

ITALY

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

In August, the Sicilian Vendicari Nature Reserve apologised and took down a sign, which advertised family discounts for families consisting of a father, mother, and children.

ASYLUM

Trans migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and stateless persons expressed their support for the Zan law (see below).

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

Hate speech remained common this year, including from politicians and religious figures. In January, a Napoli priest spread hate on social media by denouncing rainbow families. Italy's first openly gay mayor Giorgi Zinno was targeted by online hate. The association 'Pro Vita e Famiglia' toured Sicily this summer spreading misinformation about the Zan law. In August, Paolo Borghi of the League party conflated HIV/AIDS with the entire LGBT community. See other examples here and here. In November, parliament voted for a norm banning street advertisements with discriminatory messages against LGBTI people.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

The public debate on the long awaited changes to the Penal Code, i.e. the Zan law, continued this year, but, on 27 October, the bill was finally killed by a procedural vote after a compromise was not found. The amendments would have introduced sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds.

The bill was stalled due to a change of government and the far-right League party now controlling the Senate Justice Committee. In April, MEPs called on the Chair of the Justice Committee to put the Zan law to a vote so that the legislative procedure can continue. The Brothers of Italy party presented another draft law in May, which would have downgraded homophobic crimes and excluded transphobic crimes.

Civil society kept urging the Senate to hold a vote on the original bill. In May, 500,000 signatures in support of the Zan law were handed over to the Senate and protests were held in over 50 cities. Public figures spoke in support of the law. In June, a huge rainbow flag illuminated prominent buildings and monuments in Rome by night to send a message in favour of the Zan law.

Civil society was alarmed that the Vatican urged the

Senate not to adopt the law and "protect" freedom of speech.

In July, the bill eventually moved on from the Senate's Justice Committee, but the process was abruptly interrupted after 154 senators voted in favour of not moving forward with the debate and voting on individual articles of the bill. Out of 287 voting senators, 131 voted against and two abstained.

Meanwhile, anti-LGBT hate crimes continued. According to Arcigay, the media reports about an anti-LGBTI hate crime once every three days. In March, police in Catania beat up several sex workers, some of them trans women and migrants, following numerous raids earlier. Civil society mobilised online calling for a ministerial investigation into what happened. A trans sex worker was assaulted in August in Pompeii. Young lesbian girls were assaulted in Rome by teenagers. A graphic video spread of a gay couple who were assaulted in the metro in Rome in February. A young lesbian was kicked out of her home by her family and received death threats from them after coming out. An 18-year-old committed suicide due to constant bullying and a 12-year-old was beaten up on his way home in Perugia. Many other attacks took place (see here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, and here). An NGO based in Rome said they receive about 60 calls on their hate crime helpline each week asking for legal or psychological support.

Several of these attacks were condemned by political parties, MPs, and local mayors.

The national observatory on lesbophobia launched a survey to collect data about lesbophobic violence. Non Una Di Meno started monitoring femicides nationwide, including 'lesbicidi', murders with a lesbophobic motif.

The European Court of Human Rights found in the J.L. v Italy case that the authorities failed when victim-blaming the survivor of a biphobic gang rape attack and questioning her credibility.

EDUCATION

The University of Palermo introduced new regulations allowing trans students to use an alias of their choice as a first name.

EMPLOYMENT

The Naples Trans Association launched a free 'Transgender Business School', free for trans people.



EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The municipality of Naples voted to establish a Permanent Observatory on LGBT Rights and an Interinstitutional Group in July.

FAMILY

On 9 March, the Constitutional Court ruled on two important cases concerning family rights. First, it stated that in the case of two mothers, it amounts to discrimination that the non-gestational mother has to go through stepchild adoption. Second, it established that in the case of children born out of surrogacy, both fathers must duly be recognised as parents to that child. The Court called on the parliament to urgently legislate on the issues and prevent discrimination.

On 26 March, the Bari Court of Appeal ruled in the case of two fathers that they should both be recognised in their child's birth certificate as parents.

On 31 March, the Supreme Court ruled in the case of a gay couple who adopted their son in the US that they can both be recognised as parents on the child's birth certificate and their son will receive Italian citizenship. The family has fought for the ruling for two years.

In October, a Court in Milan ordered the Mayor to transcribe the birth certificate of the State of Florida featuring two fathers, one a US citizen, the other an Italian citizen.

FOREIGN POLICY

In September, during an LGBTI UN Core Group event, Deputy Minister Benedetto Della Vedova called for a UN strategy to protect LGBTI rights.

In November, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation created the Special Envoy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for the Human Rights of LGBTI People.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Several Pride events took place in person this year. The police shut down an LGBT party in Rome, claiming a violation of COVID-19 restrictions.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Pop star Fedez accused the state TV Rai of censorship after Rai wanted to pre-approve the singer's comments

made at a live concert stream in May. Fedez eventually got the green light and called out the right-wing League party for its anti-LGBT statements and stalling of the Zan law (see under **Bias Motivated Violence**).

HEALTH

In July, the region of Campania adopted a PEP & PrEP protocol to scale up the fight against HIV.

The Guarantor of Private Data decided that a dentist who refused to provide care to an HIV+ client in 2018 and shared this information with him in the waiting room, violated the patient's privacy. The dentist was fined 20,000 euro.

Some LGBTI organisations raised concerns about asking trans people for the vaccine certificate and documents that do not match their gender identity.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers launched a program to address discrimination related to sexual orientation and gender identity and support victims.

UNAR provided funding to 37 projects focusing on preventing discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

In April, a bill for the regulation of surrogacy was filed in parliament. The bill was drafted by numerous jurists and associations for civil rights and reproductive health. Should the other two bills aiming at making surrogacy a crime, even if carried out abroad, start being discussed, this bill should be discussed too.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Casa delle Culture, a shelter for victims of anti-LGBTQI+ discrimination and violence in Naples, opened in May. The Refuge LGBT shelter in Rome, which was under threat of closing down, will remain open thanks to a fundraiser.



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