



ILGA-EUROPE

# ACTIVITY REPORT

## 2018/2019

ILGA  
EUROPE 

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# Report on Governance Activities of the Executive Board

As the main acting body representing the member organisations of ILGA-Europe, the Executive Board provides overall direction to ILGA-Europe, acts and makes decisions in line with ILGA-Europe's vision, mission and values and in the framework of its constitution and policies laid down by the European Regional conference between conferences, in particular in line with the strategic plan agreed by members. In accordance with article E.5.d of the Constitution, the Executive Board of 2018-2019 herewith presents a report on its activities from November 2018 till October 2019 to the European Regional Conference.

## Board Set-up and Functioning

At the 2018 Regional Conference in Brussels, five Board members were elected, one of which (Olena Shevchenko) was re-elected for a second term in office, and Svetlana Zakharova, Aizhan Kadralieva, Yves Aert, and Viima Lampinen for their first mandates on the board. Together with the existing five members, the composition of the new Board was set for the new mandate and a division of positions followed, as presented in a table below. In addition to the Board members, Amir Mukambetov, Emina Bosnjak, Vyacheslav Melnyk, Yuri Yoursky were elected as reserves.

The board convened in Brussels on six occasions since the 2018 Annual Conference (in third column, number of attendance to meetings per member):

- 27 October 2018, Brussels
- 30 November - 2 December 2018, Brussels
- 12 January 2019, Online meeting
- 23-24 February 2019, Brussels
- 25-26 May 2019, Brussels
- 31 August – 2 September, 2019 Brussels

NAME	POSITION	TERM	TERM SERVED	CURRENT MANDATE ATTENDANCE
Darienne Flemington	Co- Chair	2017 – 2019	Second	6
Micah Grzywnowicz	Co-Chair	2017 – 2019	Third	6
Yves Aert	Treasurer	2018 – April 2020	First	5
Yuri Guaiana	Co – Secretary	2017 – 2019	Third	5
Soudeh Rad	Co – Secretary	2017 – 2019	First	6
Olena Shevchenko	Member	2018 – 2020	Second	3
Vladimir Simonko	Member	2017 -2019	Second	6
Svetlana Zakharova	Member	2018 -2020	First	6
Viima Lampinen	Member	2018 - 2020	First	6
Aizhan Kadralieva	Member	2018 - 2020	First	4
Anastasia Danilova	Member	April 2018	Reserve placement	3 meetings

In the past year, the Executive Board organised its work in the following sub-committees, covering different areas of responsibilities and working groups on issues that required further development in the work of ILGA-Europe:

NAME	MEMBERS
Finance sub-committee	Micah Grzywnowicz, Darienne Flemington, Yves Alert, Vladimir Simonko, Viima Lampinen
Employment sub-committee	Micah Grzywnowicz, Darienne Flemington, Vladimir Simonko, Yuri Guaiana, Soudeh Rad, Viima Lampinen
Governance sub-committee	Yuri Guaiana, Soudeh Rad, Olena Shevchenko, Svetlana Zakharova, Aizhan Kadralieva
Diversity Working Group	Darienne Flemington, Olena Shevchenko, Soudeh Rad, Aizhan Kadralieva, Svetlana Zakharova

## Overall Direction and Priorities

One of the main highlights undertaken by the Executive Board was updating the internal documents, including standing orders, staff manual and governance manual and focusing on the strategy framework pathways and how ILGA-Europe can effectively work within these pathways, given the constantly changing and demanding environment.

Meanwhile, along with ILGA-Europe's staff, and in response to changing environment, the Rainbow map index and indicators were revised to become a stronger tool reflecting the reality of Pan-European LGBTI lives in each country.

## Work on Policy and Programmes

When it comes to policy work, the Board focused on the development of a few policy documents.

The Executive Board continued the discussion about policy development on PrEP to conclude that it is necessary to identify the next steps necessary to start working on a policy document on access to Medication and Health-care services, rather than just PrEP. The Executive Board continued the discussion about policy development on corporate engagement, surrogacy and Gender Markers.

## Staff Affairs

We are very fortunate to have a highly skilled, dedicated and passionate team who works effectively and efficiently to drive forward change and implement activities of our strategic framework. The team has grown again this year, and we would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere thanks to them for their hard work on behalf of ILGA-Europe members and their commitment to our shared vision and goals.

As a responsible employer particular attention was placed to make sure that ILGA-Europe's staff have high job satisfaction levels. The Executive Board is particularly motivated to make sure that optimal working conditions exist with high attention to management style and organisational culture. The Executive Board actively participated in the recruitment process during 2019 and contributed to the development of job descriptions for new staff positions.

ILGA-Europe is an Equal Opportunities Employer. It aims to ensure that all full-time, part-time, potential employees and other individuals receive equal treatment. An updated Staff Manual has been adopted to include best practice initiatives as well as to indicate Belgium Law requirements. The Staff Manual illustrates policies that enhance current



legal requirements making ILGA-Europe a good employer. The Equal Opportunities Policy is included in both the Board Manual and Staff Manual. ILGA-Europe actively promotes equality in all policies and actions – for example, ILGA-Europe seeks engagement with underrepresented groups to ensure participation in our movement and to encourage a diverse range of people to apply for jobs.

## Internal Structure

One of the main priorities for the Executive Board has always been the organization's governance and issues related to internal structure and communication. In 2019, these included further development of roles within the board to make the Executive Board's work as efficient as possible, creating new online opportunities to meet. Moreover, there is an on-going process of improving governance processes and routines. These can be found in the Governance Manual, which was updated with the latest changes in the Constitution and Standing orders.

A more agile document on Roles and policies development in the board was adopted to help the onboarding of new board members with an eye to the expected turnover in the next Executive Boards.

## Annual Conference

The Executive Board has actively supported the staff in the preparation of the conference, in particular in the adoption of the conference theme, developing the theme, approval of the conference programme, identification of keynote speakers, and selection of scholars. Each Board member will be assigned a list of duties to perform during the event.

The Executive Board and particularly the Co-secretaries took active part in preparation of the Annual General Meeting to support the staff and ensure a smooth governance process. This year in Prague, the Annual Report and Strategic Framework \*starred workshop will give you, the representatives of the membership, an opportunity to engage in a discussion on the organisation's priorities for next year. This is your chance to ask questions and provide Feedback on ILGA-Europe's work for next year. Don't miss it!

This year, the Executive Board of ILGA-Europe is proposing all the Standing Order changes that are necessary to align the Standing Orders with the Constitutional changes agreed by members in 2018 AGM in Brussels.

The Executive Board also proposes the Conference to introduce a limitation of the number of consecutive terms a person can serve on the Board to three consecutive terms, in order to reach a better balance between the needs to build up knowledge, ensure continuity, and ensure a healthy change in membership representation.

Members will have the opportunity to raise questions, engage in conversation, and enter into lively debate around the proposals at \*starred workshop 3.

