



School of Law
Williams Institute

UCLA

RESEARCH THAT MATTERS

NONBINARY PEOPLE IN MEXICO

Results from the 2021
National Survey on
Sexual and Gender
Diversity

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Using data from the 2021 National Survey on Sexual and Gender Diversity in Mexico, this report examines data about sociodemographic characteristics, stressors, sexuality, health care, and mental health experiences of nonbinary people in Mexico. Nonbinary people are those living their gender identity outside the traditional binary gender structure totally or partially. Available in English and Spanish, this report aims to fill existing data gaps on nonbinary people and to address requests from civil society and government officials to improve data collection, develop mechanisms to ensure gender markers align across identity documents, and inform anti-discrimination campaigns about nonbinary people in Mexico.

KEY FINDINGS

- An estimated 340,620 people in Mexico identify as nonbinary.
- More than half (67.5%) of nonbinary people are under 24 years old, and the majority (80.8%) are single.
- During their childhood, nonbinary individuals often felt different due to their tastes or interests (45.5%) or their mannerisms and behavior (41.5%).
- During their childhood, half of nonbinary people (50.3%) were insulted, mocked, or told offensive things, and more than a third (38.7%) were rejected or excluded from social activities.
- Most people (86.3%) knew that they were nonbinary before they were 17 years old.
- Nonbinary people face multiple stressors around their sexual orientation and gender identity. For example, one in 10 (10.8%) nonbinary people were forced to undergo conversion therapy due to their sexual orientation, and almost one in 10 (9%) due to their gender identity or expression.
- The majority of nonbinary people report experiencing multiple mental health problems during the past year, including stress (74%), insomnia (63.7%), anxiety (65.9%), and changes in eating behaviors or weight (64.5%).
- Almost half (42.5%) of nonbinary people had suicidal thoughts in their lifetime, and a quarter (25.8%) had attempted suicide.

PROLOGUE

In recent decades, official statistics in Mexico—particularly those produced by INEGI—have played a crucial role in making historically vulnerable populations visible. Women, domestic workers, people of African descent, people with disabilities, and the LGBTIQ+ community have emerged from statistical marginalization, thanks to official information programs, which often, it must be said, have been promoted and accompanied by organized civil society. By shedding light on these groups, we have not only made their presence undeniable for the rest of society beyond statistical visibility, but we have also deepened our collective understanding.

Twenty-four months after its publication, the National Survey on Sexual and Gender Diversity (ENDISEG) 2021—one of the most advanced in its field worldwide—has left an indelible mark on the public space. It stands as a mirror in which the more than five million people of the LGBTIQ+ community are reflected with unprecedented clarity. It is a powerful tool that both informs inclusive public policy and sparks informed conversations. It acts as a megaphone that amplifies the urgency of securing the most fundamental rights, especially for those who have had the least voice: bisexuals, lesbians, and those who defy gender binarism.

This report on the nonbinary population (whose population amounts to 340,000 people in the country) is based on the ENDISEG 2021. At INEGI, we celebrate the generation of this statistical report by the Williams Institute of the University of California, Los Angeles, in collaboration with Yaaj Mexico. We celebrate it because the articulated efforts between civil society, academia, and the state contribute to the population's appropriation and exploitation of statistical information. We celebrate it not only because it is clear and rigorous but also because—and above all—it is necessary. Nonbinary people are still an invisible, unknown, and, in many ways, misunderstood population. Talking about them, making them present through statistics, is an act of justice, a strong affirmation of their existence and dignity. It is also crucial to speak not only of and about but with them.

Those who transgress gender binarism have always been in our society, and in others, among queer, androgynous and fluid people. In recent years, in many parts of the Western hemisphere, there has been a growing social and legitimate demand to recognize them and, above all, a need to respect their human rights. Moreover, the nonbinary movement is symptomatic of our current situation. In the liquid society that Bauman describes in his work, where the structures and certainties of the past have become changeable and flexible, gender fluidity becomes a symptom of the time in which we live. Institutions, including statistics, are called upon to recognize this change in time and the legitimacy of nonbinary forms of the individual.

In this context, this report is even more valuable: statistics have the power to transform perceptions and attitudes. In a society where difference and ambiguity still cause strangeness and even rejection, data challenge prejudices and promote inclusion. Knowing and disseminating data on the nonbinary population alerts us to pending challenges. In light of this, reliable and rigorous data is the best antidote to misinformation, and the best way to confront prejudice and rejection is to make visible and normalize the fluid reality of our identities.

This statistical report sheds light on a historically invisible population and invites us to rethink the boundaries of our collective identity. Among the multiple and stimulating avenues of reflection presented to us, the report indicates that the nonbinary population is extremely young. The number of young people is not only several times higher than that of the general population but also that of the rest of the LGBTIQ+ population. Thus, by recognizing and statistically describing nonbinary people, we help build a more understanding and equitable future in which fluid, nonbinary identities can be lived more fully. The future will have to be more fluid, unshielded by identities: let us learn to recognize it and, above all, to navigate it.

Dr. Julieta Brambila

General Director of Public Service Information and Institutional Relations, INEGI

INTRODUCTION

In September 2023, a local group of nonbinary activists in Mexico City met with government officials, including representatives from the Mexican Internal Revenue Service (SAT), the National Census Bureau (INEGI), and the Council to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination in Mexico City (COPRED), and agreed to collaborate on several initiatives to promote inclusion for nonbinary people. These initiatives included improved data collection on nonbinary people, a mechanism that aligns gender markers across identity documents, and anti-discrimination campaigns.¹ In the following months, between October and December 2023, Mexico saw a rise in violence targeting nonbinary and gender non-conforming people.²

Months later, in January 2024, the National Assembly of Trans and Nonbinary Organizations in Mexico, a coalition of 128 activists and civil society organizations, developed a strategy aimed at increasing the visibility of and promoting respect for trans³ and nonbinary people and confronting conservative media that violate, misinform and question their rights.⁴ They focused on rights specific to their nonbinary identity. For example, they requested that official documents either do not require sex markers (e.g., male/female) or provide additional options beyond those based on the gender binary. Furthermore, the national assembly echoed demands from local activists in Mexico City for more visibility for nonbinary people within media and inclusion in data collection efforts.⁵

¹ Congreso de la Ciudad de México, “Necesarias Reformas Legales Que Reconozcan Identidad de Personas No Binarias,” September 20, 2023, <https://www.congresocdmx.gob.mx/comsoc-necesarias-reformas-legales-que-reconozcan-identidad-personas-no-binarias-4741-1.html>; *Foro de Personas No Binarias* (Congreso de la Ciudad de México, 2023), <https://www.facebook.com/CongresoCDMX/videos/298318739588871>.

² According to public data on self-reported cases of discrimination and violence, there were 7 cases against nonbinary and gender non-conforming people self-reported in Mexico during the month of October, which spiked to 13 cases in December 2023. Data available at: Visible, “Datos Abiertos,” April 2, 2024, <https://visible.lgbt/datosabiertos/>.

³ In Mexico, trans is an umbrella concept which includes different variations of the gender identity/expression which “transgress, transition or reaffirm it”, and it includes people who identify as transexuals, transgender, transvestites, drag, and others. This means there are people who may not identify as transgender, but who identify in the trans umbrella. The common denominator is that their sex assigned at birth doesn’t correspond to the person’s gender identity/expression. INEGI, “Encuesta Nacional sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género 2021 ENDISEG: Diseño conceptual” (México: INEGI, 2022), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/productos/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/nueva_estruc/889463906278.pdf: 73.

⁴ Asamblea Nacional Trans No Binaria, “Emergencia Nacional para Poblaciones Trans y No Binarias en México,” *Revista Todes*, January 30, 2024, <https://todes.com.mx/?p=1549>.

⁵ Congreso de la Ciudad de México, “Necesarias Reformas Legales Que Reconozcan Identidad de Personas No Binarias,” September 20, 2023, <https://www.congresocdmx.gob.mx/comsoc-necesarias-reformas-legales-que-reconozcan-identidad-personas-no-binarias-4741-1.html>; Leonardo Bastida, “Reconocimiento de lo no binario – LetraEse,” 2023, <https://letraese.org.mx/reconocimiento-de-lo-no-binario/>; Geo González, “La odisea de las personas no binarias para obtener sus documentos de identificación en México,” *Agencia Presentes*, August 24, 2023, <https://agenciapresentes.org/2023/08/24/la-odisea-de-las-personas-no-binarias-para-obtener-sus-documentos-de-identificacion-en-mexico/>.

There is scarce information about people who identify as nonbinary in Mexico, and most data collection efforts are not statistically representative,⁶ only cover specific topics,⁷ or only focus on binary transgender identities.⁸ This research brief provides demographic and descriptive data on nonbinary people in Mexico based on the first statistically representative nationwide sample. In this report, a nonbinary person is a person who lives their gender identity outside the traditional binary gender structure totally or partially.⁹

This report describes statistics from the National Survey on Sexual and Gender Diversity (ENDISEG), a project led by INEGI.¹⁰ The ENDISEG is a national probability sample that collected data about LGBTIQ+ people in Mexico between 2020 and 2021.¹¹ In their published reports, INEGI included data on sexual, gender, and intersex minorities aged 15 years or older. INEGI estimates that 4.6 million people in Mexico (4.8% of the population) have a non-heterosexual orientation, and 908,600 are not cisgender. This report uses a subsample of those who are not transgender and have a gender identity other than cisgender or transgender/transsexual to focus on nonbinary respondents.¹²

⁶ See: Miguel Fuentes Carreño, “Impacto Diferenciado Ante La COVID-19 En La Comunidad LGBTIQ+ En México: Informe Estatal Para Jalisco” (Guadalajara, Jalisco: COPRED/Yaaj, 2021), https://drive.google.com/file/d/1novvcrvD5GfHfoknH3k2-hDSFXvzx9qE/view?usp=sharing&usp=embed_facebook; Miguel Fuentes Carreño, “Impacto Diferenciado Ante La COVID-19 En La Comunidad LGBTIQ+ En México” (Mexico City, Mexico: COPRED/Yaaj, 2021), https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aU8yCD1YwDiPfyRy2kvYa_K_L2qfqmNX/view?usp=sharing&usp=embed_facebook.

