TRANS PEOPLE'S WORKING LIFE CONDITIONS IN THE NORDIC REGION



Nordic Council of Ministers

CONTENT

SUMMARIES 4

INTRODUCTION 5

AIM, MISSION AND IMPLEMENTATION 5

OUTLINE OF THE KNOWLEDGE REVIEW 6

ABOUT THE SOURCES 6

METHOD AND MATERIALS 7

METHOD AND DELIMITATIONS 7

Literature 7

Input from key actors 8

Different concepts and approaches in the material 9

BACKGROUND 11

GLOSSARY 11

CONDITIONS AND REGULATIONS FOR WORKING LIFE IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES 15

Discrimination legislation in the Nordic countries 15

The Nordic model and responsibility for preventing discrimination 15

KNOWLEDGE REVIEW 16

TRANS PEOPLE'S EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET 17

EMPLOYMENT, EARNINGS, AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT 17

Vulnerability and ill health are barriers from an early age 19

Income, type of work and employment conditions 20

Career development and management 22

INSIGHTS: FAROE ISLANDS 24

DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT PROCESSES 25

TRANS PEOPLE'S WORK ENVIRONMENT AND LIFE IN THE WORKPLACE 28

DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE 28

NEGATIVE TREATMENT 31

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKPLACE CULTURE AND KNOWLEDGE LEVEL 33

Support from managers and colleagues 33
Risk and health factors in the workplace 34
INSIGHTS: GREENLAND 36
PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT 37
Physical spaces 37
The importance of being able to choose your uniform 37
OPENNESS IN THE WORKPLACE 39
Meetings with external contacts 42
INSIGHTS: ÅLAND 43
CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE 44
ACTIVE WORK, POLICIES, AND AWARENESS-RAISING 44
Consider both overt and covert identities 45
Lack of knowledge leads to poor treatment 45
Organisational support functions and knowledge development are required 46
IN DIALOGUE 47
THE NEED FOR GREATER KNOWLEDGE 49
DISCUSSION 50
DISCRIMINATION, MICROAGGRESSIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES 50
Career development 52
DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE TRANS COMMUNITY 52
Poor conditions for a good start in working life 53
SUMMARY 57
SAMMANFATTNING 62
YHTEENVETO 67
SAMANTEKT 72
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 77
REFERENCES 78
About this publication 81

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SUMMARIES

SUMMARY

SAMMANFATTNING

YHTEENVETO

SAMANTEKT



INTRODUCTION

AIM, MISSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

In January 2020, Nordic co-operation through the Nordic Council of Ministers was expanded to include work on equal rights, treatment, and opportunities for LGBTI people in the Nordic countries. Trans people are a particularly vulnerable group who face various obstacles in life, not least in working life. At the same time, there have been setbacks in recent years in terms of the living conditions of LGBTI people both in the Nordic countries and globally, and trans people have been particularly hard hit (European Parliament, 2021). This has been recognised by the Nordic ministers for gender equality, who have adopted a plan to counteract this negative trend (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2022).

In 2023, the Icelandic Presidency of the Council of Ministers initiated a project to shed light on the working life conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries. The Nordic Council of Ministers' co-operation body, Nordic Information on Gender (NIKK), based at the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, was commissioned to carry out the project in 2023-2024. It intends to provide a clearer picture of the living conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries, with a focus on working life. The aim is to make trans people's working life conditions in the Nordic countries visible to enable dialogue and identify needs and measures for improvement.

Today, there is limited knowledge of the working life conditions for trans people and the underlying factors that affect their employment. The national studies that have been published have different areas of focus, but collectively they can provide a clearer picture of working life conditions for trans people in the Nordic countries. This document will provide a clear summary of the field of knowledge in the Nordic countries. By consolidating existing research, the project helps to identify and, in some cases, fill knowledge gaps and thereby be of use to the Nordic countries. As national actors that develop knowledge or put it into practice gain increased access to knowledge from other parts of the Nordic region, the project will contribute further added value in terms of Nordic benefits.

The knowledge review also includes documentation from discussions held with national actors to identify needs and propose measures to improve the working life

conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries. Meetings have been held with representatives of national civil society organisations, anti-discrimination officers and central trade union organisations.

OUTLINE OF THE KNOWLEDGE REVIEW

This introductory section is followed by a brief description of the background to the project with respect to conditions and regulations pertaining to working life in the Nordic countries. This section also includes a glossary of terms used in the report. This is followed by a description of the method and approach and a brief introduction to the material included. The main part of the knowledge review that follows presents findings about trans people's working life conditions in the Nordic countries. It is divided into three overarching themes: trans people's employment and access to the labour market, working environments and life in the workplace and organisational climate. This is followed by a section summarising the dialogues held with national actors in the Nordic countries. The final section of the knowledge review is a discussion with concluding reflections.

ABOUT THE SOURCES

The knowledge review was written by Susanna Young Håkansson, analyst at the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at the University of Gothenburg, where NIKK is located. Kajsa Widegren, analyst, Fredrika Almqvist, project assistant and Elin Engström, project manager, were part of the project group. The texts on trans people's working life conditions in Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland were written by Charlie Olofsson, freelance journalist. During the course of the project, a reference group of Nordic subject experts was consulted. The experts included researchers in the field, representatives for trans organisations, and experts from authorities. We thank everyone for their valuable input during the project.

- Andrea Eriksson, Associate Professor of Ergonomics, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Sweden.
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- Helga Eggebo, PhD in Sociology, Nordland Research Institute, Norway.
- Johanna Jupiter, Analyst, Public Health Agency of Sweden, Sweden.
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- Sølve Storm, PhD in Gender Studies, Denmark.
- Tanja von Knorring, Transfeminina r.f., trans organisation, Finland.



METHOD AND MATERIALS

METHOD AND DELIMITATIONS

This knowledge review is based on literature on the working life conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries and on dialogues conducted with civil society organisations and labour market actors. Interviews were conducted with representatives of civil society organisations in Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland to get a picture of the situation there.

Literature

In the process of collecting material, literature searches were carried out and civil society organisations consulted, with a particular focus on trans organisations and researchers in the field, as well as experts and officials in authorities and ministries.

The first inclusion criteria for material was that the information should be specifically and discernibly about trans people. Material that, for example, deals with the LGBTI community without such a differentiation was excluded. Other inclusion criteria were that the material should be based on the Nordic countries and related to working life issues. The search was limited to the last 15 years, i.e. 2008-2023.

Initially, a literature search using the Scopus database was tested. Search terms related to trans, working life and the Nordic countries were used. This search yielded few hits, and a scan of the articles' abstracts revealed that only one of the articles fell within the inclusion criteria. Following this search, emails were sent to trans organisations and umbrella organisations for LGBTI issues in all the Nordic countries, researchers in the field and experts and officials in government authorities and ministries, with a request for any material on the theme that they knew of and to pass on the request to others working on the issue. This method resulted in a number of reports, scientific articles and ongoing projects being identified. When the project's reference group were asked to read the first draft of the knowledge review, they were also asked to suggest additional material, if they knew of any. This provided some additional indicators for relevant publications.

This is a form of snowball method (see, for example, Browne, 2005), i.e. a method based on gathering relevant information and knowledge in a context of people with a high level of personal involvement. By identifying key people for a particular issue, the movement of the snowball can capture the knowledge needed. Our reference group – as well as other key people identified for us by the reference group – is one such context. This is particularly apparent when compared to the literature search, which yielded very few results and was therefore misleading. At the same time, it may of course be the case that relevant publications are not included in this review. However, we do not claim this to be a comprehensive compilation, rather the intention is to provide a picture of the various themes that appear in the literature collected through this method.

Texts in Danish, English, Norwegian and Swedish were read in the original language. In most cases, reports written in Finnish and Icelandic were also available in Swedish or English. In one case, a Finnish text was translated into Swedish. One Icelandic report was published after the material collection was completed; for the purpose of including the results, we read a summary of the findings in English and maintained a dialogue with participating actors.

Input from key actors

The knowledge review also includes documentation from discussions held with national actors to identify needs and propose measures to improve the working life conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries. Meetings were held with representatives of national civil society organisations, anti-discrimination ombudsmen and central trade union organisations. The civil society organisations were invited to a workshop in connection with the Nordic LGBTI Conference in Reykjavik 2023, which brought together many LGBTI and trans organisations. The Nordic anti-discrimination ombudsmen were consulted at a workshop in connection with a Nordic network meeting between the ombudsmen, to which NIKK was invited. All Nordic trade union confederations were invited to a meeting organised by NIKK with the support of NFS, the Council of Nordic Trade Unions. The views and discussions presented during the workshops are included in an aggregated form. Of course, different organisations have different approaches to the issues, and it is not necessarily the case that all organisations agree with the positions presented in the text.

NIKK has also sought to contact employer organisations in the Nordic countries. As there is no umbrella organisation for employer organisations in the Nordic countries, we instead contacted them by means of a short questionnaire sent out by e-mail. Few responses were received to the questionnaire. One employer organisation provided responses from its respective member organisations.

Included material

The publications that have been identified are important sources of knowledge about the working life conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries. The material covers a wide range of topics and authors and includes peer-reviewed scientific articles and reports produced by authorities and municipalities as well as by LGBTI and trans organisations. The publications have different focuses and use different methods and approaches to produce and summarise knowledge on the subject. In this knowledge review, reference is sometimes made to the percentages described in the various reports. It is important to note, however, that the sample groups are often small. This, and the fact that the surveys were conducted using different methods, means that they should not be directly compared. However, they do give a good idea of the working life conditions of trans people in the different Nordic countries.

International research

Sometimes results are presented from international research conducted in and about contexts outside the Nordic countries. This is especially the case when it comes to themes on which there has been a lack of knowledge produced in the Nordic context. This has been done on the basis of an influential publication produced in the Nordic countries: *HBTQ-personers organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö* (HBTQ people's organisational and social work environment), produced by Mynak, the Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise (Eriksson et al., 2022). It provides an overview of international research in the field. Although many studies, especially those concerning trans people's circumstances, are often small and have limited generalisability, we see it as important to present some of the research related to themes on which there is an absence of or limited Nordic knowledge.

Different concepts and approaches in the material

When studies and reports are referenced, the terms used in the referenced publications are used throughout. This differs between the various publications and therefore also in this paper, but the term *trans person* is used as an umbrella term. In Finland, it is common to use the terms 'transfeminine' and 'transmasculine'. In the rest of the Nordic countries, the term 'trans person' is most commonly used. Some use the term 'trans experience', indicating that transition is an experience rather than an identity for some people.

There are also differences between the publications in terms of how groups have been studied and differentiated. The studies have different purposes and examine different themes and groups in different ways. For example, some of the studies differentiate by gender identity, with findings reported separately for trans people who identify as men, women, or non-binary. Others distinguish between binary and

non-binary trans people. Finally, some refer to trans people without differentiating within this group.

Several of the reports that form the foundation of this knowledge review study both trans people and other members of the LGBTI community as a whole. In this review, findings on trans people are sometimes compared to findings on other parts of the LGBTI community for context.





BACKGROUND

GLOSSARY

Given that the referenced material makes use of different concepts, this glossary collects terms that appear in this knowledge review. As there are slightly different conventions in different Nordic countries, brief explanations are sometimes also included.

Binary trans person

Collective term for experiencing oneself as being a woman or a man and being trans. Binary means that something is divided into two, and in this context refers to the division of people into two sexes, women or men. A binary trans person does not identify with the legal gender they were assigned at birth but identifies as either woman or man. In the Scandinavian-speaking countries, the terms trans woman and trans man are often used. In Finland, the terms transfeminine and transmasculine are commonly used.

Cis person

A person whose gender identity corresponds to the (legal) gender they were assigned at birth. In simple terms, a cis person is someone who is not trans. The term was created to describe the norm. The word 'cis' is Latin and means 'on this side of'.

Gender dysphoria

Gender dysphoria means that you suffer from, or experience obstacles in your everyday life since the gender you were assigned at birth does not match your gender identity. A common form of gender dysphoria is bodily gender dysphoria - that parts of the body do not feel right because they do not match your gender identity. Gender dysphoria can also be social, meaning that others do not see and treat you as who you really are. Not all trans people have gender dysphoria. Gender dysphoria can look different for different people for example, it can involve different

parts of the body and be different in different situations. If you have gender dysphoria, you may want to undergo gender-affirming treatment. Often the treatment reduces the gender dysphoria.

Gender expression

Gender expression is about how you express your gender through, for example, clothing, tone of voice, hair on your head, hair on your face, hair on your body or make-up. Norms for gender expression vary over time and depend on where you are in the world and on social class. Not everyone has the gender expression they would like to have. For example, some people want to change their body with hormones before they start living more according to their gender identity, or it may not be safe for a person to express their gender in the way they want.

Gender identity

Gender identity is a person's self-experienced gender, for example the experience of being a man, a woman, or a non-binary person. Most people, both cis and trans, experience themselves as having a gender and thus have a gender identity. An exception is people who are agender who do not experience themselves as belonging to or having any gender.

Gender incongruence

Gender incongruence is the experience that the gender you were assigned at birth does not match your gender identity. Incongruence means that something does not match something else. Most trans people experience or have experienced gender incongruence at some point. If gender incongruence is associated with psychological distress or creates obstacles in everyday life, it is called gender dysphoria. Not everyone with gender incongruence has gender dysphoria, but for example, being called by the right name and having your gender identity affirmed can be important for anyone with gender incongruence, whether or not you also have gender dysphoria.

Gender-affirming care or treatment

An umbrella term for different ways of modifying the body to make it more consistent with a person's gender identity and/or to make a person's gender identity more easily readable for others in social situations. Examples of gender-affirming treatments include hormone therapy, surgery, hair removal, or voice and communication training. Both binary and non-binary trans people may need gender-affirming care, but not all trans people do.

Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity is the norm where the dominant belief is that there are only two genders – women and men – and that the two genders are the opposite of each other and are expected to desire each other. This means that heterosexuality is seen as the norm or 'normal', the expected, and that anything other than heterosexuality is seen as deviant.

Legal gender

The gender registered for a person in the population register in the Nordic countries. Legal gender is assigned in the absolute majority of cases based on the appearance of the external genitalia of the newborn.

LGBTI

LGBTI is an abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex. Following a decision by the Nordic Ministers for Gender Equality, the term is used in official Nordic cooperation to correspond to other international organisations. The collective term is used in this compilation, except when other publications are referred to and other terms are used. This could be, for example, LHBTI (used in Norway), HBTQ (used in Sweden) and LGBTQIA (used in Åland). The latter terms also include people who identify as queer or asexual.

Minority stress

Being in a minority position increases the risk of being exposed to various psychosocial stressors, such as having to deal with bullying, discrimination, violence, or having to be on guard and prepared to be exposed or questioned. More every day, subtle negative events can also contribute to minority stress. These are called microaggressions and include, for example, looks and comments that reflect incomprehension or prejudice.

Non-binary person

A person who has the experience of not being a woman nor a man. There are many ways to be non-binary, for example experiencing yourself as being both man and woman, in-between or moving fluidly between man and woman, or as being a third gender, or completely beyond gender categories. Many non-binary people see themselves as trans, but not all do.

Person with trans experience

A term that can be used, for example, if a person has undergone gender-affirming care treatment and no longer see themself as being trans. Some people who transition thus experience being trans as a temporary experience rather than an identity, while others perceive being trans as a continuous lifelong experience and identify with the term, calling themselves trans men, trans women, or non-binary trans people. The term is also used to be inclusive of both persons who identify as trans persons and people who do not, but who have life experiences that can be described as trans experiences.

Queer

Queer can have several different meanings. It can be used as an identity and a means to break in some way with norms around gender, sexuality and/or relationships. Queer is also a term that can describe a critical approach to norms and can refer to both gender and sexual orientation.

Trans person

An umbrella term for various individuals who experience that the legal gender they were assigned at birth does not match their gender identity and/or gender expression. The term includes both binary and non-binary gender identities.

Transfeminine

Transfeminine people are usually assigned the gender of male at birth and identify themselves as, for example, woman or non-binary. In Finland, it is common to refer to trans women as transfeminine.

Transmasculine

Transmasculine people have usually been assigned the gender of female at birth and identify as, for example, man or non-binary. In Finland, it is common to refer to trans men as transmasculine.

CONDITIONS AND REGULATIONS FOR WORKING LIFE IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

Discrimination legislation in the Nordic countries

All the Nordic countries have anti-discrimination laws related to gender identity, as well as protections covering the labour market and service sector. All the Nordic countries have supervisory bodies responsible for discrimination legislation and plans for follow-up. On the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland, legislation varies widely in the area of discrimination. Åland has largely the same discrimination legislation as Finland, while Greenland and the Faroe Islands have virtually no discrimination protection for LGBTI people – in the workplace, in schools or in health care.

However, the number of reports to anti-discrimination ombudsmen regarding discrimination related to gender identity is relatively low and few judgements have been handed down. According to the Swedish Equality Ombudsman (DO, 2022), the number of unrecognised cases is assumed to be high.

