

The Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the LGBTI+ community and EU Action

The European Commission will highlight the topic of “Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the LGBTI+ community and EU Action” at a webinar organised by the EU Infopoint in cooperation with ILGA-Europe, Queer Cyprus, and Accept Cyprus. The webinar will be held on Monday, 1 June 2020 from 19:00 to 20:00.

The aim of the event is to draw attention to the advancement of LGBTI+ rights in Europe, in the Turkish Cypriot community and in the Greek Cypriot community, and how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted this work.

The seminar will host keynote speaker, Belinda Dear, Advocacy Officer at ILGA-Europe whose main area of work includes advocacy and developing policy strategies at the European level to bring about legal, political and social change for LGBTI people, with a focus on Enlargement countries, family policy and rule of law processes. Doğukan Gümüşatam and Erman Dolmacı from Queer Cyprus Association together with Christiana Papadaki and Monica Panayi from Accept Cyprus will also take part in the webinar presenting their work in the local communities and reflecting the local angle in both the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot Communities.

People across the EU continue to be targeted by racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance because of their race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability, social status or other characteristics. The EU rejects and condemns all forms of intolerance, as they are incompatible with the values and principles upon which the EU is founded. A broad set of rules exist at the EU level which contribute to better tackling different forms and manifestations of discrimination and intolerance. Discrimination against LGBTI people goes against the fundamental values of the EU and as long as it is a problem, the EU won't stop working to end it.

As part of the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community many projects have been funded to address discrimination against LGBTI people. This includes Queer Cyprus Association's “LGBTI+ in Freedom from Exploitation (LifE)” Project, and the UNSPOKEN Project: Creating Dialogue on LGBTI Rights in the Turkish Cypriot Community by Cyprus Community Media Centre and Queer Cyprus.

Background:

To tackle the discrimination against LGBTI people in the EU the European Commission has put forward the ['List of actions to advance LGBTI equality'](#). The actions outlined in this list cover all the main policy areas; effectively aiming to mainstream LGBTI equality. The policy areas included are non-discrimination, education, employment, health, free movement, asylum, hate speech/hate crime, enlargement and foreign policy. ILGA-Europe recently published: ['Protect. Adapt. and Rally'](#) – a three-part plan to support the LGBTI movement through the COVID-19 crisis, noting that COVID-19 is generating complex challenges and risks and while the virus does not discriminate, it is very clear that it hits marginalised communities disproportionately hard.

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