

# The position of LGBTQ+ on the European labour market

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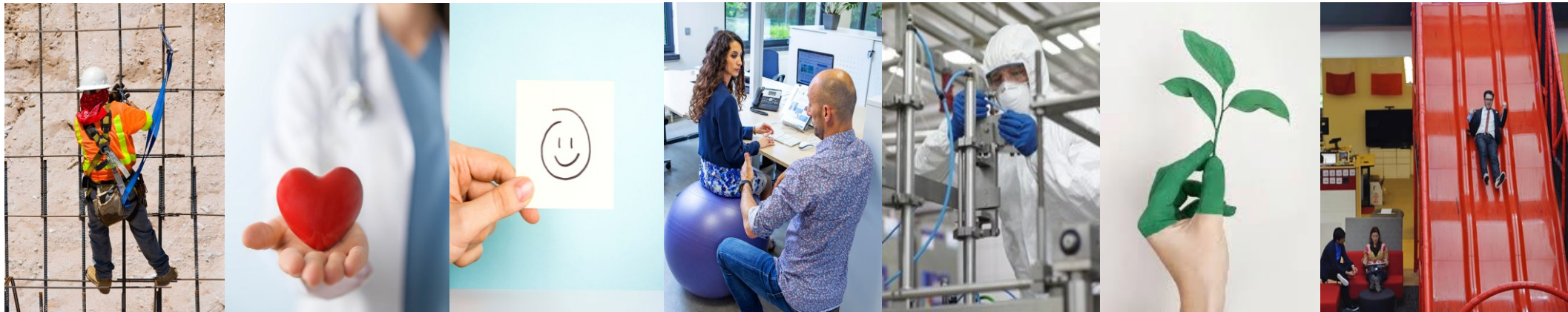
EZA Kick-off seminar

20-11-2020



# IDEWE

- External Service for Prevention and Protection at Work
- Legal obligation for companies in BE (internal or external service)
- Around 35.000 companies & 750.000 employees in BE
- Well-being themes:



# LGBTQ+ terminology

**L = Lesbian**

**G = Gay**

**B = Bisexual**

**T = Transgender**

**Q = Queer**

**+ = Others that don't  
identify with the above  
or the (cis)gender norm**

**S = Sexual**

**O = Orientation**

**G = Gender**

**I = Identity**

**E = Expression**

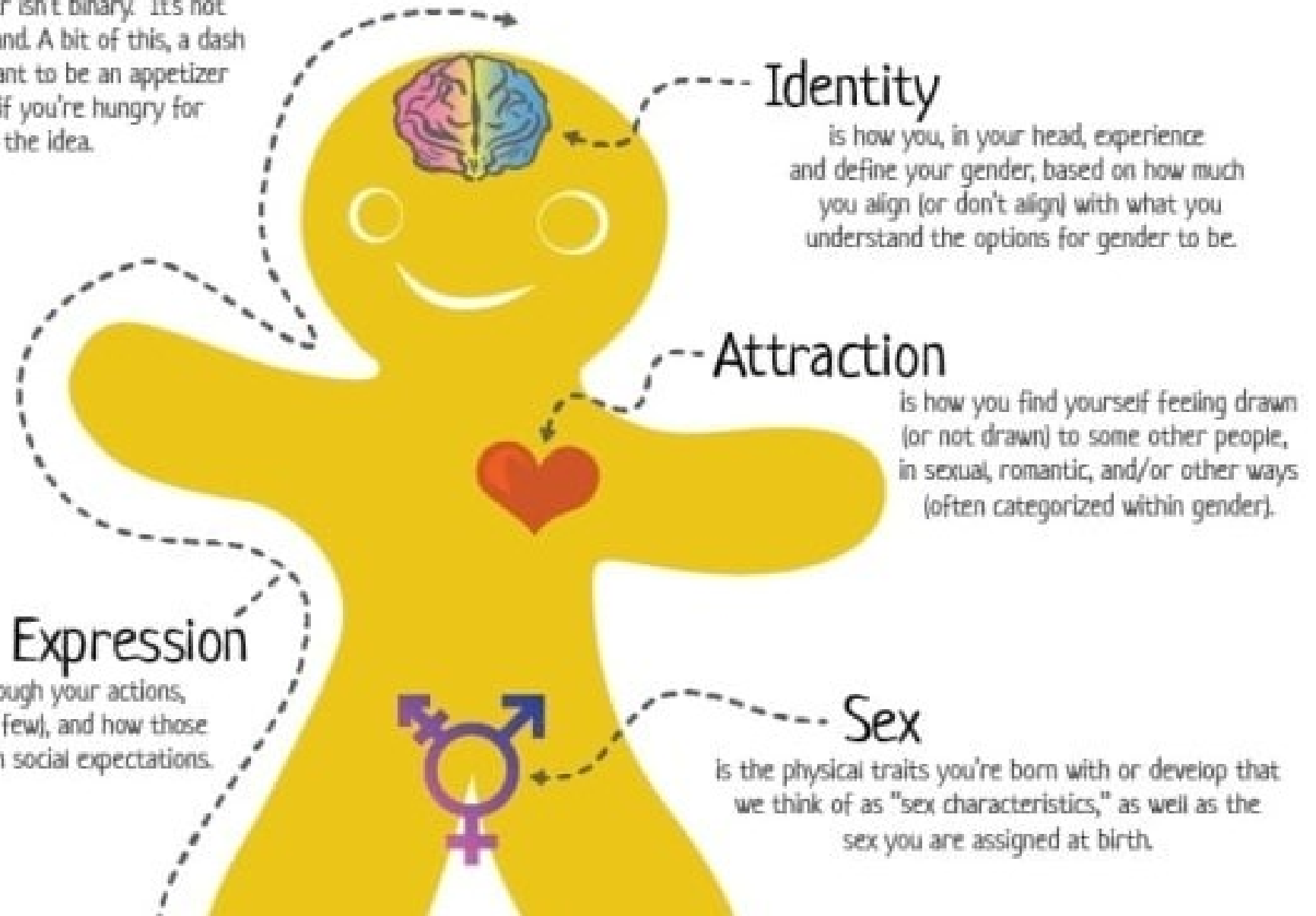
**S = Sex**

**C = Characteristics**

# The Genderbread Person

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more after reading it. In fact, that's the idea.



