



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

2018 Research



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STIFTUNG FÜR DIE FREIHEIT



SWEDEN

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CHAPTER 1

Acknowledgement

As Kaos GL Association, we care about lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) individuals in Turkey and their labor conditions. As the European Court of Human Rights has stated numerous times, the enjoyment of economic rights has effects that transcend the area of labor and paves the way for the enjoyment of other rights such as housing, health, education, expression and participation in the public sphere. The Court also underlines that the level of socialization in the workplace defines a person's social world and shapes their private life. In that sense, research such as you are about to read is important to be aware of the discrimination and exclusion that LGBTI employees experience in the labor market, in order to render them equal and free to access their rights. Problems and demands for solutions that the research reveals are keys to creating new policies for social inclusion that are sensitive to LGBTI individuals, both in the private and public sectors. A labor market that includes LGBTI individuals in the labor force is not only critical for private and public institutions to exercise universal human rights but is also in line with goals like employee efficiency, peace in the workplace and competition.

In order to contribute to this framework, we have conducted research on LGBTI employees in these two sectors since 2015. We are thankful to Prof. Dr. Melek Göregenli for creating the survey and her analysis and comments that demonstrate the academic value of the study. We should also thank Prof. Dr. Mary Lou O'Neil, Dr. Reyda Ergün, Selam Değirmenci and Doğanca Erkenel from the Kadir Has University Gender and Women Studies Research Center that began cooperating with Kaos GL in 2018 for this research. We hope to have a long and fruitful cooperation. We would like to thank Friedrich Nauman Foundation for their support and their partnership in overcoming every obstacle we encountered in order to conduct the study. And of course, we owe a great debt of gratitude to all lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex individuals that participated our survey and shared their thoughts and experiences.

We hope that these efforts would contribute to the fight for a world where every individual, including LGBTIs, can exercise their full and equal rights.

Murat Köylü, Kaos GL





CHAPTER 2

Foreword

The new version of the annual research conducted since 2015 by Kaos GL Association entitled The Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Employees of the Private Sector in Turkey continues in 2018 together with Kadir Has University Gender and Women Studies Research Center. We are happy to be a part of this 4 year old project and we hope it will continue. We believe such research will create a data pool that will feed academic research and policies regarding rights movements and LGBTI rights advocacy. We value the importance of academia-activism relationship and academy's role and responsibility as an important part of democratic society in its struggle with discrimination.

The 2018 research was carried out with 198 LGBTI individuals who work in private companies. Compared to previous years, the increase in the number of participants is gratifying. Nevertheless, it is noticeable that this increase did not translate to an increase in diversity in gender identities and sexual orientations. Compared to 2017, we have a similar number of participants declaring themselves as women and a lower number in trans (trans man, trans woman and trans) and in the category other. Those who chose man as their gender identity was double of what we had last year. There was also a decrease in lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexuals whereas the gay category was 60% larger. Therefore, even though we have a larger sample, the increase of cisgender gay participants in the sample should be kept in mind when evaluating results. Regarding intersex, unlike last year, we did not have any participants in this category.

Similar to results in previous years, most of our participants stated that they are partially or completely undisclosed in their gender identity and sexual orientation. We see that, those who are partially open, disclose themselves not to their employees or superiors, but to colleagues to whom they feel closer. Thus, there was not a significant change in terms of visibility in the workplace.

Compared to last year, there was no significant change in the diversity of work fields and education was again the largest field of all. Employees of small scale businesses and employees who work in the same company for 1 to 3 years were

again the largest categories in the sample. In terms of positions in the workplace, high and mid-level LGBTIs had a larger representation, but this should be examined together with the high rate (78%) of partially or totally undisclosed participants.

There was a significant increase in the number of foreign origin companies in this year's research. The diversity of countries also increased but the bigger share belongs to American and European countries. Interestingly only 5 of 22 people working in these companies declared they are completely open in their workplaces. This data, compared to other answers in the survey, shows that there was no change in the effectiveness of the policies to prevent discrimination in the foreign companies, consistent with last year.

Again, parallel to 2017, LGBTI employees preferred a personal contact or recommendation and/or a company's social media posts and company profiles in career websites to decide regarding a job search or application. In that respect, LGBTI employees feel the need to foresee the work environment together with the match between a certain position and their personal qualities. Despite that, the ratio of totally or partially disclosed LGBTI employees shows that there are great obstacles to LGBTI visibility in the Turkish private sector and proves that the number of companies with inclusive policies is quite limited. We understand from the personal statements of the participants that inclusive anti-discrimination policies are not reflected in job adverts or job application processes. In fact, expectations regarding norms and roles produced by heteronormative and cisnormative binary gender system create pressure on LGBTI employees often even before employment.

On the other hand, 96% of our participants answered negatively to the question regarding any open or covert discrimination during the hiring process. This should be examined together with the reasons. Thirty percent of the sample hid their identity and 26% did not experience discrimination because their identity is not visible from the outside. Last year the same ration was 46% and it is an important decrease. Those who came up with no reason for not experiencing discrimination rose from 26% to 40%. Again, all these answers should be examined together with the question "Were you open about your sexual identity during job application?" where only 16% said "Yes". From their personal statements, we understand that the fear of facing hate speech, the fear of not being hired, the fear of exclusion, anxiety of not being taken seriously or not being able to do the job are among the reasons why they were not open. In addition, 23% answered "I did not feel it was necessary" to the same question. Again, reading the personal statements, we come to the conclusion that some LGBTI employees believe gender identity and sexual orientation belong to the private life and make no connection between their identity and labor, financial and social rights.

Ninety-four percent of the participants stated that corporate mechanisms to prevent discrimination did not exist, were unknown, were inefficient or did not cover gender identity and sexual orientation. There was no significant increase in comparison to last year. Answers regarding social help and support mechanisms and medical and psychological support revealed that these mechanism either do not exist altogether or are not inclusive for LGBTI employees. The number of participants that stated the contrary was very limited. Again compared to last year, there was no significant change.

Eighty-four percent of the participants stated that they did not experience any personal discrimination regarding their gender identity or orientation. But half of these believe the reason for not experiencing discrimination is their undisclosed identity. Therefore 58% of the participants either experienced sexual identity based discrimination in the workplace or was compelled to hide their identities to prevent potential discrimination. Nevertheless, a 7% decrease compared to last year should be considered progress. Whether this is significant or not will be revealed after future research.

Another finding from the research is that LGBTI employees experiencing discrimination rarely make an official complaint about it. Five out of 31 cases of direct or indirect discrimination reported the discriminatory environment and the need for supportive intervention to in-house authorities. From their statements, in only half of the cases authorities reacted and in only 1/3 the person in question was subjected to sanctions. Legal authorities were not in the picture in any of these cases. The reasons for this diffidence are clear in the personal statements. LGBTI employees do not believe there will be positive results from reporting discriminations. On the contrary, they fear they would face further discrimination and humiliation during the reporting process. They also fear their identity would be disclosed against their will. This finding is consistent with the small number of open employees.

Fifty-four percent of the participants in this study stated they did not witness any discrimination towards other LGBTI employees and 35% declared there were no other LGBTI employees in their workplaces. We should examine these numbers together with 72% that stated there were either no LGBTIs in their workplace or they did not know about them to the question "Are there any other LGBTIs in your workplace?" So, 28% stated that there in fact were other LGBTI employees in their workplaces. A total of 11% stated they witnessed discrimination cases towards other LGBTIs, therefore, nearly half of those participants working with other LGBTIs witnessed them being discriminated against.

This result makes one think about how LGBTI employees would support each other and create solidarity if they do not even recognize each other. Half of the 28%

mentioned below stated that there were no support mechanisms between LGBTIs and listed reasons such as non-communication and fear of being pressured. Even though rates of experiencing personal (16%) or other (11%) cases are small, these numbers should be considered together with the lack of disclosure in the workplace. In the same context, to the question regarding discrimination, actual or potential, affecting efficiency and satisfaction in the workplace, 58% answered “negatively”. Generally speaking, LGBTI employees are certain about being discriminated and they take precautions beginning with the job search or job application processes. Then, they hide their identity throughout employment, share it only with close colleagues, distance themselves from the others, set boundaries between work and private life. Sometimes they even “act” in terms of body language, articulation and expression of identity to continue their work life.

The answers regarding efficiency and job satisfaction revealed that not being open and vigilant against potential discrimination becomes a continuous struggle and has a large impact on LGBTI employees. The statements suggested that this situation resulted in a loss in the feeling of belonging to the company, created fear, anxiety, hate and exhaustion due to continuous role playing. Considering that work is the place most of us spend most of our time in modern society, the size of the negative effects is even more evident. The statements also revealed that working policies and mechanisms against sexual identity-based discrimination in the workplace increased the sense of belonging, self-esteem, efficiency and job satisfaction of LGBTI employees.

Despite these results, 30% of the employees graded their own institutions 3-4 or 4/4 in terms of sensitivity towards LGBTI right and this is a fact that should be examined separately. These points probably signal that these workplaces are “relatively” more sensitive than others.

Among the reasons for discrimination towards LGBTIs in labor; prejudices, ignorance, fear to lose customers and company image and political pressure are among the most chosen. In this perspective, LGBTIs working in the private sector are a reflection of the general situation of employment in Turkey. In fact, our participants listed social awareness campaigns, prohibiting discrimination legally on the national level and in-house trainings among the three measures to be taken against discrimination.

They believe that a general and labor based legal security is needed despite the fact, the understanding that law is not enough for a social transformation. They also have demands from universities, professional organizations and unions. Some of them stated that LGBTI rights movement should not be separated from other struggles, that an equal and pluralist society can only be created with a collective action.

In conclusion, in order to prevent sexual orientation and gender identity-based discrimination, to create a peaceful work environment for LGBTI persons and transform this disadvantaged position, to establish equality of social and economic rights, there are steps to be taken and arguments to be made in terms of corporate policies and NGO strategies. We hope this research contributes to those efforts.

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

İstanbul, 2018





CHAPTER 3

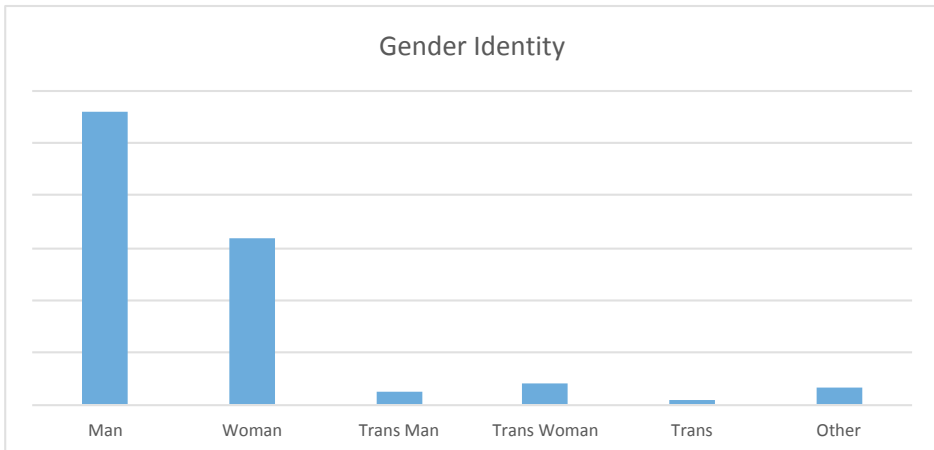
Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
Trans and Intersex Employees in
Public Sector in Turkey – 2018

Research Sample

Kaos GL has published reports on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender characteristics since 2015. In 2018, 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 working in the private sector in Turkey in 2018. This year the survey included a total of 198 individuals compared to 166 last year¹. The increase in the participant number is significant.

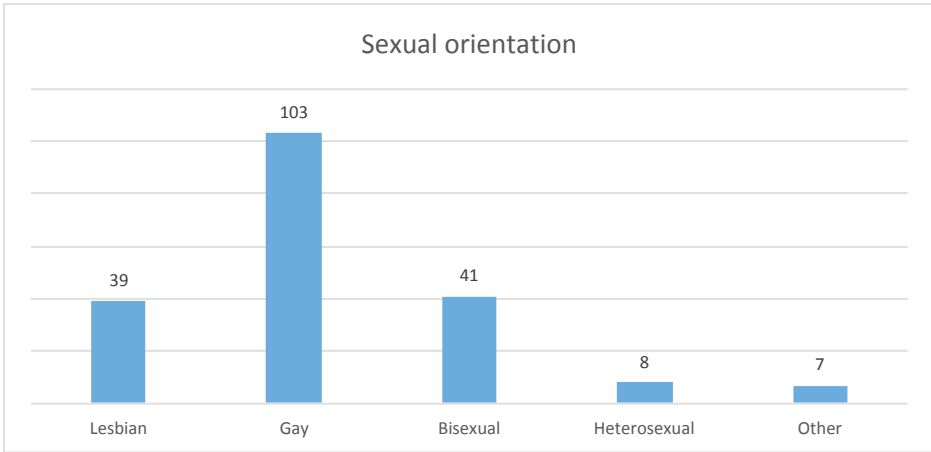
Participants were able to choose their sexual identity from a list or choose “other” and identify themselves. As you can see in the tables, most of our participants identified themselves as gay. You can also see gays and lesbians represent the largest part of the sample followed by bisexual males and females. Out of 41 bisexuals that participated the survey, 26 identified themselves as female, 12 as male, 1 trans male, 1 gender queer and 1 gender fluid.