The Nordic model and responsibility for preventing discrimination

When it comes to labour market regulation and wage setting, the model is similar across the Nordic countries. The Nordic model is based on labour market autonomy, a collaboration between the state and the labour market partners. The Nordic model is characterised by a high degree of unionisation and relatively extensive labour market regulation through collective agreements. Workers are largely organised in trade unions, while employers are represented by employer organisations. Wage setting is based on the principle that there should be negotiation between the parties, without government interference. Wages and employment conditions are regulated by collective agreement. In this context, there has long been a consensus that government interference in wage setting should be avoided as far as possible. Trade unions and employers, and by extension employer organisations, also have a major responsibility with respect to discrimination on the Nordic labour market. Employers are responsible for ensuring that employees and job applicants are not discriminated against, and employers must take active measures to prevent discrimination in the workplace. It is also forbidden to take any form of reprisal against people who have reported discrimination. Trade unions have a major responsibility to help their members in cases of discrimination, and workers are encouraged to first turn to their union if they experience discrimination.



KNOWLEDGE REVIEW

The following section presents the findings of this knowledge review. The findings are organised into three overarching themes.

- TRANS PEOPLE'S EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET
- TRANS PEOPLE'S WORK ENVIRONMENT AND LIFE IN THE WORKPLACE
- CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE





TRANS PEOPLE'S EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET

EMPLOYMENT, EARNINGS, AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Key findings:

- In the Nordic region, as well as internationally, trans people are discriminated against in the labour market.
- Unemployment is significantly higher among trans people than the general population, and the employment rate is generally lower. Several Nordic studies indicate that unemployment is about twice as high in this group compared to the general population.
- There is a higher proportion of trans people in low-wage and low-income jobs compared to the general population.
- Insecure employment appears to be more common among trans people.
- Trans people may face specific challenges with respect to their career development.
- Many trans people report physical or mental illness as a barrier in life and to accessing the labour market.
- Trans people are marginalised and excluded from the labour market from a young age.

In Finland, a number of trans organisations collectively carried out two surveys on the working life conditions of trans people, one in 2016 and one in 2020. The results are summarised in the report *Sukupuolivähemmistöjen kohtaaminen työelämässä* (Swe: *Att bemöta könsmångfalden i arbetslivet*; Addressing gender diversity in the labour market]). In 2015, the Equality Act was reformed in Finland, and a ban on discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression was introduced. The surveys aimed to explore trans people's experiences of discrimination and support in working life and any changes that had occurred after a few years of the reformed law coming into force. The respondents' employment was also studied (Saloheimo, 2021). Compared to the 2016 survey, unemployment had decreased slightly both in absolute terms and compared to the general population. The unemployment rate among respondents was 17% in 2020, roughly twice that of the total population in Finland. Another Finnish study conducted during the same period showed similar findings, with 18% of transmasculine and 15% of transfeminine respondents reporting being unemployed (Lehtonen, 2022).

In the Swedish study *Hälsan och hälsans bestämningsfaktorer för transpersoner* (Health and health determinants of trans people; 2015), one in four of the trans respondents was unemployed or received sickness benefit. This is a significantly higher proportion than in the general population (Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2015). A Swedish report from the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF), which examined young LGBTI people's experiences of working life, showed that young trans people (and young non-heterosexual people) experienced involuntary long-term unemployment to a greater extent than young cisgender people and young heterosexual people respectively. Young trans men experienced a greater level of unemployment than young trans women and young cisgender men (MUCF, 2017).

In Iceland too, unemployment among trans people is estimated to be significantly higher than in the general population. According to the Icelandic LGBTI umbrella organisation Samtökin '78 and the trans organisation Trans Island, it is estimated to be about 20%, compared to 7% in the general population (Cowi, 2010). An Icelandic survey on the situation for LGBT people in the labour market, *Hinsegin fólk á vinnumarkaði* (Swe: *Queera personer på arbetsmarknaden*, NIKK translation; Queer people in the labour market; Zoega, 2023), was produced by Statistics Iceland and the University of Iceland on behalf of BHM, an Icelandic trade union for academics. It found that 70% of the trans people in the study had been unemployed at some point in their careers, compared to 42% of cisgender LGB people.

The Danish report *Kortlægning af homo- og biseksuelles samt transpersoners levevilkår og samfundsdeltagelse* (Mapping the living conditions and social participation of gay, bisexual and trans people; 2022) also shows that trans people are less likely to be in paid employment than cisgender people. The sample included people aged 25-54; among those who were cisgender, 87% were in paid employment, including self-employment, as opposed to only 52% of those who

were trans (binary and non-binary). This difference is statistically significant. The report showed that there is a particularly large difference between cisgender women and trans women, with almost twice as many cisgender women (85%) as trans women (43%) in paid employment. Among men, there was also a significant difference, with 90% of cisgender men in paid employment, as opposed to only 63% of trans men (Greve et al., 2022: 70-72). This study does not present results for non-binary trans people as a separate group. The Norwegian report *Seksuell orientering, kjønnsmangfold og levekår* (Sexual orientation, gender diversity and living conditions; Anderssen et al., 2021) also shows that unemployment is higher among trans people than among cisgender people. The proportion of non-binary trans people with paid employment as their main occupation was 29% and in the binary trans group it was 46%. Among cisgender people, 57% had paid employment as their main occupation. The differences between the three groups were significant, controlling for age, income, and education level (Anderssen et al., 2021: 45-46). It should be emphasised that both reports refer to the proportion of people in gainful employment, and that other activities, such as studies, are not represented.

Vulnerability and ill health are barriers from an early age

In the Finnish survey *Sukupuolivähemmistöjen kohtaaminen työelämässä* (Swe: *Att bemöta könsmångfalden i arbetslivet*; Addressing gender diversity in the labour market), respondents were asked whether they belonged to minorities other than the trans community. Here long-term illness stood out, with more than a quarter of respondents stating that they had a long-term illness. Common long-term illnesses were mental health problems related to minority stress and gender dysphoria (Saloheimo, 2021). A Swedish report from the Public Health Agency of Sweden shows that a majority, about 60%, of young trans people in the study, aged 15-29, stated that their ability to work or everyday life was impaired to some degree due to physical or mental health issues (Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2015: 39).

The Finnish study *Experiences of Non-Heterosexual and Trans Youth on Career Choice and in the Workplace* (2016), focused specifically on young trans people, shows that trans people are often marginalised in working life from an early age. Some do not enter the labour market at all, and some drop out of education due to narrow gender norms in education and discrimination at school (Lehtonen, 2016). The study shows that some young trans people feel anxious about entering the labour market due to fear of discrimination and unfair treatment.

Furthermore, the author argues that young people can rarely rely on their workplaces having policies or actively working to prevent discrimination and other negative treatment based on gender identity or gender expression on a daily basis. Based on the material, he argues that young trans and non-heterosexual people are active agents, often criticising heteronormative practices either openly or in their thinking, but that they are often alone when it comes to tackling the problems

(Lehtonen, 2016).

> ***I don't try to find a workplace, while I am afraid of discrimination.***
>
> Transfeminine respondent (Lehtonen, 2016: 295)

Income, type of work and employment conditions

A Norwegian report showed that there is a higher percentage of trans people whose income is in the lowest category, below NOK 100,000 per year, compared to cisgender people. Non-binary trans people in particular stand out, with 26% in the lowest income category, representing the largest group in percentage terms. Among binary trans people, the figure was 14% and among cisgender people 10%. The differences between the groups were statistically significant (Anderssen et al., 2021: 42). A Danish report also clearly showed that trans people are overrepresented in the lowest earning category compared to cisgender people. Of the trans people in the study, 39% had an annual income of less than DKK 100,000, compared to 14% of cisgender people. The finding that trans people earn significantly less overall persisted even when controlling for background factors, such as age, ethnicity, and education level, as well as for sector. That analysis showed that trans people earn 41% less than cisgender people (Greve et al., 2022).

In the Swedish survey *Hälsans bestämningsfaktorer* (Determinants of health), over half of respondents reported that they had a monthly income of less than SEK 14,000 before tax, meaning that they are categorised as low-income earners. The authors of the report emphasise that this is partly due to the high proportion of younger respondents, with the majority of individuals with an income of less than SEK 14,000 per month being between the ages of 15 and 29 (Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2015). The Icelandic report *Hinsegin fólk á vinnumarkaði* (LGBTI people in the labour market) examined, among other things, the wages of trans people based on tax returns. It shows that the wages earned by trans women are on average significantly lower than those of gay cisgender people, who were also surveyed. The number of respondents who were trans men was deemed too small to be included in the results (Zoega, 2023).

The findings of these Nordic reports are also in line with the largest European survey on the conditions of LGBTI people ever produced, the *EU LGBTI Survey II*, produced by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). It found that while the income distribution of the LGBTI people surveyed overall was similar to that of the general population, the incomes of trans people stood out in being more likely to be in the lowest quartile and less likely to be in the highest quartile (FRA, 2019).

The Finnish survey *Sukupuolivähemmistöjen kohtaaminen työelämässä* (Swe: *Att bemöta könsmångfalden i arbetslivet*; Responding to gender diversity in working life) found that the proportion of trans people with insecure employment is very high. Only 26.5 per cent of respondents said they had permanent jobs. The corresponding figure for the entire population of Finland was 85% in 2020. These employment conditions can be partly explained by age, as many of the respondents were young adults, amongst whom fixed-term contracts are more common, but short-term, precarious employment was also common among older respondents. Most of the respondents, 69%, worked in manual labour occupations. This cannot be explained by age or education level alone: in the 40-64 age group, about half worked in manual labour occupations. Of those with a university degree, 43% worked in manual labour occupations, indicating that many did not work in the same field that they had pursued in their education (Saloheimo, 2021).

A Danish report (Greve et al., 2022) examined the employment of trans and cisgender people by sector in Denmark. It showed that trans people are more likely than cisgender people to work in trade and transport, and less likely to work in the public sector and in sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries, industry, raw materials extraction, and construction. It is also more common for trans people (5.5%) than cisgender people (0.5%) to have no information about their sector (Greve et al., 2022).

A Finnish study on young trans people shows that gender norms and beliefs about gender and where trans people 'fit in' influence the educational and career choices young trans people make (Lehtonen, 2016). Respondents said that they could experience their trans identity as a barrier to certain choices, and that their own identity motivated them to seek career choices or workplaces that they felt were a good fit for trans people. Some interviewees felt that working alone, for example through their own business or working solely online, was a good option. This is in line with previous research that suggests that one way to avoid being dependent on the acceptance of others is not to have colleagues or external contacts, such as customers (Lehtonen, 2004a).

> ***I work in a branch in which I hardly need to meet other people. Surely my self-esteem is better after accepting myself, and people don't make me afraid that much anymore, but working with animals feel good, they accept you as you are.***
>
> Transmasculine respondent (Lehtonen, 2016: 294)

A number of respondents also expressed a desire to choose a profession that was perceived to match their gender identity and gender expression, for example several trans men said that they wanted to avoid work and tasks traditionally associated with femininity (Lehtonen, 2016). Young trans people were significantly more pessimistic about finding a good job in the future compared to LGB people, who were also included in the study. More young transfeminine people than transmasculine people were pessimistic about finding a good job. Other young trans people in the study expressed the belief that their gender identity is an asset in the labour market and several expressed a desire to work on issues related to equality and human rights. Others stated that their gender identity did not affect their thinking about their career and education at all (Lehtonen, 2016).

The Swedish report '*Jag är inte ensam, det finns andra som jag*' ('I'm not alone, there are others like me'), produced by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, showed that young HBTQ people (aged 16-25) as a group are more likely to have difficulties covering day-to-day expenses (22%), such as food and rent, than young heterosexual people (16%), but that other factors often have a greater impact, including having a foreign background and disability. However, the binary trans group stands out, with 34% saying they had difficulty covering their living expenses in the past year. However, the difference is only statistically significant compared to HBQ cisgender men (15%). For HBQ cisgender girls and non-binary people, the proportions were 22% and 19% respectively (MUCF, 2022).

Career development and management

There is very little research on leadership and career development in a Nordic context, which is likely to be closely linked to the structural conditions of the labour market described earlier in this chapter. This is also further discussed in the final chapter of the knowledge review.

The Icelandic survey *Hinsegin fólk á vinnumarkaði* (LGBTI people in the labour market) found that the trans people, as well as the LGB people, surveyed were unlikely to hold management positions in the labour market. Two per cent of the trans people in the study held some type of management position, compared to four per cent of the LGB people (Zoega, 2023). Two Danish articles examine a trans woman's management and development as a manager. The articles are based on the same material: recurring in-depth interviews with a trans woman in a managerial position at a company in Denmark and interviews with employees before and after the manager's gender-affirming treatment. This material is more theory-driven than other material included in this knowledge review. In a field with little research, this type of method, which makes no claim to be representative, can be a way of exploratively seeking to broaden the field and identify new research questions. The articles show that the manager's co-workers saw themselves as open and respectful but also expressed that they had difficulty understanding their manager and that they were confused by her changing gender expression. The

manager explains that her changing gender identity changed the expectations held by her colleagues about her as a leader. They sought the nurturing and relationship-building skills that women managers are expected to have. At the same time and in line with similar gender-stereotypical expectations of the feminine-coded manager's body she was more often interrupted and ignored in meetings. The study showed in various ways how beliefs about management and managers are closely linked to the belief that there are two genders and that they are opposites (Muhr & Sullivan, 2013). The authors also examined the manager's experiences of having a 'transgressive body' (transgressive can be described as the subversion of the heteronormative template for how women and men are expected to behave and look, thus rendering it political) in relation to professionalism and how this changes based on context. In meetings with external customers, she tones down her transgressive body, for example by dressing in trousers and a shirt instead of a blouse and skirt. These are situations in which she knows that the 'novelty' of emphasising a transgressive body will 'disrupt order' as well as other people's expectations of the situation. In her private role as an activist, this is something she strives for. The study shows how the negotiation of transgressivity, professionalism and labour is complex and influenced by different contexts, each with their own cultural norms of gender, gender diversity and professionalism (Muhr et al., 2016).

In the Swedish qualitative study on trans people's work environment (Eriksson et al., 2022), several of the men included in the study describe passing as a man as being beneficial for their career. Some of the men stated that it gave them a higher status, more respect and better pay than when they did not pass as a man. One man described more negative aspects of passing as a man in the workplace, specifically being included in conversations based on societal attitudes expected of men in workplaces of the past with a more macho workplace culture and conversations and jokes based on sexism and racism (Eriksson et al., 2022: 145).

International research on trans people's career opportunities, exclusively conducted in Anglo-Saxon contexts, revealed the various ways in which discrimination and sexism in the workplace affected study participants' job satisfaction and career advancement opportunities (Eriksson et al., 2022, pp. 58-59). In relation to career advancement, the study participants highlighted the emotional labour required to hide one's gender identity and emphasised the fear of others not recognising them according to their own gender identity. Some studies show that trans women specifically are sometimes pressured, or choose themselves, to not undertake certain work tasks after gender-affirming treatment, because their managers and/or they themselves considered them less suitable for them as (trans) women. In one study, trans people expressed that their career development had stalled after undergoing gender-affirmation treatment, even in organisations that worked to be HBTQI friendly. Trans people in another study reported that they did not receive a fair assessment of their work performance, for example, being unfairly evaluated by employers and customers/clients. Some also said they had been denied work for which they were qualified or dismissed from jobs when they started to adopt a non-traditional gender expression (Eriksson et al., 2022: 58-59).

INSIGHTS: FAROE ISLANDS

"Many young trans people are entering the labour market."

Historically, many LGBTI people have chosen to move from the Faroe Islands to communities with more accepting attitudes and laws – as well as larger LGBTI communities. In recent years, outward migration seems to have slowed down and more and more people are choosing to stay or return, but since many have left in the past, a significant number of LGBTI people in the Faroe Islands are young. "This is also the case for trans people, so many have not started working yet and are still in education," says Esther Margreth Petersen, coordinator of the organisation LGBT+ Føroyar.

She believes that the issue of trans people's working life conditions will become increasingly topical in the future. "It is likely to become a more important issue as many young trans people are entering the labour market," she says, adding that LGBT+ Føroyar is already noticing this trend. She says they have been approached by an authority in the Faroe Islands for training on trans issues. "They feel that more trans people are contacting them now than before. We've had a meeting and talked about words and concepts and how to address people."

LGBT+ Føroyar recognises that the biggest obstacle for trans people in the workplace is the very restrictive laws on changing one's legal gender. The Faroe Islands have the strictest legislation in the Nordic region, and the process for changing one's personal code number is long. Surgery is one of the requirements. In practice, the legislation means that many trans people are forced to live with a legal gender that does not correspond to their gender identity, which, according to Esther Margreth Petersen, makes life in general, and not least working life, more difficult.

"Many employers automatically retrieve your data and register you according to your legal gender. In many cases, there is no way around it, and it is difficult to have a good situation at work when your gender is not respected in the workplace," she says. "Achieving legislative reform on changing legal gender is currently LGBT+ Føroyar's top priority," says Esther Margreth Petersen. "The goal is a law based on self-determination. At the same time, the organisation is working to challenge norms and change attitudes over the long term."

"We need to 'demystify' what it means to be trans. There is a lot of prejudice and misinformation." To improve conditions for trans people in the labour market, Esther Margreth Petersen believes there is a need for awareness-raising initiatives aimed specifically at employers but also at the general public. "It's not just the employer's attitude that affects how you feel at work but also how you are treated by your colleagues."

DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

In brief:

- Several of the reports examine self-perceived discrimination in recruitment through surveys or interviews. Collectively, they show that discrimination against trans people in recruitment processes is widespread.
- A quantitative study examining the issue of discrimination beyond the self-perceived also shows that trans people are discriminated against in recruitment processes and that discrimination manifests differently in male- and female-dominated industries.
- Significantly more trans women than trans men and non-binary trans people report experiencing discrimination in recruitment processes.
- The requirement for certain documentation, for example proof of previous names, can leave applicants with no choice but to be open about their transition during recruitment processes. Online recruitment tools are often designed in a way that requires gender to be specified and often only two options are available, which works exclusionary.

Denmark's results from the European study *EU LGBTI Survey II* (FRA, 2019) showed that 27% of trans respondents had experienced discrimination when applying for a job in the past year. These results were statistically significant. When the results are broken down within the trans community, clear differences emerge. Within the survey group, 40% of trans women responded that they had experienced discrimination, compared to 22% of trans men and 27% of non-binary trans people. However, these results are not statistically significant (FRA, 2019).

The Norwegian report *Seksuell orientering, kjønnsmangfold og levekår* (Sexual orientation, gender diversity and living conditions) found that many trans people have experienced discrimination when applying for jobs. For binary trans people this figure was 46% and among non-binary people it was 28%, but these differences were not statistically significant. The number of responses related to discrimination based on gender identity was significantly higher than those related to discrimination based on sexual orientation (Anderssen et al., 2021).

In the Finnish report *Sukupuolivähemmistöjen kohtaaminen työelämässä* 2015-2020 (Swe: *Att bemöta könsmångfalden i arbetslivet*; Responding to gender diversity in working life), many respondents reported experiencing direct or indirect discrimination in recruitment processes, either regularly or occasionally (14% and

28% respectively). Many reported that appearance seemed to be a major basis for discrimination. Among those who felt they had been discriminated against without having clear evidence (16%), many did not make it to the interview stage. Among those who were accepted for an interview, a number of respondents believed that the recruitment process stopped when their trans identity came to light. The report also shows that the number of trans women who experienced discrimination when applying for jobs was higher than among other groups. Those who held or were seeking temporary employment were more likely to have experienced discrimination in recruitment situations (38.5%) than those in other groups (18%; Saloheimo, 2021). The European survey by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) found that 21% of all trans respondents in Finland had experienced discrimination in the process of looking for a job in the past year (FRA, 2019). These results are statistically significant. This survey showed large differences between different groups of trans people. Among trans women, 53% responded that they had experienced discrimination, while among trans men it was 23% and among non-binary trans people it was 13%. However, these results are not statistically significant.

The results for Sweden in the same survey show a similar pattern. Among all trans respondents, 21% reported experiencing discrimination in the process of looking for a job in the past year (FRA, 2019). The data is statistically significant. When broken down by group, the results show that 41% of trans women reported experiencing discrimination, compared to 16% of trans men and 21% of non-binary trans people. These differences between groups are not statistically significant.

A Swedish study examined discrimination against trans people in recruitment processes via a quantitative method known as a correspondent test. The results showed, among other things, that cisgender people were 18% more likely to receive positive responses to job applications than trans people (Granberg et al., 2020). The researchers sent fictitious applications for low-skilled jobs. Each application indicated that the applicant had changed their name during their life, in some cases to a name associated with the same gender and in other cases across gender boundaries. The researchers then recorded whether the fictitious applicants received a response and if it was positive or negative. The results also showed differences between female- and male-dominated occupations. In male-dominated occupations, employers seemed to discriminate against trans people more often. In female-dominated occupations, employers seemed to discriminate more often against men, regardless of whether they were trans/cisgender. The biggest differences between the fictitious cisgender and trans people in the study were in male-dominated occupations, where cis men received positive responses 44% of the time, compared to 24% for trans women. Employers were more likely to send positive responses to cisgender men than cisgender women, followed by trans men and lastly trans women. In female-dominated occupations, discrimination seemed to occur mainly on the basis of the applicant's stated gender at the time of application. Employers sent more positive responses to trans women and cisgender

women than to trans men and cisgender men. The study thus shows that employers discriminate on different grounds. For example, a trans man may be discriminated against for being trans in male-dominated occupations but for being male in female-dominated occupations (Granberg et al., 2020).

The Swedish government report *Transpersoner i Sverige – Förslag för stärkt ställning och bättre levnadsvillkor* (Trans people in Sweden – Proposals for a stronger position and better living conditions; SOU 2017:92) raises the issue that employers and recruitment consultants often use web-based recruitment tools that require jobseekers to provide their gender, among other information. In most cases there are only two options to choose from, which excludes non-binary trans people. In recruitment processes, many employers also require job applicants to provide certificates and references from previous employers. A person who has changed their legal gender and/or name can prove their identity with a special certificate from the Swedish Tax Agency. However, this means that applicants have no choice but to be open about their transition if they wish to rely on this certificate (SOU, 2017). The Finnish study *Experiences of Non-Heterosexual and Trans Youth on Career Choice and in the Workplace* (2016) also addresses the issue of certificates and the consequences of fear of discrimination in job searches. One respondent reported that he had not dared to change his name officially, despite having been using his new name for 10 years, out of fear of having to explain the name change, knowing that the issue would be highlighted in job interviews and potentially give would-be employers a negative image of him (Lehtonen, 2016).



TRANS PEOPLE'S WORK ENVIRONMENT AND LIFE IN THE WORKPLACE

DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

In brief:

- Trans people face a high level of discrimination and harassment in the labour market. Among the LGBTI community, trans people are by far the most victimised.
- However, many trans people have positive experiences of their work environment. Many of the respondents across a number of reports had not experienced any discrimination and felt supported by managers and colleagues.
- A Norwegian study found harassment was most commonly perpetrated by external parties, such as clients, users, patients or customers, followed by work colleagues, which was slightly more prevalent than harassment by employers.

All of the Nordic reports examining LGBTI people's exposure to discrimination, harassment and intimidation showed that trans people were by far the most vulnerable group. The Danish report *LGBT-personers trivsel på arbejdsmarkedet* (LGBT people's well-being in the labour market; 2019) found that one in four trans respondents (25%) had felt discriminated against or harassed at work because of their gender identity. This compares to 13% of gay cisgender men and 17% of lesbian cisgender women who experienced discrimination or harassment on the basis of sexual orientation (Følner et al., 2019). In the *EU LGBTI Survey* (2019), produced by FRA, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, the results for Denmark

were slightly higher. In Denmark, 30% of trans people reported experiencing discrimination in the workplace in the past year. The corresponding figures for trans people in Finland and Sweden were 26% and 23% respectively. These results are statistically significant (FRA, 2019).

The Norwegian study *Seksuell orientering, kjønnsmangfold og levekår* (Sexual orientation, gender diversity and living conditions) also examined trans people's vulnerability and experiences of discrimination in the workplace. The study showed that both binary and non-binary trans people were more likely to experience harassment in the workplace, as well as in education, than cisgender people. The study, which also examined the living conditions of the LHB community, showed a marked difference between trans people and other groups, with trans people facing discrimination at a significantly higher rate (Anderssen et al., 2021, p. 60). Harassment by external parties, such as clients/users/patients/customers, was most common, followed by work colleagues, which was slightly more prevalent than harassment by employers. Of non-binary trans respondents in Norway, 57% reported being harassed by an external party at least once in the past year, compared to 46% for binary trans respondents. Among cisgender people this figure was 27% (Anderssen et al., 2021). Among the respondents, 39% of binary trans people and 43% of non-binary trans people had been harassed by colleagues. This compares to 15% of cisgender people. The pattern was similar with respect to harassment by employers, but this was less commonly reported across all three groups. The study also asked whether respondents had been discriminated against by their employer in a legal sense, with 34% of binary trans people and 16% of non-binary trans people reporting being discriminated against in the last five years on the basis of gender identity or gender expression. This includes discrimination such as being moved to a different job, not being hired, having to leave a job or place of study, or being overlooked for promotion. This differs markedly from those in the LHB community, who were asked the same question, with responses varying between 4 and 11% (Anderssen et al., 2021).

The Swedish study *Normer som skaver Hbtq-personers sociala arbetsmiljö i Göteborgs Stad* (Norms that hurt HBTQ people's social work environment in the City of Gothenburg) revealed the same pattern (Björk and Wahlström, 2018). The study found that HBTQ people were exposed to sexual harassment to a greater extent, and that this also applied in particular to trans, binary and non-binary, people. This is the only study in the material that examines sexual harassment specifically. In the Swedish study *Kvalitativ studie om transpersoners organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö i en svensk context* (Qualitative study on trans people's organisational and social work environment in a Swedish context), published as a separate part of the research overview *HBTQ-personers organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö en kunskapssammanställning* (HBTQ people's organisational and social work environment A knowledge compilation), the authors point out that the majority of people interviewed for the study and survey

respondents stated that they had not experienced discrimination in the workplace. Of all the survey respondents, 51% stated that they had not experienced discrimination (Eriksson et al., 2022). However, the remaining 49% said they had experienced discrimination. Some reported career discrimination (16%) or pay discrimination (8%), but most said they had experienced discrimination in some other form (49%), such as being misgendered or subjected to inappropriate or offensive comments. This study shows that non-binary trans people faced discrimination at a higher rate than binary ones. In the European survey *A long way to go for LGBTI equality* (2019), 23% of trans people in Sweden responded that they had experienced discrimination in the workplace in the past year.

The Swedish public inquiry highlighted that discrimination in the labour market affects both the trans community and many people with a foreign background and other racialised groups. Difficulties in getting a job and the fear of being exposed to both racism and transphobia can create anxiety about one's opportunities in the labour market (SOU 2017:92: 256). In an interview, a representative of the Blattetrans network talks about this double vulnerability linked to the labour market.

> ***Looking for work, being in a workplace. It's too much to be both non-white and trans. You don't dare apply for that job, thinking about what it might mean to work there, to endure both racism and heterosexism, to not get support from colleagues and managers. You don't want to expose yourself. There are few opportunities to hold a job.***
>
> Representative, Blattetrans (SOU 2017:92: 255)

The representative of Blattetrans also told the inquiry that many in the network perceive the trans movement, and the HBTQ movement in general, as being dominated by white people, that there is too little discussion about norms of whiteness and that racism also exists within the HBTQ movement, making it difficult to find a place where they feel at home, even more generally (SOU 2017:92: 255).

The research review *HBTQ-personers organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö en kunskapssammanställning* (HBTQ people's organisational and social work environment A knowledge compilation; 2022), summarises the international research situation, which shows that HBTQ people are exposed to microaggressions, discrimination, harassment and bullying to a greater extent than

heterosexual cisgender people. Research specifically examining experiences of stereotyping amongst the trans, as well as bisexual and queer, community is limited, but the presence of stereotyping and its impact on the working environments of trans people is clear from the studies, which show, for example, the prevalence of transphobia, with trans people describing severe forms of transphobic harassment. Some of the international studies in the research review focused on the consequences of discrimination against trans people in the workplace. They showed, among other things, that greater levels of discrimination were associated with higher reported levels of emotional exhaustion during the next working day, that trans people who had experienced more discrimination from colleagues reported lower well-being and that trans people chose to downplay aspects of their gender identity in environments where they were at risk of discrimination (Eriksson et al., 2022).

NEGATIVE TREATMENT

In brief:

- Many trans people have experienced negative treatment, such as derogatory comments and misgendering.
- Misgendering, for example by using the wrong pronouns, was the most common form of negative treatment. Non-binary trans people in particular reported that misgendering was a common experience.
- International research shows that microaggressions can lead to reduced engagement at work and increased workplace stress.

Trans people are also particularly vulnerable when it comes to exposure to negative behaviour, such as derogatory comments and microaggressions. In the Danish report *LGBT-personers trivsel på arbejdsmarkedet* (LGBT people's well-being in the labour market; Følner et al., 2019), 23% of trans people surveyed stated that they had experienced derogatory comments or other negative behaviour in the past year, compared to 12% among LGBTI people as a whole.

In the Finnish study on young trans people (Lehtonen, 2016), respondents spoke about workplaces with generally negative attitudes towards trans and LGBTI people, which manifested, for example, in negative comments and jokes. This affected their ability to concentrate at work, whether or not the comments were directed at them specifically.

> ***Trans and homophobic atmosphere in my earlier workplace make it impossible for me to return there (even if I could). I don't have the energy for this environment. It makes working hard and very stressful.***
>
> Transmasculine respondent (Lehtonen, 2016: 301)

Among those who were not open in the workplace, it was also perceived to be difficult to challenge disrespectful behaviour and homophobic and transphobic comments, for fear of "being exposed" (Lehtonen, 2016).

The Norwegian study *Seksuell orientering, kjønnsmangfold og levekår* (Sexual orientation, gender diversity and living conditions) also examined derogatory comments. It asked whether respondents had experienced derogatory comments or behaviour at their workplace at some point in the last five years on the basis of being an LHB/T person. Of those surveyed, 42% of binary trans people and 37% of non-binary trans people answered yes to the question. This differs markedly from respondents in the LHB community, 10 to 18% of whom answered in the affirmative. A still greater number of trans respondents stated that they had experienced general negative attitudes and comments (i.e. not necessarily directed at individuals; Anderssen et al., 2021).

The Swedish study *Normer som skaver – Hbtq-personers sociala arbetsmiljö i Göteborgs Stad* (Norms that hurt – LHBTQ people's social work environment in the City of Gothenburg) identifies disrespectful communication as a common factor that negatively affects the work environment, including, for example, trans people not being addressed by their chosen name or pronouns (Björk & Wahlström, 2018). In the qualitative part of the Swedish report *HBTQ-personers organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö* (HBTQ people's organisational and social work environment), which consists of a questionnaire survey and interviews with trans people in Sweden, most interviewees said that being misgendered was the most common form of harassment or microaggressions. Non-binary trans people in particular stated that misgendering was a common experience and that it contributed to a worsened working environment for them. Several felt that they were socially excluded and perceived misgendering as a way for others to signal that they did not accept their gender identity (Eriksson et al., 2022).

The research review in the same report (Eriksson et al., 2022) found that international research also indicates that trans people experience a number of different types of microaggressions. Studies from the US showed, among other things, that colleagues' unwillingness to acknowledge or accept trans people's gender identity resulted in reduced work engagement, trans people not wanting to disclose their trans experience for fear of it negatively affecting their career and trans people being misgendered or portrayed as difficult to deal with. All of these microaggressions were described as causing stress in the workplace.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKPLACE CULTURE AND KNOWLEDGE LEVEL

In brief:

- Workplace culture is emphasised as an important risk and health factor for trans people's work environment.
- Many trans people have experienced good support in the workplace.
- Many state that leadership plays a major role in work on inclusion, but that managers' often have insufficient knowledge to be professional in their approach.
- An organisation that actively works on equality can be a positive health factor and provide a more inclusive workplace for trans people.
- One report shows that there are more tangible risks of victimisation in workplaces with workplace cultures that are heteronormative and/or macho.

Support from managers and colleagues

The Norwegian report *Seksuell orientering, kjønnsmangfold og levekår* (Sexual orientation, gender diversity and living conditions) shows that many trans people have experienced support in the workplace. Among both non-binary and binary trans respondents, 77% had experienced that someone at work had supported, defended, or protected them in relation to their gender identity. Within the two groups, 72% and 68% respectively had experienced a more general positive attitude and heard or seen someone supporting, protecting, or promoting the rights of LHBT people in the workplace (Anderssen et al., 2021).

In the Finnish survey *Sukupuolivähemmistöjen kohtaaminen työelämässä 2015-2020* (Swe: *Att bemöta könsmångfalden i arbetslivet*; Addressing gender diversity in the labour market; Saloheimo, 2021), a majority of respondents had experienced good support from colleagues. Slightly less than half of the respondents considered their gender identity a strength in their work and in the work community. About half (48%) felt that their employer or supervisor showed support and encouragement. There was a significant difference in the responses to this question compared to the 2016 survey, in which only 30% responded in the same way. There were also significantly more respondents in 2020 (43%) than in 2016 (12%) who said that their employer had organised the physical work environment, such as physical spaces and systems linked to names and staff cards, in a satisfactory way (Saloheimo, 2021).

In the qualitative study on the work environment of trans people in Sweden, in the report *HBTQ-personers organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö* (HBTQ people's organisational and social work environment), many described leadership as playing a key role in working towards inclusion. Many of the study participants said that they received much support from managers. Examples of support included managers taking issues of discrimination seriously, but also things like never having problems getting time off work for medical reasons and communication efforts in the workplace around issues related to the transition process. Practical support, such as the seamless handling of name changes and changing rooms, was also mentioned, as well as a manager taking responsibility for telling new colleagues about correct pronouns. Some respondents said that their managers were well intentioned but lacked knowledge, and that this lack of knowledge meant that managers were unable to deal with them professionally. Several participants said they would have liked to see a higher level of knowledge among managers, both about HBTQI people in general and specifically about trans people. Many of the study participants said that they also largely had supportive colleagues who accepted and respected them or had at least treated them appropriately and neutrally. The responses indicated that an important factor for feeling comfortable in the workplace was feeling that colleagues stood up for them and did their best to be inclusive (Eriksson et al., 2022).

