



## Numbers of Equality

# 2

Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons  
in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings

## Numbers of Equality 2

Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons  
in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings

Sarajevo, 2017

Title: Numbers of Equality 2. Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings

Original title: Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače 2. Analiza rezultata istraživanja problema i potreba LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2017. godini

Author: Amar Numanović

Collaborators: Aida Tinjak, Branko Ćulibrk, Dajana Bakić and Ines Pusić

BCS proofreading: Klaudija Mlakić Vuković

Translation: Aida Spahić

Layout and design: Dina Vilić

Publisher: Sarajevo Open Centre, [www.soc.ba](http://www.soc.ba)

For the publisher: Emina Bošnjak



Kingdom of the Netherlands

© Sarajevo Open Centre/author

Non-commercial copying, photocopying, or any other reproduction of this publication in whole or in part is desirable and possible with prior written consent of the publisher. Please contact us at [office@soc.ba](mailto:office@soc.ba)

The research was conducted as part of the MATRA program supported by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

-----  
CIP - Katalogizacija u publikaciji

Nacionalna i univerzitetska biblioteka Bosne i Hercegovine, Sarajevo

342.726-055.3(497.6)

BROJEVI koji ravnopravnost znače 2 : analiza rezultata istraživanja problema i potreba osoba LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini u 2017. godini / [autor Aman Numanović] ; [saradnici/e Aida Tinjak ... [et al.]. - Sarajevo : Sarajevski otvoreni centar, 2017. - 123 str. : ilustr. ; 24 cm. - (Edicija Ljudska prava Sarajevskog otvorenog centra ; knj. 60)

O autoru: str. 121. - Bibliografija: str. 94-95 ; bibliografske i druge bilješke uz tekst.

ISBN 978-9958-536-55-7  
1. Numanović, Amar  
COBISS.BH-ID 24423686

-----

Amar Numanović

## **Numbers of Equality 2**

Research on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons  
in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 - Analysis of Findings

Sarajevo, 2017

# Content

1.Introduction	6
1.1.Research Objective	8
2.Research Methodology	9
2.1. Sample	9
2.2. Research Instrument	9
2.3. Procedure	10
3. Demographic Composition of Sample	11
3.1. Age distribution of sample	11
3.2. Sex and Gender Distribution of Sample	11
3.3. Types of LGBTI Identities	13
3.4. Educational Attainment	14
3.5. Primary Occupation of Respondents	14
3.6. Religious Affiliation of Respondents	15
3.7. Ethnic Affiliation of Respondents	15
3.8. Place of Residence of Respondents	16
4. Everyday Life of LGBTI Persons	17
4.1. Coming out	17
4.2. Discrimination Against LGBTI Persons	23
4.3. Violence against LGBTI persons	30
4.4. Confidence in Institutions	37
4.5. Psychological Well-Being of LGBTI Persons	39
4.6. Pride	45
4.7 Same-Sex Union Legislation	60
4.8 Transgender Persons	65
4.9 Economic Position of LGBTI Persons	71
4.10. Overview of Key Problems Faced by LGBTI Persons	76

5. Perception of Sarajevo Open Centre's Work on Issues Relating to LGBTI Rights	79
6. Conclusion	86
7. Framework Recommendations	88
8. Literature	91
9. Appendix 1: Questionnaire	92
10. Appendix 2: Glossary of Key LGBTI Terms	114
11. About the Author	118
12. About Sarajevo Open Centre	119

# 1.Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has done a very poor job in protecting and ensuring the rights and freedoms of LGBTI (lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) persons. That much is confirmed in the annual report of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe) published in 2017 (Rainbow Europe Index 2017), that assigns the institutional and legal framework of BiH with a 31% ranking on scale of 0% (gross violations of human rights) to 100% (full respect of human rights). As for countries from the region, Croatia (62%), Montenegro (39%) and Albania (33%) all have a higher ranking, while Serbia (30%), Kosovo (30%) and Macedonia (16%)<sup>1</sup> scored lower than BiH.

While the legal framework for protecting the rights of LGBTI persons and ensuring their equality has been somewhat improved, hate speech, discrimination and violence against the LGBTI community are still a widespread occurrence in the society of BiH.

Measures to ensure the equality of LGBTI persons were adopted through two important policies in 2015 and 2016: in late 2015 and the first quarter of 2016 governments of both entities adopted annual operational plans for the implementation of the Gender Action Plan in 2016, while the Council of Ministers of BiH adopted a one-year Anti-Discrimination Action Plan in April 2016. These policies include a number of measures designed to enhance the rights of LGBTI persons.<sup>2</sup>The Law on Amendments to the Criminal Code of FBiH was also adopted in April 2016 “regulating, among other things, hate crimes committed on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.”<sup>3</sup>Finally, Amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Law of BiH were adopted in mid-2016. The amendments “finally introduce correct terminology by adding sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited grounds of discrimination”, and also “include ‘sex characteristics’ as prohibited grounds of discrimination”, thereby making BiH the first country in Southeast Europe with an anti-discrimination

---

1 ILGA-Europe (2017). *Rainbow Europe Index May 2017*, <https://goo.gl/2tLZsj>

2 Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2016). *Alternativni izvještaj za BiH 2016: politički kriteriji* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 23] (Sarajevo: Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina), p. 32.

3 Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2016). *Alternativni izvještaj za BiH 2016: politički kriteriji* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 23] (Sarajevo: Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina), p. 32.

legislative framework that protects intersex persons.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, fear, violence and discrimination are still part of everyday life for LGBTI persons and little has improved in this regard: in 2015, Sarajevo Open Centre documented “as many as 103 cases of hate speech and incitement to violence, 20 incidents and criminal offenses motivated by prejudice related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity.”<sup>5</sup>

The current, predominantly heteronormative and patriarchal social context, inundated with explicit homophobia, intolerance and violence against LGBTI persons, coupled with inadequate institutional mechanisms for protecting LGBTI rights and freedoms, has made the life of the LGBTI community much harder and considerably more limited than the rest of the population. LGBTI persons are often prevented from leading a normal life or meeting basic personal, social or cultural needs (e.g. being open about their relationships, freely expressing their gender, etc.). The results of this study indicate that fear of violence, discrimination and/or exclusion often leads to extreme forms of self-isolation, avoidance of certain cultural and social activities, reluctance to express one’s views, etc. The lives and needs of LGBTI persons are often incomparable to the quotidian life of those whose sexual orientation, gender and/or sexual identity falls neatly within the dominant and cultural matrix of the BiH society.

Therefore, we decided to adopt a different approach. Unlike most studies and reports that focus primarily on the institutional and legal framework and/or social position of LGBTI persons, the study presented here aims to provide comprehensive, detailed insight into the attitudes of LGBTI persons and their outlook on everyday life, the challenges and problems before them and the real needs of the community. Although somewhat different in terms of methodology and scope of research, this study can be viewed as a continuation of Sarajevo Open Centre’s research work from 2013 when the organisation published the report “Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini” (eng. Numbers of Life: Analysis of Results of Research on the Needs of LGBT Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The following section presents basic information about the

---

4 Jasminka Džumhur, Nives Jukić and Ljubinsko Mitrović (2016). *Specijalni izvještaj o pravima LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Banja Luka: Institution of the Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina), p. 9.

5 Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2016). *Alternativni izvještaj za BiH 2016: politički kriteriji* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 23] (Sarajevo: Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina), p. 33



methodological framework, the approach, as well as the demographic composition of the sample. The next part is dedicated to the analysis of key research results divided into ten thematic units. After that, we discuss the work of Sarajevo Open Centre, i.e. the effects of its activism. Finally, we present general recommendations drawn from this research on how to improve various aspects of the life of LGBTI persons.

### ***1.1. Research Objective***

Our main objective was to obtain a deep, factual understanding of the problems, needs and the state of human rights of the LGBTI community in BiH, analysed and presented through basic empirical indicators. We tried to collect empirical data and evidence in order to target the authorities with well-designed advocacy initiatives aimed at enhancing the rights and the position of the LGBTI community.

## 2. Research Methodology

The research combines descriptive analysis of statistical data collected through a questionnaire and a qualitative analysis of answers to open-ended questions.

### ***2.1. Sample***

The sample includes 366 LGBTI persons from BiH. Although there were 393 responses initially, 27 were omitted (6.9% of the total number of individual responses), due to the questionnaires being incomplete or not filled out properly. The sample includes people from all over BiH, especially regions around four larger urban centres— Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, Banja Luka and the towns surrounding them. The average age of the respondents is 26.3 years (see more in 3. Demographic Composition of Sample).

A nonprobability sampling technique called snowball sampling was used. The questionnaire was delivered to LGBTI persons via email, using SOC's email database. It was also distributed through social media and web pages targeting the LGBTI community, while 4 pollsters were hired to poll respondents face-to-face (by arranging a meeting at their home or some other place). This ensured adequate territorial distribution and the participation of LGBTI persons who do not have access to the Internet or might not have seen the online questionnaire. In order to avoid polling the same people twice, the field researchers asked the respondents whether they had already filled out the online questionnaire before proceeding with polling.

### ***2.2. Research Instrument***

Data was collected through the use of a comprehensive, combined questionnaire that featured open-ended, closed-ended and semi closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was distributed online, as a Google Docs document, and in paper form. The structure and the questions were identical in both the online and the print version, which ensured complete comparability of results collected through the questionnaires.

The questionnaire featured questions regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents and 58 thematic/topical questions

divided into 12 main units concerning key aspects of the research: (1) coming out, (2) discrimination, (3) violence, (4) confidence in institutions, (5) psychological well-being of LGBTI persons, (6) key problems of LGBTI persons in BiH, (7) Pride, (8) same-sex unions, (9) transgender persons, (10) intersex persons, (11) the economic situation of LGBTI persons (12) LGBTI activism of Sarajevo Open Centre.

### ***2.3. Procedure***

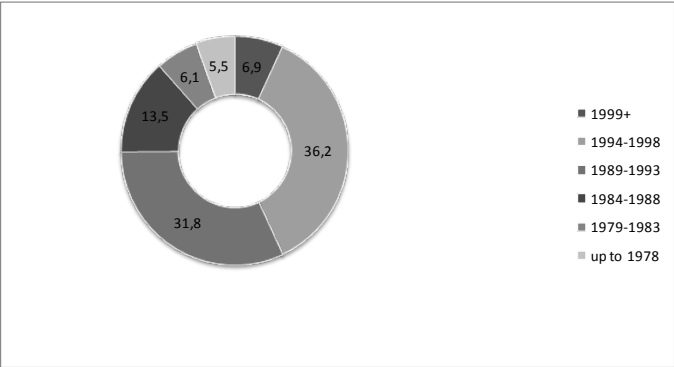
The research was carried out between February and May 2017. Before being released publically, the questionnaire was circulated among SOC members in order to ensure its comprehensibility, precision and functionality. The online questionnaire brought in 169 individual responses, from 15<sup>th</sup> March to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2017, while 197 individual responses were collected through the print version of the questionnaire. Once the online data collection and field research were completed, the results were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), a specialised software for statistical analysis of data.

# 3. Demographic Composition of Sample

## 3.1. Age distribution of sample

The research includes respondents in the age range between 14 to 66 years. The average age of respondents is 26.3, while persons born between 1989 and 1998 make up around 2/3 of the sample (see Graph 1 for a general overview of age distribution). This fact should be kept in mind when analysing the results since they are primarily a reflection of the views, attitudes and problems of LGBTI persons aged between 19 and 28.

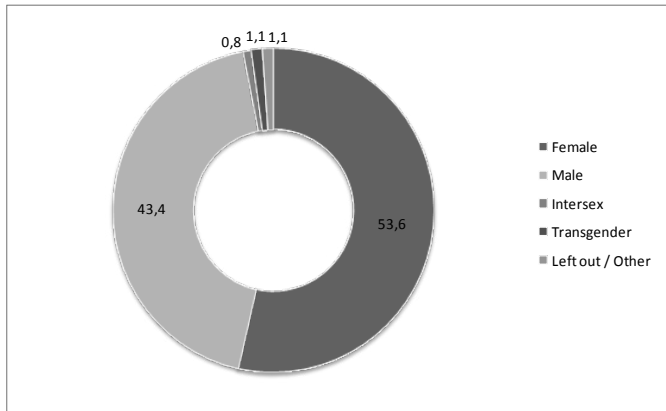
*Graph 1: Age distribution of respondents by year of birth (%)*



## 3.2. Sex and Gender Distribution of Sample

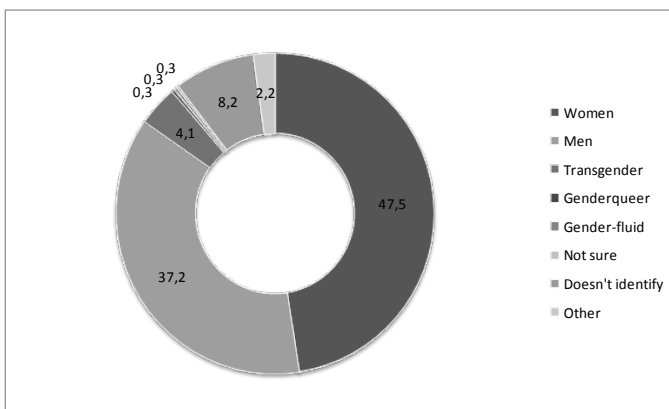
The biggest number of respondents (196 or more than half) identify as female, followed by respondents who identify as male (159) and, finally, as trans (4 respondents) and intersex persons (3 respondents). Four respondents left out their sex or identified as sexless.

*Graph 2: Sex distribution of sample (%)*



As for gender distribution, 174 respondents identify as women, 136 identify as men, 15 identify as transgender, 1 person identifies as 'genderqueer', 1 person identifies as gender-fluid, 1 is undecided, 30 refuse to identify with any gender category, while 8 respondents identify as atypical, or agender. Although 15 people described themselves as transgender in the question on gender identity, 18 respondents said they were transgender when asked which type of identity makes them identify as LGBTI. It would seem that some transgender persons use binary categories to define their gender identity, and this explains the discrepancy in numbers.

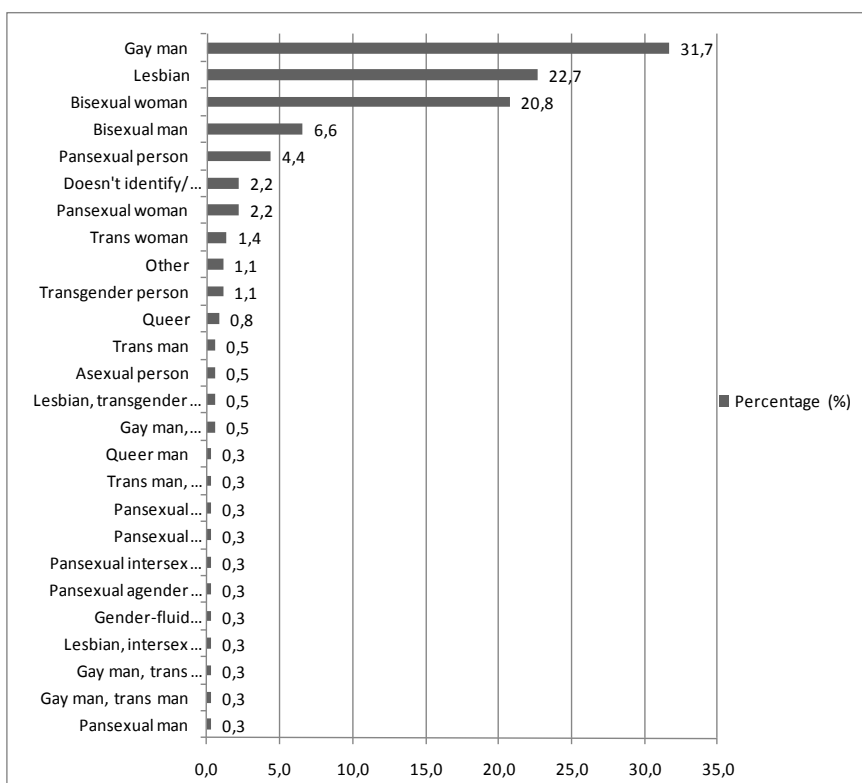
*Graph 3: Gender distribution of respondents (%)*



### 3.3. Types of LGBTI Identities

As for the types of LGBTI identities that make up the sample, most respondents identify as gay men (31.7%), lesbians (22.7%), bisexual women (20.8%), bisexual men (6.6%) and pansexual persons (4.4%). The complete overview of the identities that make up the total sample is presented in Graph 4.

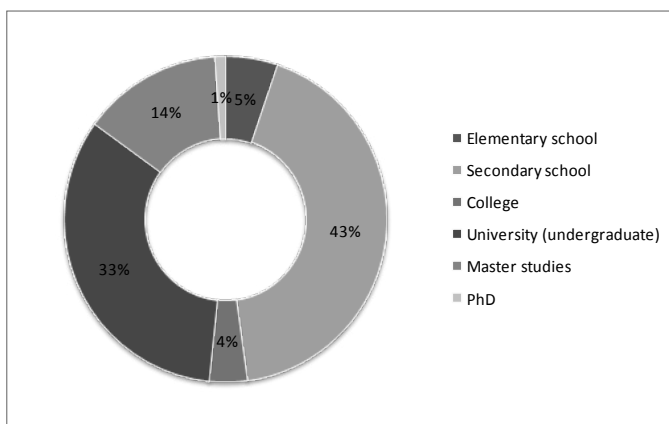
Graph 4: Types of LGBTI identities (%)



### 3.4. Educational Attainment

As for the level of educational attainment, more than half of the respondents have finished a higher education level, mostly undergraduate studies (three-year or four-year programs). Respondents who have finished secondary school make up the largest part of the sample (43%).

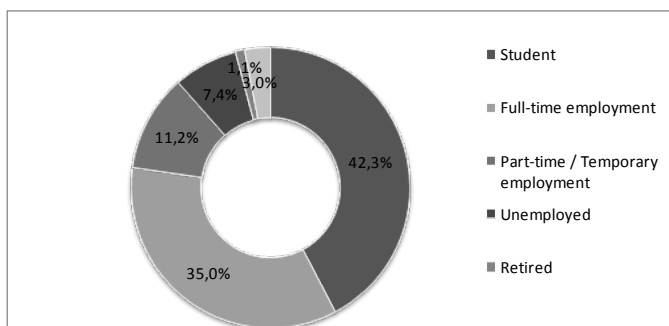
*Graph 5: Educational attainment of respondents (%)*



### 3.5. Primary Occupation of Respondents

As for primary occupation, students who are still at school make up 42.3% of the sample. The employed and temporarily employed make up 46.2%, around 7.4% of respondents are unemployed, while four are retired.

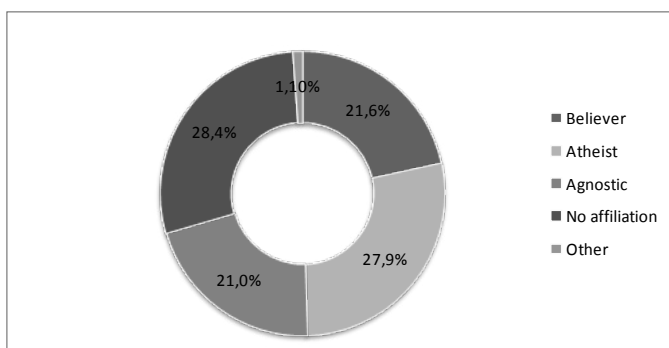
*Graph 6: Primary occupation of respondents (%)*



### 3.6. Religious Affiliation of Respondents

More than 1/5 of respondents identify as religious and most affiliate with one of the three dominant religions in BiH – Islam, Catholic Christianity and Orthodox Christianity. Almost half of the respondents identify as atheists (27.9%) or agnostic (21%), while the rest of the respondents either do not profess any religious affiliation or identify as something else.

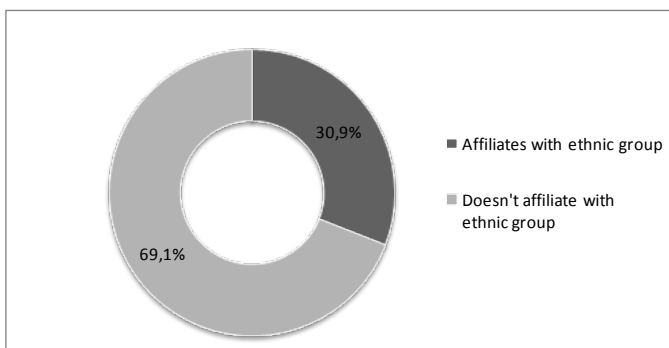
*Graph 7: Religious affiliation of respondents (%)*



### 3.7. Ethnic Affiliation of Respondents

As for ethnic affiliation, more than 2/3 of respondents do not identify with any ethnic community. Of those who do, 30.8% identify as Serbs, 28.9% identify as Bosniaks, 19.2% identify as Croats, 13.5% identify as Bosnian and Herzegovinians, while the remaining 7.6% identify with other ethnic categories.

*Graph 8: Ethnic affiliation of respondents (%)*





### 3.8. Place of Residence of Respondents

The respondents come from various towns all over BiH, as evidenced by Table 1. Nine respondents live abroad (in other countries), while 20 respondents have not cited their place of residence. Around 35% of respondents live in Sarajevo, 11% in Banja Luka and Tuzla, while 8.2% live in Mostar and Prijedor.

*Table 1: Place of residence of respondents (frequency)*

Sarajevo	128	Doboj	1
Banja Luka	40	Foča-Ustikolina	1
Tuzla	41	Goražde	1
Mostar	30	Gračanica	1
Prijedor	30	Gradačac	1
Zenica	11	Gradiška	1
Bihać	5	Ilijaš	1
Ilidža	3	Istočno Sarajevo	1
Kiseljak	3	Kakanj	1
Pale	3	Kalesija	1
Vogošća	3	Konjic	1
Banovići	2	Laktaši	1
Bijeljina	2	Livno	1
Brčko	2	Lopare	1
Kozarska Dubica	2	Novi Grad	1
Lukavac	2	Posušje	1
Tešanj	2	Sanski Most	1
Visoko	2	Široki Brijeg	1
Vitez	2	Velika Kladuša	1
Zavidovići	2	SBK	1
Bosanski Šamac	1	Abroad	9
Čapljina	1	N/A	20

## 4. Everyday Life of LGBTI Persons

### 4.1. Coming out

*Coming out* is a self-disclosure process during which homosexual, bisexual or transgender persons – i.e. people whose sexuality or gender expression defy standard patriarchal, binary norms – reveal their identity to other people, i.e. stop hiding.<sup>6</sup> From a terminological point of view, *coming out* is a shortened form of *coming out of the closet*, a metaphor that describes no longer concealing one's identity, be it sexual orientation or gender.<sup>7</sup> Coming out is therefore a permanent, life-long process<sup>8</sup>, since LGBTI persons are always revealing their identity to someone, be it people who did not know of it before, or people they meet or come into contact with for the first time.

