



Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Albania: Sexual orientation and gender identity

Version 8.0

September 2025

Executive summary

Albania is a traditional society where emphasis is placed on family membership and conforming to traditional gender roles, particularly in rural areas. However, same-sex relations are legal and trans persons are able to change their gender. LGBT+ people have freedoms of speech, assembly and association and the law allows for equality for all in accessing education, employment, housing, healthcare and goods and services.

LGBT+ persons form a particular social group.

In general, LGBT+ people are unlikely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm from either state or non-state actors.

The country guidance case of [IM \(Risk – Objective Evidence – Homosexuals\) Albania CG \[2003\] UKIAT 00067 \(8 September 2003\)](#) found that there was no evidence that gay men were at risk of persecution by either the state or society. The country guidance case of [BF \(Tirana – gay men\) Albania \[2019\] UKUT 93 \(IAC\) \(26 March 2019\)](#), found that:

- discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation was illegal
- there were avenues to seek redress
- there was a generally effective system of protection in Tirana for gay men
- it would not be unduly harsh for an openly gay man to relocate to Tirana.

The country information in this note does not indicate that there are ‘very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence’ to depart from these findings.

In the years since [IM](#) and [BF](#) were determined, the Albanian government has passed some of the most progressive LGBT+ laws in the region. The situation for gay men and the LGBT+ community as a whole, particularly in Tirana, has improved since the promulgation of both [BF](#) and [IM](#). Whilst some LGBT+ persons face stigma, harassment, discrimination and violence from non-state actors, in general, this is not sufficiently serious by its nature and/or repetition, or by an accumulation of various measures, to amount to persecution or serious harm.

Protection is likely to be available to LGBT+ people.

Internal relocation is likely to be available to LGBT+ people.

Where a claim is refused, it must be considered for certification under section 94(3) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 as Albania is listed as a designated state. Such a claim must be certified under section 94(3) if you are satisfied it is clearly unfounded.

All cases must be considered on their individual facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate they face persecution or serious harm.

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Assessment

Section updated: 10 September 2025

About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of **whether, in general**:

- a person faces a real risk of persecution/serious harm by state or non-state actors because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation/gender identity
- the state can provide effective protection
- internal relocation is possible to avoid persecution/serious harm
- a claim, if refused, is likely or not to be certified as ‘clearly unfounded’ under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

This note provides an assessment of the situation of actual and perceived lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and people of other minority sexual orientations and gender identities (LGBT+). Sources often refer to LGBT+ persons collectively, but the experiences of each group may differ. This is true of the COI in this note, with few examples, definitions and thresholds of what constituted violence or discrimination, and a lack of data on the number and frequency of incidents. Where information is available, the note will refer to and consider the treatment of each group discretely.

Paragraphs 35 and 82 of the determination of the Supreme Court’s ruling in [HJ \(Iran\) and HT \(Cameroon\) v Secretary of State for the Home Department \[2010\] UKSC 31, heard 10,11,12 May and promulgated 7 July 2010](#), have set out the approach to take and established the test that should be applied when assessing such a claim based on a person’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression.

Decision makers **must**, however, consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account the specific facts of each case.

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1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

1.1 Credibility

- 1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), the [Asylum Instruction on Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).
- 1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check, when one has not already been undertaken (see [Biometric data-sharing process \(Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process\)](#)).
- 1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person’s claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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1.2 Exclusion

- 1.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons to apply one (or more) of the exclusion clauses. Each case must be considered on its individual facts.
- 1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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2. Convention reason(s)

- 2.1.1 Actual or imputed particular social group (PSG).
- 2.1.2 LGBT+ persons form a PSG in Albania within the meaning of the Refugee Convention because they share an innate characteristic that cannot be changed **and** have a distinct identity in Albania because the group is perceived as being different by the surrounding society.
- 2.1.3 Although LGBT+ persons in Albania form a PSG, establishing such membership is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed is whether the person has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of their membership of such a group.
- 2.1.4 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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3. Risk

3.1 Risk from the state

- 3.1.1 LGBT+ persons are unlikely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm from the state. The onus is on the person to demonstrate otherwise.
- 3.1.2 In the country guidance case of [IM \(Risk – Objective Evidence – Homosexuals\) Albania CG \[2003\] UKIAT 00067 \(8 September 2003\)](#), heard on 15 July 2003, the Tribunal concluded that ‘... there is no country background evidence which supports a reasonable likelihood that homosexuals as such in Albania are subject to any action on the part either of the populace or the authorities which would amount to persecution for the purposes of the Refugee Convention or would be in breach of their protected human rights.’ (Paragraph 7)
- 3.1.3 The country guidance case of [BF \(Tirana – gay men\) Albania \[2019\] UKUT 93 \(IAC\) \(26 March 2019\)](#), heard from 16 October to 18 October 2018 and 23 October 2018, found that, ‘Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation is unlawful in Albania and there are avenues to seek redress. Same-sex relationships are not legally recognised in Albania. However, there is no evidence that this causes serious legal difficulties for relationships between openly gay men.’ (Paragraph 251)
- 3.1.4 The Court of Appeal subsequently [upheld the decision](#) on 25 October 2019 and refused permission to appeal in [BF](#) on all grounds; it found that, ‘... the tribunal considered the evidence before it and the issues with which it had to deal comprehensively and with patent and commendable care, and made no error of law.’ (Paragraph 62)
- 3.1.5 In the years since [IM](#) was determined, the Albanian government has passed some of the most progressive LGBT+ laws in the region and its public officials have demonstrated a willingness and ability to partner with LGBT+ activists to pass reforms. The available country information indicates that the situation for gay men and the LGBT+ community as a whole, particularly in Tirana, has improved since the promulgation of [BF](#) and [IM](#). The country information in this note does not indicate that there are ‘very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence’ to depart from these findings.
- 3.1.6 Albania is a regional leader in terms of legal protections against discrimination and violence on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. Same-sex relations are legal, and whilst same-sex partnerships, marriage or parenting are not currently recognised in law, amendments to the Family Code have been drafted to address this. Trans persons have the ability to change their legal gender and name through a court ruling supported by medical documentation. Whilst not currently legally binding, protocols exist to regulate medical procedures on intersex children (see [Legal context](#) and [Healthcare](#)).
- 3.1.7 LGBT+ people have freedoms of speech, assembly and association and the Law on Protection against Discrimination allows for equality for all, including LGBT+ persons, in accessing education, employment, housing, healthcare and goods and services (see [Legal context](#)).
- 3.1.8 Although there have been instances where politicians and public officials have used offensive language or spread misinformation about the LGBT+ community, in general, senior public officials have demonstrated consistent support for LGBT+ rights. For example, in 2025, permission was granted for

a lesbian couple to hold an unofficial wedding on the rooftop of the mayor's office in Tirana, and a 2025 Pride event in Tirana received 'broad support' by Albanian officials. Despite obstacles to the implementation of the LGBTI National Action Plan 2021-2027, caused by a lack of resources, the UN Independent Expert noted 'clear political will' from both national and municipal officials to implement it, and reported high levels of engagement from state and municipal officials (see [Attitudes of government and public officials](#) and [LGBTI National Action Plan \(2021-2027\) and other policy initiatives](#)).

- 3.1.9 Based on recent available country information, there is a lack of reporting on police violence, harassment, or arbitrary arrests of LGBT+ persons in Albania. However, the country information that is available does not, in general, indicate widespread or systemic mistreatment amounting to persecution of the LGBT+ community by the state (see [Police treatment of LGBT+ persons](#)).
- 3.1.10 If an LGBT+ person is not 'out' about (or conceals) their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, consider why this is the case. If it is because the person fears persecution or serious harm and this is well-founded, they are likely to require asylum or humanitarian protection.
- 3.1.11 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), [Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

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3.2 Risk from non-state actors

- 3.2.1 LGBT+ persons are unlikely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm from non-state actors. Whilst some LGBT+ persons face stigma, harassment, discrimination and violence from non-state actors, in general, this is not sufficiently serious by its nature and/or repetition, or by an accumulation of various measures, to amount to persecution or serious harm. The onus is on the person to demonstrate otherwise.
- 3.2.2 In the country guidance case of [IM](#), the Tribunal found that in general the level of societal discrimination in Albania as a whole is not sufficiently serious by its nature and repetition that it will reach the threshold of being persecutory or otherwise inhuman or degrading treatment.
- 3.2.3 In the country guidance case of [BF](#), the Tribunal found that, 'An openly gay man may face discrimination in Tirana, particularly in the areas of employment and healthcare. However, whether considered individually or cumulatively, in general the level of such discrimination is not sufficiently serious to amount to persecution.' (Paragraph 251)
- 3.2.4 The available evidence on the societal treatment of gay men and the LGBT+ community as a whole does not indicate that there has been a significant or durable change. There are not, therefore, 'very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence' to justify a departure from [BF](#) and [IM](#).
- 3.2.5 Albania is a patriarchal and traditional society where emphasis is placed on family membership and conforming to traditional gender roles. Although protection from discrimination is provided for in law, in practice, sources report that the collective LGBT+ community face some difficulties in

accessing education, employment, housing, healthcare and goods and services due to prevailing negative attitudes of LGBT+ persons in Albanian society. However, provisions to improve access to these areas and counteract issues include the recognition of SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity) as eligibility criteria for social housing, the development of a national health protocol to facilitate access to hormone therapy for trans persons, legal protections against discrimination in employment, and initiatives to promote inclusive workplace practices (see [Cultural norms and expression](#) and [Access to services](#)).

- 3.2.6 There is a discrepancy between official reporting and civil society regarding prevalence of hate speech and hate crime towards the LGBT+ community. Whilst the state police and General Prosecutor's Office report few or no incidents annually, civil society organisations report a higher prevalence, particularly following high-profile LGBT+ visibility events. Crime data is not disaggregated, making it difficult to determine the number of hate crimes committed against LGBT+ individuals, with underreporting further obscuring the prevalence and nature of offences (see [Reporting and data on violence against LGBTI people](#)). In 2024, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination reviewed 2 hate speech cases based on SOGI and 5 complaints of discrimination, most of which related to goods and services, and one of which involved employment (see [Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination \(CPD\)](#) and [Access to services](#)).
- 3.2.7 In 2023, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights carried out a survey of 100,000 LGBT+ persons in the EU and neighbouring countries. The survey results indicated that:
- 62% of Albanian respondents reported having been harassed in the year before the survey
 - 15% reported having been attacked in the 5 years before the survey
 - 51% of Albanian respondents reported having experienced discrimination in at least one area of life.
- 3.2.8 However, whilst the survey provides some insight into the experiences of LGBT+ persons in Albania, it did not specify the number of Albanian participants, nor did it define thresholds or what constitutes 'harassment', 'discrimination', or an 'attack'. Due to these limitations, the findings do not point to a different conclusion on the risks to LGBT+ persons (see [Societal treatment of, and attitudes towards, LGBT+ persons](#)).
- 3.2.9 The level and frequency of discrimination and violence faced by LGBT+ persons is likely to differ according to their geographic location and degree of openness. Isolated instances of violence or discrimination tend to occur against visibly active LGBT+ persons who express their SOGI or affection publicly, and/or who take part in pro-LGBT+ activities, particularly in rural areas. Within the LGBT+ community, trans persons may face an elevated risk of harm due to increased visibility (see [Societal treatment of, and attitudes towards, LGBT+ persons](#) and [Discrimination and violence towards trans persons](#)). There is a lack of information surrounding the societal treatment of intersex persons in Albania, although the LGBTI National Action Plan 2021 to 2027 referred to intersex persons as facing 'multiple discrimination,' along with trans people (see [LGBTI National Action Plan \(2021-2027\) and other policy initiatives](#)). However, the country information

does not indicate that societal violence and discrimination against LGBT+ persons is sufficiently widespread or systemic to constitute a real risk of serious harm to the community as a whole.

3.2.10 If a LGBT+ person is not 'out' about (or conceals) their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, consider why this is the case. If it is because the person fears persecution or serious harm and this is well-founded, they are likely to require asylum or humanitarian protection.

3.2.11 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), [Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

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4. Protection

4.1.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from the state, they are unlikely to be able to obtain protection.

4.1.2 A person who has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from a rogue state actor and/or a non-state actor is likely to obtain protection from the state.

4.1.3 In general, Albania takes reasonable steps to prevent the persecution of LGBT+ persons by operating an effective legal system for the detection, prosecution and punishment of acts constituting persecution and a person is generally able to access the protection. Corruption, sympathy or weakness of some individuals in the system of justice does not mean that the state is unwilling to afford protection. As such, the state is both willing and able to offer sufficient protection to persons fearing non-state actors, including 'rogue' state actors. The onus is on the person to demonstrate otherwise.

4.1.4 In the country guidance case of [BF](#), the Tribunal found that:

'Particular care must be exercised when assessing the risk of violence and the lack of sufficiency of protection for openly gay men whose home area is outside Tirana, given the evidence of openly gay men from outside Tirana encountering violence as a result of their sexuality. Such cases will turn on the particular evidence presented. ...

'...There exists in Tirana a generally effective system of protection should an openly gay man face a risk of harm in that city or from elsewhere in Albania' (paragraph 251).

4.1.5 The Court of Appeal subsequently [upheld the decision](#) on 25 October 2019 and refused permission to appeal in [BF](#) on all grounds; it found '... the tribunal considered the evidence before it and the issues with which it had to deal comprehensively and with patent and commendable care, and made no error of law' (paragraph 62). The EWCA added the tribunal 'unarguably, properly' considered the effectiveness of steps being taken to provide adequate protection, stating, 'No doubt more could be done – but the law does not require perfection, only that there is sufficient protection for those at risk of persecution on the basis of, in this case, their sexual identity' (paragraph 43).

