

LGBTIQ
EMPLOYMENT
EQUALITY
INDEX

2016 Annual Report of Findings

May 2016

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the HeadHunter®
building and powering your career

Executive Summary

The Headhunter Group is pleased to announce and publish the findings of its first annual LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index in Albania.

When first initiating this idea, there were many naysayers. They claimed that the Albanian private sector would not bother to participate. They claimed that the Albanian public would not care. Thanks to our own convictions on the right to employment for all citizens as well as a number of international actors in the country, we preserved. We are firm in our conviction that all Albanian citizens—regardless of any quality or status—have something to contribute to the country and they have the right to employment.

The results surprised even us: a total of 71 companies participated in the first annual process and a few actually demonstrated concrete policies and measures in place to protect the rights and uphold the dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees. This first year's awardees will be announced at the awards ceremony on May 17, 2016.

These awardees have already taken concrete measures to protect LGBTIQ Albanians. They set an admirable example for other employers in the country to follow. They also recognize that upholding the rights of any group benefits all of society. We are humbled that they agreed to participate in our Index and we are inspired by their commitment.

Key Findings and Recommendations

While The Headhunter Group was pleased at the enthusiastic response to participating in the rating process, the results show that companies in Albania have very little in the way of human resource policies and practices to protect and uphold the rights and dignity of minority job-seekers and employees. Unfortunately, this finding does not come as a surprise to most. Those which do include some policies and practices do not specifically extend them to LGBTIQ Albanians.

But a significant number of these companies support community-based organizations and charities, and are willing to do more in terms of minority professional inclusion. Most of businesses interviewed for this rating process mention their willingness to upgrade and improve their recruitment and HR management procedures to be more inclusive, accessible and secure to LGBTIQ candidatures and employees.

The Headhunter Group sees both a tremendous need and demand for trainings on workplace diversity for companies in Albania as well as standardized policies and practices which companies can adapt and adopt.

The 2016 Rated Companies

Following the in-depth process conducted in February and March, Headhunter Group Ltd tabulated the results for each of the 71 companies which participated and a total of five companies achieved a rating.

Interpretation of the Ratings

Each answer receives a fixed number of points, and the points are totaled for a total score. The Ranking is divided into 4 categories: **gold**, **silver**, **bronze**, and **non-rated**. Gold is the highest ranking allocated to companies with outstanding performance, support and inclusion of LGBTIQ in the workforce specifically. Only companies which specifically identify LGBTIQ persons in their human resources policies and practices can reach Gold level. Rankings are provided using 4 tiers:

- **Gold**: refers to companies which specifically mention protection for the rights and dignity of LGBTIQ job seekers and employees in their human resource policies and practices. They will have a demonstrated track record of promoting equality and dignity for LGBTIQ job seekers and employees through their actions and employee relations. These companies also demonstrate compliance with the Albanian law on non-discrimination.
- **Silver**: refers to companies which have policies and practices to protect the dignity of LGBTIQ job seekers and employees, but may not have a demonstrated track record of actions to do so. Their policies mention LGBTIQ specifically. These companies demonstrate compliance with the Albanian law on non-discrimination.
- **Bronze**: refers to companies with general policies on protection of rights and dignity for employees, but without specific mention to LGBTIQ job seekers and employees. These companies demonstrate compliance with the Albanian law on non-discrimination.
- **Non-rated**: All other companies and employers will be considered as non-rated. These companies lack policies and practices to protect the rights and dignity of LGBTIQ job seekers and employees. These companies do not show compliance with the Albanian law on non-discrimination. This Ranking is intended to provide encouragements and provide the opportunity to the Headhunter Group to offer its services in terms of technical assistance, advice and training.

About the LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index

The LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index is the first of its kind in Albania as well as in the non-EU states of the Balkans. ***The LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index is a ranking system to determine how well companies respect the rights and dignity of LGBTIQ persons in their hiring, training, development, and general employment practices.*** In addition, it rates their compliance with local labor laws on the topic.

The Headhunter Group, the largest recruitment and human resource company in Albania and one of the largest in the Balkans, has decided to launch such an Index as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and Workplace Diversity. The Group has an intrinsic commitment to see equal employment opportunities extended to all citizens. The Group is also well-placed to create and launch such an Index, as it has the credibility within the private sector to act as a judge of human resource policies.

Each year, on or around the International Day of Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (on May 17), the Headhunter Group presents awards to the companies which have been exemplary in protecting the rights and upholding the dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees. The Headhunter Group's LGBTIQ Employment Index measures the policies and practices of companies operating in Albania towards LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees. The Headhunter Group staff interview directors and verify policies and practices of both international and Albanian companies each year.

Information on the Index can be accessed at: <http://headhunter.al/lgbtiq-index>

The LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index is an important expression of The Headhunter Group's corporate social responsibility efforts. The Headhunter Group is active in supporting a number of issues related to employment for youth, women and girls, and minorities. In 2015, it founded RINI Albania to carry out charitable activities in favor of youth employment and workplace diversity.

The LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index was created by a team of experts from SFV Consulting Group (www.sfv-consulting.com). In addition to its core consulting services, the Group has conducted a number of activities for LGBTIQ-focused projects and organizations, including a worldwide donor compendium, multiple trainings to LGBTIQ-focused organizations, and one of the world's first ever research studies on LGBTIQ refugees from Syria.

Methodology

The Headhunter Group has designed a methodical and verifiable process of rating the companies according to the Index.

Company Self-Selection

Participation in the LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index is entirely voluntary. The Headhunter Group offers participation to companies and also responds to companies which wish to participate in the Index. It should be noted that all statements in this report should recognize that they are based on a voluntary participation and are not representative of the Albanian private sector as a whole.

On-Site Rating Process

Expert staff from The Headhunter Group use a standardized questionnaire for each company to be rated, and conduct an on-site interview with the Human Resources Department, Director, or other qualified staff person. The Headhunter Group staff verify each answer on site as well, verifying policies and procedures.

Rating Issuance

Upon completing the interview and returning to The Headhunter Group offices, the staff then tabulate the scores for each answer and issue a rating based upon a pre-determined scale. The results for each company are transparent, verifiable, and auditable.

The Headhunter Group will undertake the rating process in the early months of each year. It is envisioned that more and more companies will agree to participate. Companies which have already been rated will have the opportunity to be re-rated in subsequent years and achieve higher ratings.

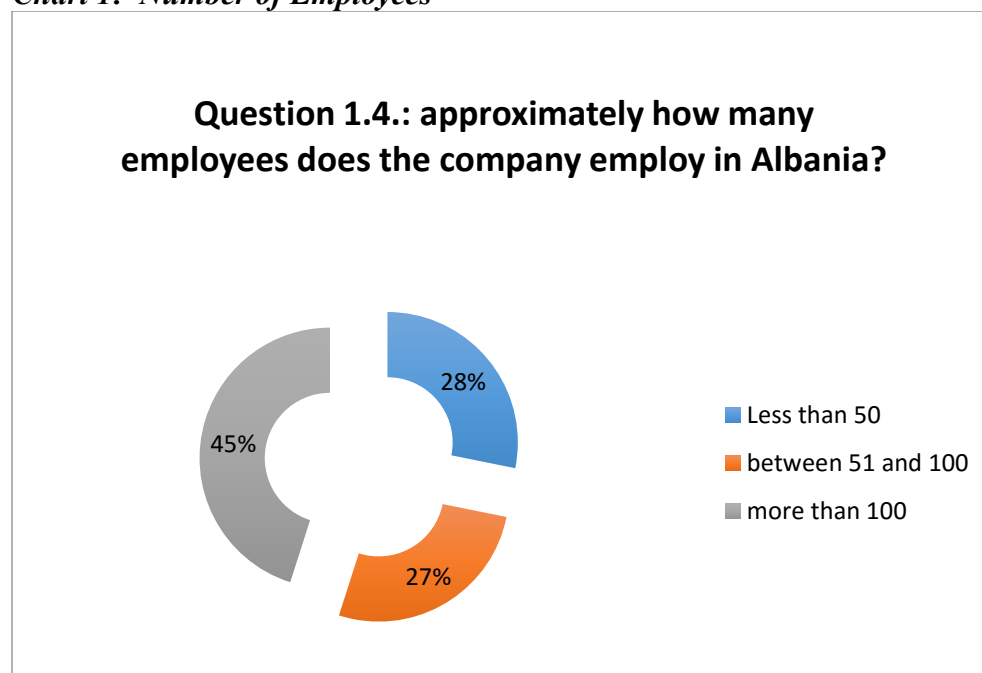
Key Findings and Analysis

This section contains some key findings from the 71 company ratings. They are presented here to show important trends and gain insights into the status of Albania's private sector in upholding the rights and dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees.

Section I: Basic Information for Companies

The staff of The Headhunter Group conducted ratings on a total of 71 companies.

