



ILGA-EUROPE
**ACTIVITY
REPORT**

20

23

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS' INTRODUCTION

What a year 2023 has been for ILGA-Europe! A year of growth and consolidation, of forward-looking thinking and planning, of transition and renewal.

As you'll read in this report, the ILGA-Europe team have carried out a hugely impressive amount of work. They have launched several new programmes and regranting schemes, which is further increasing our flexibility to support LGBTI organisations and expanding our connection with the movements in different countries and sub-regions. They have invested time in designing new innovative ways in which we can facilitate learning and sharing of experiences amongst activists.

They have built on our deep connections with institutions, politicians and policy makers, both in Brussels and nationally across the region, to push for new and better European legislation, to advocate for standard-setting by our regional institutions, and to actively support the translation of laws into practice by public authorities.

They have committed to building and strengthening alliances to make sure LGBTI voices are an active part of collective actions for gender equality, decriminalisation of sex work, democracy, social rights. They innovated and continued to adapt to an ever-evolving communications landscape to ensure the right messages are heard.

All the learning from our current work provided the basis for our collective reflection about ILGA-Europe's next five-year strategic framework. As always, the strategic planning process was a unique opportunity to come together as board members and staff to reflect on the state of play of our movement, on what is needed for all of us to continue to

move forward in the years to come, and what are ILGA-Europe's roles to contribute to our collective aspirations.

This year, we paid particular attention to thinking about what social acceptance, inclusion, equal societies and economies look like, and how we can together push change in these areas over the next five years.


Amid such organisational strength and consolidation, ILGA-Europe has been in a solid and healthy position to embark on leadership transition. We have an incredible team of professional and committed staff, a very engaged and dynamic board, a consolidated financial footing, and despite the upheavals of our world, lots of clarity about what we're about and what we can contribute.

And the appointment of a new Executive Director is a wonderful opportunity for renewal and new energy in our organisation, as ILGA-Europe continues to make sure it is able to adapt to meet what is relevant to the movement in circumstances and an environment that is changing, shifting and becoming more and more critical.

As our team embraces the change, it is with a view of staying ahead of the curve of what the world throws our way, so we can continue to be an anchor for our movement. And always doing so by placing our connection with all of you at the heart of everything we do.



Evelyne Paradis



Chaber

ORGANISATIONAL UPDATES

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION AT ILGA-EUROPE



This is always an important moment in an organisation's life, which is why immense care and thinking went into planning the transition of executive directors as Evelyne announced she would be stepping down after nearly 14 years in the position. The board, the management team, the whole staff team, everyone played their part to make sure this transition would be done smoothly and would be an opportunity for the organisation. After a detailed and thorough recruitment process, the board announced the appointment of Chaber as the new Executive Director. Chaber officially started in the position on 1 October, while Evelyne will remain available for a few months to support them where needed, especially in relation to passing on organisational knowledge.

WHAT WILL ILGA-EUROPE BE LOOKING AT IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

2023 was a strategic planning process year for the organisation. In March, the board and staff started a process towards developing our next five-year plan. In May we held an online consultation with members to help us answer the main questions we are asking ourselves. In June we had a two-day meeting in Brussels with representatives from 23 organisations who came to Brussels to do some collective thinking. Together we reflected on what social acceptance, inclusion, equal societies and economies look like, and much more. The rich exchanges between members, board and staff fed into the elaboration of a revised strategic framework, which was shared to members for consultation late summer, and will be up for approval at this year's annual conference.

RAINBOW EUROPE

ANNUAL REVIEW: PUBLISHED FEB 20

OUR 12TH ANNUAL REVIEW SHOWS FINDS THAT 2022 WAS THE MOST VIOLENT YEAR FOR LGBTI PEOPLE ACROSS THE REGION IN THE PAST DECADE, BOTH THROUGH PLANNED, FEROCIOUS ATTACKS AND THROUGH SUICIDES IN THE WAKE OF RISING AND WIDESPREAD HATE SPEECH FROM POLITICIANS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, RIGHT-WING ORGANISATIONS AND MEDIA PUNDITS

15,000 WEB VISITS



**POTENTIAL MEDIA REACH:
34 MILLION**

TOP 5 MEDIA HEADLINES:

- 1 ANTI-LGBTQ+ VIOLENCE IN EUROPE HITS DECADE-HIGH, REPORT FINDS (POLITICO)
- 2 LES VIOLENCES ANTI-LGBTQ+ SONT EN HAUSSE EN EUROPE ALERTE UNE ONG (ELLE, FRANCE)
- 3 LGBTI PEOPLE IN EUROPE FACE AN INCREASINGLY TOXIC AND VIOLENT ENVIRONMENT, NEW REPORTS WARNS (EURONEWS)
- 4 REPORT SUGGESTS LIFE IS GETTING TOUGHER FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE IN EUROPE (BLOOMBERG NEWS)
- 5 2022 NAJGORSZYM ROKIEM DLA OSÓB LGBTI OD DEKADY (PRAWA CZŁOWIEKA, POLAND)

RAINBOW MAP & INDEX: PUBLISHED MAY 17

OUR RAINBOW MAP FINDS THAT WHILE THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE IS BECOMING MORE POLARISED AND VIOLENT, PARTICULARLY AGAINST TRANS PEOPLE, POLITICAL DETERMINATION TO ADVANCE LGBTI RIGHTS IS PAYING OFF. THE LARGEST GAINS ON THE MAP ARE FOR COUNTRIES THAT INTRODUCED LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION (LGR) USING A SELF-DETERMINATION MODEL

