

ALBANIA

In July, the United Nations Independent Expert on Protection Against Violence and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity [emphasised](#) the need to address legislative gaps by establishing a straightforward and affordable administrative procedure for legal gender recognition. Additionally, he recommended taking steps to make schools safe and inclusive environments for all children and called for improvements in the processes for reporting, documenting, and investigating bias-motivated crimes.

ANDORRA

The Department of Equality Policies and Diversand launched a [visibility campaign](#) on IDAHOBIT (May 17).

ARMENIA

In January, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe issued a [written statement](#) regarding anti-discrimination legislation in Armenia. In the statement, the Assembly urged the Armenian Government and Parliament to include protections based on sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, and sex characteristics in their proposed draft 'law on equality'.

AUSTRIA

In March, Austria set up a [compensation fund](#) of 33 million euros to provide financial compensation to LGBTI people who faced prosecution because of their sexual orientation under the discriminatory provisions that remained in force until the early 2000s.

In May, the United Nations CAT [advocated](#) for legal measures to prohibit unnecessary medical treatments on intersex children, compensation for those affected, and the creation of counselling and support structures. These recommendations align with those formulated in 2015, which already called on Austria to protect intersex individuals from harmful interventions.

In September, GREVIO issued its [evaluation report](#) on combating violence against women in Austria, offering specific recommendations to the country. The report included a [recommendation](#) to gather data on "forced sterilisation," in response to which Austria announced that the feedback would serve as a catalyst to gather data on the prevalence of forced sterilisations and forced abortions in the country.

AZERBAIJAN

In April, the ECtHR issued a [ruling](#) on several applications against Azerbaijan concerning LGBTI rights. These applications stemmed from events in September 2017, when Azerbaijani police arrested multiple LGBTI people under various pretexts, leading to their mistreatment, illegal detention, and discrimination.

In 2019, Azerbaijan acknowledged the violations and offered compensation through a unilateral declaration. However, the applicants expressed dissatisfaction, citing inadequate compensation and acknowledgment. The ECtHR reviewed the government's submission and removed 19 applications from its list, stating that further examination was unnecessary given the government's admission and compensation offer.

BELARUS

In March, the HRC passed a [resolution](#) calling for the immediate establishment of a group of independent experts to oversee the human rights situation in Belarus.

BELGIUM

The Belgian LGBTI organisations Prisme, Çavaria, and RainbowHouse Brussels received accreditation under a new framework introduced by the federal government. Accreditation is necessary for accessing subsidies. This accreditation follows a bill amending anti-discrimination legislation, which allows umbrella organisations and associations to apply for recognition every five years. The first accreditation cycle began on January 1, 2024, and will end on December 31, 2028. These organisations were recognised and can now apply annually for subsidies from the Minister (or the Secretary of State) to support their activities. The financial support is intended for the structural operation of the organisations and the implementation of work programs focused on federal policies to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The Institute for Gender Equality released an awareness-raising [report](#) to encourage trans and non-binary people to exercise their human rights by putting them in contact with competent actors and service-providers.

As part of the Walloon Plan for the inclusion of LGBTI people for 2022-2024, Wallonia launched an awareness campaign developed by the SPW IAS in close collaboration with the Prisme Federation on the [discrimination](#) and [violence](#) experienced by LGBTI people. The campaign aimed to highlight many organisations and support structures available for victims or witnesses of violence or discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.

In May, in celebration of the IDAHOBIT, the Museum of Walloon Life launched a [collection](#) of objects, archives, photos, and testimonies related to the history of LGBTI movements in Wallonia. This social history museum committed to tracing the evolution of Pride marches, queer culture, sexual orientations, and gender identities within its collections.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In April, the ECRI published the [report](#) for its sixth monitoring

cycle, encouraging authorities to provide a legal framework affording same-sex relationships recognition. The report also asked to guarantee a quick, transparent and accessible process based on clear, precise and foreseeable legal provisions by which transgender persons can obtain legal gender recognition.

In October, in response to the proposal of law on Amendments of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (see also under Police and Law Enforcement), the United Nations Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders addressed an [open letter](#) to the national authorities. In their letter, the UN bodies argued that the proposed removal of the term 'gender identity' from the Criminal Code could lead to the removal of human rights protections for vulnerable people, in violation of BiH's human rights obligations.

