

# EURO-LETTER

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[www.ilga-europe.org/europe/publications/euro\\_letter](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/publications/euro_letter)

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- **Pantelis Ravdas** – for the Greek translations.

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.



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## ILGA-EUROPE:

### Staff news: ILGA-Europe has new Programmes and Policy Officers

**Aija Salo** works at ILGA-Europe as a **Programmes & Policy Officer** in the programmes service area. Her responsibilities include coordinating ILGA-Europe's participation in several projects in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, monitoring and bringing forward LGBT issues in the context of the accession of new countries to the European Union and influencing the Council of Europe and the OSCE in human rights issues. She also has tasks related to ILGA-Europe's Human Rights Violations Documentation Fund.



#### Background:

Aija is a long-term activist in the Finnish LGBT and feminist scene. To work for ILGA-Europe she has a leave of absence from the national LGBT organisation of Finland, Seta, where she is employed as the secretary general. She has a good knowledge of transgender issues based on cooperation with the Transgender Support Center of Seta. Earlier on she has worked inter alia as the secretary general for the League of Finnish Feminists (Naisasialiitto Unioni) and as an evaluator in the umbrella organization of Finnish development cooperation NGOs KEPA. She has also participated in a development project in rural Sudan involving women's empowerment and family planning issues.

Aija is a member of the national board of the European year of equal opportunities for all in Finland. She has a strong commitment to combat multiple discrimination. She has been promoting the visibility of the indigenous people of Finland, the Sami, as well as cooperating with many disability organisations. Aija is especially interested in the wellbeing of LGBT youth and she has addressed this issue in the Finnish umbrella organisation for youth work, Allianssi, and in the Union of Student Unions in Finland.

Aija is well informed on LGBT perspectives to the employment market. She participated in Finland in the Equal research project Sexual minorities and trans people in working life. The educational background of Aija is in the University of Helsinki in sociology, political science, development studies and gender studies. She is currently working on a master's thesis on sociology on the wellbeing of working-class lesbian and bisexual women at work.

Aija comes from Finland, from Helsinki, and is Finnish-speaking. She started working with ILGA-Europe on the 1st of August 2007.

**Silvan Agius, Policy Officer.** Silvan is responsible for the areas of employment, pension and social benefits, the family, demographic changes and multiple discrimination. He also contributes towards ILGA-Europe's policy regarding transgender persons.

### **Background**

Silvan has been a social activist since a young age with various social, environmental and human rights organisations including Moviment Graffiti, Greenpeace Mediterranean, Front Kontra l-Golf Kors, The Arts Collective and Malta Gay Rights Movement. In 2003, he also contested the local and general elections with Alternattiva Demokratika - The Green Party.

During 2004-7, he has served as Principal at the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, taking care of the development and implementation of various EU co-funded projects, and the area of policy and development.

Silvan is a graduate in Anthropology and holds a Masters in human rights and democratisation. During 2006 he also followed a Summer Course in Sexual Orientation Law at the University of Amsterdam where he was awarded two CALI Excellence for the Future Awards. He is an avid believer in the promotion of international human rights and works hard for the attainment of substantive equality for all.

Silvan comes from Malta and started working with ILGA-Europe on 20 August 2007.



## Strategic Plan for ILGA-Europe 2008-2011

*by Patricia Prendiville, Executive Director of ILGA-Europe, 10 August 2007*

Paper 2 of the Strategic Planning Process for ILGA-Europe is now available at our website: [http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/news/strategic\\_plan\\_for\\_ilga\\_europe\\_2008\\_2011](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/news/strategic_plan_for_ilga_europe_2008_2011)

This brings together the data from the first phase of the consultation and the discussions during the Consultation Meeting held in Budapest on 7th July, 2007.

As indicated earlier you are welcome to make comments on this Paper 2 **until 9th September** so that the final document presented for conference voting can be fully inclusive of all your points of view. Please do keep in mind that the document for voting on will be a broad outline of the strategic objectives and will not contain actions details.

In the 3rd mailing we will send out a document that describes the kind of objectives we will have under each of the strategic objectives, and we will also be including a glossary of terms so that this key document is fully understood.

I look forward to seeing you all in Vilnius, and welcome any feedback/comments you have on this Paper 2 until 9th September, but the earlier you can send them to me the better!

With many thanks to all you have contributed so much to this process.

