

ILGA-EUROPE  
**ACTIVITY  
REPORT**

2021/2022



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION



2022 started with the launches of our second funding needs assessment report and the 11th edition of our Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia. Like the rest of the world we didn't anticipate that on February 24 Russia would launch a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, thereby beginning the biggest conflict in Europe since the Second World War.

As a result, our work became a delicate balancing act, one which we had been in many ways prepared for by the COVID-19 pandemic two years earlier. We had to find ways to immediately respond using all the resources and skills built up in our team, while at the same time continuing the essential long-haul work we do on behalf of and alongside activist organisations across Europe and Central Asia.

We understood from the outset that the war was not going to be a short-term situation for people in Ukraine, Russia, and neighbouring countries. We recognised that there would be particular vulnerabilities experienced by LGBTI refugees, and those LGBTI people who were either forced, or chose to remain in Ukraine and Russia. We acknowledged too that this war would have an impact on people in countries at risk of invasion, such as Moldova and Georgia, and that there would be large movement of LGBTI people to the Caucasus and Central Asia.

With this understanding, a huge amount of our immediate time, resources and energy was required to respond - practically, financially and strategically - to the needs of LGBTI organisations both in Ukraine and across the regions we work on.

Amidst it all, there is so much to draw encouragement and inspiration from...

- We have continued to make real progress with our political advocacy and our support of new strategic legislation to advance cases on the European level as you'll read in the sections below.
- We will close this year with the launch of four new programmes, which have been in development during the past 12 months.
- We have also been securing a considerable amount of new funding, which will significantly increase the resources we have to support and enhance the movement in the years to come, and.
- We have continued to invest in tools enabling us to do the work. This year we launched our re-designed website after a two-year process of analysing the thousands of pages of the content of our previous site and reimagining the presentation of our work to make it a fully accessible, inclusive and immediate facility. We have continued to grow The Hub, our free online resource centre for the LGBTI movement.

- While we've said goodbye to long-time treasured colleagues, we've also welcomed to new wonderful staff, and will be bringing three new people by the end of the year.
- And of course, after a two-year period of adopting and adapting to COVID-19 restrictions, we have begun to come together again in person with the organisations and activists we support across the regions. Our board too have been able to meet in the same room, as have our staff team. Being able to connect beyond our computer screens, as we are able to do at our first proper conference in three years, provides a vital emotional underpinning that really benefits all of our work.

In a region currently dominated by the consequences of a war unleashed by a superpower, the balancing act is in letting the situation drain all the energy, attention and resources responding to the war at the expense of everything else. There is no doubt there is an urgent role for ILGA-Europe to play in the here and now, but at the same time we have a unique role to play in the larger picture as it unfolds.

Over the past year, whether I have been on calls with activists in Ukraine, or marching alongside activists at EuroPride in Belgrade, or meeting with donors at a global gathering in Iceland, I've been reminded with great clarity about what our work is all about. It is about people. It is about both the collective and the individual, our communities and every lesbian, gay man, bisexual, trans and intersex person living in them. It is about responding to needs in the moment as best we can, and looking out for needs in the long-term, with the goal of making the world we live in safe, and the lives of LGBTI people free of any kind of marginalisation or oppression.

Ultimately, as we have seen with great clarity over the past few years, it is a constant navigation between the immediate and the long-term.

This comes with responsibility. It is ever present in my mind that the work comes at a cost for so many who give so much of themselves for the good of all. While we are all putting so much effort into shaping the world to come, we must take care of ourselves too. Every single person, activist or actor ILGA-Europe works with is a resource for the betterment of all, and our resources need to be cherished as well as supported.

On a personal level, looking at ILGA-Europe's growing team, I am truly grateful and comforted to know that I am surrounded by such a strong group of talented people who work with such professionalism and commitment, and who deeply care about being there for those who tirelessly work on the ground. Our work, with you and on your behalf, holds steady and continues.

Our message to you back at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, was that the work goes on, despite the interruption our world experienced. As we hopefully move into a post-pandemic era, amidst the enormous change it has brought about, this message is more important than ever. Our work, with you and on your behalf, holds steady and continues.



Evelyne Paradis



# RAINBOW

EUROPE

## ANNUAL REVIEW: PUBLISHED FEB 15

OUR 10TH ANNUAL REVIEW SHOWS THAT AMID A RISE IN OFFICIAL ANTI-LGBTI RHETORIC FUELLING A WAVE OF HATE CRIME IN EVERY COUNTRY IN EUROPE, THERE IS A GROWING INSTITUTIONAL RESOLVE TO TACKLE HATRED AND EXCLUSION.