CROATIA

In March, President Zoran Milanović held a [meeting](#) with representatives from kolekTIRV, the Association for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Trans, Intersex, and Gender Variant Persons, who presented the campaign "I am like you." The campaign highlights the needs and problems of gender-diverse persons, with an emphasis on the right to easy access to health services.

In May, the city of Rijeka announced that it would once more [display the LGBTI flag](#) on the municipal administration building to mark International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia.

In June, representatives of local governance like the mayor of Zagreb, Tomislav Tomašević, deputy-mayor Luka Korlaet, and the president of the city assembly Joško Klisović, as well as politicians from the Možemo! and the SDP parties, [joined the Zagreb pride parade](#).

In June, Parliament approved a [report](#) from the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality highlighting the extent of both physical and psychological violence against LGBTI people. According to the Ombudsperson, some media still perpetuate negative stereotypes, undermine the rights of LGBTI people, and contribute to an intolerant and hostile environment. Such portrayals, the Ombudsperson argues, foster a sense of exclusion and impede LGBTI people's ability to fully exercise their rights.

The UN Human Rights Committee published its [findings](#) on Croatia, expressing concerns about the ongoing prejudice, discrimination, and hate crimes against LGBTI people. The Committee's observations highlight a troubling absence of targeted goals and activities in national strategies and policies designed to prevent and address discrimination against LGBTI

persons. As part of its concluding observations, the Committee urged Croatia to integrate specific measures into national strategies and action plans to combat discrimination, prejudice, and hate crimes against LGBTI people. Furthermore, the Committee asked Croatia to ensure their active involvement in the development and implementation of these measures.

In July, a [roundtable organised](#) by the Možemo! Parliamentary Club was held in the Croatian Parliament, focusing on the theme "Anti Gender Movements and Violence Against Women".

CYPRUS

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.

FINLAND

In March, the Bishops' Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland [endorsed a proposal](#) to add a provision to the church order to recognise two definitions of marriage: one between a man and a woman and another between two people, allowing priests to officiate same-sex weddings. By May, the proposal had [moved](#) to the Church Council of Turku for review. It is currently under examination by the legal committee, which has requested input from the basic committee.

Helsinki Pride organisers confirmed the [participation](#) of members from the Social Democrats, the Swedish People's Party, the Left Alliance, and the Greens in its yearly Pride event. The governing NCP, Finns Party, Christian Democrats, and the opposition Centre Party and Movement Now did not participate.

The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Transport and Communications have also [announced](#) that Pride would not be reflected in their activities or communications.

FRANCE

In March, the National Assembly unanimously passed a [bill](#) in its first reading aimed at recognising and compensating the harm suffered by gay people historically persecuted in France.

In April, the Court of Justice of the European Union [heard a case](#) challenging the French railway company SNCF's requirement for passengers to select "Mr" or "Ms" when buying tickets. Filed by the Mousse Association on behalf of 64 people, the lawsuit argues that this practice violates GDPR and EU non-discrimination laws. In January 2025, the [CJEU ruled](#) that the practice was unlawful, stating that collecting gender markers is unnecessary and potentially discriminatory, setting a precedent for compliance with GDPR across the EU.

The DILCRAH and Sport et Citoyenneté launched the "[For an Inclusive and Respectful Sport - Collection of Good Practices 2024](#)" initiative, a collection of practical measures and recommendations aimed at creating a more inclusive and respectful sporting environment for LGBTI people.

In June, a [poster campaign](#) aimed at combating LGBTI-phobic discrimination in sports was launched by the Lyon LGBTI + centre, the regional prefecture, the City of Lyon, and the City of Villeurbanne in the Lyon metropolitan area, featuring posters that highlight the harassment faced by athletes.

(See also under Participation in Public, Cultural, and Political Life.)

GEORGIA

In June, the Venice Commission [declared](#) the legislative proposal for the [foreign agents bill](#) non-compliant with European and international standards. The Commission's [review](#) condemned the draft constitutional law as detrimental and unsatisfactory, asserting that it exacerbates prejudices and stereotypes against LGBTI people.

GERMANY

In January, ZDF, a German public-service television broadcaster, aired a [documentary](#) on the persecution of LGBTI people under the Nazi rule.

In September, Olaf Scholz became the first chancellor in German history to give a [speech](#) on the rights of LGBTI people, opening a queer human rights conference of his own party, SPD.

