



Resolution 2576 (2024)¹

Preventing and combating violence and discrimination against lesbian, bisexual and queer women in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Despite major progress on the protection of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons in recent years, attacks seeking to deny these rights or withdraw them have increased in Europe. For a long time, lesbian, bisexual and queer (LBQ) women have been sidelined and are now especially targeted by anti-gender movements, which attack women's rights and the rights of LGBTI persons, and attempt to silence them or deny them their legitimate place in public spaces.

2. LBQ women experience stigma and discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and their specific identity as women who do not conform to societal expectations, stereotypical gender-related roles or so-called standards of femininity. They may be victims of physical, verbal and psychological violence, including so-called "honour" crimes seeking to deny their sexual orientation, punish them for assuming it or control their bodies. Other prejudices may also interact, depending for example on racial or ethnic origin, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics, disability, age and social class. Prejudice and stigma can affect access to employment, housing, healthcare, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the private and family life of LBQ women. Thus, preventing and combating violence and discrimination against LBQ women is a human rights issue.

3. The Parliamentary Assembly denounces the instrumentalisation of the rights of LGBTI persons for political purposes and the hate speech targeting LGBTI persons. It deplores the actions taken by State structures to undermine LGBTI persons, including LBQ women, such as support for anti-equality demonstrations and the adoption of decrees or laws seeking to restrict the rights of LGBTI persons or prevent the dissemination of information. The Assembly recognises that lesbian transgender women and racialised LBQ women are subject to particularly violent attacks, and that sexism, racism, biphobia, transphobia and lesbophobia can result in intersecting forms of discrimination. The Assembly asserts that everyone has their place in society and that attempts to impose heteronormativity and self-effacement must end. The assertion and protection of the rights of LGBTI persons, including LBQ women, do not remove other people's rights.

4. Policies designed to protect the rights of LGBTI persons do not always take into account the specific challenges faced by LBQ women. The Assembly supports the protection and promotion of the rights of LBQ women in all their diversity, and the fight against hate speech on any ground, and calls for respect for all identities. Parliamentarians have a key role to play in the fight against hate speech targeting LGBTI persons and can take part in the activities of the Parliamentary Platform for the rights of LGBTI people in Europe. In this connection, the Assembly refers to its [Resolutions 2543 \(2024\)](#) "Freedom of expression and assembly of LGBTI people in Europe", 2417 (2022) "Combating rising hate against LGBTI people in Europe", 2465 (2022) "The fight for a level playing field – Ending discrimination against women in the world of sport" and 2395 (2021) "Strengthening the fight against so-called 'honour' crimes".

1. *Assembly debate* on 3 October 2024 (31st sitting) (see [Doc. 16043](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 3 October 2024 (31st sitting).



5. Promotion of respect for all, in all their diversity, can be achieved in particular through the education system, which should be a force for progress and a setting in which everyone can be themselves. Information campaigns and expressions of strong political support for measures to combat all forms of discrimination, taking account of their intersectional dimension, are needed. The Assembly stresses the importance of providing access to inclusive school programmes that integrate diversity.

6. The national bodies responsible for equality issues play a major part in combating violence and discrimination against LBQ women. The Assembly calls for their role to be recognised and for them to be given political and financial support.

7. The Council of Europe has played a pioneering role in protecting the rights of LGBTI persons, including LBQ women. The Assembly highlights the importance of implementing Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. It welcomes the progress made over the last ten years, including the creation of a Committee of Experts on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (ADI-SOGIESC). It calls on member States to support the committee's work, including the preparation of an initial Council of Europe strategy on the protection of the rights of LGBTI persons.

8. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly calls on the member and observer States of the Council of Europe and States whose parliaments enjoy observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly to:

8.1. adopt, finance and implement national strategies to protect the rights of LGBTI persons, prepared in co-operation with organisations representing LGBTI persons and including specific measures for LBQ women;

8.2. recognise the specific features of LBQ women's access to their rights and ensure that laws on women's rights take them into account;

8.3. implement robust legislation against discrimination and ensure that it contains specific provisions on discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics, and takes account of the intersectional dimension;

8.4. implement the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights on the rights of LGBTI persons, including LBQ women;

8.5. adopt a zero-tolerance policy on hate crimes and hate speech against LGBTI persons, including LBQ women, to prosecute and, where appropriate, punish perpetrators of violence motivated by prejudices against them, to intensify measures to combat online anti-LGBTI hate and prosecute the perpetrators thereof;

8.6. repeal legislative and constitutional amendments designed to restrict the rights and freedoms of LGBTI persons, including LBQ women, and to prohibit conversion practices and forced sterilisation;

8.7. guarantee access to information for all on diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics, to combat disinformation campaigns on LBQ women and to repeal "anti-LGBTI propaganda" laws;

8.8. recognise the parental rights of the second parent in same-sex couples, in the child's best interest;

8.9. recognise the right of same-sex couples to marry or at least to contract a civil union giving them access to the same rights as marriage, to recognise marriages of same-sex couples celebrated abroad so as to be able to transfer social security rights, and to guarantee the payment of survivor's pensions;

8.10. recognise fears of persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics as grounds to grant asylum, and support asylum requests from LGBTI persons forced to flee their country for these reasons.

9. With regard to assistance for LBQ women who are victims of violence and discrimination, the Assembly calls on the member and observer States of the Council of Europe and States whose parliaments enjoy observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly to:

9.1. ratify, if they have not already done so, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, "Istanbul Convention") and to implement it;

- 9.2. implement Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech, Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate crime and General Policy Recommendation No. 17 of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons;
 - 9.3. train police officers, social workers and judicial authorities on the proper reception of LBQ women victims of violence or discrimination;
 - 9.4. finance specific programmes to support LBQ women, including those consisting of providing emergency shelters.
10. With regard to combating prejudice, the Assembly calls on the member and observer States of the Council of Europe and States whose parliaments enjoy observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly to:
- 10.1. protect the freedom of expression and visibility of LBQ women in public spaces and support pride marches;
 - 10.2. support inclusive emotional and sexual education programmes that integrate diversity in schools;
 - 10.3. finance cultural and education programmes supporting respect for diversity and combating sexist stereotypes and hate speech targeting LGBTI persons, including LBQ women;
 - 10.4. encourage the establishment of inclusive policies in the private and public sectors;
 - 10.5. support research and data collection on violence and discrimination against LBQ women;
 - 10.6. run awareness-raising campaigns on combating prejudice, discrimination and violence against LGBTI persons, including LBQ women;
 - 10.7. support non-governmental organisations working to protect the rights of LBQ women in all their diversity and to consult them when drafting policies regarding LBQ women.
11. With regard to access to healthcare, the Assembly calls on the member and observer States of the Council of Europe and States whose parliaments enjoy observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly to:
- 11.1. train health professionals on the proper reception of LBQ patients and ask them to take into account the diversity of patient profiles and life journeys;
 - 11.2. guarantee equitable access to healthcare without discrimination to all LBQ patients, including in medically assisted procreation services, and recognise the importance of mental healthcare for all.
12. The Assembly encourages national parliaments to celebrate International Lesbian Visibility Day on 26 April and to co-operate with organisations protecting LBQ women's rights.