

# Washington LGBTQ+ Survey: Demographics and Policy Experiences

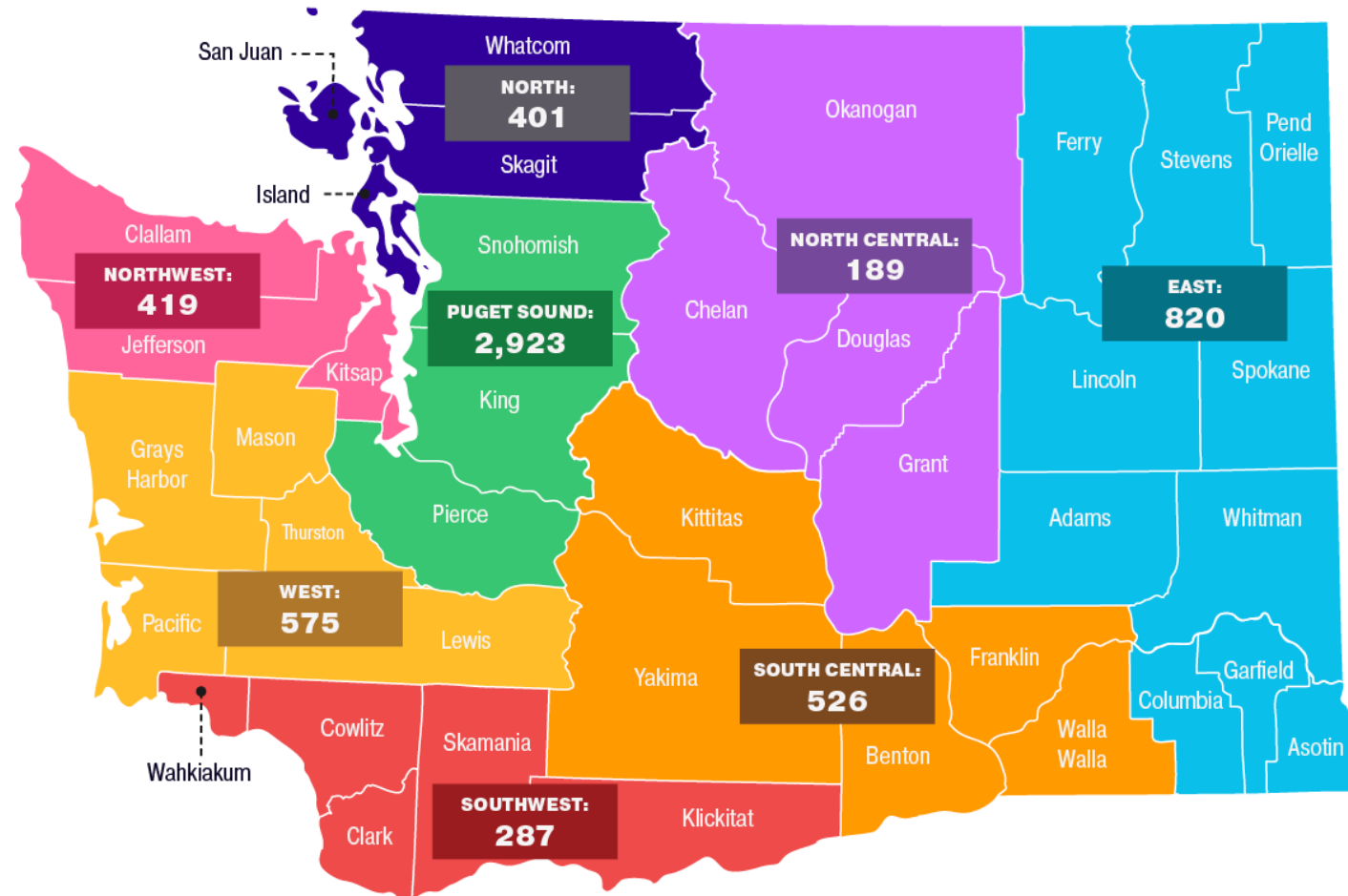
# Overview

- Demographics
- Living in Washington
- LGBTQ+ resources and policies
- Experiences with gender-affirming legal processes
- Suggestions for policy improvements

# Demographics

(6,659 survey participants)

# Region of residence

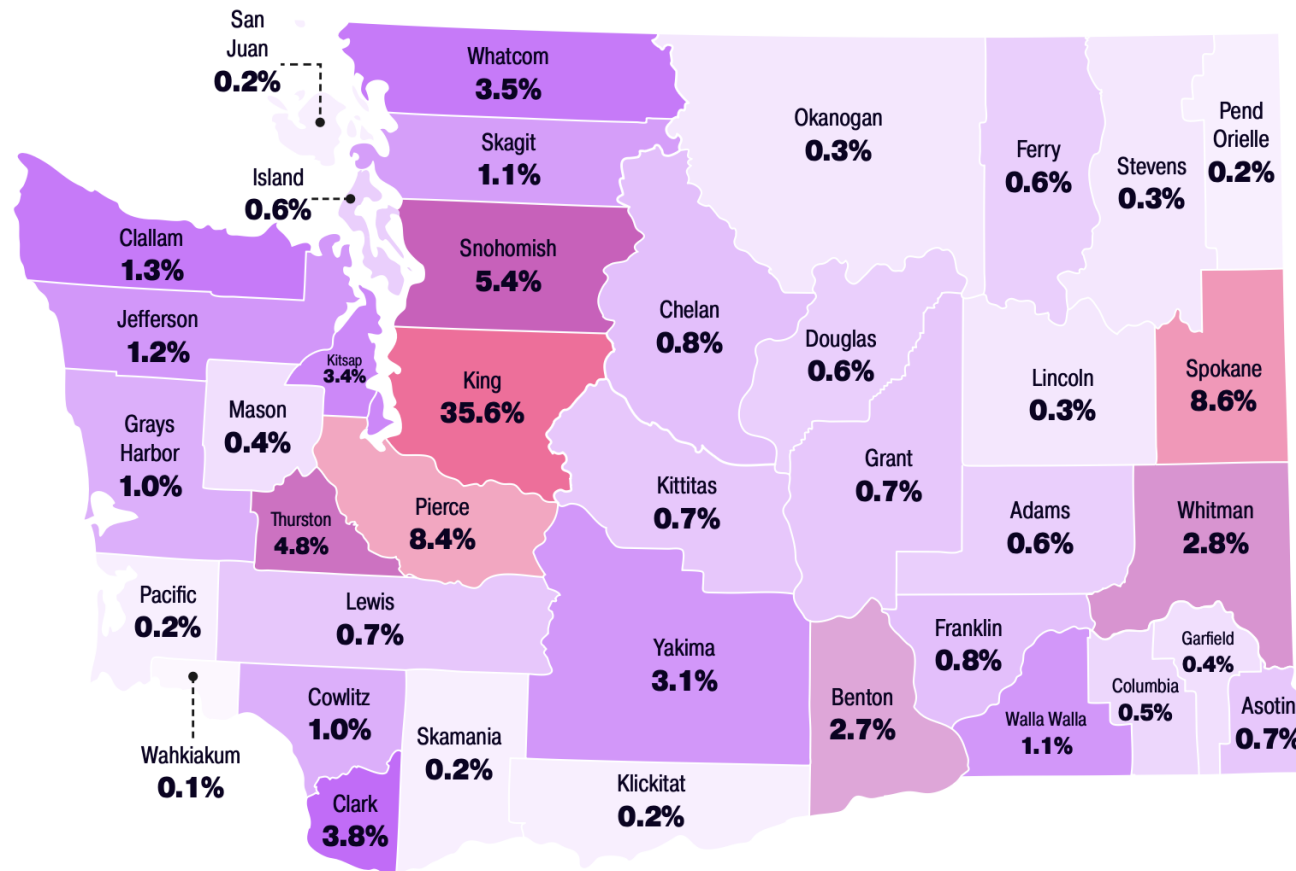




# County of residence

Percent of Survey Participants Residing in County

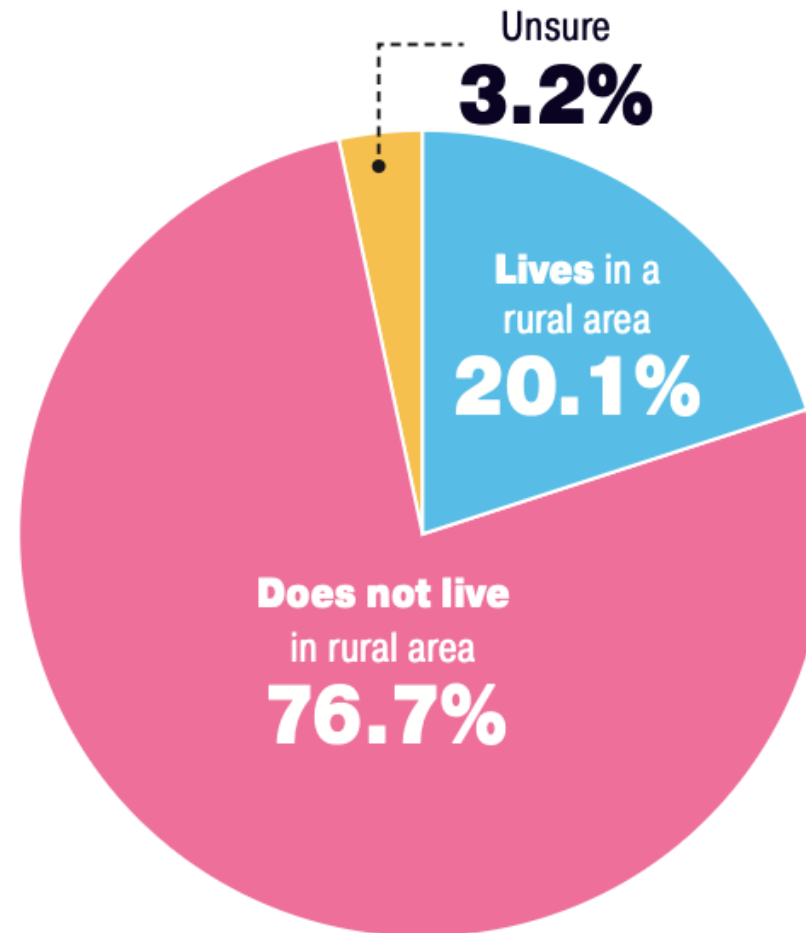
(6,098 participants)



# Rural area residence

Do you live in a rural area  
(that is, an area not  
immediately surrounding a  
city; a small town generally  
surrounded by open land)?

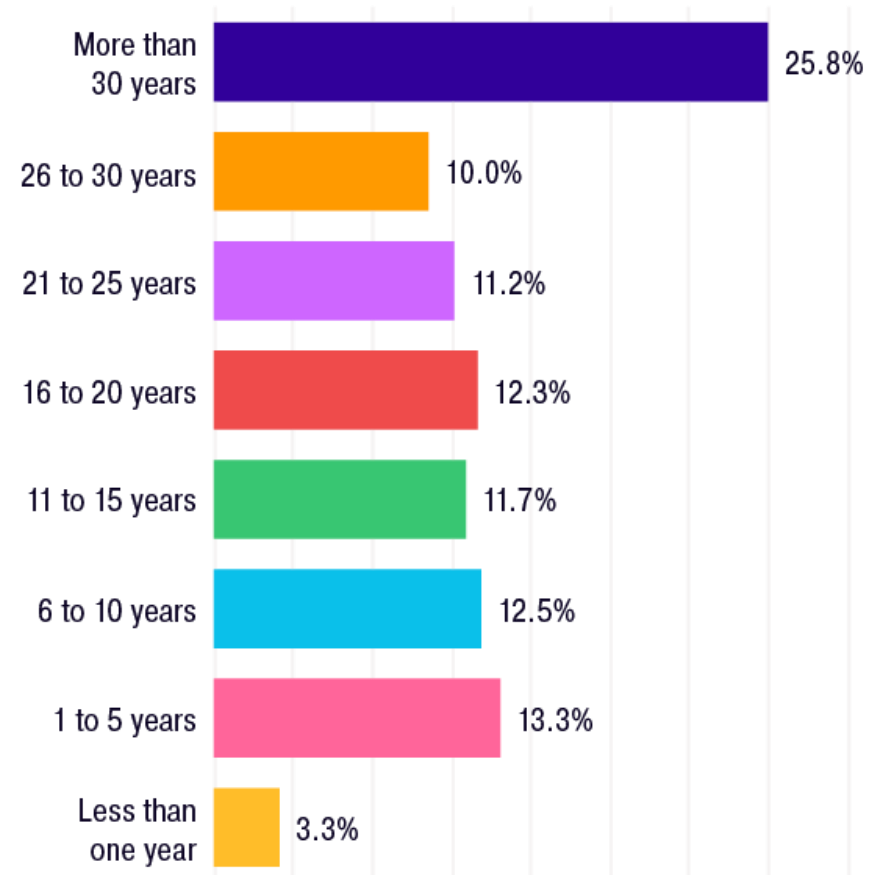
(6,091 participants)



# Duration of living in WA

How long have you lived in Washington?

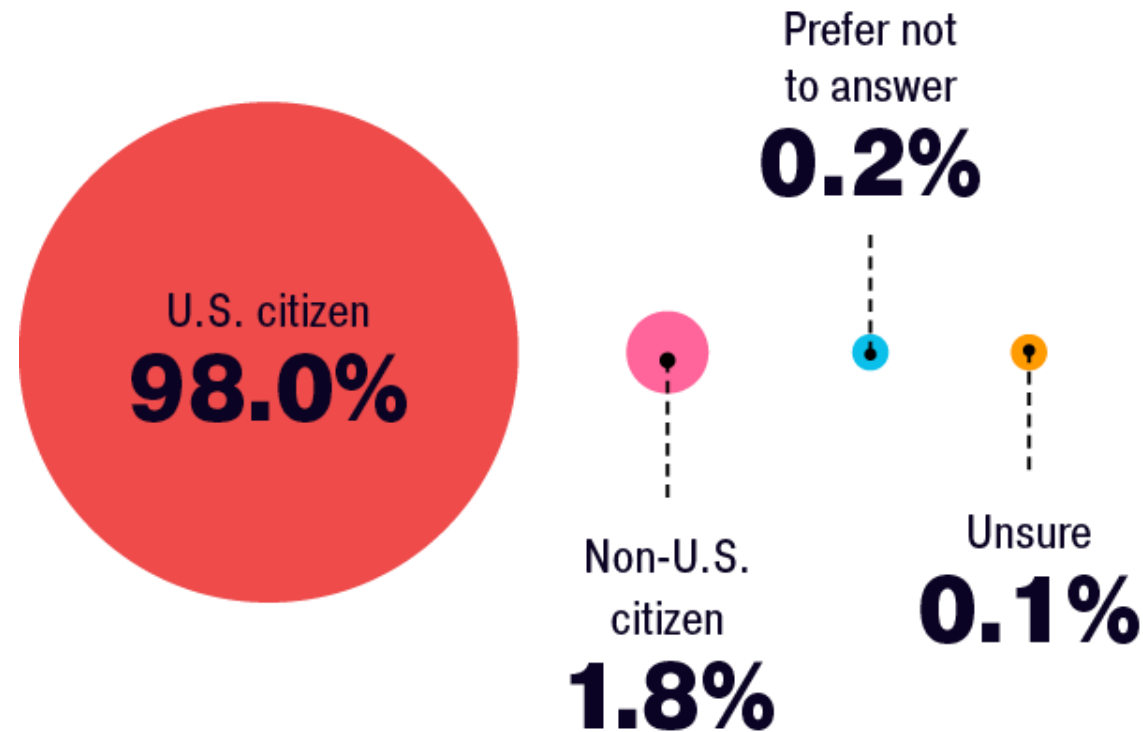
(6,096 participants)



# U.S. citizenship

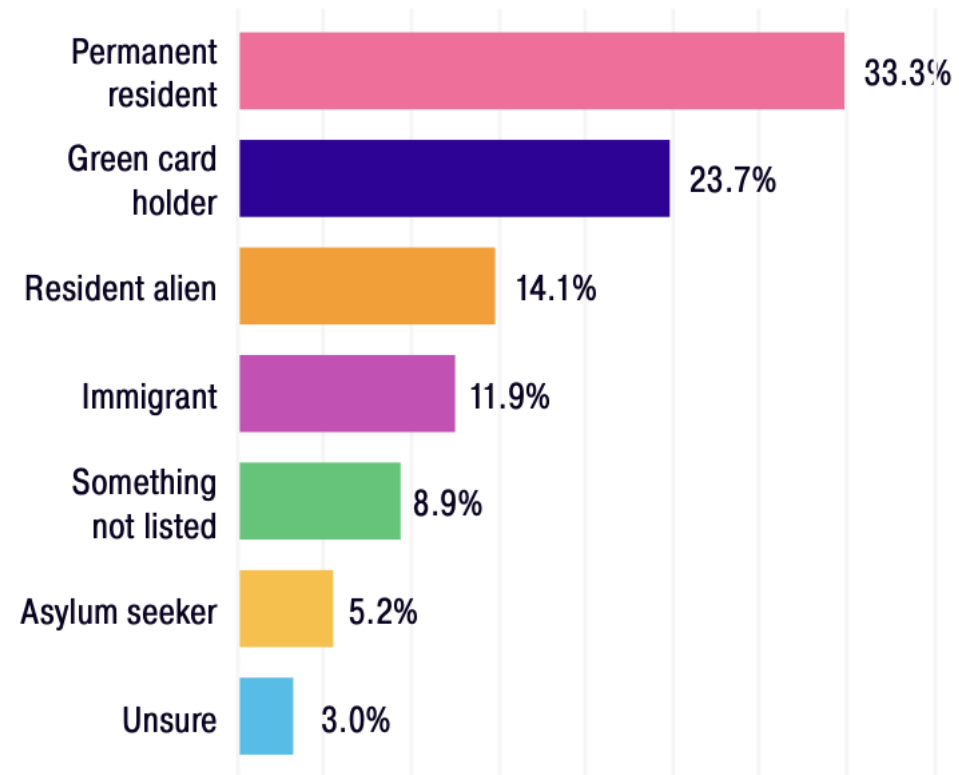
Are you a citizen of the United States?

(5,516 participants)



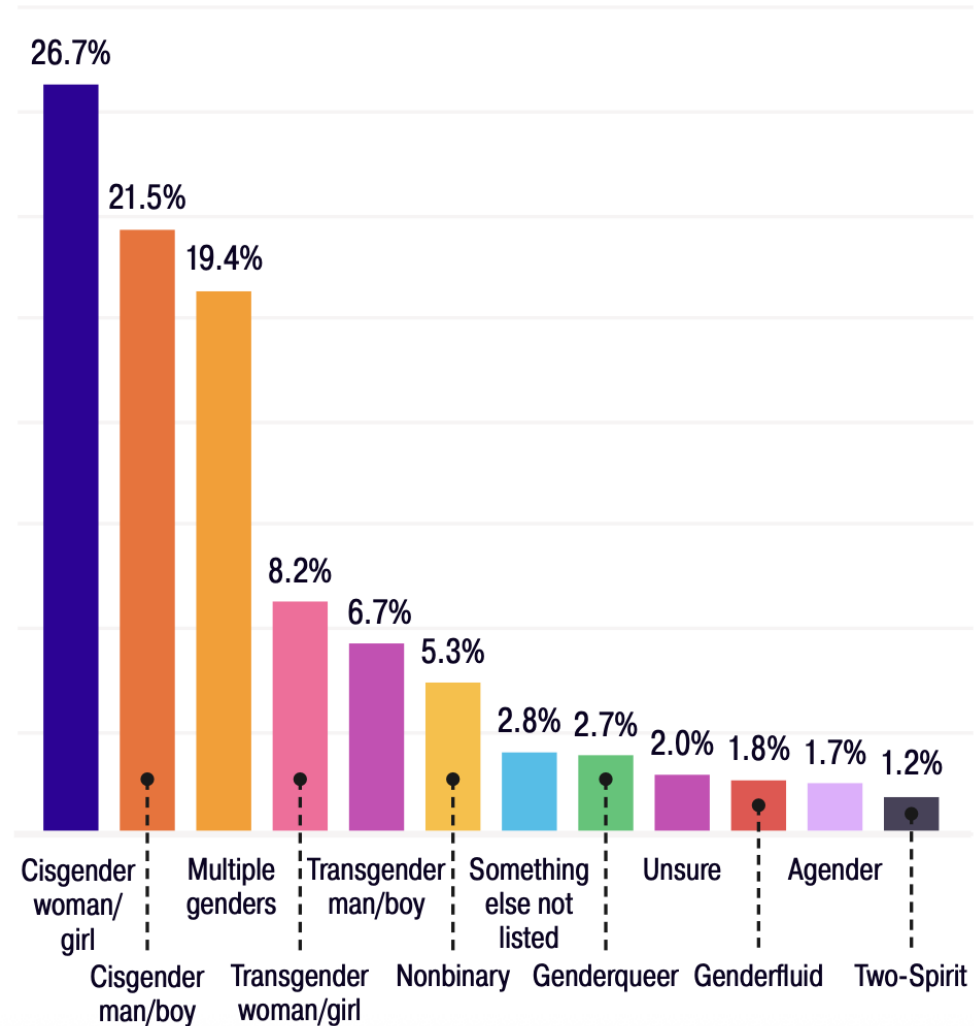
# Immigration

**Of 135 participants who reported their immigration status:**



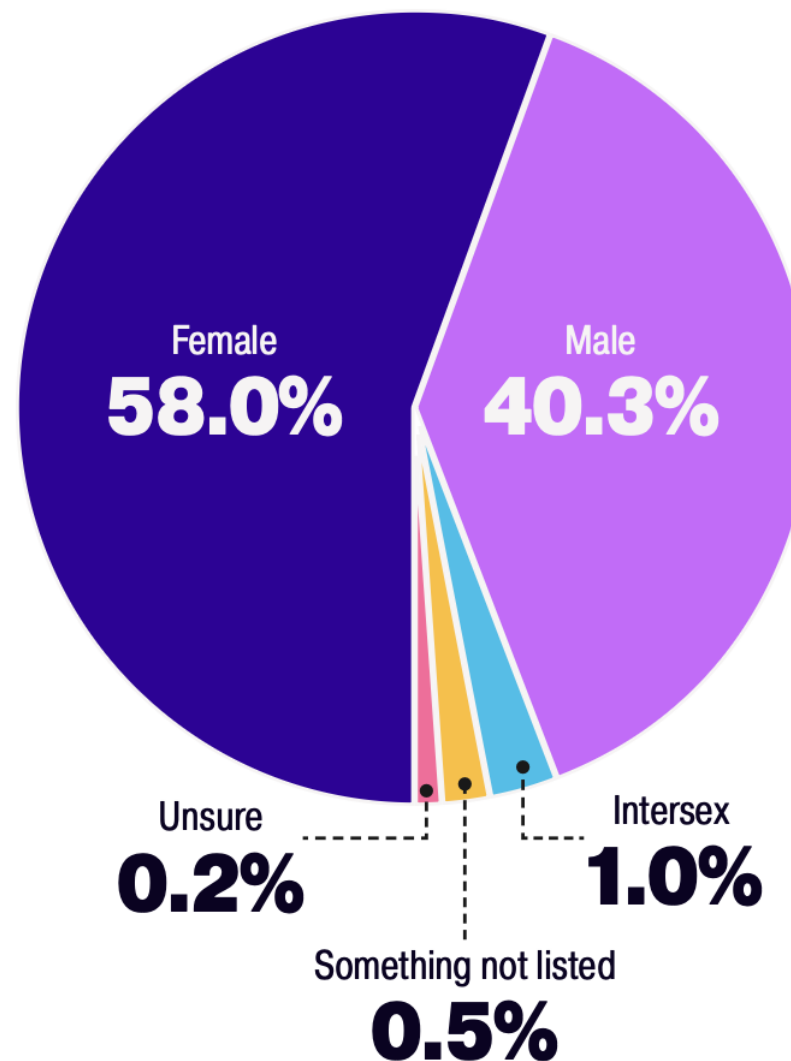
# Gender

Which describes your gender?  
(6,163 participants)



# Sex

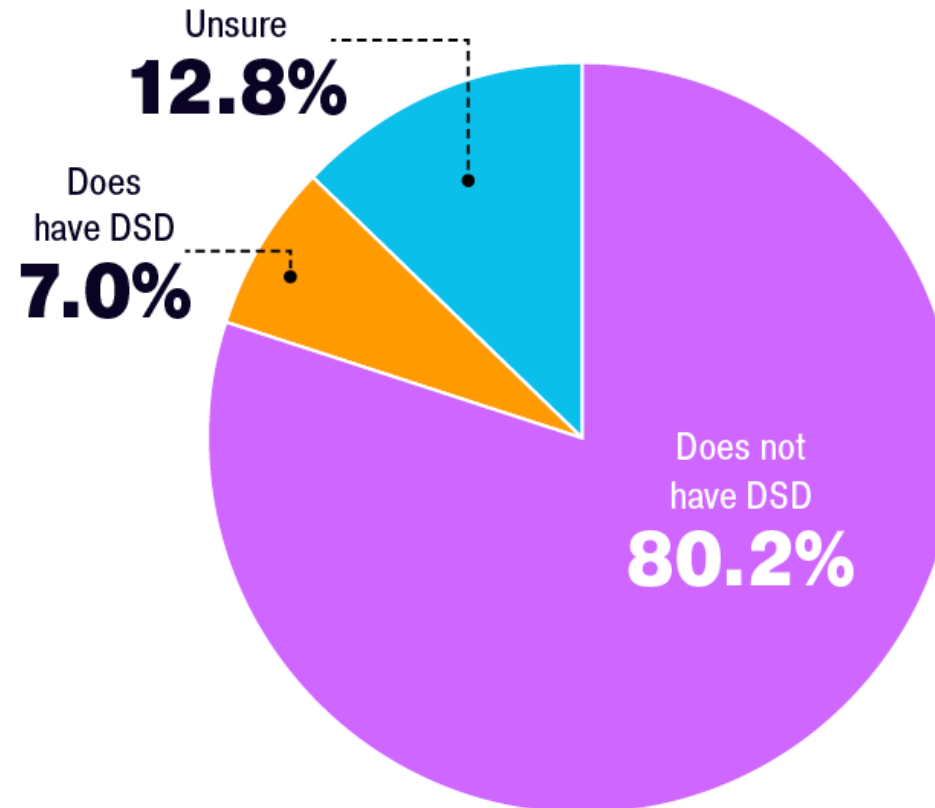
What sex were you assigned at birth?  
(6,155 participants)



# Difference of sex development

Do you have a difference of sex development (DSD)?

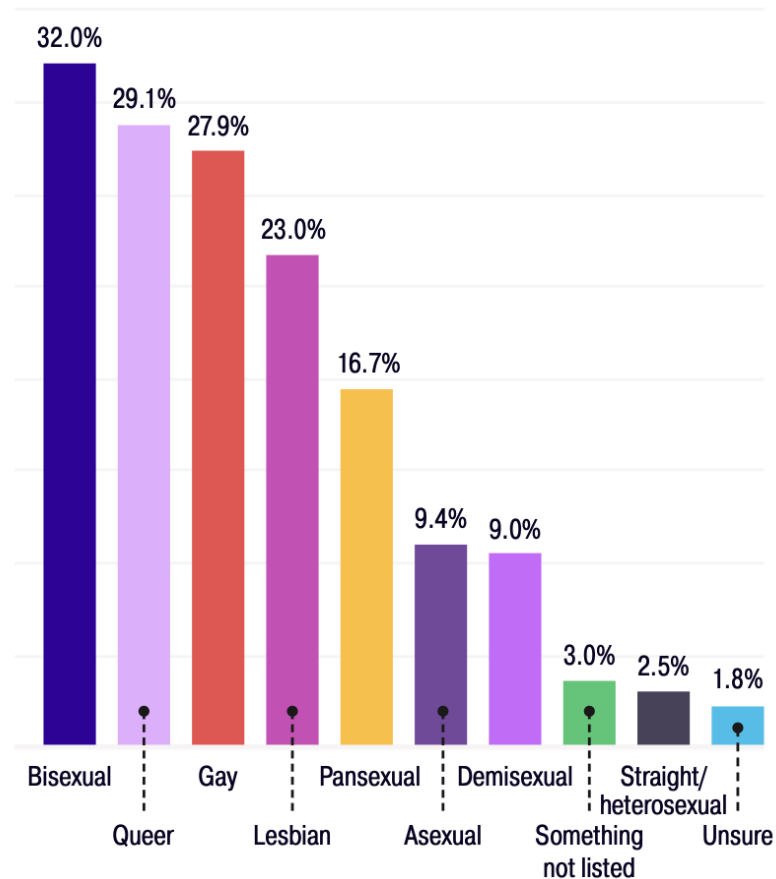
(6,164 participants)





# Sexual orientation

**Which sexual orientation describes you?**  
(6,166 participants)



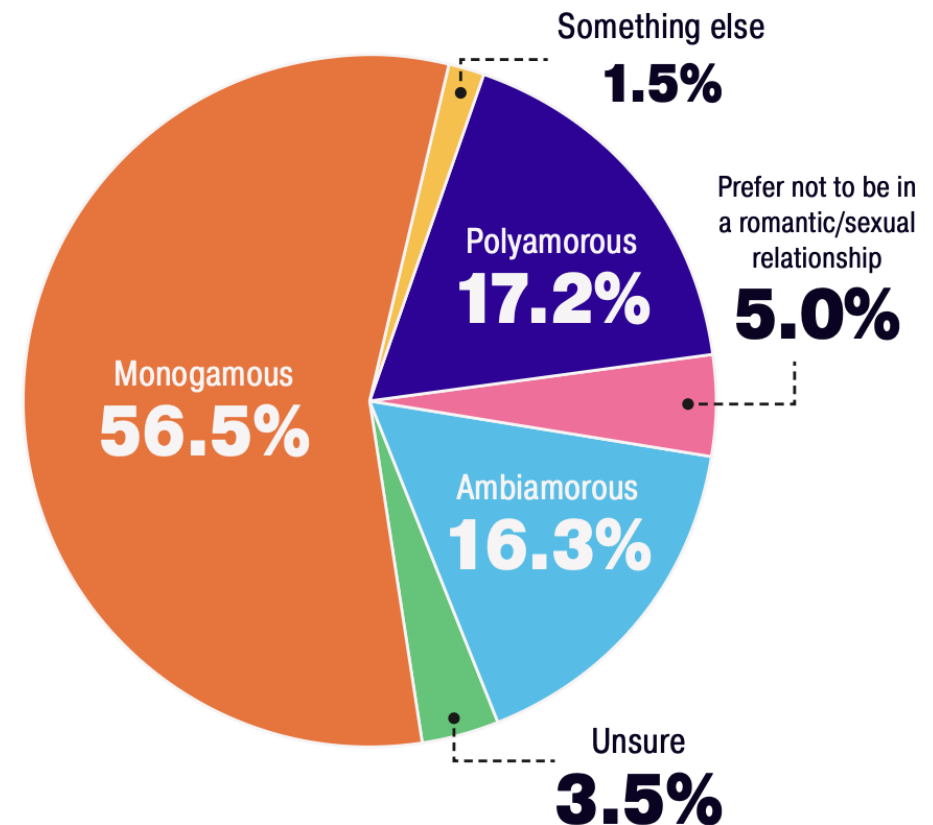
# Relationship structure

## Definitions:

- Monogamous** (When a person has romantic, sexual, and/or emotional relationships with only one partner at a time)
- Polyamorous** (When a person may have romantic, sexual, and/or emotional relationships with multiple partners at the same time, and generally all partners are aware of the existence of multiple relationships/partners)
- Ambiamorous** (When a person may have a romantic, sexual, and/or emotional relationship with one person at a time OR may have romantic, sexual, and/or emotional relationships with multiple people at the same time, depending on their situation, with a key factor often being the preferences of a current partner)

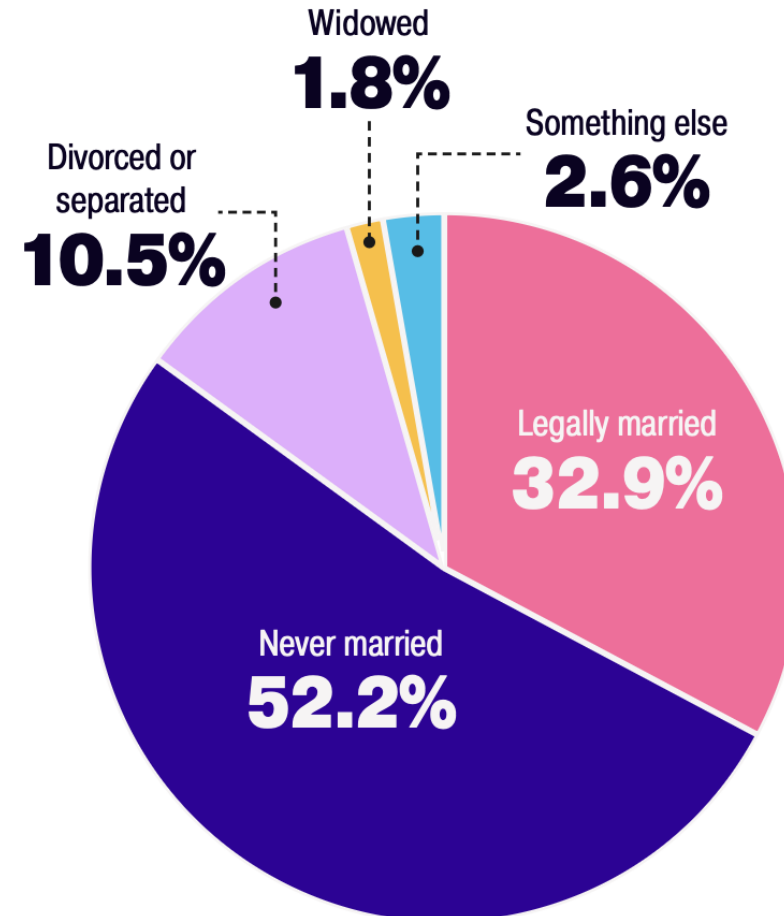
## Which best describes your preferred romantic/sexual relationship structure?

(6,148 participants)



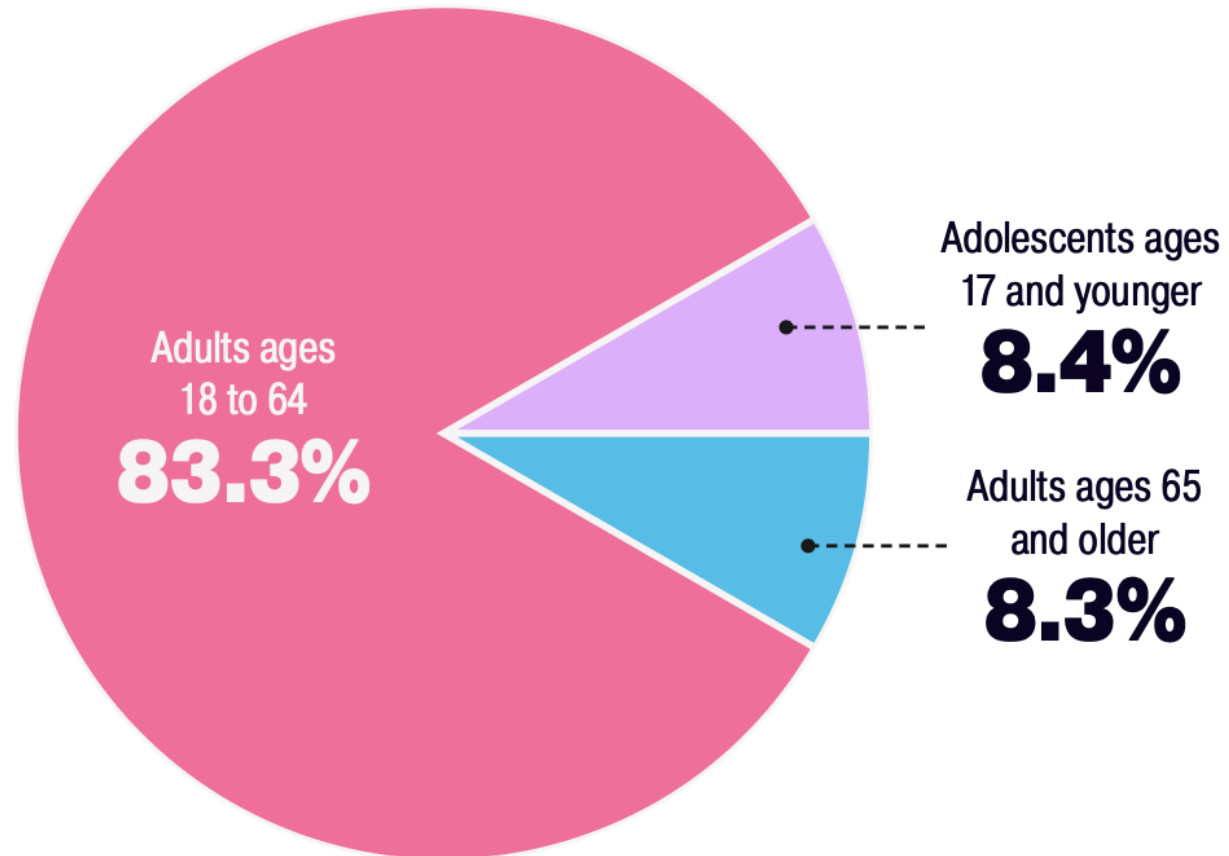
# Marital status

Which describes your current marital status  
(6,102 participants)



# Age

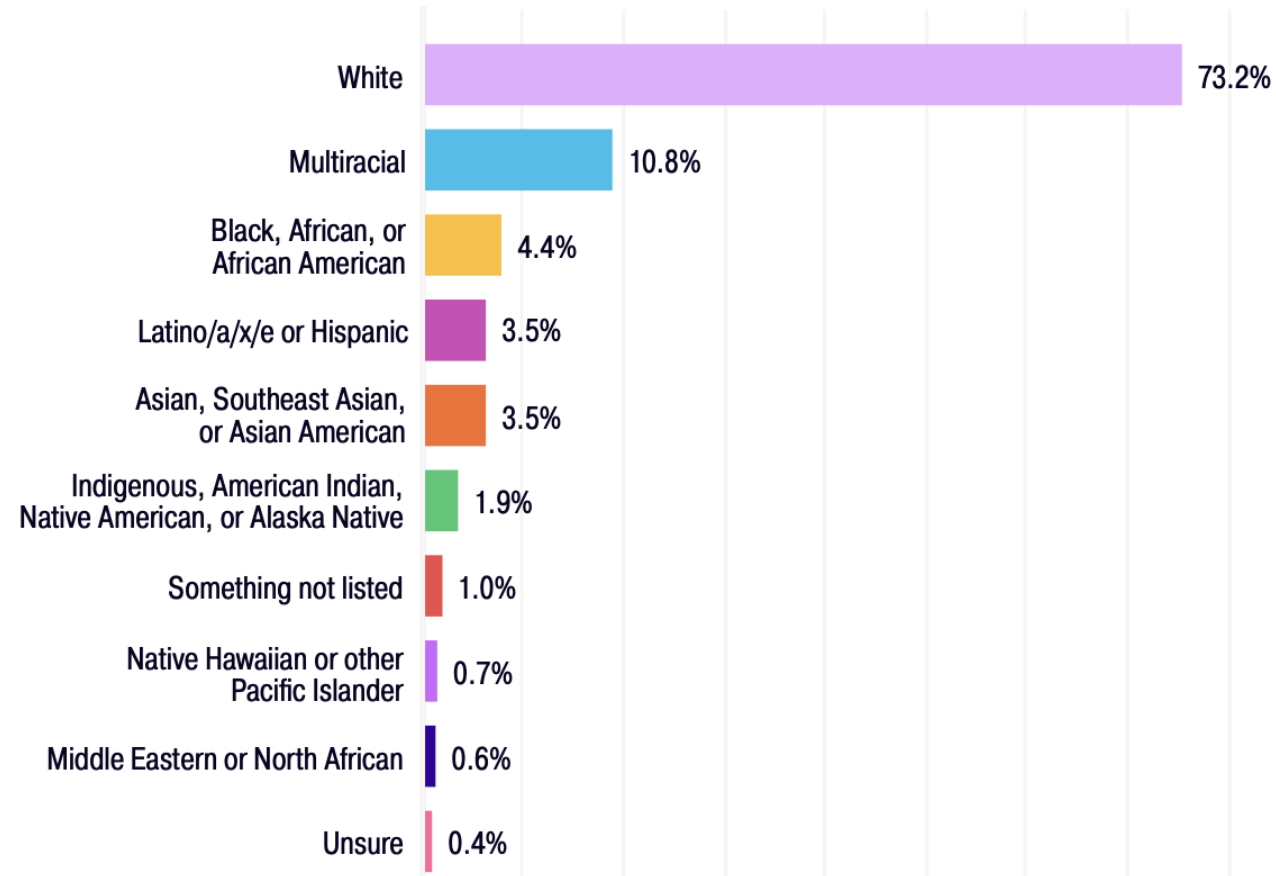
What is your age range?  
(6,138 participants)



# Race/ethnicity

What is your race/ethnicity?

