



## UNHRC

### POLITICAL RECOGNITION

On April 4<sup>th</sup> 2024, the intersex movement celebrated a **significant milestone** for intersex rights globally, with the first-ever **resolution from the United Nations Human Rights Council** on the rights of intersex people, brought forward by **Finland, South Africa, Chile, and Australia**.

## WHO

### RESEARCH

A group of researchers affiliated with the **World Health Organization** conducted a systematic review focused on medical rationales for so-called “sex-normalising” surgeries. **They concluded that these surgeries risk harming the individual’s physical and mental health, violate their right to bodily integrity and future sexual autonomy, regardless of the level of harm or benefit as judged by others, such as doctors or parents.**

## EUROPEAN UNION

### LEGISLATION

On May 7<sup>th</sup> 2024, **EU Member States** adopted **two important directives**: The first, the Directive on minimum standards for equality bodies, **makes an explicit reference to the ground of sex characteristics for the first time ever**; the second, the **Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence**, explicitly **recognised intersex people as being victims at a heightened risk of experiencing violence** due to intersectional discrimination.

## IRELAND

### HATE CRIME LEGISLATION

In **Ireland**, on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024, the Ministry of Justice approved the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Bill 2024, which **protects intersex people from hate crimes**.

OII Europe member organisation *Intersex Ireland* celebrates the **fruitful cooperation with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL)**, within the Coalition Against Hate Crime which was composed of a number of other organisations, who advocated together for the inclusion of intersex people in this law.

## BELGIUM

### POLITICAL RECOGNITION

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024, the **Belgian Senate** hosted an Intersex Symposium, which included a screening of the film “She, They, Us” (2023), which centers, among others, the story of a Belgian intersex person who was subjected to IGM as a child.

## FRANCE

### ASYLUM

On November 14<sup>th</sup> 2024, **France** granted asylum to an intersex person **on the grounds of sex characteristics**, a first in the country.

## CANARY ISLANDS (SPAIN)

### POLITICAL RECOGNITION

On October 26<sup>th</sup> 2024, on **Intersex Awareness Day**, the **facade of the Cabildo of Tenerife, the governing body of the island of Tenerife**, was illuminated with the **colours of the intersex flag**.

The **Government of the Canary Islands** also ran an **awareness raising campaign** for several weeks on Canarian television and social media around *Intersex Awareness Day*.

## FAROE ISLANDS (DENMARK)

### EDUCATION

The documentary “*Stine does not exist*” (2020), which is featuring an activist of *Intersex Denmark*, was being **used as educational material in schools** in the **Faroe Islands**.

## AUSTRIA

### HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES

In April 2024, **Austria** was **examined by the UN Committee against Torture (CAT)**. The Committee issued concluding observations **calling for an end to non-vital, non-consensual surgeries on intersex minors in the country**, following recommendations already made by the CAT in 2015. The **Austrian Ombudsman Board** similarly shared a call for the Austrian government to end these harmful practices.





# HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES

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*VIMÖ - OII Austria* submitted a shadow report to the Committee, and participated in the NGO briefing session with the CAT, outlining the **continuation of these surgeries**.

### This good practice example highlights:

- ▶ The important role that Ombudspersons can play in helping to achieve intersex equality by echoing calls to protect the bodily integrity of intersex people.
- ▶ The importance of intersex-led organisations being heard by human rights mechanisms.

**CAT report:** [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CAT%2F%2FAUT%2FCO%2F7&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CAT%2F%2FAUT%2FCO%2F7&Lang=en)

**VIMÖ report:** [https://vimoe.at/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/UN\\_Public\\_Final-1.pdf](https://vimoe.at/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/UN_Public_Final-1.pdf)

**Ombudsman report:** [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCAT%2FNHS%2FAUT%2F57968&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCAT%2FNHS%2FAUT%2F57968&Lang=en)

# EDUCATION

In 2024, *Intersex Denmark* was informed that the **documentary** they participated in the making of, entitled “*Stine does not exist*” (2020), featuring one of their activists, was being **used as educational material in schools** in the **Faroe Islands**. The documentary follows an intersex activist around Pride, thereby raising awareness about the challenges they face.

### This good practice example highlights that:

- ▶ Awareness raising material that centers personal testimonies increases understanding among adults and youth alike.
- ▶ Raising awareness about intersex lived realities in schools is crucial to combating discrimination and fostering inclusion.

**Documentary:** <https://www.tvsyd.dk/ovrige-udsendelser-pa-tv-syd/stine-findes-ikke>

# LEGISLATION

On May 7<sup>th</sup> 2024, the Council of the **EU** adopted two **legislative proposals setting minimum standards for equality bodies**. One of the two directives, **for the first time ever in EU legislation, makes an explicit reference to the ground of sex characteristics (Art. 6)**. This inclusion acknowledges the fact that persons experience discrimination on the ground of their sex characteristics, and ensures that intersex people will be included in the scope of the work done by equality bodies at national level.

