

Equality and Non-Discrimination

ALBANIA

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.

ANDORRA

This year, the Ministry of Equality implemented the obligation for all companies to have a protocol for sexual and gender-based harassment.

The measure was [criticised](#) by Diversidad, which warned that existing protocols remain framed through heterosexual and traditional perspectives and fail to explicitly address gender diversity or the specific forms of harassment faced by trans people.

The organisation has communicated these concerns to the Ministry of Equality, which has indicated that potential changes are currently under consideration.

ARMENIA

The Draft Law on Ensuring Equality, which has been under development for several years, remains [unfinalised](#) and fails to incorporate key elements required for comprehensive anti-discrimination protections. Notably, it does not explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity among the prohibited grounds for discrimination. Although the law was expected to be submitted to the National Assembly in early 2025, this did not occur, and the law was not adopted during the year.

Access to effective remedies remained limited. In 2025, documented cases indicated that courts rarely examined discrimination as a distinct legal issue, and bias based on sexual orientation or gender identity was frequently not treated as an aggravating factor (see also under Police and Law Enforcement).

In 2025, Pink Armenia lodged an application to the European Court of Human Rights for a case involving the 2017 refusal, by the Ministry of Culture, to recognise and classify three awareness-raising materials promoting tolerance towards LGBTI persons as social advertisements. In 2017, the Ministry refused to grant this status without providing a written justification, and when pressed for an explanation, cited unfounded reasons, including the claim that the advertisements lacked public importance because society was already "aware of the existence of 'non-traditional' people," and that the presence of a QR code and website link rendered the materials commercial.

In October, Mary Lawlor, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, issued a [statement](#) concerning the treatment of Mamikon Hovsepyan. Hovsepyan had been publicly targeted by Armenia's Ministry of Health, which reportedly smeared him and unlawfully suspended him from the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), a key body addressing HIV, TB, and malaria, following his denunciations of abuses within the health sector. The Ministry of Health's [response](#) reportedly included mocking Hovsepyan and questioning his status as a human rights defender.

In December, the re-emergence of political manipulation targeting LGBTI issues became a prominent [issue](#) in Armenian public debate. Civil society highlighted that both government authorities and opposition forces have repeatedly sought to discredit political opponents by associating them with the LGBTI community.

AUSTRIA

In August, Austria [issued](#) a gender-neutral passport to a non-binary Austrian citizen residing in Germany and Austria, following a ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union requiring Member States to recognise legally registered gender changes carried out in another EU country. Although Austrian law does not currently provide a general procedure for legal gender recognition for non-binary persons, the authorities complied with the ruling to ensure cross-border recognition. This marked the first issuance of a gender-neutral passport in Austria for a non-binary person.

In October, Austria's National Council [voted](#) to discontinue the use of gender-inclusive language in official documents, reinstating traditional grammatical forms of German.

The move ends the previous practice of using symbols like asterisks, slashes, or internal capital letters to denote gender diversity.

BELGIUM

In April, the Brussels Regional Government reaffirmed its commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) by announcing that DEI criteria would

be progressively integrated into public procurement and linked to regional economic support for employers. The Region also signalled its intention to promote DEI at federal and European levels.

In June, [implementation](#) of measures under the Brussels regional equal opportunities framework entered into force, requiring local administrations to adopt diversity plans in order to access certain subsidies.

In July, in Brussels, the court of first instance [ruled](#) in favour of a 51-year-old trans cyclist who challenged the International Cycling Union's (UCI) updated eligibility rules for women's competitions. Until mid-2023, she had been allowed to compete provided her testosterone levels remained below a set threshold for 24 months, but new rules introduced last July required that trans women must have begun their transition before puberty or before the age of 12. The court found this condition discriminatory, stressing that it excluded virtually all trans women and was unsupported by solid scientific evidence. While acknowledging UCI's aim of protecting women's competitions as legitimate, the judge held that the measures were neither proportionate nor necessary. The ruling prevents the UCI from refusing her entry into women's competitions, though the organisation may still appeal.

The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men published a [leaflet](#) aiming to raise awareness of intersex variations to promote an approach based on respect, autonomy and fundamental rights, and to encourage intersex people who are victims of discrimination to contact the Institute.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In 2025, civil society groups [reported](#) that - in the last five years - local governments in Republika Srpska have provided over 2 million KM in funding to 11 anti-LGBTI groups. These organisations oppose women's reproductive rights and LGBTI rights and have campaigned against laws protecting women from violence.

In February, the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo issued a final ruling establishing discrimination on the

grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics.

