



2015: **THE YEAR OF NEW PARTNERSHIPS**

Annual Report of the
Sarajevo Open Centre

ABOUT SOC

Sarajevo Open Centre (SOC) advocates full respect of human rights and social inclusion of LGBTI people and women.

Sarajevo Open Centre is an independent, feminist civil society organisation aspiring to empower LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, and intersex) persons and women by strengthening the community and building an activist movement. Sarajevo Open Centre also publicly promotes human rights of LGBTI people and women, and advocates improvement of legislation and better policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina at state, European, and international level. By working on issues of European integration, Sarajevo Open Centre is improving human rights in general and encouraging further development of civil society.

Sarajevo Open Centre was founded in 2007 and its professionalization began in 2011. Today, with 12 team members, a steering board, its founders, activists, and an intensive partner network in BiH and all over Europe, the organisation is recognised as one of the key actors in the civil society of Bosnia and Herzegovina when it comes to human rights.

Sarajevo Open Centre
Čekaluša 16
BiH-71 000 Sarajevo



+ 387 (33) 551 000 (Programme Team)



+ 387 (33) 551 001 (Management, Finance and Administration)

+ 387 (33) 551 002

www.soc.ba - office@soc.ba

www.lgbt.ba - www.eu-monitoring.ba

CONTENTS

A Personal Letter instead of a Foreword	4
Sarajevo Open Centre in 2015 - a Brief Overview	5
2015: THE YEAR OF NEW PARTNERSHIPS	
Programmes	
Rights of LGBTI People	7
Women's Rights	11
SOCplus	14
Communication	16
Communication Platforms	16
The Media	16
Knowledge Production: SOC Publishing	17
Organisation Development and Finance	18
WHAT WILL 2016 BRING US?	21
What Others Said About Us	23
The Team	24

A PERSONAL LETTER INSTEAD OF A FOREWORD

Last year's report said 2014 was the year of maturity and stabilisation. If we follow that logic, 2015 would be a year of adulthood and composure. These features are best reflected in the recognisability of the organisation which, confident and calm, relying on years of experience and learning, continues working for better or for worse. SOC became a fact in the lives of BiH citizens, whether they like it or not.

We cannot even recall all the social events with the LGBTI community and its friends, but there were many and all have been empowering. Groups of young people were gathered in Sarajevo, numerous groups in other BiH towns were supported, given tailwind to fight and engage in the adventure of activism. Media info sessions launch into the public space what many would like to see kept within the four walls. Billboards question our conscience. And Merlinka Film Festival, with its increasing importance for our city, is becoming a weekend people plan not to miss.

We may not forget that 2015 saw the (re)launch of the School of Feminism Žarana Papić. The idea realised for the first time in 1998 is gaining momentum once again and is gathering young people hungry for knowledge, reading, feminism, activism... Somebody Said Feminism lectures create a space to question burning issues for the continuous women's struggle for equality. SOC persistently and patiently advocates rights of women through various segments of its program, some less, some more visible.

SOC is one of the organisations that first dealt with awareness raising and activist events that pointed to the inequality and exclusion of a given group of people in the society, but is now in a phase of advocating and proposing legal amendments with MPs and representatives of the executive. This demonstrates the seriousness and courage of the organisation to deal with topics that many institutions competent for gender equality and human rights are failing to tackle in such a responsible and serious way.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without SOC's team. As members of the Steering Board, we followed the growth and development of SOC over a number of years. Now, we see a team of people trained and empowered to highly professionally deal with difficult issues in difficult times.

Certainly, there are many other things we should have mentioned, but we failed. Do not hold it against us. We selfishly remember those that marked us personally.

Arijana Aganović, Elmaja Bavčić and Aida Spahić
Steering Board members

SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE IN 2015 - A BRIEF OVERVIEW

While 2014 was another election year *eaten by locusts*, where it was practically impossible to achieve any significant changes in public policies and their implementation, in 2015 we opened many doors and started the fight for equality at various fronts. We will underline two key achievements here.



