

>THEMES

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

ALBANIA

The implementation of the previous National LGBTI Action Plan remained flawed, with only the Ministry of Health and Social Protection fulfilling their responsibilities and cooperating with CSOs. The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination has also failed to take proactive steps against discrimination and violence.

The new National LGBTI Action Plan (2021-2027) was adopted in November. PINK called for a coordination and monitoring body to oversee implementation, and the establishment of a Transgender Support Fund.

PINK published a report on the human rights of LGBTI people in Albania in the past 10 years, critical of the lack of government action, particularly on trans rights. Aleanca LGBTI published guidelines on the implementation of the SDGs with a focus on LGBTI people.

Aleanca continued its cooperation with the municipalities of Tirana, Vlora, and Lezha to increase their capacity and help develop local LGBTI action plans. The municipality of Kukës withdrew due to the stance of the new mayor.

ANDORRA

Andorra's anti-discrimination body, the Equality Observatory that was set up in 2020, is yet to become operational. Minister Pallarès pledged it would be by the end of 2021. The Observatory will collect data on hate crimes and will also have a specific committee on LGBTIQ+ issues.

The government's Equality Department confirmed in May that three cases were currently being handled, including one of homophobic bullying in school and two focusing on trans young people's right to legal gender recognition. All three cases were reported in 2020. DiversAnd reported that many more cases exist, but reporting is low.

In 2021, DiversAnd learned about seven other cases, one concerning discrimination in sports and six regarding trans young people's name change and social transitioning.

On 28 June, DiversAnd held a training for politicians on trans rights issues, as part of Pride Day. The attendance was lower than expected, but the attendees were receptive and interested in the subject. The last day of Pride events was on 2 July, when the organisers held a

'Pride Dinner' at the Primavera restaurant, which was open and welcoming of all.

The National Plan for Childhood and Adolescence, which was drafted with the participation of DiversAnd, is yet to be published, but the government announced in November that it would implement it from May 2022 onwards.

ARMENIA

on SOGI this year, of which nine were reported to law enforcement bodies. Some of these were rejected, and others have not been processed in a meaningful way. Only one case is at court.

Trans people have increasingly suffered from discrimination and violence during the COVID-19 quarantine, according to interviews conducted by Right Side NGO.

The Ombudsman's 2020 annual report mentioned five discrimination cases based on sexual orientation. Civil society reports that the section on LGBT people should be more comprehensive and in-depth.

The NGO Center for Legal Initiatives published the first ever report on the situation of LGBT prisoners in the country.

AUSTRIA

In June, the Minister of Justice Alma Zadić publicly apologised to victims of criminal persecution in the second Republic and called on the parliament to do the same, which was welcomed by civil society. Prior to 1971, when Austria decriminalised same-sex relations, those persecuted could be sentenced to two-to-five years in prison. The parliament has yet to issue an apology, overturn convictions, and pay compensation.

The Ombudsperson's Office published a guide on gender-sensitive language in June, which was welcomed by civil society.

The Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) announced at this year's party conference that the SPÖ is committed to trans-inclusive feminism.

In July, the Linz municipal council announced a program consisting of six measures to promote and protect the rights of LGBTIQ people.

In October, Austria [delivered](#) a joint statement on the human rights of intersex persons at the UN Human Rights Council, calling for concrete measures to combat harmful practices violence and discrimination based on sex characteristics.

AZERBAIJAN

QueerRadar's survey on LGBTQ+ people's well-being during the 2020 lockdowns [found](#) that many were impacted by a loss of income and housing, had to move back to unsafe family homes, lost their employment, or had difficulty accessing social benefits. The authors highlighted that trans people have been particularly at risk of discrimination and violence since the COVID-19 pandemic started, and that the police did not provide any effective support in these cases.

In April, the US Embassy in Azerbaijan published the detailed '[Report on the human rights situation in Azerbaijan - 2020](#)', highlighting discrimination, violence, and other forms of ill-treatment against LGBTI people as a key concern.

BELARUS

On 10 July, ahead of the August elections, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus again [expressed](#) increasing concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in the country, and the unwillingness of the government to implement previous UN recommendations.

BELGIUM

The federal government failed to have its Interfederal Action Plan on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics ready by the 2021 deadline.

