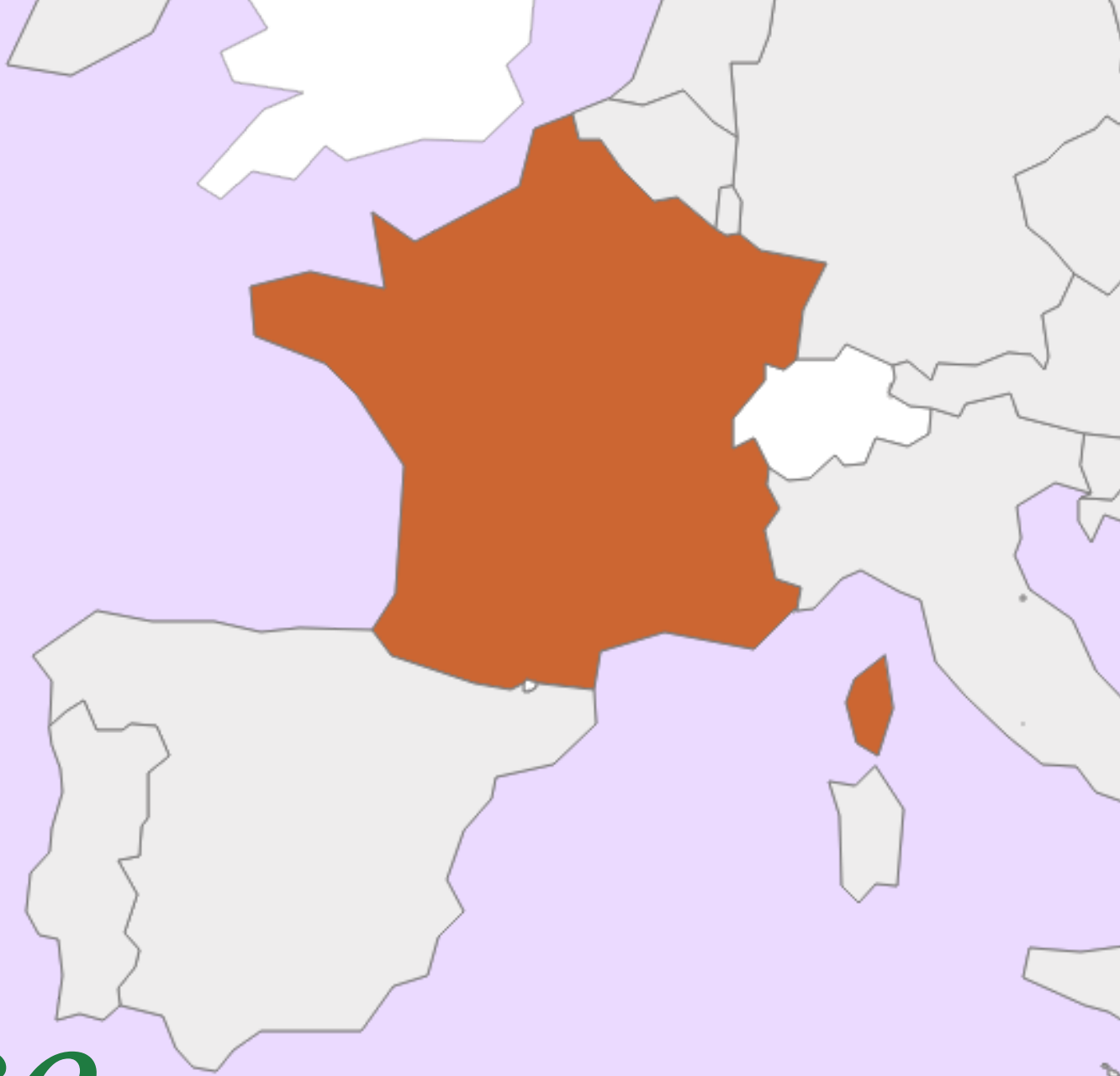
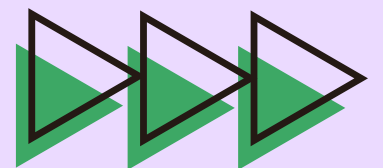




