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Focus on gender

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Editorial

Dear readers,

This edition of our magazine has two main themes: history and gender. ILGA-Europe celebrates its 15th anniversary, but our history obviously begun much earlier. This time we look into our history before the formal establishment of ILGA-Europe as a European region of ILGA and highlight the importance of the history of LGBTI movement as whole.

Most of the content, however, explores the issue of gender from a number of perspectives and angles. Some articles pose a range of questions: Is the LGBTI movement free from sexism? Does our movement which fights against heteronormativity reproduce other normativites? Are we mindful of the rights or others while claiming our own right? I really hope that our richness of this focus section on gender will provide exciting, stimulating and thought-provoking reading.

And finally, this is the last edition of our 48 pages magazine. As of summer 2012, our magazine will be published in a slightly different format and in fewer pages. However, we will maintain our current approach of exploring particular current themes in depth.

I hope you will enjoy this edition and as usual, we encourage your feedback.

Juris Lavrikovs

Reflecting on history, celebrating achievements, continuing the fight

Gabi Calleja and Martin K.I. Christensen,
Co-Chairs of the Executive Board of ILGA-Europe

In 2011 ILGA-Europe celebrated its 15th anniversary. But as you will find out in the first article of this magazine, the history of the organised LGBTI movement in Europe is deeply connected with the creation of ILGA itself which was born out of a specific European initiative. A timeline of our 15 year history highlights the most important events in the organisation's history and the major achievements for the human rights of LGBTI people at European level to which ILGA-Europe and its membership directly contributed.

Fifteen years is a relatively short time in history, but what a transformation ILGA-Europe has experienced and what progress has been made in Europe! The organisation which started out on the basis of typewritten letter exchanges between a number of volunteer activists is now an established professional, Council of Europe and UN-accredited network of 331 member organisations in 42 out of 49 European countries. Today ILGA-Europe is the leading voice of LGBTI people at European level, the main watchdog of human rights and equality of LGBTI people as well as a credible and respected partner for all European institutions. As a result of joint work between ILGA-Europe and its members, Europe is the first continent which has intergovernmental legally binding instruments explicitly banning sexual orientation discrimination as well as specific reference to the grounds of gender identity. Also as an outcome of joined up work across the region, Europe experienced the biggest wave of decriminalisation of sexual acts between consensual adults in the world a few years ago and is the only continent free from such laws with the exception of North Cyprus. Almost all European countries (39) ban sexual orientation discrimination in employment. Almost half of European countries recognise same-sex partners (21) and many recognise also same-sex parents (11). Almost all European countries (34) have legal/administrative procedures for the legal gender recognition of trans people.

While demonstrating high professionalism and having built sustainable partnerships with International and European institutions, ILGA-Europe maintains strong links to its membership and grass roots activists. Equal importance, resources and attention has been dedicated to supporting and developing its memberships and links to the wider European LGBTI movement. Such deep grass roots connections provide ILGA-Europe its unique status and legitimacy.

But clearly our work is far from being done and complacency is the last thing we can afford. Not only is there still a lot of work to be done to achieve legal equality, particularly when it comes to gender identity and gender expression discrimination, but legal equality is only a step towards changing hearts and minds. Currently our joint work is being challenged like never before by an increasing shift towards extremism and conservatism across Europe.

So while celebrating our achievements and successes, we need to remain organised, focused and vigilant. **The struggle for legal equality and social justice goes on!**

Back Into The Future:

ILGA-Europe Before 1996[1]

David Paternotte, Fonds de la recherche scientifique/Université libre de Bruxelles, looks at the history of ILGA-Europe prior to its formal creation in 1996. His article reveals that the history of ILGA-Europe and ILGA are inseparable. The history of ILGA which is now the world federation, from the very beginning had strong, if not exclusive, European focus and started as a European initiative.

Very few people know that the founding meeting of ILGA, which took place in Coventry (United Kingdom) in 1978, was originally designed to prepare for the 1979 European elections. LGBT groups across Western Europe had been in touch for a couple of years, and some had visited each other. This was particularly true in the United Kingdom, where the powerful Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE), who organised the Coventry meeting, was working closely with its Scottish and Northern Irish smaller counterparts, who had regularly attended CHE annual conferences.

The 1974 International Gay Rights Congress, organised in Edinburgh by Ian Dunn and Derek Ogg from the Scottish Minorities Group[2], gave a first impulse to recent transnational LGBT activism[3]. However, its focus was more global, and it did not manage to establish a permanent organisation. Partly for this reason, the organisers of the Coventry meeting wanted something more concrete, with clear short-term goals, and structured at a lower geographical scale. However, representatives from other continents, namely from the United States, and Australia, came to the meeting and successfully convinced their fellow activists to set up a global organisation: the International Gay Association (IGA).

Since then, I(L)GA's history has been characterized by its double, global and European, dimension. It was already obvious in 1978. The first press statement clearly claimed the organisation was formed "to maximise the effectiveness of gay organisations by coordinating political action on an international level in pursuit of gay rights and in particular to apply concerted political pressure on governments and international institutions"[4]. However, other documents reveal that, reflecting IGA actual membership, Europe was the main focus. The need of an observatory status at the Council

[1] This article is based on an ongoing research project on the history of ILGA and ILGA-Europe, which is funded by the Belgian Fonds de la Recherche scientifique. It includes a complete review of ILGA archives in Brussels, Amsterdam and London, and interviews with (former) activists. For an overview of ILGA history, see http://ilga.org/ilga/en/article/mG6UVpR17x.

[2] They were also among the founders of ILGA.

[3] Earlier attempts of building transnational networks happened in the past. In the fifties and the sixties, homophile groups joined in the International Committee for Sexual Equality (ISCE). In the early seventies, gay liberation groups also tried to establish an international gay and lesbian network. Some of the founders of ILGA, such COC or FUORI!, were part of these early attempts.

[4] IGA, *Press release*, Coventry, 28 August 1978.

of Europe was already discussed, and several submissions to committees of the Council of Europe were on the agenda. More surprisingly, contacts with the European commission were also envisaged, candidates to the European Parliament elections had to be contacted, and the idea of an "all-party group of Euro-MPs favourable to gay rights"[5] was even suggested.

As we see, the long 'prehistory' of ILGA-Europe is particularly interesting, as it allows a better understanding of the birth of ILGA-Europe. It highlights the strong European dimension of ILGA long before the foundation of ILGA-Europe. Indeed, ILGA has always been inspired by a certain idea of Europe and, crucially, of its usefulness for the progress of LGBT rights. From the start, founding activists believed that Europe had a specific meaning in terms of values, and thought that European institutions, along with the United Nations, could be used to increase pressure on reluctant states and gain rights from abroad. It was a rather logical thought in the case of the Council of Europe, but it was truly visionary in the case of the EEC, which was mostly a socioeconomic institution at the time.

The fact that several ILGA founders and key early activists came from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, where the European Court of Human Rights played a central part in decriminalizing homosexuality[6], has probably been decisive. This strong European dimension has been further strengthened by the constant presence, over the last thirty years, of some Europhile activists who had either attended the Coventry meeting, such as Peter Ashman and Nigel Warner, or had joined the organisation soon thereafter, like Kurt Krickler.

European politics have thus been among ILGA priorities since 1978. The membership of the organisation has long been predominantly European, and Europe remains one of the regions where it is strongly established. Mirroring this strong European dimension, two annual conferences have been organised since 1980. The main one often took place during the summer, and gathered activists from all over the world to discuss global issues as well as those related to ILGA. A smaller European one was also traditionally organised around New Year to deal with regional matters, anticipating the ILGA-Europe annual conference.

Following a reformist approach to LGBT politics, ILGA began to lobby European institutions very early. Contacts with the Council of Europe started in 1978 and, although it was not granted an official advisory status until 1997, the organisation played a decisive part in key decisions, such as the historic 1981 report on the discrimination of homosexuals.

The European Community was another early target. In 1984, the 6th IGA World Conference, hold in Helsinki, decided that "an IGA project group should be formed for permanent contact with the parliament and commission and for lobbying purposes"[7]. An EC lobby office was also established in 1992 in Brussels.

However, contacts had already taken place, and the Parliament quickly appeared as the friendliest institution. ILGA activists had met officials to prepare the 1984 Squarcialupi report, and the instrumental role of the Parliament was further confirmed by the adoption of the Roth Report in 1994. The latter had been drafted in close collaboration with ILGA, which had

[5] IGA, *Proposals for political action*, 1978, p. 2.

[6] Jeff Dudgeon and David Norris were involved in the early years of I(L)GA, and attended several meetings in the seventies and early eighties. Peter Ashman, who co-chaired the first meeting of IGA, was one of Dudgeon's lawyers.

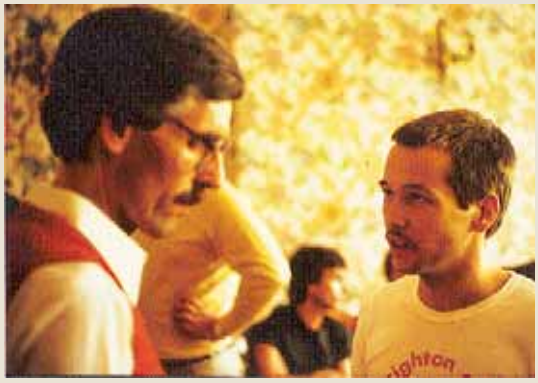
[7] IGA, Conference report, 1984, p. 6.

organised several meetings in Brussels and Sitges (Spain). The organisation could decisively rely on sympathetic insiders, such as Hein Verkerk, a Dutch activist and a long ILGA campaigner who was working for the Dutch Greens at the European Parliament.

After contacts with Commission officials, the first meeting with a European Commissioner happened in 1990. Vaso Papandreou, the European Commissioner for Social Affairs, agreed to fund a study on "the rights of lesbians and gay men in the legal order of the European Commission" and the impact of the 1992 Single market[8]. Interestingly, Commissioner Papandreou criticised the scarce presence of trans people in the organisation at the time[9]. At the end of 1995, ILGA activists met representatives of the president of the Commission for the first time. The first major European grant was also received this year, when the Commission awarded ECU 150,000 from the Phare & Tacis Democracy Programme for a project in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia.

Central and Eastern Europe have always been a priority. In 1981, at the Turin Conference, HOSI-Wien suggested the creation of an East Europe Information Pool. Between 1987 and 1996, it organised a conference "for Eastern and South Eastern Europe" every year. It was also involved in the Helsinki Process, which became the OSCE.

The decision to establish a new organisation in 1996 came as the result of several factors. On the one hand, it was the consequence of a regionalisation process, which had been discussed for years within ILGA. The organisation had grown, and its management had become more complex. Besides, ILGA had to become truly global, and Europeans could neither monopolise power nor debates. ILGA-Europe was hence the first regional branch set up within the organisation in search of a regional balance. On the other hand, new opportunities were emerging at EU level. The groundbreaking 1994 Roth report had been a breakthrough and the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference preparing a new European treaty was seen as a chance not to be missed. Therefore, a new organisation exclusively dedicated to European matters was deemed as necessary.



Images: participants of the very first IGA meetings

The rest of the story is well known, and remembered in this special issue. The close relationship between ILGA-Europe and some MEPs increased with the official establishment of an Intergroup on LGBT rights in 1997. The organisation became an official partner of the European Commission as a result of the Treaty of Amsterdam, and core funding came from the EU in 2000. It allowed ILGA-Europe to rent an office in Brussels, to hire employees and to become a professional organisation lobbying in Brussels, Strasburg, Warsaw and a few other places in order to defend LGBT rights in Europe.

[8] Kees Waaldijk and Andrew Clapham (eds.), Homosexuality: A European Community Issue, Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1993.

[9] As remembered by Lisa Power in a recent interview.

Milestones of the 15 years of ILGA-Europe

This timeline highlights the milestones in the history of ILGA-Europe as well as the main developments related to the human rights of LGBTI people at European level towards which ILGA-Europe and its member organisations contributed directly.

