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## As we celebrate Global Pride 2020, everyone in the UK should feel safe to be themselves



Whilst I share the disappointment that the traditional festivities cannot take place this year, I am so pleased to see that people are undaunted by the restrictions Covid has put us under, and are taking up the challenge to celebrate and campaign in a different way with verve, says Kemi Badenoch MP | Credit: PA Image©

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3 min read 27 June

I want us to unite with the ambition of building on the positive work from the last 20 years.

This month we join together across the world for Pride, to celebrate the great strides we've made for diversity and equality.

I was delighted to be appointed the Minister for Equalities in March, and I'm determined to ensure that everyone in this country feels safe in their freedom to be themselves.

As we mark Pride during a global pandemic, the question of how to stay safe and healthy whilst celebrating is at the forefront of our minds.

This month, we should have seen parades and parties to promote this sentiment.

Instead, today, people from around the world will go online for Global Pride 2020 - 24 hours of music and art, speeches from activists and campaigners, and addresses by public figures, streamed by Google, YouTube, Facebook and others straight into people's homes.

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celebrate and campaign in a different way with verve.

As we mark Pride during a global pandemic, the question of how to stay safe and healthy whilst celebrating is at the forefront of our minds.

This is why I'm delighted that the Government Equalities Office (GEO) is continuing to fund the country's first National Adviser on LGBT Health.

We're also doing more to improve the experience LGBT individuals have when they access healthcare settings.

For example, funding from the GEO has enabled the LGBT Foundation to pilot the Pride in Practice programme which trains GPs and staff in primary care organisations to fully support LGBT patients.

I am proud to live in a country that the OECD identifies as part of a 'top performing tier' in this space, and that the UK's progress on legal inclusion of LGBT people, and also those who are intersex, since 1999 is described as "tremendous".

Pride is a time for us to recognise those who paved the way, those initiatives like Pride in Practice that continue to do so, and to look forward to where we must go.

I want us to unite with the ambition of building on the positive work from the last 20 years.

Work which saw the OECD's report on LGBT-inclusive laws and policies praised the UK earlier this week.

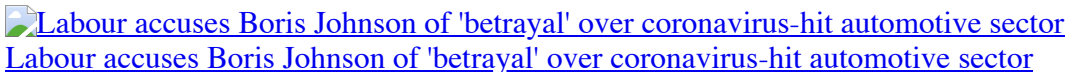
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Looking to the future, as we promised, we will be holding an international LGBT conference - bringing people from around the world together, to ensure every LGBT person is safe to be who they are.

I wish everyone a happy Pride, however they choose to mark it. Enjoy the sun and celebrations.

*Kemi Badenoch is Conservative MP for Saffron Walden and minister for equalities.*

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