



EUROPEAN UNION

ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

In July, the Advocate General (AG) of the CJEU issued an [opinion](#) in the Mousse (C-394/23) case, stating that it is not “necessary” under the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and that it is therefore unlawful for the French national rail service, SNCF, to force customers to choose between the civil titles “Mr” or “Ms” when purchasing train tickets. The AG also stated that processing data on civil titles creates a risk of discrimination on the grounds of gender identity for trans and non-binary people.

ASYLUM

In May, the European Parliament and the Council formally [adopted](#) the new Pact on Migration and Asylum. Among other obligations for Member States, the Pact addresses the need to protect fundamental rights of vulnerable groups, such as LGBTI asylum seekers, through screening procedures with preliminary vulnerability checks and strengthened safeguards in the Reception Conditions Directive.

In June, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) published a [report](#) on Asylum, presenting a comprehensive overview of key developments in asylum in 2023. It highlights practical steps to implement such safeguards, including improved country of origin information related to SOGIESC-based persecution and specialised training for national authorities to handle LGBTI cases with sensitivity and fairness.

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In February, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) addressing the overall rise in hate speech and hate crimes across the EU, with particular attention to vulnerable groups, including LGBTI people. The resolution highlighted the significant impact of hate speech on LGBTI individuals, especially trans and intersex persons, and called for harmonised EU-wide measures to combat such bias-motivated attacks. It also urged Member States to strengthen legal frameworks and enhance protections for all communities affected by hate speech and hate crime.

In June, the European Union adopted the [EU AI Act](#), establishing a pioneering framework for AI regulation. It began to enter into force gradually, categorising AI into high-risk, unacceptable risk, and general-purpose AI models. The Act includes provisions to prevent AI systems from being used in ways that could lead to discrimination or the spread of hate speech, and protect vulnerable people from AI-driven biases.

On the 27 November, the European Parliament held a plenary debate on anti-LGBTI legislation and the need for protecting a discrimination-free EU. During the debate there were a [number of instances](#) of discriminatory speech from some MEPs which were largely condemned by the debate’s Chair, who also stated they would investigate the respective MEPs for lack of compliance with the Parliament’s Standards of Conduct.

BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In May, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the [Directive](#) on combating violence against women and domestic violence. The Directive establishes the obligation for the Member States to pay due regard to intersectional discrimination, specifically mentioning sexual orientation, recognising a heightened risk of gender-based violence for victims of such discrimination, as well as establishing the intention to punish the victim for their sexual orientation and gender among grounds of aggravating circumstances. It recognises specific protection and support that lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex people should receive, as well as preventive measures that the States should focus on to protect them.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In May, the European Parliamentary Research Service published a [briefing](#) on the implementation of the 2020-2025 EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy. The briefing expressed concern over persistent discrimination and violence, highlighting issues such as gaps in family recognition and legal protections across Member States. It urged further action to address these disparities,

particularly through strengthened anti-discrimination frameworks and better data collection to inform policy changes. The European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on the implementation of the Strategy in February.

In August, Bulgaria passed a law banning “LGBTQ+ propaganda and promotion” in schools, prompting significant public outrage and protests. The European Commission [responded](#) by requesting clarification from Bulgaria regarding the [legislation’s compliance](#) with EU principles of equality and non-discrimination. Equality Commissioner Helena Dalli emphasised the EU’s [commitment](#) to combating discrimination as outlined in the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy, while the European Parliament’s LGBTI Intergroup called for decisive action, describing the law as a direct assault on the LGBTIQ+ community. The Commission is currently assessing whether the law violates EU standards, with potential infringement procedures being considered.

FAMILY

In 2024, the Council of the EU [continued negotiations](#) on the draft regulation for the cross-border recognition of parenthood, which had been supported by the European Parliament’s non-binding position in December 2023, including a policy debate among Ministers in June. While no final agreement was reached by the end of 2024, the regulation remains a critical step towards ensuring that parenthood established in one Member State is recognised across the EU. Once adopted, this regulation will provide essential protections for rainbow families, safeguarding children’s rights to healthcare, education, and free movement, and addressing inconsistencies that continue to create significant challenges for LGBTI families across the Union.