France non-discrimination country report

Key highlights

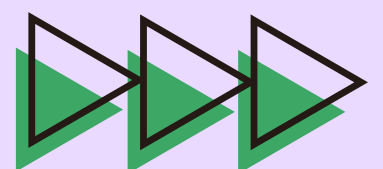


European network of legal experts
in gender equality and non-discrimination



Universalist Equality

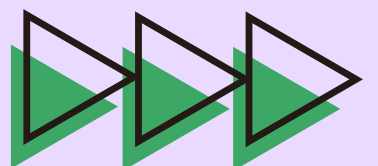
France's strong formal equality model provides a constitutional foundation for non-discrimination. Although French law covers all EU-protected grounds and adds around 20 national grounds with protection extending across employment, education, social protection, healthcare, housing, and services, its refusal to recognise ethnic or racial categories can limit targeted policies and data collection.

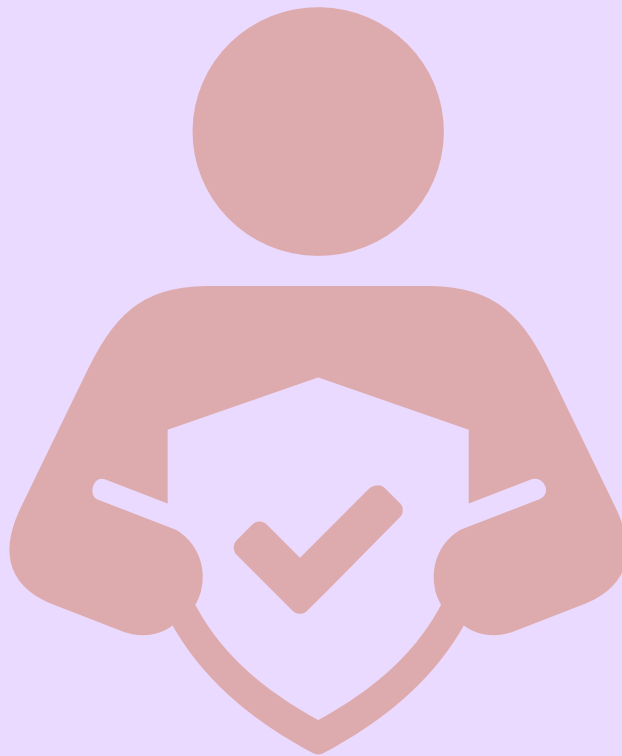




Anti-Racism Legislation

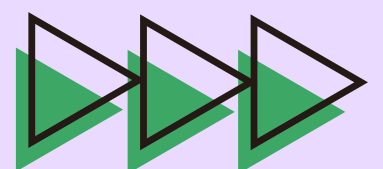
New legislation strengthens measures against anti-semitism, racism, discrimination, violence and hatred in higher education.

