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SNAPSHOT SERIES:

INTERSEX INDIVIDUALS' LIVED EXPERIENCES

The **F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index™ (GBPI)**, piloted in 2022, aims to measure the lived experiences of LGBTQI+ individuals, including intersex people, whose sex characteristics—hormones, chromosomes, gonads and genitalia—do not fit into the normative, biological categories of "female" or "male." The 2024 GBPI survey was amended in two key ways: first, respondents were asked to measure the extent to which they share their LGBTQI identity; and second, intersex respondents were asked to share if they were subjected to nonconsensual or harmful medical practices (including medically unnecessary surgeries) as children.

Figures 1-3. Intersex Respondents - GBPI 2022 & 2024

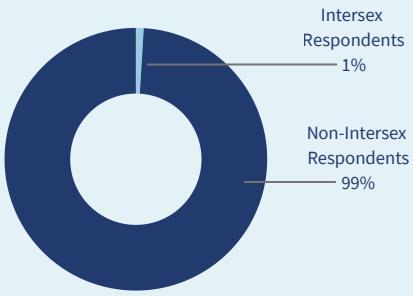

Figure 1. 2022 GBPI - Intersex and Non-Intersex Response Rates

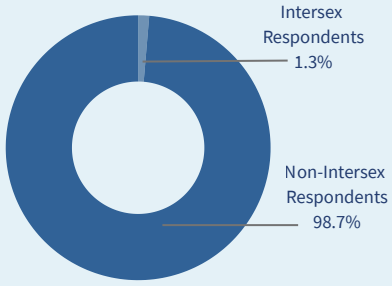

Figure 2. 2024 GBPI - Intersex and Non-Intersex Response Rates

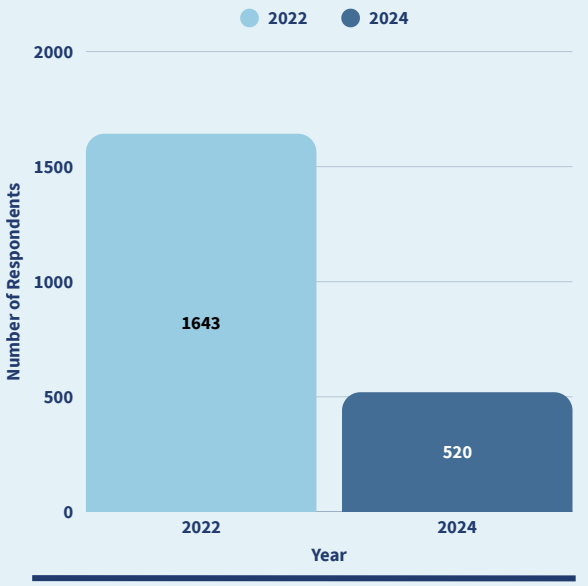

Figure 3. Intersex GBPI Respondents - 2022 & 2024

The 2024 GBPI garnered **38,811 responses** compared to 2022's **169,920**. Of the total responses in 2022, there were 1,643 intersex respondents, about 1% of total respondents in that year (see **Figures 1 & 3**). In 2024, 520 individuals identified as intersex, accounting for 1.3% of all responses (see **Figures 2 & 3**). While intersex individuals made up a greater percentage of GBPI respondents in 2024, the decrease in intersex responses from 2022 to 2024 indicates that there is a limitation to what can be learned about the intersex population and that more work is necessary to understand how to more readily access this population.

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RESPONSES RATES ON THE GBPI

The number of responses from intersex individuals showed a significant difference between 2022 and 2024. In 2022, 1,636 individuals responded to question one, asking about individual safety; 1,627 individuals responded to question two, asking about safety in gathering; 1,633 individuals responded to question three, asking about acceptance, 1,623 individuals responded to question four, asking about discrimination; 1,625 individuals responded to question five, asking about fear of police; and 1,622 individuals responded to question six, asking about violence. In 2024, those questions' response rate was 511, 510, 510, 507, 505, and 505, respectively.

