

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2967/07

by Marco Cappato (ALDE) and Maria Carlshamre (ALDE)
to the Council

Subject: Recent homophobic decisions and initiatives by Lithuanian and Polish authorities and Latvian LGBT pride

In Lithuania on 21 May 2007, the mayor Juozas Imbrasas banned from stopping in Vilnius the EU-sponsored anti-discrimination truck that is touring 19 EU Member States in the framework of the EU initiative 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for All', while the City Council banned a tolerance campaign rally due to take place on 25 May in support of the human rights of various groups, including the rights of LGBT persons, for alleged 'security reasons'. In Poland, the Equality Foundation has denounced a campaign started by the authorities to collect data concerning people's sexual orientation, as Janusz Boguszewicz, journalist of gay internet websites, has been questioned by the police to ask for information concerning friends and acquaintances and their sexual orientation. The government is still working on the legislative proposal to ban so-called 'homosexual propaganda' in schools, which has already been condemned by the EP in its recent resolution on homophobia in Europe. The Ombudsman for Children, Ewa Sowinska, and the psychologists in her office have also launched an enquiry on the sexuality of Tinky Winky, the pink Teletubbies character, to ascertain whether it is gay or straight, and whether the BBC programme promotes homosexuality among children. In Riga the LGBT march will take place on 3 June, while it was banned in 2006 and allowed in 2005 but was disrupted by violent counter-demonstrators.

Can the Council state its position regarding the abovementioned decisions and initiatives by the Lithuanian and Polish authorities? Can it state what initiatives it has taken towards these governments, notably to stop the witch-hunt against homosexuals in Poland, and ensure that the Lithuanian authorities respect the right of freedom of peaceful assembly and demonstration and that equality and non-discrimination are promoted in the EU, as provided by European laws and policies?