Chart 1: Number of Employees

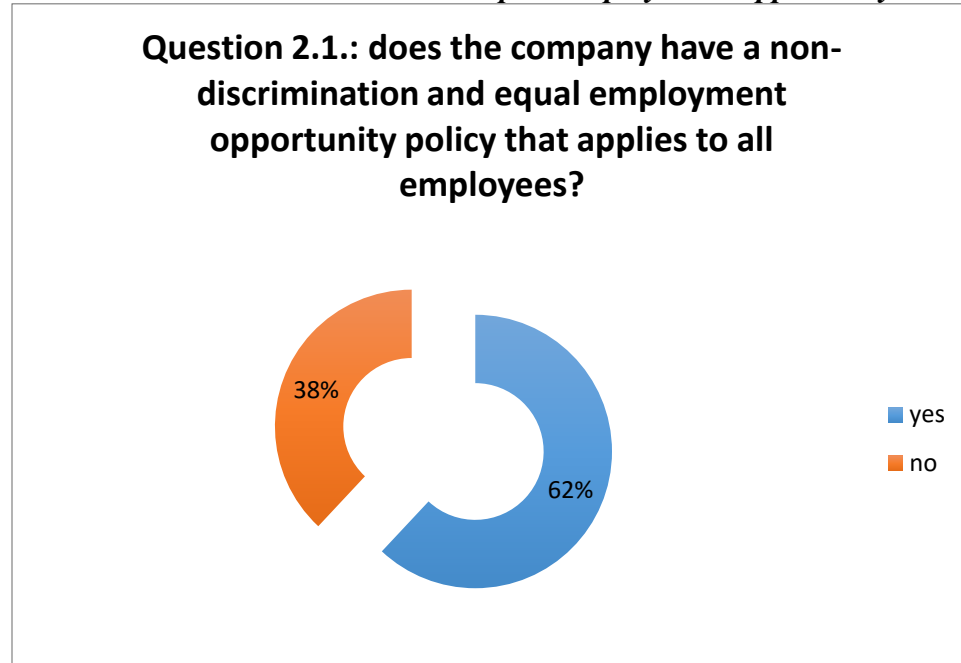


As shown in **Chart 1** above, the majority of companies which participated in this year's rating were relatively large, well-established companies. 45% of those companies had more than 100 employees and 27% had between 51 and 100 employees. Companies participating in the rating came from a wide range of industries but the most common were from Banking 13%, Retail 13%, and Restaurant/Hospitality 11%.

Section II: Policies and Procedures

Questions in the second section asked companies about the policies they have in place.

Chart 3: Non-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy



Only 62% of companies currently have a policy for non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all employees. As this question is not specifically for LGBTIQ persons but for all persons, it shows that there is still tremendous room for improvement in building a culture of non-discrimination. The results of this question also showed why so many companies of the 71 which participated did not achieve a rating. In **Chart 4** below, companies were asked if the policy is specific to LGBTIQ and related status. Only 22% of companies had policies which contained language related to LGBTIQ and related status, again highlighting the fact that employment policies as yet do not sufficiently protect LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees.

Chart 4: LGBTIQ Specific Mentions in Non-Discrimination Policies

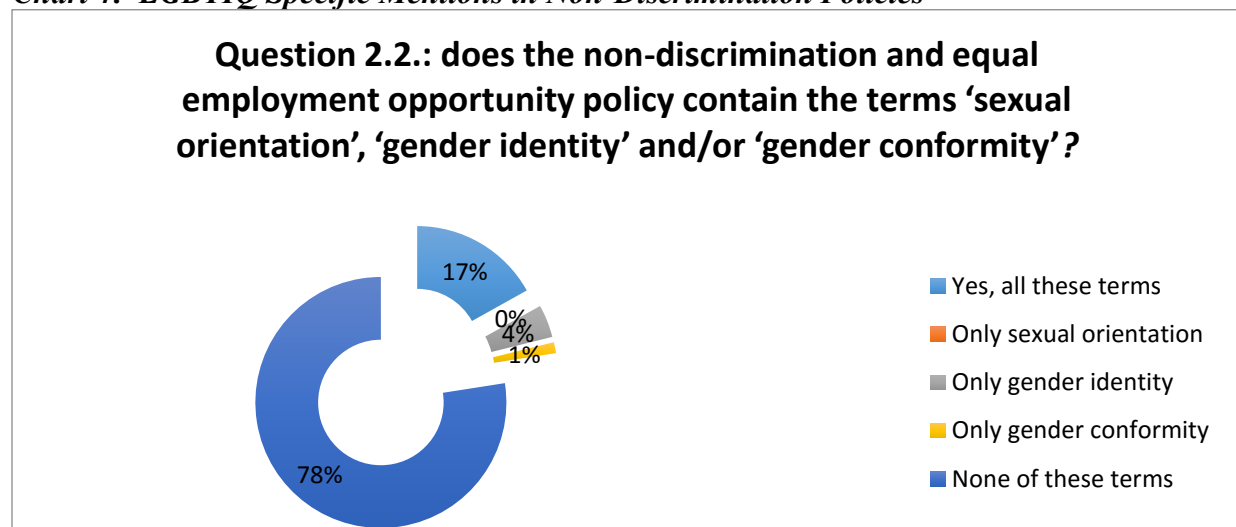


Chart 5: Specific Mandate for Non-Discrimination and Equality Opportunity

Question 2.3.: does the company have a Human Resource Manager or a Senior Executive with a mission mandate or specific responsibility that includes non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity?



As noted in Chart 5 above, only 25% of companies rated have a specific manager (usually a human resources manager or director) who has a specific mandate to ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunity for staff. This again highlights the fact that—not only do companies not have policies in place—they also lack the human resource skills and mandates to put those policies into place. Furthermore, without having staff specifically charged with this issue, it is assumed that many of these companies lack a champion for these rights within the management structure.

Chart 6 below reinforces this point, showing that only 7% of companies had a staff member with specific mandates to include LGBTIQ persons in the company's human resource structure and policies.

Chart 6: Specific LGBTIQ Mention in the Mandate

Question 2.4.: does the mission mandate of this Human Resource Manager or Senior Executive specifically include LGBTIQ diversity?