**POTENTIAL MEDIA REACH:
712 MILLION (11-19 MAY)**

**170,866 WEB VISITS
744,148 SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS**



TOP 5 COUNTRIES:

- 1 MALTA (89%)
- 2 BELGIUM (76%)
- 3 DENMARK (76%)
- 4 SPAIN (74%)
- 5 ICELAND (71%)

BOTTOM 5 COUNTRIES:

- 45 BELARUS (12%)
- 46 RUSSIA (8%)
- 47 ARMENIA (8%)
- 48 TURKEY (4%)
- 49 AZERBAIJAN (2%)



AS POWERFULLY EVIDENCED IN THIS YEAR'S RAINBOW MAP, THE RISE OF ANTI-LGBTI RHETORIC FROM ANTI-DEMOCRATIC FORCES, PARTICULARLY INSTRUMENTALISING FALSE ANTI-TRANS NARRATIVES, IS BEING FOUGHT BACK BY POLITICIANS IN EUROPE WHO HAVE THE COURAGE TO MAKE A STAND FOR THE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY OF EVERY CITIZEN.

- EVELYNE PARADIS

PROGRAMMES



CONFERENCE 2023

NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS
WE HAVE SUPPORTED WITH
FUNDING AND LEARNING:

81

74 ACTIVISTS BROUGHT FROM GRANTEE
ORGANISATIONS IN 23 COUNTRIES

NUMBER OF SCHOLARS
FROM 32 COUNTRIES **73**

4+2=6

ACTIVISTS FROM
HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES
WE BROUGHT TO
BRUSSELS TO MEET
WITH POLICY MAKERS
AND INSTITUTIONS

35

ONLINE LEARNING SESSIONS TO SUPPORT
COORDINATION OF ORGANISATIONS WORKING IN
THE SAME COUNTRY, EXCHANGE OF
EXPERIENCE BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS
ACROSS THE REGION, AND SKILLS BUILDING

7

IN-PERSON COORDINATION AND LEARNING
MEETINGS FOR ACTIVISTS



4

COUNTRIES WE VISITED TO MEET WITH ACTIVISTS



ADVOCACY

14

COUNTRIES WE VISITED TO MEET WITH
ACTIVISTS, AND FOR OTHER MEETINGS

29 COUNTRIES



WHERE WE WORKED TOGETHER WITH ACTIVISTS
TO SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR ADVOCACY PLANNING ON
ADVANCING RIGHTS AND PROTECTION AND
COUNTERING BACKLASH, ADDING OUR VOICE DIRECTLY
TO THEIR ADVOCACY WHERE THEY JUDGED THIS TO
HAVE HAD AN ADDED VALUE

9 REPORTS

INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF
THE FRA 2019 LGBTI SURVEY II

LESBIANS BRIEFING (WITH EL*G)

BISEXUAL PEOPLE BRIEFING (WITH BI+ NEDERLAND)

MIGRANT AND RACIAL, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES BRIEFING (WITH EQUINOX)

TRANS & NON-BINARY BRIEFING (WITH TGEU)

INTERSEX BRIEFING (WITH OII EUROPE)

YOUTH BRIEFING (WITH IGLYO)

OLDER PEOPLE BRIEFING (WITH AGE PLATFORM EUROPE)

HOMELESSNESS BRIEFING (WITH FEANTSA)

DISABLED PEOPLE BRIEFING (WITH EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM)





FUNDRAISING

209 GUESTS CAME TO THE ILGA-EUROPE EUROPEAN EQUALITY FUNDRAISER, PROVIDING

€35,800 UNRESTRICTED FUNDING

- 287 PEOPLE DONATED ONLINE
- 42 OF WHICH ARE MONTHLY DONORS
- WE RECEIVED DONATIONS IN 8 DIFFERENT CURRENCIES
- WE RECEIVED EMPLOYEE DONATIONS FROM 10 COMPANIES
- €91,690 IN UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS FROM REVOLUT

26 COMPANIES SUPPORTED OUR WORK

34,840

HOURS WORKED BY STAFF



FINANCE

INCOME: €6,423,747

EXPENDITURE: €6,399,418

6,319

FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS



REGRANTING

75 NEW GRANTS TOTALING:

€1,613,072

AVERAGING €21,798 EACH IN 25 COUNTRIES



WE MANAGED

145 ACTIVE GRANTS TOTALING

€2,588,698

IN 34 COUNTRIES

INCLUDING:

13 TO SUPPORT STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION CAPACITY OF THE MOVEMENT

22 TO SUPPORT LGBTI ORGANISATIONS IN HIGH-RISK OR CHALLENGING CONTEXTS

26 TO SUPPORT ADAPTABILITY AND EMERGING STRATEGIES

14 TO SUPPORT WORK ON STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES

EMERGENCY SUPPORT GRANTS

€174,000



7 RAPID SUPPORT FUND FOR UKRAINE GRANTS TOTALING €146,000

3 'DIGNITY FOR ALL' GRANTS FOR RESPONDING TO THREATS AND ATTACKS TARGETING LGBTI PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS TOTALING €28,000

