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## No. 185

## January 2011

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## **ILGA-EUROPE**

### **ILGA-Europe's 15th Anniversary: looking back to strengthen the future**

By Martin K.I. Christensen and Linda Freimane, Co-Chairs of the ILGA-Europe Board: *ILGA-Europe will celebrate its 15th anniversary by looking back together with some of the important personalities from member organisation who have contributed to shaping the organisation since 1996... Each month, starting from February and for the rest of 2011, the Euro-Letter will present personal stories from the 15 years that ILGA-Europe has existed.*

[Read the whole text from the Co-Chairs here.](#)

### **Job opportunity at ILGA-Europe – Policy & Programmes Officer**

ILGA-Europe is currently looking to employ Policy & Programmes Officer. Closing date for receipt of applications is 12.00 CET, Monday 21 February 2011.

[Find more information about this vacancy as well as the application pack.](#)

### **Second edition of The Equality Pod is out**

This edition was recorded at the European Parliament and it revisits the topic of the proposed EU anti-discrimination directive which aims to ban discrimination in such areas of EU competence as access to goods, housing, healthcare, education, and social protections on the grounds of age, disability, religion/belief and sexual orientation.

[Read more hear about the latest podcast and download it here](#)

### **Call for proposals for the ILGA-Europe Human Rights Violations Documentation Fund**

The goal of the fund is to promote documentation of cases of discrimination, hate crimes and other human rights violations against LGBTI people according to the international human rights standards. Deadline for applications: 28 February 2011.

[Find more information about the call for proposals here](#)

### **Study visit to the Council of Europe for activists in the Step Up! Project**

Between 24 and 27 January ILGA-Europe organised a study visit to the Council of Europe for 8 LGBT human rights defenders from the Western Balkans. The study visit was conducted in the framework of ILGA-Europe's Step Up! project and aimed to familiarise the activists to the work of Council of Europe.

[Read more about the study visit to the Council of Europe here.](#)

### **Kazakh and Kyrgyz LGBTI Human Rights Defenders visit Brussels**

In December 2010 ILGA-Europe organised a study visit to Brussels for activists from Amulet (Kazakhstan) and Labrys (Kyrgyzstan) in how the European Union is active in Central Asia and the type of human rights violations which are particularly relevant to raise.

[Read more about the study visit to the EU institutions here.](#)

### **The ILGA-Europe LGBT Family Exhibition in the northern part of Cyprus**

From the 9-15 January, HOKI (the Initiative Against Homophobia Association) hosted the ILGA-Europe LGBT Family Exhibition in the northern part of Cyprus. This is a break through since same-sex sexual acts are still considered illegal.

[Read the article from HOKI about the Exhibition here.](#)

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## **EUROPE**

### **European Parliament calls for justice after the brutal killing in Uganda**

David Kato, a prominent Ugandan LGBT rights defender, was killed after been brutally beaten up. The European Parliament was very fast to react – firstly a joint statement by the Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, the Co-President of the Africa Caribbean Pacific Joint Parliamentary Assembly, and the Co-Presidents of the Intergroup on LGBT Rights in the European Parliament, and then a statement by Jerzy Buzek MEP, President of the European Parliament.

[Read the joint statement here](#), and [read the statement from MEP Jerzy Buzek here](#).

### **European Parliament urges Lithuania to reject proposed homophobic law**

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the 19 January 2011 urging Lithuanian Parliament to reject proposed amendments to the country's Code of Administrative Offences introducing an offence of 'promotion of homosexual relations' punishable with a fine of €580 to €2,900.

[Read the media release from ILGA-Europe here](#).

### **A landmark victory in human rights battle as EU conclude UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities**

The European Union has formally concluded the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 23 December 2010, becoming the first intergovernmental group to sign on to any human rights treaty.

[Read media release from European Disability Forum](#).

