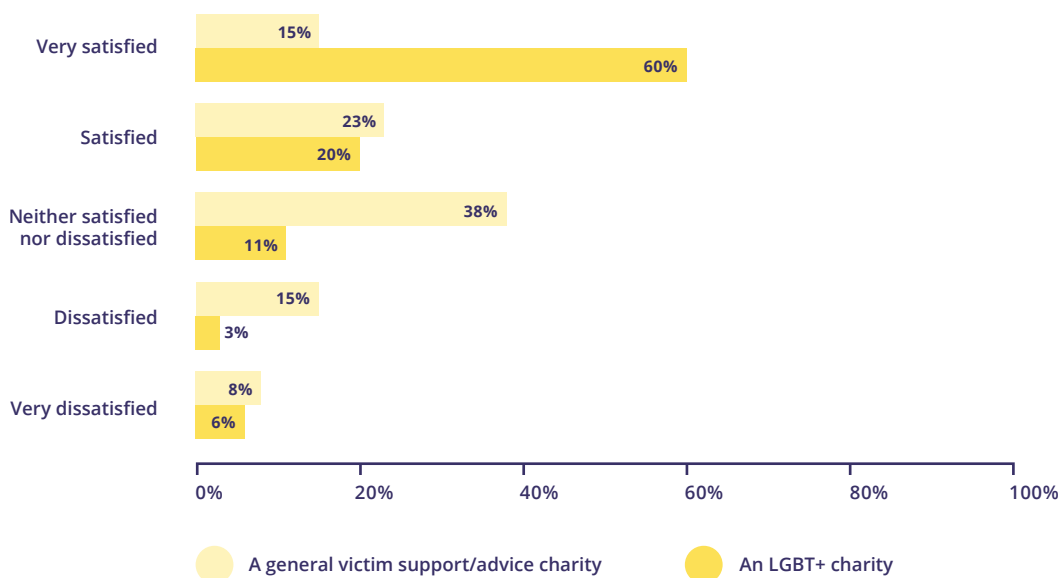


Satisfaction with support

Participants who accessed some form of support were asked how satisfied they were with the response they received.

Respondents who accessed support through a specific LGBT+ organisation were much more satisfied with the service they received compared to those who accessed a generic service. 80% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the support from a LGBT+ service, whereas only 38% of respondents who sought support from a generic service were either very satisfied or satisfied. Equally, those who had accessed support from generic services were more likely to be either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the response they received compared to those who received support through a LGBT+ service (23% vs 9%).

Figure 10. How satisfied were you with the support you received? LGBT+ vs Generic Services (n=80)