Arc-en-Ciel Wallonie [welcomed](#) that 160 of Wallonia's 262 municipalities raised a rainbow flag on the occasion of IDAHOBIT this year, marking a 19% increase compared to 2020. The figures in the Brussels-Capital Region are close to 100%. In Flanders, all cities hung the flag.

The government adopted its [Gender Mainstreaming Plan](#) in June, which includes a total of 186 political measures.

In September, the Flemish Youth Ministry [announced](#) they would free up an additional 1.54 million euro funding for work with vulnerable youth, but did not specifically mention LGBTQ+ youth. Given the recent violent attacks,

youth organisation Wel Jong expressed concern and launched the #SafetyNotFound campaign with a petition to urge the government for more funding.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The draft national LGBTI Action Plan, completed in late 2020, is yet to be adopted at the federal level. Republika Srpska and Brčko District governments endorsed it, but no developments have taken place since. Civil society has urged the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees to inform them about next steps. The draft Action Plan was prepared by state and civil society representatives, and covers protection from discrimination and violence, the right to private and family life of same-sex partners, asylum, and other key areas. No further developments took place before the end of the year.

In May, the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina joined SOC in holding a [roundtable](#) about gaps between laws and reality for LGBTI people, bringing together key stakeholders.

BULGARIA

Deystvie launched a [platform](#) where victims of anti-LGBTI discrimination or violence get free legal aid and can submit complaints.

Bilitis and GLAS published e-learning modules for employers on non-discrimination (see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)).

Bilitis, GLAS and Deystvie launched the first [LGBTI Strategic Framework and Action Plan in Bulgaria](#), outlining five priorities for the LGBTI movement for 2021-2026.

CYPRUS

On IDAHOBIT (May 17), the Ombudswoman released a statement [warning](#) of the danger of underestimating anti-LGBTI incidents and framing them as isolated cases. The Minister of Justice also [made](#) a public statement on condemn anti-LGBTI discrimination and violence.

On 18 May, Cyprus co-hosted an online IDAHOT+ Forum together with the UK, welcoming around 150 activists and government officials from Europe. In June, the Ministerial Council approved the [National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights](#), which includes eliminating homophobic and transphobic discrimination and exclusion.

In October, Accept - LGBTI Cyprus published a draft [Action Plan for LGBTQI+ Rights](#). The draft was prepared by an interdisciplinary working group, consisting of civil society, university and party representatives, the Ombudswoman's Office and representatives of the European Commission. It has not been endorsed by the government, but civil society is now advocating for its adoption.

NORTHERN CYPRUS

QCA [published](#) an analysis of the legislative framework in the northern part of Cyprus in terms of discrimination against LGBTI people.

CROATIA

Prime Minister Andrej Plenković [said](#) in a statement in July that all minorities should feel safe in the country and that LGBT people should be honoured, not merely tolerated. He also condemned recent hate crimes, especially violence on the day of the 20th Zagreb Pride march.

CZECHIA

The coalition of conservative parties [won](#) the October parliamentary elections, beating the previous government by a narrow margin. Liberal parties performed worse than expected and the parliament does not currently include social democratic parties.

The chairwoman of the major anti-LGBT+ organisation, [Alliance for Family](#) and the spokesperson of the main anti-abortion organisation, [Movement for Life](#), were both [chosen as assistants](#) by two MPs from the conservative Civic Democrats and from Movement ANO, respectively.

The Ombudsman [retained](#) his unsupportive stance towards LGBTIQ+ people, publicly questioning if they are denied any rights whatsoever. Neither the Ombudsman, nor the High Representative for Human Rights took any significant action in support of LGBTIQ+ rights this year. The High Representative co-authored the first ever national LGBTIQ+ strategy but failed to secure support and adoption of the strategy by the outgoing government.

DENMARK

A report of the Ministry of Equality [found](#) that 58% of trans and 36% of intersex respondents experienced discrimination in the past year, most often in healthcare. The government's [bill](#) to extend equal treatment legislation to gender identity, expression, and sex characteristics grounds in all areas of life and sexual

orientation beyond employment was successfully adopted in December. It will enter into force on 1 January 2022.