Unlike homosexual and bisexual persons, transgender people do not come out voluntarily since gender identity is visible and cannot be easily concealed.<sup>9</sup>

The process of coming out is often very arduous and traumatic but it is crucial for identity development, self-acceptance and nurturing a feeling of pride.<sup>10</sup> Coming out is therefore a watershed moment in the life of an LGBTI person.

Since the society of BiH remains intolerant towards LGBTI people, i.e. anyone whose sexuality or gender expression defies the binary patriarchal matrix, LGBTI people in BiH come out less frequently, usually to a narrow circle of people. Frequent cases of discrimination, exclusion or violence against those who come out discourage other LGBTI people from revealing their identity. This in turn prevents the formation of a critical mass of people who could fight against discrimination

---

6 See Jasmina Hasanagić, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 30; Arijana Aganović et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation), p. 64.

7 See Jasmina Hasanagić, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 30.

8 Arijana Aganović et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation), p. 64.

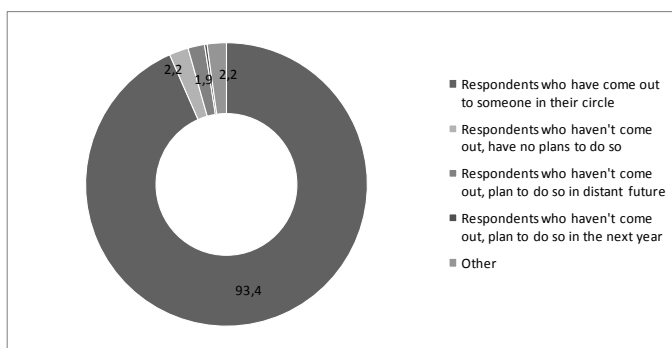
9 Jasmina Hasanagić, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 30.

10 See Jasmina Hasanagić, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 30. and Arijana Aganović et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation), p. 64.

and homophobia and work towards equality and freedom of expression for LGBTI people. Indefinitely prolonging the process of coming out also impacts the mental well-being and self-acceptance of LGBTI persons.<sup>11</sup>

Since coming out is so important for the life of an LGBTI person and the community as a whole, and since BiH remains a homophobic, hostile society, we tried to analyse how many of the respondents are out, who they usually come out to, whether they have been met with acceptance or rejection and, finally, why LGBTI people choose to remain in the closet or keep their identity concealed in front of (some) people from their circle. Most respondents who took part in the research are out. As many as 93.4% have revealed their LGBTI identity to at least someone (see Graph 9). As for respondents who are not out, a third of them have no plans to do so, while a third intends to come out to close family members or friends, mostly in the distant future. The remaining respondents did not answer the question. Three respondents have not officially come out, but certain people within their circle are aware of their LGBTI identity. Although the percentage of respondents who are out is extremely high, the result cannot be taken as representative of the entire LGBTI population, since the research included people who were already known to Sarajevo Open Centre or were polled by researchers face-to-face, which means that most of them were already out and had revealed their LGBTI identity to someone.

*Graph 9: Percentage of out respondents in relation to total sample*



11 Jasmina Hasanagić, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), and Arijana Aganović et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation).

Respondents mostly come out to their friends (around 90% of respondents). Friends are also the biggest source of support – in 87% of cases friends are supportive of LGBTI persons, while in 10.6% of cases some friends are supportive while others are not.

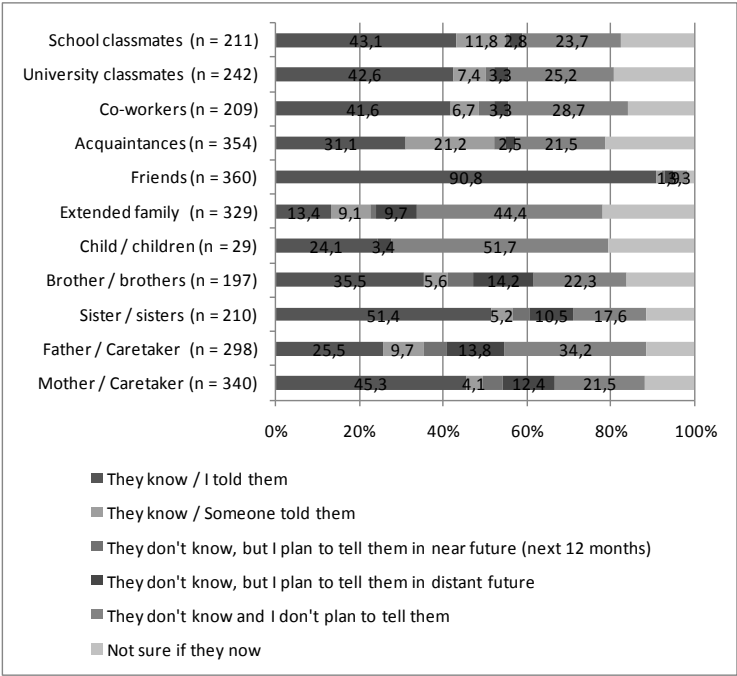
As for close family members, in 56.6% of cases the sisters know that the respondents are LGBTI and they are supportive in 70% of cases. It means LGBTI people are most likely to come out to their sisters. Almost half of the respondents report being out to their mothers. Mothers are supportive in over 50% of cases. Fathers/caretakers are the least likely family members to know about the LGBTI identity of the respondents. They are also the least supportive – just 32.6% of fathers/caretakers who know of the LGBTI identity of the respondents are supportive. The data reinforce the image of the father as a patriarchal and heteronormative figure.

*Table 2: Close family members who are aware of the LGBTI identity of respondents*

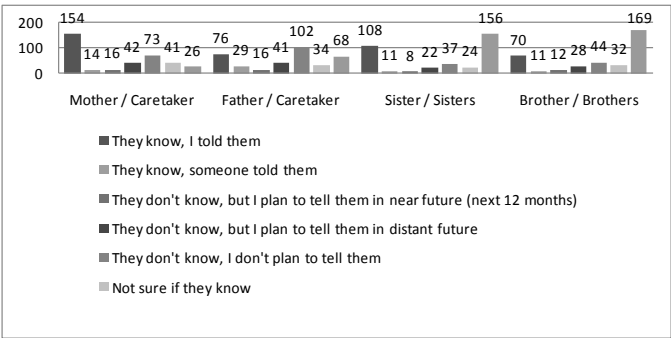
	Knows	Doesn't know, planning to tell	Doesn't know, not planning to tell	Not sure if they know
Mother/ caretaker	49.4% 52% are supportive	17.1%	21.5%	12.1%
Father/ caretaker	35.2% 32.6% are supportive	19.2%	34.2%	11.4%
Sister(s)	56.6% 69.3% are supportive	14.3%	17.6%	11.4%
Brother(s)	41.1% 51.7% are supportive	20.3%	22.3%	16.2%

Most respondents say their extended family members are not aware of their identity, and in most cases they have no intention of telling them.

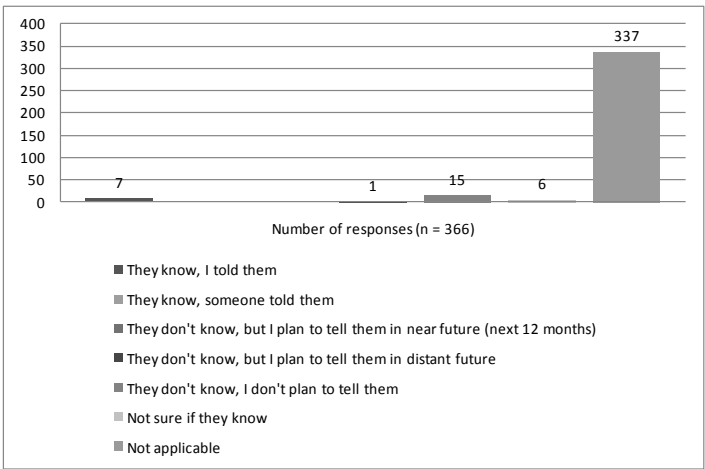
Graph 10: Which people from the respondents' immediate circle know of their LGBTI identity (%)



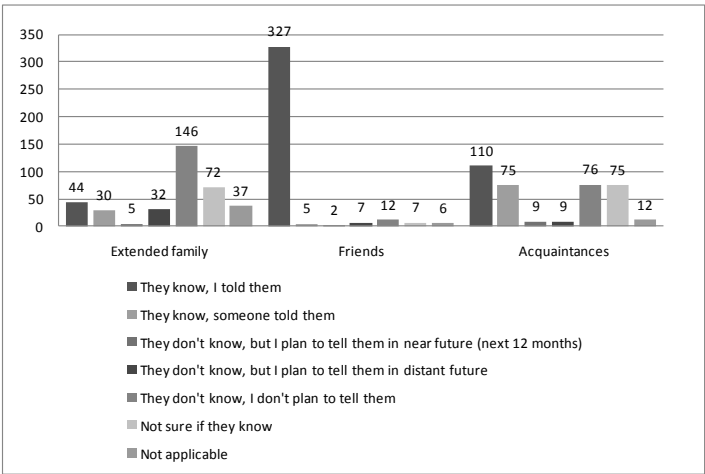
Graph 11a: Which people from the respondents' immediate circle know of their LGBTI identity – immediate family (frequency)



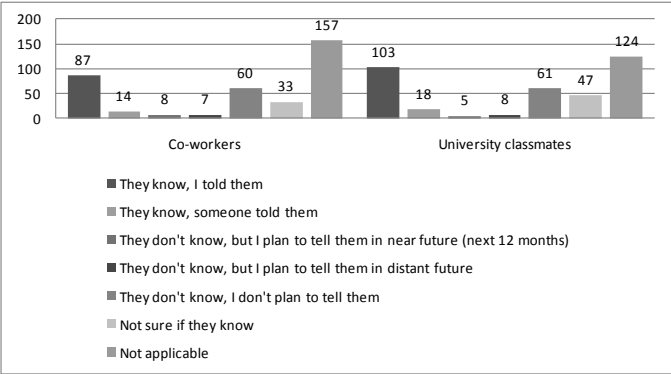
Graph 11b: Which people from the respondents' immediate circle know of their LGBTI identity – child/children (frequency)



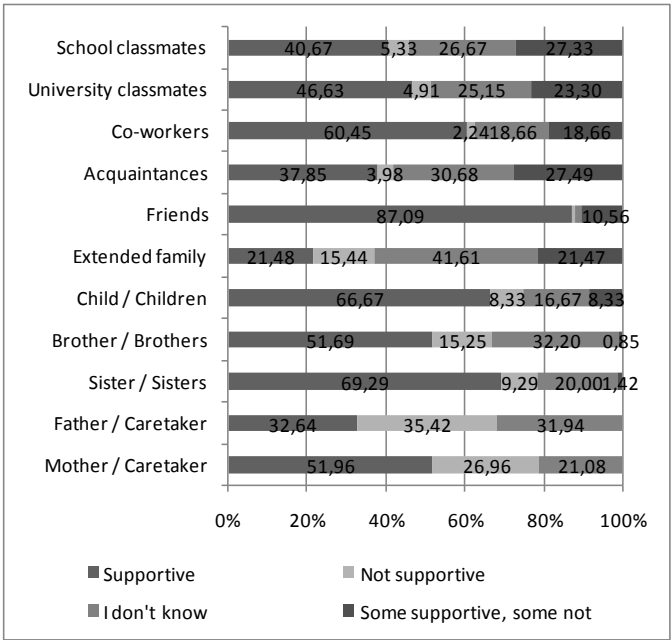
Graph 11c: Which people from the respondents' immediate circle know of their LGBTI identity – extended family, friends and acquaintances (frequency)



Graph 11d: Which people from the respondents' immediate circle know of their LGBTI identity – co-workers, classmates from school or university (frequency)



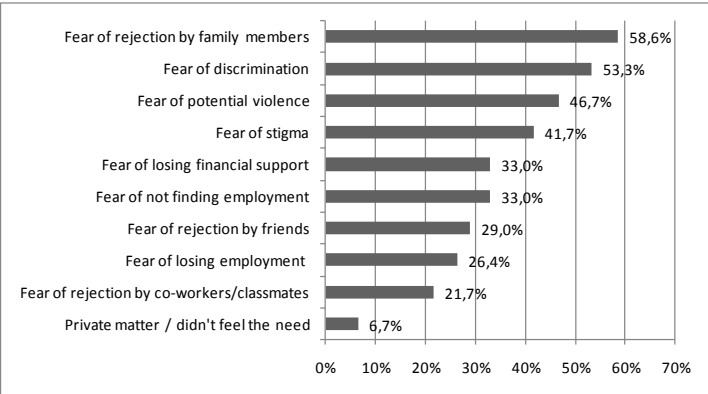
Graph 12: Are those who know of the respondents' LGBTI identity supportive



Fear of rejection by family members was cited by 58.6% of respondents as the reason for not coming out. Other reasons include fear of

discrimination (53.3%), fear of violence (46.7%) and fear of stigmatisation (41.7%). Economic reasons, such as the fear of losing financial support (33%), fear of not being able to find employment (33%) and fear of losing employment (26.4%) were also cited as important factors that prevent LGBTI persons from coming out. A small number of respondents view their identity as a private matter and therefore report not feeling the need to come out as LGBTI.

Graph 13: Reasons for not coming out as LGBTI to someone



## 4.2. Discrimination Against LGBTI Persons

The Anti-Discrimination Law of BiH defines discrimination as “any different treatment including any exclusion, limitation or preference based on real or assumed grounds towards any person or group of persons, their family members or those who are affiliated with them in any way, on grounds of their race, skin colour, language, religion, ethnic affiliation, disability, age, national or social origin, connection to a national minority, political or any other persuasion, property, membership in a trade union or any other association, education, social status and sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics or any other circumstance, with the purpose or the consequence of preventing or jeopardising the recognition, enjoyment or realization of rights and freedoms in all areas of life.”<sup>12</sup>

There are two forms of discrimination. *Direct discrimination* refers to

12 *Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text* (Official Gazette of BiH, no. 59/09 and 66/16), Article 2, Paragraph 1; prepared by Inela Hadžić (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), <https://goo.gl/7Mqh9w>.



any different treatment on grounds listed above, i.e. “acting or failing to act when a person or a group of persons is put, or has been, or could be put in a less favourable position in relation to some other person or group of persons in a similar situation”, while *indirect discrimination* refers to any situation, involving the defined grounds of discrimination, “in which, an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice has or could have the effect of putting a person or a group of persons (...) into an unfavourable or less favourable position in relation to other persons.”<sup>13</sup> Other forms of discrimination include:

- *Harassment* is defined as “any unsolicited behaviour (...) the aim or the effect of which is harming a person’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere.”<sup>14</sup>
- *Sexual harassment* is defined as “any form of unsolicited verbal, non-verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature, the aim or the effect of which is harming a person’s dignity, especially when it creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere.”<sup>15</sup>
- *Mobbing* is defined as “any form of non-physical harassment at the workplace that entails repetitive actions that have a humiliating effect on the victim, with the aim or the consequence of undermining the employee’s working conditions or professional status.”<sup>16</sup>
- *Segregation* is defined as “an act by which a (natural or legal) person separates other persons” on one of the grounds of discrimination and in line with the definition of discrimination provided by the Anti-Discrimination Law of BiH.<sup>17</sup>

Discrimination can be experienced on an individual, institutional or structural level. The discrimination against LGBTI persons in BiH is mostly institutional as the existing legislation does not allow marriage or same-sex unions, therefore denying LGBTI people certain

---

13 *Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text* (Official Gazette of BiH, no. 59/09 and 66/16); prepared by Inela Hadžić (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), Article 3, Paragraph 1 and 2, <https://goo.gl/7Mqh9w>.

14 *Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text* (Official Gazette of BiH, no. 59/09 and 66/16); prepared by Inela Hadžić (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), <https://goo.gl/7Mqh9w>.

15 *Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text* (Official Gazette of BiH, no. 59/09 and 66/16); prepared by Inela Hadžić (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), <https://goo.gl/7Mqh9w>.

16 *Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text* (Official Gazette of BiH, no. 59/09 and 66/16); prepared by Inela Hadžić (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), <https://goo.gl/7Mqh9w>.

17 *Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text* (Official Gazette of BiH, no. 59/09 and 66/16); prepared by Inela Hadžić (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), <https://goo.gl/7Mqh9w>.

rights, such as adoption, etc.<sup>18</sup> (see more in part 3.7. *Same-sex Union Legislation*).

According to a 2015 regional research conducted by the National Democratic Institute, 51% of LGBT persons in BiH have experienced some form of discrimination on the grounds of their sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>19</sup>

Keeping in mind previous reports and documented cases of discrimination against LGBTI persons,<sup>20</sup> we tried to determine how our respondents view discrimination, whether they have experienced it, and if yes, what forms and on what grounds, as well as find out if they have ever reported discrimination to anyone and whether their case has been tried in court.

When asked if they have ever been discriminated against for being an LGBTI person, almost 2/3 of respondents replied in the negative, saying they have not been discriminated against so far (see Graph 14). The result is almost identical to the results of a research conducted in 2013 by Sarajevo Open Centre, when 63% of respondents claimed not to have experienced discrimination.<sup>21</sup> However, we should keep in mind that only a small number of LGBTI people are out beyond their inner circle of family and friends (see part 4.1 *Coming out* in this report). The fact that LGBTI persons mostly conceal their identities might explain why only about 38% of respondents say they have experienced some form of discrimination.

---

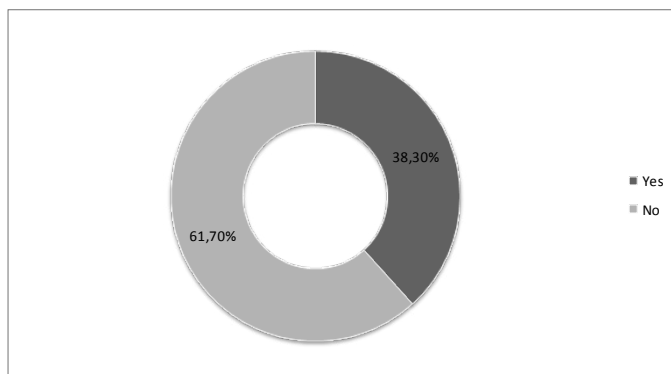
18 Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 16.

19 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 21] (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 34.

20 See Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2016). *Alternativni izvještaj za BiH 2016: politički kriteriji* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 23] (Sarajevo: Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of BiH)

21 Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 32.

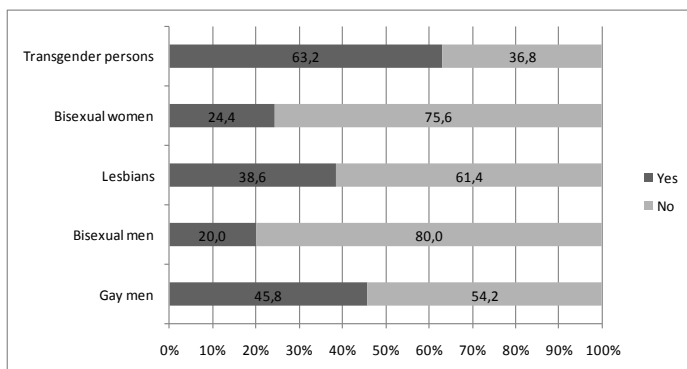
*Graph 14a: Have you experienced any form of discrimination on the grounds of being an LGBTI person? (%)*



The high number of transgender respondents who have experienced discrimination is particularly alarming: around 2/3 of transgender persons who participated in the research have experienced some form of discrimination, which only confirms the extreme vulnerability of this population (see 4.8. *Transgender Persons*) and suggests a high level of transphobia. Transgender persons cannot easily conceal their identity as gender expression is visible to others, which might partially explain the high level of discrimination.

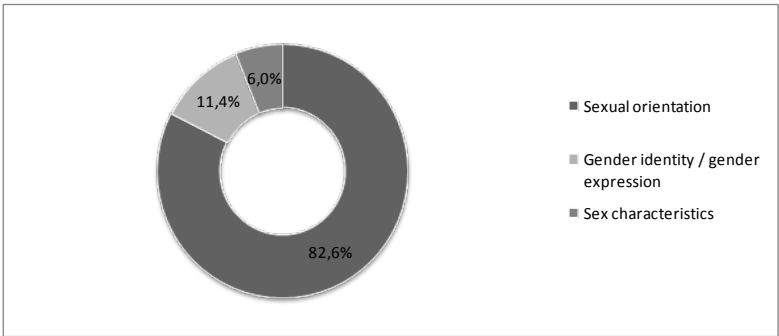
Furthermore, almost half of gay men (45.8%) and more than a third of polled lesbians (38.6%) have experienced some form of discrimination, while the percentages among bisexual persons, men and women alike, are somewhat lower, but still significant. Bisexual persons might have an easier time concealing their identity, since they also engage in intercourse with persons of the opposite sex, making it easier to pass off as heterosexual and therefore reduce the possibility of discrimination.

*Graph 14b: Have you experienced discrimination as an LGBTI person?, sorted by identity (%)*



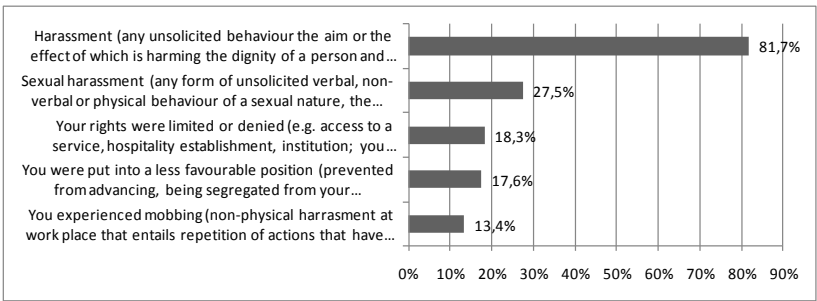
The respondents who replied in the affirmative mostly cite their sexual orientation as the grounds of discrimination (see Graph 15), reflecting the structure of the sample which is mostly made up of respondents whose LGBTI identity is based on their sexual orientation (i.e. homosexual and bisexual persons).

*Graph 15: Grounds on which the respondents believe to have been discriminated against*



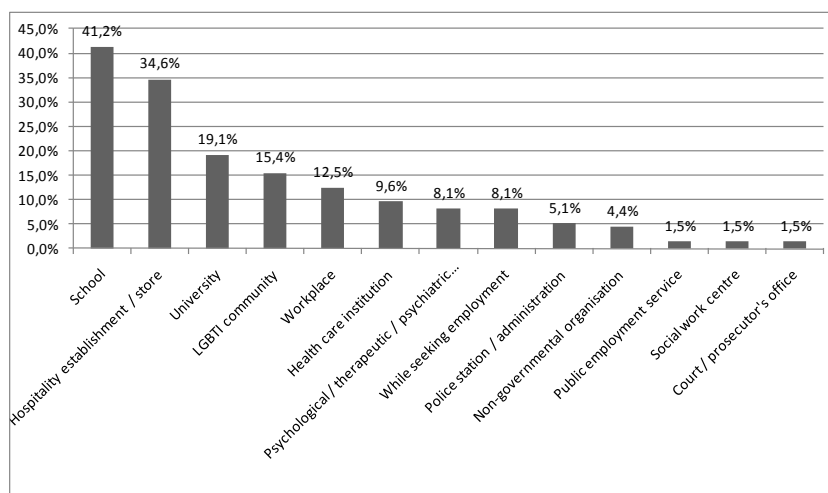
Up to 81.7% of all cases of discrimination experienced by the respondents include harassment, making it the most common form of discrimination. Sexual harassment is the second most common form of discrimination, experienced by 27.5% of respondents, which is particularly worrying.