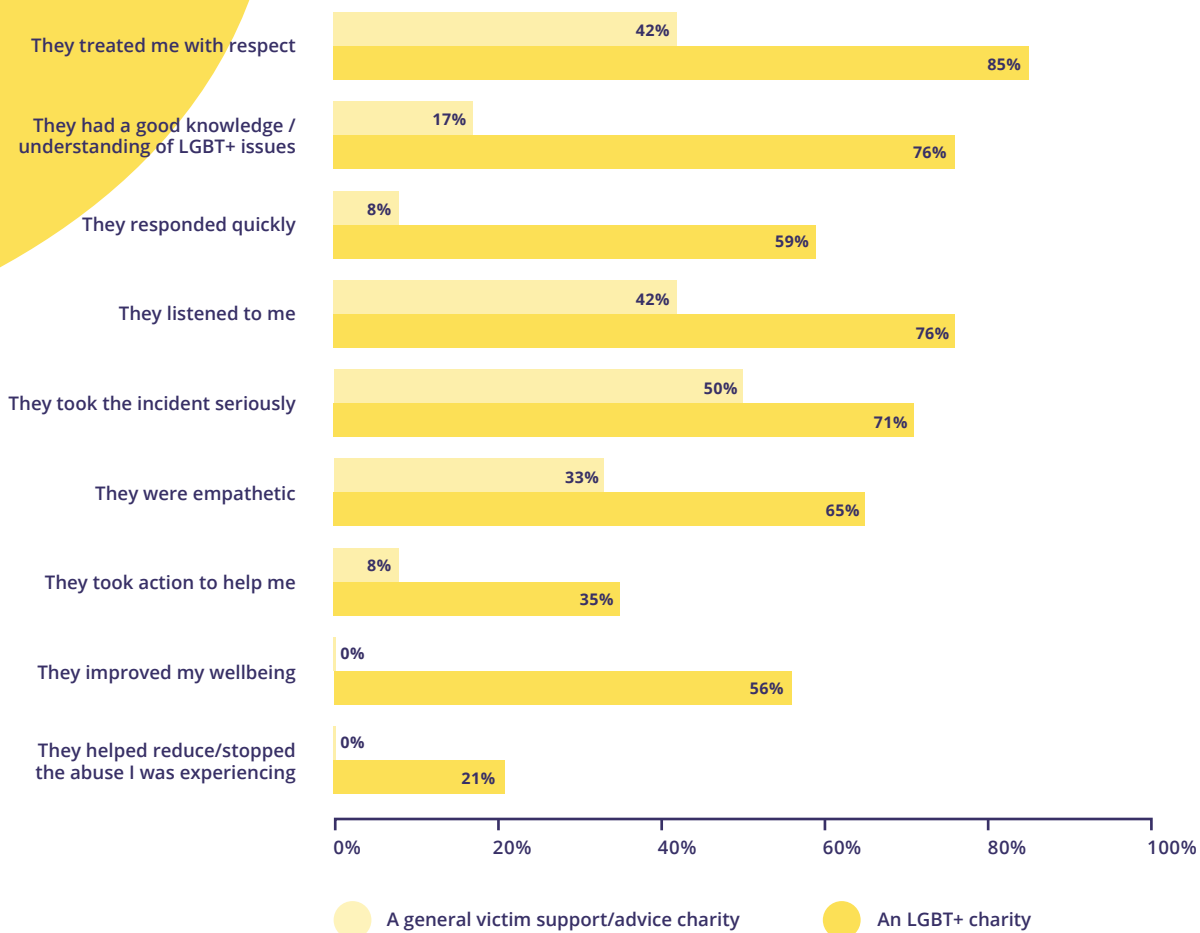
7 Support



Respondents who sought support from an LGBT+ organisation as opposed to a generic support service or organisation were much more likely to feel that they were treated with respect (85% v 42%); the organisation had a much better knowledge and understanding of LGBT+ issues (76% v 17%); their response was felt to be quicker

(59% v 8%); they listened more (76% v 42%); the incident was taken more seriously (71% v 50%); they were more empathetic (65% v 33%), they were much better placed to take action (35% v 8%), improve users wellbeing (56% v 0%), and reduce and/or stop the abuse from happening (21% v 0%).

Figure 11. Why were you satisfied with the support you received? Generic v LGBT+ Services (n=80)