ESTONIA

On 2 July, Pride took place in Tallinn in the form of a [bicycle march](#), aimed to raise awareness about [inequalities](#) still faced by LGBTQI people in Estonia.

The Estonian Human Rights Centre's [annual human rights review](#) provides a detailed overview of the situation of LGBT rights.

FINLAND

1 February [marked](#) the 50th anniversary of Finland decriminalising same-sex relations.

In October, the Ministry of Justice [published](#) an overview of the human rights situation of LGBTIQ people in Finland. The report aims to support the government in its work to promote the fundamental and human rights of LGBTIQ people and includes a set of proposals to enhance them.

FRANCE

CSOs remain disappointed with the Ministry of Equality's pace of implementing the [National LGBT+ Action Plan](#) (2020-2023) and the Ministry's lack of cooperation with CSOs.

The National Human Rights Institution [launched](#) a new [portal](#) where victims of discrimination can report incidents.

On IDAHOBIT, several ministries and public authorities [launched](#) a campaign against anti-LGBT discrimination and its impact on health.

In July, the Interministerial Delegation for the Fight against Racism and Anti-Semitism (DILCRAH) published [factsheets](#), in collaboration with the CIA - OII France, on the rights of intersex people.

Several LGBTI people [shared](#) their experiences of sexual abuse and harassment under #MeTooGay and CSOs [called](#) for all prevention and support measures to be inclusive of LGBTI people. The LGBTI+ Federation published [resources](#) on domestic violence in lesbian couples. #metoopolitics was launched by women in politics, endorsed by public figures, such as Alice Coffin and openly lesbian senator Mélanie Vogel.

OII Europe and others called for a new draft ‘Guidelines for the promotion and implementation of gender equality’, which is currently based on a binary understanding of sex and gender and excludes trans, intersex, and non-binary people.

The gender neutral pronoun “iel”, which combines “il” and “elle”, was newly introduced in a well-known dictionary, sparking public debate.

GEORGIA

During its third Universal Periodic Review, Georgia received 23 recommendations on SOGIESC issues in April and accepted 22, on discrimination, hate crimes, hate speech, and freedom of assembly.

On 28 April, the Venice Commission urged Georgia to ensure that the appointment process of new Supreme Court judges complies with international human rights law standards and to re-announce the competition. Disregarding the recommendations, the process, which has lacked transparency, impartiality, and independence, continued without changes. On 17 June, nine new judges were appointed.

Reports were leaked in September suggesting that civil society continues being surveilled and that the state has gathered information about people’s identities and contact information. Civil society demanded a stop to intimidation.

In a standalone chapter, the Ombudsperson’s annual report highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the LGBTQI community and lack of adequate response from the state; including, issues related to freedom of assembly, legal gender recognition, hate crimes and discrimination; and the growing anti-gender movement. The Ombudsperson urged the government to introduce LGR regulations and address socio-economic marginalisation. The Ombudsperson faced anti-LGBT backlash for this work.

GERMANY

CSOs continued advocating for constitutional amendments to protect LGBTIQ+ people from discrimination (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

At the meeting of the Federal Council on 28 May, seven federal states introduced a draft law supplementing Article 3 of the Basic Law with a prohibition of discriminated on the basis of ‘sexual and gender identity’.

The state chamber rejected the draft. In the Bundestag, there was a joint motion by the FDP, the Greens and the Left Party to add ‘sexual identity’. The CDU/CSU and SPD blocked this draft in the Committee on Legal Affairs, so it was never voted on in plenary. Later in the year, civil society launched a petition. In the exploratory paper of the SPD, Greens and FDP, an addition to ‘sexual identity’ was agreed.

The new government’s coalition treaty includes numerous actions on LGBTIQ+ rights, including adding ‘sexual identity’ to the Constitution and a national LGBTIQ+ action plan.

On 20 May, the Bundestag voted in favour of the rehabilitation and compensation of soldiers convicted because of being LGBT, but gaps remain.

GREECE

On 29 June, the commission in charge published the National Strategy for Equality of LGBTQI+ people (2021-2023). The commission was set up in March, and included two MPs, two academics and three civil society representatives. It was chaired by the former President of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), Linos Alexandros Sicilianos. The commission launched a public consultation in March, which several NGOs participated in (see [here](#) and [here](#)). Greece’s President Katerina Sakellariopoulou also met with the commission on 17 May and issued a statement on the occasion of IDAHOBIT.