The number of trans men and women in the private sector is limited, as in other areas of work life. A series of obstacles during the education and limitations based on gender norms are the main causes of the situation.



Other: “Genderqueer”, “Non-binary”, “Genderless”, “I do not like identifications”, “I cannot categorize”, “No identity”, “Gender fluid”.

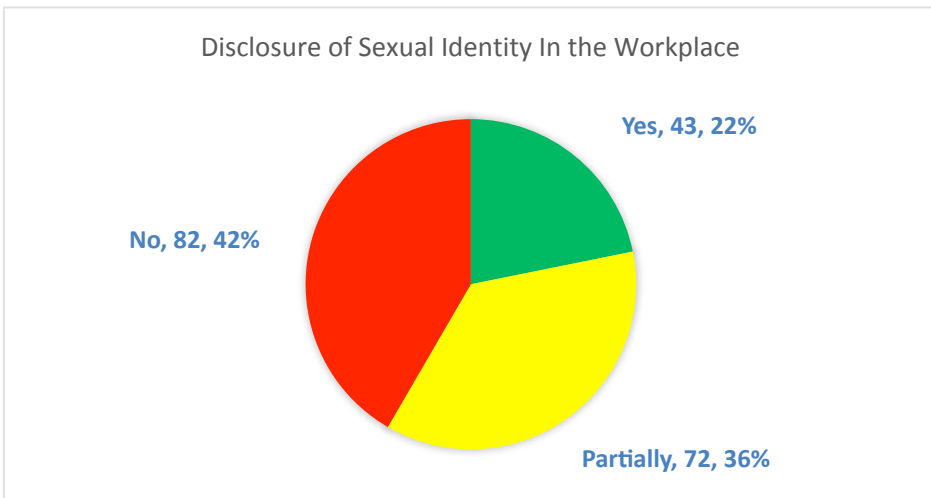
1 <http://www.kaosgldernegi.org/yayindetay.php?id=207>



Other: "Gynesexual", "Pansexual", "Queer", "I do not define" (2), "Gender queer", "I do not define".

Disclosure of Sexual Identity in the Workplace

Regarding how out individuals are in terms of sexual orientation and gender identity, of the 198 participants, just 22% (43 participants) are completely open at their workplace. Similar statistics were recorded in previous years of this research: 22%, 28% and 17% in 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively. The increase compared to 2017 numbers is evident. Similar to 2017, this year's respondents are employed in a wide variety areas in the private sector.



Forty-two percent of the participants stated that they are completely hidden about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity at work. Thirty-six percent are partially open regarding their sexual identity. If participants are disclosing their identities, it is not to the management or the employer but to close colleagues or other LGBTIs. Although some respondents did report protective superiors and employers. The findings regarding being open to colleagues was consistent with previous years. Detailed numbers can be found in the graph below.

The idea of hiding one’s sexual orientation and gender identity and the idea of “not being one’s self” and its negative effects on daily life, work performance and rights claim will be analyzed here. Findings and comments regarding these conditions will be shared in the following pages. This is one of the common themes in each year’s research.

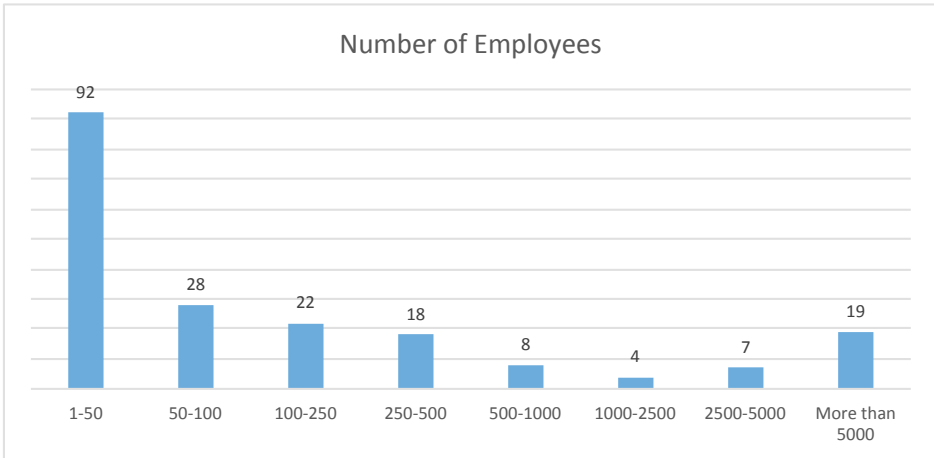
Workplaces and Positions of the Participants

The distribution of workplaces can be seen in the table below. Participants work in a wide range of areas in the private sector. Education, retail stores, health and IT were the most common. The details of the answer “other” shows the existence for LGBTI employees in many different areas which may run contrary to conventional gender roles. Unfortunately, the fact that in many cases they have hidden their identity masks this fact and does not help fight the idea that “LGBTI employees only work in some sectors”.



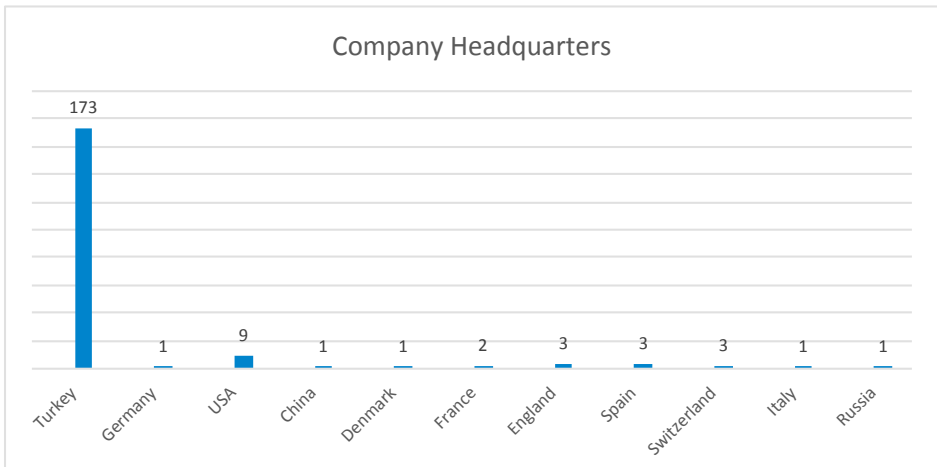
Other: Consultancy, startup, catering, outdoor sports, environment, transportation, design, measurement tools, production, installation.

When the labor capacity of these workplaces is considered, a picture consistent with previous years' findings emerged. Forty-seven percent of the participants work in in small scale establishment with a maximum of 50 employees. Thirty respondents (15%) work in companies with more than 1000 employees. Despite the size of these companies only 3 of the survey participants working there felt able to disclose their identity and only 5 of them graded their companies 3 out of 4 or 4 out of 4 in terms of LGBTI sensitivity. These findings show that the size of the corporate structure has no influence on LGBTI employees. Details can be found in the following table.



Company Headquarters

Participants were asked about the original location of their companies. The purpose is to assess whether the conditions of foreign companies' are more supportive or protective towards their employees in Turkey. Most of these companies encourage diversity in terms of sexual orientation and gender identity in their home countries.

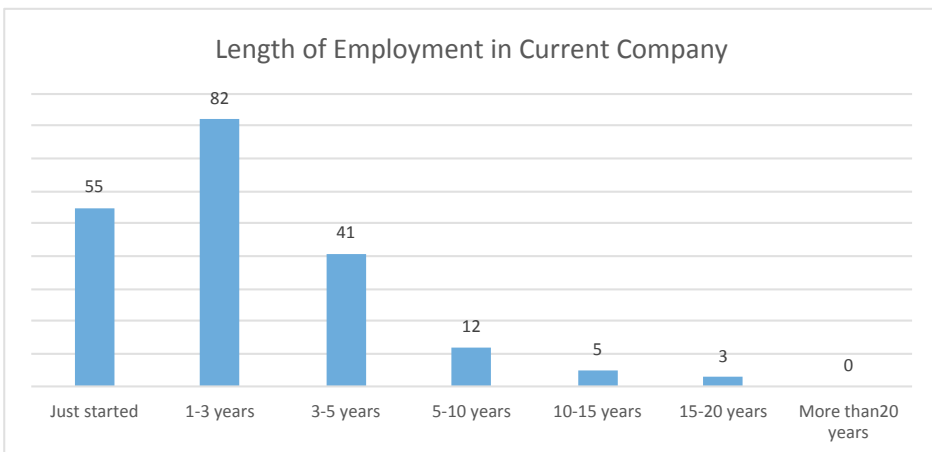


Of the 22 people who work in foreign companies, 5 participants have completely disclosed and 8 have partially disclosed their identities. None of the respondents declared that they experienced negative discrimination during the hiring and job application processes and 2 mentioned that in the job announcement that the company declared that there was no sexual identity discrimination in the process.

Length of Time in the Current Workplace

Most of our participants stated that they were a “new employee” or had worked for “1-3 years”. Few of them had worked in the same place for more than 10 years. The limited number of LGBTI employees working in the same place for more than 3 years may stem from deterrents such as lack of promotions, mobbing, harassment, threat etc., which make it difficult for LGBTI persons to work in the same company for extended periods. One should also consider the high turnover rate in the private sector.

Another explanation for employees’ short work durations may also be that many work in small or mid-size establishments where turnover is often higher than in larger corporations. Due to a lack of security in employment after 2000s, employees tend to rotate rather than working long term in the same company and this should also be considered evaluating durations.



Position in the Current Company

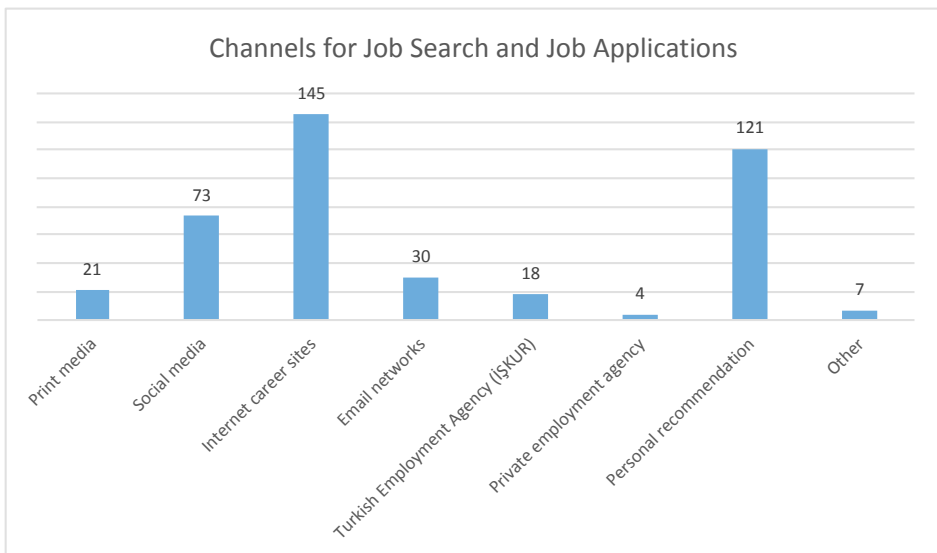
An examination of the job positions of participants reveals that half of the sample were mid-level executives or experts. Compared to last year, there were more senior executives this year.

As is shown in the table, LGBTI employees occupy varying positions. This shows that LGBTI employees have the capacity to work at all levels. However, one should also keep in mind that many participants complained about a lack of promotion or were restrained from competing for promotion. Detailed numbers can be seen in the following table.

Assessments regarding Recruitment Processes

The following table demonstrates that most of participants in this research found their current jobs through career websites, recommendations from a contact or social media channels. Many indicated that they used more than one channel.

As in previous years, the percentages of those who applied to İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency) or private labor offices was low. This might be linked to the fact that LGBTI employees often lack trust in these channels and fear being stigmatized by these institutions. The same research conducted in 2015, 2016 and 2017 revealed similarly low rates showing a clear tendency. The high level of job applications made through personal contacts signals that LGBTI employees value the references of other LGBTI individuals in choosing relatively more LGBTI friendly companies. LGBTI employees are in need of extra information about the company in question regarding their working conditions, which also means that compared to other employees they are in need of more developed social support mechanisms.



Other: "Due to being in a special group, they reach me more", "Bar association information pool", "For every job, an offer came to me", "Network, generally I get jobs through headhunting", "I haven't had any special needs", "I have my own work".

Many participants stated that the social media postings of a company had an effect on them and that they were encouraged or discouraged by a company's image and corporate identity. They tended to apply more easily and willingly to companies that mentioned LGBTI rights directly or talked about equality, diversity and non-discrimination in general. A similar situation is evident this year regarding company profiles in career websites. LGBTI individuals try to discern the attitude a company may have towards them.

Interviews and tests during the job application process

To the question "Have you encountered any criteria or statement that openly or covertly encourages or discourages the applicant regarding sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex situation?" most of our participants (185 people) answered as "No". Of the 13 participants who answered "Yes", 6 of them stated the criteria was "discouraging".

