



Press Release

4 February 2016
For immediate release

Recognition of same-sex unions in Italy



The Italian Senate began to debate on the civil unions bill. We can rely on the support of our comrades from Partito Democratico and Partito Socialista, both member of the PES, to defend it and make sure the bill will pass in both Italian Chambers.

Riccardo Nencini, Secretary General of PSI, said: *"PSI will vote in the Senate only a text that can recognize civil unions and the full adoption of partner's child with certainty and clarity. The hundred squares on the 23rd were right. A hymn to freedom and civilization."* referring to the millions of people who demonstrated in nearly 100 cities across Italy on 23 January to encourage the Government to legally recognize unions for same-sex couples.

Rainbow Rose was glad to see this great turn-out and acknowledged the hard work of different NGOs and activists to make this event a real success. Many of these activists were coming from the PD, PSI and PES as this measure would imply more equality and social justice in Italy and in Europe, in line with our core values.

Italy is the last Western European country without some form of legal recognition for same-sex couples, and was condemned by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg on this purpose. Rainbow Rose is glad to see the PD under the leadership of the Prime Minister **Matteo Renzi**, took the lead and finally proposed this bill. It is one more illustration that the PES family does deliver on a more inclusive society and progressive social reforms.

"After the good news coming from Cyprus and Greece, Italy is about to make a breakthrough towards equality, even if it is through civil partnerships instead of the main way of equal marriage. Partito Democratico is committed to giving the country a good law on the recognition of same-sex couples and rainbow families and to reducing the gap with the other EU countries and the parties in the PES family" declared **Sergio Lo Giudice** (Italian Senator of PD).

Rainbow Rose regrets the Opposition's methods to delay the debates with more than 6,000 amendments tabled, and hope the bill will be adopted very soon. As it stands, the bill will

enable same-sex couples to commit themselves to one another before a state official, to take each other's names and adopt each other's children and inherit residual pension rights.

Rainbow Rose would like to stress again the importance of legal protection for families and their children. With a step by step approach, we can expect some further reforms in a near future, to provide more equality between all couples.

This is good news for LGBT rights in Europe and Rainbow Rose will keep on working within our political family to further expand equality for LGBT citizens.

Ends

For further information email: 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) its website (www.rainbowrose.eu) and Twitter (@RainbowRose_PES)