

Appendix B: Additional results

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This appendix accompanies Unia's research report "Research on age discrimination in Belgium" (2025). It contains additional results that could not be included in the report itself. Another appendix (Appendix A) with more information on the methods used for the survey is also available on the [website](#).

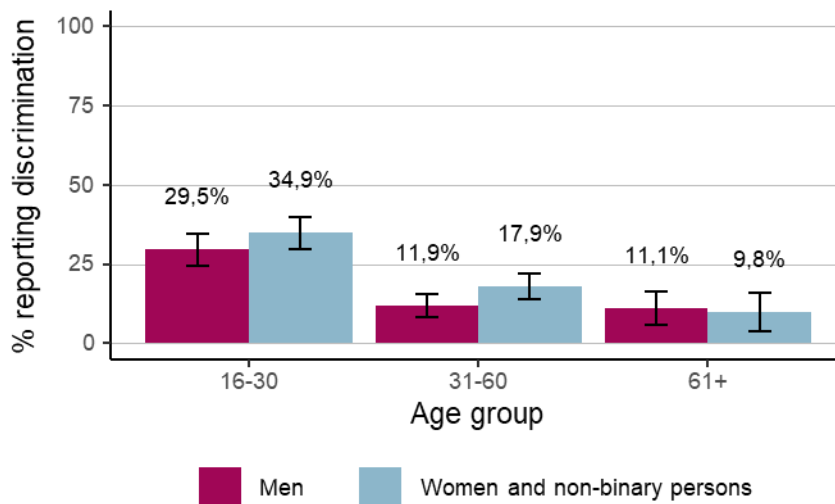
1 Additional survey results

For the intersectional analyses, caution is always needed in interpretation, as for some intersections there are insufficient data to make reliable statements. The intervals shown on the bars are confidence intervals for the percentages. They help to estimate how big a difference actually is (by seeing whether the intervals overlap or not) and indicate when very few data were available for a particular intersection (in such cases, the confidence interval will be very large).

1.1 Paid work

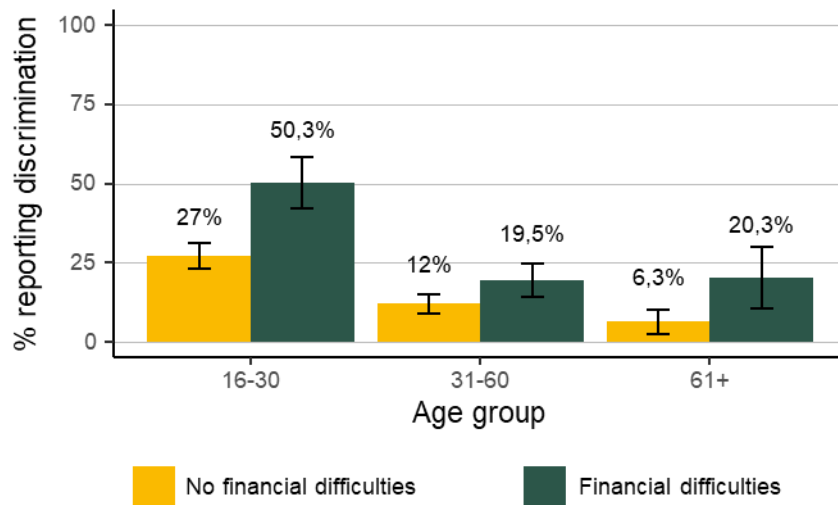
1.1.1 Intersectional analyses

Graph A1: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in paid employment or self-employment, for the intersection of age and gender



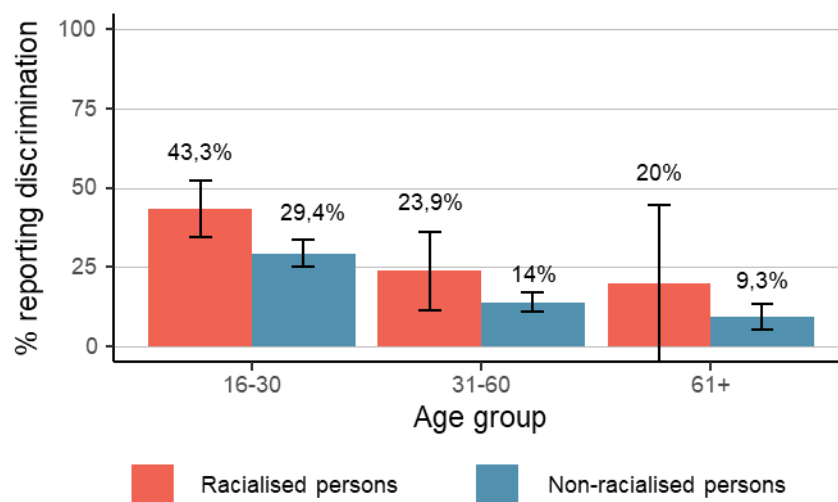
Participants who reported that they had not done or sought work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 7 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1516 participants.

Graph A2: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in paid employment or self-employment, for the intersection of age and poverty



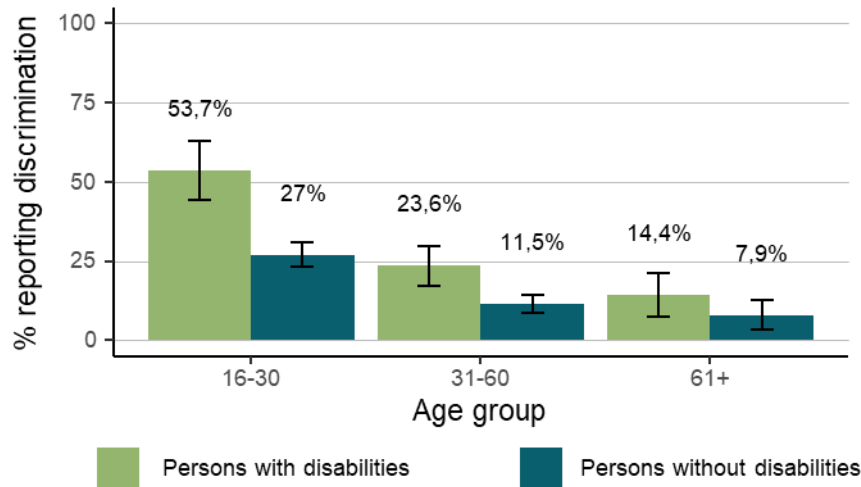
Participants who reported that they had not done or sought work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 41 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1482 participants.

Graph A3: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in paid employment or self-employment, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



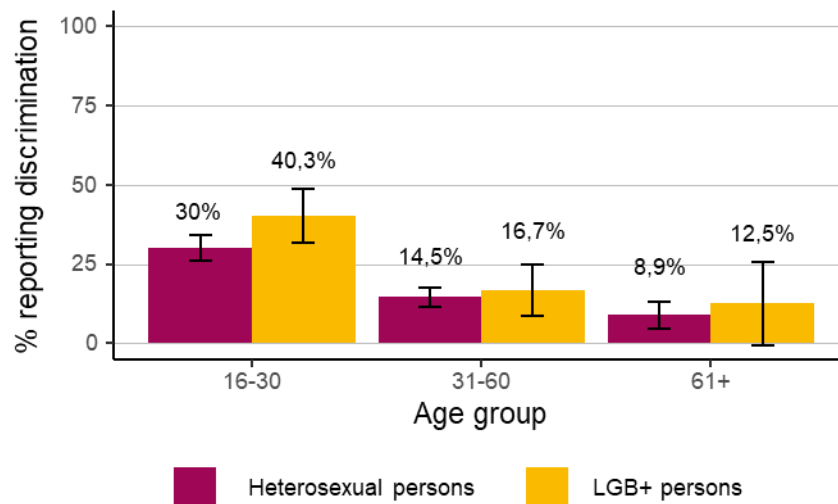
Participants who reported that they had not done or sought work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 147 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1376 participants. Note that the results for racialised individuals are based on only 46 participants in the 31-60 group and 10 participants in the 61+ group (hence the large confidence intervals).

Graph A4: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in paid employment or self-employment, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who reported that they had not done or sought work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 38 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1485 participants.

Graph A5: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in paid employment or self-employment t, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation



Participants who indicated that they had not done or sought work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 78 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1445 participants. Note that the results for older LGB+ individuals are based on only 24 participants (hence the large confidence interval).

1.2 Unpaid work

1.2.1 Forms of discrimination

Table A1: Percentage of participants who indicated a specific form of age discrimination in voluntary work, by age group

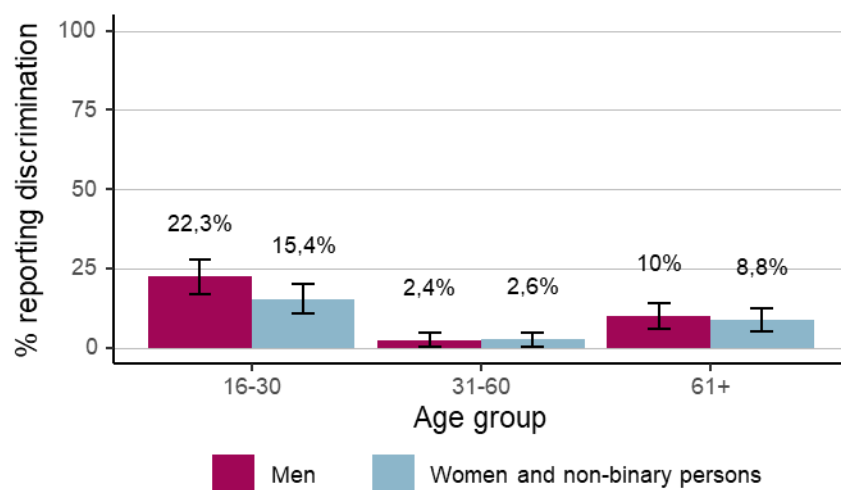
Form of discrimination	Age group		
	16-30	31-60	61+
Rejected for voluntary work	7.2%	1.0%	2.2%
Ignored or not taken seriously	4.5%	0.5%	2.4%
Forced to stop voluntary work	3.4%	0.0%	2.7%
No voluntary work suitable for my age	3.6%	0.8%	1.1%
Inappropriate comments or jokes about age	2.7%	0.3%	1.1%
Other situation	1.1%	0.3%	2.0%

Participants who indicated that they had not done or sought voluntary work in the past year were excluded. The percentages in this table were calculated on the remaining participants (446 participants aged 16-30, 398 aged 31-60 and 451 aged 61 or over).

The colour codes should be read by age group. The darkest colour represents the discrimination form that was most reported by that age group, the lightest colour represents the discrimination form that was least reported.

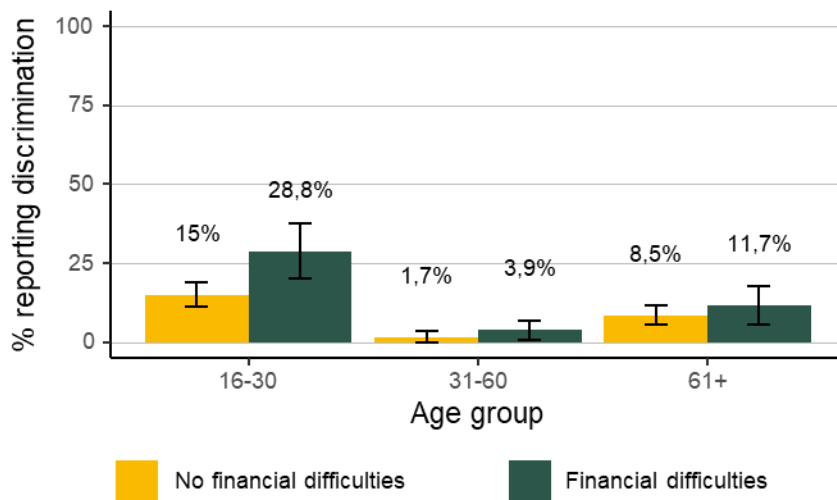
1.2.2 Intersectional analyses

Graph A6: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in voluntary work, for the intersection of age and gender



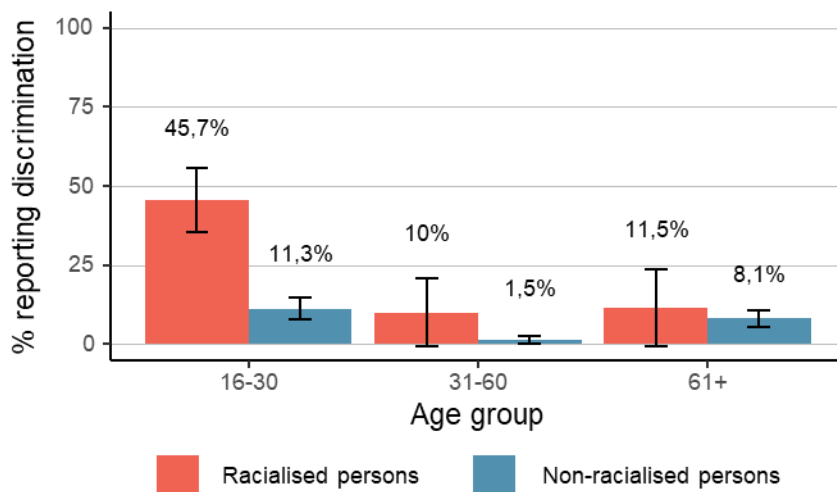
Participants who indicated that they had not done or sought voluntary work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 8 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1287 participants.

