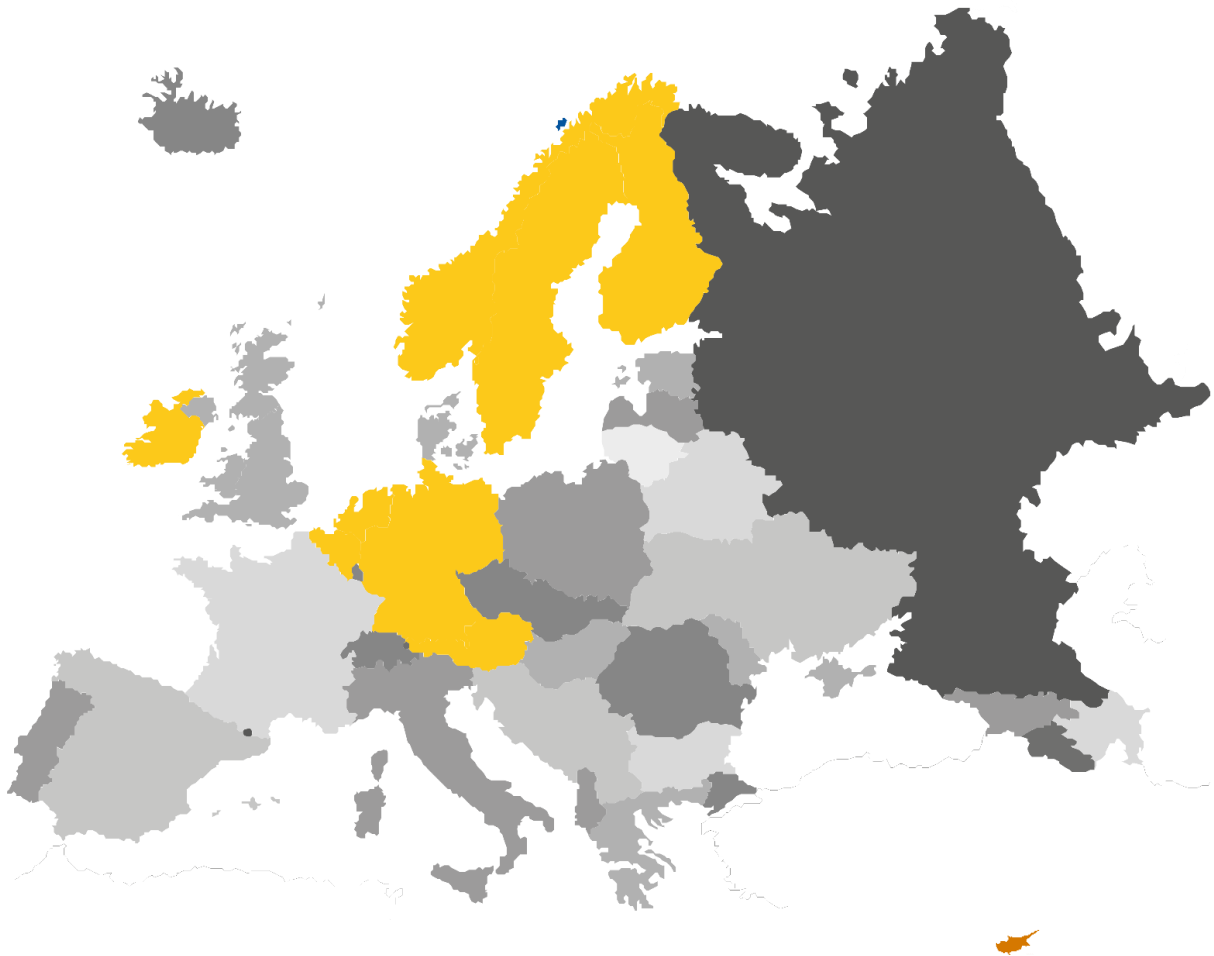


lgbt+

european centre-right
lgbt+ alliance

Political platform for European Centre Right LGBT+ Alliance



Content

Disclaimer	2
Short introduction	3
The working group forming this platform:.....	3
Values on which we build our politics.....	4
A Union of values	4
Gender diversity – a fact not an ideology	5
An including politics for families	5
Protection against discrimination, violence, and hate.....	6
Important legal reforms	7
Eradicating conversion therapy.....	7
Enhancing transgender rights and self-determination	8
Protecting intersex persons	8
Safe arenas for young LGBTI+-people	9
Healthcare for all – Ensuring LGBT+ inclusivity.....	10
Youth-centred mental health support	10
Enhancing transgender healthcare	11
Comprehensive HIV care	12
Equalizing blood donation criteria	12
International relations.....	13
A safe harbour for vulnerable groups	13
International voice for human rights	13
Member organisations	14

