



# Brief National LGBTIQ Survey: Discrimination by Religious Schools Towards LGBTIQ People

Final Report – 22 November 2018

The survey opened at 9:00 PM (AEST) on the 4 November 2018 and closed at 5:30 AM (AEST) on the 22 November 2018. LGBTIQ Australian adults were invited to participate through Facebook-targeted advertising, the Gay press and emails to LGBTIQ social, sporting, business and religious groups. Of the 1,988 people who started the survey and passed the eligibility questions (i.e., identified as LGBTIQ, 18+ years of age, and an Australian citizen or a permanent resident), 1,918 went on to answer the survey questions, resulting in a response rate of 96.5%.

## Participants

Of the total number of 1,918 participants, 51.5% identified as female, 38.3% identified as male, and 10.2% identified as non-binary or other (e.g., agender). The survey may have attracted higher numbers of females, relative to males, due to the topic relating to school-aged children (i.e., those in female same-sex relationships are more likely to be raising children than in male same-sex relationships). Of the total sample, 30.4% identified as lesbian, 38.8% as gay (incl. gay female), and 26.6% as bisexual. Almost 9% of the sample was transgender and close to 1% was intersex. Participants who were 18-39 years of age represented 58.0% of the sample (Figure 1). Participants were from all states and territories, with larger numbers residing in NSW, VIC and QLD, respectively, consistent with their larger populations (Figure 2).

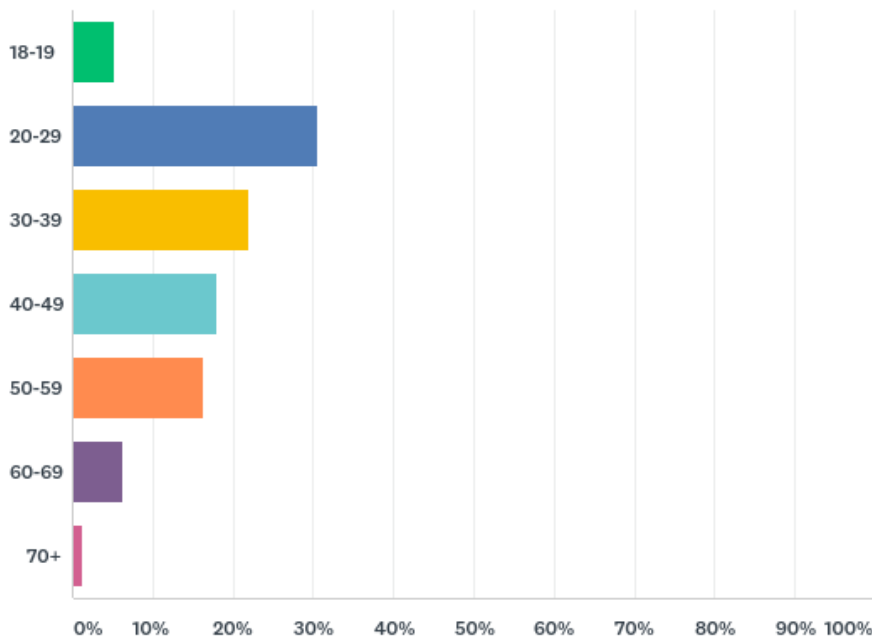


Figure 1. Age groups

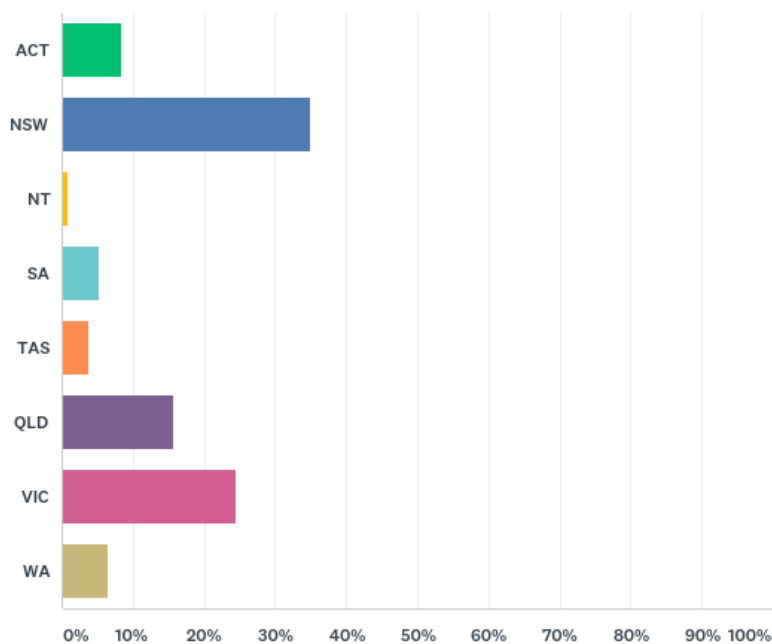


Figure 2. Place of residence

## Results

(Note: Participants were informed that questions were based on the evidence available at the commencement of the survey on the 4 November 2018)

**Q1. The federal government wants to stop discrimination by religious schools against LGBTIQ students on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity but allow discrimination against LGBTIQ students on grounds of the beliefs and values of the religion with which the school is associated. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these proposed conditions?**

- 83.7% strongly disagree; 10.8% disagree (94.5% in total disagree with government's proposed conditions); 2.1% neutral; 1.2% agree; 2.2% strongly agree (3.4% in total agree)

Participants who responded that they disagreed or were neutral for Q1 were then asked the following question:

**Q2. Delaying the legislation on discrimination by religious schools against LGBTIQ people may allow for further consultation. Would you support delaying the legislation if it were to result in the government unconditionally prohibiting discrimination against LGBTIQ students by religious schools?**

- 95.2% Yes in support of delaying legislation; 4.8% No

**Q3. The government is not stopping discrimination by religious schools against LGBTIQ staff on any grounds. To what extent do you agree or disagree that LGBTIQ staff (e.g., teachers, office staff, grounds people) should be protected from discrimination by religious schools?**

- 89.6% strongly agree; 3.2% agree (92.8% in total agree LGBTIQ staff should be protected); 0.8% neutral; 0.5% disagree; 5.9% strongly disagree (6.4% in total disagree)

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that LGBTIQ parents of school-age children should be protected from discrimination by religious schools?**

- 92.4% strongly agree; 3.2% agree (95.6% in total agree LGBTIQ parents should be protected); 0.5% neutral; 0.3% disagree; 3.6% strongly disagree (3.9% in total disagree)

## Qualitative responses:

Participants were invited to provide further information. Below are examples of the content based on the 484 participants who left comments.

- The most common response, by far, was that religious organisations should not have any grounds to discriminate, given they receive taxpayers' funding from the government. If institutions accept public funds from the government they should be bound by our civil laws.

Examples of other issues raised:

- Freedom of choice and of belief should be available to all, provided it does not impinge upon the rights and freedoms of others. Students or employees, who only become aware of their sexuality once already involved in the school community, may find it very difficult to simply remove themselves from a discriminatory or hostile school environment for a range of reasons.
- Some described their own experiences of discrimination as a student or staff member.
- If Christian schools can discriminate then it must be okay for other religious schools to discriminate even though some practices (e.g., Sharia Law) may not align with our civil laws.
- While many schools may not be discriminatory we should not enshrine into law the right to be.
- Will Christian schools discriminate against divorced parents and others who may conflict with the beliefs and values of the religion with which the school is associated or is this just a means of targeting LGBTIQ people?
- The suitability of staff and students should be based on their behaviour and abilities not their sexual orientation or gender identity.