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Amnesty International Report 2017/18 - The State of the World's Human Rights - Lithuania

The President signed legislation which discriminated against lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Parliament considered a law which would severely restrict access to abortion. Lithuania offered visas to two gay men from the Russian republic of Chechnya who feared for their safety. In two separate cases, a district court ruled in favour of two transgender people seeking to change their identity documents without undergoing gender reassignment surgery.

International scrutiny

The case of *Abu Zubaydah v. Lithuania* remained pending before the European Court of Human Rights. Abu Zubaydah alleged he had been forcibly disappeared and tortured at a secret CIA detention centre in Antaviliai, a neighbourhood of Vilnius, Lithuania's capital, between 2005 and 2006. In September, the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances urged Lithuania to investigate its involvement in US-led rendition and secret detention programmes; hold those responsible to account; and provide victims with appropriate redress and reparation.

Refugees and asylum-seekers

In May, Lithuania offered visas to two Chechen men who were seeking international protection outside of Russia for fear of persecution based on their sexual orientation. This followed allegations of abductions, torture and other ill-treatment and in some cases even the killing of men suspected of being gay in Chechnya (see Russian Federation entry).

Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

In April, the Vilnius City District Court ordered the Civil Registry Office to change the identity documents of a transgender individual who had applied for legal gender recognition, without them having to undergo gender reassignment surgery. In May, the Court ruled that the Civil Registry Office should change the gender marker and personal identity number of another transgender applicant.

In July, the President signed an amendment to the Law on Equal Opportunities which defines family members as “spouses or direct descendants”, effectively excluding unmarried partners and thereby preventing – among others – same-sex couples from being legally considered as family members.

Sexual and reproductive rights

In October, Parliament considered a draft law initiated by the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania, a political party. If implemented, it would restrict women’s access to abortion in cases where the pregnancy poses a risk to the woman’s life or health, or when it is the result of rape.

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