



#StandUp4Equality

Sport and LGBTQI+

EQUALITY IN SPORT



Safe Sport

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A survey with 5,500 LGBTQI+ participants revealed that about 90% think that homophobia, particularly transphobia, is a problem in sport (1). This might stem from negative personal experience as 16% of active sport participants indicated that they have had at least one negative personal experience within the past 12 months in relation to their sexual orientation or gender identity. The percentage is highest among trans women with 46%. Taking a closer look at the form of negative personal experiences, verbal insults (82%) and structural discrimination, such as unequal opportunities (75%), present the most common homo-/transphobic incidents (1). Resulting from the study findings, the research group developed the recommendations to include LGBTI safeguarding issues and sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in the guiding objectives of the next EU Work Plan for Sport, to promote existing sport education programs with trainings on sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination and LGBTI rights issues and lastly, to open up a dialogue with all relevant stakeholders, who can contribute to the development of policies related to the recommendations above (1).

Another survey conducted in 2019 by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights that addressed safety for LGBTQI+ people (2) found out that 11% of LGBTQI+ living in the EU were physically or sexually attacked in the previous five years because they identify as LGBTQI+. In the previous year, 38% experienced harassment for being LGBTI. Again, trans people (17 %) and intersex people (22 %) were more likely to experience attacks. Even higher rates (47 %) were detected for LGBTQI+ youth (aged 15-17). Only 21% of incidents of physical or sexual violence were reported to any organisation, including the police (2).

The creation of safe physical spaces has always been a cornerstone of the work of protection of persons from violence and discrimination. Exemplary, a Swedish NGO offers safe outdoor weekly activities for older LGBT people (3). Regarding the LGBTQI+ youth, the committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality recommends that EU member states promote respect for and inclusion of LGBTI people at school, and fostering objective knowledge on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in schools and further educational settings (4). The concern that young LGBTI people and those perceived as LGBTI are at an increased risk of being bullied stresses the need to establish a safe environment for all young people, regardless of their gender, race or sexual orientation (4).

Literature:

1: Outsport working group, led by GSU (2019): SOGI DISCRIMINATION IN SPORT.

2: European Union Agency for fundamental rights (2020): A LONG WAY TO GO FOR LGBTI EQUALITY.

3: United Nations (2020): VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY DURING THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PANDEMIC

4: European Parliament (2014): REPORT ON THE EU ROADMAP AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND DISCRIMINATION ON GROUNDS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY



The following data derives from an online questionnaire for athletes and from structured interviews with athletes that ENGSO's EWS committee conducted in July - August 2022. The questionnaire was distributed in 13 languages (Albania, English, French, Finnish, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish).

186 athletes filled out the online questionnaire, respectively, and 6 interviews were conducted with athletes during the EuroGames 2022 as well as online.

Sample characteristics are displayed in the appendices of this factsheet.