1996

- ILGA-Europe is established as ILGA's regional umbrella for Europe

1997

- Sexual orientation is included as a non-discrimination category in Article 13 of Amsterdam Treaty. This is the first international treaty to explicitly include sexual orientation
- ILGA-Europe receives its first EU funding for the project "Equality for Lesbians and Gay Men – A relevant issue in the civil and social dialogue"

1998

- ILGA-Europe is granted consultative status with the Council of Europe
- The European Parliament adopts a resolution "on equal rights for gays and lesbians in the EU" drafted by ILGA-Europe; the European Parliament states it will not support accession into the EU of the countries with discriminatory laws against LGBT people

1999

- ILGA-Europe begins campaigning for inclusion of sexual orientation in the EU employment equality directive and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights as well as for inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in the new version of Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (by Protocol 12)

2000

- EU adopts employment equality directive and the Charter of Fundamental Rights – both explicitly banning discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation
- ILGA-Europe secures its first core funding from the European Commission
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopts three historic documents referring to sexual orientation discrimination – the broadening of the European Convention on Human Rights with the Protocol No. 12 and the two recommendations on the situation of lesbians and gays in Europe, and on discrimination in asylum and immigration practices

2001

- ILGA-Europe moves into own office premises in Brussels, employs first members of staff and launches its website: www.ilga-europe.org

2002

- ILGA-Europe launches campaign on equal of treatment for LGBT EU citizens and their partners/families in the field of immigration and free movement and campaign on the recognition of LGBT refugees in the EU asylum legislation

2003

- ILGA-Europe starts working with trans issues and establishes the Trans Working Group
- ILGA-Europe receives the first grant from the Sigrid Rausing Trust which enables the organisation to work in Eastern and South Eastern Europe, on campaigns at the Council of Europe, and on trans issues

2004

- ILGA-Europe receives funding from the Open Society Institute for the project "Integration of LGBT health issues into state health policy in Central and Eastern Europe"
- ILGA-Europe plays prominent role in 'Buttiglione affair' when the European Parliament disapproves the entire new Commission because of one the proposed Commissioner's anti-democratic views and the Commission reshuffles its team
- EU adopts directive on free movement for EU citizens. ILGA-Europe celebrates partial success as the directive encourages EU Member States to facilitate the free movement for same-sex partners and their families
- EU also adopts directive on refugee status with a reference to sexual orientation

2005

- The "Scholarship Angels" scheme to raise money for Annual Conference scholarships is launched focusing on trans activists and activists from outside the European Union
- The ILGA-Europe Human Rights Violations Documentation Fund is launched with support from the Sigrid Rausing Trust. The fund aims to promote documentation of cases of discrimination, hate crimes and other human rights violations against LGBT people according to the international human rights standards

2006

- ILGA-Europe is granted consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council
- ILGA-Europe joins the project "PRECIS – Prevention and empowerment in the CIS" as a partner

2007

- ILGA-Europe and its member organisations are very involved in various activities during the "European Year of Equal Opportunities for All"

2008

- ILGA-Europe intensifies its campaign in support of comprehensive new EU anti-discrimination legislation covering discrimination on all grounds. As a result, the European Commission proposes a single anti-discrimination directive covering all grounds (age, disability, religion/belief and sexual orientation) in all areas of life outside employment
- EU's Fundamental Rights Agency publishes report 'Homophobia and Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual orientation in the EU Member States'

2009

- Following the change in ILGA Constitution, ILGA-Europe embrace the intersex issues
- ILGA-Europe starts a three-year capacity building and advocacy project with the Russian LGBT Network and its members as key partners
- ILGA-Europe launches the Be Bothered! campaign for the European Parliament elections targeting candidates to sign a ten-point pledge to promote human right for LGBT people in Europe and beyond. After the election day, 20% of all elected Members of the European Parliament had signed the pledge.

2010

- ILGA-Europe launches the new three-year project "Step up! Stronger LGBT movements for equality in the Western Balkans"
- The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe unanimously adopts the historic "Recommendations on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity"
- The Parliament Assembly of the Council of Europe adopts the "Resolution on Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity"
- The Council of the European Union's Working Party on Human Rights adopts the "Toolkit to Promote and Protect the Enjoyment of all Human Rights by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People"

2011

- The "Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence" is being adopted with a reference to the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. This is the first time gender identity is being included in a text of an international human rights treaty.
- The Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner launches a report on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity covering all 47 Member States of the Council of Europe
- ILGA-Europe together with ILGA World organise and sponsors the first ever intersex forum
- ILGA-Europe receives financial support from the Dutch government for the project on implementation of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers recommendation on LGBT rights and work on tackling LGBT-phobic hate and violence

Find more details of the 15 years of ILGA-Europe on our website:
www.ilga-europe.org/home/about_us/what_is_ilga_europe/our_history

From **his** story to our **history**

IHLIA is the International Homo/Lesbian Information Centre and Archive based in Amsterdam. *Michel Otten* reminds us about the importance of documenting and preserving our collective history as a movement.

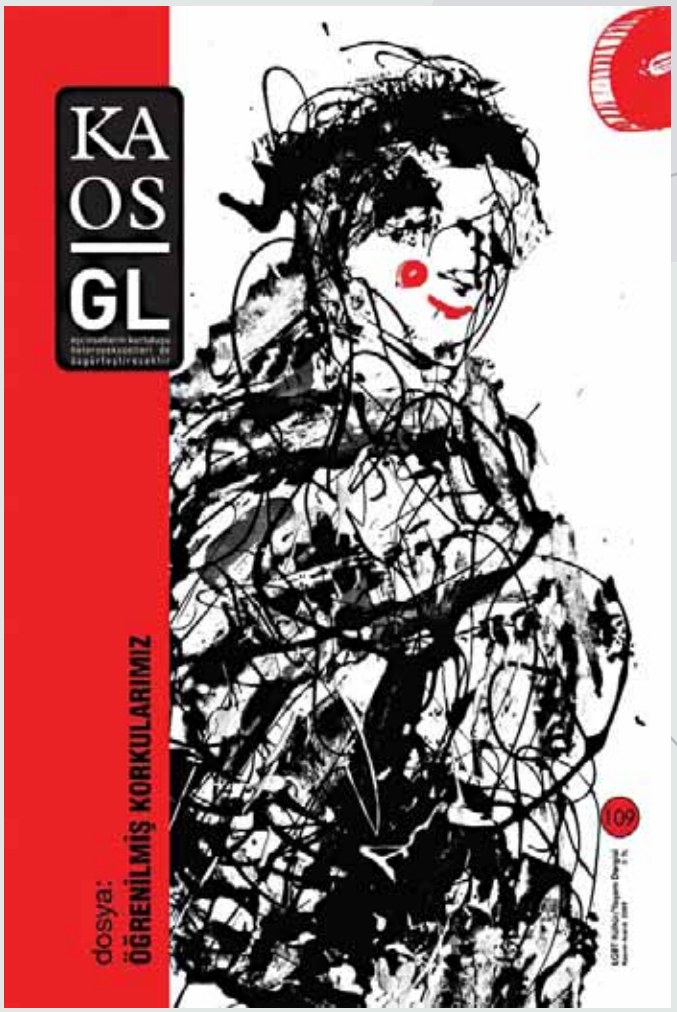
"If homosexuals are to gain any power is is [sic] to be by first getting some publicity, and some of that publicity must be in the form of the written word"

Friends of Homodok Society Journal Amsterdam

This quote can be found in the 1991 *Friends of Homodok Society Journal Amsterdam*. This journal, produced by Terrence (William) Cooke and Martin Nel, sought to expose the need for collecting, documenting, understanding and sharing gay and lesbian history. Cooke died in 1992 from the consequences of AIDS, but his whole personal collection of cards, photographs, audio-visual tapes and letters, has been preserved by IHLIA, successor to Homodok and an international gay/lesbian library, archive information and documentation centre. Without these unique documents we would probably never have known the special and colourful person Cooke had been (besides a gay activist, we know he also was a writer, historian, barman, artist and actor) and what he contributed to LGBTI life.

The Cooke Collection, as it is known, consists of literally thousands of personal and "Dear Dolly" letters spanning more than two decades from lesbians and gays across the world. It reflects the lives of a close group of friends, particularly in London and Amsterdam, and reveals the new struggle of AIDS, civil rights and asylum issues in the early '70s through to the early '90s, experiences of being arrested, a strong sense of gay identity and also practical advice on creating archives of gay/lesbian letters and stamps. When seen as a whole these letters become a "*tapestry of voices*", according to Cooke. Such a tapestry can ensure that future generations will have a glimpse of what gay life looked like during this era.

Cooke's personal story is one of many. There are also important LGBTI movement stories to tell. One example is Kaos GL in Turkey, a partner in IHLIA's Open Up! Project, which aims to digitise and disclose a substantial archive of LGBTI periodicals and organisational documents related to central, eastern and southeastern Europe. The history of Kaos GL begins in 1993 with black & white photocopied magazines which were "illegally" distributed in the streets of various places in Turkey. The editor-in-chief of the magazine, Nevin Öztop, says that the content consisted of personal stories from people who were pushed to feel lonely and isolated; so people reading these stories would not feel alone or wrong. Only in July 2005, twelve years later, did Kaos GL become an official organisation and legalised by the Turkish government, thereby becoming the first registered LGBTI association in the country. This meant that they could receive funds and contribute more to the LGBTI community in Turkey.



Kaos GL Magazine

Over the last couple of years Kaos GL, has evolved to become a broader social movement. Their motto "*The liberation of homosexuals will also free heterosexuals*" means their work has become important for other social groups and minorities in Turkey. This is one of the reasons why Kaos GL has won the European NGO's network SOLIDAR's Silver Rose Award 2012, a prize that helps raise the profile of individuals and organisations whose struggles contribute greatly to social justice and equality throughout the world.

With this dedication in mind, Öztop joins IHLIA's voice in emphasizing the importance of preserving and passing on LGBTI history, whether written or oral. Kaos GL is one of many LGBTI organisations that is contributing its archive, in this case magazines, to IHLIA's forthcoming Open Up! collection. As Öztop says, *"The magazines don't belong to only Kaos GL Association anymore, it is important that these go from hand to hand to lots of people."*

Another IHLIA initiative which stresses the importance of preserving the cultural heritage of LGBTI people is the conference on the future of LGBTI Histories of the International Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections (ALMS), to be held in Amsterdam in August 2012. From what is understood about LGBTI materials and collections in mainstream libraries and archives, they are as a general rule poorly kept; there is often an atmosphere of taboo around homosexuality as a subject, leading to poor systems of making the information available. LGBTI ALMS hopes to change that, so LGBTI people can find out about their history, their heroes, the struggle for their rights. Lonneke van den Hoonaard, director of IHLIA: *"We want them to explore the raw materials of the LGBTI experience. We want them to see the manuscripts of great LGBTI authors, we want to show them how our predecessors lobbied and lived and loved to create a world in which we all are part of the story."*

To prevent future stories of people like Cooke and movements like Kaos GL from being lost forever, collaboration between organisations and initiatives like Open Up! and ALMS are one way forward. This was nicely formulated by Cooke in his message of the need for friendship amongst groups who are all more or less interested in the same areas: *"We hope to bring some of these people into contact with one another, especially (…) where there is more darkness than light."*

For more information about IHLIA and the Open Up! and LGBTI ALMS initiatives, see **www.ihlia.nl** or email **info@ihlia.nl**

ILGA-Europe's Annual Conference 2011:

Italy in the European spotlight

15th Annual Conference of ILGA-Europe in Turin was the largest ever and one of the most successful so far. *Valeria Santostefano, Enzo Cucco* and *Gabriele Murgia*, members of the organising committee ILGA-Europe Torino 2011, share their experience of organising this event and tell about its importance for the Italian LGBTI movement.

www.white.to.it

Bringing Italy into the European spotlight

At the time the Italian delegation presented its candidacy to host the 2011 ILGA-Europe Annual Conference, the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament had just rejected a proposed bill against homophobia. The majority of the Chamber voted to declare the bill unconstitutional and sought to equate homosexuality with pedophilia, necrophilia and zoophilia. As one of the founding members of the European Union, Italy's refusal to recognise LGBT rights is often held up as an example and alibi for other European countries who also want to deny the recognition of such rights. This was one of the reasons to bring ILGA-Europe to Italy. The Italian political situation regarding LGBT rights needed to be brought to light: Italy needed to engage with Europe and Europe needed to engage with Italy. Hosting such a prestigious international event presented an occasion to do so.

Inconsistence of Italian state institutions

After Italy was selected as the venue for the 2011 ILGA-Europe Conference, the Organising Committee for the Conference sought the patronage of the most important Italian national institutions. Considering the current political climate in Italy, it was highly significant that all of these institutions responded positively. The Conference was supported by both Chambers of the Parliament, the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate of the Republic, and by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. A message from

the President of the Republic arrived to open the Conference. Although these patronages appeared to send an important and clear political message of support, it must be kept in mind that this was the same Parliament that denied protection against homophobia in 2009, and again in 2011 (just a few months before the Conference) after a second bill was presented. This incoherence needs to be strategically stressed.

Logistical challenge

The organisation of the Conference presented an important challenge to the Italian LGBT movement. The candidacy of Turin was prepared by the *Coordinamento Torino Pride*, a local organisation made up of fifteen LGBT NGOs. The candidacy was supported by other Italian ILGA-Europe members. After Torino was selected as the site for the 2011 Conference, an organising committee was formed. The committee consisted of fourteen member organisations from both the Italian national and local levels. We remember the reaction of the ILGA-Europe staff to this arrangement: they were worried that the involvement of so many different organisations might pose an obstacle to the complex preparation it takes to successfully organise a conference. Our fears, however, were soon laid to rest when the committee proved to be up to the task. Through discussion and debate, the committee was able to successfully work together to select a theme for the conference, propose workshops, and decide who to invite as speakers.

Fundraising

The most difficult challenge was fundraising. The patronages from the national institutions were not accompanied with financial support. This is another example of the hypocrisy of the Italian national political message concerning LGBT rights. We were, however, able to find support at the local level. The Turin Municipality demonstrated its commitment to LGBT issues. It recognised the relevance of hosting the ILGA-Europe Conference in Turin and, along with the Turin Chamber of Commerce and the Presidency of the Regional Council of Piemonte, supported the committee and the Conference financially. Thanks to this support, we were able to offer more scholarships than were offered at previous ILGA-Europe Conferences. The local support is encouraging and shows the disparity between the local and the national authority in Italy with respect to the recognition of rights for LGBT persons.

Visibility

The conference represented an opportunity to increase visibility for LGBT rights at the local level. While we were preparing for the conference a group of activists from the organising committee joined with other members of the local community to develop a special project: the "Clash or Dialogue" night. There were multiple goals to this project, to bring LGBT issues that usually result in a clash but require dialogue to the forefront in traditionally non-LGBT spaces; to meet up with those we do not usually meet up with in LGBT initiatives; to involve local organisations (LGBT and non-LGBT) in the process; and to bring awareness of the Conference to the local community. We decided to go into bars and clubs in one of the most famous and populated squares of Turin on a Friday night to reach the youth population and to experiment with a new way to raise awareness and involve the general public. We recruited seventeen organisations and seven bars and clubs in the area of Piazza Vittorio. These organisations proposed various themes that made up the "Clash or Dialogue" event. The themes included: LGBT families; homophobia and homophobic attacks; coming out; prevention of sexually transmitted diseases; connections between racism and homophobia; and transgender visibility.