Seven participants mentioned encouraging criteria and only 2 of those answers came from employees of foreign companies.

"They support women and LGBTIs." (publisher, gender queer)

"The job advert stated that there was no gender-based discrimination." (NGO employee, gay)

"There were statements of non-discrimination." (NGO employee, bisexual female)

"In their job adverts there were statements about having a gender and sexual orientation free attitude or something like that." (education, bisexual female)

"It was encouraging. Directly stated." (IT, heterosexual trans man)

"Encouraging. In the adverts it said, 'No discrimination based on language, religion, gender, race, sexual orientation or political view' directly." (publisher, heterosexual trans man)

Answers regarding discouraging statements signal the discriminatory nature of social norms. However, it is the responsibility of private sector employers, as well as the public sector to ensure nondiscriminatory processes in order to encourage LGBTI employees who are one of the most disadvantaged groups in the labor force. It is not enough to apply the equality principle during the job application processes, but employers also have the responsibility to prevent discrimination in order to see their employees' real qualities. Our participants stated that their preparations for the job application (CV and self-promotion) were affected directly by the job adverts and their attitude towards their employer directly affected their motivation at work. The situation can be easily seen in the quotes below.

“I think having only words man and woman on the adverts is the ceiling a binary understanding of gender, therefore it is pushy and has negative effect on LGBTIs.” (lawyer, bisexual female)

“The fact that they are looking for men and women stops trans individuals.” (NGO employee, trans gyneseexual)

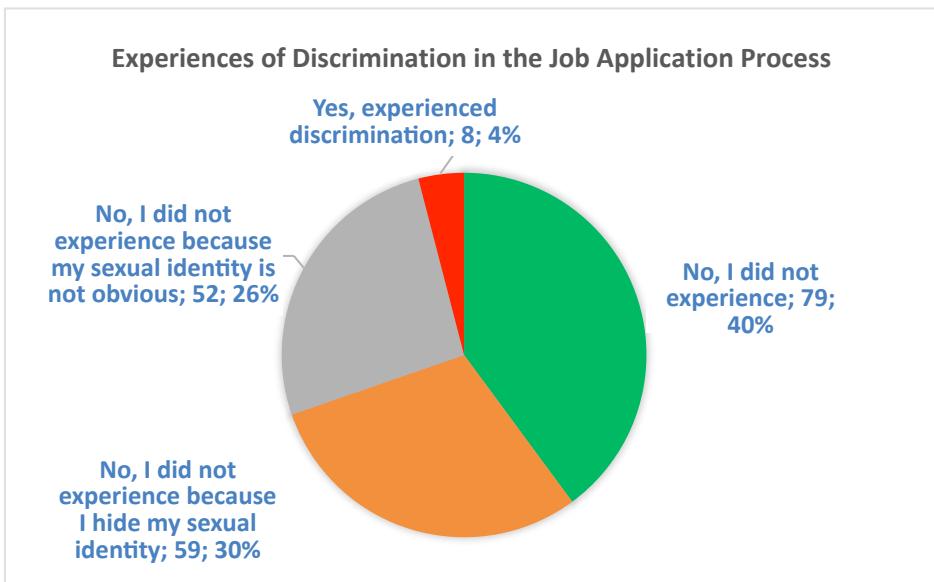
“The criterion of general morale.” (health personnel, lesbian)

“The terms ‘presentable man or woman’ underlined.” (working in publishing, employee not defining a gender or orientation)

Some of the participants stated that the reflection of expectations related to social gender norms and roles has negative effects on LGBTI employees. Therefore, using gender neutral language and language that transcends the understanding of existing gender roles would encourage LGBTI individuals. For example, adverts could just define the job description and not use any gender specific term. In addition, the advert could also make clear that there would be no discrimination related to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. The situations in which there is positive discrimination towards LGBTIs, heterosexual women and other disadvantaged groups are not included in this argument.

Interviews and tests during the hiring process

To the question “Have you experienced any open or covert discrimination during the hiring process because of your sexual identity?”, a majority answered “No”, similar to the previous question.



However, as you can see on the following table that 30% linked the situation to the fact that they conceal their identity. Another 26% said they did not experience discrimination because their identity is not obvious.

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

Another reason for not experiencing discrimination might be the general acceptance of heterosexuality and cisgender and the widespread assumption that everyone is heterosexual or cisgender. Ideally, companies could create an application process and environment where applicants could state their sexual identity freely – if they wanted.

Eight participants declared that they faced discrimination during the tests and interviews of the hiring process.

“LGBTI organizations I work for are in my CV. I put them there on purpose, provocatively. Employers usually do not understand what they are. One of them called me for an interview just to ask that. Another one asked what the NGO was for and said ‘You wouldn’t hit on our secretary, right?’ as a joke!” (female lawyer, bisexual)

“I applied for a teaching job in a school that presents itself as Turkey’s first education cooperative. During the interview, they told me that they had a disagreement and some of the members left because they did not want me hired. Later, the same institution accused me of creating a sterile environment because I organized events and activities to break binary gender roles. They mobbed me and told me ‘We let people leave because of you!’ They tried to present me my being there as a trans was a favor. There are many institutions that use trans individuals as a display and instead of shifting current gender roles they strengthen it.” (service personnel, trans gynosexual)

“During the interview they asked why I was exempt from the military service. I honestly told them the truth. The woman I was talking stood up and said ‘Leave this room immediately!’ in a bitter tone.” (IT specialist, gay)

“They were prejudiced.” (advertising, trans woman)

“No matter how good I tried to hide, the interview was over the minute they found out. I they let me understand it was gender identity related. They called it social understanding of morality.” (working in publishing, employee not defining a gender or orientation)

“In most applications I hide my military service exemption because they reject me immediately.” (NGO employee, gay)

“I am a woman and my identity was excluded in the adverts looking for men. But during the hiring nothing happened. But they don’t know I am bisexual.” (working in construction, bisexual female)

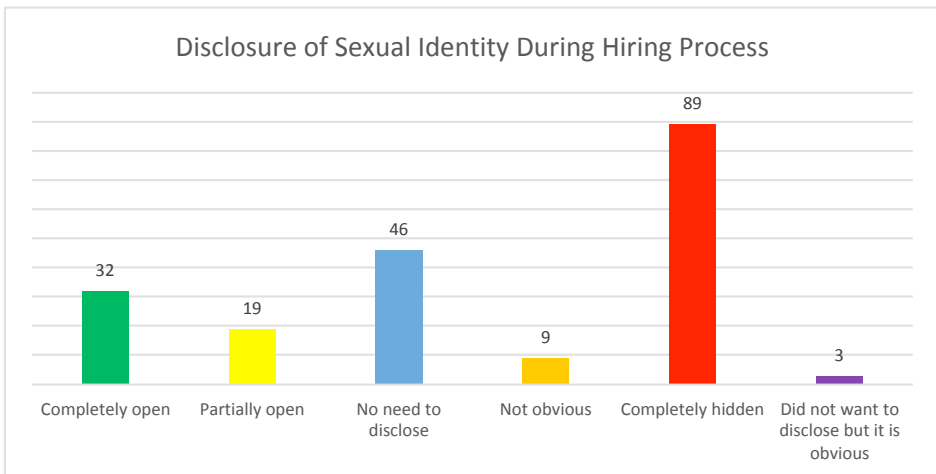
“Normally when I say my name they ask if I am a woman. I say “Yes” and they say they value appearances and ask, “Would you have a makeup?” I say “No” and I walk away.” (catering, trans man)

Respondents made it clear that their sexual identities were at least “questioned” openly or covertly and they were “informed” through insinuations that about various difficulties might come up at work during the application process. This may intimidate LGBTI applicants and lower performance at work.

Similar to past years, interview questions related to military service proved to be an issue for LGBTI applicants. In addition, according to the testimony of one applicant, hiring LGBTIs can be presented as an advertisement and favor for the employee.

Disclosure during the hiring process

From the answers to the open-ended question, “Were you open in terms of sexual identity during the hiring process? How did you feel about being open or being forced to hide?” in this sample, the majority of respondents did not disclose their identities and had difficult experiences throughout the process (198 responses).



Only 32 of participants were completely open about their sexual identity, where 89 hid their identity completely. Compared to previous years the percentage of those who were open about themselves decreased. At first one considers general difficulties in socio-political circumstances and increasing conservatism, but we should also keep in mind the increased diversity of work areas and other factors that changed in 2018. The fact that we have less participants this year might suggest that we had more participants with a hidden identity last year.

During the hiring process, some participants gave clues about their sexual identity even though they were not completely open about it and there were no direct questions related to gender identity and sexual orientation.

“During the hiring process I did not feel the need to share my identity. I did not hide it either. I talked about my master’s thesis on LGBTI and my volunteer work at SPoD. I did not face any discrimination. The fact that I mentioned these things made me stronger.” (consulting expert, bisexual female)

“I was open when they asked about the NGOs in my resume. I actually put them there on purpose, because I feel the need to be open. I am an activist, working in the field. But I did not say anything before it came up.” (law expert, bisexual female)

Thirty-two participants declared they were open and some of them mentioned that the attitude they experienced during and after the interview helped them with being open.

“I was planning to hide until I went to the interview. But I realized I acted naturally there and the person I talked to did not make a deal about it so I kept being normal about it.” (mid-level executive in retail, gay)

“I was not open at first, but my superior told me ‘We know you, we are here now and after the treatment.’” (worker in energy, bisexual female)

“First I thought I should hide but I disclosed myself when I realized I was not talking to homophobes.” (health personnel, gay)

“At the beginning I needed to hide it and not talk even if I did not face any discrimination. However, they could tell from the appearance, they would think I was a trans or a butch lesbian. I could only disclose after a while if they were non-discriminating people. I was only able to disclose myself at work when I was 28. And I was able to easily talk about it and have relaxed conversations at my current job, not with everyone. When I go out for a meeting or an event, public or private, I hide it.” (publishing specialist, heterosexual trans man)

Some reported that they thought it was a risky move to be open during the interviews.

“Of course, there was anxiety, but I overcame.” (retail specialist, gay)

“I could not be open because it is a risk, in such a country. Only close people that I trust know about it. I do not think everybody should know. It does not make any sense to go around with a flag. But I tell them when it’s necessary. It depends.” (construction specialist, lesbian)

Most people choose not to disclose their identity during the job application process because they are afraid they will not be hired, they will be excluded, hated, exposed, they will not be able to do their jobs and will not be promoted. Therefore, some of them admit they were faking which led to personal conflicts and forced to apply with that state of mind.

“I could not be open, I would never be hired. Small town and conservative employers...” (law personnel, gay)

“I hid my orientation because undereducated workers would never listen to me and do what I say. In order to keep my executive position, I felt the need to perform some masculine moves.” (specialist in construction, gay)

“Even though I don’t feel the need to hide my sexual orientation during job applications I don’t feel comfortable when it comes up. I fear they will talk behind my back and I feel different from them.” (specialist in entertainment, lesbian)

“I don’t think they are gentle. I fear they are prejudiced, disrespectful and offending.” (specialist in education, lesbian)

“I felt the need to hide. I think it’s unnecessary to try to explain my sexual identity when it’s already difficult to talk to those animals all day.” (specialist in automotive, gay)

In addition, some of the participants believe that sexual orientation or gender identity are not social or public categories that are supported and protected on a human rights base. They rather think these are “about private life” or “intimate” so they are not connected to labor, economy or social rights.

“I did not disclose my identity during job application because my private life is nobody’s business.” (mid-level executive in food industry, lesbian)



“Business life and sexual life are two different things. So, it is not necessary to say, “I am gay, you know?”” (researcher, gay)

“Normally I don’t think did is relevant, so I did not mention.” (specialist in education, bisexual female)

“I don’t feel any need to talk about my sexual identity, disclose or hide it, at work. I am trying to do my job at work.” (administrative personnel, bisexual man)

“I never mentioned it because my identity and my work are not related. There would be no problems even if I brought it up.” (high-level executive in advertising, gay)

“I don’t have to hide it or disclose it. I want my private life to be a subject of conversation.” (mid-level executive in health, queer)

The fact that our participants believe that sexual orientation and gender identity are private, intimate personal issues seems to show how its very victims internalize dominant heteronormative ideology. In addition, the internalization is not only in mentality but also in daily practices. The situation requires further examination of LGBTIs self-transformation processes in the public sphere. To “leave your sexual identity home when you go to work” might signal a self-control and self-transformation process on its own. Furthermore, not declaring one’s sexual identity might result in not using some economic, social and cultural rights.

Some of participants preferred being partially disclosed during interviews and tests and they accomplished this without directly declaring their identity but mentioning gender equality and LGBTI rights in general.



