

Sexual orientation explored: A study of identity, attraction, behaviour and attitudes in 2009

Gavin Ellison and Briony Gunstone

YouGov

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Executive summary

Introduction

A Commission priority is to populate the new Equality Measurement Framework (EMF) with data on indicators, in order to map the changing face of equality. However, it is well established that indicators for sexual orientation have not been routinely collected to date. This study was devised to increase our knowledge of the nature of sexual orientation, to capture changing public attitudes and to investigate the impact of disadvantage experienced by lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. YouGov was commissioned to develop the study in December 2008.

The study is unique in capturing a wide range of perspectives from over 5,000 online survey respondents, including 2,199 who currently identify themselves as heterosexual/straight and 2,731 who currently identify themselves as LGB. Survey respondents were recruited from a self-selected online research panel of around 235,000 adults in England, Wales and Scotland in a two-stage process. In the first stage, a sample of 75,000 panel members was identified, containing all those who had responded to an earlier Oracle survey that carried a question on sexual orientation. In the second stage, a sub-sample was drawn. This sub-sample consisted of all those who had indicated in the Oracle survey that they were LGB; had answered 'other'; or had preferred not to answer (5,567 in total), plus a random sample of 3,995 of the remaining heterosexual respondents. The results have been weighted by age, gender, employment, socio-economic classification, region and educational level using both national data and information from the wider panel.

The chosen methodology has the benefit of allowing a large sample of people who have previously identified their sexual orientation as LGB to be included in the study. In addition, online self-completion surveys allow the respondent to experience some distance from the interviewer. An important caveat must be applied from the outset: even by weighting the results, it is impossible to know whether the composition of the sample by sexual orientation reflects that of the general population, or the LGB population. This applies equally to responses throughout the survey. The size and characteristics of the LGB population remain unknown.

Summary findings

In this sample, approaching six per cent of people identified themselves as LGB and almost 91 per cent as heterosexual/straight. If other aspects of sexual orientation are included alongside those who identify themselves as LGB, such as having sex with, or being sexually attracted to someone of the same sex, the figure rises to 14 per

cent. With the exception of bisexual people, only a minority of people had identified their orientation differently in the past.

The majority of respondents agreed that it is acceptable to answer social survey questions on sexual orientation and did not oppose the inclusion of a non-compulsory question in the Census.

Public attitudes towards LGB people were not consistent. People were happier to accept openly LGB people as close friends, managers at work or as their GP, and were less accepting regarding candidates for prime minister, religious leaders and parents.

Fear of disadvantage and discrimination impacts upon the lives of LGB people in profound ways. Some LGB people still do not feel they can be easily open about their sexual orientation.

LGB women and men face disadvantage, exclusion and segregation as a result of their sexual orientation. LGB respondents reported they had suffered stress, low self-esteem and had felt frightened as a result of prejudice and discrimination linked to their sexual orientation, despite evidence of greater public tolerance. Significant minorities reported bullying, and physical and sexual assault, and would not live in certain places in Britain, or work in certain jobs.

Overall findings

Describing current sexual orientation

After weighting the results as described above and in Chapter 2, 90.9 per cent of the survey sample described themselves as straight/heterosexual, while the combined LGB group represented 5.7 per cent. Of the 'other' responses, 1.3 per cent preferred not to say, and a further 2.1 per cent gave other reasons.

Variations in how people describe their sexual orientation

The majority of lesbians and gay men said they would describe themselves in the same way to other people. Just over a third said they would describe themselves differently depending on who they were with. This was true for 75 per cent of bisexual people. Bisexual people who said they would describe themselves differently were most likely to describe themselves as heterosexual to other people, whereas gay men and lesbians were more likely to simply not state their sexual orientation at all. A fifth of bisexual people would describe themselves as heterosexual to their partner.

Describing sexual orientation in the past

After people had described their sexual orientation, they were asked if they had always thought of themselves in this way. For the majority of people, sexual orientation appears to be fixed. Only five per cent of respondents indicated that they had changed how they think about their sexual orientation. Bisexual people (50 per cent) and lesbians (36 per cent) were most likely to have changed how they described their sexual orientation, whereas gay men (21 per cent) and heterosexual people (two per cent) were least likely to have changed. Bisexual people and lesbians who had changed their orientation were likely to have described themselves as heterosexual in the past, whereas gay men were more likely to think of themselves as gay after a bisexual period. The study showed that sexual orientation was most likely to become 'fixed' by the age of 25. There is evidence that gay men were likely to have arrived at their current orientation earlier than lesbians.

Current sexual attraction

People were much more likely to report some degree of current sexual attraction that was different to their stated orientation or sexual behaviour. Sexual attraction to the same, or opposite, sex does not necessarily translate into changes in behaviour or identity. Lesbians were most likely to report sexual attraction outside their stated identity (19 per cent reported attraction to men for example). Around one in ten heterosexual women (10 per cent) and gay men (12 per cent) reported being sexually attracted to women and slightly fewer heterosexual men (six per cent) reported sexual attraction to other men. Almost all bisexual people (92 per cent) reported current sexual attraction to both men and women.

Sexual attraction in the past

Gay men, lesbians and heterosexual men were more likely to report sexual attraction outside their current stated orientation between the ages of 16 and 25. This was true of 56 per cent of lesbians and 39 per cent of gay men over the age of 25 when reflecting back to when they were aged 16 to 25. Around one in ten heterosexual men and women over 25 experienced some degree of same-sex sexual attraction between the ages of 16 and 25. Three-quarters of bisexual people reported attraction to men or women between the ages of 16 and 25.

Current sexual behaviour

Some people described having sex outside their stated orientation. This was most likely among gay men and lesbians. Five per cent of gay men reported some sexual relations with women, along with one per cent of heterosexual women. Five per cent of lesbians and three per cent of heterosexual men reported some sexual relations with men. Almost half of bisexual people reported sexual relations with both men and women. The remainder had opposite sex relations only, or reported no sexual behaviour at all.

Forty-eight per cent of bisexual men reported having sexual experiences only or mainly with women, compared with only 27 per cent who reported sex only or mainly with men. Even more strikingly, 70 per cent of bisexual women reported that their current sexual experiences were only or mainly with men, compared with only 10 per cent who were currently having sex only or mainly with women.

Sexual behaviour in the past

People in most groups were more likely to have sexual relations outside their current stated orientation when they were younger (aged 16 to 25), with the exception of bisexual people, suggesting there is some truth in theories about early experimentation. Over half of lesbians (56 per cent) reported sex with men when aged between 16 and 25 and over a third (36 per cent) of gay men reported sex with women in the same age group. Four per cent of heterosexual men and three per cent of heterosexual women reported same sex relations when younger. Only around one in ten bisexual people reported sex as equally often with both men and women in the past.

Current identity, attraction and behaviour combined (not exclusively heterosexual)

In addition to the six per cent of the sample who identified themselves as LGB, a further eight per cent indicated that they were currently attracted to the same sex, or having sex with the same sex, but still identified themselves as heterosexual. If sexual orientation is a combination of identity, attraction and behaviour, then 14 per cent of respondents could be construed as not exclusively heterosexual. This figure does not include those who identified as 'other'.

Asking and answering questions on sexual orientation

The vast majority (75 per cent) of respondents felt that it was acceptable for social surveys to ask questions about sexual orientation. Older respondents were less likely to find it acceptable, though 70 per cent of those over 60 had no objections.

Twenty-two per cent of respondents actively opposed the introduction of a non-compulsory sexual orientation question in the 2011 Census. Seventy-eight per cent – the vast majority – either actively supported the measure or did not mind either way. LGB respondents (and gay men in particular) were the strongest supporters. The highest levels of opposition were from the over 60s, with nearly a third against the measure.

There is evidence that different survey methods can affect the way orientation is described, particularly for bisexual people. Twenty per cent of bisexual people, seven per cent of gay men and nine per cent of lesbians said they would give a different response online than in a private interview held by a researcher at home. Significant minorities of all groups, including heterosexual people, said they would not answer the question at all in that situation. Bisexual people, gay men and lesbians who indicated they would give a different response would be likely to state they were heterosexual.

Attitudes towards LGB people

The majority of heterosexual men and women said they would be happy about, or felt neutral towards having a manager at work (82 per cent) or close friends who were openly LGB (88 per cent), or being treated by an openly LGB doctor (84 per cent). However, a quarter (25 per cent) of heterosexual respondents said they would not be happy to vote for an openly LGB candidate for prime minister. Younger people, those with higher educational attainment and non-religious people were more likely to be happy about openly LGB people being in these positions.

One in five (21 per cent) heterosexual men and women did not feel that lesbians could be equally as good at bringing up children as other women, and around a quarter (27 per cent) felt the same about gay men's ability to bring up children. However, these figures hide large differences between heterosexual men and women: 55 per cent of heterosexual women compared with 33 per cent of heterosexual men agreed that gay men can be equally good as other men at bringing up children. In comparison, around 90 per cent of gay men and lesbian respondents felt that gay men and lesbians could be as good at bringing up children as other parents. This strength of feeling was shared by bisexual women and, to a lesser extent, by bisexual men.

Only 38 per cent of all religious respondents and the same proportion of non-religious respondents agreed that being religious was compatible with being openly LGB. Thirty-three per cent of religious heterosexual people would not be happy to follow an openly LGB religious leader, and around a quarter (26 per cent) felt that LGB

religious people would not be accepted by their religious leaders. Religious LGB respondents were more positive, but almost half (47 per cent) felt they could not be open about their sexual orientation and still be accepted by their religious community.

Exclusion and segregation

The findings show that LGB women and men perceive and experience high degrees of exclusion and segregation in wider society. Thirty-nine per cent of gay men, a third of lesbians, and one in ten bisexual people felt that there were some jobs they would not consider because of their sexual orientation. Encouragingly, younger people were less likely to feel excluded. The most commonly cited jobs and careers that LGB respondents would avoid were: the police service and armed forces, teaching, and manual trades. Many who said they would avoid the armed services and police gave working culture, organisational policies and perceptions of homophobia as reasons for this. Teaching and working with children in general was negatively associated both with public debates about the teaching of homosexuality in schools and the perceived reactions of parents and others to their children having an LGB teacher.

Twenty-four per cent of gay men, 13 per cent of lesbians and a small proportion of bisexual men and women said they had avoided participating in certain sports, or had hidden their sexual orientation while participating, out of fear of prejudice or discrimination linked to their sexual orientation. The most commonly mentioned were team sports such as football and rugby, which some perceived as 'laddish', aggressive and homophobic. Those who participated feared being treated differently by teammates and experiencing negative reactions to their presence in the changing room because of their sexual orientation.

Over half of gay men (58 per cent) and lesbians (51 per cent) stated that there were places in Britain where they would not want to live because of their sexual orientation. Around a fifth of bisexual men and women also agreed with this statement. Those who agreed were asked to give examples of such places. Areas such as Northern Ireland, Ireland and large cities like Birmingham and Glasgow were frequently mentioned, and many also highlighted highly rural areas and deprived inner cities as being less welcoming.

The impact of disadvantage

Over half of gay men and 61 per cent of lesbians felt they had experienced disadvantage because of their sexual orientation. Disadvantage was wide ranging, but respondents tended to cite: neighbourhoods, experiences at school and university, problems with family, having to live in secret or without as much freedom as they would want, and openly homophobic verbal and physical abuse.

Fear of disadvantage and discrimination impacts upon the lives of LGB women and men in profound ways. Some LGB people still do not feel they can be open about their sexual orientation. Only half of lesbians, gay men and bisexual women and a third of bisexual men felt they could be open about their sexual orientation without fear of prejudice or discrimination in schools, colleges or universities. Around half of lesbians and gay men, a third of bisexual women and a fifth of bisexual men believed they could be open in their local police station. Only 28 per cent of gay men and lesbians felt they could be open about their sexual orientation when walking through their local neighbourhood. Fear of prejudice was less acute, although still present, for many people in their workplaces, local health services and their families.

When asked about incidents of prejudice and discrimination that were related to their sexual orientation, the majority of gay men (63 per cent) and lesbians (66 per cent) said they had experienced name calling and other forms of verbal abuse. Around half of lesbians and gay men and a third of bisexual women and men reported that they had suffered stress. Around four in ten lesbians and gay men reported that they had been bullied, or felt frightened, and had suffered from low self-esteem. Around one in five gay men reported they had been physically assaulted and six per cent of lesbians that they had been sexually assaulted. Nine per cent of gay men and fourteen per cent of bisexual men reported a current mental health condition, as did 16 per cent of lesbians and over a quarter (26 per cent) of bisexual women. This contrasts sharply with just three per cent of heterosexual men and eight per cent of heterosexual women.

Implications

Sexual orientation is more complex and wide ranging than the categories of lesbian, gay or bisexual would suggest. In addition to the six per cent who identified themselves as LGB in this sample, a further eight per cent reported having sex with, or being sexually attracted to someone of the same sex. This has implications for meeting the needs of those people who fall into a wider definition of sexual orientation.

The vast majority of people were comfortable with defining their sexual orientation when asked. Over three-quarters considered it to be acceptable in social surveys and a higher proportion would be content to be asked in the Census. The Census is the most reliable source of population estimates but does not currently include a sexual orientation question. Without a reliable profile of LGB people, representative surveys are not currently possible.

The findings imply that bisexual men and women differ from lesbians and gay men in their identity, behaviour, attraction and experiences of disadvantage. Where possible in sexual orientation studies, findings should be reported separately for all three groups, along with aggregated LGB results.

The findings also indicate that there is work to be done in effecting positive change in public attitudes, and in particular towards openly LGB candidates for prime minister, as religious leaders and as parents. Homophobia remains persistent and tackling forms of bullying and hate crime targeted at LGB men and women is a priority. Support for LGB men and women is essential in relation to damaged self-esteem and in helping those who experience mental health problems.

The findings on segregation indicate a need for work to be done on integrating LGB issues into initiatives promoting good relations and community cohesion.

1 Introduction

1.1 Context and aims

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is the independent advocate of equality and human rights in Britain. It aims to reduce inequality, work to eliminate discrimination, promote and protect human rights and strengthen good relations between people, and make sure that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.

In their recent review of evidence on sexual orientation (carried out for the Equality and Human Rights Commission), Mitchell et al (2009) concluded that ‘the absence of reliable statistical data on sexual orientation presents a major obstacle to measuring progress on tackling discrimination and tackling inequality’. The most notable data gap, from which baseline population estimates are drawn, is the decennial Census. The 2011 Census in England/Wales and Scotland will not include a question on sexual orientation because of concerns about the impact on response rates: the Office for National Statistics, which administers the Census, is not convinced that the nation is ready to be asked this question in a compulsory population survey. The Commission has developed the Equality Measurement Framework (EMF) to map inequality using baseline indicators, and is obliged to produce a triennial State of the Nation Report on the changing face of inequality in Britain. Populating the EMF is a priority, but indicators of inequality on sexual orientation have not been routinely collected.

It is in this context that in December 2008, YouGov was commissioned to develop an original quantitative study on sexual orientation.

The aims were to:

- investigate how people identify their current sexual orientation, and describe their current sexual behaviour and attraction
- investigate whether sexual identity, behaviour and attraction changes over time
- understand more about whether people would find it acceptable to be asked a sexual orientation question on social surveys and in the Census
- understand more about how people might answer a sexual orientation question according to how it is asked and administered
- identify public attitudes towards openly lesbian, gay and bisexual people in a range of personal and professional settings, and
- understand more about the impact of disadvantage experienced by lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people.

This report presents the findings of this unique and ground-breaking study on sexual orientation and attitudes towards LGB people in Britain in 2009, with responses from 5,190 adults, including 2,991 lesbians, gay men and bisexual people.

1.2 Structure of the report

The findings are presented over the following eight chapters:

- Chapter 2 explains the methodology, and explores the demographic differences and similarities of LGB respondents. It presents some indicative findings on background characteristics such as age, income, disability, location, education and employment.
- Chapter 3 explores the current status of people's sexual orientation, attraction and behaviour and the extent to which those aspects are fixed or fluid.
- Chapter 4 builds on current views of orientation, attraction and behaviour to consider the extent to which people have changed over time and might do so in the future.
- Chapter 5 considers how people feel about being asked for their sexual orientation in social surveys and, potentially, the 2011 Census. The effects of question wording and survey method are also considered.
- In Chapter 6 the report moves on to consider general attitudes towards LGB people and how responses differ according to demographic factors. Specific questions about lesbians and gay men as parents and sexual orientation in the context of religion explore attitudes further.
- Chapter 7 presents the views of LGB respondents on working life, sports and places to live and in doing so explores whether there is evidence of segregation in these aspects of life.
- Finally, Chapter 8 explores any experiences of disadvantage that have resulted from sexual orientation and the consequent effects on well-being.

2 Methodology

2.1 Online survey approach

This quantitative survey was conducted online between 24 February and 2 March 2009. The YouGov online research panel consists of around 240,000 adults in England, Scotland and Wales. The sample was taken from this panel in two stages. For the first stage a sub-sample was generated, which included all panel members who responded to the August 2008 monthly screening survey. This survey carried a question asking about respondents' sexual orientation and received over 75,000 responses. In the second stage, a sample of 9,562 was selected from that pool of 75,000. This overall figure consisted of all who had indicated that their sexual orientation was lesbian, gay or bisexual, or who had answered 'other' or 'prefer not to answer', plus a random sample of 3,995 of the remaining heterosexual respondents. The aim was to achieve responses from 2,000 heterosexual adults and significantly boosted sub-samples from the LGB community and those who had previously answered 'other' or 'prefer not to answer'.

There are various advantages and disadvantages to using an online method, which should be considered in relation to the survey findings. YouGov's online research panel allowed access to significant numbers of LGB respondents, who had identified their sexual orientation in an earlier survey. The survey dealt with highly sensitive topics and for this reason an online approach was felt to be particularly appropriate. In the absence of an interviewer, online research allows respondents to answer more openly and honestly. As it is less likely that anyone will see their responses, they are also less likely to feel compelled to give a 'safe' or socially desirable answer.

However, while the YouGov research panel is large enough to capture all sections of society (as defined by any socio-economic or demographic factors), it is important to be aware that the survey is not a population study. Members of the panel are recruited through targeted internet campaigns and by using specialised recruitment agencies that contact people from specific groups to ensure an appropriate demographic balance. The survey results have been weighted on factors such as age, gender, employment status and socio-economic classification to ensure as close a match with the Great Britain (GB) adult population as possible, but because a random probability sampling approach is not used, the findings cannot be generalised to the population as a whole.

The figures in Table 1 represent the sample for this study as defined by the sexual orientation question posed in the August 2008 Oracle survey. The question used in the Oracle survey was:

- Do you consider yourself to be ...?
- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Gay man
- Gay woman
- Lesbian
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

Table 1 Sample profile by sexual orientation (based on the August 2008 Oracle)

	Sampled	Responses	Response rate %
Heterosexual	3,995	1,759	44
Bisexual	1,795	1,148	64
Gay man	1,992	1,306	66
Lesbian/gay woman	581	401	69
Other	399	207	52
Prefer not to answer	800	369	46
Total	9,562	5,190	54

Table 2 compares the responses to the question used in the August 2008 Oracle survey with those to the question used in this study, in which the following question and response categories were used:

- We would like to begin by simply asking you whether you consider yourself to be:
- Straight/Heterosexual;
- Gay/Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other (please explain below)

Table 2 Sample profile by sexual orientation (August 2008 Oracle against this study)

		2009 study				
		Hetero sexual	Gay man	Lesbian	Bisexual	Other
August 2008 Oracle	Heterosexual	1,710	1	1	20	27
	Bisexual	137	31	13	899	68
	Gay man	8	1,264	0	19	16
	Lesbian/gay woman	2	0	378	13	10
	Other	103	2	2	19	81
	Prefer not to answer	239	22	11	36	61
Total		2,199	1,320	405	1006	263¹

2.2 Questionnaire design

Designing the questionnaire involved drawing upon a range of existing studies and information on best practice. In particular, the design was informed by National Centre for Social Research's (NatCen) National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (2000), as well as quantitative and qualitative work previously conducted by the Office for National Statistics. The survey was informed by language use within survey design from a number of studies carried out for the campaigning group and charity, Stonewall.

There were various issues to be considered in designing the language and terminology for questions around sexual orientation. It was important the questions reflected the language people would use to describe their sexual orientation, to make sure that answer options were properly understood by and relevant to respondents.

The wording 'Straight/Heterosexual' was chosen on the basis that 'heterosexual' may not be understood by all respondents. 'Straight', although colloquial, is the more common term. The wording 'Gay/Lesbian' was chosen on the basis that 'homosexual' had negative connotations historically and is not commonly used by gay people; 'gay' is the more common term. It was also recognised that some gay

¹ In the 2009 study a 'Prefer not to answer' (PNTA) option was not provided. Instead, 83 cases were coded as PNTA from within the 'Other' category. This was carried out after examining responses to an open question which followed the 'other' response. As a result these figures will not be a exact match with the 2009 responses provided in Table 3.

women prefer the term 'gay' to 'lesbian' and the wording was designed to encompass this.

Respondents were given the option of answering 'Other' in response to the sexual orientation questions, and those who did so were asked to explain why they answered in this way.. These responses were analysed. Where appropriate they were back-coded into the existing categories, but this only applied in a small number of cases. The remainder were grouped either into a broad 'Other' category or a 'prefer not to answer' category (see Chapter 3).

Introductory preambles were included before particular questions or sections, where appropriate. These gave background information or explanations for questions that may have been considered personal or sensitive, to ensure that respondents understood why they were being asked, and felt reassured and as comfortable as possible in answering. This helped us to meet our duty of care to respondents and also create the conditions within which honest and open responses could be provided.

The questionnaire was piloted with around 50 respondents drawn from the YouGov panel. These comprised of a mixture of different sexual orientations and age groups. The pilot aimed to identify any areas that were not properly understood, which were difficult to answer, or which respondents did not feel comfortable answering. Changes to the questionnaire were made based on analysis of the findings and additional qualitative feedback provided.

2.3 Weighting

The most important variable for weighting the data was sexual orientation. However, given that there are no national statistics available that would reliably estimate the profile, we applied a two-stage process using the August 2008 monthly screening survey. The data file of over 75,000 respondents was weighted for interlocked age, gender and employment, and the additional factors of socio-economic classification and region. The resulting sexual orientation breakdown was then used to provide weighting ratios for this study. In addition the results were weighted by:

- age, gender and employment interlocked
- region
- socio-economic classification
- industry sector for those in employment, and
- age and highest level of educational qualification interlocked.

Table 3 Survey response profile

Variable	Value	Weighted	Unweighted
	Base	5,190	
Gender	Men	2,531	3,046
	Women	2,659	2,144
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual/straight	4,713	2,199
	Gay men	138	1,320
	Lesbian	38	405
	Bisexual men	63	534
	Bisexual women	62	472
	'Other' men	52	86
	'Other' women	57	91
	Prefer not to answer	67	83
Socio-economic classification	ABC1	2,855	3,149
	C2DE	2,336	2,040
Disabled	Activities substantially limited	469	486
	Limited but not substantially	695	789
	Not disabled	4,026	3,915
Religion	Non-religious	2,305	2,823
	Christian	2,524	1,967
	Non-Christian religions	361	400
NVQ Level	NVQ4 and above	1,539	2,946
	NVQ2/3	1,774	1,609
	NVQ1 and below	1,877	635
Age	18–34	1,472	1,706
	35–59	2,247	2,526
	60 and over	1,470	958
Ethnicity	White	4,896	4,953
	Ethnic minority	294	237
Region	North East	226	203
	North West	599	554
	Yorkshire and Humber	453	437
	East Midlands	387	323
	West Midlands	467	434
	East of England	495	462
	London	661	907
	South East	726	737
	South West	459	470
	Wales	261	250
	Scotland	457	413
Trans	Trans (transgender, transsexual or transvestite)	40	111

The weighted and unweighted response profile for key demographic variables is presented in Table 3 above.

2.4 Demographic information

The demographic information in this section provides context for later findings on attitudes and experiences, but should not be treated as robust estimates for the population as a whole (see Section 2 for sampling method).

Age

The median age of LGB respondents was lower than that of heterosexual men and women. As detailed in Table , gay men and bisexual women in particular have a younger age profile, with 76 per cent of gay men being under the age of 45 and 56 per cent of bisexual women aged under 35.

Table 4 Age bands by sexual orientation

	Heterosexual/Straight %	Gay man %	Lesbian %	Bisexual man %	Bisexual woman %	Other (man) %	Other (woman) %
18 to 24	12	15	13	13	27	19	29
25 to 34	15	30	21	16	29	34	25
35 to 44	17	31	31	26	23	11	9
45 to 54	17	13	15	21	11	13	16
55 +	39	12	21	23	10	23	21
Median age	47	36	40	43	32	34	33
Unweighted base	2,199	1,320	405	534	472	86	91

The median age of bisexual women was 32, notably eleven years younger than bisexual men. In contrast lesbians had an older age profile than gay men. Those identifying with the ‘other’ category were younger than heterosexual respondents with nearly half under the age of 35, compared with 27 per cent of heterosexual men and women.

Location

London in particular and the South East to a lesser extent were represented by relatively high proportions of LGB respondents in this study compared with other regions in GB. Twenty-seven per cent of gay men and lesbians and 19 per cent of

bisexual people surveyed lived in London compared with 12 per cent of heterosexual respondents. Alongside the 14 per cent of the heterosexual sample living in the South East (excluding London) were 15 per cent of gay and lesbian respondents and 15 per cent of bisexual people.

Regions with notably lower proportions of lesbian and gay respondents compared with heterosexual men and women included the East Midlands and West Midlands; East of England, Yorkshire and Humber, and the North West.

Employment status, industry sector and seniority

Given the generally younger age profile, LGB respondents were more likely to be of working age and in employment. Table 5 shows three-quarters of gay men in full-time work, compared with 57 per cent of heterosexual men. Similarly a higher proportion of lesbians (58 per cent) and bisexual women (41 per cent) were in full time employment than heterosexual women (34 per cent). The young age profile of bisexual women is reflected in the higher proportion of students in this group.

Looking specifically at the working-age population, there were still more gay men in full-time employment than heterosexual men (77 per cent, compared with 66 per cent). Similarly, the proportion of working-age heterosexual women in full-time employment was substantially lower than the 69 per cent of working-age lesbian respondents.

The industry sectors of finance and business services and public administration were strongly represented among the occupations of gay and lesbian respondents. Thirty-five per cent of employed gay and lesbian respondents were working in public administration and a further 22 per cent in financial and business services, compared with 28 per cent of heterosexual respondents in public administration and 16 per cent in finance and business services.

There were few differences between the proportions of gay, lesbian and heterosexual workers in the leisure and retail sector, but few gay and lesbian respondents worked in manufacturing and construction. While 12 per cent of heterosexual employees were based in the manufacturing industry, only four per cent of gay and lesbian respondents were. Similarly, nine per cent of heterosexual respondents worked in the construction industry but just three per cent of gay and lesbian respondents did likewise. Patterns of employment among bisexual workers were closer to the heterosexual profile, but still lower in manufacturing and construction.

Table 5 Which of the following best describes your employment status? (by sexual orientation)

	Heterosexual/Straight man %	Heterosexual/Straight woman %	Gay man %	Lesbian %	Bisexual man %	Bisexual woman %
Working full-time (30 hours a week or more)	57	34	75	58	68	41
Working part-time (8–29 hours)	9	18	6	11	6	15
Working part-time (less than eight hours)	1	2	1	-	2	2
Unemployed and looking for work	2	2	3	3	3	5
Retired	22	25	6	16	10	7
Looking after family or home	1	7	-	3	-	7
Full-time student	3	3	4	3	5	13
Not working as sick or disabled	5	5	4	8	5	8
Unweighted base	1,061	1,138	1,320	405	534	472

Gay and lesbian respondents were more likely than heterosexual men and women to be in professional occupations such as lawyers, accountants and social workers. There were comparatively fewer in skilled and elementary trades associated with manufacturing or building trades.

