

## Press Release

**1 March 2016**  
**For immediate release**

**Switzerland: NO against populist and discriminatory measures!**



*"If this horrible discriminatory backlash initiative of the so-called „Christian“ Democratic Party of Switzerland was adopted, 98% of the Swiss people would have to pay the new tax privileges for the richest 2% married heterosexual couples. Therefore I vote NO to this initiative and appeal to all Swiss citizens to do the same!" Margret Kiener Nellen, National councilor of Socialist Party*

On 28 February, Swiss citizens had to vote on different questions put to referendum. A lot of media attention focused mainly on a very populist one planning to expel foreigners for minor crimes, which was rejected by the voters. Citizens also rejected another popular initiative on tax for couples which, if adopted, could have put in the constitution a very narrow definition of marriage as being only between a man and a woman.

Our sister party in Switzerland (*Parti socialiste suisse/Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz/Partito socialista svizzero*) had been very vocal on this point. **Margret Kiener Nellen**, National councilor of Socialist Party declared: *"While so many other Western countries open-up the marriage for all - including thus homosexual couples - the so-called "Christian" Democratic Party of Switzerland wants to discriminate hundred thousands of homosexual couples in Switzerland by writing a new clause into the Federal Constitution defining marriage exclusively for one man and one woman and therefore blocking the positive votes Swiss Parliament has already taken on a "Marriage for ALL-Initiative". On top of this: while most other Western countries have long ago introduced the individual tax model - each person being taxed separately also when married - the same so-called "Christian" Democratic Party of Switzerland wants to ban Swiss Parliament from introducing individual taxation in this same horrible backlash initiative by stating that married couples must always be taxed as a unit."*

Some MEPs from the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), such as Sylvie Guillaume<sup>1</sup>, Vice President of the European Parliament, and other S&D members of the LGBTI Intergroup also took a stand and supported the successful public campaign lead by Swiss NGOs.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sylvieguillaume.eu/avancons-ensemble>

**Aurelien Mazuy**, President of Rainbow Rose declared: *"We are very happy about the results on these initiatives which show a reject of populist and discriminatory proposals. It was good to see the full mobilisation of our sister party on this tax initiative. Conservative forces failed in preventing further equality for same-sex couples. It gives some hope for other discussions going in Europe on similar issues."*

## **Ends**

For further information email: [contact@rainbowrose.eu](mailto:contact@rainbowrose.eu) or call: +32 495 16 1005

Notes for editors:

1. Rainbow Rose is the network for the LGBT groups of the socialist, social democratic and labour parties across Europe. It gathers 31 structures.
2. Rainbow Rose is affiliated (associate member) to the Party of European Socialists (PES) and works with the Progressive Alliance of Socialist and Democrats (S&D Group) in the European Parliament
3. You can find more about Rainbow Rose on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/RainbowRose.eu](https://www.facebook.com/RainbowRose.eu)) its website ([www.rainbowrose.eu](http://www.rainbowrose.eu)) and Twitter (@RainbowRose\_PES)