**1,763 DOWNLOADS**  
**18,554 WEB VISITS**



**POTENTIAL MEDIA REACH:**  
**33 MILLION IN FIRST 10 DAYS**

### TOP 5 MEDIA HEADLINES:

- 1 'LGBTI ASYLUM SEEKERS FACE 'DOUBLE DISCRIMINATIONS' ACROSS EUROPE, NGO WARNS. (EURONEWS INTL)
- 2 ILGA-EUROPE ВЫПУСТИЛА ДОКЛАД О ПОЛОЖЕНИИ ЛГБТИ-ЛЮДЕЙ В ЕВРОПЕ И ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ В 2021 ГОДУ  
ILGA-EUROPE RELEASES REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF LGBTI PEOPLE IN EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA (АФИША DAILY, RUSSIA)
- 3 BBC'S 'TRANSPHOBIC REPORTING' CALLED OUT IN MAJOR INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS REVIEW (PINK NEWS, UK)
- 4 THE BBC HAS BEEN CALLED OUT FOR TRANSPHOBIA BY A HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP (DAZED, UK)
- 5 ANTI-LGBTI RHETORIC RISING THROUGHOUT EUROPE (EURACTIV, EU)

## RAINBOW MAP & INDEX: PUBLISHED MAY 12

ILGA-EUROPE'S 2022 RAINBOW MAP SHOWS THAT A NEW DYNAMIC HAS APPEARED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS TO FILL IN THE GAPS THAT EXIST AROUND LGBTI EQUALITY, AND PUSH STANDARDS AT A TIME WHEN DEMOCRACY IN THE REGION IS BEING CHALLENGED.

**240,503 WEB VISITS**  
**SOCIAL MEDIA REACH: 1,291,108**



**POTENTIAL MEDIA REACH:**  
**1,102 MILLION IN FIRST 7 DAYS**

### TOP 5 COUNTRIES:

- 1 MALTA (94%)
- 2 DENMARK (74%)
- 3 BELGIUM (72%)
- 4 NORWAY (68%)
- 5 LUXEMBOURG (67%)

### BOTTOM 5 COUNTRIES:

- 1 BELARUS (12%)
- 2 RUSSIA (8%)
- 3 ARMENIA (7.5%)
- 4 TURKEY (4%)
- 5 AZERBAIJAN (2%)



IN THE FACE OF ANTI-LGBTI FORCES WHICH REMAIN RIFE ACROSS EUROPE, WE WELCOME THE RENEWED MOBILISATION BY A GROWING NUMBER OF POLITICIANS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO DO WHAT IS NEEDED TO IMPROVE THE LIVED REALITIES OF LGBTI PEOPLE. MORE IS DEFINITELY NEEDED TO STRENGTHEN THIS UPWARD DYNAMIC IN THE COMING YEAR. - EVELYNE PARADIS



## ADVOCACY

WE HAVE ACTIVELY WORKED  
TOWARDS RIGHTS FOR LGBTI PEOPLE IN  
**26 COUNTRIES**

WE HAVE HAD **30**  
EU LGBT POLICY & LEGISLATIVE INPUTS

**26** HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS  
WITH COMMISSIONERS, NATIONAL  
MINISTERS AND MEP'S

**6 THIRD-PARTY INTERVENTIONS  
IN STRATEGIC LITIGATIONS**

## FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

(SO FAR IN 2022)

- €3,773,173 INCOME
- €2,349,391 COSTS
- 3,699 FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

## REGRANTING

43 NEW GRANTS TOTALING:  
**€571,760**  
BY THE END OF 2022 WE EXPECT  
OUR NEW GRANTS TO COME TO €1M

WE MANAGED 90 ACTIVE  
GRANTS FOR A TOTAL OF  
**€1,053,982**  
**IN 28 COUNTRIES**

## DONATIONS

TOTAL: €246,000

- €35,000 OF THIS WAS RAISED AT THE EUROPEAN EQUALITY FUNDRAISER IN BRUSSELS, IN JUNE
- €129,435 WAS RAISED VIA REVOLUT BANKING
- WE HAD EMPLOYEE DONATIONS FROM 17 COMPANIES
- WE RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM 21 COMPANIES, INCLUDING: GOOGLE, DIAGEO, VOGUE EYEWEAR, JOOLZ, CATAWIKI, RIOT GAMES, ITW, WP ENGINE, SUPERMETRICS, & MADEWITHLOVE