*Graph 16: Forms of discrimination experienced?*



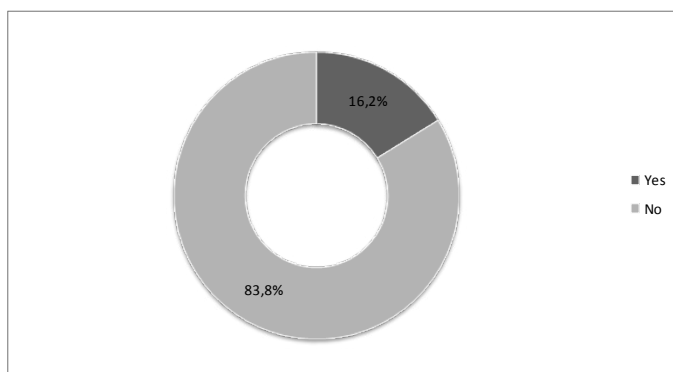
Most cases of discrimination took place in education institutions (up to 41.2% in schools and 19.1% in a university setting), as well as hospitality establishments and stores (34.6%). Interestingly enough, 15.4% of respondents experienced discrimination within the LGBTI community, indicating that members of the community are intolerant towards some LGBTI identities.

*Graph 17: Settings in which respondents experienced discrimination*



A particularly alarming fact is that only a small number of respondents who experienced discrimination decided to report the case. As many as 83.8% of cases have remained unreported. However, the number of reported cases is still higher than the numbers cited in the 2013 research, when only 6% of respondents who experienced discrimination decided to report it.<sup>22</sup> The reluctance to report discrimination makes it that more invisible, undocumented and unsanctioned, thereby hindering efforts to understand the different occurrences of discrimination and develop efficient combating strategies.

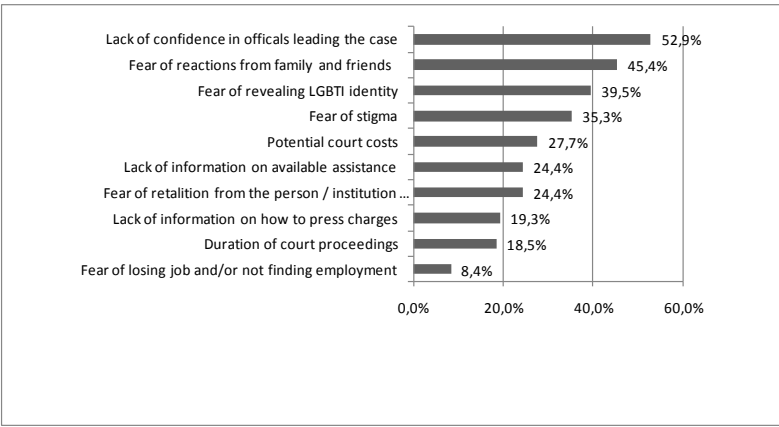
*Graph 18: Did you report discrimination?, n = 142 (%)*



<sup>22</sup> Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 34.

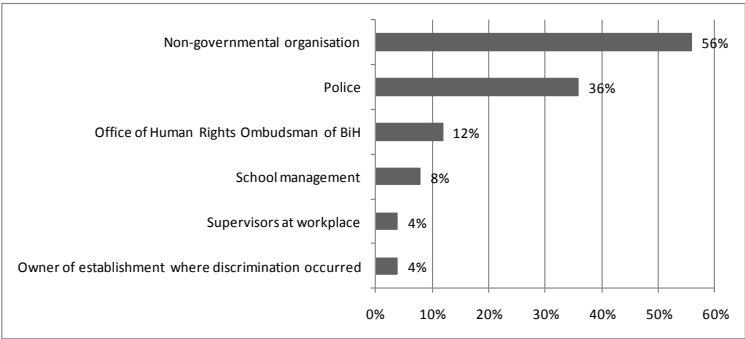
Respondents who have been victims of discrimination chose not to report the case because they do not have confidence in the officials, i.e. the institutions, fear the reaction of their family and friends, and fear being outed. LGBTI persons who are not out and are afraid of revealing their LGBTI identity find themselves in a vicious circle: they suffer discrimination on the grounds of their identity but are not able to use institutional protection for fear of being outed.

Graph 19: Reasons for not reporting discrimination



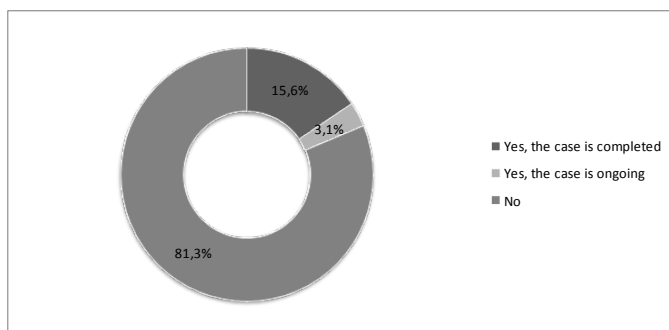
When they do decide to report discrimination, respondents mostly reach out to non-governmental organisations. This indicates both the lack of confidence in institutions and a high level of confidence in non-governmental organisations. In most cases, discrimination was reported to two NGOs: Sarajevo Open Centre (6 cases) and KVART (4 cases).

Graph 20: To whom was discrimination reported?



Less than 1/5 of reported cases have been tried in court. This fact further reinforces the claim made in this and the following part of the report that BiH lacks efficient implementation of anti-discrimination and criminal provisions, although they more or less ensure equality for LGBTI persons. The five cases tried in court were in fact resolved in favour of the plaintiffs and the perpetrators were punished. However, according to two respondents the punishments were minimal and inadequate.

*Graph 21: Has your case been tried in court?, n = 32*



### **4.3. Violence against LGBTI persons**

In addition to exclusion and discrimination, LGBTI persons in BiH are often exposed to violence as well. The lack of adequate institutional framework and adequate reactions by competent institutions (primarily the police and the judiciary) to cases of violence against LGBTI persons encourages such violent practices, and leaves the LGBTI community unprotected.

Therefore, LGBTI persons are often the victims of not only verbal (insults, humiliation, threats etc.) but also physical violence: according to the findings of the regional research conducted by the National Democratic Institute in 2015: 72% of surveyed LGBTI persons from BiH experienced some form of violence, while 15% of them experienced physical violence.<sup>23</sup> In addition, two important LGBTI / queer events – Queer Sarajevo Festival in 2008, and Merlinka Festival in

23 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 21] (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 23

2014 – were marked by organized physical attacks against the participants, causing severe injuries to some of the participants (for further information see 4.6. Pride).

Although the Criminal Code of both entities and the Brčko District defines hate or prejudice-motivated crimes as aggravating circumstances, and although, in that sense, sexual orientation is recognized as banned motivation, these laws are rarely implemented appropriately, also due to a lack of sensibility and training of police and judiciary officials for acting in hate crime cases, or crime cases motivated by sexual orientation, gender expression or sex characteristics of the victims of violence.<sup>24</sup> In addition, there mostly are no special units inside police institutions for investigating crimes or incidents related to these motives, which would have regular contact with local LGBTI organizations and work on strengthening protection and building trust.<sup>25</sup> In that sense, adequate reactions are omitted, i.e. investigatory and judiciary procedures are sluggish while the perpetrators mostly remain unpunished or are punished with insufficiently harsh measures.

Considering the previously mentioned cases, we intended for this research to survey whether the respondents were victims of violence, and if so, which form of violence was it and on what grounds did they experience the violence; whether they reported it and whether the case was tried in court and to what effect. Moreover, having in mind the intolerant atmosphere in BiH society towards the LGBTI community, and earlier cases of violence against LGBTI persons, we wanted to inquire the extent to which fear of violence is internalized among surveyed LGBTI persons and what consequences potential fear may have on the everyday lives of these people.

Most respondents (60.9%) fear for their safety because they are an LGBTI person, which indicates that the surveyed LGBTI persons see their everyday environment as threatening and it also suggests that they do not feel safe or adequately protected or having the minimum safety secured.

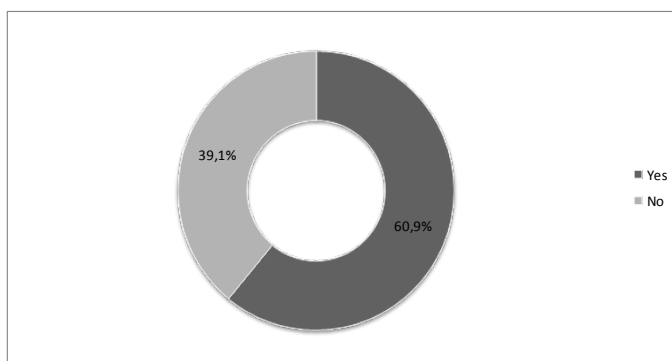
---

24 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 21] (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 22.

25 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 21] (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 22.



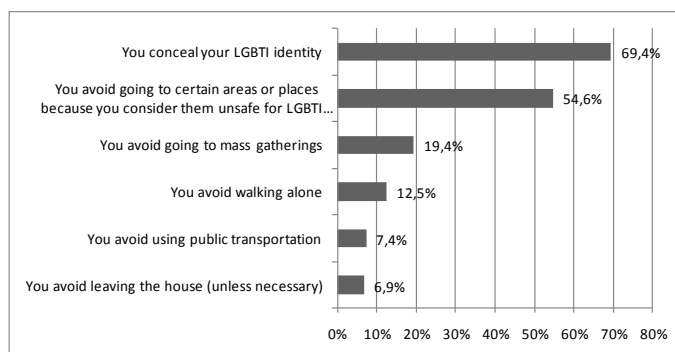
*Graph 22: Do you fear for your safety because you are an LGBTI person?*



In order to cope with the sensation of being afraid for your own safety, LGBTI persons employ different strategies for avoiding possible danger: as many as 69.4% of them responded that that was the reason they were hiding their identity; around 55% of them avoid certain places because they consider them to be unsafe for LGBTI persons; while 19.4% avoid mass gatherings. There is also a significant number of those who avoid walking alone (12.5%) or avoid using public transport (7.4%) (see more in Graph 23). These results show us that social activities – such as socializing activities, consuming cultural content etc. – daily activities and the opportunity of expressing one’s own identity are, in many respects, limited for LGBTI persons out of the feeling of fear for one’s own safety. In other words, the feeling of not being safe in their social environment has a negative effect on the everyday life of an LGBTI person, their dignity of life and it significantly limits basic social activities, which heterosexual persons savour every day. In that sense, LGBTI persons correct their own behaviour and habits in accordance with expected threats from the environment, and transform homophobic pressures into specific forms of their own behaviour employed as coping strategies.

It is particularly worrisome that almost 7% of respondents avoid leaving the house out of fear for their own safety, which can be characterized as extreme case of self-isolation due to this fear. One respondent stated that he corrects or controls gestures, body language or the pitch of his voice to keep his identity hidden. Further on, one person stated that they were in a relationship with a person of the opposite sex to hide their sexual orientation and save themselves from possible violence.

*Graph 23: If your answer is yes, does fear make you do any of the following? n = 216*

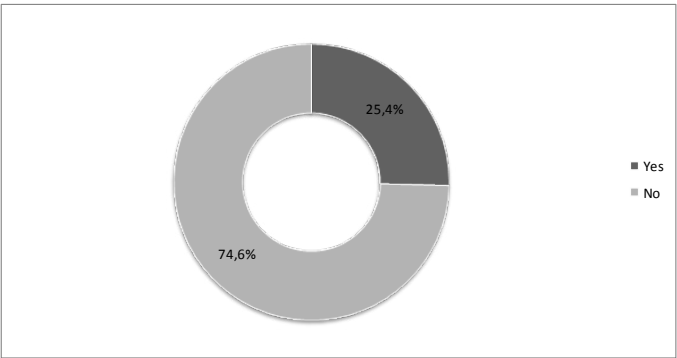


The fact that the extent of the society's intolerance towards LGBTI persons is alarming and the society's safety is at a low level is best illustrated by the data that 25.4% respondents experienced violence on the grounds of being an LGBTI person. One has to also bear in mind that LGBTI persons, in line with the findings presented in section 4.1. *Coming out*, are less likely to 'out themselves' to people from a wider circle, and that they predominantly *come out* among the closest friends, which lowers the chance for violence against these persons. If one considers this fact, this data gains an even larger scale.

The findings received in this survey are close to the research findings from 2013, when 24.1% of the total number of respondents answering this question, confirmed that they had experienced some form of violence.<sup>26</sup> In that sense, this data can suggest that there have not been significant changes regarding the increased tolerance and/or protection of LGBTI persons against violence in the last four years; but that there have also not been any retrograde tendencies in this aspect (an increase in violence), especially since it is possible to assume that a significant number of participants in this research also took part in the research in 2013.

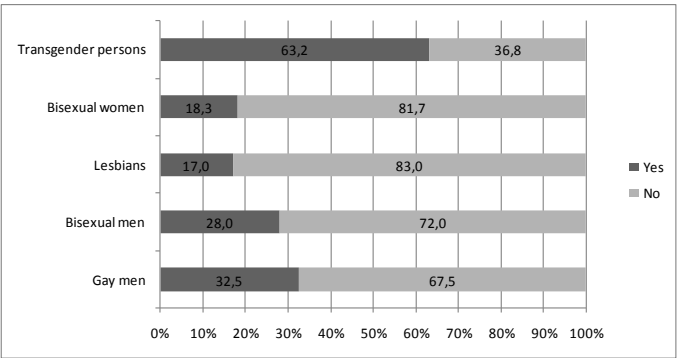
<sup>26</sup> Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 50.

*Graph 24a: Did you experience violence on the grounds of being an LGBTI person?*



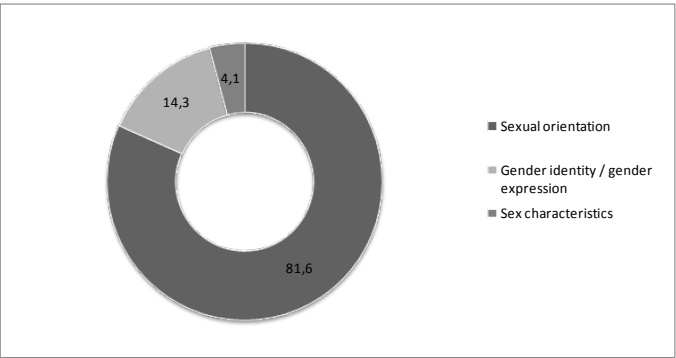
It is interesting to see that among male population the proportion of persons experiencing violence is greater than among the female population: thus 32.5% homosexual (gay) men and 28% bisexual men experienced violence on the ground of their LGBTI identity, as opposed to 17% homosexual women (lesbians) and 18.3% bisexual women. This data can probably be clarified due to patriarchal cultural order where the male sexual orientation which is not heterosexual is far less tolerated, as well as by the fact that men would be a more common target of other homophobic men. However, it is alarming that almost 2/3 of transgender persons taking part in the research had experienced violence, which suggests that it is a specifically vulnerable category, a category which is especially exposed to violence. In other words, this data suggests a high level of transphobia in the society.

*Graph 24b: Did you experience violence on the grounds of being an LGBTI person? sorted by type of identity*



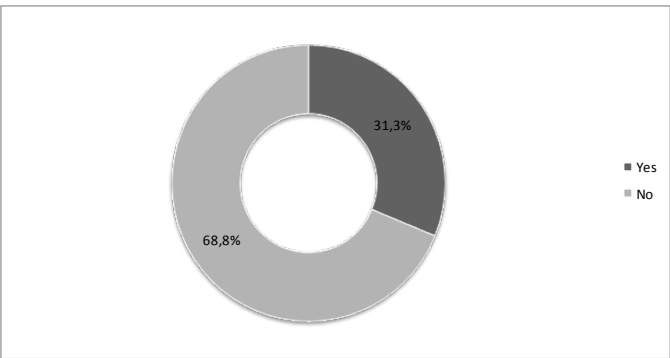
Sexual orientation is stated as the most common reason why respondents experienced violence, which can be explained by the structure of causes with the highest proportion of homosexual and bisexual persons, i.e. persons who belong to the LGBTI identity according to their sexual orientation.

*Graph 25: On what grounds did you experience violence (in your opinion)? (%)*

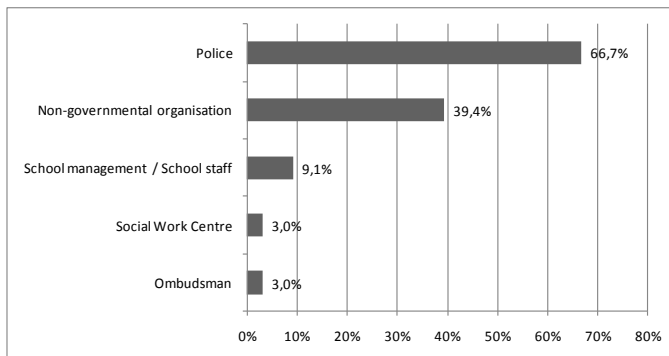


As opposed to discrimination cases, experienced violence is somewhat more often reported – almost a third of the respondents who experienced violence also reported it. 2/3 of the cases were reported to the police. In addition to the police, victims of violence often address non-governmental organizations as well (in 39.4% cases), suggesting an important level of trust of LGBTI persons towards non-governmental organizations and expecting the aid of these actors.

*Graph 26: Did you report the violence you experienced? n = 96*

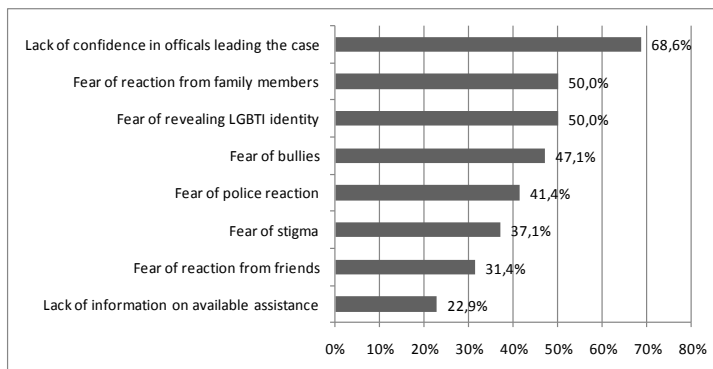


*Graph 27: Who did you report the violence to?*



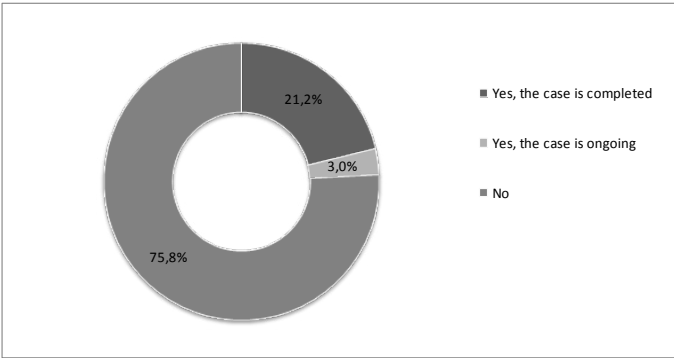
Reasons for not reporting violence are mostly the same as in the case of not reporting discrimination – distrust towards officials, fear from the response by family and the fear from a possible, unwanted ‘outing’. It is symptomatic that the fear from the reaction of the police is stated as one of the reasons for not reporting violence in as many as 41.4% of cases, suggesting an extremely low level of trust in the police – in other words, these respondents classified the police into the group of people who could potentially commit violence, instead of the group which should protect LGBTI persons from violence.

*Graph 28: Reasons for not reporting violence*



Out of 33 respondents, who reported having experienced violence, only 8 cases were tried in court, out of which one is still ongoing, which confirms the inefficiency of institutions in protecting LGBTI persons from violence as was stated at the beginning of this section. Nonetheless, the outcomes are mostly satisfying: five out of seven processed cases resulted in the punishment of the perpetrator of violence.

Graph 29: Has your case of violence been tried in court? n = 33



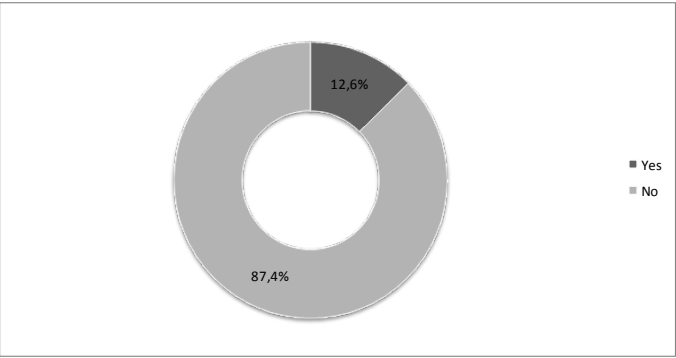
#### 4.4. Confidence in Institutions

As was emphasized several times earlier in the text, the attitude of the police and judiciary institutions towards the problems the LGBTI community faces – or to be more precise, towards violence and discrimination that LGBTI persons face – is mostly below the satisfactory level. The lack of response or inadequate action in cases of discriminatory or violent treatment of LGBTI persons creates a feeling of distrust of the LGBTI community towards these institutions.

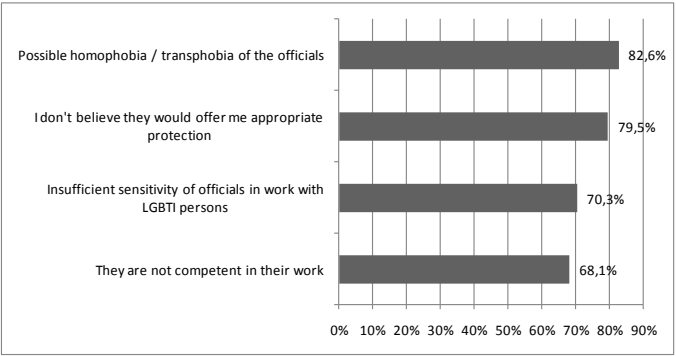
Therefore, we tried to see whether the respondents have trust in the police or judiciary, and if not, what are the main causes, or reasons for lack of trust.

As is evident from the previous two sections, the trust of the respondents in official institutions is mainly low. Only 12.6% of the respondents trust the police, and 14.5% the judiciary. The main reason for distrust is possible homophobia/transphobia of police officers (82.6% respondents) and the judiciary (75.5% respondents). In addition, disbelief that they might be offered adequate protection, insufficient sensibility of the staff to work with LGBTI persons and incompetency are reasons for distrusting these institutions for most respondents. Regarding the judiciary, corruption (1.94%) and the length and complexity of procedure (1.29%) were also recognized as problems impairing the trust in this sector.