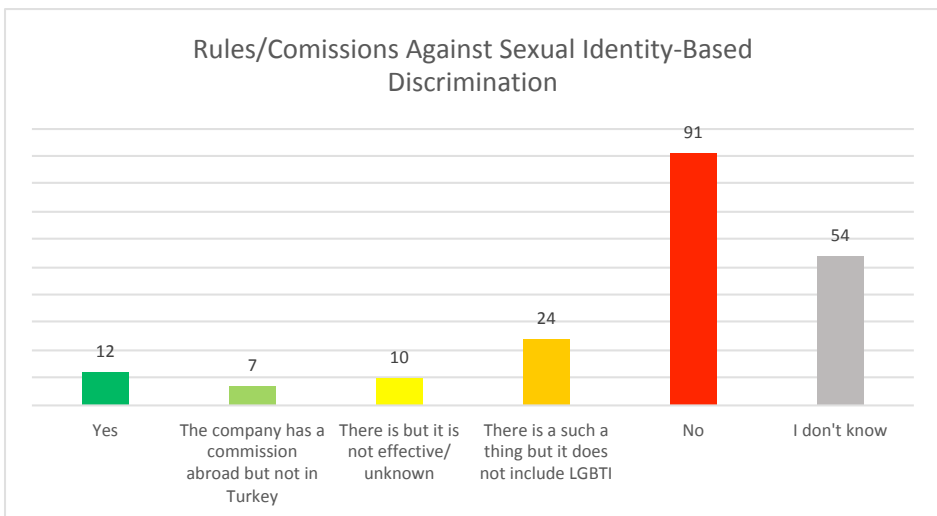
“I did not say it at first. After I signed in, I talked to my superior. Later I did not even have to disclose. When they asked about my boyfriend, I told them a girl name and got a surprised but positive reaction. On social media, on Google there is a lot of information about me. If they wonder, they can look it up, I thought.” (specialist in education, bisexual woman)

“I always hide my sexual identity. Only my close friends know me because I do not want to be excluded or judged because of who I am. What I feel, is like, I am a theater actor. They give me a role and a costume. I have a character there and I wear the costume and play my part in this play called life. Spiritually can be exhausting but I have nothing else to do. I am afraid that people will find out about real me.” (NGO personnel, lesbian)

Corporate Protection against Discrimination

We asked LGBTI participants the following question: “Are there any rules or commissions to prevent sexual identity-based discrimination in your company regarding promotion, assignment, discharge, detention or in-house education?” The total of “Yes” and “Yes but not known or effective” was just 22 (11%). Despite these policies, only 5 of 22 reported that they were able to disclose their identities.

Similar to previous years, most of our participants answered as “No” (46%) or “I don’t know” (27%). This is especially significant for participants that answered “I don’t know” because it signals some kind of “lack of expectation”. Individuals might not have any expectations of protective measures regarding human rights or LGBTIs and/or companies do not have such mechanisms.



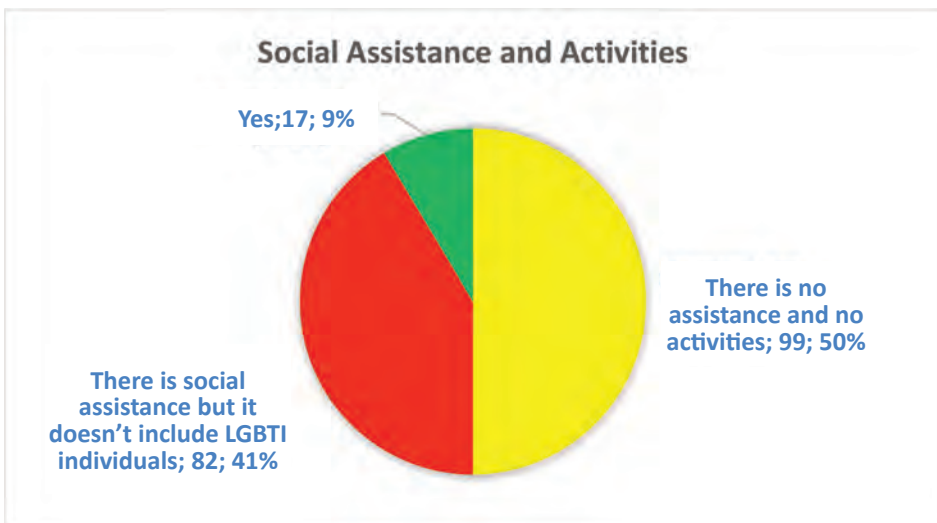
Out of the 25 participants who work for companies that their headquarters are in a foreign country, 5 disclosed their identity, 8 were partially open and 12 did not disclose. Two of these participants stated that they saw an anti-discrimination statement in the job advert. For those employed at foreign companies 6 out of 11 participants answered “Yes” and “Yes but not known or effective” regarding any rules or commissions against sexual identity discrimination. Five of stated that such measures existed in the foreign branch but not in Turkey.

In summary, very few participants stated that there were sexual identity based protections in their workplaces. However, some of them are unknown or ineffective. This finding is in line with our findings in the previous years and it does not signal any positive change in employees’ expectations or employers’ attitudes.

Social Assistance and Activities

To the question “Is there a special program on LGBTI employees regarding social help and activities in your company, such as family help or celebration for partners, inclusion of partners to birthday activities?” nearly 50% of participants responded negatively because their companies did not have any similar programs for any of the employees.

Forty-one percent of participants declared that their companies have social help end events for their employees, but LGBTI persons are usually ignored. Family, spouse, partner, boyfriend and girlfriend terms are interpreted heteronormatively. This understanding creates a lack of equality against LGBTIs and wears them out socially and emotionally. It also becomes an obstacle on their way to corporate belonging, work efficiency and satisfaction.



First of all, just a situation would make LGBTIs as “others” and they would feel “cut off from social context”. Unlike other employees, the link between work life and private life cannot be established, which influences people’s commitment to their workplace and its corporate identity and decreases efficiency and job satisfaction.

As in previous years, this year’s findings show that LGBTI employees are unable to be open about their identities or their partners in company functions in or outside their workplace. Even those in “better” circumstances felt themselves obligated to maintain a low profile in comparison to non-trans heterosexuals.

Of the very few who answered positively to the question on social programs (17 people, 9%), some of their answers are below. Of 12 people who declared that there are rules and commissions in the company to prevent sexual identity-based discrimination, 6 stated that LGBTIs were included in social help and events. Out of 25 people with company headquarters in another country, 6 stated that LGBTIs were included in social help and events. According to these findings, LGBTI employees are viewed as single individuals even when they work in relatively protected work environments where there are rules that guarantee equality. In order to have their partners accepted as their families there needs to be more corporate acceptance.

“In the corporation bylaw there is a list of rights of partners where in parenthesis says ‘same sex partners’. In social event you always have a ‘plus 1’ but as far as I know there are no LGBTIQs who have partners so we could not test the rule.” (high-level executive in health, gay)

“All events include LGBTIs.” (specialist in publishing, gender queer)

“We organized a pride week to increase awareness, it was really nice.” (IT expert, gay)

“We have many events and celebrations, but I never brought my partner. My department is quite open-minded, but not the others.” (worker in tourism, lesbian)

“My partner has the same rights I received from the institution I work for, health, travel, allowance etc.” (mid-level executive in NGO, gay)

“Yes, we have events. You can come with who you want, no one cares. There is a positive attitude towards our partners, they want to meet them etc.” (specialist in education, bisexual woman)

“We study migration and multiple discrimination. We have psychological and legal support. We are trying to create an organization.” (NGO employee, gynosexual trans)

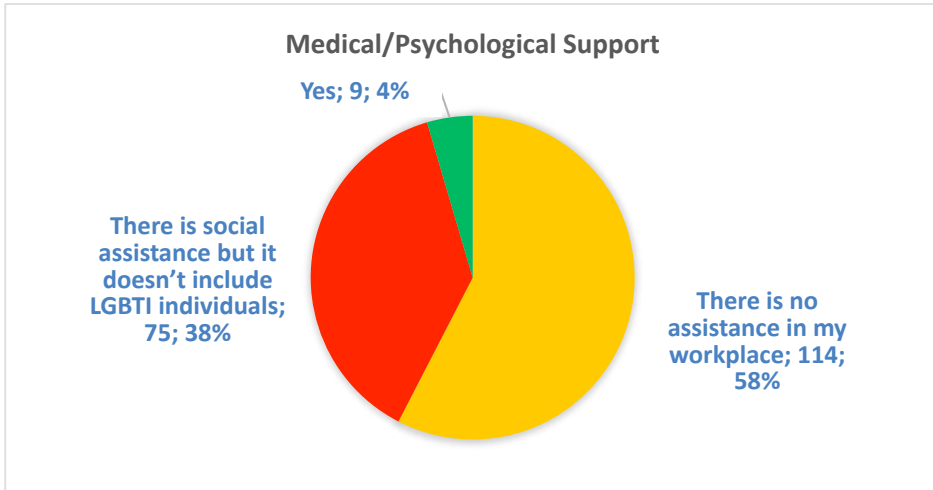
“We let people use maternity-paternity leave in same sex partnerships. We celebrate pride every year.” (mid-level executive in e-commerce, gay)

“I got married in France and my manager gave me a present. When I left the company I and my partner had a dinner with my colleagues and superiors.” (specialist in media, pansexual woman)

“My boyfriend could easily come to visit. They bought us tickets, so we could come to the company new year party.” (personnel in construction/architecture, gay)

Medical and Psychological Support

The question asked about the details of the subject of health was, “Does medical-psychological support in your company have inclusive practices and trained personnel to meet the needs of LGBTI employees?” Most participants responded “No” (114 people) stating there were no such support mechanisms. Seventy-five stated that there were support practices but none of them was meeting LGBTIs’ needs.



Of the 12 people who stated that there were rules and commissions preventing sexual identity-based discrimination, only 4 confirmed the existence of LGBTI inclusive practices in the area of medical and psychological support. Out of 25 individuals with company headquarters in a foreign country only 4 was able to confirm such support.

In some of the answers you can see below, LGBTI-special awareness or psychological support services were quite limited. None of the participants reported the existence of more extensive health coverage and services.

“In-house health center has doctors and a psychiatrist, but I never heard their support in those matters. Maybe they do it but keep it secret and that is why I don’t hear about it.” (in transportation, bisexual woman)

“Our health insurance covers psychotherapy. Middle East LGBTI contact person is in Turkey and we already organize a training regarding LGBTI terminology. They plan detailed trainings.” (high-level executive in health, gay)

“We have a Behavior Committee and free access to a psychological support line that works 24 hours to reach in a traumatic situation.” (mid-level executive in NGO, gay)

“We have an employee support line. Confidential and free.” (high-level executive in e-commerce, gay)

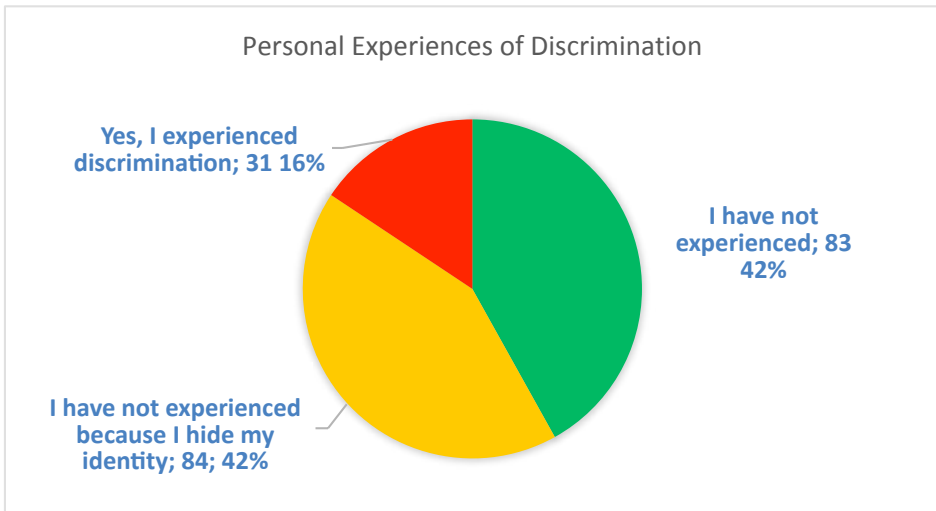
“We trained every employee in the subject. I case we need we can get psychological help from outside.” (IT, heterosexual trans man)

“I am the trainer. In fact, people mistake my specialty and my activism outside work. When they don’t understand something about homosexuality they stare at me.” (specialist in health, bisexual woman)

As health support there should be special measures regarding sexual identity and intersex and trained personnel that support LGBTI employees from a socio-psychological perspective and help trans individuals during their transition periods. It is an important corporate equality policy to include support mechanism to meet these needs.

Personal Experiences of Discrimination

One of the questions aimed at evaluating discrimination was, “Have you experienced personal cases of discrimination in your workplace? How did they proceed?”



As displayed in the graph, 31 of 198 people, 16% of the sample, stated they had experienced discrimination related to their sexual identity. In addition, 84 people stated they had to hide their identity in order not to be a victim of discrimination. In short, a total of 58% either experienced discrimination or hid their identity to avoid discrimination. We should note that LGBTI employees often hide their sexual orientation or gender identity in order to survive in the work life. At the same time, when we look at the numbers from 2017, there is a 7% decrease in the number of participants who experienced discrimination or reported having to hide their iden-

tities. You can see below quotes from different experiences of discrimination and most of them underline common problems.

