



## Manifesto FVG PRIDE 2021

The FVG Pride ODV association, supported and in collaboration with numerous other associations of the Friuli and Julian territory, announces a new Pride for the year 2021, which will consist of a dense calendar of meetings organized throughout the region and which will culminate in a final march with the storming of the square, in order to make our voice heard, once again and even louder, an echo of our lives increasingly at risk.

The year 2020 was a difficult year for everyone. Confinement as a containment measure from the COVID19 pandemic has had a profound impact on many levels across society, especially affecting those who are most vulnerable. This is the case of LGBTQIA + people, more exposed to discrimination, job insecurity, invisibility and domestic violence caused by those families who do not accept their identity and with whom they have been forced to live in confinement. The consequences of this lockdown period have left a profound mark on our community which, however, has shown its cohesion especially in the mutual support provided to its members in the face of institutional indifference.

We could also say that the recognition of our rights at a national level has been confined since 2016, the year in which law 76/2016 created a specific legal institution, and consequently discriminating, with which to protect some rights of homosexual couples.

Although politics are defined as inclusive and sensitive to the issues of discrimination against minorities, the reality of the facts is clearly different: us people lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or transgender, non-binary, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual or who, in any way and degree, we do not ascribe our bodies and our identities to the roles or social norms dictated by cissexualism and heterosexualism, we are still today second-class citizens who are not legitimated by marriage and parenthood; even today we are aware and perceive the danger to our safety when we walk down the street, alone or with our partner - whose bloody confirmation was given to us, in recent times, by the tragedy of Ciro and Maria Paola Gaglione, the beating in Piazza Bellini, events that occurred in Naples in September 2020, or the attack in the Valle Aurelia station in Rome last February. The data of recent surveys published on the subject outline a widespread climate of hatred towards LGBTQIA + people in Italy: even today we are the target of physical attacks, insults and voluntary or involuntary hate speech based on our sexual identity. From June to December 2019, 672 reports of hate crimes or other acts motivated by homobiphobic or transphobic hate were collected by the LGBTI Resource Center in all

the national territory. The people interviewed report, in most cases, that they have suffered insults, insults or threats, perpetrated in public places, often by herds, or in the family; and three out of four people do not report due to lack of trust in institutions or fear.

This situation of fear and mistrust in the institutions should not come as a surprise if we consider that it is from this same policy that communication campaigns based on prejudice arise, campaigns that have the express purpose of spreading false information to the population and fueling discrimination. A further example is given by the process on the legislative decree Zan, whose discussion and amendments already

presented leave little room for interpretation on the fact that in Italy homophobia and transphobic hatred is not yet recognized by a part of politics as a real, dangerous and well-defined phenomenon in its manifestations, and the “playful” comparisons between the discrimination that a person can suffer for their sexual orientation or gender identity with the insults suffered due to baldness or gray hair confirm that not only is the phenomenon unknown, but above all that there is a lack of will to know it and to accept it.

As far as our Region is concerned, no progress has been made since 2017; on the contrary, we could even talk about steps backwards thinking about facts that by now we know well: the exits from the Ready Network, the lack of financing of the “At school to get to know each other” project, the failure to recognize the alias identity in the various public bodies) - all actions taken under the pretext of cutting the ideological propaganda, but which in fact deny our specific problems and our needs for targeted protection, choosing instead the political line of countries like Russia, countries that use the term “ideological propaganda” as *deus vult* to persecute and criminalize the activist and to deny the existence of transgender, transsexual and non-binary people. This wave of openly homophobic and transphobic policies has begun to spread, in a worrying way, like a real pandemic through several European countries, including Hungary, which has denied identity registration to transsexuals, and Poland, with the worrying newly established “LGBT free zones”. In the rest of the Union, as well as in Italy, we find not a few political representatives who, if they do not openly sympathize with these policies, do not oppose them and attend them in complicit silence.

This “pandemic” of homophobic and transphobic hatred has even infected part of our own community that uses its voice to deny the existence of transsexual or transgender people and is committed to ensuring that they are not recognized and protected either by law or in social and associative spaces, reinforcing the hatred and prejudices against which our community has struggled for years.

Speaking of pandemics, we cannot fail to mention that in 2021 it will be 40 years since the release of the famous article in the “New York Times” which finally brought public attention to the AIDS epidemic. Our community was put to the test: almost an entire generation was lost and, along with the activists of the moment, many steps towards the recognition of our rights were also lost.

