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Sporthochschule Köln  
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Institute of Sociology and  
Gender Studies

# Final report of the survey

## *The situation of women and LGBT+ individuals in European grassroots sports*

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 **sport for all  
genders & sexualities**

Tackling Sexism,  
Trans- & Homophobia  
in European  
Grassroots Sport



Updated Version, June 2024



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# Introduction

## *Project information*



### SGS as a follow-up to the Outsport-project

- 20% LGBT+ individuals refrain from sports of interest – due to internalised fears, gender norms and stereotypes
- 16% LGBT+ athletes report negative experiences in their main sport in the last 12 months
- Major differences by sexual orientation, gender (identity) and gender expression: non-cis persons particularly vulnerable



### Questions for the SGS project

- Cultures and climate in organised sports?
  - Reasons for differences by gender identity?
  - Prevalence of traditional gender norms/stereotypes and their importance as a cause of discrimination against LGBT+ in sports?
- **Focus of SGS: all people involved in organised sports**

(Braumüller et al., 2020, 2022; Hartmann-Tews et al., 2021, 2022; Menzel et al., 2023)





# Introduction

## *Project information*

**4 countries:** Austria, Italy, Spain and Germany

**7 organisations working together** (04/2022 – 09/2024)



**Aim:** promote an inclusive sports culture for all persons regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity in European grassroots sports

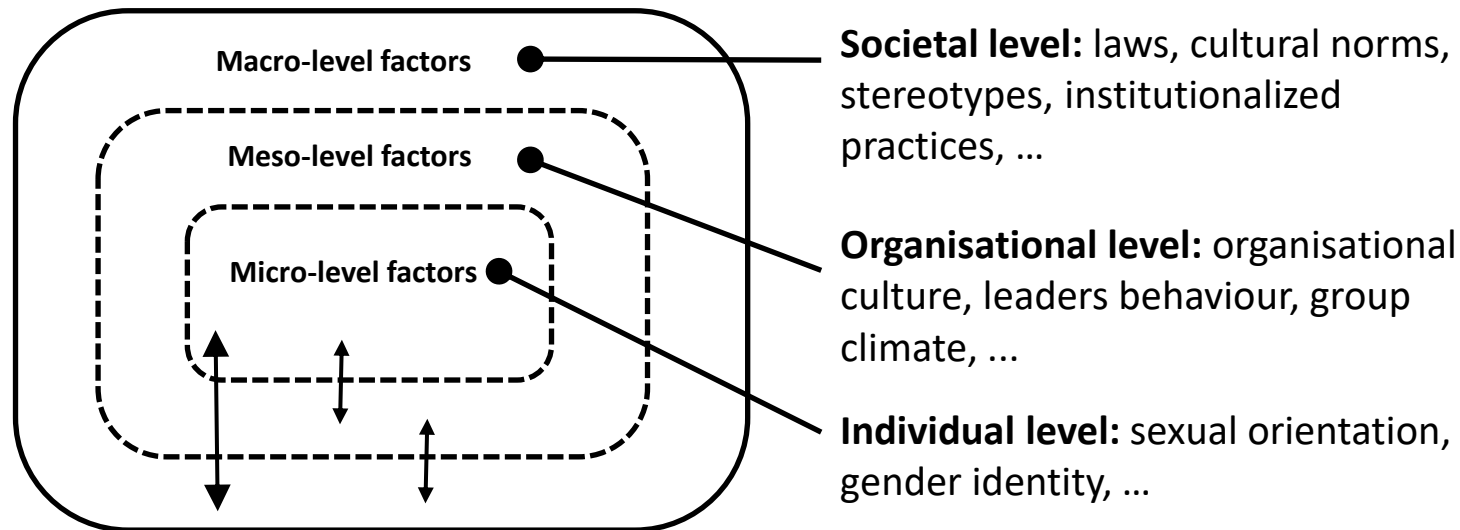
- Research (**survey**, needs assessment, good practice report)
- Education (learning platform), train the trainers,...
- Guidelines for clubs



# Theoretical framework

*Cunningham (2012, 2019)*

## Multilevel model for understanding discrimination in sports



(Cunningham, 2012, p. 7)



# Theoretical framework

## *Stereotypes and norms*

### Stereotypes

- widely held, oversimplified and generalised image of a specific group of people
- connected to expectations about typical behaviour, capabilities, habits etc.
- justification of differential treatment (oppression, ...)

### Norms

- widely held formal or informal rules and expectations of behaviour
- people are expected to observe and follow norms
- violations of norms are addressed by formal or informal penalties

→ potential for discrimination and exclusion



# Theoretical framework

## *Sexism, homo- and transnegativity in sports*

- Sport as a body-centred system  
(Gieß-Stüber, 2009; Hartmann-Tews, 2018; Stichweh, 1990)
- Hegemonic masculinity  
(Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Fink, 2008; Krane, 2016; Messner, 1990; Pattinson et al., 2022)
- Heteronormativity  
(Kauer & Krane, 2013; Krane & Symons, 2014)
- Gender segregation  
(Griffin, 2012; Krane et al., 2012; Lucas-Carr & Krane, 2012)

### → Social structures of discrimination and exclusion and of ...

- women athletes (sexism)
- LGB - lesbian, gay and bisexual athletes (homonegativity)
- T+/TIN - trans, intersex and non-binary athletes (transnegativity)



## Empirical framework

### *Sexism, homo- and transnegativity in sports*

*“Sport is not the only institution in which sexism exists. However, the form it takes in sport is different from those in most other organizational settings. [...] But that is what is so interesting about sexism in sport. It is commonly overt yet simultaneously unnoticed”*

(Fink, 2016, p. 2)

*“Many sport scholars [...] describe sport as one of the most homophobic social arrangements and many anecdotal reports show sexual minority athletes stigmatized or discriminated against through negative stereotypes, social isolation, and harassment.”*

(Shang et al., 2012, p. 32)

*“Within the group of LGBT+ athletes, non-cisgender athletes are identified as the most vulnerable group in organized sports [...]. [They] challenge the sex binary and sex-segregated sport systems and the alignment to either male or female teams that is required for participation in competitive structures”*

(Braumüller et al., 2020, p. 14)







# Empirical framework

## *Sexism in sports*

### Sexism

- *“Prejudice or discrimination based on sex; especially, discrimination against women”* and the *“behavior, conditions, or attitudes that foster stereotypes of social roles based on sex”* (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.)
- Gender role stereotyping, sexualised harassment, micro aggressions, gender biasing, excluding organisational cultures, „old boy’s clubs“, ...
- Effects are among others, lack of women in leadership positions, quantitative and qualitative differences in media coverage, dearth of corporate sponsorship for women’s sports, gender pay gap
- Up to 65% of women in sports report experiences of discrimination

(Aitchison, 2005; Barnes & Adams, 2022; BBC Sport, 2020; Burton, 2015; Burton & LaVoi, 2016; Cunningham, 2008; Fink, 2016; Goldman & Gervis, 2021; Hindman & Walker, 2020; Kerr, 2010; Rutherford, 2001; WIS, 2018)





# Empirical framework

## *Homo- and transnegativity in sports*

### Homo- and transnegativity

- Sport as an unsafe space, lack of infrastructure and acceptance, gender segregation policies, sport-related clothing, ...
- 10% to 67% of LGBT+ athletes with experiences of discrimination – various discrimination forms (verbal, physical, structural, ...)
- Positive effects through sports activity (body changes, satisfaction, recognition, ...)

(Denison et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2017; Kavoura & Kokkonen, 2021; Lucas-Carr & Krane, 2012; Oliveira et al., 2022; Pattinson et al., 2022; Semerjian, 2019; Smith et al., 2012; Sport Wales, 2012; Symons et al., 2010; Symons et al., 2017)





## Research focus

### *Quantitative survey*

#### Quantitative online survey (11/2022 – 02/2023)

##### ➤ Aim

- Identification of prevailing gender norms and stereotypes in organised sports and their impact on discrimination and exclusion of girls/women and LGBT+ people in organised grassroots sports.

##### ➤ Target group

- people (age 16+) involved in organised grassroots sports over the last 12 months (athletes, coaches, board members, further volunteers)
- Europe, focussing on the partner countries (AUT, GER, ITA, ESP)

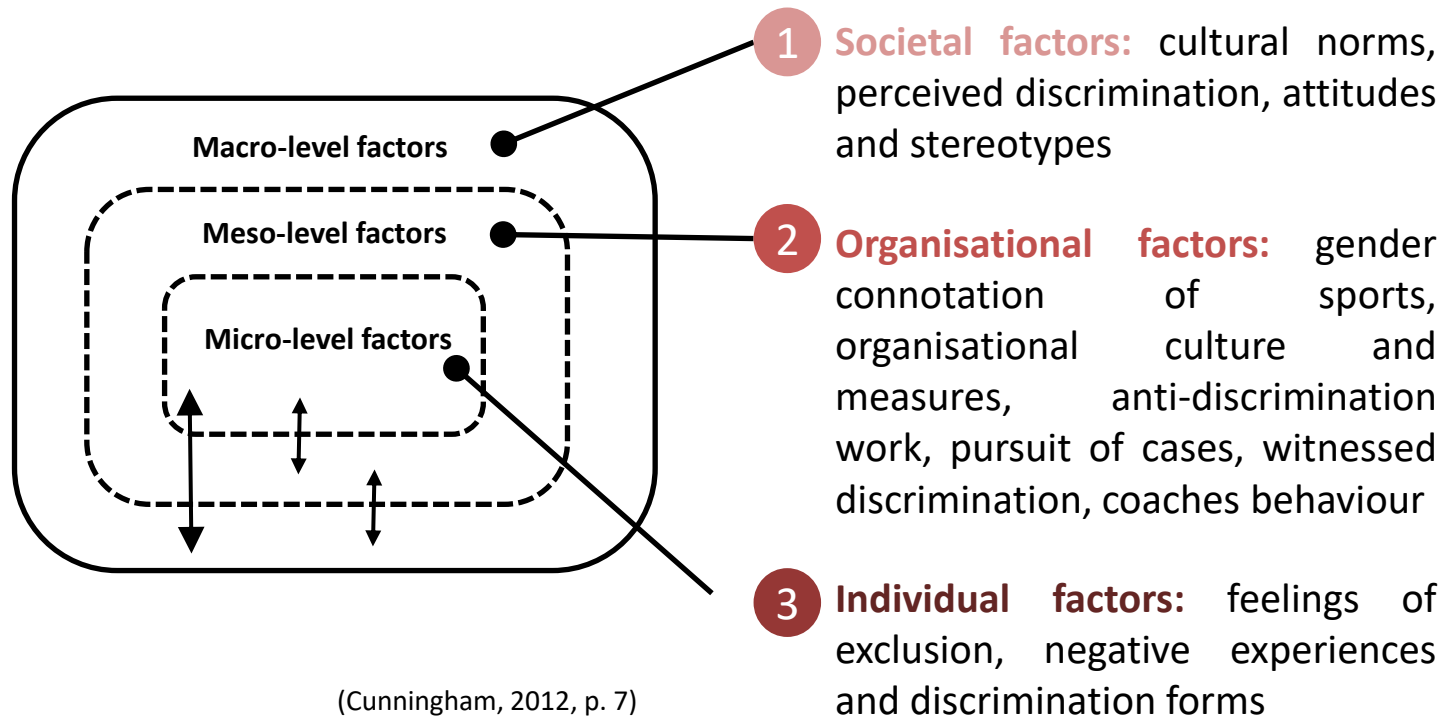
##### ➤ Recruitment

- systematic recruitment by the partner organisations and their networks in grassroots sports using mailing lists, social media etc.



# Research focus

## Quantitative survey





## Research focus

### *Data analysis – strategy and restrictions I*

The data report focuses on the presentation of data of selected areas at the macro, meso and micro level with reference to the complete sample (N=2832). The subsamples of respondents, who answered the respective question are displayed on each slide. In the figures, values below 5% are not labelled.

#### ➤ **Differentiation by country**

Most findings are presented for the overall sample and on a country-by-country basis for the five countries with the most respondents: Germany, Spain, Austria, Italy and the United Kingdom. Respondents from other countries are sometimes included under the term “other countries”\*. Statistical country-comparisons are only done if the numbers of respondents in the respective subsamples are sufficient. When comparing country-specific results, the heterogeneous composition of the sample must be taken into account (see slides 21-26).

\* Including respondents from Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, Non EU-Countries





## Research focus

### *Data analysis – strategy and restrictions II*

#### ➤ **Differentiation by gender identity**

Since the subsamples are quite small and unequally distributed in terms of gender identity, these differentiations are only made if the result is striking.

#### ➤ **Differentiation by role**

Respondents were asked to indicate their various roles in their sport organisations in the last 12 months. Those who reported having more than one role were asked to prioritise functional roles (board members and coaches) over their roles as athletes or further volunteers. Respondents were then instructed to fill out the questionnaire with regard to their prioritised perspective. This was important as some questions were only asked to specific roles. Except for these role-specific questions, no further differentiations by role are integrated in this data report.





## Research focus

### *Data analysis – abbreviations*

- **LGB:** lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals
- **TIN:** trans, intersex and non-binary individuals
  
- **N:** overall sample size
- **n:** size of subsample of the respective question (how many respondents have answered)
- **p:** value for significance,  $p < .05$  → significant findings
- **Cramer V:** value for statistical correlation (between 0 'no correlation' and 1 'perfect correlation')
- **M:** mean value
- **SEM:** standard error of mean
  
- **Colour scheme:** different colours represent a specific focus of the data presented
  - Blue: General data
  - Red: Data focussing on sex
  - Turquoise: Data focussing on sexual orientation
  - Green: Data focussing on gender identity





# Survey sample

## *Overview*

### Description of the sample:

- **Sociodemographics I** (age, country, education, ...)
- **Sociodemographics II** (sexual orientation, gender identity, ...)
- **Sports involvement** (role, level of sports, main sports, ...)
- **Country-specific samples for Austria, Germany, Spain, Italy und the United Kingdom** (sexual orientation, gender identity, education, role)
- **Main sports by country**





# Survey sample

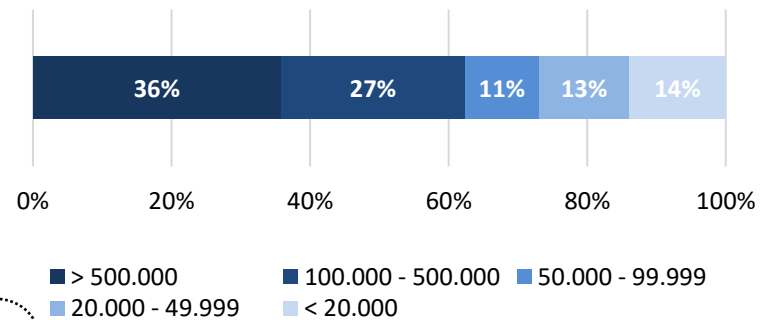
## Sociodemographics I (N=2838)

Age M=40 years ( $\pm 16$  y.) (n=2745)

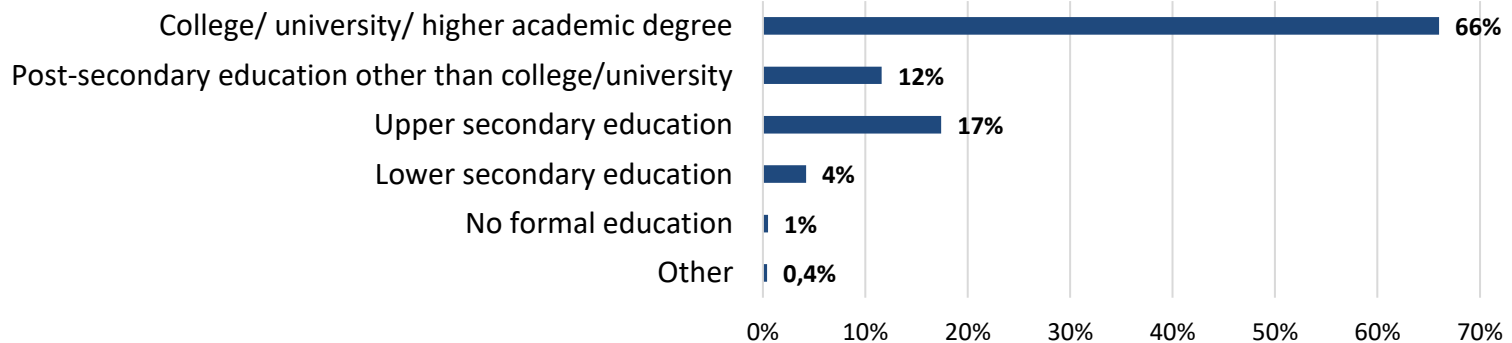
### Country (n=2779)

Germany:	58%
Spain:	18%
Austria:	9%
UK:	5%
Italy:	5%
Other:	5%

### Population of region of residence (n=2725)



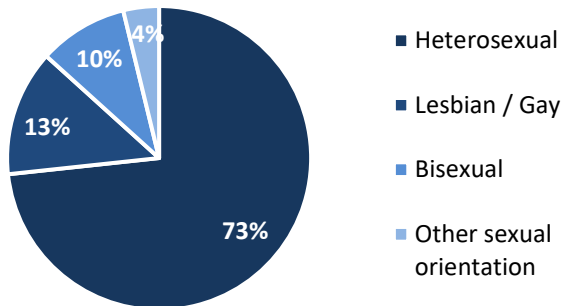
### Education (n=2794)



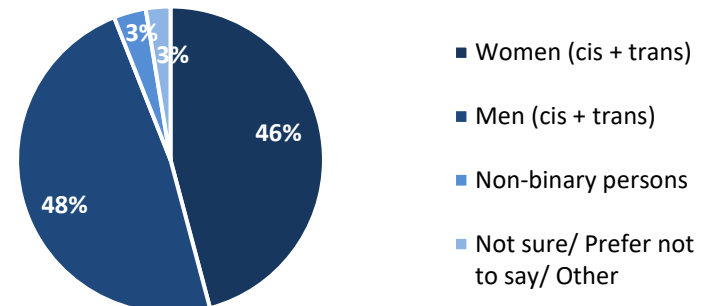
# Survey sample

## Sociodemographics II

**Sexual orientation** (n=2784)



**Self-identified gender identity** (n=2827)



**Sex observed at birth** (n=2817)

Female	49.7%
Male	50.2%
Intersex	0.1%

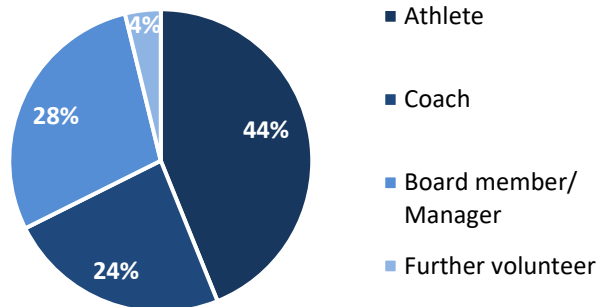
**Gender identity exact** (n=2773)

Cis men	48.0%	Trans men	1.1%
Cis women	45.9%	Trans women	0.9%
Non-binary p.	3.4%	Other	0.7%

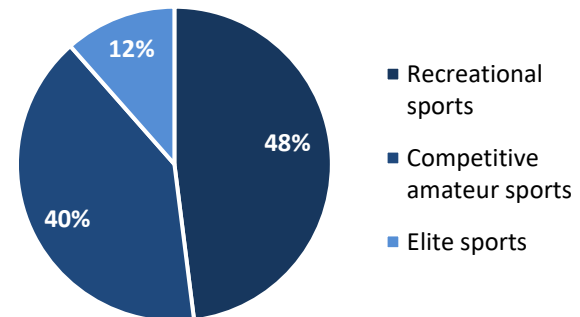
# Survey sample

## *Sports involvement*

**Role in organised sports** (n=2837)



**Level of sports** (athletes & coaches, n=1889)



**Main sports** (athletes & coaches, n=1491)

Football	15%
Track and field	14%
Swimming	6%
Fitness / Gymnastics	5%

**Sports category** (athletes & coaches, n=1889)

Individual sports	58%
Team sports	36%
Other / not classifiable	7%



## Survey sample

### *Sociodemographics and sports involvement*

**Sociodemographics:** The sample consists of 2838 respondents, who are 40 years on average. The highest share is from Germany (58%) followed by Spain (18%), Austria (9%), UK (5%), Italy (5%) and other countries (5%). More than 60% of the respondents live in urban areas with more than 100.000 inhabitants. Respondents share a high educational level with 66% having an university degree. The respondents identify mainly as heterosexual (73%) and as men (48%) and women (46%). The sample consists primarily of cis individuals with 3.4% identifying as non-binary, 2% as trans and 0.7% other gender identities.

**Sports involvement:** Almost half of the respondents (44%) answer from the perspective of an athlete, 24% as a coach and 28% as board member/manager. Almost half of the athletes and coaches are involved in recreational sports, 40% in competitive amateur sports and 12% in elite sports. The highest share of respondents are involved in football (15%) and track and field (14%), followed by swimming and fitness/gymnastics. Generally, 58% are involved in individual sports and 36% in team sports.