⁷ On mental health of LGBTIQ+ youth, including nonbinary youth, see: The Trevor Project, “Encuesta Sobre La Salud Mental de Las Juventudes LGTBQ+ En México” (Mexico City, Mexico: The Trevor Project, 2024), https://www.thetrevorproject.mx/encuesta/assets/static/2024_M%C3%A9xico_National_Survey_ES_Final.pdf.

⁸ COPRED, “Encuesta Sobre Discriminación En La Ciudad de México” (Mexico City, Mexico: COPRED/Mitofsky, August 2021), <https://copred.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/EDIS2021-11122021.pdf>; Heleen Vermandere et al., “Personas trans y las barreras en el acceso a servicios de salud” (Morelos, Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública, May 2023), <https://www.insp.mx/avisos/personas-trans-y-las-barreras-en-el-acceso-a-servicios-de-salud>; *Conversatorio: Estudios sobre lo trans y lo no binario. Retos y prejuicios en la academia.* (Mexico City, Mexico: El Colegio de México, 2023), <https://agenda.colmex.mx/Actividad/3378/estudios-sobre-lo-trans-y-lo-no-binario-retos-y-prejuicios-en-la-academia/20230517>.

⁹ Dante Ureta, “¿Qué es ser una persona trans no binaria?,” *Homosensual* (blog), October 13, 2022, <https://www.homosensual.com/lgbt/diversidad/que-es-ser-una-persona-trans-no-binaria/>; Tania Morales Olvera, *Escuela Desarrollo de Personas*: (Mexico: Carbon4, 2024), 109, https://infanciastrans.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Libro_Escuela_Desarrollo_De_Personas_Una.pdf; INEGI, “Encuesta Nacional sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género 2021 ENDISEG: Diseño conceptual” (México: INEGI, 2022), 73, https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/productos/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/nueva_estruc/889463906278.pdf.

¹⁰ INEGI, “Encuesta Nacional sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género (ENDISEG) 2021. Presentación de resultados.” (México: INEGI, 2022), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/endiseg/2021/doc/endiseg_2021_resultados.pdf.

¹¹ INEGI, “Encuesta Nacional Sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género (ENDISEG) 2021. Nota Técnica” (Ciudad de México: INEGI, June 2022), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/endiseg/2021/doc/endiseg_2021_nota_tecnica.pdf.

¹² INEGI, “Encuesta Nacional Sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género (ENDISEG) 2021: Datos Abiertos,” CSV, 2021, https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/endiseg/2021/#datos_abiertos.

This study aims to describe nonbinary people in Mexico in the following areas: sociodemographic characteristics (age, disability, Afro-descendant and Indigenous identifications, religion, education, and employment); stressors in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood; sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity; and health care and mental health. In previous studies and INEGI's published reports, there are an estimated 592,328 persons in Mexico with a trans identity who are not transgender or transexual (65.2% of the trans respondents in the ENDISEG 2021). This includes people who self-identify as nonbinary, gender fluid, and agender, among others.

Previous studies have provided limited data on transgender and gender non-conforming people in Mexico. In the non-probabilistic 2018 Survey of Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (ENDOSIG), 688 respondents identified as gender non-conforming. Among these respondents, more than 60% were young adults; 39.1% finished high school, and 36.6% had a college degree; 9.7% identified as Indigenous and 6.8% as Afro-descendant; 57% were employed or looking for employment; 63.8% had no religion, and 21.7% were Catholic; more than two-thirds (70.9%) were single.¹³ From the same survey data, we found that of the 117 respondents who answered additional questions about their gender identity, a quarter (25.6%) had realized their gender identity did not match the sex assigned at birth during their childhood and another quarter during their adolescence. Out of the 79 respondents who answered about their families' reactions when they revealed their gender identity, 53.8% reported an adverse reaction from their family. Out of the 103 respondents who responded to questions about when they started living according to their gender identity, almost half (48.5%) had not started living in a way that reflects their current gender experience, and 21.4% had started as young adults.¹⁴

Out of the 437 respondents in the 2018 ENDOSIG who reported experiencing different forms of discrimination, nonbinary people reported experiencing discrimination in multiple social spaces, including family (39.7%), social media (48.3%), school or work (32.3%), recreational spaces (32.3%), and in public spaces and public transportation (48.4%).¹⁵ Of the 356 respondents who mentioned the reasons they were discriminated against, most experienced discrimination based on how they dressed (73.9%) and their physical appearance (69.7%).¹⁶ About a third of the 688 respondents from the same survey who reported having a gender non-conforming identity go to private health care providers (32.3%), and around a quarter go to doctors' offices in pharmacies (26.5%).¹⁷ Although a significant effort was made to include nonbinary people, the survey was non-probabilistic, so findings could not be generalized outside the sample.

Another non-probabilistic study in 2024 of 10,635 respondents led by the Trevor Project Mexico found about 66% of trans and nonbinary youth aged 13 to 24 reported having suicidal thoughts, and almost half had attempted suicide.¹⁸ In addition, two-thirds of nonbinary participants reported symptoms of

¹³ CONAPRED, "ENDOSIG," 2018, <https://sindis.conapred.org.mx/estadisticas/endosig/>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ The Trevor Project, "Encuesta Sobre La Salud Mental de Las Juventudes LGBTQ+ En México" (Mexico City, Mexico: The Trevor Project, 2024), https://www.thetrevorproject.mx/encuesta/assets/static/2024_M%C3%A9xico_National_Survey_ES_Final.pdf

depression (66%), and more than half reported symptoms of anxiety (59%).¹⁹ Of the 9% who reported experiencing conversion therapy, 24% were nonbinary or gender non-conforming. More than one in 10 (12%) experienced physical violence due to their gender identity, and 37% felt discriminated against due to their gender identity.²⁰ This survey shed important light on the mental health of adolescents and young people in Mexico. However, it did not include other sociodemographic characteristics or nonbinary people over 24 years old.

¹⁹ Rates among trans men were higher (73%) and for trans women were lower (59%). See *ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

RESULTS

Among the gender non-conforming population of Mexico, 37.5% identify as nonbinary, including those with heterosexual and non-heterosexual sexual orientations. Based on that percentage, there are an estimated 340,620 nonbinary people in Mexico ages 15 to 75. They comprise the most significant proportion of gender non-conforming people in the country (see Appendix for the estimates).

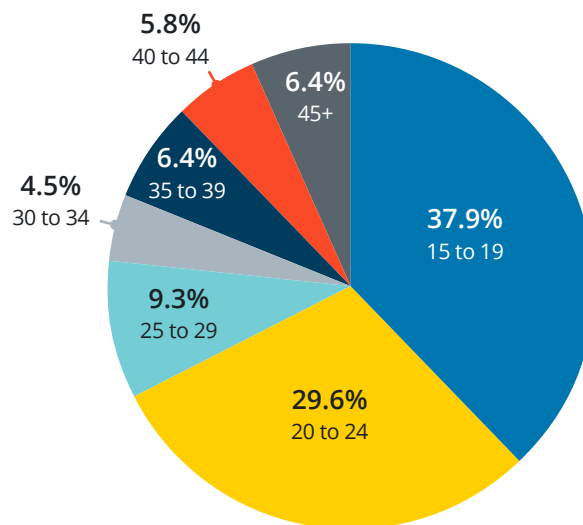
Table 1. Nonbinary people in Mexico ages 15 or older

	%	95% CI
Percent of the gender non-conforming population, including LGB and non-LGB people, who identify as nonbinary	37.5%	(31.3, 44.1)
	N	95% CI
Number of nonbinary people in Mexico, including LGB and non-LGB respondents	340,620	(278,241, 402,999)

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Over two-thirds of nonbinary people were under 24 (67.5%). Most were single (80.8%), and among those who were married or in common-law marriage (17.4%), half lived with their partner (49.3%), and the other half did not (50.7%). When compared to the latest available data on marriage status in Mexico (2017), the percentage of nonbinary people who were single was more than double that of the general population (34%).²¹ The mean age of marriage in Mexico among cisgender men (34.1) and women (31.3) was lower than for nonbinary people (39.0) in 2022.²²

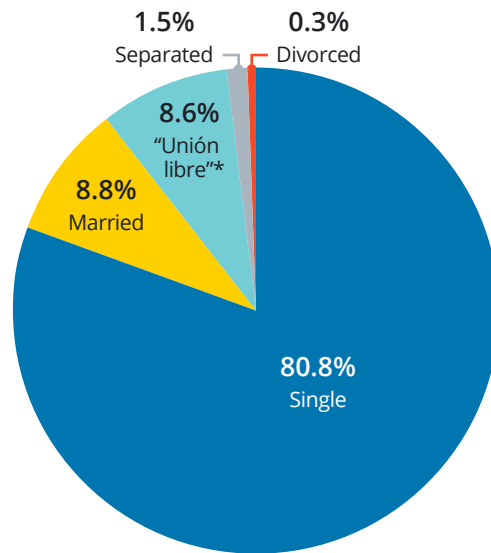
Figure 1. Percentage of nonbinary people in Mexico by age group



²¹ INEGI, “Nota Técnica. Estadística de Matrimonios (EMAT) 2022” (Aguascalientes, Mexico: INEGI, 2022), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/emat/doc/matrimonios_2022_notas_tecnicas.pdf, 6-7.

