



The FVG Pride ODV Association, with the support and collaboration of numerous other associations of the Friulian and Julian territory, announces with this manifesto a new FVG Pride edition for the year 2023. Like previous editions, it will consist of a dense calendar of events organized throughout the region and will culminate in a final march, during which we will take to the streets in order to make our voices heard, once again and even louder, as an echo of our increasingly marginalized existence.

As members of the LGBTQIA+ community, we find ourselves living in the darkest moment in the history and politics of our Country since WWII, as we are governed by a far-right party whose leadership attempts to disguise itself as a moderate, pro-European political force. Not being faced with an equally brash opposition, they have taken advantage of this absence to increase their political standing until they democratically gained a majority in Parliament. We know all too well that fear, populism and nationalism have historically led us to situations of conflict and times of profound social crisis. For us, the weight of remembrance is that of millions of lives and, unfortunately, we have a long memory. We remember, for instance, an animated declaration of the current President of the Chamber of Deputies, Lorenzo Fontana: *“We want a Europe where marriage is between a mom and a dad and children are given to a mom and a dad! We don’t even want to hear about other filth!”*. Incidentally, the (recorded) “filth” makes up at least 2% of Italian families.

The newly appointed Minister for Family, Natality and Equal Opportunities, Eugenia Roccella, has declared that every child *“has a mom and a dad by force of circumstance”*, that *“when we say that a child has two dads or two moms, we’re not actually saying the truth”*, and that *“abortion is unfortunately a right”*. Thankfully, there are comforting signs coming from Europe: the European Commission has recently presented a proposal for a regulation that aims at guaranteeing across the EU the rights granted by one Member State to the children of same-sex couples: parents will be able to request a European certificate from the Country that recognized their parenthood first, and this certificate will have to be recognized and applied in all Member States.

In addition, let us remember the inappropriate applause which recently met the dropping of a bill against homophobia and transphobia, even though signs of the legitimization of violence against LGBTQIA+ people have become more and more obvious. Among all others, we want to remember the tragic incident that happened last June and involved a Venetian trans woman, Cloe Bianco, who committed suicide after suffering repeated episodes of violence in healthcare as well as in her social and work life.

According to the new Istat-Unar survey on workplace discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people (2020-2021), almost half (46,9%) of gay and bisexual people stated that they had suffered at least one episode of discrimination at school or at university. In the workplace, the data is not comforting either: among gay and bisexual people, one in three has been discriminated against in the workplace and one in five has been assaulted or has experienced a hostile workplace environment.



Electoral registers in Italy are still divided by gender, and going to the polling station can often become a forced coming out that many trans and nonbinary people do not want to face, eventually having to renounce their constitutional right.

Far too often, we are barred from entering schools to discuss sex education, we are compelled to separate our public and private life when we hold public office, we are accused of promoting imaginary subversive ideologies that aim at undermining the natural balance of the universe and at molding young minds by instilling inhuman convictions. Finally, and this might be even more absurd and paradoxical, we are not even always considered worthy to be involved in debating questions that affect us directly.

Among this whirlwind, we have not mentioned the Roman salutes at multiple celebrations, the denial of disembarkation to “residual loads”, the would-be patriots, the “anti-abortion” ministers, the appraisal of Putin, the biblical quotes about homosexuality being an abomination, the declaration of same-sex couples’ illegality, and the many other occasions in which our lives have been ridiculed or put at stake.

On a regional scale too, our community has been going through a profoundly difficult time ever since the installation of the Fedriga government in 2018 and the resulting cancellation of the limited progress made by the Regional Council. The complexity of this moment has manifested in numerous occasions in which our very lives have been put at risk by LGBTQIA-phobic declarations and actions which reflect a prevalent unwillingness to understand our claims and demands, which we find inexplicable.

First of all, let us remember the amendment of Regional Act No 9 of 16 May 2014 by means of the Regional Act No 23 of 30 October 2018, which compressed the specific roles of three Authorities into one single role, the “Regional Authority for the rights of the individual”, transforming it from a collective body to a single person. This role, which used to be called “Authority for individuals at risk of discrimination”, has been largely weakened by this amendment. Originally, in fact, the Authority received reports of cases of alleged discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity among others, whether by public or private entities; more importantly, they worked on the prevention of such episodes. Proof of the weakening of this role can be found, for instance, in the answer given by the current Regional Authority following our request to sponsor the previous FVG Pride edition, contesting its political manifesto as “*biased*”, clarifying that the authority, “*independently from the examination of the multiple individual points, cannot grant institutional support*”, and inviting us to only contact him to report discriminatory practices. Thus, it appears clearly that safeguards at a regional level are only provided when we have already been victimized, and not in terms of prevention, given the fact that we are a vulnerable demographic.