The ruling concerned a public statement made by the then-member of the Sarajevo Canton Assembly, Samra Čosović Hajdarević, who, following the announcement of the first BiH Pride March in 2019, published a Facebook post that, among other things, contained calls for segregation, isolation, and discrimination against LGBTI persons.

In March, the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska passed amendments to its Criminal Code that erased "gender identity" from the list of 'protected characteristics' from all provisions of the law.

In June, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina amended its Criminal Code, narrowing the definition of "close person" in laws protecting individuals from violence to include only partners of the opposite sex. This change was introduced in response to unfounded claims that the previous gender-neutral definition could lead to the legal recognition of same-sex couples.

In October, the Agency for Public Officers of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, jointly with Sarajevo Open Centre, organised a training session on discrimination based on SOGIESC for public officers.

Similar trainings were also organised in May and October for members of the judiciary both in the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Commission for Human Rights of the House of Peoples of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina refused to examine a complaint submitted by the Sarajevo Open Centre (SOC), reportedly on the basis of prejudicial attitudes towards LGBTI people. Only the President of the Commission issued a dissenting opinion.

CROATIA

In February, an HIV-positive gay man from Bjelovar, won his case before the Constitutional Court of Croatia, arguing that the Municipality of Bjelovar and the school had illegally processed his health data

without his prior knowledge or consent. Zagreb Pride proved that information about his HIV status had been used to reassign him to a job position where he would not come into contact with pupils - supposedly as a "preventive health protection measure". Lower courts had upheld this precedent until December 2024, when the Constitutional Court ruled that his personal data had been processed and used unlawfully, thereby violating his right to privacy, resulting finally in discrimination.

CYPRUS

In November, a draft amendment defining the terms "woman" and "gender" for the first time in Cyprus triggered strong opposition from human rights groups, who warned that the proposal could exclude trans women from existing protections under domestic-violence legislation. The bill, submitted by DIKO MP Chrysis Pantelidis and DISY MP Charis Georgiades, seeks to revise the national law aligning with EU Directive 2024/1385 and the Istanbul Convention. Supporters argued that a precise definition is needed and insisted that the measure does not restrict gender-identity rights. Government bodies and independent institutions, however, stressed that neither the directive nor the Convention defines "woman," noted that trans women face disproportionate levels of violence, and cautioned that limiting the definition could breach non-discrimination standards. Several organisations and a number of MPs opposed the bill, prompting the parliamentary committee to request a legal opinion from the Law Office while the Justice Ministry reviews the submissions.

DENMARK

In June, the Danish government unveiled its new development policy strategy with broad cross-party backing, giving stronger and more explicit priority to the rights of LGBTI people than in previous strategies.

FRANCE

In February, a coalition of LGBTI rights associations sent a letter to the Ministries of Sport, Interior, and Justice, highlighting a rise in homophobic acts and chants being recorded during championship matches.

In March the Stop Homophobié association reported that they would submit a complaint against Vincent Labrune, president of the Professional Football League (LFP), following an Instagram post that referenced a homophobic chant by supporters of Saint-Étienne.

In April, the Paris Criminal Court sentenced far-right YouTuber Grégory Toussaint for public insult and incitement to hatred based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The conviction followed the broadcast of two videos which falsely accused LGBTI people of indoctrinating children, equating them with paedophiles, and advocated for public assaults.

In May, the football club FC Nantes announced that it will financially sanction its player Mostafa Mohamed for refusing to play in a match scheduled on IDAHOBIT. The club noted that Mohamed had previously refused to participate in similar matches on the same day during the past two seasons, claiming that his faith and origins influenced his choice.

In May, several racist and homophobic tags were discovered on the campus of the University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour (UPPA). The university's management condemned the messages as contrary to the institution's values of equality and respect and announced that it would file a complaint.

In June, the Professional Football League (LFP) announced sanctions against one player for uttering a homophobic insult during a halftime on IDAHOBIT, while two other sanctions were awarded to players refusing to participate in the matchday's anti-LGBTI-phobia initiative.

GEORGIA

In March, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Interim Resolution CM/ResDH(2025)31 concerning the execution of judgments in the *Identoba and Others v. Georgia* group of cases, including *Women's Initiatives Supporting Group and Others v. Georgia* and *Aghdgomelashvili and Japaridze v. Georgia*. The Resolution expressed serious concern at the continued failure of the Georgian authorities to

ensure effective protection against, and investigation of, bias-motivated violence targeting LGBTI persons. It noted persistent shortcomings in identifying discriminatory motives, holding perpetrators accountable, and addressing police misconduct. Despite more than a decade of supervision of these judgments, the Committee of Ministers underlined that investigations remain incomplete and that implementation of required individual and general measures has been insufficient.

