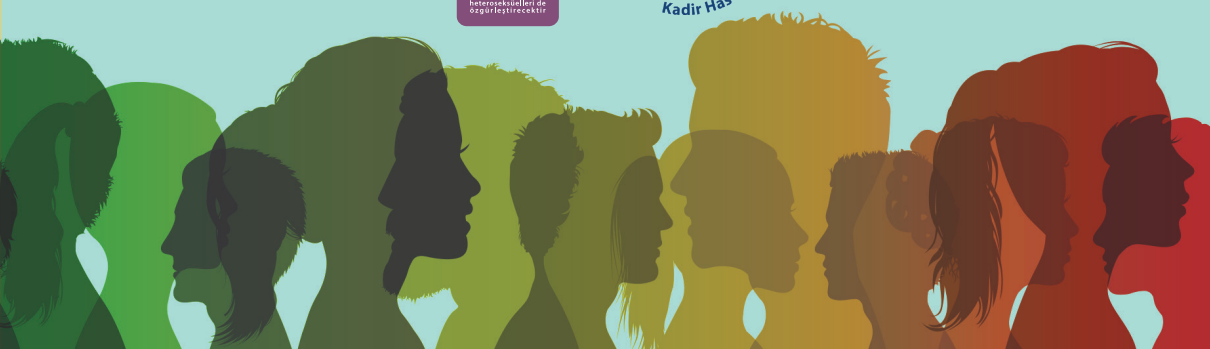




Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Plus Employees in Private Sector in Turkey

2020 Research



Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Plus Employees in the Private Sector in Turkey 2020 Research

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INDEX

Chapter 1

Key Findings

5

Chapter 2

Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Plus Employees
in the Private Sector in Turkey in 2020

15

Research sample

Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex traits	17
Age and education level of the participants	19
Disclosure of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex traits in the workplace	20
Characteristics of workplaces and positions of the participants	21
Headquarters of companies	23
Duration of work in the current workplace	24
Position in the current company	24

Assessments regarding recruitment processes

25

Channels for job search and application	25
Inclusion and discrimination in job advertisements	26
Disclosure during the hiring process	28
Experiences of discrimination during the hiring process	29
Corporate protection against discrimination	31
LGBTI+ inclusive social activities	32
LGBTI+ inclusive social help and medical support	32

Personal experiences of discrimination

33

Reporting the discrimination	35
------------------------------	----

Experience of discrimination towards other LGBTI+ employees

36

Hate speech against LGBTI+ individuals

38

The relationship between discrimination, job satisfaction and efficiency

40

General evaluation regarding the sensibility of workplaces about LGBTI+ rights

42

Suggestions for the fight against discrimination of LGBTI+ employees

43

Quotes from our participants

44



Chapter 1

Key Findings

This is the 6th year for The Situation of LGBTI+ Employees in the Private Sector in Turkey conducted by Kaos GL Association. We, as the Kadir Has University Gender and Women Studies Center are happy to have been a part of this research for the last three years.

The 2020 research was conducted using SurveyMonkey Pro and consisted of an online survey of 674 people who declared themselves LGBTI+ and who worked in the private sector at the time of the research. Our sample consisted mainly of young, highly educated (above high school) individuals who have been in their current job for a relatively short time. Eighty-two percent were between the ages of 18 and 35, 86% have associate, undergraduate or graduate education and 85.8% have worked in their current workplace for less than 6 years. For the first time this year, we asked the participants to identify the city in which they live but we also included “I do not want to share” as an option in case people wanted to keep this information private for security issues. As a result, 17.2% did not answer this question. Among those who stated their city, most of the participants were in Istanbul, followed by Izmir and Ankara.

In 2020, 49.6% of the participants declared their gender identity as male or trans male and their sexual orientation as gay. This was the largest group in the sample. Similar to last year, the ratio of those who chose “other” for gender identity increased, almost doubling to 10%. The “other” answer for sexual orientation also increased to 8%. In comparison to 2019 results, this year more people defined themselves outside the binary gender system in terms of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Another interesting aspect of this year’s results was the decrease in the total percentage of participants who chose “woman” or “trans woman” for their gender identity. This ratio was 38% within 85 participants in 2016, 45% within 166 participants in 2017, 36.3% within 198 participants in 2018, and dropped to 29.3% within 772 participants in 2019. This year the ratio was 29.7% with 674 people in our sample. At this time, we do not have enough data to explain exactly why the rate drops as sample size increases. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), in 2019 the labor force participation rate among men stood at 63.1% while for women it was only 28.7%. We can conclude that as our sample size grows, results are closer to those in the research universe.¹ The statistics show that women’s labor force participation rate overall is low and that women are often engaged in unregistered employment.

According to DISK/Genel-İş Union report on March 2020 entitled “Women’s Labor in Turkey”, Turkey has one of the lowest rates of labor force participation for women among OECD countries. Only three out of ten women above the age of 15 are part of the work force. Unemployment rates for women are double compared to EU

¹ TÜİK, *Haber Bülteni: İşgücü İstatistikleri 2019*, 20 Mart 2020, www.tuik.gov.tr (Last Access: 20.10.2020).

average and three times the OECD average. For those who employed, the biggest problem is job insecurity. In 2019, unregistered employment for women was 41.3% of the total.² In addition, in countries where there are no policies regarding gender transition periods and legal recognition of gender identity, unemployment rates are higher among trans individuals. This forces many trans women into unregistered, insecure jobs and sex work, which requires further investigation.³

Similar to previous years, this year the largest group in the sample found employment in the education, health, IT, food and the retail sectors. Among respondents, 40.2% were working in these sectors while 68.1% of participants work in small or medium size companies. It is possible to say that the respondents comprised LGBTI+ employees from nearly every sector of the economy. When it comes to the score the employees gave to their workplaces (1 to 4) in terms of LGBTI+ sensitivity, NGO's received the highest average (2.9) similar to last year. The banking/finance, food and health sectors received the lowest points. This research suggests that company scores and the ratio of openly LGBTI+ employees dropped as the number of employees increased.

Multinational or foreign companies received a higher satisfaction rate than Turkey based companies. Eighty-three percent of the international companies represented in the sample have their headquarters in the United States or the European Union. Their average score was 2.3/4. The same score was 1.6/4 among Turkey based companies. In line with this finding, 31.7% of the participants who worked in a foreign company declared that there are mechanisms in their workplaces to prevent discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation and sex characteristics. For companies based in Turkey, the same ratio was 9.3%. Similarly, the ratio of employees open in terms of their gender identity, sexual orientation and sex characteristics (25.7%) was higher in foreign companies.

The percentage of those who claimed they were completely open regarding their identity in the workplace was 14.8% in 2020. In the same research for the public sector, the ratio was 3.4%. Last year, disclosure rates in the private and public sectors were 17.4% and 4.4% respectively. In 2018, the numbers were higher at 22% and 7%. In order to understand the significance of this decrease, we need to continue examine trends together with the numbers of coming years.

The rate of those who disclosed their identity during the hiring process has also declined. Only 8.9% of the participants declared there were open during these processes. This demonstrates that, similarly to previous years, LGBTI+ employees

2 DISK/Genel-İş Araştırma Dairesi, *Türkiye'de Kadın Emeği Raporu*, Mart 2020, www.genel-is.org.tr (Last access: 20.10.2020)

3 For an example see: European Council Commissioner for Human Rights, *Human Rights and Gender Identity* (CommDH/IssuePaper(2009)2), 29 July 2009, p. 12,13, www.coe.int (Last access: 23.10.2020); European Council Commissioner for Human Rights, *Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe*, October 2011, p. 171, www.coe.int (Last access: 23.10.2020).

experience difficulties accessing employment at least, in part, due to discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation and sex characteristics. LGBTI+ employees often do not disclose their identities in order to avoid unemployment. Since the risk continues after the hiring process, they continue the strategy throughout their employment. The rate of disclosure during employment was slightly higher than the rate of disclosure during the hiring process, which suggests that the working conditions, the attitude of colleagues and administrators may create a level of confidence that could help LGBTI+ employees to disclose their identities. Quotes from our participants support this as well.

In 2020, 6.7% of participants reported that they had experienced discrimination (discriminatory attitudes, discourse, behavior and/or practices) during the hiring processes. Less than half (42.9%) of the participants stated that they had not experienced discrimination in hiring but 50.4% believe they did not experience discrimination because either they were not open regarding their gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex situation and these were not detectable in the appearance. Slightly more than forty-five percent (45.7%) declared they had not experienced discriminatory attitudes or practices without pointing to a particular reason.

The rate of those participants who reported experiencing discrimination during the hiring processes or in the workplace was low however; we should consider this data in comparison to other statistics. One out of two LGBTI+ employees experienced gender based discrimination or they did not experience it because they were assumed to be non-trans or heterosexual since they did not disclose their gender identity, sexual orientation or sex characteristics. In addition, the number of individuals that stated they did not experience discrimination needs to be examined in light of the rate of people who remain undisclosed. Just 8.9% were open regarding their identity during hiring processes and only 14.8% reported being open in the workplace, once hired. Moreover, 14.8% of participants reported witnessing discriminatory attitude or practices towards other LGBTI+ employees.

In 2011, European Council Commissioner for Human Rights issued a detailed report regarding discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation that highlighted the non-disclosure strategy LGBTI+ employees are often obliged to adopt in order to prevent the risk of discrimination and harassment. The often-obligatory use of non-disclosure as a strategy makes it more difficult to analyze the real dimension of homophobia, transphobia and discrimination in the workplace.⁴ Looking at our own survey data, the European Council's statement, based on research in different countries, is also valid for Turkey. Data also suggests that when this strategy is not employed or not effective, discrimination occurred. LGBTI+ employees in Turkey do not disclose their identities to avoid discrimination and harassment.

4 European Council Commissioner for Human Rights, *Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe*, p. 166, 176.

Parallel to our findings in 2018 and 2019, LGBTI+ private sector respondents, in 2020, continued to prefer channels like peer reference and internet career sites to seek and apply for jobs. In that context LGBTI+ employees may feel the need to foresee the conditions in companies where they seek work, to determine if there is a possible match between their profile and the position.

Despite taking precautions while job seeking, the numbers of individuals who remained completely or partially undisclosed demonstrates that there remain substantial obstacles to LGBTI+ visibility in the private sector in Turkey and that the number of companies with inclusive policies was very limited. According to our participants, inclusive policies and non-discriminatory attitudes were not reflected in the job postings or hiring processes. Roles and norms produced by a heteronormative and cisnormative binary gender system created certain expectations that have a negative impact on LGBTI+ employees starting with the hiring processes and leading to the deployment of the strategy of non-disclosure.

In order to examine the conditions that force LGBTI+ employees to use this strategy throughout their work lives last year we added a question regarding hate speech. In 2019, 34% and in 2020 36.9% of our participants declared they witnessed hate speech in their workplaces towards LGBTI+. This finding confirms the condition in which LGBTI+ employees often feel compelled hide their identities at work. The same ratio is 56.6% in the public sector research, which explains why we have a lower disclosure rate within LGBTI+ employees of the public sector.

Another important dimension is gender equality. Our research suggests that those who chose “woman” or “trans woman” for their gender identity a strategy of non-disclosure strategy was more common. We witnessed similar results in 2019 as well. The rate of those completely disclosed in the workplace dropped significantly among women. We are planning to analyze gender equality aspect comparing our results over the last 6 years and share this separately as a detailed study.

Another point worth mentioning is gender equality. When the responses of participants who declared their gender identity as women and trans women are grouped and compared with the general rates, results suggest that the strategy of non-disclosure is more widely applied by women participants. This is similar to last year’s findings. The rate of women and transwomen who fully disclosed their identity during recruitment and in the workplace remains lower than the rest of the sample, and at the same time, the rate of this group being total undisclosed increases. We plan to continue to expand the gender equality dimension of this reason by exploring all the data that has been collected over the past six years.

Similar to previous years, this year some of our participants expressed the idea that sexual orientation, gender identity and someone’s sex characteristics are private and related to an individual’s personal life. Therefore, they did not see these “personal issues” as related to social and economic rights, supported and protected

in terms of human rights against discrimination in the workplace. We should also consider that these participants might have a different understanding related to discriminatory attitudes, discourse, behavior and practices in the workplace.

