



Gej Strejt Alijansa Gay Straight Alliance

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PREJUDICES EXPOSED

HOMOPHOBIA IN SERBIA 2010

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF:
PUBLIC OPINION
VIEWS OF GLBT POPULATION
DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

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PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY REPORT

METHODOLOGY

The public opinion survey for the needs of Gay Straight Alliance, aimed at discerning **the attitude toward homosexuality**, was conducted in the March, 2010. The survey was conducted on the representative sample of 1405 respondents, in the entire territory of Serbia (without Kosovo and Metohija). Data was collected through direct interviews with respondents in their households.



DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

GENDER

women – 49%
men – 51%

AGE

from 15 to 19 – 5%
from 20 to 29 – 21%
from 30 to 39 – 17%
from 40 to 49 – 17%
from 50 to 59 – 16%
over 60 years – 25%

EDUCATION

no education and elementary school – 21%
graduates from schools for manual occupations – 11%
other high school graduates – 48%
vocational school or university graduates – 20%

OCCUPATION

farmers – 6%
workers with no qualifications
and semi-qualified workers – 11%
qualified and highly-qualified workers – 25%
technicians – 14%
clerks – 14%
experts – 14%
housewives – 10%
pupils and students – 10%

NATIONALITY

Serbian – 86%
others – 14%



1. INTRODUCTION

A little over two years ago (in February 2008), Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) in cooperation with Centre for Free Elections and Democracy (CESID), conducted a comprehensive public opinion survey concerning the perception of homosexuality, the first one of this kind in our country. The concept of researching homosexuality as a 'social construct'¹ (the phenomenon that exists in the area of social and political life and varies depending on current conditions and (not) achieved civilization norms, being a constant), which was then defined, was used this time too. Based on this concept, the emphasis is on determining attitudes, reactions and behaviour of general public toward the existence of certain social reality (and not the reality as such), i.e. a social group that has already articulated itself and which is trying to actualise itself in the area of social and political life, but which encounters serious obstacles in that process. These obstacles are often found in prejudices and stereotypes of the majority (mostly traditional, patriarchal and authoritarian) of the general public, which are then transposed onto political players who, by default, are always trying to 'please' the majority, creating a vicious circle of marginalisation, discrimination or, at least, 'failure to act', which often mean stagnation and regression. Therefore, the first step in overcoming these obstacles is a detailed and comprehensive insight to the attitudes of the majority, as well as an attempt to understand causes and consequences of such attitudes. In this way, the planning of all actions and overcoming the obstacles on the way to full recognition and integration will find its foothold and become relatively compatible with expectations, perceptions, fears and reactions of general public. As much as it used to be perceived that the majority of general public is irreconcilably opposed to the avant-garde, which is today comprised of activists for the rights of sexual minorities, mutual understanding can certainly be more productive than the tension and withdrawal into one's social circles denying the existence of reality on any side (reality that sexual minorities exist or reality that odium toward them exists, whatever the causes and factors of that odium are). Convergences are certain, changes are happening, and the spirit of the time is taking its toll – surveys are used exactly to draw the course and the easiest way to reach such changes on one hand and, on the other hand, to keep records of these changes through time.

A research conducted in 2008 shows a high level of homophobia, in the full sense of that word², with all its entailing consequences. The current situation, two years on, can partly be found in this report, i.e. in the findings and interpretations of this year's survey.

¹ Find out more about this in: Ivana Spasić, Homosexuality and Sociology – From pathological Model to Social Construct, at: <http://www.gay-serbia.com/teorija/2000/00-02-15-sociologija/index.jsp>, as well as in our previous public opinion survey report, which is in the possession of Gay Straight Alliance.

² It is generally accepted that homophobia nowadays is interpreted and used in a much wider sense than what this word etymologically denotes. Homophobia is not only fear from persons who are prone to same-sex sexual relationships, but it also denotes a wide range of feelings, attitudes and behaviors that are negatively charged toward homosexuals. Unlike other phobias, which are dysfunctional for an individual, homophobia is, on the contrary, very functional, because it generates a dominant type of social values and makes homophobic individuals well integrated into the main-stream system of values. Find out more about this in Jane Connor and Alison Thomas-Cottingham, Homophobia, at: <http://www.gay-serbia.com/teorija/2003/03-24-08-homofobija/index.jsp>

In the period between the two surveys, some significant, even ground-breaking events took place, which are related to the promotion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) rights and organizing of GLBT movement in Serbia. The very topic of attitude towards GLBT population was at times a dominant topic of public debate, which divided Serbian society more dramatically than some other, apparently 'more important' social, economic or political issues. Some of these moments are the adoption of the Anti-Discrimination Law (March 2009) or an attempt to organize Pride Parade in Belgrade (September 2009). These events administered the topic of people with 'different' sexual orientation and the acceptance of their assembly as a particular agenda of public debate, therefore confronting the public with the need to discuss it. This debate placed a challenge before the society and the state, of (not) accepting civilization development which involves affirmation of human rights for all minorities, regardless of the basis for their formation. Besides, **the aforementioned events and the reaction of the state and society to them have created a specific favourable climate for changes in the attitude of the public towards the existence of sexual diversity, which has been noticed in the comparison of the findings from 2008 and from this year's survey.** That was, among other things, one of the objectives of this research – to analyse the changes and their direction, whether there was regressing or progressing in certain areas of attitude towards sexual diversity, indicated according to what is easiest for the public to fathom, and that is the notion of homosexuality.

Why was it that the problem of the attitude towards sexual minorities came up a few times as a topic of utmost importance to the public, as well as a topic that raised much bitter disagreement in society? The answer to that can partly be given by other public opinion surveys showing how many issues, formerly in the focus of the public and political elite, are now outdated. Thus, the research conducted by CESID in the last year shows a significant overcoming of ethnic and interethnic tensions, which has in the past 20 years represented one of the main reasons for conflict and divides. Minority groups formed on the basis of ethnic origin managed to achieve a necessary level of affirmation and integration in society and politics, which resulted in diminishing the ethnic distance and acceptance of these minorities by the majority in most social interactions. The next step in accepting diversity is affirmation and acceptance of sexual diversity, which is unavoidably imposed by universal social development and the strengthening and accelerating of European integrations. One of the ways of confirming one's identity, which is a universal human need, is a need to have something else, something different in society (which is at certain times and in certain circumstances perceived as hostile). That 'something else', 'other' and 'different' is no longer marked by a national epithet as a dominant category, but by a sexual and a gender one. The public and stakeholders have yet to define their attitude towards the 'different', and each in their positioning find certain interests and satisfy some needs – individuals and groups aim to be accepted in the given system of values or to change it (depending on their respective position), and politicians and the media strive to attract new supporters and consumers who will launch them to top orbits of ratings and popularity. Social groups formed on the basis of sexual and gender identities, and organisations that represent them, ought to identify their allies and opponents and, through their proactive attitude, make the process of overcoming sexual diversity, as a hostile 'otherness', as painless and as fast as possible. Public opinion surveys are only one of the means aimed at facilitating that objective.

2. GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY

As in the previous research, general attitude towards homosexuality was established based on a sequence of repeated statements, which can be affirmative or negative towards this phenomenon, and which the respondents were to agree or disagree with. Two tables below firstly show the negative, and then positive statements, with a comparison of results from 2008 and 2010 respectively.

When it comes to negative statements, we can say that there was a slight increase in homophobia, generally speaking. Only the statement that homosexuality is an illness showed a slight decrease in the number of respondents agreeing with it, from 70% to 67%. However, this figure is still very high and implies a persistent 'resistance' of the public to the fact that homosexuality was long removed from the official lists of illnesses. And all the other statements also indicate that homophobia is still present to a great degree, in some aspects it is even greater than before (e.g. there has been an increase by 6% in those who believe that homosexuality represents a danger to society – from 50% to 56%). The most dramatic change in figures has happened in the perception of non-governmental organisations which deal with the protection of homosexuals' rights. What happened in their case? **Non-governmental organisations have obviously become significantly more recognised in the last two years – since the attitude towards homosexuality is generally a negative one, the recognition of organisations is projected in a negative direction.** This does not have to be a negative finding for organisations – it is assumed that a great number of people who expressed their negative attitude towards organisations actually in this way showed their negative attitude towards what these organisations advocate, and that they are not really familiar with their work (we shall further discuss recognition of organisations later in the report).

Table 1. (Dis)agreeing with negative statements regarding homosexuality (in %)

	AGREES*		DISAGREES	
	2008	2010	2008	2010
In my opinion, homosexuality is an illness	70	67	17	18
I think the Church is right in condemning homosexuality	60	64	18	15
State institutions should work on suppressing homosexuality	51	53	26	26
Homosexuality is very dangerous for society	50	56	26	24
Homosexuality was fabricated in the West, with the aim of destroying the family and our tradition	36	38	40	40
The problem of homosexuality is imposed by various non-governmental organisations who make money on that	28	47	40	25
Pride Parade is only a provocation aimed at people of 'normal' sexual orientation		45		28
I have nothing against homosexuals, as long as they keep their activities private		58		21
I would never accept that a person close to me is homosexual		49		26

* the value between the sums of percentage and 100% lies in replies 'I don't know, I have no opinion on the subject', which are not shown in the Table.

Three statements were first introduced in this research, and all three of them confirm the prevalence of the general attitude – 45% sees the Pride Parade as a kind of provocation, and as many as 58% gave a positive answer to the claim that they have nothing against homosexuals, but they disagree with public exposure of individuals and groups connected to homosexuals. The most troublesome statement is related to the fact that even one half of people in Serbia would reject their close family and friends upon finding out that they were homosexuals, i.e. that is the number of people who claim they would never accept that. Expressions of ‘not accepting’ were the objective of the second part of research, where we analysed the reactions to this fact, using a reaction scale where two poles were represented by acceptance and support on one hand, and violence as a form of ‘treatment’ on the other.

Looking at the findings from the previous table, it can be concluded that the situation is worse than two years ago. Still, such conclusions are not unambiguous. When analysing the affirmative claims regarding homosexuality, and all they entail, it can be seen that the percentage has increased, namely from 1% to 14%, varying from one claim to the other. Even where there was no increase in agreeing, the percentage remained the same, as is the case with the following two claims. But let's start from the beginning.

Most respondents still acknowledge that homosexuality ‘naturally’ exists, regardless of the time of living – 67% of respondents, both two years ago and now, claim that this phenomenon has always existed, and that the whole sensationalism of today lies in the fact that it is now a topic for public discussion. Thus, the existence of this phenomenon is not denied, but there is opposition to recognize it as legitimate, with all the repercussions that granting legitimacy entails!

Slight changes for the better have been noticed in the statement about everyone having their right to sexual orientation, and that there should be places available for gathering of homosexuals, as well as that this group should be helped in fulfilling their rights. Besides, the number of those claiming that homosexuals should be allowed to marry, or that Pride Parade is a legitimate way of fulfilling their rights, increased by 4%. Still, all these changes do not bring qualitatively significant improvements – obviously it takes a lot more than a mere time span of two years to change things dramatically or for agreeing and disagreeing to reach at least approximately similar level. Despite the improvements, there is still opposition to the idea of homosexuals getting married, adopting children, holding their events, and fulfilling their rights.

However, this research has also shown a positive characteristic which causes optimism that public opinion can change, i.e. that such a change has already been triggered by the fact that **the opinion about homosexuals being people like everybody else has become a dominant one**. Even though it might sound modest, or even bizarre, acknowledging that homosexuals have ‘human’ qualities in the situation where there is an exceptionally negative attitude towards most social interactions with homosexuals represents an improvement. While two years ago less than two fifths of the respondents (38%) thought that ‘homosexuals were people like us’, more than a half of them (52%) agreed with that in this research. At the same time, fewer respondents disagree with this statement and now the number of those who think homosexuals are not human decreased to 28%, compared to 42% in the previous research.

Table 2. (Dis)agreeing with positive statements regarding homosexuality (in %)

	AGREES*		DISAGREES	
	2008	2010	2008	2010
Homosexuality has always existed; it was concealed earlier, but now it is talked about	67	67	11	12
Everybody has a right to their sexual orientation as long as they do not endanger others	65	67	14	12
Homosexuals are people like you and me	38	52	42	28
There should be public places where homosexuals could gather	22	23	53	55
Homosexuals in Serbia are an endangered group and should be helped in fulfilling their rights	12	15	64	62
Homosexuals should be granted the right to marry	10	14	77	72
Gay Pride represents a legitimate way of fighting for gay rights and should be held	8	12	73	69
It is necessary to allow homosexuals to adopt children	8	8	73	79

* the value between the sums of percentage and 100% lies in replies 'I don't know, I have no opinion on the subject', which were not shown in the Table.

