

2021 Profile of LGBTQ Home Buyers and Sellers

National Association of REALTORS®
Research Group



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Introduction

A February 2021 Gallup estimate suggests that the proportion of U.S. adults who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or genderqueer/non-binary has increased steadily from 3.5 percent in 2012 to 4.5 in 2017 to 5.6 percent in 2021, representing almost 19 million U.S. adults. This increase was driven partly by Millennials, born between 1980 and 1996: the proportion of this generation who identified as LGBTQ rose from 5.8 percent in 2012 to nine percent in 2021. The proportion of Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2002, is even higher: 15 percent identify as LGBTQ.

NAR first added a question about sexual orientation to its annual *Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers* study in 2015. The percentage of home buyers and sellers who identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual has held steady at four percent since 2015. NAR added questions regarding gender and gender identity in 2019, and while transgender and gender non-binary individuals made up less than one percent of buyers and sellers, they are at least eight percent of those identifying as LGBTQ. Given that Millennials now make up 37 percent of home buyers (*2020 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers*), and given further shifting attitudes regarding orientation and identity among Generation Z, the proportion of buyers and sellers identifying as LGBTQ is likely to increase as well. NAR Research studies buyer behavior and characteristics of dozens of demographic profiles. This was a population of buyers NAR felt was important to study as a growing segment in order to better inform members and the public.

This report examines data from 2015 to 2020. Differences are examined by LGBTQ, Non-LGBTQ, Lesbian and Gay, and Bisexual buyers and sellers. There were distinct differences between LGBTQ and Non-LGBTQ home buyers and sellers. LGBTQ buyers and sellers were less likely to be married couples than others and more likely to be single men and unmarried couples. They were more likely to identify as male than as female,* and more likely to be in one-person households. They purchased older and smaller homes than Non-LGBTQ buyers and sellers, and were more likely to have done so in urban areas. They expect to live in their new homes five years less than Non-LGBTQ buyers.

**Because gender was added only two years ago, the report combines Lesbian and Gay buyers and sellers into one group to ensure adequate sample sizes for both buyers and sellers. Data points related to gender represent 2019 and 2020 data only.*

Introduction

There were also significant differences for those who identified as bisexual. Some of these differences were factors of age: the typical bisexual home buyer or seller was 34, vs. 45 among lesbians and gay men and 46 among Non-LGBTQs. Bisexuals were less likely to identify as White/Caucasian, more likely to identify as Hispanic/Latino, and more likely than lesbians and gay men to cite a primary household language other than English, reflecting the increasing diversity of younger U.S. adults. But some of these differences show patterns related not to age, but to gender: two-thirds of bisexual buyers were female, while two-thirds of lesbian or gay buyers were male. Bisexuals were more likely to report single-income households than other home buyers, even when controlling for age, and they are more likely than lesbians or gay men to report children in the household. Bisexuals across age groups were more likely than others to be first-time home buyers, to report lower incomes, and to be single females. And bisexuals spent less than other home buyers on the homes they purchased, regardless of age.



Highlights: LGBTQ vs. Non-LGBTQ

LGBTQ Buyers/Sellers

- More likely to be first-time home buyers
- Lower median age (42), income (\$93,200), and purchased home price (\$245,000)
- More likely to identify as male (51 percent) than female (40 percent); eight percent are gender non-binary
- Most likely married couples, but one-fifth each are unmarried couples and single males
- Typically two-person households, but more likely than Non-LGBTQ to be one-person households
- Less likely to have purchased a multi-generational home; more likely to have purchased a townhouse, row house, duplex or condo
- Median square footage of purchased home is 1,730 sq. ft.; median year built is 1977
- More likely than Non-LGBTQ to have purchased in urban areas/central cities
- Expect to stay in newly-purchased home for 10 years
- More likely to place importance on convenience to entertainment, leisure and veterinarian

Non-LGBTQ Buyers/Sellers

- As likely as LGBTQ to be first-time home sellers
- Higher median age (46) and income (\$97,000), and purchased home price (\$268,000)
- Slightly more likely to identify as male (51 percent) than female (49 percent).
- Almost twice as likely as LGBTQ buyers/sellers to be married
- Typically two-person households
- More likely to have purchased a detached single-family home
- Median square footage of purchased home is 1,900 sq. ft.; median year built is 1992
- More likely than LGBTQ to have purchased in small towns or rural areas
- Expect to stay in new home for 15 years
- Less likely to place importance on affordability and more likely to place importance on convenience to family/friends

Highlights: Lesbian/Gay vs. Bisexual

Lesbian/Gay Buyers/Sellers

- Less likely to be first-time home buyers and sellers
- Higher median age (45), income (\$96,500), and home price (\$250,000)
- Almost twice as likely to be male/gay (64 percent) as female/lesbian (34 percent)
- One-quarter (26 percent) are single males
- Less likely to have children in the household
- Over half (57 percent) have two income earners
- Most likely of all groups to identify as White/Caucasian
- Median square footage of purchased home is 1,750 sq. ft.; median year built is 1977
- More likely to place importance on quality of neighborhood and convenience to entertainment and leisure
- Most likely of all groups to have made no compromises on home purchased
- Most likely of all groups to have used a conventional loan; least likely to have used a VA loan

Bisexual Buyers/Sellers

- Most likely of all groups to be first-time home buyers and sellers
- Lower median age (34), income (\$78,100) and home price (\$215,000)
- Almost twice as likely to be female (63 percent) as male (35 percent)
- One-third (32 percent) are single females
- Twice as likely to have children in the household
- Almost half (46 percent) have one income earner
- Most likely of all groups to identify as Hispanic/Latino
- Median square footage of purchased home is 1,600 sq. ft.; median year built is 1974
- More likely to place importance on convenience to jobs and overall affordability
- Most likely of all groups to have made at least one compromise on home purchased
- Most likely of all groups to have used FHA and VA loans

Demographics

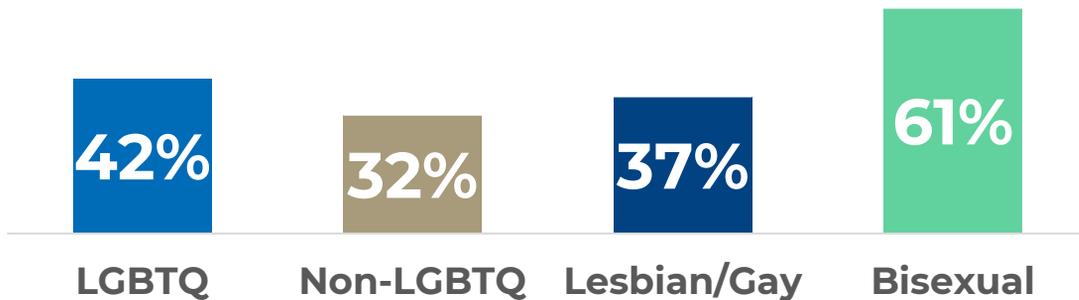


First-Time Buyers and Sellers

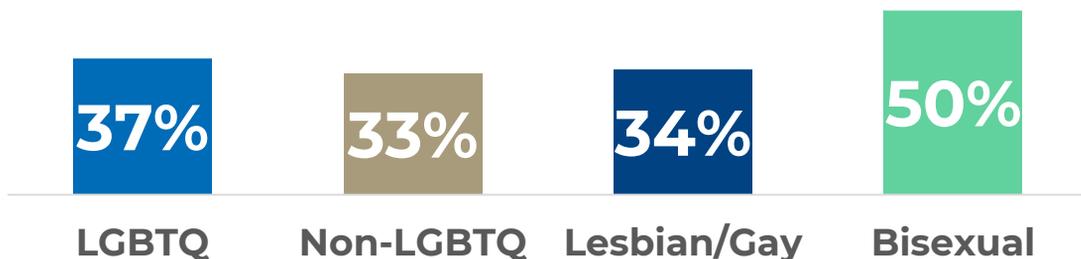
LGBTQ buyers were more likely than Non-LGBTQ buyers to be first-time home buyers, but about equally likely to be first-time home sellers.

Bisexual buyers were more likely to be first-time home buyers and sellers than Lesbian and Gay or Non-LGBTQ buyers or sellers. This was true regardless of the age of the buyer.

First-Time Home Buyers



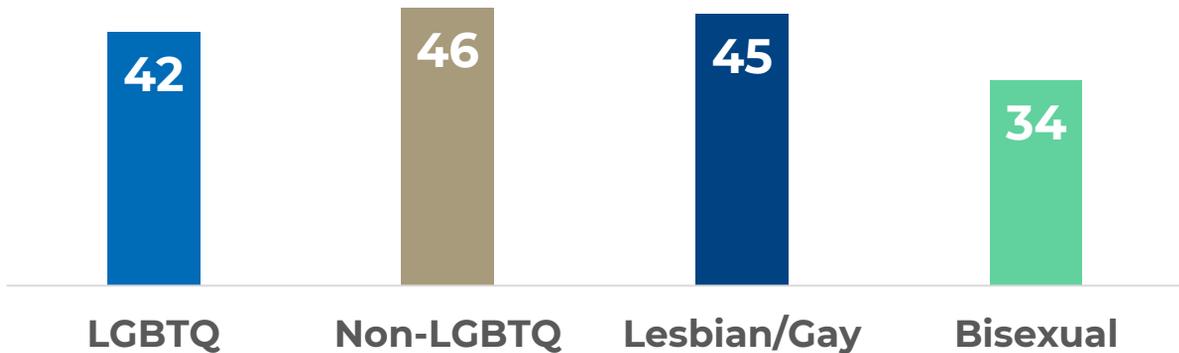
First-Time Home Sellers



Age and Income

LGBTQ buyers and sellers were slightly younger and earned slightly less in the previous year than Non-LGBTQ home buyers and sellers. Bisexuals were younger and earned significantly less than both Lesbian and Gay and Non-LGBTQ buyers and sellers.

