New Executive Director for ILGA-Europe appointed

News, ILGA-Europe

After a detailed recruitment process, the board of ILGA-Europe have announced the organisation's new Executive Director.

The board of ILGA-Europe have announced that Chaber, a previous Executive Director of the Polish LGBT organisation, KPH (Campaign Against Homophobia), will step into the role from 1 October. They have also worked as ILGA-Europe's Finance Director for the past five years. Their appointment to lead ILGA-Europe comes after a recruitment process that began in May of this year.

According to Co-chairs Natia Gvianishvili and Yves Aerts Jacobs, "During the recruitment process, the ILGA-Europe Executive Board had the luxury of having several strong candidates, whose time and commitment to the process we appreciate and are grateful for.

"While the value-alignment and engagement with and care for the communities in Europe and Central Asia was something that the shortlisted candidates definitely had in common, Chaber stood out with their ability to be both visionary and practical in their approach. Chaber showed skills and experiences important for a strong leader and a strong manager. They showed the thinking and ability to navigate difficult political situations, that an organisation like ILGA-Europe might be, and has been, faced with, and proposed solutions that put the movements on the ground at the centre, respecting their safety, agency and integrity as well as being a strong advocate for better resourcing of their work.

"ILGA-Europe is an organisation that has been open to growth and change, but a lot more work needs to be done to support the under-resourced segments of our communities, finding new strategies, holding difficult conversations that will move our collective work forward. The next stages of our work will be outlined in our new Strategic Framework and our expectation is that Chaber, together with the amazing team at ILGA-Europe, will find meaningful and maybe even new and interesting ways of achieving the goals we and our membership set for the organisation."

Speaking about their appointment, Chaber said, "I am deeply honoured to become the leader of an organisation that is so fundamental to the advancement of equality, freedom, strength and safety of LGBTI movements in Europe and Central Asia. Having been part of the ILGA-Europe team since 2018, and sat on its board for three years before that, I have a deep and nuanced understanding of our role working with and on behalf our 700-plus member organisations, and LGBTI activists across Europe and Central Asia.

'The LGBTI movement and ILGA-Europe have been central to my life for over a decade, so my message to members as I look forward to becoming its new Executive Director is that of unwavering commitment – we will strengthen our bonds and adapt so we can seize all the moments and opportunities to come.

'We are all navigating through time of turbulent and transformative change, marked both by the unique challenges and victories of LGBTI communities in the region and the remarkable growth of ILGA-Europe. We must further build our reach, impact and ability to drive change and amplify voices on a regional level, but we also must become surrounded by a diverse, vibrant and well-resourced movement able not only to withstand any opposition, but to

adapt, work together, and through that forge sustainable progress. My goal for the coming years as ILGA-Europe's Executive Director will be just that."

Congratulating Chaber on their appointment, ILGA-Europe's outgoing Executive Director, Evelyne Paradis said: "The world around us is in flux, and more than ever, ILGA-Europe's role is to offer a steady point of reference for the movement as it continues to move forward. Activists also need the ILGA-Europe to be by their side and guide them as they navigate challenging times. In the next few years, the organisation will need to continue to grow, finding the balance between remaining solid and steady, and being dynamic and agile as the world around us changes so quickly.

"Chaber has truly unique combination skills: strategic and creative thinking, capacity to bring people along, an enormous ability and dedication to learning, calm and grit, commitment to creating collective spaces that elevate everyone. Beyond everything else, they care so deeply. About activists, about their colleagues, about ILGA-Europe. It is with immense faith and serenity that I'll be handing over the reins of ILGA-Europe to Chaber."

The board's co-chairs concluded: "We look forward as Chaber begins the interesting next chapter in ILGA-Europe's life, building on legacy of Evelyne Paradis and taking the organisation forward, maintaining its strength and stability, and making its role as a pillar and voice for the movements in Europe and Central Asia even stronger."