

LGBTIQ  
EMPLOYMENT  
EQUALITY  
INDEX

# **2018 Annual Report of Findings**

**September 2018**

**a product of**

**the HeadHunter®**

## Executive Summary

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

Although when first initiating this idea in 2016, there were many naysayers, claiming that the Albanian private sector would not bother to participate and that the Albanian public would not care, thanks to our own convictions on the right to employment for all citizens, as well as a number of international actors in the country, we persevered. We are firm in our conviction that all Albanian citizens—regardless of any quality or status—have something to contribute to the country and they have the right to employment.

The end results surprised even us: a total of **71** companies participated in the first annual process and a few actually demonstrated concrete policies and measures in place to protect the rights and uphold the dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees. The number further increased the second year, by reaching a total of **109** participating Companies.

This year, the results of the third annual LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index in Albania were even more impressive. The participation was increased considerably and **149** companies operating in Albania answered to the questionnaires, which show a significant increase of awareness level from business environment in relation to the measures in place to protect the rights and uphold minorities and specifically, LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees.

Awardees and some other participating companies from the last year, achieved higher scores in the present year's Index and have already taken concrete measures to protect LGBTIQ Albanians. They set an admirable example for other employers in the country to follow, by recognizing that upholding the rights of any group benefits all of the society.

The increasing trend of participation and rates makes us believe that the **40** new companies joining this year's LGBTIQ Index, will show improvements and achieve higher rating in the next year's Index. We are humbled that they agreed to participate in our Index and we are inspired by their commitment.

### *Key Findings and Recommendations*

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

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

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

### **The 2018 Rated Companies**

Following the in-depth process conducted in July and August, 2018, The Headhunter Group tabulated the results for each of the **149** companies which participated and a total of **7 (seven)** companies achieved a rating.

#### ***Interpretation of the Ratings.***

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

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

This Ranking is intended to provide encouragements and provide the opportunity to the Headhunter Group to offer its services in terms of technical assistance, advice and training.

## About the LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index

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

The Headhunter Group, the largest recruitment and human resource company in Albania and one of the largest in the Balkans, decided in 2016 to launch such an Index as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and Workplace Diversity. The Group has an intrinsic commitment to see equal employment opportunities extended to all citizens. The Group is also well-placed to create and launch such an Index, as it has the credibility within the private sector to act as a judge of human resource policies.

Each year, the Headhunter Group presents awards to the companies which have been exemplary in protecting the rights and upholding the dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees.

The Headhunter Group's LGBTIQ Employment Index measures the policies and practices of companies operating in Albania towards LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees. The Headhunter Group staff interview directors and verify policies and practices of both international and Albanian companies each year.

Information on the Index can be accessed at: <http://www.hh.al/sq-al/lgbtq-index>

The LGBTIQ Employment Equality Index was created by The Headhunter Group and is an important expression of its corporate social responsibility efforts. The Headhunter Group is active in supporting a number of issues related to employment for youth, women and girls, and minorities. In 2015, it founded RINI Albania to carry out charitable activities in favor of youth employment and workplace diversity. The Headhunter Group has conducted a number of activities for minorities-focused projects and organizations, including LGBTIQ Equality Index, Antidiscrimination Law awareness workshops for job-seekers, employees and employers, and Employer's Antidiscrimination Manual implementation, etc. The annual Indexes are conducted by a team of experts in the Human Resources and Humanistic fields, within The Headhunter Group.

## Methodology

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

### *Company Self-Selection*

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

sector as a whole. This year, for the first time, also Public Institutions and NGO-s were included, in order to have a wider basis for comparison amongst employing organizations in Albania.

***On-Site Rating Process***

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

***Rating Issuance***

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

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

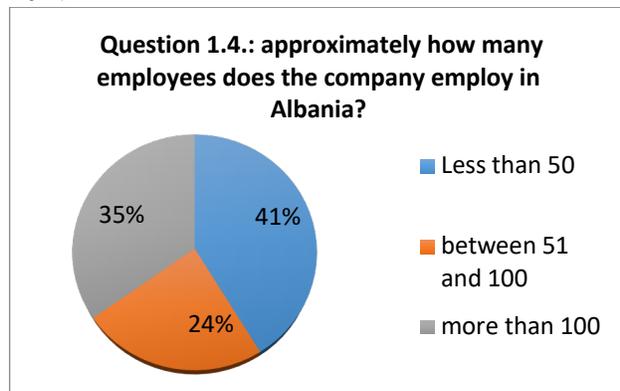
**Key Findings and Analysis**

This section contains some key findings from the **149** company ratings. They are presented here to show important trends and gain insights into the status of Albania’s private sector, mainly, in upholding the rights and dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees.

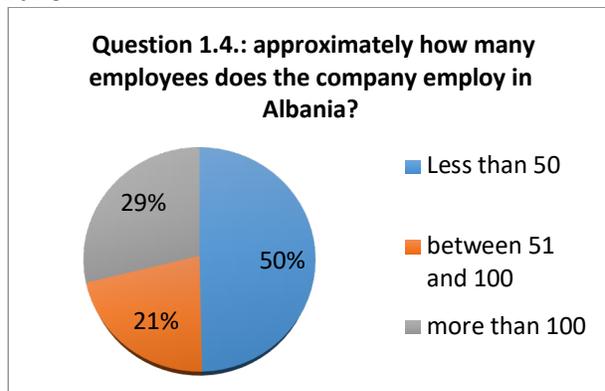
**Section I: Basic Information for Companies**

The staff of The Headhunter Group conducted ratings on a total of **149** companies, versus **109** companies participating in the previous year. The participation was increased with **37%**.

**Chart 1: Number of Employees**  
2017



2018



As shown in *Chart 1 – 2018*, the majority of companies which participated in this year’s rating were relatively large, well-established companies. **29%** of those companies had more than 100 employees and **21%** had between 51 and 100 employees.

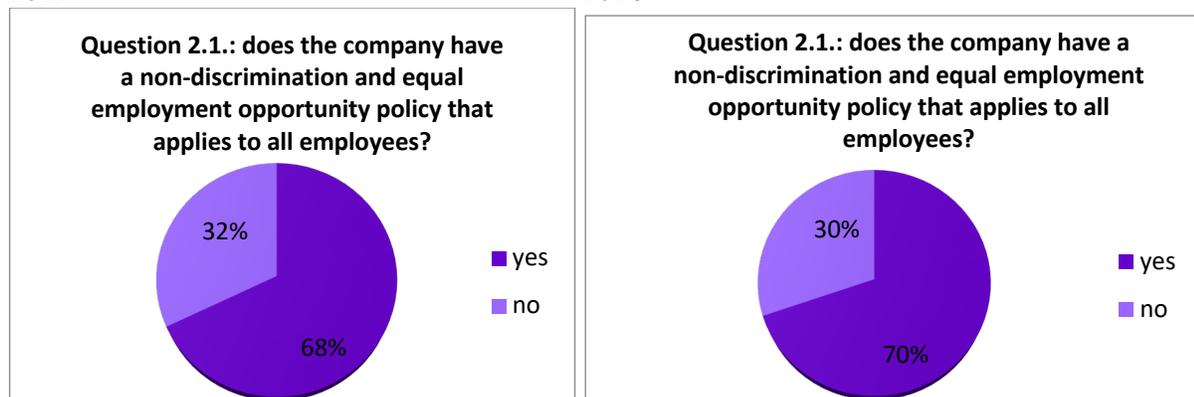
This year, the aim was to include more companies of smaller size, in order to have more inclusive results representing at a wide level Albanian organizations, so **50%** of companies included had less than 50 employees, which is a considerable increase of this category compared to the **41%** of the previous year, as shown in the *Chart 1- 2017*. This increase is important as small size companies need to be on focus, since generally they have less developed policies and procedures in place, especially on this topics, and there is much work for improvement to be made.

Also, companies participating this year in the rating came from a wide range of industries but the most common were from Hospitality **24%**, Food&Beverage **11%** and Retail **9%**.

