


Breaking down the Come Out 4 Europe campaign

In the lead-up to the 2024 European Elections, we launched a Europe-wide campaign to gather signatures from candidates pledging to protect and advance LGBTI human rights if elected, and to get voters out to elect them.


[Campaign, European Parliament](#)

ILGA-Europe's Come Out 4 Europe campaign launched on March 4, 2014 and ran for three months in the lead up to the European Elections the following June. We created a [six-point pledge](#) for candidates to sign saying how they would go about protecting and advancing LGBTI human rights if elected to the European Parliament.



with ILGA-Europe

This is your opportunity to show how you will support and protect the rights of LGBTI people as an elected member of the European Parliament.



Come Out 4 Europe Pledge 2024

I, as a candidate for the European Parliament, pledge to be a firm supporter of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people's human rights and equality in the European Union and beyond.

I will:


- propose and advocate for EU policies and laws that provide explicit protection on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics, and that provide concrete responses to the needs of LGBTI people in all their diversity
- recognise that, in a context where LGBTI rights are used as scapegoats in wider attacks on democracy, I need to also actively engage on rule of law, democracy and inequality as part of my commitment
- Make sure the EU uses all its powers to hold Member States accountable for violations of the human rights of LGBTI people, and for ignoring their obligations under EU treaties, legislation and policies, and refusing to implement of existing legal protections
- act as a strong defender of LGBTI organisations and human rights defenders across Europe and beyond by actively challenging any restrictions to civil society space through working to secure sustainable and accessible EU funding for civil society, including LGBTI organisations
- advocate for the EU to be a champion for LGBTI Human Rights in Enlargement, Neighbourhood countries and Third Countries
- advocate for the adoption of an ambitious second EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy, and actively contribute to its effective implementation by mainstreaming LGBTI rights in EU internal and external policy-making.

In order to work towards these commitments, I will:

- meaningfully engage with, and seek out the input and strategic guidance of LGBTI civil society, who are best placed to know how to meet the needs of their communities
- use credible and responsible sources of information to ensure my work for LGBTI rights contributes to well-informed and constructive political discussions in Brussels and across the EU
- communicate about LGBTI rights and equality in a manner that brings people together and builds alliances and support, avoiding polarisation
- put the safety of the community above any other concerns and always follow the "do no harm" principle, including by keeping my work out of the public eye whenever necessary

How you will deliver:

If elected, how will you deliver on the commitments you have made in this pledge in your daily work?



SIGN THE PLEDGE

The core campaign message

Equality and the protection of the human rights of LGBTI people are inextricably interconnected with freedom, democracy and the protection of human rights in our societies in general. As we witness the rise of political forces that question basic fundamental rights and freedom, it is a time when we must all pull together for the Europe we want to see:

- A stronghold for democracy and inclusiveness
- where fundamental rights and freedom of everyone is protected
- with no tolerance for scapegoating by political leaders for their own power

The four campaign goals

1. To gain signatures for the pledge
2. To engage members in connecting to their candidates
3. To get people out to vote
4. To get pledge signers elected
5. To provide a basis for engagement with elected candidates in the new parliament

Comeout.eu

The hub of the campaign was the comeout.eu website where there was:

- A form for election candidates to sign the pledge, with functionality to approve candidates
- An interactive leaderboard/map that was automatically updated when a candidate signed the pledge, showing which EU country had the most pledges signed.
- Methods of sharing updates from each country.
- Methods for voters to share which candidates have signed the pledge in their countries across a range of social media and communications platforms

On the comeout.eu website and in our social media, we shared a campaign teaser video, featuring activists and ILGA-Europe's Executive Director, Chaber.

We also hosted and shared individual videos from activists across Europe in their own languages saying why the EU elections were important, and why people should vote for candidates who support LGBTI human rights. These influencer videos were viewed in large numbers.

Delivering on the goals

1. Signatures for the pledge

There were in total 1,110 signatures to the pledge across every country in the EU.

2. Member engagement

The Come Out 4 Europe campaign was designed for members to be able to use to engage candidates nationally. To support this we:

Held monthly online Monthly meetings from March to June;

designed and shared a toolkit with messaging, visuals and video content for members to use;

sent campaign update newsletters every two weeks, providing information on campaigning and practical help;

used the country ranking as a competitive element to motivate candidates to get pledge signatures;

encouraged and shared individual campaigns created by member organisation.

3. Voter mobilisation

ILGA-Europe campaigned across social media channels to engage voters from May 1st onwards

National campaigns also engaged large numbers of voters

Provisional turnout 51% (up 1% on 2019)

More than six in ten (64%) young EU citizens expressed their intention to vote

4. Elected candidates

Out of the 1,110 candidates who signed the Come Out 4 Europe pledge to protect, 164 were elected.

There are 720 seats in the European Parliament, meaning 24.17% of parliament pledged to protect and advance LGBTI human rights.

5. Basis for engagement

The pledge itself not only set out what must be done, but how it should be done. The online form also allowed candidates to say how they would incorporate these goals into their work as MEP's. Therefore the pledge gave us clear ways in which to engage with elected candidates for our advocacy work in the next parliament term.

The quality of the campaign was remarked upon by many candidates, meaning it was taken seriously and established trust in ILGA-Europe as a voice to amplify the needs and goals of LGBTI member organisations across the EU.

There was a strong measure of response from elected candidates in the aftermath of the election, many of whom turned up to a special introductory event in the parliament the September after the election.

Post-election analysis

A special post-election episode of our podcast, The Frontline, analyses the results of the election and how they may play out for LGBTI human rights in the next term of the European Parliament, 2024 -2029. It is moderated by our Advocacy Director, Katrin Hugendubel, with co-chairs of the LGBTI Intergroup at the European parliament, freshly re-elected MEP's Marc Angel from the Socialists & Democrats in Luxembourg and Kim van Sparrentak from the Greens/EFA in The Netherlands, alongside activists Luca Dudits from Hatter Society in Hungary and Roberto Muzetta from Arcigay in Italy.