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NEWSLETTER

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Are equality and non-discrimination becoming redundant in the EU?



- » Challenges for gay youth
- » Gay victims of Nazis struggle for full recognition
- » Europe gears for summer pride events



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Message from Patricia

A very warm welcome to the Spring edition of our Newsletter!

As ever it has been a busy time at ILGA-Europe during the last couple of months. A lot of work has been done by the board and staff in terms of strategic planning and organisational development. Changes at IE are that Tatjana, resigned from the board due to work commitments. Many thanks to Tatjana for all her work with us and best wishes for the future. Maya was welcomed as a full board member at the February meeting. There will be another change later on this Spring. Don Bisson will be moving on from ILGA-Europe at the end of April. We also thank Don for all his work both as Director of ECT Programmes and as Acting Director of IE. We wish him the very best in the future.

The recent statement by the Commission's President Barroso caused a lot of concerns among European organisations working in the social and equality areas, including us. We fear that Europe might be changing its social model to a more economic approach where such values as equality and non-discrimination are not given sufficient attention. While Commissioner Špidla re-confirmed the commitments to non-discrimination, mainstreaming and equality, just this week, we will have to work very hard and with our colleagues in the other social and equality NGOs to ensure these commitments are translated into actions that improve the lives of LGBT people and also the lives of the very marginalised people throughout Europe who are excluded from full, meaningful and equal participation in society.

On a positive note, the Gay and Lesbian Rights Intergroup at the European Parliament was re-launched and we hope it will provide a strong voice among the EU institutions for LGBT people.

We are busy developing the seminars to be held in Krakow in April (and they will be repeated in Slovenia in June), the EU Co-ordinators Network meeting, and the Paris Conference.

There is interesting news from around Europe about LGBT people. And we also feature items on remembering the Holocaust victims and the question of multiple discrimination and social exclusion.

We also include a first notification on the Spring/Summer Pride events that are happening throughout Europe. Do let us know of other events, so we can add them to the list.

I hope you will enjoy reading this Newsletter and as always we are happy to hear your comments, suggestions and ideas about making it even more relevant to you.

PATRICIA PRENDVILLE
ILGA-Europe's Executive Director

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Thank you Tatjana, welcome to Maya!

On 24 January 2005, Tatjana Greif resigned from the Executive Board. Tatjana had served on the board for six years, contributing with great dedication to the work of the organisation, in particular on issues relating to lesbian rights and East Europe. Over the years we have worked together, getting to know each other bit by bit, and we will all miss the strength of her commitment to the LGBT cause.

Due to the growing demands on her from her work and her life as well as her activism in ŠKUC-LL, Tatjana felt that she could not devote to ILGA-Europe all the time that would have been

needed at this moment. For this reason she thought that it would be more responsible to allow the first reserve to take up her role as a member of the board.

Dear Tatjana, while kissing you good bye, we thank you for the years you have dedicated to ILGA-Europe and we wish you all the best for your life, your work and your activism; we will miss you but we know that we will continue to work together and that it will not be long before we get together again.

So, while we are sad to be losing Tatjana, we are also happy to welcome Maya Salvadó as a full member of the Executive Board.



Maya Salvadó Ferrer

Maya Salvadó Ferrer is Spaniard who was born in Ireland and is living in France. Maya studied visual arts and women studies in France, UK, China and the USA. She has a DSAP from the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Paris and a Masters of Visual Arts from Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA. She is moth-

er of a little boy. Maya works in visual arts, is involved in an alternative coop kindergarten and parenting support network. She is active in women's organisations, and 10 years ago she organised "women by train to Beijing" for the 4th World Conference on Women. For the past 10 years she was active with the APGL (Association of Gay and Lesbian Parents and Future Parents), and now is its international representative. Maya is involved with "Paris 2005 ILGA-Europe" hosting the 27th ILGA European conference in Paris and the pre-conference on LGBT families organised by APGL.

JACKIE LEWIS and RICCARDO GOTTARDI
Executive Board Co-Chairs



"United in Diversity"

The Paris team is proud to invite ILGA-Europe members to one of the most lesbian and gay friendly capitals in the world, to a country bridging northern and southern Europe and whose people cherish liberty and diversity.

A dedicated team
In April 2003, an association was specifically created to prepare, bid for, and organise the 2005 conference, should ILGA-Europe decide to hold the conference in Paris, which it did at the annual conference in Glasgow in October 2003. The name of this specific group is "Association for hosting the

2005 ILGA-Europe conference in Paris (ILGA-Europe Paris 2005)". Its members all have strong connections to or responsibilities in other LGBT associations.

A co-operative effort
The project has received the full support of Inter-LGBT (French umbrella organisation for LGBT associations, based in Paris) which has appointed a member to the board of "ILGA-Europe Paris 2005". Other associations have shown their interest and will participate in the project: *Centre Gai et Lesbien de Paris, SOS Homophobie, CARITIG, David et Jonathan, L'Autre Cercle,*

Homosexualités et Socialisme, Commission Gaie et Lesbienne des Verts, Association des parents et futurs parents gais et lesbiens (APGL), CQFD/Fierté Lesbienne, Juristes Gais, Syndicat national des entreprises gaies (SNEG), etc. Several of these associations have already shown their ability to organise public events (LGBT Pride March, conferences, fairs, press conferences), to work with non-LGBT organisations (trade unions, human rights organisations), to run public services, fund-raise, obtain public grants, get support from high-level politicians, lobby, reach the media, etc.

On 25-26 October 2005, a pre-conference on LGBT parenting will take place in Paris (for more details, see 'Events' section).

Practical information
The conference will take place from 26-30 October 2005. The registration form and the conference programme will be available on ILGA-Europe's website www.ilga-europe.org. The main venue of the conference is FIAP Jean Monnet, 30 rue Cabanis, 75014 Paris: www.fiap.asso.fr.

ILGA-EUROPE PARIS 2005 TEAM
www.ilgaeuropeparis2005.org



News from ILGA

"Campaigning", a new bulletin for ILGA

"People interested in our issues get their share of LGBT news when they turn on their TVs, read their daily paper or their favourite website or magazine..." says Stephen Barris, communication officer at ILGA, "but they often do not get to meet the people behind the achievement, the activists behind the campaign". ILGA's new editorial initiative, called "Campaigning" intends to do just that, featuring interviews with activists of every region of the world. Offering a space for activists to expose their concerns, ILGA wishes to promote international solidarity, a value that has been at the core of ILGA since its creation in 1978. The first issue, out beginning of March, will also propose an article on the fate of "Lesbians under the Third Reich" and an insight of what's going on at the United Nations around the Brazilian resolution.

"Campaigning" will be available both in print and electronically.

Next ILGA conferences: Cebu City, Paris and Geneva

As political turmoil in Nepal became more threatening by the day, regional representatives of ILGA decided to relocate its Asia's regional conference from Kathmandu to Cebu City in the Philippines after consulting with Nepalese member *Blue Diamond Society*. *CLIC (Can't live in the Closet)* and CebuPride are joining efforts for the organisation of the second ILGA gathering in Asia.

Paris in October will be ILGA's second appointment in 2005 which will lead us to ILGA's world conference in spring 2006. As decided by its members in Manila at the last world conference, the 23rd world conference will take place in Geneva, home of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). The title of the conference "UNited we stand" clearly relates to ILGA's commitment to the full recognition of LGBT rights by the UN, and the conference itself will be held during the 62nd session of the UNCHR, an international forum that has failed to this day

to fully recognise and protect sexual orientation and gender identity as human rights...