In April, the Georgian Dream party advanced a series of legislative amendments in the first reading, including significant changes to the Law on Gender Equality. These amendments removed the term "gender" from the text, replacing all references to "gender identity" or "gender equality" with the narrower formulation "equality between women and men." Accordingly, the 2014 Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination was also amended with "gender identity" being removed from the list of protected grounds, and the Gender Equality Committee was formally dissolved. The Georgian Dream party justified the initiation of these amendments by claiming that the term "gender" had been purposely introduced into Georgian legislation under foreign influence as a "reflection of the global processes".

In July, a statement by the Georgian Orthodox Church, through its governing body, the Georgian Patriarchate voiced opposition to the European Commission's call for Georgia to repeal its anti-LGBTI legislation, claiming that such a demand contradicts prior EU assurances that European integration would not require changes to the country's traditional values. The Church described the 2024 law, passed under the ruling Georgian Dream party, as protecting "family purity" and restricting LGBTI "propaganda" aimed at minors. The Patriarchate stressed that the religious community fully supported the law at the time of its adoption and continues to see it as essential to maintaining a "healthy social lifestyle."

GERMANY

In July, Education Minister Karin Prien imposed a ban on gender-inclusive language within her ministry,

prohibiting staff from using the asterisk or other special characters in official communications. The Federal Anti-Discrimination Office has underscored that such prohibitions contradict constitutional protections against unequal treatment.

In late September, the Federal Council approved a motion submitted by the governments of Berlin, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, North Rhine-Westphalia and Schleswig-Holstein to launch a constitutional amendment process via the Bundesrat, seeking to amend Article 3(3) of the German Constitution (Basic Law), the provision that prohibits discrimination. When the constitution was drafted, LGBTI people were left out as a protected group despite their persecution under National Socialism. This omission enabled decades of criminalisation and repression in the Federal Republic. Supporters of the initiative argue that the historical gap should be closed to guarantee constitutional protection for LGBTI people now and in the future. No amendment had been adopted by the end of 2025.

GREECE

In April, Greece's Council of State overturned a 2022 Health Ministry decision that had lifted a ban on blood donations by gay men, effectively reinstating the exclusion pending further scientific evaluation. The court ruled that the policy change bypassed expert recommendations and lacked supporting scientific studies. The ruling came after petitions from organisations representing people with thalassemia, who argued that the ministry had failed to prioritise public health and proper blood safety protocols. The Health Ministry is now required to re-evaluate the policy to ensure it aligns with both scientific standards and constitutional protections.

HUNGARY

In mid-March, Hungary's ruling Fidesz party submitted a set of amendments curtailing LGBTI rights and restricting civil liberties.

The first set of amendments targeted the Fundamental Law (National Constitution).

First, it modified Article L) to emphasise that "Human beings shall be male or female." (See also under

Legal Gender Recognition) Second, to underpin the amendment to the Act on the Right of Assembly banning LGBTI-themed assemblies (See under Freedom of Assembly), it modified Article XVI (1) to underscore that the right of children to "physical, mental, and moral development" should take precedence over other rights except for the right to life.

Together with the constitutional amendments, gender identity was removed from the list of protected characteristics in the Equal Treatment Act. The list of protected grounds remains open, with "any other characteristic" potentially covering gender identity as well.

In April, the constitutional amendments were approved by Parliament with 140 votes in favor and 21 against.

In March, MP from the Our Homeland Movement Előd Novák announced plans to introduce a new bill aimed at prohibiting the display of rainbow flags on public buildings. The proposal argues that Hungarian law requires all users of the national coat of arms and flag to respect their authority and dignity, while the rainbow flag allegedly "offends the beliefs and feelings of the majority," creates scandal, and is displayed "against local public will" in highly visible locations. The bill was put on the agenda of the Parliament with supporting votes from the governing Fidesz and KDNP MPs, its discussion is pending in Parliament.

ICELAND

In February, Hinsegin kórininn, the Reykjavík Queer Choir, announced that it would withdraw from its scheduled performance at World Pride in Washington, D.C., citing concerns for the safety of trans and non-binary people in the United States.

IRELAND

In April, a gay employee at a recycling company was awarded €12,000 in compensation by the Workplace Relations Commission after being subjected to harassment based on his sexual orientation.