## Make sure your voices are heard....

by Evelyne Paradis, ILGA-Europe Policy Officer

### 1- ..... in the Commission consultation on anti-discrimination outside employment

Deadline: 15th of October, 2007

One of ILGA-Europe's ongoing demands at the European Union level in recent years has been the adoption of new European Union anti-discrimination legislation that would prohibit discrimination on all grounds, including sexual orientation, not only in employment, but in other areas of life, such as education, health care, social benefits, housing, and provision of goods and services.

The public consultation on new anti-discrimination measures launched by the European Commission in July is a key step in the process that may lead to the development of EU anti-discrimination legislation beyond the employment sector.

In this context, it is **very important that ILGA-Europe's members and supporters respond to this consultation** to send a strong message that:

- All people in the EU should have the same protection against discrimination on grounds of age, disability, religion and sexual orientation
- It is a problem that levels of protection against discrimination are not the same across the EU
- The best way to achieve equal protection is with a legislation banning discrimination on all grounds outside employment (such as in education, social services, etc.).

#### What you can do?

##### ◆ Responding to the consultation on new anti-discrimination measures

The questionnaire of the consultation is very easy to answer; it should take you about 10 minutes to complete it. The consultation is available online in English at

[http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm).

##### ◆ Sending us information on discrimination outside employment

ILGA-Europe also plans to submit its own written contribution to the Commission. In order to help us develop this response, we need information from you such as **legal cases, individual/personal stories, reports or research** on discrimination based on sexual orientation in education (schools and training institutions), access to social services, health care, access to goods (e.g. shops, restaurants, discos, etc.), access to housing (buying or renting housing).

Thank you for sending any information you may have by **September 5, 2007** to Evelyne at [evelyne@ilga-europe.org](mailto:evelyne@ilga-europe.org).

**...in the Commission consultation on the future of Europe's schools!**

**Deadline: 15th of October**

In July, the European Commission also launched a public consultation on the future of Europe's schools with the objective of identifying areas where joint actions at European level could add-value to Member States efforts.

This consultation offers an opportunity to raise many issues of relevance to LGBT youth, including school curriculum, the role of teachers, problems of early school leaving, exclusion and bullying at school, diversity policies and training of school staff, etc. For more information, read the consultation document available at [http://ec.europa.eu/education/school21/consultdoc\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/school21/consultdoc_en.pdf)

**What you can do?**

◆ **Responding to the consultation on the future of schools**

If your organisation has been working on education and/or on LGBT youth issues – whether it is in the context of projects, research or policy work – we encourage you to submit your own contribution to the Commission consultation. Do not feel compelled to answer all the questions posed in the consultation paper. It is alright to answer only those questions to which you want to respond or for which you feel you have something to say.

Responses need to be sent to [eac-schools-consult@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eac-schools-consult@ec.europa.eu), no later than 15 October 2007.

◆ **Sending us information on discrimination outside employment**

ILGA-Europe also plans to submit a written contribution to the Commission on this consultation, in cooperation with IGLYO. In order to help us develop our response, we welcome information about reports, research, projects, examples of good practices related to education.

Thank you for sending any information you may have by **September 15, 2007** to Evelyne at [evelyne@ilga-europe.org](mailto:evelyne@ilga-europe.org).

## Fundamental Rights Agency

by Christine Loudes, ILGA-Europe Policy Director

- **Study on homophobia in the EU**

On request of the European parliament, the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) will prepare a report on homophobia in Europe and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in accessing goods and services. A preliminary meeting was held on July, 5 2007 in the office of the FRA with representatives from the Council of Europe, the OSCE, national human rights institutions, NGOs, lawyers and academics. Notes from the meeting can be found on ILGA-Europe website: [http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/advocacy\\_lobbying/fundamental\\_rights\\_agency/fundamental\\_rights\\_agency\\_hosts\\_meeting\\_on\\_homophobia/report\\_from\\_fra\\_meeting\\_on\\_homophobia](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/advocacy_lobbying/fundamental_rights_agency/fundamental_rights_agency_hosts_meeting_on_homophobia/report_from_fra_meeting_on_homophobia) .

This study is an important step in collecting data on homophobia and discrimination of LGBT people in the EU. It will focus on collecting existing material in 27 EU countries and provide information for the European parliament in relation to extending protection against discrimination in goods and services.