Income and socio-economic classification

The personal income profile of employed gay men was significantly higher than heterosexual men. Thirty-seven per cent of employed heterosexual men had a

personal income of greater than £26,000 per year before tax. In comparison, half of gay men (48 per cent) earned more than that figure.

When education level is taken into account, this gap becomes smaller but is still present. Fifty-four per cent of heterosexual men with NVQ4 or higher qualifications earned over £26,000, compared with 62 per cent of gay men with the same qualification level. There were similar gaps in income between gay men and heterosexual men for the other qualification levels. Bisexual men were closely in line with the heterosexual respondents in our sample.

There was also evidence that heterosexual women had a lower income profile than lesbians. Thirteen per cent of heterosexual women earned more than £26,000 per year, compared with 25 per cent of lesbian respondents. As with men, when taking educational level into account these differences remained. Forty-two per cent of lesbians with an NVQ4 level or higher qualification earned over £26,000, compared with 29 per cent of heterosexual women with the same educational level.

Household income figures revealed a closer gap between heterosexual and gay men. Seventy-one per cent of gay men – including 29 per cent with £52,000 per year or more – had a household income of above £26,000 per year. This compares more closely with 61 per cent of heterosexual men, including 22 per cent over £52,000. The income profile of bisexual men was generally lower than that of the heterosexual sample. The household income gap was also closer between heterosexual women and lesbians.

In terms of socio-economic classification, gay men and lesbians were significantly more likely to be categorised as ABC1 (the higher level category) than heterosexual and bisexual men and women. Seventy-three per cent of gay men and 66 per cent of lesbians were in the ABC1 group compared with 54 per cent of heterosexuals and 58 per cent of bisexual respondents.

Educational level

Lesbian, gay and bisexual respondents had a higher level of educational attainment than heterosexual respondents, with 39 per cent of gay men and 50 per cent of lesbians reporting that their highest qualifications were equivalent to or above NVQ4. In comparison, as Table details, 31 per cent of heterosexual men and 28 per cent of women were educated to NVQ4 or equivalent level. Bisexual men and women also reported higher levels of educational attainment than heterosexual respondents, although the differences were not as pronounced as for gay men and lesbians.

Table 6 NVQ equivalent level of education (by sexual orientation)

	Heterosexual/straight %	Gay man %	Lesbian %	Bisexual man %	Bisexual woman %
NVQ4 and above	29	39	50	36	31
NVQ2/3	34	34	29	32	44
NVQ1 and below	37	27	21	32	26
Unweighted base	2,199	1,320	405	534	472

Disability

There were no statistically significant differences in the prevalence of disability between gay, lesbian and heterosexual respondents. Eighteen per cent of gay and lesbian respondents had some form of limiting disability, compared with 21 per cent of heterosexual men and women. Given the younger age profile of gay men and lesbians, the closeness of the comparison may be surprising.

Specific types of disability were explored. Although gay and bisexual men were less likely than heterosexual men to suffer from a physically limiting disability (six per cent and nine per cent compared with 11 per cent), they were significantly more likely to have a mental health condition such as depression. Nine per cent of gay men and 14 per cent of bisexual men reported having a mental health condition, compared with just three per cent of heterosexual men. Even larger differences were found between lesbian and bisexual women and heterosexual women: 16 per cent of lesbians and 26 per cent of bisexual women stated that they had a mental health condition, which contrasts sharply with just eight per cent of heterosexual women.

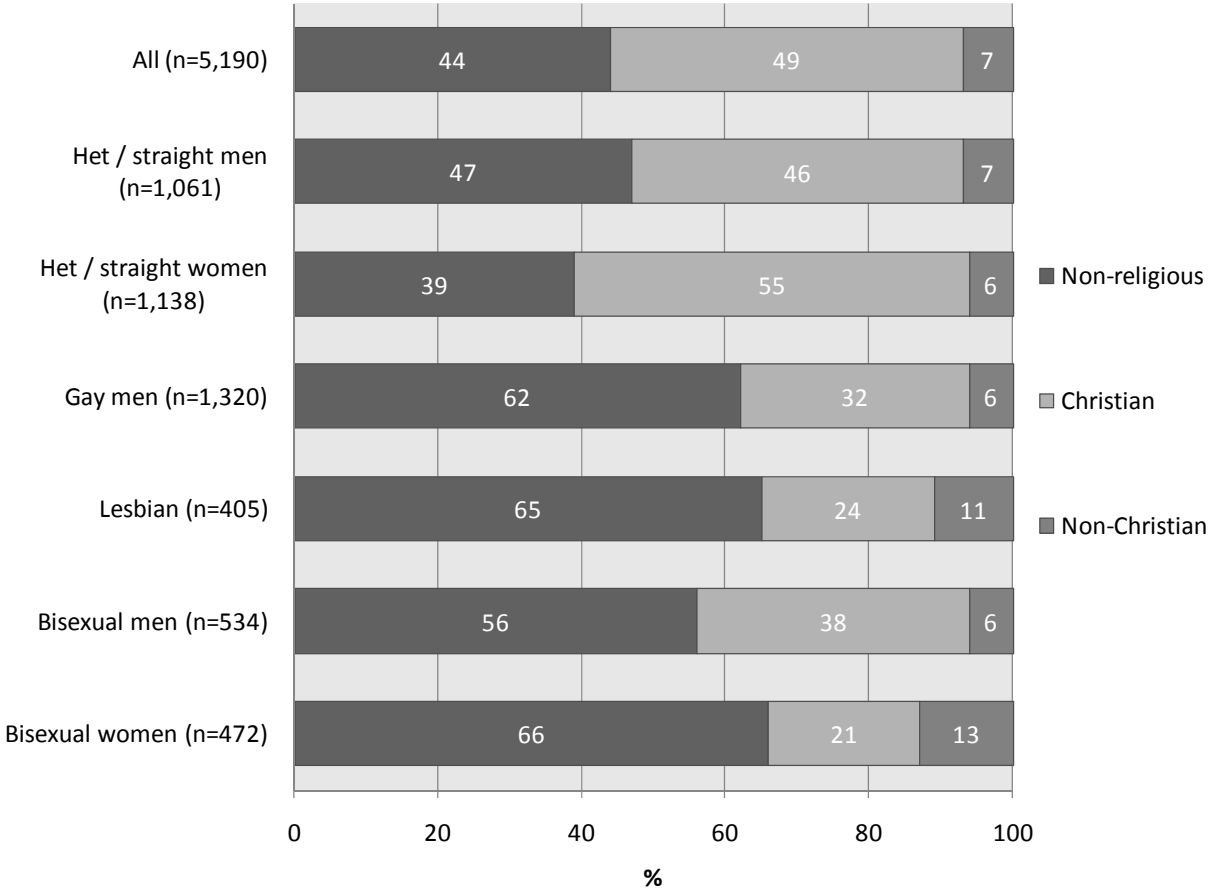
Religious identification

Only 37 per cent of gay men and lesbians considered that they belonged to a particular religion, compared with 53 per cent of the overall sample. Bisexual men and women were also less likely to be religious. Thirty two per cent of gay men and 24 per cent of lesbians said they were Christian, and there was some limited evidence that lesbians and bisexual women in particular were more likely to identify with non-Christian religions, as Figure 1 illustrates.

Age is a notable determinant of religious identification and the younger age profile of LGB respondents was likely to be a key influencing factor. However, when looking only at those aged 18 to 34 it is still apparent that fewer LGB respondents regarded

themselves as religious. A quarter of LGB respondents aged 18 to 34 said they were religious, compared with 41 percent of heterosexual people.

Figure 1 Religious profile (by sexual orientation)



Base: Heterosexual/Straight and LGB respondents

Age is a notable determinant of religious identification and the younger age profile of LGB respondents was likely to be a key influencing factor. However, when looking only at those aged 18 to 34 it is still apparent that fewer LGB respondents regarded themselves as religious. A quarter of LGB respondents aged 18 to 34 said they were religious, compared with 41 percent of heterosexual people.

Ethnicity

The proportion of gay and lesbian respondents within the ethnic minority group constituted a slightly smaller proportion than those within the white group. The proportion of gay and lesbian ethnic minority respondents was 1.4 per cent, compared with 3.5 per cent of white respondents. A higher proportion of ethnic minority respondents (3.1 per cent compared with 2.0 per cent) ticked the ‘other’ option, but men and women within this group were also much more likely than white

respondents to mark 'prefer not to say'; 7.5 per cent chose this option, compared with 0.9 per cent of white men and women.

Relationships and household composition

Heterosexual respondents (67 per cent) were much more likely to be married to, or live with, a partner of the opposite sex than lesbian or gay respondents were to be in a civil partnership or living with a partner of the same sex (42 per cent). Nineteen per cent of lesbians and 11 per cent of gay men were in a registered civil partnership, compared with 54 per cent of heterosexual women and 58 per cent of heterosexual men who were married. Eighty-two per cent of gay men said they had never been married or in a civil partnership, compared with 32 per cent of heterosexual men.

Thirty-seven per cent of bisexual men and a quarter of bisexual women were currently married to a person of the opposite sex, but most bisexual respondents had never been married or been in a registered same-sex civil partnership. Only three per cent of bisexual men and seven per cent of bisexual women live with a same-sex partner, while 50 per cent of bisexual men and 46 per cent of bisexual women live with someone of the opposite sex.

Twenty-seven per cent of bisexual men and women lived with their children or the children of their partner, a figure that was not too different than that of heterosexual men and women at a third. In contrast, only two per cent of gay men and seven per cent of lesbians had a child in the household. Possibly reflecting the younger age profile of gay men and lesbians, they were more likely than heterosexual men and women to be living with friends and housemates.

3 Describing current sexual orientation

3.1 In summary

This chapter covers questions on how people describe their sexual orientation, and how this might vary by circumstance. Further detail on those who chose the 'Other' category is covered in this chapter. The trans category is also discussed here. The chapter also looks at sexual attraction and behaviour, and the extent to which these can fall 'outside' people's stated orientation.

LGB people were likely to vary the way they described their orientation, depending on the situation. Seventy-five per cent of bisexual people said they would do this, along with 61 per cent of those in 'other' categories and 35 per cent of gay men/lesbians. Among respondents who said they would describe themselves differently, bisexual people were very likely to describe themselves as heterosexual, both to friends and family and to people in an official capacity. Gay men/lesbians were more likely simply not to state their orientation at all.

Many people reported sexual attraction 'outside' their stated orientation. This was most likely among lesbians (19 per cent), but around one in ten heterosexual women and gay men, and slightly fewer heterosexual men, also reported this kind of attraction. Heterosexual women were the group most likely to report no sexual attraction to anyone (nine per cent).

Smaller proportions reported sexual experiences 'outside' their orientation: three per cent of heterosexual men and five per cent of gay men, five per cent of lesbians and one per cent of heterosexual women.

Bisexual people were more likely to report attraction to, and sexual experiences with, the opposite gender rather than the same. Forty-eight per cent of bisexual men and 70 per cent of bisexual women said they had sex only or mainly with the opposite gender, with 27 per cent and 10 per cent reporting sex only or mainly with the same gender. The same was true for sexual attraction although the disparity is not quite so large.

3.2 Describing current sexual orientation

After weighting the results as described above and in Chapter 1, an estimated 90.9 per cent said they considered themselves to be straight/heterosexual in response to the following sexual orientation question:

We would like to begin by simply asking you whether you consider yourself to be:

- Straight/Heterosexual
- Gay/Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other (please explain below)

The combined gay and lesbian proportion was 3.3 per cent with bisexual men and women at 2.4 per cent. The combined LGB group represented 5.7 per cent. A smaller proportion (3.4 per cent) ticked 'other' and were asked to explain why. Their reasons are explored in Section 3.3 below and those who wrote that they did not want to say (1.3 per cent) were placed into the separate category of 'prefer not to answer'. This reduced the 'Other' category to 2.1 per cent of the sample and certain sub-groups within this category could be considered as non-heterosexual. The largest such group (1.1 per cent of the total sample) were those describing themselves as being between categories or 'bi-curious'. Some felt that the label bisexual implied a 50/50 split that did not match their view of themselves.

Table 7 displays responses to the sexual orientation question, broken down by gender.

Table 7 Do you consider yourself to be ...? (by detailed sexual orientation)

	%	Unweighted N
Straight/Heterosexual man	43.2	1,061
Straight/Heterosexual woman	47.6	1,138
Gay man	2.7	1,320
Lesbian/gay woman	0.7	405
Bisexual man	1.2	534
Bisexual woman	1.2	472
Other (man)	1.0	86
Other (woman)	1.1	91
Prefer not to answer (man)	0.7	45
Prefer not to answer (woman)	0.6	38
Total	100	5,190

3.3 Those answering 'other'

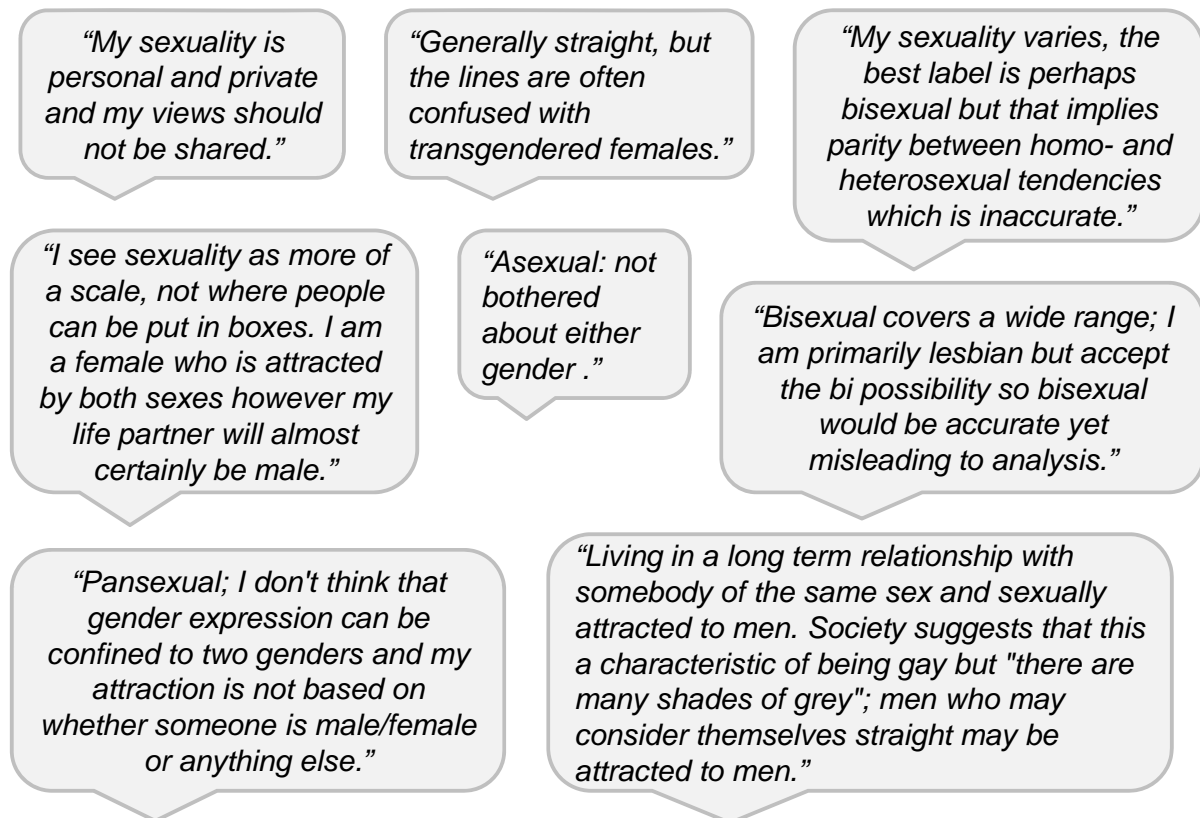
Like most sexual orientation questions, the one used in this study included an option to answer 'other (please explain below)' and provided respondents with a text box to

type in their explanations. The text was analysed and the following categories were established:

- People who did not wish to disclose their sexual orientation. Because 'prefer not to answer' option was not provided, many people ticked 'other' and then wrote that they preferred not to say. These respondents numbered 68 (one per cent) of the survey sample, and were placed into a category of their own under the 'prefer not to say/refused' code.
- People in various trans categories (such as transsexual, transvestite or transgender). Although trans is not a sexual orientation, a small number of respondents felt that it was. All those who provided trans as their explanation for ticking 'other' subsequently identified as trans when we asked a specific question later in the survey. This group of ten respondents was retained in the 'other' category.
- People who considered themselves to be asexual/non-sexual, who perhaps did not experience sexual attraction or have any interest in having sex. This group of 22 respondents remained in the 'other' category.
- People who considered themselves to be fluid, between categories or curious. This larger sub-category (55 respondents) closely matched the purpose of the 'other' category. These respondents felt that traditional labels of gay, lesbian or bisexual did not reflect the way they thought about themselves. Terms such as 'bi-curious', 'pansexual' and 'ambisexual' were used by some to describe how they viewed themselves. Many others felt that the term bisexual implied a 50/50 balance that did not reflect their feelings or current circumstances.
- People who objected to the concept of labelling in principle (14 respondents) were retained in the 'other category'. While the previous sub-group focused on the difficulties of matching the way they viewed themselves with the options provided, these respondents objected to the concept of labelling in principle, but were distinguishable from those in the 'prefer not to say/refused' category.

Figure 2 provides a selection of some of the reasons respondents gave for ticking 'other'.

Figure 2 Reasons for ticking ‘other’



Fifty-three of those ticking ‘other’ were placed into the ‘prefer not to answer/refused’ category. That left the number of people in the ‘other’ category as 177 (unweighted), representing 3.4 per cent of the survey sample. The demographic characteristics of this group are listed below, along with differences that were identified between them and the overall survey population:

- There was a 48 per cent/52 per cent balance between men and women.
- With a median age of 33 for men and 34 for women, the ‘other’ sub-group has a younger profile than heterosexual men and women. Over half (52 per cent) of the ‘other’ group were under 34, compared with 27 per cent of heterosexual respondents. While not as young as the bisexual women group, they are more comparable with the LGB age profile than that of heterosexual men and women.
- Socio-economic classification was closely comparable with heterosexual respondents, and so lower than gay men and lesbians. Fifty-seven per cent of ‘other’ respondents were in the ABC1 group compared with 72 per cent of gay men and lesbians.
- People in the ‘other’ category were less likely than LGB respondents to be working full-time and were more likely than heterosexual men and women to be students, or not working because of illness or disability.

- A greater number of people in the 'other' group were ethnic minority compared with other groups, and they were more likely to identify with a non-Christian religion.
- The income profile of the 'other' group was lower than that of heterosexual people and LGB respondents, reflecting the higher relative proportions of students and those not currently in work.

3.4 Trans, transsexual, transgender and transvestite

This study asked people whether they considered themselves to be trans; that is, transsexual, transgender or transvestite. Trans is not a sexual orientation but is often considered as a category alongside the LGB categories. Two per cent of respondents (111 in the unweighted survey sample) identified themselves as transsexual, transvestite or transgender with a broadly even split between the three. A small number of observations about their demographic profile are included here. Those identifying as trans had the following characteristics in comparison with the non-trans sample:

- The trans group had a younger age profile with a third under the age of 35 and only nine per cent aged over 60.
- Twenty-six per cent were married to someone of the opposite sex, but 51 per cent, a higher proportion than non-trans respondents, had never been married or registered a same-sex civil partnership.
- A high proportion of those identifying as trans were in full-time employment (64 per cent). However, a sizeable minority (19 per cent) were not working because of illness or disability. This compares with just five per cent of heterosexual respondents who were not working for similar reasons.
- The personal income profile of trans respondents was higher than other respondents. Similarly, two-thirds of trans respondents were in the ABC1 socio-economic category, compared with 55 per cent of the non-trans majority.
- Educational attainment was higher amongst trans respondents with 43 per cent having reached a qualification equivalent to NVQ4 or above compared with 30 per cent of non-trans respondents. The highest educational level attained was NVQ1 for only a quarter of trans respondents compared to over a third (36 per cent) of non-trans respondents.
- Trans respondents were no less likely to be religious than others, but non-Christian religious belief was more prevalent. Twenty per cent identified with a non-Christian religion, compared with just six per cent of the non-trans majority.

3.5 How sexual orientation can vary by circumstance

The way that people describe their sexual orientation can be affected by the circumstances that they are in. While ninety-two per cent of respondents said they would always describe their orientation the same way, eight per cent said they would describe it differently to different people or in different situations (see Figure 3).

Bisexual people are the group most likely to describe their orientation differently in different situations. Three-quarters of all bisexual people said they would do this, and the proportion is even higher among bisexual men (83 per cent, compared with 67 per cent of bisexual women). Sixty-one per cent of those in the 'other' category would also describe their orientation differently depending on the circumstance.

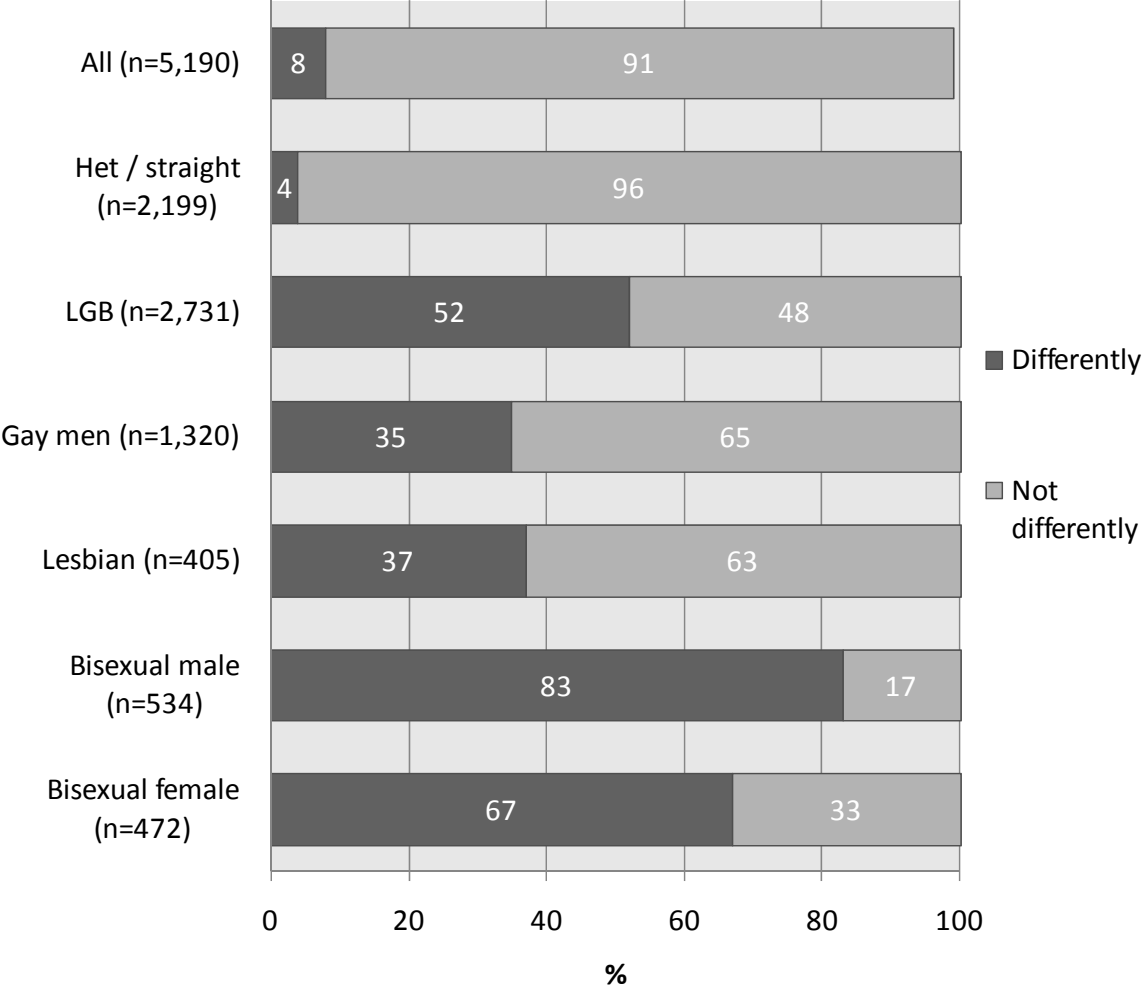
Just over a third of gay and lesbian respondents said they would describe their orientation differently (35 per cent of gay men and 37 per cent of lesbians), but the vast majority would not. Only four per cent of those who considered themselves heterosexual said they would describe themselves differently in different situations, with no variation between men and women.

Younger age groups – where bisexual respondents were concentrated – were more likely than older groups to say they would describe their orientation differently.

Among those who would describe themselves differently, bisexual respondents were likely to describe themselves as heterosexual in many situations. A fifth of all bisexual people surveyed said they would describe themselves as heterosexual to their partner. This was even more likely for bisexual men, of whom 36 per cent said they would describe themselves this way. Close to half would do the same with their parents, and over a quarter (26 per cent) said they would describe themselves as heterosexual to close friends.

When dealing with people in an official capacity, over a third (37 per cent) of bisexual people said they would describe themselves as heterosexual to the police, and a further 21 per cent would not disclose their sexual orientation. Similarly, 30 per cent said they would describe themselves as heterosexual to doctors or health professionals, and 10 per cent would not say.

Figure 3 Would you describe yourself differently depending upon who you are with?



Base: all respondents

By comparison, gay and lesbian respondents were more likely to avoid saying they are gay men/lesbians, rather than describing themselves as heterosexual. Only around six per cent of all gay men/lesbians said they would describe themselves as heterosexual to their parents, while nine per cent would not say. In sharp contrast to bisexual people, only one per cent of gay men and lesbians said they would describe themselves as heterosexual to close friends.

Outside the realm of friends and family, gay and lesbian respondents were also more likely to avoid stating their orientation rather than identify themselves as heterosexual. Only four per cent would describe themselves as heterosexual to the police, but 14 per cent said they would not say. If speaking to a doctor or health

professional, only two per cent would say they were heterosexual and seven per cent said they would not answer the question.

3.6 Sexual attraction

Respondents were asked whether they felt sexually attracted to only men, mainly men and sometimes women, about equally often to men and women, mainly women and sometimes men, or only women. Overall the sample was close to balanced on attraction to men and women. Forty-seven per cent of respondents reported current attraction only or mainly to men and 43 per cent only or mainly to women. Two per cent were equally attracted to either and eight per cent reported no attraction at all.

The results show that significant proportions experienced attraction 'outside' their stated orientation. This indicates that for many people, orientation is not defined only by attraction. Lesbians showed the most variance from their stated orientation, with 19 per cent reporting some level of attraction to men. Twelve per cent of gay men reported some sexual attraction to women.

