

38th Session of the Human Rights Council
UPR Outcome – Romania
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Statement by: International Lesbian and Gay Association

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Mr. President,

This statement is prepared in consultation with 2 human rights NGOs from Romania, ACCEPT Association and ECPI-Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives.

We welcome the 15 recommendations made on sexual orientation and gender identity issues during the third cycle of the UPR to Romania. We commend Romania for accepting 13 of these recommendations yet regret that the government partially noted 2 recommendations related to same-sex civil partnerships and marriage.

Romania was the last state in Europe that decriminalised same-sex relationships, only at the end of 2001. The widespread intolerance towards LGBT people makes Romania one of the countries with the highest levels of homophobia and transphobia in the European Union. This is partially nourished by stereotypes, framing LGBT persons as a threat to Romanian families. Same-sex couples are actively portrayed by conservative groups as being fundamentally opposed to so-called 'traditional families' or family values.

Starting in 2015, an initiative to redefine family in the Constitution as being exclusively based on the marriage between a man and woman created a serious backlash against LGBT community. This initiative, prompting parliament to organise a referendum, aims to restrict the right to privacy and family of single parents, non-married heterosexual couples and same-sex couples, thereby infringing equality and non-discrimination standards that Romania has undertaken to respect.

The existing small-scale training programmes for combating discrimination and hate crimes carried out for judges, prosecutors, medical practitioners and teachers will fail to produce results in the chronic absence of the multi-annual Strategy on Preventing and Combating Discrimination, and subsequent annual action plans for its implementation. Romania needs to ensure that awareness raising campaigns on equality and non-discrimination, as well as educational and continuous learning programmes, are available and implemented in schools and in training facilities for civil servants and other key professional actors. As a matter of urgency, Romania should implement HIV/AIDS national measures for youth and vulnerable groups and adopt medical protocols and training modules for professionals on providing healthcare services for transgender people in accordance with the WHO standards. Furthermore, Romania needs to update legal gender recognition procedures in order to respect human rights standards.

We express our willingness to work with the national authorities for implementing these recommendations and hope to see Romania taking concrete and decisive actions before the next UPR cycle.

I thank you, Mr. President.