4.1.6 The government produced the LGBTI National Action Plan 2021-2027 with the aim of promoting equality, inclusion and protection of the LGBT+ community, although implementation has been limited due to a lack of

resources. There is provision for LGBT+ issues to be co-ordinated through the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, all Government ministries are expected to address LGBT+ inclusion within their own fields, and local government has responsibility for ensuring equal treatment for LGBT+ persons in their area (see [LGBTI National Action Plan \(2021-2027\) and other policy initiatives](#) and [Government departments and the police](#)).

- 4.1.7 Civil society reports and the UN Independent Expert note some instances whereby the police fail to adequately investigate or follow up on complaints by LGBT+ persons, with some attacks and incidents of violence not resulting in official action. However, the reasons for this are not always reported and may also be due to lack of evidence or other procedural factors. While these gaps persist, formal protections exist and are gradually improving. The state police have taken steps to address risks, including collaborating with civil society, improving reporting and case-handling mechanisms, and providing guidance and oversight for responding to incidents. They have also consistently provided security for Pride events, supported public LGBT+ activities, such as the Queer Film Marathon in Tirana, and worked with organisations to monitor and respond to harassment or intimidation (see [Police treatment and protection of LGBT+ persons](#)).
- 4.1.8 Courts and justice mechanisms for LGBT+ persons in Albania face challenges. Procedural and sentencing factors, alongside gaps in understanding, contribute to these weaknesses. However, the UN Development Programme has delivered training to magistrates, prosecutors, and human rights staff to improve handling of LGBT+ issues, and state-funded services, such as the shelter Streha, provide support for survivors of violence. Referral mechanisms and partnerships between gender-based violence and LGBT organisations are also expanding, demonstrating that protections and support structures exist and are gradually improving (see [Judicial treatment and protection of LGBT+ people](#)).
- 4.1.9 The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination (CPD), which serves as Albania's equality body, and the People's Advocate, which monitors public institutions' compliance with human rights obligations, provide formal mechanisms of redress for LGBT+ persons. Both bodies face limitations such as limited resources, low levels of public awareness and underreporting of cases. Nevertheless, the CPD has reviewed complaints relating to hate speech, access to goods and services, and employment, and has issued decisions against public and private actors, including findings of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The People's Advocate may also recommend legislative reforms and whilst its recommendations are not legally binding, they are reported to carry growing influence (see [Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination \(CPD\)](#) and [People's Advocate \(Ombudsperson\)](#)).
- 4.1.10 There is also a significant number of non-governmental organisations in Albania which advocate for LGBT+ rights and the LGBT+ community, run awareness campaigns and Pride events, and work with, as well as deliver training to, the police. These organisations also offer additional assistance to LGBT+ persons requiring assistance and protection from the state (see [LGBTI groups, CSOs and NGOs](#)).
- 4.1.11 For further guidance on assessing state protection, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), [Sexual identity](#)

5. Internal relocation

- 5.1.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from the state, they are unlikely to be able to internally relocate to escape that risk.
- 5.1.2 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from a non-state or rogue state actor, they are likely to be able to internally relocate to escape that risk. This is because, in general, there are parts of Albania, including Tirana, where it will be reasonable to expect LGBT+ persons to relocate.
- 5.1.3 Albania is a small country, a little larger than Wales, with a population estimated to be between 2.8 million and 3.1 million. 520,000 people live in the capital, Tirana. People are generally able to move around freely (see [Freedom of movement](#)).
- 5.1.4 In the country guidance case of [BF](#), the Tribunal found that:
‘... in Tirana, in general, an openly gay man, by virtue of that fact alone, would not have an objectively well-founded fear of serious harm or persecution on return to Tirana.
‘There is only very limited evidence that an individual would be traced to Tirana by operation of either the registration system or criminal checks at the airport. However, it is plausible that a person might be traced via family or other connections being made on enquiry in Tirana. Whether an openly gay man might be traced to Tirana by family members or others who would wish him harm is a question for determination on the evidence in each case depending on the motivation of the family and the extent of its hostility. ...
‘...In general, it will not be unduly harsh for an openly gay man to relocate to Tirana, but each case must be assessed on its own facts, taking into account an individual’s particular circumstances, including education, health and the reason why relocation is being addressed’ (paragraph 251).
- 5.1.5 The Court of Appeal subsequently [upheld the decision](#) on 25 October 2019 and refused permission to appeal in [BF](#) on all grounds. The Tribunal had concluded that ‘the situation in Tirana is far from perfect and ... discrimination against gay men does arise, in particular, as regard employment...; but ..., even when considered cumulatively, such discrimination is not at a level that would make it unduly harsh for a gay man to relocate to Tirana’ (paragraph 50). The Court of Appeal found that ‘the tribunal’s analysis and conclusion are not arguably wrong in law’ (paragraph 51) and stated, ‘... the tribunal considered the evidence before it and the issues with which it had to deal comprehensively and with patent and commendable care, and made no error of law’ (paragraph 62).
- 5.1.6 Internal relocation will not be an option if it depends on the person concealing their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the proposed new location to avoid persecution.
- 5.1.7 For further guidance on internal relocation and factors to consider, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), the [Asylum Instruction on Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity](#)

[issues in the asylum claim.](#)

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6. Certification

- 6.1.1 Where a claim is refused, it must be considered for certification under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 as Albania is listed as a designated state. Refused claims are likely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under the Act.
- 6.1.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\).](#)

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Country information

About the country information

This section contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment which, as stated in the [About the assessment](#), is the guide to the current objective conditions.

The structure and content follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before **14 August 2025**. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

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7. Legal context

7.1 Legal rights

- 7.1.1 Albania signed the UN Declaration on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in 2008¹.
- 7.1.2 Albania adopted the [European Convention on Human Rights](#), which came into force in Albania on 2 October 1996,² including Protocol 12 (general prohibition of discrimination)³.
- 7.1.3 Article 18 of the [Constitution of the Republic of Albania \(as amended in 2022\)](#) referred to discrimination, but did not include grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity: 'No one may be unjustly discriminated against for reasons such as gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language, political, religious or philosophical beliefs, economic condition, education, social status, or parentage.'⁴
- 7.1.4 Article 1 of the [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), amended in 2020, states, 'This law regulates the implementation of, and compliance with, the principle of equality and non-discrimination in relation to ... gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex characteristics, living with HIV/AIDS...'⁵ The Act prohibits discrimination on these grounds in the fields of participation in politics (Chapter I), employment (Chapter II), education (Chapter III), health and goods and services (Chapter IV), amongst others.
- 7.1.5 In the Albania 2024 Report, covering the period from 15 June 2023 to 1 September 2024⁶, published on 30 October 2024, the European Commission (EC) reported on Albania's progress towards EU accession⁷. The report

¹ HRW, [UN: General Assembly Statement Affirms Rights for All](#), 18 December 2008

² CoE, [28 years of Albanian membership to the European Convention...](#), 2 October 2024

³ ECHR, [Judgments of 31.05.2022](#), 31 May 2022

⁴ Govt of Albania, [Constitution of the Republic of Albania](#), 21 October 1998, amended in 2022

⁵ Govt of Albania, [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), 4 February 2010, amended 2020

⁶ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.3, footnote 3), 30 October 2024

⁷ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.39), 30 October 2024

noted, 'The legal and institutional framework for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) persons is partially aligned with the EU acquis and European standards.'⁸

- 7.1.6 On 30 April 2025, the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) published its Concluding Observations on the third periodic report of Albania, which stated, 'The Committee notes the State Party's commitment to improving the legal framework for the protection of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, including legal recognition and protection of same-sex couples, but regrets that no such framework has yet been adopted.'⁹
- 7.1.7 The US Department of State's (USSD's) 2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices (Country Report 2023) stated, '... Sexual orientation and gender identity were among the classes protected by the country's hate crime law.'¹⁰ The USSD published their 2024 Albania Country Report on 12 August 2025 but provided no coverage of LGBT+ persons¹¹.
- 7.1.8 The Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, Graeme Reid, presented his findings from his official visit to Albania, conducted from 1 to 12 July 2024, in a report to the UN Human Rights Council dated 17 June 2025 (UN Independent Expert report of June 2025). The report stated, '...following an amendment to the law on civil status in 2020, changes in legal name and legal gender by court decision, when supported by medical documentation, are permitted. However, a comprehensive law on legal gender recognition has yet to be introduced in Albania, leaving transgender individuals without an accessible administrative process.'¹²
- 7.1.9 Following Albania's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva on 30 August 2024, Albania accepted a number of LGBTI rights recommendations, including the recognition of same-sex unions and marriages, strengthening provisions against hate speech and hate crimes, ensuring the full implementation of anti-discrimination legislation and reinforcing the National Action Plan for LGBTI persons, but rejected one recommendation on legal gender recognition based on self-determination^{13 14}.
- 7.1.10 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe stated, 'Despite numerous recommendations directed at Albania, a legal framework for gender recognition remains absent in the country. This deficiency leaves many trans people without essential documentation that accurately reflects their gender identity, perpetuating discrimination and stigmatisation while also limiting access to healthcare and other critical services.'¹⁵
- 7.1.11 The Independent Expert noted the following with regard to healthcare:
'Through alignment with European Union standards and national reforms, Albania has built a legal framework that affirms the right to health for all. Key legislation, such as the law on reproductive health, guarantees access to

⁸ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.40), 30 October 2024

⁹ UN HRC, [Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Albania...](#) (para 11), 30 April 2025

¹⁰ USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#), 22 April 2024

¹¹ USSD, [2024 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#), 12 August 2025

¹² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 27), 17 June 2025

¹³ Aleanca, [LGBTI Alliance reporting to the United Nations Human Rights Council](#), undated

¹⁴ ILGA World, [58th session of the UN Human Rights Council ... Statement by ILGA World](#), undated

¹⁵ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

sexual and reproductive health education without restrictions based on religion or ideology, while the law on the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS mandates the integration of HIV prevention education into school curricula. Albania is also among the few countries in Europe that explicitly prohibit discrimination based on gender identity, establishing an essential legal foundation for advancing equality in healthcare.’¹⁶

- 7.1.12 Further considering healthcare, in 2025, the International LGBTQI Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO) published a report entitled, ‘LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025’. With reference to the methodology used, IGLYO stated, ‘...the research relies on qualitative data. IGLYO has worked closely with its member organisations and partners to gather information on national legislation, policies and practices. Where necessary, desk research was conducted to verify or supplement the data. The final results were reviewed and validated by additional partners and pro-bono lawyers and legal experts.’¹⁷ IGLYO’s Report stated, ‘Albania’s Law on Public Health does not specifically include sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics as protected grounds.’¹⁸
- 7.1.13 Considering legal rights to employment, under the Labour Code, any kind of discrimination in employment on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity is prohibited¹⁹.
- 7.1.14 The IGLYO Inclusive Education report 2025 stated, ‘The Law on Pre-University education grants the right to education for all, without discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.’²⁰
- 7.1.15 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert reported on housing provision for LGBT persons:
- ‘The right to housing for LGBT individuals in Albania is supported by a legal framework that includes the law on social housing of 2018 and the law on protection from discrimination of 2010. Sexual orientation and gender identity are formally designated as eligibility criteria for housing support under the social housing law in recognition of the specific vulnerabilities of LGBT persons, including family rejection, school-based bullying and workplace discrimination. ... In addition, discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity is explicitly prohibited under the law on protection from discrimination, reinforcing the right to equal treatment in housing and other social services.’²¹
- 7.1.16 ILGA-Europe’s website states, ‘ILGA-Europe is an independent, international non-governmental umbrella organisation uniting over 700 organisations from 54 countries across Europe and Central Asia.’²² ILGA-Europe published its 2025 Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe and Central Asia (ILGA-Europe’s 2025 Annual Review), dated February 2025, and reported on freedoms of speech, assembly and association: ‘Currently, there are no legal provisions in the Republic of Albania that restrict individuals from discussing

¹⁶ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 53), 17 June 2025

¹⁷ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.17), 2025

¹⁸ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.27), 2025

¹⁹ Govt of Albania, [Labour Code of... Albania](#) (Article 9), last amended 5 December 2015

²⁰ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.27), 2025

²¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 32), 17 June 2025

²² ILGA-Europe, [About Us](#), no date

or reporting on LGBTI issues in the media. Additionally, no laws limit LGBTI people from assembling in public or private, forming associations, registering organisations, or holding events.’²³

- 7.1.17 On 20 May 2020, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported on the end to ‘conversion therapy’ in Albania and stated, ‘Albania’s Order of Psychologists has announced that it will prohibit members from offering “conversion therapy,” or pseudo-therapeutic attempts to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.’²⁴ However, in his report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted, ‘... this restriction applies only within the psychology profession, leaving gaps in protection against such practices in other healthcare settings.’²⁵
- 7.1.18 The ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map ‘...annually ranks 49 European countries on a scale between 0% (gross violations of human rights, discrimination) and 100% (respect of human rights, full equality) on the basis of laws and policies that have a direct impact on LGBTI people’s human rights... The Map ranks each country under seven categories: equality and non-discrimination; family; hate crime and hate speech; legal gender recognition; intersex bodily integrity; civil society space; and asylum.’²⁶ The 2025 Rainbow Map ranked Albania in 26th position with a score of 35.45%; this is a slight drop from 36.38% in 2024²⁷. For context, the UK is ranked in 22nd position with a score of 45.65%; the European average is 41.85%; and the average for the European Union is 51.13%.²⁸
- 7.1.19 The UN Independent Expert’s report of June 2025 summarised the legal framework with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity as follows:
- ‘Albania has emerged as a regional leader in advancing legal protections against discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity...
- ‘The legal framework in Albania is notably strong. The law on protection from discrimination of 2010 provides explicit protections for individuals on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics. Same-sex relations were decriminalized and enhanced penalties for bias-motivated crimes, including those based on sexual orientation and gender identity, were introduced as a result of amendments to the Criminal Code. Other key legislation, such as the Labour Code and the law on social housing, are aimed at protecting marginalized groups and public health laws apply universally without discrimination. These legal foundations place Albania ahead of many countries in the region in terms of formal equality.
- ‘However, some gaps remain. There is no legal recognition of same-sex partnerships or marriage, nor any procedure for legal gender recognition for transgender individuals. The Ministry of Health and Social Protection has taken proactive steps to address these protection gaps, including drafting proposals to amend the Family Code to extend recognition to same-sex