## Section II: Policies and Procedures

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

**Chart 2: Non-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy:**  
2017

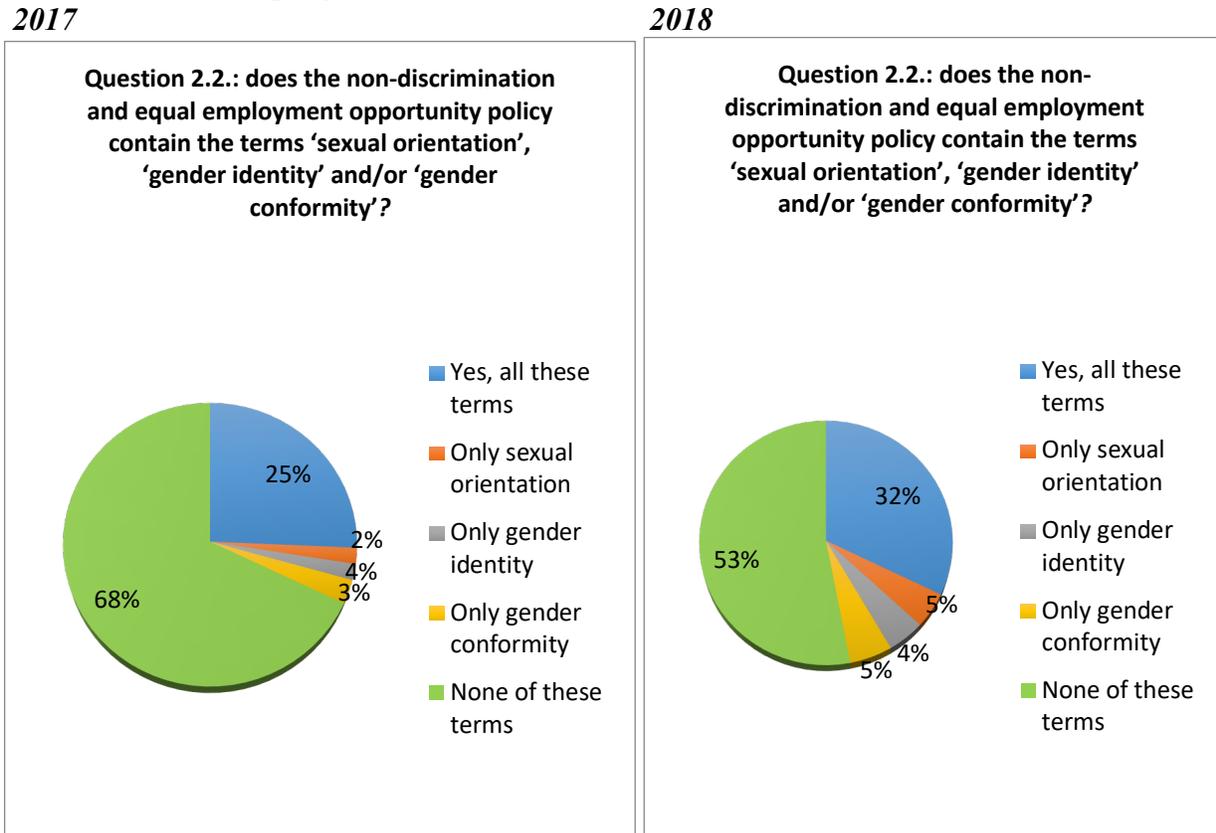


**70%** of companies state that currently have a policy for non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all employees. Although there is a progress compared to the results of **68%** from last year, as shown in the *Chart 2 – 2017*, as this question is not specifically for LGBTIQ persons but for all persons, it shows that there is still tremendous room for improvement in building a culture of non-discrimination, especially in companies newly joining this year. The results for this question also showed why **30%** of the companies out of the 149 which participated, did not achieve a rating.

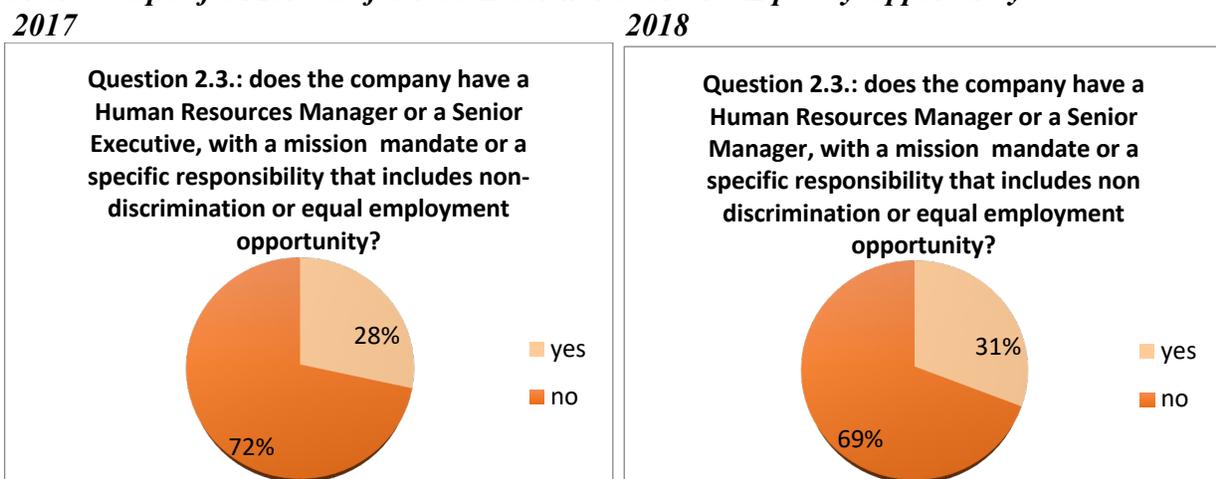
In *Chart 3 – 2018 below*, companies were asked if the policy is specific to LGBTIQ and related status. **32%** of companies had policies which contained language related to LGBTIQ and related status, again highlighting the fact that employment policies as yet do not sufficiently protect LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees. However, there it has been an increase compared to the previous year’s results where only **25%** of companies, as shown in the *Chart 3- 2017*, had in place policies which contained language related to LGBTIQ, which shows a tendency from

Albanian companies towards equal treatment and non-discrimination to minorities, including LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees.

**Chart 3: LGBTIQ Specific Mentions in Non-Discrimination Policies**



**Chart 4: Specific Mandate for Non-Discrimination and Equality Opportunity**



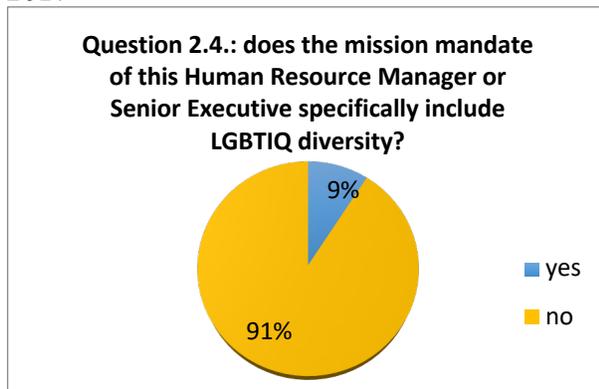
As noted in **Chart 4 – 2018**, only **31%** of companies rated have a specific manager (usually a human resources manager or director) who has a specific mandate to ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunity for staff. Although this year’s results are slightly higher compared to



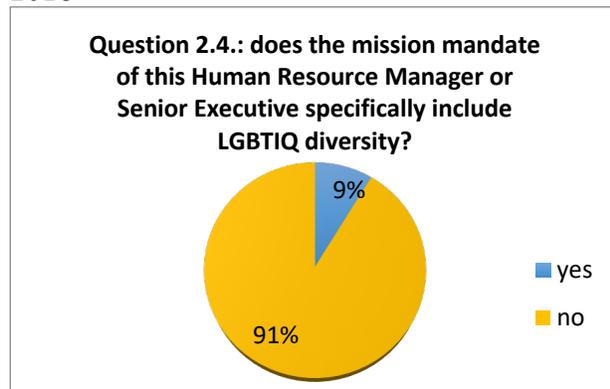
those of the previous year, **28%**, as indicated in the *Chart 4 – 2017*, this again highlights the fact that—not only do companies not have policies in place—they also lack the human resource skills and mandates to put those policies into place. Furthermore, without having staff specifically charged with this issue, it is assumed that many of these companies lack a champion for these rights within the management structure.

*Chart 5 - 2018* below, reinforces this point, showing that only **9%** of companies had a staff member with specific mandates to include LGBTIQ persons in the company’s human resource structure and policies. The results are the same with those of the previous year shown in the *Chart 5 – 2017*.

**Chart 5: Specific LGBTIQ Mention in the Mandate**  
2017

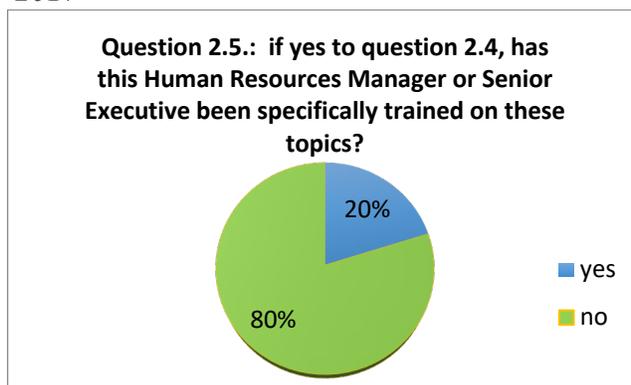


2018

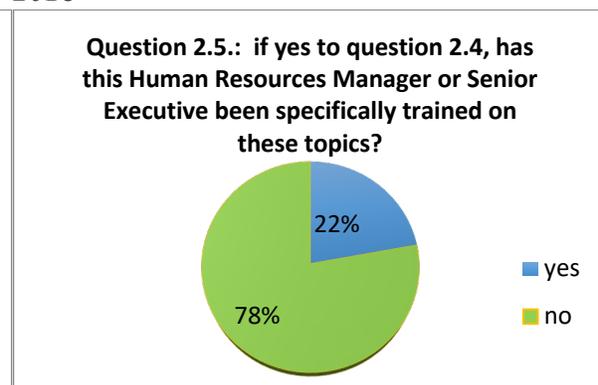


*Chart 6 - 2018* below describes the extent to which companies actually train their human resource managers or other directors on non-discrimination and equal opportunity and only **22%** reported that they do. The Headhunter Group finds this statistic troubling and there is just a slight increase compared to the previous year when the result was **20%** as shown in the *Chart 6 – 2017* below. Even though 68% of companies reported having such policies (see *Chart 2* above), only 20% actually train their management on implementing such policies. This leads one to believe that those policies in companies without trained management are likely unenforced or weakly enforced at best.