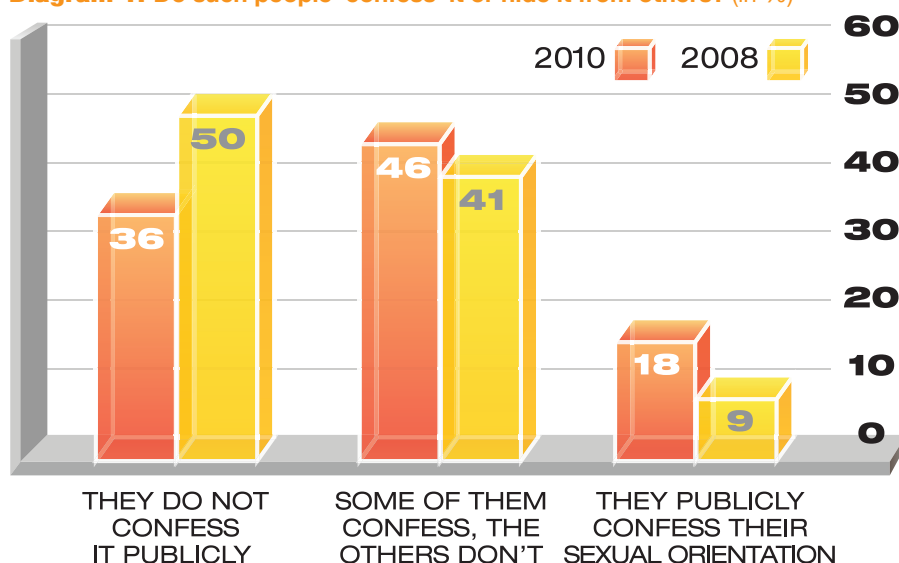
What do these findings suggest? The fact that there is a slight increase in the number of both positive and negative statements about homosexuality implies that a certain polarization of public opinion has taken place, but in this polarization negative feelings towards homosexuality are still dominant. This research shows a slight decrease in the number of people who 'don't have an opinion' and do not know how to declare when it comes to this phenomenon, which implies that public discussion about everything that was happening was successful, for it certainly raised interest of a greater number of people than before.

3. KNOWLEDGE, EXPLANATION OF ORIGIN AND REACTIONS TO HOMOSEXUALITY

Previous research has clearly showed that the attitude towards homosexuality greatly depends on whether the respondents have people of 'other' sexual orientation around them, or have no contact with this phenomenon at all. Those who interact with such people have better chances to 'realise' that 'homosexuals are people like you and me' and therefore have a milder and more tolerant attitude towards this phenomenon. This research confirms that assumption entirely. What we can hope for is that the increase in the number of those who publicly declare their sexual orientation (whether in interpersonal relations, or if they are celebrities, as is the case in countries with a developed democratic culture and the culture of human rights) will lead to a decrease in homophobia. This journey is long, because in a society where the confines of homophobia and discrimination are strong, it is not easy for homosexuals to 'come out', so that vicious circle will be hard to break.

There are some improvements in this respect, at least according to the findings from this research. These improvements reveal more about the gay community, than about those 'on the other side'. Namely, the number of those who claim they know someone who is homosexual (personally, or through someone) is identical to the one from two years ago and equals 23% (out of which 11% claim that they know homosexuals personally, and 12% through someone else). However, the answers to the question whether those people admit they are homosexual or not are significantly different than two years ago. In this research, the number of those who claim that they know people who have different sexual orientation, although these people would not admit that, decreased from 50% to 36%. At the same time, there is an increase in those whose acquaintances (some or all of them) admit their sexual identity.

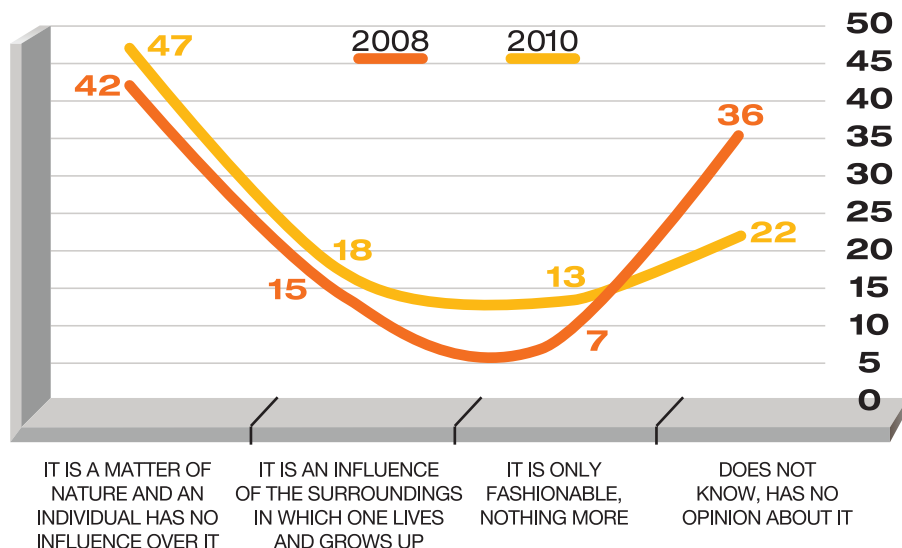
Diagram 1. Do such people 'confess' it or hide it from others? (in %)



And a few more pieces of information regarding the acknowledgement of homosexuality – it is much more acknowledged as a male than as a female phenomenon. Out of the total number of respondents who claim they know who the people of homosexual orientation are, 51% say they are only men, 4% that they are only women, and 44% state both genders; the majority of respondents (71%) say those people are their acquaintances; only 1.5% state those people are close or distant relatives; 12% state they are their friends; 6% that they are colleagues, and 9% that they are neighbours.

One more finding raises optimism and indicates that changes in public opinion are possible and are taking place. It is the one regarding the perception of the 'origin' of homosexuality. Firstly, there is a greater number of those who think that it is a matter of nature and that an individual cannot have an impact on whether they will be homosexuals or not – two years ago 42% had this opinion, and now the percentage is 47%. Secondly, there is an increase in the number of those who claim that this phenomenon is caused by influences from one's surroundings, as well as that it is a product of a pure social construct in the form of 'being fashionable'. Where has then been a decrease in figures? This is probably the most important conclusion of this report. **The number of those who have no opinion about this issue has decreased from 36% to 22%, which means that more people think about this phenomenon, it is easier to express one's attitude, and there are fewer people in the 'grey zone of ignorance' who, by stating they have no opinion about this or they do not know, negate the existence of this phenomenon.** All this has certainly been caused by all the events and the context mentioned at the beginning of this report.

Diagram 2. In your opinion, why does someone become a homosexual? (in %)



The thing that has not changed is the connection between the understanding of the origin of homosexuality and the attitude towards this phenomenon. As many as 87% of the respondents who are not in the least bit homophobic, i.e. have a positive attitude towards homosexuals and think that homosexuality is natural; that

is also the opinion of those who are mostly not homophobic – 68%. On the other hand, homophobic people, i.e. those who have a negative attitude towards the phenomenon generally either do not know how to explain its existence, or believe that it is a matter of 'being fashionable'.

This research has gone even further in determining the attitude towards homosexuality, because it did not stop at identifying the 'passive' dimensions of the attitudes, i.e. cognitive and emotional components of the attitude towards the phenomenon, but it has also thoroughly examined the 'active', i.e. the conative component of attitudes, which involves readiness for action, doing and behaving in a certain way. This component of attitude was examined through reactions to the knowledge that a person from one's surroundings, with whom the respondent has more or less intense social interactions, is a homosexual. The findings are very interesting. Some general conclusions can be drawn from these findings:

- **The more close and intense the interpersonal relationship is, the more intense and extreme the reaction to the fact that someone is homosexual is.** This is particularly true of children, because in their case there is the greatest number of respondents who would even use 'strong hand' to convince their children they were not homosexuals – as many as 17%. However, it is also in the case of children, the fewest number of people would stop communicating with them, and most respondents, as many as 62%, would try 'to solve the problem' through conversation. On the other hand, when it comes to relationships that are not so close, e.g. with neighbours or colleagues, the prevailing attitude is that one should not interfere and that one should pretend that nothing is happening.

- **Those who are tolerant and not homophobic are like that regarding any type of relationship.** One in ten respondents, at the average (variations are minimal and range from 9% to 11%) would support a homosexual from their surroundings, regardless of whether that person is their child or only a neighbour or a colleague. This is a very significant piece of information because it not only indicates the range of tolerance, but also its quality and intensity. People who are tolerant have a significantly clearer opinion, they know why they have a certain attitude, so the quality of such attitude greatly differs from the irrational intolerance most people express. It is expected that in the future, with the increase in the range of tolerance (which is almost an unavoidable development in our society, however slow the development itself), it will also significantly increase both in quality and intensity, which is probably equally important.

- **Whatever the type of relationship, a reaction of any kind would follow.** The number of those who would ignore the problem does not exceed one third of respondents in case of the most distant social relations.

- **The dominant attitude is that people of homosexual orientation can be talked out of being gay.** In most relationships, the greatest percentage belongs to those who would try and convince people they are close to not to be gay. That figure varies from 62% in case of children, to 33% in case of neighbours.

- **However small that percentage is, what is worrying is the fact that there are respondents who would, even in the most distant kind of social relations, find it justifiable to use violence as a reaction to the fact that someone is a homosexual.** This percentage is the highest in case of reaction to children, but as much as 3% of population would beat up their colleagues or neighbours if they admitted to being gay.

Table 3. How would you react if a person close to you confessed they were a homosexual?* (in %)

	Child	Parent	Relative	Friend	Work Colleague	Neighbour
I would support that person	9	9	10	11	11	11
I would pretend not to know anything and continue behaving in a normal way	6	13	21	21	34	35
I would talk to them and try to convince them that it is wrong	62	56	50	46	35	33
I would stop communicating with that person without any explanation	6	16	15	18	17	19
I would firmly eliminate such a silly idea from their head, even by beating it out of them	17	5	4	4	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Findings shown in the group of people who answered this question, i.e. excluding the answer 'does not know, has no opinion/attitude'.



4. VIOLENCE TOWARD HOMOSEXUALS

We devoted a lot of attention to the extreme type of reaction to homosexuality, more precisely **violence**, for a number of reasons. A group that reacts in this way, however small, is the loudest in its reactions, and as such usurps the media coverage and public attention and creates the feeling of a need to eliminate homosexuals. Apart from that, threats of violence are one of the biggest reasons and obstacles for GLBT population to exercise their rights, bearing in mind that such threats are most intense when this group intends to assemble and hold public gathering. If we add that last September even the state admitted that it cannot withstand the threats of violence, it is clear why it is important to determine the number of those who are ready for such a reaction, what are the reasons for that and how to address this serious issue.

The topic of violence was mentioned earlier in the part where reactions to the phenomenon in the immediate surroundings were examined, and when it was determined that as many as 17% of parents would use violence if their children confessed they were of homosexual orientation. Violence can, however, be manifested in many other ways and in different circumstances, and this research tried to determine the exact range of circumstances when individuals can be expected to have violent reactions or when someone thinks violence is justified.

There is awareness that violence is socially and politically incorrect and unacceptable behaviour. Therefore, we can conclude that a certain number of respondents under such pressure do not acknowledge violence as a means of 'struggle' against homosexuals, even though they might have such an attitude in private. On the other hand, it can be assumed that a certain number of those who opt for and defend violence, do so under the pressure of expectations that it is acceptable – they are trying in this way to confirm their heterosexual identity, they consider themselves to be better adjusted to the dominant system of values, even though perhaps in a concrete situation they would not dare be violent at all (it is simply popular to say that 'faggots should be beaten up'). Research of violence and conclusions drawn on this topic are under the influence of these two different kinds of pressure more than any other topic, but it can be assumed that those pressures on individuals counterbalance each other, so that the finding that can be drawn out of this is close to reality.

