

Alarming surge in transphobic speech across Europe sparks concern for EU elections

[Press Release](#), [Annual Review](#), [Bias-motivated Speech](#), [Transphobia](#)

Ahead of the EU Elections next June, a new report shows a stark rise in anti-LGBTI, and in particular, transphobic statements from politicians across Europe.

[Published today](#) by ILGA-Europe, the 13th *Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia* alarmingly reports hate speech from politicians in 32 European countries over the course of last year, 19 of them member states of the EU.

There has been a clear accumulation of hate speech against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) community from officials across Europe, much of it targeting trans people, in countries including EU member states Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden.

The vast majority of anti-trans statements instrumentalise children, using scare tactics to create opposition to trans minors' access to healthcare and restrictions on education. This is a broader trend we see in the use of children, with politicians across Europe claiming that limiting access to information about LGBTI people prevents harm to minors.

The report clearly shows that demonising from politicians combined with attempts to introduce legislation is impacting suicide rates and mental health, especially for young LGBTI people, and an escalation in violent protests outside schools and libraries, making young people unsafe.

This fear mongering has directly led to a further rise in attacks. Of the 54 countries reporting in the Review, only six of them reported no hate crime in 2023. In the other 48 countries, much of the reported verbal and physical violence targeted trans people. Only one EU member state reported no hate crime.

Says Katrin Hugendubel, Advocacy Director with ILGA-Europe: "It is in this climate that the European Parliament elections will take place next June. The public discourse is becoming more polarised and violent, particularly against trans people, and the LGBTI community has experienced the highest and most severe violence across Europe in decades.

"The very core values and standards upon which the EU was founded – respect for human dignity and human rights, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law – are being called into question, and human rights, and in particular the human rights of LGBTI people, are facing a strong challenge from far-right forces. LGBTI people's rights and humanity are increasingly being exploited to divide societies, undermine democracy, the rule of law and human rights."

Next week, ILGA-Europe will launch their [Come Out 4 Europe campaign](#), which will give candidates for the European Parliament an opportunity to show how they will support and protect the rights of LGBTI people as elected members of the European Parliament.

Says Executive Director of ILGA-Europe, Chaber: “LGBTI rights are under attack, and children are being harmed in the process. As we witness the rise of political forces that question basic fundamental rights and freedom, the elections next June will be a pivotal moment for the EU, and for LGBTI people. In light of the findings of the 2024 Annual Review, our ‘Come Out 4 Europe’ campaign will call for clear political commitments on safeguarding human rights, democracy and freedom from candidates for the European Parliament.”

[Read the Annual Review 2024](#)



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