



Albania

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

According to the 2024–2025 nationwide [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, access to goods and services for LGBTI persons remains limited and characterised by low institutional trust and limited awareness of protection mechanisms. Only 25% of respondents reported having accessed services or visited the Aleanca LGBTI community centre or other LGBTI organisations. Awareness of public equality bodies is also low, with only 36% stating that they were aware of the role or activities of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination. Institutional distrust remains widespread. 88% of respondents reported that they do not trust law enforcement institutions, and 90% stated that they had never reported discrimination or violence to any public authority. Among those who experienced serious incidents, only 11.6% reported the case, and only two cases resulted in any form of final resolution.

In 2025, Ylberofilia's [Needs Assessment of Trans People in Albania](#) highlighted persistent barriers in access to essential services. According to the assessment, 29.4% of trans and non-binary respondents reported difficulties in obtaining services, while 23.5% had avoided health services altogether due to fear of discrimination. The assessment further found that 35% of respondents reported a persistent fear of discriminatory treatment by medical staff, and that social and housing services were widely perceived as unsafe or ineffective.

ASYLUM

Civil society organisations reported an increase in requests from LGBTI persons seeking information on asylum procedures and international protection pathways. According to the 2024–2025 nationwide [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, 48% of respondents identified the lack of legal recognition of their relationships and gender identity as a primary reason for considering emigration. Community organisations linked this trend to growing hostile public discourse and disinformation targeting LGBTI persons, which has contributed to heightened insecurity and uncertainty regarding long-term protection in Albania.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH AND VIOLENCE

Public [discourse](#) on LGBTI issues escalated during the reporting period, particularly in connection with the draft Law "On Gender Equality" and proposed amendments to civil registry legislation. During parliamentary debate on the Gender Equality Law, political and religious actors framed the draft as a threat to children, family values and national identity. The reform was publicly misrepresented as introducing same-sex marriage or automatic legal gender recognition. Similar hostile narratives accompanied the Democratic Party's proposed civil registry amendments, which were presented as a response to alleged "gender ideology". Although the initiative was not adopted, the public debate was characterised by stigmatising rhetoric and [disinformation](#) targeting LGBTI persons. Organised anti-LGBTI campaigns continued throughout the year, including renewed calls for a referendum aimed at blocking equality-related legislation. Hate campaigns increasingly targeted individual activists and human rights defenders. Personal data, including names and employment details, were circulated online alongside accusations of being "foreign agents" or "anti-family actors". Complaints were filed with the police; however, prosecutorial authorities refused to initiate criminal proceedings. At the institutional level, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination examined several complaints concerning hate speech. In one case involving D. Mema, the Commissioner found that public statements constituted discriminatory and degrading treatment against LGBTI persons. The decision was appealed and is pending before a national court. Strategic cases were also initiated against political figures Fatmir Mediu and Silva Caka for alleged bias-motivated public statements (see also under Equality and Non-discrimination).

According to the 2024–2025 nationwide [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, approximately 61% of respondents reported having personally experienced or directly witnessed discrimination or violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics during the previous year. Public spaces and online platforms were identified as the most frequent locations, with 67 cases occurring in streets or other public places and 65 cases online.

The Needs [Assessment](#) of Trans People in Albania documented persistent structural gaps in protection and high levels of insecurity affecting trans people. According to the assessment, 50% of respondents stated that state institutions do not adequately address the security needs of trans people. The assessment further found that 23.5% of respondents had experienced physical and or sexual violence. In 58.3% of reported cases, violence involved multiple perpetrators, indicating patterns of collective abuse. Underreporting remained significant, with 75% of respondents who experienced physical and or sexual violence not reporting the incident to law enforcement. Threats and intimidation were also widespread, with 82% of respondents reporting that they had been threatened with physical violence at least once in the preceding twelve months. The assessment noted that fear of harassment and violence further restricted freedom of movement, with some respondents incurring additional financial burdens due to reliance on private transport to avoid unsafe public spaces.

EDUCATION

Educational environments continue to be perceived as unsafe for LGBTI students. According to the 2024-2025 nationwide [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, 73% of respondents described Albanian schools as unsafe for marginalised groups, including LGBTI students, while only 4% considered schools safe. Respondents linked this perception to harassment, verbal abuse and social exclusion. Among respondents currently in education or who had recently attended school, 25% reported difficulties accessing or attending secondary or vocational education during the past year due to their sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics. In addition, 46% stated that they knew at least one other LGBTI person who had faced similar barriers. Approximately 2% of respondents reported not completing compulsory education, citing family rejection and persistent bullying. During parliamentary debate on the draft Law "On Gender Equality", the role of education in addressing gender stereotypes and promoting equality was publicly contested. Political and non-state actors framed gender education initiatives as harmful to children,