Risk and health factors in the workplace

The same study (Eriksson et al., 2022) shows that workplace culture is an important risk and health factor for trans people's work environment. The participants in the study highlighted that there are more tangible risks of discrimination, harassment, microaggressions and social exclusion in workplace cultures that are heteronormative and/or macho, i.e. characterised by an oppressive ideal of masculinity. The majority of study participants described their workplaces as hetero- or cisnormative. Many mentioned that hetero-norms, which regulate female and male behaviour, were a strongly regulating influence in both

female- and male-dominated workplaces, but that there was more room for differences in workplaces with a majority of women. Many of those who had experienced workplaces characterised by traditionally masculine norms, described as macho by the participants, felt that those workplaces regulated gender expression more explicitly than others, for example through comments and questioning. For most, these workplace cultures had a negative influence on job satisfaction and well-being. However, it should be emphasised that although the terms macho and male-dominated were combined in several cases, this was not always the case. Some respondents also described their workplace as male-dominated with an inclusive workplace culture (Eriksson et al., 2022).

A workplace culture in which the organisation actively promotes equality can be a health factor and provide a more inclusive workplace for trans people. Some of the study participants specifically highlighted factors such as gender-neutral facilities, including toilets and changing rooms, and the importance of using correct pronouns. Other factors highlighted were good support from managers, for example in dealing with and preventing discrimination, and proactive work on health and safety issues and communication initiatives. Knowledge and expertise on trans issues, such as the transition process, were highlighted as important health factors, as was good support from colleagues. Access to support outside the workplace, via networks, a support line, or a trade union, was also stated as an important factor, but this was something many respondents lacked (Eriksson et al., 2022). The Finnish report shows that those working in male-dominated sectors experienced more problems with external contacts due to their gender identity than those working in other sectors, and they were less likely to perceive their identity as a strength than those working in other sectors (Saloheimo, 2021).

This is also in line with international research, which shows that HBTQ people may be less open in masculine-coded workplaces and that there may be an increased risk of discrimination and harassment in macho workplace cultures, due to more stereotypical notions of how men and women should behave (Eriksson et al., 2022).

INSIGHTS: GREENLAND

"Employers who discriminate will be held accountable"

In Greenland, there are no studies on the labour market conditions for trans people, so it is not possible to say anything about the situation in general.

"It is a general challenge that we face that there are no statistics on the conditions for HBTQI+ people. This makes work to promote change more difficult, because without such comprehensive knowledge, the problems we describe can be perceived as existing only at the individual level," says Qillaq Olsen, Chair of Sipineq Plus.

The organisation was founded in March 2023 and its first project has been to translate various HBTQI terms into Greenlandic. In principle, the glossary is ready and now they are just waiting for it to be approved by the Greenlandic Language Council.

"The fact that there will soon be Greenlandic words for, for example, 'homosexual', 'gender identity' and 'sexual orientation' is important for ensuring that people understand what we are trying to communicate. The foreign words are often misunderstood, and many words have also acquired a negative connotation," says Qillaq Olsen.

The hope is that the new glossary will help raise awareness of what it means to be an HBTQI+ person and challenge prejudices. Olsen believes this is important for improving conditions for HBTQI+ people in society as a whole and thus also in working life.

The studies that exist of trans people's working life conditions in the Nordic countries show that many trans people have experienced discrimination both in regard to recruitment and in their workplaces. Qillaq Olsen knows that such experiences are also present in Greenland, while there are also trans people who feel that they are treated well at work.

Greenland does not have a law on discrimination against minorities, but this may be about to change. A proposal for an equality and anti-discrimination law is on the table of the Greenlandic government (Inatsisartuts), and it includes sexual orientation and gender identity. Qillaq Olsen hopes that the new law will be adopted soon and believes it will be important for the HBTQI+ movement.

"Employers who discriminate will be held accountable in a different way than before. The law also sends a clear signal that it is not okay to discriminate."

One factor that Sipineq Plus knows affects conditions for trans people in Greenland is the lack of access to trans care. The legislation for changing one's legal gender is the same as in Denmark and is based on self-identification, but trans people who need gender-affirming treatment face problems. Prescriptions for hormones are not available in Greenland, and there is at least one case of a trans person being fined after returning home to Greenland with hormones prescribed by a doctor abroad.

"You have the right to change the gender stated in your passport, but in order to receive treatment, in practice you have to leave Greenland. In other words, you have to leave the place that is your home in order to live as who you are, and this is something we know is a cause of a many cases of mental ill-health."

PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

In brief:

- The importance of gender-neutral toilets is emphasised in the studies. Physical premises affected the working environments of all interviewees in some way.
- Gender-neutral changing rooms were seen as positive, but several study participants also emphasised the need for privacy, in terms of both changing and showering facilities.
- Several international studies suggest that it may be useful for employers to reflect on whether formal dress codes can be discriminatory, as well as how informal and formal dress codes in the workplace affect the well-being of HBTQ people.

Physical spaces

The Swedish survey and interview study on trans people's work environment found that physical facilities affected the work environment of all interviewees in some way, although most worked in a workplace with gender-neutral toilets. For example, it could be a matter of not having to make decisions about which toilet to use. The importance of the workplace having gender-neutral toilets was emphasised by the vast majority. Most had also experienced previous workplaces with gendered toilets, and highlighted this as a cause of anxiety, especially for non-binary people and those at the beginning of a transition process. However, for workplaces with changing and shower rooms there was more of an issue, as these were less likely to be gender-neutral. The presence of gender-neutral changing rooms was perceived as positive, but several study participants also pointed to the need for privacy – in terms of both changing and showering facilities (Eriksson et al., 2022). The Swedish public inquiry (SOU, 2017) also shows that access to changing rooms, showers and toilets is a factor where the situation for trans people needs attention with respect to the physical work environment.

The importance of being able to choose your uniform

The Swedish trade union Unionen has conducted a legal study, *Vilka möjligheter har en arbetsgivare att påverka anställdas klädsel, särskilt med avseende på könsidentitet och könsuttryck?* (What possibilities does an employer have to influence employees' dress, especially with regard to gender identity and gender expression?) The report notes that employers commonly cite reasons related to the work environment to justify certain dress codes, which may be reasonable from a safety perspective. However, according to the report, there are few reasons for

which employers in Sweden can restrict an employee's gender expression, i.e. how someone expresses their gender socially, for example through their clothing, hairstyle, make-up or voice. If the employer requires a uniform and the uniform is available in different gender-coded versions, the employee should be able to choose whether to wear a feminine- or masculine-coded uniform. Refusing to allow someone to choose a uniform or to switch between different gender-coded uniforms can constitute discrimination. For example, if the employer does not provide feminine-coded uniforms in larger sizes, this may constitute indirect discrimination, at least if it particularly affects trans people (Unionen, 2016). In the Swedish public inquiry (SOU, 2017), several of the respondents' accounts related to clothing.

> ***Some days I dress the way I want to, and sometimes get comments about it, which I can still handle because I want to somehow create a culture where my colleagues feel they can be themselves, and that is more important than clumsy colleagues. But when it's time for various trips, customer meetings and, e.g., management team meetings, I almost exclusively choose to dress as others would expect, put on make-up etc. – it feels like I've dressed up and am also emphasising parts of myself and my body that I don't feel comfortable with, that 'aren't me'.***
>
> Account 91, SOU (2017: 381

Apart from these studies, no further Nordic knowledge on the physical work environment of trans people was found during the research review. It is clear that this aspect is important, and we therefore present some of the international research reviewed in the Swedish report *HBTQ-personers organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö* (HBTQ people's organisational and social work environment). One of the US studies reviewed in the report highlighted the importance of inclusive language around toilets and changing rooms in organisational policy documents. Formal as well as informal dress codes can be a problem. A major study from the US found that working in environments that required gendered dress, for example in the form of gender-coded uniforms, was discriminatory and restricted gender expression. The study indicated that the trans people who participated in the study considered gender-neutral clothing to be positive. Several studies indicate that it may be useful for employers to reflect on whether formal dress codes can be discriminatory, as well as how informal and formal dress codes in the workplace affect the well-being of HBTQ people (Eriksson et al., 2022).

OPENNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

In brief:

- Trans people are much less open about their gender identity than those in the LGB community are about their sexual orientation, according to the Nordic reports.
- The reports also indicate that there is a general correlation between being able to be open in the workplace and well-being and satisfaction at work.
- At the same time, some trans people have faced discrimination and harassment as a result of coming out in the workplace.

In the Finnish study conducted by trans and LGBTI organisations, it was clear that being able to be open in the workplace improved well-being and increased work motivation (Saloheimo, 2021). A Swedish study shows that those who were less open also felt less included in the social community of the workplace (Björk & Wahlström, 2018). A Danish report showed that there was a higher risk of depression and stress for those who felt that they could only be open in the workplace 'to a small extent' or 'not at all' (Følner et al., 2019). Overall, the Swedish research review also showed that being able to be open about one's gender identity and/or trans experience can be important. The link between openness and well-being at work applied to trans people, as well as the rest of the HBTQI community, which was also studied in the research review. In the studies in which openness did not show a positive effect on health, it was associated with increased risk of discrimination and harassment (Eriksson et al., 2022). In the Finnish survey, just over a quarter of respondents said they were not open about their gender identity in the workplace. Those who were not open in the workplace were more concerned that openness would lead to discrimination and negative treatment from colleagues than from employers (Saloheimo, 2021).

The Finnish study on young trans people (up to the age of 30) showed that they were less likely to be open than older trans people, with 46% of transfeminine respondents and 60% of transmasculine respondents respectively saying they were not open at work (Lehtonen, 2016). Many were concerned about being treated unfairly or excluded if they chose to be open. However, among those who chose to be open in the workplace, few had experienced negative consequences, and most had experienced positive treatment and acceptance. Many of the respondents emphasised that it took much time and energy to think about whether or not to come out, and if so, to whom, how and when, but also that it could be stressful to

hide their gender identity. The question of whether or not to be open in the workplace was the most common theme across respondents' answers. For young people, who are new to working life and often have short-term contracts and thus often change jobs and colleagues, this becomes a particularly important issue (Lehtonen, 2016).

The Norwegian report *Seksuell orientering, kjønnsmangfold og levekår* (Sexual orientation, gender diversity and living conditions) divides responses between trans men, trans women and non-binary people. Among trans men, 40% stated that they are not open in the workplace, for trans women the corresponding figure was 21%, and for non-binary trans people 30% (Anderssen et al., 2021).

The Danish report *LGBT-personers trivsel på arbejdsmarkedet* (LGBT people's well-being in the labour market), based on survey data, found that only one in two trans people were open about their gender identity in the workplace. Moreover, a quarter said they had regretted their openness at some point in the past two years. As mentioned previously, one in four respondents had felt discriminated against because of their gender identity and just over a fifth of trans respondents were in a high-risk group for job dissatisfaction. The same report, which also surveyed managers and HR staff, shows that only 68% of respondents strongly agreed when asked if it would be fully accepted if a trans or intersex person 'came out' in their workplace. For comparison, 85% strongly agreed with the statement when it related to someone coming out as gay or bisexual (Følner et al., 2019).

The Danish report *Undersøgelse af udfordringer og stigma i forhold til at have en LGBTI-identitet i Danmark* (Exploring the challenges and stigma of having an LGBTI identity in Denmark) also shows that trans people are less likely to be open at their workplace than the rest of the LGB community (Følner et al., 2020). When asked why they did not want to be open, about half of the respondents (49%) answered that they have no need to be open about their gender identity at work. Many (47%) said they thought it would make life more difficult, that colleagues would not understand (34%) or being accepting (30%), or that colleagues would subject them to bullying and harassment (28%). Some said they thought it would make colleagues uncomfortable (17%) and some said they thought they would be fired if they came out (12%). Respondents could choose multiple answers. Among the trans people in the study who chose to be open in the workplace, 19% had received negative comments about their gender identity at their workplace/place of education (Følner et al., 2020).

In the Norwegian qualitative study *Alskens folk* (All sorts of people; 2013), the experiences of the participants, who were all trans, of coming out in the workplace were very diverse. Several reported favourable experiences and that good support from management had resulted in colleagues being supportive and respectful. Others said that the choice to come out had instead led to serious negative consequences. One participant reported serious harassment and threats of violence from a colleague. Several participants reported that they had either lost

their job or had been subtly removed from certain work duties and felt that their employer had tried to 'push' them out of the workplace.

> ***You are elegantly deprived of work tasks. You are given tasks that they hope you won't bother with. You realise that they're interested in how you do things, and you feel monitored, almost persecuted. You become terrified of making a mistake so that they can catch you.***
>
> Informant (van der Roos, 2013: 52)

They felt monitored in a way they were not before and thus constantly afraid of doing something wrong. These informants tried to speak out and raise the situation with the union but found that this process often costs too much energy (van der Roos, 2013).

The Swedish report *Jag är inte ensam, det finns andra som jag Unga hbtqi-personers levnadsvillkor* (I'm not alone, there are others like me Young HBTQI people's life circumstances), produced by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, examines the situation of young LBTQ people in the labour market. It shows that young trans people are also significantly less open than those in the HBQ group are about their sexual orientation (MUCF, 2022). The *EU LGBTI Survey II* for Sweden shows that young non-binary trans people (aged 15-29) stand out, with 55% responding that they are never open about their gender identity at work (compared to 30% among binary trans people and 14% and 15% among cisgender girls and cisgender boys respectively regarding their sexual orientation; FRA, 2019). The interviews with young trans people in the MUCF report show that openness is an essential issue. Many reflect on the fact that being open is not always a choice and on the potential consequences of being open. One respondent stated that they believed their trans identity was obvious to colleagues at a previous workplace. Another respondent said it was clear to other employers that she is trans because she appears under a different name in a number of documents and has not been able to change her personal code number yet. This creates uncertainty for her, although she stated that she did not know if she was being discriminated against, for example, raising questions over whether this is the reason she gets fewer shifts than colleagues with the same skills. One respondent described that not being able to choose whether or not to be open was a barrier to applying for a job, and that the lack of identifying documents indicating the correct gender was still a barrier in this respect. One respondent said that openness was not really a choice because colleagues had found them on social media and then asked questions during work

hours, which they felt added an additional workload on top of their regular duties. In their account, social media contributes to blurring the boundaries between private and public (MUCF, 2022).

Meetings with external contacts

Many respondents felt that they could be open in the workplace, completely or only partially among some colleagues, but often not in meetings with clients, users, pupils, parents, and patients (Björk & Wahlström, 2018). This is also in line with the European survey *EU LGBTI II* (FRA, 2019).

The Finnish survey *Sukupuolivähemmistöjen kohtaaminen työelämässä 2015-2020* (Swe: *Att bemöta könsmångfalden i arbetslivet*; Addressing gender diversity in the labour market) also showed that among those who were open in the workplace, about half of those with outward facing roles perceived their gender identity to be a strength in these contexts, while about half perceived it to be a problem, with non-binary respondents in particular finding it difficult to express their gender identity in customer situations. Respondents reported intrusive or hostile attitudes of some customers towards trans people, which manifested in a variety of ways, including everything from misgendering to mistreatment. In male-dominated sectors, personal gender identity was perceived as a problem in encounters with external contacts to a greater extent than in other sectors (Saloheimo, 2021). The Swedish survey and interview study showed similar results. Some indicated that they were not open about their trans experience with customers and service users. When they were, they were often treated with respect, but the negative experiences of the study participants included gross insults and serious threats. However, the most common negative experience was being misgendered, but many said that in casual communication, such as in meetings with customers, it mattered less than when they were misgendered by colleagues (Eriksson et al., 2022).

The research review *HBTQ-personers organisatoriska och sociala arbetsmiljö* (HBTQ people's organisational and social work environment), which also compiled international research on the work environment of trans people, contains sections that show the nuances and consequences of whether or not one is open in the workplace. Here too, visibility becomes an important theme. According to an interview study from the USA, being a trans woman resulted in low status in some occupations, and some interviewees felt that they would not be able to get jobs that involved outward facing tasks because they would be visible to customers and the public (Budge et al., 2010). In another study from the USA, trans women who were not open about their trans identity at work described avoiding displays of masculine-coded competences, as they felt their trans identity risked being revealed if they were associated with masculinity (Yavorsky, 2016).

INSIGHTS: ÅLAND

"The risk is that you become isolated and don't come into your own"

Being trans in Åland means belonging to a small minority, in a small community.

"Many people move to the Finnish mainland or to Sweden because they are looking for community and friends who share their experiences," says Ida Aareva, who represents the organisation Regnbågsfyren.

Until recently, she was a member of the organisation's board, but now she herself has moved away from Åland and thus also left the board.

Ida Aareva recognises that there is a lack of knowledge about the working life conditions for trans people in Åland.

"The truth is that there is probably not much information," she says.

The mapping in this report shows that trans people in the Nordic countries generally face greater challenges in the labour market compared to the population as a whole. For example, they experience higher unemployment rates. Trans people are also overrepresented in low-income jobs, and many have experienced discrimination both in recruitment and in the workplace.

Ida Aareva does not see a reason to believe that conditions are any different in Åland compared to the rest of the Nordic countries, apart from the special challenges that come with living in a small community.

"It is easy to feel left out among your colleagues. Most people conform to fairly traditional middle-class norms. It's hard to be the one who stands out and breaks those expectations, especially in a small community," she says.

There have been no studies into the conditions for trans people in working life on Åland, but in 2019 the Government of Åland conducted a broader survey of HBTQIA people and their relatives. The survey was developed as the basis for an action plan on equal conditions for HBTQIA people in Åland society, and some of the questions are about treatment in working life. Due to the low number of respondents (fewer than 50 people), no statistically significant results can be presented from the survey, but the material includes a number of testimonies from Åland's HBTQIA movement.

