



# Slovakia



Hostility towards LGBTI people remains relatively high in Slovakia, as demonstrated by the number of police officers that needed to be deployed to protect the marchers during Rainbow Pride Bratislava. Meanwhile a proposed bill for the introduction of registered partnerships for same-sex couples was defeated by a wide margin. Support for LGBTI issues remains declarative by government institutions with bodies like the Government Council for Human Rights proposing to set up a Committee for LGBTI issues while not yet translating into concrete policy commitments.

## Access to goods and services

- In February, a printing company in Prešov refused to provide a print run for a customer because the document contained the word 'gay'. The company stated that it was against their beliefs and values to provide such material. Iniciatíva Inakost' notified the Inspectorate of Slovak Trade Inspection (SOI) about the case, which ruled that the company discriminated against the customer on the basis of sexual orientation and breached the principle of equal treatment. Later, the company apologised and provided the printing service for free.

## Bias motivated speech

- In May, MP Š. Kuffa from OĽaNO, a conservative parliamentary movement Ordinary People and Independent Personalities, referred to homosexuality as a mental illness. He responded to Rainbow Pride Bratislava and a proposal from MP M. Poliačik from liberal Freedom and Solidarity (SaS), to introduce civil partnership with the statement: "The World Health Organization ranked homosexuality as mental illness once [...]. It is a serious mistake to let ill people run on the streets without help." This was accompanied by other declarations about homosexuality being "morally bad and perverted" by other MPs from the same party. LGBT organisations protested against these statements and demanded an apology. However, the subsequent meetings with the MPs did not change anything. The conflict led to a public discussion between the two mentioned parties and representatives from LGBT organisations on Slovak national television, where the persistence of the religion-based homophobic discourse was very visible.

## Bias motivated violence

- In June, during Bratislava Pride, a very small group protesting against the event held up banners with slogans such as "We do not want homosexual extremists in Bratislava" and other similar displays. The symbolic same-sex wedding was also briefly interrupted by a smoke shell thrown into the assembly. Nobody was hurt and the event went on without further disturbance. The

police investigated the incident and after a few months caught the perpetrator.

## Equality and non-discrimination

- The government abolished the position of Vice President for Human Rights and National Minorities. The remits of the position were redistributed under various ministries.
- In July, the Government Council for Human Rights, Minorities, and Gender Equality decided to establish a Committee for LGBTI issues. The decision was unanimous and was taken on the initiative of nine different non-governmental organisations. The creation of the Committee and its activity was allocated to the Foreign Ministry. The Ministry has been unable to constitute the Committee up to now. The prolonging of the creation of the Committee seems to be a tactical move to paralyse the Committee's activity.

## Family

- In August, Freedom and Solidarity (SaS) announced it would introduce a bill on registered partnership for same-sex couples in the following months. In November, lawmakers in Slovakia rejected plans by the country's opposition party to legalise civil partnerships for same-sex couples. Only 14 of 129 MPs present voted to send the bill for a second reading, 94 were against and 20 abstained. Previous unsuccessful attempts to introduce civil partnership legislation were made in 1997 and in 2000.

## Freedom of assembly

- All LGBTI-themed events that took place were considered legal and took place with the assistance of the police. The largest one was the third year of the Rainbow Pride Bratislava. The assembly finally marched through the city centre without any disturbances and protected by the police. The only negative incident was a smoke shell that was thrown close to the stage after the march. The event was monitored by some international organisations.

## Police and law enforcement

- In June, the most visible and largest-scale LGBT event was Rainbow Pride Bratislava, which was organised in

cooperation with national and city police. Around 800 police officers participated in the security measures. The scale of the force was the result of previous experience with violent attacks on the assembly. The measures included fencing the square, security checks at every entrance, using a system of security cameras, three helicopters and other measures.

## Public opinion

- In July, FOCUS Agency conducted an opinion poll which found that support for the *Civil Partnership Act* had increased: 47% of the respondents were in favour of the bill, 38% against it and 15% undecided.
- According to Eurobarometer 2012, 32% of Slovaks believe sexual orientation discrimination is widespread. This is slightly below the EU27 average (46%). 27% believe gender identity discrimination is widespread. This is slightly below the EU27 average (45%). Slovaks scored 3.4 on a scale from 1 ('totally uncomfortable') to 10 ('totally comfortable') when asked how comfortable they would feel with an LGB individual in the highest elected political position in their country. This is significantly below the EU27 average (6.6). Slovaks scored 3 on a similar scale when asked about a transgender/transsexual person in the highest elected political position in their country. This is significantly below the EU27 average (5.7).

## Member organisations of ILGA-Europe

Duhovy Pride Bratislava - Rainbow Pride Bratislava  
[www.duhovypride.sk](http://www.duhovypride.sk)

Hnutie Ganymedes

Iniciatíva Inakosť  
[www.inakost.sk](http://www.inakost.sk)