contributing to resistance against inclusive school policies

The Needs [Assessment](#) of Trans People in Albania found that trans people face systemic social and institutional barriers within the education system. While 70.5% of respondents reported having completed primary education, a significant proportion indicated that they were unable to progress to higher levels of schooling. The assessment identified bullying and discrimination as primary drivers of educational discontinuation, with 63.6% of respondents reporting that they ceased their education due to peer bullying. Institutional discrimination further affected educational trajectories: 41% of respondents reported changing schools due to discrimination, 64.7% discontinued further education as a result of discriminatory treatment, and 60% of those who reported discrimination stated that their situation remained unchanged.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment conditions for LGBTI persons remain marked by insecurity and discrimination. According to the 2024-2025 nationwide [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, 70% of respondents had been employed during the past year, while 30% were unemployed. Among those employed, 47% worked under a formal contract, 44% were in informal employment and 9% were self-employed. Income levels indicate economic vulnerability: 16% of employed respondents earned below the national minimum wage, and 48% reported monthly incomes above 70,000 ALL (approximately 700 EUR). Workplace environments are frequently perceived as unsafe. Only 23% of employed respondents reported feeling safe and respected at work, while 30% stated that they did not feel safe at all. Homophobic and transphobic jokes, differential treatment and harassment were cited as common experiences. 70% of employed respondents reported that they had never disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity in the workplace. Approximately half of those who remained closeted indicated that they feared losing their job. 27% reported experiencing sexual harassment at least once during the past year. Employment support services were rated as "very much needed" by 68% of respondents.

The Needs [Assessment](#) of Trans People in Albania documented severe structural exclusion of trans people from the labour market, characterised by high levels of unemployment, informality, pervasive discrimination, and limited access to institutional support mechanisms. According to the assessment, 35.2% of respondents were classified as NEET (not in education, employment, or training), and 47.05% reported engagement in sex work, reflecting significant economic marginalisation. Discrimination was reported across recruitment, employment, and job retention processes: 50% of respondents with prior employment experienced discrimination from prospective employers, 41.6% reported losing employment due to discrimination related to their gender identity, and 58.3% encountered discrimination in the workplace. Workplace environments were further characterised by violence and harassment, with 20% of respondents reporting experiences of violence and 30% reporting sexual harassment linked to their gender identity. The assessment also noted that fear of discrimination contributes to concealment, with 50% of currently employed respondents reporting that they did not disclose their gender identity in the workplace.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

As part of its Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Albania accepted several [recommendations](#) aimed at strengthening the rights of LGBTI people. These include commitments to advance legal recognition of same-sex marriages and cohabitations, strengthen accountability for the implementation of the National Action Plan for LGBTI Persons (2021-2027), prohibit forced medical interventions on intersex children, and reinforce measures against hate speech and hate crimes (see also under Legal Gender Recognition).

In November, the Albanian Parliament [adopted](#) the draft law "On Gender Equality", aligning the legal definition of gender in Albanian law with the Istanbul Convention and explicitly extending protection against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. In the run-up to the vote, civil society organisations reported a broad disinformation campaign aimed

at weakening the bill. In August, Democratic Party MP Tritan Shehu criticised the draft law, calling it an attack on the foundations of Albanian society and warning that recognising terms such as non-binary, trans or gender-fluid would open the door to a "multi-gender society". Statements made during a televised broadcast were also cited by civil society as inciting hatred and dehumanisation of LGBTI persons. (see also under Bias Motivated Speech and Violence)

Civil society further raised concerns about public [statements](#) by opposition figures directed at the EU Ambassador to Albania, Silvio Gonzato, which framed his openness about his sexual orientation as illegitimate political pressure.

Aleanca LGBTI's 2024-2025 nationwide [survey](#) shows persistent discrimination. 38.5% of respondents experienced discrimination or violence in the previous year based on sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics, and 22.6% witnessed such incidents. Legal counselling was rated as "very much needed" by 65% of respondents. Civil society organisations report weak enforcement of anti-discrimination guarantees and limited accountability in practice.

FAMILY

A strategic litigation case seeking legal recognition of same-sex marriage is currently pending before the Administrative Court of Appeal of Albania. The case challenges the exclusion of same-sex couples from civil marriage under Albanian law and may have significant implications for access to family-related rights.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

In May, the annual Pride March [took place](#) in Tirana under the unifying slogan "Side by side." The event saw hundreds of Albanian citizens. The march was attended by national political figures, including the Minister of Health and Social Protection, as well as diplomatic representatives from Sweden, Canada and the European Union, underscoring growing domestic engagement alongside international solidarity.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In July, Albania's parliament adopted a new [National Strategy against Foreign Intervention and Disinformation](#), promoted by the ruling Socialist Party. While framed by the government as a national security measure, opposition and media-freedom voices warned it could be used to restrict critical reporting and civil society activity, including work by organisations supporting marginalised groups such as LGBTI people.

