Trans Activists Visit EU Institutions in Brussels

article, non-discrimination, trans activists

In November 2022, six trans activists from across the European Union travelled to Brussels to join staff from TGEU on a study visit in connection to proposed legislation on strengthening equality bodies.

Bringing their diverse and rich experiences working with the trans community, the activists shared their personal stories and reasons for needing strong, independent equality bodies that are mandated to work on gender identity and gender expression. They also learned about the EU institutions, how legislation is developed, and the important role of equality bodies in promoting equality and protecting from discrimination.

TGEU prepared a video that showcases the trip and the important points the activists made.

What did the activists do?

In addition to meeting with a senior staff member of the European Commission, the study visit met with MEP Dr Sylwia Spurek from the Greens/EFA group, assistants and advisors at the European Parliament, as well as officers of Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies, and a representative of the Belgian Gender Equality Institute.

The activists took away a lot from the experience:

> “I learned a lot about how European Institutions and Equality Bodies work and how is the life of the trans community in real life in [Member] States of the EU. I gained more experience in international team work, I built international network with trans, non-binary, and genderqueer activists.”

But at the same time reminded us we have work to do!

> “It showed me… in regards to gender identity issues are not being carefully taken care of… there is still a lack of understanding and misinformation [about trans people].”

A huge thanks to the activists for travelling to Brussels and sharing their insights with us and with policy makers, to all those who made time to meet with us, and a special thanks to IGLYO for hosting us in Brussels!

Background

On 7 December 2022, the European Commission released its draft proposal for two Directives aimed at establishing minimum standards for equality bodies. TGEU published a response to the draft proposal for Directive. Equinet released a position paper with their policy positions and proposals. This is just the beginning; TGEU will continue to work, together with other European LGBTI networks and Equinet on ways to strengthen these directives so they offer the strongest protection for trans people.