



MINISTRY OF HUMAN CAPACITIES
MINISTER

Reference No: 21833/2016/EUNEF

“~~30.03~~” March 2016, Budapest

Subject: information on draft Council Conclusions on LGBTI persons and gender equality

Dear Sir/ Madame,

May I take this opportunity to draw your attention to the circumstances of the decision taken by EU ministers for social affairs at the EPSCO Council meeting held on 7 March in Brussels.

In the frame of equality, the current Dutch Presidency of the EU Council submitted two draft council conclusions to the Council aiming at adopting them in a package. One was on the response to the Commission’s Strategic engagement for gender equality and another one was on the response to the Commission’s List of Actions to advance LGBTI equality. During the negotiation process, Hungary requested the separation of the two conclusions but the Presidency finally decided to keep these two themes together. Therefore Hungary had to block the adoption of both documents.

With regard to the Council Conclusions on gender equality Hungary highly appreciated the efforts of the Dutch Presidency. Strengthening the role of families is a top priority for my country therefore the Presidency’s work was indeed valued during the preparatory process to facilitate the approval of our proposed paragraph on the importance of family. It is our firm belief that equality between women and men cannot be achieved without supporting families.

In line with all these efforts, Hungary encouraged the adoption of the council conclusions that laid down further tasks for both the Commission and the Member States for supporting women.

However, unfortunately this document was connected to another one on the equality of LGBTI persons which aimed at implementing or enforcing a list of actions elaborated by the European Commission exclusively. The content of this document raised serious concerns, as the text was not in line with previously adopted documents concerning the equality of LGBTI persons. In addition it did not take into consideration the Member States’ national identity, constitutional traditions and competences in the field of family law.

Values and norms laid down in the Fundamental Law are extraordinarily important for the Hungarian government and we cannot and will not support decisions that do not represent these values. However in line with international obligations the provisions of the Hungarian legislation in force ensure the protection of LGBTI persons, our Fundamental law clearly defines the basic principles including that our understanding of marriage exclusively as a union between a man and a woman and its preferential treatment as opposed to other forms of living together may not be considered discriminatory.

Family policy fundamentally falls under national competence and any direct or indirect pressure aiming at revising our values could not be accepted.

Yours sincerely,


Zoltán Balog
