Covid-19 and Ilga World

“Supporting the global movement and bringing it together has always been what ILGA is about. The work in 2020 had just begun, when the Covid-19 pandemic forced us to adapt to a new reality. Now more than ever, we are aware that our beautiful, diverse family needs each other’s support in these challenging times. And while many of our events – including regional conferences – have had to be cancelled or postponed, our work continues: we have new ways for our global family to come together – from our series of roundtables and advocacy webinars, to a collection of remote working and well-being resources and positive messages to raise the spirits of our LGBTI communities in this tough time (see https://ilga.org/covid19 - have you already shared yours?).”

“We will conduct research to investigate how this pandemic is impacting our communities in the long run, and we will continue to support our member organisations as they keep conducting their advocacy work – for example, in their activities to follow up on recommendations by the Human Rights Committee. Even in these unprecedented, challenging times, we are in this together!”

Staff Safety and Office Measures

Ilga World (IW) has instituted a de facto shutdown of travel and the physical office since half of March. All staff continue to work remotely. IW has been sharing local and international advice with staff to make sure being good, healthy citizens in their respective geographic contexts.

The UN has cancelled or postponed many of the advocacy spaces that IW participates in (HRC, CSW, UPR etc). IW shifted therefore into using online platforms for advocacy and training work, as well as focusing on longer term research projects.

1.1. In This Together: ILGA World COVID-19 Response

To be good movement leaders, ILGA World launched an online campaign called: “In This Together” where LGBTI organisations around the world shored-up messages of positive support at this very uneasy time. See https://ilga.org/ILGA-World-covid-19-in-this-together-campaign

1.2. Finances & budget changes

The total operating expenditure in 2019 was 2,829,706 CHF, while the total income in 2019 was 2,730,143 CHF. ILGA World ended 2019 with total results of 24,198 CHF after the use of free reserves accumulated in 2018. (1CHF = 0,93EUR)
In April (‘first revision’) and July (‘extraordinary revision’) of this year, a new budget 2020 has been adopted by the board. The revised budgeted revenues for 2020 are significantly below (-31%) the originally approved version. The CORE funding is down by 24%; the PROJECT funding is down by 27%. Expenditures will be reduced proportionally. The most important savings are made at the Direct programs costs: they will be limited to 379’153 CHF representing 25% (or – CHF 449’531) reduction in total expenditures. The total forecast income is now 1’818’681 CHF, the total expenditure 1’815’844 CHF, with a marginally positive result of 2’837 CHF and no possibility to replenish permanent reserves.

1.3. World conference postponing

In May 2020, after careful consideration, the ILGA World Board has decided to postpone the next ILGA World Conference to Spring 2022 in California. The event – to be hosted by the It Gets Better Project in Los Angeles, CA, United States – was originally planned for November 2021.

This was a difficult decision, but it was made necessary because of the unprecedented situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the highest level of participation at the conference, a long lead-in period is needed and ILGA World would have needed to issue the call for scholarships and workshop applications in June 2020 to allow time for visa applications, all the while securing funds to make the event possible.

ILGA World has decided that this is simply not the right time to be embarking on this process with so much uncertainty. ILGA World is a global family and our family needs each other’s support right now.

The logo and the theme of the event will be announced in the second half of 2020, and open a call for scholarship applications and session proposals by the end of the year. The official dates will be communicated through the website and social media pages.


1.4. Postponing of intersex conference

In August, the 5th International Intersex Forum (5IIF) organising committee has made the difficult decision to further postpone the 5IIF to a yet-undetermined date in 2021.

This postponement is due to the adverse developments, health concerns and travel restrictions amid the current global health issues relating to COVID-19. The specific vulnerabilities of members of our community to these health concerns and travel restrictions have been the driving force behind this decision by the committee.

Until we meet again, we will continue working to create a high level programme for the 5th International Intersex Forum. We look forward to meeting you in Bangkok, Thailand in 2021!