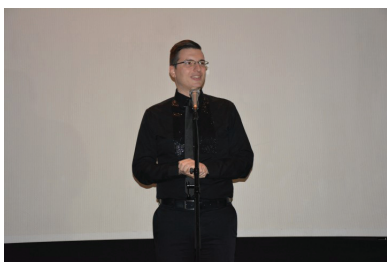
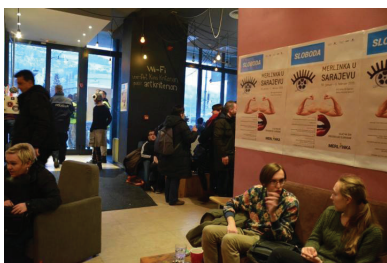
For the first time, in May 2015, a BiH parliament devoted a special session to human rights of lesbians, gay, bisexual, trans* and intersex (LGBTI) people. Although nothing revolutionary happened during or after it, the thematic session of the Joint Committee for Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH will be remembered as the start of institutional recognition of LGBTI people and the need to work on the improvement of their rights. Following this session, we worked on the activities of including LGBTI issues in annual operational plans of Republika Srpska and Federation of BiH in accordance with the Gender Action Plan, amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Law and FBiH Criminal Code.

At our initiative, the Gender Equality Committee of the BiH parliament organised in 2015 a thematic session on the political participation and gender equality. As the result of this work, the Committee proposed amendments to the Law on Council of Ministers of BiH, and in the beginning of 2016 it will propose amendments to the Election Law, all with the purpose of achieving higher and more substantial presence of women in the political life of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that, as long as women do not adopt decisions on all issues of the BiH politics in an equal manner, there can be no equality or general progress in our society.

At the organisational level, in 2015 we continued working on the implementation of our *Strategy* (2014-2017). Since 2015, we have been enjoying institutional support from the Swedish International Development Coordination Agency (SIDA) and cooperation with the Open Society Fund BiH.

Our work would not be possible without our fantastic team. We thank them for their effort and struggle, and for putting up with us. We thank all our associates and persons we work for, who have, in countless messages, comments and criticisms, contributed to our development.

Saša Gavrić, Executive Director
Emina Bošnjak, Programme Manager



Festival Merlinka in Sarajevo, 2015



RIGHTS OF LGBTI PEOPLE

In our work on rights of LGBTI people, Sarajevo Open Centre focuses on three aspects.

Psychosocial and legal support to LGBTI people and building the activist movement

Because we recognise the personal needs of LGBTI people, as well as the fact that state institutions are not providing them with necessary support, we greatly focus on psychosocial and legal empowerment. We believe that without the empowerment of the LGBTI community, no LGBTI person will be able to exercise his/her rights or become an advocate for human rights. We think that community activities (workshops, discussions, talks with activists), psychological counselling, access to information (web portal lgbt.ba), support groups (activist group), empowerment of activist groups and associations, as well as legal advice and representation are the foundations of empowerment of individuals. Long-term outcome of these activities will be the empowered LGBTI people ready to exercise their rights before judicial and non-judicial authorities, becoming thus pioneers in the fight for human rights of this minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Increasing the responsibility of BiH institutions to protect human rights of LGBTI people

LGBTI people are the only social group in Bosnia and Herzegovina whose problems and needs have been systematically excluded from public policies, and public policies and legislative changes are therefore needed. Sarajevo Open Centre, together with its partners, is developing and advocating public policy proposals based on specific needs and experience. Aware that policies and legislation are not sufficient, we also work with public officials (police officers, judges, prosecutors) to raise their awareness and knowledge on violations of human rights of LGBTI people. Future professionals, particularly young lawyers and journalists, can contribute to these changes and therefore represent an important target group in our efforts.

Informing the public about rights of LGBTI people

LGBTI people and their lives are still a taboo in BiH society. By targeted actions in leading TV, online, radio, and print media we contribute to dissemination of credible information among the wider public about the state of human rights and lives of LGBTI people. We also use artistic and cultural platforms (such as the queer film festival Merlinka) to raise awareness of the public about LGBTI rights.

Find out more about the state of human rights of LGBT people in 2015 in: *Pink Report 2016. Report on the State of Human Rights of LGBTI People in BiH* will be available from April 2016 at:

www.soc.ba -> Publications -> Human Rights Series

Find out more about our activities and results at www.soc.ba -> Programmes

There can be no equality without psychosocial and legal empowerment of LGBTI community

In 2015, we successfully continued and intensified our work with LGBTI people. In addition to legal advice (online, by phone, live) and specialised online medium for LGBTI community (www.lgbt.ba), we work directly with LGBTI people. Twice a month, we organised closed events for LGBTI community, educating and empowering it. From 2015, in cooperation with a professional organisation, we provide psychological counselling.



Strengthening the activist movement all over BiH

As we are aware of the fact that we have to strengthen and widen the movement for LGBTI rights, in 2015 we worked on empowering activist groups in Banja Luka, Tuzla, and Mostar. Through various activities, counselling and exchange, we contributed to strengthening and decentralising LGBTI (and queer) activism, helping it become more visible than ever. We intensively contributed to capacity building of association LibertaMo from Mostar and Banja Luka association of queer activists (BUKA), as well as to the establishment of Tuzla Open Centre.