Graph A7: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in voluntary work, for the intersection of age and poverty



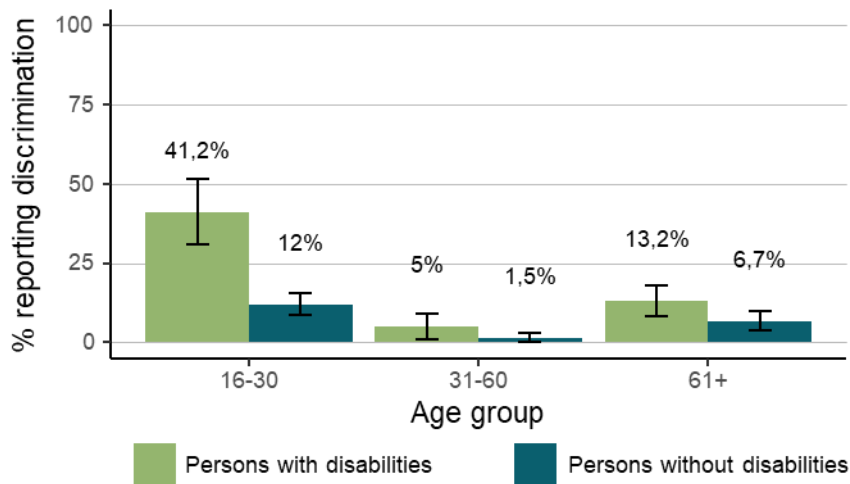
Participants who indicated that they had not done or sought voluntary work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 32 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1263 participants.

Graph A8: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in voluntary work, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



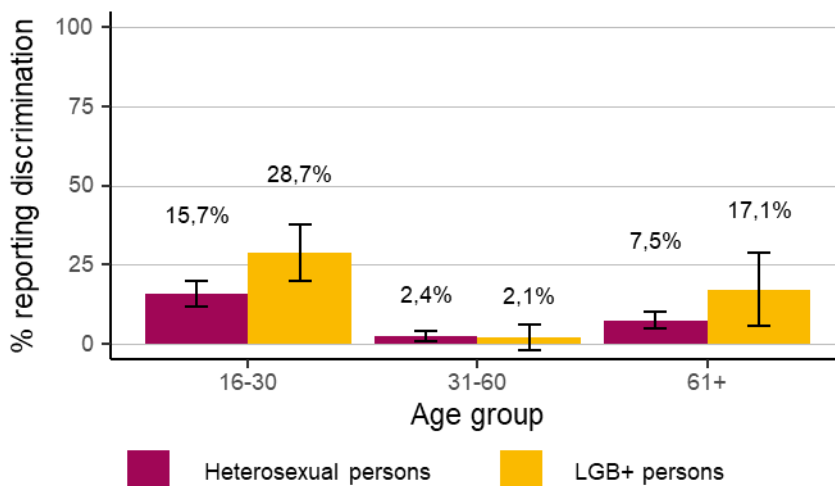
Participants who indicated that they had not done or sought voluntary work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 125 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1170 participants. Note that the results for racialised individuals are based on only 30 participants in the 31-60 group and on 26 participants in the 61+ group.

Graph A9: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in voluntary work, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they had not done or sought voluntary work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 40 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1255 participants.

Graph A10: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in voluntary work, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation



Participants who indicated that they had not done or sought voluntary work in the past year were excluded. In addition, 83 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1212 participants. Note that the results for LGB+ persons are based on only 47 participants in the 31-60 group and 41 participants in the 61+ group.

1.3 Housing

1.3.1 Renting and buying: forms of discrimination

Table A2: Percentage of participants who indicated a specific form of age discrimination when renting or buying a home, by age group

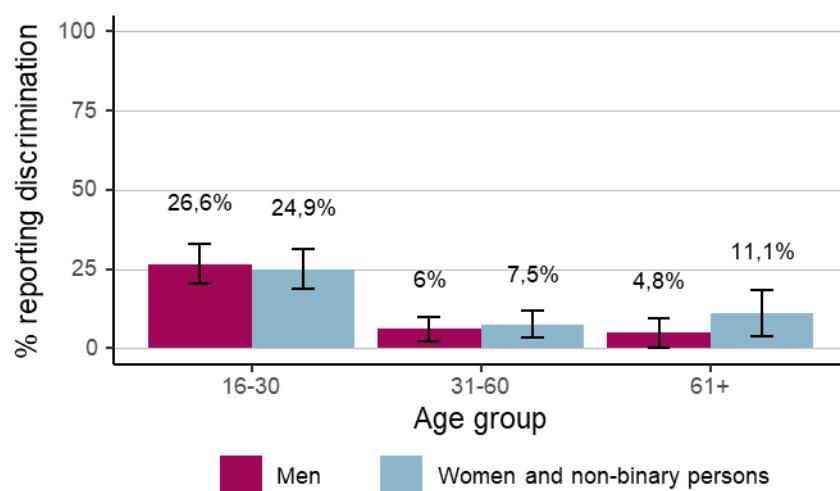
Form of discrimination	Age group		
	16-30	31-60	61+
Less likely to rent accommodation with income other than wages	11,1%	1,7%	1,9%
Refused for a rental property	7,2%	1,3%	3,2%
Difficult search led to poor/bad housing	5,2%	1,7%	2,5%
Treated rudely or condescendingly	4,1%	2,0%	2,5%
Rights as a tenant not taken seriously	3,4%	0,7%	3,2%
Other situation	0,8%	0,3%	2,5%

Participants who indicated that they had not looked for, rented or bought a home in the past year were excluded. The percentages in this table were calculated on the remaining participants (387 participants aged 16-30, 299 aged 31-60 and 157 aged 61 or over).

Because of the small number of participants, small percentage differences between groups in this table should be interpreted very cautiously: they often involve a difference of only one or two people (for this reason, we do not use colour gradations in this table).

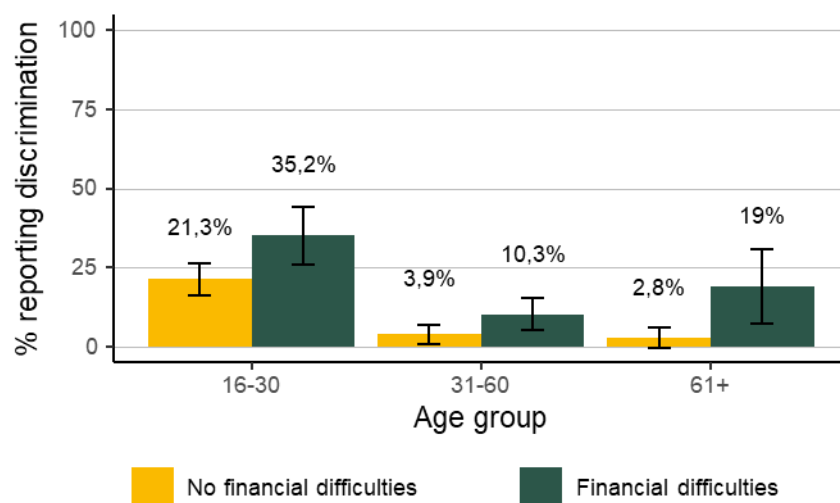
1.3.2 Renting and buying: intersectional analyses

Graph A11: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in renting or buying a home, for the intersection of age and gender



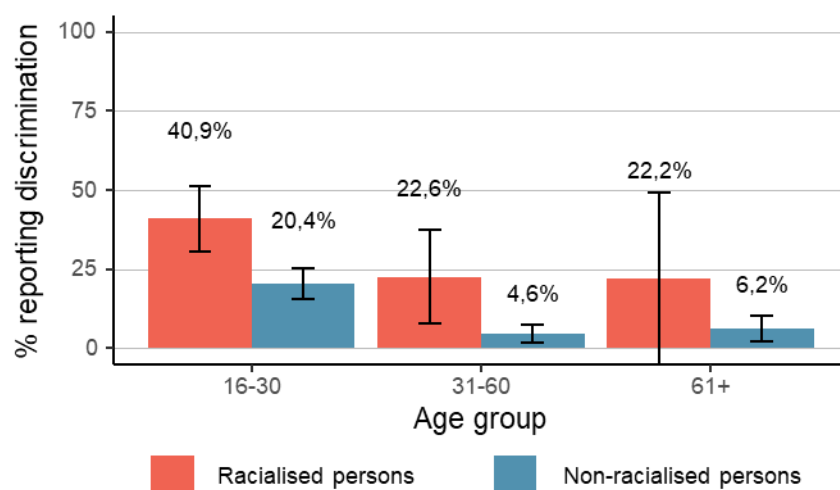
Participants who indicated that they had not looked for, rented or bought a home in the past year were excluded. In addition, 5 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 838 participants.

Graph A12: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination when renting or buying a home, for the intersection of age and poverty



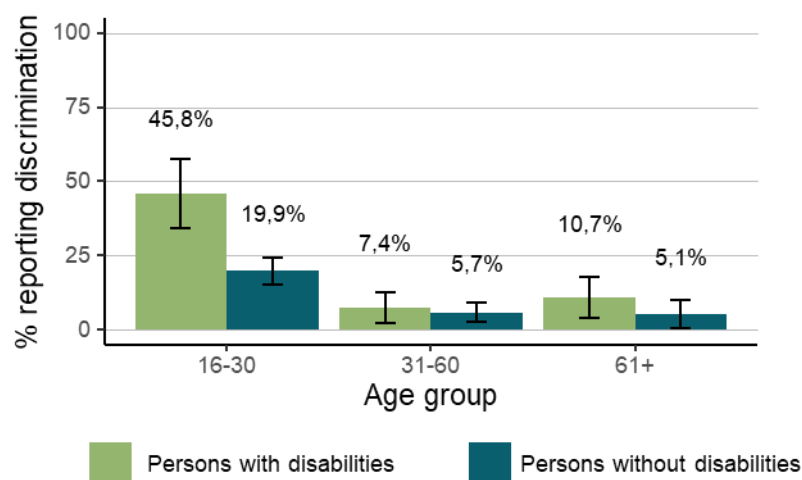
Participants who indicated that they had not looked for, rented or bought a home in the past year were excluded. In addition, 35 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 808 participants. Note that the results for older persons with financial difficulties are based on only 42 participants.

Graph A13: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination when renting or buying a home, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



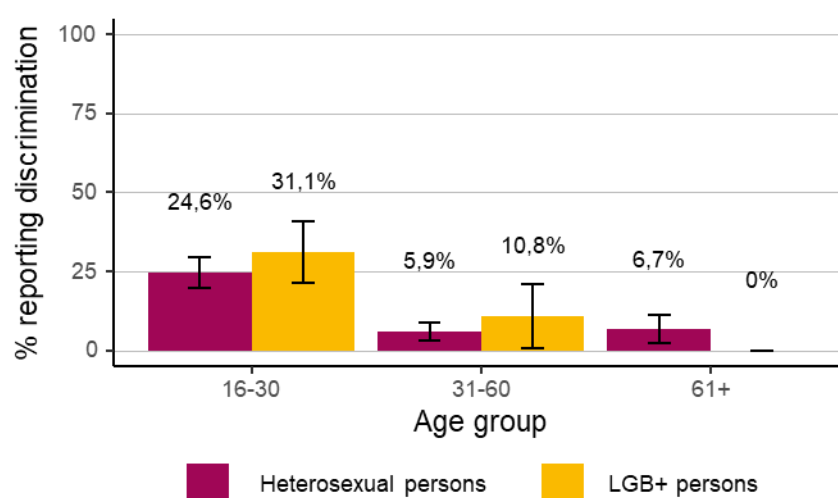
Participants who indicated that they had not looked for, rented or bought a home in the past year were excluded. In addition, 83 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 760 participants. Note that the results for racialised persons are based on only 31 participants in the 31-60 group and 9 participants in the 61+ group.

