

Trinity College Dublin & Belong To: New Report on Mental Health of LGBTQI+ People (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/107894>)



Trinity College Dublin and Belong To published a new report on the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQI+ people.

The report, *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland*, is the second iteration of the 2016 *LGBTIreland Report*. It is the largest sample of Ireland's LGBTQI+ population, with over 2,800 participants. (<https://belongtoyouthservices.cmail19.com/t/i-l-aurithd-khbjydrh-j/>)

The first study in this series was conducted close to the time of the Marriage Equality referendum, when hopes were high as to what the future held for LGBTQI+ people in Ireland.

The picture that the findings paint is disheartening and upsetting – but to those of us working to support LGBTQI+ people, unfortunately they are not surprising.

Anti-LGBTQI+, and particularly anti-trans, attacks are on the rise. We are seeing increasing levels of hate directed at our community.

The findings show that, compared to the general youth population, LGBTQI+ young people experience:

- 3 times the level of severe or extremely severe symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- 3 times the level of self-harm.
- 2 times the level of suicidal thoughts.
- 5 times the level of suicide attempts.

LGBTQI+ young people negotiate coming out against a backdrop of a challenging environment including increased hate and discrimination towards LGBTQI+ people online, offline and in the media, and bullying and discrimination at school, where young people spend most of their time.

In recent years there has been a movement towards protecting and supporting LGBTQI+ young people at post-primary level through the leadership of amazing schools. However, the findings related to school experiences reveal that effort is still needed to ensure the full inclusion, safety and belonging of LGBTQI+ students.

Read Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland 2024 **(<https://belongtoyouthservices.cmail19.com/t/i-l-aurithd-khbjydrh-t/>)**

In addition to LGBTQI+ youth, another group emerged in this study as particularly vulnerable.

It is no surprise, given the levels of vitriol and misinformation, and lack of education that surrounds trans identities, that the mental health of the trans community is suffering.

The trans community face more stigma, isolation and discrimination in society than other cohorts in the LGBTQI+ community, and lack access to healthcare.

This results in this group experiencing high levels of self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and anxiety as these findings demonstrate.

You can find the full report by Professor Agnes Higgins and her team of researchers at Trinity College Dublin here. (<https://belongtoyouthservices.cmail19.com/t/i-l-aurithd-khbjydrh-i/>)

Despite these upsetting findings, there are some positives to be taken from the report.

Participants rated legislative changes, making LGBTQI+ friends, and positive and realistic LGBTQI+ representation in the media as the top three factors that positively impacted their mental health.

The importance of supportive family and friends, a supportive workplace and support from the LGBTQ+ community not only helps people cope, but also creates a sense of belonging and resilience.

Participants spoke of the important role that LGBTQI+ organisations like Belong To, and community groups throughout the country, play in providing safe spaces for the community, in particular LGBTQ+ youth.

These spaces allow our young LGBTQI+ people to grow into their identity, develop positive relationships, and witness the joy and pride that comes with belonging to the LGBTQI+ community.

At Belong To, we will continue to provide these life-saving spaces for LGBTQI+ young people and to campaign for an Ireland where we move forward and progress positive changes. We could not do this work with you – our allies, supporters, donors and stakeholders.

These upsetting findings should serve as a rallying cry to the Government, policymakers and allies to work with us to end anti-LGBTQI+ stigma and discrimination and create a society where the LGBTQI+ community can feel safe and supported.

Region

Nationwide

[Read Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland 2024 \(https://belongtoyouthservices.cmail19.com/t/i-l-aurithd-khbpydrh-t/\)](https://belongtoyouthservices.cmail19.com/t/i-l-aurithd-khbpydrh-t/)

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