Disclaimer

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Short introduction

The work of the European Centre-Right LGBT+ Alliance, as an official member of the EPP-family, hereinafter referred to as the Alliance, on developing active centre-right policies for the LGBT+ community must be intensified. To initiate this, the board decided in April 2023 to create an ad-hoc committee to develop an intentional program based on our earlier motions and input from each organisation.

The committee based their work on motions from the annual meetings, our digital statements, and reviewed the European Platform developed by LSU in 2016, as well as the new LGBTIQ+ policy document from Fine Gael, along with other policy documents from member organisations.

The proposed platform will be discussed and finally decided upon at the Annual Meeting for the Alliance in Dublin on November 11th.

The working group forming this platform:

Helge Ytterøy L'orange	Vice President and chair	Norway
Kevin Maas	CD&V Regenboognetwerk	Belgium
Sophia Ahlin	Öppna Moderater	Sweden
Christian Gebhardt-Eich	LSU	Germany
Conor Glynn	Fine Gael LGBT	Ireland
Vegard Rødseth Tokheim	Åpne Høyre	Norway
Hans-Dieter de Smit	CDA Pride	The Netherlands
Jenni Juulia Tikka	Kasary	Finland
Lars Hector	Öppna Kristdemokrater	Sweden

Values on which we build our politics

We build our values on the Christian-democratic and liberal-conservative base, where respect for the individual stands strong. We want to build a society where everyone is safe, and can live as they really are, develop and build the life they want.

We fight for the right to be different, and we believe that a liberal-conservative and Christian-democratic view best secures the individual's right to be different.

We strongly reject the notion that being LGBTI+ is some form of an ideology. To see and recognize the whole individual it is important to recognize the multitude of characteristics, of which sexual orientation and/or gender identity is as important as other characteristics.

We strive for a state that protects but does not limit the individual. We strive for a state that helps and supports you when needed, but that does not take over the control of the individual and individual choices.

We have a strong belief in cooperation across national borders and see the EU as a guarantor of peace and development on our continent.

Let me be absolutely clear:

- If you are against the rule of law and independent judiciary, you are not a Christian Democrat;
- If you don't like the free press and NGOs, if you tolerate xenophobia, homophobia, nationalism and anti-Semitism, you are not a Christian Democrat;
- If you place the state and the nation against, or above, the freedom and dignity of the individual, you are not a Christian Democrat;
- If you wish for conflict and divisions globally and inside the European Union, you are not a Christian Democrat;
- If you support Putin and attack Ukraine, if you are in favour of the aggressor and against the victim, you are not a Christian Democrat;
- If you want to replace the Western model of liberal democracy with an Eastern model of "authoritarian democracy", you are not a Christian Democrat.

*EPP-president Donald Tusk
the EPP Congress in Helsinki 2018*

A Union of values

The European Union is a union of values, where respect for and protection of human rights are core values. The Alliance emphasises that this is non-negotiable, and in conjunction with this note that LGBTI+-rights are human rights.

The continued implementation of the Union of Equality (EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025) is important. This should include an evaluation of the, so far, implemented measures as well as a follow-up to the strategy aimed at further promoting the rights of LGBTI+-persons in the EU member states. The Equality Strategy should also interconnect closer with other EU policies, so that LGBTI+-policies are more integrated into existing policies within other areas.

Gender diversity – a fact not an ideology

Gender diversity is not a new idea coming from radical ideologists. In ancient Greece, people with both female and male gender characteristics were seen as one part of the world of gods, where Hermaphroditus is the foremost embodiment of masculine and feminine qualities. In the Indian subcontinent, we have the hijras who are considered to belong to a third gender category. Other similar examples of gender diversity can be found in Norse mythology, native American cultures, Chinese culture, and elsewhere. Even in the bible, correctly translated, man was not created solely as man or woman, but male and female. This leaves room for interpretation that man can combine both characteristics at the same time.