Making transgender and rights of trans* people visible and a priority

2015 was the year of trans* activism. In addition to working directly with members of trans* community and trans* activists, we drafted the first study on human rights of trans* people, hosted the American professor and trans* activist Susan Stryker, organised the first conference on trans* rights in BiH history and worked on the law on gender identity, which systematically regulates the rights and procedures for legal recognition of sex reassignment and life in another gender identity. This law will be presented and its adoption advocated in 2016.

Monitoring, reporting, advocating changes

We continued our intensive advocacy activities in 2015. We applied the well-known recipe: we monitored the developments, documented violations of LGBTI people, published results in the *Pink Report*, and developed specific legislative and public policy initiatives. We worked on, inter alia, amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Law (including sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics as grounds for prohibition of discrimination) and amendments to the Criminal Code of the Federation of BiH (hate crime).



Making institutions more sensitive: police, prosecution, judiciary

Behind every change, there are people. In order for LGBTI people to obtain higher level of institutional support, we work with representatives of political parties, parliaments and the executive, with police officers, prosecutors and judges. In 2015, we cooperated intensively with the OSCE Mission, organised trainings on hate crime in the Federation of BiH and organised two trainings for the judiciary on the rights of LGBTI people.



LGBTI issues in government operational plans

Following successful intensification of cooperation with the Gender Equality Agency of BiH and Gender Centres of RS and FBiH, we succeeded in our aim to recognise LGBTI rights in gender equality operational plans of Republika Srpska and Federation of BiH. For the first time in BiH history, the problems of LGBTI people have been recognised in public policies. We hope that the recognition of these problems by the institutional mechanism for gender equality is only the start of entity institutions' work on rights of LGBTI people.



Media visibility of LGBTI topics

We continued cooperating with all relevant BiH TV, radio, online, and print media in 2015. Media products (shows, series of articles, video features) that emerged from our campaigns reached more than two million BiH citizens making LGBTI rights quite visible. We directly cooperated with the following web portals: buka.com, bljesak.info, radiosarajevo.ba and tacno.net.



Merlinka - 2015 queer film festival

For the third year now, we organised this weekend festival - the most visible LGBTI event in BiH. Despite the fear created by the attacks in 2014, Merlinka in 2015 proved that this festival has its audience. LGBTI people, but also their heterosexual/cisgender friends and supporters showed they can stand up to intimidation. For the second time, we supported Merlinka in Tuzla, organised by Tuzla Alliance of Independent Queer Activists (TANKA).



Leadership in regional cooperation

In the end of 2015, SOC started its first regional project. From 2015 to 2017 we will work with Labris (Serbia), Subversive Front (Macedonia), Centre for Equality and Freedom (Kosovo), Cure Foundation (BiH) and ILGA Europe (Belgium), implementing a \$332,000 project with the aim to use EU integration in the best way possible to improve the protection of LGBTI rights. This is also the first regional LGBTI project lead by an organisation from the Balkans, and SOC is thus confirming its leadership position in the Western Balkans.



Exhibition: All Human Right are Born Equal and Free in Dignity and Rights

May 17, 2015 - International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was crowned by a large exhibition in the city gallery Collegium Artisticum in Sarajevo. Through the so-called Yogyakarta Principles we tried to present individual human rights from the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and show how LGBTI people are deprived of them. Entering public institutions with minority artistic projects is of huge importance.

III ciklus predavanja i feminističkih razgovora
NEKO JE REKAO FEMINIZAM?



Ilustracija: Santa Filčić

50 NJANSI CYBER FEMINIZMA -
FEMINISTIČKI PRINCIPI INTERNETA
predavačice: Belma Kučukalić i Aida Mahmutović

utorak, 14. april 2015, u 18:00
Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti BiH
Šime Milutinovića 7, Sarajevo

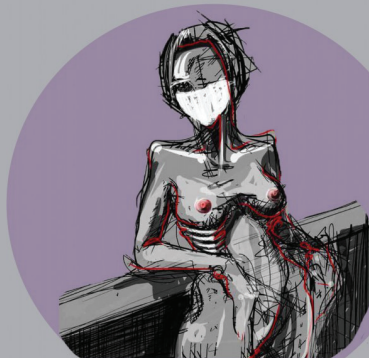
SARAJEVSKI
OTVORENI
CENTAR

ONEMOGLAŠTENO
THE GLOBE OF THE FUTURE AND THE PRESENT



FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG

III ciklus predavanja i feminističkih razgovora
NEKO JE REKAO FEMINIZAM?