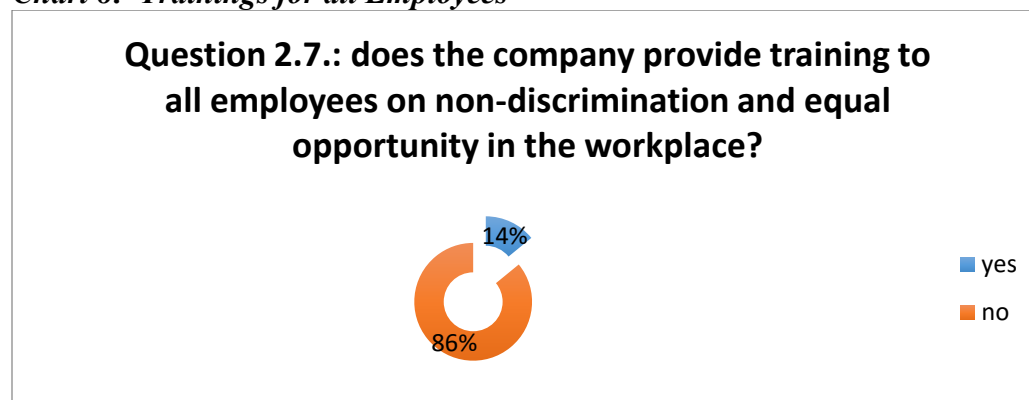
Chart 7 below describes the extent to which companies actually train their human resource managers or other directors on non-discrimination and equal opportunity. Unsurprisingly, only 18% reported that they do. The Headhunter Group finds this statistic troubling because 62% of companies reported having such policies (see **Chart 3** above) but only 18% actually train their management on implementing such policies. This leads one to believe that those policies in companies without trained management are likely unenforced or weakly enforced at best.

Chart 7: Training for Human Resources and Management

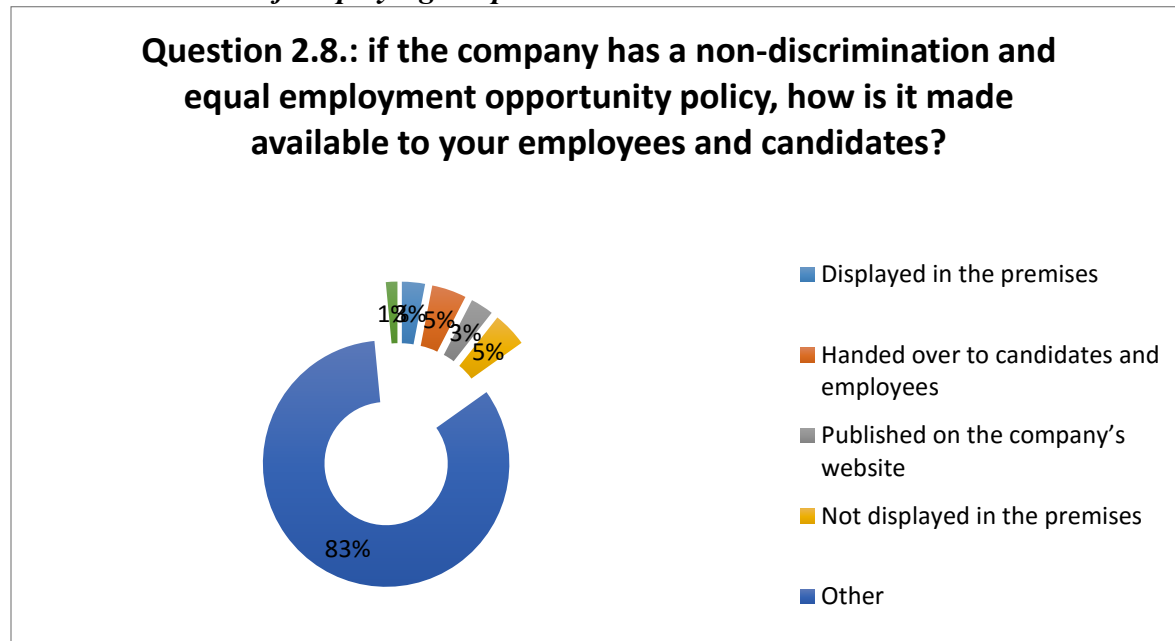


In **Chart 8** below, the Index asked if the company provides training on non-discrimination and equal opportunity to all employees. This is important as it relates to the working culture and atmosphere in the company. Only 14% of companies offer such training.

