

ANNUAL REVIEW

OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION
OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS
AND INTERSEX PEOPLE IN EUROPE
AND CENTRAL ASIA

2024

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ALBANIA

ACCESS TO ADEQUATE FOOD

Because LGBTI people have limited access to state services, due to discrimination, civil society organisations continued to provide necessary support.

Aleanca provided food packages to at least 249 community members this year, including transgender sex workers and people living with HIV.

Rainbowphilia (Ylberofilia) and a partner church teamed up to distribute food packages for trans and sex worker communities, helping up to 20 individuals.

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

Aleanca offered reimbursement in 14 cases for administrative proceedings for documentation such as ID's, passports, notary services and document issuance.

Aleanca reimbursed internet, electricity and water bills in 46 cases.

Aleanca provided legal counselling, legal representation and administrative support in filing institutional complaints in 52 sessions.

ASYLUM

Aleanca supported community members with specialised legal counselling on asylum-seeking procedures in at least seven cases, giving advice on how the process works for those who wish to leave Albania and seek asylum. PINK Embassy received at least 20 requests from community members wanting to migrate for safety reasons.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

Despite some signs of a positive trend in the media towards the LGBTI community, during a morning TV live show in March, journalist Flavio Qarri misgendered and deadnamed trans activist Luana Myrto, who was a guest on the programme. Myrto made a formal complaint to the Commissioner Against Discrimination, who took no measures against the journalist.

In May, the National Platform for Internet Safety ([iSIGURT.al](https://www.isigurt.al)) and PINK Embassy published their annual report on online hate speech against LGBTI people. Media biases and sensational news were found to contribute to this issue, with approximately 200 reported incidents, including hate speech, sexual violence, and bullying.

In May, Aleanca and Pro LGBT filed discrimination and hate speech complaints against two representatives of the Pro Life and Family Coalition and Cinema Millenium. The complaints were related to the public contestation of the "Strange World" movie for its portrayal of LGBTI+ characters. The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination ruled in favour of discrimination in one case, while the other was left for mediation between the parties.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

Rainbowphilia reported ten cases of hate violence against trans people and sex workers to the Uwazi platform.

EDUCATION

Aleanca's annual survey found that 30% of LGBTI respondents were unable to complete compulsory education because of discrimination and economic challenges. 63% believe teachers and principals are not well informed on LGBTI issues despite training carried out in the frame of the National Action Plan. 262 people participated in the survey, which has not been publicly published. CSOs continued to advocate for more inclusive school curricula, particularly in relation to sex education. Aleanca reimbursed university fees and vocational courses for 15 cases.

PINK Embassy and CRCA/ECPAT Albania followed up on over ten cases of bullying of LGBTI minors, revealing that public schools lacked protocols for handling SOGI-based violence or discrimination.

The Albanian National Child Helpline (ALO 116-1110) reported a 30% increase in calls from LGBTI children reporting peer bullying and violence. One adolescent attempted suicide due to continuous bullying without adequate protection.

EMPLOYMENT

According to Aleanca's annual survey, 40.8% of LGBTI respondents do not have and have never had formal employment. During 2023 Aleanca supported employment of 19 community members through mediation.

In December, the UNDP Albania and PINK Embassy together with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the Ministry of Finances, held a workshop on anti-discrimination in the private sector, to promote better cooperation among the private sector and LGBTI organisations.



EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In July, the European Parliament [adopted](#) the Commission's 2022 [report](#) on Albania, expressing serious concern about discrimination against LGBTIQ+ persons in key areas.

The implementation of the National LGBTI Action Plan (2021-2027), which was formally [launched](#) in 2022, continued to remain flawed, with no implementation of legislation such as changes in the family code and a draft law on gender identity, or introduction of new legislation as requested by NGOs.

Streha held meetings with 110 legal professionals and young LGBTI people living in rural areas in the districts of Kajava, Kukesi and Lushnja, to raise awareness on key legal aspects impacting LGBTIQ+ communities.