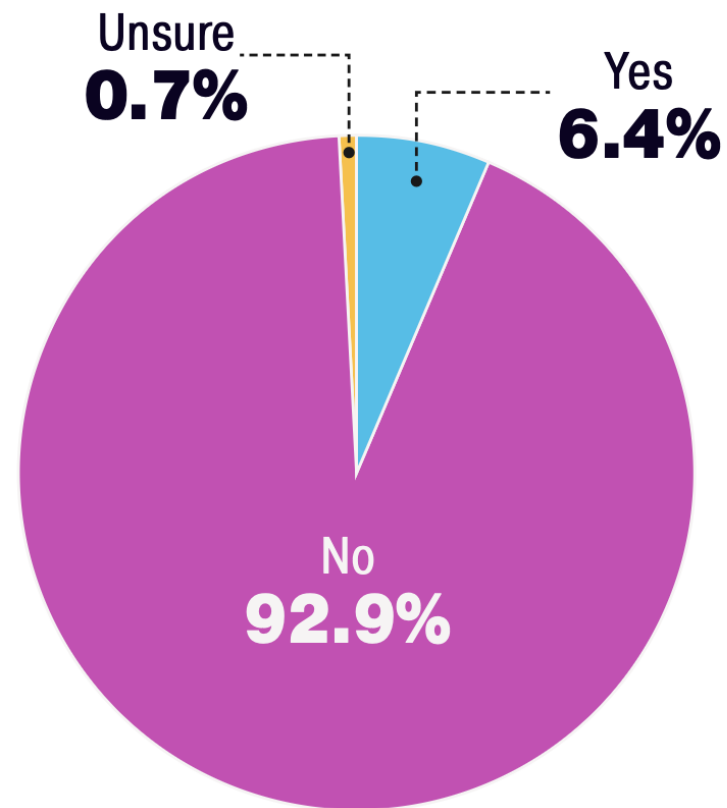
(6,138 participants)



# Tribal affiliation

Are you an enrolled member of a Native American nation or tribe?

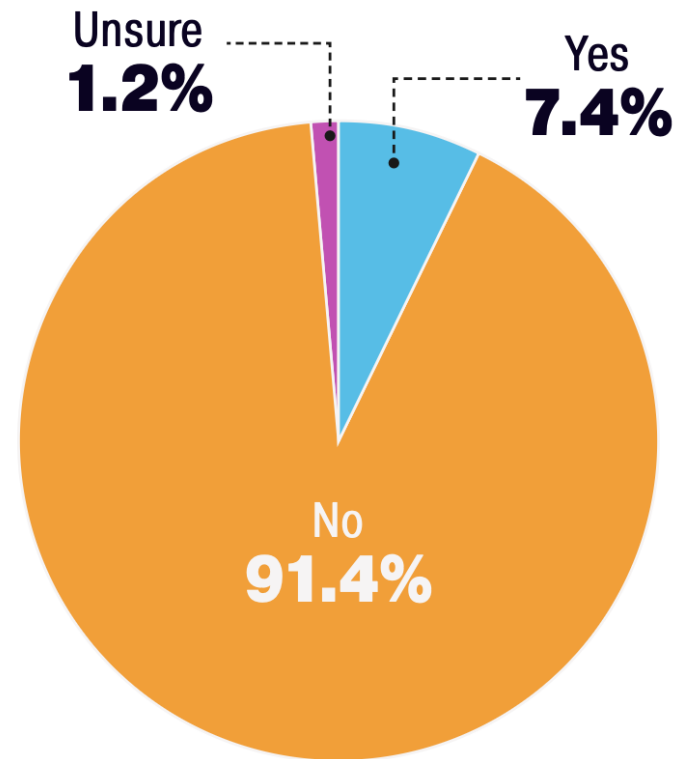
(6,145 participants)



# Alaska Native or American Indian

Do you identify as Alaska Native  
or American Indian?

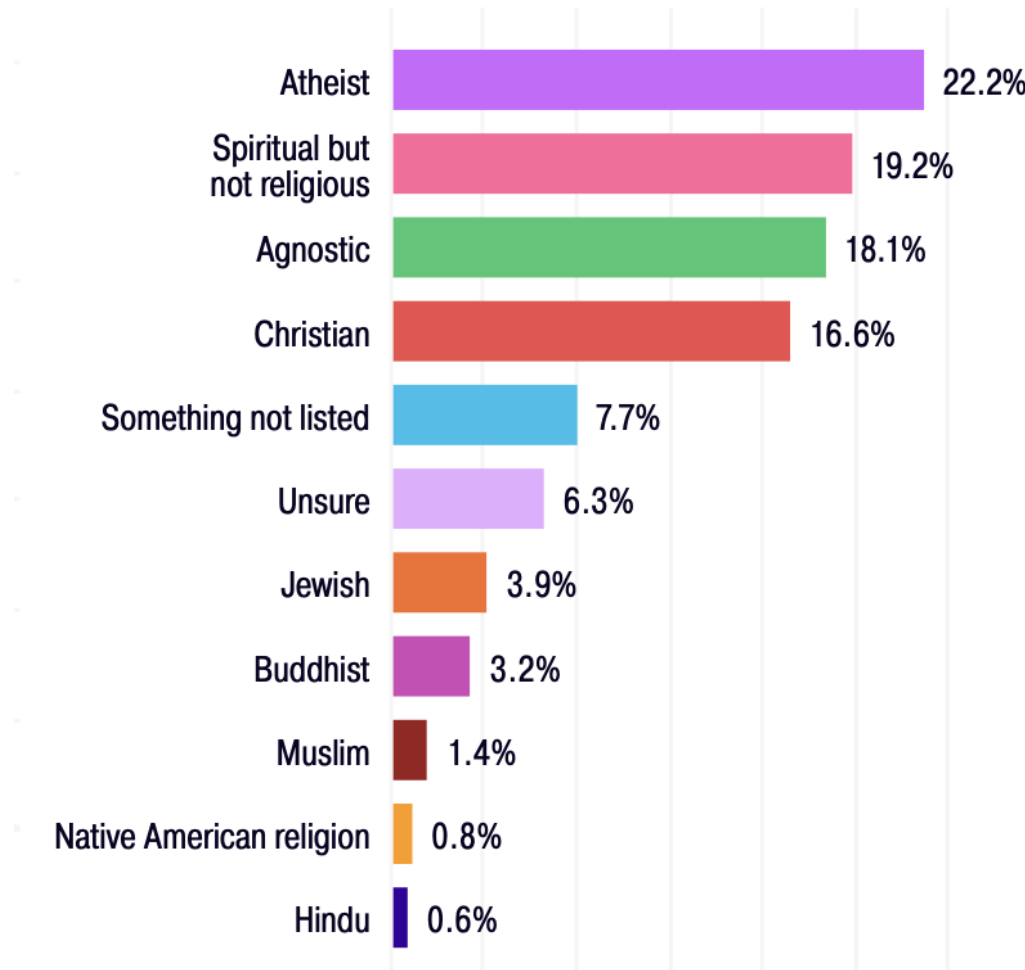
(6,121 participants)



# Religion

**Which religion or perspective at best represents  
your beliefs?**

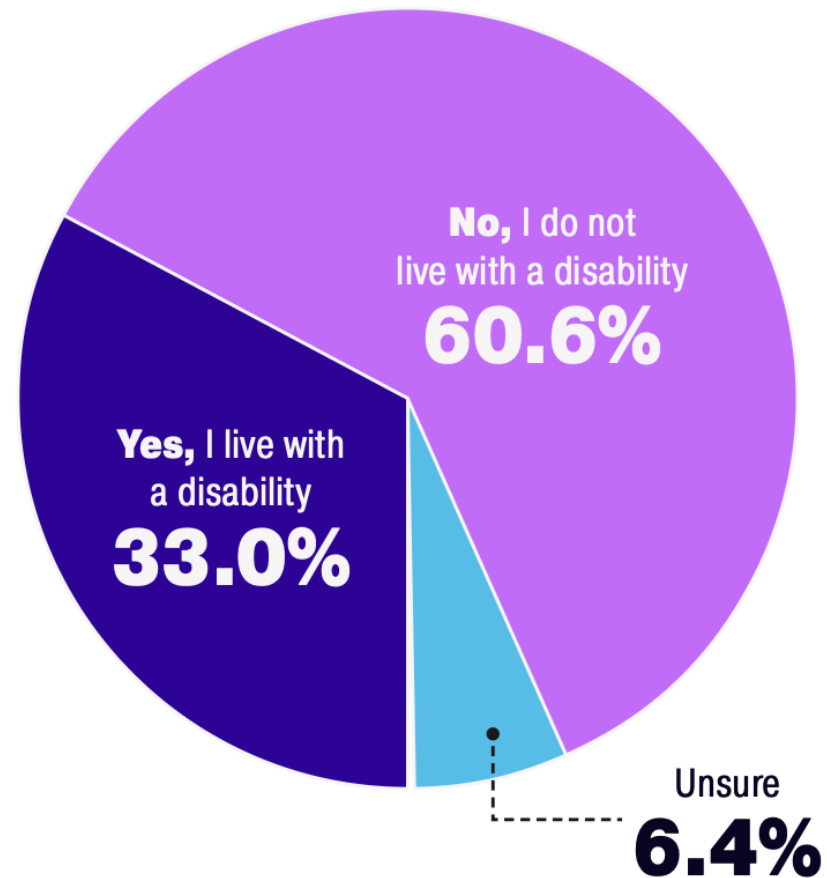
(6,143 participants)





# Disability

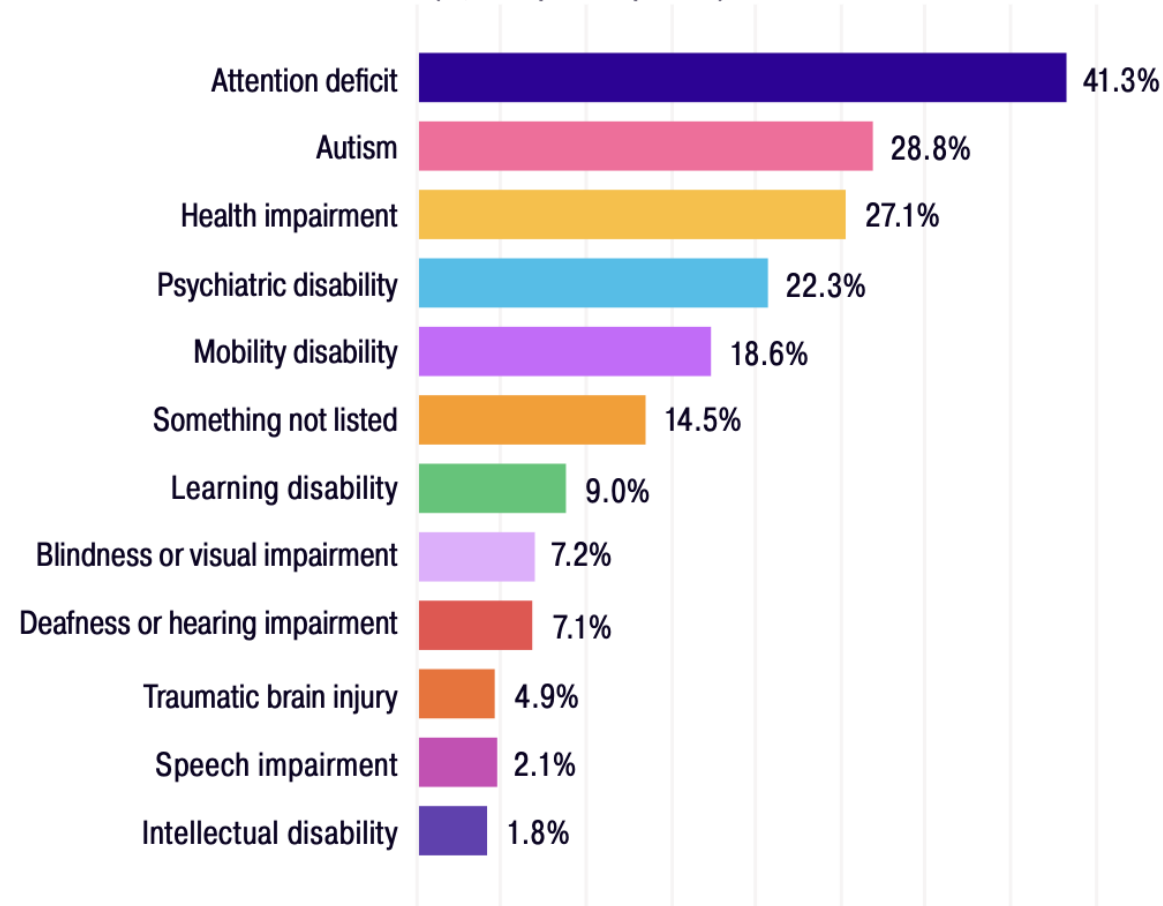
**Do you live with a disability?**  
(6,148 participants)



# Disability

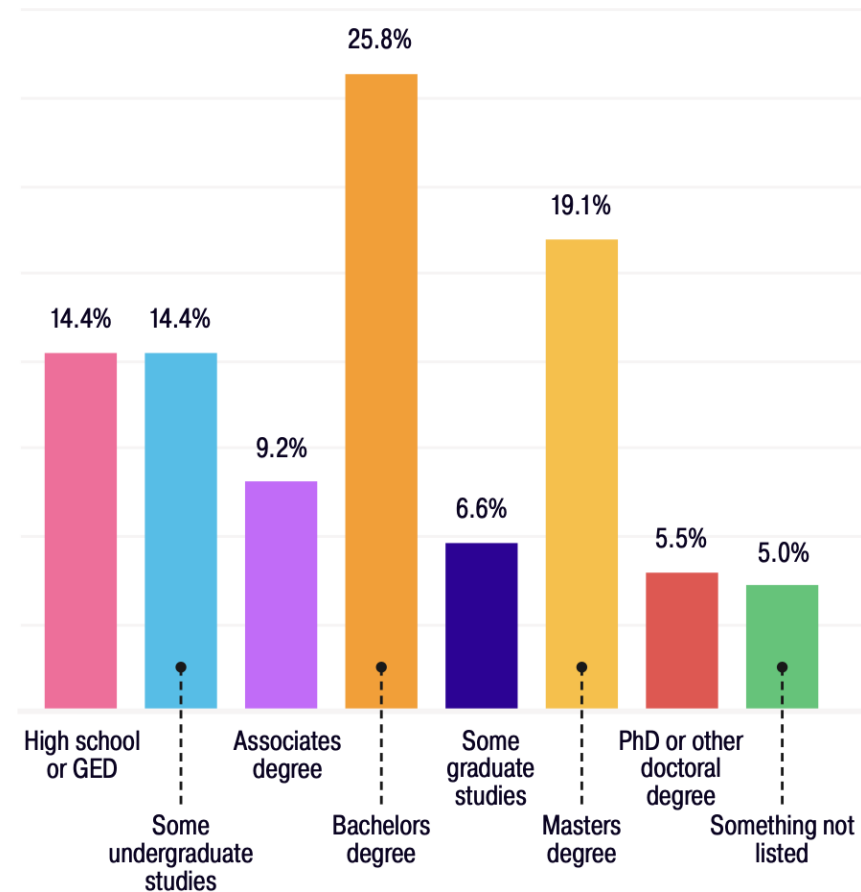
## Which disabilities or chronic conditions do you live with?

(2,443 participants)



# Education

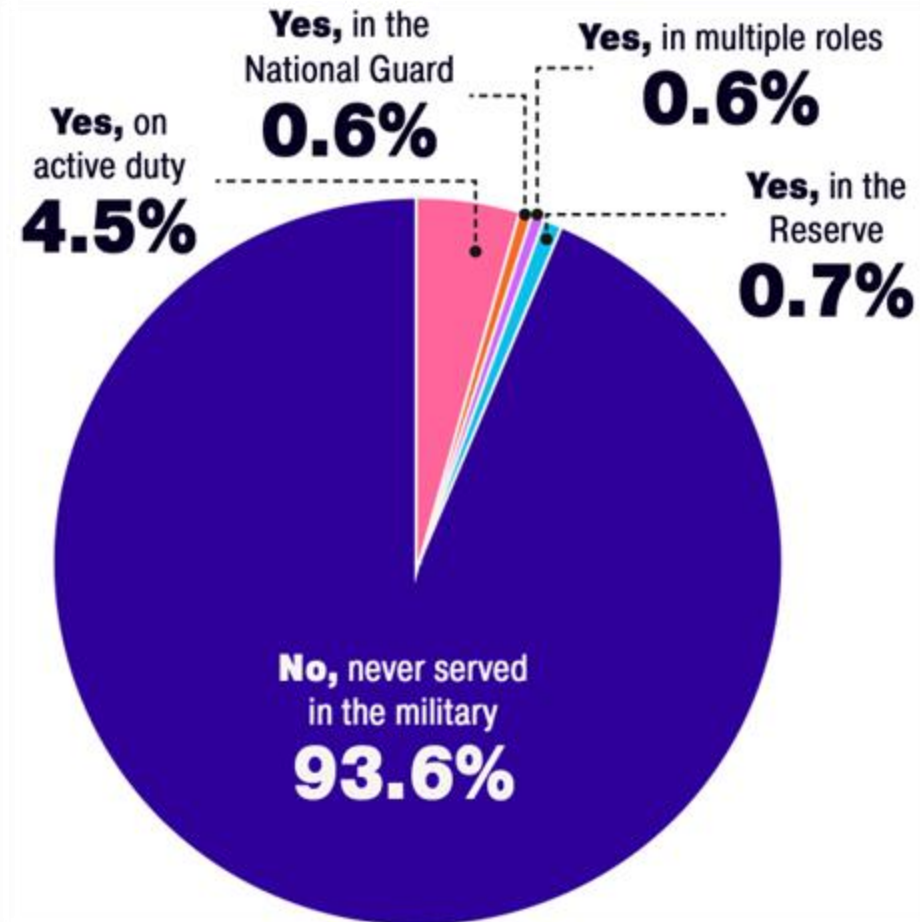
**What is the highest level of education you have completed?**  
(6,139 participants)



# Military service

**Have you ever served in the  
United States military?**

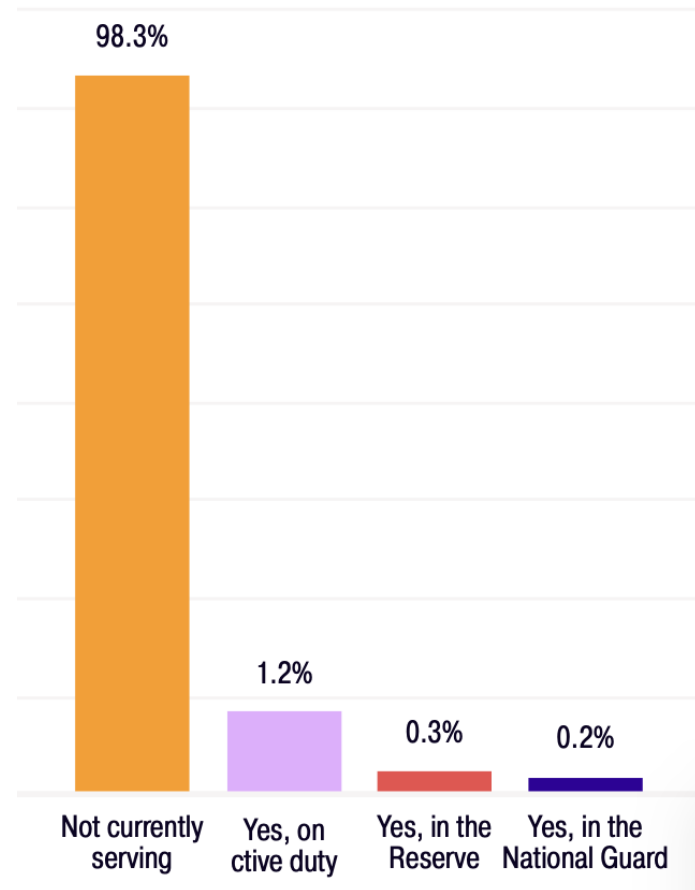
(5,553 participants)



# Military service

Are you currently serving in the  
United States military?

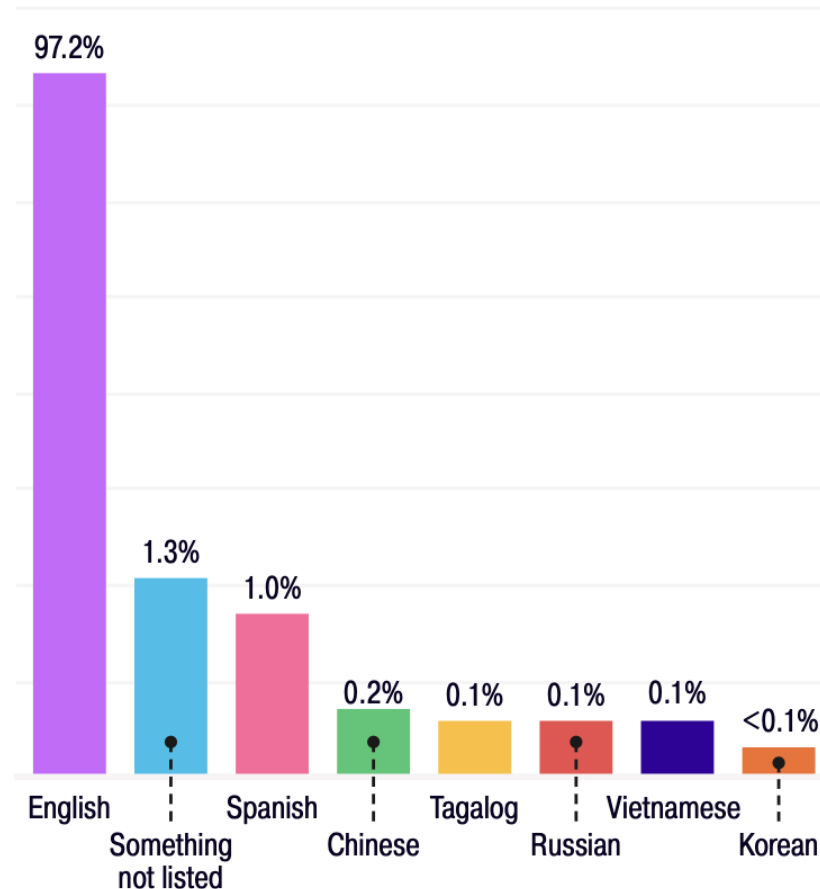
(5,521 participants)



4.9% of participants  
are military veterans

# Language at home

**What language do you primarily use at home?**  
(6,145 participants)



# Living in Washington

# Top things liked

- Main themes:
  - Community (29.0%)
  - Acceptance (23.1%)
  - Legal protections (14.9%)
  - Natural environment (8.0%)
  - Safety (7.3%)
  - Politics (6.9%)
  - Healthcare (6.6%)
  - Locations and sense of place (4.5%)
- Complete table of themes, subthemes, and quotes is in the report

**What are the top three things you like most about living in the state of Washington as an LGBTQ+ person?**

(Random selection of 1,900 participants)



# LGBTQ+ Resources and Policies

# Availability of resources

Which best describes how available LGBTQ+ resources are to you in Washington?

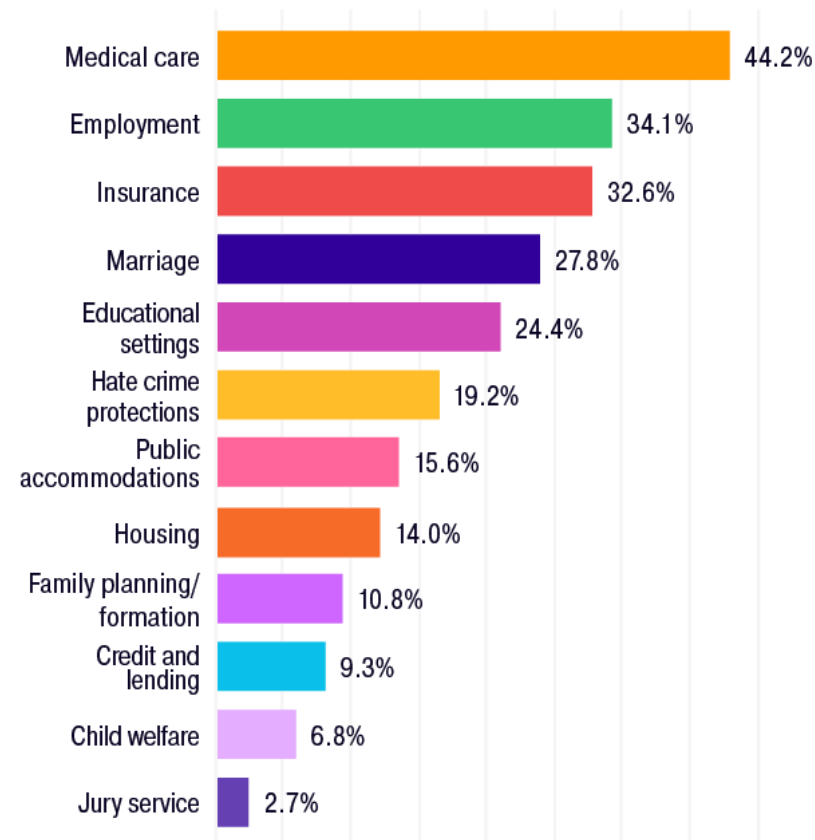
(6,648 participants)



# Policies and protections

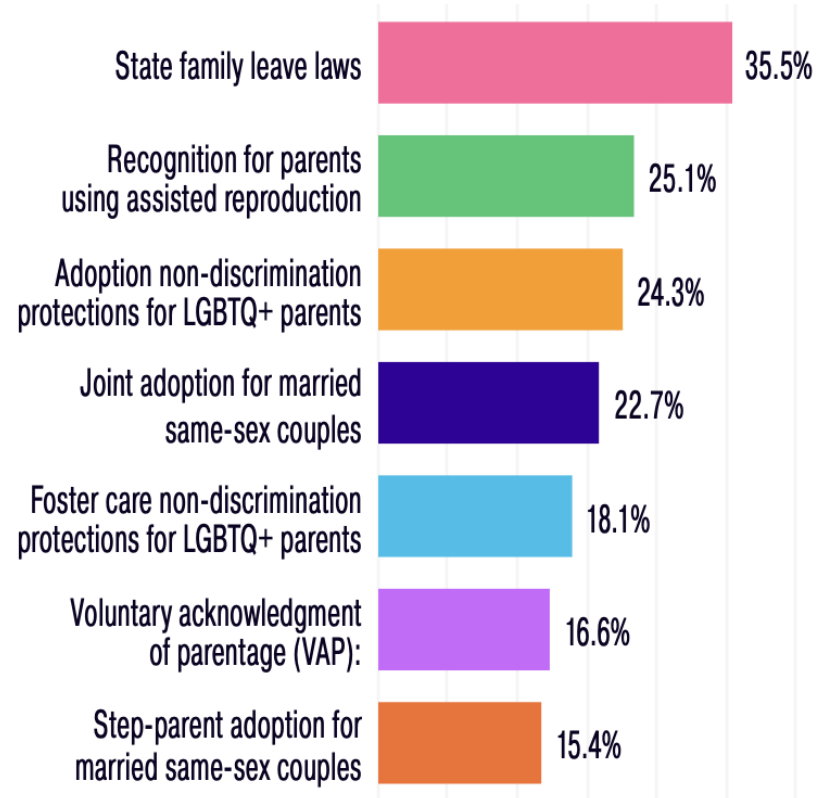
Have you benefited from Washington policies or legal protections for LGBTQ+ people in the following contexts?

(6,607 participants)



# Family planning policies

**Of the 10.8% of participants who benefited from family planning policies, these were the top policies they benefited from:**  
(714 participants)

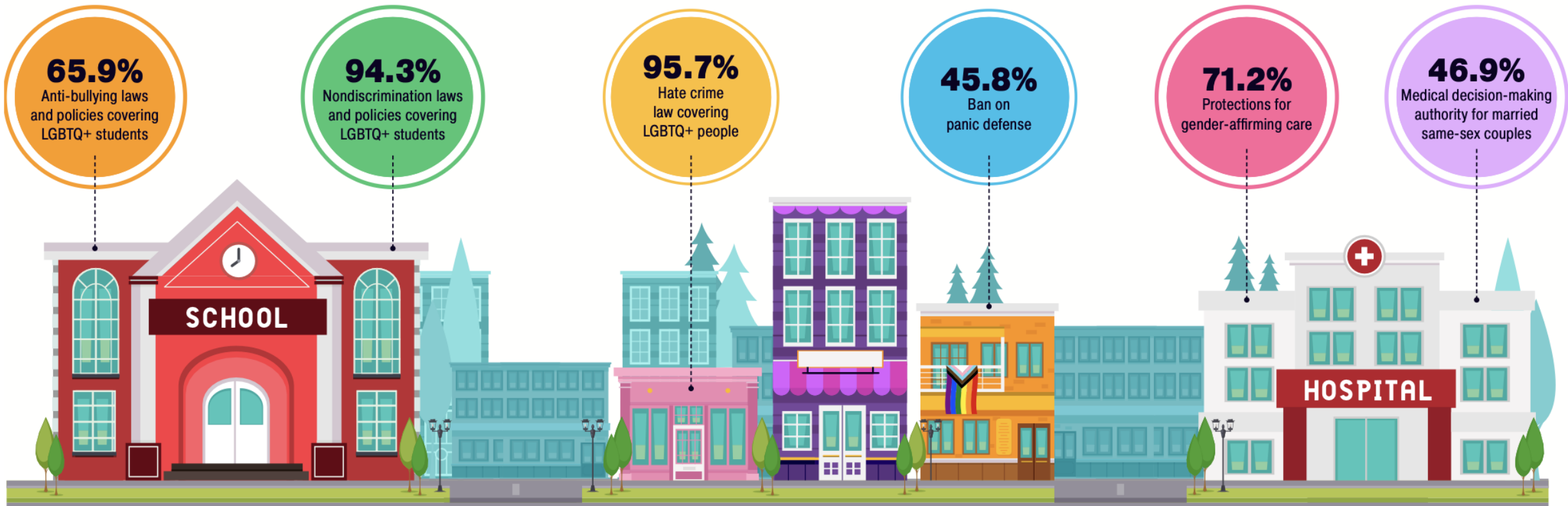


# Education, hate crimes, medicine

Of the 24.4% of participants who benefited from educational setting policies/protections, these were the top policies they benefited from:  
(1,369 participants)

Of the 19.2% of participants who benefited from hate crime policies/protections, these were the top policies they benefited from:  
(1,048 participants)

Of the 44.2% of participants who benefited from medical care policies/protections, these were the top policies they benefited from:  
(2,292 participants)



# Attitudinal effects of policies

**To what extent do you believe these state policies and legal protections have improved attitudes of the general public toward LGBTQ+ Washingtonians?**

(6,490 participants)

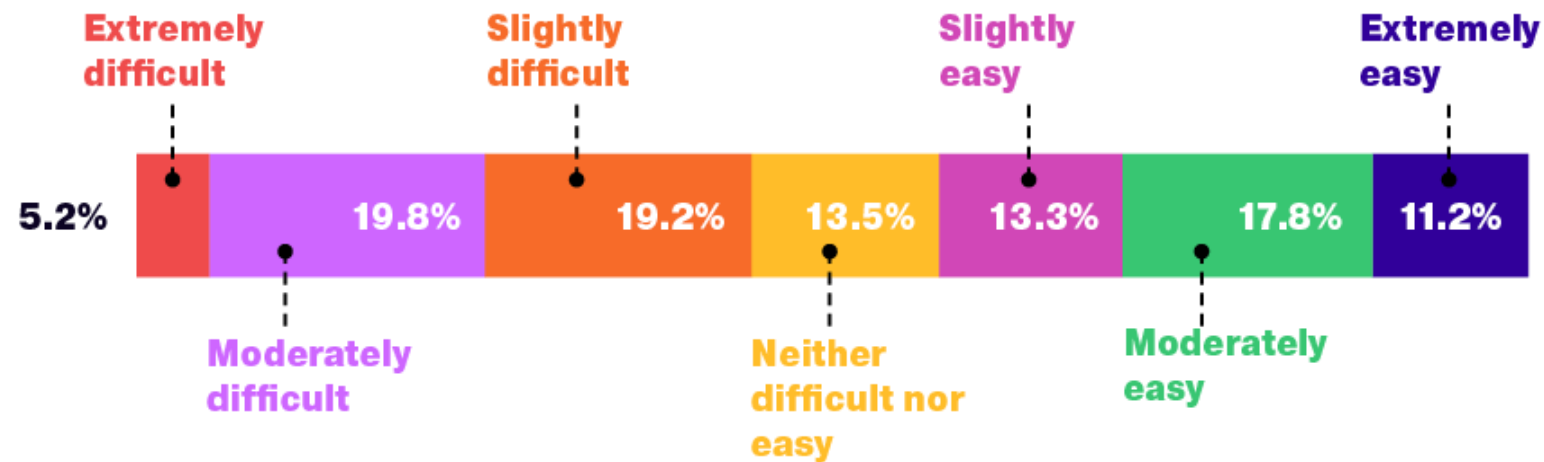


# Experiences with Gender-Affirming Legal Processes

# Birth certificate change

How was your experience changing the sex or gender on your birth certificate while living in Washington?

(734 participants)

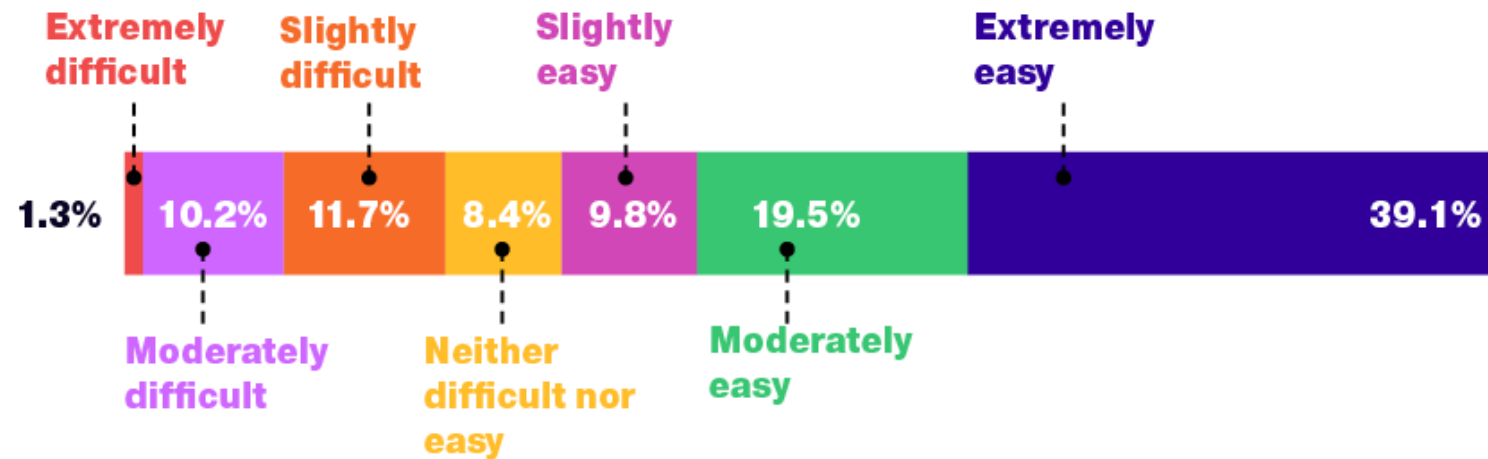




# Driver's license change

How was your experience changing your sex or gender on your driver's license while living in Washington?

