



# Strategic Plan for ILGA-Europe 2005-2008

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# Vision, Mission and Values Statement

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## Vision

ILGA-Europe's vision is of a world in which the human rights of all are respected and everyone can live in equality and free from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

## Mission

**ILGA-Europe's mission is:**

- \* to act as a voice at European level for the rights of those who face discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression
- \* to promote the right to equality and freedom from discrimination by lobbying and advocacy, and by educating and informing the European institutions, media and civil society
- \* to strengthen the capacity of European human rights organisations fighting against sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression discrimination to work for equality through their involvement in advocacy campaigns and networking, the exchange of best practice, the dissemination of information and capacity building programmes.

# Values of ILGA-Europe

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## Core Values

**Respect for fundamental human rights**, with particular emphasis on equality and freedom from discrimination, gender equality and the right to self determination.

**International solidarity**, with mutual support in combating oppression and discrimination and fighting for equality both within Europe and with other regions of the world.

**Full, democratic involvement of membership** in the development of policies and **transparency** in accounting for actions taken.

**Inclusivity**, with respect for diversity and accessibility.

**Effective delivery** of advocacy/anti-discrimination campaigns and capacity building programmes.

# Strategic Objectives of ILGA-Europe

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1. **Increased recognition of fundamental human rights.**
2. **Working towards full integration in the labour market.**
3. **Working towards full social inclusion, particularly with regard to access to goods and services.**
4. **Increased recognition of the diversity of family relationships.**
5. **Strengthened capacity of member organisations.**
6. **Strengthened capacity of ILGA- Europe to achieve it's mission.**

In its annual work programmes ILGA-Europe works with the three main European institutions, the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe (CoE), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), to promote lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights. It does this by seeking to influence these institutions to develop policies supportive of LGBT rights, and by making use of these policies once they are in place, either at European level, or through informing and educating national member organisations to use these policies. It also seeks to extend LGBT rights at European level by supporting test cases at the European Court of Human Rights and at the European Court of Justice.

## Over-arching approaches to achieving strategic objectives

**Inclusion of Europe wide approach** - recognising our members in all of the countries of Europe.

**Inclusion of Equality within the LGBT communities as a focus throughout** - encouraging equality for all within the organisation and all its actions.

**Creating links between strategic objectives** - enhancing the synergy of output from combinations of strategies in the attainment of objectives.

# Strategies to Achieve These Objectives

## Currently ILGA-Europe uses the following strategies:

- 1. Awareness raising** - raising awareness about the issues of inequality and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity within the relevant institutions, other human rights based social change organisations, the media and the general public through information dissemination and media work.
- 2. European policy advocacy** - advocating for human rights standards, policies and legislation at the European institutions which support the rights and needs of LGBT people.
- 3. Supporting test cases** - identifying and supporting legal actions that will extend recognition of key areas of LGBT rights at European level.
- 4. Lobbying for European pressure on national institutions** - using European human rights standards, policies, legislations and institutions to put pressure on national governments and legislatures which fail to uphold the rights of LGBT people through informing on non-compliance to relevant institutions and lobbying for their support.
- 5. Broadening the range of LGBT issues addressed at European level** - developing argumentation and providing evidence for the greater inclusion of LGBT issues in a wide arena of social policy - e.g. youth, health and social inclusion policies.
- 6. Capacity development** - enhancing the capacity of member organisations to lobby, advocate, raise awareness and engage in the promotion and inclusion of LGBT recognition in their own countries. Enhancing the capacity of ILGA-Europe itself to undertake its work and attain its strategic objectives through organisational development and the acquisition of increased competences by board and staff.
- 7. Co-operation with relevant organisations** - working in co-operation with other organisations so as to enhance the visibility of LGBT issues, to contribute to human rights based equality debates and policy development and to work in solidarity with others also experiencing exclusion, inequality and discrimination.

## Emerging Strategies:

**A. Promotion of good practice** - ILGA-Europe has developed a resource on Promoting Equality in Employment. Further developments in this field would be to work directly with employers, employees, trades unions and interested groups on promoting good employment practices in relation to LGBT people.

**B. Enhancing understanding of multiple identities and diversity** - ILGA-Europe is working with member organisations and other European based NGOs to develop greater understanding of the intersection between various forms of inequality and how multiple inequality and discrimination experienced by people with multiple identity can be addressed legally, in terms of social policy and in terms of promotion of awareness of these issues. This will lead to future action strategy.

## Implementation of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan will be operationalised through the development of an annual work programme to cover all of the six strategic objectives. This will be written in the form of a logframe document and will in turn form the basis for the annual work programmes of each of the staff members, the working groups and the sub-committees and the board of ILGA-Europe.

The attainment of these goals on an annual basis will be monitored through the Performance Management System which operates internally, and which is used to report to ILGA-Europe's funders and to provide evidence of performance for an external evaluation of the work of the organisation.

At conference, a report will be made on progress on the key performance indicators and on the annual performance indicators. This will be presented at a workshop each year.

## Developing the next strategic plan

There will be annual reviews of performance on the annual work programmes, which will feed into a three-year review forum to be held at the relevant annual conference. This learning and reflection on progress will contribute to the organisation identifying the next cycle of strategic objectives, which will then form the next and subsequent strategic plans. ILGA-Europe's cycle of developing strategic plans will mirror the annual conference cycle so as to ensure maximum participation and inclusion of opinions and views of members.