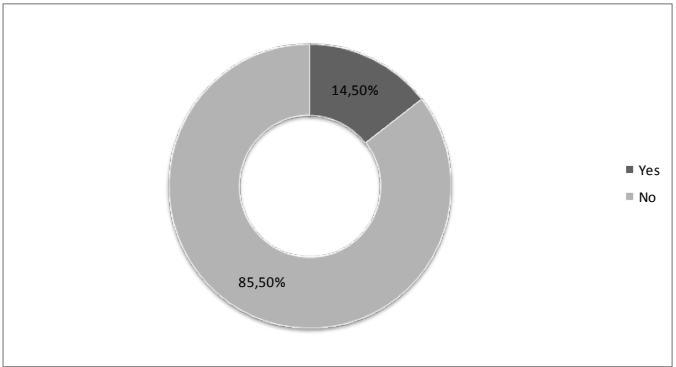
Graph 30: Do you trust the police?



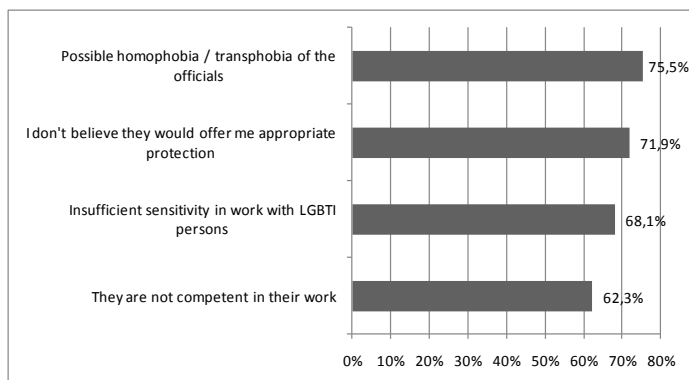
Graph 31: Why do you distrust the police? n = 317



Graph 32: Do you trust the judiciary?



Graph 33: Why do you distrust the judiciary? n = 310



Comparing with the results from 2013, it is interesting to notice that trust in the police (the judiciary was not included in the previous research) has decreased: namely, in 2013, 24% respondents said they trusted this institution,<sup>27</sup> in 2017, the number of people trusting the police fell to 12.6%, i.e. it decreased by 11.4%. This drop in trusting the police could probably be explained if it were not for the overall significant improvement in the professional work of the police regarding the protection and problems of LGBTI persons, and the incidents occurring in the period from 2013 to 2017 (e.g. attack on the participants of the Merlinka Festival in 2014) lacking adequate response from the police.

Considering the findings of this research, it can be concluded that the surveyed LGBTI persons do not see the police or judiciary as institutions which could offer them appropriate protection. Having in mind a large number of respondents who stated (possible) homophobia of the officials as a reason for distrust, it is possible to assume that LGBTI persons see these institutions as part of the problem and not its solution.

#### **4.5. Psychological Well-Being of LGBTI Persons**

The problems LGBTI persons face daily in BiH, the feeling of insecurity and/or not being accepted or not being free to express their identity, can negatively reflect on the psychological wellbeing of these persons. Although research about this field was not conducted in BiH or is not available, the literature and research conducted in other

27 Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 50.



countries identified numerous long-term psychological effects of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia on LGBTI persons, from the tendency to “lock themselves up” into safe environments and self-isolation (interacting with a small number of people, moving around and spending time only in known spaces which the person recognizes as safe, avoiding social and cultural events, activities etc.), over internalizing the homophobia which becomes the result of self-perception, i.e. self-understanding, and future social interactions, all the way to more difficult psychological consequences such as different anxious and depressive states or episodes, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts or tendencies etc.<sup>28</sup> In other words, the effects of non-acceptance, rejection and violent threats on LGBTI persons are from mild forms of disturbing the psychological wellbeing and normal life to different forms of disturbing the psychological health and disabling a person for everyday activities.

Having in mind potential risks for the psychological wellbeing which intolerant and homophobic environment brings with itself, we wanted to examine whether respondents felt the psychological consequences of the social attitude towards LGBTI persons, how they are manifested and, ultimately, how do the respondents handle them and whether they ask for professional help or support.

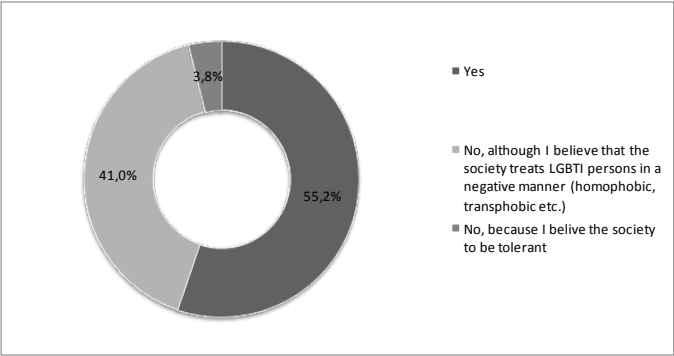
The troublesome piece of information is that more than half of the respondents think they had psychological difficulties or crises due to the social treatment of LGBTI persons (see Graph 34). Stress, i.e. stress episodes, is a state experienced by as many as 87.7% respondents of the ones stating psychological difficulties. Regarding more severe psychological difficulties, depression or depression episodes, 70.9% of respondents are considered to have experienced them, while 64% of the 203 respondents who went through psychological difficulties due to the attitude of the society towards their identity experienced anxiety and panic attacks. It is alarming that 38.4% of respondents experienced suicidal thoughts and/or suicide attempts, and eating disorders are not an insignificant state, and almost a third of the respondents (see Graph 35) experienced that. In addition to these states, one person stated that they went through addiction (it was not exactly stated what kind of addiction) which is considered to be the direct consequence of the social context (i.e. homophobia, transphobia etc.) which the LGBTI community faces. These results

---

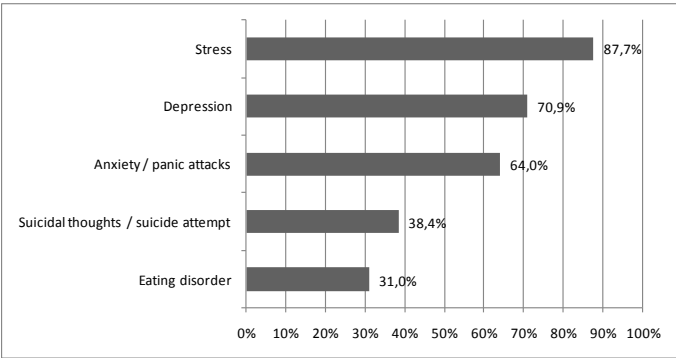
28 See, e.g., Eric L. Goodwin (2014). “The Long-Term Effects of Homophobia-Related Trauma for LGB Men and Women” in *Counsellor Education Master’s Theses* [Paper 160]; Dorothy L. Espelage et al. (2008). “Homophobic Teasing, Psychological Outcomes, and Sexual Orientation Among High School Students: What Influence Do Parents and Schools Have?” in *School Psychology Review* 37(2), p. 202-216.

testify to the devastating consequences homophobia, biphobia and transphobia have on the psychological wellbeing and life of LGBTI persons and point at the need of a systematic approach to the psychological support for this community.

*Graph 34a: Do you think you experienced psychological difficulties/ crises due to the social treatment of LGBTI persons? (%)*



*Graph 35: If you have experienced psychological difficulties, what kind of difficulties are you talking about? n = 203 (%)*

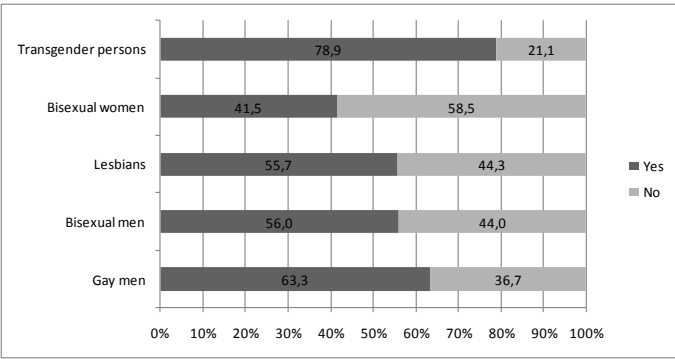


Based on the gathered data, it is possible to conclude, or once more confirm, that transgender persons are an especially vulnerable category: almost 4/5 of transgender persons included in the research had psychological difficulties due to the social treatment of the LGBTI identity or, to be more specific, transphobia and an inadequate institutional framework. This information is not surprising, since transgender persons are, primarily, more exposed to the reactions of the environment since it is harder for them to hide their identity as

opposed to, e.g., sexual orientation, and that gender reassignment represents a difficult decision, and the transition a long and complex process. During this process, transgender persons often face numerous challenges and inconveniences (for further information see section 4.8. *Transgender persons*).

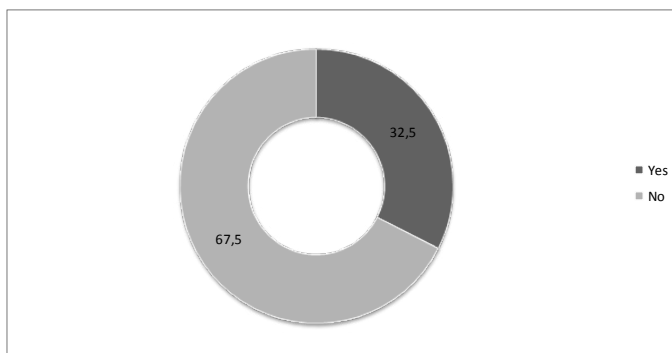
Further on, almost 2/3 of homosexual men, and somewhat over half of bisexual men and lesbians experienced some form of psychological difficulties due to the social treatment of LGBTI persons. The number of people who experienced psychological difficulties is extremely high among gay men, which can be attributed to the patriarchal mind-set in which “masculinity”, i.e. the desirable image of a man, is mostly formed through the prism of heterosexual relations and narratives. In that sense, the patriarchal order exerts special pressure on men stepping outside the framework of stereotypical sexual and gender categories.

*Graph 34b: Do you think you had psychological difficulties / crises due to the social treatment of LGBTI persons? (%)*



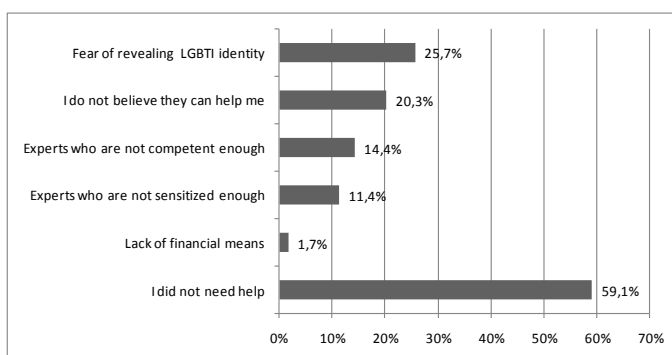
Despite the problems and social treatment the LGBTI community faces, only 1/3 of respondents sought expert psychological / psychiatric / therapeutic help. Out of the total number of those who have not asked for expert help so far, 59.1% of them did not have the need for this kind of service (see Graph 37). However, it is illustrative that more than half – or 55.9% to be exact – of persons who stated that they experienced psychological difficulties, did not ask for expert help.

*Graph 36: Did you ever seek expert psychological/ psychiatric / therapeutic help? (%)*



As some of the main reasons for not asking for professional help, the respondents stated being afraid of revealing their LGBTI identity (25.7%); they expressed doubt about this service helping them (20.3%); insufficient competence (14.4%) and insufficient sensitization (11.4%); as well as the lack of financial means to ensure the services of expert help (1.7%). Accordingly, these data suggest, to an extent, a low level of trust of LGBTI persons towards the actors offering expert psychological help and support, either because of lack of sensitization or competence. Also, it is evident that a large number of respondents do not trust the efficiency of such methods, suggesting that LGBTI persons are not introduced to the procedures and benefits of expert help in this area. In that sense, adequate help and support for LGBTI persons in handling psychological difficulties is often missing, leaving these people alone in these processes.

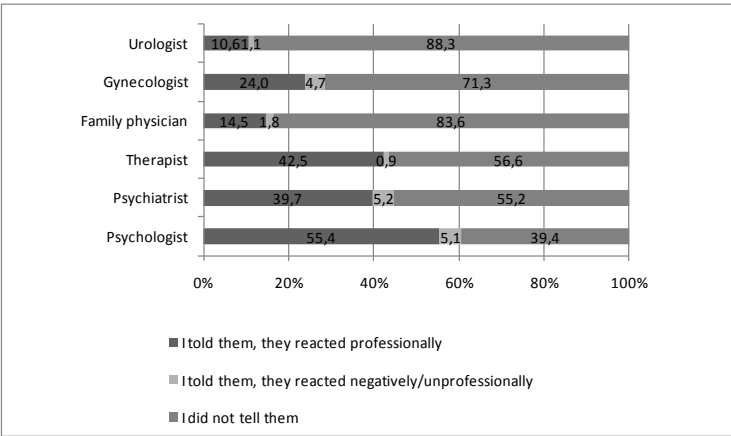
*Graph 37: Reasons for not seeking professional help, n = 237, (%)*



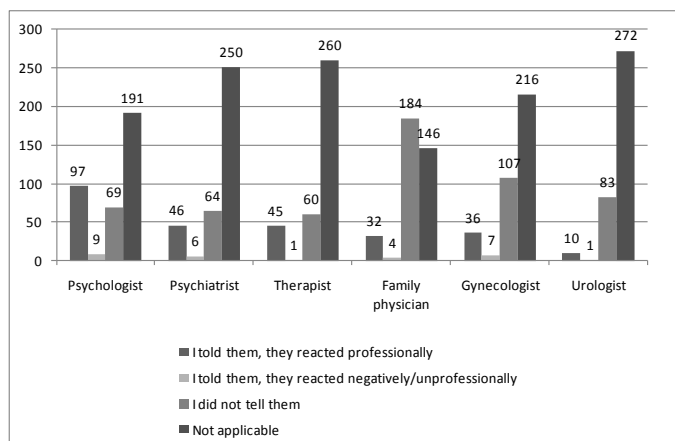
When speaking about respondents who went through specific psychological difficulties, but did not ask for professional help, the main reasons are being afraid of revealing their LGBTI identity (44.3%) and doubting that this service could help them (30.4%) – however, it is interesting that 30.4% of them think that they did not need help, despite the conditions they were in.

Of all the professional medical and psycho-therapeutic staff that the respondents are in contact with, psychologists are the ones they reveal to be LGBTI persons the most (in more than 60% of cases). Out of that number, in 4.6% of the cases did the psychologists react negatively, i.e. unprofessionally to this information (see Graph 38). However, most of the listed experts professionally reacted to finding out the identity of the respondent, which makes the stated distrust seem unjustified or less justified to an extent.

*Graph 38: Did you tell some of the listed medical staff that you were an LGBTI person and how did they react to this information? (%)*



*Graph 39: Did you tell some of the listed medical staff that you were an LGBTI person and how did they react to this information? (frequency)*



## 4.6. Pride

Pride has been one of the central cultural and activist events of almost every LGBTI community / movement since 1969 when the first Pride was held in the United States of America (USA).<sup>29</sup> Pride intends to promote equality and freedom of LGBTI persons, enhance the visibility of the community and raise awareness and encourage the debate on the issues the community faces. The parade gathers the LGBTI community and everyone else who believe that LGBTI persons should enjoy the same rights and freedoms as the rest of the population. In that sense, Pride can be understood as “a march of all people advocating for a non-selective access to human rights”.<sup>30</sup>

In the area of former Yugoslavia, the organization of Pride is one of the greatest challenges for the LGBTI community and organizations, since the first attempts at organizing this event in these countries were mostly followed by physical and verbal violence and strong opposition by numerous organizations, institutions, media and a large part of the public.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, there were certain positive move-

29 For further information see Arijana Aganović et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation), p. 363.

30 Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 50.

31 For further information see Arijana Aganović et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture*

ments made regarding this issue in the neighbouring countries. In Croatia, the first Pride was held in Zagreb in 2002 with the slogan “Coming out against Prejudice”. Although the first parades were marked by threats and violence, the parade was held every year without exception, and since 2007, no incidents have been reported. In that sense, Croatia “can already boast of continuity in organizing Pride”.<sup>32</sup> In Croatia, in addition to Zagreb, the parade is also held in Split. The first one was organized in 2011 with the slogan “Different Families, Same Rights” and it was marked by provocation and violence. Nonetheless, from that day on, the Split Pride has been organized every year and these marches went by without incidents. Regarding Serbia, the first attempt at organizing Pride happened in 2001 with the slogan “There is Room for Everyone” – the attempt was ended in a violent reaction by radical right-wing organizations, which, together with inadequate police reaction, resulted in 40 injured people and the destruction of buildings and property. After that, two attempts at organizing Pride in 2004 and 2009 were cancelled due to threats against the safety of participants and inadequate support of state institutions. Finally, in 2010, The Belgrade Pride was organized again gathering around 1000 participants, but it was marked by violence again (over 100 people were injured) and the demolition of buildings, public and private property. After that, another Pride was planned and cancelled in 2011, and the next one was held in 2014. The March went by peacefully in 2014 although it was marked by smaller sporadic incidents. Since then, every year in Belgrade Pride has been held without violent incidents.

In Montenegro, the first Pride was held in Podgorica in 2013. Although there were violent reactions to the organization of the first Pride, the participants in the march were not injured owing to the professional reaction of police forces – nonetheless, around 20 police officers were injured during the conflict between the police and the violent opponents of the march. After that, Pride was organized every year without significant incidents.

Although the neighbouring countries can boast of some continuity in organizing Pride, such a march has still not been organized in BiH, which can be explained, among other things, by the experience of violence during earlier events organized in connection with LGBTI and queer topics and the non-existence of determination of government institutions to support such an event in an adequate manner. The attempt at organizing the first Queer Sarajevo Festival in 2008 was

---

(Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation), p. 364.

32 For further information see Arijana Aganović et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation), p. 365.

followed by disapproval, even rhetoric of agitation, partly by the media, right-wing organizations and supporter groups, which resulted in violence on the first day of the Festival. Eight people were injured and the Festival was stopped. Six years later, a new case of violence occurred during the Merlinka Festival, when 14 masked people attacked the visitors injuring three people.

Bearing in mind the fact that Pride has not been organized in BiH yet, on the one side, and regional experiences on the other, we wanted to survey the opinions of the respondents on the need of organizing the first event of this kind and their readiness to participate in the march. Somewhat less than half, i.e. 44% of respondents believe that the first Pride should be organized in BiH, while 21% of them are against it. These results are similar to the ones from 2013, when also less than half, i.e. 48% respondents believed that the first Pride should be organized in BiH, with 52% being against it (the design of the questionnaire did not include the response “not sure”)<sup>33</sup>.

The result of having less than half of the surveyed LGBTI community supporting the first Pride in BiH can primarily be explained by fear of possible violence, which is also indicated by additional explanations that were left by the respondents, where the most common arguments for not organizing Pride were possible homophobic violent incidents / violence against the participants and the “unreadiness” of the society for such an event. Further on, some respondents believe that Pride is not the right approach to the battle for human rights of LGBTI persons, believing that there are issues of higher priority for the LGBTI community which need to be solved, that such an action can be counterproductive regarding the current level of sensitivity of the society regarding this topic – where some people think that Pride might endanger what has been achieved so far in building a more tolerant treatment of the LGBTI community, that the response rate would be small etc.

However, although less than half of the respondents think that Pride should be organized in BiH, one should bear in mind the fact that the remaining 35% is not sure, and only 21% (i.e. a bit more than 1/5 of the entire sample) is explicitly against organizing Pride. In other words, although less than half the respondents support the idea of the first Pride being organized in BiH, the number of people not supporting the possibility is also a small one. A significant number of the ones who are not sure can, to an extent, be explained, through the analysis of qualitative data, by the fact that they do support the

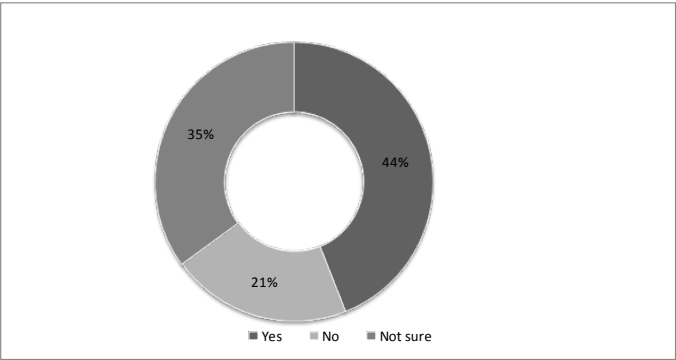
---

33 Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open), p. 51.



organization of Pride as such, but considering the possibility of violence and/or other potential concurrent negative effects, they did not offer whole-hearted support to the idea of the march.

*Graph 40: Should the first Pride be organized in BiH?*



***Some of the reasons why the first Pride should be organized in BiH, according to personal explanations of the respondents***

- Because it is indispensable.
- It's high time.
- It is legitimate that the LGBT population asks for the protection of their rights.
- Pride is something that commemorates the community and it is just a beautiful event. I think we should have the right to organize Pride but only with full protection by the police, for safety reasons of the participants.
- LGBTQ+ persons should be able to walk freely and proudly in the streets at least once a year, and show who we are without being looked at in a weird way, to be surrounded by people like us and maybe even find the love of our life.
- I think it is a good way for the society to begin the process of accepting the reality that LGBTIQ persons exist and have always existed as a part of it. I don't want to be just inside "my 4 walls" since I personally object more to the "I don't mind, but they should keep it within their 4 walls" type of acceptance.
- Pride in BiH is necessary for reasons of greater visibility of LGBTI persons, raising awareness of the public and realizing more and eventually equal rights for everyone.
- I want us all from the LGBT community to gather and together walk through the city proudly, to show people that we are not

afraid of who we are, because it's nothing abnormal, but only incomprehensible for traditional people. It is time for people to understand that we are here, and that there are a lot of us.

- Because it is an important area to fight about, it is absolutely important to be visible in the streets, and it is one of the ways for the BiH society to prove it has grown and it is capable of securing its citizens the enjoyment of rights that are guaranteed by the law; that it is ready to offer them the possibility to express their freedoms and rights to difference, but that it would also protect them in the case of discrimination. Years of presence in the streets in neighbouring countries have become fruitful, and I believe that we only have to start and hope for the same result in a couple of years here as well.
- If the participants are properly protected by state services, I don't see a reason for not organizing Pride. If we wait for "the right moment", then Pride will never take place.
- I think it's time people accepted the fact that we are not doing anything bad, because that is actually who we are, and that they should accept us as we are because we do not want any harm to anyone, nor impose our sexuality, as they think.
- Pride leads to greater awareness of both heterosexual and LGBTQI persons about the fact that LGBTQI people live everywhere around us, even when we think they are not there.
- BiH has a large LGBT population which is not visible and is hidden in the closet, so Pride might push the point of view of younger (and older) LGBT persons towards opening up to their closest family or friends and/or the environment. The society needs to see that there is a large number of LGBT persons.
- Yes, because people in BiH lack the basic knowledge about LGBT persons and I believe that gradual training would only be available for individuals, while hitting the streets is something every citizen can see.
- Although the situation would be the same as with the first Belgrade Pride, I believe it is important so people would understand that LGBTQI persons exist and walk around the city, that they are not a western fiction.
- Looking at the example of Serbia, we can see that the continuous organization of Pride leads to a "cultural shock" and getting used to it, so it becomes a normal event.
- The environment is ready for Pride, it is not safe, but it was nowhere safe at the beginning.
- Yes, in the sense of protest and enhancing visibility.