Every person has a multitude of characteristics that must be acknowledged, also sexual orientation and gender identity/orientation. We strongly condemn all attempts to define gender diversity a part of an ideology that can damage our society.

Our modern 2-gender model leaves a vulnerable and small minority in an area without legal protection as well as in the crossfire between strong and partly hateful fronts in the discussion about inclusion and the dissolution of norms.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Protection against discrimination:** Discrimination protection for trans people must be introduced in all European countries and the EU must exercise influence to ensure this.
- 2. Education and knowledge:** Information and dissemination of knowledge about transgender people and gender diversity must be included as a natural part of sex education.
- 3. Legal inclusion:** All countries must investigate how national legislation can safeguard gender diversity and include trans people in a better way.

An including politics for families

Families are as varied as life itself. Modern family policies need to aim at supporting the well-being of all families and family situations – this includes the traditional family with mother, father, and children as well as single parents, families after divorces, blended families, rainbow families and families with same-sex partners¹.

How families organise their coexistence is up to each family, and so all forms of living together deserve respect and recognition. The EPP should strive to guarantee that member

¹ This is an English version of the newly adopted program of CSU in Bavaria, [see page 19: CSU-Grundsatzprogramm.pdf](#)

countries ensure that all children should have the same legal and social rights, no matter what the family looks like.

Therefore, respecting and recognising same-sex partnerships and marriage for all and reject any form of discrimination is an important part of allowing everyone to have a family.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Mutual recognition:** We need to implement concrete measures for mutual recognition of (registered) partnerships and same-sex marriages for EU citizens and their children (rainbow families), to ensure full implementation of the principle of free movement of persons within the EU.
2. **Ensure childrens rights:** We claim that the EU takes a clear stand against removing children's rights to parents by denying parenthood due to gender definition, as seen in recent cases in Italy².

Protection against discrimination, violence, and hate

Over the last years we have seen a rise in hate crime and hate speech against vulnerably groups like LGBTI+-individuals and groups, disabled persons, and other minorities. This in regards of physical attacks, some with lethal result, verbal attacks and hate speech in digital channels.

It is important to establish concrete policy goals to increase the confidence of LGBTI+-people and vulnerably groups in the law enforcement and increase the willingness to report discrimination and hate crime with a special focus on transgender persons.

Extremist groups and hate-oriented individuals know no borders. We observe that nationalists learn from each other and help their affiliates, both verbally and physically, through visits and joint demonstrations. There are also signs of financial resources from other countries being used to spread hate and misinformation targeting vulnerable groups. To combat this, international cooperation needs to be significantly improved.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Improved legislation:** Each country must review their legislation and make sure they implement an efficient protection against discrimination, that cover all members of the LGBT+ community.
2. **Prioritisation of fighting hate crime:** Each country must establish a national strategy to fight hate crime, and make sure that law enforcers have resources to fight hate crime efficiently

² <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/24/italys-mounting-attack-lesbian-parents>

- 3. International cooperation:** Europol and other forms of police cooperation must strengthen their work against extremist groups that spread hatred and misinformation. The work must be carried out systematically and with regular revisions to ensure effective means of action.

Important legal reforms

The Alliance advocates for critical legal reforms to protect and empower the LGBT+ community across Europe. Furthermore, the Alliance and the EPP share the same centre-right values. Our common commitment to human dignity, freedom, and justice compels us to address the following pressing issues and recommend comprehensive solutions.

Eradicating conversion therapy

It is important to recognise that conversion therapy, with its aim to change an individual's sexual orientation and alter their personality, continues to inflict severe harm on LGBT+ individuals. This pseudoscientific practice is both dangerous and unethical, causing lasting emotional and psychological trauma for those subjected to it. Studies show that individuals who underwent conversion therapy are nearly three times more likely to attempt suicide³.

