



NUMBERS OF EQUALITY 3

Research on Problems and Needs of
LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina
in 2023 - Analysis of Findings



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in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2023 - Analysis of Findings

Sarajevo, 2023

Human Rights Series
Paper number 92
Sarajevo Open Centre

Title: Numbers of Equality 3: Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2023 - Analysis of Findings

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Publisher: Sarajevo Open Centre

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This publication was prepared with the support of the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of the publication are the sole responsibility of Sarajevo Open Centre and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the U.S. Government.

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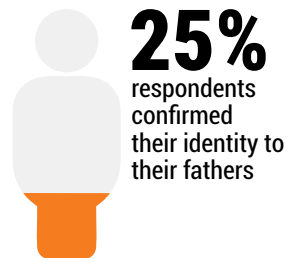
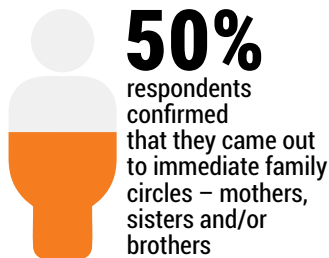
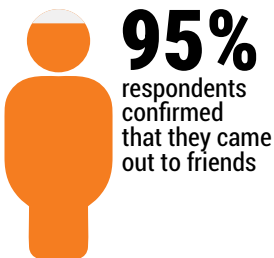
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Executive Summary

The research recognised both the progress in the respect of LGBTI rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the deep-rooted problems that LGBTI people face in our society, including lack of access to health care, lack of social support and economic opportunities, and deficiencies in legislation that fails to provide adequate protection.

Although the research findings point to the need for broader education of society about LGBTI issues to reduce stigma and increase acceptance, they also point to certain positive developments.



respondents (48,13%) experienced discrimination due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity



respondents (38,9%) experienced homo/transphobic violence



respondents (61,34%) experienced increased fear for their security

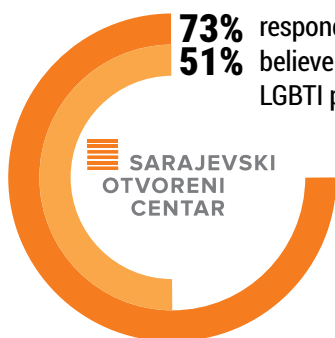
Furthermore, the research showed that a significant number of participants face mental health difficulties because of the environment in which they live.



25,76% respondents reported problems with anxiety and panic

19,81% respondents stated that they experienced depression

These results emphasise the necessity of establishing safe spaces and the need for greater access to psychosocial support for LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The respondents emphasised the need for social understanding, acceptance and support to combat stigma and build a more inclusive social community.



However, research indicates that there is an additional need for inclusive spaces, such as LGBTQ+ clubs, to foster a sense of belonging and provide space for the free expression of diverse identities.

Further findings also emphasise the need for access to professional health and psycho-social support services, for strengthening legislation to provide adequate protection of the right to self-determination and private and family life and to ensure broader protection and a basis for wider social equality, which will not be focused exclusively on issues of violence and discrimination in the narrowest sense.

Introduction

With respect to human rights of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we need to underline that social and legal-political progress often do not follow each other, and that the changes observed at the level of society do not necessarily mean changes in the immediate environment of LGBTI people.

Despite the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made visible progress in protecting and supporting LGBTI human rights during the past twenty years of activism, resulting in the continuity of pride marches, queer culture and art festivals, and the adoption of the Action Plan to Improve the State of Human Rights of LGBTI People, there are challenges that remain. Recent attacks on LGBTI activists in Banja Luka reveal institutional homophobia and inertness in the application of the existing legal framework, while the slow-moving process of legal recognition of same-sex partnership in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina calls into question the political will to ensure respect for human rights of LGBTI people beyond prohibition of violence and discrimination. The amendments to the 2022 Law on Mandatory Health Insurance of Republika Srpska, preventing systemic support for the health care of transgender persons, clearly show how much the protection of LGBTI human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina depends on the will of conservative authorities and how hard-won freedom and support can quickly be lost.

LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina lead their lives navigating these social and legal contradictions; therefore, when planning any subsequent step in advocacy, policy and regulation development, and especially when creating community empowerment and support activities, it is necessary to take into account their reality and circumstances that shape their everyday life.

This research provides insights into the existing attitudes and perceptions of LGBTI people in relation to challenges, problems and specific needs, and builds on the previous research efforts – Numbers of Equality: Research on Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 - Analysis of Findings and Numbers of Equality 2: Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings, to better understand the life of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Taking into account the changed social and legal context in the past period, this research aims to provide an updated overview of the challenges and needs of the LGBTI community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so that their voices serve as basis for future work and efforts towards greater acceptance and a more equal, inclusive and fair BiH society.

Key Methodological Notes

Research Goal

The goal of this research was to offer the most comprehensive and exhaustive insight into the attitudes and perceptions of LGBTIQ people in Bosnia and Herzegovina about their everyday life, the challenges and problems they face, and their specific needs. The research builds upon research efforts from 2013 and 2017, the results of which are presented in the reports: Numbers of Equality: Research on Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 - Analysis of Findings and Numbers of Equality 2: Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings.

Data Collection

An extensive combined questionnaire containing closed, open and semi-open questions was used for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed both online in Google Docs and in a printed version – with both versions being identical in terms of structure and questions – to ensure full comparability of collected results. Data were collected in the period April-May 2023.

Sample

The research included a convenient sample of 401 LGBTI people from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Data collection was carried out by 10 researchers in five BiH regions (RS and Krajina, Tuzla, Posavina and Brčko, Central Bosnia, Herzegovina and Sarajevo), thus achieving better representation and diversity of collected data. Snowball method was applied to select the sample and reach the respondents. This means that the first respondent was selected randomly, followed by other respondents who were selected based on recommendations by or connections with previously selected respondents. In addition, respondents could choose whether to provide data in-person or online, which enabled flexible participation in the research.

The representation of respondents from different regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina enabled an insight into the wide spectrum of needs of LGBTI people in different social, economic and geographical contexts, and provided material for a thorough analysis. This analysis provides valuable insights into the position and needs of LGBTIQ people in BiH and sets the foundation for future steps to meet these needs.

Instrument

The questionnaire is attached as an annex to this report.

Data Analysis and Processing

The research combines a descriptive statistical analysis of data collected by the survey questionnaire and a qualitative analysis of answers to the open-ended questions, which complements the understanding of the quantitative results.

Research Limitations

We should outline the methodological limitations of this research. The sample is convenient, which means that incomplete answers were not excluded for the purpose of collecting as much information as possible. Furthermore, although the questionnaire envisages the collection of data relating to intersex people, we were unable to reach out to them in this research.

Sample Structure Overview

The survey included a total of 401 respondents and provided valuable insight into the sample structure. In terms of age, younger population stands out, while older respondents are less represented, indicating the need for additional consideration of the perspectives of different LGBTI generations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The majority of respondents completed secondary education and/or graduate studies; accordingly, most of them stated that they are students. However, in almost an equal number the respondents stated that they are employed, and in lower number that they are occasionally/part-time employed or unemployed, with respective characteristics.

The results also indicated ethnic and religious diversity. Although the majority of respondents did not state their ethnic background, those who did, mostly stated they are Bosnians and Herzegovinians or, more often, members of one of the three constitutive peoples. Similarly, many declared they are atheists or agnostics, and a large number that they are believers – within the three dominant monotheistic religions in BiH.

The majority of respondents included in the sample live in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a smaller number in the Republika Srpska and Brčko District.

Understanding the different demographic characteristics of the respondents is crucial for a better understanding of their experiences, perceptions and attitudes towards social and institutional factors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and contributes to a more adequate interpretation of research findings.

The detailed demographic structure of the sample is presented at the end of the report.

General Research Results

In this research, the respondents highlighted the various challenges that the LGBTI community faces in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on their own experiences and perceptions of their position in BiH society and the impact that the circumstances they live in have on their everyday life. In an effort to gain a comprehensive understanding of needs and positions, this research prioritises their unique experiences and perspectives as members of this marginalised community.

Responding to a range of identified problems, respondents categorised most of them as important or very important, therefore the results for all categories gravitate towards 5 – very important. The most important problems, according to respondents, include:

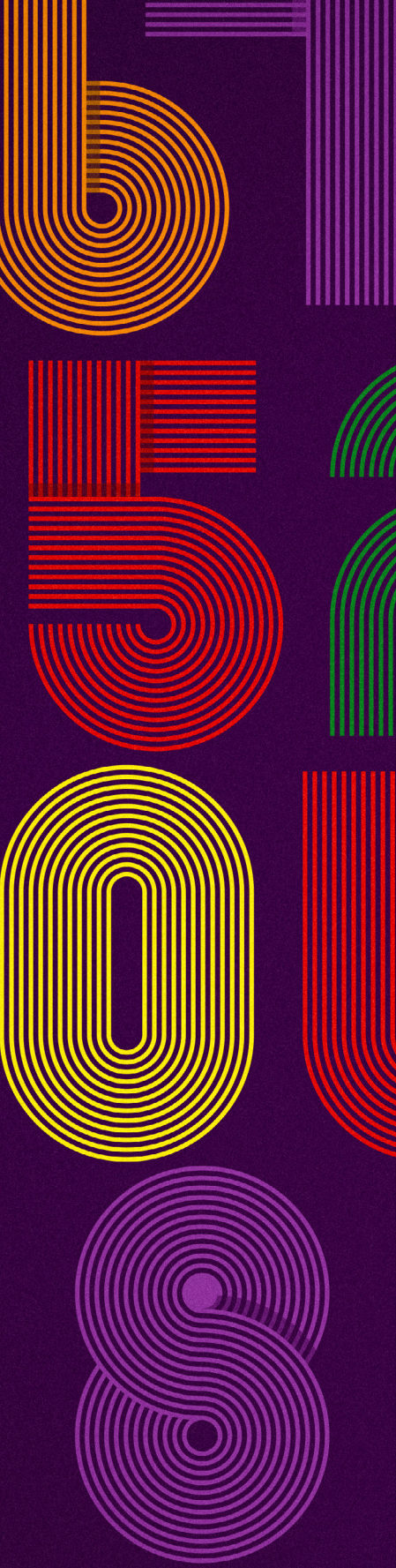
- physical violence, psychological/verbal violence and sexual violence
- lack of safe spaces/shelters for victims of violence
- discrimination at school and/or at the workplace, and
- economic violence.

BELOW IS A LIST OF PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE LGBTI POPULATION IN BIH. PLEASE RATE THEIR IMPORTANCE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5.

| | Not important | Somewhat important | I'm indifferent to it | Important | Very important |
|---|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Discrimination at workplace | 6 | 6 | 5 | 81 | 283 |
| Discrimination in school / at university | 4 | 3 | 8 | 80 | 301 |
| Social isolation | 4 | 5 | 25 | 75 | 287 |
| Bias (homophobia, transphobia) | 5 | 5 | 22 | 75 | 289 |
| Difficult inclusion | 4 | 4 | 33 | 98 | 253 |
| Stigmatisation | 2 | 6 | 19 | 86 | 279 |
| Psychological / verbal violence | 3 | 2 | 8 | 48 | 333 |
| Sexual violence/harassment | 3 | 1 | 14 | 42 | 335 |
| Physical violence / attacks / destruction of property | 3 | 4 | 10 | 45 | 332 |
| Economic violence (e.g., denying access or taking away money and/or other material goods) | 5 | 2 | 18 | 85 | 286 |
| Insufficient support from family | 2 | 12 | 35 | 103 | 243 |
| Insufficient support from friends | 5 | 12 | 44 | 95 | 227 |

| | Not important | Somewhat important | I'm indifferent to it | Important | Very important |
|---|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Difficult access to various services | 3 | 16 | 37 | 102 | 238 |
| Lack of support programs from state institutions (municipality, police, prosecutor's office, court) | 2 | 9 | 27 | 95 | 263 |
| Inadequate visibility of LGBTI people and LGBTI topics/issues in public | 6 | 16 | 47 | 112 | 215 |
| Non-existence of adequate institutional programs of psychological support for LGBTI people | 4 | 10 | 24 | 94 | 264 |
| Unemployment | 11 | 10 | 32 | 81 | 252 |
| Non-existence of a medical team for gender reassignment surgery | 6 | 13 | 33 | 84 | 252 |
| Demanding gender reassignment procedure | 8 | 12 | 35 | 85 | 245 |
| Inability to enter into same-sex union | 3 | 8 | 24 | 84 | 272 |
| Forced surgeries of intersex persons | 7 | 10 | 22 | 86 | 267 |
| Lack of safe spaces/shelters for victims of violence | 3 | 5 | 11 | 61 | 311 |
| Housing | 4 | 15 | 45 | 86 | 241 |
| Hate speech/hate crime | 3 | 3 | 15 | 81 | 289 |
| Discrimination in healthcare | 4 | 4 | 18 | 73 | 290 |
| Discrimination by religious communities | 16 | 18 | 51 | 47 | 256 |
| Inability of same-sex couples to adopt children | 10 | 11 | 32 | 78 | 263 |
| Inability of same-sex couples to use biomedically assisted fertilisation | 7 | 15 | 31 | 93 | 246 |

Although it is unquestionable that the respondents see discrimination and various forms of violence as a burning issue for the community, their answers indicate that it is impossible to separate their experiences of living from all the challenges that the traditional environment imposes on LGBTI people, and that almost all identified problems have a high degree of impact on their everyday life, as will be confirmed by the findings of this report.



EVERYDAY LIFE OF LGBTI PEOPLE



Coming out

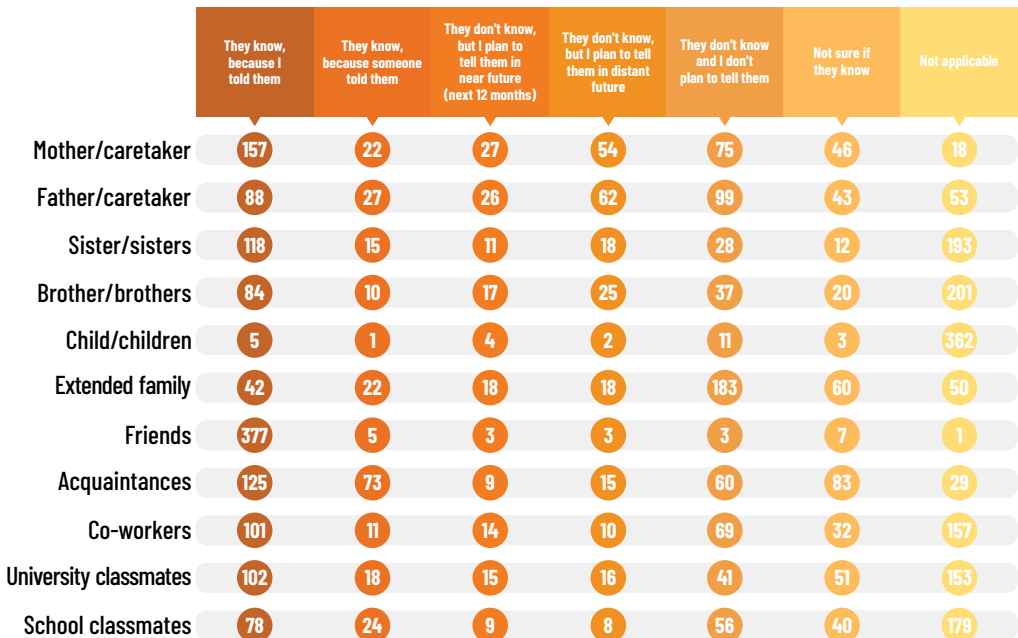
The coming out process is of the greatest importance for LGBTI people in a society. Although invisibility may seem to provide protection from the reactions of the environment, it eliminates all authenticity, leaves significant consequences for the well-being and life of individuals, where neither personal nor community progress in the position and respect for human rights is possible without that first step. For that reason, we first present the findings related to coming out.

“Coming out” as a notion comes from the phrase “coming out of the closet”, and is used to describe the disclosure of one’s sexual orientation, gender identity and/or sex characteristics. Coming out represents both personal self-acknowledgment and revealing one’s LGBTIQ identity to others. This process allows LGBTIQ people to live freely, without having to hide parts of their identity, which positively affects their mental health and quality of life.

In the coming out process, in addition to personal self-acknowledgement and acceptance, the support of family and the environment plays a key role, which can contribute to the emotional well-being of LGBTIQ people, providing them with a sense of acceptance and security. A supportive environment enables LGBTIQ people to live without fear of rejection, thereby reducing their social isolation and increasing self-confidence and well-being, which further contributes to the creation of a more inclusive society, where all people can live an authentic life.

This part of the research brings us an overview of the level of support that LGBTIQ people have in their daily lives, especially in terms of coming out and authentic living of their LGBTIQ identities in BiH society.

COMING OUT



According to the findings, LGBTI people, precisely 94.7% of respondents, disclosed their identity to their friends. This finding is consistent with the 2017 findings of the needs of the community survey, when 90% of respondents confirmed that they had disclosed their identity to their friends.

With respect to the immediate family, 41.2% of respondents disclosed their identity to their mothers, 43.5% to their brothers, and as many as 58.4% to their sisters. Only 25.5% of respondents disclosed their identity to their fathers.¹

We can therefore say that a greater number of respondents decided to disclose their LGBTIQ identity to acquaintances (34.2%), work colleagues (42.6%) or university colleagues (41.9%) than to their own fathers.

These findings correspond to 2017 research findings, when 56.6% of the respondents confirmed that their sisters knew about their identity, almost half that their mothers knew, while fathers/guardians among members of the immediate family were the ones who least often knew about the LGBTIQ identity of the respondents (32.6%).²

It seems that these percentages still confirm the perception of the father figure as a heteropatriarchal guardian of traditional family values, and they influence the relationship of trust between fathers and their LGBTIQ children.

MARK WHICH PERSONS (OF THOSE WHO KNOW ABOUT YOUR LGBTI IDENTITY) ARE SUPPORTIVE, OR NOT SUPPORTIVE.

| | Supportive | Not supportive | Not sure if they are supportive | Some are supportive, some are not | Not applicable |
|-----------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Mother/caretaker | 110 | 59 | 79 | 2 | 146 |
| Father/caretaker | 63 | 62 | 64 | 2 | 206 |
| Sister/sisters | 117 | 20 | 23 | 4 | 232 |
| Brother/brothers | 71 | 19 | 39 | 2 | 261 |
| Child/children | 4 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 373 |
| Extended family | 28 | 22 | 67 | 42 | 231 |
| Friends | 349 | 9 | 7 | 25 | 9 |
| Acquaintances | 104 | 14 | 86 | 89 | 103 |
| Co-workers | 83 | 8 | 32 | 34 | 238 |
| University classmates | 80 | 3 | 43 | 53 | 216 |
| School classmates | 48 | 8 | 37 | 52 | 248 |

¹Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

²Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

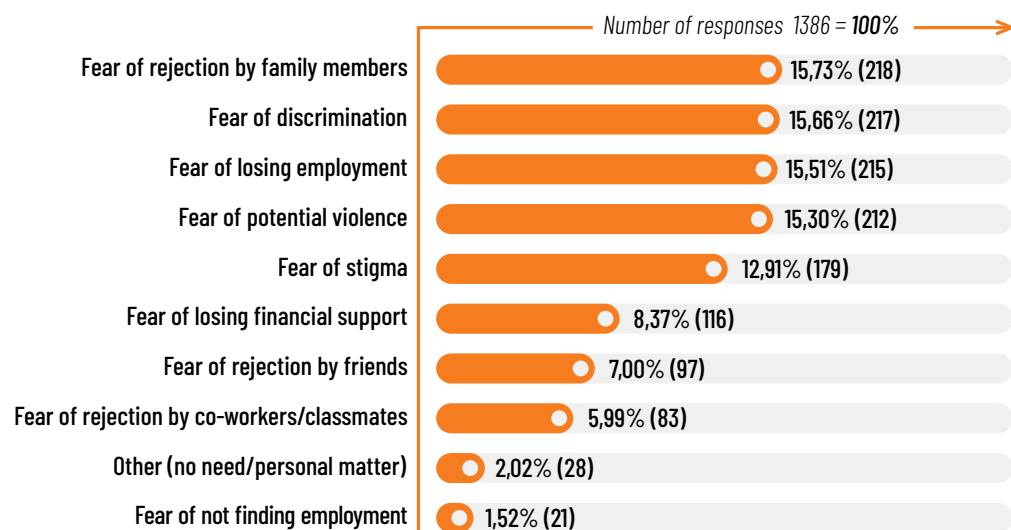
On the topic of support from people who know about the respondent's LGBTIQ identity, the situation is again similar to 2017.

As many as 91.36% of friends who know about the respondent's LGBTIQ identity support them in authentic and open living of their identities, while in 2017 this percentage was 87%. Within the immediate family that knows about the respondent's LGBTIQ identity, 61.45% of the respondents enjoy such support from their mothers, 87.97% from their sisters, 75.5% from their brothers, and 54.78% from their fathers. In 2017, within the immediate family that knew about the respondent's LGBTIQ identity, 70% of them enjoyed the support of sisters, slightly more than 50% of mothers, and only 32.6% of fathers/guardians. This increase in family support for LGBTIQ people can be attributed to greater visibility of the community in recent years, efforts in education about and awareness of LGBTIQ issues, work with parents and family members of LGBTIQ people, and changes in social norms and attitudes through continuous activism.

In the area of education and work, as many as 74% of respondents confirmed that they enjoy the support of work colleagues who know about their LGBTIQ identity, and 66.66% of them said the same about university colleagues.

Although the results of this research indicate a shift in the acceptance of LGBTIQ people, a large number of respondents confirmed that fears of potential consequences still limit them in free and authentic living of their identities.

WHAT WERE YOUR REASONS FOR NOT COMING OUT AS LGBTI TO SOMEONE?



The fear of rejection from the family is obviously a significant factor in the decision of LGBTIQ people not to share their identity with their environment. In 2017, as many as 58.6% of respondents cited this fear as a reason for hiding their identity,³ but the fact is encouraging that in 2023 this number is significantly lower, i.e., only 15.73%.

³Ibid.

In 2017, 53.3% of respondents cited fear of discrimination as a reason for not coming out, while in 2023, 15.66% of people avoided revealing their identity for the same reason. The level of fear of violence similarly decreased from 46.7% in 2017 to 15.3% in 2023.

