



LGBTQ
Allyship
Presents:

**2017 HOUSING
SURVEY OF
THE LGBTQ+
COMMUNITY**

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2017 Housing Survey

of the LGBTQ+ community

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Methodologies

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This survey was administered to 300 LGBTQ+ people, the majority of whom currently live in Seattle. It was distributed by hand at an LGBTQ+ focused Housing Justice Conference in Seattle in November 2016 and electronically via queer, place-based Facebook groups, the Allyship website and emails to Allyship's member lists and contacts at the beginning of 2017. The survey included a combination of quantitative and qualitative responses.

Overview

In 2015 LGBTQ Allyship completed an 1100 participant survey on LGBTQ safety in Seattle and asked LGBTQ+ individuals what were solutions to increasing LGBTQ safety in Seattle. Sixty-four percent reported access to affordable housing would increase LGBTQ safety in Seattle and 52% reported that equitable development would play a major role in increasing LGBTQ safety. Since our 2015 survey Allyship has hosted numerous community forums on safety and housing, our first LGBTQ housing conference, helped pass several housing justice policies in Seattle and our second LGBTQ Housing Leadership Institute. Through our organizing, education and leadership development we have heard LGBTQ+ communities voice their struggles around safety and housing ranging from economic displacement from traditional LGBTQ+ neighborhoods to seniors being pushed back into the closet to trans people who are houseless having trouble finding gender affirming shelters to Two Spirit, queer, and trans people of color (2SQTPOC) being displaced out of historically POC neighborhoods. Despite the pervasiveness of these concerns, the dominant conversation around the housing crisis tends to omit the particular struggles of LGBTQ+ communities altogether.

As a follow-up to our 2015 LGBTQ Safety survey, Allyship administered a new survey focused on the consequences of the housing crisis as a step toward making sure that LGBTQ+ people are not only included in conversations about the housing crisis, but also that our voices, particularly those of LGBTQ+ people who face multiple forms of marginalization, are centered in the identification of problems and creation of solutions. Through this survey, we did preliminary analysis to discern how LGBTQ+ community members in Seattle are being impacted by today's housing crisis. The survey also identified ways people in our communities are already showing up for each other to mitigate housing injustices and what solutions our community members are most interested in pursuing. Taken together, we hope

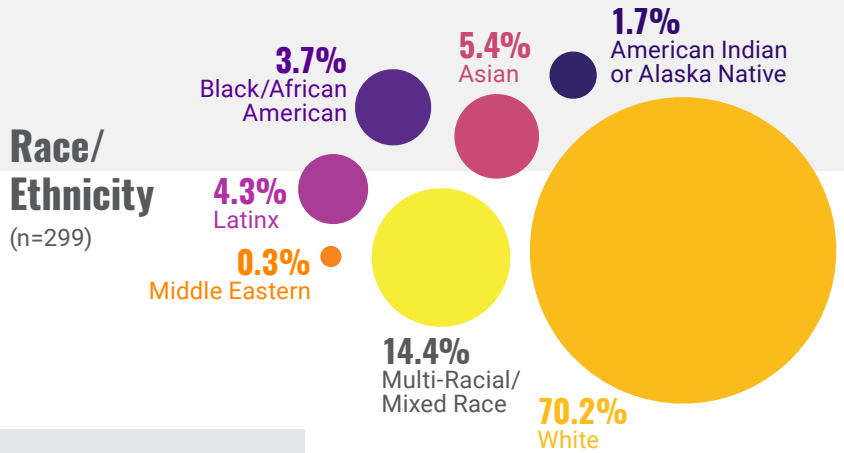
this survey will spur follow up community-based participatory research, changes in housing policy interventions to include intersectional LGBTQ+ equity frameworks, creation of senior and intergenerational housing and a continued commitment to centering solutions proposed and created by LGBTQ+ people who are hit first and worst by today's housing crisis.

Limitations

Our survey's usage of social media as a primary mechanism for administration likely led to a survey that is skewed toward 18-44 year olds, as well as to a surveyed demographic of people who have access to social media. In our survey creation, execution and analysis LGBTQ Allyship engaged in a hybrid of a Community Based Participatory Research project. Our Steering Committee of volunteers engaged in providing feedback to survey questions and provided overall analysis of the data and direction of the report. With a project budget of under \$5000 we lacked the resources to stipend community member involvement, partner with other community-based organizations, offer the survey in different languages, and offer stipends to survey participants. Lastly, we recognize the need for follow up research in areas like South King County, and/or research that focuses specifically on differences in LGBTQ+ communities on the basis of race, disability, gender and/or class.