Each of the seven bars and clubs involved hosted one of these themes, which were represented through various cultural projects such as art exhibitions, theatre performances, videos and music. The theme of "Clash or Dialogue" was also concretely represented in the square itself: on one side with a flash mob pillow fight and on the other with a Living Library.

The "Clash or Dialogue" project was supported by two major communication studios, UNDESIGN and WHITE. Both volunteered to work on the project and helped to provide a communication strategy to raise public awareness. As part of this project, and to generate interest, we opened a blog, a Twitter account, and set up a Facebook profile. We also produced publicity materials, which included a free magazine that focused on the themes of the evening and more than one hundred video interviews of LGBT activists and the general public concerning LGBT issues. The videos were published on YouTube. The evening was a tremendous success and demonstrated the power of dialogue as a means of increasing public awareness of the challenges faced by members of the LGBT community.

Gender and the European LGBTI Movement

Silvan Agius, Policy Director of ILGA-Europe, explains why it is important for our movement to bring together lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex communities and how the main reasons for discrimination which these groups experience are different but interconnected.

Some people often wonder what unites gays, lesbians, bisexuals, trans and intersex people under the same umbrella acronym: LGBTI. They argue that the different LGBTI sub-groups lead their lives, form meaningful relationships and experience discrimination in fundamentally different ways. In their view, a movement fighting for the recognition of human rights for all these different people is bound to fail to satisfy the needs of all those that it aims to represent. Interestingly, this argument has been voiced by a number of members of the LGBTI community itself.

Undeniably, there are different grounds on which LGBTI people experience discrimination. Lesbians, gays and bisexuals primarily experience discrimination because of their sexual orientation; trans and gender variant people experience discrimination on the grounds of their gender identity and/or gender expression; and intersex people experience discrimination on the grounds of their sex. In addition, same-sex couples and their children experience discrimination on the grounds of their family and/or marital status, and of course, in various instances discrimination takes place on an intersection of the grounds listed above. Seen like this, LGBTI is indeed a mouthful. However, a segregated approach to LGB, T and I would miss the fact that there is a common root to most manifestations of discrimination against LGBTI people. That root is sexism.

Gender stereotypes and sexism are all around us. The social and cultural framework that we inhabit, and the media that we consume are full of subtle (yet constant) gendered messages informing our understanding of which actions and roles are expected, and which statuses are to be afforded to men, women and the rest of us. Along with patriarchy, this gender binary system is supported by a form of gender policing, known as cisnormativity, which maintains a normalising and polarised sense of what is masculine and what is feminine. A departure from the ascribed gender norms comes at the cost of social exclusion and marginalisation. Additionally, the gender binary system is reinforced through heteronormativity, whereby heterosexuality is perceived to be the default sexual orientation and other sexual orientations are seen as deviant.

An adequate response to the various forms of discrimination waged against LGBTI people requires a conscious

understanding of the sophisticated pattern of advantage and disadvantage that emanates from the different majority and minority statuses on the grounds of sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, family and marital statuses. Additionally, such a response needs to be aware of the overlaps between sexism, homophobia and transphobia. In view of this need, ILGA-Europe has over the years invested significant energy into the exploration of LGBTI diversity and ways of working effectively to advance equality for all.

At first, ILGA-Europe was principally oriented towards gay, lesbian and bisexual people's rights, but over time the organisation has evolved to include equality for trans people in its mandate, and more recently we have embraced equality for intersex people as well. As expected, this journey has required a number of changes and adjustments both in the way the organisation is structured and in the way our work is articulated and communicated. For example, in 2004, ILGA-Europe took the significant step to move away from the previous gender balanced (yet gender binary) Executive Board composed of five males and five females to a Board composed of two slots open to all - including those who do not identify as either gender - and a minimum of four males and four females. Likewise, our 2011-2013 Strategic Plan represented another significant step in this process. Gender identity and gender expression were mainstreamed throughout the Plan and a focus on capacity building on trans and intersex issues for ILGA-Europe's membership, board and staff was also included.

In terms of more concrete outcomes, over the past six years we have supported the emergence and strengthening of Transgender Europe (TGEU) as a stand-alone European movement. While the capacity-building support that we provided was primarily a one-way process, the conceptual exchanges and the strategic partnership with the organisation has helped ILGA-Europe to significantly speed up its learning on matters related to gender identity and gender expression, and enhance its ability to effectively advocate for equality for trans and gender variant people. In 2009, in partnership with TGEU, we held the Trans Rights Conference oriented towards the establishment of a formal exchange between activists for trans rights and European Institutions. At this same conference the Malta Trans Rights Declaration was adopted, and it was subsequently endorsed by the 2009 ILGA-Europe Annual Conference. The Declaration has since formed a basis of ILGA-Europe's and TGEU's joint advocacy.

In 2008, the ILGA World Conference adopted an amendment to the name of the organisation effectively incorporating intersex people into the scope of ILGA for the first time. Given the fact that per se a European intersex rights movement did not exist, we have taken some time to liaise with local intersex organisations and enhance our organisational learning in preparation for advocacy work. This exchange with key intersex activists has in turn allowed ILGA-World and ILGA-Europe to jointly organise the first International Intersex Organising Forum in 2011. The Forum brought together intersex activists from around the globe to network and work jointly towards the formulation of the demands of the emerging movement. While the Forum was hailed as a very important milestone by those present, it was clearly only the beginning of the process towards the articulation and promotion of the application of human rights for intersex people.

As ILGA-Europe continues its work championing human rights for all LGBTI people, we are aware that we need to enhance knowledge sharing between the European, national and local levels of the organisation. All of us need to work together to challenge all discrimination, regardless of whether it is related to (to name but a few) exclusion from the right to marry, register partnerships and adoption; inadequate healthcare and laws on change of legal gender; or to gross violations of the right to bodily integrity such as forced gender reassignment, sterilisation or non-consensual genital surgery.

While appreciating that different national and local LGBTI organisations have different focuses and goals, we all need to enhance cooperation and jointly challenge the causes of our inequality. We also need to show solidarity with the most vulnerable amongst us and ensure that all LGBTI people are adequately welcomed and represented. Far from being a diluted message, it is only through solidarity and strong partnerships that we will formulate the next steps in our struggle for equality.

Questioning the Movement?
Queering Democracy?

Ruth Baldacchino was asked to write about gender stereotypes within the LGBTI Movement, which many have sought to build; that movement which has configured and reconfigured ways we understand gender, sexuality, sex, discrimination, family and power. This article aims to take a look at some ideas and actions created by this "movement" and cast a critical eye at the relationships between activism, the discourse(s) generated and the legal changes sought. Like others, Ruth argues that these relationships have (re)created systems of power imbalances and normativities within and outside this LGBTI Movement.

In the eyes of many I am framed as a small-island subject; a post-colonial subject; a new-EU subject. Small, post and new usually mean "lacking the experience of a large community", the "long history of a free country" with "only a few years of EU-membership privileges". I am probably all of these but I would rather say that I am a thirty-something, academic activist who has lived on islands all their life.

Framing the issue

This is an attempt to deconstruct and understand perceived relationships within the global LGBTI movement and I take a three-pronged approach to develop my arguments: community framework, discourses of migration, and heteronormativy.

A number of theorists have talked about the idea of **communities**, with some putting forward the idea that all communities are imagined realities which help create a sense of belonging with groups of people characterised by sameness. This framework provides and understanding of the LGBTI movement since it has similar characteristics to the way individuals and groups treat or see local communities.

Sullivan examines and deconstructs[1] the concept of "community" with particular reference to the "lesbian and gay community" by focusing on commonality and hospitality. This provides an insight into the construct of community, and community membership which determines access to queer spaces and places, thus implying underlying assumptions

[1]Sullivan's is a Derridean deconstruction: an approach, which according to O'Rourke "tends to be supplanted by Foucault in most genealogies of queer studies" (2005).

about the "lesbian and gay communities". The ways in which *community* or a movement is grounded in unity, having a common purpose and sharing a set of beliefs, may separate and exclude individuals and such a perception of community draws people to it as it "feels good" - community is a "warm" place providing shelter and safety, as opposed to "the world outside" which often seems dangerous and hostile. However, at the same time, Bauman has suggested that a community demands loyalty and obedience in return for a sense of belonging that, in turn, entails policing one's practices, desires and beliefs. Referring to Derrida's work on community and the notion of hospitality, Sullivan argues that a "firm sense of identity can only be formed in and through the exclusion of difference and increasingly vigilant forms of border patrol" and concludes that

> "…identity is social, unstable, continually in process, and to some extent, is both necessary and impossible… (I)t is the aporetic structure of subjectivity and social relations that, disallows the unification, solidification and immobilisation of being, that disallows community". (Sullivan, 2003: 149-150).

I make reference to **migration discourses**, which bear a strong resemblance to the above arguments and throw light on the movement's intersections. The emergence of fields of study, such as LGBT studies, sexuality and gender studies, queer theory, transgender theory and other fields have emerged in an attempt to explore the impact of "the global coming out of LGBT politics, and the roles of gender and sexuality" within this (Cotten, 2012: 2). Theorists have cross-fertilised migration studies and queer theory and methods which have led to the analysis of queer globalisation, politics of citizenship and asylum in queer migration, homonationalism and homonormativity (Cruz-Malavé & Manalansan, 2002; Luibhéid & Cantu, 2005; Patton & Sanchez-Eppler, 2000; Puar, 2002, 2007).

Citizenship politics have allowed LGBTI and other disenfranchised groups seeking to make claims for "inclusion and rights". Whilst acknowledging the power of these politics, such universalising claims are used to mould universal ideals. Various scholars – critical race, queer, postcolonial and feminist – point out that citizenship "functions as a double discourse… [on one hand] as a source of political organizing and national belonging and as a claim to equality, and on the other hand, it erases and denies its own exclusionary and differentiating nature". (Bradzel, 2005: 176)

We focus on LGBTI bodies, their subjectification and concepts of belonging. We police the intersections of the movement – "from the bodily biological processes of trans and intersex individuals to the mobility of identities and subjectivities" (Sullivan, 2003; Cotten, 2012: 3) and this brings up connotations, models and modes of knowledge which "ceaselessly establish connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relevant to the arts, sciences and social struggles" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 7).

Our work as activists, academics, policy-makers, funders and other stakeholders has been focused on challenging and disrupting normative ideas of gender and sexuality boundaries, creating discomfort in our respective communities.

These intersections, foci and subjectifications create a chain of actions and whereas the LGBTI movement does not have a universal language, there is a specialised language which undermines the heterogeneous reality of language. Our work as activists, academics, policy-makers, funders and other stakeholders has been focused on challenging and disrupting normative ideas of gender and sexuality boundaries, creating discomfort in our respective communities.

The norm(al) refers to the gender and sexual assumptions and expectations that all are "heterosexual"; that there are two genders with one gender attracted to the other; that it is all set out – clear with no boundaries and no exceptions. Heterosexuality is taken as the natural order, marginalising and often erasing the experience of other sexualities. Adrienne Rich's (1980) coined the terms "compulsory heterosexuality" in the prominent essay "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" to refer to the unquestioned status of heterosexuality and noting "the economic imperative to heterosexuality and marriage and to the sanctions imposed against single women and widows…" (1980: 634). Rich argued for the analysis of heterosexuality as a political institution (1980: 637).

This idea has been extended by queer theorists to present the intersection of gender and sexuality and their complexities: within contemporary Western culture's binary gender system, one is expected to desire someone of the opposite gender. Michael Warner uses the term **"heteronormativity"** to look into the "complex cluster of sexual practices [that] gets confused, in heterosexual culture, with the love plot of intimacy and familialism that signifies belonging to society in a deep and normal way" (2002: 194). Warner continues:

> "A whole field of social relations becomes intelligible as heterosexuality, and this privatized sexual culture bestows on its sexual practices a tacit sense of rightness and normalcy. This sense of rightness—embedded in things and not just in sex—is what we call heteronormativity" (2002: 194).

Universality and Relativity

During the keynote speech on international human rights and LGBT rights at the ILGA-Europe Annual Conference in Vienna (2008), Jack Donelly argues that unlike other human rights' advocates in other fields, "LGBT advocates…rather than seeking to implement global norms locally, are struggling to take local practice beyond global norms". He continues that in reality "most human rights are normatively universal, of genuinely global scope" however "LGBT rights… even at the level of principle, are entirely local".

We are positioned on the outside of what is acceptable and normative; we are treated as outsiders, illegal, unethical and immoral. If I am perceived as immoral, unethical and illegal, am I human at all? If I am not, what relevance does citizenship and democracy play in my life? I was told that I must be human to be a citizen, and a citizen to form part of a democracy. However, if I am not seen, heard, treated as human, do I belong to a democracy and are the expectations the same?

If human rights are recognised as "normatively universal", then my understanding is that LGBTI activists are fighting and struggling within institutions such as the UN to make LGBTI rights so: normative and universal. What are the implications of such? How relative are the local and personal experience to the global movement?

This creates a local-global clash that whilst globalising LGBTI rights from a localised position, LGBTI activists are mainstreaming language, identities, life experiences, and behaviours. Taking this into consideration and the earlier references to the double character of citizenship and the underlying assumptions of belonging to the Movement, I argue that the LGBTI movement has contributed towards recreating "citizenship" as a normative discourse that "presupposes universality and therefore exacerbates and negates difference." (Bradzel, 2005: 176).