Fear of economic consequences remains a significant factor. In 2017, 33% of respondents avoided revealing their identity due to fear of losing financial support, while in 2023 this fear is shared by only 8.37%. The level of fear of losing employment also decreased from 26.4% in 2017 to 15.51% in 2023.

These changes indicate that there is a perception of a greater degree of acceptance within the LGBTIQ community, and that the degree of empowerment of LGBTIQ persons has also increased in the period between the two research efforts, leading to a greater number of coming out instances, but also a greater degree of support. We can interpret this empowerment as a result of several different factors, including the increased general public availability of information about LGBTIQ topics and activism in BiH. We also need to take into account the generational specificities of research respondents, which are reflected in their greater openness, bolder expression of attitudes and identities, their fluid understandings and greater availability of information sources; therefore, a greater degree of awareness about their rights and mechanisms of their realisation. It is clear that there are still challenges that need to be overcome, especially with regard to fear of discrimination and violence, but progress is unquestionable, as are the results of the actions taken so far and the increase in the visibility of the LGBTIQ community in BiH society.

Discrimination Against LGBTI People

Discrimination has deep and long-term harmful consequences for the LGBTI community, because discrimination in education and employment threatens their physical and mental well-being, social inclusion and access to economic opportunities.

In legal terms, discrimination means any distinction, exclusion, limitation and any form of placing a person or group of persons in a disadvantageous position on some ground or characteristic; in the case of LGBTIQ people, these are: sexual orientation (lesbians, gay men, bisexual persons), gender identity (transgender people) and gender expression (of all LGBTIQ persons) and sex characteristics (intersex persons).

Seen through the lens of historical inequality and discriminatory attitudes towards LGBTIQ people, the social isolation of the community and its invisibility are the result of these social processes. Continuous discrimination and an unequal position have led to a high level of stress, anxiety and depression among LGBTIQ people, and have influenced the development of minority stress in the BiH LGBTIQ community.

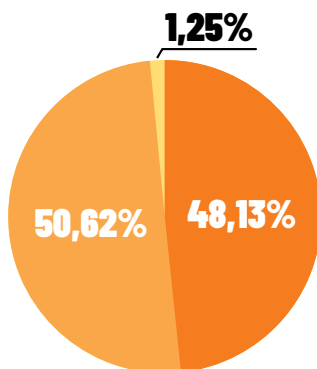
Increased visibility and a higher level of coming out of LGBTIQ people led to an increase of the number of respondents – 48.13% of them experienced discrimination based on their LGBTIQ identity.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUND OF BEING AN LGBTI PERSON?

■ No answer (5)

■ No (203)

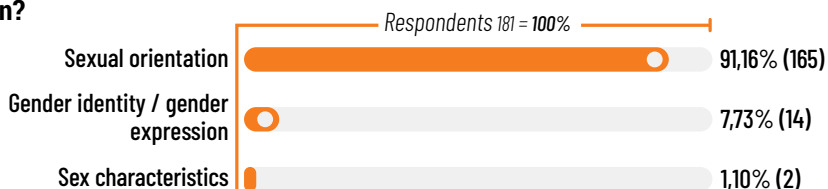
■ Yes (193)



In 2017, almost 2/3 of respondents stated that they had not experienced discrimination.⁴ In this context, the findings of this research correspond more to the data of the regional research from 2015, conducted by the National Democratic Institute,⁵ where as many as 51% of LGBTI people in BiH stated that they had experienced some form of discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Of the 48.13% of respondents who stated that they experienced some form of discrimination, 91.16% were discriminated against on the ground of sexual orientation, and 7.73% on the ground of gender identity/expression.

If the answer is yes, on what grounds were you discriminated against, in your opinion?



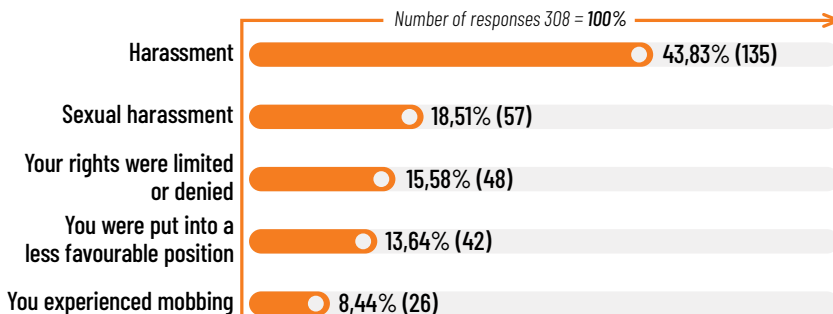
Among the forms of discrimination experienced by respondents, the most common is harassment on the ground of LGBTIQ identity, which was experienced by 43.88% of them. The 2017 research showed similar findings, where as many as 81.7% of respondents who experienced discrimination stated that they had encountered this type of discrimination.⁶

⁴Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre

⁵NDI Public Opinion Poll in the Balkans on LGBTI Communities." Ndi.Org. 28. October 2015. <https://www.slideshare.net/NDIdemocracy/ndi-public-opinion-poll-in-the-balkans-on-lgbti-communities>.

⁶Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre

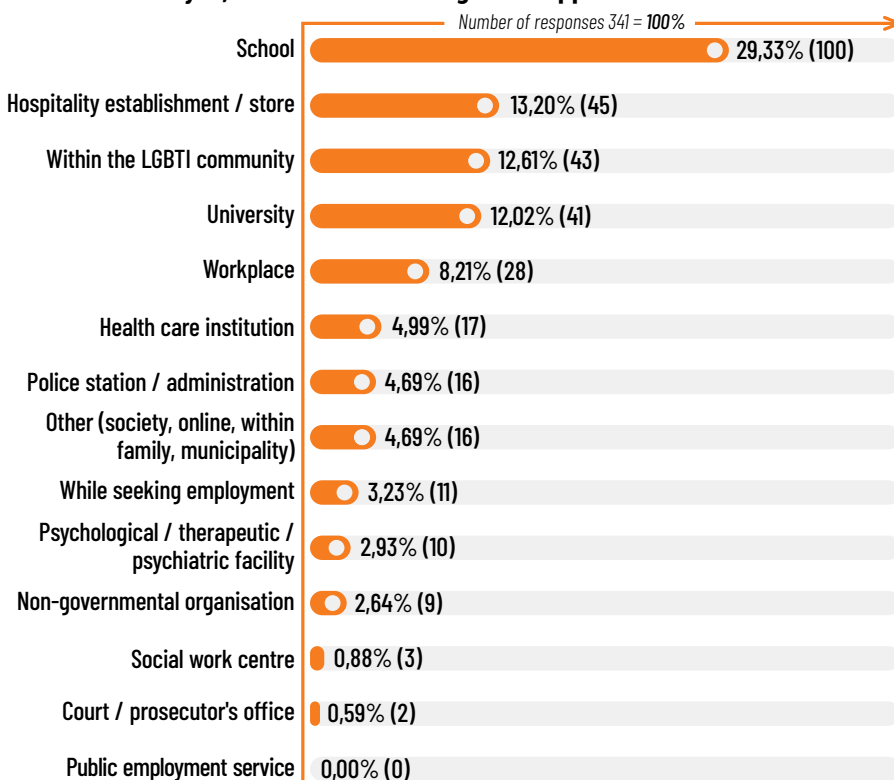
If the answer is yes, what form of discrimination did you experience?



According to the findings of this research, the largest number of respondents encountered discrimination at school (29.33%), while many experienced discrimination at the workplace (8.21%), in police stations (4.69%), and in health institutions (4.99%), at universities (12.02%) and in hospitality establishments (13.20%).

As many as 12.61% of respondents reported discrimination within the LGBTI community. In addition, some experienced discrimination while seeking employment. Some mentioned other situations, including discrimination in society, online, within the family and in the local community.

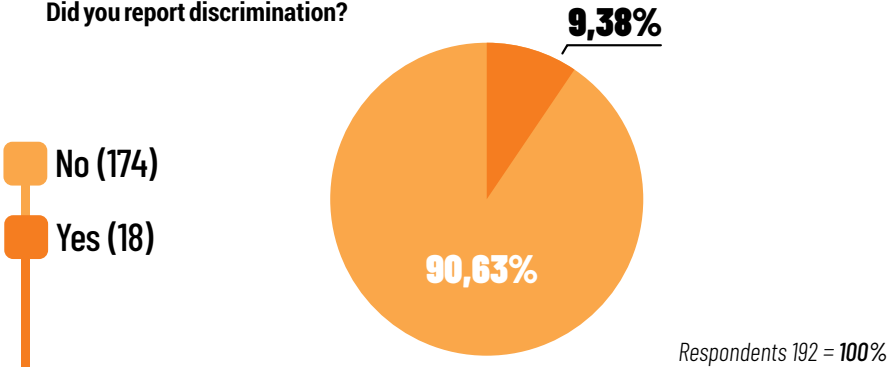
If the answer is yes, in what kind of setting did it happen?



The 2017 research also revealed similar findings; the respondents reported that they most often experienced discrimination in educational institutions – as many as 41.2% at school, and 19.1% of the respondents at university; and in hospitality and retail establishments (34.6%). 15.4% of the respondents stated that they had experienced discrimination within the LGBTI community.

In 2017, 83.8% of respondents stated that they did not report discrimination;⁷ this research found that as many as 90.63% of respondents decided not to report discrimination.

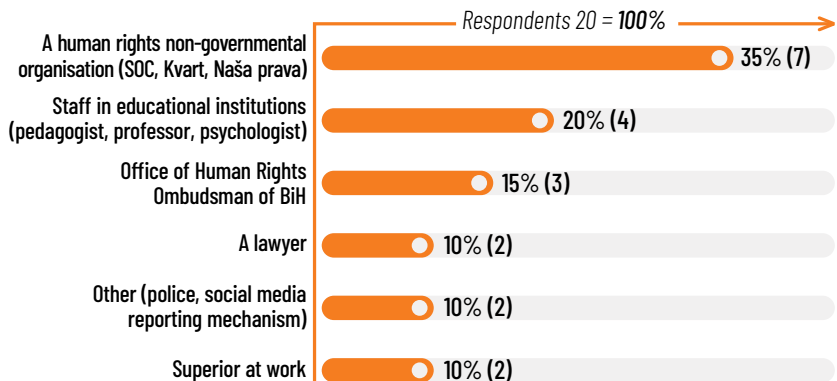
Did you report discrimination?



Just as in 2017, there is a clear lack of trust in the institutions responsible for protection against discrimination, and the reluctance of people to report makes discrimination less visible and hinders efforts to combat it.

In 9.38% of cases when respondents decided to report discrimination, they mostly decided to seek support from civil society organisations (35%) and from the Human Rights Ombudsman Institution (15%), indicating a low level of trust in judicial institutions and bypassing civil proceedings as a mechanism for proving and combating discrimination.

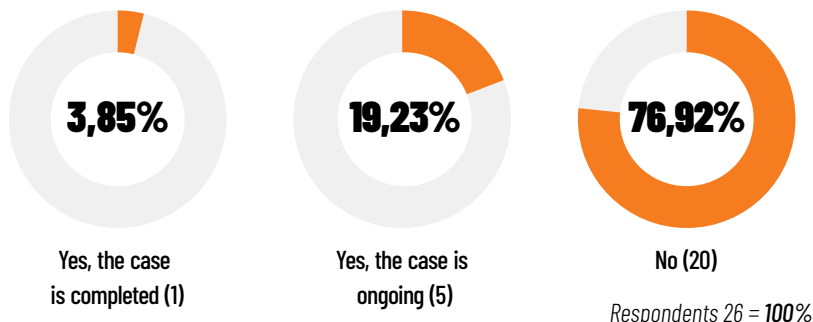
If the answer is yes, to whom did you report discrimination?



⁷Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

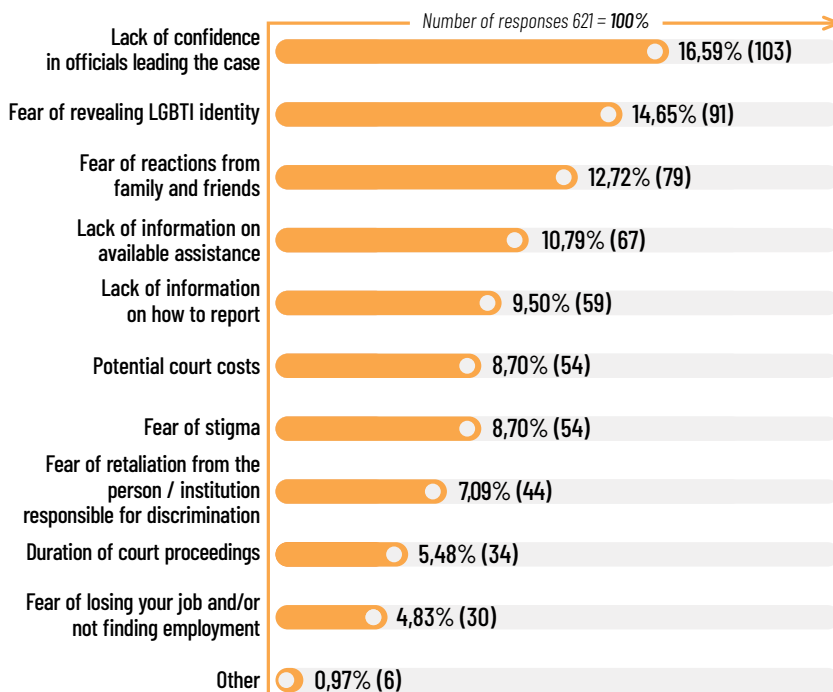
Out of 20 reported cases of discrimination, only six were considered by the court. Of these, one process has been completed, and five are still ongoing, which points to the inefficiency and sluggishness of the judicial system in BiH in implementing anti-discrimination legislation and ensuring protection for LGBTI people.

Has your discrimination case been tried in court?



As in the previous research, the answers to the question why respondents did not report discrimination reveal deep fears and obstacles that the LGBTIQ community faces. Distrust of officials in the process, fear of identity disclosure and lack of information about possible help and reporting procedures are some of the key factors. The length of court proceedings, possible financial costs, fear of retaliation and concern about the reaction of family and friends are also expressed motives for not reporting cases of discrimination.

If the answer is no, why did you decide not to report discrimination?



These data not only highlight the complexity of the problems faced by LGBTI people, but also indicate the importance of strengthening support, informing and trust to encourage the reporting of discrimination cases and enable the community to feel safe and achieve justice.

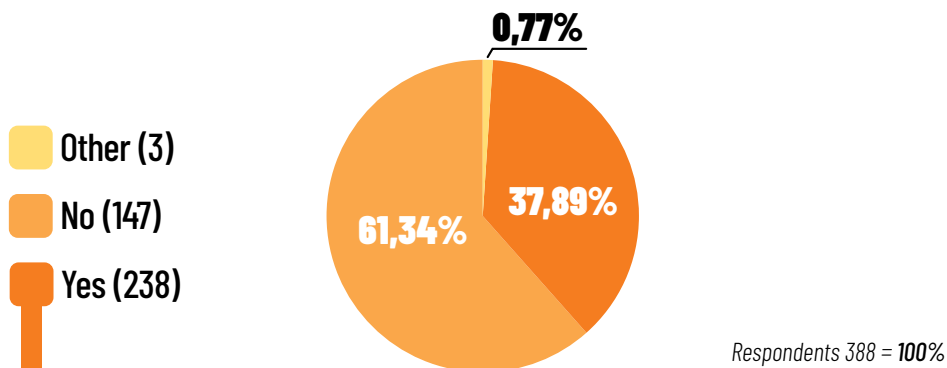
Violence Against LGBTI People

Violence motivated by sexual orientation, gender identity and/or sex characteristics has a serious and harmful impact on the LGBTIQ community, because it creates a sense of fear and insecurity and limits the possibility for members of the community to live freely and openly, thereby causing consequences for their mental and physical well-being.

Cases of violence such as the attacks on Sarajevo Queer Festival in 2008 and Merlinka Queer Film Festival in 2014, and the attack on activists of the BiH Pride March Organising Committee in 2023 significantly harmed the LGBTIQ community, instilling fear and undermining the already fragile trust in state institutions – revealing their inertness and inefficiency in sanctioning perpetrators and providing protection to LGBTIQ citizens.

It is not surprising that this research noted that as many as 61.34% of respondents fear for their own safety because they are LGBTIQ. The fact that the 2017 research had a similar finding is concerning – 60.9% of respondents expressed the same fear,⁸ revealing a negative trend in perceiving one's own safety among LGBTIQ people in BiH. Despite the growing support in the immediate environment, it is clear that LGBTIQ people continue to perceive BiH society as generally intolerant and xenophobic.

DO YOU FEAR FOR YOUR SAFETY BECAUSE YOU ARE AN LGBTI PERSON?

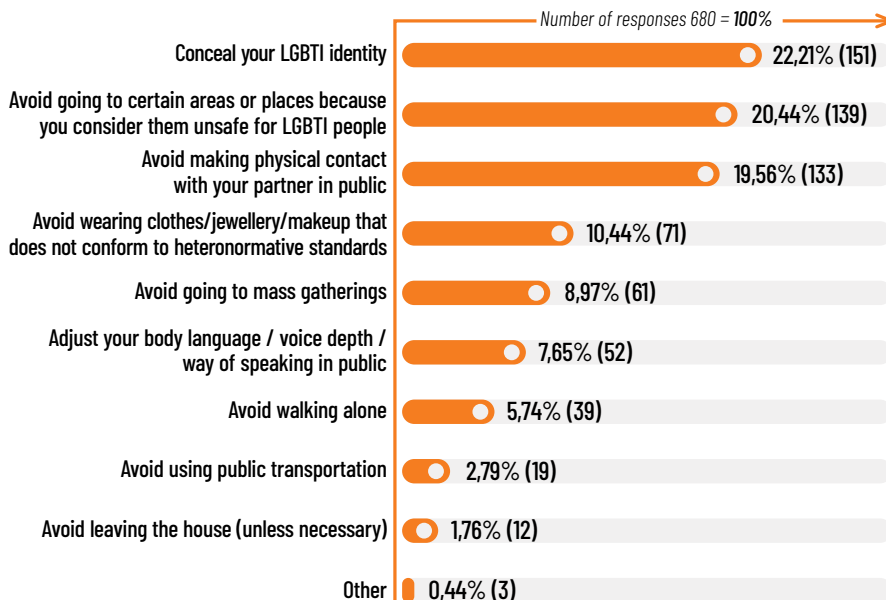


The findings of this research provide deep insight into the behaviour of LGBTI respondents caused by fear of discrimination and violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The results show that many of them live in constant fear and keep adjusting their behaviour to protect themselves. As many as 22.21% of respondents hide their LGBTI identity, while 1.76% avoid leaving the house unless necessary. 20.44% of respondents avoid certain areas or places due to fear, and a significant number of respondents (19.56%) avoid making physical contact with their partner in

⁸Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

public, while as many as 10.44% adjust their appearance in line with heteronormative standards. These data point to the serious challenges that LGBTIQ people face in everyday life, as well as the need for a safe environment that will allow freedom of expression of identity without fear of violence or discrimination.

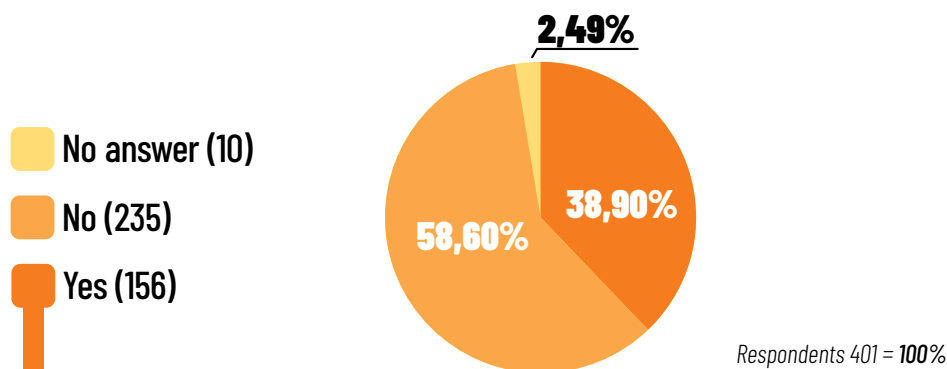
If the answer is yes, does fear make you do any of the following?



Although these findings paint a gloomy picture of the everyday life of LGBTIQ people in BiH, progress has been made in this aspect compared to 2017, when as many as 69.4% of respondents stated that they hide their LGBTIQ identity out of fear,⁹ and about 55% that they avoid some places they consider unsafe for LGBTIQ community.

As many as 38.9% of respondents confirmed that they experienced violence because of their LGBTIQ identity, which is an increase compared to 2017, when only 25.4% of respondents reported this.

DID YOU EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE ON THE GROUNDS OF BEING AN LGBTIQ PERSON?

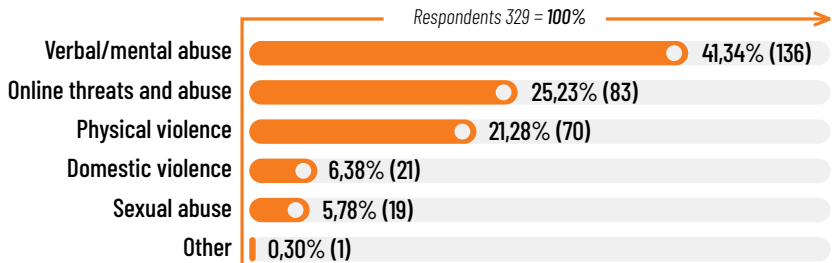


⁹Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTIQ Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

It is evident that the increased visibility and openness of the community brings with it some negative consequences, and that the strategies to avoid the risk of violence that the members of the community apply are not sufficient to protect them from the violent reactions of society.

In terms of the types of violence experienced by LGBTI people in BiH, the results of this research show that 21.28% of respondents experienced physical violence, while 41.34% were exposed to verbal and psychological abuse. Online threats and abuse were recorded by 25.23% of respondents. In addition, 6.38% of respondents experienced domestic violence, while 5.78% were victims of sexual abuse.

If the answer is YES, what type of violence have you experienced?



These figures emphasise the serious need for stronger and more efficient mechanisms to protect LGBTI people in BiH from violence.