Unfortunately, this is not the only institution that has attempted to erase us. We are referring to the “Regional commission for equal opportunities between men and women”, an advisory body of the Regional Council and government which, in our region unlike in many others, specifies within its name the gender binary which prompts its actions. While this might seem like an insignificant detail to the untrained eye, it is actually symptomatic of a desire to only take into consideration cisgender and



heterosexual men and women. Thus, as was already made clear by their negative answer to our sponsorship request for FVG Pride 2021, this authority keeps sexual diversity outside of its own purview.

In carrying out our analysis on what we consider hostile political choices towards our community, we must not forget that the Regional Council ignored the plea made by all the associations which fight for gender equality in Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The associations demanded that the Regional Council update the regional electoral law, which is the last one in Italy (along with other three Italian regions) which still does not include the possibility to indicate two gender preferences in the electoral roll. Statistical data have demonstrated that the two gender preferences mechanism has proved a useful means to enhance the percentage of elected women. Even though the dual candidate preferences system has led to an overall increase of elected women of 19%, the female representation stays at a paltry 12% (data collected by Valentina Ferri e Alina Grieco in *La composizione di genere nei consigli comunali dopo l'introduzione della doppia preferenza*). Despite the urging by the Regional Equal Opportunity Commission to align with the national law, the Regional council led by Massimiliano Fedriga has refused - for the third time - to accept a very simple amendment which had been requested. The Regional council has refused the very same amendment for the third time, promising to accept it "later" and to include it in a broader election law proposal. This promise has remained unfulfilled for years.

Both local and national Italian politics are sending out clear discrimination signals along with the intention to marginalize and isolate us. But we like to think that the worst time can happen to be the perfect time. Do we not have any law which protects us? Then we can write the best law possible. Do they not consider us as worthy political participants so much that they do not grant us anything? Then we will demand everything, and we will not accept any compromise. Do they not want to see us on squares? Then we will organize the most beautiful Pride parades. From the most violent threats will come the most ambitious demands. From our despair, from the insensibility which we have been forced to live in, will bloom our most wonderful flowers.

The most disruptive tool we possess to emphasize our existence is the Pride march, and this is our goal. Our Pride parade is a public demonstration open to whoever wishes to partake; it is a march whose aim is to claim the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. This event is a grand celebration of the iridescent beauty of the individuals and of our community, but it is also the place that hosts our discomfort, our frustration and our worries. Therefore, the location of the march is significant. Pordenone is the only former province of our region which hasn't yet hosted a pride parade. The LGBTQIA+ community living in this territory has increasingly demanded that we bring to the streets and the squares one of our most elementary claims, which is also unfortunately the most ignored: our existence as LGBTQIA+ people. We have decided to address this need, especially in light of some statements delivered by the mayor of Pordenone, Alessandro Ciriani, about the so called "gender ideology", about the public display of symbols related to the queer community in schools, and about his constant failure to respond to the request for confrontation made by LGBTQIA+ associations in the area. There cannot be any relationship in the absence of one party; consequently, we cannot confront each other if the other party denies itself. It seems that ignoring us is the strategy implemented against us by the current city administration. Frequently, in the name of "protecting everybody", an aim claimed



by the “Mayor for everybody”, a pretext is created to push away the confrontation between a group of citizens and the institutions. However, part of the citizens of Pordenone consists of queer people, who are also the same citizens who are systematically pushed away from public matters and are forced to disguise themselves as universally acceptable, discreet, aligned and decorous. Often personal beliefs, especially for those in positions of power, prompt the creation, reception and distribution of distorted news shaped to one's own fears or those of the audience to be won over, using inappropriate, violent and discriminatory language. The aim usually is not to educate oneself - perhaps even critically - about something that one does not experience firsthand and does not know, but to isolate anything that may threaten those beliefs. The LGBTQIA+ community of Pordenone, and of its territory, which loves this city in all its peculiarities and in all its criticalities, opposes this stance. We want to live in a country and a city which sees us, listens to us and addresses our needs; a city or a country which does not legitimize violence and does not consider us as threats to be attacked. We will bring this wish to the squares and streets of Pordenone. We will be an inevitable and colorful opposition. It will be difficult to keep choosing not to see us. We are "like flowers breaking asphalt and growing in its cracks", kind and tireless evidence of courage.

