



# EURO-LETTER

ILGA-Europe's monthly electronic LGBTI political and legal news bulletin

**No. 188**

**April 2011**

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## **ILGA-EUROPE**

### **ILGA-Europe's 15th Anniversary: Adrian Coman, member of the ILGA-Europe Board 1997-2002**

Read the third article in the celebration of the 15th Anniversary of ILGA-Europe - this time as an interview with former board member, Adrian Coman.

[Read the article here.](#)

### **ILGA-Europe at the conference 'Montenegro - a brighter spot on the LGBT map'**

On 28 March, Juventas organised a conference Montenegro-a brighter spot on the LGBT map. Representatives from the government of Montenegro and the civil society as well as the EU Delegation in Montenegro and ILGA-Europe were invited to speak in the conference.

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

### **Training in Montenegro by ILGA-Europe**

On 29-30 March, ILGA-Europe conducted a training on Human Rights Violations Documentation and Advocacy with the representatives from Juventas and LGBT Forum Progress, the two

organisation working on LGBT issues in Montenegro.

[Read more and see pictures from the training in Montenegro.](#)

### **ILGA-Europe at the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Fundamental Rights Platform of the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)**

On 14 and 15 April, ILGA-Europe participated to the 4<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Fundamental Rights Agency's (FRA) Fundamental Rights Platform (FRP). The FRP is a network for cooperation and exchange organised by the FRA to structure its dialogue with the civil society. ILGA-Europe has been taking an active part in FRP meetings since the foundation of the Agency.

[Read more here about the annual meeting.](#)

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## **EUROPE**

### **European convention on violence against women to include protection for lesbian, bisexual and trans women**

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a new convention to protect women from violence on 6 April 2011. ILGA-Europe regards this as a major step forward in the fight against gender-based violence and towards full protection of women across Europe from both domestic violence and in other circumstances such as violence in public places, forced marriage, rape, 'honour' crimes and genital mutilation.

[Read more about this breakthrough convention on a European level here.](#)

### **New Hungarian Constitution: ILGA-Europe urged Hungarian parliamentarians to uphold European human rights standards**

On Monday, 18 April 2011, the Hungarian parliamentarians had their final vote on the proposal for a new Constitution of Hungary. Various provisions of the draft of the Constitutions caused serious concerns from various European institutions and human rights organisations.

Read the [media release from ILGA-Europe](#) and the [media release from the Hungarian LGBT Alliance](#)

### **Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers reply to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation**

The Committee of Ministers has now, finally, replied to the Assembly regarding the groundbreaking resolution from April 2010. ILGA-Europe considers the response disappointing.

[Read more about the resolution and the response here.](#)

### **Thomas Hammarberg: Implementation of human rights standards remains unsatisfactory in Europe**

Human Rights Commissioner Thomas Hammarberg presented on 12 April his annual report 2010. His final analysis: "Progress in implementing human rights is too slow; and the disappointment felt by many is more than justified. For this the politicians in power have a responsibility; the implementation of human rights is largely a question of political will."

[Read more about the annual report from the Council of Europe here.](#)

### **Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly Monitoring Committee report on Georgia**

In its two yearly report on Georgia, the Monitoring Committee expressed concern at the situation of the LGBT community in Georgia, and the Assembly adopted a resolution calling upon the Georgian authorities to "step up their efforts to fight any forms of intolerance and hate speech on the basis of ... sexual orientation".

Read [the resolution](#) and [the report](#) here.

### **New website calls Slovak LGBT people to report discrimination**

The Slovak LGBT organisation, Iniciatíva Inakos has launched a website called Homofobia.sk. The website is designed for reporting, monitoring and prevention of homophobic incidents, provision of

information for victims of attacks and discrimination in Slovakia.

[Read more about the new Slovak website.](#)

### **Lithuanian Parliament still unready to reject homophobic law**

A majority of the members of the Committee on Legal Affairs of Lithuanian Parliament voted for the „improvement“ of legislative amendment which seeks to establish harsh fines for the „propagation of homosexual relations in the public“. The author of the anti-gay law, MP Petras Grazulis now has unlimited time to come up with a new amended proposal which has to go under considerations in the parliamentary committees once again.