By distinguishing between state-based discrimination and social discrimination to understand the implications of universalising claims to LGBTI rights, Donelly argues that within the human rights framework, the state is obliged to ensure groups are tolerated, human rights are not violated, and individuals are provided for and protected. Since the onus is put on the nation-state, that leaves the individual – the rest of society – with an expectation of mere toleration. According to Donelly, (within the human rights framework) we cannot demand any other from individuals as it does not expect individuals and wider society to change their attitude.

Donelly (2008) said, "Equal treatment means only equal treatment in public life. It does not mean full social equality, let alone complete social inclusion". Despite the limitations of human rights, "there is no room for the state or any of its agents to disparage people for who they are or how they choose to live. Quite the contrary, equal treatment requires at least a neutral attitude, and multiculturalism demands a positive embrace of difference."

Taking culture into consideration, Donelly shifts the focus on the way "dominant elements of society think about human beings, and in particular, who is considered to be fully human - and thus fully entitled to all human rights, equally", and suggests that whilst the list of internationally recognised rights is important, it is the "legal and social recognition of the full humanity of previously despised and excluded or dominated groups" that should be the most important focus.

Conclusion: Ramblings of a queer non-citizen

The field of queer studies has primarily provided us with frameworks which attempt to challenge and question assumptions around our gender and sexuality. Those of us who use queer studies and related frameworks in their work – both the academic and activist kind – seek to understand how bodies and a collective of seemingly similar bodies are treated and positioned in discriminatory and unequal hierarchies.

Despite my position of Otherness, I do enjoy a number position of privileges within the context of this writing – I'm perceived as white, and with a relatively high level of education; I speak from my position as an academic and an activist. However, I'm also a person who sees their gender and sexuality as queer, not because I seek to attract attention, but because my attractions and desires do not usually fall within the expected and the accepted. This article and these concluding reflective remarks come from my perspective, a perspective which cannot and should not be applied to everyone.

We[2] are positioned on the outside of what is acceptable and normative; we are treated as outsiders, illegal, unethical and immoral. If I am perceived as immoral, unethical and illegal, am I human at all? If I am not, what relevance does citizenship and democracy play in my life? I was told that I must be human to be a citizen, and a citizen to form part of a democracy. However, if I am not seen, heard, treated as human, do I belong to a democracy and are the expectations the same?

Democracy provides "meanings" to citizens; it provides spaces to belong and places to become relevant. The intertwining structure of laws, mores and ethics present defining concepts of what is acceptable and/or what is not, what is good and what is not, what is normative and what is not, what is legal and what is not. And when I'm not accepted or when I'm not good or when I'm not normative or when I'm not legal in the eyes of the law, normative guiding ethics and mores, I start lacking meaning. I lack the meaning of democracy as I don't have spaces to belong and places to become relevant; and as a result I'm deprived of that meaning. I become irrelevant.

The LGBTI Movement has sought to restructure and challenge heteronormative discourses by reforming definitions of citizenship to be more inclusive, however in so doing, it recreated other normativities (such as, homonormativities) and in some aspects it reinforced the heteronormative discourses.

Thus I'm also speaking from my position of irrelevance, my experience of unbecoming citizen. At the realisation of my Otherness, my reaction was to fight for relevance, to fight to be recognised as human again, and ultimately as citizen. Ironically, through this fight to gaining relevance, I started rejecting the participation in the production and promotion of citizenship and its democratic foundations as in doing so I realised I was reproducing the same oppression.

Can I be queer and citizen? Is one concept the antithesis of the other? Is queer anti-citizen, anti-democratic?

I try to subvert the normalisation, legitimisation and regulation that citizenship requires. To be a citizen in not simply a matter of enjoying a specific legal status; it includes the wide variety of practices and imaginings required by citizenship. That is, one must imagine oneself as a citizen as well as be imagined by the citizenry as a member of it. (Brandzel, 2005).

Legal status or rights has not guaranteed that black or gay will be understood as citizen-subjects or will be considered to subjectively stand in for citizenry. Leti Volpp (in Brandzel, 2005) states that "while in recent years [lesbian and gay[3]] may be perceived as legitimate recipients of formal rights, there is discomfort associated with their being conceptualized as political subjects whose activity constitutes the nation."

[2] I use the collective "we" to refer to the positions of many.

[3] My addition. I left bisexual, trans and intersex people out of this equation intentionally as I do believe that the dominant discourse has focused on lesbian and gay identities.

The LGBTI Movement has sought to restructure and challenge heteronormative discourses by reforming definitions of citizenship to be more inclusive, however in so doing, it recreated other normativities (such as, homonormativities) and in some aspects it reinforced the heteronormative discourses. Some scholars, like Loutzenheiser and MacIntosh, argue that the result is

> "a citizenship discourse that, while partially inclusive in its categorical frameworks of naming, does not address the underlying dominant ideologies. These same underlying ideologies prohibit some newly named political bodies from engaging in the practice of citizenship. The inherent rights and freedoms of heteronormative citizenry are not accorded equally to the queer body, the body of color, the Othered bodies of those who do not fit neatly within the socio-political parameters. The result is the formation of boundaries…" (Loutzenheiser and MacIntosh, 2004: 154)

Citizenship displaces non-white, non-heterosexual, non-gender normative people through these intersections of normativities, but it does so in very different and meaningful ways. A radical queer critique of citizenship has a stake not in saving it or in redefining it but in undermining its production and promotion of normativity. Whilst I did not choose to be positioned outside or in opposition to (Maltese) citizenship, my positioning (and all those who belong to this position) can and should be used to critique normative citizenship practices and institutions.

A critique of citizenship, of the nation-state, of normalisation, heteronormativity and homonormativity is required. To queer democracy and to queer citizenship we need to work to conceive a citizenship that does not require universalisation, false imaginaries, or immersion in and acceptance of the progress narratives of citizenship. (Bradzel, 2005)

Queer citizenship, democracy, human rights and the LGBTI movement itself require a constant critique not only of the difference between queer and normative citizens but of the boundary maintenance inherit in citizenship. If the history of citizenship is in fact the history of normalisation, of legitimisation, of differentiation, then to queer citizenship would transform these practices radically. From these positions, queer citizens would refuse to participate in the prioritising of one group or form of intimacy over another; they would refuse to participate in the differentiation of peoples, groups, or individuals; and they would refuse citizenship altogether.

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2nd Prize: Aurore Martignoni (IT): Working Girls

In Italy as in Europe as a whole, there is a significant gender gap in terms of opportunities and participation in the labour market. My research is an exploration of the stories of women who have chosen traditionaly 'male' occupations. This project was not born from the intent to start a feminist polemic, but from an almost anthropological reflection on the role of women in the contemporary working world. Working Girls becomes a portrait of society today, seen and told from a female perspective. Some of these professions remain strongly masculine, others are no longer so, and still others are simply special and are considered male by some and ambivalent by others. This analysis then leads to a discussion about where the male starts and female ends, but also and especially regarding the assumptions underlying these ideas.

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
LOBBY
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Challenging Patriarchy Together

Mikael Gustafsson, member of the European Parliament, identifies heteronormativity as common ground for feminist and LGBTQ movements. He believes we should work towards more individualisation of rights rather than employing family based rights approach. He also gives food for thoughts to the LGBTQ movement on an issue still causing debates within the fight for equality – surrogacy motherhood.

In my view the work for women's rights and gender equality and the work to strengthen the rights of LGBTQ persons are very closely linked. One cannot be achieved without the other.

Patriarchal notions of gender are the fundamental drivers of injustice and inequality against women. And in my view, patriarchal views and structures are also central to the discrimination, violence, and injustices faced by LGBTQ persons. Achieving gender equality and justice for LGBTQ persons demands challenging constructions of sexuality and ideas about what is a man and a woman. This questioning goes further than just looking at stereotypes or even identities. It is about challenging structural power relations, and it is about challenging heteronormativity.

In order to reach our goals of a society with justice and equality for all – we cannot let our agendas and visions be framed by a strict anti-discrimination perspective. In order for us to change society, our analysis and our demands for change has to go further than this. Equality is not just mathematics, but it is about changing people. How they deeply feel and act upon gender, power, and sexuality.

Heteronormativity is a strong and persistent pillar of our patriarchal societies. Laws and regulations around property, civil rights, social benefits, etc in most of our societies are structured around heterosexuality. When heteronormativity will no longer be the invisible frame of thought we will be able to take some important steps further for LGBTQ rights, women's rights, and for gender equality.

In concrete terms, I think the feminist struggle against traditionalist notions of what a family must look like is a shared political goal for our struggles. I also believe we must work towards the individualisation of rights and benefits (in social security systems and in benefit schemes) rather than family based ones. Moreover, it is a shared goal for all of us to develop effective and far reaching anti-discrimination legislation at EU level. And last but not least - I believe that the feminist movement and the LGBTQ movement must act together against violence and hate. Gender-based violence, including violence against LGBTQ persons, is fuelled by patriarchal ideology, and not only limits people's lives, it also takes lives.

But I will also like to challenge the LGBTQ movement on one issue – surrogacy motherhood. Acknowledging the links between our different struggles for equality also means to never build the 'rights' of some persons on the lack of choice/freedom of another person. Opening up to the use women's bodies in surrogacy, is to set one set of 'rights' above another persons right to choice and dignity. I know that the demands for pro-surrogacy motherhood policies are carried not primarily by the LGBT movement, but that the most important consumers of surrogacy are of course heterosexual couples. But I would like to see a clearer stand from the LGBTQ movement against this, and in particular the growing commercial practices around surrogacy.

Instead I believe we must be prepared to explore the full range of possible family forms, and support the different possibilities to form families outside a heternormative context. I am a committed advocate for the recognition of non-traditional and multiple family forms, both in terms of access to reproductive healthcare and in juridical terms.

It is my view that in order to achieve equality and rights for all, feminist struggles and the LGBTQ struggles must keep very close links – and in solidarity with each other not accept any form of exclusion, injustice or discrimination. Although we can have different roles and different focus in our daily work towards equality, the struggle for equality can never be successful if it is fragmented and partial.

I am an active advocate in the struggle for justice and equality for LGBTQ persons. I look forward to work with the LGBTQ movement on all the dossiers coming up in this legislature, and let us in particular hope that our demands for an EU Roadmap on LGBTQ rights can become a reality.

Mikael Gustafsson is a member of the European Parliament (Swedish Left party, member of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) political group in the European Parliament). He was elected new Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality in October 2011. The views presented in this article are of Mikael Gustafsson personally and not of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality.

Together against **gender roles**

Anna Elomäki, of the European Women's Lobby, highlights the importance of feminist and LGBTI movements working together towards challenging the traditional gender roles.

1st Prize: Charlotte Draycott (UK): In Chambers

The young barrister dressing signifies a moment where the woman oscillates between her femininity, youth and the identity imposed by the barrister's robes. It explores the tension between the traditional presentation of the English legal establishment and its modern reality. My interest in producing this work arose from the historical absence of women within the legal system. This portrait and the others in the series are intended to conflict with the conservative conventions of portraiture within the legal establishment. Growing up within the Inns of Court I felt compelled to respond to the masculine codes of conventions implicit within traditional legal portraiture, much of which dates back to the 17th century. Retaining the painterly aesthetic and the court dress, the portrait celebrates these young modern women. I was driven by a desire to represent the unrepresented with the intention of invoking new sentiments into the portraits.

Tackling gender roles is one goal around which NGOs advocating for women's rights and organisations defending the rights of LGBTI people can – and should – join forces. Working together on cultural norms concerning gender, sexuality, femininity and masculinity allows feminists and LGBTI activists to broaden their perspective through learning from each other's specific concerns and become more egalitarian and sensitive to multiple discrimination.

Gender roles influence behaviour and perception

Even today, European societies are organised around patriarchal patterns based on assumptions around male domination and female subordination. These patterns also imply that one has to be either a man or a woman in order to be recognised as a person, give a narrow depiction of what women and men, girls and boys, "should" do, how they "should" think and look like and present heterosexuality as the norm.

Gender roles are formed during the socialisation processes of the early childhood, and imposed on us by various influences across our lives. They are reinforced in particular by the stereotypical portrayals of women in domestic and caring tasks or as sex objects and the clichéd images of strong, dominant men, which media and culture often provides us. We play gender roles in our daily lives, either unconsciously or in order to be accepted by others. Gender roles also have an impact on how we perceive others and on how we react to those who do not conform to them.

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
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A feminist perspective to gender roles and gender stereotypes

Culturally reproduced, narrow ideas of femininity and masculinity and the activities socially considered as appropriate for women and men are intrinsically linked to gender inequalities. Gender roles and stereotypes not only limit the choice available for women and men; they also perpetuate the unequal power relations between the sexes, usually to the detriment of women.

The scope of culturally accepted femaleness is considerably broader today than it was in the 1960s when the feminist debate on gender roles began. However, the traditional idea of women and men's separate spheres is deeply entrenched both in minds and in reality. For example, the responsibility for care is still mainly shouldered by women, and many laws and policies related to employment are still based on the idea the male breadwinner model.

Although in the last decades gender roles have become slightly less rigid, the increasingly sexualised images of women in the media and the exponential growth of the sex- and porn-industry pose new challenges for equality between women and men. In addition to reproducing the idea of male domination and female subordination, they incite to violence against women – currently is the most structural human rights violation in Europe.

Gender roles and gender stereotypes also shape intimate relationships between sexes, but they also have a tangible impact on women as a group across sexual orientations and gender identities. Just think about the gender pay gap, gender segregation in education and in employment, women's gross under-representation from political and economic decision-making and the prevalence of all forms of male violence against women.

