

Asylum

ALBANIA

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.

ARMENIA

In November, the European Commission [presented](#) the [Visa Liberalisation Action Plan](#) to Armenian authorities, marking a key step toward EU-Armenia visa liberalisation. The plan sets out required reforms, including effective implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, strengthened anti-discrimination policies, protection of minority rights, access to justice, religious freedom, and awareness-raising against racism and xenophobia. It was reported that applicants to the Migration and Citizenship Service are often required to wait several months for an interview, most frequently due to the alleged lack of interpreters. As a result, an individual's lawful period of stay in the Republic of Armenia may expire, forcing them to exit the country and re-enter.

Further, civil society underscored that housing spots in state-run shelters are extremely limited, with NGOs continuing to provide social worker's services, psychological counseling, and legal assistance to LGBTI migrants.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In 2025, the Council of Europe [expanded](#) its curriculum of online training programs to include a formation on "LGBTI Asylum Seekers in Bosnia and Herzegovina," with several public officials, including border police officers, kickstarting the program by taking part in it.

FRANCE

In March, the Paris Administrative Court [annulled](#) a February order by the Paris police chief to transfer a trans asylum seeker to Spanish authorities. The court ruled that transferring the person, who had begun transitioning in France, would amount to "inhuman and degrading treatment." The police chief's decision had been made under the Dublin III Regulation, which prevents refugees from seeking asylum in multiple EU countries.

GEORGIA

In 2025, internal civil society data underscored that emigration among LGBTI people in Georgia continued to be a growing and persistent concern. Community-based organisations reported a recurring, "wave-like" pattern in requests for relocation or international protection support, consistent with trends observed in the previous years. The highest number of requests in 2025 was recorded in May, which may correlate with the entry into force of the so-called "Georgian Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA)" and the heightened climate of fear and uncertainty it generated. A comparable spike was observed in 2024, with peak demand in September and October - periods that coincided with the third reading of anti-LGBTI legislation and the murder of Kesaria Abramidze.

GERMANY

In June, the Federal Cabinet adopted a [proposal](#) aimed at classifying Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, as so-called "safe countries of origin." Yet, in these states, LGBTI people continue to face imprisonment for several years, torture, and widespread societal violence.

In August, the newly elected coalition government under Chancellor Friedrich Merz of the Christian Democratic Union [announced](#) its commitment to end Germany's humanitarian admission programmes. Among those targeted is the Federal Admission Program Afghanistan, which had been established to relocate and protect vulnerable Afghans including LGBTI people exposed to systematic persecution, rape, and murder under Taliban rule.

GREECE

In October, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) condemned Greece for the treatment of an LGBTI refugee from Iran, who had been detained pending deportation in 2013. The Court ruled that Greece's actions violated Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which prohibits inhuman or degrading treatment. The ECtHR also noted that the refugee had no practical or effective legal remedy at the time to challenge the detention or seek restoration of his rights. The lawyer representing the refugee highlighted the prolonged delay in the case and emphasised the importance of linking the ECHR decision to the official files of the authorities responsible, so that accountability could be reflected in personnel evaluations or promotions where applicable.

ICELAND

In January, Iceland's national LGBTI organisation Samtökin '78 reported a surge in inquiries from people in the United States seeking information on relocating to Iceland following the election of Donald Trump as president.

IRELAND

Figures published by the Department of Justice showed that 94 US citizens applied for international protection in Ireland in 2025, compared with 22 in 2024, representing a more than fourfold increase. The number has risen steadily since 2022, when 13 US citizens applied. The Department of Justice did not disclose whether any of the 2025 applicants were granted protection.

In April, the Minister for Justice, Jim O'Callaghan, secured Cabinet approval for publication of the General Scheme of the International Protection Bill 2025, intended to transpose the EU Migration and Asylum Pact into Irish law. Civil society organisations, including the Coalition on the EU Migration Pact, warned that the proposed framework contains significant human rights gaps. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission expressed concern in particular about expanded detention powers, limitations on access to legal representation and counselling, and safeguards for children and other vulnerable applicants. Advocacy groups cautioned

that the proposed measures could have

serious consequences for international protection applicants, including LGBTI persons, who may face heightened risks in detention settings, barriers to confidential legal advice, and insufficient recognition of sexuality- and gender-based protection claims.