The low number of reported cases of gender based discrimination, homophobia and transphobia in Turkey where anti-discrimination mechanisms of solidarity and protection makes it more difficult for us to analyze the real dimensions of discrimination. Similar to previous years, this year's research results suggest that LGBTI+ employees do not use official channels against the discrimination they experience. Only three out of sixty-one individuals who experienced discrimination in the workplace based on their gender identity, sexual orientation or sex characteristics made an official complaint. Twenty-six individuals never reported the discrimination; the remaining individuals engaged in personal reactions, spoke to officials or just shared the experience with those close to them. Only one participant reported the case to an NGO and again only one person took their discrimination case to court. None of the participants reported their experience of discrimination to their union or professional organization or took the case to the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey (TIHEK). Participants also stated that they did not believe they would get any results through official channels in case of discrimination against LGBTI+ employees. Furthermore, they feared losing their jobs, hate speech, prejudice and involuntary disclosure due to their claims of discrimination.

These results demonstrate that LGBTI+ employees in Turkey need mechanisms to access to employment and work life. Unfortunately, our research suggests that such mechanisms are not common or are ineffective in the private sector. In a few positive instances where they were operating, these mechanisms protected LGBTI+ employees against discrimination and hate speech, increasing their job satisfaction and efficiency.

Only 12.6% of participants declared there were effectual rules and regulations in their companies to prevent discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation and sex characteristics. In companies where effective anti-discrimination measures are in place disclosure rates for LGBTI+ employees almost double and the number of individuals who remain feel they cannot in anyway disclose their identities dropped significantly. In these companies, 30.6% of the LGBTI+ employees are completely open about their identities and only 17.7% remain completely undisclosed. As a reminder, in the overall sample 14.8% reported being open about their identity and 32.8% remained undisclosed. Participants also stated that even in companies with no such mechanisms existed, a non-written agreement or the existence of a LGBTI+ friendly corporate culture also created positive results. However, only 10.2% of the participants declared that there existed inclusive practices regarding LGBTI+ employees in terms of social events. In companies with inclusive practices, 47.8% of the participants reported that they are completely open about their identities. Social aid and psychological support for LGBTI+ employees was

only applicable for 9.2% of the participants and 35.5% of those individuals hide their identities in their workplaces. Mechanisms that empower LGBTI+ employees and rules and regulations to ensure those mechanisms are effective remain quite rare in the private sector in Turkey. The findings here make clear that these means are crucial to fighting discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation and sex characteristics and to empowering LGBTI+ employees.

When we talk about mechanisms to access employment and to empower employees, the first groups that come to mind are unions and professional organizations. This research shows that the rate of membership in such organizations are low among LGBTI+ employees and among those who are members; they did not consider these organizations as the primary place to fight discrimination. Only 11.3% of participants were members of professional organizations and 6.8% were members of a union. This is below the general unionization rate in Turkey. According to DİSK-AR Report on Unionization in Turkey 2020, 12.14% of all workers in Turkey are members of a union.⁵

According to our data, among the 61 participants who experienced discrimination, only 12 were members of a union or professional organization at the time of the survey. Importantly, none of these individuals reported their case to their member organizations. In addition, when we asked our participants to state three major measures that would prevent discrimination against LGBTI+ employees only 23.6% mentioned, “organized struggle and solidarity networks” as a possible solution. These findings point out that we need unions and professional organizations to be active in the fight against discrimination and that these organizations should prioritize the implementation of anti-discriminatory policies.

In 2016, the International Labor Organization (ILO) published the findings of its Honor Project where they note that economic and social rights of the LGBTI+ are not a priority for unions, this includes unions in Turkey. The same note also indicates that LGBTI+ are the major group to experience discrimination and harassment, that job seeking LGBTI+ are closed about their gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex situation as a strategy which continues during the employment. The ILO study also shows that disclosed LGBTI+ employees suffer less from anxiety, depression and burnout syndrome, and in order to provide these working conditions workplaces should implement supportive and inclusive policies.⁶

Participants made clear that being subjected to gender based discrimination and hate speech or even the risk of experiencing discrimination created a series of difficulties. The continuing need to employ a strategy of non-disclosure of their

5 DİSK-AR, *Türkiye’de Sendikalaşmanın Durumu Araştırması Raporu*, April 2020, www.disk.org.tr (Last access: 20.10.2020).

6 International Labour Organization, *Gender identity and sexual orientation: promoting rights, diversity and equality in the world of work, Results of the ILO’s PRIDE Project, Briefing note*, p. 1, 2, 3.

identities to avoid such possibilities exacerbates this situation. LGBTI+ employees reported being unable to have real and intimate relationships, little or no sense of belonging to their companies, they often felt hopeless, sad, anxious and angry, they lacked in their work performance and motivation, which often led to depression, stress, tension and burnout syndrome due to overwhelming conditions. Their efficiency and job satisfaction dropped decidedly. Since we spend most of our time at our workplaces, the negative aspects of the situation are obvious.

Even though the non-disclosure strategy seems to provide some level of protection against discrimination and hate speech, the obligation to subscribe to this strategy is a form of discrimination itself. Generally, LGBTI+ employees reported feeling certain that they would be discriminated against and therefore began to take measures against this even before their employment. During their employment, LGBTI+ individuals continued to hide their identities or only shared this with close colleagues and/or other LGBTI+ individuals in order to separate their work and private lives. Some individuals even felt they had to pretend in terms of body language or the way they express themselves in public. This strategy of non-disclosure and caution against potential discrimination turns into a continuous form of discrimination and has a negative impact on LGBTI+ employees both mentally and physically that is not limited to just their work life.

Answers to open ended questions revealed that the primary concerns for LGBTI+ employees were freedom and visibility. In order to achieve these, LGBTI+ individuals need, in their words, increased social awareness, the abandonment the assumption heteronormativity and cisnormativity rooted in the binary gender system and transformation through education. Even though LGBTI+ participants requested legal security both in gender and in terms of labor law, respondents expressed a general belief that law was not enough to transform society. In that context, LGBTI+ employees called for universities, professional organizations, unions and NGO's to address LGBTI+ rights.

Finally, similar to previous years, the research for 2020 shows that we still have a long way to go in preventing discrimination based gender identity, sexual orientation and sex characteristics, in ensuring LGBTI+ individuals a peaceful and efficient work environment, and in eliminating disadvantages to access employment, to generate legal and corporate policies and civic strategies to guarantee equality in terms of social and economic rights. We hope that our research will be helpful to empower LGBTI+ employees and terminate discrimination.

Prof. Mary Lou O'Neil and Dr. Reyda Ergün



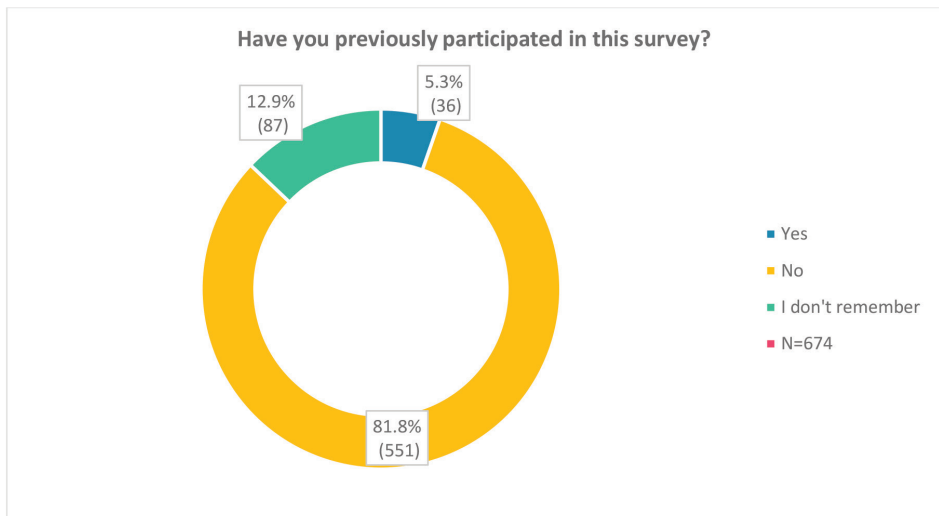


Chapter 2

Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans,
Intersex and Plus Employees in the
Private Sector in Turkey in 2020

Research sample

Kaos GL has published reports on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender equality in the workplace since 2015. In 2018 and 2019, Kaos GL and Kadir Has University Gender and Women Studies Center conducted research using SurveyMonkey Pro online survey system. The participants were lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex individuals employed in the private sector in Turkey in 2019. This year the survey consisted of 674 participants with 81.8% of the participants (551 people) said they have not participated this research before 12.9% (87) did not remember participating and 5.3% (36) actually participated in previous years.



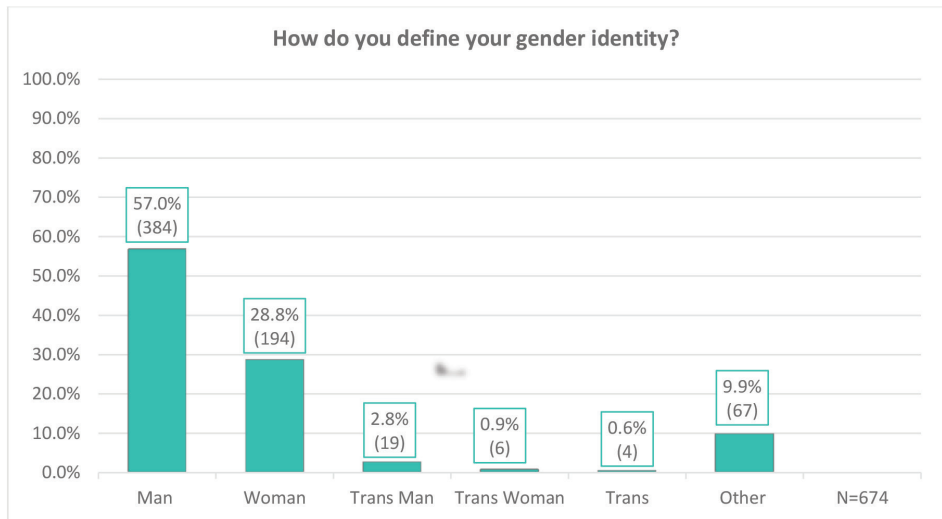
Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex traits

Participants were able to choose their gender identity from a given list or choose “other” and identify themselves.

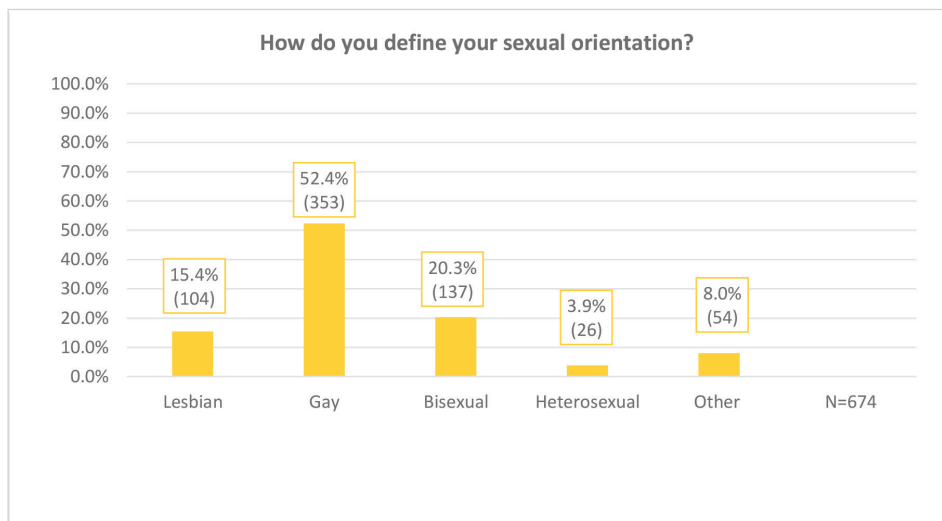
In the sample, 384 participants (57%) identified themselves as male, 194 (28.8%) as female., 19 (2.8%) as trans male 6, (0.9%) as trans female, 5 (0.6%) as trans and 67 (9.9%) as other. Regarding sexual orientation. 102 of the participants (15.4%) declared to be lesbians. 353 (52.4%) gays. 137 (20.3%) as bisexual, 26 (8%) as heterosexual and 54 (8%) as other.

As you can see in the tables, most of the participants identified themselves as gay. Additionally, male and female homosexuals are the largest groups in the sample followed by bisexual males and females. Out of 137 bisexuals that participated the survey, 84 identified themselves as female, 37 as male, 3 trans, 2 trans male and 11 as other.