It is especially important to underscore data that indicate a serious problem of online violence. Based on the finding that 25.23% of respondents experience online threats and abuse, it is important to focus on preventive strategies that could significantly reduce the risk of this form of violence.

First, education plays a key role. It is necessary to work on awareness raising among the general public, especially youth, about harmfulness of online violence and its consequences. The joint action of civil society, educational institutions, the media and other stakeholders is necessary to promote and ensure safe use of the Internet, and to warn of the risks of online violence and the consequences of such actions.

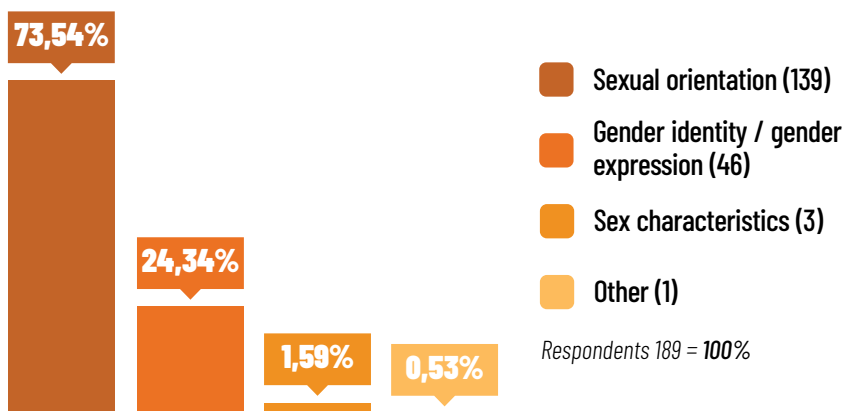
Second, a necessary step in combating these types of violence is certainly adequate regulation of cyberbullying and online threats. Recognising the harmful consequences of these forms of violence, and adequately investigating and sanctioning the perpetrators can serve as a strong deterrent.

It is also crucial to support victims of violence, and to create safe online spaces where they can ask for help and support, which can empower them to report incidents.

For the purpose of preventive action and comprehensive suppression of online violence, continuous cooperation is needed between competent institutions, civil society organisations, internet providers and the media, which can enable the exchange of information, resources and best practices to develop effective strategies for the prevention and sanctioning of online violence.

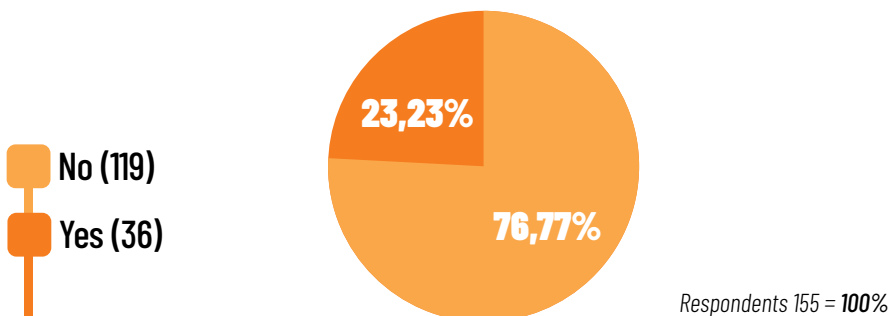
Similar to cases of discrimination, a high percentage of respondents – 73.54% – reported that they had suffered violence based on their sexual orientation.

On what grounds did you experience violence (in your opinion)?



Respondents stated that they reported violence more often than cases of discrimination, with as many as 23.23% of them having reported violence. Here we note a decrease in the number of reports compared to 2017, when almost 1/3 of respondents stated that they had reported cases of violence.¹⁰

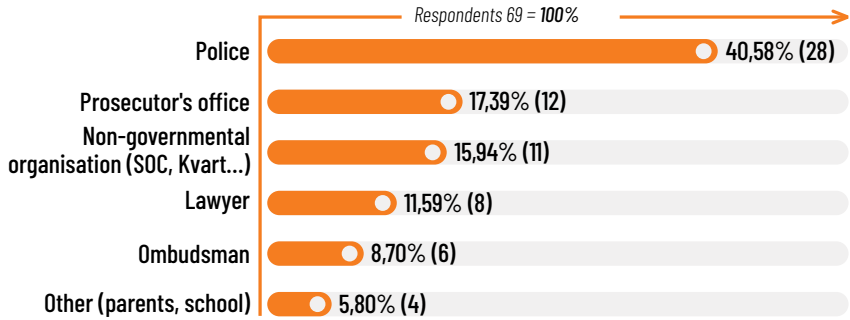
Did you report the violence you experienced?



In most cases, respondents who suffered violence, 40.58% of them, reported the violence to the police, 17.39% to the prosecutor's office, while 15.94% decided to seek the support of non-governmental organisations. As many as 11.59% sought lawyer's support in cases of violence.

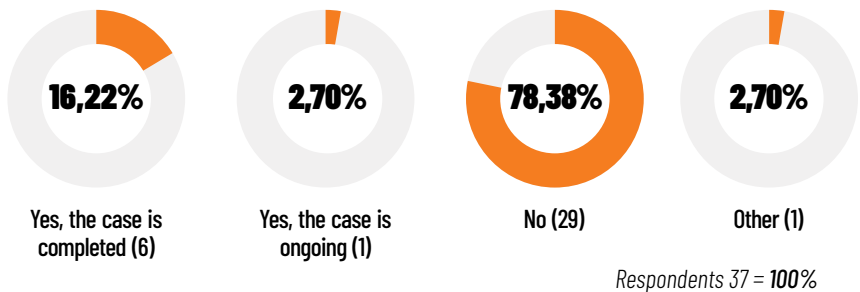
¹⁰Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

If the answer is yes, who did your report the violence to?



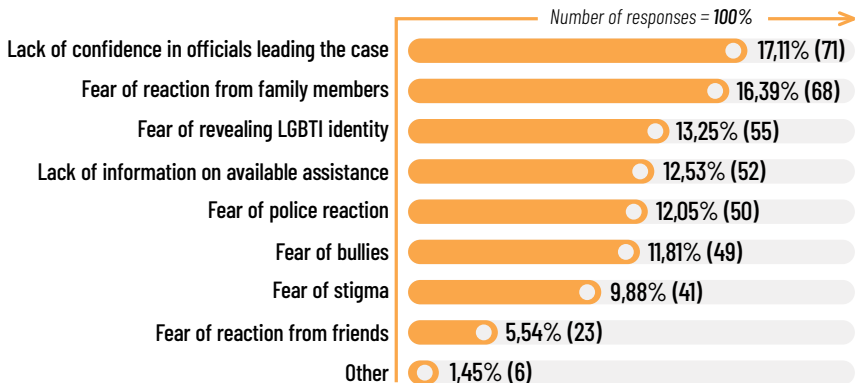
Of the 37 cases of violence, seven had a judicial epilogue, in six cases the process has ended, while in one case it is still ongoing. Out of 37 cases of violence, 29 were not considered by the court. For the sake of comparison, in 2017, out of 33 respondents who reported experiencing violence, eight cases of violence were considered by the court.

Has your case been tried in court?



When explaining the reasons for not reporting violence, as many as 17.11% of respondents stated lack of confidence in officials leading the case, while 13.25% decided not to report violence due to fear of revealing their LGBTI identity. Fear of police reaction was present among 12.05% of respondents, while 16.39% decided not to report violence due to fear of family reaction. Also, 11.81% of respondents expressed fear of bullies as a reason for not reporting violence.

If the answer is no, why did you decide not to report violence?



In the 2017 research, fear of police reaction was cited as one of the reasons for not reporting violence in as many as 41.4% of cases,¹¹ which may indicate a potential change in the community's attitude towards police officers in the period between the two surveys, and a basis for strengthening relations of cooperation and trust.

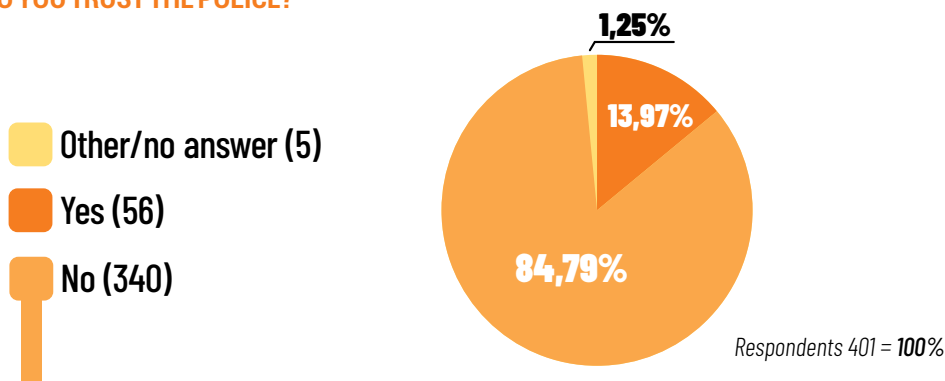
However, findings in this area further highlight the serious barriers LGBTI people face when reporting violence, including fear of backlash and lack of trust in the justice system. Creating a safer environment, strengthening trust in judicial institutions and providing adequate support are key steps towards curbing violence and ensuring justice for LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Trust in Institutions

Trust in institutions is particularly important when handling cases of discrimination and violence against LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The very nature of these cases often involves deeply personal and sensitive experiences. LGBTI people who have faced discrimination or violence must have confidence that the institutions responsible for their protection will act fairly and without bias. When trust in these institutions is eroded, it can deter victims from seeking help, reporting incidents or taking legal action, which perpetuates a culture of silence and impunity, and allows discrimination and violence to continue unchecked. On the contrary, when institutions are perceived as reliable and responsible, that not only empowers LGBTI people to come forward with their grievances but also sends a clear message that such discrimination and violence will not be tolerated. Building and maintaining trust in institutions is not only a matter of human rights, but also a key step towards creating an inclusive and fair society in which all citizens, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, can live without fear of discrimination or violence.

Therefore, it is alarming that 84.79% of respondents do not trust the police, and that this is only a small departure from the 2017 research findings, when 87.4% of respondents confirmed that they do not trust the police in BiH.¹²

DO YOU TRUST THE POLICE?



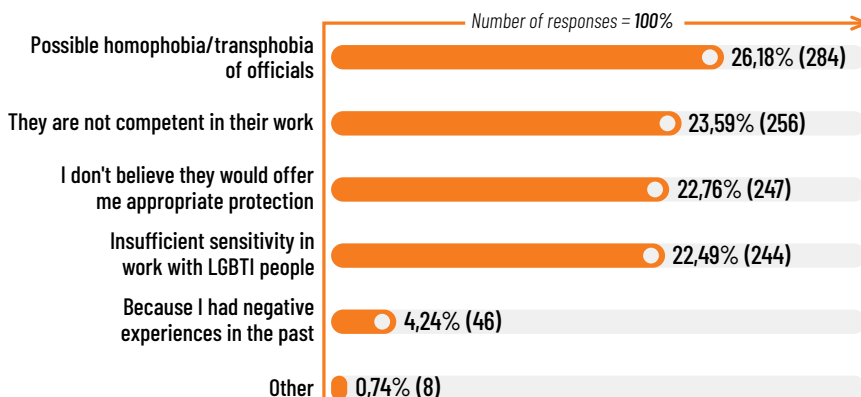
¹¹Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

¹²Ibid.

Such a low percentage is not surprising, given that respondents state that in the process of reporting violence, they had a series of deeply disturbing experiences.

Many respondents faced discrimination and received little or no support when reporting abuse, especially verbal or harassment-related violence, often resulting in feelings of isolation and frustration. Respondents claim that negative contacts with police officers were common, and that they varied from rejection, insensitive behaviour to open hostility. In some cases, individuals were exposed to additional mistreatment by police officers, which exacerbated their trauma and mistrust of institutions.

If the answer is no, why do you distrust the police?



Respondents indicated a general lack of seriousness in responding to emergency situations, which led to delayed or inadequate assistance. Such cases included reports of domestic violence, where victims were met with condemnation instead of support.

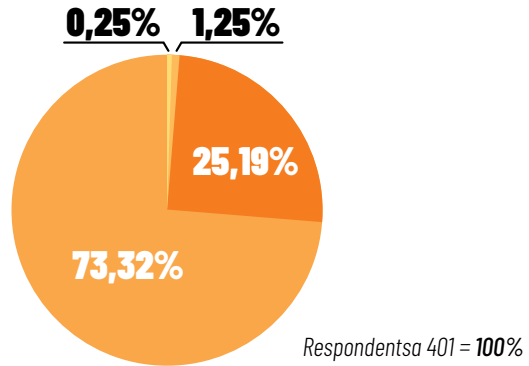
This kind of institutional negligence and failure to provide adequate support and protection has led to reluctance of LGBTIQ people to communicate with law enforcement. The negative experiences highlight the urgent need for comprehensive reforms in the handling of reports of violence, with an emphasis on empathy, professionalism and a commitment to ensure justice and safety for all.

In the context of courts and prosecutor's offices, a large number of respondents, 73.32%, confirmed that they have no trust in these judicial institutions. Similar to distrust in the police, in 2017 this answer was given by 85.5% of respondents,¹³ and we can see the potential increase in trust as a result of work and effort in the period between the two surveys, but also as a basis for further improvement and building of trust between LGBTIQ community and judicial institutions.

¹³Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre

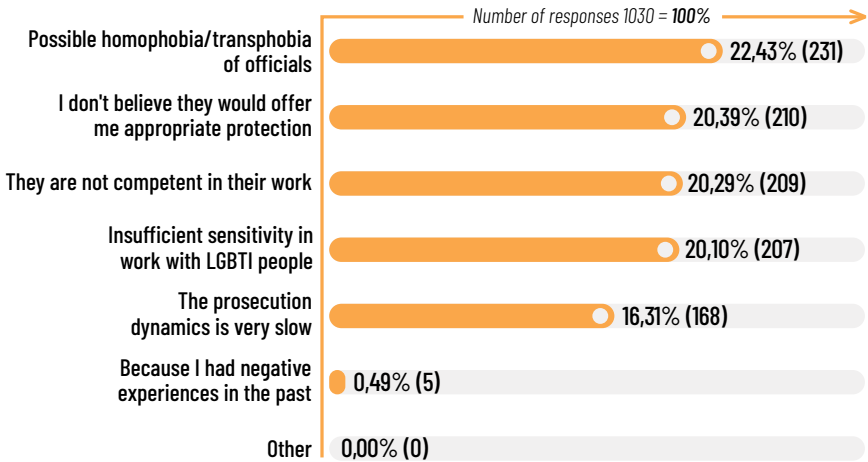
DO YOU TRUST THE JUDICIARY?

- Other/no answer (5)
- I'm not sure (1)
- Yes (101)
- No (294)



As many as 22.43% of respondents pointed out the possible homophobia/transphobia of officials as the reason for the lack of trust. In addition, 20.10% believe that the officials were insufficiently sensitised to work with LGBTI people, whereas 20.29% that the officials did not perform their work competently. Furthermore, 20.39% expressed distrust in the provision of appropriate legal protection, while 16.31% cited the fact that the prosecution of cases takes a very long time as a reason for their lack of trust.

If the answer is no, why do you distrust the judiciary? Multiple answers are possible.



Such findings point to the necessity of finding new, longer-term approaches to education, sensitisation and professionalisation of judicial officials in working with LGBTI people in BiH.

In answers relating to their trust in the Human Rights Ombudsman Institution of BiH, as many as 68.08% of respondents pointed out that they were not familiar with its work and activities. Such a high percentage of respondents not knowing about the Ombudsman Institution indicates the invisibility of their role in the protection of human rights, and the need for their positioning as defenders of the human rights of LGBTIQ people in BiH, and proactive work on establishing contact and developing trusting relationships with organisations, activists and LGBTIQ people in BiH.

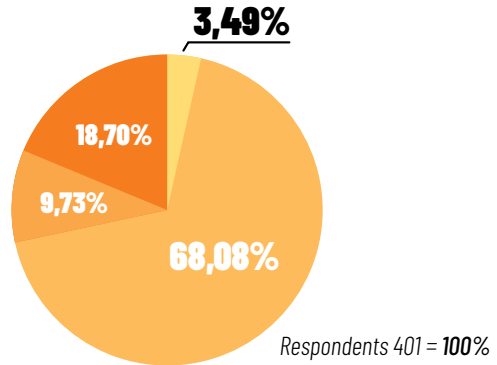
DO YOU TRUST THE INSTITUTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN OF BIH?

No answer (14)

I am not familiar with the work and activities of the Institution (273)

Yes (75)

No (39)



The percentage of respondents not familiar with the work of the Ombudsman Institution is particularly worrying because this institution was one of the first to stand up for the protection of the human rights of LGBTI people; in 2016, they prepared a Special Report on the State of Human Rights of LGBT Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina,¹⁴ identifying violations of the human rights of LGBT people in BiH and presenting concrete recommendations to improve their protection and respect. Recommendations that referred to the right to self-determination and the right to family life comprehensively offered steps that would enable a high degree of equality of LGBTI people in BiH society.

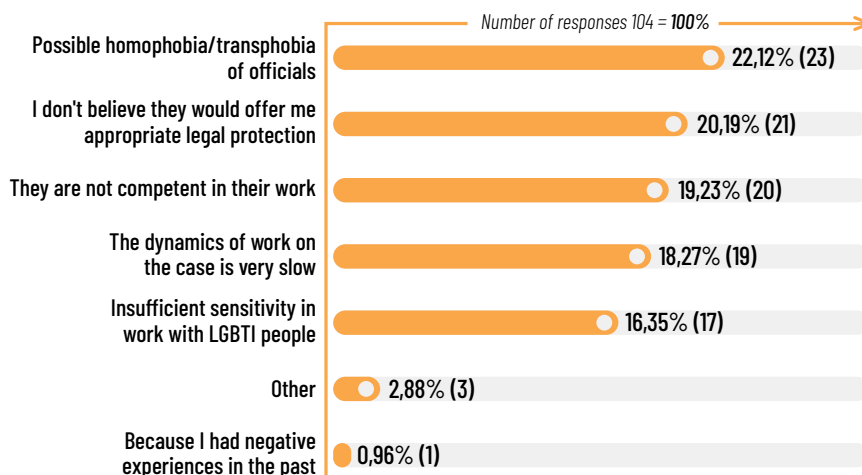
The fact that most respondents are not familiar with the role of the Ombudsman indicates that their role has been marginalised over time, and that there is a need to increase the visibility of their work, presence and proactivity in protecting and promoting the human rights of LGBTI people. It is necessary to work on regular monitoring and reminding of institutional negligence and non-fulfilment of recommendations given in light of Bosnia and Herzegovina's international obligations. In the context of these findings, it is particularly important to work on recognising the Institution of the Ombudsman as a central institution for protection against discrimination, which has a mechanism for examining cases of discrimination in its mandate, and offers recommendations that the court must take into consideration when deciding on cases of discrimination; as well as the option of organising a situational test that can strengthen the claim and ensure that the final outcome of the trial is in favour of the discriminated person.

The reasons given by LGBTI respondents in Bosnia and Herzegovina for distrusting the Institution of Ombudsman are similar to those expressed towards police and judicial institutions. As many as 22.12% of respondents expressed concern about the possible homophobia/transphobia of the staff, while an additional 16.35% believe that the staff of this institution were not sufficiently sensitised to work with LGBTIQ

¹⁴Jasminka Džumhur, Nives Jukić, Ljubinko Mitrović. 2016. Specijalni izvještaja o pravima LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini . Banja Luka: Institucija ombudsmena/ombudsmana za ljudska prava Bosne i Hercegovine.

people. 19.23% of respondents believe that this institution does not perform its work competently, and 20.19% did not believe that they would be provided with appropriate legal protection. Also, as many as 18.27% expressed dissatisfaction with the slow processing of their cases.

If the answer is no, why do you distrust the Ombudsman Institution?



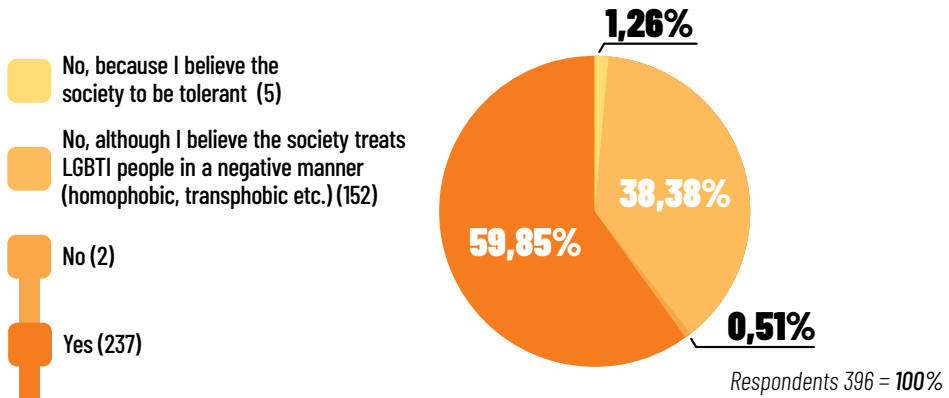
The high percentage of respondents not being familiar with the work of the Ombudsman Institution points to the need to strengthen the institution's mandate in the sphere of protecting the human rights of LGBTI persons, and to strengthen the promotion and awareness of their work on these issues, both through thematic campaigns and public responses, cooperation with the media and relevant civil society organisations on raising public awareness and conveying the message to the LGBTI community that the Institution of the Human Rights Ombudsman monitors and condemns violations of the human rights of LGBTI people, and monitors and encourages, within its mandate, the institutions' work on these issues.

Psychological Well-Being of LGBTI People

Minority stress is a psychological concept that refers to additional stress and pressure experienced by people belonging to minority groups due to their social position or identity. This stress stems from systemic inequalities, discrimination, prejudice and social isolation, to which minority groups are often exposed.

The findings of this research indicate a significant connection between the social attitude towards LGBTI people and the psychological difficulties or crises experienced by them. As many as 59.85% respondents stated that during their lifetime, they had psychological difficulties or crises due to social attitudes towards LGBTI people. In addition, 38.38% of respondents stated that they did not directly experience psychological difficulties, but are aware of the negative attitudes (homophobia, transphobia, etc.) towards LGBTI people, indicating the implicit influence of society on their psychological well-being.