Chart 8: Trainings for all Employees



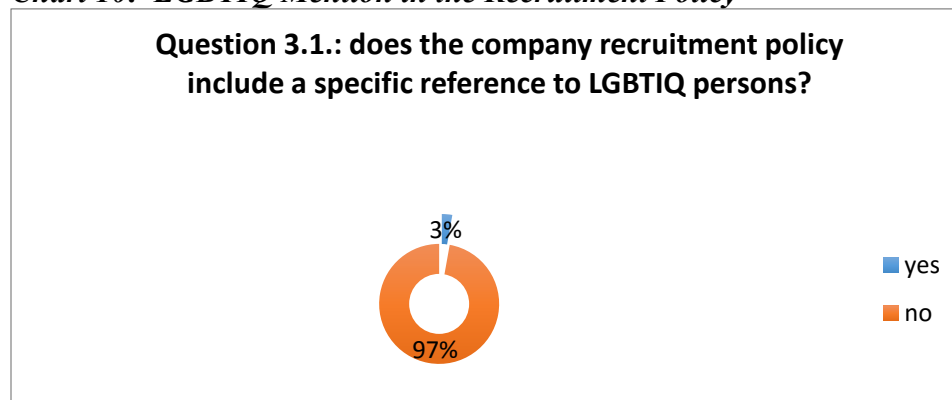
For those companies which do have a non-discrimination and equal opportunity policy, the Index asks about the accessibility and dissemination of the policy to its job-seekers and employees. In **Chart 9** below, companies largely displayed their policies publically but further efforts could be made to increase awareness on them among the staff.

Chart 9: Methods of Displaying the policies

Section III: Policies for Recruitment and Employee Retention

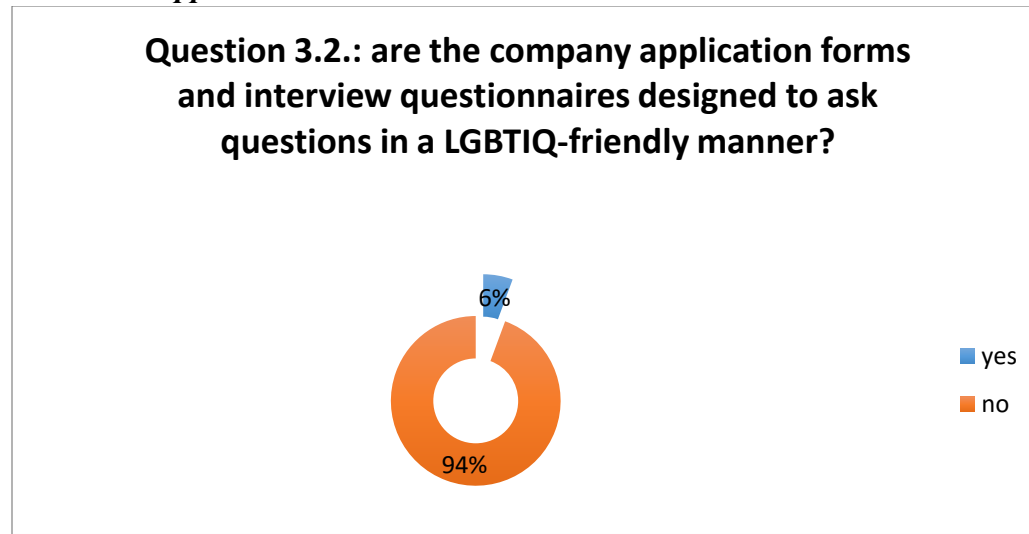
In this section, the Index asked companies about the policies and procedures they have in place regarding recruitment and employee retention.

In **Chart 10** below, only 3% of companies reported that they have a specific mention for LGBTIQ job-seekers in their recruitment policies. This is important to note because non-discrimination at the stage of recruitment is critical (a) to make LGBTIQ job-seekers encouraged to apply at that company for a job; (b) let non-LGBTIQ job-seekers know from the beginning that they will be expected to work in an inclusive atmosphere; and, (c) set the tone for hiring managers that discrimination is not tolerated. It also provides some basis for recourse if an LGBTIQ job-seeker feels that they have been discriminated against during the recruitment process.

Chart 10: LGBTIQ Mention in the Recruitment Policy

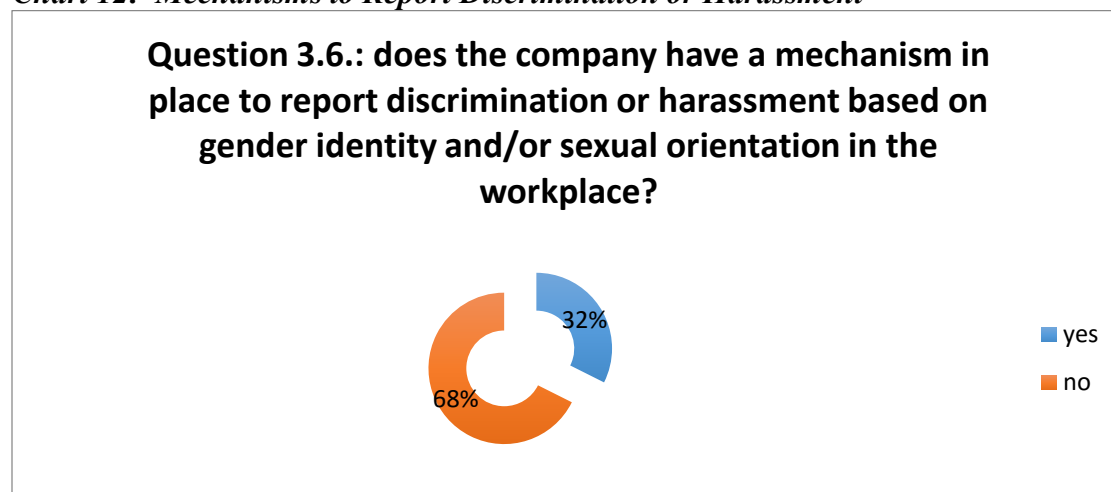
Only 6% of companies, as shown in **Chart 11** below, have application forms and interview questions which are LGBTIQ-friendly. Doing so is a much more nuanced form of respecting the rights and upholding the dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers but many companies lack the skills to do so. This might include types of questions which do not force a gender-based answer or questions which are not invasive towards the lifestyle of the job-seeker. These also guarantee that the companies are not asking LGBTIQ job-seekers about their sexual orientation or gender identity through indirect means.