Median Age

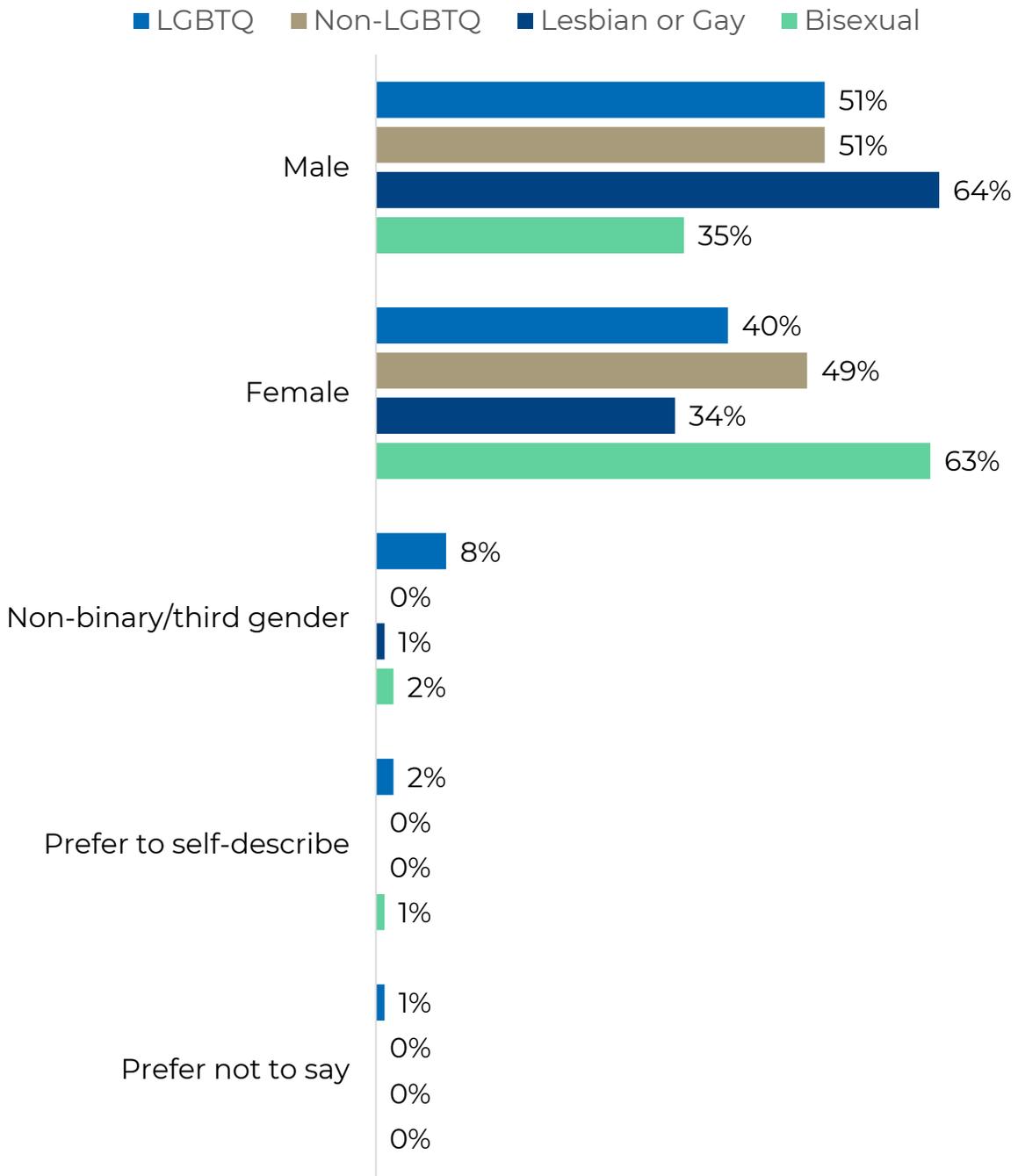


Income

	LGBTQ	Non-LGBTQ	Lesbian/Gay	Bisexual
Less than \$45,000	12%	12%	10%	22%
\$45,000 - \$74,999	24%	23%	23%	29%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	19%	19%	20%	14%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	22%	25%	23%	20%
\$150,000 or more	23%	22%	24%	14%
MEDIAN	\$93,200	\$97,000	\$96,500	\$78,100

Gender Identity*

LGBTQ buyers and sellers are more likely to self-describe as male than as female. Two-thirds of Lesbian and Gay buyers and sellers are male, while two-thirds of Bisexual buyers are female. Eight percent of LGBTQ buyers and sellers identify as non-binary, gender-nonconforming or third gender. Less than one percent identified as transgender.**

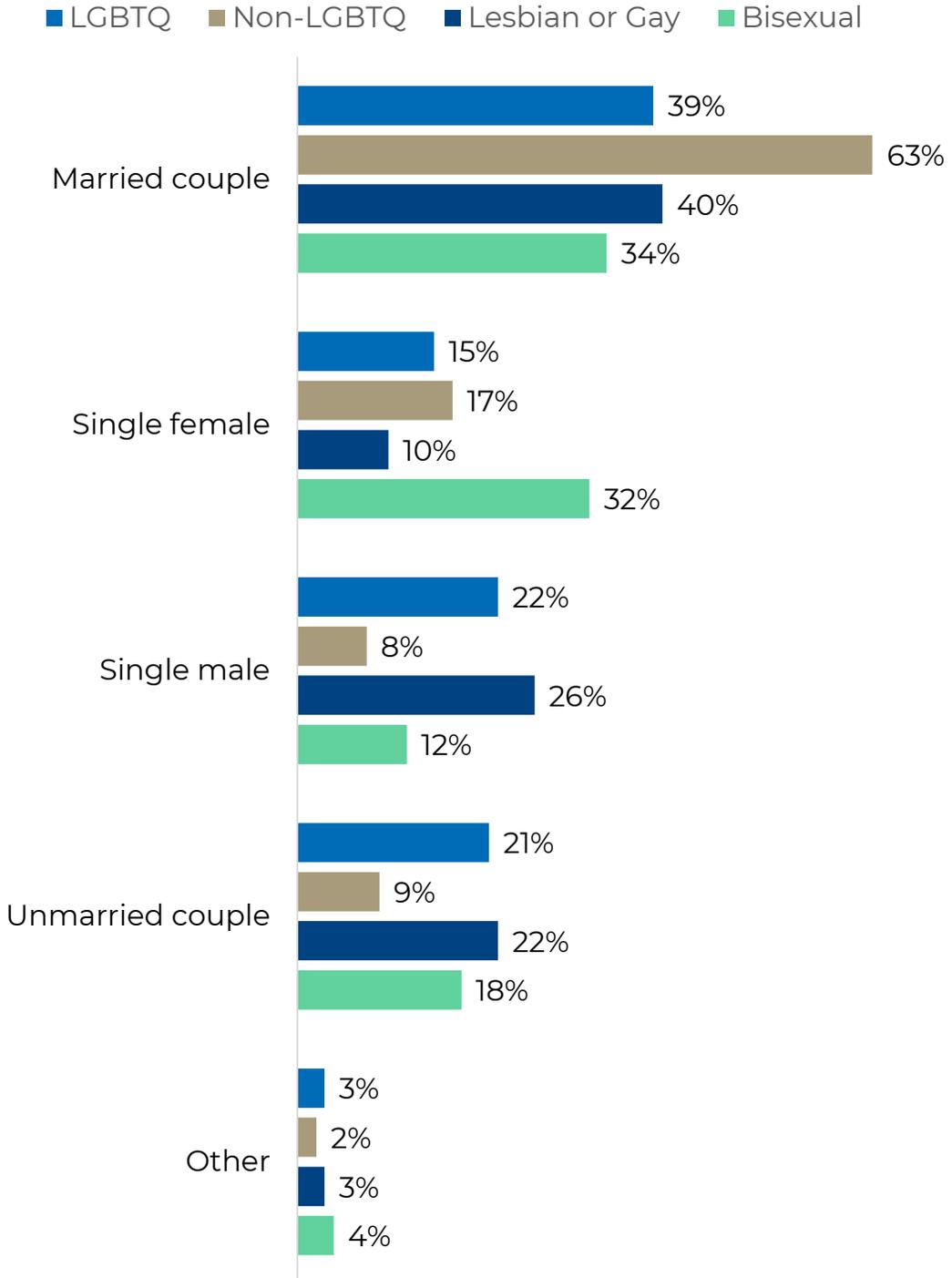


*Based on 2019 and 2020 data.

**Asked as a separate question: "Do you identify as transgender?" Based on 2019 and 2020 data.

Marital Status

LGBTQ buyers and sellers were almost half as likely as non-LGBTQ to be married couples, and as likely to be unmarried couples as to be single males. One-third of bisexual buyers were single females, while 26 percent of Lesbian/Gay buyers/sellers were single males. Lesbian and Gay buyers/sellers were the most likely to be unmarried couples.

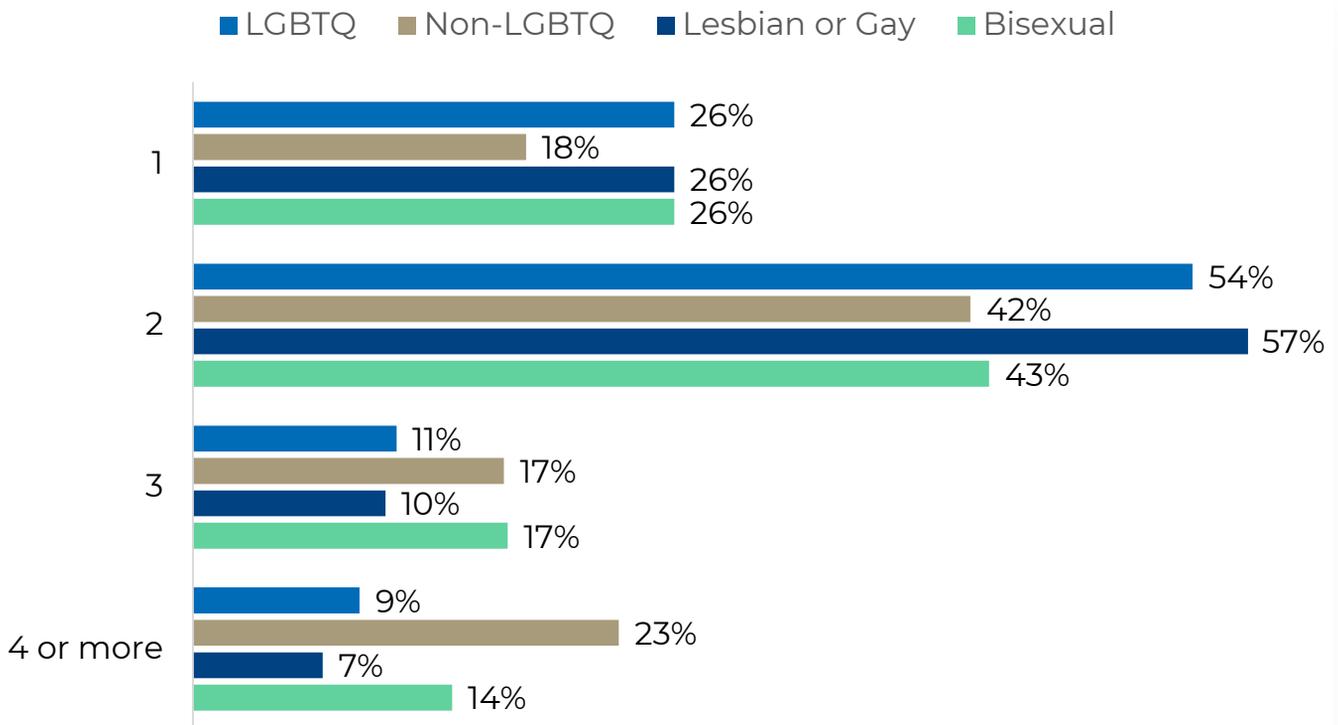


Household Size and Children in Household

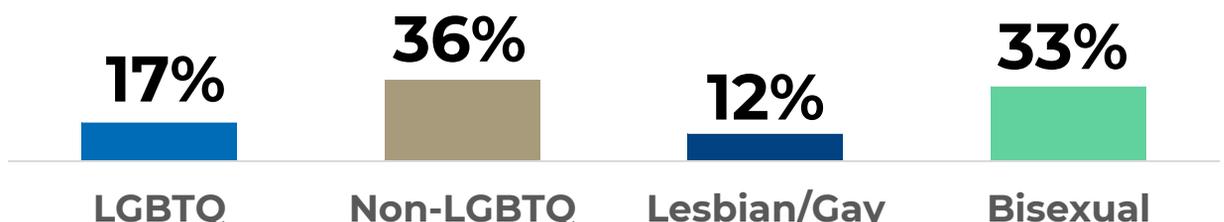
The typical household had two people, regardless of orientation or identity. However, Lesbian/Gay buyers were most likely to have two-person households, and least likely to have households of more than two. They were also one-third as likely to have children in the household.

