

Legal Gender Recognition

ALBANIA

During the Universal Periodic Review process, Albania rejected a [recommendation](#) to establish legal gender recognition based on self-identification (see also under Equality and non-discrimination)

According to the 2024-2025 [survey](#) of Aleanca LGBTI, among respondents identifying as transgender or non-binary, only two individuals were able to consult a doctor about hormone therapy or other gender-affirming medical interventions during the past year, while over 90% reported having no access to such care.

In 2025, trans activist Luana Myrto, supported by the Albanian Helsinki Committee, began pursuing legal action against the civil registry for refusing to amend her gender marker. The case stemmed from the fact that - although trans people in Albania are theoretically entitled to the same social policy benefits as other citizens - the absence of a Law on Gender Identity significantly limits their ability to fully exercise these rights as there is no legal mechanism to change gender marker on official documents or to update one's name in accordance with their gender identity.

ANDORRA

In July, concerns were raised about the continued delay in publishing the decree regulating access to hormonal treatments in Andorra. The lack of a clear regulatory framework was highlighted as posing serious risks, as some trans people reportedly begin hormonal treatments without medical supervision.

These concerns were outlined in the same civil society [submission](#) to Andorra's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) by NGOs Diversand and Stop Violències, which called on the Andorran government to publish the decree without further delay. (See also under Human Rights Defenders)

ARMENIA

In April, The Right Side NGO [launched](#) a strategic litigation case seeking to compel the authorities to issue an administrative act allowing the correction of the gender entry in a birth registration record. The lawsuit, submitted to the Administrative Court of Armenia on 3 April 2025, was accepted for

examination. It concerns a trans applicant whose request to amend the gender marker in their passport had been refused by the competent administrative body.

In 2025, civil society reiterated that the lack of formal mechanisms for changing gender markers on official documents generates daily obstacles for trans persons in employment, banking, healthcare, and travel. As a result, many face discrimination, forced outing, and denial of essential services.

Although name changes are possible under the Law on Civil Status Acts Registration, the law does not provide any procedure for legal gender recognition. In practice, trans people are often required to undergo psychiatric evaluation or medical procedures to access rights that should be rooted in self-determination.

AUSTRIA

In January, Austria's Higher Administrative Court (VwGH) [overturned](#) a decision by the Vienna Administrative Court that had allowed a trans person to delete their gender entry from the civil registry. The VwGH rejected the request, asserting that gender registration is fundamentally based on biological and physical sex. The person concerned has since announced plans to appeal the ruling to the Constitutional Court.

In November, the right-wing Freedom Party (FPÖ) presented a [motion](#) to amend the constitution to recognise only two genders, arguing that the measure was necessary to "return to biological reality." The motion was dismissed by the majority of the parliament.

BELARUS

In June, a ['Gender Transition Commission'](#) examined the applications of 30 trans people seeking trans-specific healthcare and/or legal gender recognition, leading to only eight approvals. The date of the meeting was announced only a few days in advance, making preparation difficult and adding psychological strain.

Further, participants reported that the methods remained outdated and discriminatory, with

members asking inappropriate and humiliating questions about intimate life, everyday habits, alcohol preferences, and even physiological details. Applicants were also unexpectedly required to retake psychological tests that are typically conducted during initial registration. Explanations given for refusals were vague and subjective, often resting on arbitrary judgments about "inappropriate" personal qualities rather than objective standards.

In September, the Ministry of Health of Belarus amended the rules governing legal gender recognition procedures and changed the composition of the Gender Transition Commission, removing a sexologist and replacing this role with a psychiatrist-narcologist.

In December, a Gender Transition Commission meeting in Minsk examined applications of approximately 36 trans applicants seeking trans-specific healthcare and/or legal gender recognition, resulting in 16 approvals. The meeting date was announced one week in advance, and at least two applicants were unable to attend due to the short notice.

BELGIUM

In April, Interior Minister Bernard Quintin (MR) publicly proposed not introducing a third gender option ("X") on identity cards but instead allowing non-binary people to request the removal of the gender marker. The proposal would establish two types of ID cards: one displaying the gender marker (M/F) by default, and another without any gender indication available upon request. The proposal follows years of political deadlock and a 2019 Constitutional Court ruling which found the lack of recognition for non-binary people unconstitutional. LGBTI organisations criticised the proposal as inadequate, stressing that it does not provide full legal recognition of non-binary identities and could expose individuals to discrimination, particularly in countries hostile to LGBTI rights.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In May, the Cantonal Court of Sarajevo issued a decision in favour of a trans woman whose legal gender recognition approval was declared dependent, by administrative authorities, on her divorcing her wife. Despite the ruling, administrative

authorities still refused to allow the procedure to take place, leading the applicant to challenge the decision once more in front of the Cantonal Court.