Graph A14: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination when renting or buying a home, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they had not looked for, rented or bought a home in the past year were excluded. In addition, 33 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 810 participants.

Graph A15: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination when renting or buying a home, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation



Participants who indicated that they had not looked for, rented or bought a home in the past year were excluded. In addition, 51 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 792 participants. Note that the results for LGB+ persons are based on only 37 participants in the 31-60 group and on 11 participants in the 61+ group.

1.3.3 Collective living facilities: forms of discrimination

Table A3: Percentage of participants who indicated a specific form of age discrimination in the context of collective living facilities, by age group

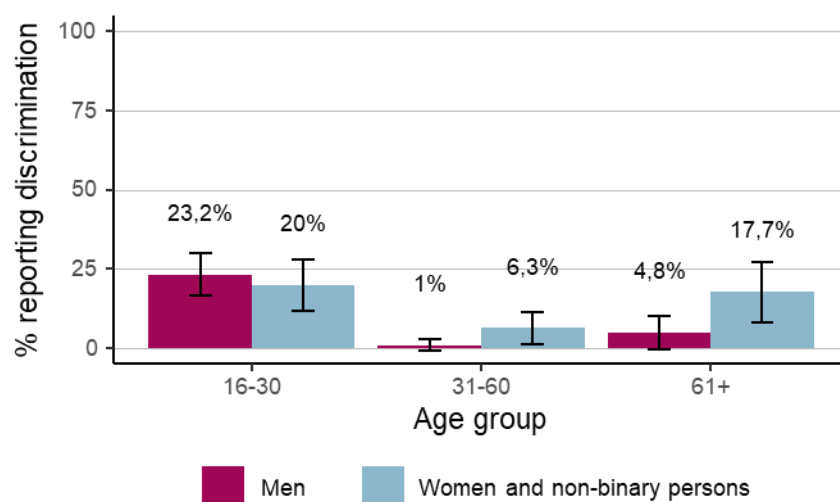
Form of discrimination	Age group		
	16-30	31-60	61+
Suitable facility far too costly	8.3%	1.0%	7.2%
No access to facility/shelter	9.1%	2.0%	0.8%
Forced to leave facility/shelter	3.2%	0.5%	0.0%
Not involved or insufficiently involved in decisions about residence	2.8%	0.5%	0.8%
Placed in institution/residential care centre against one's will	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Other situation	0.4%	0.0%	6.4%

Participants who indicated that they had had no contact with collective living facilities in the past year were excluded. The percentages in this table were calculated on the remaining participants (252 participants aged 16-30, 196 aged 31-60 and 125 aged 61 or over).

Because of the small number of participants, small percentage differences between groups in this table should be interpreted very cautiously: they often involve a difference of only one or two people (for this reason, we do not use colour gradations in this table).

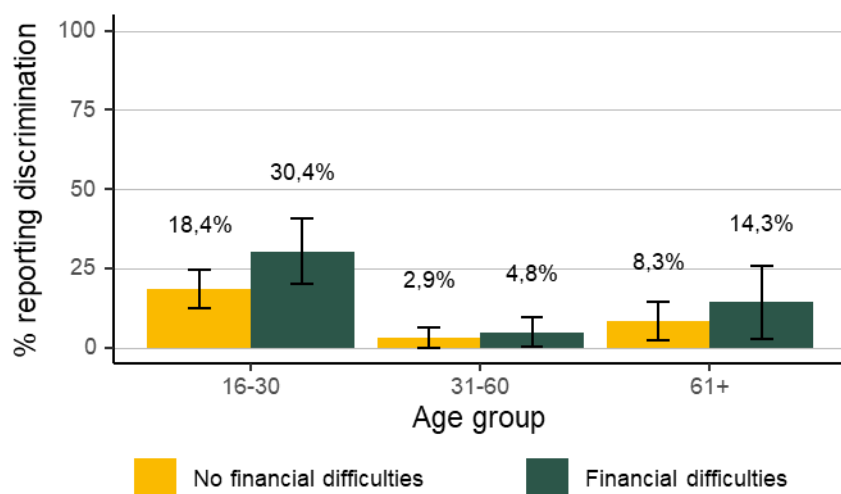
1.3.4 Collective living facilities: intersectional analyses

Graph A16: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of collective living facilities, for the intersection of age and gender



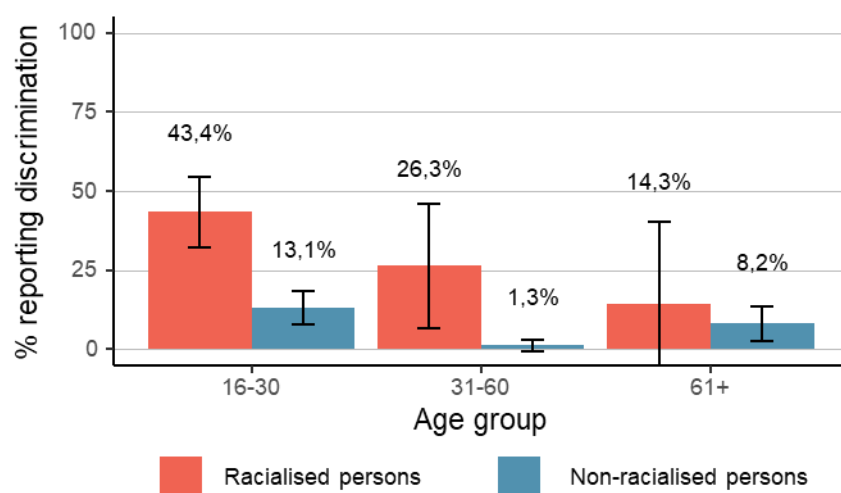
Participants who indicated that they had had no contact with collective living facilities in the past year were excluded. In addition, 4 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 569 participants.

Graph A17: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of collective living facilities, for the intersection of age and poverty



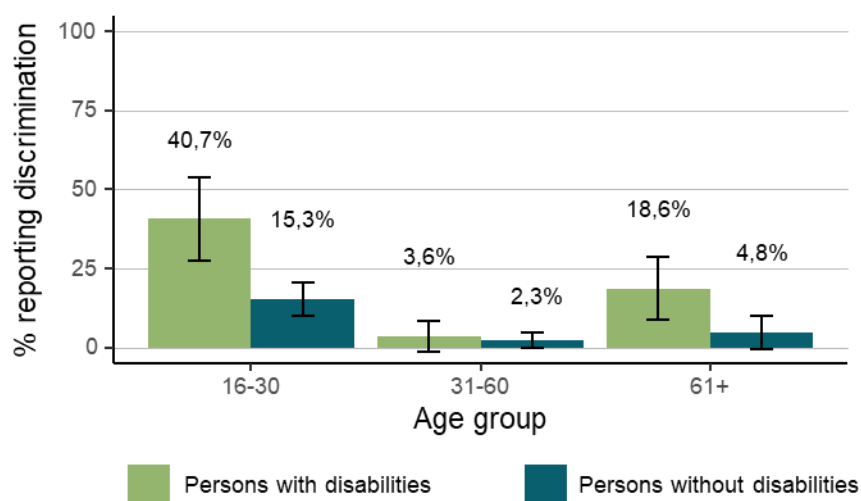
Participants who indicated that they had had no contact with collective living facilities in the past year were excluded. In addition, 28 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 545 participants. Note that the results for older persons with financial difficulties are based on only 35 participants.

Graph A18: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of collective living facilities, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



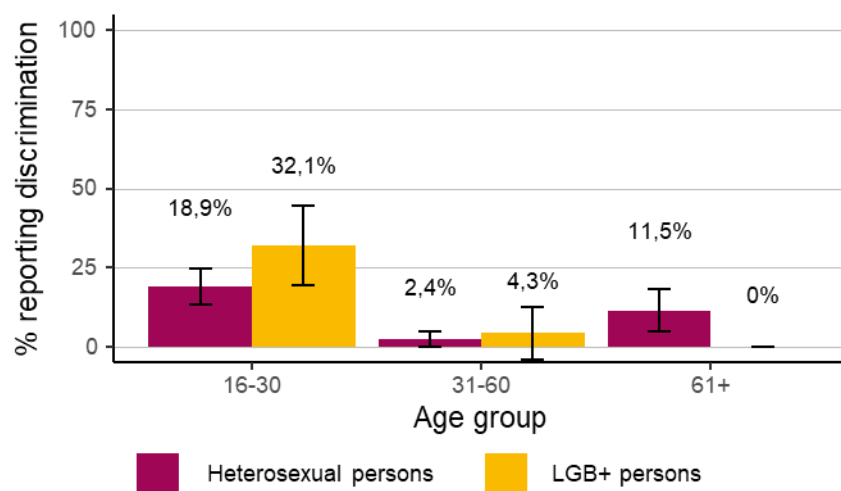
Participants who indicated that they had had no contact with collective living facilities in the past year were excluded. In addition, 64 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 509 participants. Note that the results for racialised persons are based on only 19 participants in the 31-60 group and on 7 participants in the 61+ group.

Graph A19: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of collective living facilities, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they had had no contact with collective living facilities in the past year were excluded. In addition, 28 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 545 participants.

Graph A20: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of collective living facilities, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation

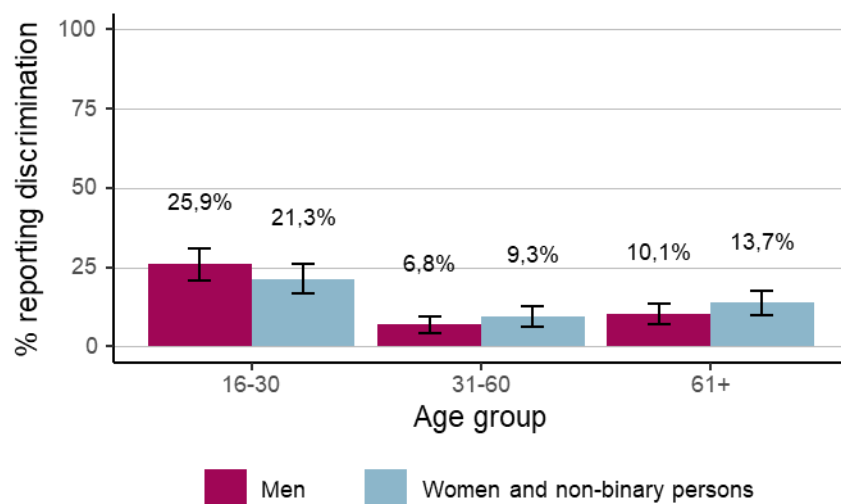


Participants who indicated that they had had no contact with collective living facilities in the past year were excluded. In addition, 50 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 523 participants. Note that the results for LGB+ persons are based on only 23 participants in the 31-60 group and 11 participants in the 61+ group.

