

ALBANIA

A new draft law on sexual and reproductive health was criticised by activists as its provisions restrict access to Reproductive Medicine and Assistance (RMA) to heterosexual couples and single women and render surrogacy available only for married heterosexual couples who cannot conceive naturally.

ANDORRA

Abortion, even in instances of maternal risk, foetal abnormalities, or rape, remains outlawed in Andorra.

CROATIA

At present, the acceptance of new samples for the storage of sperm and eggs is not feasible, and there is insufficient information available regarding the causes and potential solutions to this issue.

In September, as members of the ultraconservative network Vision Network gathered for a private conference in Zagreb, a protest was held in the city's European Square by the fAKTIV – Feminist Collective to challenge the agenda of the Network. The protestors criticised the group's opposition to abortion, same-sex marriage, divorce, and contraception with the slogan: "Not in our city, we know your agenda."

CZECHIA

During the Senate debate on the bill introducing same-sex partnerships (see also under Family), a group of senators proposed amendments that aimed not only to restrict the rights of same-sex partners but also to limit the reproductive rights already established for women and opposite-sex couples. For instance, one proposed amendment would have required a married woman to obtain her husband's consent to access assisted reproduction services. Additionally, another amendment would have imposed a fine on women who failed to identify a man deemed to be the father on their child's birth certificate. Ultimately, these amendments were not approved by the Senate.

The Ministry of Justice, alongside a working group, has presented initial analyses and proposals concerning the institution of surrogacy. Although a bill has yet to be introduced in Parliament, current indications suggest that surrogacy will be available exclusively for heterosexual couples.

FRANCE

In March, the French Congress approved the constitutionalisation of the right for women to have a voluntary termination of pregnancy, amending Article 34 to guarantee this freedom. While the text only explicitly mentions "women's freedom," the Council of State clarified in December 2023 that this right must be extended to "any person who has started a pregnancy," including trans men.

President Emmanuel Macron, in an interview with Elle magazine, reiterated his opposition to surrogacy, labelling it as "a form of commercialisation of bodies."

In September, newly appointed Prime Minister Michel Barnier vowed to protect medically assisted procreation, the right to abortion and same-sex marriage. This pledge followed concerns about the appointment of conservative ministers, who were opposed at the time to same-sex marriage and recently to the constitutionalisation of abortion.

GERMANY

In April, an expert commission established by the government presented its final report evaluating the potential legalisation of egg donation and surrogacy. The commission concluded that the legalisation of egg donation is generally permissible; however, it expressed greater caution regarding the legalisation of surrogacy. Additionally, the commission recommended the complete decriminalisation of abortion.

In November, a law which imposes fines for harassment outside abortion clinics, medical offices, and counselling centres, came into force.

IRELAND

In October, Health Minister Stephen Donnelly announced an expansion of the free IVF scheme as part of the upcoming budget. The expansion will focus on enabling couples who require donor assistance—those in need of donor eggs or sperm—to access publicly funded IVF, and on expanding the scheme to include couples experiencing secondary infertility, where couples who already have a child face difficulties in conceiving again.

ITALY

In April, Italy's Prime Minister condemned surrogate parenthood as an "inhuman" practice. As part of her intervention, she also urged parliament to advance a bill that would criminalise Italians who travel abroad for surrogacy, which is already illegal in Italy and punishable by jail and fines.

In June, the Lega Nord party proposed an amendment to a bill that aims to prohibit surrogacy, even when conducted abroad. The bill proposed the introduction of imprisonment ranging from 4 to 10 years and fines between €600,000 and €2 million for those involved in surrogacy. In October, the bill was signed into law, allowing surrogacy to fall under the umbrella of "universal crimes", a type of offence which typically applies to crimes like genocide or human trafficking, and extending penalties to Italian citizens who seek surrogacy abroad. The legislation, approved with 84

votes in favor and 58 against, ended up imposing fines ranging from €600,000 to €1 million and prison sentences from three months to two years. The law has sparked significant [controversy](#), particularly among human rights groups, who argue that the law unfairly targets same-sex couples and infringes on personal freedoms.