Many battles have been fought and won by our community, battles that have improved the lives of millions of people, but this historical period is showing us more than ever that the achievements are not guaranteed. We must persevere in our struggle to defend and guarantee our protections and the rights that have been recognized to us, but we are still on the way to a world where all the people of the LGBTQIA + community can live with equal dignity, free from all oppression and discrimination. And this goal will not be crossed as long as minorities, of any kind, are oppressed by the current state of affairs. This is the reason why our struggle is an intersectional struggle, we can no longer think in watertight compartments, when we talk about LGBTQIA + rights we talk about the rights of all \*. Our identities are complex and crossed by oppressions which each have their own different matrix but which accumulate in a sum that is greater than the parts. Fighting for the recognition and well-being of a person means first of all recognizing the different types of oppression that the person undergoes and operating on each of them according to their specific characteristics. This is why the rights of workers, the anti-racist struggle, feminisms, anti-fascism and any other form of fight against discrimination are LGBTQIA + struggles and vice versa. We will never be truly free as long as someone stays behind, so we cannot fail to raise our voices against any other form of discrimination or abuse, nor remain impassive while good anti-discrimination, inclusion and civil coexistence practices are abolished.

For this reason, we LGBTQIA + people must also highlight what all migrants who have arrived in Italy have been suffering in recent years and especially with the spread of COVID19. After the previous government has been tenaciously committed to the dismantling of widespread reception, these people - we repeat it so that we do not forget that they are people - now find themselves locked up, just like prisoners and without a valid reason, prison camps that take the name of CPR, of which we have an example in the region, in Gradisca d'Isonzo.

This is just a meager synthesis of everything that animates us and pushes us to fight again. This moment of

uncertainty and precariousness, of confinements and pandemics, urges us to put our lives on the line and to bring our concerns to the center of public opinion.

To create together a fair world in which everyone is free to be themselves and live in harmony, with dignity and without the fear of reprisals or discrimination, FVG Pride asks:

## **LEGAL RECOGNITION**

### **Egalitarian marriage**

Law no. 76/2016 (known as the Cirinnà law) is an apartheid law as it reserves an “exclusive” institution for same-sex couples. Civil marriage remains prohibited for people living in a non-heterosexual relationship. This law has in fact legitimized discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, making explicit the ideological approach to our relationships as a couple and families. We are no longer willing to tolerate being second-class citizens. That the Italian state introduces a law that extends civil marriage to couples in a non-heterosexual relationship as well.

We require, pending a law that finally guarantees equal marriage, that marriages contracted abroad by Italian citizens or Italian citizens and foreigners are recorded in the marriage registers of our municipalities and not in the registers of civil unions between people of the same sex, degrading them to a different and less protective institution than civil marriage.

### **Adoption**

That the Italian state allows, according to homogeneous criteria, the adoption of minors also by individuals and couples, regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation. That the Italian State also guarantees every parent to recognize their daughters and children at birth, including those born abroad, so that both parental figures, and not just the biological parent, are recognized and called to the responsibility towards daughters and sons. We also ask the Italian State for the right to full and legitimate adoption by the social parent, even in cases of a separation of the parental couple.

### **Law against homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia (d.d.l Zan)**

We ask that the Zan-Boldrini bill be approved by Parliament, but with substantial changes in comparison to the current version, so as not to become yet another example of a downward compromise. As it is the Zan-Boldrini bill is, in fact, an unsound law. It is necessary to explicitly prohibit conversion therapies: scientific literature has extensively demonstrated that these “therapies” lack any scientific basis and that, instead of bringing benefits, they are detrimental to the mental and physical health of those who undergo them. It is also necessary to prohibit all forms of propaganda against the LGBTQIA+ community. Homophobia is not an opinion, and one cannot claim for oneself the right to discriminate against a segment of the population.

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

The State must recognize the right to gender identity and self-determination of transgender, non-binary, queer, and intersex people. In the expectation that gender will no longer be a relevant information for the definition of a person, we would firstly demand the updating of the fields of the registry documents: we want the word “gender” no longer to be used in documents and at least a third option to be provided for the individuals who do not recognize themselves in the gender binary or whose physiological and phenotypical reality cannot be ascribed to one of the two poles. The amendment of personal data for transgender or non-binary people must also be unrelated to whether or not they wish to undergo hormonal or surgical medical treatments.