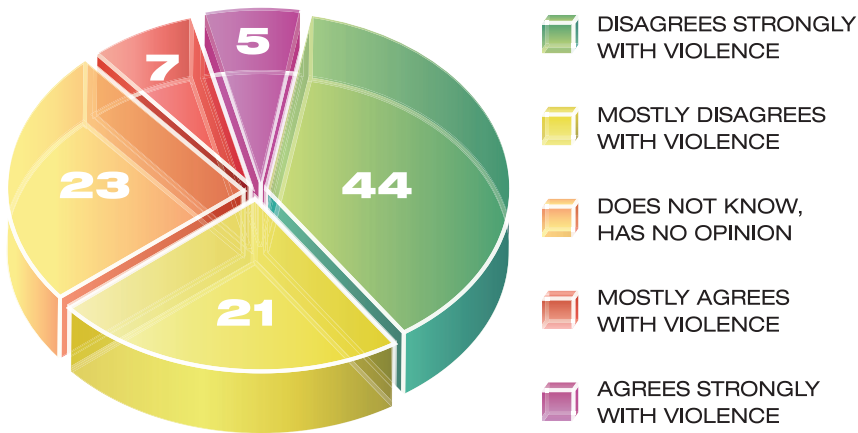
As expected, **indirect justification of violence is higher than readiness for violence itself**. The highest 'tolerance' of violence exists when it comes to public organising of population characterised by minority sexual identities. One in five people think it is justifiable to use threats and violence in order to stop a gay parade from taking place, if it cannot be done in any other way. However, in this case, the disagreement with this idea is significant (54%). Besides, the mentioned one fifth that justifies violence (20%) accepts it with a following reservation: 'if it cannot be prevented in any other way'. Thus, there is no dominant public opinion advocating violence towards gay parades – the majority is against organising such event, think of it as a provocation etc., but if it were to be held, it should not be stopped by using violence. This finding should be taken into consideration by those who gave up securing Gay Pride because of threats, because they surrendered to the pressure from an aggressive minority, and not a majority. It is perhaps more appropriate to say that, should such an event be held, there would be an air of indifference around it, which will be seen in one of the following findings.

Furthermore, 14% of respondents think that violence and beatings are legitimate ways for eliminating homosexuality. In this case as well there is a bigger disagreement because two thirds of respondents disagree with this kind of ‘treatment’. The same number of people does not support violence at all, regardless of what they think of homosexuals, and that is one of the most important findings in this part. More than one half agree that violence towards homosexuals should be severely punished. In this case, there are greater dilemmas than in other four statements, because nearly a third of respondents (31 %) are not sure about what should be done to those who are violent towards homosexuals.

Table 4. Do you agree with the following statements? (in %)

	Disagrees	Does not know, no opinion	Agrees
If it can't be prevented in any other way, it is justifiable to stop a gay parade by threats and violence	54	26	20
Only good beating up can stop homosexuals in their 'silly ideas'	66	20	14
Regardless of what I think about people of different sexual orientation, I strongly disagree with the use of violence against them	13	22	65
People using violence against any person of different sexual orientation should be severely punished	16	31	53

Diagram 3. The index of (in)tolerance to violence towards homosexuals (in %)



It is clear and expected that tolerance to violence is strongly connected with the general attitude towards homosexuality. Still, there are many more homophobic people and those with a negative attitude who do not have a ‘potential’ to activate their

negative attitude and turn it into action. Those who are tolerant of the phenomenon categorically refuse violence as a method, while intolerant ones have mixed feelings about violence and only in the totally homophobic group is there a critical mass of 30% of those who mostly or absolutely support violence.

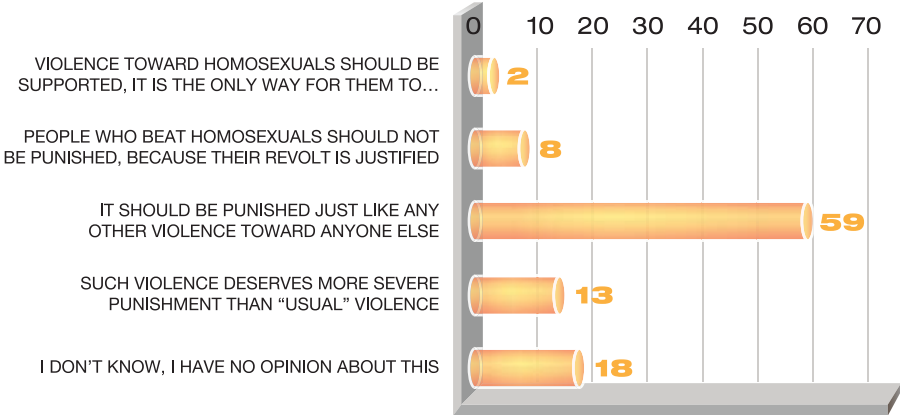
Table 5. The relationship between homophobia and violence against homosexuals (in %)

	Disagrees strongly with violence	Mostly disagrees with violence	Does not know, no opinion	Mostly agrees with violence	Agrees strongly with violence	Total
Very homophobic	18	24	28	16	14	100
Mostly homophobic	34	26	28	7	5	100
Indifferent/does not know	46	19	30	4	1	100
Mostly not homophobic	81	11	8	1	0	100
Not homophobic	94	5	1	0	0	100
Average	44	20	23	7	5	100

How should the state react to violence against homosexuals? Majority of respondents think it should be done in the same way as in case of any other form of violence – punishments existing in the legal system for the use of violence should be applied in the same way in this case as well, nothing more and nothing less.

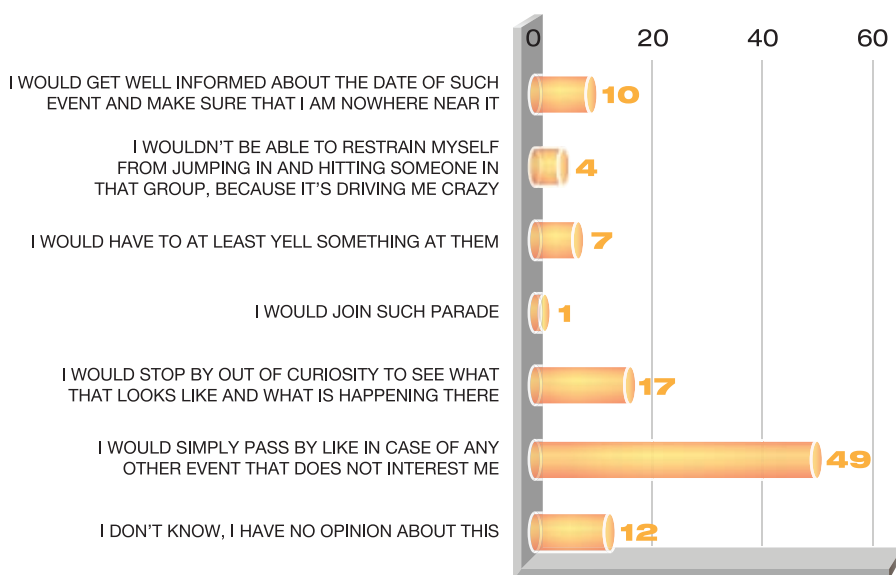
When it comes to responses on the other two sides of the dominant attitude, it can be seen that there are more of those who believe this form of violence is more dangerous than any other and that it is the reason why it should be punished more severely – the number of those is 13%, whereas there are 10% of those who support violence, whether in the form of not punishing the offender or supporting them strongly in their inclinations to beat homosexuals up (8% plus 2%).

Diagram 4. What do you think about violence against people of different sexual orientation, which is sometimes used against them? (in %)



One of the indicators for potential violence is the attitude towards Pride Parade, as one of the most authentic events representing the phenomenon. Most people, one half of them, would go past such an event without showing any interest – they would simply ignore such an event like any other kind of event they are not interested in. The other half is again divided into two groups – those who have a positive or a negative attitude towards this event; those with a negative attitude (about one fifth of them) would avoid such an event in any case, verbally ‘attack’ the participants, or use violence. The other group (nearly one fifth, i.e. 18%) would stop to see what such an event looks like out of curiosity, or they would join it. By the way, this statement has the fewest number of indecisive respondents and those who have no opinion, when compared to most other questions in which the attitude towards homosexuality is indicated, which confirms that this event is highly recognizable, and that a significant number of the members of general public probably form their attitude toward homosexuality exactly on the basis of this event.

Diagram 5. Imagine you're passing by a gay parade. How would you react? (in %)

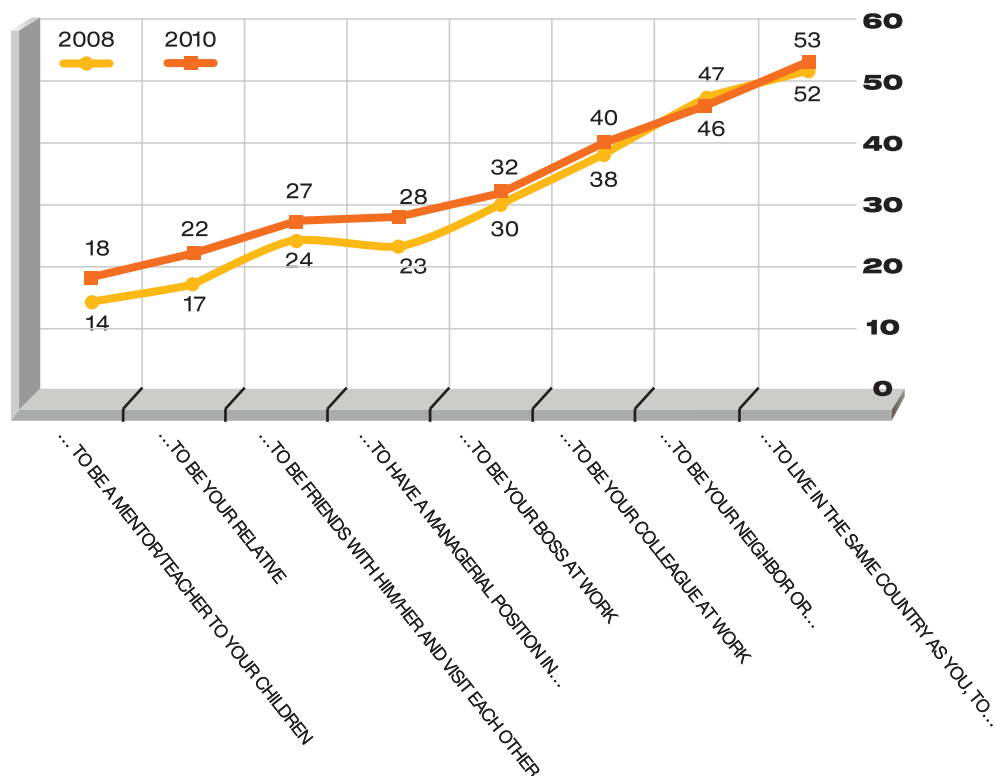


Thus, violence towards homosexuals is not justified, i.e. there is a dominant opposition to the use of violence against individuals or groups representing GLBT population, or belonging to that population. The number of those who declare that they support violence or at least find it justifiable does not exceed 20% of population, whichever indicator is in question, and the number of those who are ready to use violence ranges from 2% to 5%, varying from one situation to another. The exception to this is a situation when parents react to homosexual tendencies of their children, when a greater number of people are ready to use force and thus influence the change in reality.

5. SOCIAL DISTANCE TOWARD HOMOSEXUALS

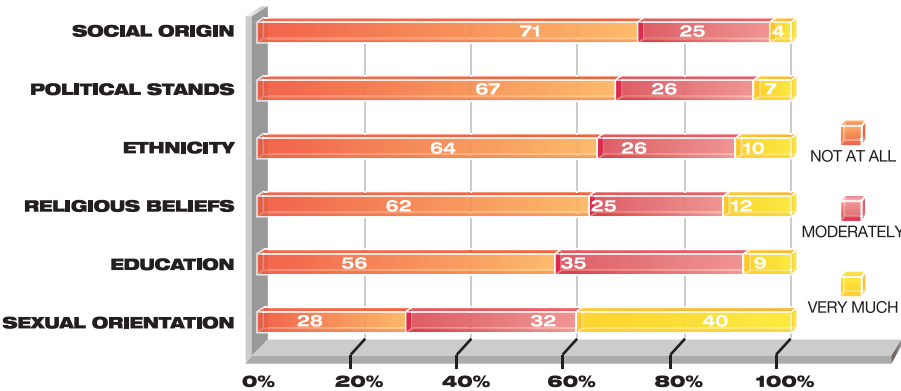
Standard scale for social distance measuring (Bogardus Scale) was used in both surveys, in this one, and in the 2008 survey. Eight different statements are used to measure intensity of social relationships. It begins from the widest social interaction, where cohabitation in a political unit is hypothesized, then goes through various relationships up to the closest social interaction that implies kinship, whether directly or through children of the respondents. For most of the respondents it is only acceptable that homosexuals live with them in the same country, while over half of the respondents oppose all other relationships. The biggest distance is related to frequent and intensive forms of social dynamics (education of children, kinship, friendship), while it is somewhat lower in the forms of interactions that are related to work and neighbourhood. Although the distance is still quite high, we can identify certain shifts that indicate the increase of acceptability of different sexual orientation. This is primarily related to the least desirable forms of social interaction with homosexuals, which have significantly increased. Therefore, education of children became acceptable in 18% (before 14%), kinship in 22% (before 17%) and so on.