The number of trans male and females in the private sector was limited, similar to other areas of work life. A series of obstacles during their education and limitations based on gender norms are the main causes of the situation.

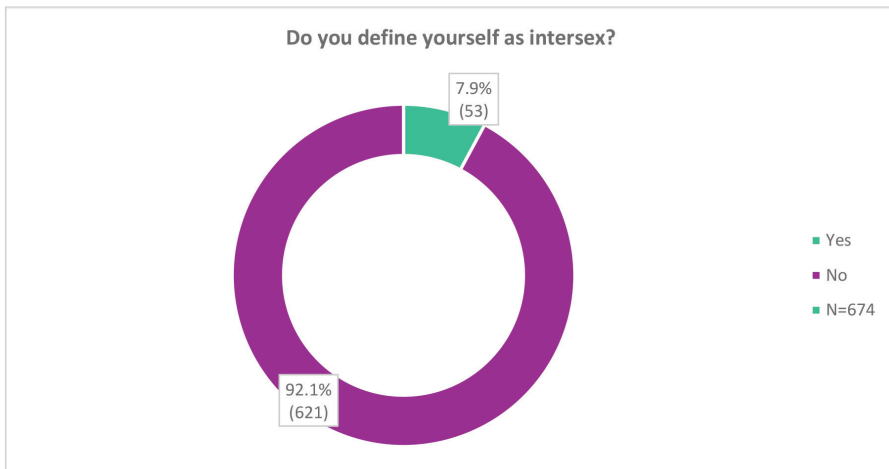


Other: Passive gay, Genderqueer (4), non-binary (22), Queer (6), I don't define it, Agender, Gay (2), I don't have a gender identity, Gender neutral (s), I feel gender neutral, Sometimes female/sometimes male, Gender neutral, Gender fluid, Butch (2), Gay (4), Crossdresser, Pangender, Bisexual, Rfki cinsiyet, Intersexual, Bisexual crossdresser, Gender fluid (3), I haven't put a name on it yet., I don't feel I belong to any gender. Gender non-conforming, non-conforming.



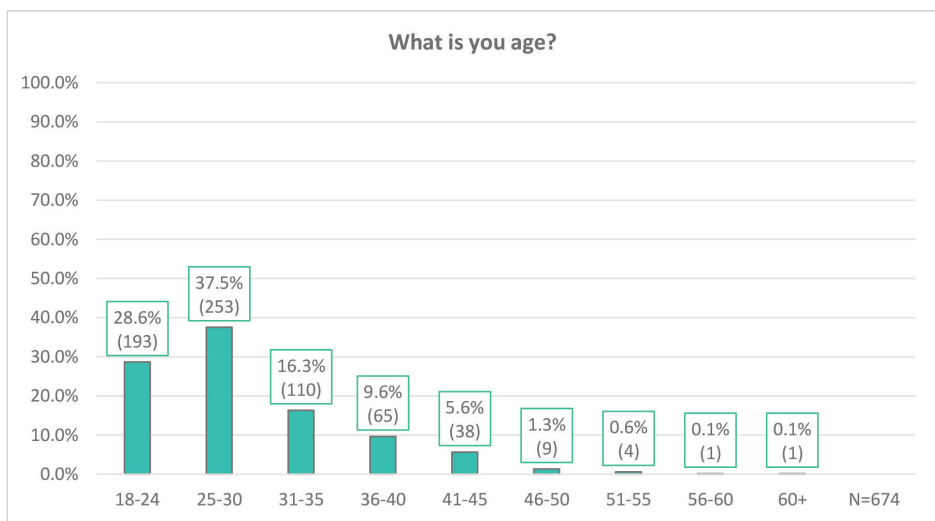
Other: 75% gay 25% heterosexual, pansexual (21), pansexual-demisexual, I don't define it (2), Pansexual (4), I don't have a sexual orientation, I like women, I could be with a shemale, temporary asexual trans male, Queer (3), Just men, Intersex, Gay, Doesn't matter I won't forgive I mean active, Gay, I like men, Male, Normal (2), Human, Bisexual crossdresser, Bicurious, Polisexual, open, Fluid, asexual (-).

In response to the question “do you identify yourself as intersex?” fifty-three participants said yes (7.9%) while 621 said no (92.1%). Among those who answered yes, the distribution of gender identities was as follows: male 28, female 17, trans female one, and six others. Among those who identified as intersex, 24 individuals said they were gay, 16 bisexual, eight lesbian, one heterosexual while four people choose “other”.

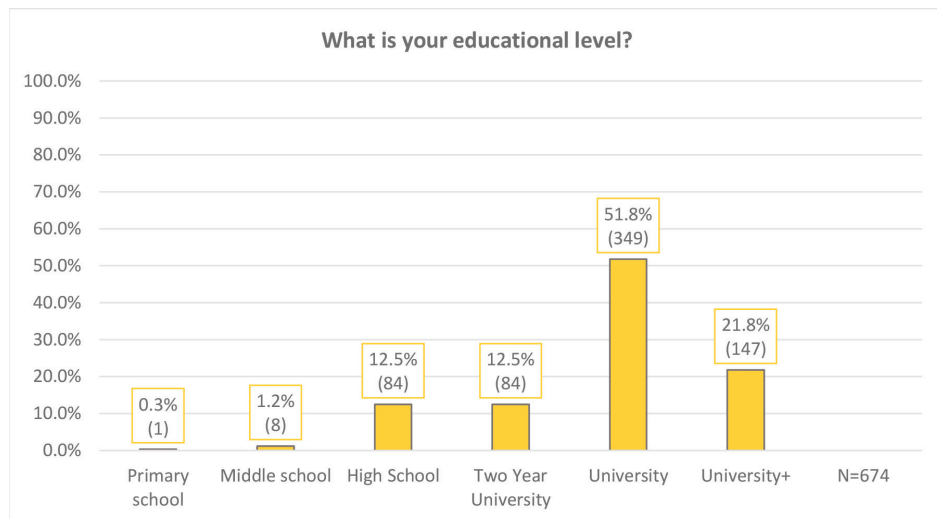


Age and education level of the participants

The age distribution participants can be examined below. The largest group was the range between 25-30 years (37.5%). The total of those between 18-35 years was 556 individuals (82.4%).



Close to half of the participants have a university degree (51.8%) while the other half of the sample consisted of 147 people (21.8%) with an M.A. or PhD, 84 (12.5%) with a high school diploma, eight (1.2%) individuals had completed middle school and two participants had a primary education.

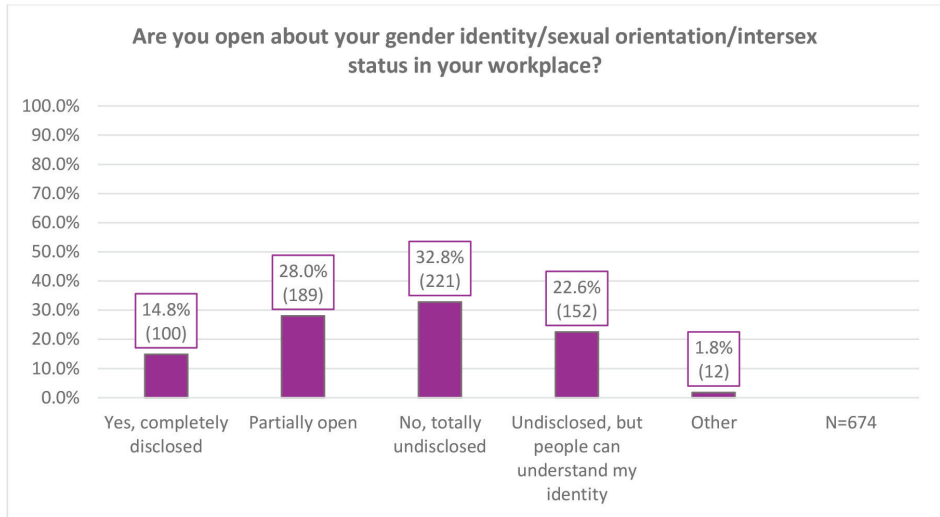


This year, we asked participants to name the city they live in at the time of the research. While 116 respondents (17.21%) preferred not to share that information, the remaining 558 (82.8%) came from 40 different cities. The most named were Istanbul (57.5%), İzmir (11.1%) and Ankara (10%). These cities are followed by Kocaeli, Bursa, Antalya and Adana.

Disclosure of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex traits in the workplace

Regarding disclosure in the workplace, 100 participants (14.8%) stated they were completely open about their identity. In contrast, 221 people (32.8%) related that they were completely closed and a further 189 people (28%) were partially open about their identity in their workplaces. A further 152 participants (22.6%) believed others in the workplace could determine their identity despite the fact that they remain undisclosed.

It would appear that those who are partially disclosed were open not to management or their employers but towards close colleagues or other LGBTI+ individuals. At the same time in open ended questions some participants made clear that there are supportive managers and employers. Detailed numbers can be found in the table below.



Other: 1. I don't feel the need to specify it. 2. I am neither open nor close, I don't care. Straight people don't say "hi, I am straight" so why should I. 3. That is them. 4. I am undisclosed but my workplace it doesn't cause a problem. 5. It depends on the place and the needs of my work. 6. A few of my close work friends know. 7. I disclosed to a few friends safely. Some people learned due to circumstances out of my control. Most people don't know but there are some who can guess. 8. I haven't disclosed yet because I am afraid. 9. I have put a name on it yet. 10. __. 11. There are some people who I am completely open with and there are some who I think can guess. 12. I am bisexual so I cannot completely behave so I approached them in a friendly manner.

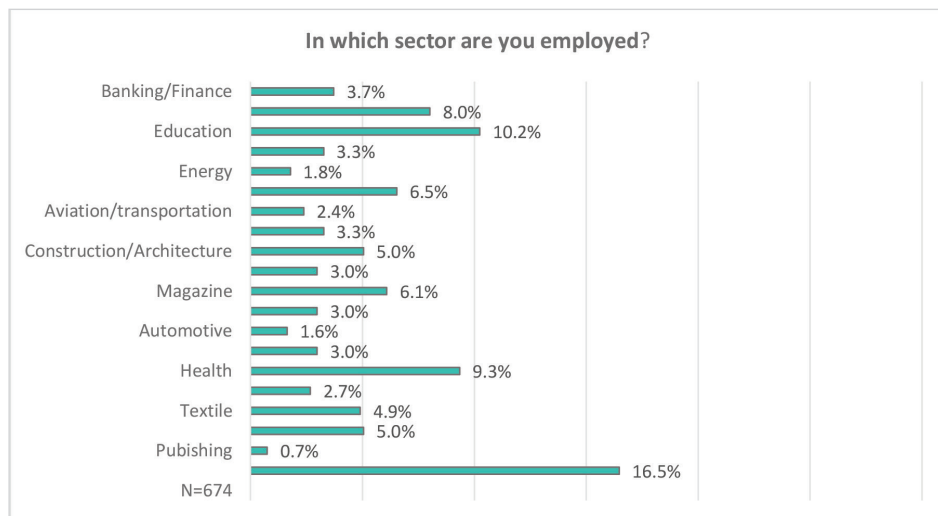
Out of those 100 who were completely open at work, 74 worked in companies with headquarters in Turkey. In this subgroup, 64 declared that they were men, 21 as women, three as trans men, one as trans woman and one simply as trans. Among this group of participants, 51 were open regarding their identity during the hiring processes as well.

Just 113 people in the sample worked in large companies with more than 1000 employees. Out of this group, only 19 (16.8%) declared that they were open about their gender identity, sexual orientation and intersex traits in the workplace. At the same time, only 40 individuals (35.4%) graded their companies four out of four or three out of four when it comes to LGBTI+ rights and sensitivity. These findings show that the size and institutional structure of the workplace did not make a significant difference for LGBTI + employees. Detailed numbers can be viewed from the graph below.

Characteristics of workplaces and positions of the participants

You can see the distribution of workplaces in the table below. Participants worked in a wide range of different areas in the private sector. The majority of respondents worked in education, health, information technology, food and retail stores.