Any information, research or good practices at national level on areas of education, health, housing, combating hate crime are particularly relevant. Please send information to Christine:

[christine@ilga-europe.org](mailto:christine@ilga-europe.org)

- **Call for tender**

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights published a new open call for tender for the provision of reports and studies on legal issues concerning the promotion and protection of fundamental rights in the European Union.

The FRA is looking for a team of experts in each member states of the EU (27) and one team of experts on the EU with the qualification of lawyers and academics. **Closing date for the call is the 10th September 2007.**

The duration of the contract is 4 years.

For further information and the documents related to this call please consult <http://fra.europa.eu> or the Official Journal S 144/2007 available at

<http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:178109-2007:TEXT:EN:HTML>

Title: AT-Vienna: provision of reports and studies on legal issues concerning the promotion and protection of fundamental rights in the European Union

Document reference: 178109-2007

URL: <http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:178109-2007:TEXT:EN:HTML>



## Collection of good practices on dealing with hate crimes targeting LGBT people

*by Christine Loudes, ILGA-Europe Policy Director*

ILGA-Europe is in the process of publishing a handbook on recording violence against LGBT people which will be available at the end of 2007. Part of the handbook will present good practices on working with victims of hate crime, working with the police or any initiatives to reduce hate crime. If you know of good practices and want to promote them, please send a description of the projects and links to website to Christine:

[christine@ilga-europe.org](mailto:christine@ilga-europe.org). Thank you in advance for your contributions!

## ILGA-Europe makes submission to the Council of Europe on the needs to recognise LGBT Human Rights Defenders

*by Nigel Warner, ILGA-Europe adviser on the Council of Europe*

The Council of Europe is considering what steps it can take to support human rights defenders. It is likely that the Committee of Ministers (which consists of the foreign ministers of the 47 member states) will make a Declaration on the need of governments and others to support human rights defenders.

ILGA-Europe has made a submission documenting the extensive problems faced by many LGBT human rights defenders in some countries and urging that the Committee of Ministers specifically recognize the need to support them in the Declaration.

The submission documents the climate of intolerance faced in many countries, the homophobic speech, violence, and other denial of rights (freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression) which LGBT human rights defenders experience, and the failure in some countries of the courts, police and ombudspersons to support them.

It concludes that that the Committee of Ministers, by explicitly supporting LGBT human rights defenders in their Declaration, thus emphasising their legitimacy and bringing visibility to the problems they face, can do much to support them.

ILGA-Europe's submission to the Council of Europe is published at: [www.ilga-europe.org/europe/notice\\_board/resources/the\\_need\\_for\\_inclusion\\_of\\_specific\\_reference\\_to\\_lesbian\\_gay\\_bisexual\\_and\\_transgender\\_human\\_rights\\_defenders\\_in\\_the\\_proposed\\_declaration\\_on\\_human\\_rights\\_defenders\\_by\\_the\\_committee\\_of\\_ministers](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/notice_board/resources/the_need_for_inclusion_of_specific_reference_to_lesbian_gay_bisexual_and_transgender_human_rights_defenders_in_the_proposed_declaration_on_human_rights_defenders_by_the_committee_of_ministers)

## **ILGA-Europe makes submission to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on Suicidality among LGBT youth**

*by Nigel Warner, ILGA-Europe adviser on the Council of Europe*

The Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is preparing a report on child and teenage suicide.

ILGA-Europe has submitted a report to the Committee drawing attention to the need for governments to take action to address the factors which result in a relatively high degree of suicidality among LGBT youth.

The report builds on earlier research by IGLYO and ILGA-Europe published in a document, "Social exclusion of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Europe". It draws attention to the extensive evidence of above average suicidality among LGBT youth, and to the finding that this phenomenon is a consequence of the marginalisation, stigmatisation and discrimination which they face.

It demonstrates that, where governments, schools etc have taken steps to counter these factors, significant improvements in the well-being of young LGBT people can be achieved.

The report concludes that the measures needed to bring about these improvements are well understood, and that the main barriers to their implementation are likely to be lack of information or misinformation, and in some instances, opposition from the social forces and institutions whose hostility to LGBT people contributes to the environment which jeopardises and excludes LGBT youth in the first place. It concludes with a list of detailed recommendations addressed to governments.

