

Ireland

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

In February, the Irish Prison Service (IPS) announced further delays in issuing its long-awaited policy guidance on the housing of trans inmates. Despite reports on its imminent completion in June, no policy had been published by the end of the year. The forthcoming policy aims to provide clear guidance on the management of trans prisoners and consider the supports for gender diversity in the prison environment more broadly.

In June, the Mental Health Commission (MHC) launched a guidance document and a training resource to support mental health services staff working with LGBTI service users. The material provides guidance to mental health professionals on how to meet the needs of LGBTI people accessing services, with the aim of promoting "a deeper understanding" of the unique challenges faced by LGBTI people and to improve service-user experiences across Ireland's mental health system. The guidance was based on an evidence review commissioned by the MHC.

ASYLUM

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.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In February, Six O'Clock Show host Brian Dowling revealed that he had hired a hate crime investigator after facing severe online trolling. Dowling and his husband have been targeted with significant online hate since the birth of their children via surrogacy.

In July, the Coalition Against Hate Crime, a network of 22 civil society organisations representing

communities commonly targeted by hate crime and hate speech in Ireland, sent a [letter](#) to Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan regarding Ireland's response to an infringement procedure initiated by the European Commission concerning the transposition of the EU Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia. The Coalition expressed concern at reports that the Department of Justice intended to assert that existing Irish legislation already fully complies with EU obligations, warning that this position appeared to contradict commitments in the Programme for Government and the National LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy to strengthen incitement to hatred legislation. The letter emphasised that effective protections against hate crime and hate speech must be substantive and comprehensive, addressing not only Ireland's EU law obligations but also its broader human rights commitments, including the protection of LGBTIQ+ people and other communities targeted by hate. It called for transparency around the infringement process and for the development of a holistic approach to combating hate, including the adoption of a National Action Plan to Combat Hate beyond the criminal law.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

Several homophobic and transphobic incidents were reported throughout 2025, reflecting ongoing hostility in public spaces and online. In February, a taxi driver deliberately [drove](#) toward a lesbian couple while shouting homophobic abuse. In October, two drag performers were [assaulted](#) in Cork during the Jazz Festival, and police [investigated](#) a suspected homophobic attack in Limerick in which two people required hospital treatment.

Court proceedings also continued in relation to earlier incidents. In June, a judge [issued](#) a bench warrant in a case involving assault and incitement to hatred linked to a 2022 homophobic attack on a Dublin Bus, brought under legislation in force prior to the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024. In September, a 19-year-old was [charged](#) with the murder of a man he had met via a gay dating app; no further developments were publicly reported by the end of the year.

Far-right mobilisation remained a concern. In July, a member of the Irish People party [appeared](#) before court in connection with alleged harassment of a librarian during protests over the inclusion of an LGBTI-themed book in a public library. In November, following the arrests of men suspected of links to a violent far-right organisation, the Coalition Against Hate Crime [warned](#) of rising hate-driven extremism and called for a coordinated national response.

EDUCATION

In November, Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland [held](#) its annual Stand Up Awareness Week from 3 to 7 November, aiming to reduce homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools and youth services. Record levels of participation were reported, with around 75% of post-primary schools nationwide engaging in the initiative by hosting talks, presentations and dedicated lessons on LGBTQ+ inclusion and respect. The campaign received official support from Ireland's Minister for Education and Youth, Helen McEntee, and was formally endorsed by major education unions, including the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland and the Teachers' Union of Ireland, reflecting broad institutional backing for inclusive practices in educational settings.

EMPLOYMENT

In October, Red Umbrella Éireann, Sex Workers Alliance Ireland (SWAI), and the Street Workers Collective [published](#) a draft legislative proposal calling for the full decriminalisation of sex work, with an emphasis on the safety and labour rights of sex workers. The proposal was formally introduced as a Private Members' Bill by independent TD Ruth Coppinger at the Red Umbrella Film Festival. The draft sought to remove criminal penalties for sex workers working together or engaging support staff, such as security personnel or drivers. By the end of 2025, the proposal had not advanced through the parliamentary process.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

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.

FAMILY

In February, Cuan, Ireland's national agency addressing domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence (DSGBV), [launched](#) The Hardest Stories campaign. Through fictionalised narratives, the

campaign seeks to break the silence and foster a society where all individuals can live free from the threat of violence. Among the stories shared as part of the campaign is one that specifically targets the LGBTI community.

In April, the LGBTQ+ Parenting Alliance (comprising Equality for Children, Irish Gay Dads and LGBT Ireland) launched a [petition](#) calling on the Irish Government to urgently introduce legislative reform to ensure all children born into LGBTI families are afforded full legal recognition and protection in respect of both parents. The Alliance emphasised that, under the current legislative framework, a significant number of children in LGBTI families continue to lack comprehensive legal recognition of both parents, leaving children without essential rights and creating inequalities between family types. Representatives of the Alliance met with the Minister for Health to reiterate the need for urgent legislative action to amend the Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Act 2024 through the proposed Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) (Amendment) Bill. Although the Minister indicated in July 2025 that the proposed amending legislation was "at an advanced stage", by the end of 2025 the Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Act 2024, enacted in 2024, remained largely uncommenced, and no general scheme or draft amendment Bill had been published.