See https://ilga.org/5IIF-fifth-international-intersex-forum-postponed-2021
Black Lives Matter: video statement

“From every corner of the world, the global LGBTI community comes together at ILGA World to condemn racial injustice and police brutality, and is calling for transformative action to heal societies from discrimination.”


Board meetings

In April 2020, ILGA World held its first-ever online Board meeting, as the Covid19 made such international gatherings impossible for the time being. There were people connected over 20 different time zones. See also https://ilga.org/ilga-world-holds-its-first-ever-online-Board-meeting

Steering committees

*Each European representative to Steering Committees provides their own reports*

Each region elected/appointed their representative to each of the five Steering Committees. European region was the first one, so our representatives had to wait for several months when all other regions will be elected/appointed as well as election of chairs.

Intersex

The committee’s focus has been on organising the 5th International Intersex Forum, which was planned to be held at the end of March but postponed to September due to COVID-19. The forum may still have to be either (a) postponed to next year, and/or (b) conducted online.

Youth

At the ICPD25 Nairobi Summit an empowering speech was delivered by Martin Karadzhov, Chair of ILGA World’s Youth Steering Committee, during the signature session titled "My body, my life, my world - 1.8 billion reasons why".

Women

On International Women’s Day a flash-mob with short videos and photos in social networks has been organized.

Bi

Hilde Vossen gathered almost all Bi Visibility Day / Week / Month events from every corner of the world, that they could possibly find. They made a longlist, uploaded and edited them. At the end they were more than 220 entries.

The number of events worldwide has increased: in 2019 there were about 225 events, compared to about 200 events in 2018 worldwide. In 2019 Europe and Central Asia held 118 events. This is more than 50% of all the Bi+ Visibility Day activities worldwide. The world has 196 countries. The number of countries covered with Bi Visibility Day activities, are 40.
Trans

(We did not get information about the activities of this committee by the chairperson; the European representative didn’t feel included.)

Staff updates

2 New Staff starting:
Polyxeni Kallini (she/her) - Senior Finance Officer, Grants and Reporting
Gabriel Galil (he/him) - Senior Programme Officer (UN advocacy, Human Rights Council and UPR)

4 New Interns
Sebastián Aguilar Betancurt - Intern - UN Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures
Mphatso Sakala - Intern - intersex people and sex characteristics
Maddalena Tomassini - Communications Intern
Research intern (name is not published for safety reasons)

State-Sponsored Homophobia report and World Map on Sexual Orientation laws

The latest update to the ILGA World's State-Sponsored Homophobia report has been released on 10 December 2019.

In June 2020 in celebration of Global Pride, ILGA World launches its World Map on Sexual Orientation laws in 20 languages to make it accessible to even more members of our global family. This map is supported by the data collected in State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019: Global Legislation Overview Update and incorporates some of the legal developments that took place since then, including civil partnerships in Monaco, marriage equality in Costa Rica, protection against discrimination in employment in all 50 states in the United States of America and the unfortunate repeal of the antidiscrimination law in North Macedonia.

There still 12 countries in the World where consensual same-sex sexual act between adults are punishable by death

Trans advocacy week

In June 2020, the Trans Advocacy Week took place virtually. With a series of trainings, panels and participatory sessions, ensuring accessibility, diversity and visibility.

One year ago, the World Health Assembly approved the eleventh version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). After more than 10 years of political mobilization, all categories related to trans and gender diverse people were removed from the chapter on mental disorders.

Although this is a historic achievement, there are still key issues to address on the road to full depathologization, including the new category of “gender incongruence” in the ICD-11, the challenges posed by legal pathologization at the country level, and the anti-gender movements who promote re-pathologization in their battle against what they call “gender ideology.”
The organisation’s Annual Treaty Bodies Report
The latest edition of United Nations Treaty Bodies: References to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics report was released in July 2020.
In 2019, nine Treaty Bodies made 137 SOGIESC references in 66 Concluding Observations on 56 different states. This included 10 follow-up recommendations to 8 countries made by 5 Committees.