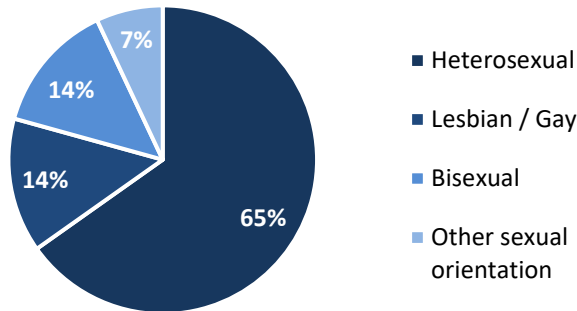
# Survey sample

Austria (N=259)

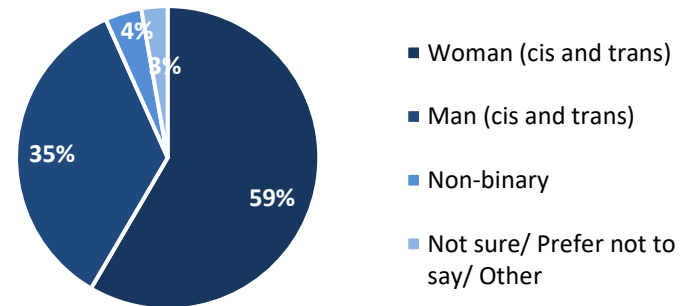
Age M=39 years (±13 y.) (n=247)



Sexual orientation (n=256)



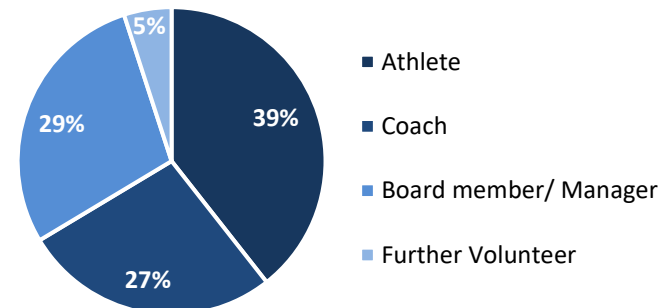
Self-identified gender identity (n=258)



Education (n=252)

College/ University/ Higher academic education	73%
Post-secondary education other than college/ university	0.4%
Upper secondary education	18%
Lower secondary education	0.4%
No formal education	0.04%
Other	0%

Role in organised sports (n=259)





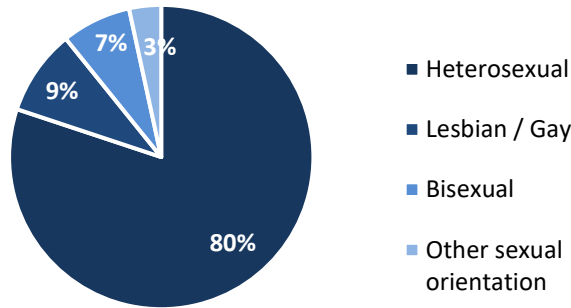
# Survey sample

Germany (N=1603)

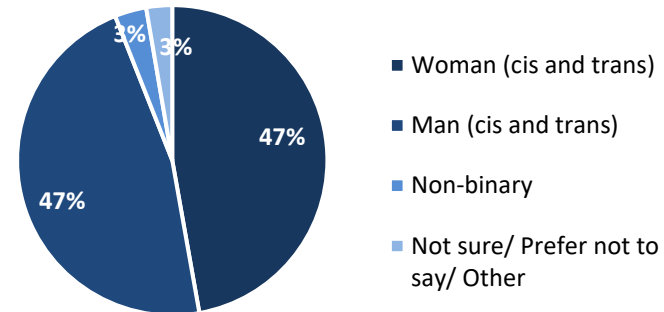
Age M=43 years (±16 y.) (n=1540)



**Sexual orientation** (n=1563)



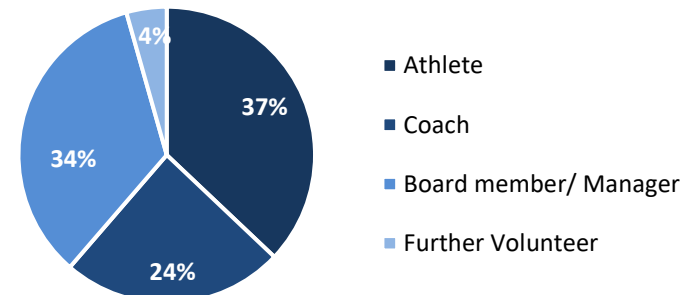
**Self-identified gender identity** (n=1597)



**Education** (n=1582)

College/ University/ Higher academic education	59%
Post-secondary education other than college/ university	15%
Upper secondary education	21%
Lower secondary education	6%
No formal education	0.03%
Other	0.03%

**Role in organised sports** (n=1602)



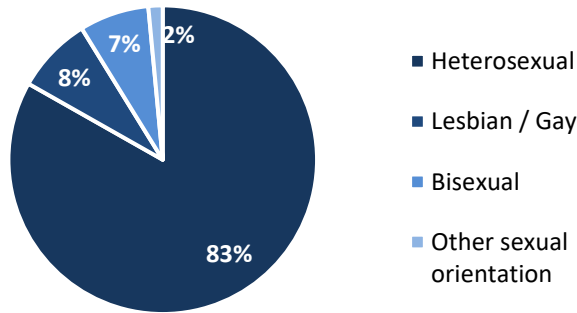
# Survey sample

Italy (N=141)

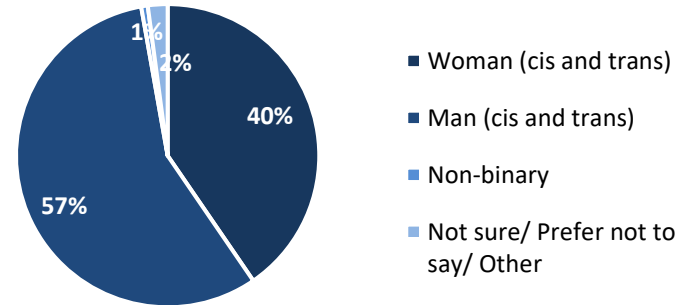
Age M=46 years (±15 y.) (n=139)



### Sexual orientation (n=137)



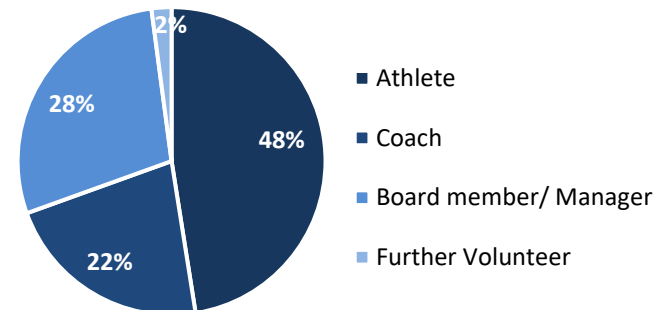
### Self-identified gender identity (n=141)



### Education (n=140)

College/ University/ Higher academic education	51%
Post-secondary education other than college/ university	13%
Upper secondary education	30%
Lower secondary education	5%
No formal education	0%
Other	0.7%

### Role in organised sports (n=141)





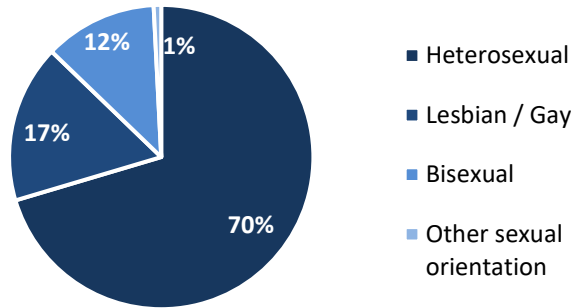
# Survey sample

Spain (N=501)

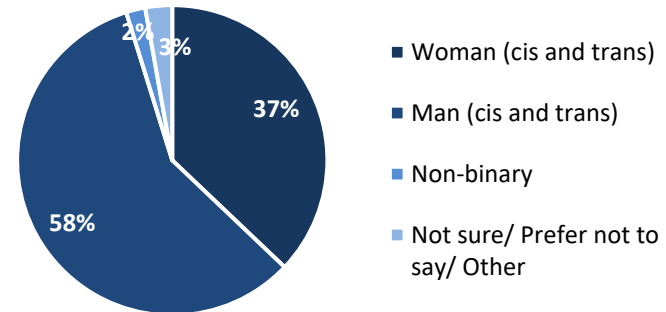
Age M=33 years (±14 y.) (n=492)



**Sexual orientation** (n=500)



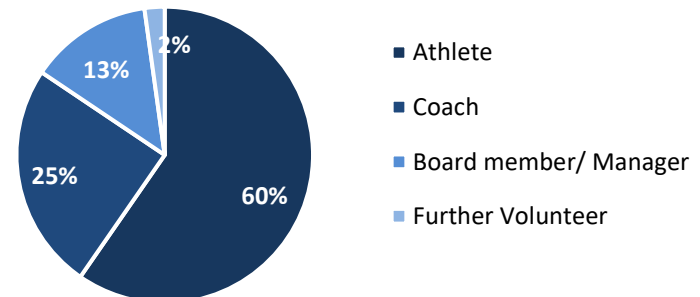
**Self-identified gender identity** (n=499)



**Education** (n=491)

College/ University/ Higher academic education	82%
Post-secondary education other than college/ university	9%
Upper secondary education	6%
Lower secondary education	1%
No formal education	1%
Other	0.6%

**Role in organised sports** (n=501)







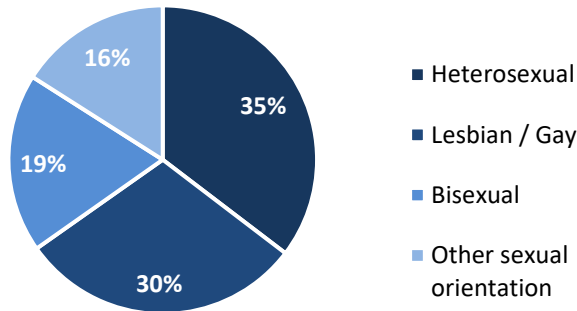
# Survey sample

United Kingdom (UK) (N=148)

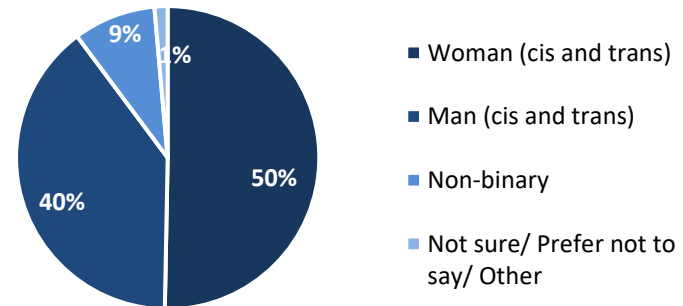
Age M=33 years (±12 y.) (n=146)



**Sexual orientation** (n=144)



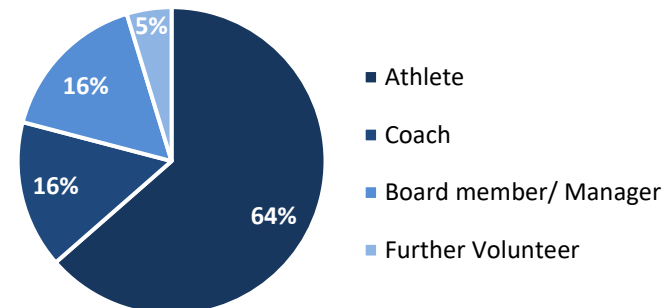
**Self-identified gender identity** (n=147)



**Education** (n=147)






College/ University/ Higher academic education	83%
Post-secondary education other than college/ university	3%
Upper secondary education	14%
Lower secondary education	0.7%
No formal education	0%
Other	0%

**Role in organised sports** (n=148)



# Survey sample

*Main sports by country (question only for athletes and coaches)*

 n=138		 n=740		 n=91		 n=339		 n=86	
Football	23%	Football	16%	Football	20%	Athletics	39%	Archery	20%
Roller Derby	9%	Swimming	9%	Athletics	13%	Football	13%	Rugby	16%
Volleyball	9%	Fitness	6%	Gymnastics	11%	Basketball	5%	Football	8%
Archery	6%	Volleyball	5%	Cycling	6%	Rugby	4%	Roller Derby	8%
Gymnastics	4%	Gymnastics	5%	Fitness	6%	Fitness	4%	Athletics	7%



## Survey sample

### *Country-specific characteristics*

- **Age:** the sample of the UK and Spain (m=33) is much younger compared to Austria, Germany and Italy (mean from 39-46).
- **Sexual orientation:** the overall percentage of heterosexual respondents is 73% and generally above 65% of the samples – except the UK, with a share of 35% and the most diverse composition with regard to sexual orientation.
- **Gender identity:** the overall share of women is 46% in the general sample, while Spain represents the lowest share (37%) and Austria the highest share (59%) of women. The share of non-binary persons varies from 9% (UK) to 1% (Italy).
- **Education:** all respondents report a high educational level, particularly in the UK, Spain, and Austria with more than 70% with higher academic education.
- **Role in organised sports:** athletes have a total share of 44% - and are overrepresented in Spain (60%) and the UK (64%). The share of coaches is 24% and quite similar in all countries.





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## Empirical findings

### *Societal factors*

#### Macro level

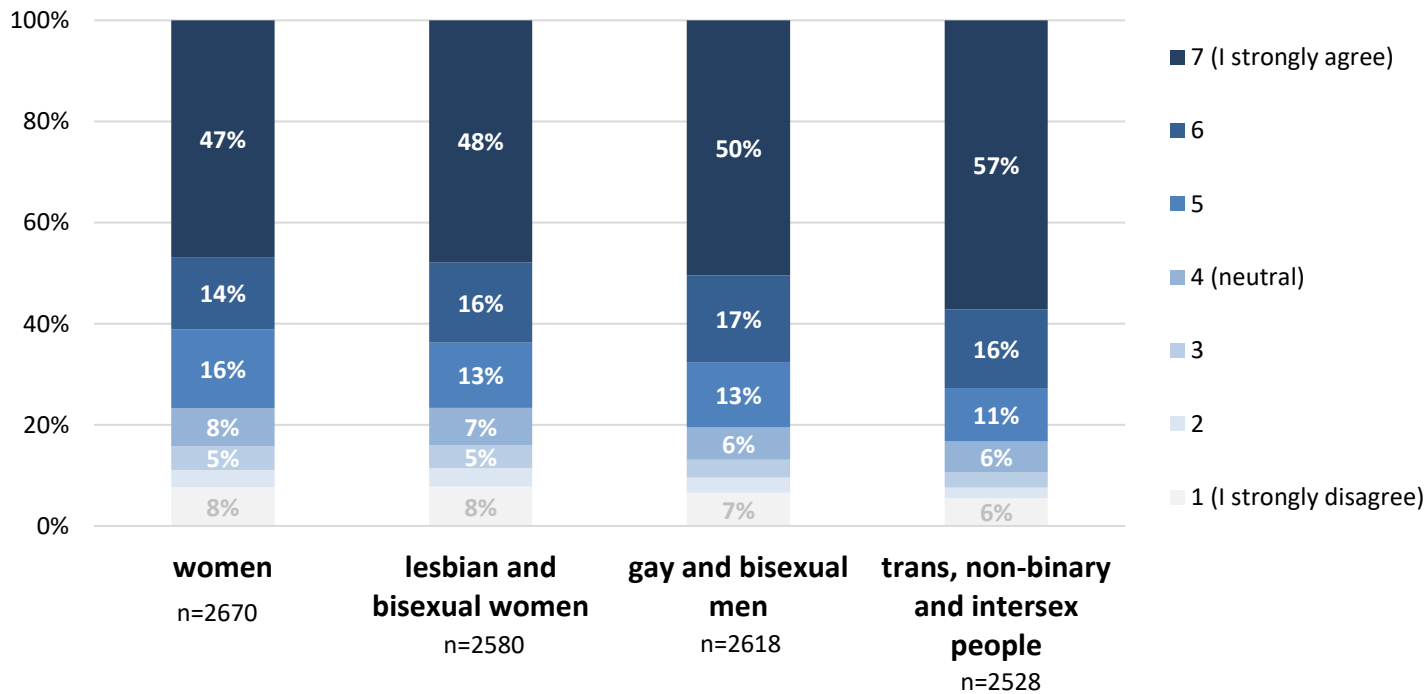
- Perceived discrimination in sports
- Stereotypes about men and women in sports
- Stereotypes about lesbian and gay athletes
- Stereotypes about trans, intersex and non-binary athletes
- Attitudes towards trans, intersex and non-binary athletes
- Attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in organised sports

1

# Macro level

## Perceived discrimination in sports

*In organised sports, there are attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against ...*





1

## Macro level

### *Perceived discrimination in sports*

To determine the perceived discrimination against (a) women, (b) lesbian and bisexual women, (c) gay and bisexual men and (d) trans, intersex, and non-binary people in organised sports, the degree of agreement or disagreement to each statement had to be indicated on a 7-point scale.

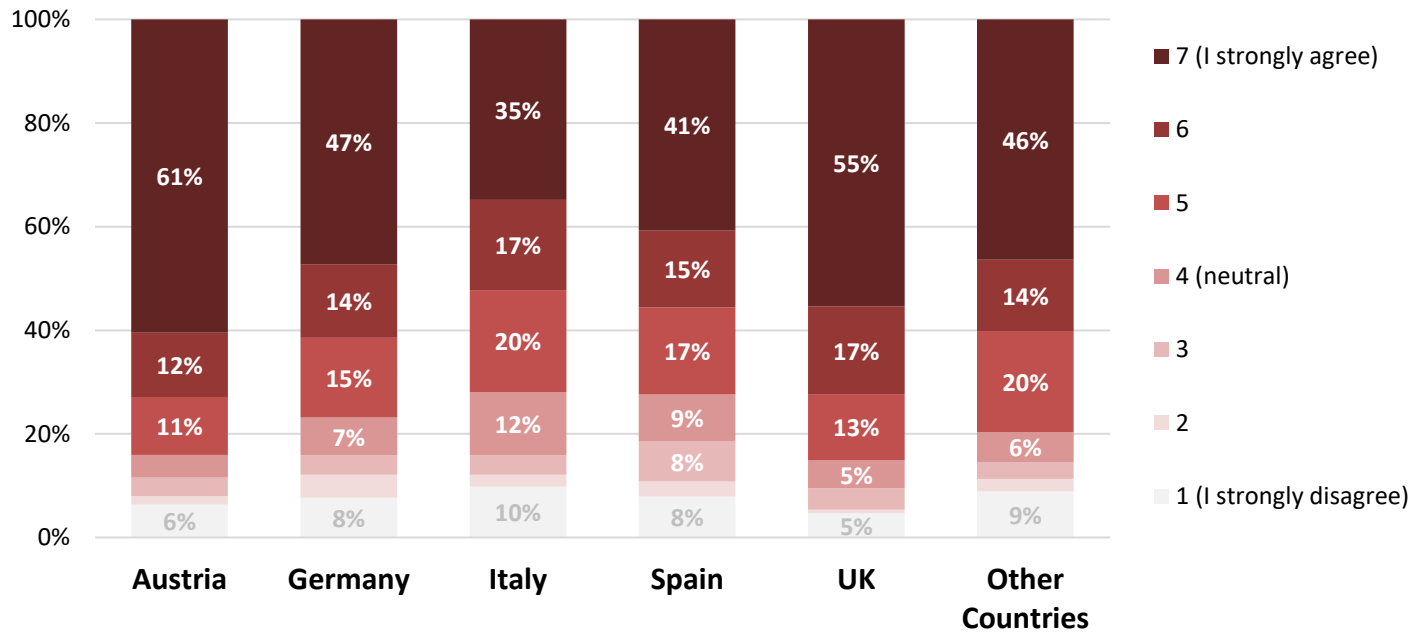
About half of the respondents strongly agree (cat. 7) that there are attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against sportswomen and LGBT+ athletes. The highest approval appears in the discrimination statement against TIN people and the lowest in the discrimination statement against women. In total about 80% agree to some extent that there is discrimination against these groups in organised sports (cat. 7, 6 and 5), while about 20% of the respondents share neutral attitudes or disagree to the statements (cat. 4, 3, 2 and 1).

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# Macro level

## Perceived discrimination: women

*In organised sports, there are attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against women.*



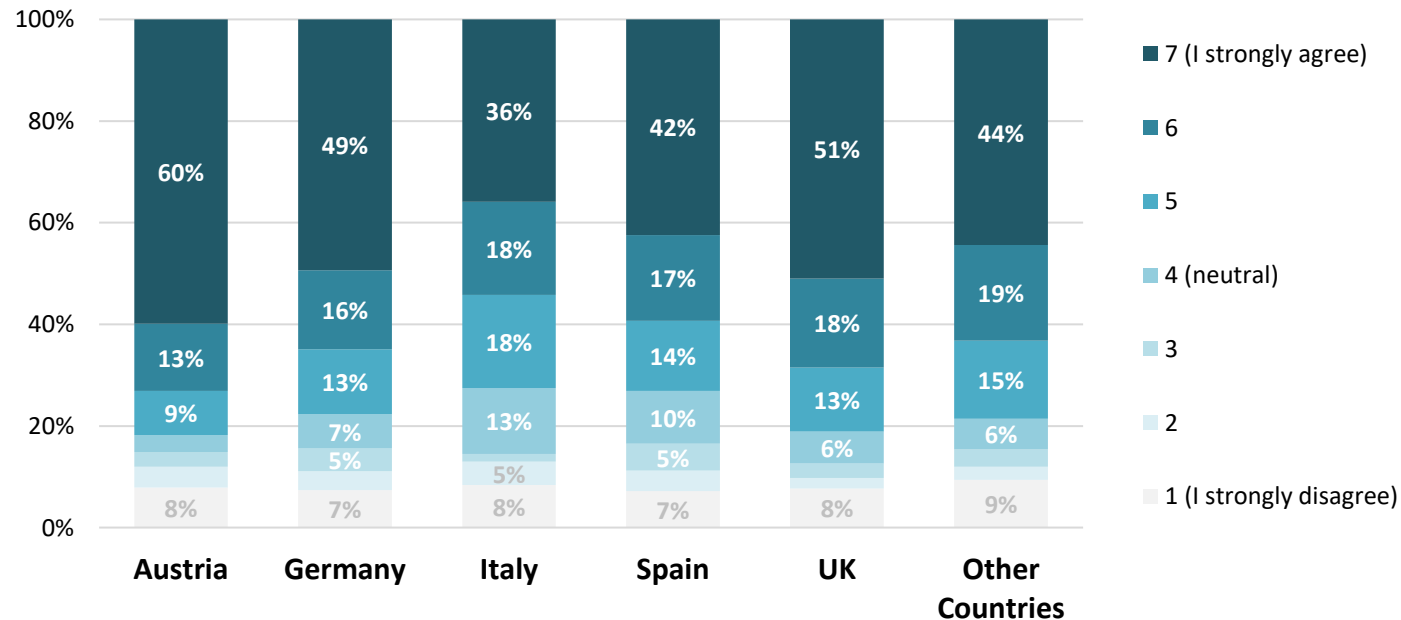
n=2620; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .072