1.4 Financial services

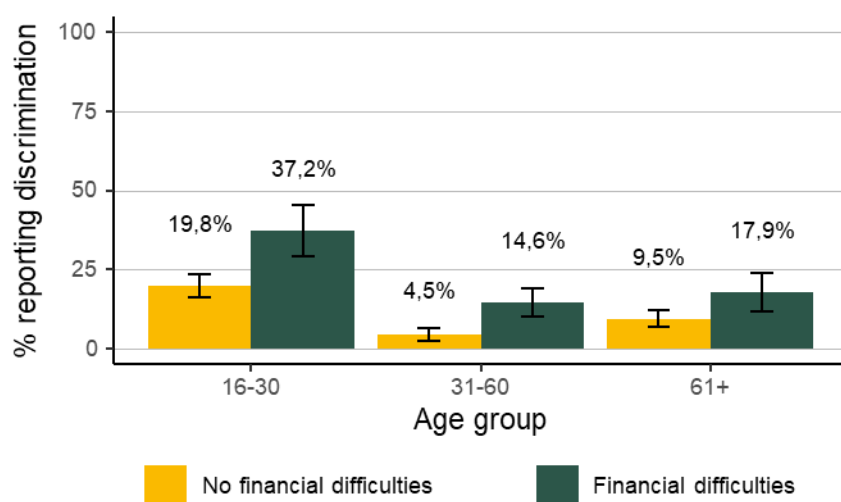
1.4.1 Intersectional analyses

Graph A21: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of financial services, for the intersection of age and gender



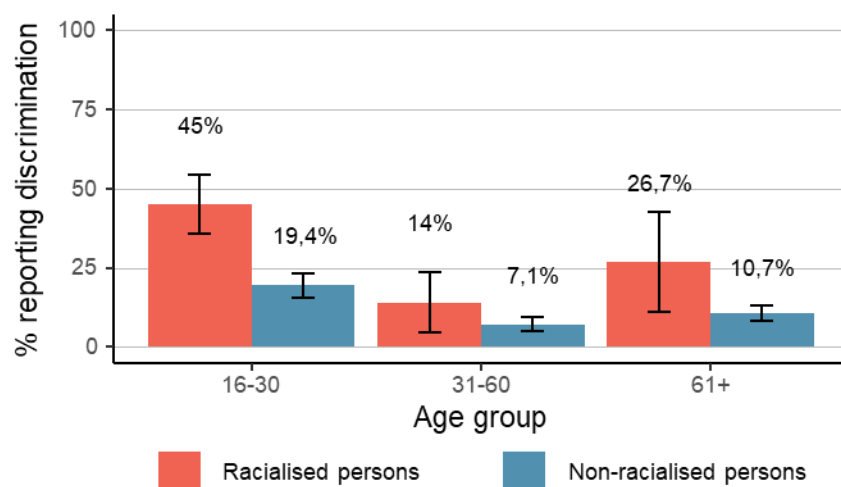
Participants who indicated that they had not used financial services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 5 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1947 participants.

Graph A22: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of financial services, for the intersection of age and poverty



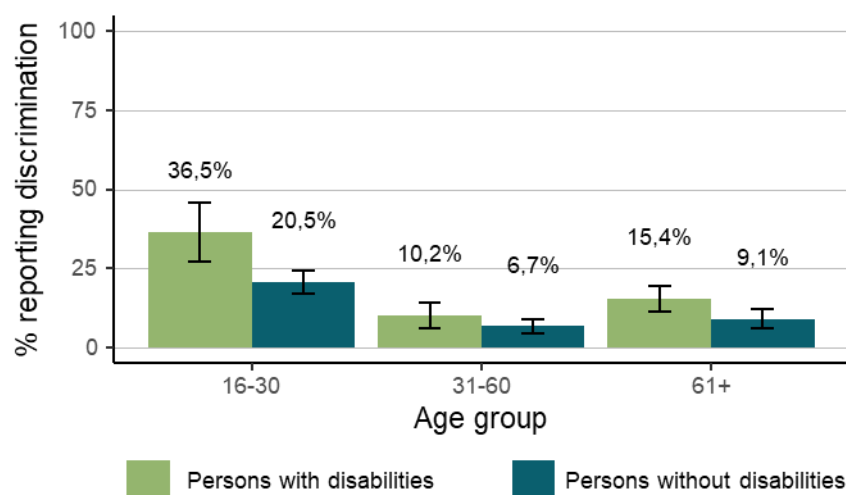
Participants who indicated that they had not used financial services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 48 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1904 participants.

Graph A23: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of financial services, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



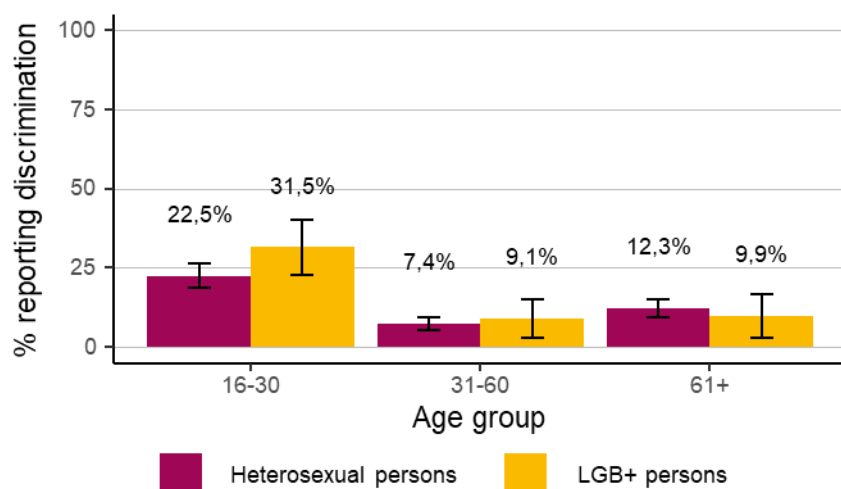
Participants who indicated that they had not used financial services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 190 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1762 participants. Note that the results for older racialised persons are based on only 30 participants.

Graph A24: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of financial services, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they had not used financial services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 41 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1911 participants.

Graph A25: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of financial services, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation



Participants who indicated that they had not used financial services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 120 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1832 participants.

1.5 Public services, social security and social services

1.5.1 Forms of discrimination

Table A4: Percentage of participants who indicated a specific form of age discrimination in the context of public services, by age group

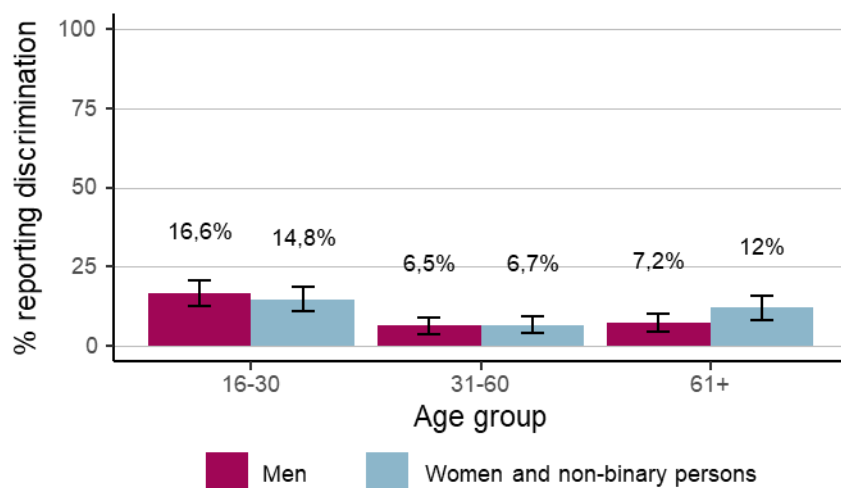
Form of discrimination	Age group		
	16-30	31-60	61+
Treated rudely or condescendingly	5.2%	2.7%	2.9%
No clear information about rights at my age	3.7%	2.4%	4.1%
No access to a public service	4.4%	0.9%	1.8%
No access to benefits	2.9%	1.6%	0.7%
Employee addressed someone else	2.1%	0.1%	1.0%
Other situation	0.6%	1.2%	1.8%

Participants who indicated that they had not used public services in the past year were excluded. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining participants (616 participants aged 16-30, 667 aged 31-60 and 611 aged 61 or over).

The colour codes can be read by age group. The darkest colour represents the discrimination form that was most reported by that age group, the lightest colour represents the discrimination form that was least reported.

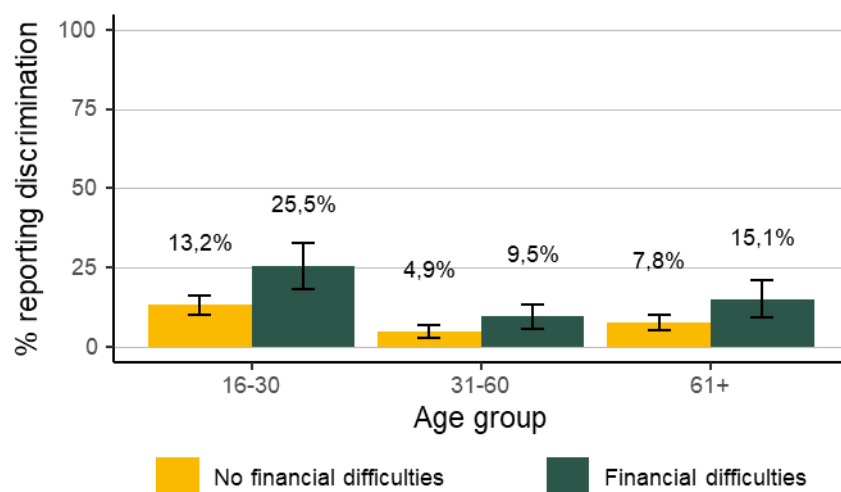
1.5.2 Intersectional analyses

Graph A26: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of public services, for the intersection of age and gender



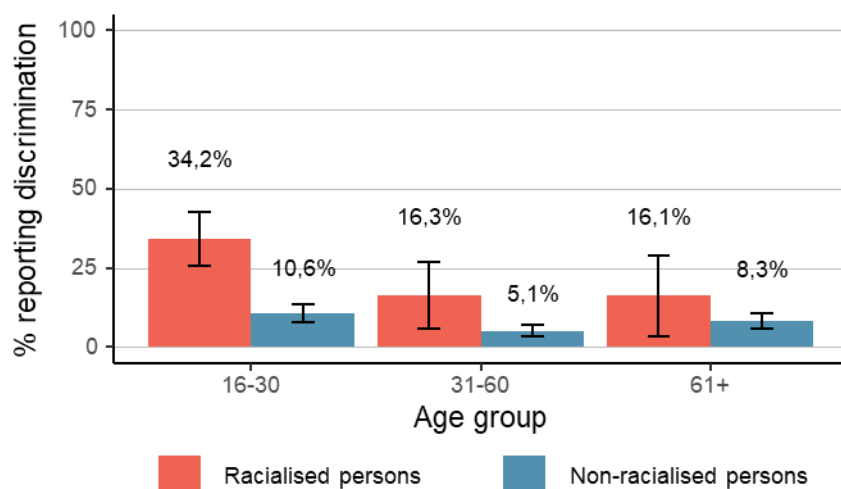
Participants who indicated that they had not used public services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 5 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1889 participants.

Graph A27: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of public services, for the intersection of age and poverty



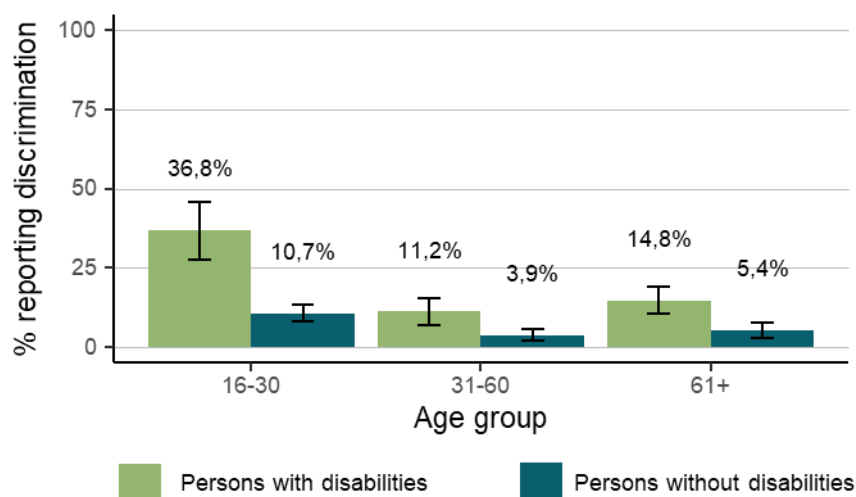
Participants who indicated that they had not used public services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 42 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1852 participants.

