



Some facts:

According to the EU LGBTI Survey II, in the 5 years prior to the survey, 17% of respondents from Malta experienced a sexual or physical attack with 22% of these from a family member and 42% experienced harassment 13%, of them from a family member.



LGBT individuals are 3 times more likely than their cisgender heterosexual counterparts to experience a mental health condition

LGBT youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide, experience suicidal thoughts, and engage in self-harm, as compared to cisgender heterosexual youth



An estimated 20-30% of LGBT individuals abuse substances, compared to about 9% of the general population

Human Rights Directorate
A3 Towers, Level 0,
Triq I-Arkata
Paola PLA1211

www.humanrights.gov.mt
[www.facebook/HRDmt](https://www.facebook.com/HRDmt)
lgbtiq@gov.mt



Co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

TALK IT OUT

Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer Communities

Introduction

Although not frequently spoken about, an issue that is prevalent among the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) community is the emotional challenges faced throughout their lives.

Depression, anxiety, stress, stigma, addiction, and other mental health conditions are often difficulties faced by the LGBTIQ community. These are not encountered only through the 'coming out' or the 'transitioning' phase, but throughout an individual's life.

When LGBTIQ persons look out into the world, they don't see many role models they can look up to for inspiration. It is only recently that we are seeing successful 'out' LGBTIQ persons in the business world, a same-sex couple bringing up children, or older LGBTIQ persons who freely talk about their past experiences.

Minority stress can lead to health disparities often induced by a hostile, LGBTIQ phobic culture, which often results in a lifetime of harassment, maltreatment, discrimination and victimisation.

Coming Out

It is often one of the most difficult phases of an LGBTIQ person's life. Most need to come out several times in different social spheres.

Worrying about how family, friends and colleagues may react can impact mental health, as do negative reactions to coming out.

Intimate Partner Violence

LGBTIQ individuals may experience abusive relationship with a partner or ex-partner. Psychosocial services may sometimes not reflect everyone in society and portray their services as exclusively for cisgender women in heterosexual relationships.

It may also be more difficult for LGBTIQ persons to seek support from domestic violence services because they think this might reflect badly on an already stigmatised community.

Shame and stigma

Most LGBTIQ people experience shame at some point in their lives and are the target of stigma all throughout their life. Despite increased acceptance, some members of society still tend to pass negative judgements about LGBTIQ people, claim that one's LGBTIQ identity can be changed or that it is unnatural, sinful or harmful to children, all of which can lead to self-hatred. Experiences of discrimination impact the mental health of LGBTIQ persons and can give rise to anxiety or depression.



Eating disorders

Gay, bisexual men and trans women are more likely to report struggling with an eating disorder. This is a result of pressures coming from within the community itself as well as the broader society.

Substance misuse

Substance misuse can become a coping mechanism by the LGBTIQ community. Studies show that LGBTIQ persons are at higher risk of experiencing some form of substance dependency, including alcohol, tobacco, as well as illegal drugs.

Who's there to help?

Aġenzija APPOĠĠ Domestic Violence Services aims at supporting victims at the time of crises by providing them with immediate assistance to meet their immediate needs, helping them develop a safety plan, as well as providing ongoing support.

☎ 22959000 / 179
✉ dvu.fsws-appogg@gov.mt
🌐 www.fsws.gov.mt

Dar Kenn Ghal Sahhtek, is a residential and out-patients facility providing a holistic treatment through a multi-disciplinary team of health care professionals targeting persons suffering from eating disorders and obesity.

☎ 21453690
🌐 <https://www.facebook.com/kennghalsahhtek/>

The Gender Wellbeing Clinic provides a range of specialised services through a multi-disciplinary team aimed at trans persons and includes psychosocial support services such as social work, counselling and psychiatric sessions. Referral to the Gender Wellbeing Clinic is through a GP, social worker or psychologist/counsellor.

☎ 79500299
✉ transhealthcare.health@gov.mt
🌐 www.transhealth.gov.mt

Community Mental Health Clinics

The Primary and Secondary Mental Health Clinics are provided within polyclinics by teams of nurses, care workers, social workers, psychologists, specialist doctors and psychiatrists who work together to meet the care needs of the individual. Service users have regular appointments with their Consultants, during which their progress can be monitored.

☎ 25456930/1

Aġenzija Sedqa Care Services aim at supporting persons with drug and/or alcohol problems or compulsive gambling, their families and others to help them live a stable life and to integrate better in society. These are composed of Detoxification Services, Residential Services and Community Services.

☎ 23885110
✉ sedqa@gov.mt
🌐 www.fsws.gov.mt

The Rainbow Support Service (RSS) provides psycho-social support services to members of the LGBTIQ community and their family members. RSS also provides various safe social spaces through several activities aimed at different groups within the community both in Malta and Gozo. RSS also provides consultation and training to other professionals working in the social and education fields.

☎ 79430006
✉ support@maltagayrights.org
🌐 www.facebook.com/rainbowsupportservice





Some facts:

According to the EU LGBTI Survey II, in the 5 years prior to the survey, 17% of respondents from Malta experienced a sexual or physical attack with 22% of these from a family member and 42% experienced harassment 13%, of them from a family member.



LGBT individuals are 3 times more likely than their cisgender heterosexual counterparts to experience a mental health condition

LGBT youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide, experience suicidal thoughts, and engage in self-harm, as compared to cisgender heterosexual youth



An estimated 20-30% of LGBT individuals abuse substances, compared to about 9% of the general population

Human Rights Directorate
A3 Towers, Level 0,
Triq l-Arkata
Paola PLA1211

www.humanrights.gov.mt
www.facebook.com/HRDmt
lgbtiq@gov.mt



Co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

TALK IT OUT

Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer Communities