In August, a gay Nigerian man who had been among 35 passengers removed from Ireland on a government-chartered flight in June was granted permission to reapply for asylum. New evidence highlighted the acute risks he faces in Nigeria due to his sexual orientation.

In August, UNHCR Ireland announced a new project, Supportive Spaces: Trauma-informed Practice in International Protection Accommodation, which will train civil servants in the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) and staff in accommodation centres how to best support the wellbeing of residents. LGBT Ireland has engaged with UNHCR to ensure LGBTI International Protection Applicant (IPA) specific content is included in the training.

In October, a series of protests and attacks targeting IPAS centres occurred. Following the alleged sexual assault of a young girl, protests took place at Citywest IPAS Centre, Co. Dublin over the course of several nights, which escalated into violent clashes with Gardaí (Irish police), with fireworks and other missiles thrown, a garda vehicle set on fire, and numerous public order incidents. Separately, an IPAS accommodation centre in Dublin's south inner city was attacked by a group of individuals who set fire to wheelie bins and damaged property while shouting slogans demanding the removal of the centre, while in Drogheda, Co. Louth, an arson attack was carried out on an IPAS centre on Halloween night.

KOSOVO

As of 2025, Kosovo recognises sexual orientation and gender identity as potential grounds for asylum in line with international standards. However, procedural safeguards, specialised training for asylum officers, and adequate reception conditions for LGBTI asylum seekers remain limited.

KYRGYZSTAN

In 2025, there were two documented cases of asylum-related requests addressed to the feminist queer organisation Qun Jelesi, where individuals received support through case accompaniment and consultations. These cases primarily involved LGBTI persons who had experienced hate crimes or those already living outside Kyrgyzstan and seeking asylum.

LITHUANIA

In February, the Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania (LVAT) clarified that belonging to the LGBTI community does not automatically justify granting refugee status and a real risk of persecution in the country of origin must be demonstrated. The court noted that while same-sex relations may be criminalised in some countries, this alone does not constitute persecution which, according to authorities, must be real, systematic, or severe enough to meet international and EU standards.

Throughout the year, the Lithuanian Gay League (LGL) continued to receive reports from LGBTI asylum seekers regarding poor living conditions in Foreigners' Registration Centers. Several Central Asian asylum seekers reported experiencing persecution from fellow nationals already residing in Lithuania.

A class action lawsuit supported by Amnesty International was initiated in Lithuania in June 2024 and remained ongoing in 2025, challenging the unlawful detention of asylum seekers, including a number of LGBTI applicants.

MALTA

In May, following statements by Prime Minister Robert Abela indicating that Malta would place the reform of human rights conventions related to migration on the agenda of its upcoming Council of Europe presidency, a coalition of 16 NGOs held a press conference outside the Safi detention centre. The organisations, including Moviment Graffiti, aditus foundation, the Malta LGBTIQ Rights Movement (MGRM) and Jesuit Refugee Service Malta, criticised the detention of vulnerable migrants, including women, children, LGBTI people, and persons

with serious health conditions. They raised concerns about longstanding detention practices and conditions at Safi, recalling a 2021 Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture report that described prolonged confinement in overcrowded units with limited access to the outdoors.

NETHERLANDS

In July, the Dutch House of Representatives adopted a new family reunification rule for asylum seekers, under which only legally married partners are eligible to join them in the Netherlands. Opposition MPs argued for an exemption for LGBTI asylum seekers, given that same-sex couples from most countries of origin cannot legally marry and would therefore be unable to meet the new condition. The government argued that LGBTI asylum seekers could still attempt to rely on European human-rights law (Article 8 ECHR). The NGO COC Netherlands underscored that this does not guarantee family reunification and creates a clear disparity between heterosexual married couples, who retain certainty, and same-sex couples, who are left without it.

In August, a 28-year-old trans woman from the United States launched a legal challenge against the rejection of her asylum claim in the Netherlands. She had applied for political asylum stating that she no longer felt safe in the US. Her lawyer's office explained that she travelled to the Netherlands because policies introduced under the Trump administration made her feel unsafe as a trans person. Official data show 29 Americans applied for asylum in the first half of 2025, without giving the cited grounds.

