

CYBER
THREAT
ANALYSIS

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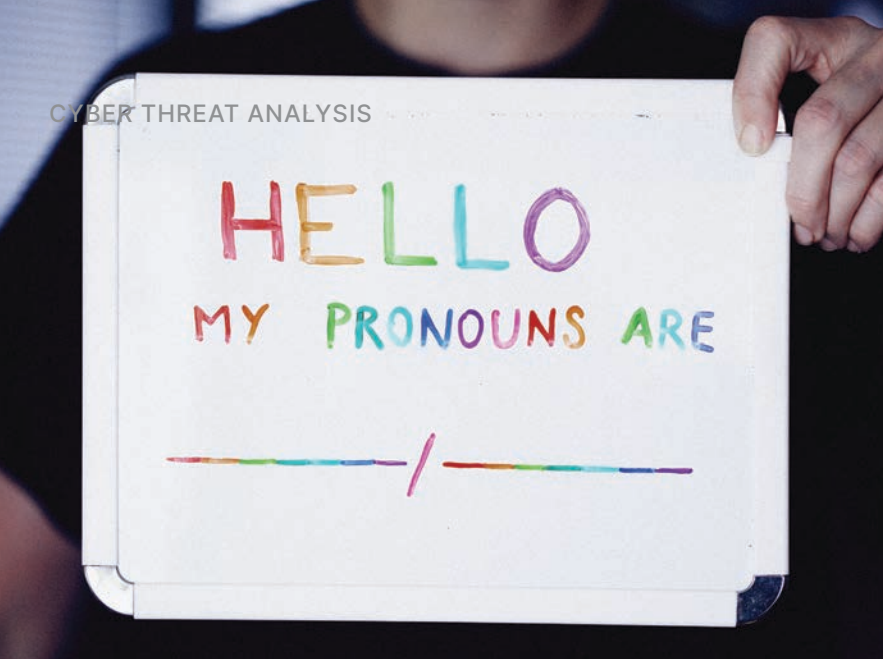
By Insikt Group®

June 24, 2021

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I DREAM
OF KISSING
YOU IN PUBLIC

Pride and Prejudice in Shifting Landscape of LGBTQIA+ Laws Worldwide



Executive Summary

In honor of Pride month, Recorded Future's Insikt Group partnered with Out@RF, the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) Employee Resource Group at Recorded Future, to research the political landscape facing the LGBTQIA+ community worldwide in the last year. Around the world, the progress of civil rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people remains a long and uneven road, one marked with victories and crises, advances and setbacks, celebrations of pride and attacks motivated by prejudice. Although LGBTQIA+ rights have advanced greatly both in popular support and laws passed in many countries, particularly in the West, in recent years, nationalism has also been on the rise worldwide — and with it, growing calls for a return to “traditional” social values. For many proponents of these values, LGBTQIA+ rights remain anathema.

In some countries, openly living as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community can be tantamount to a death sentence. But even in nations where there is broad public support for LGBTQIA+ rights and protections are enshrined in federal law, many LGBTQIA+ people continue to face persecution from individuals, businesses, communities, and state and local governments.

In the United States, for example, public support for same-sex marriage has hugely increased over the last 25 years, from just 27% support in 1996 to 70% in 2021. However, there continues to be legislation passed across the country to restrict the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals. In the past year, some states in the US passed several laws restricting transgender individuals in their everyday lives, such as banning transgender youth from playing on gender-divided sports teams with the gender they identify as.

Many European nations are similarly divided on LGBTQIA+ issues. In Russia, a 2020 constitutional referendum that “[defines] marriage exclusively as a union between one man and one woman” received broad public support. There have also been violence and protests throughout eastern Europe throughout 2020 and 2021, with 2 young men kidnapped by security forces personnel in Russia, the Polish Stonewall protest stemming from a series of arrests and detention incidents targeting Polish LGBTQIA+ rights activist Malgorzata “Margot” Szutowicz, and several legal or government restrictions on the LGBTQIA+ community in Hungary.

The rights and protections of the LGBTQIA+ community in the Middle East have not changed significantly in the past year. Same-sex marriage is not recognized in any country in the Middle East, and homosexuality is illegal in most of them. In addition to these limitations, members of the LGBTQIA+ community face online harassment, surveillance, and censorship.

In Latin America, anti-LGBTQIA+ laws, policies, and regulations have been proposed, passed, and sometimes implemented by some governments attempting to court religious and conservative supporters in the last decade. In many countries, LGBTQIA+ individuals continue to be targeted in violent attacks, and many have little faith in local authorities to protect them or prosecute these crimes.

Across East Asia, there have been limited advancements for LGBTQIA+ rights. Same-sex marriage is illegal or unrecognized in all countries but Taiwan. In many cases, protestors of restrictive laws affecting the LGBTQIA+ community are arrested.

The LGBTQIA+ community across Africa continues to be repressed and targeted. In Ghana, a legislator proposed a bill that would ban all forms of LGBTQIA+ advocacy, effectively making LGBTQIA+ community centers illegal and tightening restrictions on LGBTQIA+ individuals, who already face up to 3 years in prison for same-sex sexual acts under a colonial-era law. LGBTQIA+ members who flee and seek asylum to escape repressive restrictions in Africa find themselves facing homophobic prejudice and abuse while living alongside other asylum seekers.

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United States

Background

Throughout 2020 and 2021, while strides have been made to support the LGBTQIA+ community within the United States, there continues to be legislation passed restricting members of the community. Throughout the past year, several states passed bills restricting the rights of transgender individuals, especially transgender youth, in areas like access to gender-affirming healthcare, the ability of transgender youths to participate on sports teams, access to public restrooms, and the ability to update legal documentation.

Targeting of LGBTQIA+ Communities

Bills Passed into Law

According to recent reports ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#)), over 30 states have introduced more than 300 bills that would restrict LGBTQIA+ rights across the country, many of which affect transgender youth. Between 2020 and 2021, 20 states within the US have [proposed](#) bills that would limit healthcare for transgender youth. Arkansas signed a [bill](#) into law that bans access to gender-affirming healthcare for transgender youth on March 29, 2021. In addition, on May 17, 2021, Tennessee signed a [bill](#) requiring public businesses and government facilities to post signage if they allow transgender individuals to use multiperson bathrooms, locker rooms or changing rooms associated with their gender identity. On April 30, 2021, Montana's governor signed a [bill](#) requiring residents to obtain surgery and a court order before updating their gender on birth certificates.

State senators continue to push for anti-transgender legislation despite failures faced in the House. For example, in May, 2021 the Texas Senate [passed](#) a bill) [SB \(1311\)](#) banning gender-affirming health care for Texans under .18 The bill passed days after the House first rejected it.

