



## Statement to the Media 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021

In anticipation of the UK Government's Consultation on "Conversion Therapy", X-Out-Loud has delivered copies of 44 personal accounts of persons leaving LGBT identities, from 22 countries, to all politicians in both Westminster Houses, also to the devolved parliaments and assemblies in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The organisers are grateful to the financial contributors from across the UK who have made this possible. Nine of those featured in the book, entitled 'X-Out-Loud Emerging Ex-LGBT Voices', are from the UK.

The campaign was thought necessary given the failure of media in the UK to platform voices supporting the view that sexuality is fluid, and in some cases changeable. Much has been made of the Government's 2017 National LGBT Survey which is known to have excluded any but those who were LGBTIQ+ identified, meaning that any persons who were formerly LGBT identified, and had been positively impacted by interventions including change-allowing therapies, were excluded from participating in the survey. The UK government appears to have consistently denied the existence of former LGBT persons. Despite decades of high-profile meetings with LGBT activists and government officials, no face-to-face meetings with ex-gays or former transgendered people and government leaders are on record. We hope that by reading the book, politicians will acknowledge the existence of this marginalised group.

X-Out-Loud Co-Director and former X-Factor (Malta) contestant Matthew Grech said: "X-Out-Loud has provided a safe space for men and women voluntarily withdrawing from LGBT self-identification and embracing heterosexuality and their biological sex, where they can be loved, affirmed and protected for who they are and who they dream to become. We expect every serious government and entity to listen to the heart wrenching stories of our members that reveal much about the roots their personal issues and the hope found in the gospel of Jesus Christ."

It remains generally unrecognised that ex-gay, or former LGBT persons, are protected under the Equality Act of 2010, against discrimination. This is according to a High Court ruling following the Core Issues Trust vs Transport for London appeal court case in 2014<sup>1</sup>. X-Out-Loud is a project of Core Issues Trust. In 2020 the trust was subject to intense online abuse, which we reported to the House of Commons Petitions Committee. Shortly after this social media campaign to discredit Core Issues Trust, Barclays Bank gave notice of ending business services to the trust and to that of its associated project, the International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice. The trust's Facebook pages, along with its PayPal and MailChimp accounts were shut down at the same time. The 12-language version of 'Voices of the Silenced' (2018), a film produced by Core Issues Trust was also subsequently banned from YouTube, in line with Vue Cinema Piccadilly's cancellation of the film's premiere screening in 2019. The National Secular Society has made repeated unsuccessful attempts to remove Core Issues Trust from the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland.

Dr Mike Davidson, co-director of X-Out-Loud and CEO of Core Issues Trust said: "The time has come to recognise that in the UK individuals can reject or renounce any former identity, sect, belief system and self-description, except that of LGBT. Why in the case of former LGBT persons alone, is choice denied? Those associated with our work refuse to be forced to stay gay or trans. This government has prided itself on science-led policy decisions. But what science is supporting the idea that we are born gay or trans? One look at the twin studies shows there is no such thing as 100% concordance with identical twins both identifying as gay, in all cases. Appeals to mental health statements are not authoritative empirical evidence. Poor practice should always be opposed, but governments have no right to dictate sexual trajectories or to deny access to responsible help to achieve personal goals.

We hope the publication is helpful in platforming individuals whose life-experience makes the current debate less academic and more about the people who will be affected by bans that will make their lives more difficult.

**Ends**

**For further information**

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References

<https://www.xoutloud.com/book/>

<sup>1</sup>Intervention Minister for Women and Equalities:

Paragraph 98 page 17 - <https://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2014/34.html>

X-Out-Loud is a project of Core Issues Trust, a registered charity: 105095.

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