LGBTI perspective enriches the feminist analysis

The same norms for socially appropriate behaviour, desire and appearance for individuals of each sex also lead to discrimination against individuals, whose appearance, gender identity, desires and biological sex are combined in non-normative ways. The patriarchal system of male domination also relies on the exclusion of certain forms of sexual and gender expression.

In questioning the naturalised division of individuals into men and women and showing that the biological sex does not determine masculinity and femininity and objects of love and desire, LGBTI movements have provides an important update to the feminist discussion about gender roles and stereotypes. They have also enriched the feminist analysis of patriarchy.

Most women's rights organisations, including the European Women's Lobby, discuss gender roles with the focus on inequalities between women and men. Feminists have in the past been allies of the LGBTI movement in different ways and need to continue to address the discrimination of LGBTI people. Women's rights organisations need to form alliances with others – and in terms of fighting gender roles, LGBTI movement is a crucial ally. The LGTBI and women's movement should work hand in hand in order to both fight against the structural discrimination of women, but also take integrate the concerns of lesbian and bisexual women as well as transgender persons.

Collaboration is not always easy. At the moment, the main concepts used to discuss equality between women men are undergoing transformations. The focus on women and women's rights is fading in public policies and debates. The current main concept, "gender equality", is increasingly used to cover other issues too, such as combating discrimination against men and tackling homo- and trans-phobia. There is a real danger that the gender-terminology loses sight of the unequal power relations between women and men that structure our societies.

A more feminist LGBTI movement

LGBTI activists can also learn something from the feminist analysis of gender roles and gender stereotypes. It is necessary for LGBTI organisations to take account of inequalities between women and men entrenched in the traditional views and structures of patriarchal model and not focus exclusively on inequalities faced by those with non-normative gender identities and sexualities. Equality between women and men, which implies moving away from traditional norms and roles, is in the interests of half of the LGBTI population. Negative stereotypes of women have an impact on their daily lives, and they may also encounter these stereotypes when they participate in the activities of LGBTI organisations.

The LGBTI movement can become more feminist also by paying critical attention to the alternative forms of masculinities and femininities produced and cherished within it. What does it mean if gay and lesbian couples reproduce traditional gender roles that contribute to inequalities between women and men?

Erika Szostak (UK): Trapped

I chose to wear a mask in the image because of the way that masks symbolize performance. If gender is both performed & performative, then gender roles can be the mask that we may have no choice but to wear. In addition, the more economic & professional gains that women have made, the more stringent the demands on our appearance seem to have become. With the increasing prevalence of eating disorders & depression among teenage girls (who are officially the most depressed demographic) & such a normalization of cosmetic surgery that scholars have called it a feminine moral & cultural imperative, the mask represents the only kind of face women are allowed to show the world - smooth, ageless, indistinguishable, bland.

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
LOBBY
EUROPEEN DES FEMMES

Photo competition "My World: Visions of Feminism in the 21st Century"

In 2010, the European Women's Lobby celebrated its 20th anniversary. For the EWL, this was the occasion to reflect on the achievements of the women's movement in Europe over the last two decades, but, more importantly, to look into the future and how we could build upon these achievements.

The Europe-wide photo competition 'My World: Visions of Feminism in the 21st Century' was designed in this context to encourage young women to think about what 'feminism' means to them, and how this plays out in their daily lives. The impressive response to the call reflects the continued interest in the feminist movement of young women today and the richness of their cultures and experiences. At the same time, the entries spoke clearly and eloquently about the gender inequalities and restrictive gender norms that are still part of the everyday life of young women living in Europe across ethnicities, social background and sexual orientation.

From artistic renditions to photo-journalistic realism, the entries touched upon, among other issues, violence against women, the socio-economic position of women, maternity and multiple discrimination against women with disabilities, women of migrant origin and in relation to sexual orientation. Struggle against traditional gender roles and the strong hold that culturally constructed understandings of femininity and masculinity have on us were among the most popular themes explored.

Charlotte Draycott's 'In Chambers' (1st Prize) presents us a young female barrister, who is dressing in the traditional court hall robe. In the portrait, the barrister balances between her youth and femininity and the role that the robe and the legal institution that it represents impose on her. Aurore Martignoni's series 'Working Girls' (2nd Price) explores the stories of women who have chosen traditionally 'male' occupations, such as butcher, fire fighter, police or petrol station assistant in the gender-segregated working world. Erika Szostak's 'Trapped' portrays a woman wearing a paper mask that symbolises the face women are expected to show in the world: smooth, ageless and indistinguishable.

Martignoni's photographs point out that gender norms are slowly changing as women enter new professions from which they were previously excluded, forcing us to question the thin line between what is culturally considered masculine and feminine. Dracott's portrait of the young female barrister reminds us that women's entry into new areas of public life does not necessarily change the masculine codes of conduct embedded in our institutions, although it may have the potential to do so. Erika Szostak's picture makes us realise that the economic and professional gains that women have made have not freed them from gender roles and stereotypes. On the contrary, the demands on women's appearance have become more stringent.

See the winning photos and explanations on the front cover and pages 21, 24, 26-27, 30-31

Council of Europe:

Convention on preventing and **combatting violence against** women and domestic violence

Nigel Warner, ILGA-Europe's Advisor of Council of Europe, represented ILGA-Europe as an Observer at the Expert Committee preparing the draft Convention. He gives his impressions of the Convention and of the drafting process.

Introduction

In April 2011 the Council of Europe adopted a new Convention on "preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence". The culmination of many years preparatory work at the Council of Europe and campaigning by supportive member states and NGOs, it is considered to be the world's most extensive legally binding agreement in this field.

Its main purpose is set out as being to "protect women from all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence". It covers all forms of such violence, including forced marriages, psychological violence, stalking, physical violence, sexual violence including rape, female genital mutilation, forced abortion and forced sterilisation and sexual harassment. It also makes clear that so-called "honour" should not be considered as an excuse for violence against women.

It obliges parties to take a wide range of measures in the fields of prevention, protection and support, the criminal and civil law, and procedures for investigation and prosecution and establishes a mechanism whereby an independent group of experts monitors implementation of the Convention.

For those interested in more explanations, there is an excellent website which includes a quiz.[1]

The Convention is the product of a monumental negotiating process involving a Council Europe Expert Committee (known by the acronym "CAHVIO") made up of lawyers and gender equality experts from the 47 member states, from observer states and from a number of NGOs. There were no fewer than nine 4-day negotiating sessions, spread over nearly 2 years, each involving around 120 participants.

Inevitably there were strong differences of opinion in many areas

The most striking was whether the Convention should be limited to protecting women and girls from domestic violence, or whether it should also include men and boys. Those who wanted the Convention to be limited to protecting women emphasised that domestic violence is overwhelmingly by men against women, and were concerned that if the scope of the Convention was expanded to include men and boys, a key message would be lost and its efficacy would be seriously diluted. The disagreement on this basic question continued throughout the negotiating process, enormously complicating the drafting process and putting intense

[1] www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/default_en.asp

pressure on the timetable. Eventually a compromise was agreed whereby Parties are given the option of extending protection against domestic violence to men and boys.

A second area of debate concerned the definition of "gender". Some conservative states, led by the Holy See (which took part as an Observer State), objected to the definition of "gender" as socially constructed, insisting that it be limited to the concept of male and female sexes. This viewpoint found relatively little support in the Expert Committee. But when the negotiations moved to the political level at the Committee of Ministers – where NGOs have no access – the text of the Explanatory Report (which accompanies and explains the Convention) was amended in a way which seriously compromised this definition.

A third area of disagreement was on how far practical measures should go. Here, there was a distinct divide between legal experts – mainly men – and gender equality experts – mainly women, the former repeatedly trying to restrict obligations, the latter insisting on the reality of violence against women, and the necessity for addressing it effectively. A variant of this debate involved experts (usually legal) arguing that they couldn't support a particular proposal because it went beyond their existing laws – with gender experts responding that the whole point of the Convention was to raise standards across Europe, not restrict them to the lowest existing position.

ILGA-Europe's involvement

ILGA-Europe's objective was to try to ensure that the Convention explicitly provided protection to lesbian, bisexual and transgender women. There were two keys to this: ensuring that the non-discrimination article of the Convention included the terms "sexual orientation" and "gender identity"; and ensuring that any definition of groups who were particularly vulnerable to violence (and therefore particularly needed protective measures) included lesbian, bisexual and transgender women.

The first step was to apply for Observer Status at the Expert Committee. To the shock of many delegates, the Russian Federation registered outright opposition to ILGA-Europe's participation. Other member states insisted that the matter be referred to the Committee of Ministers, where the Russian objections were overruled. But the process took many months, as a result of which ILGA-Europe missed several meetings of the drafting Committee.

A second step was to enlist the support of the Parliamentary Assembly. A Turkish MP, Nursuna Memecan, was appointed to prepare an Opinion. She proved very supportive, endorsing the view that violence against lesbian, bisexual and transgender women is essentially gender-based, and should be included in the Convention.

A third step was to prepare a submission to the Expert Committee ahead of the preparation of the first draft, highlighting the extent of violence against lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, stressing the gender-based nature of this violence, and setting out how the Convention should address these concerns.

We were very pleased when the first draft included sexual orientation and gender identity in the non-discrimination article. There was however no definition of vulnerable groups, and it became clear that, instead, it was intended that the Explanatory Report to the Convention would list examples of such groups. During the negotiations we put forward amendments on this question, but there was no real support from member states (even friendly ones) for the Convention itself to include a listing of vulnerable groups. However the Explanatory Report did include the necessary wording.

The inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in the non-discrimination article was strongly opposed by a number of states, led by the Russian Federation. This opposition continued when the work of the Expert Committee was completed and the negotiations moved to the political level at the Committee of Ministers. However the negotiating position of the Russian Federation was not strong, since it is not expected to ratify the Convention. This enabled supportive member states to maintain the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity, although, as noted earlier, conceding adverse wording around the definition of "gender" in the Explanatory Report.

All in all, the Convention is a positive step forward for LGBTI people. It is the world's first binding intergovernmental agreement to mention "gender identity", and only the second (outside the EU) to mention sexual orientation.[2] It should provide a very valuable tool for combating violence against lesbian, bisexual and transgender women in Europe when it eventually comes into force. This will happen when it has been ratified by 10 states. At the time of writing 18 states have signed the Convention, but only one, Turkey, has so far ratified it.

[2] The first was the Council of Europe's Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
LOBBY
EUROPEEN DES FEMMES

2nd Prize: Aurore Martignoni (IT): Working Girls

In Italy as in Europe as a whole, there is a significant gender gap in terms of opportunities and participation in the labour market. My research is an exploration of the stories of women who have chosen traditionaly 'male' occupations. This project was not born from the intent to start a feminist polemic, but from an almost anthropological reflection on the role of women in the contemporary working world. Working Girls becomes a portrait of society today, seen and told from a female perspective. Some of these professions remain strongly masculine, others are no longer so, and still others are simply special and are considered male by some and ambivalent by others. This analysis then leads to a discussion about where the male starts and female ends, but also and especially regarding the assumptions underlying these ideas.

Double discrimination

***Léa Lootgieter* is a co-referent of SOS Homophobie's commission on lesbophobia. She tells us about their study on lesbophobia and the double discrimination due to gender and sexual orientation.**

SOS Homophobie is a national French association founded in 1994 to combat lesbophobia, gayphobia, biphobia and transphobia. Thanks to the testimonies it receives on its hotline, and thanks also to its, *Study on lesbophobia*[1] published in 2008, the organisation has found evidence that lesbian and bisexual women are the victims of a double discrimination based on their sexual orientation and on their gender.

One of the central elements of lesbophobia is the denial of women's sexuality. In the absence of a phallus, sexuality is considered as insignificant, if existing at all. At "best", it is considered as pornography: women can give pleasure to each other but they cannot reach an orgasm without a man's intervention. This is a common belief that reflects a heteronormative society which imposes a strict division of roles between the genders: women are seen as passive and limited to their reproductive function, while men are seen as active producers. Those women who do not fit in that representation are condemned to invisibility.

This situation has many consequences in the day-to-day life of lesbian and bisexual women. They are nearly absent in the media and in the general culture, and as a result it is more difficult for them to identify and name themselves and to become aware of the violence they fall victims of. During grassroots actions organised by *SOS Homophobie*, volunteers noticed that many women end up considering lesbophobic violence as a normal part of their daily life. They tend to minimise the gravity of some acts, in particular when these come from their family or from friends. This internalised

[1] *Enquête sur la lesbophobie*

lesbophobia is a powerful impediment to the kind of support the association can provide to victims of discrimination. In 2010, only 15% of the calls we received by our hotline came from women. In contradiction with this figure, the Study on lesbophobia published in 2008 gave evidence that 63% out of 1,793 women interviewed in 2003 and 2004 had already experienced a lesbophobic aggression in their lifetime. There were hints that this already worrying figure was underestimated, since 28% of the respondents had said they were hiding their sexual orientation, while another 13% had said they were censoring themselves.

When lesbians are visible, they tend to be better accepted than gays by the rest of the society. Two women holding hands or kissing in public are less likely to shock than two men. However, this form of tolerance is only façade, because it simply comes from the depreciation surrounding love between women. Violence starts when people realise that what they see is more than a game, and that women are actually a couple. The testimonies we receive give evidence of this fact: the first type of social setting where lesbophobia is explicitly present if family (32% in 2010). When sexual orientation is clearly disclosed to one's relatives, it stops being a mere representation and becomes a reality, potentially triggering very hostile reactions, from incomprehension to removal from the family's home. Another example is quite frequent: a man tries to flirt with two lesbians identified as a couple. In this case, verbal and physical aggressions happen after they refuse his proposal, but never before. Here again, it is clear that a homosexual relations between women is accepted as long as there is a possibility for the man to take part in it. When this is denied, then aggressions start.