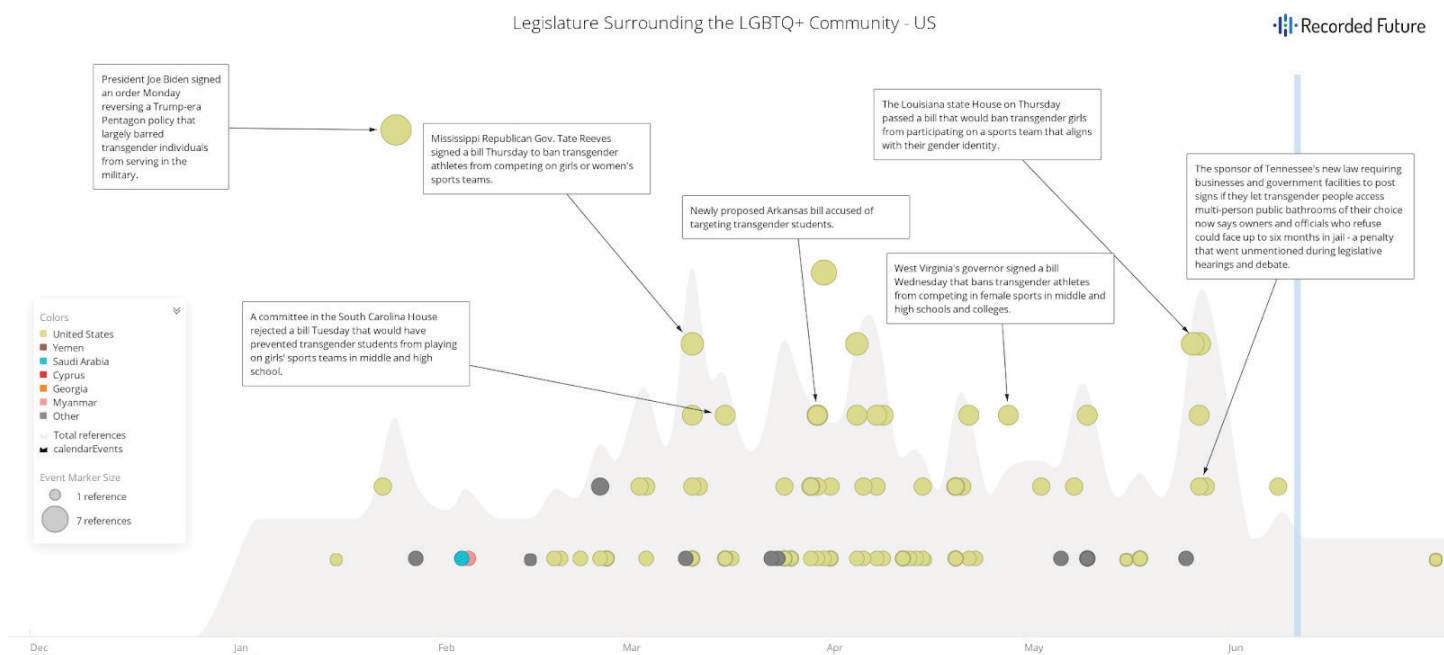


Figure 1: Legislation surrounding the LGBTQIA+ community throughout the past 6 months (Source: Recorded Future)

Participation in Sports Across the Country

One topic that is often discussed regarding these laws is the participation of children who are transgender in gender-divided athletic activities. Caitlyn Jenner, an American media personality and former Olympic athlete who is transgender and recently announced she is running for governor of California, [stated](#) that she is in support of similar laws for school-age children, which has led the transgender community to question Jenner's use of her platform and status. Jenner attempted to retract her statement, although not entirely, by later [stating](#) that "transgender girls should be able to participate in sports, but only if they medically transitioned at a very young age".

On June 2, 2021, Florida became the eighth state to [restrict](#) transgender girls and women in public secondary schools and universities from playing on female sports teams, requiring the teams to be designated based on "biological sex". The bill defines biological sex as the sex printed on a student's birth certificate. South Dakota, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, West Virginia, Montana, and Alabama have similar legislation.

While some states have pushed to prevent transgender athletes from participating in sports, the NCAA [released](#) a statement on April 12, 2021, clarifying their stance on this issue: "The NCAA Board of Governors firmly and unequivocally supports the opportunity for transgender student-athletes to compete in college sports. This commitment is grounded in our values of inclusion and fair competition."

Positive Changes for LGBTQIA+ Communities

While there have been several changes restricting the LGBTQIA+ community in the US in the past year, there have also been steps forward in protecting members of the community. The Equality Act has gained traction in US politics and pop culture, seeing support from [President Joe Biden](#) and musician [Taylor Swift](#). According to the [Human Rights Campaign](#), "The Equality Act would provide consistent and explicit non-discrimination protections for LGBTQIA+ people across key areas of life, including employment, housing, credit, education, public spaces and services, federally funded programs, and jury service." This act would provide the LGBTQIA+ community protection on a federal level. On February 18, 2021, the Equity Act was introduced to the House of Representatives and then to the Senate on February 23. The Equality Act was passed in the House of Representatives on February 25, 2021, with a bipartisan vote of 224-206. Additionally, US President Joe Biden expressed his support for transgender Americans, especially transgender youth, in a social media post on June 7, 2021.

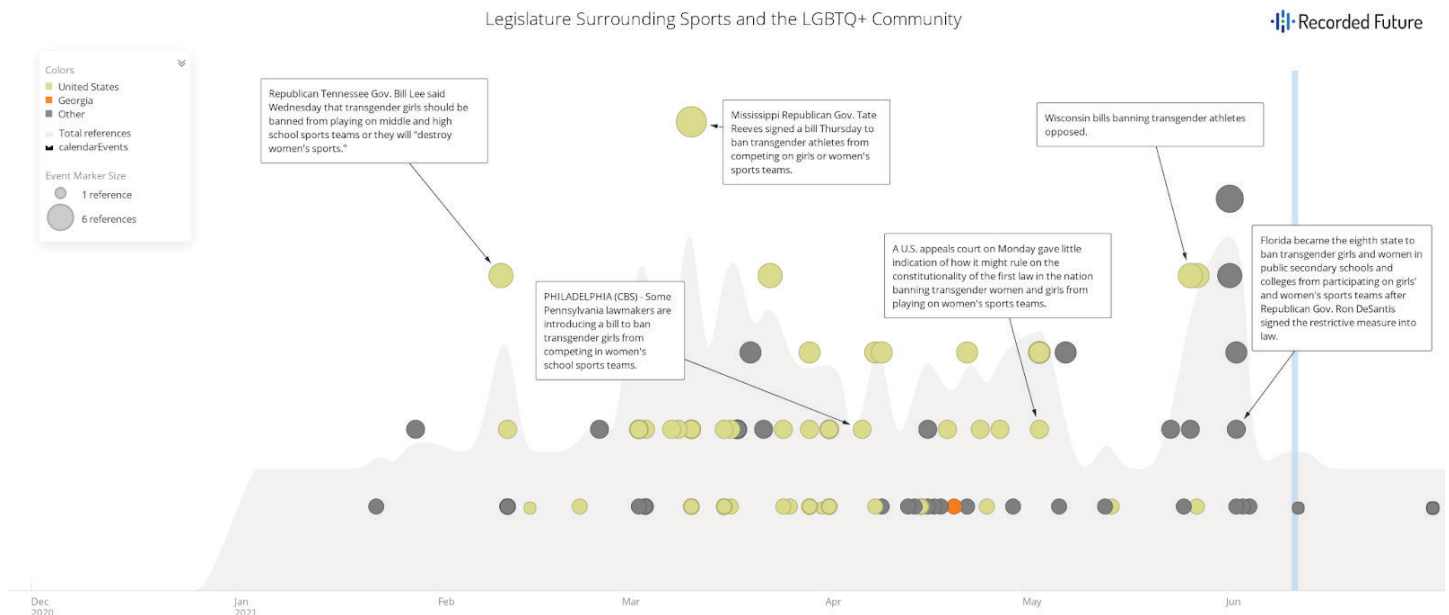


Figure 2: Legislation surrounding sports and the LGBTQIA+ community throughout the past 6 months (Source: Recorded Future)

Increasing Community Support

From American Corporations

Despite [record-breaking](#) anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation passed in 2021, over 130 major US companies have joined a statement opposing anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation, according to a March 2021 [statement](#) from Freedom for All Americans, a political organization that describes itself as a “bipartisan campaign to secure full nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ people nationwide”.

