

European Citizens' Initiative 'Ban on conversion practices in the European Union'

During its March II plenary session, Parliament will hold a debate on the European Citizens' Initiative calling for an EU-wide ban on conversion practices targeting LGBTIQ+ individuals.

The citizens' initiative

On 24 January 2024, the European Commission [registered](#) a European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) calling for a [ban on conversion practices in the European Union](#). The initiative has gathered 1 128 063 verified statements of support. Signatories urge the Commission to 'propose a binding legal ban on conversion practices targeting LGBTIQ+ citizens in the European Union' by adding these practices to the list of [EU crimes](#). They also call for amending the [Victims' Rights Directive](#) to establish minimum standards of protection. The initiative is registered under the ECI framework of [Article 11\(4\)](#) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/788](#), which provide citizens with a formal mechanism to bring policy proposals directly to EU institutions. On 2 March 2026, the LIBE committee hosted a [public hearing with the involvement of the PETI committee and participation of the FEMM committee](#) on this ECI.

Banning conversion practices

Conversion practices (also called conversion 'therapies') are widely [condemned](#) as constituting torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, causing severe physical and psychological harm. Recognising these dangers, the European Commission recently published its [LGBTIQ+ equality strategy 2026-2030](#), building on the achievements of the [2020-2025 equality strategy](#). It [seeks](#) to assist Member States in prohibiting conversion practices, improving law enforcement training and tackling online hate and cyberbullying. The 2026-2030 strategy also envisages the publication in early 2027 of a study analysing the nature, prevalence and impact of these practices on LGBTIQ+ people. However, it does not propose the addition of conversion practices to the list of EU crimes.

At national level, eight Member States (Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Malta, Portugal and Spain) have already enacted [national bans](#) on conversion practices, while others have considered legislative proposals. Enacted laws follow broadly similar approaches, but differ in how conversion practices are defined, the scope of protection and to whom it applies, the use of administrative or penal sanctions, and the sanctions imposed. On 26 January 2026, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a [resolution](#) calling for the prohibition of conversion practices.

European Parliament position

The European Parliament has a long-standing record of [denouncing](#) all forms of discrimination against the LGBTIQ+ community, including firm opposition to conversion practices. In [2018](#), Parliament welcomed ongoing efforts to ban conversion practices and end the pathologisation of trans identities, urging Member States to introduce measures safeguarding the right to gender identity and expression. In [2020](#), it condemned the Polish Episcopate's position advocating conversion 'therapies' targeting LGBTI individuals, and reiterated its call for national bans. In [2021](#), when declaring the EU an LGBTIQ Freedom Zone, Parliament reaffirmed the need to criminalise reported conversion 'therapies'. Most recently, in a [2024 resolution](#), Parliament urged the Commission to explore legal avenues for banning conversion practices at EU level, while encouraging Member States to adopt national prohibitions. It also welcomed the Commission's decision to register the ECI calling for an EU-wide ban on conversion practices.

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