Diagram 6. Social acceptability of homosexuals (in %)



Within the social distance we have also tested what personal traits can be an obstacle for the respondents to make friendships. We used the six degree scale of individual's personal traits (education, social origin, ethnicity, religious beliefs, political orientation and sexual orientation), which offered the respondents a possibility to state to which extent this personal trait is for them an obstacle in making friendships.

Diagram 7. Personal traits that are obstacles for friendship (in %)

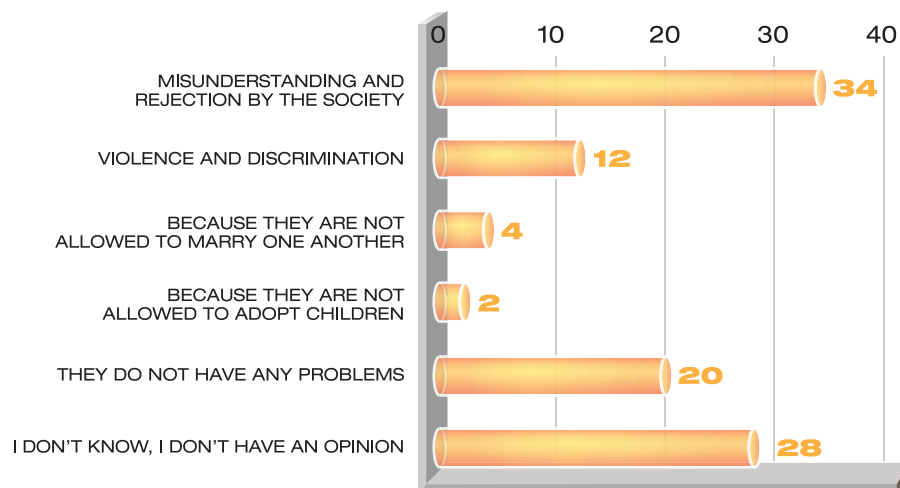


Only sexual orientation stands out as a personal trait that can be an obstacle for a closer interpersonal communication! In the category of those who are homophobic, almost 90% sees this orientation as an obstacle in making friends, while in the group that is not homophobic group this is only the case with every ninth person.

6. PROBLEMS AND RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE

It is not easy for those who have a negative attitude toward a particular group of people to admit that this group has problems, because by doing that, they would partly admit that they themselves are someone who creates a problem for that group. For this reason, the finding that almost a half of the respondents believe either that homosexuals do not have any problems (20%) or do not have an opinion about this (28%) is not surprising. Those who were ready to give answer to this question, predominantly think that the problem is misunderstanding and rejection by the society – one third of respondents have this opinion. Discrimination and violence as problems are recognized by 12% of respondents, while very few people believe that the problems are not enabling the homosexuals to get married and adopt children. This is not surprising, because there is a very widespread negative attitude and no acceptance toward these two rights.

Diagram 8. What do you think are the main problems of homosexuals in Serbia? (in %)

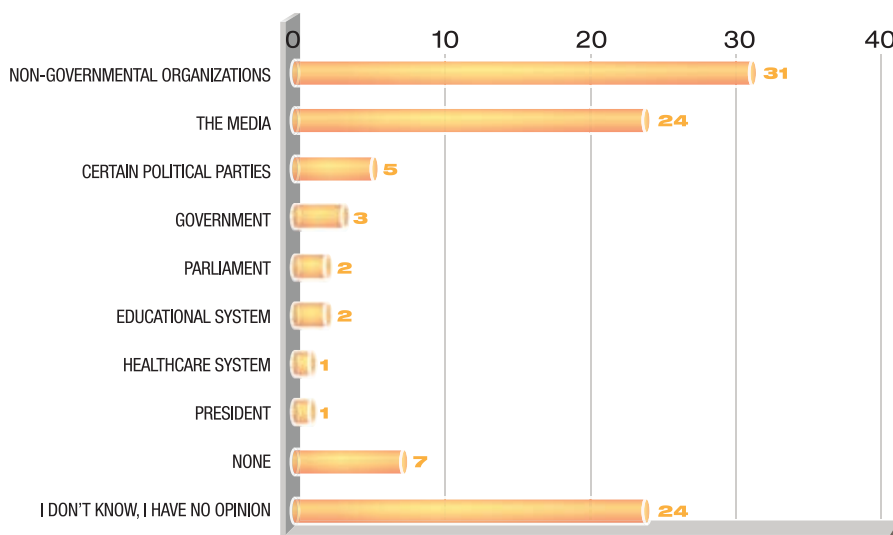


Taking into account the already established fact that male homosexuality is more recognizable than the female one, we expected the results showing that people think that gay men have bigger problems than homosexual women. 27% of respondents think that men have more problems than women; only 3% of respondents think that homosexual women are more endangered, and 40% of respondents selected the answer „both“; 30% were not able to answer this question.

Circumstance surrounding the last year's events, and attempts of sexual minorities to articulate their rights, showed that, without organized support from different social and political figures, their efforts could remain only on the level of attempts. Without support from institutions, which should, by definition, enable all citizens to exercise their rights, it was clearly impossible to organize the Pride Parade last year – a part of the general public can be happy about this, the other part can oppose it, but everybody clearly recognizes the powerlessness of state institutions to do their job with respect to securing and promoting the rights of all of their citizens.

Who, in the opinion of the citizens of Serbia, does the most for the promotion of the rights of homosexuals? Regardless of whether they have a positive or negative opinion, more than a half of respondents see civil sector organisations as someone who, to the biggest extent, defends the rights of people that belong to sexual minority. Almost one third of respondents think that NGOs provide the most significant support to sexual minorities in the struggle for their rights, and one forth think that it is the media. A total of 6% of answers goes to state or political institutions (the government, Parliament and President in total), while the total of 3% goes to the main social services and activities, healthcare and education.

Diagram 9. What institutions promote homosexual rights the most? (in %)

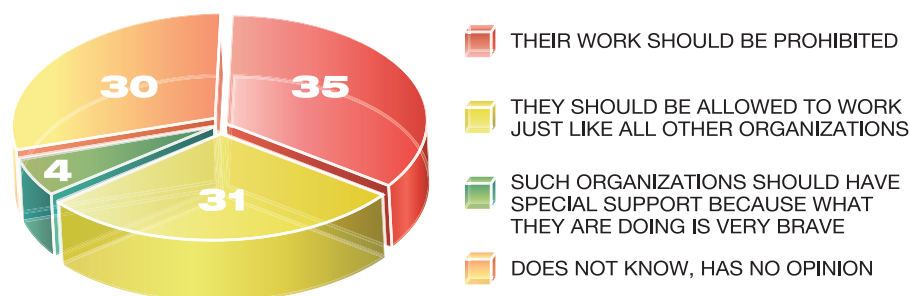


This is a very important finding that indicates an urgent need for the system, which holds all the instruments for the promotion and protection of human rights (which is the main postulate of the rule of law on which all modern democracies are based), to start addressing more seriously the social group that is being created on the basis of sexual difference and its rights and freedoms. If there is a consensus to build our society on the civilization heritage of the rule of law, it is no longer a question of whether it is necessary to secure the rights of all minorities that define themselves as such, but only when and how to do this. Selective compliance with the principles of the rule of law, in the sense of giving rights to ethnic or social groups, but not sexual groups, questions the entire system, because minority rights are observed in general, or not observed at all. Therefore, whatever the social climate or value systems there are for (no) acceptance, political elite have a huge responsibility to change this climate in the direction of what is more sustainable in the future and which is the prerequisite for societal development in general.

Other than this, the opinion that state institutions are not doing anything or are doing very little to promote homosexual rights, does not depend either on general attitude toward homosexuality or any other opinion that is related to this phenomenon. To put it in simple terms, whatever they think about this phenomenon, state institutions and public services are not seen by anybody as places where sexual minorities can find support and stronghold.

Since non-governmental organisations are recognized as the most significant factor in the promotion and protection of the rights of sexual minorities, what is the public opinion about them? This topic was opened in such a manner that the attitude toward this type of organisations is taken as an indicator for the general attitude toward homosexuality, where it can be seen that attitude toward them has changed significantly in the negative direction compared with two years ago. They are seen as someone who unnecessarily imposes the rights of sexual minorities topic to the public and makes good profit from doing that (which is not only the case with the opinion on this type of organisations, it is the public opinion on non-governmental organisations in Serbia in general). When asked explicitly about their attitudes toward activities of NGOs that advocate the rights of sexual minorities, opinions are divided – although more than a third of respondents (35%) think that activities of such organisations should be prohibited, 31% think that they should do their work just like all other organisations; 4% is for „positive discrimination“ of such organisations, while as many as 30% do not have any opinion about them.

Diagram 10. What do you think about organisations involved in the protection and promotion of the rights of sexual minorities? (in %)



Do people really know what such organisations are doing, and specifically which organisations they are? Very unlikely. One third admit that they do not know what these organisations are advocating – 34%; more than a third - 36%, believe that organisations are fighting for homosexuals to have the same rights as everybody else, while 30% claim that the focus of their work is to fight for some special rights.

It is not surprising that there are so many of those without any opinion whatsoever, taking into account that most of them have never heard about organisations advocating the rights of sexual minorities. It is surprising that there are more of them who give a general assessment of their work and opinion about how they should be treated than those who have any knowledge about what these organisations are and what they do.

Out of three tested organisations, the most recognizable is Gay Straight Alliance, with 27% of respondents claiming to have heard about it. The same number of people heard about the other two organisations, Queeria and Labris, i.e. 12%, and 11%, respectively.

Table 6. Have you heard about any of the following organisations working toward protection and promotion of the rights of sexual minorities? (in %)

	Heard	Has not heard
GAY STRAIGHT ALLIANCE	27	73
QUEERIA	12	88
LABRIS	11	89



7. VALUE-BASED ORIENTATIONS AS THE MAIN CORRELATES OF THE ATTITUDE TOWARD HOMOSEXUALITY

The hypothesis that we have set when developing the survey was related to the assumption that value-based frameworks define specific opinion of the respondents and that this is exactly the key basis for the attitude toward homosexuality. This thesis was already tested in the research two years ago, and is now unambiguously confirmed. Value-based orientations are a far more relevant correlate of the attitude toward this phenomenon, much more than, for example, social or demographic context and personal traits of individuals, which are only indirectly, through values, reflected on the attitude toward homosexuality (to the extent in which, for example, those with less education are more traditional and more conservative). Even regional differences do not play a significant role, which will be discussed in more details at the end of the Report.

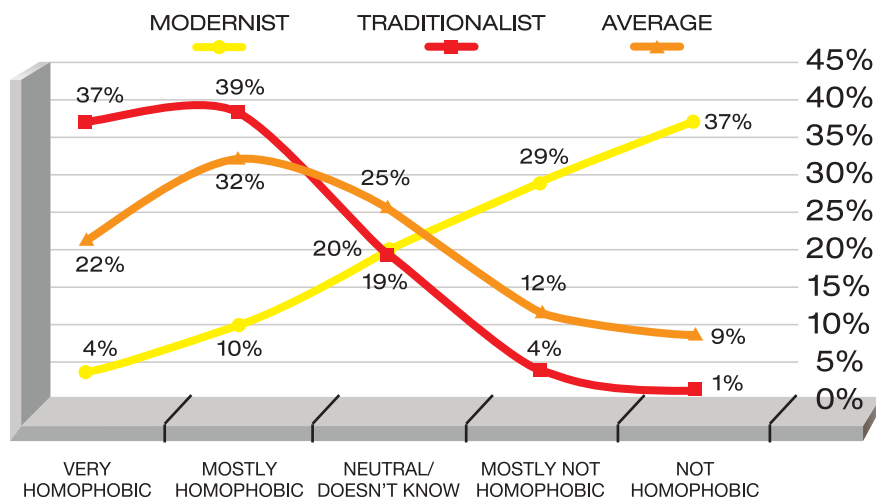
Several value-based dimensions have been placed into the context of the attitude toward homosexuality: traditionalism, authoritarianism, conformism and nationalism. In addition to them, another two topics are indirectly, through values, related to the attitude toward homosexuality, and these are attitude toward democracy as a social and political order and attitude toward the European Union.