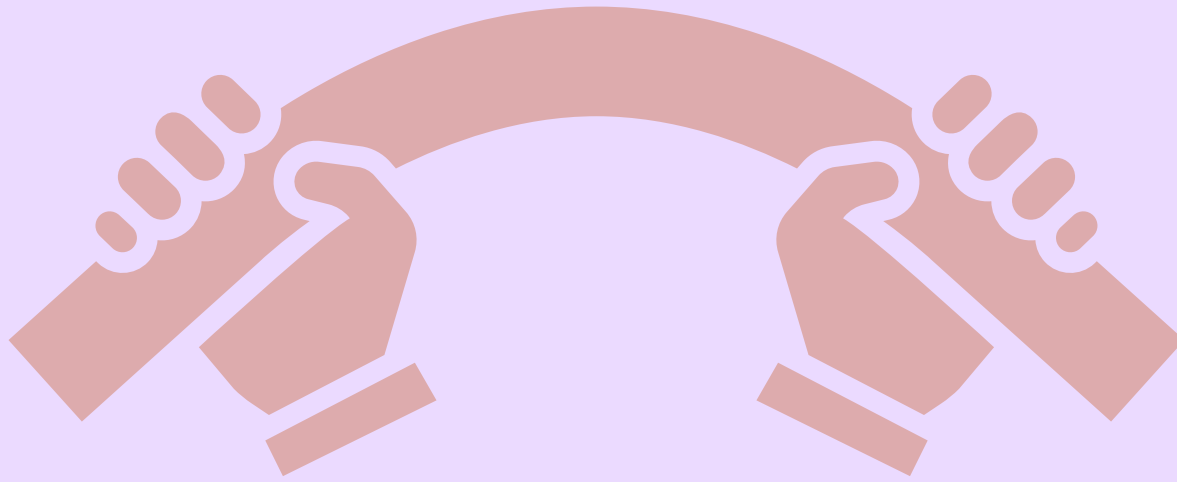




Stronger Racial Protections

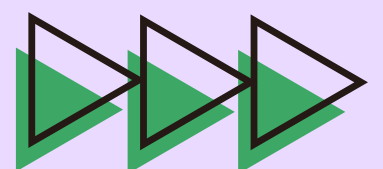
The Court of Cassation established an important precedent by confirming that racist slurs targeting a person constitutes a punishable insult.





Flexible Judicial Protection

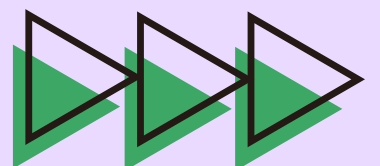
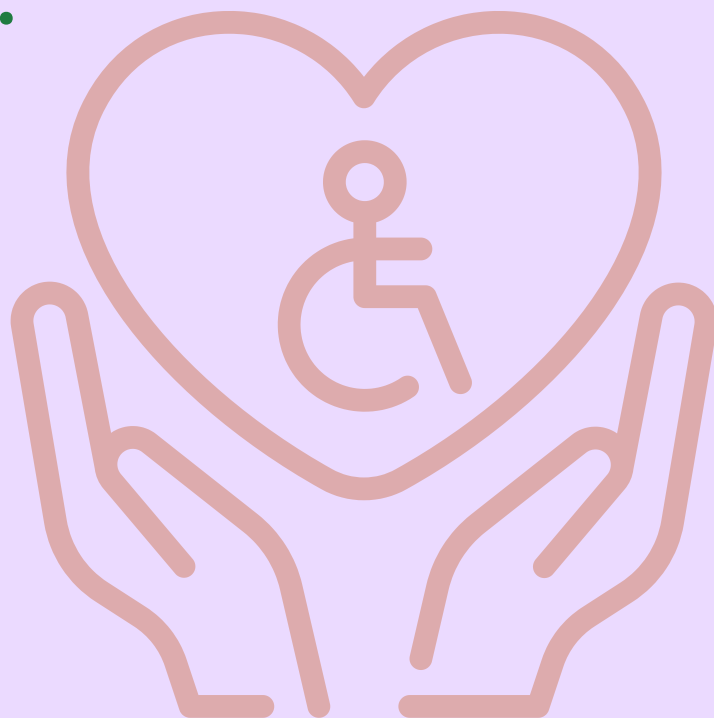
Courts recognise assumed characteristics, discrimination by association, and combinations of discriminatory grounds, despite gaps in their explicit legislative recognition.