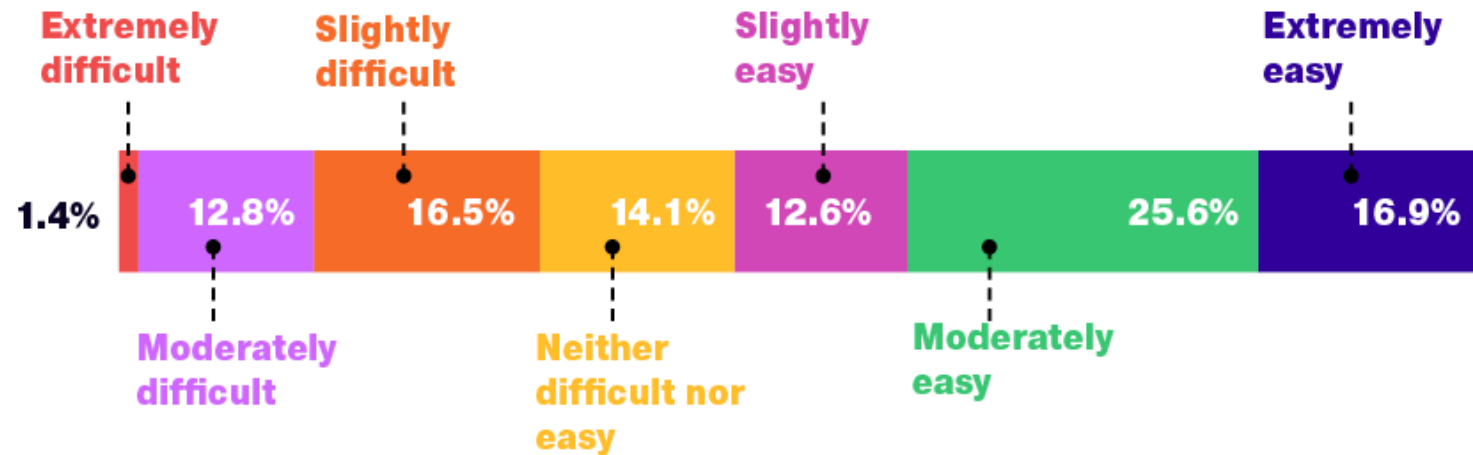
(1,188 participants)



# Legal name change

How was your experience changing your legal name while living in Washington?

(1,390 participants)



# Suggestions for Policy Improvements

# How WA government can help

**What would you like to see the Washington state government do to help LGBTQ+ people who live in Washington?**

(5,420 participants)

- Main themes:
  - Legislation, legal protections (22.6%)
  - Healthcare (17.1%)
  - Federal issues (9.5%)
  - Education (9.3%)
  - Housing (6.8%)
  - Community (6.8%)
  - Representation/visibility (5.7%)
  - Public funds (4.5%)
  - Regional issues (4.0%)
  - Employment (3.6%)
  - Law enforcement (2.1%)
  - Aging and elder care (1.8%)
  - Parenting/youth (1.6%)
  - Anti-trans stances (0.7%)
  - Judicial issues (0.5%)
  - Taxes (0.3%)
  - Other feedback (3.1%)

# How WA government can help

**What would you like to see the Washington state government do to help LGBTQ+ people who live in Washington?**

(5,420 participants)

| <b>Legislation &amp; legal protections</b>            | <b>22.6%</b> |
|---|--------------|
| Increase legal protections for LGBTQ+ people          | 5.2%         |
| Increase legal protections for transgender people     | 3.3%         |
| Improve/enforce anti-discrimination laws              | 2.6%         |
| Protect people from hate crimes                       | 2.3%         |
| Remove barriers around name and gender marker changes | 1.5%         |
| Legal protections for same-sex marriage               | 1.2%         |
| Add LGBTQ+ protections to state Constitution          | 0.9%         |
| Require more gender-neutral bathrooms                 | 0.9%         |
| Enhance legal protections for LGBTQ+ minors           | 0.6%         |

# How WA government can help

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Healthcare</b>  | <b>17.1%</b> |
| Remove barriers to gender-affirming care                         | 5.1%         |
| Improve mental health support                                    | 2.7%         |
| Improve access to healthcare                                     | 2.6%         |
| Expand insurance coverage  | 1.6%         |
| Support accessible reproductive healthcare                       | 1.0%         |
| Ensure medical providers are educated about LGBTQ+ rights/issues | 0.9%         |
| Improve healthcare   | 0.8%         |
| Make healthcare affordable                                       | 0.6%         |
| Address LGBTQ+ discriminatory policies in healthcare             | 0.5%         |

# How WA government can help

| <b>Federal issues</b>   | <b>9.5%</b> |
|---|-------------|
| Protect LGBTQ+ people from the federal government               | 5.8%        |
| Advocate for LGBTQ+ people at federal level                     | 1.7%        |
| Strengthen WA's position as a sanctuary state for LGBTQ+ people | 1.5%        |
| Support international human rights                              | 0.4%        |
| Enforce federal laws that protect LGBTQ+ people                 | 0.1%        |

# How WA government can help

| <b>Education</b>   | <b>9.3%</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Promote LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum and debunking of misinformation in public schools | 3.1%        |
| Support LGBTQ+ students facing discrimination in schools (K-college)                 | 1.9%        |
| Support anti-bullying initiatives and protections                                    | 0.8%        |
| Support more inclusive sex education   | 0.8%        |
| Stop the banning of books with LGBTQ+ content  | 0.5%        |
| Ensure educators are trained on LGBTQ+ rights and issues                             | 0.4%        |
| Increase public education on LGBTQ+ rights and reduce misinformation                 | 0.4%        |



# How WA government can help

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Housing</b>                             | <b>6.8%</b> |
| Increase affordable housing                | 2.9%        |
| Address homelessness                       | 1.8%        |
| Increase housing for at-risk youth         | 0.7%        |
| Increase LGBTQ-inclusive housing           | 0.7%        |
| Address housing issues in general          | 0.4%        |
| Bolster protections for LGBTQ+ tenants     | 0.3%        |
| Restrict short-term rentals (AirBnb, vrbo) | <0.1%       |

# How WA government can help

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Community</b>                                       | <b>6.8%</b> |
| Increase support and resources for LGBTQ+ people       | 2.3%        |
| Increase safe spaces for LGBTQ+ youth                  | 1.1%        |
| Increase resources for LGBTQ+ youth                    | 0.8%        |
| Have more public events for the LGBTQ+ community       | 0.7%        |
| Increase support and resources for BIPOC LGBTQ+ people | 0.4%        |
| Address inclusion/discrimination in religious contexts | 0.4%        |
| Protect sports access for transgender people           | 0.3%        |
| Increase safety for trans individuals                  | 0.2%        |

# How WA government can help

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Representation/visibility</b>  | <b>5.7%</b> |
| Publicly support LGBTQ+ communities   | 3.7%        |
| Ensure representation of LGBTQ+ issues in state-sponsored campaigns                   | 1.1%        |
| Foster LGBTQ+ representation in local government                                      | 0.9%        |
| <b>Public funds</b>   | <b>4.5%</b> |
| Increase funding for resources in general   | 2.7%        |
| Provide financial support for LGBTQ-serving and LGBTQ-owned businesses and nonprofits | 1.0%        |
| Support LGBTQ+ art and culture  | 0.6%        |
| Fund DEI work/programs/organizations  | 0.1%        |
| Reduce funding for businesses and organizations that are not inclusive                | 0.1%        |

# How WA government can help

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Regional issues</b>   | <b>4.0%</b> |
| Improve LGBTQ+ visibility/resources/support in rural communities | 1.6%        |
| Increase resources for LGBTQ+ people in Eastern WA               | 1.1%        |
| Improve safety and protections for LGBTQ+ people in Eastern WA   | 1.0%        |
| Create LGBTQ+ centers outside of Seattle                         | 0.2%        |

# How WA government can help

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Employment</b>   | <b>3.6%</b> |
| Help LGBTQ+ people secure jobs  | 0.9%        |
| Workplace equality for LGBTQ+ people                                  | 0.8%        |
| Increase/Strengthen worker rights                                     | 0.7%        |
| Mandatory LGBTQ+ training for government and private sector employees | 0.5%        |
| Protection and support for trans people in the workplace              | 0.2%        |
| Support LGBTQ-owned and -affirming businesses                         | 0.2%        |
| Continue workplace DEI efforts  | 0.2%        |
| Promote LGBTQ+ mentorship programs in the workplace                   | 0.1%        |

# How WA government can help

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Law enforcement</b>  | <b>2.1%</b> |
| Increased enforcement of laws regarding hate crimes                     | 0.5%        |
| Greater education and training for law enforcement                      | 0.4%        |
| Decrease funding for law enforcement                                    | 0.3%        |
| Improve Police relationship with LGBTQ+                                 | 0.3%        |
| Improve law enforcement protection of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities      | 0.1%        |
| Increase law enforcement presence                                       | 0.1%        |
| Establish community-based safety initiatives outside of law enforcement | 0.1%        |
| Prohibit law enforcement from affiliating with hate                     | 0.1%        |
| More justice  | <0.1%       |
| Reform law enforcement  | <0.1%       |

# How WA government can help

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Aging and elder care</b>                                    | <b>1.8%</b> |
| Increase resources and supportive spaces for LGBTQ+ seniors    | 1.3%        |
| Support LGBTQ-inclusive senior housing                         | 0.5%        |
| <b>Parenting/youth</b>   | <b>1.6%</b> |
| Remove barriers to adoption for LGBTQ+ people                  | 1.0%        |
| Discreet support for closeted youth/youth in unsafe situations | 0.4%        |
| Promote an LGBTQ-inclusive foster care system                  | 0.1%        |

# Q&A

- In the room
- Online
- [Comment dashboard](#)



**Thank you!**

# Washington LGBTQ+ Survey: Economic and Financial Experiences

# Overview

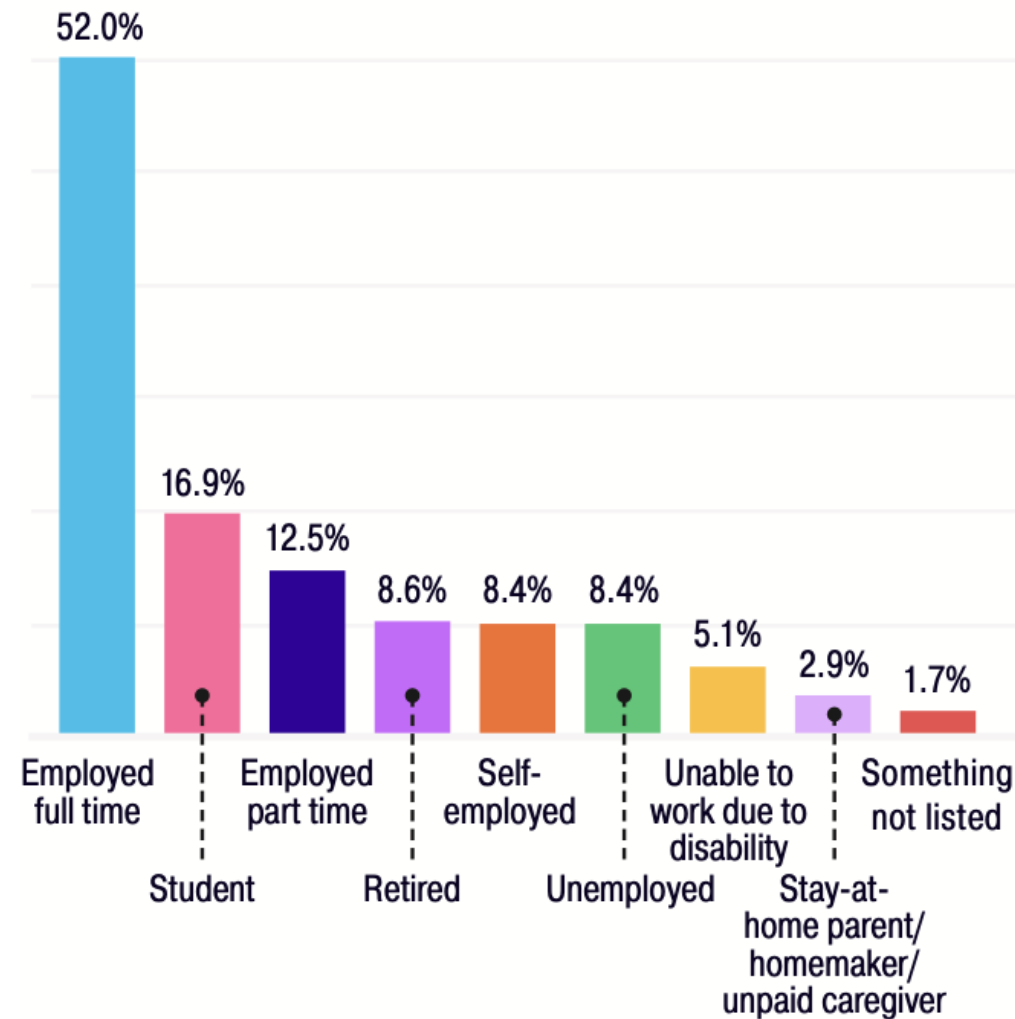
- Employment and career
- Housing and household dynamics
- Financial well-being and comparison
- Intersectional analyses

# Employment and Career

# Employment status

**What is your current employment status?**

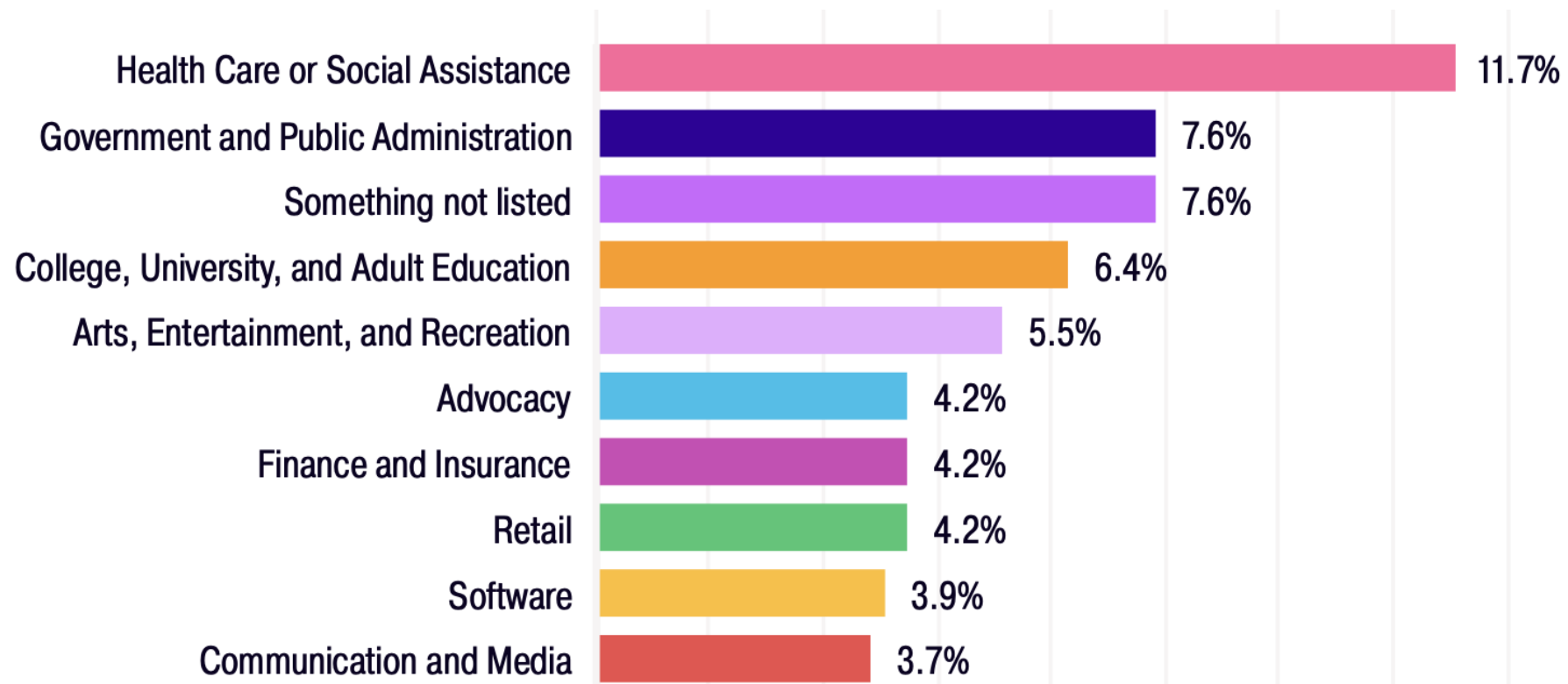
(6,149 participants)



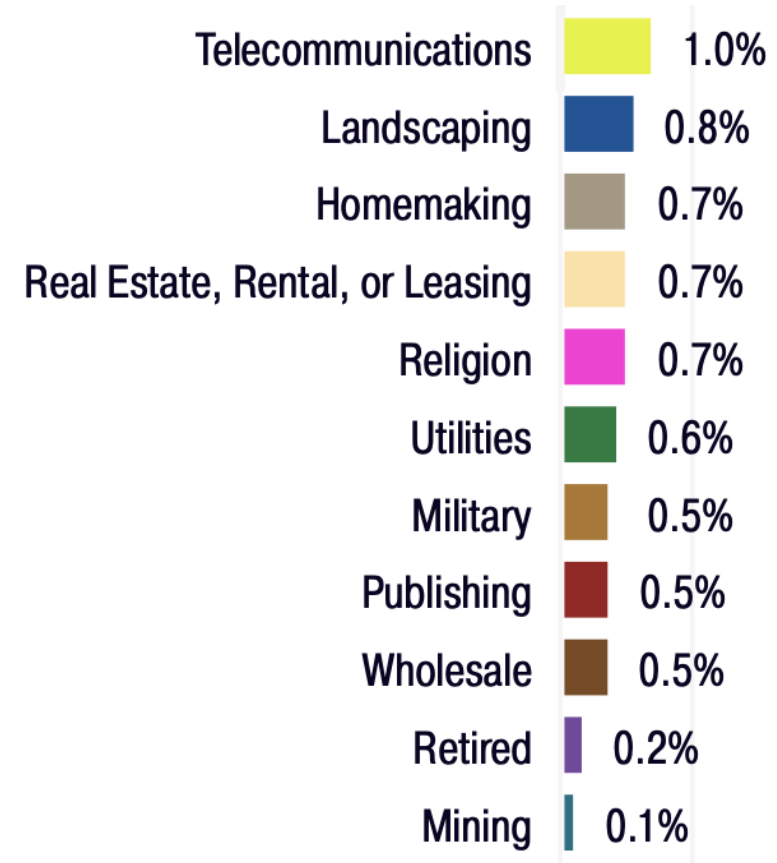
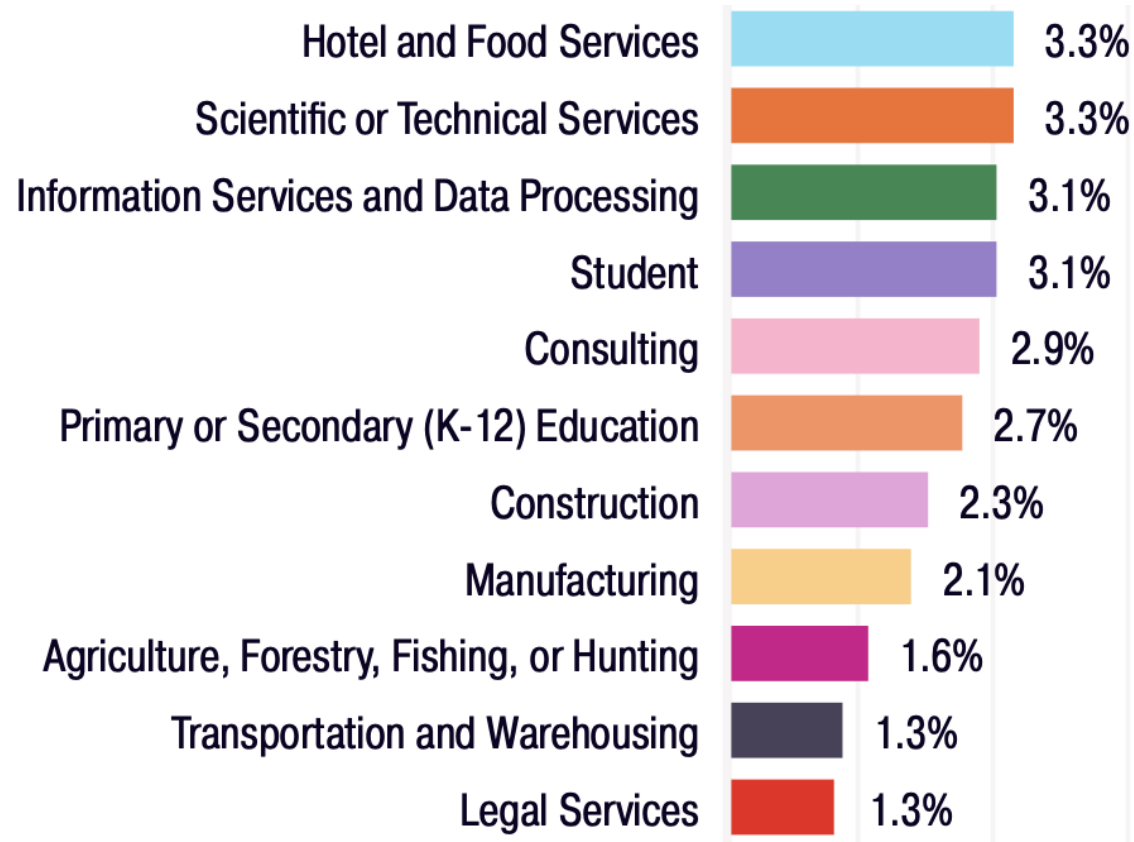
# Occupation

**Which industry best describes your current occupation?**

(6,144 participants)

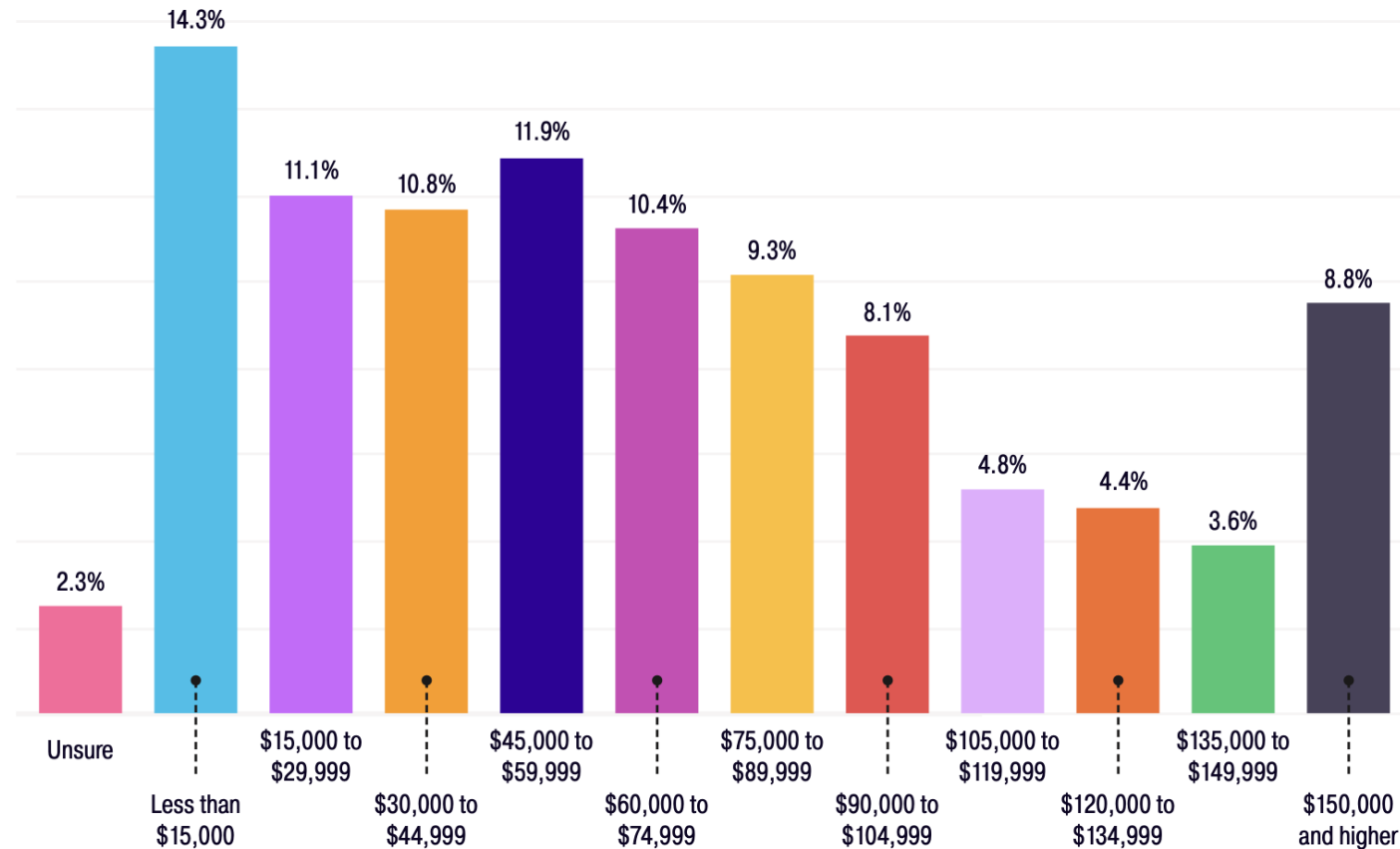


# Occupation



# Gross annual individual income

Which best describes your gross annual individual income?  
(5,336 participants)

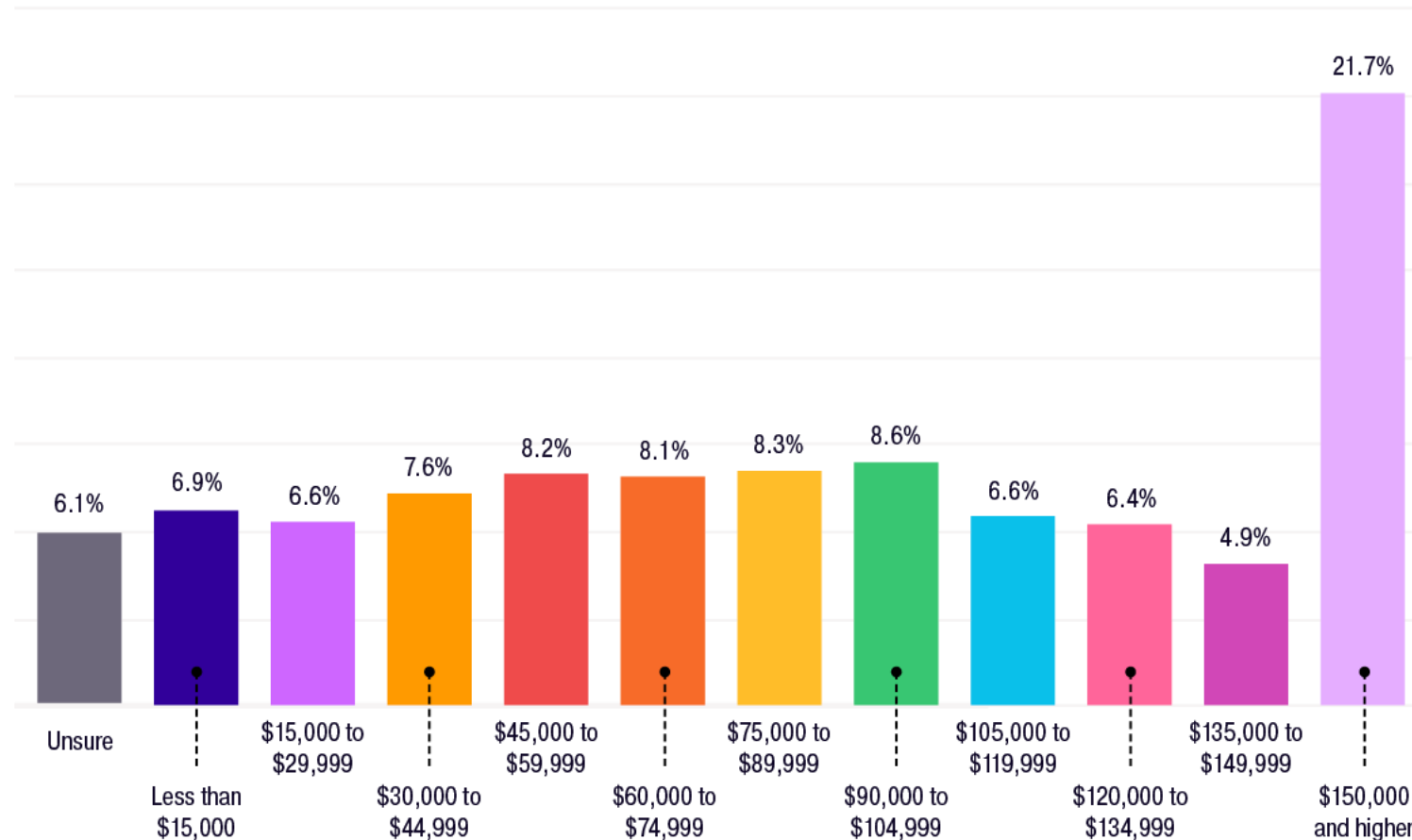




# Gross annual household income

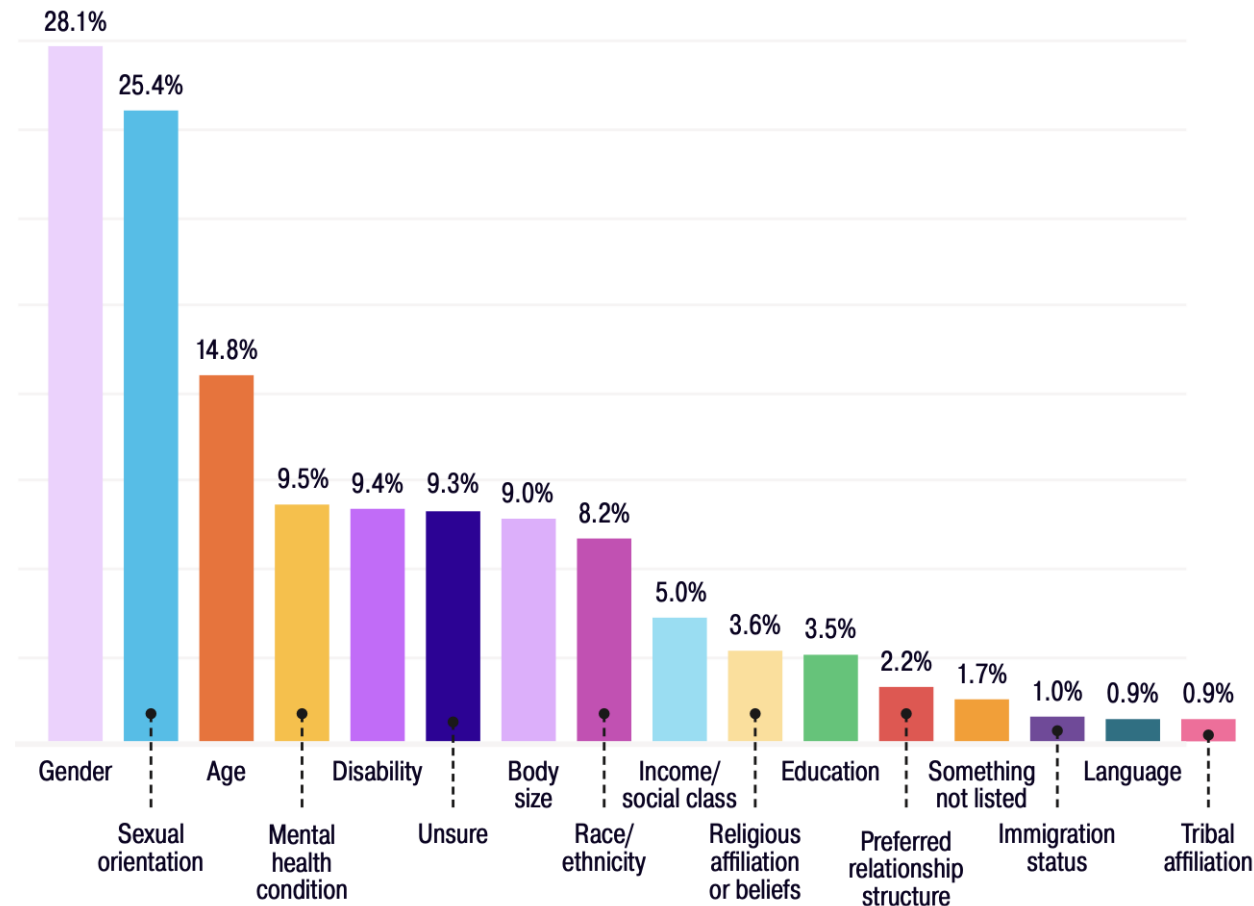
Which best describes your gross annual household income?

(5,504 participants)



# Workplace discrimination

Have you experienced discrimination in the workplace in Washington based on...  
(3,507 participants)



# Career advancement

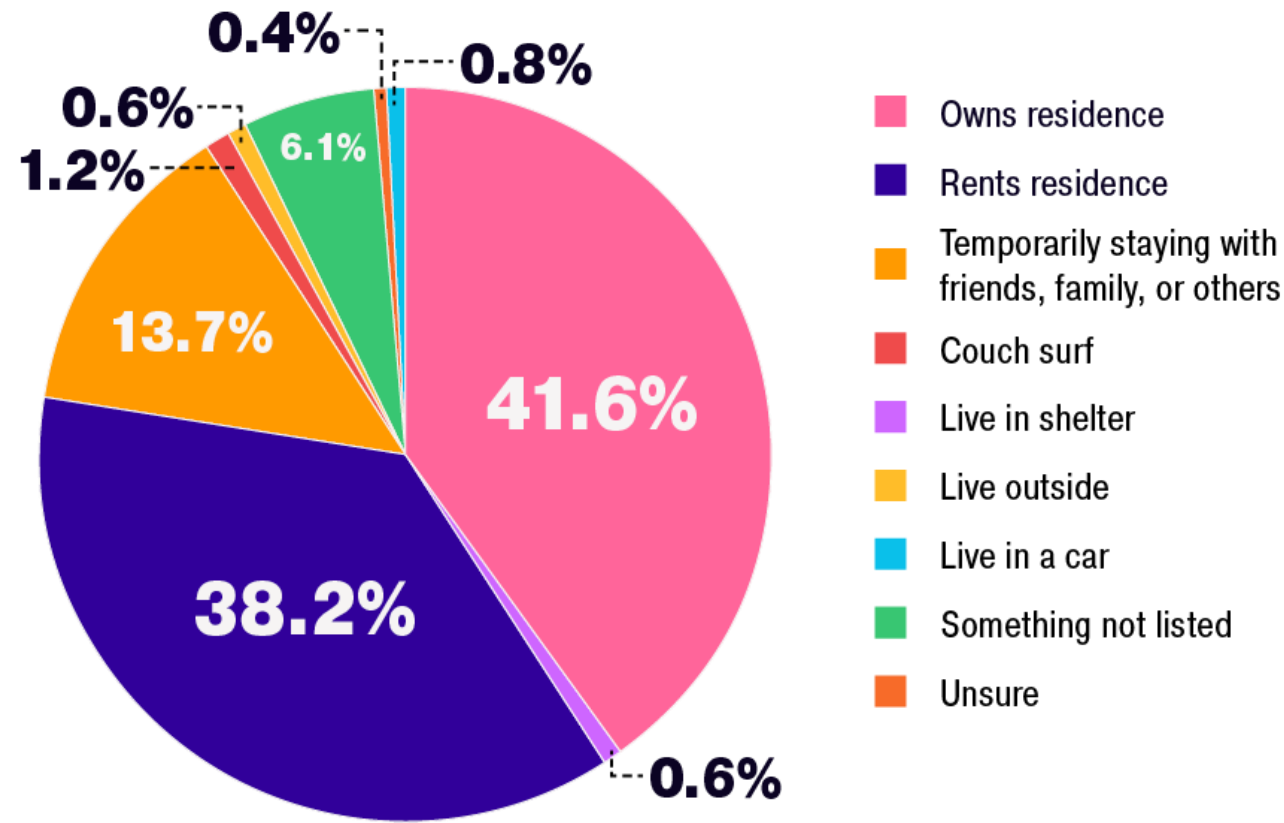
- **40.1%** of participants believe their LGBTQ+ identity has **not affected** their career advancement opportunities
- **20.6%** believe their LGBTQ+ identity has affected their career advancement **in a negative way**
- **13.2%** believe their LGBTQ+ identity has affected their career advancement **in a positive way**

# Housing and Household Dynamics

# Primary housing

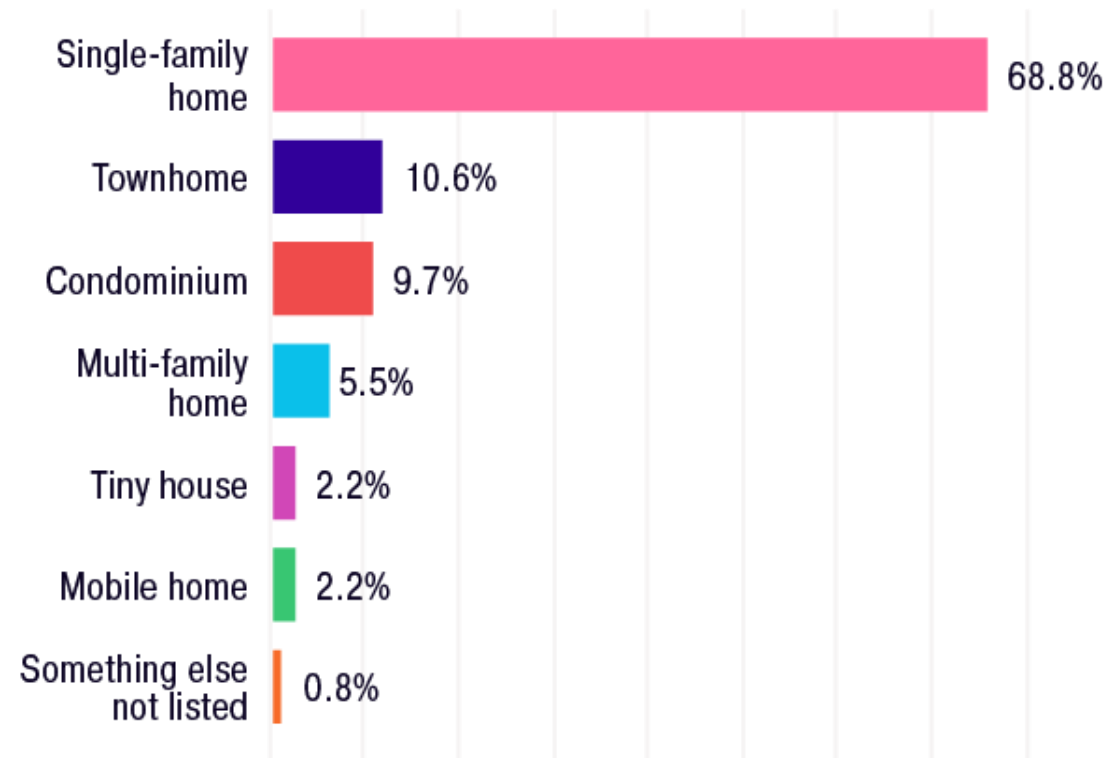
Which best describes your current primary housing?