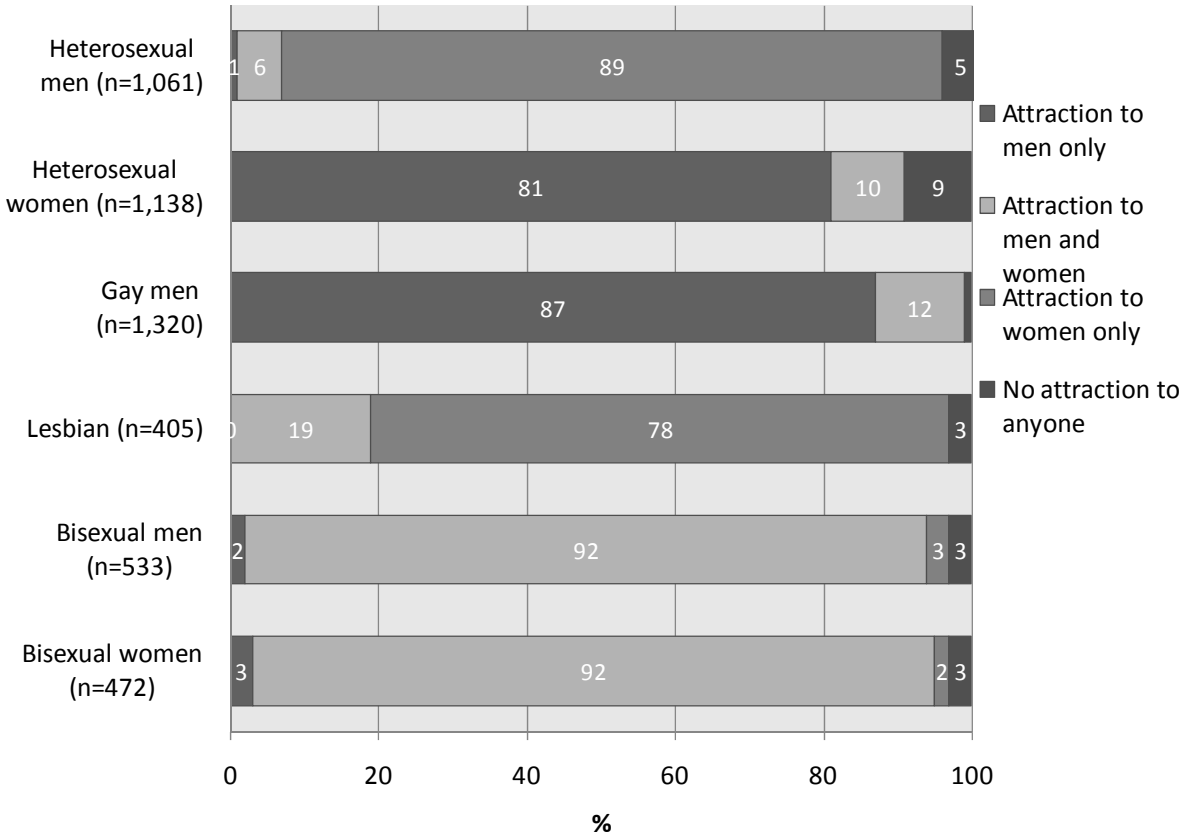
Heterosexual respondents also showed variance of this kind, as illustrated in Figure 4 below. One in ten heterosexual women reported current attraction to women, while six per cent of heterosexual men reported attraction to men. Heterosexual women were the group most likely to report having no attraction to anyone (nine per cent).

Small proportions of bisexual people reported current attraction to only one gender. Three per cent of bisexual men said they were currently attracted only to women, and two per cent only to men. Among bisexual women, three per cent were attracted only to men, and two per cent only to women.

Most bisexual people were not evenly balanced in their attraction to each gender. A third of bisexual women (33 per cent) and a quarter (26 per cent) of bisexual men said they were attracted equally often to men and women. The remainder were sexually attracted more to one or the other gender, and this was predominantly towards the opposite sex.

Forty-four per cent of bisexual men were currently attracted only or mainly to women, with only 27 per cent attracted only or mainly to men. Similarly, 46 per cent of bisexual women were attracted only or mainly to men, with 18 per cent attracted only or mainly to women.

Figure 4 Current sexual attraction



Base: all respondents

3.7 Sexual behaviour

In terms of sexual behaviour, respondents were again fairly balanced between genders. Forty-seven per cent reported current sexual experiences mainly or only with men, and 41 per cent mainly or only with women. Only one per cent reported an even balance between the two, and 11 per cent do not currently have sex with anyone.

The survey showed that some respondents' sexual behaviour also fell outside their stated orientation, although this was less the case than for sexual attraction. Three per cent of heterosexual men reported sexual experiences with men, and five per cent of gay men reported sexual experiences with women. Five per cent of lesbians reported having sex with men, while one per cent of heterosexual women stated that they have sex with women.

As with sexual attraction, bisexual people were more likely to report sexual behaviour with the opposite gender than the same. Forty-eight per cent of bisexual men reported having sexual experiences only or mainly with women, compared with only

27 per cent who reported sex only or mainly with men. Even more strikingly, 70 per cent of bisexual women reported that their current sexual experiences were only or mainly with men, compared with only 10 per cent who were currently having sex only or mainly with women.

The results indicate that bisexual people are far more likely to be in a relationship with someone of the opposite sex than with someone of the same sex. This was particularly the case for bisexual women in this survey. While this may be a matter of preference in some cases, it is also likely to be driven by practicality or availability (that is, there might more heterosexual partners available and therefore the chances of meeting a suitable person are greater).

3.8 Same-sex attraction and behaviour

In addition to the six per cent of the sample that identified themselves as LGB, a further eight per cent indicated that they are currently attracted to or have sex with the same sex, but still identify themselves as heterosexual. This proportion is composed of more women than men, and predominantly by those who are attracted to the same sex, rather than those with same-sex experiences. Adding this subgroup of heterosexual men and women to those who identify as LGB produces a total proportion of 14 per cent who either state their orientation as LGB or have some degree of same-sex attraction or experiences at the time of the study.

4 Sexual orientation over time

4.1 In summary

This chapter looks at changes in how people describe their sexual orientation, attraction and behaviour over time. It covers the extent to which people have changed their orientation compared with earlier in their lives, or think it likely that it will change in the future. It also looks at the variation between people's stated orientation, and the sexual attraction and behaviour they have experienced in the past or expect to experience in the future.

Five per cent overall had changed how they described their sexual orientation from the past to date. Bisexual people (50 per cent), those in the 'others' category (40 per cent) and lesbians (36 per cent) were the most fluid in this respect, while gay men (21 per cent) and heterosexual people (two per cent) were the most fixed. Where change had taken place, bisexual people and lesbians were likely to have previously been heterosexual. Gay men were likely to have arrived at their current orientation earlier than lesbians.

Respondents aged over 25 were asked about past sexual attraction. Many respondents reported sexual attraction in the past that was outside their current orientation. Fifty-six per cent of lesbians and 38 per cent of gay men reported this between the ages of 16 to 25. Ten per cent of heterosexual women and nine per cent of heterosexual men reported same-sex attraction during this period of their lives.

Respondents over 25 were asked about past sexual behaviour. Similarly, significant proportions reported sexual behaviour outside their stated orientation at younger ages. Lesbians were most likely to show this variation (56 per cent), along with 36 per cent of gay men. Only small proportions of heterosexual people reported this, however. Bisexual people were heavily biased towards the opposite gender in terms of their past behaviour, with 83 per cent of women and 59 per cent of men reporting sexual behaviour only or mainly with the opposite gender.

Twelve per cent overall thought their orientation could change in the future. This was most likely among those in 'other' categories (59 per cent) and bisexual people (46 per cent). Gay men (11 per cent) and heterosexual people (10 per cent) were the most fixed, with lesbians somewhere in the middle (18 per cent). Among those who thought change possible, heterosexual people and gay men/lesbians said they would be most likely to change to bisexual, while bisexual people said they would be most likely to change to heterosexual.

Expected future attraction shows very similar patterns to current attraction, indicating that most people do not expect their attraction to change. However, future behaviour suggests small-scale changes. Slightly more heterosexual women and gay men/lesbians expected to have sexual experiences 'outside' their orientation than the proportion currently doing so. Some bisexual women also expected a shift towards more sex with women than at present.

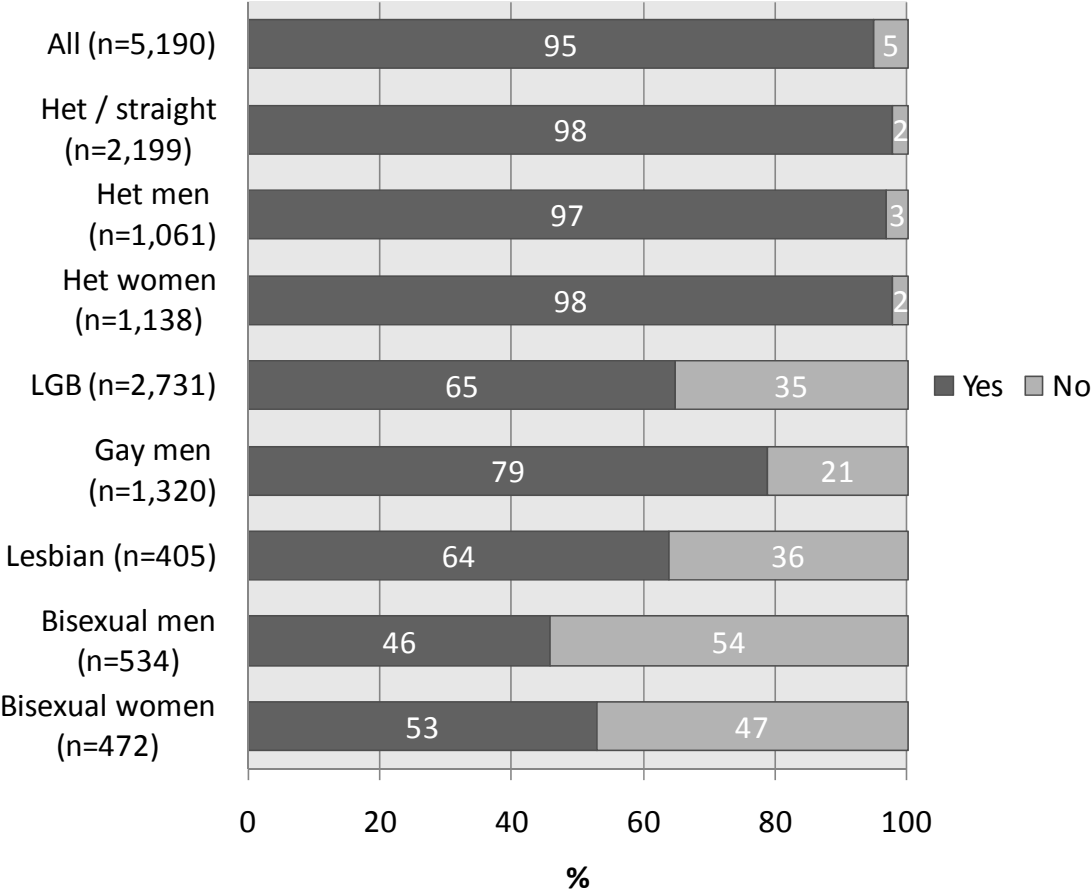
4.2 Describing past sexual orientation

After being asked to describe their current sexual orientation, respondents were asked if they had always considered themselves to be that way (see Figure 5). Overall, 95 per cent of respondents said they had always considered their orientation in the same way, while five per cent had not. However, among the LGB groups, the proportions whose orientation had changed were much larger than for heterosexual respondents. Fifty per cent of those identifying themselves as bisexual had changed what they considered their orientation to be, with little variation by gender. Over two in five (40 per cent) of those in the 'Other' category had changed their orientation, as had 36 per cent of lesbians. Gay men were comparatively more fixed, with only 21 per cent having changed their orientation. The figure for heterosexual people was two per cent.

The figures were lower among those aged over 25. Of those in this age group, 66 per cent of bisexual people saw themselves as bisexual between ages 16 and 25, while 36 per cent saw themselves as heterosexual during this period. Eighty-five per cent of gay men/lesbians aged over 25 saw themselves this way between ages 16 and 25, with 13 per cent identifying as heterosexual during this period of their lives, and eight per cent seeing themselves as bisexual.

In terms of past orientation, there was a significant variation between gay men and lesbians. Among those aged over 25, less than three quarters (73 per cent) of lesbians saw themselves as a lesbian between ages 16 and 25, with 27 per cent seeing themselves as heterosexual. By contrast, 88 per cent of gay men saw themselves as gay during this period, with only nine per cent seeing themselves as heterosexual. This suggests that gay men are more likely to fix on this orientation at an earlier age than lesbians. Lesbians and gay men were equally likely to have considered themselves bisexual between these ages (eight per cent).

Figure 5 Have you always considered yourself this way?



Base: all respondents

Heterosexual people who had changed their orientation were most likely to have seen themselves as bisexual previously, although the numbers are very small. One per cent of over 25s saw themselves as bisexual between ages 16 and 25, while less than one per cent saw themselves as gay or lesbian.

Those in the 'other' category who had changed orientation were most likely to have considered themselves heterosexual in the past. Twenty-three per cent of over 25s saw themselves as heterosexual between ages 16 and 25, while only eight per cent saw themselves as bisexual, and six per cent as gay or lesbian.

4.3 Past sexual attraction of those aged over 25

Respondents over the age of 25 were asked about sexual attraction between ages 16 and 25. The results show that it is common for sexual attraction to change over time, without this necessarily meaning a change to perceived orientation.

Lesbians were the most likely to have experienced attraction 'outside' their stated orientation in the past: 56 per cent of those aged over 25 reported some attraction to men when they were between ages 16 and 25. Similarly, 38 per cent of gay men were attracted to women between these ages.

Heterosexual people were more fixed than gay men/lesbians, but nevertheless showed some variation between stated orientation and past attraction. Ten per cent of heterosexual women over 25 reported attraction to women when aged between 16 and 25, while nine per cent of heterosexual men reported some attraction to men between these ages.

The majority of bisexual people reported some attraction to both genders when they were between ages 16 and 25, however a quarter (24 per cent) of bisexual men said that they were attracted only to women between these ages, and four per cent only to men. Twenty per cent of bisexual women were attracted only to men between ages 16 and 25, and two per cent only to women.

As with current attraction, bisexual respondents tended to be biased towards the opposite gender in terms of their past. Fifty-six per cent of bisexual men were only or mainly attracted to women when they were between ages 16 to 25, with only 21 per cent only or mainly attracted to men. Bisexual women showed a similar pattern: 55 per cent were mainly or only attracted to men between these ages, while only 11 per cent said the same for women.

4.4 Past sexual behaviour of those aged over 25

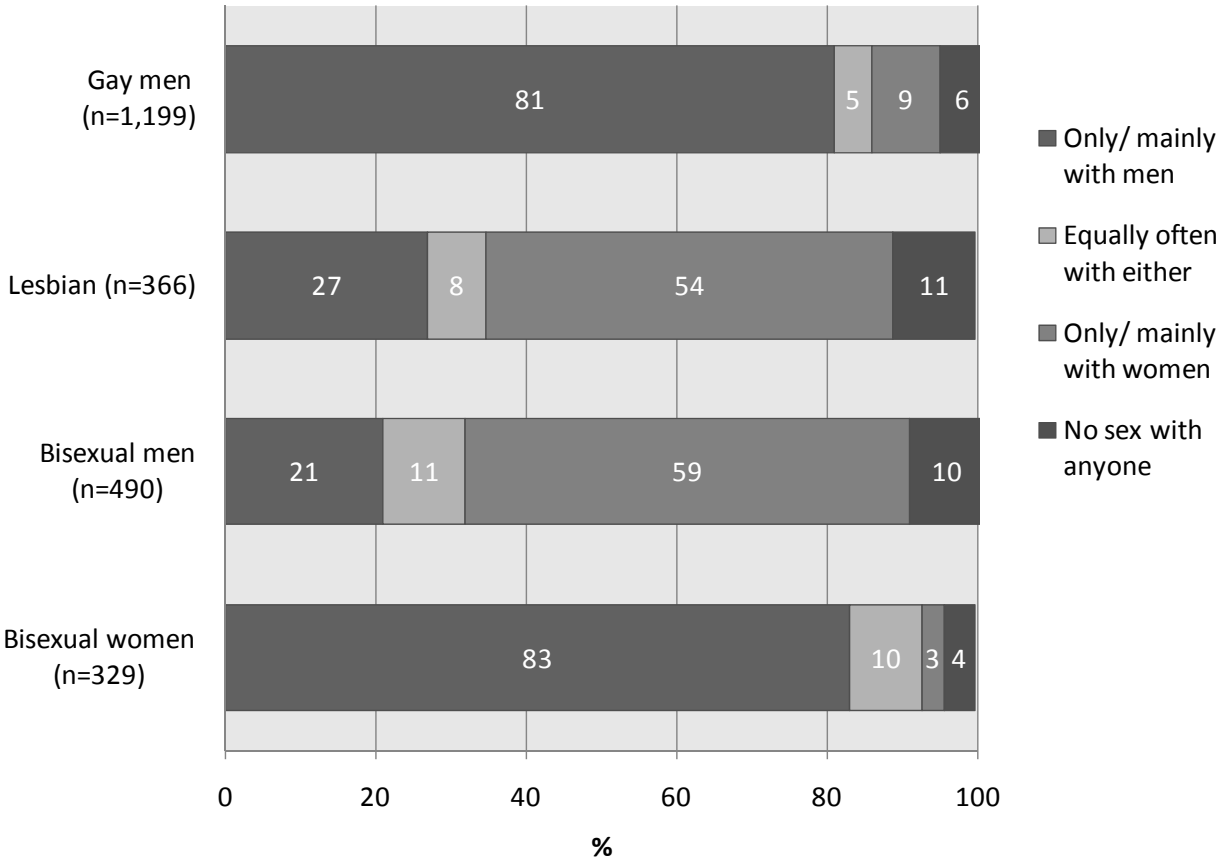
Respondents over the age of 25 were asked about sexual behaviour between ages 16 and 25. For respondents aged over 25, there was considerable variation between current orientation and behaviour in early adulthood, with lesbians the group most likely to show this variation. Fifty-six per cent of lesbians aged over 25 reported sexual experiences with men between ages 16 and 25. Gay men were more fixed, but nevertheless a third (36 per cent) reported sex with women between these ages.

Seventeen per cent of lesbian respondents had sex only with men when they were between ages 16 and 25. In contrast, only six per cent of gay men had sex only with women when they were aged 16 to 25. These groups may have considered themselves heterosexual during that period, but notably between the age of 25 and the present day, only a small number reported sex with the opposite gender. Only one per cent of gay men and two per cent of lesbians reported having sex only with women and men respectively since the age of 25.

Heterosexual people were less likely to vary in this way: only five per cent of heterosexual men reported sex with men between ages 16 and 25. A similar proportion (three per cent) of heterosexual women had sex with women when they were between these ages. Around half of bisexual people had sexual experiences with both genders between ages 16 and 25. A third of bisexual men reported sex with only women between these ages, and seven per cent only with men. Forty-four per cent of bisexual women said they had sex only with men between these ages, while one per cent had sex only with women.

As discussed earlier, bisexual people showed a bias towards the opposite gender in their current sexual behaviour. This was even more true of their past behaviour, with the majority of bisexual people reporting sex mainly with the opposite gender (see Figure 6). Eighty-three per cent of bisexual women reported sexual experiences only or mainly with men between ages 16 and 25 compared with only three per cent who had sex only or mainly with women. Fifty-nine per cent of bisexual men reported sexual experiences only or mainly with women between these ages compared with only 21 per cent who had sex only or mainly with men.

Figure 6 Sexual behaviour between ages 16 and 25



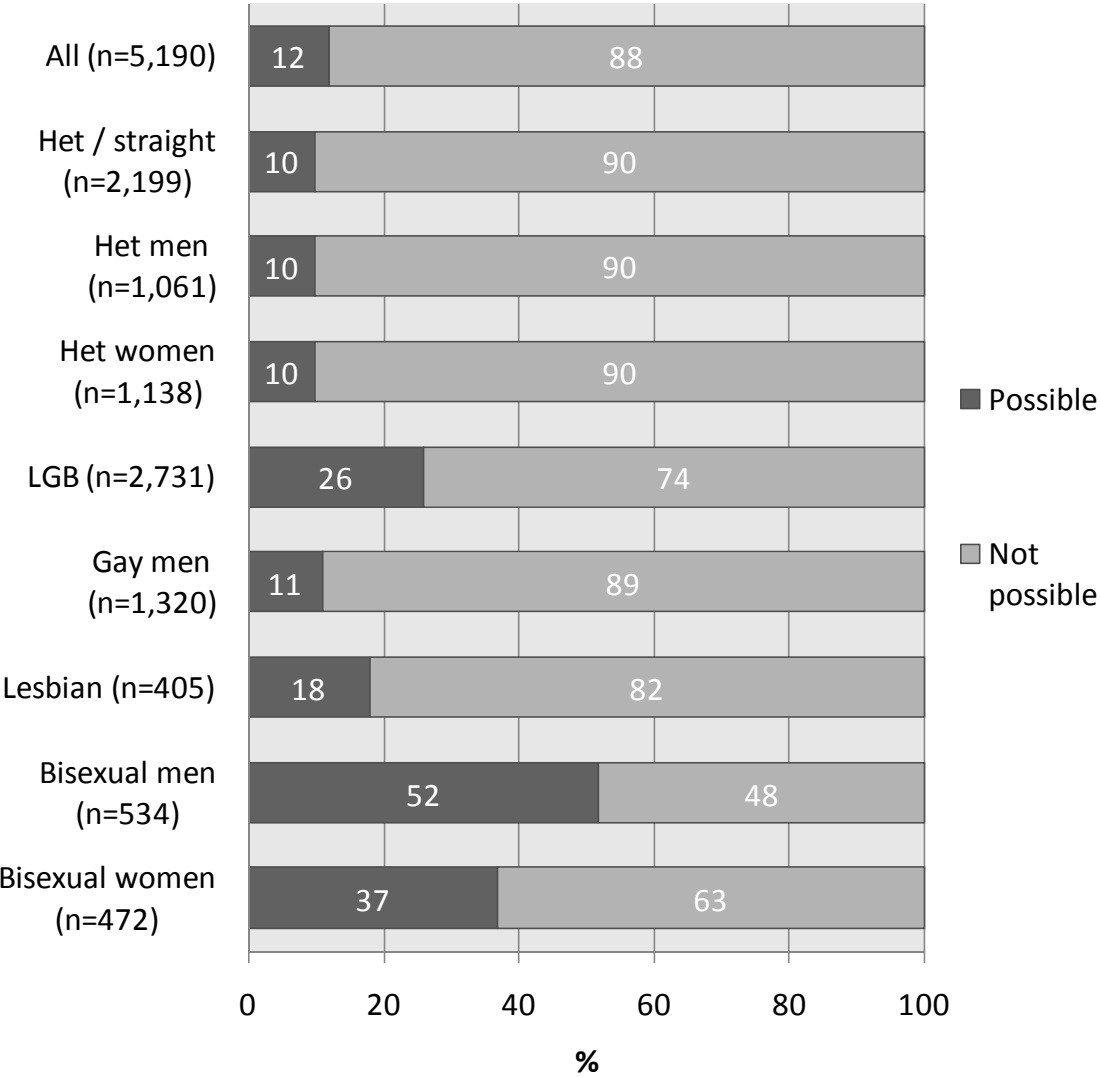
Base: those aged between 16 and 25

4.5 Possible future orientation

Twelve per cent of respondents overall thought it possible that they might describe their sexual orientation differently in the future (see Figure 7). Those in the ‘other’ category were most likely to hold this view, with more than half (59 per cent) thinking this possible. Forty-four per cent of bisexual people also thought they might change how they describe their sexual orientation. Among these, bisexual men were significantly more likely to think their orientation might change than were bisexual women (52 per cent compared with 37 per cent).

The majority of respondents described their orientation as fixed. This was particularly so for gay men and heterosexual people (with no significant variation by gender). Eleven per cent of gay men and ten per cent of heterosexual people thought they might change in the future. Lesbians were less fixed than gay men and heterosexual people, but much more so than bisexual people: 18 per cent thought it possible that their orientation could change.

Figure 7 Is it possible that you will change how you consider yourself to be in the future?



Base: all respondents

Among those who thought they might change in the future, both gay and lesbian respondents would be most likely to change to bisexual. Eight per cent of gay men and 11 per cent of lesbians thought it possible that they could consider themselves bisexual in the future. It was less likely that they would consider themselves heterosexual; only two per cent of gay men and three per cent of lesbians thought this possible.

Heterosexual people who thought their sexual orientation might change were also likely to switch to bisexual. This was the case for six per cent of heterosexual men and seven per cent of heterosexual women. Heterosexual people were very unlikely

to think they would change to being gay/lesbian, but there is a slight variation between men and women in this respect. One per cent of heterosexual women thought they could change to lesbian, while almost no heterosexual men thought they would consider themselves to be gay in the future.

Bisexual people, the group most likely to think it possible that they might change their orientation, were almost twice as likely overall to think they would change to heterosexual than to think they would be gay men/lesbians. Twenty-six per cent of bisexual women thought they might consider themselves to be heterosexual in the future, compared with only 11 per cent who thought they could change to being lesbian. Thirty-two per cent of bisexual men thought they might change to heterosexual, compared with only 15 per cent who thought they could change to being gay. This is in line with findings from elsewhere in the survey, which show that bisexual people tended to orientate towards the 'heterosexual' side of attraction and behaviour.

4.6 Possible future attraction

Future sexual attraction shows a similar pattern to current attraction in most cases. Overall the sample remains close to balanced between genders when thinking about future attraction: 47 per cent think they will be attracted only or mainly to men in the future and 42 per cent only or mainly to women, with two per cent attracted to both equally and nine per cent not attracted to anyone.

Lesbians were most likely to think they would have sexual attraction 'outside' their orientation in the future. Fifteen per cent thought they would have some attraction to men in the future. This compares with 19 per cent who reported some attraction to men currently. One in ten (11 per cent) gay men thought they would be sexually attracted to women in the future; a similar figure to the 12 per cent who currently do.

Heterosexual people also showed a similar pattern to their current attraction. Ten per cent of heterosexual women thought they could be attracted to women in the future, while nine per cent reported being attracted to women at present. Seven per cent of heterosexual men thought that they could be attracted to men in the future, compared with six per cent who said they were currently attracted to men.

A quarter (24 per cent) of bisexual men expected to be attracted only or mainly to men in the future while 44 per cent expected to be attracted only or mainly to women. Forty per cent of bisexual women expected to be attracted only or mainly to men,

while 18 per cent thought they would be attracted only or mainly to women. In both cases, these figures were the same as those for current attraction.

These figures suggest that, in the main, people expect their current patterns of sexual attraction to remain the same in the future.

4.7 Possible future behaviour

When considering sexual behaviour, there are greater differences between current and expected future behaviour than there are between current and expected future attraction. The results show some small-scale variations between current and expected future behaviour, indicating that some respondents envisaged a change in their sexual behaviour.

Five per cent of heterosexual women expected to have sex with women in the future, compared with one per cent who reported current sex with women. For heterosexual men, four per cent expected to have sex with men in the future, which is not significantly different from the proportion who said that they currently do.

Seven per cent of gay men expected to have sex with women in the future, compared with three per cent who did so currently. Similarly, six per cent of lesbians expected to have sex with men in the future, while only three per cent reported current sex with men.

Bisexual women also showed some variations. While 67 per cent reported that their current sexual experiences were only or mainly with men, only 58 per cent expected this to be the case in the future. Seventeen per cent expected to have sex equally often with each gender in the future, compared with six per cent who reported this current sexual behaviour. The proportion who expected to have sex only or mainly with women was not significantly different.

Bisexual men, by contrast, did not expect much change in the future compared with the present, with few significant differences between the figures.

5 Asking and answering questions on sexual orientation

5.1 In summary

This chapter covers attitudes to being asked questions about sexual orientation in surveys generally and in the Census specifically. It also looks at how the context in which a question on sexual orientation is asked (for example at home, by telephone) may affect the way people describe their orientation. Lastly it investigates how changing the wording in a sexual orientation question might affect the response given.

The vast majority (75 per cent) felt that asking questions about sexual orientation in social surveys was acceptable. Although older respondents were more likely to think that it was not acceptable, 70 per cent of over 60s had no objections. Groups that were more likely to find it unacceptable included ethnic minorities, with 33 per cent saying they felt this way. Gay men and lesbians stated high levels of support, with only ten per cent finding it unacceptable.

Twenty-two per cent overall actively opposed the introduction of a non-compulsory sexual orientation question in the 2011 Census. The rest either actively supported the measure or did not mind either way. Again, LGB respondents, and gay men in particular, were the strongest supporters. The highest levels of opposition were from the over 60s (32 per cent against the measure) and those with religious affiliations. Twenty-six per cent of non-Christians and 24 per cent of Christians opposed the idea, compared with 20 per cent of non-religious respondents.

The survey method may affect the way orientation is described. Bisexual people were the most likely to indicate they would vary their response in different survey situations. Twenty per cent would give a different response in the context of a private at-home interview with a researcher than they would in an online survey, as would seven per cent of gay men/lesbians. A third of bisexual people said they would give a different response on an employer's questionnaire. Gay men/lesbians were less likely to give a different response. Significant proportions of all groups, including heterosexuals, said they would not answer the question in this situation. Where a different response would be given, bisexual people and gay men/lesbians would be likely to say they were heterosexual.