## MEDIA REACH



"ILGA-EUROPE" APPEARED  
**1.6K TIMES IN PRESS ARTICLES  
IN 76 COUNTRIES**  
THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY  
**6.4 MILLION ARTICLE VIEWS**  
WHERE ILGA-EUROPE APPEARED

## RESOURCES



**#UkraineLGBTI**  
**Information-Action-Direction**

WE CREATED THIS THREE-PRONGED RESOURCE TO PROVIDE VITAL HELP FOR LGBTI PEOPLE CAUGHT UP BY THE WAR IN UKRAINE. AMONG OTHER THINGS, WE LIST THE BEST PLACES TO DONATE MONEY SO IT WILL GET DIRECTLY TO THOSE WHO NEED IT, LIST THE HELP AVAILABLE FOR LGBTI REFUGEES IN HOST COUNTRIES, WE PROVIDE DIRECT FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ORGANISATIONS THROUGH RE-GRANTING; CONNECTED TO RELEVANT ACTORS TO ENSURE MEDICINES REACHED LGBTI PEOPLE IN NEED; ADVOCATED FOR THE INCLUSION OF LGBTI PEOPLE IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES; AND PROVIDED RESOURCES AND ADVICE FOR LGBTI ORGANISATIONS IN HOST COUNTRIES.

**16,000 VISITORS SO FAR**

## MULTIMEDIA

31 BLOGS  
**12,100 VIEWS**  
8 PODCASTS  
**8,401 LISTENS**

### VIDEO CONTENT



TIKTOK: 1,279 VIEWS  
INSTAREELS: 10,171



## SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

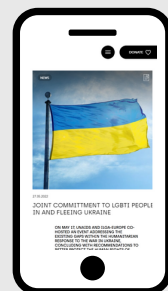


OUR AUDIENCE HAS  
**GROWN BY 10.5%**  
COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS PERIOD

OUR TWITTER ACCOUNT  
REMAINS THE BIGGEST  
CHANNEL WITH  
**44,052 FOLLOWERS**  
AND 115,312 ENGAGEMENTS



## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED JUNE 13



WORKING TOGETHER WITH SOLOS, AN AGENCY BASED IN PORTUGAL, WE RE-IMAGINED THE STRUCTURE AND DESIGN OF OUR WEBSITE TO STREAMLINE ACCESS TO OUR INFORMATION, EXPRESS IN SIMPLER BUT MORE DYNAMIC WAYS THE COMPLEX WORK WE DO, BE CLOSER TO VISITORS, FOSTER A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IN LGTBI ACTIVISM, AND BE FULLY ACCESSIBLE,



**152,000  
VISITORS  
SO FAR**

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR, ILGA-EUROPE IS A HIVE OF ACTIVITY. OUR 21 STAFF MEMBERS ARE CONSTANTLY WORKING ON A MYRIAD OF PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES, AND NOT ALL OF IT CAN MAKE IT INTO THIS REPORT. HERE ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WORK DONE OVER THE PAST YEAR, WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO CHANGE FOR LGBTI PEOPLE IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA UNDER EACH OF OUR FIVE PATHWAYS OF CHANGE. THIS YEAR WE HAVE INCLUDED A SECTION TO SHARE OUR WORK RESPONDING TO THE SITUATION FOR LGBTI PEOPLE IN UKRAINE AND NEIGHBOURING AND REFUGEE HOST COUNTRIES SINCE THE WAR BEGAN ON FEBRUARY 24.

## OUR WORK TO SUPPORT #UKRAINELGBTI

From the outset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we recognised that the war would not be a short-term situation, and that it would affect LGBTI people in Ukraine and beyond. With this understanding, a huge amount of our immediate time, resources and energy was required to respond - practically, financially and strategically - to the needs of LGBTI activists and organisations in the frontlines and in neighbouring countries, who are helping LGBTI people caught up in the conflict, while at the same time looking towards longer-term responses. Looking at the short, medium and long term, our central working principle has been to connect and mobilise people, institutions and resources to strengthen and reinforce the work happening on the ground.

