

Global conference set to tackle urgent challenges facing LGBT people around the world

- UK and Argentina will co-chair the 2022 Equal Rights Coalition conference from Buenos Aires today
- 42 member states and more than 140 civil society organisations will discuss the need to uphold human rights for LGBT persons
- pre-conference report highlights the growing global “backlash” against LGBT rights and freedoms

The Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) will meet in Buenos Aires today (Thursday 8 September) to discuss joint action on urgent issues that LGBT people face globally.

The gathering comes at a pivotal moment as ERC member states have identified a growing global threat to the freedoms and human rights of LGBT persons. It will also provide the opportunity for governments and NGOs to share best practice.

The current ERC co-chairs, Argentina and the UK, will also present a report tracking progress of the [ERC's Strategy](#) and [Five-Year Implementation Plan](#), published in July 2021.

Germany and Mexico will take up their roles as new ERC co-chairs during the closing ceremony of the conference on Friday 9 September. The ERC will commit to strengthening engagement from ERC members and empowering greater representation from the Global South. Germany and Mexico will also be joined by civil society co-chairs and supported by a new Administrative Unit, funded by member states.

UK Prime Minister's [Special Envoy for LGBT Rights, Nick Herbert](#) (Lord Herbert of South Downs) said:

The UK stands for freedom – and that means freedom for all. We're proud of the Equal Rights Coalition's work to defend these freedoms but more needs to be done, in every part of the world, to achieve our aims.

We look forward to supporting Germany and Mexico in their role as the next ERC co-chairs. Together we can send the clear message that LGBT rights are human rights.

Argentina's Special Representative Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Alba Rueda said:

Argentina is a strong country in human rights and diversity. This is the result of the social and political movement of lesbians, gays, travestis, transgender people, non-binaries, and all activisms that break away from the patriarchal and binary system.

We value the ERC in this same way: as a space in which social organisations can express themselves so that states can listen to them and commit to turning their demands into public policies.

This year's ERC Conference follows previous convenings in Montevideo in 2016, Vancouver in 2018, and a virtual event in 2021. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the UK and Argentina have held an extended tenure as co-chairs since 2019.

The conference will focus on 4 key areas, including:

- developing inclusive national laws and policies
- advancing the [Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- supporting civil society responses to the global anti-gender movement
- mapping the progress towards decriminalisation around the world

Civil society organisations play a vital role in the Equal Rights Coalition. The current civil society co-chairs – Asociación Familias Diversas Argentina, Kaleidoscope Trust, and Stonewall – support more than 140 groups from across the world. The UK, Argentina, Mexico, the USA, Canada, The Netherlands and Belgium have funded some of the in-person participation at this year's conference for civil society organisations and human rights defenders from the Global South.

In July 2021, the ERC agreed a [Strategic Plan](#) and [Five-Year Implementation Plan](#) to help guide and energise the group's work and ensure the organisation can live up to its huge potential. The pre-conference report highlighted this prioritisation process as a "major achievement" of Argentina and the UK's tenure as co-chairs.

- the ERC will meet in Buenos Aires from 8 to 9 September
- for delegates unable to attend in person, participants will also be able to engage virtually through a hybrid meeting
- journalists wishing to cover elements of the conference either in person or virtually, can [apply for accreditation](#)