Aleanca trained the staff of The Commissioner against Discrimination and Peoples Advocate to provide better services to the LGBTI community.

FAMILY

CSOs continued pushing for the recognition of same-sex unions, including [strategic litigation](#) work.

The case of a lesbian couple, where the [birth registry office](#) and the [Administrative Court of Appeal](#) refused to recognise the non-biological mother, was filed at the High Court. According to experts, a judgement in the case could be expected within two years. The couple, leaders of the organisation Pro LGBT, stated they would go to the European Court of Human Rights if necessary.

Support for equal marriage has grown in recent years with one in four Albanians supporting the recognition of marriage for LGBTI people, according to ERA's [regional study](#).

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

The 14th Festival of Diversity [opened](#) on 17 May and events were [held](#) throughout the month, including a national forum on hate speech and hate crimes, and a [flashmob](#). Tirana Pride was [held](#) on 20th of May under the motto, 'Open Your Heart'. Government and Ombudsperson office representatives spoke at the opening.

HEALTH

Access to trans healthcare remained seriously limited, with many trying to access services abroad or purchase hormones online.

PrEP and PEP continue to be unavailable to LGBTI people. Civil society organisations continued to call for the proper implementation of the National Strategy for People Living with HIV 2020-2025, adopted in 2019.

Up to November 2023, Aleanca provided rapid HIV and other STIs testing to 1,538 people, reimbursed medical-related costs for about 179 cases, and provided psycho-social counselling in 420 cases.

Streha provided over 580 psychological and psycho-social sessions and reimbursed 89 medical prescriptions. A total of 67 LGBTIQ+ people were supported by Streha, 20 through shelter and 47 through other services.

Rainbowphilia facilitated trainings in [August](#) and [October](#) 2023 for medical practitioners and the trans community.

According to Aleanca's annual survey, 20% of respondents were unable to access medical services or required accompaniment. Of the remaining 80%, 16% experienced discrimination from medical staff, and 30% felt anxious about potential discrimination in healthcare institutions.

Aleanca and Rainbowphilia continued to advocate with the Ministry of Health for a protocol that enables trans people to access hormone therapy. A working committee of medical practitioners and CSOs began drafting it in July.

HOUSING

Aleanca LGBTI supported community members through rent reimbursement in 137 cases.

Between October 2022 and October 2023, Streha provided shelter to 20 LGBTI people, half of them trans. The number of trans people seeking housing doubled compared to the previous period.

Rainbowphilia supported five people from trans and sex workers communities through rent reimbursement.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

CSOs organised different training sessions with [independent bodies](#) and [community services](#).

The UN's CEDAW, in its fifth review, [accepted](#) recommendations from the LGBTI Alliance regarding the rights of LGBTI women in Albania. It was the first time the CEDAW Committee's observations included temporary measures for



LBTI women. The CEDAW also called for legal recognition of same-sex marriages and partnerships in Albania.

Streha received support from the Social Fund of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

The European Commission's 2022 report on Albania called for legislation on legal gender recognition (LGR). In 2022, the government backtracked on its commitment to do this. CSOs continued advocating with the Parliament for LGR and participated in a hearing in November to raise the issue.

Rainbowphilia together with the Helsinki Committee brought a case to court that could pave the way for trans people to change name and gender marker in official documents, in which a trans woman is suing the civil registry because they refused to change her gender marker. The Commissioner Against Discrimination received an invitation to join the lawsuit.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

In May, the 'I Am Your Child' exhibition opened in Tirana as part of Pride week. Poetry, cinema, theatre and drag shows were also part of Pride week.

The Queer Film Marathon Tirana festival took place in October.

In July, the Agimi cinema in the city of Tirana screened two queer films, 'Hippocampus' and 'Letter to myself', produced by Rainbowphilia.

Trans activist, Luana Myrto was elected member of Tirana's youth council.

POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

NGOs Aleanca, OMSA, PINK, PRO LGBT and Streha held 12 training sessions for all the Directorates of Police across the country. Albania has 12 directorates of police corresponding with 12 regions of the country.



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