### PROVIDING DIRECT SUPPORT

Since March, we issued grants for a total of 302,600 EUR to support LGBTI Ukrainians, 64% of which went to 13 LGBTI groups in Ukraine, and the rest to five groups welcoming LGBTI refugees in neighbouring countries (Poland, Moldova, Romania). These grants went to support organisations that are providing shelters, access to basic necessities and medication, psychological assistance to people in Ukraine and those who have left the country. Beyond funding, we've also launched online consultation to support organisations working in crisis situations to prevent burnout and take care of themselves.

### MOBILISING RESOURCES

We've also been assessing the needs of LGBTI organisations on an ongoing basis. We've been bringing the attention of larger funders to the resourcing needs and connecting LGBTI groups to funding opportunities whenever possible. We've also actively worked to mobilise both short and longer-term funding for Ukraine from different grantmakers.

### CONNECTING AND MOBILISING

We've been serving as a point of reference for different actors and at different levels. We've been playing a coordinating role between LGBTI organisations working directly with LGBTI people in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries, especially on support for refugee resettlement and access to medication. In this regard, we must thank Transgender Europe (TGEU), EuroCentralAsian Lesbian\* Community (EL\*C), RFSL, COC Nederland, and Freedom House for coming together and creating a true collaborative space to support LGBTI people affected by the war. We also shared information on an ongoing basis as part of our [three-part plan](#).

### ADVOCATING FOR INCLUSIVE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES

We are working to ensure that humanitarian aid is taking the specific needs of LGBTI people into account and that aid providers are connected with us and LGBTI organisations on the ground. While we broke new ground by working directly with UN agencies to develop

some of the first LGBTI [specific guidelines for humanitarian agencies](#), this is only a first step. Translating goodwill into concrete actions is yet to be seen. This is opening a new area of work for ILGA-Europe as we are increasingly committed to taking on the longer-term advocacy to make the humanitarian sector LGBTI-inclusive.

### WORKING TO ENSURE ACCESS TO MEDICATIONS

In the meantime, we've been doing our part to fill gaps in humanitarian needs, including by working with colleagues in other LGBTI organisations to organise shipments of medications and hormones to trans people in Ukraine. We've also been actively advocating with different institutions and governments for them to take action to respond to the needs in terms of [shelters](#) and medicines.

### MAPPING REFUGEE SUPPORT AND RESETTLEMENT

We've been advocating for the full application of the [Temporary Protection Directive](#) in EU countries and family reunification of all families. We did mapping of how refugee support and resettlement works on the ground in all EU countries and are engaged with the European Commission and members across the EU to ensure full and LGBTI inclusive implementation. On a more practical level, we connected groups working to support refugees to exchange information and expertise to make sure as many people as possible are taken care of across the EU, and we keep our [contacts list](#) up to date for LGBTI people fleeing Ukraine.

### PUTTING LGBTI PEOPLE ON THE POLICY AGENDA

Finally, we've been busy researching, monitoring, documenting and preparing briefings on what is currently happening for LGBTI people staying in Ukraine and Russia, or who are leaving or have left; what their needs are, and connecting to relevant actors in the humanitarian sector, both in the Ukraine and outside. We are connecting with activists on the ground, partner and member organisations, and updating institutions on rising issues, including [securing access](#) to border crossing and inclusive prevention and protection from [gender-based violence](#).

## PATHWAY 1 - EMPOWERED AND INCLUSIVE LGBTI COMMUNITIES

### HOLDING COMMUNITY SPACES FOR OUR EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIA MOVEMENT

After two years of meeting on a screen, our team has been particularly excited and invested in recreating the magic of ILGA-Europe annual conferences. Bringing forward the discussions and the learning from the 2021 Gathering Online, we're finally convening in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia around the theme "Shaping the World to Come". Being mindful of the context in which we'll be meeting again, the team and board have been even more attentive to creating conditions to enable us to come together once more in a safe and caring space, and to have the many conversations we need to have to move our movement and our work forward.

Earlier in the year, we had to decide to limit participants, anticipating potential COVID-related restrictions. We did so, trying to be as fair and accessible as possible, while remaining firmly committed to ensuring that the diversity of the LGBTI movement in the region is reflected at the conference. This is why throughout the registration and the scholarship process, our team worked hard to balance the different profiles of activists and organisations that are present in our movement, and to use the scholarship process to support the participation of activists from under-represented and marginalised parts of the community. As a result, around two thirds of participants at the conference are receiving support to be in Sofia.