Participants

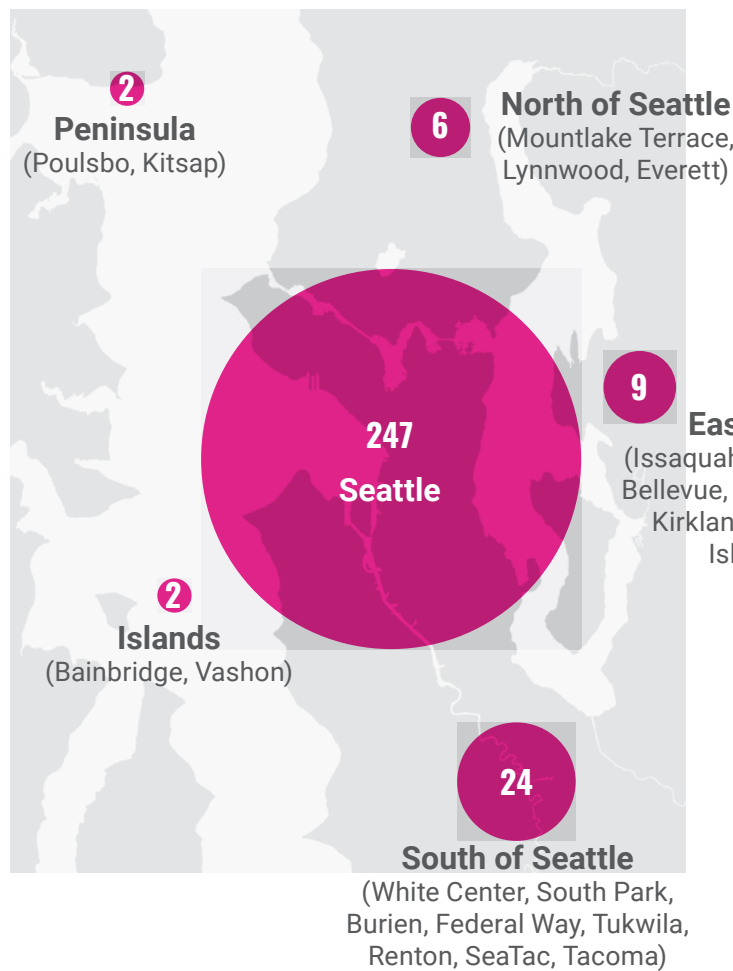
Who took the survey?



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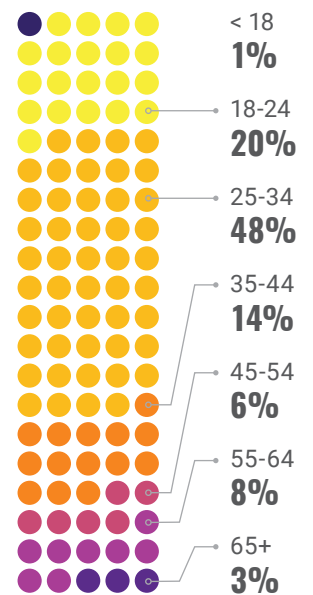
Location of Residence

number of people
(n=290)



Age

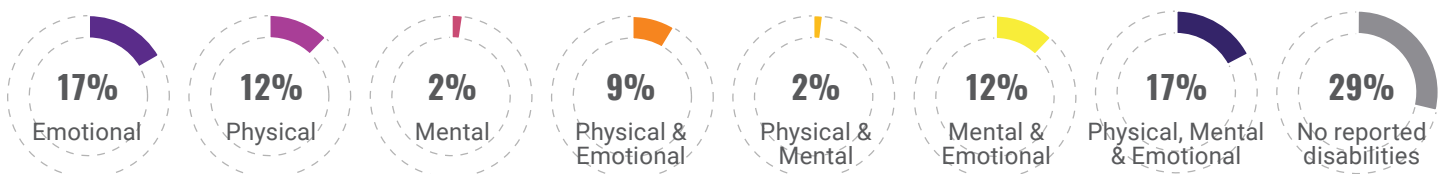
(n=300)

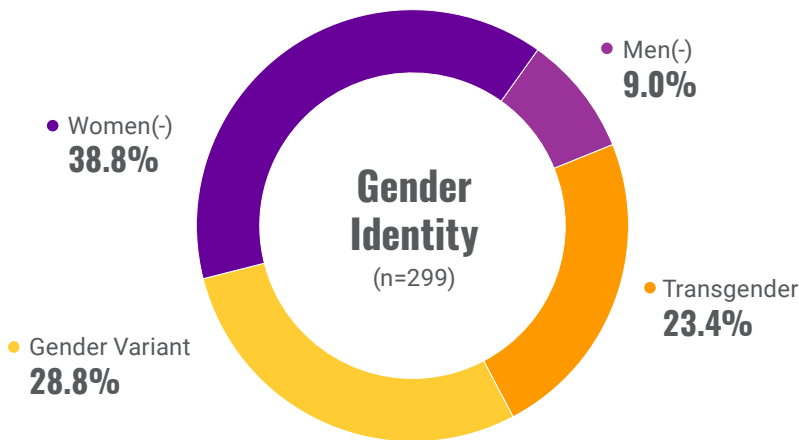
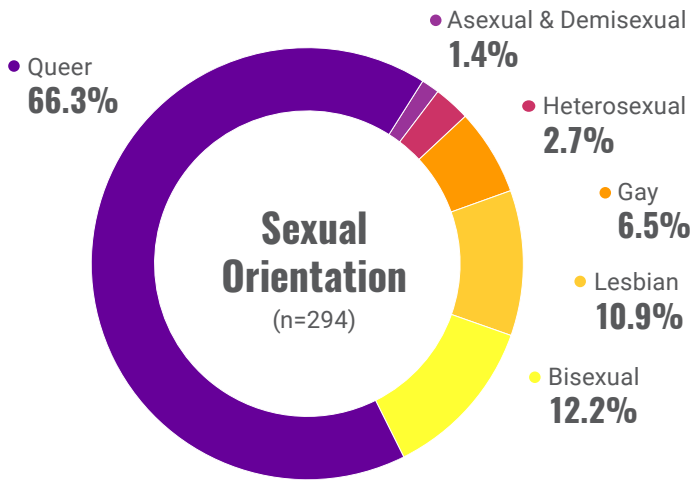


Disability Status

(n=300)

Participants self-identified disability status by reporting limitations due to physical, mental and/or emotional abilities in the past 12 months.





