EU Enlargement Countries Called on to Urgently Ensure Protection of the Human Rights of LGBTI People

News, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, EU Enlargement, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey

> Published today, ILGA-Europe's Annual Enlargement Review urgently calls on all EU enlargement countries to properly implement their anti-discrimination, hate crime and hate speech legal frameworks, in the context of rising anti-gender, anti-rights and far-right groups.

ILGA-Europe and the LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey (ERA), have published their annual Enlargement Review, which outlines the developments in recognising and respecting the human rights of LGBTI people in each enlargement country (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey) from January to December 2021.

The annual LGBTI Enlargement Review acts as an LGBTI submission to the Enlargement Progress Reports of the European Commission. These reports are a detailed annual assessment of the state of play in each candidate country and potential candidate country, outlining what has been achieved over the last year and what remains to be achieved.

This year's Enlargement Review is published in the context of rising Euroscepticism in the enlargement countries, as well as a significant rise of anti-gender, anti-rights and far-right groups across the region. Misinformation and discriminatory speech against LGBTI people has been spread in public discourse via national broadcasting and political processes, leading to the prevention of the development of laws and policies inclusive of LGBTI people. As a result, despite some welcome significant advancements in the preparation and drafting of legislation to protect the human rights of LGBTI people this year, much of this legislation is currently stalled.

The Annual Enlargement Review recognises that the EU accession process has been a strong driving force for change in the recognition of the human rights of LGBTI people in the region, and it encourages this continued commitment by outlining the laws and policies that are still needed to ensure full and genuine protection of the human rights of LGBTI people, and by providing recommendations to each country's authorities and to the European Union.

At ILGA-Europe, we hope to see the current legislative gaps closed, in particular regarding family rights, legal gender recognition based on self-determination, and the protection of intersex people's human rights. With the rise in anti-gender, anti-rights and far-right groups, we renew with increased urgency our call on all countries to properly implement their anti-discrimination, hate crime and hate speech legal frameworks.

Further information:

Each country's submission is arranged under the following headings. In cases where organisations have no updates to share, the respective heading has been left out. Each thematic heading also contains recommendations for the national authorities.

- Summary of key developments
- Main action points for the coming year
- Bias motivated violence, hate speech, hate crimes
- Education
- Employment
- Equality and non-discrimination, including legislation and enforcement
- Freedom of assembly, association and expression
- Health
- Human rights defenders
- Public opinion and attitudes
- Recognised unions for same-sex couples
- Rights and equal treatment of trans people
- Rights and equal treatment of intersex people
- A supportive and enabling environment for civil society
- Recommendations on how the EU delegation/European Commission can support LGBTI CSOs