



Norway

ASYLUM

The government announced in July that it will prioritise facilitating the permanent resettlement of LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers, setting a quota to receive 3,000 people in 2020.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH AND VIOLENCE

Kripas, Norway's National Criminal Investigation Service, reported zero hate speech incidents against LGB people in the first half of 2020. Kripas fears that homophobic hate speech is common, but largely goes unreported. It also expressed concern about trans people not being protected by the Criminal Code's hate speech provisions.

Trans people were targeted by the growing anti-gender rhetoric among conservatives, the far right, and also some anti-trans "feminists" and LGB activists. Several trans people were personally targeted in the media.

In May, the Justice Committee decided to postpone the vote on the bill that would include gender identity as a protected ground in the provisions on hate speech and hate crime. The Committee justified the delay by arguing that the "concepts" of gender identity and expression were "controversial". Civil society expressed deep concern over the move, as the parliament had mandated the government to table a bill back in 2018. In the end, the bill passed the first and second parliamentary hearings and was overwhelmingly supported. It will enter into force in 2021.

In March, the Oslo police department reported a 17% increase in hate crimes between 2018 and 2019. In the previous year, the increase was 20%. Of the 278 hate crime incidents recorded last year, 59% targeted people of colour, 20% LGBTI people, 17% religious minorities, 3% people with disabilities, and 2% Jewish people. Nationally there was a 22% increase in reported hate crimes between 2018 and 2019, totalling 761 incidents. 122 of these targeted LGBTI people, 33% more than the year before.

On 13 August, a young gay man and two of his friends were physically assaulted by a group of four, in Oslo. The victim shared that he was regularly targeted by hate speech, but this was the first time that he was physically assaulted. After the case became public, he received a lot of messages from other LGBT victims of hate crimes, showing the prevalence of violence.

In the suggested state budget for 2021, seven million NOK was set aside for a national competency centre against hate crimes, and three million NOK for research on hate crimes. The

budget was approved in December, marking an important step in ensuring all police districts get increased competence in this field.

BODILY INTEGRITY

In June, civil society organisations called on the government to issue a public apology and provide financial compensation to trans people who were forced to undergo sterilisation in order to access legal gender recognition. Sweden paid similar compensation a few years ago, and the Netherlands announced a compensation programme in 2020. In support of civil society's request, the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombudsperson sent a request to the Ministry of Health and Care Services on the matter. The Ministry responded in October, expressing hesitation about providing compensation to a specific group, but stating they would reassess their position once the two court cases, launched by trans people are settled.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

2,476 feminists signed a joint statement calling for the inclusion of trans people in the movement, an important move in light of the growing anti-gender rhetoric in feminist movements across Europe:

"In the past year, we have heard many people say that trans people's rights are at the expense of women's rights. We, the signatories of this petition, strongly disagree. As women and feminists, we will not stand for the struggle for women and lesbians becoming a pretext for oppressing trans people."

In October, the Church of Norway published the findings of its study finding that one-in-five LGBTI clergy had experienced discrimination in the past ten years.

HEALTH

The public consultation on trans-specific healthcare guidelines was closed in February 2020. The new guidelines centre user participation and an individualised approach to care, which is a positive step.

Civil society expressed concern that the guidelines might maintain the state gender clinic's monopoly in terms of knowledge and care provision. The guidelines envision the setting up of regional clinics, but it is unclear what services they would provide and who would be in charge of delivering training for their staff.



It is also yet unclear what services will be newly covered by public insurance. Although the guidelines include non-binary people in their scope, it is currently unknown what services they would be able to access. The guidelines argue a lack of evidence about the benefits for non-binary people of accessing trans healthcare. Access of trans youth to services is also not guaranteed. Civil society has criticised the guidelines on all these points.

HOUSING

Trans people reported difficulties accessing gender-specific shelters during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sex worker organisations are concerned that migrant sex workers are also facing obstacles in getting the support they need during the crisis.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply affected the LGBTQ community and organisations. Events were canceled and activities have been suspended. LGBTQ organisations fear that isolation has negatively impacted many in the community.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

It is unclear whether under the new trans healthcare guidelines (see under Health) a trans man with the legal gender of “man”, or non-binary people, would be able to have their eggs frozen, or access IUI or IVF. Civil society fears that they will be excluded.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

A [report](#) on LGBTQ issues in child welfare, published in October, found that service providers across the country all need capacity building in the area.

The association of gender and sexuality diversity’s (FRI), international solidarity fund has provided humanitarian support to FRI’s partner organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic, enabling them to deliver humanitarian support to their membership.



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