²² *Ibid.*

Figure 2. Marriage status of nonbinary people



Note: *Common law marriage

Some nonbinary people identified as Afro-descendants (4.2%), and almost one in five (19.4%) self-identified as Indigenous. The main reason respondents identified as Indigenous was “because they are Mexican” (52.2%).²³ According to 2020 data from INEGI, Afro-descendant people represented 2% of the total population.²⁴ Thus, this sample showed twice as many respondents self-identifying as Afro-descendant. In 2022, INEGI data showed that 19.4% of Mexicans identified as Indigenous; therefore, this sample is consistent with national data.²⁵

²³ The question about indigenous self-identification stems from the 2017 National Discrimination Survey (ENADIS), which followed international standards when including questions of people from originary nations. According to the INEGI, following the United Nations, the recommendation is to allow for self-identification without defining who are the indigenous people from what an outsider may understand it to be. The CONAPRED helped design the question “according to your customs and traditions, do you identify as indigenous,” and recognizes that people can interpret it as self-identifying as Mexicans with indigenous roots, although they are currently not part of an indigenous community. It follows the Economic Commission for Latin America’s criteria to identify originary nations in the region: self-identification, common origin, culture, and territory, to which those who self-declare indigenous just by being Mexicans respond to. See: INEGI, “Encuesta Nacional Sobre Discriminación 2017. Diseño Conceptual” (Aguascalientes, Mexico: INEGI, 2018), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/enadis/2017/doc/enadis2017_diseno_conceptual.pdf: 44-45

²⁴ INEGI, “Población Afromexicana,” 2020, <https://cuentame.inegi.org.mx/poblacion/afromexicanos.aspx?tema=P>.

²⁵ INEGI, “Comunicado de Prensa Núm. 430/22. Estadísticas a Propósito Del Día Internacional de Los Pueblos Indígenas” (Aguascalientes, Mexico: INEGI, August 8, 2022), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/saladeprensa/aproposito/2022/EAP_PueblosInd22.pdf.

Figure 3. Self-identified Afro-descendant and Indigenous nonbinary people

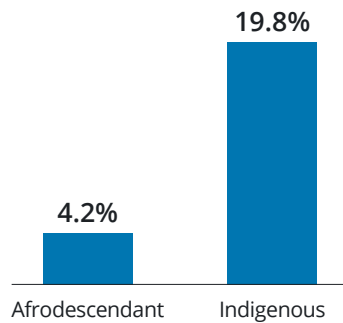
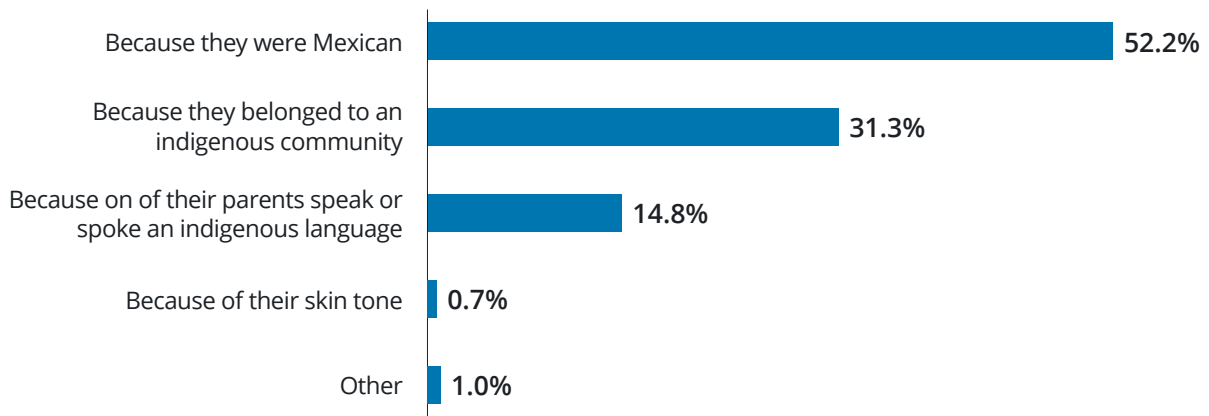
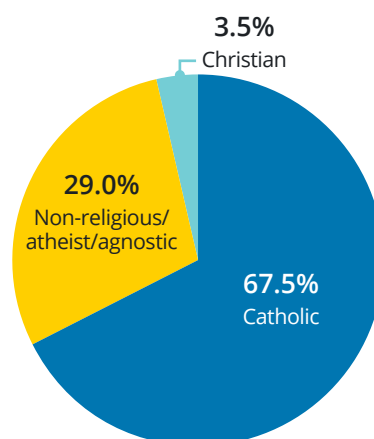


Figure 4. Reasons for identifying as Indigenous among nonbinary people



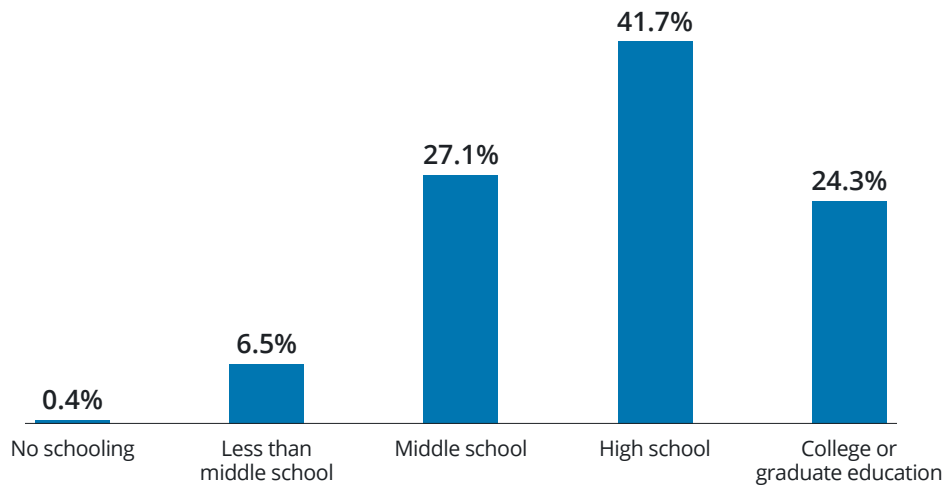
Two-thirds of nonbinary people (67.5%) identified their religion as some denomination within Catholicism, whereas almost a third (29%) reported not being religious or being atheist/agnostic.

Figure 5. Religion among nonbinary people



Two-thirds of respondents (68.8%) had either a middle or high school education, and almost a quarter (24.3%) had a college degree.

Figure 6. Educational attainment among nonbinary people



Almost half (47.4%) were employed or unemployed but looking for a job.²⁶ Nearly a third were students (31.3%), and a fifth (20.7%) were house workers or caregivers. Half of the respondents were employees or workers (50.7%), and a third (33%) were self-employed.²⁷ Most people worked either in personal and security services (18.3%) or as low-wage workers (e.g., street vendors, cleaning, and delivery services).²⁸

²⁶ The economically active population, as defined by *INEGI*, are people who provide or offer labor, who could have been hired for an economic activity (occupied), or who are still looking to be hired (unoccupied), through which they are still influencing the job market through their job search. An occupied person is someone who does an economic activity, meaning they're involved in processes which finally lead to consented transactions between someone who offers and someone who demands the service. For the detailed conceptual design, see: *INEGI*, "Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo. Cómo Se Hace La ENOE. Métodos y Procedimientos" (Aguascalientes, Mexico: *INEGI*, 2023), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/productos/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/nueva_estruc/889463909743.pdf, p. 12

²⁷ According to the *INEGI*, an employee or worker ("empleado u obrero") is an employed person 12 years or older who worked as a subordinate for an employer, company or public/private institution in exchange for a wage or salary for a full week. Day laborers ("jornaleros" or "peones") include paid workers, whether agricultural or livestock workers, as long as they do not perform any other work in agriculture, like managers in agricultural production. A paid helper ("ayudante con pago") is an employed person aged 12 years and older who worked to perform short-term tasks during the week (a few hours or days) and received a wage or payment upon completing each of those tasks. For the Spanish definitions, see: *INEGI*, "Censo de Población y Vivienda 2020. Glosario," *INEGI*, 2020, <https://www.inegi.org.mx/app/glosario/default.html?p=cpv2020#letraGloE>.

²⁸ We classified them following the ENOE's System of Industrial Classification for North America 2018 (SCIAN - Hogares). For more details on what encompasses each classification, refer to: *INEGI*, "Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo. Nueva Edición ENOE N. Clasificaciones Tercer Trimestre 2021" (Aguascalientes, Mexico: *INEGI*, 2021), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/enoe/15ymas/doc/clasificadores_enoe_n.pdf, pp. 14-52.

