

European Parliament backs call for civil society supports in the EU

[News](#), [Civil Rights and Freedom](#), [Civil Society](#), [European Parliament](#), [European Union](#), [Freedom of Association](#), [Funding](#), [Rule of Law](#)

This morning, 489 MEPs voted in favour of an instrument to support civil society organisations which promote democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights.

Over 500 LGBTI organisations are members of our ILGA-Europe family – and the message coming from many of them for the past few years has been undeniable. **Their work is getting harder, much harder.**

Their ability to organise events with their local LGBTI community, as well as working in alliances for human rights and the rule of law in their countries, is reducing.

This is happening **all over Europe** – it's not a problem that only exists outside the EU. We repeat: this is problem for the EU too.

And it's not just ILGA-Europe who have observed this phenomenon – in January 2018, the [FRA's new report recognised shrinking space](#) at an institutional level for the first time and said it needed to be urgently addressed.

One very practical way to better support civil society groups who are experiencing obstacles (whether direct or indirectly) is more **flexible funding**. There are several great mechanisms available for human rights defenders reworking outside the EU's borders, including from DG NEAR and DG Devco – but nothing similar for EU-based civil society to turn to.

That is why ILGA-Europe is delighted to see that MEPs in Strasbourg today in a resolution clearly call for a funding mechanism for human rights organisations working in the EU. The European Parliament has shown that it understands the realities faced by activists working to create positive change in their communities. I

In her intervention in the debate in plenary on Tuesday, **Commissioner Jourova** also voiced her support for such an instrument and **it is now up to the European Commission** to include a European Values Instrument in its proposal for the next Multi-annual Financial Framework (or MFF). Such an instrument should allow for direct support for national organisations working on human rights and democracy in a flexible manner.

Great to see EP supporting call from civil society across EU for [#EuropeanValuesInstrument](#). Over to the EC now [@GOettingerEU](#) [@VeraJourova](#) <https://t.co/VQHbxG1wsj>

— Katrin Hugendubel (@khugendubel) [April 19, 2018](#)

YES! The European Parliament just voted with a big majority in favour of creating a fundamental values instrument to support civil society. We have to defend fundamental rights, rule of law and democracy!

pic.twitter.com/LI9Qwr5V0N

— Terry Reintke (@TerryReintke) [April 19, 2018](#)