Sexual Orientation

Queer - includes participants who identify as pansexual, questioning, hetero/homoflexible

Gender Identities

Transgender - participants who identify as transgender

Gender Variant - includes participants who identify as any of the following: gender non-conforming, genderfluid, gender variant, gender queer, non-binary, genderfuck, Two Spirit, agender, gender neutral, demiboy, butch, femme, androgynous, confused, questioning and who do not identify as transgender

Women(-) - participants who identify as women and who do not identify as transgender or gender variant

Men(-) - participants who identify as men and who do not identify as transgender or gender variant

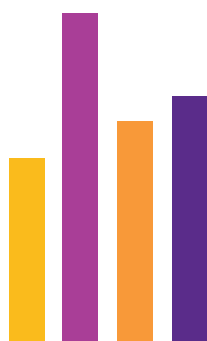
(-)The categories "women" and "men" are incomplete without including trans women and men, so we are following previously established conventions to use a minus sign to signal the incompleteness of these categories.

Current Financial Status

(n=298)

19%
I have difficulty paying bills no matter what I do

34%
I have enough money to pay bills, but only because I cut back on things

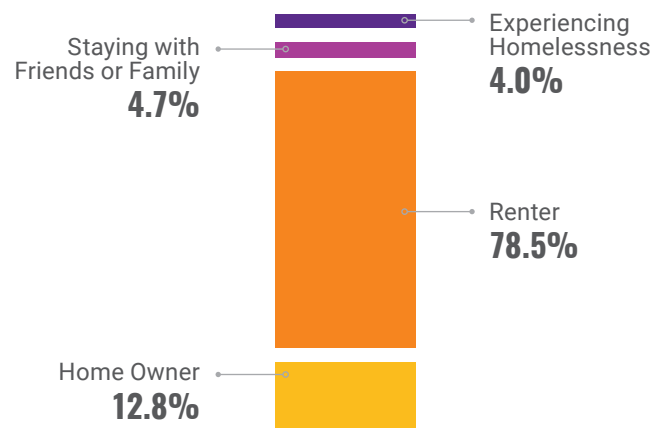


22%
I have enough money to pay bills, but little spare money to buy extra or special things

25%
After paying bills, I have enough money for special things

Current Living Situation

(n=297)



Impacts

How are LGBTQ+ people being impacted by the housing crisis?

