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ILGA-EUROPE

ILGA-Europe's 15th Anniversary: Steffen Jensen, member of the ILGA-Europe board 1996-2000

The first personal testimonial in the celebration of the 15th Anniversary of ILGA-Europe is from one of the founders of ILGA-Europe, Steffen Jensen.

[Read the testimonial from Steffen Jensen here.](#)

PRECIS Project Closing Conference

On 7th and 8th February 2011 over 150 participants gathered in Chisinau, Moldova to conclude the five year PRECIS project (Prevention and Empowerment in CIS) of COC-Netherlands, GenderDoc-M and ILGA-Europe and LGBT organisations from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Ukraine.

[Read more about the closing and the PRECIS project here.](#)

EUROPE

Removal of “sexual identity” phrase from draft anti-discrimination law in Turkey

The law proposal was prepared to protect Turkish citizens against discrimination and human rights violations against LGBT individuals. The removal of sexual identity ground from the proposal has been heavily criticised by Turkish LGBTI organisations, and ILGA-Europe reacted by sending a letter to Commissioner Füle of the European Commission expressing deep concern of the situation in Turkey.

[Read the reaction from the coalition of Turkish LGBTI organisations here.](#)

[Read the letter from ILGA-Europe to Commissioner Füle here.](#)

European Parliament strongly condemns the murder of David Kato

The European Parliament formally condemned the brutal murder of David Kato with a resolution which points to Uganda's enduring failure to abide by international human rights law, and protect LGBT people from violence. It strongly condemns the use of the death penalty under any circumstances, and instructs the European Commission and EU Member States to support LGBT people and human rights defenders in Uganda.

[Read the media release from the European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBT Rights here.](#)

First LGBT Group established in Montenegro

Montenegro's first NGO working for the protection of LGBT rights, LGBT Forum Progress, has begun to work in the capital Podgorica.

[Read more about the new LGBT organisation in Montenegro here.](#)

Concerns about racist and homophobic election campaign by Lithuanian political party

The political party “Jaunoji Lietuva” (Young Lithuania) continues to shock the Lithuanian media with its racist and homophobic election slogans during this current municipal election campaign.

[Read the reaction from the Lithuanian LGBT organisation LGL here.](#)

UNITED NATIONS

Action Alert: Urge your government to support and lobby for UN Statement on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

ILGA-Europe is urging European LGBTI organisations to contact their national governments in order to either make them support or lobby other governments for a UN statement on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. The statement will be given on the 9 March, where all UN states will meet in Geneva at the United Nations Human Rights Council.

[Read more about what you can do and how to do it here.](#)

LGBTI FAMILIES

ILGA-Europe contributes to the Stakeholder consultation on possible EU measures in the area of paternity leave

In February ILGA-Europe submitted a contribution to the Stakeholder consultation on possible EU measures in the area of paternity leave.

[Read the key recommendations and download the full text of the contribution here.](#)

HATE & VIOLENCE

OSCE/ODIHR's 2010 Annual Hate Crimes Report: call for submissions

ILGA-Europe will soon start preparing a comprehensive submission to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the OSCE, in view of their annual report on "*Hate Crimes in the OSCE Region – Incidents and Responses in 2010*".

[Read more about the submission to OSCE here.](#)

TRANSGENDER

Administrative Supreme Court in Austria ends forced outing of trans people on marriage certificate

Spouses, who upon legal gender recognition of one of them are of the same sex have in marriage certificates continued to be called „man“ and “woman”. This has led to outing of the trans spouse each time when he/she had to present the marriage certificate.

[Read the media release from Rechtskomitee LAMBDA here.](#)

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Budapest Pride ban overturned

The police in Budapest banned the Pride March scheduled to take place 18 June 2011. However national and international human rights organisations strongly condemned the decision and the Metropolitan Court of Budapest overturned the police ban.

[Read more about the overturned ban of Budapest Pride here.](#)

Minsk Authorities Sanctioned Rally of Sexual Minorities on Valentine's Day

A dozen LGBT activists took part in the event in a park close to the Ministry of Justice, one of the locations that were approved by both the Minsk City Executive Committee and the police.