MEDIA REACH

"ILGA-EUROPE" APPEARED

1,423 TIMES IN PRESS ARTICLES
IN ABOUT 50 COUNTRIES

THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY

3,927 MILLION

ARTICLE VIEWS IN WHICH WE APPEARED

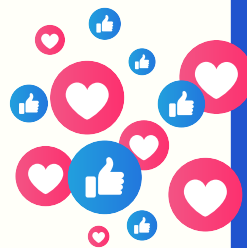


SOCIAL MEDIA

TOTAL
FOLLOWERS:
112,513

OUR AUDIENCE HAS
GROWN BY 9.1%
OVER THE PAST YEAR

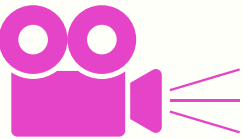
OUR TWITTER 'X' ACCOUNT
REMAINS THE LARGEST
CHANNEL, GROWING TO
45,940 FOLLOWERS
BUT ENGAGEMENT
HAS SHRUNK BY 18.5%



MULTI-MEDIA

VIDEO VIEWS

285,593



 INSTAGRAM 177,732

 TIKTOK 32,902

6 PODCASTS

2,183 LISTENS



29 BLOGS

6,800 READS

WEBSITE USERS

617,978

15K PER MONTH



THE HUB

OUR FREE ACTIVISM
RESOURCE CENTRE

PAGE VIEWS

3,482

873 MEMBERS



TOP 5 MOST READ

- 1 TACKLING ANTI-TRANS NARRATIVES
- 2 WHAT ARE INTERNAL COMMS AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT

- 3 5 SURE STEPS TO IMPROVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS
- 4 TACKLING ANTI TRANS NARRATIVES TOP TIPS FROM 11 TRANS GROUPS
- 5 WHICH COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS DOES AN LGBTI ACTIVIST NEED

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR, ILGA-EUROPE IS A HIVE OF ACTIVITY. OUR 25 STAFF MEMBERS ARE CONSTANTLY WORKING ON A MYRIAD OF PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES, AND NOT ALL OF IT CAN MAKE IT INTO THIS REPORT. HERE ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WORK DONE OVER THE PAST YEAR, WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO CHANGE FOR LGBTI PEOPLE IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA UNDER EACH OF OUR FIVE PATHWAYS OF CHANGE. THIS YEAR, AS WE DID IN LAST YEAR, WE'VE INCLUDED A SECTION TO SHARE OUR WORK RESPONDING TO THE SITUATION FOR LGBTI PEOPLE IN UKRAINE AND NEIGHBOURING AND REFUGEE HOST COUNTRIES SINCE THE WAR BEGAN ON FEBRUARY 24, 2022.

OUR WORK TO SUPPORT #UKRAINELGBTI

While most of our support for LGBTI organisations in Ukraine falls into our programmatic and advocacy work (see below in the report), ILGA-Europe has continued to make space for additional ways to support LGBTI communities in the context of the ongoing full-scale invasion of the country.

PROVIDING RAPID RESPONSES

We created a Rapid Support Fund, a dedicated fund to offer urgent support to LGBTI organisations in Ukraine. Through the fund, we've supported groups on the creation of spaces where their team and local community can meet safely and access IT and recharge phones; on security measures for public events they are resuming; on supporting groups who deliver medication to community.

WORKING TO ENSURE ACCESS TO MEDICATIONS

To contribute to filling a gap in humanitarian needs, we've made a one-year partnership with Doctors of the World to ensure more regular shipments of hormones to Ukraine. In addition to providing funding for the initiative, we coordinated hormone shipments between Ukrainian organisations (who identify needs and are responsible for distribution in the country) and Doctors of the World.

ADVOCATING THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR REMAINS HIGH ON OUR AGENDA

One year on since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we continue pushing so LGBTI people's needs are considered in humanitarian responses, and bringing visibility to the challenges faced by Ukrainian LGBTI organisations in working with the humanitarian sector, as we did in this [op-ed](#). One of our focus has been on continuing to advocate for the inclusion of medicines for trans and intersex people in humanitarian aid packages.

PATHWAY 1 - EMPOWERED AND INCLUSIVE LGBTI COMMUNITIES

BRINGING OUR EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN MOVEMENT TOGETHER

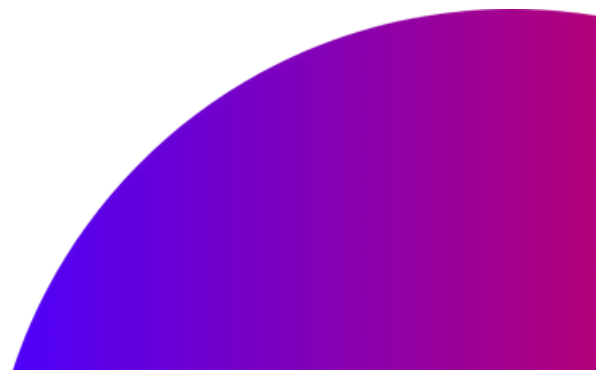
One of ILGA-Europe's most important roles is to create spaces for activists from across the region to come together, the highlight being our annual conference, our own "community moment". Convening in Ljubljana around the theme "Rising to the Moment", the team and board have once again been working hard to create conditions to enable us to come together once more in a safe and caring space, and to have the many conversations we need to have to move our movement and our work forward.