Chart 11: Application Forms



In **Chart 12** below, only 32% of companies reported that they have a mechanism to report harassment on the job. This low number is not surprising given the low number of companies that have non-discrimination policies. Nevertheless, the absence of such mechanisms leave LGBTIQ employees vulnerable. In addition, it is important that all employees know that such mechanisms exist so that they know any type of harassment would have consequences.

Chart 12: Mechanisms to Report Discrimination or Harassment



Similarly, in **Chart 13** below, only 14% of companies had management staff trained on responding to such complaints of discrimination or harassment. Again, this is troubling because of the 32% of companies which have a mechanism (see **Chart 12** above), only about half of those have management trained on responding. Obviously, this highlights the vulnerability of LGBTIQ persons on the job and their limited options for recourse if they are discriminated or harassed.

Chart 13: Staff Training

Question 3.7.: is someone in the company trained on how to deal with this if there is a complaint submitted on discrimination, bullying or harassment based on gender identity and/or sexual orientation in the workplace?



In **Chart 14**, only 7% of companies have a mechanism to evaluate and mitigate the safety and welfare concerns of LGBTIQ employees in the workplace. This is not surprising given the low levels of companies with policies and trained management. Nevertheless, it highlights the vulnerability of LGBTIQ persons on the job.

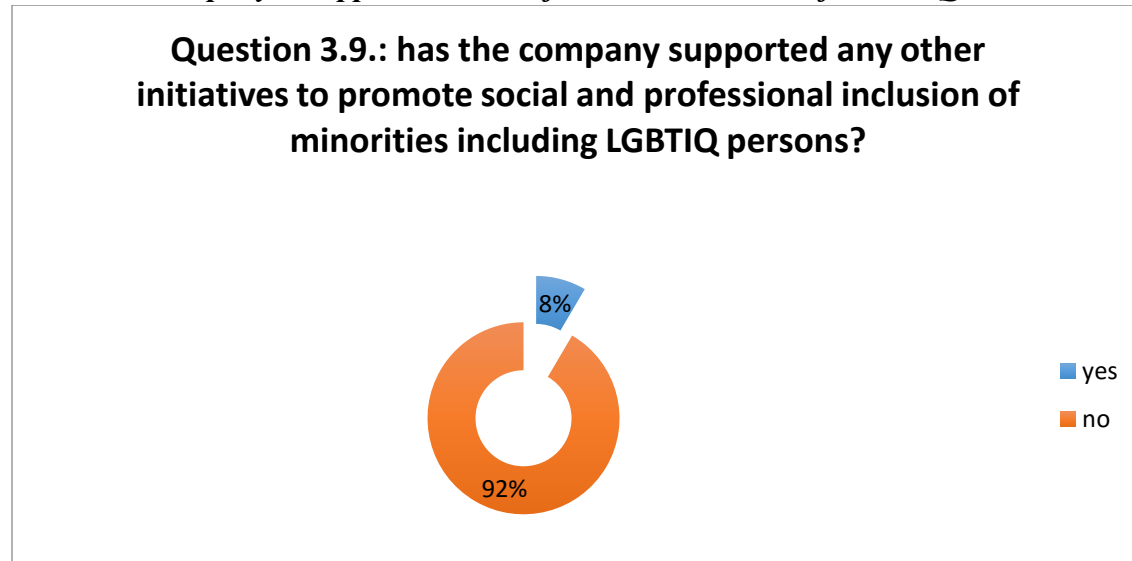
Chart 14: Mechanisms to Evaluate and Mitigate the Safety and Welfare Concerns of LGBTIQ Employees

Question 3.8.: does the company have any mechanism in place to evaluate and mitigate the safety and other welfare concerns of LGBTIQ employees in the workplace?



Chart 15 asked companies if they had ever supported any initiatives to promote social and professional inclusion of minorities including LGBTIQ persons.

Chart 15: Company's Support to the Professional Inclusion of LGBTIQ Persons



Section IV: Corporate Social Responsibility and Outreach

This section asks about a company's corporate social responsibility and outreach to the community at large. As **Chart 16** below shows, just under half of the companies have a CSR strategy already developed. This is positive because it at least provides the framework for adding more protections for LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees if the company is willing. However, as Chart 17 below shows, only 6% of those CSR strategies mention LGBTIQ communities.

