



GEORGIA

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

In January, the Public Defender found that a printing company discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation by association when denying services to LGBT activists in 2021.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

Preceding Tbilisi Pride Week, held in July, government representatives, religious leaders, and far-right extremists of the Alt-Info made countless anti-LGBT statements. Alt-Info spread hateful messages for days prior to the event and called on people to join efforts to attack and disrupt Pride. In June, the Union of Orthodox Parents demanded that Mziuri Cafe in Tbilisi remove its rainbow flag and said the “propaganda of sodomites is a genocide”. Another far-right group held an anti-LGBT protest in June, calling queer people “filth” - several of them were arrested.

In June, Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili called Pride “anti-national, anti-state provocation” and accused Tbilisi Pride of causing the 2021 riots, where thousands of extremists attacked activists and journalists during Pride Week. The Pride organisers called for police protection, and the Ministry of Interior answered by saying they would protect the Pride event.

In July, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights and in August, the UN Human Rights Committee called on Georgia to prevent anti-LGBT hate crimes, and hate speech from politicians.

In October, the Public Defender’s report highlighted that the anti-LGBT statements of political leaders incited the 2021 events.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

A trans woman was sexually harassed in March. Trans women were verbally abused and their home was attacked in May - the police made no arrests. A 17-year-old was verbally and physically assaulted on a bus in a homophobic incident in November. In November, a cisgender woman was killed in Tbilisi. The perpetrator was under the impression that the woman was trans. Rainbow and EU flags were burnt outside the Lithuanian embassy on 9 June - four people were arrested.

On 4 April, 20 far-right extremists were convicted by the Tbilisi City Court and sentenced to six months to five years in prison due to their involvement in the 2021 attacks against Tbilisi Pride. Far-right groups and human rights activists were both waiting for the verdict outside of the court and were kept apart by the police.

In June, the European Court of Human Rights communicated the Tbilisi Pride and others v. Georgia case, concerning the state’s failure to protect activists and journalists during the 2021 riots.

TV Pirveli broadcast a report in June claiming that the state security service encouraged the 2021 brutal attack against activists and journalists.

In July, three people were fined for the 2021 attack against the Tbilisi Pride office. The court failed to establish that the incident was a hate crime or an organised attack. Civil society also questioned why only three people were charged.

In November, the procedure for issuing compensation for victims of violence against women and domestic violence was adopted. In the lack of legal gender recognition procedures, trans women are excluded from this measure.

EDUCATION

Research conducted by the Equality Movement affirmed that LGBT students face discrimination and bullying in school. WISG’s study on societal attitudes towards LGBTQI persons highlighted the lack of a linear connection between levels of education and anti-LGBTQI attitudes.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In January, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted Resolution 2418 (2022) on ‘Alleged violations of the rights of LGBTI people in the Southern Caucasus’, and called on Georgia to adopt legislation and policies that safeguard against discrimination on the basis of gender expression and sex characteristics and to set up a body to establish a dialogue with the Orthodox Church regarding their stance towards LGBT people.

In September, the UN Human Rights Committee recommended Georgia tackle discrimination towards

LGBT persons, including by training law enforcement, prosecutors and the judiciary.

19 candidates competed to fulfil the Public Defender's role. Civil society organisations firmly supported three of the candidates. The parliament failed to elect a new Ombudsperson at the special parliamentary session in December.

The Ombudsperson's annual report highlighted the responsibility of high-level political leaders in encouraging violence during the 2021 anti-LGBT riots. The report also found that the legal situation of LGBTI people did not improve over the past year.

FOREIGN POLICY

In March, Georgia applied for EU membership. The European Commission responded that Georgia could become a candidate if it fulfils a list of 12 criteria.

FREEDOM FROM TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT

To implement the 2020 ECtHR judgement in *Aghdgomelashvili and Japaridze v. Georgia*, an investigation was ongoing this year under Article 333 of the Criminal Code on the abuse of official powers. The victim's representatives launched a request with the Prosecutor's Office that the investigation cover Article 151 (threats), Article 156 (persecution) and Article 144 (torture). In October, WISG, the European Human Rights Advocacy Centre (EHRAC), and the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) submitted a report to the Committee of Ministers showing the lack of follow-up action by the government.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Tbilisi Pride week was held between 28 June - 2 July. The organisers of Tbilisi Pride decided not to hold a Pride march, due to security concerns. Instead, the festival featured parties, a film screening, a conference, and a festival. Civil society called on the Ministry of Interior to protect the participants.

The far-right extremist group Alt-Info raised funds to organise anti-Pride actions and brought people from the countryside to the capital. On the morning of 2 July, Alt-Info tried to occupy the Pride Fest location,

but police arrested 26 people and secured the venue, and over 40 throughout the weekend. About 4,000 extremists roamed the streets of Tbilisi during the day, burnt NATO and EU flags and tried to disrupt Pride in the later hours too. The police protected the Pride participants throughout the day and no attacks happened.

The General Prosecutor's Office reopened investigations this year, following the December 2021 ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in the *WISG and others v. Georgia* case, establishing a violation of Articles 3 and 11 in conjunction with Article 14.

HEALTH

Implementing the Ombudsperson's 2020 recommendations, the Ministry of Health, together with community-based and donor organisations, started setting up a working group to develop medical protocols and guidelines for trans-specific healthcare. WISG released its policy document.

HOUSING

The housing situation of LGBTQI and particularly trans people was further worsened by the war in Ukraine, and state support is still not available.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Human Rights Committee called on Georgia to introduce quick, accessible, and transparent legal gender recognition on the basis of self-determination. In December, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in three LGR cases against Georgia, establishing that the lack of a clear legal framework for LGR is a violation of Article 8.

WISG released its LGR policy document in June.

The appeal of an intersex woman, who was denied LGR without proof of surgery in 2021, is ongoing.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

Young green politicians spoke about launching a feminist and queer party.



POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

WISG held training for the police, the Prosecutor's Office, the State Care Agency and legal service providers on anti-LGBT hate crimes, discrimination, and victim support.

PUBLIC OPINION

WISG's study on societal attitudes towards LGBTQI persons highlighted that social acceptance is slowly increasing, especially among youth.

Another study found a similar trend.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Equality Movement's research showed that access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services is limited and not covered by private insurance.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Equality Movement's study showed that LGBT people are unaware of state support and when they do seek services, they often encounter discrimination.

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