# Legal framework: Council directive 89/391/EEC

## On the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work

- The employer shall have a duty to **ensure the safety and health** of workers in **every aspect related to the work**
  - ⇒ Including workers' mental health, but not always as a priority
- **Particularly sensitive groups** must be **protected** against the dangers which specifically affect them
  - ⇒ LGBTQ+ as risk group

# Lack of focus on mental well-being

*“My company spent so much money and time on the physical well-being of their employees. It goes so far that every year, a company comes to measure the air quality of our office. But my employer never asked me about my mental well-being.”*

(Source: Research & risk report PREVENT, 2020)

# Legal framework: Council directive 2000/78/EC

## On establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation

- The purpose of this Directive is to lay down a general framework for **combating discrimination** on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or **sexual orientation** as regards **employment and occupation**, with a view to putting into effect in the Member States the principle of **equal treatment**.

# Legal framework: Council directive 2006/54/EC

## On the implementation of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation

- **Equal opportunities and equal treatment** in terms of access to employment, working conditions, and occupational social security schemes.
- The principle of equal treatment for men and women cannot be confined to the prohibition of discrimination based on the fact that a person is of one or other sex. It also **applies to discrimination arising from the gender reassignment of a person.**



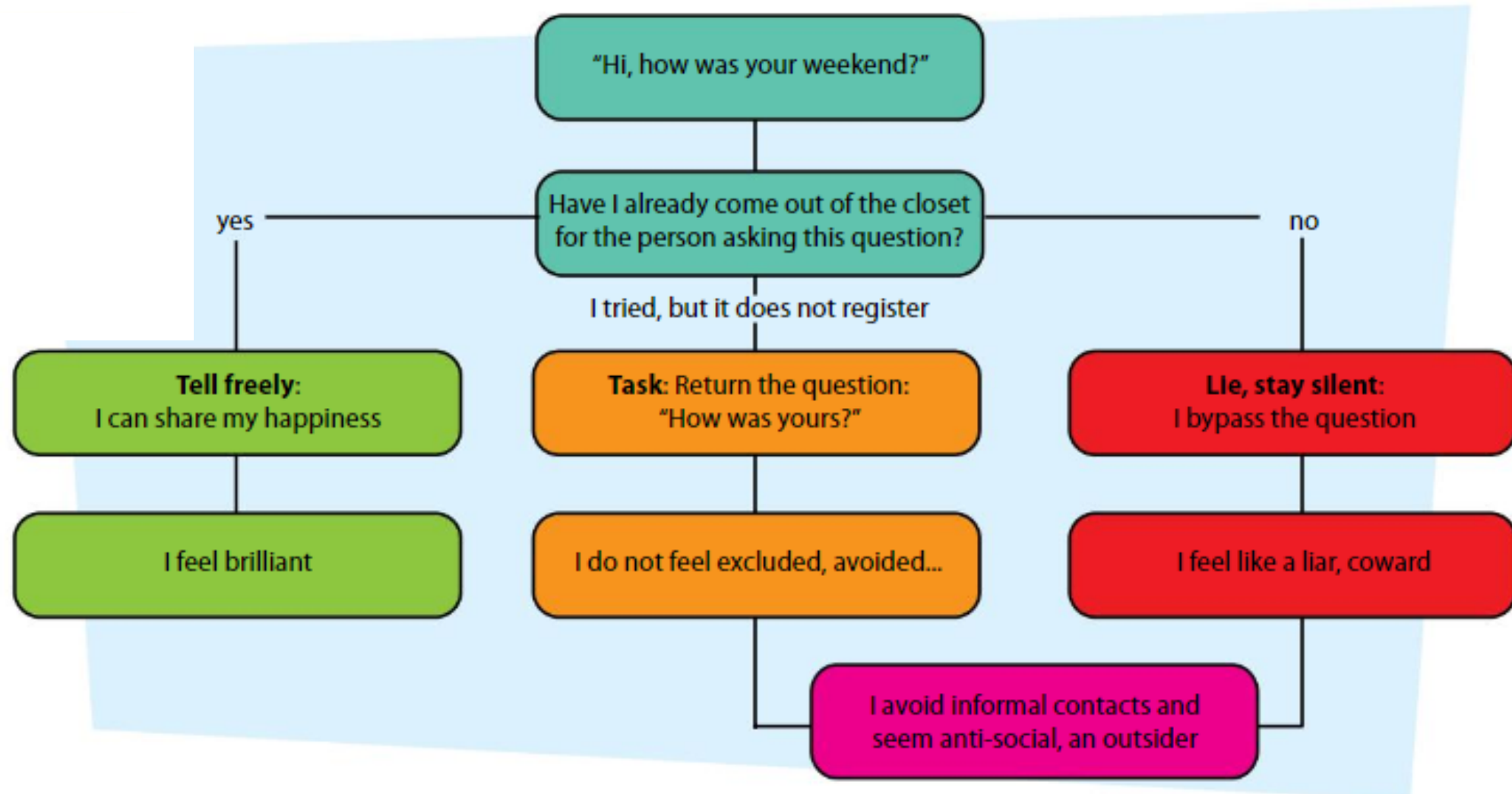
An open white closet door is shown against a dark grey wall. Behind the door is a vibrant rainbow-colored curtain with vertical stripes in red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. A wooden floor is visible at the bottom of the frame.

# **LGBTQ+ AT WORK: IN OR OUT OF THE CLOSET?**

# LGBTQ+ DISCLOSURE

- One in four (26%) of respondents in FRA-study of 2019 hide being LGBTI at work
- Both coming out or staying in the closet can be beneficial (e.g., increased work satisfaction) or detrimental (e.g., discrimination) (Willis, 2011; Tatum, 2018)
- Decision to be open depends on perceived atmosphere and environment (Dewaele et al., 2019)
- Decision making process can be exhaustive – > The cost of thinking twice paradigm

