

**EU-UK Balance of Competencies
Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Report**

Summary

1. This paper contains Stonewall's response to the Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Report review of the balance of competencies between the EU and UK.
2. Stonewall is the leading lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) equality organisation in Britain and campaigns and lobbies to advance the human rights of LGB people both in Britain and worldwide.
3. Stonewall welcomes this review. Stonewall's response to a number of key issues included in the inquiry's terms of reference is below.
4. The human rights abuses against LGB people globally are widely reported and recorded. Stonewall is deeply concerned about these continued abuses, which include: the criminalisation of consensual sexual activity between people of the same sex, violence and threats of violence by security services and members of the local community and discrimination in services such as healthcare and education.
5. Many of the 78 nations which criminalise same-sex sexual activity are recipients of EU aid and over half are Commonwealth countries. Due to the negative legal environment and social attitudes towards gay people in these countries most programming by bilateral and multi-lateral donors fails to explicitly address the needs of gay people. Stonewall believes that this deficit can only be addressed through effective bilateral and multilateral partnerships which both operate in development assistance and diplomacy. Therefore, the partnership between the EU and the UK is critical for the success of this approach.
6. In recent years the European Union has developed specific funding opportunities for civil society organisations advocating for gay equality, in particular under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. This instrument has also looked at LGB inclusion in general programmes e.g. in freedom of expression work. This EU funding offers a source of support under which is perceived to be more politically neutral and under which sensitive LGB programmes can be developed.

There is less likelihood of governments criticising LGB programmes funded by the EU as being an imposition of western values, compared to direct funding from former colonial powers like the UK. Furthermore any such criticisms are more effectively rebutted by a united European diplomatic front.

7. As DFID concluded in its own Multilateral Aid Review the multilateral system is important as it can work in more countries and on a larger scale. The ability of the EU to develop and implement LGB related programming across a range of countries is important both for wider impact and for learning. As DFID develops its own approaches to make sure gay people are included in its own bilateral programmes there are EU lessons which can be shared.
8. DFID's Multilateral Aid Review noted that the European Development Fund channels 40 per cent of its funds to Commonwealth countries. Currently European Development Assistance is the largest individual recipient of DFID Overseas Development Aid. The UK government needs to remain a significant stakeholder in EU aid and seek to influence how it supports the needs of gay people especially in countries which criminalise same-sex sexual activity.
9. The EU also plays an important role in international fora and in agreeing the direction of development policy globally. For example Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, Head of the Commission Directorate-General for Development Co-operation is a member of the post Millennium Development Goal High Level Panel, co-chaired by Prime Minister David Cameron. It is hoped that the EU, along with the UK and other like-minded powers will be able to argue for more explicit inclusion of the needs of LGB people in the new goals and indicators. Likewise EU enhanced observer status at the UN, G8 and G20 provides opportunities for joint UK – EU influencing on LGB equality.
10. The UK government also needs to remain fully involved in order to influence other EU governments to speed up their progress to meet the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income to overseas development aid.