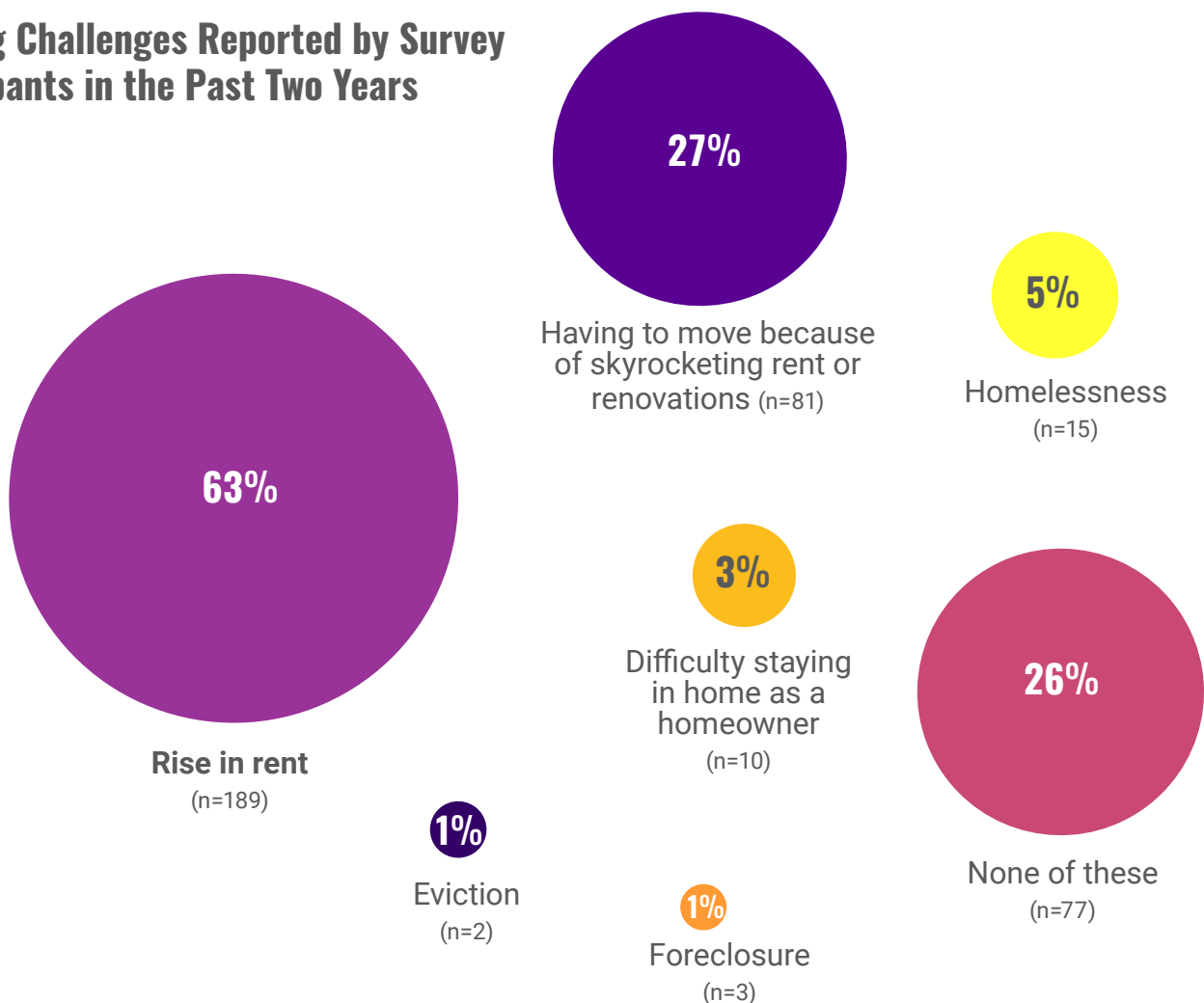
Summary of Housing Challenges

We asked participants to share about housing challenges within the past two years. Nearly 2/3 of survey respondents report experiencing rises in rent, which is unsurprising due to the large sampling of LGBTQ+ people living in and around Seattle, which is one of the most rapidly gentrifying cities in the nation.¹ Over a quarter of respondents indicate experiencing economic eviction, or having to move because landlords raised rents beyond what people could afford.

Housing Challenges Reported by Survey Participants in the Past Two Years

(n=299)

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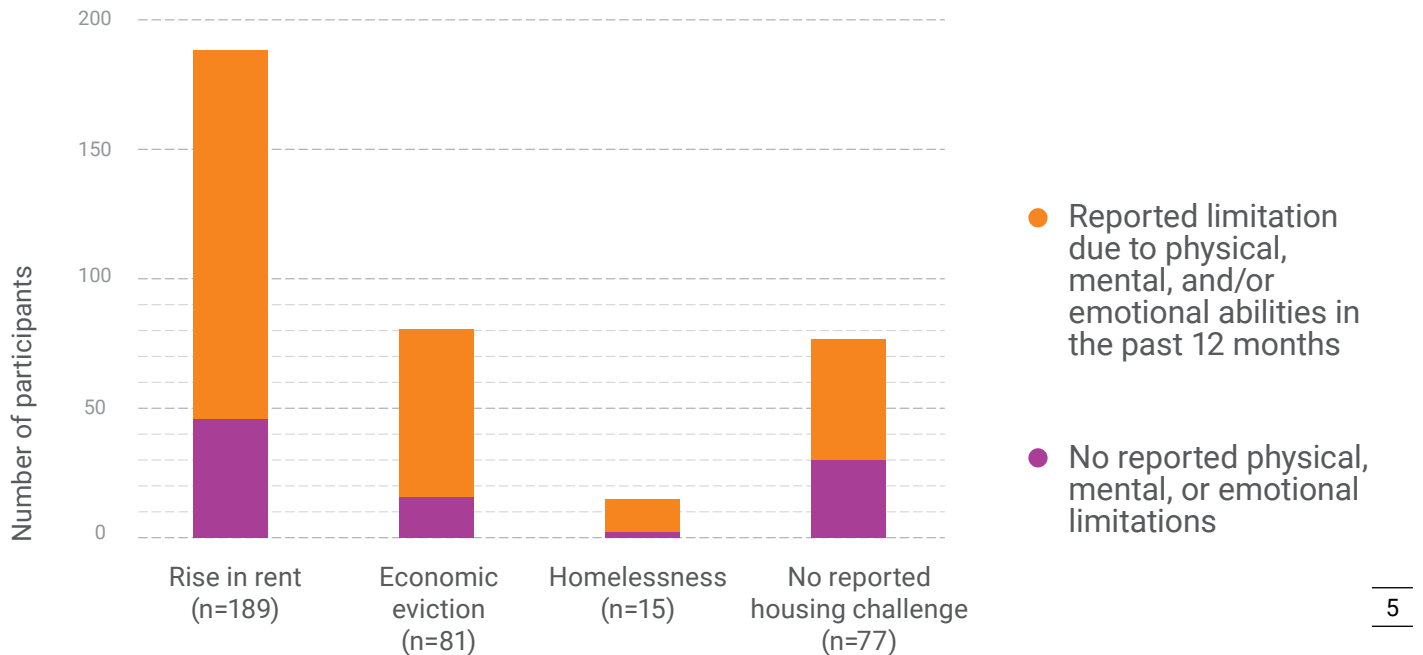
Additional Challenges

Additional challenges mentioned include housing discrimination, needing to engage in survival sex to pay for housing, moving around a lot, inability to find autism friendly housing, being stuck in abusive situations because of lack of housing affordability, abusive and slumlord landlords, and exploitative property management.

