

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Research paper on LGBTI Political Participation in the Balkans
2017

1. Background

The Gay & Lesbian Victory Institute (Victory) has been partnering with Labris since 2013 to increase the number of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, trans and intersex (LGBTI) leaders involve in the democratic process in Serbian and the West Balkans, as a tool to achieve legal and social equality for LGBTI people in the region.

The four main pillars of Victory's international work are:

- **Training leaders:** Train LGBT leaders that want to contribute to building a more inclusive democracy.
- **Political Parties:** Collaborate with political parties to increase the participation of the LGBT population within their structures.
- **Public Awareness:** Raise public awareness and educate public opinion on LGBT representation within democratic institutions.
- **Research:** Conduct research to demonstrate the positive effect of LGBT inclusivity in democratic institution

Labris and Victory, in collaboration with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), trained 20 LGBTI leaders last year to help them to better represent the LGBTI population and find the spaces for their political participation. The trainings took place over five weekend sessions held in Serbia from May to October 2014, comprised of theoretical sessions, group work, and workshops. The training provided comprehensive non-partisan training for future candidates, campaign staff, and community leaders. Participants acquired the necessary skills and strategies to become an effective leader able to represent and work for their communities within the democratic game.

The 'Democracy for All: Political Participation of LGBTI Persons in the Balkans' conference is a continuation of Victory and Labris' strategy to increase political participation of LGBTI people in the Balkans. In collaboration with HES (Hirschfeld-Eddy-Stiftung), the conference was held on September 15, 16, and 17, 2015, in Belgrade, Serbia, where we had 143 people join us. The participants enjoyed two days of discussions, training, and leadership skills development. They also expanded their networks that will aid them in performing their duties and reinforcing democratic participation and human rights of the LGBTI population in the Balkans.

The conference had two parts:

The **pre-conference on the 15th** was a day for advocacy, with MPs from the Western Balkans, providing the opportunity to exchange opinions, experiences, and best practices.

The **conference on the 16th and 17th** was broken down into two types of sessions:

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1. **Plenaries:** all participants attend and expand on different issues raised in each thematic area.
2. **Workshops:** workshops facilitated by experts in the field and allow the audience to acquire specific skills that will serve them well in the performance of their political leadership.

Victory also partnered with the NDI to learn about the social attitudes of LGBTI and general population towards equality for LGBTI people in the Balkans. The research findings were released during the conference.

2. About the Organizations

[Labris](#), one of the oldest lesbian human rights organizations in the region (founded in Belgrade in 1995) is an organization that considers the right to different sexual orientation as one of the basic human rights. Our mission is to work on the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against lesbians and all women in general and to establish a more equal society. Our vision is a society without hate, fear, with rule of law, society where sexual and gender minorities would have equal rights as majority. Our values are tolerance, solidarity, nondiscrimination, equality and dignity for all minorities.

Founded in 1993, The [Gay & Lesbian Victory Institute](#) (Victory)'s mission is to increase the number of lesbian, gay, bisexual and, transgender people in public office and to provide programming, services, and other support to help ensure their success. Victory has developed and trained thousands of LGBTI leaders in the U. S., increasing international representation across our programs every year. With 19 staff, our programs focus on developing LGBTI leaders through internships, fellowships, campaign trainings, and an annual international conference. We have expanded our work to implement international campaign and leadership trainings. We trained more than 200 LGBTI individuals in the Balkans, Colombia, Peru, and other countries. We have received grants from several private donors and foundations. Google, Arcus Foundation, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, Bank of America, Gill Foundation, Microsoft, and Comcast have supported our work.

3. Audience and use of findings

The research will be used to understand what the opportunities are to increase political participation of LGBTI people in the Balkans and its impacts towards equality.

The products will be used by the following stakeholders:

- LGBTI organizations in the region, to understand the opportunities to use political participation as an advocacy tool to achieve equality.
- Victory and Labris to justify the importance and potential impact of this work.
- Victory and Labris to assess the impact of the political leadership training delivered during 2014.

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- Victory and Labris to have relevant information to work with political parties and other stakeholders to achieve equality through political participation.

4. Overall objective of the research and research questions

The overall purpose of the research paper is to outline the opportunities to increase political participation in Serbia and the Balkans (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Slovenia).

Main research question: What are the opportunities to increase LGBTI political participation in Serbia and in the Balkans, and how to leverage those?

The specific objectives of the research are:

- Identifying progress, challenges, and best practices in the processes of political participation of the LGBTI population in the region.
 - Question: What has been the political participation of openly LGBTI people in Serbia and the Balkans, what challenges have they had to face, and what was their impact towards equality for LGBTI people?
- Identify the impact that 2014 political leadership trainees made for the equality of LGBTI people thanks to the training and the ideas and skills they acquired through it.
 - What was the short-term impact of the political leadership training Victory and Labris delivered in 2014, for the equality of LGBTI people in their countries?
- Identify the entry points to work with political parties to incorporate LGBTI issues and openly LGBTI people within their structures and candidates.
 - How can we work with political parties in Serbia and the Balkans, so they incorporate issues affecting the LGBTI population, and increase their openness towards having openly LGBTI members and candidates?

5. Methodology

The majority of the research will rely on qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews. The consultant will also implement a media analysis of instances when political participation of LGBTI citizens is mentioned in the media, if relevant. The gathered information will help the consultant, as well, to draw some quantitative conclusions and trends.