DO YOU THINK YOU EXPERIENCED PSYCHOLOGICAL DIFFICULTIES / CRISES DUE TO THE SOCIAL TREATMENT OF LGBTI PEOPLE?

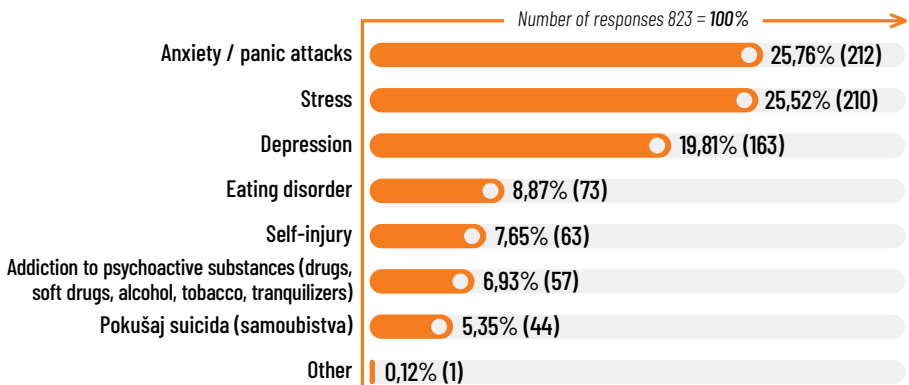


These findings are consistent with the 2017 community needs research, when more than half of the respondents reported that they had difficulties due to their LGBTI identity.¹⁵

Only 1.26% of respondents believe that society has a tolerant attitude towards LGBTI people, while only 0.51% of respondents do not feel that they had psychological difficulties, although they recognise negative social attitudes towards LGBTI people.

Mental health issues among LGBTI people include a wide range of problems. Thus, 25.76% of respondents stated anxiety/panic attacks as the most frequently experienced difficulties, and 25.52% stress. Depression is also a common problem, experienced by 19.81% of respondents. It is worrying that 5.35% of respondents reported a suicide attempt, and 7.65% reported self-harm. Eating disorders were mentioned by 8.87% of respondents, while 6.93% reported problems with addiction, including drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other psychoactive substances.

If the answer is yes, what kind of mental difficulties are you talking about?



¹⁵Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

In the 2017 survey, as many as 87.7% of respondents who reported mental difficulties reported a high level of stress, and as many as 70.9% of respondents believed that they had experienced depression or depressive episodes, while 64% experienced anxiety and panic attacks. Suicidal thoughts and/or attempted suicide were in 2017 reported by 38.4% of respondents.¹⁶

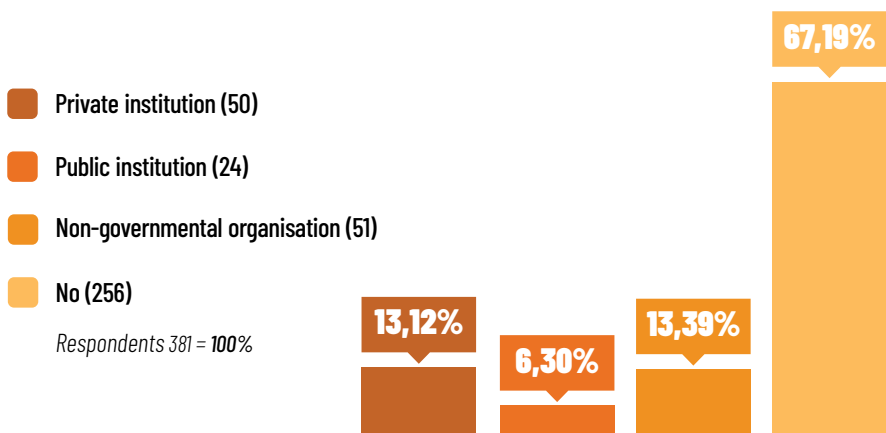
It is obvious that social distance and intolerance significantly influence the emergence and severity of mental health challenges that LGBTIQ people face, which indicates the need to provide adequate psychological support and develop resources within the community so that its members feel supported and empowered to face these difficulties.

It is evident that significant steps have been taken in the field of mental health of LGBTIQ people, and that the available support and the opening of discussion on these issues leads to the improvement of mental health and a lower level of mental difficulties of the LGBTIQ community.

It is necessary to work additionally on campaigns to raise public awareness about the harmful consequences of homo/transphobia for the well-being and safety of LGBTIQ people and their families, who also inevitably feel the negative consequences.

When it comes to seeking professional psychological/psychiatric/therapeutic help due to difficulties caused by negative reactions towards LGBTIQ people due to their identity, the results show that the majority of respondents (67.19%) have not sought this kind of help so far. However, a significant number of respondents, 32.81% did look for support. Private institutions were the choice for 13.12% of respondents, while 6.30% sought help in public institutions. Furthermore, 13.39% of respondents turned to non-governmental organisations, which are often an important source of support and information for LGBTIQ people.

Did you ever seek expert psychological / psychiatric / therapeutic help because of your sexual orientation and/or gender identity?



¹⁶ibid.

In 2017, 1/3 of respondents reported that they had sought professional psychological/psychiatric/therapeutic help, while 59.1% stated that they had no need for this type of support.¹⁷

Activism to date has ensured that there are resources and support services available to the community, but these findings underline the importance of increasing the LGBTIQ community's awareness of the availability of these resources to ensure that all those who need support can easily access it.

Respondents who sought psychological help and support shared a series of experiences when addressing professionals. For most of them, the meetings were positive and therapeutic in nature, and they felt supported and understood by the therapist. Some even rated their experiences as perfect and expressed their willingness to continue seeking help in the future. Furthermore, the possibility of interacting with other LGBTIQ people within the therapeutic context created a sense of belonging and togetherness.

However, in some cases, financial difficulties were an obstacle to access therapy, and it was impossible for respondents to get the help they needed. According to respondents, private therapists are often sensitive towards LGBTIQIA+ issues, but public institutions do not always share that level of awareness.

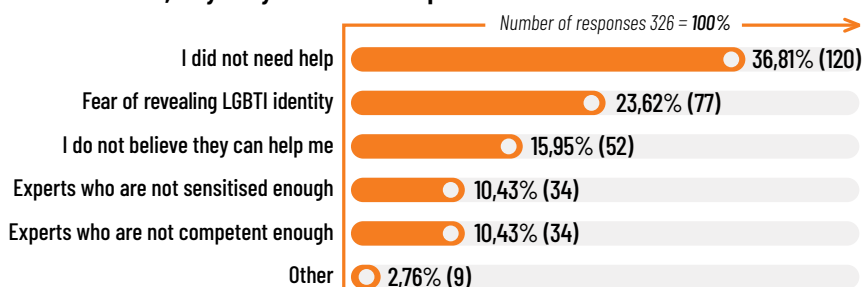
A number of respondents encountered homophobia in public health institutions, which indicates the need for better staff training and sensitisation. However, the majority of respondents felt that professionals in public institutions are open to dialogue and that they accept and understand them.

Respondents' experiences highlight the importance of selecting competent and sensitised professionals, of additional training and sensitisation, as well as of the need to ensure available and accessible mental health resources in the LGBTIQ community.

Their experiences emphasise the importance of creating safe and inclusive spaces where individuals can express their needs for support and care for their mental health without fear of judgment or discrimination.

Of the 67.19% respondents who did not seek professional psychological/ psychiatric/ therapeutic help, 36.81% pointed out that they did not need help and did not seek it.

If the answer is no, why did you not seek help?



¹⁷Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTIQ Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

However, a significant number of respondents expressed concern or fear as the reason for not seeking help. Thus, 23.62% of them did not seek help because they were afraid that their LGBTI identity would not be revealed. 15.95% of respondents did not believe that professionals could help them, while equal percentage of respondents, 10.43%, doubted competence and sensitivity of professionals.

These findings do not deviate too much from the 2017 research, where 25.7% of respondents reported that they were afraid of revealing their LGBTI identity, 14.4% doubted the competence of professional and 11.4% did not believe they were sensitised.

Therefore, these findings show that a campaign is necessary to inform the LGBTI community about where to seek professional help, as well as additional training and sensitisation of mental health professionals, especially those employed in public institutions.¹⁸

As for experiences of LGBTI people who came out to professionals they consulted, they vary, mostly depending on the type of specialist: 71.6% of respondents experienced a positive reaction from a psychologist during the consultation, 51.89% from a psychiatrist, and 82.3% of them experienced the same reaction from the therapist. The highest percentage of respondents, 84.6%, decided not to share their LGBTIQ identity with the family physician; 86.9% of them made a similar decision in case of urologists, and 71.17% in case of gynaecologists.

WHAT WERE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH THE EXPERTS YOU CAME OUT TO?

| | I told them, they reacted professionally | I told them, they reacted negatively/unprofessionally | I did not tell them | Not applicable |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Psychologist | 111 | 14 | 30 | 201 |
| Psychiatrist | 41 | 14 | 24 | 271 |
| Therapist | 102 | 8 | 14 | 229 |
| Family physician | 15 | 7 | 121 | 208 |
| Gynaecologist | 29 | 3 | 79 | 239 |
| Urologist | 5 | 1 | 40 | 303 |

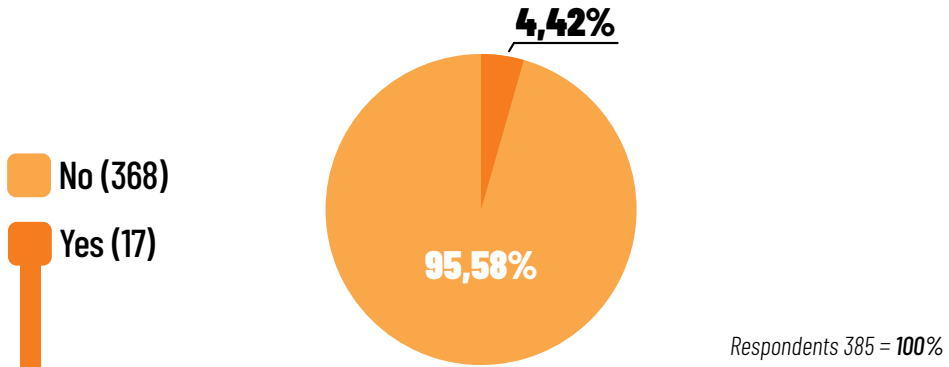
These findings indicate that LGBTI people do not feel free to share their identity beyond the field of psychosocial support, and that, although they trust mental health professionals, they do not share this sentiment for professionals in other fields of medicine. It is clear that there is a

¹⁸Amar Numanović. 2017. Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače 2. Analiza rezultata istraživanja problema i potreba LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2017. godini. Sarajevo: Sarajevski otvoreni centar.

necessity to replicate the mental health approach of educating and sensitising professionals to other areas, and to inform the LGBTIQ community about these efforts and the availability of LGBTIQ inclusive health care.

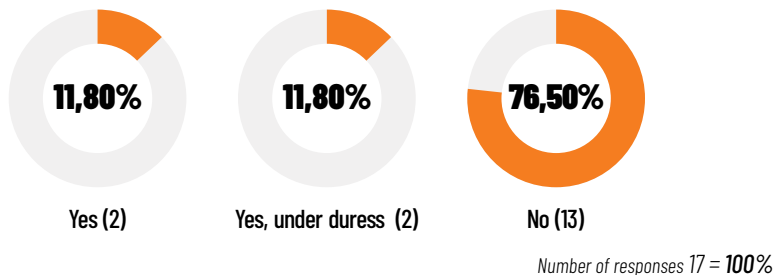
When it comes to conversion therapy, which has been discussed a lot in the BiH LGBTIQ community lately, the majority of respondents, 95.58% of them, reported that they had not undergone any procedures or treatments to change their sexual orientation/gender identity/sex characteristics against their will. However, 17 of them, 4.42%, reported that they had undergone such treatments.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SUBJECTED TO SERVICES INVOLVING ANY PROCEDURES AND TREATMENTS AIMED AT CHANGING OR MODIFYING YOUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR GENDER IDENTITY, EITHER AGAINST YOUR WILL OR WITH PERSUASION? THESE ARE KNOWN AS CONVERSION OR REPARATIVE THERAPIES.



Of the persons subjected to conversion treatments, 77.78% did not consent to the treatment, and were subjected to it against their will. Although 22.22% of respondents agreed to treatment, half of them did so under duress.

Have you consented to the treatment?



Various treatments and procedures of conversion therapy were applied:

1. Religious treatments and procedures, including visits to religious officials that included attempts at re-education and religious talks, or pseudo-religious rites such as "casting off magic" or "fear casting", that sometimes resulted in violence.

2. Forced cases of negligent medical or pseudo-medical treatment, using bioenergy, prescription of antidepressants, anxiolytics and antipsychotics, and extensive endocrinological, hormonal and gynaecological tests for the purpose of treating LGBTI identity.
3. Exposure to pornographic content and violence, and sexual harassment or violence with the aim of “healing” sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

All these different traumatic interventions were often the result of pressure or coercion from family members or professionals, indicating an alarming disrespect for the autonomy of LGBTI people and their right to make decisions about their body and health, and the need to publicly discuss the existence and harmfulness of conversion therapies and to find mechanisms to suppress such approaches to LGBTI people.

Some respondents described their experiences, among which:

“I was subjected to fear casting several times and went to see the imam who beat me for being gay.”

“A renowned psychiatrist recommended I get treatment from the holy book, but I refused.”

“I was forcibly given drugs such as antidepressants, anxiolytics and antipsychotics (which I did not need). I underwent medical tests – blood sampling, imaging of the thyroid gland, hormone extraction and invasive gynaecological tests. During the sessions, I was shown brutal pornographic content and all the time I was told that I was sick and that I needed intensive and invasive therapy in order to be cured. I was also subjected to sexual harassment and violence.”

Pride March

The BiH Pride March is a protest organised to oppose inequality and violations of human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer people; it represents the fight against inequality and demands equal treatment of LGBTIQ people as other BiH citizens.

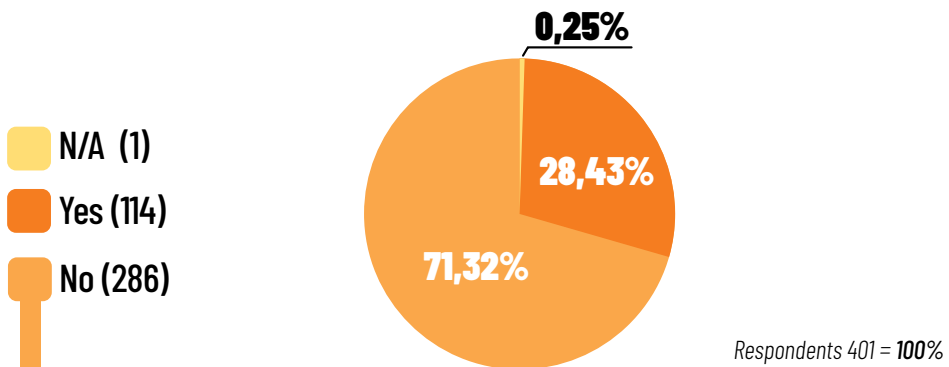
The Pride March is an important form of protest for the LGBTIQ community and society in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the following reasons:

1. Fight against discrimination: The Pride March provides an opportunity to speak out publicly against the discrimination, violence, and misunderstanding that LGBTIQ people frequently face in society.
2. Raising awareness: Organising the Pride March raises public awareness of the issues that LGBTIQ people face, such as invisibility, isolation, and violence.

3. Promoting equality: The Pride March sends a strong message to all citizens, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, about the importance of equal rights, freedom, and equality.
4. Creating a safe space: The Pride March provides a safe space for LGBTIQ people to express their identity without fear of violence or discrimination.
5. Transformative potential: Although it may be met with hostility, the Pride March has the potential to transform society by increasing the visibility of LGBTIQ people and decreasing fears and prejudices.

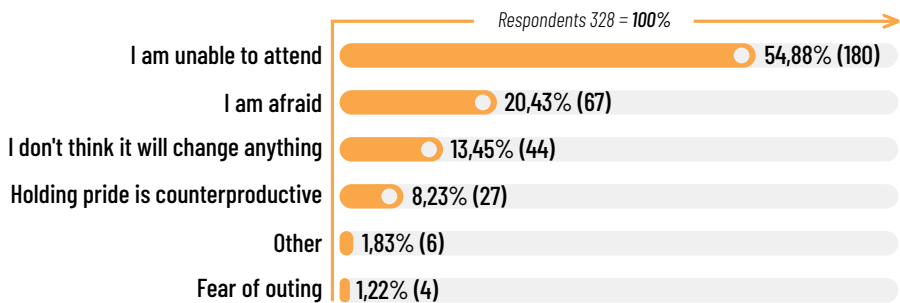
Of the total number of respondents, 28.43% said they had taken part in the BiH Pride March.

DID YOU TAKE PART IN THE PRIDE MARCH?



The majority of those who did not participate in the Pride March, 71.32%, stated that they were unable to do so. Fear was cited as the reason by 20.43% of respondents, and 13.45% doubted that the Pride could affect change.

If the answer is NO, please provide a brief explanation of your answer



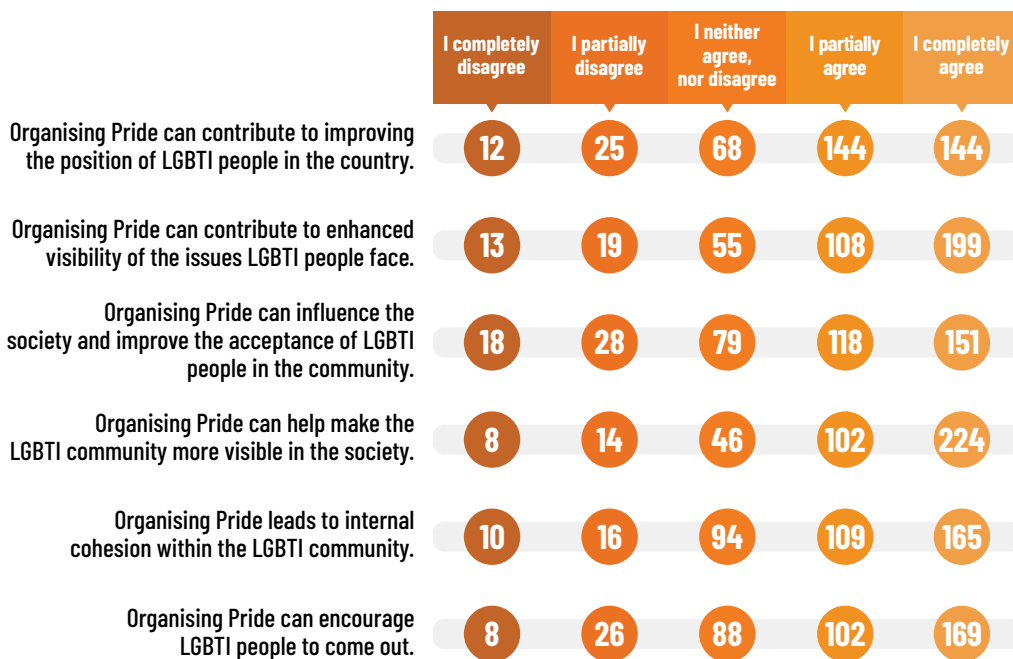
Respondents were encouraged to reflect on and express their level of agreement with certain statements and claims about the Pride March as part of this research. Despite their reluctance to attend, the majority of respondents see the positive and transformative potential of the Pride March.

The majority of respondents believe that holding the Pride March benefits the LGBTI community

in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In particular, 73.28% agreed with the statement that the Pride March can help to improve the position of LGBTI people.

Furthermore, 77.9% of respondents agreed with the statement that the Pride March can increase the visibility of the problems faced by LGBTI people. In terms of social impact, 68.2% of respondents believe that holding a Pride March can have a positive impact on society and contribute to LGBTI acceptance in the community.

BELOW ARE SOME STATEMENTS REGARDING THE PRIDE MARCH. PLEASE RANK YOUR AGREEMENT WITH THESE STATEMENTS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5.



Furthermore, the majority of respondents (82.7%) believe that the Pride March contributes to greater visibility of the LGBTI community in society, while 69.5% believe that it contributes to the LGBTI community's internal cohesion. Also, 68.96% of respondents believe that holding the Pride March will encourage LGBTI people to open up about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Such attitudes highlight the progress that the Pride March has made in the attitudes and perceptions of the LGBTIQ community in BiH over the past four years, because this level of positive perception of the effects of the Pride on the community and society differs significantly from the research findings from 2017, when only 44% of respondents were in favour of holding the Pride March, while 21% were expressly against it, and the rest were unsure.¹⁹

Even the level of agreement with the aforementioned statements increased by about 10% in each

¹⁹Amar Numanović. 2017. Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače 2. Analiza rezultata istraživanja problema i potreba LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2017. godini. Sarajevo: Sarajevski otvoreni centar.

category between the two research.²⁰ For comparison, in the first research of this type, conducted in 2013, 52% of respondents believed that the Pride March should not take place.

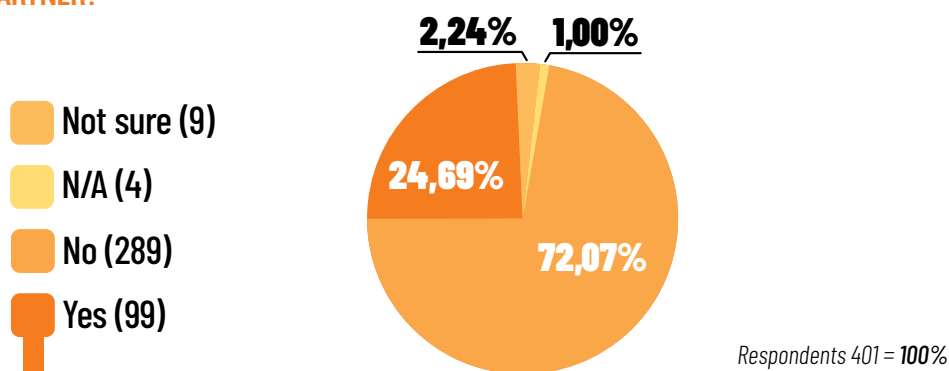
Overall, the research findings indicate that the majority of respondents believe that holding the Pride March has a positive impact on the position of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This improvement in LGBTI community attitudes and perceptions in BiH is encouraging and suggests that society is gradually opening up and accepting diversity.