1

# Macro level

## Perceived discrimination: lesbian and bisexual women

*In organised sports, there are attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against lesbian and bisexual women.*



n=2531; p= .008\*\*; Cramer-V= .064



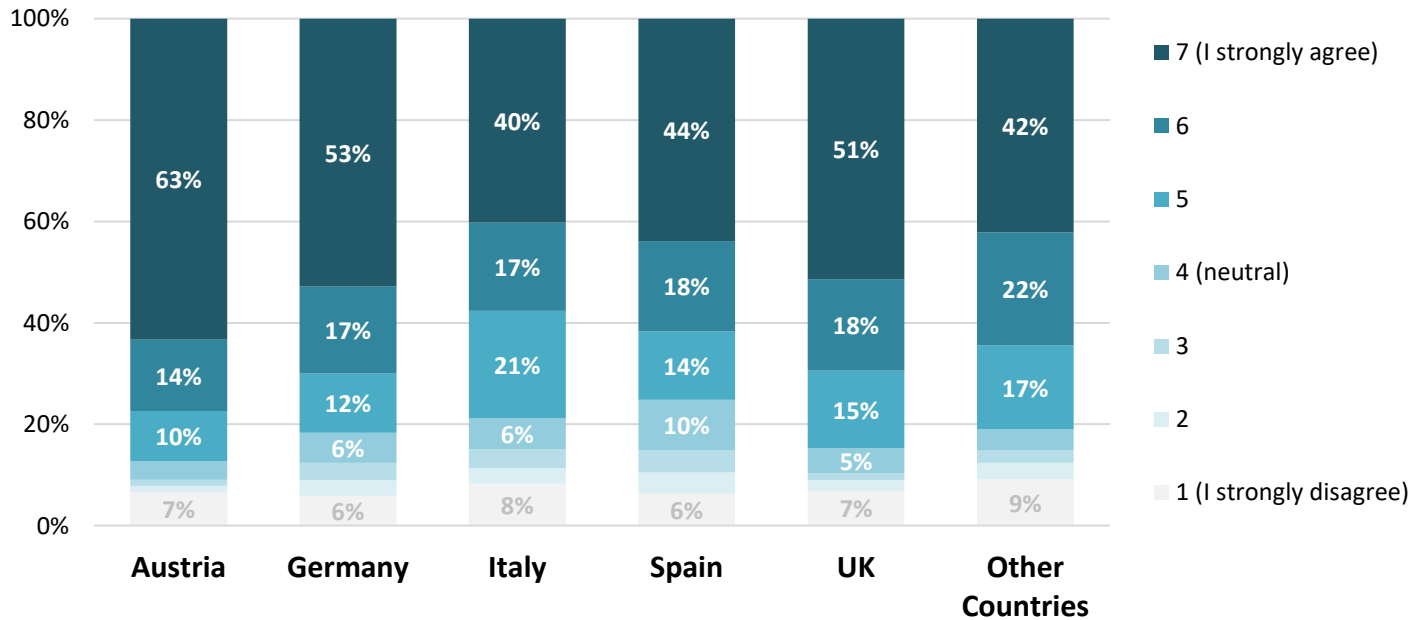


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# Macro level

## Perceived discrimination: gay and bisexual men

*In organised sports, there are attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against gay and bisexual men.*

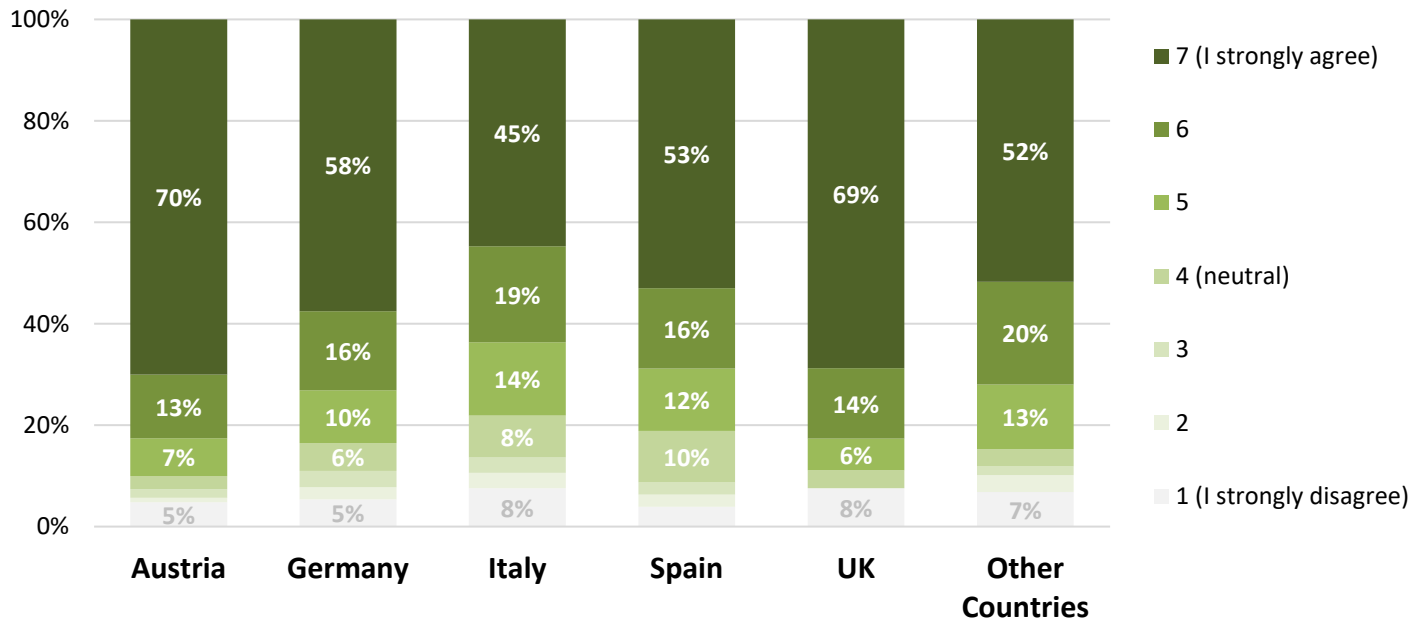


n=2570; p < .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V = .07

# 1 Macro level

## *Perceived discrimination: trans, intersex and non-binary persons*

*In organised sports, there are attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against trans, intersex and non-binary persons.*



n=2481; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .074



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## Macro level

### *Perceived discrimination in sports – by country*

The general finding that trans, intersex and non-binary people are perceived as the most vulnerable group is also found in the results of each of the countries.

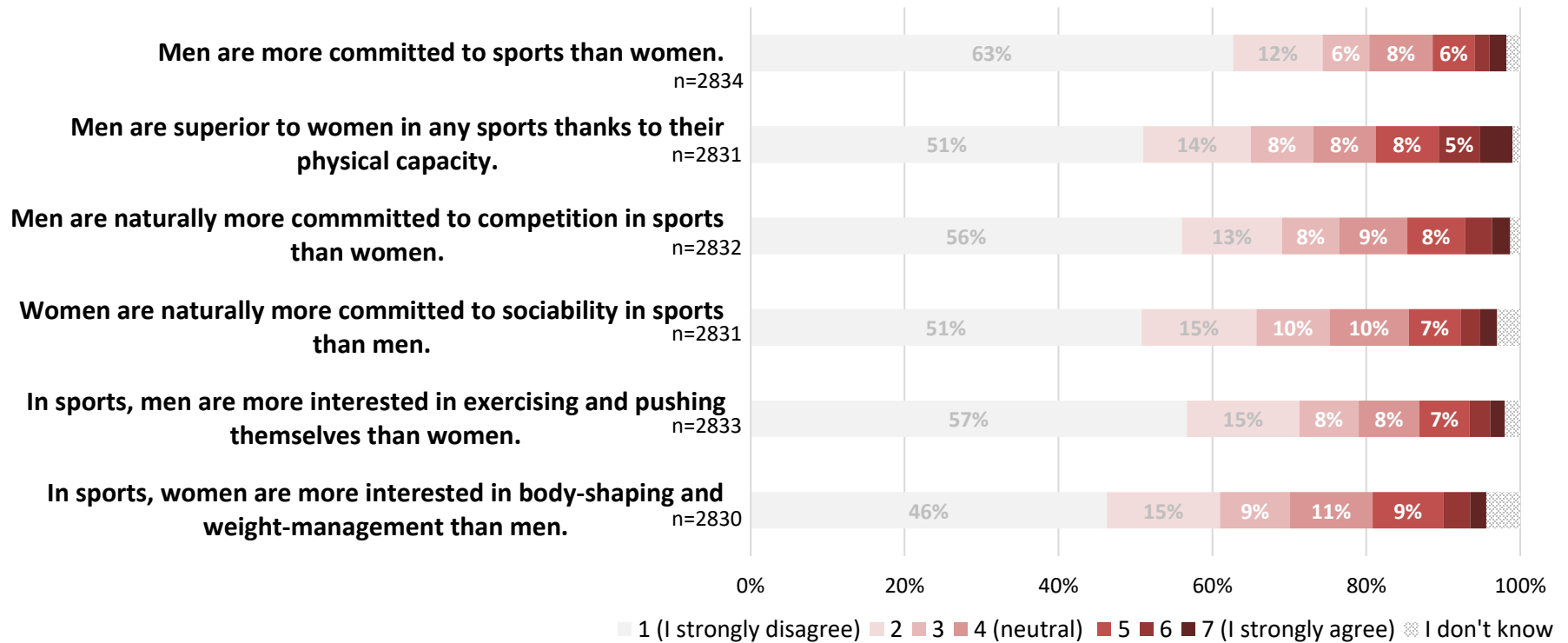
When comparing the country-specific data the following significant differences occur. The highest awareness of discrimination against women, lesbian and bisexual women, gay and bisexual men and trans, intersex and non-binary people, occurs amongst the Austrian respondents. They are followed by the respondents from the United Kingdom and, behind them, Germany. Respondents from the other European countries perceive more discrimination against the groups queried compared to respondents from Spain. Particularly in Italy, the awareness of discrimination against the four groups is quite low compared to the other countries, as shown by the highest disagreement in all categories.



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# Macro level

## *Stereotypes about men and women in sports*





1

## Macro level

### *Stereotypes about men and women in sports*

The majority of the respondents strongly disagree with all the queried stereotypes against sportsmen and sportswomen that resemble traditional beliefs of masculinity and femininity in sports-related contexts. More than 70% disagree to some extent to these statements (cat. 1, 2, and 3 on the 7-point scale), while between 8% to 10% share neutral attitudes (cat. 4) and only a small minority agrees to some extent to these traditional stereotypes (cat. 5, 6, and 7).

Respondents express the highest disagreement with the stereotype of a higher commitment to sport of men compared to women, a stronger focus on exercising and pushing themselves, and a higher commitment to competition among sportsmen.

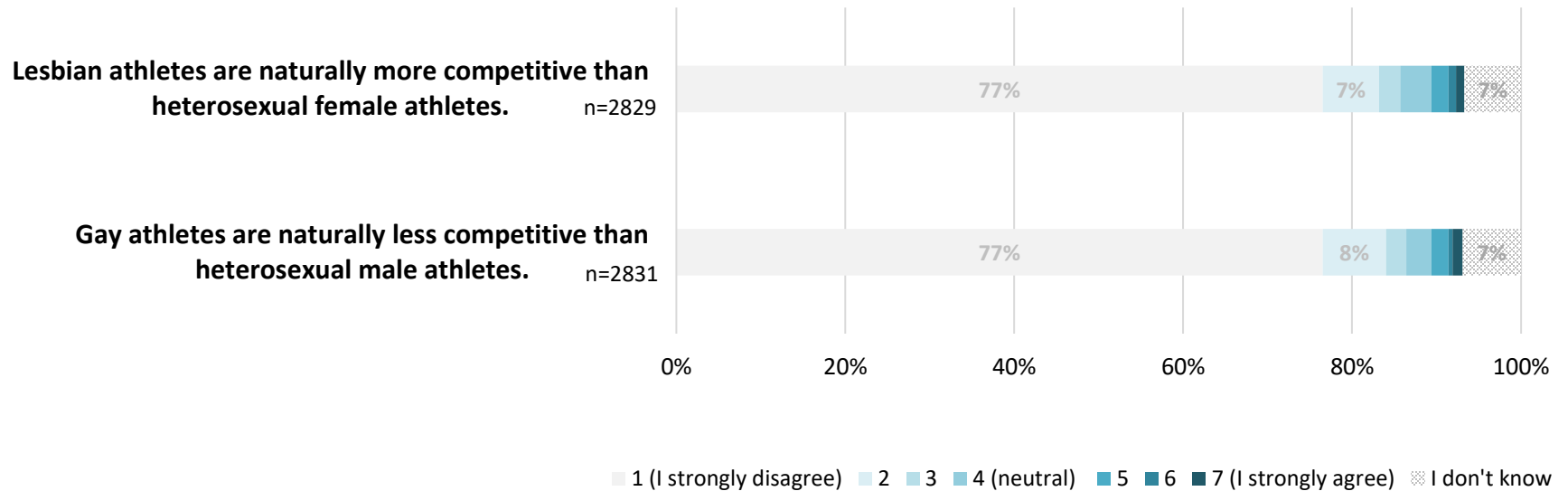
18% of respondents agree to some extent that men are superior to women due to their physical capacity and 15% express that women focus stronger on body-shaping and weight management than men.



1

# Macro level

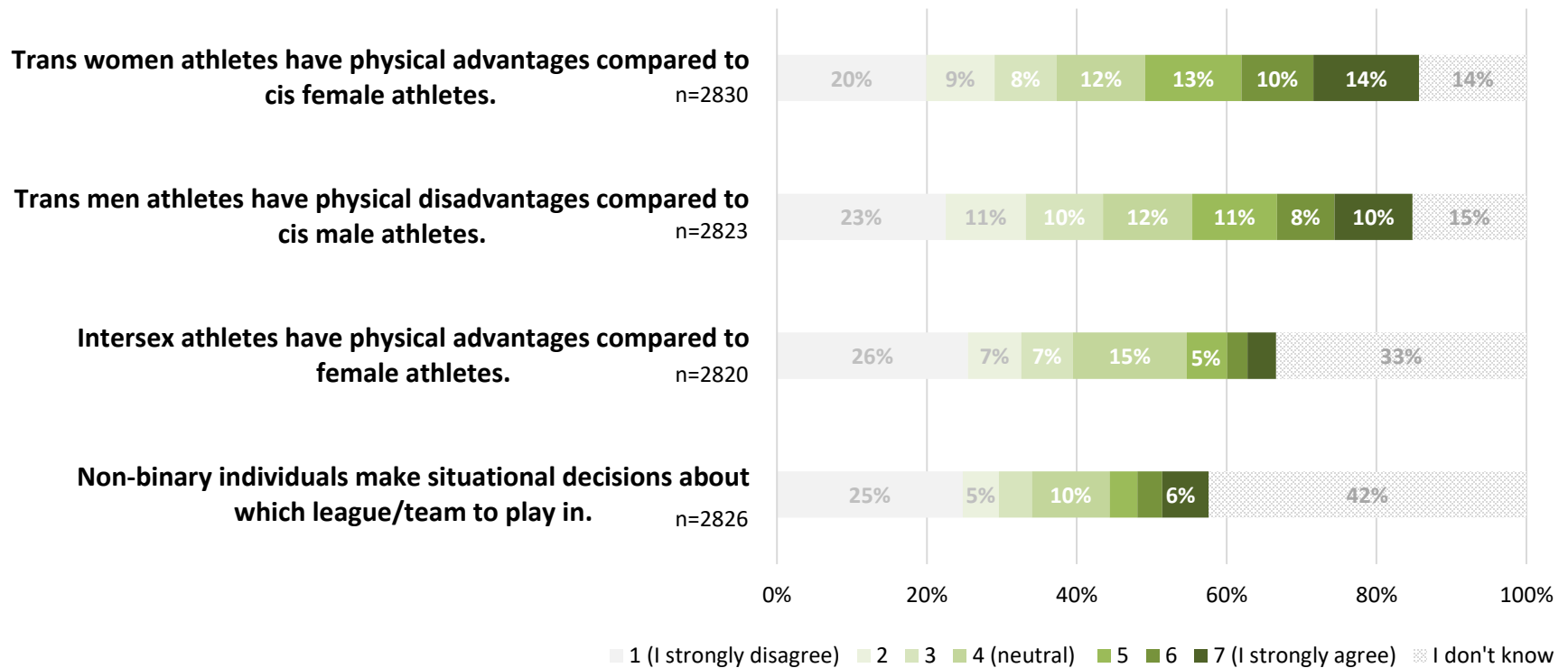
## *Stereotypes about lesbian and gay athletes*



1

# Macro level

## *Stereotypes about trans, intersex and non-binary athletes*





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## Macro level

### *Stereotypes about LG and TIN athletes*

The vast majority of respondents does not support the stereotype that the sexual orientation of individuals is related to their competitiveness in sport.

In contrast, agreement rises when stereotypes about trans, and particularly about intersex and non-binary athletes are presented. The share of respondents that agree or disagree to some extent that trans women have physical advantages compared to cis women is exactly the same (37%, cat. 5, 6, and 7), while 12% share neutral opinions and 14% don't know. 43% disagree to some extent that trans male athletes have physical disadvantages, while 29% agree, 12% have neutral attitudes and 15% have no opinion.

33% of the respondents indicate that they don't know if intersex athletes have physical advantages compared to female athletes, while 40% disagree and 12% agree to some extent. The stereotype about non-binary athletes is supported by 13% of the respondents while the biggest share of respondents (42%) has no opinion and one third disagrees to some extent.

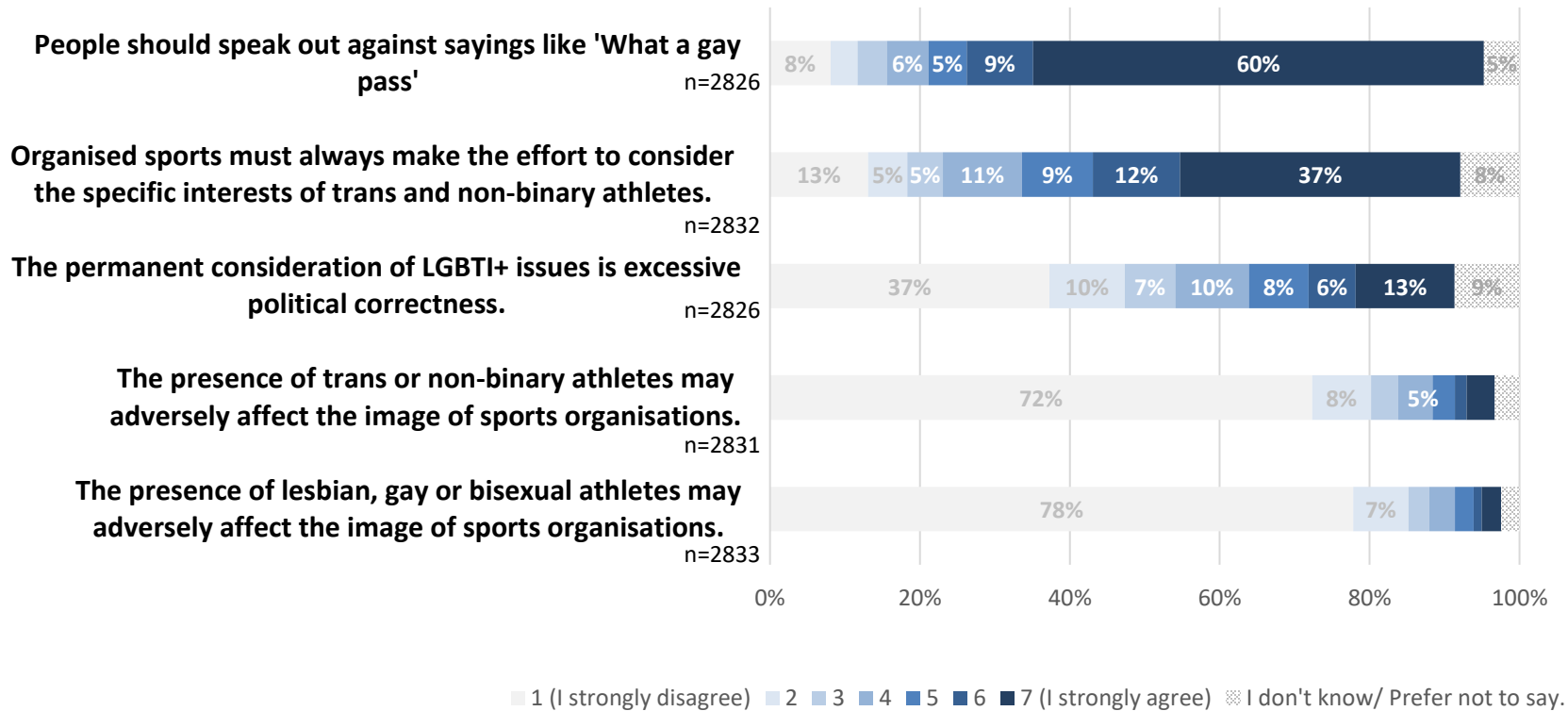




1

# Macro level

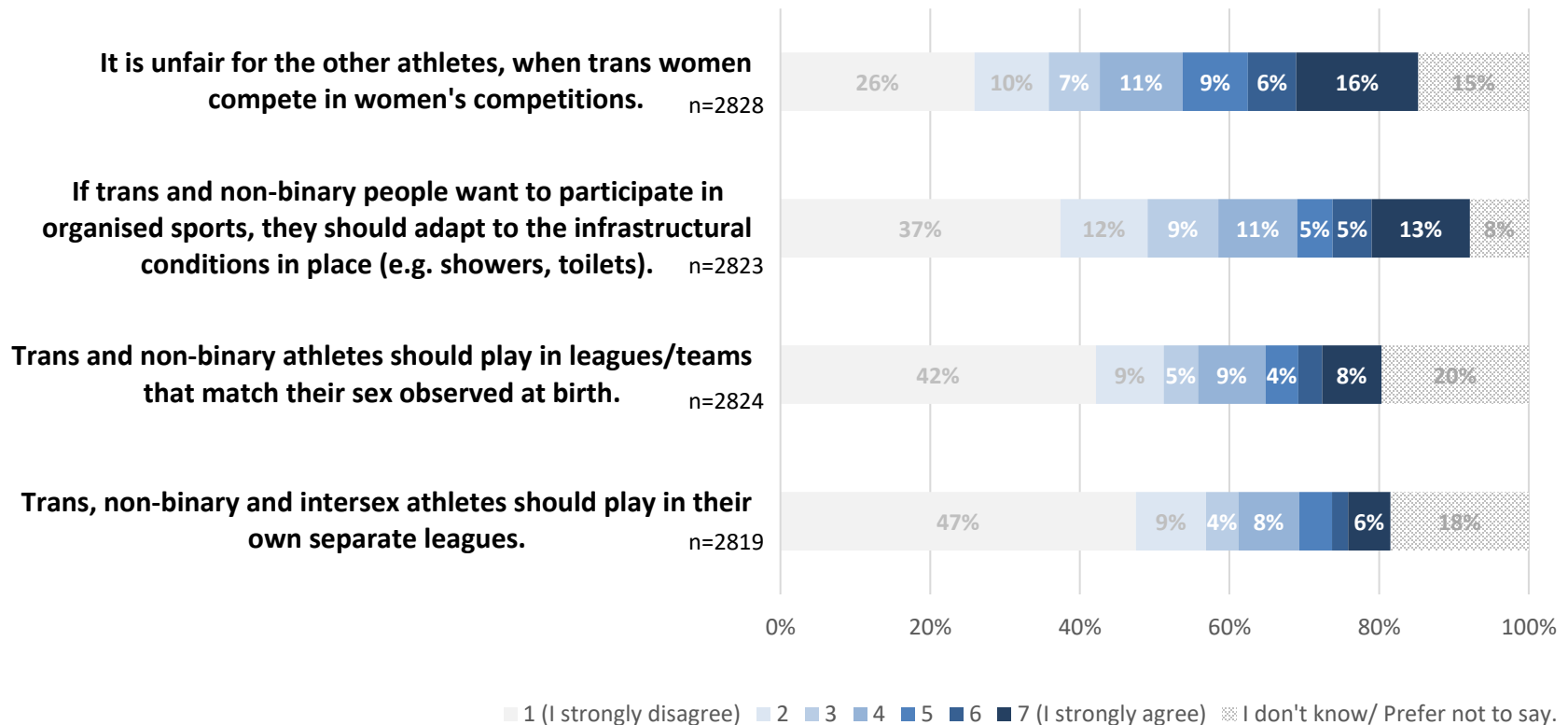
## Attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity I



1

# Macro level

## Attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity II





1

## Macro level

### *Attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity I*

The vast majority of respondents strongly disagree that the presence of lesbian, gay athletes adversely affects the image of a sports organisation (78%) nor the presence of trans- or non-binary athletes (72%).

