Stop the EU’s equality betrayal – Defend anti-discrimination now!

article, non-discrimination, hate crime, non-discrimination

In a disheartening step backward for equality, the European Commission is considering the withdrawal of the proposed Directive on anti-discrimination—a pivotal measure designed to safeguard equal rights throughout the EU. This directive represents a commitment to combat discrimination in various sectors of public life, including access to healthcare, education, housing, and social benefits. It is particularly vital for protection against discrimination based on religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, and is a baseline to further expand comprehensive protection to all groups at risk of marginalisation across all areas of life.

In 2008, the Commission proposed a Council directive aimed at extending equal treatment protections beyond the workplace. However, the proposal has been stalled for years due to a lack of unanimous agreement among EU member states, with only a few countries such as Czechia, Germany, and Italy blocking it before the Commission ultimately announced to withdraw the proposal. As a result, millions of people remain vulnerable to systemic discrimination, and a hierarchy of protection has emerged, where some forms of discrimination are addressed more comprehensively than others.

This move comes at a time when far-right forces are gaining momentum, posing a significant threat to democracy, equality, and human rights across the continent. Instead of taking decisive action to protect groups at risk of marginalisation—including LGBTI+ people, older and younger people, persons with disabilities, religious minorities and those at the intersections of discrimination, including racialised people—the European Commission has chosen inaction, sending a dangerous message that equality is negotiable.

At a time when human rights protections should be strengthened, the EU cannot afford to retreat. By signing this petition, you join the call for European leaders to reaffirm their commitment to a Union of Equality. Demand that they reject any regression in anti-discrimination laws and work towards strengthening protections for all citizens.

sign the petition

*This campaign is run by AGE Platform Europe, EL*C, ENAR, ERGO Network, IGLYO, ILGA-Europe, OII Europe, and TGEU – Trans Europe and Central Asia*