The report is available at [www.ilga-europe.org/europe/notice\\_board/resources/suicidality\\_among\\_lesbian\\_gay\\_bisexual\\_and\\_transgender\\_youth](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/notice_board/resources/suicidality_among_lesbian_gay_bisexual_and_transgender_youth)

## PRECIS proceeds

*by Aija Salo, ILGA-Europe Programmes & Policy Officer*

ILGA-Europe is a partner in the five-year project "Prevention and Empowerment in the Newly Independent States (NIS)" (PRECIS), coordinated by COC Netherlands. The overall project goal is to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS and other STIs among LGBT communities via capacity building of LGBT organisations in the NIS. Partners in the PRECIS are LGBT organisations in the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. ILGA-Europe is responsible for the implementation of the PRECIS' advocacy component.

The partner organisations of PRECIS gathered in Amsterdam for the first days of August to a project task force meeting to review the progress during the second project year and to plan further activities. On the agenda were among others the implementation of a gender sensitive approach within the project, encouraging the activities of local LGBT initiative groups attached to the project and discussing how to produce and use an ethical code of conduct within LGBT organisations.

On August 2nd an open symposium was held to present the situation and work of LGBT organisations in Eastern Europe. Boris from the information center GenderDoc-M in Moldova, Anna from Labrys in Kyrgyzstan and Kamran from Gender and development in Azerbaijan described their experiences and the challenges they face as LGBT activists in their countries in the Post-Soviet time. The symposium was attended by an engaged audience. The project partners' representatives received even media attention during the week, inter alia a broadcast on Dutch national television.

The project task force meeting ended in the Amsterdam Canal Pride on August 4th. COC Netherlands had several boats in the parade. One of them was an international boat involving the PRECIS partners. Waving among others the flags of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the PRECIS activists enjoyed a sunny day of pride in a welcoming Amsterdam.

# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

## Upcoming funding opportunity in the area of Justice, Freedom and Citizenship

*by Christine Loudes, ILGA-Europe Policy Director*

The new Programme Fundamental Rights and Citizenship in the DG Justice, Freedom and Security (DG JLS) of the European Commission will be implemented this year for the first time. Its general objectives include promotion of the development of a European society based on respect for Fundamental Rights and rights derived from citizenship of the Union and strengthening civil society and to encourage an open, transparent and regular dialogue with it in respect of fundamental rights as well as fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. It could also cover projects such as dealing with homophobic hate crime or collection of data on violation of fundamental rights of LGBT people in the EU.

Civil society will be invited to submit applications for the financing of projects as defined in the annual work programmes. The application should cover projects of min. 75.000-100.000 euros and the Community funding will cover up to 70% of total costs; any project funded should imply at least 2 different EU member states (candidate countries are included).

The call for proposals will be published in September based on the annual work programme at the JLS website

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/funding/rights/funding\\_rights\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/rights/funding_rights_en.htm)

the time frame for tendering will be very limited so we advise you to look for projects and partners already. You can post call for partners on the notice board of ILGA-Europe's website.

For more information, contact Christine: [christine@ilga-europe.org](mailto:christine@ilga-europe.org)

# FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY:

## ILGA-Europe updates Diary of events: county-by-country

*by Nigel Warner, ILGA-Europe adviser on the Council of Europe*

ILGA-Europe has published an update of its document - "Freedom Assembly - Diary of Events by Country". This sets out, for each of 11 European countries where there have been problems with LGBT people exercising the right to freedom of assembly, a detailed history of events from 2000 onwards. It also includes a summary listing 12 key types of event (pride marches banned, violence against demonstrators, failure by the police to protect demonstrators, failure by courts to uphold freedom of assembly, etc). This permits a rapid understanding of the kind of problems faced by pride organisers, and also some of the positive developments that have taken place.

The document starts with an overview of events, summarising developments each year. From this a number of conclusions are reached:

- In most countries involved, particularly those in the EU, a fairly rapid progress towards recognising the right of the LGBT community to freedom of assembly is possible. This progress results from a combination of determined advocacy at national level, international support, particularly from European parliamentarians and institutions, and support by the courts.
- Attempts to establish the right to freedom of assembly in a particular country for the first time are almost invariably opposed by city authorities. As there are still many countries in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe where there have been no Pride events, national and international campaigns to support LGBT freedom of assembly are likely to continue for many years.
- Where LGBT marches are permitted, where politicians and faith leaders avoid inflammatory language, and where the police provide proper protection, violent opposition ceases, or is much reduced, thus demonstrating that the public order arguments used by some authorities in justifying the banning of marches is not generally valid.
- However, even in cities where a good track record of peaceful events has been established, a recurrence of violence cannot be ruled out, underlining the need for continual vigilance by organisers, city authorities and the police.

