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EURO-LETTER

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The seven-year Programme targets all stake holders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To that effect, PROGRESS will be instrumental in:

- providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;
- monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;
- promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large

For more information see:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html

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

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Message from Dirk



Dear Euroletter readers, ILGA-Europe members, friends and supporters,

Just a couple of days ago I and Maxim Anmeghichean, our Programmes Director, came back from Moscow where we are starting a new ambitious project. The meeting was an opportunity for all involved parties to meet and get to know each other. We also had various meetings with international donors and European embassies gathering political support for the project.

This is the largest project of its kind in Russia, both in terms of finances and geographical coverage. In total 5 local partners from 3 Russian regions (Karelia, St Petersburg and Tyumen oblast' in Siberia) are involved, including the key partner – the Russian LGBT Network. Just to give you an idea – territory-wise these regions equal about 1/3 of the entire European Union!

What are we trying to achieve with this project? One of the most immediate goals is to resolve the problem of the access to the basic rights to association and assembly by LGBT citizens. And as one of this Euroletter's articles informs, there is already some positive changes with the St Petersburg's LGBT group to become the first one to be officially registered in Russia without courts battles.

Our ambition is to strengthen local LGBT organisations and enable them to engage in a constructive dialogue with local and national Russian governmental authorities with the goal to obtain recognition and respect for the human rights of LGBT people in the country.

How will we work with our partners? Our approach is to strengthen the partner's organisational and advocacy capacity. We want to help them to build bridges and to be engage with other civil society organisations working in the area of equality and human rights. The partners will also be working with representatives of various professions, such as lawyers, media, and psychologists with a view of building various networks of providing support and help to LGBT community in Russia.

We are well aware this is ambitious and challenging project, but we have all the trust this joint effort will be a success and we look forward to working with our partners in Russia.

Dirk De Meirleir

Executive Director

Job opportunity with ILGA-Europe: Communications Officer

by *ILGA-Europe*

The Communications Officer will be contributing towards effective implementation of ILGA-Europe's Communications Strategy. In particular, the Communications Officer will be responsible for providing effective information and communications services, maintaining website and database, support colleagues within ILGA-Europe and its members to achieve the organisation's objectives.

You will need experience of

- effective communications with diverse audiences in an organisational setting
- experience of providing information service, maintaining website and database in an organisational setting.
- you will also have excellent drafting/proof-reading/editing skills, presentation and computer skills (Word, Excel, Power Point, data base soft wares)

Other requirements are:

- A high standard of English (listening, reading, writing and speaking) in an international context
- A good knowledge of human rights and equality issues, particularly as they relate to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people
- Commitment to equal opportunities
- Ability to relocate to Brussels and travel in Europe
- A working knowledge of another European language

Useful additional experience/knowledge could include:

- Experience of working in an NGO
- Journalism qualification
- Familiarity with the European institutions
- Microsoft or equivalent accreditation in relevant computer software

The Contract: ILGA-Europe offers an employment contract under Belgian law for an indefinite period provided successful completion of a probation period of six months.

Gross salary: Salary scale €41,387 to €46,162 in four annual increments, starting at the beginning of the scale. The organisation has a generous remuneration package, including contributing to a Pensions scheme for employees and 'family friendly' policies. Relocation support from within Europe to Brussels will be given where appropriate.

Closing date for receipt of applications: 17.00 CET, Friday, 13th March, 2009.

For an application pack which also contains more information about the job and the application form, please visit our website at

www.ilga-europe.org/Europe/About-us/Job-opportunity/Communications-Officer

ILGA-Europe is an equal opportunities employer and encourages applications from all sections of society.

Final Report of ILGA-Europe and IGLYO's AGE project

by *Evelyne Paradis, ILGA-Europe's Policy Director*

In 2008, ILGA-Europe and IGLYO came together once again in the context of a project aimed at examining how sexual orientation and gender identity intertwine with other strands of identity, such as age. The Age Project was a response to the recognition that certain age groups within the LGBT community are rendered almost invisible, especially LGBT youth and – to an even greater extent – older LGBT people.

