



ANNUAL REVIEW

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

2025

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SPAIN

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In February, Isabel Rodríguez, the Director of the Women's Institute sparked controversy by attending an event organised by "Feminist Teachers for Coeducation", who are explicitly in favour of repealing Spain's LGBTI law and ending support for trans students. The meeting included presentations that equated trans people with paedophiles and criticised "gender ideology". In July, six months after her appointment, Rodríguez was dismissed by the Spanish Government due to suspected irregularities in several public tenders. She was replaced by Cristina Hernández.

In June, a subcommittee at the Low Chamber (Congreso de los Diputados) was set up to develop a State Pact against hate speech towards vulnerable groups.

Albert Puig, a councilor from the party Aliança Catalana, made offensive remarks about the LGBTI community, referring to gay men as "the biggest cancer Catalonia has". His comments were made just before the IDAHOBIT and followed a message from the Generalitat's Council of Equality and Feminisms inviting people to celebrate Pride.

In July, the Barcelona Court acquitted a man accused of a hate crime for directing homophobic insults at a young man during the 2019 LGBTI Pride march in Barcelona. While the court condemned the insults and humiliation, it ruled that the comments did not meet the severity required to constitute a crime under the Penal Code. Barcelona's Prosecutor Office has issued an appeal against the ruling.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In May, several cases of bias-motivated violence were recorded across Spain. These include the violent beating of a 14-year-old trans girl by a peer, a homophobic attack against openly gay singer Miguel Garena, and an episode of harassment faced by a health worker who received a threatening letter accompanied by a photograph of him and his partner in the crosshairs of a gun.

In May, a man was tried and faced nearly four years in prison for threatening an Irish gay couple and telling them to return to Ireland.

In August, two transphobic attacks were reported in Valencia during the early hours of Saturday morning. The assailants shouted slurs and targeted two trans women in separate incidents, with one of the women sustaining a serious injury requiring seven stitches after being struck.

The trial concerning the murder of Samuel Luiz in 2021 on the promenade of A Coruña began in mid-October. In late November,

the Court ruled that the murder was motivated by homophobic intent. The sentence is due to be announced before the end of 2024.

In December, new cases of LGBTIphobia were reported in Gijón and Valencia.

DATA COLLECTION

FELGTBI+ and the State Federation of Education released a report revealing that 36.5% of teachers in educational centres have experienced LGBTIphobia. In 53% of cases, victims received no support from management, increasing their risk of sick leave fourfold. The report attributes 50% of such violence to students, 31% to staff, and 19% to family members.

The Report on the State of Education for LGBTI People, published by FELGTBI+ in collaboration with 40dB, surveyed 800 respondents aged 18 and older. It estimates that 1.6 million of Spain's 8.3 million students identify or will identify as LGBTI. While coming out occurs earlier, only 8.6% of LGBTI students aged 18-24 are fully out, compared to 44.9% in the 55-64 age group. The report highlights significant barriers for trans people, with only 23.5% holding a university degree—below the national average—and 46.3% having only an ESO qualification. Dropout rates among LGBTI students stand at 18.9%, nearly six points above the national average.

The State of Hate: State LGBTI+ 2024 provides a broader view of bias-motivated violence. This second comprehensive study highlights the persistent underreporting and underdetection of violence in police records and reveals that 10% of LGBTI people in Spain have experienced physical or sexual violence in the past five years.

In November, FELGTBI+ released a socioeconomic report showing that 30.6% of LGBTI people in Spain are at risk of poverty, while four-in-ten LGBTI people over 60 are unemployed.

Finally, the Political State: LGBTI+ State 2024 survey, published in March, analysed voting trends among the LGBTI community. It found that 57% of LGBTI people vote for left-wing parties and 29.3% for right-wing ones. Notably, more than 30% of right-wing LGBTI voters supported left-wing parties in the general election.

A report published by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) revealed that 53% of LGBTI people reported experiencing harassment due to their sexual orientation or gender identity over the past year. Additionally, the report indicated that 12% of LGBTI people in Spain have faced physical assault in the last five years, with 4% experiencing such attacks in the past year.

In July 2024, the Observatory against LGBT-phobia published a report recording 303 incidents of violence and discrimination in Catalonia in 2023, marking a 27.8% increase from the previous year. Verbal aggressions were the most common, representing 25.5% of the reported cases, while physical assaults comprised 23.5%, totalling 71 cases.

In Galicia, the Observatory against LGBTIphobia of A Coruña, managed by the LGBTI NGO, ALAS A Coruña, reported 48 LGBTIphobia related incidents, of which 43 could be considered aggressions. Almost half of them (47.92%) were verbal aggressions.