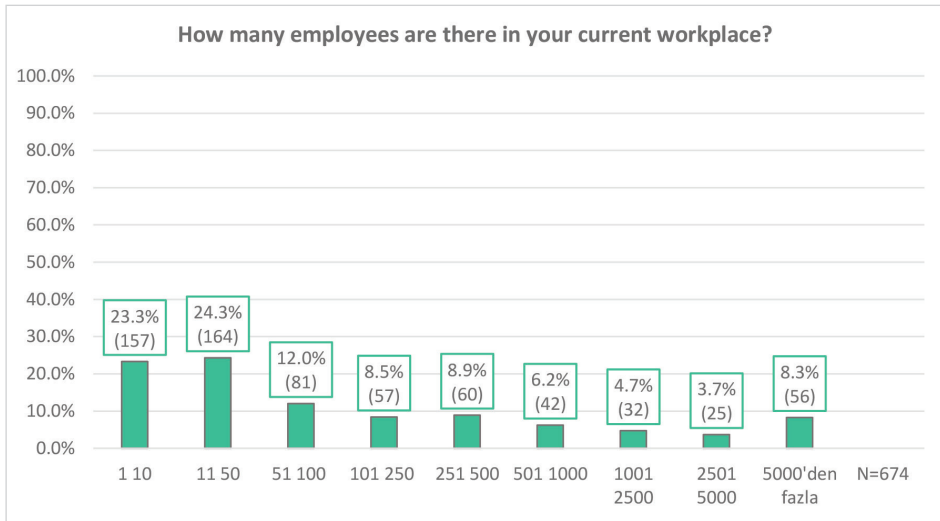
Furthermore, the details of the answer “other” shows that LGBTI+ individuals are employed in many different areas, contrary to gender roles inherent to the society. Unfortunately, the fact that made hide identity does not help fight the idea that “LGBTI+ employees only work in some sectors”.



Other: fast moving consumer goods, localization/media, Ecologic NGO, consulting (4), I work irregularly in the construction sector, telecommunication (3), decorative goods sales, private security, barista, e-commerce, cinema/advertising, design/architecture, dubbing, marine, market (3), tgb, logistics (3), fast consumption, holding, research (2), design (2), legal dept. E-commerce website, iron/steel distributor, auditing, production, training, veterinarian, market research, jeweler, customer service, cafe, science and culture art, beauty center, accountant (2), plastics, text phone, salesperson, sheet metal, electronics, machine sector, chemistry (2), factory, communications (2), industrial production, helping people as a company assistant, furniture factory, auditing, organizationa, fire safety, night club, television/film sector, art, service (6), marina, generatory repair service, law, ship building, technology, neuromarketing, shipyard, call center (2), insurance/finance, florist, industrial production, engineering and sports, education, photograph, porcelain, elevator, digital events, electronics, stylist, paper, design/consulting/creative industries, cosmetics, defense industry, tobacco, sports (4) ambassador, printing, academic/law, psychologist, translation/consulting, production factory.

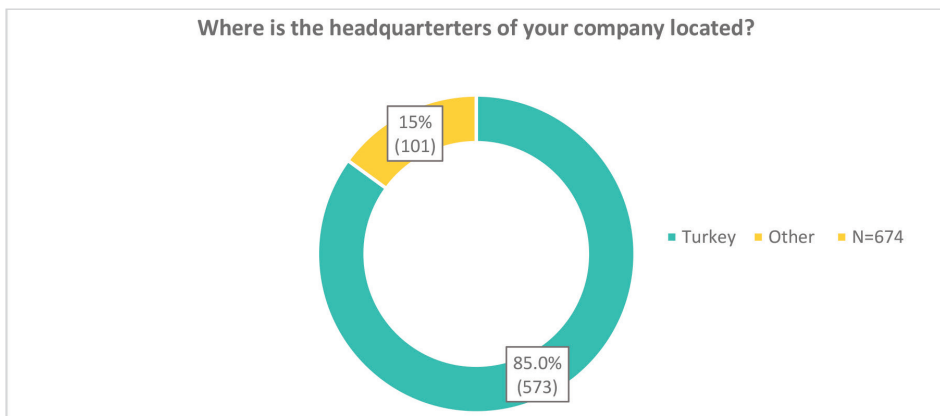
When we consider the numbers of employees the workplaces of participants, a consistent finding emerged. Similar to previous years, most respondents worked in small businesses. In 2020, 23.35% of the participants (157 people) worked companies with ten or fewer employees.

In contrast, 113 individuals (17%) reported of working in companies with more than 1000 employees. Companies with a labor workforce might be expected to have more corporate capacity to manage human resources however only 19 participants working in these companies stated they were able to disclose their identity and only 40 of them rated their companies highly in terms of LGBTI+ sensitivity. These findings show that corporate size has little influence on LGBTI+ employees. You can see the details on the table below.



Headquarters of companies

We asked participants about the headquarters of their companies. The purpose is to assess whether foreign companies' retain supportive and/or protective policies towards LGBTI+ employees in Turkey. Of the 573 participants who worked in companies based in Turkey, 53 (11%) declared that their companies have rules and regulations to prevent discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals. In companies with headquarters outside of Turkey, the same ratio is 31% (28 out of 113). Among the 101 individuals who worked in companies whose headquarters is outside of Turkey, 21 stated that they completely disclosed regarding the identity.



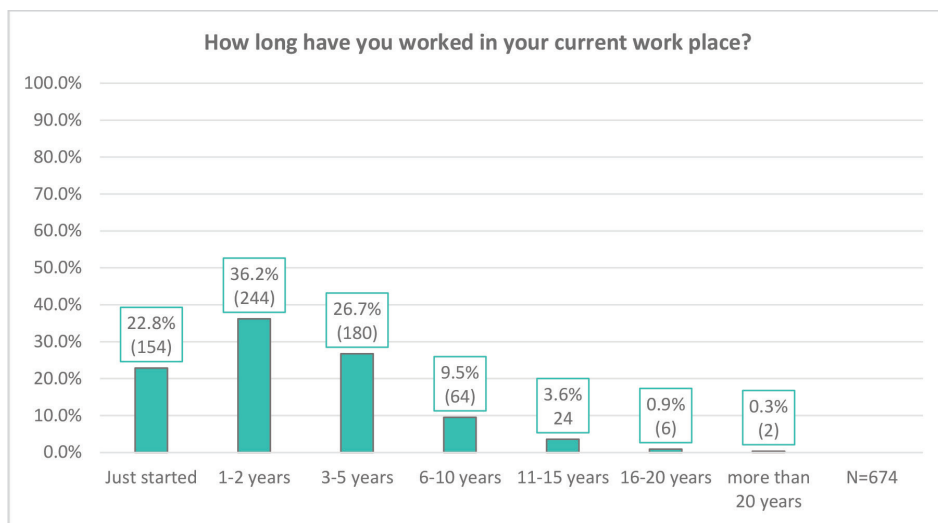
Other: England (12), US (36), Japan (4), Holland/France (1), Germany (6), Sweden (5), EU (1), Istanbul (1), Spain (6), Holland (2), Korea (3), Asia Switzerland (3), China, Hong Kong, Italy, Izmir, Greece, Slovenia, United Arab Emirates, Turkish Republic Northern Cyprus, Austria

Duration of work in the current workplace

Most of our participants (85.7%) declared they had worked in their current workplace for less than 5 years. Just a small group (8 people) had worked in the same place for more than 15 years while 12.5% of the employees (32 people) who worked in the same company for more than 10 years were open regarding their identity in their workplace. This demonstrates that the strategy of non-disclosure is not specific just to the hiring process of but often continues over the long term.

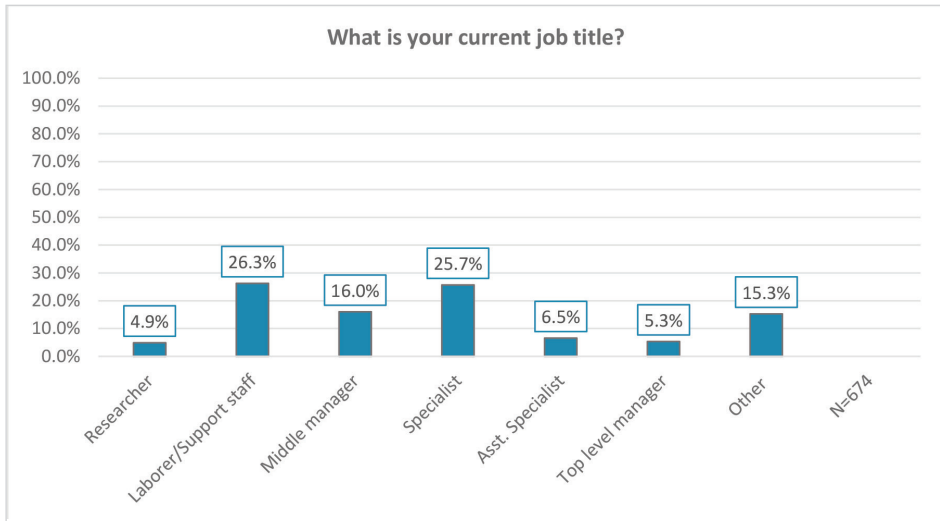
Position in the current company

An examination of the answers regarding job positions of participants, revealed that half of the sample were experts and worker/service personnel.



As the table below shows, LGBTI+ employees who participate in this research occupied a variety of positions similar to the population as a whole. This shows that LGBTI+ employees have the capacity to work at all different levels and including upper levels of their respective organizations.

However, many participants related experiencing difficulties in promotion similar to other disadvantaged groups such as heterosexual cisgender women. LGBTI+ employees face to promotion and they have limited opportunities. Furthermore, it is important to note that a majority of participants were either closed or partially closed in their workplaces. Twenty-five percent the participants (36 people) who were high-level executives were completely closed regarding their sexual orientation and gender identity. Detailed numbers can be seen on the table below.

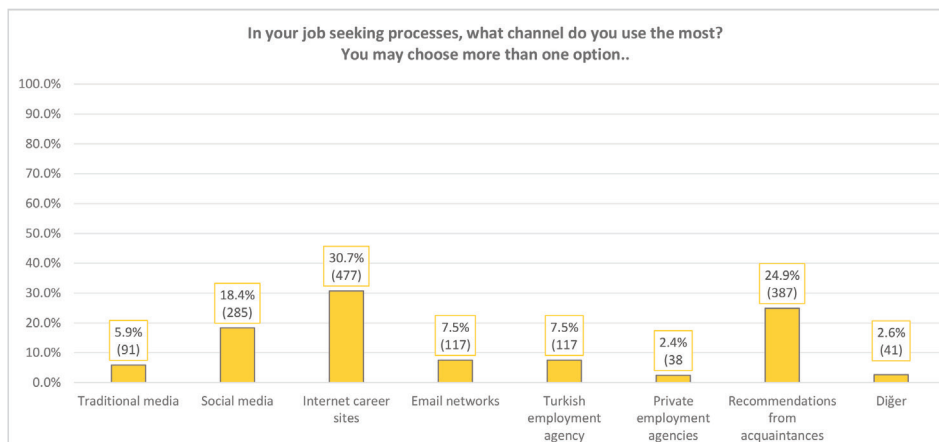


Other: web designer, project coordinator, consultant (2), freelancer, intern (5), customer representative, project assistant (2), architect (2), lawyer (6), academician, workplace nurse, dancer, junior software developer, founder, video mixing assistant, medical consultant, designer. We are in equal status with other employees other than the boss in terms of profession, business owner (2), engineer (6), technician, worker, research assistant (2), cashier (2), social media expert, bartender, graphic designer, receptionist, project director, academic personnel, coordination, executive assistant (2), translator, nurse (4), editor/sound artist, intermediate level informatics, producer of culture and art, researcher, manager, music sector, junior, reporter, civil servant, customer service representative (2), veterinarian (2), social media director, technician, associate professor, designer (2), white collar/quality control, art director, teacher (6), team leader, assistant, senior expert, authorized worker, oriental dance instructor, host, trainer, human resources director, waiter, design, executive assistant, part-time guide, pilates instructor, sous chef, operator, art director, freelance translator and consultant, software developer, barista

Assessments regarding recruitment processes

Channels for job search and application

As you can see in the following table, most participants found their current jobs through career websites, recommendations from a contact or social media channels. Similar to previous years, the numbers of those who used the Turkish National Employment Agency (İŞKUR) or private employment offices was low. This might be linked to the fact that LGBTI+ employees lack trust in these channels and their fear being stigmatized by these institutions. These numbers have remained low in each year of the research (2015-2020). The high level of job applications through a personal contact signals that LGBTI+ employees value the references of other LGBTI+ individuals in choosing LGBTI+ friendly companies. LGBTI+ employees are in need of more information about the company in question regarding potential working conditions which also means that compared to other employees they are in need of more developed social support mechanisms.