[Read more and the reaction from the Lithuanian Gay League here.](#)

### **EU Roma Framework weak on discrimination against Roma**

The European Roma Policy Coalition (ERPC) expressed concerns after the adoption of the EU framework for National Roma Integration Strategies.

[Read the press release here.](#)

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## **UNITED NATIONS**

### **Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Assembly and of Association appointed**

Maina Kiai has been appointed as the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association for the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

[Read more about this new position within United Nations here.](#)

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## **ASYLUM**

### **European Parliament introduces sexual orientation and gender identity in revised EU directive on asylum**

The European Parliament voted in favour of a report which contains a number of measures strengthening the applications from individuals claiming asylum in the European Union due to persecutions because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

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

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## **ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES**

### **Lesbian couple challenge hotel in Brighton, United Kingdom**

A lesbian couple was denied a double room in the British city Brighton.

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

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## **LGBTI FAMILIES**

### **Liechtenstein will hold referendum on same-sex registered partnership law in June**

In March 2011, the Liechtenstein Parliament unanimously adopted the registered partnership bill. The only thing that could prevent the Bill from becoming law is a negative referendum. Such a referendum must be held within three months if 1,000 signatures are collected. On 21 April, an initiative called “Vox Populi” presented 1,208 signatures to the Government office. The Liechtenstein Government has therefore announced that a referendum will be held able in June 2011. The result

will be binding.

[Read more about the referendum here](#) (only in German)

### **Poland ends discrimination against same-sex couples who want to have their relationships recognised abroad**

The Polish registry offices will be issued with new certificates which will effectively end in Poland discrimination against same sex couples wanting to get married or enter into a civil partnership abroad.

[Read more about the development in Poland here.](#)

### **European Court of Human Rights hears first case on second parent adoption by same-sex couple**

On April 12 the Court held a hearing on the case of Gas & Dubois v. France. The lawyer for the couple, Caroline Mecary, set out very clearly the ways in which a denial of the right to have two legal parents is contrary to the best interests of the child. Professor Robert Wintemute made an intervention on behalf of ILGA-Europe and a number of other NGOs, in support of the couple. The Court is likely to publish its judgment later this year.

[Read more about case and the interventions here](#)

### **Austrian Supreme Court asks Constitutional Court to turn down the ban of insemination of lesbian couples**

With introduction of registered partnership by 1st January 2010 Austria explicitly banned medically assisted procreation for lesbian couples. The Austrian Supreme Court now asks the Constitutional Court to turn down that ban as unconstitutional.

[Read the press release from Rechtskomitee LAMBDA about the development in Austria here.](#)

### **The National Rainbow Family Conference in Bern Was a Success**

The Kornhausforum in Bern, Switzerland, served as the venue for the National Rainbow Family Conference. A colourful programme made up of panel discussions, scientific presentations and an exhibit illustrated the current situation of rainbow families in Switzerland. The umbrella organisation's principal demand is equality in adoption law. The politicians in attendance expect a repeal of the ban on adoptions for registered partners no earlier than 2016.

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

### **Seminar on Free Movement of Same-sex Families in the EU**

On the 3 May MEP Sophie in't Veld in collaboration with ALDE, the European Parliaments Intergroup on LGBT Rights and ILGA-Europe are organising a seminar in the European Parliament about free movement of same-sex families in the EU.

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

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## **AGE OF CONSENT**

### **Supreme Court in Gibraltar equalises age of consent**

On 8 April the Supreme Court in Gibraltar made a judgment to equalise the age of consent so it is 16 years old for all.

[Read more about the development in Gibraltar here.](#)

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## **TRANS ISSUES**

### **Portugal: Gender identity legislation signed by the President**

After the initial veto by the President, the Portuguese Parliament confirmed the legislation that ensures gender recognition for trans persons. This confirmation in Parliament has now forced the President to sign the law into effect. Upon publication, everyone will finally be entitled to a legal

recognition of their gender identity in Portugal.