HUNGARY

The European Parliament decided to [challenge](#) the European Commission's decision to release €10 billion in frozen assets to Hungary. The Parliament argued that the release was a concession to blackmail by Hungary, which had threatened to block EU accession talks with Ukraine, undermining efforts to address Hungary's deteriorating rule of law, including issues related to academic freedom and LGBTI rights.

In November, the Court of Justice of the European Union held a [hearing](#) in the [infringement case](#) brought by the European Commission against Hungary's legislation that restricts minors' access to information about the LGBTI community, deeming the law discriminatory and in violation of EU law, including Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union. The procedure has been [supported](#) by 15 EU Member States and the European Parliament.

The UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief made an official visit to Hungary. As part of the visit, the Rapporteur also met with LGBTI activists discussing how religious teachings are instrumentalised to undermine LGBTI rights and the various forms of exclusion suffered by LGBTI believers and clergy.

ICELAND

Guðrún Karls Helgudóttir, the incoming Bishop of Iceland, the church's past on the LGBTI community, underlining the debt owed by the church to LGBTI people.

IRELAND

In April, Joe O'Brien, the Minister of State for Community Development, Integration, and Charities, [announced](#) that 18 projects would be awarded funding through the National Integration Fund 2023.

Duncan Smith, Labour TD for Dublin Fingal, has [criticised](#) Health Minister Stephen Donnelly for failing to engage with trans advocacy groups. Smith also called for an engagement of trans advocacy groups in the appointment of the clinical lead for the National Gender Service's new care model.

In May, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth announced the development of a new [strategy](#) to succeed the National LGBTI Inclusion Strategy. The upcoming strategy aims to establish multilevel [consultation processes](#) with interested community members to enhance LGBTI inclusion, safeguard rights, and improve the overall quality of life for LGBTI people.

In June, the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman, [unveiled](#) €1.3 million in funding

to support LGBTI communities and launched the 2024 LGBTI Community Services Funding Call. This financial commitment is part of a broader effort to advance equality in Ireland, with an emphasis on new national strategies aimed at supporting LGBTI inclusion. The announcement included a 62% increase in funding for LGBTI initiatives, aimed at strengthening the national LGBTI infrastructure. Additionally, the budget of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission has been increased by €1.021 million. In December, the Department announced the allocation of funding to 24 LGBTI projects under the 2024 LGBTI Community Services Funding Call and the LGBTI Youth Fund. A total of €1,398,916 will be distributed to support various organisations across Ireland.

ITALY

In March, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe released a report underscoring the trend of ultra-conservative governments exploiting LGBTI people to bolster their political standing under the guise of defending “traditional values.” The report urged governments and authorities, among them Italy, to develop and fund public awareness campaigns and training programs to better educate the public about the rights and experiences of LGBTI people.

In April, the European Parliament denounced the rise of anti-LGBTI rhetoric within some European governments, expressing concern about how such rhetoric undermines global efforts towards the universal decriminalisation of LGBTI identities.

In July, UNAR finally issued a call for the selection of projects aimed at establishing or strengthening centres against discrimination motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity

In October, the Council of Europe expressed concern about the rise of hate speech and xenophobia in Italy, urging the government to adopt a plan to combat racism. After five years of monitoring the human rights situation in the country, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published a report highlighting an increase in xenophobic rhetoric in public discourse, particularly directed at refugees, immigrants, and LGBTI people.

KAZAKHSTAN

In July, the UN Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education urged the Kazakh government to reject the petition requesting legislation capable of

banning both visible and covert LGBTI “propaganda.” In a common statement, they argued that such legislation would breach Kazakhstan’s Administrative Procedural Code and international human rights obligations.

In April, during the 15th Annual Human Rights Dialogue between the EU and Kazakhstan, the EU addressed the treatment of LGBTI persons.

KOSOVO

In June, Prime Minister Albin Kurti reaffirmed Kosovo’s commitment to democracy and equality during Pristina’s yearly Pride march.

LATVIA

Latvia officially ratified the Istanbul Convention, which entered into force in May, marking a significant development in the country’s commitment to combating gender-based violence. Nonetheless, alongside the ratification, Latvia affirmed that it would apply the Convention in accordance with the principles, values, and norms outlined in its Constitution. The government also emphasised that the term “gender,” as used in the Convention, would not be understood as an obligation to introduce any alternative understanding of sex beyond the traditional categories of men and women into Latvia’s legal or educational systems.