Broad Disability Rights

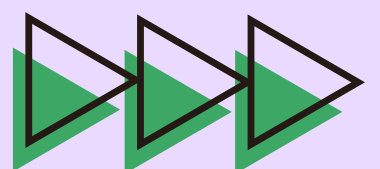
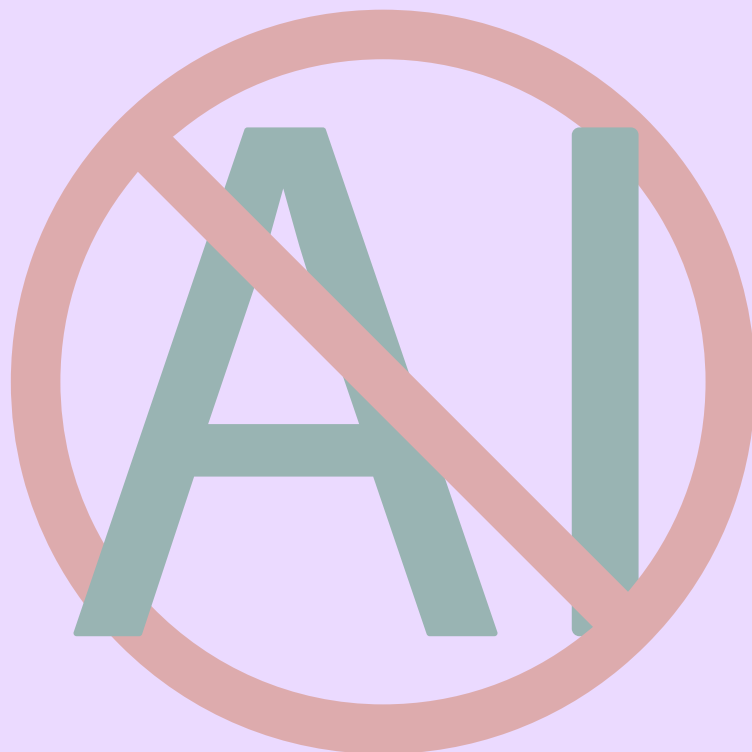
French law provides wide protection against disability discrimination across employment, education, housing, healthcare and services, without always requiring formal disability recognition. However, reasonable accommodation duties do not generally extend to goods and services.

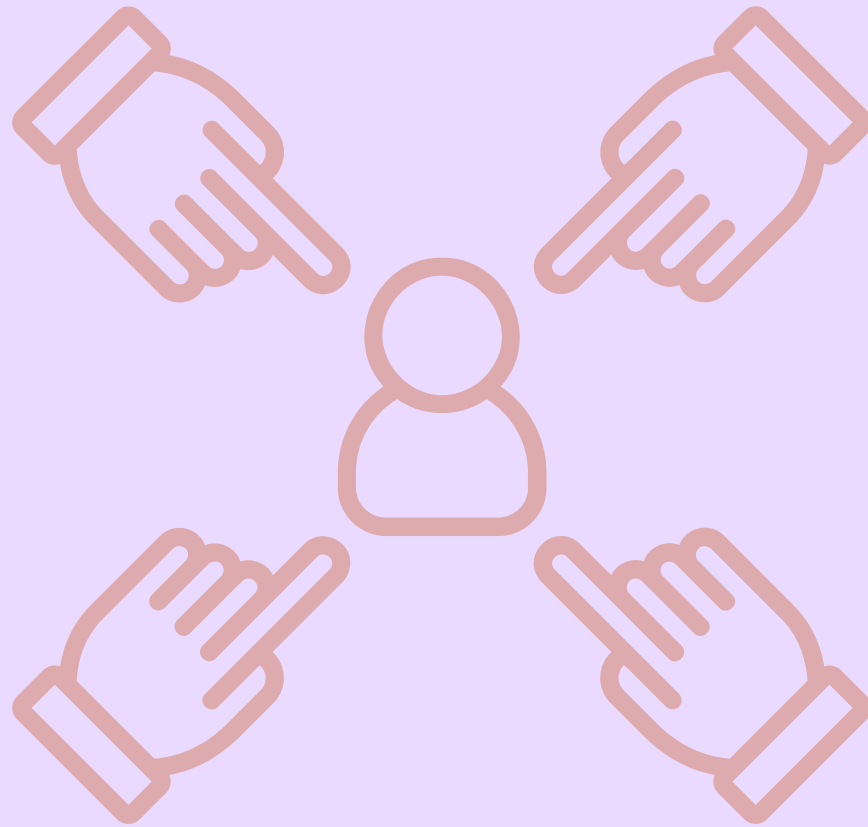




Emerging Discrimination Risks

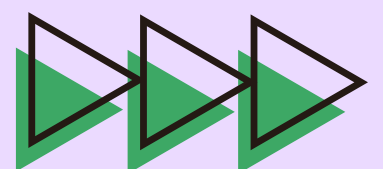
France has developed a guidance on AI and data protection, but algorithmic welfare surveillance and extended video-surveillance trials raise concerns about bias, transparency, and unequal targeting.





