

European Parliament Elections 2024

OII Europe Info Leaflet

What should I know about the EP elections?

The **European Parliament (EP)** gives voice to the citizens of the EU.

It is **elected every 5 years** by EU voters.

Seats are allocated on the basis of the population of each Member State.

The Parliament meets in both **Brussels and Strasbourg**, while its General Secretariat is based in **Luxembourg**.

It is the EU's only **directly-elected institution** and is one of the EU **co-legislators** (= *law-making bodies*), together with the Council of the European Union which gives voice to the Member State governments.

The next elections will take place **between 6 and 9 June 2024**.

While the candidates run within national political parties, once elected, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) can join **transnational political groups**. (Such as for example The Greens/EFA group, The Left group, the Social & Democrats group, among others.)

Read more about the [European Parliament](#) and the [2024 Elections](#)

Why should I vote in the 2024 EP Elections?

1 Because active participation in democratic processes is deeply connected to the fight for intersex human rights

In the journey towards securing the protection of human rights *for all*, one important step is to ensure that the elected representatives **represent the diversity** within EU society, as well give voice to the **demands of marginalised communities**.

This helps to take steps towards making democracy **stronger** and more **inclusive of intersex people**. By using our vote, we impact on **who our decision makers are**, and can ensure that they **share our vision** of what the protection of intersex human rights in the EU looks like.

Democracy and human rights go hand in hand. It is not surprising that anti-gender movements' strategies and actions are often coupled with authoritarianism and threats to democracy and the rule of law.

Why should I vote in the 2024 EP Elections?

2 Because the EP has a role to play to advance intersex rights

The EP has the **power to make legislation**, together with the Council, based on legislative proposals put forward by the European Commission.

The EP can only exercise the **competences** attributed to it by the EU Treaties.

This means that the EP does not have the power to intervene in every single topic relevant for the intersex community. However, it is very important to note that:

- Every time that the EP acts, it is **bound to respect the fundamental rights** as recognised in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
- This includes recognising
 - the **Right to the integrity of the person**, (which includes the right to free and informed consent);
 - the **Prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment**; and
 - **The rights of the child**.
- When implementing EU law, Member States are bound to the Charter too.

Several of the policy areas where the EP has legislative competences, address topics relevant for intersex persons, for example: **Anti-discrimination**, “**Eurocrimes**” and **Victims’ rights**

The **power to legislate** is one of the most important powers held by the EP, because when a piece of EU legislation enters into force, it is binding across the Member States. In other words, it has a direct impact on people’s lives in the EU

However, there are **other significant powers** to consider:

1. **Budgetary**. For example approving the annual budget
2. **Supervisory**. For example, questioning other institutions or examining citizens’ petitions
3. **Elective**. For example, electing the President of the Commission and confirm the Commission as a whole.

The EP can also **adopt resolutions**, that is, **non-binding acts** that nonetheless have **political influence**.

Why should I vote in the 2024 EP Elections?

3

Because the EP has taken some important steps relevant for intersex rights in the EU, but there is much more to be done

The EP has repeatedly taken a **strong stance on intersex human rights**. In its historic [resolution of 14 February 2019](#) on the rights of intersex people, among other points, the EP:

- Condemns “sex-normalising treatments and surgery”;
- Stresses the need to provide adequate counselling and support;
- Calls to improve access for intersex people to their medical records;
- Calls for depathologisation.
- Calls for measures for tackling discrimination, ensuring LGR based on self-determination, supporting human rights-compliant research.

Some of these calls were reiterated in subsequent EP resolutions, which did not have their main focus on intersex rights, but rather on fundamental rights in general, on gender equality / sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This shows an increased awareness of the need for an **intersectional approach** when working to protect intersex human rights:

- **Fundamental rights** - [resolution of 15 September 2022](#)
- **Sexual & Reproductive Health Rights** - [resolution of 24 June 2021](#)
- **Gender equality** - [resolution of 6 July 2022](#); [resolution of 16 September 2021](#)

Despite being non-binding, resolutions are important: they are referenced and used at EU and national level for legislative and advocacy purposes. Furthermore, they contribute to putting pressure on other decision-makers and important stakeholders to enhance the protection of human rights.

When it comes to its **law-making powers**, on several occasions the EP has discussed **amendments** (AMs = suggested changes to the language within the text of a legislative proposal) that aimed to protect **intersex people's rights**. For example:

- **Anti-discrimination.** The EP Committee responsible for the *proposal for a directive on standards for equality bodies* adopted AMs that include the ground of “sex characteristics”, based on a broad interpretation of the ground of “sex”
- **“Eurocrimes”.** The EP adopted its position on the *proposal for a directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence*. Its position encompassed AMs on intersex rights, including one to criminalise IGM across the EU. The negotiations with the other co-legislator (the Council) towards the final text have now concluded, and IGM is no longer in the final text, however the EP’s position on the matter, as laid out in their draft proposal, remains unchanged.
- **Victims’ rights.** In the EP’s work on the *proposal for a directive on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime* some MEPs tabled AMs that recognise intersex victims among victims at a heightened risk and victims with specific support needs.

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————— Candidate Questionnaire —————

Here are 3 questions we have prepared that we think would be useful in gaining an understanding of EP candidate's knowledge about intersex issues and commitment to advancing intersex rights. You are welcome to use these in emails, letters or direct questions towards candidates in your country.

- 1** Are you aware of intersex people and the human rights issues that impact the European intersex community?
- 2** Are you aware of the steps that the EP has already taken to advance intersex rights?
- 3** As an MEP, how do you plan to commit to advance the rights of intersex people in the EU?