In April, the Irish High Court [ruled](#) that children of same-sex couples born abroad are entitled to Irish passports. The court found that the State cannot deny citizenship solely because of a parent's gender or the child's place of birth. The cases involved two Irish mothers, who had been refused recognition as legal parents of their children born in Australia and Spain.

In October, the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health published a pre-legislative scrutiny [report](#) containing 18 recommendations to make Ireland's assisted human reproduction and surrogacy framework more inclusive of diverse family structures, including those of LGBTI families. The recommendations are intended to inform the drafting of the Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) (Amendment) Bill, which remains under development, and include mechanisms to recognise parentage for second

parents in international donor-assisted reproduction and surrogacy arrangements. During the same period, the government established the Assisted Human Reproduction Regulatory Authority (AHRRA) with appointed leadership, marking a key step toward implementing and overseeing the 2024 Act and future legislative changes. Certain provisions of the 2024 Act have also been commenced via secondary legislation, even as full commencement and further reform await the forthcoming Amendment Bill.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

In May, the Labour Party was compelled to relocate its planned Marriage Equality anniversary event in Dublin due to threats from far-right protesters. The event was intended to commemorate ten years since Ireland's historic vote in favor of Marriage Equality but concerns were raised about the safety of staff and public representatives arose after a wave of online threats targeting the event and its attendees.

In May, Trans and Intersex Pride Dublin announced that Sinn Féin would be barred from participating in the city's Pride march in July due to ongoing concerns about the party's stance on trans rights. The decision followed months of dialogue in which Pride organisers sought clarification from Sinn Féin leadership on key issues affecting trans people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In May, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties hosted a discussion on how to challenge attempts to limit LGBTI people's rights to express, assemble and associate in Ireland. The discussion saw contributions from the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Graeme Reid and Irish LGBTI advocates and organisations.

HEALTH

Gender-affirming healthcare remained under significant pressure in 2025, with continued concerns about capacity and access. In May, the Professional Association for Trans Health Ireland (PATHI) warned that long waiting times, restrictive clinical practices and limited service availability within the National Gender Service (NGS) were leading some trans people to self-medicate. The Minister for

Health acknowledged in the Dáil that services were failing to meet demand and committed to developing a new model of care. The State established the National Clinical Programme for Gender Healthcare which is tasked with developing a new Model of Care for gender-affirming care. The National Clinical Programme includes a scoping review of research into gender-affirming care, and in August, the Health Service Executive (HSE) launched a public call for submissions to the scoping review. In August, the Health Service Executive (HSE) a public consultation to inform this reform.

In December, the NGS announced its intention to close its waiting list to new patients from March 2026, prompting strong criticism from trans advocacy organisations, which warned that more than 2,470 people could be left without access to care. The Department of Health and the HSE responded that the NGS does not have authority to close its waiting list, which remained open to new referrals. During the same month, the Labour Party tabled a motion calling on the government to provide a model of gender-affirming care in primary care settings with a focus on GP led care, based on informed consent as per WPATH and WHO guidelines and international best practice.

Oversight of gender services was also subject to legal scrutiny. In April, two senior clinicians from the NGS initiated judicial review proceedings in the High Court concerning the Health Information and Quality Authority's (Hiqa) handling of a complaint about the HSE's care pathway for children and adolescents, including referrals abroad for assessment. Leave to proceed was granted in May; no final judgment had been reported by the end of the year.

In June, St James's Hospital publicly apologised to a trans patient following deficiencies in her emergency treatment after complications from gender-affirming surgery abroad. The matter, initially brought before the Workplace Relations Commission under the Equal Status Act 2000, was resolved by agreement, with the hospital committing to engage with trans advocacy organisations to improve care pathways.

Alongside these systemic challenges, several institutional initiatives were introduced. In June,

the Mental Health Commission published guidance and training [resources](#) for staff working with LGBTI service users. In July, the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation [endorsed](#) the adoption of World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) standards as the basis for a future model of trans healthcare. In August, public [reporting](#) highlighted uncertainty over whether trans women are eligible under Ireland's free Hormone Replacement Therapy scheme, prompting requests for clarification from the Department of Health. In October, the National Women's Council published [research](#) documenting healthcare inequalities affecting marginalised women, including LGBTI communities. Community-led initiatives also expanded, with the organisation Transgress the NGS [broadening](#) its Injection Supply Programme to improve access to safe hormone administration materials for trans and non-binary people.

BODILY INTEGRITY

In April, Belong To and Trinity College Dublin published the Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland - Intersex Sub-[report](#), based on responses from 31 intersex participants. The report found that 39% had undergone medical interventions related to their intersex variation, with most describing these as non-consensual or lacking informed consent. High levels of psychological distress were recorded, including lifetime self-harm (60%), suicidal thoughts (74%) and suicide attempts (50%), and the report highlighted ongoing concerns regarding bodily autonomy and transparency in medical care.

