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**Editor:**

Juris Lavrikovs

**Contact us:**

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

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# ILGA-EUROPE:

## ILGA-Europe's campaign on new EU anti-discrimination directive

### ● Sign the petition, save the directive!

*by Evelyne Paradis, ILGA-Europe's Senior Policy Officer*

**The campaign to save a new anti-discrimination directive that would cover all the grounds (disability, age, religion/belief and sexual orientation) continues!**

On 17 April, MEP Liz Lynne launched a petition to call on the Commission and Member States to bring forward a comprehensive, inclusive anti-discrimination directive.

**Please sign this petition and circulate it widely!**

**We need everyone's support to make sure that this coming June, the Commission proposes an anti-discrimination legislation covering all the grounds, and not just on disability.**

The petition can be found here: [www.signtostopdiscrimination.org](http://www.signtostopdiscrimination.org)

**It takes 2-3 minutes to do and will help us in our efforts!**

**Below you will find our media release on stepping up the directive campaign:**

**Many thanks in advance for your ongoing support!**

### ● ILGA-Europe is stepping up its campaign to ensure that the ground of sexual orientation is included in new EU anti-discrimination directive

*Source: ILGA-Europe media release, 9 April 2008*

Within the next couple of months, the fate of an EU directive protecting against discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, sexual orientation and religion/belief in all areas of life will be decided by the European Commission and the European Council. At the moment, there are signs that this directive will not include sexual orientation, age and religion/belief. ILGA-Europe is calling on everyone to join its campaign to ensure that a comprehensive new EU anti-discrimination directive which protects against discrimination on all grounds and in all areas of life is proposed and adopted.

# ILGA-EUROPE:

For years ILGA-Europe and other European networks working against discrimination on the grounds of age, disability and religion/belief have been calling for a harmonised EU anti-discrimination legislation which would eliminate the hierarchy of rights and protections that currently exists in EU law:

- **race and ethnicity:** discrimination is banned in **all areas of life**
- **sex:** discrimination is banned in **employment** and in **access to goods and services**
- **sexual orientation, age, disability, religion** and **belief:** discrimination is banned only in **employment**.

In 2004, Mr Barroso, the President of the European Commission made a promise after the European Parliament dismissed the proposed Commission because of the questionable human rights records of Mr Buttiglione. He made a statement before the Parliament promising to personally ensure that the legal protections would be enlarged to all forms of discrimination. The European Parliament called for such a directive at least on seven occasions in the past 8 years.

Deborah Lambillotte, Co-Chair of ILGA-Europe Executive Board, said:

“We are concerned by indications that the project of one directive embracing all grounds of discrimination and applying to all areas of life might be abandoned by the Commission. We want to remind European decision-makers that the principles of human rights and equality are the basis upon which the current Commission was approved by the European Parliament four years ago. The Commission needs to live up to its promises, deliver such a directive and prove that the commitment made in 2004 were not just empty words.”

Martin K.I. Christensen, Co-Chair of ILGA-Europe Executive Board, continued:

“We encourage all our members in the European Union, all our allies and supporters to actively get involved in this campaign. Contact your Commissioner, talk to your government officials. Let them know that lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Europe still suffer from discrimination in education, healthcare, in accessing goods and services and that they need to be protected.

Discrimination is not just an abstract concept. Discrimination is an unfortunate lived reality for many people. Mobilise your members, colleagues, friends and relatives to send a clear demand to the Commission and to your government – the current EU hierarchy of protections against discrimination has to end now! Call on them to ensure that everyone in the EU is equally protected against discrimination.”

More information about the campaign for a new EU anti-discrimination legislation, including background documents, resources and information, advice and suggestion on what you can do to help this campaign, are available on our website: [www.ilga-](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/campaigns_projects/campaign_for_a_new_european_anti_discrimination_legislation)

[europe.org/europe/campaigns\\_projects/campaign\\_for\\_a\\_new\\_european\\_anti\\_discrimination\\_legislation](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/campaigns_projects/campaign_for_a_new_european_anti_discrimination_legislation)

## **Police raids ILGA-Europe members' and partners' premises**

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

On April 8th and 9th, police raided the premises of two ILGA-Europe partner organisations: of the lesbian and transgender women's organisation Labrys in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and of Lambdaistanbul in Turkey. In both cases people present were demanded to present their IDs, and the organisations were required to present all of their organizational documents. The police falsely accused both organisations of prostitution. In Kyrgyzstan, activists documented the event on video and cameras. There were also representatives of international NGOs present. The raids raised concerns from the civil society about the safety and integrity of human rights defenders.