²³ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

²⁴ HRW, [Albanian Psychologists Prohibit Anti-LGBT “Conversion Therapy”](#), 20 May 2020

²⁵ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 59), 17 June 2025

²⁶ ILGA-Europe, [About - Rainbow Map](#), May 2025

²⁷ ILGA-Europe, [Albania - Rainbow Map](#), May 2025

²⁸ ILGA-Europe, [United Kingdom - Rainbow Map](#), May 2025

couples.’²⁹

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7.2 Criminal Code

- 7.2.1 Article 265 of the [Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania](#) noted that ‘Inciting hate or disputes on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation, as well as intentional preparation, dissemination or preservation for purposes of distributing writings with such content, by any means or forms, shall be punishable by imprisonment of from two to ten years.’³⁰
- 7.2.2 The USSD Country Report 2023 stated, ‘No laws criminalized consensual same-sex relationships or sexual conduct, cross-dressing, or other sexual or gender-characteristic behavior.’³¹
- 7.2.3 In the Inclusive Education Report 2025, IGLYO stated, ‘There is no law explicitly prohibiting non-consensual, non-therapeutic surgeries on intersex children ...’³²

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7.3 Civil rights

- 7.3.1 The USSD Country Report 2023 stated, ‘The law did not recognize same-sex civil unions or marriages, and the civil registry did not recognize same-sex parenting.’³³
- 7.3.2 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC noted, ‘Albania does not have legislation recognising civil cohabitation or same-sex marriage.’³⁴
- 7.3.3 Equaldex, a website whose mission is to ‘...crowdsource laws and public opinion data related to LGBTQ+ rights to provide a comprehensive and global view of the LGBTQ+ rights movement’³⁵ noted that LGBTI persons are able to serve in the military³⁶, blood donations by gay men are legal³⁷, there is an equal age of consent³⁸ and that there are no laws restricting the discussion or promotion of LGBTI rights³⁹.
- 7.3.4 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted, ‘... there is still no legal recognition of ... the rights of LGBT individuals to ... joint adoption or access to assisted reproductive technologies. Surrogacy laws similarly exclude same-sex couples.’⁴⁰

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8. State attitudes and treatment

8.1 LGBTI National Action Plan (2021-2027) and other policy initiatives

²⁹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 12 to 14), 17 June 2025

³⁰ Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania, Article 265, 27 January 1995 (copy on request)

³¹ USSD, [2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices](#), 22 April 2024

³² IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.28), 2025

³³ USSD, [2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices](#), 22 April 2024

³⁴ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.40), 30 October 2024

³⁵ Equaldex, [About](#), no date

³⁶ Equaldex, [LGBT rights in Albania](#), no date

³⁷ Equaldex, [LGBT rights in Albania](#), no date

³⁸ Equaldex, [LGBT rights in Albania](#), no date

³⁹ Equaldex, [LGBT rights in Albania](#), no date

⁴⁰ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 26), 17 June 2025

- 8.1.1 The [National Action Plan for LGBTI People in Albania 2021–2027](#) is a government initiative to promote equality, inclusion, and protection of LGBTI individuals, focusing on coordinated efforts across institutions and civil society to improve access to rights and services⁴¹.
- 8.1.2 The LGBTI National Action Plan 2021-2027 (2021-2027 NAP) highlighted the main focus of the plan for the period it covers:
- “NAP for LGBTI+ 2021-2027” is the third action plan at the national level with a focus on the protection of rights, provision of quality services, raising awareness, and reducing the level of intolerance of society against LGBTI+ people in Albania. As such, this NAP reflects the priority and special attention that the Government of Albania pays to the creation of a society based on the rights, merits, and civic, social, and professional values of each individual, as well as responsible, efficient, and transparent governance, in the interest of the country's development, fighting corruption, inequality, impunity, and discrimination of any kind...
- “NAP for LGBTI+ 2021-2027” was drafted based on the findings and recommendations from the “Evaluation Report of the Implementation of NAP for LGBTI persons in the Republic of Albania 2016 - 2020”, so it aims to expand, deepen and increase the measures envisaged and not fully implemented, or even implemented but still require support for long-term sustainability, according to the policy goals set out earlier in NAP 2016-2020. Among others, the evaluation report on the implementation of NAP 2016-2020 recommends focusing specifically and nationwide on the most vulnerable LGBTI+ people and those facing multiple discrimination, such as transgender and intersex persons.’⁴²
- 8.1.3 The 2021-2027 NAP also highlighted the bodies responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of LGBTI individuals:
- ‘The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination and the People's Advocate are the two main independent institutions which, among other things, have the responsibility to properly address the issues of LGBTI+ people in Albania. At the central level, the treatment of LGBTI+ issues is coordinated through the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MHSP), specifically through the Sector of Policies and Strategies for Social Inclusion and Gender Equality, as part of the General Directorate of Health and Social Protection Policies and Development. It is clear that the responsibility for addressing various aspects of LGBTI+ issues at the central level lies with all line ministries, depending on their mission and field of activity. At the local level, the obligation and responsibility of priority treatment, without discrimination and in accordance with the approved standards and legislation in force, for all issues related to LGBTI+ people, lie with the Local Self-Government Units in cooperation with other local partner institutions.’⁴³
- 8.1.4 See also [Oversight](#).
- 8.1.5 The 2021-2027 NAP also laid out three key policy goals:
- ‘I. Improving the access of LGBTI+ people to public services and specialized support services that are effective, of good quality, and available throughout

⁴¹ CoE, [Albania's LGBTI National Action Plan 2021-2027 presented](#), 14 February 2022

⁴² CoE, [National Action Plan for LGBTI People 2021-2027](#) (p.9 to10), December 2021

⁴³ CoE, [National Action Plan for LGBTI People 2021-2027](#) (p.13), December 2021

the country, in accordance with their specific needs and national standards harmonized with European/international ones.

‘II. Ensuring protection and security for LGBTI+ people through improving the legal framework, its effective implementation, as well as increasing the access of LGBTI+ people to the justice system.

‘III. Creating an inclusive, accepting and non-discriminatory society against LGBTI+ people in Albania.

‘Achieving these policy goals requires comprehensive efforts by all line ministries, central public institutions, at the regional and local level, local self-government units, independent institutions, civil society organizations especially those specializing in LGBTI+ issues, international organizations, the media, academia, and all other actors implementing policies that directly affect the guarantee of the rights of LGBTI+ people. A necessary and constant need is to find the right and appropriate mechanisms that ensure a strong and effective inter-institutional cooperation, both in the horizontal and vertical direction.’⁴⁴

8.1.6 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC noted that ‘Most of the LGBTIQ National Action Plan 2021-2027 has yet to be implemented.’⁴⁵

8.1.7 In the Inclusive Education Report 2025, IGLYO stated, ‘Similar to the 2016 National Action Plan, the 2021 National Action Plan ... [aims to] to tackle hate speech and hate crimes against LGBTI people. Civil society has, however, reported that progress ... has been limited.’⁴⁶

8.1.8 The IGLYO report continued, ‘Civil society organisations, as well as multiple international bodies, including [the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights] CESCR, [the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women] CEDAW, and the UNHRC UPR, have highlighted the Action Plan’s weak implementation in their conclusive observations.’⁴⁷

8.1.9 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted that the NAP 2021-2027 underpinned law:

‘Guiding much of this [legal] work is the third national action plan for LGBTI+ persons (2021–2027), which aligns closely with the national strategy for gender equality. Together, these plans are designed to advance social and economic rights, promote political participation and reduce gender-based and domestic violence, while creating measurable goals for progress.

‘Notwithstanding these strong policy commitments, there are obstacles to practical implementation. Limited resources, high staff turnover and a lack of public awareness of LGBT issues have slowed progress on the ground. On the other hand, there is clear political will... One civil society group expressed both approval of the promise of the national action plan for LGBTI+ persons (2021–2027) and frustration with its implementation: “If the plan were properly implemented, 95 per cent of our concerns would be gone from 2027.”’⁴⁸

⁴⁴ CoE, [National Action Plan for LGBTI People 2021-2027](#) (p.21), December 2021

⁴⁵ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.40), 30 October 2024

⁴⁶ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.27), 2025

⁴⁷ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.27), 2025

⁴⁸ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 15,16), 17 June 2025

8.2 Attitudes of government and public officials

8.2.1 On 19 May 2024, Balkan Web reported in views of the Orthodox Church, stating:

‘The Orthodox Church has opposed same-sex marriage ... the Metropolitan of Apollonia and Fier, His Grace Nikola said that initiatives like [this] weaken the role of women in society.

“Christianity has exalted the figure of the woman, her role as a wife and as a mother. Everything that has come after, ... laws on same-sex marriage ... all these that have become a name for themselves in freedom and for women's freedom and rights have only damaged and will damage her role even more” - said the Metropolitan of Apollonia and Fier, Your Grace Nikola.

‘Referring to the family, Grace Nikola said that ... the important thing is that this treasure that the church has preserved over the centuries should be preserved.’⁴⁹

8.2.2 Indicating a degree of tolerance by local authorities, on 20 May 2024, Reuters reported on the unofficial wedding ceremony of 2 women, which was held on the rooftop of the Mayor's office in Tirana (same-sex marriage is not recognised by the state; see [Civil rights](#)). Police were also deployed to guard the entrance to the building, in case of protest⁵⁰.

8.2.3 In May 2024, Balkan Insight also reported on the unofficial wedding and noted, ‘The most vocal criticism of the ceremony came from former President Ilir Meta, who now leads the small Freedom Party. Meta made several homophobic remarks on Sunday and Monday, saying the event was part of a “perverted agenda”.’⁵¹

8.2.4 In May 2024, Report TV, an Albanian news network, reported on the reaction of the Mufti of Shkodra to the unofficial wedding:

‘The Mufti of Shkodra, Imam Muhamed Sytari, has reacted to the behaviors that harm the Albanian family...

‘In 2024, society has degraded until the family is threatened. Because a few days ago we saw a ceremony on the terrace in front of the municipality of Tirana, a prohibited action and with the presence of the vice president and it was legitimized and became public and sensational and those characters are still covered in the media today...’⁵²

8.2.5 The 2025 Annual Review by ILGA-Europe referred to the same unofficial wedding and stated, ‘The ceremony, officiated by British Methodist Church pastors, sparked a surge of hate speech from the Pro-Family and Life Coalition [which includes parliamentarians, university professors and representatives of 5 faith groups⁵³, including Protestants, Catholics and Muslims⁵⁴] and various religious organisations.’⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Balkan Web, [The Orthodox Church against LGBT marriage ...](#), 19 May 2024

⁵⁰ Reuters, [In loving protest, Albanian lesbians marry unofficially](#), 20 May 2024

⁵¹ Balkan Insight, [Unofficial Same-Sex ‘Marriage’ Ceremony Causes Controversy...](#), 20 May 2024

⁵² Report.TV, [The Mufti of Shkodra against LGBT marriage and Surrogacy](#), 24 May 2024

⁵³ Evangelical Focus, [“A secular institution is saying it interprets the Bible ...”](#), 21 December 2022

⁵⁴ Life Site News, [Albania's first notable pro-life march denounces ...](#), 25 June 2024

⁵⁵ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

- 8.2.6 Considering attitudes towards gender identities, on 30 January 2025, Albanian Times reported, ‘The Democratic Party of Albania [the opposition party⁵⁶], led by Sali Berisha, has submitted a draft law to parliament that seeks to enshrine in legislation that the Republic of Albania recognizes only two genders: male and female.’⁵⁷ The article suggested that this issue was not one that was of importance to Albanians, and suggested this was an attempt by Berisha to gain the favour of President Trump. There was no further update on the draft law at the time of publishing this report.
- 8.2.7 In co-operation with other NGOs, ILGA-Europe published the LGBTI Enlargement Review 2025, in which it noted, ‘...in recent years, Albania has witnessed a concerning rise in an anti-LGBTI movement, spearheaded by influential political figures, religious leaders, and prominent public figures. This movement has periodically directed its hate rhetoric and actions towards the LGBTI community, ... deploying inflammatory and discriminatory rhetoric, perpetuating harmful stereotypes, and fostering public animosity.’⁵⁸
- 8.2.8 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe stated:
- ‘Amidst public consultations for a new draft law on sexual and reproductive health, the Pro-Family and Pro-Life Coalition launched a disinformation campaign against the LGBTI community. The Coalition falsely claimed that surrogacy provisions are part of an agenda to infiltrate Albanian families. Members asserted that the “aggressive gay agenda” aims to take babies from mothers and give them to trans men, accusing the LGBTI community of “playing with the blood of Albanian babies.” ...
- ‘On May 23 [2024], the Pro-Family and Life Coalition organised the “Manifesto of Life” rally following a symbolic marriage ceremony of two women at the Tirana Municipality. At the rally, the coalition began collecting signatures for a “Pro-Family” petition. Participants falsely claimed that the LGBTI community aims to depopulate the country and impose hormone replacement therapies on children. The coalition filed a criminal complaint against the mayor of Tirana, seeking to open a criminal investigation. They accused him of abuse of duty, alleging that he had used his position to improperly promote the LGBTI agenda.’⁵⁹
- 8.2.9 In its Concluding Observations of April 2025 on the third periodic report of Albania, the UN HRC ‘noted with concern’ the prevalence of negative statements made about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons by public officials⁶⁰. However, the Committee did not provide quantitative data regarding the scale or extent of such rhetoric.
- 8.2.10 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert found that there was ‘clear political will’ to implement the National Action Plan and stated, ‘... national and municipal officials alike expressed a commitment to improving protections and fostering equality. As one municipal official noted, shifting mindsets and social attitudes takes time, and legal reforms are an important driver of this change.’⁶¹ The Independent Expert also noted that ‘Throughout