The report will be used, amongst other things, as input to the Legal Affairs and Human Rights Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which is preparing a report on LGBT freedom of assembly.

The Diary of Events can be found at: [www.ilga-europe.org/media\\_library/lgbt\\_rights\\_freedom\\_of\\_assembly\\_diary\\_of\\_events\\_by\\_country\\_august\\_2007](http://www.ilga-europe.org/media_library/lgbt_rights_freedom_of_assembly_diary_of_events_by_country_august_2007)

## Faroe Pride successful

*Source: media release by ANSO, Association of Nordic LGBT Student Organisations, 20 August 2007*

A very successful Faroe Pride is now over. Tórshavn was dressed in rainbow colours during last weekend, from Friday to Sunday, and the biggest event was a parade on Saturday. 130 people marched under the slogan Does love have gender from the Nordic house to Tórshavn's main square, Vaglið, where 200 more joined for a program of speeches and music.

We are very happy with the turnout for the parade, keeping in mind that only around 19.000 people live in Tórshavn and 48.000 in the whole Faroe Islands. I hope that next year even more will join us, says Tina Jakobsen.

Finnur Helmsdal, parliamentarian in the Faroese Løgting, said in his speech at Vaglið that registered partnership should be legalised rather today than tomorrow in the Faroes. He also thanked ANSO for making the first pride in 2005 possible, since that event really started a discussion in Faroese society, which for example led to the addition of sexual orientation into the anti-discrimination paragraph in the penal code last December.

In a small community like this, the LGBT movement needs allies. I hope that we have been able to show that LGBT issues have to do with all of us. I also hope that by bringing representatives together from various Nordic student organizations, we have created an alliance that hopefully will play an important role when it comes to supporting human rights during upcoming years in the Faroe Islands, concludes Ásta Ósk Hlööversdóttir, president of ANSO.

## SAME-SEX FAMILIES:

### New "Litigation in European Courts" section added to ILGA-Europe's website

by Prof. Robert Wintemute

[http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/litigation\\_in\\_the\\_european\\_courts](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/litigation_in_the_european_courts)

This section contains "written comments" about developments in international and comparative human rights law that ILGA-Europe has submitted (alone or with other non-governmental organisations) to the European Court of Human Rights since 2000, as well as ILGA-Europe's recent oral observations in a case before the European Court of Justice.

ILGA-Europe member organisations are encouraged to cite these developments in debates at the national level, whether in the national parliament, a government department, a city council, the supreme court or any lower court.

(1) For the latest developments with regard to legal recognition of same-sex couples, see the SCHALK & KOPF v. Austria written comments (26 June 2007) (European Court of Human Rights), and the MARUKO oral observations (19 June 2007) (European Court of Justice).

(2) For the latest developments with regard to adoption of children by lesbian and gay individuals or same-sex couples, see the E.B. v. France written comments (3 June 2005) (European Court of Human Rights). The following is a partial update to these written comments:

- **Spain** now permits joint or second-parent adoption by married (and presumably also unmarried) same-sex couples: Ley 13/2005, de 1 de julio, por la que se modifica el Código Civil en materia de derecho a contraer matrimonio, *Boletín Oficial del Estado* no. 157, 2 July 2005, pp. 23632-23634, <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2005-07-02/pdfs/A23632-23634.pdf> (in force 3 July 2005).

- **Belgium** now permits joint or second-parent adoption by married (and presumably also unmarried) same-sex couples: Loi du 18 mai 2006 modifiant certaines dispositions du Code civil en vue de permettre l'adoption par des personnes de même, *Moniteur belge*, 20 June 2006, Edition 2, p. 31128 (in force 30 November 2006).

- **Iceland** now permits joint or second-parent adoption by registered same-sex couples: Law No. 65/2006 (in force 27 June 2006), amending Law No. 130/1999, art. 2.

- **Scotland** now permits joint or second-parent adoption by registered or unregistered same-sex couples: Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007, s. 29(3) (a similar reform was adopted in England and Wales in

2002, and has been proposed for **Northern Ireland**, see "Adopting the Future", [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/adopting\\_the\\_future-3.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/adopting_the_future-3.pdf), June 2006).

This means that, in 2007, there are already 9 European countries that permit at least the adoption of a child by the same-sex partner of its birth parent (second-parent adoption), if not also joint adoption by a same-sex couple of a child who is related to neither partner: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Scotland).