### **Regulating sex work**

Voluntary sex work between self-determined adults must be decriminalized. The State cannot continue to ignore a reality that involves thousands of workers and millions of clients and neglect it into illegality. To those who voluntarily conduct this work, the State must guarantee the right to welfare, health and safety, in respect of Human Rights and Dignity as for any other worker. Since the majority of sex workers in Europe are migrant people in vulnerable circumstances who face the violation of their human rights on a daily basis due to immigration laws, anti-prostitution laws and hostile policies towards LGBTQIA+ people, it is urgent to ensure support for sex workers. It is necessary to ensure that these people do not suffer multiple discrimination because of their situation as migrants, refugees or LGBTQIA+, to ensure access to justice, to documents and to work, and by doing so removing them from illegality. Sex work can be decriminalized without giving up the fight against trafficking, exploitation, and any aspect of violence, which must be severely targeted.

## **Alias identity guarantee in Public Institutions**

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

## **Modification of law n. 40/2004**

We ask that Law 40/2004 be repealed in order to guarantee access to assisted reproductive technology (ART) to all individuals, single or in couples, regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation.

We also ask that the Italian State pass a law to regulate the practice of surrogacy with the aim of protecting all those involved and defending and supporting the self-determination of the person, where consenting adults are involved, single or in pairs, who decide to undertake a process that does not violate the dignity and freedom of any party, as already happens in other countries such as, for example, the UK, USA or Canada.

## **Freedom of choice concerning the surname**

The mandatory and automatic tradition of assigning the father's surname to the children of the couple is a legacy of a patriarchal and male chauvinist society that should no longer belong to us. We therefore ask that, at the time of the birth registration, the freedom to choose the children's surname from that of the parents be guaranteed and that the option to give both surnames in the preferred order be included.

## **PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION AND COMBATING NEGATIVITY TOWARD INDIVIDUALS IN THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY.**

### **Ensuring education on diversity**

The first step towards understanding is education. It is sad to note that, still today, there are many people who do not know the meaning behind words such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, questioning, queer, intersex and asexual; a constant confirmation comes from the language employed by newspapers and journalists. We believe, therefore, that it is imperative that the State provide its citizens with the basic cultural tools to understand what discriminated sexual minorities are and the dangers they face. We ask that the educational syllabus of public schools guarantee a thorough education about affectivity and sexuality, as well as about diversity, carried out in collaboration with competent institutions and appropriate to the age of the students, which also involves families and is based on the democratic principles of respect and acceptance of all diversity. That public school personnel welcome and value all family backgrounds of students and that teaching body and administrative staff in schools be provided with the training necessary to treat LGBTQIA+ students with respect.

We remind the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Regional Authority that the project "A scuola per conoscerci" (Let's get to know each other in school) has proved, in its 12 years of life, to be a useful tool in preventing and combating bullying against LGBTQIA+ students in the schools of the Region and we demand that, in the absence of other tools that prove to be more effective, the Region resume funding it. Similarly, we urge that the rest of public employees, and in particular workers in offices in close contact with the public, law enforcement and health service personnel, who are most often in direct contact with citizens, be offered the necessary education and/or training to treat LGBTQIA+ citizens respectfully and professionally, in order to prevent discriminatory treatment in the public administrations. We also ask that the Ministry of Education, University and Research provide specific funds and encourage research projects concerning gender studies and queer studies.

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

The Re.a.dy network (Anti-Discrimination Network for Public Administrations) is an initiative promoted by the Municipality of Turin that aims at sharing good practices among the adhering public administrations concerning discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Being part of the Network does not imply any economic charge but only the commitment to organize once a year an event aimed at raising awareness and spreading the topics covered by the Network.

Considering that the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region, the Municipality of Udine and the Municipality of Trieste have been part of the Re.a.dy Network until the installation of the current governments – which have sanctioned the exit from the circuit without even providing a valid reason – we demand that the Region, the Municipalities of Udine and Trieste return to join the RE.A.DY Network for the exchange of good practices in fighting discrimination. We also urge the municipalities of the Region that have not yet decided to do so to join.

## **Ensuring protections for LGBTQIA+ people across the European Union**

In recent years, the several international institutions have made great strides in respecting the freedoms and rights of LGBTQIA+ people around the world. It is thanks to the European Institutions such as the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Council of Europe that we know the problematic situation of LGBTQIA+ people in Poland or the serious violation of the rights of trans people in Hungary. But these international organizations, along with others, have not only made publicly known the violations of the rights and freedoms of LGBTQIA+ people, but have also publicly reprimanded countries that operate by violating the fundamental rights of LGBTQIA+ people. We ask that the European institutions continue to fight for LGBTQIA+ people in order to be granted the same rights and freedoms throughout the European Union, without distinction from country to country. The examples of various European states violating people's freedoms and dignity are well known and all too current. We cannot afford a European Union which contains multi-tiered rights, where an LGBTQIA+ person is safe and free to be and love in one country, but as soon as they cross the border these same freedoms become grounds for discrimination and danger. Every European citizen must be free to benefit from freedoms and rights throughout the European territory, without distinctions or fears. The motto of the European Union is "united in diversity": we also fight for a world where diversity enriches us and where diversity should be seen as an added value and not as a discriminating factor.