“I face discrimination coming from the customers, but what can you do, I have to make a living.” (service personnel in entertainment, gay)

“I experienced verbal and psychological harassment.” (service personnel in food industry, gay)

“They mocked me because I was polite and did not have a girlfriend. I can’t tell anyone. They would lynch me.” (specialist in IT, gay)

“Mocking, insinuations...” (specialist in construction, gay)

“Some men and women told me “Don’t talk so soft!”. I do not show it normally. I made an official complaint and they were punished.” (specialist in transportation, gay)

“I constantly hear homophobic jokes and comments and I don’t say anything about it.” (specialist in retail, bisexual woman)

“Sometimes they pressure me saying ‘You have to get married, why you don’t have a girlfriend?’ That’s disturbing enough.” (service personnel in law, gay)

“I experienced discrimination from some colleagues but they had to learn to respect. My bosses are strict about these things.” (lesbian in food industry, defining herself as genderless)

“When they see a nice lady they start staring at me. I do not think they have bad intentions but it’s not nice even as a joke. I feel anxiety when I have to make a massage. My hands shake.” (mid-level executive in health, lesbian)

“I have experienced. I talked to the person in a calm way, the way he would understand. He apologized. I never had any conversation with him besides work.” (specialist in IT, gay)

“They joke about LGBTI related news.” (specialist in construction, bisexual woman)

“Maybe not discrimination but my director ignores my identity. I sent a WhatsApp message to work group about pride. ‘They fired gas but I am ok’. He said nothing. Next day he told me he did not see the message but on WhatsApp, you can see he did. He has Islamic identity and he doesn’t respond to these kind of things.” (specialist in health, lesbian)

“Sexist and homophobic discourse, maybe not directly but workers talk about things.” (specialist in construction, gay)

“Being trans made me lonely.” (mid-level executive in advertisement, trans woman)

“They keep investigating my girlfriend. I am followed.” (specialist in publishing)

“I hide my identity but they suspect sometimes. They try verbal harassment. They asked me why I was so polite, like gay.” (service personnel in installation, gay)

“I was harassed by a male colleague. I was about to resign but my director and HR director backed me up and changed my position. I disclosed myself to them after this incident.” (specialist in media, gay)

“Because I don’t have a contact with women or I don’t make an effort they told me ‘Let’s not have another Kerimcan Durmaz case!’ or ‘Why don’t you visit a prostitute?’ kind of things. I generally hide my identity.” (specialist in transportation, gay)

“Being a victim of constant homophobia and not expressing yourself is not discrimination?” (specialist in education, gay)

“In periods when I did not have a girlfriend they made fun of me.” (high-level executive in trade, bisexual man)

As in the 2017 findings, participants underlined that the level of discrimination almost reaches mobbing.

“In my previous workplace my director realize I was gay and he mobbed me until I resigned. And he was successful.” (specialist in education, gay)

Most of our participants stated that the discrimination they face at work created job insecurity.

“I would be out the door whenever they realize I have an alternative or that I am useless. They are transphobes, but I need to work. And they have to work with me.” (specialist in entertainment, trans woman)

“I was fired for no reason when I disclosed my identity.” (service personnel in entertainment, gay)

“They would not work with me if I was not a special cast.” (specialist in entertainment, trans woman)

“On the set of a documentary my head told me something indirectly and told me he did not want to work with me: “You live a marginal life, you probably do drugs and such!” (specialist in media, bisexual woman)

Reporting Discrimination

We asked participants: “Did you report discrimination you experienced to authorities in the company, in the union or in jurisdiction? How did they proceed? If not reported, why?” The main finding was that with the exception of 6 individuals, none of the participants reported a potential discriminatory environment or direct or indirect case of discrimination. Three employees who reported discrimination to upper management claimed their managers did nothing. Two people were notified that the person discriminating against them had been given a warning and in one case, the individual received punishment.

Below you will find some testimonies from 31 employees who claim they faced discrimination.

“No. I did not report the fact that even my long hair was seen as femininity, that I was humiliated by the auditing company and warned about my appearance. They told me to be manlier. No, I did not report that.” (specialist in transportation, gay)

“I am trying to stay away from people as much as I can. I don’t join conversations so that they don’t catch me.” (service personnel in textiles, gay)

“I was harassed in my previous work but I did not report it. I just quit.” (service personnel in retail, gay)

“I don’t believe in results.” (specialist in retail, lesbian)

Most of our participants stated that they did not file a report for fear of losing their job. You can see the quotes below.

“I did not report because I like my job in general and I did not want to lose it.” (mid-level executive in education, bisexual man)

“I did not report because I work without insurance and I have to bear it due to financial reasons.” (service personnel in food industry, lesbian)

“I did not report any authority because I fear losing my job.” (service personnel in food industry, gay)

In general, the statements related to how our participants reacted against discrimination are in line with previous years. LGBTI employees fail to seek for their rights because they fear losing their jobs, high stakes, involuntary disclosure and other problems that might come up in work life. Another important finding is their disbelief about authorities advocating LGBTI rights. This might be the result of an inadequate corporate or legal approach. LGBTI employees worry that reporting discrimination might result in further discrimination, or even spreading discrimination outside the workplace. Hence, they stay quiet.

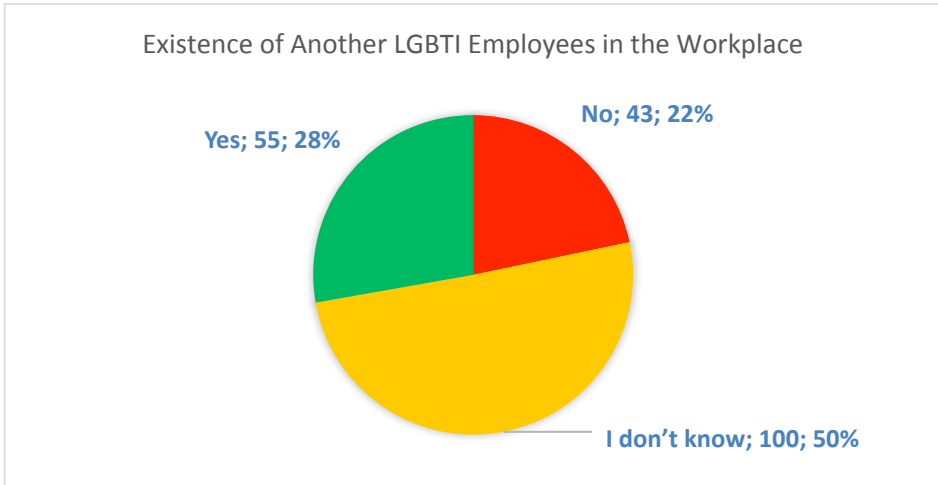
Experience of Discrimination Towards Other LGBTI Employees

Existence of Other LGBTIs in the Workplace

To the survey question, “Are there other LGBTI employees in your workplace? Are you in solidarity with them?” 55 people (28%) answered “Yes” confirming the existing of others. Exactly half of the sample stated that they had no information and only 43 people said “No”, 22%.

A significant amount of LGBTIs turn towards employers considered more LGBTI friendly. Evaluating this information together with the finding that most LGBTIs are silent when they face discrimination, the importance of LGBTI networks and social support mechanisms is understood more clearly. Where corporate procedures or management mentality fails to protect them, LGBTI employees find support and solidarity for each other. Only in this way it is possible to survive the discriminatory environment of the workplace.

Of 55 people who confirmed the existence of other LGBTI employees in their workplaces, 30 explained the network between LGBTI individuals making clear that there are different forms and contents of solidarity.



“We applied for a special leave through the union for 17th of May and Pride Week and now we have that right.” (mid-level executive at NGO, woman not defining sexual orientation)

“When we face sexist or phobic discourses we support each other and come up with constructive criticism. I can say we have some solidarity.” (in consulting, bisexual woman)

Twenty-seven out of 55 positive answers stated there is no solidarity between LGBTI employees in their company. Some of them believe there is no need for solidarity since they did not experience any discrimination. Others state the lack of solidarity comes from the fact that none of the LGBTIs disclose their identities. One participant stated that he/she would not make solidarity since this type of networks might create problems in the workplace. A similar sentiment emerged last year that a solidarity network might pave the way for other forms of discriminations against LGBTIs. In fact, company pressure prevents solidarity.

“Yes, I think there is. However, we can never communicate openly. It’s like we have wall around.” (mid-level executive in finance, bisexual woman)

Some of our participants underlined the fact that lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex employees do not communicate with each other.

“I know there are lots of secret gays and lesbians thanks to heterosexual gossip.” (service personnel in transportation, bisexual woman)

“Not really because one wants to spend time with his/her partner there is no room for social life, other one has no clue. Solidarity aside, many people try to stonewall the issue.” (high level executive at NGO, bisexual man)

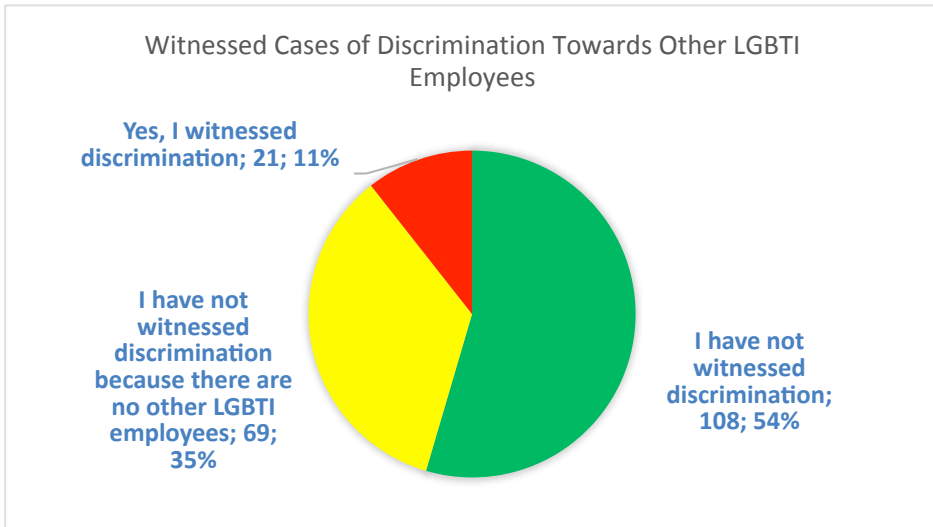
“We are not disclosed and we come from different political backgrounds, so there is no solidarity. I only support LGBTI theoretically.” (specialist in construction/architecture, bisexual woman)

We already confirmed that LGBTI employees could work in every position and in every area of work. In fact, compared to last year's sample, there was diversity in terms of work areas or departments among this year's participants. However in many case LGBTIs have not disclosed their identities and cannot communicate with other LGBTI employees to advocate for their rights or for solidarity. This finding is also consistent with previous years.

Experiences of Discrimination towards Other LGBTIs in the Workplace

To further explore the issue of discrimination participants were asked, "Have you witnessed cases of discrimination towards other LGBTI employees? How did it proceed?" Most answered "No" but it is important to remember that 143 participants, 77% of the total, also answered negatively the question "Are there any other LGBTIs in your workplace?" Therefore, there are 28% (55 people) of the sample who confirm the existence of other LGBTIs and 11% of these people stated there was discrimination towards them. This is clearly a high number.

You can find some of the testimonies below.



"You can hear discrimination words in every little thing. I intervened a couple of time." (specialist in entertainment, trans woman)

"I see insults and threats coming from the customers and the police." (specialist in IT, gay)

"They make gay jokes; they laugh sarcastically, some of the colleagues." (service personnel in tourism, lesbian)

“It’s more like neighbors gossiping. And uncovers other employees’ attitude.” (specialist in media, lesbian)

“We had a lesbian employee, they kept making jokes about her, and then she was let go after he performance evaluation.” (service personnel in law, gay)

“Using curses. Alienating discourse.” (specialist in education, trans woman)

“I witnessed so many that I cannot cover with a small note.” (service personnel at NGO, gynesexual trans)

“I have witnessed. First they point at somebody and then it grows. Either that person is fired or he/she cannot stand anymore and leaves.” (specialist in IT, gay)

“An employee did not want to work with a trans student. I took care of it.” (specialist in education, bisexual woman)

“It more like joking, laughing behind someone’s back, making it a joke material. But I never saw it escalating and becoming chaotic.” (service personnel in transportation, gay).

“One of my employees made a hate speech about another one being gay and black.” (high-level executive in education, gay)

“Even if it’s not discrimination, a person I suspects is gay receives friendly jokes about him being gay or jokes with sexual insinuations. He is not bothered but I think some of the joke are a little over the line.” (in construction, bisexual woman)

The testimonies of participants regarding discrimination against other LGBTI employees emerged in areas similar to their own experiences of discrimination. Eleven percent declared being a witness and this percentage is similar to the percentage of personal experiences of discrimination (16%). Thirty-five percent told us there were no other LGBTI employees that they know of. This finding is significant on its own and signals that discrimination is not always visible from the outside. Victims of discrimination cannot openly report their situation because they fear losing their jobs or working conditions getting even worse.

The Relationship between Discrimination, Job Satisfaction and Efficiency

Another question we asked out participants was, “How do sexual identity related situations you experience or might experience affect your efficiency and satisfaction at work?”

To this open-ended question 115 out of 198 participants (58%) answered that different experiences of discrimination affected their job satisfaction and efficiency. In 2017, more than two-thirds of participants stated that discrimination, potential discrimination and a non-supportive working environment affected their satisfaction and efficiency. Another 15 declared being open about their identity helped their identification with the workplace and with the work.

