Trans Advocacy Week 2026: Trans and gender diverse leaders driving change at the United Nations

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Trans Advocacy Week is a vital initiative at a time when trans people are often talked about but rarely listened to. Each year, from June to July, a coalition of civil society organisations supports trans activists in amplifying their voices in the UN, one of the world's most influential human rights spaces. Since 2017, more than 60 trans and gender diverse activists have engaged with the UN in Geneva during Trans Advocacy Week.

What is UN Trans Advocacy Week?

During United Nations Trans Advocacy Week, trans activists have the opportunity to speak directly to global decision-makers. Through this initiative, trans and gender diverse people address the challenges and discrimination they face with those who need to hear it the most: world leaders, politicians and other decision-makers. This drives action towards greater equality, acceptance, and understanding.

Most of us wish to go through life living openly and freely, as our true selves. But today, all over the world, trans and gender diverse people face more discrimination, are more likely to be unemployed, and experience more barriers to higher education than the general public. These factors make it almost impossible for trans and gender diverse people to access international advocacy spaces such as the United Nations. UN Trans Advocacy Week bridges this gap by opening UN spaces up to trans activists, particularly those from underrepresented regions such as the Global South and East.

What is the UN Human Rights Council?

The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) meets regularly to discuss and address global human rights issues. The UNHRC is responsible for investigating human rights violations and making recommendations to improve the protection of human rights worldwide.

The council consists of representatives from 47 Member States who are tasked with promoting and safeguarding human rights on a global scale. For more information, visit ILGA World's resources on the UNHRC or the official UN Human Rights Council website.

Key topics for Trans Advocacy Week 2026

UN Trans Advocacy Week 2026 will focus on critical issues affecting trans communities globally, including:

- **Freedom of association:** Examining how protecting civil society organisations and civic spaces is crucial for trans people to be able to truly exercise their rights
- **Democratic backsliding:** Analysing how the instrumentalisation of trans and gender diverse people and attacks on gender equality function as a gateway to wider assaults on democratic governance and multilateral human rights systems.

Why is Trans Advocacy Week important?

Trans Advocacy Week empowers activists with the knowledge and experience to navigate international human rights mechanisms. Participants receive training on UN advocacy, deliver statements to the Human Rights Council, connect with other trans and gender diverse activists, and meet directly with representatives of UN Member States to lobby directly on pressing issues that trans people face in their countries.

Because of this experience, community leaders can strengthen local advocacy efforts through direct engagement with UN bodies and mechanisms and contribute to international dialogue and policy change.

Who is participating?

In June 2026, we will be bringing 14 participants from all regions of the world to Geneva for the 62nd Human Rights Council session.

UN TAW is co-organised by:

- Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN)
- East Africa Trans Health and Advocacy Network (EATHAN)
- Global Action for Trans Equality (GATE)
- ILGA World
- RFSL, Swedish Federation for LGBTQ Rights
- TGEU: Trans Europe & Central Asia

Through Trans Advocacy Week, trans and gender diverse voices drive change at the highest levels, advancing equality and human rights for all.

Your support makes change possible

We work across Europe and Central Asia to advance trans rights, build strong communities, and drive change through research, advocacy, and community-building.

Your donation helps us continue this vital work — defending trans lives, amplifying trans voices, and advocating for justice every day.

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