Ilustracija: Santa Filčić

ŽENE BEZ LICA -
KAKO FEMINIZAM NIJE PREPOZNAO
ŽENE SA INVALIDITETOM?

predavačica: Tanja Mandić Đokić

petak 26. juni 2015, u 18:00
Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti BiH
Šime Milutinovića 7, Sarajevo

SARAJEVSKI
OTVORENI
CENTAR

FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG

III ciklus predavanja i feminističkih razgovora
NEKO JE REKAO FEMINIZAM?



Ilustracija: Santa Filčić

QUEER TEORIJA I KLASIČNI
JUGOSLAVENSKI FILM
predavač: Nebojša Jovanović

petak, 20. novembar 2015, u 18:00h
Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti BiH
Šime Milutinovića Sarajlje 7, Sarajevo

SARAJEVSKI
OTVORENI
CENTAR

FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG

III ciklus predavanja i feminističkih razgovora
NEKO JE REKAO FEMINIZAM?



COSMO-POLITIKA: DUETALNI FEMINIZAM
ŽENSKIH ČASOPISA

predavač: Nenad Veličković

četvrtak, 05. mart 2015, u 18:00
Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti BiH
Šime Milutinovića 7, Sarajevo

SARAJEVSKI
OTVORENI
CENTAR

Ilustracija: Santa Filčić

FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG

Third round of lectures and feminist discussions *Somebody said feminism?*

In our work on women's rights, Sarajevo Open Centre focuses on two aspects.

Increasing the responsibility of BiH institutions to protect women's human rights

Although women represent more than 50% of the population, they are in fact the largest minority group that is being systematically excluded from the political and public life, and discriminated in the economic life. Along with the satisfactory legislative framework, there is a need for more decisive public policies, legislative amendments and innovation. Sarajevo Open Centre, together with its partners, is developing and advocating proposals of public policies based on specific needs and experience. We also work with decision-makers to raise their awareness and knowledge. Future professionals represent an important target group in our efforts.

Informing the public about women's rights and feminism

By targeted artistic, educational, and research actions, we contribute to the questioning of the position of women in BiH society but also the provision of credible information to the wider audience about the state of women's human rights and feminism.

Find out more about the state of women's human rights in 2015 in:

2016 Orange Report

Annual Report on the State of Women's Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina

available at www.soc.ba -> Publications -> Human Rights Series

Find out more about our activities and results at: www.soc.ba -> Programmes



Equality Academy - partnership incubator

Together with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, we are implementing as of 2015 a multi-module training programme for MPs, representatives of the executive and key bodies of political parties. By studying history of women and feminism, gender equality policies and standards, we raise awareness of participants about the need to include gender issues in all aspects of political life. Though four three-day modules, we built cooperation with many decision-makers and started our joint efforts on specific changes. We continue with the Equality Academy in 2016.



Systematic cooperation with parliamentary committees and institutional mechanisms for gender equality

In 2015, we strengthened the cooperation with gender equality parliamentary committees in the parliaments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federation of BiH. We established a close cooperation with the Gender Equality Agency of BiH and Gender Centres of Republika Srpska and the Federation of BiH, which resulted in joint activities on the development of public policies and amendments to the law. We believe that in cooperation with institutions we can always achieve more than without the actors of the political system.

Monitoring, reporting, advocating changes

Last year, we were one of the most active members of Women's Network of BiH. We maintain the media presence of the network, also by administering the zenskamreza.ba web portal. We monitored the developments around the formation of government at the level of BiH, entities and cantons, and lead and/or participated in advocating equal participation of women in the executive and legislative branches. We drafted the monitoring report about women's participation in politics and the *Annual Report on Women's Human Rights*.

Political participation and gender equality

Convinced that equal political participation of women in the legislative and executive branch, with the aim of achieving gender equality in decision-making, is a precondition for a better society, SOC is active in the promotion of gender equality in the political life. We advocate amendments to laws regulating the election and work of governments of state, entity and cantonal levels, amendments to Election Law and we work with representatives of political parties on the inclusion of women and men in the key bodies of political parties.

Somebody Said Feminism; 3rd edition

In 2015 we implemented the third cycle of lectures and talks *Somebody Said Feminism*, a unique BiH feminist programme with regular lectures in Sarajevo, which brings feminism and women's human rights into the public sphere, always finding new audiences.



