

## Rainbow Digest March 2026

Read all about the recent major court wins for LGBTI rights in the EU

[Newsletter](#)

### EU member states must ensure legal gender recognition to guarantee freedom of movement

On 12 March, the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) ruled that all member states must provide for legal gender recognition (LGR) procedures allowing their citizens who have exercised their right to move and reside freely in another member state to obtain identity documents matching their lived gender.

The case concerns a Bulgarian trans woman who moved to Italy. Bulgarian authorities denied her LGR applications for almost a decade.

The Court confirmed that refusing to grant LGR can create serious barriers to exercising EU citizens' right to move and live freely across the Union and breaches her fundamental right to respect for their private life.

*"Today's judgment is a huge step forward for the protection of trans persons' fundamental rights under EU law, in a context where three member states are now completely banning legal gender recognition. The European Commission now has a strong legal basis to swiftly act against States that do not comply with this judgment."* – Marie-Hélène Ludwig, Senior Strategic Litigation Advisor at ILGA-Europe

[Read more.](#)

### Poland obliged to recognise same-sex marriages concluded abroad

On 20 March, Poland's Supreme Administrative Court issued a landmark ruling implementing an earlier CJEU judgment and confirming that the refusal to transcribe same-sex marriages concluded abroad is incompatible with EU law.

The case, ongoing since 2019, concerns a couple who were repeatedly refused transcription of their marriage certificate by the Civil Registry Office.

Following the CJEU's preliminary ruling in November 2025, the case returned before the Polish Supreme Administrative Court, which has now overturned earlier administrative and court decisions and referred the case to the Civil Registry Office to transcribe the foreign marriage certificate.

The judgment is a victory for the many same-sex couples in Poland who have been deprived of marriage recognition for years and a first step towards equality. It also shows that domestic courts can swiftly implement CJEU judgments, contrary to what we have seen in other CJEU cases.

[Read more.](#)

## Romanian court confirms recognition of trans identities across the EU

On 31 March, the Bucharest Tribunal upheld a decision requiring Romanian authorities to issue a new birth certificate to Arian Mirzarafie-Ahi, reflecting his gender identity already legally recognised in the United Kingdom prior to Brexit.

This outcome follows a landmark 2024 judgment by the Court of Justice of the European Union, which confirmed that EU Member States must recognise the legal gender recognition decisions of other Member States. Arian's case has become a key example of how this obligation must be implemented in practice.

*"Today, on 31 March, we celebrate Trans Day of Visibility, and I am glad to share this victory with my community. I have won definitively before the courts in Romania. This is not only my victory, but ours as well, the victory of those who are still waiting to be seen, heard, and recognised." – Arian Mirzarafie-Ahi*

[Read more.](#)

## ILGA-Europe news

### New call for proposals for LGBTI organisations in Ukraine

We continue our commitment to standing alongside Ukrainian LGBTI organisations with a new call for proposals, offering funding and a structured partnership over the next two years.

[Apply here by 12 April.](#)

### The ILGA-Europe Fund for Racial Justice

We will support organisations led by racialised LGBTI communities that are working to shape current political conditions, bringing people together for collective vision and action, holding ground for political expression and dissent, organising for resistance and exercising rights.

[Apply here by 13 April.](#)

### New funding scheme to support rapid responses to emerging challenges and opportunities

Our Threat & Opportunity Response Fund will resource LGBTI organisations to act quickly and strategically when faced with unforeseen and urgent situations, such as legal, political or other threats or opportunities. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

[Read more.](#)

### Internship and learning opportunity at ILGA-Europe

We're looking for a Conference, Events and Operations Intern to work with us for the largest annual gathering of LGBTI activists and allies in Europe and Central Asia. This is a learning position so you will support ILGA-Europe's work and get training, professional development and experience valuable in further workplaces or volunteering opportunities.

[Apply here by 19 April.](#)

## **Make sure your voice is heard in major research on LGBTI funding**

We invite LGBTI organisations and groups in Europe and Central Asia to take part in a global survey on LGBTI movement funding needs, part of LGBTI Pathways co-led by GPP and ILGA World. [ILGA-Europe will support](#) organisations in using the findings once the results are published.

[Take the survey by 21 April.](#)

## **Join our webinar for allies on implementing the new CoE intersex recommendation**

Together with OII Europe, we're organising an online session on 20 April to discuss the implementation of [the Committee of Ministers Recommendation on equal rights for intersex persons](#). It is specifically designed for non-intersex organisations, including LGBTI, LGBT, and other human rights organisations working at the national level.

[Register here by 19 April.](#)

## **Mark your calendars for the ILGA-Europe 30th anniversary celebration!**

We will celebrate three decades of LGBTI equality work across Europe, and the politicians, leaders, and activists who made it happen, at the ILGA-Europe Equality Fundraiser. Join our celebration in Brussels on 3 June 2026.