HEALTH

According to the 2024-2025 nationwide [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, 68% of respondents accessed healthcare services at least once during the past year, while 14% reported experiencing discrimination by healthcare personnel because of their LGBTI status. Avoidance of necessary medical care remains significant. While 29% reported attending sexual or reproductive health check-ups in the past year, 25% stated that they had avoided such services despite feeling they needed them.

Healthcare access for transgender persons remains structurally limited. A national medical protocol on hormonal treatment has been drafted but has not been formally approved and therefore remains unimplemented.

The Needs [Assessment](#) of Trans People in Albania found that access to healthcare information and services remains limited for trans and non-binary people. According to the assessment, only 50% of respondents knew where to seek assistance in the event of health concerns, and 47% reported a consistent readiness to seek support from medical professionals. The assessment further documented inappropriate and discriminatory conduct by healthcare providers as a significant concern. 23.5% of respondents reported experiencing inappropriate remarks by medical personnel, as well as violations of dignity, ethical standards, and professional obligations of care.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In June, the UN Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity presented the

[findings](#) of his official visit to Albania, conducted from 1 to 12 July 2024. The report documented that LGBTI persons continue to experience discrimination in key areas, including education, healthcare, and employment. It further identified persistent obstacles to reporting bias-motivated crimes and accessing effective remedies. According to the report, these challenges are closely linked to entrenched societal attitudes. At the same time, the Independent Expert noted that Albania has established a relatively robust legal and policy framework. Planned reforms - particularly concerning legal gender recognition and the recognition of same-sex partnerships - were identified as critical opportunities to translate existing commitments into concrete and durable improvements.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

During the Universal Periodic Review process, Albania rejected a [recommendation](#) to establish legal gender recognition based on self-identification (see also under Equality and non-discrimination)

According to the 2024-2025 [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, among respondents identifying as transgender or non-binary, only two individuals were able to consult a doctor about hormone therapy or other gender-affirming medical interventions during the past year, while over 90% reported having no access to such care.

In 2025, trans activist Luana Myrto, supported by the Albanian Helsinki Committee, began pursuing legal action against the civil registry for refusing to amend her gender marker. The case stemmed from the fact that - although trans people in Albania are theoretically entitled to the same social policy benefits as other citizens - the absence of a Law on Gender Identity significantly limits their ability to fully exercise these rights as there is no legal mechanism to change gender marker on official documents or to update one's name in accordance with their gender identity.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

According to the 2024-2025 nationwide [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, among lesbian and bisexual women, 19% reported having visited a gynaecologist or

reproductive health specialist during the past year, while more than 28% stated that they had intentionally avoided such visits despite feeling they needed them. Barriers are also evident in the area of family planning. Among lesbian and bisexual women who expressed a wish to become parents, 27% stated that they would consider in-vitro fertilisation in Albania, 55% stated that they would not, and 17% indicated a preference for adoption. Gaps were also identified in HIV prevention. Among gay and bisexual men, 66% expressed interest in using PrEP or PEP if available, while 18% reported having no knowledge of these prevention methods and 16% stated that they were not interested.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LIFE

Ahead of the parliamentary elections of 11 May 2025, the third edition of the Mendo Politikisht [analysis](#) reviewed political party programmes with regard to LGBTI rights. The report found that only one political subject explicitly referred to sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds from discrimination. All other parties and coalitions analysed either made no reference to LGBTI issues or addressed human rights in general terms without specific commitments. The majority of political programmes did not include concrete proposals on legal recognition of same-sex couples, legal gender recognition, protection from hate speech and hate crimes, or access to LGBTI-inclusive services.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Controversy erupted in Tirana after it was [revealed](#) that the municipality's new scoring formula for the social housing program "Subsidization of Loan Interest" awards two additional points to applicants who identify as part of the LGBTI community. Municipal council member Jonathan Pano denounced the measure as part of a broader political agenda, claiming it unfairly privileges one group while neglecting vulnerable segments of society.

Following public statements by Pastor Akil Pano condemning the inclusion of LGBTI persons in the 2025-2027 local social policy framework, the Municipality of Tirana removed the dedicated

chapter addressing the needs of LGBTI citizens from its social plan.

The Needs [Assessment](#) of Trans People in Albania identified stable housing as the most urgent need reported by trans respondents. According to the assessment, nearly one in three respondents lived in short-term or otherwise insecure rental arrangements. Experiences of homelessness and severe housing exclusion were also documented. 17.6% of respondents reported having slept on the streets or in public spaces, while 41.2% indicated that they had relied on temporary accommodation in shelters, underscoring significant housing precarity among trans people.