Chart 16: Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy

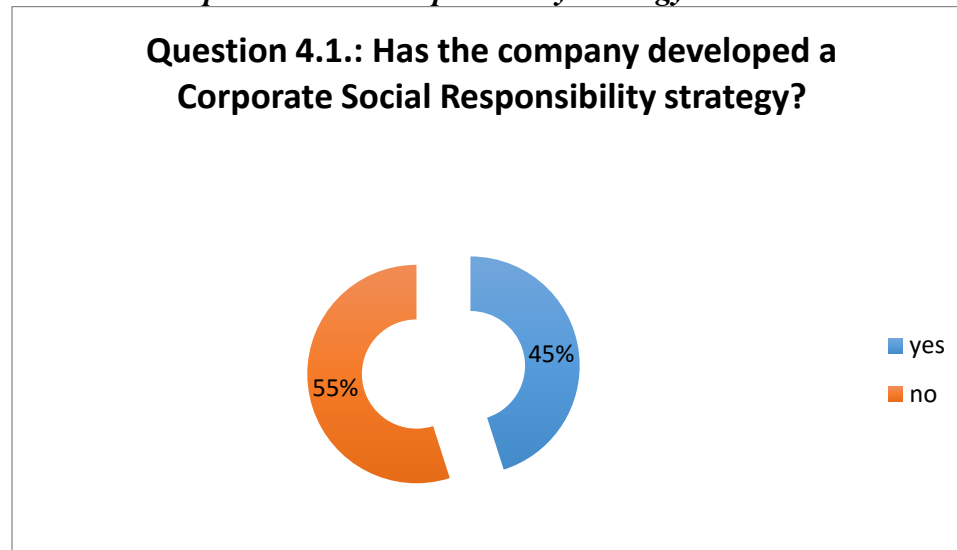


Chart 17: Specific Mention of LGBTIQ in the CSR strategy.

Question 4.2.: if YES to question 4.1., does the Corporate Social Responsibility strategy include specifically LGBTIQ diversity?



Chart 18 below shows that just over half (52%) of companies made charitable donations but only 3% did so to LGBTIQ-focused organizations or projects. However, it must be kept in mind that there are only three active such organizations in Albania and thus, even if a company was willing to make a donation, its options for such are highly limited.

Chart 18: Charitable Giving by Companies

Question 4.3.: during the last two years, has the company made any donations or offered any sponsorships to charities or community-based organizations

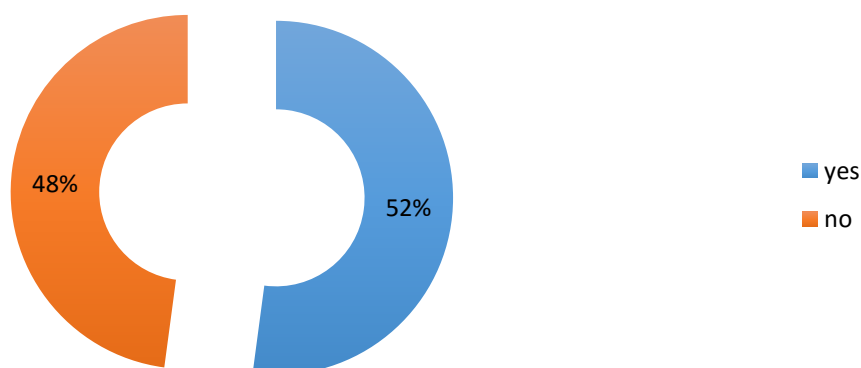
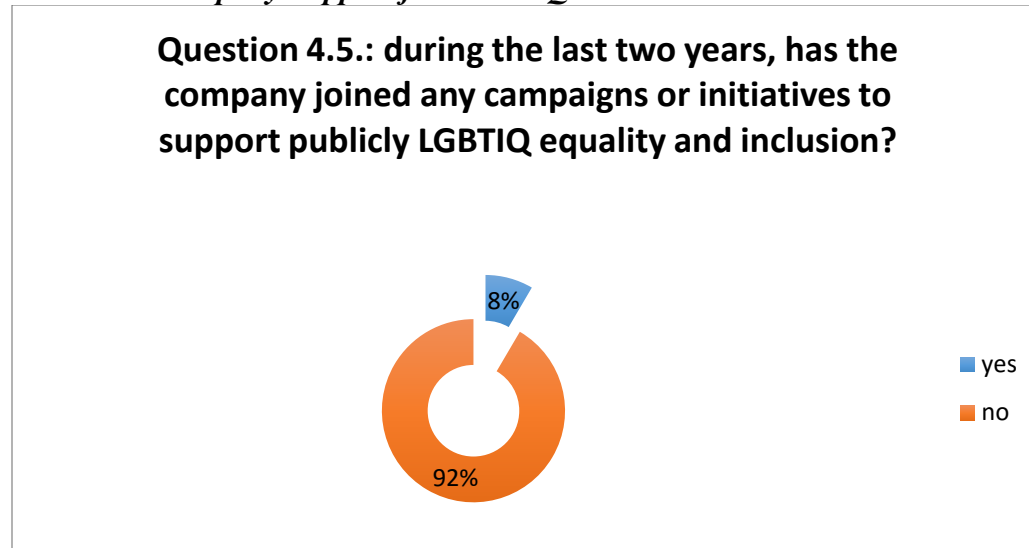