Decisively against violence against women

In the end of 2015, we provided active support to safe houses, leading media campaigns for a better status of safe houses in the Federation of BiH. We worked with representatives of safe houses, organised protests in front of the Parliament of the Federation, met with MPs and ministers of justice and labour and social policy, informed the media about these actions. We did not allow the legal status of safe houses be endangered and we warned about the systemic violation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in the Federation of BiH. The fight for safe houses continues in 2016.

School of Feminism Žarana Papić

Following an intensive and participatory preparation for the new feminist educational programme, in 2015 the two-semester School of Feminism Žarana Papić was launched. Inheriting the Women's Studies of Women of Women, we continue the tradition established in 1998 which offers a unique informal educational program, hoping it will in the next few years give birth to a new generation of fighters for equality in BiH society.





Intensive cooperation with the media and representatives of political life

In our work, we mostly focus on the rights of LGBTI people and women but we think that civil society organisations should focus on other issues as well. That is the way to achieve the betterment of rights of the social group with whom and on whose behalf the organisation works but also of human rights of other citizens. For that reason, Sarajevo Open Centre is an active participant of various coalitions and civil society networks, as well as an initiator of specific actions. In 2015, we worked on the following issues.

Fighting discrimination: amendments to laws and strategy development

Having recognised that fighting and prohibiting discrimination are very important issues, as well as the need to adopt public policies that would focus on prevention of discrimination, we decided to actively participate in and lead processes relating to the amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Law of BiH and advocating the adoption of the strategy to fight and prevent discrimination. In 2015, we published the study *Harmonising the Anti-Discrimination Law of BiH with the EU Acquis Communautaire* and the publication *Proposals of Amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Law of BiH*, becoming thus the only civil society organisation which submitted specific amendments in the very start of the process. We are very proud that Council of Ministers of BiH proposed in December 2015 the amendments to the law which contain, inter alia, some new grounds proposed by us that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristic, providing in this way clear protection to LGBTI people. Let us hope that the Parliamentary Assembly will adopt the proposed amendments in 2016 and we are looking forward to the 2016 work on the strategy to combat discrimination.

-> More about our activities and results at
www.soc.ba -> Programmes -> Anti-Discrimination Law

Institution of the Ombudsmen for Human Rights:

Amendments to law and appointment of ombudsmen

In 2015, we were the only civil society organisation which followed the process of the appointment of new ombudsmen from the very start. We influenced the change of rules of procedure of the ad-hoc commission for appointment of ombudsmen and we followed all their sessions. In addition, in 2015 we were involved in the drafting of the new law on ombudsmen for human rights. In August 2015, we published the *Model Law on the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsmen in BiH* and we presented it to the working group. We are very proud of managing to change more than 30% of articles in the law. Although we are not fully satisfied with the proposal of the law which was submitted to the parliamentary procedure, we are very proud that it contains our provisions relating to a) defining competences and authorisations of the Ombudsmen Institution, b) division of tasks between the three ombudsmen, c) establishment of an advisory civil society body under the Ombudsmen Institution, and d) first time inclusion of issues of sexual and gender minorities in the law on human rights ombudsmen.

-> More about our activities and results at
www.soc.ba -> Programmes -> The Law on Ombudsmen for Human Rights

Hate crime: amendments to the FBiH Criminal Code

In 2015, we continued advocating the amendments of the FBiH Criminal Code. We organised a range of meetings with the representatives of the Federal Government and Parliament, media campaigns and a special conference on hate crime, with the aim to improve the criminal regulation of this matter. We presented our amendments in the publication entitled *Criminalisation of Hate Crime under the Criminal Code of FBiH*. The result of this intensive work with organisations gathered in the Coalition for Combat against Hate Speech and Hate Crime, beginning 2016 the Federal Ministry of Justice finally submitted the proposal of amendments to the Criminal Code. The proposal covers issues of hate crime as well. Protected grounds include sexual orientation and gender identity. In 2016, we will follow the adoption process, and we will continue working with the police and the judiciary.

-> More about our work at www.soc.ba -> Programmes -> Hate Crime

European integration and human rights

In 2015, Sarajevo Open Centre continued the coordination of the Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of BiH, a non-formal coalition of civil society organisations aspiring to contribute to European integration monitoring, but also advocating specific solutions when it comes to the political integration criteria (human rights, rule of law, democracy). During 2015, we worked on the strengthening of the network of civil society organisations and that resulted in the *Alternative Progress Report*, strengthening of regular contacts with the Delegation of the European Union in Sarajevo and monitoring of the implementation of the *December Demands* catalogue. Certain priorities set in the *Alternative Progress Report*, have been included in the official *Progress Report* published by the European Commission in the fall of 2015. The Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration is recognised by the media and European partners as a corrective in the area of European integration.

