



The International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, Biphobia (IDAHOТ 2016)

COMING OUT WORKS BETTER!

The IDAHOТ was created in 2004 to draw the attention of policymakers, opinion leaders, social movements, the public and the media to the violence and discrimination experienced by LGBTI people internationally. In under a decade, May 17 has established itself as one of the most important dates for LGBTI communities to mobilise on a worldwide scale. The date of May 17th was specifically chosen to commemorate the World Health Organization's decision in 1990 to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder.

PSI General Secretary Rosa Pavanelli says, "Homophobia or transphobia, in any form, is damaging and even life-threatening. We stand in solidarity with LGBTI workers and firmly denounce all forms of marginalization and stigmatization linked to sexual orientation or gender identity. Public service workers have an important role to play in terms of providing public services on the basis of equality and delivering human rights for all, promoting social and economic justice". Juneia Batista, Chair of PSI's World Women's Committee adds: "In the last decades, PSI and its affiliates have worked to empower LGBTI voices, both within the trade union movement, and by giving more visibility to these issues and building cooperation with LGBTI organizations, such as ILGA".

Eurian Leite, the coordinator of PSI's LGBTI Inter-American Committee points out, "There are still countries where homosexuality is considered a crime and punishable by death. When individual rights are curtailed, other areas of our lives also suffer consequences. Therefore we need affirmative action by unions to combat prejudice and violence at the workplace. **The more diverse a union is, the more effectively it will be able to recruit from a broad range of equity-seeking communities, and strengthen collective power to defend trade union and human rights."**

PSI's LGBTI Inter-American Committee builds on best practices from the entire region, from Brazil to Canada – where the labour movement has played an important role in the struggle for LGBTI rights. Eurian continues: **"We encourage unions to bargain LGBTI rights into their collective agreements, and to promote the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 111. By supporting these important causes in our unions and our communities, we can make real gains for LGBTI people everywhere."**

The Pink Network of the biggest trade union in the Netherlands, FNV, is firmly committed to sexual and gender diversity policies. It is allied with other LGBTI organizations in the Netherlands, like COC Nederland, Workplace Pride and Amnesty International, and supports PSI's LGBTI union development work in the Inter-Americas. Jolanda van Gool, Board Member of the Pink Network, says: **"Inclusion is necessary within the workplace since diversity is not a problem nor a luxury – we need to recognize the importance of cooperation and cohabitation. It is healthy and productive to have an inclusive work climate. Coming out works better!"**

In August 2016, PSI will participate in EUROPRIDE and related events in Amsterdam. We look forward to update affiliates on actions.

Please send the contacts of the LGBTI coordinator of your union and materials to share on PSI's LGBTI page to equality@world-psi.org