

# Institutional Support

## ALBANIA

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.

## ANDORRA

In May, on the occasion of the International Day Against LGBTI-phobia (IDAHOBIT), the Consell General d'Andorra (Parliament) hosted a [conference](#) titled "To be or not to be trans, that's not the question" by Dr. Jordi Reviriego. As part of his intervention, Reviriego stressed that biological sex and gender must not be conflated, noting that gender is a social construction. He highlighted the contradiction in society's acceptance of aesthetic surgeries for cis people, while pathologizing or criminalizing similar interventions when it comes to trans people.

## ARMENIA

In April, the Armenian government [approved](#) its Gender Policy Strategy and Action Plan for 2025-2028, outlining commitments to promote gender equality and combat discrimination. While the initiative was welcomed by human rights NGOs, it was reported that the strategy still falls short of explicitly addressing sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds against discrimination.

In May, ahead of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT), Anzhelika Movsesova, Advisor to the Human Rights Defender of Armenia, conveyed the Ombudsperson's message reaffirming the institution's commitment

to monitoring LGBTI rights, responding to violations, and developing preventive tools to better protect vulnerable groups.

In December, the EU-Armenia Partnership Council held its sixth [meeting](#), during which both parties highlighted the strong momentum in bilateral relations, reaffirmed shared values, and adopted a new "Strategic Agenda for the EU-Armenia Partnership." The agenda sets ambitious cooperation priorities and represents a major step toward deepening and advancing EU-Armenia ties. The Council noted the upcoming EU-Armenia Summit in May 2026 as another key milestone for enhancing the partnership. As EU-Armenia cooperation is grounded in commitments to human rights and non-discrimination, the strengthened partnership may have implications for advancing protections for LGBTI people.

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In July, the European Parliament published its [annual report](#) on Bosnia and Herzegovina, placing new emphasis on countering hybrid threats such as foreign interference and disinformation. The report expressed concern over increasing efforts by malign foreign actors to exploit ethnic divisions and institutional weaknesses to obstruct reforms and erode trust in the EU. It also criticised Milorad Dodik, current president of BiH, and members of the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) for launching initiatives aimed at nullifying state laws within the Republika Srpska entity and attacking key state institutions.

## BULGARIA

In February, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) presented its [assessment](#) of Bulgaria's progress on two high-priority recommendations from its 2022 monitoring report. ECRI rapporteur Jens Vedsted-Hansen noted that while Bulgaria has taken steps to expand the number and regional distribution of Roma mediators in healthcare, education, and employment, it has failed to implement the recommendation concerning the rights and equality of LGBTI people. Specifically, Bulgaria has neither established a working group nor adopted a national action plan to protect LGBTI rights, as ECRI had urged.

## CROATIA

In 2025, the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers of the European Commission published its Country [Report](#) on Non-Discrimination in Croatia. While the report identifies persistent gaps and uneven national-level responses to discrimination, it highlights notable progress at the local level, particularly in Zagreb. The report underscores that civil society actors and local authorities in Zagreb have taken a proactive role in advancing LGBTI equality through structured policy initiatives. In this context, the City of Zagreb adopted the Programme for the Equality of LGBTI Persons, which will remain in force until the end of 2026.

In June, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe published its [monitoring report](#) on Croatia, noting measurable progress in addressing hate speech and improving the inclusion of Roma communities, while stressing that significant structural shortcomings persist. ECRI identified ongoing prejudice and discrimination against LGBTI persons and ethnic and national minorities as a matter of concern. In relation to LGBTI rights, the Commission highlighted that the legal gender recognition procedure remains excessively burdensome and highly medicalised, creating barriers to the effective enjoyment of rights. The Commission issued a set of targeted recommendations, including reforming legal gender recognition procedures, strengthening political leadership against racist and anti-LGBTI rhetoric, addressing residential segregation affecting Roma families, and developing a national strategy on migrant integration that builds on existing good practices.

## CZECHIA

The programme declaration of the newly formed government coalition (See also under Education) mentions preventing funding for non-profit organisations for political activism. The proposal would also apply to non-profit organisations that seek to improve the position of LGBTI people in society, as they are often referred to as actors of political activism.