BULGARIA

In May, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) held a hearing in the Shipov case (C-43/24). The case was brought by a Bulgarian trans woman living in Italy, whose repeated attempts to amend her gender marker and name on official Bulgarian documents were denied by national courts, creating issues in accessing healthcare, education, employment, housing, welfare, and even exercising her freedom of movement within the EU. This case comes against a backdrop of repeated condemnations from the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), which ruled that Bulgaria was in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights for failing to ensure quick, transparent, and accessible gender recognition procedures. Nonetheless, Bulgaria's Supreme Court issued a binding interpretative decision in 2023, declaring that national law does not permit courts to authorize a change of sex, name, or personal identification number for trans people in the civil register.

In September, CJEU Advocate General Jean-Richard de la Tour presented an opinion on the case, stressing that Member States are obliged to legally recognise the gender identity of their citizens and to reflect this in civil status documents, regardless of whether the person has undergone surgical interventions. He argued that if a trans person cannot obtain an identity document reflecting their gender identity, this constitutes a restriction on the fundamental rights enshrined in EU doctrine - among which the right to free movement. Further, he also underscored that the condition of surgical operation as a prerequisite for recognition of gender reassignment violates the right to personal integrity and the right to private life.

CZECHIA

In February, the Czech government discussed, but did not adopt a formal position on a draft law regulating legal gender recognition. The bill responds to a 2023 Constitutional Court ruling that abolished the requirement of surgery or sterilisation for legal gender recognition. The proposed law would allow

people over 18 to apply for legal gender recognition by making a personal declaration at a registry office, supported by medical certificates confirming their trans identity, the approval by an expert committee under the Ministry of Health, and a mandatory one-year waiting period before registration. The bill received largely negative feedback during the comment procedure, with ministries of Education, Interior, and Health, as well as the Commissioner for Human Rights, voicing strong objections, particularly concerning regulation of hormonal treatment and its effects on reproductive rights.

In June, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruled that Czechia's legal requirement for sterilisation as a condition for legal gender recognition violates the rights of trans people. The case concerned a non-binary person who had spent more than a decade seeking legal gender recognition and a change to their personal identification number without undergoing surgery. The Court found this requirement to be a breach of the right to private life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

In June the Czech Ministry of Health issued a new methodology allowing legal gender recognition without requiring surgery or hormonal treatment, effective from July. The methodology was developed in response to a 2023 Constitutional Court ruling which deemed the legal requirement for surgical intervention and sterilisation incompatible with human dignity. Under the new rules, a certification from a psychologist and signed informed consent will suffice for obtaining the certificate needed to update one's gender marker at the registry office. The organisation Trans*parent, welcomed the removal of the requirement but reiterated that a self-determination model would provide the most effective and rights-respecting framework.

DENMARK

In January, the Parliament rejected a parliamentary decision proposed by the Conservative Party to deprive young trans persons (aged between 15-17) of autonomy in healthcare regarding gender affirming treatments.

In February, a proposal from Denmark's opposition attempting to restrict the country's existing legal

gender recognition framework was rejected at its first reading in the Danish Parliament (Folketing), with nearly two-thirds of MPs expressing support for the current law.

In February, the Danish People's Party submitted a proposal for a parliamentary decision requesting the state and public authorities to only recognise two genders – cognisant of the fact that, in Danish, the words for sex and gender overlap. Nonetheless the proposal did not gain political support.

In April, the Parliament passed a proposal attempting to amend the abortion law to lengthen the period under which requesting an abortion is legal. However, following comments in the public hearing from the Women's Council Denmark and the Danish Association of Midwives, the government changed the existing trans-inclusive wording to specifically using the word 'woman' to refer to the category of people concerned by the law. The LGBT Komiteen argued that the modalities through which the change was implemented were not consistent with traditional legislative processes, underscoring that the law represents the first instance in Danish legal history in which LGBTI-inclusive legislation was rolled back.