⁵⁶ The Global State of Democracy, [Albania - May 2025](#), May 2025

⁵⁷ Albanian Times, [Democrats push new gender law ...](#), 30 January 2025

⁵⁸ ILGA-Europe, [LGBTI Enlargement Review 2025](#), 2025

⁵⁹ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

⁶⁰ UN HRC, [Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Albania...](#) (para 11), 30 April 2025

⁶¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 16), 17 June 2025

his time in Albania, he was impressed by the high level of engagement from ... State officials, who generously shared their time and insights. He had the privilege of meeting dedicated municipal officials working with limited resources to implement the national action plan...⁶²

8.2.11 The Independent Expert's report continued:

'...some interlocuters expressed growing concern about the recent rise of intolerant rhetoric, often rooted in misinformation and amplified by some political and media figures. Narratives that falsely portray LGBT people as a threat to family values or children have gained disproportionate attention in public discourse. One notable example is the persistent myth that LGBT activists seek to replace the terms "mother" and "father" on birth certificates with "parent 1" and "parent 2", overshadowing real legal challenges faced by same-sex couples seeking recognition as co-parents.'⁶³

8.2.12 The Independent Expert further reported that, 'Hate speech, disinformation and public hostility have fuelled a climate in which violence against LGBT people is normalized or overlooked. ... This environment has, at times, discouraged political support for the equal rights of LGBT people...'⁶⁴

8.2.13 On 20 July 2025, Tirana Times, an English-language news outlet providing news on Albania,⁶⁵ reported on Pride, which took place in May 2025 in Tirana. The report noted that the event had received 'broad support' from Albanian officials⁶⁶.

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8.3 Police treatment and protection of LGBT+ persons

8.3.1 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted:

'To combat discrimination and promote diversity, the State Police have aligned policies and training with international standards, including the Council of Europe's manual on investigating hate crimes against LGBTI persons. In 2024, more than 400 students at the Security Academy received such training, and topics such as non-discrimination, community policing and diversity are integrated into annual training and promotion exams, supported by continued collaboration with the Council of Europe.'⁶⁷

8.3.2 On 14 May 2024, the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) published the results of an online survey of LGBTIQ people across the 27 EU Member States and the EU candidate countries, which include Albania. The survey was carried out online between June and August 2023⁶⁸. EU FRA's website stated, 'FRA's survey is one of the biggest of its kind globally. It analyses the experiences of over 100,000 LGBTIQ people of all backgrounds aged 15 years and above in the EU and neighbouring countries. This is the third wave of the survey FRA first conducted in 2012 and again in 2019.'⁶⁹

⁶² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 91), 17 June 2025

⁶³ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 19), 17 June 2025

⁶⁴ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 72), 17 June 2025

⁶⁵ Tirana Times, [About us](#), no date

⁶⁶ Tirana Times, [Tirana Pride Highlights Albania's LGBT+ Progress Amid EU Hopes](#), 25 May 2025

⁶⁷ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 68), 17 June 2025

⁶⁸ EU, FRA, [LGBTIQ equality at a crossroads: progress and challenges](#) (Methodology Q&A), no date

⁶⁹ EU, FRA, [LGBTIQ equality at a crossroads: progress and challenges](#) (Overview), no date

- 8.3.3 EU FRA's website made the following observations regarding whether the survey results were representative:
- 'The online survey allowed all interested LGBTIQ people with internet access to take part. However, an opt-in online survey does not in principle deliver a random probability sample that would fulfil the statistical criteria for representativeness.
- 'To mitigate this inherent problem of opt-in online surveys, FRA ensured that the survey is "as representative as possible"....
- 'Although the results cannot be considered as representative of all LGBTIQ people in the EU, they constitute by far the largest collection of empirical evidence on discrimination and hate crime against LGBTIQ people worldwide since FRA's surveys in 2012 and 2019.'⁷⁰ Further information about the methodology used is available in the [Methodology Q&A](#). As the survey did not specify how many Albanian respondents participated, CPIT is unable to gauge how representative the findings are of the LGBT+ community in Albania.
- 8.3.4 The EU FRA survey gave the following result concerning the state response to mistreatment of LGBTIQ persons: '13% in Albania believe their national government effectively combats prejudice and intolerance against LGBTIQ people. For the EU-27 it is 26%.'⁷¹
- 8.3.5 In an article published in November 2024, UN Development Programme (UN DP) reported that 63% of LGBTI individuals believe law enforcement lacks the knowledge to protect them effectively⁷².
- 8.3.6 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe reported, '...in August [2024], the Executive Director of Aleanca LGBTI was summoned by police to address a legal complaint received via email. The complaint alleged that the organisation's logo, which features a double-headed eagle with one half coloured in rainbow, was derogatory and offensive to national symbols.'⁷³
- 8.3.7 In the same report, ILGA-Europe further stated, 'A couple of lesbian activists faced stoning attacks twice near their neighbourhood. Despite filing official complaints, the victim's efforts to seek justice were unsuccessful.'⁷⁴ However, the report did not state where complaints were filed or provide any further details.
- 8.3.8 New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy, which is based in Washington and which '...focuses on issues at the intersection of U.S. foreign policy and global geopolitics,'⁷⁵ published an article on 12 May 2025 by Gresa Hasa, who graduated in Political Science from the University of Tirana⁷⁶. The article reported on an incident of violence against a member of the LGBT community: 'In E. Gj's case, despite the victim having reported the violence to the police, law enforcement failed to act effectively against the attackers and provide adequate protection. The authorities' constant inaction, as well as the fear of another homophobic attack, prompted E. Gj to relocate to

⁷⁰ EU, FRA, [LGBTIQ equality at a crossroads: progress and challenges](#) (Methodology Q&A), no date

⁷¹ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

⁷² UN DP, [UN Free and Equal in Albania: The Fight for LGBTI Equality](#), 28 November 2024

⁷³ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

⁷⁴ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

⁷⁵ New Lines Institute, [About](#), no date

⁷⁶ New Lines Institute, [The Multifaceted Struggle of the LGBTQ+ Community...](#), 12 May 2025

another neighborhood in the capital and later emigrate.⁷⁷

- 8.3.9 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted the following in the context of police protection for LGBT persons:

‘The General Directorate of Police has adopted a range of measures to promote inclusive, fair and effective protection, in particular for vulnerable groups. These include improving access to reporting mechanisms, enhancing police training, standardizing case documentation and strengthening cooperation with civil society. A round-the-clock free hotline and an official email address are available to report all forms of violence. Article 7 of State Police Law No. 82/2024 enshrines the principle of human rights, equality and non-discrimination, guaranteeing the right of arrested or detained individuals to submit complaints regarding their treatment. This is supported by standard procedures established through Order No. 1720 of 20 November 2023.’⁷⁸

- 8.3.10 However, the Independent Expert noted, ‘There are reports from civil society organizations of ongoing discrimination in areas such as ... policing...’⁷⁹ and added that, despite progress in developing legal frameworks and services aimed at addressing violence, ‘LGBT people in Albania continue to face significant risks to their safety and security, compounded by persistent discrimination, gaps in legal protections and challenges in enforcement.’⁸⁰

- 8.3.11 The Independent Expert continued, ‘Without the ability to align their legal documents with their gender identity, transgender people are susceptible to mistreatment by authorities [and] increased vulnerability within detention facilities...’⁸¹

- 8.3.12 The Independent Expert also reported the following positive examples of police protection:

‘For 12 consecutive years, police have ensured the safety of Tirana’s annual Pride parade, which has proceeded without major incidents of violence. The State Police also collaborate with civil society organizations to monitor the situation of the LGBT communities and support anti-discrimination efforts. In 2024, they provided support during the Queer Film Marathon Tirana at the request of the Open Mind Spectrum Albania organization. These efforts have been acknowledged positively by LGBT community representatives, enhancing trust in the police.’⁸²

- 8.3.13 In the sources consulted, CPIT found no reported instances of adverse police treatment, such as harassment, violence or arbitrary arrests of LGBT+ persons in the past two years (see [Bibliography](#)).

- 8.3.14 For general information on the functioning of the police force in Albania, see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Actors of Protection](#).

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8.4 Judicial treatment and protection of LGBT+ people

⁷⁷ New Lines Institute, [The Multifaceted Struggle of the LGBTQ+ Community in Albania](#), 12 May 2025

⁷⁸ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 65), 17 June 2025

⁷⁹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 18), 17 June 2025

⁸⁰ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 69), 17 June 2025

⁸¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 70), 17 June 2025

⁸² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 76), 17 June 2025

- 8.4.1 In the Country Report 2023, the USSD commented that enforcement of the hate crime law, which includes sexual orientation and gender identity among the classes protected, was ‘generally weak.’⁸³ The USSD did not expand on what it meant by this, or how enforcement was measured.
- 8.4.2 In an article dated November 2024, UN DP reported that it had been delivering training as part of its ‘Free and Equal’ campaign for LGBTI persons: ‘Education is central to the campaign. Training sessions are equipping magistrates, prosecutors, and human rights institution staff with the knowledge and tools to handle LGBTI issues fairly. From understanding terminology to recognizing systemic biases, these sessions aim to bridge the gap between the law and the lived experiences of LGBTI individuals ...’⁸⁴
- 8.4.3 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC described discrimination in access to justice for LGBTIQ persons as ‘very prevalent’⁸⁵ and added, ‘As an observer to the work of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Albania was covered by the III LGBTIQ Trust Survey, which found that overall, in Albania in 2023, 51% felt discriminated against in at least one area of life in the year before the survey (for the EU-27 it was 37%).’⁸⁶
- 8.4.4 The Heinrich Böll Foundation states that it maintains close ties to the German Green Party (Alliance 90/The Greens) and is a think tank for green visions and projects⁸⁷. In June 2025, the Foundation published an article by Dea Nini, ‘an Albanian human rights lawyer with expertise in international human rights law, constitutional law, privacy rights, family law, and reproductive rights, with a strong focus on SOGIESC issues...’,⁸⁸ which stated, ‘[Article 265 of the Criminal Code](#) criminalizes “incitement of hatred or dispute,” but it has proven toothless in practice. [Seven formal complaints have been filed](#) under this provision since 2023; none resulted in investigation or prosecution. Prosecutors appear reluctant to act, likely due to the article’s two-year minimum sentence, which raises the stakes of any indictment.’⁸⁹ See [Actions taken by NGOs](#) for further information about the submitting of complaints.
- 8.4.5 See Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Actors of Protection](#) for general information on the judiciary, legal aid and actors of protection.

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8.5 State services for LGBT+ victims

- 8.5.1 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted provision for survivors of gender-based violence, stating, ‘The partially State-funded shelter, Streha, plays a vital role in providing specialized care for LGBT individuals who have experienced violence and discrimination.’⁹⁰
- 8.5.2 Again referring to gender-based violence, the report stated, ‘Notwithstanding a strong policy framework, frontline organizations report that State funding and resources remain insufficient to meet the needs of victims and to fully

⁸³ USSD, [2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices](#), 22 April 2024

⁸⁴ UN DP, [UN Free and Equal in Albania: The Fight for LGBTI Equality](#), 28 November 2024

⁸⁵ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

⁸⁶ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

⁸⁷ H. Böll Stiftung, [Who we are and what we want](#), no date

⁸⁸ H. Böll Stiftung, [Dea Nini](#), no date

⁸⁹ H. Böll Stiftung, [Framing Fear, Unmaking Rights: ... Anti-Gender Ideology](#), 26 June 2025

⁹⁰ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 61), 17 June 2025

implement these protections in practice.⁹¹

8.5.3 The Independent Expert continued:

‘Coordinated referral mechanisms have been established in municipalities across the country to provide emergency responses for victims of domestic violence, and specialized services exist for women and children. However, the inclusion of LGBT individuals within these protections varies, and cases have been reported in which shelters ... and social services have failed to adequately support LGBT victims, in particular gay men and transgender individuals. While some shelters ... offer vital support for LGBT young people and partnerships between organizations working on gender-based violence and LGBT rights are growing, coverage remains limited and resources scarce.’⁹²

8.5.4 CPIT were unable to find any further information regarding state services offered to LGBT+ victims in the [sources consulted](#).

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9. Oversight

9.1 Government departments and the police

9.1.1 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert stated:

‘Within the central Government, matters relating to the rights of LGBT persons are coordinated by the Sector for Social Inclusion under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. However, the responsibility to safeguard these rights extends across all Government ministries, each expected to address LGBT inclusion within their relevant mandates. At the local level, municipal governments are tasked with ensuring equal treatment for LGBT individuals, including by working alongside local institutions to uphold national laws and standards.’⁹³

9.1.2 The Independent Expert also noted that there is oversight of the police: ‘The State Police are subject to both internal and external oversight. The Directorate of Professional Standards handles complaints and disciplinary action, while the Police Supervisory Agency functions under the Ministry of Interior. The People’s Advocate conducts unannounced visits and civil society organizations have full access to monitor police facilities under cooperation agreements...’⁹⁴

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9.2 Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination (CPD)

9.2.1 Article 21 of the [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#) states, ‘The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, hereinafter the Commissioner, ensures the effective protection from discrimination and from any other form of conduct that incites discrimination. The Commissioner is a public legal person.’ Article 22 states, ‘The Commissioner is independent in exercising his duties and is subject only to the Constitution and law.’ Further information about the Commissioner’s role is provided in Chapter V of the

⁹¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 63), 17 June 2025

⁹² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 73), 17 June 2025

⁹³ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 23), 17 June 2025

⁹⁴ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 68), 17 June 2025

Law⁹⁵.