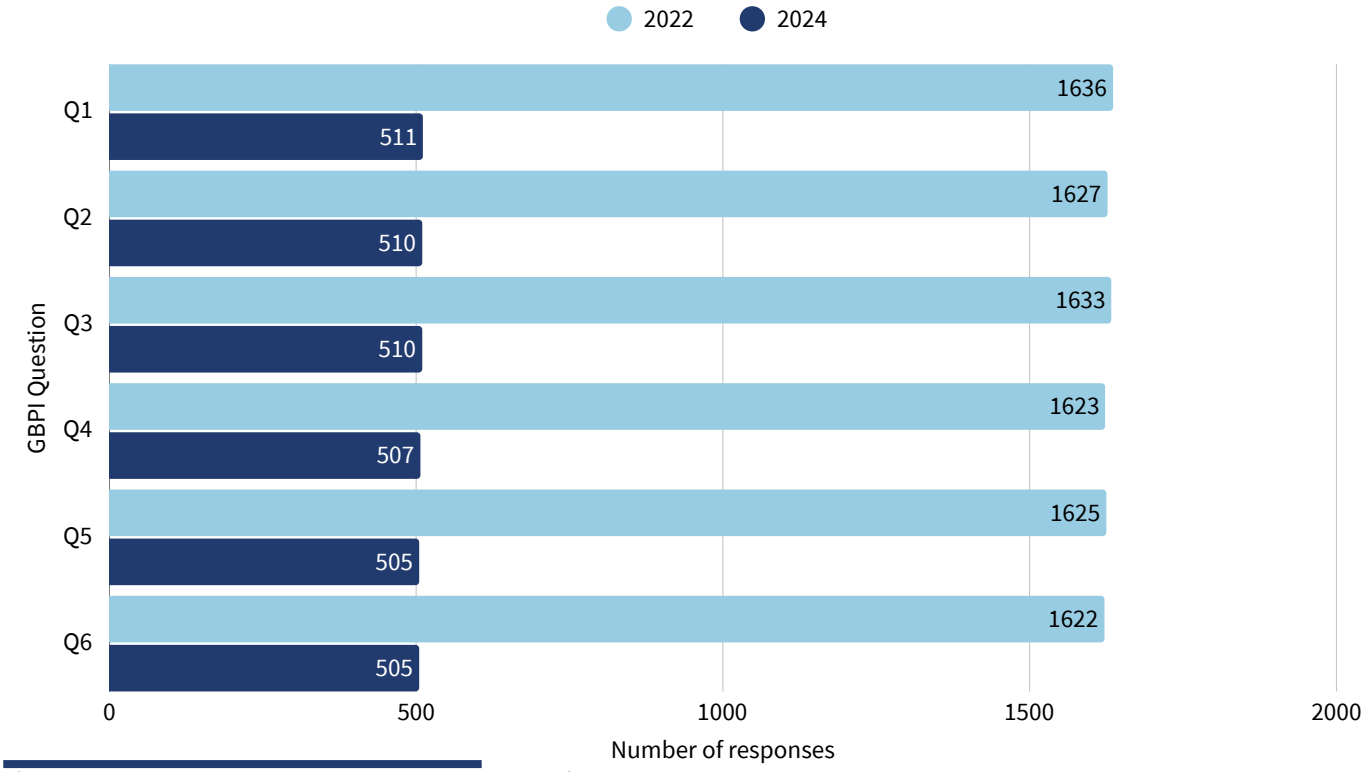

Figure 4. Intersex response rates on the GBPI by question

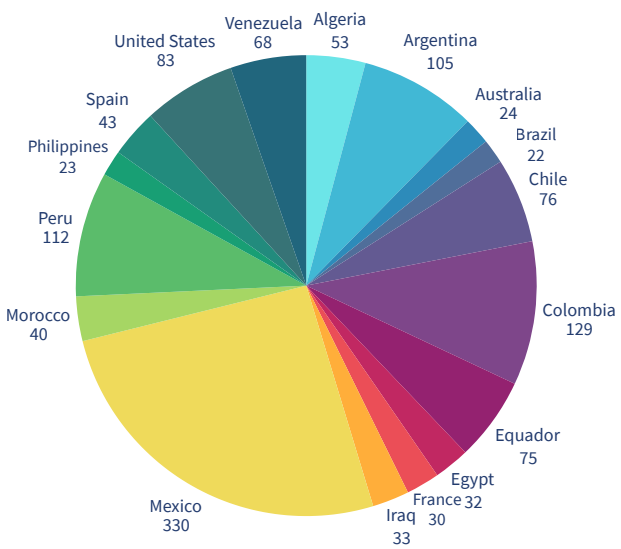

Figure 5. Countries with 20+ intersex responses on the 2022 GBPI

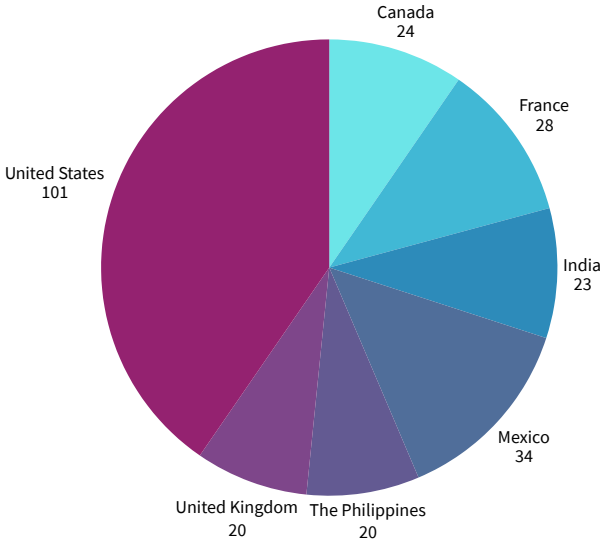

Figure 6. Countries with 20+ intersex responses on the 2024 GBPI

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GLOBAL INTERSEX RESPONSES - 2024 GBPI

Figure 7. 2024 GBPI Scores for Intersex Individuals

Figure 7, above, shows the breakdown of responses of intersex individuals on the 2024 GBPI. The six questions ask individuals to respond with their perceptions and experiences within the last year with Q1: Safety; Q2: Safety in Gathering; Q3: Acceptance; Q4: Discrimination; Q5: Fear of Police; and Q6: Violence.

As shown in **Figure 8**, below, scores **decreased** for all questions from 2022 to 2024. Though the response rate for 2024 is not as robust as it was in 2022, these data nevertheless suggest that intersex individuals feel less safe, less accepted, more fearful of violence, less able to gather publicly, and more likely to experience discrimination and violence than did their counterparts just two years earlier.

Figure 8. GBPI Score Comparison for Intersex Individuals, 2022 & 2024

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RESPONSES ON VISIBILITY

In 2024, seven countries received 20 or more responses on the GBPI from individuals who identified as intersex: Canada (24 respondents), France (27 respondents), India (23 respondents), Mexico (34 respondents), the Philippines (20 respondents), the United Kingdom (20 respondents), and the United States (101 respondents). Countries with fewer than 20 responses were not counted in this comparative analysis.

Figure 9, below, shows the distribution of intersex individuals' responses in these seven countries to the question, "Do you share with others that you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?"

