



Annual Review

of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex
People in Kosovo covering the period of January to December 2018

Kosovo*

Bias-motivated speech

During the Pride Week in October, several cases of hate speech by political figures were recorded. The political Party “Fjala” held a press conference denouncing the Pride march, and urging the government to ban such events in public places. The leader of the party claimed that a workshop on self-defence organised as part of Pride Week was an indication of the fact that LGBTI persons are organising a terror attack.

A member of the leftist Political Party “Levizja Vetevendosje”, Donika Gashi, who is also part of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, made a statement on her Facebook profile calling LGBTI persons “sick” and “shkije” (a derogatory word used to refer to Serbs). The organisers reacted with a [press release](#) asking for perpetrators to be called to justice.

Pride week was accompanied by a rise in hate speech, and threats sent to community members and organisers, all of which were reported to the police.

Bodily integrity

In January, LGBT NGOs Center for Social Group Development (CSGD) had a meeting with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, starting conversations about amendments of the Civil Status Law to recognise gender of trans people in their public identification documents and public registers, as well as amending article 32, paragraph 3 of the law which states: “When the child’s genital organs have disorders, the gender shall be established by a medical report”, thus directly violating the right to bodily integrity of intersex people.

Freedom of assembly

LGBT NGO CSGD and Centre for Equality and Liberty (CEL) successfully organised the second Pride march in Prishtina on 10 October. The march took place without incidents, with a considerable number of police being present, but no barricades around the participants. The march attracted a much higher number of LGBTI persons than in previous years. A few members of government institutions also participated, including the Minister of European Integration, Ms. Dhurata Hoxha, member of the Social Democratic Party, Frasher Krasniqi, and Prishtina Mayor, Shpend Ahmeti. However, it was accompanied by a rise in hate speech (see above Bias-motivated speech).

This year’s IDAHOT event on 17 May in the main square of Prishtina also passed without incident.

Human rights defenders

Human rights defenders, especially LGBTI activists, were targeted by threats and hate speech online during 2018 (see above Bias-motivated speech). However, no physical attacks on LGBTI activists were reported this year.

Legal gender recognition

In January, CSGD had a meeting with the Ministry of Internal Affairs about amendments of the Civil Status Law to allow for legal gender recognition.

On 4 April, [Bler Morina](#), a trans man, filed a request to change their name and gender marker in the Civil Status Registry at the Civil Status Office of the Municipality of Gjakova.

On 15 May, Morina received the decision of the Commission of the Civil Status Office in Gjakova, rejecting the request based on lack of evidence of Morina’s inability to integrate in society with the current documents. The second instance authority of the Agency for Civil Registration under the Ministry of Internal Affairs rejected Morina’s appeal. Morina filed a lawsuit against the Agency at the Prishtina Basic Court – Department for Administrative Cases and a Request for Constitutional Review about the rejection to his name and gender marker change.

Police and law enforcement

Overall, cooperation between the Kosovo police and LGBTI organisations is strong. A case of police misconduct was reported in 2018. A video was shared online, featuring five police officers insulting two LGBTI individuals. The victims reported the case and the officers concerned were suspended. The Police Inspectorate of Kosovo opened an investigation.

Public opinion

According to the report “[Life on the Margins: Survey Results of the Experience of LGBTI people in South Eastern Europe](#)”, LGBTI people’s perception of their acceptance in Kosovo remains the lowest in the region of Western Balkans. 74% of the respondents stated they are not open about their sexual orientation, which is

* ‘Included in this Review as a separate jurisdiction following UNSCR 1244/1999’

the highest percentage in the Western Balkans. 73% said that they avoid certain locations for safety reasons, while 90% of the respondents stated that they avoid holding hands with their same-sex partner for the same reason (both figures represent the highest percentage in the Western Balkans). The report also showed there are high levels of discrimination, as well as concerning levels of harassment and violence against LGBTI individuals.

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