9.2.2 In its Concluding Observations of 30 April 2025 on the third periodic report of Albania, the UN HRC noted, 'The Committee is concerned about the continuous postponement of the appointment of the mandate holder for the [position] ... of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination, since 2023. Despite increases in the allocated [budget] of [this institution], the Committee remains concerned about reports that the [institution] still [lacks] the human and financial resources needed to effectively fulfil [its mandate] across all regions of the State Party.'⁹⁶

9.2.3 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted:

'Key institutions for protecting and promoting the rights of LGBT individuals have been established in Albania. Central among them is the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, which was established by the law on protection from discrimination of 2010 and functions as the country's equality body in line with European standards. ...

'The Commissioner actively promotes human rights under this framework and has handled various cases involving discrimination against LGBT individuals and has issued decisions against both public and private entities. In 2024, the Commissioner reviewed 12 hate speech cases, including 2 based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The Commissioner also handled five discrimination complaints related to sexual orientation and gender identity, most of which related to goods and services and one of which involved employment.

'As a result of handling those complaints, four decisions were issued: one finding of no discrimination, one of inadmissibility and two terminations of investigative procedures. Issues reported in complaints to the Commissioner included employment refusal, denial of services and public hate speech.

'However, the overall number of complaints remained low, suggesting underreporting.'⁹⁷

9.2.4 The report further noted the role of the Commissioner in the field of employment discrimination:

'... the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination has received few formal complaints from LGBT individuals – an absence widely understood to reflect underreporting and limited trust in institutional mechanisms rather than a lack of discrimination. Notably, in one case (No. 234, dated 17 December 2021), the Commissioner found that the complainant, J.M., had been discriminated against by Fiber Group L.L.C. on the grounds of sexual orientation. In decision No. 144 (dated 21 July 2022), the Commissioner ordered the company to revise its internal complaint procedures, display the anti-discrimination law in the workplace and conduct employee training to ensure compliance with legal obligations.'⁹⁸

9.2.5 In the article of June 2025, the Heinrich Böll Foundation stated, '... of eight complaints submitted to the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination between 2023 and 2025, only three resulted in findings of discrimination or

⁹⁵ Govt of Albania, [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), 4 February 2010, amended in 2020

⁹⁶ UN HRC, [Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Albania...](#), 30 April 2025

⁹⁷ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 22), 17 June 2025

⁹⁸ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 82), 17 June 2025

hate speech. The remaining cases were dismissed, often under the pretext of “freedom of expression,” even when the speech in question targeted individuals for their sexual orientation or gender identity.⁹⁹

- 9.2.6 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe stated: ‘Despite the provisions put in place by the law “On Protection from Discrimination”, public education on protection against discrimination remains notably low. Over 63% of respondents were unaware of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination’s existence. Equally noteworthy, 85% of respondents who encountered discrimination never lodged a discrimination complaint with the Commissioner’s office.’¹⁰⁰

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9.3 People’s Advocate (Ombudsperson)

- 9.3.1 See CPIN on [Albania: Actors of protection](#) for background information on the Ombudsperson generally.
- 9.3.2 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert stated, ‘In parallel [to the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination], the People’s Advocate ... monitors compliance by public institutions with human rights obligations, including the protection of the rights of LGBT persons.’¹⁰¹
- 9.3.3 The report continued, ‘The People’s Advocate monitors public institutions’ treatment of LGBT persons and may propose legislative reforms. The recommendations of the People’s Advocate, although not legally binding, have grown in influence owing to increased institutional awareness and parliamentary monitoring of their implementation.’¹⁰²

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10. Societal treatment and attitudes

10.1 Cultural norms and expression

- 10.1.1 A March 2021 article by Reuters reported on the experiences of LGBTI individuals in Albania. Although the source referenced dates back to 2021, it remains relevant for assessing cultural attitudes in Albania. Social and cultural norms - particularly those relating to SOGIE issues - tend to evolve gradually, and the article provides valuable context for understanding persistent societal dynamics. With reference to traditional views on relationships and families, the article noted:

‘In a largely patriarchal society, however, those who are open about their sexual orientation are often judged by family and friends.

“Any kind of relationship that is not crowned with starting a family is totally unacceptable,” Sara, who gave only her first name to protect her identity, told Reuters.

‘Sara said the dream of every LGBT person was “to come out openly in a close social network or family”. Because of prejudice, however, some people like her opted to keep a low profile.’¹⁰³

⁹⁹ H. Böll Stiftung, [Framing Fear, Unmaking Rights: ... Anti-Gender Ideology](#), 26 June 2025

¹⁰⁰ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹⁰¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 22), 17 June 2025

¹⁰² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 28), 17 June 2025

¹⁰³ Reuters, [Patriarchal Albania offers little compassion for same-sex relationships](#), 9 March 2021

- 10.1.2 The EU FRA survey for Albania, carried out from June to August 2023 and published in May 2024, provided information about how open LGBTIQ people felt able to be; however, it is not clear how many Albanians took part:
- ‘74% avoid often or always holding hands with their same-sex partner in Albania. For the EU-27 it is 53%
 - ‘47% in Albania avoid often or always certain locations for fear of being assaulted. For the EU-27 it is 29%
 - ‘12% are now fairly or very open about being LGBTIQ in Albania. For the EU-27 it is 51%’¹⁰⁴

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10.2 Societal treatment of, and attitudes towards, LGB persons

- 10.2.1 In the sources consulted, CPIT found limited recent information relating to adverse societal treatment – such as harassment or violence – of LGBT+ persons in the past two years. The information available mainly provides a general overview and does not offer detailed accounts of specific incidents or the scale and extent of such treatment (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 10.2.2 The EU FRA survey, carried out from June to August 2023, and published in May 2024, gave the following results concerning violence and harassment of an unspecified number of LGBTIQ people in Albania:
- ‘15% of all respondents in Albania had been attacked in the 5 years before the survey. The EU-27 is 13%.
 - ‘6% of respondents in Albania had been attacked in the 12 months before the survey. The EU-27 is 5%.
 - ‘62% in Albania say they were harassed the year before the survey. The EU-27 is 54%.’¹⁰⁵
- 10.2.3 The survey also provided the following result concerning violence and prejudice in Albania:
- ‘27% in Albania say that violence against LGBTIQ people has increased. This is 59% for the EU-27.
 - ‘27% in Albania say that LGBTIQ prejudice and intolerance has risen in their country in the last five years. It is 53% across the EU-27.’¹⁰⁶
- 10.2.4 The survey gave the following information concerning discrimination against LGBTIQ people in Albania:
- ‘Discrimination affects many areas of life, such as going to a café, restaurant, hospital or to a shop. Overall, in Albania in 2023, 51% felt discriminated against in at least one area of life in the year before the survey. For the EU-27 it was 37%’¹⁰⁷.
- 10.2.5 The survey also provided the following result concerning ‘conversion abuse.’
- ‘30% of respondents in Albania experienced a so-called “conversion” practice in order to make them change their sexual orientation and/or

¹⁰⁴ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁰⁵ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁰⁶ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁰⁷ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

gender identity. For the EU-27 it is 24%.¹⁰⁸ The report did not provide any further details, such as who had delivered an attempt at conversion or whether it had been forced.

- 10.2.6 In an article dated 23 February 2024, the Albanian news outlet Euronews reported on a 'Barometer' survey on attitudes towards LGBT persons. The article did not state when the survey was carried out or provide details of methodology or sample size, but noted:

'To the question "in your life, have you directly met or had direct experience with any person from the LGBT community", the percentage of those who answered no is 86.3%.

'Faced with a figure of this level for lack of recognition, the other questions have put citizens in front of hypothetical situations for the presence of the LGBT community, at different levels, positions, proximity.

'What seems clear is that the closer the persons of the LGBT community are supposed to be to the respondents, the higher their inadmissibility [lack of acceptance] is.

'To be exact, the inadmissibility of having colleagues is 61.2%.

'For having a neighbor, the refusal is 63.8%.

'To have managers in the workplace, 64.6% refuse.

'If they are supposed to have family doctors, 64.3% say no.

'Would they accept someone from the LGBT community as a friend, 73.7% refuse.

'Children's teachers, 81.1% disagree.

'Asked if they would accept that a member of their family had a marriage or cohabitation, the percentage of non-acceptance is 94.2%.¹⁰⁹

- 10.2.7 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe further stated, '... in May [2024], a group of minors threw stones at the representative of the LGBTI Alliance in Tirana. A participant in Tirana Pride 2024 faced similar violent behaviour.'¹¹⁰

- 10.2.8 In the same report, ILGA-Europe continued:

'Recent misinformation and hate speech targeting the LGBTI community in Albania contributed to increased incidents of discrimination and harassment. Many LGBTI people face hostility in the workplace, schools, and within their families, resulting in social isolation leading to mental health challenges like anxiety and depression. The pervasive fear of public exposure forces many LGBTI people to hide their identities, denying them the basic freedom to live authentically.'¹¹¹ The report included a link to the website of the NGO Aleanca, which stated that it had published a factsheet addressing a rise in anti-LGBTI rhetoric and actions:

'... The document highlights disinformation spread by the Pro-Family and Pro-Life Coalition, which falsely linked a new draft law on surrogacy and medically assisted reproduction (RMA) to LGBTI+ groups.

¹⁰⁸ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁰⁹ Euronews, [Barometer/ Tolerance towards LGBT+ in Albania](#), 23 February 2024

¹¹⁰ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹¹¹ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

‘The fact sheet discusses the surge of hate speech following a symbolic lesbian marriage during Pride Month in 2024 and details the profound social consequences for LGBTI individuals, including increased violence, stigma, and discrimination...’¹¹²

10.2.9 In its Concluding Observations of April 2025 on the third periodic report of Albania, the UN HRC ‘noted with concern’ ‘...the discrimination faced in the State Party [Albania] by ... lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, which poses significant barriers to their full enjoyment of human rights. With reference to its previous concluding observations, the Committee is also concerned about the prevalence of stereotypes and prejudices against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons...’¹¹³

10.2.10 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted the ‘persistence of deep-rooted societal stigma’ towards LGBT individuals¹¹⁴. The report further stated, ‘Common to all victims of gender-based violence are shared experiences of stigma and discrimination rooted in rigid gender norms. As one official in Kukës noted, just as domestic violence was once considered a taboo subject, discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation have also historically been avoided in local communities.’¹¹⁵

10.2.11 The Independent Expert continued:

‘A clear gap exists between the perceptions of law enforcement authorities and civil society organizations regarding the prevalence of hate crimes and hate speech against LGBT individuals in Albania. While official reports suggest few, if any, recorded incidents – with the State Police and General Prosecutor’s Office reporting no hate crimes in 2023 – civil society accounts present a different picture. While violent incidents are not systemic or widespread, they occur with sufficient regularity to have a chilling effect on the public expression of identity. ... visibly active LGBT individuals appear to be particularly at risk, with reports of violence following public displays of affection or participation in advocacy activities.’¹¹⁶

10.2.12 The Independent Expert further noted,

‘Civil society organizations have reported an increase in targeted attacks against activists ... following high-profile LGBT visibility events.

‘Hate speech, disinformation and public hostility have fuelled a climate in which violence against LGBT people is normalized or overlooked. Civil society organizations have reported an increase in ... public stigma and harassment following high-profile LGBT visibility events.’¹¹⁷

10.2.13 The article published by New Lines Institute in May 2025 noted that, ‘Nowadays, progressive and intersectional discourse and practice are evident, though they remain largely confined to Tirana. Despite efforts to extend these practices to the country’s periphery, where issues are more severe and being openly LGBTQ+ frequently poses a significant risk to one’s

¹¹² Aleanca, [Urgent developments in Albania and a call for action!](#), no date

¹¹³ UN HRC, [Concluding observations on the third periodic report...](#) (para 11), 30 April 2025

¹¹⁴ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 31), 17 June 2025

¹¹⁵ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 62), 17 June 2025

¹¹⁶ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 64), 17 June 2025

¹¹⁷ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 72), 17 June 2025

life and wellbeing, progress is steady but slow.’¹¹⁸

10.2.14 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe further stated:

‘On May 21st [2024], Albania’s “Alliance Against Hate Speech,” issued a statement expressing concern over the recent surge in hate speech targeting the LGBTI community and human rights defenders. The statement noted that social and media platforms were rife with offensive language, derogatory comparisons and threats, affecting not only the IDAHOT [International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia] 2024 campaign but also unrelated events. The Alliance underscored that respecting the rights of any community does not undermine the rights of others and urged responsible institutions to address hate speech, especially when propagated by public figures or those in positions of power, as it can cause significant harm.’¹¹⁹

10.2.15 See also [Attitudes of government and public officials](#).

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10.3 Treatment of trans persons

10.3.1 In the sources consulted, CPIT found limited recent information relating to adverse societal treatment – such as harassment or violence – of trans persons in the past two years. The information available does not indicate the scale and extent of such treatment (see [Bibliography](#)).

10.3.2 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe noted that a trans woman was attacked by a group of men near Tirana municipality in May 2025¹²⁰.

10.3.3 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted, ‘Cases of physical violence and harassment against transgender people, both online and in public spaces, remain alarmingly frequent.’¹²¹ The report further stated, ‘Transgender women ... appear to be particularly at risk, with reports of violence following public displays of affection or participation in advocacy activities.’¹²² The report did not expand upon the scale and extent of violence and harassment committed against trans persons.