(6,126 participants)



# Home ownership

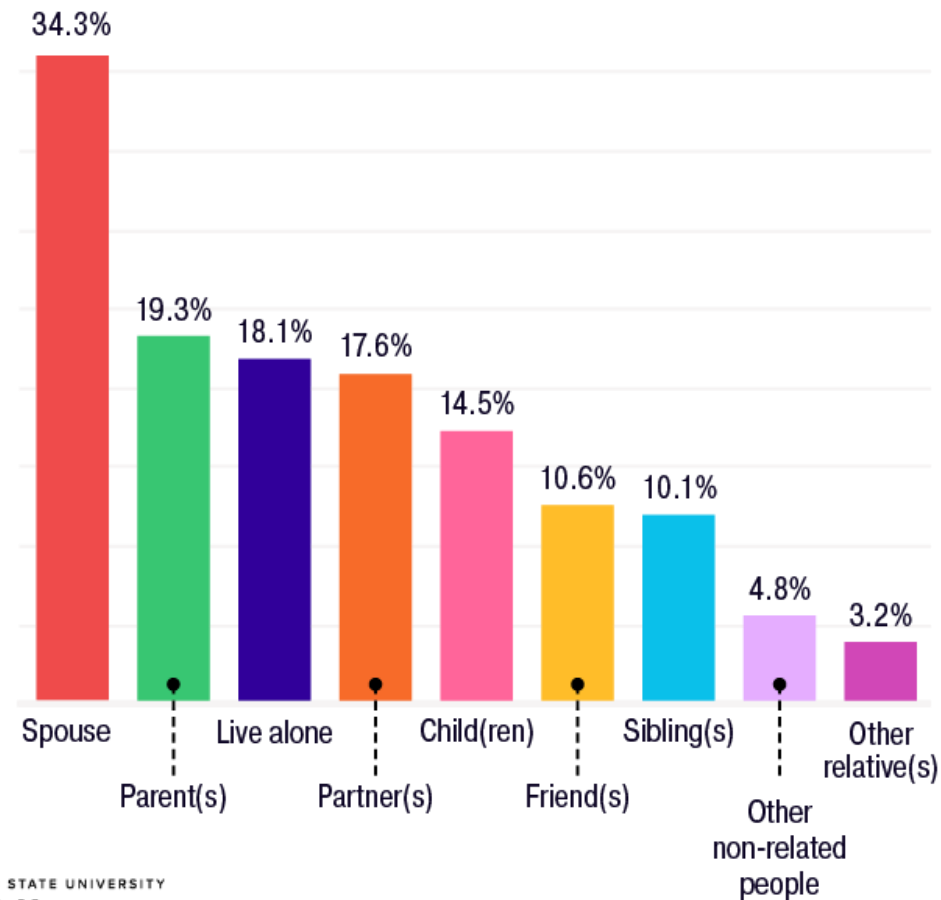
**Of the 41.6% of participants who own a home,  
these are the types of homes they own:**  
(2,543 participants)



# Members of household

Who lives with you in your household?

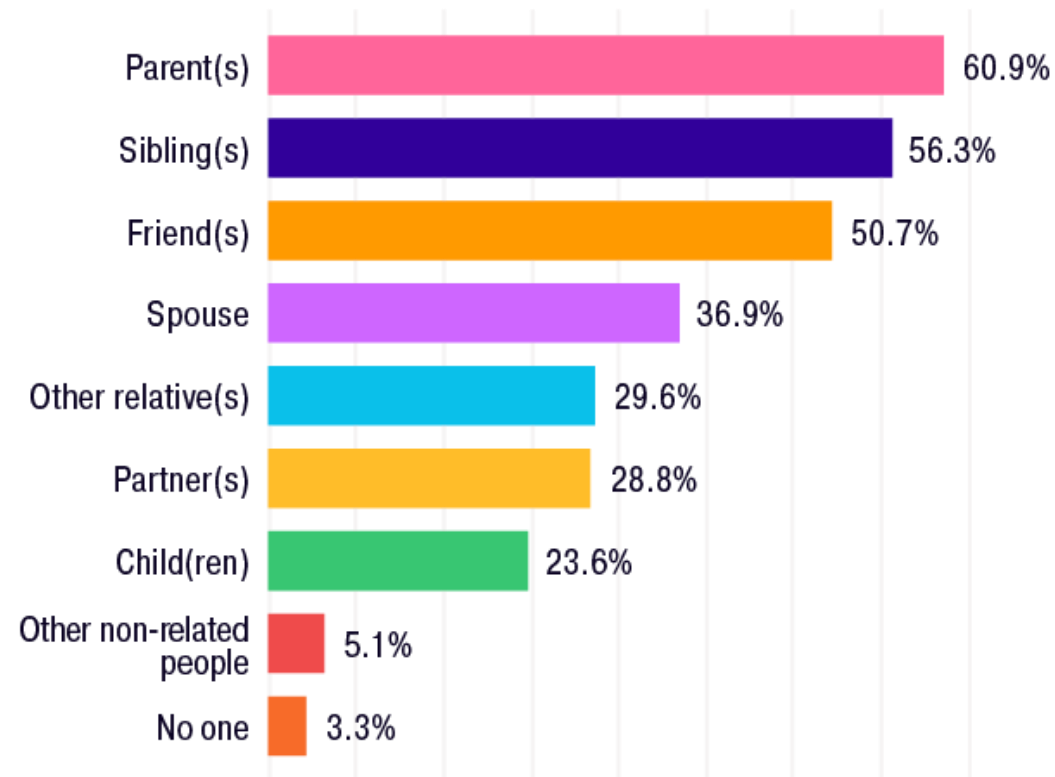
(6,124 participants)



# Family members

**Who do you consider to be part of your family?**

(6,124 participants)



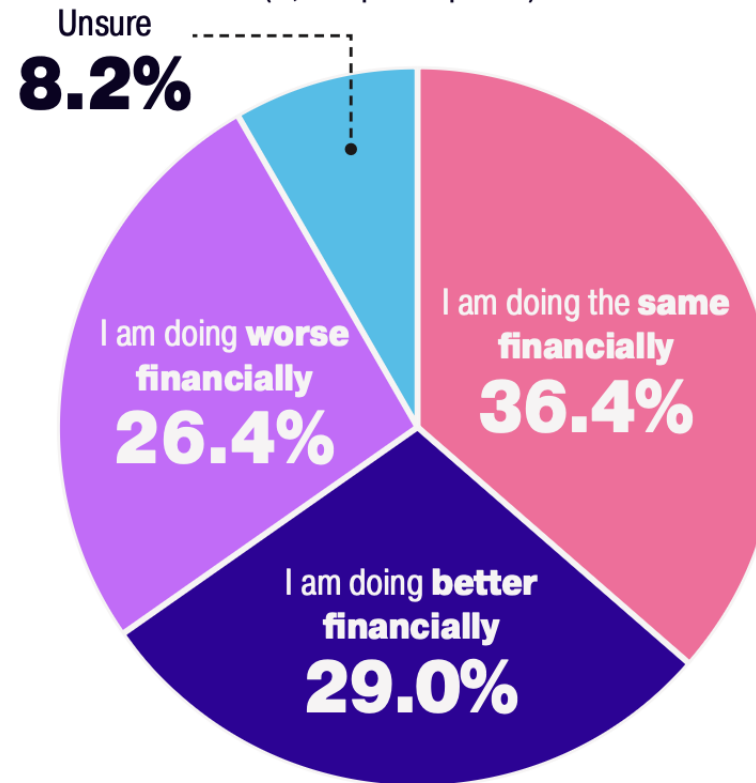


# Financial Well-Being and Comparison

# Sense of financial status

How do you think you are doing financially compared to other people your age in Washington?

(5,530 participants)

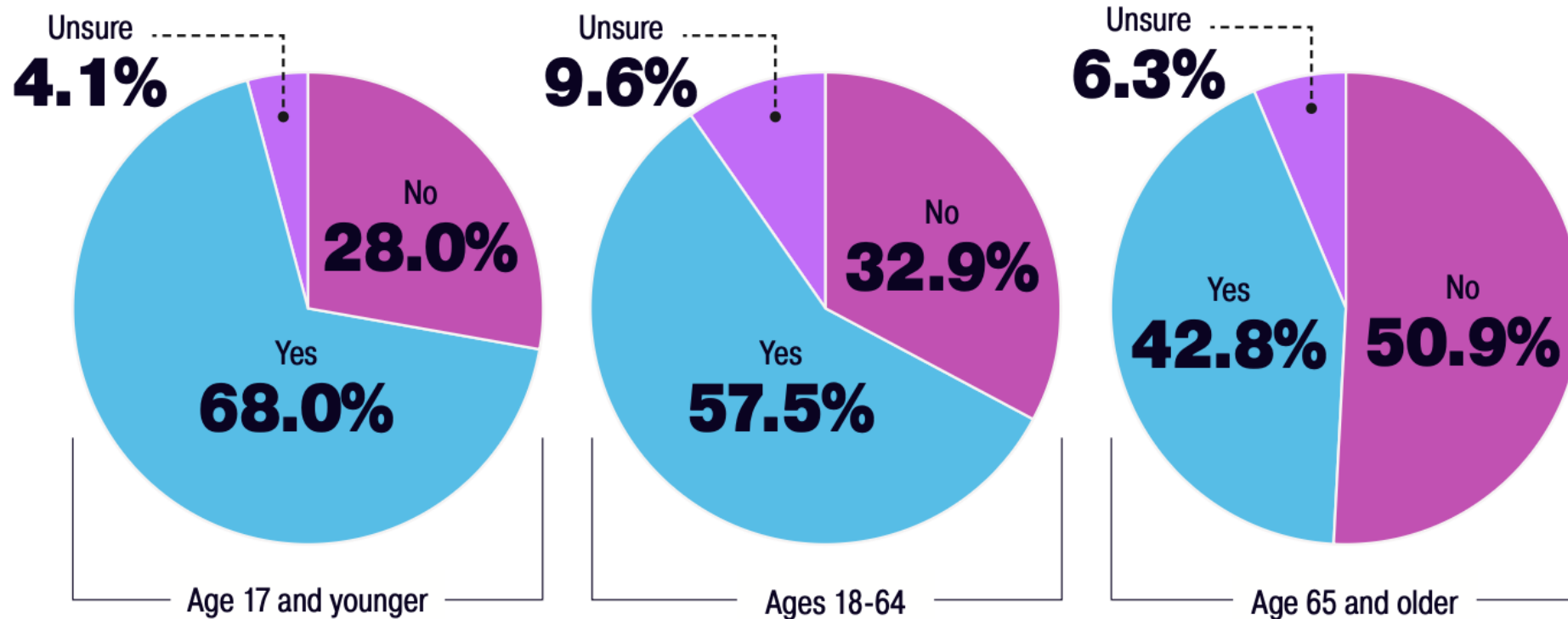


# Intersectional Analyses

# Workplace discrimination x age

**Do you feel that you have experienced discrimination in the workplace in Washington?**

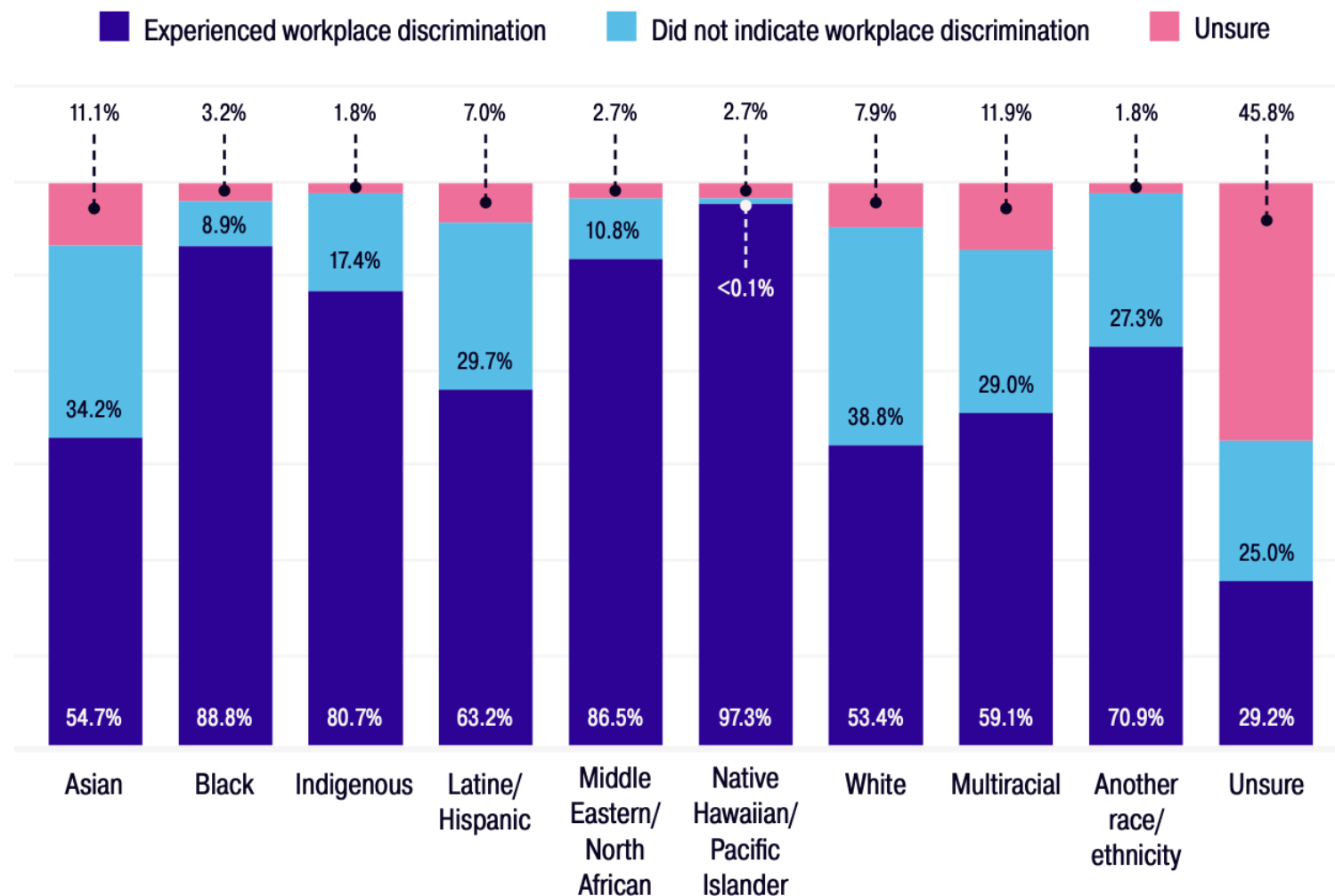
(6,098 participants)



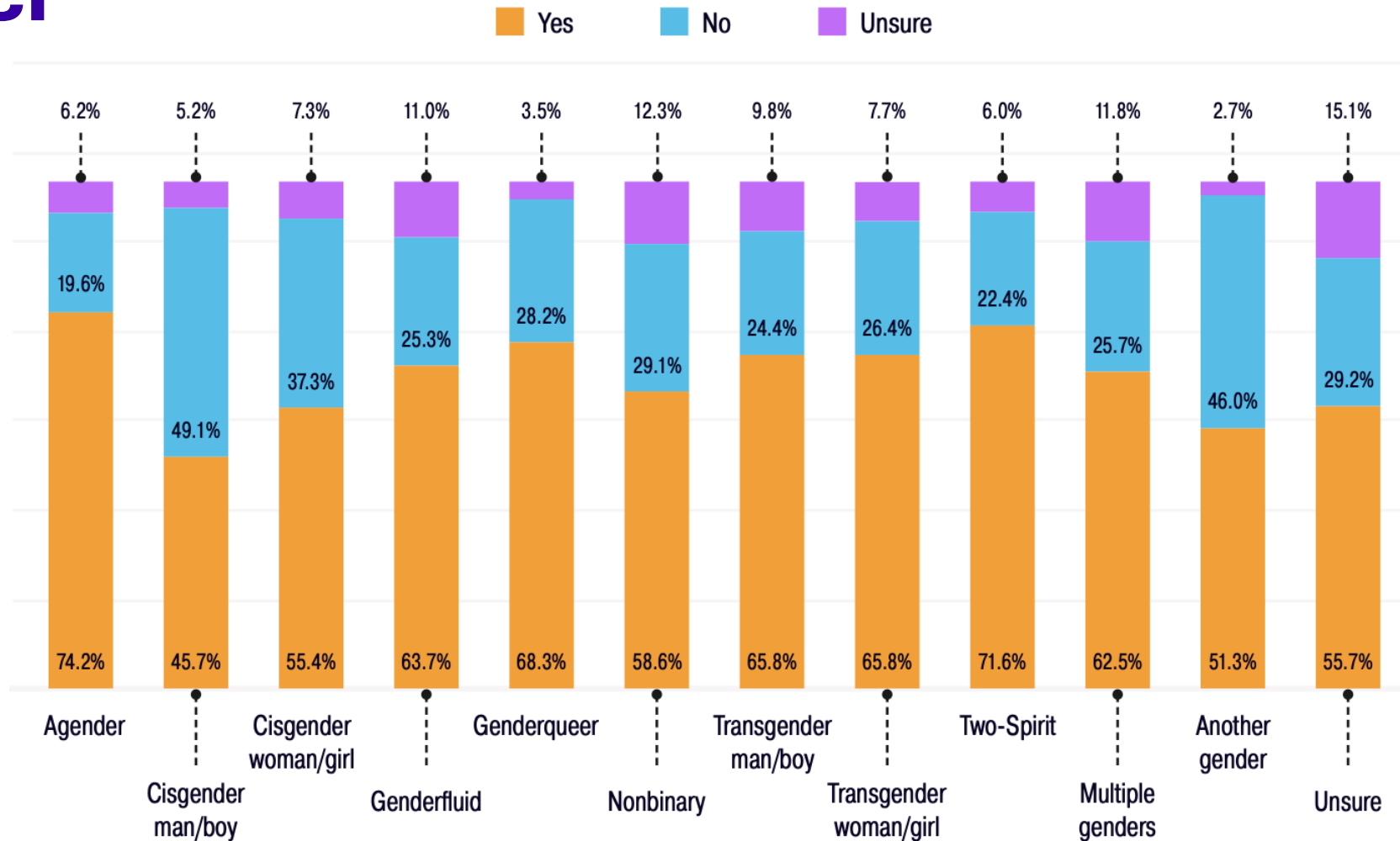
# Workplace discrimination x race/ethnicity



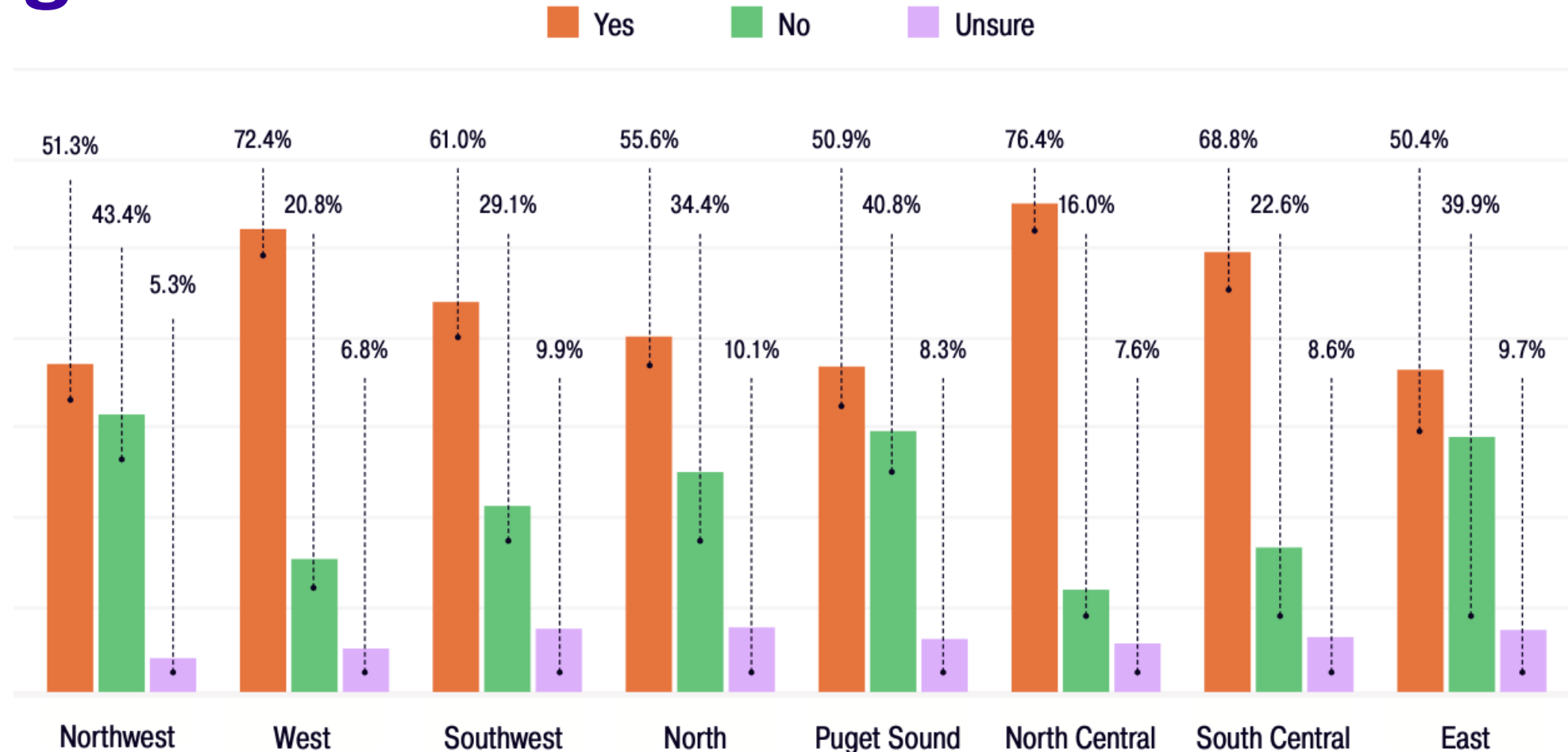
**Have you experienced workplace discrimination in Washington?**  
(5,253 participants)



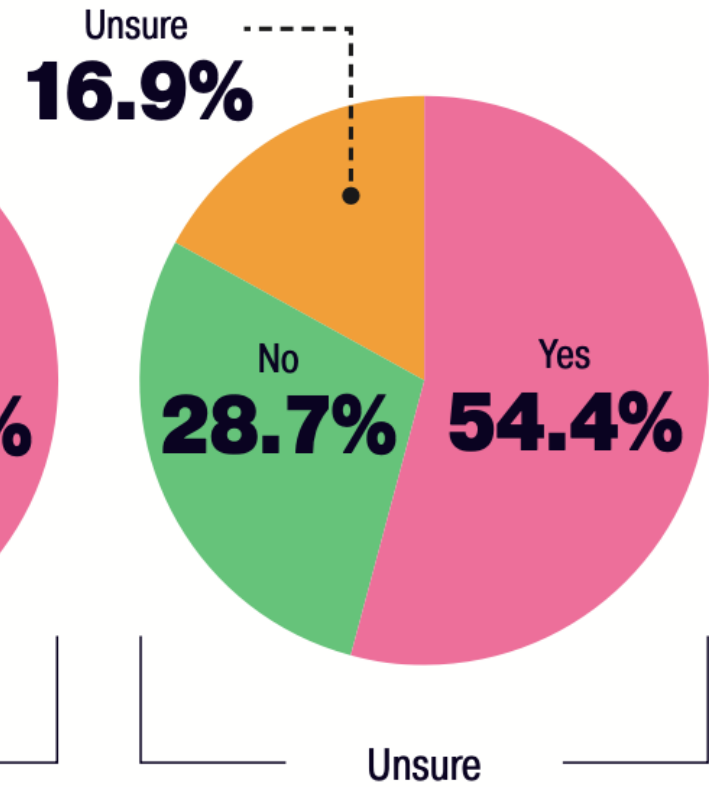
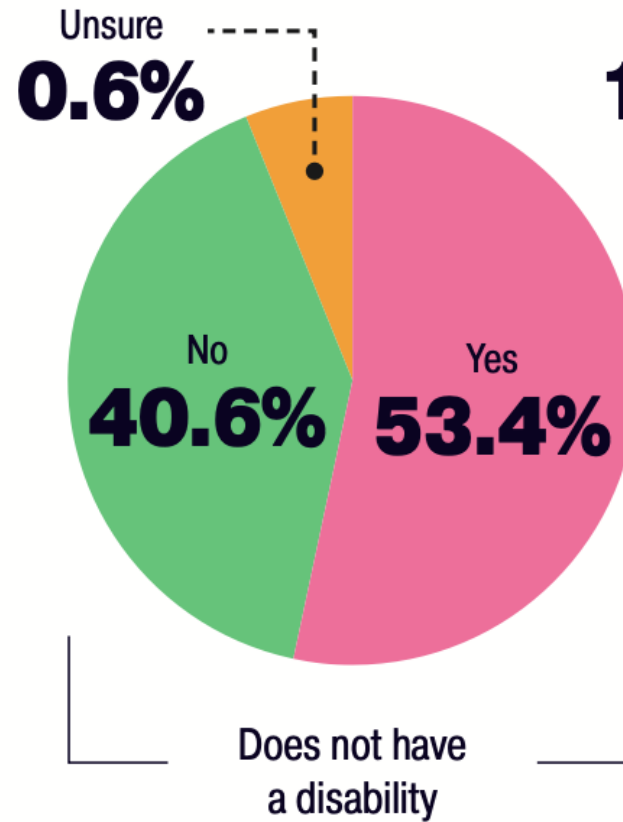
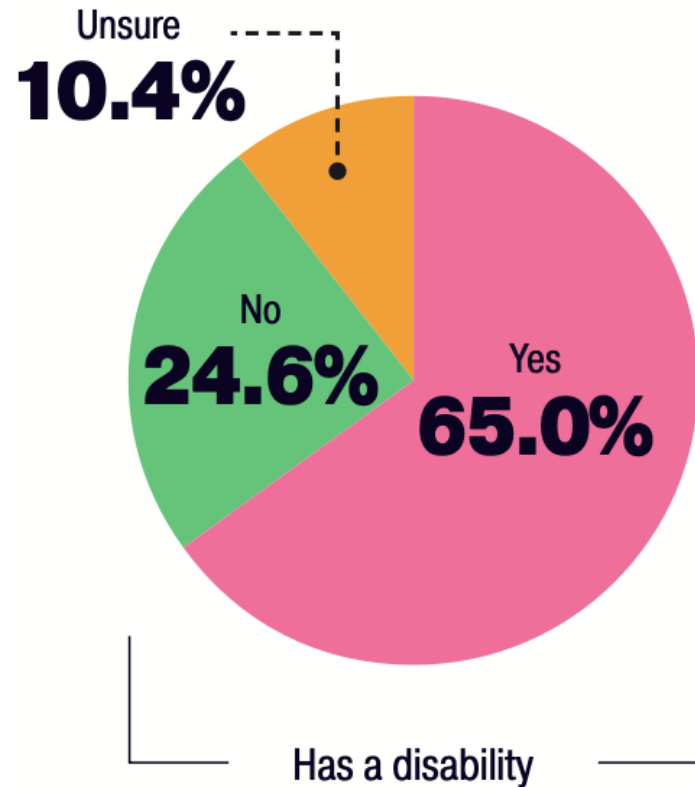
# Workplace discrimination x gender



# Workplace discrimination x region



# Workplace discrimination x disability

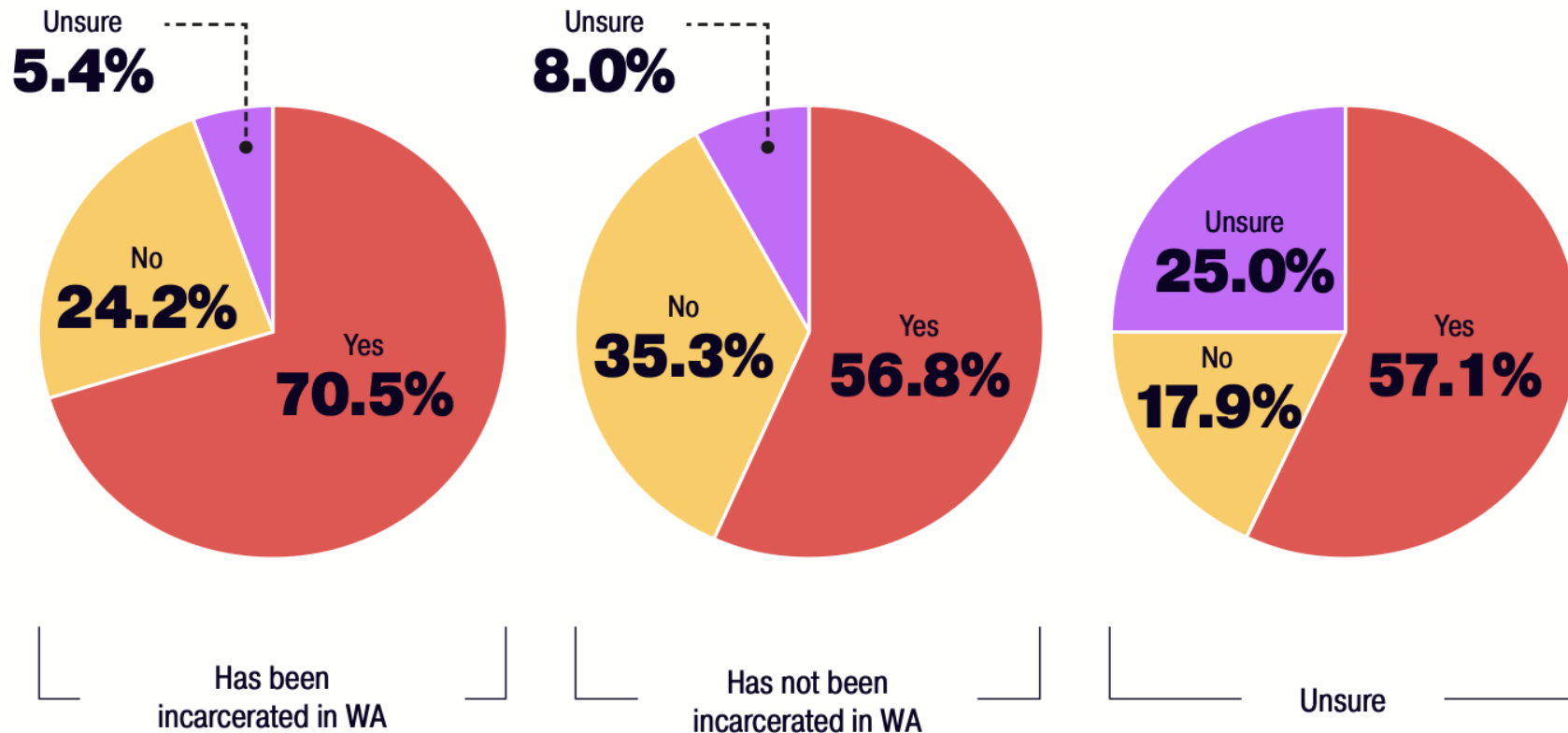


(5,261 participants)

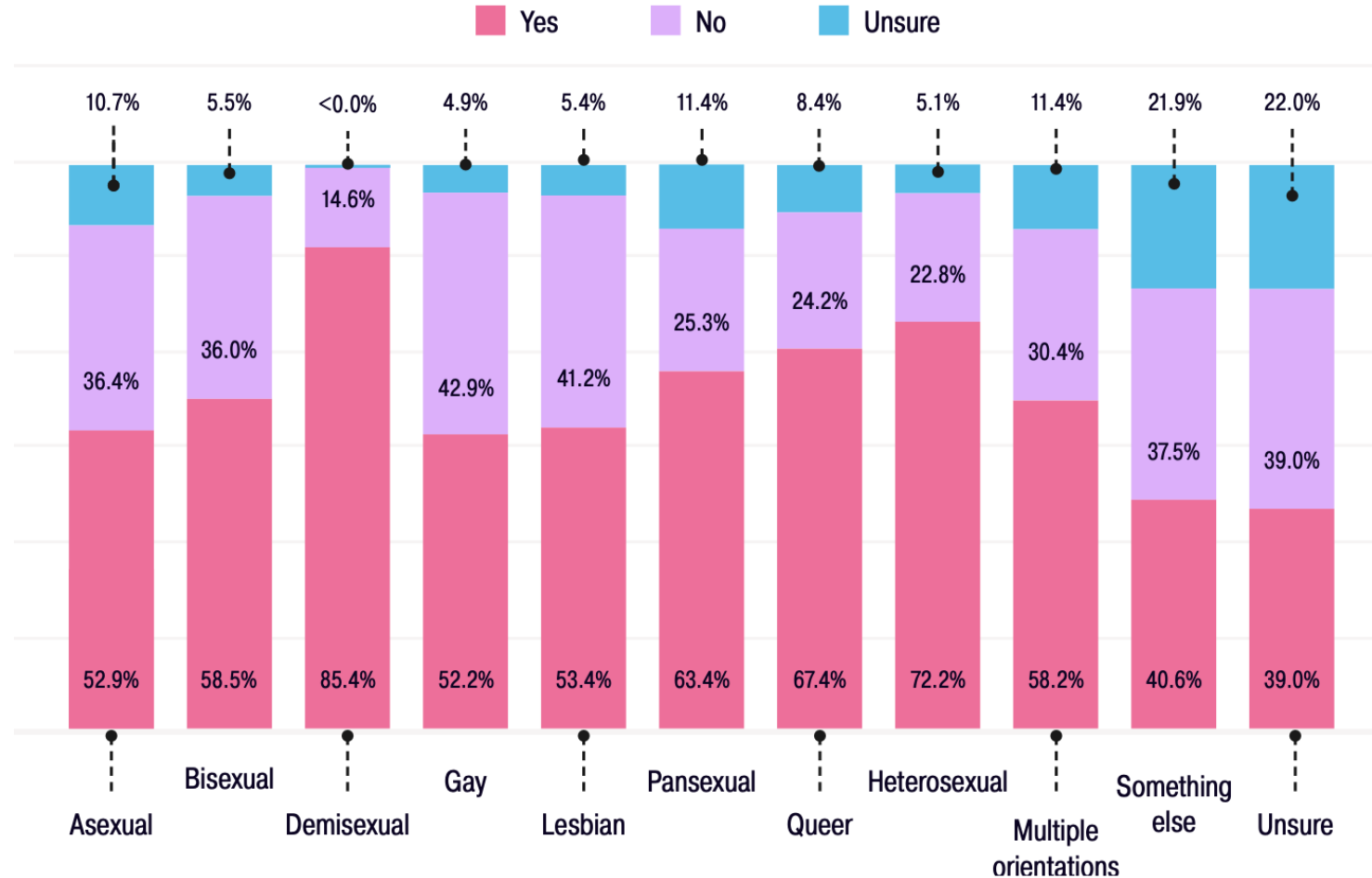


# Workplace discrimination x prior incarceration

(5,195 participants)



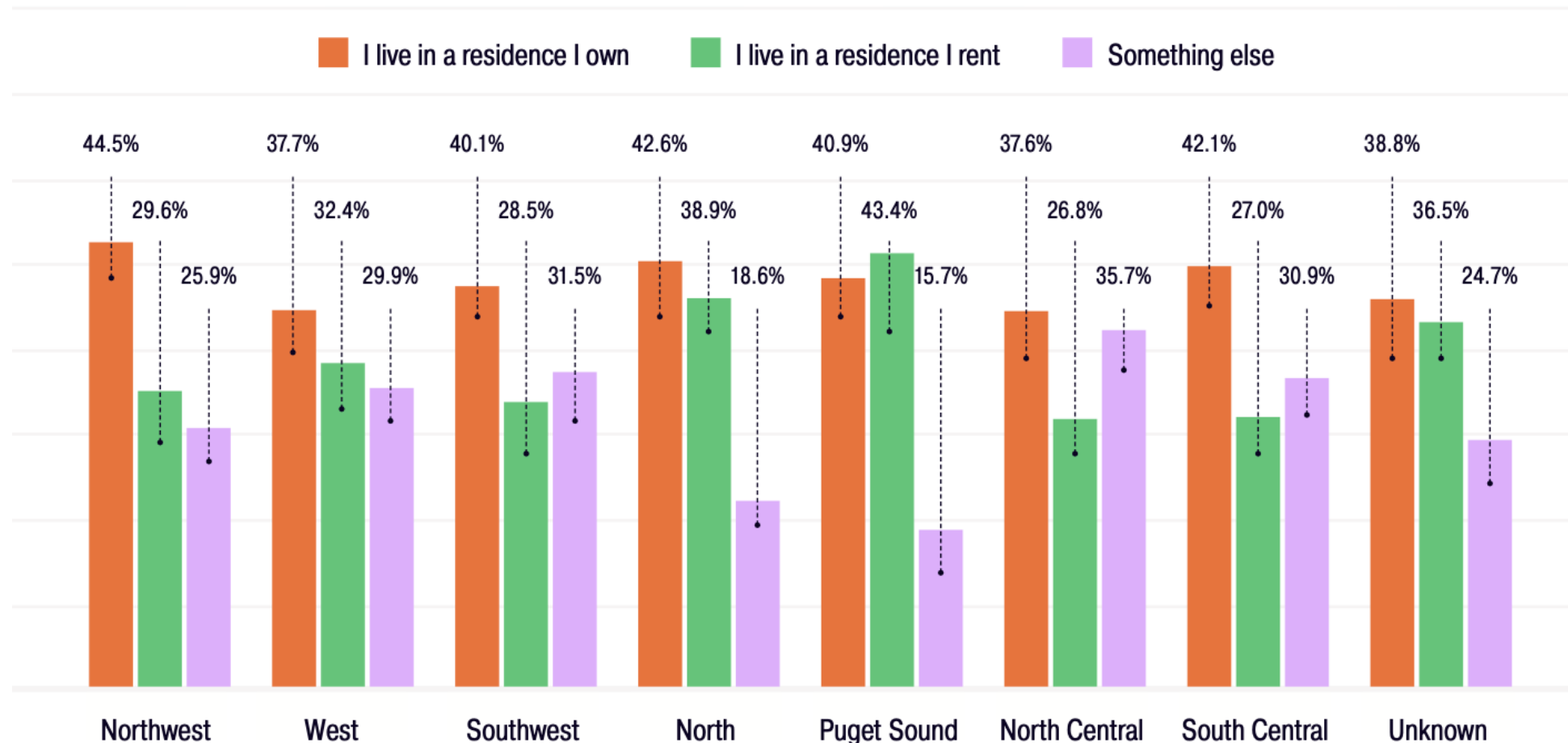
# Workplace discrimination x sexual orientation



# Primary housing x region

Which best describes your current primary housing?

