



Norway

ASYLUM

In March, Norway updated its official travel advice for the United States, joining several other European countries in warning citizens of stricter entry conditions and issues related to gender recognition.

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

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In May, Håvard Jensen, group leader of the Progress Party (FrP) in Indre Østfold, was reported to the police after making a threatening statement about people carrying a rainbow flag. During a break in a municipal council meeting, he stated that he would "chase [someone] with an axe" if a person carrying a rainbow flag came onto his road. The remark was directed at a representative of FRI – the Organisation for Gender and Sexual Diversity – who was present at the meeting, and the organisation subsequently filed a police report. There have been no further public developments reported on this incident since the police report was filed.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In its new 2025 prioritisation circular, the Attorney General has decided to remove hate crime as an explicit priority area, despite the fact that reported cases have been steadily increasing year by year. In response to questions, the Attorney General explained that even though the term no longer appears in the circular, hate crime should continue to be treated as a priority. Nonetheless, omitting it from the new circular poses a risk that this focus will be weakened, leading to reduced resources and a gradual erosion of the expertise that has been developed.

In June, In Vinje, a trans activist and organiser of Pride events, faced a potentially targeted attack when her garage burned down. The police are investigating the incident as a possible hate crime.

In June, three teenage boys were arrested in Bodø for setting fire to a Pride flag at Hunstad Primary School.

In July, the Queerness art collective's Pride project, *The Missing T*, was vandalised at City Hall Square. The installation, which debuted during Pride Week, featured large letter figures initially displaying "LHB-Q+," with the "T" added on Friday, symbolising the visibility and inclusion of trans people.

EDUCATION

In December, FRI, Queer Youth and PKI formally handed over more than 25,000 signatures to the Minister of Children and Families in support of FRI's appeal "Protect queer children and young people." The petition calls for stronger measures to ensure that all staff in schools and kindergartens have solid knowledge of the lives and living conditions of queer youth.

In June, the Directorate of Education instructed Christian independent schools to cease teaching content that portrays same-sex relationships or diverse sexual orientations as sinful or morally wrong. The directive follows an inspection of four schools affiliated with the Church of the Society in Kristiansand and Egersund, which found multiple violations of the Education Act. The report specified that schools must revise teaching materials on topics including same-sex relationships or diverse sexual orientations, cohabitation, sin and fear, gender equality, democracy, critical thinking, and creation.

In December, Norway's Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal (Diskrimineringsnemnda), sitting in an extended panel, issued opinions on complaints about Drammen municipality's Pride/rainbow-flag marking in schools and kindergartens. The majority found no unlawful discrimination.

EMPLOYMENT

In May, news emerged that Accenture, the American consulting firm with around 1,000 employees in Norway, is ending its global diversity and inclusion initiatives following US President Donald Trump's executive orders. Accenture CEO Julie Sweet informed all employees that the company's goals

for diversity, inclusion, and equality are being discontinued, including career development programs aimed at specific demographic groups. This change affects the Norwegian branch, which has offices in Oslo, Bergen, and Stavanger.

FAMILY

In July, the Storting reached a majority in favor of granting automatic legal parenthood to co-mothers in same-sex relationships. Previously, co-mothers had to apply to the state to be recognised as legal parents, but the upcoming amendment to the Children's Act will give them full parental rights from birth. The change in law will also include unmarried couples, who will now be able to declare co-maternity in the same way as paternity.

HEALTH

In June, the Health Centre for Gender and Sexuality (HKS) in Oslo announced it will no longer initiate hormone treatment for minors with gender dysphoria. The decision follows a supervisory report by the Norwegian Board of Health Supervision (Statens helsetilsyn), which concluded that aspects of the centre's treatment practices for minors were not in line with specialist healthcare requirements. In July, the Grünerløkka district in Oslo also decided to halt medical treatment for underage trans patients at the district level. This followed the supervisory process, although neither HKS nor the State Administrator had formally required the district to suspend care entirely. Subsequent reporting indicated that the district's decision to restrict treatment went beyond the specific recommendations made in the supervisory findings. Following these developments, the Patient Organisation for Gender Incongruence (PKI) held a demonstration in front of the Oslo Opera House to protest such restrictions on healthcare for underage trans people.

In June, the Patient Organisation for Gender Incongruence (PKI) released a report highlighting the experiences of trans patients at Oslo University Hospital (OUS). The report found that many trans people describe abusive treatment and experiences resembling conversion therapy.

In October, the Patient Organisation for Gender

Incongruence raised concerns on the research practices of the National Treatment Service for Gender Incongruence (NBTK), suggesting that the National Hospital may have mishandled – or even effectively falsified – documentation in order to conduct studies on trans people without their knowledge or consent. The controversy follows a recent decision by the Integrity Committee at Oslo University Hospital, which dismissed NBTK for using material from a quality register in research without securing the necessary consent. A second, comparable case is now under review by the same committee, and yet another related matter is being examined by the Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics (REK) South-East. In November, new questions were raised after the same team of researchers submitted yet another complaint to the Integrity Committee. As reported by Forskning.no, the group at the NBTK may have carried out additional violations.

