

# **Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018**

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## Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018: Highlights

- Gender-based violence—defined as violence that is committed against someone based on their gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender—encompasses a range of behaviours, not all of which meet the threshold of criminal behaviour. Five dimensions of gender-based violence are explored: unwanted sexual behaviour while in public, unwanted sexual behaviour online, unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace, sexual assault, and physical assault.
- According to the 2018 Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS), an estimated 1 million people in Canada are sexual minorities—that is, they reported their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian, bisexual or a sexual orientation that is not heterosexual—representing 4% of the population of Canada 15 years of age and older.
- In addition, approximately 75,000 people, or 0.24% of the population of Canada aged 15 and older indicated on the SSPPS that their assigned sex at birth was different from their current gender, or that they were neither male nor female—in other words, that they are transgender. Those whose assigned sex at birth aligns with their gender are cisgender.
- Excluding violence committed by an intimate partner, sexual minority Canadians were more likely to have experienced physical or sexual assault both since age 15 and in the past 12 months than heterosexual Canadians. Violence targeting sexual minority Canadians was also more likely to result in injuries than violence committed against heterosexual Canadians. In addition, sexual minority Canadians were less likely to report their physical assaults to the police.
- Sexual minority Canadians were also more likely than heterosexual Canadians to report experiencing inappropriate behaviours in public (57% versus 22%), online (37% versus 15%) and at work (44% versus 22%) in the 12 months preceding the survey.
- When it came to their experiences of inappropriate behaviours while online, sexual minority Canadians were more likely to report that they knew the person who had targeted them. They were also more likely than heterosexual Canadians to have taken measures to protect themselves from harassment online within the past 12 months (38% versus 23%).
- Transgender Canadians were more likely to have experienced violence since age 15, and also more likely to experience inappropriate behaviours in public, online and at work than cisgender Canadians.
- Sexual minority Canadians were more than twice as likely as heterosexual Canadians to have used drugs or alcohol to cope with emotional abuse or physical violence that they experienced since age 15 (24% versus 10%).
- In general, when compared with heterosexual Canadians, those who were a sexual minority were more likely to engage in binge drinking (53% versus 44%), non-medicinal cannabis use (37% versus 15%), and non-prescribed drug use (10% versus 3%) in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS.
- No statistically significant difference was observed between transgender and cisgender Canadians when it came to engaging in binge drinking and non-medicinal cannabis use in the past 12 months. However, transgender Canadians were more likely than cisgender Canadians to have used drugs or alcohol to cope with abuse or violence experienced in their lifetimes.
- Overall, sexual minority Canadians were more likely than heterosexual Canadians to report that they considered their mental health to be poor or fair (32% versus 11%). They were also more likely to have seriously contemplated suicide in their lifetimes (40% versus 15%), and to have been diagnosed with a mood or anxiety disorder (41% versus 16%).
- Similar to the experiences of sexual minority Canadians, transgender Canadians were more likely to report their mental health as poor or fair than their cisgender counterparts, and also more likely to have seriously contemplated suicide in their lifetimes. They were also more likely than cisgender Canadians to have been diagnosed with a mood or anxiety disorder.

## Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018

by Brianna Jaffray, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics

In 2018, the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS)—a large-scale nationally representative household survey—was conducted by Statistics Canada with the goal of advancing knowledge of gender-based violence in Canada.

In addition to measuring the prevalence and nature of violent victimization—defined in this survey as physical and sexual assault—the SSPPS measured the prevalence and nature of inappropriate sexual behaviours<sup>1</sup> experienced in public, online and at work that do not meet the criminal threshold. The more subtle nature of these behaviours means that they are less likely to be reported to police than more overt types of victimization, and thus are not often captured in research that uses police-reported or administrative data. While these types of behaviours are not necessarily physically or sexually violent, they can make people feel unsafe or uncomfortable in spaces that they have a right to access and can serve to reinforce negative cultural norms and stereotypes of vulnerable populations. These behaviours and the culture surrounding them can have a lasting impact on the mental and physical health and well-being of Canadians.

Measuring these behaviours is also an important contribution to the study of gender-based violence in Canada and can provide a more complete picture of the types of unwanted sexual behaviours experienced by Canadians in public and private settings. Gender-based violence includes all violence perpetrated against someone based on their gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender.

Research suggests that sexual minority (those who stated their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, or otherwise not heterosexual) people experience violence at a greater prevalence than heterosexual people (Simpson 2018; Walters et al. 2013). This has also been noted among transgender (those whose assigned sex at birth was different from their current gender) people when compared to cisgender<sup>2</sup> people (Langenderfer-Magruder et al. 2016). Furthermore, compared to the heterosexual and cisgender populations, those who are a sexual minority or transgender have been found to be more likely to report poor mental health, anxiety disorders and suicidal ideation (Bouman et al. 2017; Hatzenbuehler 2011; Cochran et al. 2003). The reasons for this vulnerability are complex and difficult to isolate, however sexual minority and transgender people are often stigmatized in society at both the individual and structural levels (Pachankis 2014).

Cultural stigmatization and its effects can be experienced in many diverse settings and can take many forms. This *Juristat* article provides, for the first time, a national analysis of the experiences of violence among transgender people in Canada, and builds on the existing body of research of the experiences of sexual minority Canadians. It will explore the unique experiences of both sexual minority and transgender Canadians, specifically with regard to the wide spectrum of behaviours that encompass gender-based violence. The measures that will be examined include the prevalence of unwanted sexual behaviours experienced in public, online and at work, as well as physical and sexual assault experienced since age 15 and in the past 12 months. Mental health indicators such as self-rated mental health, medically diagnosed mood and anxiety disorders, and suicidal ideation are also explored, in addition to health risk behaviours such as binge drinking and illicit drug use.

Sexual orientation is disaggregated—where sample size allows—into the following four categories: heterosexual, gay or lesbian, bisexual<sup>3</sup> and sexual orientations not elsewhere classified (n.e.c.), which includes all other sexual orientations not captured in the aforementioned categories. It is also further analyzed by gender where sample size allows.

While this analysis will focus on the impacts of sexual orientation and gender on experiences of victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours, it is important to recognize that there are many aspects of a person that can intersect—such as their sexual orientation, gender, race, or whether they have a disability—and impact their likelihood of experiencing victimization (Crenshaw 1994). Where possible, additional characteristics are explored in this article in order to illustrate the many aspects that may contribute to one's lived experiences of gender-based violence.

## Text box 1

### Definitions used in this analysis

**Assigned sex at birth/sex at birth:** refers to sex assigned at birth. Sex is typically assigned based on a person's reproductive system and other physical characteristics (Statistics Canada 2018a).

**Gender:** refers to the gender that a person internally feels (gender identity along the gender spectrum) and/or the gender a person publicly expresses (gender expression) in their daily life, including at work, while shopping or accessing other services, in their housing environment or in the broader community. A person's current gender may differ from the sex a person was assigned at birth (female or male) and may differ from what is indicated on their current legal documents. A person's gender may change over time (Statistics Canada 2018b).

**Woman/women:** refers to anyone who reported their gender on the 2018 Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS) as female. This includes both cisgender and transgender women.

**Man/men:** refers to anyone who reported their gender on the SSPPS as male. This includes both cisgender and transgender men.

**Gender diverse:** refers to persons whose current gender was reported on the SSPPS as not exclusively female or male. It includes persons who reported being unsure of their gender, persons who reported that they were both female and male, or neither female nor male. It also includes those who indicated on the SSPPS that their gender was two-spirit.

**Cisgender:** refers to persons who reported on the SSPPS that their sex assigned at birth is the same as their current gender (Statistics Canada 2018c).

**Transgender:** refers to persons whose sex assigned at birth was reported on the SSPPS as female and whose current gender was reported as other than female; or persons whose sex assigned at birth was reported as male and whose current gender was reported as other than male. It also includes persons who were reported as being unsure of their gender or persons who were reported as both male and female, bi-gender, or neither male nor female (Statistics Canada 2018c). When a respondent indicated on the SSPPS that their gender was two-spirit, they were also included in this category.

**Sexual minority:** refers to both cisgender and transgender persons who reported their sexual orientation on the SSPPS as homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, two-spirit, asexual or any sexual orientation that is not heterosexual.

**Heterosexual:** refers to persons who reported their sexual orientation on the SSPPS as heterosexual or straight.

**Gay or lesbian:** refers to persons who reported their sexual orientation on the SSPPS as homosexual, gay, lesbian or attracted to people of the same gender as themselves.

**Bisexual:** refers to persons who reported their sexual orientation on the SSPPS as bisexual, pansexual, omnisexual or polysexual.

**Two-spirit:** refers to a person who embodies both a masculine and feminine spirit and is used by some Indigenous people to describe their sexual, gender or spiritual identity (The Canadian Encyclopedia 2020). For this reason, and due to sample size, those who indicated that their gender was two-spirited were classified as *gender diverse* and those who indicated that their sexual orientation was two-spirit were classified as *sexual orientation not elsewhere classified (n.e.c.)*.

## Section 1: Experiences of sexual minority Canadians

According to the 2018 Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS), an estimated 1 million Canadians are sexual minorities—that is, they reported their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian, bisexual or a sexual orientation that is not heterosexual—representing 4% of the population of Canada 15 years of age and older. Slightly more than half (52%) of sexual minority people in Canada were women, while 44% were men and 3% were gender diverse.

## Text box 2

### Terminology used in reference to the sexual minority population

The Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces provided a write-in response option to the question “What is your sexual orientation?” where respondents could provide their sexual orientation if it was not already listed as a response option. The question provided three response categories for people to select from—in addition to the write-in category—heterosexual, homosexual (e.g., lesbian or gay) and bisexual.

*Gay or lesbian* will be used throughout this article in reference to those who either indicated that they were homosexual in the questionnaire, or to those who chose to write in that they were gay or lesbian.