This is just a summary of all that animates us and motivates us to fight again. This moment of explicit opposition by politics against our community urges us to put our existences on the line and bring our convictions and firm demands to the center of the public eye. We strongly believe in the intersectionality of our demands: for us, fighting against sexism, racism and xenophobia, stigmatization of mental disorders, neurodiversity and disabilities, fatphobia and religious intolerance is just as important as fighting LGBTQIA-phobia. To create together an equal world in which all are free to be themselves and live in harmony, with dignity and without fear of reprisals or discrimination, FVG Pride calls for:

## **(DE)INSTITUTIONS**

### **RE.A.DY Network.**

We are calling for a broad membership to the Re.a.dy Network, the Anti-Discrimination Network for Public Administrations, an initiative brought forward by the City of Turin and which calls for the sharing of good practices concerning discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, through horizontal involvement of public administrations. Being part of the structure does not entail any economic burden, but only the annual commitment to organize an event aimed at raising awareness and popularizing the issues covered by the Network itself. As of 2018, with the installation of the current governments, both the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region and the municipalities of Udine and Trieste have left the circuit without providing any valid reason, creating an obvious void of guarantees for any minority.

We demand a renewed membership to the Re.a.dy Network, both from the Region and the Municipalities of Udine and Trieste, for the promotion of an active social culture that is committed to



combating discrimination and valuing differences; we also call on the region's non-member municipalities to join the network.

### **Respect for the secularity of the state**

We demand that the Italian state guarantee the secularity of its bodies, so that no religious denomination or officials can impose a behavioral model, dictate political choices or influence judicial choices that justify social discriminatory practices or acts.

We also demand that public bodies reaffirm their independence from religions by divesting themselves of cult symbols, such as crucifixes in schools, which attack both the secularity of the state and the right to religious freedom.

### **Ensuring LGBTQIA+ rights in prison settings**

We ask that it be ensured that transgender inmates be housed in sections dedicated to their gender of choice and not to their registry gender, and that specific support programs be created and implemented for socio-occupational reintegration.

We also call for ensuring the mental and physical well-being of LGBTQIA+ inmates by fostering information and awareness initiatives for employees and other inmates in order to prevent discriminatory situations, activating training campaigns on sexual health and well-being, and implementing preventive plans against acts of violence based on LGBTQIA-phobia.

### **Guarantees for asylum seekers**

We demand that special reception services be guaranteed in the territory for those who seek international protection and have special needs; these services are also provided by the appropriate national and European regulations for LGBTQIA+ people persecuted in their country of origin because of their sexual identity.

We also ask that international guidelines be respected in territorial commissions, that funds allocated for reception not be cut, and that NGOs be guaranteed to be able to lend their services as they provide relief.

In addition, we demand that reception processes be guaranteed, and that the model of widespread reception, a model proven virtuous for integration into the local social fabric and emulated in many other cities, be restored.



We demand the immediate dismantling of CPRs, which are a form of detention that violates human dignity, starting with the one located in Gradisca d'Isonzo.

### **Permanent LGBTQIA+ anti-violence center.**

We request that the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region, in coordination with the relevant entities in the area, create and continuously fund a permanent regional anti-violence center that welcomes and provides useful information and specific support services to victims of homophobia and transphobic violence.

We also call for the continuous funding of a temporary shelter for LGBTQIA+ people who have suffered discrimination or violence and/or find themselves in a situation of extreme vulnerability, where they can receive the support they need to recover and rebuild the skills to regain their autonomy, based on the model of territorial excellence that has been the Villa CARRA project.

### **Respect for bi-multilingualism in the Region**

We demand that bi-multilingualism be respected and implemented as stipulated in the law. Bi-multilingualism is a defining part of our Region and is one of the reasons that make it an Autonomous Region. Respect for multiculturalism and differences also comes through language. More often than not, bi-multilingual road signs are unavailable and in other instances they contain blatantly incorrect translations, not to mention public statements released from public agencies and texts produced by public services that are often and frequently translated using various search engines and come across as nonsensical and are riddled with errors. While many steps have been taken in recent years toward greater respect for the various language minorities that make up our region, these efforts are not enough. The lack and low quality of translations cannot continue to be blamed on economic reasons. We are a land composed of many realities and minorities. Respect for bi-multilingualism must become the starting point on which bridges are to be built.