On May 7th 2024, the EU Member States adopted the **Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence**. The Directive, for the first time in history, explicitly **recognises intersex people** as being among **victims at a heightened risk of experiencing violence** due to intersectional discrimination.

### This good practice example highlights that:

- ▶ Intersex people and the ground of “sex characteristics” are being more and more explicitly recognised in binding EU legislation.
- ▶ Legislative bodies confirm the necessity to protect intersex people as a specifically vulnerable group, including on a ground that addresses the specific kind of human rights violations they face.

**Equality Bodies Directive:** <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1500/oj/eng>

**Violence Against Women Directive:** <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1385/oj/eng>

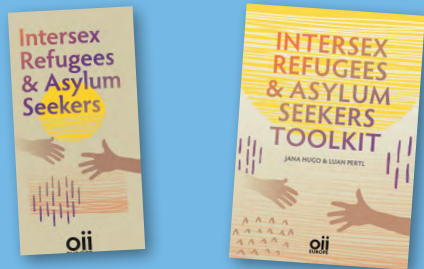
# ASYLUM

On November 14<sup>th</sup> 2024, **France** granted asylum to an intersex person **on the grounds of sex characteristics**, a first in the country. This sets an important precedent for explicitly recognising the specific forms of discrimination and violence that intersex people face, and which often underpins their decision to flee their country of origin, in combination with other factors.

### This good practice example highlights that:

- ▶ Recognising the specific forms of violence and persecution faced by intersex people, due to having a variation of sex characteristics, is an important factor in ensuring their protection.

*You want to know more about intersex refugees and asylum seekers? Please check out our **flyer** and **toolkit** available on [www.oiiurope.org](http://www.oiiurope.org) both as a free PDF-download.*



# POLITICAL RECOGNITION

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024, the **Belgian Senate** hosted an Intersex Symposium, which included a screening of the film “She, They, Us” (2023), which centers, among others, the story of a Belgian intersex person who was subjected to IGM as a child. The Symposium also featured a roundtable which included a human rights lawyer and representatives from Belgian civil society.

On October 26<sup>th</sup> 2024, on **Intersex Awareness Day**, the **facade of the Cabildo of Tenerife, the governing body of the island of Tenerife, was illuminated with the colours of the intersex flag**. 14 other public buildings in the city of Santa Cruz, at the initiative of the City Council, displayed banners commemorating October 26. This milestone in terms of visibility was achieved following awareness raising from *Caminar Intersex* to the President’s office and **training given to all 1800 employees of the Cabildo**. The lightning of the facade will from now on take place every year on October 26. **The Government of the Canary Islands** also ran an **awareness raising campaign** for several weeks on Canarian television and social media around Intersex Awareness Day.

On April 4<sup>th</sup> 2024, the intersex movement celebrated a **significant milestone** for intersex rights globally, with the first-ever **resolution from the United Nations Human Rights Council** on the rights of intersex people, brought forward by **Finland, South Africa, Chile, and Australia**. The resolution

was passed with 24 votes in favour, 23 abstentions and **no votes against**. 11 Council of Europe Member States of the Human Rights Council voted for the resolution.

### These good practice examples highlight that:

- ▶ Intersex rights are human rights.
- ▶ International human rights bodies are willing to further investigate “discriminatory laws and policies, acts of violence and harmful practices” against intersex persons across the globe.
- ▶ The outcome of the vote is a statement to how much the understanding and knowledge of intersex issues has significantly grown in Europe and across the world in the past decade; incl. as a result of the efforts of intersex organisations and their allies.
- ▶ Raising awareness at national level for human rights violations intersex people face is key to help achieving intersex rights incl. at international level.

**Awareness raising video from the Government of Canary Islands:**

<https://www.instagram.com/realGobiernoCan?igsh=wtlnz2TnN0N4eQV>

**UN coalition statement:**

<https://www.unhcr.org/United Nations addresses the human rights of intersex persons in ground-breaking resolution/>

**UN HRC resolution:** <https://basil.un.org/doc/4481/1313/0>

# HATE CRIME LEGISLATION

In **Ireland**, on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024, the Ministry of Justice approved the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Bill 2024, which **protects intersex people from hate crimes**. The bill includes provisions that protect persons targeted because of certain characteristics, including sex characteristics, including in the context of crimes aggravated by hatred of those characteristics. OII Europe member organisation *Intersex Ireland* celebrates the **fruitful cooperation with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL)**, within the Coalition Against Hate Crime which was composed of a number of other organisations, who advocated together for the inclusion of intersex people in this law.