(5,674 participants)



# Q&A

- In the room
- Online
- [Comment dashboard](#)

**Thank you!**



# Washington LGBTQ+ Survey: Health



# Overview

- Mental health
- Substance use and behavioral health
- Physical health and wellness
- Healthcare access and utilization
- Discrimination in healthcare
- Health services for older adults
- Sexual health
- Intersectional analyses
- Presidential election effects

# Mental Health



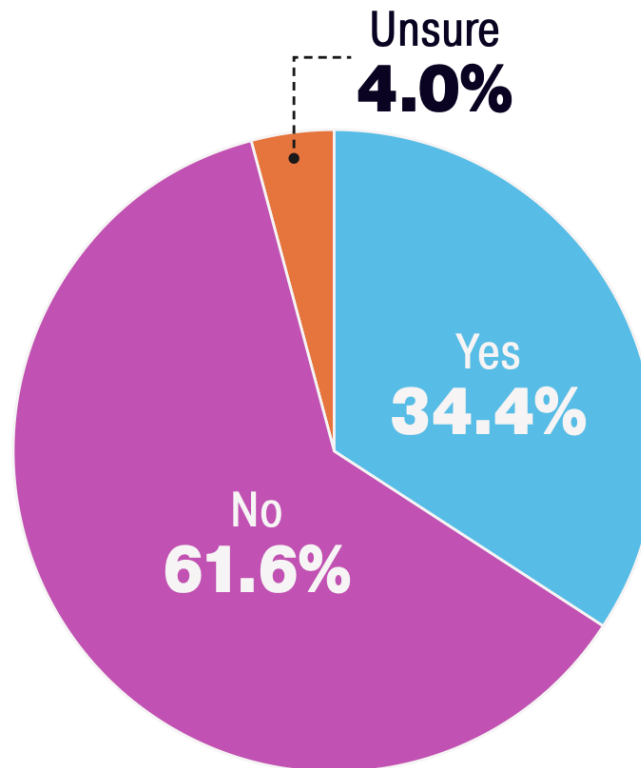
# Depressive symptoms, anxiety

- On average, participants experienced:
  - More than **two days of depressive symptoms** in the past week ( $M = 2.20$ ,  $SD = 1.79$ )
  - More than **three days of anxiety** in the past week ( $M = 3.08$ ,  $SD = 2.20$ )

# Suicidal ideation

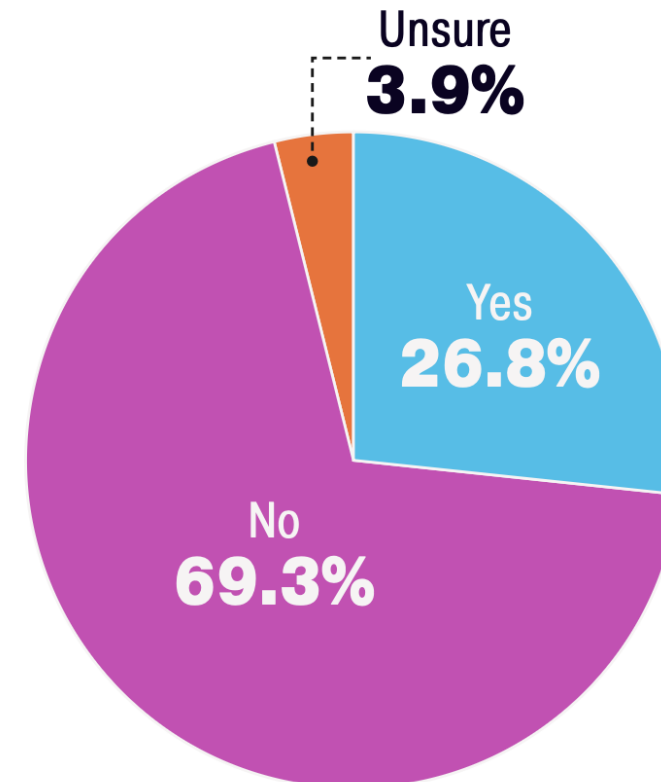
In the past 12 months, have you ever wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?

(6,202 participants)



In the past 12 months, have you ever had any thoughts about killing yourself?

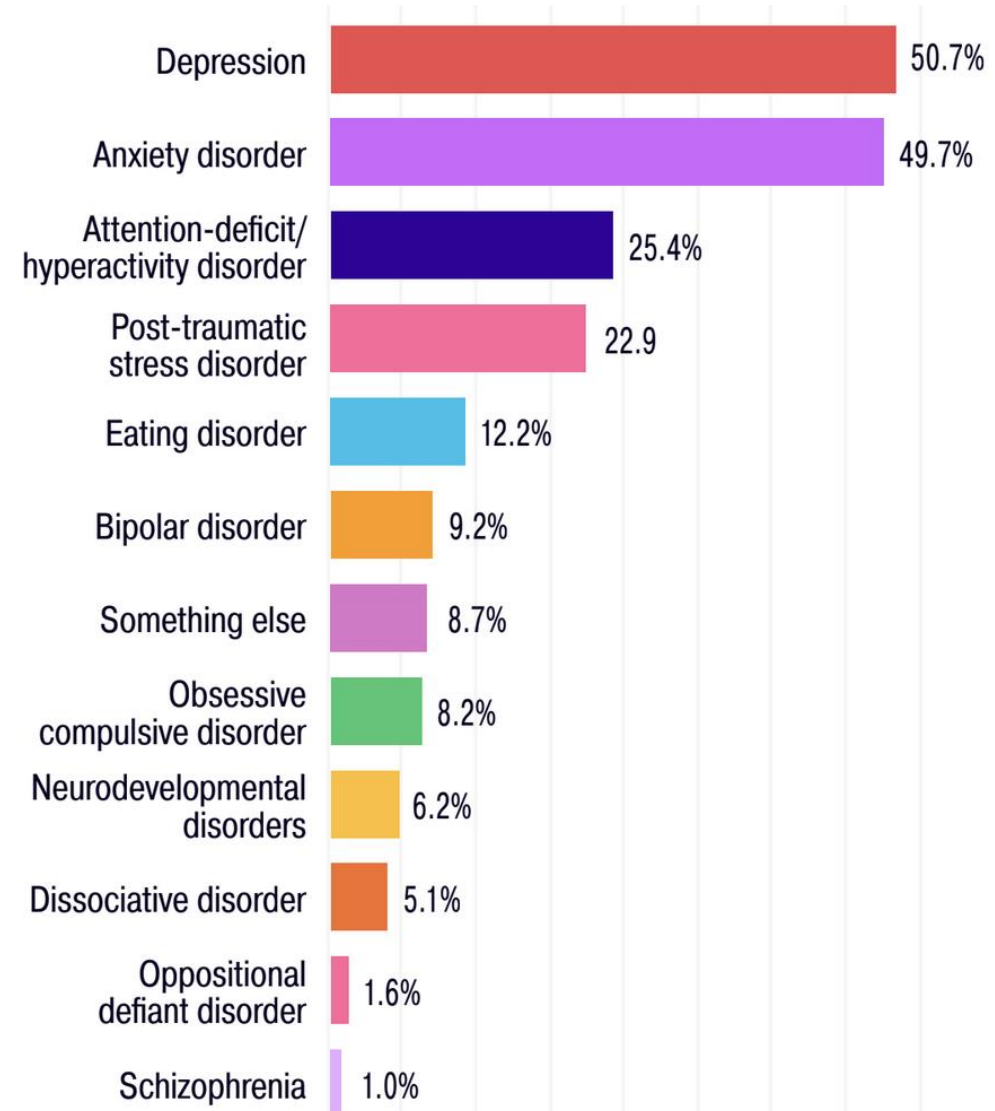
(6,201 participants)



# Mental health diagnoses

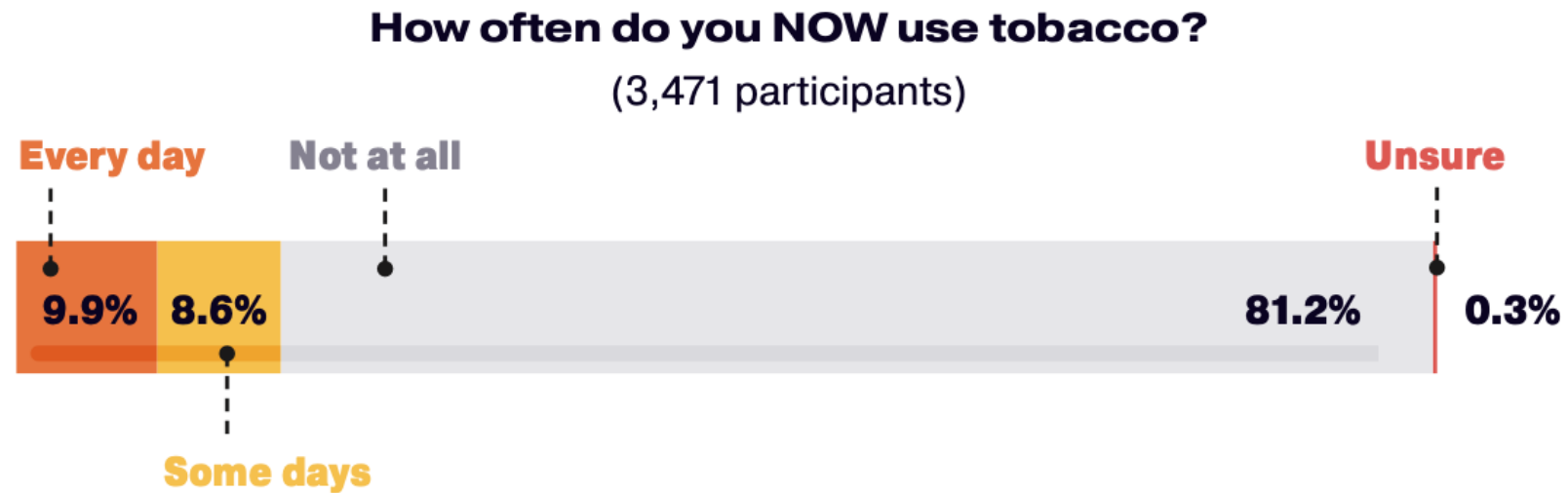
**Which diagnoses have you received from a medical professional at any time in your life?**

(6,213 participants)



# Substance Use and Behavioral Health

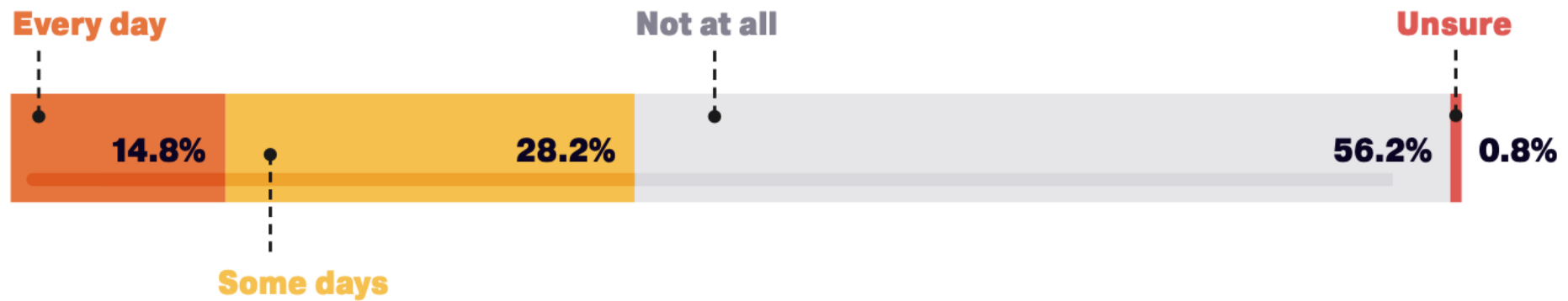
# Tobacco use



# Marijuana use

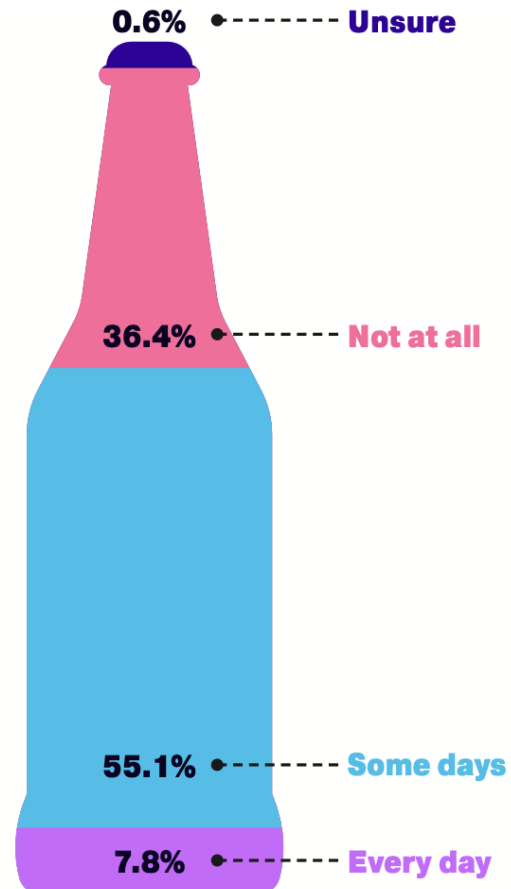
**How often do you NOW use marijuana?**

(3,461 participants)



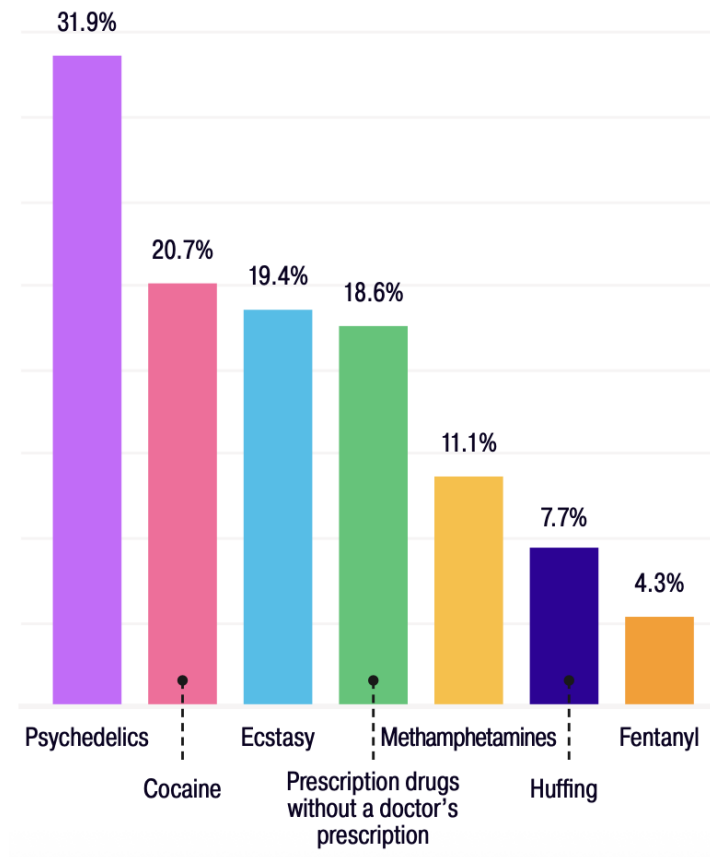
# Alcohol use

How often do you drink alcohol?  
(5,636 participants)



# Controlled substance use

For the 38.3% of participants who reported using  
illicit substances, these were the types used:  
(2,555 participants)

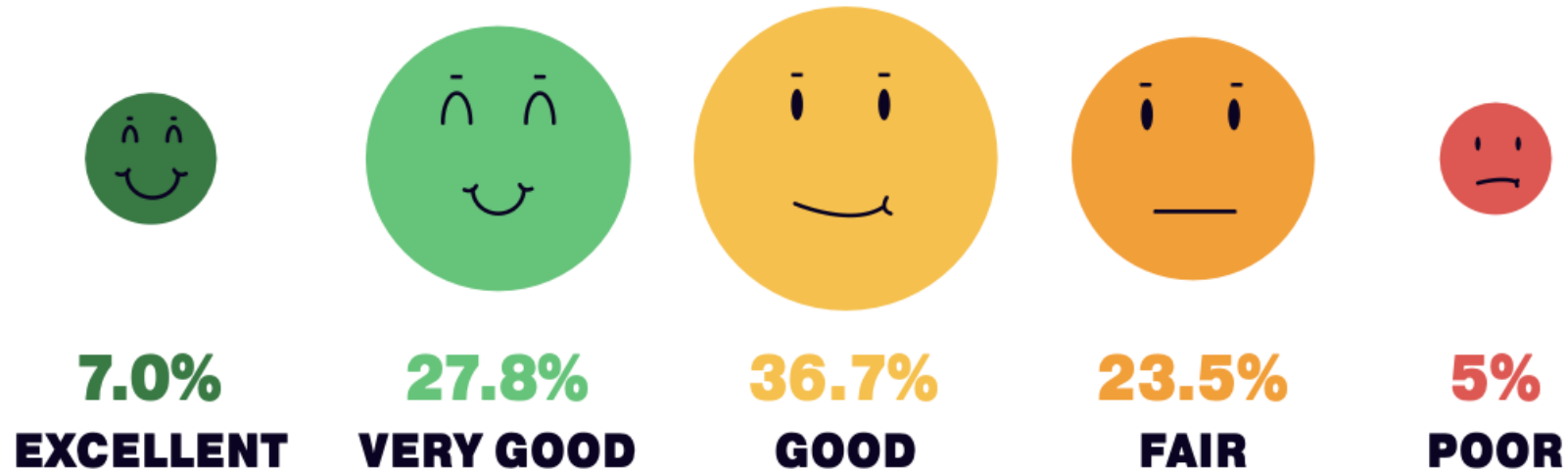




# Physical Health and Wellness

# Physical health

(6,303 participants)



# Weekly physical activity

On how many days during the past week did you engage in physical activity or exercise?

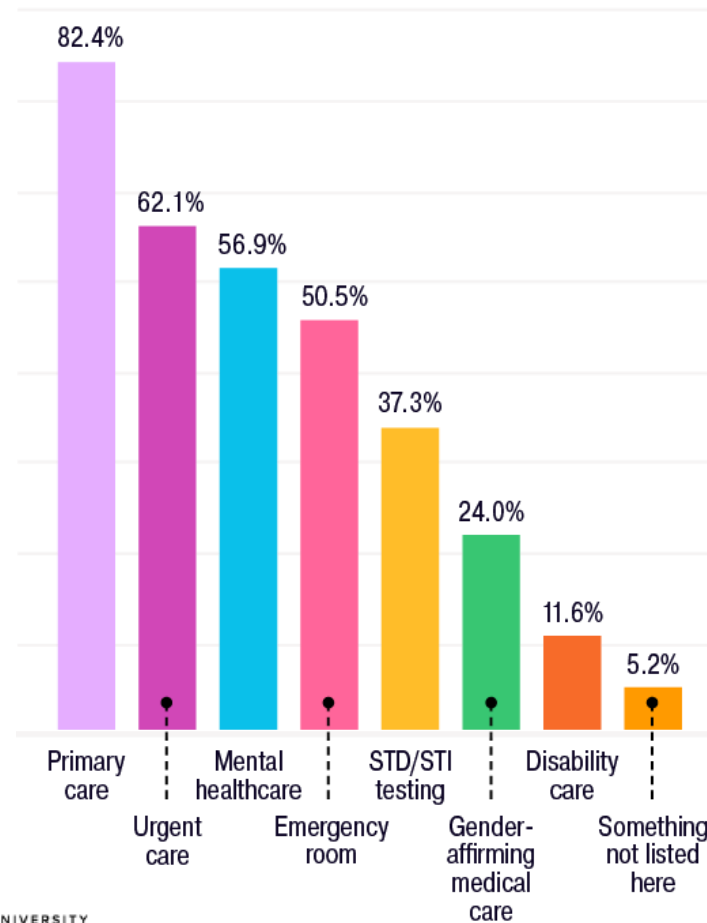
(6,285 participants)



# Healthcare Access and Utilization

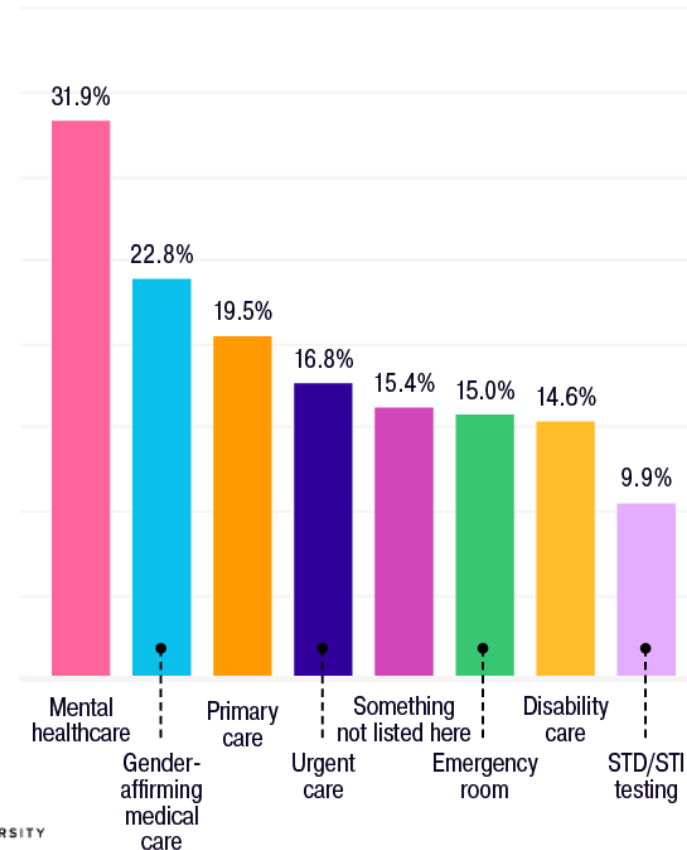
# Medical care use

**Forms of medical care used in Washington**  
(6,367 participants)



# Inaccessible medical care

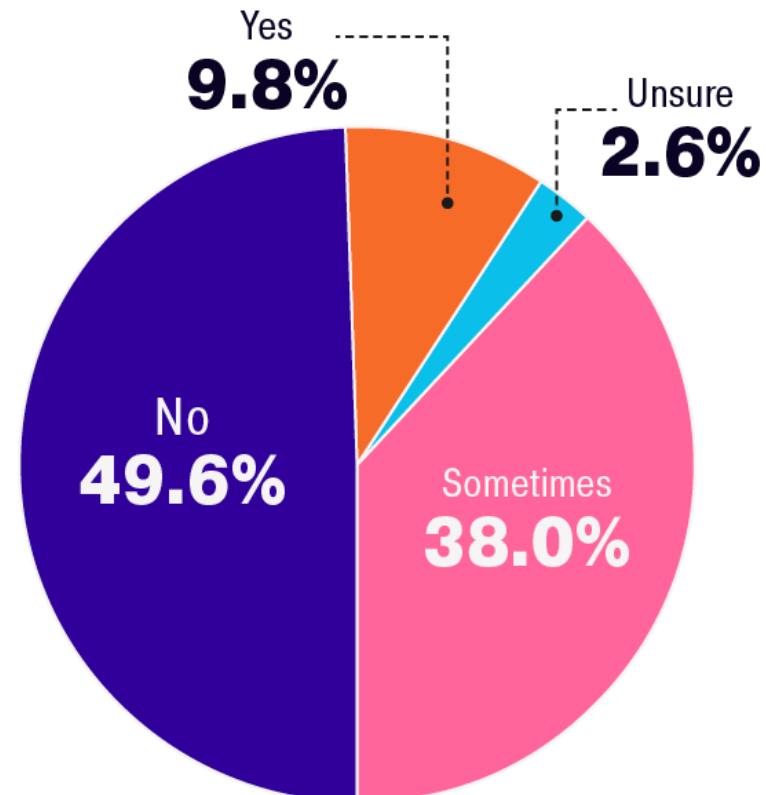
**Of the 44.0% of participants who weren't able to access care, the following types of care were inaccessible:**  
(2,011 participants)



# Avoidance of medical care

Do you tend to avoid obtaining medical care because you expect to experience discrimination in medical settings?

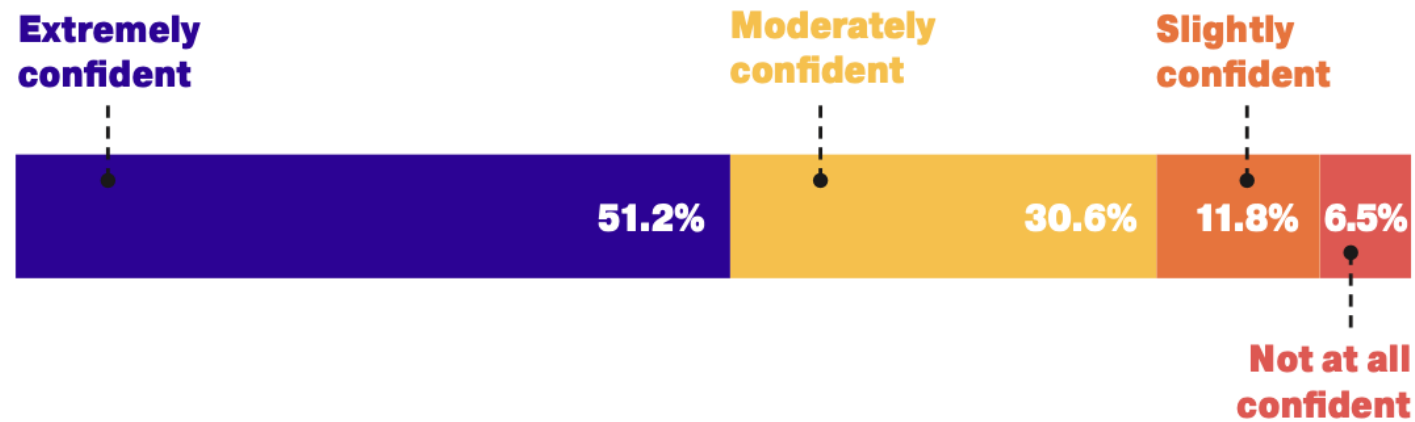
(6,338 participants)



# Access to support

**If you were to become sick or injured in the near future, how confident are you that someone you know would take care of you?**

(6,310 participants)

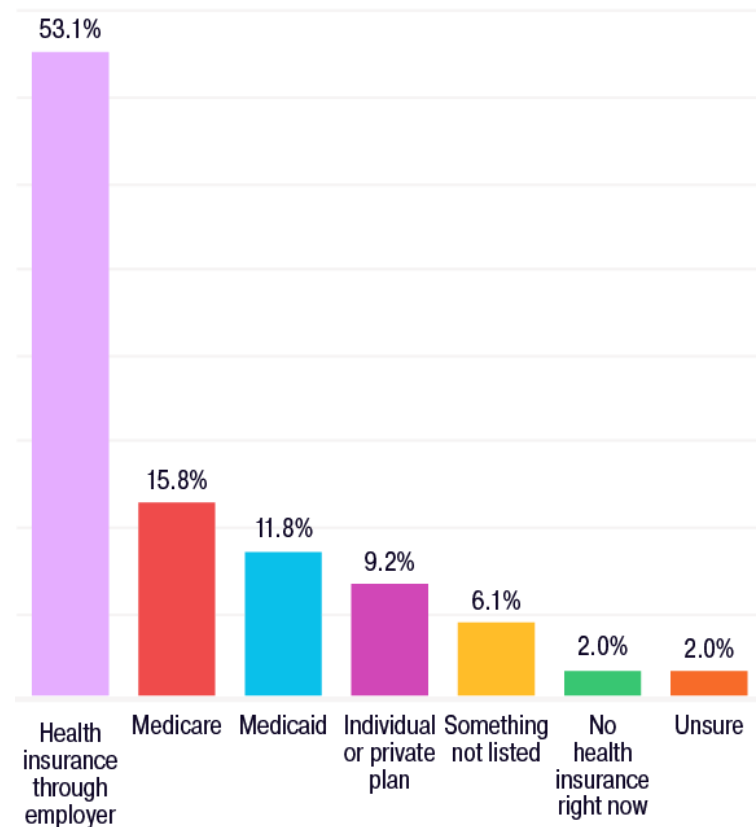




# Primary health insurance

Which of the following best describes your  
primary health insurance coverage?

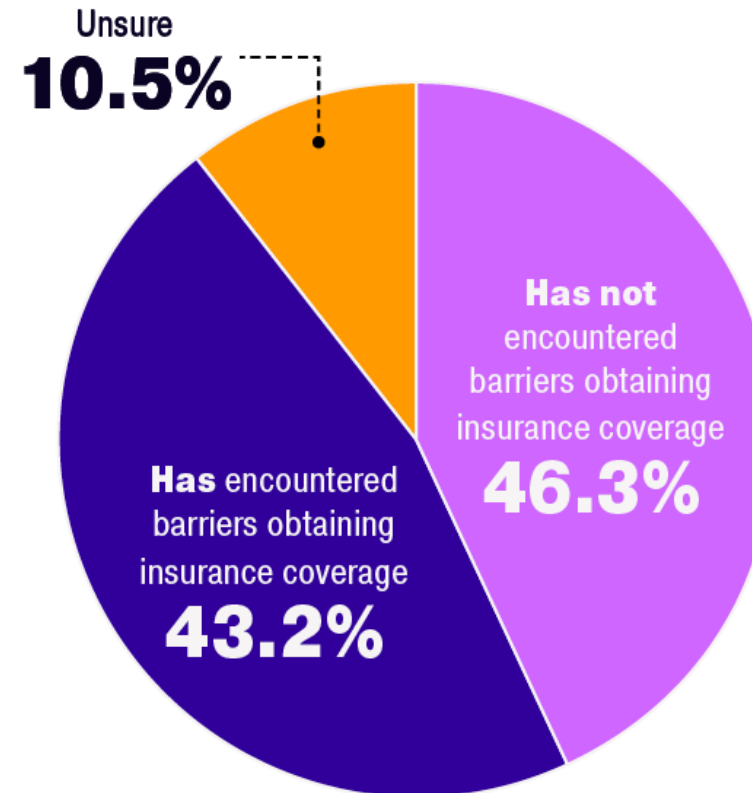
(5,725 participants)



# Barriers to insurance coverage

While living in Washington, have you encountered barriers to obtaining insurance coverage for gender-affirming procedures?

(1,364 participants)



# Barriers to insurance coverage

**Please explain the barriers you encountered when trying to obtain insurance coverage for gender-affirming procedures.**

(870 participants)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Difficulty with insurance policy</b>                   | <b>81.0%</b> |
| Gender-affirming care (GAC) never covered                 | 28.4%        |
| Slow bureaucracy  | 16.4%        |
| Hair removal for GAC denied                               | 8.7%         |
| Arbitrary restrictions                                    | 7.1%         |
| Top surgery/chest masculinization denied                  | 6.8%         |
| No or few providers in-network                            | 5.0%         |
| Medicaid/Medicare issues                                  | 4.3%         |
| No or few experienced providers in state                  | 1.2%         |
| Out-of-state insurance denied coverage protected in-state | 1.2%         |
| VA doesn't cover GAC                                      | 0.8%         |
| Limited information about coverage                        | 0.6%         |
| Religious insurance denying coverage                      | 0.6%         |

# Barriers to insurance coverage

**Please explain the barriers you encountered when trying to obtain insurance coverage for gender-affirming procedures.**

(870 participants)

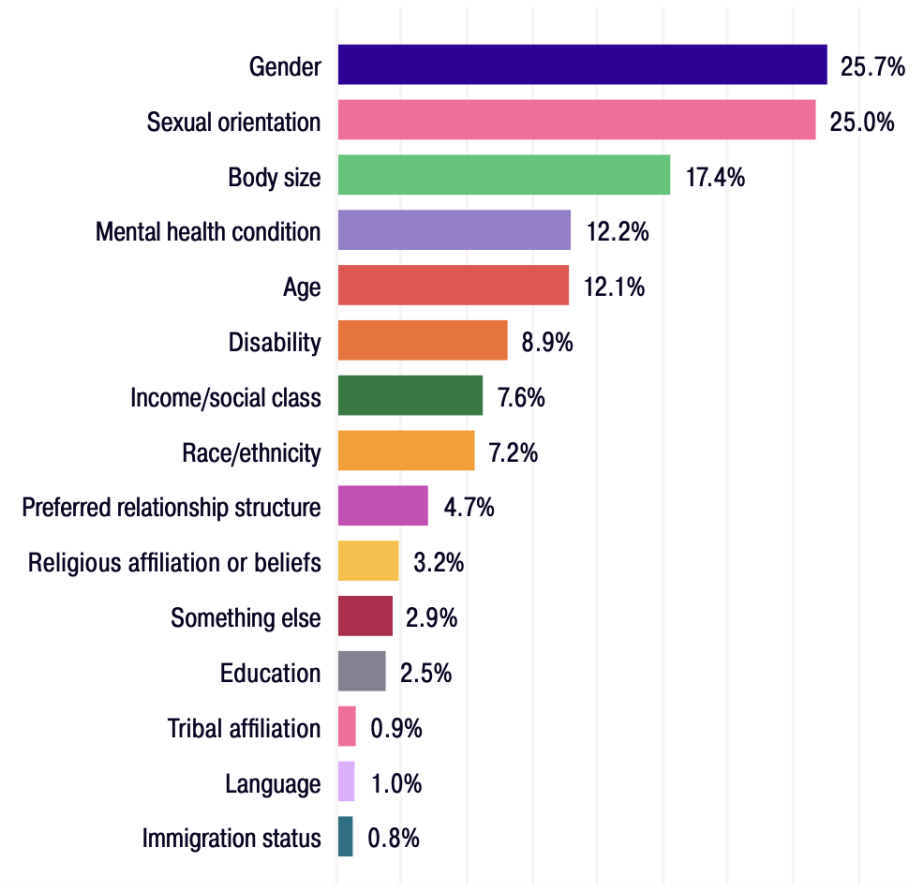
|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Money</b>                               | <b>9.8%</b> |
| High cost of care                          | 8.9%        |
| Incorrect charges                          | 0.9%        |
| <b>Difficulty with insurance personnel</b> | <b>4.8%</b> |
| Experienced discrimination                 | 3.8%        |
| Uneducated staff                           | 1.0%        |
| <b>Time</b>                                | <b>4.2%</b> |
| Long wait for approval from insurance      | 1.8%        |
| Long wait times to see providers           | 1.0%        |
| Long wait times for surgery                | 0.8%        |
| Long travel times to approved providers    | 0.6%        |

# Discrimination in Healthcare

# Medical setting discrimination

Do you feel that you have experienced discrimination in a medical setting in WA based on any of your characteristics?