Another breach of the freedom of association is still going on in Turkey: Lambdaistanbul had its fifth trial in a closure case raised by Turkish authorities against the organisation on April 17th. The procedure was once again postponed, this time to May 29th as the government assigned expert's report arrived too late. The Turkish activists are hopeful of that the next trial would put on end to the frustrating procedure of violating the freedom of association of LGBT people.

## ILGA-Europe is looking for a consultant

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

ILGA-Europe is looking for a consultant to compile a practical manual for grassroots advocacy work on the human rights of LGBT people in an East European and Central Asian context together with ILGA-Europe. The estimated amount of work for the consultant is 25-30 days. The gross payment is EUR 10 000.

The consultant must have a sufficient level of expertise and experience in the fields of

- advocacy and lobbying in relation to minority rights in a difficult setting
- international human rights protection mechanisms and intergovernmental institutions' mechanisms for protecting human rights of LGBT people
- NGO working methods and structures
- the cultural context of Eastern European and Central Asian countries
- English language (excellent knowledge)

It is recommendable to also have knowledge of

- diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression
- methods of capacity building
- human rights situation in Eastern European and Central Asian countries, including the human rights of LGBT people
- the Russian language

**Deadline for proposals is May 18th, 2008.** The manual should be ready for layout by the end of October 2008 so as to be ready for printing by the end of the year.

More information available at ILGA-Europe website:

[http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/about\\_us/job\\_opportunity](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/about_us/job_opportunity)

# EUROPE:

## Human Rights Commissioner Hammarberg speaks about homophobia and calls for greater protection against discrimination against LGBT people

*Source: Council of Europe*

On 17 April 2008, the ALDE political group at the European Parliament organised a conference on LGBT rights. Thomas Hammarberg, an active defender of human rights for LGBT people, delivered yet another powerful supportive video message.

“Since I took up the office, I have been quite horrified by the extent of homophobia in a number of countries in Europe”, said the Commissioner for Human Rights in a video message shown at a Conference organised by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (LGBT). The event is held today in the European Parliament in Brussels.

The Commissioner raised several concerns regarding the effective respect of LGBT persons’ rights, in particular to be protected from hate crimes and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. He also stressed the freedom of assembly when peaceful Gay Pride Marches are organised: they should not be obstructed by national and local authorities.

Thomas Hammarberg referred to widespread discrimination against LGBT persons and the need for comprehensive inclusive anti-discrimination legislation. “Regulations and laws should list all grounds for discrimination including sexual orientation which is not always the case”. Finally, the Commissioner stressed the importance of the Yogyakarta Principles, a worldwide lawyers’ initiative which analyses international human rights law through a LGBT persons’ prism, and their relevance for future respect for human rights for all.

You can watch full video message on the Commissioner's website:

[http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/default\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/default_EN.asp)

*Mr Hammarberg has confirmed his participation in ILGA-Europe's annual conference which this year takes place on 30 October – 2 November in Vienna.*



## Council of Europe

*by Nigel Warner, ILGA-Europe Council of Europe advisor*

There have been a number of important developments at the Council of Europe in recent months:

### A - Intergovernmental agreements

#### A.1 Revised European Convention on Adoption

The original Convention on Adoption, dating from 1967, limited adoption to married couples, or single persons. Article 6 read:

**1.** The law shall not permit a child to be adopted except by either two persons married to each other, whether they adopt simultaneously or successively, or by one person.

In March 2008 the Committee of Ministers approved a revised Convention which, for the first time possibly in any international agreement on adoption, recognises adoption by same-sex couples. While the Convention does not insist that parties to the Convention must permit adoption by same-sex couples, it allows those parties that wish to recognise same sex couples for this purpose to do so. I have not been able to locate the final text of the Convention at the Council of Europe website, but the following article comes from the draft reviewed by the Parliamentary Assembly, and I believe has not changed.

#### Article 7 - Conditions for adoption

**1.** The law shall permit a child to be adopted:

- a. by two persons of different sex
  - i. who are married to each other, or
  - ii. where such an institution exists, have entered into a registered partnership together;
- b. by one person.

**2.** States are free to extend the scope of this convention to same-sex couples who are married to each other or who have entered into a registered partnership together. They are also free to extend the scope of this convention to different-sex couples and same-sex couples who are living together in a stable relationship.