Figure 7. Employment among nonbinary people

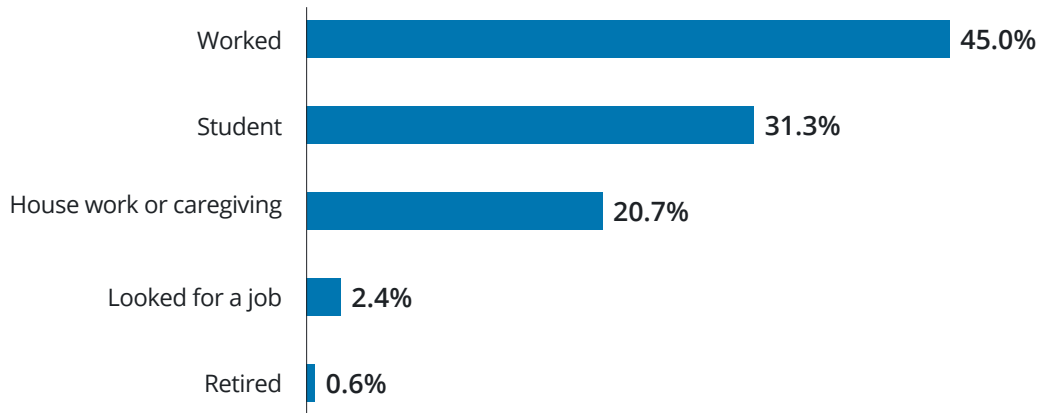
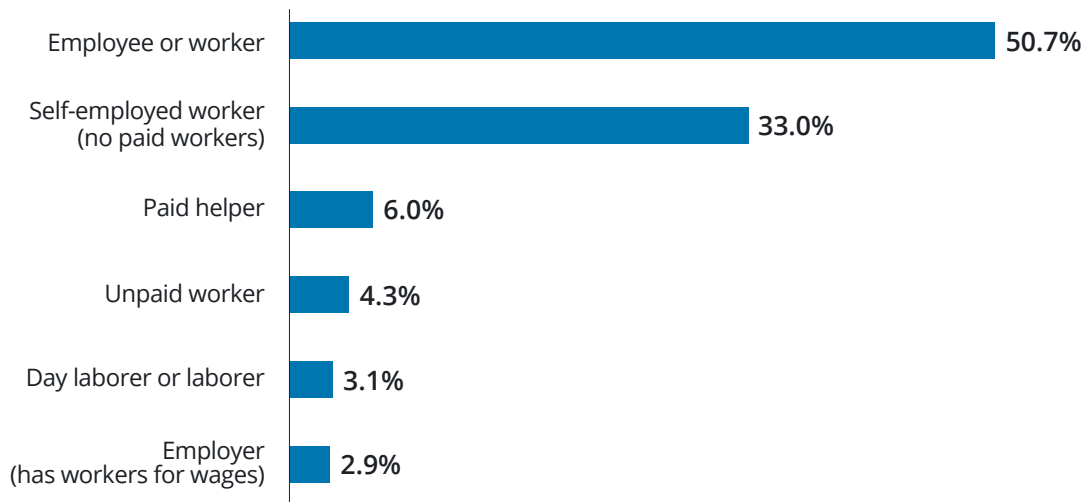


Figure 8. Job position among employed or job-seeking nonbinary people (n = 105)



Note: According to INEGI, an employee or worker (“empleado u obrero”) is an employed person 12 years or older who worked as a subordinate for an employer, company, or public/private institution in exchange for a wage or salary for a whole week. Day laborers (“jornaleros” or “peones”) include paid workers, whether agricultural or livestock workers, as long as they do not perform any other work in agriculture, like managers in agricultural production. A paid helper (“ayudante con pago”) is an employed person aged 12 years and older who worked to perform short-term tasks during the week (a few hours or days) and received a wage or payment upon completing each of those tasks.

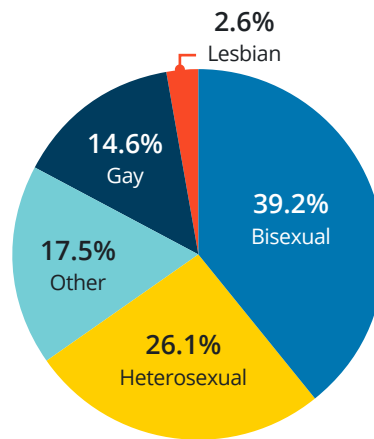
Figure 9. Industry among employed or job-seeking nonbinary people (n = 105)



SEXUALITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

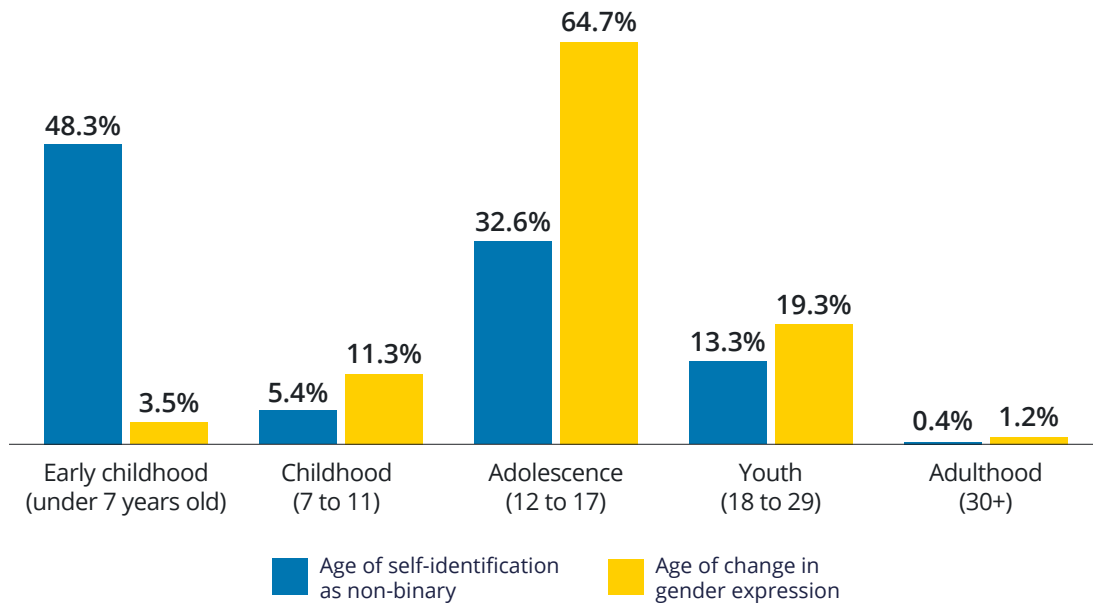
Most nonbinary people identified as bisexual (39.2%), followed by heterosexual (26.1%). Among those who chose “Other” (17%), most of them (44.8%) identified as pansexual. Almost 1 in 10 identified as being born with variations in sex characteristics (9.9%).

Figure 10. Sexual orientation of nonbinary people



Among those who knew they were nonbinary all their life, 86.3% knew it before they were 17.²⁹ Also, 79.5% started changing their gender expression before they were 17 years old.

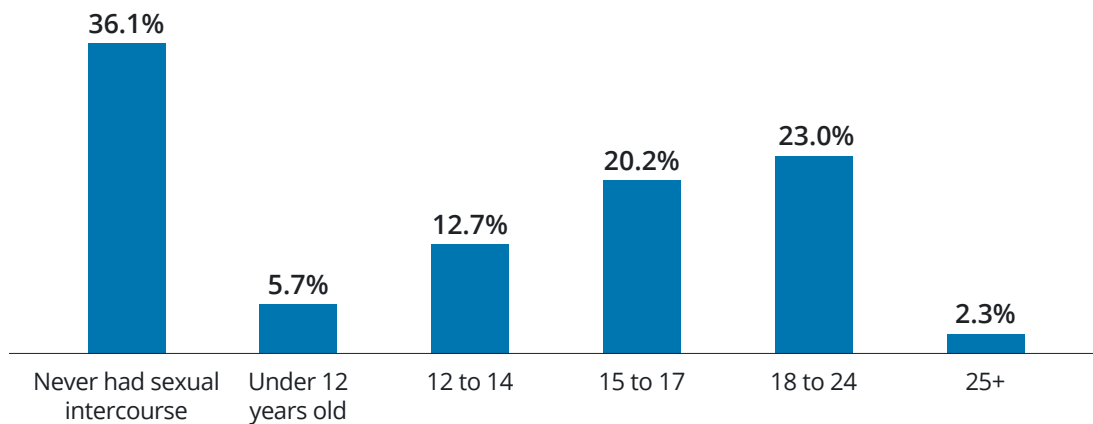
Figure 11. Age at which people started to identify as nonbinary (n = 170) and age they started changing their gender expression (n = 80)



Note: The category “early childhood” includes people who answered they knew their entire life their gender did not correspond to their sex assigned at birth.

Around a third (36.1%) had not had sexual relations, and another third (32.9%) had their first sexual intercourse as a teenager (between 12 and 17 years old).³⁰

Figure 12. Age of first sexual relation among nonbinary people



²⁹ Figure 11 shows data of respondents who included a specific year when they self-identified as nonbinary and when they started changing their gender expression. The appendix includes data for all respondents, excluding those who didn't specify a response.