Compared to the indicators achieved by Treaty Bodies in 2018, the number and percentage of SOGIESC references in 2019 remained relatively similar: 64 (or 49%) of SOGIESC Concluding Observations in 2018 and 66 (51%) in 2019; 138 and 137 SOGIESC-inclusive references in 2018 and in 2019, respectively.

While CEDAW still made more SOGIESC references than any other Treaty Body in 2019, it failed to reach its high of 62 references from 2018 (this consequently resulted in a nearly 50% decrease).

In 2014–2019, all 9 Treaty Bodies made a total of 672 SOGIESC-inclusive references in 385 Concluding Observations. The majority of the references were made by HRCtee, CEDAW, CRC and CESCR.

Looking at the distribution of SOGIESC-inclusive Concluding Observations and references over the six years reviewed, we can see the linear progress made from 2014 to 2016, followed by either a slight decrease or a slight growth.

Between 2014 and 2019, the growth in the number of SOGIESC-inclusive Concluding Observations amounted to more than 50%, while the number of SOGIESC references grew by more than 250% during the same period.

'Conversion therapy' report
The latest edition of Curbing deception - A world survey of legal restrictions of so-called ‘conversion therapies’ was released in February 2020.
Research shows that religious leaders appear to be among the most outspoken proponents of “conversion therapies” and that those who seek their services tend to do so motivated by their perceived inner conflict between their religious identity and their sexual or gender identity. Therefore, it is vital that we pay special attention and listen to the members of our communities whose lived experience of faith, religion or spirituality may pose a threat to their well-being and their mental health.
Since 2017, State-Sponsored Homophobia has tracked the countries where laws are in force to restrict these harmful practices and, although only 3 UN Member States have nationwide bans thus far, this report shows how considerable progress is being made at various levels. In any case, legal reform is only one of the many avenues that can be explored to tackle so-called “conversion therapies” within a multi-faceted strategy. In this report ILGA World presents a wide array of tools, legal or otherwise, that our member organisations could discuss and eventually incorporate into their strategies to fight “conversion therapies” within their communities.
Regions updates:

**ILGA ASIA**

ILGA Asia continued to support LGBTI activists in reporting human rights violations to UN mechanisms, and strengthened its communications and outreach strategy. The team also grew in numbers, allowing the region to expand its work on human rights training and advocacy support.

Evaluation of strategic plan and strategic planning: ILGA Asia has recruited a consultant to evaluate its work program. All the evaluation activities will be conducted online. The strategic planning for 2021-2025 will also be all online this year, which means the membership consultation will not take place due to all the travel restrictions and the risks involved.

Response to COVID-19 in Asia:
The COVID-19 outbreak is affecting our community in Asia. ILGA Asia has moved all activities online, and fortunate for us, this is a non-conference year. However, some of our member organizations are greatly affected. ILGA Asia distributed a survey to analyze the situation on the ground and identify current needs. ILGA Asia revised their work plan to better respond to the current situation, including the possibility of channelling current funding away from this year’s activities to support communities in need. Domestic violence against LGBTI youth by family during quarantine is increasing, so ILGA Asia is drafting a statement to inform society about this situation.

See also [https://www.facebook.com/IlgaAsia/](https://www.facebook.com/IlgaAsia/)

**PAN AFRICA ILGA**

Pan Africa ILGA worked to build its own governance capacity and to support LGBTI human rights defenders in the continent, all the while putting its new strategic plan into action, engaging in UN spaces and working towards a more active role within the African Union. They also worked with ILGA Asia to build an unprecedented South-South initiative—a joint advocacy and security training to further develop in 2020.

In March, Pan Africa ILGA announced the postponement of their 5th regional conference: “(..) Pan Africa ILGA will be postponing its 5th Regional Conference which was scheduled to be held in Accra, Ghana, from 27 to 31 July 2020, (..). As the conference requires extensive travel from delegates and participants from the above regions and other parts of the globe, Pan Africa ILGA believes that postponement is the most responsible approach. We will keep all stakeholders updated as this process unfolds.”