Graph A28: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of public services, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



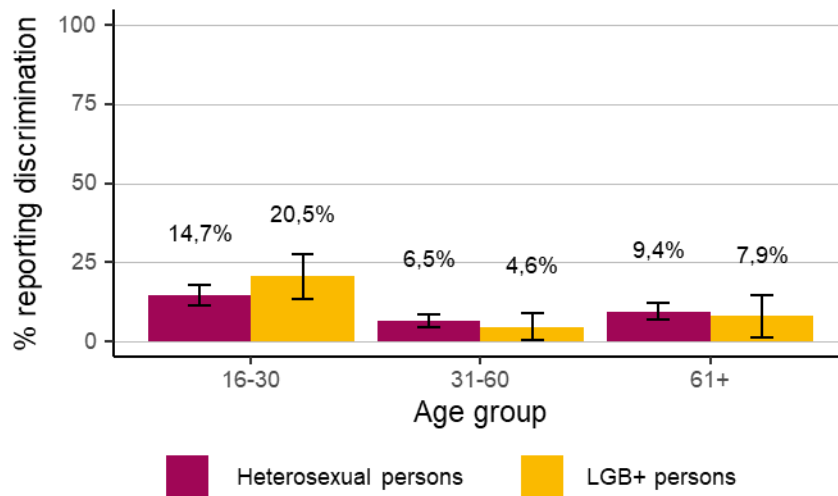
Participants who indicated that they had not used public services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 178 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1716 participants. Note that the results for racialised people are based on only 49 participants in the 31-60 group and 31 participants in the 61+ group.

Graph A29: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of public services, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they had not used public services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 44 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1850 participants.

Graph A30: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in public services, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation

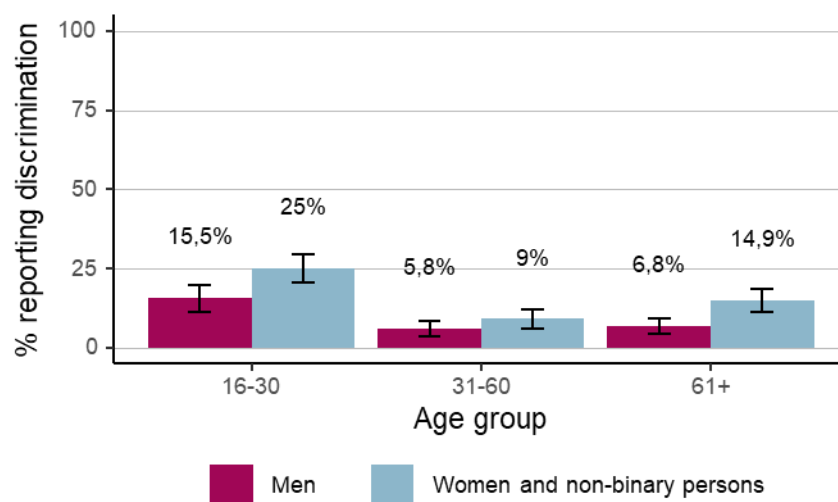


Participants who indicated that they had not used public services in the past year were excluded. In addition, 107 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1787 participants.

1.6 Healthcare and assistance

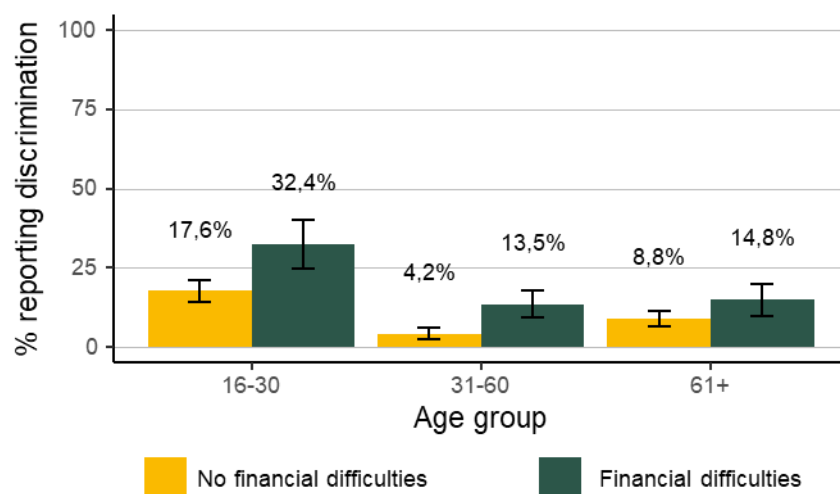
1.6.1 Healthcare: intersectional analyses

Graph A31: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of healthcare, for the intersection of age and gender



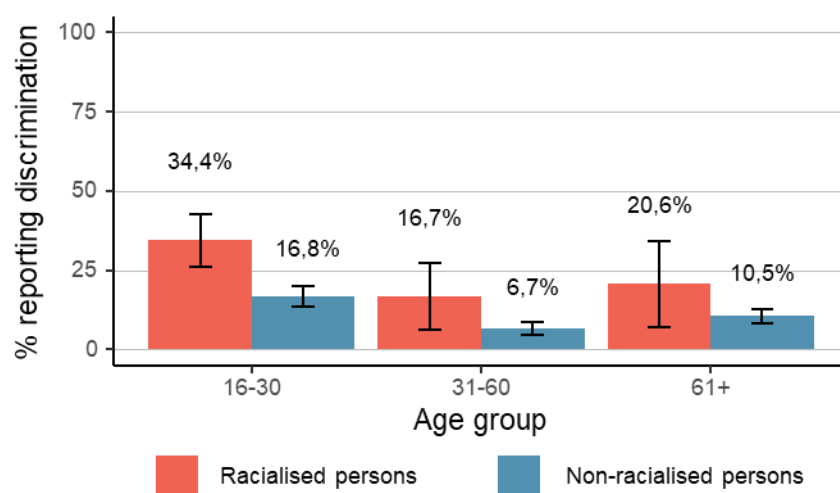
Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used healthcare in the past year were excluded. In addition, 8 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2166 participants.

Graph A32: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of healthcare, for the intersection of age and poverty



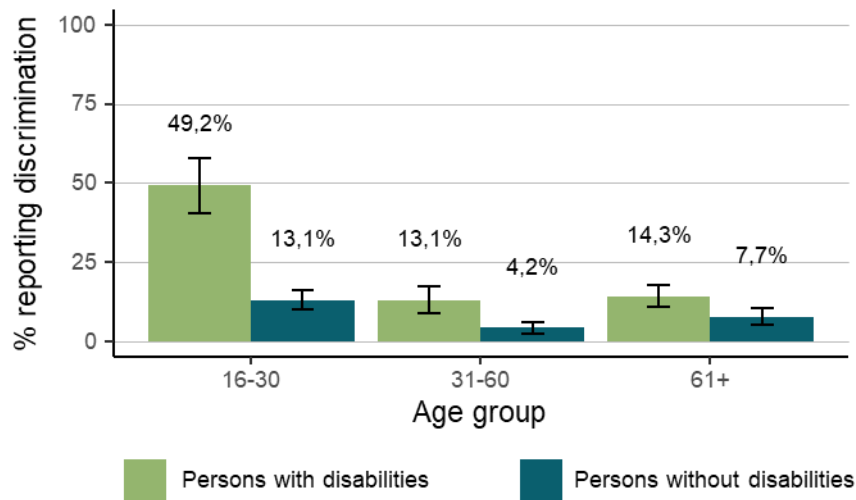
Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used healthcare in the past year were excluded. In addition, 51 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2123 participants.

Graph A33: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of healthcare, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



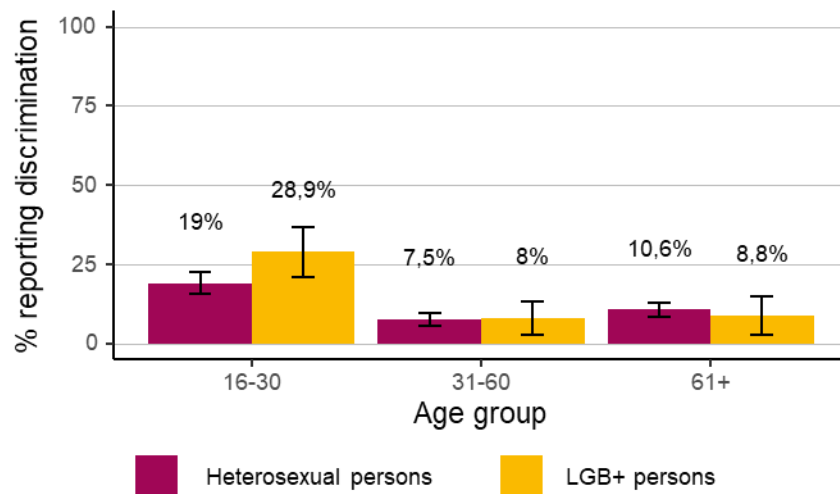
Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used healthcare in the past year were excluded. In addition, 202 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1972 participants. Note that the results for racialised individuals are based on only 48 participants in the 31-60 group and 34 participants in the 61+ group.

Graph A34: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of healthcare, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used healthcare in the past year were excluded. In addition, 46 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2128 participants.

Graph A35: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of healthcare, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation



Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used healthcare in the past year were excluded. In addition, 119 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2055 participants.

1.6.2 Help and assistance: forms of discrimination

Table A5: Percentage of participants who indicated a specific form of age discrimination in the context of personal help or assistance, by age group

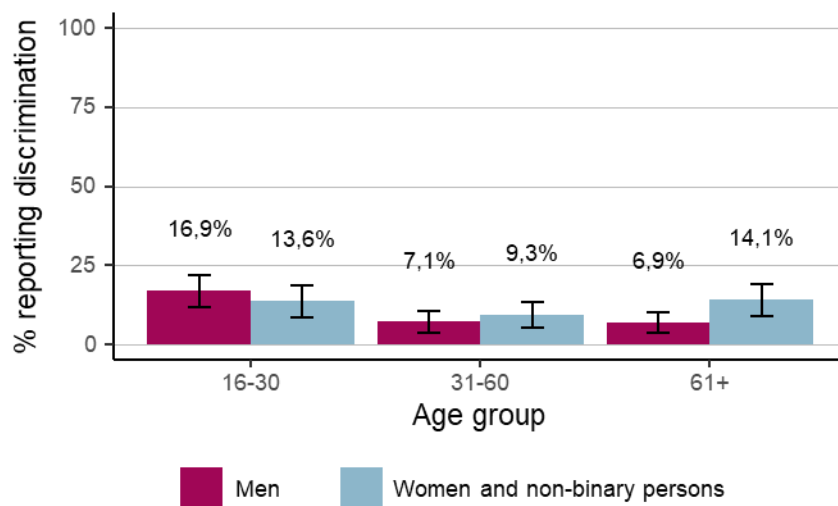
Form of discrimination	Age group		
	16-30	31-60	61+
No help or assistance suitable for my age	6.0%	4.2%	3.0%
Assumptions of need for help or assistance	4.2%	1.6%	2.2%
Not or insufficiently involved in decisions about myself	3.9%	0.8%	1.7%
Restrictions imposed on emotional/sexual intimacy	1.8%	1.3%	0.2%
Experienced verbal or physical abuse	0.8%	1.0%	0.5%
Other situation	0.3%	1.3%	2.7%

Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used personal help or assistance in the past year were excluded. The percentages in this table were calculated on the remaining participants (384 participants aged 16-30, 381 aged 31-60 and 401 aged 61 or over).

The colour codes can be read by age group. The darkest colour represents the discrimination form that was most reported by that age group, the lightest colour represents the discrimination form that was least reported.