1. Hartley, D. (2013). Gentrification and financial health. Economic Trends.

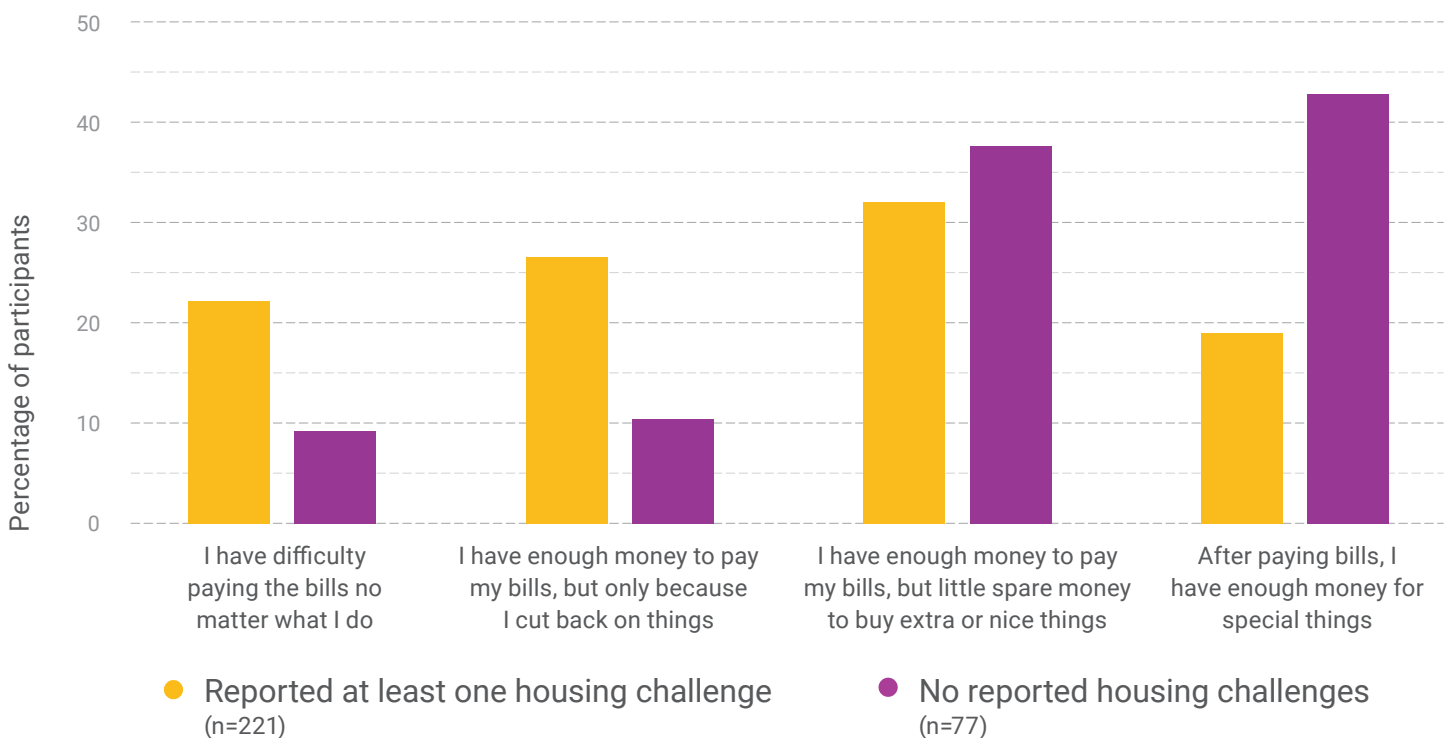
Disability and Housing Challenges

The data suggests that people from the sample who reported limitations due to disability (physical, mental, and/or emotional) are **more likely to have experienced some sort of housing challenge**. Participants experiencing homelessness had the highest rate of occurrence of disability of any group experiencing housing challenges. We cannot conclude from the data that housing challenges are the cause of limitations in physical, mental, or emotional abilities; however, it is likely that disabilities of all kinds could be exacerbated by rising rent, getting economically evicted, eviction, foreclosure and being unstably housed.



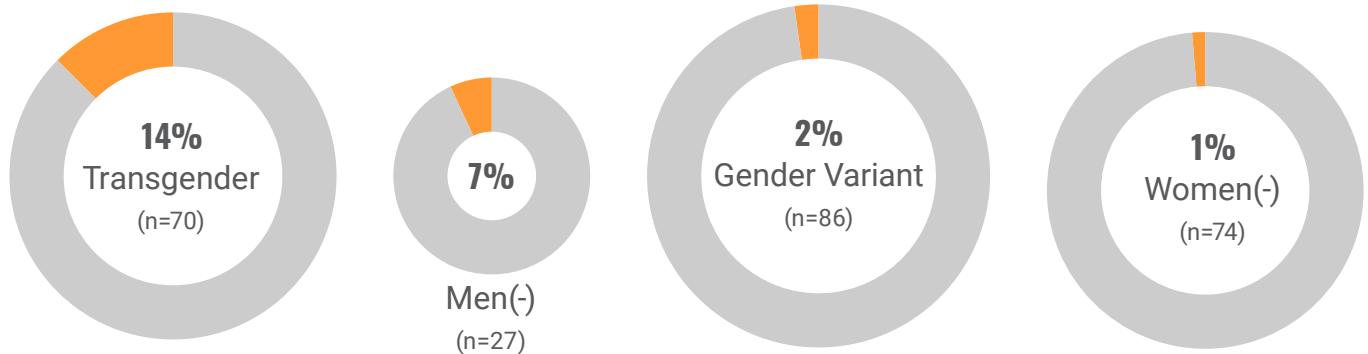
Disposable Income and Housing Challenges

Additional points of interest include looking into the financial setbacks people face when facing housing challenges like rising rents, economic eviction, foreclosure, or homelessness. Trends indicate that people with no reported housing challenges have more disposable income. People who have faced **at least one housing challenge in the past two years** appear far more likely to have difficulty paying bills.