- It is necessary for visibility and raising awareness on the presence of LGBTI persons.
- It would contribute to the visibility of the LGBTI population.
- I think that it improves the visibility of LGBTI persons, and it can definitely help anyone who is in doubt about their gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Visibility is one of the most important aspects of promoting human rights. It is hard to convince someone that there are people whose rights are being denied. Visibility breaks down prejudice (in my experience, most homophobic people change their opinion when they finally see that LGBT persons are “ordinary”) and sends an important message that we will not agree to be second class citizens, that we want equal treatment in the society to which we contribute, each in our own way, and that the streets are ours too.
- Yes, if there is someone ready to take responsibility over the march and guarantee the safety of the participants.
- I think it should be organized, because the countries in the region also held their Pride, there only has to be some work done on the preparations and organization of the event.
- It happened in almost the whole region, now it’s time for BiH. S
- We are the only country in the region where it has not been organized yet.
- Where there is an annual parade, the situation started to get better.
- The capital of a country should organize the Pride.
- Because we are uninformed, uneducated and very closed as a society, and also because of raising awareness on the rights and life of the LGBT community.
- If the community decides that it is necessary, I will support it, although I believe that there could be maybe more efficient ways of inclusion than Pride.
- Pride as all other protest assemblies held on the grounds of different social problems, is a democratic way of expressing one’s right to the freedom of peaceful assembly, it is part of freedom of speech, thought and the freedom of openly expressing a critical opinion towards certain negative processes and dogmas in the society.
- We need to break the ice for once and have a modest, appropriate, cultural Pride without kitsch or sexual connotations. We should present a normal and acceptable picture of the LGBTI society to the public, give them an opportunity to hear positive stories too.

---

---

***Some of the reasons why the first Pride should not be organized in BiH, according to personal explanations of the respondents***

- Being a part of the LGBTI community is because we are who we are, and that's it. I believe it is not even important to offer the information that we are, is it important that someone is straight and why should we emphasize that we are lesbian/gay. Who cares! It is just me. (...) It is not my character feature, but my sexuality. I did not decide on it one day, I just am. Just like my mum did not decide to be straight. Therefore, I don't think it is even necessary to organize Pride because that is who we are and this kind draws attention and presents us as something we are not. We are all just people. I believe that we should just let it become accepted in a way as something that is already present in the society. It should subtly become an everyday matter for people. Of course, some form of activism of LGBTI organizations is needed for that as well, but maybe not as glaring as I believe the parade to be.
- Its purpose would not be clear enough, just like it isn't clear enough in other countries. Pride would serve a purpose if it were a protest to prove how far behind our society was. And it would be proven when violence is committed against the participants of the parade. It is the most important message and the most urgent problem that our society has to solve – violence against people for exercising rights to a private life and their own bodies. I cannot say I support people marching around if I know that they will get beaten for it. When the society is advanced enough for the parade to be organized in peace, without violence, then we won't have the need to organize it, just like there is no point in still organizing it in Germany and countries with similar systems.
- I am not sure how much the parade helps. I believe that sexuality (just like e.g. nationality) are not things to be proud of (in the end, these are not things you accomplish, they are part of process and events we could not have consciously influenced). Similarly, judging by the recordings from Prides in larger cities, they often give the wrong impression on the LGBTI population. I think that certain behaviours that can be noticed in these parades offer homophobes new arguments in plain sight, which if used correctly can even seem legitimate. Depending on the time of protest, the parade might even be the right choice. I think we need to show that sexuality, while being a factor of diversity, it essentially does not change things, i.e. essential differences between an LGBTI and a non-LGBTI person, especially regarding their worth and rights, are

non-existent and must be non-existent.

- The level of citizenship is not the right one for the parade to go by without incidents and it would be a burden for LGBT persons. Pride lost its meaning when it shifted from a political battle to a form of entertainment, so that the population is not aware of the original idea of Pride.
- BiH community is not sensitized enough for this event. Pride would attract a very small number of the LGBTI population and would lead to violent encounters.
- BiH society is not advanced enough regarding education, tolerance and social ceremony and responsibility (we could even say that it is backwards) and I believe that any attempt at organizing Pride would be interpreted as a provocation and presented as perversion, even if it were an “ordinary” march.
- BiH is still not ready for Pride. Such mass fights and attacks would break out that no one is aware of what it would look like. We all know what happened at the Festival at the Academy in Sarajevo. It will take at least another decade of education, thorough education.
- To what extent is BiH ready for such a thing? It was proven several times that people did not react properly to anything related to LGBTI persons, what would then happen if Pride was organized? I’d love that things were different, but I know how people think about these topics, BiH is still not ready.
- Although Pride would be a good step forward to better visibility of LGBTI persons, I am afraid of the consequences it can cause considering the area and environment we live in.
- Only for the reason of security of LGBTI persons, not yet. Anyway, I would love to see it but under the condition that no one gets hurt, which is “far reaching” for BiH at the moment.
- There would be incidents for sure and it isn’t the safest. I don’t think the police could help a lot either due to the mentality of our people.
- I think that our society is not ready for that just like LGBTI persons (most would not join the parade).
- There aren’t enough people to go into the street.
- It’s better to avoid violence and fight using different means.
- Although I am gay, I don’t support Pride because I don’t think it is the right way to sensitize the citizens in these areas.
- Although I understand the need for it, I believe that our society is not mature enough to understand Pride as anything but a provocation, thus the achieved visibility would bring more harm than

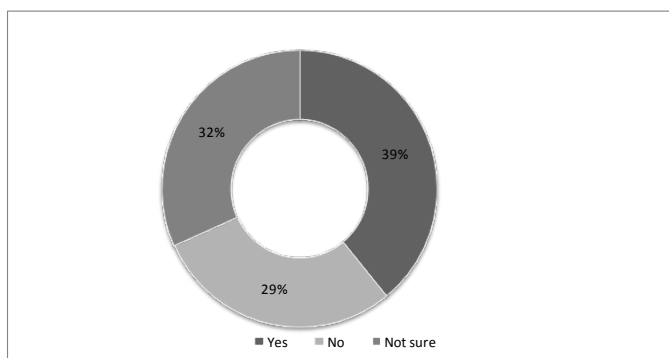
good. Nonetheless, otherwise maybe we cannot hope for the normalization of the image and status of LGBT persons in BiH.

- There are a lot of problems of higher priority to be solved.
- I believe that BiH needs to first form enough LGBT associations and institutions which will actively work on solving problems, protection, social integration, amendments to laws on the state level etc. Organizing the parade without laws, institutions and government bodies protecting the security and rights of participants in the parade would be a bad move in a country like BiH, to say the least.
- I am not an advocate of Pride in a country where most people don't understand its meaning. There are a lot of more important things to work on.
- I am personally not interested in parading around which is pointless unless laws are aligned to improve the standard of life in this country.
- This country is not at the level of development when the parade would "help" anyone, especially not the LGBT population, apart from parading and then it would all stop.
- Do straight people have a parade?
- I think this only increases the wrath of homophobic people.
- I don't believe it would bring about the wanted results, on the contrary.
- Our society is not ready for that, we would only destroy what has been built so far. Even baby steps are still steps towards the future and change. Just as we don't like things imposed on us, we should not impose on others what they are not yet ready to understand, but we should offer them a chance to understand and accept it in a simpler, more appropriate way.
- In a society and country with high unemployment rates, bad financial situation of citizens, healthcare problems, problems with rights (regardless which ones), problems with national charge etc. I don't think that Pride will be well accepted.
- I don't think that sexual affiliation should be emphasized or be a matter of pride.
- The moment is still not right; I think it is better to work on strengthening the LGBT population.

If the first Pride were to be organized in BiH, only a bit more than 1/3, i.e. around 39%, of respondents would participate. Somewhat less than 1/3 of respondents (29%) claim that they would not take part, while around 32% of them are not sure. It is interesting that around

14.3% of respondents who think that the first Pride should be organized in BiH would not take part in it, and 19.3% of them are not sure whether they would take part, which we can see as a consequence of fear from violence or “outing” themselves.

*Graph 41: Would you take part in Pride?*



The respondents who answered that they would not or are not sure whether they would participate in Pride listed as the reasons the fear of physical and other forms of violence (in approx. 33% of answers), followed by fear of being ‘outed’ – i.e. the fear of their LGBTI identity becoming known because of their participation in Pride (in approx. 18% of answers), and scepticism towards Pride being a meaningful, good and/or efficient method of fighting for the rights of LGBTI persons and improving the position of the community (in approx. 14% of answers). In addition, many respondents want to keep their privacy and/or see their identity as an intimate thing, and believe that taking part in Pride would lead to their public exposure (in approx. 9% of answers).

---

***Some of the reasons why the respondents think they should not participate in the first Pride in BiH, according to their own explanations***

- Just so that I could maintain my privacy and security.
- The attempts so far at organizing Pride do not seem trustworthy enough for it to go by in safety.
- Yes, anywhere else, but not in BiH at the moment. Maybe after some time.
- If the parade is organized in some ten years or so, yes, because I believe that the situation would be better, but right now I would not be part of the parade.

- I wouldn't participate in Pride in BiH, but I would participate anywhere else.
- I would like to participate but I am afraid of the physical violence during the parade, maybe not even as much as what might follow the Pride and how it would reflect on my life in the future.
- I would not participate because I haven't disclosed my sexual identity to anyone yet, and I would not want people I care about to find it out because of my participation at that gathering.
- I still haven't outed myself to my homophobic family.
- I am not sure because I am hiding my sexual identity.
- Since I am not so overtly out, I am not sure whether I would be ready for such a big step.
- The number of people who know about my sexual orientation is very limited, and that would be complete outing. However, I do have a great wish to be part of such an event, I would probably be reminded that I am not alone.
- I don't want to be seen by people to whom I haven't outed myself (especially referring to my employer).
- Although I want to be part of it, I fear that it might bring about more problems (work, family, financial stability...) than pleasure....
- Due to the public character of the work I am doing, I would not expose myself so publicly, maybe in some other town, not in my hometown, no, but I do support it.
- People should be informed and guided not paraded. We should deal with politics more and use it to "chase" rights and similar things. (...) LGBT population has problems with basic human rights guaranteed by law but those are the same problems of straight people as well. We all have almost the same problems.
- Although it is an accepted point of view that Pride is "the means" in fighting for the rights of LGBTI persons, I cannot agree with that and I am of the opinion that smaller activities, assemblies, trainings, gatherings ... (could) have a larger effect on the realization of the rights of LGBTI persons.
- I fight for myself every day and I don't need a parade to make something possible for me, I lead a normal life and I don't hold back in front of anyone. If someone feels the need to go, they should, but there are a lot of people allegedly fighting for LGBTI rights but they are afraid to walk down the street holding their partner's hand, not to mention something else, what is the point in going into the street once and march. The real fight for me is if you act like any other couple not making a fuss over it, not hiding or being ashamed of it.



- I believe that people should not propagate their sexual orientation publicly, but keep it to themselves and their closest social environment.
- There is no need to expose oneself in that way. Sexuality is a private thing.
- Just like straight people don't impose themselves on me, I don't impose myself on them.
- I strongly oppose this because it doesn't show LGBT persons in the right light. If we are looking for acceptance and equality, then we should behave and live in accordance with it, without exposing ourselves.
- I think Pride is part of the process and it should happen. However, I also think that there isn't a lot of sense in taking a non-existing community to Pride. There is still a lot to be done on strengthening the community before taking it to the streets. The first parade will definitely have problems, and unless we develop a community which can support and articulate it, the parade might shatter what little has been created. Then again, the time is never right for Pride and this argument can delay the act of going to the streets for a long time. That is why it is important to weigh in the situation and look for allies.
- Taking a stroll once a year without doing anything else for the LGBTI population isn't the solution. If I need hundreds of policemen protecting me just because I decided to walk the street openly as a lesbian, it speaks volumes about the country the parade is held in. I think it is necessary to work actively on improving the social environment and communication with the authorities and judiciary to improve the situation, and one walk won't do that. It will draw the attention of the public, cause reactions and get space in the media, but without more substantial measures nothing will get better.
- Pride only causes a different effect in the sense that it is the source of additional violence and negative comments.
- I think the parade is unnecessary and that with my walk I won't contribute to people understanding or accepting, but on the contrary, I will be exposed to abusive speech or even threatened in a physical way.
- In my opinion, Prides are very hypersexual and I believe they should remain part of the Western culture. As homosexuals, we should build our image through cultural events, and not a sex party in the open.
- Because I am completely satisfied with my situation and I believe

that we are the ones deciding whether we will be happy and accepted (we choose the people to hang out with, the people around us etc.), and if we choose the right people to love us the way we are, we don't need the support of irrelevant people.

- I celebrate my sexuality even without the parade.

---

***Some of the reasons why the respondents think they should participate in the first Pride in BiH, according to their own explanations***

- Who is going to do it if not me?
- I consider it to be my responsibility.
- Why not?! It's needless to comment on it. I am part of this community. That's my Pride.
- I participate regularly in the parades in Zagreb and Split and I would walk with pride in my country.
- Yes, because it's time I walked down the street freely.
- If it took place, of course I would support the people who would walk through BiH for the first time.
- If we don't support who we are, others won't either.
- The point of organizing Pride is enhancing the visibility and drawing attention to the problems the community faces. I would consider myself rather hypocrite if I didn't take part in the activity whose aim is to promote my rights and freedoms, and I definitely want to enjoy them and live freely.
- I want to support the freedom of expression, love and show that we are the same, people of flesh and blood regardless of the orientation.
- It is time the society saw that LGBTIQ people were present and that nothing would change in interpersonal relations even if they are visible and enjoy their rights like persons who aren't LGBTIQ.
- I want to be visible and show support to the community and the society that we are here.
- I am part of it and I firmly believe that we have to be bold about requesting our rights.
- I believe that Pride articulates requests which directly influence me and that is why I feel the need to participate in it. A specific amount of fear would definitely be present, but I also think that the participation in the parade would help me to overcome some personal obstacles.
- Although the risk of revealing oneself is too great, and the consequences catastrophic, it is very important to show that we are there, that we exist, and that we are no different from the rest of

our fellow citizens. If we show up in a satisfactory number, it will leave a significant impression on the public, and hopefully show families that being LGBT in BiH is not only a myth.

- No matter what is done in connection with solving the LGBTTIQ question, Pride reverberates the loudest, it is talked about and it is a (direct) witness to visibility.
- There is no point in living in a rabbit hole and hope for the world to somehow thunder by me and not even notice that I am there. Looking at the history of civilization, courage paid off every time. Every time people defended their own integrity and dignity, there were positive social changes. It does not happen fast, but every step (and every person at every street activity) is an indispensable part of that process.
- Yes, because it is necessary to be part of the public space and discourse if we want to improve the position of the LGBTI community and because I have the moral obligation, as a citizen, to protest for minority rights, especially in case of the rights of minorities facing such a high level of discrimination and violence.
- Pride is extremely important in a political sense. I think it is even more important here than in some other country in the “West”, since it is the beginning for LGBTI persons to realize their rights. Rights are “acquired” in the street.
- Definitely yes, even if I weren’t lesbian, it is important to support any person or group whose basic human or other rights were denied.
- For two years, since I realized I was bisexual, my wish has been to participate in this and fight for rights, not only for myself but also for others who are in the same situation as me.
- I believe that this is the way I could help anyone who are afraid to admit that they are LGBTI.
- I believe in the power of social action. At the same time, it also frightens me a bit, because of security and possible outing, but on the other side, I think it would be a good moment, because I would be surrounded by people from the community.

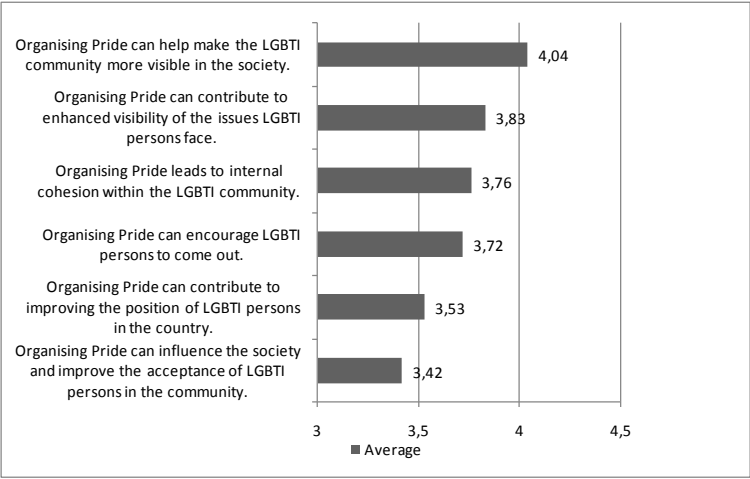
Although less than half of respondents think that the first Pride should be organized in BiH, most of them thinks that organizing the march could have certain positive effects: in that sense, over 50% of respondents completely or partially agreed with all the listed affirmative statements on the positive effects Pride could have on different aspects of the LGBTI community (see Graph 43). 74% of respondents completely or partially agree with the statement that Pride can

contribute to the visibility of the LGBTI community, while 67.5% of respondents completely or partially agree with the statement that the march can contribute to the visibility of the problems of the LGBTI community. Further on, 62.6% of respondents agree that Pride can cause the ‘outing’ of some LGBTI persons; and 61.8% of respondents agree that Pride contributes to the strengthening of internal cohesion within the community.

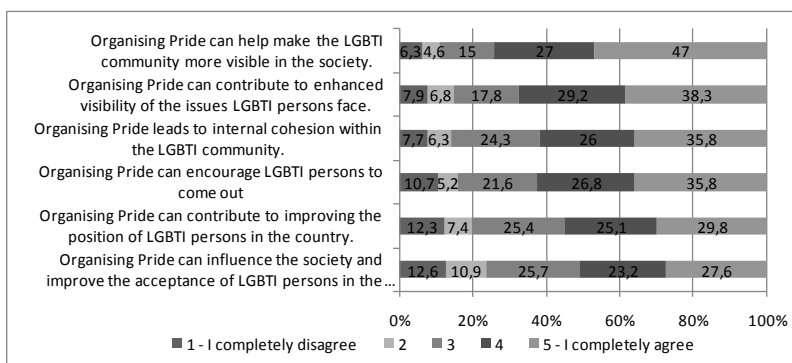
On the other side, respondents agree the least (54.9% and 50.8%) with the statements that Pride can contribute to the improvement of the position of LGBTI persons in the country or improve their acceptance in the society. In that sense, it can be concluded that the respondents agreed more with the statements that Pride could improve the visibility of the community or the problems it faces, but less with the statements regarding particular effects of Pride on the improvement of the position and the rights of the community.

Such results can hint at the respondents, due to continuous exposure to homophobia, slow transformation of the social consciousness about the rights of LGBTI persons, numerous legal and institutional shortcomings and limitations, and repeated homophobic incidents have a dismal view of the possibility for actions of this type to significantly improve the position of the LGBTI community.

*Graph 42: Do you agree with the listed statements? (average)*



Graph 43: Do you agree with the listed statements? (%)



## 4.7 Same-Sex Union Legislation

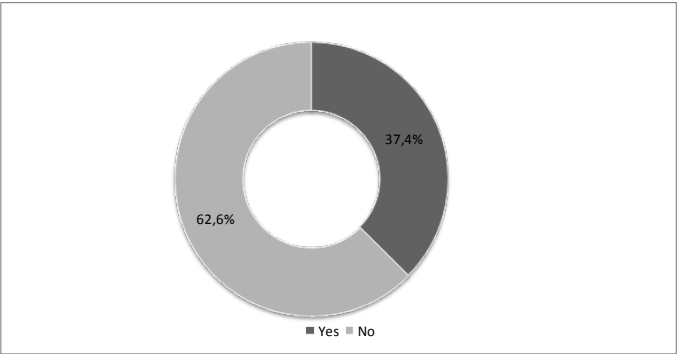
Existing legislation in BiH does not recognize or protect same-sex unions in any way. In that respect, persons who are in long-term and stable same-sex partnerships are not able to enjoy equal rights like heterosexual couples: thus, for illustration purposes, persons living in same-sex unions are not entitled to survivor pension after the partner's death, there are no legal mechanisms that would ensure proper distribution of joint property in case of partnership termination or inheritance in case of partner's death, same-sex couples are not entitled to the tax reliefs that married heterosexual couples enjoy etc.<sup>34</sup> In view of the existing legal and institutional framework that does not recognise same-sex unions and prevents formalisation of such partnerships, and given the social context in which LGBTI persons are mostly forced to hide their same-sex emotional relationships or to reveal them only to the narrow group of people - in order to avoid potential condemnation, exclusion or eventually violence - we tried to examine to what extent the LGBTI people decide to live together as a couple and what are their positions regarding legal regulation of same-sex partnerships and potential formalisation of this kind of partnership.

Of the total number of respondents, 37.4% are in lasting and stable intimate relationships. The age structure of the sample which comprises of younger people somewhat explains the relatively low

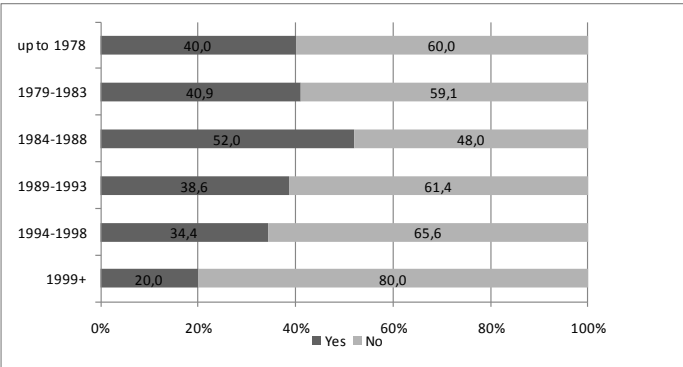
<sup>34</sup> Sarajevo Open Centre (2016). *Same-sex partnership – a sleeper in BiH's EU integration process* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 25] (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 2.

percentage of respondents living in lasting and stable intimate relationships (see section 3.1 of this report and Graph 44b). On the other hand, although we have no data about trends relating to stable intimate relationships among heterosexual persons of similar age structure that would give as a comparative overview of these trends and enable us to map potential differences, one can assume that the existing social context has a negative influence on starting and maintaining of long-term LGBTI relationships.