The International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO)

On 17 May 1990, the General Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. This fundamental date was chosen to celebrate the International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO), an initiative of French activist Louis-Georges Tin. The project supported by ILGA, which hosts a petition in its favour on www.ilga.org, is campaigning for the acceptance of a world day against homophobia on national and international calendars. LGBT groups are encouraged to take actions on that specific day to raise awareness on homophobic situations around the world. For more info, please contact tin@idahomophobia.org.

STEPHEN BARRIS

ILGA's Communications Officer

Background information:

ILGA-Europe is the European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). ILGA was founded in 1978 and is a world-wide network of national and local groups dedicated to achieving equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people around the world.

ILGA is to this day the only international non-profit and non-governmental community-based federation focused on presenting discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity as a global issue.

EU Policy priorities

From a social project to "growth at all costs"



President Barroso

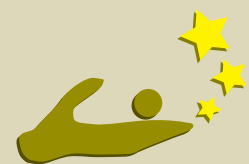
If one of my children is ill, I focus on that one, but that does not mean that I love the others less.¹

In early February the European Commission launched two communications to the European Spring Council that caused shock and dismay amongst European social NGOs. The communications symbolise a marked shift in the direction of EU policy away from the Lisbon

objectives of social progress, environmental sustainability and economic growth. The revamped Lisbon Strategy - poignantly renamed "Working together for growth and jobs"² - is little short of a radical new approach that will see social and environmental pillars of the EU pushed aside in a desperate battle to create jobs and economic growth.

Only days later, the Commission published a sec-

ond communication: the future Social Policy Agenda for 2005-2010³. The new Social Agenda fits in with the logic of the "Growth and Jobs" agenda and reduces social policy as a means to achieve economic growth and employment. The underlying assumption is that economic growth will automatically lead to greater social cohesion without any need for specific policies to reinforce such positive benefits. On the



whole, the policy priorities represent a big step backward from the achievements made over the past five years: the commitment to EU social policy and the important role of civil society is waning.

New era for equality and non-discrimination in the EU?

Last autumn saw a significant increase in political support for more EU action in the fight against discrimination. Undoubtedly linked to the Buttiglione affair (cf. *ILGA-Europe Newsletter 4/04, p. 9*), Commission President José Manuel Barroso pledged his commitment to actively defend equality and to adopt an ambitious package to consolidate respect for human rights and non-discrimination in Europe. In response to the Green Paper consultation, Commissioner Vladimír Špidla introduced the future EU policy package on equality last November (cf. *IE Newsletter 4/04, p. 8*). Key components were to be a feasibility study on further EU legislation in the field of goods and services as well as a greater integration of non-discrimination objectives into other policy areas and instruments.

Three months later the initial enthusiasm has been overtaken by a sobering wake-up call. The Social Agenda presented in early February shows clearly that the approach taken to social policy in general and non-discrimination in particular

will be minimalist. Admittedly, some of the substantive proposals - a communication in late 2005, the draft action programme *PROGRESS*, the feasibility study - continue to form part of the Commission's work-plan for the next three years. But the overall framework is altered.

The new Agenda seems defensive of the need for social policy, it lacks a clear framework for action, and the principles it gives for social policy are vague. The number of concrete policy proposals is limited, and the instruments suggested are weak. Despite the need identified in the Green Paper consultation to mainstream equality across all areas of EU policy, the agenda fails to mention how mainstreaming might work in practice. There is no specific reference to NGOs in the context of civil society's role in governance. The role of the main financial instrument, the European Social Fund, is biased towards job creation, and the future of the open methods of co-ordination in the field of social inclusion is left unclear. The next months are a crucial time for NGOs across Europe to give more shape to the EU's future social policy agenda. Now is the time to argue strongly for the benefits of social policy both in its own terms and as a contribution to achieve the objectives defined at Lisbon in 2000.

BIRGIT HARDT

¹European Commission President José Manuel Barroso explains to the European Parliament why he has to focus more on his economic child instead of his siblings social policy and environmental sustainability; 2 February 2005.

²For the full text of the Communication, see: http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/index_en.htm. For more information on the work of the Social Platform on this, see: www.socialplatform.org/code/en/soci.asp?Page=668.

Check also ILGA-Europe's press release: www.ilga-europe.org/m7/media_releases/Lisbon%20agenda%20review%202-02-05.htm.

³For the full text of the Communication, see: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_policy_agenda/spa_en.pdf.

The Social Agenda 2005-2010: What is in it for us?

The new Social Agenda is more of a general background document than a concrete set of actions. This gives us an opportunity to help translate general commitments into specific steps. What, then, are the key proposals?

- » **European Initiative for Youth**
- » **European Social Fund:** vital funding source for national initiatives in the employment and social field - ensure it is open for work on non-discrimination
- » **Health and Safety at Work:** new EU strategy 2007-2013
- » **European Year of Workers' Mobility:** 2006 will be an opportunity to push for cross-border recognition of same-sex families
- » **Non-discrimination policy framework:** December 2005: Communication on future EU policy framework on non-discrimination
- » **Feasibility Study on further EU legislation in field of non-discrimination**
- » **European Year of Equal Opportunities:** proposed for 2007
- » **"PROGRESS":** new Community Action Programme (2007-2013) to cover work in the field of non-discrimination

For further information, see: www.ilga-europe.org.

The Social Platform comments on the "Growth and Jobs" agenda

"Even if the last five years have been years of struggle to maintain the balance between the economic, social and environmental pillars of the Lisbon strategy, the change in the rhetoric and in the practice of decision makers was encouraging. If EU governments endorse Barroso's approach, the EU will be returning to an obsolete model of economic development, ignoring key political commitments made during the last years."

We therefore call on the EU head of states to:

- » Hold firm their commitment to a balanced Lisbon Strategy, including social cohesion objectives
- » Recognise that social, economic and employment policies should be designed in an integrated approach
- » Guarantee that overarching instruments such as the Spring Summit integrate a strong social and environmental dimension
- » Ensure that national action programmes cover social cohesion objectives, including the streamlined social protection and social inclusion objectives
- » Reaffirm EU commitment to the EU Social Inclusion Strategy to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010.

For more details on the Social Platform campaign, see: www.socialplatform.org/code/en/camp.asp?Page=143.

Gay and Lesbian Rights Intergroup re-launched

In the end of 2004, the Gay and Lesbian Intergroup of the European Parliament was re-established. Michael Cashman (Socialist Group/UK) was elected president of the Intergroup, and the following MEPs were elected vice-presidents: Sophia in 't Veld (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe/NL), Raül Romeva i Rueda (The Greens/European Free Alliance/E) and Alexander Stubb (European People's Party and European Democrats/FIN).

ILGA-Europe is pleased that there was a cross-party support enabling the establishment of the Intergroup and hopes to work with its members very closely. A first meeting to discuss some of the priorities was already held. One of the first actions taken by the Intergroup was a letter to Commission President José Manuel Barroso regarding a series of homophobic statements by government officials in Slovenia.

The next meeting of the Intergroup is scheduled for April. Justice, Freedom and Security Commissioner Franco Frattini has been invited to discuss how to follow up the Commission's commitments to equality and human rights expressed last October.

JURIS LAVRIKOVS

Background information:

- » "Intergroups" at the European Parliament are informal and open groups of MEPs (Members of the European Parliament), assistants, civil servants of the European institutions, lobbyists and NGOs who work together on specific issues. They try to put their demands on the European agenda and compare notes on battles won and lost.
- » To have an Intergroup established, it is necessary to gather the signatures of the leaders of three political groups in the European Parliament. Intergroups are allowed to meet only during the part-sessions in Strasbourg.
- » The Intergroup on Gay and Lesbian Rights wants to act as a pressure group in order to ensure that gay and lesbian rights are visible not only in the EP, but in the rest of the EU institutions and in society.
- » This Intergroup has been formed through cross-party support and is dedicated to advocating for the rights and interests of LGBT people.