DATA COLLECTION

In June, a study on the aftermath of the June 25, 2022 terrorist attack in Oslo revealed that LGBTI people directly affected by the shooting experienced nearly ten times more targeted hatred than non-LGBTI survivors. Among the 229 study participants, one in three LGBTI respondents reported experiencing hatred directly linked to their identity in the aftermath. The survey also showed lasting fear with two out of three participants who had previously attended queer events are now hesitant to do so, leading many to reduce visible expressions of queerness to protect their safety. Similarly, the Norwegian centre for violence and traumatic stress studies released a report about the findings of an inquiry with people who were present that day, revealing that many have not received adequate health care for both physical injuries and trauma.

In July, a survey conducted by Sentio Research on behalf of Khrono and the National Union of Students (NSO) revealed that many students are critical of teaching and research on equality, diversity, LGBTI issues, and racism. According to the results, one in three students believes universities "should limit topics such as diversity, equality, LGBTI, and racism" in their teaching and research. Criticism is highest

among the youngest students, aged 18 to 20, with 41 percent supporting such limitations, compared with 24 percent of those aged 26 to 29. The survey also found a gender gap: 39 percent of male students support limiting these topics, compared with 26 percent of female students.

FOREIGN POLICY

In May, Socialist Party (SV) politician Kathy Lie raised concerns about Norway's European Economic Area (EEA) cooperation with Hungary following the country's ban on Pride events. In a written question to the Minister of Culture and Equality, Lie asked how EEA funds could be effectively used to promote human rights and support civil society in Hungary, given that Norway opposes the Pride ban and other authoritarian measures by the Hungarian government. Similarly, the Green Party (MDG) national board adopted an emergency resolution demanding that the government freeze EEA funds for Hungary until further notice, if the Hungarian government does not lift the ban on Pride events.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

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

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

In February, the Progress Party (FrP) reiterated its opposition to the introduction of a third legal gender category. Simen Velle, leader of the Progress Party's youth wing, stated publicly that he recognises only two genders, framing this position as a reflection of what he described as "biological realities."

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LIFE

In February, Elisabeth Meling became the first trans person in Norway to top a parliamentary election list. The decision was confirmed when the Centre Party held its nomination vote in Vestland county. Meling was placed first on the party's list in the Hordaland electoral district, while also being nominated in second place on the list for the Sogn og Fjordane district.

In June, the Oslo District Court removed a judge from the upcoming terror trial against Arfan Bhatti after he wrote an editorial in support of Pride. District Court Judge Steinar Backe had criticised teachers who opposed Pride celebrations in an Aftenposten editorial in May of last year. Bhatti's defense attorney, John Christian Elden, argued that these statements made the judge unfit to preside over the trial.

In June, the Norwegian Football Federation (NFF) continued work on guidelines for the participation of trans women in football, involving consultation with trans players and a review of international practices. A draft framework had been prepared, but no final guidelines were published or adopted by the end of 2025.

In October, Tromsø Municipality announced that it had entrusted the Arctic Pride organisation with coordinating the development and implementation of the municipality's forthcoming action plan on gender and sexual diversity. The mandate includes

delivering capacity-building activities in cooperation with civil society partners.

PUBLIC OPINION

In September, the newly-elected bishop in Nord-Hålogaland expressed his support for the inclusion of LGBTI people in the Church. In October, the Church of Norway publicly apologised to the LGBTI community during an event in Oslo. Preses Olav Fykse Tveit acknowledged that the Church had, for decades, caused profound harm by excluding qualified queer people from working in the Church, refusing to pray for or marry same-sex couples, and contributing to the stigmatisation of HIV-positive individuals by framing AIDS as divine punishment.

POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

In June, the Oslo Police District launched an appeal for victims to come forward following reports of harassment outside Pride Park. According to the operations manager, the police are seeking to identify individuals who had their Pride flags forcibly taken and were spat on near the festival area.

In June, the Minister of Justice, Astri Aas-Hansen from the Labour Party, addressed concerns over the placement of two trans women convicted of rape in a women's prison. She clarified that while Norwegian guidelines generally direct trans women to serve time in women's prisons, exceptions can be made if such placement would threaten the safety of the individual or other inmates, or otherwise appear clearly inappropriate. There was no publicly reported outcome tied to the case by the end of 2025.

During this year's Oslo Pride, London Pub praised the Oslo Police for their strengthened cooperation, which contributed to a heightened sense of safety for clientele. The focus on safety has been particularly important since the terror attack on June 25, 2022, with nightclub clientele and Pride attendees seeking reassurance when returning to spaces that can be triggering or traumatic.

In November, prosecutors requested a 30 – year prison sentence for Arfan Bhatti, whom they describe as the driving force behind the 2022 terrorist attack against Oslo Pride. In their closing

arguments before the Oslo District Court, state prosecutors Sturla Henriksbø and Aud Kinsarvik Gravås argued that Bhatti played a decisive role in enabling the mass shooting outside the London Pub and Per på Hjørnet, where two people were killed and several others injured. They stressed that Bhatti shows no remorse, poses a high risk of reoffending, and should therefore receive the maximum penalty under Norwegian law—30 years, with a minimum term of 20 years.