# The cost of thinking twice (inspired by Claudia Woody)

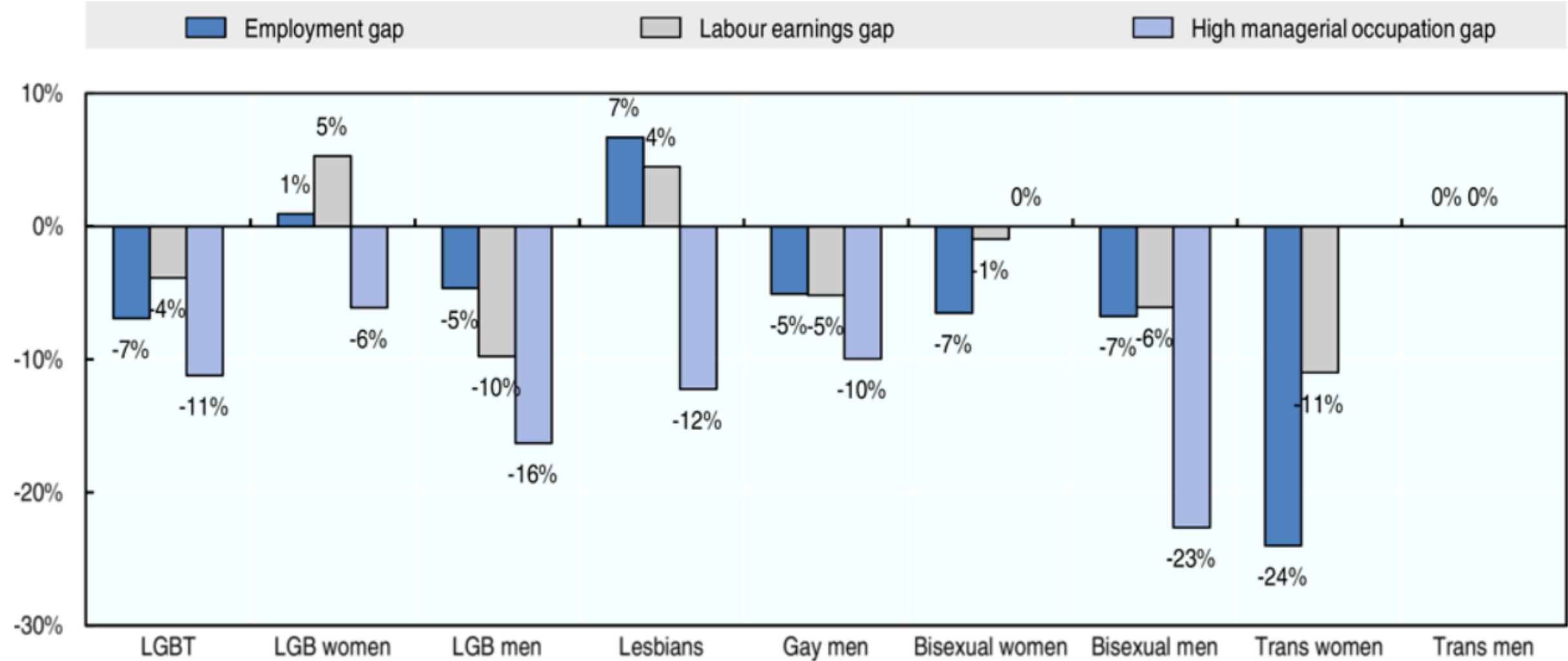


A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, rectangular card with a rainbow gradient. The person is wearing a dark suit jacket and a white shirt. The card is held in front of the person's chest, and the rainbow colors are clearly visible. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**HOW DO LGBTQ+ DO AT WORK?**

Figure 1.12. **LGBT people experience gaps in employment status, labour earnings and access to a high managerial position**

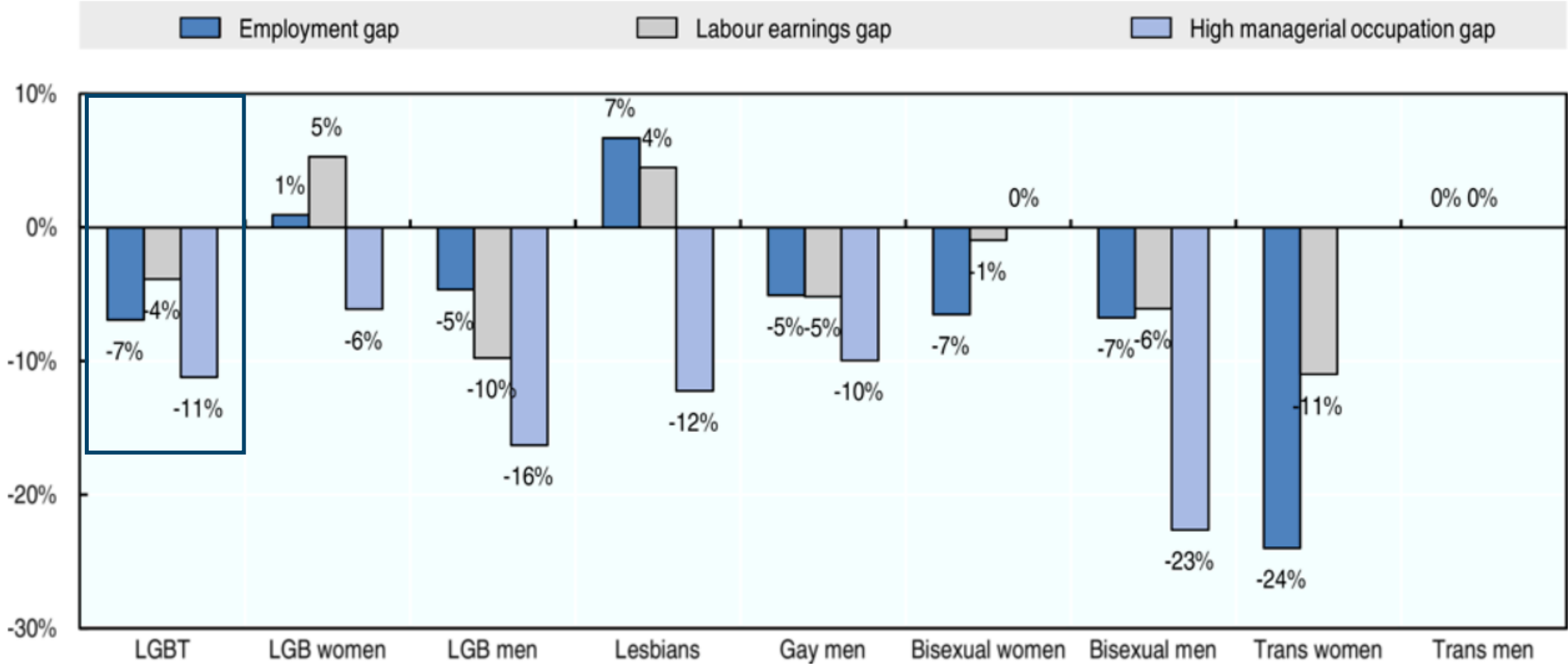
Gaps in labour market outcomes across LGBT and non-LGBT individuals