In September, 160 prominent figures in education, academia, and other areas signed a joint letter criticising the Strategy and particularly the inclusion of sex education in schools. Several signatories however stated that they never actually signed on.

On May 17, on the occasion of IDAHOBIT, GTSA and the municipality of Athens launched the ‘Breaking The Silence’ campaign, to tackle anti-LGBTI discrimination and violence.

In August, the mayor of Athens announced that its Department of Equality & Discrimination will strengthen measures to combat anti-LGBT discrimination and called for an Inter-Parliamentary Committee on LGBTI issues.

HUNGARY

The parliament’s 2020 decision to abolish the Equal Treatment Authority (ETA), Hungary’s most important

equality body, entered into force on 1 January 2021. The ETA is now merged into the Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, currently headed by Ákos Kozma, a loyal government supporter who has been silent on LGBTI issues. In June, the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) recommended that Hungary's NHRI be downgraded from A to B status, signalling that it only partially complies with the Paris Principles.

ICELAND

The 2020 Equal Gender Rights Law, which moves away from the previous wording on equality between a "male and female" and gives recognition to those registered with a gender marker beyond these two options, entered into force on 6 January.

IRELAND

Several gay men were arrested by undercover police officers, when cruising in public bathrooms, in what resembles homophobic persecution from decades ago.

The Department of Justice established a working group consisting of representatives from the Department of Justice, An Garda Síochána, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), the Office of the Attorney General and three individuals from the LGBTI+ community, to exonerate men prosecuted when 'homosexuality' was still criminalised.

ITALY

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

KAZAKHSTAN

In February, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Kazakhstan, highlighting discrimination against LGBTI people and the regressive 2020 order that limits trans persons' right to legal gender recognition and access to trans healthcare.

On the occasion of IDAHOBIT in May, the British Embassy in Nursultan released a podcast dedicated to LGBT rights and the LGBTI+ community in Kazakhstan, and the US Embassy placed a rainbow flag on its building. Employees of 20 embassies also released a support message.

KOSOVO

Following the establishment of the new government, Emilia Rexhepi was elected Third Deputy Prime Minister for Minority and Human Rights Issues. As Rexhepi is an opponent of marriage equality, civil society condemned her appointment.

KYRGYZSTAN

Labrys published their report on the needs of LGBT people, in Kyrgyz and Russian, highlighting high levels of institutional discrimination and violence. The report is based on responses from 174 individuals.

Civil society continued advocating for comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, as part of consultations on the National Gender Strategy.

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) recommended Kyrgyzstan to criminalise hate speech and violence against LBT women, ensure their freedom of assembly, and introduce comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation.

LIECHTENSTEIN

In its monitoring report published in May, the European Commission against Racism (ECRI) called on the government to implement its previous recommendations and commission a study about the issues that LGBT people face, along with measures to address those.

LITHUANIA

Lawyer and head of the Lithuanian Centre for Human Rights, Birute Sabatauskaitė was appointed with a strong majority as Lithuania's new equal opportunities ombudsperson. Sabatauskaitė has expertise in gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights.

In May, Vytautas Mizaras, known for his support for the LGBTQ community, was appointed by parliament as a new Constitutional Court judge.

The revision of the Law of Equal Treatment continued to be stalled this year.

LUXEMBOURG

A number of Catholic religious leaders in German speaking countries criticised the Pope's latest hostile statements about LGBT people, in what some call a revolution.

Luxembourg's clergy did not join these efforts, which was criticised by civil society in an open letter.

Subsequently, there was a meeting between Cardinal Hollerich and Rosa Lëtzebuerg, which resulted in a promise not to penalise priests who bless same-sex partnerships. Joint actions between the diocese and the LGBTIQ+ community are being considered for the first time in 2022.

MALTA

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Governance, Edward Zammit Lewis announced a month-long campaign for LGBTIQ people's equality in May, on the occasion of IDAHOT. Lewis thanked the Human Rights Directorate for its work and commitment to date on ensuring the implementation of the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy and Action Plan.