Earlier in the year, a decision was made to set a limit to the size of the event. We found in Sofia last year that a cap on numbers led to overall positive outcomes for the conference and participants. There was more balanced participation from across the movement, giving newer activists a chance to interact with the more experienced among us. We were able to create a calmer space, which we know is much needed amongst many overworked activists, which facilitated more and deeper interactions and networking.

Alongside this, we are using the scholarships programme to ensure access to participants who would not otherwise have been able to be at the conference, to ensure that the ILGA-Europe Annual Conference is never a 'closed club', but is a constantly renewing space where activists from across the spectrum of the LGBTI movement can come together. As a result, around 45% of participants at the conference are receiving support to be in Ljubljana.

LET'S KEEP TALKING ABOUT COMMUNITY ORGANISING

While we have not had activities or programmes specifically dedicated to community organising this year, support for community organising work is re-emerging as a central theme in many aspects of our work. It is part of our programme with racialised LGBTI communities, with LGBTI groups working in high-risk countries, with organisation focusing on providing services. The team will be developing more targeted support and work on community organising in the coming year.



PATHWAY 2 - STRONG, RESOURCED, SKILLED, ACCOUNTABLE AND SUSTAINABLE LGBTI MOVEMENTS

MORE AND MORE RESOURCES GOING TO THE MOVEMENT

It's been a very exciting and busy year at ILGA-Europe! We have launched six new programmes and continued to increase our regranting, bringing to 10 the total number of country specific and/or regional programmes the team is currently running

Since January 2023, **we have awarded over €1.6 million to 75 sub-grants** (and counting!), which averaging €24,576 per sub-grant. By the end of the year we expect to award two million euro in grants!

We have stepped up our efforts to support the LGBTI movement in the places where it is experiencing backlash, or in issues and priorities that have been under-resourced, by launching new funding programmes or extending existing ones. Running from one to three years, we have considerably improved our ability to provide multi-year grants to LGBTI groups, which offer more predictability. All our programmes combine financial support, capacity strengthening, peer learning for activist organisations.

For each programme, there is thinking about the design to best respond to organisations' priorities and needs, to facilitate learning for both grantee partners and the wider movement, to ensure that funding is as accessible for LGBTI groups while respecting the regulations of ILGA-Europe's own funders, and so much more. In short, our programmes and finance teams have been working hard to offer the best opportunities to LGBTI organisations.

STEPPING UP COUNTRY-BASED PROGRAMMES

We have stepped up our efforts to support LGBTI movements where they are resisting backlash and continuing to mobilise and serve their communities.

As our work takes us to specific parts of the region and/or countries where LGBTI activists carry out their activism in increasingly difficult contexts, there's a large portion of our work we don't talk about publicly out of security considerations. We expect to broaden the scope of our country-based work in 2024, both in terms of reach and volume

The model we're adopting across our country-based programmes is a combination of multi-year grants to larger organisations which connect more widely in a country, and opportunity grants to support more focused and practical change initiatives and groups who respond to more specific needs of the community.

Beyond funding, all grantees receive support through peer learning online and in-person meetings; advice, guidance and support from the team (including on financial project management), and where relevant, access to additional external expertise. A continued role for ILGA-Europe is also to support groups in creating space for joint thinking, longer-term planning and strategizing, especially in places where activists have little room to take a step back from demanding realities.

THE EXAMPLE OF POLAND

Our work in Poland relies on a framework that combines flexible funding as an established organisation, opportunity funding for diverse LGBTI organisations and groups, and coordination, learning and advocacy support. In addition to providing funding to KPH as a national-level organisation, we've opened up a call for Polish LGBTI groups who lacked resources to implement ideas of how to bring concrete positive change. Out of 12 applications (including some involving rural areas), we selected four groups who focus on local organising of community and allies, and will come together in our programme for over 18 months. All the organisations will support their work through funding and learning, and will also be brought together in spaces where joint thinking about the movement in Poland can be facilitated.

STRENGTHENING OUR MOVEMENT IN KEY AREAS

In addition to our country-specific work, ILGA-Europe has of course a central role in developing areas of work, knowledge and skills that are important for the wider LGBTI movements in the region. At the moment, our regional programmes focus on: strategic communications, human rights documentation, emergency support and security, addressing structural inequalities in LGBTI communities.

Each of these programmes is made up of regranting, coordination and learning components. As with our country-focused projects, grantee partners receive support from the team, and where relevant, access to additional external expertise related to the interests and needs expressed by grantee partners. These programmes also have a very strong emphasis on capturing and sharing learning; peer learning amongst participants as well as identifying learning which is of value for the wider movement.

HERE ARE OUR REGIONAL PROGRAMMES:

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IS A JOURNEY

When it comes to communications, a field where new tools and trends are emerging by the hour, continuous learning is key to the work. As part of our multi-year [Strategic Communications programme](#), since spring 2022, we have been working with four grantee partners in Bulgaria, Georgia, Ireland and Slovenia. An important goal is for these four partners to become **'anchor' organisations** that serve as sources of communications knowledge and skills for others in the movement. This track of the programme combines multi-year project grants of 2.5 years and coaching, mentoring and learning opportunities to support LGBTI organisations in strengthening their strategic communication capacities. Over 20 activists from 14 countries were selected to join us in this first programme.

Along with our grants, LGBTI groups have our support and coaching in fine-tuning their strategies, strengthening financial management systems or practices, and in navigating crises. We'll be building on the learning from this programme in the coming year.