**Source:** OECD calculations based on 46 research papers  
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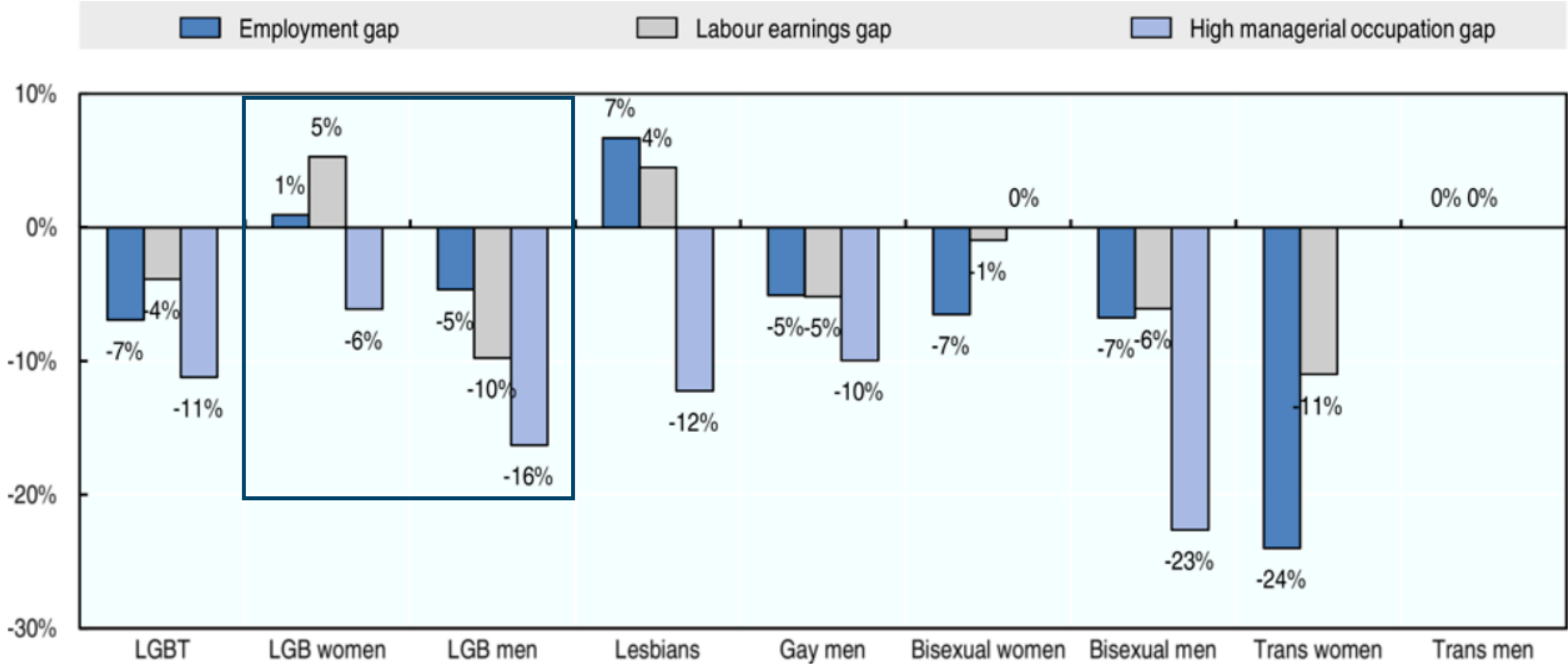
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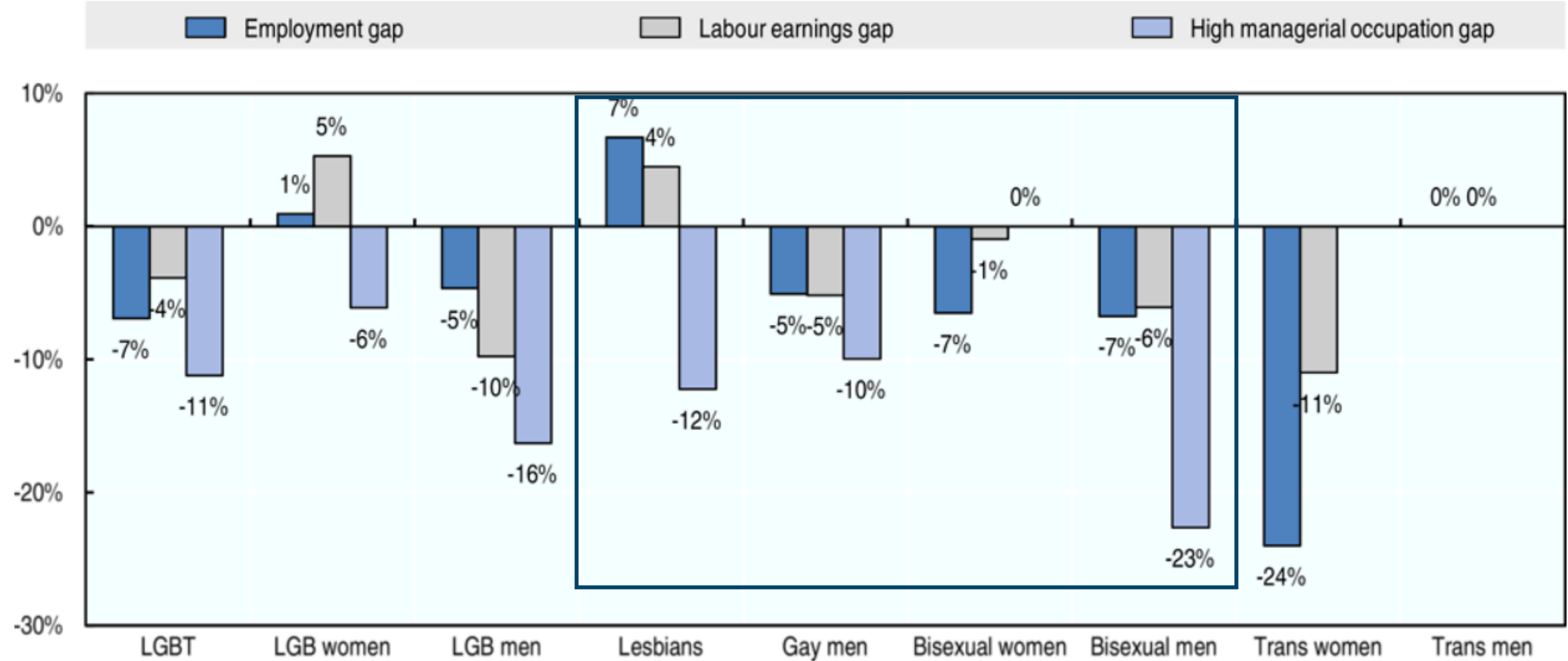
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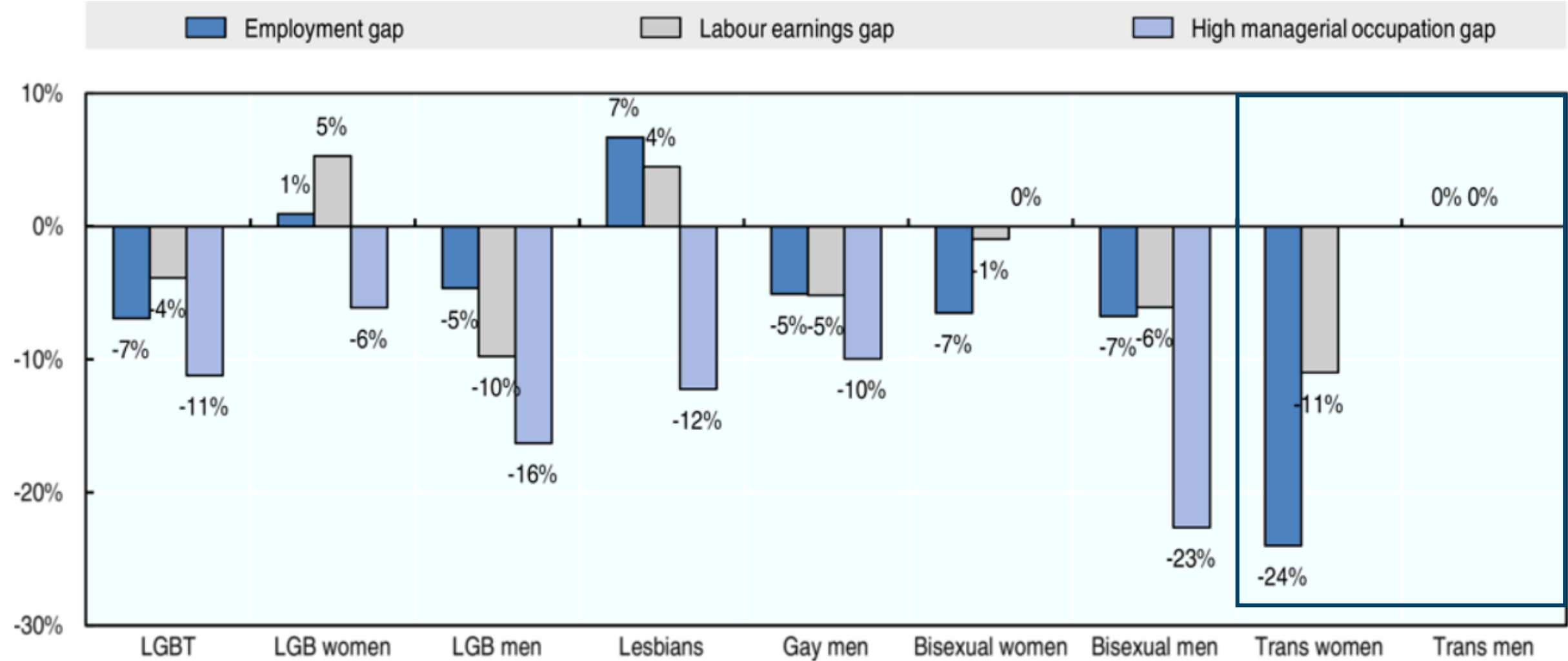