The process of adopting the Equality Act, which would further strengthen rights protections for LGBTI people, continued to be stalled this year while the Ministry for Equality, Research and Innovation undertook the drafting of further amendments that will mostly affect the ability of the proposed Human Rights and Equality Commission to issue penal sanctions.

The SOGIGESC Unit of the Maltese government published its annual report in September as part of its annual conference.

In October, Malta launched its first Anti-racism Strategy.

MOLDOVA

Moldova elected its first female President, Maia Sandu, in late 2020. Sandu defeated former President Igor Dodon, who had criticised her for having participated in Pride marches. Nonetheless, the Action and Solidarity Party, which Sandu previously headed, seems to have failed those most vulnerable during the parliamentary elections this year, by hardly mentioning LGBT people, and other minorities in its program.

MONACO

The fourth visit of the European Commission against Racism (ECRI) to Monaco took place in May and June.

MONTENEGRO

The number of local government focal points on LGBTI rights increased from 17 in 2020 to 21 in 2021.

Juventas, Queer Montenegro and Spectra continued to support local municipalities, in cooperation with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights. The municipality of Mojkovac will adopt a local LGBTI action plan soon, and the municipalities of Pljevlja, Cetinje and Bar are in the drafting process.

The Ombudsman's Office published an anti-discrimination manual this year.

Civil society reports that due to political tensions, human rights issues were difficult to put on the government's agenda this year.

NETHERLANDS

On 13 March, ten party leaders and representatives signed a new Rainbow Ballot Box Agreement with COC Netherlands, committing to LGBTI equality ahead of the elections. The Agreement includes measures against violence, for respect and acceptance in schools, transition leave, the option of getting an 'X' gender marker, and a legal ban on unnecessary operations on intersex people without their consent. The previous Agreement (2017) was crucial for law reform over the past years and CSOs now hope the same. In December, the new government coalition committed to implementing the new Rainbow Agreement.

In May, the city of The Hague signed the Dutch Intersex Treaty.

A government report found that the state is responsible for discrimination against LGBTI people in the past century. Civil society demanded a public apology.

TNN's annual monitoring report found a rise in anti-trans discrimination for the fourth consecutive year.

SAVE and Trans United Europe launched 'The situation of migrant sex workers in the Netherlands'.

The first national study about bisexual people's experiences highlights invisibility, exclusion and prejudice.

After almost 20 years of campaigning by COC, the Senate adopted the first reading of Constitutional amendments to cover LGBTI people in the prohibition of discrimination. The second reading will continue into 2022.

NORTH MACEDONIA

The CPPD was established at the beginning of 2021. Despite technical and administrative issues, it has issued several opinions.

The new draft Law on Gender Equality is expected to be tabled in early 2022.

NORWAY

In June, the government presented its new LGBTQI Action Plan (2021-2024). The Action Plan includes numerous measures, but civil society is concerned that it lacks clearly defined goals and the necessary funds to implement the measures. Civil society has also warned that in terms of conversion therapy, only assessment and knowledge acquisition are listed, and not a ban. The issues of children and young people are not specifically addressed either.

A number of important studies about the situation of LGBTI people in Nordic countries were published this year, including Mapping and analysis on LGBTI in the Nordics. For the first time since 2013, the government also commissioned a study on the living conditions of LGBTI people in Norway. The study 'Sexual orientation, gender diversity and living conditions' showed some alarming findings, including a third of trans people having experienced sexual abuse and a third have attempted suicide. Overall, trans people scored lowest on living conditions and bisexual people scored very low on mental health and other indicators. Cisgender lesbians and gay men reported living conditions similar to cisgender heterosexuals.

POLAND

Several trans people took part in KPH's Trans Day of Visibility video campaign in March this year.

In April, the Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe rejected the entire list of Polish candidates for the European Court of Human Rights, including Aleksander Stępkowski, the founder of the far-right Ordo Iuris.

More than 100 civil society organisations condemned the parliament's move in April to remove the Ombudsperson in an unlawful political process lacking transparency, independence, or impartiality. Adam Bodnar's mandate expired in September 2020, but the law sets out that he should stay in office until his successor is appointed.