In June, the Minister for Children, Disability and Equality, Norma Foley, announced the publication of the National LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy II (NLIS II)

for 2024-2028, alongside its first Action Plan for 2025-2026. The Strategy sets out government commitments across key areas including safety and protection from violence, inclusive education, health and mental health services, legal recognition, equality in public services, and improved data collection. At the launch, Minister Foley highlighted that the Strategy was developed in cooperation with government bodies and LGBTI civil society organisations.

In July, a bill was introduced in the Dáil to expunge historic convictions for consensual sexual activity between men, more than three decades after homosexuality was decriminalised in Ireland. Sinn Féin TD Aengus Ó Snodaigh described the legislation as an overdue measure to "right a wrong" affecting hundreds of men who were convicted since the State's foundation. The Disregard of Historic Offences for Consensual Sexual Activity between Men Bill was developed in consultation with campaign groups and co-signed by Opposition parties and Independents. The bill had not progressed beyond initial stages by the end of 2025.

In September, a trans man received €5,000 in compensation after the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) found that he had been discriminated against on the basis of his gender identity by a youth organisation. He had volunteered as a leader for 18 months before discovering in 2024 that his original application, submitted in late 2022, had been put to a vote without his consent. During that meeting, his gender identity was disclosed and discussed without his permission. Although he was ultimately accepted as a leader, the organisation imposed a condition preventing him from working with younger groups, a restriction the WRC found to constitute discrimination.

ITALY

In 2025, the Meglio a Colori campaign published the first national report documenting conversion practices in Italy. The report provided an overview of the existing information about how such practices take form, a country focus of the FRA data and a dedicated position statement of the Italian Association of Psychology. The initiative formed part of broader advocacy efforts calling for legislative

measures to prohibit conversion practices and ensure effective protection for those affected.

In March, the Ministry of Education and Merit issued a new circular banning the use of schwa (ə), a symbol used to express gender-neutral forms, and the asterisk in all official communications. The measure is framed as part of the government's wider campaign against what it calls gender theory and follows earlier steps such as recent statements by Minister Giuseppe Valditara from the Brothers of Italy Party, who openly admitted the government's intent to escalate its opposition to inclusive language and gender-related discourse in schools and institutions.

In April, Italy did not sign a condemnation statement by 23 European embassies against Hungary's ban on Pride events. In May, Italy again did not sign a declaration by 20 EU countries condemning Hungary's Pride ban and anti-LGBTI laws.

In July, Italy's women's national football team captain, Elena Linari, became the first Italian national team player to wear a rainbow armband during an international match, doing so during the game against Spain on 11 July. The gesture was widely interpreted as a public show of support for LGBTI equality and inclusion in sport.

KAZAKHSTAN

In February, deputies of the Majilis complained about what they described as "information attacks" by representatives of the LGBTI community following their public statements against LGBT people and requested intervention from the security services. In response, the Chair of the National Security Committee (KNB) stated that the agency would not investigate such matters, indicating that they did not fall within its mandate.

In 2024, Kazakhstan's Ministry of Health commissioned a study examining the alleged impact of so-called propaganda of same-sex relations on young people. In March 2025, the research concluded that sexual orientation cannot be altered through external influence or propaganda, and that the presence of LGBTI people can have a positive impact on adolescents by supporting self-understanding, reducing isolation, and providing access to peer

support for minority youth. According to reports, the findings provoked dissatisfaction among authorities, who had reportedly expected the study to justify restrictive measures against LGBTI people similar to those adopted in Russia. Shortly after President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev publicly criticised what he described as so-called democratic moral values, including LGBTI, and accused international NGOs of using them to interfere in domestic affairs, the Ministry of Health removed the report from its website without explanation.

In June, the organisers of Miss Kazakhstan issued a statement after media reports suggested that trans women might be eligible to participate in the national beauty contest. The reports stemmed from comments made by the contest's director during a press conference, which, according to the organisers, were taken out of context. The organisers underlined that this year's theme, Freedom of Choice, is intended to highlight respect for diversity, individuality, and the right of every woman to be herself. Within this framework, they said they are open to public debate on issues of stereotypes, beauty standards, self-expression, and inclusiveness. However, they emphasised that the official rules of participation remain unchanged.

LATVIA

In June, the Latvian Saeima voted to submit for further consideration amendments to the National Flag Law proposed by the opposition party Latvia First (LPV). The amendments would prohibit the rainbow flag from being displayed alongside the Latvian national flag. According to the LPV's annotation, state and municipal institutions must remain "neutral" toward different lifestyles and identities, and displaying the rainbow flag alongside the national flag undermines this neutrality.