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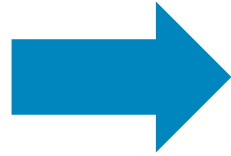
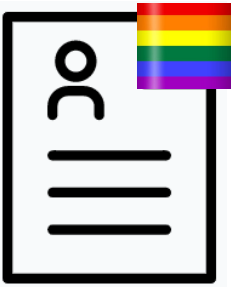
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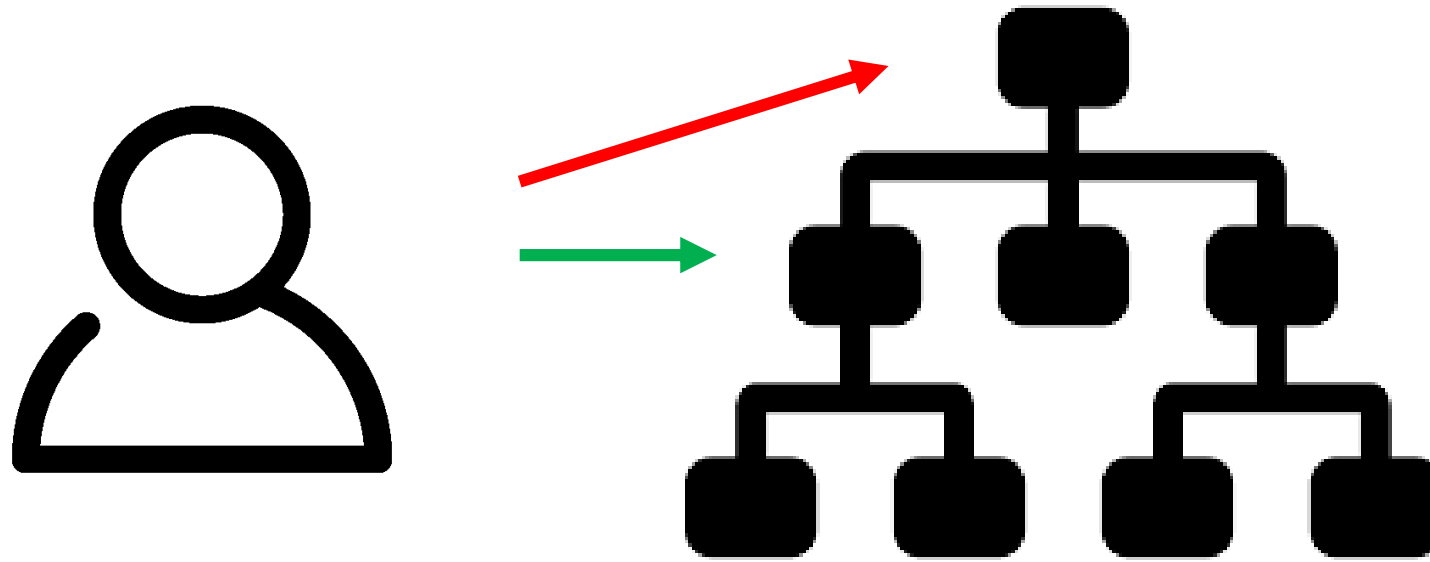
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# Field experiment – correspondence testing



