

# Watershed Moment as Council of Europe Sets First Standard Protecting Intersex Rights

[Press Release](#), [Council of Europe](#), [Intersex](#)

The Council of Europe's 46 Member States have unanimously adopted the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Equal Rights for Intersex Persons, setting out the most comprehensive framework to date for protecting the human rights of intersex people across Europe.

Today, 7 October, 2025, marks a watershed moment for intersex human rights in Europe. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe unanimously adopted the Recommendation on Equal Rights for Intersex Persons (CM/Rec(2025)7).

Organisation Intersex International Europe (OII Europe) and ILGA-Europe highly welcome the Recommendation which establishes a new gold standard in Europe. It covers a comprehensive range of topics for the advancement and protection of intersex rights, from the prohibition of non-consensual interventions and treatments, access to justice, redress and monitoring mechanisms, tackling hate crime and hate speech, prohibiting discrimination in the areas of education, employment and sport. The Recommendation also covers access to health and social care, right to family and private life, the right to seek asylum, and data collection.

The Recommendation provides thorough guidance to Member States on closing persisting legal gaps, particularly as related to prohibiting intersex genital mutilation (IGM), as well as recognising sex characteristics as a necessary protected ground for discrimination. The Recommendation paves the way for the establishment of clear, standardised human rights protections for persons with variations of sex characteristics across the Council of Europe region.

The Committee of Ministers Recommendation, while not legally binding, is an invaluable tool to guide Member States to advance equality and the rights of intersex persons at national level, in that it provides comprehensive recommendations to States. The implementation of the Recommendation will be systematically monitored by the Committee of Ministers which means that States are expected to demonstrate the steps they are taking to align national legislation with the measures set out in the Recommendation itself.

Dan Christian Ghattas, Executive Director of OII Europe, says, "As the first comprehensive international human rights instrument dedicated to the protection of persons with variations of sex characteristics, the Recommendation marks a historic and much-needed milestone. It powerfully highlights the significant gaps in rights protections that intersex individuals continue to face and provides clear guidance to States on how to address them. We urge States to act without delay to fully implement the Recommendation and uphold the human rights of all intersex persons."

Magda Rakita, Co-chair of the OII Europe Board, says, "We are delighted that the long-awaited Recommendation has been adopted. The importance of such a comprehensive set of measures cannot be overstated, as it sends an important message of hope to intersex persons across Europe that Member States must and will work to ensure that their fundamental rights are upheld."

Says Chaber, Executive Director of ILGA-Europe: “The Recommendation is both groundbreaking and long overdue. By adopting it, Member States of the Council of Europe commit to addressing the critical gaps in rights protections faced by intersex persons. We will work closely with signatory States and LGBTI organisations across the region to ensure these gaps are closed and that the Recommendation is fully and effectively implemented.”

The Council of Europe will launch the new Recommendation on Equal Rights for Intersex Persons on 27 October 2025 at a high-level event in Strasbourg, organised under the Maltese Presidency of the Committee of Ministers and broadcast live online. The launch will also open the #EuropeGoesPurple campaign, a joint initiative with OII Europe running from 26 October to 8 November 2025, aimed at raising public awareness, visibility and political momentum for intersex equality across Europe.

See the full Council of Europe Recommendation [here](#).