³⁰ Definition of childhood and adolescence in Mexican law establishes the former is under 12 years old, and the latter is from 12 to 17 years old.

STRESSORS

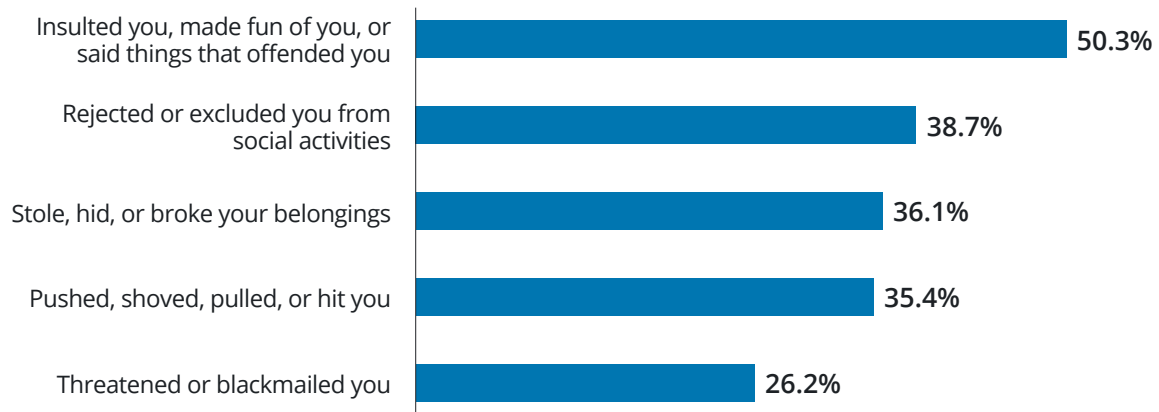
Childhood

During childhood, many nonbinary people reported being made to feel different based on their interests (45.5%) or mannerisms and behavior (41.5%). Among negative childhood experiences they reported, half were insulted, mocked, or told offensive things (50.3%), and more than a third were rejected or excluded (38.7%), had their belongings robbed or broken (36.1%), or were physically assaulted (35.4%).

Figure 13. Reasons nonbinary people were made to feel different during childhood

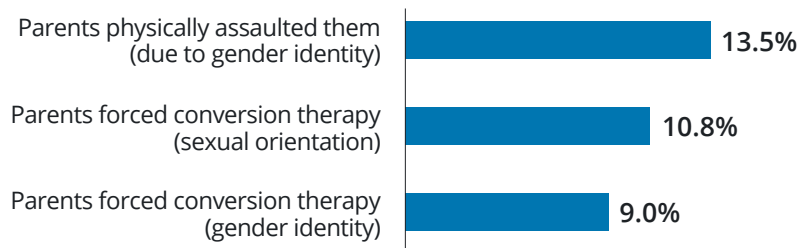


Figure 14. Actions taken by others to bother or make nonbinary people feel bad



Nonbinary people face specific stressors related to their gender identity. While most reported that their parents were accepting of their gender identity (88.5%), around one in ten (13.5%) were attacked or insulted by their parents after initially revealing their gender identity. Further, about one in ten were forced by their parents to go to conversion therapy to change their sexual orientation (10.8%), and almost one in ten to change their gender identity (9%) when they disclosed it.

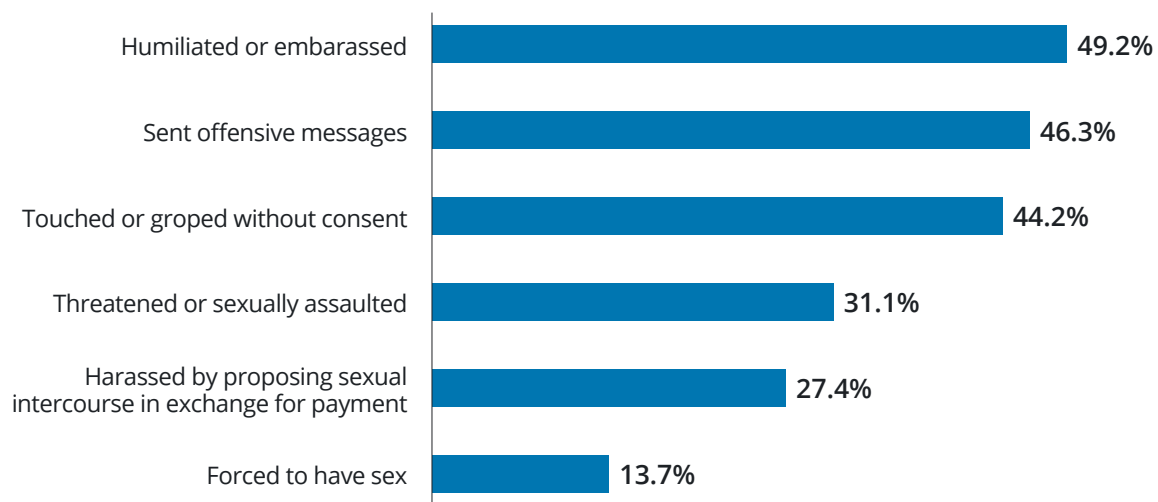
Figure 15. Experiences of nonbinary people after revealing their sexual orientation and gender identity to their parents



Adulthood

Between 2020 and 2021, 15.3% experienced some form of discrimination for being nonbinary. Across their lifespan, almost half of nonbinary people were humiliated or made to feel ashamed (49.2%), sent offensive messages (46.3%), or touched without consent (44.2%).³¹

Figure 16. Nonbinary people's lifetime experiences of discrimination and harassment



HEALTH CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

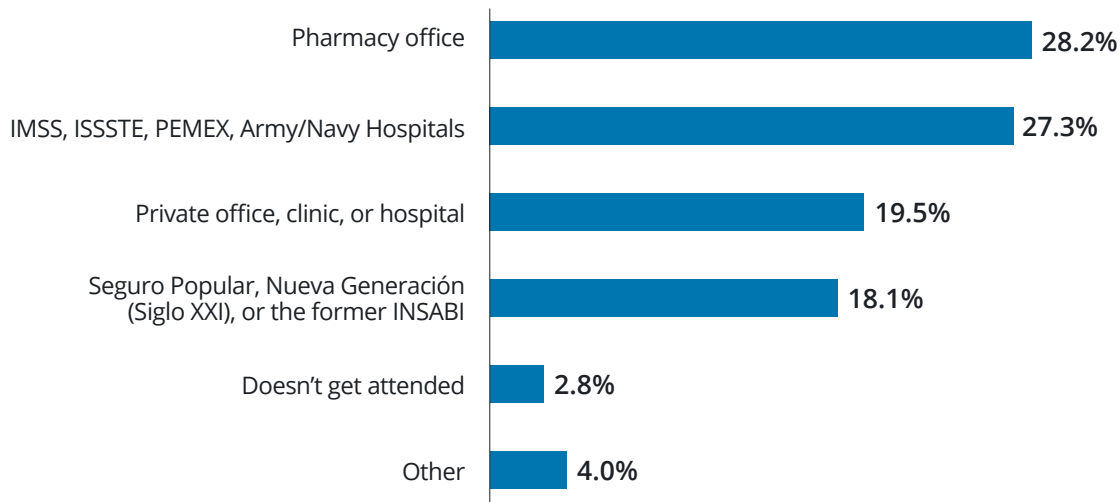
Some nonbinary people (16.2%) lived with at least one form of disability, including difficulties walking, seeing, moving the upper body, learning, hearing, bathing/dressing/eating, speaking, or emotional/mental. Living with a disability means it was very hard or not feasible for them to perform this activity.³²

³¹ Thresholds for precision based on the coefficient of variation for these variables is higher than 30% (meaning low precision), for which we advise taking with caution the results for figure 16. For more details see the Appendix.

³² Disability is categorized according to the 2017 INEGI Disability Survey, in which the person must have great difficulty or cannot do a basic activity. A dichotomous variable was made out of the ordinal variable (no difficulty to lots of difficulty) that encapsulates this definition to know which is the target population that lives with some disability. (See: INEGI, "La Discapacidad En México, Datos al 2017. Versión 2017" (Aguascalientes, Mexico: INEGI, 2017), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/productos/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/nueva_estruc/702825094409.pdf, p. 6)

More than a quarter of nonbinary people mainly accessed health care providers through medical offices available in pharmacies (28.2%) and another quarter in public hospitals (27.3%), such as IMSS, ISSSTE, or PEMEX hospital. When asked if they had sought medical attention related to their sexual orientation or gender identity, more than two-thirds (77.9%) had not sought it specifically for those reasons. This medical attention includes specific care related to endocrinology, psychology, and psychiatry.

Figure 17. Primary health care provider among nonbinary people



Respondents reported experiencing multiple mental health problems within the 12 months prior to the survey, with three-fourths (74.7%) experiencing distress. Almost two-thirds experienced insomnia (63.7%), anxiety (65.9%), or changes in eating behaviors or weight (64.5%). Over four in ten (42.5%) had suicidal thoughts, and a quarter (25.8%) attempted suicide. Among the reasons for having suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide, the majority reported issues related to their families or partners (51%), with others citing health problems (26.2%) or problems at school (24%).