To facilitate the work of the Chairing Pool and the onboarding of new Chairing pool members, the Executive Board put together a brand new Chairing Pool Manual.

Due to the fact that the Annual Conferences have been growing with each year, the Executive Board devoted some time to discuss organisational capacity to organise larger conferences, which included among others focus on human resources and financing.

## Focus on Diversity

With a growing interest and feedback following the Annual Conference in Athens (2015), the Executive Board prioritised its work on diversity. There is a Diversity Working Group (DWG), which is composed of a few members of the Executive Board and a few staff members representing each of the Departments. The idea behind the structure of the DWG is to mainstream diversity within the organisation but also to make best use of expertise existing within the staff and board members.

The DWG used to meet once a year, but now meets prior to each board meeting in order to do more work in person and to create a routine around diversity work.

In 2019, the Diversity Working Group met three times, starting with the second Board Meeting.

The focus was not only to enhance preparations of the Annual Conference in general terms, but also to make other activities



organised by ILGA-Europe more accessible – to this end there is now a bespoke Diversity Fund that members and/or individuals can donate to.

The Executive Board members and ILGA-Europe staff who had the task of scholarship selection paid particular attention to those members who fulfilled one or more of a range of under-represented characteristics to ensure a better diversity in the conference.

This year we have also reviewed the application form for board candidates, taking into account the skills and experiences identified as needed in the Executive Board, and we continue the opportunity for prospective Board members to meet the membership in an informal way over 'tea and cake', and offered the opportunity for prospective Board members to send a picture of themselves attached to the form, so they remain more accessible during the conference.

## Representation

Over the past year, ILGA-Europe has been invited to many occasions, LGBTI events and NGO or government conferences. Executive Board members have represented ILGA-Europe on some of those occasions, particularly where most impact was anticipated and a European LGBTI perspective was deemed necessary.

Special effort was made to co-ordinate the visits with ILGA-Europe staff to minimise costs as much as possible meaning, unfortunately, that it was not feasible to have representation to all requested events. ILGA-Europe's Treasurer, Yves Aerts, residing in Belgium, attended the annual Gala in June.

During the Press launch of ILGA-Europe's 2019 Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia, the ILGA- Europe's co-chair, Micah Grzywnowicz, ILGA- Europe's co-secretary, Soudeh Rad and Svetlanta Zakharova were present to introduce the report and answer to journalists' questions. Micah Grzywnowicz also attended the EU Development Days as one of the speakers.

Both the Staff and Executive Board members attended Pride events this year in representation of ILGA-Europe. In particular, the ILGA-Europe's Treasurer attended EuroPride in Vienna and spoke at the Human Rights conference in June 2019.



# Report on ILGA-Europe's Strategic Framework 2019-2023

## Highlights and Achievements

This section aims to report on the work done by ILGA-Europe towards achieving the goals set out under our Strategic Framework 2019-2023. This report covers work carried out between November 2018 and October 2019.

### PATHWAY 1

#### Empowered and inclusive LGBTI communities

The first pathway towards achieving our vision is having an “Empowered and inclusive LGBTI communities”, which means that LGBTI people, including those who are underrepresented and/or marginalised, have safe(er) spaces to come together, and can access services and support that respond to their needs, know about their rights and feel empowered to exercise them, have a voice and agency in decision-making process that impact their daily lives, take active part in all domains of public life, and are fully included in all aspects of the development and work of LGBTI movements.

To a significant extent, ILGA-Europe's role is largely to strengthen the capacity of LGBTI groups and organisations to engage in community building and organising members. Building on the Community Organising project which ended in 2018, we have been integrating the resources into our different programmes and events. For example, we co-organised a learning and peer exchange platform bringing together community organisers from over 15 LGBTI organisations and groups that run community centres in places where civil society has been under pressure. As another example, we spoke on a panel about the anti-gender movement and intersex issues during the OII Europe.

Community Event, and worked with over 60 intersex activists from 25 countries to further strengthen the working relationship between the two networks.

## The annual ILGA-Europe conference

In many respects, the Annual Conference is the closest we get at IE to creating a community space. This is the moment every year when all members connect and take part in decisions about the organisation when the IE team exchange and hear from members when we learn from each other and think about who is there or not. It's where we discuss what are

our key priorities for LGBTI people and how we can work on them together, where we can show solidarity as a European movement for local movements.

This is why we place intersectionality at the heart of the conference. We invest time and energy to thinking about how we create ever safer spaces to have conversations, how we amplify the voices of those who are not heard within LGBTI communities, and how we can contribute to empowering under-represented groups within the LGBTI communities.

Our scholarship scheme aims to enable more groups to participate and facilitate under-represented voices at the conference. A large part of the programme focuses on strengthening skills, knowledge and capacities for LGBTI activists to deliver effective change for LGBTI communities. This year, there are several workshops and spaces that give participants opportunities to talk about the experiences of intersecting aspects of our identities: workshops on the experiences of Roma LGBTQI people, of asylum seekers, sex workers, intersex people, lesbian women, people living with HIV, of bisexuals, of LGBTI people of faith, of LGBTI youth and homelessness. And because we are a community of ourselves and need to lead by example, we also look at issues of well-being and sustainability for the movement. This way of working is put in practice during the conference itself by taking care of our own communities. Social activities are shaped to allow conference participants to relax in the best way for their own well-being – including everything from childcare facilities and a quiet room for reflection.

Our Board and Staff Working Group on Diversity continue to steer our reflections throughout the year and lead on this work, particularly concerning conference preparations.

## Facilitating voice and agency

Another key part of our action is aimed at identifying the needs of under-represented and/or marginalised parts of the LGBTI communities and at creating space for groups to come together. Over the past year, we have focused on the inclusion of LGBTI people with disabilities. Later in 2019, we will host the first gathering for D/deaf and disabled LGBTI activists and LGBTI and disability rights activists in Europe and Central Asia.





This event is a first step towards increasing our knowledge and expertise around the intersection between LGBTI and disability and also assessing how to increase participation of LGBTI people living with disabilities in IE work and to support movement building efforts for LGBTI people with disabilities. During the preparation phase, several disabled LGBTI activists were consulted and provided feedbacks on the content of the event planned and on the accessibility of the call and application form. This will be followed by a social media campaign around the International Day for Persons with Disabilities.

## PATHWAY 2

### Strong, resourced, skilled, accountable and sustainable LGBTI movements

The second pathway towards achieving our vision is “**Strong, resourced, skilled, accountable and sustainable LGBTI movements**”. This implies that LGBTI groups and organisations have access to sufficient, appropriate and sustainable resources to carry out their work – resources in terms of money, skills and knowledge, people (within the movement and outside), in a way to drive change, and enable them to effectively respond to emerging threats to their communities, or to seize opportunities that emerge to drive change.

