



# SWITZERLAND

## ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

A third of Zurich's school bathrooms will be gender-neutral in the future and will welcome all students. Zurich is the first city to introduce such a measure. Bern is also putting in place 'universal' bathrooms.

## ASYLUM

The observatoire romand on the right to asylum published a report on the situation of LGBTIQ+ persons in the asylum system.

The city of Bern organised training for the staff of all their asylum camps on women and LGBT asylum seekers, and the asylum organisation Zurich continued to offer such training twice a year.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

A number of anti-trans pieces appeared in the media again this year. In some cases, civil society turned to the Ombudsperson. In September, Federal Councillor Ueli Maurer made transphobic statements.

A new study among German-speaking high school students found that 40% made homophobic jokes and two-thirds have called a friend "faggot".

The perpetrator in a fatphobic and lesbophobic hate speech case was sentenced to three months in prison and a fine. It was the first conviction since homophobic hate speech was criminalised in 2020. The sentence was overruled by the police tribunal, which did not classify the act as discrimination and incitement to hatred but only as defamation.

A right-wing politician was sentenced for a racist and homophobic social media post.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

Anti-LGBT attacks continued to be an issue, with the number of hate crimes increasing. The joint report by TGNS, LOS, and Pink Cross documented 96 anti-LGBTQ hate crimes in 2021 - 50% more than the previous year. The majority of the incidents took place close to the 2021 referendum and parliamentary action on marriage equality. There was a sharp increase in transphobic hate crimes reported. Civil society continued to advocate for prevention and awareness-raising measures across the country.

A study on LGBTQ youth's experiences of violence in the canton of Vaud was published.

The Federal Council's report, published in June, suggested that data on anti-LGBTI hate crimes be collected nationwide. Also in June, the National Council voted in favour of a national action plan to combat anti-LGBTQ hate crimes. The Federal Council now needs to draft an action plan.

A Federal Council's report on sexual harassment, published in April, showed that LGBTI persons are also affected. It is one of the first state reports explicitly mentioning non-binary persons.

The guild of Bassersdorf, in its annual event, decided to burn a trans effigy this year, sparking an outcry.

In October, the neo-nazi group, 'Junge Tat' physically attacked a Drag Story Time event for children in Zürich.

## BODILY INTEGRITY

In March, a member of the Council of States tabled the demand to ban irreversible medical interventions on intersex children. In October, the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women called on Switzerland to ban intersex surgeries.

Vaud and Neuchâtel tabled proposals to ban so-called 'conversion therapies'. The National Council supported the demand for a federal ban, a motion that the Council of States will have to vote on as well. The Federal Council will examine the extent of these practices upon the proposal of a conservative MP, which was supported by the National Council. The harmful practice continues to affect many in the country.

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Constitutional Council of the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden presented its draft constitution, which would make it the first canton to explicitly prohibit discrimination on grounds of GIESC (SO is also covered).

The Basel-Stadt government suggested the parliament revise the cantons equality act to



explicitly include SOGIGESC.

In August, the Luzern government adopted its planning report 2022-2025 to promote gender equality and LGBTI rights, the first of its kind.

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) recommended that cantons are given adequate resources to implement LGBTI rights. The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended that cantons include LGBTI people with disabilities in consultations.

In December, the Council of States rejected the demand for a ban of non-binary inclusive forms in French language. The demand was primarily rejected because the respective rules by the Federal Chancellery do not allow inclusive language anyways. In June, the National Council supported the ban. The city of Zurich adopted new language regulations which will make non-binary people more visible in the administration's official texts.

The Swiss Catholic Bishops Conference adopted a report in August with exclusionary language about LGBTQ people.

## FAMILY

The first same-gender couples got married in July after Switzerland became the 17th European country in 2021 to introduce marriage equality. All Protestant churches in the French-speaking areas welcome couples.

Civil society continued to advocate for more legal protections for rainbow families, including the legalisation of surrogacy and regulations, recognition of more than two parents, easier stepchild adoption procedures, and others. In June, two important motions were passed in the National Council, one providing automatic parenthood recognition for non-gestational parents in a marriage, and another abolishing the one-year waiting period for second-parent adoption. While in December the first one was rejected by the Council of States, the latter was supported.

## FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

The first night Pride was held in Lausanne and no incidents were reported. Several other Prides were held throughout the country, including in smaller towns such as Chur or Bulle, and with Zürich Pride highlighting trans rights as the theme for the first time.

## HEALTH

In December, the Federal Council published a report based on a study on the health of LGBT persons showing a worse (mental) health status compared to cisgender heterosexual persons. Among LGBT people, trans people reported the worst health status.

In February, a commission of the National Council started a public consultation suggesting an explicit ban of discrimination based on sexual orientation in blood donation; the Federal Council expressed its support. In December, the Swiss Red Cross suggested either abolishing the blood donation deferral period for men who have sex with men or reducing it to four months.

Civil society urged the government to speed up the monkeypox vaccination process.

## INTERSECTIONALITY

A new report highlighted that lesbian farmers face multiple discrimination in agriculture.

## LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

The new legal gender recognition procedure, consisting of a simple declaration based on self-determination, became available on 1 January. As of August, 350 people used the procedure. However, in practice it proves to be an inaccessible procedure for many asylum seekers and refugees.

In December, the Federal Council published a report on the question of recognising non-binary identities, rejecting it. TGNS reacted with a strong statement. The report was requested by the National Council in 2018.



## **PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LIFE**

The Swiss national team decided not to wear the 'One Love' armbands during the FIFA football World Cup held in Qatar in November. Several NGOs called for the overall boycott of the World Cup.

## **POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

In March, National Council tasked the government to research and recognise the harm that has been done to 'homosexuals' and other minorities in the army and to suggest ways for reparation.

Several prisons sensitised their staff on the handling and care of LGBTIQ+ persons in detention through training provided by the Swiss centre of competence on the execution of penal sanctions. The major TV news show 'Rundschau' produced and aired a report on trans women in (women's) prisons, based on a positive example.

## **PUBLIC OPINION**

A new study among German-speaking high school students found that almost half of boys felt uncomfortable about having a gay friend - this rate was half among girls.

## **SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

Waiting lines are already in place as medically assisted reproduction and sperm donation became available to same-sex female couples from July onwards, but without cost coverage.

The anti-abortion movement continued to grow stronger this year.

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