In addition, those who provided a write-in response indicating that they were pansexual or attracted to two or more genders were combined with those who reported that they were bisexual into the *bisexual* category. Combining these categories facilitates the representation of otherwise small groups who could not be reported on independently due to sample size. For the same reason, those who reported that they were asexual, demisexual, two-spirit or any other sexual orientation not covered by the above terms, are grouped under the broad category of *sexual orientation not elsewhere classified (n.e.c.)*.

### Sexual minority Canadians more likely to be violently victimized in their lifetime than heterosexual Canadians

Past research has found that sexual minority individuals are at an increased risk and experience higher levels of victimization than their heterosexual counterparts (Conroy and Cotter 2017; Cotter and Savage 2019; Simpson 2018).

Self-reported incidents of violent victimization are an important indicator collected by the SSPPS. Physical and sexual assaults provided through police reports are useful, however, a large proportion of physical and sexual assaults go unreported for a variety of reasons (Benoit et al. 2015; Conroy and Cotter 2017; Cotter and Savage 2019). People may not feel that they will be believed by the police, they may not think the incident is significant enough to report to police, or they may have had prior negative experiences with police (Conroy and Cotter 2017; Venema 2014). These are especially true among sexual minorities, who often report that they have experienced stigmatization and discrimination in their previous interactions with police, which may affect the likelihood of them seeking help from police services when they are victimized (Nadal and Davidoff 2015). Collecting this information directly from respondents therefore provides a critical complement to official police-reported data on violent crime.

The SSPPS collected the prevalence of violent victimization (physical and sexual assault) both since age 15 and in the past 12 months. More detailed information was collected about the incidents if they were assaulted within the 12 months preceding the survey.

Excluding violence committed by an intimate partner, six in ten (59%) sexual minority Canadians had been physically or sexually assaulted since age 15, a much larger proportion than the four in ten (37%) heterosexual Canadians who reported the same.

In addition, sexual minority Canadians with a disability were more likely to report that they had been physically assaulted (55%) and sexually assaulted (46%) since age 15 than those who did not have a disability (36% and 29%, respectively). Sexual minority people who self-identified as Indigenous also experienced a higher prevalence of both types of violent victimization since age 15—73% of Indigenous sexual minorities had been physically assaulted and 65% had been sexually assaulted, compared with 45% and 37% of non-Indigenous sexual minorities, respectively (Table 1).

The difference between sexual minority and heterosexual experiences of victimization was even larger when looking at violence that occurred in the 12 months preceding the survey; 11% of sexual minority Canadians reported that they had experienced violent victimization, more than double the prevalence among heterosexual Canadians (4%) (Table 2).

In part, the considerably higher prevalence of violent victimization among sexual minority Canadians in the past 12 months may be related to the fact that, on average, Canadians who report being a sexual minority are younger, and younger people are at an increased risk of experiencing violent victimization (Conroy and Cotter 2017; Cotter and Savage 2019; Perreault 2015). However, when controlling for age, the differences in the proportions of sexual minority and heterosexual Canadians who had been violently victimized in the past 12 months remained statistically significant.

Significant differences were also observed between sexual minority and heterosexual Canadians with regard to the prevalence of sexual assault in the past 12 months. More than triple the proportion of sexual minority Canadians (7%) reported that they had been sexually assaulted than did heterosexual Canadians (2%)—a difference consistent with what was seen for lifetime prevalence (Table 2).<sup>4</sup>

There were also gender differences observed, as higher proportions of both sexual minority and heterosexual women had been sexually assaulted within the 12 months preceding the survey than their male peers. In this time, almost one in ten (9%)



sexual minority women and just under 3% of heterosexual women had been sexually assaulted, compared with 4% of sexual minority men and less than 1% of heterosexual men (Table 2).

Some of the details<sup>5</sup> of the sexual assaults also differed between sexual minority and heterosexual Canadians. For instance, the most common place that sexual minority Canadians reported for their assault was in a private residence or on private property. In contrast, the most common location reported by heterosexual Canadians was at a commercial or institutional establishment, such as a restaurant, bar, school, office building, store, shopping mall, or hospital (Table 3).

### **Sexual minority Canadians who have been assaulted more likely to sustain physical injuries as a result**

While the vast majority (94%) of sexual assaults reported by heterosexual Canadians did not result in any injuries, the same was true for just 77% of sexual minority Canadians. Among physical assaults, three-quarters (75%) of heterosexual people reported that they were not injured as a result of the assault, compared to 59% of sexual minority people (Table 3).

Though whether or not the assaults were motivated by hatred of diverse sexual orientations cannot be determined from the SSPPS data, it is worth noting that previous studies have found that incidents of violence motivated by this type of hatred are more likely to be violent and result in injuries than those committed against heterosexual individuals (Simpson 2018).

### **Sexual minority Canadians less likely to report physical assault to police**

Some research suggests that those who are a sexual minority tend to have a more negative perception of the police than heterosexual individuals, even when controlling for other variables such as race and income (Owen et al. 2018). In addition, they may be less likely to seek help from police due to prior negative experiences such as discrimination or stigmatization (Nadal and Davidoff 2015). This negative perception can lead to hesitancy or fear when faced with the prospect of interacting with the police, potentially reducing the likelihood of sexual minorities reporting their experiences of assault.

An estimated 70,000 sexual minority Canadians—or 6% of all sexual minority Canadians aged 15 and older—said that they had been physically assaulted in the 12 months prior to the SSPPS (Table 2). Of these reports, 19% of physical assaults came to the attention of the police. Meanwhile, almost one-third (30%) of heterosexual individuals who were physically assaulted said that the incident was brought to the attention of the police (Table 3).

Due to small sample size, details on reporting sexual assault to the police is not available for sexual minority Canadians. In addition, further breakdown by sexual orientation and gender is not available for physical assault details.

### **Bisexual women four times more likely than heterosexual women to have been victimized in the 12 months before survey**

Bisexual Canadians were much more likely than heterosexual Canadians to have experienced physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives. Almost two-thirds (62%) of bisexual people reported that they had been victimized since age 15, compared to just over one-third (37%) of those who were heterosexual. Gay and lesbian Canadians were also more likely to experience violent victimization than their heterosexual counterparts, with 53% reporting that they had been victimized since age 15. Prevalence of lifetime victimization was significantly higher for gay, lesbian and bisexual men and women, than it was among heterosexual men and women (Table 4).

Bisexual women were the most likely to have experienced violent victimization within the past year, with one in six (15%) reporting that they were victimized within the previous 12 months. This was more than three times higher than the proportion of heterosexual women (4%) who reported the same. Furthermore, bisexual women were almost four times more likely than heterosexual women to have been sexually assaulted in the past year (11% versus 3%), and four times more likely to be physically assaulted in the past year (8% versus 2%).

### **Bisexual women most likely to report experiencing unwanted sexual behaviours in public**

The SSPPS collected information on a number of different types of unwanted behaviours that may not necessarily meet the criminal threshold, but nonetheless can make Canadians feel unsafe or uncomfortable in public.<sup>6</sup> These types of behaviours can have long-lasting negative impacts on the physical and mental health and well-being of those who experience them. Sexual minority Canadians are more exposed to these types of behaviours and being a sexual minority has been associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing unwanted behaviours in public (Cotter and Savage 2019). In addition, sexual minority Canadians may be targets of hate crimes due to their sexual orientation (Simpson 2018).

According to the SSPPS, sexual minority Canadians were more than twice as likely as heterosexual Canadians to report experiencing some form of inappropriate behaviour in public in the 12 months preceding the survey (57% versus 22%). Among sexual minority women, two-thirds (69%) reported that they had experienced an inappropriate behaviour in public,

more than twice the proportion (31%) of heterosexual women who reported the same. The proportions were lower among men, though the trend was similar—41% of sexual minority men and 12% of heterosexual men reported experiencing an inappropriate behaviour in public in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS (Table 5).

Sexual minority Canadians with a disability (67%) were also more likely to have experienced an inappropriate behaviour in public during this time frame than those who did not have a disability (44%) (Table 1).

While most sexual minority Canadians experienced inappropriate sexual behaviours in public in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS, there were notable differences between the different genders and groups captured under the sexual minority umbrella. In particular, more than three-quarters (76%) of bisexual women reported that they had experienced an inappropriate behaviour in public, the highest proportion of all sexual minority groups and more than twice the proportion of heterosexual women (31%) (Table 6).