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10.4 Reporting and data on violence against LGBT+ people

10.4.1 The EU FRA survey, carried out from June to August 2023 and published in May 2024, gave the following results for LGBTIQ people in Albania regarding reporting to the police: ‘12% went to the police in Albania to report physical or sexual attacks. It is 11% across the EU-27.’¹²³

10.4.2 In an article dated 28 November 2024, the UN DP stated that 83% of violence cases against LGBTI individuals go unreported¹²⁴. It was not clear how this statistic was obtained, or when.

10.4.3 In April 2025, INSTAT (Albanian Institute of Statistics) published crime and criminal justice statistics for 2024. Statistics are not disaggregated to show incidents related to sexual orientation and gender identity. However, the

¹¹⁸ New Lines Institute, [The Multifaceted Struggle of the LGBTQ+ Community...](#), 12 May 2025

¹¹⁹ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹²⁰ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹²¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 70), 17 June 2025

¹²² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 64), 17 June 2025

¹²³ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹²⁴ UN DP, [UN Free and Equal in Albania: The Fight for LGBTI Equality](#), 28 November 2024

following statistics were released:

- In 2024, a total of 32,653 criminal offenses were recorded.
- In 2024, 17,761 injured persons were registered; 37.9% (6,731) of these were injuries of crimes against the person; 38.8% (6,891) of the victims were women¹²⁵.

10.4.4 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted ‘...the lack of disaggregated data on incidents related to sexual orientation and gender identity, making it difficult to have an accurate assessment of the situation.’¹²⁶

10.4.5 The Independent Expert continued:

‘The underreporting of violence against LGBT individuals remains a significant barrier to understanding the full extent of the problem. Many victims do not disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity when seeking protection, fearing stigma or lack of support. Consequently, official statistics fail to capture the prevalence of bias-motivated crimes, and violence against LGBT individuals is often invisible within broader data on domestic and gender-based violence. Institutional weaknesses in data collection, limited trust in police and judicial systems and the societal pressure to remain silent all contribute to this ongoing invisibility.’¹²⁷

10.4.6 The report further noted:

‘Encouragingly, reporting on the implementation of national action plans is undergoing a transition from a biennial to an annual process, which may help to strengthen oversight and identify trends more effectively over time...

‘Positive steps have been taken to include LGBT issues in broader human rights reporting frameworks. For example, the Ministry of Justice incorporates information on access to justice for LGBTI individuals in its contributions to national reports submitted under international treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Istanbul Convention. However, these efforts remain limited by the fundamental absence of systematic data collection at the national level...’¹²⁸

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11. Access to services

11.1 Access to services generally

11.1.1 See [Legal rights](#) and [Civil rights](#) for an overview of the legal protections and entitlements afforded to all citizens, including LGBT+ people.

11.1.2 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted, ‘Without the ability to align their legal documents with their gender identity, transgender people are susceptible to ... difficulties in everyday interactions with public institutions.’¹²⁹

¹²⁵ INSTAT, [Crime and criminal justice statistics, 2024](#), 30 April 2025

¹²⁶ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 18), 17 June 2025

¹²⁷ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 75), 17 June 2025

¹²⁸ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 87 to 89), 17 June 2025

¹²⁹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 70), 17 June 2025

11.2 Access to healthcare for LGBT+ persons

11.2.1 The EU FRA survey, carried out from June to August 2023 and published in May 2024, provided the following result: '5% of LGBTIQ respondents in Albania felt discriminated against in healthcare in the year before the survey. For the EU this is 14%.'¹³⁰

11.2.2 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC stated that '...LGBTIQ individuals face limited access to primary healthcare and to sexual and reproductive healthcare services.'¹³¹ The report also described discrimination against LGBTIQ persons as 'very prevalent' in access to healthcare¹³² and added, 'As an observer to the work of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Albania was covered by the III LGBTIQ Trust Survey, which found that overall, in Albania in 2023, 51% felt discriminated against in at least one area of life in the year before the survey (for the EU-27 it was 37%)'.¹³³

11.2.3 In an article dated November 2024, UN DP reported that '16% of LGBTI patients face prejudice from medical staff, while 64% avoid seeking care altogether out of fear or financial constraints.'¹³⁴ The report did not clarify whether respondents had disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity to healthcare providers, making it unclear whether the reported prejudice was directly linked to their LGBTI identity. Additionally, the data did not disaggregate how many of the 64% avoided care due to fear versus financial constraints.

11.2.4 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted:

'The Ministry of Health and Social Protection holds a central role in the development and implementation of the national action plan for LGBTI+ people, working in coordination with other ministries to support implementation at both the national and local levels. In drafting the plan, the Ministry collaborated closely with international partners and remains responsible for delivering training across key sectors, including education, healthcare, law enforcement and social services. However, this work is challenged by limited resources.'¹³⁵

11.2.5 The Independent Expert also reported on issues and developments:

'A Ministry official acknowledged the ongoing difficulty in raising public awareness on non-discrimination, noting that the Ministry had ... [delivered] ... training programmes that addressed the needs of ... LGBT people...

'Albania has taken meaningful steps to strengthen its health system and improve protections for ... LGBT people...

'Building on this framework, the Ministry has developed specific programmes to support vulnerable groups, including country-wide mental health services, HIV treatment programmes and regular training for health professionals to strengthen inclusive care practices. Public education campaigns have further

¹³⁰ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹³¹ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.39), 30 October 2024

¹³² EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

¹³³ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

¹³⁴ UN DP, [UN Free and Equal in Albania: The Fight for LGBTI Equality](#), 28 November 2025

¹³⁵ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 48), 17 June 2025

sought to promote non-discrimination across healthcare ...¹³⁶

11.2.6 The Independent Expert also reported certain challenges:

‘This progress notwithstanding, considerable challenges continue to hinder LGBT individuals’ full and equal access to healthcare. Discrimination within public medical institutions remains a persistent problem...

‘Mental health is another area in which LGBT individuals face barriers to adequate care. While mental health services are available, access remains uneven, in particular for those dealing with the long-term effects of discrimination, social exclusion and trauma. ...’¹³⁷

11.2.7 The Independent Expert concluded, ‘Albania has laid a strong foundation through its legal commitments and recent health policy reforms. By addressing these remaining gaps and ensuring the full inclusion of LGBT people in its healthcare system, Albania can build a model of equitable, inclusive and rights-based healthcare ...’¹³⁸

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11.3 Access to healthcare for Trans persons

11.3.1 In the Inclusive Education Report 2025, IGLYO stated, ‘In 2023, 53% of surveyed trans individuals reported being denied healthcare or receiving inadequate medical services due to their gender identity.’¹³⁹ IGLYO did not provide information on the sample size, methodology or any further detail on this finding.

11.3.2 Considering progress made against the 2021-2027 NAP, the EC report 2024 noted steps taken regarding medical care, stating, ‘The adoption of the medical protocol for transgender and gender diverse persons is a positive step in facilitating the right to healthcare for transgender and gender diverse persons, but implementation not adopted yet and corresponding legal changes still need to be ensured, including the revision of legal rules on changes to identity documents.’¹⁴⁰

11.3.3 In their 2025 annual review, ILGA-Europe stated that a lack of documentation reflecting the identities of trans persons limited their access to healthcare and other critical services¹⁴¹.

11.3.4 The article published by New Lines Institute in May 2025 noted, ‘Transgender individuals in particular are disproportionately affected by ... challenges ...’¹⁴²

11.3.5 The UN Independent Expert reported on issues and developments:

‘A Ministry official acknowledged the ongoing difficulty in raising public awareness on non-discrimination, noting that the Ministry had ... [delivered] ... training programmes that addressed the needs of ... LGBT people...

‘A key development is the Ministry’s near-finalization of Albania’s first national health protocol for transgender individuals, created in collaboration

¹³⁶ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 49 to 54), 17 June 2025

¹³⁷ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 55,58), 17 June 2025

¹³⁸ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 60), 17 June 2025

¹³⁹ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.27), 2025

¹⁴⁰ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.40), 30 October 2024

¹⁴¹ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹⁴² New Lines Institute, [The Multifaceted Struggle of the LGBTQ+ Community...](#), 12 May 2025

with civil society, medical experts and multiple ministries. This protocol, which will facilitate access to hormone therapy, is urgently needed owing to the country's lack of formal gender-affirming care and professional expertise. It will be distributed to family doctors nationwide, ensuring better healthcare access for transgender people.

'Access to gender-affirming care remains limited. Albania does not offer gender-affirming surgeries and, while the upcoming hormone therapy protocol would help to address a critical gap, broader structural, financial and training capacities remain underdeveloped. Consequently, many transgender individuals are forced to seek care abroad, facing significant financial and logistical challenges...

'Albania has taken meaningful steps to strengthen its health system and improve protections for ... LGBT people...

'Building on this framework, the Ministry has developed specific programmes to support vulnerable groups, including country-wide mental health services, HIV treatment programmes and regular training for health professionals to strengthen inclusive care practices. Public education campaigns have further sought to promote non-discrimination across healthcare ...'¹⁴³

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11.4 Access to healthcare for Intersex persons

11.4.1 The June 2020 report by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) noted:

'In this monitoring cycle, ECRI also covers the situation of intersex persons. ECRI was informed by the authorities that it is not mandatory in Albania to carry out so-called "sex-normalising" surgery on newly-born intersex babies. According to the information available, such operations are, in fact, not carried out currently in Albania at all. ECRI was informed by the authorities about their intention to look more closely into the needs of intersex persons in the country...'¹⁴⁴

11.4.2 The IGLYO report of 2025 stated, 'The Medical Protocol for Children with Atypical Development (2020) aims to regulate medical procedures for intersex children but is not legally binding, leading to a lack of implementation.'¹⁴⁵

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11.5 Access to housing

11.5.1 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC described discrimination in access to housing for LGBTIQ persons as 'very prevalent'¹⁴⁶ and added, 'As an observer to the work of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Albania was covered by the III LGBTIQ Trust Survey, which found that overall, in Albania in 2023, 51% felt discriminated against in at least one area of life in the year before the survey (for the EU-27 it was 37%)'.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 49 to 54), 17 June 2025

¹⁴⁴ ECRI, ['Sixth report on Albania'](#), 2 June 2020

¹⁴⁵ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.28), 2025

¹⁴⁶ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

¹⁴⁷ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

11.5.2 In the Annual Review 2025, ILGA-Europe reported:

‘To address the economic precarity faced by LGBTI people in the country, sexual orientation and gender identity have been recognised as eligibility criteria for social housing.

‘The law on social housing (Law no. 22/2018, “On Social Housing”) establishes a framework for providing affordable housing to vulnerable populations, including the LGBTI community. It aims to ensure access to housing, particularly for individuals facing discrimination, such as trans people, who are disproportionately affected by housing issues. Between 2019 and 2024, for instance, 22 trans women were evicted from their homes solely based on their gender identity. Many LGBTI individuals view the capital city as the only place where they can live free from violence, leading to increased demand for housing there. However, a significant barrier to accessing social housing is the lack of trust in the system, as concerns about compromised confidentiality during the application and assessment process deter many from applying. The effectiveness of this legislation is further undermined by the absence of essential bylaws, which complicates proper implementation. As highlighted by an article on portavendore.al, many institutions continue to rely on outdated provisions from previous laws when applying the current legislation, thus hindering progress and reinforcing legal gaps that continue to restrict the LGBTI community’s access to adequate housing.’¹⁴⁸

11.5.3 The article published by New Lines Institute in May 2025 noted, ‘Transgender individuals in particular are disproportionately affected by ... challenges’¹⁴⁹

11.5.4 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert reported on housing provision for LGBT persons under the law, stating, ‘This legal framework has had a meaningful impact, in particular for transgender individuals, by providing a basis for prioritization in gaining access to housing services.’¹⁵⁰

11.5.5 The report continued:

‘Notwithstanding these legal protections, access to housing remains a persistent challenge owing to gaps in implementation, inadequate enforcement and the absence of necessary by-laws. In practice, institutions work according to outdated legal provisions, limiting the effectiveness of current laws and leaving LGBT persons with the protections to which they are entitled. Structural barriers and social stigma further undermine access. A central concern is the fear of disclosure during the application process: to access LGBT-specific housing benefits, individuals must self-identify. This requirement raises serious concerns about confidentiality. Many avoid applying for support owing to the risk that sensitive personal information may be exposed during interactions with municipal authorities. The application process itself can be lengthy and burdensome, with extensive documentation requirements that are often difficult to meet. Some procedural requirements, such as obtaining approval from property owners, open the door to further discrimination.’¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹⁴⁹ New Lines Institute, [The Multifaceted Struggle of the LGBTQ+ Community...](#), 12 May 2025

¹⁵⁰ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 32), 17 June 2025

¹⁵¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 33), 17 June 2025

11.5.6 The report noted the accommodation difficulties experienced by transgender persons in particular:

‘The shortcomings in the implementation of legal protections for LGBT individuals in Albania have serious and far-reaching consequences, in particular for transgender persons. Discrimination, lack of legal gender recognition and financial precarity leave transgender women especially vulnerable to homelessness, exploitation and exclusion from social services. Even where support mechanisms exist, transgender individuals have reported feeling excluded or unsupported, citing restrictive rules around gender expressions, curfews and behaviour in shelters that can compromise their safety and dignity. More broadly, administrative and structural hurdles frequently push LGBT individuals to rely on informal networks for temporary shelter, which, in the most precarious cases, may result in unsafe or exploitative living conditions, including engagement in sex work as a means of survival.’¹⁵²

11.5.7 The report provided information about emergency housing:

‘In recognition of the persistent challenges experienced by LGBT individuals in gaining access to housing, the Government has developed emergency housing mechanisms, in particular for survivors of domestic violence. Pursuant to Council of Ministers Decision No. 327 of 2 June 2021, victims and their children may be placed in emergency shelters if assessed to be at high risk of continued exposure to domestic violence. Risk assessments and case management are conducted by the State Police and municipal coordinators on the basis of joint instructions from relevant ministries. Protection measures, including placement in shelters, can be ordered by the police or the court, with victims escorted by police and supported by dedicated local teams. While emergency shelters are an essential resource, they do not adequately address the long-term housing needs of LGBT persons or replace the need for specialized, inclusive housing solutions for marginalized groups.

