

EROTICS GLOBAL SURVEY 2017



Sexuality, rights and internet regulations

EROTICS Global Survey 2017: Sexuality, rights and internet regulations



EROTICS Global Survey 2017Sexuality, rights and internet regulations





EROTICS Global Survey 2017

Sexuality, rights and internet regulations

Authors:

Delfina Schenone Sienra and Mariana Palumbo Bruno Zilli and Horacio F. Sívori (Introduction)

Reviewers:

Bruno Zilli and Debbie Budlender

Editors:

Katerina Fialova and hvale vale

Copy editing and proofreading:

Lynn Welburn Lori Nordstrom (APC)

Publication production:

Flavia Fascendini (APC)

Graphic design:

MONOCROMO

Cover design:

Cathy Chen (APC)

The EROTICS Global Survey 2017 is part of is part of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) project "Building EROTICS Networks in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka", funded by AmplifyChange. To read more on this subject, please visit erotics.apc.org or www.genderlT.org

EROTICS (Exploratory Research on Sexuality and ICTs) is a global network of activists, academics and organisations working on sexuality issues including LGBTIQ rights, sex work, sex education, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and genderbased violence, in addition to internet freedom advocates, policy experts and techies. The objective of the network is to promote inter-movement collaboration on sexual rights and internet rights, highlight technology-related violations against sexual rights activists, and build their capacity in the design, usage and governance of the internet.



AMPLIFYCHANGE

APC would like to thank AmplifyChange for their support of this 3rd edition of the EROTICS Global Survey.

Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Licence <creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/> Some rights reserved. ISBN: 978-92-95102-94-1 APC-201712-WRP-R-EN-DIGITAL-284

Table of contents

About the authors)
Sexuality and the internet: 2017 survey findings	,
Sexuality, rights and internet regulations survey 2017 Delfina Schenone Sienra and Mariana Palumbo)
Appendix 1. Quantitative questionnaire	}
Appendix 2. In-depth interview guide)

About the authors

Mariana Palumbo was born in Argentina. She graduated in Sociology at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), Argentina where she completed a master's degree in Social Research. Currently she is studying for a PhD in Social Sciences at UBA and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), where she also works as a professor. Her principal research interests lie in the field of emotions, love, violence, gender and sexuality studies. She has written articles for specialised journals and congresses. Mariana is a member of the Programme Against Gender-based Violence at the University of San Martín. She is also a member of the Gino Germani Interdisciplinary Institute of Gender Studies at UBA and of the Ibero-American Laboratory for Socio-historical Studies on Sexuality (Red LIESS).

Delfina Schenone Sienra was born in Argentina and has lived in Mexico since 2014. She graduated in Sociology at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) and completed a master's degree in Social Sciences at FLACSO-Mexico. Previously she worked for several years at IPSOS-Argentina, an international market research company, as project manager. She is now teaching in middle school at Prepa Ibero and is preparing her PhD applications. Her principal research interests lie in the field of feminist studies, specifically in motherhood and maternity, unpaid care work, and feminist economics. She has participated in several congresses, written articles about feminism and gender inequalities for different publications in Argentina and Mexico, and has three articles in the process of publication in specialised journals.

Sexuality and the internet: 2017 survey findings

Bruno Zilli and Horacio Sívori1

At three different times over the past four years, the APC Women's Rights Programme's project EROTICS: Exploratory Research on Sexuality and the Internet sent out a questionnaire to its worldwide network of gender and sexuality activists, advocates, professionals and academics, to learn about the role of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in their work. The survey was particularly designed to reflect on their experiences and responses to online violence and censorship. In this introductory note, we comment on the meaning of the survey as a tool to explore the potential, challenges and possibilities of the internet for the exercise of gender and sexuality rights.

The EROTICS project looks at the impact of regulatory frameworks and control mechanisms on the actual lived practices, experiences and concerns of internet users in the exercise of their sexual rights.² At its seminal stage, five case studies showed that while increasing online activity exposes users to certain risks and threats, individuals and collectives are successful in developing means of self-protection, regulation and empowerment.³ However, national governments, as well as business and user-based control initiatives aimed at curbing those risks – vaguely justified by the imperative of protecting vulnerable subjects – end up generating restrictions

to online activity and content that could otherwise improve the thriving online experience and sexual expression of internet users, in particular, young people, women and sexual minorities.

To assess the scope of this impact on sexual rights advocacy, the EROTICS team designed and applied a global survey with two primary objectives. One was to map how sexual rights activists (on a variety of issues and from different countries) use the internet to advance their work. The other objective was to document and provide insights on the types of risks, harassment, content regulation or censorship they deal with, and how they respond to them. That is, what gender and sexuality-related online content, practices and modes of interaction may be subjected to censorship, limitations, threats or violence.

The survey reached out to respondents broadly self-identified as "working on" LGBTIQ, women's and sexual rights, which potentially included activists, scholars, experts and supporters; in other words, individuals who are particularly sensitive to issues around sexual rights and the internet. They were invited to respond to a questionnaire addressing issues of access, use of internet resources for advocacy, online safety and censorship. The first global survey was launched in 2013,4 and a slightly revised version of the questionnaire was applied as a follow-up exercise in 2014.5 In 2017, a revised version of the questionnaire was again sent out, and an important innovation was introduced: in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals who volunteered to expand on their responses.6

Given the global scope of this research, the results provide insights on the social, political and technical contexts of internet use by gender and

Bruno Zilli (PhD) and Horacio Sívori (PhD) are anthropologists, researchers at the Latin American Center on Sexuality and Human Rights, State University of Rio de Janeiro; where Bruno is the assistant editor of Latin American Journal, and Horacio is an assistant professor at the Graduate Program in Collective Health.

² Kee, J. (Ed.). (2010). EROTICS: Sex, rights and the internet. Association for Progressive Communications. https://www.apc. org/en/node/12781

³ Ibid. The research was conducted in five countries: Brazil, India, Lebanon, South Africa and the United States.

⁴ See https://www.genderit.org/articles/survey-sexual-activismmorality-and-internet

⁵ Link to report of 2014 survey results.

⁶ Link to report of 2017 survey results.

sexuality activists worldwide, the security challenges they face, as well as current limitations to the exercise of sexual rights, and how they negotiate them. The findings illuminate the connections between internet surveillance, online sexual sociability and expression, and how gender and sexuality markers, among others, mediate the access and meaningful use of ICTs. They provide evidence to help explain the impact of internet regulation on sexual rights activists' work, and make inferences about the exercise of gender and sexual rights in the contemporary online/offline continuum. Insights from the EROTICS survey might also help explore strategic ways for sexual rights activists to address digital security and advocate for gender and sexuality issues among internet rights activists.

The 2017 survey Sample

The basic demographics of the survey sample indicate some variety in terms of age, gender and sexual identity, reflecting the reach of this research initiative, initially targeted at the networks among which the EROTICS project has resonated, without a pre-designed sample stratification device. The survey provides valuable data on some particular local contexts, as well as age and sex/gender identity categories. Given the size of the sample, broader inferences with some statistical validity can be made, considering the survey's characteristics and its targeted universe, gender/sexual rights activists, with certain countries, regions, age groups and sex/gender identities better represented than others.

Active dissemination of the survey had an impact on the sample, evidently dominated by LGBTIQ and feminist activism, which is consistent with the survey target. In all its three applications, most survey respondents were overall relatively young, cis queer female. World regions where EROTICS members are based or are more active – largely in the global South – were substantially better represented, highlighting the importance of networking for the success of the survey.

Matters of representation

The small number of responses obtained from individuals who self-identified as transgender, intersex or "other" does not permit any statistically relevant statements regarding those groups. However, strategies to reach trans people have been progressively more successful, with an increase in their representation

in the most recent survey. To complement the survey data, in 2017, interviews were conducted with trans persons, among others not as strongly represented in earlier survey samples – in particular, invisibilised or silenced communities, such as persons with disabilities, younger and elder age groups, and migrants. The 2017 report quotes those interviews, offering their important and illuminating perspectives. The report also presents the individual responses of trans and intersex people to the questionnaire in absolute numbers, instead of percentages, to account for their small statistical representation.

Online presence

Most respondents worked for non-governmental organisations, followed by people who worked either as independent activists or are members of academic or policy institutes, focusing on issues related to women's and LGBTIQ rights, usually through policy monitoring, content production and/or dissemination, and direct actions such as training and capacity building – all these activities relying heavily on internet access. The survey sample shows that more cis heterosexual women work on women's rights and more cis gay men work on LGBTIQ rights.

The report also shows how important an online presence is for people who face strong social discrimination. They use the internet to express their identities, to network, to search for and share information, as well as to advocate for their rights. This enabling role of the internet is evident in the use of social networks (especially Facebook), email (especially Gmail), and instant messaging (especially WhatsApp). Despite its importance, Facebook is also perceived as a risky space, according to respondents, because of its lack of transparency on how personal information is handled and used – let alone protected.

Online challenges

The survey also asked its respondents about how safe (or unsafe) they felt, and the types of threats and violence they experienced online, as challenges to the exercise and expressions of their identities and their work on gender and sexuality rights. Social networks – again, primarily Facebook – are the main online spaces where these interactions take place, and much of the online violence reported occurs in interactions with other internet users, as opposed to, for instance, censorship or surveillance on behalf of the state or within their families.

For survey respondents, however, the most important factors influencing policies or monitoring their activities online in ways that limit their sexual expressions and activism are government/state actors and internet providers. Thus, although the experiences reported do not show the state as a main actor, government and business are perceived as potential violators of privacy and other communications and sexual rights online. Religious authorities were also mentioned as an increasingly active factor in these violations.

Overall, respondents indicated a degree of uncertainty related to how secure their online presence really is, and cases of hacking, identity theft, monitoring, stalking, and harassment all add to these feelings, which were more prevalent among LGBTIQ respondents. The reasons underlying such acts of control, surveillance, and online threats, among respondents' perceptions, show a process of moralising the internet, where the protection of "vulnerable" subjects (women, youth, children) or institutions (the family, the state, country, public decency, and tradition) act as a strategic argument to justify interference with the online activities of groups already discriminated against offline.

Notably, then, the state, internet providers and religious authorities are perceived as potential antagonists; and other internet users - usually unknown men – are reported as the main sources of online violence. Therefore, institutional and official indifference to rights violations, combined with the increasingly open condemnation of minorities by some of those institutions (notably, church leaders and state officials), creates an atmosphere where individual aggressors feel emboldened in their acts of anonymous online malice. Unfortunately, for the survey respondents, options for facing these challenges are limited, unless they have the technical savvy to confront online violence and unwanted monitoring. Their most frequent responses are non-confrontational solutions, such as leaving the platforms or closing accounts. However, visibilising those events, to gain political or legal leverage, was also mentioned as a viable reaction, and, when that fails, confronting aggressors was also considered an option.

