

Nicosia, 13 May 2016

LGBTI Rights in the EU

The European Commission will mark the importance of LGBTI rights in the EU on International Day Against Homophobia, at Naci Talat Foundation, Nicosia from 13:45 to 16:00 on Tuesday, 17 May 2016. The EU Policy on the rights of LGBTI individuals, best practices from EU countries, EU harmonisation and implementations to achieve equality for LGBTI individuals, and relevant EU supported projects for LGBTI equality will be discussed at the panel.

The European Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Through its policies and programming, the EU particularly focuses on eliminating barriers to equality, fighting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. International Day Against Homophobia represents an annual landmark to draw the attention of decision makers, the media, the public, opinion leaders and local authorities to the alarming situation faced by lesbian, gay, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people and all those who do not conform to majority sexual and gender norms.

May 17 is now celebrated in more than 130 countries, including 37 where same-sex acts are illegal, with 1600 events reported from 1280 organizations in 2014. These mobilisations unite millions of people in support of the recognition of human rights for all, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

Background:

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) covers LGBTI issues providing guidance for member states. In many EU Member States, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people run the risk of discrimination and harassment on a daily basis. Prejudices and misconceptions about homosexuality and transgender people further fuel intolerant attitudes and behaviour towards this community.

Under EU law, lesbian, bisexual and gay people are currently protected from discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation only in the field of employment. Meanwhile, transgender people are legally protected from discrimination under EU law on the ground of sex to the extent that discrimination arises from gender reassignment.



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