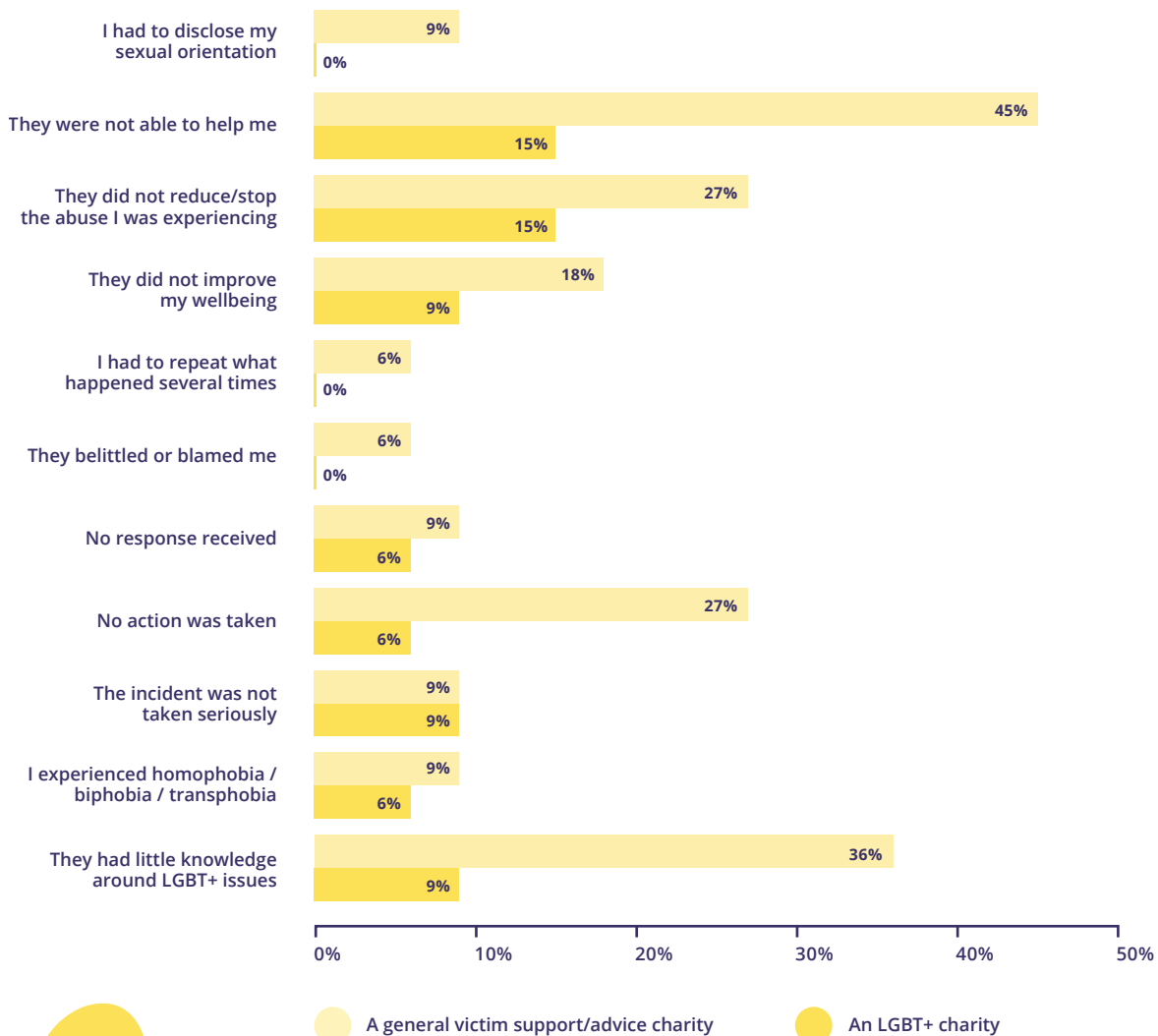
7 Support



Similarly, respondents were more likely to be dissatisfied with generic support than LGBT+ specific support because they had little knowledge around LGBT+ issues (36% v 9%); they were required to disclose their sexual orientation and/or gender identity to several different people (9% v 0%); they were less able to help (45% v 15%); no response was received (9% v 6%); they did not reduce/stop the abuse (27% v 15%);

no action was taken (36% v 9%); they experienced homophobia, biphobia or transphobia (9% v 6%); they had repeat what happened several times (6% v 0%); they felt belittled or blamed (6% v 0%); and their wellbeing was not improved (18% v 9%). An equal number of respondents felt that their experiences were not taken seriously by both generic and LGBT+ specific support services (both 9%).

Figure 12. Why were you dissatisfied with the support you received? Generic vs LGBT+ Services (n=75)





In addition to being asked about support services, participants were also asked whether they reported their experiences to the police.

The vast majority of respondents had not reported to the police. Reasons given for deciding not to report revolved around the victim's perception of the offence, their previous experiences with the police, or they feared repercussions. Very few participants reported to other relevant agencies, such as a local authority or housing provider, highlighting that LGBT+ hate crime is significantly underreported.

8 Reporting



Reporting to the police

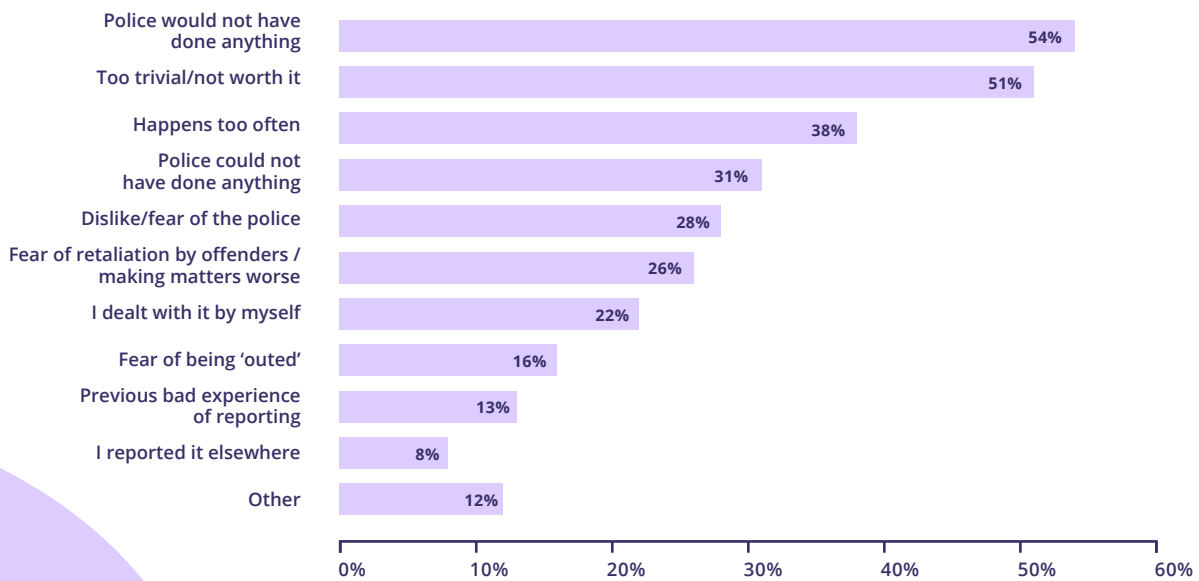
When asked whether they had reported their most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse to the police, only 13% of respondents stated that they had, and 87% of respondents had not.