Bisexual buyers were almost as likely as Non-LGBTQ buyers to report children in the household, but equally as likely as other LGBTQ buyers to report household sizes of one.

Household Size Median = 2 (All Categories)



Children Under the Age of 18 in Household

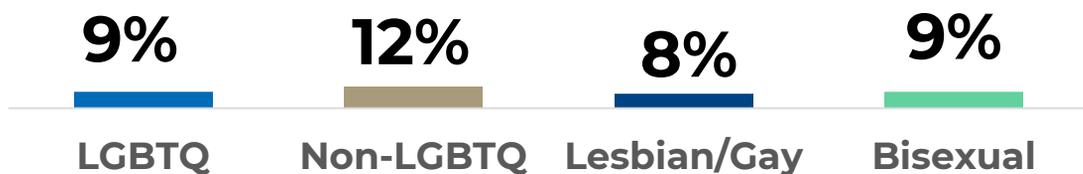


Multi-Generational Homes and Number of Income Earners

LGBTQ buyers were less likely than Non-LGBTQ to have purchased a multi-generational home housing more than themselves and children under 18.

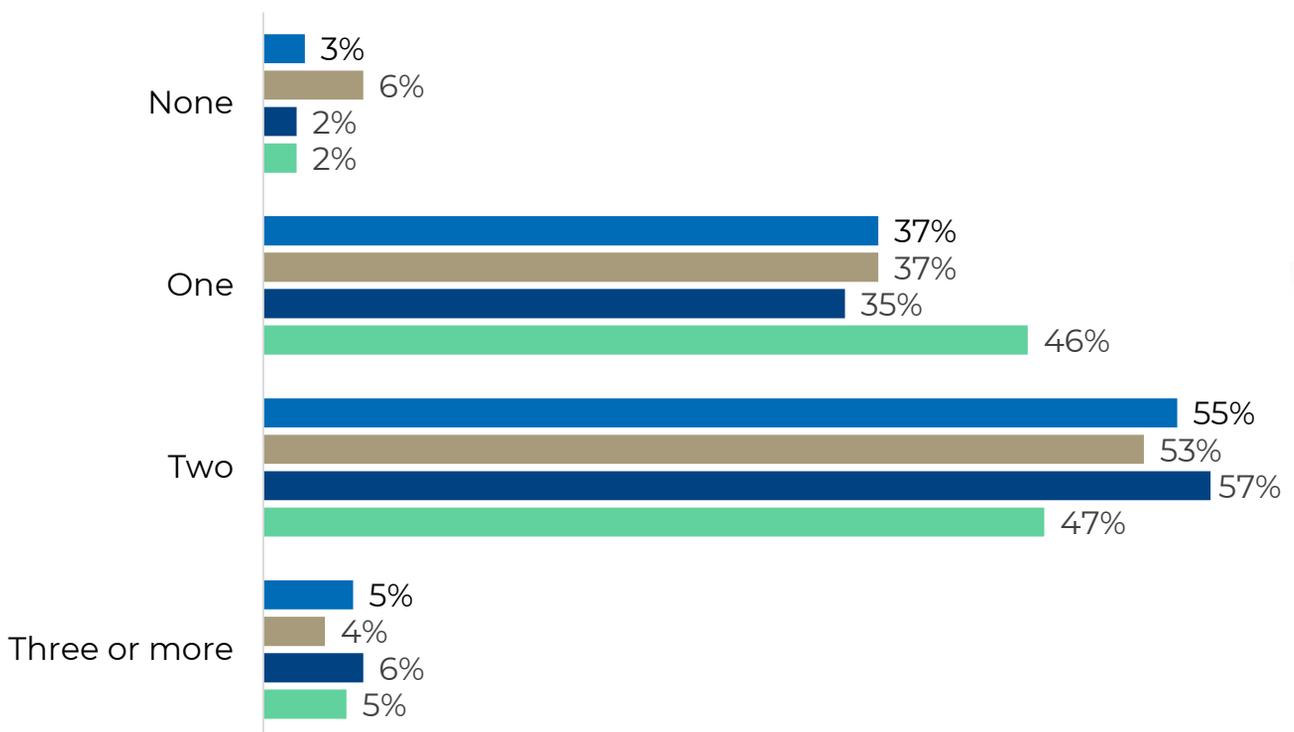
Almost half of Bisexual buyers reported only one income earner in their household, vs. one-third of all other groups.

Multi-Generational Homes



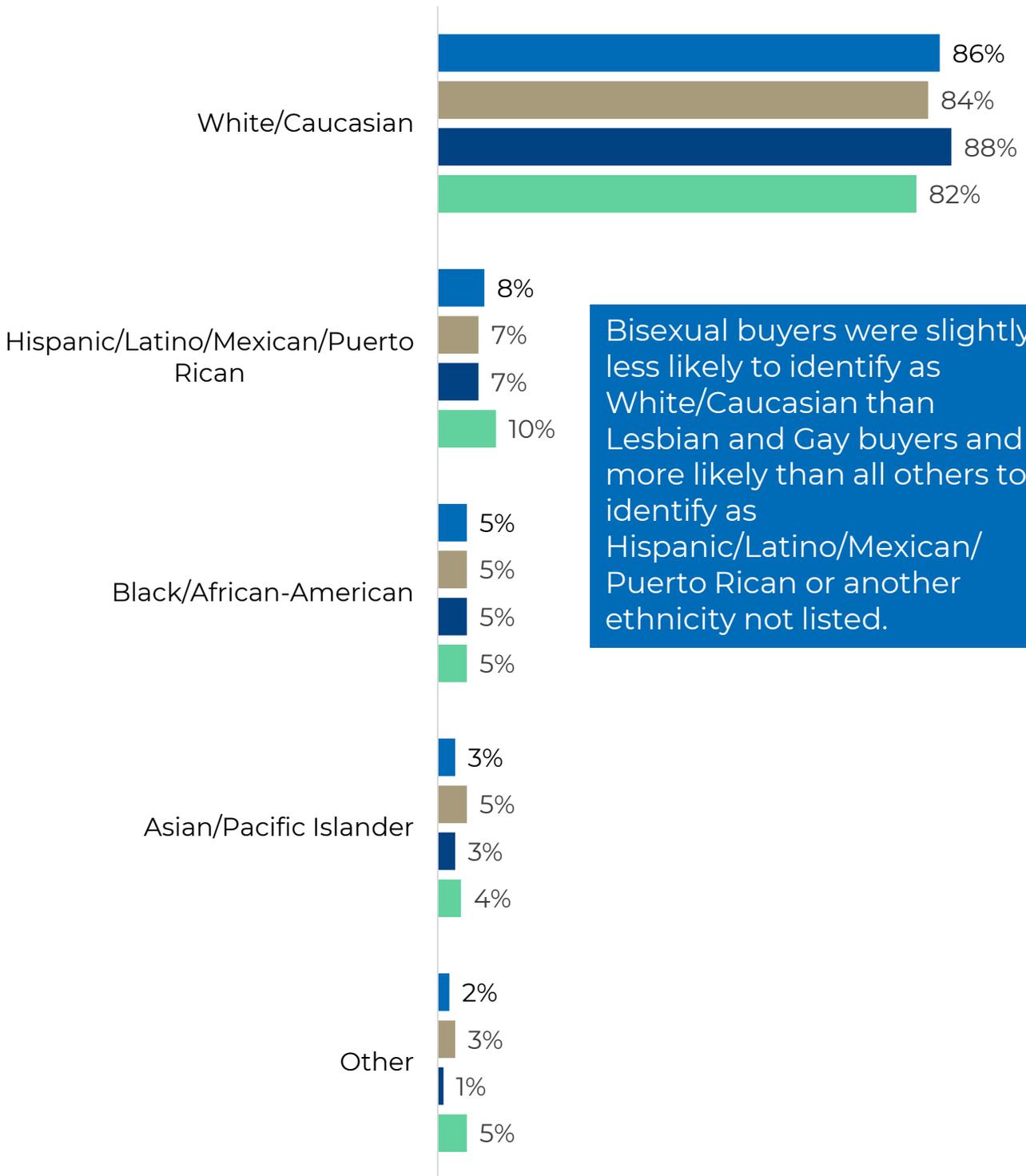
Number of Income Earners Median = 2 (All Categories)

■ LGBTQ ■ Non-LGBTQ ■ Lesbian or Gay ■ Bisexual



Race/Ethnicity

■ LGBTQ ■ Non-LGBTQ ■ Lesbian or Gay ■ Bisexual



Bisexual buyers were slightly less likely to identify as White/Caucasian than Lesbian and Gay buyers and more likely than all others to identify as Hispanic/Latino/Mexican/Puerto Rican or another ethnicity not listed.

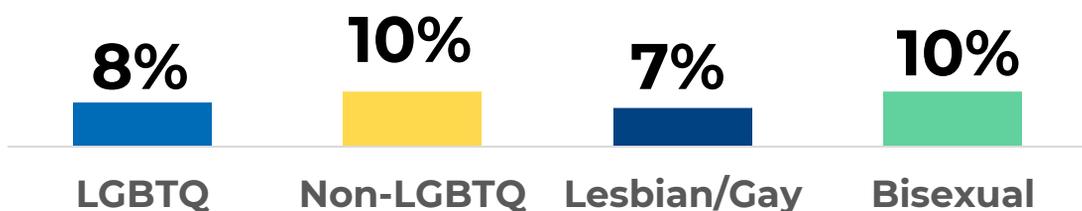
Primary Language Other Than English and Born Outside the U.S.

Both Non-LGBTQ and Bisexual buyers were more likely than Lesbian or Gay buyers to speak a primary language other than English and to be born outside the U.S.

Primary Household Language Other Than English



Born Outside the U.S.