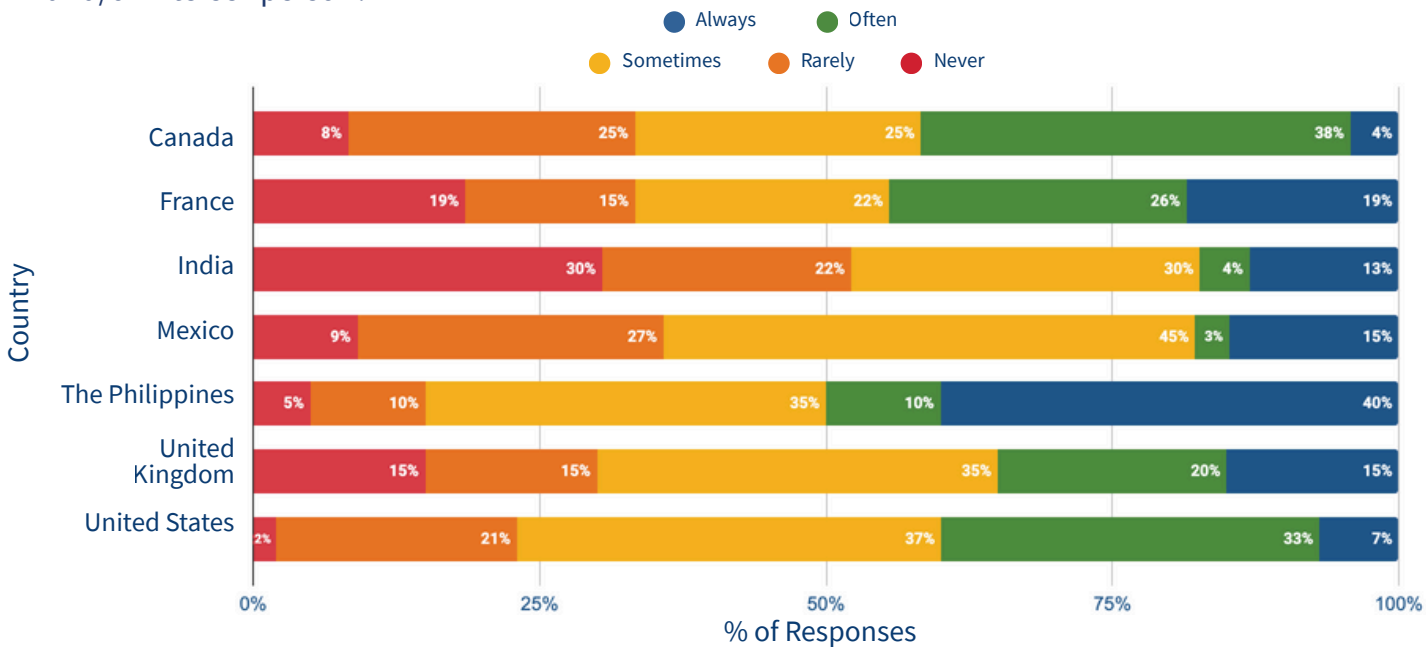

Figure 9. 2024 GBPI - Intersex Respondents' Visibility Responses

The visibility question on the 2024 GBPI survey is available to all sexualities and gender identities, not only to intersex individuals, but the subset of countries with more than 20 intersex respondents presents an interesting case for analysis. **The Philippines** has the highest proportion of respondents who answered that they "always" or "often" share their identity with others (50%). **France** and **Canada** also have a high proportion of respondents saying they "often" or "always" share their identity (44% and 42%, respectively). Meanwhile, in **Mexico**, just 18% of respondents report "often" or "always" sharing their identity with others, and in **India**, the percentage is even lower, at only 17%. Some respondents seem to feel more comfortable sharing their sexual or gender identity, but not their intersex status, as noted by a lesbian, intersex, 55+-year-old from the United States: "I am an out lesbian but I am not out as an intersex woman." Intersex individuals have more difficulty with visibility and acceptance than other sexual and gender identity minorities, as evidenced in our selection of survey comments (see below, page 6).

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RESPONSES ON NONCONSENSUAL SURGERIES

Figure 10, below, shows the distribution of intersex individuals' responses to the question, "To your knowledge, were you subjected to harmful medical practices (including medically unnecessary surgeries) as a child without your consent?"