-> More about the initiative at www.eu-monitoring.ba

COMMUNICATION

Transparency is an organisational value of the Sarajevo Open Centre. We believe that civil society organisations must report on their work and in that way contribute to changes in social awareness and accountability.

SOC web

Sarajevo Open Centre maintains three web platforms:
Organisational website - www.soc.ba,
The only LGBT info portal in BiH - www.lgbt.ba,
Web presentation of the Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of BiH - www.eu-monitoring.ba
The three sites had **112,000** visitors in 2015.

SOC on social networks



SOC in the media

All relevant BiH TV, radio, online, and print media reported on our work. We appeared as guests in morning shows and central news, gave interviews, and wrote texts ourselves.

You can read the selected content at: www.soc.ba -> Press

We produced, together with partner organisations and the media, media campaigns and contents that reached more than two million citizens. You can find some of these on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/sarajevskiotvorenicentar> with more than 36,500 views.



Knowledge production: SOC publishing

Since its establishment, Sarajevo Open Centre has been known for its intensive research and publishing activity. We believe that we contribute to social changes by producing knowledge. In 2015, in our editions *Questioning*, *Human Rights*, *BiH Politics*, *Gender* and *Human Rights Papers* we published and disseminated 31 publications/studies/books in 18,600 copies.

We are especially proud of the following six:



1995-2015:

Women and Political Life in Post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina

This publication was prepared on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement and it speaks about an alternative history and presents the so far insufficiently visible contribution of women to BiH politics. It was developed by joint work of three young women scholars, and is primarily based on 15 interviews with politicians and activists.



Life Beyond the Norms. Transgender in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In this publication, SOC is presenting the first comprehensive study on the rights and needs of trans* people. Through the prism of different disciplines, this study provides clear recommendations for the improvement of trans rights.



Pink Report.

2014 Report on the State of Human Rights of LGBT People

For the fourth year in a row SOC is publishing the annual report on the rights of LGBT people - one of its kind in the country. The report documents violations and trends, but also presents specific proposals to improve the state of human rights of LGBT people.



2014 Annual Report on the State of Women's Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina

For the third year in a row SOC is publishing the report on the state of women's rights. For the first time, the report was principally drafted by SOC employees and that makes us especially proud.



Feasibility Study for the Establishment of a Women's Fund in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Having in mind that we have managed to develop and grow into a successful organisation, SOC together with Cure Foundation felt the need to make a study to assess the need to establish a national foundation to finance women's activism.



2015 Alternative Progress Report: Political Criteria

For the third year, SOC is coordinating the development of the only civil society report on the progress on BiH's path to the EU or the lack of it. The report focuses on issues of democratisation, rule of law and human rights and has the aim to influence the official EU progress report.

ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE

2015 has been the year of stabilisation, in both organisational and financial terms. We successfully continued with the implementation of the organisational Strategy for the period 2014-2017, with a regular overview of results using the Results Assessment Framework and the 21 indicators that we use to measure our results.

Strategy and Results Assessment Framework (RAF) can be downloaded from www.soc.ba -> *About us*

Growth/fall of funds through the years



Total funds available for 2015

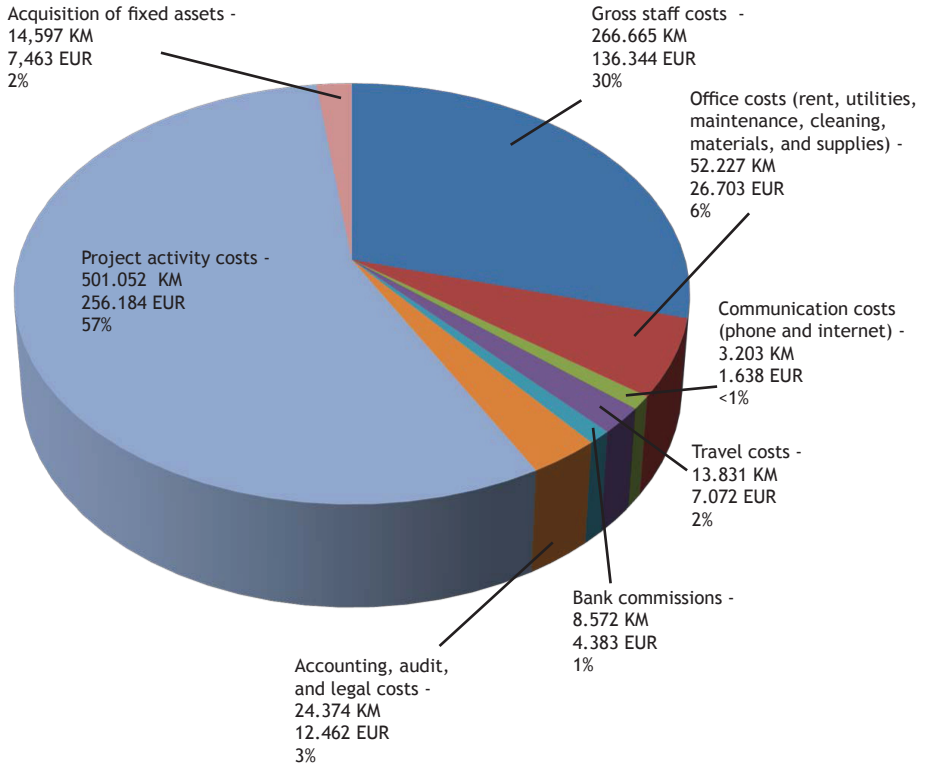
	KM	EUR
Unspent balance from 2014	357,680	182,879
Funds received from international donors in 2015	1,145,780	585,828
Funds from other sources in 2015	5,946	3,040
Total funds available for 2015	1,509,406	771,747