Positive or negative affects come in many different forms. We listed some of the negative affects below, using direct quotes from our participants.

“It affects everything, my whole life. I become a mess psychologically. I am tired of pressure. I cannot adapt myself to anything.” (specialist in IT, gay)

“The fact that my sexual life is a sexual phantasy for my colleagues makes me angry, sad, and decreases my efficiency at work. It is difficult both sharing and not sharing your sexual identity.” (service personnel in tourism, lesbian)

“I am always in the background. I am not even allowed to come forward sometimes. They don’t think I can manage because I am a little thin.” (service personnel in textiles, gay)

“It is already difficult to have a job and have insurance. I don’t know what would happen if I did not hide my identity. Nevertheless, I do not do it anymore because it ruins my relationship. But it definitely decreases my chances to find a job. If you are homosexual and feminine, that means being a dream girl for men. You get homophobic attitude from women and harassment from men. I am a makeup artist and I like women. I am afraid of customer not feeling comfortable around me.” (specialist in media, bisexual woman)

“If they suspected or found out, I would be sacked. I live in a small city and my bosses are religious. How efficient can you be in a job where you cannot be yourself? How can you be relaxed?” (service personnel in law, gay)

“I cannot have health benefit for my partner. I can help marriage support if I quit my job. It is almost 20000 liras, it is important. I am planning to disclose myself and ask for that money when I quit. It does not affect my efficiency, but it hurts me not being able to help my partner like heterosexuals do.” (specialist in health, lesbian)

“I define myself as woman. Biologically I am a man and during daytime, it is difficult to play a man’s role. It makes me feel bad. And definitely has an effect on efficiency.” (specialist in law, trans woman)

“You cannot really talk to people or win the customer trust if you are not yourself. So your sales drop. You have difficulty expressing yourself because of all the limitations. It’s like you always have to fight with question like ‘Do you have a girlfriend?’” (service personnel in retail, gay)

“I hate my job and everybody I work with. They don’t see me, if they really knew me, they would hate me and I would never be in this position. I hide myself and listen to their terrible jokes. I resist the pressures about getting married and having a kid, I make up boyfriends to tell them. How can I be happy under this much pressure?” (mid-level executive in finance, bisexual)

“In the past, they called me a ‘fag’ at school so I have lots of anxiety. It affects my efficiency at work. I always lived with this problem.” (researcher in finance, gay)

“I hide myself. It is disturbing because I am always anxious and I can’t trust people I work with.” (specialist in education, lesbian)

When we evaluate our findings as a whole, we find out that experiences of discrimination related to one's sexual identity not only harms a person's psychology, but also decreases an employee's efficiency and satisfaction. Participants pointed out negative outcomes like exclusion, negative feelings including anger, loss of hope from life and future.

Even if not expressed directly, loss of focus and concentration should also be expected, because LGBTI employees often have to develop 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. Because they cannot express themselves fully, they are unable to create real friendships and other social relationships that support these friendships even outside work.

Some participants also pointed out the issue of belonging. Due to discrimination at work, most of them do not have any sense of belonging towards their workplace. Here are some examples.

"It ruins my motivation and sense of belonging. I am trying not to be present anywhere I feel discriminated." (specialist in entertainment, lesbian)

"I fall into an existential crisis. I have no sense of belonging and I live with constant fear and stress." (researcher in education, gay)

"It is frustrating to hide my identity. I don't belong there" (intern in finance, lesbian).

"I can tell from experience that I am detached from the company and my efficiency has decreased." (specialist in media, gay)

"It makes impossible to own my job. Not the only reason but definitely has an effect. It makes me hold back in a social environment. I hold myself back in the events, when there are people that I am not open to. Generally, I cannot be myself and when I talk, work or chat there is this sense of wearing something else. Sometimes when I feel unaccepted about daily thing (not like discrimination but like people not internalizing what they seem to accept) I feel excluded and disturbed." (specialist in publishing, trans man)

Participants who are open at work or who work at LGBTI friendly places tended to give positive answers. The fact that they did not receive any pressure regarding gender identity or sexual orientation makes them trust themselves and others. They are more efficient, their work life and private life feed each other, which in turn feeds job satisfaction.

"I never experienced anything like that. The organization I work for and its policy about LGBTIs creates a safe environment for me." (high-level executive in health, gay)

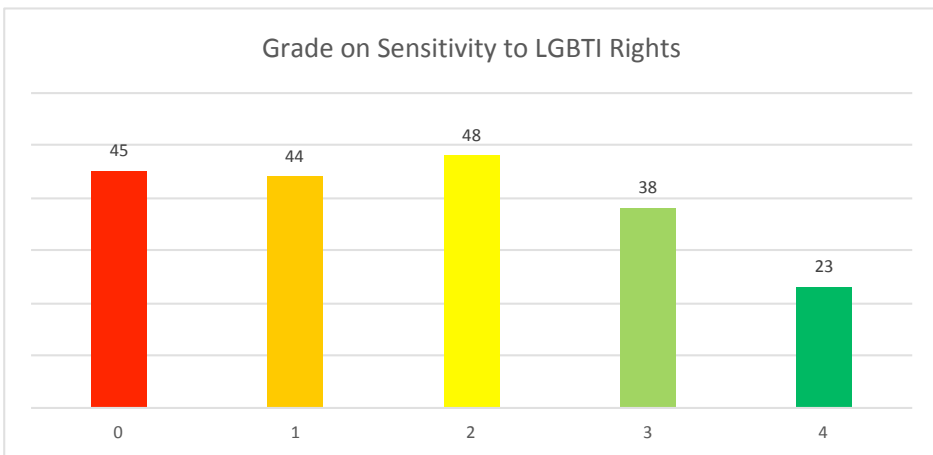
"We have preventive measures regarding discrimination against age, religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and similar, therefore I am in an affirmative process." (mid-level executive at NGO, gay)

"It does not affect me. It even have positive sides. The transform together, slowly." (specialist in education, bisexual woman)

General Evaluation Regarding the Sensitivity of Workplaces about LGBTI Rights

We asked participants to evaluate the sensitivity of their companies in terms of sexual identity-based rights and discrimination. We asked respondents to give a grade between 0 to 4. You can see the answers on the table below.

As you can see, 89 out of 198 participants, almost half gave grades 0 and 1 while one-fourth gave a grade of 2, which translate to average. This means that 70% of participants graded their own company average or below. Only 38 (19%) gave 3, which is above average and only 23 (11%) graded their companies 4, which is highly positive.

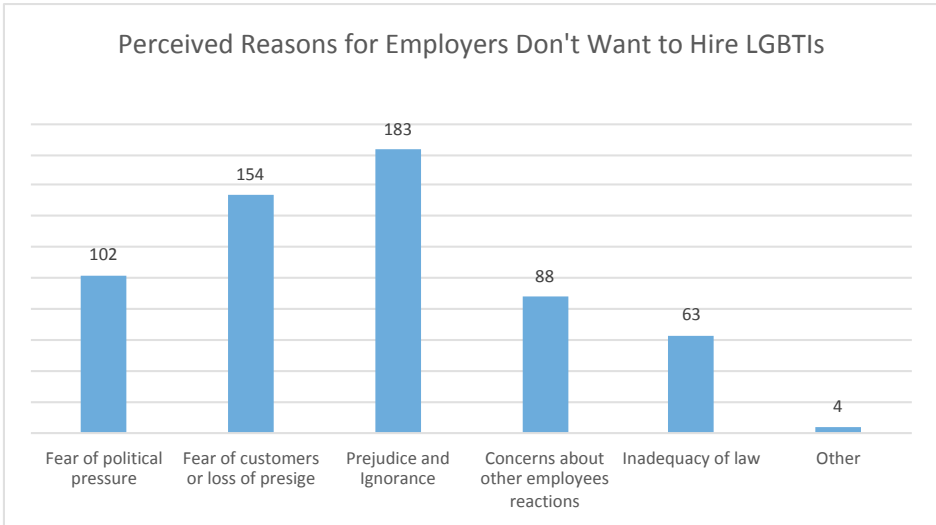


This finding is consistent with previous years. There is some relativity in these positive answers (4). Participants expressing content in terms of company sensitivity also gave negative answers to other question. They still do not have the same rights as other employees, they often cannot fully express themselves, they take precautions and work keeping in mind that this is an exception. This finding shows that unless there is a sensitivity everywhere about equality and rights, no employee could ever be completely happy, satisfied and secure.

Main Reasons of Discrimination against LGBTIs from the Employee Point of View

We asked the question “What are the 3 reasons why employers don’t want to hire LGBTI persons?” to participants to reflect on the reasons of sexual identity-based discrimination. Each participant could choose up to 3 answers.

Similar to last year, most participants reported ignorance and prejudice as the main reasons of these attitudes. Ignorance creates prejudice and social norms feed this.



Other: "Religious reasons", "LGBTIs are not visible and not common in the sub-sector where I work", "I don't know", "False identification of sexual identity".

Negative images and understandings of LGBTIs feed negative attitudes of employers. An increased number of people also stated that political pressure supports this discriminatory system.

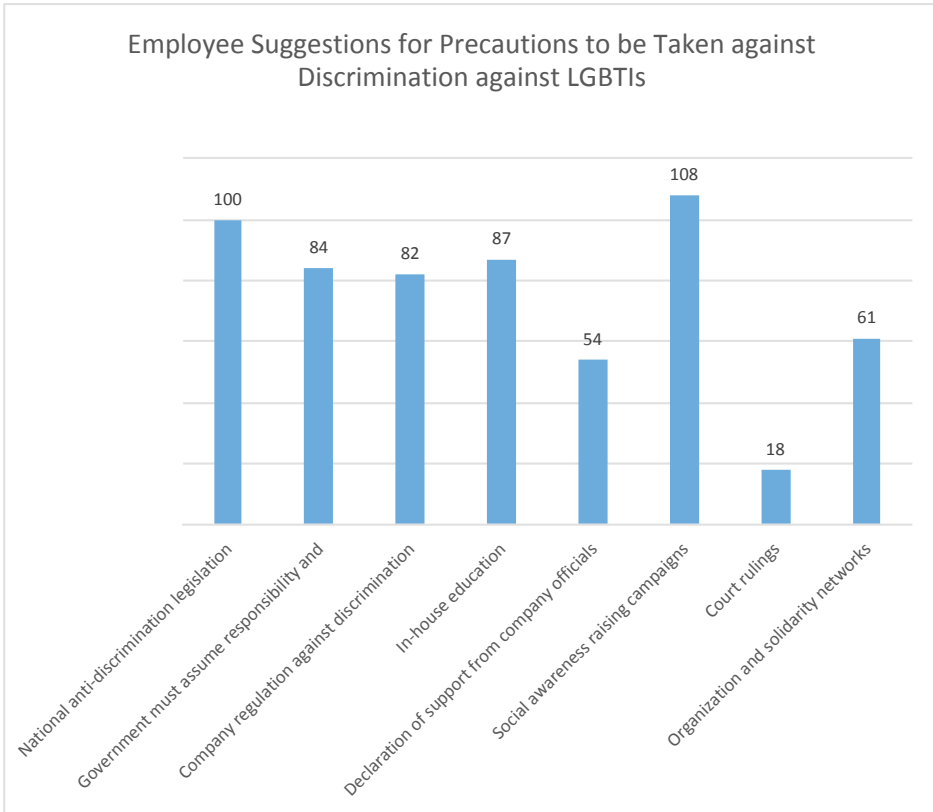
The second most chosen answer is the fear of customers and image loss, which signals that human and LGBTI rights are not considered common values of the market and the corporate world.

LGBTIs are aware of the fact that the existing social background and general mentality projects itself into the workplaces. Therefore, we can also argue that the unequal environment in the workplace is difficult to change.

Suggestions for the Fight against Discrimination of LGBTI Employees

In the last part of the survey, participants were asked, "What do you think are the three most important measures to be taken against discrimination against LGBTI employees in the workplace?" The results are presented in the table below.

Most of participants pointed out the need to create mental and attitude changes that would develop social awareness. The second most common measure was a law against discrimination on the national level. Similarly, in-house trainings was the third most common response.



The answers regarding the fight against discrimination are consistent with previous years. The second most common answer, the need for legal transformation shows the demand for national anti-discrimination legislation. However, our participants believe that legal and constitutional changes are not enough and a change in social mentality is imperative to fight against discrimination. In the end, law is applied by people and without social change, LGBTI employees' working conditions will not improve. A significant number of participants also underline the necessity of organized resistance to achieve these legal and social transformations.

Quotes from Our Participants

After the survey we asked our participants if they wanted to share any thought or subjects that should be included in our reports. Below you will see some of the answers.