So where do we stand...?

Sexual morality evidently permeates most forms of State regulation, as well as public concern regarding online safety and security. Many legal, technological, community-sponsored and market internet regulation devices, as well as multiple less formalised everyday practices of protection and self-regulation are driven by moral anxieties, often regarding sexuality. The general findings of the surveys confirm those observations.

The earlier ethnographic findings of the EROT-ICS project indicated that neither the regulation devices' protective functions nor their potential to unreasonably restrict sexual rights were at all self-evident to sexual rights activists, let alone internet users. The potential of such mechanisms to obstruct the exercise of sexuality and the promotion of sexual rights often go ignored, as their primary focus is the protection of traditional values, and especially of subjects conceived as vulnerable.

The EROTICS survey reveals, on the one hand, respondents' perceptions and experiences regarding online safety, closer to the users' point of view, their skills and digital literacy. On the other hand, the survey is also sensitive to technical and juridical/political forms of regulation, emphasising security dimensions – located at the "hard" level of technological, market and state control. Both those perspectives are crucial to an understanding of the role of internet regulation as related to the exercise of sexual rights. It is the goal of the EROTICS project to generate data and develop activist interventions to help bridge the gap between those two dimensions, as well as the duality between freedom and protection.

In light of the online experiences mapped by the EROTICS project, one can look at internet regulation as a form of discipline, made of rules and control mechanisms, but also of self-regulation and risk management devices both by collectives and by individuals. Our findings support the assumption that technical skill and knowledge about regulation do in fact contribute to a fuller exercise of sexual rights. In other words, communication rights can and should also be envisioned, and advocated for, as sexual rights.

Sexuality, rights and internet regulations survey 2017

Delfina Schenone Sienra Mariana Palumbo

Introduction: Location, objectives, methodology and limits

This survey aimed to find out how activists working on gender, sexuality and sexual rights use the internet in their work. For this purpose, academics, policy makers and independent activists, among others, were invited to answer a series of questions about the role of the internet in their activism and/or personal life, and the difficulties they face in using it freely and fully, considering their experiences regarding censorship, violence and surveillance online.

These survey objectives respond to the overall EROTICS project,¹ which are to enable sexual right activists from different regions to engage politically with the internet as a public space and to counter technology-related violence against women and LG-BTIQ people.

This research looked into three main topics: The internet as a means of sexual expression; situations of surveillance, censorship and online harassment; and the resistance strategies the respondents develop against these situations. To establish a statistical profile of the survey sample, respondents were also asked about their socio-demographic information. We also inquired about the issues and the organisations where respondents work regarding their sexuality and sexual rights activism. All the information required was guaranteed to be anonymous and confidential, with respondents being notified about their privacy rights before answering the survey.

Data gathering and analysis were both quantitative and qualitative. The information was gathered with an online survey² and with in-depth interviews.³ The survey questionnaire included 31 questions, with 22 closed and 19 open-ended answer options.⁴ The questionnaire was designed to obtain detailed information about situations of surveillance, censorship and violence experienced by the respondents.

Regarding the qualitative section of the survey, we conducted eight in-depth interviews with individuals representing different profiles: one cis⁵ lesbian woman, 30 years old, who is a Spanish migrant and lives in Argentina; one cis gay man, 30 years old, from Macedonia; one cis heterosexual woman, 66 years old, from Jamaica; one cis woman, 26 years old, from Egypt, who migrated from a small town to the capital of the country in order to work and study; one cis heterosexual woman with disabilities, 42 years old, from Malawi; one trans pansexual woman, 35 years old, from Mexico; one cis heterosexual woman, 56 years old, from India, who is a sex work activist; and one queer/trans lesbian woman, 35 years old, from India. These in-depth interviews addressed the same issues as the survey regarding the interviewees' views about internet use, experiences of surveillance, censorship and/or violence, and strategies adopted against those situations.

The main idea of the qualitative part was to select different profiles that were part of the target community, but also to pay special attention to the less represented ones in quantitative studies,

¹ EROTICS is a global network of activists, academics and organisations working on sexuality issues including LGBTIQ rights, sex work and sex education, among others. See: https:// www.apc.org/en/project/erotics-exploratory-research-projectsexuality-and-internet

² To see the quantitative questionnaire, go to appendix 1 at the end of the report.

³ To see the in-depth interview guide, go to appendix 2 at the end of the report.

⁴ Comprising 12 "other" options + seven open-ended questions (where two are name and email). Q8 has both closed-ended and also open-ended options.

⁵ Cisgender or the short form cis is the term used in opposition to transgender. It is used for people whose gender identity matches the one they were given when they were born.

members of particularly invisibilised or silenced communities: people with disabilities, young and elder people, migrants and trans persons.

The process of selection of the cases was based on two criteria. On one hand, we contacted people who had completed the online survey and left their email in the "Contact" section of the questionnaire, from where we obtained six of the interviews. On the other hand, APC provided us some contacts of activists who are part of their network, where we obtained the other two interviews: An Indian trans woman and an Indian activist who works on issues related to sex work. We sent emails inviting them to participate in the in-depth interviews and told them about the purpose of the study. We did six interviews through Skype and two preferred to answer the guestions by email. The interviews were done mostly in English with the exception of the ones done in LAC that were done in Spanish.

The survey was hosted on the APC website from 19 July through 22 August 2017. The questions, with the exception of the socio-demographic ones, were not compulsory, which is why the questions have different numbers of cases. The average time to answer the questionnaire was about 35-40 minutes and the interviews, in average, were one-hour long.

The final [quantitative] sample includes 332 cases. The survey was launched first in Spanish and English and then during fieldwork, one week later, three more languages were added: French, Chinese (traditional and simplified) and Arabic.

It is important to note that because there are not representative quantitative studies regarding the target population, there is no available information regarding the quantity of them in each region of the world and therefore there are no possibilities yet to design a representative study regarding the distribution of the sample. This is why the data comes from a convenience sample, not statistically representative of the universe of sexual rights activism.

The distribution strategy consisted on the one hand of contacting by email the target population around the world, especially in regions and areas where APC has contacts. And, on the other hand, by posting the questionnaire on APC's website and communicating it through Twitter, so that anyone who fulfilled the requirement of being an activist in gender, sexual rights and sexuality issues (whether they were academics, independent bloggers, members of NGOs or worked in something else that involved activity regarding these issues) could answer it. Finally, the intention was to include people

with a diversity of gender identities and sexual orientations, as well as different ages and regions in order to reach people who usually are invisible or have little space in surveys and statistics.

Demographics

The survey was launched in different regions of the world. The majority of the sample – 40% – lives in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC);⁶ 21% in South, South East and East Asia (SA);⁷ 20% in Africa;⁸ 12% in North America and Western Europe;⁹ 4% in Western Asia (WA)¹⁰ and 2% in Eastern Europe.¹¹ Because of the quantity of cases and considering cultural similarities, we decided to include the three cases we have of Australia with North America and Western Europe and the four cases from Taiwan and China with South, South East and East Asia.

The survey has been analysed in terms of gender identity, sexual orientation, regions and issues of work in sex rights activism. However, when the information is disaggregated by these variables there are groups that have very small bases such as Eastern Europe, Western Asia, trans, intersex and pansexual people. They are included in the results showed as total sample but they will not appear in the figures or have their percentages compared with the other groups. Due to the importance that gender identity and sexual orientation have for this study, we will include information of trans and intersex people in absolute numbers in order to shine a light on their situation but the treatment given will be more qualitative than quantitative.

⁶ The LAC sample includes: Argentina 63 cases, Brazil 14, Chile 5, Mexico 23, Paraguay 6, Colombia 4, Ecuador 2, Venezuela 2, Nicaragua 3, Costa Rica 2, Peru 2, El Salvador 2, Honduras 2, Bolivia 1 and Dominican Republic 1.

⁷ The South, South East and East Asia sample includes: China 2 cases, Taiwan 2, India 30, Nepal 7, Sri Lanka 5, Pakistan 2, Viet Nam 1, Malaysia 7, Indonesia 5, Cambodia 1, Philippines 3, Myanmar 1, Thailand 2 and Bangladesh 1.

⁸ The Africa sample includes: South Africa 13 cases, Egypt 9, Malawi 1, Kenya 11, Nigeria 7, Tunisia 3, République Democratique du Congo 3, Liberia 1, Burundi 6, Rwanda 1, Algeria 1, Tanzania 3, Sudan 2, Ghana 1, Cameroon 1, Togo 1 and Uganda 1.

⁹ The North America and Western Europe sample includes: Spain 7 cases, France 2, United States 5, Canada 3, Australia 3, United Kingdom 2, Belgium 1, Portugal 3, Germany 3, Netherlands 3, Malta 1, Italy 4 and Denmark 1.

¹⁰ The Western Asia sample includes: Armenia 2 cases, Lebanon 8, Palestine 1, Israel 1 and Turkey 1.

¹¹ The Eastern Europe sample includes: Croatia 1 case, Kosovo 1, Albania 1, Serbia 1 and Bosnia and Herzegovina 2.

Table 1. Trans a	Table 1. Trans and intersex respondents by region										
	Total	Africa North America Latin A Europe Latin A			South and Eastern Asia						
Trans woman	6	3	1	2	0						
Trans man	9	5	0	3	1						
Intersex	5	2	1	1	1						
Total	20	10	2	6	2						
				Note: Table 1 sho	ws number of cases						

Gender

The results of the present study show that 86% of the respondents define themselves as cis: 61% as cis women and 25% as cis men.

Of the trans and intersex population (20 cases) we have mostly trans men respondents (nine cases). The majority of them live in Africa (10 cases) and LAC (six cases). (Table 1)

Sexual orientation

If we focus on sexual orientation, the majority of respondents define themselves as LGBQ¹² (61%), and more specifically, 17% as gay, 15% as bisexual, ¹³ 14% as queer and 11% as lesbian. There were also 2% that defined themselves as pansexual¹⁴ and 3% that declared having an "other" sexual orientation. ¹⁵ The remaining 39% of respondents defined themselves as heterosexual. ¹⁶ When we look at the distribution by region we see that in Africa the LGBQ community is also the majority but they have a greater presence – 73% – whereas in North America and Western

LGBQ population has an important representation in the total sample of the survey. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Sexual orientation – Total sample

61%

Europe, 59% of respondents are LGBQ and in SA 57% are LGBQ. On the other hand, in LAC, 48% are

LGBQ, this being the only region where they are

not the majority of respondents. As we can see, the

- 12 We will address sexual diversity LGBQ without T and I because trans and intersex were asked as gender identities in a different question of sexual orientation from where gay, lesbian, bisexual and queer are.
- 13 Regarding bisexual people (50 cases) by gender identity we have a majority of cis women with 35 cases and the other 15 cases distribution is: 9 cis men, 1 trans woman, 2 trans men and 3 other gender identity. We decided not to open the category of bisexuals by gender throughout the report due to the small bases that we would have if we consider the cases that are not cis women.
- 14 They answered "Pansexual" in the "Other" open-ended option of the question.
- 15 These people selected the "Other" open-ended option and we decided to leave them grouped in this category because of the small bases: it includes "I don't prefer any, but I'm also not hetero", "Puto", "Not heterosexual", "Whatever I feel like it", "Msm", "demisexual", "Group is of various sexualities and gender expression", "asexual", and "femmesexual & raromantic".
- 16 Regarding heterosexual people (128 cases) by gender identity we have a majority of cis women with 103 cases and the other 25 cases distribution is: 19 cis men, 2 trans men, 3 intersex and 1 other gender identity. We decided not to open the category of heterosexuals by gender throughout the report due to the small bases that we would have if we consider the cases that are not cis women.

