

## **Cities and regions commit to making the EU an LGBTIQ Freedom Zone**

The Party of European Socialists, Renew Europe, European Alliance and the Greens Groups in the European Committee of the Regions warmly welcome the European Parliament Resolution on the declaration of the EU as an LGBTIQ Freedom Zone. In light of the growing backlash against LGBTIQ people in the form of public discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, the European Union must stand ready to defend democracy, the rule of law and all its people's fundamental rights, without any exceptions.

The political groups request the European Commission and the Council to use all tools at their disposal to ensure the effective protection and non-discrimination of LGBTIQ people and their families. It undermines to this effect that compliance with Article 2 TEU, which encapsulates the Union's values, should constitute a conditionality for eligibility for EU funds.

The European Committee of the Regions is in the process of elaborating its position on the European Commission's LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, in which it will take a strong stance against breaches of LGBTIQ people's rights, such as the development of zones free from so-called LGBT ideology.

The Party of European Socialists, Renew Europe, European Alliance and the Greens Groups commit to this effect to conducting a broad discussion on this issue, with the involvement of all their members with a view to effectively defending local democracy.

### **Signed by:**

**Christophe Rouillon**, President of the PES Group in the European Committee of the Regions and Mayor of Coulaines, France

**François Decoster**, President of Renew Europe in the European Committee of the Regions, Mayor of Saint-Omer and member of the Regional Council of Hauts-de-France

**Dr Kieran McCarthy**, President of the EA Group in the European Committee of the Regions and Member of the Cork City Council, Ireland

**Satu Haapanen**, Co-President of the Greens in the European Committee of the Regions and city councillor of Oulu, Finland

**Bernd Voß**, Co-President of the Greens in the European Committee of the Regions and member of the Schleswig-Holstein State Parliament, Germany