

FROM AND FOR OUR OWN:

Needs analysis of the French-speaking LGBTQ2S Community in Manitoba

HIGHLIGHTS

This study was conducted to gain a better understanding of the needs and realities faced by French-speaking LGBTQ2S Manitobans (the "Community" hereinafter). The first project of its kind in Western Canada, this needs analysis was initiated by the Collectif LGBTQ* du Manitoba, a grassroots organization that supports and advocates on behalf of all French-speaking LGBTQ2S Manitobans.¹ Today, French-speaking Manitobans are a thriving cultural and linguistic community; however, they remain the target of sustained francophobia. Homophobia and heteronormativity likewise continue to fuel systemic and pervasive discrimination against LGBTQ2S people in Manitoba. This discrimination and the resulting stigmatization lead those who are the target of these social constructs to experience chronic minority stress, internalized homophobia, and other forms of psychological distress. These realities may further contribute to housing and food insecurity, to the development of disabilities or mental illness, and to unhealthy coping strategies among this marginalized population. Robust social supports, as well as access to inclusive healthcare and social services, are key to promoting the well-being and vitality of this Community.

This analysis aimed to describe 1) the sociodemographic and ethnocultural profile of this Community; 2) its social support and healthcare needs; 3) perceived discrimination and stigmatization with respect to language, sexual orientation and/or gender identity; and 4) the Community's priorities for the future. A total of 80 French-speaking adults living in Manitoba participated in an online survey conducted in June 2020, during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

OVERALL TRENDS:

- Half the respondents were between **18 and 34 years of age**, and 48.8 percent identified as **women**. Most respondents identified as **gay, lesbian, or two-spirited**. The majority also identified as white and as middle class.
- The biggest challenge reported by respondents was related to **finding and obtaining information on LGBTQ2S-friendly healthcare and community services in French**. Some participants reported that such services are not yet offered in Manitoba in French, although the need is palpable; however, respondents generally reported feeling respected by service providers regarding their sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The most pressing service needs expressed by respondents pertain to **social activities, mental health supports, opportunities for group discussions on LGBTQ2S issues, physical health services, and sexual health resources**, provided in French and in a safe environment that is proactively affirming to all sexual and gender identities.
- Another troubling trend emerged: many respondents reported experiencing **rejection on the part of the greater Manitoba French-speaking community towards LGBTQ2S people, and inversely, from Manitoba's LGBTQ2S community towards French speakers**. Respondents therefore feel they are the target of a dual discrimination based both on their sexual orientation/gender identity and their identity as French speakers. Respondents also reported a sense of isolation, difficulty in forming relationships, and the absence of a support network for French-speaking LGBTQ2S people.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Download the complete report (in French) by scanning this QR code with your mobile device!

1
CONTINUE
with this needs
assessment to reach
underrepresented
populations

2
FOSTER
the interpersonal
and community
well-being of French-
speaking LGBTQ2S
Manitobans

3
IMPROVE
access to healthcare
and social services
in French, in a
proactively inclusive
and safe environment
for all LGBTQ2S
people.

¹Learn more about the Collectif LGBTQ* du Manitoba here: collectiflgbtq.ca