Our 2015 donors are divided into core funding (Open Society Fund BiH and Swedish International Development Coordination Agency SIDA) and project-based donors. Here is a list of the main donors in 2015.

Funds received in 2015

Donors in 2015	KM	EUR
Swedish International Development Coordination Agency (SIDA)	209,246	106,986
Royal Norwegian Embassy in Sarajevo	148,222	75,785
Open Society Fund BiH	146,592	74,951
USA State Department	143,846	73,547
Dutch Mission to the OSCE in Vienna	97,792	50,000
European Union/EIDHR	87,560	44,769
National Endowment for Democracy (NED)	75,175	38,436
Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice	74,441	38,061
Dutch Embassy Sarajevo/MATRA Programme	68,179	34,859
US Embassy Sarajevo	38,194	19,528
Heinrich Boell Foundation - Sarajevo Office	21,443	10,964
Embassy of Switzerland Sarajevo	11,628	5,945
ILGA Europe	9,989	5,107
Gong Zagreb (MFA Croatia)	5,256	2,687
Other international donors	8,219	4,202
Total funds from international donors	1,145,780	585,828
Other sources/private donations	5,946	3,040
Total funds in 2015	1,151,726	588,869

Expenditures in 2015



Unspent funds in 2015

	KM	EUR
Total available funds in 2014	1,509,406	771,747
Total expenditures in 2015	884,520	452,248
2015 balance - unspent funds/ transferred to 2016	624,886	319,499

Learn more about our finances in the *2015 Audit Report*, which will be available on our website as of April 2016.

You can download the audit and other reports at www.soc.ba -> About us -> Reports.

WHAT WILL 2016 BRING US?



More intensive cooperation with the institutional gender equality mechanisms

Cooperation with the Gender Equality Agency of BiH and gender centres of Republika Srpska and the Federation started in 2015. It will be strengthened in 2016. We will work together on joint trainings and conferences, reports, amendments to the law and proposals of public policies relating to gender equality and LGBTI people. Sarajevo Open Centre will support the three institutions in their attempts to cover LGBTI equality by their work on gender equality, and to promote it actively before other authorities.



INTERNATIONAL DAY
AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA,
TRANSPHOBIA & BIPHOBIA

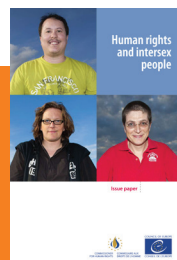
A Worldwide Celebration of
Sexual and Gender Diversities

May 2016 - LGBTI Equality Month

For the first time, on the occasion of May 17 - International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, a wider coalition of civil society organisations coordinated by Sarajevo Open Centre will organise several activities during May, making it a month of LGBTI equality. We will also cooperate with partners from the European Union and the USA, and together with Gender Centre of Republika Srpska, we will organise the first conference on LGBTI rights in the seat of the Government of RS.

Transgender and intersex work

We have started intensively working on trans rights in 2015. We will continue the activities on trans issues, providing support to trans people but also advocating better regulation of medical and legal protection and aid. In 2016, we will intensify our work on the rights of intersex people. Intersex activists from the countries of Western Europe gave us a clear sign that we must open our doors to intersex persons, speak about intersexuality to make intersex people feel welcome as well. We will start our work on intersexuality by publishing the translation of intersex human rights issue paper developed by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe.