**Source:** Drydakis, N. (2015). Sexual orientation discrimination in the United Kingdom's labour market: A field experiment. *Human Relations*, 68, 1769-1796.

# Ceiling effects



## EXTRA VULNERABILITIES:

- Bisexuality
- Intersectionality

**Source:** Aksoy, C. G., Carpenter, C. S., Frank, J., & Huffman, M. L. (2019). Gay glass ceilings: Sexual orientation and workplace authority. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 159, 167-180.

# Ceiling effects

*“I am a trans person but I don’t see a lot of trans persons in higher positions. Why do you think this is the case? Because trans persons don’t have ambitions? I don’t think so! It is because the system isn’t made for us. It took me months before I could even change my name.”*

(Source: Research & risk report PREVENT, 2020)

*“Being from an ethnic minority and queer, in the position I am today, it feels like I reached the ceiling. I don’t want to complain, but I am aware that I have to work twice as hard before people can take me seriously.”*

(Source: Research & risk report PREVENT, 2020)

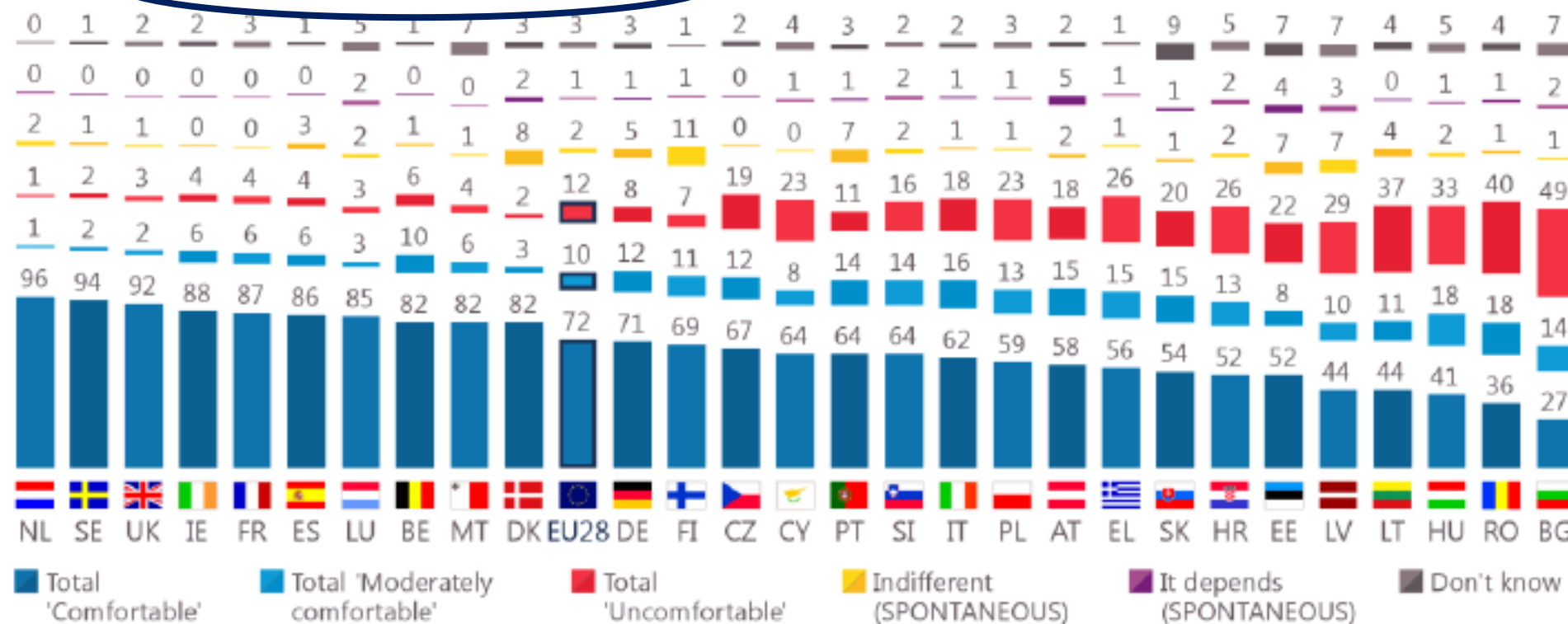


**HOW DO LGBTQ+ FEEL AT WORK?**

# Comfort working with ...

**QC12R.10** Regardless of whether you are actually working or not, please tell me, using a scale from 1 to 10, how comfortable you would feel, if a colleague at work with whom you are in daily contact, belonged to each of the following groups?  
'1' means that you would feel "not at all comfortable" and '10' that you would feel "totally comfortable"