7.1. TRADITIONALISM

We defined this value-based framework of respondents with a series of claims³, and in relation between traditionalists and modernists, the former have significant prevalence. Almost two thirds of the people, based on the statements given to us, can be classified as traditionalists (31% moderate traditionalists and traditionalists), while less than one fifth are modernists (11% moderate modernists and 8% modernists). If we take only opinions at far ends, we can see that the value matrix predominantly defines the attitude toward homosexuality. Predominantly negative attitude toward homosexuality also colours the value matrix. Among the modernists, mostly the ones who are not homophobic are dominant, and in this group we find 14% of those who are very or mostly homophobic. Among the traditionalists, there are only 5% of those who are mostly not homophobic or not homophobic at all, and 76% of those who are homophobic to a different extent. Unlike the survey that we conducted two years ago, the difference between negative attitudes toward homosexuality has decreased. Previously, 85% of traditionalists had negative attitude toward homosexuals, and about 30% of modernists.

³ The claims are as follows: Men should hold the leading positions in the business world; The most important virtue of any woman is to be good wife and mother; One should strictly follow national customs and tradition; It is necessary to adhere to ethical norms preached by my religious community.

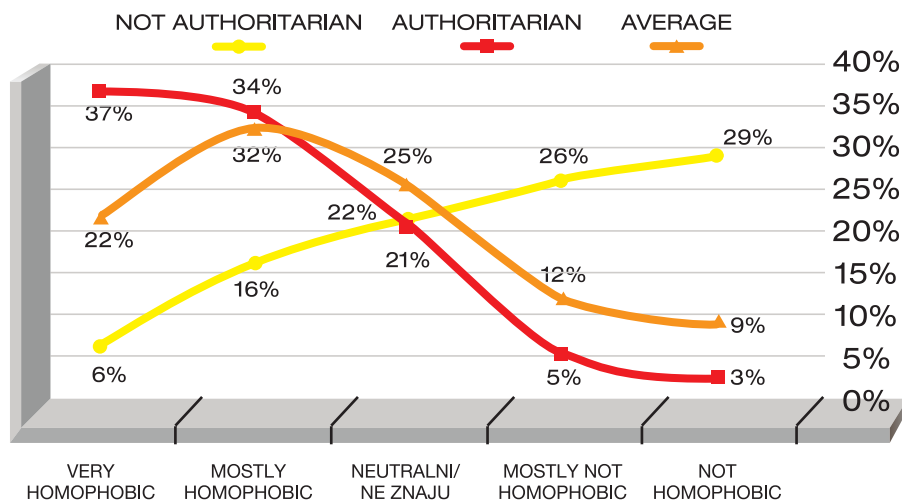
Diagram 11. Traditionalism and attitude toward homosexuality



7.2. AUTHORITARIANISM

Authoritarianism is the second tested value-based orientation⁴. The survey showed that our society is predominantly authoritarian, but things have changed in positive direction. There are now over 25% of those who are not authoritarian, while two years ago there were 18% of them, while the number of those who are authoritarian remained the same - 50%. This means that those who were previously indecisive adopted forms of behaviour which are not authoritarian.

Diagram 12. Authoritarianism and attitude toward homosexuality



⁴ Claims used in the testing of authoritarianism were: Children should be raised in strict discipline; Teachers and professors should be strict with their students; This country needs a strong and fearless leader who will be followed by the people; Respecting authority is the greatest virtue that children should learn today.

Authoritarianism was tested as orientation directed more towards the models of social orders, and not toward the domain of private, which is the matrix for the definition of traditionalism. Therefore, there are more authoritarians who are not homophobic (5% mostly not homophobic and 3% not homophobic at all) than was the case with the same value-based attitude among the traditionalists. Changes are also obvious with respect to time dimensions. Two years ago, there were only 4% of authoritarians who were not homophobic (4% mostly not homophobic and 0% not homophobic at all), and today there is twice as many. On the other hand, in the category of not authoritarian people there were many more of those who were not homophobic at all or mostly not homophobic (now there are 55% of them, and two years ago there were 44%).

7.3. CONFORMISM

Conformism⁵, as a type of behaviour and thinking that implies uncritical acceptance of attitudes and behaviours of others (especially the majority) is an element that explains not only the origin of attitudes, but also their maintenance and transmission. Conformism is especially strong when it comes to ‘traditionally’ unacceptable phenomena such as homosexuality.

Table 7. Conformism and attitude toward homosexuality 2008 and 2010 (in %)

	Nonconformist 2010	Nonconformist 2008	Conformist 2010	Conformist 2008
Very homophobic	12	13	36	51
Mostly homophobic	22	22	38	35
Neutral/doesn't know	22	36	21	10
Mostly not homophobic	24	26	3	5
Not homophobic	21	3	2	0

Just like with previous value-based attitudes, general positive trend can also be identified. Namely, the number of those who are homophobic in the category of conformists has dropped, and the number of those who are not homophobic in the category of nonconformists has increased. It must be said that the ratio between conformists and nonconformists has not significantly changed, and it is obvious that the focus shift of general public and what is happening in the general public influenced the attitudes of conformists.

7.4. NATIONALISM

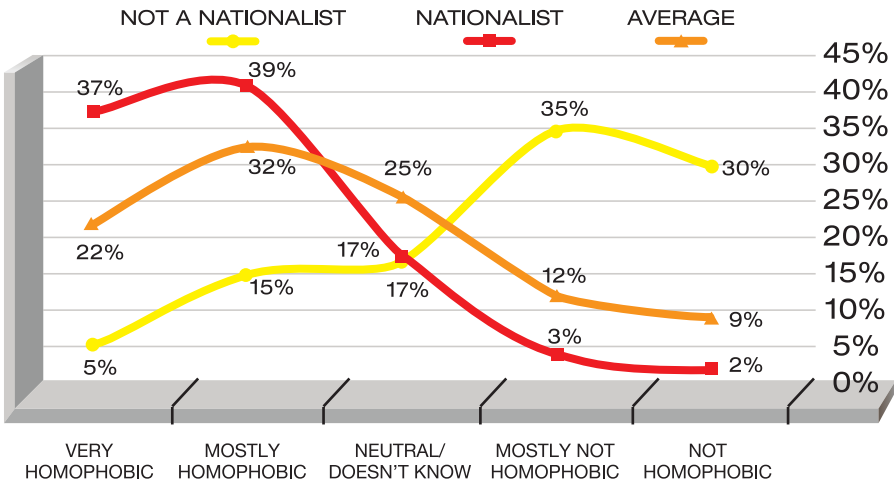
Nationalism⁶ is seen as an attitude toward nation as the reference group for identification, and since in these territories the nation is seen as a part of the ‘extended family’, the assumption was that there would be high correlation between negative attitude toward homosexuality and nationalism. Just like in the previous survey, this hypothesis was

⁵ The following claims were used to define conformism: I always behave in the manner that the society expects me to; I don't like to argue with someone about something if we have differing opinions; I try not to stand out too much from the people in my surroundings; I don't like to express my opinion if I know that it will differ from the others'.

⁶ Nationalism was tested through the following claims: I am ready to sacrifice myself for the interests of my people; One must be careful toward other nations, even when they approach us as friends; Because of the mixing of various cultures, we are at danger of losing our identity; It seems that members of my nation are better than people who belong to other nations.

proved to be correct. Nearly eight out of ten nationalists have homophobic attitudes, and only one in twenty of them is partly or completely not homophobic. On the other hand, nationalistic attitude entails opposing attitudes toward homosexuals. Two out of three respondents who were not nationalists are not homophobic, and on the other hand, one out of five is homophobic (the sum of very and mostly homophobic).

Diagram 13. Nationalism and attitude toward homosexuality



Individually defined value-based dimensions indicate the attitude toward homosexuality. However, it must be seen in which extent there is a common denominator for all attitudes and how it can be expressed. To this end, we are using the cluster analysis, which 'links' the respondents who have certain common characteristics.

Table 8. Clusters⁷ of attitudes toward homosexuality depending on value-based orientations

Cluster	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Modernist	6%	0%	28%	75%	3%	19%
Neutral/doesn't know	29%	4%	41%	20%	14%	19%
Traditionalist	65%	96%	31%	5%	83%	62%
Nonconformist	23%		18%	80%	63%	32%
Neutral/doesn't know	36%	2%	43%	16%	37%	23%
Conformist	41%	98%	40%	4%		45%
Not authoritarian	70%	1%	2%	77%	1%	26%
Neutral/doesn't know	30%	10%	31%	18%	27%	21%
Authoritarian		89%	67%	6%	72%	53%
Not a nationalist	28%	4%	40%	74%	6%	27%
Neutral/doesn't know	41%	13%	42%	21%	28%	27%
Nationalist	31%	84%	18%	5%	66%	47%
Not homophobic	6%	2%	35%	71%	3%	21%
Neutral/doesn't know	34%	19%	39%	20%	18%	25%
Homophobic	60%	79%	26%	8%	79%	55%
Cluster share	17%	31%	17%	17%	18%	

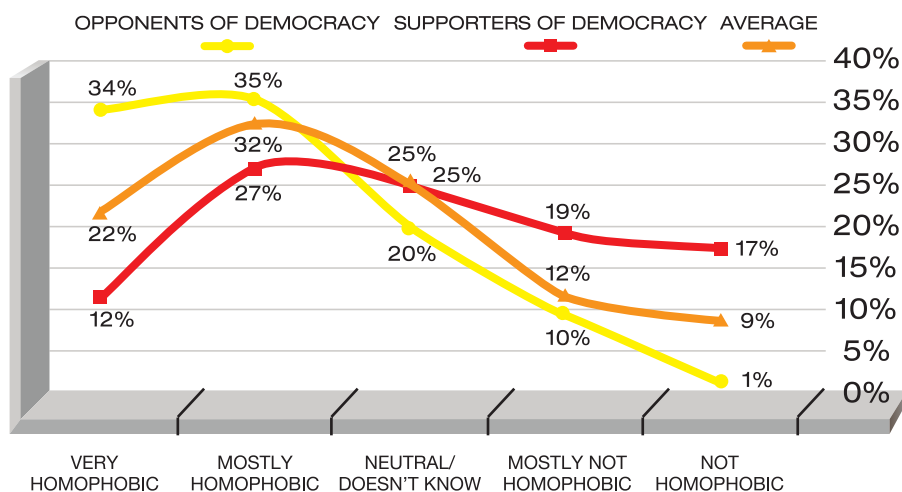
⁷ Cluster represents a group of respondents who have certain common characteristics.

Taking into account value-based orientations of the members of individual clusters, the extreme poles are represented by members of cluster 2 and cluster 4. **Cluster 2**, which makes almost one third of the population, includes all those who have negative value-based orientations taken to the extreme. These are people who are traditionalists, conformists, authoritarians, nationalists and homophobic. On the other hand, **cluster 4** is comprised of all 'bright spots' of value-based orientations, and it includes people who are modernists, nonconformists, and are not authoritarians, nationalists or homophobic. This cluster makes up for less than one fifth of the population. **Cluster 5** is very similar to the 'negative' cluster 2, only this cluster includes a difference related to conformism. It includes people who do not succumb to the majority, but rather who induce the attitudes of the majority. Negative value-based orientations also dominate in **cluster 1**, primarily with respect to traditionalism and homophobia, while nationalism and conformism are divided among all three sets within this group. What makes them a 'better' option against clusters 2 and 5 is their lack of authoritarian attitude. In **cluster 3**, in addition to the dominant authoritarians, all other value-based dimension divide participants in this group.