## DENMARK

In March, Denmark [issued](#) a travel advisory for trans citizens planning to visit the United States, joining a growing number of countries responding

to recent US policy changes. The advisory follows a January executive order that curtailed trans rights, ending the issuance of passports with an "X" gender marker and prohibiting gender changes on renewed passports.

In May, Aalborg Municipality's Diversity Committee unanimously [agreed](#) to begin developing an LGBTI policy and action plan. The initiative follows dialogue meetings involving local LGBTI associations and politicians. Alongside municipal efforts, the Region of Southern Denmark is set to become the first Danish region with an LGBTI policy, aimed at improving interactions between healthcare professionals and LGBTI patients.

In August, the Danish government [announced](#) that it would allocate 24 million kroner to a new LGBTI action plan for 2026–2029, citing persistent levels of discrimination and distress among LGBTI people. The planned action plan, to be negotiated alongside the 2026 budget, aims to strengthen prevention of discrimination, improve support for victims of hate crime, and expand networks and community offers for LGBTI people across the country, with a focus on regions outside the capital. Parliamentary parties backing the initiative underlined the need for targeted measures to address hate-motivated violence, discrimination, and the wellbeing gap affecting LGBTI communities.

In August, the UN Human Rights Council issued [Report A/HRC/60/50](#), containing recommendations for member states on the protection of intersex persons. The document urges countries, including Denmark, to address discrimination, acts of violence, and harmful practices targeting intersex children and adults. It calls on states to combat infanticide, sexual violence, and other forms of physical abuse, as well as to prevent hate speech and incitement to violence both online and offline. Member states are also encouraged to integrate sex characteristics into relevant laws and policies to ensure effective protection, legal recognition, and equal treatment for intersex people.

## ESTONIA

In May, on the day of the Tallinn Pride march, Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna of the Estonia 200 party publicly [stated](#) that "everyone must have the right to love." On the occasion of IDAHOBIT 2025, the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs and Estonian foreign missions flew rainbow flags demonstrating official governmental support for LGBTI rights as part of Estonia's foreign policy commitments.

In December, Estonia adopted a national action plan to strengthen equality and protections for LGBTI people across education, healthcare, employment, and the legal system. Developed over nearly two years by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the plan is guided by the principle that Estonia should be "a great place for LGBTIQ people to live." Key measures include improving school safety and inclusivity, updating curricula to address LGBTI topics, and ensuring mental and physical security for students and staff. Legal reforms aim to expand protections against discrimination in public services, healthcare, education, and access to goods. Changes to gender-marker procedures and protections for intersex children are also planned. Healthcare measures focus on accessible sexual health counseling and gender-affirming care, while workplaces will receive guidance on inclusion and safety, supported by annual HR and agency training. Victim support and law enforcement training will improve responses to hate crimes and discrimination, and prisons will assess and reduce risks for LGBTI persons. Internationally, Estonia commits to condemning LGBTI discrimination and violence, with embassies participating in diplomatic statements, raising awareness, and flying Pride flags on key dates. The government plans a midterm review in 2027 and a final evaluation in 2030 to track progress.

## FINLAND

In February, the city council of Lahti voted to end the practice of raising the rainbow flag at city hall during Pride. The decision followed an initiative submitted in November 2023 by Liike Nyt councillor Jari Pykäläinen, who argued that the city should "emphasize a neutral line" by limiting flag-raising to official and established national flag days. The proposal received support from nearly all members of the National Coalition Party and several representatives of the Social Democratic Party, the council's largest group.

Similarly, in November, an administrative court in

Eastern Finland ruled on a complaint challenging a municipality's decision to fly the rainbow flag during Pride celebrations. The complainants argued that the measure violated the principle of non-discrimination and the municipality's flag policy.

The court dismissed the complaint, finding that flying the rainbow flag could be justified as an action to promote equality. It emphasised that advancing equality is a legal obligation for public authorities under non-discrimination legislation, and that the measure was consistent with this duty.