In October, the Latvian parliament (Saeima) voted to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention, following sustained political campaigns framing the treaty as an expression of so-called gender ideology. The vote was made possible after a conservative partner within the governing coalition broke ranks, supporting the withdrawal against the stated positions of both the Prime Minister and the President of Latvia.

MOLDOVA

In June, the opposition parliamentary group Pobeda (Victory) submitted a draft law seeking to protect what it described as the family and moral foundations of Moldovan society by restricting the activities of LGBTI people. According to a statement published on the group's Telegram channel, the proposal would prohibit the promotion of non-traditional sexual relations and gender identity in schools, the media, and public events. It further sought to restrict adoption by LGBTI people and to ban assemblies, marches, and parades that promote non-traditional family relations (see also under Freedom of Expression and Family).

NETHERLANDS

In April, the Reformed Political Party (SGP), joined by the Farmer-Citizen Movement (BBB), Forum for Democracy (FvD), and JA21, submitted a motion calling on the government to withdraw a draft bill amending the Transgender Act before parliamentary debate. The proposed reform would have removed the requirement for a medical or psychological expert statement to change one's legal gender marker, replacing it with a self-determination procedure following a mandatory reflection period. It also provided for a court-based procedure for applicants under 16 with parental consent. Transgender Netwerk Netherlands criticised the motion, warning that halting the legislative process undermined democratic standards and negatively affected the safety and legal certainty of trans people. On 8 April, the House of Representatives adopted the motion, effectively ending the legislative process. In July, State Secretary Struycken confirmed that the cabinet had formally withdrawn the bill. In October, during an election debate organised by COC Netherlands, NSC MP Willem Koops acknowledged that withdrawing the bill before full parliamentary debate had been a mistake, while reiterating that his party would nevertheless have opposed the reform.

POLAND

In April, Łańcut County, the last Polish local government that had maintained an "LGBTI-free" status through the Local Government Charter of Family Rights, formally repealed the resolution. The move was prompted primarily by pressure from

the European Commission, which warned that local governments maintaining discriminatory laws risk losing access to EU investment funds.

PORTUGAL

In June, in response to the announcement of the "1st Heterosexual Pride March" in Porto, organised by the neo-Nazi group 1143, over 20 LGBTI collectives in Portugal issued an open letter condemning the event. The signatory collectives, comprising organisers of LGBTI Pride marches and queer activist groups emphasised that the demonstration represents an attack on freedom.

ROMANIA

In June, the NGO MozaiQ reported that an abandoned apartment block was defaced with a giant homophobic message: "STOP LGBT". Although authorities were notified, the Capital Police initially refused to act, citing the absence of a formal complaint.

During the 2025 presidential campaign, several electoral posters of candidate Nicusor Dan, who was perceived as supportive of LGBTI rights, were vandalised with messages stating that "he should be voted if you want to legalize LGBTI marriage." Following a complaint by ACCEPT, they were removed by the Central Electoral Bureau.

RUSSIA

In February, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) delivered its judgment in *Bazhenov and Others v. Russia*. The Court held that Russia had violated Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) in conjunction with Article 8 (right to respect for private life), as the authorities did not effectively investigate the homophobic publication of the applicants' private information and photographs by extremist groups online. The disclosure exposed the applicants to harassment and threats, creating a climate of fear for their safety. The ECtHR stressed that sexual minorities are a particularly vulnerable group requiring heightened protection, and reiterated its established principle that any differential treatment based on sexual orientation demands "particularly convincing and weighty reasons."

SLOVAKIA

In January, Prime Minister Robert Fico announced plans to amend the constitution to recognise only two genders. Speaking at a press conference in Bratislava, he argued that Slovakia must have the final say on such matters, even if it contradicts EU law. Fico said the amendments were needed to curb what he called "progressive ideologies", claiming that people today "change their gender identity on a daily basis" and that Slovakia must safeguard its heritage. Under his proposal, transitioning would be permitted only in "exceptional, justified cases", and adoption rights would be restricted to couples recognised as parents in the constitutional sense – excluding same-sex couples, since marriage in Slovakia is defined solely as the union of a man and a woman. In April, the amendments were discussed in first reading by the Slovak Parliament. In light of the second reading, in June, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe issued a warning to Slovak lawmakers against proposed constitutional amendments that could undermine human rights protections. Also in June, the European Commission echoed similar concerns, underscoring that the proposed changes would breach European Union law by attempting to deny the supremacy of EU rules over national legislation. After the vote had been suspended in June due to a lack of sufficient support, in late September Slovakia's parliament ultimately approved the constitutional amendment. The adopted changes formally recognise only two genders, restrict comprehensive sexuality education in schools, and limit adoption rights exclusively to married heterosexual couples and undermine supremacy of EU law.