LITHUANIA

In March, Vilnius City Municipality, Minister of Justice, Minister of Economy and Innovation, Seimas Ombudsperson Office, Estonia’s Gender Equality Commissioner, and numerous other entities supported a bid by LGL to host EuroPride 2027 in Vilnius.

In June, the Lithuanian Pride festival in Vilnius welcomed an estimated 20.000 attendees. The event featured the participation of writer Kristina Sabaliauskaitė, and Freedom Party members like Finance Minister Aušrinė Armonaitė. The Lithuanian Green Party and Vilnius Mayor Valdas Benkunskas also participated, with international guests and embassy representatives, such as the German Embassy.

On the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, foreign ambassadors in Lithuania issued a statement backing the LGBTI community and urging the Seimas to pass a civil unions bill.

The Equal Opportunities Promotion Action Plan for 2024–2026 included measures related to LGBTI rights but has been criticised for being fragmented and lacking long-term impact.

Seimas Ombudsperson Office led an inter-institutional discussion

on LGBTI rights on 30 August, with representatives of major ministries, law enforcement and civil society.

LUXEMBOURG

In April, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Diversity released an [evaluation](#) of Luxembourg's national action plan on LGBTI rights. The evaluation highlighted progress but also notable hardships for trans and intersex people, as well as for the development of key legislation against conversion therapy. Furthermore, the evaluation underscored that representatives of LGBTI organisations noted challenges in monitoring the progress of the plan on LGBTI rights.

This year, the Ministry for Equality and Diversity provided financial support to three organisations through conventions. In June, support was granted to Intersex & Transgender Luxembourg (ITGL), followed by a commitment to queer-feminist film art in August for Queer Loox. Finally, in September, the Laboratoire d'Etudes Queer, sur le Genre et les Féminismes (LEQGF) received funding for their research on discrimination mechanisms.

MALTA

Following the publication of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) [LGBTIQ survey](#), Rebecca Buttigieg, Malta's Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reforms, [acknowledged](#) that while progress has been made, further efforts to identify other needed policies to counter discrimination and safeguard the rights of LGBTI people are needed to ensure full equality and inclusivity.

In July, the Human Rights Directorate of the Government of Malta published a [progress report](#) for its 'LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy & Action Plan', covering the period from January 2023 to July 2024.

MOLDOVA

In November, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) [released](#) their latest national report on Moldova, recommending that Moldovan authorities intensify their efforts to ensure the independence, effectiveness, and proper resourcing of the Council for Equality and the Ombudsman. The report also provided a series of recommendations, urging Moldovan authorities to take urgent and substantial actions to combat discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights.

MONACO

In May, France's Sports Minister demanded "the toughest sanctions" against the footballer Mohamed Camara and his club. The request came after the Monaco player covered an LGBTI

support badge on his jersey with white tape on IDAHOBIT. The player was handed a four-match suspension for his actions and refusal to take part in awareness-raising activities proposed by the disciplinary committee.

In June, Monaco Pride [celebrated](#) its third edition, with over 150 attendees including Camille Gottlieb, daughter of Princess Stephanie.

MONTENEGRO

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights has been actively engaged in [developing](#) a new LGBTI Strategy, particularly through its efforts in establishing a working group dedicated to drafting the Law on Legal Gender Recognition based on self-determination. The previous LGBTI Strategy, which ran from 2019 to 2023, has now expired. The new strategy was [adopted](#) in June and will cover the period until 2028.

In March, during her visit to Montenegro, now former Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Dunja Mijatović [emphasised](#) the need for Montenegro to adopt several key laws. She stressed the importance of ensuring that laws on equality, anti-discrimination, and legal gender recognition (LGR) based on self-determination align with international human rights standards. The Commissioner also highlighted the increase in hate speech, particularly online, which exacerbates ethnic, religious, and political divisions, disproportionately affecting marginalised groups such as Roma, LGBTI people, and women in public roles. These concerns were echoed in the Commissioner's [report](#) published the same month, which also raised issues regarding the use of mental health diagnoses, sterilisation, and invasive medical procedures as requirements for LGR in Montenegro.