For the full text of this draft, see:

<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc07/EDOC11274.htm>

# EUROPE:

## **A.2 Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse**

The above Convention was opened for ratification in October 2007. Its article on non-discrimination makes specific reference to sexual orientation. I believe that this is the first international agreement outside of the European Union to include such a reference. The Article reads as follows:

### **Article 2 - Non-discrimination principle**

The implementation of the provisions of this Convention by the Parties, in particular the enjoyment of measures to protect the rights of victims, shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, sexual orientation, state of health, disability or other status.

The full text can be found at: <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/treaties/Html/201.htm>

## **B - Statements by Committee of Ministers**

In recent months the Committee of Ministers has made two important statements when replying to Written Questions from the Parliamentary Assembly on the denial of freedom of assembly rights to LGBT people in Russia and Lithuania. The full texts can be found at:

<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc08/EDOC11557.htm>

<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc08/EDOC11560.htm>

The importance of the replies goes beyond the Committee of Ministers reaffirmation of the right of LGBT people to freedom of assembly, in that they contain a commitment to taking positive action in support of LGBT rights:

The Committee of Ministers will "consider how to enhance Council of Europe action in this area, in order to achieve more synergy, co-ordination and substantial results and has instructed the relevant services of the Secretariat to make proposals to this effect."

This is the first occasion that the Committee of Ministers has ever undertaken to take positive action in relation to LGBT rights, and may well therefore be a very significant development.

# EUROPE:

## C - Parliamentary Assembly

### Child and Teenage suicide

In its April session the Parliamentary Assembly passed a resolution on "Child and Teenage Suicide" which included good references to the problems of LGBT teenagers. Four of the speeches during the debate also made reference. Some of the text from the resolution:

**9.** It reaffirms the importance it attaches to respecting political, economic, social, cultural, sexual and physical differences. It therefore strongly condemns all forms of religious, ethnic and sexual discrimination and reasserts its commitment to combating racism, homophobia and the stigma attached to all sexual behaviours, including transexualism.

**10.** The Assembly is concerned at evidence that suicidality among young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people is significantly higher than in the general young population. It notes that this heightened risk is not a function of their sexual orientation or gender identity, but of the stigmatisation, marginalisation and discrimination which they experience because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. As such, this heightened risk has a significant human rights dimension.

See: <http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta08/ERES1608.htm>

# LGBT FAMILIES:

## Ireland recognises de facto same-sex families

*Source: media release by GLEN, 17 April 2007*

GLEN, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network, strongly welcomes the judgement by Mr. Justice Hedigan that a lesbian couple and their child are a de facto family, in common with other Irish de facto families, under the European Convention on Human Rights.

“This is a very significant acknowledgement of the existence of, and growing numbers of, same-sex couples parenting children in Ireland. These families want and need their family life recognised to protect the interests and welfare of their children.” says Eoin Collins, Director of Policy Change.

“GLEN also welcomes the call by Justice Hedigan for urgent consideration by the legislature of provision for legal recognition of same sex couples that takes account of children and parenting issues. The principle emphasised by Justice Hedigan that the welfare of the child is paramount, should underpin the framing of any legislation”, continues Eoin Collins.

“This case shows the importance and urgency of including provision for parenting and children’s rights issues in Government proposals for legal recognition of same-sex couples and families” continues Eoin Collins

“Providing a legal framework for parenting with the welfare of children the paramount guiding principle will also help clarify obligations and responsibilities from the outset” says Eoin Collins. “Such a legal framework, as noted by Justice Hedigan should help to avoid in the future the emotional trauma to which all the parties in this case have been subjected”, continues Eoin Collins, Director of Policy Change.

*A gay friend of a lesbian couple who donated his sperm to one of them, resulting in the birth of a boy now aged almost two, has lost his landmark High Court bid for guardianship of the child and has also been refused access.*

# LGBT FAMILIES:

## **Ireland:** **Mixed response to plans for civil unions**

*Source: Carl O'Brien, Irish Times, 2 April 2008*

Gay equality groups have given a mixed welcome to new civil partnership legislation that will extend many of the benefits and legal obligations of marriage to same-sex couples.

The Irish Times reported yesterday that the heads of a new Bill are being finalised under which same-sex partners will be able to avail of marriage-like benefits in a range of areas such as property, social welfare, succession, maintenance, pensions and tax. However, it will not provide any right for same-sex couples to be considered as joint adoptive parents, despite a strong campaign by gay equality groups.

The Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (Glen) said the Bill, as reported, had the potential to transform radically the lives of thousands of lesbian and gay couples. "This is a reform whose time has come. All political parties have played a role in getting us to this point and there is huge public support for change," said Kieran Rose of Glen. However, the group said it was vital that a framework is agreed that will allow children parented by lesbian and gay couples to establish a legal connection with those parenting them.

The lobby group MarriagEquality expressed disappointment that the new legislation will leave children of gay and lesbian people "outside the law". The group's co-chair, Gráinne Healy, said equality will only be achieved for gay and lesbian couples by allowing them to marry and have all the rights and benefits received automatically by married heterosexual couples. "While any legislation in this area - where hitherto there has been none - is welcome, if these reports are true, it is of great concern that gay and lesbian people will continue not to have the same rights as heterosexual couples," she said.

# LGBT FAMILIES:

## Greeks consider recognising same-sex couples

*Source: Pink News, 2 April 2008, [www.pinknews.co.uk/news/articles/2005-7284.html](http://www.pinknews.co.uk/news/articles/2005-7284.html)*

Greek authorities are considering adopting a law that would allow same-sex couples to be recognised by a civil ceremony, the country's NET TV said on 31 March. The Greek Justice Ministry pledged to establish a working group on the rights of gay couples living together, which would "analyse all aspects of the issue, international practice and the existing domestic legal and social framework."

The New Democracy-led government is expected to introduce legislation later in the year that will offer several rights to unmarried couples. The Minister of Justice has announced to the media that the government is against discrimination and will therefore include same-sex unions in the legislation.

This announcement has caused anger in the Greek Orthodox Church. Bishop Anthimos of Thessaloniki said that such a decision would degrade the human species and "make them equal to animals." However, Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens has distanced himself from the Holy Synod's stance on the issue of cohabitation between unmarried couples saying that the Church "should be more open-minded and less moralistic."

Church's governing synod described moves by the Greek government to afford unmarried or defacto couples the same legal rights as their married counterparts as a "catastrophic bomb" which threatened Greek society and compared the move to "prostitution."

The Greek government is hoping new legislation will align with similar laws throughout Europe.

# LGBT FAMILIES:

## **Bulgaria to introduce civil partnerships, but only for hetero couples**

*by Aksinia Gencheva, BGO Gemini*

Welcome to the balance-sheet of 2007 in the column for complaints and appraisals. 98% of the stories in the gay news in Bulgaria in 2007 contained deeply saddening events, from the terrible things people cause to their children to the scary things people do with His body. The conclusions which is sad and which deserves bravos we leave to you. Bulgaria is already a full member of the European Union for a year. This is on theory. Practically, we are still living in the prehistoric, (post)communistic and Balkan society, which rejects the "other". "The other" is subject to mockery, insults, gossiping, and harassment and has no rights. This is because the Society believes that he, the Other, insists to have Privileges, not Rights. The Other, who is different, doesn't have the right to fight for a normal life, breath the air of "the normal", go out in Their restaurants, talk to Them, because He depraves Them and, generally, the best would be if he, the Other, doesn't show at all, since He demoralises our fragile normal society.

The Bulgarian Family code, the law which regulates the family and children relations, has last been amended, when I was still in the kindergarten. Perhaps the Bulgarian politicians believe the concept of the Family is still as it was 2000 years ago. It's surprising that women are not equal to a cow and other (movable) property, having in mind the actuality of the Family code. The Family code is now being amended and will (probably) include new family institution – the civil partnerships. Over 54% of the couples in Bulgaria (straight and gay) live in a partnership, though not legally recognised. Now, when the Family code will be amended, once again it will limit the civil partnership to "man and woman" union (as stated also in the Bulgarian Constitution).

It's disappointing to see how the Bulgarian politicians defend the marriage between man and a woman as a warranty for the health and safety of the children and a mainstay of the society. The marriage is a deal, a contract between two people to stand each other, to save money in joint money-box and to create at least one tax-payer. The problem is that the gay family is not a "real" problem. The married gay-families didn't cut off the health system budget; neither have shortened the list of medicines for the people with cancer. The Bulgarian society, generally, is annoyed why We are troubling Them with Our problems, since we are a Minority? Well, the children left in institutions or orphanages in Bulgaria are "only" 9000, then why the whole society is troubling with their problems!?