Furthermore, respondents express a sensibility when it comes to homonegative language: three quarters of the respondents agree to some extent that people should speak out against sayings like ‘What a gay pass’, while 16% disagree to some extent.

The majority of respondents disagrees (54%) that considering LGBT+ issues is excessive political correctness - however, more than a quarter of the respondents agree with the statement, and around a tenth share neutral attitudes or ticked *I don't know*. This general attitude is further substantiated with the item that organised sports have to make efforts to consider specific interests of trans and non-binary athletes: 58% agree, 23% disagree, 11% are undecided and 8% don't know.





1

## Macro level

### *Attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity II*

The respondents' attitudes on fairness and the participation of TIN athletes reveal heterogeneous attitudes and quite a big share that indicates *I don't know* or *Prefer not to say*.

About 60% of the respondents disagree to some extent that trans, (intersex) and non-binary athletes should play in their own leagues or in leagues that match their sex observed at birth. Roughly one fifth is undecided on these points and the rest shows neutral attitudes or agrees to these statements. Again around 60% disagree that trans and non-binary athletes should adapt to the infrastructural conditions, while 23% agree, 11% share neutral attitudes and 8% are undecided.

The fairness item shows ambivalences in the respondents attitudes: 43% disagree that it is unfair for the other athletes, when trans women compete in women's competitions, while 31% agree to this statement. 15% are undecided and 11% share neutral attitudes.



1

# Macro level

## *Stereotypes and attitudes – by country*

Sum scales for stereotypes about (1) male & female, (2) lesbian & gay, (3) trans, intersex and non-binary athletes and (4) and attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity (scales range from 1 to 7 with 7 showing approval of stereotypes/excluding attitudes)

	Total M (SEM)	AUT M (SEM)	GER M (SEM)	ITA M (SEM)	ESP M (SEM)	UK M (SEM)	Other M (SEM)	Significance
<b>(1) Stereotypes about male and female athletes</b> (n=2599)	<b>2.17</b> (.023)	<b>2.16</b> (.076)	<b>2.16</b> (.030)	<b>2.07</b> (.098)	<b>2.31</b> (.057)	<b>1.72</b> (.080)	<b>2.13</b> (.110)	Chi <sup>2</sup> (5) = 31.218, <b>p &lt; .001***</b>
<b>(2) Stereotypes about lesbian and gay athletes</b> (n=2916)	<b>1.42</b> (.020)	<b>1.22</b> (.050)	<b>1.38</b> (.026)	<b>1.59</b> (.111)	<b>1.53</b> (.050)	<b>1.38</b> (.086)	<b>1.55</b> (.097)	Chi <sup>2</sup> (5) = 27.228 <b>p &lt; .001***</b>
<b>(3) Stereotypes about trans, non-binary and intersex athletes</b> (n=1332)	<b>3.04</b> (.042)	<b>3.03</b> (.156)	<b>2.97</b> (.056)	<b>2.76</b> (.161)	<b>3.22</b> (.097)	<b>2.99</b> (.200)	<b>3.43</b> (.243)	Chi <sup>2</sup> (5) = 9.644 <b>p = .086</b>
<b>(4) Attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity</b> (n=1649)	<b>2.63</b> (.032)	<b>2.32</b> (.097)	<b>2.67</b> (.042)	<b>2.54</b> (.104)	<b>2.82</b> (.076)	<b>1.97</b> (.121)	<b>2.64</b> (0.198)	Chi <sup>2</sup> (5) = 56.881 <b>p &lt; .001***</b>

n=102-245 n=730-1451 n=86-136 n=271-481 n= 58-137 n=56-118

Kruskall Wallis Test – Mean Differences between groups



1

## Macro level

### *Stereotypes and attitudes – by country*

For the country comparison three sum scales with stereotypes against (1) male and female athletes, (2) lesbian and gay athletes, (3) trans, intersex and non-binary athletes and one sum scale (4) with attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in organised sports have been built. All scales display the means for the included items and range from 1 (strong disagreement) to 7 (strong agreement).

In total there is a very low level of agreement to stereotypes about LG athletes ( $m=1.42$ ), far lower than about gender (2.17) and particularly TIN athletes (3.04). Gender stereotypes are least expressed in the UK (1.72) and least rejected in Spain (2.31). Stereotypes about lesbian and gay athletes are least expressed in Austria (1.22) and least rejected in Italy (1.59). The country differences with regard to gender and sexual orientation are significant. Stereotypes about trans, intersex and non-binary athletes do not differ significantly between the countries. The most negative attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in sports are seen in Spain (2.82) and the least negative attitudes in the UK (1.97).



2

## Empirical findings

### *Organisational factors*

#### Meso level

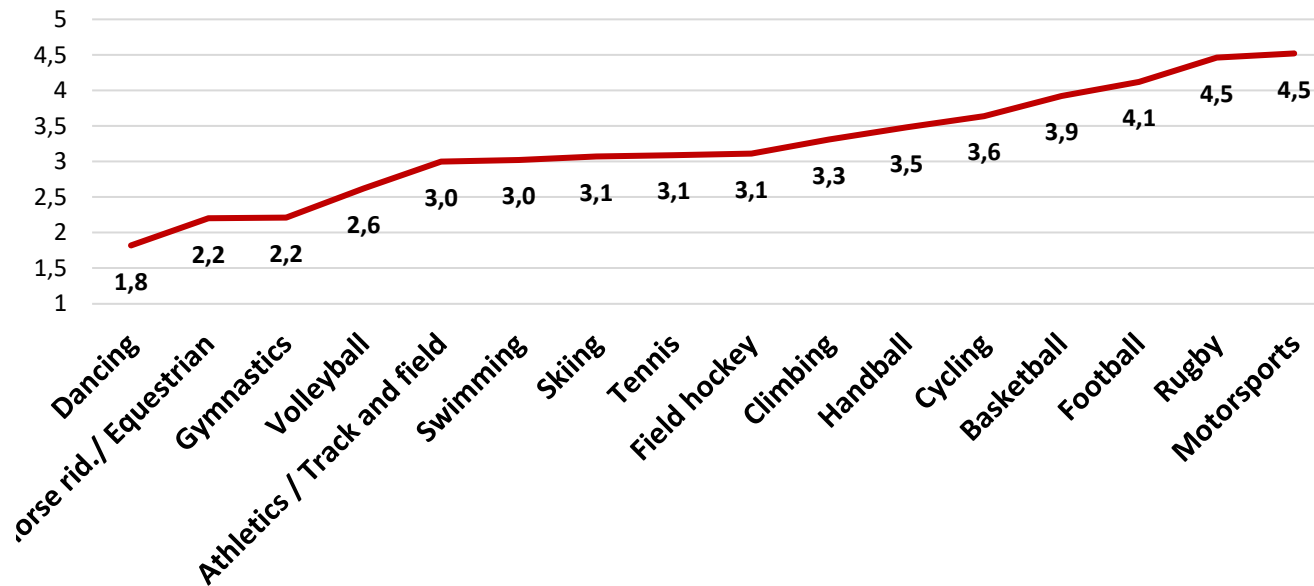
- Gender connotation of sports
- Organisational measures towards equality and anti-discrimination
- Anti-discrimination work
- Gender ratio in sports organisations
- Diversity in statuses and pursuit of discrimination cases
- Coach behaviour
- Witnessed discrimination (sexism, homo- and transnegativity)

2

## Meso level

### Gender connotation of sports

What is the image of the following sports in your country: How do you think people would describe them? (1 very feminine, 5 very masculine)



n=2044







2

## Meso level

### *Gender connotation of sports*

The respondents have been asked whether they have ever heard sports referred to as being 'masculine' or 'feminine'. 87% of the respondents affirm this and are further asked about the image of specific sports in their respective countries. The scale ranges from (1) very feminine to (5) very masculine with 3 displaying neutral sports.

The graph illustrates that the majority of sports are perceived as gender neutral, with mean values ranging around 3, such as athletics/track and field, swimming, tennis or field hockey.

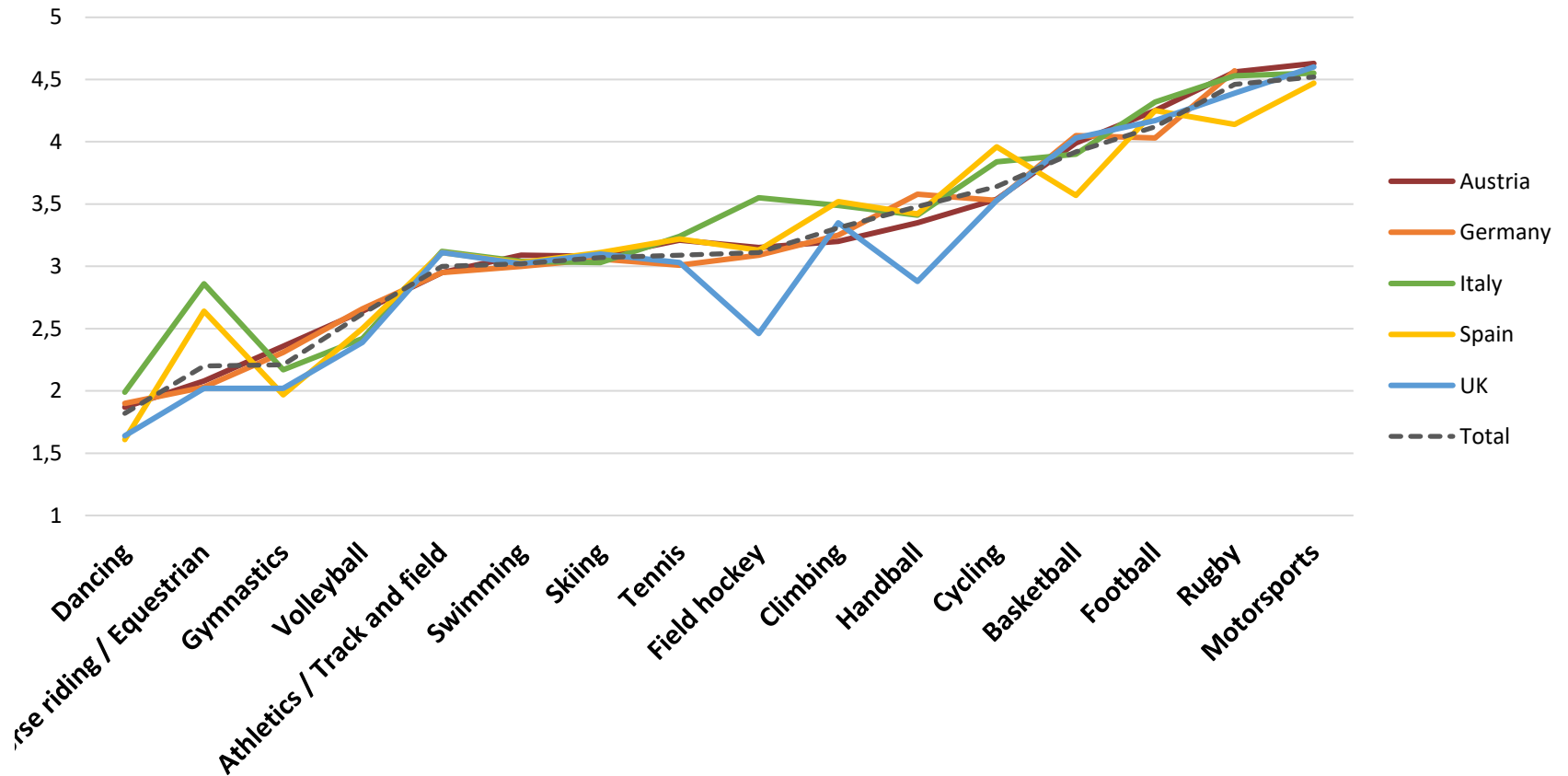
At the same time there are more sports that are linked with masculinity than femininity. Some of them have an image as being very masculine such as motorsport and rugby, while sports that are indicated as being feminine are less strongly connotated with femininity, such as dancing, horse riding/equestrian or gymnastics.



2

## Meso level

### Gender connotation of sports – by country





2

## Meso level

### *Gender connotation of sports – by country*

The country comparison of the gender connotation of the sports reveals rather similar images of the different sports in Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK. Nevertheless some differences occur:

- Horse riding/equestrian is described as neutral in Italy and Spain compared to the other countries' feminine image of it .
- In Italy the image of field hockey appears to be more masculine, while in the UK field hockey is described as a rather feminine sport.
- Handball is labelled as rather neutral in the UK, while the rest ascribe a small tendency towards masculinity.
- The image of basketball and rugby is slightly less masculine in Spain compared to all the other countries.
- German and Austrian respondents more or less replicate the general findings, as no particular differences emerge.



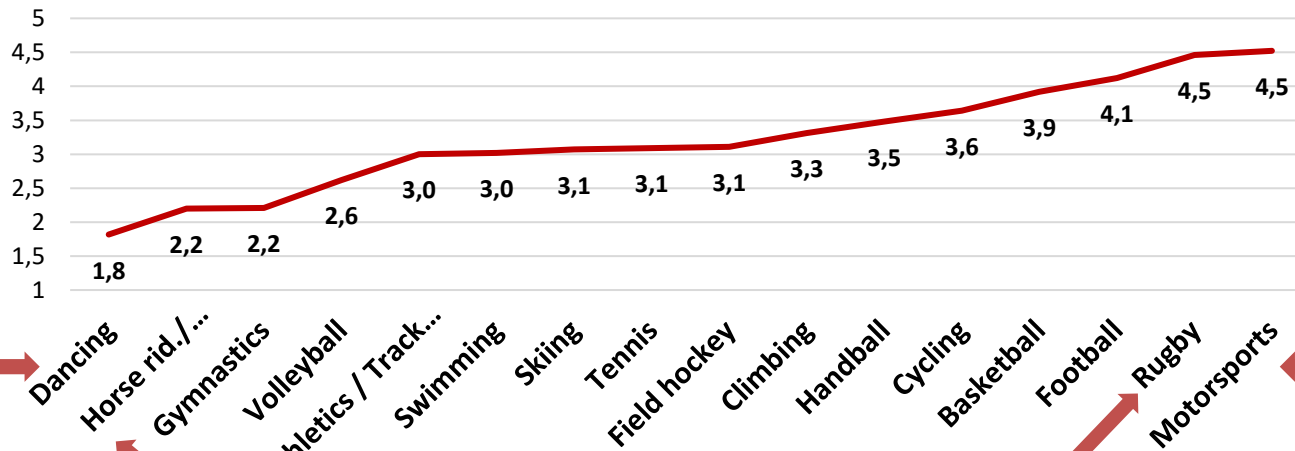
2

# Meso level

## Gender connotation of sports – characteristics

Why do you think people refer to this specific sport as being very feminine or very masculine? Because it is characterised by...

(only asked to those who indicated a sports as 1 very feminine or 5 very masculine)



- Aesthetics/graceful movements
- Physical flexibility/mobility

- Aesthetics/graceful movements

- Danger/violence/risk-taking
- Physical strength/force

- Danger/violence/risk-taking
- Speed/rapidity of (re-)action

n=2044





2

## Meso level

### *Gender connotation of sports – characteristics*

More than half of respondents who describe dancing and horse riding as very feminine, tick aesthetics/graceful movements as a typical characteristic and for dancing also flexibility/mobility. In contrast, motorsport and rugby appear as typical masculine sports, both because of danger, violence and risk-taking. Rugby is further associated with physical strength and force, while motorsports with speed and rapid actions.

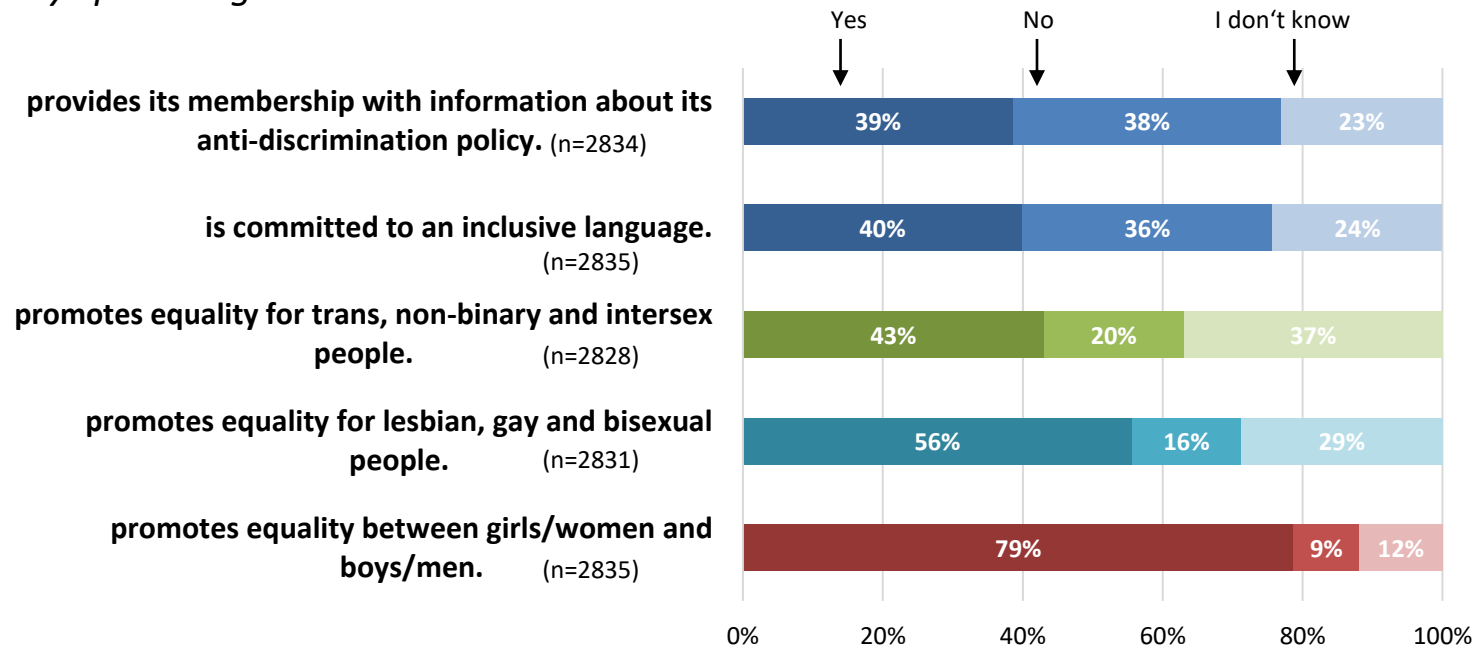


2

## Meso level

### Organisational measures – equality and anti-discrimination

My sports organisation ...





2

## Meso level

### *Organisational measures – equality and anti-discrimination*

Measures towards equality and anti-discrimination that are undertaken by the respondents sports organisations have been assessed.

Almost 80% report that (binary) gender equality is promoted in their sports organisation. The share is lower with regard to the promotion of equality for sexual diversity (56%) and for gender diversity (43%). At the same time: More than one-third (37%) lack knowledge about their organisation promoting equality for gender diversity and 29% don't know if their organisation promotes equality for sexual diversity.

About 40% of respondents report that their organisation promotes inclusive language or informs its members about its anti-discrimination policies. About the same share report that these policies are not implemented and around a quarter of respondents has no knowledge in this regard.

