

# ILGA-Europe Glossary

## *INTRODUCTION*

This glossary will help you through the world of special terms and abbreviations that ILGA-Europe uses in its daily work. You can find out what we mean, when we say or write: *LGBTI, hate crime, The European Commission, biphobia heteronormativity, Council of Europe, intersex, capacity development* ect.

The purpose of the glossary is first of all to knowledge share and streamline the usage of the language when it comes to LGBTI related issues and the work of ILGA-Europe. It can therefore be useful for LGBTI activists, media, civil servants, students and researchers.

The glossary also contains *don'ts* – this is from ILGA-Europe's experience that terms have been misused or misunderstood, which can be counterproductive for the work of ILGA-Europe and its members on a national level.

Do also note that this glossary is in a constant process of development as the usage of language changes through time.

Finally ILGA-Europe has created a list of used abbreviations with a link to their meaning. Find the list of abbreviations and acronyms in the end of the document.

Do you have any comments to the glossary, then do not hesitate to contact Nanna Moe, Communications Officer ([nanna@ilga-europe.org](mailto:nanna@ilga-europe.org))

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## **ABC**

**Advocacy:** in its widest definition, the practice of advocacy is the pursuit of influencing outcomes. More specifically, advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make or have responsibility for implementing policy decisions. As such, the word ‘advocacy’ is quite pliable and is used variously to suit organisational agendas. It is understood in terms of the work an organisation does and the fundamental mission of the organisation. There are very many types or models of advocacy – each suited and tailored to the core purpose of the organisation employing it. For ILGA-Europe, it is one of the five strategic tools that we use to reach its organisational vision. The strategic plan of 2011-2013 states that: (ILGA-Europe is) advocating for human rights standards, legislation and policies at European and International levels; supporting its partners and members to develop advocacy on LGBTI people’s rights at national and local levels.

**Age of consent:** the minimum age at which a person is considered to be legally competent of consenting to sexual acts. The age of consent has differed between heterosexual and homosexual acts in most European countries. However this has been equalised in all countries except Cyprus and Greece where there are still an unequal age of consent.

**Asexuality:** an asexual person is someone who does not experience sexual attraction. Asexual people have the same emotional needs as everybody else and are just as capable of forming intimate relationships. Asexuality should not be misinterpreted as celibacy, which is a choice or a certain situation. Some consider asexuality as a sexual orientation.

**“Being in the closet”:** see *Coming-out*

**Bias crime:** see *Hate crime*

**Biphobia:** the fear, unreasonable anger, intolerance or/and hatred toward bisexuality and bisexual people (*see “Bisexual”*). The phobia may exist among heterosexuals, gay men, lesbians, or by bisexuals themselves, and is often related to multiple negative stereotypes of bisexuals centre on the belief that bisexuality does not exist and on the generalisation that bisexuals are promiscuous.

**Bisexual:** when a person is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to persons of more than one sex.

**Capacity Development:** the processes and actions of enhancing the capacity of partner and member organisations to lobby, advocate, raise awareness and engage in the promotion and inclusion of LGBTI recognition at European and/or national level; while enhancing the capacity of ILGA-Europe to undertake its work and attain its strategic objectives through organisational development. Capacity development is one of the five strategic tools that ILGA-Europe is using to reach its organisational vision.

**Case-law:** Case-law refers to the decisions and interpretations made by judges while deciding on the legal issues before them which are considered as the common law or as an aid for interpretation of a law in subsequent cases with similar conditions. Case-law is used by advocates to support their views to favour their cause and establish certain principles in existing law.

In a European context case-law includes:

- Judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (see *European Union*) in response to referrals from the European Commission, national courts or individuals of the EU countries.
- Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (see *Council of Europe*) in response to the 47 member states of Council of Europe and individuals living in the member states.

**Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union:** see *European Union*

**Cisgender:** a term referring to those people whose gender identity and gender expression match the sex they were assigned at birth and the social expectations related to their gender.

**Cisnormativity:** refers to the practices and institutions that legitimise and privilege those who are comfortable in the gender belonging to the sex assigned to them at birth. On the other hand, this norm systematically disadvantages and marginalises all persons whose gender identity and expression do not meet social expectations.

