

EQUALITY OF RIGHTS FOR GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL,

Austria



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: (Employment only)
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Cohabitation rights
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Belgium



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Marriage equality, cohabitation rights
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Joint adoption, second parent adoption, fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Bulgaria



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Czech Rep



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership, cohabitation rights
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Cyprus



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Discriminating sexual offences provisions: Unequal age of consent, Same-sex sexual activities illegal; only in North Cyprus
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

United Kingdom



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership, cohabitation rights
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Joint adoption, second parent adoption, fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Sweden



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Constitution, employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Marriage equality, cohabitation rights
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Joint adoption, second parent adoption, fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Spain



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Marriage equality
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Joint adoption, second parent adoption, fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Slovenia



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Slovakia



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Romania



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Portugal



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Constitution, employment, goods and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Cohabitation rights
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Poland



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Violation of freedom of assembly
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Does Europe welcome gay politicians?

By Burcu Bakir

Lesbian Bisexual Gay and Transsexual (LGBT) organisations across Europe cooperate under the umbrella of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). There are ongoing campaigns, projects and lobbying in many member states and within the EU, LGBT people suffer from discrimination, especially in their careers because of their personal preferences. Many gay and lesbian politicians still encounter difficulties once having made public their private preferences in sexual orientation although these norms have become commonplace for the public in Western Europe over the last years.

Michael Cashman, the President of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Gay and Lesbian Rights, mentioned in a recent report that LGBT people are exposed to unacceptable levels of discrimination and harassment within the EU. On the other hand, some homosexual politicians in Europe are successful to prevail against these obstacles. Guido Westerwelle, the Foreign Minister of Germany is the first European openly gay minister who publicly announced his homosexuality. Although much criticism over his sexual orientation would be a matter in some regions like Middle East and Asia, the German public seems to find this a non-issue.

Another example that could be a turning point for gay and lesbian movements has showed up in Iceland. Johanna Sigurdardottir was appointed as a Prime Minister of Iceland and became the first openly lesbian head of government. It is said that she represents a milestone for homosexual rights and would encourage the other gay politicians who prefer to hide their homosexuality. Also recently, Roger Karoutchi, French Minister for Parliamentary Relations disclosed his homosexuality and stated that he saw no reason to hide it. In some parts attitudes may have changed but the reality for any gay or lesbian or transsexual person today really varies from one country to another. While most openly gay politicians are from the European's left



More than 200 gay and lesbian demonstrators who wanted to march through a Town Square in Wrocław, Poland, on 24 October to protest discrimination against homosexuals, were blocked by members of the National Polish Revival. They were not allowed to go through and clashed with the police who were there to protect the demonstrators | ANA/EPA/Grzegorz Hawalaj POLAND OUT

wing, the gay politicians from the right wing prefer to hide their homosexuality. Juris Lavrikovs, Head of Communications for the ILGA of Europe, said that many countries were suspicious of public opinion but willing to make progress on the issue and offered some alternatives for homosexual couples. He added that countries like Iceland which overcame its prejudices against homosexuals would be an example and send a signal to others.

Moreover, Malta hosted a meeting on 27 October which was organised by the Malta Gay Rights Movement in the framework of 13th ILGA-Europe's annual conference. During the meeting, the President of Malta, Dr George Abela mentioned the importance of education and information to tackle discrimination and to increase tolerance and acceptance of differences. This is the first time that a president of a state meets with the representatives of ILGA-Europe during its annual conference.

TRANS AND INTERSEX PEOPLE IN EUROPE

Denmark



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership, cohabitation rights
- Parenting rights of same sex-couples: Joint adoption, second parent adoption, fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Estonia



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Finland



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Second parent adoption, fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

France



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership, cohabitation rights
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Germany



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership, cohabitation rights
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Second parent adoption
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal



Representing the sexual minority

Are there hostile situations in Europe for LGBT people?

To give you an example, in some countries it is still not safe to be a human rights LGBT activist. If you are advocating and openly declaring your belonging to the sexual minority it is still life-threatening. Like in some countries like Turkey, there is consistently killing of transgender people, which we just heard the news last week for the first time that someone had actually been convicted because impunity is a very big issue in some countries. If you look at what was happening in Eastern European and central European countries for the last five years was first pride events while there was a hostile environment. Not only from fellow citizens, but also a lot of hostility was actually created and promoted by a lot of politicians, community leaders, religious leaders which created this hysterical homophobic environment which resulted in ugly and violent expressions. So we're talking about very, very different situations in those countries. When you look at some of the countries that are smaller and you're known for your activism it is difficult to get a job and it is difficult to be safe in your neighborhood because you're vulnerable to abuse and violence is actually one of the most serious issues for us throughout Europe, unfortunately not just Eastern European or Southern European issues. The beatings and killings and humiliations are happening every-

where.