On 21 November the European Commission launched an infringement procedure against Slovakia for its Constitutional amendment package adopted in September. This package includes a number of amendments that discriminate against LGBTI persons, as well as amendments that stipulate that Slovakia retains sovereignty over what are described as "national identity" matters, with the stated aim of ensuring that Slovak domestic legislation may take primacy over all international law, including EU law and the ECHR in these areas. The Commission has launched infringement in relation to the primacy

of EU law. The [Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights](#), the [Venice Commission](#), the [Fundamental Rights Agency](#) of the European Union, and [multiple UN Special Rapporteurs](#) in the fields of education, health and privacy expressed their concern regarding the amendments, and prior to their approval in Parliament, called for withdrawal or rejection of the proposed changes. These concerns are also shared by the European Parliament, as expressed following the LIBE mission to Slovakia of 2-3 June 2025, the plenary debate of 10 September on "the Rule of law and EU funds management in Slovakia", and the [open letter](#) which over 50 MEPs sent to the Slovak National Council on 16 September.

In October, the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) issued a [statement](#) condemning Slovakia's newly adopted constitutional reform on LGBTI rights. The FRA warned that the amendment (See more above) "undermines the principles of equality, human dignity, and respect" guaranteed by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. It denounced the legal definition of sex as "male or female, biologically determined," arguing that it erases the "lived experiences" of trans, non-binary, and intersex people. The agency also criticised the new requirement for parental consent for minors to attend sex education classes, describing it as an undue "restriction on access to objective and reliable information."

In October, the Human Rights Coalition warned that the situation of LGBTI people in Slovakia continues to worsen. The coalition stated that hatred has "shifted into political speeches, legislation, and public discourse." The coalition criticised both the government and parliament for failing in their duty to protect all individuals regardless of identity, orientation, or faith, calling the recent constitutional amendment (see more above) "a frontal attack on human rights, particularly those of queer people." In response, the Justice Ministry maintained that Slovakia's Constitution already prohibits discrimination based on sex, gender, or sexual orientation and asserted that the state "provides protection to all citizens without distinction." It said the constitutional amendment affirming two genders "is not a legal novelty but merely a confirmation of the current state," adding that "the rights and status of trans persons remain unchanged."

SLOVENIA

In July 2023, the Parliamentary Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities called on the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities to prepare and adopt a National Strategy for the Equality of LGBTIQ+ Persons by the end of 2024. At the ILGA-Europe Annual Conference in Ljubljana in October 2023, State Secretary Dan Juvan [reaffirmed](#) the government's commitment to delivering Slovenia's first comprehensive LGBTIQ+ strategy. The Ministry established a working group including relevant ministries, LGBTI NGOs and independent experts, which drafted several versions of the strategy addressing gaps in healthcare, education and legal protection. By early 2025, civil society expressed cautious optimism that Slovenia would adopt a dedicated national action plan. In autumn 2025, however, the Ministry announced that the strategy would be abandoned, citing "critical errors in assessment" during the drafting process. The decision followed a multi-year collaborative effort in which civil society had contributed substantial voluntary work. LGBTI organisations strongly criticised the withdrawal, describing it as a serious setback that undermined trust in political commitments and left Slovenia without a comprehensive policy framework ahead of parliamentary elections in March 2026.

SPAIN

In late January, the Vox parliamentary group in Murcia submitted a [motion](#) calling for the repeal of the region's 2016 LGBTI Equality Law, which provides protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Vox justified the proposal by attacking so-called "gender ideology," linking it to education, healthcare for minors, and women's rights.

In February, the People's Party (PP) [announced](#) plans to amend Law 4/2023 on trans and LGBTI equality and Law 39/2022 on Sport. The party stated that the reform aims to regulate access to women's sports competitions on the basis of sex, a proposal [criticised](#) by civil society for excluding trans athletes and undermining non-discrimination protections.

In February, the Parliament of Catalonia [advanced](#)

amendments to Law 11/2014 on LGBTI equality, aimed at strengthening protections. The reform updates the sanctioning regime, classifying conversion practices and online incitement to discrimination as very serious infractions. In late February, Vox introduced initiatives to repeal equality and non-discrimination laws in six autonomous communities: Madrid, Andalucía, Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura, La Rioja, and Murcia. In March, the Canary Islands Parliament unanimously rejected one such proposal.