In July the government issued a guidance note outlining circumstances in which the principle of equal treatment between women and men may lawfully be set aside (for example, in gender-segregated services or single-sex activities). The Ministry of Equality subsequently submitted the draft guidance for broader consultation after arguing that its initial version lacked sufficiently clear protections for LGBTI persons. The consultation process aims to ensure that the guidance correctly balances legal exceptions to sex equality with safeguards against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics.

GEORGIA

In 2025, civil society condemned Georgia's failure to implement the ECtHR ruling in A.D. and Others

v. Georgia (See also under Health), underscoring that the September 2024 'family values/minors' law includes a complete prohibition of legal gender

recognition and has been applied as a basis to restrict gender-affirming healthcare.

GERMANY

In February, doctors, psychologists and psychotherapists experienced in supporting trans and non-binary people issued a [joint statement](#) rejecting political interference in medical practice and condemning attempts to curtail health-related rights for intersex, trans and non-binary persons. The statement responded in part to a November 2024 motion passed by the Bavarian Landtag with the support of CSU, Free Voters and AfD deputies, which called on the state government to advocate federally for limiting trans-affirming medical treatments for minors, including puberty blockers, hormones and surgeries to "exceptional cases". The experts also expressed concern about party programmes advocating the abolition or restriction of Germany's Self-Determination Act (SBGG), which since late 2024 allows adults to amend their names and gender markers without medical or judicial barriers.

GREECE

In April, the secretariat of the University of West Attica [refused](#) to issue a new degree to a trans graduate whose civil registration documents had been legally updated to reflect their gender identity. The refusal cited a decision of the Council of State, but under article 4 and article 6(1) of Law 4491/2017 on legal gender recognition public authorities are explicitly obligated to update all official records and issue new documents reflecting a person's corrected gender and name.

HUNGARY

In late February, the Hungarian government announced [plans](#) to amend the constitution to explicitly state that "Human beings shall be male or female." (See also under Equality and Non-Discrimination). In April, the Hungarian Parliament [approved](#) these constitutional amendments by a vote of 140 to 21, officially enshrining that a person can be defined exclusively as either male or female. The change codifies a binary definition of sex into the country's Fundamental Law, and according to the explanatory memorandum, the new wording bars any legal gender recognition. Following the approval,

the European Commission [announced](#) it would closely analyse the amendment, stating that changes must be examined "with great care and from a European legislative perspective," and stressing that the EU "will not hesitate to act if necessary" should the amendment be found to breach EU law. The Section of Biological Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences issued an [official statement](#) calling the binary definition of sexes "imprecise", which might result in "marginalizing those people who do not fit in these categories (...) and expose them to systemic discrimination in education, healthcare and employment". The [Venice Commission](#) noted that the explanatory memorandum "aims at strengthening the existing legislative legal basis for the prohibition of the legal recognition of gender identity" by entrenching a binary understanding of gender.

In March, the CJEU [affirmed](#) that member states have to offer the possibility to rectify data on gender in state registries, and such rectification cannot be made conditional on proof of surgery. The case concerned an Iranian refugee in Hungary who, despite medical certificates confirming his male gender identity, had been registered as female in the asylum registry. Hungarian authorities refused to amend the record on the grounds that he had not undergone gender reassignment surgery. The Budapest court referred the matter to the CJEU, which ruled that under the GDPR, national authorities must correct inaccurate data relating to gender identity when sufficient evidence is provided. The judges [concluded](#) that a surgical requirement would infringe on fundamental rights, notably the right to physical integrity and private life, and is neither necessary nor proportionate to ensure the reliability of public registers.

IRELAND

2025 marked the 10th anniversary of the Gender Recognition Act 2015, which made it possible for trans people to legally self-declare their gender and update their official documents accordingly. However 10 years on, the gender recognition process still cannot be accessed by non-binary people, trans and gender diverse youth under 16 and citizens in Northern Ireland.

In April, following a Supreme Court ruling in the

UK defining women solely by their biological sex (See under United Kingdom), Irish Equality Minister Norma Foley reassured trans people that Irish law will continue to protect them from discrimination. In Ireland, concerns arose over sports policies, prompting calls for compliance with national equality protections or potential legal challenges.

ITALY

In February, two proposals emerged to exclude trans women from women's sports were submitted: one legislative proposal from Laura Ravetto of the Lega party, and another initiative from Fratelli d'Italia party at the European Union level.