Other: I am looking for work friend, LinkedIn (4), I look at sites with academic ads., Nepotism is at work., through references, family company, I haven't had the need., Higher Education Council ads (2), Bar association information pool (4), I started my own business.(2), I give my CV to companies., None of them., direct offer from workplaces, I apply directly to possible workplaces., My own preferences and offers, I am not looking. (2), Companies own websites, University career center, Friend's suggestions (4), I'm connected to the head office and find employment independently from social media, I give my CV., I work for the company where I did my university internship., I personally go and speak with them., Newspaper, The company's website or sociak media sites., Freelancer application sites, If there is an ad on the street or sometimes the recommendations of acquaintances., I go and ask myself.

Inclusion and discrimination in job advertisements

To the question "Have you encountered any criteria or statements that openly or covertly encourages or discourages LGBT+ applicants?" 620 people said no and 54 people said yes.

Examples of positive answers can be seen below:

"In some postings I saw gender identity or sexual orientation clause and I never applied to those no matter what." (gay queer in NGO)

"The institution I work for has a non-discrimination policy." (gay male in health sector).

"There were equal opportunity questions and a statement that the company is equal towards everyone in terms of sexual orientation etc." (gay male in pharmaceuticals)

"It was stated that there can be no discrimination based on sexual orientation" (gay male in health sector)

"I saw supportive advertisements in my social environment, virtual or physical." (bisexual non-binary in publishing)

"In all our job postings the company states that there will be no discrimination based on religion, language, race or gender, that female candidates have priority and that discrimination is against our protocols." (gay male in NGO)

Answers to questions concerning biased statements in advertisements revealed that discriminatory social norms surface in private sector employment policies. However, it is a responsibility of employers, both public and private, to openly state their support for LGBTI+ employees. It is not enough to just apply the principle of equality during the job application processes, but they also have the responsibility of preventing discrimination in order to see their employees' real qualities. Participants stated job adverts directly affected their preparation during the application process (CV and self-promotion). Attitude towards their employer also directly impacted their motivation at work. The situation can be easily seen in the quotes below.

"Many companies request only men or women, plus they have very strict dress codes." (lesbian in food sector)

"Asking about military service in an internet job posting is discrimination" (pansexual non-binary working irregularly)

"Generally they post jobs as woman or man, in the binary gender system. As a agender under the transgender frame I can say it's challenging". (agender lesbian in education sector)

"Yes. Even though not directly, they are looking for someone who can perform as a "man". They ask if I get sick a lot? Am I tough? Am I fragile? Ask questions to reveal my sexual orientation and filter people like me." (gay man in law area)

"Military situation for gays. It can affect us, trans women as well. They ask you why you delayed the service or why are to exempt from it. You tell them the truth to be honest and then get rejected. No matter what you studied, your being gay is the problem. They say you are not compatible with other employees. You have to be honest because if you pursue a career, your lies would be a big problem. I have not seen any supportive criteria and I don't expect to." (heterosexual tran female in food sector)

"The brand I work for is focused on foreign countries and they are proud of their non-discrimination towards LGBTI+ individuals. But unfortunately they were mobbing a former employee that people know about." (heterosexual female in retail sector)

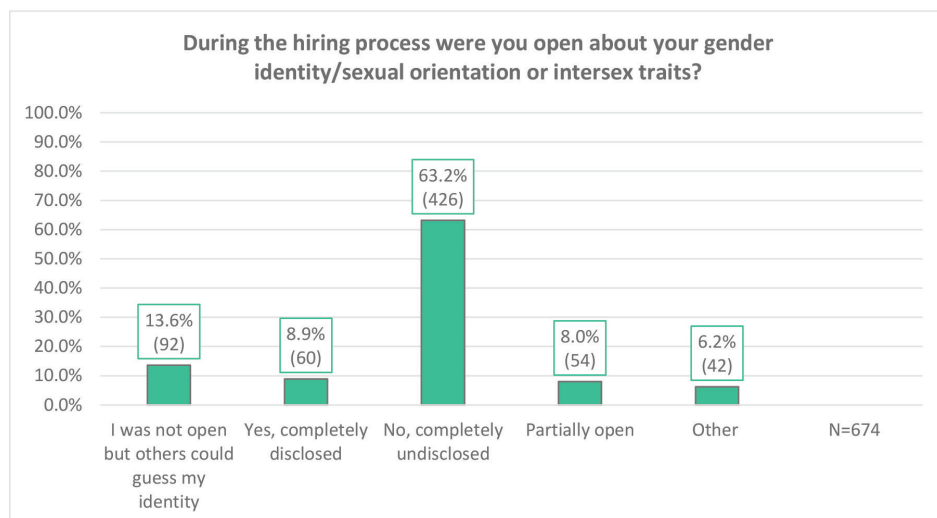
Some participants reported that the sexist expectations arising from dominant gender norms and roles reflected in job postings negatively affected LGBTI + employees. Therefore, using gender neutral language or language that transcends the understanding of existing gender roles would encourage LGBTI individuals. For example, an advert could just define the job description and not use any gender specific terms. In addition, the advertisement could also make clear that discrimination related to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex traits is not tolerated. Situ-

ations in which there might be positive discrimination towards LBGTI, heterosexual woman and other disadvantaged groups are not included in this argument.

Disclosure during the hiring process

To the question “Were you open about your gender identity/sexual orientation/ intersex traits during the hiring process?” most of the participants answered “No”, similarly to the previous question.

As you can see in the graph below only 60 people (8.9%) were completely disclosed during the hiring process. Ninety-two applicants (13.6%) said they were not disclosed but they assumed their identity was already known. Only fifty-four people (8%) were completely open regarding their identity.



In addition, some participants do not view sexual orientation or gender identity as social or public categories supported and protected on the basis of human rights. Rather, they sexual orientation and gender identity as belonging to the private or intimate sphere and as such these issues are not connected to labor, economy or social rights.

“I do not feel the need to disclose just like a heterosexual would not.” (gay male in textiles)

“I am not open or closed, I did not need to disclose. I don’t know if I fit the stereotypes.” (bisexual non binary in publishing)

“I was closed not because I needed to but I didn’t want to share.” (bisexual female in culture and arts)

"I was closed because it's nobody's business. I would say it if I was asked but then I wouldn't want to work in that company." (bisexual women in IT)

"No one asked me about my sexual orientation during the interview and I did not mention it." (bisexual male in retail)

"I did not mention it because it is not related to my profession." Lesbian female in construction/architecture)

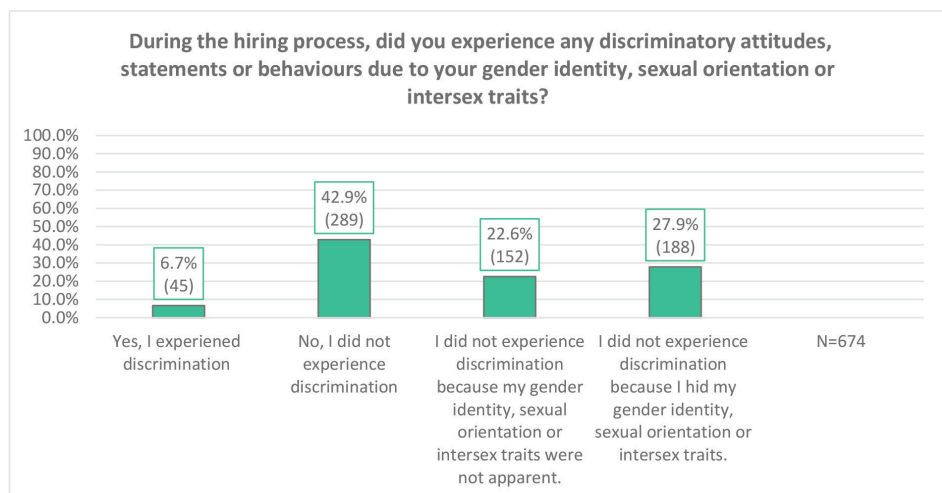
Experiences of discrimination during the hiring process

To the question "Have you witnessed any kind of discriminatory attitudes, discourse, behavior or practices regarding your gender identity/sexual orientation/intersex traits during the hiring process?" 289 applicants (42.9%) answered negatively.

However, in the following graphic you can see that 188 people (27.9%) thought that this was because they hide their gender identity. Another 22.6 percent thought they did not witness discrimination because their gender identity/sexual orientation/intersex traits was not apparent.

These answers should be evaluated keeping in mind that a great majority of participants either hide or simply do not disclose their gender identity or sexual orientation. It is evident that many LGBTI fear discrimination or rejection and prefer to keep their identity hidden to prevent any confrontation.

Another reason for the high rate of the participants who stated that they did not encounter discrimination during the recruitment process may be general societal assumption that everyone is heterosexuality and cisgender. In order to protect people from different forms of discrimination and support them regarding their rights, companies could create an application environment where applicants would be able, if they chose to, freely state their gender identity.



Forty-five participants stated that they faced discrimination during the hiring processes:

"There was a position that I could easily fill in a TV channel I worked for as a freelancer. When my friends recommended me they said I would not fit. The reason given was my clothing style but people wear shorts for summer in that place." (gay male in media sector)

"I was hired and ready for the orientation. Unfortunately the orientation was a fiasco since I was assigned as heterosexual. So hypothetically I was getting married, having kids, had girlfriends inside the company, and they talked about the possibility of me having sex with beneficiaries. It was all heterosexual. Corporate policy documents were prepared accordingly. I was laughing inside saying these do not concern me. It was still disturbing. Especially when they said I had to behave according to my assigned sex I was really nervous." (gay queer in NGO)

"Most of these processes ended negatively because of my sexual orientation. But in my current workplace, at the HR department, when I was asked why I was looking for a job, I told them I didn't want past experiences of bullying and discrimination to shape my life and that I was looking for a place to work as who I am. When they were trying to understand what I said that were really discriminating (sexual preference, illness, disabilities). But when they finally got it they said there was no gender based discrimination in the company and they were serious about it." (gay male in retail)

"They didn't hire me because of my identity." (bisexual trans male in food sector)

"I was filtered because of the way I speak." (gay male in food sector)

"I was told that being a lesbian was not a serious thing and that bisexuality was an undecided sexual orientation or even a show." (Bisexual women in entertainment sector)

"My assigned gender by birth is male. I was rejected 3 times: 1) I had long nails so they asked me if I was playing the guitar. I said 'No, that's how I like it' so they got suspicious and asked my professor from the university and he outed me. 2) They found an online picture of me with make-up and said 'inappropriate web content'. 3) They said they are looking for a female kindergarten teacher because she might take the kids to the toilet sometimes." (pansexual non-binary in education sector)

"I found out that the executive who interviewed me said that I was a good candidate but a little feminine. His boss told him that it was the way I work that should count so I was hired. I never had any problems but they shouldn't even mention it." (gay male in IT)

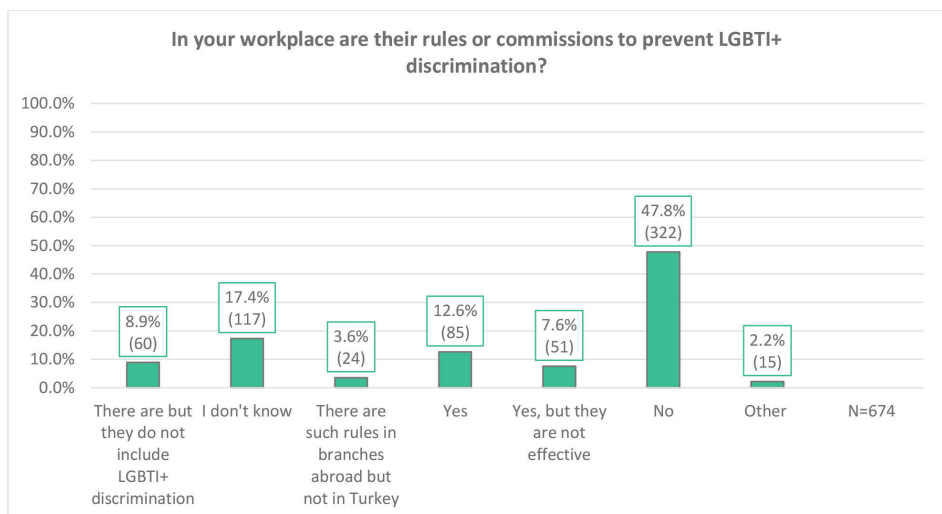
"I was hired in my current job after my 3rd application. The reason was that I could work indoors without being seen." (heterosexual trans male in health sector)

"I was asked questions all the time. My director tried to discover my identity asking questions ending with 'isn't it?'" (bisexual female in food sector)

Corporate protection against discrimination

When asked “Are there any rules or commissions to prevent gender-based discrimination in your company regarding promotion, assignment, discharge, detention or in-house education?” only 85 participants (12.6%) answered positively. Twenty-four participants (3.6%) declared that the institution they work for has rules and commissions against discrimination in their foreign branches, but these rules were not applied in Turkey.

