



European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

NEWS REPORT

Country:	Macedonia
Title:	Study on Problems and Needs of LGBTI Persons in the Fields of Social Protection, Legal Services and Police Conduct
Date:	15 March 2016
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<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	The LGBT Centre publishes first wider study on problems and needs of LGBTI persons in the country
Ground of discrimination:	Sexual orientation
Source:	NGO publication
Field:	Social protection, employment legal services, police conduct
Applicable law:	n/a

Content

Policy development:

The LGBT Centre of the Helsinki Committee of the Republic of Macedonia published the first study of problems and needs of LGBTI persons in the country.¹ The study focuses on the areas of social protection, legal services and police conduct.

The study found that 39% of the surveyed persons consider that they have been victims of discrimination. However, 74.6% of these did not report the discrimination anywhere. In addition, 38.6% of interviewees consider that they have been discriminated at the workplace because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, with one quarter considering that their sexual orientation was the reason behind the lack of any promotion. Also one quarter of persons consider that they have been fired because of this, whereas 27.7% did not get the job they applied for because of this. Out of these, a high 90% did not report the discrimination to any of the competent institutions.²

Even more alarming are the findings that 65.9% of the surveyed persons reported being subjected to violence due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Out of these, 18% responded being subjected to more than one type of violence (physical, verbal, mental, sexual). Out of these, 71.27% did not report the case. The prevalence of domestic violence among these cases is one of every three persons.

¹ Kocho Andonovski et al, "Analysis of the problems and needs of LGBT persons in Republic of Macedonia in the area of social protection, legal services and police conduct [Анализа проблемите и потребите на ЛГБТИ луѓето во Република Македонија во областа на социјалната заштита, правните услуги и полициското постапување]" <<http://lgbti.mk/uploads/3b7076e5-dc63-4b58-8bb6-ae2a46d91bc4.pdf>> Last accessed: 22.02.2016.

² The study does not provide a more specific answer as to what is meant by "a competent institution". This is justifiable considering the study was conducted in several fields, thus it would be difficult to compile a succinct and coherent list of competent institutions.

The Study further underscores the gravity of situation arising from the very low reporting rates of both discrimination and violence. The highest percentage of reporting registered in this study was in relation to police misconduct. Main reasons for underreporting are victimisation and lack of trust in state institutions.

Andonovski et al issue a set of recommendations for each of the field which fell in their research focus. Common recommendations across fields include need for sensitisation and awareness raising among State employees and informing citizens of their rights as well as informing the LGBTI persons how to realise their own rights. There is also a call for greater cooperation of the State institutions with the civil society organisations, but also a call to a halt of scapegoating of CSOs and the build-up of a negative campaign which causes mistrust in these organizations among the citizens.

The study was conducted in six major urban areas from across the whole country. Participants were selected via convenience sampling. The return rate of survey questionnaires was a high 95.71%. As the authors of the study themselves state, no claim on representativeness of the study can be made due to the simple fact of stigma attached to their personal characteristics which causes sometimes these persons to be hiding their own identity even from themselves.

Key points of analysis:

Study finds gross violations of the rights of LGBT persons.

Internet link source:

Kocho Andonovski et al, "Analysis of the problems and needs of LGBT persons in Republic of Macedonia in the area of social protection, legal services and police conduct [Анализа проблемите и потребите на ЛГБТИ луѓето во Република Македонија во областа на социјалната заштита, правните услуги и полициското постапување]" <<http://lgbti.mk/uploads/3b7076e5-dc63-4b58-8bb6-ae2a46d91bc4.pdf>> Last accessed 22.02.2016.