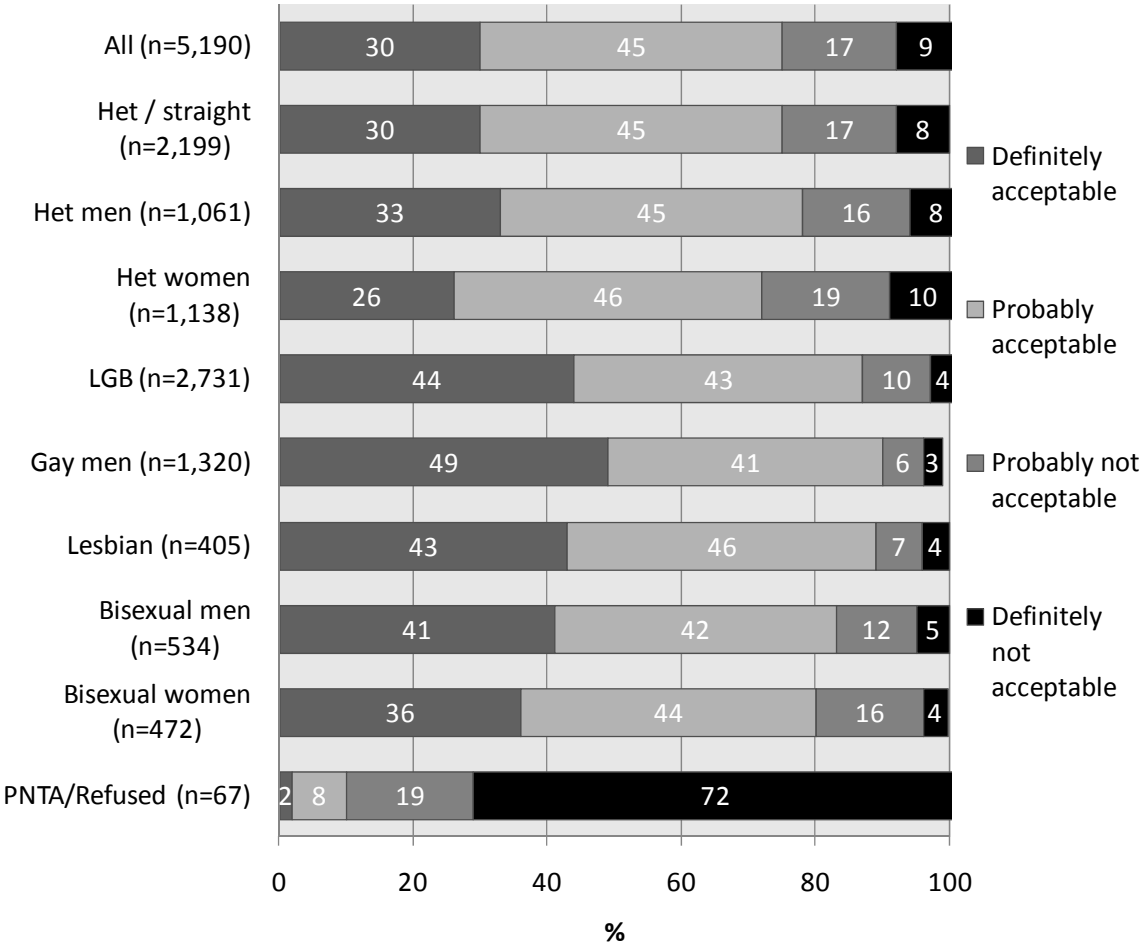
Changing the wording of the sexual orientation question from 'what do you consider yourself to be?' to 'best describes how you think of yourself' would make a difference

for six per cent of respondents. This was most likely among those in 'other' categories (26 per cent), bisexual men (13 per cent) and lesbians (10 per cent).

5.2 Asking about sexual orientation

Seventy-five per cent of respondents felt that it was acceptable to be asked a question about their sexual orientation in large national surveys. As illustrated in Figure 8, acceptability was highest amongst gay men (90 per cent) and lesbians (89 per cent).

Figure 8 Acceptability of being asked a question about sexual orientation in large national surveys (by sexual orientation)



Base: all respondents

Perhaps surprisingly, a sizeable minority of bisexual people (18 per cent evenly split between men and women) thought it was unacceptable to ask a sexual orientation question in social surveys. Those who had chosen not to state their sexual orientation were understandably the least likely to find such questions acceptable.

There is also some evidence that those considering themselves trans were less likely than other groups to support the question. Eighty-three per cent found it acceptable, leaving a significant minority (17 per cent) having disagreed.

Younger people were the most likely group to say they found it acceptable to ask a sexual orientation question. Seventy-nine per cent of 18 to 34 year olds said they found it acceptable, although with 70 per cent of over 60s also in support there was still a high level of agreement regardless of age. There was greater support from men than women with 78 per cent of men finding orientation questions acceptable compared with 71 per cent of women.

There was lower support demonstrated by those from an ethnic minority background and those with lower levels of educational attainment.

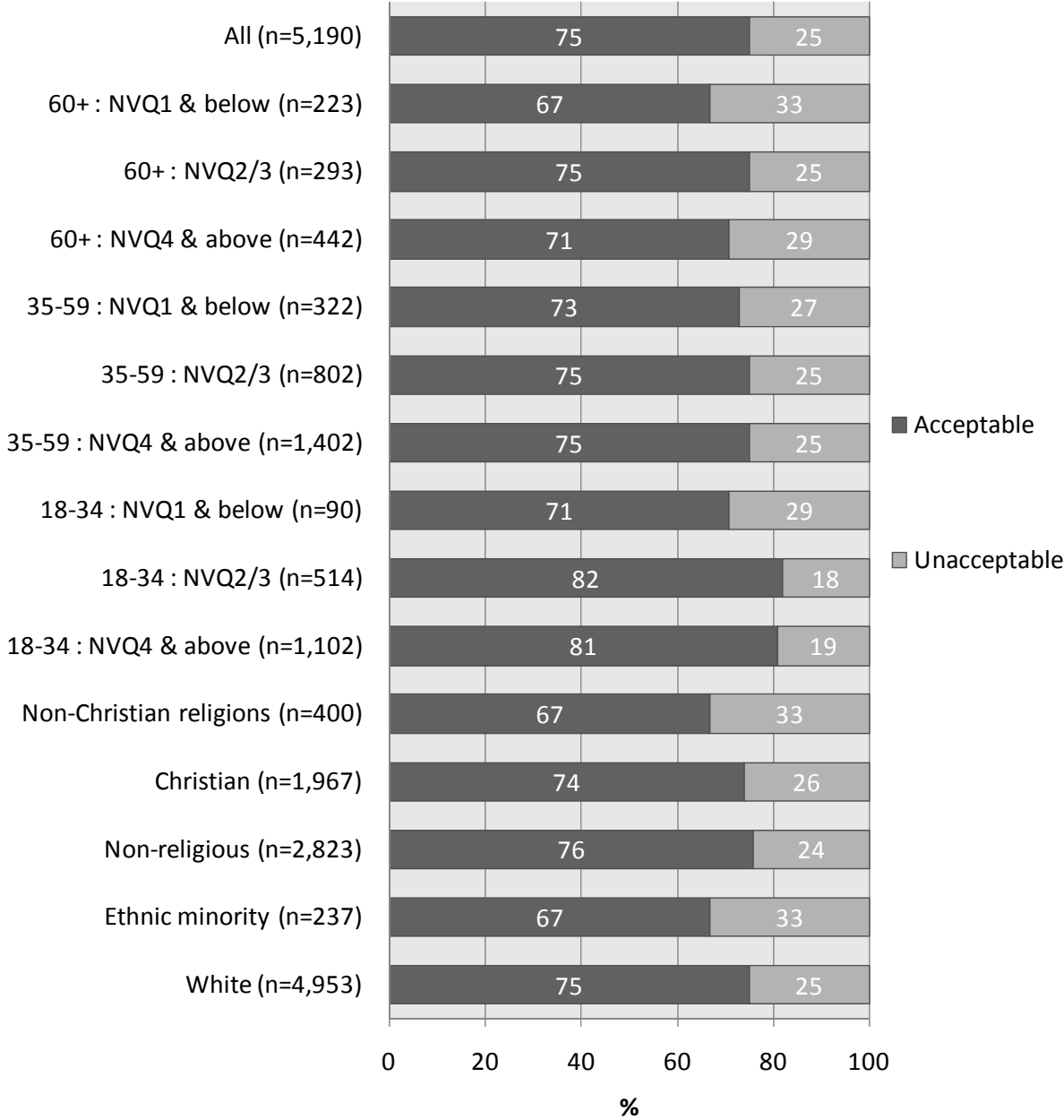
Figure 9 sets out some of these key differences. The most notable difference was on the basis of ethnicity, with 67 per cent of ethnic minority respondents finding the question acceptable compared with 75 per cent of white respondents.

Differences according to educational attainment were not so pronounced. Seventy-six per cent of those at NVQ4 and above found the questions acceptable, compared with 77 per cent at NVQ2/3 and a lower 71 per cent of those at NVQ1 and below.

A smaller minority of respondents also felt that it was not acceptable to be asked about other commonly collected demographic characteristics such as ethnicity. Whilst 86 per cent found it acceptable, 14 per cent did not. The highest levels of objection were from the over 60s (18 per cent) and ethnic minority respondents (24 per cent).

Some felt that it was not acceptable to collect sexual orientation or any other demographic information. This was the case for 12 per cent of heterosexuals, five per cent of gay men/lesbians and eight percent of bisexual respondents. Among the heterosexual sub-group, age was a key factor with 17 per cent of over 60s finding all demographic questions unacceptable, compared with 11 per cent of under 60s.

Figure 9 Acceptability of being asked a question about sexual orientation in large national surveys (by various demographics)

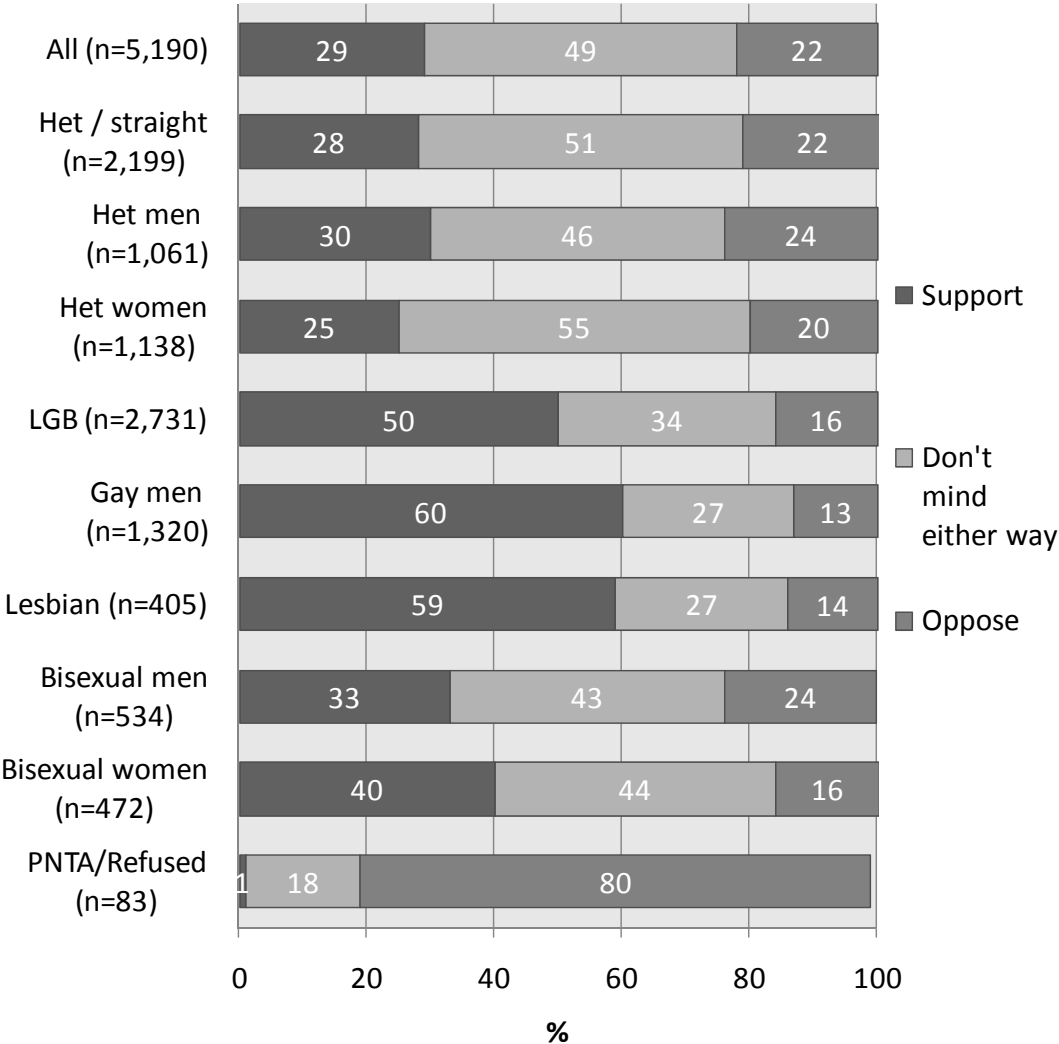


Base: all

5.3 Sexual orientation in the 2011 Census

Opposition to having a non-compulsory sexual orientation question in the 2011 Census was limited to around one in five. A third of heterosexual men and a quarter of women expressed support for the inclusion of a sexual orientation question in the Census and around half said they did not mind either way. As Figure 10 displays, gay men and lesbians in particular were in strong support, with only 13 per cent of gay men and 14 per cent of lesbians opposing the move.

Figure 10 Do you support, oppose or not mind either way the introduction of sexual orientation in the 2011 Census? (by sexual orientation)



Base: all respondents

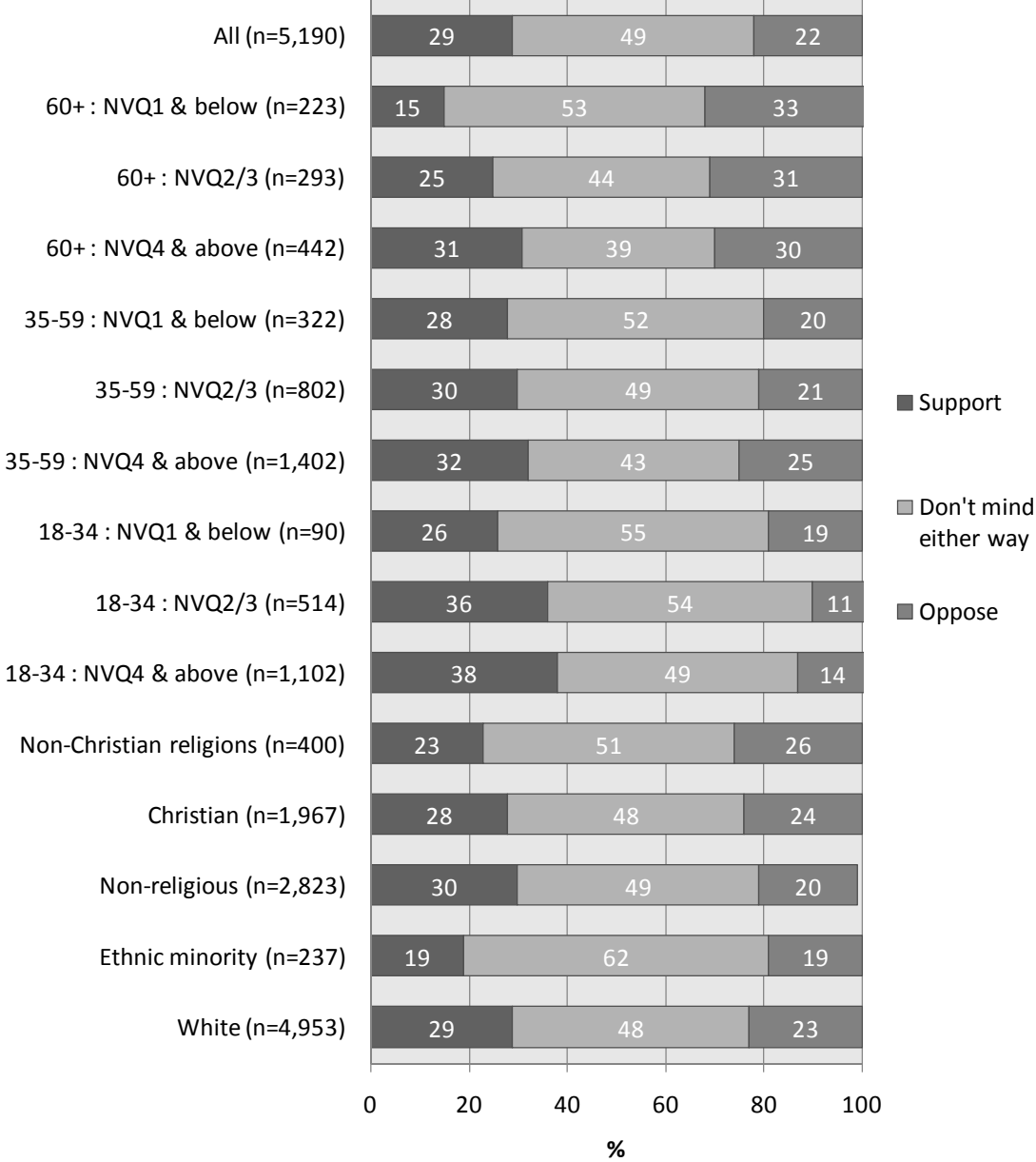
Bisexual people were less supportive (36 per cent) but only around a fifth overall (24 per cent of men and 16 per cent of women) were actively opposed. There was stronger support among trans respondents, with 40 per cent actively supporting, 40 per cent not minding either way, and just 20 per cent in opposition.

When those who found all demographic questions, including sexual orientation, unacceptable were excluded from the analysis, the proportion objecting to inclusion in the Census fell from 22 to 16 per cent in the case of heterosexual people and from 20 per cent to 16 per cent of bisexual people. Within each of those sub-groups, those over the age of 60 were significantly more likely to object (22 per cent of heterosexual people and 20 per cent of bisexual people respectively).

Figure 11 details a degree of consistency of response on the basis of religion and ethnicity, but shows significant variation by age. Thirty-three per cent of those aged 18 to 34 stated active support for the introduction of a sexual orientation question in the Census, while only 14 per cent opposed it. This contrasted with the 35 to 59 age group of whom 30 per cent supported it and 22 per cent were opposed and, most significantly, the over 60s for whom there was net opposition, with only 22 per cent in support and 32 per cent against.

There was a corresponding difference in support between higher and lower levels of educational attainment. Of those with a qualification at NVQ4 or above 34 per cent were in support and only 23 per cent opposed its introduction. The level of support was low enough among those at NVQ1 and below to become net opposition, with 23 per cent in favour and 24 per cent opposed. When age and educational attainment are combined it shows the variation within age bands, so that even in the otherwise supportive aged 18 to 34 group, those with NVQ1 and below were significantly less likely to be in favour (26 per cent compared with 38 per cent of 18 to 34s at NVQ4 and above).

Figure 11 Do you support, oppose or not mind either way the introduction of sexual orientation in the 2011 Census?



Base: all

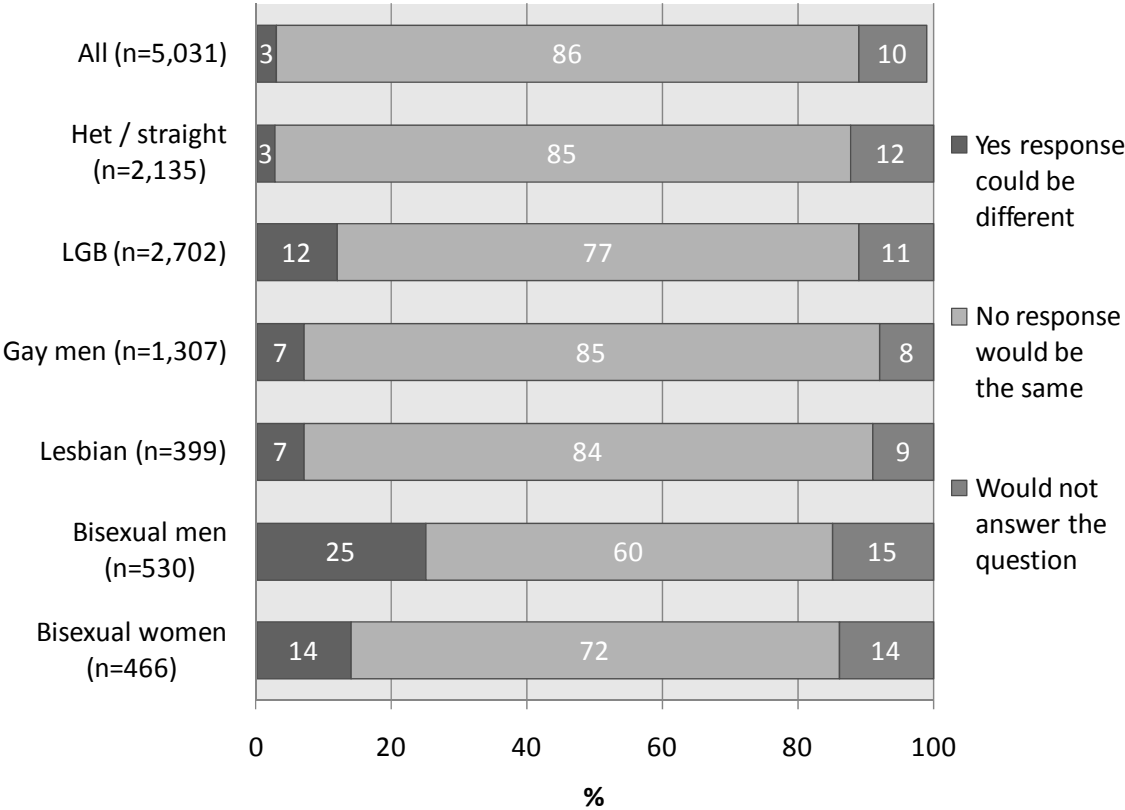
5.4 Possible effect of survey method

The survey found that the context in which the sexual orientation question is asked may have a significant impact on how respondents answer. Generally, private contexts such as an at-home, telephone or online interview that no one else could see or hear, are the most likely to get an accurate response. However, even in these situations, significant proportions of LGB respondents, and bisexual people in particular, would either give an inaccurate response or not answer the question. The

type of survey that met the most opposition was monitoring questionnaires when applying for jobs.

If speaking to an at-home interviewer privately – the context in which the Office for National Statistics social survey questions would be asked – three per cent of respondents overall said that they might give a different response to the one given in this survey, while a further nine per cent said they would not answer the question. Bisexual people were most likely to give a different response (20 per cent) or to not answer the question (15 per cent). By contrast, only seven per cent of gay men/lesbians said they might give a different response, while eight per cent would not answer the question.

Figure 12 Would your response to a sexual orientation question be different from the answer you gave earlier in the survey? (at-home interviewing in private)



Base: all, excluding not applicable answers

Bisexual men (25 per cent) were somewhat more likely than bisexual women (14 per cent) to say they might describe themselves differently in different contexts. There was little variation between gay men and lesbian respondents: both were equally likely to describe themselves differently (seven per cent).

Heterosexual respondents were unlikely to say they would give a different response. However, nine per cent said they would not answer the question. There was no variation here between heterosexual men and heterosexual women.

In the context of responding to a survey administered by an at-home interviewer while other people in the household could see or hear their answers, both bisexual people and gay men/lesbians were around twice as likely to say they would give an inaccurate answer. Forty-three per cent of bisexual people thought they would give a different response, and a further 23 per cent said they would not answer the question. This left only a third (34 per cent) who thought they would actually identify themselves as 'bisexual'. Fourteen per cent of gay men/lesbians thought they might give a different response, while 16 per cent thought they would not answer.

Asking about a telephone interview that could not be overheard by anyone produced fairly similar figures to the private in-home interview. Eighteen per cent of bisexual people and five per cent of gay men/lesbians said they would answer 'heterosexual' in this context, while 20 per cent and 16 per cent respectively said would not answer the question.

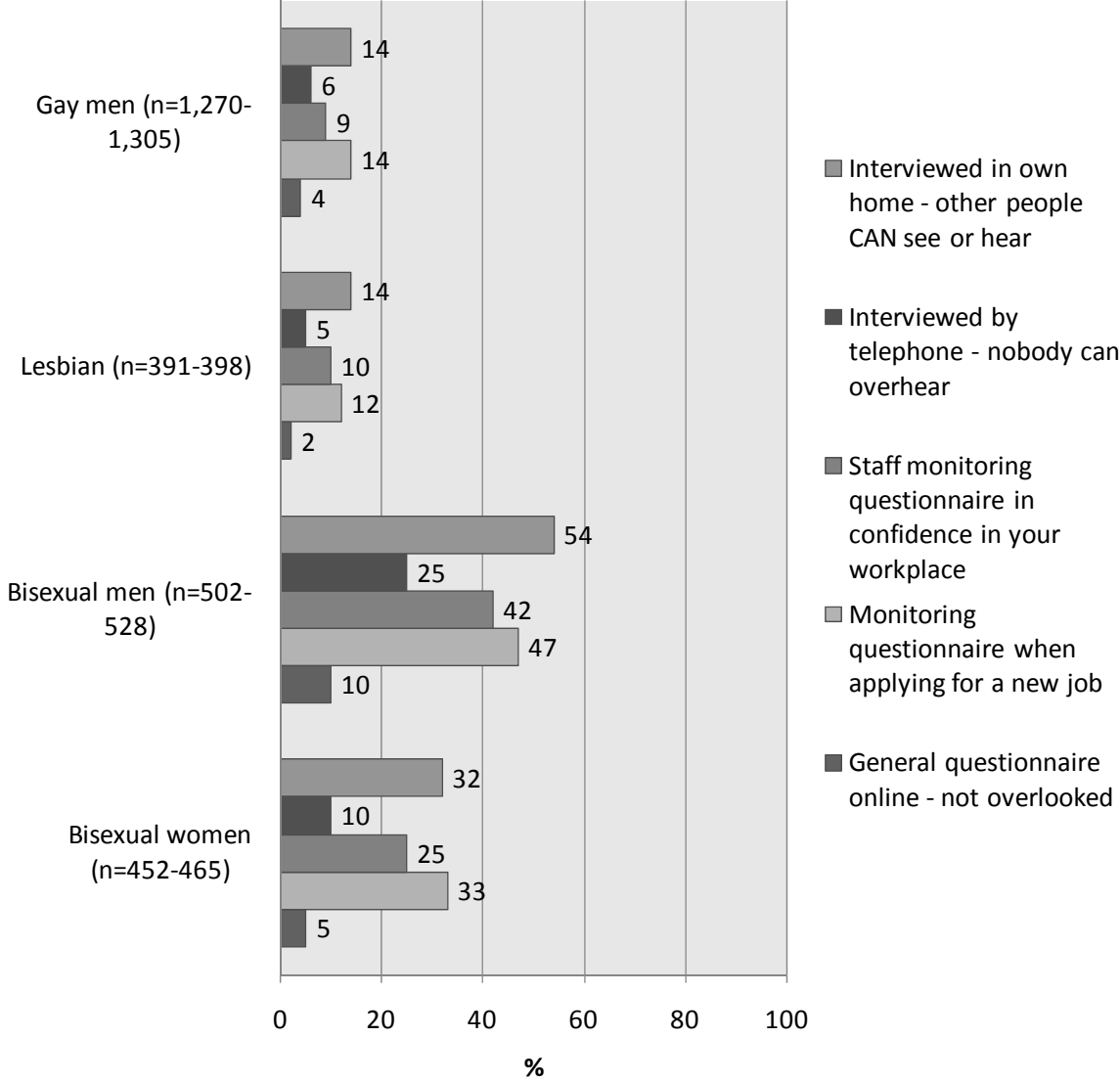
When thinking about a work setting, the tendency to give a different response was higher, particularly among bisexual people. A third of working bisexual people said they would give a different response on a staff monitoring questionnaire in the workplace, and a further 26 per cent said they would not answer the question. Among gay men and lesbians, nine per cent said they would give a different response and 13 per cent thought they would not answer the question.