Too often we see examples of vandalism in which public signs written in Slovenian and Friulian are stained and/or hidden. These are remnants of fascism, of a society that is afraid of diversity and fights it rather than welcomes it hence not realizing how diversity can enrich it.

## **RIGHTS AND DONGS**

### **Marriage equality**

We ask for a modification of the law n. 76/2016 ("Cirinnà law") which is an apartheid law as it reserves an "exclusive institution" to same sex couples, while civil marriage remains forbidden for people in non-heterosexual relationships. This law de facto legitimizes discrimination based on sexual



orientation and gender identity, and makes us second-class citizens. We demand that the State updates the archaic and discriminatory institution of civil marriage, revising its founding principles, repealing rules with patriarchal connotations (e.g. articles 89 and 143-bis of the Civil Code) and extending it to people in non-heterosexual relationships.

While waiting for marriage equality to be finally formalized in Italy as well, we demand that marriages celebrated abroad between Italian and foreign citizens be transcribed in the marriage registers of the Municipalities and not in the registers of civil unions, thus degrading their rights and protections.

### **Adoption and family**

We ask for the transposition of the regulation approved by the European Commission in December 2022 which requires the protection of same-gender families. One of the articles in particular, protects the recognition of the children of LGBTQI+ couples: if the family unit is recognized by 1 of the 27 countries of the European Union, this recognition must be extended in all the other Member States. Furthermore, the concept of "family" at the basis of every legal institution turns out to be dated and not compatible with reality any more. We believe that nowadays we can recognize different types of "family" or more properly different ways of living emotional and/or social relationships, monogamous or not, nonetheless worthy of consideration and protection.

In the wake of this regulation, we ask that the Italian State guarantees every parent the right to recognize their children at birth, even those born abroad. This includes the possible recognition not only for the biological parent but also for the partner: we ask for the right to adopt also by the social parent, and for it to be protected even in cases of separation.

We ask that the Italian State allow the adoption of minors by individuals and couples regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Finally, we ask that there be a discussion and a review of the legal institutions related to the theme of the family and everything connected to it (think, for example, of the "affinity" bond), as well as the review of anachronistic legal terms such as "... family man".

### **Law against homobiphobia and transphobia**

We ask for a law that condemns homobiphobia and transphobia, equating hatred towards LGBTQI+ people with discriminatory and hateful aggravations (such as racism) but also provides for positive improvement and protection actions for LGBTQI+ minorities. It is necessary to prohibit conversion therapies: scientific literature on the matter has shown that they have no scientific foundation, on the contrary, they have dire consequences for the mental and physical health of the "patients". Anti-LGBTQI+ propaganda must also be banned. LGBTQI+ is not an opinion and no one can claim the right to freely discriminate against a group of the population.



## **Regulation of sex work**

We demand that voluntary *sex work* between self-determined adults to be decriminalized. The state cannot continue to ignore a reality involving thousands of workers and millions of customers that are currently left in a limbo of illegality. To those who voluntarily carry out this work, the State must guarantee the right to welfare, health and safety, the respect of Human Rights and Dignity as for any other worker.

Given the fact that the majority of sex workers in Europe are migrant in vulnerable situations, who are confronted every day with the violation of their human rights due to immigration laws, laws against prostitution and hostile policies towards LGBTQIA+ people, it is urgent to guarantee support to sex workers, ensuring that they do not suffer multiple discrimination due to their situation as migrants, refugees or LGBTQIA+ people. We must grant them access to justice, documents and jobs removing them from clandestinity. Sex work can be decriminalized without giving up the fight against trafficking, exploitation and every form of violence, which instead must be hit hard.

Sex workers are currently paying too high a price, from acts of extreme violence to murders, as in the recent cases of Sarzana, Rome and Turin. We consider it unacceptable for the State to not take a stand on these hate crimes and we demand for it to clearly and unequivocally condemn them.

## **Guarantee of alias identity in Public Institutions**

Every Public Institution or Administration, including the Universities of Udine and Trieste, must guarantee the alias identity for their own staff and for transgender and/or non-binary students. It consists in having one's chosen name and gender instead of their personal detail in every document or address, physical or digital, in which they appear. Dead-naming, or the practice of voluntarily addressing a person by their birth name rather than by the name of choice, must be discouraged and prosecuted.

