

Brussels, 23 May 2016

Dear friends,

Diversity is what makes ILGA-Europe the vibrant membership-based organisation that it is today. Having proactively worked on this issue for more than a decade, we are committed to ensure outreach and accessibility across all our activities for LGBTI communities in all their diversity.

ILGA-Europe's Working Group on Diversity works hard to ensure that diversity is part of our daily work and that organisation takes concrete actions to fulfil the commitments made in its strategic plan. But the Annual Conference is a place where the European LGBTI movement meet. It is where we develop a sense of belonging and where we discuss and develop key aspects of our work towards equality. If diversity within our own movement is not represented in this key moment, how can we aim at being representative of LGBTI communities?

For this reason, ILGA-Europe plans each conference with diversity at the forefront of our thoughts. From the choosing the theme, to selecting a location and setting our event programme, every element aims to be as inclusive as possible. It is an ongoing effort and we are learning as we go, together with our members and partners.

Diversity of participation at the conference is incredibly important to ILGA-Europe whether it is in terms of sexual orientations, gender identities and/or gender expression, sex characteristics, cultures, religions and beliefs, linguistic, ethnic backgrounds as well as in terms of age, ability, health status, financial means and family composition/responsibilities among others. We welcome participants from organisations and groups which are under-represented within the LGBTI movement. It is vital that we include everyone and make sure that those who are seldom represented can flourish at the centre of our annual gathering.

The 2016 **conference theme** Power to the people intends to give participants plenty of scope for diversity discussions. Our staff and board always try to create space at each conference to allow for personal engagement and enable attendees to explore how all the facets of their identities intersect. We also integrate as many themes in the **programme** as possible, encouraging our friends and attendees to suggest speakers and workshop topics. On a practical level, we are committed to taking concrete measures to make the event as inclusive and accessible as possible (see [ILGA-Europe's Diversity Policy](#))



We can do this, but only with your help:

- ILGA-Europe provides a certain number of scholarships every year to ensure under-represented groups within the LGBTI movement can attend the conference. Is there someone you think might be interested in joining us in Cyprus? Spread the word about our scholarships.
- As you read this, think about your colleagues and friends in your organisation. Who has been to the ILGA-Europe conference before and who has yet to meet us? We encourage you to think about who will attend the Nicosia conference and help us to empower minority groups to take part in European level discussions.
- Consider bringing someone to the ILGA-Europe conference who normally would not be able to attend *or* make a donation to [ILGA-Europe's Diversity Fund](#) so that we can do this for you.

The Annual Conference represents a great chance for activists and organisations that might face visibility problems to reach out to one another. Let's make the most of the opportunity!

Evelyne Paradis

On behalf of ILGA-Europe's Working Group on Diversity



Evelyne Paradis  
Executive Director