### LET'S KEEP TALKING ABOUT COMMUNITY ORGANISING

As part of the series of webinars launched in 2021 to share learning and inspiration on community organising, we proposed a webinar discussion to share experiences of working with volunteers in LGBTI movement. Looking at different approaches of LGBTI organisations in engaging with volunteers, the webinar was an opportunity to reflect on why engaging volunteers is important and often even necessary as part of a strategic community organising work.



# PATHWAY 2 - STRONG, RESOURCED, SKILLED, ACCOUNTABLE AND SUSTAINABLE LGBTI MOVEMENTS

## ASSESSING THE FUNDING NEEDS OF LGBTI ORGANISATIONS

We published our latest [funding needs assessment report](#) in January, finding among many other facts, that one in three LGBTI organisations operate on less than 55 euro a day and almost 85% of organisations have been faced with burnout issues. The first funding needs assessment survey was carried out in 2017 with the intention to shine a light on the activities undertaken by LGBTI organisations. Our latest report, based on survey responses from almost 300 LGBTI organisations across Europe and Central Asia, continues this work and looks at organisations' budgets and funding sources, the populations they serve, the activities they do, and what is hard about their work. The report is instrumental in our work with grant-making institutions to make the case for more and better funding for our movement across the region.

## OUR GROWING RE-GRANTING WORK

Moving funding and knowledge closer to the movement is becoming an ever-more central part of our work every year. It is very difficult to capture in a few lines the extent of the time, energy and care that the team puts into ensuring that our financial resources are as accessible as possible for LGBTI activists across the region, while providing technical support and access to expertise to strengthen their work.

Over the past year, ILGA-Europe ran several large regranting programmes. Our "Responding to Anti-LGBTI forces" programme supported 21 LGBTI organisations to scale-up skills, competences and new tactics of the LGBTI movement in the areas of communication, alliance building, and sustaining a cohesive and resilient LGBTI movement in the context of rising anti-LGBTI forces. We recently launched a funding call for documentation projects on institutionalised violence and on support

available for victims of domestic violence based on their SOGIESC. This programme will support eight-to-ten groups to strengthen evidence on these issues, with the aim of supporting advocacy at both national and European levels.

The ILGA-Europe team constantly assesses where there are unmet needs from a geographical perspective, and seeks to address such needs through our programmes and projects. More and more of this work takes us to specific parts of the region and/or countries where LGBTI activists carry out their activism in increasingly difficult contexts, and which we don't talk about publicly out of security considerations. We can however say that we'll have four new large country and/or regional focus programmes coming up, some of which we'll be able to share more information on in a near future.

## EMERGENCY SUPPORT THROUGH DIGNITY FOR ALL

As a member of the Dignity consortium for a decade now, we've been able to give emergency funds, advocacy support, and security assistance to human rights defenders and civil society organisations under threat or attack due to their work on human rights and equality for LGBTI people. This programme was essential to our ability to respond quickly to everyone impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. By April, we had provided 16 grants to organisations from Poland, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia and Armenia – as many grants as we had issued for the whole of 2021. Since then, we've issued several other grants to groups requiring emergency interventions, as we see the number of requests for support continue to increase.

## OUR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME

Building on work that started almost ten years ago, we are very excited to have launched a new three-year programme aimed at strengthening [strategic communications skills](#) within the LGBTI movement in Europe and Central Asia, and contributing to collective thinking on the strategic use of communications in shaping public conversations and changing public attitudes.

As a part of this programme, we selected five partners with whom we'll work over the next two and a half years. These partners will receive multi-year grants to support them to make communications into one of the core functions in their work, and to amplify their existing communications skills and experiences. In turn, they are also expected to become 'anchor organisations' or 'hubs of knowledge', which can share learning with other LGBTI groups in the region.

We also opened a call for grants to support eight organisations that do work on communications with no, or limited resources or capacities, and those that work with/serve underrepresented communities. Meanwhile, we continue to offer practical support to activists through our very popular Skills Boost sessions, on topics like [creating great campaign](#) videos at home, make graphics with free tools and no design skills or working with media.

## LEARNING WITH THE ORG-MINDS PROGRAMME

Developing and fine-tuning organisations is at the core of social change work. And yet, so few of us have time and space think about how we set up our organisations. With our learning programme, OrgMinds, we want to create a space where LGBTI activists can learn about organisational design and explore ways to strengthen their organisations with peer support, inspiration, and the joy of discovery. Over 20 activists from 14 countries were selected to join us in this first programme. Along with our grants, LGBTI groups have our support and coaching in fine-tuning their strategies, strengthening financial management systems or practices, and in navigating crises. We'll be building on the learning from this programme in the coming year.