However, this is a national competence and the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development reported that 16 out of 27 EU member states have no specific legal provisions against conversion therapy⁴. The Alliance believes a harmonized approach is necessary to protect all European citizens.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. EU-wide ban:** The Alliance calls upon all to condemn the practice of conversion therapy. Additionally, we ask the EPP to make a real effort to persuade its member organisations to issue similar statements and subsequently propose legislation to ban conversion therapy in their respective countries. The EPP should use its vast network to finally end this unethical practice in Europe, showing historical and visionary leadership.
- 2. Educational campaigns:** The Alliance calls upon the EU-member states to create educational campaigns to raise awareness about the dangers of conversion therapy, targeting healthcare providers, educators, and the general public. These campaigns should focus on the importance of evidence-based, inclusive care.
- 3. Support networks:** Every country must strive to establish support networks and counselling services for survivors of conversion therapy.

³ Turban JL, B. N. (2020;77(1):). Association Between Recalled Exposure to Gender Identity Conversion Efforts and Psychological Distress and Suicide Attempts Among Transgender Adults. JAMA Psychiatry., pp. 68–76. doi:10.1001/jamapsy.

⁴ European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, 2020

Enhancing transgender rights and self-determination

Without a doubt trans persons are among the most discriminated in all spheres of life. That's why the European Centre-Right LGBT+ Alliance stands shoulder to shoulder with all who strive for proper self-determination for trans persons in all European countries.

Recognising that self-determination is key in the context of gender identity. Yet, transgenders face many obstacles when trying to assert their true gender identity. The legal gender recognition process is different in all member states. Hungary's restrictive gender recognition

Look to...

The Dutch government officially apologised for this internationally recognised violation of the human rights of transgender and intersex persons. Other countries can look to The Netherlands or Norway, to learn from their respective legislation of 2014 and 2016.

In the Netherlands this legislation was formed and presented by a centre-right government. In Norway the legislation was formed and implemented by a conservative government

policy for example, requires individuals to undergo irreversible surgeries prior to obtaining permission to change gender, effectively coercing them into making life-altering decisions⁵. The Alliance believes the centre-right needs to act against these degrading requirements. The Alliance believes the centre-right ideology is well equipped to form sensible and balanced policy strategies regarding these topics.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **LGR reforms:** The Alliance calls for a proactive stance in advocating for the reform of legal gender recognition legislation across member states. The Netherlands and Norway, both with centre-right governments, have set progressive examples in this regard, emphasizing self-determination and inclusivity.
2. **End sterilization requirements:** The Alliance advocate for the elimination of sterilization requirements for legal gender recognition across the EU. This change would align with the core centre-right values of individual autonomy and dignity. Transgender individuals should not be forced to undergo invasive medical procedures to assert their true gender identity.

Protecting intersex persons

Recognising that intersex individuals often face medical interventions without their informed consent, perpetuated by outdated practices rooted in misconceptions about sex and gender. This is supported by data collected across the European Union. A study conducted in Germany found that the majority of intersex individuals surveyed had undergone medically unnecessary procedures without their consent, often during infancy⁶.

⁵ Amnesty International, "Coercive and Cruel: Forced Sterilizations of Transgender People in Hungary," 2020

⁶ Zwischengeschlecht.org, "Germany: Stop Genital Mutilations on Intersex Children," 2017

This causes physical and psychological harm and violates their human rights. Findings like these emphasize the urgent need for legal safeguards and awareness campaigns to protect intersex individuals and respect their rights.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Legal safeguards:** The Alliance advocate for legislation at both the EU and national levels that explicitly protects the bodily integrity and autonomy of intersex individuals. Ensure that medical interventions are only carried out when deemed medically necessary and are performed with informed consent.
2. **Data collection and research:** The Alliance encourage member states to collect comprehensive data on intersex births and interventions, fostering transparency and accountability. This data can inform evidence-based policies and interventions that respect the rights of intersex individuals.
3. **Awareness and education:** The Alliance support awareness campaigns that raise public understanding of intersexuality, promoting empathy, respect, and acceptance for intersex individuals. Education is crucial in dismantling harmful stereotypes and promoting inclusivity.

Safe arenas for young LGBTI+-people

Young people are the future of any society and community, so it is essential to ensure that important environments for young LGBTI+-people (such as schools, sports, and youth associations) are safe and inclusive, allowing everyone to be themselves without fear of discrimination and exclusion.