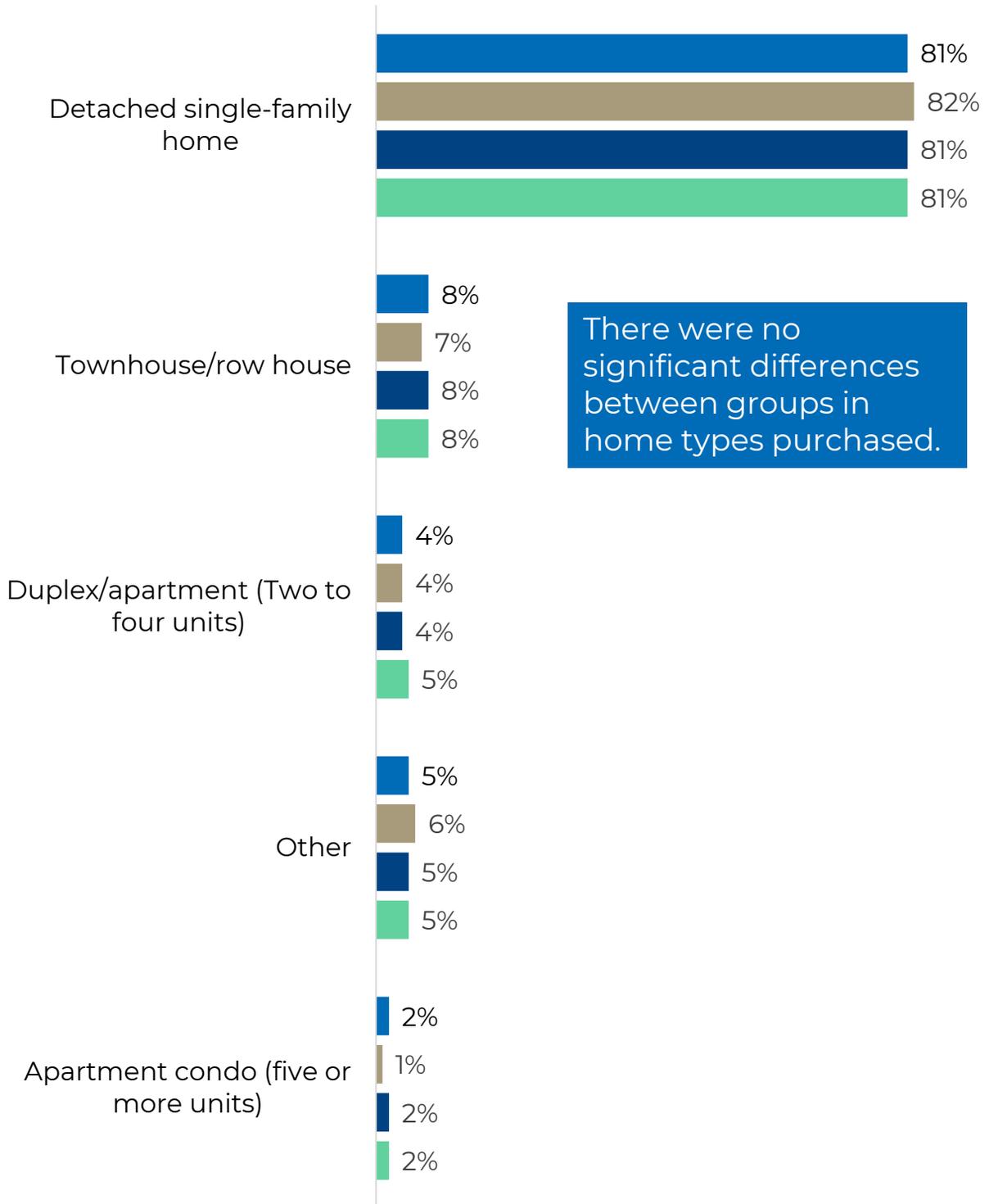


Homes Purchased



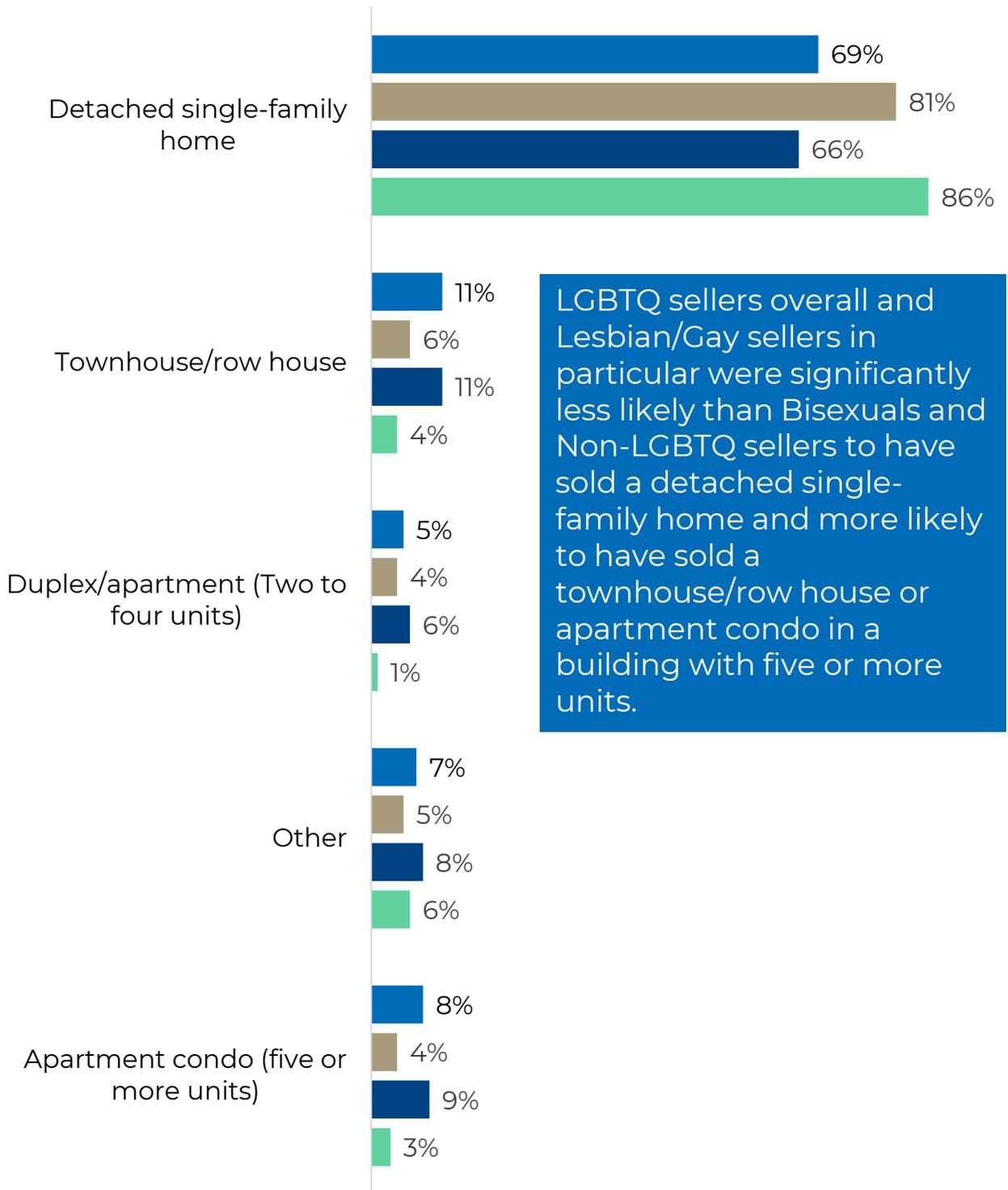
Home Type Purchased

■ LGBTQ ■ Non-LGBTQ ■ Lesbian or Gay ■ Bisexual



Home Type Sold or Selling

■ LGBTQ ■ Non-LGBTQ ■ Lesbian or Gay ■ Bisexual

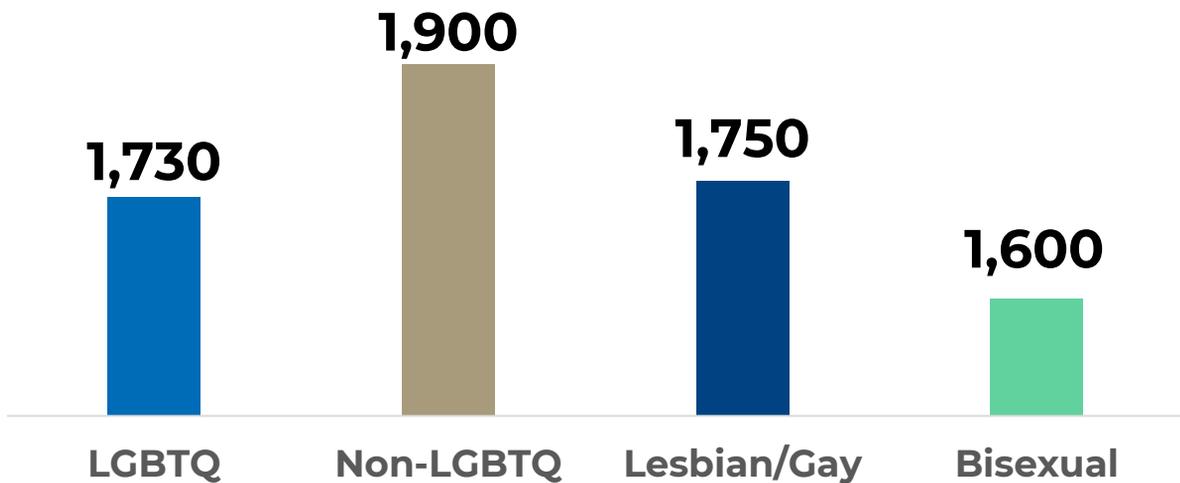


LGBTQ sellers overall and Lesbian/Gay sellers in particular were significantly less likely than Bisexuals and Non-LGBTQ sellers to have sold a detached single-family home and more likely to have sold a townhouse/row house or apartment condo in a building with five or more units.