Discriminatory Harassment

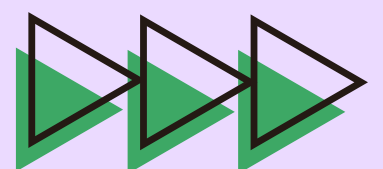
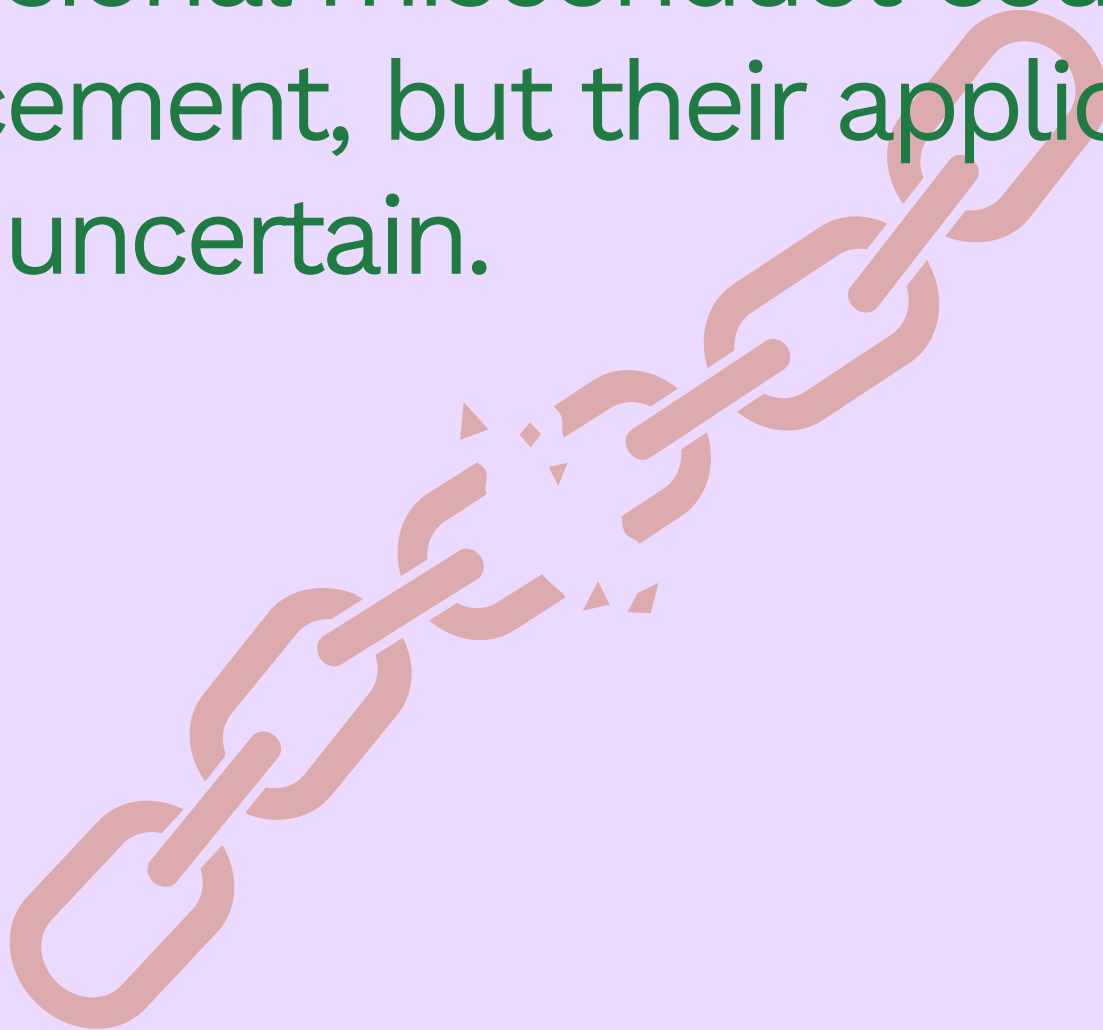
Courts clarified that discrimination and discriminatory harassment may cause distinct harm, potentially allowing separate compensation for each violation.