These rates appears to be much lower than the number of overall hate incidents that come to the attention of the police (47%) as well as overall crime (38%), according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales³. This would suggest that there is a particular issue in LGBT+ victims of hate crime coming forward to the police.

³ Home Office (2020) Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2019 to 2020. [Link](#)

Barriers to reporting to the police

Figure 13. Why did you decide not to report your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse to the police? (n=449)



LGBT+ participants described a range of factors which determined whether or not they would report their experiences of violence and abuse. Participants often gave several reasons for not reporting. The reasons given by participants can be grouped into three main categories; their perception of the offence, previous experience of the police, and fear of repercussions.



Perception of the offence

For some participants, their decision not to report their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence was linked to their perception of the seriousness of the offence.

50% of survey respondents indicated that did not report their most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ hate crime because they perceived the incident as trivial. Some respondents stated that they would only report physical violence, whilst others would report instances of verbal and online abuse.

“ I would only report serious stuff, like if I was physically hurt or something. ”

The perception of the offence was also seen to be important in how the police would respond. Participants felt that the police would only respond to serious crimes, and would therefore not report instances that they did not deem to be serious. Similarly, some participants felt that because of how and where the offence took place, the police would not be able to do anything due to lack of evidence or witnesses.

“ I never thought about reporting it because I didn't even know who had done it. What would the police be able to do if I couldn't even tell them that? ”

8 Reporting



Finally, participants explained that they experienced hate crime regularly, so much so that for many they described it as being an inevitable part of their lives, and that if they were to report these experiences to the police, then this would take up almost all of their time. 38% of survey respondents said that they did not report their most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse because it happened too often for them to want to report.

“ If I reported everything to the police, I wouldn't be off the phone. ”

Previous experience with the police

Previous negative encounters with the police also contributed towards participants' unwillingness to report their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse.

Some had reported a previous crime but were disappointed with the police response they received. Others had heard friends and families' negative experiences of reporting to the police and this influenced their decision not to report, fearing that they would receive a similar response. 13% of respondents explained that they did not report their most recent incident because they had reported previously and had a bad experience, which deterred them from reporting future instances.

“ I have reported lots of things before but nothing ever gets done so why would I bother anymore. ”

“ I have had a few friends who are also gay go to the police, who have just had the worst experience in terms of how they responded, if they responded at all. I doubt I would get a better response if I was to report anything, so why bother. ”

8 Reporting



Other respondents explained that they had experienced homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, acephobia or intersexphobia from the police in the past, which resulted in a lasting fear and dislike towards the police for many LGBT+ respondents. 28% of respondents hadn't reported their most recent incident of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse because they disliked or were fearful of the police.

“ Back in the early nineties I was being attacked and two officers walked by, I shouted for help but rather than help me they joined in. Ever since then I have never had any faith in the police. ”



Fear of repercussions

A final factor influencing an individuals' decision to report their experiences to the police related to fear of repercussions.

These repercussions involved a fear of being 'outed' by reporting through the disclosure of personal information or that they would incriminate themselves because of the context in which the incident took place (e.g. in a public sex environment). This reason for not reporting was given by 16% of survey respondents. Respondents were also reluctant to report because they feared that doing so may make matters worse, as the offender or others close the offender may retaliate. This reason was provided by 26% of survey respondents.

“ It was hard because he was my neighbour but I didn't want to make things worse by reporting, and then getting more abuse not only from him, but his family and friends. ”

“ Before I was out I wouldn't report anything. ”

“ I know of friends who have been abused at cruising sites but they don't report it because they're worried about what might happen to them. ”