In June, the Parliamentary Rainbow Network and Seta organised a Pride Q&A session at Helsinki Pride house. The event featured members of parliament discussing current rainbow issues and included speeches from rainbow activists. Participants included network chair Elisa Gebhard (SDP), vice-chair Saara Hynkkö (Green), Mai Kivelä (Left Alliance), Henrik Vuornos (National Coalition), Eeva Kärkkäinen (Centre) and Emma Ringbom (Swedish People's Party).

## FRANCE

In May, the Senate adopted a bill aimed at rehabilitating people convicted under France's former laws criminalising homosexuality. The text, introduced by Socialist Senator Hussein Bourgi and approved unanimously, acknowledges that France pursued discriminatory policies against homosexual people between 1942 and 1982 – the year homosexuality was fully decriminalised. The bill specifically targets two former provisions of the criminal code: one that imposed a higher age of consent for same-sex relations, and another that increased penalties for "public indecency" when committed by two people of the same sex. However, the Senate rejected the compensation mechanism that had been inserted in the draft law during its first reading and approved by the National Assembly. That mechanism proposed financial reparations for those wrongly convicted: a flat €10,000 payment plus €150 for each day spent in detention. Senate right-wing and centrist groups, who hold the majority, opposed reinstating this component, arguing that it lacked legal clarity and could lead to significant litigation risks.

In June, the French Equality Body published a

new framework decision on matters relating to gender identity. This text updates and expands the previous framework decision of 2020, addressing the difficulties trans people face in multiple areas: civil status and filiation, health and social protection, education, employment, sports participation, access to goods and services, police ethics, and deprivation of liberty. It also considers the specific situations of trans foreign nationals.

In June, a bill was tabled in the Senate to strengthen the legal framework against LGBTIphobic violence and facilitate the work of LGBTI advocacy associations. The text aims to address gaps identified following a priority constitutional question (QPC) filed by STOP Homophobie by providing that associations fighting LGBTIphobia could join proceedings as civil parties in cases of rape, sequestration, theft, extortion or blackmail. Another key measure aims to reinforce the ban on conversion therapies by extending criminal liability to anyone offering conversion practices, regardless of professional status. Finally, the proposal introduces "gender expression" as an autonomous ground of protection in anti-discrimination and hate speech law, attempting to align French law with recommendations from the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

## GEORGIA

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe voiced concern that, despite repeated requests, Georgian authorities proceeded with the adoption of the "Law on the Protection of Family Values and Minors," which bans the promotion of LGBTI identities and restricts public assemblies organised for that purpose. The Committee warned that this legislation represents a regression in the execution of previous cases and raises serious questions about Georgia's compliance with European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) judgments. It therefore urged the Georgian state to repeal the law.

In July, ILGA World, Women's Initiatives Supporting Group (WISG), Tbilisi Pride, and Equality Movement (EM) submitted a shadow report for Georgia's fourth Universal Periodic Review. The report assessed the situation of human rights for LGBTI people in Georgia between 2021 and 2025, highlighting systematic rollbacks of rights, increasing state-sponsored

hostility, and growing exclusion from public life. It also noted that progress on gender equality had been undermined, with measures to promote women's political participation revoked and gender-based violence, particularly by law enforcement, going unpunished, sustaining a climate of impunity.

## GERMANY

In May, Germany's federal parliament (the Bundestag) announced that it would fly the rainbow flag only once a year, on the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT). Bundestag President Julia Klöckner (Christian Democratic Union, CDU) justified the decision by arguing that Christopher Street Day (CSD) is primarily a day of assembly, protest, and celebration, and that the rainbow symbol should therefore be carried by citizens rather than displayed by the parliamentary institution itself. Chancellor Friedrich Merz likewise rejected the hoisting of the rainbow flag at federal institutions for CSD, dismissing the idea by stating that the Bundestag is "not a circus tent."

In May, Sophie Koch, a member of the Saxon state parliament, was appointed as the new Federal Government Commissioner for the Acceptance of Sexual and Gender Diversity. The role is situated within the Federal Ministry of Education, Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, with a mandate to strengthen acceptance of sexual and gender diversity across society and government policy.