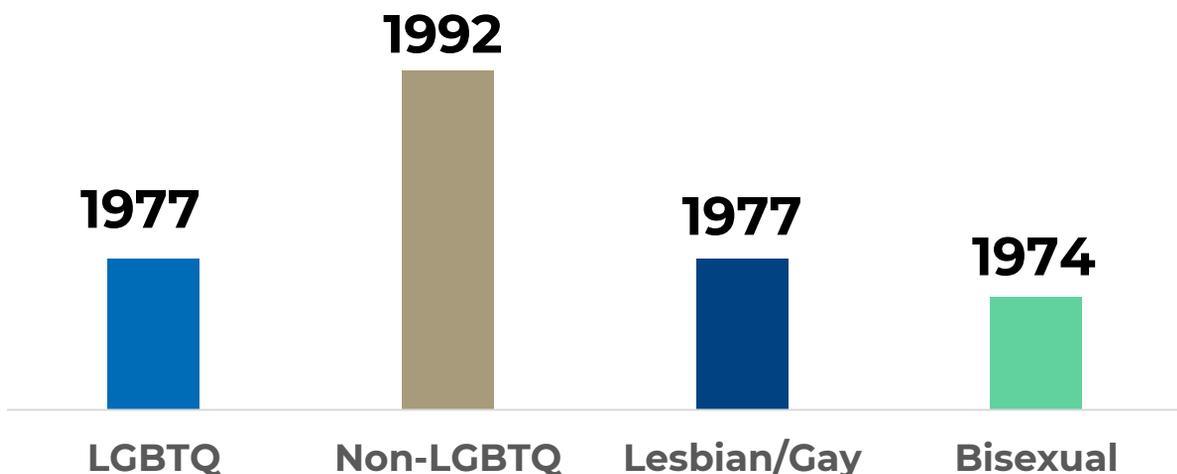
Home Size and Year Built

LGBTQ buyers purchased older and smaller homes than Non-LGBTQ buyers, with Bisexuals purchasing the smallest and oldest.

Median Square Footage

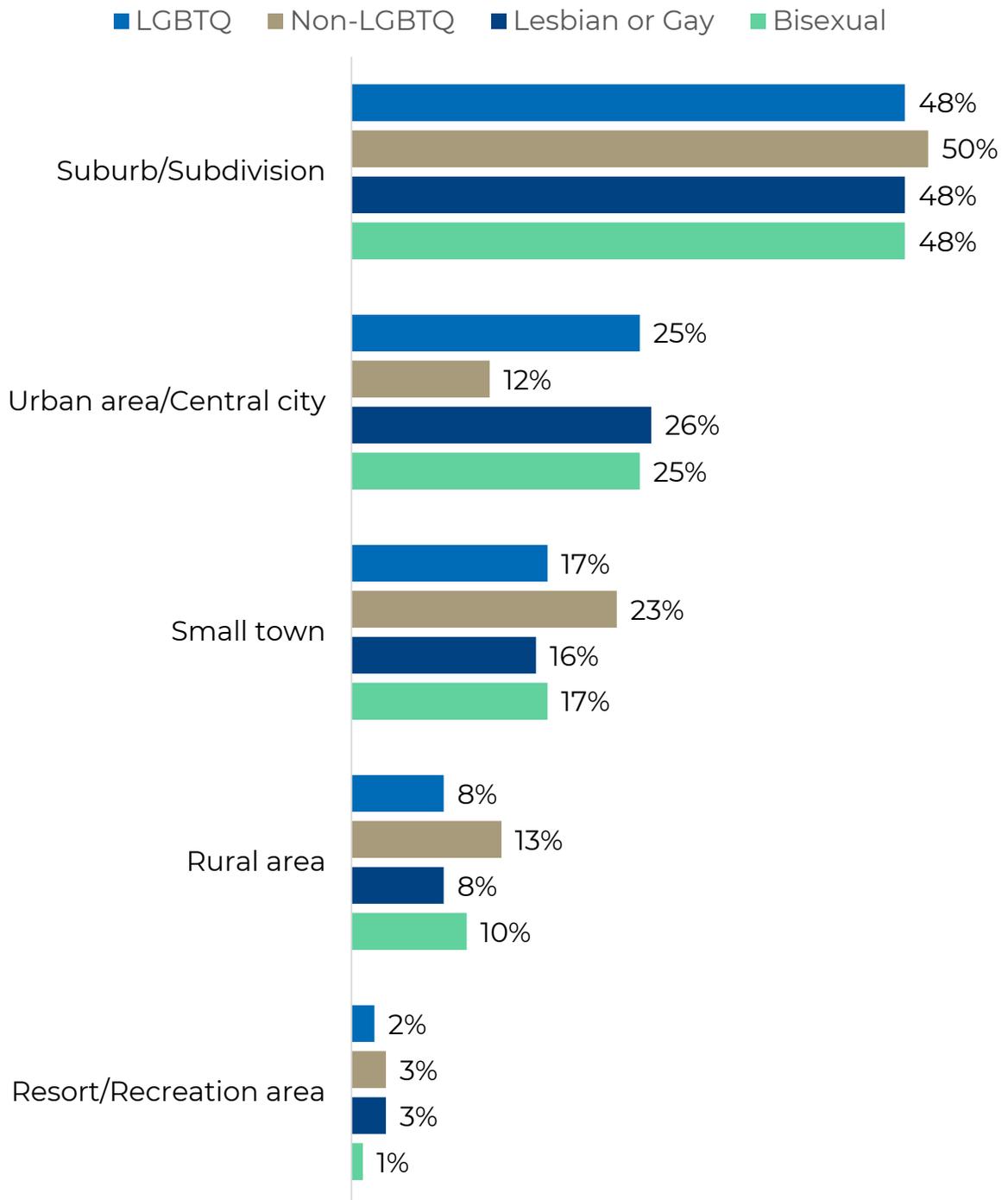


Median Year Built



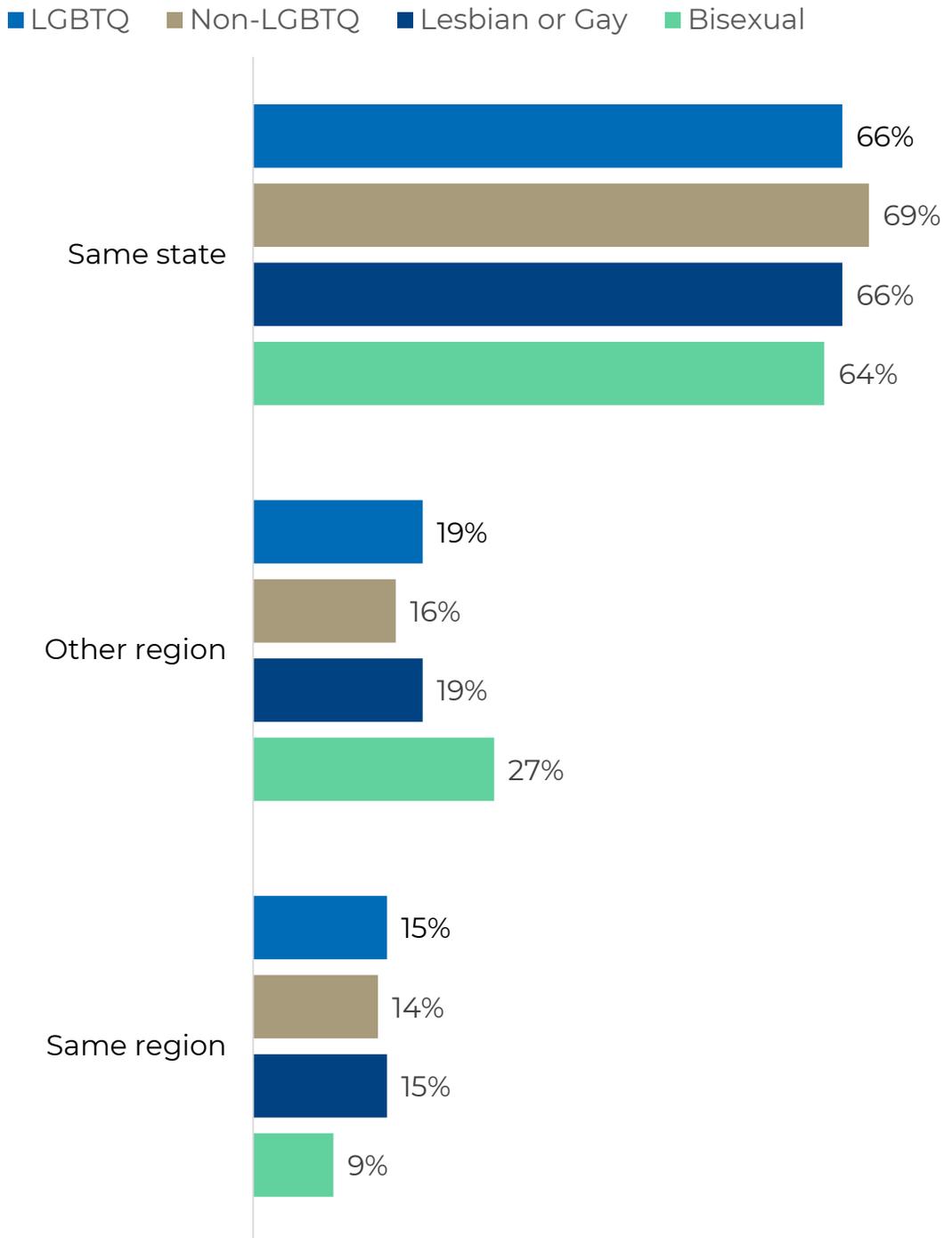
Home Location

LGBTQ buyers were much more likely to have purchased in urban areas/central cities and less likely to have bought in small towns or rural areas. All groups were equally likely to have purchased in a suburb or subdivision.



Proximity to Previous Home

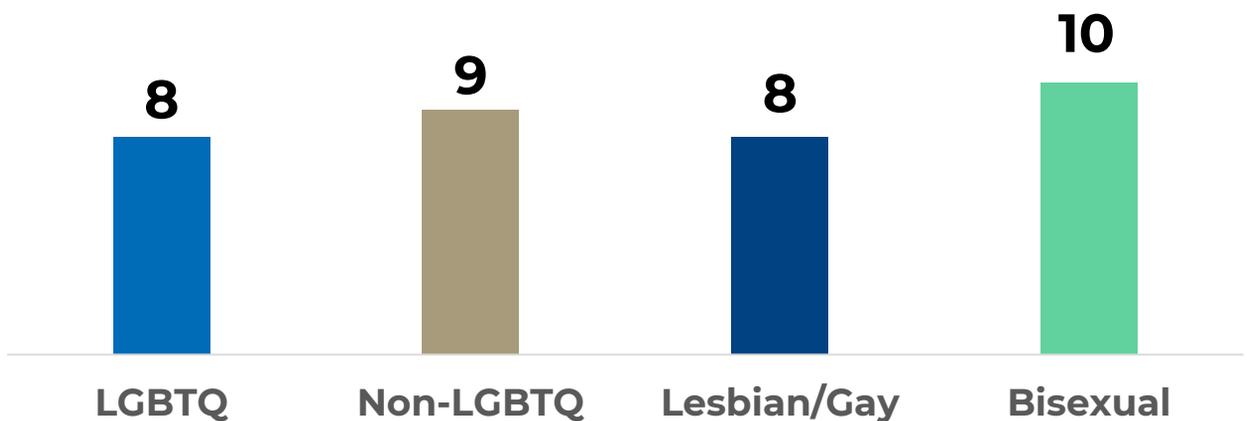
Bisexual buyers were more likely to have moved to another region than Lesbian and Gay, Non-LGBTQ, and LGBTQ buyers overall. This is a function, however, of the lower age of Bisexuals: this difference disappears for buyers over 35.