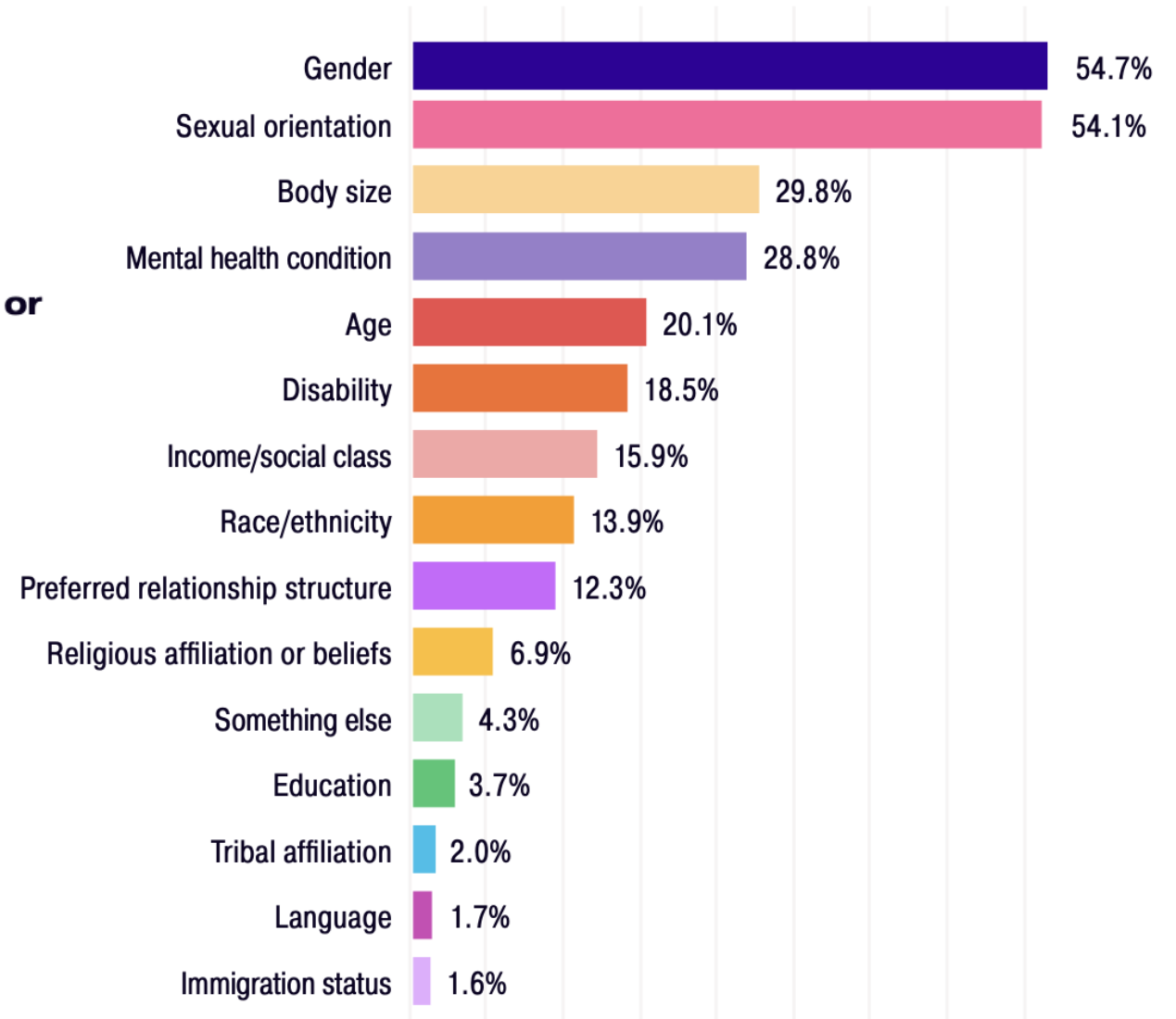
(6,319 participants)



# Identities prompting avoidance

**When you avoid medical care, which of your identities or characteristics do you expect discrimination in medical settings to be related to?**

(3,197 participants)



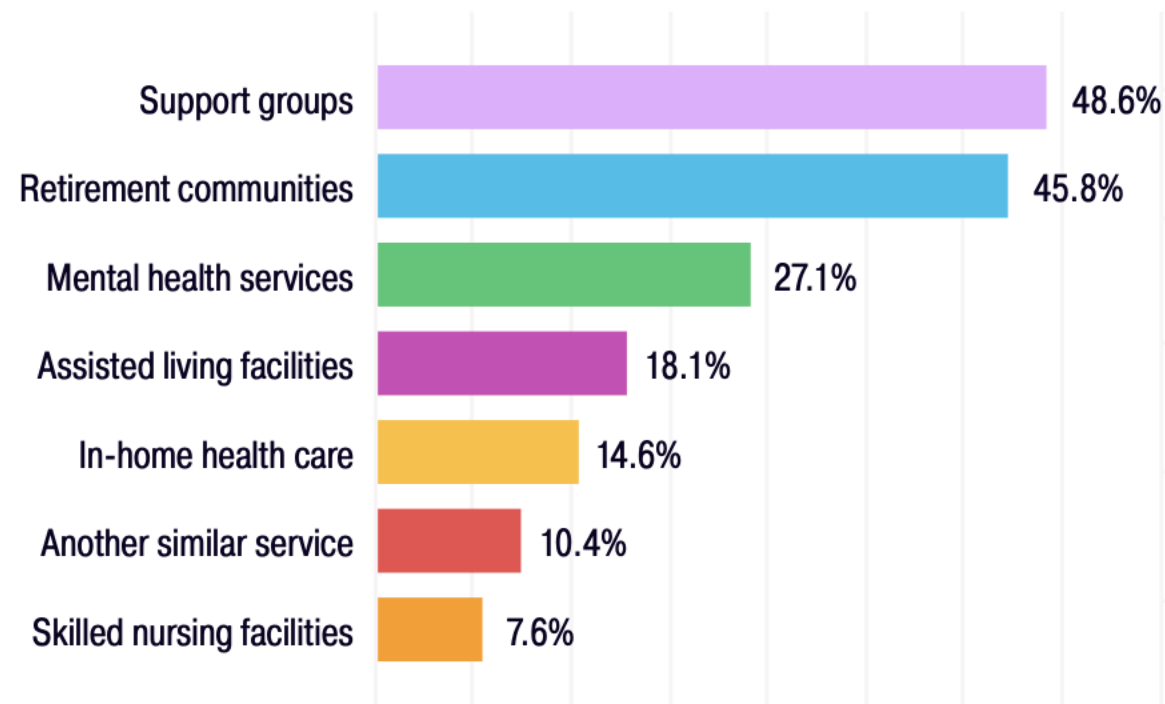
# Health Services for Older Adults



# Ages 65+ inaccessible services

**Of participants ages 65+ who were unable to find LGBTQ-affirming services, the following types of services were inaccessible:**

(144 participants)

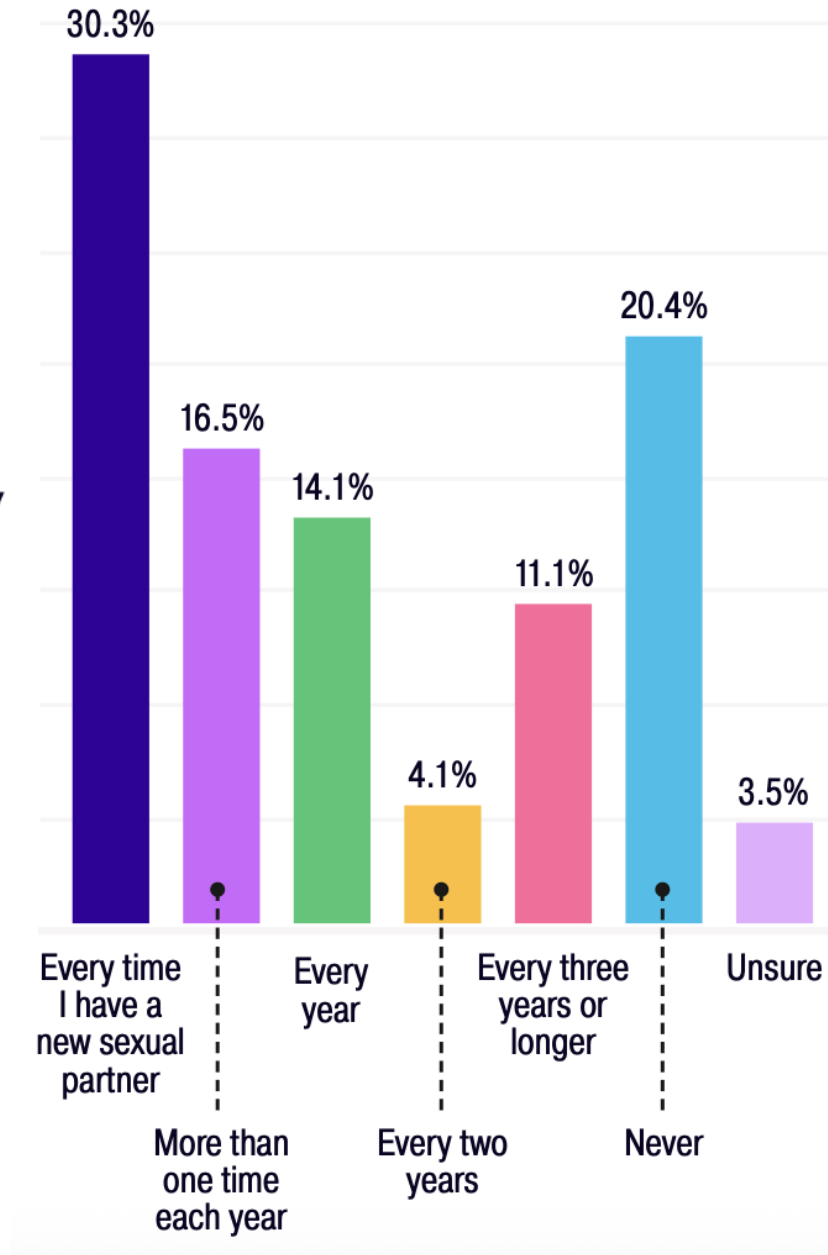


# Sexual Health

# STI screening

**How often do you engage in screenings for sexually transmitted infections?**

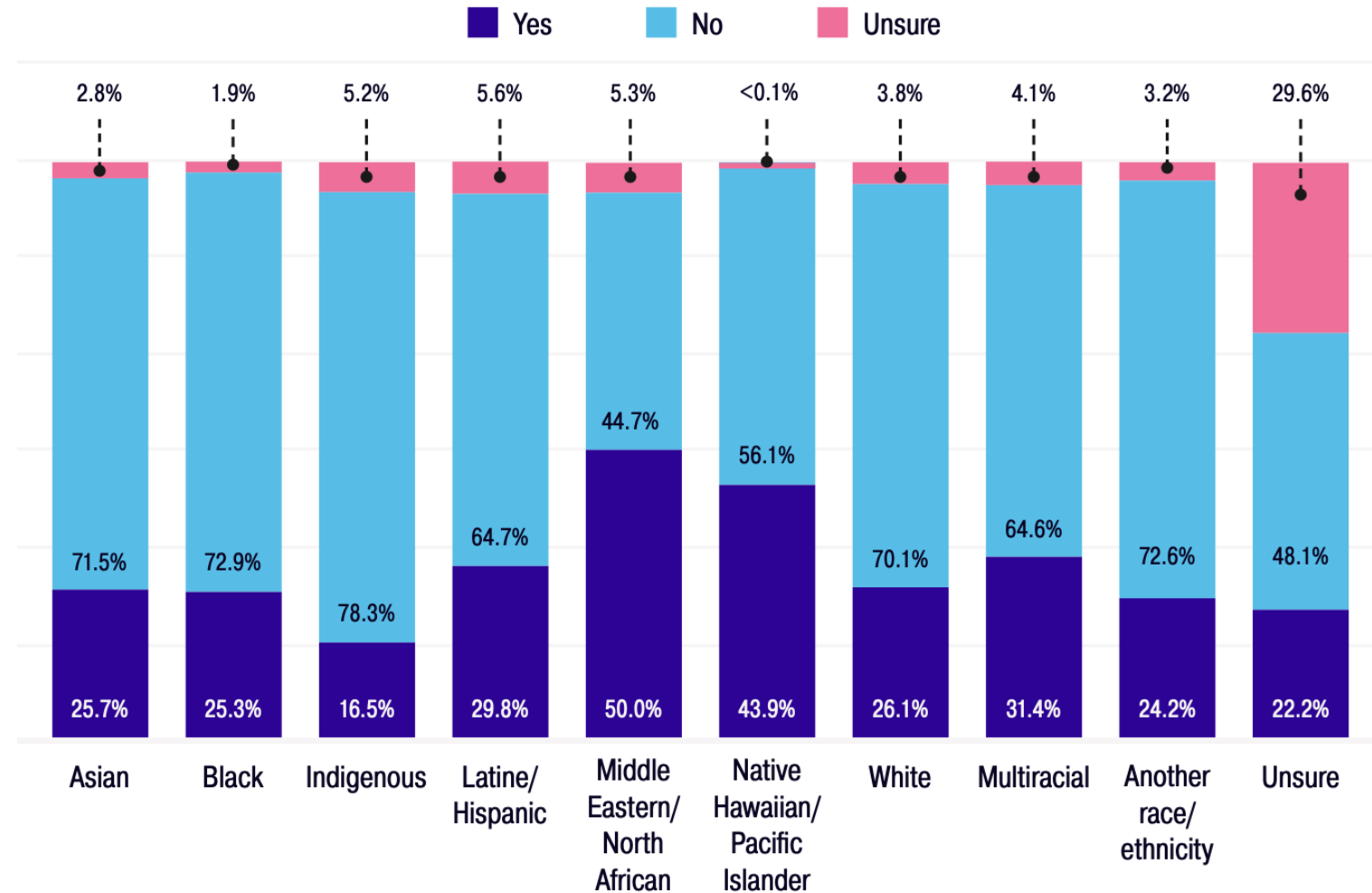
(6,202 participants)



# Intersectional Analyses

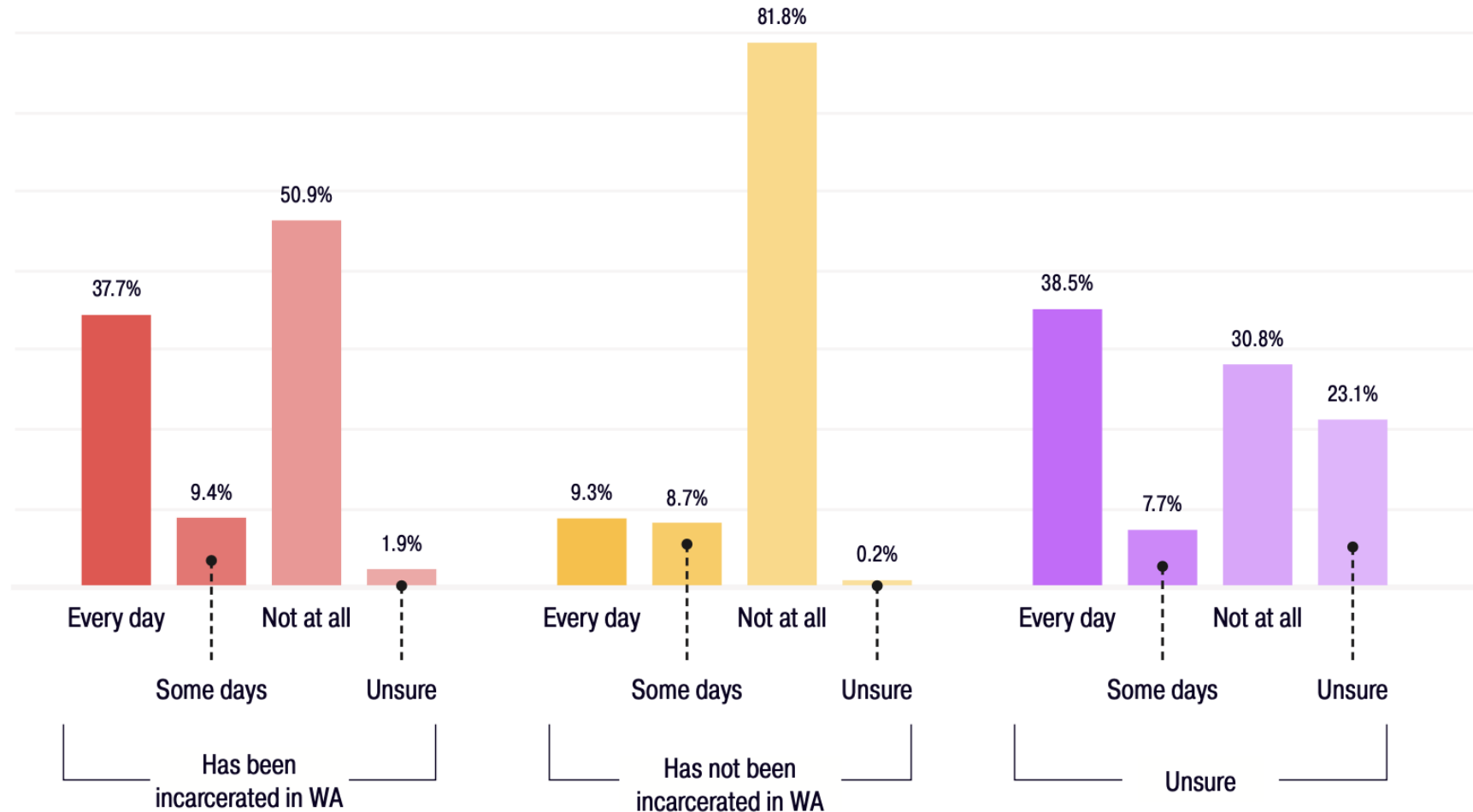
# Suicidal ideation x race/ethnicity

In the past 12 months, have you ever had any thoughts about killing yourself?  
(6,129 participants)



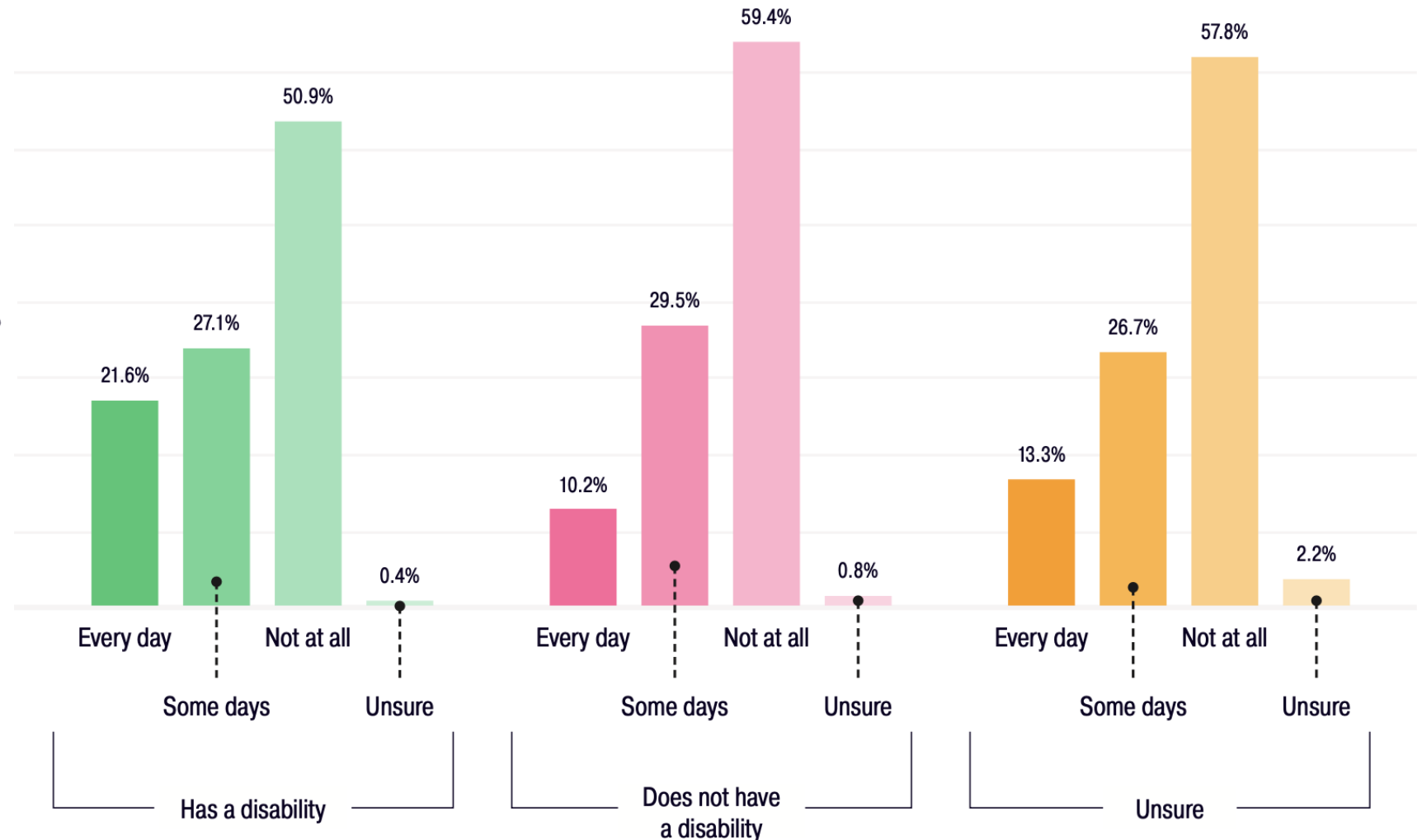
# Tobacco use x prior incarceration

**How often do you NOW use tobacco?**  
(3,350 participants)



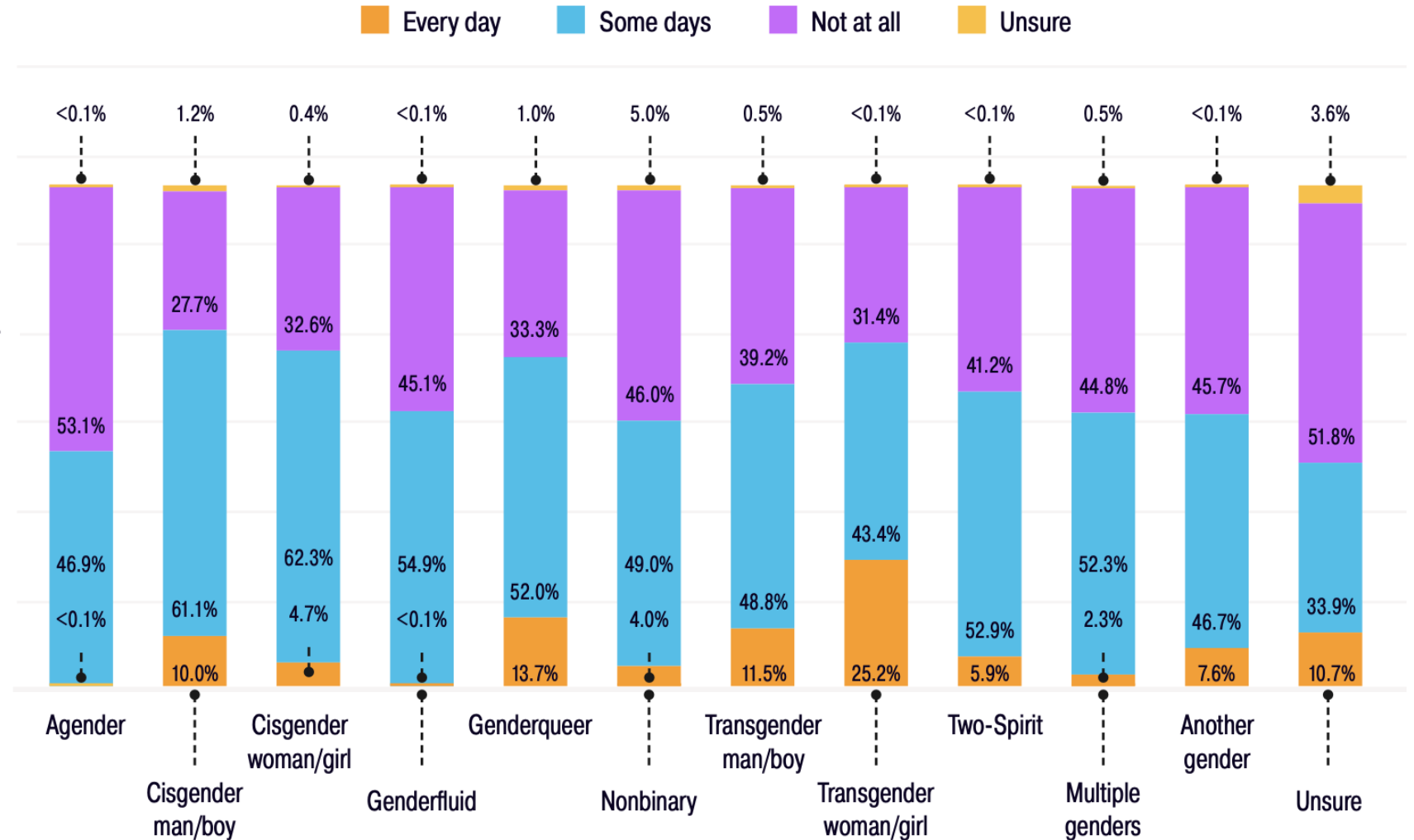
# Marijuana use x disability

**How often do you NOW use marijuana?**  
(3,429 participants)



# Alcohol use x gender

**How often do you NOW consume alcohol?**  
(3,440 participants)

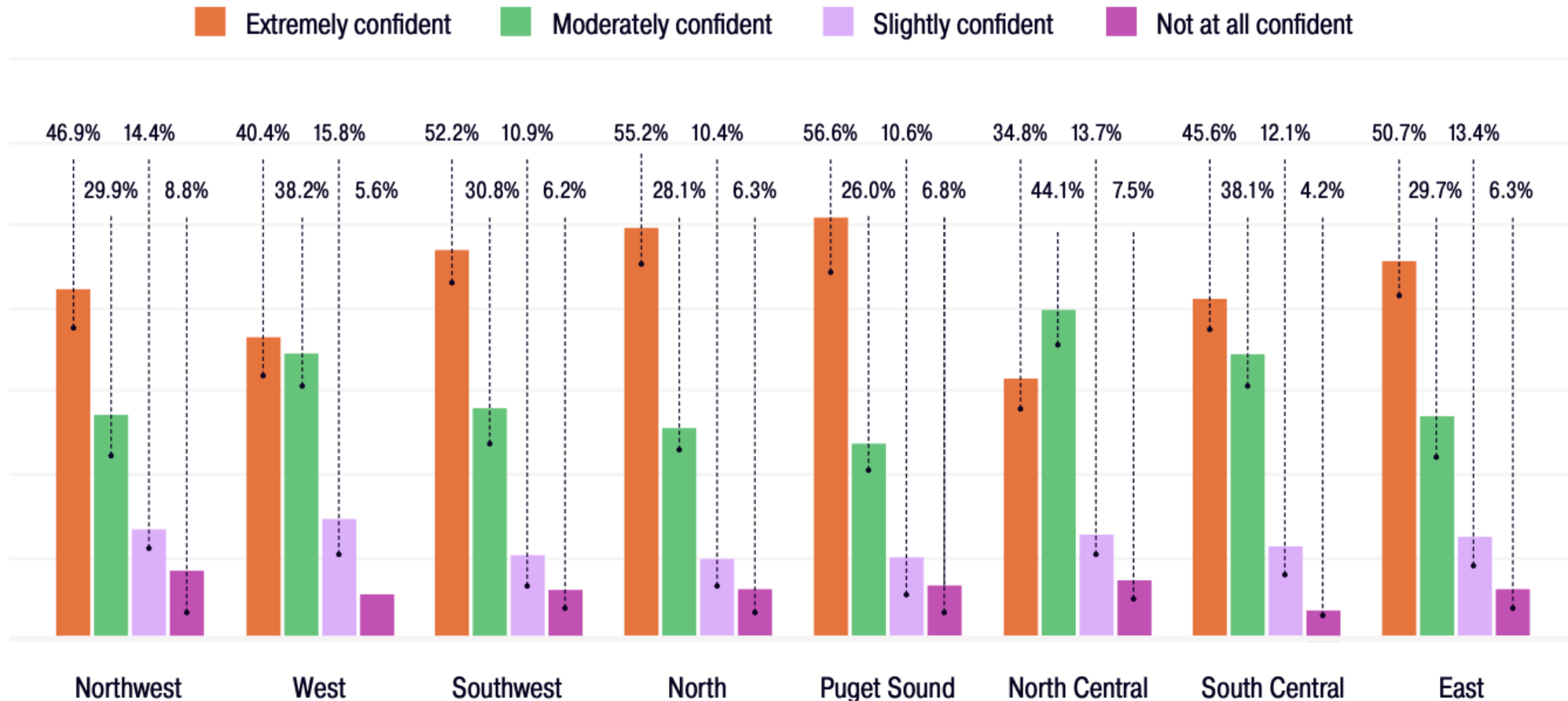




# Access to support x region

**If you were to become sick or injured in the near future,  
how confident are you that someone you know would take care of you?**

(6,142 participants)



# Presidential Election Effects

# Depressive symptoms

- The effect of timing on depressive symptoms was significant,  $F(1, 6,209) = 26.25, p < .001, \eta p^2 = .004$
- **Participants who completed the survey after the election had higher levels of depressive symptoms ( $M = 2.33, SD = 1.86$ ) than those who completed the survey before the election ( $M = 2.10, SD = 1.73$ ):**
  - 2.10 days per week before the election
  - 2.33 days per week after the election

# Anxiety

- The effect of timing on anxiety was also significant,  $F(1, 6,195) = 21.79, p < .001, \eta p^2 = .004$
- **Participants who completed the survey after the election had higher levels of anxiety** ( $M = 3.23, SD = 2.27$ ) than those who completed the survey before the election ( $M = 2.96, SD = 2.15$ )
  - 2.96 days per week before the election
  - 3.23 days per week after the election

# Perceived safety

- The effect of timing on perceived safety was significant,  $F(1, 6,179) = 12.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta p^2 = .002$
- **Participants who completed the survey after the election felt safer as a 2SLGBTQIA+ person in Washington State** ( $M = 5.40$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ), compared to those who completed the survey before the election ( $M = 5.30$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ )
  - 5.30 before the election (scale: 1 = *extremely unsafe* to 7 = *extremely safe*)
  - 5.40 after the election

# Q&A

- In the room
- Online
- [Comment dashboard](#)

**Thank you!**

# Washington LGBTQ+ Survey: Design and Methodology



# Overview

- Recognize team and partners
- Discuss survey design and methodology
- Share outreach approach and outcomes
- Show participant feedback about survey experience

# Research Team and Partners

# Research team

- Leadership:
  - Traci Gillig
  - Crystallee Crain
- Research assistants:
  - CJ Janssen
  - Ron Price
  - Oaklen Warren
  - Axis Zarcone
  - Zak Moreno
  - Christina Nickerson



# Partners

- **Prevention at the Intersections** (complete project)
- **WSU Social and Economic Sciences Research Center** (complete project)
- **Charles Watson II** (March – June 2025)
- **RCB Communications** (November 2024 – January 2025)
- **data2insight** (August 2024 - January 2025)
- **Delve** (March 2024 – January 2025)
- **Sankofa Consulting** (December 2023 - July 2024)

# Advisory panel

- Nikki Brueggeman – Whitman College
- Erin Fordyce – NORC
- Robin Lang – Washington State Department of Veteran's Affairs
- Gabe Neuman – GSBA
- Julia Przedworski – Pride in Numbers
- Tracy Simmons – FAVS News

# Citation of research

Research commissioned by the Washington State LGBTQ Commission and led by Washington State University

APA Style citation:

Gillig, T. K., Crain, C., Janssen, C., Price, E., Warren, O. E., Zarcone, A., & Moreno, Z. (2025). *Washington LGBTQ+ Survey Report 2025*. Washington State University. <https://www.walgbtqsurvey.com/>

# Survey Design and Methodology

# Timeline

- **December 2023:** Research team began working with the LGBTQ Commission
- **January 2024:** Team led grounding session with the LGBTQ Commission
- **February – May 2024:** Team designed questionnaire and outreach approach, reviewed with LGBTQ Commission and advisory panel, submitted study plan to Washington State Institutional Review Board (WSIRB), pilot tested survey materials, established social media and website, produced branded items, conducted media relations
- **June 1, 2024:** Launched data collection, tracked/reported preliminary outcomes
- **January 31, 2025:** Closed data collection, started full data analysis
- **May 17, 2025:** Presented preliminary findings
- **June 25, 2025:** Delivered final report and presentation



# Project goals

- Research team aimed to meet the LGBTQ Commission's goals stated in the RFQQ and expressed through the grounding session and subsequent conversations, including:
  - Capture LGBTQ+ Washingtonian's demographics; geographic locations; health, safety, and economic/financial experiences; primary needs
  - Reach LGBTQ+ Washingtonians across the lifespan
  - Engage hard-to-reach communities such as Two-Spirit, rural, and older LGBTQ+ people
  - Provide data to help the LGBTQ Commission make informed policy recommendations

# Research team aims

- Team also desired to:
  - Co-create survey with a diverse group of LGBTQ+ people across the state
  - Empower LGBTQ+ Washingtonians to share their unique experiences
  - Ensure accessibility
  - Engage with the community in various ways
  - Examine survey data as a whole and intersectionally
  - Provide results that lend themselves readily to policymakers, community members, and others

# Survey design

- Drew from the diversity of our team members to create an inclusive survey
- Team members have experience in:
  - Leading survey-based, mixed method research with LGBTQ+ adolescents through adults
  - Engaging with BIPOC communities
  - Understanding experiences of transgender, nonbinary, and rural Washingtonians
- Incorporated established survey scales/items when available, and designed new ones when needed



# Survey items and scales

- Demographics
- Policy experiences
- Health, medical experiences, and social support
- Economic and financial experiences
- Safety experiences
- Incarceration experiences
- Source of hearing about survey

**How safe do you feel as an LGBTQ+ person in the state of Washington?**

- ☐ Extremely safe
- ☐ Very safe
- ☐ Somewhat safe
- ☐ Neither safe nor unsafe
- ☐ Somewhat unsafe
- ☐ Very unsafe
- ☐ Extremely unsafe

# Open-ended survey questions

- For all participants:
  - *“What would you like to see the Washington state government do to help LGBTQ+ people who live in Washington?”*
  - *“Is there anything else you’d like to share with us about being LGBTQ+ in Washington?”*
  - *“Is there anything you’d like to share with us about your experience with this survey?”*

# Open-ended survey questions

- For participants who experienced barriers to obtaining gender-affirming care:
  - *“Please explain the barriers you encountered when trying to obtain insurance coverage for gender-affirming care.”*
- For previously incarcerated participants:
  - *“Did your LGBTQ+ identity negatively affect your treatment by other inmates or personnel while incarcerated?”*
  - *“Did you have difficulty receiving healthcare that affirmed your LGBTQ+ identity while incarcerated?”*



# Protecting participants

- Anonymous survey
- Parental permission for adolescents ages 11 to 17 (WSIRB-required)
- Separate questionnaire for entering \$50 raffle drawing
- Data stored in secure, password-protected spaces, with limited access

# Review and pilot testing

- Internal team review
  - Survey team represents queer individuals of a range of ages, identities, backgrounds
- Review by LGBTQ Commission leadership and commissioners
  - Options to provide feedback via a Qualtrics questionnaire and in a Zoom meeting
- Pilot testing with LGBTQ+ people of various ages, abilities, identities, and life experiences
  - Interview/survey completion sessions conducted



# Inclusive materials

- Translated English questionnaire and informational materials into Spanish and Chinese
- Created online and paper-and-pencil questionnaires



# Preliminary data analysis and cleaning

- Monthly preliminary analysis during data collection to guide outreach
- Participants were screened for study eligibility based on the following criteria:
  - Living in or being a resident of Washington State
  - Being age 11 or older
  - Identifying as LGBTQ+
  - Not having previously completed the survey
- Multiple team members conducted rigorous screening for invalid responses (bots, etc)

# Data analysis

- Statistical analyses (frequencies, descriptives, correlations, regressions) conducted by WSU SESRC and lead principal researcher (SPSS v28)
- Qualitative analysis and coding of open-ended responses led by WSU SESRC, supported by WSU research assistants
  - SESRC inductively analyzed selections of participants' written responses to create codebooks
  - SESRC staff and research assistants used the codebooks to assign codes to participants' written responses
  - Intercoder reliability established between coder pairs

# Outreach

# Outreach approach

- WSU Media Relations activities prior to study launch generated statewide coverage and enthusiasm about the project



## New WSU study will examine Washington's rainbow reputation

By KIRO 7 News Staff

November 28, 2023 at 5:44 pm PST





# Outreach approach

- Timed survey launch to align with start of Pride
- Shared the survey link online
  - Posted on @walgbtqsurvey social media
  - Emailed to LGBTQ+ and other relevant organizations
- Conducted additional media relations
- Distributed and posted print materials
- Hosted in-person outreach and survey administration events



# Focused outreach

- Preliminary analysis of participant race/ethnicity showed underrepresentation of Latine and Asian people
- In September 2024, team launched focused outreach:
  - Additional engagement with relevant community organizations, student groups, businesses, etc
  - Op-ed in *International Examiner*
  - Targeted online ads
  - Public service announcements in English, Spanish, Chinese
  - Recruitment through survey firm SAGO



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
Edward R. Murrow  
College of Communication

*International Examiner*

OPINION

## The critical importance of BIPOC representation in state LGBTQIA+ survey

By Dr. Crystallee Crain - January 13, 2025



Free pride flag image, public domain LGBTQ CC0 photo.

As activist June Jordan reminds us, “We’re the ones we’ve been waiting for.”

The [Washington LGBTQ+ Survey](#), led by Washington State University's Murrow College of Communication and sponsored by the [Washington State LGBTQ Commission](#), stands as a landmark initiative in understanding and supporting our state's diverse Two-spirit — an umbrella term for third genders in Native America — and LGBTQIA+ communities.

It is a first-of-its-kind statewide survey aimed at raising the voices of queer adolescents and adults living in Washington to state policymakers. While the survey has successfully gathered insights from more than 5,400 Two-spirit and LGBTQIA+ community members across every Washington county, a crucial demographic gap has emerged that demands our immediate attention and action before the survey closes on January 31, 2025.

Communities of color know all too well that without information about us we can't make the case for the social and political changes needed. Two-spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities of color face additional barriers and exclusions that the Washington LGBTQ+ Survey aims to provide context for.

# Outreach outcomes

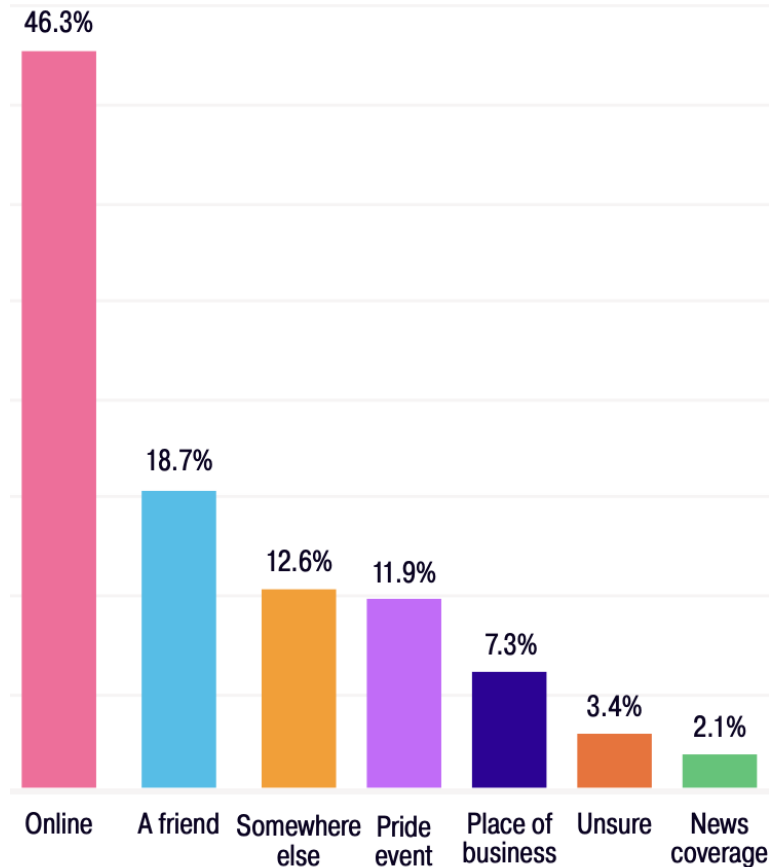
- Sample of nearly 6,700 LGBTQ+ participants
- Representation across lifespan, from adolescents to older adults
  - Participants ranged in age from 11 to 98 years old
- Participants from every Washington county
- More than half of participants are transgender, nonbinary, or other non-cisgender identity
- Diversity across race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and other key characteristics and experiences represented



# Outreach outcomes

## How did you hear about this survey?

(6,095 participants)



# Participant Feedback

# Participant feedback

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the survey?**  
(935 participants)

|                                     |              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Positive emotional responses</b> | <b>60.4%</b> |
| Survey was a positive experience    | 38.8%        |
| Grateful for survey                 | 16.4%        |
| Made me feel valued                 | 2.5%         |
| Gave me hope                        | 1.6%         |
| Learned something                   | 0.9%         |
| <b>Survey content feedback</b>      | <b>28.0%</b> |
| Survey is missing something         | 22.0%        |
| Gave context to previous answers    | 2.2%         |
| Experienced mechanical/tech issue   | 1.7%         |
| Noticed redundancies                | 0.8%         |
| Could improve identity questions    | 0.5%         |
| Found parts confusing               | 0.4%         |
| Wanted another open-ended question  | 0.2%         |

|                                      |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Survey flow feedback</b>          | <b>5.8%</b> |
| Commented on length                  | 5.3%        |
| Commented on accessibility           | 0.5%        |
| <b>Data-related questions</b>        | <b>2.9%</b> |
| Asked about results availability     | 2.3%        |
| Inquired about anonymity             | 0.6%        |
| <b>Negative emotional responses</b>  | <b>2.6%</b> |
| Suspicious of survey                 | 1.3%        |
| Expressed a general negative emotion | 1.2%        |

# Participant quotes

## Positive emotional responses

The survey questions were well-crafted and covered a broad range of topics relevant to LGBTQ+ individuals.

I appreciate your inclusive wording throughout, especially with regard to asexuality and body positivity.

## Survey content feedback

Hard to answer some of the questions from my experience. I have never felt discriminated against; being gay is one facet of my identity, and not a major one at that.

I'm closeted and have passed as straight my whole life, so many of the questions didn't squarely apply to me (e.g., discrimination at work, etc.), but that's 100% understandable.

# Participant quotes

## Survey flow feedback

Thank you for making this survey so accessible.

This survey was a little long! It almost made me not want to complete, but as someone who has developed and distributed similar surveys - and believes in community feedback and engagement - I felt it was necessary for me to complete it. I hope to see and learn about your findings when analysis is complete!

## Data-related questions

I am satisfied with the survey's privacy protection measures, knowing that my personal information will be kept securely.

Thank you for doing this research. I look forward to the report back and community outcomes.

## Negative emotional responses

It's a mixed feeling when surveys ask about discrimination because it brings back tough memories.

It was a sad reality check for me and my quality of life and being totally alone.