This year's National Remembrance Day ceremony marked the first time that explicit mention was made of people who were persecuted and killed during the Nazi era because of their gender or sexual identity.

## HUNGARY

In late March, the European Parliament's AI Act expert and monitor warned that Hungary's plan to use AI-powered facial recognition to identify and fine participants in Budapest Pride would breach EU law. The Hungarian Parliament had just voted to ban the march (See also under Freedom of Assembly), threatening violators with fines of 200,000 forints and allowing the use of digital biometric surveillance to track those who defied the ban. In April, the

European Commission officially announced it would review the legal compliance of such legislative changes, especially in relation to any potential violation of European rules on artificial intelligence, which prohibit real-time and remote biometric identification systems, such as facial recognition in public spaces.

In late March, 21 European countries and Australia issued a joint diplomatic statement condemning Hungary's decision to ban the annual Pride parade. The embassies stressed that the new legislation adopted by the Hungarian Parliament "results in restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression."

In April, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, Michael O'Flaherty, urged Hungary's National Assembly to amend its law on the right of assembly, which effectively prohibits events such as Pride marches. In a letter addressed to Assembly President László Kövér, O'Flaherty warned that banning peaceful events promoting LGBTI equality violates the right to freedom of assembly.

In April, several Members of the European Parliament announced they would attend the Budapest Pride march in June, despite a new law passed by Viktor Orbán's government banning such events (See also under Freedom of Assembly). Speaking during a plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Hungarian MEP Csaba Molnár described the ban as a "homophobic measure" disguised as child protection and urged colleagues to join: "We will go to Pride this year too, come and participate too." In June, EU Commissioner for Equality Hadja Lahbib also expressed her willingness to attend Budapest Pride.

In April, Human Rights Watch condemned Hungary's newly adopted constitutional amendments restricting the right of assembly, calling them further evidence of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's dismantling of democracy and the rule of law (See also under Freedom of Assembly)

In May, a group of Members of the European Parliament sent a letter urging Brussels to freeze all EU funding for Hungary in response to what they described as "further alarming regression" on

democracy, rule of law, and fundamental freedoms. Simultaneously, twenty European Union countries have put out a joint statement accusing Hungary of violating the fundamental values of the European Union by passing laws that target LGBTI people.

In June, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen urged the Hungarian authorities to lift the ban on Budapest Pride. "Our Union stands for equality and non-discrimination. These are our fundamental values, enshrined in our treaties," she declared, calling on Hungary to ensure that Pride could take place. In parallel, a small solidarity Pride march was held in Brussels, organised by Amnesty International, to protest the Hungarian ban.

In June, 33 embassies, one diplomatic mission and eight cultural institutes issued a joint statement to mark the 30th Budapest Pride. Among the signatories were the embassies of countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Germany and Spain, while the United States notably did not join. The statement reaffirmed the participating missions' support for LGBTI people in Hungary and elsewhere, underscoring their commitment to equal treatment, non-discrimination, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and protection from verbal and physical violence – principles grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In September, Budapest Pride was nominated for the European Union's Sakharov Prize for human rights by the Greens in the European Parliament. The nomination highlighted Budapest Pride's role in defending fundamental freedoms, particularly the right to freedom of assembly and association as guaranteed by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The nomination did not result in an award.

## IRELAND

In November, Minister for Children, Disability and Equality Norma Foley announced €1.7 million in funding through the 2025 LGBTIQ+ Community Services Fund. The initiative aims to promote inclusion, protect rights, and enhance the wellbeing and quality of life of LGBTI people in Ireland, enabling full participation in social, economic, cultural, and political life. A total of 43 community service projects received grants of up to €100,000 each under this

programme.

## KAZAKHSTAN

In February, the [activities](#) of USAID in Kazakhstan and across Central Asia were significantly reduced under the administration of US President Donald Trump. Mazhilis Deputy Magerram Magerramov accused the agency of lobbying for LGBTI rights and argued that LGBTI and feminist activism in Kazakhstan is externally driven through such financial support rather than internal social demand, and alleged that USAID has financed minority protests in the country. Political scientist Gaziz Abishev also weighed in, stressing the importance of distinguishing between humanitarian aid and political influence. While supporting funding for education, science, and assistance to vulnerable groups, he warned that politicised projects often serve as tools of foreign pressure under the guise of development.