Contact with the police

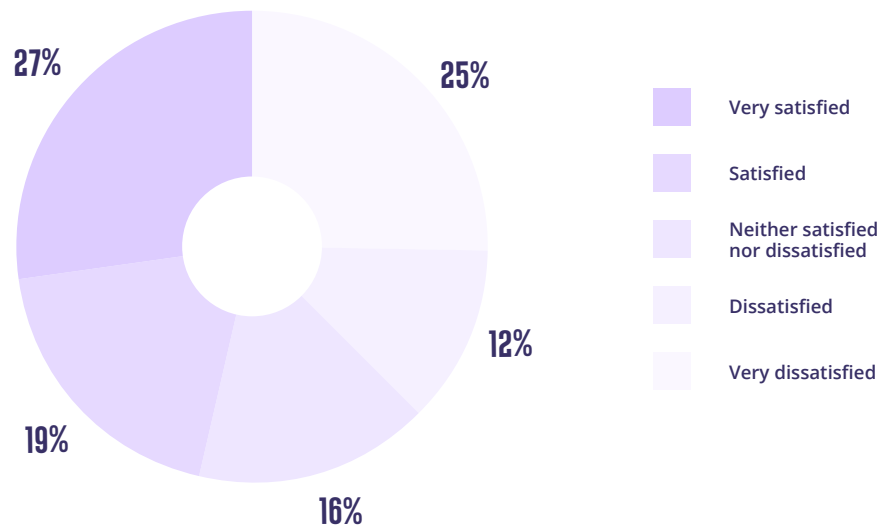
Those who had reported their most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse were asked about their contact with police and how satisfied they were with the response they received.

4+5 Home Office (2020) Hate Crime England and Wales 2019/20. [Link](#)

46% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the response they received, with 37% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. 16% of participants were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. These levels of police satisfaction are lower than those for all hate crime (55%) as well as crime in general (66%)⁴. Similarly, LGBT+ hate crime victims also appear more likely to be dissatisfied with the police handling of the matter (37%), higher than for hate crime victims in general

(27%) and victims of crime more broadly (17%)⁵. This data suggests that despite improvements, the police response to LGBT+ victims of hate crime is highly variable, and while there are many instances of positive experiences, some negative issues with the police response to LGBT+ victims of hate crime continue to persist. These negative issues appear to be more prevalent among LGBT+ victims of hate crime than hate crime victims in general.

Figure 14. How satisfied were you with the police response to your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse? (n=64)

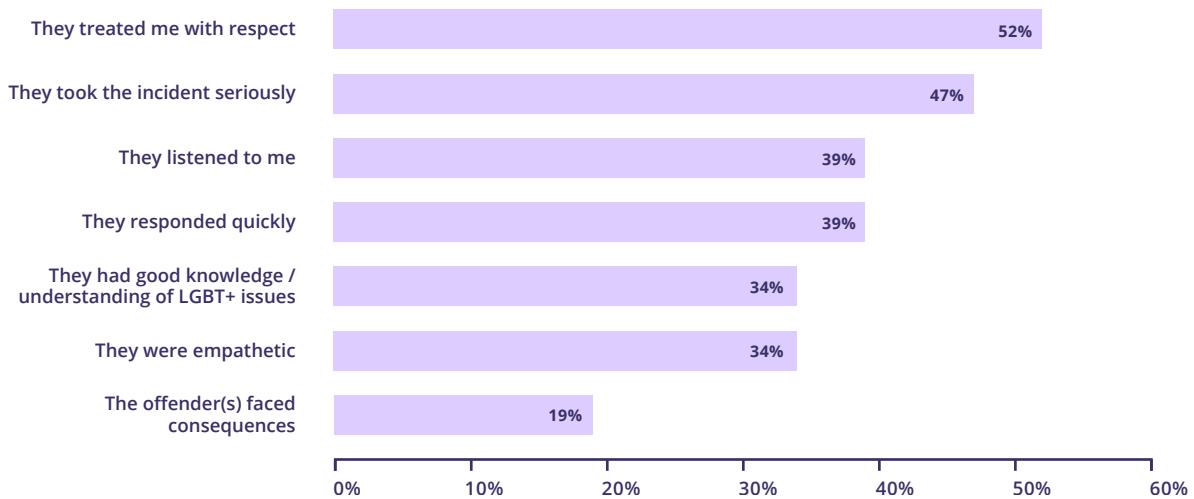


8 Reporting

Respondents who were satisfied with the police response felt that they were treated with respect (52%), that the police took the incident seriously (47%) and responded quickly (39%).

Respondents felt that they were listened to (39%), that the police demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of LGBT+ issues (34%), and showed empathy (34%). 19% of respondents were satisfied because the offenders faced consequences.

Figure 15. Why were you satisfied with the police response to your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse? (n=65)

