



# SLOVENIA

## BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In March, MP Branko Grims (Slovenian Democratic Party - SDS) stated during a parliamentary debate that all “LGBTI and cultural marxist indoctrination” must be banned from school and instead, “real” Slovenian tradition and culture should be taught.

The organisers behind the Family Festival stated in an interview in August that although they were not against same-sex couples, they were against ‘LGBT ideology’ as it aims to “appropriate children” and “adopt children” by “skipping the line”. Igor Vovk is the director of Institute Iskreni, who are known for their anti-LGBTI beliefs. The Institute says that homosexuality “can be cured”, that abortion should be banned, and has also advocated against COVID-19 vaccines.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

Legebitra documented six and TransAkcija three hate crimes this year, through their online platforms.

## EDUCATION

Legebitra’s study ‘LGBT youth – let’s break the silence in schools!’ found that one in four LGBT young people in Slovenia witnessed anti-LGBT remarks in school and that in most cases teachers either did not intervene or did so inefficiently.

In June, Legebitra and Ljubljana Pride held an event focusing on the results of the study as well as best practises and recommendations.

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The government, led by far-right Janez Janša, continued the crackdown on journalists and civil society this year. Civil society continued holding mass demonstrations. Civil society remains concerned that Slovenia is following in the footsteps of Hungary and Poland.

TransAkcija published its report on ‘LGBTQI+ people and coming out’, which presents the main findings of a coming out survey in which 477 LGBTQI+ persons participated. The survey examined how people come out, finding for instance that 22% came out through the usage of emojis on social media and 18% through social media posts. Respondents said it was the hardest to come out to their mother (62%) and father (58%).

Transakcija also shared another publication this year, featuring the answers to their coming out survey question: “What would you say or advise someone who has not come out?”. The resource is an empowering collection of supportive messages.

## FAMILY

On 1 March, the government and the Legislative and Legal Service of the National Assembly presented their position on family rights issues, stating that the current legislation does not discriminate against same-sex couples in terms of marriage or adoption rights. Civil society responded with criticism.

## FOREIGN POLICY

Slovenia refused to join other EU countries in speaking out against Hungary this year after the Hungarian government introduced a propaganda law to ban the discussion of LGBT issues in front of minors. Slovenia’s opposition criticised the government.

## HEALTH

In April, Legebitra launched its report ‘Transgender people during the Covid-19 pandemic: access to health services’. The report calls for demedicalising legal gender recognition, training healthcare professionals, and guidelines on trans healthcare facilitate the work of the interdisciplinary team set up by the Ministry of Health and the University Psychiatric Clinic Ljubljana in 2020. The interdisciplinary team met once in 2021, namely in January - further meetings were planned, but always postponed, much to civil society’s concern. TransAkcija also reported difficulties in cooperation, for instance when requesting information about medical procedures only the team knows about.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The increasingly hostile political situation (see under **Equality and Non-discrimination**) continued to place a lot of burden on LGBTI organisations. In February for instance, the governing party SDS sent out a questionnaire to all Slovenian households with stigmatising and scapegoating language about NGOs and the media.

Civil society remained concerned about the negative attitude of the new government towards LGBTI organisations and how that has played a role in the



distribution of funds, for instance in the case of Norwegian grants. Civil society reported that while funding calls did not specifically exclude LGBTI organisations, they made it very difficult for smaller organisations to apply. For instance, some funding calls required that the applicant had at least 50 members and provided documentation proving this. Civil society successfully lobbied for the removal of this requirement, which was not part of the original agreement between Norway and Slovenia, and was also a violation of GDPR regulations.

In October, a European Parliament delegation visiting Slovenia issued a [statement](#) of concern over the ongoing intimidation and pressure on civil society. Prime Minister Janez Janša [called](#) the MEP delegation “Soros puppets”.

## LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

Civil society continued to be excluded from the legal gender recognition (LGR) working group this year, which was [set up](#) by the Ministry of labour, family, social affairs and equal opportunities in 2019. The working group is reported to have finalised its analysis on the legal situation, but this was not published and no further developments took place.

On a positive note, the Government published official forms in July, through which individuals can request their gender marker change. These forms did not exist before, either in physical or online form. The form is also accessible for minors, which civil society saw as an important affirmation that minors can indeed access LGR and not just on an ad hoc basis as before.

## POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Legebitra continued its cooperation with the police on hate crime training this year, and the establishment of LGBTI liaison officers. Legebitra reported that the training is going well and hopes that leadership within the police will maintain and strengthen its commitment to the program.



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