See also [http://panafricanilga.org/](http://panafricanilga.org/)
**ILGA NORTH AMERICA**

ILGA North America is growing their social media footprint, expanding outreach to ILGA members and aiming to generate new ILGA memberships. They plan to elevate ILGA’s profile and visibility across our region.

The region’s consultation with the incoming ILGA members in anglophone Caribbean is completed. The ED’s outreach to eight francophone ILGA member groups is underway including discussion yesterday on likely ILGA LAC and NA collaboration in this area.

ILGA Caribbean working group has completed its work as the regional board moves on to examining the amendments to the region’s Constitution and Standing Orders that will be required.

**COVID-19**

Many LGBTI people are facing the prospect of homelessness. There has been a dramatic loss of jobs (for example, over 62,000 workers represented by one of ILGA’s largest members in North America). Lost jobs and benefits for LGBTI persons are perilous. Poverty and social isolation are now on the rise; increasingly, for LGBTI youth and older persons.

One of ILGANAC first ILGA member organizations in North America, Egale, has just released research confirming this crisis for LGBTI communities in Canada alone:
- The majority of LGBTQI2S households have been affected by job loss and reduced hours as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Overall LGBTI persons are disproportionately impacted financially by COVID-19.
- LGBTI communities report a greater impact of COVID-19 on their physical, mental and overall quality of life. This finding is particularly acute among LGBTI living with chronic illness.

See also: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/402661627035554](https://www.facebook.com/groups/402661627035554)

**ILGA OCEANIA**

**Board Meeting in-person**, January 8th-12th, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (first time this 2019, SGM elected Board has ever met face to face) Board Members attend this really important Better Together - National LGBTI regional conference. They held an interactive meet and greet event during Better Together and profiled the work of ILGA as well as promoted the upcoming ILGA Oceania Conference, Aug 30-Sep 4th, 2020, Noumea. The Board also met with ILGA Oceania Disability Advisor, Margherita Coppoline to discuss accessibility for Noumea

**World Pride, Sydney, 2023** (Sydney Mardi Gras) Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras won their bid for Sydney to host WorldPride 2023. The ILGA Oceania Board and several Oceania members actively championed this historic bid that will see World Pride on Oceania soil for the first time. WorldPride 2023 will coincide with the 45th anniversary of the first Mardi Gras Parade and the 50th Anniversary of the first Australian Gay Pride Week.

Miss Galaxy Pageant 2019 Miss Galaxy Queen: Marina Cocobutter Miss Galaxy Pageant 2020 - rescheduled to December
Asia-Pacific Rainbow Families Forum - rescheduled to December

See also: [https://ilgaoceania.life/](https://ilgaoceania.life/)
ILGA LAC

ILGALAC Conference took place in Bogotá, Colombia in November 2019. The VIII Regional Conference of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association was held in the city of Bogotá to Latin America and the Caribbean (ILGALAC), hosted by Corporación Femm. The conference was the largest in ILGALAC’s history and was attended by 320 human rights defenders and activists from different departments of the country and over 30 countries.

New Regional Council was elected. During this period the Regional Council has met four times.

ILGALAC’s Electoral Observatory published reports prepared with local organizations for the presidential elections of 10/20 in Bolivia, 10/27 in Uruguay and Argentina. The reports were prepared by the regional council, the regional office and local organizations and had a very good impact.

In view of the current situation of the COVID-19 Pandemic affecting the world, the Regional Council and the Regional Office have carried out the following activities, with the aim of providing our members with information and support to mitigate the negative effects of this pandemic. ● Two webinars were held: - The challenges of the LGBTI+ movement in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. - Challenges of trans people in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. ● Pronouncements: - ILGALAC’s statement on the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on our region. - ILGALAC’s statement on the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on trans people in our region. ● Campaigns: - #Help usHelp. This campaign brings together a large amount of resources to make them available to the LGBTI+ community in our region. It collects information on solidarity networks, contacts people who want to help by sharing their time and offering containment to those who are isolated and enriching our quarantined time.


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