**Chart 6: Training for Human Resources and Management**  
2017



2018



In **Chart 7 - 2018** below, the Index asked if the company provides training on non-discrimination and equal opportunity to other managers, supervisors and team leaders and the results show that only **27%** of companies offer such training. This is a good indicator of improvement, considering that last year the rate was of **22%**, **Chart 7 – 2017**.

**Chart 7: Training for other managers**  
2017

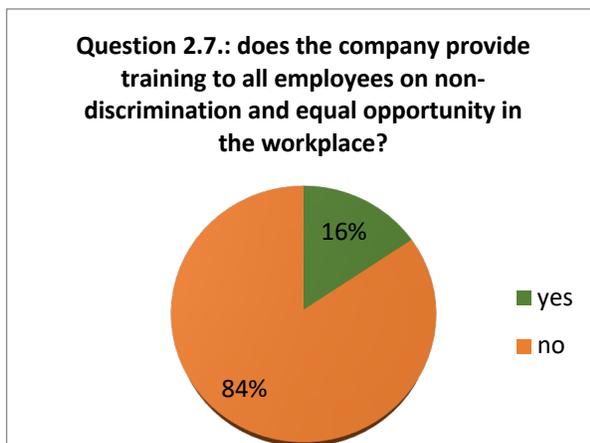


2018

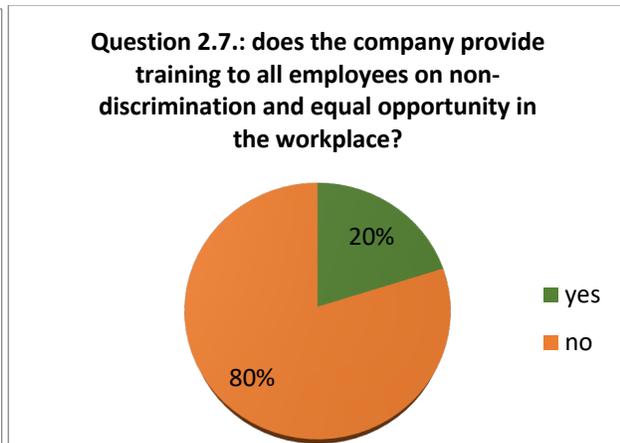


In **Chart 8 - 2018** below, the Index asked if the company provides training on non-discrimination and equal opportunity to all employees. This is important as it relates to the working culture and atmosphere in the company. Only **20%** of companies offer such training, still is an improvement compared to the previous year's results of **16%**, as appears in the **Chart 8 – 2017**.

**Chart 8: Trainings for all Employees**  
2017

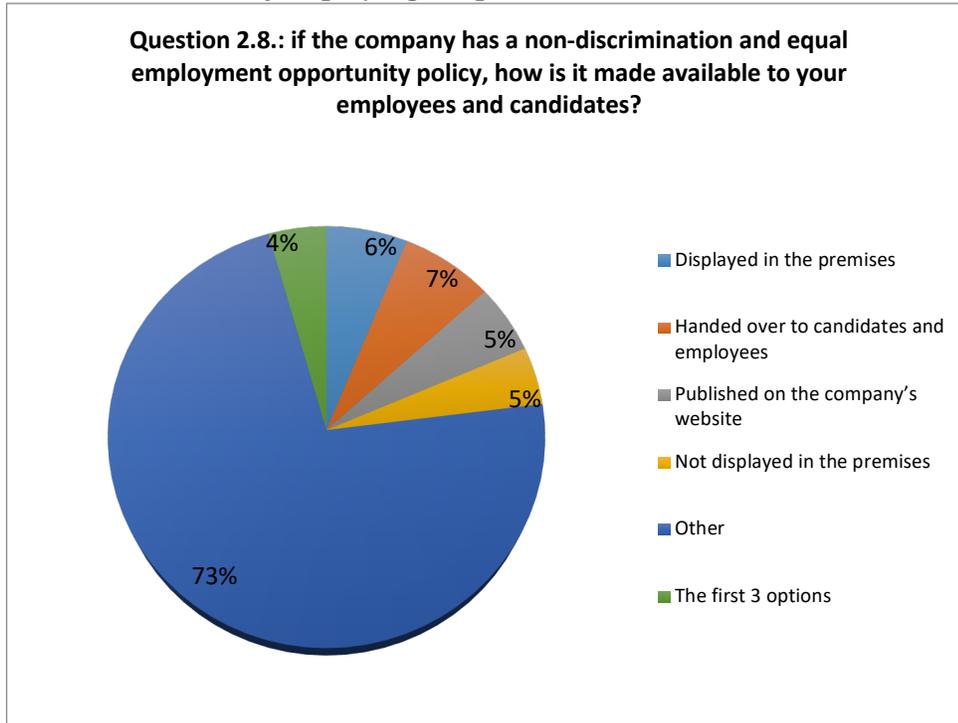


2018

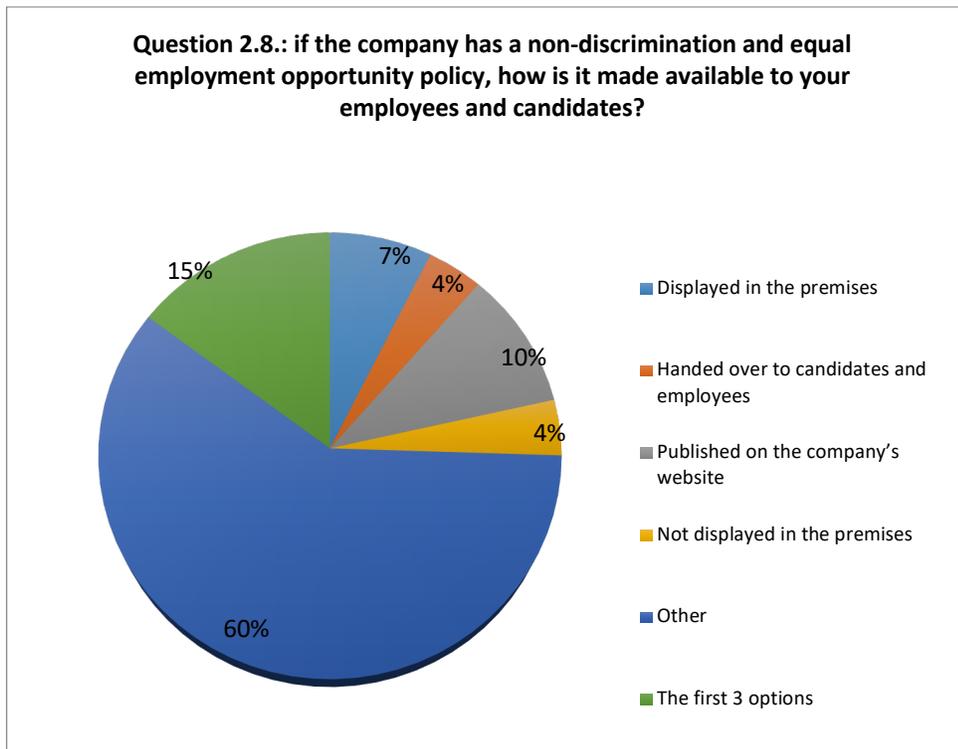


For those companies which do have a non-discrimination and equal opportunity policy, the Index asks about the accessibility and dissemination of the policy to its job-seekers and employees. In **Chart 9 - 2018** below, companies largely displayed their policies publically and compared to the previous year, all specified forms of display record an increase, as obvious from the collation with the **Chart 9 - 2017**. Whatsoever, further efforts could be made to increase awareness on them among the staff and job seekers.