In April, the Constitutional Tribunal, which lost its independence years ago, ordered Adam Bodnar's removal. Bodnar had petitioned to have the head of the court Julia Przyłębska removed from the position, due to her political affiliation with the ruling PiS party. Bodnar embodied one of the last standing pillars of Polish democracy.

A few days before the EC launched an infringement procedure against Poland, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that Poland's new disciplinary chamber, a judiciary oversight body, was contrary to the EU law. The body is mandated to discipline judges, including by sanctioning them for certain judgments or for referring cases to the ECJ.

KPH gave out its third annual Equality Crown awards to several LGBT+ people and allies, including politicians, lawyers, and influencers. KPH also released a list of companies who support LGBT+ rights.

Open For Business published a new report 'The Economic Case for LGBT+ Inclusion in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE): Hungary, Poland, Romania and Ukraine', finding that anti-LGBT+ discrimination comes at a high economic cost and that inclusion contributes to economic growth.

Dunja Mijatović, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights issued a Human Rights Comment in August on the worrying trend of anti-LGBTI backlash across Europe, highlighting the increasingly hostile political rhetoric in a number of countries, including in Poland.

PORTUGAL

Civil society expressed serious concern about the appointment of João Caupers as the president of the Constitutional Court in February. Caupers is known for homophobic and anti-human rights positions, including about marriage equality.

RUSSIA

The fifth Trans* Camp took place in Krasnodar in June, bringing together 20 people.

T*Revers made a number of resources available this year, including for parents of trans people, medical professions working with trans people, and others. In May, Revers also published the book 'Helping Competently, Helping Meaningfully, Helping Carefully, Helping Everyone', for mental health professionals.

Coming Out [released](#) a study on the needs of the most vulnerable LGBT* communities in St. Petersburg with a focus on poverty and access to humanitarian aid. The study included sex workers and people who use drugs, and featured 50 in-depth interviews.

The [annual report](#) of the St Petersburg Ombudsman for human rights [mentioned](#) human rights violations against LGBT+ people, highlighting threats and insults, the restriction of freedom of expression and assembly, domestic violence, and discrimination as the most common violations.

Stimul LGBT's 2020 annual report [documented](#) 74 cases of hate crimes and discrimination based on SOGI in the Moscow region.

QWNC published a [study](#) on the coping strategies for non-heterosexual women and transgender people in the North Caucasus, where living conditions and survival paths were recorded.

SERBIA

In May, the parliament [amended](#) the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination and added 'sex characteristics' as a protected ground. The process started back in 2019, so civil society welcomed the step.

The parliament also adopted the [Law on Gender Equality](#) in the same month, prohibiting discrimination on grounds of sex, gender, and sex characteristics and lists among vulnerable groups those who "find themselves in an unequal position" due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

There is still no new Anti-discrimination strategy in place, since the previous one expired in 2018. On 10 December however, Minister of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue Gordana Čomić [announced](#) the government would adopt a Human Rights Strategy.

SLOVAKIA

Extremist rhetoric across the political spectrum has greatly increased over the past two years, since the 2020 elections. During the October parliamentary session, five legislation proposals were tabled by MPs, who were previously members of the far-right party [I'SNS](#) (People's Party Our Slovakia) and now represent the far-right Republika party. These include proposals to amend

the Constitution [saying](#) that gender at birth cannot be changed and that a father is a man and a mother is a woman; to establish that the state can protect gender at birth and the the promotion of "homosexuality, gender reassignment and deviation from gender identity acquired by birth" must be banned from schools, in advertising or broadcasting; to [ban](#) legal gender recognition; to ban the display of rainbow flags on state buildings (see under **Family** and **Legal Gender Recognition**).

In lack of clear support from the centre right governing party OĽaNO, none have been passed yet. Nonetheless, the proposals resembling the Hungarian propaganda law received votes from dozens of MPs, including the leader of the social democrat Smer, Robert Fico. Several MPs from ruling parties Sme rodina and OĽaNO have publicly [declared](#) their support for the repressive laws. The further tabling of such laws is [expected](#) in the near future.

The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, Slovakia's equality body, published an [expert opinion](#) finding that excluding those who have a psychiatric diagnosis of being trans from insurance of mortgages or other loans is discriminatory. The Centre called on insurance companies to remove the restriction. Incoming director Silvia Porubánová was the first representative of th

SLOVENIA

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.

