

Transgender people more likely to be self-employed, study reveals, as trans people more likely to earn less

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Transgender people in the US are more likely to opt for self-employment than face discrimination, a study from Trinity Business School has found.

The study, undertaken Klavs Ciprikis from the Economic and Social Research Institute, Damien Cassells from NUI Maynooth and Jenny Berrill from Trinity Business School, found that transgender people in the United States, while less likely than cisgender men, were more likely than cisgender women to opt for self-employment.

According to the study, transgender people are more likely to earn less than cisgender people – with there being a sizeable income gap between the earnings of employed transgender people and that of cisgender people.

The researchers calculated that 64% of the transgender income gap could be due to discrimination.

Meanwhile, in terms of income from self-employment, the researchers found self-employed transgender people to be no better or worse off than self-employed cisgender men.

In undertaking the study, the researchers used data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), a nationally representative health-related survey, between 2018 and 2021 across 41 US states. The survey contains information about individuals' gender status and identities.

Reflecting on the study, the authors state that “the findings of this article provide important and timely information on transgender labour market outcomes and experiences that influence their employment decision. For the first time we can compare and analyse differences in self-employment rates and incomes from self-employment between transgender and cisgender persons. These findings are particularly important for future policy developments to improve labour market outcomes and mitigate inequalities experienced by transgender persons, which is one of the potentially most marginalised groups in the USA”.

The paper, Transgender selfemployment outcomes: evidence from the USA, published in the journal, Small Business Economics, can be accessed here (<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11187-023-00845-4>).

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