



## OPEN LETTER

To honourable President Poroshenko,

To the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine,

To the distinguished members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,

One of the founding principles of the European Union is to ensure equal rights for everyone, regardless of their gender, nationality, skin colour or sexuality. As Ukrainians are progressing on the path towards European integration, we salute the progress made for greater LGBTI equality.

Two years of violence-free Kyiv Pride events has demonstrated the country's commitment to the right of peaceful assembly, which so many sacrificed their lives for during the Maidan Revolution. We urge the Ukrainian authorities to preserve peace this year on June 17th and provide security backing for the upcoming Kyiv Pride.

We also urge Ukrainian authorities, Members of the Parliament, Cabinet of Ministers and the President to strengthen the country's commitment to a European future and take up the unfinished job of providing equal access to basic rights for LGBTI Ukrainians.

We regret to see that the legislative progress is stalled: while NGOs recorded multiple instances of hate speech and hate crime in 2017 in Ukraine, Ukraine remains one of the last places in Europe where no laws protect LGBTI minorities from either of the two. Civil society's recommendations to the Health Ministry for improving legal recognition and healthcare access for trans Ukrainians haven't been adopted. To this day, LGBTI public events all over the country face regular disruptions and attacks.

No one's rights are safe until the rights of all are protected.

Big changes often start with symbolic gestures. We encourage Ukrainian leaders and authorities to join their citizens for the Kyiv Pride on June 17th. Make history and be in the front row as Ukrainians march towards being a strong, diverse and equal democracy within our European family of states.

Sincerely,

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