More information about the previous term's Intergroup:
www.gayandlesbianrightsintergroup.org.



Michael Cashman

"To achieve legal equality and social justice for LGBT people across the EU and in the wider world, our aim must be high and our aim is achievable. The LGBT community deserves nothing less. We must be determined and focused within the EP to ensure that LGBT rights are enshrined in non-discrimination directives."



Alexander Stubb

"I have always believed in fundamental rights for all individuals, regardless of race, colour, sex or sexual orientation. In that sense I guess you could deem me liberal. And I want to work with issues close to my heart, even if it is not always politically the most 'convenient' thing to do.

To me, it seems that the greatest challenge of the Intergroup is bringing GLBT issues into the mainstream of the European minority debate. Of course, with big changes going on in the Union, we must also focus on the realisation of GLBT rights in all EU states, old and new."



Sophia in 't Veld

"The Intergroup can build on the excellent work of its predecessors in the past ten years. Now the time has come to take things further: I want to achieve concrete results in the coming mandate. For example: real implementation of the equality directive, and recognition of married same-sex couples. The European Parliament has shown to be a true advocate of fundamental rights, not least in the debate on Mr Buttiglione. During that episode Mr Barroso and

Mr Frattini have committed themselves firmly to the fight for equal rights and ending discrimination. We will take them up on that commitment! In addition, we will speak out loudly and clearly against all forms of homophobia, in particular by government members of EU or friendly countries, such as the USA. We will closely monitor the situation in candidate countries and countries in the Neighbourhood Policy. Finally, I would like to focus on young people and issues of education and media."



Raül Romeva

"Europe must co-lead the defence of LGBT people's right to be guaranteed a normal life in all the aspects, not only within European borders, but also all over the world. The EP Intergroup is crucial to promote mainstreaming of LGBT issues, to increase conscience amongst parliamentarians and, through them, to guarantee that the European policies are coherent with the 'united in diversity' principle."

Social Inclusion of LGBT Youth



©Stonewall

even more so. As a result of homophobia and other discrimination, they face higher than usual risks of drug and alcohol addiction, depression, and suicide. They are often highlighted as a group susceptible to poorer school performances than the norm. Combined, these effects can lead to a serious level of social exclusion.

Contacts and colleagues throughout Europe are being consulted in order to determine the extent of the problem. We are also looking to see how much research has been done on the various issues facing LGBQ youth to see where there are research gaps that need to be addressed. The end goal of these efforts is to produce a brochure that will raise awareness at the European level of the daunting challenges faced by LGBQ youth and their particular needs. It is hoped that member states will then be more aware of the necessity to explicitly include this group more visibly in their National Action Plans on Social Inclusion/Poverty.

One of the "hot topics" on the European agenda is no doubt the European Social Agenda. Headlines have made this point clear, in particular with regard to the Commission's plans to change the Lisbon Agenda and to focus primarily on the so-called economic pillar. NGOs are working hard to ensure the social pillar, which used to be on equal footing with the economic priorities, does not become forgotten. In the midst of all this change in the air, ILGA-Europe has begun its work on social inclusion, a topic of huge relevance to large parts of the LGBT community.

Social inclusion is an integral

part of the fight against poverty. The policy strategy is closely linked to the Lisbon Agenda and has been pitched as part of the solution. Social inclusion works around a set of agreed "common objectives." The 2000 Nice Council and the 2002 Århus European Round Table have established these objectives. Including, "to facilitate participation in employment and access by all to resources, rights, goods and services", "to prevent the risks of exclusion", "to help the most vulnerable", and "to mobilise all relevant bodies".

ILGA-Europe wishes to be an active participant in the process to improve social inclusion and

to ensure it does not ignore the social exclusion experienced by the LGBT community. We are currently approaching the issue from the angle of multiple discrimination as well as age. We are, as a result, concentrating our efforts on dealing with the social exclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and "questioning" youth as a particularly vulnerable group and will in the future also be dealing with the social exclusion of LGB older people.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning (LGBQ) youth are a particularly vulnerable group. It is already acknowledged that youth in general are a vulnerable group, but LGBQ youth are

It is useful to highlight that ILGA-Europe and IGLYO will no doubt work closely together as IGLYO is working on similar topics and issues. Indeed, on 3-10 April 2005, IGLYO will be organising a study session dealing with "Bullying and Isolation in Education". The city of Strasbourg will be the backdrop to this exciting session. The event will be an important occasion to discuss the exclusion of LGBT youth within the educational systems in Europe. And ILGA-Europe hopes, the session will make even more people join its efforts to combat social exclusion of LGBQ youth.

KIM SMOUTER

Latest developments

On 25 January 2005, the Commission organised a hearing on the future Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). Representatives of governments and EU institutions, national human rights institutions, academics, politicians, human rights organisations, international organisations (Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OSCE), and national and European NGOs took part in the debate on the future agency. This hearing highlighted that many issues are still up for discussion such as the geographical scope of the agency (limited to EU member states or broader scope), its competences (data collection, education, promotion of human rights) and its remit particularly in the light of the work done by the Council of Europe and national human rights institutions. One point encountered a high

level of agreement. Independence is a key element of the FRA and is achievable only if adequate budget and resources are allocated to the agency. This point was stressed by many speakers, presumably to counter the Commission's proposal to create a "light weight structure".

A discussion also took place at the European Parliament on 1 February when MEP Kinga Gál (EPP-ED/H) presented her report on the FRA to the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. Gál presents the role of the FRA as threefold: promotion, protection of human rights and raising awareness between the actors. She envisages the FRA as a "network of networks" working closely with national human rights institutions and other international human rights bodies such as the

Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). During this debate MEP Michael Cashman (PES/UK) highlighted the crucial role that the FRA had to play in relation to Article 13 EC Treaty (anti-discrimination clause). He also stressed the importance of dealing with Article 13 rather than by separating each discrimination grounds to tackle issues of multiple discriminations.

The publication of a draft regulation is expected in June 2005 to finalise the structure, remit and geographical scope of the FRA. This will then be discussed and adopted by the European Council. In the opening speech to the hearing, Commission Vice-President Franco Frattini stated: "Taking also into account the financial framework, in particular the fact

that the new financial perspectives will be applied from 2007, I believe that it is realistic to think that the Fundamental Rights Agency will be functional as from 1 January 2007." Before this, it will be important to raise, with the EU institutions and with all EU member states, the profile of the agency and the role it can play for the rights of LGBT people. We are very interested in learning about your views, suggestions and work being done on this subject and would like to work together to maximise the agency's benefits to LGBT people.

CHRISTINE LOUDES

**More information:
ILGA-Europe's position
paper is available on
www.ilga-europe.org.**

Questions can be addressed to christine@ilga-europe.org.

Rights of LGBT people in EU neighbouring countries

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is defined by the European Commission as "a new policy that invites our neighbours to the East and to the South to share in the peace, stability and prosperity that we enjoy in the European Union and which aims to create a ring of friends around the borders of the new enlarged EU." The aim of the ENP is twofold: inducing integration and also structural changes in the countries party to the Policy.