### Resource mobilisation for LGBTI activism

ILGA-Europe is uniquely placed to identify needs within the LGBTI movements in Europe and Central Asia, and to take a lead in developing strategic responses to meet these needs and create greater capacity within the movement. Over the past two years, we invested time and resources to do an in-depth assessment of the funding needs of LGBTI activists in the broad region. A growing movement in size and diversity requires access to new funding, and a rapidly changing environment requires that funders adapt to the changing needs of the movement. Our recent funding needs report gives ILGA-Europe very strong data to make our resource mobilisation for LGBTI activism in Europe and Central Asia more effective.

Over the past year, we used our funding needs’ report as a basis to reach out to new potential funders for LGBTI work in

the region. Building on our long-standing cooperation with the Global Philanthropy Project (GPP) to bring funders together to discuss priorities on funding in Europe, we published the report ‘Funding for LGBTI Activism in Europe and Central Asia’ which presents the key priorities for the movement. This report was widely disseminated through webinars for funders and activists and meetings with private foundations and government agencies. We teamed up with GPP and some of its members to organise the first-ever session on LGBTI issues at the European Foundation Centre’s annual conference, the largest gathering of funders in Europe. An increasingly important part of this conversation is about raising awareness about the lack of funding available and accessible for underrepresented groups.

ILGA-Europe also stepped up our engagement with European governments to make the case for more direct funding for LGBTI work in Europe. While some European governments are large funders of LGBTI organisations globally, few have paid attention to needs in Europe, including within the EU, in recent times. With the support of the Dutch government, we started a dialogue with a number of governments about funding at both national and regional levels in Europe. We are making the case that national and regional organisations play at different levels and that support at those levels is required to sustain the work of the whole movement.

There is also a conversation about the role of the private sector in resourcing the movement. NGOs need to diversify their income to survive and continue their work defending LGBTI rights. There are opportunities in asking companies need to put their money where their mouth is and invest in the work of LGBTI activists to reach our shared goals. Corporate sponsorship also presents challenges, starting with the risks of pink-washing. This year, ILGA-Europe adopted a new corporate sponsorship policy to help us guide conversations with the private sector, a policy which we will share with members to contribute to their own thinking around partnership with corporate actors.

Helping strengthen the capacity of LGBTI groups and organisations on resource mobilisation, in early October 2019, we delivered a training on project proposal writing training in Georgia, while at the last ILGA-Europe conference we gave



workshops on digital fundraising and corporate partnerships. On an ongoing basis, we respond to queries from members and provide support through one-to-one consultations with activists. We also disseminate ILGA-Europe's Fundraising Guide and continue to collect a library of resources to help fundraising efforts of members

## Financial support through grant-making

Beyond our role in identifying the needs of LGBTI activists and groups and making the case for funding at a regional level, we also continue to expand our own role as grant-makers through our growing re-granting schemes. Over the past 12 months, ILGA-Europe made 36 new grants totalling an amount of €394,137. The smallest grant made was a little over €1,000 whilst the largest grant made was €25,000. About 90% of these grants have been awarded to organisations working in places where their rights are under attack. Over the past year, we have issued grants to strengthen work with allies; to support organisational development, community building, awareness-raising within communities, monitoring and advocacy work; campaigning on civil partnership, prides, hate crimes reporting, mobilisation for elections; message testing (see more under Pathway 4); as well as security grants and emergency grants for human rights defenders and communities at risk.

Our re-granting initiatives continue closely linked with our movement-building work, as our approach is not focused on funding alone, but on combining financial resources with additional capacity building. Where possible, ILGA-Europe facilitated peer-learning spaces between grantees (and often also other activists) where ways of working can be discussed that are relevant to the successful implementation of the grant. We also provide significant amounts of coaching to help strengthen the capacity of activists and organisations, both on thematic issues such as campaigning and security, as well as on organisational issues. In the past year, we strengthened our support on financial management by offering a training and webinars on financial and administrative management and on reporting for sub-grantees to help them align their financial management and cost documentation practices with ILGA-Europe standards. Many of these conversations serve to increase transparency and communication within the movement, contributing to trust-building and a growing cohesion of work.

ILGA-Europe provides both flexible grants and project grants. Many of the grant-making programmes are currently supported by advisory committees, and we are looking at how to strengthen our re-granting in coming years through new participatory and consultative processes. With the growing scope of grant-making and in the context of limited transparency due to security risks, it is essential to ensure a proper exchange of information and an opportunity to have a broader picture of the grants to the movement and the work of different groups.

## Mapping needs of the movement

ILGA-Europe can provide on-going analysis of the movements' needs in relation to skills capacities and resources. This is important for multiple reasons: it is the basis to inform funders and grant-makers about where funding is needed in Europe and Central Asia, just as it is the basis of our own grant-making and helps us prioritise our programmatic work. Following the broad funding needs' assessment carried out in 2017-2018, we launched this year a needs assessment on strategic communications. After a few years of working on primarily message framing & testing and campaigning, we want to take a few steps back and assess the current needs of the LGBTI movement in Europe and Central Asia in this field to understand what other needs in the field of strategic communication exist and to map the overall communication capacity of the LGBTI movement in our region. The results will not only inform ILGA-Europe's capacity-building work in the coming years but also contribute to on-going conversations amongst funders about funding needs and gaps.

## Capacity-building

As collective capacity in the movements continues to grow, the ILGA-Europe team is focusing on offering capacity-building programmes which respond to emerging needs and/or identified gaps within LGBTI movements in Europe and Central Asia, and increasingly look at building expertise in areas of work that are new for the movement. In addition to ongoing work on community organising (see Pathway 1) and strategic communications (see Pathway 4), this year ILGA-Europe started exploring what good governance means in the context of LGBTI organisations and groups. In addition to building on our



knowledge about different models of organisational structures and practices, we are preparing a survey for members and partners to collect information about the challenges and solutions LGBTI groups have in developing their approaches to good governance and accountability. This work is important for both organisations working with formal structures as well as for organisations that work with 'horizontal models of organizing.' As part of this new conversation, we are organising a workshop at this year's conference.

Sadly, the need to strengthen the capacity of LGBTI groups and organisations on security, safety and well-being issues remains high in our region. In partnership with the Dignity for All consortium, we continued to provide security and well-being trainings continue to be a central element of our work with members in countries such as Russia and Turkey where the external threats have been clearly documented, but with growing opposition in other countries (such as the anti-gender movement) the need for ILGA-Europe to constantly standby has only grown.

Our security work expanded in Central Asia. Part of the work focused on security around public events and prides, though a significant portion of the security challenges is about threats and attacks directed at individual activists or groups known for their work. For the coming year it is expected that some countries within the European Union will also increasingly require support in this area, for instance looking at the protection of prides in Poland. We also continue to look at digital security as an area for development. Beyond digital security, digitalisation is a growing area of importance for the movement in Europe and Central Asia. There is an evident need for the further development of skills and competencies within the movement around digitalisation.