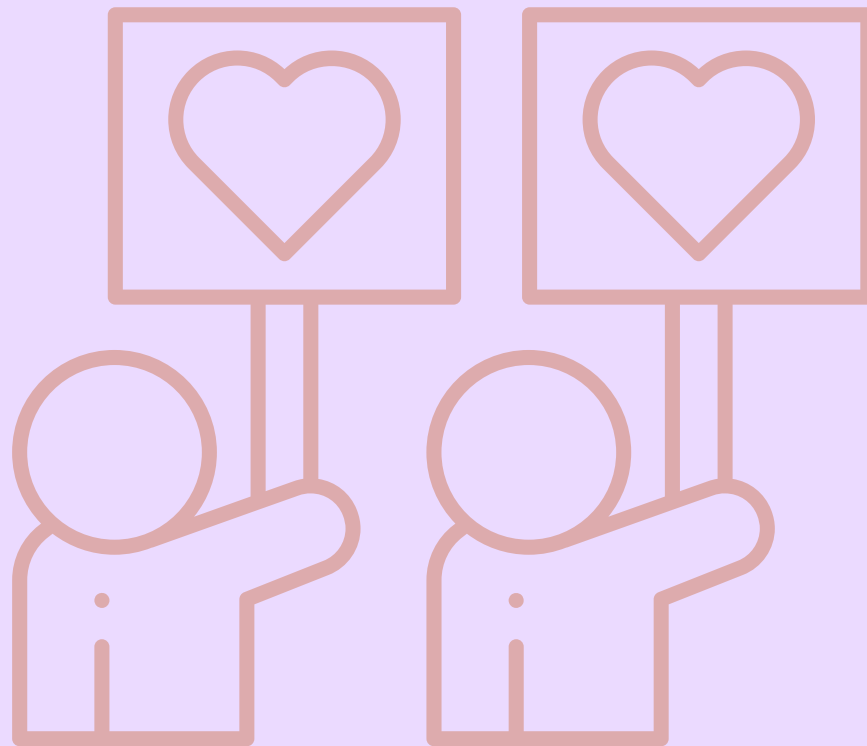




Limited Sanctions

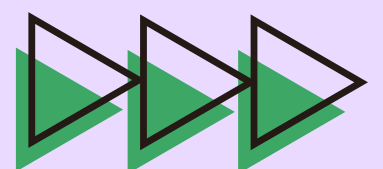
Compensation and criminal fines remain generally low, reducing their deterrent effect. New civil sanctions introduced in 2025 for intentional professional misconduct could improve enforcement, but their application is still uncertain.





Expanded Collective Action

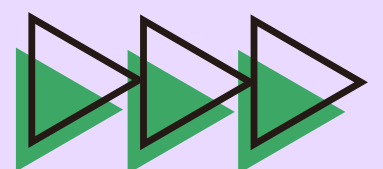
Trade unions, NGOs, and other organisations can support victims, initiate group actions, and, in some cases, bring claims in the public interest without an individual claimant.

