

ANNUAL REVIEW

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

2024

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GREECE

ACCESS TO ADEQUATE FOOD

Many trans people continued to struggle financially and be barely able to cover basic needs.

ASYLUM

The government gave a six-day deadline to civil society to comment on the new immigration law, which civil society criticised as outdated on LGBTI+ issues and completely omitting LGBTI+ migrants.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

Hate speech by political and religious leaders continued to be a serious issue (see here, here, and here), particularly in the lead-up to the national elections in June. Religious figures blamed LGBTI people for the fires during the summer. A well-known veteran athlete called trans people 'paedophiles'. Stefanos Kasselakis, gay politician and newly-elected President of SYRIZA, was targeted by hate speech online (see here, here and here). Hateful speech was also common in media outlets (see here).

In June, the European Court of Human Rights found the case of Aegialia Ambrosios, former Orthodox Metropolitan known for his homophobic stance and speech, inadmissible.

Intersex Greece's intersex-led report on hate speech against intersex people showed that most incidents are perpetrated by the medical community. Almost one third of online content about intersex used derogatory terms such as "paedophile", "perversion" or "satanism".

Two MPs of the far-right Spartan Party, which got into parliament this year, said "we will put an end to this brothel", referring to posters about rainbow families in Athens. They also called for a counter-protest on the day of Pride in Crete at the end of June. The Pride received so much support, including from anti-fascist organisers, that the counter-demonstration was cancelled and the hateful posts were removed.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

The national hate crime monitoring body's annual report shared that 38 hate crimes were documented against LGBTI+ people in 2022.

Hate crimes continued to be a serious issue this year (see also Freedom of Association) (see here, here, here, and here). On 10 July, a black migrant trans woman and sex worker, Anna Ivankova was brutally murdered in her home. Media outlets

repeatedly misgendered her. A protest and commemoration was held outside her apartment on 11 July - Anna Ivankova was an active member of the LGBTIQ+ activist and art scene. Some of the organisers were harassed and physically assaulted the same evening by a group of six men. The suspected murderer was arrested.

A former police officer sued an intersex woman, who he harassed and assaulted in 2019, for defamation, after he was exonerated this year.

The second instance trial in the murder of LGBT+ activist Zacharias Kostopoulos, who was killed in 2018, was postponed to January 2024.

In December, Council of Europe's GREVIO published its Baseline Evaluation Report on Greece, including, for the first time, intersex women.

EDUCATION

In March, parliament adopted legislation to combat bullying and violence in education, which covers SOGIESC grounds.

The Teaching Federation of Greece affirmed that a teacher in an Athens primary school did nothing wrong when showing the film *Boys in the Shower* to his class of ten-year-olds. The teachers received backlash from parents.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The equal treatment law was amended in February to include disability as a protected ground in all areas of life. Civil society voiced firm criticism that SOGI grounds are only included under employment and lawmakers failed to change this.

The conservative New Democracy Party retained its power in the national elections that were held in June. Three far-right parties entered parliament.

Prime Minister Mitsotakis continued to support legal reform to advance LGBTIQ+ rights, following the adoption of the National Strategy for Equality of LGBTIQ+ people (2021-2023) last year. The government is yet to set up a body in charge of addressing LGBTQ rights.

FAMILY

Following the elections in June, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis affirmed that the government wanted to introduce marriage equality within the next four years. Opposition

party SYRIZA shared this stance vocally in the lead-up to the elections. Civil society continued to call for a comprehensive reform of family laws that go beyond marriage equality.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Several LGBTI+ organisations, and over 100 groups in total, joined the Walk against Discrimination on 21 March to say no to racism, discrimination and violence against minorities.

Several incidents took place during Athens Pride, held in June. The starting point of the march was moved due to an election campaign booth in the original location, which many activists criticised as backing down. The new route did not pass by the parliament's building. A group of fascists attacked a trans person on the morning of Pride and took their flag away. Several migrants were also targeted.

On 29 June, Vuziballs held the first Pride march in Chania (Crete).

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Far-right politicians took issue with a rainbow painted on a school's wall in Corinth. The mayor and the deputy Minister of Education both stated the painting had nothing to do with LGBTIQ+ rights and it was merely a rainbow.

HEALTH

Access to trans-specific healthcare, especially for those uninsured remained very difficult. In January, access to an essential hormone-related drug was suspended due to a technical change in prescriptions. The drug is widely administered for a number of conditions, but was only suspended in trans-specific healthcare. The Transgender Support Association (GTSA) immediately intervened and requested the state to remedy the situation, which could leave many without hormonal treatment. 27 SYRIZA MPs joined in lobbying the Ministry.

The Health Ministry's solution is a new procedure that requires an endocrinologist to administer the prescription online and a three-member panel to approve it, which is very complicated and lengthy. GTSA continued to call for depathologisation, access to healthcare for migrants and refugees, insurance coverage, and other key advancements.

HOUSING

On 28 August, the Athens Municipal Council approved the opening of the first shelter for LGBTIQ+ homeless people.

LGBTIQ+ organisations have been consulted prior to the decision and later signed a memorandum of collaboration. The shelter is expected to open in spring 2024.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

Stefanos Kasselakis, openly gay politician, became the new president of leading opposition party SYRIZA after the party's crushing defeat during the June elections.

Civil society organisations worked hard throughout the year to lobby journalists and candidates in the national and municipal elections to address LGBTIQ+ rights in their political agendas, but most did not cover them in a meaningful way. Civil society also warned that trans people must be protected from questioning, harassment, and discrimination when going to the voting polls.



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