Migration status

■ Heterosexual

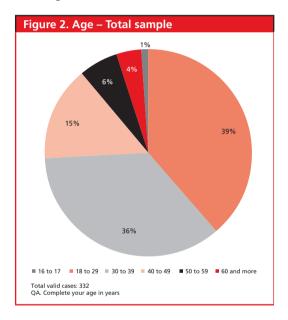
The majority of the respondents live where they were born. Only 16% are migrants (considering migrants as people who live in a country other than that in which they were born). This tendency remains the same in the majority of the regions. But in North America and Western Europe this tendency changes, 56% of the respondents of that region are migrants.

Total valid cases: 332 QC. Choose any that apply

Age

Regarding age, 74% of respondents are between 18 and 39 years old (between 18 to 29 years old, 39% and between 30 to 39 years old, 36%) and 15% are between 40 and 49 years old.

If we consider this information by regions, we can see some differences between them. Africa is where there are more people between 18 and 39 years old (86%, where 58% are 18 to 29 and 29% are 30 to 39 years old) than in the total sample. It is followed by SA where there are 76% of them, but here the amounts of each groups are the other way around than Africa: 31% are 18 to 29 and 44% are 30 to 39 years old. In North America and Western Europe and LAC we have a somewhat smaller amount of people of these ages than in the total sample: in the first case we have 71% and in the second one 67%. (Figure 2)



Situations of discrimination experienced by the respondents

In this survey we pay special attention to situations of discrimination that the respondents have lived. We asked if they have ever experienced discrimination based on: the colour of their skin; ethnicity; their social class/caste; any physical disability; health conditions, religion and migrant status. Respondents could select more than one type and we also allowed them to add other kinds of discrimination they had suffered, where they stated discrimination based on: sexual orientation, gender identity, physical appearance and age.

Among the respondents, 19% indicated they had not suffered any type of discrimination,

which implies that 81% of the sample suffered at least one kind of discrimination. Among the ones that were discriminated against in some way, the most frequent types of discrimination are based firstly on social class/caste (26%), followed by ethnicity (20%), colour of skin (19%) and sexual orientation (19%).

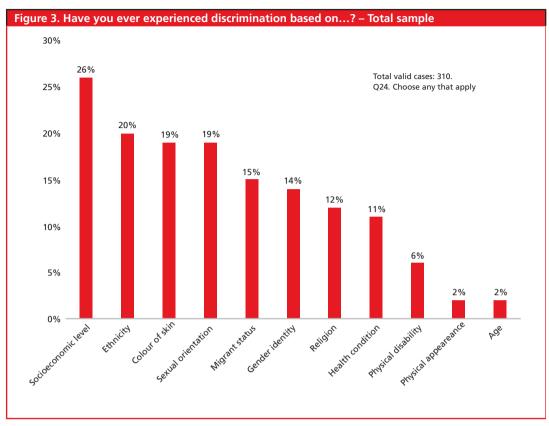
Two cases mentioned they had suffered *all* the closed-ended options of discrimination given on the survey: One is a gay cis man who is 36 years old and lives in Pakistan and the other respondent identifies as a non binary pansexual person, who is 34 years old and lives in Australia. (Figure 3)

Regarding trans and intersex respondents, out of six trans women, one suffered discrimination based on social class/caste, one for health conditions, two for gender identity and one case indicated that she experienced discrimination based both on ethnicity and physical disability. Out of nine trans men, one indicated that he was discriminated against because of his migrant status, one for the colour of his skin, one by sexual orientation and one by gender identity. Three said they had experienced discrimination for different reasons, one for health conditions, religion and sexual orientation; one for health condition and gender identity; and the last one for colour of skin, health condition and sexual orientation.

Of the intersex people, one suffered discrimination because of sexual orientation and one for gender identity. The last three indicated that it was for more than one reason: one for ethnicity, social class/caste and sexual orientation; one for colour of skin, ethnicity and physical appearance; and the last one for physical disability, health condition, gender identity and sexual orientation.

If we analyse the information by region, we can see that the four main types of discrimination appear in all of them but with a different order of appearance: in Africa the first type of discrimination is based on the colour of the skin, followed very closely by social class; in North America and Western Europe the first one is sexual orientation based; in LAC the main one is social class and has significant differences with the second type which is by sexual orientation and, finally, in SA the main one is ethnicity based followed closely by colour of skin.

Through the in-depth interviews with activists we can see that the main discrimination which is based on social class/caste does not appear and they mention instead experiencing discrimination based on their status as activists, their sexual orientation and physical disabilities.



For example, this activist suffered discrimination from men for her disability. "Have you ever experienced discrimination? Yes. Sometimes some men want you because they know you have disabilities and if you refuse they discriminate you. That happens online. When you are online they are strong to tell you anything." (Cis heterosexual woman with disabilities, 42 years old, from Malawi)

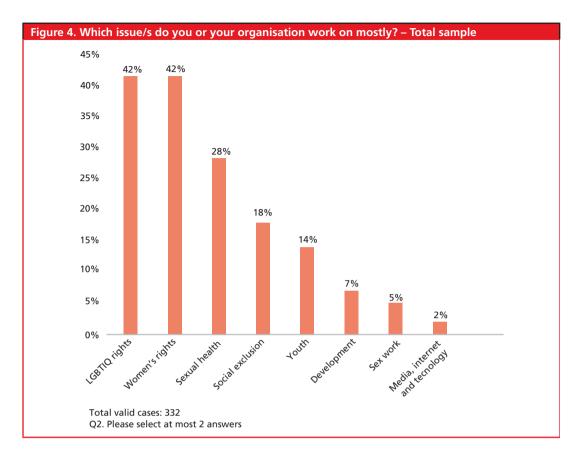
Another activist explains that she suffered discrimination because of her gender because she lives in a strongly religious society. This led to her decision to become a feminist activist: "I felt everyone is talking about politics but no one is talking about women. So as a woman in this context and this religious society and community where I grow up I felt like ok I want to talk about myself as a woman and the discrimination I suffered based on my gender. I started to be part of this group by the first anniversary of the Egyptian revolution."

(Cis woman, 26 years old, from Egypt, who migrated from a small town to the capital of the country in order to work and study)

In the following part of the survey we asked about the respondents' activities regarding sexuality and sexual rights: the type of organisation where they work, the activities they develop and the issues they work on.

If we analyse the organisation where they work, we can see that the majority of the respondents are members of NGOs (41%), in second place they are independent activists (18%) and in third place they work in academic, research and/or policy institutes (16%).

Considering trans and intersex respondents we see that as in the total sample, they work mostly in NGOs (nine cases) and as independent activists (seven cases). But it is important to mention that there are no trans or intersex respondents that work in academic, research and/or policy institutes. Also, following the same trend as the total sample, out of 18 respondents with physical disabilities, eight work in NGOs, four are



independent activists and two work in academic, research and/or policy institutes.

If we now consider this information by region, we notice that there are some differences between the regions. African respondents follow the same trend as the total sample as does SA, but the difference between NGOs and independent activists is significant. On the contrary, in North America and Western Europe, in first place we have independent activists, in second place the respondents work in academic, research and/ or policy Institutes and in third place we find NGOs. And finally in LAC, the difference is that there are more respondents working in academic institutes than as independent activists.

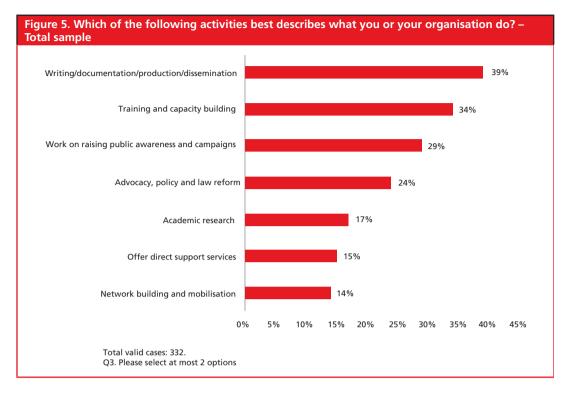
The issues on which the respondents work mostly 17 are LGBTIQ rights, women's rights (both 42%) and sexual health (28%). (Figure 4)

It is important to note that if you analyse the two main issues by sexual orientation and gender identity, you find that 86% of LGBTIQ respondents work on their rights. If we take a look at trans and intersex we can see that four out of six trans women respondents, all trans men respondents and four out of five intersex respondents work on this issue. On the other hand, 54% of heterosexual respondents work on women's rights, this being their main topic. This probably has to do with the composition of the sample of heterosexuals, where 80% are cis women.

Considering this by region, the only thing that is worthy of mention is that in LAC 52% of the respondents work on women's rights being the only region where this issue is in first place.

Regarding the activities in relation to sexuality and sexual rights that best describe the work and activism of the respondents, we find that in first place they dedicate to writing, documentation, production and dissemination of information, followed closely by training and capacity building, and in third place they work on raising public awareness and campaigns. (Figure 5)

¹⁷ The respondents were asked to pick only one option which represented the best description of their organisation's or their work. They were given a list of options and they could also write down something else if they needed to in "others", which was open-ended (only seven respondents used it).



Considering the four most common activities, it is quite interesting to notice that cis women engage more than cis men in writing, documenting and disseminating information (40% and 36% in each case) and training and building capacity in their organisations (35% versus 33%), whereas cis men engage more than cis women in activities that have to do with public space and public appearances such as raising public awareness and campaigns (31% and cis women: 27%) and advocacy, policy and law reform (29% versus 23%).

"We work on online campaigns concerned about bodily autonomy for ex abortion, sexual harassment, virginity including the intersectionality between violation, voice public and public fear. Also in offline campaigns, for example, the event was named: We will ride bicycles, is about the right to city." (Cis woman, 26 years old, from Egypt)

If we consider trans respondents, we can see see some differences between the total sample. Out of nine trans men respondents, six work on raising public awareness/campaigns and five in advocacy, policy and law reform and three out of six trans women respondents work on training and capacity building.