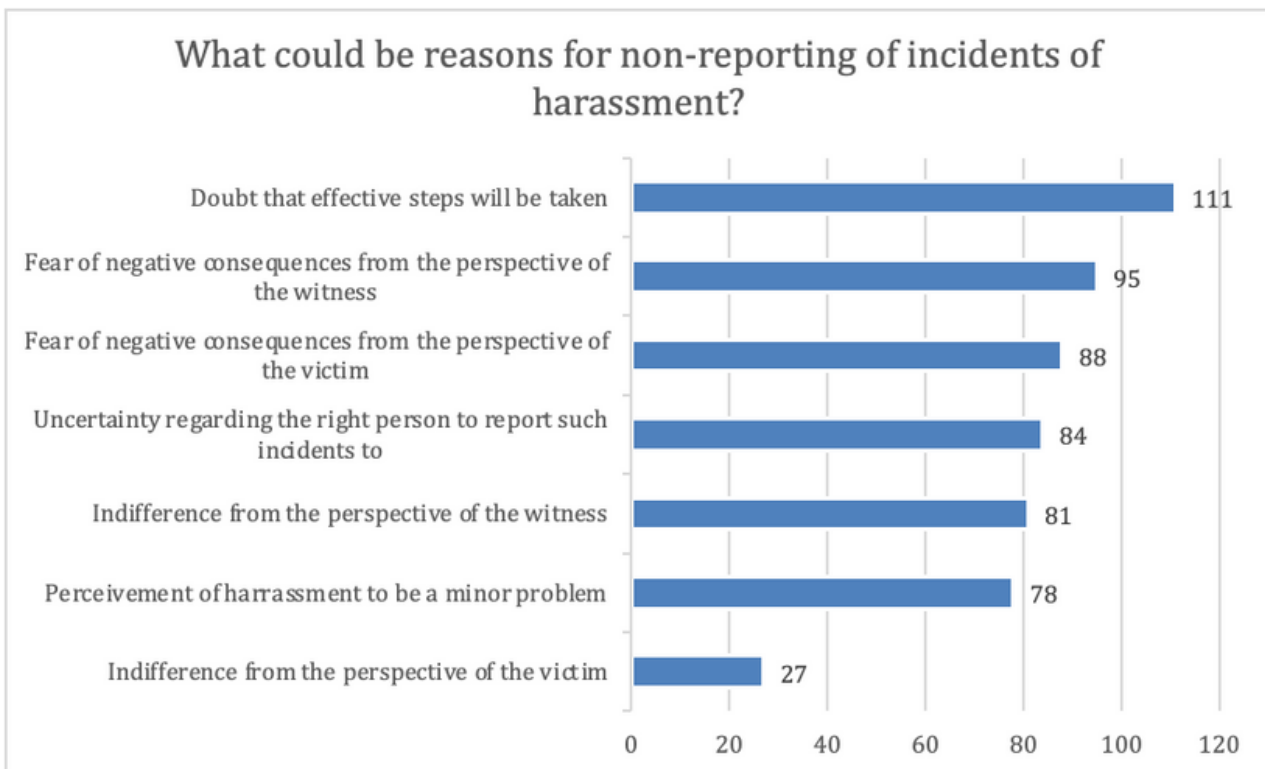


Figure 1. Answers of Athlete Questionnaire. Numbers are displayed in absolute numbers. Multiple answers could be selected.