## **Respect for the secularity of the State**

We demand that the Italian State guarantee the secularity of its organs so that no religious confession of functionaries can impose a behavioral model, dictate political choices, or influence judicial choices that justify social practices or discriminatory acts. We also ask that public institutions reaffirm their independence from religions by removing religious symbols from their buildings – such as crucifixes in schools – which are an attack against both the secularity of the State and the right to religious freedom.

## **Respect for bi and multilingualism in the region**

We ask that bi and multilingualism be respected and implemented as required by law. Bi and multilingualism is a characteristic element of our Region and is one of the reasons that make it an Autonomous Region. Respect for multiculturalism and differences also passes through language. All too often we witness road signs that are neither bilingual nor multilingual, or other cases of blatantly incorrect translations, not to mention public bodies announcements and texts produced by public services that are often translated using various search engines which are nonsensical and riddled with errors. Although in recent years many steps have been taken towards a greater respect for the various linguistic minorities that compose our Region, these efforts are not enough. We cannot continue to ascribe the lack and low quality of translations to economic reasons. We are a land composed of many realities and minorities. Respect for bilingualism and multilingualism must become the starting point from which to build bridges. Too often we see examples of vandalism where Slovenian and Friulian writings are sullied and covered. These are remnants of fascism, of a society that is afraid of diversity and fights it rather than welcoming it and that does not understand how diversity enriches it.

## **GUARANTEE AND PROTECTION OF WELL-BEING AND HEALTH**

### **The right to psychological, emotional and mental health**

We believe that emotional and mental health, as an essential part of the right to health, is an inalienable right of all people and that everyone should be guaranteed accessibility to the tools to preserve it. For too long our State and the other institutions that govern us have ignored the issue of accessibility to psychological, emotional and mental health, creating major disparities in society. These issues are exacerbated with regard to the LGBTQIA+ community, which, like other social minorities, suffers from a specific stigma related to the discriminatory environment of our culture.

We also emphasize that all too often experts in the field - both in public and private networks - are not adequately trained to approach the issues and needs of social minorities, including the LGBTQIA+ community. Therefore, we call for strengthening the current tools which should ensure access to psychological health and for experts in this field to be trained in LGBTQIA+ issues beforehand.

### **Ensuring LGBTQIA+ rights in penitentiary environments.**

We ask that transgender inmates be housed in sections dedicated to their elected gender and not to their gender assigned at birth.

We also ask that the physical and mental wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ prisoners is guaranteed, by promoting informative and awareness-raising initiatives for employees and inmates, in order to prevent discriminatory

situations, by activating information campaigns about sexually transmitted diseases and sexually transmitted infections, and applying implementation programs for the prevention of violence of LGBTQIA-phobia root.

### **Regional coordination and strategic prevention of STIs and STDs**

The LGBTQIA+ community fights for a free, conscious and informed sexuality for which the sexually transmitted infections departments of the Health Authorities in the Region play a key role.

For this reason, we urge the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region to increase funding to these departments, especially with regard to prevention.

We ask the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region to create, finance, launch and coordinate new public information campaigns on HIV infections and sexually transmitted infections in general, and to widely promote condoms as a means of prevention against sexually transmitted infections.

We ask for the creation of a regional coordination of the STI departments of the regional Health Authorities with the purpose of offering a more efficient service and to carry out prevention in a strategic way; we also ask that the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region grant the Center of Sexually Transmitted Diseases of Gorizia the recognition of leading center of the requested coordination, in light of its excellence in the practice and in the reception of patients. We also urge an expansion of prevention services: that the regime of anonymity and free testing for the most common STDs such as gonorrhoea, hepatitis and syphilis be extended and generalized, and that the service be offered with increased visibility; that rapid testing for HIV be promoted; that community-based HIV testing is actively offered in unconventional locations with a CBvCT (Community-Based voluntary Counselling and Testing) perspective and according to the HIV CoBATEST protocol to populations most exposed to HIV (MSM - Men who have sex with men, IDU - injection drug users and Migrants); that the free HPV vaccine be offered more widely.

### **Depathologization of Transgenderism**

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.