One of our roles is also to lead in creating space for much-needed discussions within the LGBTI movements. In 2019, we organised a meeting to reflect on how the broader movement have responded to urgent "crisis" situations (such as Chechnya and Azerbaijan) in recent years, and to identify building blocks for the movement to strengthen its capacity to be more resilient towards future crises contexts. In addition to activists with first-hand experience of responding to urgent situations, other key stakeholders who played a role in supporting the

communities on the ground were invited along with other organisations with relevant expertise to share. The need to do so was widely felt within our organisation and more broadly, amongst groups involved in providing direct support to people affected by crises. The nature of crisis response work has left deep marks on the lives of many activists and raises questions about our readiness to respond to large scale human rights abuses in the future. Looking forward, we will actively seek to develop the capacity of groups working in (potential) crisis areas so that LGBTI activists are better prepared to respond.

## Peer learning and exchange of knowledge

There is so much capacity-building work carried out by the ILGA-Europe team every year. Not everything can be captured here. It should be said that a significant way in which we contribute to strengthening the capacity of LGBTI activists, groups and organisations is by increasing the exchange of knowledge and facilitating peer learning. This happens of course at the Annual Conference, where participants get to learn and challenge each other through more than 70 programme spaces, discussions, pre-meetings, consultations, etc. The conference is not only the main networking space for LGBTI activists in Europe and Central Asia each year, but it also a space that people leave empowered and inspired.

To facilitate sharing of knowledge within the LGBTI movement and provide more learning opportunities to reach out to more activists throughout the year, ILGA-Europe is also working on an online learning platform, to be launched by early 2020. A very exciting feature of this platform is that activists can upload best practices to the platform so that peer-learning comes within reach of a growing number of activists.

Another peer learning moment this past year was the 2nd edition of the networking meeting of European networks. This meeting brought together the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer & Intersex Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO), Organisation Intersex International Europe (OI Europe), the European Forum of LGBT Christian Groups, the Network of European LGBTIQ\* Families (NELFA), European Parents' Network, Eurocentralasian Lesbian\* Community (ELC), EuroBiNet, and the International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE). It allowed peer-learning



between networks about organisational development and management and also helps to build a shared understanding of the context in our region; identifying opportunities for synergies and collaboration and learning. Beyond this gathering, this year again ILGA-Europe also offered peer learning opportunities and mentoring on organisational development, fundraising and advocacy to European networks such as OII Europe, IGLYO, Transgender Europe (TGEU) and ICRSE.

### PATHWAY 3 - A legal and policy framework which protects and promotes human rights and equality at local, national, regional and international levels

The third pathway towards achieving our vision is: “A legal and policy framework which protects and promotes human rights and equality at local, national, regional and international levels”. This includes ensuring that strong legal standards exist to protect the human rights LGBTI people, public policies are in place to make sure those laws are effectively implemented and that public authorities are fully equipped to contribute to the equality of all LGBTI people, including providing enabling environments where civil society organisations can do their work.

ILGA-Europe is uniquely placed to identify common trends in political opportunities and challenges which impact the LGBTI movements across the region. This role has been growing, especially in taking a lead in bringing knowledge and expertise together to develop strategies for the movements to respond effectively.

### Responding to negative trends

Sadly, much of our attention and energy has been going towards responding to negative trends in our region again this year. Mobilisation of so-called “anti-gender” movement against LGBTI rights, as well as women’s rights and sexual/reproductive rights, continued to be visible this year, especially in relation to the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (or Istanbul Convention) in different countries. Collective action is key to overcoming this

sort of organised opposition, so ILGA-Europe has been actively contributing to coalition work with our fellow European NGOs and partner networks, especially around common action with EU institutions and Council of Europe. In addition to ensuring that European policy-makers have the accurate information they need about different country situations to respond to this evolving trend, part of this work is also about raising awareness of EU and Council of Europe officials about the nature of the anti-gender movement and the very damaging impact their action is having on communities across the region. (Also see Pathway 4) Based on extensive consultation with and input from civil society, we also developed specific recommendations for institutions, governments and other allies on how to support civil society in the context of this anti-gender opposition. ILGA-Europe organised a workshop in January for LGBTI groups to share knowledge and strategise on how to effectively respond and/or prevent the attacks of anti-gender forces. We also provided support to members in a few countries, where anti-gender groups have been mounting opposition to education policies (Portugal) or parenting rights (Hungary), to name a few examples.

The other trend which we work on are attacks on democratic institutions and the rule of law which affect LGBTI communities in multiple ways, from ongoing pressure against civil society organising and mobilising and violations on fundamental freedoms, to growing scapegoating of LGBTI people by political and public actors, which leads to rapidly growing LGBTI-phobic violence and speech. Throughout the year, we did our best to bring human rights violations against LGBTI people and LGBTI groups (such as bans on LGBTI events in Turkey; a series of violent attacks in Armenia; waves of anti-LGBTI hate speech and violence in Poland; attacks on the LGBTI community in Hungary; attacks on the EL\*C Conference in Kyiv, Ukraine; Bulgarian anti-LGBTI violence and the banning of a Pride photography exhibit, and the new wave of a crackdown on LGBTI people in Azerbaijan crackdown in April this year) to the attention of EU and Council of Europe, actively pushing for appropriate responses. We actively engaged with the relevant EU Commissioners and the EU Parliament, the Council of Europe’s Human Rights Commissioner and the Parliamentary Assembly to denounce violations. For instance, thanks to our advocacy efforts, 31 PACE MPs signed a written declaration that



invited Turkish authorities to take action to ensure the right to freedom of peaceful assembly is effectively enjoyed by LGBTI persons as equal members of society.

In addition to direct engagement on specific developments which require immediate response, we also raised issues more structurally in the context of European policy processes. As part of NGO coalitions, we advocated for the creation of a new effective monitoring mechanism of fundamental rights in the EU and more accessible and better EU funding for civil society in the next EU budget. During the year, we raised the challenges faced by LGBTI activists and community members in the region at in different human rights consultations organised by the EU and the Council of Europe. Core to this work has been our alliance-building with other NGOs working at regional level, to join forces in our advocacy to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms in Europe and Central Asia.

## The Rights of Intersex People

On a positive note, there is a political opportunity in the growing momentum around the human rights of intersex people at European level. In February, the European Parliament passed a landmark resolution on the Human Rights of Intersex People. This resolution, among others, “strongly condemns sex-normalising treatments and surgery” and encourages the Member States to adopt legislation that protects the bodily integrity of intersex people “as soon as possible”. It also confirms that intersex people are “exposed to multiple instances of violence and discrimination in the European Union” and calls on the European Commission and the Members States to propose legislation to address these issues. In addition to gaining wide political support for such a resolution, one of ILGA-Europe’s key roles in this process was ensuring that the voices of intersex activists and OII Europe were at the core. Beyond EU advocacy, ILGA-Europe and OII Europe also joined forces to launch “Protecting Intersex People in Europe: A toolkit for law and policymakers” at the IDAHOT+ Forum in May in Oslo. There is much to build from in the coming years to advance rights and equality for intersex people in Europe.