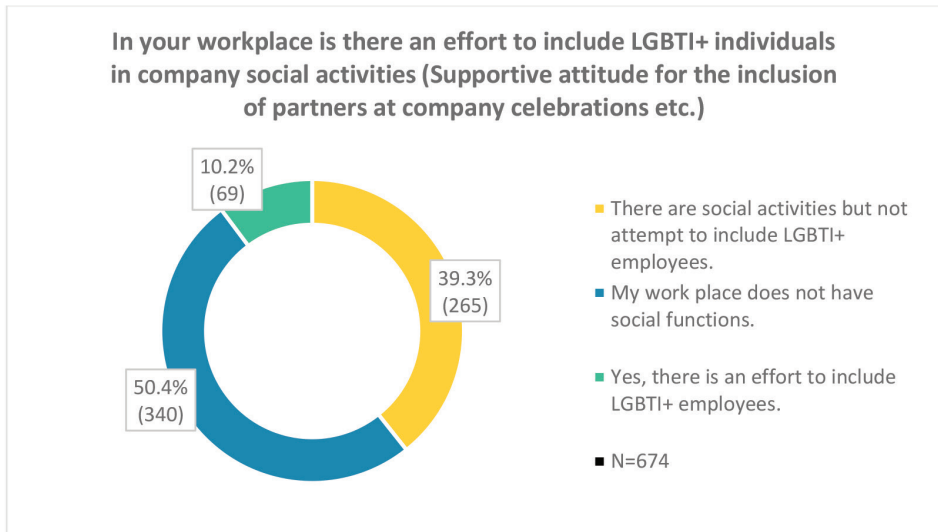
Most respondents answered the question “No” (47,8 %) or “Don’t know” (17,4%). It is significant that the percentage of those who don’t know is so high and may demonstrate a lack of expectation.



Other: 1. As a company with headquarters in Spain, they are not interesting in gender identity. All of the upper management is LGBT. Our company has no prejudices about this issue, prejudice comes from customers. 2. In the advertising agency, any one discriminating or using discriminatory language regarding religion, language, race, orientation and gender, and such behavior is warned and such behaviour is strictly prohibited. 3. There is a verbal set of rules for verbal respect among employees. I think that the employees of the company create this. 4. I will do it. I will be a supporter when I start own law firm. 5. The rules of equality and discipline include a statement that an individual cannot be fired or subject to discrimination due to sexual identity difference. 6. There are no rules but at the hotel LGBT individuals are open and we generally have guess from abroad. In the last five months we have had more than 50 LGBT guests. 7. We have a rule to be respectful to everyone. Nobody sees gender identity, orientation, appearance, profession as a reason for discrimination. 8. Although there is no official board, it is well known that many lgbti individuals are senior executives rather than unofficial board. 9. There is one for show. 10. There is no such rule in literature, but discrimination and homophobia between employees and employers is not well regarded. 11. I know there is, but administrators should act in accordance with such an important board. 12. There are less than 10 people working in the office and from what I can see there are unwritten rule that everyone communication in a framework of respect. 13. Since it is a small company there isn't. 14. I am not sure. There is a sexual orientation, but I don't know if it's in its charter. I know its not a main focus. 15. The rules are made abroad, but local practices do not emphasize sexual orientation / gender identity / intersex traits. The only discussion is on basic discrimination. 16. There isn't any rule but the company managers and upper manage are open and protective. 17. The company's international policies office publishes such things, our company translates and publishes it here, but it is not applied here.

LGBTI+ inclusive social activities

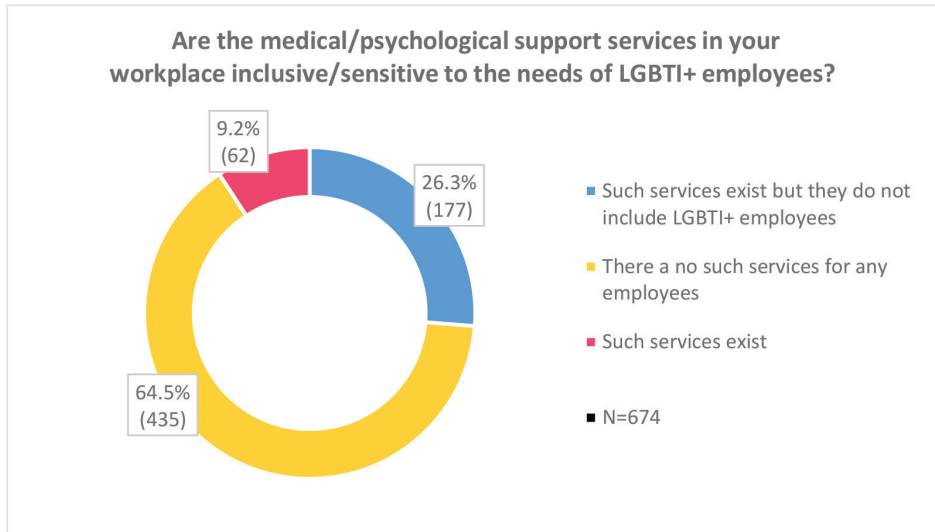
When asked “Are there any social activities in your company that aims to include LGBTI+ individuals?” 340 participants (50.5%) said that such activities did not exist in their workplace while 265 people (39.3%) said there were activities but are not sensitive to the needs of LGBTI+. Only 69 participants (10.2%) stated that company social activities included LGBTI+ employees.



LGBTI+ inclusive social help and medical support

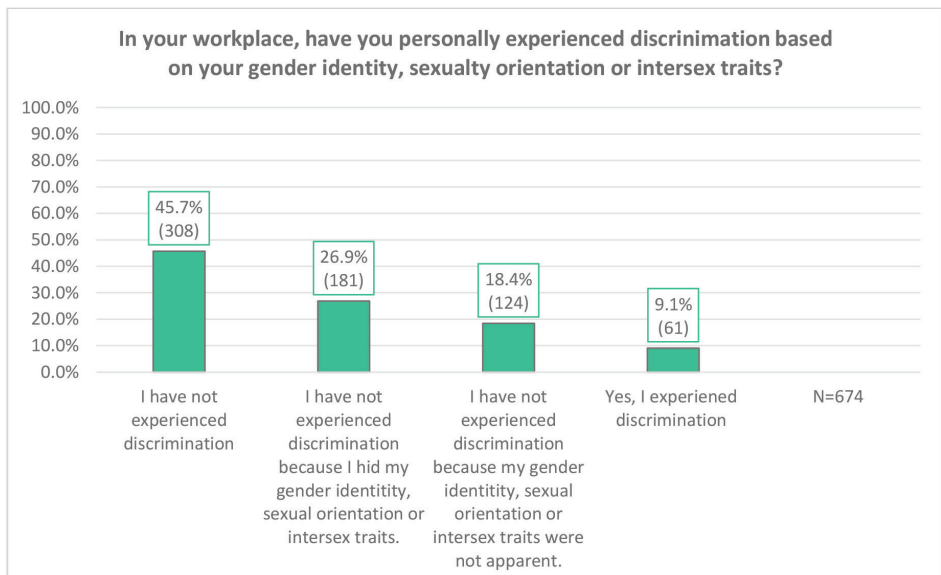
The question we asked about the details of the subject of health was “Does medical-psychological support in your company have inclusive application and trained personnel to meet the needs of LGBTI employees?” Health support should include measures regarding gender identity and intersex traits and trained personnel that would support LGBTI+ employees from a socio-psychological perspective and as well as provide assistance to trans individuals during their transition periods. It is an important corporate equality policy to include support mechanisms towards these needs.

To assess the current situation, we asked our participants whether they have any kind of medical or social support and the majority, (64.5%) declared there was no such support in the company they work for while 177 participants (26,3%) said that these mechanisms exist but did not include the needs of LGBTI+ individuals. Only 62 (9.2%) participants provided a positive answer regarding social and medical help in the workplace.



Personal experiences of discrimination

One of the questions aimed at evaluating any discriminatory acts experienced by participants. Answers to the question “Have you experienced personal cases of discrimination in your workplace? How did they proceed?” can be found below.



As the table above shows, only 61 (9.1%) reported that they experienced discrimination in the workplace because of their gender identity/sexual orientation/intersex traits. However 181 people (26.9%) declared that they hide their identities in order to prevent discrimination. A further 124 people (18.4%) related that the reason why they did not face discrimination was because their gender identity/sexual orientation/intersex traits are not obvious to observers.

Some of the quotes from the personal experience of discrimination can be seen below and most of them indicate common, structural problems.

“Phobic discourse in everyday language...They keep coming back after you correct them. If the tension increases in an argument they say I am obsessed about these things because I am not at peace with my sexuality. I keep correcting them even though I feel like the office police sometimes.” (gay male in media sector)

“I work in a big firms so we don’t know everybody. In a business trip we were supposed to stay in twin rooms and we were matched randomly. After we all came together, some friends of the person staying with me, they teased him. It was like high school, they kept giggling from a distance. I had to tell the HR person responsible and they took me to a single room.” (gay male in construction/architecture)

“My cis-hetero male boss who knows I am a bisexual female keeps making bawdy jokes, he talks about his ex-girlfriends and wants me to check out girls on the street.” (bisexual female in law area)

“I heard people say things like ‘You are POLITE and smart, so don’t throw yourself away going around construction sites’. I was not expected to be rude for job interview but then they make me feel like I wasn’t up for the job.” (pansexual non-binary in construction sector)

“They ended my training when they realized I was gay.” (Gay male in food sector)

“They keep warning me about dress codes even though I wear the same with non-trans males. Then, they use those warnings to call me a problem employee and kept me from promotion.” (asexual trans masculine working as a consultant)

“An IT operative in my company installed a program in my computer and reached personal correspondence with a colleague (because he liked that person as well). He shared those e-mails but the company was totally on my side.” (gay male in auditing area)

“I was called a “homo” for not being married and not having Instagram photos with girls, twice.” (gay male in automotive sector)

“Even though I am trying to hide it, I am different from hetero men, it’s

about what I feel inside, people notice that. There are common areas for people to smoke, we have coffee breaks, I want to go out and join them. When I go next to the boys and ask what's up, they tell me they are talking about men stuff like football, they tell me to go next to the girls where they talk about makeup and kitchen, girl stuff. I laugh at them but I can't be the same all the time, sometimes it hurts." (gay male in communications)

Reporting the discrimination

Of the sixty-one applicants that reported experiencing discrimination, they were asked whether or not they reported the incident and given the option to choose more than one reporting option. Twenty-six applicants stated they had not reported the discrimination they experienced. The most common answer was "I directly reacted to the person in question". Other common answers were "shared with close circle" and "verbally reported to the executives".

Only 1 person took the case to the court and 1 reported it to an NGO. Interestingly, none of those who experienced discrimination reported their case to a union or professional organization.

