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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Implementation of the Commission's LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025  
- Presidency steering note

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Delegations will find attached the Presidency steering note on the above subject, with a view to the lunch debate at the EPSCO Council on 14 June 2021.

## Implementation of the Commission's LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025

Equality and non-discrimination are core values and fundamental rights in the EU, enshrined in the Treaties and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Article 19 TFEU empowers the Council to take appropriate action to combat discrimination on various grounds, including sexual orientation. More than two decades ago, the Council already prohibited such discrimination in the fields of employment and occupation in Directive 2000/78/EC. In 2016, the Council also approved a set of Conclusions in response to the Commission's List of actions to advance LGBTI equality.<sup>1</sup> Recently, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution reaffirming the importance of LGBTIQ equality in the EU.<sup>2</sup>

However, according to recent studies, the situation in the EU demonstrates that equality in this area has yet to be achieved: discrimination against LGBTI persons remains high and is even increasing in the EU<sup>3</sup> and trans and intersex people are among the least accepted groups in society.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the COVID-19 crisis is known to have exacerbated structural inequalities and increased discrimination. For a more social Europe, a strong equality agenda is needed, so as to ensure that the European Union is a safe place that allows all people to fulfil their potential.

In 2020, the Commission adopted the first ever LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025.<sup>5</sup> It sets out the Commission's key actions and objectives for the coming five years across four pillars:

1. Tackling discrimination against LGBTIQ people;
2. Ensuring LGBTIQ people's safety;
3. Building LGBTIQ inclusive societies; and
4. Leading the call for LGBTIQ equality around the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 10417/16.

<sup>2</sup> P9\_TA(2021)0089.

<sup>3</sup> FRA, [EU-LGBTI II - A long way to go for LGBTI equality](#) (14 May 2020).

<sup>4</sup> See fn 1-2; European Commission, [Legal gender recognition in the EU: The journeys of trans people towards full equality](#), June 2020.

<sup>5</sup> 13081/20.

Combating LGBTIQ inequality in the EU requires joint efforts at every level. Against this background, Ministers are invited to share their views on the following questions:

- 1) What is the best way to promote LGBTIQ equality policies at the EU and national level?
- 2) How can the implementation of the Commission's LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 best support the Member States in this policy field?

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