# Which countries criminalise gay lives?



Across the globe, 64 countries maintain laws that criminalise homosexuality, generating international discussions about human rights and social justice. A significant portion of these countries — nearly half — are situated on the African continent, illustrating a regional concentration of such laws.

In Africa, 30 countries have established legal frameworks that prohibit same-sex relationships. These include major nations such as Nigeria, Egypt, and Kenya. The existence of these laws is often attributed to a combination of cultural, religious, and historical factors. Countries like Uganda and Nigeria have made international headlines for severely punitive legislation against the LGBTQ+ community.

In Asia and the Middle East, 22 countries, including Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, have legal prohibitions against homosexuality. Notably, in Indonesia, the ban applies primarily in the Aceh Province, South Sumatra, and select other regions. Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran are known for their strict enforcement of these laws, with penalties that can be as severe as capital punishment.

Within the Western Hemisphere, five countries continue to enforce laws against homosexuality. In the Caribbean, Jamaica and Guyana are recognised for their longstanding legal positions on this issue. The Caribbean's legal stances are frequently tied to colonial-era laws and societal norms that have persisted over the years.

The Oceania region, which includes countries like Papua New Guinea and Samoa, has seven nations where homosexuality is illegal. These islands' legal systems often reflect traditional beliefs and values, which are reinforced by legislative measures against same-sex activities.

The legality of homosexuality is a topic of considerable debate and diplomatic engagement in the international arena. The countries listed often face scrutiny from global human rights organisations and Western nations advocating for LGBTQ+ rights. Legal reforms or challenges within these countries can lead to significant socio-political movements, both locally and internationally. These laws impact millions of people worldwide, shaping both personal lives and broader societal structures.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <http://www.globalequality.org/component/content/article/166> - Lists countries where homosexuality is criminalized, including those in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas.
* <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/death-penalty-homosexualty-illegal/> - Details countries where homosexuality is punishable by the death penalty, such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Brunei.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-43822234> - Discusses the global trend of criminalizing homosexuality, highlighting African countries like Ghana, Tanzania, and Zambia.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-43822234> - Mentions that nearly half of the countries criminalizing homosexuality are in Africa, including major nations like Nigeria, Egypt, and Kenya.
* <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/death-penalty-homosexualty-illegal/> - Provides information on Asian and Middle Eastern countries with strict laws against homosexuality, such as Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.
* <http://www.globalequality.org/component/content/article/166> - Lists countries in the Americas and the Caribbean that continue to enforce laws against homosexuality, including Jamaica and Guyana.
* <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/death-penalty-homosexualty-illegal/> - Mentions the Oceania region, including countries like Papua New Guinea and Samoa, where homosexuality is illegal.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-43822234> - Discusses the international debate and diplomatic engagement on the legality of homosexuality, including scrutiny from global human rights organisations.
* <https://features.hrw.org/features/features/lgbt_laws/> - Provides a global overview of laws criminalizing same-sex relations, including recent reforms and challenges in various countries.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-43822234> - Highlights the impact of colonial-era laws on current legal stances in the Caribbean and other regions.