On 27 January 2005, the Subcommittee on Human

Rights in the European Parliament organised a hearing on the aspects of human rights in the Neighbourhood Policy. During this hearing the ENP was given as an example of mainstreaming human rights in EU policies. It was also noted that the ENP sets ambitious policies towards Eastern European, South Caucasian and Mediterranean countries.

The potential of this tool to further human rights varies from country to country. It is, for instance, easier to convince countries that want to access

to the EU to respect human rights. It was also mentioned that countries that are members of the Council of Europe and, therefore, signatories to the European Convention on Human Rights have higher human rights standards than other countries. It is therefore difficult to impose respect for human rights values beyond the accession countries (and those which have been promised accession). The EU offers different benefits to Eastern European countries than to the Mediterranean or South Caucasian countries.

The principles of the ENP are based on shared common values rather than imposing respect for human rights standards as recognised by the EU. However, it was stressed that there is a need to distinguish between countries that are making changes to promote and protect human rights and those that deny human rights. Belarus was cited as an example of a country not respecting ENP principles.

In promoting the human rights dimension of the Neighbourhood Policy, the EU

New EQUAL co-operation on sexual orientation

The EU programme EQUAL is promoting new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market. A new round of tenders under EQUAL was launched in 2004, and a number of projects have now been approved for the starting phase, during which the projects will consolidate the national and transnational work.

Four new EQUAL projects are in the process of forming a transnational partnership focussing on sexual orientation. The projects are:

- » "Deledios" (France)
- » "Open and Safe at Work.It" (Lithuania)
- » "Partnership for Equality" (Slovenia)
- » "Beneath the Surface" (Sweden).

Although the scope of each

project differs - e. g. the Lithuanian project focuses on young people and the labour market in general, while the Swedish project focuses on the working environment in schools - the four projects have a lot in common. They all have an interest in awareness raising and capacity building in organisations, institutions and social partners, focusing on sexual orientation issues related to working life, both on national and EU levels. They want to create an inclusive environment, collect and disseminate good practice, carry out research, foster partnership and develop sustainable networks on all levels.

The partnership will be built on three different pillars, formed as working groups, which will

focus on different parts of the projects' scope and activities.

The objective of the Research Group is to learn more of how the heterosexual norm is constructed and repeated in different areas of working life. The Communication/Policy-making Group will, with a clear EU perspective, work to raise awareness and propose sustainable change to discriminatory structures in society and among social partners. The Experience Exchange Group will work to establish sustainable communication between similar organisations and institutions in the participating countries, in order to make sure that key actors can benefit from good practice, methods and policies developed and used in other countries.

If the partners are approved for the next phase, the partnership will go on until spring 2007. In 2005 a joint information leaflet will be published, and the partners will develop web sections in English on their respective web pages. Communication and policymaking activities as well as experience exchange will go on continuously. Conferences will be held in France 2005, Sweden 2006 (research conference) and Lithuania 2006. A final conference, where conclusions will be presented, will be held in Slovenia in 2007. Reports on research and other project activities/conclusions will be presented during the project period.

In this transnational partnership, many organisations from different countries and from different sectors in working life (NGOs, trade unions, employers' organisations and companies) will unite in spreading the same message in a strategic way. They all want to contribute to positive progress on sexual orientation issues related to working life, both on national and EU levels. They all are eager to start the transnational co-operation - as soon as the national representatives of the European Social Fund have given their approval, which is expected before summer.

ANETTE SJÖDIN

RFSL/Transnational co-ordinator of the EQUAL project
"Beneath the Surface"

CL

needs to support civil society in these countries. National NGOs can play an important role at two stages of the process. They can put pressure on their government when an agreement between the EU and their country - called "action plan" - is negotiated, and once this action plan is agreed, they can monitor the respect of its human rights clause. These action plans set out precise steps agreed with each partner for the 3-5 years to come. It is a statement of intent by the EU and the state

party. In December 2004, such action plans have been agreed between the EU and Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Moldova, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine. They contain human rights clauses that can be referred to by national NGOs. The Commission has affirmed its intention to integrate a second series of partner countries into the ENP during the course of next year - Egypt, Lebanon, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia: "We will launch this exercise by presenting country reports in

February 2005, followed by consultations on Action Plans once the Council has given its green light."

Unilateral reporting will take place in 2006 when the Commission will monitor the implementation of Action Plan by countries. This will be a good opportunity to create visibility for the rights of LGBT people in the countries that are supposed to become a party to the European Neighbourhood Policy.

More information available on the Commission's website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/overview_en.htm.

EQUAL

Homosexual Nazi victims not always remembered



Homosexual victims of Nazis

On 27 January 2005, Europe marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau, and in many countries it was also a Holocaust Memorial Day. Alongside with Jewish, Roma and Slavic people, political opponents, and disabled people, thousands of homosexual people were tortured and killed by the Nazis.

On the same day the European Parliament adopted a resolution on remembrance of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and racism. The resolution states that "hundreds of thousands of Jews, Roma, homosexuals, Poles and other prisoners of various nationalities were murdered" at Auschwitz-Birkenau and stresses that remembrance events are important not only as occasions to remember and condemn Nazi crimes but also to learn "wider lessons about the dangers of victimising people on the basis of race, ethnic origin, religion, politics or sexual orientation".

Patricia Prendiville, Executive Director of ILGA-Europe said: "It is a very important resolution and we are pleased homosexual victims of Nazi persecutions are being given delayed but deserved recognition and remembrance alongside with the other groups of Holocaust victims. Unfortunately the historical fact of systematic persecution of homosexual men and women by the Nazi regime is still being denied by some individuals and organisations, and in some countries homosexual victims are being excluded from official remembrance events. I hope this resolution will promote just and unprejudiced understanding of the history and will eradicate unfair denial and exclusion of homosexual victims."

Auschwitz ceremony without homosexuals

This year's event at Auschwitz-Birkenau, however, demonstrated that there is still work to be done to achieve full recognition of and respect for those victims persecuted for their homosexuality. Two months prior to the remembrance celebration, the Polish LGBT organisation *Kampania Przeciw Homofobii* (Campaign Against Homophobia) sent a letter to the curator of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum asking permission for the group to take part in the official ceremony and to lay a wreath. The group has not received any reply, and its members who tried to enter with the wreath on the day of the ceremony were not let in. KPH issued the following statement: "We really wanted to celebrate the memory of our brothers and sisters murdered in Nazi camps. However, our letters asking for permission to participate were left without answer. Even though we could not be there, we will remember our brothers and sisters marked with the stigma of the pink triangle. May this tragedy never repeat."

JL

Commemorative plaque unveiled in Italy

On 26 January 2005 a black marble plaque surmounted by a pink triangle was unveiled at the site of the only Nazi concentration camp on Italian soil - a rice-mill at San Sabba near Trieste converted into a camp in 1943. The mounting of the plaque, proposed by Italy's gay rights organisation *Arcigay*, was backed by the city's mayor and council.

Monument in Berlin

The Berlin memorial to honour the homosexual victims of National Socialism is also taking shape. It is made possible after a decision of the German Bundestag adopted on 12 December 2003. Meanwhile, the site for the memorial was chosen: it will be mounted on the Southeast edge of the Tiergarten park in the Berlin-Mitte district, opposite the memorial for the murdered Jews of Europe. An international artistic two-phase tender for the design of the memorial was launched last year, and by the deadline - 31 January 2005 - 124 artists and architects had submitted their initial ideas and bids. The final competition will be launched at a colloquium in Berlin on 7-8 April 2005. Up to seven projects selected from those bidding will be invited, together with 23 other participants, to concretise their proposals in this final competition. The final selection of the winning project is scheduled for the end of this year/early next year.