**Civil partnership:** see *Registered partnership*

**Civil union:** see *Registered partnership*

**Cohabitation rights:** a couple living together on the same physical address can in only in some European countries (and regions) make a legal agreement on some practical matters (which vary from country to country). This may be done

instead of getting married or entering a registered partnership, however, the rights emanating out of cohabitation are more limited. [For information on the current situation, check out our country-by-country section.](#)

**Coming-out:** the process of revealing the identification of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex person.

**Outing:** when a person's identification as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex person is revealed without consent.

**“Being in the closet”:** a situation where someone has decided not to be open about his or her sexual orientation (lesbian, gay man, bisexual), gender identity/expression (trans person) and/or sex (intersex person).

**Committee of Ministers:** *see Council of Europe*

**Council of Europe (abbr. CoE):** The Council of Europe is Europe's oldest political organisation, founded in 1949. It groups together 47 countries. The headquarter is in Strasbourg, France. The Council was set up to:

- defend human rights, parliamentary democracy and the *rule of law* (clear separation of powers, legal certainty and equality of all before the law),
- develop continent-wide agreements to standardise member countries' social and legal practices,
- promote awareness of a European identity based on shared values and cutting across different cultures.

Main tasks:

- acting as a political anchor and human rights watchdog for Europe's post-communist democracies,
- assisting the countries of central and eastern Europe in carrying out and consolidating political, legal and constitutional reform in parallel with economic reform,
- providing know-how in areas such as human rights, local democracy, education, culture and the environment.

Important bodies and conventions:

**Committee of Ministers (abbr. CoM):** the Council's decision-making body, and is composed of the 47 Foreign ministers or their Strasbourg-based deputies (ambassadors/permanent representatives). Its Chair changes every six months according to the member countries' alphabetical order. The Ministers' Deputies meet at least once a month. They draw up the Council of Europe's activities programme and adopt its budget.

**European Convention on Human Rights (abbr. ECHR):** (formally the *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*) is an international treaty to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in Europe. It was drafted in 1950 and the convention entered into force on 3 September 1953. Rulings at the European Court of Human Rights are based on the Convention.

**European Court of Human Rights (abbr. ECtHR):** composed of one judge from each of the 47 member states. It makes judgments in respect of possible violations of the European Convention on Human Rights. Where the Court finds that a particular member state has violated the Convention then the government is obliged to take corrective action. Judgments of the Court, which establish a general principle in respect of one country, should, in theory, be acted on by other countries, which similarly violates the Convention.

**Parliamentary Assembly (abbr. PACE):** the Parliamentary Assembly has 636 members (318 representatives and 318 substitutes) from the 47 national parliaments of the member states. The Parliamentary Assembly is a deliberate body and holds four week-long plenary sessions a year. It debates on a wide range of human rights and social issues and its recommendations to the Committee of Ministers have been at the root of many of the Council of Europe's achievements.

**Council of the European Union:** see *European Union*

**Court of Justice of the European Union (abbr. CJEU):** see *European Union*

**Cross dresser:** see *Transvestite*

**Custody rights:** where same-sex couples, transgender parents or an individual LGBTI person are treated on the same level as different-sex couples and singles when custody for one's own child is discussed.

## **DEF**

**Different-sex relationship:** different-sex relationship is a relationship containing of people of two different sexes. This term is preferred instead of opposite-sex, as it should be avoided as it is based on the wrong assumption that there is only two possible sexes and that they are immutable.

**Discrimination:** unequal or unfair treatment which can be based on a range of grounds, such as age, ethnic background, disability, sexual orientation or gender

identity. Can be divided into four different types of discrimination, which all can lead to victimisation and harassment:

- *Direct discrimination*: a situation where a person is treated less favourably than others on grounds of his or her sexual orientation or gender identity.
- *Indirect discrimination*: where an apparently neutral provision or practice would put persons having a particular sexual orientation or gender identity at a disadvantage compared to others.
- *Multiple discrimination*: based mix on two or several grounds of discrimination such as religion or belief, race, disability, age, gender and gender identity and/or sexual orientation.
- *Experienced discrimination*: also called subjective discrimination, is the experience of being discriminated against. Experienced discrimination does not necessarily entail discrimination in the legal sense.
- *Victimisation*: victimisation is a specific term to mean discrimination against a person because they have made a complaint or been a witness in another person's complaint.
- *Harassment*: any act or conduct that is unwelcome to the victim, which could be regarded in relation to the victim's sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and/or as offensive, humiliating or intimidating. It can include spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

**Disorders of Sex Development (abbr. DSD)**: a medical term that has recently replaced the term intersex within medical jargon, and refers to congenital conditions in which development of chromosomal, gonadal, or anatomical sex are considered atypical.

