

PRESS RELEASE

20 December 2018



ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACCEPT – LGBTI CYPRUS WITH TWO WOMEN AT THE HELM

The Annual General Assembly of Accept – LGBTI Cyprus took place last Saturday, 15 December 2018, at the University of Nicosia, with elections for the new Board of Management of the organisation taking place at the same time. For the first time, the position of the President is now held by a woman, Monica Panayi, who is now 3rd President of the organisation. Sarah Petridou was elected to the position of Vice-President.

The event was attended by Ms Stella Kyriakidou, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Vice-President of DISI party, and Iliana Kanara, member of the Central Committee of EDEK. On behalf of the Government the event was attended by Mr Costas Gavrielides, Adviser to the President of the Republic of Cyprus on issues of Multiculturalism, Respect and Acceptance to Diversity and former President of Accept-LGBTI Cyprus.

In her greeting, on behalf of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, Ms Stella Kyriakidou expressed support for the work of the organisation and referred to her experiences during her tenure as head of the Cyprus Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on LGBTI rights.

Costas Gavrielides, in his greeting, analysed the Government's actions over the past year, focusing on the preparations of the draft bill on Legal Gender Recognition that is expected to reach the Parliament at the beginning of the new year. Reference was also made to the preparations for the creation of a Committee for the Promotion of Multiculturalism and Diversity, thus covering pre-election commitments by the Government. The Committee will set up a special sub-Committee on LGBTI issues and produce a national action plan which includes issues affecting LGBTI people. Reference was also made to the accession of Cyprus to the Equal Rights Coalition, a global coalition of Governments promoting LGBTI rights, as the 40th member, last August.

In his speech, the outgoing President of Accept-LGBTI Cyprus, Mr. Nicholas Tryfon, mentioned the actions of the organisation in 2018 with special reference to the Cyprus Pride Festival 2018 in June and the forthcoming bill on Legal Gender Recognition, expressing the disappointment of the organisation for the delay in advancing this to the Parliament. He recalled that during the Cyprus Pride 2018, through the Minister of Transport who represented the Government, Mr. Vassiliki Anastasiadou, the LGBTI community received assurances that the bill would have been forwarded to the Parliament in early autumn, a promise that did not materialise. He also expressed concern about points in the draft bill that was set out for public consultation in September and particularly for the lack of petitions covering intersex persons.



However, he expressed satisfaction that the Ministry of Education is taking part in an important action of the organisation, the HOMBAT programme, in cooperation with the Cyprus Youth Organisation and the Commissioner for the Protection of Children's Rights, where many educators will be informed about LGBTI issues and how to handle these in schools.

He also expressed the satisfaction of the organisation for the appointment of an Adviser to the President of the Republic on issues of Multiculturalism, Respect and Acceptance of Diversity, but also on the steps taken for the creation of a Committee on Multiculturalism and Diversity, and through this, a special sub-Committee on LGBTI issues.

The outgoing president also analysed the actions of Accept during this year's electoral period and the commitments of all the Presidential Candidates, presenting a table with the answers to the questions put to them by the organisation, published in January (<http://www.acceptcy.org/ln/node/9413>).

Finally, Mr Tryfon thanked the volunteers and the partners of the organisation, especially the Representation of the European Commission in Cyprus, the Office of the European Parliament in Cyprus and, amongst others, the embassies of the USA, Germany, Netherlands and Austria. He also thanked other NGOs who cooperated with Accept in the past year, such as the AIDS Solidarity Movement, the Cyprus Family Planning Association (KSOP), the Association for the Prevention of Violence in the family (SPAVO), the Cyprus Council for Refugees, the Mediterranean Institute for Gender Studies (MIGS), the Movement for Equality, Support and Anti-racism (KISA), CARDET, and the Turkish Cypriot organisations Envision Diversity and Queer Cyprus. He also thanked the Cyprus Youth Board and the Universities of Nicosia, Cyprus and Neapolis and the private companies that either with products or with financial support contribute to the work of Accept, making special reference to supporters of this year's Cyprus Pride, Somersby, Starbucks, Get Fresh, Love FM, Limoncello, Brekkies and Palio Ksydadiko.

A presentation of the events and actions of the sub-groups of Accept from Constantinos Laccotrypes followed, member of the Board of Management of the organisation. The Assembly ended with the announcement of the new 8-member Board of Management following the elections, as follows:

President: Monica Panayi

Vice-President: Sarah Petridou

Secretary: Constantinos Laccotrypes

Treasurer: Anastasia Andreou

Members: Diomedes Koufteros, Raphael Pelengaris, Adrian Posea, John Zacharias Theophanous

The new Board expressed its commitment to continue the effort to meet the organisation's goals.

Accept – LGBTI Cyprus