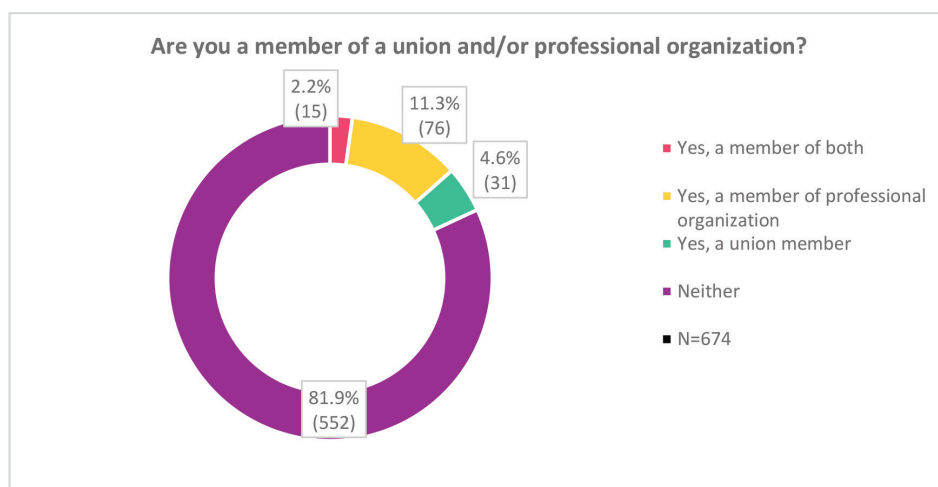


Other: 1. If I meet with a counselor, the guidance counselor will laugh at me and I will be finished in the eyes of my family. I'm in a shitty situation. 2. I reported the situation to the top manager both verbally and in writing and nothing was done and it was covered up. 3. No because I am the manager. 4. I share it with a gay friend. 5. I am fighting on my own. 6. A warning from HR was passed on to me by my manager. Men shave their heads why can't I? Isn't this sexist? My manager said yes it is but I didn't report this to HR.

In general, the statements concerning how participants reacted to discrimination were in line with previous years. LGBTI+ employees often fail to pursue their rights because they fear losing their jobs, involuntary disclosure and other problems that affect their work life. Another important finding was their disbelief in authorities

advocating LGBTI+ rights. This might be the result of an inadequate corporate or legal approach. LGBTI+ employees worried that reporting discrimination might result in further discrimination, or even spreading discrimination outside the workplace. Hence, they often remained silent.

The inadequacy of corporate and legal approaches to discrimination is also worth mentioning especially with regard to unions and professional organizations. From Respondents answers' made clear that 12 participants were members of at least one union or organization and had experienced discrimination in the workplace. Five of these participants never made an official complaint and none of them notified their union or professional organization.



Experience of discrimination towards other LGBTI+ employees

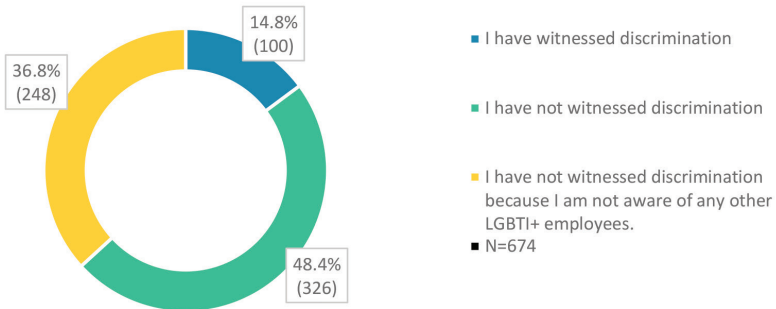
On the topic of witnessing discrimination, we asked the question “Have you witnessed any kind of discriminatory attitude, discourse or practice towards other LGBTI+ in your company?”. Almost half participants answered no with 248 participants (36.8%) stating they had “Never witnessed discrimination because there are no other LGBTI+ employees in the company”. At the same time, 100 people (14.8%) reported witnessing discrimination.

Here are some of the examples of what participants had to say on the topic:

“Some of the applicants were thought to be gay and were filtered out during the hiring process.” (lesbian female in media sector)

“Similarly, they were told to behave more manly. Whoever that ideal man is.” (gay male in media sector)

In your workplace, have you witnessed discrimination against other LGBTI+ employees?



“I witnessed transphobic discourse. I reacted and I had positive feedback. I think I can create awareness in open minded people.”(lesbian female in e-commerce)

“In my previous company, our boss was ridiculed by the workers for feminine behavior.” (bisexual male in construction/architecture)

“Between two similarly positioned colleagues, a heterosexual female harassed a gay male. She thought touching him was ok since he was gay. We warned her politely.” (gay male in health sector)

“I personally experienced a director that moved a lesbian employee to a basement where she wouldn’t work with anyone, after it was understood she was a lesbian. I was horrified by the story.” (bisexual female in health sector)

“A male employee at my same rank once said in a meeting that all homosexuals should be killed. My answer was ‘You can start with me!’” (lesbian female in education)

“Sometimes I am there for the new hires and when we have an LGBTI+ their questions and attitudes are different. I react and try to educate my colleagues. LGBTI+ are not taken seriously, they are seen as less capable than straight people.” (gay male in tourism)

“Funny looks behind a feminine male or a masculine female. ‘Sorry but I am a little phobic’ kind of explanations.” (gay male in IT)

“Yes. On casual dressing days me and my LGBTI+ friends had limitations.” (gay male in banking/finance)

“They told me that an employee before me was openly gay. He resigned because of the homophobic attitudes of the boss. They told me that because

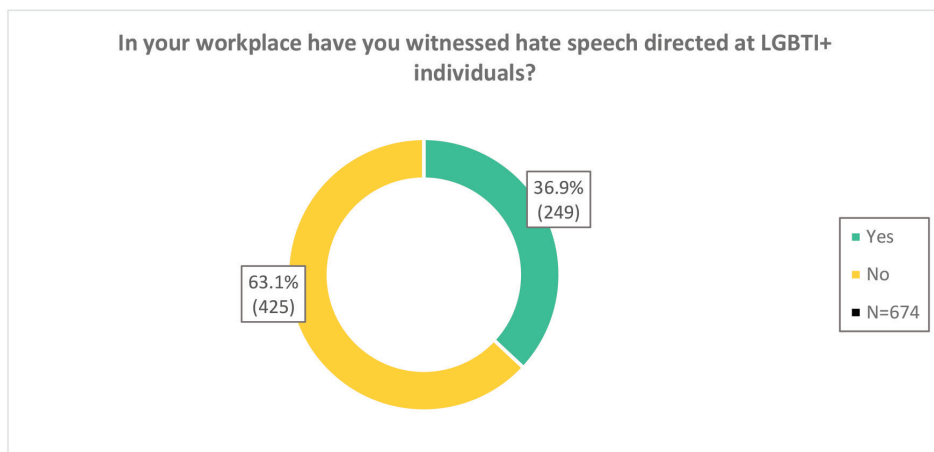
they were thinking that I was also gay and they were trying to find out. I am not looking for a negative or positive reason behind it. They might be trying to disclose my gender identity out of their own curiosity of just for a bet.” (gay male in advertising)

“My colleagues clearly stated that they cannot stand that kind of individuals, they want to exercise violence. Because it’s inappropriate.” (lesbian female in education sector)

From what participants shared and parallel to the findings of last year, we see repeated patterns of mobbing, dismissal, ridicule and verbal insult towards LGBTI+ individuals in the workplace.

Hate speech against LGBTI+ individuals

In the survey, we asked the question “Did you witness any kind of hate speech in your company?” and 425 participants (63.1%) answered the question no whereas 249 people (36.9%) said they witnessed hate speech.



Some of the personal quotes of those who witnessed hate speech can be found below:

“They were talking about interesting customers and they made fun of a trans individual and a lesbian couple.” (lesbian female in health sector)

“They say only lesbian or bi women are acceptable, other LGBTI+ are disgusting.” (bisexual female in law area)

“During an online meeting a male colleague was talking about someone else on the team and he used the word ‘partner’. Then someone used a ‘shit’

emoji. Other sent surprised faces. Finally, that person had to correct himself.” (gay queer at an NGO)

“After inappropriate jokes about a trans individual, I slightly criticized them as if I was LGBTI+ friendly. Now I keep doing that to be understood.” (bisexual female in tourism)

“Not at headquarters but at some branches I have seen some employees’ hate speech against some customers. I reported them to HR so that they are warned, punished forced to receive awareness training etc. I followed it up closely.” (gay male in retail)

“I work in the same company with my father. Just because he has an earring they called him ‘girly’ and ‘faggot’ and many other things.” (bisexual women in textiles)

“They make ‘gay jokes’ in the office. Twice, once in the office and once in a social event, I heard one of the high executives talk about how homosexuality is not normal.” (lesbian female in maritime sector)

“LGBTI+ colleagues personally used discriminatory discourse against other LGBTI+ subjects. They were let go by the administration for violation of disciplinary code.” (no sexual orientation or gender identity, works in culture and arts area)

“During a divorce case they showed that the husband of our client was into transsexuals and used Facebook photos that he liked as a proof saying that he should not have a relationship with the kids.” (heterosexual trans female in law area)

“Two male colleagues were talking about how would I go to the military service. ‘He can’t go, he would get a report, a homo report’ was the ugly comment. They were laughing as it was a funny thing and they didn’t feel bad that I overheard them.” (heterosexual trans female in food sector)

“I met a couple of people who were teasing another colleague for being gay. It might not be hate speech it is filled with humiliation and homophobia.” (lesbian female in chemistry sector)

“Some of my colleagues and especially my employer belittle homosexuals and they use the words they use for them as curse words for each other. Our company creates advertisements and their attitude is not to step outside traditional and heterosexist content.” (gay male in advertisement)

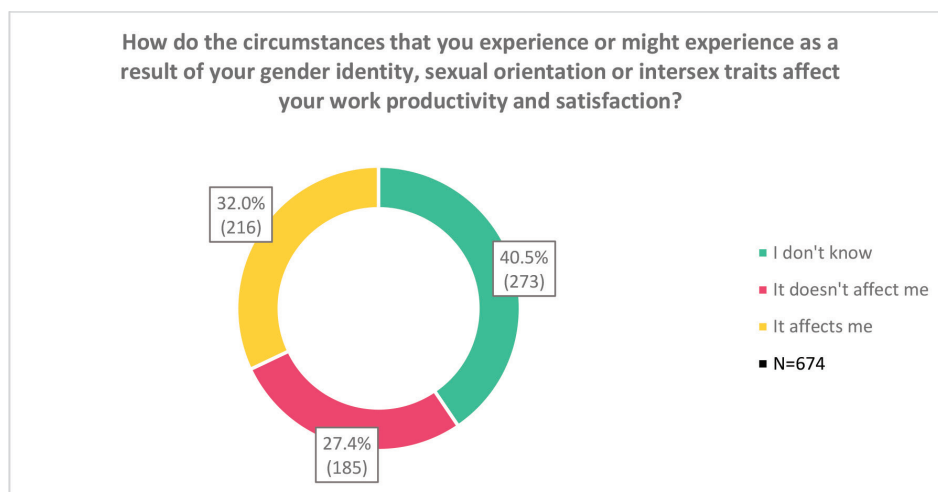
“There are no other LGBTI+ in my company. Not visible anyway. There might be those I took for a heterosexual, that I didn’t realize they were gay. But when people talk about homosexuality I can hear the hate speech.” (gay male in food sector)

“Even during daily conversations many people use homophobic discourse and hate speech. The most basic is when they see a gay character in a show they say “They put it right in front of us, it’s not ok to encourage these” and they go all the way to “Dirty homos!” (Gay male in health sector)

As you can in the quotes, hate speech and discrimination go hand-in-hand. In addition, 20% of those who did not witness discrimination based on gender identity/sexual orientation/intersex situation stated they witnessed hate speech.

The relationship between discrimination, job satisfaction and efficiency

Responding to the question “Does actual and potential discrimination based on gender identity/sexual orientation/intersex situation in the workplace have any effect on your job satisfaction and efficiency?” 185 people (27.5%) answered the question negatively. At the same time, 221 participants believed (32.1%) it did have an effect and 273 people said “I don’t know” (40.5%).



Some of the comments related to job satisfaction and efficiency can be seen below:

“There is an effect because I have to pretend.” (passive gay in tourism)

“I am afraid of being humiliated and ridiculed, I don't want to be labelled with this characteristic instead of the work that I do. I think I can't be creative enough, keeping the secret tires me.” (75% gay 25% heterosexual male in education sector)

“It decreases my will to work and I am planning to leave since I don't think I will be promoted.” (bisexual genderqueer in media sector)

“I have to work all day in my heterosexual persona and when I am disclosed I feel like I have to work more and without any mistakes as if being a lesbian was my mistake. In my previous workplace I was mobbed through my gender identity when there was nothing going on.” (lesbian female in media sector)

"It feels lonely and I feel disposable all the time." (bisexual non-binary in publishing)

"It feels restless, insecure, unhappy and uncomfortable." (lesbian female in health sector)

"It decreases my belief in my workplace and people I work with. Reduces my desire. There are times I don't want to be there." (gay male in media)

"I am not myself. I cannot fully perform when I am not myself."