- **Ireland** has not yet opened up joint or second-parent adoption to same-sex couples, but the Attorney General has confirmed that adoption by an unmarried individual is open to unmarried individuals who are lesbian or gay: <http://www.citizensinformation.ie> (Search: "adoption and same-sex couples").



## EMPLOYMENT, GOODS & SERVICES

### **Romania: The first legal case won based on sexual orientation discrimination regarding access to public services.**

*Source: ACCEPT media release, 24 July 2007*

This month of the year 2007, district 4 Court of Law of Bucharest decided in favour of a citizen who accused SC Distrigaz Sud SA of discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation when he required the company services. The Court decided that SC Distrigaz Sud SA will have to pay the accused moral prejudice in total of 1000 Euro. The verdict is not final; SC Distrigaz Sud SA can challenge it in the Court of Law.

ACCEPT Association (non-governmental organization that defends and promotes the rights of LGBT - lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders – as human rights) supports the decision given by the Court in this case: „This solution gives us faith that the anti discrimination legislation can work in Romania, including in the Courts of Law, it offers solutions to those who are discriminated when they interact with important companies, public or private.”, the opinion of Florentina Bocioc, the Executive Director of ACCEPT Association.

We hope that this verdict will be read by the SC Distrigaz Sud SA representatives, but also by other institutions and companies, and is representing a sign to introduce specific non-discrimination policies in the internal regulations and procedures regarding the access to goods and services based on any criteria, including the sexual orientation criteria.

## **UK: Stonewall and the General Medical Council join forces to combat health care concerns of lesbian, gay and bisexual people**

*Source: Stonewall media release, 25 July 2007*

Stonewall and the General Medical Council (GMC) have joined forces to help combat concerns that some doctors are not responding properly to the health needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people.

Research conducted by Stonewall during the consultation for the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007, highlighted some of the problems faced by LGB people when trying to access services from doctors. These included:

Failure either to examine or to respond to a patient properly, for example doctors that have not been willing to offer a smear test to lesbians

Doctors refusing to accept someone as a patient because of their sexuality

Doctors that have made offensive or discriminatory comments about LGB people and their sexuality

As a response to these concerns, an information leaflet has been produced which aims to inform LGB people of their right to complain if they feel they have been discriminated against by their doctor, and offers guidance on how they should go about this. The leaflet is the first the GMC has published for a specific group of patients.

Doctors wishing to practice medicine in the UK must be registered with the GMC, who already publish guidance for doctors to follow to ensure patients are not treated unfairly. Failure to follow this can put their registration at risk.

Ruth Hunt, Head of Policy & Research at Stonewall explains; "Stonewall is extremely pleased to be working with the GMC. We have heard from many men and women who have been treated differently by doctors just because of their sexual orientation. We hope this leaflet will reassure gay people that they can, and should, complain when they receive substandard care, and that their complaint will be taken seriously."

Dr Ed Borman, GMC council member, says: "The GMC wants to make sure that all patients can access appropriate healthcare without difficulties. We are working together with Stonewall to ensure that LGB patients do not encounter any barriers to their medical care. The GMC sets out the principles of good practise in our guidance to doctors *Good Medical Practice* and can take action where this guidance has not been followed."

## NOTICE BOARD:

### **UN OHCHR post addressing sexual-orientation related discrimination**

*by Scott Long, 3 August 2007*

The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has created and is advertising a Human Rights Officer position to address issues of discrimination, who will serve as a focal point on discrimination based on sexual orientation. The job posting, in the Women's Human Rights and Gender Unit, can be found at

[https://jobs.un.org/Galaxy/Release3/vacancy/Display\\_Vac.aspx?lang=1200&VACID=422011a9-5d0f-4dc3-8103-d3fc1465b0df](https://jobs.un.org/Galaxy/Release3/vacancy/Display_Vac.aspx?lang=1200&VACID=422011a9-5d0f-4dc3-8103-d3fc1465b0df)

This is a historic posting; applicants are obviously encouraged. **The deadline is September 24.**

### **Two job openings at Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice**

*by Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice*

Two positions are Director of Programs and Associate Director of Grantmaking.

All details are on ILGA-Europe website: [http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/news/two\\_job\\_openings\\_at\\_astraea\\_lesbian\\_foundation\\_for\\_justice](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/news/two_job_openings_at_astraea_lesbian_foundation_for_justice)