In May, Zhanarbek Ashimzhanov, Member of the Mazhilis of the Parliament, [called](#) on the Deputy Prime Minister to tighten control over social networks, scrutinise the activities of NGOs, and to release the Ministry of Culture's study on the influence of LGBT on minors. Ashimzhanov reiterated his demand for a legislative ban on so-called LGBTI propaganda. He argued that organisations active on platforms like TikTok promote phenomena alien to our culture and deliberately target vulnerable children and adolescents. According to him, such destructive ideas are introduced into Kazakhstani society with the help of foreign grants, which he claimed threaten national security. His request was supported by nine other deputies. In response, Kosherbayev stated that the Ministry of Culture monitors social networks around the clock to prevent the spread of harmful content among minors.

In July, representatives of [Feminita](#) spoke at the 144th session of the UN Human Rights Committee, held under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), highlighting violations of the civil and political rights of LGBTI persons in Kazakhstan. As Kazakhstan is obliged to report under the ICCPR every eight years, the intervention posed questions to the Kazakhstani delegation on the rights of LGBTI persons, the ongoing petition against so-called LGBTI propaganda, the absence of comprehensive anti-

discrimination legislation, and access to medical services for trans people.

## KOSOVO

In July, the European Parliament adopted its [report](#) on Kosovo, expressing concern that the draft Civil Code of Kosovo has yet to be adopted. The report highlighted that the draft code addresses key issues of gender equality, including equal sharing of joint marital property between spouses. It also emphasised the importance of ensuring that the Civil Code protects the rights of all individuals, including members of the LGBTI community, in line with constitutional guarantees and fundamental EU values.

## LITHUANIA

In January, an international conference on demographic challenges and family policy was held at the Seimas, organised by the Temporary Family Policy Group of the Lithuanian Parliament. Among the principal speakers was Jerzy Kwaśniewski, president of the Polish organisation Ordo Iuris, known for its advocacy against gender equality and LGBTI rights. During his visit, Kwaśniewski also met with the Minister of Justice. Civil society organisations raised concerns about the participation of actors associated with transnational anti-gender initiatives in parliamentary discussions on family policy.

## LUXEMBOURG

In July, Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, head of the Catholic Church in Luxembourg, participated for the first time in the commemoration ceremony for victims of queenphobic violence, which traditionally opens Luxembourg Pride Week. His participation marked a notable gesture of engagement from the Catholic Church in a context where religious institutions have historically played a significant role in public life.

In July, Yuriko Backes, Minister for Gender Equality and Diversity, presented the updated National LGBTI Action Plan (PAN LGBTIQ+). The plan comprises 81 measures and 147 concrete actions structured across 15 thematic chapters. On 21 July, the plan was subsequently discussed with members of the parliamentary Committee on Family, Solidarity, Living Together, Reception, Gender Equality and

Diversity during a dedicated exchange session. While Luxembourg's national LGBTI organisation Rosa Lëtzebuerg ASBL and the Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CCDH) welcomed the update, both organisations expressed concerns about its substance and direction. According to the CCDH, the new plan does not include the depathologisation of trans identities, maintaining the requirement for trans people to obtain a psychiatric certificate to start their transition process.

In October, during the accession ceremony of Grand Duke Guillaume, an internationally broadcast ceremonial event aimed at reflecting the diversity of Luxembourgish society included a segment on "Living Together." Rosa Lëtzebuerg, as the national advocacy organisation for LGBTIQ+ people, was invited to participate alongside public institutions and human rights organisations. The invitation was widely viewed as the first explicit recognition of queer communities by the Luxembourg monarchy.

## MALTA

In May, Prime Minister Robert Abela stated that while the government must continue fostering a culture of equality, Malta has already "done all that was needed to be done" in terms of LGBTI legislation. Speaking after his keynote address at the European IDAHOT+ Forum, Abela pointed to the introduction of civil unions, same-sex marriage, and other reforms as evidence that Malta had already enacted the key legislative changes required.