*Graph 44a: Are respondents in a lasting and stable intimate relationship? (%)*



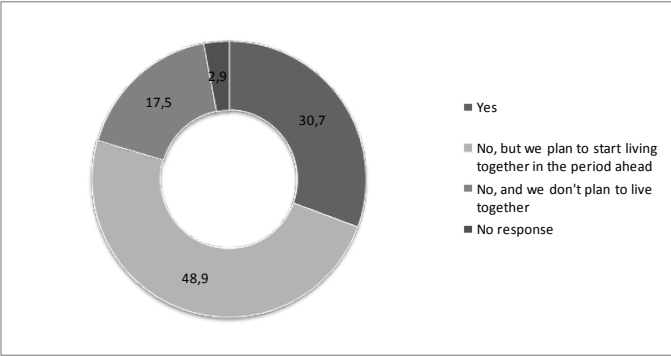
*Graph 44b: Are respondents in a lasting and stable intimate relationship, by age / year of birth of the respondent? (%)*



Furthermore, around 30.7% of respondents who are in lasting and stable intimate relationships live with their partners, whereas around 49% plan to start living together in the forthcoming period. In other words, 4/5 of sampled LGBTI persons who are in lasting and stable

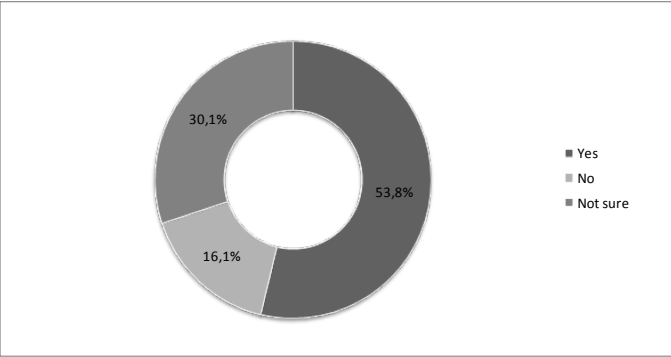
intimate relationships are committed to live together with their partners, and they either live together or plan to do so in the future, although the existing legal and institutional framework neither supports possible formalisation of these relations, nor provides legal protection to such partnerships.

*Graph 45: Do they live with their partner?, n = 137, (%)*



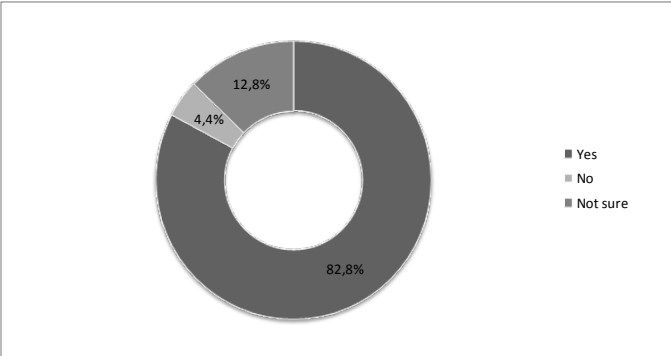
The majority of respondents claim that they would enter into a life partnership or same-sex union if it was allowed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while a small number (around 16%) claims that they would not do it even if such formal-legal possibility existed. 62% of respondents who are in stable intimate relationships would formalise the life partnerships, while 24% said that they are not sure about it. In other words, the majority of respondents want to conclude a life partnership in the near or far future, but non-existence of applicable legislation in this field prevents them from doing so, depriving them of the legally guaranteed rights of heterosexual couples.

*Graph 46: Would you enter into a life partnership or same-sex union if it was possible in BiH?*



Nevertheless, as many as 82.8% of LGBTI persons covered by this research believe that it would be useful to have the same-sex partnerships legally regulated, mainly for the purposes of regulating bureaucratic and formal-legal aspects of coexistence and enjoying the rights that are currently unavailable to them while they live informal partnerships, due to the absence of legislation governing this field (e.g. regulating of inheritance rights, division of property, tax benefits etc.) Moreover, the need to equalize the rights with heterosexual couples and thereby ensure equality among citizens regardless of their sexual orientation is frequently used as an argument (also see Table 6). Only 4.4% of respondents do not believe that legislative regulation of the issue of same-sex partnerships would be useful.

*Graph 47: Is legislative regulation of same-sex partnerships useful?*



Among 16 respondents who do not believe that legislative regulation of same-sex partnerships would be useful, 3 do not support marriage / partnership as a concept, be it heterosexual or same-sex, 1 believes that LGBTI persons should be entitled to conclude a real marriage instead of registering a partnership, 1 believes that there are more priority issues that should be solved first, 1 thinks that it is not possible because we live in BiH, whereas 8 respondents did not explain their positions. Among 47 respondents who said that they were not sure, 7 believe that they are not sufficiently familiar with the issue, while 34 did not answer. Others mostly presented the same arguments as the respondents who do not believe that such legislative regulation would be useful.



---

## **Some of the reasons why, as respondents explain, legislative regulation of same-sex partnerships is useful**

- All of us must be equal before the law and the state!
- No matter if one believes in marriage as an institution or not, everybody should have the right to a choice: to form any kind of civil community with their partner or not. By acquiring the right to a same-sex partnership, LGBT persons would be able to enjoy several rights that heterosexual couples already have, such as the right to joint property, inheritance, to regulate the right to reside in a country if one partner is a foreign national...
- Marriage is not a union of a man and a woman, but a union of two people who love each other. This right belongs to everyone, in Bosnia as well.
- In this way, same-sex persons would obtain equal rights as heterosexual persons.
- Yes, for purely pragmatic reasons, because same-sex couples would be able to exercise rights they do not have without proper legal framework (paying tax, hospital visitations). In addition, legal regulation of same-sex partnerships would contribute to equalization of same-sex couples and heterosexual couples, both legally and by changing the social perception of partnership and family.
- Yes, primarily because of certain rights that spouses enjoy, and LGBT persons are deprived of, such as property issue regulation etc.
- Long-term coexistence should be legally regulated for the purposes of protecting the rights and obligations. One can give romantic connotations to it, but this is not the point. Such regulation and negotiations about it would certainly increase visibility and raise awareness of queer existence in our country.
- Emotional and legal fulfilment, social and economic stability.
- Finance and healthcare. I want the right to stay in the hospital when I need to.
- Tax benefits, hospital visitations, possibility to inherit.
- Although I believe that a piece of paper is not a sign of love. But such piece of paper would mean a lot in the future of two people, for medical purposes, legal regulation etc.
- It is useful for practical reasons: property, offspring, tax benefits...
- I think it is important for fulfilment of basic rights, especially economic rights, housing issues, inheritance rights, health and social insurance rights, children etc. And everyday life situations, I don't

know what I would do if something happened to my partner, and I was not allowed into the isolated part of the clinical ward where only close family members are allowed, because I don't belong to the 'family' within the meaning of the Family Law.

- I see same-sex marriage as a complete inclusion of LGBT persons into the society. We would be legally equal to other married persons and use all benefits e.g. in case of partner's death, pension, inheritance, loans or child adoption. Everything should be equal.
- Whoever wants to do it, let them do it. Of course it is necessary, for those who want it, and state should allow them to do it and provide them with all other existing rights.
- It is useful, considering that LGBT persons living in same-sex unions do not have equal rights as persons who live in heterosexual unions. I can't see the meaning in different rights.
- LGBT+ persons are human being like straight people, and they should be treated equally. Although personally I don't think marriage is necessary between two partners of any sexual orientation, such choice and option must exist.
- It is mostly useful for the purposes of exercising the same rights that heterosexual persons already enjoy.
- Everyone should have the right to live in some kind of union if that is how they feel and what they need, and the state should provide it, regardless whether they account for 1% or 10% of the population, or if there are only 2 people with such needs.
- Yes, when love happens, why wouldn't it be crowned with marriage. Adoption will also be facilitated through legal regulation, and the life of some beautiful child will be saved and brightened.
- Tax benefits, hospital visitations, possibility to inherit

## 4.8 Transgender Persons

Transgender identity can be defined as 'gender presentation of a person which is not in line with sex-defined traditional gender roles' and,<sup>35</sup> in that respect, it represents the 'framework concept which includes all the people who feel or choose to present themselves differently from gender roles that traditionally belong to them, be it through clothing, behaviour, speech, posture or physical adjustments'<sup>36</sup>.

---

35 Jasmina Hasanagić, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 19.

36 Jasmina Hasanagić, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 19.

Trans\* persons in BiH are in a very unfavourable position: these people are often exposed to transphobia, discrimination and violence (as shown in the previous sections of this report), whereas the trans\* identity – especially during the transition process - often impedes employment and equal participation in the labour market, which frequently pushes trans\* individuals to existential edge<sup>37</sup>. Moreover, trans\* individuals are exposed to institutional discrimination and faced with numerous legal and institutional restrictions that make their daily lives more difficult or prevent them from living with own identity. In that respect, trans\* persons in BiH are ‘constantly faced with a legal vacuum in terms of legal regulation of sex change’<sup>38</sup>. For example, trans\* people can only change the sex marker in their official documents and the single birth identification code after they have completed medical transition; if we consider that there are long waits for sex reassignment surgery and that prior to it, a person needs to undergo hormonal therapy during which their body changes and develops the characteristics of the other sex, it leads to a discrepancy between how the person looks and the information about their sex in their official documents<sup>39</sup>. This practice leads to discrimination, potential violence and unpleasant situations ‘and it forces them to constantly explain their gender identity, reveal personal information and have their medical documentation constantly with them during the most mundane moments of their life like taking classes and sitting for exams, paying by card in supermarkets, visiting a medical institution, crossing the border, identifying themselves to a person at a state institution and during a job search.’

Also, the lack of medical and financial support for sex reassignment surgery for transgender persons makes this already lengthy process even longer, more complex and more difficult: both the endocrine therapy and the surgical procedures have to be undergone abroad, because they cannot be performed in BiH, and the cost is not covered by the state-funded health insurance, which means that each individual has to burden the costs of their transition.<sup>40</sup>

---

37 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). ). *Rozi izvještaj 2016: godišnji izvještaj o stanju ljudskih prava LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 27.

38 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). ). *Rozi izvještaj 2016: godišnji izvještaj o stanju ljudskih prava LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 27.

39 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). ). *Rozi izvještaj 2016: godišnji izvještaj o stanju ljudskih prava LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 27.

40 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Rozi izvještaj 2016: godišnji izvještaj*

Unlike BiH, neighbouring countries recognised to some extent the needs of transgender persons and adopted legal and institutional solutions aiming to resolve these problems: the state health insurance in Montenegro covers 80% to 100% of sex reassignment treatment costs, even when performed abroad, considering that Montenegro does not have own medical team to perform such treatments; state health insurance in Serbia covers 60% of costs of sex reassignment treatment performed by the specialised medical team in this country; in Croatia, transgender individuals can correct their sex markers in personal documents and the single birth registration code on the basis of 'life with the different gender identity without having undergone the entire medical sex reassignment process, which prevents discrimination of these people during the transition process and protects their bodily integrity and the right to choose a treatment at own disposition.'<sup>41</sup> In that respect, BiH substantially lags behind the neighbouring countries when it comes to the legal and institutional framework for sex reassignment of transgender individuals.

In view of the specific needs and problems that transgender persons are faced with, we tried to examine whether respondents plan to get the sex reassignment surgery, if they are already in the transition process, if they faced any problems because of the discrepancy between their gender expression and sex marker in personal documents, if they believe that it would be useful to introduce the third sex category and what situations are transgender people facing because of their trans identity.

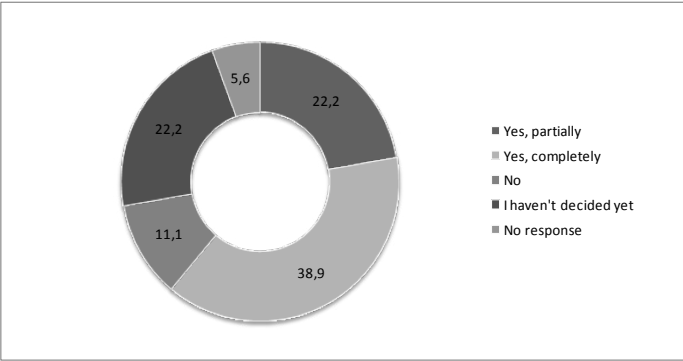
Of 18 trans\* persons who were included in this research, around 61% plan to change their sex partially or completely, while 22.2% have not decided yet. Of this number, 4 (22.2%) persons are already in the transition process, and 7 (38.9%) would like to commence that process. Although the decision on sex reassignment means that respondents will have to cover all treatment costs, most of them plan to do it because it is a very important step in their identity building process.

---

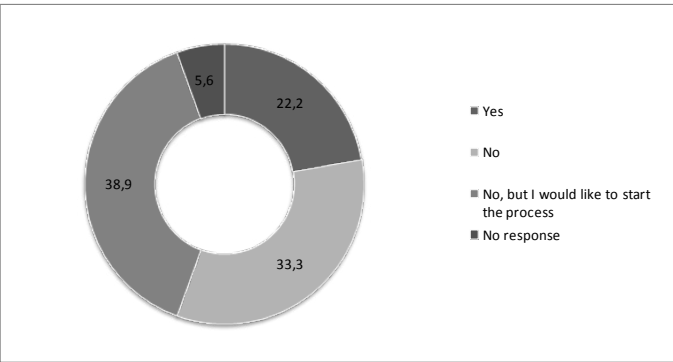
*o stanju ljudskih prava LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 27.

41 Damir Banović et al. (2016). *TRANS\*FORMACIJA prava - modeli pravnog regulisanja prilagodbe spola u BiH* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 7.

Graph 48: Do you plan to undergo sex reassignment treatment (%)

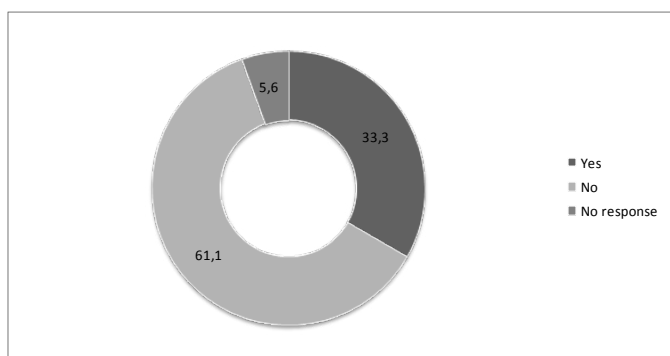


Graph 49: Are you currently in the process of transitioning?, n = 18



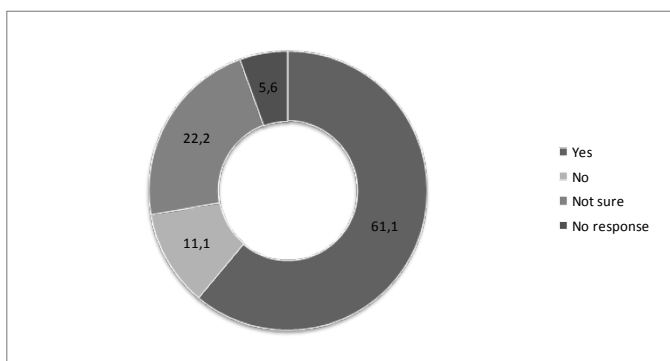
6 transgender respondents were having problems because of the discrepancy between their gender expression and sex marker in personal documents. These are mostly bureaucratic problems that occur in the interaction with authorised officers (police, border police) who request additional clarifications regarding the sex marker, thus exposing transgender persons to unpleasant situations and repeated sharing of personal data.

*Graph 50: Did you have problems because of the discrepancy between your gender expression and sex marker in your personal documents?*



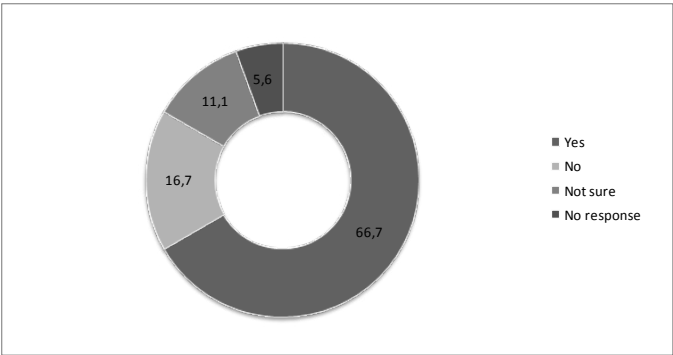
Therefore, it is not a surprise that almost 2/3 of respondents would change their sex marker in personal documents even before completion of the transition process if they had such formal option – such change would reduce their exposure to potentially discriminating and/or abusive behaviour and eliminate the need for trans persons to constantly prove and explain their identity.

*Graph 51: Would you change the sex marker in your documents prior to completion of the transition process if you had such possibility?*



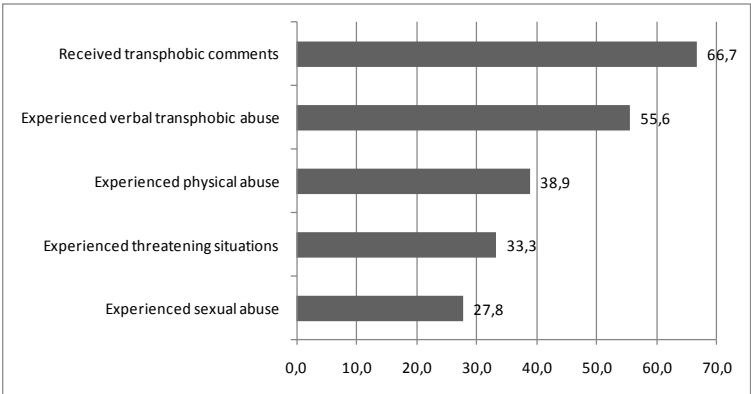
Also, 2/3 of respondents believe that the third sex category should be introduced in the law, in addition to the binary male and female sexes. Respondents mostly explained that this would provide a formal sex marker for gender-fluid persons, persons who do not experience their gender within the frame of binary gender categories, and persons who place their gender identity somewhere between the two sexes.

*Graph 52: Do you believe that the third sex category should be introduced in the law, in addition to the binary male and female sexes?*



As mentioned above, transgender persons in BiH are often targets of various forms of transphobia. Accordingly, 66.7% of transgender persons received transphobic comments, and 55.6% were exposed to transphobic verbal abuse. It is particularly worrying that 5 out of 18 transgender respondents experienced sexual abuse. All of this indicates that problems of transgender persons and challenges they are facing should be approached and handled with greater attention.

*Graph 53: Were you ever exposed to any of the situations specified below as a transgender person?*



## 4.9 Economic Position of LGBTI Persons

The Anti-Discrimination Law of BiH prohibits any kind of different treatment of LGBTI persons in employment in private or public sector<sup>42</sup>. Also, labour legislation i.e. labour laws in the Federation of BiH and Brčko District, as well as the Law on Civil Service in the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, whereas the Republika Srpska Labour Law does not include the explicit prohibition of this kind, although it was adopted in January 2016.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, none of these laws includes gender identity and sex characteristics as the protected grounds<sup>44</sup>.

Despite this prohibition, LGBTI persons are often subjected to discrimination in labour and employment, which is reflected in results of the regional survey conducted by the National Democracy Institute in 2015: as much as 36% of LGBT respondents reported to have experienced some kind of discrimination in the workplace or in employment, whereas 30% of general population respondents reported that they would have ceased all communication with a co-worker if they found them to be of a different sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>45</sup>

In view of the fact that the unfavourable social position and stigmatisation of LGBTI persons can have a negative impact on the economic aspects of life, primarily employment, work and career advancement, the research paid special attention to this dimension of daily lives of LGBTI persons.

Still, only 8.3% of respondents think that their LGBTI identity impedes their career advancement, while 46.1% believe that this is not the case. Interestingly, as much as 45.6% of respondents (68.7% of the total number of those who do not believe that their LGBTI identity

---

42 *Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text* (Official Gazette of BiH, No. 59/09 and 66/16), Article 2; prepared by Inela Hadžić (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), <https://goo.gl/7Mqh9w>.

43 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre) p. 28; ILGA-Europe (2017). *Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe: 2017* (Belgium: ILGA-Europe), p. 63.

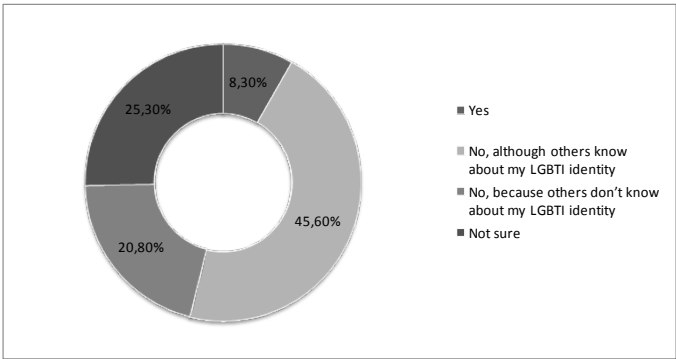
44 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 28.

45 Vladana Vasić, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 28.



impedes their career advancement) do not think that they have problems in this domain, although others know about their LGBTI identity, which disproves our initial assumption based by the aforementioned data: that career advancement is not impeded as long as one's LGBTI identity remains unknown. Still, when interpreting this information, one should keep in mind that the sample structure primarily comprises of young people between 19 and 28 years of age (2/3), and that the average age of the sample is 26 years, which suggests that the experience of these people with career advancement is fairly modest.

*Graph 54: Do you think that your LGBTI identity makes your career advancement harder, n = 360*



---

**Some positions of the respondents about the question whether the LGBTI identity impedes career advancement**

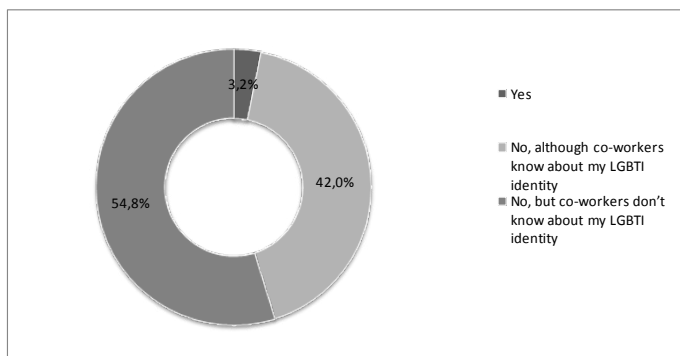
- Although other people do not know my identity, I know that I must hide it in most situations.
- Coming out and full-time seem impossible to me.
- It is simply impossible to distance yourself from everything that an identity includes; in my case, it also includes activist efforts and therefore, when applying for any job, I must do the selection and assessment whether the position is safe, whether I will have to be on alert, if somebody will find some of my texts about the community and if this would mean potential dismissal or a problem.
- No, because I work for an LGBTI organisation, in human rights field; however, I believe that I would face some resistance if I tried to find a job in the legal sector after years of work on human rights of LGBTI persons.