Gender Identity and Housing Challenges

There were 4 different gender identity categories in the survey. Out of 294 participants 156 people identified as either transgender or gender variant and **47 of those individuals (or 30%) have been displaced from their homes** in the last 2 years. One other notable outlier is the fact that 12 out of 15 respondents who were experiencing homelessness at the time of the survey identified as transgender or gender variant, which aligns with other studies documenting the specific housing and economic justice barriers faced by transgender and gender non-conforming people.¹



Percentage of survey participants experiencing homelessness

Sexual Identity and Housing Challenges

Out of 6 different sexual identities and 294 respondents 36% of bisexual individuals (13 out of 36) and 29% of queer people (56 out of 195) have been displaced from their homes due to rises in rent or renovations in the last 2 years.

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Race and Housing Challenges

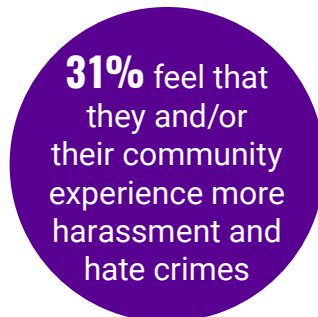
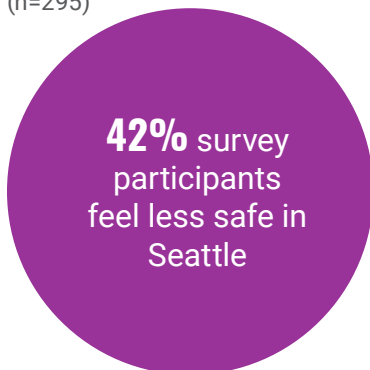
No ascertainable differences in race can be reported, however, this is likely due to disproportionate impacts of gentrification of people of color from Seattle, and an under-representation of LGBTQ+ people of color. (29.8% POC survey participants vs. 34% people of color residents living in Seattle from the 2010 Census)

Impacts of the Changes of Seattle's Landscape

Survey participants reported that changes in Seattle's landscape led them to experience the following:

Safety

(n=295)



Some survey respondents elaborated on how they feel unsafe:

"I was stuck with abusive family because I can't afford anywhere else on SSI"

"I have a slumlord landlord but I'm too afraid to move or fight back"

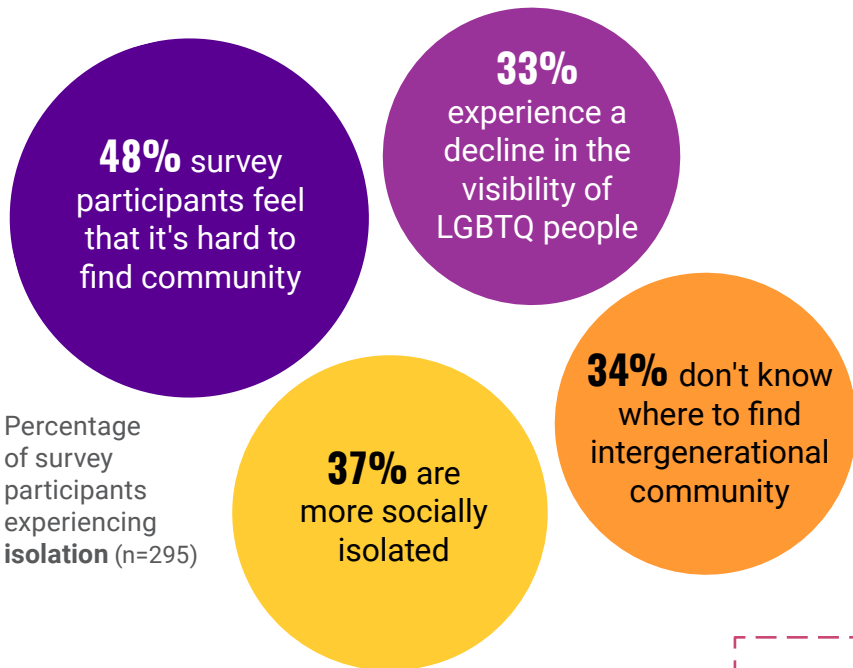
"I was evicted after losing a job and dealing with a domestic violence situation"

"I desperately want to leave but am unable to due to scarcity of subsidized housing"

