

H.E. Helena Dalli
European Commissioner for Equality
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BELGIUM

H.E. Elisa Ferreira
European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms
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H.E. Nicolas Schmit
European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights
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Subject: Minority approach in EU-funds for NGOs working with LGBTIQ+ displaced Ukrainians

To H.E. Commissioner Helena Dalli,
To H.E. Commissioner Elisa Ferreira,
To H.E. Commissioner Nicolas Schmit,

As a network of non-governmental organisations working with LGBTIQ+ displaced Ukrainians, we would like to express our concern in regard to the use of EU funds that were made available for the Member States under REACT-EU. We would like to ask the European Commission to use a minority approach and make direct funds available to civil society organisations.

Since the start of the war, our organisations have helped over 5.000 LGBTIQ+ displaced persons fleeing the war in Ukraine. While many of us had no experience with humanitarian aid, we had to adapt our daily work quickly to this new reality. We have helped the displaced persons with shelter, sexual and reproductive health, finding jobs, learning the local languages, psychological and legal aid. In the EU, we represent organisations active in the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, The Netherlands.

We are very proud about the work we have done but acknowledge this is only a drop in the ocean. All of this work has been financed by private philanthropy. While in the beginning of the war, there was a lot of attention given by private funders to this work, seven months after the war started, the initial funding is drying out and is not sustainable.

As you know, the situation of LGBTIQ+ displaced persons in many of the countries of arrival is very precarious. Therefore, they are amongst the most vulnerable fleeing the war in Ukraine. Especially in Hungary, Poland and Romania, both state- and non-state sponsored discriminations are prevalent. Therefore, the regular reception facilities do not guarantee safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ persons. We need to prevent dangerous situations for persons who have just fled from a war situation.

While the European Commission has been very generous, under REACT-EU, to support member states to help refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, our work has not received any support from these channels. Therefore, we would like to ask the Commission for the following:

1. To make extraordinary EU-funding directly available to civil society organisations that are dealing with Ukrainian displaced minority groups as soon as possible.
2. To build in conditionality in the upcoming funding streams towards the member states under REACT-EU. We would like to request the member states to ensure non-discrimination and a systematic policy of ensuring the safety of minorities. Therefore, the member states should make funding available to groups dealing with refugees belonging to minority groups when re-granting funds from EU-REACT.

As LGBTIQ+ organisations, we count on the European Commission to ensure that every person fleeing the war in Ukraine finds a safe and welcoming environment in the European Union.

We are looking forward to your response and will be at your disposal for any meeting where we would have a chance to present our long-term needs and recommendations how to address them.

Yours sincerely,



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Executive Director
Forbidden Colours
Belgium-EU



Steve Roth
Executive Director
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Forbidden Colours & ORAM represent the following group of organisations co-signing this letter:



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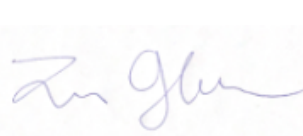
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