## **Amendment of Law No. 40/2004 - Medically assisted procreation**

We call for the repeal of Law No. 40/2004 to allow access to procreation medically assisted procreation (MAP) to all persons, single or in couples, regardless of identity gender and/or sexual orientation, promoting the protection of all forms of parenthood.

## **Guaranteeing women's rights to autonomy**





We call for respect for freedom of choice and freedom of self-determination with respect to sexual, reproductive and affective life of all. For this reason, we specifically call for an end to the attacks on the self-determination of women, the most visible target of heteropatriarchal impositions still entrenched in Italian society. In particular, we demand an end to legislative interventions to make divorce more burdensome and child custody more difficult for separated couples, and that voluntary termination of pregnancy not be hindered in any way, improving and eliminating conscientious objection in public health care. We also call for increased resources for institutions and associations concerned with women's care and health, and for greater attention by institutions to the elimination of the gender gap.

We demand that the State reject, in word and deed, the heteropatriarchal ideology that imposes on women the only possible and subordinate roles: mothers and wives.

### **Self-determination and recognition of transgender, non-binary, queer and intersex people**

We call for State recognition of the right to gender identity and to self-determination of transgender, non-binary, queer and intersex people. We want the updating of fields in civil registry documents: that "gender" and not "sex" be mentioned in the documents and that there be at least a third option for individuals who do not identify with the gender binary or whose physiological and phenotypical reality cannot be ascribed to either pole.

The rectification of biographical data for transgender or non-binary individuals should be untethered from the willingness to undergo hormonal or surgical medical treatment or not.

### **Depathologization of intersexuality**

We want the Italian State to de-pathologize variants of sexual characteristics within guidelines and medical protocols and accept intersexuality as a natural variant of genital physiology.

### **Depathologization of transsexuality**

We demand that all diagnostic manuals and associations of health professionals remove Transgenderism, Transsexuality and Gender Dysphoria from the list of mental illnesses, following the example of the World Health Organization.

### **Intersex Corrective Surgeries**



We demand that the State declare as illegal genital mutilation and so-called corrective surgeries at birth, which force intersex people inside a label arbitrarily decided by the doctors. Any surgical or pharmacological intervention aimed at normalizing a body that does not fit within the typical binary notions of male or female must be allowed only after obtaining the informed consent of the person concerned.

### **Accessible and inclusive polling stations for Trans\* identities**

We demand that polling stations be made inclusive, accessible and respectful to all trans identities. The voting procedures set forth in Art. 5 of Presidential Decree No. 223 of March 20, 1967, which call for the division of polling stations into electoral lines divided by male and female, represent in fact a limitation on the exercise of the right to vote for thousands of transgender and non-binary people who are thus outed. Forcing the trans community into coming out in environments not prepared to welcome them, means exposing people to the not remote possibility of becoming targets of hostility, discrimination and violence by virtue of their gender identity.

We also call for speeding up the procedures for registry rectification of documents. Thousands of people eligible to vote right now in Italy are not in possession of documents that conform to their identity, this because of the now obsolete Law 164 of 1982 that regulates in Italy the process of registry rectification of documents and requires people to go through lengthy of bureaucracy in Italian courts in order to obtain a document that recognizes them in their daily social relationships.

## **PATIENT UNTIL A CERTAIN POINT: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

### **Right to psychological, emotional and mental health**

We ask for the improvement of the current tools that should ensure the access to psychological health, and that this sector experts should be preventively formed about LGBTQIA+ thematics.

We deem that emotional and psychological health, as an essential part of the right to health, is an inalienable right of every person and the accessibility to tools to preserve it must be assured for all. For too long, our State and other institutions that govern us have ignored the matter of accessibility to psychological, emotional and mental health, creating a huge gap at a social level. These issues are even further aggravated regarding the LGBTQIA+ community that, like other social minorities, suffers from a specific stigma linked to the discriminatory nature of our local culture. Even though measures have been recently implemented in order to simplify the access to mental health, both at national and regional levels, they have proven to be insufficient in relation to population demand and, therefore, ineffective in their purpose. We therefore emphasize the need for systematic strategies that grant access to the right to psychological health.



We also highlight that, more often than not, the available sector experts both in public and private healthcare systems are not properly instructed to tackle the issues and needs from social minorities, in which the LGBTQIA+ community is included.