[Read more about the Belarusian public LGBT event here.](#)

NOTICE BOARD

Amnesty International's photo contest: YES to diversity, NO to discrimination

Amnesty International has challenged people across Europe to snap a shot to illustrate their vision of a society free of discrimination. The aim is to mobilise people to express the ideal of a fairer and more inclusive society as creatively and imaginatively as they can. The contest is open to everyone in Europe above the age of 14, excluding professional photographers and runs until 31 March 2011.

[Find out how to take part in the contest and submit your photos here.](#)

Sex Work and Human Rights Symposium – 5-6 March 2011

Pembe Hayat LGBTTT Solidarity Association in Turkey is organising this symposium in order to attract attention to the problems of sex workers, including discrimination, hate crimes, violence, stigmatization, lack of legal and 'de facto' protection.

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

Conference 'Fleeing Homophobia. Seeking Safety in Europe' – 4-5 April 2011

The conference will focus on the research findings of the Fleeing Homophobia project. These findings will be shared with a wider audience. The consequences of these findings for policy makers, decision makers, the judiciary, lawyers, NGO's and activists will be discussed. Academics and people working in practice will share insights and experiences, so as to make these mutually fruitful.

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

Challenging Homophobia in Education (Europe Wide) Conference – 27-29 April 2011

LGBT Youth Scotland and Legebitra are currently coming to the end of an 18 month project to examine the strategies used by governments and NGOs to challenge homophobia within education together. As part of this project they will be hosting a 2 day long conference in Edinburgh to disseminate the results of the research and best practices.

[Read more about the conference and the call for participants here.](#)

International seminar on Homophobia in schools in Eastern Europe – 4-5 May 2011

The main aim of the seminar is to address how homosexuality is dealt with in (primary and secondary) schools in Eastern Europe, what is the situation of LGBT pupils/students in these schools and how LGBT teachers are treated at their workplace in schools. The conference is organised by The Peace Institute, Legebitra and the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Deadline for abstracts: March 15, 2011.

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

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all previous Euro-Letters in English as well as the Greek translations from No 127, January 2006 are available in pdf format on [our website](#).

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Steffen Jensen, member of the ILGA-Europe board 1996-2000



Steffen Jensen

Read the first personal testimonial in the celebration of the 15th Anniversary of ILGA-Europe - this time from one of the founders of ILGA-Europe, Steffen Jensen.

In the late 80's ILGA had established a working party dealing with European issues: the CoE/CSCE working party. It was dealing with issues around the Council of Europe and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (later the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe – OSCE). From the 1991 conference in Berlin an EC working party was also established, dealing with issues around the European Community (later the European Union).

The working parties consisted each of around 10-15 people from European countries and quite many were members of both working parties. I was part of both, and in all we were less than 20 people involved in the work, and we took care of lobbying the European institutions. The Euro-Letter was established in 1990 as a common information tool between members of the working parties and I was the editor until 2005.

I had taken part in all ILGA World and European conferences since 1986 and often been involved in changes of ILGA rules and together with my membership of the two working parties this was the background for my involvement in the establishment of ILGA-Europe.

And I am very proud of having taken part in that, because ILGA-Europe has really been a great success and is now a very respected international NGO with great influence on European policy concerning LGBT issues with close ties to all European institutions both at EU level and at Council of Europe level.

Among the most spectacular achievements of ILGA-Europe I will mention the inclusion of sexual orientation in the Amsterdam Treaty and the Framework directive on discrimination in the labour market.

Before the establishment of ILGA-Europe and before the Amsterdam Treaty it was nearly impossible for ILGA to get a positive dialogue with the European Commission and the Council of Ministers – only the Parliament would listen to us. This has really changed – and now ILGA Europe has close relations in all European institutions.

ILGA-Europe is – rightly – considered a very professional NGO always delivering very precise, relevant and to-the-point contributions. The main reason for that is of course the excellent staff we have been lucky to have.

Steffen Jensen, Denmark