MALTA

In March, activists in Valletta held a [march](#) for International Women's Day, calling for significant reforms on abortion rights and domestic violence. Participants particularly highlighted the need to address Malta's stringent abortion laws. The criticism focused mainly on recent legislative changes that further limit access to abortion, and the prioritisation by both politicians and the Church of embryo protection over women's rights.

MONTENEGRO

There have been ongoing problems accessing hormone therapy for some trans persons in Montenegro.

In response, there have been numerous efforts to address this issue, including communications with Health Centres, the Ministry of Health, the Health Insurance Fund, and the Ombudsman. Despite these efforts, challenges persist, including a recent shortage of Nebido, a form of testosterone crucial for the health of some trans persons. No actions have been taken by state institutions to resolve this shortage.

In October 2023 the PrEP treatment for HIV prevention was introduced in Montenegro. However, in 2024 the treatment is still in its testing phase and limited to only 100 participants. Additionally, the Institute for Public Health this year made progress in expanding access to HPV vaccination by including trans people in their vaccination program, marking a positive step toward inclusive healthcare initiatives.

The Ministry of Health's discriminatory restriction preventing LBTQ women from accessing reproductive treatments has been lifted following the Ombudsperson's ruling on discrimination.

NETHERLANDS

In May the Dutch association of obstetricians and gynaecologists presented their updated position on assisting trans people's reproductive wishes. It states that there is no reason to treat trans people who wish to become parents and need reproductive assistance any differently than cisgender people, contrasting the previous position.

PORTUGAL

The EMIS 2024 study, the largest survey aimed at men who have sex with men (MSM) [took place](#), and this year it was designed to include trans women and non-binary people for the first time.

ROMANIA

Romania is still lacking mandatory sex education. This is due to the fact that, in 2020, the Constitutional Court ruled that the bill that deleted "sanitary education" from the law on the rights of the child, was constitutional. Although the Education for Health class covers sexuality to some extent, very few schools teach it.

SLOVENIA

Two initiatives were submitted to the Constitutional Court's constitutional review concerning sexual and reproductive rights. The first concerned equal access to assisted reproductive procedures for lesbian couples, while the second concerned the access for single women to the same services.

In November, the Constitutional Court of Slovenia [ruled](#) that certain provisions of the Act on Infertility Treatment and Biomedically Assisted Fertilisation (OBMP) are unconstitutional. Specifically, the court found that limiting access to OBMP procedures to single women and women in same-sex relationships violated the constitution. The court has given the country one year to address the non-compliance and amend the law accordingly.

SWEDEN

The Public Health Agency of Sweden has completed a 2023 [investigation](#) into expanding preventive HPV vaccination efforts. The extension would include unvaccinated older boys, young men, and risk groups, such as men who have sex with men, trans people, and people living with HIV, up to the age of 26.

A [study](#) by the University of Borås, commissioned by the Public Health Agency, revealed that stigma remains a significant issue for older people living with HIV in Sweden. Despite effective treatment for many, individuals report facing persistent stigmatising attitudes and challenges related to their condition.

In September, the Swedish government announced that a [public inquiry](#) will investigate the potential removal of the information obligation for individuals living with HIV under the Swedish Communicable Diseases Act. Currently, the law requires those living with HIV to inform their sexual partners of their status. However, for several years, people with well-controlled treatment and undetectable viral levels have been able to obtain an exemption from this obligation through their treating physician. Organisations representing people living with HIV have long argued that this requirement, in place since HIV was included in

the Communicable Diseases Act in 1985, stigmatises individuals and does not effectively contribute to infection prevention.

TURKMENISTAN

The Criminal Code of 1997 bans same-sex sexual relations, categorising 'sodomy' as a criminal offense. The law carries a maximum punishment of two years in prison and targets only men.

Since the 2022 power transition, reproductive rights have notably declined, with police intimidation and legislative changes making abortion virtually inaccessible.

UNITED KINGDOM

In November, the NHS proposed new plans that prioritise IVF access for trans men and lesbians, potentially coming into effect as early as next year and placing them at the forefront of the priority list for fertility treatments.