### **Regional STD coordination and strategic prevention**

The LGBTQIA+ fights for a free, conscious and well-informed sexuality for which the STD departments from the Regional Healthcare Districts play an important role. For this reason, we urge the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region to increase the investments on such departments, especially regarding prevention. We ask for the creation of a regional coordination for the STD departments from the Healthcare Districts to offer a more efficient service and strategically act on prevention. We also ask the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region to grant the Center of Sexually Transmitted Diseases of Gorizia, given its excellence in medical practice and the patient hospitality, the acknowledgment as the leading center for the requested coordination.

We ask the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region to create, finance, activate and coordinate new public campaigns to disseminate information about HIV infections and STDs in general, and to promote in large scale the condom as a preventive tool against STDs.

We ask for the creation of specific informative campaigns to promote alternative means beyond barrier methods to prevent HIV infections, such as PrEp (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis). Furthermore, we ask the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region to work in order to provide for free condoms, femidoms and oral dams, and the inclusion of a reimbursement to make the PrEp available to all people for which the method is prescribed.

Besides that, we ask for the prevention services to be increased: the extension and the generalization of the anonymity and the free access to test for the most common STDs such as gonorrhea, hepatitis and syphilis, and that the service should be offered with more visibility; that the HIV fast test should be promoted; that the HIV community-based test should be actively offered in non-conventional places in sight of CBvCT (Community-Based voluntary Counseling and Testing) and according to HIV protocol CoBATEST to populations more exposed to HIV (MSM - Men Who Have Sex with Men, IDU - Injecting drug users, sex-workers); last but not least, that the scope of free access to the HPV vaccine should be broadened.

### **Guarantee of the right of voluntary interruption of pregnancy (VIP) and reproductive care**

It is unacceptable that in a country like Italy, a law approved more than forty years ago, and that allows women to resort to VIP in a public structure, has not been thoroughly applied. We fought to obtain this right, which was constantly criticized even after its parliamentary recognition, and it is worth remembering that 88% of citizens opposed the revocation of this law during a popular referendum. In



Italy, according to the data from the Italian National Institute of Health (ISS, data of May 2022 relating to 2020) 64.6% of gynecologists, 44.6% of anesthesiologists and 36.2% of non-medical personnel declare themselves conscientious objectors, with wide regional variations. Access to VIP for women is constantly hindered, if not even denied, making a path that is often difficult to undertake dramatic and humiliating.

The vast majority of health personnel are not trained or informed about the sexual and reproductive needs of the LGBTQIA+ person. Furthermore, there are no public services that address the desire for parenthood of singles and queer couples.

We ask for the full application of the Law of 22th May 1978 n. 194 and that the clinics present in the territory are maximized, to guarantee free and gratuitous access to treatment and voluntary termination of pregnancy. We ask for the abolition of conscientious objection in public offices, or at least for a number of non-objecting doctors and nurses to be always guaranteed in every hospital to ensure the abortion health service at any time, within the limits imposed by current legislation. We defend the principle according to which all women have the right to choose, in the absence of contraindications and within the ninth week of pregnancy, the pharmacological method for IVG (RU-468). For us, the right to self-determination of women and the right of each individual to freely decide about their body are both inalienable. We ask for the right to free contraception throughout the national territory.

We believe it is fundamental and essential that anyone who accesses a public health service that deals with sexual and reproductive health, such as regional clinics or the hospital departments themselves, be welcomed, listened to and taken care of by non-judgmental, informed, updated medical and other healthcare personnel, which should be competent about LGBTQIA+ specific sexual and reproductive issues. We ask for rules that prevent and oppose gynecological and obstetric violence, so that every medical act is properly explained and in any case preceded by an informed and explicit consent, in full application of the recommendations of the World Health Organization (1985).

We ask for the recognition by the National Healthcare Service of vulvodynia, pudendal neuropathy, stage I and II endometriosis, adenomyosis and fibromyalgia as chronic and disabling diseases, and the inclusion of vulvodynia, pudendal neuropathy and fibromyalgia in the Essential Levels of Care. We ask that medical and health personnel be able to provide clinical information regarding medically assisted procreation techniques dedicated to LGBTQIA+ couples. We ask that the right of reproduction and parenthood of trans and non-binary individuals be discussed and protected within the gender affirmation processes.

### **Ensuring support to the families**

We demand that the FVG Region -with the support of regional Healthcare Agencies- establish centers that families of LGBTQIA+ persons can turn to in order to receive information, aid and support throughout the territory - not just in chief towns of provinces.