‘The Streha Center, which operates the only dedicated shelter accommodating LGBT individuals from Albania and the wider region, remains the sole facility of its kind, providing safe housing and support services to those at risk. Established in 2015, it provides critical emergency accommodation for LGBT youth between 18 and 29 years of age who have experienced violence, family rejection or homelessness, and has supported 173 young people since its establishment. However, the facility faces significant challenges: it is consistently at full occupancy owing to its limited capacity and it is not equipped to meet the needs of older individuals or those requiring long-term housing solutions. In addition to these operational constraints, the Center’s financial situation remains fragile. According to individuals who run the shelter, only 30 per cent of its budget is covered by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, leaving it heavily dependent on external fundraising. There have also been credibly [sic] concerns that its public advocacy work may place its limited Government funding at risk.’¹⁵³

11.5.8 The Independent Expert concluded, ‘Notwithstanding important legal protections on paper, the lived reality for many LGBT persons in Albania is

¹⁵² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 34), 17 June 2025

¹⁵³ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 35,36), 17 June 2025

marked by housing instability, discrimination and systemic barriers. Comprehensive reforms to guarantee privacy, equitable access and long-term support are needed to protect LGBT people from discrimination and uphold their fundamental right to housing.¹⁵⁴

- 11.5.9 See [NGOs and support](#) for further information about the services provided by Streha.

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11.6 Access to employment

- 11.6.1 The results of the EU FRA survey, carried out from June to August 2023 and published in May 2024, gave the following result for Albania '36% felt discriminated against at work or looking for work in the year before the survey in Albania. For the EU-27 it is 19%.¹⁵⁵
- 11.6.2 In an article dated November 2024, UN DP reported that 'In workplaces, 32% of LGBTI individuals report being treated unfairly, but only 2% feel safe enough to report it.'¹⁵⁶ It was not clear how these statistics had been obtained, or when.
- 11.6.3 UN DP also described work it is undertaking to address discrimination in the workplace:
- 'Discrimination in the workplace remains a significant hurdle...
- 'To address this, the campaign has partnered with businesses like Raiffeisen Bank, promoting policies that foster inclusion and diversity. Workshops, training sessions, and one-on-one meetings encourage companies to adopt anti-discrimination standards, creating safer and more respectful environments.
- 'The results are promising. Several businesses now publicly commit to LGBTI inclusion ...'¹⁵⁷
- 11.6.4 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC described discrimination in access to employment for LGBTIQ persons as 'very prevalent'¹⁵⁸ and added, 'As an observer to the work of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Albania was covered by the III LGBTIQ Trust Survey, which found that overall, in Albania in 2023, 51% felt discriminated against in at least one area of life in the year before the survey (for the EU-27 it was 37%).'¹⁵⁹
- 11.6.5 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted the following provisions, in addition to the law:
- '... initiatives such as the translation and promotion of the United Nations Guidelines on Business and Human Rights have encouraged some businesses to adopt inclusive practices. In 2023, those standards were shared with approximately 80 businesses, and more than 60 participated in discussions on addressing discrimination in the workplace. International organizations, such as the International Labour Organization, have also supported businesses in creating safer environments for LGBT employees,

¹⁵⁴ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 37), 17 June 2025

¹⁵⁵ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁵⁶ UN DP, [UN Free and Equal in Albania: The Fight for LGBTI Equality](#), 28 November 2024

¹⁵⁷ UN DP, [UN Free and Equal in Albania: The Fight for LGBTI Equality](#), 28 November 2024

¹⁵⁸ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

¹⁵⁹ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

in particular through the implementation of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), which Albania ratified in 2021.¹⁶⁰

- 11.6.6 The report continued, referring to a survey carried out by the NGO Aleanca; it was not clear when the survey was carried out:

‘Those advancements notwithstanding, significant barriers to employment persist for LGBT individuals. Civil society research has highlighted widespread discrimination that often goes unreported. While official government channels, including the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation, indicate no formal complaints of employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, this stands in sharp contrast to the experiences shared by many LGBT people. A recent civil society survey found that a significant portion of the surveyed LGBT population faced barriers to formal employment, with 40.8 per cent having never been engaged in a formal work contract. Many turn to informal employment as an alternative, with 15.6 per cent reporting participation in such work. Even among those who are employed, workplace discrimination remains a pressing issue, given that 34 per cent reported experiencing harassment and prejudice on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.’¹⁶¹

- 11.6.7 The Independent Expert particularly noted the situation for transgender persons, stating, ‘Transgender individuals and gender-non-conforming persons face particularly acute challenges. Many struggle to secure stable employment owing to gaps in education, pervasive discrimination and social stigma. These barriers can result in economic marginalization, driving some into precarious forms of work, including sex work, as a means of survival.’¹⁶²

- 11.6.8 The report continued, ‘A lack of comprehensive data on employment discrimination continues to hinder effective responses. Employment offices report no cases [of complaints from LGBT+ persons] ...’¹⁶³ See [Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination \(CPD\)](#) for information about action taken by the Commissioner in relation to discrimination in the workplace.

- 11.6.9 The Independent Expert continued, ‘The main obstacles appear to arise at the point of entering the labour market, with LGBT individuals facing challenges during recruitment and application processes. In some instances, limited educational opportunities further exacerbate this exclusion, making it difficult for many to compete on an equal footing within the job market.’¹⁶⁴

- 11.6.10 The article published by New Lines Institute in May 2025 noted, ‘Transgender individuals in particular are disproportionately affected by ... challenges ...’¹⁶⁵

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11.7 Access to education

- 11.7.1 The EU FRA survey, carried out from June to August 2023 and published in May 2024, indicated: ‘In Albania 67% of all respondents say that during their

¹⁶⁰ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 78), 17 June 2025

¹⁶¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 80), 17 June 2025

¹⁶² UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 81), 17 June 2025

¹⁶³ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 82), 17 June 2025

¹⁶⁴ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 83), 17 June 2025

¹⁶⁵ New Lines Institute, [The Multifaceted Struggle of the LGBTQ+ Community...](#), 12 May 2025

time in school they suffered bullying, ridicule, teasing, insults or threats because they are LGBTIQ. For the EU-27 it is 67%, a steep increase compared to 2019 (43%).¹⁶⁶

11.7.2 The EU FRA survey also indicated:

- '64% of LGBTIQ students in Albania say were hiding [sic] being LGBTIQ at school. This was 49% in the EU-27.
- '29% of LGBTIQ students in Albania say that in school someone often or always supported, defended or protected their rights as an LGBTIQ person. This was 32% in the EU-27.
- '36% of LGBTIQ respondents in Albania say their school education never addressed LGBTIQ issues. In the EU-27 this was 62%.¹⁶⁷

11.7.3 In an article dated November 2024, UN DP reported that 'In schools, 54% of LGBTI students face discrimination from peers, and 25% experience bias from teaching staff, turning classrooms into places of dread rather than learning.'¹⁶⁸ The UN DP did not provide details of how the data was collected, the sample size, geographic scope, or methodology. It is also unclear whether the discrimination reported was based on self-identification, perceived identity, or disclosure of LGBTI status.

11.7.4 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC described discrimination in access to education for LGBTIQ persons as 'very prevalent'¹⁶⁹ and added, 'As an observer to the work of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Albania was covered by the III LGBTIQ Trust Survey, which found that overall, in Albania in 2023, 51% felt discriminated against in at least one area of life in the year before the survey (for the EU-27 it was 37%).'¹⁷⁰

11.7.5 In the Inclusive Education Report 2025, IGLYO stated that 'Albania does not have any anti-bullying policies in place that specifically address homophobia, transphobia or interphobia in schools.'¹⁷¹ The same report noted 'Similar to the 2016 National Action Plan, the 2021 National Action Plan is also focused on reducing inequality and discrimination in education ... Civil society has, however, reported that progress ... has been limited.'¹⁷²

11.7.6 IGLYO further reported, 'In 2022, PINK Embassy, Aleanca and Streha supported the first openly trans person to attend university, who was met with a welcoming attitude from teachers and students.'¹⁷³

11.7.7 IGLYO also set out avenues of redress for students who experience discrimination or violence, stating that they can:

'...report cases to the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination. Children and youth can also reach out to Alo 116, a national helpline which also supports LGBTIQ people. Free legal aid for LGBTI children and youth is provided by CRCA/ECPAT [Child Rights Centre Albania/Every Child Protected Against Trafficking] Albania, while the hotline ISIGURT.AL

¹⁶⁶ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁶⁷ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁶⁸ UN DP, [UN Free and Equal in Albania: The Fight for LGBTI Equality](#), 28 November 2024

¹⁶⁹ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

¹⁷⁰ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.41), 30 October 2024

¹⁷¹ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.27), 2025

¹⁷² IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.27), 2025

¹⁷³ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.28), 2025

supports victims of online hate speech or sexual assault. Barnahus Albania provides support to children and young people who are victims of sexual harassment and abuse.¹⁷⁴

11.7.8 IGLYO also provided further information about assistance available for students, stating, 'The state provides no relevant guidelines for LGBTQI learners, but civil society does. For instance, PINK Embassy has resources for young people on coming out, on trans issues, and also to support parents.'¹⁷⁵

11.7.9 In the LGBTI Enlargement Review 2025, ILGA-Europe reported that 'Over the past five years, Aleanca LGBTI documented 25 cases of individuals leaving education due to bullying and societal pressure with 80.2% of LGBTI victims never reporting discrimination out of fear of exposure and further mistreatment.'¹⁷⁶

11.7.10 In his report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert stated:

'... According to one respondent, the Ministry of Education has resisted curriculum reforms owing to concerns about potential resistance from parents. Efforts to train teachers on LGBT issues have been undertaken within the framework of the national action plans for LGBTI+ persons, but these have been insufficient to address the widespread lack of competence and preparedness among educational staff.

'...While there have been meaningful steps towards creating more inclusive learning environments, persistent gaps remain that prevent many LGBT students from fully realizing their right to safe, supportive and high-quality education...

'The legal framework in Albania provides an important foundation for inclusive education. ... However, [its] potential remains fulfilled only in part, given that key topics relevant to LGBT people remain absent from official curricula and textbooks.'¹⁷⁷

11.7.11 The Independent Expert also noted the role of NGOs in schools:

'Encouragingly, there have been local initiatives and collaborations aimed at raising awareness of LGBT issues in schools. In partnerships with civil society organizations and international bodies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund, training sessions and pilot programmes on gender equality, anti-discrimination and bullying prevention have been introduced. Some municipalities have supported awareness-raising activities in schools and, in collaboration with parent boards, have worked to promote acceptance of LGBT students and reduce family rejection. These localized efforts demonstrate the positive impact of targeted interventions and highlight a growing recognition of the importance of LGBT inclusion in education.'¹⁷⁸

11.7.12 The Independent Expert concluded:

'While education is identified as a priority area in the national action plan for

¹⁷⁴ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.28), 2025

¹⁷⁵ IGLYO, [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#) (p.28), 2025

¹⁷⁶ ILGA-Europe, [LGBTI Enlargement Review 2025](#), 2025

¹⁷⁷ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 42), 17 June 2025

¹⁷⁸ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 43), 17 June 2025

LGBTI+ persons (2021–2027), implementation has been limited and cooperation between national and local authorities remains fragmented.

‘These challenges notwithstanding, there is a strong foundation on which to build a more inclusive education system. Albania has demonstrated an ability to advance progressive reforms in other areas of education, and legal principles that support equality and non-discrimination have been established.’¹⁷⁹

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11.8 Participation in the political sphere

- 11.8.1 Article 9 of the [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), updated in 2020, states, ‘Discrimination in exercising the right to vote, to be elected, and to be appointed to a public duty for the grounds referred to in Article 1 of this law is prohibited.’¹⁸⁰
- 11.8.2 In the report of June 2025, the UN Independent Expert noted that the National Action Plan for LGBTI+ persons, 2021 to 2027, and the National Strategy for Gender Equality are designed to promote political participation of LGBT persons¹⁸¹.
- 11.8.3 At the time of writing, and in the sources cited, CPIT was unable to find evidence of any openly LGBT individuals serving in Albania’s Parliament, regional assemblies, or major political parties (see [Bibliography](#)).

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12. LGBT+ groups, CSOs and NGOs

12.1 NGOs and support

- 12.1.1 [Aleanca](#), a grassroots organisation created in 2009 to assist LGBTI individuals in Albania, noted on their website:

‘The Alliance against discrimination of LGBT (Aleanca LGBT) is an Albanian non-governmental organization that envisions a free, open and equal Albanian society that embraces diversity and is inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

‘... In 2011 with the support of Civil Rights Defenders Aleanca managed to open the first [sic] LGBT community center in Albania... The main areas of our work during these years have been the following:

‘Community Building - Community events (discussion groups...workshops on life skills, job counselling [sic] etc)...

‘Awareness Raising - Organizing of the biggest LGBT pride event: Tirana Pride, public lectures in universities and high schools...

‘Advocacy and Lobbying - Aleanca has been part of the working group that has drafted the Law against discrimination of LGBT people which was approved in February 2010... Aleanca has set up a system of monitoring and documenting cases of discrimination towards LGBT community members and has used these data’s in national and international reports... Aleanca has been working very closely with woman [sic] organization to train

¹⁷⁹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 45,46), 17 June 2025

¹⁸⁰ Govt of Albania, [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), 4 February 2010, updated in 2020

¹⁸¹ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 15), 17 June 2025

them on LGBT issues so they could serve as focal points in other towns for LGBT members of community, when they need a safe place to go to or when they need psychological or legal support.