Some respondents describe that they cannot, or do not dare to, be open at their workplace, and Ida Aareva recognises this situation. She believes that many trans people avoid telling their managers and colleagues about their identity, precisely because norms are so restrictive. "It may work well for some, but if you feel you can't be yourself at work and have to disguise yourself to fit in and be accepted, there's a big risk that it'll negatively affect how you feel," she believes.

"The risk is that you become isolated and don't come into your own. Working life is not just about doing a job with your hands and your brain. It's also about being part of a community and feeling like one of the group."



CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

ACTIVE WORK, POLICIES, AND AWARENESS-RAISING

In brief:

- A Danish study shows that very few workplaces have an HR policy that addresses issues of gender identity or gender variance.
- A supportive organisational climate is linked to the perception of a good working environment, job satisfaction and health, as well as willingness or courage to be open in the workplace.
- To create an inclusive workplace, both overt and covert identities need to be considered. This means that a workplace should not take for granted that someone has a particular sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Danish report *LGBT-personers trivsel på arbejdsmarkedet* (LGBT people's well-being in the labour market) shows that very few workplaces have an HR policy that addresses issues of gender identity or gender variance. Only 2% of managers and HR staff surveyed said that this was the case. When asked why their HR policy did not address these topics, most responded that they did not think there was a need for it (45%) or that they had not thought about it (30%; Følner et al., 2019).

At the same time, the international research discussed in the Swedish research review shows the importance of active work and policies to create an organisational climate that is perceived as supportive of trans and other HBTQ people. A supportive organisational climate is in turn linked to the perception of a good work environment, job satisfaction and health, as well as the feeling of wanting or daring to be open in the workplace (Eriksson et al., 2022: 43). Being able to be open in the workplace can in itself be a factor that contributes to well-being

(see section on openness in the workplace). However, a UK study cited in the knowledge review showed that encouraging openness is not necessarily the best way to increase the well-being of HBTQ employees (this study examines this community as a whole), rather it is more effective to work to actively create inclusive environments. Examples given in the article included encouraging employees to write their preferred pronoun in email signatures and incorporating exercises around heterosexism in diversity training (Fletcher & Everly, 2021).

Consider both overt and covert identities

The research review summarises some further findings on the theme (Eriksson et al., 2022). To create an inclusive workplace, both overt and covert identities need to be considered. This means that a workplace should not take for granted that someone has a certain sexual orientation or gender identity. It should be up to each person to be open at work and to have control over their level of openness, which is recognised as a key factor for an inclusive workplace. This requires a certain organisational climate and awareness by management and colleagues to make this possible. This means a climate in which, for example, it is accepted to be open and pursue HBTQ issues, but without feeling pressure from management or colleagues to be representative of HBTQ issues. This is in line with the fact that being open in the workplace is not always rational, as it may increase exposure to discrimination. It also requires measures that place responsibility on managers and employees as a group, rather than on the individual.

Lack of knowledge leads to poor treatment

It is also clear that knowledge about trans people and trans experiences is generally low and that there is a need for training and awareness-raising initiatives among managers and employees (Eriksson et al., 2022). As mentioned earlier, many trans respondents state that knowledge about trans people and trans experiences is often so low among managers that they do not feel that they are treated professionally, even when their manager is well meaning. Several of the participants mention that they feel that their managers are too ignorant to provide support with respect to the work environment and issues of discrimination (Eriksson et al., 2022). Participants in this study said, among other things, that they wished there was a guarantee of managers having a reasonable level of knowledge and that the level of ignorance of managers makes it difficult to address more subtle problems, such as minority stress and stress about how one's physical transition will be received in the workplace.

The Swedish study *Normer som skaver – Hbtq-personers sociala arbetsmiljö i Göteborgs Stad* (Norms that hurt – HBTQ people's social work environment in the City of Gothenburg; 2018) also shows that it can be stressful for trans people to have to correct colleagues, for example with respect to names and pronouns, and that colleagues' limited competence and knowledge of trans people made it more difficult to get them to listen (Björk & Wahlström, 2018). International research can also be summarised by saying that trans people highlighted the need for both general diversity training and specific training so that managers in particular, but also employees, are better equipped to take account of trans people's work environment situation (Eriksson et al., 2022).

Organisational support functions and knowledge development are required

In the Swedish study on trans people's work environment (Eriksson et al., 2022), a number of respondents described that they had received or knew that they could receive support from HR or safety representatives. Some said that they would have liked the union and HR to have greater expertise and thus be able to provide greater support. Several people asked for a support line to call for support and advice related to HBTQ issues in working life. Some described the need for networks with other trans people in the same profession or industry. Some said they had access to such networks, but a greater number said that they did not but that it would have meant much to have had access to such a network.





IN DIALOGUE

In the conversations with civil society organisations, anti-discrimination ombudsmen and central trade union organisations, which also contributed to the basis of this knowledge review, issues of discrimination against trans people and the need for more knowledge were raised in various ways. Several civil society participants raised the issue that it is difficult to report discrimination because they are seen as a problem in the workplace if they raise issues or repeatedly make reports. Experiences of receiving poor support from trade unions when reporting were also raised. Among the anti-discrimination ombudsmen, it was emphasised that the low propensity to report is a problem, as is the fact that this is a target group that largely avoids contact with authorities. In order for more people to report, anti-discrimination ombudsmen pointed out that dialogue with civil society is important and that knowledge of how to report and what a report can look like needs to be strengthened. To make it possible for civil society to provide such support and knowledge, more resources are needed for organisations. Anti-discrimination ombudsmen also pointed to the need for stronger legislation, such as a general ban on discrimination in the public sector, which would strengthen protections against discrimination for all. Both trade union confederations and civil society organisations highlighted the prevalence of discrimination on multiple grounds and the problem of discrimination laws not being applicable on multiple grounds.

Civil society organisations argued that both trade unions and anti-discrimination ombudsmen need to take a greater role in protecting the rights of trans people and providing guidance to workplaces, which would allow civil society organisations to engage in anti-isolation work and offer support and assistance. They also emphasised that more resources are needed for this, and that it is important that resources for non-discrimination officers remain intact.

The central trade union organisations in turn highlighted that they see a need for training for themselves and trade unions, including more knowledge on how to deal with and support vulnerable people. The trade union confederations also made concrete suggestions for the establishment of a knowledge database with

knowledge support and examples of best practice to help increase knowledge in this area. In addition, they emphasised the importance of active management of the work environment and the use of current measures and other structures that are in place to promote inclusion.

Trade union confederations emphasised that it is particularly important to focus on trans people, as it is a growing community of different ages, and that more support, focus, and resources are needed for this community. Another issue raised was the importance of looking at organisations internally and asking who the unions represent, who feels included in trade union organisations and what can be done to increase the number of people involved. It was highlighted that it is important that both the central organisations and trade unions drive work on development and can push each other.

As in the knowledge review, civil society organisations and trade union confederations highlighted that discrimination and negative treatment by third parties is common, for example in the service sector.

One employer, which represents a number of regions, responded to the short questionnaire sent out by NIKK. Each region was consulted by the employer organisation. Overall, all the regions responded that they are working broadly on diversity and inclusion. One region stated that it is also considering revising its diversity policy with a particular focus on LGBTQIA people, and one mentioned a proposal to consider LGBTI and trans people specifically in relation to the revision of its equality policy. Several regions responded that local HR departments have looked to them for advice and guidance during employee transition processes. This has involved specific questions about segregated changing rooms, and the perception is that workplaces have resolved this well. One region sampled HR units in hospitals and asked how they had solved any challenges with gender-segregated spaces, with the response being that there are good local solutions and that the issue is handled on a needs basis, as is the case for all employees. One specific challenge mentioned related to a region where it is not possible to change personal code numbers in the HR system, meaning that anyone who changes their legal gender needs to be re-registered as a new employee. It seems from the survey responses that, from the perspective of employers, everything from policy questions to how workplaces solve issues related to the physical work environment and technical systems is important.

THE NEED FOR GREATER KNOWLEDGE

All the organisations highlighted the need for greater knowledge at several levels. In particular, civil society organisations stated that they would like to see trade unions focus more on the issues raised and improve their level of knowledge. As in the studies mentioned above, they also wanted to see awareness raised amongst employers. In particular, it was mentioned that employers, but also colleagues, need more knowledge about minority stress and issues related to the transition process, which also includes social security and sick leave during transition. One suggestion raised was that there should be a hotline to which employers can direct their questions. There is a need for a resource that removes the responsibility imposed on individual employees to educate and explain. This involuntary responsibility was something that many had experienced, both in the research material and discussion groups, and which was described as energy consuming and often leading to stress and fatigue. The anti-discrimination ombudsmen also believed that employers need more knowledge but stated in addition that trans people need more knowledge about what rights they have in working life.

The group of civil society organisations also raised the need for more research and that a lack of data is a problem, especially when it comes to double vulnerability and intersections, i.e. other power structures that can interact with having a trans identity. Several of the organisations specifically mentioned non-white trans people who experience racialisation and trans people with disabilities as being particularly vulnerable but stated that there is currently a lack of Nordic data to investigate this through research. Qualitative studies were suggested as a way of gaining more knowledge about differences within the trans community.

In this text, which summarises the dialogues, it becomes clear that some questions and criticisms are directed at other actors. Different types of actors have different perspectives and focuses, and these dialogues, held with one type of actor at a time, do not always provide answers to questions and criticisms levelled by other actors. This shows that in the future it will be important for these different stakeholder groups to engage in dialogue with each other to a greater extent than is currently the case. The Nordic model should predominantly reflect a dialogue-based approach, which should also apply to the issues herein.



DISCUSSION

Many of the barriers that trans people face in and around the world of work are rooted in restrictive norms that define how men and women are expected to behave, as well as cisgender norms that perpetuate that idea that only two genders exist and that they are static. As this knowledge review has shown, these norms are reflected in recruitment processes, working environments and career development opportunities. Breaking these gender norms often results in some form of punishment from society, whether it is being removed from a recruitment process, being discriminated against or mistreated by colleagues and clients, or being treated unprofessionally by a manager. The consequences of living as a trans person in a society where many people are ignorant, prejudiced or, in the worst case, hostile towards trans people can negatively affect working life, as well as life outside work, in a variety of ways.

The purpose of this knowledge review is to provide a clear summary of knowledge about the working life conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries and the underlying factors that affect their employment. In summary, the Nordic knowledge provides a picture of working life conditions that are worse than those of cisgender people in a number of ways. The conditions described show that various types of exclusionary processes, such as discrimination and negative, transphobic environments, are common obstacles to a secure and fulfilling working life. This applies both to the search for a job and to the working environment in a workplace. These barriers can have serious consequences for trans people's finances, quality of life and health.

DISCRIMINATION, MICROAGGRESSIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

All the Nordic reports that examine LGBTI people's exposure to discrimination, harassment and threats show that trans people are by far the most vulnerable group. Discrimination, derogatory comments, and a negative workplace environment can affect well-being and the opportunities to thrive and develop in one's working life – as well as the opportunities to have a working life at all.

Recurring in the material, as well as in the dialogues with civil society organisations, are statements about stress, lack of energy and feelings of exhaustion and fatigue as a result of navigating working life when there is little knowledge about trans people. This can result from being in a workplace in which it is necessary to constantly inform colleagues who ask questions or, for example, use the wrong pronouns, resulting in the need to act as an educator alongside performing work duties. It may also involve devoting energy to thinking about which kinds of jobs are safe and which are not, for example avoiding occupations or positions that require significant contact with people or in which the person believes they will be discriminated against to a great extent. It may also involve spending much time and energy thinking about whether or not to come out in the workplace. For those who have precarious employment and therefore need to change jobs frequently, it becomes a recurring issue that takes up time and energy.

It is important to emphasise that this is not just something that occurs at the individual level but is very much an aspect of workplace culture. In several instances in the study material, generally negative attitudes towards trans and other LGBTI people are addressed and how these are expressed through a workplace culture characterised by microaggressions, negative comments and jokes about trans people in general, not necessarily directed at an individual. Trans people in the study material referenced the negative impact of such workplace cultures on their overall well-being and job satisfaction, as well as their ability to concentrate at work. Those who were not open in the workplace also found it difficult to challenge disrespectful behaviour and homophobic and transphobic comments, for fear of being 'outed'. International research shows similar consequences of discrimination, negative attitudes and microaggressions, including emotional exhaustion, lower work engagement and stress, as well as an unwillingness amongst trans people to be open about their gender identity for fear of it negatively affecting their career or a greater tendency to downplay aspects of their gender identity in environments where there is a risk of discrimination (Eriksson et al., 2022).

In the material as well as in the dialogues with civil society organisations, issues of health and ill-health recur in different ways. Fatigue and lack of energy, as a consequence of encountering microaggressions, discrimination and ignorance, is one example. Isolation from the labour market due to fear of discrimination or poor treatment is another. A further example is the conditions that accompany a physical transition. It was highlighted in conversations with civil society organisations that a physical transition often affects a person's ability to work, as well as their mental and physical capacity – something that can lead to discrimination in itself. As in several places in the material, isolation, from both the labour market and the outside world, was also highlighted, especially while waiting to undergo the transition process. Having to be away from work for a significant amount of time is one example and commonly a significant burden in waiting that often lasts a long time, which is also addressed in previous research (Bremer, 2011). It is clear that the conditions of working life are closely linked to the conditions of life in general.

Career development

Little is known about the management and career development of trans people in the Nordic countries. In the few qualitative studies that exist, several trans men describe passing as a man as being career enhancing. Some men described it as giving them greater status and better pay than when they did not pass as a man and stated that they were generally treated with more respect in society (Eriksson et al., 2022). This can be contrasted with the experience of Claire, a trans woman and manager. After her transition, she felt that she was interrupted more often and was less likely to be listened to, while co-workers confided in her in a way they had not done before her transition. These examples clearly show the impact of how gendered power structures and heterosexist patriarchal practices that favour men and are to the detriment of women permeate the wider world of work.

Otherwise, there is a significant lack of Nordic knowledge about career development and especially management. We therefore cannot say anything for certain about this area, but it is possible to interpret this lack of knowledge against other results in the knowledge review. Findings indicating that many trans people have precarious employment and hold jobs below their educational level could indicate that only a relatively small group undergo career development leading to a managerial position. The findings on high levels of discrimination against trans people in the workplace, as well as experiences of stress and burnout due to discrimination and negative environments, suggest the same. It is unusual for employees who are marginalised or unhappy in their workplace to be promoted to or aspire to positions that confer the responsibility, trust, and power to make decisions affecting others in a workplace, such as managerial positions. The findings that trans people experienced career and pay discrimination (Björk & Wahlström, 2018) and were discriminated against in their workplace after coming out, and for example transferred to other tasks, forced to leave their job or not promoted (Anderssen et al., 2021), point in the same direction. This is not something we can know for sure, as knowledge directly examining management and career development is largely lacking, but until more research is done, the findings of this knowledge review seem to point to such a conclusion.

DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE TRANS COMMUNITY

It is important to emphasise that there are differences and variations within the trans group. The results of several of the reports show that the specific gender identity of an individual within the trans community affects their experiences in working life, as we see in the examples above. Trans women are more likely to experience harassment and discrimination than trans men, both in the workplace and in recruitment processes. Trans women are also more likely to be unemployed than trans men and non-binary trans people, and more trans feminine than trans

masculine young people are pessimistic about finding a good job (Lehtonen, 2016). The particular vulnerability of trans women is also reflected in the reasoning of previous studies, such as Eriksson and colleagues' qualitative study on trans people's work environments in the Swedish context. The authors emphasise that individual gender identity interacts with the prevalence of discrimination against people with a trans experience, with their findings indicating that trans men/men experience slightly less exposure to discrimination than trans women/women and non-binary people (Eriksson et al., 2022: 170). This is also in line with European findings from the extensive data produced by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), which also shows that trans women are the group that is most at risk of violence and harassment (Calderon-Cifuentes, 2021). Transphobia and misogyny, conscious or unconscious, interact and hit trans women particularly hard. In proposing measures to reduce the vulnerability of trans people in the workplace, it is therefore important to consider variations within the trans community and not analyse the community as more uniform than it is.

At the same time, there is much about the differences within the trans community that we currently know nothing about. There are many subgroups and intersections on which there is an absence of information in a Nordic context. Intersectional perspectives are lacking in the included material to a significant extent, which can be partly explained by the fact that it largely consists of survey studies based on large sets of quantitative data, which rarely include intersectional analyses. In the conversations with civil society organisations, as well as in parts of the written material, the issue of double vulnerability is raised, for example a non-white trans person constantly having to deal with heterosexism and racism, as well as the experience of being discriminated against, without being able to determine the basis of the discrimination. This was also raised in the discussions with the trade union confederations, several of which referenced the problem that discrimination laws are not applicable on multiple grounds. In order to know more about differences within the trans community and, based on this knowledge, develop policy measures to improve the working life conditions of these communities, research with intersectional perspectives and additional data are needed.

Poor conditions for a good start in working life

However, one factor for which there is more information is how age interacts with having a trans experience. Young trans people are often particularly vulnerable, and there are many indications that many trans people get a bad start in working life. One striking similarity between the Nordic survey studies is that a majority of the trans respondents are young. This differs from respondents within the LGB community, who are more evenly distributed across different age groups. We also know that there has been an increase in people receiving a gender dysphoria diagnosis within the population. This increase is especially apparent for children and young people (National Board of Health and Welfare, 2020). Based on previous research, we know that young people are particularly vulnerable to health problems

when they are unemployed or working in precarious conditions (Vancea & Utzet, 2017). Previous research also shows that young trans people report poorer mental and physical health than young cisgender people (see, for example, Siverskog, 2021). It is therefore particularly important to give special consideration to young trans people, which is a relatively large and growing group, and their relationship to the labour market.