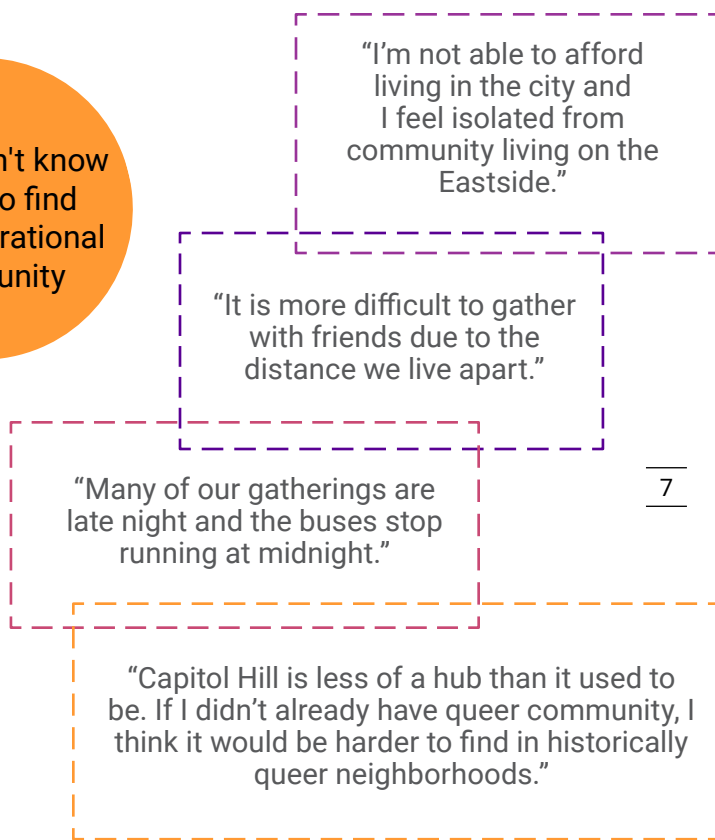
1. Spicer SS. 2010. Health care needs of the transgender homeless population. Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health. 14: p. 320-339.
 Injustice at Every Turn -- http://www.thetaskforce.org/static_html/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_full.pdf

Isolation

Anecdotal reports from community members suggest that many queer and trans people of color do not feel safe in historically POC neighborhoods that are gentrifying. Additionally, anecdotal reports suggest that many LGBTQ+ people do not feel safe in Capitol Hill, an historic gayborhood in Seattle.

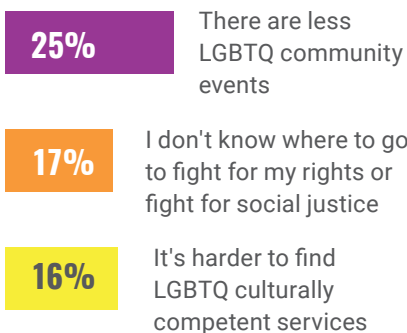


Some survey respondents elaborated upon the connections between isolation and displacement:



Resource Access

Percentage of survey participants experiencing difficulty accessing **resources** that are LGBTQ specific (n=295)



Showing Up: How are LGBTQ+ people helping each other deal with the housing crisis?

Of our survey participants, **77.9%** (233 out of 299) respondents indicated that they have helped LGBTQ+ people who are experiencing homelessness in some way.

Other responses include: gave money/food/clothing/other supplies, food distribution, fundraised, volunteer at a shelter, advocated within systems.