**A gay, lesbian or bisexual person (%)**

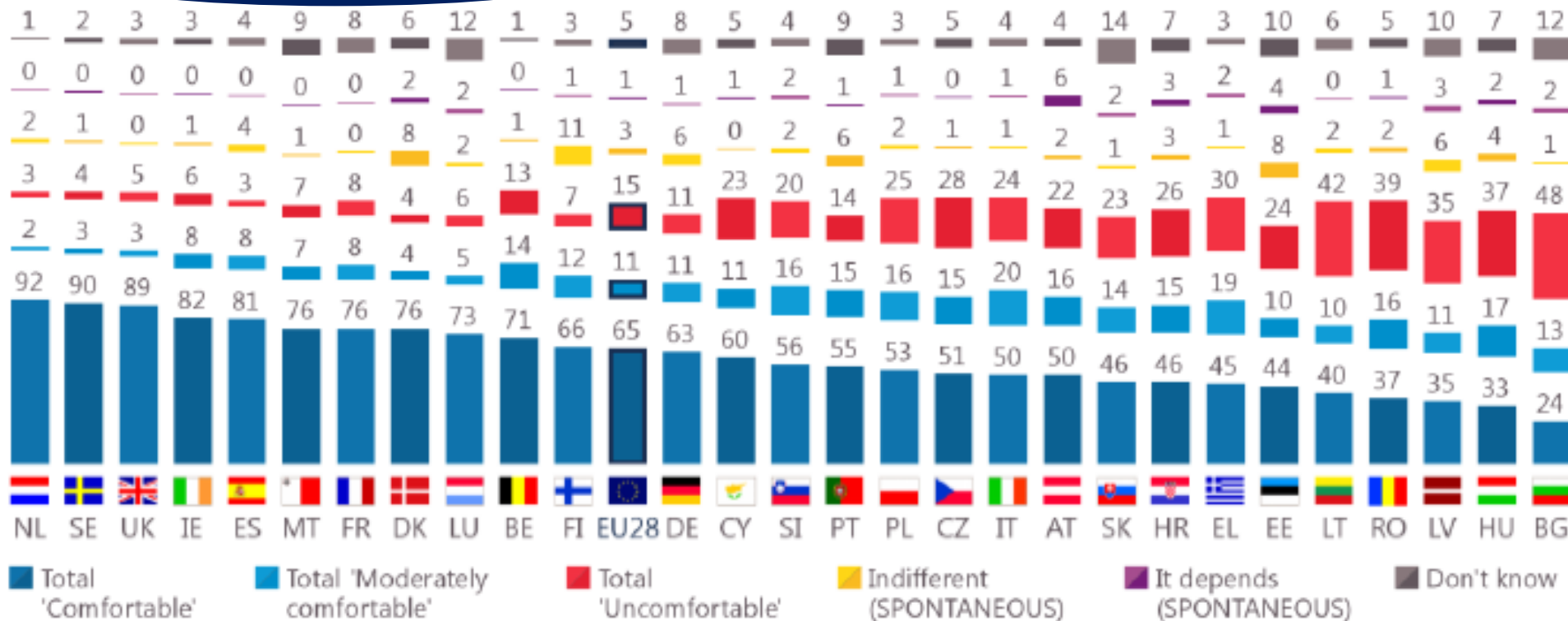


Source: Eurobarometer, 2019

# Comfort working with ...

**QC12R.11** Regardless of whether you are actually working or not, please tell me, using a scale from 1 to 10, how comfortable you would feel, if a colleague at work with whom you are in daily contact, belonged to each of the following groups?  
'1' means that you would feel "not at all comfortable" and '10' that you would feel "totally comfortable"

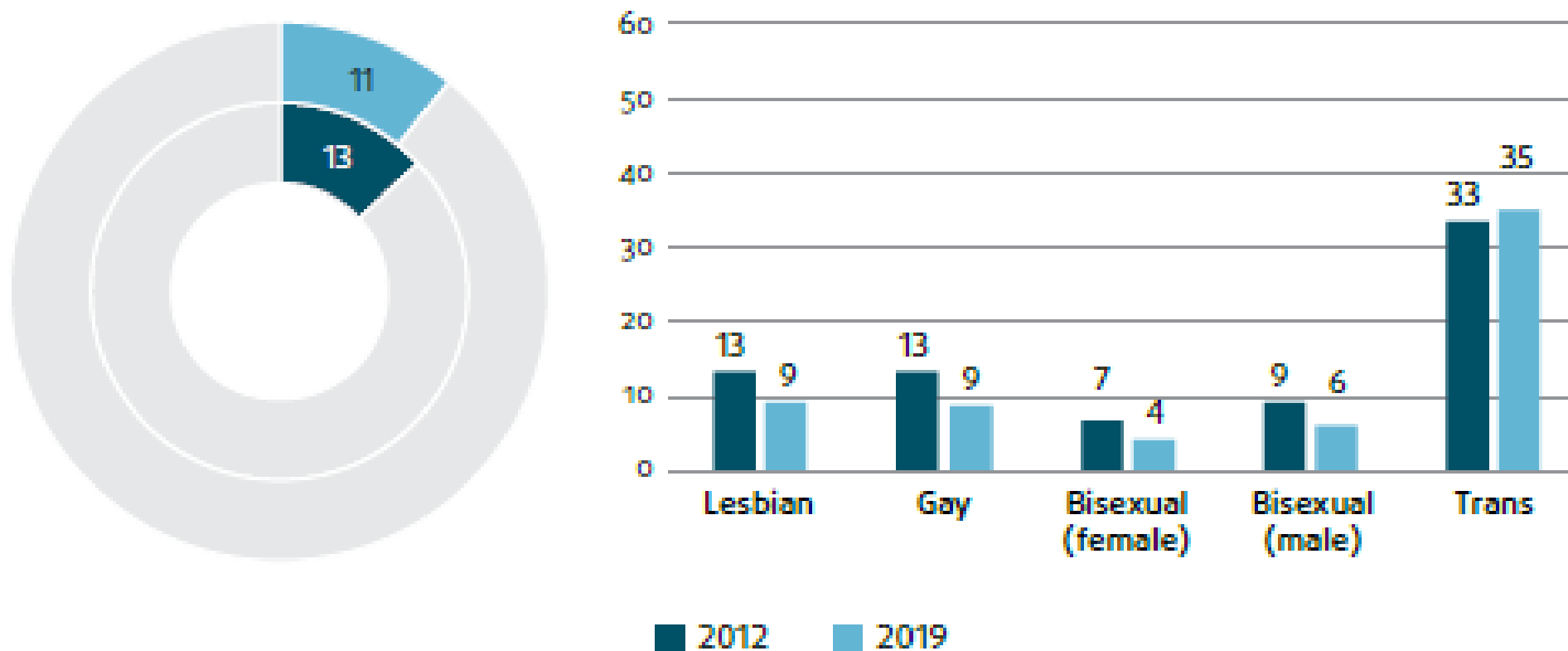
## A transgender person (%)