Same-Sex Unions

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, where LGBTI people are forced to hide their same-sex relationships to avoid condemnation and violence, legalising same-sex relationships is critical to combating stigma and promoting equality and inclusivity. Existing legislation does not recognise or protect same-sex unions in any way, which means that people who have long-term and stable emotional relationships with same-sex partners do not have the same rights as heterosexual couples. Same-sex couples, for example, cannot inherit a pension in the event of a partner's death, do not have legal mechanisms for dividing assets in the event of a relationship break-up or inheriting assets in the event of a partner's death, and do not qualify for the tax benefits available to married heterosexual couples. This legal void creates significant uncertainty for same-sex couples and represents a legal and social injustice.

Of the total number of respondents, 24.69% stated that they are in a long-term, stable emotional relationship with a partner of the same sex, while the majority stated that they are not currently in such a relationship.

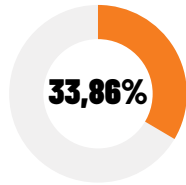
ARE YOU IN A STABLE, LONG-TERM EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH A SAME-SEX PARTNER?



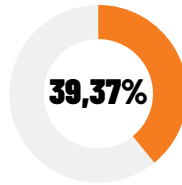
Of the total number of respondents who are in a long-term and stable emotional relationship, 33.86% already live with their partner, and 39.37% plan to do so in the near future.

²⁰/ibid

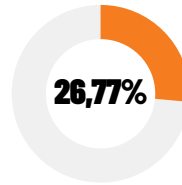
Do you live with your partner?



Yes (43)



No, but we plan to start livingtogether in the period ahead (50)



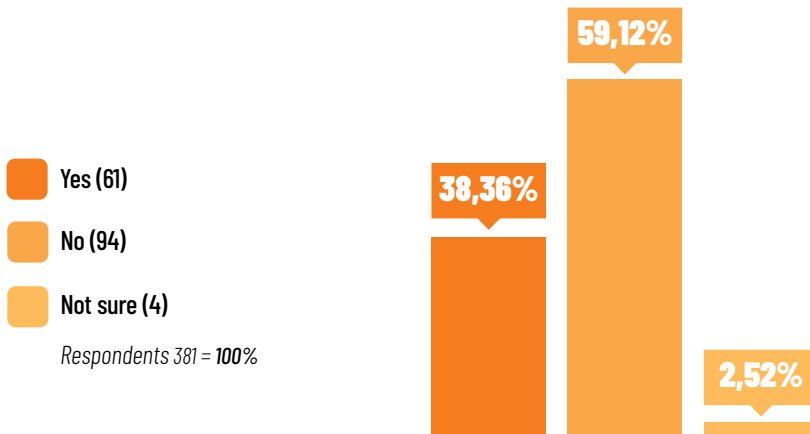
No, and we don't plan to live together (34)

Respondents 127 = 100%

This research finding indicates that same-sex couples are a social reality in BiH, and that despite legal and institutional neglect, they create, shape, and live in their communities in the same way that heterosexual couples do. The lack of regulation does not reduce the number of same-sex partnerships; rather, it places existing couples in legal uncertainty and unequal position.

More than half of the respondents, 59.12%, stated that they do not want to have children, but a significant percentage, 38.36%, stated that they do want to have children in their same-sex union.

ARE YOU PLANNING TO HAVE CHILDREN IN YOUR UNION?



The decision to become a parent, particularly for LGBTI people, can be personal and complex, influenced by a variety of factors. Some of the reasons could be personal life goals, professional ambitions, or simply personal preference.

However, same-sex couples may choose not to have children due to concerns about the stigma and discrimination their children may face as a result of having same-sex parents. Furthermore, the adoption or IVF procedure can be extremely difficult and expensive, or simply unavailable to same-sex partners.

Although the respondents' perspectives on this issue appear clear and explicit, it is important to

note that they cannot be accepted as absolute truth, precisely because they may be conditioned by the legal and social insecurity that same-sex couples face in BiH.

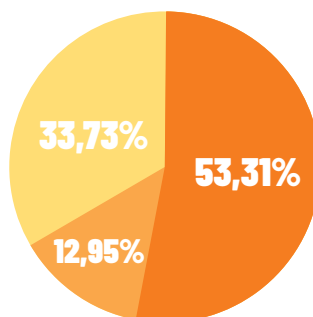
When asked if they would still enter into a life partnership or same-sex union in BiH if they were able, more than half of the respondents (53.31%) said yes.

WOULD YOU ENTER INTO A LIFE PARTNERSHIP OR SAME-SEX UNION IF IT WAS POSSIBLE IN BIH?

Yes (177)

No (43)

Not sure (112)



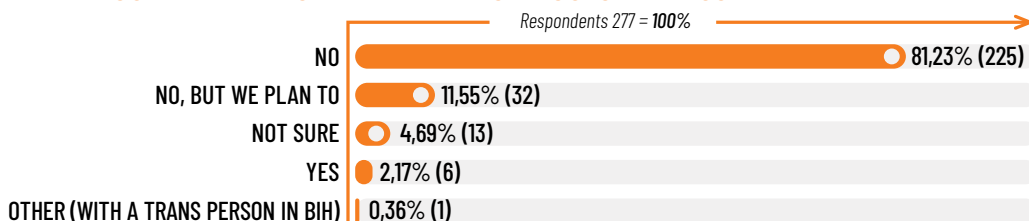
Respondents 332 = 100%

In the 2017 research, the majority of respondents stated that they would enter into a same-sex partnership or life union if such a thing were possible in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 62% of respondents who are in a stable emotional relationship stated that they would enter into a life partnership; this means that even then, most of the respondents wanted to enter into a life partnership in the near or distant future but the lack of regulation in this area prevented them from doing so.²¹

It is interesting to note that 33.73% of respondents were unsure whether they would enter into a life partnership in that situation, which prompts consideration of the level of information and knowledge of the rights that the regulation of life partnerships within the community itself entails. Given the legal and social invisibility of same-sex partnerships, both in society and within the LGBTIQ community, there is room for more information on this topic, as well as the need for LGBT people in their environment and in safe spaces to be in the company of same-sex couples who can talk about their experiences, as well as the concrete consequences of the lack of legal regulation on their daily lives.

Given the lack of legal regulation and the ability to recognise same-sex partnerships formed outside of BiH, 81.23% of respondents have not entered into this type of union. However, six respondents said they had formed a life partnership outside of BiH, and another 32 said they planned to do so.

HAVE YOU ENTERED INTO A LIFE PARTNERSHIP OUTSIDE BIH SO FAR?



Respondents 277 = 100%

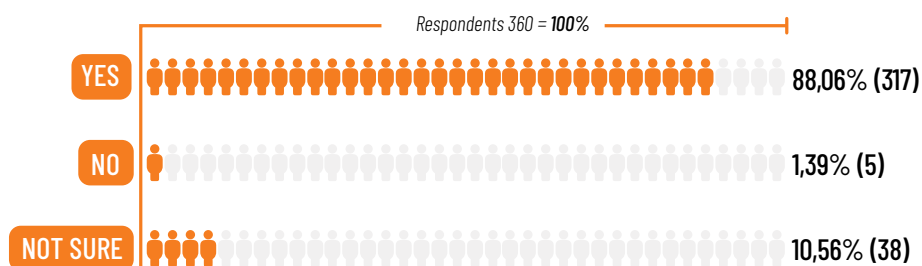
²¹Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTIQ Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

As previously stated, these findings confirm that same-sex couples are a social reality in BiH, and that in the absence of domestic legal mechanisms, they find ways to protect and “legitimise” their communities.

Countries that same-sex couples from BiH choose as destinations for entering into same-sex partnerships include countries in the region such as Croatia and Montenegro, as well as Slovenia, Germany, the United States, and Canada.

Regardless of their personal views on certain aspects of life unions, the vast majority of respondents, 88.06%, believe that same-sex partnerships should be legally regulated in BiH.

DO YOU THINK THAT SAME-SEX PARTNERSHIPS SHOULD BE REGULATED IN BIH?



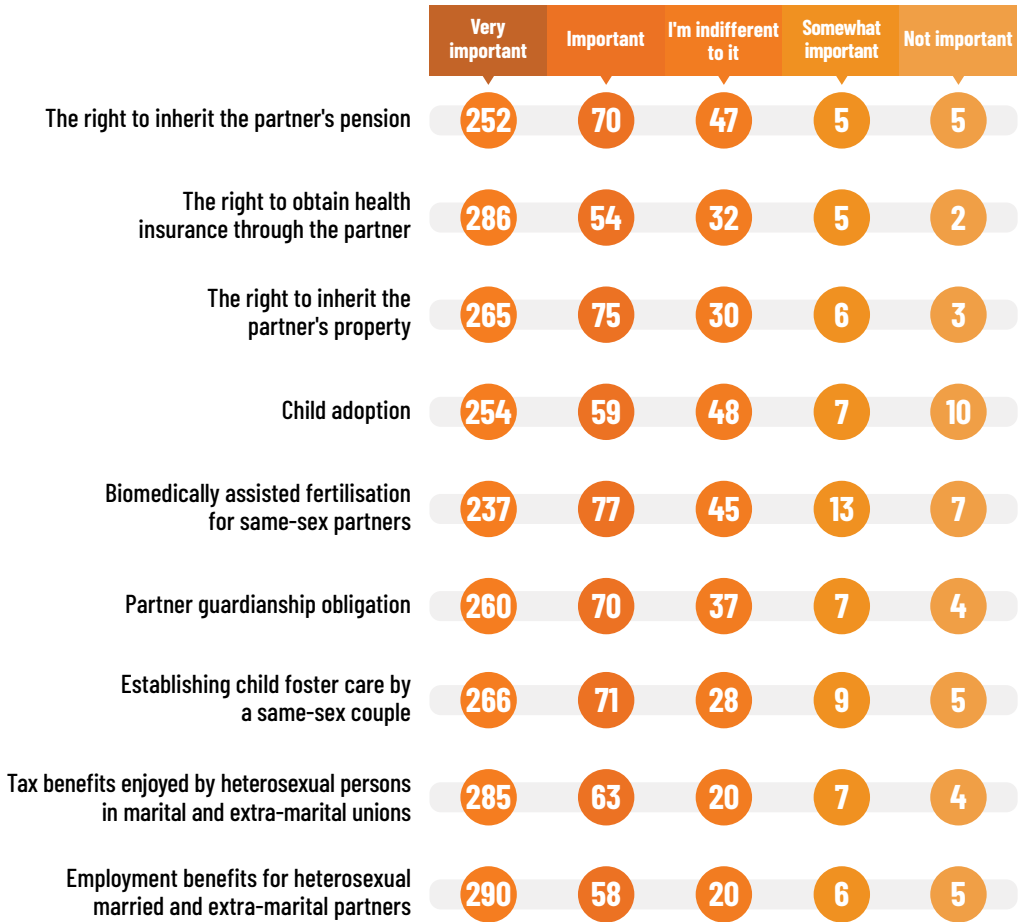
In the 2017 research, the majority of respondents, 82.2%, stated that legal regulation of same-sex partnerships would be beneficial, citing the regulation of bureaucratic and formal-legal aspects of joint life as the main reasons, i.e., the possibility of enjoying rights that they could not achieve in informal partnerships due to the disorganisation of that area.²²

Only five respondents believe that same-sex partnerships should not be legally recognised in BiH, with reasons ranging from fear of the environment and non-acceptance to scepticism that this would change anything in the position of LGBTI people in BiH and the belief that partnerships are “easier” to conclude in EU countries.

As part of the research, the respondents rated the importance of regulating different aspects of same-sex partnerships on a scale from 1 to 5. Despite previous questions indicating respondents' uncertainty about the rights and obligations entailed by same-sex partnerships, when presented with the most frequently cited reasons why these unions should be regulated, respondents mostly characterised all of them as very important (ranging from 60% to nearly 80% agreeing with the statement). The reasons given are listed in the table below:

²²Amar Numanović (2017) *Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings*. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

RATE THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULATING SAME-SEX PARTNERSHIPS FOR CERTAIN LIFE MATTERS ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5



When given the option to add some omitted reasons for the need to regulate same-sex partnerships, respondents highlighted visits to the partner in the hospital, difficulties in regulating the residence status for a partner who does not have the citizenship of the country in which they plan to live, and denial of related rights due to the partners' different citizenships as an important issue to be addressed.

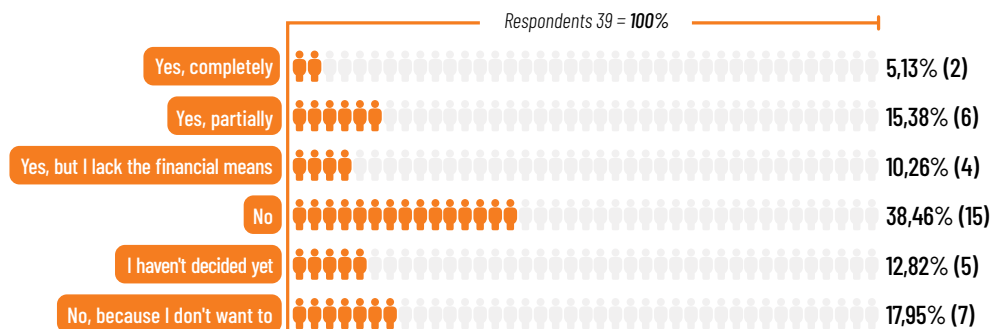
Such findings suggest that, while they may not be the most familiar with the legal aspects of same-sex partnership regulation, LGBTIQ people in BiH not only live and enter into these partnerships, but also very clearly recognise what is required for their same-sex partnerships to be treated the same as heterosexual couples, and to be able to perform their partnership moral duties unhindered and without discrimination.

Legal Recognition of Gender and Gender Identities

Transgender people in Bosnia and Herzegovina face serious challenges due to legal and social invisibility. The lack of adequate legal protection frequently causes problems in the daily lives of trans people. This invisibility can obstruct access to health care, education, employment, and other fundamental rights. Furthermore, trans people are frequently stigmatised and discriminated against because of their gender identity and expression, which can lead to isolation and limited opportunities to participate in the community. In this context, the purpose of this research is to provide insight into the challenges that transgender people face, as well as to define how to work towards creating an inclusive society that respects and supports different gender identities.

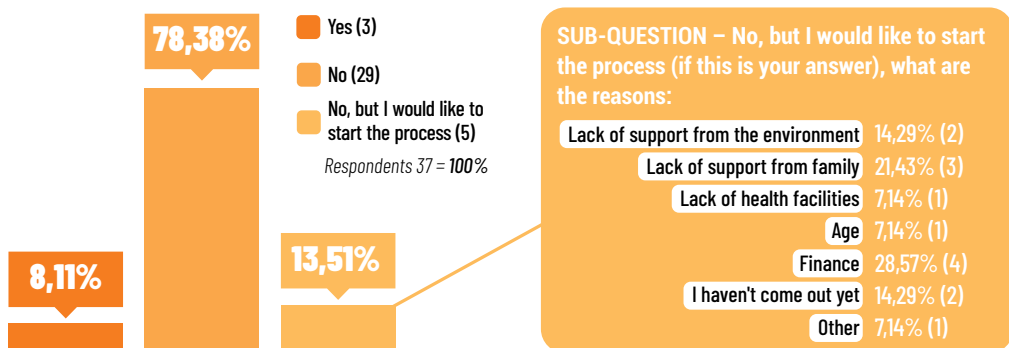
Of the total number of respondents in this research who identify as transgender in some aspect of their identity, 5.13% intend to completely undergo gender reassignment procedure, while 15.38% intend to partially undergo gender reassignment procedure. 10.26% of respondents stated that they would like to reassign their sex but lack the financial means to do so. 38.46% of respondents stated that they would like to reassign their sex but lack the financial means to do so. 10.26% of respondents stated that they would like to reassign their sex but lack the financial means to do so. 12.82% of respondents stated that they would like to reassign their sex but lack the financial means to do so. 17.95% of respondents stated that they would like to reassign their sex but lack the financial means to do so.

DO YOU PLAN TO UNDERGO GENDER REASSIGNMENT PROCEDURE?



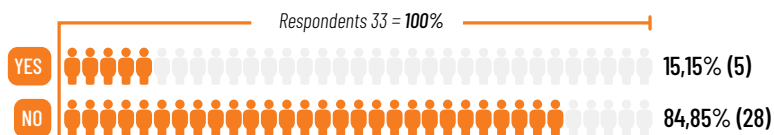
Out of a total of 37 respondents who were asked if they were in the process of transitioning, 8.11% said they were, while 78.38% said they were not. An additional 13.51% expressed a desire to begin the transition process, citing, among other things, a lack of support from family (21.43%) and the environment (14.29%), not outing (14.29%), and a lack of financial resources (28.57%).

ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSITIONING?



Transgender people frequently experience discomfort as a result of their gender identity and expression, with 5.15% reporting issues as a result of the discrepancy between their gender expression and the sex marker in the documents.

DID YOU HAVE PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN YOUR GENDER EXPRESSION AND SEX MARKER IN YOUR PERSONAL DOCUMENTS?



The most frequently reported inconvenience was a discrepancy between physical appearance and the sex marker in the documents. Individual situations, however, ranged from name-calling and comments by border police or police officers to threats and violence.

In 2017 research on the needs and problems of the LGBTI community in BiH, nearly two-thirds of respondents confirmed that they would change their sex marker in personal documents even before the transition is completed.²³ Given the aforementioned experiences, and the constant fear of negative reactions, it is not surprising that 28.13% of respondents in 2023 would change their sex marker before the transition process is completed. However, nearly 56.25% would not do so, and 15.63% were unsure of their decision.

WOULD YOU CHANGE THE SEX MARKER IN YOUR DOCUMENTS PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF THE TRANSITION PROCESS IF YOU HAD SUCH POSSIBILITY?



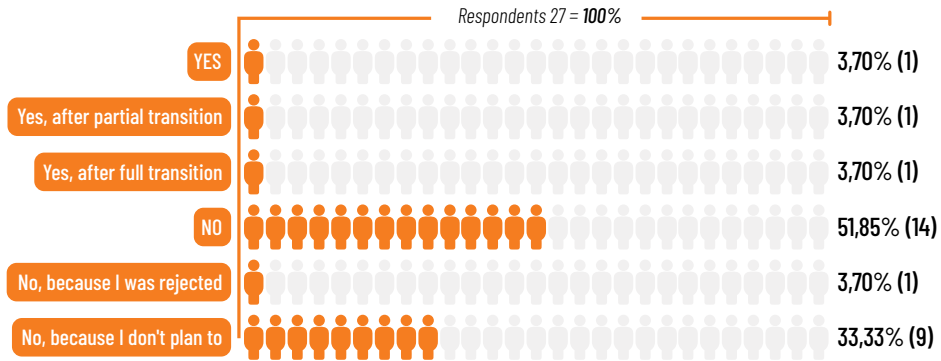
This discrepancy in responses also suggests a potential misunderstanding of what gender reassignment would imply for transgender people, and may be the result of a fear of additional violence in situations where changing the marker would result in a greater discrepancy between the sex indicated in the documents and a person's gender expression.

Given the growing transphobia in society, as well as the spread of harmful and false narratives about transgenderism that are becoming dominant even within the LGBTI community and activism, special attention should be paid in the coming period to information and sensitisation activities aimed at both the community and trans people themselves, as well as the general public, about the various trans identities, needs, and challenges that these people face in BiH.

When it comes to changing the sex marker, only three out of 27 respondents succeeded, compared to 51.85% who failed.

²³Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

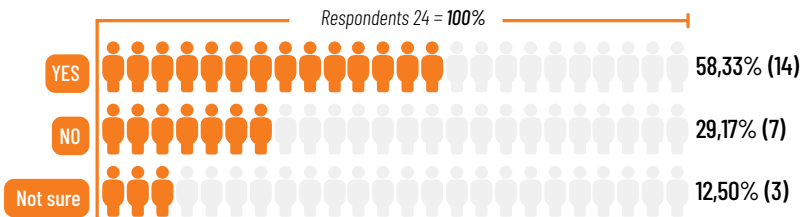
HAVE YOU SUCCESSFULLY CHANGED THE SEX MARKER IN BIH DOCUMENTS (BIRTH CERTIFICATE, CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP, ID CARD, PASSPORT, STUDENT LOGBOOK, DIPLOMA, HEALTH INSURANCE CARD, BANK ACCOUNT) TO REFLECT YOUR GENDER IDENTITY?



Of the three people who managed to change their sex marker, one did so after a full transition, which implies complete gender reassignment, and the other after a partial transition. These results suggest that, despite the rigid interpretation of domestic legislation in this area, different practices exist within competent institutions in BiH, the identification and exchange of which could lead to a harmonisation of approaches to this issue and potentially better respect and protection of trans people’s human rights in BiH.

When asked whether a third sex category should be legally recognised, 58.33% of those who spoke on the subject agreed, 29.17% disagreed, and 12.50% were unsure.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE THIRD SEX CATEGORY SHOULD BE INTRODUCED IN THE LAW, IN ADDITION TO THE BINARY MALE AND FEMALE SEXES?



Some supporters of this initiative point out that the inclusion of this marker could have an impact on social issues such as transgender acceptance and understanding, as well as the need to accept different biological sex variants. It is clear that this possibility is mostly observed in the context of trans identity, whereas the intersex point of view was largely absent, which can be attributed to the fact that no intersex people participated in the research itself, which should be given more consideration when developing methodologies and conducting similar research in the future.

The research findings clearly indicate the need for more education and social information to ensure support and rights for people who identify as trans, gender variant, or non-binary. This type of education is also required within the LGBTI community, as evidenced by the findings related to

the understanding and expression of one's own gender identity described in the sample structure chapter.