Is there a clear disparity between the Eastern bloc and the rest of Europe? If so, what's the cause for this?

Partially it's true. I think we need to bear in mind it's only one aspect of the problem, of the issue. The various obvious reasons are that half of Europe was chopped off from the rest of the world for 50 years. So we're talking about isolation and a very different discourse for 50 years, which basically determined a lot of issues those countries are dealing with now. A lot of development, including advance of human rights generally but also LGBT rights in particular, were happening more organically in the Western Europe. Obviously this was a complete taboo subject behind the other side of the wall and suddenly after the liberation we're talking 10-15 years there was a flood of ideas, development and one of those was emancipation of LGBT people and their self-awareness and claiming their social place, but also their rights. Therefore, it caused some collision because society had not caught up and was not in the same place as the rest of Europe and LGBT people were almost 100% invisible and they did not exist or the information existing in their time was in most cases a criminal offense, sickness and things like that. It's understandable that those processes are causing much more tension, not only on LGBT rights. Society is not able to catch up so quickly. Unfortunately, in Eastern Europe the politicians and decision-

makers and community leaders are not often helping. We're seeing a shift to a much more nationalistic approach where idea of openness, inclusion, tolerance and human rights for everyone doesn't fit and there's a lot of self-preservation happening. It's a general problem and not a specific problem [in the eastern bloc]. It's also important to point that there has been a lot of positive development in those places and it's very individual country-to-country.

How does ILGA-Europe work with the Gay and Lesbian Rights Intergroup?

The intergroup is a very close ally for ILGA-Europe for our work at the EU level. What we are doing is connecting them to our membership: providing them with data and information, a constant exchange of ideas and how we can be helpful. If there are certain events coming how we can cooperate, for example every summer the MEP's are very much interested to be present at the hostile prides in Europe and we are always connecting them with those organizers in those countries. They [MEP's] are bringing a huge profile, a lot of media attention and also, a lot of protection because if the authorities know there are members of the European Parliament obviously the approach is very different to make sure their safety is ensured. Also, by having members of the European Parliament those countries during these events brings the debate a slightly different perspective because it helps the media and the people to depart from this very basic level to

interview with Juris Lavrikovs

maybe see the issues in a more global European dimension. For example, we are planning, maybe in November, to host an event in the Parliament jointly with the Intergroup to reenergize the "Be Bothered Pledge" to talk about LGBT issues and relaunch the appeal to get to know the rest of the MEP's [1/5 of all MEP's have signed the pledge].

Current short-term goal?

To make sure the EU is developing framework dealing with homophobic hate crimes right now there is only a framework dealing with racial hate crimes. It's important that there are frames that if someone is facing discrimination at least there are ways to remedy it. Providing these legal frameworks, including protection from discrimination and introducing positive legislation, is also a very important signal to society that discrimination is wrong and that everyone deserves equal rights. Across Europe the radical, homophobic and racist sentiments are on the rise in Europe and I think it is sort of a reminder that there is no point where you can sit and achieve something quietly because this is something which you have to always work on.

"Europe is the most advanced continent concerning LGBT rights in the world."

Juris Lavrikovs is the Communications Manager for ILGA Europe, he was interviewed by Daniella Lopez

Netherlands



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Marriage equality, registered partnership, cohabitation rights
- Parenting rights of same-sex couples: Joint adoption, second parent adoption, fertility treatment
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Malta



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Luxembourg



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Lithuania



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Violation of freedom of assembly
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Latvia



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Violation of freedom of assembly
- Consenting same-sex acts between male adults were decriminalised in 1992.
- Consenting same-sex acts between female adults were never criminalized.

Greece



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Discriminating sexual offences provisions: Unequal age of consent
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Hungary



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Partnership recognition of same-sex couples: Registered partnership, cohabitation rights
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Ireland



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment, good and services
- Criminal law refers to sexual orientation
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal

Italy



- Anti-discrimination legislation refers to sexual orientation: Employment only
- Consenting same-sex acts are legal