The aims of the AGE Project included:

- Assessing the issues faced by younger and older LGBT people and to explore the commonalities and differences with regard to age-related issues;
- Bringing LGBT people of all ages together and to assess the desire for and potential of intergenerational dialogue
- Increasing the visibility of and support for the hidden LGBT age groups and to investigate how the issues of the different LGBT age groups can be mainstreamed into age organisations.

Two roundtables were organised during the year, bringing together representatives from LGBT organisations, as well as from mainstream age organisations.

The final report of the AGE project provides information about the project's methodology, outcomes of the roundtable discussions and the main findings of the project. It is available on ILGA-Europe's website at:

www.ilga-europe.org/europe/publications/non_periodical

A warm thanks to the IGLYO team for this fruitful collaboration, and in particular to the project coordinator Sylvi Paulick!

Contribute to the follow-up to the project!

ILGA-Europe will start integrating the learning of this project in its work in the coming year, in the context of our policy work and our work on increasing diversity within the organisation, especially in relation to the situation of older LGBT people.

One of the key shortcomings identified in the project is the lack of information and data on the realities of older LGBT people.

If you know of research or of existing projects targeting older LGBT people, please sent information to evelyne@ilga-europe.org.

Job opportunity with ILGA: Finance, Administration & Organisations Support Officer

by *ILGA-Europe*

ILGA is inviting applications for the position of Finance, Administration & Organisations Support Officer.

This full time position is based in the ILGA secretariat, Brussels, Belgium. The secretariat includes three other staff and it provides coordination and support to the ILGA network.

ILGA is a worldwide association of organizations and individuals working for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons and communities throughout the world.

The Job description and supplementary information is available on the ILGA website: www.ilga.org

Interested persons are required to submit their application in the form of an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae as well as a letter explaining the applicant's motivation in applying for this position and in working for an organisation such as ILGA.

Applications should be sent to: Patricia Curzi, patriciacurzi@ilga.org

Deadline for applications is Sunday, March 8, 2009 midnight, Brussels time.

The starting date will be as soon as possible. Salary according to experience within ILGA salary scale.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted regarding their application.

Council of Europe Expert Committee starts work on preparing Recommendation on combating sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination

by Nigel Warner, ILGA-Europe's Advisor on Council of Europe

The Expert Committee charged by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe with preparing a Recommendation to the member states on combating sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination held its first meeting in mid-February. Government experts from nine member states are to prepare a draft during the course of 2009, which will then be considered by the full Committee of Ministers representing the 47 Council of Europe member states. The Recommendation will constitute the first detailed international "soft law" statement on combating sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination.

At its first meeting, under the chairmanship of the Swedish expert, the former Swedish Homo-Ombudsman, Hans Ytterberg, the Committee drew up a list of possible issues for inclusion in the Recommendation. The next stage will be for these issues to be converted into a first draft of the Recommendation. Transgender Europe, ILGA-Europe, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch participated in the meeting as Observers.

European Commissions awards journalists for their contributions towards fighting discrimination

Source: "For Diversity. Against Discrimination"

The EU's 'For Diversity. Against Discrimination' prize for journalists has been awarded to a French article about gay football players, in a tie with a Danish article about women who convert to Islam.

The third prize went to a Portuguese article while the special Roma Award has been won by a Greek journalist. The award ceremony took place in Prague at the Kaiserstejnky Palace on February 5, 2009.

At the ceremony, the European Commission honoured those journalists who, through their writing, help foster a better understanding of the benefits of diversity and who encourage readers to consider more closely issues of discrimination and inequality. This year, the Commission dedicated a Special Award to an article concentrating on Roma issues.

Pascale Krémer, journalist at Le Monde, won the joint first prize with her article "Homophobie et football: la leçon de Chooz" (Homophobia and football – The lesson of Chooz) on gay players in a local football team. It looks at how the lucrative marketing world of football helps perpetuate discrimination against gays and lesbians but also examines the positive measures taken by football leagues across Europe to combat it.

The other joint first prize went to Ole Hall, journalist at the Danish Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten. His article "Danske muslimer udsat for chikane" (Danish Muslims are subject to harassment) reveals how Danish women who convert to Islam suddenly go from being a member of a majority to becoming a very visible minority in their home country. As such, they face the same prejudices and hostility from society as Muslims of foreign parentage.