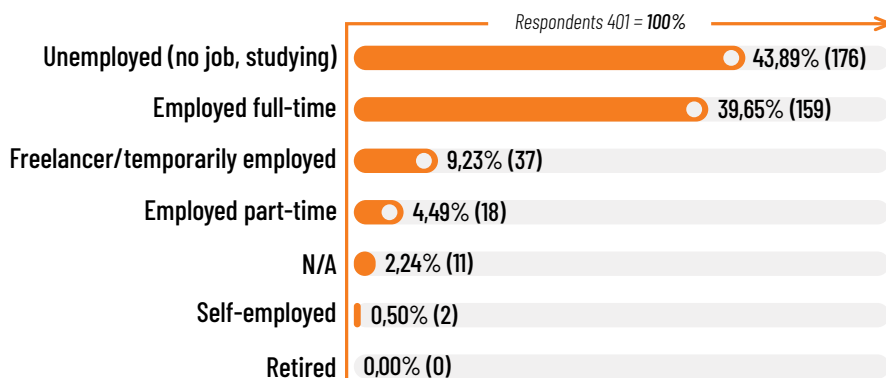
In addition, when interpreting the findings of this chapter, keep in mind that the lack of precise legal regulation and trans-inclusive health care, as well as non-coverage of medical expenses, further complicates the situation for transgender people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a result, they are frequently forced to deal with financial barriers to important medical services, as well as to limit their gender expression and transition process in accordance with their true capabilities or to avoid negative reactions from the environment.

Economic Position of LGBTI People

Despite laws protecting LGBTI people's rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, approximately 8% of respondents in this research reported experiencing mobbing or other forms of discrimination in the workplace because of their LGBTI identity. Any inequality or violation of LGBTI human rights at work or in connection with their income makes them even more vulnerable, because due to ubiquitous xenophobia and social distance, they usually do not have the family and social support networks that cisgender heterosexual people have, and any insecurity in the field of finances can put them in a disadvantageous position. This research provided an insight into the economic position of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, taking into account the inequality in which they live, study, and work.

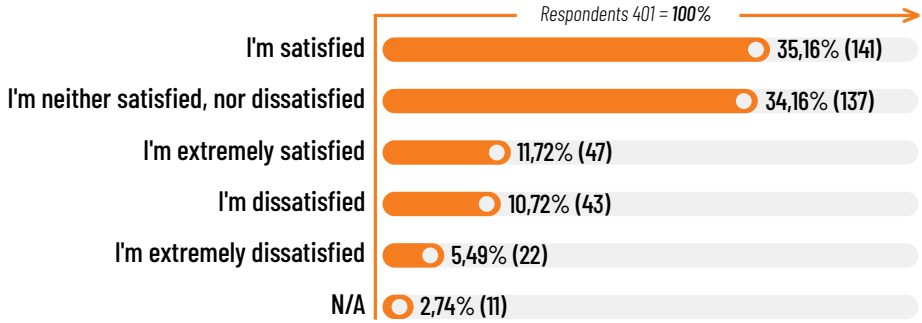
A total of 39.65% of respondents are employed full-time, while 43.89% are unemployed or still in school. Another 9.23% of respondents work freelance or on a temporary basis, while 4.49% are employed part-time.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS?



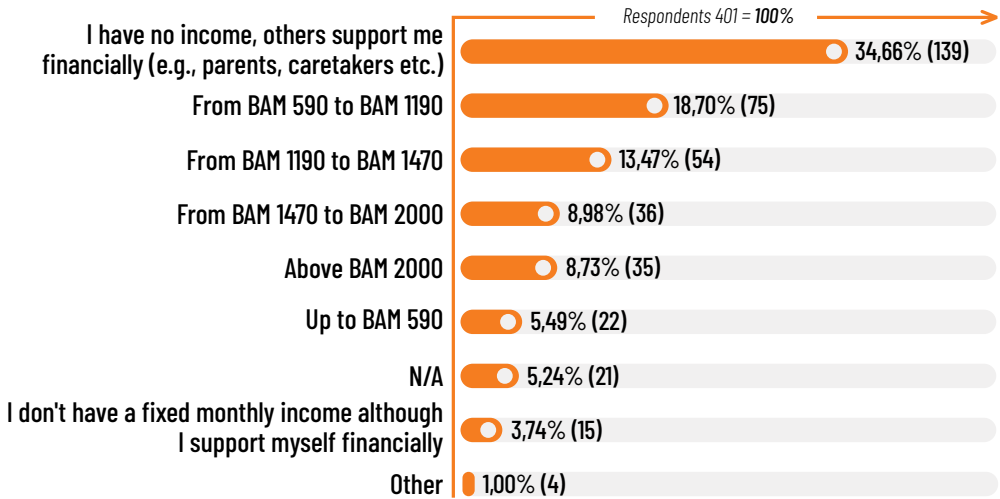
On the other hand, 35.16% of them were satisfied with their financial situation, and an additional 11.72% were extremely satisfied. On the other hand, 10.72% said they were dissatisfied, and 5.49% said they were extremely dissatisfied.

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION?



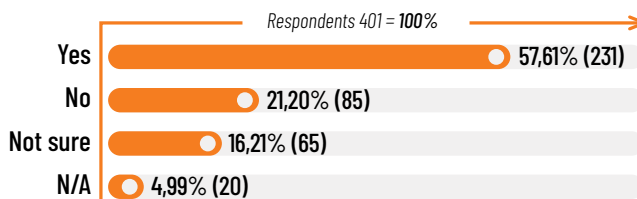
Of the total number of respondents, 34.66% of them do not have income and are supported by others, which is not surprising given the age structure of the sample and the large number of students among the respondents.

WHAT IS YOUR AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME?



Although the majority of respondents earn up to BAM 1470 per month, 57.61% believe that their income is sufficient to meet basic needs. Respondents' responses to the question about whether their monthly income is sufficient to meet basic needs vary significantly; while some are financially secure, others highlight the difficulties they face. In general, they state that they have basic expenses, including annual vacations, but the prevailing opinion is that the cost of living has risen and that their financial situation is difficult, particularly in light of rising food and rent prices.

IS YOUR MONTHLY INCOME ENOUGH TO MEET BASIC NEEDS?



While the majority of respondents are satisfied with their monthly income, these findings must be considered in the context of overall economic situation in BiH, including the consumer price index and the cost of living. Furthermore, understanding their economic situation is more difficult without information about their work habits, who they live with, and whether they have additional living expenses. According to these findings, the LGBTIQ community in BiH is aware of economic changes and more difficult living conditions, and the need for better financial support and available opportunities to ensure basic survival while saving for the future is recognised.

Future research may benefit from a more in-depth analysis of these factors in order to better understand the complexities of the economic picture of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to draw informed conclusions about their needs and challenges.

Perception of Sarajevo Open Centre's Work on Issues Relating to LGBTI Rights

The research findings confirm that respondents generally regard SOC as an organisation with many years of experience that has played a key role in significantly changing the perception of LGBTI people in BiH, particularly in Sarajevo, where significant progress has been made in respecting the rights of the LGBTI community.

Respondents, on the other hand, pointed out that despite SOC's efforts BiH remains a conservative society, and they emphasise the need for greater efforts to raise awareness and acceptance of LGBTI issues in society, as well as the need for more active engagement outside of Sarajevo, particularly in other parts of BiH.

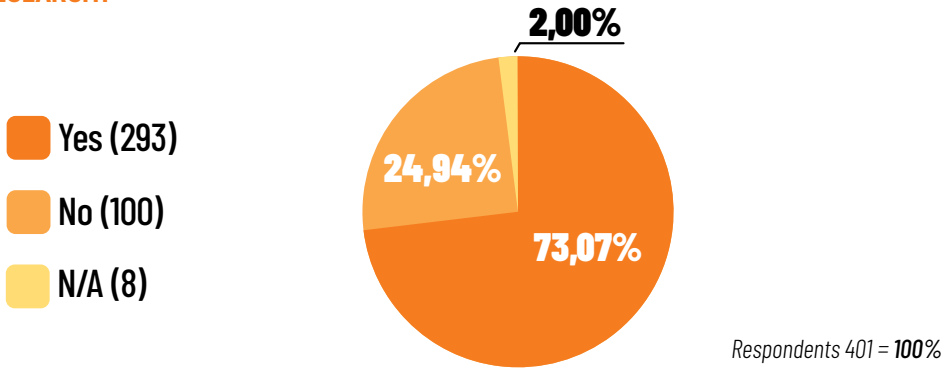
In this regard, the research results coincide with the findings of a previously conducted public opinion survey, where the need for additional information and conducting awareness campaigns on specific issues prevails, and the findings of both are applicable to both the LGBTI community and the general public.²⁴

The prevailing opinion is that SOC's work is crucial for the LGBTI community in BiH, particularly in terms of providing legal and psychosocial support, education about LGBTI rights and problems, and collaboration with institutions to improve the position of LGBTI people in BiH.

The majority of respondents (73.07%) were already familiar with the work of the Sarajevo Open Centre, while 24.94% were not familiar with its work prior to the research.

²⁴*Emina Bošnjak (ed.). 2023. Acceptance from a Distance: Attitudes towards Homosexual, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.*

WERE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE'S WORK PRIOR TO THIS RESEARCH?



The results correspond to the findings from 2017, when slightly more than ¾ of the respondents were familiar with SOC's work,²⁵ which can potentially speak of continuous reaching out to a part of the community/audience that follows the organisation's work, but also of the need to try to reach out to other groups within the LGBTI community in some new way.

Respondents had varying levels of familiarity with the Sarajevo Open Centre's services and activities, owing primarily to their nature. Thus, the most popular services and activities included LGBTI workshops (14.21%), LGBTI parties/socialising events (14.27%), and public events such as round tables, film screenings, and exhibitions (14.14%), which are also the events most frequently attended by the LGBTI community itself.

WHAT SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH?



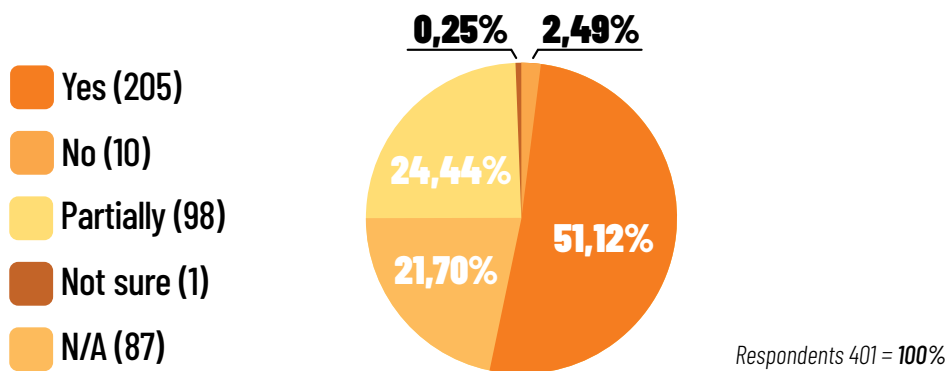
²⁵Amar Numanović (2017) Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre.

According to the 2017 research, public events (such as round tables, film screenings, and exhibitions) were leading the way in terms of recognition, with 87.1% of respondents familiar with them,²⁶ which could explain both then and now why such activities are generally more widely promoted and target the broadest circle of the LGBTI community.

However, there is a clear need to find an innovative way to communicate to the community all activities and the role of SOC in other fields of work on LGBTI human rights, and to convey the significance and importance of these activities with continuous work on mobilising and empowering the community.

The majority of respondents (51.12%) believe that the Sarajevo Open Centre's work has a positive impact on public perception of LGBTI people, while 24.44% agreed in part. Only 2.49% of respondents disagree that SOC has a positive impact on the perception of LGBTI people.

DO YOU BELIEVE THE SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE'S WORK HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF LGBTI PEOPLE?



Respondents rated almost all of the options for the Sarajevo Open Centre's future focus as important or very important, but the following were the most significant for the greatest number of respondents:

1. Safe space for victims of violence - throughout the research, violence was identified as one of the greatest fears of LGBTI people in BiH, and the need for a safe space and/or shelter was emphasised several times as a potential measure to reduce the risk of violence;
2. Psychological counselling for LGBTI people / self-help groups - respondents repeatedly emphasised the importance of providing adequate psychological support and the availability of resources to address the specific challenges faced by LGBTI people.
3. Training for civil servants - according to several research segments, the LGBTI community believes that civil servants are insufficiently educated and sensitised, and that such activities have the potential to transform perceptions within state institutions, as well as the level of community trust in them, which could lead to better support and protection of LGBTI human rights.

²⁶/ibid.

Other activities, as well as respondents' views on them, are listed in the table below:

WHICH OF THE LISTED ACTIVITIES, ACCORDING TO YOUR NEEDS, DO YOU THINK THE SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE SHOULD FOCUS ON IN THE FUTURE?

| | Very important | Important | I'm indifferent to it | Somewhat important | Not important |
|--|----------------|-----------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Actions in public space / street actions | 121 | 106 | 80 | 31 | 8 |
| Supporting the Pride March | 157 | 102 | 55 | 25 | 9 |
| Training of civil servants (e.g., police, medical staff, school staff, etc.) for the purpose of sensitising and ensuring professional approaches to LGBTI people | 252 | 74 | 18 | 5 | 1 |
| Public cultural events (film screenings, exhibitions, discussions etc.) | 188 | 109 | 39 | 12 | 1 |
| Media campaigns for the purpose of informing and sensitising general public about LGBTI rights | 198 | 98 | 41 | 10 | 3 |
| Online activities (web portal on LGBTI rights, work on social networks etc.) | 157 | 102 | 65 | 21 | 3 |
| Psychological counselling for LGBTI people / self-help groups | 266 | 60 | 19 | 4 | 1 |
| Legal counselling for LGBTI people | 250 | 64 | 26 | 5 | 3 |
| Work with journalists and/or media companies for the purpose of professional reporting on LGBTI topics | 204 | 76 | 55 | 12 | 3 |
| Advocacy with state institutions / change of legislation / analysis of public policies and influencing them | 250 | 65 | 25 | 6 | 2 |
| Social activities for LGBTI people (socialising events, parties, outings, artistic activities/creative workshops etc.) | 209 | 94 | 32 | 7 | 5 |
| Strengthening the LGBTI movement in BiH (support for individual activities/organisations) | 219 | 78 | 34 | 14 | 2 |
| Economic empowerment of LGBTI people (increased capacity, knowledge, and skills) | 209 | 89 | 38 | 8 | 3 |
| A safe space for victims of violence | 287 | 46 | 10 | 2 | 3 |
| Support for the sexual and reproductive health of LGBTI people | 267 | 52 | 17 | 6 | 4 |

Ibid.

As additional activities or areas of action, the majority of respondents emphasise the need to include areas where there are currently no or very few activities for the LGBTI community, as well as the importance of expanding resources and focusing activities on these underserved regions to ensure that all members of the community have access to support and empowerment programs.

A significant number of respondents emphasised the importance of addressing health issues within the LGBTI community, such as medication availability and support for people with sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. It was also emphasised how crucial it is to advocate for access to pre-exposure prophylaxis treatment (PREP) within the health system to prevent the spread of HIV.

The significance of creating safe and inclusive spaces with a vibrant atmosphere for the LGBT+ community, such as a gay club, which could serve as the foundation for various events and parties, including drag queen performances, and encouraging a sense of belonging and community, was also emphasised.

Respondents emphasised the importance of initiating open debates and discussions with the general public to raise awareness of LGBTI organisations' work, reduce stigma, and bridge the gap between different social groups.

Conclusion

This repeated research on the needs and problems of the LGBTI community in Bosnia and Herzegovina reveals a complex mosaic of challenges that this community faces. Discrimination and violence are frequently the result of a lack of understanding, visibility, and support from society and institutions. The research results point to the need for a comprehensive approach, including education, advocacy, and psychological support, to improve the quality of life of LGBTI people in BiH.

Special emphasis should be placed on educating the community about LGBTI identities and experiences. Many members of the LGBTI community struggle to understand their gender identities and sexual orientations. As a result, re-information activities are critical in providing accurate information, strengthening empathy, breaking down stereotypes, and removing prejudices among LGBTI community members.

Furthermore, the report emphasises the importance of creating safe spaces and ensuring a widespread and accessible network of psychological support, particularly for those who have experienced violence or discrimination.

This research lays the groundwork for future steps, urging institutions, civil society organisations, and society in general to work together to create a more inclusive, supportive, and safe environment for LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Framework Recommendations

These recommendations reflect the key findings of this research within the scope of the areas covered, and are intended to provide a foundation for action in order to create an inclusive environment in BiH that provides equal opportunities, support, and protection to LGBTI people:

COMING OUT

To create and promote safe and supportive spaces within the LGBTI community for people to openly discuss their experiences, doubts, and fears about coming out.

Create and implement informational activities to raise LGBTI community awareness about various aspects of coming out and identities within the community, as well as acceptance processes such as self-acceptance, family dynamics, and the importance of friend support.

VIOLENCE

Continue with education and sensitisation programs for police and judiciary representatives by introducing innovative education formats that build the capacities of police representatives to recognise motives and make first contact with victims of hate crimes, understanding the psychological consequences and the importance of building a trusting relationship, with a clear establishment of an interdisciplinary work methodology in these cases.

Work on the establishment of safe spaces for LGBTI victims of violence, with a particular emphasis on safe online spaces and support in cases of cyberbullying and psychological violence.

Begin addressing the issue of violence in forced conversion therapy cases.

DISCRIMINATION

Conduct information campaigns about discrimination and its various forms, as well as protection mechanisms.

Strengthen the role and proactivity of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman, as well as its monitoring role in this area, and maintain contact with the LGBTI community.

Continue with education and sensitisation programs for judicial representatives by introducing innovative educational formats that connect the LGBTIQ community with judicial representatives, and work on building trusting relationships.

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

Encourage ongoing dialogue and collaboration between institutions and the LGBTI community in order to identify concerns, share experiences, and inform on the policy/measure development.

Continue with education and sensitisation programs for civil servants.

Encourage institutions to be proactive and transparent in their interactions with LGBTI people.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Improve access to accessible and inclusive psychosocial support services tailored to the needs of the LGBTI community, with a focus on professional and supportive service providers.

Focus efforts on building a network of sensitised and educated health professionals in all fields of medicine who can serve as experts and educators to a larger network of health workers, with the aim of ensuring an LGBTIQ inclusive environment during regular visits and providing specialist medical support as needed.

Strengthen support networks and groups that provide safe spaces for sharing experiences, coping strategies, and emotional support.

Develop online platforms that provide resources for mental health protection and promotion, self-help tools, and a contact list of LGBTI inclusive mental health professionals.

PRIDE MARCH

Inclusion of as many LGBTI individuals as possible in the organisation, support for and participation in pride marches, and promotion of a sense of community and acceptance.

Start a discussion about the importance of the Pride March within the community, as well as the potential support mechanisms for community members who are afraid and/or unable to participate.

Use pride marches to educate the community by organising workshops, panels, and discussions on LGBTI rights, acceptance, and inclusivity.

SAME-SEX PARTNERSHIPS

Advocate for the recognition of same-sex partnerships.

Conduct public awareness campaigns emphasising the importance of legal recognition of same-sex partnerships, and eliminating stereotypes and prejudices.

Open a dialogue in the LGBTI community about same-sex partnerships, their importance, and the ways in which couples in BiH already live and maintain their life unions.

Involve LGBTI families in these activities to strengthen the family support aspect of same-sex partnerships.

TRANSGENDER PERSONS

Improve transgender persons' access to health care services such as hormone therapy, mental health support, and gender-affirming surgeries.

Advocate for the simplification of legal processes for changing the sex marker in official documents in order to ensure gender identity recognition.

Conduct campaigns to raise awareness about transgender issues, dispelling myths, stereotypes and misinformation both within the community and in the public, with a focus on building alliances and support despite growing transphobia.

ECONOMIC POSITION

Promote inclusivity and equality by advocating for the development of workplace anti-discrimination policies that explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity.

Hold financial literacy and management workshops and provide resources to empower LGBTI people to make informed economic decisions.

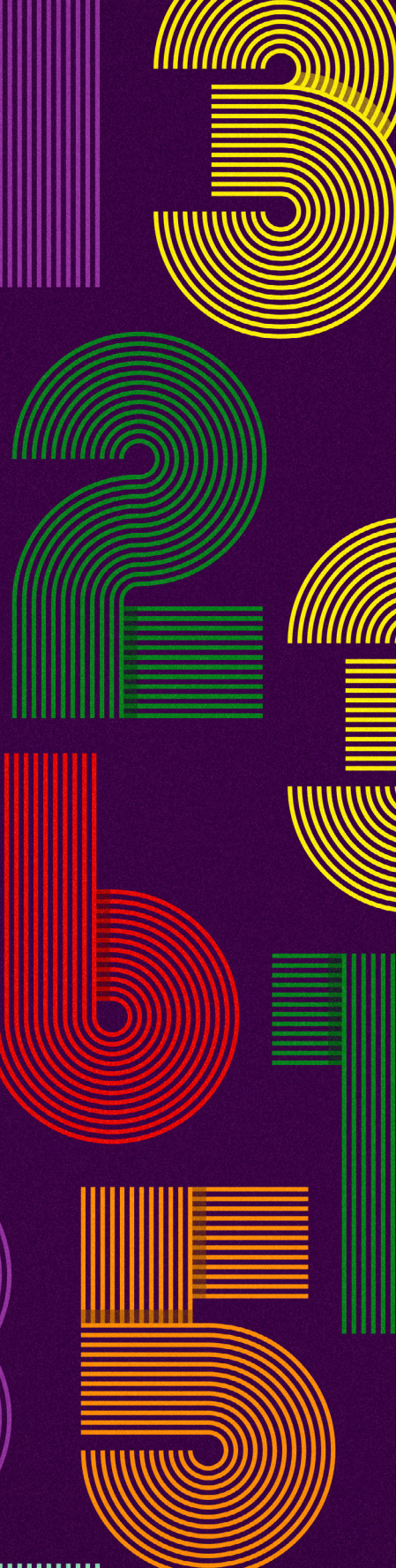
Actively cooperate with legal entities in the labour market to ensure that workplaces reflect the highest standards of diversity and inclusion.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE

Improve communication between the Sarajevo Open Centre and the LGBTI community, so that the organisation becomes more open and responsive to the community's needs and concerns. Consider developing a broader communication strategy for the Sarajevo Open Centre that would address issues of importance to the LGBTI community and BiH, with a focus on topics about which the community expressed ignorance and where, according to the findings of this research, there is a clear need for more information.

Create regular feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and community forums, to allow community members to suggest SOC activities.

Maintain regular work on issues important to the LGBTI community and the protection of their human rights, but also work on developing a rapid response system to sudden changes and trends in human rights violations and threats to the LGBTI community's position in BiH.