# Q&A

- In the room
- Online
- [Comment dashboard](#)

**Thank you!**

# Washington LGBTQ+ Survey: Safety, Hate Crimes, and Incarceration



WASHINGTON STATE  
**LGBTQ**  
COMMISSION



# Overview

- LGBTQ+ identity and safety
- LGBTQ+ community connections
- Incarceration and related experiences

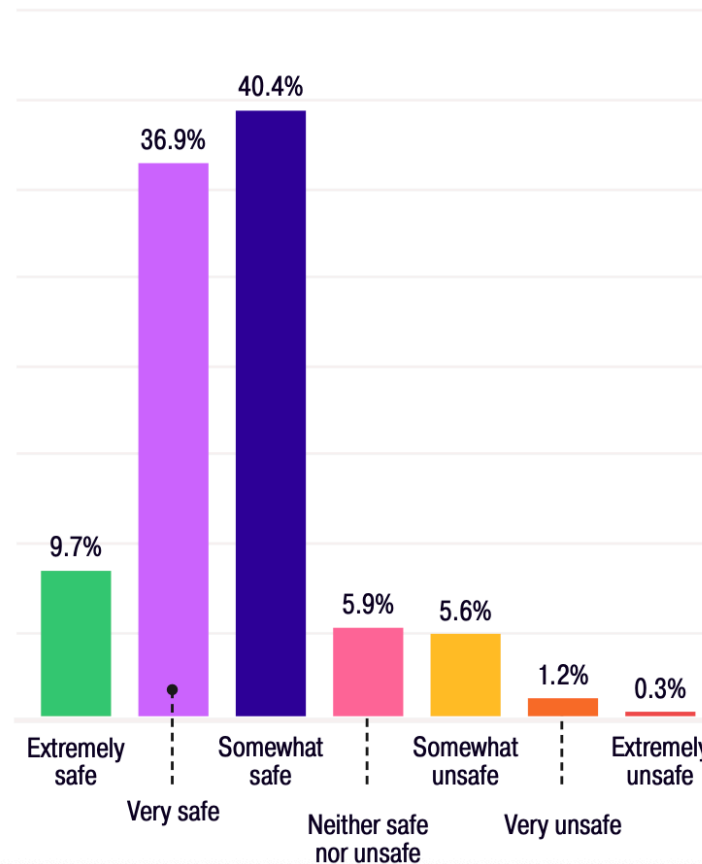
# LGBTQ+ Identity and Safety



# Perceived safety

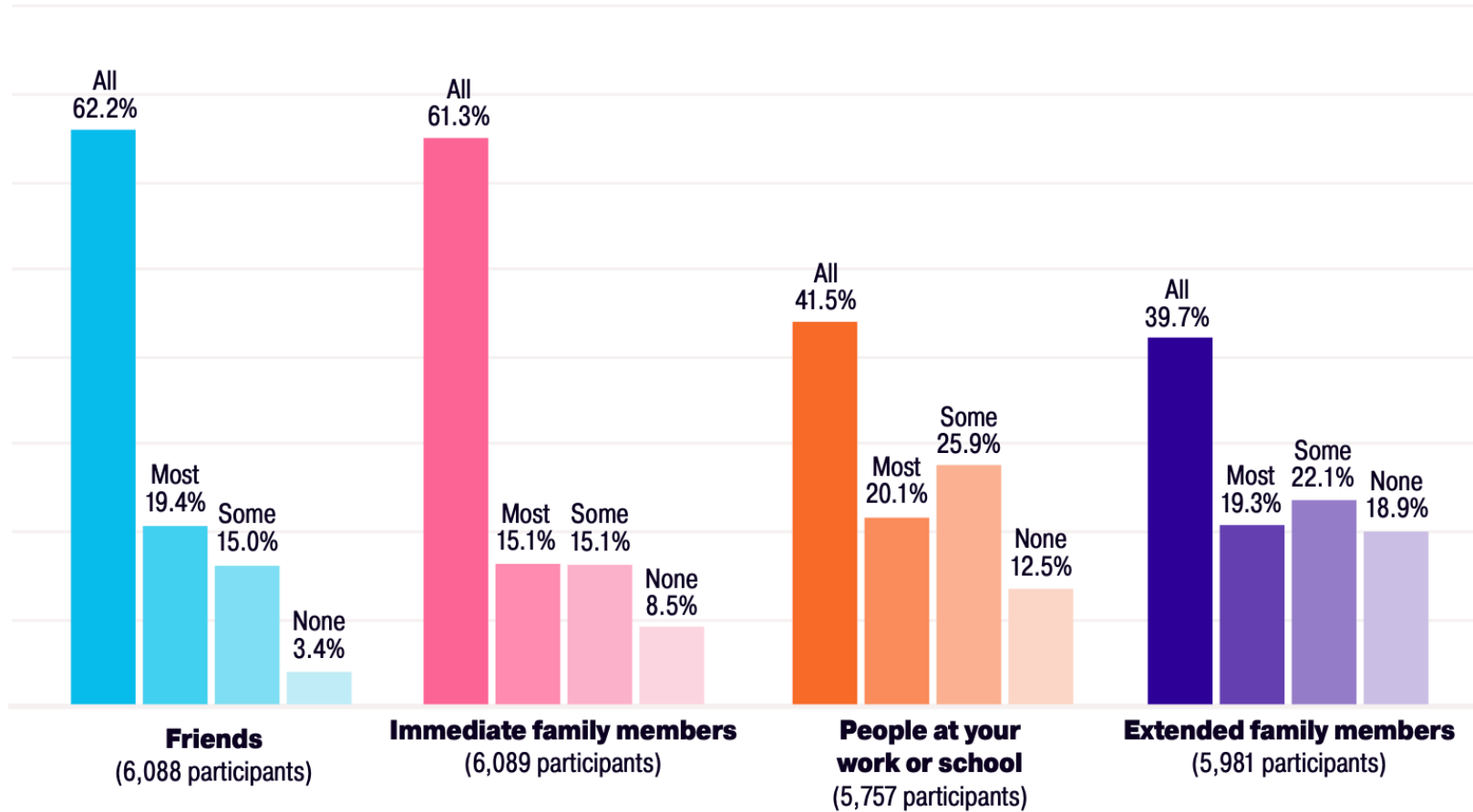
**How safe do you feel as an LGBTQ+ person in the state of Washington?**

(6,187 participants)



# Outness

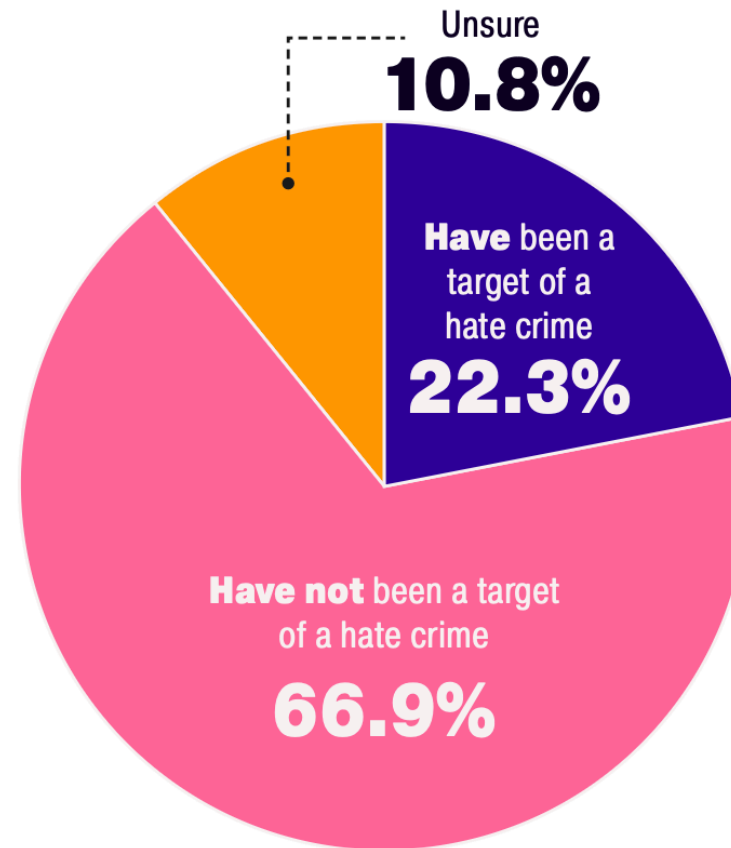
Are you out (or open about your LGBTQ+ identity) to:



# Hate crime victimization

**While living in Washington, have you ever been a target of a hate crime?**

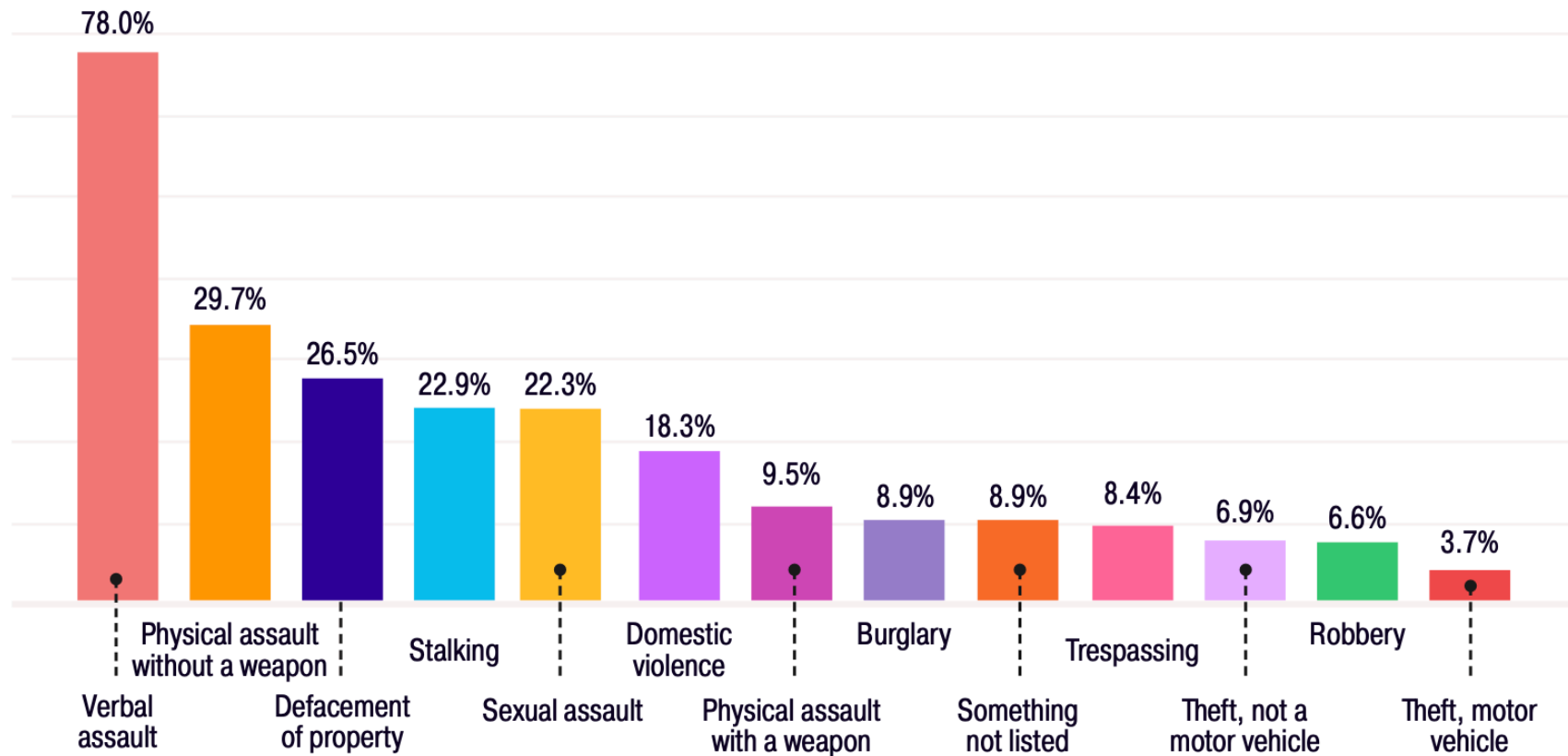
(1,880 participants)



# Hate crimes experienced

Which hate crimes you have experienced while living in Washington?

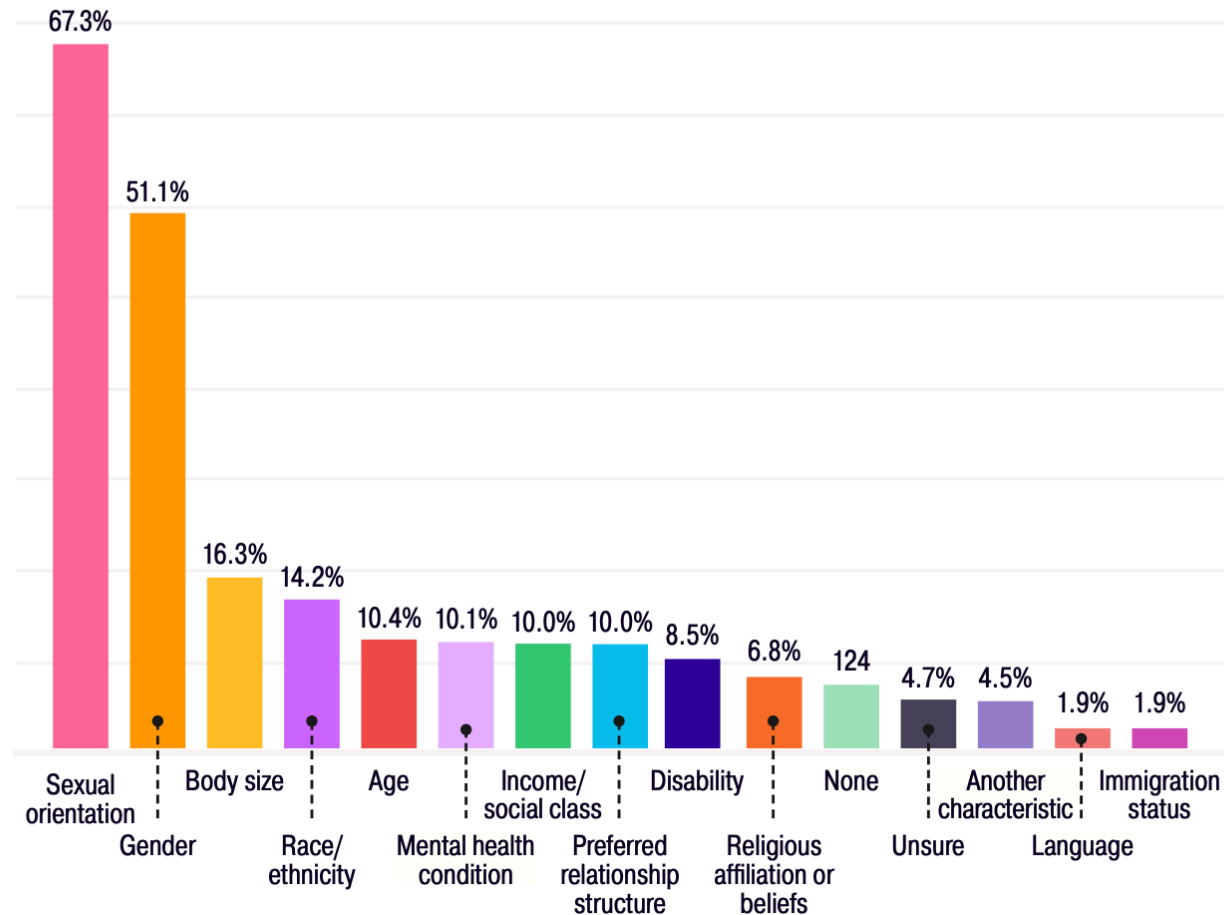
(2,045 participants)



# Identities prompting hate crime

What do you think motivated the actions of the offender?

(2,040 participants)



# LGBTQ+ Community Connections

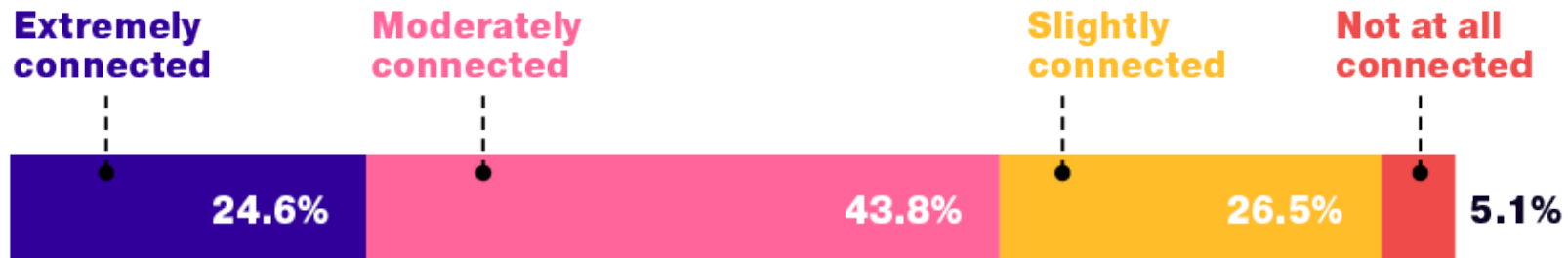




# Connectedness to community

To what extent do you feel connected to an LGBTQ+ community in Washington?

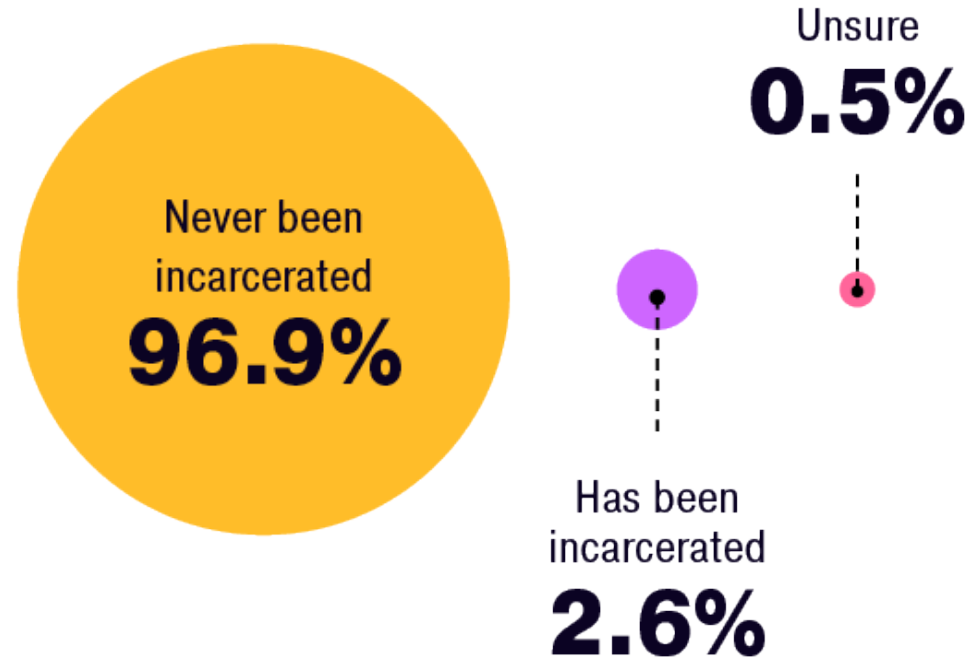
(6,659 participants)



# Incarceration and Related Experiences

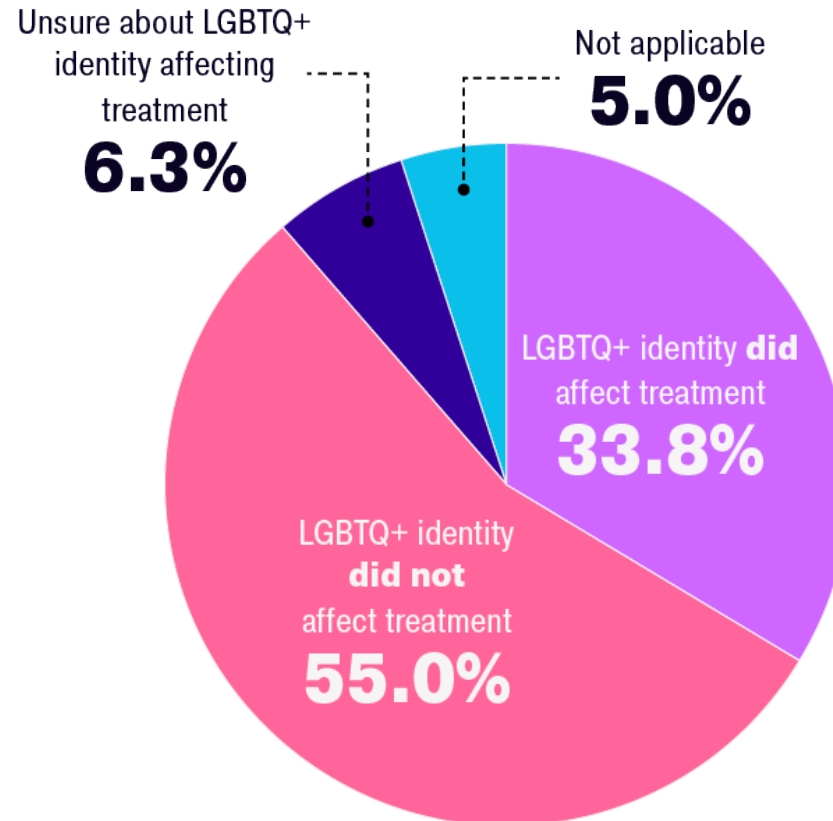
# Prior incarceration

Have you ever been incarcerated in  
Washington?  
(6,056 participants)



# Treatment by others

**Did your LGBTQ+ identity negatively affect your treatment by other inmates or personnel while incarcerated?**  
(160 participants)



# Treatment by others

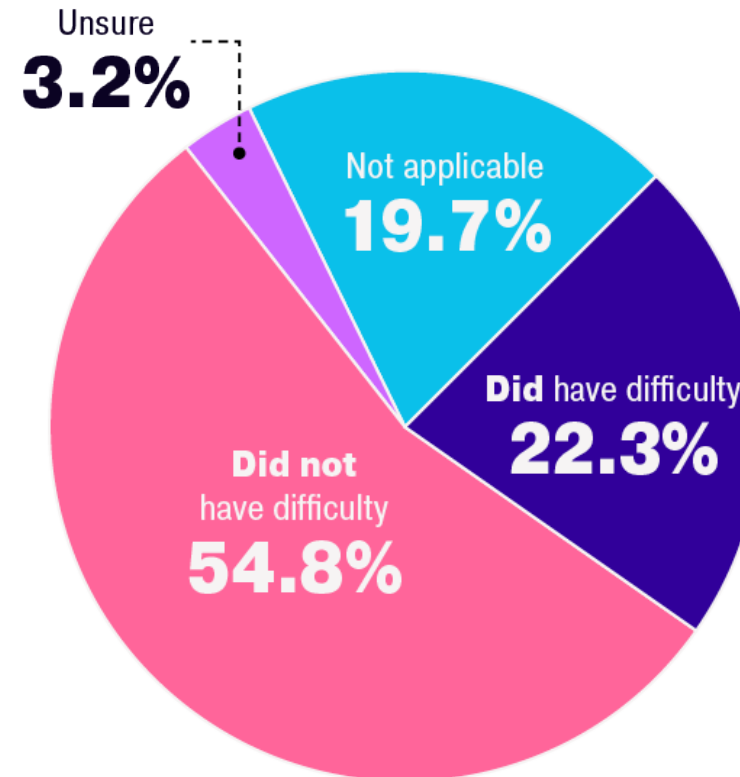
**Did your LGBTQ+ identity negatively affect your treatment by other inmates or personnel while incarcerated?**  
(67 participants)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Negative experience</b>  | <b>67.2%</b> |
| Witnessed or experienced mistreatment by other incarcerated individuals | 41.8%        |
| Experienced mistreatment by staff                                       | 14.9%        |
| Incarcerated in wrong-gender area                                       | 7.5%         |
| Staff weren't educated/trained  | 3.0%         |
| <b>Neutral experience</b>   | <b>32.8%</b> |
| Wasn't 'out' as LGBTQ+  | 14.9%        |
| Treated the same  | 9.0%         |
| Wasn't in long enough to experience anything negative                   | 9.0%         |



# Healthcare experiences

Did you have difficulty receiving health care  
that affirmed your LGBTQ+ identity while  
incarcerated?  
(157 participants)



# Healthcare experiences

**Did you have difficulty receiving healthcare that affirmed your LGBTQ+ identity while incarcerated?**  
(80 participants)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Didn't experience difficulties</b>     | <b>68.7%</b> |
| No issue with healthcare                  | 33.7%        |
| Didn't need healthcare while incarcerated | 27.5%        |
| Wasn't out at the time                    | 7.5%         |
| <b>Experienced difficulties</b>           | <b>31.2%</b> |
| General healthcare concerns               | 7.5%         |
| Limited access to gender-affirming care   | 6.2%         |
| Mistreated by medical staff               | 6.2%         |
| Staff was unknowledgeable                 | 5.0%         |
| Treatment was delayed                     | 3.7%         |
| Confidentiality concerns                  | 2.5%         |



# Intersectional Analyses



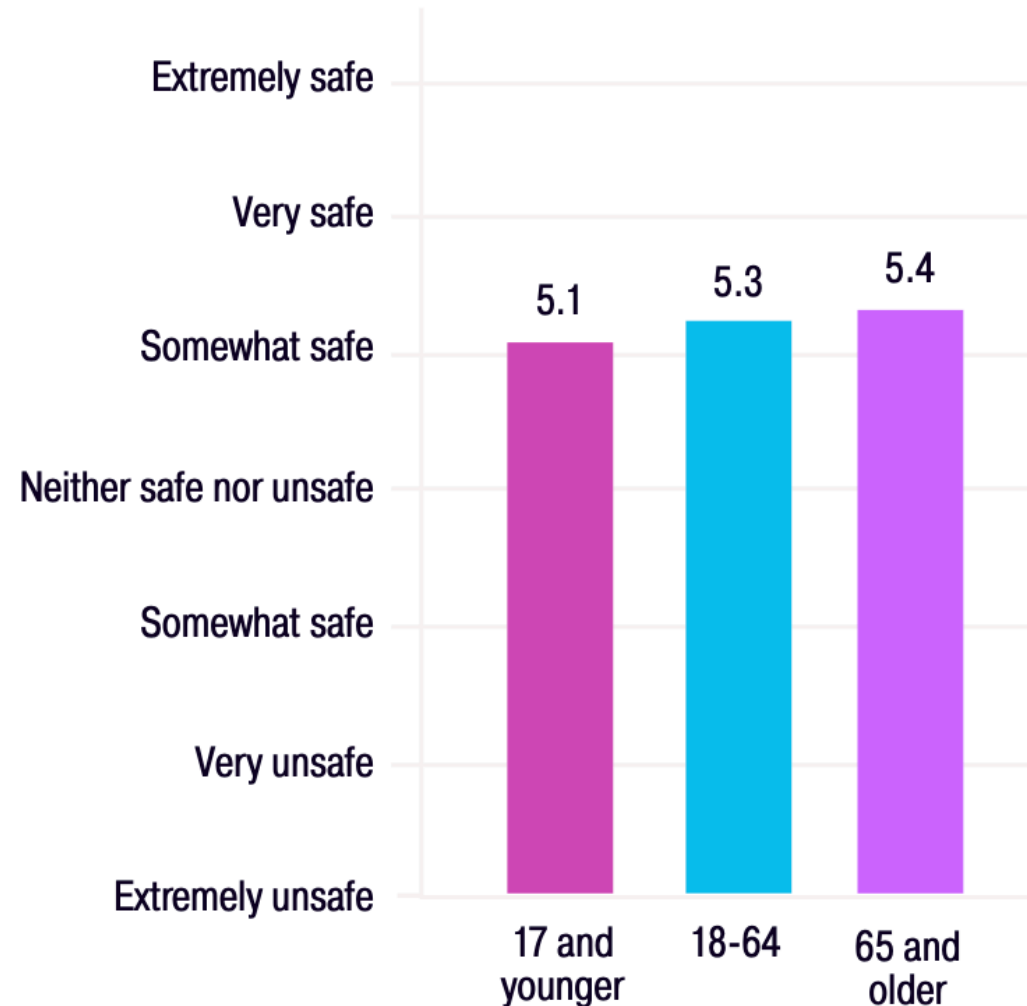
WASHINGTON STATE  
**LGBTQ**  
COMMISSION



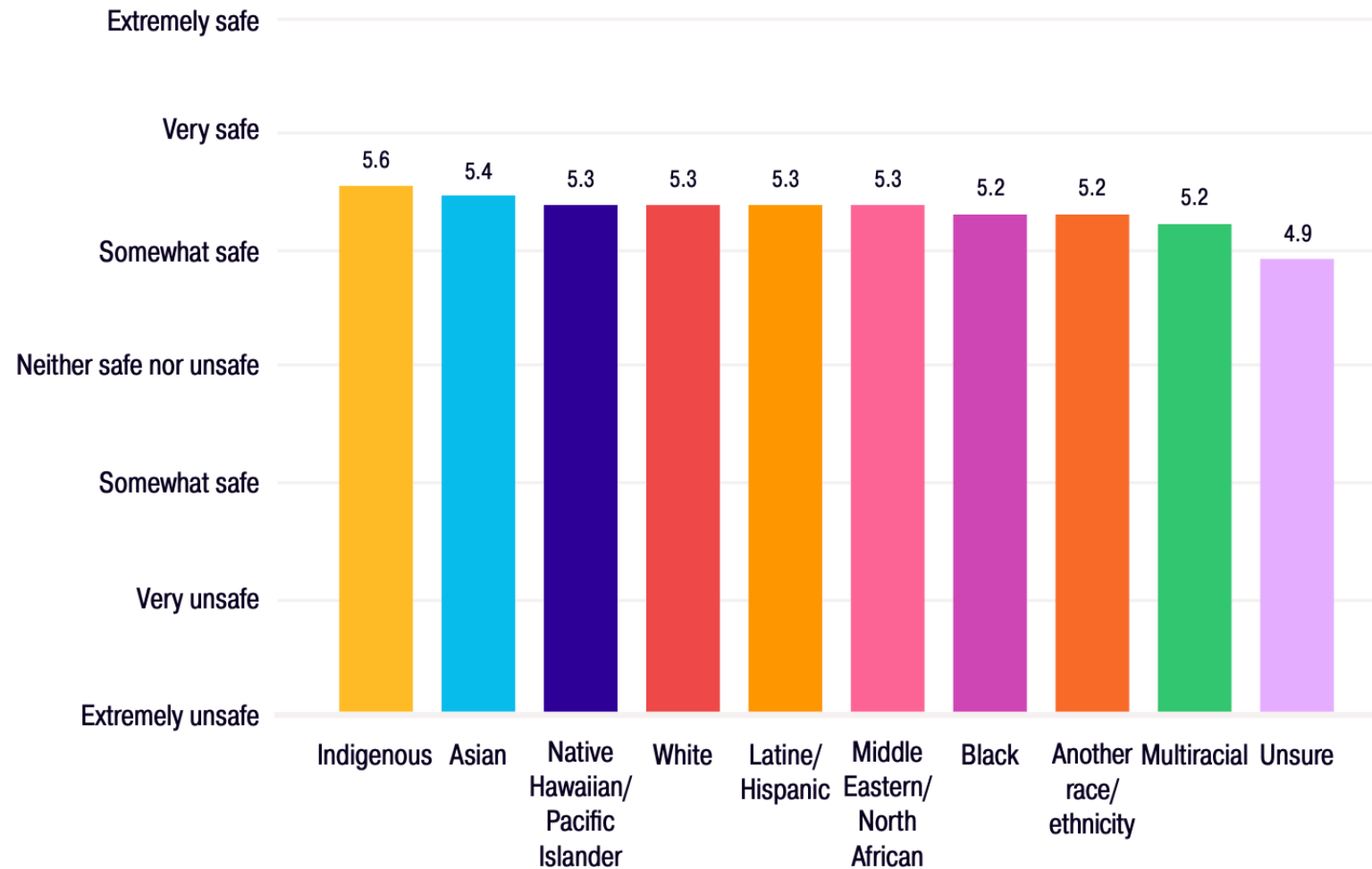
# Perceived safety x age

**How safe do you feel as an LGBTQ+ person  
in the state of Washington?**

(6,104 participants)



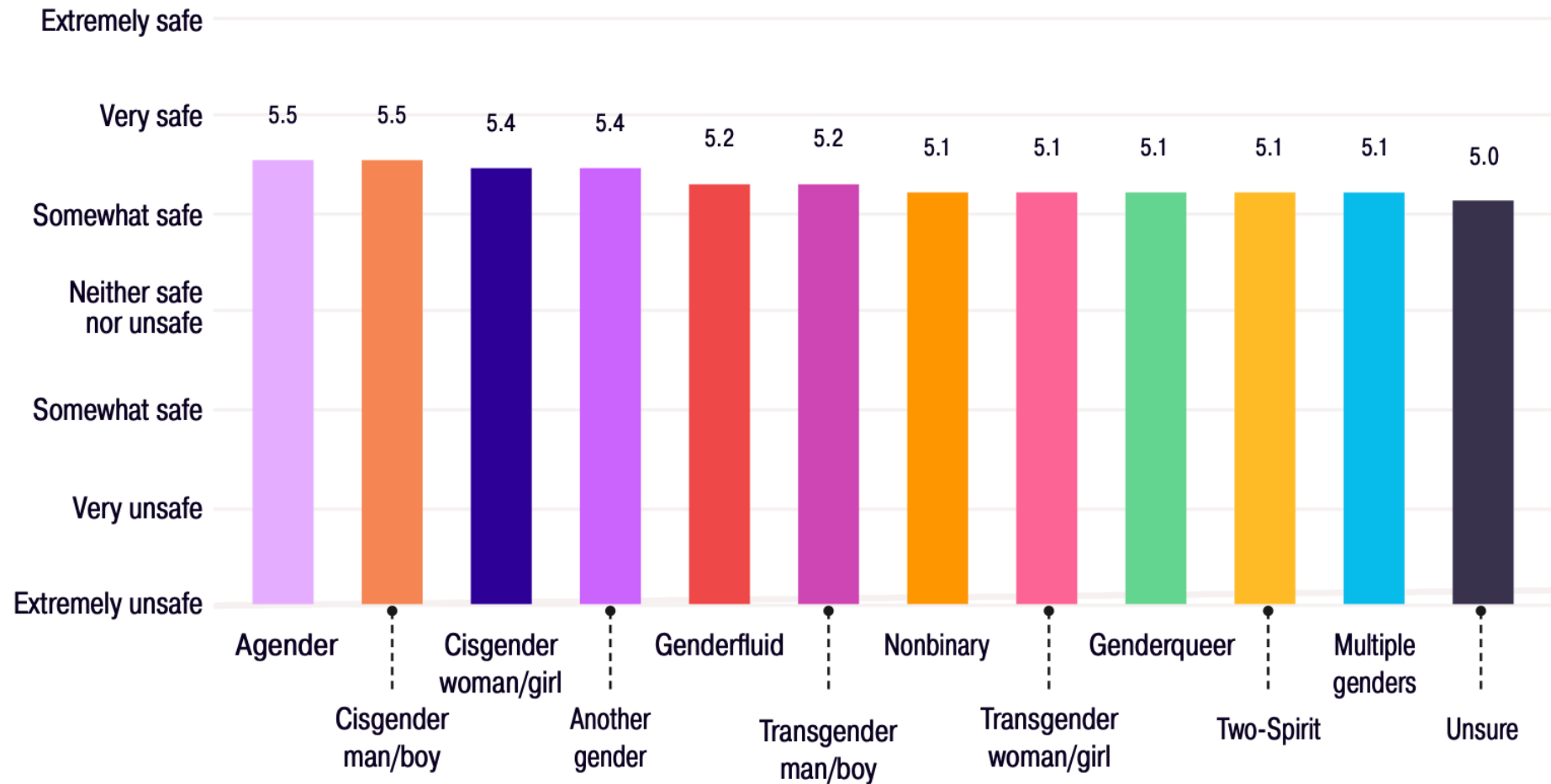
# Perceived safety x race/ethnicity



(6,132 participants)



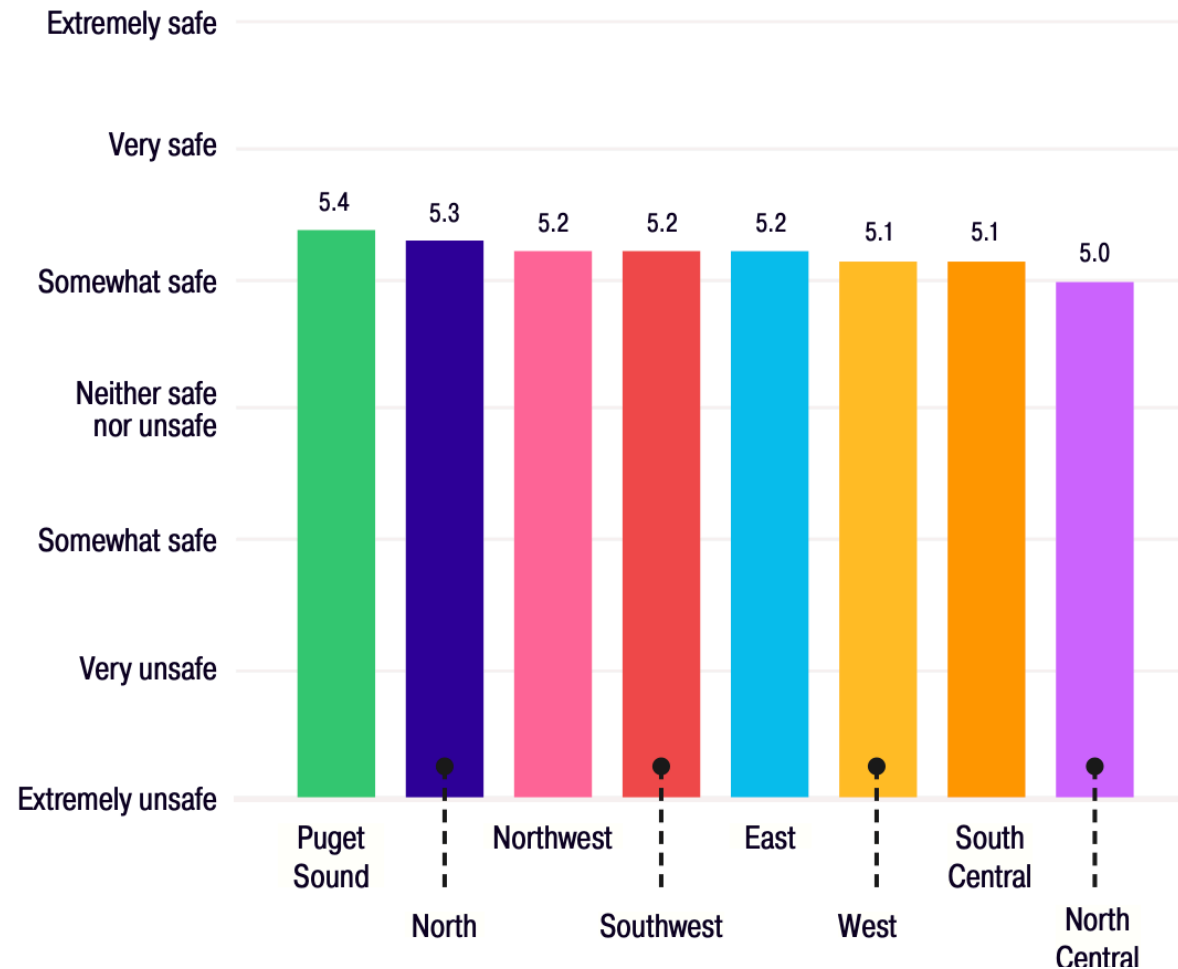
# Perceived safety x gender



(6,157 participants)