### **Guarantee of available and cost-free medical services for transgender and non-binary people**

We ask that surgical rectification of secondary sexual characteristics be treated by the Ministry of Health with equal dignity and urgency to all other surgeries and that transgender and non-binary people no longer have to wait years to undergo these surgeries because they are considered to be cosmetic surgery.

We also ask that beard, chest, and back hair removal surgeries for transgender women be covered by the National Health System; they should not be a burden on the individual's finances.

### **Depathologizing intersexuality**

We ask that the Italian State depathologizes the variations of sexual characteristics within medical guidelines and protocols and accepts intersexuality as a natural variant of genital physiology.

### **Corrective surgeries of intersexuality**

We demand that the State prevent and outlaw genital mutilation and so-called genital corrective surgeries that force intersex people into a label - arbitrarily decided by doctors - that may not reflect either the identity nor the physiology of the adult person. Any surgical or pharmacological intervention aimed at normalizing a body that does not fit into the typical binary notions of male or female must be allowed only after obtaining the informed consent of the person concerned.

### **Guarantees of pregnancy interruption and reproductive care**

We demand the strengthening of local counseling centers in order to guarantee access to healthcare and voluntary interruption of pregnancy. We also ask that the possibility for medical and health personnel to make use of the objection of conscience be abolished or, at least, that a sufficient number of non-objecting doctors and nurses be guaranteed in every hospital to ensure the service of termination of pregnancy at any time within the limits imposed by current legislation.

### **Guarantees for asylum seekers**

We ask that the provision of special reception services be guaranteed on the territory for those who apply for international protection and have special needs; these services are also provided by the specific national

and European regulations for LGBTQIA+ people persecuted in their country of origin because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

We also ask that the funds allocated to reception are not cut, that NGOs are guaranteed to be able to provide their services in the various phases of the reception process, and that the model of widespread hospitality is restored, a model that has proven virtuous for integration into the local social fabric and that has been emulated in many other cities. We demand the immediate dismantling of the CPRs (permanence centers for repatriation) - starting with the one located in Gradisca d'Isonzo - which constitute a form of detention that violates human dignity.

### **Ensuring rights for LGBTQIA+ seniors.**

LGBTQIA+ elderly people tend to be invisible, and involuntary loneliness for them has a dual matrix: age discrimination and sexual identity discrimination. The first, already prevalent in our society, has even more particular relevance in the LGBTQIA+ community and culture, especially in the male environment and for 50-plus adults entering their elderly years. The latter brings with it peculiarities that change physiognomy according to the greater or lesser confidence with which the individual socializes their sexual identity; in addition, there is the potential fragility of a social support that in Italy is often based on family blood ties, more prone to crumble for elderly LGBTQIA+ people without descendants. We ask that caregivers and organizations working in active aging include among their competencies a specific training and in-depth knowledge of the peculiarities of the condition of elderly people belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community.

### **Guarantee of rights for LGBTQIA+ people with disabilities**

We ask that in centers and protected facilities, people with disabilities be guaranteed a complete education on affectivity and sexuality, regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identity. We also ask that the figure of the emotionality, affectivity and sexuality health worker for people with disabilities (OEAS) be legalized and protected.

### **Permanent LGBTQIA+ Anti-Violence Center**

We ask the Region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia to create and firmly fund a permanent regional anti-violence center that welcomes and provides support services to victims of homophobia and transphobic violence and also includes the establishment of a temporary shelter for LGBTQIA+ people who have suffered discrimination or violence, physical or verbal, where they can take refuge and live temporarily in the absence of housing that guarantees their safety and integrity, while they receive the necessary assistance to get back on their feet.

### **Guarantee of women's rights to autonomy**

We demand that freedom of choice and freedom of self-determination with respect to the sexual, reproductive and affective life of all be respected. For this reason, we demand an end to attacks on women's self-determination, to legislative interventions aimed at making divorce more difficult and burdensome, and to laws that make custody of the children of separated couples more difficult and traumatic for ideological reasons; we ask that no legislative intervention be discussed that hinders or makes more difficult or onerous the voluntary interruption of pregnancy, reduces resources for institutions and associations that deal with women's care and health, reiterates and reinforces the heteropatriarchal ideology that requires women to be mothers and wives.

For us minorities, the time has come once again to put up a united front, to huddle together and fight to preserve the rights and victories that our ancestors fought for, to finally gain recognition for the rights that are still denied to us, so that we can pass them on to the next generations.

Now, let us persevere in our demands for the world to be a safe place for everyone. Now, let us fight so that no one should ever have to suffer oppression again.

**Now. Together. Let's break through rights!**