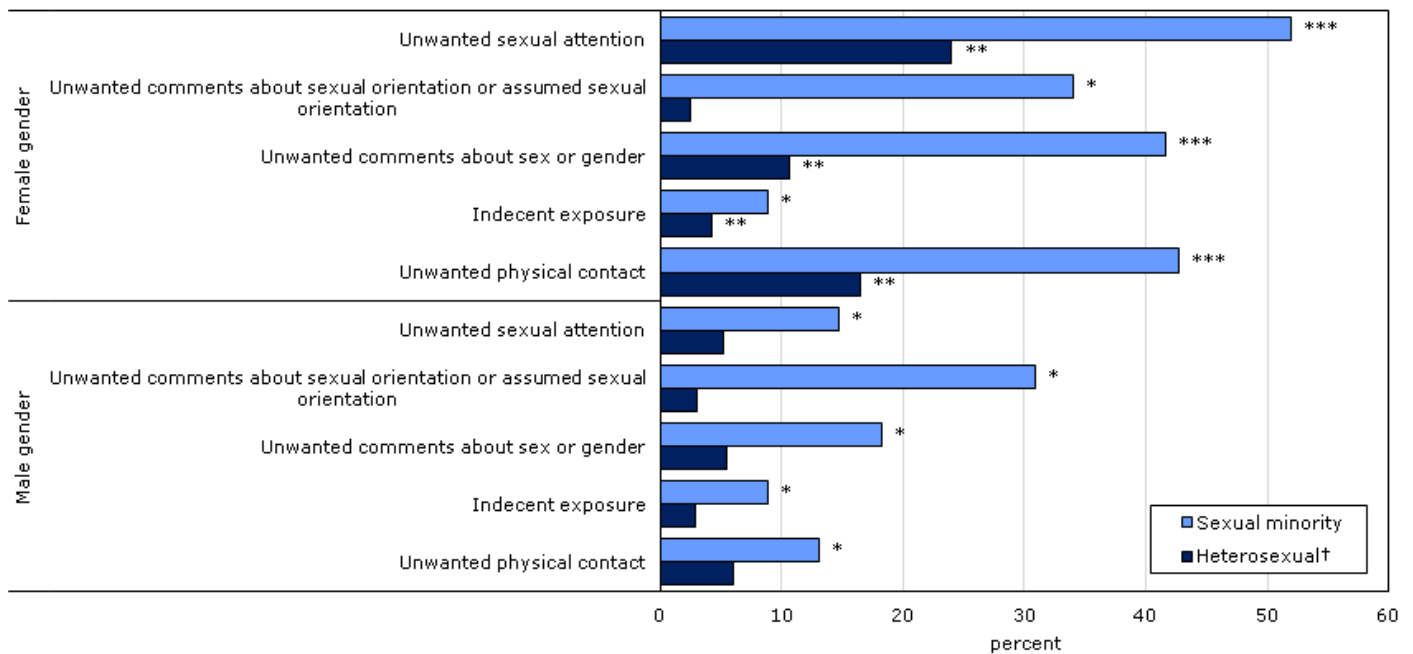
### One-third of sexual minority Canadians experienced unwanted comments about their sexual orientation in public

Of the five types of unwanted behaviours experienced in public that were measured by the SSPPS,<sup>7</sup> the most common type of behaviour experienced by both sexual minority and heterosexual Canadians was unwanted sexual attention, such as comments, gestures, body language, whistles, or calls. This was reported by 36% of sexual minority and 15% of heterosexual Canadians. When broken down by gender, this remained the most common type of behaviour experienced by sexual minority women (52%) and heterosexual women (24%).

Among heterosexual men, the most common type of unwanted behaviour experienced in public was unwanted physical contact (6%). For sexual minority men, the most common type of behaviour experienced in public was unwanted comments about their sexual orientation or assumed sexual orientation (31%). Although this was the most common behaviour experienced by sexual minority men, it was also experienced by one-third (34%) of sexual minority women (Chart 1, Table 5).

**Chart 1**  
Types of inappropriate behaviours experienced in public, by sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018

Gender and type of behaviour



\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)  
 \*\* significantly different from estimate for male gender only (p < 0.05)  
 \*\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05) and estimate for male gender (p < 0.05)  
 † reference category

**Note:** Sexual minority includes those who reported that they were gay or lesbian, bisexual or another sexual orientation that is not heterosexual.  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

### Sexual minority Canadians twice as likely to experience inappropriate behaviours online

The anonymous nature of the Internet and online spaces can often facilitate threatening or inappropriate behaviour, as perpetrators do not experience the same risk of identification as they would in a public space or in the physical presence of



their target (Barlett 2016). Similar to the manner in which inappropriate behaviours experienced in public was collected, the SSPPS collected information on five different types of behaviours.<sup>8</sup> that could be experienced while online. On the whole, the proportion of sexual minority Canadians who experienced an inappropriate behaviour while online in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS was more than twice that of heterosexual Canadians (37% versus 15%). While regular Internet use is generally higher among young people, and Canadians who reported that they were a sexual minority are a younger population, this difference remained statistically significant when controlling for age.

### **Almost half of bisexual women experienced an inappropriate behaviour while online in the past 12 months**

When examined further by gender, four in ten (40%) sexual minority women reported that they had experienced unwanted behaviours while online, more than twice the proportion of heterosexual women (18%). Similarly, sexual minority men were also more likely to experience an unwanted behaviour while online than their heterosexual counterparts, with 32% reporting an experience compared to 13% of heterosexual men (Table 5). Overall, sexual minority Canadians were more likely than heterosexual Canadians to report that they knew the person<sup>9</sup> who had targeted them (42% versus 33%).

Of all sexual minority Canadians, those who reported that they were bisexual were the most likely to experience an unwanted behaviour while online. An estimated 179,000 bisexual women reported that they had experienced an unwanted behaviour online in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS, representing half (50%) of all bisexual women aged 15 and older. Among bisexual men, the same was true for roughly 66,000 individuals, or 40% of all bisexual men aged 15 and older (Table 6).

Like inappropriate behaviours experienced in public, sexual minority Canadians with a disability were more likely than those without a disability to have experienced an inappropriate behaviour while online (46% versus 25%). In addition, a larger proportion of Indigenous sexual minorities (62%) experienced inappropriate behaviours online than non-Indigenous sexual minorities (35%) (Table 1).

### **Most common type of unwanted behaviour experienced online differs between sexual minority and heterosexual Canadians**

Of those who experienced unwanted behaviours online, the most common type differed between those who were a sexual minority and those who were heterosexual. Among sexual minority individuals, the most common type of behaviour was being sent unwanted sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages, experienced by 20% of sexual minority men and 28% of sexual minority women. Among heterosexual individuals, the most common type of behaviour was receiving threatening or aggressive emails or messages directed at them personally, reported by 7% of heterosexual men and 10% of heterosexual women (Table 5).

### **Sexual minority women most likely to take measures to protect themselves online**

As with public spaces, people should have the right to feel safe in the online spaces that they choose to visit. However, many people do not feel that they can spend time online without taking measures to protect themselves. The SSPPS asked about three different measures that could be taken by Canadians to protect themselves while online: changing their username or blocking others, limiting Internet or social media use and shutting down or deleting an account. This information was only collected for those who reported that they had used the internet in the past 12 months.

Although not a causal relationship, just as sexual minority Canadians were more likely to experience inappropriate behaviours online, they were also more likely than heterosexual Canadians to take measures to protect themselves from harassment online within the past 12 months (38% versus 23%).

Sexual minority women were the most likely to take protective or avoidance measures, with 44% reporting that they had taken at least one measure. Conversely, heterosexual men were the least likely to have taken any protective measures, with just 18% reporting having done so in the past 12 months.

The most common type of protective measure taken by both sexual minority men and women was changing their username or blocking others because of harassment (23% and 34%, respectively). This was, however, different from both heterosexual men and women for whom the most common type of protective measure taken was limiting their Internet use or social media participation for protection (12% and 17%, respectively) (Table 5).

### **Sexual minority Canadians twice as likely to experience unwanted sexual behaviour at work**

According to the SSPPS, seven in ten (70%) Canadians worked at a job or business within the past year,<sup>10</sup> and according to the Labour Force Survey, in 2018, Canadians spent an average of 36.6 hours per week at work (Statistics Canada 2020)—a place where they should feel safe and free from harassment. However, many individuals still face inappropriate and unwanted behaviours in their workplace. Harassment at work can have numerous consequences on the mental health and

well-being of Canadians, including decreased productivity and motivation, increased absenteeism, increased risk of depression and other negative health effects (Hango and Moyser 2018).

Overall, 44% of sexual minority individuals who had worked at some point in the past 12 months reported that they had experienced inappropriate behaviours at work during this time frame.<sup>11</sup> This was twice the proportion of heterosexual people (22%) who reported the same.

Among sexual minorities, a higher proportion of women (49%) experienced these behaviours than men (35%). The same was true for heterosexual people—28% of heterosexual women and 16% of heterosexual men reported experiencing at least one type of inappropriate behaviour at work (Table 7).

Inappropriate sexual jokes were the most common behaviour experienced by both sexual minority men (19%) and women (33%). More than one-quarter of sexual minority women reported having experienced unwanted physical contact (28%), unwanted sexual attention (27%) and suggestions that they do not act like a woman is supposed to act (26%). For sexual minority men, a large proportion of whom also experienced unwanted sexual attention (15%), the third most common behaviour experienced was suggestions that they do not act like a man is supposed to act, reported by 12% of these men.

### **Sexual minority Canadians more likely to consider their mental health as poor or fair**

Data from the SSPPS show that a large proportion of sexual minority Canadians experience gender-based violence in their day-to-day lives, through inappropriate sexual behaviours in public, online and at work, as well as more overtly violent behaviours such as physical and sexual assault. These behaviours can have profound effects on the mental health and well-being of those who experience them.

In previous studies, sexual minority Canadians have been identified as being at a higher risk of negative mental health outcomes (Poštuvan 2019) and as more likely to engage in alcohol and drug use (Kann et al. 2011) than their heterosexual counterparts. In addition, they are less likely to seek medical care, possibly due to concerns about potential mistreatment (Mayer et al. 2008). Many of these studies focus on the experiences of sexual minority youth and students, rather than the entire population, and the information collected on the SSPPS fills an important data gap regarding the mental health and behaviours of sexual minority Canadians of all ages.<sup>12</sup>

When asked to self-rate their mental health, one-third (32%) of all sexual minority Canadians aged 15 and older stated that their mental health was poor or fair. More specifically, four in ten (41%) bisexual Canadians and one in five (20%) gay or lesbian Canadians reported poor or fair mental health. Comparatively, poor or fair mental health was reported by one in ten (11%) heterosexual Canadians (Table 8).

Canadians who reported that they were a sexual minority were generally younger than their heterosexual counterparts, and it is well-established that younger people are more likely to report poor mental health, and engage in binge drinking and drug use. When controlling for age, the differences observed between sexual minority and heterosexual people remained statistically significant for self-reported mental health, prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders, suicidal ideation, engaging in binge drinking, non-medicinal cannabis use and illicit drug use.