Finally, lesbophobia is also anchored in gender stereotypes. Many lesbian and bisexual women mention physical or psychological violence happening even when they are not in a visible couple. In these cases, they are told they do not fit in heteronormative social codes: the lack of "femininity" as defined by society, the fact they live alone and don't have children, or that they don't mention their husband in conversations at work, triggers suspicion in their environment and they end up automatically classified as "lesbians". In such a situations, lesbophobia has an impact not only on actual lesbians and on bisexual women, but also on heterosexual women. It is a case of the confusion people make between sexual orientation and gender identity. We find other evidence of this confusion in testimonies coming from trans women who come to *SOS Homophobie* and who often suffer being called "fags". In a heteronormative society, lesbians, bisexual women and trans people face a double problem: they are not considered as "real women", but at the same time they are the victims of sexism linked to their biological or chosen sex.

SOS Homophobie advocates for gender identity to be added to the list of prohibited discrimination grounds, at the same level as sexual orientation. The association also works on the recognition of the words "lesbophobia" and "transphobia" in French dictionaries, so that victims can name the specific forms of discrimination they are facing. *SOS Homophobie* also created an internal mixed commission on lesbophobia to specifically work on this issue. The commission organises awareness raising actions: booths at parties, cultural and sport lesbian events, interviews and testimonies collection, dissemination of *SOS Homophobie's Practical Guide against Homophobia*[2] which gives LBT women some tools to learn about their rights and to be able to protect themselves. The commission also tackles the invisibility lesbian women are victims of. It took part to the redaction of an inter-associative brochure called *Down the knickers*[3], under the supervision of Sida Info Service and Le Kiosque. This brochure addresses lesbian and bisexual women's health issues. The aim was to create a tool for these women to self-identify in a positive way, while taking care of their own physical and psychological health and enjoying a satisfying sexuality.

[2] *Guide pratique contre l'homophobie*

[3] *Tomber la culotte*

'Opening our eyes to women's experience of homophobic and transphobic violence'

Susan Paterson, Senior Criminologist at the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in London, outlines the details of a survey on hate crime experiences of lesbian, bisexual and trans women.

Over the last two decades, the term 'Hate Crime' has emerged to describe the type of violence carried out because of the perpetrator's hostility towards the social group which the victim is perceived to belong to. Although there is a growing awareness and acceptance amongst the general public in the UK of the extent of victimisation towards the LGBTI community, research on specifically women's experience of homophobic violence is still very limited.

Both national and local survey-based research on the LGBT community would indicate that women and men's victimisation rates are fairly equal[1]. However, other research has shown there is a significant differential rate between men and women reporting homophobic violence to the police, with a ratio of seven men to one woman[2]. This article therefore will explore both the nature and dynamics of violence motivated by homophobia and gender bias experienced by women.

Background on women's experience of homophobic and transphobic crime survey

The number of homophobic incidents reported to the Metropolitan Police Service between January and December 2011 was 1345, and of these 26% of victims were women.

The Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) definition of homophobic crime which has been adopted by the Metropolitan Police Service is:

- **Homophobic incident:** *"Any incident, which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person (that is, directed to impact upon those known or perceived to be lesbian, gay men, bisexual or transgendered people).*

Although the MPS routinely collects hate crime data and carries out its own victim satisfaction surveys, including the LGBT community, both official crime and survey data have been criticised in the past for not providing an adequate understanding or reflection of marginalised communities' experiences of hate crime.

Research Methodology

In order to address the problems identified above, a victimisation survey was commissioned by the MPS which specifically asked women in London about their experience of homophobic or transphobic abuse and violence. The survey was carried out by an independent market research company and targeted both gay women and non-gay women – it is the perception of the offender that dictates whether you become a target of homophobic attacks. The research was undertaken by means of a self-completion questionnaire and this was administered by fieldworkers. The response rate was 1112.

The Gay British Crime Survey: p13, http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/revised_hate_crime_pdf_jane_2011_1.pdf

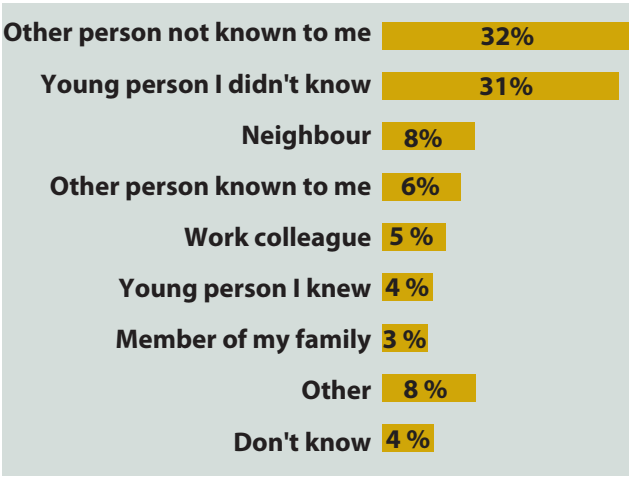
Crime prevention – New approaches, Grounded crime prevention: Responding to and understanding hate crime, Stanko et al, p147, Weisner Ring, 2003

How survey findings can inform us about homophobic or transphobic incidents

- Four out of ten women have experienced one or more homophobic incidents in the past 12 months and just over two thirds have experienced some form of homophobic/ transphobic abuse or assault in their lifetime.
- Those respondents who classified themselves as 'fully out' were significantly more likely to experience homophobic or transphobic abuse or violence.
- Those respondents who were either 'not out or partially out', aged 25-44 years or classified their ethnic grouping as 'black' were significantly more likely to change their behaviour than other groups.

Reporting incidents to the police

Just under one fifth (17%) of those experiencing homophobic or transphobic incidents had reported one or more of these incidents to the police. There are several categories of crime significantly less likely to be reported to the police than others, these being verbal abuse/harassment, blackmail, mugging, attempted murder, rape and other sexual violence. Conversely, 'physical violence/assault' was more likely to be reported to the police. Furthermore, one fifth (19%) of respondents had experienced repeated incidents perpetrated by the same person/people.



Relationship between the victim and perpetrator

The survey showed that in two thirds (63%) of incidents the perpetrator(s) of the homophobic/transphobic incident was not known by the victim. However, a quarter (26%) of incidents was perpetrated by someone the victims knew, and of these just under one in ten incidents were neighbours of the victim.

Impact of hate crime

Feelings of safety were highest in socialising venues (86%), in or near their home (83%) and in their workplace (83%). Notably, however, just under half (48%) did not feel safe when using public transport. As a direct result of experiencing hate crime, just under half of the respondents felt that they would change their behaviour or appearance to avoid homophobia or transphobia.

Measures have been taken

The research showed that just under a third (29%) felt the incident(s) had a long term impact upon them and other third (35%) felt that the incident(s) had a short term impact.

Following the research carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service, specific measures have been adopted to tackle the issue. For instance, women have been encouraged to report homophobia and/or transphobia through the MPS media and community engagement activities, and to ensure representation in MPS initiatives LGBT women are to be included in all relevant community engagement activities. Police Officers have been advised to communicate effectively with the victim during the investigation or engagement and to ensure a timely follow-up takes place. The Metropolitan Police Service will also monitor the effectiveness of service delivery from the first response through to the follow-up process by sexual orientation, gender and gender identity.

United Nations:

A space to watch from a gender perspective

ILGA representatives at the UN

Catherine Bayer

***Patricia Curzi,* ILGA's UN Liaison Officer, talks about their work towards increased recognition of gender and LGBTI perspectives in the UN and highlights major developments.**

2011 has been an important year for the recognition of LGBTI rights at the United Nations.

In March, the Joint Statement on ending violence and related human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity was signed by 85 States; in June the first ever Resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity was approved. The report requested by the resolution was issued on 15 December and it will be discussed at the Human Rights Council on 7 March 2012. And finally, after 17 years of lobbying, ILGA regained its UN observatory status on 25 July 2011, which grants ILGA the best position ever to give voice to the movement in the international fora.

The Joint Statement was a sign of the growing consensus towards the end of criminalization and human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The resolution and the subsequent report went a step further, since the 10 recommendations of the report remind all States to fulfil their human rights obligations towards all citizens.

The report specifically contains one section on Gender recognition for transgender people and mentions several cases of violence against trans women and trans men. One of the recommendations of the report specifically refers to transgender rights. References to lesbian, bisexual and transgender women are made as part of transgressing and challenging accepted socio-cultural norms, traditions and the role and status of women in society. Gender-specific violence mentioned ranges from forced marriage and forced pregnancy to rape, control and regulation of female sexuality.

ILGA has been very active in providing documented information for this report and the 10 recommendations will be a focus in all our lobbying activities with States and with UN entities such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Universal Periodic Review until they have been implemented.

Despite challenges, such as the fierce opposition by some conservative States to LGBTI rights, there are positive signs that make us feel optimistic as we pave the way for full recognition of LGBTI rights at the UN.

The UN report on violence against LGBTI people (document number A/HRC/19/41) is available at: **www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/19session/reports.htm**

Read more on ILGA's work at UN by clicking on UN / ONU at **www.ilga.org**

UNITED NATIONS: we were and are still there

Members of ILGA have been engaging with various UN institutions for a long time and lesbian and bisexual women have been active since the first UN World conference on women held in 1975. Read below some of the achievements gained.

Mexico 1975

The First UN World Conference on Women fuelled the lesbian movement. The lesbian caucus raised the question of the exclusion of lesbian issues from the agenda of the conference. The press published information on the "Lesbian workshop," an event held in parallel to the World Conference.

Copenhagen 1980

Second UN World Conference on Women. The organising Committee of the Forum for the World Decade for Women approved five proposals for workshops on lesbian issues.

Nairobi 1985

Third UN World Conference on Women. The International Lesbian Information Service organized seven workshops. The lesbian caucus formulated specific demands. To protect them from the local authorities, the head of the Forum had the lesbian workshop tent taken down, an act that put lesbian issues in the spotlight. During the conference the official delegate of the Netherlands talked openly for the first time about lesbian issues.

Vienna 1993

World Conference on Human Rights organised by the UN. Two Latin American lesbians testified publicly in the Court of Human Rights, voicing the main obstacles encountered by lesbians in their lives.

Cairo 1994

For the first time, the expression "sexual rights" is placed in an official intergovernmental document for the Conference on Population and Development. The debate on sexuality was vigorous, but the term was withdrawn.

Beijing 1995

Fourth UN World Conference on Women. An international campaign succeeded in having lesbian issues included in the official agenda. The official Conference Committee discussed the expression "sexual orientation" and paragraph 96 of the Beijing Platform for Action included the protection of women's autonomy in decision-making about sexuality. A South African lesbian testified at the UN plenary in the name of the lesbian caucus.

Canada 1998

Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights. 150 NGOs came together in the Global Forum for Human Rights and produced a document specifically dealing with sexual orientation and including in its final report recommendations from LGBT groups.

New York 2000 – Beijing + 5

Session of the General Assembly of the UN on the follow up to the Beijing Platform for Action. At the Millennium Summit, the eight Millennium Development Goals* were established. Fierce debates were held for the inclusion of discrimination based on sexual orientation in the final texts. Though it was removed, some countries supported the inclusion of sexual orientation on the list of obstacles that women face, and it was set down in the records.

New York 2005 – Beijing +10

The UN Commission on the Status of Women conducted the ten-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action. Lobbying by right-wing and conservative movements resulted in a political climate that was hostile to sexual and reproductive rights issues. Nonetheless, paragraph 96 of the Beijing Platform for Action was reaffirmed, protecting women's autonomy in decision-making about sexuality.

New York 2010 – Beijing +15

The UN Commission on the Status of Women undertook a 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Emphasis was placed on sharing experiences and good practice, with a view to overcoming the remaining obstacles and new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals. LGBTI activists and those focusing on sexual and reproductive rights and women's health organized several workshops attracting public attention.

* Those goals, set to be achieved by 2015, are: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Achieve universal primary education; Promote gender equality and empower women; Reduce child mortality; Improve maternal health; Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; Ensure environmental sustainability; Develop a global partnership for development.

Gender and asylum

Elodie Soulard, of _France terre d'asile_, writes on behalf of Gensen project partners about gender perspectives in European asylum practices. Gensen – enhancing gender-sensitivity and a harmonised approach to gender issues in European asylum practices in order to better identify and serve the needs of vulnerable asylum-seekers. This project is co-financed by the European Commission.

Promoting the implementation of gender-sensitive refugee status determination procedures in Europe

The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol (the Refugee Convention) defines a refugee as a person who *"owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country"*.[1] Gender is therefore not a specific ground for persecution under the Refugee Convention. In 2002, in order to overcome this legal vacuum, the UNHCR developed gender Guidelines on International Protection[2] providing legal interpretative guidance for governments, legal practitioners, decision-makers and the judiciary.

In these Guidelines, the UNHCR defines gender as: *"the relationship between women and men based on socially or culturally constructed and defined identities, status, roles and responsibilities that are assigned to one sex or another [...] Gender is not static or innate but acquires socially and culturally constructed meaning over time"*. The UNHCR guidlines continue: "*Gender-related claims have typically encompassed, although are by no means limited to, acts of sexual violence, family/domestic violence, coerced family planning, female genital mutilation, punishment for transgression of social mores, and discrimination against homosexuals."*[3]

Background to the Gensen project

Concerns about how gender-related claims for asylum are considered have been raised regularly over the past decade by academics and practitioners. However, information has not been collected since 2004[4] and more recent research concentrates solely on procedures[5] and not on qualifying as a refugee or reception or detention conditions. Following on from the Exchange for Change project – a guide for the improvement of the recognition of gender-based persecution in the asylum determination process in Europe published in May 2010[6] – the Gensen project aims to fill this gap.