## MOLDOVA

In June, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled on the case of a Moldovan lawyer and human rights advocate. The applicant, known for her human rights advocacy on behalf of the LGBTI community, reported being insulted with homophobic remarks and threatened by colleagues and that the authorities failed to protect her. Although the Moldovan courts ruled against her and framed the incident as a "neighborly quarrel," the ECHR, by contrast, concluded that the insults and aggression directed at Straisteanu had wider implications, as they targeted both her personally and the LGBTI community she represents.

In mid-June, the Moldovan Interior Ministry

condemned the violence and provocations that targeted the LGBTI march in Chisinau on June 15. The Ministry argued that conservative and religious groups deliberately sought to destabilise the event, not only by confronting participants but also by clashing directly with police officers tasked with guaranteeing public safety. An incident in which a counterprotester carrying a child tried to push through police lines, nearly causing the boy to fall, was the subject of an investigation by the Children's Ombudsman, who expressed concerns about the deliberate exposure of minors to volatile confrontations

## MONTENEGRO

In June, the European Parliament published its periodic report on Montenegro, highlighting concerns that the draft law on legal gender recognition was not adopted in 2024, despite it being a measure under Montenegro's EU accession programme.

In November, the European Commission released its latest report on Montenegro, noting that, while some progress has been made, the country continues to face outstanding obligations in key EU accession chapters 23 and 24. The report highlights that Montenegro has not yet adopted the Draft Law on Legal Recognition of Gender Identity based on self-determination, despite completing prior legislative steps and consultations with the European Commission. In addition, the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination and the Law on Life Partnership of Persons of the Same Sex remain pending full implementation, with delays exceeding five years in some cases.

## NORTH MACEDONIA

In June, the European Parliament published its periodic report on North Macedonia, highlighting widespread hate speech on social media targeting Roma and LGBTI people, as well as other marginalised groups and calling for the systematic prosecution of hate speech, hate crimes, and intimidation. The report also called for the inclusion of hate speech in the Criminal Code.

## NORWAY

In June, the Norwegian government announced

[plans](#) to establish a memorial site for the Pride terror attack on June 25, 2022. According to Minister of Culture and Equality Lubna Jaffery from the Labour Party, the memorial is intended to serve as a place of collective grief, reflection, and resistance, symbolising the community's stand against hatred and violence.

In June, the rainbow flag was [raised](#) for the first time outside Oslo Cathedral, accompanied by a performance from the Norwegian Broadcasting Orchestra. The event was attended by Oslo Cathedral's dean, Pål Kristian Balstad, who emphasised the church's commitment to celebrating diversity and promoting a safe, inclusive society.

In October, the presented state budget [underscored](#) that the Norwegian Organisation for Gender and Sexual Diversity (FRI) would face cuts to its capacity-building initiatives. Among the targeted initiatives are Pink Competency Child Welfare, which will receive a reduction of 275,000 NOK (approximately €24,000) in 2026. Initially, Pink Competency Justice, a program meant to increase knowledge on hate crimes and equitable treatment of queer people by the police and the correctional system, was cut from the original budget proposal but eventually secured funding

## ROMANIA

In May, Nicușor Dan was elected president of Romania defeating far-right rival George Simion. In a subsequent [report](#), the newly-elected president had initially parted ways with his party on the basis of their opposition to equal marriage, but he avoided taking strong public stances on the matter during the campaign and after his election.

In October, [three training-of-trainers](#) sessions were organised by ACCEPT for police officers, prosecutors and social workers, aimed at strengthening institutional capacity to recognise, investigate and effectively respond to hate crimes targeting LGBTI people.

## RUSSIA

In September, Mariana Katzarova, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, presented her

[report](#) to the 60th session of the Human Rights Council. The report underscores the expansion of legal restrictions on access to materials listed in the Ministry of Justice's Federal List of Extremist Materials. Katzarova's findings highlight a growing pattern in which these extremism laws are applied disproportionately against minority groups, with a documented increase in prosecutions targeting LGBTI people and operators of LGBTI-friendly spaces.

