

## &gt;THEMES

## FOREIGN POLICY

## ARMENIA

In May, the courts [reviewed](#) the decision of the Migration Service which could lead to the possible extradition of Salman Mukayev to Russia. Mukayev was previously detained by the authorities in Chechnya on charges of homosexuality and allegedly tortured.

## AUSTRIA

After weeks of debate, Austria [joined](#) the European Commission's proceedings against Hungary in late March and [expressed](#) a firm stance against its anti-LGBT propaganda law.

The Austrian Embassy in Tehran, Iran [outed](#) an Iranian citizen living in Austria. The Ombudsperson requested a formal apology from the Embassy.

## AZERBAIJAN

Government-affiliated media published a number of [articles](#) undermining international agencies and their support of LGBTI people's rights. State-controlled national television channel AzTV accused the USA of "bringing the LGBT system into politics" in one of their [programmes](#).

## BELGIUM

Belgium joined the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

## BULGARIA

Bilitis's [study](#) found that in the last three years 39% of LGBT respondents [had](#) difficulty finding a job.

On May 17, [Sofia Pride Business Forum](#) took place for the first time, attracting over 60 representatives of different companies.

## CYPRUS

Cyprus acted as vice-chair in the Council of Europe's newly formed Working Group on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics (GT-ADI-SOGI) of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) this year.

Civil society [expressed](#) alarm that Cyprus [did not join](#) the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary.

## CZECHIA

Several politicians [criticised](#) Hungary's ongoing crackdown on LGBT+ rights, such as fining a bookstore for selling a YA novel with queer characters. Nevertheless, Czechia [did not join](#) the European Commission's [infringement](#) proceedings against Hungary.

## DENMARK

The Ministry of Development redirected aid to Uganda following consultations with civil society after the country [passed](#) its harshest ever anti-LGBT law this spring.

Denmark [joined](#) the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary.

## FRANCE

France [joined](#) the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

The French envoy for LGBT+ rights [cancelled](#) his visit to Cameroon after he was declared persona non grata.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs [announced](#) a 2 million EURO fund for French embassies to support LGBT+ human rights defenders.

## GEORGIA

The attacks against Tbilisi Pride this year were [seen](#) by many as a [threat](#) to Georgia's EU candidacy status (see under Freedom of Assembly). In September, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy [said](#) during their country visit in September that "more signs of progress" were required.

On November 8th, the European Commission [recommended](#) that Georgia is granted candidate status for joining the EU. The European [Commission's report on Georgia](#) critically evaluates a number of LGBTQI protections, including hate crime, hate speech, LGR, etc.

On December 14, Georgia was granted EU candidate status, on the understanding that the steps set out in the European Commission's [recommendation](#) of 8 November 2023 are taken.

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### GERMANY

Germany joined the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

The Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development presented their new feminist foreign and development policy guidelines.

The German government included sexual orientation and gender identity in the update to its international criminal law legislation in October.

A German citizen was fined and deported from Russia for engaging in so-called 'LGBT propaganda'.

### HUNGARY

(See under Freedom of Expression)

In May, the European Parliament adopted a resolution expressing concern about Hungary's ability to take on the EU Presidency in 2024, as it has systematically undermined the EU's fundamental values. In 2022, the EP passed a resolution which identified Hungary as a "hybrid regime of electoral autocracy" instead of a democracy.

In June, Hungary also refused to support the EU Justice Affairs Council's conclusions on the protection of LGBTI communities in Europe.

### LITHUANIA

LGL held the first ever conference focusing on employment, Direction: Employment. Strengthening LGBTQ Workplace Inclusion, which was joined by the Minister of Economy and Innovation and several Ambassadors.

### IRELAND

Ireland joined the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

### ITALY

In March, the Senate voted against Italy's support for the European Commission regulation for cross-border recognition of same-sex parents.

### LUXEMBOURG

Luxembourg joined the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary in April.

### MALTA

Malta joined the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

In May, activists gathered outside the Honorary Consulate of Slovakia in Malta to protest on the de facto ban on legal gender recognition.

### NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands joined the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

### POLAND

Poland did not join the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

Poland refused to support the EU Justice Affairs Council's conclusions on the protection of LGBTI communities in Europe. The Minister of Justice said the conclusions force "special LGBT rights" on people.

The European Commission continued to withhold EU funds due to rule of law violations.

### PORTUGAL

Portugal joined the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

### ROMANIA

Romania did not join the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

### RUSSIA

24 February marked the one year anniversary of Russian troops invading Ukraine - the war continues to date. The intensified onslaught on LGBT rights was tied into the narrative of the invasion this year. The parliament adopted amendments to the law conscription and military duty several times this year (see here, here and

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[here](#)). Civil society continued providing information to those participating in protests or [objecting](#) to the war and [conscription](#). Trans women have been subject to the draft if they had not changed their legal gender and many were barred from leaving the country. In 2023, the decree prohibiting dismissal from military service continued to be in effect until mobilisation was stopped. [This prevents](#) LGBT people who oppose the war in Ukraine from leaving military service at the risk of being imprisoned.

### SLOVAKIA

Slovakia [did not join](#) the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBTI+ legislation.

### SLOVENIA

Slovenia [joined](#) the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

### SWEDEN

Sweden [joined](#) the European Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT legislation.

As one of the [final steps](#) of the Swedish Presidency of the EU, the EU Justice Affairs Council adopted [conclusions](#) on the protection of LGBTI communities in Europe.

### UKRAINE

24 February marked one year since Russian troops [invaded](#) Ukraine - the war continues to date. The war has greatly [increased](#) the visibility of LGBTI people, with some estimates [saying](#) between 2-7% of the army is from the community.

A year after Ukraine [received](#) EU candidate status, the European Commission's report [welcomed](#) the advances to date and encouraged Ukraine to maintain progress, including on family rights and combating hate speech.