

Civil Liberties in the European Union

The European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party, convening in Helsinki, Finland on 13-15 October 2010:

Noting that:

- Although Nazism and Communism originated in Europe, Europe is also the continent of enlightenment and humanism, and it was here that people first stood up for equality, tolerance and diversity, against oppression and prejudice.

Whereas:

- The common respect for and belief in fundamental human rights and civil liberties constitutes the foundation for European cooperation and these basic rights and liberties are now under threat in several European states;
- LGBT-persons (lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people) in many European countries are faced with violence when they speak up for their rights;
- According to a recent report from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), minorities all over Europe are faced with discrimination, harassment and criminal actions. The most exposed group is the Roma people. The report states that 40 percent of all Roma people who apply for a job are discriminated against, and that 10 percent say they have been exposed to violence. This means that the numbers are higher than for any other minority group in Europe.

Notes with deep concern:

- Reports from various member states of deportations of Roma people in suspected contravention of European Union regulations regarding the free movement of citizens within the union.

Calls upon:

- Liberal and democratic parties in Europe to urge their governments to review their compliance with fundamental human rights for minorities, which are established in the Treaty of Lisbon and the charter of fundamental rights;
- The European Commission to vigorously enforce the treaties with respect to the right of free movement of all citizens within the Union, regardless of their ethnic background, as well as the principle of non-discrimination written down in the Charter of fundamental rights, making use, if necessary, of the European Court of Justice;

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- Liberal and democratic parties in Europe to support the fight for equal rights and civil liberties for LGBT-persons in Europe by legislative measures but also by supporting events such as pride festivals;
- Liberal parties to continue their commitment to all EU citizens, regardless of sexual orientation, ethnic origins, religion or gender;
- The European Commission to put forward a proposal for a graduated response sanction mechanism to be used against those member states that do not comply with human rights and civil liberties requirements.

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