

Tajikistan

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

In 2025, civil society actors reported that many LGBTI people avoided seeking support from legal service providers due to fear of stigma, discrimination, and their heightened economic vulnerability.

They underscored that many lawyers were reluctant to take on cases involving LGBTI clients. This reluctance was linked to concerns about reputational damage, pressure from judicial or state authorities, and fear of being stigmatised or targeted due to their professional involvement in LGBTI-related cases. As a result, access to effective legal representation remained limited.

ASYLUM

Civil society organisations documented over four cases in which LGBTI people from Tajikistan sought asylum in European countries due to well-founded fears of persecution. These fears included threats to personal safety, harassment, blackmail, and the risk of disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity, compounded by the lack of effective protection within the country.

Access to information about asylum procedures remained extremely limited. Many LGBTI individuals did not know how to apply for protection, which countries could provide it, or what evidence was required.

Consequently, some LGBTI people sought to leave the country through informal channels, resulting in underreporting and limited documentation of cases, despite the presence of real and ongoing risks to their safety.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

As of 2025, Tajikistan continues to lack legislation explicitly prohibiting incitement to hatred or bias-motivated violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The lack of legal guarantees and effective government responses contributes to impunity and further exacerbates the problem of underreporting of violence and persecution against LGBTI people. For instance, in 2025, civil society reported that various LGBTI bloggers were directly targeted by online hate speech. These bloggers were subjected to numerous hostile, derogatory, and offensive comments.

In December, a trans woman was arrested on charges of distributing pornographic materials. The case received widespread coverage in national media and online platforms, alongside numerous hostile and derogatory comments which led to a significant wave of hatred against LGBTI people.

DATA COLLECTION

In 2025, a country-of-origin information brief published by the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) highlighted the scarcity of official data on the situation of LGBTI people in Tajikistan and the reliance on civil society documentation to assess patterns of abuse and discrimination.

ECOM's national monitoring remained one of the few sources systematically documenting cases and identifying recurring practices, including the use of criminal provisions and coercive interactions with law enforcement. Individual cases identified through this monitoring are referenced under the relevant thematic chapters of this report.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Civil society reporting continued to indicate that Tajikistan's legal framework does not provide explicit protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics. The absence of hate crime and anti-discrimination provisions contributes to limited accountability and a lack of official monitoring (see also under Data Collection).

EMPLOYMENT

ECOM documented cases in which law enforcement officers disclosed individuals' sexual orientation to employers, resulting in dismissal or forced resignation. Trans people were reported to face particularly severe barriers to employment due to the lack of legal gender recognition, pushing many into informal or precarious work without access to labour protections (see also under Data Collection).

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Throughout the year, civil society organisations advocating for human rights, including LGBTI rights, faced government monitoring, inspections, and threats that limited their ability to operate effectively. According to civil society sources, this pressure contributed to restrictions on organizing meetings and disseminating information.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

In 2025, the space for human rights defenders in Tajikistan continued to shrink significantly. Human rights defenders reported high levels of fear, stress, and psychological burnout linked to the ongoing pressure and uncertainty surrounding their professional activities. Concerns about reprisals, loss of funding, and personal safety led to increased self-censorship and reduced public engagement, particularly on sensitive issues such as LGBTI rights.

According to reports by the IPHR, the broader human rights environment in Tajikistan in 2025 was characterised by restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association, as well as by intimidation and surveillance of civil society actors.

HEALTH

ECOM documented cases in which LGBTI people were subjected to forced or coerced HIV testing, including during police raids and detention. In several instances, individuals living with HIV were threatened with prosecution under Article 125 of the Criminal Code solely on the basis of their HIV status. Civil society reported that fear of disclosure, criminalisation, and breaches of confidentiality continue to deter LGBTI people from accessing healthcare and HIV-related services (see also under Data Collection).

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

As of 2025, Tajikistan does not have a clear or accessible legal framework governing legal gender recognition, despite provisions in the Law on Civil Status Acts that formally allow for changes to name and gender markers in official documents.

In practice, some trans persons have succeeded in amending their documents through court proceedings, but the process is widely described as complex, lengthy and financially or procedurally inaccessible for many. Fear of retaliation or stigma further discourages individuals from publicly sharing their experiences.

In June, the Smolninsky District Court in St. Petersburg received an application from a citizen of Tajikistan seeking official legal gender recognition. The applicant requested that changes be made to their birth record, specifically to amend the gender marker from male to female. In February 2023, the applicant received a 'certificate of sex change' from a private medical institution. However, when they applied to the registry office with this certificate, the request was denied, as the document was not on the official list of documents recognised by Russian law for confirming legal gender recognition. According to court spokesperson Daria Lebedeva, the applicant's attempts to request legal gender recognition began as early as 2022.

POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

ECOM documented 27 cases of human rights violations against LGBTI people in Tajikistan, with law enforcement officers identified as perpetrators in the majority of cases. The most common violations involved extortion, threats, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. Police frequently confiscated mobile phones and other devices without judicial authorisation, using personal messages or images to threaten prosecution under Article 241 of the Criminal Code (pornography-related offences), primarily as a means of coercion and extortion. (see also under Data collection)

Throughout the year, over 30 cases of police mistreatment targeting LGBTI persons were documented by civil society. These incidents involved arbitrary detention, harassment, extortion, and blackmail by law enforcement authorities, with some individuals being accused of distributing pornographic materials and intentionally transmitting HIV. Due to fear of reprisals, ongoing criminal investigations, and limited access to official records, many incidents went unrecorded, and organisations did not have access to all relevant cases.

Broader human rights monitoring reports further indicate that civil society organisations and human rights defenders faced heightened scrutiny, surveillance, and restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association.