

ILGA-Europe's submission to Progress Reports of the European Commission 2020

[Report, Inclusion and Equality, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, EU Enlargement, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey](#)

LGBTI ENLARGEMENT REVIEW 2020

In order to ensure an accurate representation of the developments relating to the human rights of LGBTI people ILGA-Europe and ERA, together with our member organisations in EU accession countries, have compiled this submission to the Progress Reports of the European Commission.

This report reflects developments in the recognition and respect for the human rights of LGBTI people in each accession country during the period from January through December 2020. It is intended to assist the European Commission in assessing the progress made en route to EU accession in each country to date. In addition to outlining key developments and challenges on the road to LGBTI equality, the report also highlights gaps in legislation and policy for the promotion and protection of the human rights of LGBTI people, and the priorities which authorities in each country should tackle in the coming year, as identified by LGBTI activists in the respective countries.

In light of the devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic this year on the LGBTI community and work of LGBTI activists, we have also included information about its impact, and the necessary assistance that the EU can help provide in supporting LGBTI people. ILGA-Europe and ERA members have reported that the LGBTI community has been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and that state support services have failed to reach the most vulnerable in LGBTI communities. As a result, LGBTI NGOs have had to adapt their previous plans and budgets to cover humanitarian aid gaps within the State response to the crisis, providing food, hygiene kits and shelter to LGBTI people who have lost their jobs or been rendered homeless. This has left organisations depleted in terms of human resources and finances, and they have found donors and funders in many cases to have not been flexible with their funding. Even funding specifically earmarked for Covid-19 response has not been possible to use for service provision and support. Given the unsustainable response by governments, it is more essential than ever for the EU to support LGBTI people in the accession countries via funding for supporting LGBTI communities and community-needs advocacy. This funding is essential in order to allow LGBTI NGOs to support the community during the pandemic and ensuing economic crisis, and for them to also have the financial and human resources capacity to continue advocacy work for legislative and policy change within the accession framework. A survey conducted by ERA with its members in the summer of 2020, found that the Covid-19 related measures taken by governments have had numerous negative consequences for the LGBTI+ community including: interruption of essential health services by state institutions, inability to receive essential community services from NGOs, heightened levels of homelessness, increased incidents of domestic violence, closure of LGBTI+ businesses, a significant loss of jobs and rising mental health problems. LGBTI+ organisations have also faced challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic measures including: loss of funding, closure of community centres, cancellation of services and other activities as well as a general shift towards emergency humanitarian work for LGBTI+ people in need.

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