## PATHWAY 3 - A LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK WHICH PROTECTS AND PROMOTES HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY AT LOCAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

### KEEPING THE PRESSURE ON THE EU TO ACT AGAINST ATTACKS ON LGBTI RIGHTS

We've been very attentive to ensuring that the war was not used as an excuse to advancing equality work or acting against human rights violations. This was particularly true when it comes to remaining committed to holding strong on rule of law in the EU. Early on in the war, ILGA-Europe took a leading role with other human rights NGOs to send a [joint letter](#) to the presidents of both EU institutions, with a clear message to stay strong in the respect for fundamental rights and rule of law across the EU, and not to allow the war in to be used as an argument to water down previous steps taken against the attacks of the human rights of LGBTI people by the governments of Poland and Hungary.

**Speaking of Poland and Hungary...** We've been carefully following the [infringement procedures](#) taken by the European Commission against both Hungary and Poland their anti-LGBTI legislation and measures. In July, the Commission brought the Hungarian government before the CJEU due to discriminatory amendments adopted in June, which ban the "portrayal and the promotion of gender identity different from sex at birth, the change of sex and homosexuality". The Commission judged that the responses given by the government were unsatisfactory and thus started legal procedures. We stay vigilant as we closely monitor and respond to developments in the procedures.

### WORKING TO ENSURE RULE OF LAW

Beyond these two countries, we keep making the case of other countries where LGBTI people and rights are at stake. We have successfully worked towards the inclusion of attacks on LGBTI rights in the EU Commission's rule of law report 2022.

We've brought specific cases of human rights violation to the attention of the Commission, including by setting up meetings between Commission and local activists as we did in the case of violent attack on a community centre in Bulgaria. As part of an EU expert group, we are working with other NGOs to ensure that the legal attacks against LGBTI activists (so-called SLAPPS), are seen as breach EU rule of law and fundamental rights and included in upcoming actions by the EU against these SLAPPS.

We're working alongside many others to make sure the fundamental rights conditions to ensure EU funding is fully respected. A decision of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) confirmed the legality of the EU's rule of law conditionality, that is the ability to block EU funds for countries which don't respect rule of law. Following this, we joined 86 organisations to call on EU ministers for decisive action under Article 7 to protect rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights in Poland. Together with allied organisations, we also called on the EC to refrain from releasing recovery funds to Poland and Hungary in spring this year, due to ongoing violations of fundamental rights.

## SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU LGBTIQ EQUALITY STRATEGY

Nearly two years have passed since the European Commission launched its first-ever EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy (2020-2025) and it has certainly kept us busy. In addition to working closely with Commission staff to support setting up the kinds of internal structures and resources that make implementation possible and effective, we've also been engaging in a number of legislative processes...

**A policy against gender-based violence for all** – We've been working with the Parliament and Member States to ensure that the upcoming Commission proposal on violence against women and domestic violence will be inclusive. Those who are most at risk of gender-based violence are frequently the least protected. In a joint manifesto published in February, we urged the EU to take

a truly inclusive approach that leaves no one behind in their proposal for a directive. Working towards mutual recognition of parenthood at EU level – We've been part of the expert group, contributed to public consultations and worked closely with MEPs, to ensure that the Commission's upcoming proposal on parenthood recognition will fully address the realities of rainbow families across the EU. The legislative proposal is expected this November.

**Strengthening EU hate crime legislation** – We wrote to Commission President von der Leyen with TGEU and OII-Europe to call for the extension of grounds protected under hate crimes and hate speech legislation to all SOGIESC. The European Commission put forward a legal initiative to extend the list of EU crimes to include hate speech, both online and offline, and hate crime and thus now prepared the legal base to work on legislation on the matter, including SOGIESC as protected grounds, recognising the prevalence of bias motivated violence and incitement against LGBTI people.

The European Commission is expected to publish a recommendation to member states on harmful practices. Working with OII Europe, TGEU, EL\*C and IGLYO, we've met with relevant officials and submitted our collective input, working to ensure that sterilisation, intersex genital mutilation and so-called 'conversion therapies' are included in the recommendation.

