



European network of legal experts
in gender equality and non-discrimination

Non-discrimination country report 2025: highlights



Belgium





Federal complexity:

Belgium's federal and community/regional structure complicates implementation of anti-discrimination law and public understanding, with overlapping responsibilities and fragmentation.



Comprehensive legal framework:

Belgium prohibits discrimination covers broad fields on a wide range of grounds, including EU-protected grounds and additional ones such as political opinion, union membership, wealth, and civil status.



Major reforms:

In 2023–2024, federal and federated laws were amended in line with recommendations from an expert commission, strengthening protections (e.g. recognition of multiple and intersectional discrimination, clarified definitions and expanded sanctions).



Constitutional guarantees:

Articles 10, 11, 11bis and the new Article 22ter enshrine broad equality rights, including the right of persons with disabilities to full inclusion and reasonable accommodation.



Remedies & sanctions:

Victims can seek annulment of discriminatory clauses, damages, injunctions, or publication of judgments. Sanctions were made more effective and dissuasive in 2023 reforms.



Equality bodies:

Unia (federal/interfederal) and the Flemish Human Rights Institute are main equality bodies.

Independence is legally guaranteed and their mandates are wide, but fragmentation reduces accessibility.



Case law developments:

Courts have applied broader interpretations of discrimination, increasingly recognising multiple discrimination and requiring reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities.



Persistent discrimination:

Roma, people of Muslim background, persons with disabilities, and LGBTI+ people face systemic discrimination in housing, employment, education, and public life.



Positive action & obligations:

Positive action is permitted by law, but proactive equality duties are limited. Public sector equality plans and employer diversity charters exist but are unevenly applied.



Key challenges:

Lack of coordination between federal and regional reforms, the Flemish withdrawal from Unia, rising far-right influence, and persistent anti-Muslim discrimination remain major obstacles.