



# KOSOVO

## ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

CSGD published a report on LGBT and Roma people's access to services in Prizren.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

CSGD's 2022 Annual Report on the Status of LGBTIQ+ Persons in Kosovo, published in May, concluded that 2022 was marked by intolerance and hatred towards the LGBTIQ+ community and that hate speech by politicians was particularly common during discussions about the Civil Code (see under Family).

A reality TV show's characters made stigmatising statements about LGBTI people in January.

Artist, Ermira Murati, also known as Orange Girl, received several death threats for her painting featuring a kiss between the leaders of Kosovo and Serbia. (See under Freedom of Expression).

The local Islamic Community held a protest against a queer performance in August (see under Participation). One of the organisers, the head of the Prizren Islamic Community, said that children should be "strictly kept away from this degeneracy".

Chairperson of the Commission for Human Rights, Gender Equality, Victims of Sexual Violence during the War, for Missing Persons and Petitions, Duda Balje, continued to make statements against legal recognition for same-sex couples. Civil society organisations continued to call for her removal.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

The Prosecutor's Office filed charges against a man who allegedly planned a terrorist attack against LGBTI people.

In August, a graffiti was painted in Prishtina saying "kill the gays". The graffiti was reported to the police. Activists replaced the word "kill" with "kiss".

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Civil society marked IDAHOBIT in May. The Government Building was lit up with rainbow lights again, and several state institutions, embassies, the National University Library, and the EU Office in Kosovo raised a rainbow flag. Prime Minister Kurti tweeted in support of the community, but did not post on Facebook, which many saw as reluctance to stand with LGBTI people on platforms where he has a huge following.

Civil society continued its cooperation with the Office of Good

Governance and the Prime Minister and held several meetings on the rights of LGBTI people.

## FAMILY

Prime Minister Albin Kurti said during Pride week that he would "do his utmost" to get the Civil Code adopted by parliament. In 2022, the parliament voted against amendments to the Civil Code that would have opened the path to provide legal recognition to same-sex couples.

The Minister of Justice shared that a working group was set up to focus on legal recognition and draft a concept note and that the Ministry wants to send a bill to the parliament this year.

## FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

CSGD, CEL, and other human rights groups jointly organised Kosovo Pride Week again this year, between 5 - 10 June. This year's motto was "I love you as you are!". The Prime Minister joined the opening event, which his office and the Office for Good Governance co-organised with civil society. President Vjosa Osmani spoke about hate crimes and violence against LGBTI people in Kosovo and globally.

Pride Week featured various events, including movie nights, parties, exhibitions, discussions, and a conference. For the first time, Prime Minister Kurti also attended the Pride march. Other political figures were also present. The march was celebrated by hundreds on 10 June and no incidents were recorded.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Artist, Ermira Murati, also known as Orange Girl, presented her newest painting on the 15th anniversary of Kosovo's independence from Serbia (see under Bias-motivated Speech), portraying a kiss between the two countries' leaders.

Canadian queer singer Peaches performed at the DokuFest in August, the biggest cultural event in Kosovo. A protest was held against the performance (see also under Bias-motivated Speech) and some journalists were attacked.

## HEALTH

CEL and CSGD continued to offer psychological support to LGBTI people and their families.

In October, the head of the HIV department at the Infectious Disease Clinic of the University Clinical Center of Kosovo (QKUK) announced that 10 people were diagnosed with HIV this year.



## PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

CEL Kosovo [launched](#) Queer TV this year.

The first Pristina Queer Festival was [held](#) in September. The three-day cultural festival featured film screenings, concerts, and the promotion of the Albanian language edition of the Kosovo section of the 2022 book, *Transgender in Post Yugoslav Space*. The organisers shared that some performers were reluctant to participate.

Kosovo's first gay bar, Bubble, [continued](#) to operate since the opening in 2022. Bubble regularly receives threats, but none of them have materialised to date.

The Sekhmet Institute [conducted](#) a study on queer people's access to voting.

At the end of November, the play [The Apple Was Not an Accident](#) premiered, a performance about the power of not giving up. The play was directed and performed by a lesbian couple and was supported by [CSGD](#).

## PUBLIC OPINION

The regional organisation ERA's [report](#) Attitudes towards [LGBTIQ+ people in the Western Balkans](#) concluded that Kosovo needs to step up efforts to raise awareness and improve public perceptions about LGBTIQ+ people.

## SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The construction of a shelter for LGBTI people was delayed again this year.

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



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