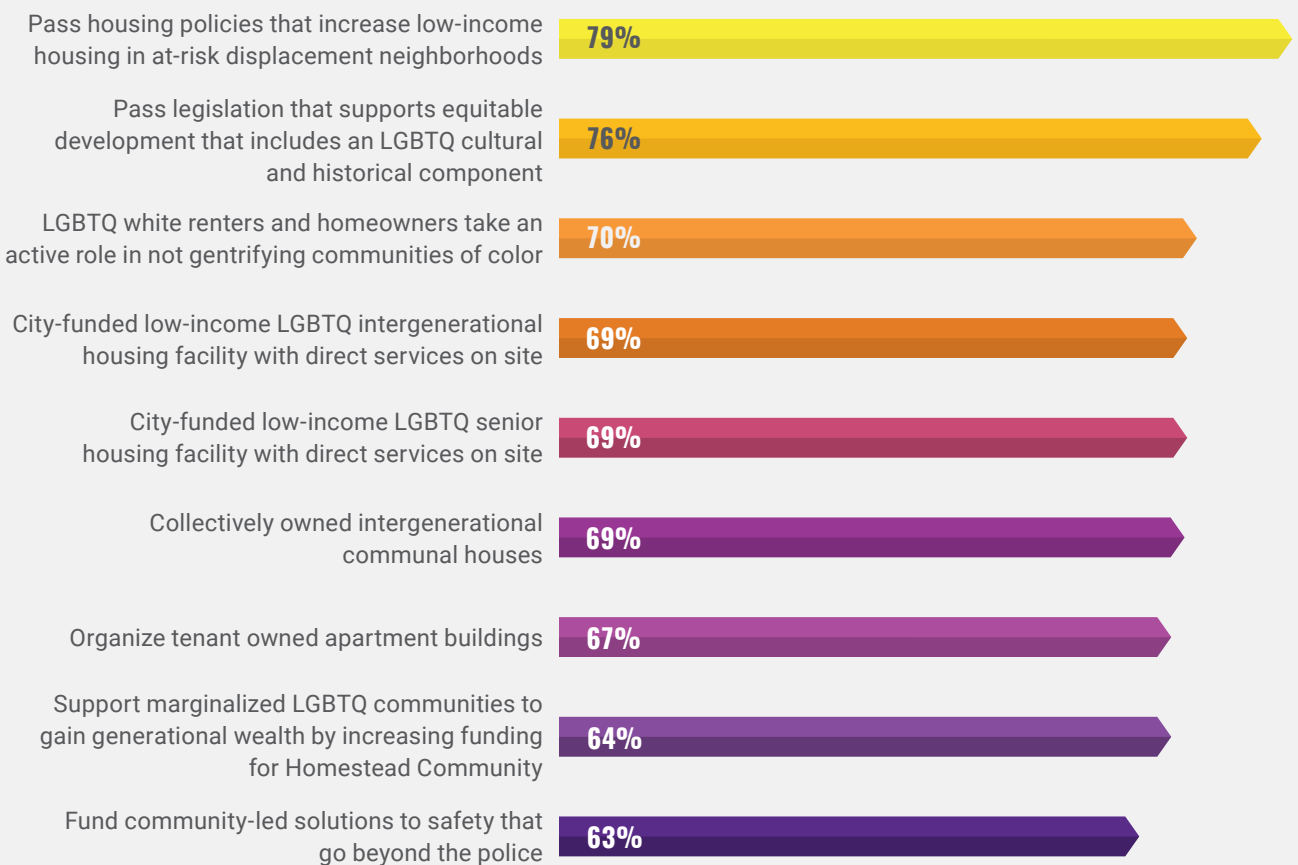
Solutions

What are proposed solutions to the housing crisis?

(n=292)

Given the high percentage of surveyed community members who are impacted by the housing crisis, we were interested in learning more about the solutions LGBTQ+ people want to pursue. Some solutions are policy-oriented while others are related to organizing efforts that can happen within LGBTQ+ communities.

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Additional Proposed Solutions

Other proposed solutions include requiring developers to build a higher percentage of affordable housing units that are available to very low income people, rent control, a more progressive taxation system (including an income tax and taxing unoccupied houses and buildings), rent control, creating community-controlled funds for folks in need of financial assistance, and limit the number of luxury units that can be built.

Conclusions

What are the implications of this housing survey?

Suggestions for Future Research

Given the limitations of our sample size, who we surveyed, and some of the difficulties that come with surveying LGBTQ+ communities, we are suggesting additional community-based participatory research in the following areas:

Age: Among the participants surveyed our sampling of voices 45 and older and 18 and younger were missing.

Two Spirit, Queer, and Trans People of Color: this survey under-represented 2SQT People of Color. Given the particular intersections of racism, colonialism, and cisheterosexism, a survey focusing on the specific experiences of low-income and cash poor 2SQT POC could illuminate solutions that are proposed by people who are often considered the most disposable by our society.

LGBTQ+ and Disability: preliminary findings in this study showed disproportionate numbers of people with disabilities facing housing challenges. This warrants follow up and additional focus.

Gender Identity & Housing Challenges: given the high number of survey respondents who were transgender and gender variant and experiencing homelessness or economic eviction, further research could be done to lift up perspectives and solutions of transgender and gender variant people who are unstably housed.

Sexual Identity & Housing Challenges: based on the preliminary findings of bisexual and queer individuals experiencing disproportionate amounts of economic evictions and the 2015 Office of Civil Rights study where over 60% of queer individuals seeking housing faced housing discrimination in Seattle, further study is warranted to identify effective housing solutions for marginalized sexual minorities.

South King County: anecdotal evidence suggests that many LGBTQ+ are being displaced from Seattle to areas south of the city. This study focused primarily on Seattle residents. Further research could be done to understand the specific consequences of displacement on people who have already relocated to a different geographic area.

Implications for Policymakers

1. Utilize an Intersectional LGBTQ+ Equity Lens and Framework: Policy makers should consider the way the housing crisis is contributing to many of our LGBTQ+ community members experiencing an increased sense of isolation and a lack of safety. To ensure regular and consistent attention to this problem, they should work with organizations and community members to include an intersectional LGBTQ equity lens and framework in all housing policies and projects.

2. Build more Low-Income Housing in At-Risk Displacement Neighborhoods: Our second recommendation is based on the number one solution identified by survey respondents for housing policies to be passed that increase the amount of low-income housing in at-risk displacement neighborhoods. Clearly, policies themselves will not be enough and significant funding is needed to build low-income housing in neighborhoods that are at a high risk of displacement.

3. Fund LGBTQ+ friendly Senior and Intergenerational Low-Income Housing: Seattle lacks LGBTQ+ friendly low-income senior and/or intergenerational housing. Based on survey respondents stated solutions and anecdotally through Allyship's housing justice organizing there is a need for affordable senior and intergenerational housing. The City of Seattle and King County need to invest in low-income housing that provides LGBTQ+ culturally competent wrap around services, hires LGBTQ+ friendly staff, and actively becomes a community hub to prevent social isolation across the generations.

4. Fund Community-Based Participatory Research and corresponding organizing efforts: There is a severe deficiency of data on how the lack of housing, jobs, transportation, community, intergenerational connection and culture have on the well-being of LGBTQ+ local populations. Funding that is directed toward community-based organizations that utilize CBPR as one tool to organize toward solutions identified by marginalized LGBTQ+ communities will ensure that research is a tool that directly benefits people who are participating.

Thank you for joining us in supporting
LGBTQ Housing Justice

Acknowledgements

Community based research is often a labor of love! As such, we want to extend our deep gratitude to everyone who took the survey—your time and energy and willingness to provide feedback helps us do our work more effectively. Additionally, to everyone who helped with survey design, dissemination, numbers crunching, graphics and report writing - specifically Laurie, Helena, Roxie, Dinah, Eli, Odette, Nate, Jean, Debbie and Kelsen - you all rock!



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