Christiana Martins and Marisa Antunes won the third place with their article "Elite à prova de racismo" (Racism-proof elite) about successful Portuguese citizens from minority backgrounds who have broken through glass ceilings. It was published in the weekly Portuguese newspaper Expresso.

For the Special Roma award, Mika Kontourousi, journalist at the Eleftheros Tipos wrote the article "Η Γιουζγιάν σπάει τα σύνορα της φυλής της" (Yuzyan "breaks" the borders of her tribe). It describes the problems Roma women are confronted with when they try to move away from their traditional roles in society.

EUROPE:

The prize-giving ceremony took place as part of a seminar on 'Media for Diversity', organised by the European Commission. The seminar presented the results of a pan-European study on good practices by and about the media in tackling discrimination and promoting diversity. It gathered more than 80 media professionals, equality bodies and NGOs from around Europe.

The winning entries to the journalist award scheme were selected from over 545 articles from all 27 Member States submitted between 1 January and 31 October 2008. The jury members underlined the high quality of the articles submitted. The four European winners will each receive a grant for a research trip to an EU country of their choice.

You can view all winning articles here:

<http://journalistaward.stop-discrimination.info/winners0504241.0.html>

New video by EU' anti-discrimination campaign

Source: European Commission/Mostra

The European Union's "For Diversity. Against Discrimination" campaign just completed a new DVD entitled "A Diverse Society: Tackling Discrimination Across Europe."

Since 2000, European legislation has been in place to protect inhabitants of the EU from discrimination in the area of employment on the grounds of their age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, race or ethnic origin and disability. Race discrimination is also illegal in other areas of society such as access to goods and services or education. Yet despite this legislation and other initiatives to combat discrimination, 1 in 3 Europeans is unaware of his or her rights and obligations. This film explores issues of equality and diversity under the law and includes experiences of those who have suffered discrimination.

This film was produced in the framework of the campaign "For Diversity. Against discrimination" in 22 EU languages.

You can view this film on ILGA-Europe's facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/ILGA-Europe/11494607341>

The DVD will also be available at the EU bookshop in late March 2009:

<http://bookshop.europa.eu/eubookshop/>

Title: A Diverse Society: Tackling Discrimination Across Europe

Catalogue number: KE-78-08-537-1X-Z

Online documentation database on LGBT issues

by *Evelyne Paradis, ILGA-Europe's Policy Director*

Created in 1978, the RoSa Documentation Centre and Archives on Feminism, Equal Opportunities and Women's Studies, based in the Flemish House of Equal Opportunities, has been gathering materials and research on equality issues.

This documentation centre has started a collection focusing on LGBT issues: the HOLEBI collection (www.rosadoc.be/holebi). This collection is available online (although the site is currently only in Dutch) and at the Centre.

In order to create as complete a collection as possible, RoSa would greatly appreciate receiving publications and material on LGBT issues from across Europe.

Researchers and organisations are thus invited to send their material to the RoSa Documentation Centre where it will be archived and made available online.

Material can be sent to RoSa (Holebi collection), Koningstraat 136, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.

For more information about RoSa's LGBT collections, please contact Chris Zwaenepoel at zwp@rosadoc.be

Hungarian Government Approves New Registered Partnership Bill

by **Tamás Dombos**, *Háttér Society for LGBT People*, tdombos@gmail.com

Budapest, February 11, 2009 – The Hungarian Government has approved today a new bill on registered partnership. The bill replaces a previous law on registered partnership that was struck down by the Constitutional Court in December 2008 just weeks before its supposed entry into force. As opposed to the previous version, the new bill introduces the institution of registered partnership only for same sex couples, however, it also introduces a different scheme of domestic partnership registration for both same sex and different sex couples. Support for the bill in the Parliament is still an open question.