Too often, young LGBTI+-people are subjected to physical and psychological violence simply because they are different. The only message young LGBTI+-people hear from the role models within these arenas is that being LGBTI+ is a negative aspect, that it is sinful, and people should not live their lives in accordance with their own identity. These messages can significantly impact the physical and emotional development of young LGBTI+-people.

Therefore, the European Union and the EPP must embrace the value of non-discrimination and promote the idea that diversity should be a positive and non-negotiable norm upon which social interactions are built. This not only creates a safe environment for young LGBTI+-people to grow up in, but also provides a hopeful perspective for the future.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **A non-negotiable norm:** Diversity should be a positive and non-negotiable norm on which social interactions are built. As a result, any form of discrimination, bullying, and rejection of young LGBTI+-people should be rejected.

2. **Ban on negative portraying:** Ban organisational statements negatively portraying being LGBTI+ in spaces meant to be safe. This can be achieved through the implementation and enforcement of clear policies and guidelines.
3. **Enabling educational institutions:** Continue discussions and collaboration with educational institutions to ensure they are equipped with appropriate educational materials and resources that address topics of sexuality and diversity.
4. **Create understanding:** Identify and support key influencers within communities who can initiate discussions and promote acceptance of young LGBTI+-people from within. Actively share personal stories of young LGBTI+-people to share the experiences and struggles of LGBTI+-people in order to create understanding and empathy.

Healthcare for all – Ensuring LGBT+ inclusivity

The high regard for human dignity unites centre-right politicians from all over Europe. It is at the heart of our ideology and of our policies. The European Centre-Right LGBT+ Alliance believes everyone should receive the same quality of care, no matter your sexual orientation, gender, religion, or colour of skin. The European Centre-Right LGBT+ Alliance presents 4 proposals, in line with our centre-right values, to address some major pressing healthcare issues.

Youth-centred mental health support

Recognising that all European citizens should be ensured access to high-quality healthcare. However, many young people, particularly those who struggle with their sexual orientation, gender and identity, face significant barriers. LGBT+ youth frequently encounter difficulties in accessing timely and appropriate mental health services or faces discrimination within the healthcare system.

Up to 30% of lesbian and bisexual women in the UK have been reported to at some points have faced discrimination from healthcare providers⁷. This can lead to long-term emotional and psychological distress.

The percentage of LGBTQ+ youth contemplating suicide, appears to be almost three times higher compared to heterosexual youth and reportedly 48% of transgender youth have seriously considered committing suicide⁸.

⁷ Lisa Colledge, Ford Hickson, David Reid, Peter Weatherburn, Poorer mental health in UK bisexual women than lesbians: evidence from the UK 2007 Stonewall Women's Health Survey, *Journal of Public Health*, Volume 37, Issue 3, September 2015, Pages 427–437, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdu105>

⁸ "National Survey on LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health." The Trevor Project, 2021

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Mental health in school:** The Alliance encourage member states to develop health programs in schools, focusing on emotional well-being and self-empowerment.
2. **Education and Training:** The Alliance encourage member states to promote comprehensive training for healthcare professionals to ensure they are equipped to provide empathetic and effective care to LGBT+ youth. Medical schools and universities should include LGBT+ healthcare topics in their curricula⁹.
3. **Accessible Information:** The Alliance calls upon member states to provide information, both online and offline, that young people can access discretely to learn about sexual orientation and gender identity and provide them with tools to find appropriate support.

Enhancing transgender healthcare

Recognising that transgender individuals are faced with inadequate care in most European countries, member states can improve their transgender healthcare by learning from good practices in other countries. Belgium can be seen as an example in this regard and already has a robust transgender healthcare system in place. Yet, Belgium continuously seeks to improve its transgender healthcare by focussing on medical professional training and data-driven approaches¹⁰.

Look to Belgium...

Each Country must establish a transparent trans care way point(s). The stations in the Belgian model show how it can be done to create excellent transgendercare.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Standard of care:** The Alliance calls upon the member states to establish comprehensive healthcare standards for transgenders, providing these individuals with access to gender-affirming care and appropriate psychological assistance.
2. **Data collection and research:** The Alliance advocates for intensified data collection on transgender healthcare outcomes, and subsequently used to develop evidence-based policies to improve the well-being and health of transgender individuals.
3. **Ongoing training for healthcare providers:** The Alliance encourages member states to ensure evidence-based training in transgender healthcare of medical professionals with a focus on the unique healthcare needs of transgender patients.