NORWAY

The Ministry of Culture and Equality [commissioned](#) the Directorate for Children, Youth and Families to develop a national guide on gender diversity to foster greater understanding and recognition among public service providers. Scheduled for release in spring 2025, this guide aims to improve conditions for non-binary people and builds on the recommendations in the 2023 report on a potential third legal gender category. The measures proposed in the guide include the removal of the gender indication numbers from citizens' social security numbers.

In the revised national budget, the Socialist Left Party [secured](#) funding for a support group following the terror attack during Oslo Pride on June 25, 2022. For 2025, the party also secured funding for two national programs: Pink Competency Child Welfare, aimed at employees in the child welfare system, and Pink Competency Justice, focused on police employees with an emphasis on hate crimes.

POLAND

In May, Krakow Mayor Aleksander Miszalski [announced](#) his willingness to participate in the city's Pride march and said the rainbow flag would also be raised at the town hall.

In May, the parliamentary team for LGBTI equality held a [meeting focused on the situation of trans people in Poland](#). The meeting included input from parents of transgender youth, who proposed legal, educational, and healthcare reforms to improve the conditions for young trans people.

In June, Ombudsman Marcin Wiacek [underscored](#) the necessity for Poland to align its legal framework with a 2023 ruling by the ECtHR declaring that the Polish government has an obligation to legalise civil unions of same-sex couples.

In February, the Ombudsman's office issued an [updated version of the guidelines for judges and lawyers on proceeding legal gender recognition cases](#). The publication was prepared by numerous lawyers and practitioners who are experts in this field. The Ombudsman has submitted the guidelines to courts in Poland.

As a consequence of the ECtHR judgement in the *W.W. v. Poland* case, the intervention of KPH in the Ministry of Justice, and intervention of the Human Rights Ombudsman's office, [the General Director of Prison Service declared the will to establish a working group of trans persons in prisons](#).

PORTUGAL

The Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) expressed its [commitment](#) to contribute to the development of the National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2018-2030. The plan aims to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, and sexual characteristics through a broad range of activities such as the enhancement of the competencies of professionals across both public and private sectors.

ROMANIA

Ahead of the 2024 local and European Parliament elections, a proposal to ensure the inclusion of trans people in the electoral process faced significant opposition from civil society groups and political actors. Opponents argued that trans people do not have the right to legal gender recognition under Romanian law. The proposal, submitted by the ACCEPT Association to the National Electoral Bureau, aimed to address issues faced by trans persons during previous elections, such as the refusal of their right to vote due to discrepancies between their civil status documents and their gender identity or expression.

RUSSIA

In May, the ECtHR [ruled](#) that Russia had discriminated against a teacher who was dismissed for posting pictures indicating her sexual orientation.

In October, the ECHR [found](#) the inclusion of more than 100 Russians and organisations in the register of 'foreign agents' to be discriminatory and unlawful, and awarded them compensation ranging from 10,000 to 1 million Euro.

SAN MARINO

A new law targeting cyberbullying was adopted, explicitly including protection based on gender and sexual orientation. The law complements a 2024 regulation addressing private violence, with a stronger focus on safeguarding women.

SLOVENIA

In June, Deputy Mayor Dejan Crnek and Minister of Labor Luka Mesec [joined](#) 5,000 participants for the yearly Pride march in Ljubljana.

In July, the Ljubljana City Council approved a [proposal](#) to name a new park after Ada Škerl and Sonja Plaskan, making it the first park in Slovenia dedicated to a same-sex couple.

SPAIN

In June, the Council of Ministers decided to file appeals of unconstitutionality against the regulations passed by the Community of Madrid in 2023 that impact the rights of LGBTI people. The Madrid Assembly had introduced laws that permitted exceptions to the ban on conversion practices, required psychiatric diagnoses for young trans people, and barred LGBTI organisations from participating in discrimination cases. The Minister of Equality [announced](#) this decision during a press conference following the Council of Ministers meeting with the LGBTI+ State Federation, where she condemned the Madrid Community's regulations as "regressive." In August, the Spanish Constitutional Court [accepted these appeals](#) and suspended the laws pending the review.