7.5. DEMOCRACY

Democracy⁸ is not only a political system, but in a wider sense it is a system of values in which everybody's rights are respected, which enables equality in enjoying civilization's heritage and achievements, as well as respecting the rules and procedures... Therefore, the relationship between attitude toward homosexuality and democracy is not insignificant, and it is proven that such relationship exists. Among those who have negative attitude toward homosexuality, there are many more of those who question democracy as a system and do not trust it, than in the group of tolerant ones. Thus, there are almost 70% of those among democracy opponents who are fully or mostly homophobic; on the other hand, among the supporters of democracy the number of people who are tolerant toward the phenomenon of homosexuality is far above average (the average is 21%, among democracy supporters 36%).

Diagram 14. Democracy and attitude toward homosexuality

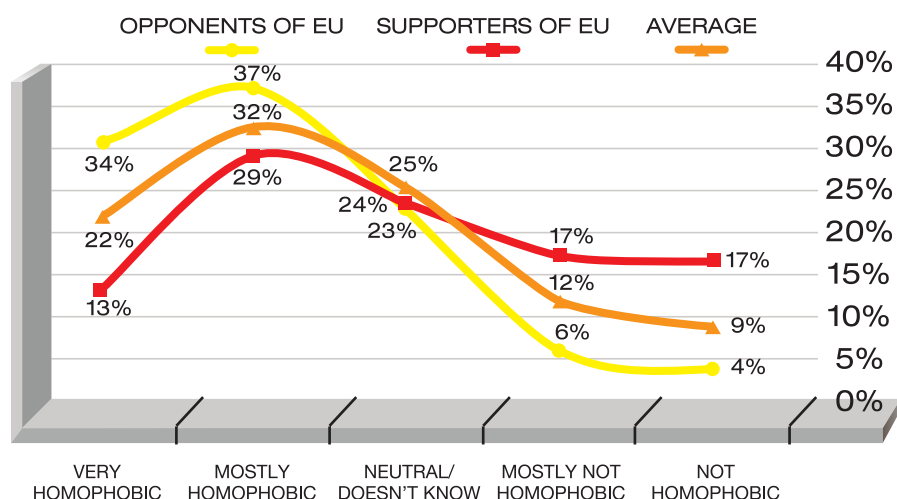


⁸ Statements used to identify an attitude toward democracy were: Democracies have not been successful in maintaining order and Democracy may have its flaw, but is better than other types of government.

7.6. ATTITUDE TOWARD EUROPEAN UNION⁹

Why and in what manner the attitude toward European Union is correlated with attitude toward homosexuality? Attitude toward EU implies a series of values related to the acceptance of modern, 'pro-European' heritage, including the conquering of a new generation of human rights. Those who believe that Serbia should join the EU and those who see the EU as a system that will lead us to normalcy, are assumed to also have a more positive attitude toward sexual minorities. This link has been confirmed in the survey, which shows that the number of those who are homophobic among the opponents of the EU is much higher than the average.

Diagram 15. EU and attitude toward homosexuality



⁹ Claims used to define an attitude toward EU were as follows: EU is a guarantor of peace, stability and development of Serbia; and By joining the EU we are at a risk of losing our national identity and culture.

8. OTHER CORRELATES OF THE ATTITUDE TOWARD HOMOSEXUALITY

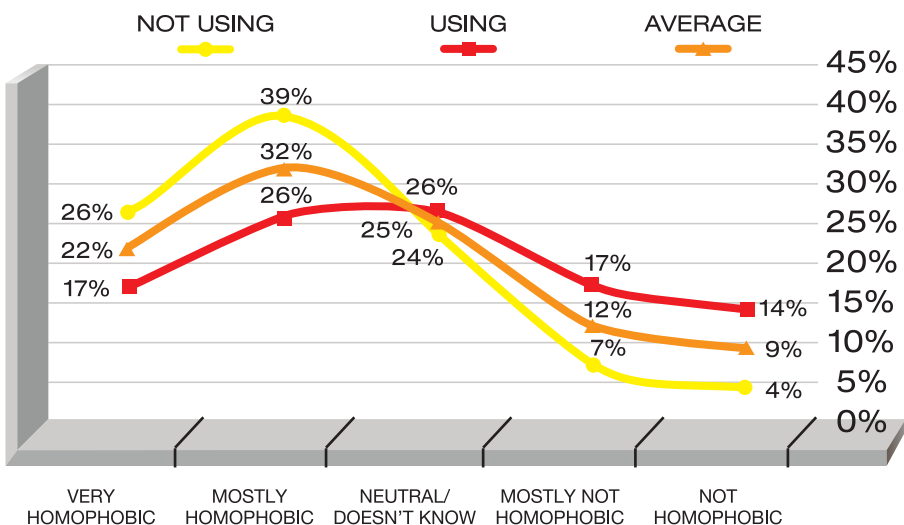
8.1. THE MEDIA

Several findings from this survey indicate a relationship between the level of information and the existence of prejudices, stereotypes and distance toward homosexuals. Those who are better informed show more interest in their surroundings, and through information they have a better chance to break the barrier of prejudices they are surrounded with. In this way, they are gaining an opportunity to hear or see that not everything is the way they imagined, the way they were taught, that there are things that differ from the framework in which they live and act.

On the other hand, information also implies the culture of being open toward what comes from the outer world, new ideas, knowledge, and ways of communication. The manner in which the new media is accepted, such as Internet, indicates a step forward with respect to the said openness not only to gain information, but also to gain it in a new way, which implies learning and changing oneself.

Therefore, it is not surprising that there is a certain statistical link between the degree of using Internet and the degree of homophobia and the rejection/acceptance of a different sexual orientation. Those who are above the average Internet users have an opportunity not to develop negative attitude toward homosexuality – among those who are not using it, the number of those with moderate or full homophobia is above the average.

DIAGRAM 16. The use of Internet and attitude toward homosexuality



In addition to the fact that less information means smaller chances to overcome negative attitudes toward homosexuals, it is significant where the information is coming from, i.e. what media is chosen as the one which supports opinions and expectations in accordance with the system of values maintained by an individual. This interrelation is such that it is difficult to ascertain what the cause and what the consequence is, but the fact that there is a compatibility of the expressed values and program policy of certain media.

There is an above average number of the homophobic people among those watching TV Pink, then among those who watch RTS (Radio-television of Serbia, national TV). The most liberal are those watching B 92, followed by those who watch TV Fox (other TV stations were not taken into account, because statistically they are not relevant to enable cross-referencing of data).

Table 9. The most frequently watched TV channels and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	Doesn't watch TV	RTS	Pink	B92	Fox	Average
Very homophobic	35	27	22	11	16	22
Mostly homophobic	20	34	42	25	27	33
Neutral/doesn't know	27	25	25	23	31	25
Mostly not homophobic	7	8	9	22	15	11
Not homophobic	12	6	3	19	11	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

As for the newspapers, the most liberal are the readers of Politika, and then the readers of Blic. The most conservative are the readers of Kurir, then Press (who are homophobic based on the number, but not so much on intensity, because there are many more of those who are 'moderately homophobic' among them), and then Večernje novosti (other daily press was not taken into account, because statistically they are not relevant to enable the cross-referencing of data).

Table 10. Favourite newspaper and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	Doesn't read newspapers	Blic	Večernje Novosti	Kurir	Press	Politika	Average
Very homophobic	24	16	29	30	19	11	22
Mostly homophobic	32	30	31	48	46	31	33
Neutral/doesn't know	26	29	22	11	25	27	25
Mostly not homophobic	10	18	10	7	7	16	12
Not homophobic	8	8	8	5	4	16	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

8.2. POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS

Political orientations, i.e. the choice of a particular political ideology and philosophy, subsume many values, viewpoints and expectations of people. Therefore, it is not surprising that the voters of some political parties are, to a smaller or larger extent, different in their attitudes toward homosexuality – in this way, they express their political viewpoint, but they also take a stand toward certain social and political issues in the manner that their political party does.

In this survey, political orientations are divided into three levels – 1) orientation during previous elections (what party the respondents voted for on previous elections), 2) current orientation (what party the respondents would vote for if the elections were now) and 3) popularity of political leaders.

The difference between former and current political orientation was taken into account because the fact that in the period after the last elections an important event happened on the political scene of Serbia, namely the splitting of Serbian Radical Party (SRS), which is the second largest opposition party and the pivoting point of the right wing. The splitting of the party entailed the splitting of the body of voters, and the survey also showed certain irregularities in this splitting, namely answers to the question why someone stayed with the radicals while the others chose the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS). Excluding one of the main lines of this division – popularity of the leaders – it was noticed, for example, that the attitude toward European Union significantly divides these two types of voters, in the sense that Progressive Party voters have more positive attitude toward the EU, whereas the SRS voters remained a group of voters that jeopardizes the Serbia's path into Euro integrations. As the result of these divisions, it is interesting to see how and whether the attitude toward human rights, including the rights of sexual minorities, is indirectly reflected on the voters of these and other political parties.

The comparison of attitudes toward homosexuality of those who were the voters of political parties two years ago (during the last parliamentary elections) and the voters of political parties today, indicates the changing attitudes within the supporters of various political parties toward this phenomenon, which is very significant both for the parties and the public in general.

Those who voted for the list 'For an European Serbia' two years ago (where the voters of the Democratic Party (DS) were dominant, but which also included the supporters of G 17 Plus, Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO), Democratic Party of Sandžak (SDP), namely a series of small parties with very different ideological provenience) were more homophobic than not, and more homophobic than the voters of the Democratic Party today. Namely, the former voters of that big coalition in 40% of the cases had negative attitude toward homosexuals, and 32% of the cases had positive attitude (see table 11). Among the voters of the Democratic Party today, this ratio is 38% and 37%, i.e. showing a slight decrease in the number of the homophobic and an increase of those with positive attitude (with the decrease in the number of those who are indecisive, see table 12.). It is difficult to fully compare these two groups, exactly because the body of voters for the list 'For a European Serbia' was somewhat different than the body of voters for the Democratic Party today, but this finding indicates a slight change that exists in the corpus of this group of voters and the fact that the body of voters for the Democratic Party is a little bit more liberal than the body that voted for the entire coalition two years ago.

Those who remained today as the body of voters for the Serbian Radical Party, are more 'radical' than the body of voters for this party was two years ago. And while in the corpus of their voters there used to be 8% of those who were tolerant toward homosexuals, such persons cannot be found among the radicals today at all! Additionally, the number of those who are homophobic increased from previous 80% to 86% today.

No significant changes occurred in the behaviour of the voters of the former DSS/NS coalition as opposed to their voters today, as well as the voters of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the parties that gathered around that party. What is interesting about the voters of the SPS today is that there are much fewer of those who do not have an opinion than was the case with the voters of their coalition two years ago.

Expectably, the voters of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) are the most liberal, today as well as before. The number of those who are liberal toward homosexuality among them is far above the average, namely the ratio is directly opposite to the ratio among the general population. It seems that the distribution of force has changed 'for the worse', since there are more of those who are homophobic in this group among the today's voters, than was the case among voters in 2008; statistically, however, this finding is not too relevant, because of the relatively small number of the supporters of this party who were included in the sample.

Very interesting is the situation among the voters of the Serbian Progressive Party, a party that did not exist as such two years ago. Those who are opposing homosexuality among the party supporters (including the supporters of the Serbian Democratic Party, SPS, SRS) are today less conservative (although still above the average), and the majority in this block consists of those who do not have a negative attitude (Table 12). It is obvious that a part of the former 'more liberal' radicals today belong to their group, which is reflected in the fact about the attitude of those who are radicals today.

Table 11. Previous political orientation and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	'For an European Serbia'	SRS	Coalition DSS-NS	Coalition SPS-PUPS-JS	LDP	Minority parties	Other parties	Average
Very homophobic	14	32	35	19	3	4	21	22
Mostly homophobic	26	42	38	49	11	46	25	33
Neutral/ doesn't know	28	18	18	26	29	39	33	25
Mostly not homophobic	18	6	6	4	26	11	4	12
Not homophobic	14	2	3	2	32	0	17	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 12. Current political orientation and attitude toward homosexuality (in%)

	DS	SRS	DSS	SPS	LDP	SNS	Average
Very homophobic	16	43	37	35	6	24	22
Mostly homophobic	22	43	34	53	17	45	33
Neutral/doesn't know	24	14	17	6	25	18	25
Mostly not homophobic	20	0	9	6	25	10	12
Not homophobic	17	0	3	0	28	4	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Regarding the trust in political leaders, it is interesting to notice that in certain cases the voters, in their attitude toward homosexuality, deviate from the official position of the leader, or do not recognize in that position what constitutes his attitude toward that issue (or that leader does not speak about it at all!). Therefore, among those whose leader is Boris Tadić, the number of those who are homophobic is below average, but this number is still above two fifths (41%). Additionally, there are as many as 30% of those who are homophobic among the supporters of the leader of the most liberal party, Čedomir Jovanović.