Unemployment and early exclusion from education and the labour market risk affecting health and well-being at the individual level but also ultimately constitute an economic burden at the societal level. There are thus major benefits in both the short and long term if young people complete basic and further education and are integrated into the labour market (Randell, 2023). However, mental ill-health can also be an effect of organisational and structural conditions in schools and workplaces, which are also often contexts in which narrow and exclusionary gender norms are maintained.

It is beyond the scope of this knowledge review to include issues relating to young trans people and education, but there is nevertheless a strong link between education and working life. Young trans people need to be assured a good start in the labour market, and a high standard and quality of education is an important part of that start. Conditions in both school and working life can lead to stress and mental health problems. A higher proportion of young trans people state that they are not satisfied with their school or work situation and have difficulties at school, as well as reporting higher levels of perceived loneliness, lack of community and feelings of exclusion and isolation compared to cisgender people (Anderssen et al., 2020). Difficulties in school affect both the transition to working life and the type of jobs that are accessible (Randell, 2023).

Precarious employment is also linked to negative mental health outcomes, and young workers with precarious employment are at increased risk of mental health problems and poorer mental health compared to those with more stable employment. Active labour market and training programmes, including social security measures, improved working conditions and targeted health programmes are important to address this vulnerability (Vancea & Utzet, 2017). It appears that extensive work is needed in both schools and workplaces to create favourable conditions to ensure a good start in working life – and the rest of life – for young trans people.

In addition to this, it is important to ensure that there are measures that work for those trans people who transition later in life. We know, for example, that there is an increase in the number of trans people who choose to transition at an older age, only after retirement, because they see it as too risky to come out and undergo a transition while still in working life (Siverskog & Bromseth, 2023). Needs and measures from the employer side may also differ depending on whether an employee has already undergone transition before their first job or they do so after several decades of working life, and it is important to consider a life cycle perspective when developing measures.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

With the exception of one report, which examined the situation of young HBTQI people (MUCF, 2022), economic vulnerability is not explicitly addressed in the included material. However, we do learn about trans people's overrepresentation in terms of unemployment; exposure to discrimination, including in recruitment; illness that affects ability to work; and poor employment conditions, such as insecure employment and low wages. Based on these findings, this knowledge review suggests that trans people are more likely to struggle to make a living and to be at risk of or living in poverty and economic vulnerability than the majority population.

Based on European data, analyses of the economic vulnerability of trans people have been carried out by Trans Europe, an umbrella organisation that brings together organisations from across Europe working for trans rights (see, for example, Calderon-Cifuentes, 2021; Karsay, 2021). Data from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) shows that across the EU, 46% of trans respondents struggled to make ends meet. One in four trans people in the EU have experienced some form of homelessness and 11% of young trans people aged 15-17 have experienced homelessness (FRA, 2019). This is significantly higher than in the LGB community. Forms of homelessness include sleeping rough, staying with a friend or relative or in a shelter. More than half, 59%, of trans people with a migrant and/or ethnic minority background in the EU have experienced some form of homelessness. Trans people who are parents are also more likely to experience homelessness. Non-binary respondents appear to fare slightly better financially than trans women and trans men. Trans people with disabilities, trans people with migrant and/or ethnic minority backgrounds, non-heterosexual trans people and intersex trans people have more difficulty coping financially than other groups. Those who are most affected are trans people with low levels of education and disabilities, regardless of gender (Calderon-Cifuentes, 2021). The author attributes the difficult economic situation that trans people often face to the fact that many have been discriminated against from an early age, including in the education system, and often have not had support from home. Subsequently, many are unable to access the labour market and instead have to turn to informal economies, such as sex for compensation, to survive financially. That also leaves many trans people, especially trans women, exposed to serious forms of violence and harassment (Calderon-Cifuentes, 2021).

Based on FRA's survey data (EU LGBTI Survey II, 2019), it is possible to isolate data from the three Nordic countries that are EU members. The survey is the largest of its kind but, just as for the included Nordic studies, it is important to bear in mind that the sampled groups are relatively small when isolating only trans people. When it comes to difficulties coping financially, the patterns are similar to those seen across the EU on average, but the percentage is slightly lower, with about 40% of

trans respondents in the three respective countries stating that they have difficulties coping financially. In terms of homelessness, Denmark and Finland are close to the EU average, with about 25% of respondents having experienced some form of homelessness. Sweden stands out as the EU country with the highest percentage of homelessness among trans people, with 35% of trans respondents having experienced homelessness in some form. The most common reasons for homelessness are family or relationship problems, insufficient financial resources and/or unemployment (FRA, 2019). These figures differ markedly from the LGB community, and even more from the majority population. In 2024, FRA will publish a follow-up to the *EU LGBTI Survey II* from 2019. There is every reason to specifically monitor and produce data on the conditions and vulnerability that trans people experience in the Nordic countries.

In the Nordic material included in this knowledge review, themes such as economic vulnerability, poverty and other consequences of poor working life conditions are conspicuously absent. This may be because the included material explicitly relates to working life and mainly examines themes that are clearly linked to working life, such as pay and working environment, or attempts to access work, such as recruitment. Questions related to the consequences of poor structural conditions and a fragmented and insecure working life for life in general are not included. The Nordic approach that emerges from this overview thus differs from that represented by the European statistics and analysis above. The latter shows that we learn about other aspects of vulnerability when questions are asked on the basis that working life conditions and living conditions are always closely linked. This shows us that there are other questions to ask and other ways of asking them. In the Nordic material, for example, questions about working life conditions and finances are not linked to consequences in areas such as health, housing, and other conditions for living a safe and decent life. A recurring theme in the material is that more knowledge is needed about the working life conditions of trans people. Where we direct the searchlight and how we choose to formulate problems will guide the knowledge we gain. These perspectives are clear examples of areas where more Nordic knowledge is needed to improve working life conditions, closely linked to living conditions, for trans people in the Nordic region.





SUMMARY

Trans people are a particularly vulnerable group and face various obstacles throughout their lives, not least in working life, where they experience worse conditions as a group than the majority population. At the same time, in recent years there have been setbacks in terms of the living conditions of LGBTI people in both the Nordic countries and globally, and trans people have been particularly hard hit.

Today, there is limited knowledge of the working life conditions for trans people and the underlying factors that affect their employment. The national studies that have been published have different areas of focus, but collectively they can provide a clearer picture of working life conditions for trans people in the Nordic countries.

The Nordic Council of Ministers has therefore initiated a project to summarise the field of knowledge in the Nordic countries. By consolidating existing research, the project helps to identify and, in some cases, fill knowledge gaps. The project is intended to provide a clearer picture of the living conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries, with a focus on working life. The aim is to highlight the working life conditions of trans people in the Nordic countries to enable dialogue and identify needs and measures for improvement.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' co-operation body, Nordic Information on Gender (NIKK), located at the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, carried out the project that resulted in the following knowledge review.

The knowledge review was developed from literature on the working life conditions for trans people produced in the Nordic countries, as well as dialogues conducted with civil society organisations and labour market actors. Interviews have been conducted with representatives of civil society organisations in Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland to get a picture of the situations there.

TRANS PEOPLE'S EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET

In the Nordic countries, as well as internationally, trans people are discriminated against in the labour market. Unemployment is significantly higher among trans people than among the general population. Several Nordic studies indicate that unemployment is about twice as high in this group as in the rest of the population. The included reports also show that there is a higher proportion of trans people in low-wage jobs and on low incomes compared to the general population. Insecure employment is also more common among trans people. The studies show that there may be particular challenges in career development for trans people. Many trans people also report physical or mental illness as a barrier in their lives and in the labour market.

Several studies have examined self-perceived discrimination in recruitment through surveys or interviews. Overall, they show that discrimination against trans people in recruitment processes is widespread. A quantitative study that examined the issue beyond self-perceived discrimination also showed that trans people are discriminated against in recruitment processes, and that discrimination manifests differently in male- and female-dominated industries. Significantly more trans women than trans men and non-binary trans people stated that they have been discriminated against in recruitment processes. Requiring proof of previous names, for example, may leave applicants with no choice but to be open about their transition during recruitment processes. Web-based recruitment tools are often designed to require applicants to indicate their gender and often only provide two options, which works exclusionary.

WORKING ENVIRONMENTS AND WORKPLACE LIFE FOR TRANS PEOPLE

Trans people are also heavily exposed to discrimination and harassment in working life. Among those in the LGBTI community, trans people are by far the most vulnerable. A Norwegian study showed that harassment was most likely to be committed by external parties, such as clients, users, patients, or customers, followed by work colleagues, which was shown to be slightly more widespread than harassment by employers. On the other hand, many trans people have positive workplace experiences. A large proportion of respondents in several of the reports had not experienced any discrimination and felt supported by managers and colleagues.

However, many trans people have experienced negative treatment. According to the studies, misgendering, for example being referred to by the wrong pronouns, was the most common form of negative treatment. Non-binary trans people in

particular reported that misgendering was a common experience. International research shows that microaggressions can lead to reduced job engagement and workplace stress.

In the included reports, workplace culture is emphasised as an important risk and health factor for trans people's working environments. Many trans people experienced good support in the workplace. Many also stated that leadership plays a major role in work on inclusion, but that managers often have insufficient knowledge to be professional in their behaviour. Working actively on equal treatment can be a positive health factor within an organisation and provide a more inclusive workplace for trans people. One report showed more tangible risks of victimisation within heteronormative and/or macho-oriented workplace cultures.

Physical premises had a major impact on the working environments for those interviewed in the studies. The importance of gender-neutral toilets was emphasised, and likewise gender-neutral changing rooms were viewed as something positive, but several study participants also emphasised the need for privacy – in terms of both changing and showering facilities. Several international studies highlighted that it may be useful for employers to reflect on whether formal dress codes could be discriminatory, as well as on how informal and formal dress codes in the workplace affect the well-being of LGBTI people.

Trans people were shown to be much less open about their gender identity than members of the LGB community were about their sexual orientation. The reports also indicated a general correlation between feeling able to be open in the workplace and well-being and satisfaction in the workplace. Conversely, some trans people experienced discrimination and harassment in the workplace as a result of coming out.

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

A Danish study showed that very few workplaces have a staff policy that addresses issues of gender identity or gender variance. A supportive organisational climate was linked to employees' perceptions of a good working environment, job satisfaction and health, as well as their sense of wanting or having the confidence to be open in the workplace. To create an inclusive workplace, both open and hidden identities need to be taken into account. This means that workplaces should not assume an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity.

It is also clear that knowledge about trans people and their experiences is generally low and that there is a need for training and awareness-raising initiatives among managers and employees. Trans respondents in the studies reported that they would also have liked their trade unions and HR departments to have had greater expertise and thus have been able to provide greater support.

DISCUSSION

The knowledge review shows that many of the obstacles that trans people face in and around working life are based on restrictive norms, which are reflected in recruitment processes, work environments and opportunities for career development. Violating these rigid notions of gender often entails some form of punishment from the surrounding society, whether it is being eliminated from a recruitment process, being discriminated against or mistreated by colleagues and customers, or being treated unprofessionally by a manager. All the Nordic reports that examine the vulnerability of LGBTI people to discrimination, harassment and threats show that trans people are by far the most vulnerable group. In the studies and in conversations with civil society organisations, questions about health and ill health recur in various ways. The fatigue and loss of energy that results from dealing with microaggressions, discrimination and ignorance is one example. Isolation from the labour market due to fear of discrimination or mistreatment also recurs.

The knowledge review shows that there is little knowledge about trans people's managerial and career development in the Nordic countries. Findings that indicate that many trans people face insecure employment and hold jobs below their level of education could indicate that only a relatively small group undertake a career development path that leads to a managerial position. Likewise, findings on the high levels of discrimination faced by trans people in the workplace, as well as the stress and exhaustion they experience due to discrimination and negative attitudes, support this theory.

It is important to emphasise the differences and variations within the trans group. The findings from several of the reports show that the nature of an individual's gender identity affects their experiences in the labour market. For example, trans women face more harassment and discrimination than trans men, both in the workplace and in recruitment processes. Age is another important factor – young trans people are often particularly vulnerable, and there is evidence that many trans people have a difficult start in the labour market.

At the same time, there is a significant amount of missing information on differences within the trans group. There are many groups and intersections we know nothing about in a Nordic context. Intersectional perspectives are largely absent from the studied material, which can partly be explained by the fact that it largely consists of survey studies conducted with large sets of quantitative data, which rarely provide for intersectional analyses.

With the exception of one report, economic vulnerability is not explicitly addressed in the included material. However, based on what we learn about the overrepresentation of trans people in terms of unemployment, exposure to

discrimination, including in recruitment, illnesses that affect an individual's ability to work and poor employment conditions, such as insecure employment and low wages, the results of this knowledge review indicate that people in the trans group are more likely than those in the majority population to have difficulty earning a living and be at risk of or living in poverty and economic vulnerability.

European analyses of the economic vulnerability of trans people, based on data produced by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), confirm that trans people often face difficult economic situations. Many trans people in the EU struggle to make ends meet and a large proportion have experienced homelessness. Data collected by FRA shows that trans people in the Nordic countries also often face economic hardship. The patterns in experiences of homelessness are similar to, and in one case worse than, those across the EU. These perspectives are examples of areas where more Nordic knowledge is needed.





SAMMANFATTNING

Transpersoner är en särskilt utsatt grupp som möter olika typer av hinder i livet, inte minst i arbetslivet där villkoren för transpersoner som grupp är sämre än för majoritetsbefolkningen. Samtidigt har det de senaste åren skett bakslag när det gäller lgbti-personers livsvillkor både i Norden och globalt, och särskilt transpersoner har drabbats hårt.

I dag är kunskapen om transpersoners arbetslivsvillkor och de bakomliggande faktorer som påverkar gruppens sysselsättning begränsad. De nationella studier som finns publicerade har olika fokus och rör olika områden, men kan tillsammans ge en tydligare bild av transpersoners arbetslivsvillkor i Norden.

Nordiska ministerrådet har därför tagit initiativ till ett projekt som överskådligt sammanfattar kunskapsfältet i Norden. Genom att sammanfoga resultaten bidrar projektet till att identifiera, liksom i vissa fall fylla kunskapsluckor. Projektets mål är att ge en tydligare bild av transpersoners livsvillkor i Norden, med fokus på arbetslivet. Syftet är att synliggöra transpersoners arbetslivsvillkor i Norden för att möjliggöra dialog, identifiera behov och åtgärder för förbättring.

Nordiska ministerrådets samarbetsorgan NIKK, Nordisk information för kunskap om kön, placerat vid Nationella sekretariatet för genusforskning i Sverige, har utfört projektet som bland annat resulterat i detta kunskapsunderlag.

Till grund för kunskapsunderlaget ligger litteratur om transpersoners arbetslivsvillkor framtagen i de nordiska länderna samt dialoger som genomförts med civilsamhällesorganisationer och arbetslivsaktörer. Intervjuer har genomförts med företrädare för civilsamhällesorganisationer på Grönland, Färöarna och Åland för att få en bild av hur situationen ser ut där.

TRANSPERSONERS SYSSELSÄTTNING OCH TILLGÅNG TILL ARBETSMARKNADEN

I Norden, liksom internationellt, diskrimineras transpersoner på arbetsmarknaden. Arbetslösheten är betydligt högre bland gruppen transpersoner än bland befolkningen i stort. Flera nordiska undersökningar pekar på att arbetslösheten är ungefär dubbelt så hög i denna grupp som i övriga befolkningen. De inkluderade rapporterna visar också att det är en högre andel transpersoner som har låglöneyrken och låga inkomster jämfört med befolkningen i stort. Osäkra anställningar är också vanligare bland gruppen transpersoner. Studierna visar att det kan finnas särskilda utmaningar i karriärutvecklingen för transpersoner. Många transpersoner uppger även att fysisk eller psykisk sjukdom utgör hinder i livet och på arbetsmarknaden.

Flera studier undersöker självupplevd diskriminering i rekrytering genom enkäter eller intervjuer. Sammantaget visar de att diskriminering av transpersoner i rekryteringsprocesser är utbredd. En kvantitativ studie som undersöker frågan bortom självupplevd diskriminering visar också att transpersoner diskrimineras i rekryteringsprocesser, och att diskrimineringen sker på olika sätt i mans- respektive kvinnodominerade branscher. Betydligt fler transkvinnor än transmän och ickebinära transpersoner uppger att de blivit diskriminerade i rekryteringsprocesser. Krav på intyg med exempelvis tidigare namn kan göra att sökande inte har något annat val än att vara öppna med sin transition under rekryteringsprocesser. Webbaserade rekryteringsverktyg är ofta utformade så att man måste ange kön och ofta finns bara två alternativ, vilket verkar exkluderande.

TRANSPERSONERS ARBETSMILJÖ OCH TILLVARO PÅ ARBETSPLATSEN

Transpersoner blir även utsatta för diskriminering och trakasserier i arbetslivet i hög utsträckning. I lgbti-gruppen är transpersoner den grupp som är klart mest utsatt. En norsk studie visar att det är vanligast att bli utsatt för trakasserier av extern part, som klienter, brukare, patienter eller kunder, därefter av arbetskollegor, vilket är något mer utbrett än trakasserier från arbetsgivare. Många transpersoner har dock positiva arbetsmiljöerfarenheter. En stor del av respondenterna i flera av rapporterna har inte upplevt någon diskriminering och har känt sig stöttade av chefer och kollegor.