If the context was a monitoring questionnaire when applying for a new job, 40 per cent of bisexual people said they would give a different response and 34 per cent would not answer, leaving only a quarter who would describe themselves as bisexual. Fourteen per cent of gay men/lesbians would give a different response and a quarter would not answer.

The two charts below show the ways in which different groups would respond in various situations. Bisexual people were the group most likely to give a different response in every situation, and this was driven predominantly by bisexual men more than by bisexual women. Bisexual people were also the group most likely to not answer the question.

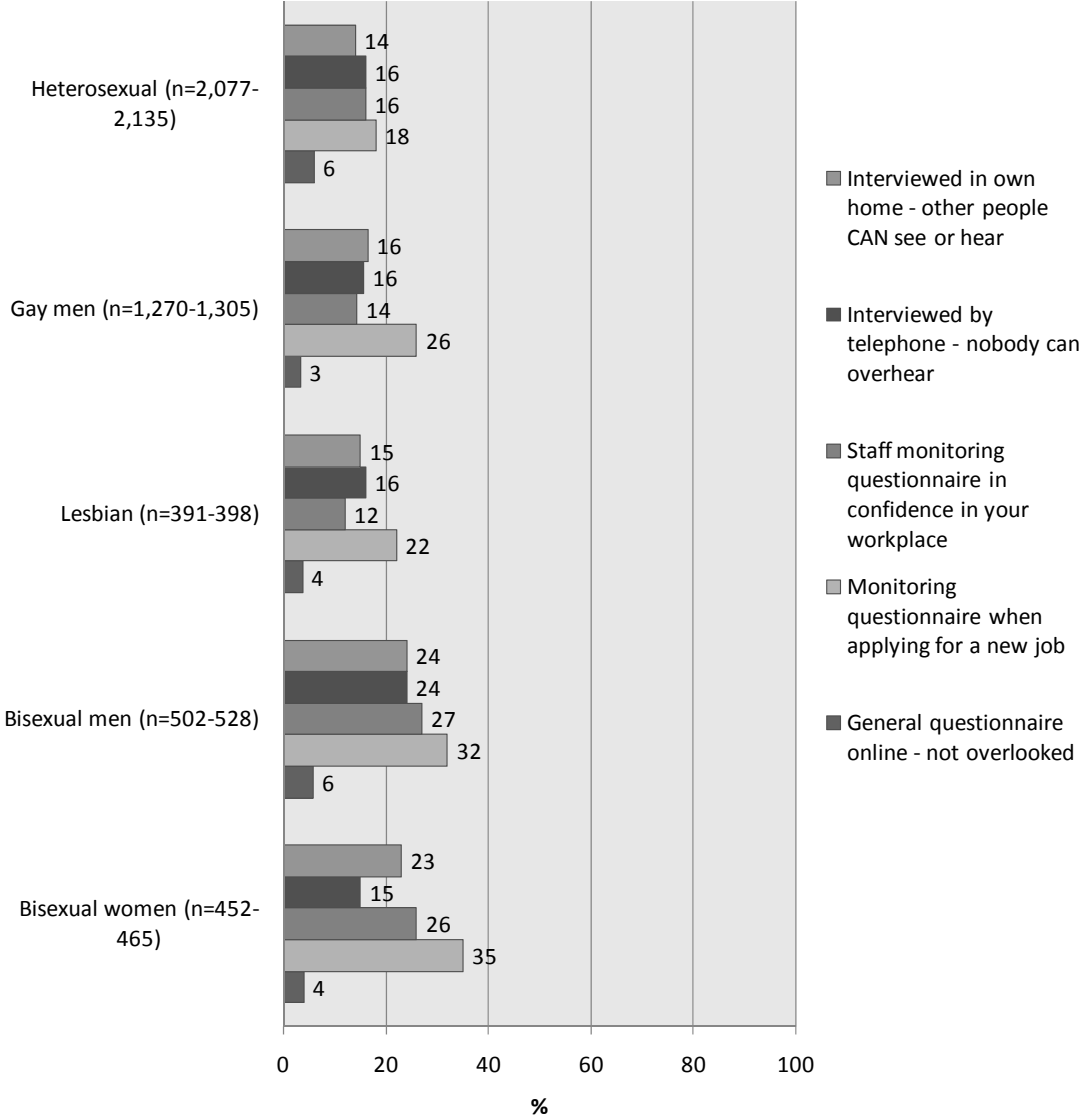
Only a small proportion of heterosexual men and women (between two and four percent) thought they would give a different answer in different situations. However, a sizeable minority of up to 16 per cent indicated that they would not answer the question in certain circumstances.

Figure 13 Those who would give a different response to a sexual orientation question (by method) than the answer they gave earlier in the survey



Base: LGB only, excluding not applicable answers

Figure 14 Those who would not answer a sexual orientation question (by method)



Base: Heterosexual/Straight and LGB only, excluding not applicable answers

Among those who would give a different response, bisexual people were most likely to answer ‘heterosexual’ across all contexts. Seventeen per cent of all bisexual people surveyed said they would describe themselves as heterosexual if speaking to an in-home interviewer in private. This figure increases to 39 per cent for situations in which other people could see or hear the interview.

In the workplace, nearly a third (31 per cent) of working bisexual people said they would describe themselves as heterosexual on a staff monitoring questionnaire, while a third said they would do the same on a monitoring questionnaire when applying for a new job.

As discussed earlier, gay men and lesbians were less likely than bisexual people to give a different response in the first place. However, where they do answer differently they would also be most likely to answer 'heterosexual'. Two per cent of all gay men and lesbians would describe themselves as heterosexual to an in-home interviewer in private, while nine per cent would do the same if the in-home interview was not private.

Five per cent of employed gay men/lesbians said they would describe themselves as heterosexual on a staff monitoring questionnaire, and seven per cent would do the same on a monitoring questionnaire when applying for a new job. Gay and lesbian respondents were also more likely than bisexual people to choose 'other' rather than stating a sexual orientation.

5.5 Possible effect of question wording

The sexual orientation question asked of respondents in this survey was:

We would like to begin by simply asking you whether you consider yourself to be:

Straight/Heterosexual

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other

Following this question, respondents were asked whether changing the question wording might affect the answer they gave. Respondents were reminded of their previous answer and presented with this alternative question wording: 'Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?'

The answer options remained the same. The change in wording resulted in only very minor anticipated changes in orientation across all groups. The largest effects were shown among those who had originally ticked 'other' but might change their response to heterosexual, gay man/lesbian or bisexual. Seven per cent of those that ticked 'other' in the first question said they would change their answer to heterosexual if asked the alternative, three per cent would change their answer to gay or lesbian and 11 per cent to bisexual. A small number of those who had originally selected bisexual (three per cent) thought they would change their answer to heterosexual.

6 Attitudes towards sexual orientation

6.1 In summary

This chapter covers general social attitudes with regards to sexual orientation. Included in this are attitudes of heterosexual respondents towards openly LGB people in public life, the workplace, and with close friends. It also looks at the views of all respondents on LGB people bringing up children. Finally, it considers how far respondents think that being LGB is compatible with religion and being religious, exploring the views of both the religious and the non-religious.

The majority of heterosexual men and, in particular, women (71 per cent) would be happy with openly LGB close friends. However, less than half of men and only 52 per cent of women would be happy to vote for an openly LGB candidate for prime minister. Younger people, those with higher levels of educational attainment, and non-religious people were more likely to be happy about openly LGB people in society than the average person.

Only a third of heterosexual men agreed that gay men could be equally good at bringing up children. Heterosexual women were more positive with 55 per cent in agreement.

LGB respondents were significantly less likely to consider themselves religious and there were doubts over whether religion is compatible with being openly LGB. Although 61 per cent of religious gay men thought that it was compatible, only 40 per cent felt that they could be open about their sexual orientation and still be accepted by their religious community. The perception of those who were not religious was more negative; only 39 per cent of non-religious gay men believed that being religious and openly LGB was compatible.

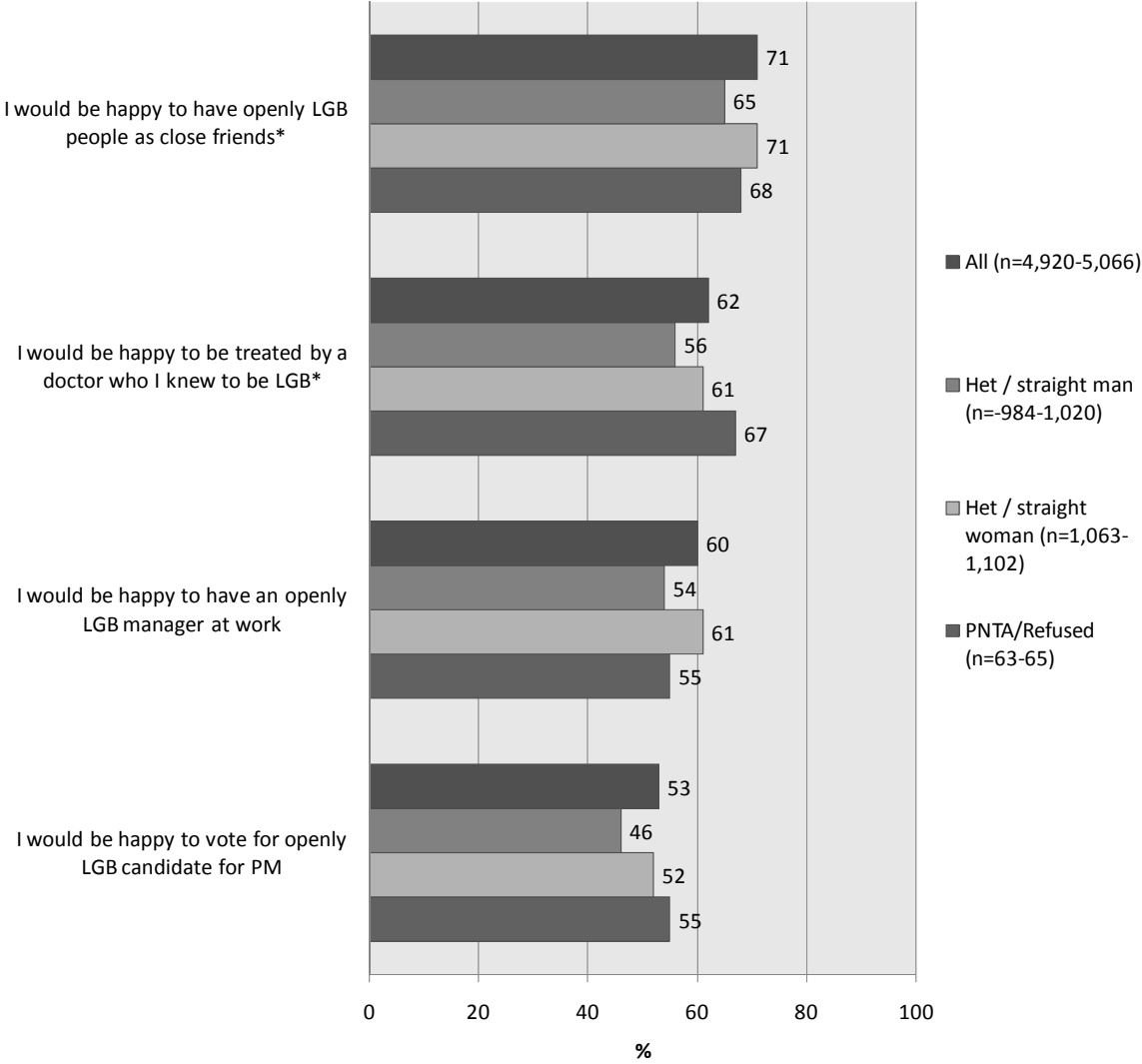
6.2 General attitudes towards LGB people

Nearly three-quarters (71 per cent) of those surveyed agreed that they would be happy to have openly LGB people as close friends. Heterosexual women were significantly more likely to agree than men, but with two-thirds of men stating that they would, the majority of heterosexual men were also in agreement.

As displayed in Figure 15, levels of agreement fell steadily as people considered whether they would be happy with an openly LGB person in various roles. Less than two-thirds would be happy to have an openly LGB doctor and slightly fewer felt likewise about having an openly LGB manager at work. Their likelihood to vote for an

openly LGB prime minister was lower still with just over (53 per cent) saying they would be happy to do this. Heterosexual men were consistently less happy than heterosexual women for openly LGB people to be in these roles.

Figure 15 Strongly agree and tend to agree with statements about openly LGB people (by sexual orientation)



Base: all heterosexual/straight and PNTA respondents, excluding don't know answers.* indicates that scale was reversed.

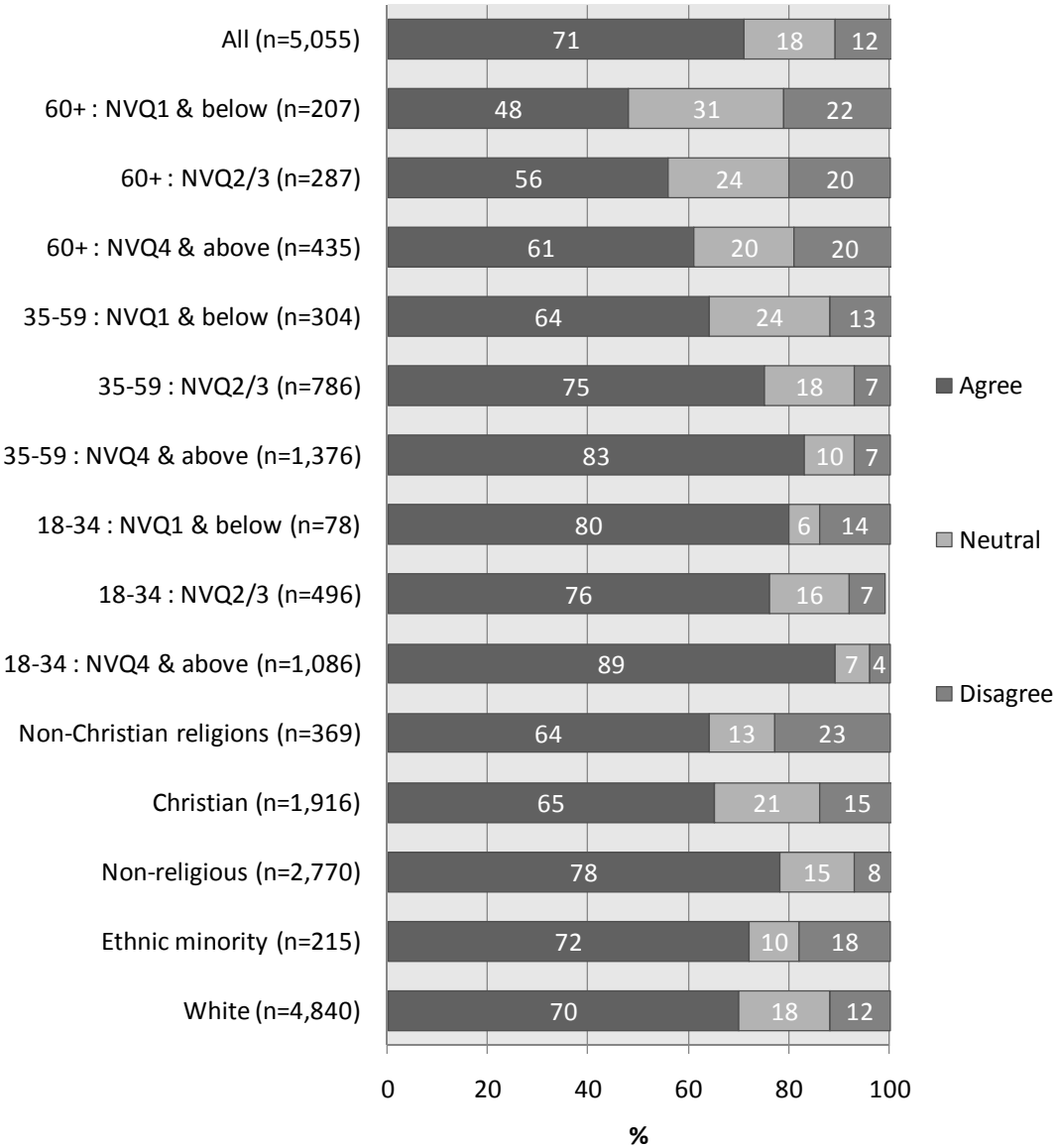
Gay men and lesbians were overwhelmingly positive about openly LGB people having the roles listed in the four scenarios in Figure 16, but there was some indication that bisexual men were less likely to be so.

In the specific case of having openly LGB people as close friends, attitudes were affected by religious and ethnic background, age and educational attainment.

Seventy-eight per cent of non-religious respondents agreed that they would be happy with this, compared with around two-thirds of those identifying as religious.

Only a small minority of LGB respondents (five per cent) said they would not be happy with an openly LGB manager at work. An even smaller number said they would be unhappy to be treated by an LGB doctor or would not be happy to vote for an openly LGB candidate for prime minister. Only two per cent of gay men and lesbians would not want openly LGB people as close friends.

Figure 16 Happy to have openly LGB people as close friends (by education, age, religion and ethnicity)



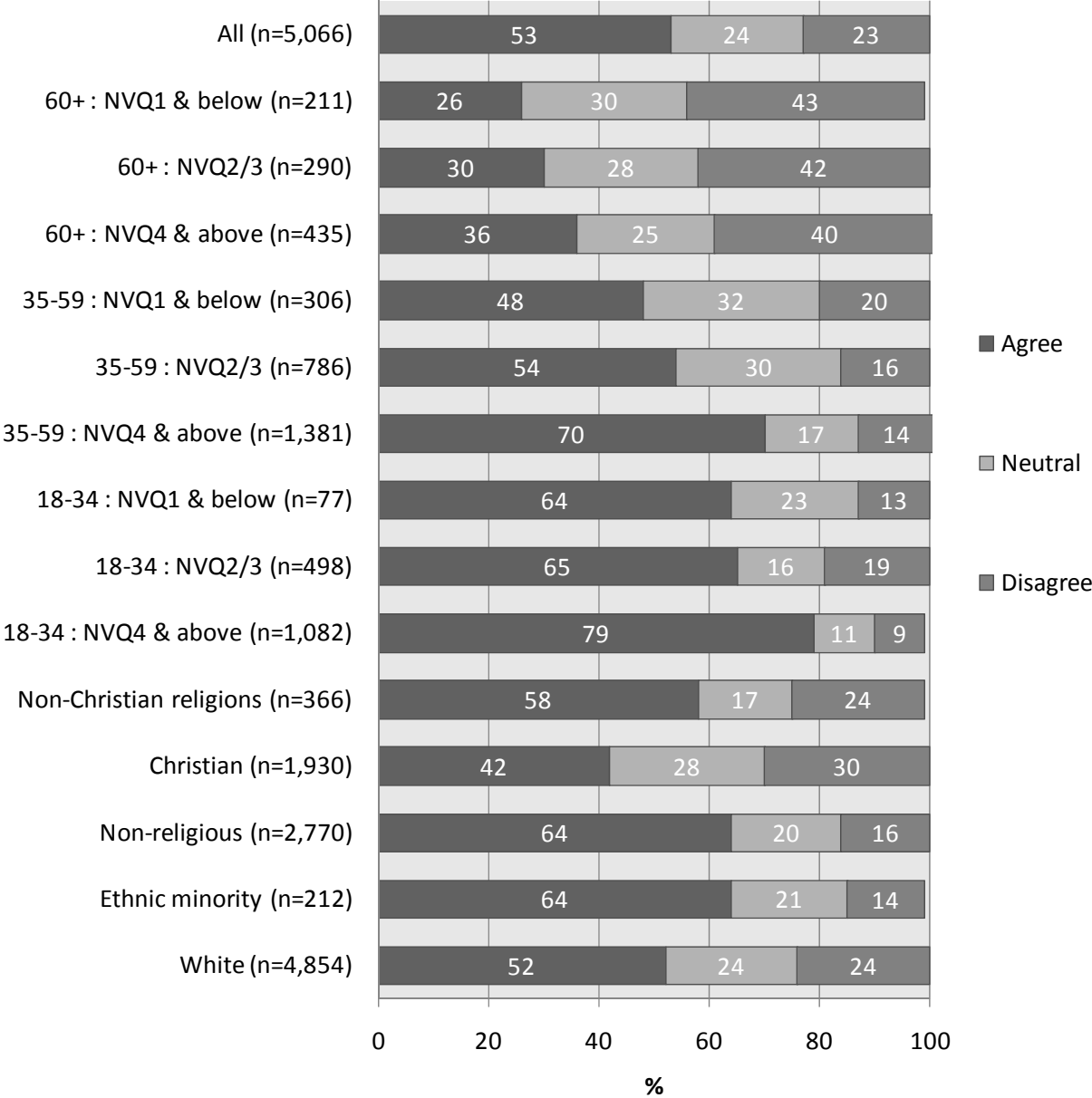
Base: all, excluding not applicable

Figure 16 shows clear differences by age and educational attainment. Eighty-nine per cent of 18–34 year olds whose highest educational qualification was at NVQ4 or higher agreed that they would be happy to have LGB people as close friends, compared with 48 per cent of over 60s whose highest qualification was at NVQ1 or below. Age appears to be a stronger indicator here: the vast majority of younger people with lower levels of education (80 per cent) were still likely to have agreed.

Figure 17 shows the extent to which respondents would be happy to vote for an openly LGB candidate for prime minister by education, age, religion and ethnicity. Overall, there were lower levels of agreement with this statement compared with consideration of openly LGB people as close friends. Again, those in the youngest age category and with highest levels of qualifications (18 to 34, NVQ4 and above) were the most likely to agree with this statement (79 per cent), with the oldest and least qualified respondents being the least likely to agree (26 per cent). This was supported by similar demographic measures such as socio-economic classification so that 56 per cent of those in the ABC1 group agreed, compared with 48 per cent of those in the C2DE group.

On this issue there were few differences on the basis of ethnicity but a sharp divide between non-religious and Christian respondents in particular. Just 42 per cent of Christian respondents stated that they would be happy to vote for such a candidate, compared with two-thirds (64 per cent) of those with no religious affiliations.

Figure 17 I would be happy to vote for an openly LGB candidate for prime minister (by education, age, religion and ethnicity)

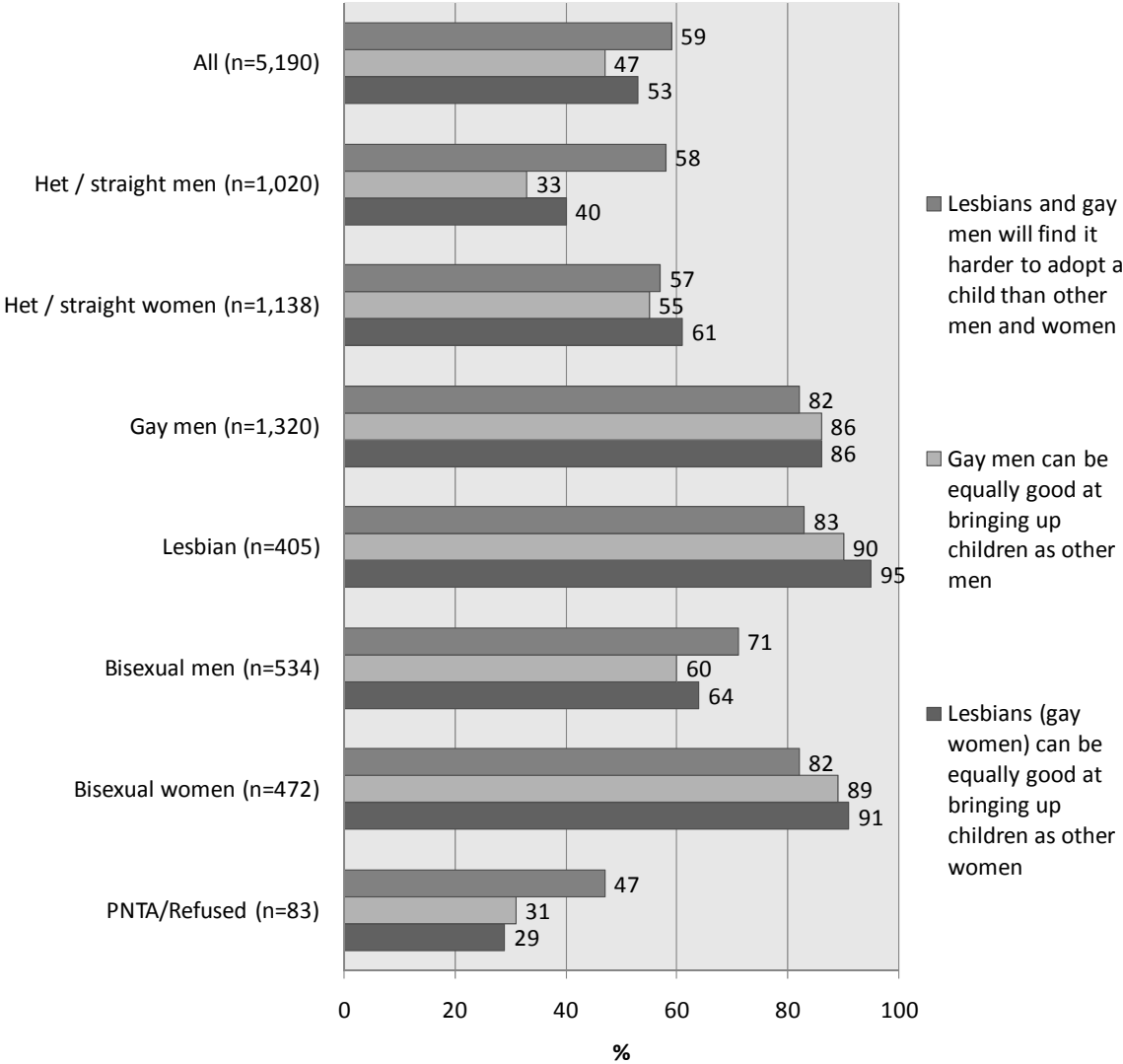


Base: all, excluding not applicable

6.3 Attitudes towards LGB parents and bringing up children

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with statements about LGB people bringing up children. The vast majority of gay men, lesbians and bisexual women agreed that gay men and lesbians can be equally as good as heterosexual parents at bringing up children. As Figure 18 illustrates, bisexual men were less likely to agree, as were heterosexual women. Heterosexual men were even less likely to agree with these statements.