"As a former public health personnel who hid his identity (and did not complain about it) I can say I work more efficiently in the institution I am working right now. When you

grant a person the right to hold on to his/her own originality, every detail about daily life changes, without even noticing.” (high-level executive in health, gay)

“Everything the state says is like a law. And the fact that they are reacting the Pride with so many cops makes people think that this is disgusting, sinful and forbidden.” (specialist in advertisement, bisexual woman)

“Even world labels in homophobia like Ireland progressed so far. For us it is not only about LGBTIQ+ rights. Women, minorities, atheists should all be considered together. LGBTI movement cannot be a movement on its own. Must be a movement against all discrimination. That (+) sign means something. There are lots of examples like workers’ movement and LGBTI movement in England.” (specialist in IT, gay)

“I am shocked by this thing I have been noticing for a while. For example, once I was on the line in a copy center. The student in front of me was gay, I understood. When they were done with him two clerks looked at each other and smiled silently. I wanted to react by I stopped myself. I talked in a way they could understand I was gay and I watched the expression on their face. Beautiful, regret and shame... I actually have a bigger problem. I was watching a show on TV and I noticed I was disturbed by the feminine gay character’s way of talking. I am like that myself. I was more comfortable when I was a student but in business life your environment influences you even when you don’t notice. Being ignored is also a form of pressure. This creates great losses for me in my business life.” (specialist in education, gay)

“They should give us a job rights. I never had any problems but my friends who had; they should be protected because our life is more difficult than others. Company executive may not take us seriously right now but they all come from certain universities. So, I think we can work on Gender identity and sexual orientation education in universities and aim for long term.” (specialist in construction/architecture, gay)

“Turkish Medical Association, Turkish Bar Association, workers unions should work on LGBTI problems and organize events in order to raise LGBTI consciousness.” (in transportation, gay)

“As long as discrimination and humiliation against women continues in Turkey, violence towards gays, lesbians and trans will continue as well. Or maybe LGBTI salvation will be the salvation of heterosexuals as well.” (high-level executive at NGO, bisexual man)

“LGBTI rights and bans against discrimination, together with the rights of employees in general should be secured legally and institutionally.” (mid-level executive in education, bisexual woman)

“The biggest problem for LGBTI persons and especially trans persons is to find a job and work. If we have financial freedom we can fight with other things. State (İŞKUR – Turkish Employment Agency) and NGOs should help trans individuals in job finding and follow up their rights in the workplace. No one should seek for their rights alone. Just like disabled and ex-con quotas, trans persons should have positive discrimination as well.” (worker in IT, gender fluid bisexual)

“Democracy is a dream as long as gay people are pushed underground, they are forced to be hypocrites, as long as our lives are not considered normal.” (high-level executive in education, gay)

“When I was a research assistant in a private university in communications department I was discriminated and mobbed by the head of department. In the end, I was let go. This is the main example why this is not only about education. We should value people for being human. No titles or power should be given to people who are heartless enough to mess with someone’s living just because he/she dislikes that person.” (researcher in education, gay)



CHAPTER 4

Approaches from the USA-based and Germany-based Companies regarding Rights of LGBTI Employees



* Söz konusu bölüm, Kaos GL Derneği'nin 2015 yılı araştırması için Ekonomist Tanju S. Serdengeçti tarafından hazırlanmış ve kapsamındaki bilgilerin geçerliliği nedeniyle aynen alıntılanmıştır. Bakınız: <http://www.kaosgiderneği.org/yayindetay.php?id=129>

A. Background

It is an inevitable part of human dignity for individuals to be a part of social and work life without experiencing discrimination and expressing freely their sexual orientation and gender identity. Universal Declaration of Human Rights begins with the following article:

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

Despite the high level of technology and socio-economic development in today's world, we encounter numerous examples of gender, gender identity and sexual orientation based discrimination in employment. In some countries, depending on the level of development of sensitivities in public and private sectors, fight against discrimination is constructed on the heteronormative understanding of gender. In others where we have a democratic public administration and rule of law, discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex individuals is also recognized by law, their sexual orientation and gender identity is protected and supported.

It is imperative to have a work environment free of every kind of discrimination for the individual to pursue a dignified life. Work life starts with the choosing the appropriate channels of education depending on one's capabilities and desires and continues with freedom to apply for jobs. This freedom continues with equal treatment in hiring and supported with the work or social rights and events that come with it.

According to European Trade Union Confederation's (ETUC) report on 2008, gender-based discrimination can have many different forms:

- LGBT people experience a refusal of employment and dismissal, as well as discrimination in access to employment, training and promotion
- LGBT people are often invisible and fear 'coming out' in case they are discriminated against in areas such as promotion, career development and access to

training etc. This can also result in self-exclusion, whereby a LGBT person may avoid certain jobs or employment for fear of discrimination.

- Homophobic bullying and harassment is not an uncommon experience for LGBT people at work and workplace equality actions are important to ensuring that there is a workplace culture of respect and dignity.
- Benefits that are enjoyed by heterosexual partners are denied same-sex partners, for example, paternity and parental leave, relocation, caring for a sick partner or bereavement leave, educational or other benefits for employees and their families, goods and services provided free of charge or at a discount, survivors pension schemes or benefits from life insurance, and health-care insurance for employees and their families.

These examples of discrimination excludes LGBTI employees from a regular work life, which in turn creates a social inequality. It is not a coincidence that the first sectors to come to people's minds for LGBTI employees are entertainment, tourism and advertisement. The obstacle in social and work life create this sectoral understanding of discrimination.

In today's global world, there are international companies that care for national sensitivities without sacrificing universal values. These companies carry their work practices around the globe. These practices should be applied to other countries as long as national laws and regulation permit.

This report summarizes USA and Germany based companies' attitudes towards LGBTI employees and LGBTI rights in general. Companies are chosen among the most notorious ones in terms of their activities and their reputation in Turkey. First a thorough search is carried on in company websites, English versions. A keyword-based search is also conducted on the pages in German. Corporate activity reports, management documents and press releases are examined. A search on popular search engines is also conducted using keyword. Since we received limited information regarding German-based companies, an e-mail has been sent to notify them that a Turkey based NGO working on LGBTIs contacted them regarding the analysis of LGBTI employees work conditions. These companies either never replied or directed us to the information on their web pages. Only one company sent us a detailed answer through their Director of Diversity and gave information regarding their applications in Germany and in United States. This research includes 6 American and 9 German companies. Our findings suggest that they have a high level of awareness regarding gender equality, they all are sensitive in the context of diversity and sustainability.

The research shows that American companies are more systematic, easy to access and detailed websites that list their efforts on LGBTI rights. In fact, their corporate support have higher levels of inclusiveness compared to German companies. Whereas German companies show country-based sensitivities even in international markets or USA. Therefore, we can argue that German companies have less in-house regulations because both Germany and the European Union have stronger will power in gender identity and sexual orientation in terms of laws and institutions.

Tanju. Ş. Serdengeçti,

November 2015

US-based Companies

The Dow Chemical Company

Dow is in the Turkish market for more than 40 years and it is a pioneer when it comes to positive examples regarding LGBTI employees. There are 7 “Employee Network” in the company. The networks aim at sharing information, transferring experiences, finding the necessary high-level leadership and supporting professional development in relation to common interests of the employees. One of these networks is the LGBTI networks called GLAD – Gays, Lesbians and Allies at Dow. As in other networks, GLAD is supported by a high-level executive. Dow funds many GLAD activities, gives scholarships and support LGBTI awareness in business life on the grounds of equality. We can summarize Dow’s long-term activities as follows:

In 2016 Human Rights Campaign of HRC declared Dow as the Best Place to Work for LGBT Equality according to its Corporate Equality Index, CEI. The company has a 100/100 points record since 2005.

GLAD distributes a scholarship to support a national association called Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, PFLAG on science and technology. Dow is also one of the association’s financial supporters.

Dow is a supporter of OutStanding, an NGO open for senior LGBTI executives.

Dow won the Workplace Excellence award given by Out and Equal in 2013. In 2015 Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Howard Ungerleider received the Champion Award. Ungerleider is also the supporter for GLAD at executive level. The company is still a sponsor for Out and Equal.

On June 25, 2015 Dow gave corporate support to the Supreme Court decision regarding Equal Marriage and co-signed a declaration together with 379 corporations and organizations.

Dow supports Employee Non-Discrimination Act discussed in the Senate and House of Representatives in the USA. This act bans gender and sexual orientation based discrimination in the hiring processes. It has been in the agenda for a long time but so far not approved by the senate or parliament.

Dow is chosen as the 2nd best company by the International Business Equality Index prepared by International Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

According to the survey conducted by Workplace Pride Foundation in 2014, Dow is in the top 5 companies thanks to its efforts on effective participation of LGBTI individual in the business life. These 4 companies and their points are as follows: IBM (86%), Dow (80%), BNP Paribas (76%), Shell (73%) and Cisco Systems (67%). Dow is currently a sponsor to the foundation.

Short information: Dow Chemical Company

Founded in 1897, DOW is active in 180 countries. The headquarters are in Michigan, USA. In Turkey they are operational for 45 years and has a total of 53000 employees worldwide. 2014 annual revenue is more than \$58 billion.

The Coca-Cola Company

Coca-Cola has a substantial share in the Turkish market and is a non-alcoholic beverages company operating more than 50 years now. The company put great effort on LGBTI rights and their inclusion in the work life. It considers LGBTI rights as the main issue in fighting against discrimination and achieved a great success. The company considers discrimination and diversity issues in the context of human rights. Therefore, without discriminating languages, religions, races, gender etc. the idea of equal opportunity is seen as the common element for every employee. Sexual orientation is also a sensitive issue in terms of basic human rights.

They have an organization called Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Ally (LGBTQA) Business Resource Group that helps LGBTI employees be a part of the work life without facing discrimination. This way, LGBTI employees and activists have a mechanism through which they can Express themselves. These mechanisms can help companies achieve their priorities. We can summarize Coca-Cola's results as the following:

In 2016, 10th time consecutively, received 100/100 in Corporate Equality Index.

In 2011, they started a Workplace Gender Transition Guideline in USA and supported health care for transgender individuals.

Starting from 2015, they declared they would help same sex couples in their financial losses regarding health and tax issues. The declaration also includes states where same sex marriage is not possible.

Coca-Cola sponsored tens of Prides around USA, supported event to raise awareness against HIV/AIDS.

The company is one of the sponsors of Human Right Campaign and financially supported National Gay and Lesbian Journalists Association Conference in 2014.

Co-organized projects with Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation to support LGBTI community.

Short information: The Coca-Cola Company

Founded in 1886 and active in Turkey since 1964, Coca-Cola is selling non-alcoholic beverages to more than 200 countries. In 2014 had an annual income of \$46 billion and has 129000 employees. 65300 of these are in US and together with the bottling partners the number reaches 700000.

Levi Strauss & Co.

Levi Strauss is a pret-a-porter company active in Turkey for more than 30 years and well known globally for its efforts for LGBTI. We can give some of the positive examples as follows:

Financially supported National Center For Lesbian Rights (NCLR) and The San Francisco LGBT Community Center.

Lobbies and supports Employee Non Discrimination Act as part of its policies advocacy.

Supports same sex marriage as a human right and gender equality issue. Protested the ban against same sex marriage in California putting white ribbons (symbol of marriage equality movement) on mannequins. In 2014 launched a collection with rainbow theme to celebrate 30 years of support to LGBTI.

In Corporate Equality Index received 100/100 13 times including 2016, except for the 1st year of the index where it had 86 points.

Organized special designed t-shirts and images for the displays to support same sex marriage together with Human rights Campaign.

In March 2015 worked together with another pret-a-porter GAP calling the industry to support the fight against anti-LGBTI bills.

Before the Supreme Court decision co-signed a petition on same sex marriage together with 378 companies. The company advocates that this is a gender equality issue and that every individual has the right to get married.

Organize opening statements on vice-presidential level at Out & Equal meetings, supported actively White Know for Equality's campaign on same sex marriage legalization.

In 2014 sponsored Athlete Ally with its campaign against homophobia and transphobia in sports. The NGO organizes campaigns, trainings and programs on the issue.

Short information: Levi Strauss

Founded in 1853, Levi Strauss has headquarters in San Francisco, Brussels and Singapore. It is active in Turkey since 1987 and has a sales organization in more than 110 countries. In 2014 made sales worth \$4,8 billion and has 15000 employees in total.

IBM

As one of the pioneers of the information technology area, IBM made great effort regarding LGBTI awareness. Has more than 230 Diversity Network Groups where employees can express sexual orientation, country, culture and other specialties. These groups work as awareness centers that help employees develop in the business life protecting their diversities.

One of these groups is called The Employee Alliance for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Empowerment at IBM – EAGLE. It was founded in 1995 and has over 55 communities. Works on the existence and protection of safe and free environments for the LGBTI. In that context EAGLE interacts with other organizations outside the company and advocates LGBTI rights not only in business life but in the society in general.

IBM also takes seriously the issue of equal pay and other helps/supports that heterosexual employees receive, unless it is forbidden by law. Organizes leadership programs to help LGBTI employees in their promotion to mid and high-level executive positions. We can summarize the efforts as follows.:

Received 100/100 points in Corporate Equality Index for 13 years consecutively. Only the first year of the index, in 2002, the company received 86 points. Actively supports Human Rights Campaign.

In Outie Awards distributed by Out&Equal received many prizes since 2001 as a company, as LGBTI employees, as in-house network groups and even as non-LGBTI individuals fighting for LGBTI rights. Is and active supporter of Out&Equal.

According to Workplace Pride 2014 Global Benchmark Survey results of Workplace Pride Foundation in Holland, IBM is has the highest level of LGBTI employees and received 86/100 points. IBM is also a supporter for Workplace Pride Foundation.