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[1] Article 1A(2).

[2] UNHCR, Guidelines on International Protection: Gender-Related Persecution within the context of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, HCR/GIP/02/01, 7 May 2002.

[3] UNHCR, ibidem, I.3, p.2.

[4] Crawley H. and Lester T., *Comparative analysis of gender-related persecution in national asylum legislation and practice in Europe*, UNHCR, Geneva, 2004.

[5] UNHCR, *Improving asylum procedures: Comparative analysis and recommendations for law and practice: Key gender related findings and recommendations,* 2010.

[6] CEAR, CIR and FTDA, EXCHANGE FOR CHANGE: Guide for an effective protection of refugee victims of gender-related persecution in Europe, May 2010.

Funded by the European Refugee Fund and implemented by 5 European NGOs[7] the Gensen project aims to help to harmonise legislation, policies and practice to ensure gender-sensitivity in the European asylum system. As part of the project, comparative research was conducted in 10 EU Member States: Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. A comparative report will be published in spring 2012. The Fleeing Homophobia project (also funded by the ERF) was running concurrently with the Gensen project -report published in September 2011[8]; to avoid duplication the Gensen research focuses on women.

Inconsistent interpretation of refugee qualification

Across the European Union, women make up one third of people who apply for asylum in their own right. If we compare recognition rates for women and men at national level, important divergences are observed.[9] In 2010, women had more chance than men to obtain protection in France, Hungary, Sweden, Spain and the UK. However, in France, for instance, women were granted a subsidiary protection 4 times more often than men.[10] Besides, Sweden and the UK are the only countries researched where sex-disaggregated data on permitted appeals are available. Interestingly, Belgium provides not only sex-disaggregated statistics but also on gender-related statistics: number of gender-related claims assessed, types of gender-related persecution mentioned, recognition rates...

Gender-sensitive measures have been adopted in Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the UK. They include legislation considering gender-based harm as an act of persecution, national legislation taking into account gender in the definition of a particular social group, guidelines for national authorities or identification of experts at the first instance level. It should be noted that the implementation of national guidelines (non-binding instruments) was reported to be poor and led to inconsistent gender-sensitive practices in the UK and Sweden.

In all the countries researched, gender-related asylum claims are mainly interpreted on the basis of a particular social group. Yet, the interpretation of this social group is the most problematic. Although the Qualification Directive provides a common definition,[11] definitions applied at the national level diverge considerably. For instance, in some countries – such as Belgium – the definition used by national authorities recognizes the existence of the "social group of women"; an interpretation that has been rejected several times in the French jurisprudence. Similarly, while some countries – such as Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Sweden or the UK - recognize that well-founded fears of female genital mutilation or forced marriage can lead to refugee status, others – such as France – would rather grant applicants subsidiary protection. Access to international protection on the basis of gender-based persecution at the EU level is therefore a lottery.

Miscellaneous gender-related procedural guarantees

Likewise, practices are diverse in terms of procedural issues. Examples of good practice have been collected in only a minority of countries researched. For instance, only Belgium, the UK and Sweden systematically inform applicants of their right to choose the sex of the interviewer and interpreter, which, in practice, will be provided as far as operationally possible. The UK is the only country to provide the possibility to request an all-female Tribunal on appeal. Furthermore, a childcare service is available during interviews in Belgium and the UK, allowing parents to attend interviews in better conditions. Belgium also published a specific brochure in several languages for female asylum seekers.[12]

The initial findings of the research conducted using the framework of the Gensen project highlight the urgent need for harmonization of interpretation and practice at EU level. The European Asylum Support Office created in 2011 could play a specific role by disseminating good practice among Member States (training, national guidelines…) and consequently enhance gender-sensitivity at the EU level. The Gensen report will be making recommendations to all EU actors who may have an impact on the improvement of gender-sensitive asylum systems in the EU.

For more information on the Gensen project please contact: **nuria.diaz@cear.es**.

European projects on domestic violence in same-sex relationships:

www.lars-europe.eu

www.taeterinnen.org

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[7] Asylum Aid (UK), Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (Spain), Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (Italy), France Terre d'Asile (France), Hungarian Helsinki Committe (Hungary).

[8] Spijkerboer T. and Jansen S., *Fleeing homophobia*, COC Nederland and Vrije University Amsterdam, September 2011.

[9] Italy (except for the Rome Territorial Commission), Romania and Portugal do not provide sex-disaggregated data on decision making.

[10] Subsidiary protection was introduced in 2004 by the Council Directive 2004/83/EC (Qualification directive), article 15.

[11] Qualification directive, article 10(d).

[12] CGRA, «Women, girls and asylum in Belgium. Information for women and girls who apply for asylum», September 2011.

The hetereonormative view of domestic violence:

Women can't hit or rape and **men** can't be raped

Mia Høwisch Kristensen has an MA in Cultural encounters and Gender studies and lives and works in Copenhagen. Among other involvements she is a member of the board at NeMM - a network of researchers and others who are interested in studies on men and masculinities. In this article she highlights the gender normative discourses concerning domestic violence and the problems they can create for LGBT-people.

Most commonly, domestic violence is understood as involving partners of different genders, typically with the female being the abused and the male the abuser. In public discourses, domestic violence in relationships among LGBT people is either perceived to be non-existent or is generally seen as a very minor issue. But what if we took a closer look at domestic violence in same-sex couples, particularly GBT-men? Which gender normative discourses do GBT-men encounter, and which notions of sexuality are dominant among authorities and shelters dealing with domestic violence? Finally, we will hear about a new initiative currently being carried out in Denmark: a shelter targeting gay- and bisexual-men who have been exposed to domestic violence.

The lack of knowledge

Not only in Denmark, but also in the rest of the Nordic countries, researchers are starting to focus on the lack of research on domestic violence in relationships among LGBT-people. When it comes to research on non-heterosexual people's quality of life, Sweden is often two steps ahead of Denmark, in a variety of ways. But in terms of domestic violence in same-sex relationships Sweden also has a lot of ignorance to deal with. Two researchers tried to address this by publishing the biggest and only Nordic study in the field in 2005: *Våldsamt like och olika - Om våld i samkönade parrelationer*, a report on violence in same-sex relationships by Carin Holmberg and Ulrica Stjernqvist. Holmberg and Stjernqvist found that a quarter of their significant sample of gay-, bisexual- and trans people who were involved in the study had experienced physical, psychical and/or sexual violence. However, only 6% of battered LGBT-people report violent incidents to the police due to fear of being rejected or met with homophobic prejudices. And as it turns, out their fears might well be real.

A hetereosexualised world

"Women can't hit or rape and men can't be raped" is a myth that seems to be prevalent in mainstream discourse concerning who fits the roles of abused and abuser. According to Emilia Åkesson from the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women (NCK) at the University of Uppsala in Sweden, it is important to challenge this gender normative discourse.

NCK recently analysed what knowledge is available in the field of violence in LGBT relations and found that the quantity of research on this field is seriously lacking when compared to the anecdotal prevalence of LGBT people being subject to domestic violence. This has serious consequences for those experiencing domestic violence. Authorities lack education concerning cases of same-sex domestic violence, and incidents such as an officer mistaking two men living together as heterosexual roommates is not uncommon. The officer may fail to report the incident as domestic violence because the two men are not willing to expose their relationship status and/or gender identity. Therefore there is a need for education within police forces and health authorities in hospitals and treatment centre.

There also is a lack of knowledge among LGBT people regarding where to turn for help if they do experience violence at the hands of their partner. And no wonder. Holmberg and Stjernqvist, mentioned above, undertook random checks on Swedish relief organisations and domestic violence shelters and found that none of them had even addressed the question of violence in LGBT relationships. Some even made homophobic remarks to the questions. It is obvious that a lot of work needs to be done to spread accurate information concerning this subject.

This all indicates that organisations dealing with domestic violence and structures within these systems tend to hetereosexualise people who contact authorities when exposed to domestic violence. Non-heterosexuality does not seem to have received much attention among people who work in this field. This is obviously a problem, because it prevents LGBT-people from reporting incidents to the police, and from seeking help at shelters and relief organisations.

Danish shelter targeted gay and bisexual-men

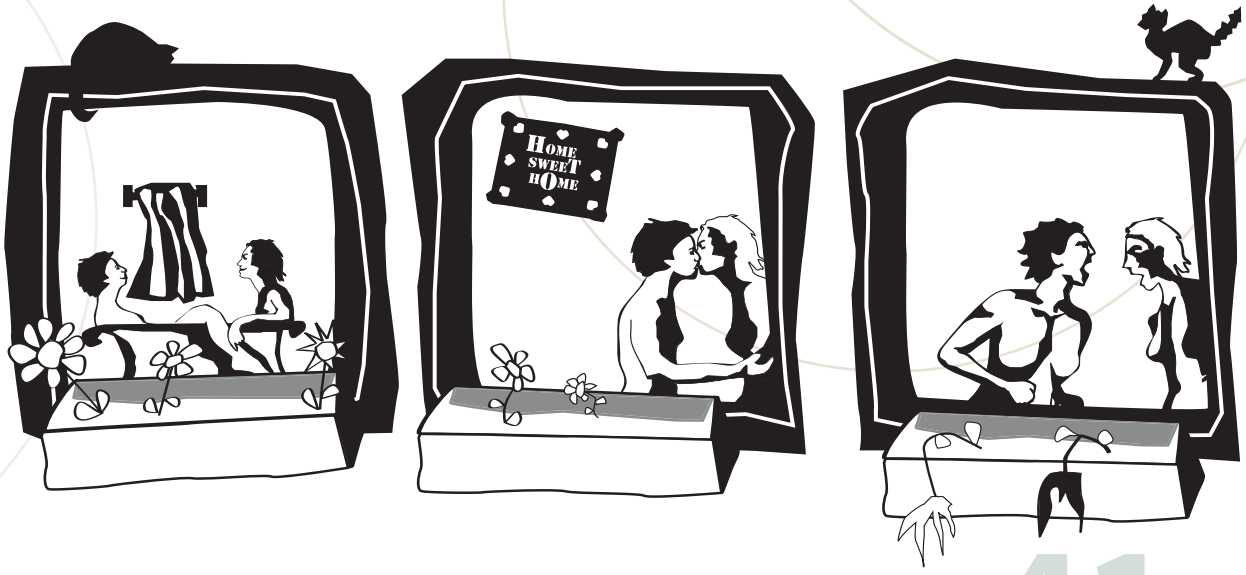
To date, there has been very little, if any, available information or tenders targeting LGBT-people in violent relationships in Denmark; but a new initiative will change that. Jørgen Rau and Carsten Nicolaysen both work with crisis-stricken men and are now planning to open a domestic violence shelter targeting only gay and bisexual men. According to Rau and Nicolaysen, the need is there, they have the volunteers and they have found a house which would be perfect for this purpose. However, they still need the financial funding to start the project. Nicolaysen, who runs a crisis center for men in a small town in Denmark, often meets homosexual men who have been exposed to violence in their everyday work. In his mind, they don't fit in at 'normal' shelters:

"One month ago we had a homosexual man staying with us. He had been beaten up badly. His arms were purple and he had a big bruise on his head. Mentally and physically he had broken down. Unfortunately, we realised that mixing hetero- and homosexual men doesn't work. Stupid comments are being made and gay men shouldn't have to deal with that. They have a hard time in the first place." (Nicolaysen to NIKK magasin 3.2011. My translation).

Gay- and bisexual-men who are exposed to violence are very fragile, Nicolaysen explains. They need protection but there are no shelters targeted at them. That's why Rau and Nicolaysen are working hard to establish this shelter right now. They believe that it is of great therapeutic value to be able to go to a shelter where no one questions your sexuality or the gender of your partner.

Rau and Nicolaysen are also planning to carry out educational courses. Their goal is to function as a research centre where methods and experiences in this field will be developed and shared.

In general, the question of sexuality has so not received much attention to date among authorities or shelter homes dealing with domestic violence. The risk of being hetereosexualised and discriminated against when 'coming out' to authorities is significant. As a result of the current situation, there are many instances of non-heterosexuals not reporting violence incidents. Homophobic prejudices tend to originate from gender normative perceptions, which include a heteronormative worldview. In order to prevent such ingrained perspectives, education is required. Research centres, such as the one planned by Rau and Nicolaysen are much needed.

