



Sweden

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

In November, Regnbågsdalen, Stockholm's second LGBTI senior residence, opened in Enskededalen. The residence includes 18 apartments, as well as shared facilities including a gym, library, cinema, and spaces for activities.

ASYLUM

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

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

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In July, the Court of Appeal of Skåne and Blekinge upheld the conviction of a 15-year-old Landskrona student for incitement to hatred, confirming in full the sentence by the Lund District Court imposing 30 hours of youth service. The case stemmed from an incident in October 2024, when the student delivered a speech that included calls for violence against LGBTI people.

In October, the Svea Court of Appeal upheld a conviction for incitement against a group of people in connection with hateful comments directed at the children's storytelling initiative *Bland drakar och dragqueens*. The original judgment, issued by the Nacka District Court on 23 April, concerned a 61-year-old man who posted comments in a Facebook thread alleging that drag artists were engaged in abusive behaviour. The District Court found him guilty of a lesser form of incitement against a group of people and sentenced him to 80 day-fines. The Court of Appeal rejected the appeal and upheld the ruling in full.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In May, the Stockholm District Court delivered its verdict in the case of a homophobic assault at Målarpaviljongen, a well-known LGBTI-run venue in the city. The incident occurred after an intoxicated client, denied further service by an employee, began shouting homophobic slurs and urged a companion to join him outside, declaring his intent to kill the staff member. Together, the two men physically assaulted the employee, while the main perpetrator shouted that the bar was "a gay place." The court concluded that these actions were motivated by hostility toward the employee's sexual orientation, while the accomplice, though central to the violence, was not found to have expressed similar homophobic remarks. Both convicted men received suspended sentences and 100 hours of community service, alongside an order to pay nearly 24,000 SEK (approximately €2,100) in damages.

In May, just days before the seventh edition of Lakeside Pride in Askersund, every Pride flag lining the city's main streets was vandalised in what officials describe as a deliberate and coordinated attack.

In July, Expressen published an investigation into a crime wave in Uppsala, where young men have systematically targeted men who have sex with men through dating apps. Under the pretense of intimate dates, victims were threatened, beaten, or extorted with the warning that their sexual orientation would be exposed to families, employers, or religious communities.

EMPLOYMENT

In August, a [report](#) funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and conducted in partnership with RFSL examined labour market outcomes among trans people in Sweden and Finland. Based on survey responses from just over 1,000 participants, the study found higher levels of unemployment and economic vulnerability among trans respondents, with an unemployment rate of 14 percent. The report also noted 56 percent of trans respondents reported reduced work capacity, which it linked to experiences of discrimination, minority stress, and insufficient workplace support. Notably, respondents who had transitioned in a workplace setting were more likely to report full work capacity than those who had not, highlighting the importance of inclusive and supportive working environments.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

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.

FAMILY

In July, a [study](#) conducted by the Institute for Social Research (SOFI) for Stockholm University revealed that women in heterosexual relationships experience the steepest decline in income after becoming mothers, while birth mothers in female same-sex relationships face significantly smaller losses. The research examined register data from

more than 170,000 different-sex couples and over 2,800 female same-sex couples and highlighted how gender roles and welfare policies shape parents' financial outcomes.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

In July, members of the group Queers for Palestine Malmö [staged](#) a demonstration at Scandic Triangeln, the hotel hosting Malmö Pride's Pride House, following their participation in a seminar. Activists unfurled a Palestinian flag, displayed a banner reading "End complicity to end apartheid," and chanted slogans while distributing flyers calling on Malmö Pride to take a clear stance on Palestine. Malmö Pride later described the protest as peaceful. The demonstration ended when hotel staff and a security guard escorted the activists from the premises. Malmö Pride subsequently criticised the actions of the hotel staff and announced that it would suspend further collaboration with the establishment.