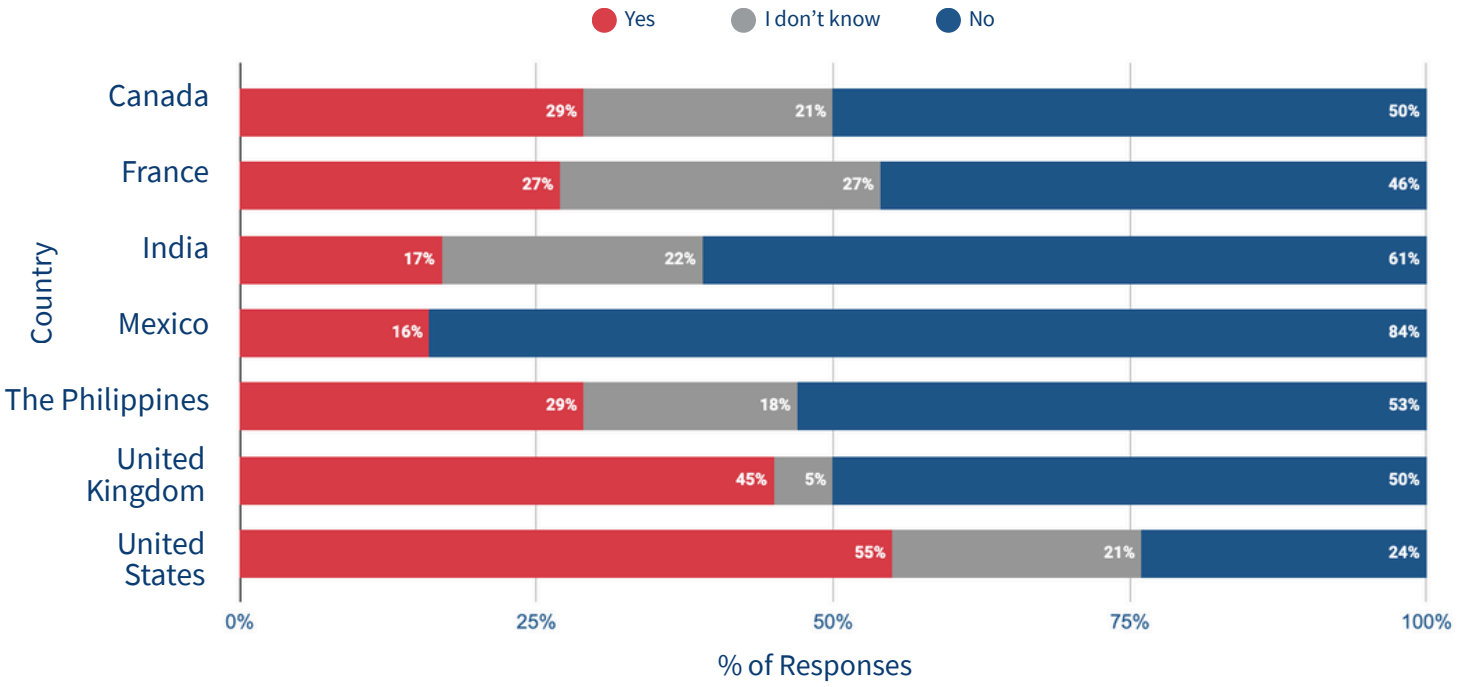

Figure 10. 2024 GBPI - Intersex Surgery Responses

The **United Kingdom** and the **United States** notably have the largest proportions of respondents indicating that they were subjected to harmful or medically unnecessary practices as a child without their consent. In the U.S., more than half of intersex respondents answered "yes" (55%), while just under half of respondents answered "yes" in the United Kingdom (45%). Many more people in the U.S. were also unsure of whether they were subjected to harmful medical practices (21%) compared to those respondents in the United Kingdom (5%).

On the other hand, 84% of intersex respondents from **Mexico** said they **had not** been subjected to nonconsensual harmful medical practices as a child. There were no intersex respondents from Mexico who said they did not know whether they had been subjected to such practices. **India** follows closely behind Mexico with 61% of intersex respondents answering "no" to the question of being subjected to nonconsensual medical interventions as a child.

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MEDICAL INTERVENTIONS ON INTERSEX MINORS

Figure 11, below, depicts whether a country or territory has enacted laws prohibiting medical interventions on intersex minors.