The reasoning behind this growing corporate support may be largely economic. Although Kasey Suffredini, the CEO and national campaign director of Freedom for All Americans, claims in the statement that “America’s business community has consistently taken a strong stand opposing legislation that discriminates against LGBTQ workers and consumers”, [some](#) of the corporations that have signed [this joint statement](#) have also donated to anti-LGBTQIA+ politicians in the past. According to the statement, “Business leaders consistently report that they have difficulty with recruitment, retention, and tourism business in states that have considered or passed anti-transgender legislation in years past”. This alone is sufficient to explain the shifting support of businesses toward LGBTQIA+ causes: even if, as Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett [has said](#), the primary concern of public companies is to maximize shareholder value over social causes, businesses will still align themselves with a contentious social cause when doing so may garner public goodwill and thereby increase consumer retention and profits.

From Individual Americans

From a societal standpoint, a May 2021 [Gallup poll](#) of 1,016 American adults (age 18+) found that 70% of Americans support same-sex marriage, an increase of 10% since 2015 (when same-sex marriage was legalized by the Supreme Court), and an even larger increase from 1996, when support was at 27%.

Additionally, the same poll found that 2021 is the first year a majority of Republicans (55%) have expressed their support for same-sex marriage; 83% of Democrats (consistent over the past few years) and 73% of independents (an increase from 68% in 2020) have also expressed their support. This growth has also been observed across age groups, with all age groups expressing the most support to date.

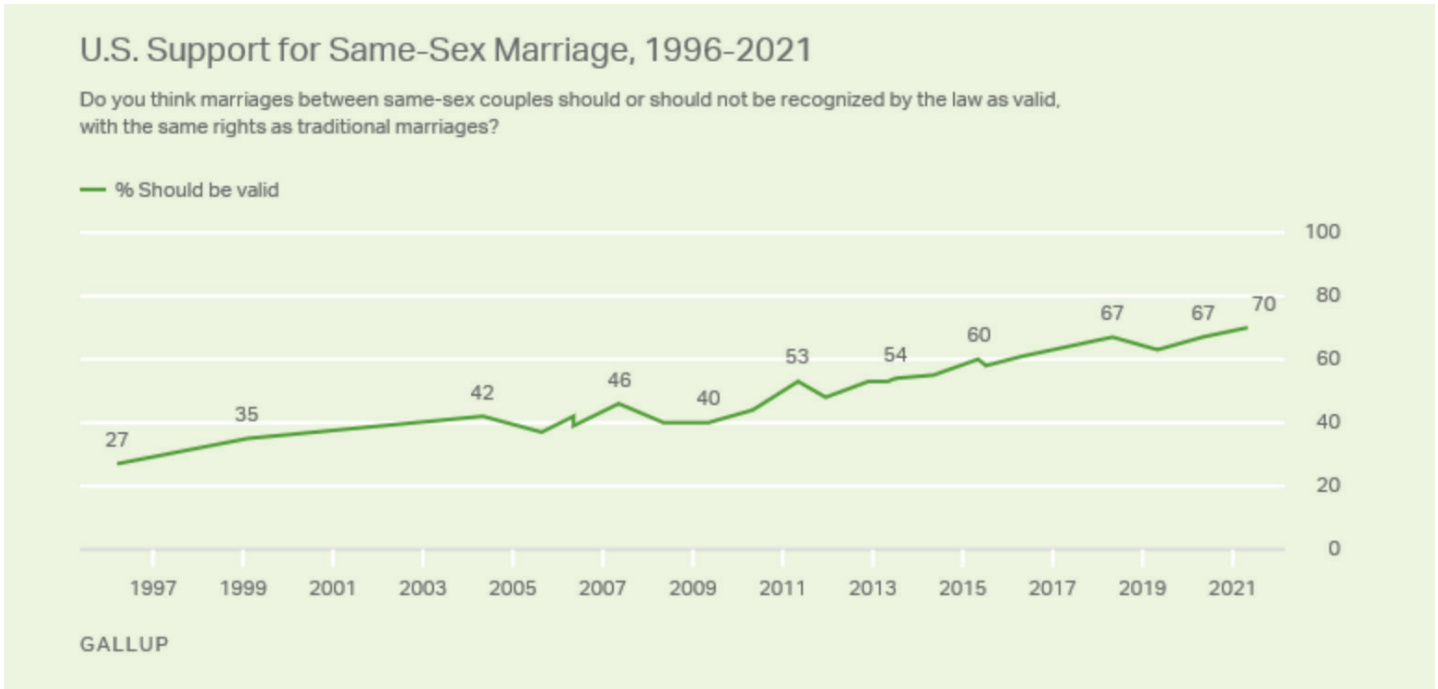


Figure 3: Increase of support for same-sex marriage in US between 1996 and 2021 (Source: [Gallup](#))

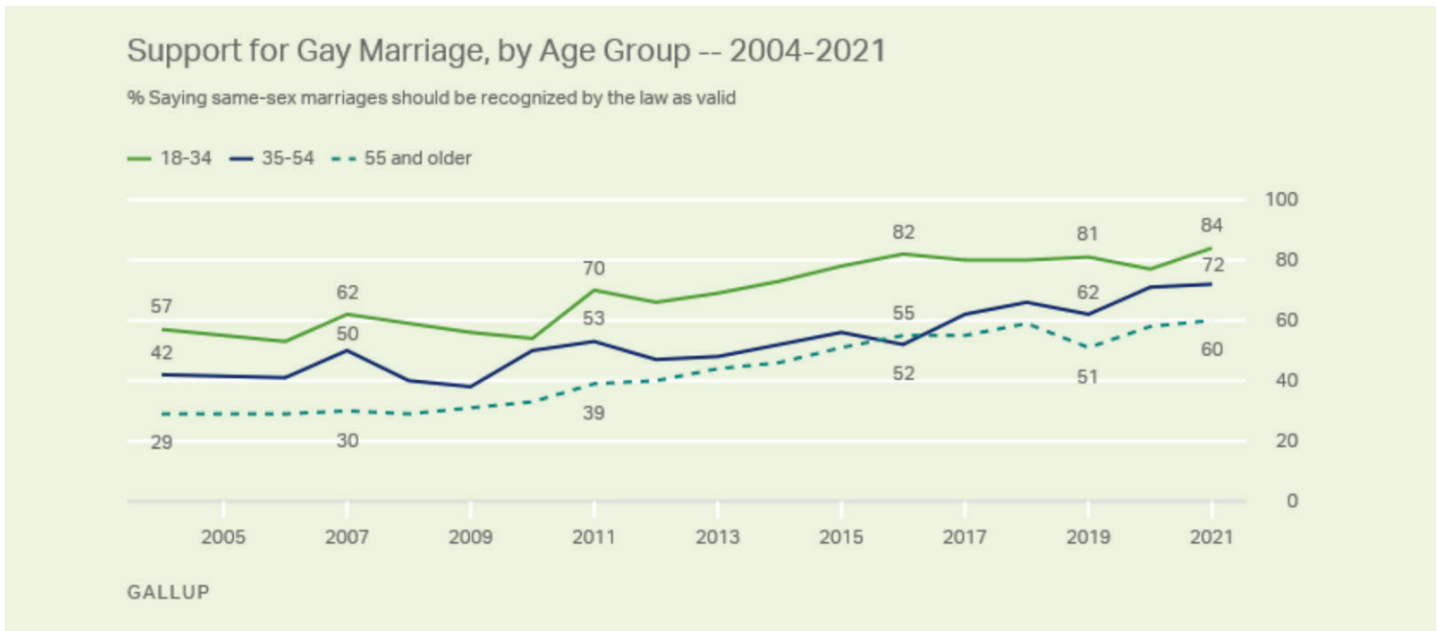


Figure 4: Increase in support for same-sex marriage across age groups (Source: [Gallup](#))



Eastern Europe

Background

The legal rights and protections for the LGBTQIA+ community in Eastern Europe vary from nation to nation. This unequal application of civil rights has affected the social and economic landscape of the region. According to one industry [study](#), there has been an [exodus](#) of people from some nations whose laws are oppressive to those in the LGBTQIA+ community, and discrimination has depressed economic growth by 2% annually in the region.

