

# Czechia

## BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

Bias-motivated speech against LGBTI+ people continued to be a serious issue, by politicians, religious leaders, anti-LGBTI+ activists, and the media. The following are a handful of examples:

On May 17, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs raised the rainbow flag to mark IDAHOBIT, [sparking hateful comments online](#).

A far-right political party, Trikolora, was formed this year and campaigned with anti-LGBTI slogans in the October regional elections, such as “traditional family is the basis of our region” and “girls have pussies and boys have penises”. Trikolora failed to secure any Senate seats and got only two of the 675 mandates in the regional elections.

In August another far-right party, Freedom and Direct Democracy, issued a [statement](#) during Prague Pride against “the promotion of the gender ideology of homosexuality”, and condemned the fact that the city financially supports the event.

While some religious leaders welcomed Pope Francis’s comments on same-sex civil unions, the Prague Archbishop Dominik Duka [called them](#) an attempt to destabilise the Catholic public.

The anti-LGBTI organisation Alliance for Family continued making hateful statements, including in support of conversion therapy. They also proposed restricting sexual and reproductive rights.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In May, a district court in Pilsen sentenced a neo-Nazi organiser to 300 hours of community service for wearing a shirt featuring a known Nazi figure at last year’s Pride march. Both parties appealed. In August, the Regional Court in Pilsen [overturned](#) the judgment, increasing the man’s sentence to six months in prison.

The first instance Criminal Court of Prague sentenced a man to the maximum possible punishment of five years probation and a 1,000 euro fine for [burning](#) a rainbow flag and shooting firecrackers at participants during Prague Pride 2019.

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In February, Stanislav Křeček, known for his anti-LGBTI views, was [appointed](#) as the new head of the Ombudsman’s Office. Civil society is concerned that Křeček will not build on the legacy of his predecessor, Anna Šabatová, and will not protect LGBTI+ people from discrimination.

## FAMILY

In January, Jsme Fér [Eng: We are fair] and a number of political parties [called on](#) MPs to adopt the marriage equality bill, first introduced in 2018.

In March and September, two motions were filed in Parliament for the debate to continue. During the March vote, 54 MPs voted in favor and 51 against, but the 60 abstentions tilted the balance to a ‘no’. The same happened in [September](#), with fewer MPs attending due to distancing rules.

Of the nine political parties in the House of Representatives, only the Pirate Party is fully in support of the bill. The far-right Freedom and Direct Democracy and the Christian Democrats are against it, and the other six parties have shown various degrees of support in their votes.

*“Many MPs just want the whole issue to go away [...] They don’t believe it’s important enough to go out on a limb for and they are scared of the vehement opposition from the far-right and Catholic Church.” - Adela Horakova, Advocacy Director at Jsme Fér to [Balkan Insight](#)*

[Litigation](#) is pending at the Constitutional Court concerning the rights of same-sex partners and their families. Two pending cases were merged by the court in the one proceeding. The government opposed the applicants in one case, but did not join the proceedings in the other. The [Roman Catholic Church](#) and the Alliance for Family filed hostile [amicus curiae briefs](#).

## FOREIGN POLICY

Most political parties in parliament, and the government failed to publicly condemn the hostilities against LGBTI+ people in Poland and Hungary this year. Instead, the Prime Minister [supported](#) a conference organised by the Alliance for Family, featuring conservative ministers from the two countries. The event was postponed due to the pandemic.

In August, Czech LGBTI+ activists [organised](#) a demonstration in support of prosecuted Polish LGBTI+ activists. In October, feminist activists [protested](#) in support of Polish women’s right to bodily integrity.

## FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prague Pride parade was [held on boats](#) this year. A number of events also took place [online](#).

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

MPs elected several representatives of the Roman Catholic Church to the monitoring board of public TV and [radio](#) this year. The ballot was secret, but it is assumed that the appointments were supported by the ruling party, the far-right Freedom and Direct Democracy, the Social Democrats, and the Communist Party. In November, at the initiative of new members, board fired members of the Administrative Board of the Czech Television - a move considered [unlawful](#) by the Senate Committee on Public Media. Opposition MPs and civil society fear what the future holds.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Human rights defenders are [concerned](#) that Czechia might go down the path of some of its neighbours, such as Poland or Hungary.

The COVID-19 pandemic put a halt to many activities of LGBTI+ associations, including the marriage equality campaign. Several events were held online.

Jsme Fér was one of the [most active](#) NGOs in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, sharing information, organising volunteers, and making face masks. Lawyers with Jsme Fér also [monitored](#) COVID-related regulations to ensure that same-sex couples and their families receive equal treatment, for instance, that reunification applies to both married couples and those in a civil union. Jsme Fér lobbied the government multiple times to change the discriminatory wording of public regulations - in the third instance, following substantial media [attention](#), the government followed suit.

The peer counselling line "[S barvou ven](#)" continued supporting LGBTI+ teenagers during the pandemic.

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Despite Helena Válková, Representative for Human Rights, not endorsing marriage equality, her office and the governmental Committee on Sexual Minorities co-organised a [conference](#) in June on key issues faced by LGBTI+ people - hopefully the foundations of the first governmental LGBTI+ strategy.

## LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

Despite the European Court of Human Rights ruling and the [recommendations](#) of European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in October, there was no progress this year on banning the mandatory sterilisation requirement of legal

gender recognition. The process was stalled due to opposition in parliament. A case on the issue is pending at the Constitutional Court.

## PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

Jsme Fér conducted a [survey](#) with candidates in the October elections, finding that 12 of the 27 newly elected senators supported marriage equality.

## PUBLIC OPINION AND ATTITUDES

Jsme Fér's poll confirmed [last year's](#) results - 60% of the public supports marriage equality.

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Civil society is concerned about the future implications of the growing power of anti-choice organisations and the failure of the government to condemn the events in Poland.



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