

Latvia



Progress on legal equality for LGBTI people continues to be frustratingly slow in Latvia.

The country's legislation and policies do not contain many LGBTI-specific references, with significant gaps remaining in equality law, family policies, provision for legal gender recognition and protection for trans people.

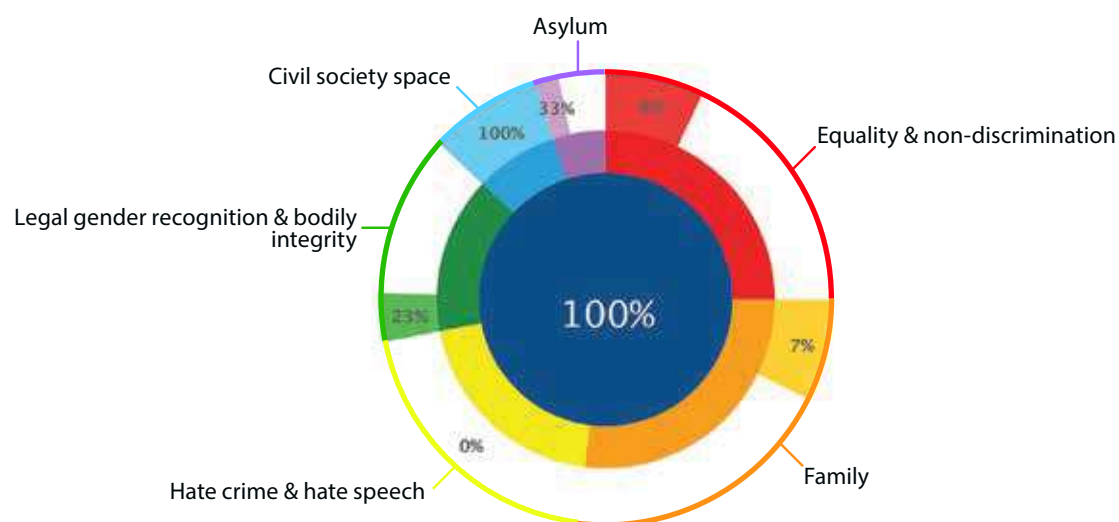
There are no points awarded on the Rainbow Europe Index at all in the area of hate crime and hate speech. The US State Department's annual report on country situations noted that societal discrimination against LGBTI people persists in the country. However, the national Ombudsman's office did clarify that the constitutional article on non-discrimination was applicable in a situation where a photographer refused to take a portrait of a lesbian couple and their family.

The civil society space section of the Map is the only policy area that scores well, a fact that LGBTI activists will hope remains as Riga prepares to host Baltic Pride in 2018 (following the inspiring scenes of 2015).

Unfortunately, there was no progress to report on the recommendations for policymakers contained in the last edition of the Annual Review, as no action plan on equality was developed and same-sex couples are still not formally recognised in law. In fact, one piece of legislation that was passed asks public officials to declare who their spouses or people they live with are, to avoid potential conflicts of interest – a law that not only fails to legally protect same-sex cohabiting couples but will also publicly out them.

All Rainbow Europe information is available online at www.rainbow-europe.org

Legal and policy situation in **Latvia** as of 31 December 2017



In order to improve the legal and policy situation of LGBTI people, ILGA-Europe recommend:

- ➡ Including express mentions of all SOGISC (sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics) grounds in law and policies designed to tackle hate crime.
- ➡ Adopting legal measures to recognise and protect same-sex couples, such as cohabitation, civil unions or registered partnership.