More information: www.gedenkort.de/eng-start.htm.

New claim opportunities for Holocaust victims

Swiss banks have now published a new list of bank account holders who were probably or possibly victims of Nazi persecution. ILGA-Europe asks member organisations and newsletter readers in relevant countries to publicise this information with a view to reaching individuals who may be the owner of such an account, or the heir of an owner.

Information on making claims can be obtained from: www.crt-ii.org, by telephoning 001-800-33-4646, or by e-mailing: claims@crt.ch.

NIGEL WARNER



Commemorative plaque in Mauthausen

Austria still refuses compensation

The Austrian lesbian and gay movement has been joining official commemoration celebrations in the former concentration camp of Mauthausen near Linz for more than 20 years and was able to mount there the first commemorative plaque for the homosexual victims in 1984.

However, more than 20 years of political lobbying could not persuade the conservative People's Party (ÖVP) to vote for an amendment to the Federal Nazi Victim Compensation Act in order to include those persecuted on the grounds of their homosexuality. Therefore, this victim group is not only refused official recognition but also any legal entitlement to compensation. Among other things this means that the months and years impris-

oned in concentration camps are not included in their pension contribution periods that form the basis for calculating the amount of their monthly retirement pension; contrary to their SS guards whose service periods in the camps are taken into account by the Austrian state pension system as contribution times and, thus, increase the amount of their monthly pensions.

On several occasions the conservative parties voted down law initiatives introduced by the opposition parties - Social Democrats and Greens - to remedy this situation, the last time as recently as in 2001; in February 2004, a similar motion tabled by the opposition was deferred in the Parliament's social affairs committee. The ÖVP and the rightwing Freedom Party, FPÖ, have had a majority in the Parliament since 1983. These two parties consider homosexual Nazi victims as ordinary criminals since the total ban on homosexuality was not introduced by the Nazis but the 1852 Austrian penal code provision prohibiting both female and male homosexuality remained in force - unchanged - between 1938 and 1945 and was

only repealed in 1971!

2005 is an important year of political celebration in Austria: the country celebrates the 60th anniversary of the Second Republic, founded after the liberation from the Nazis; the 50th anniversary of becoming again a free country after the State Treaty was signed with the four occupation powers in 1955, and the 10th anniversary of its membership in the European Union. This year, the annual celebration of the liberation of the Mauthausen camp will take place on 8 May. For this year's 60th anniversary, around 10,000 people from all over Europe and overseas are expected to participate: survivors, family members of the 200,000 people killed in the camp, old and young anti-fascists. The LGBT movement will not only try to also mobilise an extra big LGBT delegation this year, but will hold an international scientific symposium on the fate of gay men and lesbian women in Austria during the Nazi era. The event will take place in Linz and Mauthausen on 6-8 May 2005.

In March 2005, *Homosexuelle Initiative (HOSI) Wien* will

launch a campaign to force Austria's right-wing government to change the compensation act to include homosexual victims before 8 May 2005. The campaign will include media work and direct actions to draw the attention of the international public to this scandal and to embarrass the ÖVP/FPÖ government. HOSI Wien calls upon ILGA-Europe and its member organisations to support the campaign with protests and other actions deemed appropriate. A direct appeal will soon go out to the various mailing lists and through the various information channels. Please, join in to finally recognise and rehabilitate the gay and lesbian Nazi victims in Austria on equal footing with all the other victim groups!

More information on the symposium: www.hosiwien.at; HOSI Wien's 2001 exhibition "Lost Lives - Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals in Vienna, 1938-45" is available in an on-line version (both in German and English): www.ausdemleben.at.

KURT KRICKLER

Holocaust - ERA Swiss bank claims

A new list is now available of Swiss bank account holders who were probably or possibly victims of Nazi persecution. The list, resulting from further negotiations with Swiss banks, is part of the claims process under the Settlement of the Holocaust Victim Assets class action litigation in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, Chief Judge Edward R. Korman presiding. To date, the Court has authorized repayment of more than \$220 million from the Settlement Fund to bank account owners or their heirs.

The new list of Swiss bank account holders is on the website of the Claims Resolution Tribunal, www.crt-ii.org. Applications are also available on this website. Please call the telephone number below if you are unable to view this new list of bank account holders.

- » Individuals who believe that they are owners, or heirs of owners, of the accounts included in the new list must file an application.
- » Applications may only be submitted for the accounts appearing on the new list.
- » If you previously filed an application with the Claims Resolution Tribunal for another account and you now want to claim an account on the new list, you must submit a new application.
- » There is no fee or other charge for filing and processing claims.
- » Deadline for filing new applications: July 13, 2005.

A list of organizations that will assist individuals with the applications is included with the claim forms and is available at www.crt-ii.org.

Please check the website of the Claims Resolution Tribunal, www.crt-ii.org, periodically for updates regarding the Settlement.

For more information and to obtain applications:

www.crt-ii.org
Telephone: 1-800-33 4646
Email: Claims@crt.ch

Also published on the website www.crt-ii.org is a new list of 36 names of Holocaust Era insurance policyholders who had policies issued by the Austrian insurer Der Anker which, because of special circumstances, are covered by the Settlement. Insurance claims forms may also be downloaded from this website.

Law Enforcement Officers Hate Crimes Training Programme Launched



The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has launched a major training programme for law enforcement officers on responses to hate crimes. As a result of ILGA-Europe's intervention and recommendations made at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in October 2004 (cf. IE Newsletter 4/04, p. 12), hate crimes is defined to include violent or criminal acts based on sexual orientation. ODIHR has identified ILGA-Europe as a key stakeholder in the endeavour, and the programme facilitator has actively sought our assistance in the development of the programme.

The project involves the acqui-

sition of information related to the law enforcement communities within the OSCE region in regards to hate crimes. Knowledge about the policies, procedures and reported practices of law enforcement, judicial and governmental and non-governmental agencies in their response to, investigation of and management of hate crimes is sought. Those practices judged to be most effective will be designated "best practices" and appear in an electronic library database on the ODIHR website. The database will also be used to construct credible training programmes for law enforcement officers to tackle hate crimes throughout the OSCE region. OSCE will also organise a seminar in September on

"Improving the effectiveness of law enforcement in preventing and combating hate crimes" at which there will be a session dedicated to hate crimes based on the sexual orientation of the victim. ILGA-Europe has been consulted on this session and been approached as a possible speaker at the session.

ODIHR is seeking ILGA-Europe's assistance in identifying any electronic or written material with regards to the police response to hate crimes. They are also seeking our assistance in identifying points of contact within the law enforcement community who could assist in identifying their policies and procedures on the issue. They are also interested in collecting guides, written rec-

ommendations or other documentation pertaining to the LGBT communities' recommendations for effective response to hate crimes and "homophobic hate incidents". ODIHR wants to include these recommendations into the "good practices" website to better understand the issue and be guided by recommendations from the affected community.

Anyone who has knowledge of this kind of information or with good points of contact within your local law enforcement community is asked to pass this information to Don Bisson or Miha Lobnik at the ILGA-Europe office so that we may pass this information on to ODIHR.

DON BISSON

ILGA-Europe to Increase Capacity for Human Rights Violations Monitoring and Documenting

The upcoming ILGA-Europe seminar on Human Rights Violations Monitoring and Documenting in Krakow (see p.19 for more details) is the first step in an effort by ILGA-Europe to increase its and its members' capacity to monitor and document human rights violations against LGBT people. Our goal is to try and standardise the process we use to document human rights violations so that we may pass this information along to international human rights organisations, EU institutions, the Council of Europe and the OSCE/ODIHR.