Figure 18. Prevalence of mental health problems among nonbinary people in the past year



Figure 19. Lifetime prevalence of suicidal thoughts and attempts among nonbinary people

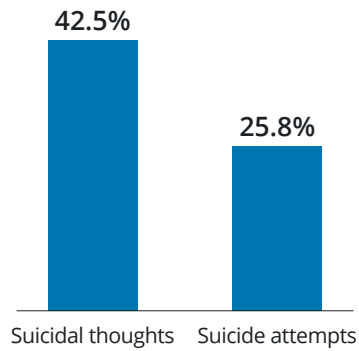
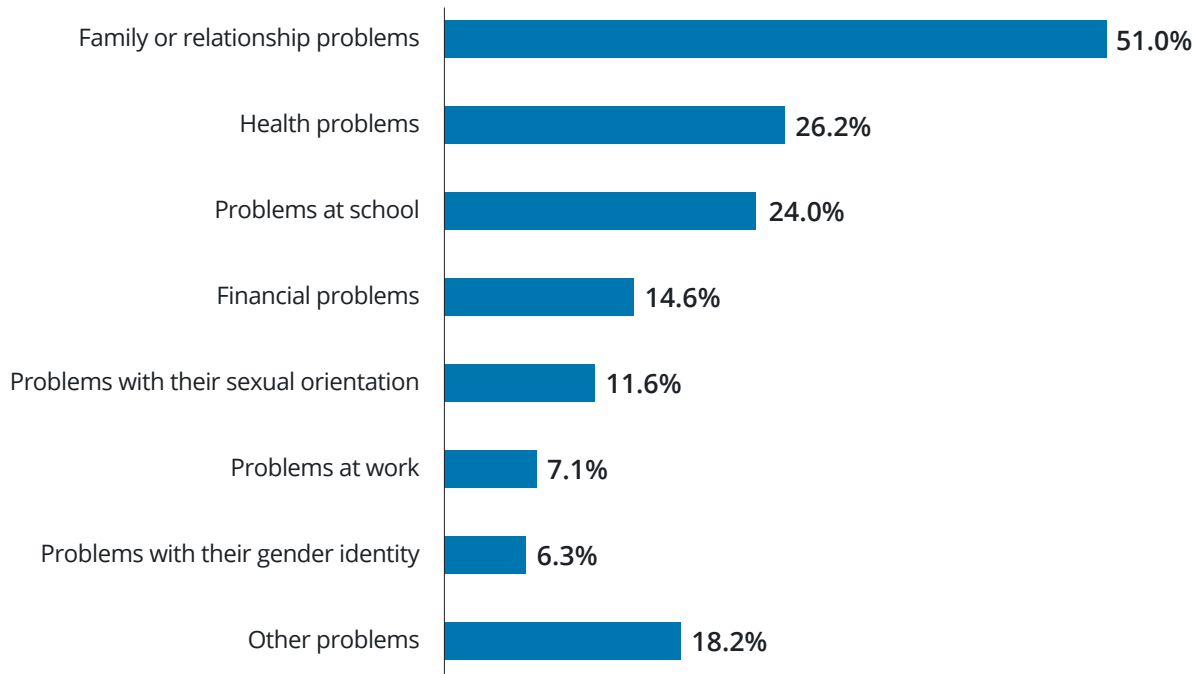


Figure 20. Reasons for suicidal thoughts and attempts among nonbinary people



CONCLUSION

This report summarizes findings about nonbinary people from the ENDISEG. The results depict a population that is young, mostly single, primarily high school educated, predominantly Catholic, with a high proportion identifying as bisexual. The report also highlights the challenges nonbinary people face from childhood, including discrimination and violence, and how those experiences continue to be part of their daily lives through humiliation, offensive messages, and sexual harassment.

Although the data shows a high level of acceptance from parents regarding their child's nonbinary gender identity, many respondents still experienced conversion therapy for their sexual orientation or gender identity. Other mental health stressors were high, with more than two-thirds of participants reporting stress, insomnia, anxiety, or changes in eating behaviors or weight. Future research should more closely examine the high rates of suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts among nonbinary people, including their correlation with family or relationship problems.

The limited sample size does not allow for an analysis of some variables with low levels of statistical precision. Also, it limits intersectional analysis for nonbinary people who are members of racialized communities, like those self-identifying as Afro-descendants and Indigenous, including impacts on education levels, employment rates, and experiences of other forms of discrimination in addition to being nonbinary. Additionally, different ways of asking about self-identification among First Nations, originary peoples, or native peoples, instead of the category "Indigenous," could improve efforts to reach these groups and to include their voices in how demographic surveys define them.³³ Improving these measures would allow us to understand better the sociodemographic characteristics of nonbinary people who are part of originary peoples.

We also recommend adding variables to the ENDISEG that help us understand migratory trajectories and income levels. This would provide a more nuanced picture of internal and external immigration of nonbinary people in Mexico—and the broader population of LGBTIQ+ inhabitants—as well as the economic disparities and poverty levels within this population. Furthermore, some variables included in the original questionnaire around adolescence were unavailable in the online database, thus limiting analysis of that developmental period in nonbinary people's lives.

Our results show the first picture of the composition of nonbinary people in the country and reflect how much we can learn from data from a nationally representative sample of a population group with growing visibility in Mexico.

³³ See Rafael Lozano and Carlos Acuña, "México es una nación artificial: Yásnaya Aguilar", *Corriente Alterna*, February 26, 2022, <https://corrientealterna.unam.mx/territorios/mexico-es-una-nacion-artificial-yasnaya-aguilar/>; Yásnaya Elena A. Gil, "La manera más efectiva de combatir la usurpación indígena. Pënyety," *El País México*, July 22, 2023, sec. Opinión, <https://elpais.com/mexico/opinion/2023-07-22/la-manera-mas-efectiva-de-combatir-la-usurpacion-indigena-penety.html>; Edmundo del Pozo, "Pueblos Originarios y Afromexicano no deben ser discriminados una vez más," *SinEmbargo MX*, January 23, 2024, <https://www.sinembargo.mx/23-01-2024/4457830>.

METHODOLOGY

This research brief summarizes findings from the 2021 Mexican Encuesta Nacional sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género (ENDISEG), led by the Mexican National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI). The ENDISEG is a national probability sample of sexual, gender, and intersex minorities (LGBTIQ+) individuals aged 15 years or older. The survey was conducted via in-person household sampling in three stages, stratified and by conglomerates. The sample selection uses the 2012 INEGI's National Household Framework to create a subsample that allows for gathering the current universe of the ENDISEG.

The sample size had a 90% confidence interval, with a design effect of 4.67, a maximum expected relative error of 7.43%, and a maximum expected non-response rate of 15%, for a proportion of the population aged 15 years and older that self-identifies as LGBTIQ+ of 5.1%. A sample size of 50,113 households was obtained, which was adjusted to 50,258 households at the national level. Data were weighted to correct for non-response bias.³⁴

From the estimated sample size, INEGI included 43,737 households as the effective sample, which represents 36.4 million households. This sample consists of 44,189 persons 15 years and older in the final sample, which represents 97.2 million people 15 years and older.³⁵ INEGI estimated that 4.8% of the respondents had a non-heterosexual sexual orientation (bisexual, gay, lesbian, or other), which is an estimate of 4.6 million people.³⁶

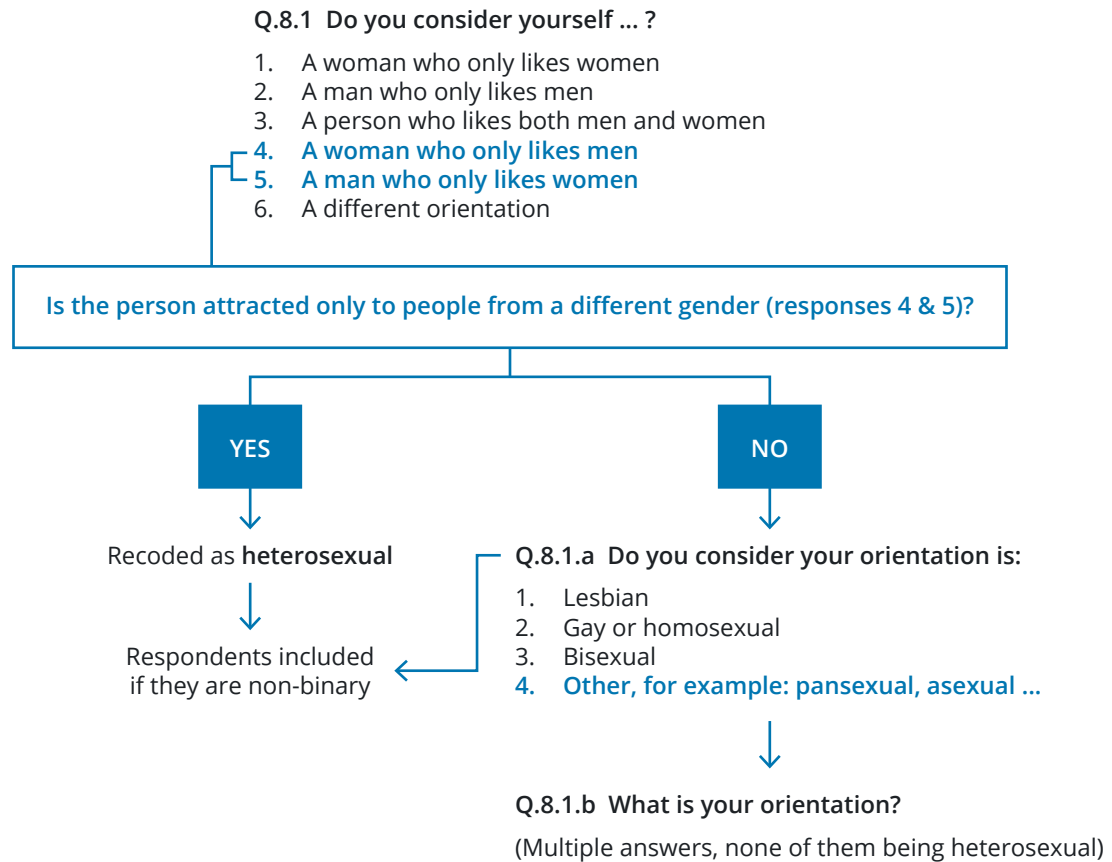
The variable on sexual orientation was coded to include heterosexual people, as seen in Figure 21. The ENDISEG categorized the non-heterosexual respondents through a two-step question: the first one, based on sexual attraction, asked if the respondent was attracted to a different gender, the same one, both men and women, or if they had a different orientation; the second question specifically asked about identities (gay, lesbian, bisexual or other), but wasn't asked to those who in the previous question answered that they were men only attracted to women, or women only attracted to men. Thus, no variable explicitly asked if someone was heterosexual. In the sub-sample of nonbinary participants, we included people who answered they were only attracted to the opposite binary gender and labeled them as heterosexuals.