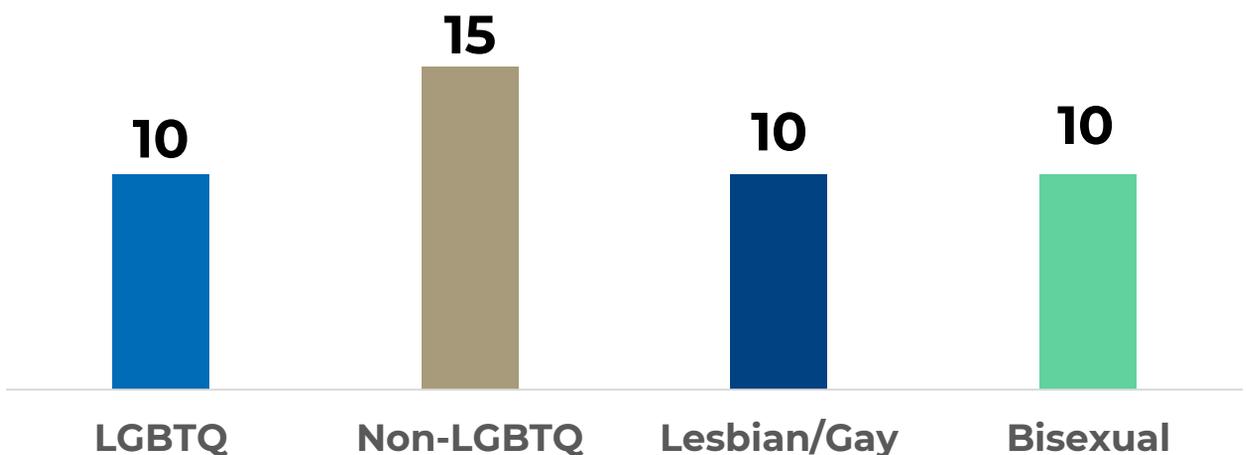
Length of Home Search and Years Expected to Own

Bisexual buyers searched longer than Lesbian and Gay or Non-LGBTQ buyers for their home. LGBTQ buyers overall expected to spend significantly less time in the new home than Non-LGBTQ buyers.

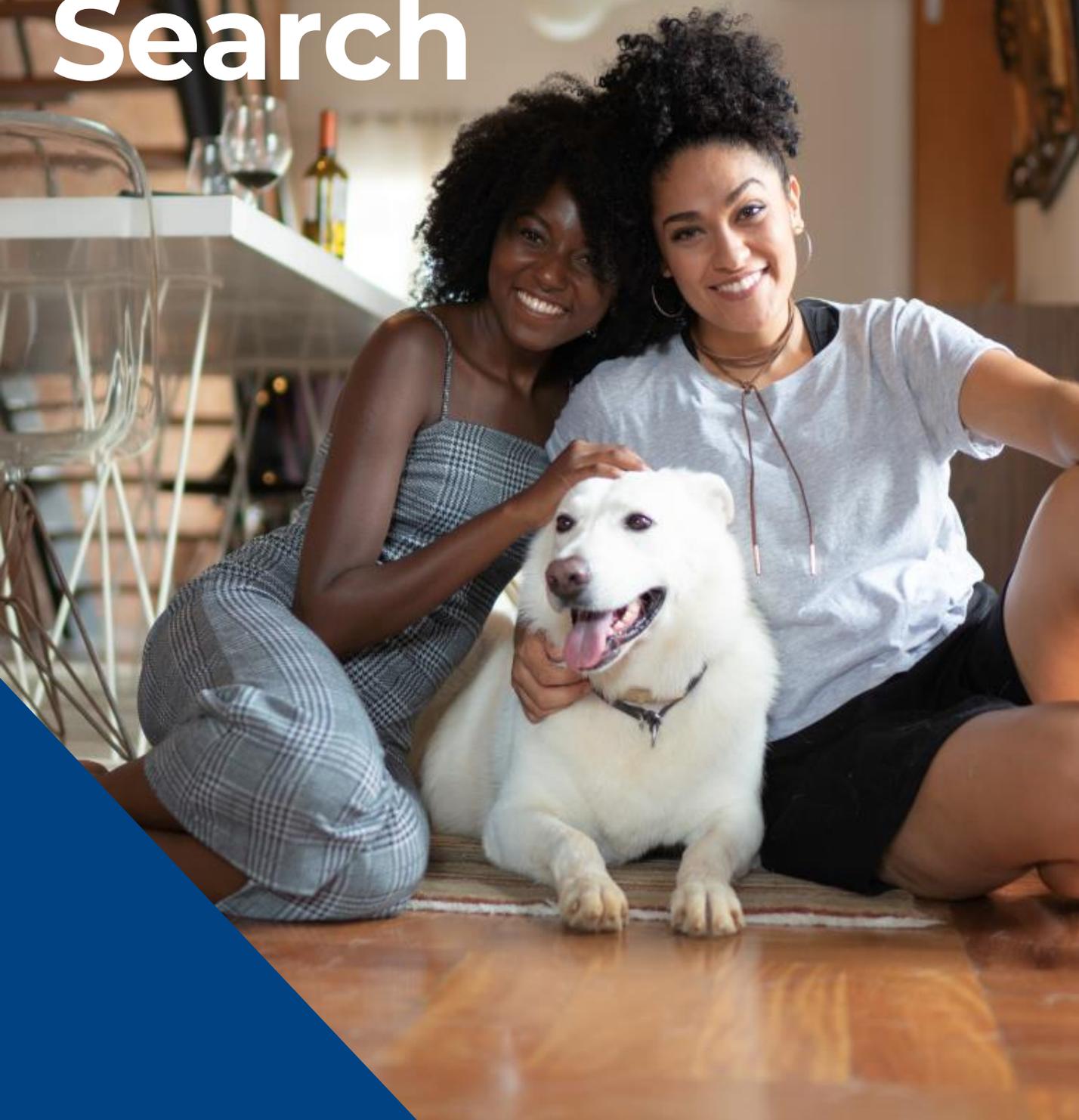
Median Length of Search (Weeks)