In August, the government approved a draft law introducing tighter controls on gender-affirming healthcare for minors. The text, which must now be examined by parliament, sets out new regulatory requirements for the prescription of puberty blockers and gender-affirming hormones to people under 18 diagnosed with gender dysphoria. According to the government, the measure aims to protect the health of minors and ensure effective data monitoring. Until the new protocols are adopted, each treatment would require authorisation from a national ethics committee composed of paediatric specialists. The proposal also provides for the creation of a national database within the Italian Medicines Agency (AIFA) to monitor the use of these medications and collect detailed medical information on minors receiving gender-affirming healthcare.

In December, during deliberations on the 2026 state budget, the parliamentary majority rejected an amendment proposed by the Democratic Party that would have established a dedicated fund for sexuality and relationships education in schools. This marked a shift from December 2024, when the government had approved a similar amendment tabled by +Europa party, allocating €500,000 for the same purpose.

KAZAKHSTAN

In late February, members of Kazakhstan's parliament proposed a legislative ban on gender-affirming surgeries. The initiative was introduced by Majilis deputy Magerram Magerramov, who called for such procedures to be prohibited in law, using

stigmatising language to portray trans people as mentally ill and framing gender-affirming healthcare as incompatible with Kazakh culture. He argued that allowing these procedures would normalise what he described as "destructive" ideas influenced by Western values, and asserted that Kazakhstan should reject such approaches in favour of what he characterised as traditional norms.

LITHUANIA

In September, Lithuania's Constitutional Court refused to examine a challenge of the absence of legal gender recognition procedures in Lithuanian law. The Court declined jurisdiction over the case brought by the Vilnius Regional District Court, which questioned whether the failure to establish procedures for changing gender markers in civil status records and the unchangeable nature of personal codes violated constitutional principles. While acknowledging that Lithuania has still not implemented its obligations stemming from the European Court of Human Rights' 2007 judgment in *L. v. Lithuania*, the Court ruled that addressing legislative inaction falls outside its mandate. The Court suggested that lower courts could fill these legal gaps on a case-by-case basis using constitutional principles, but emphasised that comprehensive legislation remains the responsibility of parliament.

In October, the Seimas Commission on Suicide and Violence Prevention and the Human Rights Committee organised a joint session on "ensuring the rights of LGBTQ+ persons in the healthcare sector." The session emphasised that accessibility of legal gender recognition-related healthcare depends on legislative changes, as the current provision in the Civil Code does not include protections for minors.

NORWAY

In February, the Progress Party (FrP) reiterated its opposition to the introduction of a third legal gender category. Simen Velle, leader of the Progress Party's youth wing, stated publicly that he recognises only two genders, framing this position as a reflection of what he described as "biological realities."

POLAND

In January, the Polish government signaled plans to simplify the process for changing gender markers

on official documents. At the time, one government bill had already been submitted to the Sejm (the lower house of parliament), with up to three proposals expected, including one from the Rainbow Socialists Association.

In March, the Polish Supreme Court ruled that people seeking to change the gender marker on their birth certificate no longer need to sue their parents in the process, and such cases will proceed through non-litigation procedures. The decision overturned a long-standing principle dating back to the late 1980s, which treated trans identities as insufficient grounds for correcting the gender designation on official documents. The Court clarified that requesting a change in gender marker is analogous to correcting civil status certificates and should therefore be handled in a non-contentious manner.

SAN MARINO

In 2025, momentum has been recorded by civil society in the identification of legal gender recognition processes. Several cases were discussed throughout the year by Associazione 121 and the San Marino National Health Authority which - at the time of writing - completed a draft of procedural guidance for handling requests for LGR and trans-specific healthcare.

SPAIN

In April, the Constitutional Court began deliberations on the Popular Party's appeal against key provisions of Spain's Trans Law, which recognises gender self-determination and prohibits conversion therapies. The law allows minors aged 12 to 16 to rectify the sex marker in the Civil Registry with the support of a legal representative, a provision challenged by both the PP and Vox. The draft ruling prepared by magistrate Juan Carlos Campo supported nearly all aspects of the law and sought to affirm constitutional protection for self-determination from the age of 16 without medical requirements. However, provisions concerning minors caused divisions within the Court, leading the Court president to postpone a vote in late April. In early May, the first round of deliberations was closed without a decision, leaving the case pending.

