

LGBTQIA+ life challenges in Georgia



Legal Challenges

Same-gender sexual activities for both men and women have been legal in Georgia since 2000. The age of consent for both heterosexual and homosexual sex is equal, at 16 years old. In 2014, the Georgian state passed a sweeping anti-discrimination law that protects sexual minorities against hate crimes and abuse based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. However, Georgia does not recognize same-gender unions, either in the form of marriage or civil unions and same-gender marriage is constitutionally banned since 2018. Transgender people have the right to change legal gender, documents and personal names but surgery and sterilization are required since 2008.

Activism

Center for Transgender Women
(<https://trans.org.ge/landing-page/>)

Equality Movement
(<http://www.equality.ge/en/home>)

Identoba (<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding/organisation/identoba.9965/>)

Inclusive Foundation
(<https://georgiaequality.org/>)

Tbilisi Pride (<https://tbilisipride.ge/en-US/Pride>)

Women's Initiatives Supporting Group
focused on lesbian and bisexual women and trans* persons. (<https://wisg.org/>)

Resources

- [1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Georgia
- [2] https://ilga.org/downloads/ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2019.pdf
- [3] https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/Attachments/forces_out_lgbt_people_in_georgia_august_2007.pdf
- [4] <https://www.politico.eu/article/georgia-lgbtq-struggles-worsen-under-coronavirus-lockdown/>
- [5] https://ilga.org/civi_details

Societal Challenges

Discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people remains widespread in the South Caucasus nation even as it has enshrined LGBTQIA+ protections in law while seeking closer ties to the European Union. Negative attitudes towards LGBTQIA+ people are still dominant in Georgia. According to the recent survey, 84% of the Georgian public thinks that same-gender sexual relations are always morally wrong and sex work is more unacceptable. Transgender people remain particularly vulnerable, and especially so in the context of the pandemic, as many rely on sex work to survive. Despite its legality, homosexuality is still considered a major deviation from the highly traditional Orthodox Christian values prevalent in the country. Consequently, homosexuals are often targets of abuse and physical violence, often actively encouraged by religious leaders.

Displacement

Social pressures force some LGBTQIA+ individuals – and activists especially - to escape Georgia and seek asylum in mostly European or North American countries.