Two months ago, on December 15, 2008 the Hungarian Constitutional Court ruled that the law on registered partnership adopted by the Hungarian Parliament a year earlier was unconstitutional. The Court found that the solution chosen by the legislator – i.e. creating an institution similar to marriage for both same sex and different sex couples – duplicates the institution of marriage for different sex couples, and thus contradicts the special protection of marriage enshrined in the Constitution. On the other hand the Court also held that same sex couples have the right to an institution similar to marriage. Within a day Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány instructed the Minister of Justice and Law Enforcement to prepare a new bill on registered partnership taking into account the opinion of the Court. After consultations with various LGBT organizations, the Ministry prepared a new bill that has been approved by the Government today.

The new bill retains much of the content of the previous bill with one exception: the institution of registered partnership would only be available to same sex couples. Establishment and dissolution of registered partnerships would be the same as for marriage, and registered partners would be entitled to most of the rights available for married couples. Notable exceptions are the right to take the partners' name and the right to adopt children. Besides introducing registered partnerships for same sex couples, the bill would also introduce a new scheme for registering domestic partnerships. Unlike registered partnership, this new opportunity would not grant any new rights or duties to couples cohabiting without marriage, but would only make it easier for them to prove the existence of such a relationship. This second registration scheme would be available to both same sex and different sex couples.

Although the Government fully supports the new bill, its adoption by the Parliament is still an open question. Hungary currently has a minority government after the liberals left the government coalition early last year. Conservative opposition parties heavily criticized the previous bill on the account that it introduced same sex marriage under a different name. It is yet to be seen whether their position has changed as a result of the Constitutional Court declaring such an institution a constitutional right. Based on "parliamentary mathematics" the bill has a high chance of being passed: governing parties hardly ever vote against proposals by their own government and the liberals fully support the new bill. It is, however, very hard to predict how delicate negotiations involved in running a minority government will affect voting on the bill.

Portugal: important steps towards equal access to marriage

by **Paulo Corte Real**, *Associação ILGA Portugal*

There is an upcoming election for Parliament in Portugal this year and same-sex marriage is currently a key political issue.

In Portugal, unregistered civil unions are available for all couples (including same-sex couples) since 2001; and the Portuguese Constitution explicitly forbids discrimination based on sexual orientation since 2004. This constitutional provision and the resonance of the Spanish example have been particularly relevant in the fight for same-sex marriage in Portugal, that has included several initiatives, such as:

- a Petition promoted by Associação ILGA Portugal, that was recently discussed in Parliament
- a court case regarding a lesbian couple that tried to get married; the case has now reached the Constitutional Court and also generated the publication of several books by legal experts on same-sex marriage;
- bill proposals by two minority parties, Bloco de Esquerda and Partido Ecologista "Os Verdes", that were recently rejected in Parliament.

All these initiatives have led to a wide debate and to a growing public support for same-sex marriage.

The Socialist Party has recently re-elected the current Prime-Minister, José Sócrates, as its leader and the motion he presented for re-election included a commitment to equal access to marriage. The motion defines as a priority "the fight against all types of discrimination and the removal, in the coming term, of legal barriers to same-sex marriage".

José Sócrates clarified that equality will be defended without hesitation or halfway solutions, ruling out separate-but-equal institutions such as registered partnerships, and stating that: "the recognition of rights and dignity of a minority is a victory for all".

However, a spokesperson for the Socialist Party has subsequently stated that access to adoption by same-sex couples is not supported.

The issues of same-sex marriage and LGBT parenting – and the importance of ending legal discrimination as a necessary condition for a coherent and effective anti-discrimination programme – will soon be under discussion in Lisbon at the upcoming international Conference "Mainstreaming LGBT Anti-Discrimination Policies" (March 27th-28th) organised by Associação ILGA Portugal (www.ilga-portugal.pt).

The general election for Parliament will be held in the autumn. If there is a majority for parties that support ending discrimination in the access to marriage, the change in the legislation is expected soon thereafter.

The IGLCC invites corporations to be part of the first edition of the International Business Equality Index

Source: Joint media release by IGLCC and ILGA-Europe, 5 February 2009

The International Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (IGLCC) is proud to invite all major international corporations to participate in the world premiere of the International Business Equality Index survey that will measure how they are performing internationally in issues related to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) community. The Index is a unique tool allowing corporations to draw external comparisons, which illustrate how their competitors are doing as well as internal comparisons that provide a better understanding of their own performance. The deadline for completion of the survey is April 30th 2009 with the results being announced during the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights held during the World Outgames in Copenhagen from July 25th to August 2nd, 2009.