In late October, following the publication of NGO COC Netherlands' research on the safety of LGBTI asylum seekers (see also under Data Collection), COC and the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) signed a renewed cooperation agreement. Under the agreement, COA committed to strengthening measures aimed at ensuring safe and inclusive living conditions for LGBTI residents in asylum reception centres.

NORWAY

In March, Norway updated its official travel advice for the United States, joining several other European

countries in warning citizens of stricter entry conditions and issues related to gender recognition.

In March, Norway's Green Party (MDG) announced its proposal to establish a separate fast-track visa scheme for trans people fleeing persecution in the United States. Party leader Arild Hermstad explained in a press release that what began as so-called "anti-woke" rhetoric in the US has now escalated into a systematic denial of rights and security for trans people, stripping them of recognition, healthcare, and participation in public life.

RUSSIA

Since the beginning of the year around 700 people have migrated to Russia under the 2024 decree creating a so-called "shared values" visa program, popularly referred to as the "anti-woke" visa, aimed at attracting Western conservatives opposed to liberal gender norms. The scheme offers a three-year residency permit with minimal requirements, convertible into Russian citizenship, and is framed as "providing humanitarian support to individuals who share traditional Russian spiritual and moral values."

In December, Russia blocked access to the website of Rainbow Railroad, a global non-profit organisation that helps at-risk LGBTI people reach safety. Authorities labelled the organisation's work "extremist."

SERBIA

In September, a European Parliament report noted that Serbia has enacted a legal framework recognising persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity as a basis for granting asylum. While commending this legislative development, the Parliament urged the authorities to improve sensitivity training for asylum officers in order to prevent refoulement and secondary victimisation in practice.

SPAIN

In March, the Sumar Movement, Spain's left-wing political platform led by Deputy Prime Minister Yolanda Díaz, announced plans to register a proposal in Congress urging the government to expand training for immigration personnel to better identify

discriminatory legislation against LGBTI people.

SWEDEN

In 2025, following identified shortcomings in the legal quality of the Swedish Migration Agency's decision-making, the government instructed the authority to improve consistency and legal certainty in its case reviews, with particular attention to LGBTI asylum claims and cases involving conversion practices. In October, the Agency reported measures including implementation of EU Asylum Agency guidance on LGBTI-related protection grounds, revised methodological guidance, and new staff training. The civil society organisation RFSL nonetheless reported continued reliance on credibility assessments that conflict with Swedish and international standards, including stereotypical expectations regarding applicants' narratives.

During 2025, legislative processes continued to tighten Sweden's asylum and migration framework. Proposals under consideration include abolishing permanent residence permits as a general rule and expanding the possibility of revoking residence permits and citizenship in certain circumstances. These reforms, developed by the government in cooperation with the Sweden Democrats and linked to implementation of the EU Asylum and Migration Pact, are expected to be adopted before the 2026 general election. Civil society actors have expressed concern that stricter rules may disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, including LGBTI asylum seekers.

TAJIKISTAN

Civil society organisations documented over four cases in which LGBTI people from Tajikistan sought asylum in European countries due to well-founded fears of persecution. These fears included threats to personal safety, harassment, blackmail, and the risk of disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity, compounded by the lack of effective protection within the country.

Access to information about asylum procedures remained extremely limited. Many LGBTI individuals did not know how to apply for protection, which countries could provide it, or what evidence was

required.

Consequently, some LGBTI people sought to leave the country through informal channels, resulting in underreporting and limited documentation of cases, despite the presence of real and ongoing risks to their safety.

TURKMENISTAN

Throughout the year, travel bans and restrictions on freedom of movement continued to be recorded in Turkmenistan, with authorities systematically restricting citizens – including LGBTI people, activists, and HIV-positive people – from leaving the country.

In August, reports emerged of the case of a 30-year-old gay man living with HIV who fled Turkmenistan in 2018 to escape persecution. Since then, he has been residing in a European territory, where he recently lost both his job and access to antiviral treatment. Because his passport has expired, he cannot leave his current location, and renewal would require returning to Turkmenistan, where homosexuality is criminalised and punishable by imprisonment. Human rights organisations have confirmed that LGBTI people and people living with HIV in Turkmenistan are routinely targeted, imprisoned, tortured, and often "disappeared" within the prison system. At the same time, they also warned that deportation to Turkmenistan would expose him to immediate risks of imprisonment, torture, and denial of medical care.