In May, the Valencian regional government, led by the PP and Vox, rolled back protections in the Trans

Law. Schools are no longer required to explicitly address gender identity, expression, or family diversity, and restrictions on conversion practices were softened, with only coercive forms remaining prohibited. In July, Compromís announced it would challenge the reforms before the Constitutional Court, arguing that they undermine fundamental rights. In September, the Court admitted the appeal for consideration.

SWEDEN

Since Sweden's new Gender Identity Act came into force in July, applications have surged, with the National Board of Health and Welfare receiving 77 requests in the first four days of application. The law, which lowered the minimum age for legal gender change to 16 with parental consent, also removed the previous requirement of gender-affirming healthcare, favoring instead a medical certificate to complete the process.

TAJKISTAN

As of 2025, Tajikistan does not have a clear or accessible legal framework governing legal gender recognition, despite provisions in the Law on Civil Status Acts that formally allow for changes to name and gender markers in official documents.

In practice, some trans persons have succeeded in amending their documents through court proceedings, but the process is widely described as complex, lengthy and financially or procedurally inaccessible for many. Fear of retaliation or stigma further discourages individuals from publicly sharing their experiences.

In June, the Smolninsky District Court in St. Petersburg received an application from a citizen of Tajikistan seeking official legal gender recognition. The applicant requested that changes be made to their birth record, specifically to amend the gender marker from male to female. In February 2023, the applicant received a 'certificate of sex change' from a private medical institution. However, when they applied to the registry office with this certificate, the request was denied, as the document was not on the official list of documents recognised by Russian law for confirming legal gender recognition. According to court spokesperson Daria Lebedeva,

the applicant's attempts to request legal gender recognition began as early as 2022.

UNITED KINGDOM

In February, Scottish Green equalities spokeswoman Maggie Chapman urged the UK Government to overturn its use of Section 35 of the Scotland Act, which blocked the Scottish Gender Recognition Reform Bill from taking effect. The bill, passed by Holyrood in 2022, was designed to simplify the process of obtaining a gender recognition certificate by removing the requirement for a medical diagnosis. In July, the High Court dismissed a legal challenge to the registration of England's first private clinic providing gender-affirming healthcare to adolescents. The claim, brought by a former nurse and another individual, alleged that the Care Quality Commission had acted irrationally in approving the clinic. The court rejected the challenge, with Mrs Justice Eady finding that the CQC's assessment had been rational and that patient safety had been given primary consideration.

In April, the UK Supreme Court ruled that the terms "woman" and "sex" in the Equality Act 2010 refer to sex as recorded at birth, rejecting arguments that trans women holding Gender Recognition Certificates (GRCs) should be recognised as women for the purposes of the Act. While the Court emphasised that trans people remain protected from discrimination under the Equality Act, the ruling confirmed that holders of GRCs may lawfully be excluded from single-sex services where this is justified under the legislation. The judgment prompted public bodies and private organisations to review policies relating to single-sex services, facilities, and quotas. The ruling was welcomed by organisations opposing the inclusion of trans women in women-only spaces, while trans communities and civil society organisations expressed concern about the implications for the legal recognition and practical effect of Gender Recognition Certificates. In August, Dr Victoria McCloud, the UK's first openly transgender judge, initiated proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights. Dr McCloud, who resigned from the judiciary in 2024, argued that the Supreme Court's refusal to permit her to intervene in the case violated her right to a fair hearing under Article 6 of the European Convention on

Human Rights, on the grounds that she was denied the opportunity to demonstrate how the Court's interpretation directly affected her legal status and rights.

In June, the parents of a 17-year-old initiated a High Court challenge seeking to prevent their child from continuing gender-affirming healthcare. The claim followed the parents' discovery that the teenager had forged a parent's signature in order to access hormone treatment. The parents argued that the treatment had been provided without an adequate assessment of the child's mental and physical health and raised concerns about potential harm. The court adjourned the proceedings, with Mr Justice MacDonald noting that the teenager maintained that, under the law, they were entitled to make their own healthcare decisions.

UZBEKISTAN

In June, reports spread on social media claiming that Uzbekistan had legalised legal gender recognition. However, these claims stemmed from amendments adopted to Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 550 regulating the procedure for changing personal data in passports, but only in strictly defined medical cases. Specifically, they apply to individuals with rare congenital conditions, including intersex variations. In such circumstances, following a full medical examination, diagnosis, and surgery, a change in official records may be authorized.