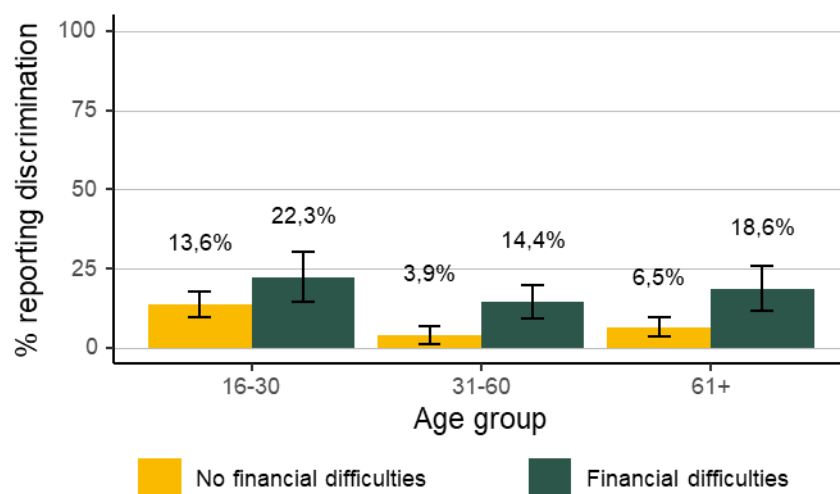
1.6.3 Help and assistance: intersectional analyses

Graph A36: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of personal help or assistance, for the intersection of age and gender



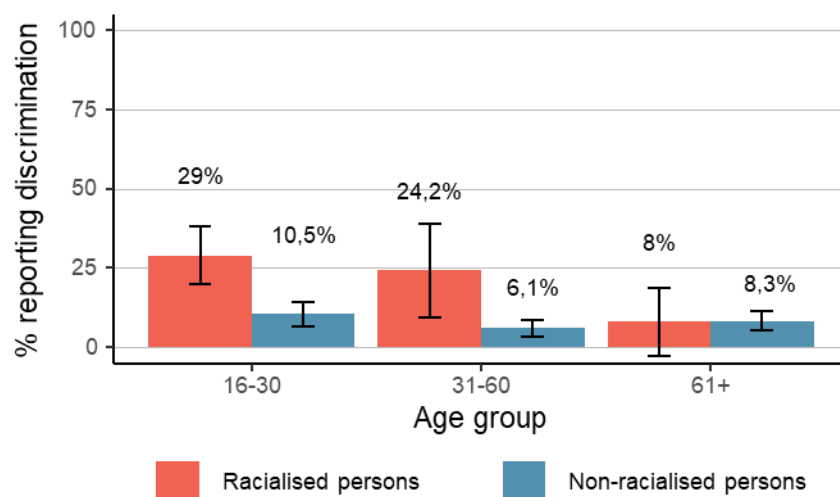
Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used personal help or assistance in the past year were excluded. In addition, 3 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1163 participants.

Graph A37: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of personal help or assistance, for the intersection of age and poverty



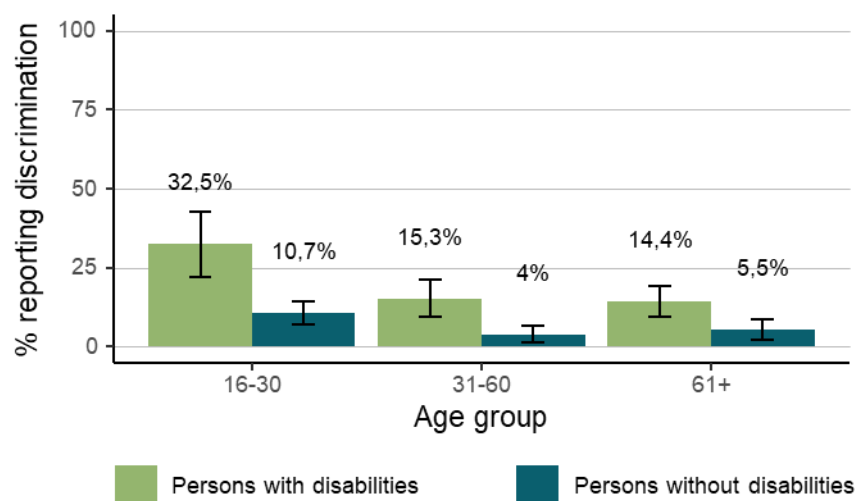
Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used personal help or assistance in the past year were excluded. In addition, 37 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1129 participants.

Graph A38: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of personal help or assistance, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



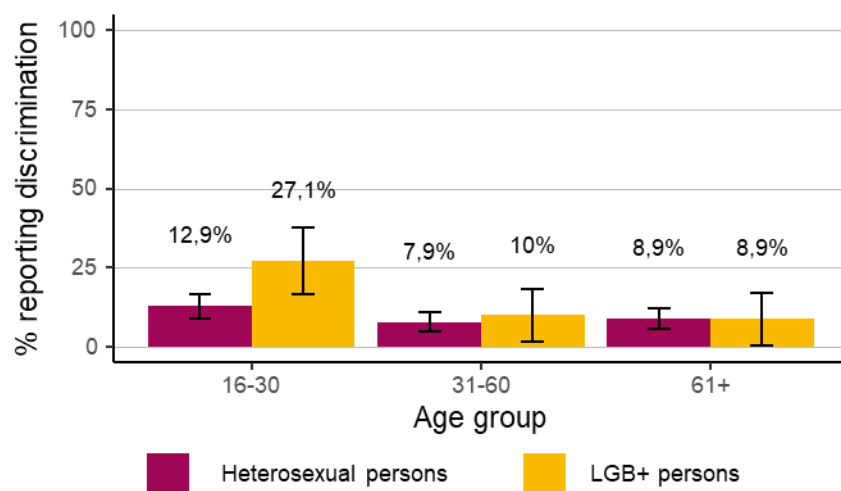
Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used personal help or assistance in the past year were excluded. In addition, 109 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1057 participants. Note that the results for racialised persons are based on only 33 participants in the 31-60 group and 25 participants in the 61+ group.

Graph A39: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of personal help or assistance, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used personal help or assistance in the past year were excluded. In addition, 30 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1136 participants.

Graph A40: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in the context of personal help or assistance, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation

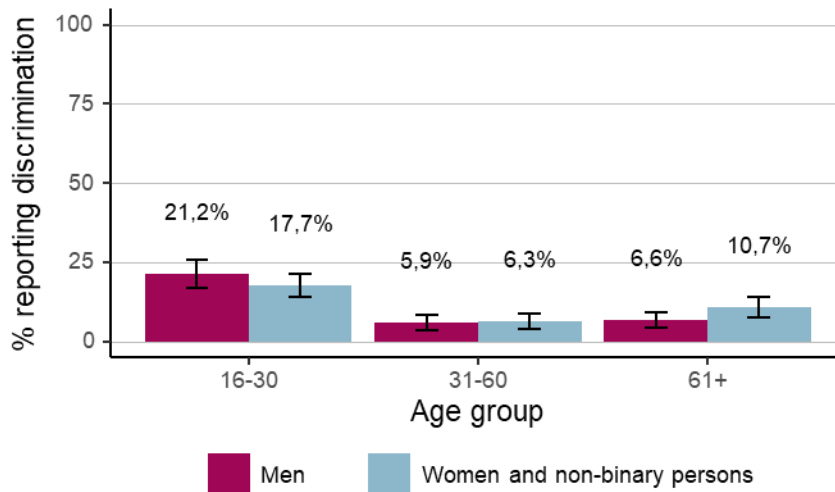


Participants who indicated that they had not sought or used personal help or assistance in the past year were excluded. In addition, 76 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 1090 participants. Note that the results for older LGB+ persons are based on only 45 participants.

1.7 Public space, leisure time, shops and catering

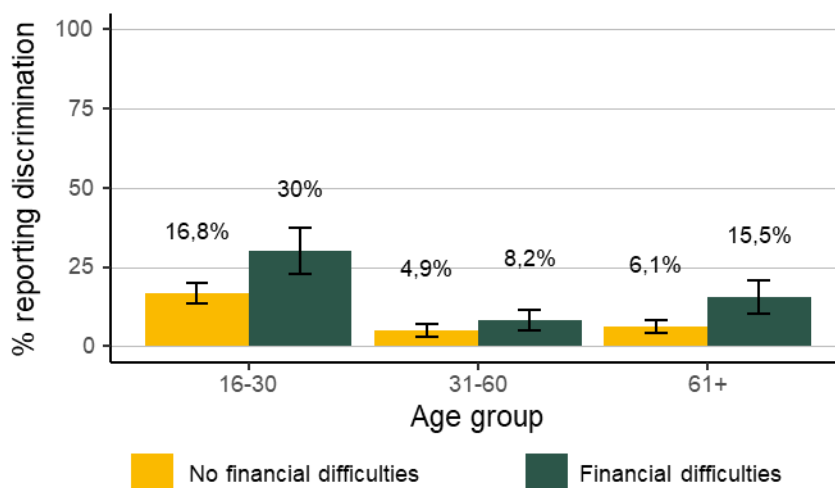
1.7.1 Intersectional analyses

Graph A41: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in public spaces, for the intersection of age and gender



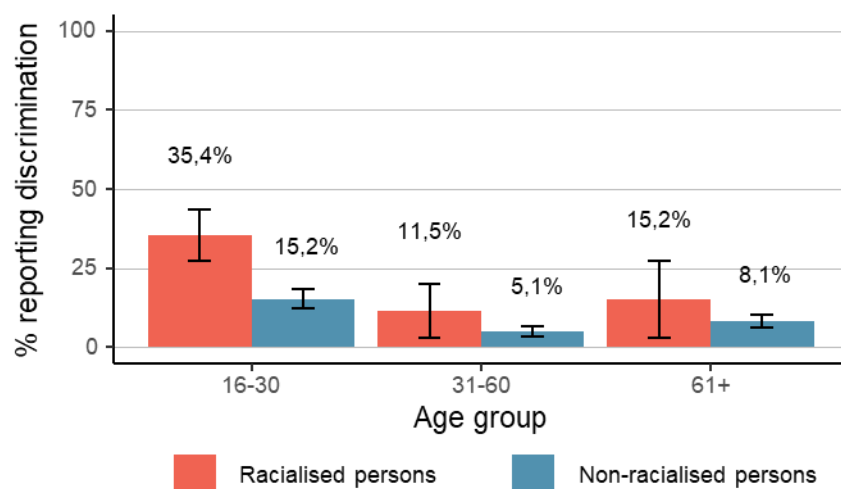
Participants who indicated that they rarely or never visited public spaces in the past year were excluded. In addition, 7 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2243 participants.

Graph A42: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in public spaces, for the intersection of age and poverty



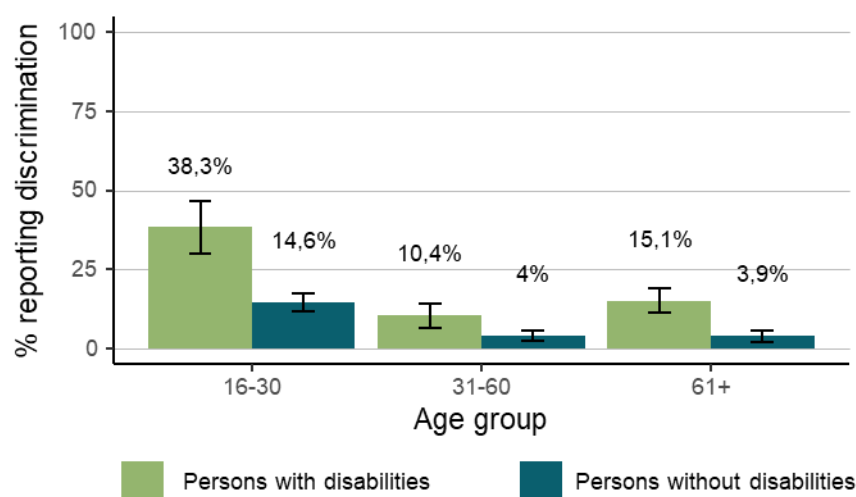
Participants who indicated that they rarely or never visited public spaces in the past year were excluded. In addition, 59 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2191 participants.

Graph A43: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in public spaces, for the intersection of age and racialised persons



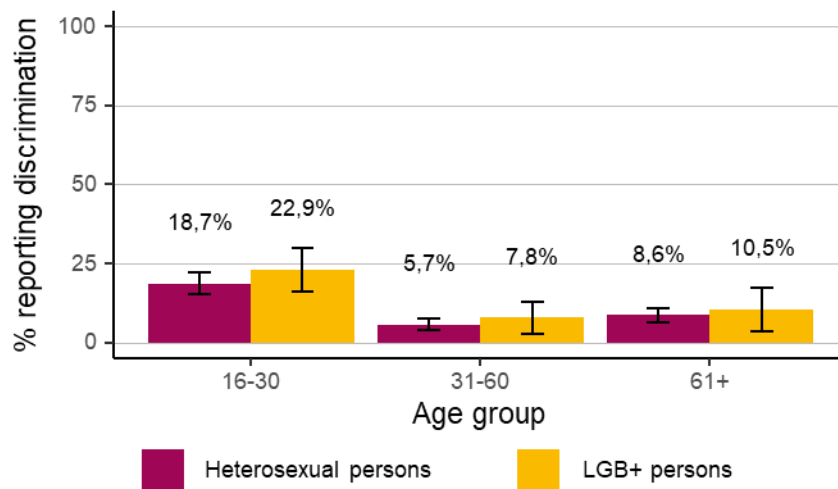
Participants who indicated that they rarely or never visited public spaces in the past year were excluded. In addition, 204 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2046 participants. Note that the results for older racialised people are based on only 33 participants.