Targeting of LGBTQIA+ Communities

Russia

In July 2020, Russian voters largely supported a constitutional referendum that allowed Vladimir Putin to run for 2 more presidential terms and constitutionally outlawed same-sex marriage. The [adoption](#) of the referendum, which “[defines] marriage exclusively as a union between one man and one woman”, represents part of an ongoing campaign against the community in Russia. Other repressive measures, such as the “gay propaganda law” (a 2013 law that bans the dissemination of “propaganda on non-traditional sexual relations”), continue to stifle free expression for both [individuals](#) and [businesses](#) in Russia. In addition to the efforts to criminalize speech, Russian government authorities with the Investigative Committee, a federal anti-corruption oversight body, had [planned](#) to arrest gay fathers in Russia under child trafficking laws and “allegedly [threatened] to place their children in foster care for the duration of the investigation”. Oksana Pushkina, a Russian legislative official with the State Duma’s Committee on Family, Women, and Children’s Issues, petitioned the Russian Prosecutor General in relation to the case and sought to protect the men and their children from “lawlessness and obscurantism”. The effort has been part of an ongoing [assault](#) against LGBTQIA+ families and the community’s civil rights in Russia.

The systematic condemnation of the LGBTQIA+ community often leads to violence, with some of the most egregious cases of violent attacks conducted by officials in the Russian republic of Chechnya. On February 5, 2021, 2 young men — Salekh Magamadov, 20, and Ismail Isteyev, 17 — were kidnapped by security forces personnel from a safe house in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. Rights advocates with the Russian LGBT Network had previously helped the men escape torture at the hands of security forces in Chechnya. According to open-source [reporting](#), the pair were arrested by Russian law enforcement and handed over to Chechen security forces; however, their whereabouts were unknown to the Russian LGBT Network, who opened a case seeking their safe return. The danger Magamadov and Isteyev face cannot be understated, as the Chechen government has engaged in [torture](#) and [extrajudicial killings](#) of gay men and an ongoing campaign of repression against the LGBTQIA+ community, which has prompted limited European Union (EU) [sanctions](#).

Poland

ILGA-Europe, an international gay rights organization, currently [ranks](#) Poland among the lowest of all nations in Europe regarding LGBTQIA+ rights. In Poland, the LGBTQIA+ community faces harsh discrimination, with both the Polish government under the Law and Justice (PiS) party and the Roman Catholic Church in the region enabling systemic oppression. At least a third of the country has been [declared](#) an “LGBT Free Zone”, as visualized by the Atlas of Hate [map](#). According to a 2021 ILGA-Europe [report](#), “Trucks with homophobic banners and audio claiming a link between homosexuality and pedophilia began driving in public spaces this year.” Such repressive tactics have [led](#) many Polish LGBTQIA+ citizens to abandon their home country. Those who stay face crackdowns on speech, abuse, and arrest at the hands of the state.

A series of arrests and detention incidents between July and August 2020 [targeting](#) Polish LGBTQIA+ rights activist Malgorzata “Margot” Szutowicz culminated in a mass [protest](#) in which 48 people were subsequently detained. [Accounts](#) of the crackdown against the protestors “allege police randomly picked up people from the crowds marching peacefully down the street, while the force that was used by the police to restrain some of the protestors appears to have caused injuries”. Media [reporting](#) indicates that the incident, now known as the [Polish Stonewall](#) protest, is “the result of a brazen homophobia of the authorities who did not hesitate to use any means of violence to intimidate”.

Hungary

Over the last year, Hungary has brought forth several new challenges to the LGBTQIA+ community. [According](#) to a representative for Hatter Tarsasag, an LGBTQIA+ advocacy group, “In the past year and a half, [conservative members of the Hungarian government] have become more vocal about their opposition to L.G.B.T.Q.I. rights, and increasingly against trans people”.

On December 15, 2020, the Hungarian parliament [voted](#) to “redefine the concept of ‘family’ in the country’s constitution, a move that will effectively bar same-sex couples from adopting children”. The [amendment](#) “would ensure that only heterosexual married couples can adopt children”, while “Single people could gain exemptions by special ministerial permission”. David Vig, Director of Amnesty Hungary, [called](#) the passing of the law “a dark day for Hungary’s LGBTQIA+ community and a dark day for human rights”. He went on to say, “These discriminatory, homophobic and transphobic new laws — rushed through under cover of the coronavirus pandemic — are just the latest attack on LGBTQIA+ people by Hungarian authorities”. The law comes after several years of calls in the Hungarian parliament to push for so-called “family values”, and in 2019, the speaker of the Hungarian parliament “[compared](#) same-sex adoption to paedophilia”.

In May of last year, a few months before passing the constitutional amendment, Hungary [passed](#) a law “making it impossible for transgender or intersex people to legally change their gender – putting them at risk of harassment, discrimination, and even violence in daily situations when they need to use identity documents”, according to Human Rights Watch.

Even outside of legal or government restrictions on the LGBTQIA+ community, other cultural areas have been affected by regressive policies of the conservative government under the ruling Fidesz party. In 2019, Hungary [removed](#) itself from competition in the widely-watched Eurovision song contest. While no official reason was given for the withdrawal, a pro-government television commentator described “Eurovision as ‘a homosexual flotilla’ and said not participating would benefit the nation’s mental health”. Hungary similarly did not compete in the 2021 Eurovision contest, while the Hungarian public broadcaster MTVA [stated](#) that it would not broadcast the event. An April 2021 incident involving a top German soccer club caused a minor diplomatic [incident](#) between Germany and Hungary when the club “sacked a Hungarian coach for expressing anti-immigrant and anti-LGBT views”, leading to an exchange between the foreign ministries of Germany and Hungary.

These developments bring into question the seriousness of Hungary’s commitments as an EU member state, as these new laws and stipulations “[violate](#) Hungary’s obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights”.

Positive Changes for LGBTQIA+ Communities

Despite government repression of LGBTQIA+ communities in some European nations, efforts to challenge these actions have been ongoing. The vice president of the EU Commission, Vera Jourova, [stated](#) that abuse against the LGBTQIA+ community “belongs to the authoritarian playbook and has no place in the EU”. Her comments reflect a European Commission [strategy](#) to support “LGBTIQ strategy and the principles of tolerance and nondiscrimination”. The [proposal](#) “would also protect same-sex families in all 27 of the bloc’s members, and promises more funding for organizations promoting equality”. Jurova further reiterated the EU’s pledge to support the LGBTQIA+ community, [stating](#), “Everyone should feel free to be who they are — without fear or persecution”. According to a November 2020 press release outlining the European Commission strategy, the EU Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, [stated](#),

Today, the EU asserts itself, as the example to follow, in the fight for diversity and inclusion. Equality and non-discrimination are core values and fundamental rights in the European Union. This means that everybody in the European Union should feel safe and free without fear of discrimination or violence on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics. We are still a long way away from the full inclusion and acceptance that LGBTIQ people deserve. Together with the Member States, I trust we can make Europe a better and safer place for all. In this regard, the strategy calls on those Member States that do not have national LGBTIQ equality strategies to adopt one, addressing the specific equality needs of LGBTIQ people within their country.