### This good practice example highlights that:

- ▶ “Sex characteristics” is increasingly mainstreamed as the appropriate protective ground across Europe.
- ▶ Cooperation between intersex organisations and national institutions are vital to ensure the protection of intersex people from discrimination.

**Hate Offences Bill:**

<https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/act/2024/41/eng/enacted/a4124.pdf>

**Press release:**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/a597e-minister-mcintee-welcomes-passing-of-hate-crime-legislation-by-oireachtas/>

# RESEARCH

In August 2024, a group of researchers affiliated with the **World Health Organization** conducted a systematic review focused on medical rationales for so-called “sex-normalising” surgeries. **They concluded that these surgeries risk harming the individual’s physical and mental health, violate their right to bodily integrity and future sexual autonomy, regardless of the level of harm or benefit as judged by others, such as doctors or parents**. It is the first time that such a strong call for the end of these interventions is made by prominent global medical experts.

### This good practice example highlights that:

- ▶ The harmful nature of IGM is being more and more recognised globally, including by medical professionals.
- ▶ Fundamental rights, including bodily integrity, must be at the center of medical decision-making processes.

**Research:** <https://www.researchprotocols.org/2024/1/e64444/>

# IN THE MAKING: IGM BANS

On February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024, **Belgian** MP Sarah Schlitz (Greens) brought forward a draft proposition for a bill entitled “safe-guarding the physical and psychological integrity and bodily autonomy of persons with variations in sex characteristics.” The bill aims to **protect intersex minors from non-consensual, medically unnecessary surgeries or interventions**, as well as **setting out certain comprehensive obligations for healthcare professionals**. Following the introduction of this draft legislation, a coalition of intersex organisations went to Parliament in November 2024 to advocate MPs to advance the bill.

In 2024, positive steps were taken in the **Netherlands** towards banning non-consensual, non-emergency medical interventions on intersex persons. In May, a first motion was passed by the Dutch House of Representatives on the rights of intersex people, **calling on the government to do everything in its power to stop IGM**. In November, a second motion **called on the competent Ministries to start the law-making process banning these interventions**, which passed with overwhelming majority.

In 2024, important advancements were made in the **Canary Islands, Spain** regarding the **implementation of the 2021 Trans & Intersex Law**, which includes a **revision**

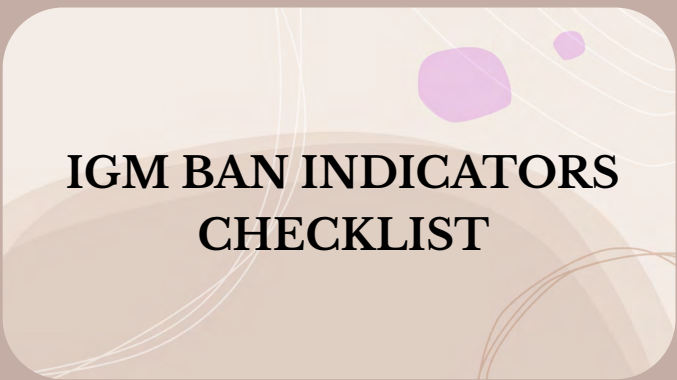
**of the medical protocols** relating to intersex healthcare. OII Europe’s member organisation *Caminar Intersex* worked closely with a multidisciplinary team of doctors, endocrinologists, geneticists, paediatricians, neonates, social workers, primary care doctors and other health care professionals in the development of the new protocols for intersex people and their families.

**BE Draft legislation:** <https://www.dekamer.be/kvvcr/showpage.cfm?section=flwb&language=nl&cfm=/site/wwwcfm/flwb/flwbn.cfm?dossierID=0077&legislat=56&inst=K>

**NL First motion:** <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/moties/detail?id=2024Z08672&did=2024D20380>

**NL Second motion:** <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/moties/detail?id=2024Z18675&did=2024D44569>

**ES Trans & Intersex law:** [https://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2021-11382](https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2021-11382)



✓ **The Indicators for effective protection of the rights of intersex people**, in particular protection from IGM aim to give policy makers and law makers a useful tool when preparing legislation to prohibit intersex genital mutilation and to establish comprehensive legal protection of the right to bodily integrity and self-determination of intersex people. They were developed based on analyses of existing IGM laws and consultation with intersex civil society across Europe about the essential elements that constitute a ban. [www.oiiurope.org/igm-ban-indicators-checklist/](http://www.oiiurope.org/igm-ban-indicators-checklist/)



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<https://www.oiiurope.org/igm-ban-indicators-french-german/>



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