



Trans at Work: Report of Results

Study on the Living Situation, Work Life and Wellbeing of Trans People in Switzerland

With a survey on behalf of Transgender Network Switzerland (TGNS), Bern University of Applied Sciences has recorded current living situations of trans people in Switzerland. The survey's primary focus was placed on participants' working lives and wellbeing. The Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE) supported the project with financial grants. By comparison with past surveys, the present study's results demonstrate notable progress towards equality in the living and working conditions of trans people in Switzerland. Nevertheless, unemployment rates in this group are still clearly elevated compared to the population average, with their health and life satisfaction being lower. An inclusive working environment and support from supervisors and colleagues in particular present essential success factors for trans people's working lives. Action is needed regarding the dismantling of structural barriers as well as raising awareness and knowledge.

Bern, 27.05.2025

Background

For trans(gender) people, their inner knowledge of which gender they are of ("gender identity" or self-identified gender) does not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may identify as binary (i.e. as a woman or a man), non-binary, as several genders ("pangender", "gender fluid") or no gender at all ("agender").

It is currently estimated that approximately 200,000 trans people are living in Switzerland. So far, little is known about their living conditions. They are, however, often affected by discrimination in their working lives.

The Survey

The present study's goal was to record current living and working conditions of trans people in Switzerland, and to demonstrate potential relationships of structural and social factors with the wellbeing of individuals. Based on this, measures for inclusion of trans people in working life are to be developed in a follow-up project. The online survey took place from January to March 2024. In total, 1,207 people completed the questionnaire, over half of which (752) were trans people. A large portion of the remaining 455 ("cis") participants also considered themselves to be part of the LGBTQIA+ community.



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Transgender Network
Switzerland
www.tgns.ch

Trans Welcome
www.transwelcome.ch



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

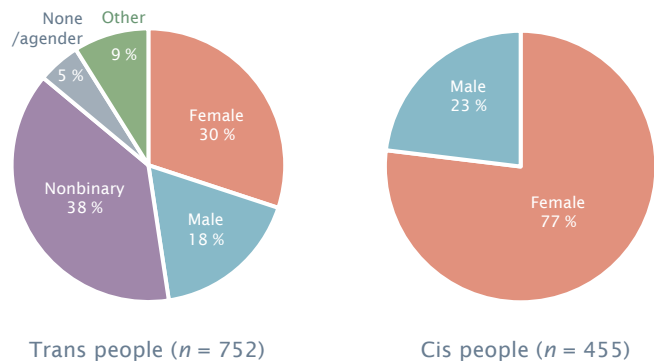
Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI
Département fédéral de l'intérieur DFI
Dipartimento federale dell'interno DFI

Eidgenössisches Büro für die Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann EBG
Bureau fédéral de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes BFEG
Ufficio federale per l'uguaglianza fra donna e uomo UFU
Finanzhilfen
Aides financières
Aiuti finanziari

Life Situation and Demographic Characteristics

Out of the 752 trans participants, nearly half (48 %) identified as binary, with more women than men in this group. Nonbinary people made up the largest group out of all trans participants. Other mentions included terms such as “genderqueer” or “gender-fluid”. The 455 cis participants mainly comprised of women. Participants’ age at the time of the survey lay between 16 and 89 years, with half of the group being under 30 years of age. Numbers of nonbinary people were particularly high among younger participants. The majority lives in German-speaking Switzerland and in larger cities or metropolitan areas. Only one fifth of participants lives in the countryside.

(Self-identified) gender of the participants



Unemployment and Job Seeking

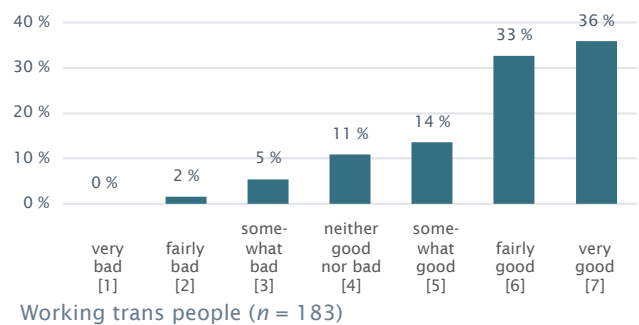
Among trans participants who were able to work, unemployment rates were three times as high as they were among the general population (7.4 % vs. 2.4 % at the time of the survey, according to national definition; data: SECO).

Among those who were employed, trans people were much more likely to be seeking a new job than cis people. Nearly one in three job-seeking trans people were doing so for reasons of bullying or discrimination in their current workplace.

Employment

71 % of trans people were employed at the time of the survey with a mean workload of 76 %. Approximately 61 % of this employed group presented themselves according to their self-identified gender at their workplace, another 17 % partly, and 23 % according to their sex assigned at birth. Nearly 36 % first came out as trans at their current jobs. This group rated the results of their coming-out as well as support from supervisors and their colleagues as predominantly positive. According to some written comments, a work environment that is not perceived as supportive may be a reason for many trans people not to come out at their workplace.

Coming-out as trans at current place of work: Perceived support from colleagues



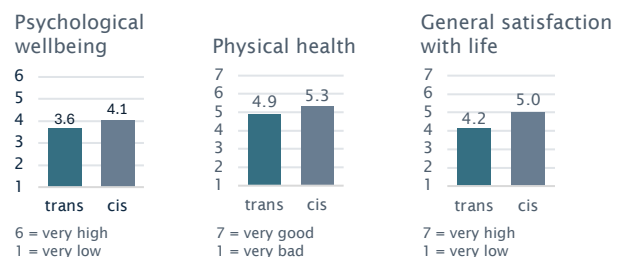
Support and Authenticity

Overall, i.e. for cis people as well, perceived support from supervisors is positively correlated with participants’ feelings of authenticity in the workplace.

This demonstrates that trans people are not the only group who can benefit from an open and inclusive working environment. Authenticity, in turn, was correlated with higher subjective wellbeing.

Health and Wellbeing

In total, respondents rated their mental and physical health as fairly good, reporting relatively high general life satisfaction. However, these values were significantly lower for trans people, which, now as ever, indicates existing discrimination of this vulnerable group. A notably high proportion of trans people (12 % vs. only 3 % of surveyed cis people) under 65 years of age had been incapacitated for work for one month or more at the time of the survey. Frequently listed causes were multiple stresses and experiences of discrimination, even outside the workplace and independently of transition and coming-out.



Nearly 29 % of trans people stated that they had to postpone or completely forgo medical treatments for financial or administrative reasons in the past year. Among cis respondents, this percentage was only half as high.

Conclusion and Call for Action

Results indicate distinct progress towards equality of trans people in working life. However, they also demonstrate persistent discrimination. Access to adequate healthcare is pivotal for trans people, particularly when aiming for gender-affirming medical measures, but also with regard to general healthcare.

In order to create a supportive working environment for trans people, structural barriers (e.g. name change procedures) must be dismantled. Furthermore, sustainable measures are necessary for raising awareness and knowledge – with professionals in many working contexts as well as the broader population.