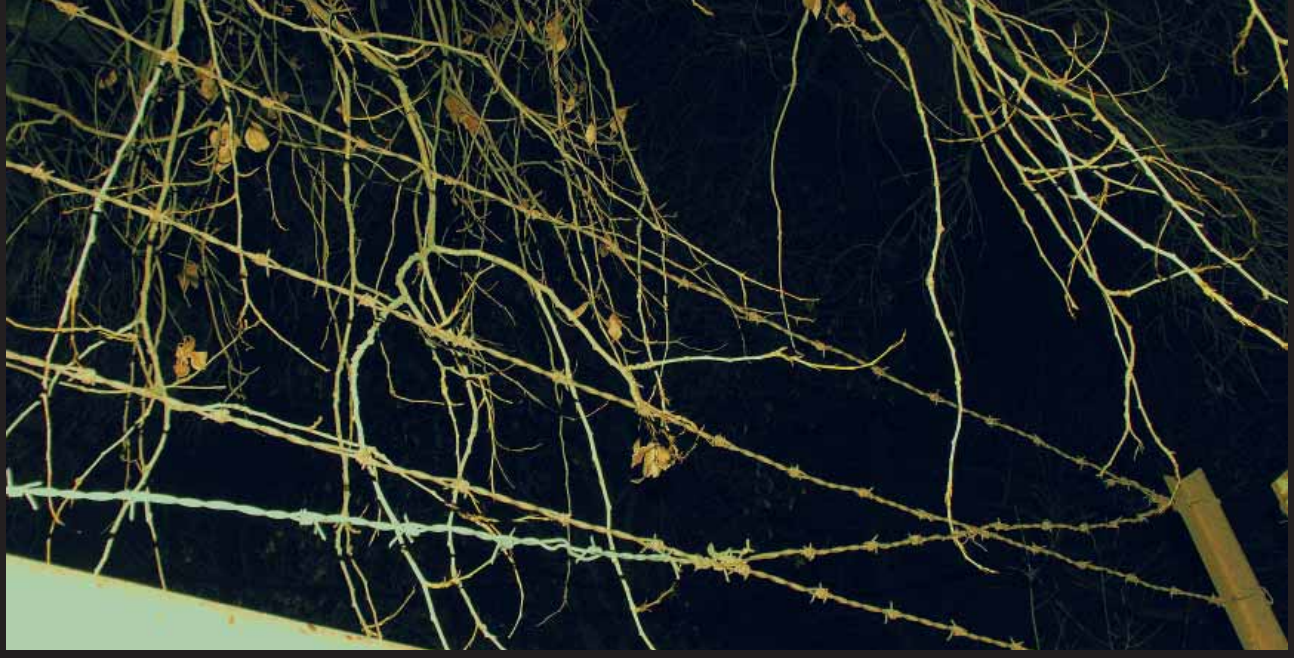


Catherine Beyer, www.catbeyer.dk

EasternEurope

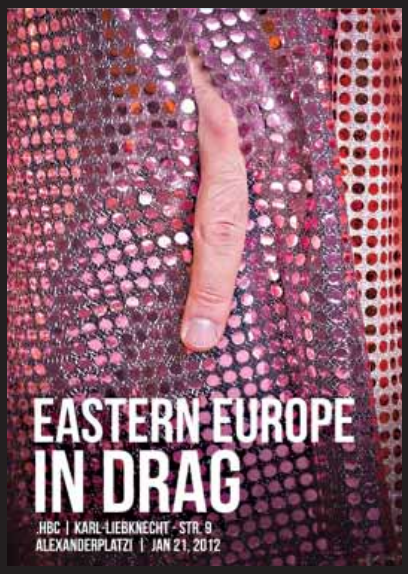
in Drag

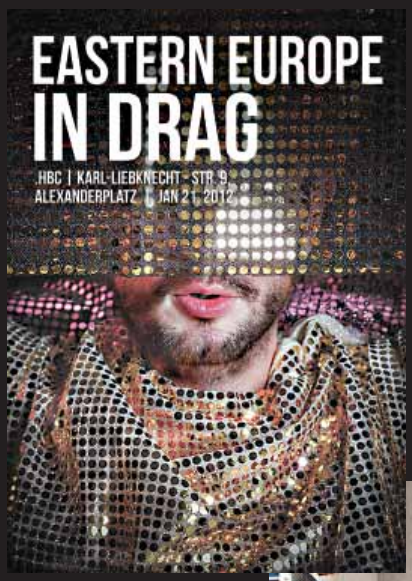
Dzmitry Suslau, an artist and curator of the project Eastern Europe in Drag, outlines the project. More than simply entertainment, it is also a way to address a number of issues and challenge some traditional perceptions.



The main reason for setting up this touring exhibition was to invite prospective audiences to analyse how heteronormative ideas of sexuality and traditional gender roles are questioned and subverted through drag queens'/kings' performances in Eastern European countries. Understanding the cultural impact of Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian drag shows is impossible without a critical assessment of the current social and political situations in these countries. Although drag shows are becoming increasingly recognisable as part of mainstream entertainment and club culture in Eastern Europe (especially due to its nostalgic humour, which is often based on references to former communist bloc celebrities)[1], they still remain a subcultural genre and mainly attract gay audiences. Thus, through this exhibition we were aiming to raise awareness not only of the LGBTI-related issues but also social and cultural factors outside the original context of the above mentioned countries.

[1] According to Robert Kulpa, through these references, drag performers make an attempt at reclaiming the recent history and historic figures as gay icons. Such queering of the East Bloc past is an important element of current gay subculture in Eastern Europe as it helps the representatives of LGBTI communities to assert their rights as citizens and representatives of the whole nation (see Kulpa, Robert. "Nations and Sexualities – 'West' and 'East'."*De-centring Western Sexualities: Central and Eastern European Perspectives.* 52).





The Exhibition Narrative

The Eastern *Europe in Drag* project took the form of two photographic series and six video installations. The exhibition narrative reflected the movement from the outside to inside. The 2011 series *Entrée/Sortie* by Volha Pukhouskaya and Egor Tsodov served as a powerful introduction to the whole show. It facilitated a contrast to the queer drag glamour of the video projections and to the other series of photographs, *Tais*, by Alexandra Kanonchanka. By depicting entrances to gay clubs and gay bars, Volha Pukhouskaya and Egor Tsodov were aiming at re-creating queer narratives within the context of the two cities (Minsk and Warsaw). In Eastern Europe these venues are still perhaps the only places where LGBTI people can socialise more or less openly.

The main video installation *Drag Activism* (2011 Hanna Babitskaya, Dzmitry Suslau) showed eleven drag performers from Belarus, Ukraine and Poland. Based on the actual interviews which I have conducted with drag queens and kings last summer, these videos presented the reflections of the performers on exhibition key-themes: marriage equality; the role of the drag performers in LGBTI Pride and the LGBTI movement; visibility and acceptance, as well as some additional themes which helped to enable real voices and personal experiences to be expressed.

Drag queens and kings might be aware of some LGBTI issues or not; they may sense a need to partake in Prides or could be completely apolitical. But what is a common to every drag queen and drag king, no matter what their political viewpoints, is that with every show they subvert the heteronormative idea of the sex binary and nationalised gender roles.

Exhibition dates:

12 December 2011 - University of Warwick, Millburn House Studio, Coventry (UK)

21 January 2012 - HBC, Berlin (Germany)

Two possible locations for the future exhibition are London and Gothenburg

Artistic Team:

curators/editors:

Dzmitry Suslau (artist, curator)

Nelly Kazuk (managing curator)

Anastacia Suslava (editor)

artists:

Alexander Monich (artist, illustrator)

Hanna Babitskaya (photographer, video artist)

Nadzeya Piatrushyna (fashion illustrator, graphic designer)

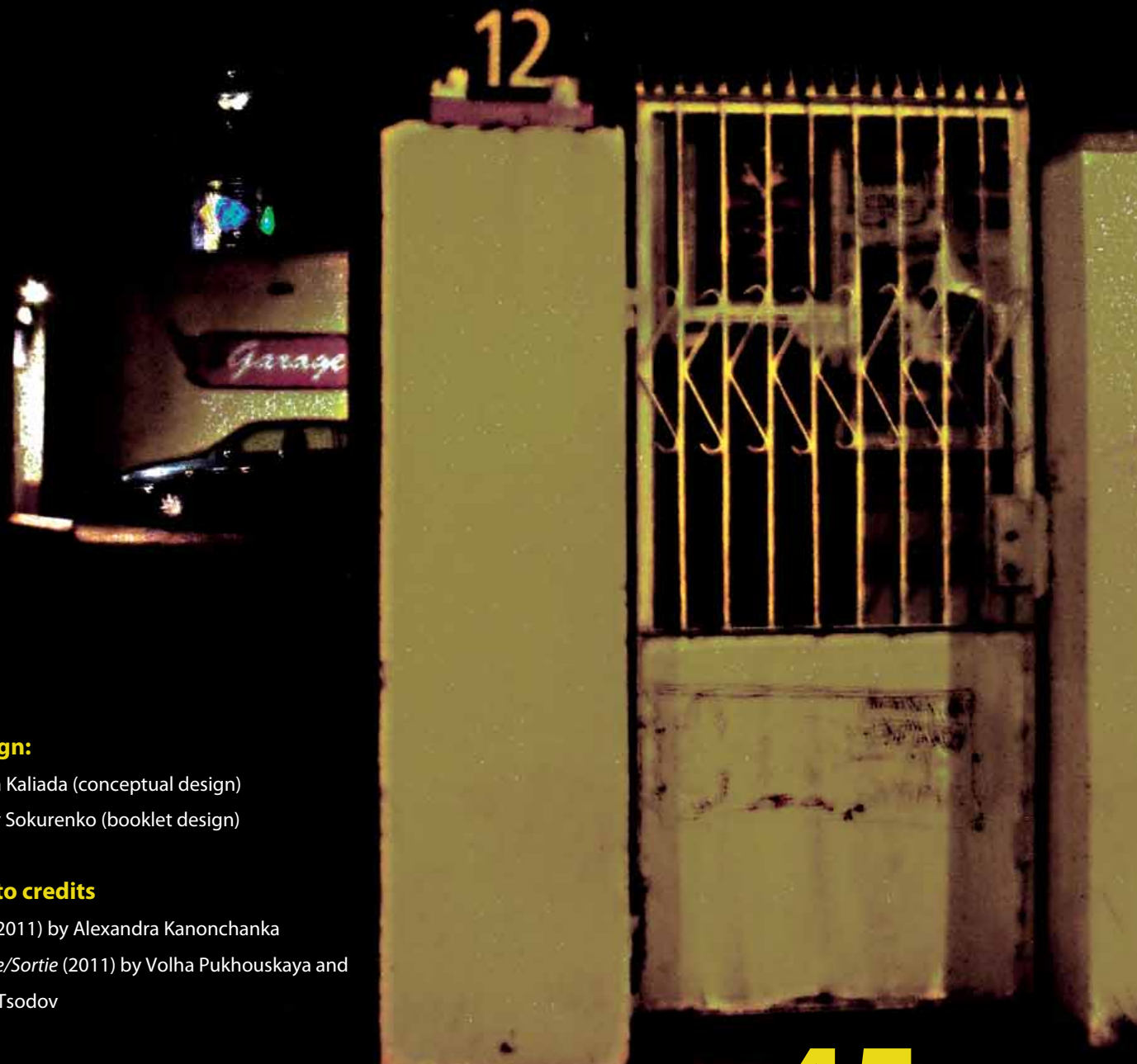
Miland Suman (director, digital artist)

Logan Mucha (film director)

Egor Tsodov (poster design, photographer)

Alexandra Kanonchanka (photpgrapher)

Volha Pukhouskaya (photographer)



design:

Nadia Kaliada (conceptual design)

Vasily Sokurenko (booklet design)

Photo credits

Tais (2011) by Alexandra Kanonchanka

Entrée/Sortie (2011) by Volha Pukhouskaya and Egor Tsodov

Men-Ups

Prior to Christmas 2011, when preparing this edition of our magazine with a focus on gender, I came across a Men-Ups calendar made up of images by young US photographer Rion Sabean. The images were impossible to ignore due to their unusual composition: men with baseball bats, tools and weights posing in 1950s pin-up poses. I could not help but wonder how this project came about and was very keen to ask Rion about the rationale behind the project. What I found out from his explanation is that behind something that at first appears slightly silly and humorous is something that contains much deeper meaning and questions the social construct of gender. It provides a great additional contribution to the focus section of this magazine.
Juris Lavrikovs

"I began to have the idea for the Men-Ups project during a semester that I can only describe as constantly inspirational to my thought process, where I was making many connections between my ideas and those of feminists before me. Initially, I just knew that the project would centre on the ideal of the masculine male being portrayed in society's definition of the feminine.

From there, it grew into what it is today. I wanted to really combine the traditions of feminine and masculine in such a way that would bring the viewer in and have them asking questions, even if they got no answers. I have a firm belief in the transformative affects that thinking and asking have on the human mind. If I could achieve that through my images, then I would be accomplished in this project.

My intent for the Men-Ups project was two-fold. Even though it is a direct commentary on gender identities and their fictionalized nature, there are two main proponents that I connect with this larger whole. So, one side of the project demonstrates the ways in which women are sexualized and deemed attractive by the media, and secondly, the ways that men aren't sexualized by the media in the same ways. Overall, the project both plays into stereotyping, but also destroys the secular rules that traditional gender roles represent.

More specifically, my photographs are constructed to ask not only why it's sexy for a woman to be represented in such singular ways, but also, why it isn't sexy for a man to be shown in the same light. Society has made the mixing of gender identities out to be something criminal, and in doing so, has

built a very rigid representation of something very un-rigid; the human being.

Being born with a one set of genitalia doesn't automatically define how you're supposed to be act, feel, or portray yourself, but being raised on this structure makes it difficult for many to imagine a world any other way. If a male takes on the traditions of the feminine, then they are almost immediately marked as "gay", and the same goes for the female. This is an issue that is both nonsensical as it is important to deconstruct, and that I what I hope the project has brought more to the surface."

More information about Rion Sabean:
www.rionsabean.com

DUBLIN, IRELAND WELCOMES ILGA-EUROPE 2012

Dublin is gearing up to giving a big 'Céad Mile Fáilte' welcome ILGA-Europe delegates in October 2012. We hope returning visitors, and those who've not been to Dublin yet, will come, enjoy a wonderful conference in a wonderful city, and get to experience the best of Irish hospitality and 'craic'!

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