Another component of this programme is the **learning journey grants**. They are aimed at LGBTI groups that do not have resources to have paid communications staff but are interested in finding ways to strengthen their communications. In January we started to work with eight organisations selected for their learning potential. Each one is accompanied with in-depth learning activities and received 10,000 Euro for the duration of the programme, that will last until mid-2024. Two more organisations – in Romania and in Germany – are supported with small-scale funding to boost their strategies by time-sensitive communications activities.

And finally, the team has been organising **Skills Boosts online sessions**, to make learning available to a wider group of activists. Through these sessions, we offer practical support to equip activists with new tools and knowledge. Since January, we hosted three new Skills Boost sessions: on [effective campaigns in the times of crisis session](#); on learning about data visualisation to improve how we tell stories about LGBTI people; and on [Media interview practice for LGBTI activists](#), which was specifically designed for LGBTI activists to prepare for and be more confident in media appearances.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR RACIALISED LGBTI COMMUNITIES

So many organisations and groups have been doing incredible work and contributing to change, while at the same time being historically excluded from funding. Our new 12-month programme is intended to support and strengthen the work being done by and for racialised LGBTI communities in Europe.

We awarded nine grants that support the work of 12 organisations from eight countries (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Netherlands, France, UK) which are run by racialised LGBTI people and/or meaningfully and consistently engage racialised LGBTI people in their organisational structure.

The type of work that organisations are implementing under this programme is diverse and ranging from work with/for refugees in migrants centres, raising awareness about the lived realities of Roma LGBTI communities, self-organising working class racialised LGBTI people living beyond capital cities in a suburban Pride, collaborating with service providers to improve access for racialised queer communities to mental health services, and creating safe spaces for racialised trans people accessing health services, to name a few.

This programme brings an exciting opportunity for us to learn from the part of the movement who do important work on the intersection of socio-economic justice and anti-racism and to bring this learning to the wider movement.

ADDRESSING LGBTI HOMELESSNESS

Housing is a precondition for access to health, employment, education, and social services. Yet, LGBTI homelessness remains hidden in Europe. Through this 12-month programme we are supporting five organisations from four countries (Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Spain). Our support is designed as a combination of grants for their projects and regular capacity building and peer learning. The projects we support focus on data collection, advocacy efforts, and collaboration between sectors, systems and services in addressing LGBTI homelessness. We believe that having a small group of organisations with a strengthened experience in the area of LGBTI homelessness will bring new learnings and insights that can be shared with a wider movement and benefit other organisations who are at the beginning of their work on homelessness in their respective countries.

DOCUMENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBTI PEOPLE

Institutionalised violence and domestic violence against LGBTI people continues to go underreported across the region. This is why the [Documentation and Advocacy Fund](#) is supporting seven organisations from across Europe and Central Asia collecting evidence to sustain future advocacy work on these themes that frequently go overlooked.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT THROUGH DIGNITY FOR ALL

As a member of the Dignity consortium for a decade now, we've been able to give emergency funds, advocacy support, and security assistance to human rights defenders and civil society organisations under threat or attack due to their work on human rights and equality for LGBTI people. This programme has been essential to support LGBTI organisations from across the region to regroup in the face of unforeseen threats or attacks on LGBTI rights, to create spaces for joint strategizing, and to come up with solutions that allow organisations to continue their operation despite targeted attacks against LGBTI organisations and civil society.

BUILDING FROM PREVIOUS LEARNING

In addition to these programmes, the team has also been following up on the "strengthening the movement in the context of rising anti-LGBTI forces" programme which ran in 2021-2022, by developing follow-up plans to share the learning with the wider movement and by further supporting project partners from the Western Balkans with a strategizing meeting on addressing anti-trans rhetoric and attacks in their region. We've also been thinking about how to move forward on supporting organisational development in the movement, building on our 2022 OrgMind programme. More to come in 2024!

REACHING ACTIVISTS BEYOND OUR PROGRAMMES

Throughout the year, there are many ways in which the team provides support to LGBTI groups and activists, especially thinking about how to reach those who are not active participants in our programmes. We've organised peer learning and exchange of experiences between activists from countries facing similar developments (such as the proposal or adoption of an anti-propaganda law), we've organised study visits to European institutions for activists from non-EU countries, we've provided guidance on strengthening organisational and financial processes, we've resumed our travels to meet activists and better understand their realities, and we've continued to share resources on our Online Learning Hub.

PATHWAY 3 - A LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK WHICH PROTECTS AND PROMOTES HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY AT LOCAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

ADVANCING LGBTI EQUALITY: THE BEST RESPONSE TO BACKLASH!

Advocacy in times of stark rise in anti-LGBTI violence and growing polarisation. Published on February 20, our [flagship Annual Review](#) clearly defined the context in which our movement is currently working: in 2022 there was a stark rise in the violence against LGBTI people, not only in terms of quantity but in the severity of the attacks. This year's Annual Review highlighted the correlation between anti-LGBTI violence and anti-LGBTI hate speech from politicians, representatives, religious leaders and the media. Scapegoating and polarisation has real effects on LGBTI people's lives. We saw this polarisation with the World Cup One Love armband controversy, which we discussed in our podcast, [The Frontline](#), in December.