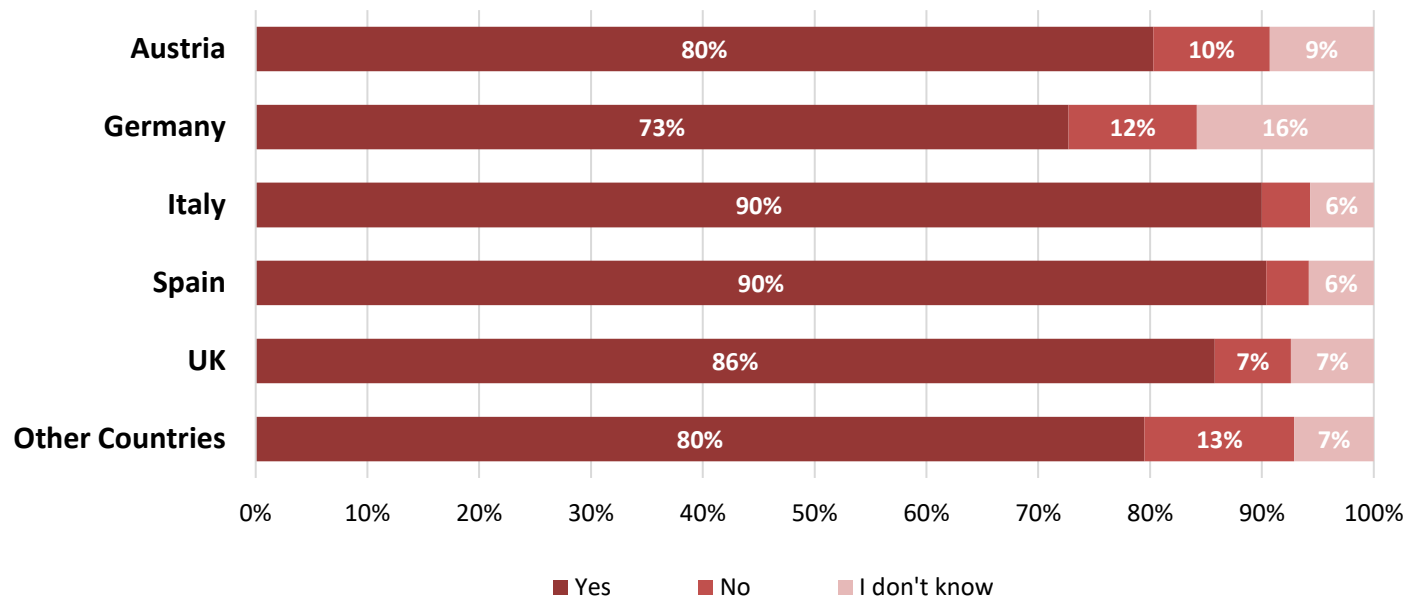


2

## Meso level

### Organisational measures: gender equality – by country

*My sports organisation ...  
promotes equality between girls/women and boys/men.*



n=2776; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .133





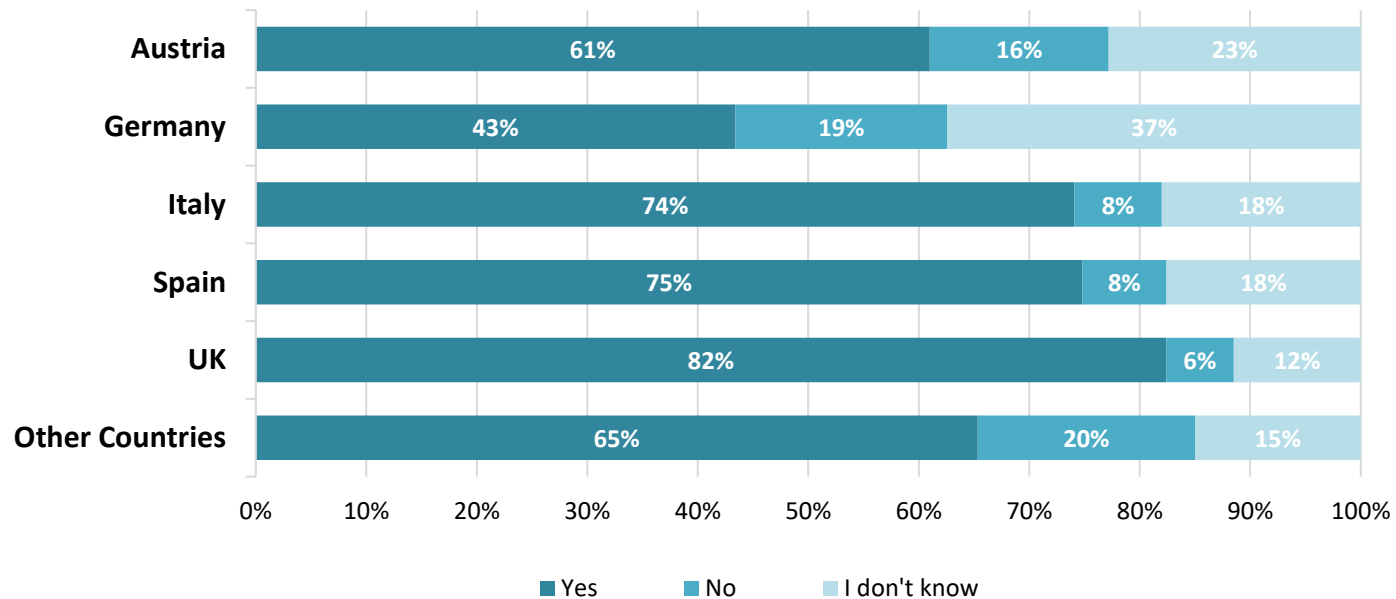


2

## Meso level

### Organisational measures: LGB equality – by country

*My sports organisation ... promotes equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people.*



n=2772; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .213

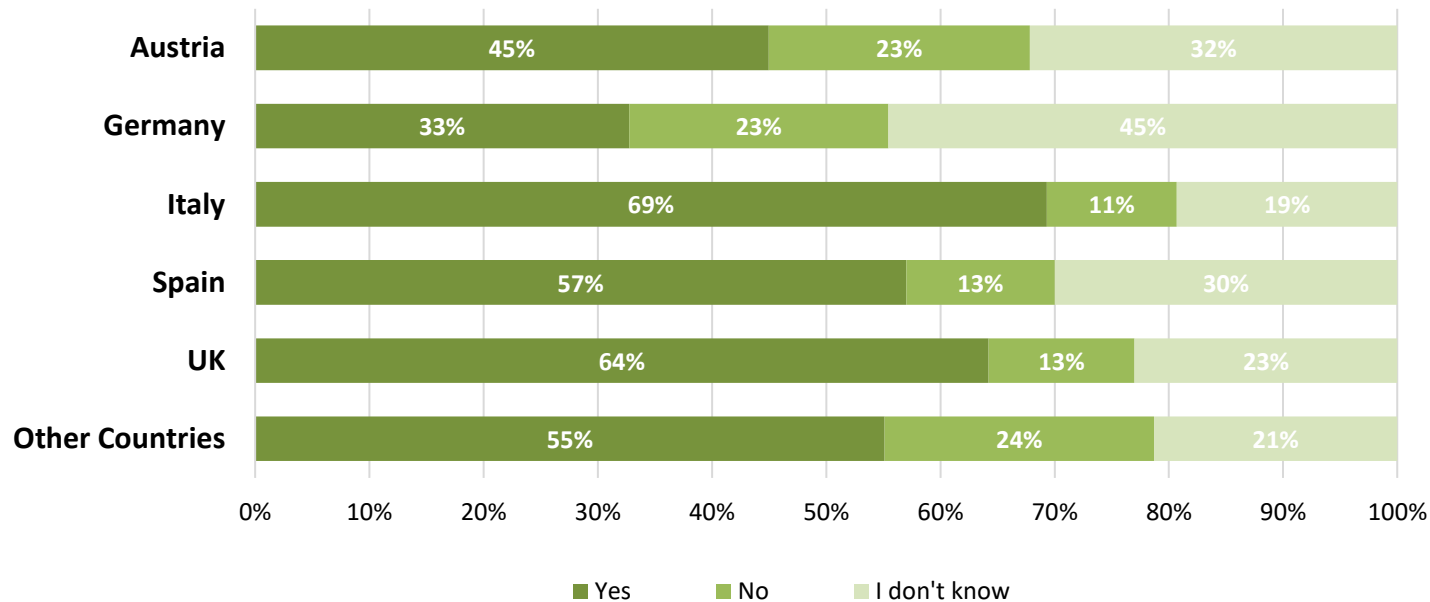


2

## Meso level

### Organisational measures: TIN equality – by country

*My sports organisation ...  
promotes equality for trans, intersex and non-binary people.*



n=2769; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .188





2

## Meso level

### *Organisational measures: equality – by country*

With regard to promoting equality for women/girls as well as for sexual and gender diverse people, we see relevant and significant differences between the countries.

Sports organisations in the UK, Italy and partly Spain are reported to implement much more measures to promote equality for girls/women, LGB people as well as TIN people compared to other countries. In contrast, German sports organisations have the lowest share regarding the implemented equality measures in all dimensions.

There is a kind of hierarchy with reference to promoting equality: In each country, gender equality is most often promoted in the respondents' sports organisations, followed by equality for sexual diverse people. Equality for gender diverse people is least often promoted.

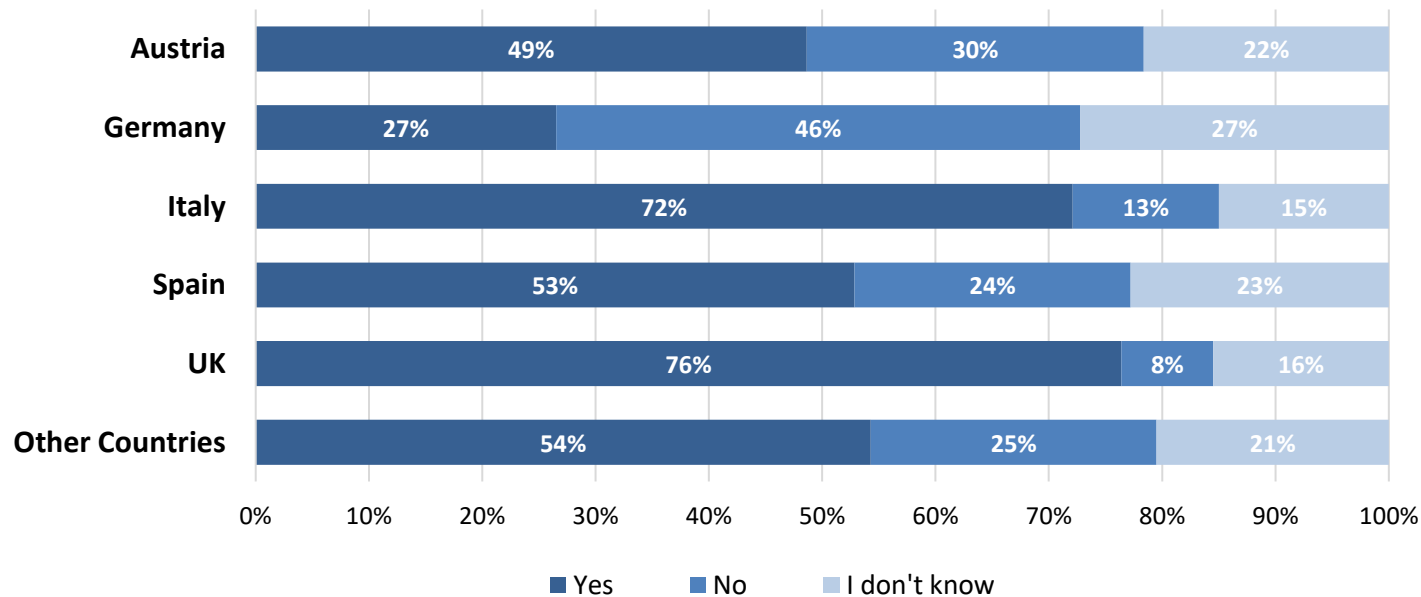


2

## Meso level

### Organisational measures: language – by country

*My sports organisation ...  
is committed to an inclusive language.*



n=2776; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .245

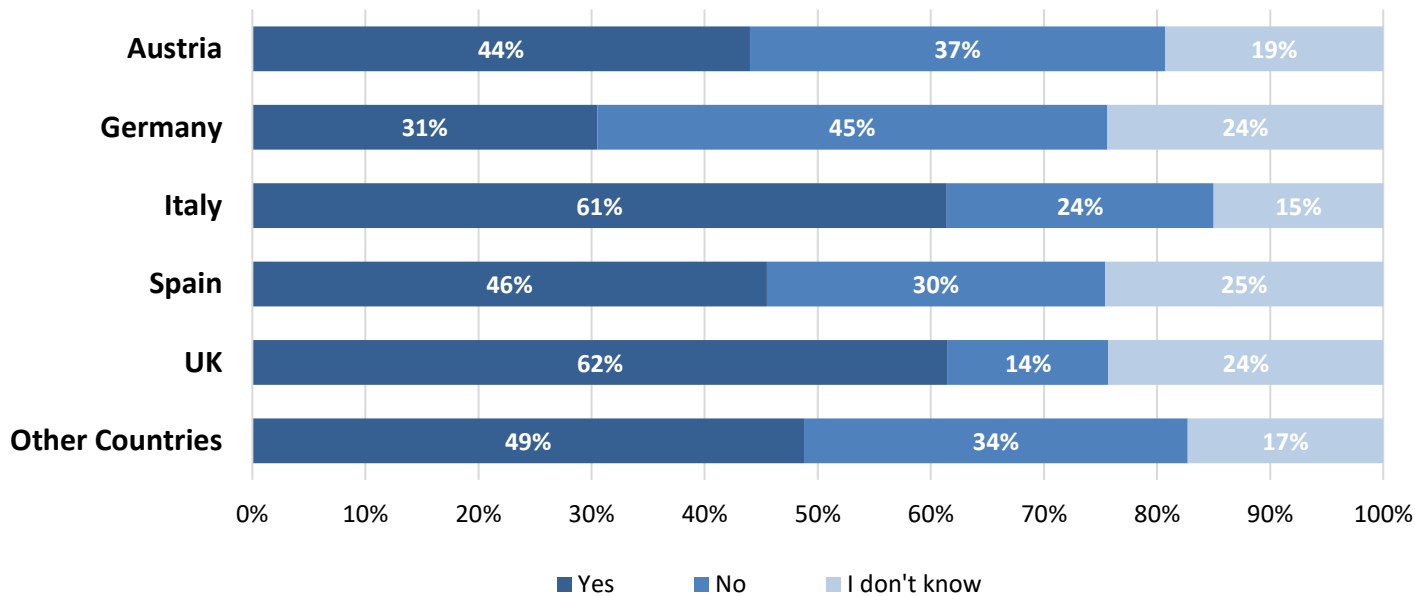




## 2 Meso level

### *Organisational measures: information about policy – by country*

*My sports organisation ...  
provides its membership with information about its anti-discrimination policy.*



n=2775; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .163





2

## Meso level

### *Organisational measures: language and policies – by country*

With regard to the commitment to an inclusive language and the provision of information on anti-discrimination policies, the ranking of the countries is similar: the UK and Italy have the highest shares with regard to these measures (61% - 76%), followed by Spain and Austria.

Germany lags far behind – not even one third of German respondents report that their sports organisations provide their members with information on their anti-discrimination policies, and only one quarter reports about their organisations being committed to an inclusive language.

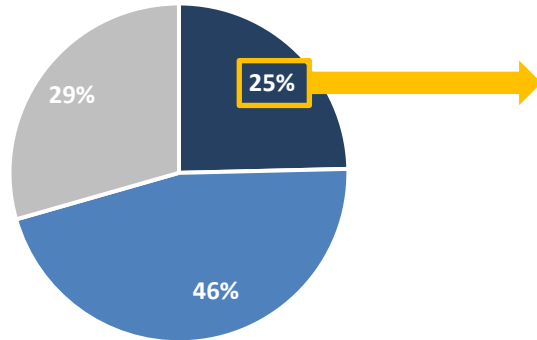


2

## Meso level

### Anti-discrimination work

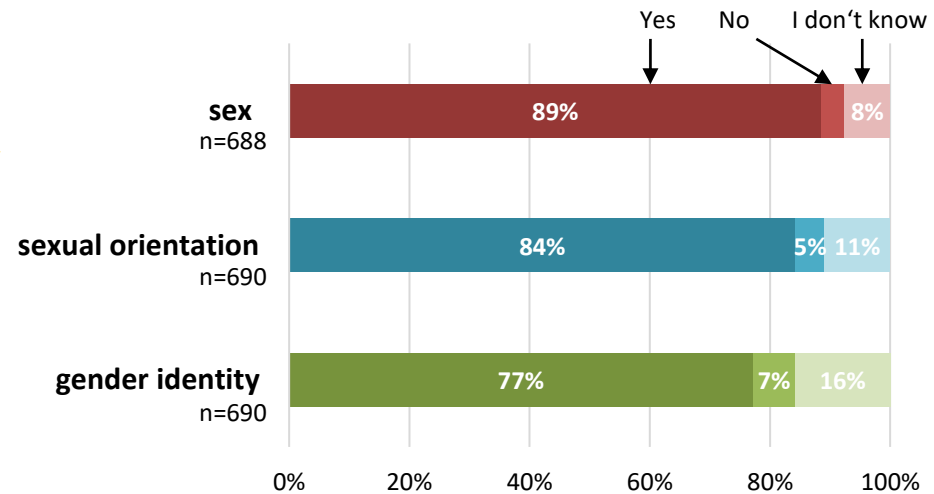
*Is there an anti-discrimination function in your sports organisation?*



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

N=2838

*The scope of its anti-discrimination work includes discrimination based on ...*





2

## Meso level

### *Anti-discrimination work*

Only 25% of all respondents report that their organisation has an anti-discrimination function, whereas 46% negate the existence and 29% lack knowledge in that.

Those who report that their organisations have an anti-discrimination function, are asked further details about the organisations' anti-discrimination work. In most of the sports organisations, discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity falls within the scope of their anti-discrimination work. Sex is the most prominent focus (89%), followed by sexual orientation (84%) and gender identity (77%).

16% of the respondents do not know if gender identity is considered within the organisations' anti-discrimination work, while for sexual orientation 11% and for sex 8% do not know.





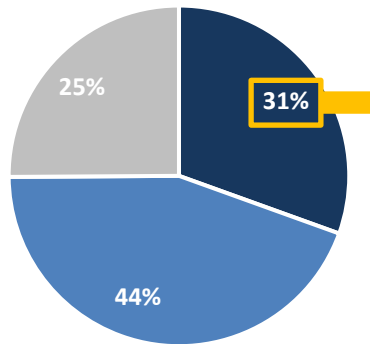
2

# Meso level

## Anti-discrimination work



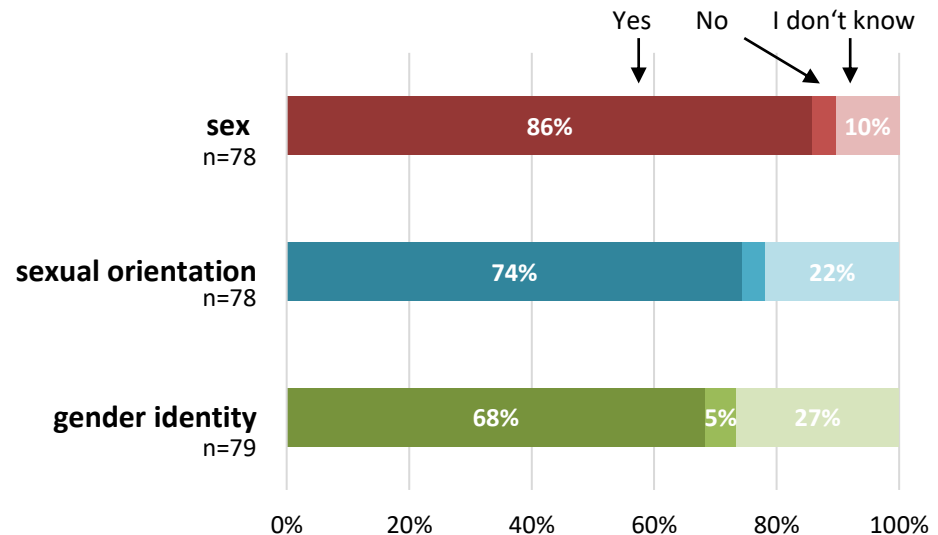
*Is there an anti-discrimination function in your sports organisation?*



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

n= 259

*The scope of its anti-discrimination work includes discrimination based on ...*



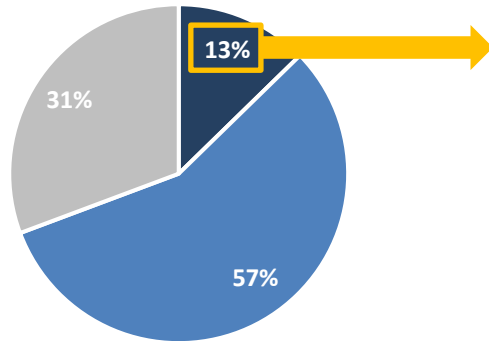
2

## Meso level

### Anti-discrimination work



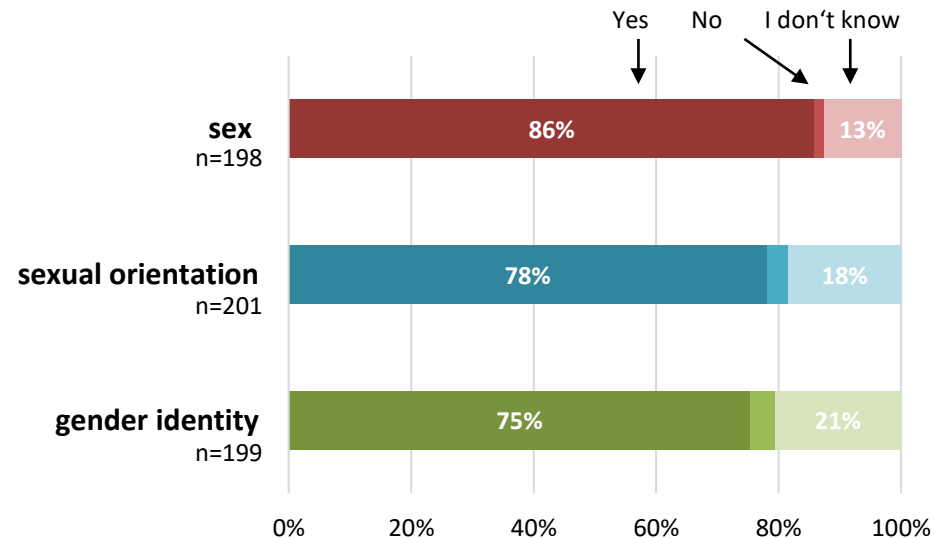
*Is there an anti-discrimination function in your sports organisation?*