The most conservative are those who place the most trust in Vojislav Šešelj, then in Tomislav Nikolić and Ivica Dačić, and finally in Koštunica and Vučić.

Table 13. Trust in leaders and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	Boris Tadić	Tomislav Nikolić	Vojislav Koštunica	Ivica Dačić	Čedomir Jovanović	Aleksandar Vučić	Vojislav Šešelj	Average
Homophobic	41	73	62	75	30	55	90	54
Neutral/ doesn't know	26	17	21	25	30	25	8	25
Not homophobic	33	10	17	0	40	20	3	21
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

What can we conclude from the link between political orientations and attitudes toward homosexuality? This is not an issue because of which voters chose to support or not support certain political parties; after all, political parties and their leaders are not including this issue in the agendas of their appearances and programs. **Voter's attitude toward the phenomenon of homosexuality is more a reflection of the general system of values, in which the political orientation is only one element, than a direct link with the political orientation.** This does not absolve political parties and leaders from responsibility in the moments when they have to define their position toward this phenomenon, because the position of their voters and potential consequences of such positions will directly depend on it.

8.3. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Socio-demographic characteristics were determined in the previous survey as well, and there have been no significant changes since then. The results show that demographic characteristics are far less relevant than the social ones. Gender and age have statistically very low correlation with the attitude toward homosexuality – women are somewhat less homophobic than men (Ck 0.13), and young people somewhat less than older people (Ck 0.19).

Ethnicity also has statistically low significance (Ck 0.12) – people of Serbian ethnicity are to a certain extent more homophobic than members of ethnic minorities, but that link is less significant.

Table 14. Gender and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	Female	Male	Average
Very homophobic	18	26	22
Mostly homophobic	31	34	33
Neutral/doesn't know	26	24	25
Mostly not homophobic	14	9	12
Not homophobic	11	6	9
Total	100	100	100

Table 15. Age and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Average
Very homophobic	25	18	20	19	20	29	22
Mostly homophobic	27	28	29	30	42	35	32
Neutral/doesn't know	23	28	24	25	23	25	25
Mostly not homophobic	14	13	15	16	10	7	12
Not homophobic	11	13	11	10	6	5	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 16. Ethnicity and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	Serbs	Others	Average
Very homophobic	24	12	22
Mostly homophobic	32	33	33
Neutral/doesn't know	25	28	25
Mostly not homophobic	11	14	12
Not homophobic	8	14	9
Total	100	100	100

Among the social attributes, education shows a moderate statistical link with the attitude toward homosexuality (Ck 0.29). The most conservative are not those with the lowest level of education – those who have not or have only graduated from elementary school (because they primarily concentrate in the group of those who do not have an opinion), but those who graduated from three-year or four-year high schools. Those with high education are tolerant in a more significant degree.

Table 17. Education and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	Elementary school graduates	Graduates from schools for manual occupations	High school graduates	Vocational school or university graduates	Average
Very homophobic	31	32	19	14	22
Mostly homophobic	36	41	33	24	33
Neutral/doesn't know	26	21	25	26	25
Mostly not homophobic	4	5	14	18	12
Not homophobic	2	2	9	18	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Statistically, occupation of an individual has the strongest link with the attitude toward homosexuality in this correlate group (Ck is 0.31). The most conservative are farmers, followed by manual workers, housewives, and the most tolerant are experts, pupils and students.

Table 18. Occupation and attitude toward homosexuality (in %)

	Farmer	Housewife	No qualific. – semi-qualified worker	Qualified worker – highly-qualified worker	Technician	Clerk	Expert	Pupil, student	Average
Very homophobic	31	31	30	20	18	22	10	19	21
Mostly homophobic	45	36	34	39	29	25	2	26	32
Neutral/doesn't know	20	25	30	26	23	25	27	29	26
Mostly not homophobic	3	7	5	10	18	20	18	9	12
Not homophobic	1	2	3	5	12	9	20	16	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The survey does not show significant regional differences (Ck 0.21). The number of those with negative attitude is similar in all three regions and is within the range between 50% and 60% (Vojvodina 49%, Belgrade 50%, Central Serbia 60%), with a somewhat different intensity. In Vojvodina, in addition to the lowest number of those who are homophobic, the intensity of that homophobia is also the lowest, because there are only 14% of those who are extremely intolerant. Number wise, Belgrade is similar to Vojvodina, but the intensity of homophobic

feelings is higher, because one fourth is very or mostly homophobic. In Central Serbia there is also one fourth of those who are extremely homophobic, but only 36% are mostly homophobic.

Table 19. Regional differences (in %)

	Belgrade	Vojvodina	Central Serbia	Average
Very homophobic	26	14	24	22
Mostly homophobic	24	34	36	33
Neutral/doesn't know	22	26	27	25
Mostly not homophobic	14	15	9	12
Not homophobic	14	11	5	9
Total	100	100	100	100

Things that can be concluded about the correlates of the attitude toward homosexuality¹⁰ include the conclusion that this phenomenon is mostly linked, through cause and consequence, to the **value-based orientations** (which are the consequence of socialization, environment, in/sufficient information, reproduction of stereotypes and prejudices, and even certain psychological needs for self-confirmation of one's own identity and fear that this identity is jeopardised), and **less** to certain objective **social characteristics of an individual** or **currently defined attitudes toward different social or political phenomena**. The fact that someone is male/female, younger/older, manual worker/expert, lives in Vojvodina/Belgrade/Central Serbia only creates predispositions to adopt or reproduce certain systems of values as the systems of desirable behaviour and way of thinking; further, the fact that some people chose to consume certain media or to vote for certain political parties represents an 'outlet' of certain value-based orientations, which are compatible with ideologies, expectations and contents that are sought for and which satisfy a certain position. In this interrelationship between different social, psychological, cultural and political realities, the attitude toward homosexuality is created, which is as much rigid as it represents the opposition to the dominant systems of values, which are still traditional, patriarchal, authoritarian and conformist and which give a lot of significance to identities. Homosexuality, as something that is different, and which, at the same time, in this system of values strictly belongs to the domain of private, personal and intimate (because it contains – sexuality), is seen as a threat to the system at the very thought of its appearing in the public arena.

¹⁰ We intentionally do not discuss the reasons, but correlates, as the term that indicates the existence of a connection, because in these cases it is difficult to determine what the cause, and what the consequence is.



FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF GLBT POPULATION



CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of qualitative research with representatives of GLBT population was to identify answers to the questions related to problems that this group is facing in the social and political environment, what is their perception of the position, human rights and freedoms of GLBT persons and groups in Serbia, as well as what would be the methods and perspectives for improvements in these areas.

The research was conducted using the method of focus group discussions, in three such events that were organized in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš in May 2010.

Focus group participants were members of GLBT population who, to a different extent, revealed their sexual orientations, who are ready to talk about this more or less publicly and therefore are not the fully representative group of the population. However, for the set objectives, they are a fully competent and representative group, because answers to the questions asked include their 'exposure' to the environment and public to a certain degree, as well as their willingness to share their experiences. On the other hand, individuals with these characteristics have a relatively good understanding of the subject matter, are able to reflect on it and articulate their opinions, which are based on their experience, as well as experience of individuals similar to them, who are not ready to accept the type of interaction such as research and this kind of discussion.

All focus group participants have been 'outed', but to a different extent, which most often depend on their age, social framework in which they live and work and time since when they were outed for the first time. Thus, those with more 'out of the closet years' since the first time they confessed to their surroundings that they were of a different sexual orientation are currently outed to a bigger number of people from their surroundings. In time, the number of people who are aware of their sexual identity increases, reaching the limit where the relationship is sufficiently close and intense that there is a need for the other party to become aware of that fact. The discussions have confirmed the findings of the public opinion survey that there is a number of people who are (or are becoming) tolerant to the fact that people closest to them, primarily members of their immediate family, are of a different sexual orientation. Namely, a big number of participants were outed to their parents, sisters or brothers and/or the closest circle of friends, who reacted to this fact in different ways, but who have accepted it in time and today live with it without major problems.

All participants agree that the situation in the field of individual outing today is significantly different than it used to be, 10 or 20 years ago. Phenomenon of a different sexual orientation is becoming very much present in the public life, it stimulates people to think about it, to become acquainted with elements of that phenomenon, which, to a certain degree, leads to the change in climate and acceptance of the phenomenon and people with such characteristics to a greater extent than before. However, it has also been concluded that stronger the presence of sexual orientation minority topics and struggle for the rights of GLBT people are, at the same time, the stronger reactions 'on the other side' are, i.e. on the side of opponents and adversaries of the rights of such persons.

Visibility of sexual minorities and their personalization in the public space are, for the participants, the main quality toward the achievement of GLBT population rights that exists today, and was missing until recently. For the participants this is an important and necessary step toward the systemic accomplishment of GLBT persons' rights, and possibility for them to organise and in that manner realise all other rights. There are many more places today where GLBT population can gather, it is 'being talked about', it is easier for people to accept persons of a different orientation, a

specific GLBT sub-culture is being created, but the most important change has not happened yet, and that is institutional and political acceptance, equalization and protection of rights of this minority group along with the majority rights.

Although they think there are **certain shifts in terms of social acceptability of sexual diversity in Serbia**, which is primarily the result of general modernisation and opening of the society and state, but **on the level of political system and institutionalized guaranteeing of human rights, GLBT population thinks that Serbia is still far away from the necessary standards**. Those areas in which such change has occurred are the result of spontaneous and uncontrolled courses of social development, and not systematic actions of those actors who hold instruments to change the state of affairs in their hands. This primarily relates to the state – namely, there is a consensus that even these actions that the state is making in the field of promoting and improving human rights, it is doing under external pressure, and not on the basis of understanding authentic needs of those groups who need such rights and the benefits the society will have as the result.

For this reason, **there is no trust in the state** as a whole, or in any individual institution, as in entities that want to help members of GLBT population to fully achieve their rights. However, despite this there is an awareness that the time of confrontation with the state and withdrawing into avant-garde circles of struggle that, without a partner, has no chance of success, has passed, and that it is necessary to work with those who can and must help, recognise their interests and motives, and build partnerships on rational grounds. In addition to adopting laws and changing the institutional framework toward full equality of all citizens, regardless of their sexual orientation, they believe that the primary task of the state is to **change the awareness** of its citizens (which the participants see as one of the most important preconditions for the improvement of their rights), primarily through information and affirmative messages, but also through changes in educational system, which is supposed to prepare young generations to fully accept diversity.

It is the similar case with **political parties**. There is no identified trust in any individual party as a party that has an intention to ‘run afoul of’ the majority public opinion and to begin openly advocating the rights of sexual minorities, but the dominant opinion is that political parties are evasive and ambiguous with respect to the rights of GLBT population. However, the perception of political parties through the relationship of state institutions toward the GLBT issue is interesting, namely predominant is opinion/expectation that once the parties enter institutions, they should work in the interest of all citizens, including GLBT persons, regardless of their political ideologies.

There is a trust in civil sector, primarily in **non-governmental organisations**, and only they are currently seen as serious advocates of minority rights. There is a contradictory attitude toward the **media** – on one hand, it is believed that the media contribute to the improvement of social climate, because they serve as a ‘window to the world’, through which people in Serbia can see that differences actually exist and that they do not always pose a danger. On the other hand, however, it is believed that the media, through their sensationalist reporting, can additionally stigmatize GLBT population, thus making a step backward.

For the change of social surroundings, in the words of individual participants, also important is the **attitude of representatives of GLBT population itself** – the more open they are to talk about themselves, the more exposed they are, the more persons from this population can be seen among public personalities, the more acceptance, respect and tolerance there will be.

International community is seen as a very important partner in the attempts to change the position of GLBT population, primarily their representatives who act in

the country and who have the real understanding and instruments to help both this population and the state to make improvements.

Representatives of GLBT population chose the surroundings, in which they move, adapt it to themselves and adapt themselves to it, and therefore discrimination in interpersonal relationships exists to a small degree or does not exist at all. However, in situations when they cannot choose their surroundings and are 'forced' to move in it, **discrimination exists, and exists in a significant degree**. It primarily concerns the work environment. In all three focus groups, there was at least one personal and several indirect experiences of discrimination at work that was the result of different sexual orientation, whether it was latent or direct and overt. What gives even more reasons for concern is the reaction of those who are discriminated against, which often implies withdrawal from such surroundings, even at the expense of losing a job. There is awareness that Anti-Discrimination Law is in effect, but it is obviously necessary to work much more on its implementation, especially with those who are supposed to be applying that law.