Years Expected to Own New Home

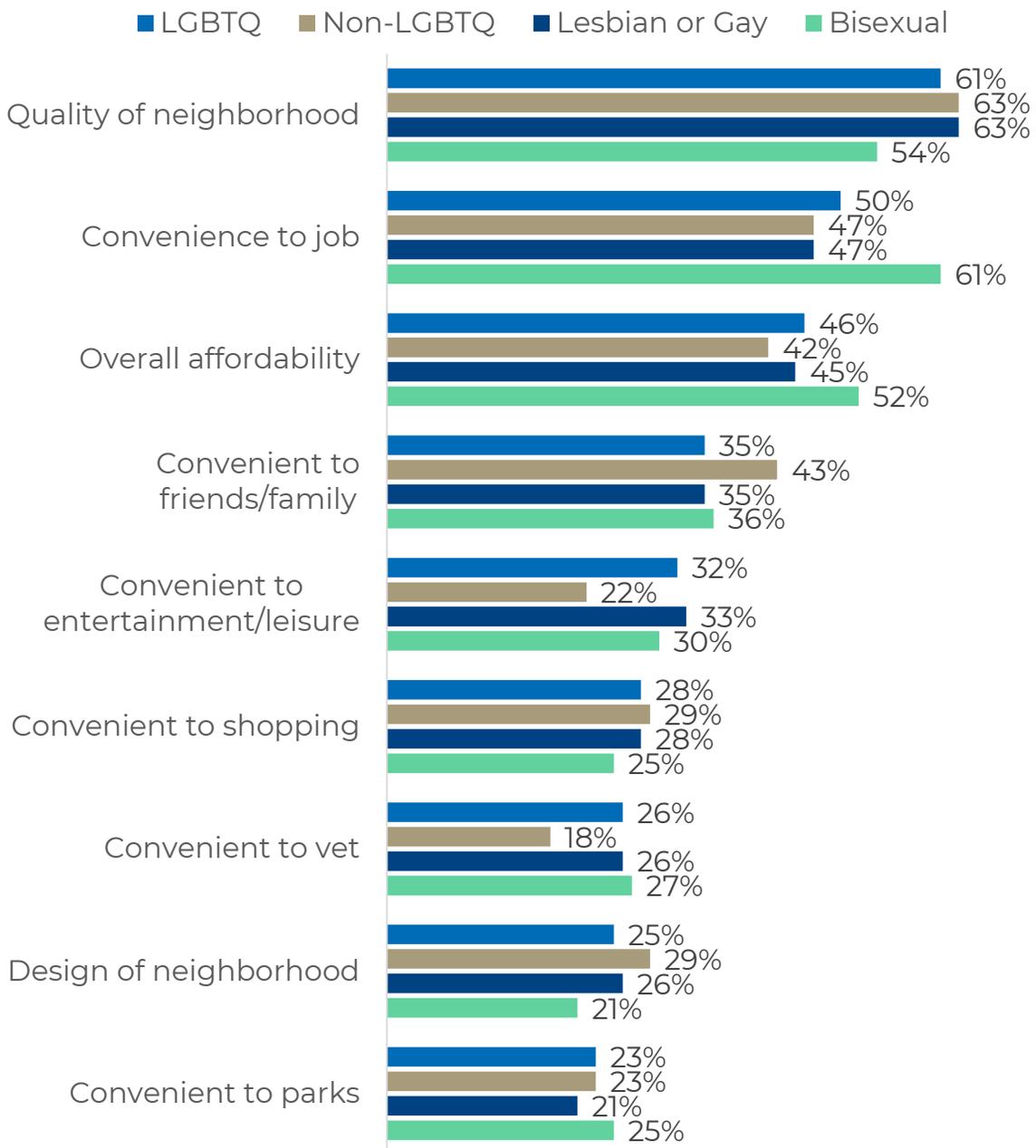


Considerations in Home Search



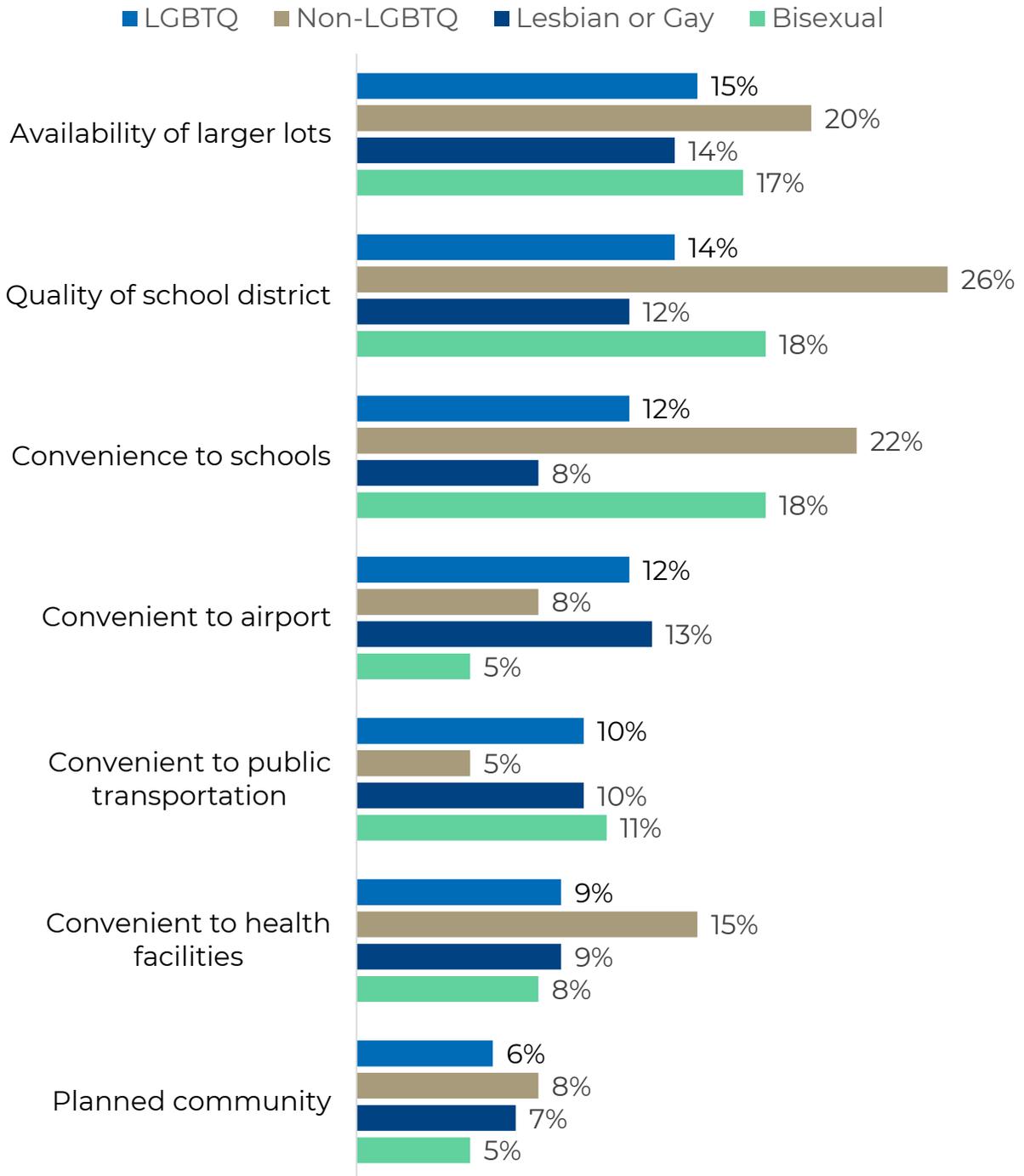
Most Important in Considering Neighborhoods

The three most important qualities were the same for all groups. However, Bisexual buyers were the most likely to place importance on convenience to their jobs. They also placed higher importance on overall affordability and less importance on the quality of the neighborhood. LGBTQ buyers overall were less concerned than non-LGBTQ about convenience to friends and family and placed higher importance on convenience to entertainment and leisure and to a vet.



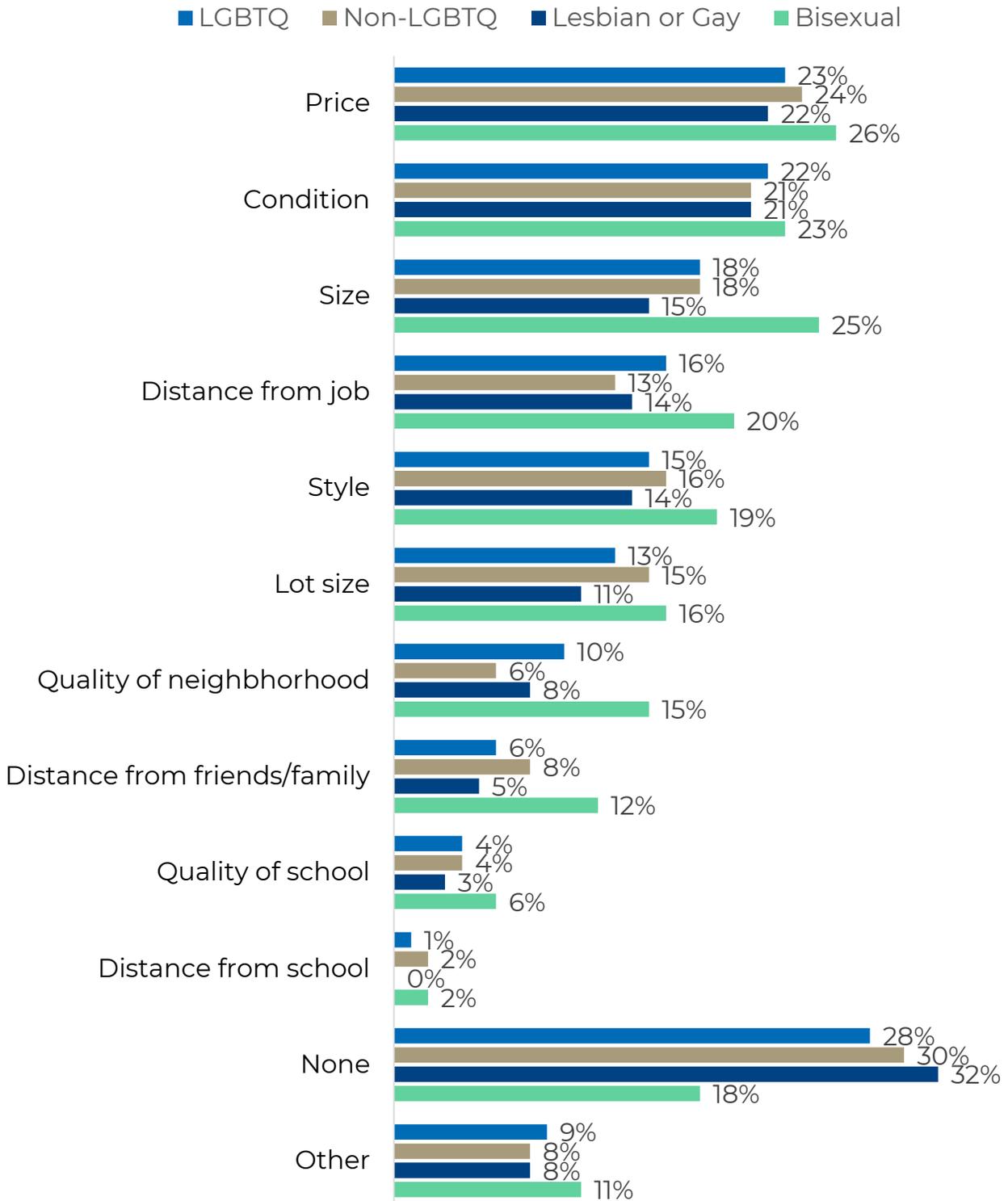
Less Important in Considering Neighborhoods

LGBTQ buyers were less likely than non-LGBTQ buyers to place importance on the availability of larger lots, the quality of school districts, and convenience to schools and health facilities, and were more likely to place importance on convenience to an airport and public transportation.



Compromises on Home Purchased

Bisexual buyers were much more likely to have made at least one compromise on the home they purchased: most likely on size, price or condition. They were also significantly more likely to have compromised on the quality of the neighborhood and distance from friends and family.



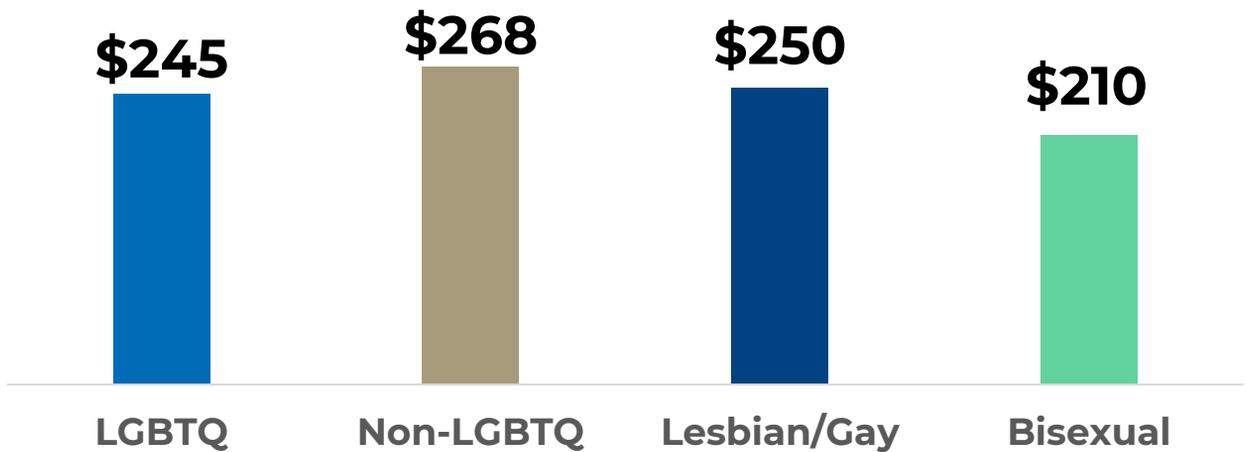


Prices, Mortgages and Loan Types

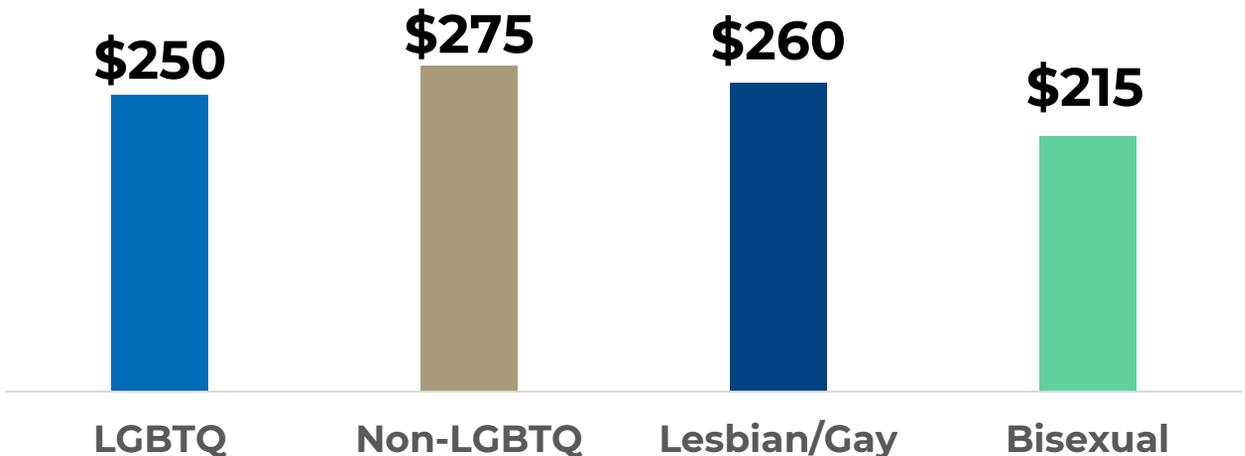
Purchase and Asking Prices

While there were no significant differences between Lesbian and Gay buyers and Non-LGBTQ buyers or between LGBTQ and Non-LGBTQ buyers overall, Bisexuals spent measurably less than other groups and placed offers on less expensive homes.