We also demand that Healthcare Agencies provide appropriate training and education to their social health personnel and general practitioners in order for them to be able to provide families and youngsters with all necessary information around care and prevention throughout their process of sexual and affective growth and with special attention to and inclusion of non cis-hetero sexualities.

### **Ensuring the rights of LGBTQIA+ seniors**

We demand that caregivers and organizations working in the field of active ageing have specific competences and thorough training and education on the peculiar characteristics of LGBTQIA+ elders, and that they are able to implement specific practices to target their needs.

LGBTQIA+ elderly people tend to be invisible, and their involuntary loneliness has a twofold matrix: age discrimination and sexual identity discrimination. Age discrimination is already widespread in our society and has major relevance in the LGBTQIA+ community and culture, especially among male environments and 50-plus adults entering their old age. Discrimination based on sexual identity has mutable specific characteristics that depend on the degree of confidence with which a person socializes their own sexual identity. The Italian social support system is potentially fragile as it is oftentimes based on family blood ties; therefore elderly LGBTQIA+ people without descendants are at risk of finding themselves with little to no support.

### **Ensuring the rights of LGBTQIA+ people with disabilities**

We claim, support and promote the principle of universal accessibility as declined in all aspects of everyday life and with special attention to ensuring access to information, social events and places that would guarantee the full participation of people with disabilities to community life.

We also demand that centers and facilities for protection guarantee the right for sexuality of people with disabilities without falling in the infantilization; and that a thorough education on affectivity and sexuality is ensured regardless of people's sexual orientation and gender identity. Moreover, we ask that a specialized practitioner on emotionality, affectivity and sexuality (OEAS) for people with disabilities be legalized and protected.

### **Ensuring the availability and free access to medical services for transexual, transgender and non-binary people**

We demand that the Ministry of Health treat surgery of secondary sexual traits with as much dignity as any other surgical intervention.



We demand that transgender, transsexual and non-binary people no longer have to wait years to undergo operations because they are considered purely cosmetic surgeries, that the state stop obstructing the path of gender affirmation by continually stonewalling us.

### **Ensuring the rights of neurodivergent people**

We demand that neurodivergence be not merely understood in medical terms and that it be recognized as a human specificity and not treated as a medical condition that needs to be cured. We also demand that people who deal with neurodivergent individuals either in professional or personal environments be given adequate education and training on LGBTQIA+ matters. Finally, we ask that specific education on neurodivergence be also provided in schools and educational centers for early identification of neurodivergent people, since many of them only discover their condition of neurodivergency in their adult life.

According to Acanfora (2021), neurodivergency is “the variability between the different characteristics that constitute the neurology of each person”. Within this range of variability there are specific characteristics that are particularly frequent in some individuals. Almost 80% of the population has a so-called typical neurological development, namely a rather homogeneous way to perceive both internal and external stimuli and elaborate them via behavioral practices in one’s relationship with the self and the environment. The remaining 20% of the population falls within neurodivergence and it consists of people with a neurological development which is different from the average development. This category includes people with autism, ADHD condition(s), dyslexia, dyspraxia, Tourette syndrome, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, etc. The LGBTQIA+ community includes a relevant number of neurodivergent people. Therefore, these two characteristics (neurodivergency and LGBTQIA+ belonging) shall not be taken into account separately; rather they need be dealt with in the light of intersectionality, as these people experience a type of discrimination which has two different facets that are intrinsically intertwined.

### **Ensuring menstrual justice**

We demand that the VAT on both reusable and disposable menstrual hygienic materials be abolished in its entirety, in line with Countries such as Scotland (from 2020) and the UK (from 2021). Menstruation is not a luxury people decide to have; we believe the right to hygiene to be universal and a primary and inviolable necessity of a civilized country.

We also demand that cost-free menstrual hygienic supplies are provided in all public buildings, schools and workplaces, as in Scotland from 2022. We cannot forget and deliberately ignore that the phenomenon of “period poverty” exists, namely the economic impossibility for individuals to have adequate hygiene guaranteed during their menstrual period. During their menses many people do not go to work because they cannot afford to purchase pads and they expose themselves to a high risk of



infection by using towels, cloths or worn-out clothes. It is commonly held that this type of poverty only concerns people who menstruate and live in economically unstable or poorer countries, while it is not the case: for instance, in the UK 1 out of 10 people cannot afford to purchase menstrual hygienic supplies.