Improvement of legal and public policy frameworks on human rights of LGBTI persons and women

In 2016, Sarajevo Open Centre, independently or in cooperation with partner organisations and through existing networks, will continue advocating specific changes relating to: a) combating discrimination (amendments to the anti-discrimination law and law on human rights ombudsman, development of a human rights strategy), b) women's participation in politics (amendments to the election law, law on governments at cantonal, entity, and state level), c) hate crime (amendments to the FBiH Criminal Code, amendments to police academy curricula). In this way, SOC is continuing the existing but also launching new advocacy initiatives with the aim to enhance the accountability of the state for human rights of minority groups. To do this, we will closely cooperate with parliaments and government institutions at state and entity level.

Gender equality at cantonal and local level

In 2016, we will particularly focus on gender equality at cantonal level. We will publish two documents presenting solutions to improve gender equality in municipalities, towns and cantons and we will start cooperation with one canton, having in mind that nobody cooperates with this government level. Cantons, which have the key competences in education, employment or health, are of central importance for the achievement of gender equality in our society.



Regulation of same-sex unions in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Following a successful advocacy for regulations in the area of combating discrimination and hate crime on grounds

of sexual orientation and gender identity, we believe that a public discussion should be launched about the regulation of rights and duties stemming from same-sex unions. Same-sex unions are a social reality in Bosnia and Herzegovina and should be adequately regulated. It is an obligation according to the European Convention on Human Rights, but also an ethical obligation of governments in BiH.

WHAT OTHERS SAID ABOUT US



Working with Sarajevo Open Centre motivated me to move my limits in trying to make a positive change in my community. It is of great importance to Tuzla Open Centre to have such an organisation as its partner - with integrity, visible results and positive energy - which truly lives the values it advocates.

Dajana Bakić, Tuzla Open Centre

All of us who have been involved in advocating LGBT rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the start know how much will, effort, knowledge and energy was needed to see the results that Sarajevo Open Centre achieved. Thanks to SOC, we have learned that the fight for LGBT rights, as part of universal human rights, is long, difficult and exhausting, but that everyday progress is one of the reasons why it makes sense to live and be an activist in BiH.

Kristina Ljevak, Freelance Journalist and Cultural Worker

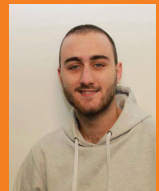


In direct action with MPs from all political parties, in a short time SOC managed to create the prerequisites for the adoption of amendments compliant with the best European practice related to promotion of gender equality, protection of LGBT population, and other vulnerable groups. This resulted in raising overall awareness of citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina about the importance of such an approach. Without SOC, the promotion of these values would have been reduced to a few MPs - SOC significantly increased the support to these values.

Damir Arnaut, MP, Parliamentary Assembly of BiH

I see SOC as an ideal, not just any, but an ideal opportunity, to do something for myself, but also other society members. For a minority member, my life got another dimension after SOC's empowerment program. I am decisively grabbing a new opportunity because I know I will have support from now on for action I take to improve the protection of LGBT right.

Miloš Zemunović, Human Rights Activist



There are open and closed stories; open and closed lives; open and closed houses. But there is just one Sarajevo Open Centre. In the spectrum of numerous civil society organisations, Sarajevo Open Centre is truly an open one. Not just as a metaphor for the only true freedom, freedom from prejudice, but also substantially in its devotion, enthusiasm and courage. Everything that you have done so far really deserves respect and I hope you will continue working equally persistently towards our common goals. For all the future noble battles, it is good to know you stand by us.

Mirjana Lukač, Gender Centre of Republika Srpska

THE TEAM
(In March 2016)

Steering Board:
Aida Spahić, Elmaja Bavčić, Arijana Aganović

Assembly President:
Damir Banović

Executive Director:
Saša Gavrić
Programme Manager:
Emina Bošnjak

Financial and Administrative Coordinators:
Feđa Bobić, Dina Vilić

Programme Coordinators:
Jozo Blažević, Jasmina Čaušević, Inela Hadžić, Lejla Huremović,
Naida Kučukalić, Maja Lukić-Schade, Vladana Vasić, Maida Zagorac

Volunteers:
Delila Hasanbegović, Rasim Ibrahimagić,
Darko Pandurević, Marina Veličković

Contact:
Sarajevo Open Centre
Čekaluša 16
BiH-71 000 Sarajevo

Tel: + 387 (33) 551 000 (Programme Team)
+ 387 (33) 551 001 (Management, Finance and Administration)
Fax: + 387 (33) 551 002

www.soc.ba - office@soc.ba
www.lgbt.ba - www.eu-monitoring.ba



The team of the Sarajevo Open Centre