

Detailed summary of the gender-based conflicts survey

In the year 2016 Task Force on Gender Equality launched the survey about gender based discrimination which was created for volunteers, workcamp leaders, project partners and others who have been included in International Voluntary Service (IVS) projects such as workcamps, trainings or youth exchanges to express themselves on that topic. Survey was filled out by 100 people, with **94 of them connected to the gender topic in IVS projects** . The latest are the ones that will be considered in the following numbers and facts.

Since **58 participants of the survey declared that they had witnessed gender conflicts** , the Gender Equality Task Force requested to become Working Group to be able to fully address this issue and create a plan to raise awareness among the Alliance network and successfully bring better practices.

Out of the 94 answers related to the gender topic, 74 participants identified themselves as female, 18 as male and 2 as other.

Most of the conflicts that have been described happened within the whole group, which also included workcamp leaders and project coordinators . The biggest number of participants of survey were volunteers/participants of IVS projects with 59 survey answers. They experienced gender based discrimination on all levels, including discrimination coming from workcamp leaders, project partners or group itself. Other survey answers, which are connected to gender conflicts, were coming from 25 workcamp leaders, 9 project coordinators, and 1 facilitator.

Among those who answered that they have felt gender based discrimination, the list of problems/conflicts mentioned are (by order of frequency):

- 1) **Sexist task allocation** (more than 27 cases): separation between men and women for the tasks such as housekeeping, cooking, heavy tasks.
- 2) **Sexist attitudes** (more than 11 cases): reproduction of gender roles and stereotypes through language, “jokes” and attitudes.
- 3) **Homophobia** (more than 3 cases): discrimination and denying LGBTQ+ people legitimacy to speak for themselves.
- 4) **Sexual harassment** (more than 3 cases): sexual comments to women from men among volunteers, workcamp leaders and hosting organization.
- 5) **Sexual abuse** (1 case)

In this study, only gender-based conflicts have been taken into consideration, although ***other identities as ethnicity, sexual orientation or religion might influence creating multiple forms of discrimination*** (Hankivsky, 2012). This highlights the need to identify the different forms of discrimination happening in the network and to have an intersectional approach.

Intersectionality: Multiple identities as gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social class, religion etc intersect and do not act independently of each other, creating multiple forms of discrimination (racism, classism, sexism...) (Hankivsky, 2012).

We now know for a fact that there are gender based conflicts in the international voluntary service projects. ***It is now our responsibility to underline this issue and fight against it in every possible way.*** We cannot let sexual harassment or sexual abuse happen on the workcamps anymore.

Especially when we can all very easily be part of the solution: by taking actions and speaking up when we witness such issues. Indeed, out of the 58 stories we collected where people witnessed such conflicts, 22 were addressed: either by the people directly involved in the conflict, or by a workcamp leader that wasn't involved in the matter from the beginning. Out of that number, 14 situations were fully or partially solved in the end.

One astounding fact is that out of the 18 males that filled out the questionnaire, 12 said that they didn't experience any gender-related conflict. One participant even answered that the kind of survey we conducted was ridiculous and that of course, everyone is treated equally in the workcamps.

This kind of feedback perfectly shows why we need to raise awareness and why we need to speak up about equal rights and equal treatment no matter the gender, age, race, sexuality and nationality. This especially is important for international voluntary service which is meeting point and open space for diversity.

We need to be able to provide safe space for everyone who is being involved in IVS projects on national or international level.

Reference:

Hankivsky, O. (Ed.). (2012). *An Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework*. Vancouver, BC: Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, Simon Fraser University.