“Despite intense anti-LGBTI attacks, equality is still advancing across Europe.” But the findings in our Rainbow Map launched in May pointed to the way forward. The 2023 map showed political determination to advance LGBTI rights is paying off in the midst of rising polarisation and violence of the public discourse. The largest gains on the map were for countries that introduced legal gender recognition using a self-determination model and those that introduced bans on intersex genital mutilation. As it's been tradition, we presented our map at the IDAHOT Forum in Iceland, in the presence of governments and institutions.

KEEPING POLITICAL COMMITMENT ON LGBTI EQUALITY HIGH

Giving the EU LGBTIQ Strategy a political boost. At the Swedish EU Presidency High Level Conference on LGBTI Equality, we [shared our assessment](#) of the implementation of the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy, giving clear recommendations on how the EU Commission and the Member States can live up to their political ambition. We also worked with the Swedish Presidency on the [Presidency conclusions](#) signed by 25 EU Member States, which signal their clear support for the Commission's strategy and a call to step up that work in the future, and worked with the Spanish Presidency in wide gathering support for the 'Declaration by EU Ministers responsible for LGBTIQ policy advancing LGBTIQ rights in Europe', which 16 member states signed. [We've also been supporting the European External Action Service \(EEAS\)](#) which took important steps to integrate LGBTI rights more strongly in their work globally.

Groundbreaking support to the infringement against Hungary. In April, [the hard work we've been doing behind the scenes](#) for the last two years culminated when 15 EU countries joining the legal case against Hungary's anti-LGBTI law (which prohibits the portrayal of LGBTI people in media and educational material addressed to minors). The European Commission decided to bring a case to the EU Court of Justice for what it considers to be “a violation of human rights and an infringement of EU law”.

The fact that so many EU member states now officially support the Commission in front of the CJEU is unique, and shows that a majority of EU countries are committed to taking action to defend LGBTI rights.

ADVOCATING FOR KEY LEGISLATION AT EU LEVEL

All children protected when crossing borders in the EU. Last December, the European Commission published its proposal for an EU directive on recognition of parenthood will protect all children, including children of LGBTI parents, from 'losing one parent' when crossing a border within the EU because of parenthood not being recognised in the country of arrival. For the last two years, we had been providing expert input to the European Commission, while providing information and analysis to EU governments, MEPs and the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), to make sure that this important proposal would respond to the needs of rainbow families. Since the publication of the draft legislation, we've been working closely with governments as well as our member organisations and children rights and family organisations to mobilise wide political support for the Commission's proposal amongst EU Member States.

Protecting LGBTI people from gender-based and domestic violence. Building on work we've been doing since 2020, we engaged particularly actively in the last year with the Parliament and the Commission on proposed text for a future directive on combatting violence against women and domestic violence. Our focus has been on making recommendations to make sure the legislation explicitly protects LGBTI women and LGBTI victims. We successfully advocated against the criminalisation of sex work and for including genital mutilation against intersex women and girls as a form of violence and gender identity, gender expression and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC) as protected grounds in the position of the European Parliament, which was adopted in July.

Since the beginning, all this work has been done in coalition with women's rights and sexual & reproductive rights NGOs. We continue to work with member states (who are the co-legislators), MEPs and the European Commission to ensure the final text negotiated by the three institutions will ensure that LGBTI people are strongly protected in the adopted legislation.

AT THE FOREFRONT OF DEMOCRACY

Rule of law. Submitting reports to the European Commission, sending letters to EU Commissioners, meetings on implementation of EU funded programmes and much more has kept us busy regarding rule of law, which in the EU means that all members of society are equally subject to the law. Since January, after the European Commission ended the infringement procedure against Poland over the country's so-called 'LGBT free zones', we have been working together with our members in the country to repeal the remaining anti-LGBT resolutions in 76 Polish cities. We will continue reporting on attacks on the rights of LGBTI people, so the rule of law protects everyone living in the EU.

Making the case for democracy. Along with other NGOs, we've been taking part actively in discussions with EU Commission on the upcoming Defence of Democracy package, which will impact on civil society funding and transparency rules. In the current context, it's important to make it clear to policy-makers and fellow CSOs that LGBTI activists are some of the fiercest defenders of democracy. We've also contributed to the recently published EU's annual Rule of Law report, ensuring that the Commission's reporting includes the violations of LGBTI rights within the EU.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONTINUES TO DO STANDARD SETTING WORK

Advancing the human rights of intersex people. We participated at the conference organised by the Council of Europe and OII-Europe in the framework of Iceland's presidency on intersex people's human rights. The conference paved the way for the establishment of the working group that will start preparing the first Intersex Committee of Ministers recommendation, which we are part of. This Council of Europe development takes place at the same time as the EU Commission is about to publish its first study on intersex people in the EU (end of 2023), a study we've actively contributed to as part of the Steering Committee.

Growing explicit commitment within the Council. We've been actively supporting the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) as it developed its first policy recommendations on combatting intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons. We've done so by participating to civil society stakeholder consultations and providing written input. We also worked closely with the European Focal Point Network and the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion in preparing for the next review of the landmark 2010 Committee of Ministers Recommendation (due in 2024). In the Parliamentary Assembly, we worked with our members to provide input to a report on LBQ women. We also supported the PACE LGBTI Platform in the organisation of several meetings (including on freedom of assembly and expression in June, on the rights of LGBTI refugees and asylum-seekers, and on conversion practices), in particular by facilitating the participation of activists to each event.