**Chart 9: Methods of displaying the policies - 2017**



**Chart 9: Methods of displaying the policies - 2018**

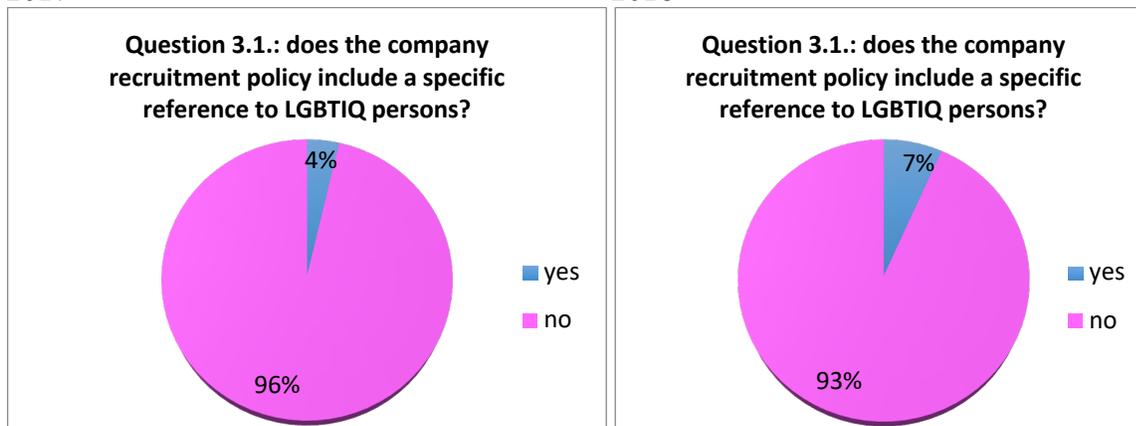


### Section III: Policies for Recruitment and Employee Retention

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

In *Chart 10 - 2018* below, only 7% of companies reported that they have a specific mention for LGBTIQ job-seekers in their recruitment policies. Although last year's results were lower, specifically 4%, as per *Chart 10 – 2017*, the percentage is still low and this is important to note because non-discrimination at the stage of recruitment is critical (a) to make LGBTIQ job-seekers encouraged to apply at that company for a job; (b) let non-LGBTIQ job-seekers know from the beginning that they will be expected to work in an inclusive atmosphere; and, (c) set the tone for hiring managers that discrimination is not tolerated. It also provides some basis for recourse if an LGBTIQ job-seeker feels that they have been discriminated against during the recruitment process.

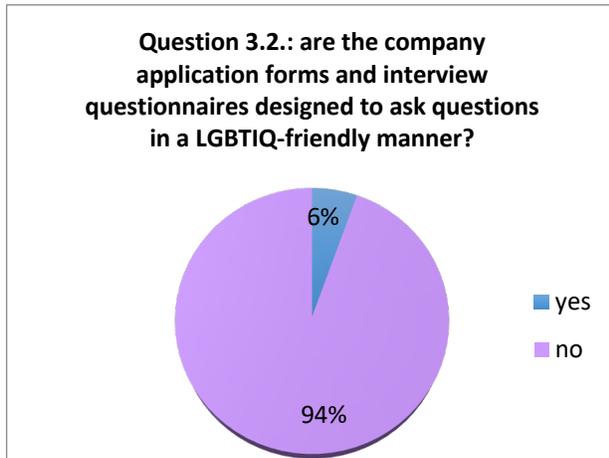
**Chart 10: LGBTIQ Mention in the Recruitment Policy**  
2017 2018



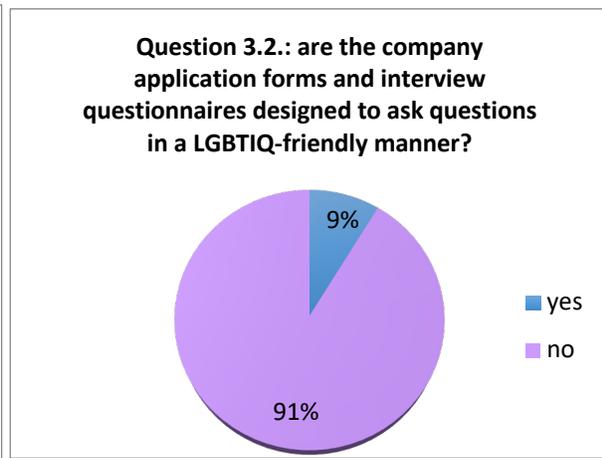
Only 9% of companies, as shown in *Chart 11 - 2018* below, have application forms and interview questions which are LGBTIQ-friendly. Doing so is a much more nuanced form of respecting the rights and upholding the dignity of LGBTIQ job-seekers but many companies lack the skills to do so. This might include types of questions which do not force a gender-based answer or questions which are not invasive towards the lifestyle of the job-seeker. These also guarantee that the companies are not asking LGBTIQ job-seekers about their sexual orientation or gender identity through indirect means. The results have a slight increase from the previous year, where this element had 6%, as can be noticed in the *Chart 11 – 2017*.



**Chart 11: Application Forms  
2017**



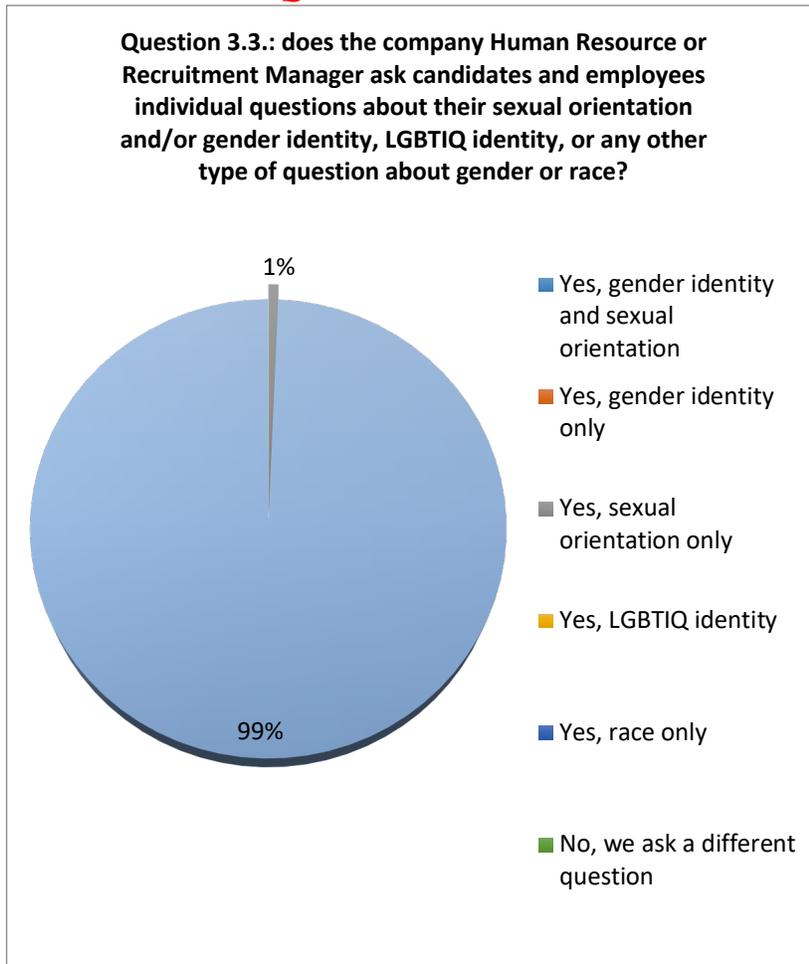
**2018**



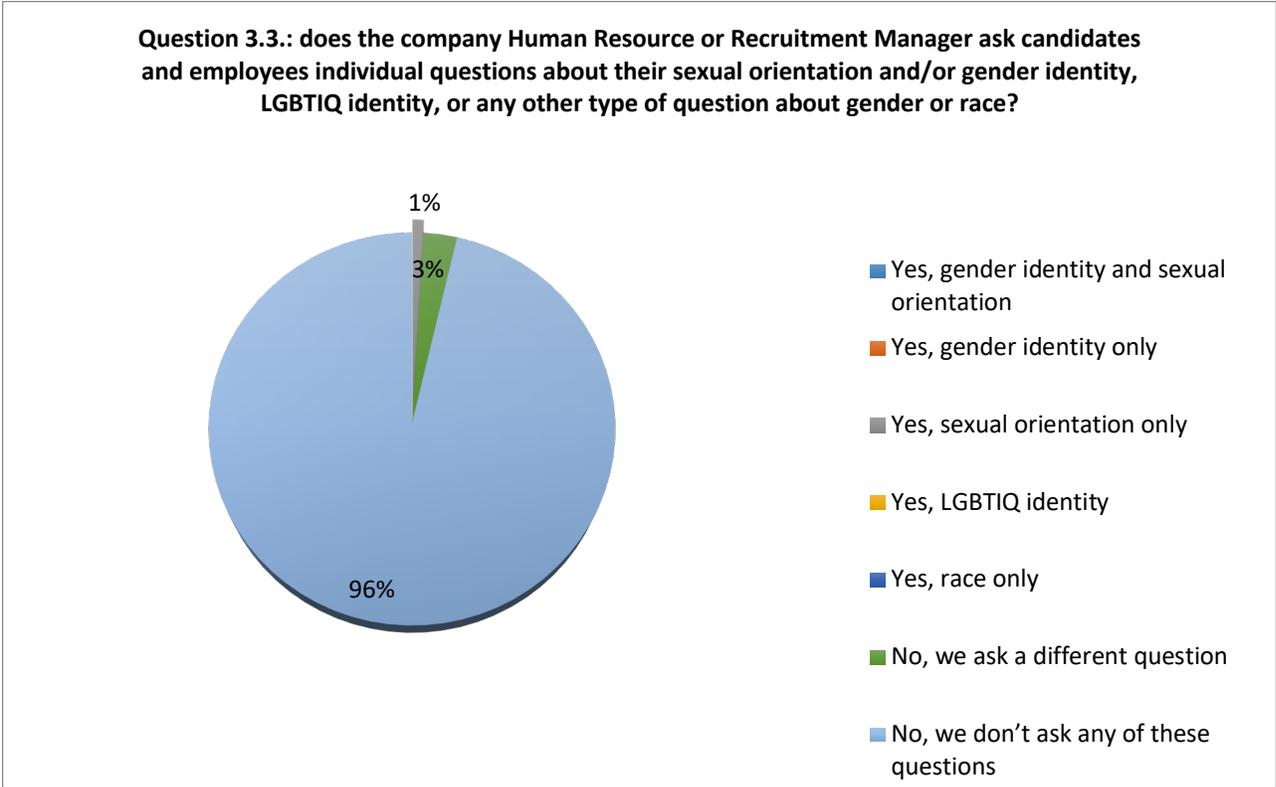
While in **99%** of companies, as shown in **Chart 12 - 2018** below, Human Resource or Recruitment Manager do not ask candidates and employees individual questions about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, LGBTIQ identity, or any other type of question about gender or race. This is an excellent result which guarantees that the companies are not asking LGBTIQ job-seekers about their sexual orientation or gender identity through indirect means. The results have **had an increase of 3%** from the previous year, as can be seen in the **Chart 12 – 2017**.