Figure 18 Agreement with statements on LGB parents and children (by sexual orientation – strongly agree and tend to agree)



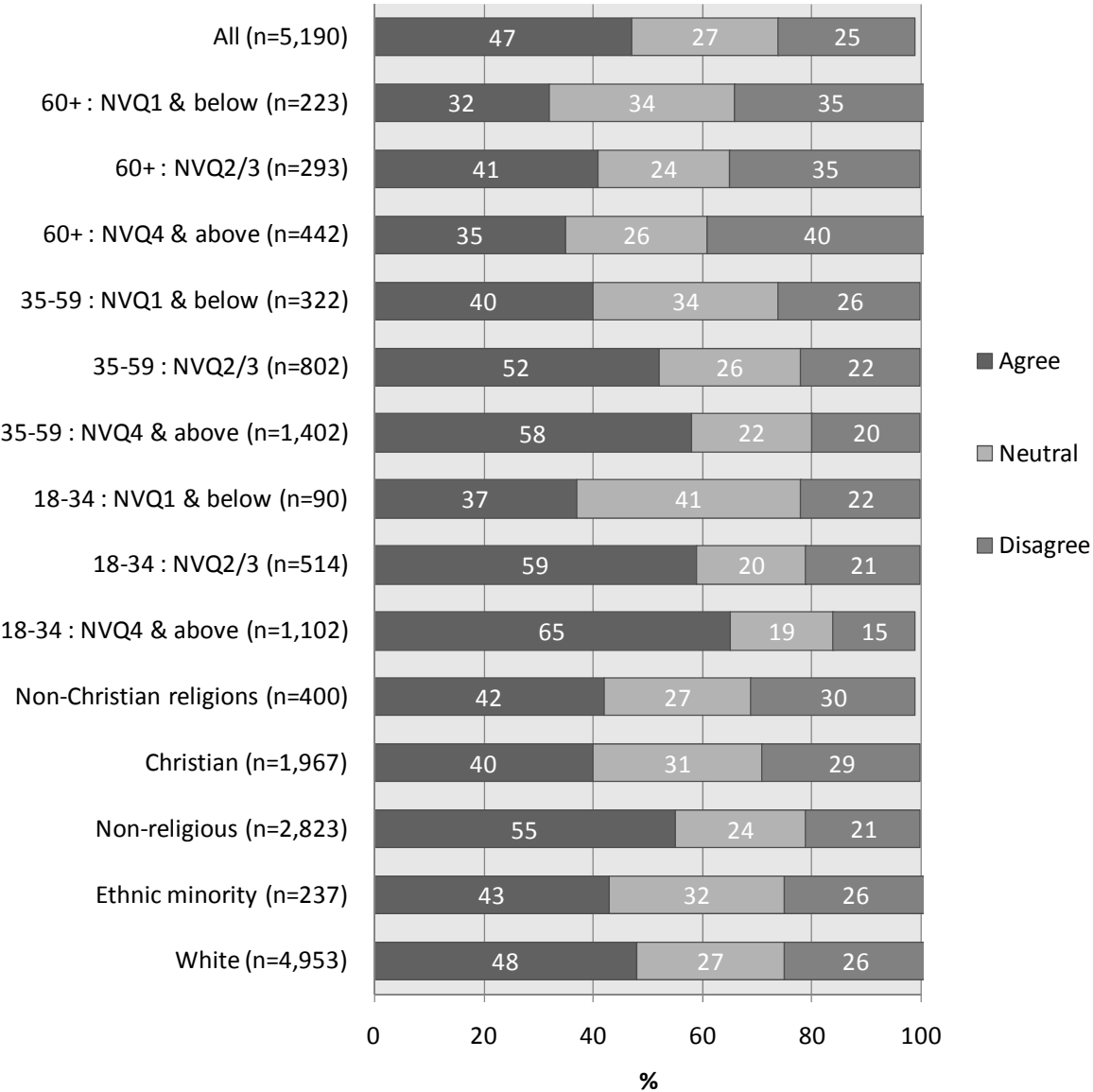
Base: all respondents, excluding 'don't know' answers

Only a third of heterosexual men agreed that gay men could be equally as good at bringing up children as other men. Heterosexual women tended to be more positive with 55 per cent agreeing and 61 per cent feeling likewise about lesbians bringing up children.

Levels of agreement were generally low among those people who preferred not to state their sexual orientation. Only around a third of this group agreed that gay men and lesbians could be equally as good as others at bringing up children. This was consistent with the attitudes expressed by this group on similar questions and was linked to their older age profile in particular.

In Figure 19 there are some significant differences of opinion on the basis of age, ethnicity and religion. While over half of white respondents agreed that gay men could be equally as good as other men at bringing up children, 43 per cent of ethnic minorities shared that view. Fifty-five per cent of non-religious people agreed, compared with just 40 per cent of Christian respondents and 42 per cent of those with another religious affiliation.

Figure 19 Gay men can be equally good at bringing up children as other men (by education, age, religion and ethnicity)



Base: all respondents, excluding 'don't know' answers

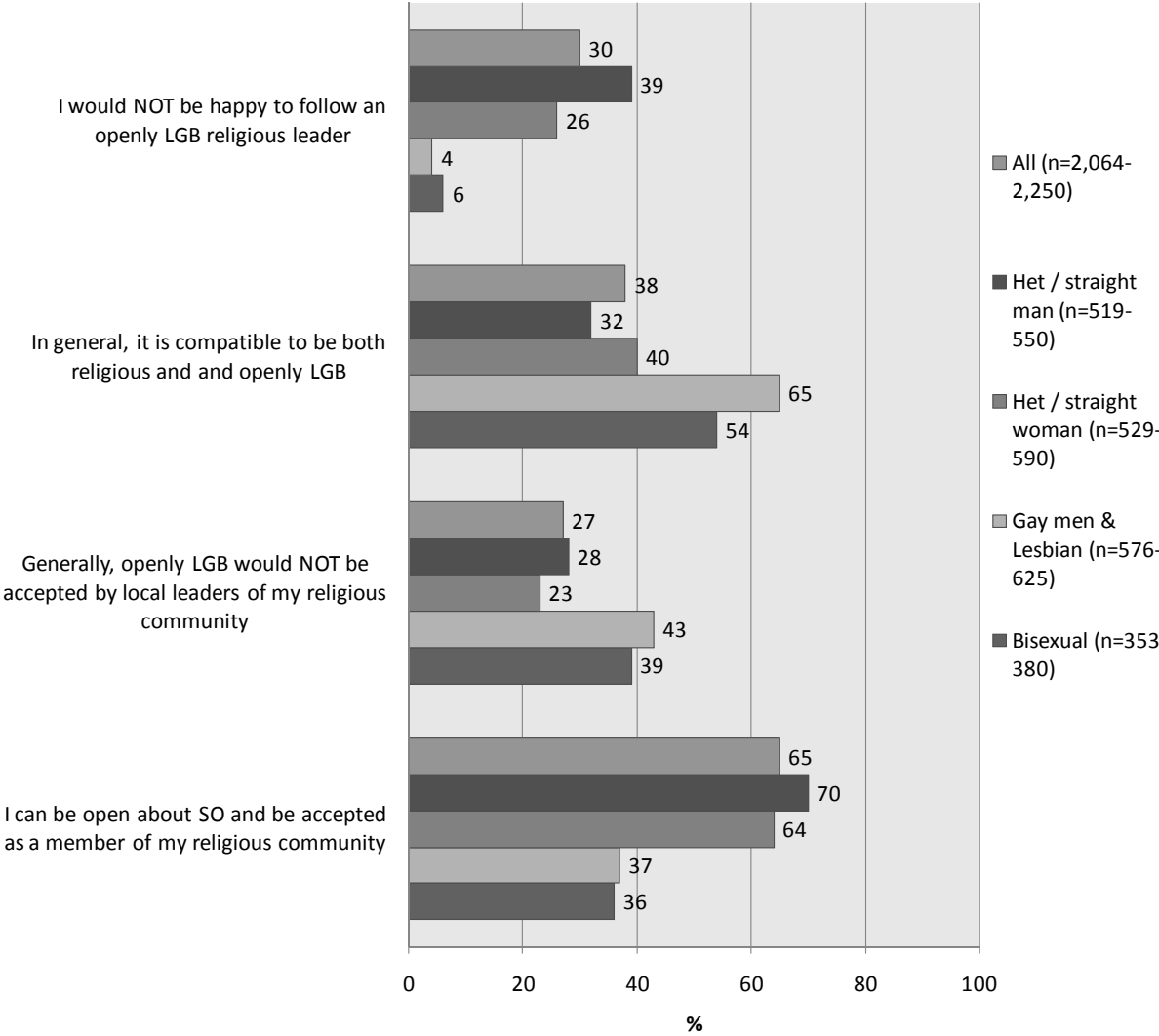
Younger people were also more likely to agree and again, there is a connection with educational attainment. Two-thirds of 18 to 34s who had attained a qualification at

NVQ4 or above agreed, a figure that declines steadily as age rises and educational attainment becomes lower.

6.4 Attitudes towards LGB people and religion

Gay men, lesbians and bisexual people were significantly less likely to be religious than heterosexual men and women in the survey. Only 38 per cent of all religious people believed that it was compatible to be LGB and religious, with heterosexual men being the least likely to think so (Figure 20). Religious gay men and lesbians were more optimistic, with around two-thirds agreeing that it is compatible. Around half of bisexual men and women agreed.

Figure 20 Agreement with attitudinal statements towards LGB people and religion (by sexual orientation)



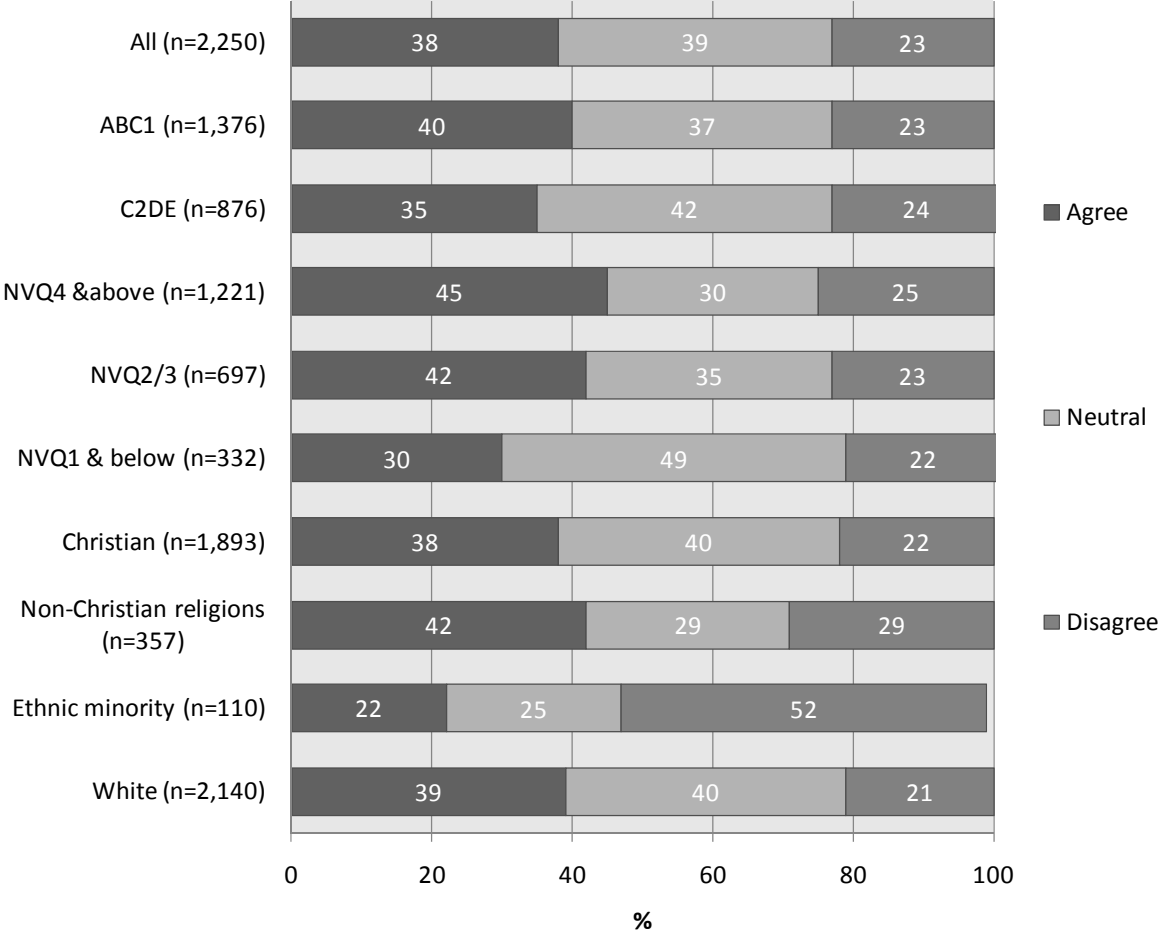
Base: those identifying as religious only, excludes 'not applicable'

Religious heterosexual men were significantly more likely than religious heterosexual women to state they would not be happy to follow an openly LGB religious leader. Twenty-eight per cent felt that openly LGB people would not be accepted by their religious leaders. A higher proportion of religious LGB people agreed that openly LGB people would not be accepted by their leaders (43 per cent of gay men and 39 per cent of lesbians), and only around a third thought they could be open about their sexual orientation and be accepted by religious leaders in their community.

Figure 21 displays a significant difference between religious white and ethnic minority respondents on whether religion and being LGB is compatible. Only 22 per cent of ethnic minority religious respondents agreed that it was, compared with 39 per cent of white religious men and women. Views on compatibility also varied by educational attainment and socio-economic classification. Forty per cent of those in the ABC1 group thought that it was compatible to be religious and openly LGB, compared with 35 per cent of those in the C2DE group, and 45 per cent of those educated to NVQ4, compared with 30 per cent of those educated to NVQ1 or below.

On the issue of compatibility between being LGB and religious, in general non-religious people did not differ significantly in their views to those with religious beliefs. There were, however, large differences in the viewpoints of non-religious LGB respondents compared with religious LGB respondents.

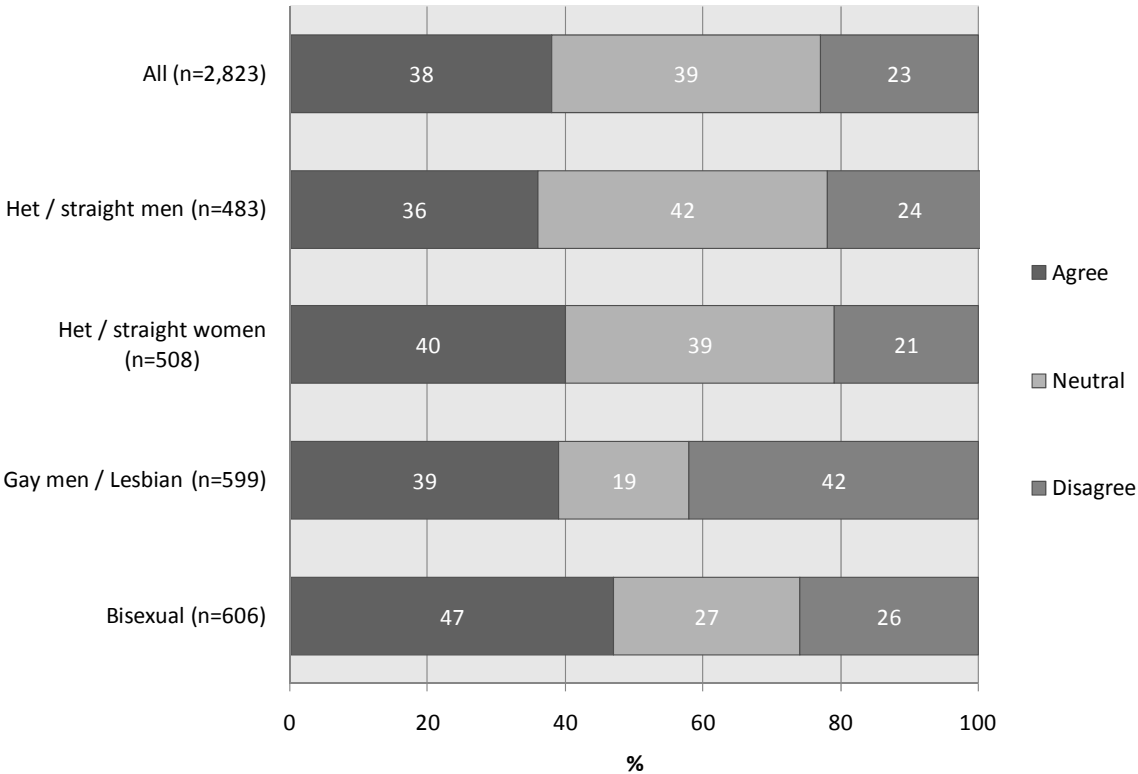
Figure 21 How far do you agree or disagree that, in general it is compatible to be both religious and openly LGB? (by educational level, socio-economic classification, religion and ethnicity)



Base: those identifying as religious only, excludes 'not applicable'

Figure 22 shows that only 39 per cent of non-religious gay men and lesbians agreed that being openly LGB and religious were compatible, compared with 61 per of those who were religious. There was a smaller difference amongst bisexual people; 52 per cent of those who were religious agreed that it was compatible, compared with 47 per cent of those who were not religious.

Figure 22 How far do you agree or disagree that in general it is compatible to be both religious and openly LGB? (non-religious people only)



Base: all respondents identifying as non-religious.

Non-religious people with higher levels of educational attainment were significantly more likely to agree that religion and being openly LGB could be compatible. Forty-seven per cent of people with a higher qualification at NVQ4 or above agreed compared with 38 per cent of those with a qualification at NVQ2/3 and just 29 per cent of those with a qualification at NVQ1 and below. Non-religious women were more positive about compatibility: 40 per cent agreed that being openly LGB and religious were compatible, compared with 35 per cent of non-religious men.

7 Sexual orientation and segregation

7.1 In summary

This chapter looks at the extent to which segregation has been experienced by LGB respondents in a variety of contexts. Specifically, it considers types of employment, sports and geographical areas that LGB people would feel excluded from or choose to avoid as a result of their orientation.

The results show evidence of perceived and experiential segregation between LGB people and wider society. Thirty-nine per cent of gay men and a third of lesbians felt that there were some jobs they would not consider because of their sexual orientation, although encouragingly younger people were less likely to say this. The most commonly cited jobs and careers that respondents would avoid were: the police service and armed forces, teaching and the manual trades.

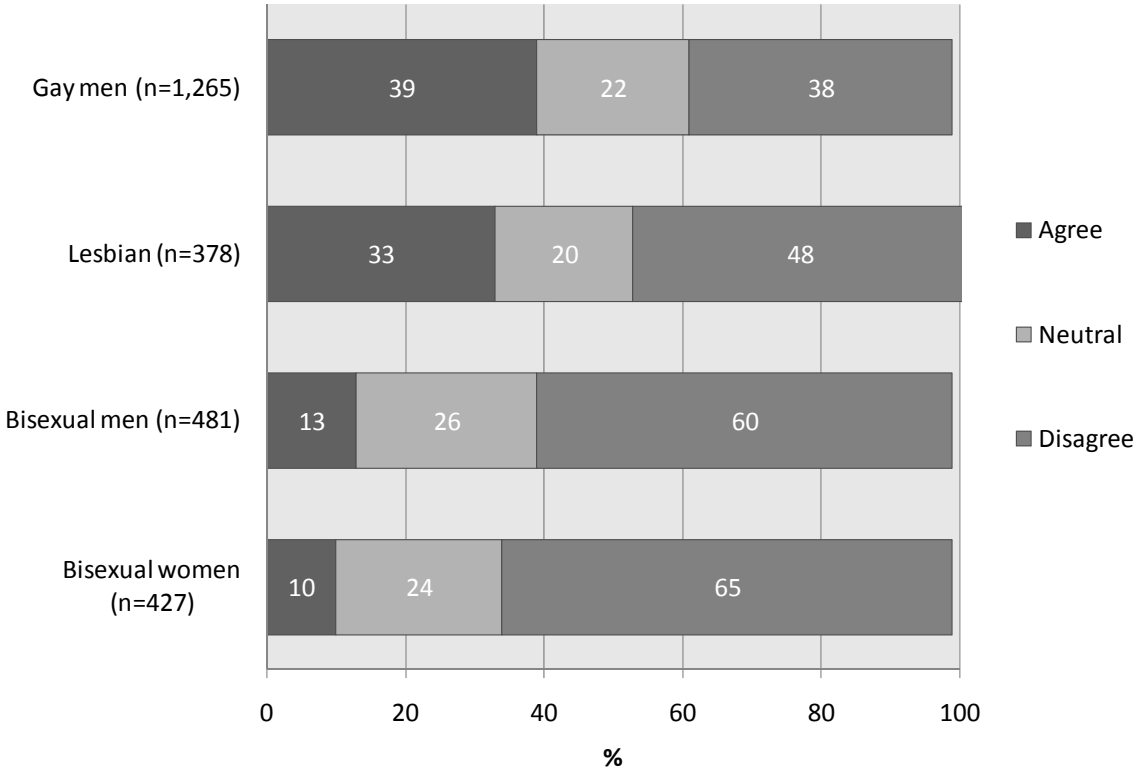
Twenty-four per cent of gay men and 21 per cent of bisexual men said they had avoided certain sports because of their sexual orientation. The most commonly mentioned were team sports such as football and rugby that some people perceived as 'laddish' and homophobic. Those who had participated had feared being treated differently by teammates and reactions of others to their presence in the changing room.

Over half of gay men and lesbians (53 per cent) said that there were places in Britain where they would not like to live because of their sexual orientation. Around a fifth of bisexual men and women also agreed. Many felt that areas such as Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and large cities like Birmingham and Glasgow were not LGB-friendly. Many also highlighted highly rural areas and deprived inner cities as being less welcoming.

7.2 Job segregation

Gay men in particular felt that there are some jobs they would not consider because of their sexual orientation (Figure 23). A third of lesbians felt the same way, as did 13 per cent of bisexual men and one in ten bisexual women. This view was also shared by many of those identifying as trans (36 per cent).

Figure 23 I have not considered/would not consider some jobs because of my sexual orientation (by sexual orientation)



Base: LGB only

When asked which jobs and careers they had avoided, the armed services, policing, teaching, generally working with children and manual/blue-collar jobs were the most frequently mentioned. The armed services, policing and manual blue-collar jobs were widely perceived as having an inherent culture of masculinity and a poor image of homophobic behaviour. Some felt that prevailing attitudes within these sectors were anti-LGB, while in the case of the armed services, many said that specific policies (past and present) had discouraged their interest.

Many respondents said they would avoid teaching or working with children and young people because of the way some sections of society and the media view gay and lesbian influences on children and young people.

Some of the reasons given for avoiding particular jobs or careers are shown below:

- Armed services and policing:

When I was an undergraduate I was keen to join the armed forces but Army, Navy and Airforce all had discriminatory attitudes and policies.

(26-year-old lesbian)

- Teaching or working with children and young people in general:

Teacher, especially primary school teacher, nursery nurse/youth worker and similar caring professions involving children and young people, because of the homophobic climate in some parts of society that I have experienced in general frontline public services.

(41-year-old gay man)

- General manual/blue-collar sectors:

Heavy manual work like mining and construction, where attitudes are less well informed.

(61-year-old gay man)

7.3 Sports segregation

Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of gay men and a fifth (21 per cent) of bisexual men said that they had avoided some sports or hidden their sexual orientation when participating. Fewer lesbians (13 per cent) and bisexual women (nine per cent) said this.

Only seven per cent of heterosexual men and less than one per cent of women agreed that they had avoided some sports. The sports that had been avoided tended to be team-based, such as football and rugby where there is a perceived masculine 'laddish', homophobic (particularly in the case of football) or aggressive atmosphere. Many mentioned the changing-room situations and feared the consequences of being treated differently if they were open about their sexuality:

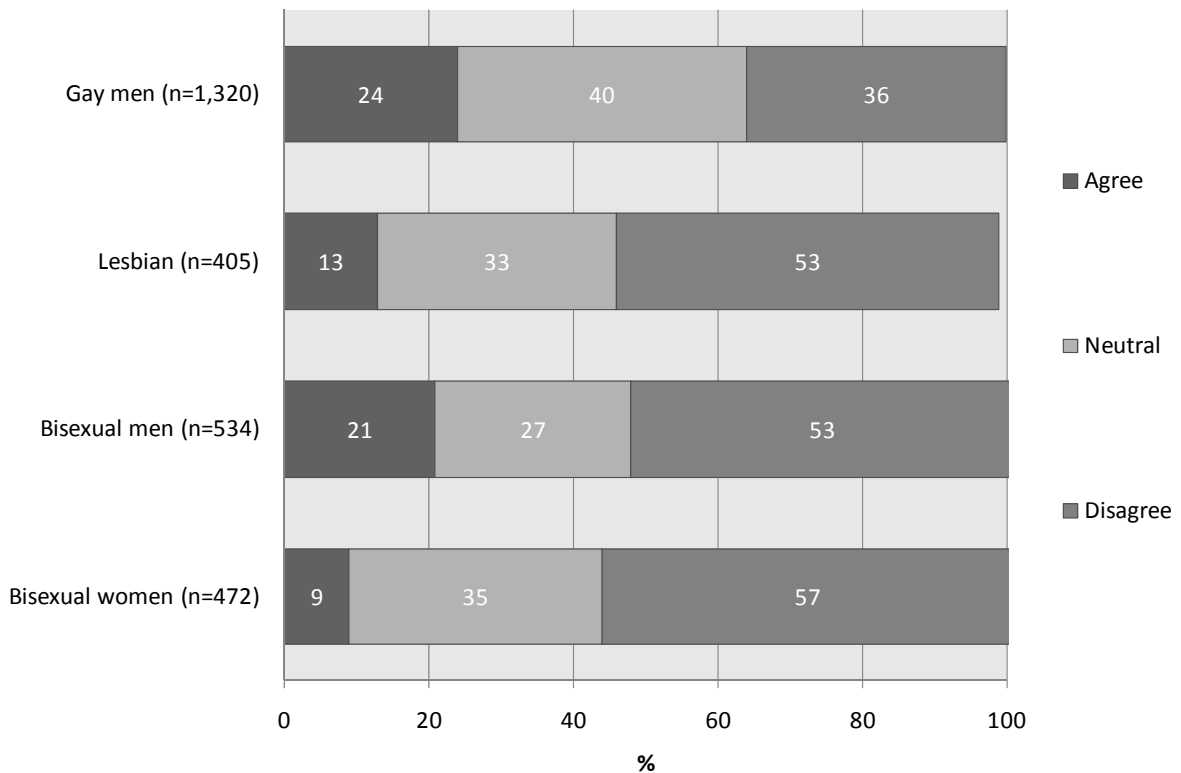
I have always concealed my sexuality in such contexts, almost wholly because of the question of physical proximity, changing, showering, etc with other (straight) men.

(60-year-old gay man)

Football – a majority of the ‘fans’ are undereducated heterosexual males who feel it’s ‘macho’ to show varying degrees of hostility towards homosexuals, particularly male homosexuals.

(45-year-old gay man)

Figure 24 I have avoided certain sports because of my sexual orientation or hidden my orientation when participating (by sexual orientation)



Base: LGB only

Conversely, there were a number of negative comments made about lesbian sports teams by lesbians and bisexual women who had avoided certain sports or who had felt the need to hide their sexual orientation:

I avoided playing football for a female team, due actually to the other members who were lesbians and insisted on 'flying the flag' and being better than men.

(38-year-old lesbian)

Others mentioned their experience of school sports and issues around bullying and, as for men, the sensitivities relating to getting changed for sports. Later in the survey many LGB highlighted their time at school as a source of the much of the discrimination they had faced:

At high school (last time I did any organised sports) the few girls that were gay/bi pretended to be straight. One of our bi friends was forced by the other girls to change in a toilet so that she couldn't 'look' at them whilst they were changing.