DATA COLLECTION

In March, researchers from Stockholm University, Uppsala University and the University of Liverpool released the first comprehensive [study](#) of gender-affirming care in Sweden. Using decades of registry data, they found that by 2020 around 0.07% of the Swedish population had been diagnosed with gender dysphoria and about 0.03% had legally changed their gender. Since the early 2010s, the numbers seeking care have increased sharply, particularly among young trans men, though growth slowed somewhat in 2019-2020.

In June, a [survey](#) revealed that a clear majority of Swedes are critical of companies that have scaled back their commitment to LGBTI and diversity initiatives. The survey, carried out by Sifo and published in the Always Open report by 7-Eleven and the Rainbow Foundation, shows that six out of ten respondents view such retreats negatively, while only a small minority approve of the trend. The survey also highlights that women and older respondents are the most critical of corporate backtracking, whereas men are considerably more likely to regard it positively.

In October, a [report](#) from the European Forum of LGBTI Christian Groups placed the Church of Sweden at the top among Europe's major churches when it comes to LGBTI inclusion. The findings come from the Rainbow Index of Churches in Europe (RICE), published for the second time, which measures levels of inclusion across four dimensions: institutional equality and non-discrimination, church practices, language and symbols, and public positions. The Church of Sweden receives an inclusiveness score of 93 percent. According to the report authors, the Church of Sweden performs particularly strongly in the areas of equality, non-discrimination, and church practices.

In November, the Public Health Agency of Sweden released its first comprehensive [review](#) of intersex people's health and living conditions, revealing major gaps in knowledge, legal protections, and societal support. The review found reliable research only for two specific diagnostic groups: people with X chromosome deviations affecting puberty, menstruation, fertility, and heart health, and those with atypical hormone production from the adrenal glands, which affects genital development and requires lifelong treatment. For the remaining 20-plus variations, almost no systematic research exists, leaving the majority of intersex experiences undocumented. The report also highlights that Sweden has lagged behind international legal developments and has put no legal protections of intersex human rights, including a ban on intersex genital mutilation, in place.

FREEDOM FROM TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING TREATMENT

In June, the Attunda District Court handed down its [ruling](#) in the case of Gustav Hemming, the former regional councilor who resigned last year after being accused of sexual misconduct. The court found him guilty of sexually molesting a 13-year-old boy during a train journey. While the judges considered the act serious enough to warrant a prison term, they ultimately imposed a suspended sentence, reasoning that Hemming was unlikely to reoffend.

FOREIGN POLICY

In May, Sweden 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.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

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.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

Since Sweden's new Gender Identity Act [came into force](#) in July, applications have surged, with the National Board of Health and Welfare receiving 77 requests in the first four days of application. The law, which lowered the minimum age for legal gender change to 16 with parental consent, also removed the previous requirement of gender-affirming healthcare, favoring instead a medical certificate to complete the process.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

In June, the Västernorrland region expanded its HPV vaccination program to cover all residents up to the age of 45, making it the first region in Sweden to offer free vaccination beyond the usual age limits. Announcing the decision, Moderate regional councillor Anna Strandh Proos underscored that access to healthcare should never depend on gender or sexual orientation, presenting the measure as part of a broader commitment to inclusion and prevention.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LIFE

In November, two members of the Open Christian Democrats (KD), Sara Bystam and Maria Hansson, requested to leave the party in protest after the leader of the party, Deputy Prime Minister Ebba Busch, announced that KD will work to dismantle the recently passed Gender Identity Act.

PUBLIC OPINION

In September, data from the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) revealed a decline in young people's acceptance of same-sex parenting and widening gender gaps in attitudes towards LGBTI issues and gender equality. According to the report, 69% of young people aged 16-29 believe that homosexual couples are just as good parents as heterosexual couples. While still a majority view, this represents a drop compared to 2018. Among these, 83% of young women agree that same-sex couples make equally good parents, compared with just 56% of young men. Further, among 16-19-year-olds, only 59% agree with the statement, while support rises to 78% among those aged 25-29. The report further finds that nearly one-third of young men (32%) say it is important for boys to be masculine and girls feminine, compared with 11% of young women.