Our focus will be on monitoring and documenting hate crimes against LGBT people as this is the area where there is currently a lot of attention because of the new mandate of the OSCE/ODIHR. We are constantly being asked if we have any information or sta-

tistics on hate crimes that can be included in databases and reports by international human rights organisations. Because we have no standardised way to collect this information we many times are unable to respond to these requests.

After the Krakow seminar and a similar one to be held in Slovenia later this year we will be working with organisations already involved in monitoring and documenting human rights violation to develop forms specific to monitoring and documenting hate crimes against LGBT people. We plan on having a training seminar after the forms and process are developed for members. Those trained will then have the capacity to train others in their organisations.

DB

European Court of Human Rights Compulsory isolation of HIV+ person violates human rights



European Court of Human Rights

On 25 January 2005, the European Court of Human Rights delivered a judgement in the case of *Enhorn v. Sweden* (application no. 56529/00).

Sweden was found guilty of violating Article 5 (1) of the European Convention on Human Rights (right to liberty and security) for compulsory isolating an HIV positive person.

The applicant is a Swedish national who in 1994 discovered he was infected with the HI virus and had transmitted the virus to another man in 1990. The local medical officer applied at the court for an order to keep the applicant in compulsory isolation in a hos-

pital in order to prevent him from spreading the HIV infection. The applicant's actual deprivation of liberty lasted almost one and a half years. The Court held unanimously that the compulsory isolation of the applicant was not a last resort in order to prevent him from spreading the HI virus after less severe measures had been considered and found to be insufficient to safeguard the public interest. Moreover, by extending over a period of almost seven years the order

for the applicant's compulsory isolation, with the result that he had been placed involuntarily in a hospital for almost one and a half years in total, the authorities had failed to strike a fair balance between the need to ensure that the virus did not spread and the applicant's right to liberty.

More information is available on the Court's website:

www.echr.coe.int.

JL

Belarus Anti-gay government campaign



President Lukashenka

During the consultation meeting with the Belarusian Security Council last September, Belarus' president Victor Lukashenka said: "We have to show our society in the near future, what they [EU and USA] are doing here, how they are trying to turn our girls into prostitutes, how they are feeding our citizens with illicit drugs, how they are spreading sexual inversion here, which methods they are employing."

Shortly after that statement, an unofficial campaign discrediting gays began. The first step was

to banish a German embassy employee. As he had a diplomatic passport he was not arrested but his boyfriend was, and both were accused of drug use. The story was broadcast on Belarus' national TV with many homophobic comments.

Later, a Czech attaché in Belarus was accused of paedophilia and banished from Belarus. Every day, national TV broadcast images of him kissing on the streets and in bars with young men around the age of 20. TV reporters claimed that these boys were under the age of 14.

Latest activities include blocking access to some Russian LGBT websites such as www.gay.ru and www.gayly.ru without any explanations.

SVYATOSLAV SEMENTSOV

Bulgaria First gay radio programme

The first independent gay radio programme was broadcast live on air by NET Radio on 6 February. The programme is called "Gemini", and is a co-production of the Bulgarian Gay Organisation Gemini and *NET Radio*.

Discrimination, social isolation and violence, friends, family and school, love, (registered) partnerships, religion, army, male prostitution, media coverage of gay lifestyle, on-line dating, sports and arts are part of the broad spectrum of themes that will be covered during the weekly broadcasts.

The first issue was the story of a 24 year old man who tried to commit suicide after realising he was gay. He shared his sexual orientation struggles with his family and received full support from them. Yet, he could not accept he was gay and tried to kill himself. Mitko and his sister shared that life-changing story in an interview called "Oh my God, I am gay!"

Gemini is broadcast live on NET Radio at 1 p.m. every Sunday.

DESISLAVA PETROVA

Bulgaria First openly gay politician

Something unbelievable has happened in Bulgaria - the most popular politician of the country, 26-year-old Ivelin Iordanov, a member of the Socialist Party of Bulgaria since 1997, declared that he does not want to hide his homosexual orientation. It is interesting that the leader of the Socialist Youth of Bulgaria, Michael Balabanov, immediately suggested that Ivelin should enter the SYB in order to jointly promote the rights of sexual minorities. At that,

Balabanov was motivated by the declaration of the Bulgarian socialists stating that they were going to protect the interests of gay people and, thus, invited them to vote for the SPB.

Participants in the conference "Sexual Minorities and Social Democracy in Europe", which took place in Sofia on 3-5 December 2004, also reported how parties of the Left in Europe have been promoting anti-discriminatory legislation. In the training conducted by MEP

Michael Cashman and Axel Queval from the French Socialist Party, it became clear that discrimination against LGBT people is a multi-faceted phenomenon. Many gay and lesbian people only do not want to waste energy in fighting for their rights, but not even want to reveal their identity. They simply follow the mainstream behaviour of heterosexual majority. Others, though, are ready to struggle for public acceptance.

Cashman and Queval pointed

out that Europe's Social Democrats today act according to the slogan "Make the invisible visible!" meaning that LGBT people should get "out of the closet" as they have a right to live in accordance with their sexual orientation and gender identity. Political parties in turn take into consideration that LGBT citizens represent a tangible voting power (it is believed to be at least 5 % in any country).

ELENA ZAMURA

Czech Republic Partnership bill rejected

On 11 February 2005 the Czech Chamber of Deputies rejected a bill on same-sex registered partnerships. This is not the first time the Czech parliament reject such a bill. As on previous occasions, the vote was very tight - this time, the bill was even short of only one vote to be passed. After the results were announced, the opponents started applauding in the room. Christian Democrat MP Jiří Karas (KDU-ČSL) told the media that he considered the parliament's decision as a victory of common sense. Representatives of the Gay and Lesbian League said behind the scene that they would try again to have the law passed. One of the drafters of the bill, Táňa Fischerová (Unie

svobody - Demokratická unie), said she did not know whether she would re-table the bill in this election term: "Evidently there is no will for this in this Chamber of Deputies." The proposals to embed in law same-sex partnerships have regularly divided individual parties, while only the Christian Democrats are against them in unison. Generally, the legislation tends to be more supported by the left. This was shown by the vote: The bill was backed by 82 out of the 165 deputies present - most MPs voting in favour belong to the Social Democrats, Communists, the Freedom Union (US-DEU), some to the opposition Civic Democratic Party ODS (Občanská demokratická strana).

Ireland Civil Partnership Bill published



Senator Norris

Irish Senator Norris, who successfully challenged Ireland's ban on sexual acts between adult consenting men at the European Court of Human Rights in 1988, published a civil partnership bill.

The issue of LGBT equality gained a momentum currently. Late last year, a lesbian couple won the right to challenge the government on getting their relationship recognised for tax purposes. The pair was married in Canada, and is now seeking changes at home (cf. IE Newsletter 4/04, p. 15).

Sweden Homophobic priest acquitted

Swedish priest Åke Green who had been sentenced to a one-month prison term for homophobic statements in a sermon, was acquitted by an appeal court on 11 February 2005. The ruling upheld his right to preach biblical views even if many found them offensive. The 63-year-old Pentecostal pastor had given a sermon on the Baltic island of Öland in 2003 calling homosexuals "a cancerous tumour on the body of society" and blaming them for the spread of HIV/AIDS.

He became the first person convicted of inciting hatred on grounds of sexual orientation under legislation introduced in 2002, provoking debate about freedom of speech and religion in a highly secular and egalitarian country.