# Perceived safety x region



# Perceived safety x disability



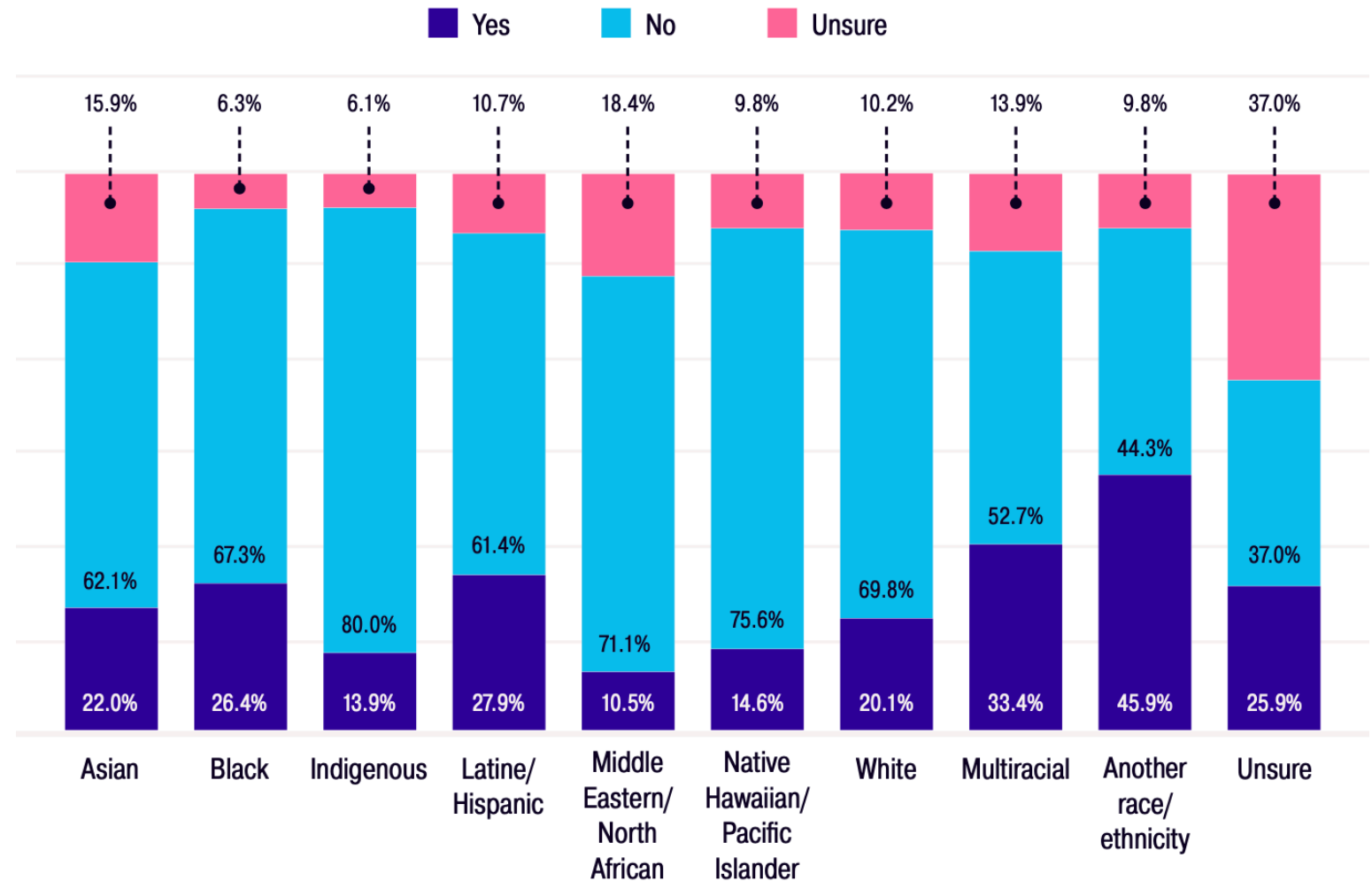
(6,142 participants)



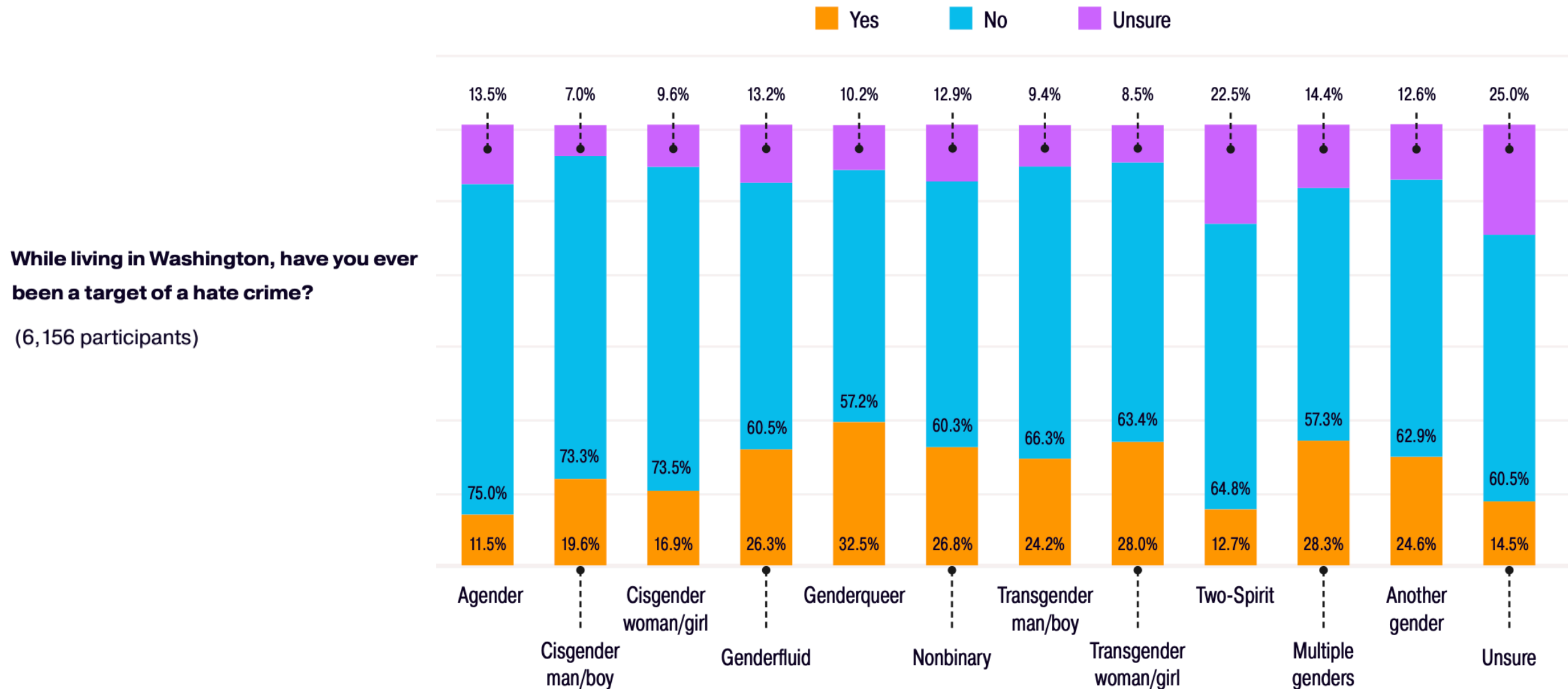
# Hate crime victimization x race/ethnicity

**While living in Washington, have you ever been a target of a hate crime?**

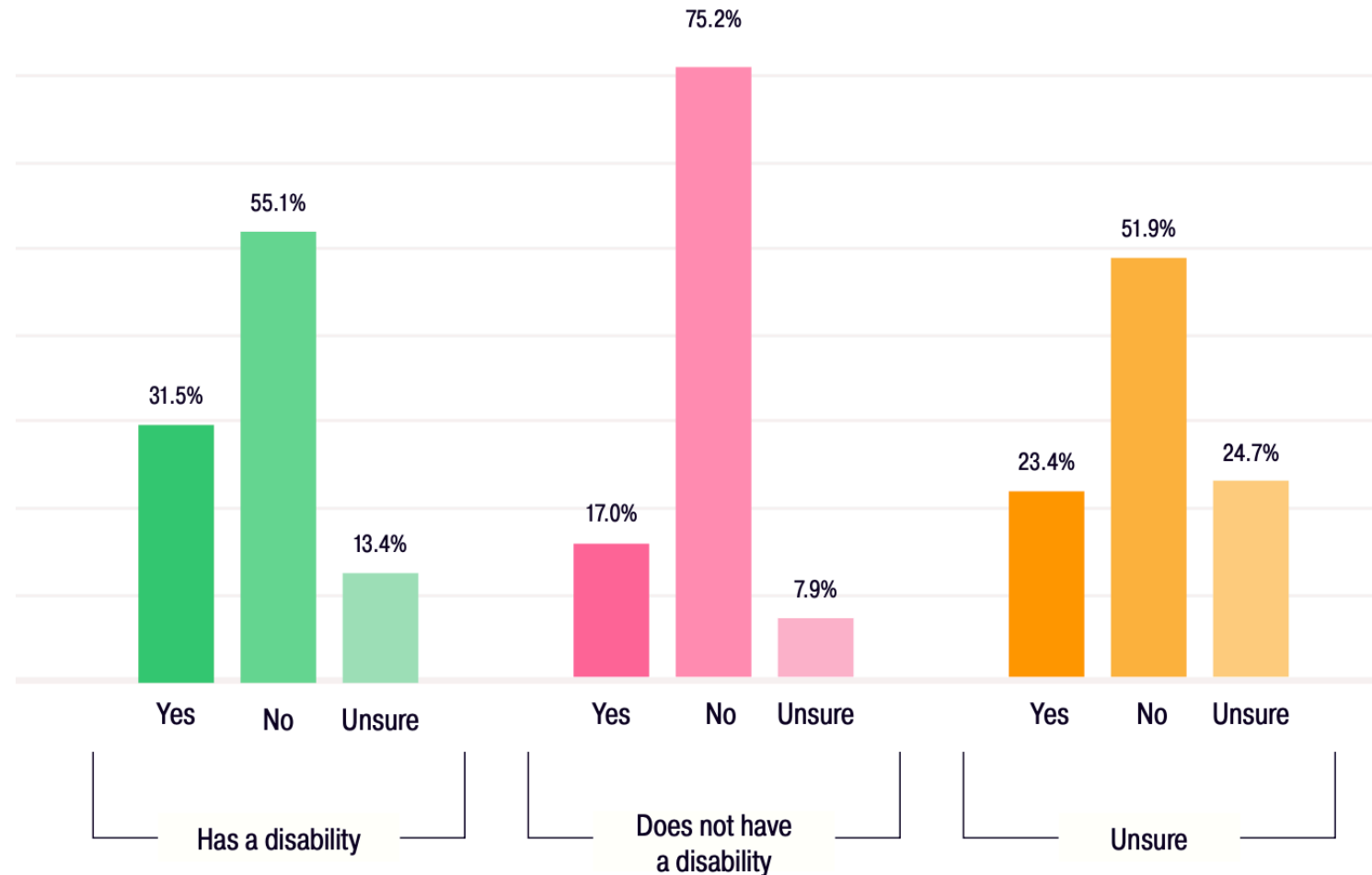
(6,130 participants)



# Hate crime victimization x gender

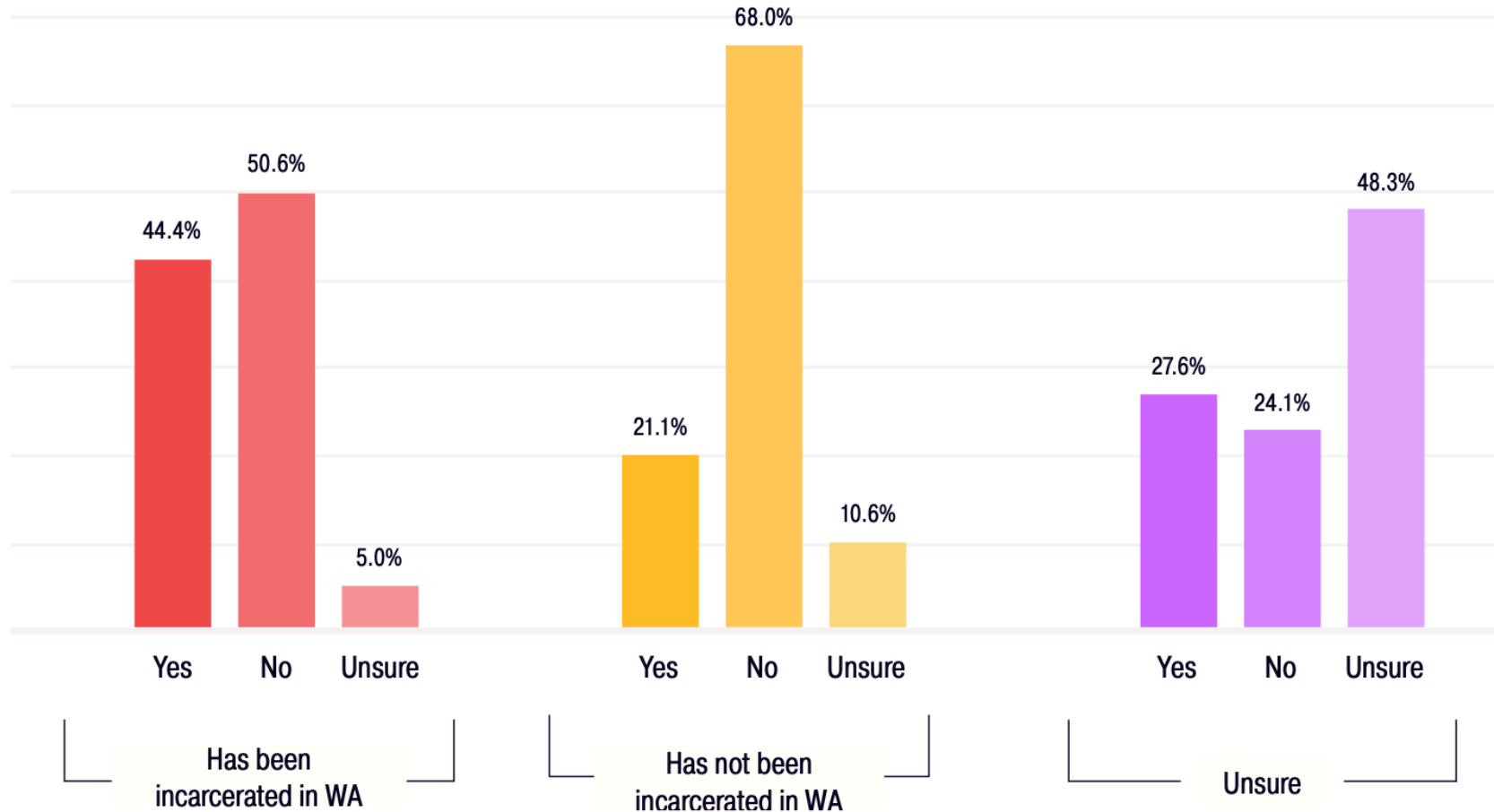


# Hate crime victimization x disability





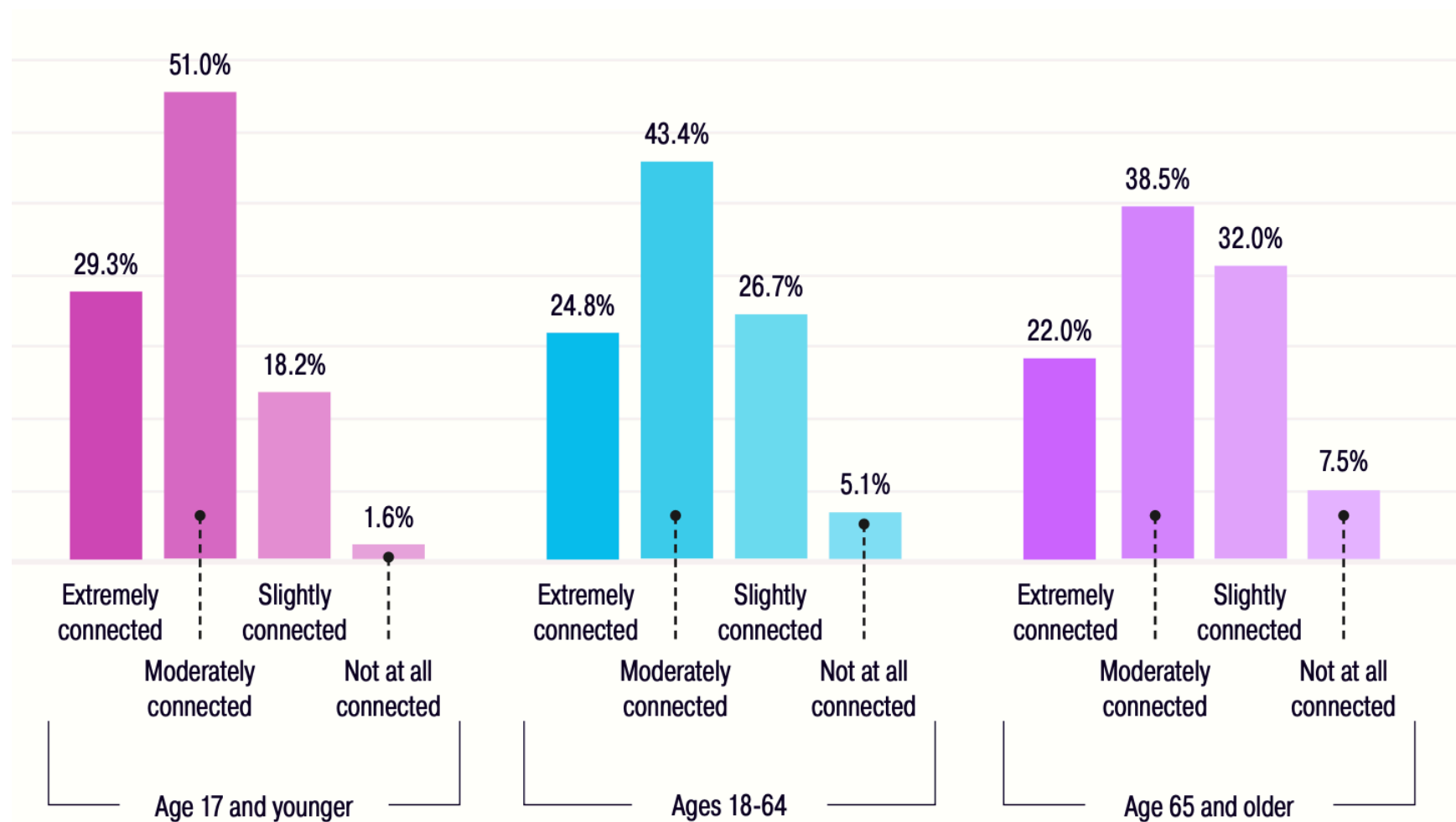
# Hate crime victimization x prior incarceration



# Community connectedness x age

**To what extent do you feel connected to an LGBTQ+ community in Washington?**

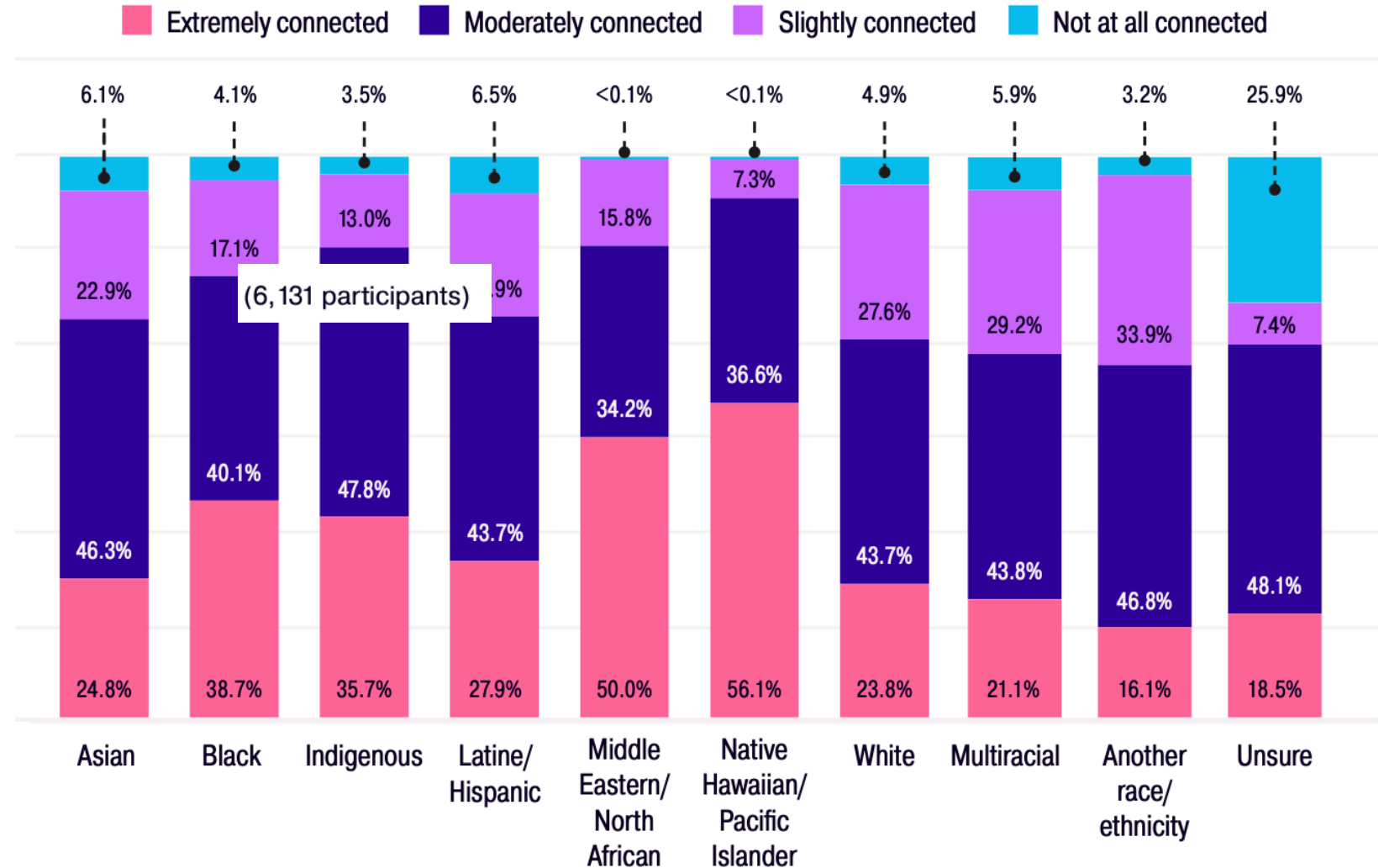
(6,659 participants)



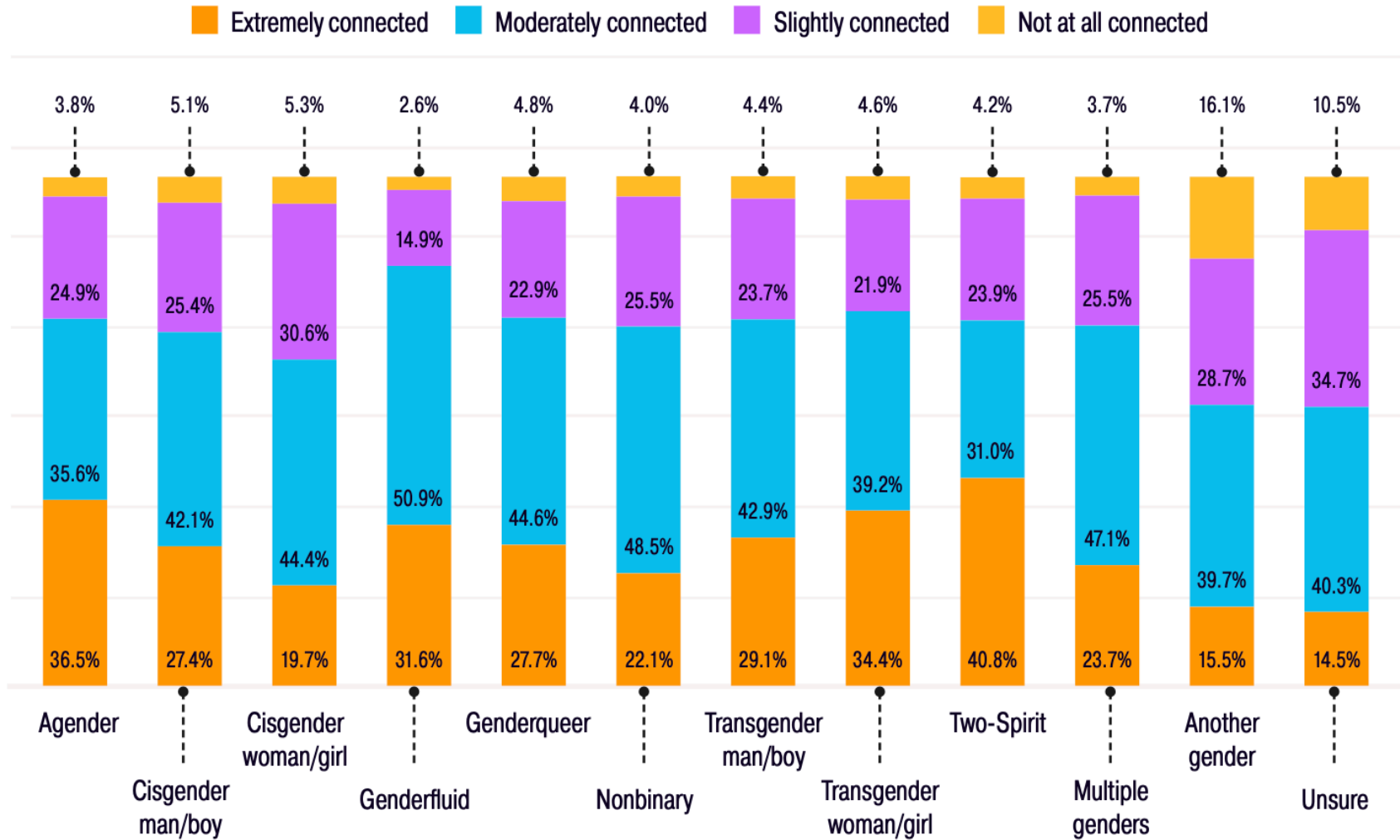
# Community connectedness x race/ethnicity

**To what extent do you feel connected to an LGBTQ+ community in Washington?**

(6,131 participants)

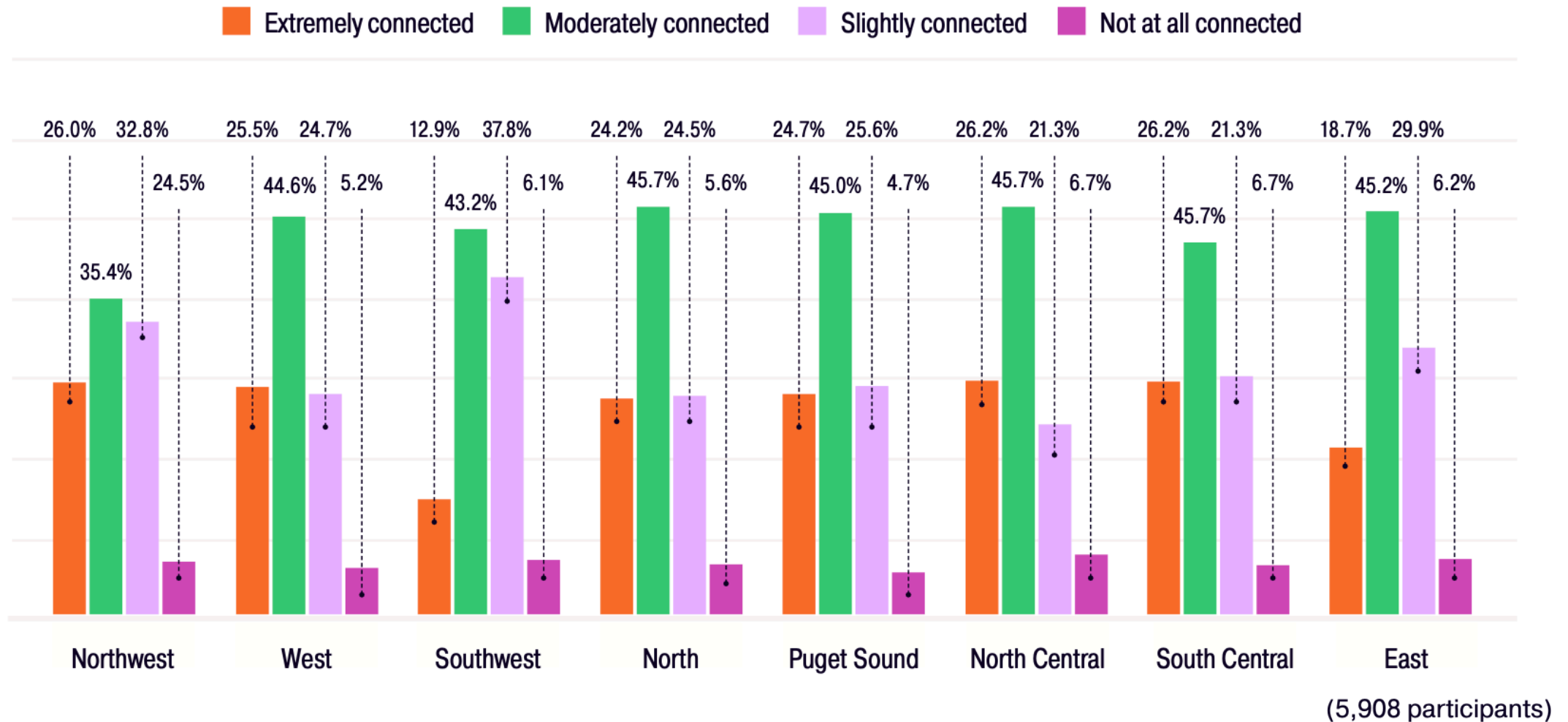


# Community connectedness x gender

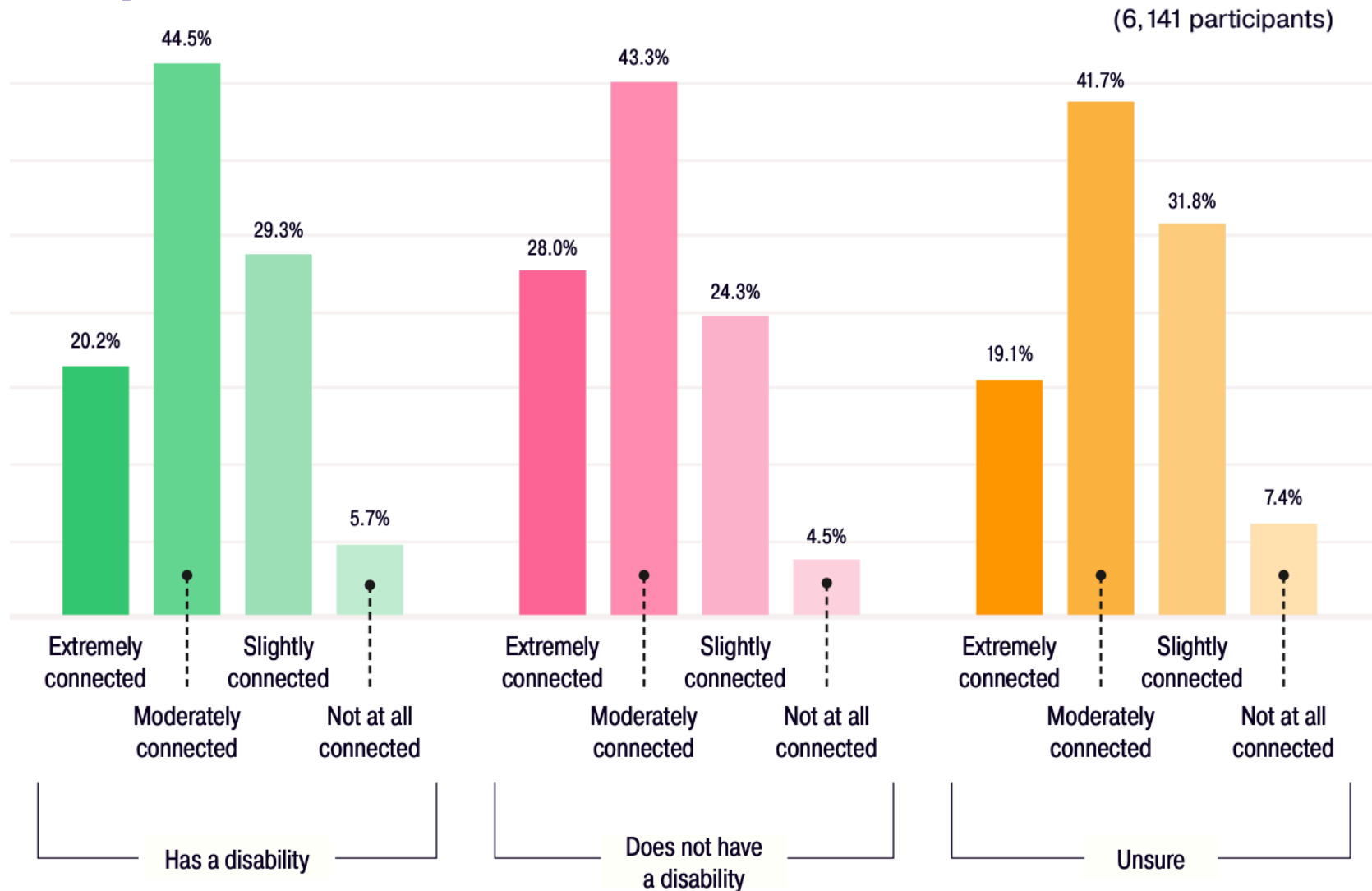


(6,156 participants)

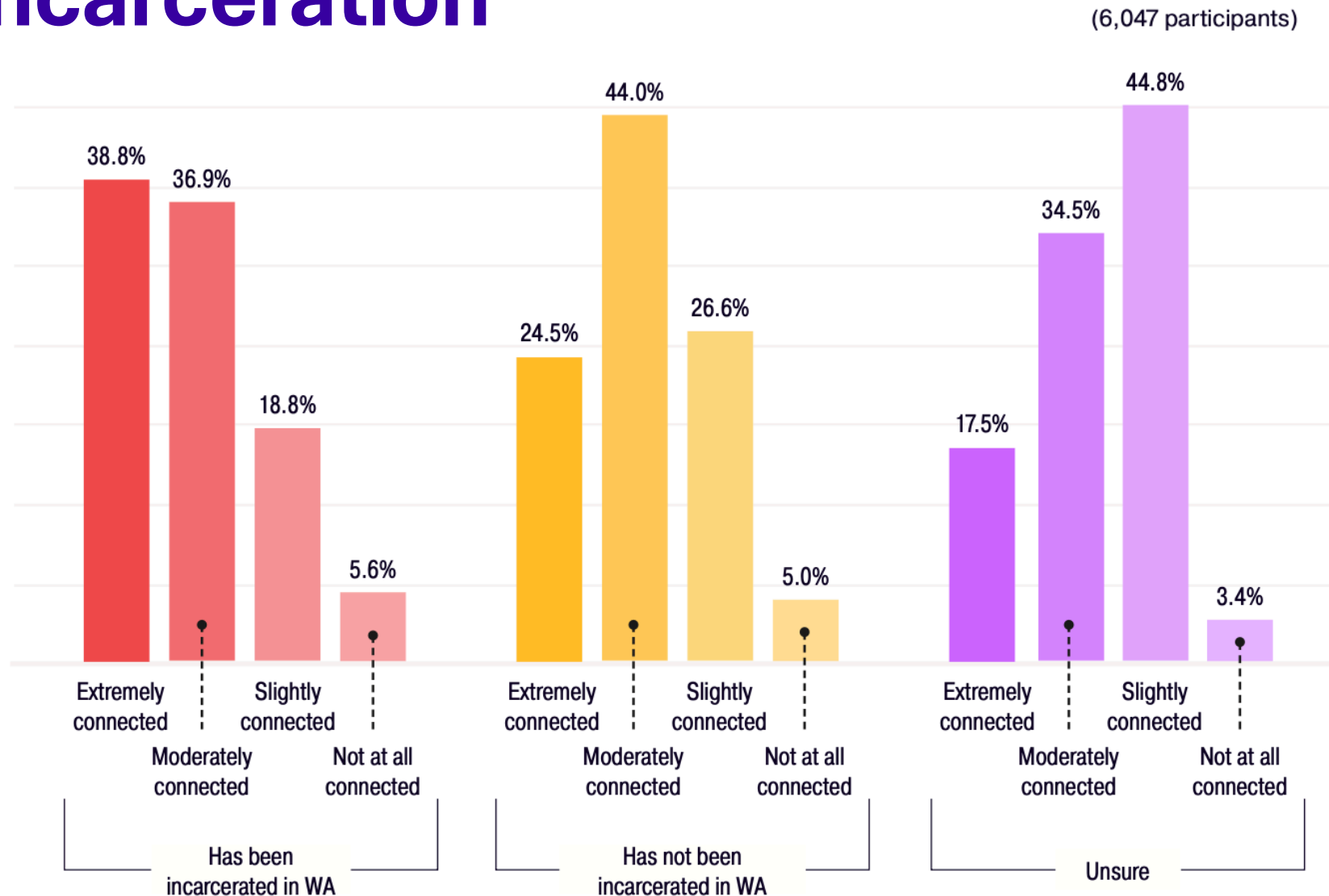
# Community connectedness x region



# Community connectedness x disability



# Community connectedness x prior incarceration



# Q&A

- In the room
- Online
- [Comment dashboard](#)





**Thank you!**