Median Purchase Price (in Thousands)

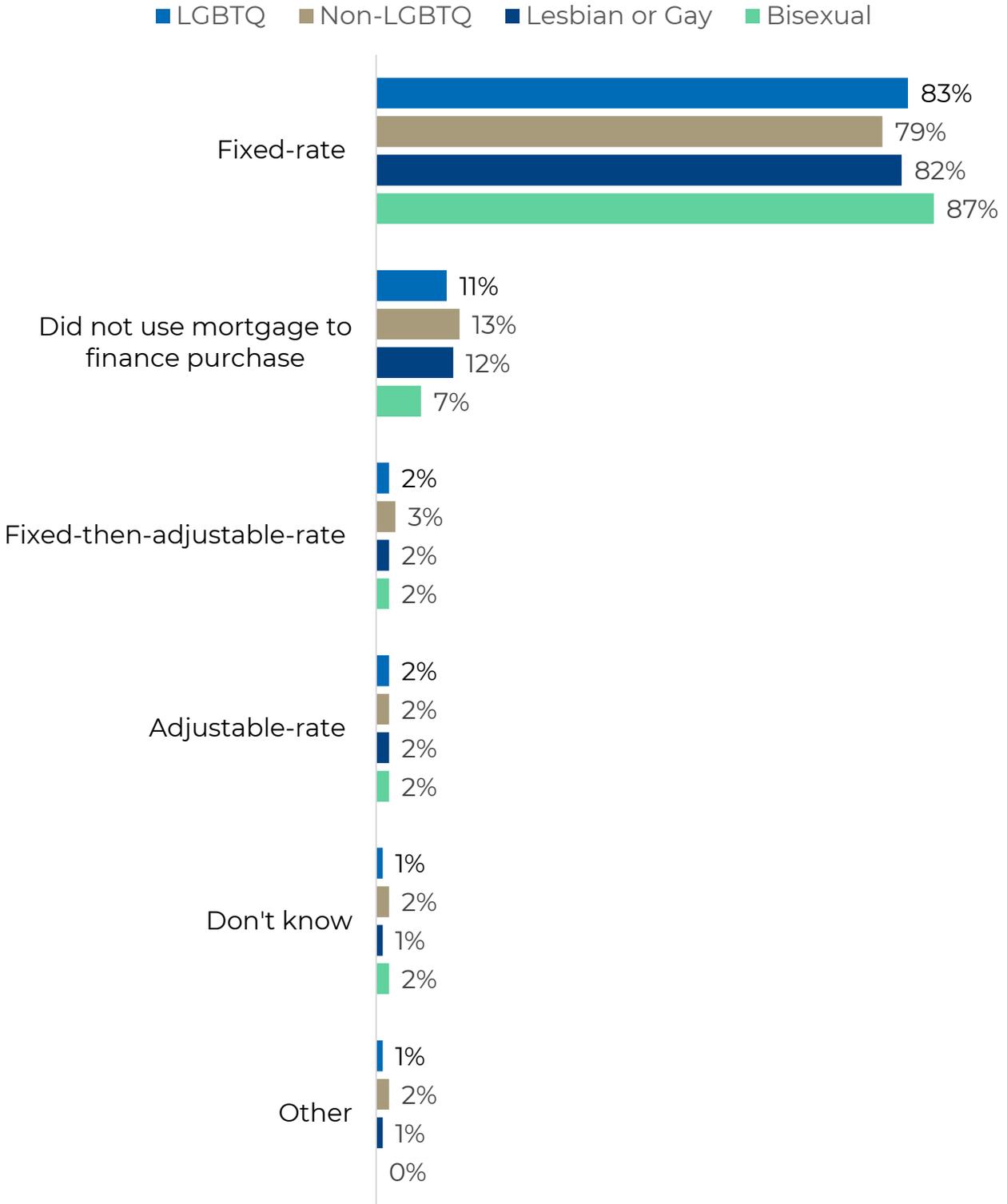


Median Asking Price (in Thousands)



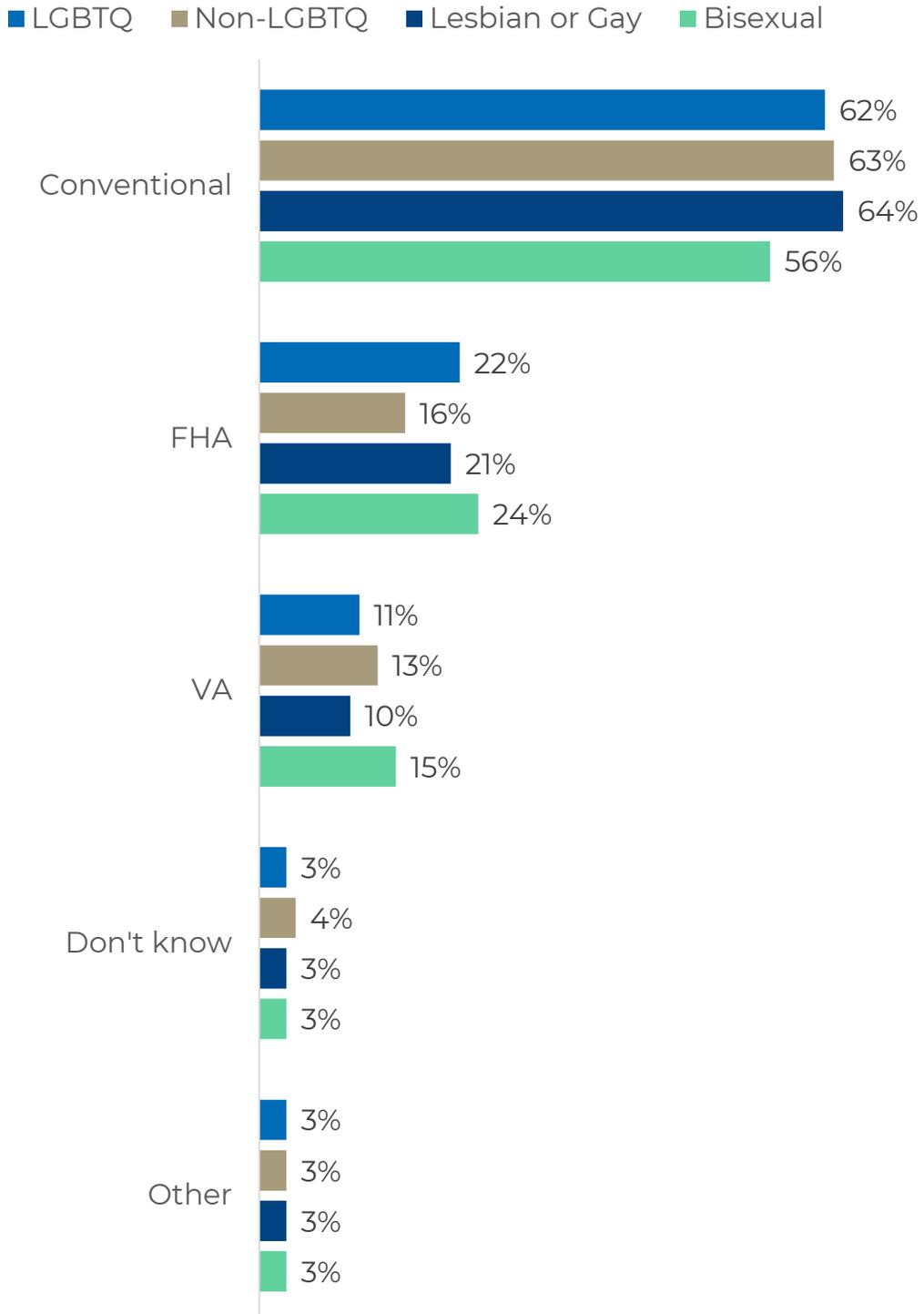
Mortgage Type

LGBTQ buyers overall were more likely than Non-LGBTQ buyers to have financed at least part of their purchased with a mortgage. Bisexual buyers were the most likely to have used a fixed-rate mortgage.



Loan Type

LGBTQ buyers overall were more likely than Non-LGBTQ buyers to have used FHA loans. Non-LGBTQ buyers and Bisexual buyers were more likely to have used VA loans than Lesbian and Gay buyers and LGBTQ buyers overall. Bisexual buyers were least likely to have used a conventional loan.



Methodology

Profile of LGBTQ Home Buyers and Sellers:

Each year in July, NAR mails out a 131-question survey using a random sample weighted to be representative of sales on a geographic basis to recent home buyers. The recent home buyers have purchased a primary residence home between July of the past year and June of the current year.

The data used for this report is an aggregation of all of the responses from those who specified sexual orientation from the 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 HBS surveys, totaling 41,950 responses. Just over four percent of all respondents qualified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Gender Non-Binary/GenderQueer (LGBTQ) in the following proportions: Lesbian or Gay (LG) (3 percent), Bisexual (B) (1 percent), and Transgender or Queer (genderqueer/non-binary) (.2 percent combined). The total sample of LBGTQ buyers and sellers was 1,574 individuals. The question “Do you identify as transgender?” was added to the 2019 survey. Gender was also added as a question in 2019, including the response option “non-binary/third gender.” Responses in these two categories represent only two years of data. The above groups have been combined to create a combined LGBTQ group for analysis. Data for Lesbian and Gay respondents have also been combined, since the gender variable is only available for two years. Differences between groups identified in the report were tested for significance at the 95 percent level of confidence.

Respondents had the option to fill out the survey via hard copy or online. The online survey was available in English and Spanish.

Methodology

Consumer names and addresses were obtained from Experian, a firm that maintains an extensive database of recent home buyers derived from county records. Information about sellers comes from those buyers who also sold a home.

The median is the primary statistical measure used throughout this report. Due to rounding and omissions for space, percentage distributions may not add to 100 percent. Data gathered in the report is based on primary residence home buyers. Ninety-nine percent of home buyers were primary residence buyers, which accounts for 31,890,000 homes sold in the U.S. in 2015 - 2020. Assuming four percent of that population is LGBTQ, then using that calculation, the sample at the 95 percent confidence level has a confidence interval of plus-or-minus 2.47 percent.



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