**Chart 12: Interview Questions - 2018**

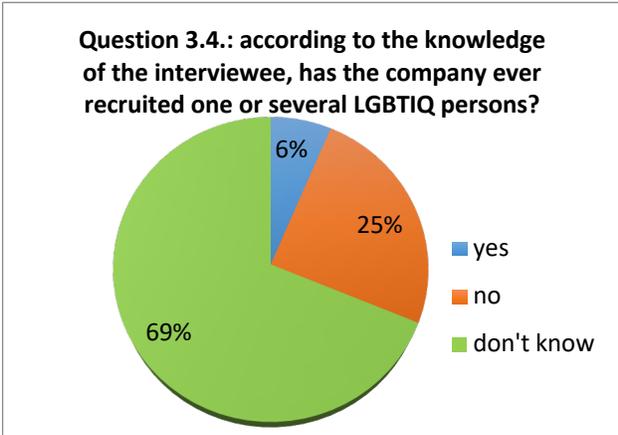


**Chart 12: Interview Questions - 2017**

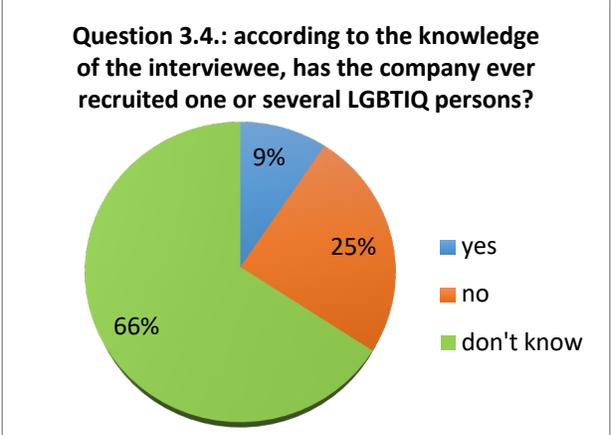


In **Chart 13 -2018** below, only **9%** of the companies acknowledge that have recruited one or several LGBTIQ persons. This low figure is also due to the fact that the majority of companies do not ask information regarding sexual orientation and/or gender identity (**Chart 12**), since 69% of them answers “don’t know”. There has been an increase from the previous year, when the results were **6%**, as can be seen in the **Chart 13 – 2017**.

**Chart 13: LGBTIQ persons Recruitment 2017**



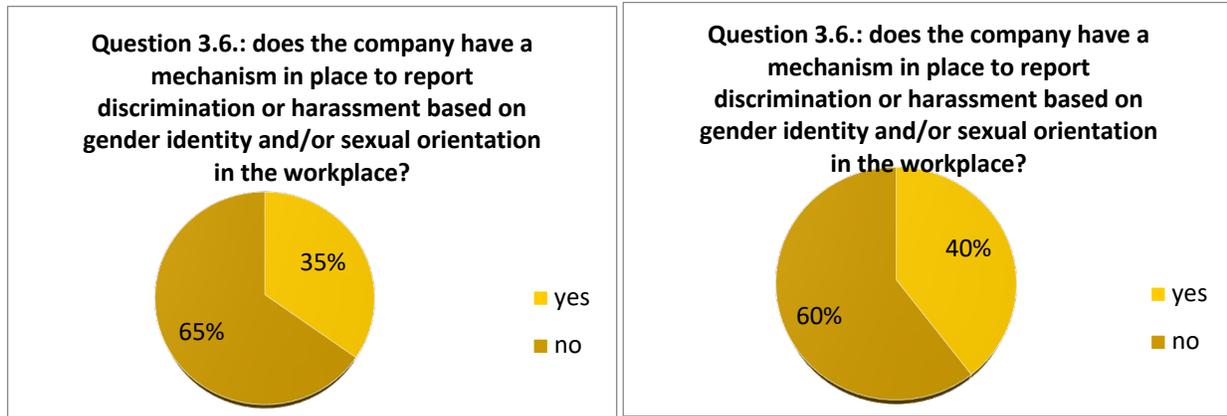
**2018**





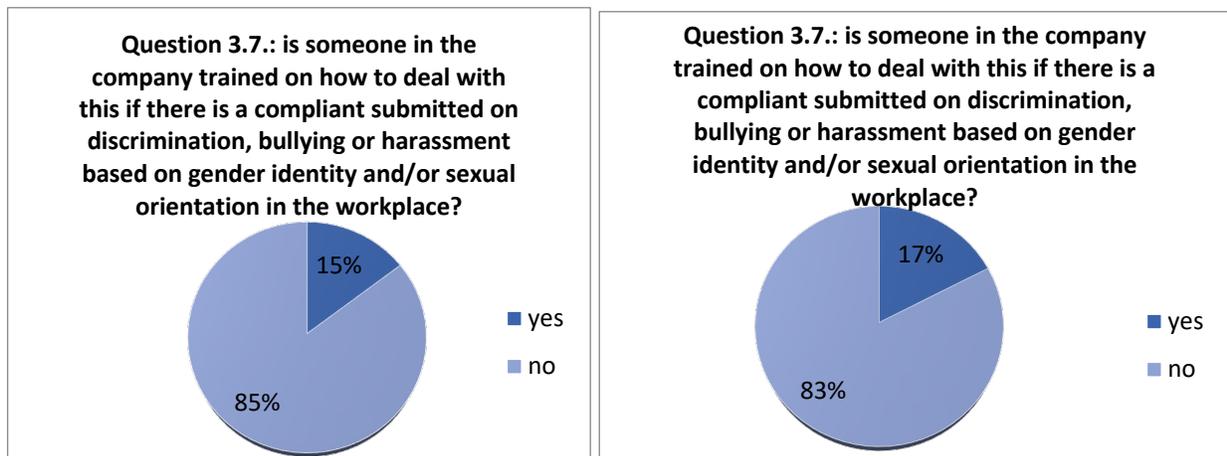
In **Chart 14 - 2018** below, only **40%**, of companies reported that they have a mechanism to report harassment on the job, which is not at the level it should be, but is still higher than the **35%** of the previous year, as shown in the **Chart 14 – 2017**. This low number is not surprising given the low number of companies that have non-discrimination policies. Nevertheless, the absence of such mechanisms leave LGBTIQ employees vulnerable. In addition, it is important that all employees know that such mechanisms exist so that they know any type of harassment would have consequences.

**Chart 14: Mechanisms to Report Discrimination or Harassment**  
2017 2018



Similarly, in **Chart 15 - 2018** below, only **17%** of companies had management staff trained on responding to such complaints of discrimination or harassment. Again, this is troubling because of the 40% of companies which have a mechanism (see **Chart 14** above), less than half have management trained on responding. Obviously, this highlights the vulnerability of LGBTIQ persons on the job and their limited options for recourse if they are discriminated or harassed. Also the fact that last year’s results are very close, **15%**, see **Chart 15 - 2017** below, shows that companies, especially the ones newly involved, have a lot to make in this direction.