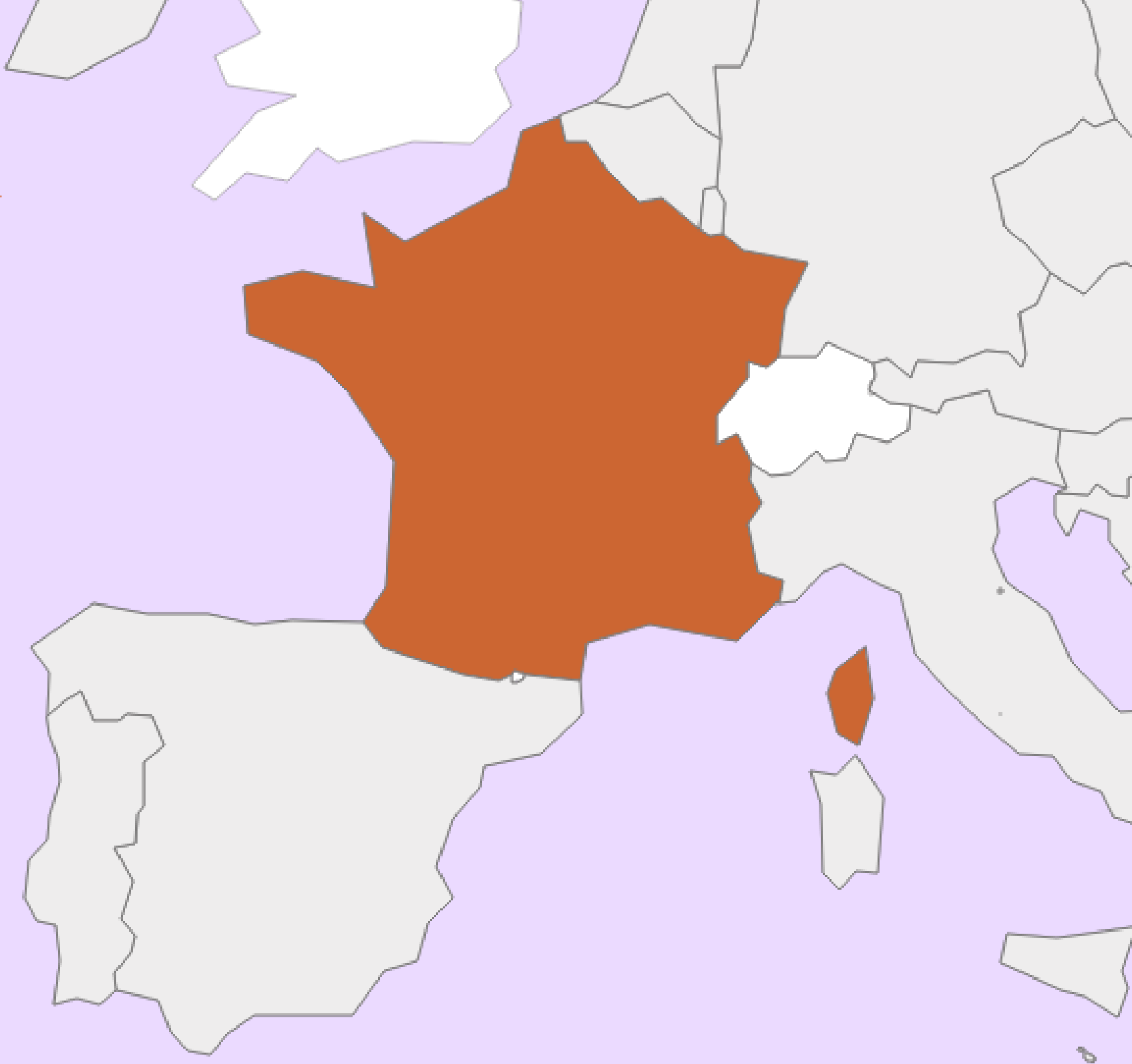




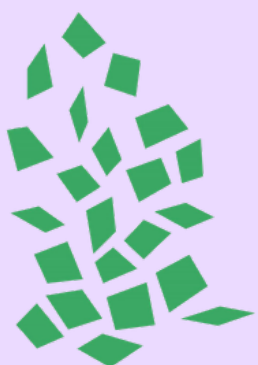
Equality Body Challenges

The Defender of Rights retains extensive investigative and mediation powers but chronic understaffing limits timely and thorough investigations. Its anti-discrimination visibility and activity have declined, while EU equality-body requirements remain to be transposed.





See the full report on
non-discrimination
in *France* on our website.



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