A number of participants had personal experience with violence as the result of them being GLBT persons. Other focus group participants did not have direct experience, but they know about numerous examples of violence from their surroundings – reactions most often included withdrawal, accepting the situation, etc. However, although not everyone has experienced physical violence, most of them have experienced verbal violence, name calling, mocking, threats, and the reaction would be withdrawal or 'returning the compliment'. It is noticeable **that there is no trust in the judicial system, i.e. assurance that cases of violence could be processed in the correct way**, as well as any trust in institutions and the system in general.

All focused groups expressed the need for **better and more efficient self-assembly of GLBT population**, through organisation, coordination of activities and mutual solidarity and assistance.

The Pride Parade, as the key event with which the general public mostly associates sexual diversity in Serbia, was also a discussion topic in focus groups. There is no dilemma as to the fact that such event is necessary in Serbia, but there are different opinions on how to really use this event in the correct way, and avoid its turning into its opposite. **Better cooperation with the state**, as well as **better mutual organisation and coordination of GLBT organisations** are two preconditions for good preparation of the future Parade, which must commence in time, through serious lobbying and advocating with all possible partners. The Parade should not be the goal in itself, in participants' opinion, and should not be held at all costs, but it must be well prepared, which means that it must be completely safe in order to fulfil its purpose.

Expectably, there were certain differences in perceptions and objective circumstances among the groups held in Belgrade, Niš and Novi Sad. These differences are primarily related to the fact that in Niš, unlike Belgrade and Novi Sad, there is not a single organisation that advocates the rights of GLBT population, or any place where this community can gather. For this reason, the participants believe that they are in a worse position than their friends in Belgrade and Novi Sad. Additionally, they think that their surroundings is more conservative and less favourable for the promotion of GLBT rights because, in their words, in addition to them and a few others, they do not know about anyone else being 'outed' in Niš.

As opposed to this, in Belgrade, and even in Novi Sad, the participants identify a higher degree of freedom 'to be what they are' (even more so in Novi Sad), but it speaks more about the community itself than about the surroundings, which is no better than in other cities, only in them the community reacts by withdrawing into their own circles more so than in Belgrade.



RESEARCH ON ATTITUDE TOWARD GLBT PERSONS IN WORK ENVIRONMENT

The purpose of this part of the research project was to determine attitudes of employers and managers in different types of work organisations toward people of a minority sexual orientation, with emphasis on issues related to existing or potential discrimination.

The research was conducted in 20 entities with different status – in private companies (involved in production, service or trade activities), public companies and public institutions and services (high schools, public broadcasting companies, and judicial institutions) during the May 2010. Out of 20 entities, 12 are located in Belgrade, five in Niš and three in Novi Sad. The smallest number of employees in surveyed companies is 10, and the highest 476. Most belong to the category of medium sized companies, having between 20 and 100 employees.

The research was conducted by the depth interviews with owners/directors/managers and other officials.

Interviews with representatives of this target group were designed as a 'funnel', i.e. the conversations were conducted from general toward individual and more concrete topics. At the beginning, it was necessary to become familiar with general attitude of the respondent toward the phenomenon of different sexual orientation, indicated through homosexuality, as the most recognisable manifestation of this phenomenon.

Representatives of entrepreneurial and managerial elite in Serbia significantly differ from one another in their general attitude toward homosexuality – differences between them are consistent with differences that exist in the general public. The fact that someone belongs to this social class does not condition their attitude toward of this phenomenon, which is confirmed by the finding from the public opinion survey according to which value based orientations (and not, for example, socio-demographic characteristics) are the main correlate of the attitude toward the phenomenon of homosexuality. However, what majority of the respondents have in common is the fact that they have an established awareness on social acceptance of this phenomenon, regardless of their personal attitude toward homosexuals. In accordance with this, even when their personal attitude is negative, they provide obvious socially acceptable answers that indicate acceptance of the existence of homosexuality on a wider social level, and in the level of work environment. Therefore, the range of answers to the question on general attitude toward homosexuality spans from it being a 'deviant behaviour' for them, to it being a completely acceptable phenomenon that the persons who have different sexual orientation will have full support from them as employers and managers. These differences in general attitude 'balance out' when the questions addressed the way they would behave toward GLBT persons as their employees, when all of them answered that this fact would not bother them. It can be said that this is also the main conclusion of this part of the research, because no respondent explicitly said that they were bothered by such phenomenon and such persons in the work place, for as long as they do their work skillfully and professionally. **All respondents emphasize that professionalism at work and the profile of a given person are what is important, and that sexual orientation does not and would not affect their attitude toward such person as an employee.**

These findings should be taken with some reserve, for several reasons. Firstly, it is very unlikely that everyone who says that homosexuality is a 'deviant behaviour' for them, only a few minutes afterwards state that they would not mind sharing their workplace with such person¹¹. Further, it was noticed that individual interviewees in the formal part of the interview give one type of answers, and afterwards they give 'off the record' comments that are not consistent with previously given answers¹². All this indicates that the level of

¹¹ It is very likely that there are those who create this type of distance, but the question is whether all those who have an extremely negative approach toward the phenomenon can react or mediate in an adequate way in extreme situations, as, for example, in case of discrimination of a certain group of employees against others because of their sexual orientation.

¹² The best illustration of this fact, which also indicates a lack of understanding of the essence of human rights and freedom to express one's identity and distinctiveness, is reflected in the answer 'and why would someone publicly disclose at work that they are a homosexual, when they know how people react! It is their private thing and what is there to talk about, work is work, they should talk about it to their friends'.

providing socially acceptable answers within this group of interviewees is much higher than usual. This is especially obvious when the questions addressed their reaction to discrimination that would happen in their companies. All interviewees are aware of the responsibility they have as company managers or owners, therefore they claim that they would react to any type of discrimination by disabling or sanctioning it. Contradictions will become clearer after analysing answers to the questions by topic of the discussion:

All respondents gave answers to that part of the questionnaire that hypothetically treated situations with 'outed' GLBT persons, because none of them has had experiences with specific situations and persons in their work environment. They all claimed that they do not know whether there are GLBT persons among their personnel or, if there are, they are not publicly exposed on the basis of their sexual orientations.

When asked how they would behave toward a GLBT person at work, most of the respondents think that they would behave just like toward all other employees, namely that the fact of a different sexual orientation would not affect their professional relationship toward that person. A smaller number of them said that they 'do not know how they would behave', because they have not had such persons in their surroundings. This group of interviewees chose the same answer to similar questions throughout the interview, which can also indicate that these people honestly do not think about this topic, but also a kind of mimicry which masks openly negative attitudes of those who do not want to provide completely honest answers, but also do not want to go 'against themselves'.

Although most managers have the opinion that other employees in their companies/institutions would not have a problem to work with a GLBT person either, this answer is even less reliable than the answer about their personal attitude. In this case, most of them are not sure and do not know what the reactions of other employees would be, while some of them think that there would be an overt resistance 'among older colleagues and those with less education'. Most of them admit that there would be 'talking behind one's back', because that is the general attitude toward this phenomenon in our society, but that they would not react to such situations, just like they would not react to gossip about someone because 'they are badly dressed'.

Nobody said openly that it would be a problem for them to hire a GLBT person who would let them know about this fact during, for example, a job interview, for as long as that person meets the criteria for the work position he/she is applying for. At this point everybody emphasized that it is only 'professionalism and approach to the work' that they find important.

One type of institutions does not follow this rule, and these are educational institutions. The research was conducted in two high schools (in Niš and Belgrade), and in these cases the directors emphasized that they are in a 'specific' position, because they would need to take into account the fact that parents of children who attend their schools would have something against the hiring of GLBT persons in these schools! Both interviewees believe that they would face resistance of some parents, but they don't know how they would react in these situations, namely whether they would hire a homosexual in their school despite this. Specific answers were avoided by providing general statements that they would need 'to consult specialised services, someone at the ministry', etc.

All respondents claimed that they would prevent any type of discrimination in their companies. However, detailed explanations of this answers already indicated several important issues. First, the understanding of discrimination itself – a number of respondents are not sure what types of discrimination there are, for some of them it means being ignored at work, while for others 'only' physical conflict with those who have different opinion constitutes discrimination. In line with this, the answers related to specific reactions to discrimination varied. Further, the answers related to discrimination against GLBT persons already indicate some typical embedded prejudices, which at the end question the very reaction to discrimination, making it meaningless.

A number of them would 'react in line with the regulations', and this group knows the least about discrimination at workplace, because they are not sure what these regulations are, nor what they entail. All they know is that they should react, namely that discrimination is undesirable. The other group would 'verbally warn and talk to those who create problems', and in case this does not change anything, they would consult the regulations. Some would 'investigate the entire situation', namely determine whether those persons complaining about discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation provoked those who 'discriminate' with their behaviour or appearance. This is a typical misconception that discrimination is often provoked and that those who are discriminated against are often 'guilty', as well as the misconception that GLBT persons always look and behave in the manner that is not typical, that they are too overt, jeopardise heterosexuality of others, etc. It is on examples like these that we can see the actual state of affairs, namely recognise the fact that such persons have negative attitude themselves, and even more often examples like these show the typical ignorance and misunderstanding of the essence of this phenomenon.

The difficulties in answering the questions about how they would react in case of discrimination could partly be attributed to a lack of knowledge about regulations or lack of regulations themselves. Most companies do not have any internal policy about employee conduct, and those that have such a policy, do not mention discrimination in it. These policies are primarily general in nature (employee handbooks or policies, statute, employee code of conduct, and it is only public companies and state institutions that have them, not private companies). Generally accepted excuse is that they apply provisions of other acts (Labour Law, collective agreements...), and five out of twenty interviewees also mentioned the Anti-Discrimination Law, although they have not been in a situation to act against it thus far¹³.

Director of certain transport company (which has an internal code of conduct for employees) said that he was planning to introduce elaborated provisions of that Law into the Code, after the Law on Mobbing has been adopted, and on that occasion to also introduce terms of discrimination on all grounds, including sexual.

The impression we gained from the interviews is that not much is being invested into education of employees, apart from education of professional nature concerning the business activity of the company. The only type of education, in addition to the professional one, organized by a number of companies, is education in the field of communication skills, public appearance and PR. Only one company sent their employees to training in the field of human rights that specifically addressed gender equality. In addition to this, no special attention is dedicated to human resources (HR) either, because there are no special departments for this area and companies are involved in it sporadically, within the general legal and personnel services in public companies, while in private companies it is the owner who is dealing with these issues or only one additional person for whom this is the second or third activity in their job descriptions. Excuses for not investing more into education and for the fact that there are no separate HR departments or persons include poor financial situation and inability to invest into this area, and not the lack of willingness.

Everything that can be drawn as a conclusion from this part of the research is, to a large extent, saturated with very obvious giving of desirable answers in the direction in which this group of respondents knows that at least it is not 'polite' to speak negatively about something that someone else wants to discuss. The second important conclusion is that lack of knowledge about this 'subject' is also very significant, namely, not much attention is dedicated to the manifestation and regulation of discrimination at workplace in general. Although everybody claims that no such cases have happened so far, situations in which discrimination would appear carry the risk of not knowing how to react or that reactions would be inadequate and more in accordance with personal feelings and attitude toward this phenomenon and GLBT persons, than in accordance with certain written procedures.

¹³ This is probably because none of our respondents would answer to the question whether there had been any type of discrimination in their companies and how such cases had been resolved. This was expected, because the owners or managers have the need to emphasize that what they are managing is good, that there are no bad interpersonal relationships, therefore certain issues were certainly not disclosed.

GSA WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS
GRATITUDE TO ALL WHO HELPED WITH
EXECUTION OF SURVEYS, PARTICULARLY:

GLBT PERSONS,
PARTICIPANTS OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

TOP AND MIDDLE MANGEMENT OF
COMPANIES WHO PARTICIPATED IN SURVEYS

GSA BRANCH IN NOVI SAD

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IN NIŠ



PREJUDICES ARE WHAT FOOLS USE FOR REASON

VOLTAIRE (1694-1778)
One of the greatest
of all French writers
and philosophers.



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