"My activism involves public advocacy, government liaison/representation (especially right now as the government of India is pushing through a Trans Rights Bill that is very poorly drafted), writing about trans, sexuality, and gender rights for digital publications, and some direct/personal work with trans people. I am also a queer/lesbian trans woman, and I write specifically about ideas of gender and sexuality with respect to non-binary trans persons." (Trans queer/lesbian woman, 35 years old, from India)

Regarding respondents with disabilities we can see that, following the trend of the sample, three out of 18 work on writing, documenting and disseminating information and also another three work on raising public awareness and campaigns, being the two most common activities between them.

If we focus on the regions we can see some differences of order but the main activities remain the same: following the trend of the sample, in North America and Western Europe and in LAC the most important activity is writing, documentation, production and dissemination of information (59% of the respondents and 37% respectively). On the contrary, in Africa and SA the main activity done by the respondents is training and capacity building (44% and 47% in each case).

Sexual expression

The internet is considered an "important" or "very important" medium of sexual expression by 66% of the sample (among them, 39% consider it "very important"). In this part of the analysis we will focus on the positive aspects of the online world and the uses of the internet by sexuality and sexual rights activists, especially for groups that have more difficulties to express themselves in offline spaces without being discriminated against, such as the LG-BTIQ community.

As one of our interviewees from LAC expressed, "The internet has been fundamental because for LGBTIQ activism, and also for feminists, Facebook allows the building of networks that would be very difficult to build in another way. It also allows the exchange of information in an efficient way, that would be very difficult in another way. The LGBTIQ population is small and is distributed everywhere and it would not be possible to have a face-to-face network." (Trans pansexual woman, 35 years old, from Mexico)

Regarding this information by sexual orientation, we can see that for LGBTIQ respondents it is much more important than for heterosexuals: it is very

important for 55% of gay respondents, 44% of bisexuals, 42% of queer and 37% of lesbians versus 28% for heterosexuals.

Q: Which are the positive aspects of using the internet for your activism?

A: It allows us to communicate and the information flows more quickly. (Cis lesbian woman, 30 years old, Spanish migrant who lives in Argentina)

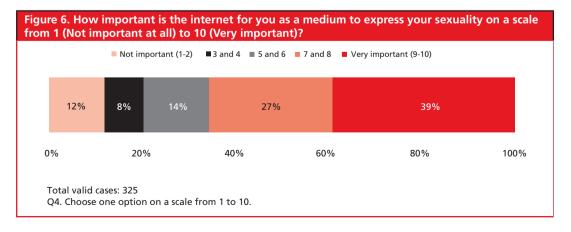
One of our interviewees, a trans activist from India suggests: "The good/positive aspect of my work on the internet is the amplification afforded by platforms such as Twitter and Facebook – which allow for my voice and my writing to be read by people not originally part of the audience. It also allows me to interact with, build communities with other trans/queer persons from around the world, who may be operating under similar circumstances as I do." (Trans queer/lesbian woman, 35 years old, from India)

If we now consider this information by region, we can see that in Africa (44%) and North America and Western Europe (51%), the level of answers of "very important" is above average. Here we can see how frequently and in what ways an African respondent uses it:

Q: How frequently do you use the internet?

A: 24/7

Q: Which are the positive aspects of using the internet for your activism?



A: Accessibility because it allows many women to join our discussion, write comments and get feedback. It allows us to access and to be accessed, to be more visible than in offline events. (Cis woman, 26 years old, from Egypt)

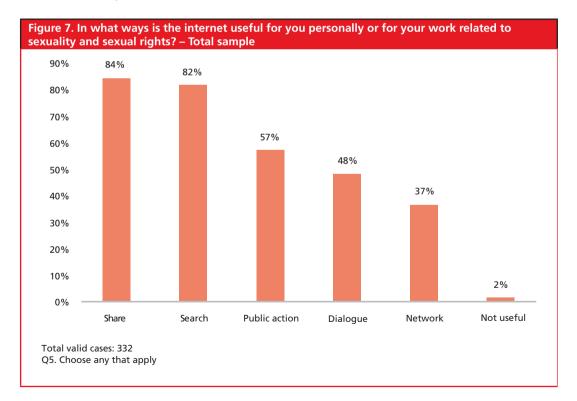
If we observe the ways in which the internet is useful for our respondents in relation to sexuality and sexual rights, we can see that most of them use it to share critical information quickly and widely (84%) and search for information that is difficult to find in offline spaces (82%). Considering the different regions, the first three uses are similar in all of the regions. (Figure 7)

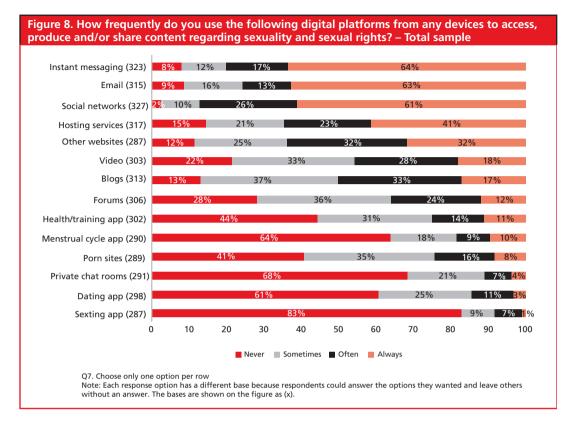
Another interviewee, a cis woman who is an activist from the LAC region, says: "The use of the internet is very good because if you have a blog, your organisation will be known faster. Also when you want to communicate, using WhatsApp is easier and cheap (...) I am able to reach a much wider audience, especially overseas, and to share experiences with them." (Cis heterosexual woman, 66 years old, from Jamaica)

The survey continued asking about how frequently the respondents use different digital platforms to access, produce and/or share content regarding sexuality or sexual rights from any device. If we first consider any frequency of use – "sometimes", "often" or "always" – we can identify that social networks (98%) are in first place, followed by instant messaging and email (both 92%), other websites (89%), blogs (87%) and hosting services (85%). The least used ones are sexting apps (17%) private chat rooms (32%) and menstrual cycle apps (36%). If we consider only the most frequent use – "always" – we notice that the three main platforms remain the same but with a different order: instant messaging (64%), email (63%) and social networks (61%).

If we consider trans and intersex respondents and those with physical disabilities, we do not see anything worth mentioning, because the trend remains the same as the total sample. (Figure 8)

If we take a look at these three most used platforms we can see that regarding instant messaging WhatsApp is the leader (90%), followed by Messenger (37%); in second place we have email where Gmail is on top (87%) and is followed by Hotmail (15%) but there is a long distance between





the two as you can see; and finally, if we consider social networks the most popular one among the respondents is Facebook (94%) followed far behind by Instagram (27%).

Another of our interviewees, a cis heterosexual woman who is an African activist, indicates that these platforms are fundamental for her activism: "The platforms I use more are Facebook, email (Gmail and Yahoo), WhatsApp. Website and Skype internationally. But local is email, Facebook and WhatsApp. Sometimes Twitter but not so much. The most important is Facebook and Whatsapp." (Cis heterosexual woman with disabilities, 42 years old, from Malawi)

After asking in what ways the internet is useful, we asked about the content the respondents search, share and/or produce. We could see that there are three main types of content: sexual health information, information about sexual violence and information related to LGBTIQ.

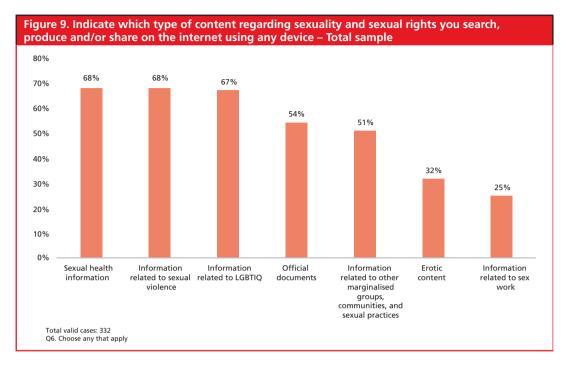
For an activist with disabilities the internet allows her to share information and experiences about the way she lives her sexuality, which is different from the mainstream.

Q: On the internet you find whatever you want?

A: On the internet you google any information as long as it is online and you can find it. Especially when you talk about sexuality, gender and disability you google and you find. And also you can share. Internet is friendly and you can find information about sexuality, gender, disability." (Cis heterosexual woman with disabilities, 42 years old, from Malawi).

Considering differences by gender identity, we find that cis men respondents search, share or produce more than cis women in LGBTIQ rights (78% versus 59%), in erotic content (46% versus 25%) and in information related to sex work (34% versus 18%).

Although the base of intersex and trans respondents is small, we can see that they search



different kinds of content. Trans women and trans men search mostly information related to LGBTIQ rights, while intersex respondents search, in first place, information related to other marginalised groups, communities and sexual practices. (Table 2)

Regarding our respondents with physical disabilities, it is interesting to note that the two main topics they search, share or produce are those related to LGBTIQ people and information about other marginalised groups. The first topic has probably to do with the composition of the sample, where the majority of them are from the LGBQ community (only three out of 18 are heterosexual) and the second one has probably to do with their physical condition. (Table 3)

Threats on the internet

In this part of the document we analyse the negative aspects of the use of the internet for activists on sexuality and sexual rights. Our respondents have experienced different kinds of threats: the most frequent – if we add "sometimes", "often" and "always" – are harassment (75%), intimidating online comments (63%) and blocked websites or filtering software that prevented the user from accessing information (54%). (Figure 10)

There are no significant differences between regions, but it is interesting to notice that in Africa is where these situations are more frequently reported by the respondents than in other regions (except for the category censorship by law).