In July, the Council of Europe Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) [recommended](#) Ireland to introduce legislation that expressly acknowledge the right of intersex persons to bodily integrity and prohibit the performance of medically unnecessary surgeries and other non-therapeutic treatment until the intersex child is able to participate in the decision. ECRI also recommended other actions to enhance intersex healthcare.

In November, a trans woman who used her frozen sperm to have a child with her wife was [granted](#) permission by the High Court to challenge the State's refusal to grant Irish citizenship to the child. The case arises from the State's refusal to recognise her

as the birth mother, requiring her instead to claim the role of "father" on official documentation. The woman, an Irish citizen, is seeking a declaration that she is legally and genetically a parent of the child, an order compelling the State to register the child on the Foreign Births Register, and the granting of Irish citizenship under the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act.

DATA COLLECTION

Throughout the year, the Department of Children, Disability and Equality published, in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin and Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland, two new [sub-reports](#) of the 2024 Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland research, across two new perspectives: 'Wellbeing and Mental Health in the Older LGBTQI+ Population in Ireland' and 'Mental Health in the Irish LGBTQI+ Population with Disabilities'.

In June, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) released [findings](#) from its Equality and Discrimination Survey 2024, revealing that LGBTI people in Ireland experience the highest levels of discrimination compared to other groups. The survey, which included 7,852 respondents, found that 22% reported facing some form of discrimination in the two years preceding the interview, marking a 4% increase from the previous survey conducted in early 2019.

In August, a [study](#) by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) highlighted that LGBTI children in Ireland are at heightened risk of bullying. The study showed that, when asked about specific experiences – such as being hit, called names, or excluded – the figure for 13 year-olds rose sharply to 62%, indicating that targeted forms of bullying are widespread among older children.

In November, it was [announced](#) that Ireland's upcoming census, scheduled for 2027, will include questions on gender identity and sexual orientation. This decision follows a public consultation and the results of a national pilot survey, aiming to provide more comprehensive data to inform policy-making and better reflect the diversity of Ireland's population.

In December, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL), in collaboration with ShoutOut and Transgender

Equality Network Ireland (TENI), published a [guide](#) outlining the rights of trans and non-binary people in Ireland. The guide covers a wide range of areas including legal gender recognition, healthcare, family life, education, workplace protections, access to goods and services, interactions with law enforcement, prison, sports, and overall safety and protection from harm. Trans and non-binary people were consulted throughout the project.

FOREIGN POLICY

In March, the Irish government [aligned](#) itself with a broad coalition of EU member states in publicly denouncing new Hungarian legislation that, in practice, outlaws Pride marches. In May, Ireland [joined](#) 15 other EU member states in a declaration urging Hungary to revise legislative and constitutional amendments adopted in March and April 2025, which could impose fines on participants and organisers of LGBTI events, authorise the use of facial recognition software at such gatherings, and potentially allow bans on them. The declaration was initiated by the Netherlands and co-signed by Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovenia, and Sweden. Speaking at the Marriage Referendum +10 Conference in May, the Tánaiste and then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Harris, highlighted Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2026 as a key opportunity to build on the EU LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy, affirming that Ireland "will work closely with EU institutions and Member States to combat inequalities experienced by LGBTIQ+ people, and promote respect for equality as one of the Union's fundamental values." In November, the Irish Government launched a public consultation on the development of the Priorities and Policy Programme for Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2026.

HOUSING

The national Youth Homelessness Strategy, which [concluded](#) in 2025, recognised LGBTI young people as a group at particular risk of homelessness and disproportionately represented among affected youth. The strategy included targeted actions aimed at prevention and improved supports

for vulnerable groups, including LGBTI youth. An evaluation, [published](#) in January, reported that only 7 of 27 planned actions had been completed and that the number of young people aged 18-24 experiencing homelessness had increased significantly, underscoring slow implementation of key measures.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

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.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

2025 marked the 10th anniversary of the Gender Recognition Act 2015, which made it possible for trans people to legally self-declare their gender and update their official documents accordingly. However 10 years on, the gender recognition process still cannot be accessed by non-binary people, trans and gender diverse youth under 16 and citizens in Northern Ireland.

In April, following a Supreme Court ruling in the UK defining women solely by their biological sex (See under United Kingdom), Irish Equality Minister Norma Foley [reassured](#) trans people that Irish law will continue to protect them from discrimination. In Ireland, concerns arose over sports policies, prompting calls for compliance with national equality protections or potential legal challenges.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

In April, Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Mary Butler, Minister of State for Mental Health and Government Chief Whip, [presented](#) the 2025-2027 implementation plan for Sharing the Vision. Butler highlighted the government's intention to back the strategy with sustained funding across the full spectrum of mental health services, from

promotion and prevention to specialist care. She also pointed to continued support for suicide-prevention measures, including the LGBT Ireland Champions Programme, which provides cultural awareness training for health and social care services.