Graph A44: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in public spaces, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that they rarely or never visited public spaces in the past year were excluded. In addition, 51 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2199 participants.

Graph A45: Percentage of participants who reported age discrimination in public spaces, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation

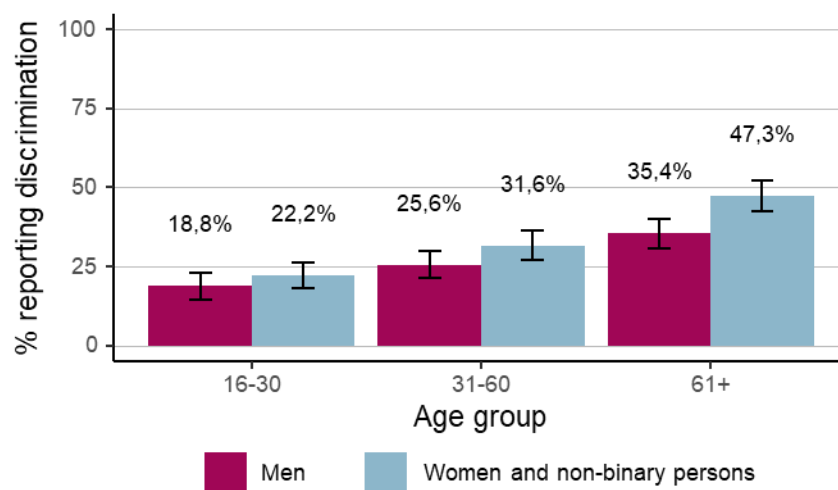


Participants who indicated that they rarely or never visited public spaces in the past year were excluded. In addition, 124 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2126 participants.

1.8 Digitalisation

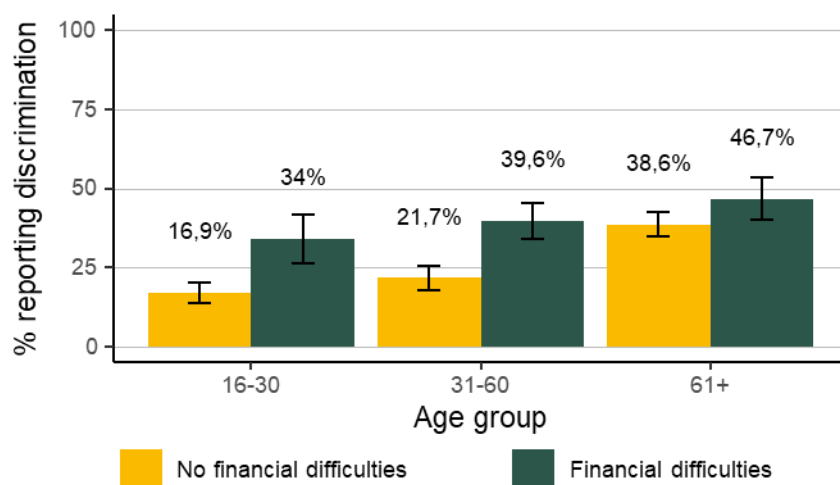
1.8.1 Intersectional analyses

Graph A46: Percentage of participants who reported discrimination due to digitalisation, for the intersection of age and gender



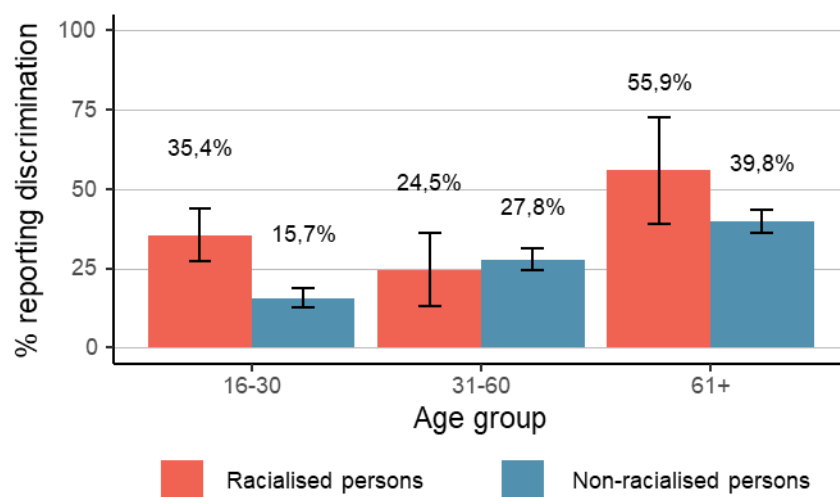
Participants who indicated that this life domain did not apply to them were excluded. In addition, 7 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their gender. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2292 participants.

Graph A47: Percentage of participants who reported discrimination due to digitalisation, for the intersection of age and poverty



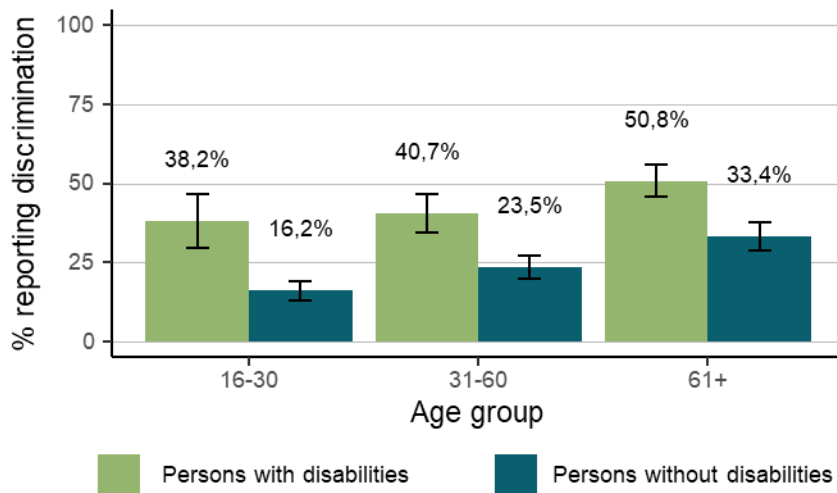
Participants who indicated that this life domain did not apply to them were excluded. In addition, 58 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their income situation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2241 participants.

Graph A48: Percentage of participants who reported discrimination due to digitalisation, for the intersection of age and racialised people



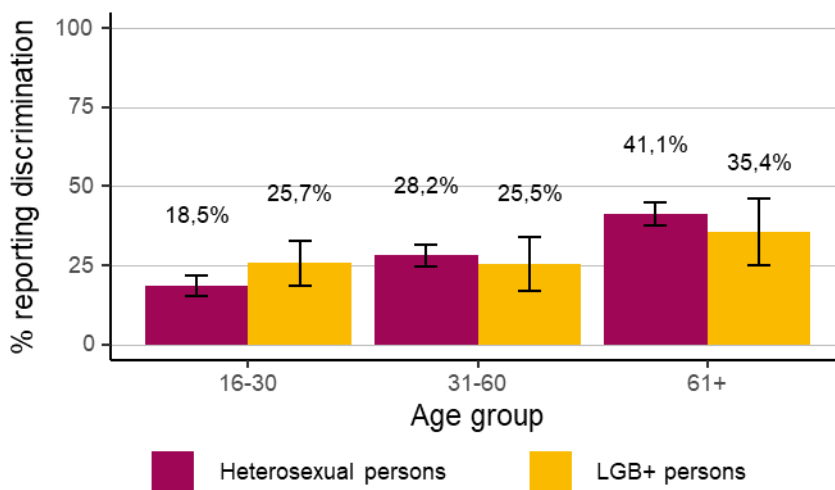
Participants who indicated that this life domain did not apply to them were excluded. In addition, 214 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available on their origins. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2085 participants. Note that the results for older racialised persons are based on only 34 participants.

Graph A49: Percentage of participants who reported discrimination due to digitalisation, for the intersection of age and disability



Participants who indicated that this life domain did not apply to them were excluded. In addition, 51 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available regarding disability. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2248 participants.

Graph A50: Percentage of participants who reported discrimination due to digitalisation, for the intersection of age and sexual orientation



Participants who indicated that this life domain did not apply to them were excluded. In addition, 135 participants were excluded because insufficient information was available about their sexual orientation. The percentages in this figure were calculated on the remaining 2164 participants.

1.9 Results regarding whether or not age discrimination was reported

The results show that people who experience age discrimination rarely report it or file a complaint.¹ Only 19.2% said that they (or someone else for them) had reported the most striking situation of the past year, 75.9% said they had not reported it anywhere. Young people (16-30) and older people aged 71+ were slightly more likely to have reported the discrimination; in contrast, those between 31 and 50 almost never reported their experiences of age discrimination.

Those who had filed a report had turned to various agencies (see Table A6), mainly to the police (20.1%), an ombudsman service (15.5%) or a municipal service (12.1%). Only 4% indicated that they had contacted Unia or the Flemish Human Rights Institute.

Table A6: Bodies or persons to whom participants had reported age discrimination

Reporting centre	%
Somewhere else (open answer)	22.4%
The police	20.1%
An ombudsman service	15.5%
A municipal service	12.1%
I shared my story on social media	10.9%
A trade union	8.6%
A politician	7.5%
I don't remember	7.5%
I prefer not to answer	6.9%
A helpline	5.7%
A lawyer	5.2%
An advocacy group, non-profit association or NGO	4.6%
I shared my story with a journalist	4.6%
Unia or the Flemish Human Rights Institute	4.0%
A professional association	3.4%
A consumer organisation	3.4%
The public prosecutor	2.9%

¹ Participants who chose 'Not applicable, I have not experienced age discrimination in the past 12 months' at the end of the survey were excluded from these analyses. This percentage was high (63.2%) compared to responses to the main questions: 411 people reported discrimination in the main questions and yet indicated no age discrimination at the end, but the results suggest that this is partly due to the fact that digital discrimination was not explicitly named as age discrimination (in addition to the complexity of the question at the end). The results in this section are based on the remaining 906 respondents.

Those who had not filed a complaint gave various reasons why they had not done so (see Table A7). Many participants felt that the situation was not serious enough (33.7%), but many also indicated that it did not occur to them that this was a possibility (28.1%), that they thought it would not make a difference anyway (25.6%) or that they did not know where to report it (17.3%). This confirms the suspicion that official reports of discrimination constitute only the 'tip of the iceberg'.

Table A7: Reasons for not reporting or filing a complaint

Reason	%
I didn't think the situation was serious enough	33.7%
It didn't occur to me that I could report it or file a complaint	28.1%
I didn't think it would make a difference	25.6%
didn't know where to report it or file a complaint	17.3%
It would have taken too much time, effort or money, or caused me a lot of stress	14.7%
I wanted to avoid negative consequences or the reaction of the person involved	10.2%
I had no proof	9.0%
This happens so often that I don't want to report it every time	8.6%
Another reason (open answer)	8.6%
I prefer not to answer	6.5%
resolved the issue myself or discussed it with the person involved	6.4%
I thought I wouldn't be believed	5.8%
I don't remember	3.2%
I wanted to avoid going to court	2.3%
I can't express myself well enough (due to language or communication difficulties)	2.2%
Friends or family advised me not to	1.6%

2 Testimonies about experiences in education

By education we mean experiences in secondary education, higher education and training courses.

The topic of education was not initially chosen as a domain to study in our survey. As a result, no questions were asked about it in the survey and we do not have any figures. But the theme often came up spontaneously in the focus group discussions, especially in the focus group discussions on racism and disability. Some also mentioned this domain in the open-ended questions in the survey. However, with a few exceptions, these testimonies were mainly about other forms of discrimination (such as racism and ableism), where the link with age was rather indirect (such as the fact that young people are, due to their age, obliged to be in education and therefore encounter this discrimination). Therefore, we do not discuss these results in the main report but in this appendix.