In April, the Sumar platform introduced a bill in Congress to recognise and protect the rights of intersex and non-binary people. The proposal includes a legal definition of non-binary identity, adaptation of official documents, data collection, and reparations for intersex people subjected to non-consensual medical interventions.

In April, the Spanish government appointed the state prosecutor, María Teresa Verdugo, as president of the Independent Authority for Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination after a two-year delay. Her mandate started in June.

In May, LGBTI organisations in the Canary Islands denounced an internal education directive ordering the removal of the non-binary gender marker from administrative forms. Following public criticism, the regional government acknowledged the measure as an error, announced its correction, and opened dialogue with civil society.

In June, the Asturian government announced that a long-awaited regional LGBTI law would be introduced during the legislature. However, despite repeated assurances, the law had not been approved or adopted by the end of 2025.

In July, the Compromís coalition requested that the Ombudsman file an appeal before the Constitutional Court against amendments to the Valencian Trans Law introduced by the PP and Vox. Compromís argued that the reforms dismantled core protections for trans people. By the end of the year, the appeal remained pending before the Court.

In December, the Parliament of Catalonia passed a law against LGBTI-phobia (Law 13/2025) that updates the

regulations in force since 2014, expands the areas of protection, adds offenses, and defines a new range of penalties ranging from €300 to €500,000. This regulation, which will come into force in 2026, not only intensifies the penalty system, but also requires companies with more than 50 employees to have a specific protocol in place and includes mandatory LGBTI clauses in public procurement, among other aspects.

SWEDEN

In May, the government presented a proposal introducing a new crime classification of psychological violence. The draft legislation defines psychological violence as repeated acts such as insults, coercion, threats, or surveillance that seriously damage a person's self-esteem. Importantly, the law would extend protection to victims of conversion practices, when these are carried out through coercion, threats, or sustained psychological pressure.

In November, the Church of Sweden decided that new priests must be willing to marry same-sex couples. At the 2025 Church Council, a vote determined that those seeking ordination must adhere to the Church of Sweden's order for marriage. The decision passed with 141 votes in favor, 99 against, and four abstentions. Previously, since 2009, priests who opposed marrying same-sex couples could still be ordained and employed.

SWITZERLAND

In January, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruled that Switzerland violated the rights of South African athlete Caster Semenya. The judgment confirmed a 2023 finding in her favor, overturning earlier international court decisions that had supported restrictions imposed by the World Athletics Association. Semenya, an Olympic gold medalist and intersex woman with naturally high testosterone levels, had been required by World Athletics to undergo medical treatment to reduce her hormone levels in order to compete in women's events. She refused, arguing that the regulation was discriminatory and harmful, and pursued legal action. While the Court of Arbitration for Sport and Swiss courts had initially upheld the

rule, the ECtHR determined that Switzerland had failed to adequately protect Semenya's rights. The judges found that she was discriminated against and denied a fair trial.

TAJIKISTAN

Civil society reporting continued to indicate that Tajikistan's legal framework does not provide explicit protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics. The absence of hate crime and anti-discrimination provisions contributes to limited accountability and a lack of official monitoring (see also under Data Collection).

TURKEY

In January, President Erdoğan declared 2025 the "Year of the Family", portraying LGBTI people and gender equality initiatives as threats to traditional values. Following a cabinet meeting, he announced a nationwide campaign focused on "protecting and strengthening the family." Shortly thereafter, the government held a Year of the Family Promotion Meeting, during which the Minister of Family and Social Services, Mahinur Özdemir Göktaş, warned against what she described as "harmful movements" undermining family values. In October, President Erdoğan submitted the 2026 Central Government Budget Law Proposal to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. The proposal allocated approximately 22 billion Turkish lira (around €600 million) to programmes aimed at the "protection and strengthening of the family."

In May, during the International Family Forum in Istanbul, President Erdoğan announced the designation of 2026–2035 as the "Decade of Family and Population." In his remarks, Erdoğan framed opposition to LGBTI rights as part of a broader struggle to protect society and freedom. The Minister of Family and Social Services stated that what she described as "gender-neutral ideologies" posed a threat to the institution of the family.

In June, during a Family Workshop organised under the Union of Religious Officials' Family Year Action Plan, the organisation's president, Ali Yıldız, made statements targeting LGBTI identities and gender

equality frameworks. In his remarks, he characterised LGBTI identities as a threat to moral and social values, criticised what he described as "genderisation", and denounced the Istanbul Convention, portraying Turkey's withdrawal as a positive development. He further called for restrictive approaches towards media, daytime television programmes, and online platforms, which he claimed promote immorality.