The appeal court in Jönköping quashed Green's conviction and found that "nothing indicates that the pastor used his position as a preacher as a cover for attacking homosexuals". It defended his right to preach what it called "the Bible's categorical condemnation of homosexual relations as a sin", even if such views were "alien to most citizens". *RFSL*, the Swedish Federation for LGBT rights, called the verdict "outrageous".

Russia Supreme Courts rejects same-sex marriage



Eduard Murzin (right)

On 15 February 2005, the Russian Supreme Court refused to rule in favour of same-sex marriage arguing it was not its competence to change the Family Code - this would be up to the legislator.

Last January two Russian men applied for a marriage certificate from a Moscow registration office. One of them, Eduard Murzin, is a (heterosexual) MP in the Russian republic of Bashkiria. His motivation for participating in the attempted marriage was to promote human rights for sexual minorities in Russia. He and his gay "partner" Eduard Mishin, editor-in-chief of a gay website, have spoken publicly about the union for several days before the filed the application in order to draw public attention the issue.

But the registrar's office refused to issue a marriage certificate because the law does not provide for same-sex marriage. Murzin argues that the restriction of marriage to opposite-sex couples violates the Russian Constitution and the European Human Rights Convention. He said he would appeal the Supreme Court's ruling to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

France Law against homophobic hate crimes

In December 2004, the French Senate gave final approval to legislation making homophobic speech and publications a criminal offence. The bill adds sexuality to an existing law banning hate crimes against other minorities. Under the legislation, anyone who provokes hatred or violence on the basis of sex or sexual orientation could be fined and subject to one year in jail.

The Roman Catholic Church opposed the bill arguing it could be used against priests speaking out against homosexuality. Despite these concerns the bill had little difficulty in passing the Senate where the conservative hold a majority. The bill that was pushed by President Jacques Chirac gives France the toughest hate crime legislation in the European Union.

French gay rights group *Inter-LGBT* hailed the vote as a decisive step to combat growing homophobia. The government drafted the law after Sébastien Nouchet, a young gay man, was brutally attacked. After he was beaten, the aggressors poured gasoline over him and set him on fire leaving him severely burned.

Ukraine New LGBT community centre opened



Press conference in Nicolaev

Last December the Nicolaev Association of Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals (LIGA) in Southern Ukraine held a press conference launching the project "Establishing of the Centre for MSM in the city of Nicolaev". The purpose of the project is to increase the legal and medical literacy of the LGBT community in the fields of HIV/AIDS, to encourage personal freedoms, and to get involved into advocacy processes. The presentation date marked the 13th anniversary of the repeal of the total ban on male homosexuality in Ukraine. Representatives of NGOs, mass media, as well as medical practitioners from the Nicolaev HIV Centre took part in the event.

As the local independent paper *Krik* reported: "The intense political enthusiasm in Ukraine, which we have been witnessing lately, also influenced a splash of activity in other spheres of Ukrainian society. That encouraged sexual minorities of the city of Nicolaev to openly and loudly announce their existence."

MAXIM ANMEGHICHEAN

United Kingdom Landmark ruling on work harassment

A manager who was persistently taunted about being gay by senior colleagues won a landmark case on 28 January 2005 under new laws against sexual orientation discrimination at work. Rob Whitfield, 28, had been earning £ 54,000 at a waste management company until constant belittling and goading by other executives forced him to leave last year.

His victory at an employment tribunal is the first successful case brought under the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, and is expected to set a benchmark for employers who fail to stamp out anti-gay or anti-lesbian harassment. He was awarded £ 35,345 in compensation for constructive unfair dismissal, harassment and discrimination.

The tribunal accepted his claim of constructive unfair dismissal and added sharp criticism of the company's failure to accept or deal with the problem.

World trade union LGBT rights network launched

The UK's Trade Union Congress (TUC) and the global trade union movement have created a network for LGBT campaigns to help trade unionists put pressure on the International Labour Organisations (ILO) and the UN Commission on Human Rights to adopt positive policies on lesbian and gay equality.

Speaking after event organised last December by the TUC at the World Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Miyazaki, Japan, TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber said: "This is a major step forward for the trade union movement and for LGBT campaigners. It will allow us to secure better rights at work and will make it easier to include trade unions in community cam-

paigns for equality generally."

The meeting heard from representatives of trade unions in Canada, Italy, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as from the global union confederations covering teachers and public sector workers. Many more national union centres were present and signed up to the new network.

The Congress also adopted a resolution calling for national laws prohibiting discrimination against gay and lesbian workers and called on trade unions to "fight prejudice, bigotry and intolerance in the workplace, in society and in the trade unions". A separate resolution on HIV/AIDS also referred to the specific interests of gay men and lesbians.

United Kingdom February - LGBT history month



Florence Nightingale

In February 2005, schools in the UK were encouraged to hold lessons exploring the achievements of gay men and women throughout history as part of the first gay history month. The project highlighted the hidden history of famous names who would probably today identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, such as William Shakespeare, who was rumoured to be bisexual, and Florence Nightingale, who few people know was a lesbian.

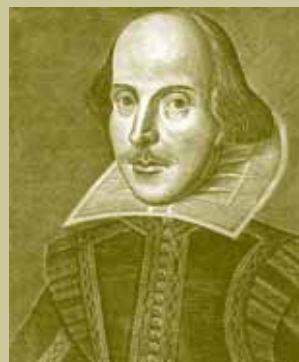
Other events covered during the month included talks on the early years of gays and lesbians in British television and discussions of the history of the British LGBT Muslim movement. Pupils were also studying modern gay icons such as Freddie Mercury and Sir Ian McKellen, alongside more historical gay and bisexual figures such as Isaac Newton and Alexander the Great. The voluntary initiative, modelled on the successful black history month held each October, is being backed by the government and has been given a grant by the Department for Education and Skills. It was officially launched at the Houses of Parliament on 7 February.

Jacqui Smith, the government minister responsible for equality, said: "I hope that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups and their supporters across the country will take the opportunity to participate in the month and organise LGBT events in their areas. I believe the month will be important in helping to drive the culture change to create a more inclusive society. It will also be a great opportunity to uncover some hidden LGBT histories." The scheme was designed by *Schools Out!*, a group campaigning for LGBT equality in schools, to get LGBT issues onto the curriculum. They also encouraged libraries, theatres, sports clubs and councils across the country to hold events.

Nigel Tart from *Schools Out!* said: "Since the 80s, LGBT issues have been squeezed out of subjects like history, English and drama. Today's students only encounter them, if at all, in relation to bullying, sex education and AIDS. LGBT history month is our first major project to reclaim our place in the curriculum."

More info:
www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk

JL



William Shakespeare



Europride 2005

17-27 June 2005, Oslo, Norway



Gay Pride owes its origin to the riots in the streets of Greenwich village in New York in 1969, when gays, lesbians and transvestites for the first time acted against police brutality and oppression. While the first commemoration of this event was highly political, Pride events now have a high cultural profile. Gay Pride is celebrated on all continents and in more than 500 cities around the world.

EuroPride was introduced in 1992 with the aim of developing an LGBT European identity.

EuroPride is a festival encompassing culture and debate for equal opportunities and rights together with entertainment, a street parade and huge celebratory events.

This year's event in Oslo is the first EuroPride outside the European Union. 2005 marks the 100th anniversary of Norway's independence. The authorities have developed an extensive programme to mark the diversity, openness and co-operation that infuse Norwegian society today. EuroPride is proud to a part of

this programme.