[Read more about the development in Portugal here.](#)

### **Malta continues to breach human rights of transgender people**

Health Minister says there are no surgery facilities or health care coverage in the country. This is despite the fact that Maltese legislation requires sterility and heavy invasive surgery in order to change gender markers.

[Read more on the website of Transgender Europe.](#)

### **Three trans women killed in Izmir, Turkey**

On 19 April three trans women got shot in Izmir, Turkey. One of the trans women died immediately after the shooting - two others were severely wounded and died of the casualties later at the hospital.

[Read more on the website of Transgender Europe.](#)

### **UK major TV channel commits to sensitive trans coverage**

The British Channel 4 signed the memorandum of understanding, and BBC either did already sign or will follow soon. The signing TV-channels and media are committing themselves to portraying trans people and the issues they are facing more sensitively.

[Read more about the memorandum of understanding created by Transmediawatch here.](#)

### **Albania: five trans people put at risk when their house was put on fire**

On 27 April 2011, five trans people was put at risk when the house where they slept was set on fire by unknown perpetrators. Luckily all five escaped the fire and are well.

[Read more about the incident in Albania here.](#)

### **Transgender Europe becomes member of European platform of Social NGOs**

The membership of the Social Platform has voted positively on Transgender Europe's application for full membership at General Assembly in Brussels.

The membership is an important step for Transgender Europe in establishing the voice of trans people at the heart of Europe together with ILGA-Europe who is already a member of Social Platform.

[Read more about Social Platform here.](#)

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## **FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION**

### **The European Court of Human Rights began to consider the case of the "Rainbow House"**

The Court has started the communication stage of the complaint of Tyumen LGBT organisation "Rainbow House" (participant of the Russian LGBT Network) about the refusal to register and discrimination based on sexual orientation.

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

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## **HATE AND VIOLENCE**

### **First case from Georgia to the European Court of Human Rights concerning police homophobia**

The case concerns the treatment by police during a raid on Inclusive Foundation in Georgia in December 2009. Interights from the United Kingdom and the Georgian human rights litigation NGO (Article 42) will do the representation.  
[Read more about the case here.](#)

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## FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

### **Montenegro: LGBT activists are preparing for the first pride parade with support from the Prime minister.**

The pride parade is planned to take place on 31 May in the capital Podgorica. In start April the Montenegrin Prime Minister expressed support for the parade, however the organisers are still worried about their safety.

[Read about the support from the Montenegrin Prime Minister here.](#)

[Read more about the pride event in Montenegro here.](#)

### **Belarus: Minsk City Executive Committee refused to LGBTI activists in the conduct of "Silence Day" on April 25**

Of the eight applications submitted by members of the organisation IDAHO Belarus were rejected by Minsk City Executive Committee under the pretext that the protesters would interfere with pedestrians or in this place will take other measures.

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

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## NOTICE BOARD

### **Participate in the European Youth Forum Survey on the situation of interns in Europe**

The European Youth Forum is taking up an initiative with other partners to improve the situation of internships in Europe.

[Take part in their survey here.](#)

### **Call for abstracts for Fleeing Homophobia Conference, 5-6 September 2011**

The conference intends to share the research findings with a wider audience; to discuss the consequences for policy makers, decision makers, the judiciary, lawyers, NGO's and activists; and to see how academic research can be made fruitful for asylum practice, and how practice can inform further research. The call for abstracts is now open – deadline 15 June 2011.

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

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Euro-Letter is published by **ILGA-Europe** - the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex Association (ILGA)

ISSN 1998-8117

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**Previous issues:**

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](#).

ILGA-Europe is grateful to **Pantelis Ravidas, Joanna Papazoglou and Evdokia Sakka** for the Greek translations.

\* \* \* \* \*

[This publication is supported under the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS \(2007-2013\).](#)

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"Its harder to crack a prejudice than an atom." *Albert Einstein*



**15 years of cracking prejudice and discrimination**

**against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe**

*A tree is a piece of art. Do not print unless necessary.*

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