

---

## ERA Statement on inclusivity and the importance of intersectionality

For ERA, it is of high importance to ensure inclusion within our network. If we only give voice to some people, we cannot be representative for the whole LGBTI+ community. Many of our members face an intersectionality of discrimination and marginalization. Intersectionality describes the hierarchical nature of power and the fact that belonging to multiple discriminated categories can mean that one's issues are ignored. We want to provide a variety and diversity among our association in order to give all LGBTI+ individuals in the Western Balkans and Turkey a voice and to be representative for the whole LGBTI+ community.

ERA - LGBTI Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkey represent all persons regardless of their sexual orientations, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, race, socio-economic status, ability, religion, age, marital and or family status, health status, and any other personal characteristic.

### How can we achieve diversity in our association?

The most important step in creation of a wider diversity is to raise awareness of the marginalization that LGBTI+ individuals face and different excluding mechanisms we have internalized. By reflecting on our own privileges and understanding the intersectionality of discrimination we should be able to take measure to be inclusive and reflective of our rich diversity. Raising the voices of people who are usually silenced is an important issue for creating a diverse movement.

Another important step that we at ERA have to take is to provide easy access within our association and the events organized by us. This includes using easy and clear language on our events and in our publications. We need to make sure that accessibility is ensured also to people who do not speak English and who need services and support in their own local language. We need to become aware of our own binary concepts in use of language and to become inclusive for non-binary people. While we are aware that we cannot remove this barrier completely, we need to do our best and provide more access to people facing this problem. We have to use barrier free locations so the access to all persons is provided. We have to try to fulfill all the needs and special conditions of our community members so that they can participate without any challenges.

We need to make sure that all our documents, the statute, laws and by-laws etc. are designed to provide more inclusivity and we need to revise those documents regularly in order to make sure that such principles are respected.

We have to try to combine our fights and not let our differences divide us. None of us can be free while the others are not. We can not only fight for the freedom of certain LGBTI+ individuals, we have to fight for the freedom for all. That is why we also have to address the issues like racism, classism, ableism, and the patriarchy. We have to face the intersectional discrimination that some of LGBTI+ persons are facing and by doing that we can enlarge our diversity and jointly secure our equality.