In Poland, the [Equaversity Foundation](#) was established to combat the rising rhetoric and attacks against the LGBTQIA+ community within the country. According to the foundation's mission, the group "want[s] to be an umbrella organization that can use the profiles of our board members to promote the cause of the LGBT+ community in Poland and fundraise for its support". Additionally, the foundation [plans](#) "to seek international donations to fund organizations working on the ground in Poland". These international funds will be gathered by efforts led by the Equaversity board, whose members [include](#) "model Anja Rubik, Nobel-winning Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk, film director Agnieszka Holland and Antoni Porowski, a Polish-Canadian cook who is one of the stars of the Netflix show 'Queer Eye'".



Middle East

Background

As [noted](#) in last year's report, throughout the Middle East, countries have [enacted](#) laws regarding the legality of homosexuality. In some countries, governments have inherited strict laws from European colonies that banned homosexuality. In other countries, such as Saudi Arabia, anti-LGBTQIA+ laws are derived from a country's interpretation of Sharia law. There have not been significant changes in the past year. Members of the LGBTQIA+ community in the Middle East have limited freedoms and protections against discrimination. In most Middle Eastern countries, homosexuality is illegal, and in every Middle Eastern country, same-sex marriage is barred or not recognized. In addition to these limitations, members of the LGBTQIA+ community face online harassment, surveillance, and censorship. In some instances, nation-states have leveraged their power and influence over telecommunication companies to shut down LGBTQIA+ applications and block websites.

Targeting of LGBTQIA+ Communities

Jordan

According to a Human Rights Watch [report](#) published on October 6, 2020, in Jordan, medical professionals and health facilities are [mandated](#) to report an individual's HIV status to the government. Even though international law [prohibits](#) deportations based solely on HIV status, foreign nationals found to be HIV-positive are similarly deported regardless of the consequences to their health and safety and banned for life from returning. According to the report, in 2020, an Iraqi gay man living with HIV fled to Jordan to escape persecution for being gay but could not access HIV treatment. Even with his health rapidly deteriorating, he could not seek medical attention for fear of being immediately deported.

Positive Changes for LGBTQIA+ Communities

Israel

On June 21, 2020, the Tel Aviv-Yafo municipality [announced](#) it would allow cohabiting couples to register their relationship and enjoy marital rights, challenging the federal government's refusal to recognize same-sex couples or those not wed under the state's religious authorities. This would allow registered same-sex couples to be eligible for housing tax discounts and make it easier to enroll their children in public daycares and schools.

On July 23, 2020, the Israeli Knesset [approved](#) a bill that would criminalize so-called gay conversion therapy practices. While the bill was approved, it still needs to pass 2 more readings before becoming law and has not done so by June 2021. The bill was heavily opposed by ultra-Orthodox members of parliament and caused instability in the ruling coalition at the time.

Qatar

On December 10, 2020, Qatar [stated](#) that despite its strict anti-LGBTQIA+ laws, rainbow flags would be allowed in stadiums at the 2022 World Cup, in compliance with FIFA rules promoting tolerance and inclusion at matches. Qatar's World Cup leadership offered FIFA assurances that displays promoting LGBTQIA+ rights will not be removed.



Latin America

Background

LGBTQIA+ rights in Latin America are stronger than in other parts of the global south, especially concerning employment and housing discrimination, and have seen net gains in recent years. Growing international acceptance for these rights and the work of domestic activist groups have helped propel these gains. Despite this, there remain setbacks. Anti-LGBTQIA+ laws, policies, and regulations have been proposed, passed, and sometimes implemented by some governments attempting to court religious conservative supporters in the last decade. Despite some positive changes in the last year, large, systemic problems remain, such as criminal violence against LGBTQIA+ individuals and a lack of trust in local authorities.

For example, while not directly tied to LGBTQIA+ issues, there has been a sharp rise in violence against women in Latin America. Out of the 12 countries globally with the highest rate of femicide, [10](#) are in Latin America. We expect an environment where violence against women is relatively normalized to be more prone to violence against trans individuals, especially trans women. This will likely become a larger focus of activists and policymakers in the coming years. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights is currently trying a [lawsuit](#) by the family of the late Honduran trans woman and activist Vicky Hernández against Honduras, alleging that Honduran police and security officials were either responsible for or neglectful of Hernández's death. The verdict is expected in mid-to-late June 2021, and a ruling in favor of Hernández's family will likely bolster the efforts of activists and the policy priorities of some states.

Targeting of LGBTQIA+ Communities

Nicaragua

Nicaragua continues to be among the most hostile countries to LGBTQIA+ rights in Latin America. A number of activists, who themselves are often LGBTQIA+, are detained as criminals in prisons. Some have been able to send messages out of prison, describing mistreatment and inhumane conditions. On March 12, 2021, activist Celia Cruz, a trans woman, issued a statement later posted to social media that there has been increased surveillance of LGBTQIA+ activist prisoners held in Jorge Navarro Penitentiary — an all-male prison — and increased use of solitary confinement against those prisoners.

Cruz, alongside 4 other [prominent activists](#), was released in April 2021, and [says](#) that she continues to face surveillance and harassment from government officials. She also stated after her release that, while in prison, she was deprived of medical care.

Positive Changes for LGBTQIA+ Communities

Legislative and Legal Changes

Argentina

On September 4, 2020, the president of Argentina, Alberto Fernández, signed a Necessity and Urgency Decree, which [mandates](#) that at least 1% of all public sector employees in Argentina must be transgender.

Bolivia

After a 2-year legal battle, Bolivia's civil registry authorized for the first time the union of a [same-sex](#) couple in December 2020. While this case may have created the precedent and several same-sex unions have occurred since this initial union, the Bolivian constitution does not provide explicit protection of same-sex marriage, and unions may face challenges either via a contradicting legal precedent or laws passed by the national legislature of Bolivia.

Chile

Chile's conservative president, Sebastian Piñera, abruptly announced [support](#) for equal marriage rights in June 2021. Piñera's political brand is that of a staunch conservative who would traditionally oppose such a policy, and the move was received with surprise in Chile. While this action by Piñera may open the door for marriage equality and expanded political protections for LGBTQIA+ individuals, Chilean activists are [skeptical](#) and believe that Piñera's remarks are solely political posturing.

Haiti

On June 24, 2020, the president of Haiti, Jovenel Moïse, issued executive orders which, in addition to legalizing abortion and raising the age of consent for girls, outlawed employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. While these reforms induced a large domestic political [blowback](#) for Moïse's administration, they have remained slated for implementation starting in June 2022. The reforms can be revoked by the Haitian parliament, and, while the current parliament has declined to do so, there is a parliamentary election scheduled for September 19, 2021.

Mexico

On November 3, 2020, the congress of the Mexican state of Puebla voted to [legalize](#) same-sex marriage at the state level. Though one of Mexico's more socially conservative states, Puebla now joins the majority of Mexico's states in recognizing same-sex marriage. Certain state functions, such as the recognition of marriages, are the domain of states in Mexico and not the central government.

Uruguay

In December 2020, the president of Uruguay, Luis Lacalle Pou, issued a [decree](#) permitting men who have sexual relations with other men to donate blood. Gay men were previously barred from donating blood per a 1999 law.



Asia

Background

In last year's report, we stated that Asia is home to some of the harshest laws targeting the LGBTQIA+ community in the world. While Bhutan finally [legalized](#) same-sex sexual activity in March 2021, little else has changed over the past year. As of June 2021, out of the 26 countries in East, South, and Southeast Asia, same-sex sexual activity remains criminalized in 9; gender affirmation remains illegal or legally ambiguous in 10; housing and employment protections are nonexistent in 13 and 15, respectively; conversion therapy is allowed in 19; and same-sex marriage is illegal or unrecognized in all but 1 — Taiwan, which became the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage in 2019. The decision pre-empted steadily changing Taiwanese public perceptions about same-sex marriage, polling at [47%](#) approval in 2019 and polling at [60%](#) in 2021.