Source: Eurobarometer, 2019

# Discrimination against LGBT in Europe – FRA study

Figure 1: Respondents who felt discriminated against due to being LGBT when looking for work in the 12 months before the survey (2012 and 2019), EU-28 and by group (%)<sup>a,b</sup>

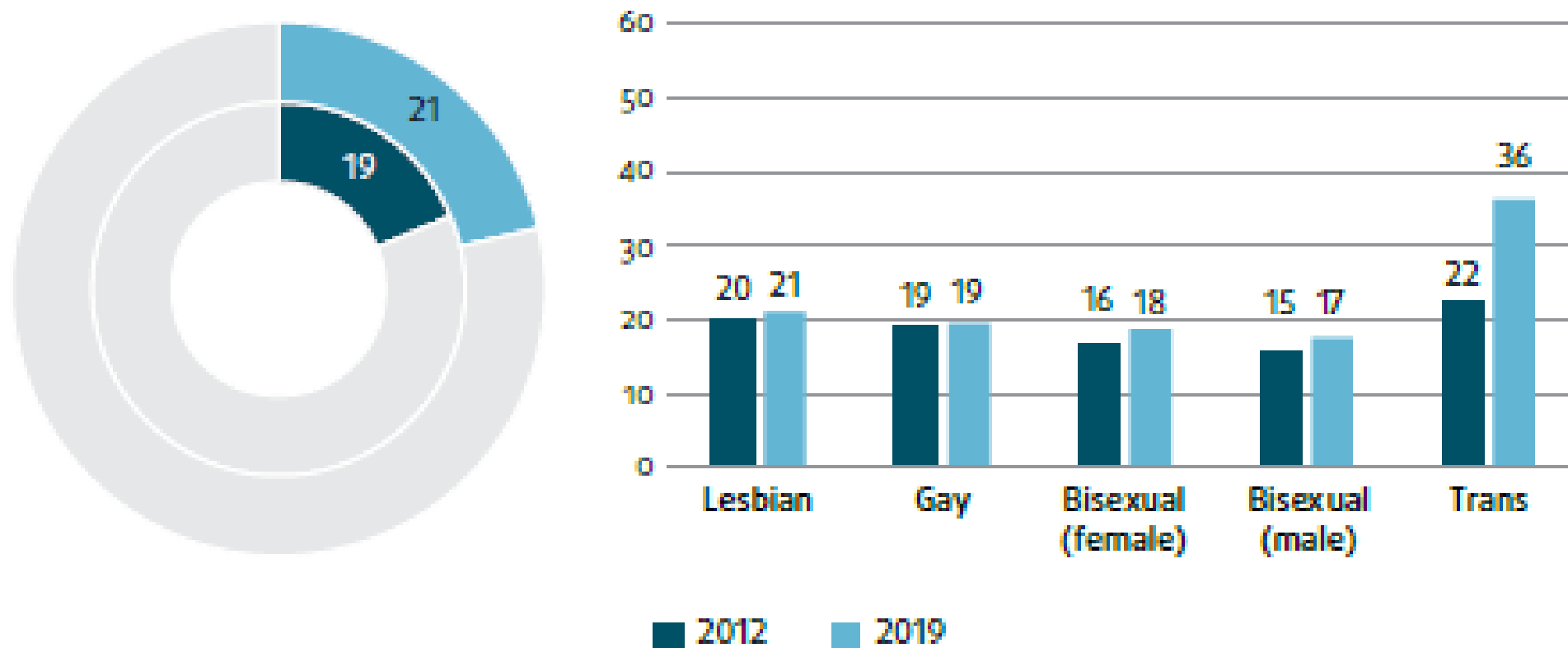


Source: FRA, EU-LGBTI I (2012) and EU-LGBTI II (2019)



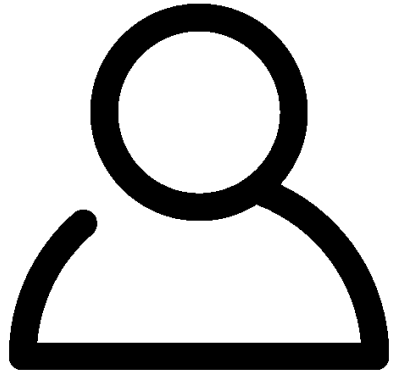
# Discrimination against LGBT in Europe – FRA study

Figure 2: Respondents who felt discriminated against at work due to being LGBT in the last 12 months before the survey (2012 and 2019), EU-28 and by group (%)<sup>a,b</sup>



Source: FRA, EU-LGBTI I (2012) and EU-LGBTI II (2019)

# LGBTQ+, discrimination and well-being at work



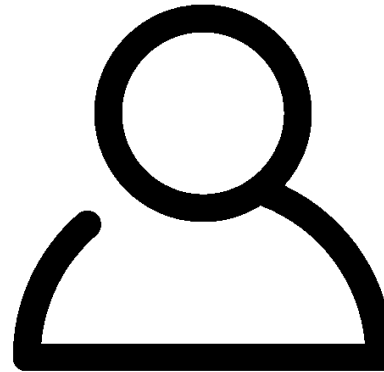
Stigmatization  
Depression  
Unfair treatment  
Discrimination  
Low job satisfaction  
Mental disorders  
Work stress  
Harassment Disrespect  
Social exclusion

**Sources:** Cech & Rothwell, 2020; Cech & Rothwell, 2020; Moya & Moya-Garofano, 2020, Waite, 2020

# Organizational context



- Diversity and equity policies installed
- Supportive workplace relationships
- LGBT supportive climate
- Culture of trust
- Higher representation of LGBT employees



- Heterosexism
- White male dominated teams

**Sources:** Capell et al, 2018; Cech & Rothwell, 2020; Lloren & Parini, 2017; Ragins et al, 2003; Wang et al., 2018; Webster et al., 2018

# Conclusion

- **Discrimination of LGBTQ+ in the (European) labour market, not only in but also before employment**
- **More discrimination for minorities among sexual minorities and for sexual minorities at intersections**
- **Sexual minorities experience lower psychosocial well-being at work**

# Take home message

Although there is legal protection of LGBTQ+ at work

Although there is a positive evolution in LGBTQ+ inclusion at work

=> There is still a lot of work to do for improving the working conditions of LGBTQ+

They always say time changes things,  
But **you** actually have to change them yourself.



**Any questions?**



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