"In order not to have a negative situation I work harder (short lunch breaks, no coffee breaks)." (gay non-binary in education sector)

"I am trying not to stare at female colleagues, not to look for more than a couple of seconds, not to enter the locker room when there are other people." (pansexual female in health)

"Off course, has a negative impact. I act against such behaviors and attitudes. I act and follow up on things outside my job description. It costs me work time 😊." (gay male in retail)

"I have to be really controlled with my students, I think it's insincere." (gay male in education sector)

"It makes me feel on guard and as if I have a double life. I constantly wonder at what point I am going to witness LGBTI+phobic or HIVphobic discourse and what to do." (bisexual female in law area)

"When I hear hate speech against gays I feel rejected and my sense of belonging to my company decreases." (gay male in banking/finance)

"I did not experience discrimination directly but even the possibility of it make me more nervous, secret and careful. Only this much should be subject to international human rights and considered cruelty." (gay male in education sector)

"I am tense because I have to keep it a secret all the time. It's really tiresome, LGBTI+ individuals are like that, it's bad to hide all the time." (gay male in health sector)

"It's like an Ahmet Kaya song: We are nervous. I used to work in really good institution before my trans process, now I get minimum wage in a low profile institution as a teacher." (heterosexual trans male in education)

"I am demoralized and demotivated. I am distracted. I continuously have to come up with defense mechanisms and apply them. I use my energy to find peaceful solutions with other people, not to have communications failure. My agenda is full. I feel like crying sometimes with no reason." (gay queer in tourism)

"Interferes with my concentration." (bisexual female in advertisement)

“It affects greatly my motivation, my devotion to my work and my good intentions at workplace.” (gay male in media sector)

“I cannot concentrate on my work and it causes fear.” (gay male in law area)

When we evaluate our findings as a whole, we find out that experiences of discrimination related to one’s gender not only harm a person’s psychology, but also decreases an employee’s efficiency and satisfaction. Our participants pointed to issues like exclusion, negative feelings including anger, loss of hope from life and future. This affects the general motivation at work and decreases the efficiency.

Even if not expressed directly loss of focus and concentration should also be expected. Because LGBTI employees have to come up with strategies to overcome obstacles in and outside work. Sometime they do it without even noticing and sometimes they are frustrated. Relationship between colleagues are affected by the situation as well. Therefore LGBTI’s are unable to find the social support mechanisms they need. Because they cannot express themselves fully, they are unable to create real friendships and other social relationships that support these friendships even outside work.

A small number of positive comments coming from applicant who are disclosed at work or who work in LGBTI+ friendly workplaces show that having no pressure regarding sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex situation increases employees’ loyalty and belonging, their thrust towards themselves and their colleagues, efficiency, private life – work life feedback and job satisfaction. Here are some examples:

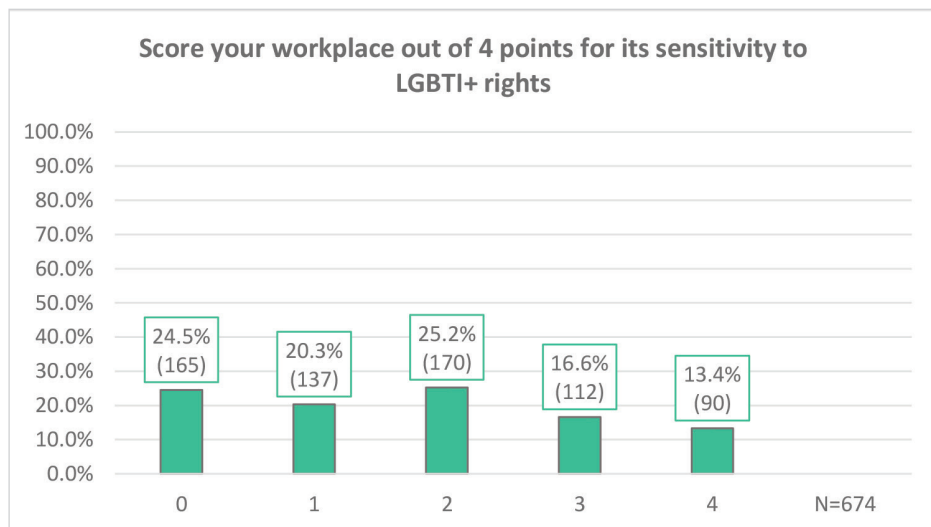
“It affects positively since I stop my service once I witness a discriminatory attitude, discourse or behavior. I can feel my company is supporting me.” (gay male in retail)

“Working in a place where I can behave so freely has a positive impact on me.” (lesbian female in culture and arts)

General evaluation regarding the sensibility of workplaces about LGBTI+ rights

We asked our participants to evaluate the sensitivity of their companies in terms of gender identity based rights and discrimination. We asked them to grade their company on a scale of 0 to 4. You can see the answers on the table below.

As you can see on the table below, 302 applicants out of 674 (45%) gave their companies 0 or 1 out of four in terms of sensitivity while another 25% graded their



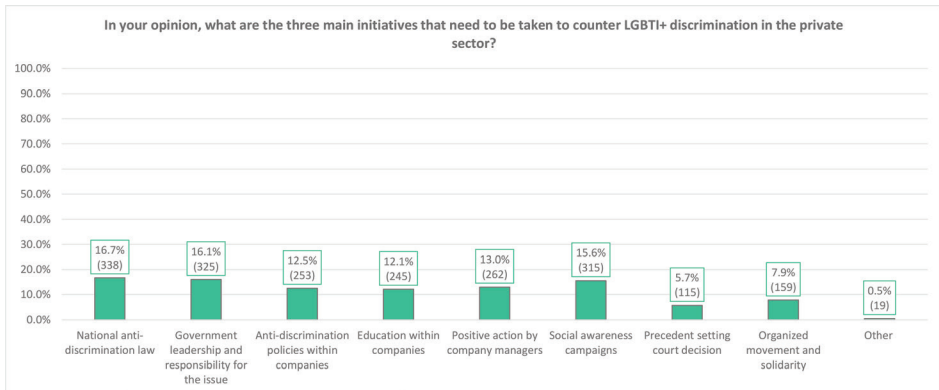
company two out of four or as mediocre. As a result 70% of the employees related that the company they work for is average and/or below average when it comes to LGBTI+ sensitivity. Some did report more positive results; 112 people graded their company three out of four (16.6%) but just 90 participants (13.4%) rated awarded their companies a four.

This finding is consistent with previous years. Even among those who provided a positive rating for their companies, their answers remain relative. Participants expressing content in terms of company sensitivity also provided negative answers to other questions. They reported a lack of the same rights with other employees, they suspected their position was precarious, they could not fully express themselves, and they took precautions and worked keeping in mind this in mind. This finding demonstrates that unless there is sensitivity throughout the workplace about equality and rights, no LGBTI+ employee can ever be completely happy, satisfied and secure.

Suggestions for the fight against discrimination of LGBTI+ employees

On the last part of the survey we asked our participants “What do you think 3 measures should be against discrimination of LGBTI+ employees?” You can see in the table a distribution of 3 answers provided.

Most participants pointed to the need for a national policy against discrimination. The second most common measure suggested was for the government to assume responsibility and leadership on this issue. Social awareness campaigns were the 3rd most common answer.



Other: 1. All of them are necessary (why just limit it to three? All of them are connected.) but first of all the government has to deal with this situation and the government will not give these rights to us so we have to start a war. 2. If any LGBT + individual is removed because of her sexual orientation in the sector she is working in, this should cause a certain amount of compensation from the other party. 3. First of all, all employers or the state or private sector who want to employ lgbt personnel should declare that you can work in my company if you are an lgbt individual. 4. The number of people who are exempt from military service and who are also civil servants at the same time, while the state does not make it public, it is necessary to disclose it to the associations. 5. A study is needed for the awareness that will cover the whole country, and it will only be effective if the state does this. 6. Everyone being aware. 7. Societal education. 8. Including this in job advertisements both gains the trust of LGBT individuals and shows the company's stance against discrimination. 9. Since the managers are the group leaders, they remain the only mechanism that can maintain contact in intra-group segregation. 10. Eliminating the gay trans distinction. 11. I am happy to respond quickly to this question. 12. Requiring in house training and making this a legal requirement for each company.

The answers regarding the fight against discrimination were consistent with previous years. The second most common answer, the need for a legal transformation shows the demand for a common, trustworthy legal guarantee. However, participants that legal and constitutional changes were not enough and a change in social mentality was imperative to fight against discrimination. Law is applied by people and without social change LGBTI+ employees' working conditions will not improve. A significant number of participants also underlined the necessity of organized resistance to achieve these legal and social transformations.

Quotes from our participants

At the end of the survey we asked participants if they wanted to share anything they thought should be included in our reports. Below you will see some of the answers.

"In fact, these issues that we discuss here shouldn't even be mentioned at work. Everybody should earn their labor's worth fairly and without discrimination. Hope to have more workplaces where justice doesn't lose its power and people are not alienated for their preferences..." (gay male in retail)

“I think that the predominance of non-trans straight people in the business environment means LGBTI + s are one step behind in their careers. And I believe we need more awareness about covert homophobia. People think discrimination only in the context of LGBTI+ right to live. That’s why so many people are not aware of their internalized phobia, they can’t face it.” (gay male in media sector)

I work in a small, niche company and I believe I am or my other LGBTI+ friends are lucky. Nevertheless, there are many things to be done in terms of visibility and proliferation. Especially big, pioneer companies should have diversity and inclusion protocols and practices.” (pansexual female working as a consultant)

“Not to be yourself for 9-10 hours a day, to keep describing things secretly, that what tires me, not the work.” Gay queer in an NGO)

“At my workplace we have an obligatory blood test every year. They told me they check HIV and other similar diseases as well. I did not finish my first year yet but the idea of being forced to take a HIV test make me feel insecure. I cannot foresee what kind of discrimination I am going to experience after the results. I don’t know if I can be fired or the information can be shared with my superiors but I would like to have some legal protection.” (pansexual non-binary in education sector)

“We should develop a work ethic based on performance not sexual orientation and harassments against our community should be considered hate crime.” (gay male in banking and finance)

“It is obvious that there are very few LGBTI+ both in the public sector and the private sector. Unfortunately most of our community make their career plans hiding their identity. And this situation imposes upon our moral and motivation that would take us one step further. I am sure gay people who do not have to foresee all that discrimination would do wonderful things, work in important positions. We need to enlighten our society and support LGBTI+ community through national channels. I hope these results are used for good (gay male in health sector)

“There are LGBTI+ friendly companies but I don’t know what sort of work they are doing. These are in Istanbul. I don’t think that friendliness and rights would exist in central Anatolia. This is my negative opinion as someone who lives around here. I wouldn’t think like that I was in an organization or I was social. We should give weight to psychological support for people who live in pious communities. I hope everything will be alright for us. I wish all a free life.” (gay male in IT)

“I have many LGBTI+ friends that judge me for being closed at work, for putting up with that. They say that I am shameless and without any pride for working in an institution that does not accept me. They want me to open up and fight them socially and legally standing tall against any discrimination based on my identity. But I don’t like to fight. I am ambitious and I can

compete at work but I cannot fight. I don't prefer a life in my own identity but in protest all the time. I wish we could accept the fact that not all LGBTI+ should fight. I am not insensitive as you can see. I can always support.” (gay male in advertisement)

“In private sector, when administration's way of life reflects on business environment, employees, especially new ones accept that view. That is why corporate approval and education serve not only LGBTI+ inside the institution but also help those outside through non-LGBTI+ individuals acceptance and behavior in everyday life. Social help and medical support is useful for everybody, it's not a discrimination if it exists or does not exist for everybody, if it's equal. When you say special psychological and medical support for the LGBTI+, if we need support for an individual, we need it for everyone. I that person is having difficulty for being and LGBTI+ that means the same support was necessary before.” (gay male in IT)

“LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey should interact more with companies. Many global companies have HR departments that want to do something about the issue but they don't know where to start or they make things worse. Organizations should help companies in terms of HR personnel trainings, internal activities and trainings. They shouldn't wait for the companies to come to them but be proactive and use mailings or social media. Just like SPoD did with 'LGBTI+ Friendly Municipalities Protocol' maybe it's more corporate or binding to have companies sign a protocol against discrimination.” (gay male in health sector)

“Foreign origin companies have so many regulations and audited so closely that employees don't have problems. But unfortunately Turkish companies have very few practices on LGBTI+ employees. I wish you provided more information to those companies and demanded more from them.” (gay male in textiles)