

Policy brief on the EU LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy 2026–2030

The European Commission's new [LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy](#) 2026–2030 expands the policy framework introduced in 2020 and places gender identity and “self-ID” at the centre of EU equality policy, while neglecting the sex-based protections of women and girls. Although not a legal act, it guides funding, legislation and institutional mainstreaming across EU and Member State levels. Adopted without democratic scrutiny, the strategy advances an agenda shaped by transactivist lobby groups in Brussels – many of them directly funded by the Commission and highly influential within EU institutions.

Despite protests from women's rights organisations, lesbians and gays, parents and detransitioners, the Commission promotes self-ID laws without age restrictions and seeks to embed gender identity across virtually every policy area: civil society, housing, transport, the economy, health, education, criminal law, family law, diplomacy, external action, asylum and, crucially, women's rights. Yet there has been no impact assessment on women and girls, children and young people or lesbians and gays.

Perhaps most revealingly, the addition of a “plus” to the title signals that the Commission has fully internalised this ideological framework – as if attempting to add infinity to an already infinite scope of identities. The result is not a serious policy document, but one that risks far-reaching and unintended consequences across European law and governance.

Areas of Concern

It is particularly worrying that the European Commission sets out to embed an open-ended concept of “gender identity” as a protected ground equivalent to – and even expanding beyond – sexual orientation under the EU Charter. This approach assumes “gender identity” to be a tangible and measurable category, while ignoring the inherent conflict between sexual orientation, which is based on sex, and the notion that heterosexual individuals of the opposite sex can “identify as” homosexual.

The Strategy largely builds on data from the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and Eurobarometer surveys, both of which suffer from significant methodological flaws. These include the conflation of sex, gender and gender identity, the merging of gender identity with sexual

orientation, and the discretionary expansion of protected characteristics beyond those listed in the EU Charter. This leads to [cross-dressers](#), men who occasionally wear stereotypically female clothing, being included as trans and thus classified as vulnerable females, illustrating the conceptual incoherence underlying the data on which the Strategy relies.

Within this ideologically captured framework, the new Strategy raises a number of serious concerns:

- By promoting legal self-ID without age restrictions, the Commission pushes for laws grounded in feelings instead of reality. This erases sex-based protections for women and girls, dismantles safeguarding standards for minors and pressures Member States to remove parental and medical oversight.
- The Commission's plan to build an evidence base for an EU-wide ban on “conversion practices” conflates fundamentally different phenomena: coercive attempts to change sexual orientation with any therapeutic, parental or educational response that does not affirm a person's declared gender identity. Such an approach criminalises talking therapy with vulnerable children and adolescents experiencing distress about their sex or sexual orientation. By merging these categories, the Commission produces unreliable data and paves the way for legislation grounded in ideology, endorsing what amounts to the erasure of lesbians and gays.
- The Commission's initiative to include “hate speech” and “hate crime” motivated by gender identity in the list of Eurocrimes under Article 83 TFEU is an attempt to embed a concept without clear or legally defined

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meaning into the EU constitution. This is not suitable as a basis for criminal prosecution, and the concept itself is incompatible with sex-based measures in EU legislation, as it replaces the material category of sex with individual self-declaration. Introducing such an undefined and subjective category into criminal law undermines legal clarity, erodes the protection of women and weakens freedom of expression.

- By encouraging Member States, when transposing the EU Directive on [Violence Against Women](#), to classify TQI+ persons as a particularly affected group of women, the Strategy erases the category of sex itself and undermines the very concept of violence against women.
- Amending equality-data frameworks to integrate “gender identity” into Eurostat reporting and national statistics – under FRA and EIGE supervision – distorts demographic data and erodes the reliability of EU equality monitoring.
- Expanded training for police and judiciary on “LGBTIQ-phobia” embeds a prescribed ideological interpretation within law enforcement and judicial decision-making.
- The conditionality of EU funding on ideological compliance is a serious democratic concern and may lead to regional authorities, civil-society organisations or educational institutions being deprived of funds if they question or fail to promote the Commission’s LGBTIQ+ agenda.
- The doubling of LGBTIQ+ funding under the forthcoming CERV+ programme entrenches a one-sided funding landscape and diverts public money away from balanced equality initiatives.
- The Commission’s push for the [Regulation on the recognition of parenthood across Member States](#), which entails recognition of surrogacy arrangements, interferes with national competence in family law and disregards the EU’s own legal standards on reproductive exploitation, violence against women, the sale of children and trafficking in human beings – all prohibited under EU law.
- By tying EU-accession progress of candidate countries to compliance with its LGBTIQ+ priorities, the Commission imposes ideological conditions that go far beyond the [Copenhagen criteria](#) and instrumentalises enlargement policy for identity politics.
- The Commission’s active enforcement of CJEU and ECtHR rulings on gender identity across Member States centralises judicial interpretation at EU level and reflects an attempt to use the judicial branch of the Union to advance policy goals beyond the intended scope of those rulings.
- Through the creation of the EU LGBTIQ+ Policy Forum, composed of transactivist organisations, the European Commission has further institutionalised the one-sided influence of special interest groups. If this platform were truly intended to represent lesbians, gays and bisexuals, we would expect it to also include organisations that advocate for the sex-based rights of women and girls, such as [Athena Forum](#), and for the rights of lesbians, gays and bisexuals, such as [LGB Alliance International](#).

Taken together, these measures point to a broad process of institutional capture, where a contested and unscientific concept of “gender identity” is treated as settled law and integrated into the EU’s policy machinery without democratic debate, evidence or impact assessment.

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