

RAINBOW ROSE CONTRIBUTION FOR THE PES 2009 MANIFESTO CONSULTATION OF PES ACTIVISTS, AUTUMN 2007

Rainbow Rose, as the LGBT network of the Party of European Socialists (PES) was recognized as observer organization, member of the PES, at the 7th Congress of the Party, held in Porto in December, 2006. Rainbow Rose is composed of the existing socialist and social-democrat LGBT groups working within the PES full and affiliated members.

Rainbow Rose's purpose, considering that the promotion of equality and diversity has always been at the heart of the European socialist movement, is to influence national and European policy, making the fight against homophobia and transphobia key issues for the PES, the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, as well as for their national member parties. Rainbow Rose is aware that, in all EU member States, the main progresses on the way to equality for LGBT people have been achieved thanks to left wing and socialist-ruled political majorities.

Rainbow Rose observes that one of the five key commitments of the Manifesto of the PES for the June 2004 European Parliament elections, "Growing stronger together", was to promote Europe as an area of democracy and equality. Grounded on "our vision of a European Union based on democracy, equality, respect for human rights, diversity and the rule of law", this commitment included the opposition to "all forms of discriminations, including any based on race, religion, belief, gender, disability, age or sexual orientation".

Considering that equality requires strong principles and determinate actions, and according to Article 21 of the Chart of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, that states that "any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited", Rainbow Rose believes that:

- 1) the Socialist Group in the European Parliament has to participate in the first place, as it did in the past and present legislatures, to the monitoring of the implementation of EU directives within the member States and candidate countries and their commitment to obligations agreed to in EU Treaties. The PES, the Socialist Group in the European Parliament and the PES member parties should also do their best to urge the Commission to institute proceedings against member States in the event of violations of their obligations. This issue will remain of major importance, given the proliferation of hate speeches targeting the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in a number of European countries, as it was denounced by the European Parliament in its resolutions of 18 January 2006 on homophobia in Europe, of 15 June 2006 on the increase in racist and homophobic violence in Europe, and of 26 April 2007 on homophobia in Europe.
- 2) the PES, the Socialist Group in the European Parliament and the PES member parties should renew their efforts to achieve the completion of the anti-discrimination legislative package based on Article 13 of the EC Treaty, and ask the Commission to propose a new directive prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in all sectors. Rainbow Rose observes that the PES Group statement on the outcome of the conference on the year of equal opportunities for all, held on July 4 and 5, 2007, includes a call for "the introduction of new horizontal legislation based on Article 13 of the EC Treaty to deliver genuine equality in all areas of life including protection against intersectional discrimination". In addition, the same statement mentions the necessity to ensure that all persons, bodies and institutions providing services in the private and public

sector promote equality and respect for fundamental rights without exception, whether based on conscience or otherwise.

- 3) the Socialist Group in the European Parliament should ensure that the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, created in Vienna, includes explicitly in its work programme the observation of homophobic, transphobic or discriminatory legislation and practices in the Member States and the Candidate countries, and develops comparative studies on the most advanced legal frameworks in the Member States.
- 4) the Socialist Group in the European Parliament should reiterate its invitation, shared by the European Parliament in its resolution of 26 April 2007, to all member States to propose legislation to overcome the discrimination experienced by same-sex couples and LGBT families, and to the Commission to make proposals to ensure that the mutual recognition principle is applied in this field also, in order to ensure the freedom of movement for all persons in the EU without discrimination.
- 5) the PES, the Socialist Group in the European Parliament and the PES member parties must keep on calling for a worldwide decriminalisation of homosexuality and transgenderism. They should be actors of the reflection on how European and national foreign policy can include the promotion of human rights, including LGBT fundamental rights.

Rainbow Rose will consider it its duty to provide members of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament with relevant information on LGBT matters in all Europe during the 2009-2014 legislature.

About Rainbow Rose

List of Rainbow Rose members:

Scwusos (Germany)
SoHo (Austria)
PINKKIRUUSU (Finland)
Homosexualités et Socialisme (France)
Gayleft (Italy)
Rosa Arcobaleno (Italy)
Grupo LGBT del PSOE (Spain)
PvdA homo-emancipatie network (Netherlands)
Labour Campaign for LG Rights (United Kingdom)
HBTS (Sweden)
SDLP (Poland)
LGBT initiative of the JS (Portugal)
PS (Belgium)
SD (Denmark)
PASOK (Greece)
Labour LGBT (Ireland)
Queer network (ECOSY)

Individual members:

Members of SDE (Estonia)
Members of SLD (Poland)

Members of BSP (Bulgaria)
Members of DNA (Norway)
Members of LSDP (Lithuania)
Members of LGBT coordination of IUSY