

LGBT+ in Russia 2023

report summary



4701
respondents

We asked people about their experiences of everyday discrimination and violence, and how their lives are being affected by increased anti-LGBT+ repression and the war with Ukraine.

What have we learned?

LGBT+ people are more closeted than in 2022

There have become more people who are closeted with all friends, relatives, colleagues, or classmates, while the number of those who are out to the majority in their social environment has decreased.

Homophobic and transphobic attitudes in Russian society have increased

There are fewer people who consider their close ones to be LGBT+ friendly, and more people who describe their environment as mainly homophobic and transphobic. The share of respondents who themselves have noticed an increase in homophobic and/or transphobic attitudes in Russian society after February 24 has increased slightly to 87%. The share of those who have observed a rise in homophobic and transphobic attitudes in their immediate environment, as in the previous year, is much smaller – 43% – but it has also increased slightly.

LGBT+ people are more likely to face pressure at work and at school

About a third of our respondents have experienced pressure at work or school because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Among transgender people, this figure is almost half. Compared to last year's data, it has become more common for our participants to experience discrimination at work or school, but the increase is still only 4 percentage points. Furthermore, according to our respondents, the new oppressive legislation has had a negative effect on the situation at work and in school: the environment has become more homophobic and transphobic, and queerness itself has become a matter of constant criticism and scrutiny.

Increasing denial of medical care (especially for transgender people)

Among those who requested healthcare and disclosed their SOGIE to a doctor or other medical professional, almost one out of five encountered discriminatory or violent actions by healthcare workers. Transgender people are especially vulnerable to discrimination in the healthcare sector: one in three transgender respondents have experienced prejudice from doctors, and one in five have been denied healthcare. Moreover, denying healthcare was significantly more common than last year. This is a direct consequence of the law prohibiting gender transition, but as our respondents said, the restrictions they faced concern not only the medical services directly prohibited by the law, but also many other things: for example, medical assistance for people who have already transitioned.



Transgender people are more likely to experience denials of state services

With the passage of the law banning gender transition, transgender people have been denied to provide state services twice as often. As we can see from the detailed responses, people are being denied not only changing their gender marker (which was prohibited by law in 2023), but also to changing their name to a gender-neutral one (which is not regulated by the law) or to changing their documents according to the previously updated gender marker.

LGBT+ people are more likely to experience hate-motivated violence or pressure, especially threats

43.5% of our participants experienced one or several forms of violence or pressure based on their sexuality and/or gender. Last year, that figure was just 30%. In other words, hate crime rates have increased significantly.

One in four participants were threatened with physical abuse because of their sexuality or gender identity in 2023 (in 2022 – only one in five).

Victims of hate crimes are less likely to contact the police, and police officers are more feared

LGBT+ people still have little trust for Russian law enforcement, our surveys have been reporting a consistently low level of credibility two years in a row. Although the level of credibility for law enforcement has not changed since last year, fear of police has become more common, as well as fear of being outed and concerns for the negative consequences that may follow. Crime victims are now reporting to the police even less frequently, and the efficiency of such reports is still on an extremely low level.

Transgender parents are more likely to face difficulties in interacting with children's doctors, teachers and caregivers

Compared to last year's data, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of parents who have encountered issues when interacting with their children's relatives. Additionally, there has been an increase in the proportion of transgender people who have faced difficulties in interacting with various children's educational and medical institutions. This may also be a direct or indirect consequence of the gender transition ban adoption.

LGBT+ people in Russia under extreme stress

Detailing the impact of war and repressions on them personally, respondents frequently described heightened levels of anxiety and exacerbated or new-onset depression. Some recounted experiencing suicidal ideation or even carrying out suicide attempts. Many mentioned abandoning outward displays of their identity, such as bright clothing, unconventional hair and nail styles, piercings, or LGBTQ+ symbols, in favor of safety. Some respondents noted turning to alcohol or substance use as a coping mechanism due to war and new laws. Some respondents noted that coming out became impossible.

The full report can be read [here](#)