Targeting of LGBTQIA+ Communities

East Asia

Targeted violence against the LGBTQIA+ community remained relatively rare throughout East Asia. However, the lingering social stigma associated with the community led to several notable incidents of discrimination and censorship over the past year, particularly in South Korea and mainland China.

South Korea

In South Korea, the LGBTQIA+ community was the target of pandemic-related backlash in May 2020 after local media [linked](#) several gay bars to a cluster of COVID-19 cases, potentially exposing 5,700 people to the virus. The reporting set off a wave of online criticism and harassment toward the community and [hindered](#) initial testing efforts as those that were potentially exposed were reluctant to come forward over the outbreak's association with the LGBTQIA+ community. The incident is indicative of the continued stigma around LGBTQIA+ issues in South Korea. In March 2021, the country's first transgender soldier, Byun Hee-soo, was forcibly discharged from the military after undergoing sexual reassignment surgery, and she was later [found dead](#) in her home. No cause of death was publicly announced, but she had previously attempted suicide three months before her death.

China

In China, the LGBTQIA+ community faced increased pressure after the government enacted new [self-publishing rules](#) in January 2021. The new rules, which require a registered license to publish content related to current affairs online, raised concerns for many in the LGBTQIA+ community. Online organizing has played a critical role in promoting LGBTQIA+ rights in the country, which only [decriminalized](#) same-sex sexual activity in 1997. LGBTQIA+ rights activists are [concerned](#) that future organizing and representation online could be hindered or outright prohibited by the new self-publishing rules.

Concerns over the diminishing representation of the LGBTQIA+ community in China are not without merit. China has long censored content involving LGBTQIA+ issues and common events like Pride parades are replaced with more minor, indoor activities to avoid garnering attention from local authorities. However, increasing pressure by local authorities over the past year has led to the demise of several notable LGBTQIA+ events and organizations, including China's oldest Pride festival in [Shanghai](#) and several bars, clubs, and NGOs in [Chengdu](#), the so-called "gay capital" of China.

South Asia

Pakistan

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated many of the issues faced by the LGBTQIA+ community in Pakistan, especially for transgender women. Compared to much of the world, Pakistan has progressive laws that protect the rights of transgender people. However, lingering [social stigma](#) leaves the community vulnerable to increased rates of poverty and violence. According to the [2016 survey](#), 51% of transgender people derive the majority of their income from dancing, 15% from sex work, and 12% from begging. COVID-19 restrictions reduced opportunities for these income sources, which led to increased [desperation and violence](#) from both within the community and without. In September, [protests](#) over the increased violence toward the community broke out in Karachi, Lahore, Mardan, and others after transgender activist Gul Panra was [murdered](#) after leaving a wedding party in Peshawar.

Southeast Asia

Philippines

In September, President Rodrigo Duterte sparked outrage in the LGBTQIA+ community after providing a full [pardon](#) to a US Marine convicted of murdering a transgender woman. The pardon followed controversial [arrests](#) of at least 20 people at a Manila Pride event in June for protesting a proposed anti-terrorism bill. The arrests only served to underscore the [protesters' concerns](#) that the broad language in the proposed bill would be used to target anyone critical of the government.

Singapore

In Singapore, same-sex activity between women is legal, but the city-state still criminalizes sexual activity between men. In March 2020, the Singapore High Court dismissed attempts to strike down the colonial-era law, [stating](#) that the criminal code prohibiting sex between men is "not so patently unreasonable." In January 2021, authorities [arrested](#) 3 members of the LGBTQIA+ community for participating in a small demonstration outside the Ministry of Education. The demonstration was [triggered](#) by a local transgender student's social media post alleging that school officials interfered with her hormone treatment.

Indonesia

While Indonesia does not criminalize same-sex relations at the national level, individual provinces and cities are allowed to pass their own laws and regulations targeting the LGBTQIA+ community. However, in areas without explicit bans on same-sex relations, authorities will often rely on anti-pornography laws to target the community. For example, in September 2020, police raided a gay-themed party at a hotel in Jakarta and [arrested](#) more than 50 men. Police ultimately released 47 of the men, but 9 men suspected of organizing the event were detained under an anti-pornography law, which carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison. In Indonesia's conservative Aceh province, where same-sex activity is criminalized, authorities publicly [caned](#) 2 men accused of having a sexual relationship. Each man received 77 blows.

Positive Changes for LGBTQIA+ Communities

Legislative and Legal Changes

South Asia

Bhutan

Bhutan's parliament [approved](#) a bill on December 10 to decriminalize same-sex sexual activity. The bill was subsequently approved by the king of Bhutan on December 11.

India

The Madras High Court of India [issued](#) a ruling in favor of a plaintiff suing police and government officials for harassment on the basis of sexual orientation. In addition, the judge in the case called for expanded civil rights and liberties for LGBTQIA+ citizens in India in the ruling. The judge ordered state and federal bureaus to report back the steps they would take in adopting LGBTQIA+ measures and policies.

East Asia

Japan

On March 12, 2021, the Sapporo District Court in Japan [ruled](#) that Article 24 of Japan's constitution, which stipulates that a marriage requires "mutual consent of both sexes", was unconstitutional as it discriminated and excluded same-sex couples. The Japanese government has experienced increased pressure from LGBTQIA+ activists in recent years, but especially in the weeks leading up to the 2020 Olympics, which are now to be held in July 2021 following delays because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Olympic Committee stipulated following the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics that all future cities hosting the Olympics must not have discriminatory laws. Tokyo passed anti-LGBTQIA+ discrimination laws in 2018, but activists have been frustrated at the lack of action from the Japanese central government. Currently there is a draft bill in the Japanese Diet which, in its prior stages, included an anti-discrimination clause, which was [controversial](#) among the governing Liberal Democratic Party of Japan. The bill has been delayed until further notice.

Southeast Asia

Malaysia

On February 25, 2021, a Malaysian court [ruled](#) in favor of a man suing to challenge Malaysian laws that ban sex "against the order of nature". The laws exist in Malaysia's Islamic set of laws, which are parallel to Malaysia's secular body of civil laws. While not creating precedent or striking down existing laws, activists hope the case will begin to turn the tide in Malaysia where statutes, particularly among the Islamic laws, have become increasingly hostile to LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Cultural and Societal Changes

Myanmar

Since the February 1, 2021 [coup d'état](#) by the military of Myanmar against the democratically elected government, the country has been embroiled in protests by students, ethnic and religious minorities, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Myanmar activists seek to use the general opposition to the now-installed junta to promote the need for LGBTQIA+ protections among fellow coup opponents. In April 2021, the [National Unity Government](#) (NUG) of Myanmar formed to oppose the military junta. The NUG formed with prominent politician Aung Myo Min, who is gay, serving as minister for human rights, indicating the possibility of promoting expanded LGBTQIA+ rights in Myanmar in the future.

Africa

Background

In last year's report, we [stated](#) that same-sex sexual acts are only legal in 21 out of the 54 countries on the African continent and that anti-LGBTQIA+ laws in Africa are largely imported from the British Commonwealth during the colonial era. Little has changed in the past year. Same-sex sexual acts remain legal in only 21 African countries, and the de jure maximum penalty for same-sex sexual acts in 3 African countries (Mauritania, parts of Somalia, parts of Nigeria) is the death penalty, a decrease of 1 compared to last year after Sudan [lifted](#) the death penalty in July 2020.

Targeting of LGBTQIA+ Communities

The LGBTQIA+ community across Africa continued to be targeted throughout the past year, with community centers being closed, individuals incarcerated, and health crises among LGBTQIA+ communities ignored.