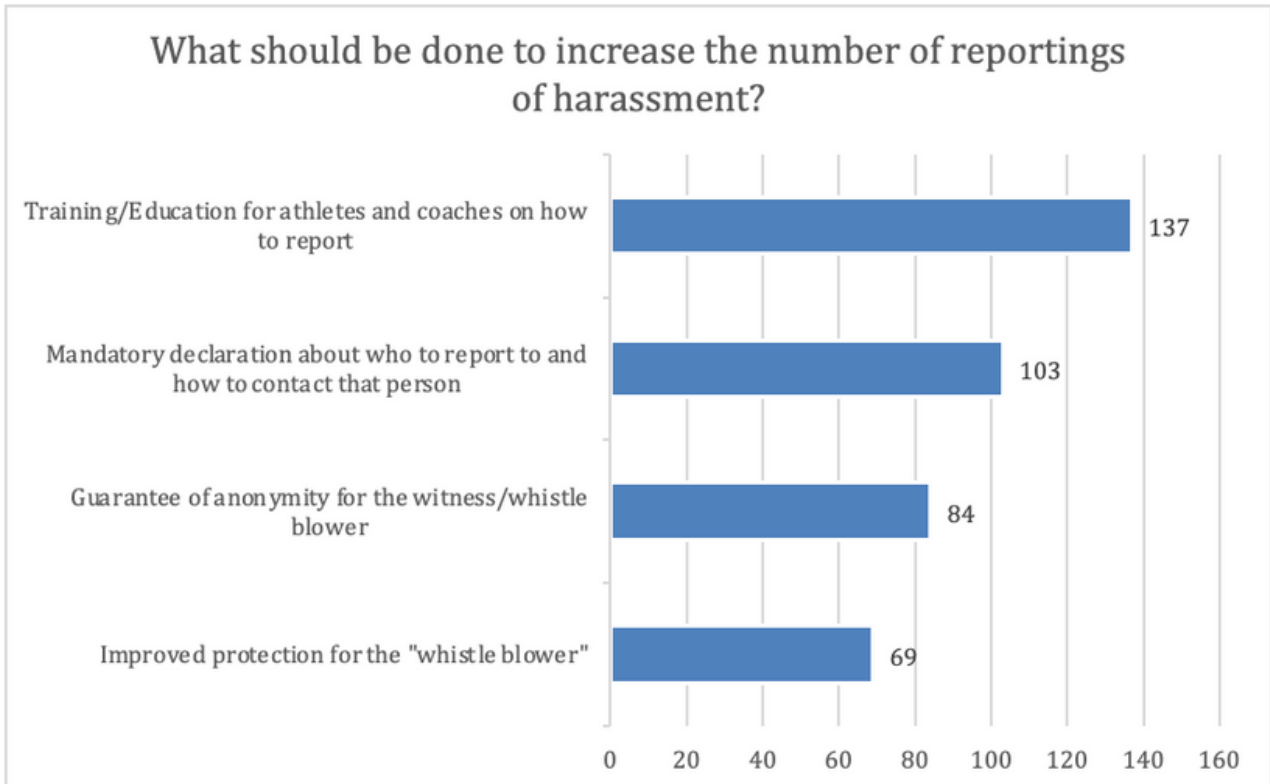


Figure 2. Answers of Athlete Questionnaire. Numbers are displayed in absolute numbers. Multiple answers could be selected, and it was optional to also answer in a free-text field.



Table 1. Athlete answers from the optional free text field

What should be done to increase the number of reportings?
Why just for this group? Insults for all are the order of the day. Only certain groups have problems with this while others take care of themselves and do not make their problems everyone's problems.
Harsh application of punishment
Training for athletes and coaches on how to report 5.
Developing effective communication strategies and making them aware of places to report
Training on gender issues for referees and managers to make them proactive in the reporting process.
Just be equal
Train the whole club
Education, but this is not just the responsibility of the coach
Harsher consequences
Efficient implementation of a clear Code of Conduct
Education
More neutral education for the topic



Figure 3 Answers of Athlete Questionnaire. Numbers are displayed in absolute numbers. It was optional to also answer in a free-text field.



Table 1. Athlete answers from the optional free text field

What should be done to prevent harassment?
Educate athletes and coaches about the LGBTQ+ community and what they might be going through in terms of abuses
Efficient implementation of a clear Code of conduct
Coaches have to talk about diversity from the start of the season
Teach also referees about diversity
Work in schools at a young age to recognise what is and is not acceptable
Use rule change as a tool to develop new relationships between participants
Contact with LGBTQI+ people - the main problem is that people don't have direct/personal knowledge with the community (what they know is what they see on tv/net/social networks)
offer additional offers for prevention, such as: sportmitdialog.de
Campaigns like in football
You can't prevent that. It's human to blame someone. Either the blame is true or the person is only blaming because they are frustrated.
In general more sensibilisation in society
Use rule change as a tool to open up new competitive models, for example mixed (beyond biological sex) or intergenerational
Work on spaces to make sports facilities more inclusive



We did not directly ask the athletes in the interviews about safe sport. Still, this term was mentioned by each interview partner. Below are some exemplary statements (direct quotations).

"We are open towards everyone, but we let heterosexual people know, that this is our safe space here - no homophobic actions accepted of course."

*"We are strongly making people aware that this is our safe space. So, we have this hypothetical discussion: what happens if we are advertising this so good and we end up with 50% being straight - are they taking us over? *laughs* Ok we agreed this will now happen."*

"One positive aspect about sport is playing in a friendly and safe space environment. We have that in my club. We are playing with everyone, not just with LGBTQI+ people."

"For our club, it is a challenge of how public we want to be and how private we want to be to provide this safe space."

"To increase sport participation rates in LGBTQI+, it is necessary to make sport more secure and safe."

"It is necessary to create more safe spaces in sport in general. Not just EuroGames and Gay Games in Europe."

"The LGBTQI movement stays in itself a little bit, because it is the only place where people feel safe. We need to have that guaranteed safe space, but we need to move much more towards is the exchange with the rest of the mainstream sporting world."



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