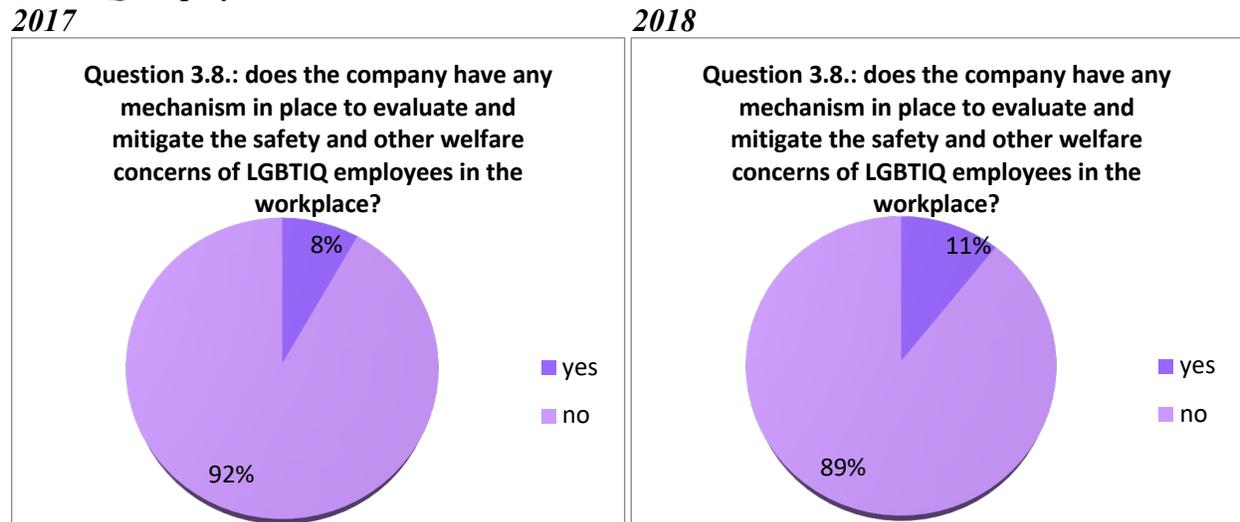
**Chart 15: Staff Training**  
2017 2018





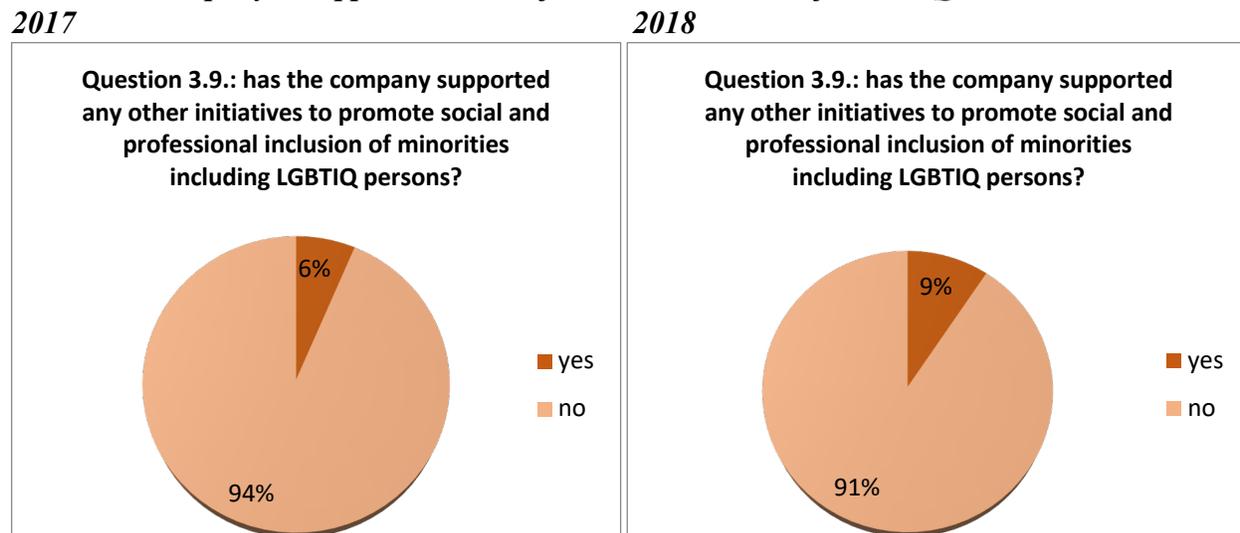
In **Chart 16 - 2018**, only **11%** of companies have a mechanism to evaluate and mitigate the safety and welfare concerns of LGBTIQ employees in the workplace. This is not surprising given the low levels of companies with policies and trained management. Nevertheless, it highlights the vulnerability of LGBTIQ persons on the job and the small increase from last year, when results were **8%**, as seen in the **Chart 16 – 2017**, reinforces this.

**Chart 16: Mechanisms to Evaluate and Mitigate the Safety and Welfare Concerns of LGBTIQ Employees**



**Chart 17 - 2018** asked companies if they had ever supported any initiatives to promote social and professional inclusion of minorities including LGBTIQ persons and only **9%** of them responded positively, however, none of the companies pertaining to this category mentioned any specific challenges the company faces, by doing so. There is an increase from the previous year, when the result was **6%**, as can be observed in the **Chart 17 – 2017**.

**Chart 17: Company’s Support to the Professional Inclusion of LGBTIQ Persons**

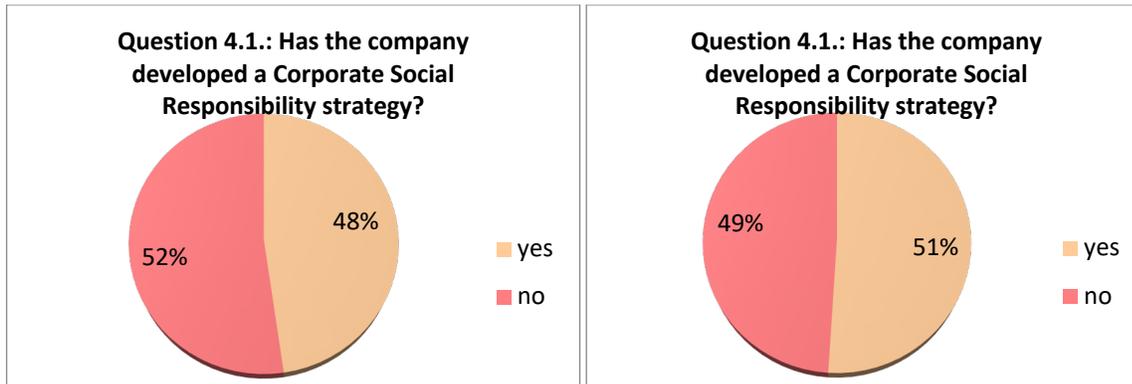




**Section IV: Corporate Social Responsibility and Outreach**

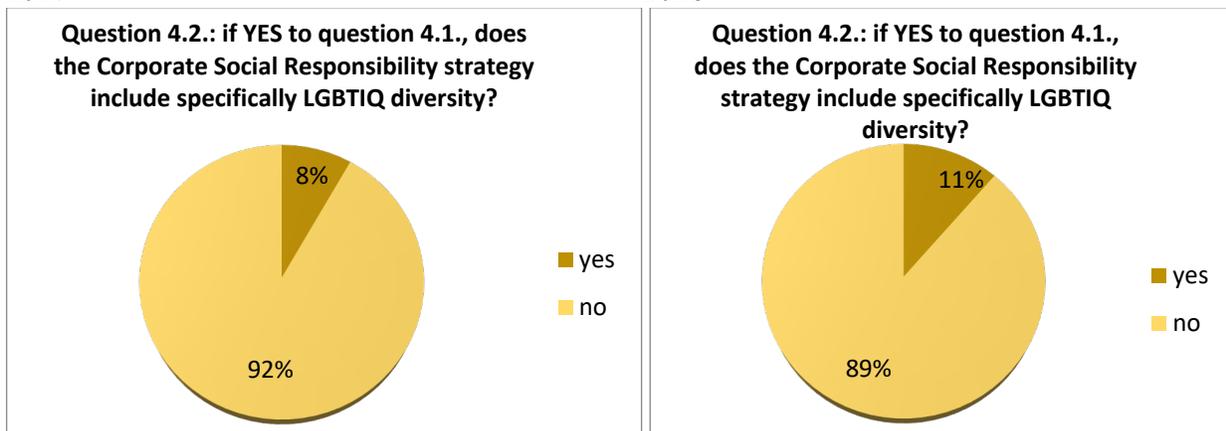
This section asks about a company’s corporate social responsibility and outreach to the community at large. As **Chart 18 – 2018** below shows that **51%** of the companies have a CSR strategy already developed. This is positive because it at least provides the framework for adding more protections for LGBTIQ job-seekers and employees if the company is willing, and also considering the increase from previous year’s result, **48%**, illustrated in the **Chart 18 – 2017**.

**Chart 18: Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy**  
2017 2018



However, as **Chart 19 - 2018** below shows, only **11%** of those CSR strategies mention LGBTIQ communities, which is a low rate, however, still higher than last year, where only **8%** of companies stated that their CSR strategies mention LGBTIQ communities, as appears in the **Chart 19 - 2017**.