- Given the field in which I work, my sexual orientation sometimes causes problems, primarily in establishing connections and better relationships with co-workers. Essentially, the orientation itself is not the problem; it is actually my inability to adjust to hetero-normative communication principles at times and to establish safe and lasting business contacts, primarily with persons of the same sex.
- Psychological condition cause by social stigmatisation results in frequent sick leaves.
- I believe that as a member of the LGBTI population who has come out, I would be restrained if I worked in the civil service, while I think that the situation in private real sector is more flexible.
- Employment in public institutions is harder for me.
- It is the work and efforts, knowledge and experience that lead to advancement, and nothing can prevent if, not even your sexual orientation.

It is similar with potential problems at the workplace because of the LGBTI identity: 96.8% of respondents who answered this question do not think that they have problems at the workplace because of their identity. More than half of them hide their LGBTI identity from their co-workers. However, we should not neglect the fact that 6 respondents did face problems at work because of their identity. On the other hand, when it comes to finding of employment, 16.6% of respondents believe that this process is harder for them because of their identity. A significant part of respondents said in the explanation that skills and competencies, and not identity, were essential in employment and at the workplace, and that there was no need to emphasize one's LGBTI identity in the business sphere, i.e. in the employment process.

Such results significantly differ from the aforementioned results of the research conducted by the National Democratic Institute which show that as much as 36% of LGBTI respondents were exposed to some form of discrimination in employment or at the workplace. For this reason, additional research should be carried out in the period ahead, in order to examine this field in greater details.

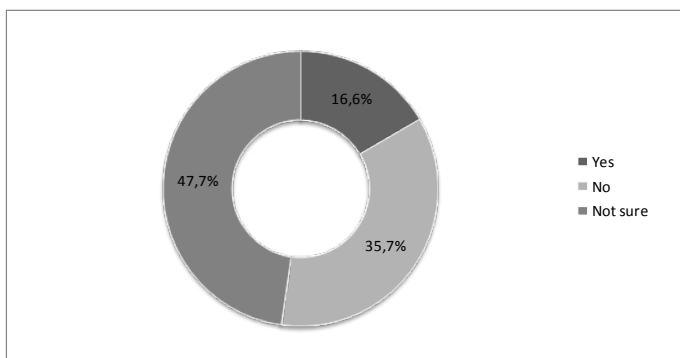
*Graph 55: Do you think that you have problems at the workplace because of your LGBTI identity?, n = 188*



### **Some positions of the respondents about problems at the workplace because of the LGBTI identity**

- People react to work and to non-standard behaviour at work. I am queer, and I often encounter various forms of belittlement, although I proved myself many times so nobody says this to me openly; however, people often don't take me seriously, because I am not a man - proud, firm, stable and everything else that a man should be. It is interesting that many people respect me, but they will still never pay equal trust to me or give me equal opportunity to prove myself as to my straight colleague who is taken more seriously than I, although he has much less experience.
- My supervisor at work is religious. She thinks that homosexuality is a disease. She limits my advancement. I will uncomfortable at work and this prevents me from putting maximum efforts.
- People don't want to work at the same place where I work.

*Graph 56: Do you think that your LGBTI identity makes it difficult for you to find employment?, n = 199*



---

---

### **Some positions of the respondents about the question whether the LGBTI identity makes it harder for them to find employment**

- If I don't tell anyone that I am gay, there will be no obstacles for me.
- Others do not know that I am an LGBTI person, so I don't know whether this would make any difference. However, given the reactions so far, I think it would.
- If I exposed myself publicly, I would have problems.
- People see and value me differently from women and men with traditional female and male appearance features.
- Gender expression does make it more difficult, because this is the first thing people notice on you, and they don't give me many opportunities to prove my abilities; they are focused on my appearance.
- Sexual orientation, especially if somebody knows about it. They will certainly tell others soon; then of course, I as a trans person would have lots of problems.
- It is not written on my forehead that I am a lesbian, nor anybody can assume that based on my appearance; I do not expose my sexuality at job interviews, and I believe that employers do not care; all they care about is that you know how to do your job and that you are willing to do it. On the other hand, I could not confirm this if they knew I was lesbian and if, for example, I applied for a teacher's position. I believe that it would make things harder.
- I do not discuss my sexual orientation with the employer.
- It is possible to find a job, but after a while, people notice who you are; you cannot remain silent forever when they ask you some questions like: do you have a girlfriend, where do you go out, who do you hang out with. People find out, you withdraw, they withdraw, it creates awkward atmosphere at work, you are aware of everything and eventually, unable to put up with it psychologically, you quit with the excuse that you found another job and blah blah, and you actually didn't.
- It depends on how educated employers are about the LGBTI community.
- It depends on the employer. Many people probably don't know or do not assume my sexual orientation. And this probably wouldn't matter to me. But there are people who immediately draw some conclusions and look at you with contempt. Of course, they will not hire you.
- For two reasons: firstly, nobody knows about my LGBTI identity,

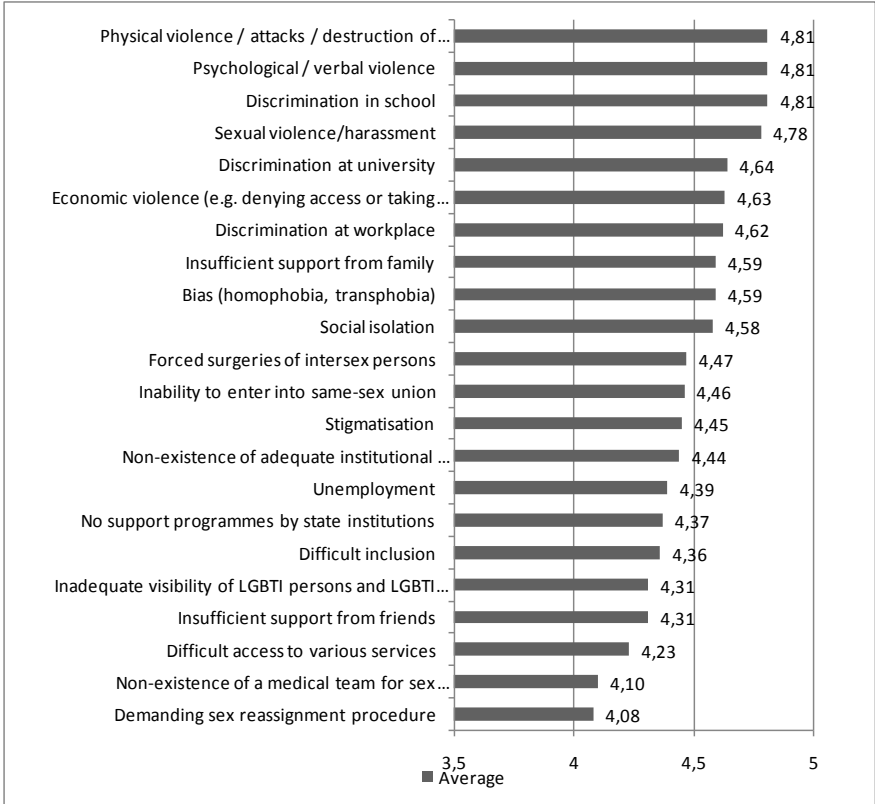
and secondly, the current economic and social situation is such that it is difficult for everyone to find employment in BiH, regardless of their affiliation to any group, except for the affiliation or membership in ruling political parties.

- The facts that I belong to the group of 'others', that I am and agnostic and that I am not interested in any political party make it difficult for me to find employment
- 99% of jobs in BiH do not require you to explain to anyone if you are an LGBT person or not.
- I think that if you invest in your education, you can enter the labour market; when you introduce yourself to the employer with your qualities instead of saying 'Hello, I am lesbian', and when you prove that you can bring the company money and quality, employers really do not care what you have between your legs or who you sleep with. Prove that you are irreplaceable, we live in capitalism.

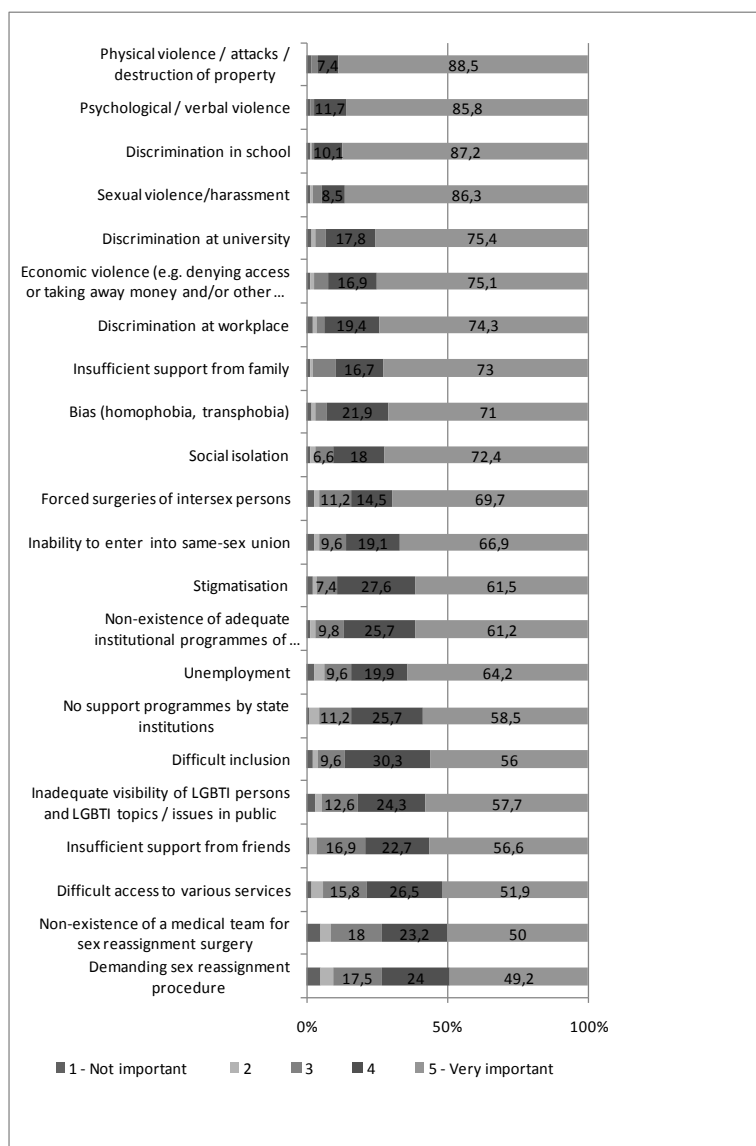
#### ***4.10. Overview of Key Problems Faced by LGBTI Persons***

Respondents had a task to assess the importance of certain problems that the LGBTI community is facing. Respondents said that the majority of the problems were important or very important, and thus the results for all categories gravitate towards '5 – very important'. However, the most important problems they defined are physical violence, psychological/verbal violence, discrimination in educational institutions and sexual violence. Some of the lowest ranked problems include those related to sex reassignment – non-existence of a medical team to perform the sex reassignment surgery and the demanding sex reassignment procedure – which can be explained with the sample structure in which transgender persons who would be directly affected by this problem were represented with less than 5%.

*Graph 57: Prioritization of problems that LGBTI community is facing based on respondents' answers*



*Graph 58: Importance of individual problems that LGBTI community is facing based on respondents' perception*



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

The Sarajevo Open Centre was founded in 2007 in order to promote and advocate for human rights and social inclusion of LGBTI persons and women. In that respect, Sarajevo Open Centre among other things has actively worked on: awareness raising about LGBTI rights and problems plaguing this community through various forms of media campaigns and thematic public events; empowerment of the community and building of an activist movement through various forms of trainings, counselling, informing and actively helping activists, activist groups and organisations to organise themselves and supporting them in their work; and on advocating for concrete public policies towards decision makers, legal protection and institutional cooperation with relevant government institutions.<sup>46</sup> In that regard, activism of the Sarajevo Open Centre is deeply involved in the needs and problems of the community and it tries to maintain the community's interests to the largest extent possible through its activities, while respecting all differences between different categories.

We therefore tried to examine to what extent has the Sarajevo Open Centre's work been recognised within the LGBTI community, how do LGBTI people value this organisation's work, are they familiar with individual activities of the organisation and how do they perceive them and finally, what are the activities that the Sarajevo Open Centre should particularly focus on in the forthcoming period. In this way, we wanted to see to what extent do the activities and approach of this organisation correspond with the community's needs.

When it comes to the visibility of the Sarajevo Open Centre, over 3/4 of respondents were familiar with the organisation's work before their participation in the research. This information points to an increase in visibility and recognition of the Sarajevo Open Centre within the LGBTI community compared to 2013, when the survey results showed that around 60% of respondents who answered this question were familiar with the organisation's work<sup>47</sup> - which is an increase by around 17 percentage points in 2017 compared to 2013.

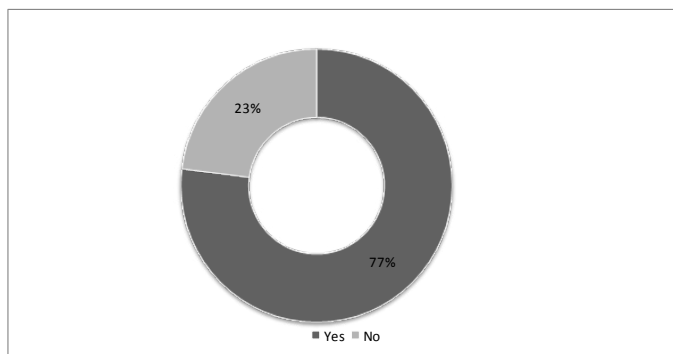
---

46 Sarajevo Open Centre, 'O nama', <https://goo.gl/Srft3>.

47 Jasmina Čaušević (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre), p. 54, <https://goo.gl/zyqu47>.

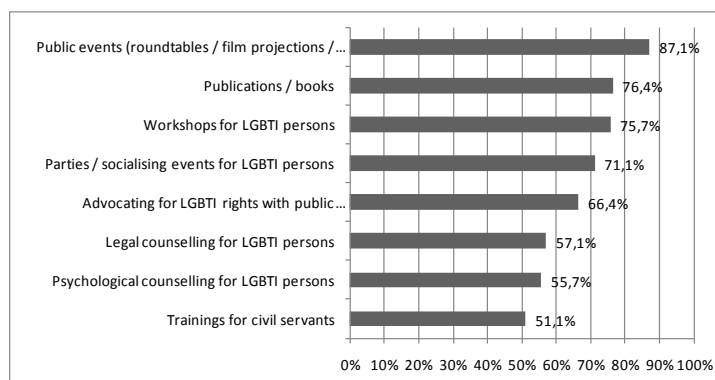


*Graph 59: Were the respondents familiar with SOC's work prior to the research*



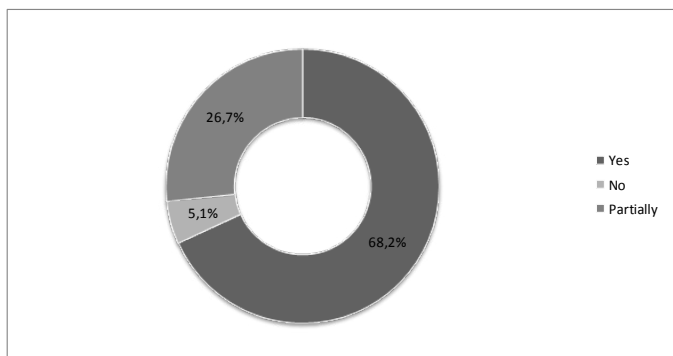
When it comes to the recognition of individual activities and services of Sarajevo Open Centre, public events are at the front (such as roundtables, film projections, exhibitions) and 87.1% of respondents are familiar with them, which to some extent can be explained with the fact that such activities are mostly widely promoted, targeting at the broadest LGBTI community group. Publications published by this organisation as well as the workshops it organises have also been recognised to a large extent – around 3/4 of respondents know about these activities. On the other hand, a small part of the respondents know that the Sarajevo Open Centre provides legal (57.1%) and psychological (55.7%) counselling for LGBTI persons which suggests that these activities should be better promoted among the LGBTI community. Finally, only around one half of the respondents know that the Sarajevo Open Centre conduct trainings for civil servants, which can be explained with the type of service which is specialised, oriented to government institutions and closed, i.e. it is not directly targeted at the LGBTI community.

*Graph 60: The share of respondents who are familiar with individual services and activities of SOC in the total number of respondents who have known about the work of the organisation (%)*

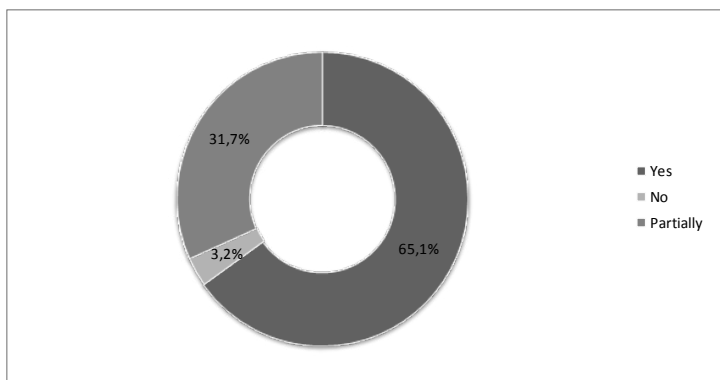


Regarding the influence of Sarajevo Open Centre's work, more than 2/3 of respondents out of 352 who answered this question believe that the work of this organisation positively influences the public perception of LGBTI persons / community, whereas slightly above 1/4 believe that the positive influence is partial. In that regard, 94.9 % of respondents believe that the Sarajevo Open Centre has had some positive impact on public perception of LGBTI persons, while around 5.1% would disagree with this statement. Accordingly, the results are relatively similar to those obtained on the basis of 2013 survey, i.e. there are no indicative deviations in the percentage structure from the positions of respondents who answered this question, with notable slight increase of the share of respondents who believe that this organisation's work has a positive influence (by 3.1 percentage points) and of those who do not believe that (by 1.9 percentage points), whereas the share of those who said 'partially' went down by 5 percentage points (see Graph 61 and Graph 62).

*Graph 61: Does SOC's work have a positive influence on public perception of LGBTI persons, n = 352 (of 366), 2017 (%)*

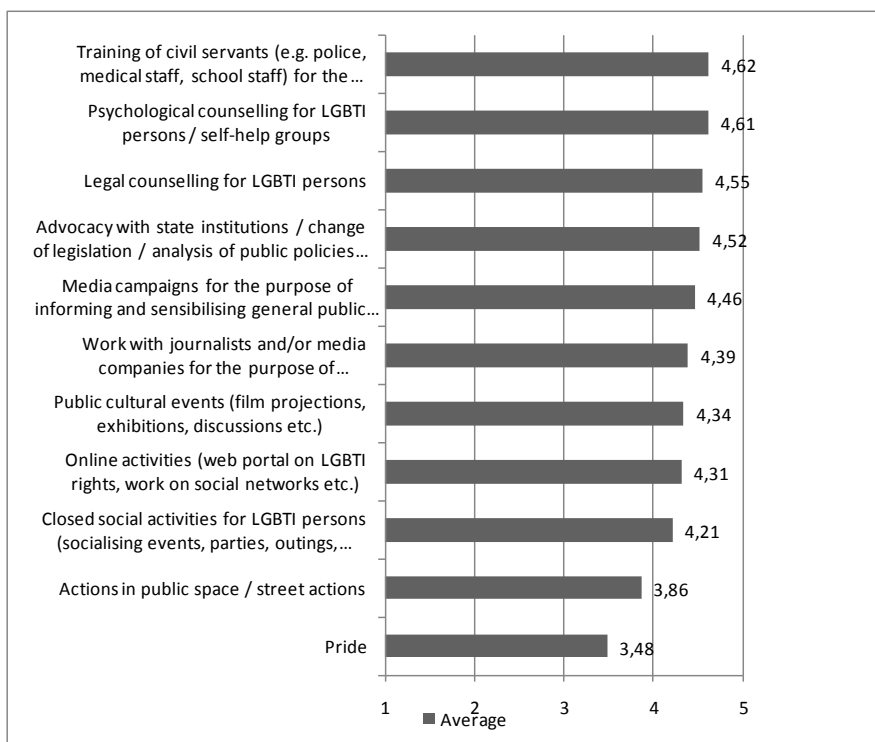


*Graph 62: Does SOC's work have a positive influence on public perception of LGBTI persons, n = 343 (of 545), 2013 (%)*

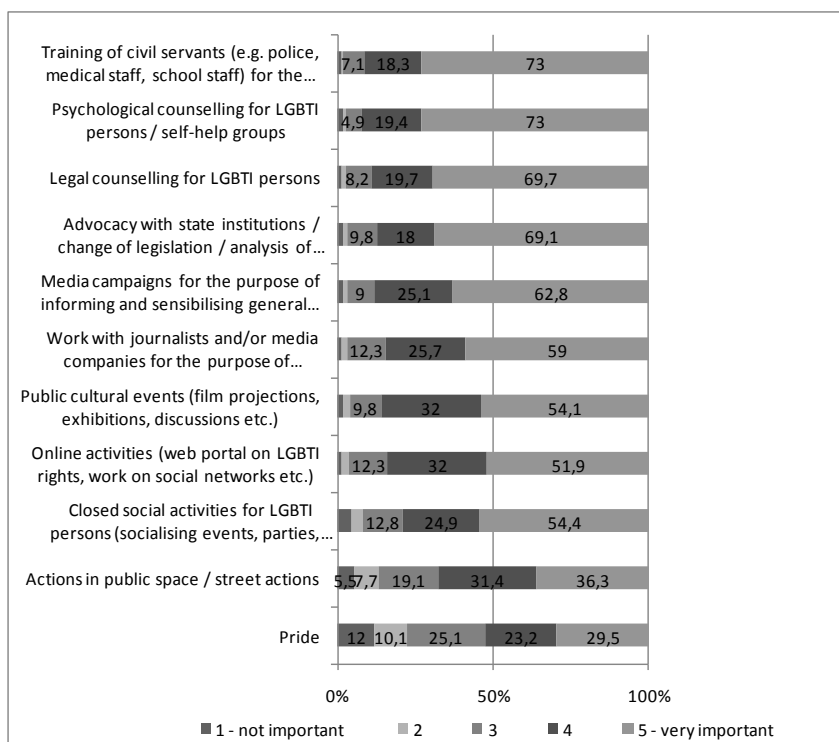


As for the future activities of SOC, assessing the importance of individual activities, respondents believe that the biggest focus should be on trainings of civil servants in order to make them aware of the LGBTI issues / persons, then on psychological and legal counselling, analyses and advocacy for public policies, and media campaigns for the purpose of informing and sensibilising general public to LGBTI rights. It is interesting that Pride is ranked last and that less than 1/3 of respondents value this activity as very important, which corresponds to the findings from section 4.6.