### **Important judgement regarding ageism in the United Kingdom**

Miriam O'Reilly, a 53 years old tv presenter, celebrates ageism victory against the British tv-channel, BBC. A tribunal finds that the tv-presenter was dropped because of age – BBC may have to pay out six-figure sum.

[Read more about the case here](#).

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## **UNITED NATIONS**

### **Civil Society Pressures Governments to Successfully Reverse Discriminatory Vote at UN**

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) voted overwhelmingly in **favour** of restoring reference to "sexual orientation" in a high-profile resolution condemning extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. The reference to sexual orientation had been removed by an earlier amendment at the committee level by governments opposed to ensuring protection for individuals targeted because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

[Read the press release from ILGA here](#)

### **Ban Ki Moon speaks out on sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination**

Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nation, made very explicit remarks in his speech at the Human Rights Council on 25 January 2011 about discrimination and persecution of people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

[Read the whole speech here](#).

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## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **Swedish lesbian pastor denied job for being 'one of those'**

A Swedish lesbian pastor who was passed over for a job with a diocese in central Sweden has accused the local vicar of discrimination.

[Read more about the employment discrimination in Sweden](#).

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## **FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION**

### **'Rainbow' LGBT Association Closed Down by Court Decision**

A court in Bursa, Turkey, decided for the closure of the Rainbow LGBT Association. The case was opened two years ago upon the complaint of the Bursa Governorship.

[Read more here about the closure here](#)

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## **HATE & VIOLENCE**

### **ILGA-Europe contributes to the consultation on the EU strategy for combating violence against women**

ILGA-Europe has in January contributed to the consultation on the EU strategy for combating violence against women 2011-2015: 'Concrete proposals towards the Action Programme'.

[Find and download the contribution here.](#)

### **Hate-crime reporting database launched**

The new tool is a part of the project "Tracing and Tackling Hate crime Against LGBT Persons" which is carried out by the Danish Institute for Human Rights, its partners and local LGBT organisations in 8 European capitals. ILGA-Europe is the evaluator on the project.

[Read more about the new database here.](#)

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## **LGBTI FAMILIES**

### **Top court in France upholds ban on same-sex marriage**

France's ban on same-sex marriages was upheld by the country's constitutional authority, in a ruling that relieves the government of any obligation to grant same-sex couples the wedding rights enjoyed by heterosexual couples.

[Read more hear about the court decision here.](#)

### **Spanish main opposition party stance about same-sex marriage: repealing**

In recent statement of Mariano Rajoy, the leader of the main opposition party in Spain, he is stating that he and his party would work to repeal marriage law that now include marriage for same-sex couples. The opposition party is likely to win the next election in Spain.

[Read more about the situation in Spain around same-sex marriage here.](#)

### **Same-sex couples to enter civil partnership in Ireland**

More than 80 same-sex couples have indicated to the General Registrar Office in Ireland that they wish to enter into a civil partnership after it became legal on the 4 January 2011.

[Read more about civil partnership in Ireland here](#)

### **Macedonia Activists Oppose Anti-Gay Constitution Change**

Civil rights group in FYR Macedonia urges political parties to clarify whether they support or oppose Church-led proposal to constitutionally ban same-sex marriages.

[Read more about the activist's fight for same-sex marriage.](#)

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## **TRANSGENDER**

### **German Court declares compulsory surgeries unconstitutional**

The German Constitutional Court announced on 28 January 2011 that the requirement to undergo sterilization or gender reconstruction surgery is not constitutional. Transgender Europe urges other countries to follow.

[Read the media release from Transgender Europe here.](#)

### **Portuguese President vetoes bill simplifying post-op bureaucracy for transsexuals**

President Cavaco Silva vetoed a bill simplifying the bureaucratic procedure for transsexuals to change their names and gender at civil registries. The bill is now sent back to the Portuguese parliament.

[Read more here about the veto from the Portuguese President](#)

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## **ASYLUM IN EUROPE**

### **ILGA-Europe launches a policy paper on asylum**

ILGA-Europe has in January launched a policy paper on the recast of the EU legislation on asylum.