2.1 Age discrimination in higher education

In the survey, some participants cited that higher education courses are aimed at a very specific age group and that one quickly stands out or experiences barriers if one does not belong to that target group. This could include being considered both 'too young' and 'too old', with these terms being used in a very relative sense:

Survey testimony: I was turned down for a course because they felt that there was very little potential in it at my current age and so it was better to accept younger candidates. (39, man)

Survey testimony: I was told during my nursing course that it was better to quit and start again later because I was too young to be a nurse. (21, agender person)

In addition to age limits for certain courses, older participants also experience financial barriers (e.g. no student discounts over the age of 26). They are also discouraged from further study or training within the work context.

2.2 The impact of racism and ableism at school

Secondary (and higher) education is an important part of young people's lives. It is a domain of life that has a major impact on their further schooling and life course. In addition, they are in a position of dependence on their teachers and the school. In secondary education as well, young people indicate that they do not always feel heard and are not taken seriously by teachers, among others.

It is notable that this domain came up mainly in the focus group discussions on the intersection of age and the experiences of racialised persons on the one hand, and persons with disabilities on the other. We note that these experiences mainly concern racist and ableist exclusion rather than age discrimination. Nevertheless, we consider it important to discuss these results because these experiences occur in the specific environment of young people.

Racialised young persons are disproportionately more likely to be discouraged from further study, advised to change educational streams (e.g. from ASO to TSO or BSO) and given fewer opportunities. For example, when they have to retake an exam, they are more likely to be advised to change direction than other classmates.

Testimony from a focus group discussion with racialised persons: School really traumatised me [...] I was in a high school where there were almost only white kids from good families. I had always been a very good student, but from the third, fourth year, I started having trouble with maths and science, because I had chosen the science direction. [...] At the end of the year, I had three retakes. Even before I had taken those [...] the lecturer called my mother to tell her that I had three retakes and that maybe I should redirect myself to beauty care or hairdressing. Honestly, I have nothing against those professions, but I knew very well that she said that because she thought I was not capable of succeeding in my studies, because I did not come from a family with parents who had a university degree, and because I was Maghrebi. [...] That really shocked me, and frankly it scarred me throughout my studies, so I didn't have much self-confidence, but it also made me stronger, to outdo myself and get results. I always wanted to go back and see her and say: look, I got a master's, I passed, you see. (22, woman)

Moreover, racialised young persons regularly face racist comments from some teachers and fellow students.

Testimony from a focus group discussion with racialised persons: A friend told me about an experience she had had. She had a science exam, had failed at the end of the year, and the teacher said to her, "What can you blacks actually do well except run, play sports and dance?" (22, woman)

The intersection with gender also plays an important role here. In line with previous research ([Agirdag, 2020](#)), racialised boys specifically are often stigmatised as 'problematic children'. We also saw the stigmatisation of young racialised boys and men reflected in public spaces (see main report).

Systematically discouraging and underestimating racialised young persons, referring them to other (often less valued) fields of study, and experiences of racism from teachers are crucial factors for their subsequent life course. It affects their study choices and opportunities, their further educational trajectories and thus their chances in the labour market. This perpetuates and reinforces pre-existing forms of social exclusion.

Testimony from a focus group discussion with racialised persons: And I find it very sad to see that our first experiences, our first experiences of racism, take place at school, with teachers who are supposed to teach you and nothing else [...] the teacher also has a dominant position [...], and so it's very easy for them to impose things on us and basically break us, and I suspect that there are a huge number of careers that have been destroyed by such teachers, who have destroyed children's dreams and belittled them [...] (22, woman)

The educational experiences of young people with disabilities also shape their future life and careers. For example, because of the lack of accessibility, they cannot always continue their studies or pursue a particular field of study. Moreover, we see that young people experience exclusion because schools are not adapted in terms of infrastructure.

Testimony from a focus group discussion with persons with disabilities: Because they say schools should become inclusive, but if you look at the school buildings, it is not possible to make them inclusive. Because you want to include someone in a wheelchair, but [...] for the entrance it was already not possible, for the toilet everything should have been enlarged.... for stairs, it's not possible to use those either, so I mean, it's actually a society that is not inclusive on any level. (64, woman)

Similarly, there is a lack of support. Hearing-impaired or deaf young people, for example, often have to provide their own interpreters and thus be responsible for the organisation and expenses. One participant, for example, testified that he had to teach himself to lipread in order to follow along at school. Overall, young people with disabilities often have to change schools for appropriate infrastructure and support.

3 Testimonies about experiences in private life

Several testimonies emerged in the focus group discussions and survey that related to people's private lives. As this is less linked to policy, we do not discuss these results in the main report, but we feel it is

important to mention them here as they provide insight into common prejudices and stereotypes in society.

3.1 Patronisation and prejudice towards older persons

Many older people report that they are often not taken seriously and patronised in everyday life, including by people close to them. It is quickly assumed that they cannot do something. This can feel insulting and, in some cases, lead to them no longer getting the necessary information or decisions being made for them (e.g. by their children). They also feel that they regularly have to show and repeat that they are still able to do or decide things for themselves.

Survey testimony: I worry that my son and grandchildren think I am older than I really am. It hurts me but sometimes I remind my son that I am still absolutely "capable". (75, woman)

Survey testimony: Judging from my appearance (old, with limited mobility), it is assumed that I am also mentally challenged! Thus, I rarely if ever get the correct, complete and necessary information (in commercial transactions, works to be carried out, etc.) Often I am childishly patronised and lulled with "that's not for you". (87, woman)

Other older participants explicitly state that they do feel respected. Several of them also experience 'positive discrimination': they like it when others spontaneously suggest helping them or treat them more kindly because of their age.

Survey testimony: I would also like to mention 'positive discrimination' here. E.g. in the container park of [city] I am always addressed and helped in a friendly way. E.g. bags of grass are taken out of the trunk and emptied, with an "I'm coming ma'am." Even at the ATM, people always discreetly ask if I'm OK. (...) You feel seen and respected in your 'old age'. (83, woman)

Still other participants have ambiguous feelings about this: a 73-year-old participant describes this extra considerate attitude towards him as 'heartwarming but also somewhat frustrating'.

3.2 Sex and sexuality

LGBTI+ persons' sexuality is often not taken seriously at both younger and older ages. Among older persons, their sex lives are more generally not taken seriously.

Testimony from a focus group discussion on gender: And with me too, because of my non-binary and lesbian identity. What also sometimes comes up is an attitude of "you're too young to know that". "Oh, being non-binary is something for young people, it doesn't really exist". (25, non-binary person)

Testimony from a focus group discussion on gender: [...] Sexologists who know absolutely nothing about LGBT+ sexuality say, and this applies to cisgender women as well as men: 'But sexuality after the age of 40 doesn't exist', 'After the age of 60 you don't have sex'. But of course we do, I've just started! I would like to say to them, "No way, I'm in great shape now, I feel good, I'm happy. I'm going for it." [...] And that is discrimination, because we are then facing someone we have to convince. Not to mention the number of doctors, dieticians etc. [...] that we, as patients, have to go and train, when there are training courses provided by

specialised associations for professionals. But no, it is us who still have to educate them and answer even more questions about our intimacy. "And how long does that take?" "How is that?" "Are you going to have surgery down there?" I now answer, "And you, what about your sex life? How do you do it?" (56, transgender man)

Older women experience this all the more: they feel invisible because they would no longer be seen as 'interesting' in this area (see also section 4.2 below). In addition, as people get older, some experience pressure to hide their sexual orientation if it deviates from societal norms.

This contrasts strongly with the over-sexualisation experienced by young women. As a result, young women also report that they sometimes consciously constrain their sexuality (due to sexual violence and socialisation from an early age).

4 General reflections on ageism in society

4.1 Prejudices, norms and perceptions play a major role

Prejudices and norms around age are widespread and influence how people are viewed and treated. Older people are often seen as 'weak' or 'out of touch', while younger people are labelled as 'lazy' or 'inexperienced'. These stereotypes influence both the way a person is treated by others and the way people see themselves. This is reflected in statements such as "I feel bad at the idea of getting older" or "I am too young to have an opinion on this". Norms and stereotypes related to age are internalised.

Testimony from a focus group discussion with persons in poverty: The stereotypes that we turn into images, into scenes, which are "older people don't learn anymore", "older people have dementia", "older people always deteriorate medically", "older people... if they fall, they immediately break their leg", "older people are professionally out of touch", "older people are technically out of touch", "older people are freeloaders and don't contribute anything to society", "older people are bad drivers", "older people are no longer creative" and "older people's cognitive abilities, they always deteriorate". (66, man)

Participants are also clearly aware of norms and prejudices that exist for each age group (e.g. that one is "in the prime of their life" at 30, that young people should have a lot of energy, that one should behave more seriously and "maturely" as one gets older, etc.). Those who deviate from this receive comments about it or fall through the cracks because they cannot meet expectations. This is certainly the case for young people with disabilities or health problems:

Survey testimony: I sometimes feel that I am left out because I am young (36) but have a serious health problem that prevents me from participating. My peers have jobs and they often cannot empathise with me, they also live at a totally different pace. I feel very lonely. There should be more contact groups for young people who, for one reason or another, cannot keep up. (36, man)

These common societal norms and prejudices contribute to the normalisation of age discrimination in different areas of life.

Finally, several participants stress that the *perception* of their age has a major impact on how they are treated, rather than their actual age. This is particularly the case for people who look younger than they are and are therefore taken less seriously and underestimated compared to peers.

4.2 Forgotten by society and policy

In the survey, many older people cite a general feeling that they are forgotten or pushed aside by society and policy. They feel invisible and as if they no longer count because they are "no longer economically interesting", "not productive" or "redundant". During discussions about pensions in the public debate, but also with people in their personal environment, some people feel that they cost society too much and that they are considered a 'burden' or 'freeloaders'.

Survey testimony: I think there is a lot of age discrimination through the media and social media, when we are in retirement after many years of career we are seen as freeloaders of society. This makes many older people feel like a burden, this is becoming a big problem. (77, woman)

Some female participants experience being doubly invisible as older women.

Survey testimony: I became invisible as an older woman over the past 20 years, economically no longer interesting, sexually no longer interesting, ... I became transparent to our society, suddenly I was a burden. (88, woman)

Some young people also indicated that, in their opinion, politics does not take them into account sufficiently. Especially during COVID, young people often felt forgotten by policies.

Testimony from a focus group discussion on gender: There was a lot of talk about young people being all alone because they were not necessarily in a relationship, etc., and being alone at home, having a very difficult time, having severe depression, even depression in the youngest ones. (52, woman)

In addition, some young people indicate that as minors they feel strongly dependent (e.g. on their parents) and that they perceive it as discriminatory that they cannot yet claim some rights or do some things themselves.

4.3 Society is not adapted to (ageing) persons with disabilities

Finally, the focus group discussion with persons with disabilities referred to the fact that society is not sufficiently adapted to persons with disabilities, whether this disability is the result of ageing or becomes more pronounced with age.

Testimony from a focus group discussion with persons with disabilities: Yes, because the older you get, the worse it gets. There is nothing you can do about it, I find that age makes the disability worse. So there is a link between the two. [...] I think the world is really becoming less and less accessible to persons with disabilities, whether that's a mental disability or an older person whose disability worsens. There is more and more talk about inclusion, but I see more and more exclusion. (64, woman)

For people who are at the intersection of age and disability, this has a big impact. Several persons with disabilities indicate that they are thinking about euthanasia in old age because they anticipate that they will no longer find the help they need when their disability worsens.

Testimony from a focus group discussion with persons with disabilities: When I see all this, it is clear that my life will be over in 5, 10 or 15 years, when I no longer have my quality of life. Everything I do: [lists all the volunteering work she does], the day that I can no longer leave my house and depend on the nurse who comes to give an injection, who at least wants to help me go to the toilet, if she doesn't say, "Madam, you have a diaper, just go in there", because they already told me that once in the hospital, when I was 40. [...] So on the day that I don't have my quality of life anymore, I leave. [...] Because society doesn't make me want to stay. It actually scares me. [...] I don't want old age. I don't want to grow old and I have planned euthanasia for myself, because when I see how society functions, it is getting worse. [...] I don't want to be a burden to my family, I already am even though I don't ask anything from them, I'm not going to ask anything later either, so with my disability I refuse to grow old. Because when I see how society treats us, it doesn't take care of us, I'd rather leave. It's not stressful for me, I've already given it a lot of thought, but this decision is linked to the way society works. (55, woman)