# LGBT FAMILIES:

“The State” should be more concerned about its children. The real problem they face is the poverty, the lack of education, the violence in the school, and not the gay marriages. Any governmental protection of the youngsters should include concern about the physical and mental stability of the kids, better and safer schools, higher family incomes and lower risk of crimes and violence against child. And not what their parents do or don't do in bed.

Meantime, while you are reading this, there are still shrinks and psychologists in Bulgaria, who will charge you with the promise to cure you or your daughter/son from their homosexuality. Today, in Bulgaria, in 2008! This is happening in a country, which officially and openly celebrates the prejudice and discrimination against part of its population through number of laws, including one forbidding them to have a family! God bless us, heroic motherland!

Recent research shows that 50% of the Bulgarian will reject their gay child. Merry Christmas, kids. Three million nine hundred eighty five persons in Bulgaria think that their child is technically defect and must be corrected by all means. Are you, dear heterosexualists, so sinless, faultless and perfectly manufactured to judge what is acceptable and what you wouldn't reject? I am ashamed to live in a country, where most of the fertile adults program the manufacturing of their future inmate with the main purpose, as perfectly manufactured hardware, to fit with the pre-given parameters – eyes color, hair, weight, height, number of descendants, etc. Some of you, dear heterosexuals, don't deserve your own children.



# TRANSGENDER:

## **Comprehensive European study of transgender people's rights and experiences of healthcare is published**

*Source: ILGA-Europe and TransGender Europe media release, 28 April 2008*

ILGA-Europe and TransGender Europe published the first comprehensive report on the experiences of health care by transgender people in European Union. This report is a result of the largest and most comprehensive data collection on transgender people's lived experiences to date.

The legal survey confirmed that very few countries had fully embraced the range of transgender protections available in Europe. Some have made very little progress, leaving their transgender citizens in fear for their safety, unable to work due to discrimination, and facing great difficulties in obtaining access all health care, not just to gender reassignment services.

The failure of states to implement directives and significant case law, from both the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights, has left a Europe divided with a few of its transgender population having fairly good access to medicine and their rights, but even then no country is by any means perfect and few countries are good in this area.

Other common problems identified through the survey are:

- refusal by the states to fund hormone treatment
- refusal by the states to fund the acceptable baseline surgeries
- refusal of any treatments because a healthcare professionals did not approve of gender reassignment
- lack of information knowledge about transgender issues by health professionals
- avoidance of routine healthcare due to anticipated prejudice from healthcare professionals.

Justus Eisfeld, Chairperson of TransGender Europe, said:

"This lack of respect for the basic human rights of trans people has to stop. We call on the European

# TRANSGENDER:

institutions to enforce the fundamental rights of their citizens to be treated with respect and dignity.”

Deborah Lambillotte, Co-Chair of ILGA-Europe's Executive Board, said:

"ILGA-Europe is proud to deliver this important report. For the first time discrimination and prejudice transgender people across European Union experience are being confirmed and evidenced by such comprehensive pan-European study. We hope that this study will become useful tool for campaigners and advocates of transgender people's rights. We also hope that the recommendations contained in the study will be listened by and taken on board by relevant European institutions to ensure that the needs and rights of transgender people are fully embraced and addressed when dealing with the issues of equality and anti-discrimination."

This study will be presented at the second TransGender Europe's Council on 2-4 May in Berlin.

PDF version of the study is available at ILGA-Europe website:

[www.ilga-europe.org/europe/publications/non\\_periodical](http://www.ilga-europe.org/europe/publications/non_periodical)

# TRANSGENDER:

## Stronger together – trans equality in UNISON

*by Carola Towle, UNISON National Officer, LGBT Equality*

Trans people face high levels of prejudice and discrimination at work. When people are isolated, they are particularly vulnerable. Trade unions exist to defend workers rights. They do this by the strength of collective organisation and action. So this should be a perfect match. The natural place for all trans workers should be in their trade union.

But it's not always so.

Many trans people – even those who identify as trade unionists – may not expect trade unions to understand and address trans equality. Many trade unions have not thought about their responsibility to their trans members and potential members.

But this is changing. Last year, two global union bodies, Education International and Public Services International, who together represent over 50 million workers in 950 unions, launched best practice guidance on trans and LGB equality. This year, the umbrella body for unions in Europe, the ETUC, is developing joint work with ILGA-Europe on LGBT equality.

UNISON, the UK public sector union, is part of both PSI and ETUC. We have a tradition of self-organisation – those affected by an issue taking the lead in identifying solutions.