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

n= 1603

*The scope of its anti-discrimination work includes discrimination based on ...*



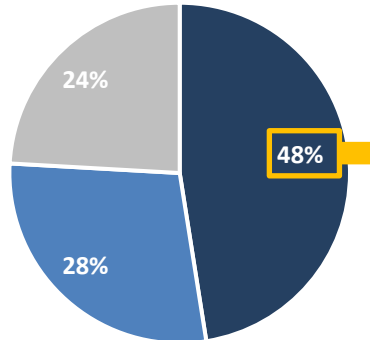
2

## Meso level

### Anti-discrimination work



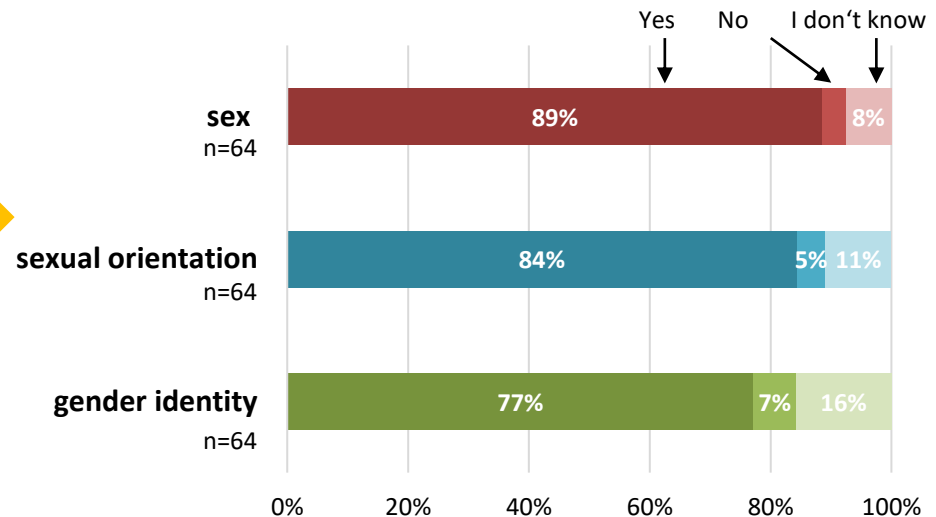
*Is there an anti-discrimination function in your sports organisation?*



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

n= 141

*The scope of its anti-discrimination work includes discrimination based on ...*



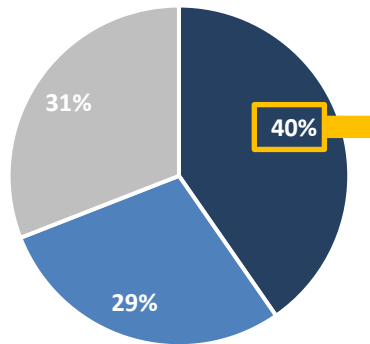
2

## Meso level

### Anti-discrimination work



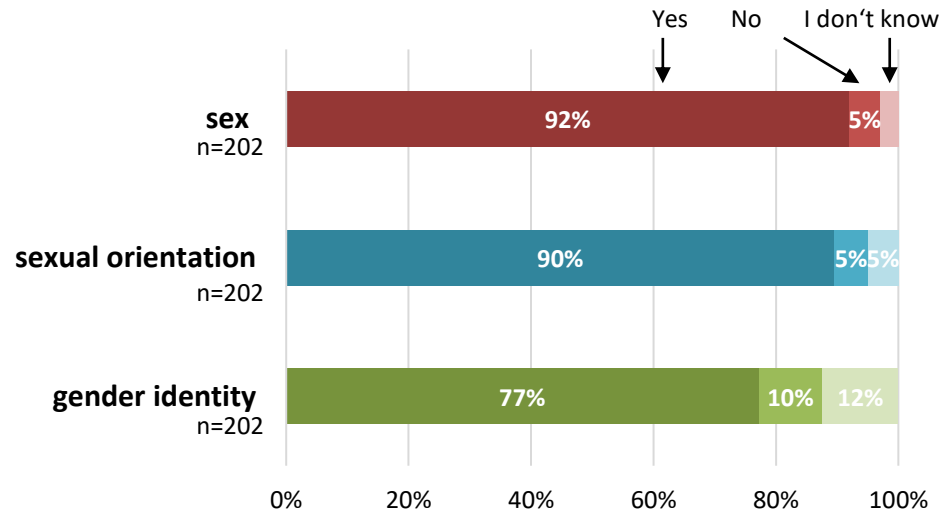
*Is there an anti-discrimination function in your sports organisation?*



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

n= 501

*The scope of its anti-discrimination work includes discrimination based on ...*





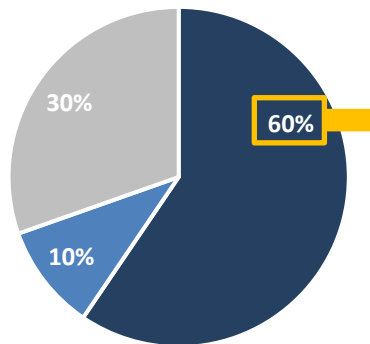
2

## Meso level

### Anti-discrimination work



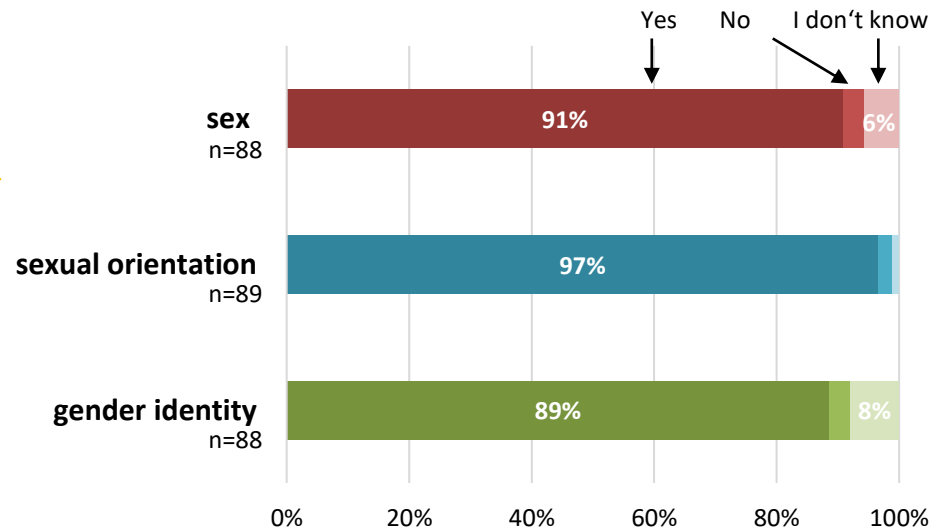
*Is there an anti-discrimination function in your sports organisation?*



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

n= 259

*The scope of its anti-discrimination work includes discrimination based on ...*





2

## Meso level

### *Anti-discrimination work – by country*

The findings regarding the anti-discrimination work in the sports organisations differ substantially by country. The UK is in the lead with 60% of the respondents reporting that their sports organisation has an anti-discrimination function, followed by Italy (48%), Spain (40%) and Austria (31%). Germany lags far behind with only 13% of respondents reporting they have an anti-discrimination function in their sports organisation.

Except for the UK, sex is the main focus of the anti-discrimination work in all countries, followed by sexual orientation and gender identity. The share of respondents who don't know if the respective dimension is in the scope of the organisation's anti-discrimination work is highest for gender identity, followed by sexual orientation and sex, which resembles the overall finding in all countries (except the UK).



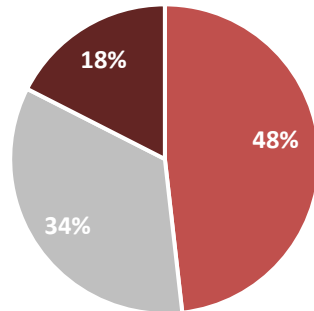
2

## Meso level

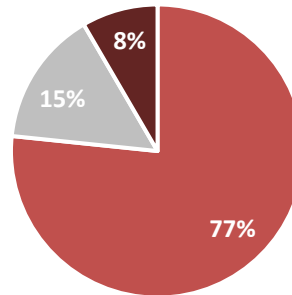
*Gender ratio (questions only for board members/managers)*

*Please indicate the gender ratio between men and women in your sports organisation.*

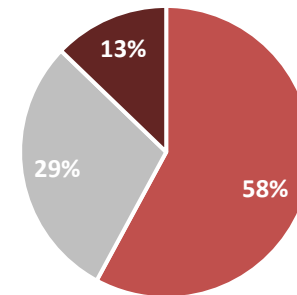
**Among athletes**  
(n=788)



**Among coaches**  
(n=772)



**Among board members/  
managers** (n=803)



■ More men    ■ Parity    ■ More women

I don't know: max 4%



2

## Meso level

### *Gender ratio (questions only for board members/managers)*

Only those who answered from the perspective of a board member/manager were asked about the gender ratio in their sports organisations.

The biggest gender bias has been identified among the coaches with 77% of board members/managers reporting more men as coaches compared to women as coaches (8%) or gender parity (15%). More than half of the surveyed board members/managers report more men being in the boards of their sports organisation (58%), while 13% report more women and 29% report gender parity in their boards. The smallest gender gap appears among the athletes: 48% of the board members/managers report more sportsmen, 18% more sportswomen and 34% a gender parity among the athletes in their organisation.

Most of the board members know about the gender ratios in their organisations - only between one and four percent ticked *I don't know*.



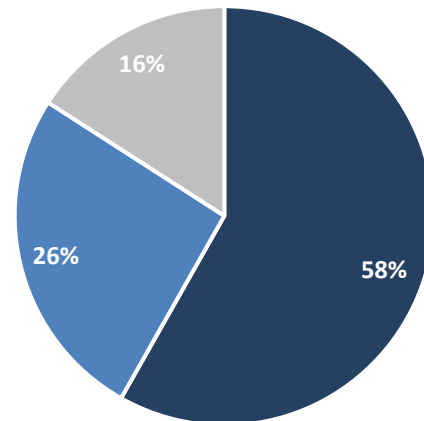




## 2 Meso level

*Diversity in statutes (questions only for board members/managers)*

*In my sports organisation, diversity and equality is included in the statutes/  
mission statement and/or set of core values.*



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

n=807

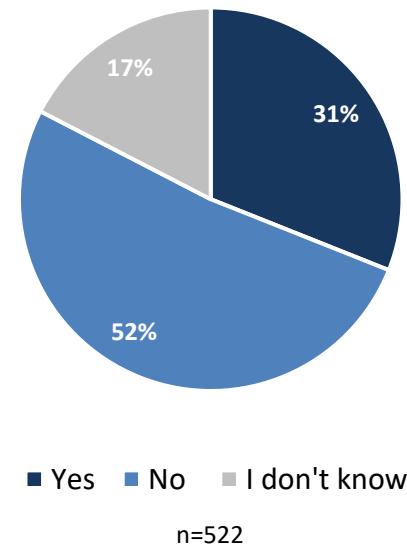
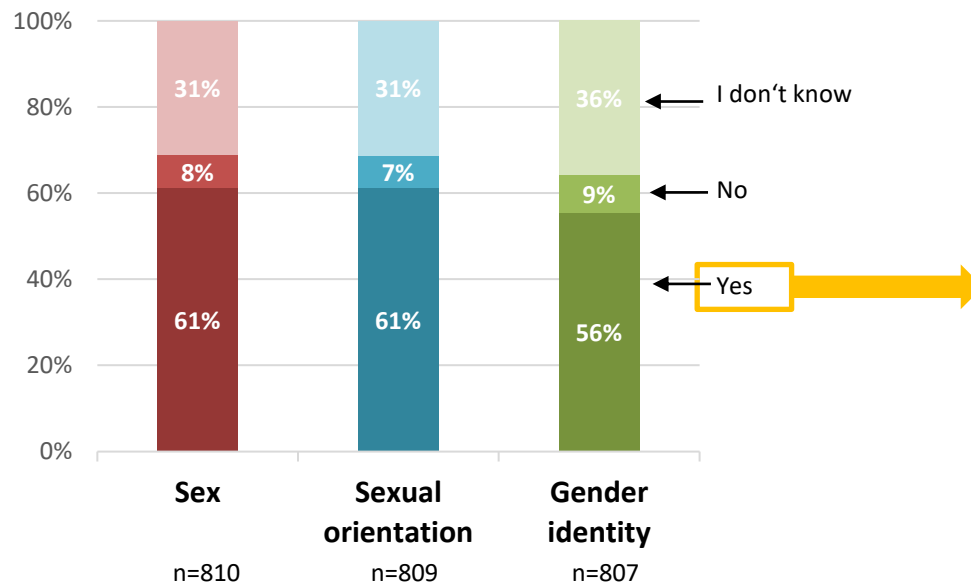


## 2 Meso level

*Pursuit of discrimination cases (questions only for board members/managers)*

*In my sports organisation, cases of discrimination are consistently pursued if they are based on...*

*If discrimination occurs, it is dealt with by means of a standardised organisation-wide procedure and process.*





2

## Meso level

### *Diversity in statutes and pursuit of discrimination cases*

As the board member/managers report, in 58% of their organisations diversity and equality is included in the statutes/mission statement and/or set of core values. One quarter negates it and 16% report having no knowledge on it.

Regardless of the type of discrimination, about 60% of the board members/managers report that their organisations pursue cases of discrimination. While less than 10% of the board members negate it, about one third do not know if cases of discrimination on grounds of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity are consistently pursued.

Among those who confirm the consistent pursuit of cases in their sports organisations, 52% deny having a standardised organisation-wide procedure and process, while 31% confirm it and 17% do not know.

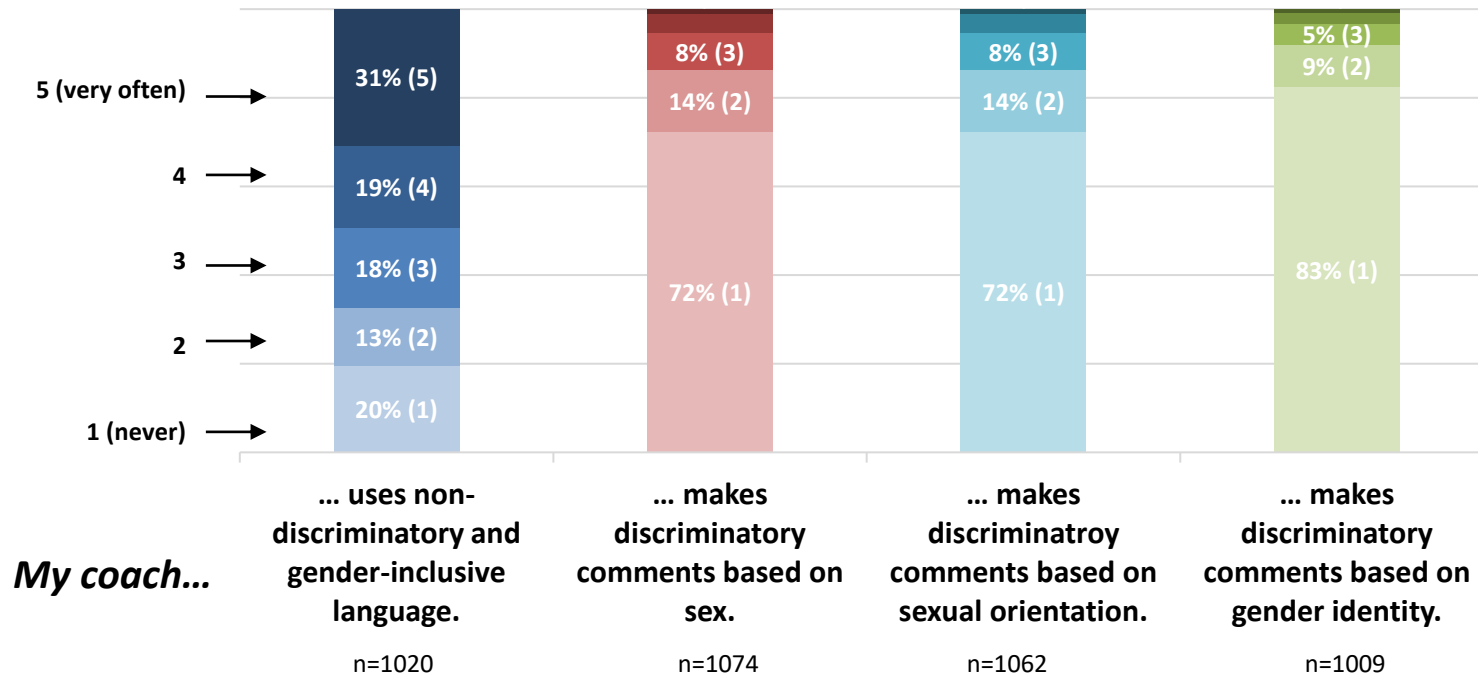


2

## Meso level

### Coach behaviour (questions only for athletes)

Please think about the behaviour of the coach in your main organised sports activity and indicate how often these actions have occurred in the last 12 months.





2

## Meso level

### *Coach behaviour (questions only for athletes)*

50% of the athletes report that their coach (very) often uses non-discriminatory and gender-inclusive language (cat. 4 and 5) and more than 70% report that their coach never makes discriminatory comments based on sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.

On the contrary, one third mentions that their coach never (cat. 1) or seldom (cat. 2) uses non-discriminatory and gender inclusive language, but obviously this does not automatically correspond to using a discriminatory language, as the shares for these statements are much smaller (cat. 4 & 5: discriminatory comments based on sex 5.4%, sexual orientation 5.4% and gender identity 3.2%).

No relevant differences between discriminatory comments based on sex, sexual orientation and gender identity by the respondents' coaches occur.



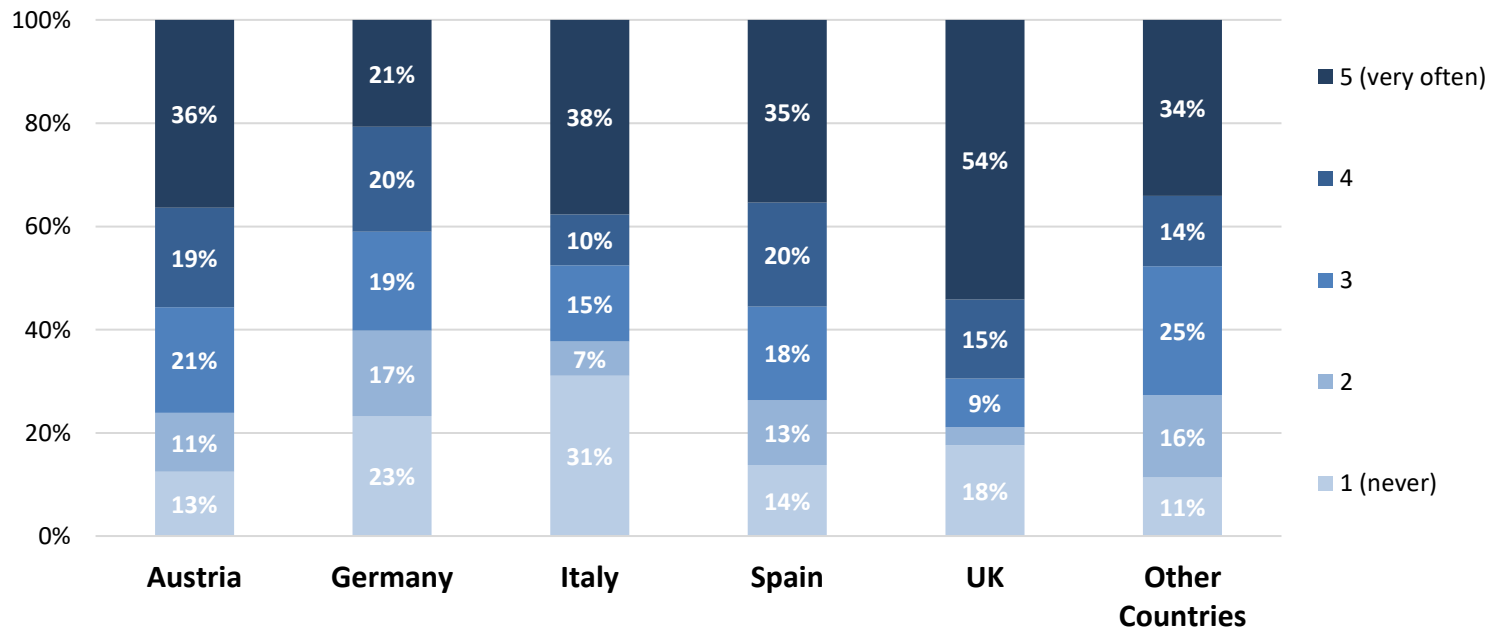
2

## Meso level

### Coach behaviour: non-discriminatory language – by country

My coach...