### Spain

In February, the association Arcópoli [criticised](#) the Madrid regional government's decision to eliminate specific subsidies for LGBTI initiatives and instead include them in the broader personal income tax funding pool. As a result, funding for Arcópoli's Observatory, created in 2016 to monitor and make hate crimes visible, was cut from its longstanding €40,000 annual subsidy to €28,000.

In February, the Government of Castilla-La Mancha [announced](#) the creation of a new €107,000 funding line to support organisations working on equality, sexual orientation, and anti-discrimination initiatives.

In March, Spain's Ministry of Equality [finalised](#) the State Strategy for Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination of LGBTI People, sending the draft to all Autonomous Communities for consultation. The strategy, mandated by the 2023 LGBTI law (Law 4/2023), outlines a four-year roadmap with measures aimed at advancing and safeguarding LGBTI rights. Structured around three main axes addressing LGBTI-phobic violence, promoting diversity and preventing discrimination, and strengthening support, protection, and memory it seeks to translate the law's commitments into concrete mechanisms. In July, the Council of Ministers [approved](#) the Strategy as well as the country's first [State Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Trans People](#). The State Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Trans People, Spain's first strategic framework dedicated specifically to trans communities, was designed to fulfil the constitutional obligation to remove barriers preventing full equality, will operate on a four-year cycle, and will serve as the main instrument for coordinating and implementing the policies foreseen under Law 4/2023. In June, the regional parliament of Castilla y León [approved](#) a

bill introduced by the Socialist Group to provide the region with its first LGBTI law. The measure was able to advance thanks to the abstention of the Popular Party (PP), which allowed the bill to pass despite the votes against Vox and two former deputies expelled from the far-right party. Until now, Castilla y León, as well as Asturias, had been the only autonomous community in Spain without a dedicated LGBTI law and without an observatory to monitor hate crimes and discriminatory acts against LGBTI people.

## SWEDEN

In January, the Swedish government launched a new LGBTI action plan for the period 2024-2027, aimed at combating hostility, promoting safety, and strengthening inclusion in working life. A key innovation is the expansion of "LGBTQI strategic agencies" tasked with implementing the plan. The Swedish Work Environment Authority has now been added to this framework, and the Swedish Defence Research Institute (FOI) will conduct a comprehensive survey of anti-LGBTI hostility in digital spaces. While welcoming the plan, civil society stressed the need for greater clarity, particularly on the issue of banning so-called conversion practices.

In September, the Swedish Government presented its 2026 budget, underscoring an increase in the funding awarded to 'measures against discrimination and racism', as well as to the Discrimination Ombudsman, LGBTI organisations, women's and girls' shelters, and measures against honour-related violence, as well as additional resources for combating ill health and involuntary loneliness among older people.

## TURKEY

In November, the European Commission released its enlargement report for Turkey, noting that previous recommendations had largely been ignored. The report stressed the need for Turkey to align its anti-terror laws with European standards and implement ECHR rulings.

The situation for LGBTI people was described as alarming. Civil society organisations advocating for women's and LGBTI rights face heavy administrative and legal pressure, including audits and smear

campaigns. The report also highlighted the lack of adequate anti-discrimination and hate crime legislation, leaving vulnerable groups without proper legal protection.

## TURKMENISTAN

In April, during its 82nd session, the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) reviewed Turkmenistan's third periodic report. The Committee expressed concern over the treatment of prisoners, highlighting enforced disappearances, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of legal and medical safeguards, absence of independent monitoring, and failures to investigate or prosecute torture and ill-treatment. It also denounced Turkmenistan's restrictive abortion laws, warning that the five-week legal limit, high costs, and limited contraception access force women into unsafe practices. The Committee further criticised the criminalisation of homosexuality and reports of police abuse against LGBTI persons, urging immediate steps to safeguard their rights.

## UNITED KINGDOM

In June, culture minister Sir Chris Bryant criticised the decision by Pride organisers in Birmingham, Brighton, London, Manchester, and Oxford to bar political parties from marching, calling it a "retrograde step." He argued that political parties had been essential in advancing LGBTI rights, a view echoed by Conservative shadow culture secretary, Stuart Andrew.