### **Four in ten sexual minority Canadians have a diagnosed mood or anxiety disorder**

One component of overall mental health is the presence or absence of mental health disorders. Mood<sup>13</sup> and anxiety<sup>14</sup> disorders are the most common mental health conditions affecting adults in Canada. Self-reported diagnoses of these disorders have increased over the past 15 years, which may reflect better detection, diagnosis and treatment by health care professionals (Mental Health Commission of Canada 2019).

Just over four in ten (41%) sexual minority Canadians reported that they had been diagnosed<sup>15</sup> with a mood or anxiety disorder, almost triple the 16% of heterosexual Canadians who reported a mood or anxiety disorder diagnosis. Among sexual minorities, more than half (51%) of bisexual Canadians reported they had been diagnosed with a mood or anxiety disorder. Meanwhile, the same was reported by one-third (30%) of gay or lesbian Canadians, and 41% of those who were a sexual minority not elsewhere classified (Table 8).

### **Sexual minority Canadians more likely to have seriously contemplated suicide**

While 15% of heterosexual Canadians reported that they had seriously contemplated suicide at some point in their lives, 40% of sexual minority Canadians—almost triple the proportion—reported the same. Again, gay or lesbian, and bisexual people, as well as those who reported a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified, were much more likely than heterosexual Canadians to report that they had contemplated suicide (Table 8).

## Binge drinking more common among sexual minority Canadians

Compared to heterosexual Canadians, gay or lesbian and bisexual Canadians were more likely to have engaged in health risk behaviours such as binge drinking and drug use in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS. While 44% of heterosexual Canadians reported that they had engaged in binge drinking<sup>16</sup> on at least one occasion in the past 12 months, the same was true for more than half of bisexual (55%) and gay or lesbian (53%) Canadians (Table 9).

## Non-prescribed drug use more than five times higher among bisexual Canadians

Drug use was also higher among gay or lesbian and bisexual Canadians than it was among heterosexual Canadians, for both non-medicinal cannabis and other non-prescribed drugs.<sup>17</sup> One in seven (15%) heterosexual Canadians reported that they had used non-medicinal cannabis in the 12 months prior to the survey, while the same was true for three in ten (29%) gay or lesbian Canadians and almost half (46%) of bisexual Canadians, proportions two and three times higher, respectively. Gay or lesbian Canadians (7%) were more than twice as likely as heterosexual Canadians (3%) to report having used other non-prescribed drugs such as magic mushrooms, cocaine or heroin in the past year (Table 9). An even larger proportion of bisexual Canadians reported having used non-prescribed drugs in the past 12 months, at 14%—a proportion almost five times higher than heterosexual Canadians.

## Sexual minority Canadians are more likely to use alcohol or drugs to cope with their experiences of abuse or violence

Research suggests that poor mental health, binge drinking and illicit drug use are associated with an increased risk of violent victimization (Cotter and Savage 2019; Perreault 2015). This association could be a reflection of alcohol or drug use as a risk factor, but it could also reflect substance use as a coping mechanism following violent victimization. The SSPPS attempted to address this data gap by specifically asking those who had been victimized if they had used drugs or alcohol to cope with abuse or violence that occurred in their lifetimes or within the past 12 months.

Among heterosexual Canadians who had experienced abuse or violence in their lifetimes, 10% reported that they had used alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism for these experiences. Among bisexual Canadians the proportion was three times higher, with almost one-third (29%) reporting that they had used drugs or alcohol to cope with their lifetime experiences of abuse or violence. Gay or lesbian Canadians were also more likely to report having used alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism—almost one in five (18%) had used alcohol or drugs to cope with their lifetime experiences of abuse or violence, almost twice the proportion of heterosexual Canadians (10%) (Table 9). The differences between gay or lesbian and heterosexual Canadians, as well as between bisexual and heterosexual Canadians remained statistically significant when controlling for age.

## Section 2: Experiences of transgender Canadians

Accurately identifying the size of the transgender population can be complex. Because of the very personal nature of gender identity—and the fear of bias or discrimination on the basis of gender—people can experience discomfort and hesitation when asked their gender directly. In addition, gender has been historically presented as a dichotomy; a person could either be male or female. Research on the experiences of transgender people is still emerging as new data sources with information on both sex at birth and gender continue to become available.

Whether or not a person is cisgender or transgender cannot be determined from their current gender alone. The term *cisgender* refers to a person whose current gender aligns with their assigned sex at birth. The term *transgender* refers to a person whose gender is different from their assigned sex at birth, which includes: men whose sex at birth was assigned female, and women whose sex at birth was assigned male. In this analysis, the term transgender also includes those who are gender diverse—that is, their current gender is neither male nor female.

In this article, while most analysis for the transgender population cannot be disaggregated by gender or sexual orientation due to the small sample size, the analysis of the experiences of the transgender population as a whole is nevertheless an important contribution to furthering research on gender-based violence.

Due to this small sample size, precise estimates for the transgender population and their experiences are not provided in this article. It is strongly recommended that interested parties refer to the confidence intervals provided in the tables to gain a more precise understanding of the experiences of transgender Canadians. For the quality of estimates, the lower and upper bounds of the confidence intervals are presented. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: If the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

### Text box 3 Identifying the transgender and cisgender populations

The Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces was the first large-scale survey conducted by Statistics Canada that used the new two-step approach to collect information on the sex at birth and gender of respondents. It was also the first Statistics Canada survey to provide a third write-in category for respondents to indicate a gender other than male or female. The term *sex* refers to sex assigned at birth, which is typically assigned based on a person's reproductive system and other physical characteristics. The term *gender* refers to the gender that a person internally feels (gender identity along the gender spectrum) and/or the gender a person publicly expresses (gender expression) in their daily life, including at work, while shopping or accessing other services, in their housing environment or in the broader community (Statistics Canada 2018b).

The question “What was your sex at birth?” provided help text indicating that the term *sex* refers to sex assigned at birth, and included male and female answer categories. The next question, “What is your gender?” also contained help text, this time explaining that the term *gender* refers to current gender, which may be different from sex assigned at birth and may be different from what is indicated on legal documents. In contrast to the question on sex at birth, the question on gender provided a space for respondents to write-in their gender if male and female categories did not apply to them.

Together, the answers to these two questions are used to derive the transgender and cisgender populations. In this article, the term *cisgender* is used to refer to those whose gender corresponds with the sex that they were assigned at birth, while the term *transgender* is used to refer to those whose sex assigned at birth does not align with their gender, and those who are gender diverse.<sup>18</sup> Being transgender does not imply any particular sexual orientation, and cisgender and transgender people can identify as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, or any other sexual orientation (The Human Rights Campaign 2019).

In this article, *cisgender* will be used to refer to:

- Female sex at birth; female gender
- Male sex at birth; male gender

In this article, *transgender* will be used to refer to:

- Female sex at birth; male gender (i.e. transgender man or trans man)
- Male sex at birth; female gender (i.e. transgender woman or trans woman)
- Either male or female sex at birth; gender neither male nor female (i.e. gender diverse)

### Demographic information about the transgender population

According to the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS), approximately 75,000 Canadians are transgender, representing 0.24% of the Canadian population aged 15 and older. Much of the existing research on transgender people includes them with sexual minorities under the LGBTQ2+ umbrella; however, it is important to recognize that the gender identity of transgender people is distinct from their sexual orientation. While many transgender people are also a sexual minority (James et al. 2016), a transgender person faces a unique set of gender-based challenges in their day-to-day lives. Current society and its institutions often fail to accommodate people who identify outside the binary gender system, or who do not conform to society's expectations for a particular gender—for example, male and female public washrooms, and receiving correctly gendered government-issued identification—and there are still many misconceptions surrounding transgender people and gender diversity.

### Transgender Canadians more likely than cisgender Canadians to have experienced violence since age 15

Previous studies conducted in the United States have found that transgender people are at a much higher risk of discrimination and violent victimization—in particular, sexual assault—than their cisgender counterparts (Griner et al. 2017; Stotzer 2009). This aligns with what was observed in the SSPPS, where a higher proportion of transgender Canadians reported that they had experienced physical or sexual assault in their lifetimes than cisgender Canadians (Table 10).<sup>19</sup> The difference remained significant when controlling for age.

It should be noted that due to sample size, analysis of physical and sexual assaults experienced by transgender Canadians within the past 12 months is not possible. Consequently, incident details such as location, the number and sex of the perpetrator(s), whether the victim sustained injuries, and whether the incident was reported to the police are not available for this population.

## **Transgender Canadians more likely than cisgender Canadians to experience unwanted behaviours in public and online**

As noted, American research has shown that transgender people are particularly at risk of discrimination and violent victimization (Griner et al. 2017; Stotzer 2009). Findings from the SSPPS support and expand on previous research by incorporating self-reporting on unwanted behaviours that do not meet the criminal threshold but that still serve to reinforce the vulnerability and marginalization of the transgender population.

A larger proportion of transgender Canadians than cisgender Canadians reported that they had experienced an unwanted sexual behaviour while in public in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS (Table 11). In particular, transgender Canadians were more likely to be the target of unwanted comments about sex, gender, sexual orientation or assumed sexual orientation, and also unwanted sexual attention, than their cisgender counterparts (Table 11).

Like unwanted behaviours experienced in public, transgender Canadians were also much more likely than cisgender Canadians to experience unwanted behaviours while online.<sup>20</sup> Those who have experienced unwanted or inappropriate behaviours while online may choose to take protective or avoidance measures to prevent future incidents of harassment. The protective measure taken may depend on the perceived severity of the initial incident, but could include changing their username or blocking others, limiting their Internet or social media use, or shutting down or deleting an online account. Many transgender Canadians reported that they had taken measures to protect themselves from harassment online in the 12 months preceding the SSPPS. Compared to cisgender people, those who are transgender were more likely to change their username or block others as a result of harassment they had experienced online (Table 11).

