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## Press Release

# Problems of Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport

## *EU project OUTSPORT publishes its research findings and recommendations for action after a three-year project period*

Cologne, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019

***The diverse field of sport is not free from discrimination. In a sports system characterised by a binary gender order and gender stereotypes, LGBTI\* people can feel insecure and sometimes discriminated against. This often prevents them from actively participating in sport. The EU project OUTSPORT presents the findings of the full survey which involved more than 5,500 respondents. It also makes recommendations as to what action organised sport can take.***

The overarching aim of the Europe-wide joint project was to develop strategies and training measures in the field of sport in order to counter discrimination and violence related to sexual orientation or gender identity. Participation in sport at all levels should be made easier for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender persons and intersexuals. In the first study, an online survey was used in which more than 5,500 LGBTI\* from all 28 EU states were asked about their experiences in sport. In the second study, representatives of 15 sports associations, sports federations and umbrella organisations from the five project countries were interviewed about their strategies for combating homo-/transphobic discrimination in sport.

The overwhelming majority of respondents perceive homophobia and transphobia to be a problem in sport; homophobic and transphobic language is widespread, especially in team sports. As a result, one third of those active in sport conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity within the context of their sporting activities. More than a third of those questioned were unable to name a single organisation or individual they could contact in the event of a negative experience or incidence. "Discrimination against LGBTI\* is a problem facing society as a whole," says Professor Ilse Hartmann-Tews, Director of Studies at the German Sports University, "which is why each one of us should feel responsible for creating a culture of respect." In the area of organised sport, the study recommends an open and proactive attitude towards questions of sexual and gender diversity on the part of all men and women active at every level of clubs, associations and sports federations.

The collaboration of five European project countries has lasted three years and will end on 31 December. Results were presented and discussed at various levels, including the final conference of OUTSPORT held in Budapest, an international conference on the situation of LGBTI\* in sport in Barcelona, the sports committee of the NRW state parliament in Düsseldorf and the Federal Network Conference of Queer Sports Clubs (BuNT) in Hamburg.

*\*LGBTI\* denotes lesbian/gay women, gay men, bisexual people, trans people and intersex people. The asterisk denotes queer people that do not identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex, but have a non-hetero sexual orientation and/or a non-cis gender identity.*

*Survey Findings Report ([English PDF](#)) und [Toolkit](#) for coaches, trainers and supervisors.*

*Specific results and recommendations for Germany are available online in the German language ([German PDF](#)).*

*The OUTSPORT project is co-financed by the European Commission through the Erasmus Plus programme. It involves five European partner organisations:*

- Italian Association for Culture and Sport (AICS)
- LEAP Sports Scotland (LEAP)
- Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC)
- Organisation for Fresh Ideas, Hungary (FRIGO)
- German Sport University Cologne

[www.out-sport.eu](http://www.out-sport.eu)

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*The German Sport University Cologne, Germany's only sports university, is a member of the Cologne Science Round Table. Cologne's position as a science location is strengthened by more than 20 network partners.*