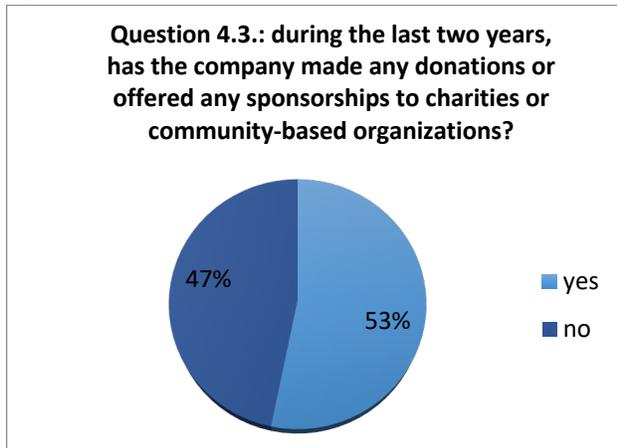
**Chart 19: Specific Mention of LGBTIQ in the CSR strategy.**  
2017 2018



**Chart 20 - 2018** below shows that **55%** of companies made charitable donations and this is a positive trend from last year where **53%** of companies declared the same, **Chart 20 – 2017**.

**Chart 20: Charitable Giving by Companies**

2017



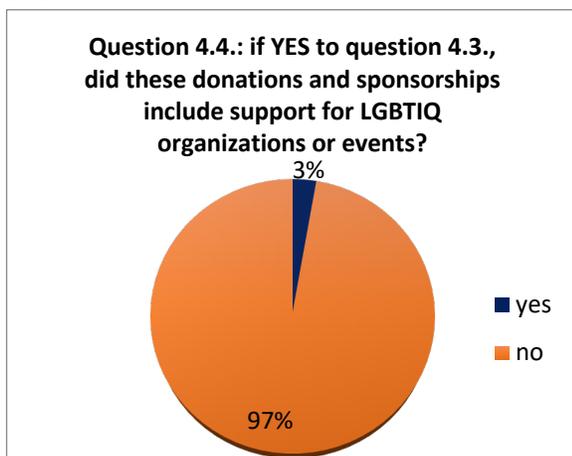
2018



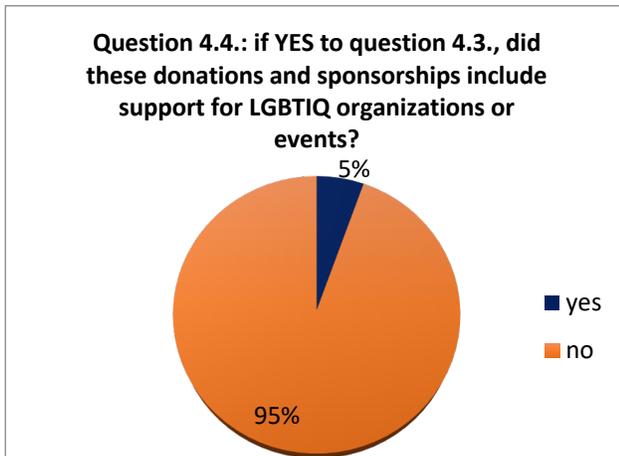
From the above companies, only **5%** did so to LGBTIQ-focused organizations or projects, as shown in the **Chart 21 – 2018** below. However, it must be kept in mind that there are only three active such organizations in Albania and thus, even if a company was willing to make a donation, its options for such are highly limited. There is an increase from the previous year, when the result was **3%**, as can be observed in the **Chart 21 – 2017**

**Chart 21: Charitable Giving including LGBTIQ**

2017



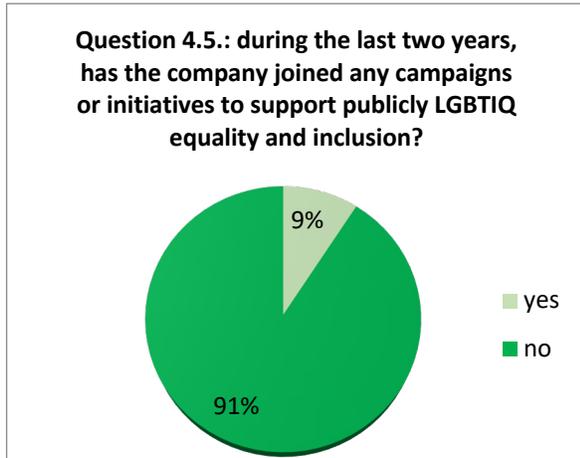
2018



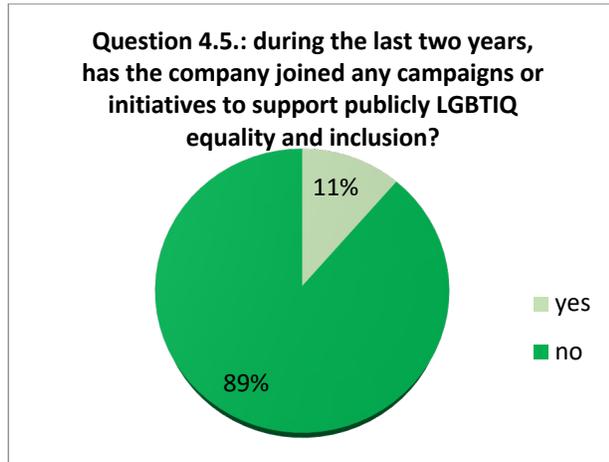
**Chart 22 – 2018** shows that only **11%** of companies joined any initiatives to support LGBTIQ equality and inclusion. While companies are interested in CSR, the issue of LGBTIQ persons does not represent a priority for their actions. However, this year’s result is higher, since last year the rating was **9%**, as shown in the **Chart 22 – 2017**.



**Chart 22: Company Support for LGBTIQ Initiatives**  
2017



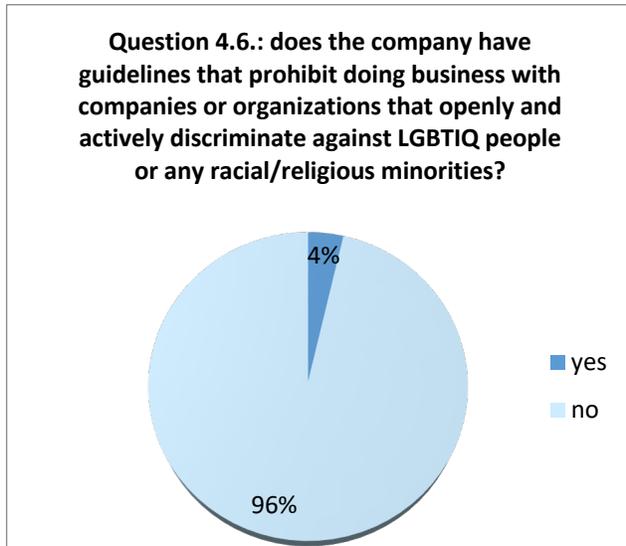
2018



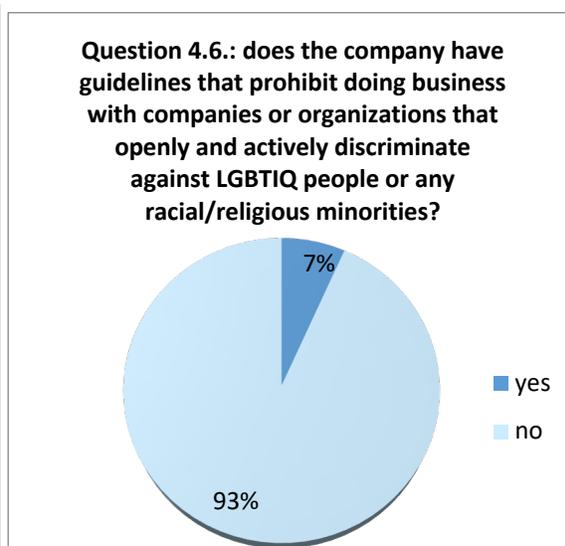
In **Chart 23 - 2018** below, only **7%** of companies have a policy or guidelines that prohibit them from doing business with other companies that discriminate about LGBTIQ persons (or other minorities). There is an increase from the previous year, when the result was **4%**, as can be observed in the **Chart 23 – 2017**.