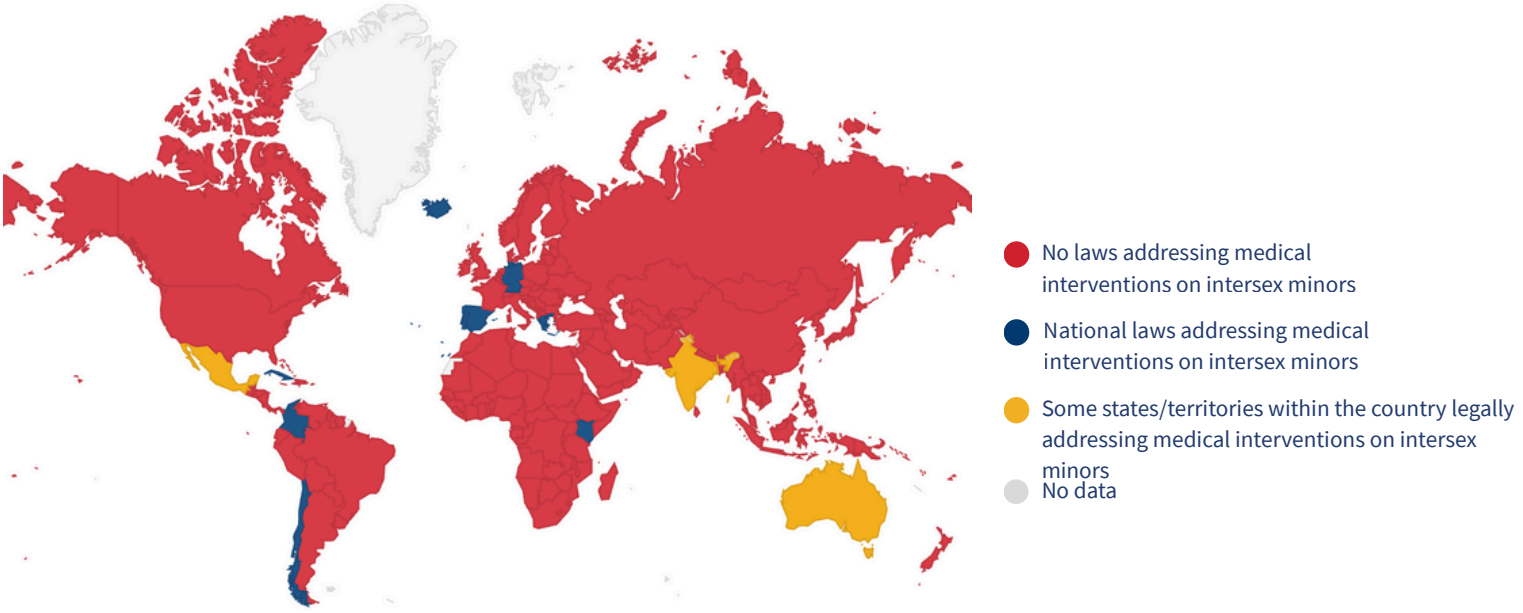

Figure 11. Laws Preventing Medical Interventions on Intersex Minors*

While some countries, such as Australia, India, [1] and Mexico [2], have had some states enact laws to protect intersex minors from nonconsensual medical procedures, **191 of 204** countries and territories currently do **not** have any laws addressing medical interventions on intersex minors. That is a staggering percentage; almost all countries tracked still have no protections for minors against nonconsensual surgeries.

In 2015, **Malta** became the **first** country to explicitly outlaw any surgical interventions on intersex minors, allowing for deferral until the individual is able to provide informed consent [3]. In subsequent years, more countries began outlawing non-lifesaving medical interventions for intersex minors, notably in South America and in Western Europe.

*Map Sources: ILGA World SOGIESC Database; Botswana Daily News; The Brazilian Intersex Association (ABRAI); The Cuban National Assembly; The News Minute; El Sol de Tampico; the 2022 U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices; and The Civil Code of Uruguay (Law No. 19580).

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GBPI COMMENTS

Selected Comments from Intersex Individuals - 2024 GBPI

Canada, Intersex, Nonbinary Woman, Bisexual, Age 36-55

> I feel reasonably safe and accepted for being bisexual. Whereas for being non-binary I'm not so safe nor accepted, and intersex is even less safe/accepted... Just last week an acquaintance was beat up after the local trans march, and when she went to the police about it they beat her even further. The violence seems most targeted at trans, non-binary and intersex folks who cannot pass, and it's been getting worse. I'm scared.