Ghana

The only LGBTQIA+ community center in Ghana was [forcibly closed](#) after being raided by Ghanaian security forces on February 24, 2021, just a few weeks after their opening fundraiser on January 31, which was [attended](#) by the Australian High Commissioner and his partner, The Danish Ambassador and his Deputy, The European Union Delegation, and other dignitaries. The community center, "LGBT+ Rights Ghana", [describes](#) itself on Facebook as "a Movement of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgenders, Intersexes, Queer and Allies championing the fight for freedom for LGBT+ persons in Ghana". In the few weeks that the community center was active, the group [received](#) death threats and faced [calls](#) to close the center, with religious leaders and other prominent figures [lobbying](#) the government to shut down the center and allegedly [threatening](#) to burn down the center. Despite these pressures, the LGBT+ Rights Ghana group [stated](#) that they were there to stay.

Days after LGBT+ Right Ghana was [raided](#) and forcibly closed by the security forces, a Ghanaian legislator [proposed](#) a bill that would ban all forms of LGBTQIA+ advocacy, effectively banning LGBTQIA+ community centers and tightening restrictions on LGBTQIA+ individuals who currently face up to 3 years in prison for same-sex sexual acts under a colonial-era law. Additionally, France24 [reported](#) that a survey by the Africa Center for International Law and Accountability showed 87% of Ghanaians favor banning LGBTQIA+ people from holding public meetings and 75% approve of recent crackdowns on LGBTQIA+ rights.

In a further crackdown against the LGBTQIA+ community, 21 LGBTQIA+ individuals were [arrested](#) by Ghanaian police on May 20, 2021, in the city of Ho in the Volta Region of Ghana while meeting to discuss the protection and promotion of LGBTQIA+ rights in Ghana. The police [deemed](#) the meeting to be an "unlawful assembly" and allegedly teamed up with journalists during the raid on the meeting. Ghana has [received](#) widespread international criticism for the arrests from celebrities, human rights groups, and the US State Department, who claimed to be "monitoring the situation closely". At the time of writing, the 21 individuals remain in custody after being denied bail 3 times.

Cameroon

Human Rights Watch [reported](#) on April 14, 2021, that Cameroon security forces have "arbitrarily arrested, beaten, or threatened at least 24 people ... for alleged consensual same-sex conduct or gender nonconformity, since February 2021" among a wider crackdown on the LGBTQIA+ community in Cameroon. Cameroon's security forces [allegedly](#) verbally and physically assaulted individuals that had been arrested and forced at least 1 transgender woman to undergo a forced HIV test and anal examination, which prosecutors in Cameroon have [used](#) as medical reports in the past in court to convict individuals charged with homosexual conduct.

In addition, 2 transgender women in Cameroon were [sentenced](#) to 5 years in prison in May 2021 for "attempting homosexuality" and "outraging public decency and problems with their ID cards" after being arrested in February 2021 at a restaurant; this is the maximum prison sentence under the anti-LGBTQIA+ law in Cameroon. The women, known as Shakiro and Patricia, [told](#) their lawyers that they are struggling in prison and are being threatened daily. Cameroon's anti-LGBTQIA+ law [prohibits](#) "sexual relations with a person of the same sex," but Cameroon seemingly applies the law liberally against individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Asylum Seekers

Given that same-sex sexual acts are illegal in most African countries and violence against LGBTQIA+ individuals is common, some seek asylum in other countries with a more favorable stance towards LGBTQIA+ rights. However, the asylum process is not without its challenges.

A Moroccan gay man, Abderrahim El Habachi, [sought](#) asylum in the UK but faced homophobic abuse while living alongside other asylum seekers from Northern Africa and the Middle East, and in February 2021, he called for dedicated housing for LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers. El Habachi's asylum application and appeal were rejected by the UK Home Office,

who allegedly told him that Morocco was safe for LGBTQIA+ individuals, despite discrimination he had faced in Morocco. (Previous Recorded Future [reporting](#) has also indicated that violence and discrimination occur against LGBTQIA+ individuals in the country.) There are other reports of LGBTQIA+ Africans being [refused](#) asylum in the UK despite harassment, violence, and rejection for reasons such as not being in a same-sex relationship, not being flamboyant or camp, and not being able to prove they are LGBTQIA+.

LGBTQIA+ Africans have also [struggled](#) with the US asylum process given the financial resources required to pay for legal representation and their “upkeep and wellbeing” while in the US, which is a particular challenge, despite the efforts of charities to support these individuals, given that asylum seekers can only apply for employment authorization a year after they’ve completed the asylum application.

Other

On April 15, 2021, BBC [reported](#) that Senegal has one of the lowest overall levels of HIV in Africa, with only 0.4% of the population being HIV positive. In contrast, at least 27% of gay and bisexual men in Senegal are HIV positive. Despite having one of the most advanced HIV prevention and treatment programs in Africa, Senegal’s stance on the LGBTQIA+ community, where same-sex sexual acts are illegal and carry a maximum sentence of 5 years, has led to fear among LGBTQIA+ individuals and a lack of effort in tackling the HIV crisis within that population.

Continuing the trend outlined in our [research](#) last year on the censorship of LGBTQIA+ media across Africa, 2 Nigerian filmmakers who produced *Ìfé*, a movie featuring a same-sex relationship between women, faced the prospect of imprisonment after the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) warned that the movie’s alleged promotion of homosexuality could carry a maximum penalty of 14 years’ imprisonment under Nigerian law. The filmmakers planned to get around any censorship and potential ramifications by releasing the movie online instead of showing the film at in-person venues in Nigeria; however, the head of the NFVCB stated that regardless of what platform the film was shown on, “as long as it’s Nigerian content and it’s telling a Nigerian story, then we have a right to it”. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether the movie was officially released online, and the official [website](#) is not hosting any content.



Figure 6: Advertisement for the Nigerian movie *Ìfé*, translated as “love” in the Yoruba language (Source: [IMDb](#))

Positive Changes for LGBTQIA+ Communities

Legislative Changes

Angola officially [decriminalized](#) same-sex relationships after colonial-era legislation banning same-sex sexual acts was scrapped in January 2019 and new legislation finally came into effect on February 10, 2021. Furthermore, the new law [bans](#) discrimination against LGBTQIA+ persons based on their sexual orientation, and “refusing to employ or provide services to individuals based on their sexual orientation” could result in imprisonment for up to 2 years.

As mentioned above, Sudan [lifted](#) the death penalty and flogging as punishment for same-sex sexual acts on July 17, 2021. However, same-sex sexual acts remain illegal and punishable by imprisonment ranging from 5 years to life, meaning that Sudan continues to have one of the harshest punishments for same-sex sexual acts on the continent. Nevertheless, LGBTQIA+ rights groups have [said](#) that the change is a first step “on the path of reform”.

In South Africa, the leader on LGBTQIA+ rights on the continent, the National Council of Provinces repealed section 6 of the Civil Union Act (2006), meaning that marriage officers and magistrates can no longer object to wedding same-sex couples on the grounds of conscience, religion, or other beliefs.

Other

In December 2020, South Africa's Department of Home Affairs [released](#) a document recommending a change to South African national ID numbers to accommodate non-binary persons. The document [stated](#) the seventh digit of South African national ID numbers, which indicates the gender of the person, "is the most contentious digit for non-binary or transgender persons as it does not reflect their sexual orientation or gender" and to "accommodate non-binary, transgender and intersex persons, it is recommended that an alternative digit or letter "X" be used for this population". This would be a first among African countries. The recommendation is expected to take at least a few years before being reflected in South African law, and there is currently no guarantee of the change being implemented.