As so often, it started with a few people speaking up and rapidly grew from there. We have a growing trans network, which meets twice a year nationally, once in a stand-alone meeting, once at the annual LGBT conference. Trans members are now involved at all levels of our union, a number of people holding senior elected positions. There are reserved seats for trans reps on our national LGBT committee, and trans members hold other seats as well. The trans caucus designed specific recruitment materials targeting trans workers. We have a bargaining factsheet on trans workers equality and an introductory guide for union reps on supporting trans members. These are on our website [www.unison.org.uk/out](http://www.unison.org.uk/out). We have examined how our own organisation works – making sure our systems work for trans people, including those who transition while in membership.

# TRANSGENDER:

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It's not all perfect. There are 1.3 million members in our union – pretty well a cross section of society – and by no means everyone has been on the LGBT equality training we run. But the union's rules are clear. UNISON's aim is to work for the elimination of discrimination on all grounds, including gender identity, and to protect the rights of all members to be treated with dignity and respect.

UNISON needs its trans members and trans members need their union. The motto of the UNISON LGBT group is Stronger Together – what more is there to say.

# NOTICE BOARD:

## New tool on LGBT issues and the media

*by Ann von Below, LGL*

On March 28th during a seminar in Vilnius organised by the Lithuanian Gay League (LGL) and entitled "How do we tackle social exclusion of LGBT in society and the media?" a publication "A media for diversity. LGBT in the news – a tool for better reporting" was launched. Published in English this booklet is based on collaboration between LGBT activists and media experts from Lithuania, Latvia and Sweden. Primarily it constitutes a toolkit for LGBT activists and media professionals alike. Main target audiences for this publication are journalists, NGO activists and representatives of national institutions and the European Commission. It offers a guide on tackling social exclusion in media.

This LGL's initiative was based on a desire to change the way LGBT people are often portrayed in the media. It is a pilot initiative with the potential to grow. One of the fundamental problems is that utter ignorance, or even blatant homophobia is still widespread in the Lithuanian press. This not only helps sustain public attitudes of hostility towards LGBT, it arguably also helps shaping them further. Moreover, the way media can be used as a tool to educate the public about LGBT, spread awareness and encourage tolerance, is lost.

This initiative constitutes a step towards tackling this trend. It is first and foremost aimed at activists and media professionals willing to work with the issues, and improve their skills doing so. The idea is to bolster a small, but certainly existing, counter-trend to that of ignorance and homophobia, and a media that could be useful, as opposed to harmful, to LGBT.

The collaboration with Latvia revealed, unsurprisingly a very similar situation as to the one in Lithuania. Grouping up with Sweden did, equally unsurprisingly, provide a different perspective. Having an impressive track record of successful cooperation with the media, the Swedish contributors certainly added a significant weight to the suggestions of good practice. However, the Swedish presence also highlighted the importance of the entire issue. Good media reporting is by no means taken for granted by LGBT activists in Sweden either. Even just an ill-informed reporter may, however innocently, still reinforce stereotypes and alienation.

This publication will be soon downloadable on [www.lgl.lt](http://www.lgl.lt) and [www.atviri.lt](http://www.atviri.lt)

# NOTICE BOARD:

## **Call for proposals: World Outgames 2nd International Conference, Copenhagen 2009**

*by Jonatan Porsager, Project manager, World Outgames 2009*

The World Outgames 2nd International Conference on LGBT Human Rights in Copenhagen takes place during 27 -29 July 2009. 1000 delegates from around the world are expected to participate in the 3-day conference, which will be part of World Outgames in 2009. The conference will be held at the new and spectacular Danish Radio's concert hall, and the program will include a wide range of high-profile international keynote speakers.

With this call for workshops we invite you to propose a workshop for the conference.

Any proposal relating to the conference themes and consistent with the goal of equality for LGBT persons will be considered.

**The deadline for the submission of abstracts for workshop proposals is October 1st 2008.**

To submit a proposal is not the same as to register for the conference. To register for World Outgames 2009 you have to pay the conference fee.

To reserve a place at the conference, workshop presenters should register as early as possible, even if they have not yet submitted their workshop proposal or have not yet heard whether their proposal has been accepted. Workshop presenters must also cover their own travel and accommodation expenses.

### **Financial support**

Participants who are unable to pay the conference fee and/or their own travel and accommodation expenses, especially participants from other locations than Canada, the United States, Western Europe, Israel, Japan, Australia and New Zealand can apply for the Outreach Programme. The deadline for Outreach applications is October 1st 2008.

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