³⁴ INEGI, "Encuesta Nacional Sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género (ENDISEG) 2021: Diseño Muestral" (Aguascalientes, Mexico: INEGI, 2022), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/productos/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/nueva_estruc/889463906940.pdf

³⁵ INEGI, "Encuesta Nacional Sobre Diversidad Sexual y de Género (ENDISEG) 2021. Nota Técnica" (Ciudad de México: INEGI, June 2022), https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/endiseg/2021/doc/endiseg_2021_nota_tecnica.pdf.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

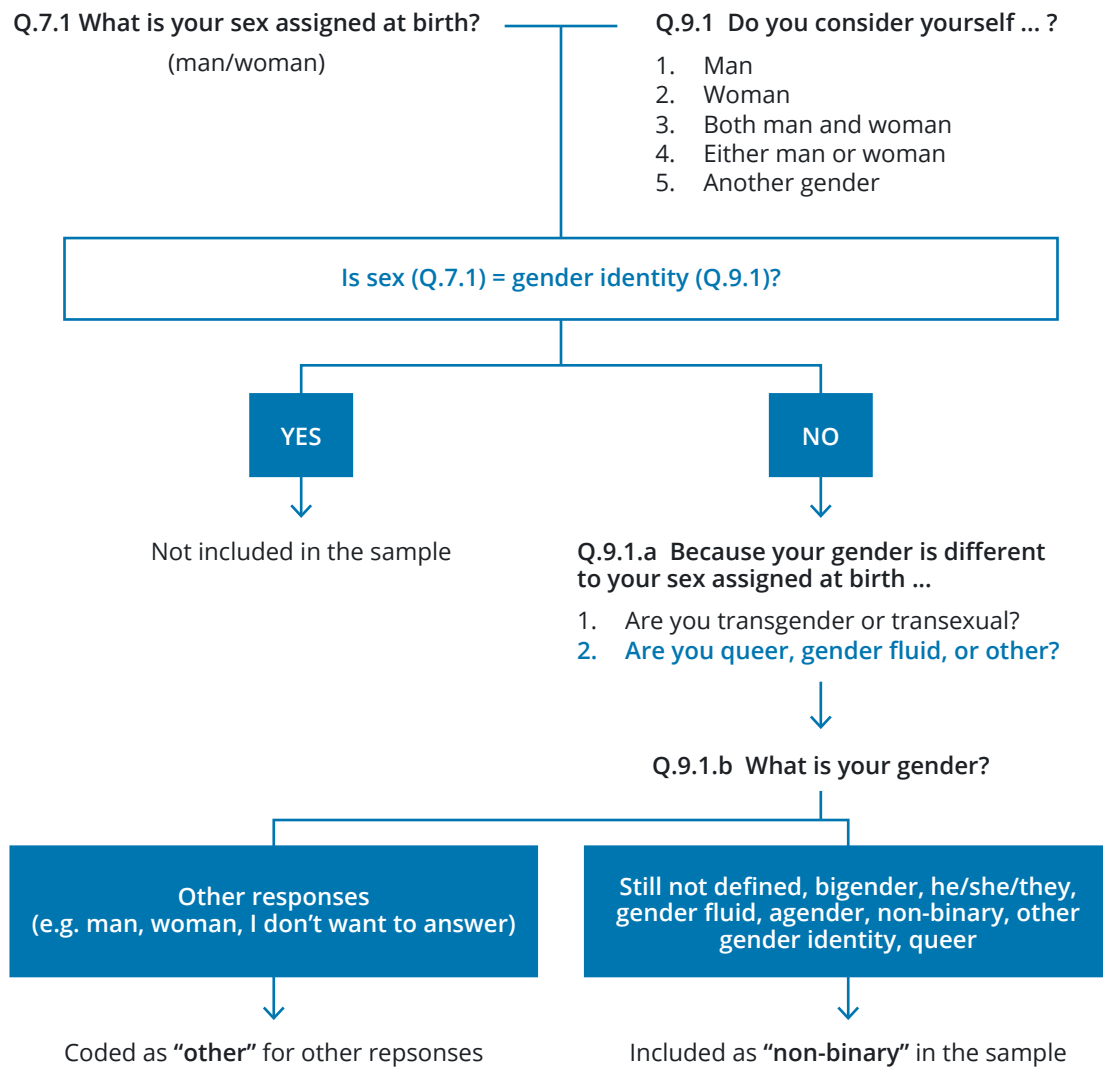
Figure 21. Identification of heterosexual respondents



The ENDISEG reported that 0.9% were not cisgender, an estimated 908,600 respondents.³⁷ As illustrated in Figure 22, the questionnaire followed a two-step process to identify trans and gender-nonconforming people. They are first asked in section 1 of the survey what their sex is assigned at birth, and then later, they are asked what their gender identity is (section 9). If these don't match, then they're filtered and asked in section 9 if their gender identity is different from their sex at birth and how they identify: 1) transgender/transsexual, or 2) queer, gender fluid, or other. Of the respondents, 65.2% answered the second option, of which people were asked a follow-up question, "What is your gender?" Of the 293 responses available in the follow-up, we defined our nonbinary sample, 172 observations, based on the definition given earlier in this project of nonbinary people (someone who lives their gender identity outside the traditional binary gender structure in a total or partial way). We excluded responses from people who did not want to answer or who answered they had a binary gender identity (e.g., masculine, feminine, man, or woman). Local civil society organizations in Mexico reviewed and approved the selected responses to be included in the category. The following graph describes the selection process:

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Figure 22. Identification of nonbinary respondents



Some variables were collapsed from ordinal (e.g., no difficulty, little difficulty, some difficulty, and a lot of difficulty) to dichotomous response patterns (e.g., yes vs. no). Some others were collapsed into more extensive categories (e.g., religious denominations within Christianity, Catholicism, and non-religious respondents). Variables with mixed types of answers (e.g., always knew they were nonbinary vs. a specific age where they started identifying themselves) were converted to only leave the discrete values and to turn categorical values into missing ones. According to legal definitions of childhood and adolescence, some ages were collapsed into groups to identify children, adolescents, and adults (see footnotes throughout the report).

AUTHOR

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ABOUT THE WILLIAMS INSTITUTE

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RESEARCH THAT MATTERS



APPENDIX

Table A1. Thresholds for Coefficient of Variation Coverage

INTERPRETATION	COLOR	THRESHOLDS
High	White	[0%, 15%)
Moderate	Yellow	[15%, 30%)
Low	Dark Orange	>=30%

Note: Table 1 shows the approved thresholds by INEGI for reporting precision of tabulations according to the coefficient of variation.

Table A2. Recoded distribution of respondents by gender identity, if different than the sex assigned at birth (N = 441), with data from Mexico's National Survey of Sexual and Gender Diversity 2021 (ENDISEG)

N = 441			
VARIABLE	%	95% CI	CoV
Gender identity, if different than the sex assigned at birth			
Transgender or transexual	34.8	(28.5, 41.7)	9.7
Nonbinary	37.5	(31.3, 44.1)	8.7
Other	27.7	(21.9, 34.4)	11.6

Note: Percent, 95% confidence intervals [CI], and coefficient of variation [CoV] are weighted population estimates.