SPAIN

FELGTBI+ welcomed the overruling of a problematic judgment in June, which imposed a fine on a man who hid his sexual orientation from his wife.

SWEDEN

In January the government presented its LGBTQI Action Plan for 2020-2023, which includes measures to address discrimination against intersex people and to respond to suicide rates. Civil society expressed concern about the lack of clear prioritisation of the legal gender recognition law reform and improvements on asylum.

SWITZERLAND

In February, the Council of States law commission launched a public consultation on revising the sex offences legislation, which could incorporate gender-neutral definitions.

The first parliamentary LGBTI intergroup was set up in June, with members from all parliamentary groups.

During the fall session, the parliament approved a law to establish Switzerland's first National Human Rights Institution.

The Constitutional Council of the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden presented its draft constitution, which would make it the first canton to explicitly prohibit discrimination on grounds of GIESC (SO is also covered).

In February, the City of Zurich presented its new Equality Action Plan (2019-2022), including a campaign against gender-based and anti-LGBT violence.

In May, the Basel-Stadt government council elected long-time TGNS volunteer and trans rights expert Étienne Rembold as a member of the Equal Opportunities Commission, who was later appointed its president. In August, the government council presented a revision of the cantonal equality act to make it explicitly inclusive of SOGIESC and launched a public consultation on the law proposal.

In June, the Luzern government council launched for public consultation its planning report 2022-2025 to promote gender equality and LGBTI rights, the first of its kind.

In December, the City of Lausanne presented its first LGBTIQ+ strategic plan.

TAJIKISTAN

In March, the draft of Tajikistan's first anti-discrimination law was sent to the parliament for a hearing. The initial draft, prepared by the working group that includes the Ombudsperson, representatives of the Ministry of Justice, and Members of Parliament, listed sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds. Civil society reported in July that the most recent draft omitted sexual orientation, and gender identity was also dropped by the end of the year.

Previously, Tajikistan received several recommendations from UN actors to introduce comprehensive and inclusive anti-discrimination legislation.

TURKEY

In March, Turkey withdrew from the Istanbul Convention, sparking outcry among local civil society and the Council of Europe. Turkish civil society organised under the United 4 Istanbul campaign, expressing grave concern about the spillover effects of the government's regressive move. Several rallies took place on 1 July, which marked Turkey's official withdrawal. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) was marked by women's rights and LGBTI+ activists protesting in various cities in Turkey. In Istanbul protesters were met with police violence, including rubber bullets and tear gas.

TURKMENISTAN

In January 2021, Kyrgyz Indigo published the milestone report "Life of LGBT Persons in Turkmenistan", finding high levels of fear and distrust in the LGBT community and experiences of extortion, blackmail, and harassment by authorities.

Group of men and male couples willing to check-in hotel rooms were reportedly questioned and, in some cases, not allowed to stay together in the same room. An anonymous witness told about the incident when a group of men "representing the cultural sector" came to Daraganata town to participate in the local festival, they were forced to register in separate rooms at one of the local hotels, and were forewarned to be questioned by the police if they decided to room in together.

UKRAINE

In March, Ombudsperson Lyudmila Denisova presented her annual report, highlighting that her office received 11 reports on anti-LGBT+ discrimination in 2020.

Ukraine adopted a new Human Rights Strategy (2021–2023) and Action Plan this year. The Strategy includes weak references, but the Action Plan retains all LGBT rights components, which had not been implemented in the previous period. These include the criminalisation of hate crimes on SOGI grounds and the development of a draft law on registered partnership for both different-sex and same-sex couples.

UNITED KINGDOM

In March, Jayne Ozanne, a survivor of conversion therapy, James Morton, and Ellen Murray all quit the government's LGBT+ Advisory Panel due to their concerns of the government's growing hostility towards LGBT+ and particularly trans people. The Advisory Panel was disbanded in April. Minister for Women and Equalities Liz Truss said a new panel would be set up soon.

In March, the Court of Session ruled that the Scottish Government acted lawfully in including trans women in an equal opportunities measure to improve women's representation on public boards.

The UK government postponed the deadline for its consultation on gender neutral bathrooms, sparking criticism from trans groups.