**Working for the protection of LGBTI asylum seekers** – Negotiations on the EU asylum legislative package are still ongoing and we are working closely with the EU Parliament and member states to ensure that LGBTI people are protected and their rights guaranteed. To ensure existing legislation is being fully implemented and rights guaranteed, we have also been closely engaging in the work of the EU Asylum Agency on protecting vulnerable groups, as well as providing input to their work on trainings for national practitioners.

### **Working with the Council of Europe –**

Harvesting the fruits of work done for over a decade to support stronger mechanisms we've been actively participating in a growing range of the Council's work, including meetings of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion, the annual thematic review processes (on legal gender recognition 2021 and on hate crimes 2022) under the Committee of Ministers' LGBT Recommendation, the establishment of a new LGBTI parliamentary group working in the Parliamentary Assembly, in addition to ongoing engagement with the SOGI unit and the office of the Human Rights Commissioner, as well as ECRI. Of particular significance is the work of the bioethics committee on the human rights of intersex people we're currently contributing to, and which we expect would create a strong basis for full inclusion of intersex human rights in a review of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation.

### **Using EU institutions as a tool to support**

**advocacy in non-EU countries** – Continuing to use all EU instruments, from the enlargement report and human rights dialogues to trade agreements, we've been active to raise LGBTI rights violations outside the EU. For example, we've regularly updated EU and CoE officials on the situation in Turkey, and worked with MEPs on an urgent resolution on human rights in Turkey. We worked closely with the EU Commission and the EU External Action Services on their response to Serbia's non-respect of the right to freedom of assembly on the occasion of Europride. We also published, together with ERA, the annual Enlargement Review, pointing to the stagnation in advancing LGBTI rights and the risk of backlash in the Western Balkans.

### **OUR ANNUAL DOCUMENTATION AND BENCHMARKING**

**We published our Annual Review** of the Human Rights Situation of LGBTI People in Europe and Central Asia in February, and found that the rise of anti-LGBTI rhetoric from politicians and other leaders in Europe and Central Asia was met in 2021 by an allied determination from the movement, civil society and institutions to tackle hatred. Official hate speech fuelled a wave of violence and anti-LGBTI hate crime was reported in almost every

### **Our Rainbow Map flew to Cyprus –**

We presented the latest edition of the Rainbow Europe Map & Index at the IDAHOT+ Forum, which took place in Cyprus in May. Presented in front of EU Commissioner Dalli and Cypriot Ministers, this year's map showed that a new dynamic has appeared to fill in the gaps that exist around LGBTI rights and push standards, giving governments ground to build upon as democracy in Europe faces exceptional challenges.

### **Launching "Intersections" data –**

Disaggregated data, which can look deeply into the lived experiences of marginalised people, is a key demand of LGBTI and other human rights groups. With this in mind, we partnered with a variety of NGOs in the region to analyse the FRA 2019 LGBTI Survey II data and pull out experiences of those experiencing intersectional marginalisation. This work is based on analysis co-commissioned by ILGA-Europe and TGEU. The first in our Intersections series, developed in collaboration with EL\*C, focuses on lesbians, and looks into the experiences of lesbians with disabilities, lesbians from ethnic minorities, trans lesbians, intersex lesbians, and more. In-depth briefings on youth, intersex people, religious and ethnic minorities, older LGBTI people, trans people, will be published in the coming months.

### **ANOTHER BUSY YEAR OF STRATEGIC LITIGATION**

#### **A long-awaited victory for Armenian activists**

– Symbolically delivered on IDAHOBIT, the ruling of the European Court of Human rights condemning Armenian authorities for their failure to protect LGBT bar owner and activist from homophobic physical and verbal attacks and arson, and to carry out an effective investigation, was a significant legal achievement. Ten years after the event, the judgement clearly highlights the bias-motivation of the crime committed and points to the need to put in place hate crime legislation including SOGI.



**EU Court case against discrimination in self-employment in Poland** – We are supporting a case in front of the CJEU concerning the refusal to continue a contract of work with a self-employed person on the basis of that person's sexual orientation. In her opinion the Advocate General firstly confirmed that self-employment is covered under the Directive and by covering the area of 'employment and occupation', the "Directive aims at enabling citizens to realise their potential and earn their living by providing their work". We are awaiting the judgement which will be another important clarification of EU legislation protecting against discrimination.