Table A3. Characteristics of nonbinary participants (N = 172) in the ENDISEG 2021

N=172			
VARIABLE	%	95% CI	CoV
Age			
15 - 19	37.9	(28.2, 48.8)	14
20 - 24	29.6	(20.8, 40.3)	16.7
25 - 29	9.3	(5.4, 15.4)	26.6
30 - 34	4.5	(2.3, 8.7)	33.9
35 - 39	6.4	(3.3, 12.1)	33
40 - 44	5.8	(2.7, 11.8)	37.4
45+	6.4	(3.4, 11.9)	32.3
Marriage status			
"Unión libre" (common-law marriage)	8.6	(5.2, 13.9)	25.2
Married	8.8	(5.0, 15.2)	28.5
Separated	1.5	(0.4, 5.2)	62.1
Divorced	0.3	(0.1, 1.2)	71.9
Single	80.8	(73.1, 86.6)	4.2

N=172			
VARIABLE	%	95% CI	CoV
Living with their partner			
Yes	49.3	(30.7, 68.1)	19.7
Afrodescendant and Indigenous self-identification			
Afrodescendant	4.2	(1.7, 10.2)	45.5
Indigenous	19.8	(13.4, 28.2)	18.9
Reasons to identify as Indigenous			
Because they belonged to an Indigenous community	31.3	(14.9, 54.2)	32.4
Because one of their parents speaks or spoke an indigenous language	14.8	(4.7, 37.8)	52.8
Because of their skin tone	0.7	(0.1, 5.6)	102.6
Because they are Mexican	52.2	(32.3, 71.4)	19.6
Other reason	1.0	(0.1, 7.7)	102.3
Religion			
Catholic	67.5	(57.1, 76.4)	7.3
Christian	3.5	(1.7, 6.9)	35.1
Non-religious/Atheist/Agnostic	29.0	(20.4, 39.5)	16.9
Lives with one or more disabilities			
Yes	16.2	(9.5, 26.2)	25.7
Education			
No schooling	0.4	(0.1, 0.9)	100.4
Less than middle school	6.5	(3.2, 12.5)	34.5
Middle school	27.1	(19.8, 35.9)	15.2
High school	41.7	(31.7, 52.4)	12.7
College or graduate education	24.3	(16.2, 34.8)	19.5
Employment past seven days			
Worked	45.0	(35.1, 55.3)	11.5
Looked for a job	2.4	(0.6, 9.0)	69
Retired	0.6	(0.2, 2.6)	71.3
Student	31.3	(22.0, 42.3)	16.6
Housework or caregiving	20.7	(13.6, 30.3)	20.4
Job position (among the economically active population; n= 105)			
Employee or worker	50.7	(37.6, 63.8)	13.3
Day laborer or laborer	3.1	(0.5, 16.4)	88.9
Paid helper	6.0	(1.8, 17.8)	58
Employer (has workers for wages)	2.9	(1.2, 6.9)	44.4
Self-employed worker (does not have workers for wages)	33.0	(20.9, 47.8)	21.1
Unpaid worker	4.3	(0.9, 17.3)	74.6

N=172			
VARIABLE	%	95% CI	CoV
Type of job			
Directors and managers	2.4	(0.9, 6.5)	50.1
Professionals and technicians	16.2	(7.3, 32.4)	38.3
Auxiliary workers in administrative activities	6.3	(2.9, 13.2)	38.9
Merchants, sales clerks, and sales agents	16.8	(9.8, 27.2)	25.9
Workers in personal services and surveillance	18.3	(9.6, 31.9)	30.4
Workers in agricultural, livestock, forestry, hunting and fishing activities	3.8	(1.2, 11.2)	56
Craft, construction, and other trades workers	10.6	(4.5, 23.0)	41.5
Industrial machinery operators, assemblers, chauffeurs, and transport drivers	7.4	(3.4, 15.5)	38.7
Low-wage workers (street vendors, cleaners, delivery services, etc.)	18.1	(10.3, 29.9)	27
Reasons people made you feel different than others during childhood			
The way you dressed or groomed yourself	38.8	(29.2, 49.4)	13.4
By your tastes or interests	45.5	(35.4, 56.0)	11.6
By the way you spoke or expressed yourself	37.1	(27.4, 48.0)	14.2
By your manner or way of behaving	41.5	(31.7, 52.0)	12.6
Other's behaviors to bother you or make you feel bad			
Rejected or excluded you from social activities	38.7	(29.0, 49.5)	13.6
Insulted you, made fun of you, or said things that offended you	50.3	(40.1, 60.5)	10.4
Stole, hid, or broke your belongings	36.1	(26.5, 46.9)	14.5
Threatened or blackmailed you	26.2	(18.2, 36.2)	17.4
Pushed, shoved, pulled, or hit you	35.4	(25.9, 46.1)	14.6
Age of first sexual relation			
Never had sexual intercourse	36.1	(26.6, 46.9)	14.4
Under 12 years old	5.7	(2.4, 13.2)	43.6
12 - 14	12.7	(6.6, 22.9)	31.8
15 - 17	20.2	(13.5, 29.2)	19.6
18 - 24	23	(16.2, 31.6)	17
25+	2.3	(0.9, 5.5)	46.3
Sexual orientation			
Lesbian	2.6	(0.9, 7.2)	52.9
Gay	14.6	(8.4, 24.0)	26.8
Bisexual	39.2	(29.6, 49.7)	13.2
Other	17.5	(10.7, 27.4)	23.9
Heterosexual	26.1	(18.6, 35.4)	16.4

N=172			
VARIABLE	%	95% CI	CoV
Other sexual orientation if they chose "Other" (n = 27)			
Asexual	20.3	(3.5, 64.0)	75.4
None	6.6	(1.3, 28.0)	77.2
Doesn't know	2.3	(0.3, 17.1)	103.2
Other	26.0	(10.6, 51.0)	39.1
Pansexual	44.8	(21.3, 70.8)	29.4
Born with variations in sex characteristics			
Yes	9.9	(5.0, 18.8)	33.8
Age of self-identification as nonbinary (n = 170) (early childhood includes those who knew their entire life)			
Early childhood (under 7 years old)	48.3	(38.1, 58.6)	10.9
Childhood (7 - 11)	5.4	(2.7, 10.5)	34.4
Adolescence (12 - 17)	32.6	(22.9, 44.0)	16.6
Youth (18 - 29)	13.3	(8.1, 21.1)	24.5
Adulthood (30+)	0.4	(0.1, 2.8)	100.5
Age at which you started changing your gender expression if they remember or reported it (n = 80)			
Early childhood (under 7 years old)	3.5	(1.3, 8.7)	47.6
Childhood (7 - 11)	11.3	(5.1, 23.2)	38.2
Adolescence (12 - 17)	64.7	(50.3, 76.9)	10.6
Youth (18 - 29)	19.3	(11.2, 31.1)	25.9
Adulthood (30+)	1.2	(0.3, 5.0)	72.7
You know you can change gender identity in official documents			
Yes	69.3	(60.0, 77.2)	6.3
Parents forced you to have conversion therapy due to your sexual orientation (if parents know about their sexual orientation; n = 66)			
Yes	10.8	(4.8, 22.7)	39.6
Parents forced you to have conversion therapy due to your gender identity (if parents know about their gender; n = 67)			
Yes	9.0	(3.2, 22.9)	50.3
Physically assaulted or insulted by your parents when they learned about your gender identity (if parents know about it; n = 67)			
Yes	13.5	(6.7, 25.3)	33.5
Experienced discrimination for being a nonbinary person (2020-2021)			
Yes	15.3	(8.4, 26.1)	28.9

N=172			
VARIABLE	%	95% CI	CoV
Faced any of the following in their lifetime			
Threatened or sexually assaulted	31.1	(21.8, 42.1)	16.7
Harassed by proposing sexual intercourse in exchange for payment	27.4	(19.1, 37.7)	17.3
Forced to have sex	13.7	(8.6, 21.1)	23
Humiliated or embarrassed	49.2	(39.0, 59.5)	10.7
Sent offensive messages	46.3	(36.1, 56.7)	11.5
Touched or grabbed without consent	44.2	(34.2, 54.7)	11.9
Primary health-care provider institution			
“Seguro Popular”, “Nueva Generación (Siglo XXI)”, or the former “Instituto de Salud para el Bienestar”	18.1	(12.1, 26.3)	19.9
IMSS, ISSSTE, PEMEX, Army/Navy Hospitals	27.3	(18.9, 37.8)	17.6
Private office, clinic, or hospital	19.5	(12.5, 29.2)	21.7
Pharmacy office	28.2	(19.7, 38.6)	17.1
None?	2.8	(1.1, 7.2)	48.2
Other	4.0	(1.4, 10.8)	52.1
Medical care due to sexual orientation/gender identity			
Had not sought such care	77.9	(68.3, 85.3)	5.5
Mental health problems prevalence within the year prior to the survey			
Insomnia	63.7	(53.9, 72.4)	7.4
Stress	74.7	(65.6, 82.1)	5.6
Depression	52.7	(42.5, 62.8)	9.9
Loss or gain of appetite or weight	64.5	(54.5, 73.3)	7.5
Anguish, fear, or anxiety	65.9	(56.3, 74.4)	7
Suicide			
Suicidal thoughts	42.5	(32.6, 53.0)	12.4
Suicide attempts	25.8	(17.7, 35.9)	18.1
Reasons for suicide thoughts/attempts (if respondents had either of them; n = 68)			
Financial problems	14.6	(7.2, 27.4)	33.8
Family or relationship problems	51.0	(35.0, 66.7)	16.1
Health problems	26.2	(13.8, 44.1)	29.5
Problems at school	24.0	(12.1, 42.0)	31.6
Problems at work	7.1	(2.7, 17.2)	46.8
Problems with sexual orientation	11.6	(5.4, 23.2)	36.7
Problems with gender identity	6.3	(2.3, 16.1)	48.7
Other problems	18.2	(9.0, 33.3)	33.1

Note: Percent, 95% confidence intervals [CI], and Coefficient of Variation [CoV] are weighted population estimates