

**29th European Conference of the International Lesbian and Gay Association
11th ILGA-Europe conference**

**Vilnius, Lithuania, 25-28 October 2006
Organised in association with Lithuanian Gay League**

18th June 2007

Dear friends,

This year our annual conference will take place in Vilnius from the 25th to the 28th of October 2007 with the theme *“LGBT Rights are human rights – Respect, Recognition and Responsibilities”*.

It is time for us to invite our members to make arrangements for their participation and travel, and for the practical and constitutional activities that members need to undertake to make sure that they can exercise the rights they are entitled to under the constitution of ILGA-Europe.

The conference is not only the annual general assembly of the organisation where stock will be taken of last year's activities and a new Executive Board elected, but also an exciting forum to meet activists from all over Europe and to attend a wide range of interesting plenary sessions with high-level speakers and a series of workshops on strategic litigation at national and European levels, hate crime, multiple discrimination, barriers to accessing justice, the Yogyakarta Principles, the PRECIS project, building alliances, and using our experience and many more. In total 21 workshops!

We will also have the chance to enjoy Vilnius thanks to the exciting social program that our hosts, Lithuanian Gay League, are putting together so that it would have something in it for everyone. As you can read from the welcoming letter from the hosts, the program also includes a public Rainbow flag event on Thursday giving us all a good chance to start the conference with the feeling of true solidarity.

Don't miss this opportunity to exchange views and ideas, to meet old and new friends and to strengthen our pan-European movement for equality for LGBT people. For the first time ILGA-Europe will hold its annual conference in a former USSR country, and this at a crucial moment in history, when talking about diversity and equality seems so difficult and when our human rights, along with those of many others, are under siege.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

ILGA-Europe's annual conference is also our annual general meeting in which the Executive Board and the two representatives on the World Board are elected, and in which policy and constitutional issues are discussed, that will inform the work of ILGA-Europe for the following years.

Strategic Plan

The development of the Strategic Plan 2008-2011 is progressing and in Vilnius we hope to present a version of the plan for adoption by the conference. Watch out for the three papers/draft of the Strategic Plan which will be circulated in June, August and September. Take part by responding to each of the stages of development of the plan, and watch the progress by checking on the website www.ilga-europe.org and follow through to Strategic Plan 2008-2011.

Elections

This will be the second time we will elect a board of 10 people under the rules approved in Budapest conference and we are learning much from the experience of last year.

As for last year we are now calling for nominations to be made. In the last few years the workload of the board in the areas of finances and employment has increased significantly. On the other hand activities such as direct lobbying now weigh less on the board. For this reason we would like to invite representatives of member organizations who are good team workers and have a strong knowledge in the areas of finances and/or employment to consider putting themselves forward, so as to give an opportunity to our Conference to provide next year's board with the necessary skills.

We would also like to encourage women representatives of member organizations and representatives of member organizations belonging to underrepresented groups within ILGA-Europe to consider putting themselves forward to give an opportunity to our Conference to elect a board richer in diversity.

Policy and constitutional debate

Discussion of policy and constitutional issues is done by debating and voting on the proposals put forward by member organizations and the Board prior to the conference and the amendments to those proposals. Please remember that, by actual rules, proposals cannot be submitted at the conference (with the only exceptions contained in Standing Order 10).

The attached notification sets out, in accordance with the Constitution, the **detailed timetable and procedures** for these and for full members to register their voting delegate(s).

Streamlining of conference mailing process - important notice!

We are again streamlining the conference mailing process: as last year, we will no longer send conference documents to you by ordinary mail. Instead, for each of the three mailings, you will receive a notification that the relevant conference information is available at the ILGA-Europe website. This procedure will both speed up the flow of information and save money. For the second and third mailings this notification will be by e-mail only.

Key dates and deadlines

30 July **Deadline** for submission of **proposals**

- 13 August** **Second mailing:** Publication of proposals, preliminary agenda and accounts for 2006
- 7 September** **Deadline** for registration for conference participants
- 7 September** **Deadline** for registration of delegates for voting purposes
- 9 September** **Deadline** for submission of **amendments to proposals**
Deadline for nominations of **candidates** for the ILGA-Europe Executive Board and for regional representatives on the ILGA World Executive Board
- 9 September** **Deadline** for submission of proposals to host the 2009 conference
- 1 October** **Third mailing:** Final agenda, including amendments to proposals, names of candidates for the Executive Board and the regional representatives on the World Board, candidates for hosting the 2009 conference and the proposed budget for next financial year.

For all procedural documents and the conference registration and scholarship application forms, see the attached first mailing notification or access www.ilga-europe.org/conference. Further information can be obtained by contacting ILGA-Europe at conference@ilga-europe.org.

We look forward to seeing many of you in Vilnius in October.

Yours sincerely,

Riccardo Gottardi

Deborah Lambillotte
ILGA-Europe co-chairs