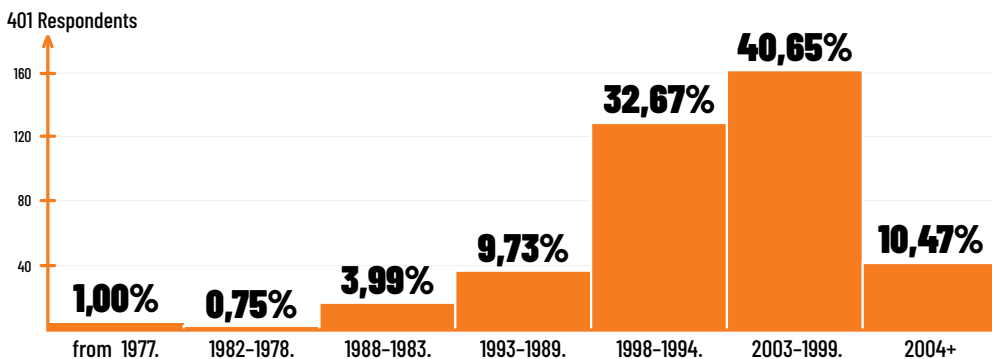
DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE



Age Distribution of Respondents

According to the collected data, the average age of respondents is 26.3, with 40.6% of respondents being 21 to 25 years old. In addition to this age group, 32.67% of respondents are between the ages of 27 and 31.

Year of birth

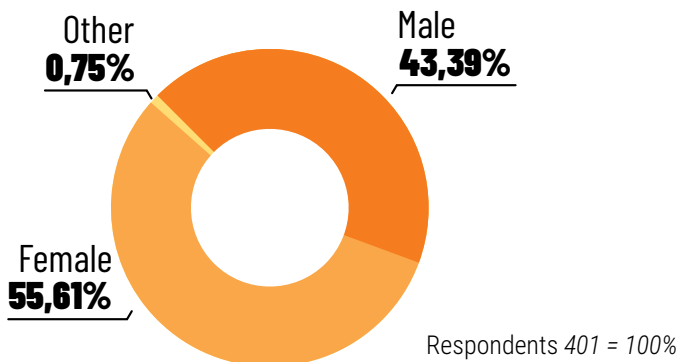


As a result, when interpreting and comprehending the research findings, keep in mind that the responses obtained are primarily a reflection of the experiences of these age groups, and that the most common responses first reflect the perception and reality of young LGBTI people in BiH.

Sex and Gender Distribution of Respondents

More than half of the sample, 55.61%, identify as female, while 43.39% of respondents identify as male. Only three people chose 'Other' when it comes to the respondent's biological sex, and no one identified as intersex.

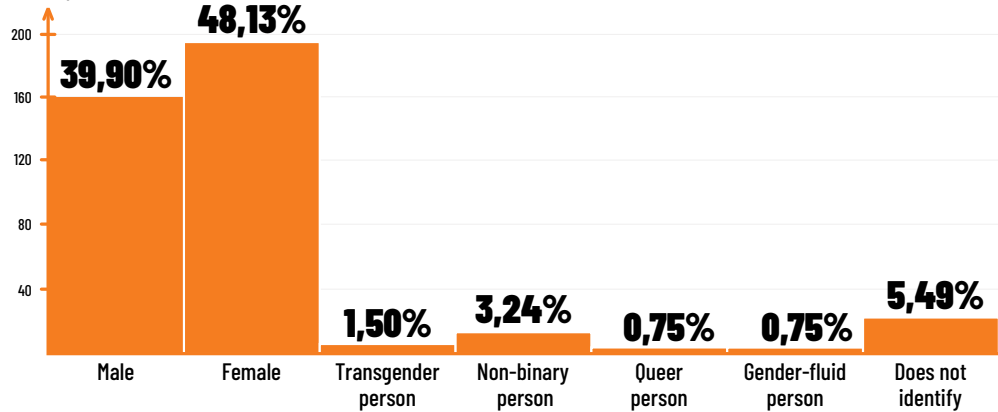
Sex



The situation changes significantly when it comes to the gender of the respondents. According to the responses, only 48.13% of respondents identify as female, while 39.9% identify as male. As many as 47 people do not declare their gender within the traditional binary division, with 13 identifying as gender non-binary, six as transgender, and 22 not identifying by gender at all.

Gender

401 Respondents

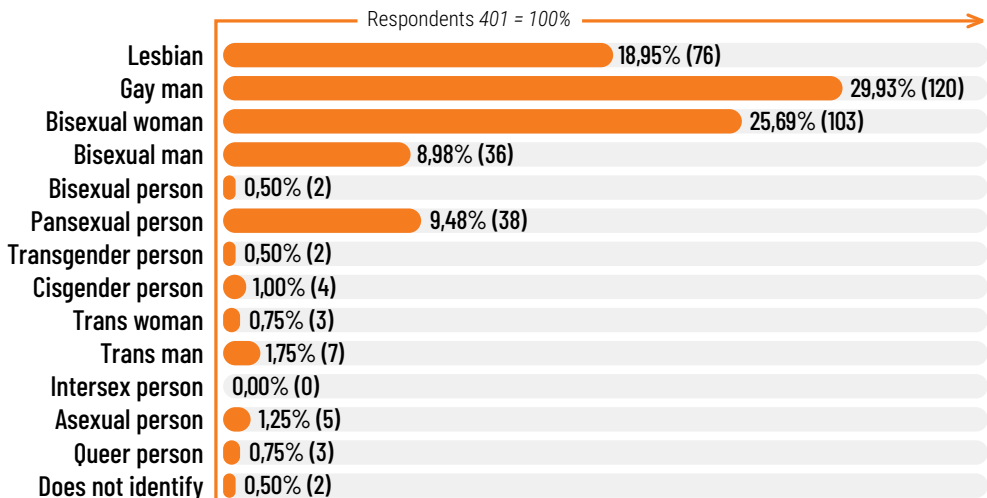


By comparing the percentages, it is clear that the concepts of biological sex and gender differ within the LGBTI community, but it is unclear how the respondents reconcile seemingly conflicting sexual and gender identities, which may indicate the need for a community-wide discussion about ways of defining, becoming aware of, and living personal identities, as well as their communication and expression towards the community and the public.

Types of LGBTI Identities

According to their sexual orientation, 29.93% of the total number of respondents identify as gay men, 25.69% as bisexual women, 18.95% as lesbians, 8.98% as bisexual men, and only two as bisexual. There were 9.48% of respondents who identified as pansexual. Five people declared themselves to be asexual.

According to sexual orientation / gender identity / sex characteristics, I identify as



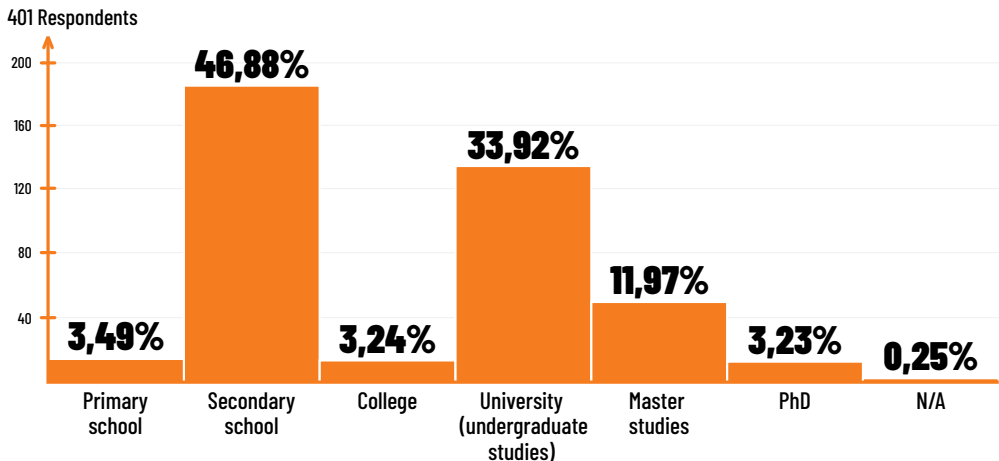
When it comes to gender identities, two people identified as transgender, three as trans women, and seven as trans men. It is worth noting that three people identified as queer, while four identified as cisgender.

Given that the question itself covered a broad aspect of LGBTIQ identities, respondents chose the one they considered primary, therefore we were unable to explore the complexity of individuals' intertwining of different sexual, sex, and gender identities in this research.

Educational Attainment

The majority of respondents, 46.88%, completed secondary school, 33.92% completed undergraduate studies, and over 15% continued their university education with a master's or doctorate. Only 3.49% of respondents completed primary school.

Obtained/completed degree of education

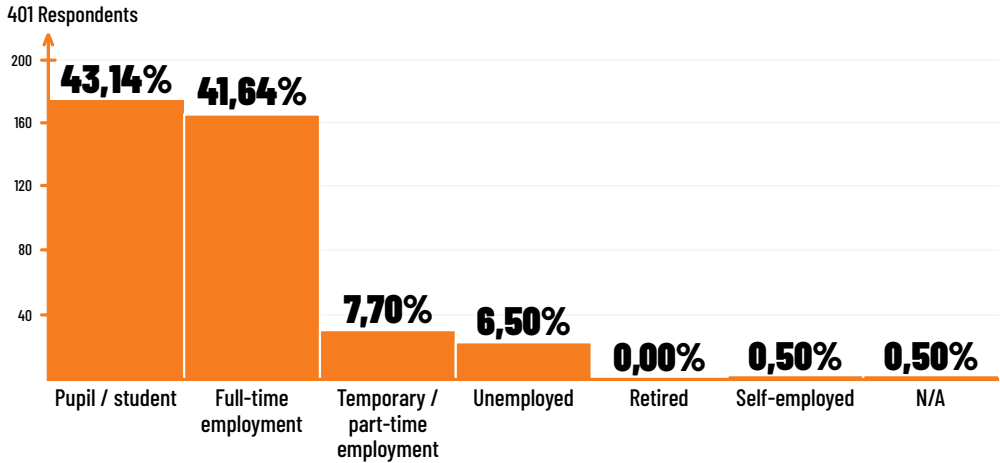


The obtained results indicate a diverse level of education among LGBTI people in BiH, which should be considered when interpreting the findings and trends observed in this research.

Sample Distribution by Primary Occupation

The majority of respondents, 43.14%, are pupils or students, and 41.65% are employed. 7.73% are employed on a temporary or part-time basis, and two are self-employed. Only 6.48% of respondents said they were unemployed.

Current primary occupation



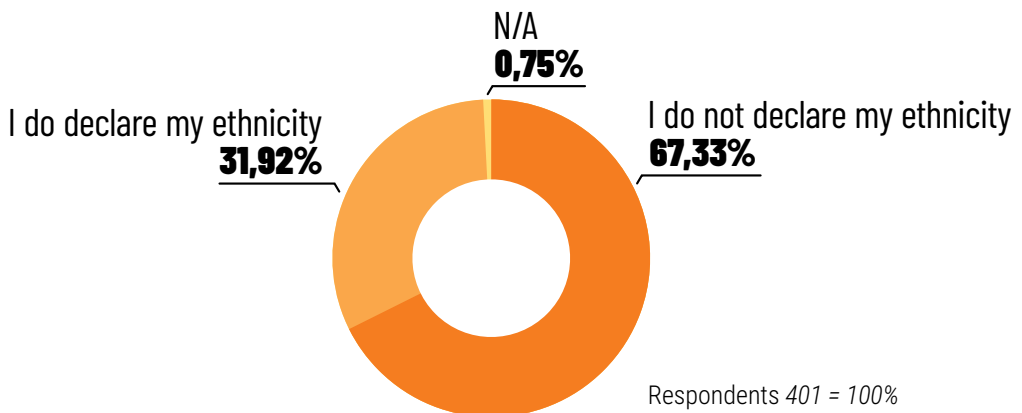
Such findings indicate that the interpretation of the research results will be influenced primarily by the attitudes of younger LGBTI people, but that the perception of employed LGBTI people, their experiences, and perspectives will also be prominent.

It is important to note that the research does not include any retirees, which means that the perspective, experience, and attitudes of that part of the LGBTI community in BiH will be missing from the research results.

Ethnic Affiliation of Respondents

The majority of respondents, exactly 67.33%, did not state their ethnicity. This high rate of non-disclosure may indicate the challenges and alienation of LGBTI people in social groups where there is a dominant social narrative that rejects LGBTI people and creates an environment in which they feel unsafe and unaccepted.

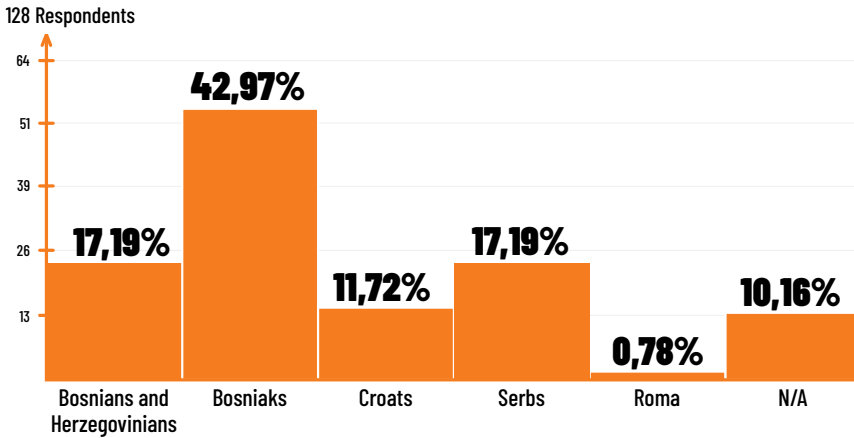
Ethnicity



Out of 128 respondents who declared their ethnicity, 22 (17.19%) identified as Bosnians and Herzegovinians; 55 (42.97%) identified as Bosniaks; 15 (11.72%) identified as Croats; 22 (17.19%)

identified as Serbs; and one person identified as Roma. Although these individuals confirmed that they declared their ethnicity in the previous question, 13 persons (10.16%) did not state their ethnicity.

Ethnic Affiliation

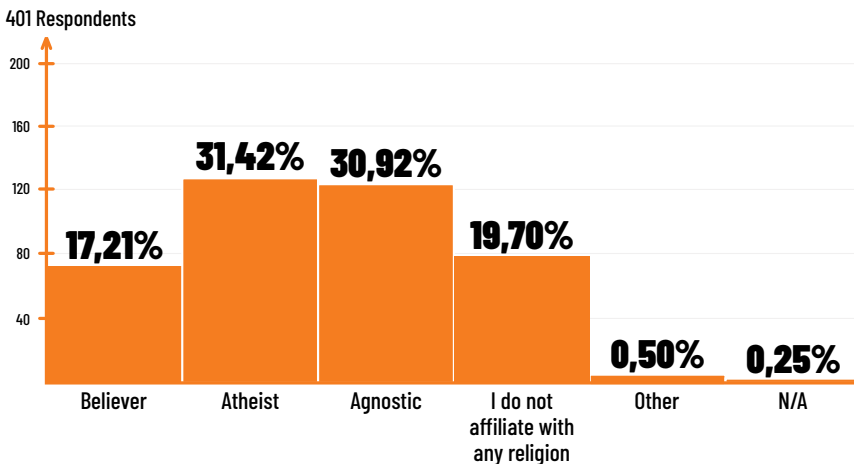


These results highlight the significance of understanding identity issues, as well as how LGBTI people are perceived and expressed in ethnically diverse societies.

Religious Affiliation of Respondents

Out of the total number of respondents, 69 people (17.21%) identified as believers, indicating a high level of religiosity within the LGBTI community and the need to give more space to discussions about LGBTI believers in BiH. A total of 124 people (30.92%) identified as agnostics. A total of 126 people (31.42%) identified as atheists, while 79 people (19.70%) did not declare their religion.

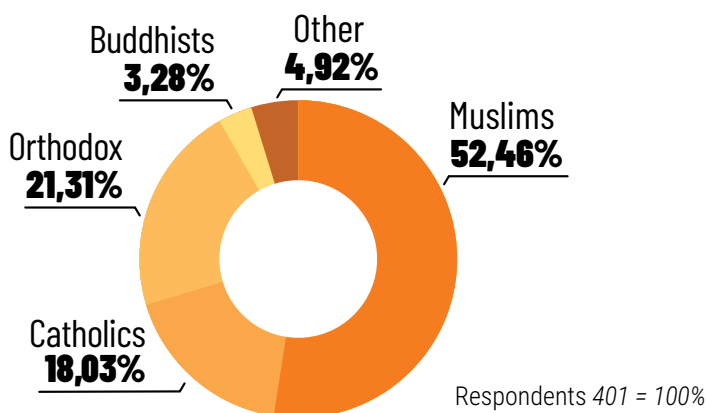
Religion



These figures reflect the potential social distance between religious communities in BiH and LGBTI people, as well as the community's need to maintain and express its religiosity and/or spirituality in large numbers.

Out of the 69 people who identified as believers, 32 (52.46%) identified as Muslims, 11 (18.03%) identified as Catholics, and 13 (21.31%) identified as Orthodox. As a result, the majority of LGBTI people in BiH continue to belong to and fulfil their religious needs within the framework of the three dominant monotheistic religions.

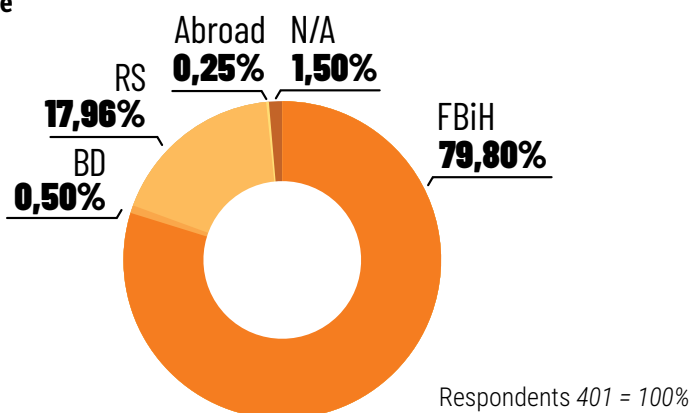
Religious affiliation



Place of Residence of Respondents

The majority of respondents, 320 (79.80%), live in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH); 72 (17.96%) live in the Republika Srpska (RS); and only two (0.50%) live in the Brčko District (BD). Six people (1.50%) did not indicate their place of residence.

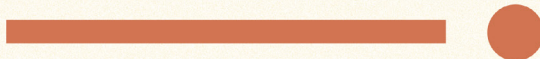
Place of Residence



These results are significant because they reveal the respondents' geographic background and can influence their perception and attitude towards institutions in the entities and Brčko District, as well as issues concerning the protection of their human rights and interaction with local authorities.



QUESTIONNAIRE



QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF LGBTI PEOPLE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Before you is a questionnaire that aims to identify the real needs of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as specific problems faced by this population. The results will help us advocate in state institutions (the police, the education and health care system, etc.) for concrete policies that benefit LGBTI people.

Please take 15 minutes of your time to fill out the questionnaire. Your participation is anonymous and voluntary, and extremely valuable to us. Data collected through the questionnaire will not be disclosed to third parties.

PLEASE READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE ANSWERING.

**Questions marked with an asterisk are mandatory.*

Please provide your personal information below.

PERSONAL DATA

Place or municipality of current residence: _____

Place or municipality of birth: _____

Year of birth (YYYY):* _____

Sex (tick one of the boxes or write your own answer): *

- Female
- Male
- Intersex
- Other: _____

Gender (tick one of the boxes or write your own answer): *

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- I don't identify with any gender
- Other: _____

Based on my sexual orientation / gender identity / sex characteristics, I identify as: * (You may tick more than one box or write your own answer.)

- Lesbian
- Gay man
- Bisexual woman
- Bisexual man
- Pansexual person
- Transgender person
- Cisgender person
- Trans woman
- Trans man
- Intersex person
- Other: _____

Educational attainment: * (Choose one answer.)

- Elementary school
- Secondary school
- College
- University (undergraduate studies)
- Master studies
- PhD

Current primary occupation: * (Choose one answer.)

- Student
- Full-time employment
- Part-time/temporary employment
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other: _____

Ethnic affiliation: * (Choose one answer.)

- I don't affiliate with any ethnic group
 - I do affiliate with an ethnic group
- If you do affiliate with an ethnic group, please indicate your ethnicity:
-

Religion: * (Choose one answer.)

- Believer
 - Atheist
 - Agnostic
 - I don't affiliate with any religion
 - Other:
- If you are a believer, please indicate your religion:
-

EVERYDAY LIFE OF LGBTI PEOPLE

Coming out

1. Mark the people from your immediate circle who are aware / not aware of your LGBTI identity. *

If some of the categories do not apply to you, please tick the 'Not applicable' box (e.g., if you are unemployed, tick the 'Not applicable' box for the category 'Co-workers').

| | They know, because I told them | They know, because someone told them | They don't know, but I plan to tell them in near future (next 12 months) | They don't know, but I plan to tell them in distant future | They don't know and I don't plan to tell them | Not sure if they know | Not applicable |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| Mother/caretaker | | | | | | | |
| Father/caretaker | | | | | | | |
| Sister/sisters | | | | | | | |
| Brother/brothers | | | | | | | |
| Child/children | | | | | | | |
| Extended family | | | | | | | |
| Friends | | | | | | | |
| Acquaintances | | | | | | | |
| Co-workers | | | | | | | |
| University classmates | | | | | | | |
| School classmates | | | | | | | |

2. Mark which persons (of those who know about your LGBTI identity) are supportive, or not supportive.

If some of the categories do not apply to you, please tick the 'Not applicable' box. If the persons listed below do not know of your LGBTI identity, also tick 'Not applicable' (e.g., if no one knows, tick 'Not applicable' for all categories).

| | Supportive | Not supportive | Not sure if they are supportive | Some are supportive, some are not | Not applicable |
|-----------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Mother/caretaker | | | | | |
| Father/caretaker | | | | | |
| Sister/sisters | | | | | |
| Brother/brothers | | | | | |
| Child/children | | | | | |
| Extended family | | | | | |
| Friends | | | | | |
| Acquaintances | | | | | |
| Co-workers | | | | | |
| University classmates | | | | | |
| School classmates | | | | | |

3. What were your reasons for not coming out as LGBTI to someone

Multiple answers possible.