⁹ American Psychological Association. Guidelines for psychological practice with transgender and gender nonconforming people. Am Psychol. 2015 Dec;70(9):832-64. doi: 10.1037/a0039906. PMID: 26653312.

¹⁰ "Gender Confirmation Surgery in Belgium: A Retrospective Analysis of Insurance Data." Journal of Sexual Medicine, 2015

Comprehensive HIV care

The Alliance recognises that further improvements to the health and social integration of people with HIV are needed to enable people with HIV in Europe to live longer, healthier lives and to contribute fully to society. Late diagnosis is common in Europe, with 47% of people newly diagnosed with HIV being diagnosed late, leading to poorer health outcomes¹¹, this compounds the Alliance concerns over the rising infection numbers.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Holistic approach:** The Alliance calls upon the member states to establish comprehensive healthcare strategies that address the long-term needs of people with HIV, including access to antiretroviral therapy, mental health support, and social services that address their unique needs.
2. **Prevention and screening:** The Alliance calls upon the member states to develop effective HIV prevention strategies, including sexual education, accessible timely screening, access to PrEP and PEP, and management of coexisting conditions.
3. **Education and awareness:** The Alliance calls upon the member states to support public education campaigns aimed at fostering understanding, whilst reducing the stigma associated with HIV.

Equalizing blood donation criteria

Recognising that although most European countries are facing the same general shortage of blood donors the approach can differ. Because determining the blood donation criteria is a national competence, there is a variety of criteria for blood donation within Europe.

Nevertheless, these inconsistencies in blood donation criteria seem to disproportionately affect men who have sex with men (MSM). In some countries MSM are indefinitely excluded from blood donation. The reason often cited for this, is the higher prevalence of bloodborne diseases in MSM in general, when compared to heterosexual individuals. However, scientific data cannot adequately support the hypothesis that MSM who have been in a long-term monogamous and therefore low-risk same-sex relationship, pose a significantly higher risk of transmitting bloodborne diseases compared to heterosexual individuals¹².

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Evidence-based policies:** The Alliance calls upon the member states to base their blood donation policies on scientific evidence that considers individual risk factors rather than restrictions based on sexual orientation.

¹¹ European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, WHO Regional Office for Europe. HIV/AIDS surveillance in Europe 2018 – 2017 data. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2018.

¹² "Risk of Transfusion-Transmitted Infections in Multi-Partnered Men Who Have Sex with Men: A Case-Control Study." Transfusion Medicine, 2019

2. **Regular assessments:** The Alliance calls upon the member states to regularly update their blood donation policies based on the latest scientific data and innovations made in screening tools.
3. **Education and awareness:** The Alliance calls upon the member states to develop initiatives to raise awareness on the importance of blood donation and the need for evidence-based criteria.

International relations

A safe harbour for vulnerable groups

The European Union must be a shelter for refugees and asylum seekers on the run from war, discrimination, and violation of Human Rights. The Alliance calls for protection of vulnerable asylum seekers, such as LGBTI+ persons.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Prioritize LGBT+ refugees:** A common EU migration policy should prioritize LGBTI+ refugees from the UN High Commissioner for refugees (UNHCR)
2. **Safeguarding LGBT+ refugees:** Policies should be established to ensure that LGBTI+ refugees and asylum seekers are safeguarded from violence, threats, and discrimination during their application processes.

International voice for human rights

In its relations with other countries, the Alliance calls for the EU to be explicit that LGBTI+ rights are inherent human rights. In the framework of UN organisations, the Council of Europe and in other international forums it is important to speak up for LGBTI+ rights, especially regarding countries where LGBTI+ is a criminal offense. In some countries imprisonment or even the death penalty are punishments and other severe punishments imposed on people due to their sexuality or gender identity.

EUROPEAN CENTRE-RIGHT LGBT+ ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Decriminalisation:** The European Union must take international leadership in the struggle of decriminalisation of LGBTI+ individuals in every nation.

Member organisations

The Alliance gathers organisations that are part of a political party belonging to the European Peoples' Party (EPP). We also cooperate with LGBT+ networks connected to parties that are members of IDU and/or IDC-CDI.

