

25 March 2022

Dear Mr Frank VANDENBROUCKE, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health,
Dear Mr Magnus HEUNICKE, Minister for Health,
Dear Mr Olivier VÉRAN, Minister for Solidarity and Health,
Dear Mr Roberto SPERANZA, Minister for Health,
Dear Ms Paulette Lenert, Ministère de la Santé,
Dear Mr Chris FEARNE, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health,
Dear Mr Ernst KUIPERS, Minister for Health, Welfare and Sport,
Dear Ms Carolina DARIAS SAN SEBASTIAN, Minister of Health,
Dear Ms Lena HALLENGREN, Minister for Social Affairs,
Dear Mr Karl Lauterbach, Minister of Health,

We are writing to you today, as a group of allied Member States with a clear commitment to promoting the rights of LGBTI people, to bring for specific concerns relating to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.

The ongoing war in Ukraine has resulted in the need for immediate action to address the needs both of a significant population of Ukrainians fleeing the armed conflict as well as for those who are staying in Ukraine. LGBTI people are often amongst vulnerable groups in crisis situations and specific attention is needed to ensure that they have the same opportunities and support as other forcibly displaced persons, to exercise the full range of their human rights without discrimination, including access to the highest attainable standard of health and humanitarian programmes.

While emergency situations make everyone vulnerable to the same human rights violations, existing discrimination and violence against LGBTI people can put them in disadvantageous position and heightens their risk to be left in the blind spot of international protection and humanitarian relief programmes. Therefore, it is important that international and European institutions, governments and the humanitarian sector carefully consider the specific vulnerabilities and needs of the community and ensure that humanitarian assistance is LGBTI-inclusive and appropriate, and addresses specific practical and strategic needs. Working with LGBTI organisations in country of origin and host countries wherever possible is important in ensuring a human-rights centred approach.

Ahead of Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting, where EU health ministers will discuss European coordination for the reception of people fleeing the war in Ukraine, ILGA-Europe would like to share below some specific health vulnerabilities of trans and intersex people in and fleeing Ukraine and call upon you:

- **to raise awareness of other health ministers and call them to simplify access for trans and intersex refugees to hormones and medicines for those already under treatment upon arrival in EU member states.**

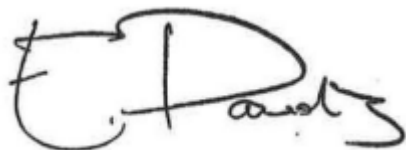
The ongoing crisis in Ukraine has resulted in need for immediate action to address the needs both of a significant population of Ukrainians fleeing the fighting as well as for those who are staying in Ukraine. Within both of these populations, trans and intersex people can be found, and their unique healthcare needs must be considered in the humanitarian response settings.

In many EU member states, accessing transition-related medical care is a long process involving assessment and waiting times for intake. For trans and intersex refugees, this could mean periods of months or even years where they must stop ongoing care while waiting to be seen in the reception country. It is necessary to consider creating alternative pathways for those already taking hormone therapies to avoid these gaps.

- **to encourage EU member states to ensure that transition-related and intersex-specific medicines are included in humanitarian aid packages under the EU civil protection mechanism and to coordinate with LGBTI civil society to ensure safe access to these medicines for individuals who need them. Please see the enclosed briefing document on medicines for more detailed information.**

While many trans and intersex people are attempting to flee Ukraine, many others are unable to leave the country for various reasons, including issues related to legal gender recognition. The result is that access to hormones and other medicines is being interrupted across the country. At present, there is a critical shortage of transition-related medicines in many cities, resulting in disruptions in vital medical care for trans and intersex people.

Yours sincerely,



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Attachments:

1. Briefing Document (March 2022): Medications Needed by Trans and Intersex People