## **Latest news**

### **ASYLUM**

#### **European Parliament adopts a new migration regulation**

It leans heavily on detention, deportation, and punishment. Even children and families could be held for up to two years, and people may be sent to third countries with little oversight, including places unsafe for LGBTI individuals. Overall, this moves the EU further away from its core values: human dignity, fundamental rights, and protection for minorities.

[Read more.](#)

### **BODILY INTEGRITY**

#### **The Portuguese Parliament passes the first reading of the bills attacking trans and intersex rights**

The legislative package rolls back legal gender recognition based on self-determination, reintroduces medical gatekeeping and pathologising requirements, restricts legal gender recognition for young people, including those aged 16 to 18, and bans gender-affirming medical care for minors. These proposals would also erase protections for intersex children from non-consensual, medically unnecessary interventions.

[Read more.](#)

#### **International Olympic Committee establishes genetic testing for women athletes**

The new policy requires mandatory genetic screening for women athletes for competing in the female category. OII

Europe affirmed that the policy is “policy driven by politics not scientific evidence”.

[Read more.](#)

## **FAMILY**

### **Supreme Court of Ukraine upholds the legality of recognising a same-sex couple as a family**

The Supreme Court confirmed the decision to recognise that two men had lived together as a family, affirming that such recognition can be based on proven circumstances of their shared life and can be done through the courts.

[Read more.](#)

### **New constitution in Kazakhstan defines marriage as a “union of a man and a woman”**

On 15 March, Kazakhstan held a constitutional referendum further cemented the President’s grip on power. During the campaign, the redefinition of marriage as “a union between a man and a woman” was politically instrumentalised to mobilise supporters for broader constitutional changes. Previously marriage was defined as a union between two consenting adults. This narrative follows the recently adopted anti-LGBTI “propaganda” law, which entered into force on March 2.

[Read more.](#)

## **FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY**

### **Criminal cases over Prides in Hungary have been suspended**

The local courts suspended the criminal cases against the Mayor of Budapest Gergely Karácsony and Pécs Pride organiser Géza Buzás-Hábel. The local court also turned to the Constitutional Court to determine whether the infamous Pride ban complies with constitutional principles as well as international and EU law.

[Check out our timeline tracking the Pride ban in Hungary.](#)

### **Russian court declares Coming Out LGBT group an “extremist organisation”**

This is the first time an actual LGBTI organisation in Russia has been labelled an extremist organisation. A parallel case against the Russian LGBT Network has been postponed again, with the next hearing scheduled for 14 April.

[Read more.](#)

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

### **Belarus adopts an “anti-propaganda” law**

Belarus’ House of Representatives approved a draft bill introducing penalties for so-called “propaganda of same-sex relations, gender reassignment, childlessness, and paedophilia,” falsely conflating LGBTI identities with criminal acts and reinforcing harmful stigma.

[Read more.](#)

## **HEALTHCARE**

## Civil society protests restrictions on trans people's access to hormones in Turkey

On 14 March, civil society organisations across five cities in Turkey issued a joint statement condemning increasing restrictions on access to gender-affirming healthcare, including barriers to hormone therapy such as tighter prescription controls, limitations on availability through public hospitals, and heightened administrative oversight. These measures, combined with broader restrictions to LGBTI expression and assembly, further limit trans people's access to healthcare and public space.

[Read more.](#)

## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

### Voting lines in Italy are no longer divided by gender

On 22 and 23 March, the voters in Italy went to polls for a constitutional referendum, in which Prime Minister Meloni sought to weaken the judicial system. Thanks to campaigning and strategic litigation by Gruppo Trans\*, the voting lines were no longer divided by gender. The lines are now organised alphabetically rather than by 'men' and 'women'.

[Read more.](#)

## Notice board

- Rainbow Mind UK is offering a series of radical self care courses for racialised LGBTQIA+ individuals in Europe. [Sing up here.](#)
- IGLYO is organising two events for young LGBTQI activists: You can apply for the [International Youth Conference on Counteracting the Anti-Gender Movement by 13 April](#) and for the [Activist Academy by 5 April](#).
- The 10th TGEU European and Central Asian Trans Council will take place from 11–13 September, in Ljubljana, Slovenia. [You can register here by 9 August.](#)
- ERA – LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey has a new call for proposals for organisations based in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. [Apply here by 27 April.](#)
- This year's World Pride in Amsterdam between 4-8 August will host a programme for religious LGBTQIA+ people. [Follow and join the Religious Pride's events here.](#)
- UNDP and ILGA World announced the second edition of the International Pride Awards. [Submit your nominees by 17 April.](#)
- The United Nations Human Rights Office opened applications for their fellowship programme to give young professionals with experience in organisations that provide services to survivors of contemporary forms of slavery and/or torture. [Apply here by 15 April.](#)
- International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network is hiring an Opposition and Narratives Intern and a Finance Intern. [Read more and apply here.](#)