One of our interviewees who is an Egyptian activist shared with us that she has experienced harassment, intimidating comments, hacking attempts and so-called "revenge porn": "When I started to talk about bodily rights in 2012 I started to be targeted personally, my account suffered hacking attempts. Every discussion I make on the internet has cyberbullying against me (...). When I broke with my boyfriend, he was mad with me because he wanted me to be in the religion with him. When I refused he started to threaten me with some private content: nude photos and a video showing me dancing." (Cis heterosexual woman, 26 years old, from Egypt)

When we take a look at threats by gender identity there are no significant differences except for some of these situations: 64% of cis women suffered intimidating comments versus 54% of cis men. On the contrary, regarding censorship, 44% of cis men experienced it

Table 2. Indicate which type of content regarding sexuality and sexual rights you search, produce and/or share on the internet using any device – Trans and intersex respondents

	Trans women	Trans men	Intersex
Sexual health information	2	6	1
Information related to sexual violence	3	3	2
Information related to LGBTIQ issues	4	8	3
Official documents	3	3	3
Information related to other marginalised groups	2	5	5
Erotic content	1	3	0
Information related to sex work	3	3	1

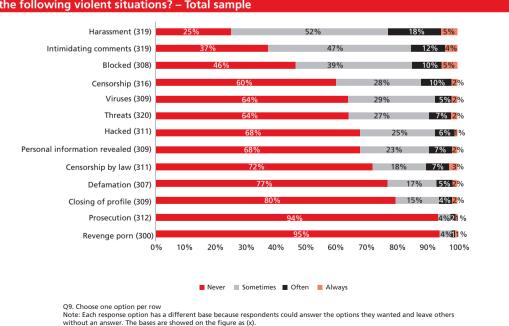
Note: Table 2 shows number of cases **Q6. Cho**ose any that apply

Table 3. Indicate which type of content regarding sexuality and sexual rights you search, produce and/or share on the internet using any device – Respondents with physical disabilities

Information related to LGBTIQ issues	14
Information related to other marginalised groups, communities, and sexual practices	13
Sexual health information	10
Information related to sexual violence	10
Official documents	8
Research on matters related to sexuality	7
Information related to sex work	4
Erotic content	4

Note: Table 3 shows number of cases **Q6. Cho**ose any that apply

Figure 10. In your use of the internet, have you ever experienced any of the following violent situations? – Total sample



versus 36% of cis women, censorship by law, 34% of cis men versus 24% of cis women, and having their personal information revealed, 40% versus 24%.

All these situations of threat on the internet have been experienced by at least one trans and/ or intersex respondent (except for revenge porn, which has not been experienced by trans men or trans women). In the same way as the total sample, the most common threats are harassment and intimidating comments and, unlike the average of respondents, threats appear at the same level as intimidating comments.

A trans activist from Mexico told us: "I have had awkward situations with users (...) One, I think, it was a troll, a man who joked about my new name in Facebook. He asked me why I chose my name. He wrote me a comment on my Facebook wall. He talked to me in the masculine form and I asked him to stop doing that. At first, I thought that he really misunderstood but later I realised he did it on purpose. He started joking about my name. Later he started joking about all the trans persons. I decided not to start a discussion and I blocked him" (Trans pansexual woman, 35 years old, from Mexico)

Considering these threats by sexual orientation, we can notice that in some of them there are differences between heterosexual and LGBQ respondents: 28% of heterosexuals versus 48% of LGBQ respondents suffered censorship, 17% of heterosexuals versus 35% of LGBQ respondents experienced censorship by law, 29% versus 41% regarding viruses, 40% versus 62% in being blocked, 23% versus 37% in having their personal information revealed and finally 13% versus 25% in having their profile closed.

Another of our interviewees, a cis lesbian woman who is an activist and currently lives in Argentina, experienced these two situations due to her activism: "Different people entered in my Facebook profile and called me 'feminazi' and wrote hundreds of offensive comments. They almost told me that if they fucked me I would be cured of lesbianism." (Cis lesbian woman, 30 years old, who is a Spanish migrant and lives in Argentina)

When we asked the respondents to describe more about these threats they had suffered because of their activity on the internet, they shared with us that the violence is based on their publications, posts or sharing of information about anything regarding abortion or issues about the LGBTIQ population. Of 58 responses in an open-ended question regarding the subject, 21% indicated abortion and another 21% LGBTIQ. Of the 76 responses regarding where it happened, we can see that it occurs mainly on social networks: in first place Facebook (59%), followed by Twitter (16%). Out of the 57 respondents that said who did it, we can see that it is mainly done by people they do not know (32%) followed by friends and family (25%) and men in general (11%). From the open-ended questions, the respondents told us some of their experiences:

"People I didn't know sharing posts (on FB) with LGBT content and triggering violent, threatening, homophobic comments which were signalled to me by friends." (Cis queer woman, 33 years old, Portugal)

"A stalker once accessed my Facebook profile which forced me to deactivate my account temporarily." (Cis heterosexual woman, 26 years old, India)

"In 2016 we received many threats and aggressions from trolls on Twitter and Facebook for demanding sexual health resources from the state." (Trans gay man, 40 years old, Argentina)

After gathering information about the violent experiences the respondents had online, we inquired about which actors they think are the most important in influencing the policies or monitoring their activities online and limiting their sexual expressions and activism on sexuality and sexual rights. There are two main actors that were identified as the ones which have more power to influence, limit or monitor expressions regarding sexuality: first 66% of the respondents mentioned government/state and second 64% said the internet providers. What is interesting is that in third place we have peers, ¹⁸ which are people that they know.

When analysing the information by gender identity and sexual orientation there are no significant differences. (Figure 11)

If we consider this information by region we can see that there are two trends: in Africa (76%) and

¹⁸ In the questionnaire, the description of peers included family members, friends and acquaintances.

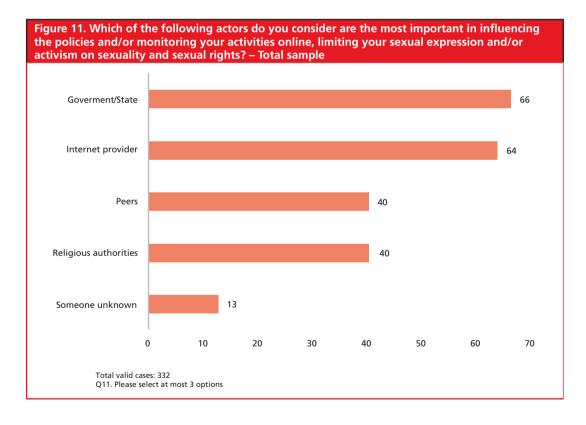
SA (86%) the government/state is above average and is much more important than the other actors. On the contrary, in LAC and in North America and Western Europe, we see that internet providers are seen as the main actor, 67% and 68% in each case. There are also differences between the importance that peers and religious authorities have in each region: where in Africa (56%) and SA (49%) the third most important actor are peers, in North America and Western Europe and LAC it is religious authorities, 32% and 46% in each case.

Besides inquiring who the perceived actors are limiting the expressions on sexuality and sexual rights, we asked about these constituencies' activity. It is very interesting to see that although the government/state is the most powerful or influential actor for total respondents so far, the religious authorities have the higher level of violence and harassment against activists in the last three years.

The interviewees do not state that they experienced surveillance from the government but they consider it an actor that may do it and they mention other activists who suffer surveillance "They are watching their emails and social media accounts. There was a case with a political activist two weeks ago. The mobile company used her own accounts on Facebook and they stole by contacting the company. That is for state actors. Her accounts remained in the security forces for a night." (Cis woman, 26 years old, from Egypt)

As we can see in this comment, the state or government wanted to control this activist but she works with other actors in order to resist the control. (Figure 12)

If we take a look at this information by gender identity, we can state that cis women perceive the increase of the level of violence and harassment by all of the actors more than cis men. Trans, intersex



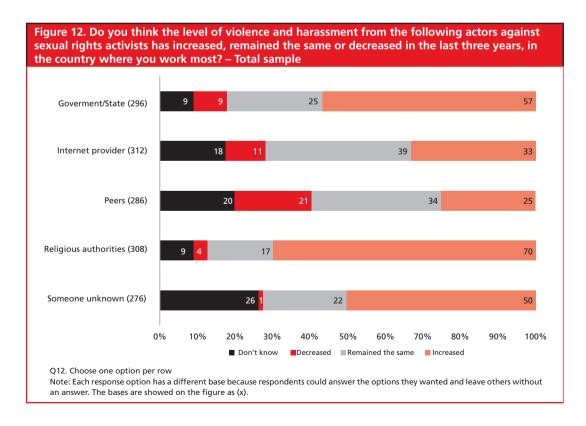
and respondents with physical disabilities follow the same trend as the total sample. Also, if we consider the differences by sexual orientation, we can point out that 61% of LGBQ respondents (where lesbians, at 77%, are above average) said that government/ state has increased versus 49% of heterosexuals and that 74% of LGBQ respondents said that religious authorities have increased their level of violence versus 64% of heterosexuals.

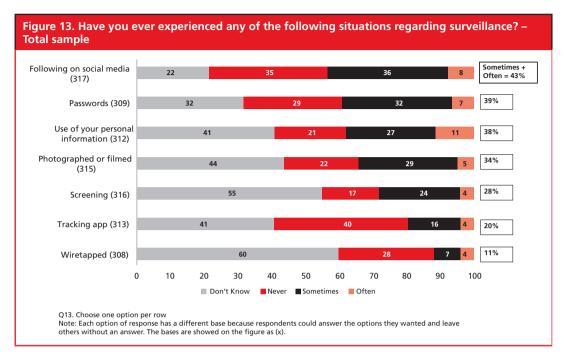
Besides these threats, our respondents were asked to talk about their experiences of censorship and surveillance. The most frequent situation they mentioned, given certain options, is that their social media presence was intensively followed by other people in a way that made them feel uncomfortable or even unsafe. If we add the options "sometimes" and "often", we can see that 43% of the respondents suffered at least one instance of this kind of surveillance. In second place we can see that 39% of the respondents indicated that someone attempted to obtain their username, password and credit card details, and it is closely followed by 38% that mention that mainstream apps have used their location data and/or personal information without their knowledge or consent.

It is important to mention the high percentage of "don't know" responses that appear in this question, which probably has to do with the nature of the threat these situations represent: most of them are hard to identify and its main purpose is that people do not know they are under surveillance. (Figure 13)

If we analyse the information by region, we notice that Africa is higher than the other regions in all of these situations. Also if we take a look at differences by sexual orientation we can see that LGBQ respondents present higher percentages than heterosexuals in all of the surveillance situations: for example, 47% of LGBQ respondents declared to have been followed on social media versus 37% of heterosexuals or 43% of LGBQ respondents said that someone attempted to obtain their username, password and/or credit card details versus 31% of heterosexuals. (Table 4)

Regarding gender identity, we can see that among trans and intersex respondents, the first situation is that someone attempted to obtain their username, password and/or credit card: three trans women, five trans men and two intersex respondents; the second one is that another person or





organisation made a background screening of them without their authorisation: four trans women, two trans men and two intersex respondents.