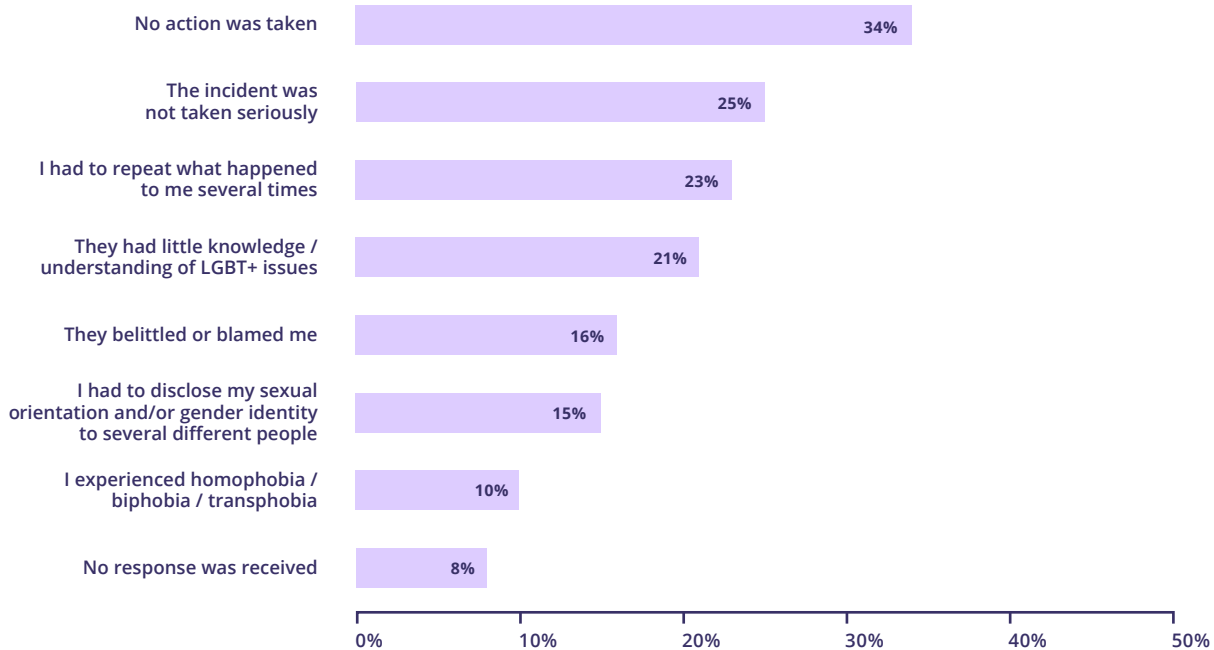


On the other hand, respondents who were dissatisfied with the police response were unhappy because the police took no action (34%) or they felt that the incident was not taken seriously (25%). Respondents also felt that they were either having to repeat what had happened several times (23%) or continually disclose their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (15%).

In some instances, responding officers were felt to have little knowledge or understanding about LGBT+ issues (21%), and in some cases were perceived as being homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic (10%). They also felt belittled (16%) or were unhappy because they did not receive a response (8%).

8 Reporting

Figure 16. Why were you dissatisfied with the police response to your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse? (*n*=62)



The factors that determined positive and negative police experiences in the quantitative survey responses were also reflected by participants in the interviews and through qualitative comments in the survey.

Respondents who were satisfied with the police response noted how officers appeared knowledgeable, took the incident seriously and were empathetic. For example:

“ They were fantastic. The officers that dealt with my case were non- straight cisgender Muslims as well which really helped. ”

“ They were extremely supportive and kind. ”

8 Reporting



“ The police woman who filled in my report was very aware of goth / alternative people getting abuse for how they look. I am not an extreme-looks sort of person, but I registered as goth to the person who threatened me and that was enough. We (the police woman and I) talked a little bit about the Sophie charity, and how Manchester reports these things as hate crimes. She said she couldn't do that because the main reason was the goth thing, but she said that she put this in the same category, at least in her head. That was nice. The LGBT part of this was something she could act on however. ”

On the other hand, those that were dissatisfied felt that their report was not taken seriously or that the police took little to no action in response to their report. Others mentioned that responding officers had very little knowledge/understanding of hate crime or LGBT+ issues. For example:

“ The police officer did NOT know that if a victim of a hate crime perceives that it is a hate crime then [it should be recorded as a hate crime], despite what police officers might think. ”

“ They relied on me to do some of the investigating. I felt like unless I presented them with a gift wrapped perfect case, nothing would happen. ”

“ I never heard anything [after giving my statement] and the people were never caught. ”

8 Reporting



“ When I have reported to the police, their attitude has been very blasé, they were very slow and weren't very empathetic. When they have investigated, which isn't very often, there have often been a string of errors and mistakes. In fact, I received an apology from the police acknowledging the multiple errors that they had made in my case. For example, it took them weeks to gather any of the evidence but by that point everything had been lost. ”

“ The first police officer I spoke to was very empathetic and wanted to come to our house as soon as he could... We were told we would have someone come Wednesday but nobody did, rather a different police officer rang and said could I give a statement over the phone... as they want to avoid coming if they can. They were satisfied with my statement. I never heard anything after this and the people weren't caught. The police said... the footage might have been wiped already due to the time they got around to taking a statement from me. ”

8 Reporting



These findings suggest that victim satisfaction with the police response is dependent upon how the individual feels that they have been treated by police. Victims who were largely positive about their interactions with police felt that they had been listened to, treated with respect and the incident was taken seriously.