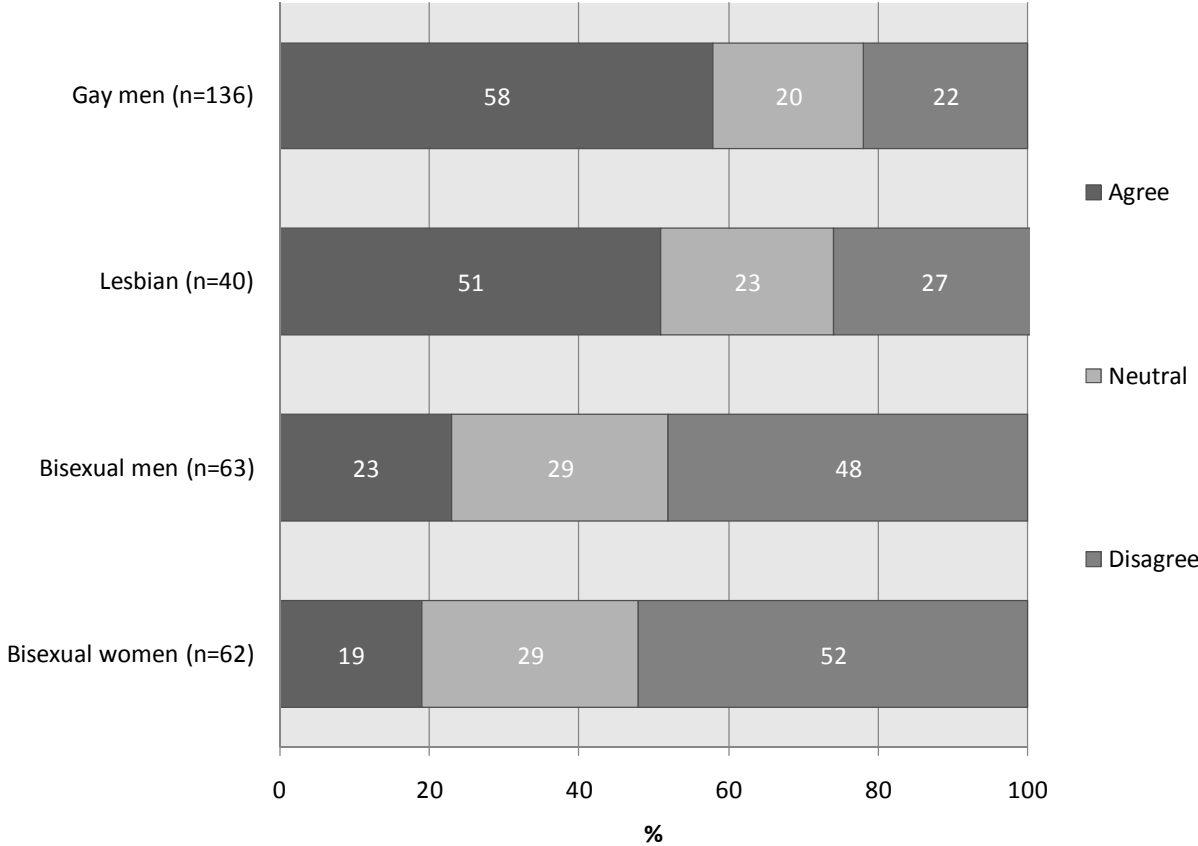
(22-year-old bisexual woman)

7.4 Geographical segregation

Over half of gay men and lesbians stated that there are places in Britain they would not live because of their sexual orientation (Figure 25). Bisexual people were less likely to agree at only around a fifth, but those identifying as trans also felt strongly about this (47 per cent).

There was a particularly strong feeling among LGB respondents based in London. Of this group, 51 per cent believed that there were other areas in Britain where they would not like to live. Fewer of those living in the midlands/Wales (38 per cent), the south (34 per cent) or the north (39 per cent) felt this way.

Figure 25 There are certain places in Britain that I would not live because of my sexual orientation (by sexual orientation)



Base: LGB only

Specific areas of Britain that were mentioned included:

- Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and rural Scotland in association with religion and perceptions of anti-gay politics and politicians in the case of Northern Ireland and Ireland
- some large cities, for example Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool or Glasgow and inner city working-class areas in general
- very rural areas in general, some parts of south-west England and rural Scotland in particular, and
- areas with high black and Asian populations because of perceived anti-gay sentiment and actual experiences of abuse.

8 Experience of disadvantage and its impact

8.1 In summary

This chapter looks at experiences of disadvantage among LGB people. Respondents were asked whether they had experienced verbal or physical abuse or bullying, sexual assault, stress, or mental or physical health problems as a result of prejudice or discrimination linked to their sexual orientation. LGB respondents were also asked to write about their experiences of disadvantage in their own words.

Over half of gay men and 61 per cent of lesbians felt that they had experienced disadvantage as a result of their sexual orientation. The most commonly mentioned disadvantages related to the workplace, experiences at school, problems with their family, having to live in secret or without freedom, and openly homophobic verbal and sometimes physical abuse.

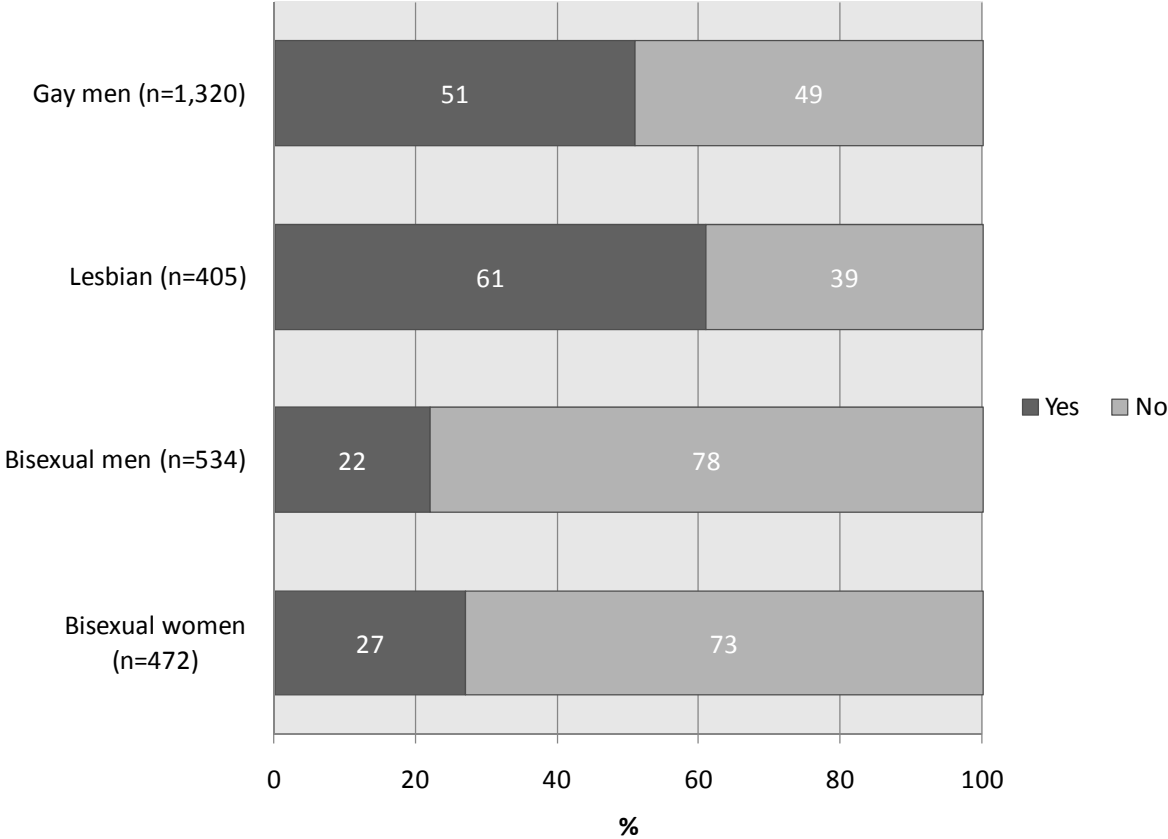
These issues can lead many LGB people to feel that they cannot be open about their sexuality. Around 70 per cent of gay men and lesbians reported a degree of openness with their family or in the workplace. Only around half of gay men and two-fifths of lesbians believed that they would be open at a police station and only a quarter when out on the streets of their neighbourhood. Bisexual women and especially men were less likely to feel that they could be open in their workplace (around a quarter) or with their family (just 23 per cent of bisexual men). Only 43 per cent of bisexual men felt that they could be open about their sexual orientation while in their current relationship.

The majority of gay men and lesbians said they had experienced name calling and other forms of verbal abuse, and significant numbers (particularly young people) said they had suffered from low self-esteem. Around one in five gay and lesbian respondents reported suffering from mental health problems at some stage of their lives, compared with just six per cent of the sample overall.

8.2 Disadvantage because of sexual orientation

Over half of gay men and nearly two-thirds of lesbians felt that they had experienced disadvantages as a result of their sexual orientation. This was shared by a smaller, but still significant, proportion of those self-identifying as trans (40 per cent) and around a quarter of bisexual men and women.

Figure 26 Have you ever experienced disadvantages because of your sexual orientation? (by sexual orientation)



Base: LGB only

Heterosexual people with a degree of past or future fluidity (those who reported any same-sex attraction or behaviour) were also asked whether they felt that they had experienced any disadvantages. Only very small numbers of these respondents – three per cent of heterosexual women and seven per cent of men – said they had.

Examples of disadvantage were wide ranging. Some of the most frequently mentioned are listed below, illustrated with some of the respondents’ quotes.

- The workplace: including bullying, discrimination, abuse and being treated differently than heterosexual colleagues:

Discrimination at work – being treated more strictly than workmates by management when I was young. If I was late or took a day off sick I was lectured about my ‘lifestyle’.

(42-year-old bisexual man)

- Career advancement and promotion:

Overlooked for promotions in career, which has led to me relocating to further career progression.

(55-year-old gay man)

- Experiences at school:

School was a bit of a nightmare. I was told to stop acting so camp, called names and experienced some bullying that was 'my own fault' etc ... That was in the 70s, and I hope that it's a bit better now.

(49-year-old gay man)

- Families:

Within my family situation: I was disadvantaged for 10 years when I came out. They're finally getting used to it now.

(42-year-old lesbian)

- General thoughts about freedom and acceptance:

Would have been an easier life without having to try and hide my sexual orientation. It's not easy being gay with so many people so against it.

(29-year-old gay man)

- Having to preserve secrecy and not feeling able to be open about their sexual orientation

It is still socially unacceptable to be affectionate with your partner in public. Leery comments from people (usually men).

(29-year-old lesbian)

Not able to be open enough to friends I have made through gym in case those friendships are lost.

(63-year-old bisexual man)

- Experience of homophobia in the form of abuse – often and frequently verbal, but on rare occasions physical:

Abuse: can't walk along the street without comments. Don't feel I can hold hands with my partner like heterosexual couples can.

(36-year-old lesbian)

Over the last 20 years living in London I have been attacked several times by strangers for being gay. I have been abused many more times by strangers for being gay.

(40-year-old gay man)

- Notable among comments from bisexual people, particularly women, was a lack of a sense of place or acceptance within both the heterosexual and gay men/lesbian communities:

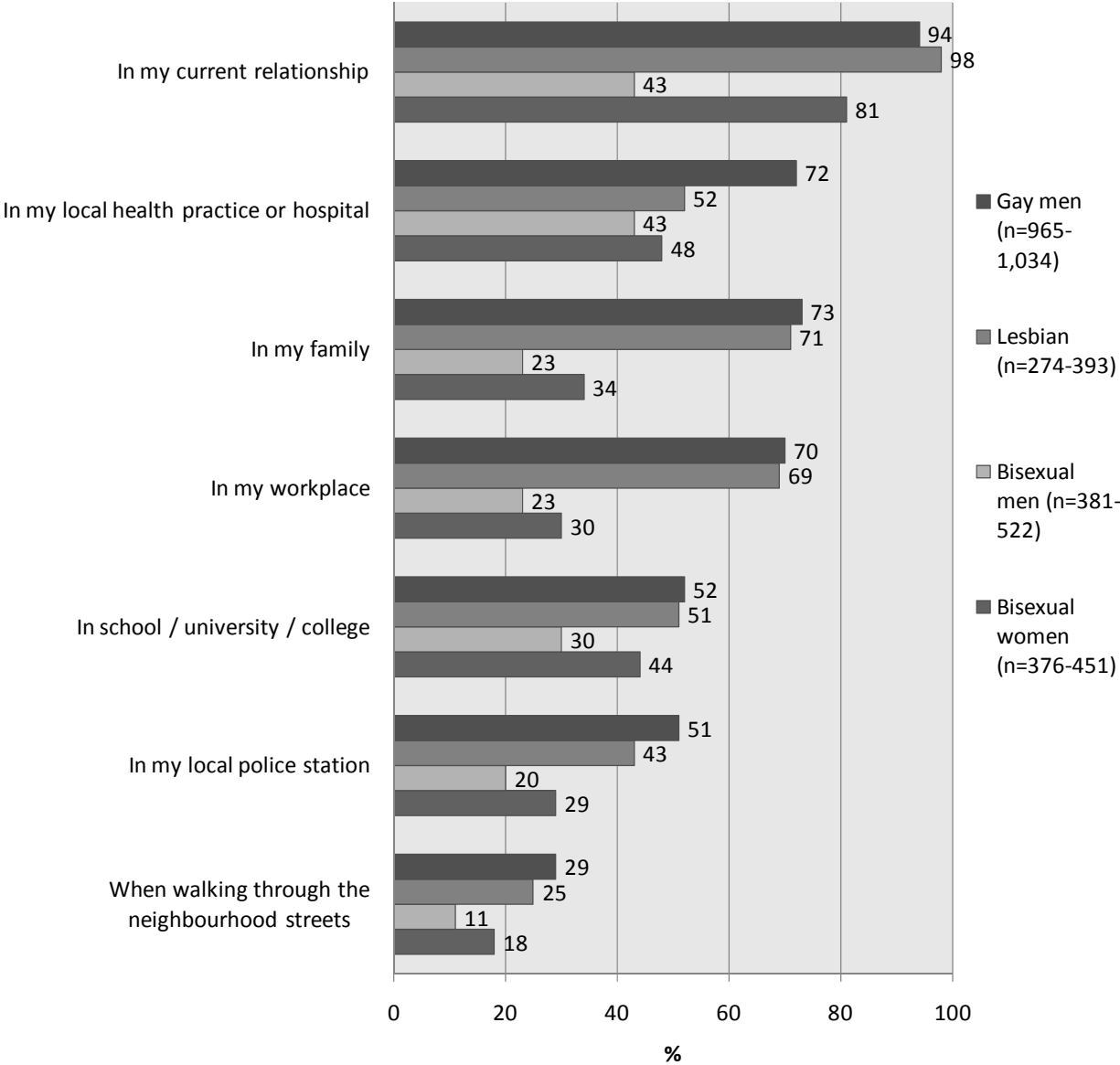
Would rather just be straight, or even gay. People tend to perceive bisexuality as being either a more promiscuous state, or an undecided state. I once applied to be a helper on a lesbian, bisexual and gay helpline, but was turned down because I was bisexual.

(35-year-old bisexual woman)

8.3 Fear of prejudice and discrimination

Fear of disadvantage and discrimination impacts upon the lives of LGB women and men in profound ways. Some LGB people still don't feel they can be open about their sexual orientation because they fear prejudice/discrimination. Respondents were also asked the extent to which they felt able to be open about their orientation in various contexts. The results presented in Figure 27 show a wide variation in openness between public and private contexts, as well as between different orientation groups. Bisexual men were the least likely to feel they could be open in all situations. In most cases there is little variation between gay men and lesbians, but the differences between gay men/lesbians and bisexual people, and between bisexual men and women, are considerable.

Figure 27 Strongly agree or tend to agree that you can be open about sexual orientation without fear of prejudice or discrimination in the following situations? (by sexual orientation)



Base: all those identifying as LGB and excluding 'not applicable' answer responses

While over nine in 10 gay men/lesbians, and 81 per cent of bisexual women, agreed that they could be open in their current relationships, less than half (43 per cent) of bisexual men felt the same. This suggests that there may be more of a perceived stigma connected to male bisexuality than to female bisexuality.

The majority of respondents also felt able to be open about their orientation with health providers. However, there are wide variations between different groups. Seventy-two per cent of gay men felt they could be open with staff at their local health practice or hospital, compared with only 52 per cent of lesbians and 48 per

cent of bisexual women. Bisexual men were again the least likely to be open in this context (43 per cent).

In a family setting, there is again a large variation between gay men/lesbians and bisexual respondents. Over two thirds (72 per cent) of gay men/lesbians felt they could be open with their family, compared with a third (34 per cent) of bisexual women and a quarter (23 per cent) of bisexual men.

Over two-thirds (70 per cent) of employed gay men, and a similar proportion of employed lesbians, felt that they could be open about their sexual orientation in the workplace. This contrasts with only a quarter of bisexual men and a third of bisexual women who felt the same way. Gay men and lesbians were less likely to be open in an educational setting than in the workplace; only just over half felt they could be open about their orientation in school/college/university. By contrast, bisexual people were more likely to feel they could be open in an educational setting than the workplace; a third of bisexual men and nearly half of bisexual women agreed that they could be open in school/college/university.

Only around half of gay men/lesbians felt they could be open in their local police station. Bisexual people were less likely to feel this way; less than a third of bisexual women (29 per cent), and a fifth of men agreed with this.

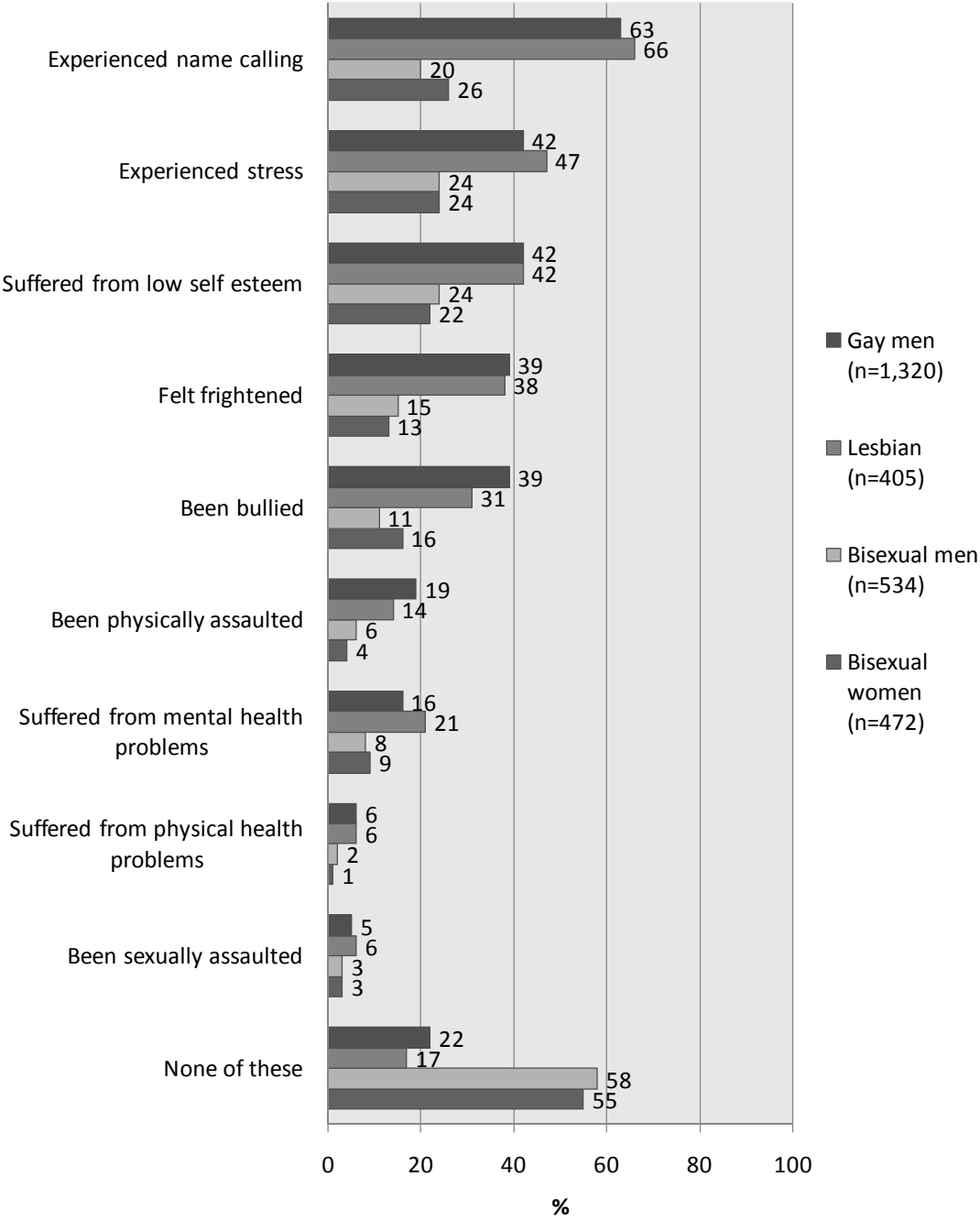
The context in which respondents across all LGB groups felt least able to be open was their local neighbourhood. Slightly over a quarter of gay men/lesbians felt able to be open while walking in local streets, along with a fifth (18 per cent) of bisexual women, and only 11 per cent of bisexual men.

8.4 The impact of prejudice and discrimination

Two-thirds of gay men and lesbians had experienced name calling as result of their sexual orientation (Figure 28). Just under half said they had suffered from low self-esteem and stress and around two-fifths had at times felt frightened. A significant number of gay men in particular (39 per cent) had experienced bullying, while sizeable minorities had been the victims of physical assault related to their sexual orientation.

Although bisexual men and women were significantly less likely to have had negative experiences linked to their sexual orientation, around a quarter (22 to 24 per cent) said they had suffered from low self-esteem and stress. A similar proportion, 20 per cent of men and 26 per cent of women, said they had been subject to name calling.

Figure 28 Have you ever experienced any of the following as a result of prejudice and discrimination linked to your sexual orientation? (by sexual orientation)



Base: LGB only.

Gay men and lesbians aged 18 to 34 were more likely than those over 35 to report low self-esteem and bullying. However, older respondents were more likely to have experienced physical assaults. Feeling frightened and experiencing stress was reported more consistently across the age groups.

Fewer of those in the trans group reported negative experiences but still around a third reported suffering from low self-esteem, had been called names, felt frightened at times and experienced stress.

When asked to think about the last 12 months only, still sizeable minorities of gay men and lesbians said they had experienced name calling (16 per cent and 22 per cent respectively). A fifth of lesbians had experienced stress relating to their sexual orientation, compared with 12 per cent of gay men. Smaller but still significant groups of around 15 per cent had felt frightened or suffered from low self-esteem. One in ten bisexual people had also experienced stress and low self-esteem in the last twelve months.

9 Conclusions and implications

This study reveals an important range of contemporary perspectives on sexual orientation in 2009, with wider implications for policy and practice.

Six per cent of respondents identified as LGB. However, minority sexual orientation is wider ranging than those who identify as LGB. A further eight per cent said they were having sex with, or were sexually attracted to someone of the same sex. This has implications for meeting the needs of those people who fall into a wider definition of sexual orientation.

The study chimes with other findings that people are more 'tolerant' about diverse sexual orientation and there is evidence from this survey of a gradual shift in acceptance. Yet, there is work to be done in affecting positive changes in public attitudes, and in particular towards openly lesbian, gay and bisexual candidates for prime minister, as religious leaders and as parents. There were stark differences in attitudes between the generations, with younger people, and those with higher levels of educational attainment being more likely to accept openly LGB people in such positions.

The vast majority of people are comfortable with defining their sexual orientation when asked. Over three-quarters consider it to be acceptable in social surveys and a higher proportion would be happy to be asked in the Census. The Census is the most reliable source of population estimates but does not currently include a sexual orientation question. Without a reliable profile of the LGB population, representative surveys are not currently possible.

A study of this size means that it is possible to explore the findings from certain sub-groups. The findings imply that bisexual men and women differ from lesbians and gay men in their identity, behaviour, attraction and experiences of disadvantage. Where possible, findings from sexual orientation studies should be reported separately for all three groups, along with aggregated LGB results.

Although public attitudes are changing, the research reveals how many lesbians, gay men and bisexual people have experienced significant disadvantage or discrimination over their lifetime, including in the workplace and in education. These findings suggest that homophobia remains persistent. Tackling forms of bullying and hate crime perpetuated against LGB people is a priority. Support for LGB people is essential in relation to damaged self-esteem and in managing mental health.

Others have chosen to live in secrecy and without the freedom they want in order to avoid prejudice. Being unable to be open contributes towards many people (particularly young people) changing the way they would describe themselves depending on the circumstances. Over a third of gay men and lesbians and three-quarters of bisexual people would vary the descriptions of their orientation. Nearly a third of gay men and lesbians would not be open about their orientation in the workplace and fewer would do so at a local police station. Significant proportions of bisexual men and women would not describe themselves as such when asked in workplace questionnaires or other social surveys. The findings imply that culture change is needed in workplaces and services, to allow people to be open about who they are without fear of prejudice.

There is also evidence of segregation, with many LGB people saying they would not consider living in certain places, working in certain industries, pursuing a particular career, or following or participating in some sports. These findings suggest that work needs to be done to integrate LGB issues into initiatives designed to promote good relations and community cohesion.

Appendix A Survey questionnaire

Base: all

This survey is about how people think about their sexual orientation and the range of ways it can be expressed. We are aware of the sensitivities of this subject and have made every effort to capture the range of people's experiences. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that all results are anonymous and confidential.

If the response you wish to give is not covered by the available options, please tick 'other' and type your answer in the box provided. If you do not wish to answer a question, please tick 'other' and explain this in the box.

Base: all

Firstly we just need to ask a few questions about you.

Which of these age groups are you in?

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 to 54

55+

Are you:

Male

Female

Section: identity

Base: all

Large national surveys often collect information on people's characteristics such as their age and sex, ethnic group, religion or whether they have a disability to see if responses are different for different groups of people.

Do you think it is acceptable, or not acceptable, to collect this information in such surveys?

Definitely acceptable

Probably acceptable

Probably not acceptable

Definitely not acceptable

Do you think that it is acceptable, or not acceptable, to ask a question about sexual orientation (that is, whether you consider yourself to be Straight/Heterosexual, Gay/Lesbian or Bisexual) in such surveys?

Definitely acceptable

Probably acceptable

Probably not acceptable

Definitely not acceptable

Base: all

The questionnaire for the next Census that will take place in 2011 is currently being developed. The Census is a compulsory survey completed once every 10 years by every household in the country. One form is completed for the whole household which includes questions about individual members of the household. One such question that could be asked – but would not be compulsory to answer – would be:

Do you consider yourself to be ...?

Straight/Heterosexual

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other (please state)

Would you support or oppose the introduction of a non-compulsory question on sexual orientation in the 2011 Census?

Support

Don't mind either way

Oppose

Base: all

The Office for National Statistics is the central producer of official statistics in the UK and provides survey results that are used widely, for example by public service providers or private companies. It has announced that in the future it will be more common for large national surveys to ask about the sexual orientation characteristics of people alongside the other questions about personal characteristics. It is therefore very important that we understand as accurately as possible how to interpret the results of such surveys.

We would like to begin by simply asking you whether you consider yourself to be:

Straight/Heterosexual
Gay/Lesbian
Bisexual
Other (please explain below)

If you ticked 'other', please type in below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional.)

Thinking about the answer you gave above, have you always considered yourself to be this way?

Yes
No

Base: those answering 'no' and over 25 in age

Please tell us what you have considered yourself to be in the following time periods.

Between the ages of 16 and 25. (Please tick all that have applied at any point.)

Straight/Heterosexual
Gay/Lesbian
Bisexual
Other (please explain below)

If you ticked 'other' please explain in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional.)

Since the age of 25. (Please tick all that have applied at any point.)

Straight/Heterosexual
Gay/Lesbian
Bisexual
Other (please explain below)

If you ticked 'other' please explain in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (optional.)

Base: those answering 'no' and under 25 in age

Please tell us what you have considered yourself to be since age 16? (Please tick all that have applied at any point.)

Straight/Heterosexual
Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other (please explain below)

If you ticked 'other' please explain in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional.)

Base: all

Is it possible that you will change how you consider yourself to be (Straight/Heterosexual, Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual) in the future?

Yes, it is possible

No, it is not possible

Base: all who think they could consider themselves differently in future

Please tell us how you think you might consider yourself to be in the future. (Please tick all that apply.)

Straight/Heterosexual

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other (please explain below)

If you ticked 'other' please explain in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional.)

Base: all

Earlier we asked you the following question:

'We would like to begin by simply asking you whether you consider yourself to be:'

Straight/Heterosexual

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other (please explain below)

Some people think about or express their sexual orientation differently depending on how the question is asked. If, instead of phrasing the question 'do you consider yourself to be' as we have just done, we phrased the question as:

'Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?' (with the same options to answer)

Would the new phrasing of the question mean you would change the answer you gave previously?

Yes

No

Base: those answering 'yes'

Please now answer this question.

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

Straight/Heterosexual

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other (please explain below)

If you ticked 'other' please explain in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional.)