## Mobilising political support at European level

Mobilising broad political support within regional institutions for LGBTI human rights and equality is a core function of ILGA-Europe. It is particularly so during a year of European elections and transitions within EU institutions. So it won’t be a surprise to read that a significant portion of our advocacy work this year was focused on EU politics in Brussels.

**The ComeOut Campaign:** Inspired by the success of our 2014 EU election campaign, ILGA-Europe revived the ComeOut campaign in the run-up to the 2019 European elections. Launched in Strasbourg with a crowd of supportive MEPs from different parties, ComeOut came to life through the active mobilisation of LGBTI organisations across the EU. Thanks to the great engagement of LGBTI activists, the campaign was a huge success, garnering over 1650 candidate signatures across all EU Member States, a record number of signatures for a European NGO election campaign. For the first time, we had signatures from all EU countries. ILGA-Europe’s ComeOut campaign showed that mobilising broad support for LGBTI equality is possible within the EU, despite an increasingly polarised social and political climate at both national and supranational levels.

As part of the campaign, ILGA-Europe also actively engaged with the main political parties, especially to get strong commitments from the lead candidates. And following the elections, there are now 225 MEPs in eight different political groups who signed the Come Out pledge. This is a very solid basis to re-create the LGBTI Intergroup in the new EU Parliament. To harness this support early on, ILGA-Europe co-hosted a reception with Terry Reintke early July to bring together many re-elected MEPs as well as new MEPs interested to join the Intergroup.

Also, we ran the Elect No Hate campaign called on MEP candidates and those with a public platform to counter hate speech and divisive rhetoric. All signatories of the ComeOut pledge were required to endorse this as a condition of their signature being accepted, to filter out those with homonationalist agendas, for instance. At the time of launch, the No Hate appeal was formally supported



by 22 organisations working across the EU for justice in the areas of human rights, labour rights, development and the environment. This has since grown to 26 organisations.

## Agenda-setting with European institutions

In 2019, there were two significant opportunities to build a strong framework for the work on LGBTI equality and rights at European level. At the EU, this year of transition with a new Parliament and new Commission is the moment when the agenda for the next five years is set. This is why so much effort went into building strong political support for LGBTI equality amongst newly elected MEPs. But having support from the Parliament is not enough. With a view of creating momentum for a strong LGBTI equality strategy in the next Commission, ILGA-Europe actively worked with 19 Member States who called for a strategy, we cooperated closely with the EU Finnish Presidency which put LGBTI equality on their agenda, we engaged with the new Commission President and the Commissioners-nominate (especially through the Parliamentary hearing process) to put the need for an LGBTI policy high on their agenda. This resulted in a clear call from all parties involved, at the high-level EU Presidency LGBTI Equality conference, the first since 2015, for the Commission to adopt an LGBTI Equality Strategy. Over the coming months, ILGA-Europe will ensure that this call is turned into reality.

At the Council of Europe (CoE), we actively engaged on the Review of the 2010 Council of Ministers Recommendation on LGBT rights – which remains to this day one of the most comprehensive human rights instruments on LGBTI equality in the world. The first and only agreement between governments to combat discrimination against LGBT people in Europe, the Recommendation was ground-breaking when first adopted in 2010 and it has become the framework for much of the work carried out by the CoE with Member States across the region. The review is a key moment to strengthen political support for CoE action on LGBTI rights over the coming years and to encourage effective implementation in different countries. To this end, ILGA-Europe worked together with TGEU, OII Europe, IGLYO, EL\*C and NELFA on a joint report to the CoE on the state of play of implementation of the Recommendation, along with national reports prepared by 11 organisations supported by ILGA-Europe and TGEU. The fact that so many

human rights groups and LGBTI organisations have come together to work on this sends a clear message about the significance of this particular review process. We also participated in meetings with CoE officials and government representatives on several occasions to discuss the creation of a stronger mechanism on SOGI within the Council, as a way to anchor the work most sustainably.

Beyond the work on the Recommendations, ILGA-Europe also continued to actively engaged with many other CoE bodies (Parliamentary Assembly, Commissioner for Human Rights, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance), especially to discuss opportunities to put new issues on the Council's agenda and to contribute to effective monitoring of existing human rights standards on SOGIESC.

## Advocating for legal protection at European level

ILGA-Europe continues to advocate with EU institutions on the adoption of new laws which create new or reinforce existing standards for LGBTI equality in the EU and beyond. Despite widespread questions about the EU's level of influence at this moment in time, there are still opportunities to establish standards. Over the past year, our advocacy with EU institutions has focused on:

- **Anti-discrimination protection:** the proposed EU anti-discrimination legislation is back on the EU political agenda, 11 years after it was first proposed. Taking the opportunity of a new Commission and new Parliament, and Finland's commitment to advancing the debate with other EU Member States under its EU Presidency, we have been active, together with our colleagues from other equality NGOs, to make the political case to unblock the negotiations. In 2019, it is unacceptable that the EU does not have equal protection against all forms of discrimination.
- **Inclusive policies for Rainbow Families:** as a result of our work with a coalition of NGOs, led by COFACE (European Organisation of Families), the EU Work-Life Balance Directive formally adopted in April, recognises that there is no one model for what constitutes a family.



It includes references to an “equivalent second parent” as opposed to just “mothers and fathers,” which is a very positive development for rainbow families. Now there is a great opportunity for implementation of the Directive at a national level.

- **LGBTI Asylum Seekers and Refugees:** We continued work with the European Parliament on ensuring the rights of LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees are better protected under the reformed Common European Asylum System (CEAS), paying particular attention to the Reception Conditions Directive and the Qualifications Regulation. While the text provides good provisions and protections on sexual orientation and gender (SOGI) issues, gender expression and sex characteristics (SC) were unfortunately not included in all of the texts. Frustratingly, EU Member States will not move forward until agreement is reached on all the different asylum policy issues, meaning that progress has stalled for now. ILGA-Europe’s ultimate goal is to ensure that the final directive will provide stronger protection for LGBTI people in the CEAS than in existing legislation.

## Strategic Legislation

The importance of strategic litigation in standard-setting and to strengthening legal protection on SOGIESC issues increases year on year. In 2019, there were two important positive judgments at the European Court of Human Rights, in which ILGA-Europe had intervened. In *X. v North Macedonia*, the Court found a violation of the right to respect for private and family life of the applicant, a trans person who had undergone gender reassignment surgery abroad but was not able to have their gender marker changed in the birth registry due to the absence of legislative framework. In *Zhdanov and Others v Russia*, the Court found Russia’s refusal to register associations set up to promote and protect the rights of LGBT people to violate the rights to freedom of association and to be discriminatory on the grounds of sexual orientation. Developments with European and national courts confirm that this work is impactful – hence our 9 third-party interventions to the European Court of Human Rights in the past year, 1 with a national court, and 1 with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. We also made submissions to the Committee

of Ministers on implementation of three cases, because the impact of litigation does not end on ‘judgment day’; the spirit of the legal decision must be brought to life and its benefits felt by LGBTI people in their daily lives. This is why we continue to engage actively in the implementation of the Coman judgement of the European Court of Justice by working with the EU Parliament and LGBTI organisations to make sure there are awareness and knowledge on how to initiate complaint procedures at the European Commission, in the event of improper application of the judgment in an EU Member State.