**uses non-discriminatory and gender inclusive language.**



(n=1000;  $p < .001^{***}$ ; Cramer-V= .135)

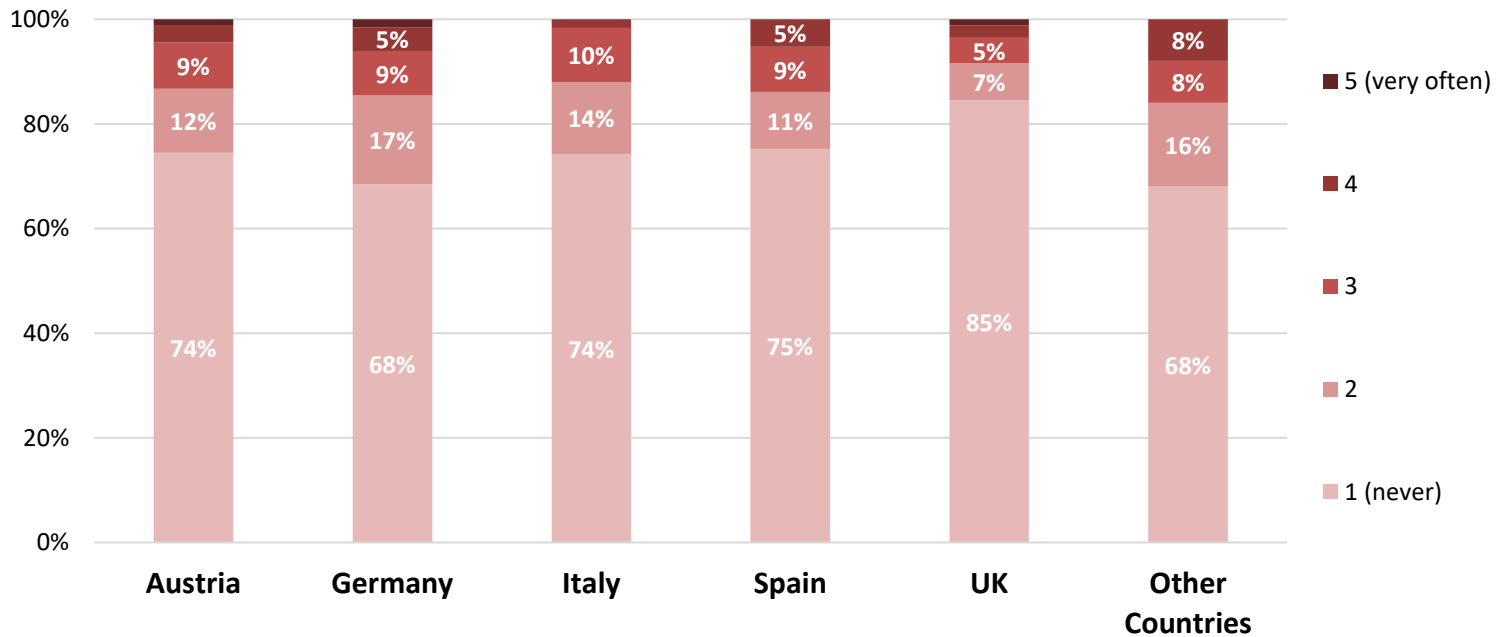


2

## Meso level

### Coach behaviour: discriminatory comments I – by country

*My coach...  
makes discriminatory comments based on sex.*



(n=1054; p= .299; Cramer-V= .074)

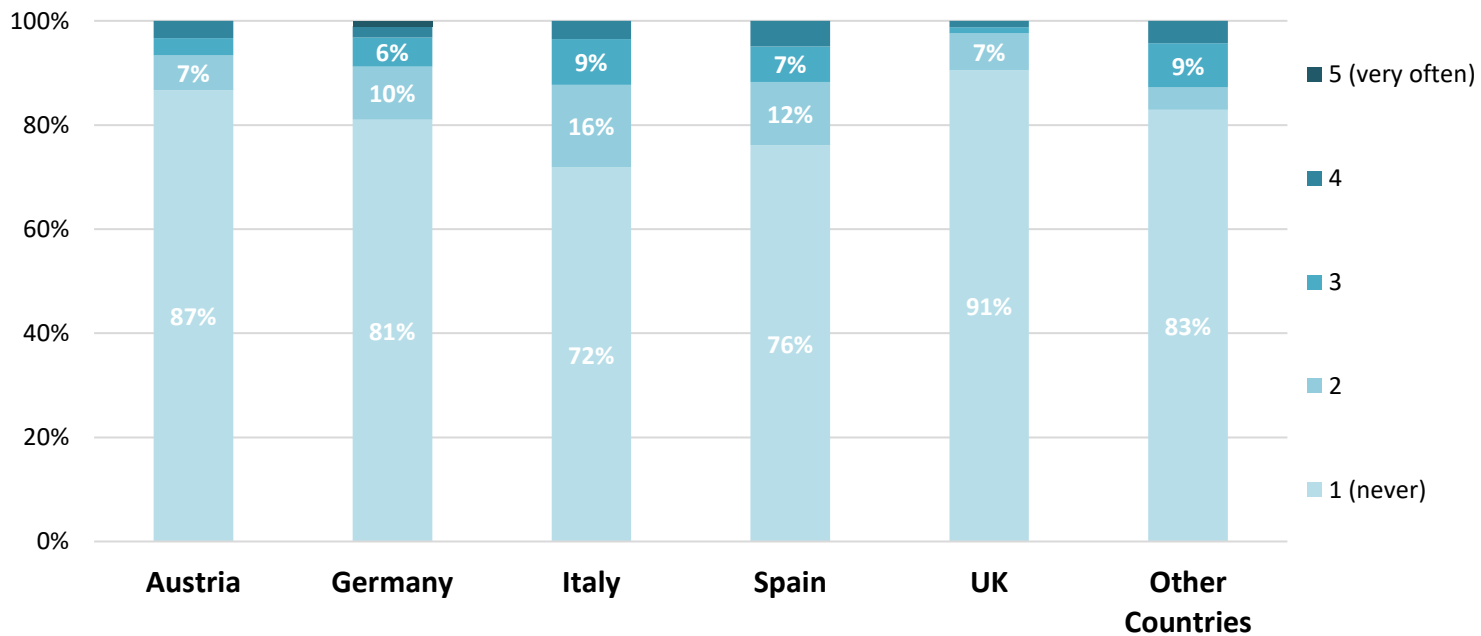
2

## Meso level

### *Coach behaviour: discriminatory comments II – by country*

*My coach...*

***makes discriminatory comments based on sexual orientation.***



(n=1041; p= .168; Cramer-V= .079)





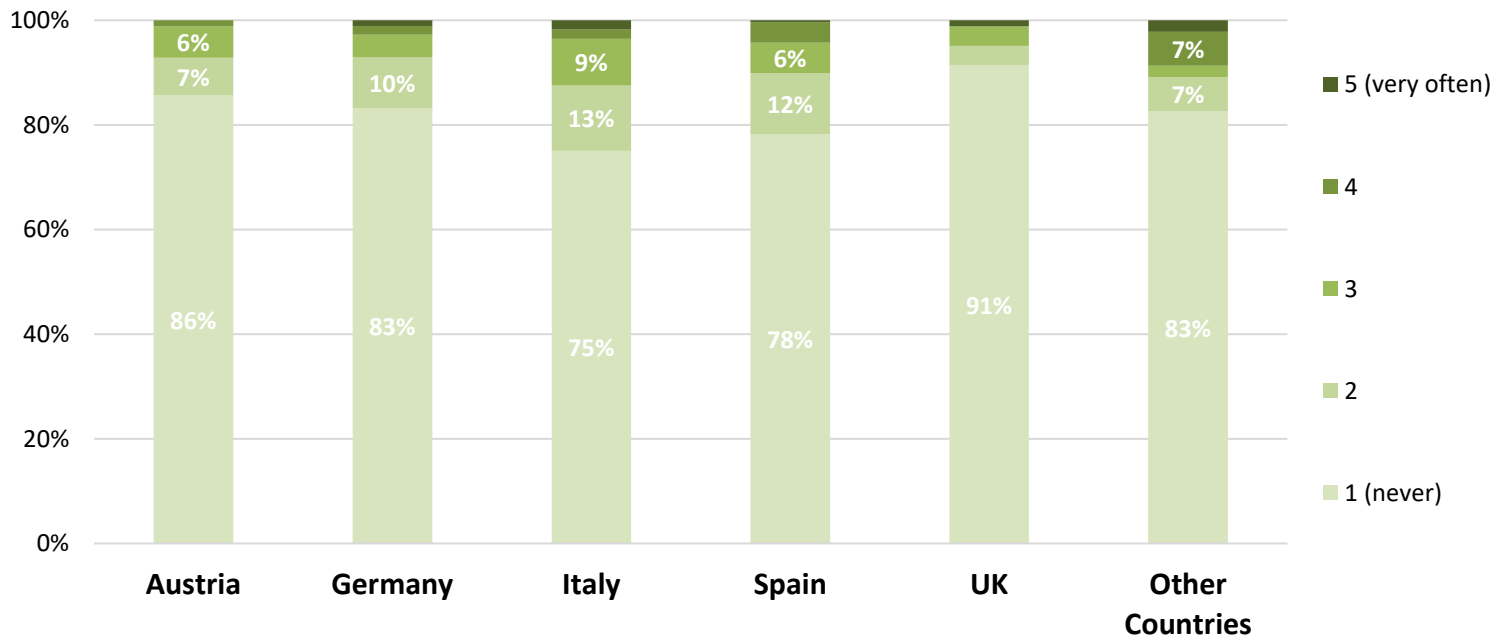
2

## Meso level

### Coach behaviour: discriminatory comments III – by country

My coach...

***makes discriminatory comments based on gender identity.***



(n=988; p= .265; Cramer-V= .077)





2

## Meso level

### *Coach behaviour – by country*

With regard to the coaches' use of (anti-)discriminatory language and comments there are few differences between the countries. Only the use of an anti-discriminatory and gender inclusive language shows significant differences: In the UK, 69% of the coaches are reported to use an anti-discriminatory and gender inclusive language (cat. 5 and 4), followed by Austria and Spain (55%), Italy (48%) and Germany (41%).

With regard to the further dimensions the data confirms that British coaches seem to make very rarely discriminatory comments based on sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. But these differences are rather small and not significant.

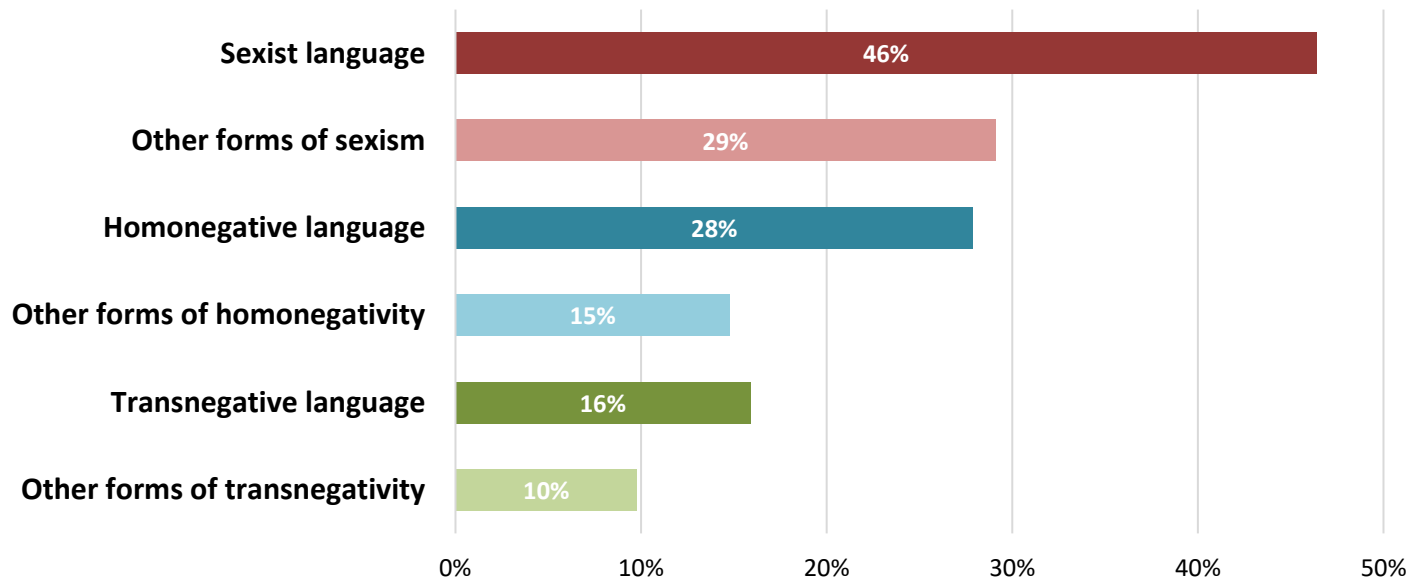




## 2 Meso level

### *Witnessed discrimination*

*We would like to know, whether you have witnessed discrimination in your main sports activity or organisation in the last 12 months (values show affirmation).*



N=2838





2

## Meso level

### *Witnessed discrimination*

10% to 50% of all respondents have witnessed some kind of discrimination in their main sports activity or organisation in the last 12 months prior to the study. The data shows a quantitative ranking of witnessing discriminatory incidents with sexism ranking first, followed by homo- and transnegativity. The respective discriminatory use of language is always more often witnessed than the other forms of sexist, homo- or transnegative behaviour.

The use of sexist language is most often reported (46%), while 28% of the respondents witness homonegative and 16% transnegative language.

With respect to other forms of the respective discrimination forms, sexism is witnessed by 29%, homonegativity by 15% and transnegativity by 10% of the respondents (athletes, coaches, board members/managers and volunteers).

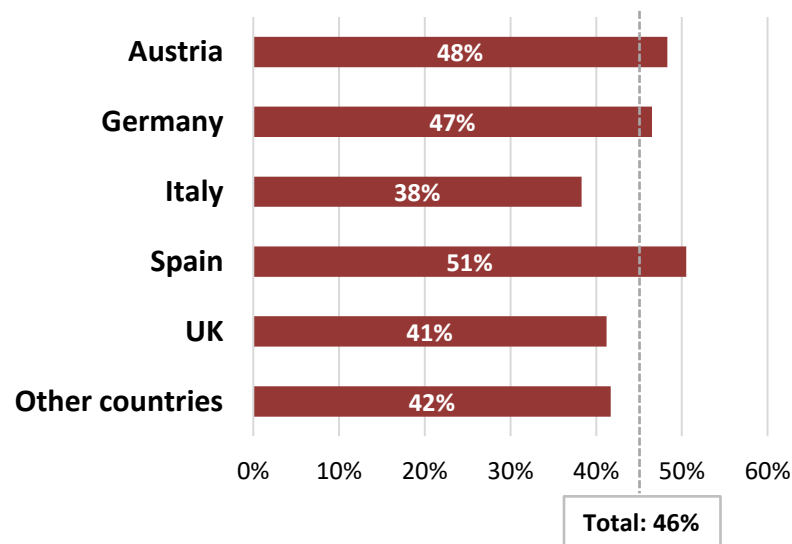


2

## Meso level

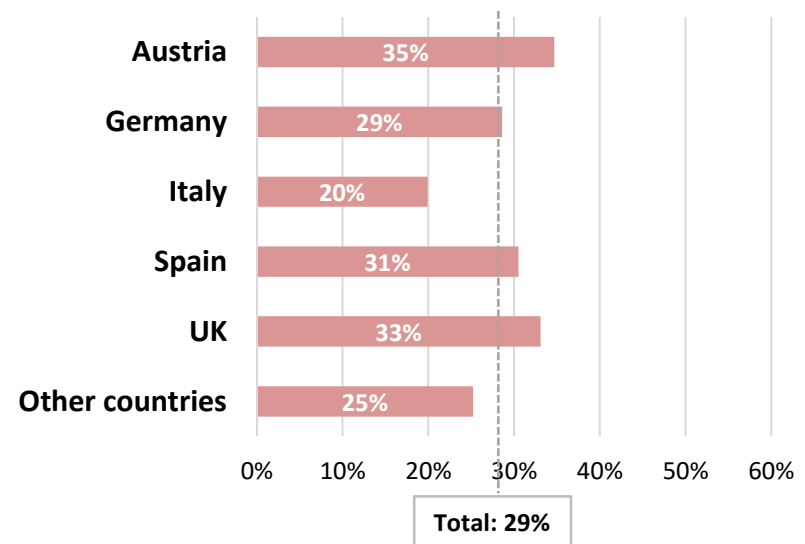
### Witnessed discrimination: sexism – by country

... witnessed sexist/sexualised language against girls/women ...



n=2779; p= .055; Cramer-V= .057

... witnessed other forms of discrimination against girls/women ...



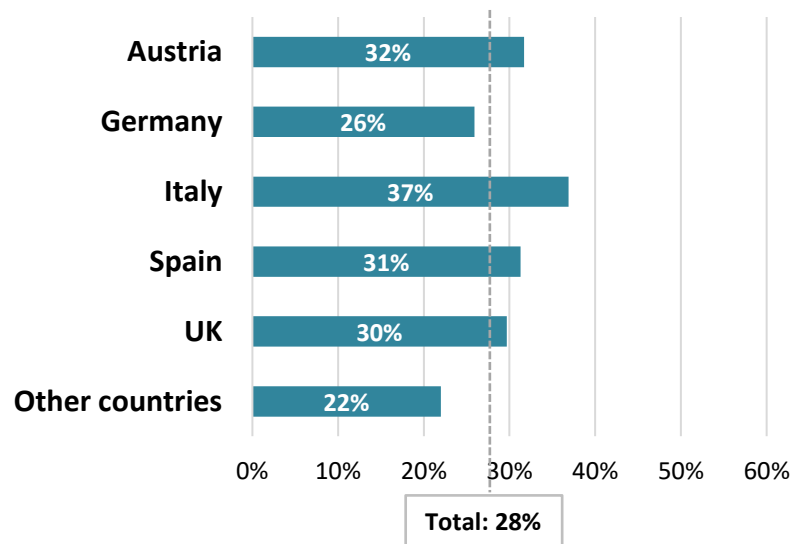
n=2779; p= .038\*; Cramer-V= .059

2

## Meso level

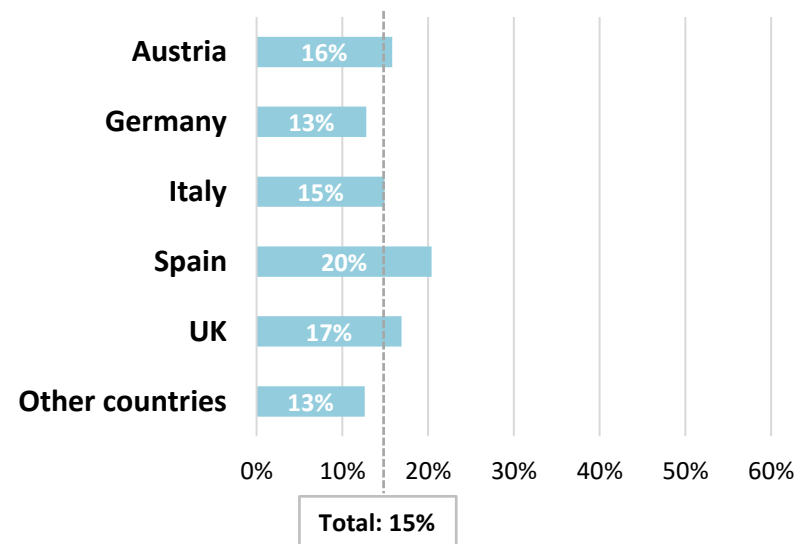
### *Witnessed discrimination: homonegativity – by country*

*... witnessed hostile language against lesbian, gay or bisexual people ...*



n=2779; p= .018\*; Cramer-V= .062

*... witnessed other forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay or bisexual people ...*



n=2779; p= .005\*\*; Cramer-V= .067

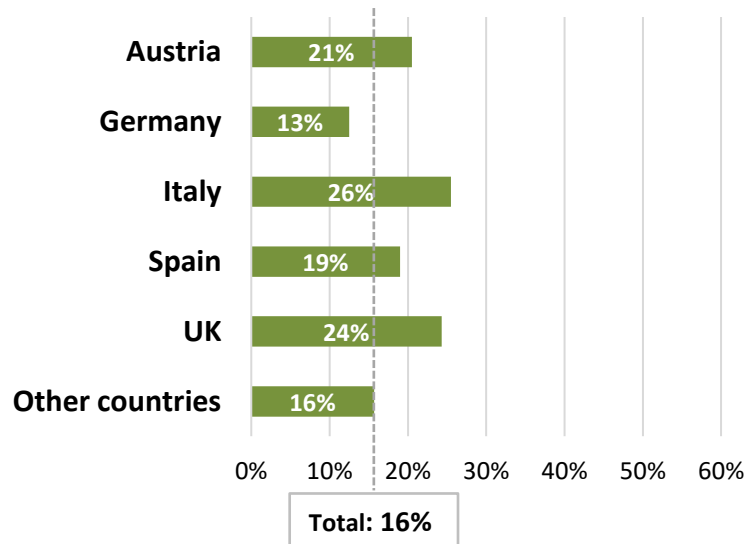


2

## Meso level

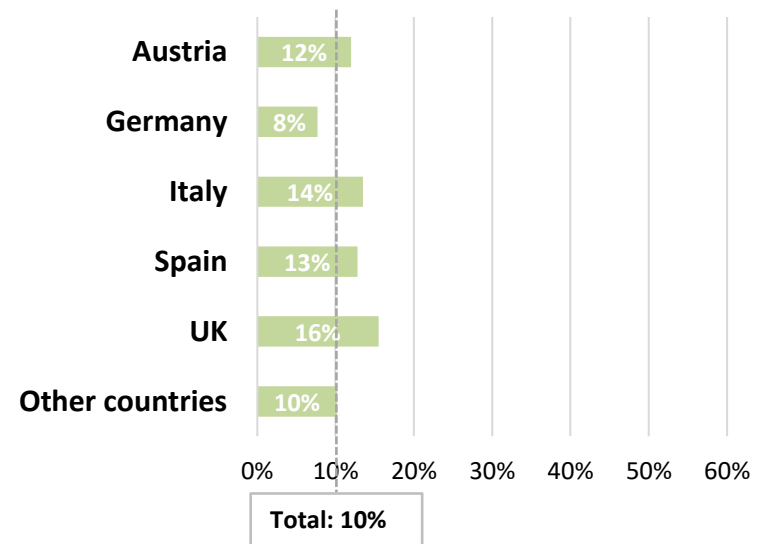
### *Witnessed discrimination: transnegativity – by country*

*... witnessed hostile language against trans, intersex or non-binary people ...*



n=2779; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .092

*... witnessed other forms of discrimination against trans, intersex or non-binary people ...*



n=2779; p= .003\*\*, Cramer-V= .069



2

## Meso level

### *Witnessed discrimination – by country*

The country comparison shows many similarities in the discrimination witnessed by the respondents: sexism is most often reported, followed by homonegativity and transnegativity and in each category discriminating language is more often witnessed compared to other forms.

Italian respondents most often report about witnessing homo- and transnegative language and least often about witnessing sexist language. In Germany, the shares of respondents who have witnessed the various discrimination forms are often the lowest (together with other European countries). Although the differences between the countries are significant, except for sexist language, they are quite small and not stable.