## **Transgender Canadians much more likely than cisgender Canadians to experience unwanted behaviours at work**

There are many barriers to employment faced by transgender people, including discrimination during all stages of the employment process. In fact, previous studies conducted in the United States have found that almost half of transgender respondents had been fired, not hired or denied a promotion, and over a quarter had lost a job due to their transgender status (Grant et al. 2011). These forms of discrimination, in addition to less overt forms of discrimination such as targeted harassment or sexualized behaviour, can create an environment where transgender people feel unsafe or unwelcome in their workplace.

According to the SSPPS, a significantly larger proportion of transgender Canadians experienced an unwanted or inappropriate behaviour at work in the past 12 months than cisgender Canadians. This difference was driven by a high prevalence of multiple types of behaviours, rather than by a single behaviour. Notably, transgender Canadians were more likely to experience unwanted physical contact and suggestions that they do not act like a man or woman is supposed to act than cisgender Canadians while at work (Table 12).

## **Transgender Canadians more likely to report negative self-rated mental health**

According to existing research, transgender Canadians are more likely to report poor mental health (Veale 2017) than their cisgender counterparts. Like sexual minority Canadians, they are also less likely to seek medical care—including mental health care—over concerns of mistreatment or discrimination (Poteat et al. 2013). The SSPPS complements existing research on the mental health of transgender youth by examining the experiences of transgender Canadians of all ages including youth aged 15 and older, adults and seniors.<sup>21</sup>

While one in ten cisgender Canadians considered their mental health to be poor or fair, this was reported by a much higher proportion of transgender Canadians (Table 13).

According to results from the SSPPS, on the whole, like sexual minorities (relative to their heterosexual counterparts), Canadians who reported that they were transgender tend to be younger than their cisgender counterparts. Although being younger may contribute to the likelihood of reporting poor mental health, mood and anxiety disorders, and suicidal thoughts, the differences found between the experiences of transgender and cisgender Canadians remained statistically significant when controlling for age.

## **Transgender Canadians more likely than cisgender Canadians to have a diagnosed mood or anxiety disorder, and to have seriously contemplated suicide**

According to the SSPPS, transgender Canadians were much more likely than cisgender Canadians to have a diagnosed mood or anxiety disorder such as depression, bipolar disorder, a phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder or a panic disorder.<sup>22</sup> Transgender Canadians were also more likely than cisgender Canadians to have seriously contemplated suicide in their lifetimes (Table 13).



Transgender and cisgender Canadians were equally likely to have reported binge drinking, and also equally likely to have used non-medicinal cannabis, in the 12 months preceding the survey (Table 14).

Due to small counts, reliable data on non-prescribed drug use is not available for transgender Canadians.

### **Transgender Canadians more likely than cisgender Canadians to use alcohol or drugs to cope with their experiences of abuse or violence**

Poor mental health, binge drinking and illicit drug use is associated with an increased risk of violent victimization (Cotter and Savage 2019; Perreault 2015). As mentioned previously, this association could reflect alcohol or drug use as a risk factor, but could also reflect the use of alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism following an experience of violent victimization. The SSPPS attempted to address this data gap by asking those who had been victimized whether they had used drugs or alcohol to cope with abuse or violence that occurred in their lifetime or within the past 12 months.

Results from the SSPPS support this previous research. Transgender Canadians who had experienced abuse or violence in their lifetimes were much more likely than their cisgender counterparts to have used drugs or alcohol to cope with these experiences (Table 14). When controlling for age, this difference remained statistically significant.

## **Summary**

In 2018, the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS) became the first large-scale, nationally representative Statistics Canada survey to use the two-step approach to collect the sex and gender of the respondent, and to debut a new method of collecting write-in information on sexual orientation. These approaches allow for more detailed analysis of gender-based violence among the sexual minority and transgender populations, and provide national data on the transgender population in Canada for the first time.

According to the SSPPS, sexual minorities—or those whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual—account for 4% of the population of Canada aged 15 and older. Overall, society is continuing to become more aware of the diversity of sexual orientations that exist and are becoming more accepting of sexual minority people. This idea is supported by a recent article based on data from the SSPPS that found that most Canadians support equal adoption rights for same-sex and opposite sex couples (Savage and Cotter 2019). However, sexual minority Canadians are more likely than heterosexual Canadians to be physically and sexually assaulted, and more likely to sustain injuries as a result. Even though they face higher rates of physical assault, sexual minority Canadians were less likely to report these physical assaults to the police. These results show that police services should continue to encourage reporting of victimization by sexual minority community, both in order to facilitate accurate reporting and to allow for the continued provision of services to this population.

Sexual minority Canadians were also more likely to be the target of inappropriate behaviours in public, online and at work when compared to their heterosexual counterparts. In particular, bisexual women were consistently more likely to be the target of unwanted behaviours, and these behaviours were more likely to be sexual in nature.

Like sexual minority Canadians, transgender Canadians also face a higher likelihood of being violently victimized in their lifetimes. They were also more likely to experience inappropriate sexual behaviours in public, online and at work than their cisgender counterparts. Though the perceptions surrounding transgender Canadians also generally show acceptance (Savage and Cotter 2019), results from the SSPPS demonstrate that transgender people are still much more likely to be the target of abuse and violence, and that they face a number of unique challenges in their day-to-day lives.

Sexual minority and transgender Canadians are more likely to consider their mental health poor or fair, an indication that more preventative strategies, mental health supports and services should be put in place for these groups. Both sexual minority and transgender Canadians were more likely to report having seriously considered suicide than their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts.

When it came to health risk behaviours, sexual minority Canadians were more likely to engage in binge drinking, non-medicinal cannabis use, and non-prescribed drug use than heterosexual Canadians. They were also more likely to have used drugs or alcohol to cope with abuse or violence that occurred in their lifetimes and in the 12 months preceding the survey. Binge drinking and non-medicinal cannabis use among transgender Canadians was not significantly different than what was observed for cisgender Canadians. However, transgender Canadians were more likely than cisgender Canadians to have used drugs or alcohol to cope with abuse or violence that happened in their lifetimes.

## **Survey description**

In 2018, Statistics Canada conducted the first cycle of the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS). The purpose of the survey is to collect information on Canadians' experiences in public, at work, online, and in their intimate partner relationships.



The target population for the SSPPS is the Canadian population aged 15 and over, living in the provinces and territories. Canadians residing in institutions are not included. Once a household was contacted, an individual 15 years or older was randomly selected to respond to the survey.

In the provinces, data collection took place from April to December 2018 inclusively and responses were obtained by self-administered online questionnaire or by interviewer-administered telephone questionnaire (CATI). In the territories, data collection took place from July to December 2018 (inclusive), and responses were obtained by self-administered questionnaire or by interviewer-administered personal interviews (CAPI). Respondents were able to respond in the official language of their choice.

The total sample size was 45,893 respondents. The overall response rate was 44%. Non-respondents included people who refused to participate, could not be reached, or could not speak English or French. Respondents in the sample were weighted so that their responses represent the non-institutionalized Canadian population aged 15 and older.

## Data limitations

As with any household survey, there are some data limitations. The results are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling errors. Somewhat different results might have been obtained if the entire population had been surveyed.

For the quality of estimates, the lower and upper bounds of the confidence intervals are presented. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: If the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

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## Notes

1. The term *inappropriate* was used on the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces questionnaire and will be used interchangeably with the term *unwanted* throughout this article.

2. Includes those whose sex at birth was the same as their current gender.
3. The bisexual answer category includes those who reported their sexual orientation as pansexual, omnisexual or polysexual.
4. Lifetime prevalence of violent victimization, physical and/or sexual assault includes any incidents experienced since the age of 15.
5. Details were collected for the incident that the respondent believed to be the most serious, or the one that affected them the most. If respondents experienced a combined incident of both physical and sexual assault, the details collected were reported under details for sexual assault.
6. The Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces defined a public space as any location that people are able to access with little or no restriction (e.g., coffee shops, the street, shopping malls, public transportation, bars and restaurants). It excludes workplaces, homes, and apartments.
7. The Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces collected information on five different types of inappropriate behaviours that could be experienced in public: unwanted physical contact; indecent exposure; unwanted comments about your sex or gender; unwanted comments about your sexual orientation or assumed sexual orientation; and unwanted sexual attention.
8. These behaviours were: receiving threatening or aggressive emails or messages directed at you personally; being the target of threatening or aggressive messages sent to a group or on social media; having someone post or distribute, or threaten to post or distribute, intimate or sexually suggestive images without your consent; being pressured to send, share or post sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages; and being sent unwanted sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages.
9. The relationship of the perpetrator was used to derive whether or not the respondent knew the person who committed the online harassment that they experienced. If the perpetrator was a family member, friend, neighbour, acquaintance, teacher, professor, manager, co-worker or classmate, it was determined that the respondent knew the perpetrator. If the perpetrator was a stranger or known by sight only, it was determined that the respondent did not know the perpetrator. It should be noted that there was also categories for “Other” (relationship not categorized elsewhere) and “Don’t know” (respondent did not know the relationship). Other and Don’t Know were combined into a third category for analysis and included in the percent calculations.
10. Includes those who were self-employed.
11. Excludes respondents who reported that they did not work in the past 12 months.
12. The SSPPS collected data from all Canadians aged 15 and older.
13. Examples of mood disorders provided on the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces questionnaire were: depression, bipolar disorder, manic depression, mania, dysthymia.
14. Examples of anxiety disorders provided on the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces questionnaire were: a phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, a panic disorder.
15. Diagnosis of a mental health condition does not necessarily imply receiving treatment.
16. Binge drinking is defined as consuming four or more drinks on one occasion for those whose sex at birth was female, and five or more drinks on one occasion for those whose sex at birth was male.
17. Examples of non-prescribed drugs provided on the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces questionnaire were: magic mushrooms, cocaine, speed, methamphetamine, ecstasy, PCP, mescaline, heroin or fentanyl.
18. Gender diverse includes persons who reported a gender other than male or female; persons who reported being unsure of their gender; and persons who reported both male and female, or neither male nor female.
19. On the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces, the term “lifetime” is used to refer to incidents that occurred when the respondent was 15 years of age or older.
20. Excludes those who reported that they did not use the Internet within the past 12 months.
21. The Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces collected data from all Canadians aged 15 and older.
22. The full list of examples provided on the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces questionnaire for mood disorders was: depression, bipolar disorder, manic depression, mania, dysthymia. The full list of examples provided on the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces questionnaire for anxiety disorders was: a phobia, obsessive compulsive disorder, a panic disorder.