While our capacity to get involved in cases at national level remains limited, we have supported a few strategic cases by facilitating pro bono support for litigants, giving advice on cases which could have an impact at European level, and giving input about existing case law to inform national courts. Beyond our legal expertise, ILGA-Europe also contributes to coordination among litigation actors in Europe, from litigation NGOs and legal experts to equality bodies and government officials responsible for the implementation of case law. We are now part of the EU’s Fundamental Rights Agency network on strategic litigation. We also contributed to TGEU Legal-Net, a network of lawyers from across Europe working on trans rights, to connect to their discussions on case strategies and share our work on anti-gender movements.

## Benchmarking Legal and Policy Standards

ILGA-Europe continued to develop and implement benchmarking of legal and policy standards on SOGIESC, to strengthen the movement’s ability to hold governments and institutions accountable on their commitments and actions to make equality for LGBTI people a lived reality. Here are some of the ways in which we worked:

- **Rainbow Europe Map and Index:** In 2019, our Rainbow Europe Map celebrated its 10th birthday; a milestone in our collective advocacy worth celebrating after a decade of holding governments to account and challenging them to step up their game. A high ranking on the Rainbow Europe Map is now synonymous with high standards of SOGIESC law-making.



The annual Intergovernmental Forum to mark IDAHOBIT (17 May) each year has become a vital date in the ILGA-Europe calendar as it offers a regular opportunity to meet policymakers face-to-face and have honest discussions about why their country is stuck at the middle of the Rainbow Europe league table for equality or even sliding down. Equally, the Rainbow Module gives very clear directions to governments for moving forward, not only by looking at gaps on the Index but also because of specific recommendations being included and directed at national lawmakers in the Rainbow Europe package each year.

With input from members, our team of talented country experts, and our board members, we used the opportunity of the 10th anniversary to review the Rainbow Europe package. The 2019 Index introduces changes in the weight of the different equality categories, to give a more accurate picture of what LGBTI people need and what matters to the lives of different parts of the LGBTI communities. Our message at the launch of the Map on 13 May at the IDAHOT event in Oslo was clear: for our movement in Europe, equality and non-discrimination laws, legal gender recognition, bodily integrity, protection from hatred and violence, and family rights are all **interconnected and equally essential** for the full enjoyment of human rights for LGBTI people.

- **Annual Review:** Our 2019 Annual Review was launched in February, at an event in Brussels with EU officials and ILGA-Europe board members. For the first time this year, the Review was published independently from the Rainbow Map and Index. This new launch strategy allowed us to promote the project with a greater reach and we received very positive engagement with the publication. The Review, now only available as digital country info-sheets online, also included introduced country chapters for some Central Asian countries for the first time.
- **Input on Fundamental Rights Agency's LGBTI Survey:** Data about the lived reality of LGBTI people is essential to understand the impact of existing laws and policies, and to inform policy-makers and civil society alike about what still needs to be done. The second round of the FRA's EU-wide LGBTI survey, conducted in 2019, therefore represents a very important opportunity to inform

European and national policy-making in the years to come. ILGA-Europe actively contributed to the first experts' and stakeholders' consultations, bringing learning from the previous survey and providing input to ensure that the second survey goes further by being fully inclusive of intersex and non-binary people. We also supported the dissemination of the survey, both general and targeted, throughout the survey period. We are now in touch with FRA and the EU Commission on plans for a visible and high-level launch of the results early 2020.

## Implementing Laws and Policies

Where laws and policies are in place, making sure that they are actively implemented and used is of equal importance to the daily lives of LGBTI communities. Over the past year, we have worked to contribute to the effective implementation of European and relevant international standards in the following ways:

- **Protection for LGBTI asylum-seekers:** As an Advisory Group member of the EU Asylum Support Office (EASO) Vulnerability Experts Network (VEN), we contributed to establishing the annual priorities for EASO and Member States in their activities to support asylum seekers with specific vulnerabilities. ILGA-Europe also submitted input and ensured participation of LGBTI organisations in a consultation on gender-related persecutions, as well as provided input into the EASO Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU, via our membership of the EASO Consultative Forum. Beyond institutions, we also launched the SOGIESC Asylum mailing list, to facilitate coordination and exchange of information amongst organisations working to support LGBTI people in the European asylum system.
- **Equality for trans people:** ILGA-Europe joined the Steering Committee for an EC-funded study on transgender people in the EU, which aims to examine the relationship between available legal gender recognition (LGR) and policy measures in EU Member States, and the well-being of transgender people in these countries in terms of employment, education and healthcare. We are also collaborating with Equinet on the development of their trans and intersex factsheet.





- **Depathologisation:** Following the historic confirmation of the removal of trans identities from the list of mental disorders in July, ILGA-Europe started discussing how best to support implementation of the revised ICD-11, especially how to support trans activists in engaging with governments and regional institutions. One example has been to co-prepare a workshop on ICD-11 implementation and depathologisation with TGEU at the EPATH Conference in Rome. We are also organising a similar co-workshop at our conference, and we put forward the ICD-11 implementation written declaration in PACE in early October 2019.
- **Combating online hate speech:** This rapidly-emerging topic is becoming increasingly prominent in our work. Over the past year, we have engaged with the EU and the Council of Europe on relevant activities to tackle online hate speech, including participating in meetings of the EU High-Level Group on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and other forms of intolerance regarding combatting LGBTI phobic hate speech and hate crimes. We contributed to the EU Code of Conduct on Countering Illegal Hate Speech Online, and input to the 'Draft Recommendation on the Human Rights Impacts of Algorithmic Systems' of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI).
- **HIV Prevention:** ILGA-Europe co-coordinated the pre-meeting "Leaving no one behind - developing effective responses to HIV among gay and bisexual men and trans people in countries with difficult contexts" with UNAIDS, EATG, and AAE, and participated in the European PrEP Summit in Warsaw. We also continue to actively participate in the EU Civil Society Forum on HIV, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis.
- **LGBTI equality in EU accession countries:** ILGA-Europe remained an active contributor to the EU enlargement annual consultation processes. This annual assessment of the accession countries' readiness to join the Union continues to be another key tool to move governments to take action concerning LGBTI equality. The process has propelled the prospective Member States to develop their anti-discrimination legislation and equality action plans –

but implementation continues to be a key concern, raised by ILGA-Europe and our members alike in our assessment reports, prepared as part of the process.