The subjects, topics and content that are censored, regulated, monitored or filtered most frequently, in the opinion of the respondents, are if we consider "likely" and "very likely": pedophilia (81%), anti-government, abortion (both 68%) and "obscene" content (67%). (Figure 14)

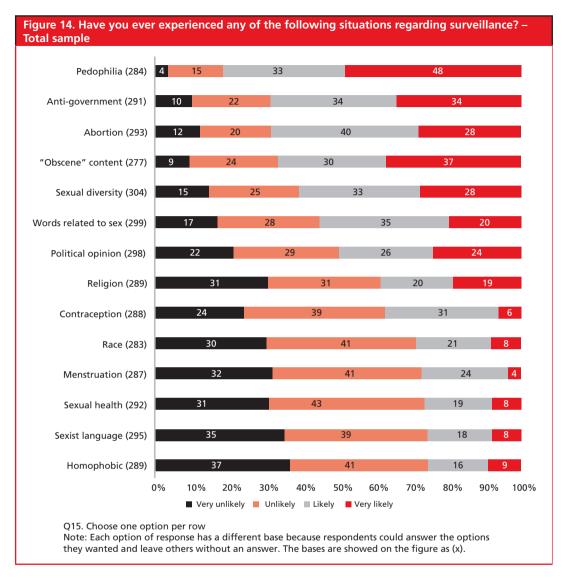
If we analyse the degree of censorship and regulation by region, we can see some differences: North America and Western Europe and SA shared the same three main topics, but in a different order. In North America and Western Europe, pedophilia (100%), "obscene" content (69%) and anti-government (54%). In SA anti-government (87%), pedophilia (86%) and obscene content (80%). On the other hand, in Africa we can see that the three most censored, regulated and monitored issues are: sexual diversity (79%), closely followed by contraception and pedophilia (both 78%). Finally, in LAC, abortion is in first place (84%), followed by pedophilia (81%) andcontraception (63%).

If we consider this information by sexual orientation, there are no significant differences. In the case of trans and intersex respondents we notice that following the same trend of the total sample,

pedophilia appears as the main topic "likely" or "very likely" to be censored; in second place, "obscene" content and in third place we find anti-government, sexual diversity and abortion.

Table 4. Have you ever experienced any of the following situations regarding surveillance? – By sexual orientation									
Situation of surveillance LGBQ Heterosexual									
Following on social media	47%	37%							
Passwords	43%	31%							
Use of your personal information	39%	32%							
Photographed or filmed	35%	29%							
Screening	29%	23%							
Tracking app	21%	14%							
Wiretapped 13% 6%									
Q1:	3. Choose on	e option per row							

One of our interviewees, who is an activist for abortion rights in LAC, indicates that the level of harassment and censorship is very high in the country where she lives: "It is not easy to support women who abort in a legally restrictive



context, where women who abort and the persons that assist in an abortion are penalised. All the time we feel watched about by which way we can communicate this issue. Before I used to talk with my partners by WhatsApp. But we know that it is not a safe way. Everything is recorded so we started using other platforms and tools where no information could be recorded." (Cis lesbian woman, 30 years old, lives in Argentina)

Likewise, in Figure 12, where we analysed the level of control by different actors regarding the level of violence and harassment, the actors whose level of censorship and surveillance increased the most, in the respondents' perception, were government and religious authorities. But here government (69%) was perceived as increasing more than religious authorities (60%). Also the third actor here is internet providers and in the other case was someone unknown. (Figure 15)

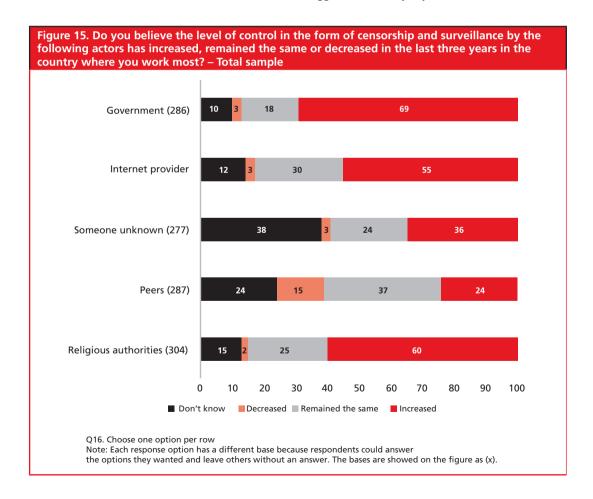
There are no significant differences by gender identity or sexual orientation except for the perception towards the increase of the level of censorship and surveillance by the government where 71% of LGBQ respondents mentioned it versus 63% of heterosexuals. Trans and intersex respondents follow the same trend as the total sample.

Regarding the regions, we can see differences. Firstly, the perception towards the increase of government activity is different: in SA 76% of the respondents mentioned it versus 67% and 68% of African and Latin-American respondents in each case and 56% in North America and Western Europe.

As we can see in one of the open-ended question responses: "I don't think this counts as violence necessarily but the Indian government does censor a lot of sites, as well as other forms of media." (Cis bisexual migrant woman, 23 years old, from India)

Referring to someone unknown we also find that: 35% of African respondents and 33% in LAC perceived the increase versus 44% in North America and Western Europe and 40% in SA. In the case of peers, we notice that in Africa and SA they are mentioned by 49% and 30% of respondents respectively versus 13% and 14% in North America and Western Europe and LAC respectively. Finally, in the case of religious authorities we see that SA respondents are the ones who perceived the largest increase (66%), followed by LAC (61%), Africa (58%) and North America and Western Europe (47%).

It is important to mention that although the actors that appear to be the ones that increased their censorship and surveillance the most are government or religious authorities, when respondents explained more about their experiences in the open-ended question and in the interviews, what appeared the most are mentions of people they do not know, and they suggest that the majority of them are men.



In another open-ended question response: "I was attacked in a chat room for mentioning I was a feminist. It was an unknown man who did it and he insulted me." (Cis heterosexual woman, 30 years old, from Colombia)

After inquiring about the actors, we asked about the reasons they give to regulate, prohibit, remove and/ or censor content. Among the most common reasons given by the government or/and corporations to regulate, prohibit, remove and/or censor content that the respondents search, share or produce on the internet, we find that the main reason used to censor content is public decency (52%), followed at a long distance by anti-terrorism (27%) and preserving tradition (22%). (Figure 16)

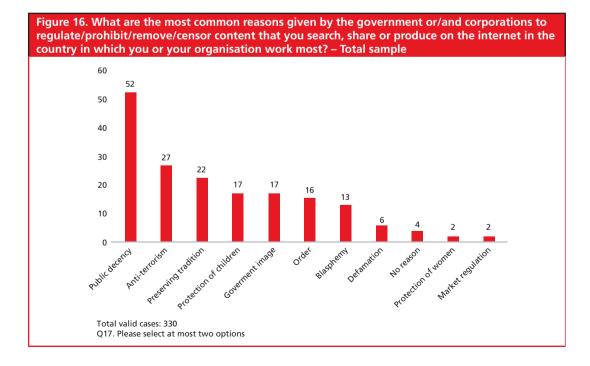
There are no significant differences by gender identity, except for trans and intersex respondents who mention in the first place "preserving tradition". If we consider this information by sexual orientation, we can see that regarding "public decency", gay respondents are the ones that mention this reason (63%) more than the others: for example, 47% of lesbians mentioned it and 50% of heterosexuals. In relation to "preserving tradition", 32% of lesbians mentioned it, more than in the other groups and the total sample.

When we look at the information by region, we can see that in terms of "public decency" there are no big differences between them: in all of the regions it is in the first place. What is interesting is that "anti-terrorism" is in third place in Africa, SA and LAC but it is in first place, sharing it with "public decency", in North America and Western Europe.

Later on we inquired about all the digital platforms they use, and which ones they consider to offer less protection of their personal information. Once again, the name of one social network in particular appeared in first place and far away from any other platform: Facebook, with 55% of 263 respondents to an open-ended question saying that this social network is particularly dangerous because they believe that Facebook has access to a lot of personal information, the privacy terms are not transparent and are changed all the time, and because they know that they sell personal information to governments and companies for marketing reasons, publicity or political reasons.

As these two open-ended responses express:

"Facebook (offers less protection for personal information) I think because if someone is not your friend they can still see decent amount of information." (Cis heterosexual woman, 21 years old, India)



"Facebook – not a very secure system with easy loopholes for third party access." (Cis heterosexual woman, 25 years old, Italy)

This survey also inquired about which types of content the respondents have trouble finding online, considering that the online world is as biased as the offline world. As we have already seen, at the same time that the internet offers a place for diversity and sexual expression, it also reproduces the discrimination against and invisibility of certain groups, identities and subjects.

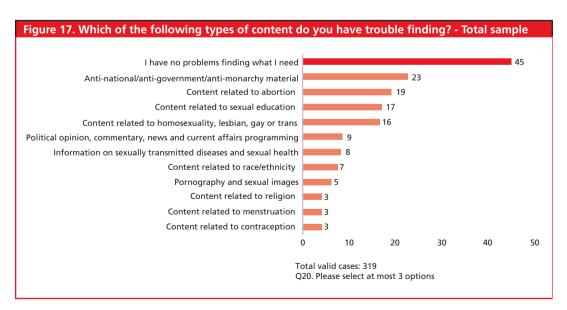
As the graph below shows, more than half of the respondents (55%) have trouble finding some kind of content, whereas 45% said that they did not have any trouble finding what they need. We can identify that there are four main types of content that are the most difficult to find: antigovernment or anti-national material in first place (23%), followed by content related to abortion (19%) in second place, and in third place, content related to sexual education (17%) and to LGBTIQ issues (16%). (Figure 17)

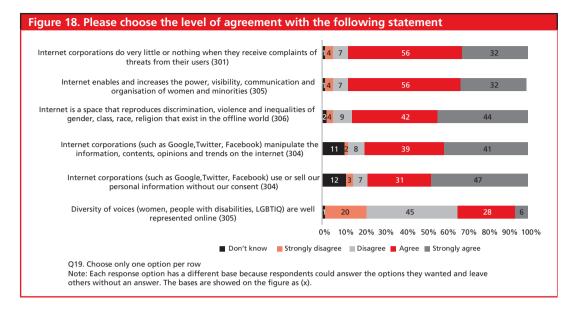
In this question there are no significant differences between cis women and cis men, but we do find that half of trans and intersex respondents express trouble in finding content related to homosexuality or trans (10 out of 20 cases). Regarding sexual orientation, the two types of content where we find differences are abortion and anti-government content. In the first case, 23% of heterosexuals

(with the majority being cis women) mentioned it versus 16% of LGBQ respondents and in the second case, we have 29% of LGBQ respondents versus 13% of heterosexuals.

When we focus on the regions, the only things worth mention are that in Africa the main content that is difficult to find are about homosexuality and trans (29%) and in LAC the main one is abortion (33%).