Connecting LGBTI organisations with the Council. Throughout the year, we supported LGBTI organisations across the region to engage in different Council of Europe country monitoring processes. We've also kept relevant Council bodies informed about country situations, and activated them to address LGBTI right violations in several countries. One of many examples is our support in helping to organise meetings with LGBTI activists during the Human Rights Commissioner's visit to the UK. Her report clearly condemns the rise in anti-LGBTI and especially anti-trans hate and violence in the country.

MAKING EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS WORK FOR LGBTI PEOPLE AT COUNTRY LEVEL

The leverage of EU Accession. In April we launched our LGBTI Enlargement Review, now covering ten countries, after EU membership prospects were given to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia in 2022. We have also been directly supporting the advocacy work of organisations in Ukraine on the adoption of same-sex partnership recognition and brought Ukrainian organisations together to discuss advocacy strategies to improve trans rights in the country.

EU Study visit with Turkish LGBTI activists. As part of our advocacy work to EU institutions, in May we organised a study visit with some LGBTI activists from Turkey who met with members of the European Parliament, officials from the EU's External Action Service, and the Council of Europe Rapporteur on LGBTI rights who's based in Brussels. In the face of anti-LGBTI backlash, as seen in the recent attacks on Prides in Turkey, it is essential to bring the realities and needs from the ground to decision-makers in Europe.

Activating support for LGBTI people in Georgia and Russia. Following the attacks and lack of protection against participants at Tbilisi Pride, and the comprehensive ban on trans-specific healthcare and legal gender recognition in Russia, we've been keeping European institutions informed and engaging on effective responses to the developments, including on how best to support people on the ground.

Supporting national legislative processes. We continue to monitor and support national legislative processes that strengthen the protection of LGBTI people in challenging contexts. This includes discussing with Italian LGBTI organisations how to best support them in pushing back against the restriction on the rights of Rainbow Families, lack of protection of trans kids in schools and threats to weaken the rights of LGBTI refugees to claim asylum in Italy.

A lot of our support to national level advocacy has focused on gender recognition laws, especially to where we could add our support to law reforms that include self-determination. This was the case in [Spain](#), Finland and Scotland, which can be serve as models for other governments attempting reforms towards self-determination. We published an [opinion piece](#) in The Parliament by our Advocacy Director, Katrin Hugendubel about this. As part of this work, we continued investing in building alliances with women's rights organisations who support trans right. We worked for example with UN Women and also published a podcast on trans inclusive feminism.

HIGHLIGHTS ON LITIGATION

Stepping up our work with the EU Court of Justice. We've been investing more of our time at the EU Court as more cases have been coming up. In January, the Court of Justice of the EU ruled that sexual orientation [is a protected](#) ground for self-employed workers following a question for the District Court of Warsaw, a case in which ILGA-Europe had participated.

There's also been a growing interest in EU member states to engage. Since the CJEU issued a landmark judgment on the [Coman case](#) in 2018, we've been working with member states to build political support for key cases regarding LGBTI rights. This past year, we have been in close contact with a number of member states to support them [intervening in a case](#) regarding the freedom of movement of a trans person and challenging the ban on legal gender recognition in Hungary, as well as a case on non-binary recognition in France.

Part of our work continues to focus on the proper implementation of judgments, especially the Coman case and the baby Sarah case, which are yet to be implemented by Romania and Bulgaria respectively. We've been supporting LGBTI organisations in bringing their complaints to the EU Commission on lack of respect of the judgements by their countries, and organised meetings between them and EU officials to make the case for increased pressure from EU institutions.

And the work goes on at the European Court of Human Rights. There were important rulings on several cases which ILGA-Europe intervened in, as always in support of national organisations and litigants. In January, in [Macate vs Lithuania](#), the Court unanimously found that there had been a violation of freedom of expression in case banning a children's book depicting same-sex relationships as essentially equivalent to different-sex relationships. In May, the Court found that Romania breached the right to respect for the family life of 21 same-sex couples by failing to recognise their relationships. We also contributed to a [case](#) involving an intersex person accessing a neutral gender marker, which was regrettably rejected by the European Court of Human Rights.

BRINGING LGBTI VOICES IN POLICIES THAT IMPACT LGBTI LIVES

ILGA-Europe joined an alliance of European civil society organisations on the rights of sex workers, led by the European **Sex Workers** alliance (ESWA). Together, we met with MEPs to raise awareness about the importance of decriminalisation in ensuring the human rights of sex workers, and advocated against an EU Parliament report calling for the criminalisation of sex work. While the report was adopted in September, our alliance managed to build more support as more MEPs voted against the report or abstained then voted in favour.

We continued to work closely with the EU Asylum Agency (EUAA) to ensure the specific needs of **LGBTI refugees** are integrated across their work by actively participating to Vulnerability Experts Network (VEN) which supports the Agency's work on training and guidelines for government officials. We also contributed to the development of interactive and comprehensive online module on LGBTI Persons in the Asylum Procedure by the Council of Europe, a module that aims to increase the capacity of legal professionals dealing with asylum claims based on SOGIGESC.

