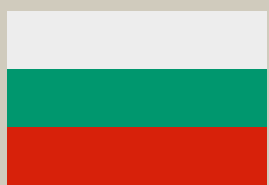




European network of legal experts
in gender equality and non-discrimination

Non-discrimination country report 2025: highlights



Bulgaria





Political Instability Impacted Legal Reform:

Bulgaria faced multiple elections and caretaker governments in 2024, leading to legislative paralysis and delaying critical reforms, including in the fields of anti-discrimination and judicial independence.



Rise in Populist and Anti-LGBTIQ Legislation:

A controversial “anti-LGBTIQ propaganda” law was passed in August 2024, prohibiting discussion of “non-traditional” sexual orientations in schools - sparking concern from human rights organisations.



Pervasive Discrimination Against Roma:

The Roma community continues to face systemic discrimination in housing, education, healthcare, and the justice system. Several ECtHR rulings against Bulgaria remain unimplemented.



Discrimination Against Other Vulnerable Groups:

Jews, Muslims, persons with disabilities, and non-traditional faith groups also face hate speech, exclusion, and inadequate protection from state institutions.



Disability Rights Show Strong Legal Development:

The 2019 People with Disabilities Act (PDA) introduced obligations for support and reasonable accommodation, with a strong case law base - though implementation gaps remain.



Constitutional Court Blocked Key Judicial Reforms:

In July 2024, the Court annulled major constitutional amendments aimed at restructuring the judicial system, reversing efforts to enhance judicial independence.



Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Law:

The Protection Against Discrimination Act (PADA) prohibits direct and indirect discrimination across a wide range of grounds and sectors, going beyond EU minimum standards.



Problems with Definitions and Enforcement:

Definitions of indirect discrimination and racial segregation are unclear or flawed; case law is inconsistent, especially in distinguishing between direct and indirect discrimination.



Equality Body Active but Underutilised:

The Commission for Protection Against Discrimination (PADC) issues sanctions and rulings, but lacks strategic focus - particularly on sensitive grounds like ethnicity and sexual orientation.



Limited Progress on Multiple and Intersectional Discrimination:

While multiple discrimination is recognised in law, intersectional discrimination is not. Case law rarely addresses the complexity of overlapping grounds.