Finally, we ask that the FVG Region set up training courses that aim at de-stigmatizing menstruation, and that it organize information campaigns to promote the use of menstrual hygienic materials that are an alternative to pads and that are currently available (such as menstrual cups and period panties); this way, it is possible to reduce the impact they have on our own health, finances and the environment. We do indeed believe that information bears common sense and common sense helps to make sustainable choices.

## **EDUCATION AND PREVENTION: DEVIANCE IN ABUNDANCE!**

### **Guarantee of education for differences**

We demand that in the Three-Year Educational Offer Plan (PTOF) of every public school, true education on affectivity and sexuality, as well as on differences, implemented in conformity with the relevant subjects and appropriate to the age of the students, also involving families, marked by the democratic principles of respect and acceptance of all diversity, be guaranteed. In fact, the first step to understanding is education as it is serious to note that, in 2023, there are so many people who do not know the correct meaning of the words lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, questioning, queer, intersex and asexual. We believe, therefore, it is incumbent upon the state to provide its citizens with the basic cultural tools to understand what sexual and gender minorities discriminated against are and what risks they face.

We also demand that the PTOF list LGBTQIA+ identities among those at greatest risk of discrimination and make a commitment to promote the mental and physical well-being and protect the full enjoyment of the right to education of LGBTQIA+ students.

We demand that public school personnel welcome and value all family backgrounds of pupils and that school faculty and administrators be provided with the necessary training to treat LGBTQIA+ students with respect.

We remind the FVG Region that the project "A Scuola Per Conoscerci" ("Getting to know each other in school") has done so and, in its 14 years of existence, has proven to be a useful and effective tool in preventing and combating homophobia and transphobic bullying in the Region's schools: we demand that, in the absence of other tools that prove to be more effective, the Region return to funding the project as well as other projects on the same issue and on education for differences.



In the same vein, we urge that the rest of civil servants, and in particular workers in offices with direct contact with the public, law enforcement, and personnel working in health services who are most often in direct contact with citizens, be offered the training and/or updating courses necessary to treat LGBTQIA+ citizens with respect and professionalism, in order to prevent discriminatory treatment in public administration.

Finally, we request that the Ministry of Education, University and Research provide specific funding and encourage research projects concerning gender and queer studies.

### **Bodies and rights: body positivity and fat acceptance**

We demand that, in the fight against inequality and the dismantling of those patriarchal paradigms that do so much harm to all, we consider the fight for acceptance of all bodies, regardless of their size, shape, skin tone, gender and physical abilities, challenging the current standards of beauty, which we regard as an "undesirable social construct."

We also call for the provision of adequate health care for fat people that does not trace their every symptom back to their weight. We also call for labor justice, for fat people, that replaces the current modus operandi that sees them discarded, or in any case paid less, regardless of the type of work or skills required.

Therefore, we hope for the dismantling of the social stigma of obesity by demonstrating to the general public how obstacles to fat people exist in reality, such as aesthetic, legal and medical approaches.

We consider self-determination to be an inalienable human right, to be defended and protected in all social spheres that our bodies experience, and we recognize how people with non-conforming bodies are subject to additional discrimination compared to people with bodies considered socially valuable.

In particular, we consider unacceptable the fear and dislike of obese people and/or obesity more generally, but also the prejudice against fat people and the hatred and marginalization that fat bodies experience. We see fatphobia as a tool of racial, classist, and ableist oppression that seeks to codify a body type considered "ideal," which is reflected in a white, western aesthetic and which attempts to correlate thinness and healthfulness, perpetrating white supremacist violence against black people, but also classist oppression against people living with limited resources and the ableist idea of health as an indicator of human worth.

### **Inclusive language**

We call for special attention to be paid within all institutions to the use of language as inclusive as possible. Indeed, we are aware that language is among the most powerful and high-performing tools





of preservation of patriarchy, and it must play a fundamental role in the fight against inequality and the dismantling of those paradigms that we contest.

We call for training in the use of inclusive language in schools because we know that although most discrimination is conveyed broadly by the whole of society and its symbols, it is handed down and transmitted, in the first instance, within households and in the early years of schooling, precisely through language. It is language, through content and representations, that is the first persuasive tool for discrimination.

Finally, we call for efforts to stop the use of language with the intent to express hatred or violence toward a person or group of people, based on characteristics such as origin, religion, sex, gender or sexual orientation (hate speech).