While the parade through the streets of Oslo on June 25 is one of the highlights of EuroPride 2005, the emphasis of the Pride Village will be on cultural events, music and building a "Pride Village Spirit", completed with information stands, shops, restaurants, fully licensed bars, and smaller tents in which various events will take place. Also, a religious midnight mass will be held on Thursday night.

Artistic expression is one of

the pillars of modern civilisation. Art plays a vital role in the process of discovering one's self-identity. This is no less true for lesbians and gay men. EuroPride 2005 in Oslo is therefore putting together a programme that will provide a stimulus for various forms of artistic expression, such as music, stage performances, films, and literature.

More information:
www.europride.no

ARNE WALDERHAUG

Baltic Pride 2005

8-14 August 2005,
Tallinn, Estonia



First Baltic Pride 2004

This year the Estonian capital of Tallinn will host second Baltic Pride. The first ever LGBT pride event in the Baltic countries took place in Tallinn last summer and offered a variety of events culminated in a march through central Tallinn attracting hundreds of participants from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden and other countries plus probably even bigger crowd of curious spectators.

This year the organisers are planning a series of art, music and literature events exploring works by and about LGBT people. "Family adoptions" is offered by the organisers: this is a system which will help to accommodate participants who otherwise would not be able to afford to come to Tallinn with the local individuals and families, mainly to help participants from

other ex-Soviet countries.

Organising this event is a tough and expensive business. Organisers are planning many fundraising events to ensure the Pride is free and accessible to as many people as possible. However, any practical advice, suggestions and proposals are very welcome. The organisers are also looking for partners and information on available funding. You can also help the Baltic Pride by purchasing our high-quality rainbow flags! All further information and contact details will soon be available on our website: www.pride.ee.

We hope to see you in Tallinn this August!

KRISSU

Call for essays Anthology to be compiled

Ania Gruszczyńska of *Kampania Przeciw Homofobii* in Poland is currently compiling an anthology of stories by Eastern European LBQ women activists and would encourage contributions covering:

- » the general situation of lesbian, bisexual and queer women in your country/region, preferably with an emphasis on LBQ activism (or contributions concentrating solely on the issue of activism);
- » homophobia such as mili-



3rd International Conference on LGBT Families

25-26 October 2005,
Paris, France

This conference is for researchers, academics, judges, social workers, family and children professionals, lawyers and all others interested in the issue of LGBT parenting. The conference's objectives are to facilitate in-depth discussions on LGBT parenting and to present the latest scientific findings on that issue. Researchers from various countries (UK, Norway, Spain, US, Canada, Belgium, etc.) will join French researchers and academics.

The conference will explore such areas as actors in LGBT families, LGBT family rights, and growing up in an LGBT Family.

The conference is organised by the Association of Gay and Lesbian Parents and Future Parents (APGL) and supported by major French research institutes (CNRS, EHESS, INED). The conference is taking place in conjunction with the 27th ILGA European conference to be held in Paris on 26-30 October 2005. A reduced fee will apply for ILGA members. If you are an ILGA member, please mention this in your registration form.

Further details, programme, registration and information at: contacts@conference-apgl.org
www.conference-apgl.org

MAYA SALVADÒ

tarism, nationalism, predominance of a particular religion, etc.
» personal accounts of what it means to be a LBQ activist in your country/region, following loosely the format of an "activist's coming-out story".

Any contributions on LBQ literature, culture, identity, etc. are very welcomed as long as they are focused on Eastern, Central and Southeast Europe. Please limit your essays to 10-12 pages maximum. If you know of a great piece of writing that

relates to the outline of this project, but is not written in English, please let me know, too. Please send your contribution by 15 June 2005.

Why English? - Because this way the anthology will be accessible to a wider public, and especially those who have no idea about the reality of activism in this region and need some education on that subject.

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Croatia: Queer Zagreb Festival



Queer Zebra

Queer Zagreb Festival was established in 2003 with the goal to stimulate and promote queer culture in Zagreb, the region and the world. Combining art, theory and activism, QZF fosters queer identities that are subversive, but not dangerous for other people. The focus is of course LGBT art, although being aware of the particular post-war situation in Croatia, the festival is connecting broader perspectives of queer identity (such as nationalism, violence, chauvinism, patriarchy, etc.) with sexuality.

The "queer" has made its entry very late in Croatia. However, mainstreaming of LGBT rights is closely connected with Croatia's aspiration to join the EU and with the mainstreaming of the human rights discourse. It sounds good to protect human rights. Queer Zagreb Festival nurtures another approach. We realised that the frequent reduction of the human rights discourse to civil and political rights is not a sustainable strategy for empowering sexual minorities in places where queer culture does not exist. Having rights, but not to have the culture is one of the paradoxes of Croatian daily realities.

Therefore, Queer Zagreb is dedicated to presenting the most recent and challenging artists active in the queer field. In addition to inviting international arts programmes, the festival takes special notice of local people willing to make efforts in creating new meanings of queer realities. Each year we produce a theatre show or a short movie by local artists. Keen to expand the possibilities of the region's population to participate in our activities, we organised the first ever competition of queer short stories in the Balkans and have received a massive response that resulted in a book published in December 2004.

In accordance with the Queer Zagreb 2005 topic of "heteronormativity of childhoods", in the context of which we want to explore the means society has and uses in order to protect children and youth from any non-normative or queer influence, we are organising a new literary project focusing on queer fairy tales and children's stories.

One of the most interesting works of art the festival produced is a "Queer Zebra" that is becoming a permanent installation in one of the main squares in Zagreb. It is a work by the young Croatian visual artist Silvio Vujčić who painted one street crossing in rainbow colours making a simple and very strong statement of "crossing" to the other side that the LGBT movement still awaits.

More information:
www.queerzagreb.org

GORDAN BOSANAC

"Culture for Tolerance" 21-24 April 2005, Cracow, Poland

The festival "Culture for Tolerance" is organised by the Cracow branch of Kampania Przeciw Homofobii (Campaign Against Homophobia). Its goal is to introduce the theme of homosexuality into the wider discourse, to draw attention to the discrimination and exclusion against which LGBT people struggle on a daily basis. The organisers have set a goal to establish a neutral space in which people - irrespective of their sexual orientation - might feel free, and one that will enable them to engage in dialogue on equal footing.

The festival's inaugural run took place on 6-9 May 2004. It prompted, on the one hand, protests and aggressive attacks from radical right-wing groups (i.e. physical attacks on peaceful participants of the March for Tolerance), yet on the other hand, there was positive interest in the festival (cf. IE Newsletter 2/04, p. 15), exceeding the organisers' highest expectations (as well as their capacity for dealing with what took place during the festival). And this is what confirms our belief that "Culture for Tolerance" is a necessary event worth repeating.

The following events are planned for this year's festival:

- » academic session "Sexual Minorities: Pride and Exclusion"
- » photo exhibition - women talking about women
- » visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum in Oświęcim
- » film screenings
- » gender training workshop
- » discussion on the state of the LGBT movement in Poland and in the countries of the Balkan Region
- » concerts
- » "lady space"
- » partying in the clubs
- » ILGA-Europe's seminars on human rights and fundraising.

ILGA-Europe is glad to be present at the festival. During the festival it will organise two seminars. It will also encourage seminar participants to take part in the March for Tolerance.

The March for Tolerance is a protest against discrimination against minority groups, against the denial of their constitutional rights, against attempts to exclude them from the public sphere. Our appeal focuses on respect for the principles of democracy, freedom and human rights.

The programme of the festival is subject to changes and amendments. For updates please contact:

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<http://tolerancja.gej.net/english/>

TOMASZ SZYPUŁA



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