The informants for the interviews will be gained through snowball sampling. In this method, the consultant solicits potential informants through the informants already gained. Case studies and personal testimonies will be pulled from these informants as well.

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Victory and Labris will provide the researcher with:

- A list of documents the researchers should consult before starting the research (see below)
- Previously recorded and transcribed interviews for the researcher to use in the analysis
- A list of key remaining people that should be interviewed and consulted

The main focus of the research will be Serbia, with a less deep approach to the topic for rest of the Balkan countries. 50% of the research effort will be spent in Serbia.

The methodology for the research will include the following:

- Literature review.
- Victory and Labris’ research papers and documents regarding human rights and LGBTI political participation in Serbia and the West Balkans.
- Travel to key countries to complete interviews: Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Kosovo.
- Use existing recorded interviews from informants from Serbia, as well as conduct further interviews with Serbian politicians and LGBTI leaders.
- Interviews with political leadership trainees, relevant LGBTI leaders in the region, key political parties in Serbia and other Balkans countries, and allies speaking at the ‘Democracy for all’ conference.
 - 31 interviews for this research have been completed, part of the methodology will include reviewing these previously recorded and transcribed interviews.
- Review poll on the social attitudes in the Western Balkans towards LGBTI issues.

The consultant will review the following source of information:

- Previously conducted and recorded interviews for this project.
- Previously recorded sessions from the ‘Democracy for All: Political Participation of LGBTI Persons in the Balkans’ regional conference in September 2015, organized by Labris and Victory.
- A view to the political participation of LGBTI people in movements and political parties in Colombia. 2014. (this research will be provided by Victory).
- Western Balkans LGBTI: Landscape Analysis of Political, Economic & Social Conditions. Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice. 2015.
- Public Opinion Poll in the Balkans on LGBTI Communities. NDI, USAID, Civil Rights Defenders, Gay & Lesbian Victory Institute. 2015.
- “State Pride” Politics of LGBT Rights and Democratisation in “European Serbia”. Marek Mikuš. 2011.
- Vote for Equality Campaign Macedonia - Post-Elections Summary Report. Subversive Front. 2016. (Provided by the organizers).
- Think Politically. Aleanca & Pro LGBT Albania. 2015.
- Political Parties and the Human Rights of LGBT People: Monitoring of the General Election 2014. Darko Pandurević, Emina Bošnjak, Naida Kučukalić. 2015. [Context: Bosnia and Herzegovina]

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- Human Rights do not Recognize Political Ideology: Political Parties and the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People. Edita Miftari. 2015. [Context: Bosnia and Herzegovina]
- The Struggle for Visibility and Equality: Bosnian LGBT Rights. Safia Swimelar. 2016.
- Women’s participation in politics and decision-making in Albania: Public Perception Survey 2012-2013. Klea Faniko; Sokol Avxhiu, Suela Kusi, Zyhrada Kongoli, Valbona Sulce, Fiorela Shalsi. 2013.
- Split Europe: Homonationalism and Homophobia in Croatia. Kevin Moss. 2014.
- LGBT Activism in Eastern and Central Europe. Susan C. Pearce. 2016.

*Note: concurrent research is also being conducted in Albania - should any relevant information overlap, we will also provide the consultant with that information.

6. Research products

The Consultant will be required to:

- A report about LGBTI political participation, with a length of approximately 100 pages and 30,000 words.
- A 10-20 page executive summary with the main findings and recommendations.
- Case studies along the research, to highlight best practices.
- First person testimonies, to have real stories.
- Clear recommendations to key stakeholders to increase LGBTI political participation, as a tool to achieve equality: LGBT NGOs, political parties, LGBTI politicians, international organizations, etc.
- The language of the reports should be easily understandable to an educated lay reader.

7. Required Qualifications and Experience of the Consultant

- Proven experience in producing research related to political participation of women or national minorities in Serbia and/or the Western Balkans.
- Local knowledge of the political systems in Serbia and the Balkan region.
- Knowledge or experience working with LGBT communities is a plus, but not necessary

8. Timetable

Products will be delivered by July 30, 2017.

Researcher will send a timeline proposal, including midterm deliverables.

9. Intellectual Property

All information pertaining to this project (documentary, audio, digital, cyber, project documents, etc.) belonging to the clients, which the Consultant may come into contact with in the performance of his/her, duties under this

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consultancy shall remain the property of the clients (Labris and the Gay & Lesbian Victory Institute) who shall have exclusive rights over their use. Except for purposes of this assignment, the information shall not be disclosed to the public nor used in whatever without written permission of the clients in line with the national and International copyright laws applicable.

10. Compensation

The Consultant's total payment shall be 4,500 Euro, based on the financial proposal developed for this consultancy.

11. Application Procedure

Applicants are required to submit the following by February 5, 2017, 11:59pm CET:

- Brief letter of Interest (1 page), stating why you consider your firm suitable for the assignment.
- Methodology on the approach and implementation of the assignment - please include a timeline to finish by July 30, 2017.
- Personal CVs of personnel proposed for this project highlighting qualifications and experience in similar projects.
- 3 work references - contact details (e-mail addresses) of referees (firms for whom you've produced similar assignments)
- Financial proposal indicating consultancy fee and a breakdown of expenses (unit price together with any other expenses) related to the assignment.
- Applicants can apply online through this link:
<https://victoryinstitute.wufoo.com/forms/qdusq9019io0fw/>

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