

About Sarajevo Open Centre

- A civil society organization dedicated to advancing human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Focus on systemic social changes, particularly in gender equality and the rights of LGBTI+ persons.

Topic of the presentation

- Freedom of assembly, hate crime, hate speech and discrimination
- Human rights of LGBTI people in BiH

Challenges and Complexities in Human Rights

- **Overview:**

- The human rights landscape in BiH faces both long-standing and new challenges.
- Influences from anti-rights and anti-democratic actors.

- **LGBTI+ Rights as a Litmus Test:**

- Issues include discrimination, freedom of expression, assembly, and hate crimes.
- Position of LGBTI+ persons in BiH reflects broader human rights challenges.

Key Areas of Concern

- **Action Plan for LGBTI+ Rights (2021-2024):**
 - Adopted but still lacks substantial implementation.
- **Same-Sex Partnership Laws:**
 - No national regulation; progress stalled in Federation of BiH, unrecognized in Republika Srpska and Brčko District.
- **Freedom of Assembly:**
 - Legal and practical restrictions in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Mostar hinder public assemblies.
- **Hate Crimes and Hate Speech:**
 - Limited recognition in courts; significant underreporting and insufficient government data.

Key Recommendations

1. Legalize Same-Sex Partnerships:

Align legislation with European Court of Human Rights standards across BiH.

2. Improve Freedom of Assembly Laws:

Update or amend laws in Canton Sarajevo, Hercegovina-Neretva Canton, and Republika Srpska.

3. Strengthen Anti-Discrimination Training:

Strengthen anti-discrimination policies, such as gender action plans and the 2021-2024 LGBTI Action Plan, by prioritizing systematic education and sensitization of public servants, public professionals in all domains, judiciary, and police.