# Description of the organisation

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## About ILGA-Europe

ILGA-Europe is the European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). It is a non-governmental umbrella organisation which represents its members, principally organisations of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, at the European level. Its membership consists of some 200 organisations from across Europe.

ILGA-Europe enjoys participatory status at the Council of Europe and receives financial support from the European Community. It is a member of the Platform of European Social NGOs. ILGA-Europe was established as a separate region of the ILGA in 1996. ILGA itself was founded in 1978. It has an office in Brussels, and six staff members.

## History

ILGA-Europe was founded in 1996, when its parent organisation, the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), established separate regions. It took over responsibility for supporting the development of the LGBT movement in Europe and for relationships with the European Union, Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Initially ILGA-Europe worked entirely on the basis of volunteer resources. However in 2001 its potential contribution to the European Union's anti-discrimination policies (established under Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam) was recognised through the provision of European Community core funding. This enabled ILGA-Europe to set up an office in Brussels, to recruit permanent staff, and to conduct an extensive programme of work in relation to sexual orientation discrimination within the EU member states and the accession countries. Further financial support from the Sigrid Rausing Trust allowed ILGA-Europe to extend its work in areas not covered by EU funding, particularly East Europe, and on transgender issues.

## Relationship to International Lesbian and Gay Association

The International Lesbian and Gay Association was founded in 1978, with the objective of working for the equality of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals around the world. This mandate was later extended to include transgender people.

As a region of the International Lesbian and Gay Association, ILGA Europe shares the overall objectives of the Association. Membership in the region is common, with the Association's members in Europe constituting the membership of ILGA-Europe. However ILGA-Europe is a legal entity in its own right, and is registered as an international not-for-profit organisation in Belgium.

## Structure

ILGA-Europe has more than 200 member organisations in over 40 European countries. These include national and local organisations, as well as trades union based groups, political party based groups, women's groups, etc. Many of ILGA-Europe's member organisations combine human rights campaigning with the provision to their community of support services such as telephone help lines, HIV information and advice, and counselling.

It is governed by a board of directors elected by the membership at the annual conference. They, together with the membership, are responsible for the main policies and strategic direction of the organisation. The day-to-day operations of the organisation are managed by the Executive Director, the Programmes Director, and supporting staff.

## Recent achievements

Over the years ILGA-Europe has been engaged in extensive activities aimed at promoting LGBT rights through the principal European institutions. These activities have done much to ensure a greater awareness of sexual orientation discrimination, and even more so, of gender identity discrimination, which until recent years, has been almost completely ignored by European level policymakers and legislators.

At the **European Union** these activities have included:

- \* lobbying for the inclusion of sexual orientation discrimination in the anti-discrimination provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam, and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- \* working to ensure the effective implementation of the Employment Directive at national level;
- \* seeking to ensure full recognition of the rights of LGBT families in the Freedom of Movement Directive;
- \* seeking to ensure the recognition of persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in the EU's legislation defining refugee status;
- \* using the criteria for accession to the European Union to pressurise governments of candidate countries to repeal discriminatory laws.

In 2004 ILGA-Europe played a significant role in the events leading to the withdrawal by the President of the European Commission of Mr Buttiglione's nomination for the position of Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs. Working with its principal Italian member organisation, it collected evidence of Mr Buttiglione's views on LGBT and women's rights and made this information available members of European Parliament (MEPs) participating in the hearing on his appointment. It formed the basis for a number of the questions put to Mr Buttiglione, his responses to which confirmed his unsuitability for the role.

At the **Council of Europe** ILGA-Europe contributed to the work leading to the adoption by the Parliamentary Assembly of recommendations on the situation of lesbians and gays in Europe, on immigration and asylum, and on proposals for the inclusion of sexual orientation in Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights. It has

also contributed to the development of the case law of the Court, through making *amicus curiae* submissions in two crucial cases, *Karner vs Austria* (tenancy succession rights for same-sex partners) and *Fretté vs France* (adoption by a gay man). In 2000 it led a campaign opposing the candidacy for the position of Secretary-General of Walter Schwimmer, an Austrian parliamentarian who had consistently opposed moves to eliminate legal discrimination against LGB people in Austria. Although he was elected by the Assembly, his majority was reduced to just two votes, far below the level expected. A moral victory, it highlighted the fact that it was not longer acceptable for important European human rights positions to be occupied by homophobes - a development emphasised even more strongly by the Buttiglione affair four years later.

At the **OSCE** ILGA-Europe has raised LGBT rights during the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting conferences for many years. It has recently been invited to contribute to a Law Enforcement Officers Training Programme on hate crimes.

ILGA-Europe has also contributed to the development of the LGBT movement in Europe, particularly in East Europe. The annual conferences have provided an important forum for exchange of information and best practice on campaigning, both at national level, and in making use of the European human rights institutions. The quarterly Newsletter, monthly Euro-Letter, and media releases, ensure the circulation of critical information. Individual projects on documenting discrimination, for example in the context of EU accession, and health policy issues, have served both to highlight the extent of discrimination, and develop the capacity of the member organisations involved.



