



CYPRUS

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In May, on the occasion of a televised political debate, Elam leader, Christos Christou insinuated that Diko leader Nicholas Papadopoulos might engage with LGBTI ‘parties’ with the objective of discrediting his opponent’s stance.

Accept-LGBTI+ documented the case of a trans woman in Famagusta who allegedly endured persistent physical and verbal assaults. The perpetrators spray-painted threatening graffiti targeting her identity outside of her home.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

During a meeting of the House Human Rights Committee, representatives of an LGBTI organisation expressed concern over the rise in reported hate incidents targeting the LGBTI community in Cyprus.

EDUCATION

In February, a children’s book, which had been donated to a local kindergarten by the school’s parent’s association, was subjected criticism because some illustrations featured two women embracing a child and two men holding another child. The backlash against these depictions led to the book being withdrawn by the school itself. Amidst criticism by prominent LGBTI organisations, the Ministry of Education distanced itself from the removal of the book from the school catalogue, pointing instead to a decision allegedly taken by the parent’s association of the school.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In February, Deputy Government Spokesman Yiannis Antoniou expressed that LGBTI rights, including same-sex marriage and adoption, are not currently prioritised in either the political or social spheres in Cyprus. Antoniou acknowledged that while there might be discussions in the future, the stagnation of past efforts—such as in enabling adoption for LGBTI couples and advancing measures previously championed by President Christodoulides during his campaign—highlight the slow pace and complexity of reforms in this area.

FAMILY

In January, the archbishop of Cyprus stated that LGBTI marriages infringe on God’s predicaments, expressing support for the Church of Greece’s opposition to LGBTI marriage and childbearing. This followed the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece’s unanimous decision to strongly oppose the Greek government’s proposed bill on same-sex marriage and adoption.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

June 1 marked the tenth year anniversary of the Cyprus Pride march, with the participation of foreign diplomats under the ‘Diplomats for Equality’ banner.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Queer Cyprus Association, in collaboration with Accept LGBTI Cyprus, announced the “Come Out 4 Europe” pledge prepared by ILGA-Europe to the European Parliament candidates. As a result of these efforts, 19 out of 45 candidates signed the “Come Out 4 Europe” pledge.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In February, Cyprus refrained from congratulating Greece following its landmark legislation on same-sex marriage, a significant omission considering the close ties between the two nations.

In May, the Cyprus chapter of Diplomats for Equality released a joint statement from 26 diplomatic missions based in Cyprus in anticipation of Pride Month and the 2024 IDAHOBIT. The statement urged Cyprus to consider amending legislation to allow same-sex couples in civil unions the right to adopt, and expressed hope for progress on legal gender recognition and same-sex marriages entered into abroad.

In October, the Cyprus Council of Ministers approved the creation of a National LGBTI Strategy aimed at combating discrimination, ensuring equality and safety, and building an inclusive society for LGBTI people.. The Commissioner for Citizens’ Rights, Panayiotis Palates, was appointed to coordinate the preparation and implementation of this strategy. Following the Cabinet meeting, Palates announced that an inter ministerial committee would oversee the strategy’s development. Palates explained that the National Strategy would align Cyprus’ legislation with European Union standards.

PUBLIC OPINION

A poll by a research company GPO revealed that a majority of Cypriot citizens oppose both same-sex marriage and same-sex adoption rights. According to the data, 32.2% of respondents strongly support same-sex marriage, while 16.9% are likely in favour, 5.4% are likely against, and 42.9% are firmly opposed. On same-sex adoption, only 16.3% are firmly in favour, 11.9% are likely in favour, 9.5% are likely against, and a significant 60.2% are firmly opposed. The poll further underscored that the proposal of a national referendum on these matters had 36.1% of respondents in favor or likely supportive of the idea, while 60.9% were likely or firmly against it, and 3% being undecided.

NORTHERN CYPRUS

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

Several same-sex couples reported difficulties accessing basic services, particularly around residency and 'legal' documentation. A same-sex couple contacted Queer Cyprus about a residence permit for a non-Cypriot partner. The couple reported that the officer dealing with their case requested additional, previously unrequired documents, citing a recent system change as the reason when justification was requested.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

Widespread online hate speech continued not to be effectively investigated.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

Both the Pride March on 17 May and the United Pride March on 7 September were targeted by groups of underage boys who threw stones at participants in the presence of police officers. Despite witnessing the attacks, the officers remained passive and did not intervene.

EDUCATION

The "[Rainbow Education Programme for Psychological Counsellors and Guidance Professionals](#)" series was held in collaboration with the Cyprus Turkish Psychological Counselling And Guidance Association (KT-PDR) and the Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Trade Union (KTÖS) at the Cyprus Turkish Secondary Education Teachers' Union (KTOEÖS) Office in Nicosia in March within the scope of the Rainbow Project funded by the European Union under the Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community and implemented by the Queer Cyprus.

FAMILY

Reports to the Queer Cyprus' Solidarity Line highlighted ongoing cases of family and social pressure against LGBTI people. A lesbian woman was subjected to intense scrutiny and control by her parents after they accessed her private messages without consent, demanding that she distance herself from her partner. Similarly, trans people faced rejection and threats from their families, further perpetuating a culture of fear and marginalisation.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

In May, on the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia, and Transphobia, the yearly [Pride march](#) of Northern Cyprus took place, seeing the participation of local leaders.

In September, the "[United by Pride](#)" event organised by the Queer Collective CY, with the participation of Accept LGBTI Cyprus, African LGBTIQ+ Community Cyprus, LGBT Filipinas, and Queer Cyprus Association held two parallel Pride marches. The third edition of the initiative represented not just a celebration of diversity, it also emphasised the urgent need for cooperation, solidarity, and action, particularly in a politically divided Cyprus.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Reports from the solidarity line show violations of privacy, particularly within family settings. Several LGBTI people, including teachers, expressed fear about being outed or facing career repercussions due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

HEALTH

Access to healthcare remains precarious for the LGBTI community, particularly those living with HIV. One person who tested positive for HIV was unable to complete their education and left the island due to inadequate healthcare services and unresolved residency status, raising concerns about the availability of HIV treatment in the region.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

A case was recorded of a trans man who successfully updated his Turkish and southern Cyprus identification documents in line with his gender identity but faced difficulties with northern Cyprus documents. The case underscored how the lack of harmonisation between jurisdictions creates significant challenges for trans individuals seeking legal recognition.



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