In late October, protests took place across Turkey in response to the proposed 11th Judicial Package, which initially included provisions aiming to expand criminal liability for expressions and conduct deemed contrary to "biological sex" and public morality, introduce prison sentences related to same-sex engagements or marriages, and increase penalties for certain public order offences. In late November, the government removed the proposed anti-LGBTI provisions from the package prior to its submission. Other elements of the reform package, including provisions affecting the prosecution and sentencing of children, remained under consideration.

In late November, the Republican People's Party (CHP) adopted its renewed program, which covers a wide range of areas including Democracy, Governance and Justice, Development, Social State, Foreign Policy, Security, and Resistance. While LGBTI issues were not explicitly listed as a separate section, the program emphasised ending discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

TURKMENISTAN

In July, David Omarov, founder of the "Invisible Rainbow Turkmenistan" initiative, released a video address to UN agencies, EU institutions, diplomatic missions, and international experts, urging recognition of systemic repression, violence, torture, and the erasure of LGBTI people in Turkmenistan. He called for acknowledgment of the harm enabled by Articles 133 and 116 of the Criminal Code and stressed that state bodies carry out abuses; officials publicly deny these realities in international forums.

UKRAINE

In July, the Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) withdrew Bill No. 5488, which would have introduced criminal liability for hate crimes, following the resignation of

Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal's government. The bill, drafted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2021 and submitted on behalf of the former prime minister, formed part of Ukraine's European integration agenda but never reached its first reading. According to the National LGBTI Consortium, while the bill was ultimately abandoned, the advocacy efforts surrounding it helped consolidate both state and non-state actors around principles of equality and non-discrimination. This stalled reform was later followed by a separate legislative initiative, introducing a new draft (see also under Bias-Motivated Speech).

In January, the commander who discriminated against non-binary soldier Evelyn Schönbrenner in the International Legion was demoted following an investigation prompted by the public organisation Ukrainian LGBT+ Military for Equal Rights. Schönbrenner, a US national who joined the International Legion in March 2022, faced repeated harassment over their gender identity and sexual orientation. In November 2022, their commander forbade them from wearing a unicorn patch and demanded the removal of a TikTok video in which they publicly supported LGBTI rights in Ukraine, claiming such acts "humiliated Ukraine." In December 2023, they filed a report to the Gender Adviser of the Land Forces Command and Commissioner of the Verkhovna Rada for Human Rights, whose investigation confirmed the discrimination and resulted in demotion of the commander.

UNITED KINGDOM

In late January, plans drafted by the Home Office proposed longer sentences for offenders convicted of hate crimes against LGBTI and disabled people in England and Wales. Currently, hostility towards LGBTI and disabled people can be treated as an aggravating factor at sentencing, but it is not embedded in the charge itself. In June, the government pledged to equalise sentencing for anti-LGBTI and anti-disability hate crimes by treating them as aggravated offences. The move followed a debate on an amendment introduced by Labour MP Rachel Taylor, backed by over 100 cross-party MPs, which aims to strengthen legal recognition and sentencing in cases where crimes are motivated by

hostility towards sexuality, trans identity, or disability. In February 2026, the UK Government introduced legislation to implement this. Scotland has had such legislation since 2021.

In January, England Hockey announced that from the next season trans women would no longer be eligible to compete in the female category. Under the new participation policy, competitions will be divided into a female category and an open category. In May, the Football Association introduced a ban on trans women competing in women's football in England, aligning its policy with the UK Supreme Court ruling defining "woman" in the Equality Act by biological sex (see also under Legal Gender Recognition). Similar restrictions had previously been introduced in cricket, where the England and Wales Cricket Board barred trans women from the top two tiers of elite women's cricket.

In March, the University of Edinburgh adopted a policy allowing staff to use toilet facilities in line with their gender identity, irrespective of possession of a gender recognition certificate. In April, eight nurses from County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust brought legal proceedings challenging the Trust's decision to permit a trans colleague to use female changing rooms. The claims include sexual harassment, discrimination, victimisation and alleged violations of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. In May, the Scottish Parliament announced that some toilet and changing facilities would be converted to gender-neutral use, while access to remaining single-sex facilities would be restricted on the basis of sex assigned at birth, following the UK Supreme Court ruling on the definition of "sex" under the Equality Act 2010. In July, the Scottish Government confirmed it would meet with Sex Matters, which had threatened legal action, and stated that the policy remained under review.