Base: all

Some people may also think about or express their sexual orientation differently depending on the type of survey and the circumstances in which it takes place.

Please think very carefully about whether your response to a sexual orientation question would differ from the answer you gave earlier in this survey in the following situations:

You are interviewed in your own home by an interviewer and nobody else can see or hear your answer

You are interviewed in your own home by an interviewer and other people CAN see or hear your answer

You answer an interview by telephone in your own home and nobody can overhear your answer

You complete a staff monitoring questionnaire, in confidence, in your workplace

You complete a monitoring questionnaire when applying for a new job

You complete a general questionnaire on-line and you are not overlooked by anyone

Yes, response could be different

No, response would be the same

Would not answer the question

Not applicable

Base: all who would answer differently in any situation

You said that you might answer differently in the following situations.

How would you answer in each of these situations?

You are interviewed in your own home by an interviewer and nobody else can see or hear your answer

You are interviewed in your own home by an interviewer and other people can see or hear your answer

You answer an interview by telephone in your own home and nobody can overhear your answer

You complete a staff monitoring questionnaire, in confidence, in your workplace

You complete a monitoring questionnaire when applying for a new job

You complete a general questionnaire on-line and you are not overlooked by anyone

Straight/Heterosexual

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other

Section: orientation/identity

Base: all

It is quite common for people to describe their sexual orientation differently depending upon who they are with.

Would you describe your sexual orientation differently depending upon who you are with?

Yes, would describe it differently depending on who I was with

No, would always describe it the same way

Base: all who would describe it differently

How would you describe your sexual orientation to the people listed below? If a person does not apply to you please tick 'not applicable'.

Your partner

Brothers/Sisters

Your child(ren)

Mother

Father

Close friends

Other friends and acquaintances

GP/other health professionals

Police/other criminal justice professionals

Teacher/University/College lecturer

Your manager at work

Other work colleagues

Neighbours

Straight/Heterosexual

Gay/lesbian

Bisexual

Other

Would not say

Not applicable

Base: all

How people describe their sexual orientation to other people can change over time. Do you feel that the way you describe your sexual orientation to others has changed over time?

Yes

No

Base: all who ticked yes

Please explain briefly how you have changed the way you describe your sexual orientation to others.

Section: attraction

Degrees of attraction by scale – current

Base: those aged 25 and under

You can be attracted to different people in all sorts of ways, for example romantically, emotionally, affectionately and sexually. For this question we would like you to think about feelings of sexual attraction or desire. You can feel sexual attraction or desire with or without this leading to sexual experiences.

Which of the following best describes your feelings of sexual attraction now, since the age of 16 up to now, and what you imagine might be true in the future?

Now

- Only to a man/men, never to a woman/women
- More often to a man/men, sometimes to a woman/women
- About equally often to a man/men and a woman/women
- More often to a woman/women, sometimes to a man/men
- Only to a woman/women, never to a man/men
- No sexual attraction to anyone

Since the age of 16

- Only to a man/men, never to a woman/women
- More often to a man/men, sometimes to a woman/women
- About equally often to a man/men and a woman/women
- More often to a woman/women, sometimes to a man/men
- Only to a woman/women, never to a man/men
- No sexual attraction to anyone

In the future

- Only to a man/men, never to a woman/women
- More often to a man/men, sometimes to a woman/women
- About equally often to a man/men and a woman/women
- More often to a woman/women, sometimes to a man/men
- Only to a woman/women, never to a man/men
- No sexual attraction to anyone

Base: those aged over 25

You can be attracted to different people in all sorts of ways, for example romantically, emotionally, affectionately and sexually. For this question we would like you to think about feelings of sexual attraction or desire. You can feel sexual attraction or desire with or without this leading to sexual experiences.

Which of the following best describes your feelings of sexual attraction now, between the ages of 16 and 25, since the age of 25 up to now, and what you imagine might be true in the future?

Now

Only to a man/men, never to a woman/women
More often to a man/men, sometimes to a woman/women
About equally often to a man/men and a woman/women
More often to a woman/women, sometimes to a man/men
Only to a woman/women, never to a man/men
No sexual attraction to anyone

Between the ages of 16 and 25

Only to a man/men, never to a woman/women
More often to a man/men, sometimes to a woman/women
About equally often to a man/men and a woman/women
More often to a woman/women, sometimes to a man/men
Only to a woman/women, never to a man/men
No sexual attraction to anyone

Since the age of 25

Only to a man/men, never to a woman/women
More often to a man/men, sometimes to a woman/women
About equally often to a man/men and a woman/women
More often to a woman/women, sometimes to a man/men
Only to a woman/women, never to a man/men
No sexual attraction to anyone

In the future

Only to a man/men, never to a woman/women
More often to a man/men, sometimes to a woman/women
About equally often to a man/men and a woman/women
More often to a woman/women, sometimes to a man/men
Only to a woman/women, never to a man/men
No sexual attraction to anyone

Section: behaviour

Base: those aged 25 and under

Sexual activities cover a wide range of behaviours. For the purposes of this question, please define activities as sexual, where both of you were clear you were engaging in sex.

Which of the following best describes your sexual experience now, since the age of 16 up to now and what you imagine will be true in the future?

Now

Sex only with a man/men, never with a woman/women
Sex more often with a man/men, sometimes with a woman/women
Sex about equally often with a man/men and a woman/women
Sex more often with a woman/women, sometimes with a man/men
Sex only with a woman/women, never with a man/men
No sexual experiences with anyone

Since the age of 16

Sex only with a man/men, never with a woman/women
Sex more often with a man/men, sometimes with a woman/women
Sex about equally often with a man/men and a woman/women
Sex more often with a woman/women, sometimes with a man/men
Sex only with a woman/women, never with a man/men
No sexual experiences with anyone

In the future

Sex only with a man/men, never with a woman/women
Sex more often with a man/men, sometimes with a woman/women
Sex about equally often with a man/men and a woman/women
Sex more often with a woman/women, sometimes with a man/men
Sex only with a woman/women, never with a man/men
No sexual experiences with anyone

Base: those aged over 25

Sexual activities cover a wide range of behaviours. For the purposes of this question, please define activities as sexual, where both of you were clear you were engaging in sex.

Which of the following best describes your sexual experiences now, in the past, and what you imagine will be true in the future?

Now

Sex only with a man/men, never with a woman/women
Sex more often with a man/men, sometimes with a woman/women
Sex about equally often with a man/men and a woman/women
Sex more often with a woman/women, sometimes with a man/men
Sex only with a woman/women, never with a man/men
No sexual experiences with anyone

Between the ages of 16 and 25

Sex only with a man/men, never with a woman/women
Sex more often with a man/men, sometimes with a woman/women
Sex about equally often with a man/men and a woman/women
Sex more often with a woman/women, sometimes with a man/men
Sex only with a woman/women, never with a man/men
No sexual experiences with anyone

Since the age of 25

Sex only with a man/men, never with a woman/women
Sex more often with a man/men, sometimes with a woman/women
Sex about equally often with a man/men and a woman/women
Sex more often with a woman/women, sometimes with a man/men
Sex only with a woman/women, never with a man/men
No sexual experiences with anyone

In the future

Sex only with a man/men, never with a woman/women
Sex more often with a man/men, sometimes with a woman/women
Sex about equally often with a man/men and a woman/women
Sex more often with a woman/women, sometimes with a man/men
Sex only with a woman/women, never with a man/men
No sexual experiences with anyone

Section: other issues

Base: all who are LGB or have indicated any fluidity

How far do you agree or disagree that you can be open about your sexual orientation without fear of prejudice/discrimination in the following situations?

In my workplace

In my family

In my current relationship

In School/University/College

When walking through the streets in my neighbourhood

In my local health practice or hospital

In my local police station

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree
Not applicable

Base: all

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements about you?

**I would be happy to have an openly lesbian, gay or bisexual manager at work.
I would not be happy to be treated by a doctor who I knew to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.**

I would be happy to vote for an openly lesbian, gay or bisexual candidate for prime minister.

I would not be happy to have openly lesbian, gay or bisexual people as close friends.

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree
Not applicable

Base: all

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Lesbians (Gay women) can be equally good at bringing up children as other women

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree

Gay men can be equally good at bringing up children as other men

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree

Lesbians (Gay women) and Gay men will find it harder than other women and men to adopt a child

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Base: all who are LGB or have indicated any fluidity

Are there any disadvantages you feel you have experienced as a result of your sexual orientation?

Yes

No

Base: all who ticked yes

What disadvantages do you feel you have experienced as a result of your sexual orientation?

Base: all who are LGB or have indicated any fluidity

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

I have not considered/would not consider some jobs because of my sexual orientation.

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Not applicable

Base: those who have not considered/would not consider certain jobs

Which jobs did you/would you not consider as a result of your sexual orientation, and why?

Base: all who are LGB or have indicated any fluidity

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

There are certain places in Britain that I would not live because of my sexual orientation.

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Base: those who would not live certain places

Please give up to three examples of places in Britain that you would not live because of your sexual orientation, and explain why.

Base: all who are LGB or have indicated any fluidity

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

I have avoided certain sports because of my sexual orientation, or hidden my sexual orientation when participating in certain sports.

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Base: those who have avoided certain sports

What sports have you avoided as a result of your sexual orientation, or hidden your sexual orientation when participating, and why?

Base: all who are LGB or have indicated any fluidity

Have you ever experienced any of the following as a result of prejudice/discrimination linked to your sexual orientation? (Please tick all that apply.)

Experienced stress

Suffered from mental health conditions

Suffered from physical health conditions

Suffered from low self-esteem

Felt frightened

Been bullied

Experienced name calling

Been physically assaulted

Been sexually assaulted
None of these

And in the last 12 months, have you experienced any of the following as a result of prejudice/discrimination linked to your sexual orientation? (Please tick all that apply.)

Experienced stress
Suffered from mental health conditions
Suffered from physical health conditions
Suffered from low self-esteem
Felt frightened
Been bullied
Experienced name calling
Been physically assaulted
Been sexually assaulted
None of these

Base: all

We said at the beginning of this questionnaire that it is common to ask questions in large national surveys about people's personal characteristics. We then asked you whether you thought it was acceptable to collect information on sexual orientation in such surveys and the Census in particular. People often develop their views after thinking about a subject in the way you have just done in relation to sexual orientation while taking this survey, so we would just like to check your views again now you have done this.

Do you think that it is acceptable, or not acceptable, to ask a question about sexual orientation (that is, whether you consider yourself to be Straight/Heterosexual, Gay/Lesbian or Bisexual) in such surveys?

Definitely acceptable
Probably acceptable
Probably not acceptable
Definitely not acceptable

Would you support or oppose the introduction of a non-compulsory question on sexual orientation in the 2011 Census?

Support
Don't mind either way
Oppose

Ethnicity

Base: all

The following question is about your ethnic group. It is divided into categories (for example white, Asian/Asian British). Please choose a response from only one category.

What is your ethnic group?

A. White (optional)

English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
Irish
Gypsy or Irish Traveller
Any other White background (write in below)

B. Mixed/multiple ethnic groups (optional)

White and Black Caribbean
White and Black African
White and Asian
Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background (write in below)

C. Asian/Asian British (optional)

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Chinese
Any other Asian background (write in below)

D. Black/African/Caribbean/Black British[OPTIONAL] [MULTICODE]

African
Caribbean
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background (write in below)

E. Other ethnic group (optional)

Arab
Any other ethnic group (write in below)

If you ticked 'any other ...' above please give details in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional)

Disability

Base: all

Do you have any of the following conditions which have lasted, or are expected to last, at least 12 months? (Please tick all that apply.)

Deafness or severe hearing impairment

Blindness or severe vision impairment

A physical disability (a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting and carrying)

A learning disability (such as Down's syndrome)

A learning difficulty (such as dyslexia or dyspraxia)

A mental health condition (such as depression or schizophrenia)

A chronic illness (such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, heart disease or epilepsy)

Other condition

None of these

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a physical or mental health condition or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Yes, substantially limited

Yes, but not substantially

No

Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?

No, not religious

Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Sikh

Other (write in below)

If you ticked 'Other' please give details in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional)

Base: all religious people

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I can be open about my sexual orientation and still be accepted as a member of my religious/faith community

In general, openly Lesbian, Gay and bisexual people would not be accepted by local leaders of my religious/faith community

I think that in general it is compatible to be both religious and openly lesbian, gay or bisexual

I would not be happy to follow an openly lesbian, gay or bisexual religious leader

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Not applicable

Base: non-religious people

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

I think that in general it is compatible to be both religious and openly lesbian, gay or bisexual

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Base: all

Do you consider yourself to be trans? This includes people who are transgender, transsexual and transvestite.

Yes

No

Prefer not to answer

Base: those who consider themselves trans

Do you consider yourself to be ...? (Please tick all that apply)

Transgender

Transsexual

Transvestite

Other (write in below)

If you ticked 'Other' please give details in the box below. Otherwise please leave this box blank. (Optional.)

Base: all

Have you experienced any of the following for any reason in the last six months? (Please tick all that apply.)

My personal income has fallen

My household income has fallen

I am behind on my mortgage/rent payments

I have lost my house/had to move out of rented accommodation

I have lost my job

The value of my savings/investments has fallen significantly

The overall level of my debt has increased

None of these

And how much risk do you think there is of each of these happening in the next 12 months?

My personal income will fall

My household income will fall

I will get behind on mortgage or rent payments

I will lose my house/have to move out of rented accommodation

I will lose my job

The value of my savings/investments will fall significantly

The overall level of my debt will increase

Little risk of this happening

Some risk of this happening

High risk of this happening

Not applicable

Section: demographics

Marital status and household

Base: all

How many of the following types of people live in your household?

Your spouse or partner (opposite sex)

Your civil partner or same-sex partner

Your children

Your mother or mother-in-law

Your father or father-in-law
Your grandparents
Your grandchildren
Your sister(s)/brother(s)
Your friends or housemates
Other people (not including yourself)

None

1

2

3 or more

Do you currently have a spouse or partner who doesn't live in your household?

Yes, spouse or partner (opposite sex)

Yes, civil partner or same-sex partner

No

Base: all

The following question is about your legal marital/civil partnership status (for example whether you are legally married or in a civil partnership), regardless of whether you live with a partner or not.

What is your legal marital/civil partnership status?

Never married and never registered a same-sex civil partnership

Married (to a person of the opposite sex)

Separated but still legally married

Divorced

Widowed

In a registered same-sex civil partnership

Separated but still legally in a same-sex civil partnership

Formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now dissolved

Surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership

Parental status

Base: All

How many children do you have in any of the following age groups?

Please tick all that apply, even if they live in another household some or all of the time. Include natural, step, foster and adopted children.

4 years old and under

5–10 years old

11–15 years old

16–18 years old

19 years and over

None

1

2

3

4 or more

Base: Those with children aged under 16

Where do your children aged under 16 live? (Please tick all that apply if you have more than one arrangement for your children.)

In your home with you most or all of the time

Their time is divided between two homes including yours

They live elsewhere and visit regularly

They live elsewhere and visit occasionally

They never visit, or very rarely

Base: all

Do you look after, or give help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either: long-time physical condition or mental health condition or disability, or problems related to old age? (Please do not include anything you do as part of paid employment).

Yes

No

Employment

Base: all

Which of the following best describes your employment status?

Working full-time (30 hours a week or more)

Working part-time (8–29 hours a week)

Working part-time (less than eight hours a week)

Unemployed and looking for work

Retired

Looking after family or home

Full time student/in school

Not working as sick or disabled

Other

Base: those currently in work

Which of the following most closely describes the industry or sector in which you work?

Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing (for example mining and quarrying, manufacturing/construction, farming, landscape gardening, fishing, hunting, environmental and land-based industries).

Electricity, gas and water supply (for example production and distribution of electricity; manufacture and distribution of gas; collection, purification and distribution of water).

Manufacturing (for example manufacturing of chemicals, food and drink, textiles and footwear, electrical equipment, machinery, transport equipment, leather and wood products).

Construction (for example demolition and construction of buildings, roads and sports facilities; water projects; civil engineering; building installation; plumbing; plastering; joinery; renting of construction or demolition equipment).

Public administration, defence, education and health (for example army, navy, air force, central or local government, police, fire, primary, secondary, higher and adult education, health and social work including nursing, dental, veterinary, charitable social work).

Leisure and retail, hotels and restaurants, wholesale, repair of goods (for example hotels, camping and other holiday centres; self-catering holidays; restaurants; take-away food; bars; clubs; canteens and other types of catering; sale, maintenance and repair of motor vehicles; retail sale of fuel; wholesale of food and drink, fuels, machinery, furniture, household goods including cosmetics and jewellery, textiles and footwear, agricultural raw materials, waste materials. etc; shops including chemists, newsagents, clothing and footwear, food and drink, leather goods, furniture, lighting, household appliances, jewellery, clocks and watches, sports equipment, toys and games, mail order and online shopping, second-hand stores, repair of personal and household goods).

Transport, storage and communication (for example railways; taxis; buses; freight; haulage; cargo handling and storage; furniture removal services; transport via pipeline; water transport; passenger sea and water transport; airports and airlines; companies supporting land, water and air transport; travel and tour operators; tour guides; post and courier services; telecommunications).

Financial and business services (for example legal; estate agents; banks; insurance companies; recruitment companies; business and financial; accountancy; book-keeping and auditing; management of retail, wholesale, construction, catering,

motor trades, transport, etc; architectural and engineering activities; security services; advertising; sales and marketing; PR; management consultants; IT, computing and related activities; research and development; renting of machinery and equipment; exhibition, fair and conference organisers; photographic, secretarial and translation services; design activities).

Other community, social and personal service activities (for example sewage and waste disposal; trade unions; religious, political or other membership organisations; motion picture and video production; projection or other related activities; radio and television; theatre; amusement parks; discos; dance instructors; news agency activities; library archives; museums and other cultural activities; sporting activities; hairdressers, beauty treatments and other physical wellbeing activities; washing and dry-cleaning; funeral and related activities).

Base: those currently in work

Which of the following definitions most closely matches the job that you do?

Corporate manager (for example director or chief executive; marketing or sales manager; senior official in local government; officer in armed forces; senior officer in police, fire, ambulance services).

Manager or proprietor in agriculture or services (for example farm manager, conservation manager, restaurant/hotel manager, beauty salon manager/proprietor).

Science or technology professional (for example chemist, engineer, IT software engineer).

Health professionals (for example doctor, dentist, pharmacist, ophthalmic optician).

Teaching or research professional (for example teacher, lecturer, senior administrator of a school, scientific/social sciences researcher).

Business or public service professional (for example lawyer, accountant, architect, social worker, librarian).

Science or technology associate professional (for example laboratory technician, quality assurance technician, town planning technician, IT user support technician).

Health or social welfare associate professional (for example nurse, paramedic, therapist, dispensing optician/pharmacist, youth worker).

Protective service occupation (for example police, fire or prison officers).

Culture, media and sports occupations (for example artist, musician, graphic designer, journalist, fitness instructor).

Business or public service associate professional (for example train driver, pilot, insurance broker, sales representative, estate agent, careers advisor, taxation expert).

Administrative occupation (for example civil service or local government administrative officer, accounts clerk, stock control clerk, general office assistant, library assistant).

Secretarial or related occupation (for example legal secretary, receptionist, typist, school secretary).

Skilled agricultural trade (for example farmer, gardener, fishing).

Skilled metal or electrical trade (for example metal worker, tool maker, car mechanic, telecoms engineer, electrician).

Skilled construction or building trade (for example plumber, roofer, bricklayer, painter and decorator).

Textiles, printing or other skilled trade (for example dressmaker, printer, butcher, chef, furniture maker, glassmaker).

Caring or personal service occupation (for example nursing auxiliary, dental nurse, care assistant, nursery nurse).

Leisure or other personal service occupation (for example travel agent, tour guide, hairdresser, caretaker, pest control officer).

Sales occupation (for example sales assistant, debt collector, market trader, window dresser).

Customer service occupation (for example call centre agent, customer care worker).

Process, plant or machine operative (for example food process operative, electrical assembler, tyre fitter, sewing machinist, scaffolder, quarry worker).

Transport or mobile machine driver/operative (for example HGV driver, bus driver, driving instructor, fork-lift truck driver, boat operative).

Elementary trades, plant or storage-related occupation (for example farm worker, goods handling and storage, building labourer).

Elementary administration or service occupation (for example postal worker, porter, bar staff, cleaner, traffic warden, shelf filler).

Personal income

Base: all

We would now like to ask you some questions about your income to see if people with different levels of income are more or less likely to be in the situations explored in the survey.

Please consider the following sources of income and tick all those that you personally receive. (Please tick all that apply.)

Earnings from employment

Earnings from self-employment

Pension from a former employer

State pension

Child benefit

Income support

Other state benefits
Tax credits
Interest from savings etc.
Other kinds of regular allowance from outside the household
Other sources, for example rent
None of the above, no personal income

Base: all who receive earnings from employment or self-employment

On the following page you will be asked about your earnings from employment/self-employment. Thinking about your earnings, would it be easiest for you to report these figures in terms of weekly, monthly or annual income?

Weekly
Monthly
Annual

Base: all who receive earnings from employment or self-employment

How much do you earn from employment/self-employment before any deductions (income tax/national insurance etc)? (Please type in numbers not words, without including a £ sign.)

How much do you earn from employment after any deductions (income tax, National Insurance etc.)? (Please type in numbers not words, without including a £ sign.)

Base: all who receive any personal income

Which of the following represents your total personal income from all sources before deductions for income tax, National Insurance etc?

Up to £2,599 per year/Up to £216 per month/Up to £49 per week
£2,600 to £5,199 per year/£217 to £432 per month/£50 to £99 per week
£5,200 to £10,399 per year/£433 to £866 per month/£100 to £199 per week
£10,400 to £15,599/£867 to £1,299 per month/£200 to £299 per week
£15,600 to £20,799 per year/£1,300 to £1,732 per month/£300 to £399 per week
£20,800 to £25,999 per year/£1,733 to £2,166 per month/£400 to £499 per week
£26,000 to £31,199 per year/£2,167 to £2,599 per month/£500 to £599 per week
£31,200 to £36,399 per year/£2,600 to £3,032 per month/£600 to £699 per week
£36,400 to £41,599 per year/£3,033 to £3,466 per month/£700 to £799 per week
£41,600 to £46,799 per year/£3,467 to £3,899 per month/£800 to £899 per week
£46,800 to £51,999 per year/£3,900 to £4,332 per month/£900 to £999 per week
£52,000 or more per year/£4,333 or more per month/£1,000 or more per week

Prefer not to answer

Base: all

Please consider the following sources of income and tick all those that you receive in your household. (Please tick all that apply.)

Earnings from employment

Earnings from self-employment

Pension from a former employer

State pension

Child benefit

Income support

Other state benefits

Tax credits

Interest from savings etc

Other kinds of regular allowance from outside the household

Other sources, for example rent

None of the above, no income

Base: all (excluding 'no income')

Thinking of the income of the household as a whole, which of the following represents the total income of the whole household before deductions for income tax, National Insurance etc?

Up to £2,599 per year/Up to £216 per month/Up to £49 per week

£2,600 to £5,199 per year/£217 to £432 per month/£50 to £99 per week

£5,200 to £10,399 per year/£433 to £866 per month/£100 to £199 per week

£10,400 to £15,599/£867 to £1,299 per month/£200 to £299 per week

£15,600 to £20,799 per year/£1,300 to £1,732 per month/£300 to £399 per week

£20,800 to £25,999 per year/£1,733 to £2,166 per month/£400 to £499 per week

£26,000 to £31,199 per year/£2,167 to £2,599 per month/£500 to £599 per week

£31,200 to £36,399 per year/£2,600 to £3,032 per month/£600 to £699 per week

£36,400 to £41,599 per year/£3,033 to £3,466 per month/£700 to £799 per week

£41,600 to £46,799 per year/£3,467 to £3,899 per month/£800 to £899 per week

£46,800 to £51,999 per year/£3,900 to £4,332 per month/£900 to £999 per week

£52,000 or more per year/£4,333 or more per month/£1,000 or more per week

Prefer not to answer

Base: all

What is the highest educational or work-related qualification you have? If you don't have any formal qualifications please select the last option.

NVQ level 5
 Higher degree (postgraduate, masters or doctorate)
 NVQ level 4
 First degree
 Other degree
 Diploma in higher education
 HNC, HND, BTEC, etc, higher
 Teaching qualification
 Nursing qualification
 RSA higher diploma
 Other higher education below degree
 NVQ level 3
 GNVQ – advanced level
 A level or equivalent (two or more)
 RSA advanced diploma or certificate
 OND, ONC, BTEC, etc, national
 City and Guilds Advanced Craft
 Scottish certificate of sixth year studies (Scot. CSYS)
 SCE higher or equivalent (three or more)
 Higher national qualification or equivalent (Scotland)
 Access to higher education qualification
 AS level or equivalent (four or more)
 Trade apprenticeships
 NVQ level 2
 GNVQ – intermediate
 RSA diploma
 City and Guilds – Craft
 BTEC, SCOTVEC, etc, first or general diploma
 O Level, GCSEs A–C and equivalents (five or more)
 A level (one only)
 AS level (two or three)
 SCE higher or equivalent (one or two)
 Intermediate 2 national qualification (Scotland)
 NVQ level 1
 GNVQ, GSVQ foundation level
 CSE below grade 1, GCSE below grade C
 Intermediate 1 national qualification (Scotland)
 BTEC, SCOTVEC, first or general certificate
 SCOTVEC modules
 RSA, other

City and Guilds, other
YT, YTP certificate
Key skills
Basic skills
Entry level
Other qualifications
No formal qualifications

References

Mitchell, M, Creegan, C, Howarth, C and Kotecha, M. *Sexual Orientation Review 2008*. Manchester: Equality and Human Rights Commission

Contact us

You can find out more or get in touch with us via our website at:

www.equalityhumanrights.com

or by contacting one of our helplines below:

Helpline – England

Telephone: 0845 604 6610

Textphone: 0845 604 6620

Fax: 0845 604 6630

Helpline – Scotland

Telephone: 0845 604 5510

Textphone: 0845 604 5520

Fax: 0845 604 5530

Helpline – Wales

Telephone: 0845 604 8810

Textphone: 0845 604 8820

Fax: 0845 604 8830

9am–5pm Monday to Friday except Wednesday 9am–8pm.

Calls from BT landlines are charged at local rates, but calls from mobiles and other providers may vary.

Calls may be monitored for training and quality purposes.

Interpreting service available through Language Line, when you call our helplines.

This report is available for downloading from our website.

If you require it in an alternative format and/or language please contact the relevant helpline to discuss your needs.

Contacts

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Helpline:

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Helpline opening times:

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This report presents the findings from a unique online survey of over 5,000 respondents, including 2,199 who currently identify as heterosexual/straight and 2,731 who currently identify as lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB). It captures a wide range of perspectives on sexual orientation, including how people define it, their attitudes and experiences.

What is already known on this topic:

There is an absence of reliable statistical data on sexual orientation, and many indicators of inequality are not collected on sexual orientation. Public attitudes are becoming more positive, and there is a general trend towards greater tolerance, though homophobic bullying is rife.

What this report adds:

- In this survey, approaching 6 per cent of respondents currently identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual. A further 9 per cent reported some current same-sex attraction or same-sex sexual behaviour.
- The majority of respondents think it is acceptable to ask questions about sexual orientation in social surveys and support, or don't mind, the inclusion of a non-compulsory question in the Census. Conducting surveys online or in private situations is likely to gain the most accurate self-identified sexual orientation responses.
- The majority of heterosexual respondents would be happy to have openly LGB people as close friends or work colleagues, but are not as positive towards openly LGB people as a candidate for prime minister, as religious leaders or as parents.
- Many LGB people felt that they can't be open about their sexual orientation because of fear of prejudice or discrimination, and a significant minority perceive and experience segregation at work, in sports and in places to live.
- There remain high incidences of homophobic hate crime and hate incidents targeted at LGB people, including bullying, name calling, and physical and sexual assault.