We see it as one of ILGA-Europe's key roles to facilitate the participation of LGBTI activists in European policy-making. In all the work we do with the EU and CoE, we aim to involve individuals and groups and support them in making their voices heard by European policy-makers. Here are only a few examples of how ILGA-Europe connects activists to policy-makers: a study visit to the EU for LGBTI activists from non-EU countries on these EU mechanisms to address LGBTI human rights issues; facilitating invitation of under-represented groups to speak at EU Parliament events; an exchange of views for activists from AfroRainbow Austria, Intersex Russia, and Transgender Northern Ireland with the office of the Human Rights Commissioner at the Council of Europe.

While most of our advocacy work this year has focused on European/regional level, ILGA-Europe continued to support national advocacy and peer learning among LGBTI organisations where it could make a difference in accelerating legal change. For example, we organised a two-day meeting for activists and lawyers from Western Balkans Countries to facilitate peer learning and exchange around advocacy and litigation strategies for same-sex partnership legislation and to strengthen cooperation across the region. We supported German organisations in their advocacy with the German government on the reform of the legal gender recognition legislation by writing to two letters to the responsible minister and a meeting in person in Brussels with the Minister for Families. Beyond Europe, we coordinated the Brussels leg of a study visit for Irantí (a South African trans and intersex advocacy organisation) on existing laws and policies on trans and intersex in Europe.



## PATHWAY 4 – Deeply-rooted social acceptance and inclusion of diversity related to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics in societies

The fourth pathway towards achieving our vision is: “Deeply-rooted social acceptance and inclusion of diversity related to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics in societies”. Over the past year, our attention has focused largely on the role of opinion leaders – especially politicians, faith leaders and media – in shaping the public discourse around LGBTI rights, as well as to the importance of visibility and participation of LGBTI people, in all their diversity, in the public sphere. We also looked at the contribution which allies – whether from civil society or private sector – can make to greater social acceptance and inclusion.

### Identifying trends and sharing knowledge

ILGA-Europe has a clear role to play in identifying trends in public discourses and narratives around LGBTI people and SOGIESC issues in the region. In 2019, through our Creating Opportunities programme, much of this work focused on developing effective responses to negative messages spread by the anti-gender movement and sharing this knowledge to strengthen the capacity of LGBTI groups. We did this through our three-day workshop for activists on responding to the anti-gender groups and provided grants to test narratives and frames in four countries. We offered webinars on narrative development to respond to the anti-gender rhetoric, and on how to frame the discourse around LGBTI issues and faith, in response to the anti-gender rhetoric. We also provided capacity building on campaigning and messaging for groups working on raising awareness of anti-LGBT hate crime in some countries.

We got to work on amplifying positive messages too! One of our webinars looked at campaigning and message framing for intersex rights, sharing some of the effective messaging used by intersex activists to build support. We also facilitated good practices exchange on using elections to make LGBTI people heard through another series of webinars organised

ahead of the EU elections, which looked at creative tools and ideas to give visibility to LGBTI issues around elections, alliance-building in campaigning, and mobilising the LGBTI communities around elections.

### Prides

Beyond being a test of a country’s commitment to freedom of assembly and expression, prides are first and foremost a vibrant and visible celebration of LGBTI identities, communities, diversity and individuality that is vital. This is why ILGA-Europe continues to lend support to LGBTI activists and pride organisers, keeping in mind where we can play a complementary role to the many other groups who do great work around prides. One of our key contributions takes the form of holding governments accountable and helping build political support. For example, in the past year, we wrote to Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Prime Minister, relevant ministers and the chief of police, calling on them to ensure effective support for the first Sarajevo Pride. Similarly, we reached out to Georgian authorities ahead of Tbilisi Pride to urge them to respect the right to freedom of assembly of LGBTI activists and to ensure adequate protection. We raised awareness on the women’s march in Bishkek, Krygyzstan, which was nearly banned by Bishkek Mayor’s Office because the organisers of the march – Bishkek Feminist Initiative – had included LBQT women and related slogans. Where we can, we also show our support by being present, as we were this year in first-ever Pride in Sarajevo, at Vilnius and in Vienna for Europride, and through sending messages of support to the organisers of Middle East Technical University (METU) Pride and Istanbul Pride in Turkey.

### Engaging the private sector

Creating broader and deeper social change in society requires the contribution of many different actors, such as health professionals, educators, employers etc. Over the past year, the ILGA-Europe team continued its conversation on engagement with the private sector, both on ensuring equality in the workplace and on the role of corporate actors in bringing political and social change. In the past year, we have been invited by companies and their LGBTI networks to educate staff on LGBTI rights in Europe and Central Asia, and



have used these opportunities to encourage them to play a more significant role in setting LGBTI-inclusive standards and facilitating sharing of good practices in their respective sectors.

We have also been creating spaces – as we will at the Prague conference – to discuss the role of the private sector in advancing equality: how do we hold businesses accountable? How do we best build genuine partnerships between civil society and the private sector? With the number of private sector actors reaching out to ILGA-Europe growing rapidly, we will engage more significantly with other LGBTI organisations in Europe and beyond in the coming year to explore how this work can be better coordinated and how we make the best use of the existing expertise that exists within the LGBTI movement. In the coming year, ILGA-Europe plans to re-engage with trade unions which have a crucial role to play in holding employers accountable when it comes to ensuring safe, fair and inclusive workplaces.

We've worked with LGBTI staff networks in both public and private sectors, creating spaces for them to share the experience of how to both foster LGBTI-inclusive workplaces internally and support change externally in societies, in partnerships with civil society. Examples of this were a dedicated workshop on the role of staff networks attended by UPS, Google, EU institutions and Belgian railway companies; and a joint workshop on business and civil society dialogue, with participation from Accenture, ING and Grindr. We've spoken at the Trainbow Europe conference for LGBTI rail workers in Europe and were invited to contribute to an IDAHOT event at DG HR on the topic of LGBTI networks.

Throughout the year we have engaged with Open@Work (a network of LGBTI staff networks of Brussels based companies). We have also, on an ad hoc basis, supported trade unions with LGBTI policy. We've seen growing interest within European trade union umbrellas to engage with LGBTI topics. UNISON from the UK contributed to a workshop on the topic of pink-washing, sharing their experience of ethical procurement from an LGBTI rights perspective.

## PATHWAY 5 – Fair, just and equal societies and economies

Our fifth and final pathway towards achieving our vision is that LGBTI people live in "Fair, just and equal societies and economies". In essence, this pathway is about recognising that the struggle for LGBTI equality is interconnected with the struggles for human rights more broadly, as well as social justice and climate justice. If we are to ensure that "no one is left behind", we have to start working more at combating structural inequalities and social exclusion – especially those rooted in gender, race, socio-economic status, nationality and ability.