Finally, in the last part of this section, we focus our analysis on the views of the respondents regarding their use of the internet, censorship and surveillance. In these statements we can condense both negative and positive aspects of their use of the internet that we have seen throughout the analysis of the survey. The first finding is that they do not consider the internet as a safe place: 88% of the respondents indicated, if we add "agree" plus "strongly agree", that corporations do very little or nothing when they receive complaints of threats from their users. Also, the internet is considered by 86% of the sample a space that reproduces discrimination, violence and inequalities based on gender, class, race and religion; 80% of the respondents think that internet corporations manipulate the information, content, opinions and trends and 78% think they use or sell their personal information without their consent. On the other hand, 88% of them consider that the internet enables and increases the power, visibility, communication and organisation of women and minorities. (Figure 18)





Strategies of resistance

When inquiring about the strategies that the respondents develop to counteract the threats on the internet, we can identify four groups: first we have diverse technical responses which are used by 70% of the sample; secondly, 48% perform non-confrontational solutions such as leaving the platforms or closing accounts; in third place, 29% use or develop political, social and legal strategies to visibilise the situations and finally 16% of the respondents try to talk to or confront the aggressor and solve the problem. (Figure 19)

In the interviews we see that some activists have different strategies including the use of digital security technology and taking part in digital security workshops.

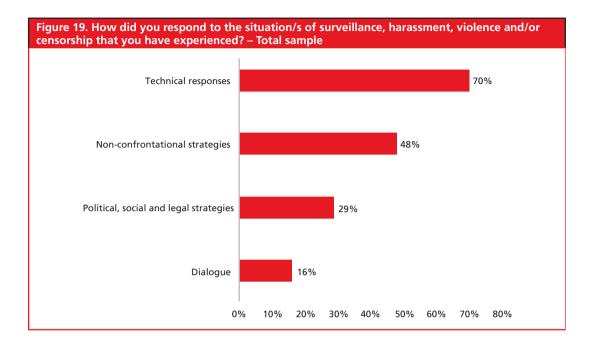
Q: Do you know if activist groups have strategies to avoid violence, control, censorship or surveillance online?

A: Yes. Some groups are constantly moderating and removing abusive comments, behaviours and accounts. Other groups use digital security tech – to protect and limit exposure of personal identifiable info – such as VPNs, anonymisers, etc. There are digital security and network security workshops organised by certain sexuality/rights organisations that invite the activist community to take part and learn better security protocols." (Trans queer/lesbian woman, 35 years old, India).

Although the respondents perform those strategies, when we ask if they read the security and privacy terms and condition when they download a program or application on the internet, we can see that they do not always read them. Just 8% answered "always" and 17% "often". The most frequent answer is "sometimes" (44%) followed by 30% that said "never". This attitude also appears in the in-depth interviews, where interviewees said that they do not read the terms and conditions, and in just one case one of the interviewees said that sometimes she does so (cis heterosexual woman, 26 years old, Egypt).

Main findings

- 81% of the sample suffered at least one kind of discrimination. The most frequent types of discrimination are based on social class/caste (26%), ethnicity (20%), colour of skin (19%) and sexual orientation (19%).
- The majority of the respondents are members of NGOs (41%), independent activists (18%) and work in academic, research and/or policy institutes (16%).
- The issues in which the respondents work mostly are LGBTIQ rights, women's rights (both 42%) and sexual health (28%). It is important to notice that if you analyse the two main issues by sexual orientation and gender identity, you find that 86% of LGBQ and trans and intersex respondents work on their rights.



- Regarding the activities in relation to sexuality and sexual rights that best describe the work and activism of the respondents, we find that in first place they dedicate their time to writing, documentation, production and dissemination of information (39%), followed closely by training and capacity building (34%), and in third place they work on raising public awareness and campaigns (29%). If we consider trans respondents, we can see some differences from the total sample. Out of nine trans men respondents, six work on raising public awareness/campaigns and five in advocacy, policy and law reform and three out of six trans women respondents work on training and capacity building.
- Regarding the internet as a medium for sexual expression we can observe that the internet is considered an "important" or "very important" by 66% of the sample, especially for groups that have more difficulties in expressing themselves without being discriminated against in offline spaces. For LGBQ respondents it is much more important than for heterosexuals. If we now consider this information by region, we can see that in Africa (44%) and North America and Western Europe (51%) the level of answers of "very important" is above average.
- Respondents frequently use digital platforms such as social networks (98%), instant messaging and emails (both 92%), other web sites (89%), blogs (87%) and hosting services (85%) to access, produce and/or share content regarding sexuality or sexual rights. Facebook (94%), is the main social network; WhatsApp (90%) the main instant messaging company, and Gmail (87%) the principal option for sending and receiving emails. What is interesting is that while Facebook is the most used social network, it is at the same time the platform the respondents perceive, in 55% of the cases, as the most dangerous because they believe it has access to a lot of personal information, the privacy terms are not transparent and they are constantly changing.
- If we observe the ways in which the internet is useful for our respondents in relation to sexuality and sexual rights, we can see that most of them use it to share critical information quickly and widely (84%) and search for information that is difficult to find in offline spaces (82%). The types of content they mainly search, share and/or produce are: sexual health information, information about sexual violence (both 68%) and information related to LGBTIQ issues (67%).

- Regarding threats on the internet, our respondents have experienced different kinds of threats: the most frequent is harassment (75%), followed by intimidating online comments (63%) and blocked websites or filtering software that prevented the user from accessing information (54%). Africa is the region where these situations are most frequently reported by activists.
- The actors the respondents identified as the ones which have more power to influence, limit or monitor expressions regarding sexuality are government/state (66%) and internet providers (64%). What is interesting is that in third place we have peers (40%), which are people that they know. If we consider this information by region we can see that there are two trends: in Africa and SA the government/state is above average (76% and 86% in each case) and is much more important than the other actors. On the contrary, in LAC (67%) and in North America and Western Europe (68%), we see that internet providers are seen as the main actor. There are also differences between the importance that peers and religious authorities have in each region: whereas in Africa and SA the third most important actor is peers (56% and 49% respectively), in North America and Western Europe (32%) and LAC (46%) it is religious authorities.
- In the last three years, although the government/ state is the most powerful or influential actor for total respondents so far, the religious authorities have a higher level of violence and harassment against activists. Cis women perceive the increase of the level of violence and harassment of all of the actors more than cis men. Trans, intersex and respondents with physical disabilities follow the same trend as the total sample.
- Situations of surveillance and censorship are commonly experienced by the respondents. The most frequent one is that the social media presence of the respondents was intensively followed by other people in a way that made them feel uncomfortable or even unsafe: 43% of the respondents suffered at least one such experience. If we analyse the surveillance situations by sexual orientation, we can see that LGBTIQ respondents present higher percentages than heterosexuals.
- The actors that increased the level of censorship and surveillance were government and religious authorities. Africa is above the other regions in

- all of these situations. These are the same actors that increase their level of violence and harassment against activists in the last three years.
- The subject, topics and types of content that are censored, regulated, monitored or filtered most frequently, in the opinion of the respondents, are if we consider "likely" and "very likely": pedophilia (81%), anti-government, abortion (both 68%) and "obscene" content (67%).
- Among the most common reasons given by the government or/and corporations to regulate. prohibit, remove and/or censor content that the respondents search, share or produce on the internet, we find that the main reason to censor content is public decency (52%) followed at a long distance by anti-terrorism (27%) and preserving tradition (22%). Regarding this finding there are no significant differences opinions by gender identity, except for trans and intersex respondents who mention in the first place "preserving tradition". It is interesting to note that if we analyse this information by region, we can see that "public decency" is in first place in all the regions. What is interesting is that "antiterrorism" is in third place in Africa, SA and LAC but it is in first place, sharing it with "public decency", in North America and Western Europe.
- 55% of the respondents have trouble finding some kind of content. We can identify that there are four main types of content that are the most difficult to find: anti-government or anti-national material in first place (23%) and content related to abortion (19%) in second place, content related to sexual education (17%) in third place, and contents related to LGBTIQ issues in fourth (16%).
- If we focus our analysis on the views of the respondents regarding their use of the internet, censorship and surveillance, they do not consider the internet as a safe place and consider that corporations do very little or nothing when they receive complaints of threats from their users. Also, the internet is mainly considered by the sample a space that reproduces discrimination, violence and inequalities based on gender, class, race and religion and that internet corporations manipulate the information, content, opinions and trends. Also the respondents think that internet corporations use or sell their

personal information without their consent. On the other hand, 88% of them consider that the internet enables and increases the power, visibility, communication and organisation of women and minorities.

Finally, in terms of strategies of resistance against surveillance, censorship and threats, the respondents firstly develop diverse technical responses (70%) followed by non-confrontational solutions (48%) and in third place, political, social and/or legal strategies (29%).

Appendix 1. Quantitative questionnaire

Sexuality, rights and internet regulations

Please read these instructions before filling in the survey:

- This survey aims to find out how activists working on gender, sexuality and sexual rights use the internet (from any devices: smartphones, desktop computers, tablets, etc.) in their work, activism and personal life, and what difficulties they face in using it freely and fully.
- 2. All responses are anonymous, confidential and for research purposes only. We ask about age, gender, sexual orientation and other demographics so that we know the profile of people who complete the survey. All information will be published only as consolidated and aggregated findings, no personally identifiable data will be shared without express and informed permission. If you want to read the APC privacy statement, please <u>click here</u>.
- 3. The survey will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. Most questions are closed-ended. Please, don't forget to click the button "Submit" when you finish the survey.
- 4. In order to obtain more reliable results, we ask you to please answer all questions. However, if any question makes you feel uncomfortable, you may skip it and go on to the next question. You can also stop answering questions and leave the page at any time.
- 5. If you are not able to immediately complete the form and you need to interrupt completing the survey for more than a few minutes, click the button "Resume Later" at the bottom of the page and save your partial entry. If you don't do this there is a risk that your session will expire and you will have to fill the survey again from scratch.
- If you want to know more about why we are doing this survey, please <u>click here</u>. If you want to know more about who we are, please <u>click here</u>.

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer the survey.

Demographic information

We ask about demographic information such as age, gender, sexual orientation, and others in order to know the profile of people who complete the survey and for statistical reasons. We will not use this information for other purposes. The information is anonymous and confidential.

- a. Age (in years):
- b. Would you define yourself as...?

Choose any that apply

Cis Woman

Cis Man

Trans Woman

Trans Man

Intersex

Other:

c. Sexual Orientation (we ask this in order to assess how internet experiences are affected by users' sexuality). Choose any that apply

Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Heterosexual

Queer

Other:

- d. Country of current residence
- e. Is your country of residence the same as your country of origin? Please select at most one answer

Yes

No

Context

1. Which of the following options best describe you or your organization?

Please select at most one answer

Non-governmental organization (NGO)

Academic, research and/or policy institute Informal collective

An independent human rights activist or blogger.