Detailed data tables

**Table 1**  
**Experiences of gender-based violence among sexual minority Canadians, by selected characteristics, Canada, 2018**

Selected characteristic	Experienced unwanted behaviours in public in the past 12 months			Experienced unwanted behaviours online in the past 12 months			Physical assault since age 15			Sexual assault since age 15		
	% <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to		from	to
<b>Gender</b>												
Men†	40.6	34.6	46.8	32.2	26.3	38.8	47.3	41.0	53.8	25.5	20.8	30.8
Women	68.7*	63.5	73.5	40.5	34.8	46.4	45.3	39.5	51.2	50.4*	44.4	56.4
Gender diverse	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
<b>Age group (years)</b>												
15 to 24†	79.7	71.7	85.9	45.2	36.2	54.6	40.8	32.0	50.2	30.4	23.4	38.5
25 to 34	59.0*	50.2	67.4	38.5	30.3	47.4	50.3	40.9	59.6	44.5*	35.8	53.5
35 to 44	48.0*	38.9	57.4	39.5	30.6	49.1	58.3*	49.1	67.0	50.8*	41.8	59.7
45 to 54	44.5*	35.2	54.1	31.0	23.1	40.3	55.4*	46.1	64.4	40.5	32.1	49.5
55 to 64	32.6*	23.8	43.0	18.8*	11.9	28.4	43.9	34.3	54.0	37.0	28.5	46.4
65 to 74	28.2*	18.1	40.9	10.7*	5.6	19.6	31.2	21.4	43.1	31.9	21.6	44.2
75 and older	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
<b>Visible minority</b>												
Yes	58.1	45.7	69.5	32.7	21.8	45.9	30.6*	20.9	42.4	19.7*	13.0	28.5
No†	56.7	52.3	60.9	37.9	33.6	42.4	50.6	46.1	55.1	43.4	39.1	47.9
<b>Disability</b>												
Person with disability	67.3*	61.9	72.3	45.8*	39.6	52.2	55.0*	48.8	60.9	46.0*	40.1	52.0
Person without disability†	43.9	37.9	50.0	25.3	20.4	30.9	36.4	30.6	42.7	29.2	24.2	34.9
<b>Indigenous identity</b>												
Indigenous person	63.2	48.3	75.9	61.8*	46.9	74.8	72.7*	58.4	83.5	65.2*	50.9	77.2
Non-Indigenous person†	56.8	52.5	61.0	35.2	30.9	39.8	45.0	40.5	49.5	37.1	33.0	41.5

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses. For behaviours online and protective measures online, percent calculations exclude those who stated they did not use the Internet in the past 12 months.

**Note:** Sexual minority refers to those who reported their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual, or a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified. Reliable data on gender diverse victims and victims whose sexual orientation is not elsewhere classified are unavailable due to small counts. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 1000.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 2**  
**Experiences of violent victimization since age 15 and in the past 12 months, by sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018**

Type of victimization and reference period	Sexual minority <sup>1</sup>									Heterosexual <sup>†</sup>								
	Male gender			Female gender			Total <sup>2</sup>			Male gender			Female gender			Total <sup>2</sup>		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to
<b>Physical assault</b>																		
Since age 15	47.3*	41.0	53.8	45.3*	39.5	51.2	46.7*	42.4	51.1	33.1	32.0	34.2	25.6**	24.6	26.6	29.3	28.6	30.0
Past 12 months	6.3	4.0	9.7	6.7*	4.2	10.4	6.3*	4.6	8.6	3.5	3.1	4.0	1.9**	1.5	2.3	2.7	2.4	3.0
<b>Sexual assault</b>																		
Since age 15	25.5*	20.8	30.8	50.4***	44.4	56.4	38.6*	34.6	42.7	7.7	7.2	8.3	29.8**	28.8	30.7	18.9	18.3	19.4
Past 12 months	3.5*	2.1	5.7	8.8***	6.0	12.5	6.7*	5.0	9.1	0.9	0.7	1.2	2.7**	2.3	3.2	1.8	1.6	2.1
<b>Total violent victimization</b>																		
Since age 15	55.4*	48.9	61.7	60.5*	54.3	66.3	58.7*	54.3	63.0	34.9	33.9	36.0	38.3**	37.2	39.3	36.6	35.9	37.4
Past 12 months	8.5*	5.9	12.1	12.4*	9.2	16.5	10.9*	8.7	13.6	4.2	3.7	4.7	4.1	3.6	4.7	4.2	3.8	4.5

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

\*\* significantly different from estimate for male gender only (p < 0.05)

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05) and estimate for male gender (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Sexual minority refers to those who reported their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual, or a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified.

2. Includes gender diverse respondents as well as those who did not indicate their gender.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

**Note:** Reliable data on gender diverse victims are unavailable due to small counts.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 3**  
**Violent victimization in the past 12 months, by type of victimization, sexual minority identity, and selected incident characteristic, Canada, 2018**

Selected incident characteristic	Physical assault						Sexual assault					
	Heterosexual†			Sexual minority <sup>1</sup>			Heterosexual†			Sexual minority <sup>1</sup>		
	% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval	
	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to
<b>Location of the incident</b>												
Private residence, property, or surrounding area	30.9	25.8	36.6	18.3	8.3	35.7	34.6	28.0	41.8	37.4	23.7	53.5
Commercial or institutional establishment	35.9	30.5	41.7	29.2	16.6	46.1	41.4	34.4	48.8	28.1	17.4	42.0
Street or other public place	25.3	21.1	30.1	27.5	16.4	42.3	15.3	10.7	21.3	15.1	8.1	26.6
Other	7.4	5.2	10.5	14.5	6.2	30.4	7.0	4.2	11.6	F	F	F
<b>Number of perpetrators</b>												
One	83.2	78.9	86.7	80.9	62.0	91.6	92.0	87.4	95.0	89.7	69.3	97.1
More than one	15.2	11.7	19.4	8.5	4.0	17.3	6.3	3.5	11.0	F	F	F
Not stated	1.6	0.8	3.2	F	F	F	1.7	0.9	3.1	F	F	F
<b>Sex of perpetrator</b>												
Male (single perpetrator or multiple perpetrators, all of whom were male)	80.6	75.5	84.9	66.8	48.4	81.2	81.1	75.3	85.8	86.6	67.4	95.3
Female (single perpetrator or multiple perpetrators, all of whom were female)	13.8	10.1	18.7	18.3	8.1	36.3	16.2	11.7	21.9	F	F	F
Multiple perpetrators, both male and female	3.4	2.0	5.7	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Not stated	2.2	1.2	3.8	F	F	F	1.9	1.1	3.3	F	F	F
<b>Presence of a weapon</b>												
Yes	21.5	17.1	26.7	32.7	19.6	49.3	2.8	1.5	5.2	F	F	F
No	69.4	63.7	74.5	53.5	36.8	69.5	95.3	92.7	97.0	82.5	61.6	93.3
Don't know	8.7	5.6	13.2	F	F	F	1.1	0.6	2.2	F	F	F
<b>Victim sustained injuries</b>												
Yes	24.6	20.0	30.0	31.0	17.8	48.2	5.9	3.9	8.9	16.3	7.6	31.5
No	75.1	69.7	79.8	58.5	40.9	74.2	93.6	90.5	95.7	77.2*	58.7	89.0
<b>Incident reported to police</b>												
Yes	30.3	25.4	35.7	18.8	9.9	33.0	4.4	2.8	7.1	F	F	F
No	69.6	64.2	74.4	70.7	52.7	84.0	95.0	92.3	96.8	90.0	69.3	97.3

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Sexual minority refers to those who reported their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual, or a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified.

2. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses but are not displayed unless they represent 5% or more of total responses.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.



**Table 4**  
**Experiences of physical assault and sexual assault since age 15 and in the past 12 months, by sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018**

Sexual orientation and gender	Physical assault						Sexual assault						Total violent victimization <sup>1</sup>					
	Since age 15			Past 12 months			Since age 15			Past 12 months			Since age 15			Past 12 months		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	% <sup>2</sup>	from	to	% <sup>2</sup>	from	to	% <sup>2</sup>	from	to	% <sup>2</sup>	from	to	% <sup>2</sup>	from	to	% <sup>2</sup>	from	to
<b>Heterosexual†</b>																		
Male gender	33.1	32.0	34.2	3.5	3.1	4.0	7.7	7.2	8.3	0.9	0.7	1.2	34.9	33.9	36.0	4.2	3.7	4.7
Female gender	25.6**	24.6	26.6	1.9**	1.5	2.3	29.8**	28.8	30.7	2.7**	2.3	3.2	38.3**	37.2	39.3	4.1	3.6	4.7
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>35.9</b>	<b>37.4</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Gay or lesbian</b>																		
Male gender	42.2*	35.1	49.7	4.3	2.2	8.2	26.6*	20.8	33.3	3.3*	1.7	6.2	52.3*	44.7	59.7	6.6	4.0	10.7
Female gender	46.3*	37.6	55.3	5.6	2.2	13.4	39.4***	31.2	48.2	F	F	F	55.6*	46.8	64.1	6.6	3.0	14.1
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>43.7*</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>31.2*</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>53.4*</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>10.0</b>
<b>Bisexual<sup>4</sup></b>																		
Male gender	52.5*	40.1	64.5	9.8*	5.2	17.6	25.4*	17.3	35.8	F	F	F	57.8*	45.0	69.6	12.1*	7.0	20.0
Female gender	46.2*	38.4	54.3	7.9*	4.6	13.3	55.4***	47.0	63.5	11.2*	7.4	16.5	63.1*	54.5	71.0	15.1*	10.7	21.0
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>48.5*</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>55.2</b>	<b>8.1*</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>45.0*</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>9.2*</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>62.1*</b>	<b>55.1</b>	<b>68.7</b>	<b>14.3*</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>18.8</b>

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

\*\* significantly different from estimate for male gender only (p < 0.05)

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05) and estimate for male gender (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Includes sexual and physical assault.

2. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

3. Includes gender diverse respondents as well as those who did not indicate their gender.

4. Includes persons who reported being, for example, pansexual, omnisexual or polysexual.

**Note:** Reliable data on gender diverse victims and victims whose sexual orientation is not elsewhere classified are unavailable due to small counts.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 5**  
**Experiences of unwanted behaviours in public places and online and protective measures taken online, by type of behaviour, sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018**

Type of behaviour	Sexual minority <sup>1</sup>									Heterosexual <sup>†</sup>								
	Male gender			Female gender			Total			Male gender			Female gender			Total		
	% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>2</sup>	95% confidence interval	
from		to	from		to	from		to	from		to	from		to	from		to	from
<b>Unwanted behaviours in public places</b>																		
Unwanted physical contact	13.1*	9.5	17.9	42.8***	36.8	49.0	29.2*	25.3	33.5	6.0	5.4	6.6	16.4**	15.5	17.3	11.2	10.7	11.8
Indecent exposure	8.9*	5.8	13.5	8.8*	6.1	12.6	9.7*	7.2	12.9	2.9	2.5	3.4	4.2**	3.7	4.8	3.6	3.2	4.0
Unwanted comments about sex or gender	18.3*	13.8	23.8	41.6***	35.6	47.8	32.6*	28.4	37.1	5.5	4.9	6.1	10.6**	9.8	11.4	8.0	7.6	8.6
Unwanted comments about sexual orientation or assumed sexual orientation	30.8*	25.0	37.4	34.0*	28.3	40.2	33.6*	29.4	38.0	3.0	2.6	3.4	2.5	2.2	3.0	2.7	2.5	3.0
Unwanted sexual attention	14.7*	10.9	19.7	51.9***	46.1	57.7	35.5*	31.4	39.9	5.2	4.7	5.8	24.0**	23.1	25.0	14.7	14.1	15.3
<b>Experienced unwanted sexual behaviour in public in the past 12 months</b>	<b>40.6*</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>46.8</b>	<b>68.7***</b>	<b>63.5</b>	<b>73.5</b>	<b>56.9*</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>30.5**</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>22.2</b>
<b>Unwanted behaviours online</b>																		
Threatening or aggressive emails or messages directed at you personally	14.9*	11.2	19.6	24.4***	19.3	30.4	20.6*	17.1	24.8	7.3	6.7	8.0	9.6**	8.9	10.4	8.5	8.0	9.0
Threatening or aggressive messages sent to a group or on social media	11.1*	7.5	16.1	14.3*	9.9	20.4	12.7*	9.6	16.5	3.9	3.4	4.4	4.1	3.5	4.7	4.0	3.6	4.4
Posting or distributing, or threatening to post or distribute, intimate or sexually explicit images without consent	4.8*	2.5	9.0	7.3*	3.8	13.3	5.9*	3.7	9.3	1.4	1.2	1.7	1.3	1.0	1.8	1.4	1.2	1.6
Pressure to send, share, or post sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages	10.3*	6.7	15.4	11.3*	8.3	15.2	10.7*	8.3	13.6	1.5	1.2	1.8	3.4**	2.9	3.9	2.5	2.2	2.8
Being sent unwanted sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages	20.1*	15.4	25.9	28.0***	23.0	33.6	23.9*	20.5	27.6	6.0	5.5	6.7	10.0**	9.2	10.8	8.0	7.5	8.5
<b>Experienced unwanted sexual behaviour online in the past 12 months</b>	<b>32.2*</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>40.5*</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>36.7*</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>17.5**</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>16.0</b>
<b>Protective measures online</b>																		
Changed username or blocked others because of harassment	22.8*	17.9	28.6	33.6***	28.1	39.5	29.1*	25.2	33.3	9.2	8.5	9.9	16.6**	15.7	17.6	12.9	12.3	13.5
Limited Internet use or social media participation for protection	16.5	12.4	21.5	26.5***	21.3	32.4	21.4*	17.9	25.2	11.8	11.1	12.6	16.9**	16.0	17.8	14.4	13.8	14.9
Shut down or deleted an account because of harassment	7.0*	4.4	10.9	9.5*	6.6	13.4	8.0*	6.1	10.5	2.7	2.4	3.1	3.7**	3.3	4.2	3.2	3.0	3.5
<b>Took a protective measure online due to harassment in the past 12 months</b>	<b>31.8*</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>43.7***</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>38.4*</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>27.5**</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>23.6</b>

\* significantly different from reference category only (p < 0.05)

\*\* significantly different from estimate for male gender only (p < 0.05)

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05) and estimate for male gender (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Sexual minority refers to those who reported their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual, or a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified.

2. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses. For behaviours online and protective measures online, percent calculations exclude those who stated they did not use the Internet in the past 12 months.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 6**  
**Experiences of unwanted behaviours in public places and online, by sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018**

Sexual orientation and gender	Experienced unwanted behaviours in public in the past 12 months				Experienced unwanted behaviours online in the past 12 months			
	number (thousands)	percent <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval		number (thousands)	percent <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval	
			from	to			from	to
<b>Heterosexual<sup>†</sup></b>								
Male gender	1,788	12.5	11.7	13.3	1,688	13.0	12.1	13.8
Female gender	4,465	30.5**	29.5	31.6	2,291	17.5**	16.6	18.5
<b>Total<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>6,254</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>3,990</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>16.0</b>
<b>Gay or lesbian</b>								
Male gender	117	38.2*	31.1	45.8	82	27.6*	20.9	35.3
Female gender	87	50.8***	41.7	59.8	35	21.0	13.9	30.3
<b>Total<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>205</b>	<b>42.8*</b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>25.3*</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>31.0</b>
<b>Bisexual<sup>3</sup></b>								
Male gender	71	41.4*	30.3	53.5	66	40.3*	29.5	52.2
Female gender	280	76.4***	69.6	82.1	179	49.8*	41.9	57.6
<b>Total<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>378</b>	<b>66.8*</b>	<b>60.7</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>46.5*</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>53.2</b>

\* significantly different from reference category only (p < 0.05)

\*\* significantly different from estimate for male gender only (p < 0.05)

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05) and estimate for male gender (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses. For behaviours online, percent calculations exclude those who stated they did not use the Internet.

2. Includes gender diverse respondents as well as those who did not indicate their gender.

3. Includes persons who reported being, for example, pansexual, omnisexual or polysexual.

**Note:** Reliable data on gender diverse victims and victims whose sexual orientation is not elsewhere classified are unavailable due to small counts. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 1000.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 7**  
**Experiences of unwanted behaviours in the workplace, by type of behaviour, sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018**

Type of behaviour	Sexual minority <sup>1</sup>									Heterosexual <sup>†</sup>								
	Male gender			Female gender			Total <sup>2</sup>			Male gender			Female gender			Total <sup>2</sup>		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to	% <sup>3</sup>	from	to
Inappropriate sexual jokes	18.8*	14.1	24.6	32.8***	26.4	39.9	26.9*	22.5	31.8	11.6	10.8	12.5	17.7**	16.6	18.8	14.5	13.8	15.2
Unwanted sexual attention	15.4*	10.5	22.1	27.1***	21.1	34.0	23.1*	18.8	28.0	3.8	3.4	4.4	14.3**	13.3	15.4	8.8	8.3	9.3
Unwanted physical contact	11.3*	7.5	16.8	27.6***	21.7	34.4	17.2*	17.2	26.2	4.4	3.9	5.0	12.7**	11.7	13.7	8.3	7.8	8.9
Suggestions that you do not act like a man or woman is supposed to act	11.8*	8.2	16.7	26.1***	20.1	33.2	20.8*	16.8	25.6	4.5	4.0	5.1	6.8**	6.1	7.6	5.6	5.2	6.1
Someone insulted, mistreated, ignored, or excluded you because of your gender	5.6	3.5	8.7	20.0***	14.5	26.9	13.8*	10.5	18.0	3.1	2.6	3.6	9.6**	8.8	10.5	6.2	5.7	6.7
Someone insulted, mistreated, ignored, or excluded you because of your sexual orientation	10.6*	7.3	15.2	11.4*	6.8	18.5	11.1*	8.1	15.1	0.9	0.7	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.4	1.0	0.8	1.2
Someone insulted, mistreated, ignored, or excluded you because you are, or are assumed to be, transgender	F	F	F	1.0	0.4	2.2	1.5*	0.8	2.8	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.6
<b>Experienced inappropriate behaviours in the workplace in the past 12 months</b>	<b>34.7*</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>42.0</b>	<b>48.8***</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>55.5</b>	<b>44.3*</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>27.9**</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>22.6</b>

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category only (p < 0.05)

\*\* significantly different from estimate for male gender only (p < 0.05)

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05) and estimate for male gender (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Sexual minority refers to those who reported their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual, or a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified.