*Graph 63: What activities should SOC focus on in the forthcoming period (average)*



Graph 64: *Importance of activities that SOC should focus on in the forthcoming period*



Apart from the aforementioned activities, some respondents mentioned additional activities or approaches that they believe deserve special attention in the period ahead. Thus, for example, 4 respondents emphasized the need for opening of a ‘gay club’ (or bar) so that the LGBTI persons could meet and socialise more often, and some of them believe that such as club should be launched and run by the Sarajevo Open Centre. Moreover, two respondents believe that activities should be organised to contribute to the integration of heterosexual persons and the LGBTI community and, in that respect, the concept of closed events should be supplemented with events open to anyone willing to come in contact with the LGBTI community. One person believes that the Sarajevo Open Centre Should establish a ‘drop-in centre’, following good practices from the region and Europe. Also, three respondents think that the Sarajevo Open Centre should focus more on other cities and small towns in the period ahead, and work more with the community and organise activities in other cities. Finally, one person gave an interesting proposal for the collection and

systematisation of information about psychologists who work with trans individuals, who strictly follow professional principles and are not homophobic – such a base would facilitate identification of trans persons and getting in touch with such psychologists. Apart from these proposals, respondents also offered those that mostly underlined the importance of activities included in the graph above, that they were supposed to prioritise.

## 6. Conclusion

The research we conducted provided us with a comprehensive and systematic insight in some of the key aspects of life of LGBTI people in BiH, their basic needs and problems they face on a daily basis. In that respect, findings of this research enabled us to insert data in the four-year time gap since the last similar research was conducted by the Sarajevo Open Centre, which was presented in the study *Numbers that mean equality: Research results analysis of LGBT people needs in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, allowing us to make a new breakdown of the situation and at least a rough comparison between the two points in time.

Research findings are not encouraging - they confirm the statement we began with in the introduction to this publication: despite of the visible improvements of the legal framework in this domain, everyday life of the LGBTI community has not changed substantially: LGBTI persons are still exposed to discrimination and violence almost to the same extent as they were in 2013 (in that respect, data are practically unchanged), the level of confidence in the official institutions – police and judiciary – among respondents is minor, and such situation instils fear in LGBTI persons, which is probably justified, and results in numerous psychological difficulties – from less serious ones such as avoidance of certain spaces, public gatherings and events, to the more extreme ones, such as avoiding to leave the house, depression, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts. Transgender persons proved to be an especially vulnerable category with respect to discrimination, violence or psychological problems caused by transphobic atmosphere which is, among other things, caused by the fact that it is much more difficult to hide one's gender identity than sexual orientation.

Support for the organisation of the first Pride is still low like it was in 2013: less than one half of respondents believe that this activist event should take place, and the most frequently mentioned reason for the lack of support is fear of violence and plight of the Pride participants. A general conclusion of this research is that daily life of LGBTI people is full of challenges, problems and restrictions, and that the much wanted equality of LGBTI persons and general population is still a distant goal, the attainment of which will require additional activist and other efforts.

In the period ahead, additional light should be shed on some aspects that were covered and tackled in this research. In that regard, findings

of this research provide a good and comprehensive insight in the perception of LGBTI people and their daily life and constitute a good baseline for further research, but sometimes they are not enough to provide final answers to numerous questions raised in this study. However, until then, these findings can help in defining the directions of future activities of the Sarajevo Open Centre more clearly, and in formulating of framework proposals for the improvement of certain aspects covered by the study.



## 7. Framework Recommendations

In accordance with the research findings and continuous advocacy efforts of the Sarajevo Open Centre, below is an overview of key framework measures that should be taken i.e. policies that should be implemented in order to improve the position of LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

### **Coming out**

- Perform continuous trainings and awareness raising campaigns for LGBTI persons, families and friends of LGBTI persons about the coming out process, communication strategies and acceptance of identity, coping with potential rejection and exclusion scenarios etc. Moreover, adequate psychological support should be provided to LGBTI persons in the 'coming out' process.

### ***Discrimination and violence against LGBTI people***

- Continuous work on the improvement and enhancement of the institutional framework is required, in order to ensure adequate implementation of legal solutions and measures for the prevention and sanctioning of discrimination and violence against LGBTI people, in order to discourage the culture of intolerance and violence against LGBTI persons.
- Encourage the LGBT to report cases of discrimination and/or violence against them and provide them with financial and legal support for that purpose.

### **Confidence in the institutions (police and judiciary)**

- It is necessary to work continuously and proactively on sensibilising and training of police officers and judicial employees in proper handling of cases of human rights violations against LGBTI persons, and to provide institutional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the work on such cases, the results of which will be transparent and publicly available.

### **Psychological wellbeing of LGBTI persons**

- Considering that a significant share of respondents faced different forms of psychological difficulties and that a very small number of respondents request professional support in coping with such crises, it is necessary to:
- Educate LGBTI people about the importance of accessing

professional help in the process of overcoming psychological crises or lasting psychological conditions;

- Professionalise psychological, psychiatric and therapeutic services in this field, and continuously train professionals to be able to understand and work with LGBTI people;
- Provide financial and logistical conditions in order for the LGBTI persons to have smooth access to the professional support in this domain – professionals or institutions specialised in LGBTI problems could be separately presented to the LGBTI community through a web presentation, brochure etc.

### **The Pride**

- Although only less than half of the respondents support the organisation of Pride, this event is one of the key elements in life and building of any LGBTI community. Therefore, institutional - primarily security - political preconditions for organisation of this event should be provided in the forthcoming period. In that regard, government institutions should provide unreserved report in planning, organisation and implementation of this event, and complete safety should be guaranteed to all Pride participants.
- Educate and inform the LGBTI community and general public about the importance of Pride and about the function of this event in the fight for equality and freedom of LGBTI persons.

### **Same-sex unions**

- In order to ensure equal legal and institutional treatment of same-sex unions / partnerships and enjoyment of equal rights and obligations for same-sex couples and heterosexual couples, and in order to eventually provide equality and avoid further institutional discrimination in that respect, relevant government levels (i.e. the Entities and Brčko District) in BiH should adopt and implement laws on same-sex partnerships in the period ahead. These laws would ensure recognition and protection for same-sex partnerships, and define rights and obligations arising from this form of coexistence for same-sex partners.

### **Economic position of LGBTI persons - labour and employment**

- Formulate and adopt amendments to labour laws in both Entities, Brčko District, and to the Law on Civil Service in the Institutions of BiH in order to ensure that all the four laws recognise sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics as grounds protected against discrimination.

### **Transgender persons**

- Legal solutions should be formulated, adopted and implemented in all three administrative units (Federation of BiH, Republika Srpska, Brčko District) or at the level of BiH that would enable change of sex marker and single birth registration code in personal documents prior to the complete sex reassignment surgery, in accordance with best European practices, and reduce potential discriminating practices that transgender persons are facing.
- Establish / train professional medical teams to provide sex reassignment services, and provide technical, infrastructural and logistical capacities for administration of the sex reassignment treatment at the territory of BiH.
- Within the state health insurance fund, provide financial resources and introduce the right to reimbursement of sex reassignment treatment costs for transgender persons, in order to make the treatment more accessible for transgender persons.
- Introduce gender identity to labour and criminal laws in BiH, i.e. in both Entities and Brčko District as one of the grounds protected against discrimination and hate crimes, in order to provide better and more efficient legal mechanisms to combat transphobia.

## 8. Literature

- Aganović, Arijana et al. (2012), *Pojmovnik LGBT kulture*. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre / Heinrich Böll Foundation
- Banović, Damir, et al. (2016). *TRANS\*FORMACIJA prava - modeli pravnog regulisanja prilagodbe spola u BiH*, Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre
- Čaušević, Jasmina (2013). *Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini*. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre
- Džumhur, Jasminka, Nives Jukić and Ljubinsko Mitrović (2016). *Specijalni izvještaj o pravima LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini*. Banja Luka: Institution of the Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Hasanagić, Jasmina, Slobodanka Dekić and Vladana Vasić (2014). *LGBT Čitanka 3: Identiteti, aktivizam, pravo*. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre
- ILGA-Europe (2017). *Rainbow Europe Index*. May 2017
- Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of BiH (2016). *Alternativni izvještaj za BiH 2016: politički kriteriji* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 23] Sarajevo: Initiative for Monitoring the European Integration of BiH
- Sarajevo Open Centre (2016). *Same-Sex Partnership – A Sleeper in BiH’s EU Integration Process* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 25] Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre
- Vasić, Vladana, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Prijedlog mjera za ravnopravnost lezbejki, gejeva, biseksualnih, transrodnih i interspolnih (LGBTI) osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2017–2019. godine* [Human Rights Papers: Paper 21] Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre
- Vasić, Vladana, Saša Gavrić and Emina Bošnjak (2016). *Rozi izvještaj 2016: godišnji izvještaj o stanju ljudskih prava LGBTI osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini*. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre
- Anti-Discrimination Law: unofficial consolidated text (Official Gazette of BiH, no. 59/09 and 66/16), Article 2, Paragraph 1; prepared by Inela Hadžić. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre

# 9. Appendix 1: Questionnaire

## QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF LGBTI PERSONS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Before you is a questionnaire that aims to identify the real needs of LGBTI persons 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 persons.

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**.

### EVERYDAY LIFE OF LGBTI PERSONS

#### *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

**10.a. If the case is completed, please describe the outcome:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**10.b. If the case was settled in a different way, please describe how:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**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 press charges
- ☐ 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 person
- ☐ Avoid using public transportation
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (*move on to question number 20*)

**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 you 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

**18.a. If the case is completed, please describe the outcome:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**18.b. If the case was settled in a different way, please describe how:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

***Confidence 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 persons
- They are not competent in their work
- I don't believe they would offer me appropriate protection
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**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.*

- Possible homophobia/transphobia of officials
- Insufficient sensitivity in work with LGBTI persons
- They are not competent in their work
- I don't believe they would offer me appropriate protection
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

***Psychological well-being of LGBTI persons***

**24. Do you think you experienced psychological difficulties / crises due to the social treatment of LGBTI persons? \***

- Yes
- No, although I believe the society treats LGBTI persons in a negative manner (homophobic, transphobic etc.) (move on to question number 26)
- No, because I believe the society to be tolerant (move on to question number 26)

**25. If the answer is yes, what kind of psychological difficulties are you talking about?**

*More answers are possible.*

- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Anxiety / panic attacks
- ☐ Suicide attempt
- ☐ Stress
- ☐ Eating disorder
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**26. Did you ever seek expert psychological / psychiatric / therapeutic help? \***

- ☐ Yes (move on to question 28)
- ☐ No

**27. If the answer is no, why did you not seek professional 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**28. Did you tell some of the medical staff listed below that you were an LGBTI person? Mark your answers below and describe the reaction of the medical staff. \***

If you do not visit any of the listed medical 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				

**29. 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	1	2	3	4	5
Discrimination 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
No support programmes by state institutions	1	2	3	4	5
Inadequate visibility of LGBTI persons and LGBTI topics/issues in public	1	2	3	4	5
Non-existence of adequate institutional programmes of psychological support for LGBTI persons	1	2	3	4	5
Unemployment	1	2	3	4	5
Non-existence of a medical team for sex reassignment surgery	1	2	3	4	5
Demanding sex 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

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

---

**Organising Pride**

**30. Should the first Pride be organized in BiH? \***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I'm not sure

**30.a. Please provide a brief explanation of your answer:**

---

**31. Would you take part in Pride? \***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I'm not sure

**31.a. Please provide a brief explanation of your answer**

---

**32. Below are some statements regarding Pride. 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 persons in the country.	1	2	3	4	5
Organising Pride can contribute to enhanced visibility of the issues LGBTI persons face.	1	2	3	4	5



Organising Pride can influence the society and improve the acceptance of LGBTI persons 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 persons to come out.	1	2	3	4	5

**Same-sex union**

**33. Are you in a stable, lasting intimate relationship? \***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (*move on to question number 35*)

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

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

**36. Is legislative regulation of same-sex partnerships useful? \***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

**36.a. Please provide a brief explanation of your answer:**

---

***Transgender persons***

*This part is intended for transgender persons only*

**37. Do you plan to undergo sex reassignment treatment?**

- ☐ Yes, completely
- ☐ Yes, partially
- ☐ No
- ☐ I haven't decided yet

**38. Are you currently in the process of transitioning?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, but I would like to start the process

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

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**39.a. If yes, please elaborate further:**

---

**40. 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. Were you ever exposed to any of the situations specified below as a transgender person?**

*Multiple answers are possible.*

- ☐ Received transphobic comments
- ☐ Experienced verbal transphobic abuse
- ☐ Experienced threatening situations
- ☐ Experienced physical abuse

- Experienced sexual abuse
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**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:

***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 body?**

- Yes
- No

**45. Have you ever undergone any medical treatment to bring your genitals/chromosomes or hormones in line with the typically male and female ones?**

- Yes
- No

**46. Have you ever been subjected to medical treatment against your will?**

- Yes
- No

**46.a. If yes, please indicate what medical treatments you were subjected to:**

---

**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 sex eassignment procedure is too invasive.	1	2	3	4	5
Intersex persons do not need sex 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 persons***

**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 monthly income? \***

- ☐ Up to 420 BAM
- ☐ From 420 to 850 BAM
- ☐ From 850 to 1300 BAM
- ☐ From 1300 to 1800 BAM
- ☐ Above 1800 BAM
- ☐ 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:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**52. Do you think that your sexual orientation/gender identity makes your career advancement harder?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, because others don't know about my LGBTI identity

- No, although others know about my LGBTI identity
- Not sure

**52.a. If yes, please provide a brief explanation of your answer:**

---

**53. (For the employed) Do you think that you have problems at the workplace because of your sexual orientation/gender identity?**

- Yes
- No, although co-workers know about my LGBTI identity
- No, because co-workers don't know about my LGBTI identity

**53.a. If the answer is yes, what kind of problems are you talking about?**

---

**54. (For the unemployed): Do you think that your sexual orientation/gender identity makes it difficult for you to find employment?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**54.a. Please provide a brief explanation of your answer:**

---

## **LGBTI ACTIVISM OF SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE**

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

- Yes
- No (*move on to question number 57*)

**56. Which services and activities of Sarajevo Open Centre are you familiar with?**

*Multiple answers are possible.*

- Public events (roundtables/film projections/exhibitions)
- Legal counselling for LGBTI persons
- Psychological counselling for LGBTI persons
- Workshops for LGBTI persons
- Publications/books
- Advocating for LGBTI rights with public institutions

- Trainings for civil servants
- Parties/socialising events for LGBTI persons

**57. Does SOC’s work have a positive influence on public perception of LGBTI persons?**

- Yes
- No
- Partially

**57.a. Please provide a brief explanation of your answer:**

---

**58. 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
Pride	1	2	3	4	5
Training of civil servants (e.g. police, medical staff, school staff) for the purpose of awareness raising and ensuring professional approach to LGBTI people	1	2	3	4	5
Public cultural events (film projections, exhibitions, discussions etc.)	1	2	3	4	5

Media campaigns for the purpose of informing and sensibilising 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 persons / self-help groups	1	2	3	4	5
Legal counselling for LGBTI persons	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
Closed social activities for LGBTI persons (socialising events, parties, outings, artistic activities/creative workshops etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Add the activities you find important:</p>					



*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)

- ☐ Students
- ☐ 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**

\_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \* \* \*

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING.**

\* \* \* \* \*

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.

## 10. Appendix 2: Glossary of Key LGBTI Terms

### BISEXUAL PERSON

A person who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to people of both sexes.

### COMING OUT

Concept derived from the phrase *coming out of the closet*, routinely used to describe public or open declarations and affirmation of one's sexual orientation (for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals), gender identity (for trans people) and sex characteristics (for intersex people). It is common on two levels: as a self-discovery, and as a (more or less) public notification. Coming out is a very important process for LGBTI persons as it represents public affirmation of their own identity which is highly significant for the psychological health and quality of life of this minority group.

### DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination refers to every distinction, exclusion, limitation and form of putting a person or a group of people at disadvantage. There are various grounds and characteristics by which a person or group of people is led to a disadvantaged position. Lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals can be discriminated against on the grounds of *sexual orientation*, trans\* individuals (including transgender and transsexual persons) on the grounds of *gender identity* and gender expression, and intersex persons on the grounds of *sex characteristics*. It is therefore essential that all three grounds (sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics) be legally recognized as grounds on the basis of which discrimination is prohibited.

### HOMOPHOBIA

Irrational fear, intolerance, prejudice against gay men and lesbians. It manifests as a conviction in heterosexual superiority. Such conviction incites violence against people who are not heterosexual, which is justified by a belief in one's own superiority (and the inferiority of others). Violence is reflected in verbal and physical attacks, and discrimination.

### HOMOSEXUAL PERSON

A person who is attracted to persons of the same sex.

### *Lesbian*

A woman who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to other women.

### *Gay*

A man who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to other men. It is also used as an adjective (e.g. gay person), and as such can include both men and women of same-sex orientation.

### *Homosexual*

Outdated clinical term for people whose sexual orientation is towards people of the same sex, i.e. person that is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to people of the same sex. This term is inappropriate and many gays and lesbians find it offensive. Better terms are gay (man) and lesbian.

### HOMOSEXUALISM

An outdated clinical term that was used to medically mark the same-sex sexual orientation. It is considered offensive because it implies that homosexuality is a disease to be treated. Keeping in mind that the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed in 1990 that homosexuality is like heterosexuality – a completely normal variation of human sexuality, this term is no longer in use.

### INTERSEX PERSON

People born with *sex characteristics*, which include chromosomes, gonads or genitalia, that do not match the typical, binary categories of male and female bodies. There are different forms of intersexuality. Individuals can be male, female and intersex. *Intersex individuals*, like male and female individuals, have sexual orientation and gender identity. In the past, these persons were often called hermaphrodites, but this term is considered discriminatory and medically inaccurate.

### LGBTI

All-encompassing term used to denote lesbians, gay men, bisexual, trans\*(gender) and intersex people. The term denotes a heterogenic group usually identified by the acronym LGBTI in social and political activism.

### LGBTTIQ

Abbreviation for lesbians, gay men, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersexual and queer people.

## QUEER

It was used earlier in the English language as a derogatory way to refer to non- heterosexual people. The term was later taken over by LGBTI people as a way to describe themselves. Some people particularly appreciate this term because it signifies defiance and includes diversity – not only gays and lesbians, but also bisexual, transgender, intersexual people, and even heterosexual people living outside the heteropatriarchal gender norms.

## GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity is associated with an individual's experience and comprehension of one's own sex, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth. Among other things, it refers to personal experience of one's own body, clothing and speech. People whose gender identity is in accordance with the sex they were assigned at birth are called *cisgender individuals*, and people whose gender identity is not in accordance to the sex they were assigned at birth are called *trans(-gender) individuals*. Transsexual individuals as a sub-group of transgender individuals are persons whose gender identity is not in accordance with the sex they were assigned at birth and who intend to adjust their biological sex, or who are in the process of transition.

### *Gender expression*

Visual and external presentation of every person that is reflected in clothing, hair, behavior, and body language.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Emotional and/or sexual attraction or affection towards people of the same and/or opposite sex/gender. Usually *heterosexual* (attracted to the persons of the opposite sex), *homosexual* (attracted to the persons of the same sex) and *bisexual* (attracted to the persons of both the same and the opposite sex) are used as categories. In legal texts in Bosnia and Herzegovina the terms sex orientation, sexual decision, sexual preference, sex preference, but the use of sexual orientation is recommended.

## SEX CHARACTERISTICS

People's sex characteristics, like the chromosomes, gonads and genitals can be different than the typical, binary division on male and female bodies. People can therefore be male, female and intersex. Intersex people can be discriminated against, or be targets hate crimes and prejudice because of their sex characteristics.

## TRANSGENDER PERSON

Term used for people whose gender identity is not in accordance with the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender people feel, prefer, or choose to present themselves differently from traditionally prescribed gender roles assigned to them at birth. This can be expressed through clothing, mannerisms, makeup, or body modifications. Among other things, the term transgender refers to people who do not identify themselves as either male or female, transsexual, transvestites or cross dressers. A *transgender man* is a person who was assigned the female sex at birth, but his gender identity is masculine, or in the spectrum of masculine gender identities. A *transgender woman* is a person who was assigned the male sex at birth, but her gender identity is feminine, or in the spectrum of feminine gender identities.

### *Transsexual person*

Person who has a clear desire and intent to modify their sex, or who has partially or completely modified their body (including physical and/or hormonal therapy and surgeries).

## TRANSPHOBIA

Irrational fear, intolerance and prejudice against transsexual and transgender people.

## HATE CRIME

Refers to criminal acts motivated by prejudices towards a person or group of people. Hate crimes include intimidation, threats, property damage, abuse, homicide or any other criminal act whose victim became a target of the assault because of their actual or assumed sexual orientation, gender identity, or seks characteristic, or because the victim is connected, supports, belongs to or is a member of an LGBTI group.

## 11. About the Author

Amar Numanović is a researcher and analyst in the area of socio-economic policies and economic development. He has worked extensively with think tanks, academic institutions, international and local non-governmental organisations and private companies. His main research interests include labour market and development policies, particularly the effects of economic interventionism on economic and social outcomes. He is also involved in issues related to human rights and freedoms.

## 12. About Sarajevo Open Centre

Sarajevo Open Centre (SOC) advocates full respect for human rights and social inclusion of LGBTI persons and women. Sarajevo Open Centre is an independent, feminist civil society organisation that strives to empower LGBTI (lesbians, gay, bisexual, trans\* and inter-sex) persons and women through community building and establishing an activist movement. SOC publically promotes the human rights of LGBTI persons and women and advocates for improved legislation and policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina on state, European and international level.

Here, we will mention only a few of our achievements related to equality of LGBTI persons.

In addition to psychosocial and legal counselling, we continue to run the only LGBTI media outlet in the country – the web portal [www.lgbti.ba](http://www.lgbti.ba). We have organised trainings for the police, the prosecutor's office and the courts and we have worked extensively with journalists, young jurists and other future professionals. In 2016 several of our legislative and policy initiatives were discussed by the government and the parliament. We have also started working with institutions on the local level, where the LGBTI community needs us the most.

Our advocacy work focuses on anti-discrimination legislation as well as combating violence against LGBTI persons. We will continue to work on issue related to trans\* persons, same-sex unions, social inclusion, as well as the position and treatment of LGBTI persons in education, health care and employment. In the past few years we have run media campaigns that have reached over a million of BiH citizens and organised the LGBTI film festival – Merlinka.

For more information about our work visit: [www.soc.ba](http://www.soc.ba).



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

In the Human Rights Series we publish reports, articles and publications on human rights of women, lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. Some of the research on the needs of LGBTI persons and public attitudes toward homosexuality and transgender identity published by Sarajevo Open Centre include:

Jasmina Čaušević (2013). Brojevi koji ravnopravnost znače: Analiza rezultata istraživanja potreba LGBT osoba u Bosni i Hercegovini. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Open Centre

Zlatiborka Popov-Momčinović (2013): “Ko smo mi da sudimo?”. Ispitivanje javnog mnijenja o stavovima prema homoseksualnosti i transrodnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini. Sarajevo: CURE Foundation, Heinrich Boell Foundation – BiH Office, Sarajevo Open Centre

All publications are available at [soc.ba](http://soc.ba), under the category Publications – *Human Rights Series*.