Många transpersoner har dock erfarenhet av negativt bemötande. Att bli felkönad, exempelvis att fel pronomen används, är enligt studierna den vanligaste formen av negativt bemötande. Särskilt ickebinära transpersoner uppgav att felkönande var en vanlig erfarenhet. Internationell forskning visar att mikroaggressionerna kan leda till minskat arbetsengagemang och stress på arbetsplatsen.

Arbetsplatskulturen framhålls som en viktig såväl risk- som friskfaktor för transpersoners arbetsmiljö i de inkluderade rapporterna. Många transpersoner har upplevt gott stöd på arbetsplatsen. Många uppger också att ledarskapet spelar stor roll för arbetet med inkludering, men att chefers kunskap ofta är för låg för att de ska kunna vara professionella i sitt bemötande. En organisation som jobbar aktivt med likabehandlingsarbete kan vara en friskfaktor och utgöra en mer inkluderande arbetsplats för transpersoner. En rapport visar att det finns mer påtagliga risker för utsatthet på arbetsplatser med arbetsplatskulturer som är heteronormativa och/eller machoorienterade.

Fysiska lokaler har stor påverkan på arbetsmiljön för de som intervjuats i studierna. Vikten av könsneutrala toaletter framhålls och könsneutrala omklädningsrum upplevs som något positivt, men flera studiedeltagare pekade också på behovet av enskildhet – både vad gäller ombytes- och duschmöjligheter. Flera internationella studier pekar på att det kan vara bra för arbetsgivare att reflektera över om formella klädkoder kan vara diskriminerande, liksom över hur informella och formella klädkoder på arbetsplatsen påverkar lgbti-personers trivsel.

Transpersoner är öppna med sin könsidentitet i mycket lägre utsträckning än vad lgb-gruppen är med sin läggning. Rapporterna indikerar också att det generellt sett finns ett samband mellan att kunna vara öppen på arbetsplatsen och välbefinnande och trivsel på arbetsplatsen. Samtidigt finns det transpersoner som har blivit utsatta för diskriminering och trakasserier till följd av att komma ut på arbetsplatsen.

ATT SKAPA ETT STÖDJANDE ORGANISATORISKT KLIMAT

En dansk studie visar att mycket få arbetsplatser har en personalpolitik som adresserar frågor om könsidentitet eller könsvariation. Ett stödjande organisatoriskt klimat har samband med de berördas upplevelse av en bra arbetsmiljö, arbetstillfredsställelse och hälsa, liksom deras känsla av att vilja eller våga vara öppen på arbetsplatsen. För att skapa en inkluderande arbetsplats behöver både öppna och dolda identiteter beaktas. Det innebär att man på en arbetsplats inte ska ta för givet att någon har en viss sexuell läggning eller könsidentitet.

Det är också tydligt att kunskapen om transpersoner och transerfarenheter generellt är låg och att det behövs utbildning och kunskapshöjande insatser bland chefer och medarbetare. Responderande transpersoner i materialet hade också önskat att deras fackförbund och HR-avdelningar hade större kompetens och därmed kunna vara ett större stöd.

DISKUSSION

Kunskapsöversikten visar att många av de hinder som transpersoner möter i och runt arbetslivet har en grund i snäva normer, något som avspeglar sig i såväl rekryteringsprocesser, arbetsmiljö och möjligheter till karriärutveckling. Att bryta mot dessa föreställningar om vad kön är innebär ofta någon typ av bestraffning från det omgivande samhället, oavsett om det sker genom att man blir bortplockad ur en rekryteringsprocess, blir diskriminerad eller illa bemött av kollegor och kunder eller får ett oprofessionellt bemötande av chefen. Alla de nordiska rapporter som undersöker lgbti-personers utsatthet för diskriminering, trakasserier och hot visar att transpersoner är den grupp som är klart mest utsatt. I materialet liksom i samtal med civilsamhällesorganisationerna så återkommer frågor om hälsa och ohälsa på olika sätt. Den trötthet och brist på energi till konsekvens av att möta mikroaggressioner, diskriminering och okunskap är ett exempel. Isolering från arbetsmarknaden på grund av rädsla för diskriminering eller dåligt bemötande återkommer också.

Kunskapsöversikten visar att det finns begränsad kunskap om transpersoners ledarskap och karriärutveckling i Norden. Mot bakgrund av resultat som pekar mot att många transpersoner har osäkra anställningar och jobb under sin utbildningsnivå så skulle det kunna tyda på att det är en relativt liten grupp som har en karriärutveckling som leder till en chefsposition. Resultaten om höga nivåer av diskriminering av transpersoner på arbetsplatser, liksom stress och utmattning på grund av diskriminering och negativt klimat, tyder på detsamma.

Det är viktigt att poängtera att det finns skillnader och variationer inom gruppen transpersoner. Resultaten från flera av rapporterna visar att typ av könsidentitet påverkar transpersoners erfarenheter i arbetslivet. Till exempel utsätts transkvinnor för trakasserier och diskriminering i högre grad än transmän, både på arbetsplatser och i rekryteringsprocesser. Ålder är en annan viktig faktor – unga transpersoner är ofta särskilt utsatta och mycket tyder på att många transpersoner får en dålig start i arbetslivet.

Samtidigt finns det mycket när det gäller skillnader inom gruppen transpersoner som vi inte vet något om än. Det finns många grupper och intersektioner vi inte vet något om i en nordisk kontext. I stor utsträckning saknas intersektionella perspektiv i det inkluderade materialet, vilket delvis kan förklaras av att det till stora delar består av enkätstudier med stora kvantitativa data, som sällan gör intersektionella analyser.

Med undantag för en rapport så tas ekonomisk utsatthet inte upp explicit i det inkluderade materialet. Genom materialet får vi däremot kunskap om transpersoners överrepresentation när det gäller arbetslöshet, utsatthet för diskriminering, bland annat i rekrytering, sjukdom som påverkar arbetsförmågan

och dåliga anställningsvillkor, såsom osäkra anställningar och låga löner. Utifrån detta så pekar denna kunskapsöversikts resultat mot att det är vanligare att personer i gruppen transpersoner än i majoritetsbefolkningen har svårt att försörja sig och riskerar eller lever i fattigdom och ekonomisk utsatthet.

Europeiska analyser av transpersoners ekonomiska utsatthet, som gjorts utifrån data framtagen av EU:s byrå för grundläggande rättigheter (FRA), bekräftar bilden av att transpersoner ofta har en svår ekonomisk situation. Många transpersoner i EU har svårt att klara sig ekonomiskt och en stor andel har erfarenhet av hemlöshet. Data insamlad av FRA visar att transpersoner ofta har svårt att klara sig ekonomiskt även i nordiska länder. Mönstren för erfarenhet av hemlöshet är också lika de för hela EU, och i ett fall värre. Dessa perspektiv är exempel på områden där mer nordisk kunskap behövs.





YHTEENVETO

Transihmiset ovat erityisen haavoittuva ryhmä, joka kohtaa monenlaisia esteitä elämässään – erityisesti työelämässä, jossa heidän asemansa on usein heikompi kuin valtaväestön. Samalla viime vuosien aikana on LGBTI-henkilöiden oikeuksien toteutumisessa koettu takaiskuja sekä pohjoismaissa että maailmanlaajuisesti, ja tämä on vaikuttanut merkittävästi etenkin transihmisiin.

Tällä hetkellä on vain vähän saatavilla olevaa tietoa transihmisten työolosuhteista ja työllistymiseen vaikuttavista taustatekijöistä. Julkaistut kansalliset tutkimukset painottavat eri alueita ja näkökulmia, mutta yhdessä ne täydentävät toisiaan ja valaisevat transihmisten työoloja Pohjoismaissa.

Tämän vuoksi Pohjoismaiden ministerineuvosto on käynnistänyt hankkeen, joka kokoaa yhteen ja tiivistää Pohjoismaissa tehdyn tutkimustiedon selkeäksi yhteenvedoksi. Tutkimustuloksia yhdistämällä, hanke edistää tietoaukkojen tunnistamista, ja joissakin tapauksissa myös täydentää puuttuvia tietoja. Hankkeen tavoitteena on muodostaa selkeä kokonaiskuva transihmisten elinolosuhteista Pohjoismaissa, erityisenä painopisteenä on työelämä. Tarkoituksena on tuoda esiin transihmisten työolosuhteet Pohjoismaissa, jotta voidaan edistää vuoropuhelua sekä tunnistaa tarpeita ja parannustoimenpiteitä.

Ruotsin kansallisessa sukupuolentutkimuksen sihteeristössä toimiva Pohjoismaiden ministerineuvoston yhteistyöelin NIKK (Pohjoismainen tasa-arvotiedon keskus) on toteuttanut hankkeen, jonka osana myös tämä julkaisu on tuotettu.

Tietopohja rakentuu Pohjoismaissa tehdylle transihmisten työoloja käsittelevälle tutkimukselle sekä vuoropuhelulle kansalaisjärjestöjen ja työelämän toimijoiden kanssa. Grönlannin, Färsaarten ja Ahvenanmaan kansalaisjärjestöjen edustajia on haastateltu, jotta saataisiin selkeä kuva näiden alueiden tilanteesta.

TRANSIHMISTEN TYÖLLISYYS JA PÄÄSY TYÖMARKKINOILLE

Transihmiset kohtaavat syrjintää työmarkkinoilla niin Pohjoismaissa kuin kansainvälisestikin. Työttömyys on huomattavasti korkeampaa transihmisten keskuudessa kuin väestössä keskimäärin. Useat Pohjoismaiset tutkimukset osoittavat, että tämän ryhmän työttömyysaste on noin kaksinkertainen muuhun väestöön verrattuna. Hankkeessa tarkastellut raportit paljastavat myös, että transihmiset ovat yliedustettuina matalapalkkaisissa töissä verrattuna väestöön kokonaisuudessaan. Epävarmat työolosuhteet ovat näin ollen yleisempiä transihmisten keskuudessa. Tutkimukset osoittavat, että transihmiset voivat kohdata urakehityksessään erityisiä haasteita. Monet transihmiset kertovat, että fyysiset tai psyykkiset sairaudet ovat esteinä elämässä ja työmarkkinoilla.

Useissa tutkimuksissa tarkastellaan rekrytoinnissa koettua syrjintää kyselytutkimusten tai haastattelujen kautta. Yhteenvetona voidaan todeta, että transihmisiä syrjitään merkittävästi rekrytointiprosesseissa. Kvantitatiivinen tutkimus, joka tarkastelee koettua syrjintää laajemmin, osoittaa myös, että transihmisiä syrjitään rekrytointiprosesseissa ja että syrjintä ilmenee eri tavoin mies- ja naisvaltaisilla aloilla. Huomattavasti useammat transnaiset kuin transmiehet tai ei-binääriset henkilöt kertovat kokeneensa syrjintää rekrytointiprosesseissa. Sellaisten todistusten vaatiminen, joissa tulee esille esimerkiksi aiemmat nimet, saattaa tarkoittaa sitä, että hakijoilla ei ole muuta vaihtoehtoa kuin kertoa avoimesti transitiostaan rekrytointiprosessien aikana. Verkkopohjaiset rekrytointisovellukset on usein suunniteltu siten, että sukupuoli on määritettävä, ja tarjolla on usein vain kaksi vaihtoehtoa, mikä vaikuttaa poissulkevalta.

TRANSIHMISTEN TYÖYMPÄRISTÖ JA TYÖOLOT

Transihmiset kokevat laajasti syrjintää ja häirintää myös työelämässä. Transihmiset ovat LGBTI-ryhmässä selvästi haavoittuvimmassa asemassa. Norjalaisen tutkimuksen mukaan transihmiset kohtaavat yleisimmin ulkopuolisten, kuten asiakkaiden, potilaiden tai palvelunkäyttäjien, häirintää. Seuraavaksi yleisintä on kollegoiden häirintä, kun taas työnantajien osuus on vähäisempi. Monilla transihmisillä on kuitenkin myönteisiä kokemuksia työympäristöstään. Suuri osa tutkimuksiin osallistuneista ei ollut kokenut syrjintää, vaan kokenut saavansa tukea esihenkilöiltä ja kollegoilta.

Monilla transihmisillä on kuitenkin kokemusta negatiivisestä kohtelusta. Tutkimusten mukaan väärinsukupuolittaminen, esimerkiksi väärän pronominin käyttö, on tavallisin negatiivisen kohtelun muoto. Erityisesti ei-binääriset transihmiset kertoivat, että väärinsukupuolittaminen on tavallista. Kansainväliset

tutkimukset osoittavat, että mikroaggressiot voivat johtaa työmotivaation vähenemiseen ja stressin kasvuun työpaikalla.

Tarkasteltujen raporttien mukaan työpaikkakulttuuri nousee esiin sekä riskitekijänä että hyvinvointia edistävänä tekijänä transihmisten työympäristössä. Monet transihmiset ovat kokeneet vahvaa tukea työpaikoillaan. Monet kertovat myös, että johtajuudella on keskeinen rooli osallisuuden edistämisessä työpaikoilla, mutta esihenkilöiden tietotaso on usein liian alhainen, jotta he osaisivat kohdata ammattimaisesti. Aktiivisesti tasa-arvoisen kohtelun puolesta työskentelevä järjestö voi olla merkittävä terveyttä edistävä tekijä ja luoda osallistavamman työympäristön transihmisille. Yksi raporteista osoittaa, että altistumisriski on korkeampi työpaikoilla, joissa vallitsee heteronormatiivinen ja/tai machosuuntautunut työpaikkakulttuuri.

Tutkimuksissa haastateltujen mukaan fyysisillä tiloilla on merkittävä vaikutus työympäristöön. Sukupuolineutraalien wc-tilojen tärkeys korostuu, ja sukupuolineutraaleja pukuhuoneita pidetään positiivisena asiana. Kuitenkin useat osallistujat nostivat esiin myös tarpeen yksityisyydelle pukeutumis- ja suihkutiloissa. Monet kansainväliset tutkimukset osoittavat, että työnantajien olisi hyvä pohtia, lisäävätkö muodolliset pukeutumiskoodit sukupuoleen perustuvaa syrjintää ja miten epäviralliset ja viralliset pukeutumiskoodit vaikuttavat LGBTQ-ihmisten hyvinvointiin työpaikalla.

Transihmiset ovat huomattavasti harvemmin avoimia sukupuoli-identiteetistään verrattuna LGB-ryhmään. Raporteista käy ilmi, että mahdollisuus avoimuuteen työpaikalla on yleisesti yhteydessä työpaikkaviihtyvyyteen ja -hyvinvointiin. Samaan aikaan jotkut transihmiset ovat kokeneet syrjintää ja häirintää työpaikalla, kun he ovat olleet avoimia identiteetistään.

KANNUSTAVAN JÄRJESTÖKULTTUURIN LUOMINEN

Tanskalainen tutkimus osoittaa, että hyvin harva työpaikka on omaksunut henkilöstöpolitiikan, joka käsittelee sukupuoli-identiteettiä tai sukupuolen moninaisuutta koskevia kysymyksiä. Kannustava ilmapiiri liittyy positiivisesti asianomaisten kokemuksiin hyvästä työympäristöstä, työtyytyväisyydestä ja terveydestä sekä siihen, haluavatko ja uskaltavatko he olla avoimia työpaikallaan. Osallistavan työpaikan luomiseksi on tärkeää huomioida sekä avoimet että piilotetut identiteetit. Tämä tarkoittaa, että työpaikoilla ei tule pitää kenenkään seksuaalista suuntautumista tai sukupuoli-identiteettiä itsestäänselvyytenä.

On selvää, että tietoisuus transihmisistä ja heidän kokemuksistaan on yleisesti ottaen vähäistä, ja että sekä johtajien että työntekijöiden tietämyksen lisäämiseksi tarvitaan konkreettisia toimenpiteitä. Kyselyihin vastanneet transihmiset ilmaisivat myös toiveensa, että ammattiliitoilla ja henkilöstöosastoilla olisi enemmän asiantuntemusta, jotta he pystyisivät tarjoamaan parempaa tukea.

POHDINTAA

Tutkimusaineisto osoittaa, että monet transihmisten työelämässä kohtaamat esteet juontuvat tiukoista normeista, jotka vaikuttavat rekrytointiprosesseihin, työympäristöön ja uramahdollisuuksiin. Sukupuolinormien rikkominen johtaa usein yhteiskunnan sanktioihin, kuten syrjäytymiseen rekrytointivaiheessa, syrjintään kollegoiden ja asiakkaiden taholta tai esihenkilöiden epäammattimaiseen kohteluun. Kaikki Pohjoismaiden raportit, jotka käsittelevät LGBTI-ihmisten altistumista syrjinnälle, häirinnälle ja uhkailulle, osoittavat selkeästi, että transihmiset ovat haavoittuvin ryhmä. Aineistossa ja keskusteluissa kansalaisjärjestöjen kanssa toistuvat samat terveys- ja sairauskysymykset eri näkökulmista tarkasteltuina. Mikroaggressioiden, syrjinnän ja tietämättömyyden kohtaamisesta johtuva väsymys ja energian puute on yksi esimerkki tästä. Työmarkkinoilta vetäytyminen syrjinnän pelon tai huonon kohtelun vuoksi on myös yleistä.