When it comes to **health**, we contributed to developing the health thematic review of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2010)5 on the rights of LGBT people; we provided input to the EU Commission's mental health package and the Commission's consultation on cancer prevention. A lot of our work on health is done in coalition and partnership with health organisations, including European AIDS Treatment Group, the LGBTI Work Group of the European Cancer Organisation, and the Nobody Left Outside initiative.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

Supporting to largest LGBTIQ Survey in the region. After having shared learning on how to improve data collection about the lives of LGBTI people, ILGA-Europe also actively supported the dissemination of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency's third LGBTIQ survey. From our experience of the two previous surveys, the data collected by FRA is a significant support for policy-making at European level.

Data at the intersections. While we wait for the publication of the new survey results in 2024, we continued the publication of our [Intersections reports series](#).

This project takes a deep dive into the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) 2019 large-scale survey into the experiences of LGBTI people in the region. In the past year, we have zoomed in on [intersex](#) experiences together with OII-Europe; on [older people's](#) experiences, in collaboration with AGE Platform Europe; on [lesbians](#) with EL*C; on LGBTI [youth](#) with IGLYO; on trans and non-binary people with TGEU; on [migrant and racial, ethnic and religious minorities](#) with EQUINOX; on LGBTI people experiencing homelessness with Feantsa and on [bisexuals](#) with BI+ Netherlands. The analysis on LGBTI people with disabilities will be published later in 2023.

PATHWAY 4 - DEEPLY-ROOTED SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE AND INCLUSION OF DIVERSITY RELATED TO SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION AND SEX CHARACTERISTICS IN SOCIETIES

CONNECTING INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS TO ACTIVISTS

This year we launched a pilot initiative to connect local and national activists with international journalists, building up a database of activists who can speak to the media across the region and identifying journalists from international organisations who are reporting from desks in each country. When stories were happening that we thought could be pitched to those journalists, we made pitches that included offers to connect the journalist with relevant activists. For example, we sent pitches about the backlash on LGBTI activists in Turkey after the re-election of Erdogan to nine different journalists and received responses from The New York Times correspondent in Turkey as well as from Euronews' correspondent. The latter took the initiative of running a story after receiving our pitch and we connected her to three local activists.

MAKING OUR WORK MORE ACCESSIBLE AND REACHING NEW AUDIENCES

We continued to communicate across our growing range of social media channels, publishing blogs, podcasts and video content. Our blog was published every Friday, and covered a wide range of subjects, reflecting on the role of cities in LGBTI people's rights, the reasons why LGBTI activists are some of the fiercest defenders of democracy, and monitoring Prides in Turkey, among many other things. Our podcast included a series going behind the scenes of our Rainbow Map, both looking at the countries that are moving up the ratings and those at the lower end, and the activist movements in those countries, and an episode looking at trans inclusion in the women's movement. We expanded more into publishing video content, especially on TikTok, with the objective of sharing news to inform, inspire, and show the truth. We've gained over 30,000 views with 4k engagements, with videos about the penal code change in Bulgaria, the attacks against Tbilisi Pride, International Non-binary People's Day, and Bi Visibility Day being among the most popular.

DIVERSITY OF BUSINESS IN PRIDE SEASON

We continue to receive partnership requests from a wide range of companies. This year we partnered with a pan-European chain of outlet shopping centres, Via Outlets, on their Pride campaign to raise awareness and funds, in addition to our long-term supporter, Revolut. We're also receiving growing interest from employee groups who organise fundraising initiatives at various companies to support our work. Interest comes from companies in different markets that go well beyond the usual suspects. As in previous years, we have also turned down some offers of partnerships over ethical concerns.

NETWORKING AND SUPPORTING LGBTI ACTIVISM

As with every year, Brussels-based LGBTI equality supporters didn't miss the date at our Equality Fundraiser.

Over 200 participants joined us to support our work so we can continue to allocate flexible funding to the much very needed work of activists in difficult contexts. This year, Belgium's Vice-Prime Minister Petra de Sutter was our guest of honour. ILGA-Europe's summer party is very popular among EU officials, fellow civil society organisations representatives and activists – so popular we were sold out ahead of the event.

PATHWAY 5 - JUST AND EQUAL SOCIETIES AND ECONOMIES

MAKING SURE OUR LEARNING IS PUT INTO PRACTICE

Do not think that the "shortness" section on Pathway 5 means there was very little work done! The truth is that the ILGA-Europe has been working very consciously and actively on integrating all the learning of the past years into our all of our work. As a result, the activities described throughout this report should reflect how we strive to be deliberate in adopting an intersectional analysis across our activities.

What you've been reading about new programmes supporting racialised communities, supporting different types of LGBTI organising, making access to data about intersecting discrimination more accessible, continuing to work more on socio-economic inequalities, our ongoing commitment to making the conference as accessible as possible (including by supporting as many activists as we can), these are all examples of how ILGA-Europe strives to contribute in a meaningful way to addressing structural inequalities that impact LGBTI people and communities.

And there is much more learning to continue to do in the coming five years, which is why a lot of our collective thinking during the strategic planning process focused on this particular Pathway.

SHARING THE LEARNING

Meanwhile, the team is working on a series for our Learning Hub on how to build an intersectional perspective in our organisation's work. It will be based on what we've been doing in the ILGA-Europe team in our advocacy, our communications, our finances and events planning, and our employment policies. This will be out later this year.

Earlier in the year, we also shared a [zine](#), which was the result of our experimentation with "learning from the future". The zine features interviews with nine activists from across the region who were asked "what different futures and structures of LGBTQI+ movement work might look like if movement work fully reflected and modelled the intersectionality inherent within LGBTQI+ communities".

