

Joint Statements from the members of the European Centre-Right LGBT Alliance

Adopted at the Annual Assembly in Stockholm September 17th 2016

Growing risk for a backlash concerning the rights for LGBTI-people in Europe

Over the last decade the rights of LGBTI-people (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersexed) have been strengthened in many European countries. This has been very important when it comes to improving the quality of life, health and safety for LGBTI-people in those countries. We have also seen that reform in one country has inspired others to get off the ground.

Currently Europe is going through a trying time though. We are still dealing with the aftermaths of the financial crisis, we are in the middle of a refugee crisis and we can see tendencies in almost all countries that political right-wing populism and extremist parties are on the rise.

In times like these there is always a risk that minority groups become targets and that the rights of minorities falls down on the list of priorities.

Therefore we the member organisations of the European Centre-Right LGBT Alliance:

- Express our concerns over the risk that the progress regarding the rights of LGBTI-people will come to a halt
- Urge the governments of European countries to not let the ongoing crisis be an excuse to stop working on important issues concerning LGBTI-people
- On the contrary: We ask the political parties of the Centre-right to take their responsibility in working for new reforms that will make LGBTI-people more included in society which is in accordance with the values of the Centre-right movement.
- Demand that all governments in Europe stand firm against any attempt from populists or extremists from the left or right to take away rights from LGBTI-people and prevent any backlash in this area

Hate crime needs to be taken seriously all across Europe

LGBTI-people (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexed) run a risk of becoming victims of crimes due to their sexual orientation or gender identity and/or gender expression. This is a real problem and it affects the quality of life, health and security for LGBTI-people in a negative way.

Research shows that LGBTI-people fear hate crimes in all countries of Europe in various degrees but no country is exempted – the problem is real everywhere. This is why it is important to work seriously against hate crimes. Hate crime is any form of crime targeting people because of their actual or perceived belonging to a particular group – in this case LGBTI. These crimes can become manifest in a variety of forms: physical and psychological intimidation, blackmail, property damage, aggression and violence, rape, and murder. This unfortunately is a reality that should not occur in 2016 in Europe.

At the same time the legislations in Europe vary a lot from country to country. In some European states, homophobia and transphobia are an aggravating factor in sentencing crimes. In others this issue has not been taken seriously enough.

On EU level there is currently no requirement for its member states to recognise sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression as a bias motivating factor in criminal law. The EU does require the member states to recognize racism and xenophobia as a motivating factor.

Therefore we, the member organisations of the European Centre-Right LGBT Alliance:

- Urge the political parties of the Centre-right in all countries of Europe to address the issue of hate crime against LGBTI-people and work in favour of effective legislation combating hate crimes against LGBTI-people
- Ask of the EU that they work for a consistency in legislation against hate crime in the member states and that the EU extends its anti-racist legislation so that hate crime and hate speech law becomes covers homophobia and transphobia in all 28 member states