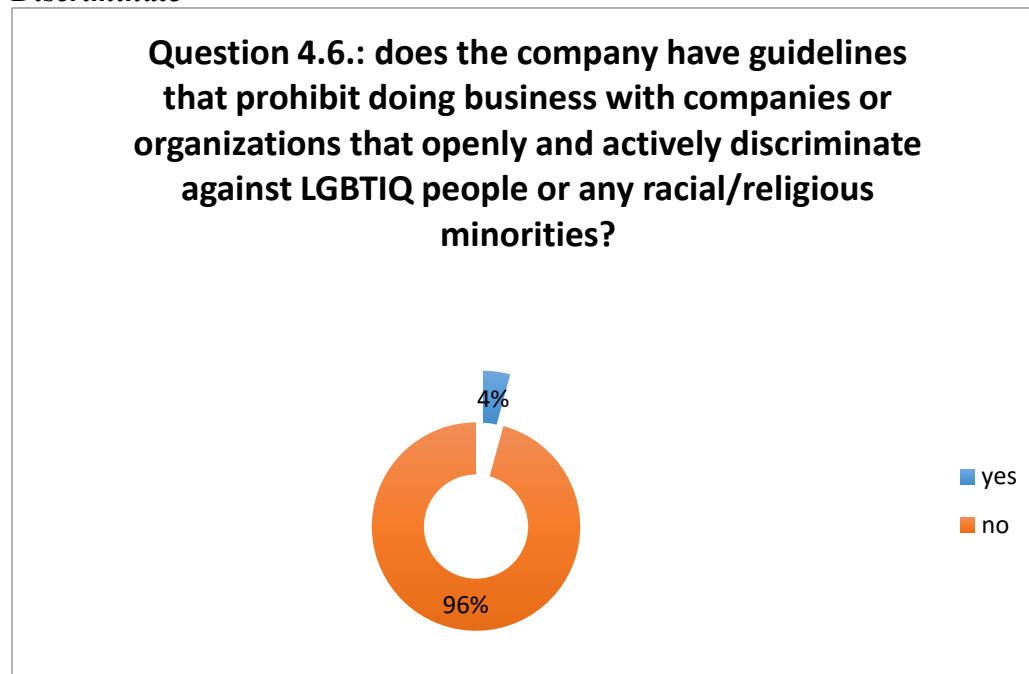
Chart 19 shows that only 8% of companies joined any initiatives to support LGBTIQ equality and inclusion. While companies are interested in CSR, the issue of LGBTIQ persons does not represent a priority for their actions.

Chart 19: Company Support for LGBTIQ Initiatives



In **Chart 20** below, only 4% of companies have a policy or guidelines that prohibit them from doing business with other companies that discriminate about LGBTIQ persons (or other minorities).

Chart 20: Policies to Prohibit Business Transactions with Businesses/Organizations which Discriminate



In **Chart 21**, a total of 38% of participating companies did mention that they would be willing to work more on LGBTIQ inclusion. Despite the fact that many businesses lack policies or training on the topic, it is encouraging that a significant percentage would like to engage further. This creates the space for further projects.

Chart 21: Willingness to Work on LGBTIQ Inclusion Issues

Question 4.7.: would the company be interesting in becoming a member of a working group on business fairness in Albania (to share best practices and lessons learnt, promote advocacy and awareness on LGBTIQ equality and inclusion in the workplace)?



Section V: LGBTIQ Specific Initiatives and Actions

In Section V, the Index asks companies for specific examples of work or support to LGBTIQ communities. Companies cannot achieve Gold status in this Index with having a proven track record of such actions.

As shown in **Chart 22** below, only 6% of companies reported to have initiatives which are innovative to LGBTIQ inclusion.

Chart 22: Initiative Programs

Question 5.3.: does the company have a program that it believes to be supportive or innovative in terms of LGBTIQ inclusion?



Recommendations

For Organizations for LGBTIQ Equality and Tolerance

- Include employment related topics in their advocacy efforts.
- Spread information on the protections for LGBTIQ Albanians in the 2010 Anti-Discrimination Law to the LGBTIQ community.
- Look for opportunities to make advocacy practical in producing tangible benefits for the lives of LGBTIQ Albanians.

For the Albanian Private Sector:

- Recognize that workplace diversity is positive for productivity, revenue, and employee retention.
- Recognize the need for and seek out training opportunities to improve the policies and practices for workplace diversity, for both LGBTIQ Albanians and other minorities.
- Raise the issue of workplace diversity in syndicates, trade unions, chambers of commerce, and other business membership organizations.

For the Albanian Government:

- Continue to enforce the 2010 Anti-Discrimination Law rigorously with an action plan containing concrete objectives and a timeline. This may include public awareness materials, standardized codes of conduct, standardized policies, and a website to access such information.
- Ensure a strong focus on employment inclusion for LGBTIQ Albanians in the National Action Plan for LGBTIQ.

For International Donors:

- Continue to identify and fund evidence-based programs which produce tangible impacts on the lives of LGBTIQ Albanian citizens.