In mid-October, the Regional Government of Madrid [announced several amendments](#) to its own legislation to avoid a legal setback, should the Constitutional Court rule against their legal reforms. The regional government claimed technical reasons as the grounds for these amendments

In December, Isabel Díaz Ayuso, President of the Community of Madrid from the Partido Popular (PP), passed a [proposal](#) that significantly reduces protections for LGBTI people in the region. The new reforms amend the regional trans rights law and LGBTI

rights law by removing the punishment for discrimination against workers based on sexual orientation or gender identity and decriminalising assaults on individuals based on their sexual orientation or gender identity, provided no injury occurs. The proposal also mandates that underaged trans people can only begin hormone replacement therapy after an examination by both a pediatrician and a psychologist. As part of these measures, the regional government also decided to eliminate the General Subdirectorate of LGBTI Equality from the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Social Affairs.

SWEDEN

In September, Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson addressed LGBTI rights, emphasising Sweden's commitment to being a tolerant society where everyone can live safely and freely, regardless of faith, race, or sexual orientation. He highlighted that a multi-year action plan for LGBTI people's equal rights and opportunities had already been initiated, a statement that was met with applause. Kristersson also introduced Maria Malmer Stenegard as the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, following her tenure as Minister of Migration, where she affirmed the importance of prioritising women and LGBTI people, who are particularly vulnerable.

SWITZERLAND

In April, the first two officers responsible for LGBTI equality at the Federal Office for Gender Equality took office.

TAJIKISTAN

In July, at the eleventh annual meeting of the European Union-Tajikistan Cooperation Committee, the EU reiterated its call for the Tajik authorities to conduct thorough investigations into human rights violations. The Committee particularly expressed concern over the continued imprisonment of human rights defenders, journalists, and bloggers in Tajikistan.

TURKEY

In August, the ECtHR announced that it would review two combined cases filed by Kaos GL, a Turkish LGBTI rights organisation, challenging the bans on LGBTI marches imposed by Turkish authorities in 2016 and 2017.

Kaos GL turned to the ECtHR claiming that the ban on a 2016 Pride March and the subsequent indefinite prohibition on all LGBTI events during the state of emergency in 2017 infringed on fundamental freedoms such as assembly, association, and non-discrimination.

Turkey was initially expected to respond to the ECtHR queries or propose a friendly settlement by October 1, 2024. However, the

deadline has been extended to January 12, 2025, with no response from the government as of now.

Turkey was initially expected to respond to the ECtHR queries or propose a friendly settlement by October 1, 2024. However, the deadline was extended to January 12, 2025. The Turkish government has since submitted its response, denying discrimination and citing "security concerns" as the basis for the bans. The government also claimed that some events were allowed during the ban period, though this is contradicted by evidence of police intervention and court rulings deeming such actions unlawful.

In the meantime, ILGA-Europe and SPOD have jointly submitted a third-party intervention, along with six other Turkish organisations who also submitted their interventions on the case.

TURKMENISTAN

Amnesty International reported that the government's refusal to acknowledge and address discrimination against LGBTI people and women underscores a troubling disregard for international human rights standards.

UKRAINE

Dmytro Lubinets, the Commissioner of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Human Rights, released the Annual Report on the State of Observance and Protection of Human and Citizen Rights and Freedoms in Ukraine for 2023.

In April the ECtHR ruled in the case of Karter v. Ukraine. The Court found that treating hate crimes based on sexual orientation as ordinary crimes, without considering the motives of intolerance, breaches Article 3 in conjunction with Article 14 of the ECHR. In June the European Union officially commenced accession negotiations with Ukraine, marking a pivotal step in Ukraine's path toward EU membership. A critical component of these negotiations is the alignment of Ukraine's human rights standards with EU norms, including the protection of LGBTI rights. In June, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Institute, the Ukrainian Cultural Fund, the Ukrainian Youth Fund, Ukrposhta, as well as a number of businesses and media showed support for Pride month by expressing solidarity with the LGBTI community.

In June, the Council of Europe met with Ukraine's First Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Oleksandr Kornienko to discuss legislative alignment with European anti-discrimination standards through the criminalisation of hate crimes based on SOGI including and the establishment of a Civil Partnership Institute.

UNITED KINGDOM

The charity Fighting With Pride announced the creation of the UK's first memorial honouring the "lost legion" of LGBTI people who served in the armed forces at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

UZBEKISTAN

The situation of LGBTI people in Uzbekistan has drawn international concern, with human rights organisations condemning the ongoing persecution of sexual minorities under the country's harsh laws.