Supporter for the OutStanding senior high level LGBTI executives organization.

Chosen between 10 best employees in 2015 in the Global Workplace Equality Index published by Stonewall since 2005. IBM is also in the list of Top Performers declared by Stonewall. List is made of companies of the Best 10 in the last 5 years and as of 2015 there are only 8 companies on the list.

Voelklinger Kreis network organized by LGBTI executives and entrepreneurs in Germany gave IBM Germany the Max Spohr Prize in 2010. This is a biennial prize for the best application.

One of the IBM vice-presidents Claudia Brind-Woody was named among 100 Women We Love by Go Magazine in 2010 and was among the Most Effective 100 LGBTI Individuals of the World Pride Power in 2012. She was also a board member of Out & Equal.

Was listed in the best 10 companies for LGBTI by DiversityInc in USA. The company is also listed in the 50 companies listed by this institution for 12 years since 2001.

Supported the foundation of National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce together with 11 companies.

In the support of LGBTI rights cooperated with GLSEN (the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network in 2012. The company made a call for its employees to choose a school and organize activities against violence against LGBTIs. So far 15 countries responded.

IBM also supports equal marriage. It supported the Supreme Court decision on equality through social media accounts.

Short Information: IBM Corp.

Founded in 1911 in USA. As pioneer in information technologies and software is active in Turkey since 1935. As of 2014, is active in more than 170 countries with an annual revenue of \$92,8 billion and 379592 employees.

Starbucks

It is a beverage company that has years of reputation in supporting LGBTI rights. The general attitude of the company is to consider the employee as a partner and sees its development central in the development of the company. Accordingly, the partners should be able to work within the corporate culture without considering the differences of language, religion, race, gender etc.

Starbucks also has one of the biggest employee networks called Starbucks Partner Pride Alliance Network. This community aims at raising LGBTI awareness among Starbuck employees, including LGBTI employees in the work life and supporting associations and forums also outside the company. We can summarize their work on LGBTI issue as the following:

Starbucks received 100 points in 2016 from the Corporate Equality Index. The company received 86 between 2002-2005, 100 between 2008-2011, 90 between 2011-2014 and 100 in 2015 and 2016.

Has a Supplier Diversity Program that aims at having a diversity of suppliers. Therefore, the company is sensitive about buying from certain sellers, unions and structures. National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce is one of these.

Supports equal marriage and signed the declaration in 2013.

In 2014, put a giant rainbow flag on the headquarters in Seattle and supported the Pride Week.

Company general manager Howard Schultz sent a video message to celebrate Supreme Court decision on equal marriage. Starbucks also supported equal marriage advocates and lobbying activities.

In 2011 and 2012 sponsored Earth Gay LGBTI community in environmental activism.

Starbucks Partner Pride Alliance Network sponsored the 1st Fab Planet summit 2014 on environment, society and identities of LGBTI individuals

Short information: Starbucks Corp.

Founded in 1971 in Seattle, USA, Starbucks is active in 55 countries. Has been in Turkish coffee market since 2003 and has 21000 stores in 65 countries. Has 191000 employees worldwide and an income of \$16,4 in 2014.

Microsoft

Being in Turkey for more than 20 years, Microsoft has a long history in LGBTI rights. Gay and Lesbian Employees at Microsoft (GLEAM) is an employee network founded in 1993. GLEAM cooperates with executive leadership to increase corporate diversity, helps the organization of in-house Pride Month and LGBTI-specific camps and trainings. Members of GLEAM organize sports and culture events spending time together. They also arrange discussions on gender, volunteer activities and even support organizations for local LGBTI organizations. GLEAM has more than 2000 members worldwide and they participate actively in Pride organization in different areas. You can see a company summary on LGBTI activities below:

Received 100/100 in Corporate Equality Index in 2015, and 10 years before that. Also supports Human Rights Campaign.

GLEAM supported Microsoft Giving Campaign with volunteers. Organized a national dinner with Human Rights Campaign and sponsored grant dinner for LGBTI individuals organized by Greater Seattle Business Association.

The company gives hardware, software and service support to LGBTI organizations and associations.

Actively works for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act in the USA.

One of the founders, Bill Gates, donated \$100000 to the campaign organized against the ban of equal marriage in Washington State.

Gives STEM scholarship for LGBTI students supporting their efforts in science, Technology, engineering and mathematics.

Short information: Microsoft Corp.

Founded in 1975 in New Mexico, USA, Microsoft is the world leader in software and information technologies. Its headquarters are in Washington and is operative in 211 countries. Has 117354 employees and an annual income of \$86,8 billion in 2014.

German companies

Bosch

As an engineering and electronics company, Bosch received gender equality award by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security in Turkey. Here is a summary of LGBTI rights efforts from Bosch:

Bosch has 10 different employee networks and one of them is the Robert Bosch Gay LGBTI group. Started in 2006 as a volunteer activity and in 2012 became an officially recognized network. RBG is open to LGBTI and heterosexual Bosch employees and has members from 10 countries. RBG aims at creating communication platforms and raising awareness in LGBTI issues. The network also creates environments where employees can discuss daily gender identity issues. RBG represents the company and is able to speak about company culture also outside the company. RBG participated in Christopher Street Day Pride in Stuttgart in July 25, 2015 with 50 members.

Is one of the first companies to sign The Diversity Charter in Germany in 2007. Charter came up in France and reached a wide audience in Germany in 2006 thanks to the Chancellor. It is a document on diversity policies, includes 6 chapters and can be signed by any company regardless its size

Short information: Robert Bosch GmbH

Bosch is a pioneer technology and services provider in 50 countries and 440 regional companies. Founded in 1886 in Stuttgart, Bosch started its operation in Turkey in 1910. In 2014 achieved an annual sales of 48.9 Euros and has 290000 employees worldwide.

Bayer

Even though known by consumers as a drug company, Bayer is a holding that operates in health, agronomy and materials science. Some examples on gender equality as follows:

Was listed in the Corporate Equity index and received 29 points between 2002-2005, 15 between 2006-2008, 80 in 2009 and 2010, 85 in 2011 and 90 in 2012, down to 80 between 2013-2015 and 75 in 2016.

Sponsor for Out & Equal LGBTI Association.

In US, Bayer offices have many networks and groups for personal development. These groups receive a budget of \$5000 and their main objective is diversity. One of them is the LGBTI group called Angle B. Its mission is to create a safe and supportive work environment, to share and communicate with other employees, have colleagues that can be role models and be a part of corporate policies without sacrificing their gender identity.

Angle B in Berkeley edited a video about excluded homosexual teenagers under a project called It Gets Better.

Signed the Diversity Charter in 2009.

Has positive examples in countries other than Germany (headquarters) and USA (LGBTI active). In a recent example, the company promised support on 10 issues related to LGBTI rights in Brazil on June 2015. Some of the issues are:

- LGBTI rights to be recognized and respected at presidential and executive level.
- Equal opportunity and fair attitude towards LGBTI
- Social awareness and education activities on LGBTI rights to be supported.
- No discrimination regarding gender identity in sales, marketing and communication channels and after sale processes.
- LGBTI supportive action also in value chains and suppliers.

Short information: Bayer AG

Founded in 1863 in Barmen, Germany, Bayer is active in Turkey since 1954. As a pioneer in drugs and chemistry operates in 101 countries, has 118900 employees and annual income of \$42 billion in 2014.

Boehringer - Ingelheim

As a leading pharmaceutical company, BI has important efforts on LGBTI. The company banned gender identity and sexual orientation based discrimination both in its headquarters in Germany, and in USA. Married or not, LGBTI couples have the same benefits that heterosexuals have in terms of health, wage and social-cultural activities. A summary of these efforts can be seen below:

Received 100 points in Corporate Equality Index since 2008 except for 2012 where it received 90 points.

Has an LGBTI group called Working with Pride, which was among the finalists of 2013 Out & Equal Workplace awards.

Was a Silver Sponsor for Stonewall Columbus Pride in 2015.

Since October 1, 2015, the German website is renewed with an LGBTI supporting new interface.

Signed The Diversity Charter in 2012.

Short Information: Boehringer - Ingelheim

Founded in Ingelheim, Germany in 1885 and active in more than 50 countries, BI is one of the 20 leading pharmaceutical companies in the world, operating in Turkey since 1994. In 2014 had net sales of 13,3 Euros and 47700 employees.

Siemens

Siemens operates in many different sectors. Has a Code of Conduct that is sensitive to gender equality both inside the company and in supply chains. The company demands measures against gender inequality, harassment and discrimination at the supplier level. Some of the applications are listed below:

In Siemens USA there is a LGBTI Employee Group as part of the Diversity and Inclusion applications.

Signed The Diversity Charter in 2010.

Siemens Energy & Automation was listed in the Corporate Equality Index between 2002-2006 and received 80 points.

Sponsored Christopher Street Day in 2015 as a Pride organization.

Has an LGBTI network in USA that helps employees in their carrier paths and personal development, in cooperation with other colleagues.

Short Information: Siemens AG

Founded in 1847, has two headquarters in Berlin and Munich. Its operation in Turkey started during Ottoman times (1856). Currently is active in 190 countries and has 343000 employees. A global player in electrification, automation, digitalization and health, as an annual income of 71,9 Billion Euros in 2014.

BASF

Is one the biggest chemical companies in the World. Some of its inclusive application on LGBTIs are as follows:

BASF has 8 employees groups, one of which is the LGBTI group called ALLchemie. Is not exclusive to LGBTI, open to every employee believing in the importance of diversity in the workplace.

ALLchemie sponsored North Caroline Gay & Lesbian Film Festival.

Accepted the Diversity Charter in 2007.

Listed as 28/50 in DiversityInc 2015 listing (In 2014 26th and 2013 31st). 10th in the Diversity Councils list.

Short Information: BASF

Founded in 1865 in Germany, BASF is a chemicals, paints, petroleum and gas company. Active in more than 80 countries and in Turkey since 1969. As of 2014 has a revenue of 74,3 billion Euros and 112000 employees.

Lufthansa

German based company is the biggest airline in Europe. Known for its sensitivity towards its employees and its passengers. Here are some examples:

Sponsor and donator for The Trevor Project to fight crisis and suicides of LGBTI individuals.

Special discounts for LGBTI destinations in summer.

Received Best Gay Travel Offer award from Mate magazine because of its positive attitudes towards gay individuals.

Created a co-working environment with Navigaytour to have a closer relationship with the LGBTI community.

Chosen as the Favorite International Airline by LGBTI magazine called Our Traveler.

Signed the Diversity Charter in 2014.

Short Information: Lufthansa AG

Founded in 1926 in Cologne/Germany, flies to 107 countries and 271 destinations. Has a joint airline with Turkish Airlines since 1989. Has 118781 employees worldwide and annual revenue of 30 billion Euros in 2014.

Volkswagen

As one of the leading automotive companies in the world, Volkswagen has anti-discrimination policies and a positive attitude towards LGBTI. Here are some examples:

The company banned all kinds of gender-based discrimination the context of equal opportunity and equality.

Volkswagen Financial Servis AG was proactive in the application of LGBTI rights.

Supporter of Out & Equal.

Started the Corporate Equality Index in 2002 with 29 points, then received 71, 86 and 86 in the following years. Since 2006 the company achieved 100 points.

Gaywheel announced VW as the most LGBTI friendly car company.

Signed Diversity Charter in 2007.

Short information: Volkswagen AG

Founded in Germany, VW is one of the leading companies in automotive. Centered in Wolfsburg, operates in 49 countries. Has 592000 employees worldwide and an annual revenue of 202 billion Euros in 2014.

BMW

BMW is a leading luxury car, motorcycle and engine companies in the World. Has a corporate understanding in fighting against discrimination in the company based on gender identity and sexual orientation. Here are some of the initiatives:

Signed the Diversity Charter in 2011.

Sponsors LGBTI Bar Association.

Listed in the LGBTI Friendly Car Companies list by Gaywheels.

Shot Information: Bayerische Motoren Werke AG

Founded in 1916 in Germany, BMW is a Munich based automotive company. Operating in 140 countries and started activities in Turkey in 1984. Had an income of 80,4 billion Euros in 2014 and has 116324 employees worldwide.

Deutsche Bank

Is a leading institution in LGBTI employee rights and fight against discrimination. Here are some examples:

Signed The Diversity Charter in 2006 as one of the 4 founder companies. Diversity Charter aims at fighting all kinds of discrimination, including gender, and at creating a working environment free from prejudices.

Member of the OutStanding, NGO for senior LGBTI executives.

Has a LGBTI employee union called dbPride. Through this union the company works on raising LGBTI awareness, cooperates with local LGBTI associations and organizes NGO activities.

Received 100 points in Corporate Equality Index since the beginning in 2003.

Member of Pride in Diversity, a non-profit organization aiming at the inclusion of LGBTI individuals, one and only in Australia.

Supports Out&Equal activities.

Short Information: Deutsche Bank AG

DB is the biggest bank in Germany in terms of revenues and number of employees. Founded in 1870. Centered in Frankfurt with a total of 98138 employees in more than 70 countries. Its operation in Turkey started in 1909. Has an income of 32 Billion Euros in 2014.