In December, the Court of Justice of the EU [held a hearing](#) in *Wojewoda Mazowiecki* (C-713/23), challenging Poland’s refusal to recognise a same-sex marriage certificate from Germany. The case could establish a key precedent for the freedom of movement and legal recognition of same-sex couples in Member States lacking legal frameworks for such unions. The Advocate General’s opinion on the case is expected in April 2025.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In November, the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) [held a hearing](#) in the infringement case C-769/22, initiated by the European Commission over Hungary’s anti-LGBTI legislation introduced in 2021 and censoring inclusive sex education, equating LGBTI “lifestyles” to paedophilia, blocking adoption for LGBTI couples and restricting content in media and advertising. Eleven Member States intervened at the hearing in support of the Commission’s position that Hungary has seriously and blatantly violated core EU values and other EU law provisions by passing legislation that stigmatises the LGBTI community under the guise of “child protection”. The Advocate General of the CJEU is expected to deliver her opinion on the case on 5 June 2025.

DATA COLLECTION

In May, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) [published](#) its third LGBTIQ survey, which revealed that while discrimination against LGBTIQ people has decreased slightly since 2019, violence and harassment have sharply increased, particularly against trans and intersex individuals. The survey highlighted alarming rates of bullying in schools, with two-thirds of respondents reporting harassment during their education, and found that over half of respondents faced harassment in daily life, reflecting persistent challenges despite some progress. Almost two-thirds of survey respondents (63%) said that they often or always encounter online statements calling for violence against LGBTIQ people, references to ‘LGBTIQ propaganda’ or ‘gender ideology’, references to LGBTIQ people posing a sexual threat or a threat to ‘traditional values’, considering LGBTIQ people to be ‘unnatural’ or mentally ill, and other forms of hatred.

FOREIGN POLICY

In November 2024 the European Commission published its annual [Enlargement Package](#). Following the 26 October elections in Georgia, the ruling party decided to suspend EU accession negotiations until 2028. There have been large protests in response to both this decision, the disputed election results and the ongoing crackdown on opposition, civil society and human rights defenders, including LGBTI. As Montenegro starts to close chapters of its accession negotiations, the EU insists on the implementation of European court judgements, including the case law of the ECtHR, which is particularly relevant as regards standards for legal gender recognition and equality for rainbow families.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In May, the European Parliament's LGBTI Intergroup published five [briefings](#) summarising its work from 2019 to 2024. The briefings highlighted key achievements, including advancing LGBTI rights within the EU, addressing discrimination, and advocating for equality globally. They also outlined priorities for the next legislative term, reinforcing the Intergroup's role as a critical driver of institutional support for the LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy and related initiatives.

On IDAHOBIT, the Belgian presidency of the EU Council organised an international [conference](#) on LGBTI equality in Brussels. During the event, Member States signed a declaration committing to respect, implement, and defend the human rights of LGBTI people. This declaration reaffirmed their dedication to building an 'Equality Union' and advancing equality across the European Union.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

In February, the European Parliament adopted the anti-SLAPP Directive which sets minimum standards for protecting public watchdogs against abusive litigation in the form of SLAPPs (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation). The Council [adopted](#) it in March, and now Member States are transposing the Directive into national legislation. The Coalition Against SLAPPs in Europe (CASE), of which ILGA-Europe is a member, is now working at national level to ensure effective transposition of the Directive and further [recommended measures](#).

In July, the European Commission [published](#) its annual rule of law report, for the first time including accession countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

In September, the Advocate General of the CJEU issued an [opinion](#) in the Deldits (C-247/23) case, urging Hungary to correct the gender marker of a trans refugee in its asylum registry under the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The opinion clarified that proof of surgical intervention cannot be required to rectify gender markers in national registries. A final CJEU decision is expected in 2025, potentially influencing legal gender recognition policies across the EU.

In October, the CJEU [ruled](#) in case C-4/23 Mirin that Romania must recognise the gender and name changes of a British-Romanian trans man who obtained legal gender recognition in the UK. The Court affirmed that refusing such recognition violates EU principles of free movement and right to private and family life, setting a precedent for mutual recognition of legal gender recognition decisions across Member States.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LIFE

In June, elections for the European Parliament resulted in the selection of 705 MEPs for the 2024–2029 term. 164 MEPs, comprising nearly a quarter of the new Parliament, signed ILGA-Europe's [pledge](#) to protect LGBTI rights, committing to advancing equality and combating discrimination across the EU.