EDUCATION

(See under Data Collection.)

EMPLOYMENT

In March, Spain's Ministry of Labour and Social Economy launched its first Social Dialogue roundtable to tackle LGBTI equality and discrimination in the workplace. At the end of June, following negotiations between trade unions, business representatives, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Economy, with the support of LGBTI organisations, an agreement was signed to promote equality and prevent discrimination against LGBTI people.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In April, around a hundred people gathered in Barcelona to protest against the rising number of transphobic attacks and the growing influence of far-right forces and their inflammatory rhetoric.

In June, it was reported that the Xunta de Galicia had significantly reduced funding for LGBTI-related resources in recent years. These cuts affected support for inclusive education, healthcare, and public services. In response, Avante LGBTI Compostela called for greater financial investment and better training for public employees to address these gaps.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

Events in Valencia have raised significant concerns about freedom of association, particularly regarding Lambda, the principal LGBTI organisation in the Autonomous Region of Comunidad Valenciana. A high-ranking official from the regional government issued threats to Lambda, indicating that all funding for LGBTI organisations could be revoked. In response to this threat, LGBTI organisations in the region severed ties with the government and proceeded to organise an independent Pride event, free from the involvement of regional political institutions.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In December, the Spanish Supreme Court ruled that LGBTI flags can be displayed at public buildings, such as town halls, since they do not have associations with any political party and they represent values such as respect for human rights.

FOREIGN POLICY

The city of Merida hosted a summit on LGBTI international cooperation supported by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which aims to boost the funds allocated for LGBTI projects and other topics included in the Merida Declaration.

In October, the United Nations General Assembly elected Spain as a member of the Human Rights Council from 2025 to 2027. The Foreign Office announced SOGIESC as a key priority during its mandate.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In June, the Council of Ministers decided to file appeals of unconstitutionality against the regulations passed by the Community of Madrid in 2023 that impact the rights of LGBTI people. The Madrid Assembly had introduced laws that permitted exceptions to the ban on conversion practices, required psychiatric diagnoses for young trans people, and barred LGBTI organisations from participating in discrimination cases. The Minister of Equality announced this decision during a press conference following the Council of Ministers meeting with the LGBTI+ State Federation, where she condemned the Madrid Community's regulations as "regressive." In August, the Spanish Constitutional Court accepted these appeals and suspended the laws pending the review.

In mid-October, the Regional Government of Madrid announced several amendments to its own legislation to avoid a legal setback, should the Constitutional Court rule against their legal reforms. The regional government claimed technical reasons as the grounds for these amendments.

In December, Isabel Díaz Ayuso, President of the Community of Madrid from the Partido Popular (PP), passed a proposal that significantly reduces protections for LGBTI people in the region. The new reforms amend the regional trans rights law and LGBTI rights law by removing the punishment for discrimination against workers based on sexual orientation or gender identity and decriminalising assaults on individuals based on their sexual orientation or gender identity, provided no injury occurs. The proposal also mandates that underaged trans people can only begin hormone replacement therapy after an examination by both a pediatrician and a psychologist. As part of these measures, the regional government also decided to eliminate the General

Subdirectorate of LGBTI Equality from the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Social Affairs.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

During the recent European Parliament elections, a Spanish content creator was met with resistance and hostility while attempting to vote. The creator reported that the voter registration list displayed his deadname, despite him having previously updated his ID and personal information to reflect his correct name and gender.

In early March, multiple episodes of legal fraud were reported involving military personnel who applied to change their registered sex under Spain's LGBTI Law, with the aim of mocking trans people and questioning the scope of the law. The concerns arose from distorted reports about the number of individuals in Ceuta who had changed their registered sex following the enactment of the 2023 law for the equality of trans people. Sensationalised media coverage falsely claimed that "almost 40 men have become women in Ceuta to take advantage of more lenient selection processes for police or firefighter positions" or that these individuals, after changing their legal gender, would enjoy "better retirement benefits and other perks." In response, FELGTBI+ issued a press release calling on the Prosecutor's Office to take decisive action against these fraudulent actions. A collective of trans advocacy groups also denounced the alleged fraud, seeking the help of the Ombudsman of Spain.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LIFE

In September, the Trans Platform Federation submitted a proposal for a Trans Memory Law to the parliamentary groups of the Congress of Deputies. The proposal includes provisions for a pension of an "identical amount" to that of social security for pensioners over 65 years of age who do not have family dependents. The Federation emphasised that this initiative aims to be a collective effort supported by all political parties committed to advancing the rights of the LGBTI community. However, at the time of writing, it is unclear whether the proposal has been officially considered or rejected by political parties.



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