ILGA-Europe is alarmed by Hungarian Parliament's moves to abolish the national Equal Treatment Authority

News, Legal Protection, Anti-discrimination, Hungary

Today, Tuesday 10th November 2020 the Justice Committee of the Hungarian Parliament tabled a bill that would abolish the Equal Treatment Authority (ETA), Hungary's most important equality body set up in 2005.

The ETA has a broad mandate to investigate cases of discrimination on grounds of sex, race/ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. In recent years the ETA was one of the last public bodies standing up for the rights of LGBTQI people in Hungary: they have delivered several decisions finding discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity by public bodies, and in April 2020 they criticized the Government's plan to ban legal gender recognition.

The bill foresees the duties of the ETA to be assumed by the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, who is a loyal supporter of the government, and very inactive on LGBTI issues. ILGA-Europe strongly condemns this attempt by the government to reduce the efficacy of the anti-discrimination body enforcing Act no. CXXV of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities in Hungary, thereby depriving many LGBTI people from pursuing justice in cases of LGBTI-phobic discrimination and protecting the rights of all minorities in Hungary.

We call on the Council of Europe and EU institutions to hold Hungary accountable to its commitments to the respect of fundamental rights as enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights, EU Treaties and EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Equality Bodies play a fundamental role in ensuring non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights of all citizens.

The Equal Treatment Authority would be abolished in less than two months, on January 1 2021. There have been no public consultations or impact assessment carried out about the reform, indicating a clear attempt by the Hungarian government to further erode the rights of minorities in Hungary and an eradication of the work of the Authority's work on equality.

> Yesterday the #Hungarian Parliament adopted legislation abolishing Hungary's Equal Treatment Authority. The new EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy highlights the importance of stable equality bodies and commits to strengthening them – how will @EU_Commission respond to this? pic.twitter.com/rkSRT4x9Zi
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> — ILGA-Europe (@ILGAEurope) December 2, 2020