In this challenging time of economic uncertainty, participation in a Index of such broad scope provides the exact edge that corporations might need to be ahead of the curve.

Linda Freimane, Co-chair of ILGA-Europe, the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) said, "ILGA-Europe sees the launch of this International Business Equality Index as a new milestone in the work towards full equality in employment. This Index sends a signal to international businesses that they have a responsibility to promote diversity and inclusion, and to ensure that LGBT employees have equal access to the same benefits and rights as all other employees. It addresses the need for the inclusion of the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity during diversity training, and also the tackling of LGBT harassment in workplaces which is crucial for LGBT people's safety in employment."

The Index provides an excellent and timely opportunity for corporations to be among the first to show their support for the global LGBTI community and benefit from its workforce and economic power. A further direct benefit of participation is the chance for corporations to evaluate and enhance their LGBTI policies and practices.

Martin K.I. Christensen, Co-chair of ILGA-Europe says, "It is important to state that this Index intends to serve as an educational tool as well as a yard stick. The intention is therefore to reward the international corporations that have consistently adopted a positive outlook towards LGBT people's inclusion and equality, and at the same time use this opportunity to assist companies that may this time score a little lower to perform better in the future. Through this Index we intend to extend our invitation to companies to consult us on improve LGBT inclusion and diversity within their workplaces and beyond."

More information on our website:

www.ilga-europe.org/Europe/Campaigns-projects/International-Business-Equality-Index

ILGA-Europe dedicates a webpage to trade union resources

by *Silvan Agius, Policy and Programmes Officer*

Global and European trade union confederations are increasing their actions and activities for LGBT workers. A body work, including policy documents and manuals is already available online on different websites. To make these documents easily accessible, ILGA-Europe has dedicated webpage to collect these resources in one place. Visit the webpage at:

<http://www.ilga-europe.org/Europe/Campaigns-projects/Trade-Unions-LGBT-Equality>

Russia: Important victory for Russian LGBT Activists

by Igor Petrov, Russian LGBT Network

LGBT Organisation *Coming Out* of St. Petersburg, Russia, has just been officially registered by the government. The organisation was formed in April 2008 and is part of the Russian LGBT Network. This is the first case in Russian history when an organisation openly announcing as its goal advocacy for the interests of LGBT community is registered by the government on the first try without any court intervention.

Says chairman of the Russian LGBT Network, Igor Petrov, "This is a truly historical moment. First time ever the Russian officials made no attempt to hinder an LGBT organisation in its attempt to attain legal status. We believe it to be the first result of the campaign for freedom of association begun by the Russian LGBT Network in 2006."

In 2006, Tyumen LGBT Organisation *Rainbow House* was refused registration by the government. The government considered *Rainbow House* to be dangerous for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. The same year, the Russian LGBT Network began its activity. Together with other human rights organisations (the Association "Agora") it provided aid in the judicial defense of the *Rainbow House*. In 2008, the case of the *Rainbow House* reached the European Court of Human Rights.

The Russian LGBT Network also consistently draws attention of the ombudsman and other representatives of the government to the problem of violations of the right of gays and lesbians to form public associations. Thanks to the regular contacts of the LGBT activists with the Russian and the international human rights organisations, this question is constantly raised in the reports by the Moscow Helsinki Group, the Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and others. The topic of the observance of rights of LGBT people for freedom of association was raised by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg.

Parliamentary Question on the implementation of the Gender 'Recast' Directive 2006/54/EC vis-à-vis transgender people

by *Silvan Agius, ILGA-Europe Policy & Programmes Officer*

In a written question¹ (14.01.2009) to the Commission, Raül Romeva i Rueda MEP followed on the discrepancy between the European legislation's protection against discrimination on the basis of 'gender reassignment' and the level of legal protection against such discrimination in Member States. In fact, in at least 11 Member States 'transgenderism is treated neither as sex discrimination nor as sexual orientation discrimination, resulting ... in a situation of legal uncertainty as to the precise protection of transgender persons from discrimination'² Mr Romeva i Rueda hence asked the Commission what it will do to ensure that Member States fully implement the Directive, and whether it will initiate infringement procedures in relation to this Directive.