Finally, YouTube [suspended](#) the account of influential Nigerian preacher TB Joshua in April 2016 after several videos showing him "curing" gay people were reviewed by YouTube and were found to be in violation of YouTube's policy that "prohibits content which alleges that someone is mentally ill, diseased, or inferior because of their membership in a protected group including sexual orientation".

Appendix A: LGBTQIA+ Rights by Country

LGBTQIA+ rights globally, according to [Equaldex](#).

Entries with * indicate a divergence from Equaldex's assessment based on ILGA's 2019 data set and other research.

United States

State	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
AL	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
AK	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
AZ	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
AR	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
CA	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
CO	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
CT	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
DE	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
DC	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
FL	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
GA	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
HI	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
ID	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
IL	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
IN	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
IA	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
KS	Legal	Illegal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
KY	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
LA	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
ME	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
MD	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
MA	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
MI	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
MN	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
MS	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
MO	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
MT	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
NE	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous

State	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
NV	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
NH	Legal	Legal	Legal	Limited Protections	Limited Protections	Ambiguous
NJ	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
NM	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
NY	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
NC	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
ND	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
OH	Legal	Ambiguous	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
OK	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
OR	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
PA	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
RI	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
SC	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
SD	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
TN	Legal	Ambiguous	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
TX	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
UT	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
VT	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
VA	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
WA	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
WV	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
WI	Legal	Legal	Legal	Limited Protections	Limited Protections	Ambiguous
WY	Legal	Legal	Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous

Eastern Europe

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
Russia	Legal	Legal ,but requires surgery	Illegal	Ambiguous	No Protection	Not Banned
Belarus	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	Ambiguous	Not Banned
Ukraine	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Moldova	Legal	Legal ,but requires surgery	Illegal	N/A	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Romania	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Poland	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Czech Republic	Legal	Legal	Civil Unions	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Slovakia	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Hungary	Legal	Legal	Other Type of Partnership	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Croatia	Legal	Legal	Civil Unions	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Slovenia	Legal	Legal	Other Type of Partnership	Limited Protections	Limited Protections	Not Banned
Serbia	Legal	Legal ,but requires surgery	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Kosovo¹	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	No Protection	Not Banned
Montenegro	Legal	Legal ,but requires surgery	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Legal	Legal ,but requires surgery	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Banned
Albania	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Banned

¹ Also <https://www.lgbti-era.org/content/kosovo>

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
North Macedonia ²	Legal) for individuals over (18	Limited	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Bulgaria	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Limited Protections	Limited Protections	Ambiguous
Armenia	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Azerbaijan ³	Legal but subject to government persecution	Ambiguous	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Georgia ⁴	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Limited Protections	Limited Protections	Ambiguous

Middle East

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
Bahrain	Ambiguous	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Not banned
Iran	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	Ambiguous	Not banned
Iraq	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Israel	Legal	Legal	Illegal*	Some Protections	Some Protections	Ambiguous
Jordan	Legal	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Kuwait	Illegal	Illegal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Lebanon	Ambiguous	Legal	Illegal*	Some Protections	No Protections	Not banned
Oman	Illegal	Illegal	Illegal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Palestine	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Not banned
Qatar	Illegal	Illegal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Saudi Arabia	Illegal	Illegal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Syria	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Varies by Region	Varies by Region	Ambiguous
Turkey	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Not banned
UAE	Illegal	Illegal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Not banned

² Also <https://www.lgbti-era.org/content/macedonia>

³ Also https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/Attachments/forces_out_lgbt_people_in_azerbaijan_august_2007.pdf

⁴ Also <https://www.equaldex.com/region/georgia>

Latin America

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
Argentina	Legal	Legal	Legal	Varies by Region	Varies by Region	Banned
Bolivia	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Brazil	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Varies by Region	Banned
Chile	Legal	Legal	Civil Unions	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Colombia	Legal	Legal	Legal	Limited Protections	Limited Protections	Not Banned
Costa Rica	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Cuba	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Dominican Republic	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Ecuador	Legal	Legal	Civil Unions	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Banned
El Salvador	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
Guatemala	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Limited Protections	Not Banned
Haiti	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Not Banned
Honduras	Legal	Ambiguous	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Mexico	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
Nicaragua	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Panama	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Paraguay	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Peru	Legal	Illegal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Uruguay	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Venezuela	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Ambiguous	Not Banned

Asia

South Asia

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
Bangladesh	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Bhutan	Legal*	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
India	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
Maldives	Illegal	Ambiguous	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Nepal	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Pakistan	Illegal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Sri Lanka	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned

East Asia

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
China	Legal	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	Ambiguous	Banned
Hong Kong	Legal	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	Ambiguous	Banned
Japan	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Macau	Legal	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	Ambiguous	Banned
Mongolia	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Ambiguous
North Korea	Legal	Ambiguous	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
South Korea	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Taiwan	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	No Protections	Banned

Southeast Asia

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
Brunei	Illegal	Ambiguous	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Cambodia	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
East Timor	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Indonesia	Varies by Region	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Banned
Laos	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Malaysia	Illegal	Illegal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	No Protections	Not Banned
Myanmar	Illegal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Philippines	Legal	Illegal	Illegal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Singapore	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Thailand	Legal	Illegal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Vietnam	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Banned

Africa

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
Algeria	Illegal	Illegal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Angola	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Benin	Legal*	Legal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Botswana	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Burkina Faso	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Burundi	Illegal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Cameroon	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Cape Verde	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Central African Republic	Legal*	Legal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Chad	Illegal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Comoros	Illegal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
Congo	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Côte d'Ivoire	Legal	Illegal	Unrecognized	N/A	N/A	N/A
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Legal	Legal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Djibouti	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Egypt	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Equatorial Guinea	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Eritrea	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Eswatini	Illegal*	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Ethiopia	Illegal	Illegal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Gabon	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Gambia	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Not Banned
Ghana	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Not Banned
Guinea	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Guinea-Bissau	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Kenya	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Lesotho	Legal	Legal	Not Legal	No Protections	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Liberia	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Libya	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Madagascar	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Malawi	Illegal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Mali	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Mauritania	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Mauritius	Illegal*	Legal	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	Protections Offered	Banned
Morocco	Illegal	Illegal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Mozambique	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Namibia	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Niger	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Nigeria	Illegal*	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Rwanda	Legal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous

Country	Homosexuality	Gender Change	Marriage Equality	Employment Discrimination	Housing Discrimination	Conversion Therapy
São Tome & Príncipe	Legal*	Legal	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Senegal	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Seychelles	Legal	Legal	Unrecognized	Limited Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Sierra Leone	Illegal*	Ambiguous	Not Legal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Somalia	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
South Africa	Legal	Legal	Legal	Protections Offered	Protections Offered	Banned
South Sudan	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Sudan	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Tanzania	Illegal	Ambiguous	Unrecognized	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Togo	Illegal	Ambiguous	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Ambiguous
Tunisia	Illegal	Illegal	Not Legal	No Protections	No Protections	Not Banned
Uganda	Illegal*	Ambiguous	Not Legal	Ambiguous	No Protections	Ambiguous
Zambia	Illegal	Legal	Not Legal	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Zimbabwe	Illegal*	Legal	Not Legal	Ambiguous	Ambiguous	Not Banned

About Recorded Future

Recorded Future is the world's largest provider of intelligence for enterprise security. By combining persistent and pervasive automated data collection and analytics with human analysis, Recorded Future delivers intelligence that is timely, accurate, and actionable. In a world of ever-increasing chaos and uncertainty, Recorded Future empowers organizations with the visibility they need to identify and detect threats faster; take proactive action to disrupt adversaries; and protect their people, systems, and assets, so business can be conducted with confidence. Recorded Future is trusted by more than 1,000 businesses and government organizations around the world.

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