Sexual worker

I am not engaged in gender, sexuality and/or sexual rights

Other:

2. Which issue/s do you or your organization work on mostly? Please select at most 2 answers

Women's rights

intersex (LGBTQI) rights

Youth, adolescents or children's rights Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer,

Sexual and reproductive health and/or HIV and AIDS

Sex work

Development issues other than health

Social exclusion, discrimination and rights issues other than the ones named above

Other:

3. Which of the following activities best describes what you or your organization do?

Please select at most 2 answers

Training or capacity building

Writing, documentation, production and dissemination of information

Direct support services (such as legal advice, counselling, case work)

Advocacy/ policy and law reform

Academic Research

Raising public awareness or campaigns

Network building or mobilization

Sexual expressions

- 4. How important is the Internet for you as a medium to express your sexuality in a scale form to 1 (Not important at all) to 10 (Very important)?
- 5. In what ways is the internet useful for you personally or for your work related to sexuality and sexual rights? Choose any that apply

It allows me to search for information that is difficult to find in offline spaces

It allows me to share/disseminate critical information quickly and widely

It allows me to network in relatively safer conditions than face-to-face

It facilitates public action and support

It allows me dialogue between people with diverse opinions

The internet is not useful for my engagement on sexuality rights in any particular way

Other:

- 6. Please indicate which contents regarding sexuality and sexual rights do you search, produce and/or share on the internet using any device Choose any that apply
 - Information related to sex work

Information related to LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/ Questioning)

Information related to other marginalized groups, communities, and sexual practices

Sexual health information (sex education, pre-marital sex, abortion, menstruation, contraception, HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy, etc.)

Information related to sexual violence (sexual harassment at the workplace or in public places, legal information, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, rape, etc.)

Erotic (porn, soft porn, etc.)

Other:

Official documents (United Nations, government, etc.)

Research on matters related to sexuality

7. How frequently do you use the following digital platforms from any devices to access, produce and/or share contents regarding sexuality and sexual rights? Choose only one option per row

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	No answer
Dating app.					
Sexting app.					
Apps related to menstrual cycle and/or pregnancy					
Social Networks					
Private chat rooms					
Porn Sites					
Apps related to health and/or training (weight,					
pressure, etc.)					
Blogs					
Forums					
Video-sharing website (Eg. Vimeo)					
Other websites					
E-mail					
Instant messaging (Eg. Whatsapp, Messenger)					
File Hosting services (Eg. Google Drive, Dropbox)					

8. Please indicate in each case that applies which is the name of the platform that you use most (eg. Facebook, Tinder, Grindr, Youtube, Snapchat, Gmail, etc.). Choose only one option per row

Please leave empty the options that you never used. Check any that apply

Comment only when you choose an answwer.

Dating app.

Sexting app.

Apps related to menstrual cycle and/or pregnancy

Social Networks

Porn Sites

Apps related to health and/or training (weight, pressure, etc.)

Blogs

Forums

Video-sharing website (Eg. Vimeo)

Other websites

F-mail

Instant messaging (Eg. Whatsapp,

Messenger)

File Hosting services (Eg. Google Drive, Dropbox)

Surveillance, censorship and online harassment

- 9. In you use of Internet, have you ever experienced any of the following violent situations (eg. harassment, threats, censorship, etc.)? Choose one per row
- 10. Please describe briefly any violent situation that you experienced because of your activity on internet (who, what, when, where, how). If you didn't experience any violent situation please go to the following question.
- 11. Which of the following actors do you consider are the most important to influence the policies and/or monitor your activities online, limiting your sexual expressions and/or activism on sexuality and sexual rights? Please select at most 3 answers

Government/state

Internet Service and internet platform Providers (eg. National telecommunication corporations, Facebook, Twitter)

Someone unknown

Peers (Family members, friends, acquaintances)

Religious authorities/groups

Other:

12. Do you think the level of violence and harassment from the following actors against activists of sexual rights has increased, remained the same or decreased in the last three years, in the country where you work most? Choose only one

	Increased	Remained the same	Decreased	Don't Know	No answer
Government/state					
Internet Service and internet platform Providers (eg. National telecommunication corporations, Facebook, Twitter)					
Someone unknown					
Peers (Family members, friends, acquaintances)					
Religious authorities/groups					

13. Have you ever experienced any of the following situations regarding surveillance? Choose on option per row

	Often	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know	No answer
Another person or organization made a background screening of you without your					
authorization.					
You were filmed or photographed without your knowledge or consent.					
Your social media presence was intensively					
followed by other people in a way that made you feel uncomfortable or even unsafe					
Someone tracked you down you using a smartphone app.					
Someone listened and/or recorded your phone calls without your consent (wiretapped)					
Mainstream apps used your location data					
and/or personal information without your knowledge.					
Someone attempted to obtain your username, passwords, and credit card details					

14. Please describe briefly any situation regarding surveillance that you experienced because of your activity on internet (who, what, when, where and how).

If you didn't experience any situation regarding surveillance please go to the following question

15. In your experience, how likely is that the following subjects/topics/contents are censored, regulated, monitored or filtered in the country that you work most?

	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very unlikely	Don't know	No answer
Anything related to words such as 'sex', 'breast', 'penis'						
Anything related to homosexuality, lesbian, gay, or trans						
Anything related to abortion						
Anything related to contraception						
Anything related to menstruation						
Anti-national/anti-government/anti-monarchy material						
Pedophilia/ child pornography						
Other 'obscene' content (including pornography and other sexual images)						
Information on Sexually transmitted diseases and sexual health						
Anti-women/ sexist language or content						
Homophobic language or content						
Contents related to race						
Contents related to religion						
Political opinion, commentary, news and current affairs programming						

16. Do you believe the level of control in the form of censorship and surveillance from the following actors has increased, remained the same or decreased in the last three years in the country where you work most? Choose only one option per row

	Increased	Remained the same	Decreased	Don't Know	No answer
Government/state					
Internet Service and internet platform Providers (eg. National telecommunication corporations, Facebook, Twitter)					
Someone unknown					
Peers (Family members, friends, acquaintances)					
Religious authorities/groups					

17. What are the most common reasons given by the government or/and corporations to regulate/ prohibit/remove/censor contents that you search, share or produce on the internet in the country in which you or your organization work most?

Please select at most 2 answers.

Public decency and upholding morals

Anti-terrorist measures/ security

Maintaining law and order

Preserving and protecting culture and tradition

Defamation/slander of individuals

Protection of children

Please indicate the one and give reasons why

Protection of women

Reputation/image of the government

Blasphemy/ religious insult

Prevention of economic problems and/or

market regulation

No reason Other:

18. Of all the digital platforms you use (social networks, web sites, forums, browsers, etc.), which one you consider offers less protection for your personal information?

19. Please choose the level of agreement with the following statements. Choose only one option per row

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	No answer
Diversity of voices (women, people with disabilities, LGBTTIQ) are well represented online						
Internet is a space that reproduces discrimination, violence and inequalities of gender, class, race, religion that exist in the offline world.						
Internet corporations (such as Google, Twitter, Facebook) manipulate the information, contents, opinions and trends on the Internet.						
Internet enables and increases the power, visibility, communication and organization of women and minorities.						
Internet corporations (such as Google, Twitter, Facebook) use or sell our personal information without our consent.						
Internet corporations do very little or nothing when they receive complaints of threats from their users.						

20. Which of the following contents do you have trouble finding? Please select at most 3 answers

Anything related to homosexuality, lesbian, gay, or trans

Anything related to sexual education

Anything related to abortion

Anything related to contraception

Anything related to menstruation

Anti-national/anti-government/anti-monarchy material

Pornography and sexual images

Information on Sexually transmitted diseases and sexual health

Contents related to race/ ethnicity

Contents related to religion

Political opinion, commentary, news and current affairs programming

I have no problems finding what I need Other:

21. How frequently do you read the security and privacy terms and condition when you download a program or application on Internet? Please select at most one answer

Always

Often

Sometimes

Never

Resistance strategies

22. How did you respond to the situation/s of surveillance, harassment, violence and/or censorship that you have experienced? Choose any that apply

Countered it technically yourself

Got technical help from someone else

Left or changed the platform

Dialogued/confronted with the agressor

Collected evidence against the agressor

Blocked the agressor

Made my case visible (eg. Campaigned or protested about the online interference)

Reported it or used legal strategies

Built coalitions with other groups

Created a fake profile in order to protect my

identity

Changed my passwords

Stopped what I was doing

I didn't do anything

I didn't experience any situation/s of surveillance, harassment, violence and/or

censorship

Other:

23. Please describe briefly any of the strategies you have used to respond to surveillance/violence/harassment/censorship (who, what, when, where and how). If you didn't experience any these experiences, please go to the following question.

24. Have you ever experienced discrimination based on...? Choose any that apply

The color of your skin

Ethnicity

Your socioeconomic level/caste

Any physical disability

For health conditions

Religion

Migrant/citizenship status

Other

Contact

For us is very important your opinion! If we need to know more about your experiences and opinions regarding these issues, can we contact you for an in-depth interview? If so, please provide us with the following information.

25. Name or Nickname (this is optional, if you don't want to leave any name or nickname you can leave it in blank):

26. Email address:

Appendix 2. In-depth interview guide

1) Organization

Where do you work?

Which issue/s do you or your organization work on mostly?

2) About your use of Internet...

In what ways is the internet useful for you personally, your work and activism?

How frequently do you use Internet?

Which social networks, apps., web sites, etc do you use more and why?

Which contents regarding sexuality and sexual rights do you search, produce and share on the internet?

What is your opinion of internet, the positive and the negative?

Have you ever had trouble finding online any content regarding sexuality and sexual rights? Which kind of content?

3) Experiences of censorship, surveillance, harassment, control

Have you ever experienced or someone you know experienced control, regarding contents about sexuality and sexual rights they produced or share online? What happened? Please describe the situation. Who was behind that control?

Have you ever experienced or someone you know experienced censorship regarding contents about sexuality and sexual rights they produced or share online? What happened? Please describe the situation. Who was behind that censorship?

Have you ever experienced or someone you know experienced surveillance regarding contents about sexuality and sexual rights they produced or share online? What happened? Please describe the situation. Who was behind that surveillance?

Have you ever experienced or someone you know experienced violence (such as harassment, discrimination, offensive comments, threats) regarding contents about sexuality and sexual rights they produced or share online? what happened? Please describe the situation. Who was behind that violence?

(If they are migrants) Have you ever experience violence because you are a migrant? What happened? Please describe the situation. Who was behind that violence? How did you react?

Do you know if there is any legislation, laws that protects people in their online activity? How is the government in your country about what happens online? does it supports sexuality expressions and the defence of sexual rights or are they trying to control it?

4) Surveillance, censorship and online harassment

Do you feel that is safe for activist to be online? How do you feel about the security of your personal information online?

Do you know if activist groups have strategies to avoid violence, control, censorship or surveillance online? if you do, which are them?

How frequently do you read the security and privacy terms and condition when you download a program or application on Internet? Why yes/no?

5) Demographic Information

May you please indicate your age, gender, sexual orientation? Where do you leave? Where were you born