In his response (03.02.2009) on behalf of the Commission, Commissioner Špidla, replied as follows:

In a number of judgements beginning with P v S and Cornwall County Council in 1996³, the European Court of Justice has recognised that EU gender equality legislation concerning the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of sex in employment and social security matters applies equally to discrimination against transsexual people on grounds of their gender reassignment.

In addition to the recast Gender Directive 2006/54/EC⁴, there is a large body of European legislation and case law providing for equality between women and men in employment, pay, social security, occupational pensions and, most recently, access to and supply of goods and services. In such areas of EU competence, transsexual people may be protected by virtue of the Court's judgements against discrimination based on their gender reassignment. Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) of the European Convention of Human Rights also need to be taken into account where transgender rights are considered.

The Commission takes breaches of EC law seriously and is closely monitoring the implementation in the Member States of EC law, including Directives 2006/54/EC and 2004/113/EC⁵.

¹ Read the full text of Written Question P-0076/09 at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2009-0076+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

² The Fundamental Rights Agency's "Homophobia and Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation in the EU Member States Part I – Legal Analysis" (2008) pg.126 http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/material/pub/comparativestudy/FRA_hdgso_part1_en.pdf

³ Case C-13/94, P v S and Cornwall County Council [1996] ECR I-2143.

⁴ Directive 2006/54/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast), OJ L 204, 26.7.2006.

TRANSGENDER:

The Member States' deadline for transposing into their domestic law Directive 2004/113/EC, which implements the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services in the European Union, expired in December 2007. Assessment and monitoring of the Member States' compliance with that Directive is ongoing.

The deadline for transposition of Directive 2006/54/EC in the Member States was 15 August 2008. However, in accordance with Article 33 of the latter, "Member States may, if necessary to take account of particular difficulties, have up to one additional year to comply with this Directive". The Commission will start monitoring the transposition of that Directive in the near future.

⁵ Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services, OJ L 373, 21.12.2004.

Monitoring the implementation of the Gender Equality Directives' implementation vis-à-vis transgender people

by *Silvan Agius, ILGA-Europe Policy & Programmes Officer*

Following the response provided to the Written Question by Commissioner Špidla, ILGA-Europe is collecting cases of discrimination against transgender people with regard to the areas of:

- Employment
- Pay
- Social Security
- Occupational Pensions
- Access to and supply of goods and services

If you know of cases of discrimination against transgender people, please send us an email containing the following details at silvan@ilga-europe.org:

- A brief description of the main points in the case
- The action that the person/organization has taken
- The response that the person received from the relevant authorities (if available)
- Any supporting evidence, e.g. documents, testimonies etc.

Particular attention is being placed on Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia that do not seem to have any structures to tackle discrimination against transgender people.

Spain to accept transsexuals into armed forces

Source: The Telegraph, 12 February 2009,

www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/spain/4605837/Spain-to-accept-transsexuals-into-armed-forces.html

The Spanish ministry of defence has said it will reform legislation to allow transsexuals to serve in the armed forces.

The move follows a publicised battle by a 28-year-old male transsexual who has been rejected by the army on two occasions because he does not have a penis.

The man, who has only been named as Aitor G R, was born female but underwent a mastectomy and hormone treatment several years ago in the first step of "gender reassignment". He is on a waiting list for an operation to reshape his genitals into a penis.

Although the Spanish army recruits women, Aitor G R is recognised as a man legally and was declared medically unfit by army recruiters because of his lack of male genitalia.

He was first turned away in Feb 2007 but reapplied earlier this month only to be refused again. He said it had always been his dream to join the army since playing with toy soldiers as a child.

"I want to be a soldier, not a porn star," the transsexual from Jaen told Spanish media, stating that he would appeal the decision.

Carme Chacón, Spain's minister of defence, has promised to revise legislation concerning medical reasons for exclusion from the armed forces.

A ministry spokesman said on Thursday that under the new guidelines the lack of a penis would no longer be sufficient reason for excluding a male army candidate.