United Kingdom, Intersex, Transgender, Under 25

> I am unlikely to be able to report crimes perpetrated against me as an intersex and transgender person, especially if they are sexual violence or any sort of domestic due to my gender and sex.

United States, Nonbinary, Lesbian, Under 25

> Because I'm intersex, I've been violently sexually assaulted by an obgyn, discriminated against and denied medically necessary care by endocrinologists despite having a professional, knowledgeable demeanor and the means to afford said care. I have also had medical information withheld from me by doctors and family.

United States, Intersex, Over 55

> I always knew my gender was not in accordance to my assigned sex and thought myself trans. After transitioning, people who knew me said, 'Well that makes sense; we all thought you were gay'. At that point, I suspected I was intersex because things didn't look normal for my genitals or my secondary sex characteristics. This final revelation confirmed for me that I finally have answers after all of these years. It would have save [sic] me a lifetime of sorrow, social stigma, and violence if they had left me off the operating table.

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GBPI Methodology

The 2024 GBPI was launched on August 19, 2024 and concluded on December 19, 2024. It builds on the success of the first iteration of the survey, launched in 2022. The original six questions remained the same but were adapted to improve clarity. The survey asks basic questions about safety, acceptance, discrimination and violence (see below, **Table 1**). Two questions were added to the 2024 survey: one question about the extent to which respondents shared their LGBTQI+ status; and another about whether intersex individuals experienced nonconsensual surgical interventions. Respondents complete the survey online and select answers on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). The GBPI score is calculated by determining the average score for each of the six questions and then taking the average of those averages. Then, this score is converted into a percentage and assigned a letter grade (A-F), where 100% (A) is the most protective and 0% (F) is the least protective.

Respondents were also asked demographic questions about their country of residence, sexual orientation, and gender identity, among other topics, and had the option to skip questions and to select multiple orientations or identities. In addition to the four languages available in 2022 (Arabic, English, French, and Spanish), the 2024 GBPI was also available in Bengali, Dutch, German, Hindi, Italian, Mandarin (Simplified Chinese), Portuguese, Russia, Swahili, Thai, and Urdu. To disseminate the survey, the FMGB once again partnered with dating apps Grindr and Eden who promoted the survey on their apps. Global LGBT+ NGOs and CSOs also shared the survey, and the FMGB team shared the survey widely across social media platforms, including Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Reddit, and BlueSky.

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Table 1. 2024 GBPI Survey Questions

Question 1 (Safety): How safe do you feel living as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person in your country?
Question 2 (Safety in Gathering): How safe do you feel gathering with other lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex people in public?
Question 3 (Acceptance): How accepted do you feel as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person by your society?
Attention Check - In order to continue with this survey, please indicate that you are not a robot.
Question 4 (Discrimination): How frequently have you experienced discrimination in your day-to-day life because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?
Question 5 (Fear of Police): How fearful are you of being arrested, harassed, or blackmailed by security forces/police because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?
Question 6 (Violence): How likely are you to be a victim of violence because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?
Visibility: Do you share with others that you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?
Intersex Surgery: To your knowledge, were you subjected to harmful medical practices (including medically unnecessary surgeries) as a child without your consent?

Notes

[1] "Australia," Legal Frameworks, SOGIESC Database, ILGA World, accessed July 30, 2025, https://database.ilga.org/australia-lgbti; "India," Legal Frameworks, SOGIESC Database, ILGA World, accessed July 30, 2025, https://database.ilga.org/india-lgbti.

[2] Mariela Macay, *El Sol de Tampico* online, May 2, 2025, accessed July 30, 2025, "Tamaulipas approves the Law for the Recognition and Care of LGBTQ+ People: What does it entail?," https://oem.com.mx/elsoldetampico/local/tamaulipas-aprueba-ley-que-prohibe-terapias-de-conversion-y-protege-a-comunidad-lgbtq-23086453.

[3] "Malta," Legal Frameworks, SOGIESC Database, ILGA World, accessed July 30, 2025, https://database.ilga.org/malta-lgbti.

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