On the other hand, those that were dissatisfied with the response of the police felt they were often belittled or blamed for what had happened, they were not listened to as they had to continually repeat what had happened and/or disclose their sexual orientation/gender identity, and the incident was not felt to be taken seriously, resulting in no action being taken.

It is also worth noting that research has found that while people's satisfaction was greater if the police solved their problems, the primary factor shaping their satisfaction was the perceived fairness in how the police treated them⁶. This would also appear to be supported by these survey findings as only 19% of respondents were satisfied with the police response because the offender faced consequences. Therefore, agencies need to focus on increasing satisfaction through improving the fairness and respectfulness of the process, as opposed to only focusing on the eventual outcome.

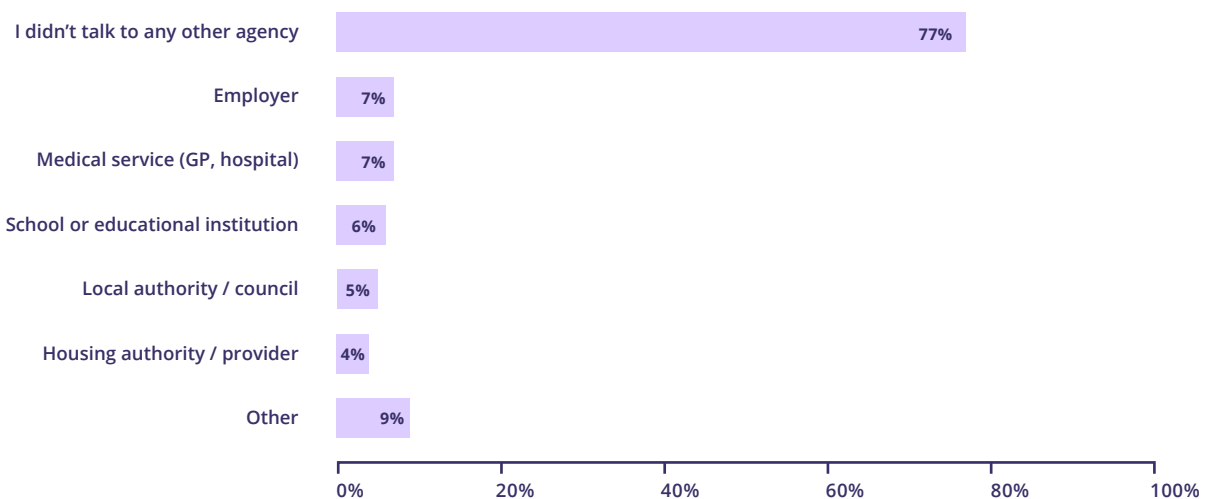
⁶ Tyler and Huo (2002) Trust in the Law: Encouraging Public Cooperation with the Police and the Courts, New York: Russell Sage.



Reporting to agencies beyond the police

There are a range of agencies beyond the police where victims are able to report their experiences.

Figure 17. Did you talk to any other agency about your most recent experience of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse? (*n=481*)



However, as the chart above illustrates, very few people are reporting to other agencies beyond the police. Almost 8 in 10 respondents did not report to any other agency, with fewer than 1 in 10 reporting to any of the following: employer, medical service, school, local authority/council or a housing authority/provider. Of those that stated "Other", this was often to a friend, family member or third sector organisation such as Galop, Victim Support or Stonewall.

8 Reporting



For most respondents this was because they were unaware that you could report elsewhere:

“ Other than the police I am not sure where else I could’ve gone to report what had happened to me. ”

“ Where else could I have gone besides the police? ”

This suggests that much more work is needed to improve awareness of alternative reporting mechanisms amongst members of the LGBT+ community so that if they do not feel comfortable reporting to the police, they know they can report elsewhere, and not have to suffer in silence.



This report has demonstrated that homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, acephobic and intersexphobic hate crime remains a pervasive problem within society.

Participants in this project described a range of abuse they had experienced from verbal abuse and harassment to physical and sexual violence.

Such incidents were found to have a profound impact upon victims who described a range of physical, emotional, psychological and financial impacts.

Following their experiences of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse, the majority of respondents required some form of support, although not all. Types of support consisted of emotional support (e.g. having someone to talk to), practical assistance (e.g. financial support), advice and support (e.g. information on where to get support), and advocacy (e.g. to ensure their case is dealt with).



Despite many victims wanting or needing some form of support, many were unable to access this support.

