



# AZERBAIJAN

## ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

In April, Azerbaijani author Nazli Chalabi published an LGBTI-themed novel titled Blue Fear, which is available for sale on the Azerbaijani market.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In March, following a yearly Women's Day march where protesters requested effective access to trans healthcare, the government-affiliated Real TV channel aired a report targeting LGBTI people with discriminatory hate speech.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In March, the murder of a trans woman in Baku was met with a police response that lacked a comprehensive investigation process, sparking community-wide requests for a thorough examination.

## EDUCATION

A new policy on equality, diversity, and inclusion was adopted by various universities in Azerbaijan, explicitly including sexual orientation and gender as grounds for protection. The policy aims to ensure clear, fair, and accessible services at university, guarantee that people are treated equally, receive the respect and dignity that they deserve, and that their diversity is acknowledged.

## FAMILY

In May, a woman from Krasnoyarsk forcibly transported her 18-year-old daughter to Baku, confiscating her documents, phone, and antidepressants after she revealed her sexual orientation. Her current whereabouts are unknown.

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In April, the ECtHR issued a ruling on several applications against Azerbaijan concerning LGBTI rights. These applications stemmed from events in September 2017, when Azerbaijani police arrested multiple LGBTI people under various pretexts, leading to their mistreatment, illegal detention, and discrimination. In 2019, Azerbaijan acknowledged the violations and offered compensation through a unilateral declaration. However, the applicants expressed dissatisfaction, citing inadequate compensation and acknowledgment. The ECtHR reviewed the government's submission and removed 19 applications from its list, stating that further examination was unnecessary given the government's admission and compensation offer.

## PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LIFE

On 7 February, snap presidential elections took place in Azerbaijan. Understanding the importance of LGBTI

representation and active engagement in such important electoral events, Nafas facilitated the involvement of LGBTI people in the monitoring of the elections, contributing to the fight for both electoral transparency and LGBTI political representation.

Despite the intention to foster inclusivity in electoral processes, the efforts of LGBTI observers were met with backlash from local media, which accused them of staging provocations and smearing the election process. An article published by Axar.az released four hours before the election, warned about "groups planning to sabotage election day," while singling out Nafas as one of the leaders of such groups. On 9 February, in another article published by Musavat, Nafas was exclusively targeted and accused of being "the main interlocutors for smearing the election process." Following the backlash similar events occurred during the parliamentary elections which were held on September 1.

Although there was no such plan of observation by any LGBTI groups in the country, an article titled "Rainbow" Observers - What and Who Do They Serve? was published on the Azvision media platform just days before the election and warned against the same scenario.

## PUBLIC OPINION

In June, discussing the package proposal being considered by the legal committee of the Georgian parliament on the outlawing of alleged 'LGBTI propaganda', a well-known Azerbaijani lawyer, Akram Hasanov expressed his support for more prohibitive norms against LGBTI rights. Hasanov claimed that "Azerbaijan should refer to Georgian practice in this matter" and advocated for a similar approach to be implemented worldwide.

In July, Georgia's anti-LGBTI draft law caused political discussions in Azerbaijan, with pro-government media contributing to the creation of an unofficial network of public officials and relevant figures in the Azerbaijan context who share a same opposition to LGBTI rights.

In September, discussing Georgia's anti-LGBTI draft law being adopted in the 2nd hearing by the Georgian parliament, a well-known Azerbaijani sociologist, Elchin Bayramli, expressed his support. Bayramli, while advocating for legislative and policy measures to counter so-called "LGBTI propaganda," proposed harmful actions targeting LGBTI people, including identifying and forcibly confining them. He also claimed that LGBTI advocacy was directed and financed by Azerbaijan's "enemies" in global circles.



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