Tutkimuskooste paljastaa, että Pohjoismaissa on saatavilla hyvin vähän tietoa transihmisistä johtotehtävissä tai heidän urakehityksistään. Tulokset osoittavat, että monet transihmiset ovat epävarmoissa työsuhteissa ja työskentelevät koulutustasoaan vastaamattomissa tehtävissä, mikä viittaa siihen, että vain harva heistä etenee urallaan johtotehtäviin. Tulokset transihmisten kokemasta laajamittaisesta syrjinnästä työpaikoilla sekä syrjinnän ja negatiivisen ilmapiirin aiheuttamasta stressistä ja uupumuksesta viittaavat samaan.

Useiden raporttien tulokset osoittavat, että sukupuoli-identiteetin tyyppi vaikuttaa transihmisten kokemuksiin työelämässä. Esimerkiksi transnaiset joutuvat transmiehiä useammin häirinnän ja syrjinnän kohteeksi työpaikoilla ja rekrytointiprosesseissa. Ikä on toinen tärkeä tekijä – nuoret transihmiset ovat usein erityisen haavoittuvia, ja on useita viitteitä siitä, että monet heistä saavat huonon alun työelämässä.

Samanaikaisesti transihmisten ryhmän sisällä on eroja, joista tiedämme vain vähän. Pohjoismaisessa kontekstissa on monia alaryhmiä ja risteäviä identiteettejä, joista ei ole kattavaa tietoa. Aineistossa on suuria puutteita intersektionaalisista näkökulmista, mikä johtuu osittain siitä, että se perustuu pääasiassa laajoihin kvantitatiivisiin kyselytutkimuksiin, joissa intersektionaalisia analyysejä tehdään harvoin.

Lukuun ottamatta yhtä raporttia, taloudellista haavoittuvuutta ei käsitellä aineistossa erillisenä teemana. Kyseisen raportin mukaan transihmisillä on yliedustus työttömyydessä, ja he kohtaavat syrjintää erityisesti rekrytoinnissa, kärsivät työkykyä heikentävistä sairauksista sekä työskentelevät usein epävarmoissa työsuhteissa ja matalapalkkaisissa töissä. Tämä viittaa siihen, että transihmiset kohtaavat valtaväestöä useammin taloudellisia vaikeuksia, mikä altistaa heidät suuremmalle köyhyys- ja taloudellisen haavoittuvuuden riskille.

EU:n perusoikeusviraston (FRA) aineistoon perustuvat eurooppalaiset analyysit vahvistavat, että transihmiset ovat usein taloudellisesti haavoittuvassa asemassa. Monet EU:n alueella elävät transihmiset kamppailevat toimeentulonsa kanssa, ja merkittävä osa heistä on kokenut asunnottomuutta. FRA:n keräämät tiedot osoittavat, että taloudelliset haasteet koskettavat transihmisiä myös Pohjoismaissa, missä asunnottomuusmallit ovat samankaltaisia kuin muualla EU:ssa, ja joissain tapauksissa jopa vakavampia. Nämä havainnot korostavat tarvetta lisätutkimukselle transihmisten taloudellisesta tilanteesta Pohjoismaissa.





SAMANTEKT

Trans fólk er jaðarsettur hópur sem er ýmsum hindrunum sett í lífinu, ekki síst í atvinnulífinu þar sem aðstæður og kjör trans fólks eru almennt lakari en hjá meirihluta samfélagsins. Á sama tíma hafa síðastliðin ár falið í sér nokkuð bakslag fyrir lífskjör hinsegin fólks, bæði hér á Norðurlöndunum sem og á alþjóðavísu. Trans fólk er sá hópur sem hefur orðið sérstaklega illa úti.

Þekking á atvinnuaðstæðum trans fólks, og þeim þáttum sem helst hafa áhrif á stöðu þessa hóps á vinnumarkaði, er takmörkuð enn sem komið er. Þær rannsóknir sem til eru sem skoða aðstæður hópsins innan tiltekinna landa hafa ólíkar nálganir og þær leggja áherslu á ólíka þætti. Saman geta þær þó gefið nokkuð skýra mynd af aðstæðum trans fólks í atvinnulífinu þvert á Norðurlöndin.

Norræna ráðherranefndin hefur þar af leiðandi sett af stað verkefni sem hefur það að markmiði að veita yfirsýn yfir þá þekkingu sem til staðar er um málefnið á Norðurlöndunum. Samantekt niðurstaðna fyrri rannsókna í þessu verkefni er bæði þáttur í að koma auga á svið sem afla þarf frekari þekkingar á en einnig í að nýta þá þekkingu sem þegar er aðgengileg. Markmiðið með að veita skýrari mynd af atvinnuaðstæðum trans fólks á Norðurlöndunum er að stuðla að samtali og bera kennsl á þarfir og aðgerðir til umbóta.

Samstarfsstofnun Norrænu ráðherranefndarinnar, NIKK (s. Nordisk information för kunskap om kön), sem á aðsetur við Skrifstofu kynjafræða í Svíþjóð (s. Nationella sekretariatet för genusforskning i Sverige), annaðist framkvæmd verkefnisins og afurð þess er sú samantekt á stöðu þekkingar sem hér fylgir.

Þessi samantekt á stöðu þekkingar er byggð á rannsóknum um vinnuaðstæður trans fólks á Norðurlöndunum og samtölum við fulltrúa frjálsra félagasamtaka og atvinnulífsins. Viðtöl voru tekin við fulltrúa frjálsra félagasamtaka á Grænlandi, í Færeyjum og á Álandseyjum til að varpa ljósi á stöðu mála þar.

ATVINNUAÐSTÆÐUR TRANS FÓLKS OG AÐGENGI AÐ VINNUMARKAÐI

Líkt og í öðrum heimshornum verða trans einstaklingar á Norðurlöndunum fyrir mismunun á vinnumarkaði. Atvinnuleysi er töluvert meira meðal trans fólks miðað við íbúa almennt. Margar norrænar rannsóknir hafa leitt í ljós að atvinnuleysi er u.þ.b. tvöfalt meira í þessum hópi miðað við íbúa almennt. Þær skýrslur sem liggja fyrir þegar þessi samantekt er skrifuð sýna að hærra hlutfall trans fólks starfar við láglaunastörf og hefur lág laun miðað við íbúa í löndunum almennt. Meðal trans fólks eru ótrygg ráðningarkjör einnig algengari. Rannsóknirnar sýna að þróun starfsferils geti falið í sér ákeðnar áskoranir fyrir trans fólk. Mörg sem tilheyra þessum hópi nefna einnig að líkamleg eða andleg veikindi hindri þau í lífinu jafnt sem á vinnumarkaði.

Nokkrar rannsóknanna rýna í upplifanir trans fólks af mismunun í eigin garð í gegnum spurningakannanir og viðtöl. Þessar rannsóknir gefa til kynna að það sé afar algengt að trans fólki sé mismunað í ráðningarferlum. Megindleg rannsókn sem tók mismunun til skoðunar burtséð frá eigin upplifunum fólks staðfestir einnig að trans fólki er mismunað í ráðningarferlum. Einnig kemur fram hvernig mismunun á sér stað á ólíkan hátt eftir því hvort sótt er um starf í atvinnugreinum þar sem karlar eru í meirihluta eða þar sem konur eru í meirihluta. Töluvert fleiri trans konur, í samanburði við bæði trans karla og kynsegin fólk, nefna að þær hafi orðið fyrir mismunun í ráðningarferli. Kröfur um vottorð þar sem fyrra nafn umsækjanda kemur fram gera það að verkum að viðkomandi hefur ekki val um annað en að ræða kynvitund og nafnbreytingar í umsóknarferlinu. Þá eru umsóknareyðublöð á netinu eru oft hönnuð með þeim hætti að umsækjandi verður að tilgreina kyn sitt og oft er þar aðeins um tvo valmöguleika að ræða, sem getur reynst fólki mjög útilokandi.

VINNUUMHVERFI OG VINNUAÐSTÆÐUR TRANS FÓLKS

Trans fólk verður einnig fyrir mismunun og áreitni í atvinnulífinu í ríkum mæli. Ef litið er til hinsegin samfélagsins í heild er það auðsjáanlega trans fólk sem verður fyrir mestri áreitni. Norsk rannsókn gefur til kynna að algengast sé að verða fyrir áreitni af hálfu utanaðkomandi aðila á vinnustað, t.d. viðskiptavina, skjólstæðinga og sjúklinga. Næstalgengust er áreitni frá samstarfsfólki, en hún er nokkuð algengari en áreitni frá vinnuveitanda. Þó vitnar margt trans fólk um jákvæða reynslu af sínu vinnuumhverfi. Meirihluti svarenda í mörgum rannsóknanna hefur þó ekki upplifað neina mismunun og finnur þess í stað fyrir stuðningi frá yfirmönnum og samstarfsfólki.

Þó er það staðreynd að margt trans fólk hefur reynslu af neikvæðu viðmóti. Samkvæmt rannsóknunum ber þar hæst að trans fólk er gjarnan rangkynjað, er til dæmis ávarpað með röngu persónufornöfni. Kynsegin fólk er sá hópur sem oftast

vitnaði um slíka reynslu. Alþjóðlegar rannsóknir hafa sýnt fram á að slík öráreitni getur leitt til að áhugi viðkomandi á vinnunni fari dvínandi og streita aukist.

Vinnustaðamenning er einnig talin leika stórt hlutverk í að ákvarða vellíðan trans fólks á vinnustað. Margt trans fólk hefur upplifað stuðning á sínum vinnustað. Margt þeirra nefnir einnig að stjórnendur gegni mikilvægu hlutverki hvað varðar inngildingu en að kunnátta stjórnenda á leiðum til þess að mæta trans fólki á faglegan og inngildandi hátt sé aftur á móti oft ábótavant. Skipulag sem stuðlar að jafnri stöðu fólks á vinnustað getur haft mikið að segja um vellíðan fólks og stuðlað að inngildingu trans fólks á vinnustað. Ein skýrslnanna bendir á að trans fólk eigi í meiri hættu á að verða jaðarsett á vinnustað þegar vinnustaðamenningin litast af karlrembu eða gagnkynhneigðum viðmiðum.

Rými og húsakostur eru sögð spila veigamikið hlutverk í vinnuumhverfi viðmælendanna í rannsóknunum. Viðmælendurnir leggja áherslu á mikilvægi þess að til staðar séu kynhlutlaus salerni. Kynhlutlaus búningsherbergi litin jákvæðum augum en margir viðmælendur benda einnig á þörfina á einstaklingsrýmum bæði þegar kemur að sturtu- og búningsaðstöðu. Niðurstöður margra alþjóðlegra rannsókna benda til að það gæti verið gott fyrir vinnuveitendur að velta fyrir sér hvort reglur varðandi vinnufatnað geti falið í sér mismunun og hvort formlegar og óformlegar venjur eða reglur sem varða fatnað geti mögulega hafi áhrif á líðan hinsegin fólks á vinnustaðnum.

Trans fólk er í mun minna mæli opið með kynvitund sína en samkynhneigt og tvíkynhneigt fólk er með kynhneigð sína. Skýrslurnar sem hér er fjallað um gefa til kynna að almennt sé samband milli þess að fólk geti verið opið á vinnustað og að því líði vel á vinnustað. Á sama tíma er það þó staðreynd að trans fólk hefur orðið fyrir mismunun og áreitni í kjölfar þess að hafa komið út á vinnustaðnum.

VINNUSKIPULAG OG -UMHVERFI SEM FELUR Í SÉR STUÐNING

Niðurstöður danskrar rannsóknar benda til þess að fáir vinnustaðir hafi mannauðsstefnu sem fjallar með beinum hætti um kynvitund og kyneinkenni. Skýr tengsl eru á milli vinnuskipulags og -umhverfis sem felur í sér stuðning og upplifunar starfsfólks á góðum vinnuaðstæðum, af starfsánægju og heilsu, auk getu þess til að vilja eða þora að vera opið á vinnustaðnum. Ef skapa á inngildandi vinnustað þarf að hafa í huga bæði opnar og huldar sjálfsmyndir. Á vinnustað á þar af leiðandi aldrei að ganga út frá að manneskja hafi ákveðna kynhneigð eða kynvitund.

Það kemur einnig skýrt fram að þekking um trans fólk og reynslu þess er almennt séð er lítil og að það er þörf fyrir fræðslu og vitundarvakningu meðal yfirmanna og starfsfólks. Það trans fólk sem var til viðtals í þeim rannsóknum sem hér eru teknar fyrir óskaði einnig eftir aukinni þekkingu og getu af hálfu verkalýðsfélaga og mannauðsdeilda til þess að veita því stuðning.

UMRÆÐA

Þessi samantekt á stöðu þekkingar sýnir að það megi rekja margar þær hindranir sem trans fólk upplifir í og í kringum atvinnulífið til þröngra viðmiða samfélagsins, eitthvað sem endurspeglast í ráðningarferlum jafnt sem í vinnuumhverfi og tækifærum fólks til að þróa sig í starfi. Þegar fólk fer gegn ríkjandi viðmiðum um kyn virðist því refsað á einhvern hátt, til dæmis með því að vera tekið úr ráðningarferli, með beinni mismunun, með andúð frá samstarfsfólki eða viðskiptavinum, eða því að yfirmaðurinn sýni ófaglegt viðmót. Allar þær skýrslur frá Norðurlöndunum, sem skoða berskjöldun hinsegin fólks fyrir mismunun, áreitni og hótunum sýna að trans fólk er sá hópur sem er hvað berskjaldaðastur. Málefni heilsu og heilsuleysis birtast skýrt á ólíkan hátt í bæði gögnunum frá rannsóknunum sem og í samtölum við félagasamtök. Eitt dæmi er hvernig þreyta og orkuleysi getur verið afleiðing af því að mæta óráreitni, mismunun og skorti á þekkingu. Einangrun eða flótti frá vinnumarkaði af ótta við mismunun eða vont viðmót kemur einnig oft fyrir.

Þessi samantekt bendir til þess að lítil þekking sé til staðar um trans fólk í stjórnunarstöðum og starfsferilsþróun trans fólks á Norðurlöndunum. Með tilliti til þeirra niðurstaðna að margt trans fólk búi við ótrygg ráðningarkjör og sinni störfum sem flokkast fyrir neðan menntunarstig þess má mögulega draga þá ályktun að tiltölulega lítill hópur trans fólks öðlist tækifæri til þess að þróa starfsferil sinn á þann hátt að það leiði til stjórnunarstöðu. Niðurstöður sem varpa ljósi á mismunun gagnvart trans fólki á vinnustað og á streitu og kulnun í starfi vegna mismununar og neikvæðs vinnuumhverfis renna frekari stoðum undir fyrrnefnda ályktun.

Mikilvægt er að taka fram að trans fólk er mjög fjölbreyttur og breytilegur hópur. Niðurstöður margra rannsóknanna sýna að munur er á reynslu trans fólks í atvinnulífinu eftir því hver kynvitund þeirra er. Til dæmis verða trans konur fyrir meiri áreitni og mismunun en trans karlar, bæði á vinnustaðnum og í ráðningarferlum. Aldur er einnig mikilvægur þáttur - ungt trans fólk er oft berskjaldaðra og margt bendir til þess að margt trans fólk eigi erfitt uppdráttar í upphafi ferils síns.

Á sama tíma er enn mikið sem við ekki vitum um fjölbreytileika innan hópsins trans fólk. Innan hans eru margir hópar og skörun hópa sem við vitum lítið um í norrænu samhengi. Í rannsóknunum sem teknar eru fyrir í þessari samantekt er lítið fjallað um skörun. Það má að hluta til rekja til þess að rannsóknirnar byggja að meirihluta á spurningalistum og stórum megindlegum gagnasöfnum þar sem greiningin varpar sjaldan ljósi á skörun eða samtvinnun.

Að undanskilinni einni rannsókn er ekki fjallað um fjárhagslega jaðarsetningu með beinum hætti. Þegar litið er til þess að hátt hlutfall trans fólks sé ýmist atvinnulaust, berskjaldað fyrir mismunun (m.a. í ráðningarferlum), lifi við veikindi sem hafa áhrif á starfsgetu eða búi við slæm vinnuskilyrði (þ.m.t. ótrygg

ráðningarkjör og lág laun), þá benda niðurstöður þessarar samantektar til þess að erfiðara sé fyrir trans fólk að framfleyta sér miðað við meirihluta fólks í samfélaginu og að það lifi eða eigi á meiri hættu á því að lifa við fátækt og fjárhagslega jaðarsetningu.

Evrópskar greiningar á fjárhagslegri jaðarsetningu trans fólks, sem hafa verið unnar út frá gögnum Evrópustofnunar grundvallarmannréttinda (FRA), staðfesta þá mynd að trans fólk lifir í mörgum tilfellum við fjárhagsörðugleika. Margt trans fólk í Evrópusambandinu á erfitt með að framfleyta sér og stórt hlutfall þess hefur reynslu af heimilisleysi. Gögn FRA sýna að trans fólk á Norðurlöndunum eigi einnig oft erfitt með að ná endum saman. Gögn um reynslu af heimilisleysi sýna einnig svipað mynstur og í Evrópusambandinu í heild, og í einu tilfelli verra. Þessar greiningar varpa ljósi á fleiri svið þar sem þörf er á aukinni þekkingu á málefnum trans fólks í norrænu samhengi.

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