

## **Riding roughshod over 'Ex-gay' identities: will the Fundamental Rights Agency protect sexual orientations of persons who are 'Post-gay' and their rights to access therapeutic support to reduce unwanted feelings, and behaviours?**

An event at the European Parliament, led by the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, in collaboration with the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) will be held Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 entitled ["Tackling Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Discrimination: Next steps in EU and Member State policy making"](#).

But will the event again single out LGBT issues and ignore other sexual orientations, including those of persons who experience homosexual behaviours and feelings as past, and consider their sexual orientations and identities to have changed?

Apologists for gay rights and their advocates consistently cite professional North American and European mental health bodies as refusing to allow medical, counselling and psychotherapeutic mental health workers to assist ex-gay individuals or those wishing to manage, reduce and where possible eliminate unwanted sexual feelings, even after advanced, informed consent. Frequent requests by Core Issues Trust, since 2013 asking for sight of peer-reviewed research which shows, on average, that therapeutic and counselling support for unwanted homosexual feelings is harmful, have not been heeded.

Since 2011, therapists offering psychotherapeutic support to individuals who are ex-gay have been removed from membership rolls of their professional bodies, simply because of their views that autonomous clients should have access to support to achieve legitimate goals of reducing sexual or romantic feelings that are unwanted. This is despite the fact that, in the United Kingdom, in a Position Statement dated April 2014, the Royal College of Psychiatrists<sup>1</sup>, which until recently held that homosexuality was entirely "biological", has now conceded that sexual orientation may change, and that human sexuality is more fluid than previously thought.

Furthermore, a recent High Court ruling, again in the United Kingdom<sup>2</sup>, before three High Court judges including The Master of the Rolls, has recognised that men and women who identify as 'ex-gay' may not be discriminated against under equalities legislation:

Discrimination against a person because of his or her past, actual or perceived sexual orientation, or because his or her sexual orientation has changed, is discrimination "because of.....sexual orientation". There is no requirement in the EA that discrimination must relate to a person's current sexual orientation. All that is required is that the discrimination is "because of sexual orientation".

Core Issues Trust requests the Fundamental Rights Agency at its important event on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October, to put in place measures to ensure recognition of the right to change sexual identity to match changed orientations, thus ensuring that the rights of individuals no longer identifying as LGBT are protected. Further it requests the FRA to recognise that such autonomous persons have a right to access counselling and psychotherapeutic support which allows, where appropriate, the management, reduction and where possible, elimination of such such feelings, the request for which should be respected.

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<sup>1</sup> Royal College of Psychiatrists, April 2014: [http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/PS02\\_2014.pdf](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/PS02_2014.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> 27 January, 2014. In the Court of Appeal CIT vs TFL (Civil Division) on Appeal from the High Court, Queens Bench Division, Administrative Court, Mrs Justice Lang C072842012 <http://www.bailii.org/cgi-bin/markup.cgi?doc=/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2014/34.html&query=title+%28+core+%29+and+title+%28+issues+%29+and+title+%28+trust+%29&method=boolean>