To do this, we still need to get a much better understanding about how socio-economic status, gender, race, ability and other intersecting factors affect LGBTI people's access to rights, services, resources and participation. While we have embarked on this journey a few years ago, there is a lot to do in terms of learning and awareness-raising within ILGA-Europe. Over the past year, we have zoomed in on the intersection of SOGIESC and disability, as well as socio-economic status. This learning is happening through stronger dialogue with other movements, as well as through deeper engagement with LGBTI people from under-represented groups.

### LGBTI and disability

Strengthened cooperation with the European Disability Forum (EDF) over the past year has enabled ILGA-Europe to move the conversation around disability along. Following a very rich meeting that brought our two teams together – during which we got to know each other and each other's issues a bit better – we identified more ways to work together. Through closer and more regular exchange, we are identifying common structural inequalities, on which we would benefit in joining forces. On a more practical level, our colleagues from EDF helped us in revising our accessibility policy for events and having another look at our communication tools. They also provided very valuable support in thinking and planning our upcoming gathering for LGBTI disabled people (see Pathway 1). We expect to do more mutual learning and joint work in the coming year.



## LGBTI and homelessness

Learning about LGBTI homelessness is moving forward thanks to our very good partnerships with the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) and True Colors (a US-based NGO working on youth homelessness). As part of this cooperation, we supported the participation of one activist from Ljubljana Pride organisation at the FEANTSA annual conference, who also joined the pre-conference training with homeless service providers and LGBTIQ leaders. We are already starting to bring back the knowledge to broader audiences – in addition to a webinar organised in September, representatives from FEANTSA, Ljubljana Pride Organisation and True Colors will facilitate a workshop at the Conference in Prague.

ILGA-Europe is also a partner to FEANTSA's Study Session on 'Building Bridges: How the LGBTIQ & Homeless Sector can work together', which will take place in Budapest in November 2019. Our partnership with True Colors should lead to a survey to map the work going on around LGBTI homelessness in Europe, which we would contribute to by supporting dissemination and outreach. This work is rapidly strengthening our alliances with NGOs active on issues homelessness, and increasing our knowledge around LGBTI homelessness.

## Building knowledge and understanding

There is much work to do within ILGA-Europe and the LGBTI movement over the coming years, a lot more knowledge and understanding to build about different intersecting and structural forms of inequalities that exist in our societies, which we too often replicate in our movement and our organisations. This is especially true around race and ethnicity, and socio-economic inequalities.

While we have these crucial conversations within our movement, we must also bring them to public and political spaces. ILGA-Europe is doing this where possible, for example, by successfully advocating for the inclusion of questions around homelessness in the second European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) EU LGBTI survey, by making sure that FEANTSA was part of an EU event on exchange of good practices on intersectionality, by working to bring different EU Parliament intergroups together to explore intersectional

issues, and by using our social media to share EU election campaigns on the right of persons with disabilities to have access to vote.

One of the most visible and encouraging signs of this alliance-building took place at Belgian Pride in Brussels on 18 May this year, when our colleagues from EDF joined ILGA-Europe on the parade. It was a wonderful moment that pointed towards a positive and inclusive future where the intersectional needs and rights of every member of our LGBTI communities can be respected and represented.



# Organisational Update

The expectations faced by ILGA-Europe continue to grow, especially as the LGBTI movement in our region encounters increasingly complex challenges. It is essential that ILGA-Europe as an organisation has the necessary capacity, resources and tools to carry out the work which is needed, while meeting our commitments to all stakeholders – especially our members – to the highest possible standards.

One crucial activity in this respect is ILGA-Europe's own fundraising to expand our donor and funding base. This work is essential to increase our ability to remain flexible in responding to emerging needs, as well as to meet our own co-funding requirements.

## The 5th European Equality Gala

After a small make-over, moving away from a more formal concept to a summer party theme, our annual flagship gala event in Brussels made a record profit this year. We improved diversity and inclusion thanks to a few initiatives, including two MEPs sponsoring tickets for activists and LBT(&ally) women, and we also chose a social enterprise for the catering. All changes received very positive feedback from guests and sponsors. The new formula is therefore not only moving towards a more sustainable profit-making model, but it is also aligning the event more closely with our values as an organisation.

## New partnerships

Over the past year, we built new partnerships with private sector actors. In July, ILGA-Europe's partnership with Revolut, a leading digital bank, was launched. We became one of Revolut's three pilot charitable partners, alongside the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) and Save the Children. Revolut's donations feature allows users to round-up their card payments and donate the difference, set up regular donations or make one-off donations to ILGA-Europe. As of early October, this partnership had raised €20,000.

We also received donations from other companies (sneaker brands Axel Arigato and RENS Original) in celebration of Pride, while Google, Diageo, visit.brussels and the Brussels Capital Region, among others, supported our Equality Gala.

## Community donations

Amidst all this positive growth in support from new sectors, it is particularly meaningful to note that the overall amount of donations from the community is also steadily increasing. We almost doubled the number of regular donors, recruited particularly through digital campaigns and at the Gala. Since launching Facebook fundraising tools for ILGA-Europe last year, as of early October, we have raised more than €4,000 through Facebook and Instagram, with a growing number of supporters setting up birthday fundraisers for us, inviting family and friends to contribute.

Every year there are more and more community fundraising initiatives and events, for example, a now annual fundraising party organised by students at Kellogg College at the University of Oxford. All of these efforts continue to require time and energy. The team, therefore, continues to evaluate how this work is done so we have the most impact while remaining in line with our core principles.

## Resourcing the movement

ILGA-Europe have access to pools of funding that come with complex requirements and restrictions, and to LGBTI groups and organisations on the ground who don't have sufficient capacity to apply for these difficult streams of funding. This makes ILGA-Europe uniquely placed to act as an intermediary. Throughout the past few years, the amount of funds ILGA-Europe has re-granted to the movement has been gradually increasing, reaching €600,000 in 2018 and almost €400,000 in the first six months of 2019.

With this area of work becoming more prominent, we have been strengthening our internal processes around the awarding of grants, supporting groups and organisations in project implementation and management, and ensuring high standards of accountability. At the same time, we strive to be a flexible funder that understands the realities of managing funds throughout Europe and Central Asia.

In 2019 we focused largely on creating systems for mapping the financial management learning needs of grantees and developing tools to ease their grant management and reporting. Large efforts were put into ensuring our funding is as clear and accessible as possible for groups who have limited resources. We hosted several targeted trainings and webinars around managing money in the movement and fundraising for organisational needs.



## **Staff team**

There is no doubt that one of ILGA-Europe's greatest assets is our staff team. Where possible, we strengthen the team by bringing new people on board; this year we created a new position in finance and administration team and opened a new fellowship on litigation, bringing us to a team of 22 people. Ensuring the sustainability of the team, especially in terms of well-being and workload, is of the utmost importance. This is why ILGA-Europe continues to invest time and resources in assessing where our current structures and work practices can be improved, to ensure that ILGA-Europe is fit-for-purpose and that the organisation is a healthy, inclusive and sustainable workplace.



