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Preventing and combating violence and discrimination against LBQ women in Europe

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Lesbian, bisexual and queer (LBQ) women face violence and discrimination based on lesbophobia, which derives from the combination of two major societal issues: misogyny and stigma related to non-conforming sexual orientation. Experiencing such cumulated biases affects the lived realities of LBQ women in all aspects of their existence, exposing them to specific forms of gender-based violence and to discrimination in the enjoyment of their human rights, such as the right to private and family life, sexual health and reproductive rights, and access to employment and housing. Additional layers of prejudice interact depending on racial or ethnic background, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics, disability, age, and class.

Tackling cases of lesbophobic violence and discrimination is made more complex by the interaction of bias related to sexual orientation and to gender, and the rights, needs and interests of LBQ women are rarely taken appropriately into consideration in standard-setting and policy-making with respect to LGBTI persons or gender-equality. In recent years, the propagation of harmful narratives targeting primarily women and the LGBTI community has heightened the risk of marginalisation of LBQ women. This phenomenon has moreover been aggravated by increasing polarisation in European societies following the pandemic and the resurgence of war in Europe, which have engendered an overall backsliding in human rights and democratic principles.

Legislative, political and societal responses to lesbophobia require a holistic approach that takes into consideration the specificities of LBQ women, puts an end to the invisibility of non-heterosexual women and takes targeted actions to understand and tackle lesbophobia. The Parliamentary Assembly should examine such specificities and such actions, collect good practices and make concrete recommendations to member States.