3

## Empirical findings

### *Individual factors*

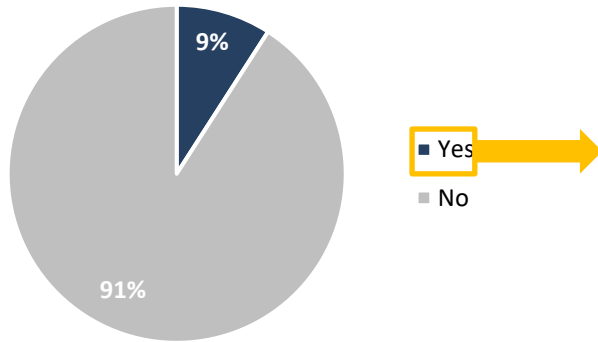
#### Micro level

- Feelings of exclusion
- Negative experiences
- Discrimination forms

### 3 Micro level

#### *Feelings of exclusion – by gender identity (questions only for athletes)*

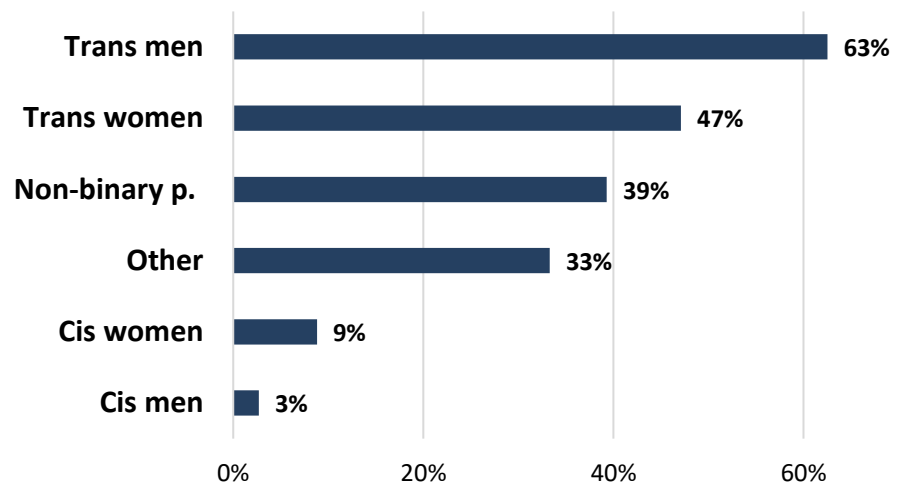
*Are there any organised sports that you are attracted to but feel excluded from because of your sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation?*



Mainly from Football, Combat Sports, Swimming, Rugby

n=1166

#### By gender identity (exact)



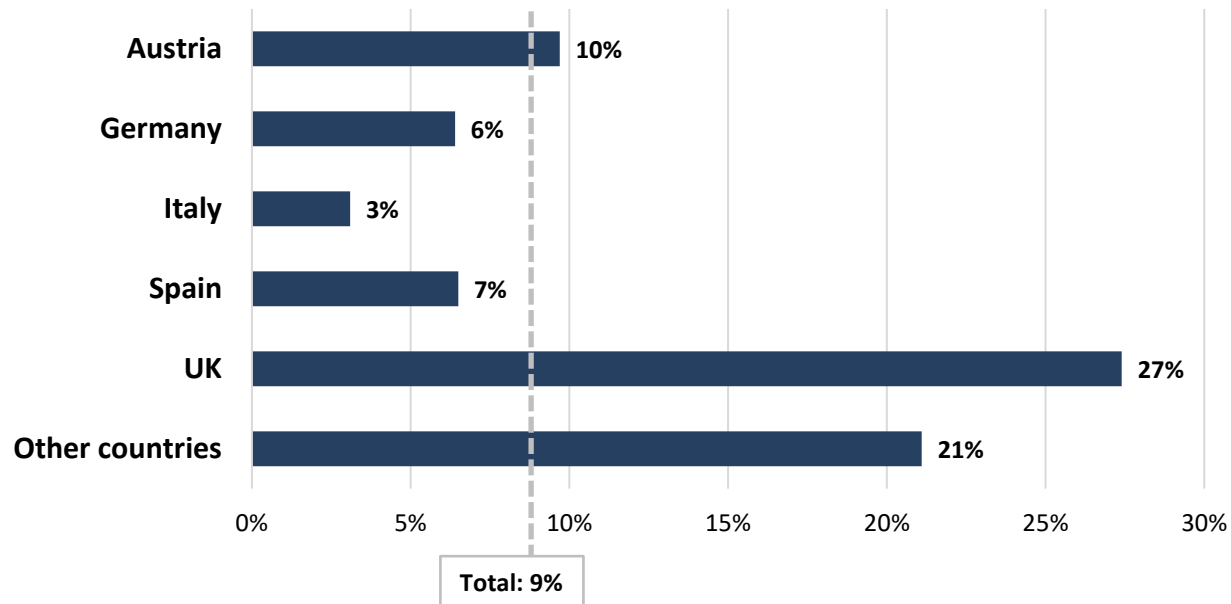
n=1148,  $p < .001^{***}$ ; Cramer-V= .39



### 3 Micro level

#### *Feelings of exclusion – by country (questions only for athletes)*

*Are there any organised sports that you are attracted to but feel excluded from because of your sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation? (values show affirmation)*



n=1139; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .221



3

## Micro level

### *Feelings of exclusion – by gender identity and country*

To get an impression about LGBT+ athletes' typical stress with regard to sports, feelings of exclusion are assessed. 9% of the athletes report, that there are organised sports that they are attracted to but feel excluded from because of their sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation. Among them, football, combat sports, swimming and rugby are most often mentioned. These feelings of exclusion differ significantly by gender identity. Trans men athletes (63%) feel mostly excluded, followed by trans women (47%) and non-binary athletes (37%). The shares drop to 9% for cis women and 3% for cis men.

With reference to the countries, the feelings of exclusion differ substantially again: 27% of the UK respondents feel excluded, followed by 21% of respondents from other European countries. In Austria (10%), Spain (7%), Germany (6%) and Italy (3%) the shares are significantly smaller.

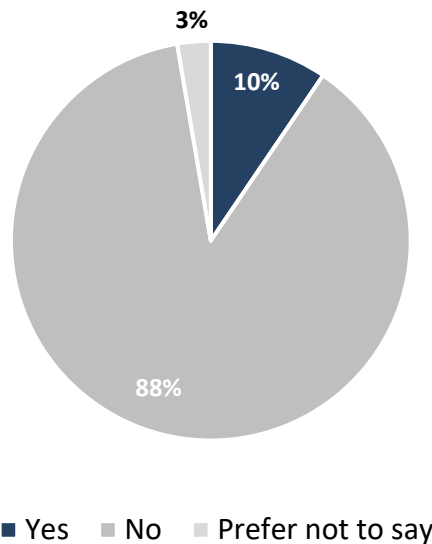


3

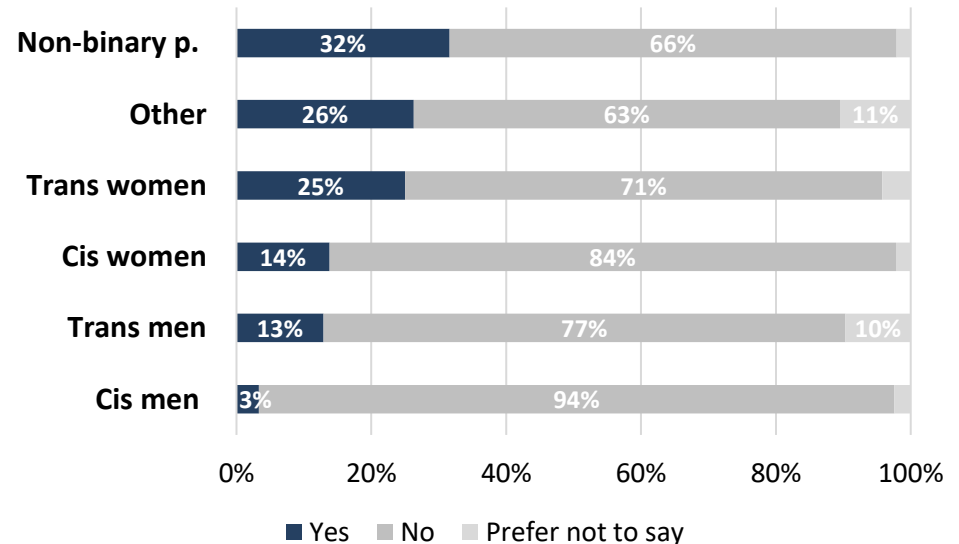
# Micro level

## Negative experiences – by gender identity

Looking back at the last 12 months, have you personally had any negative experiences within your main organised sports activity/organisation based on your sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation?



n=2838

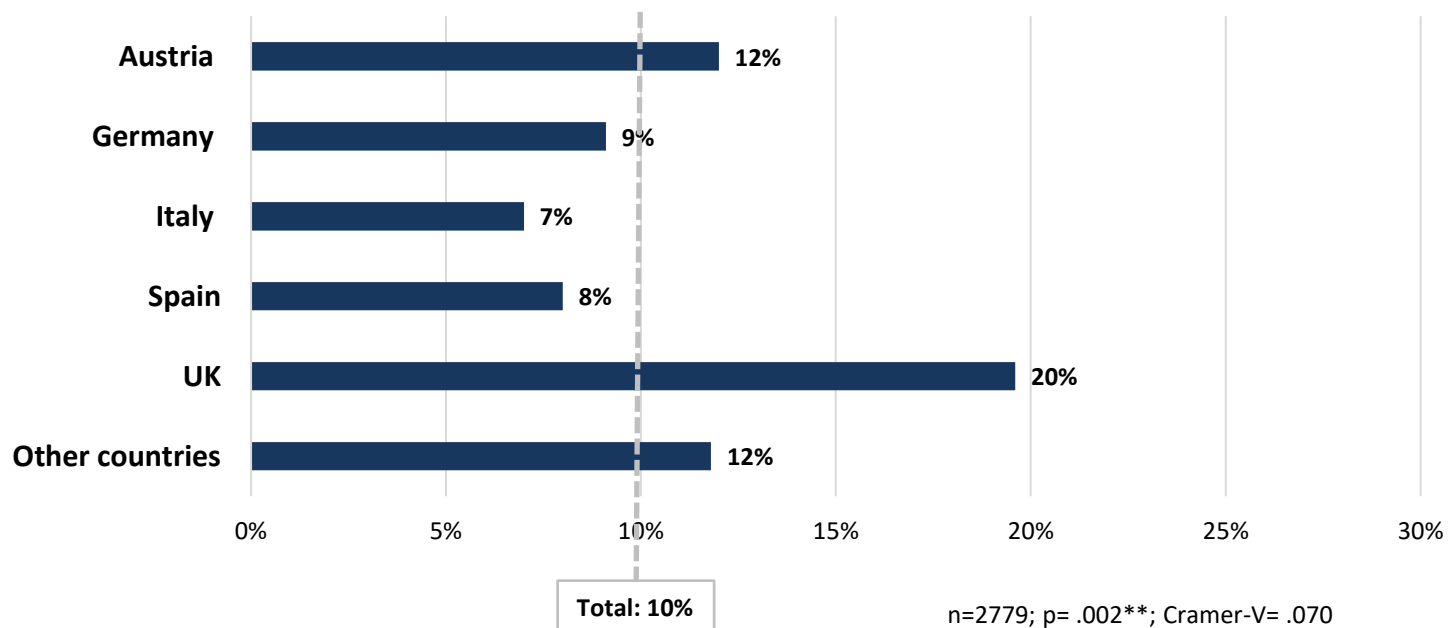


n=2773; p< .001\*\*\*; Cramer-V= .175

### 3 Micro level

## Negative experiences – by country

*Looking back at the last 12 months, have you personally had any negative experiences within your main organised sports activity/organisation based on your sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation? (value shows affirmation)*





3

## Micro level

### *Negative experiences – by gender identity and country*

10% of the respondents report that they have had negative experiences in their main organised sports activity (for athletes and coaches) or main sports organisation (for board members and volunteers) in the last 12 months prior to the study.

With regard to gender identity, the data show that non-binary persons (32%), individuals with other gender identities (26%) and trans women (25%) are the most vulnerable groups in terms of negative experiences. The shares for cis women (14%) and trans men (13%) are almost similar, while cis men report the least negative experiences (3%).

The country comparison shows also significant differences: one fifth of the UK respondents report negative experiences, followed by Austria (12%) and the other countries (12%), while in Germany, Spain and Italy less than 10% of the respondents report negative experiences in their main sports activity/organisation in the last 12 months prior to the study .



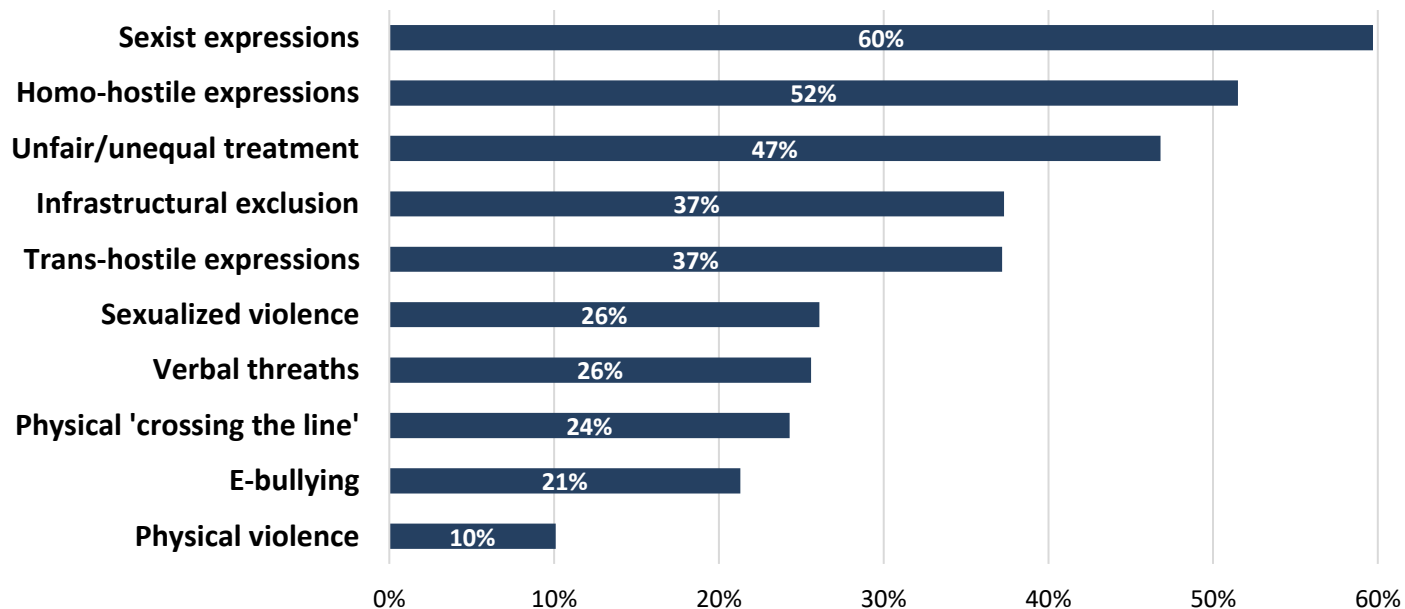


3

## Micro level

### *Discrimination forms*

*In the last 12 months, how often did you personally experience the following as a result of your sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation within your main organised sports activity/organisation? (Affirmation → at least once experienced)*



n=270







3

## Micro level

### *Discrimination forms*

Among those respondents who have had negative experiences in their main sports in the last 12 months prior to the study, the most often mentioned experiences are sexist expressions (60%), homo-hostile expressions (52%) and unequal treatment (47%). The same share of 37% of respondents report having experienced infrastructural exclusion and trans-hostile expressions. A quarter of the respondents experienced sexualised violence, verbal threats, and physically crossing the line. 21% report that they have experienced e-bullying and 10% physical violence.

Due to the limited sample sizes, the discrimination forms are not analysed on a country-specific level.



1

## Conclusion

### *Societal factors*

#### Perceived discrimination in sports

- High sensibility for discriminatory attitudes and behaviours among the respondents
- TIN individuals perceived as the most vulnerable group in organised sports

#### Stereotypes about men and women in sports, LG and TIN athletes

- Clear rejection of sport-related stereotypes about men, women, lesbian and gay athletes
- Less rejection and high insecurity towards stereotypes about TIN athletes

#### Attitudes towards TIN athletes and sexual and gender diversity

- Rather positive, but also undecided or ambivalent attitudes towards TIN athletes and sexual and gender diversity in organised sports



2

## Conclusion

### *Organisational factors I*

#### **Gender connotation of sports**

- Most sports are described as neutral, but more typical masculine sports (risk, danger) than typical feminine sports (aesthetics)

#### **Organisational measures towards equality and anti-discrimination**

- Organisations prioritise promoting binary gender equality, followed by sexual orientation and gender identity (high share of resp. lacking knowledge)

#### **Anti-discrimination work**

- One quarter of the sports organisations have an anti-discrimination function with the main focus on sex and the least on gender identity

#### **Gender ratio in sports organisations**

- More men are reported to be among coaches, board members and athletes





2

## Conclusion

### *Organisational factors II*

#### Diversity in statutes and pursuit of discrimination cases

- More than half of the organisations have diversity included in their statutes and follow cases of discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, but only a third with a standardised procedure plan.

#### Coach behaviour

- Neither inclusive language nor discriminatory comments based on sex, sexual orientation or gender identity are common among coaches

#### Witnessed discrimination

- 10%-50% have witnessed discrimination in their sports organisation, mainly sexism, followed by homo- and transnegativity
- Verbal forms are always more common than other discrimination forms.



3

## Conclusion

### *Individual factors*

#### Feelings of exclusion

- 9% of the respondents feel excluded from sports of interest due to their sex, sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- Major differences by gender identity (from 63% trans men to 3% cis men)

#### Negative experiences

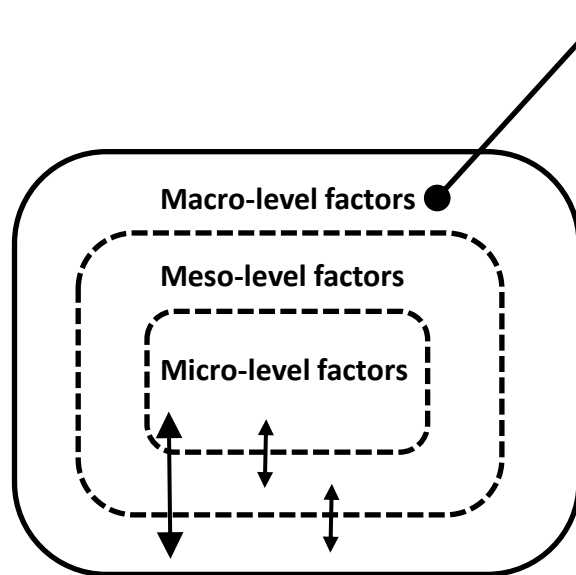
- 10% of respondents with negative experiences in their sports activity/organisation based on their sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation
- Moderate differences by gender identity (from 32% non-binary individuals to 3% cis men)

#### Discrimination forms

- Various forms of discrimination reported, ranging from sexist expressions (60%) to physical violence (10%)

# Conclusion

## *Recommendations for action*



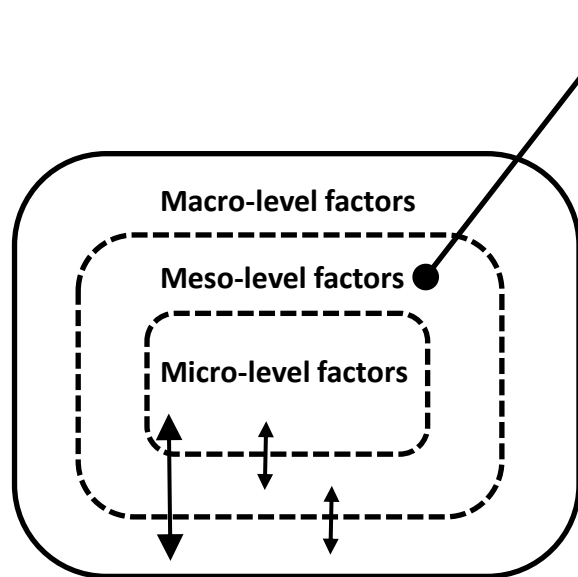
(Cunningham, 2012, p. 7)

### 1 Societal level

- Raising awareness for heteronormativity, discrimination and exclusion in sports
- Focus on needs and requirements of gender diverse (TIN) athletes:
  - sharing knowledge and education (targeting the information deficit)
  - establishing binding guidelines for participation (intersectoral dialogue)
- Understanding sexism in sports as a serious form of discrimination (sensitization!)

## Conclusion

### *Recommendations for action*



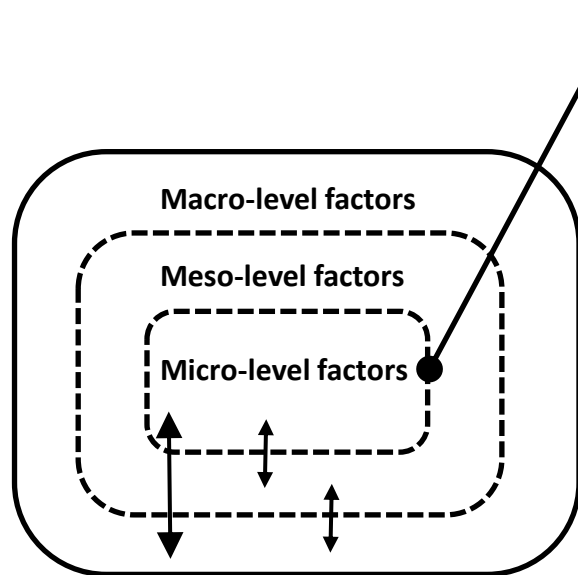
(Cunningham, 2012, p. 7)

#### 2 Organisational level

- Anchoring and extension of equality and anti-discrimination measures (official functions, standardised procedures and their communication, ...)
- Binding implementation of the topic in the educational structures of organised sports
- Encouraging women to pursue board, managerial and coaching positions
- Taking actions against the gendered image of sports (media, culture, ...)

## Conclusion

### *Recommendations for action*



(Cunningham, 2012, p. 7)

### 3 Individual level

- Drawing attention to all discriminatory incidents and taking them seriously
- Addressing coaches as role models (e.g. gender-inclusive and anti-discriminatory language, ...)
- Being aware of invisible diversity dimensions and accepting the crossing of gender boundaries
- **All stakeholders must contribute to appreciative and inclusive sports cultures**



## Conclusion

### *Country-specific findings*



- Austria: impact of the sample (many respondents from roller derby, representing a sports that is highly diverse and aware of the gendered structures) on many findings → need to take other sports in focus



- Germany lags far behind in all findings on anchoring anti-discrimination policies and equality measures with reference to sex, sexual orientation and gender identity in organised sports



- Italy: low awareness of discrimination against women and LGBT+ people in sports, although many equality measures are implemented in organisations; few respondents with feelings of exclusion and negative experiences



- Spain: many measures to promote gender equality and inclusion of LGBT+ people are implemented, but still low awareness of discrimination against LGBT+ people and low rejection of gender stereotypes



- UK: compared to other countries most organisational measures and policies implemented and at the same time highest share of discriminatory incidents and feelings of exclusion (higher awareness in organised sports in the UK?)



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