2. Includes gender diverse respondents as well as those who did not indicate their gender.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

Note: Excludes respondents who did not work in the past 12 months.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 8**  
**Mental health indicators, by sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018**

Indicator	Heterosexual†			Gay or lesbian			Bisexual			Sexual orientation n.e.c. <sup>1</sup>			Total sexual minority <sup>2</sup>		
	% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to		from	to		from	to
<b>Self-rated mental health</b>															
Positive (excellent, very good, good)	88.9	88.3	89.4	80.3*	75.5	84.4	58.9*	52.4	65.2	54.6*	37.4	70.9	67.8*	63.6	71.7
Negative (fair, poor)	10.7	10.2	11.2	19.7*	15.6	24.4	40.9*	34.7	47.4	45.4*	29.1	62.6	32.1*	28.2	36.3
Ever seriously contemplated suicide	14.9	14.3	15.5	29.9*	25.1	35.1	46.3*	39.8	52.8	58.7*	42.1	73.5	40.1*	36.1	44.3
<b>Diagnosed mood or anxiety disorder</b>															
Mood disorder	16.4	15.8	17.0	29.6*	24.7	35.0	50.8*	44.4	57.2	40.9*	25.8	58.0	41.1*	36.9	45.3
Anxiety disorder	9.5	9.1	10.0	20.6*	16.4	25.4	36.2*	30.0	42.9	31.1*	18.0	48.1	29.1*	25.3	33.3
	12.5	12.0	13.1	23.4*	18.8	28.8	41.6*	35.5	47.9	30.4*	18.5	45.8	33.1*	29.2	37.2

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. n.e.c.: not elsewhere classified.

2. Sexual minority refers to those who reported their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual, or a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 9**  
**Health risk behaviours, by sexual orientation and gender, Canada, 2018**

Health risk behaviours	Heterosexual†			Gay or lesbian			Bisexual			Sexual orientation n.e.c. <sup>1</sup>			Total sexual minority <sup>2</sup>		
	% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to		from	to		from	to
Binge drinking in the past 12 months	44.1	43.4	44.8	52.7*	46.6	58.7	55.3*	48.4	61.9	38.3	23.8	55.3	53.0*	48.5	57.4
Non-medical cannabis use in the past 12 months	15.3	14.8	15.9	28.5*	23.6	33.9	46.3*	39.8	53.0	20.8	11.1	35.6	37.0*	32.8	41.3
Non-prescribed drug use in the past 12 months (other than cannabis)	2.6	2.3	2.9	6.6*	4.2	10.2	14.0*	10.3	18.8	F	F	F	10.3*	8.0	13.0
<b>Used drugs or alcohol to cope</b>															
With abuse or violence that occurred in lifetime <sup>4</sup>	10.4	9.9	11.0	18.2*	14.1	23.2	29.5*	23.8	35.9	20.2	11.0	34.3	24.1*	20.4	28.3
With abuse or violence that occurred in past 12 months <sup>5</sup>	9.7	7.2	13.0	F	F	F	31.0*	18.2	47.4	F	F	F	29.4*	19.1	42.3

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. n.e.c.: not elsewhere classified.

2. Sexual minority refers to those who reported their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual, or a sexual orientation not elsewhere classified.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

4. Percent calculation based on those who reported having been victims of physical or sexual assault (excluding IPV) since the age of 15, or having experienced harsh parenting or physical or sexual abuse during childhood.

5. Percent calculation based on those who reported having been victims of physical or sexual assault (excluding IPV) in the past 12 months.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 10**  
**Cisgender and transgender Canadians' experiences of physical assault, sexual assault and total violent victimization since age 15, 2018**

Type of victimization	Cisgender† <sup>1</sup>			Transgender <sup>2</sup>		
	% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to
Physical assault	29.7	29.0	30.4	48.3	28.8	68.2
Sexual assault	19.4	18.8	19.9	23.5	9.2	43.8
<b>Total violent victimization<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>58.9*</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>77.4</b>

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Cisgender includes all respondents whose reported gender aligns with their reported sex at birth.

2. Transgender includes all respondents who reported a gender different from their sex at birth, including those who are non-binary, that is, whose current gender was not reported exclusively as male or female.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

4. Includes sexual and physical assault.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 11**  
**Transgender and cisgender Canadians' experiences of unwanted behaviours in public places and online and protective measures taken online, by type of behaviour, 2018**

Type of behaviour	Cisgender† <sup>1</sup>			Transgender <sup>2</sup>		
	% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to
<b>Unwanted behaviours in public places</b>						
Unwanted physical contact	11.9	11.4	12.4	22.0	6.4	47.0
Indecent exposure	3.8	3.4	4.1	F	F	F
Unwanted comments about sex or gender	8.8	8.4	9.3	43.4*	21.0	68.0
Unwanted comments about sexual orientation or assumed sexual orientation	3.8	3.5	4.2	36.5*	18.8	57.3
Unwanted sexual attention	15.3	14.8	15.9	39.2*	21.0	59.9
<b>Experienced unwanted sexual behaviour in public in the past 12 months</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>57.6*</b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>76.5</b>
<b>Unwanted behaviours online</b>						
Threatening or aggressive emails or messages directed at you personally	8.9	8.4	9.4	28.6	11.9	50.9
Threatening or aggressive messages sent to a group or on social media	4.3	3.9	4.7	F	F	F
Posting or distributing, or threatening to post or distribute, intimate or sexually explicit images without consent	1.6	1.3	1.8	F	F	F
Pressure to send, share, or post sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages	2.7	2.5	3.0	20.3	6.4	42.1
Being sent unwanted sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages	8.6	8.1	9.1	F	F	F
<b>Experienced unwanted sexual behaviour online in the past 12 months</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>41.6*</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>63.8</b>
<b>Protective measures online</b>						
Changed username or blocked others because of harassment	13.5	12.9	14.1	37.4*	18.3	59.7
Limited Internet use or social media participation for protection	14.7	14.2	15.3	F	F	F
Shut down or deleted an account because of harassment	3.4	3.2	3.7	F	F	F
<b>Took a protective measure online due to harassment in the past 12 months</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>63.0</b>

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Cisgender includes all respondents whose reported gender aligns with their reported sex at birth.

2. Transgender includes all respondents who reported a gender different from their sex at birth, including those who are non-binary, that is, whose current gender was not reported exclusively as male or female.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses. For behaviours online and protective measures online, percent calculations exclude those who stated they did not use the Internet.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.



**Table 12**  
**Transgender and cisgender Canadians' experiences of unwanted behaviours in the workplace, by type of behaviour, 2018**

Type of behaviour	Cisgender† <sup>1</sup>			Transgender <sup>2</sup>		
	% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to
Inappropriate sexual jokes	14.8	14.2	15.5	35.2	14.9	60.3
Unwanted sexual attention	9.2	8.7	9.8	34.2	13.8	59.7
Unwanted physical contact	8.7	8.2	9.3	36.3*	15.5	61.4
Suggestions that you do not act like a man or woman is supposed to act	6.1	5.7	6.6	36.4*	15.5	61.8
<b>Experienced inappropriate behaviours in the workplace in the past 12 months</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>69.4*</b>	<b>44.1</b>	<b>88.4</b>

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Cisgender includes all respondents whose reported gender aligns with their reported sex at birth.

2. Transgender includes all respondents who reported a gender different from their sex at birth, including those who are non-binary, that is, whose current gender was not reported exclusively as male or female.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

**Note:** Excludes respondents who reported that they did not work in the past 12 months. Some behaviours are not listed as results are too unreliable to be published.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 13**  
**Cisgender and transgender Canadians' mental health indicators, by indicator, Canada, 2018**

Indicator	Cisgender† <sup>1</sup>			Transgender <sup>2</sup>		
	% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to
<b>Self-rated mental health</b>						
Positive (excellent, very good, good)	88.1	87.6	88.6	34.1*	17.0	54.9
Negative (fair, poor)	11.3	10.8	11.9	65.4*	44.6	82.7
Ever seriously contemplated suicide	15.6	15.1	16.2	44.8*	25.7	65.2
<b>Diagnosed mood or anxiety disorder</b>	17.1	16.6	17.7	61.1*	40.6	79.1
Mood disorder	10.2	9.7	10.7	39.9*	21.5	60.6
Anxiety disorder	13.1	12.6	13.7	57.0*	36.5	75.8

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Cisgender includes all respondents whose reported gender aligns with their reported sex at birth.

2. Transgender includes all respondents who reported a gender different from their sex at birth, including those who are non-binary, that is, whose current gender was not reported exclusively as male or female.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 14**  
**Cisgender and transgender health risk behaviours, by behaviour, Canada, 2018**

Health risk behaviours	Cisgender† <sup>1</sup>			Transgender <sup>2</sup>		
	% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval		% <sup>3</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to
Binge drinking in the past 12 months	44.0	43.3	44.8	40.3	21.8	60.9
Non-medicinal cannabis use in the past 12 months	16.0	15.4	16.5	30.8	14.4	51.6
Non-prescribed drug use in the past 12 months (other than cannabis)	2.8	2.6	3.1	F	F	F
<b>Used drugs or alcohol to cope</b>						
With abuse or violence that occurred in lifetime <sup>4</sup>	10.9	10.4	11.5	35.7*	15.3	52.6
With abuse or violence that occurred in past 12 months <sup>5</sup>	11.5	9.0	14.7	F	F	F

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Cisgender includes all respondents whose reported gender aligns with their reported sex at birth.

2. Transgender includes all respondents who reported a gender different from their sex at birth, including those who are non-binary, that is, whose current gender was not reported exclusively as male or female.

3. Percent calculations include missing or not stated responses.

4. Percent calculation based on those who reported having been victims of physical or sexual assault (excluding IPV) since the age of 15, or having experienced harsh parenting or physical or sexual abuse during childhood.

5. Percent calculation based on those who reported having been victims of physical or sexual assault (excluding IPV) in the past 12 months.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.