- Fear of stigma
- Fear of potential violence
- Fear of discrimination
- Fear of rejection by family members
- Fear of rejection by friends
- Fear of rejection by co-workers/classmates
- Fear of losing employment
- Fear of not finding employment
- Fear of losing financial support
- Other _____

DISCRIMINATION

4. Have you experienced any form of discrimination on the grounds of being an LGBTI person? *

- Yes
- No (If the answer is no, move on to question 12.)

5. If the answer is yes, on what grounds were you discriminated against, in your opinion?

- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity / gender expression
- Sex characteristics

6. If the answer is yes, what form of discrimination did you experience?

Multiple answers are possible.

- Your rights were limited or denied (e.g., access to a service, hospitality establishment, institution; you were laid off or did not get the job mainly because of your sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics, etc.)
- You were put into a less favourable position (prevented from advancing, being segregated from your colleagues in a separate room after coming out, or excluded from other joint activities, etc.)
- You experienced mobbing (non-physical harassment at the workplace that entails repetition of actions that have a degrading effect on the victim, the purpose or consequence of which is to undermine the working conditions or professional status of the employee)
- Harassment (any unsolicited behaviour the aim or the effect of which is harming the dignity of a person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere, exclusively on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics)
- Sexual harassment (any form of unsolicited verbal, non-verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature, the aim or the effect of which is harming the dignity of a person, especially when it creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere)

7. If the answer is yes, in what kind of setting did it happen?

Multiple answers are possible.

- Workplace
- While seeking employment
- Court / prosecutor's office
- Police station / administration
- Public employment service
- Social work centre
- Health care institution
- School
- University
- Non-governmental organisation
- Psychological / therapeutic / psychiatric facility
- Hospitality establishment / store
- Within the LGBTI community
- Other: _____

8. Did you report discrimination?

- Yes
- No (move on to question 11)

9. If the answer is yes, to whom did you report the case?

Multiple answers are possible.

- A human rights non-governmental organisation.
- Office of Human Rights Ombudsman of BiH
- A lawyer
- Other: _____

9.a. If you reported discrimination to a human rights non-governmental organisation, please indicate which:

10. Has your case been tried in court?

- Yes, the case is completed
- Yes, the case is ongoing
- No

11. If the answer is no, why did you decide not to report discrimination?

Multiple answers are possible. (Skip this question if your answer to question number 8 is yes.)

- Lack of confidence in officials leading the case
- Fear of revealing LGBTI identity
- Lack of information on available assistance
- Lack of information on how to report
- Duration of court proceedings
- Potential court costs
- Fear of retaliation from the person / institution responsible for discrimination
- Fear of losing your job and/or not finding employment
- Fear of stigma
- Fear of reactions from family and friends
- Other: _____

Violence

12. Do you fear for your safety because you are an LGBTI person? *

- Yes
- No

Please provide a brief explanation of your answer:

13. If the answer is yes, does fear make you do any of the following?

Multiple answers are possible.

- Conceal your LGBTI identity
- Avoid leaving the house (unless necessary)
- Avoid going to mass gatherings
- Avoid walking alone
- Avoid going to certain areas or places because you consider them unsafe for LGBTI people
- Avoid using public transportation
- Avoid wearing clothes/jewellery/makeup that does not conform to heteronormative standards
- Avoid making physical contact with your partner in public
- Adjust your body language / voice depth / way of speaking in public
- Other: _____

14. Did you experience violence on the grounds of being an LGBTI person? *

- Yes
- No (Move on to question number 20)

14.a. If the answer is YES, what type of violence have you experienced??

- Physical violence
- Verbal/mental abuse
- Online threats and abuse
- Domestic violence
- Sexual abuse
- OTHER (fill in): _____

15. On what grounds did you experience violence (in your opinion)?

- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity / gender expression
- Sex characteristics
- Other: _____

16. Did you report the violence you experienced?

- Yes
- No (Move on to question number 19)

17. If the answer is yes, who did your report the violence to? Multiple answers are possible.

- Non-governmental organisation
- Police
- Prosecutor's office
- Lawyer
- Ombudsman
- Other: _____

17.a. If you reported violence to a non-governmental organisation, please indicate which:

18. Has your case been tried in court?

- Yes, the case is completed
- Yes, the case is ongoing
- No

19. If the answer is no, why did you decide not to report violence?

Multiple answers are possible. (Skip this question if your answer to question number 16 is yes)

- Lack of confidence in officials leading the case
- Fear of police reaction
- Fear of revealing LGBTI identity
- Lack of information on available assistance
- Fear of stigma
- Fear of reaction from family members
- Fear of reaction from friends
- Fear of bullies
- Other: _____

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

20. Do you trust the police? *

- Yes (Move on to question number 22)
- No

21. If the answer is no, why do you distrust the police? Multiple answers are possible.

- Possible homophobia/transphobia of officials
- Insufficient sensitivity in work with LGBTI people
- They are not competent in their work
- I don't believe they would offer me appropriate protection
- Because I had negative experiences in the past
- Other: _____

21.a. If your answer was because you had negative experiences in the past, can you specify exactly what those experiences were?

22. Do you trust the judiciary? *

- Yes (Move on to question number 24)
- No

23. If the answer is no, why do you distrust the judiciary? Multiple answers are possible.

Multiple answers are possible.

- Possible homophobia/transphobia of officials
- Insufficient sensitivity in work with LGBTI people
- They are not competent in their work
- I don't believe they would offer me appropriate protection
- The prosecution dynamics is very slow
- Because I had negative experiences in the past
- Other:

23.a. If your answer was because you had negative experiences in the past, can you specify exactly what those experiences were?

24. Do you trust the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of BiH?

- Yes
- No
- I am not familiar with the work and activities of the Institution

24.a If the answer is no, why do you distrust the Ombudsman Institution?

Multiple answers are possible.

- Possible homophobia/transphobia of officials
- Insufficient sensitivity in work with LGBTI people
- They are not competent in their work
- I don't believe they would offer me appropriate legal protection
- The dynamics of work on the case is very slow
- Because I had negative experiences in the past
- Other: _____

24.b. If your answer was because you had negative experiences in the past, can you specify exactly what those experiences were?

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF LGBTI PEOPLE

25. Do you think you experienced psychological difficulties / crises due to the social treatment of LGBTI people? *

- Yes
- No, although I believe the society treats LGBTI people in a negative manner (homophobic, transphobic etc.) (Move on to question number 27)
- No, because I believe the society to be tolerant (Move on to question number 27)

26. If the answer is yes, what kind of mental difficulties are you talking about? More answers are possible.

Multiple answers are possible.

- Depression
- Anxiety / panic attacks
- Suicide attempt
- Self-injury
- Stress
- Eating disorder
- Addiction to psychoactive substances (drugs, soft drugs, alcohol, tobacco, tranquilizers)
- Other: _____

27. Did you ever seek expert psychological / psychiatric / therapeutic help because of your sexual orientation and/or gender identity? *

- Private institution
- Public institution
- Non-governmental organisation
- No

27.a If you sought help, what was your experience like?

28. If the answer is no, why did you not seek help? Multiple answers are possible.

- Fear of revealing LGBTI identity
- Experts who are not competent enough
- Experts who are not sensitised enough
- I do not believe they can help me
- I did not need help
- Other: _____

29. What were your experiences with the experts you came out to? *

If you do not visit any of the listed health professionals, tick the box 'Not applicable'.

| | I told them, they reacted professionally | I told them, they reacted negatively/unprofessionally | I did not tell them | Not applicable |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Psychologist | | | | |
| Psychiatrist | | | | |
| Therapist | | | | |
| Family physician | | | | |
| Gynaecologist | | | | |
| Urologist | | | | |

30. Have you ever been subjected to services involving any procedures and treatments aimed at changing or modifying your sexual orientation or gender identity, either against your will or with persuasion? These are known as conversion or reparative therapies.

Such procedures can be carried out by health workers, mental health professionals, religious communities, and individuals who provide private services.

Yes

No

If the answer is YES, can you specify exactly which services (procedures and treatments) you were subjected to?

Have you consented to the treatment?

31. Below is a list of problems affecting the LGBTI population in BiH. Please rate their importance on a scale from 1 to 5. *

You can assign the same grade to multiple answers. Rate your answers by grouping them into 5 categories: 5 – very important; 4 – important; 3 – I'm indifferent to it; 2 – somewhat important; 1 – not important.

| | Not important | Somewhat important | I'm indifferent to it | Important | Very important |
|---|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Discrimination at workplace | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Discrimination in school / at university | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Social isolation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Bias (homophobia, transphobia) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Difficult inclusion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Stigmatisation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Psychological / verbal violence | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Sexual violence/harassment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Physical violence / attacks / destruction of property | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Economic violence (e.g., denying access or taking away money and/or other material goods) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Insufficient support from family | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Insufficient support from friends | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Difficult access to various services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Lack of support programs from state institutions (municipality, police, prosecutor's office, court) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Inadequate visibility of LGBTI people and LGBTI topics/issues in public | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-existence of adequate institutional programs of psychological support for LGBTI people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unemployment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Non-existence of a medical team for gender reassignment surgery | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Demanding gender reassignment procedure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Inability to enter into same-sex union | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Forced surgeries of intersex persons | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Lack of safe spaces/shelters for victims of violence | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Housing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Hate speech/hate crime | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Discrimination in healthcare | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Discrimination by religious communities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Inability of same-sex couples to adopt children | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Inability of same-sex couples to use biomedically assisted fertilisation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

31. a. If you think an important problem has been omitted from the list, please add it below:

ORGANISING PRIDE

32. Did you take part in the Pride? *

- Yes
- No

32.a. If the answer is NO, please provide a brief explanation of your answer:

- a) I am afraid
- b) I don't think it will change anything
- c) Holding pride is counterproductive
- d) I am unable to attend
- e) Fill in: _____

33. Below are some statements regarding the Pride March.

Please rank your agreement with these statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby the scale indicates the following: 5 – I completely agree; 4 – I partially agree; 3 – I neither agree, nor disagree; 2 – I partially disagree; 1 – I completely disagree. *

| | I completely disagree | I partially disagree | I neither agree, nor disagree | I partially agree | I completely agree |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Organising Pride can contribute to improving the position of LGBTI people in the country. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organising Pride can contribute to enhanced visibility of the issues LGBTI people face. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organising Pride can influence the society and improve the acceptance of LGBTI people in the community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organising Pride can help make the LGBTI community more visible in the society. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organising Pride leads to internal cohesion within the LGBTI community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organising Pride can encourage LGBTI people to come out. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SAME-SEX UNION

34. Are you in a stable, long-term emotional relationship with a same-sex partner? *

- Yes
- No (Move on to question number 35)
- Not sure

35. Do you live with your partner?

- Yes
- No, but we plan to start living together in the period ahead
- No, and we don't plan to live together

35.a Are you planning to have children?

- Yes
- No

35.b What specific issues have you encountered because your partnership is not regulated by law (fill in)?

36. Would you enter into a life partnership or same-sex union if it was possible in BiH? *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

36.a Have you entered into a life partnership outside BiH so far?

- Yes
- No
- No, but we plan to
- Not sure

If the answer is yes, can you please state in which country the life partnership was concluded?

37. Do you think that same-sex partnerships should be regulated in BiH? *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

37.a. If the answer is NO, please provide a brief explanation of your answer:

37.b. Rate the importance of regulating same-sex partnerships for certain life matters on a scale of 1 to 5 whereby the scale indicates the following: 5 - very important; 4 - important; 3 – I'm indifferent to it; 2 - somewhat important; and 1 – not important.

| | |
|--|--|
| The right to inherit the partner's pension | |
| The right to obtain health insurance through the partner | |
| The right to inherit the partner's property | |
| Child adoption | |
| Biomedically assisted fertilisation for same-sex partners | |
| Partner guardianship obligation | |
| Establishing child foster care by a same-sex couple | |
| Tax benefits enjoyed by heterosexual persons in marital and extra-marital unions | |
| Employment benefits for heterosexual married and extra-marital partners | |

37.c. If you think an important problem has been omitted from the list, please add it below:

TRANSGENDER PERSONS

This part is intended for transgender persons only.

38. Do you plan to undergo gender reassignment procedure?

- Yes, completely
- Yes, partially
- Yes, but I lack the financial means
- No
- I haven't decided yet
- No, because I don't want to

39. Are you currently in the process of transitioning?

- Yes
- No
- No, but I would like to start the process (if this is your answer), what are the reasons:
 - Lack of support from the environment
 - Lack of support from family
 - Lack of health facilities
 - Age
 - Finance
 - I haven't come out yet
 - Other

40. Did you have problems because of the discrepancy between your gender expression and sex marker in your personal documents?

- Yes
- No

40.a If the answer is yes, please elaborate further:

41. Would you change the sex marker in your documents prior to completion of the transition process if you had such possibility?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

41.a Have you successfully changed the sex marker in BiH documents (birth certificate, certificate of citizenship, ID card, passport, student logbook, diploma, health insurance card, bank account) to reflect your gender identity?

- Yes
- Yes, after partial transition
- Yes, after full transition
- No
- No, because I was rejected
- No, because I don't plan to

The next two questions are only for gender variant/non-binary persons!

42. Do you believe that the third sex category should be introduced in the law, in addition to the binary male and female sexes?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Please elaborate further:

42.a What topics are important to you as a gender variant/non-binary person, and what problems do you face as a gender variant/non-binary person?

INTERSEX PERSONS*

This part is intended for intersex persons only.

* Intersex persons are persons born with variations in chromosomes, hormones or genitals that do not fit the standard definition of the male and female body.

43. Do you believe that the third sex category should be introduced in the law, in addition to binary male and female sex?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

43.a. Please elaborate further:

44. Has a doctor ever mentioned to you or your parents/caretakers that your genitals/chromosomes or hormones do not fit the standard definition of the male or female

- Yes
- No

45. Have you ever undergone medical treatment as an intersex person before the age of 18 to bring your genitals/chromosomes or hormones in line with the typically male and female ones?

- Yes
- No
- If the answer is yes, please elaborate further

- What medical procedures have you undergone?

- Did a health professional explain the procedure and the consequences of the medical treatment to you?

- Da li Vam je stručna osoba pojasnila proceduru i posljedice medicinskog tretmana?

- Did you object to a medical procedure being performed?

- Who gave informed consent for the medical treatment (parents/caretakers/you personally)? – circle one of the options in brackets.

46. Have you ever undergone medical treatment as an intersex person after the age of 18?

Yes

No

If the answer is yes, please elaborate further

- What medical procedures have you undergone?

- How old were you at the time of the medical treatment?

- Did a medical professional explain the procedure and the consequences of the medical treatment to you?

- Did you object to a medical procedure being performed?

- Did you give your informed consent for medical treatment?

47. Below are some statements related to intersex persons. Please rank your agreement with these statements on a scale from 1 to 5 whereby the scale indicates the following: 5 – I completely agree; 4 – I partially agree; 3 – I neither agree, nor disagree; 2 – I partially disagree; 1 – I completely disagree.

| | I completely disagree | I partially disagree | I neither agree, nor disagree | I partially agree | I completely agree |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Intersex persons lack visibility in our society. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Generally speaking, there is little awareness on the problems affecting intersex persons. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| There are no medical teams that could carry out the necessary medical interventions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The gender reassignment procedure is too invasive. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Intersex persons do not need gender reassignment procedures. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

47.a. If you think an important problem has been omitted from the list, please add it below:

ECONOMIC POSITION OF LGBTI PEOPLE

48. What is your current employment status? *

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Freelancer/temporarily employed
- Unemployed
- High school student
- University student
- Retired
- Other: _____

49. How satisfied are you with your current financial situation? *

- I'm extremely satisfied
- I'm satisfied
- I'm neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied
- I'm dissatisfied
- I'm extremely dissatisfied

50. What is your average monthly income? *

- Up to BAM 590
- From BAM 590 to BAM 1190
- From BAM 1190 to BAM 1470
- From BAM 1470 to BAM 2000
- Above BAM 2000
- I don't have a fixed monthly income although I support myself financially
- I have no income, others support me financially (e.g., parents, caretakers etc.)
- Other: _____

51. Is your monthly income enough to meet basic needs? *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

51.a. Please elaborate further:

LGBTI ACTIVISM OF THE SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE

52. Were you familiar with the work of the Sarajevo Open Centre prior to this research? *

- Yes
- No

53. Which services and activities of the Sarajevo Open Centre are you familiar with?

Multiple answers are possible.

- Public events (round tables / film screenings / exhibitions etc.)
- Legal counselling for LGBTI people
- Psychological counselling for LGBTI people
- Peer-to-peer counselling for LGBTI people
- Workshops for LGBTI people
- Publications/books
- Advocating for LGBTI rights with public institutions
- Trainings for civil servants
- Parties / socialising events for LGBTI people

54. Does SOC's work have a positive impact on public perception of LGBTI people?

- Yes
- No
- Partially

54.a. Please elaborate further:

55. What activities should SOC focus on in the forthcoming period (in your personal opinion and based on your needs)? *

You can assign the same grade to multiple answers. Rate your answers by grouping them into 5 categories: 5 – very important; 4 – important; 3 – I'm indifferent to it; 2 – somewhat important; 1 – not important

| | Not important | Somewhat important | I'm indifferent to it | Important | Very important |
|--|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Actions in public space / street actions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Supporting the Pride March | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Training of civil servants (e.g., police, medical staff, school staff, etc.) for the purpose of sensitising and ensuring professional approaches to LGBTI people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Public cultural events (film screenings, exhibitions, discussions etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Media campaigns for the purpose of informing and sensitising general public about LGBTI rights | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Online activities (web portal on LGBTI rights, work on social networks etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Psychological counselling for LGBTI people / self-help groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Legal counselling for LGBTI people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work with journalists and/or media companies for the purpose of professional reporting on LGBTI topics | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Advocacy with state institutions / change of legislation / analysis of public policies and influencing them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Social activities for LGBTI people (socialising events, parties, outings, artistic activities/creative workshops etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Strengthening the LGBTI movement in BiH (support for individual activities/organisations) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Economic empowerment of LGBTI people (increased capacity, knowledge, and skills) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| A safe space for victims of violence | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Support for the sexual and reproductive health of LGBTI people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Add the activities you find important: | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | |

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH.

If you wish to remain in contact with Sarajevo Open Centre so you could be up to speed with its activities and the results of this research, please leave an email address:

We promise to keep your personal data confidential and not disclose them to third parties.

Finally, if you have a need or believe something is important in relation to the problems and needs of the LGBTI community in BiH (and it is not covered by the questionnaire), please add it here:

About Sarajevo Open Centre

Sarajevo Open Centre (SOC) works on promoting human rights, particularly the position and human rights of LGBTI people and women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by interpreting, presenting and representing the authentic experiences of persons suffering from human rights violations and inequalities, and by advocating for legal, political, economic, social and cultural changes in all areas of life. We will mention only some of the achievements related to the equality of LGBTI people and women. In addition to psychosocial and legal counselling, we continued running the only LGBTI medium in the country – www.lgbti.ba portal. We organised training for the police, prosecutor's offices and courts, with a focus on hate crime, hate speech and the application of anti-discrimination law; for medical professionals and health workers, with a focus on trans-specific and trans-inclusive gender reassignment; for LGBTIQ community. We have worked intensively on creating a local institutional support network for LGBTI people in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica, Mostar, Prijedor, Bijeljina, improving sexual and reproductive health and rights, the rights of workers in relation to maternity/parental leave, introducing gender-sensitive language in parliaments and universities, adopting and implementing cantonal gender action plans, but also raising awareness of gender-based violence in BiH.

Over the past years, several of our legislative and policy initiatives have entered government or parliamentary procedure. We focused our advocacy activities on policies for equality of women and LGBTI people in BiH, reproductive rights of women and men, parenting in the context of reconciling private and business life, freedom of assembly of LGBTI people, improvement of the institutional framework for the protection from violence and discrimination, and we intend to continue working on issues concerning transgender persons, intersex persons, same-sex partnerships, their social inclusion, but also the position of LGBTI people in education, health, work and employment. We have carried out media campaigns that have reached over one million citizens of BiH, and we also organised LGBTI film festival Merlinka, which, in cooperation with Tuzla Open Centre, became the local festival Kvirhana in 2021.

This publication is part of the Human Rights Series, published by Sarajevo Open Centre.

Other relevant publications in the Human Rights Series

In the Human Rights Series, we publish different online reports, texts and publications related to the human rights of women, lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender persons.

Some of Sarajevo Open Centre publications related to research on the public opinion of the LGBTIQ+ community, are:

1. Amil Brković, Branko Ćulibrk, Delila Hasanbegović, Dina Bajrektarević, Jozo Blažević (2023). Pink Report 2023 – Annual Report on the State of Human Rights of LGBTI People in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Link for the Bosnian language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Rozi-izvjestaj_za-web.pdf

Link for the English language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Pink-report_za-web.pdf

2. Admira Sitnić, Amina Dizdar, Delila Hasanbegović Vukas (2022). Orange Report 7: Report on the State of Human Rights of Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2021.

Link for the Bosnian language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/lekt-Narand%C5%BEasti-izvje%C5%A1taj-7-2021_2022-1.pdf

Link for the English language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Eng_lekt-Narand%C5%BEasti-izvje%C5%A1taj-7-2021_2022.pdf

3. Lejla Gačanica (2021.) Socio-ekonomski položaj lezbijki, gej, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interseksualnih osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini.

Link for the Bosnian language version: <https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Socio-ekonomski-polozaj-LGBTI-osoba-u-BiH-web.pdf>

4. Amar Numanović (2017). Numbers of Equality 2 Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017.

Link for the Bosnian language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Brojevi-ravnopravnost_04.10.2017.-WEB-II.pdf

Link for the English language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ENG-Brojevi-ravnopravnost_04.10.2017.-WEB-II.pdf

5. Jasmina Čaušević (2013). Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače – Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini.

Link for the Bosnian language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Brojevi-koji-ravnopravnost-znace_web.pdf

6. Zlatiborka Popov-Momčinović (2013). "Ko smo mi da sudimo drugima?" Ispitivanje javnog mnijenja o stavovima prema homoseksualnosti i transrodnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini.

Link for the Bosnian language version: https://soc.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/ko_smo_mi_2013_10_25web1.pdf