‘Training of different groups of professionals ... that work directly with people from the LGBT community... training police officers, school psychologist, teachers, journalists, other human rights activists, public officials, social workers etc.’¹⁸²

- 12.1.2 In the LGBTI Enlargement Review 2025, ILGA-Europe stated, ‘The cut in U.S funding had a considerable impact on Aleanca LGBTI which had to halt two important advocacy and strategic projects and resulted in a gap in staff salaries. Beyond the immediate interruption, the cuts created considerable uncertainty and anxiety regarding the sustainability of similar initiatives in the future. Other LGBTI organisations in Albania have been similarly impacted.’¹⁸³

- 12.1.3 [AsyLex](#), which described itself as ‘a non-profit organisation empowering asylum seekers worldwide with online legal guidance,’¹⁸⁴ provided information about LGBTQI+ resources in Albania; these resources included Gay.al, described as ‘Albania’s biggest gay community website [which] offers a forum for advice and personal stories.’¹⁸⁵

- 12.1.4 [PINK Embassy/Pro LGBT Albania](#) is a non-profit organisation working for the rights of LGBTI individuals in Albania and on their website noted:

‘PINK Embassy/LGBT Pro Albania is a non-profit organization which works for the protection and advancement of the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, intersex and queer people in Albania...

‘We have worked and lobbied for different reports such as legal amendments, action plans and measures and have served as a research and information centre for LGBT issues in Albania and abroad and have done our best to create an emancipatory and progressive environment for the recognition of LGBT rights in the country.’¹⁸⁶

- 12.1.5 PINK Embassy also provided undated information about the work they are undertaking to improve the lives of LGBTI individuals in multiple cities in Albania:

‘Rainbow cities are those cities, whose municipalities and institutions have friendly policies towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

‘Currently, PINK Embassy is working to improve the living conditions of LGBT people in six Albanian cities; Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan, Vlorë, Korçë and Shkodër. In cooperation with the municipalities of these cities we are working to increase the capacities and services offered to assist LGBT people.

‘One of the main objectives of this project is the integration of LGBT people in their communities.

‘Rainbow cities are very well-known in different parts of the world and thanks

¹⁸² Aleanca, [About us](#), no date

¹⁸³ ILGA-Europe, [LGBTI Enlargement Review 2025](#), 2025

¹⁸⁴ AsyLex, [About AsyLex](#), no date

¹⁸⁵ AsyLex, [Albania LGBTQI+ Resources](#), no date

¹⁸⁶ PINK Embassy, [About Pink](#), no date

to them the lives of many LGBT people have been easier at the local level.’¹⁸⁷

12.1.6 [Streha](#), an NGO assisting LGBTI individuals in Albania, outlined their services on their website: ‘Streha shelter supports homeless LGBTI youth who live in hostile environments – to find safe homes, employment, education, training and re-integrate and consolidate their identity.’¹⁸⁸ The website continued:

‘...Our services include a safe and supportive living environment for a period of up to one-year, medical assistance, individual therapy, career counseling and vocational training, employment assistance, legal assistance, family mediation, and recreational activities...

‘In 2023 alone, we provided accommodation for a total of 2,188 bednights and a wide range of multi-disciplinary onsite and distant services.

‘Our list of self-empowering and re-integration services includes:

- Individual development plans.
- Psycho-social support.
- Career counseling.
- Group therapy...
- Referrals to specialised services.
- Mental health and wellbeing supervision.
- Support with expenses during reintegration.
- Guidance towards employment and professional formation.
- Support in mediation of relationships with family members.
- Inclusion and participation in community-building activities.

‘We have a supportive team of Young Ambassadors, consisting of former residents of Streha who are now successfully integrated as empowered members of the society.

‘We share our expertise through various local and national projects and are actively supporting the enlargement and establishment of other shelters in the region.

‘...Streha’s residential standards have been recognized by ministerial decree as nationwide standards for the establishment and management of shelters providing services with a focus on LGBTI+ people.’¹⁸⁹

12.1.7 See [Housing](#) for further information about the role played by Streha in the provision of accommodation for LGBT persons.

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12.2 LGBT+ events in the community

12.2.1 The EC’s Albania 2024 Report noted that, ‘The 13th Tirana Pride took place

¹⁸⁷ PINK Embassy, [Rainbow cities](#), no date

¹⁸⁸ Streha, [Get Support](#), no date

¹⁸⁹ Streha, [Impact](#), no date

peacefully on 25 May 2024.¹⁹⁰

12.2.2 Tirana Times reported on Tirana's Pride event in May 2025:

'Hundreds of people marched through the streets of Albania's capital on Saturday [24 May 2025] during the annual Pride Parade, demanding equal rights, legal recognition, and dignity for the LGBT+ community under the motto "Side by Side." The event, marked by colorful banners and strong calls for inclusion, received broad support from Albanian officials and international diplomats — including the European Union and Canada — who underscored the growing importance of human rights in Albania's democratic development...

'The Pride Parade in Tirana was not just a symbolic show of solidarity but also a reflection of Albania's evolving social landscape. Though challenges persist — particularly in terms of stigma, legal recognition, and enforcement of protections — the growing engagement from both national institutions and international allies signals cautious optimism.'¹⁹¹

12.2.3 PINK Embassy provided the following undated information about the annual Diversity Festival:

"Festival of Diversity" is the most important annual event for PINK Embassy Albania and takes place every 17 May on the occasion of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT). This event is held throughout the entire week, called diversity week, and culminates with the diversity fair, pride march and other social activities such as concerts, film shows, exhibitions, workshops etc...

'For this [undated] year the Festival of Diversity will take place on 16-21 May and will be hosted by PINK Embassy in collaboration with the Human Rights House of Albania, and CRCA/ECPAT Albania and the participation of institutions, civil society organizations, international community and LGBT community in the country.'¹⁹²

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12.3 Actions taken by NGOs

12.3.1 The EU FRA survey, carried out between June and August 2023 and published in May 2024, gave the following result for LGBTIQ people in Albania: '7% reported their discrimination experiences to an equality body or another organisation in Albania. For the EU-27 it is 11%.'¹⁹³

12.3.2 ILGA-Europe's 2025 Annual Review stated, 'Aleanca LGBT [Alliance against LGBT Discrimination¹⁹⁴] has taken proactive measures against hate speech spearheaded by the anti-LGBTI movement by lodging a series of seven complaints for incitement of hatred before the Prosecutorial Services of Tirana and one discrimination and hate speech complaint before the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination.'¹⁹⁵ See [Justice](#) for further information about these seven complaints.

¹⁹⁰ EC, [Albania 2024 Report](#) (p.40), 30 October 2024

¹⁹¹ Tirana Times, [Tirana Pride Highlights Albania's LGBT+ Progress Amid EU Hopes](#), 25 May 2025

¹⁹² PINK Embassy, [Festival of Diversity](#), no date

¹⁹³ EU, FRA, [Country factsheet - Albania](#), 14 May 2024

¹⁹⁴ Aleanca, [Alliance Against LGBT Discrimination](#), no date

¹⁹⁵ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

- 12.3.3 In the report of June 2025, and in the context of hate speech against the LGBT community, the UN Independent Expert noted, 'The establishment of the Alliance Against Hate Speech in 2019, bringing together national institutions such as the People's Advocate, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination and the Albanian Media reflects a positive step towards countering harmful narratives and promoting respectful public discourse.'¹⁹⁶
- 12.3.4 In the 2025 Annual Review, ILGA-Europe noted, 'In September [2024], Aleanca LGBTI started the first strategic litigation case concerning the legal recognition of a lesbian couple by filing a request for marriage before the Civil Registry Office. The case was presented before the Administrative Court of First Instance in December.'¹⁹⁷ There was no further information available about the case at the time of writing.
- 12.3.5 The Annual Review 2025 continued, 'In September [2024], Aleanca LGBTI commenced a strategic litigation case seeking legal recognition of a trans woman's gender identity before the Civil Court of First Instance of Tirana. Simultaneously, Ylberofilia [not clear what this is], in collaboration with the Albanian Committee of Helsinki, continues to advocate in court for the right to amend personal information on identity cards.'¹⁹⁸
- 12.3.6 The article published by the Heinrich Böll Foundation in June 2025 stated, '... activists have pursued various legal remedies available. Strategic litigation efforts have been launched before national courts to demand legal recognition of same-sex partnerships and trans identities. Multiple complaints have been filed with the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination and with the Prosecution Office, challenging hate speech, exclusion from services, and discriminatory treatment.'¹⁹⁹

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13. Freedom of movement

13.1 Demography and relocation rights

- 13.1.1 Albania is roughly 28,000sqkm²⁰⁰, a little larger than Wales²⁰¹, with a population estimated to be between 2.8 million²⁰² and 3.1 million²⁰³, of whom 520,000 live in the capital, Tirana²⁰⁴. Nearly 65% of the population live in urban areas and people continue to move to towns and cities, however in general according to the CIA World Factbook there is a fairly 'even distribution [of the population], with somewhat higher concentrations of people in the western and central parts of the country.'²⁰⁵
- 13.1.2 Around 18% of the population is estimated to be aged 14 and under, 67% aged from 15 to 64, and 15% aged 65 and older. Most are ethnic Albanian, around 1% are Greek and around 1% 'other' ('including Vlach, Romani, Macedonian, Montenegrin, and Egyptian') and the remainder 'unspecified'. A

¹⁹⁶ UN OHCHR, [... Independent Expert on protection against violence...](#) (para 20), 17 June 2025

¹⁹⁷ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹⁹⁸ ILGA-Europe, [2025 Annual Review ... of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia](#), February 2025

¹⁹⁹ H. Böll Stiftung, [Framing Fear, Unmaking Rights: ... Anti-Gender Ideology](#), 26 June 2025

²⁰⁰ UN Data, [Albania](#) (General information), no date

²⁰¹ CIA, The World Factbook, [United Kingdom](#) (Geography), updated regularly

²⁰² UN Data, [Albania](#) (General information), no date

²⁰³ CIA, The World Factbook, [Albania](#) (People and Society), updated regularly

²⁰⁴ UN Data, [Albania](#) (People and Society), no date

²⁰⁵ CIA, The World Factbook, [Albania](#) (People and Society), updated regularly

small majority are Muslim, while the rest are a mix of faiths, including 'Roman Catholic 10%, Orthodox 6.8%, atheist 2.5%, Bektashi (a Sufi order) 2.1%, other 5.7%, unspecified 16.2%'.²⁰⁶

13.1.3 The USSD Country Report 2023 stated:

'The constitution and law provided for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, and the government generally respected these rights.

'... To receive government services, citizens changing place of residence within the country had to transfer their civil registration to their new community and prove the legality of their new domicile through property ownership, a property rental agreement, or utility bills. Some individuals could not provide documentation and thus lacked access to public services. Other citizens, particularly Roma and Balkan-Egyptians, lacked formal registration in the communities where they resided. The law did not prohibit their registration, but the process was often difficult to complete. Many Roma and Balkan-Egyptians lacked the financial means or necessary information to register.'²⁰⁷

13.1.4 The 'Freedom in the World 2024' report, published by Freedom House on 29 February 2024, stated, 'Albanians generally enjoy freedom of movement, though criminal activity and practices related to historically predominant honor codes limit these rights in some areas. People are generally free to change their place of residence or employment.'²⁰⁸

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²⁰⁶ CIA, The World Factbook, [Albania](#) (People and Society), updated regularly

²⁰⁷ USSD, [2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices](#), 22 April 2024

²⁰⁸ Freedom House, [Freedom in the World 2024](#), 29 February 2024

Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

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Terms of Reference

The 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Legal context - constitution, criminal, penal and civil codes, and caselaw
 - general anti-discrimination provisions (and inclusion or absence of reference to LGBT+ people)
 - same-sex sexual behaviour
 - same-sex couples, including civil union and marriage
 - gender reassignment/transition, and recognition of gender identity of trans persons
 - LGBT+ organisations
 - relevant significant court cases and caselaw
- State attitudes and treatment
 - statements made by government figures and public officials
 - government policies/programmes that assist or discriminate against LGBT+ people
 - application of law (including discriminatory application) and numbers of:
 - arrests and detentions
 - prosecutions, convictions, acquittals
 - restrictions/enforcement of law against LGBT+ organisations
 - other state treatment, such as harassment
 - access to public services
 - education
 - healthcare
 - employment
 - justice
 - state protection
 - security forces and their capabilities, including any specific units with remit to protect LGBT+ people
 - response and assistance provided, including arrests and prosecutions of persecutors, witness protection, assistance in relocation
 - oversight mechanisms and organisations, complaints process, investigations, outcomes and penalties

- geographic, socio-economic or other factors affecting variation in attitudes/treatment
- Societal attitudes and treatment
 - public opinion/views/surveys, including anti-LGBTI movements and public demonstrations
 - prevailing cultural and family attitudes to male/female relationships, family and non-conforming behaviour
 - religious group attitudes, statements and actions
 - media representation, language and discourse
 - treatment by the public, including family members
 - shunning and stigma
 - harassment and violence
 - accessing accommodation, education, employment and healthcare
 - geographic, socio-economic or other factors affecting variation in attitudes/treatment
- LGBT+ communities and groups
 - size and location of LGBT+ population
 - presence, projection and location of openly LGBT+ persons and communities into public life
 - numbers, aims and location of openly LGBT+ communities
 - services, meeting places and events, such as Gay Pride
 - operation, activities and restrictions of LGBT+ civil society and other supportive groups or associations, including websites
 - geographic, socio-economic or other factors affecting behaviour of individuals and groups.
- Freedom of movement
 - legal freedoms/restrictions, including documentation
 - safety of movement
 - vulnerabilities of different groups

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Version control and feedback

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

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Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

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Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information and assessment.

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