Funding available for NGOs working with asylum seekers and refugees

Source: European Commission

The general objective of the **European Refugee Fund (ERF)** is to support and improve the efforts of Member States to grant reception conditions to refugees, displaced persons and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, to apply fair and effective asylum procedures and to promote good practices in the field of asylum so as to protect the rights of persons requiring international protection and enable Member States asylum systems to work efficiently.

Applicants

National, regional and local authorities, universities, nongovernmental organizations as well as international organisations, registered in one of the 26 Member States participating in the European Refugee Fund, working on a strictly non-profit basis, with proven experience and expertise in the fields covered, taking into account their respective institutional competences. Actions may include participants from Denmark, candidate countries and other non EU countries, but the cost for their participation may not be covered by the Community contribution and must be financed entirely by non-Community resources.

More information about the European Refugee Fund:

http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/refugee/funding_refugee_en.htm

Call for proposals:

http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/refugee/docs/ca_call_2008_en.pdf

Job opportunity with the Open Society Institute - Program Officer, (LGBTI) Rights Initiative

by *Ladislav Zikmund-Lender*

The Open Society Institute works to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. Open societies are characterized by the rule of law; respect for human rights, minorities, and a diversity of opinions; democratically elected governments; market economies in which business and government are separate; and a civil society that helps keep government power in check.

The OSI Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender, Intersex (LGBTI) Rights Initiative, part of the Special Initiatives Program, will build off of OSI's vast network of programs and foundations to advance the human rights of LGBTI persons globally. The Initiative works to:

- Support strategies that address rights violations faced by LGBTI communities, such as decriminalization, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, etc.;
- Strengthen grass roots and regional organizations working to promote the rights of LGBTI individuals;
- Coordinate and support other OSI efforts to address issues faced by LGBTI populations that violate their rights.

The initiative is an opportunity to provide critical core support to LGBTI rights groups at the national and regional levels as well as influence global advocacy and donor agendas on key LGBTI rights issues.

Further information: www.soros.org/about/offices/washington/polgbtidc_20090203?skin=printable

Two job opportunities at IGLHRC

Source: www.iglhrc.org

• Director of Operations and Finance

The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) is an international NGO dedicated to promoting the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people through strategic partnerships with advocacy NGO's around the world. IGLHRC is headquartered in New York City, has offices in Buenos Aires, Argentina and Cape Town, South Africa, and project staff in The Philippines. Its current annual operating budget is \$2.2 million.

The Director of Operations and Finance (DOF) reports to the Executive Director, is based in New York, and is responsible for developing, implementing and achieving goals related to IGLHRC's financial functions, human resources, contracts and facilities administration, and information technology functions. The ideal candidates are individuals with broad multi-office management experience who are still accustomed to rolling up their sleeves to solve problems, excellent judgment, diplomatic communication style, experience working/living outside of the United States, and fierce dedication to human rights. DOF supervises the daily work of the NY Office Manager, oversees finance and operations policy implementation with administrative staff in Buenos Aires and Cape Town, and supervises accounting and technology consultants.

• Africa Program Coordinator

In mid-2007, IGLHRC opened a regional office for Africa in Cape Town, South Africa, to more effectively manage its operations on the continent and to build partnerships with African LGBT and human rights organizations. The Africa Program Coordinator will manage this office and IGLHRC's Africa program.

The Africa Regional Office researches and monitors human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity, convenes trainings and strategy meetings to promote decriminalization of homosexuality, advocates for legal protections for LGBT people, and works for an end to anti-LGBT violence and discrimination. The Coordinator will manage a staff of 3--two Program Associates and an administrative officer.

Further information:

www.iglhrc.org/cgi-bin/iowa/content/about/careeropportunity/jobs/index.html

NOTICE BOARD:

Survey on/with the most vulnerable groups of migrants

by YFJ

The European Youth Forum is currently undertaking a mapping study on existing good practices, experiences, expertise of civil society organisations on inclusion and representation of young people with migrant background or migrants from other vulnerable groups such as migrant women, migrant LGBT people, migrant people with disabilities, refugees, migrant children etc. To this aim, the YFJ would like to ask you to fill this questionnaire available at

www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=3yFd9Xlg6pDiTgu4kqdDWQ_3d_3d