For those that formally reported their experiences to an appropriate agency, accessing support was more straightforward. Nevertheless, respondents described a range of barriers that made accessing support difficult. Individuals who accessed LGBT+ specific support as opposed to generic support were more satisfied with the support they received.

Despite the significant impacts of experiencing anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse, many LGBT+ respondents were reluctant to report to the police. Participants described a range of factors which determined whether or not they would report their victimisation to the police which centred around three things: their perception of the offence; previous experience of the police; and fear of repercussions.

For the few respondents who did report to the police, less than half were satisfied with the response they received, and as such there remains much room for improvement. Factors that appeared to shape satisfaction with the police centred around how respondents felt they were treated. While victims of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse are able to report their experiences to agencies beyond the police, often referred to as third party reporting, the vast majority were unaware that such services were available and therefore did not make use of it.

The results of this study show that more dedicated funding is needed to enable delivery of specialist hate crime services to those in need, providing support, advice and advocacy. Efforts should be undertaken by police and other agencies to increase referrals of LGBT+ victims to specialist support services. LGBT+ communities need to be better informed about the available specialist support, for example through a national awareness raising campaign.

Quality improvements to frontline and investigative police responses toward anti-LGBT+ hate crimes are also urgently needed. Efforts should be undertaken by authorities to work with LGBT+ communities, in order to better understand and address the barriers faced by those facing hate crime in accessing assistance and support.

An online survey was created and distributed via Galop's social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook and through partner organisations.

The survey was live for 4 months from the start of April through to the end of July. It received 1123 responses. However, only 723 had been a victim of anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse and were therefore eligible to complete the remainder of the survey.

A further 200 respondents did not reach the end of the survey, resulting in 523 complete responses. In addition to the survey, 15 qualitative interviews were conducted with victims of anti-LGBT+ violence and abuse, who were recruited via Galop's social media accounts. There were also a number of qualitative questions on the survey.



A series of additional, optional demographic questions were asked. The answers to these questions describe the respondents as follows:

Age

367 respondents

Under 18	14%
18-24	19%
25-34	20%
35-44	12%
45-54	18%
55-64	13%
65+	4%

Gender

365 respondents

Male	37%
Female	38%
Non-Binary	8%
Gender Queer	2%
Unsure/Questioning	4%
Agender	1%
Self-described	10%

Gender identity

362 respondents

Trans	33%
Cisgender	58%
Unsure	9%

Sexual Orientation

367 respondents

Gay	29%
Lesbian	23%
Bisexual	16%
Pansexual	11%
Asexual	4%
Queer	8%
Heterosexual	4%
Self-described	6%

Disability

366 respondents

Physical or Mobility Condition	7%
Sensory Impairments	3%
Mental Health Condition	19%
Chronic Health Condition	6%
Learning Difficulty	5%
No Disability	48%
Other	9%
Prefer not to say	4%

Faith or Religion

366 respondents

Buddhism	2%
Christianity	17%
Hinduism	0.3%
Islam	2%
Judaism	3%
Sikhism	0.3%
No Religion	65%
Other	14%



A series of additional, optional demographic questions were asked. The answers to these questions describe the respondents as follows:

Ethnicity

366 respondents

White British	77%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1%
White – Any Other Background	9%
Asian – Indian	1%
Asian – Pakistan	1%
Asian – Bangladeshi	0.3%
Asian – Any Other Background	1%
Black – Caribbean	0.3%
Black – African	1%
Black – Any Other Background	0.3%
Latinx	1%
Mixed – White and Caribbean	1%
Mixed – White and Black African	0.3%
Mixed – any other Mixed background	3%
Other	2%
Self-described	3%

UK Region

362 respondents

East Midlands	6%
East of England	6%
Greater London	23%
North East	2%
North West	8%
South East	15%
South West	10%
West Midlands	6%
Yorkshire and Humber	7%
Northern Ireland	2%
Scotland	11%
Wales	4%

Area

362 respondents

City or Suburb	51%
Town	37%
Village or Countryside	12%

Occupational Status

365 respondents

Employed Full-Time	36%
Homemaker	2%
In Training	2%
Part-time work (< 15 hours per week)	3%
Part-time work (15-34 hours per week)	4%
Retired	4%
Self-Employed	6%
Student	20%
Unable to Work	12%
Unemployed	9%
Other	3%

Get help

If you are LGBT+ and experiencing violence or abuse, such as hate crime, domestic abuse or sexual violence, you can contact Galop directly:

Email us at advice@galop.org.uk

Use our self-referral form [here](#).

LGBT+ Hate Crime Helpline

020 7704 2040

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 999 5428

Resources

Hate Crime: A guide for LGBT+ people

[Download PDF](#)

Working with Victims of Anti-LGBT+ Hate Crimes A Practical Handbook

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