**Chart 23: Policies to Prohibit Business Transactions with Businesses/Organizations which Discriminate**

2017



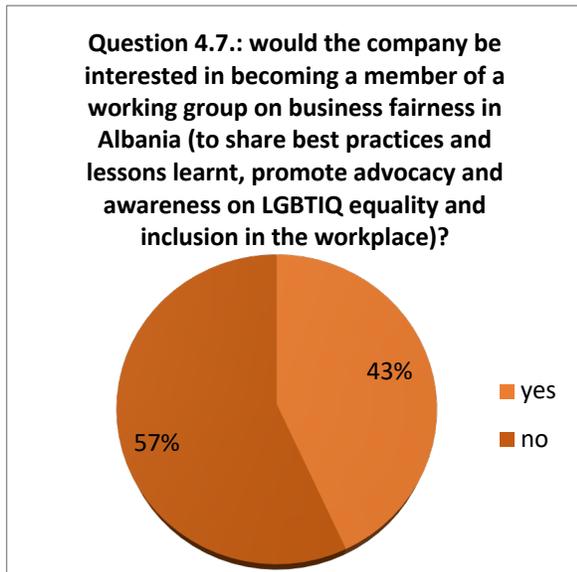
2018



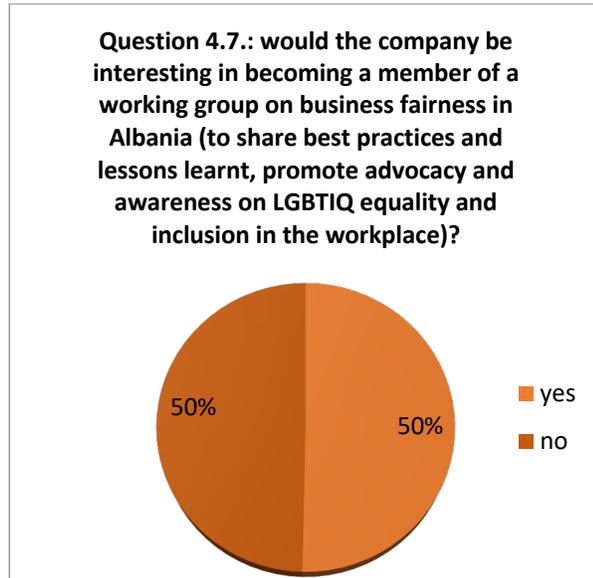
In **Chart 24 - 2018**, a total of **50%** of participating companies did mention that they would be willing to work more on LGBTIQ inclusion. A considerable increase can be observed to the results of the previous year, in **Chart 24 – 2017** which recorded **43%**. Despite the fact that many businesses lack policies or training on the topic, it is encouraging that now, half of them would like to engage further. This creates the space for further projects.



**Chart 24: Willingness to Work on LGBTIQ Inclusion Issues**  
2017



2018

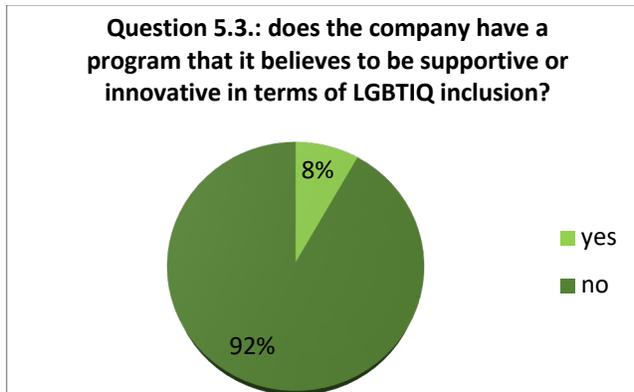


**Section V: LGBTIQ Specific Initiatives and Actions**

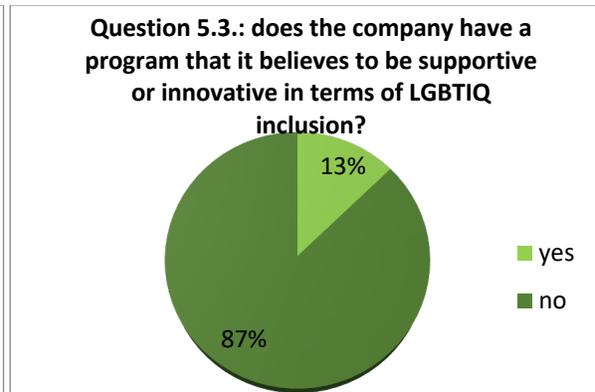
In Section V, the Index asks companies for specific examples of work or support to LGBTIQ communities. Companies cannot achieve Gold status in this Index with having a proven track record of such actions.

As shown in *Chart 25 - 2018* below, **13%** of companies reported to have initiatives which are innovative to LGBTIQ inclusion, while last year, only **8%** of those participating declared so, as shown in the *Chart 25 – 2017*.

**Chart 25: Initiative Programs**  
2017



2018

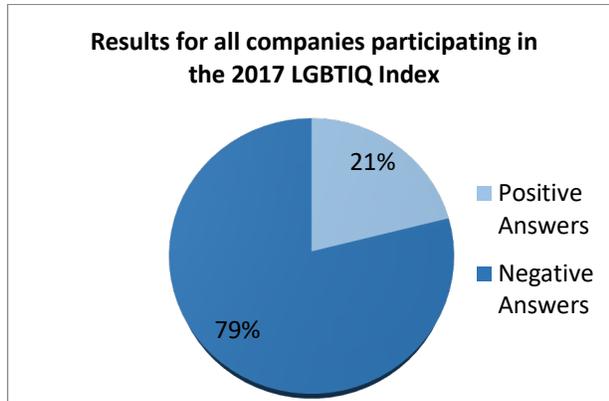


## Conclusion

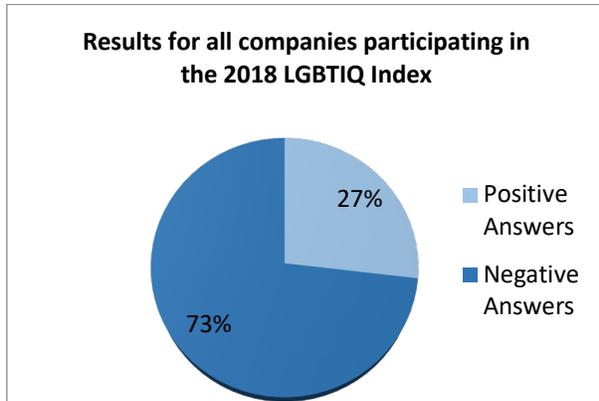
From the comparison of results for each question, generally there is an increase compared to the previous year's results. **Charts 26** below show that **27%** of all participating companies gave positive answers to the questions in the 2018 LGBTIQ Index, while only **21%** of all participating companies in 2017, did so.

**Chart 26: LGBTIQ Index General Annual Results**

**2017**



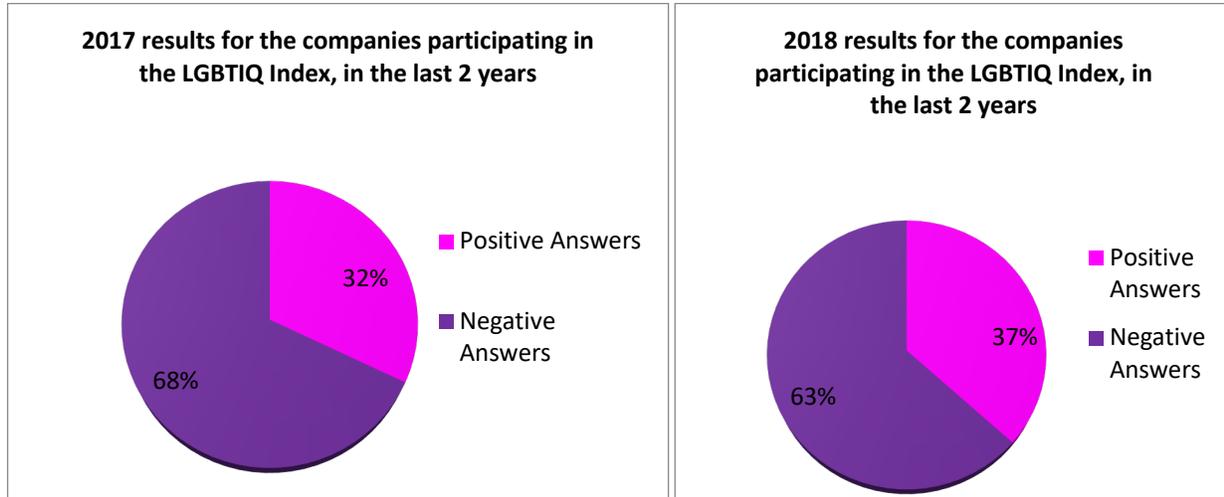
**2018**



The overall results increase with only **6%** from the previous year, might look small but, if we take into consideration the inclusion of **40** new companies, the majority of which are of smaller size and do not have much in place in the frame of policies and procedures for equal treatment and non-discrimination of LGBTIQ employees and job-seekers, which considerably lowered the overall results, the 6% increase should be considered a success.

The results of only companies which participated in the LGBTIQ Index of the last 2 years show that, this year they answered positively to **37%** of the questions, as shown in the **Chart 27-2018** below, so there is an increase compared to the previous year results of **32%**, shown in the **Chart 27-2017**. They have designed concrete procedures and policies to protect minorities and LGBTIQ Albanians.

**Chart 27: 2018 results for companies participating in the Index in the last 2 years**



## Recommendations

### For Organizations for LGBTIQ Equality and Tolerance

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

### For the Albanian Private Sector:

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

### For the Albanian Government:

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

### For International Donors:

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