[Find and download the policy paper here.](#)

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## **ACCESS TO SERVICES**

### **Bristol gay couple win Cornwall B&B bed ban case**

The owners of a hotel in Bristol, United Kingdom, who refused to allow a gay couple a double room acted unlawfully, a judge has ruled.

[Read more about the judgement here](#)

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## **NOTICE BOARD**

### **Job opportunity at IGLYO**

IGLYO (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organisation) is calling for applications for the position of full-time Programmes Officer in our Brussels office. Note that the deadline for applications is 2 February 2011.

[Read more about the job opportunity here.](#)

### **Job opportunity at the European Roma Centre**

The European Roma Rights Centre in Budapest, Hungary, invites applications for the post of Executive Director. Deadline is for applications 5 March 2011.

[Read more about the job opportunity here.](#)

### **Seminar for legal practitioners - EU Law on Equality Between Women and Men in Practice – 14-15 March 2011**

The seminar will provide an overview of the content of these Directives as interpreted by the European Court of Justice in its large case law on this topic.

[Find more details here about the seminar.](#)

**United under the rainbow? Political Conference on lesbian perspectives in Europe – 11-13 March 2001**

The aim of the conference is to promote the formation of networks with Eastern European LGBT activists. Among other things, we would like to discuss the current situation of lesbians in the Czech Republic, in Slovakia, Poland and Hungary and their strategies to achieve equal rights.

[Find more details here about the conference.](#)

**National Rainbow Families Conference – 9 April 2011**

The goal of this conference is to illustrate the current situation of rainbow families in Switzerland and map out perspectives for the future with the aid of experts and concerned families. For this purpose authorities who have researched, or are otherwise involved with the topic are invited to participate. Organiser: The Swiss Rainbow Families Association.

[Find more details the conference here.](#)

**Lesbian Spring Meeting in Rostock – 10-13 June 2011**

The Lesbian Spring Meeting is the major event for lesbian and feminine political dialogue in Germany today. The get-together is organised and run by lesbians for lesbians and with lesbians for four days every year. Main focus of the conference is “All around the Baltic Sea” – and lesbians from countries around the Baltic Sea are invited.

[Find more information about the conference here.](#)

**Summer school, Exploring the Issues of Gender, Transition and the Balkans - 19-30 June 2011**

“Euro-Balkan” Institute’s Department of Gender Studies within the framework of the Regional Network for Gender and Women’s Studies in South-eastern Europe is announcing the Call for Applications for the summer school “Dialectical Interdependencies of Theory and Practice in Feminism: Exploring the Issues of Gender, Transition and the Balkans”, to be held in Ohrid, Macedonia.

[Find more details about the summer school here.](#)

**European Geographies of Sexualities Conference – 8-10 September 2011**

This conference seeks to challenge and rectify those assumptions by providing an overview of the range of studies that have theorized the spatiality of sexualities, gender, sexual identities and sexual practices in (and beyond) European contexts. Note call for papers is open now.

[Find more information about this conference here.](#)

**New introductory e-course on Human Rights in Europe**

HREA (Human Rights Education Associates) offers introductory e-learning courses, short and specialised courses via distance education for human rights defenders and educators, development workers, and staff members of social justice organisations, international and inter-governmental organisations.

[Read more about the e-course here](#)

**Call for papers - LES Online - Digital Journal on Lesbian Issues**

LES Online is a digital journal that aims to contribute to the study of lesbian issues and to promote lesbian equal opportunities and civil rights. LES Online welcomes academics, practitioners, and researchers interested in studies that incorporate lesbian issues to submit articles. Next issue (June 2011) is on Activism and academia: intersections, conflicts and potentialities. Submissions deadline is 5 June 2011.

[Read more here about LES Online and how to submit.](#)

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**Previous issues:**

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\* \* \* \* \*

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