

Travelling? Check out this guide to the most LGBTQ+ friendly countries in the world.

Annually, the *Spartacus Gay Travel Index* publishes a list of the most gay friendly countries in the world. Data is collected and compared in multiple areas, including, but not limited to, civil marriage laws, transgender rights, ability to adopt, and anti-discrimination legislation. Countries are assessed points for positive legislation and human rights support. Countries lose points for anti-LGBTQ+ laws, religious influence, HIV travel restrictions, and prosecution for homosexuality, among other factors.

In 2021, the index featured a western European contingent of 7 countries in the top 10. The remaining spots were filled with a few surprises.

Before announcing the names of those countries, it is important to note who is *not* in the top 10, most notably the United States. It will not surprise most people to note that the US has actually fallen in the index in recent years as lawmakers have increasingly targeted LGBTQ+ legislation. When the first of these indexes was published in 2012, USA was in 38th position overall, with a score of 1. By comparison, Canada was in 4th place with a score of 7. Sweden was given top honours with a score of 9. By 2014, after the same-sex marriage laws were instated across the US, its ranking rose 8 points to number 30, posting an overall score of 2. Currently, the US sits in a 4 way tie for 31st place. Its overall score has risen to 4, as the index has added a few categories to reflect the complexity and scope of the entire assessment.

Now, for 2021's top countries. In 10th place, with a score of 9, is Australia. To be fair, there are 4 countries (Taiwan, Germany, Iceland, Australia) with a score of 10, but the rating system ranks Australia as 1st in that designation, due to some differences in category ranking within the assessment.

Five countries share 5th place: Denmark, Sweden, Uruguay, United Kingdom, and Austria. These countries have an overall score of 9.

Malta, Spain, and Portugal are in a three-way tie for 2nd place overall with a score of 11 points.

Last, but never least, Canada takes sole possession of 1st place. Our overall score is 13 points, marking the highest possible scores in anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, same-sex marriage, adoption, and transgender rights.

Canada has steadily risen in ranking on the index. It now boasts the highest ever score for any country on the assessment. Though we have been in first place since 2018, we have at times shared the ranking with other countries. 2021's index shows that Canada is outpacing other countries to build equity and celebrate diversity.

That's what freedom *truly* means.

Interested in the Spartacus Index? Check it out in full [here](#).