**The hard work of implementation** – More of our attention continues to go to making sure that great court decisions get translated into real change, and it's not straightforward! As part of our ongoing follow-up to the Coman case judgment, we've filed a complaint to the Commission urging an investigation of Hungary's refusal to implement the court decision, effectively depriving same-sex couples married in other EU countries of recognition and thus freedom of movement. We're continuing to work with Bulgarian NGO Deystvie in their appeal the implementation of the case of Baby Sara in Bulgaria so that the freedom of movement of Sara and her family is respected.

**Strategic litigation on intersex human rights** – it's been exciting to engage with OII-Europe's litigation group to strategise together and to start making third party party interventions on intersex related cases. We can hope for positive developments in this area in the coming years!

## **PATHWAY 4 - DEEPLY-ROOTED SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE AND INCLUSION OF DIVERSITY RELATED TO SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION AND SEX CHARACTERISTICS IN SOCIETIES**

### **Supporting LGBTI-inclusive media work –**

Amidst our fast-paced and clickbait culture, we are taking steps to contribute to quality and pluralism of the media landscape. ILGA-Europe published our [Guidelines for Journalists](#) to support the work of journalists on the ground, especially of those for whom LGBTI-related news are not their main beat. The guidelines give practical advice to journalists on how to report on the human rights of LGBTI people, how to talk to and about LGBTI subjects, language and pronouns, and specific recommendations for developing stories that involve trans and intersex people.

### **Making our work more accessible and reaching new audiences –**

We continued to expand our multi-media communications work across our social media channels, publishing [blogs](#), [podcasts](#) and [video content](#). Our blog was published every Friday, and covered a wide range of subjects, including updates on the situation for LGBTI people affected by the war in Ukraine, the risks to children who are born Intersex, the protection, and lack thereof, of LGBTI events in Europe and Central Asia, and the progress in LGR in Europe. Our podcast included a series of four episodes on engaging the private sector in LGBTI equality, a two-part episode on LGBTI equality and accession to the EU, and navigating change as an LGBTI activist. We branched out this year into publishing informational videos on TikTok and Instareels with the goal of building younger audiences and engaging them in the work of ILGA-Europe.

**Launching our new website** – You’ve already seen it, right? After over two years of planning, thinking, designing and working, our new website was finally launched in June. We have created a more user-friendly digital home where we hope LGBTI activists and organisations can find everything they need and stay connected to our work, and a one-stop shop for actors including media and public representatives to find up to date information on the human rights situation for LGBTI people in Europe and Central Asia, and the work of ILGA-Europe towards equality for all. You can learn more about how we created our brand-new website [here](#).

**Strong commitment from private sector during Pride season** – Building on our engagement with the private sector over the past few years, we’ve continued to strengthen and broaden support from companies. In addition to our longer-term partner Revolut, we entered into new and more varied than ever partnerships, from the auction platform Catawiki and stroller brand Joolz to Vogue Eyewear, among many others. Several companies did internal fundraising drives and the gaming community was active in raising funds. We also turned down partnership offers that were not in line with our corporate engagement principles, due to concerns around human rights violations in the supply chain.

**Our annual social gathering returned with new force!** On the evening of June 28, allies and friends got together in solidarity with the LGBTI equality movement at our Equality Fundraiser. It was an important moment to reconvene with our Brussels-based supporters - from EU Commissioner Helena Dalli and EU Ambassador Stella Ronner-Grubacic, to Belgium’s Secretary of State, Sarah Schlitz – around music, dance and powerful messages. This year again, we were able to count on the support of our sponsors Google, Diageo and [visit.brussels](#).

## **PATHWAY 5 - JUST AND EQUAL SOCIETIES AND ECONOMIES**

**Onwards with our organisational learning** – Early in the year, our “Anti-racism as culture and practice” learning process came to an end after 14 months. In addition to being an important moment of self-critical reflection, this journey also resulted in the staff and board identifying very concrete measures to integrate in our programming, advocacy and communications work to meaningfully address structural inequalities and barriers based on race that exist within our own practices.

We had lots of plans for 2022 to bring this work forward, including carrying out internal learning on socioeconomic justice and thinking about how to better integrate a social justice approach into work, and developing tools to share our lessons learned on intersectionality and anti-racism with the wider membership. We have to be honest and say that the war in Ukraine had an impact on our organisational capacity to carry out all of our planned activities.

We are however committed to continuing this work in 2023, especially as we embark on ILGA-Europe’s next strategic planning process, with the intention of making the learning and reflection of the past five years even more central to our next strategic framework.