**European Asylum Support Office (abbr. EASO)**: see *European Union*.

**European Commission**: see *European Union*

**European Convention on Human Rights**: see *Council of Europe*

**European Council**: see *European Union*

**European Court of Human Rights (abbr. ECtHR)**: see *Council of Europe*

**European External Action Service (abbr. EEAS)**: see *European Union*

**European Parliament**: see *European Union*

**European Union (abbr. EU)**: The European Union is an economic and political union of 28 current Member States in Europe. The EU origins from the European Coal and Steel Community formed in 1951 and the Treaty of Rome from 1957.

Since then, it has grown in size through enlargement, and in power through the addition of policy areas.

Important institutions, bodies and charters:

**Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union:** The European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights sets out in a single text the whole range of civil, cultural, political, economic and social rights of all persons resident in the EU. The Charter are based, in particular, on the fundamental rights and freedoms recognised by the European Convention on Human Rights (*see "Council of Europe"*), the constitutional traditions of the EU Member States, the Council of Europe's Social Charter, the Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights of Workers and other international conventions on the subject. The Lisbon Treaty which came into force in 2009 gave the Charter to have the same legal value as other EU treaties.

**Council of the European Union:** It was formerly known as the 'Council of Ministers', and for short it is simply called 'The Council'. The Council is together with the European Parliament the legislative institutions of the EU. Each EU country in turn presides over the Council for a six-month period. One minister from each of the member states attends every Council meeting. Which ministers attend a meeting depends on which topic is on the agenda.

**Court of Justice of the European Union (abbr. CJEU):** Court of Justice of the European Union is located in Luxembourg. The Court is composed of one judge from each EU country, assisted by eight advocates-general. A joint agreement of the governments of the EU countries appoints the composition of the Court. Each is appointed for a term of six years, after which they may be reappointed for one or two further periods of three years. They can be relied on to show impartiality.

**European Asylum Support Office (abbr. EASO):** The EASO is located in Valetta, Malta, and put into operation in June 2011. The EASO will support Member States in their efforts to implement a more consistent and fair asylum policy, for example by helping to identify good practices, organising training at European level and improving access to accurate information on countries of origin. It will also provide technical and operational support to Member States facing "particular pressures" (i.e. Member States receiving large numbers of asylum claims), via the deployment of asylum expert teams, thus contributing to alleviate some of the pressure on their systems.

**European Commission:** The European Commission is appointed for a five year period by agreement between the EU countries, subject to approval by European Parliament. The Commission acts with complete political independence. Its job is to uphold the interest of the EU as a whole, so it must not take instructions from any member state. The Commission is also the only institution that has the right to propose new EU legislation, and it can take action at any stage to help bring about agreement both within the Council and between the Council and Parliament. The Commission is largely responsible for managing the EU's common policies, such as research, development aid, regional policy etc. It also manages the budget for these policies. The Commission is assisted by a civil service made up of 36 "Directorates-General" (DGs) and services, based mainly in Brussels and Luxembourg. Unlike the secretariats of traditional international organisations, the Commission has its own financial resources and can therefore act quite independently.

**European Council:** The European Council consists of the Heads of State or Government of the EU countries, together with its President and the President of the Commission. It defines the overall general political direction and priorities of the European Union. The European Council provides the European Union with the necessary drive force for its development and defines the general political directions and priorities thereof. However, it does not exercise legislative functions. The European Council meets at least twice a year usually in Brussels.

**European External Action Service (abbr. EEAS):** The EU maintains diplomatic relations with nearly all countries in the world. Abroad, the Union is represented by a network of 136 EU Delegations, which have a similar function to those of an embassy. This is being coordinated by the European External Action Service which serves as a foreign ministry and diplomatic corps for the EU, implementing the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and other areas of the EU's external representation. The EEAS is under the authority of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), a post also created by the Treaty of Lisbon, whom it assists. The High Representative and the EEAS can propose and implement policy but not make it. The EEAS was formed by merger of the external relation departments of the Council of the European Union (see above) and the European Commission (see above), but is sitting outside those institutions and it also has its own independent budget.

**European Institute for Gender Equality (abbr. EIGE):** The EIGE is located in Vilnius, Lithuania, and was put into operation in May 2007. The EIGE is a European agency to support the Member States and the

European institutions (in particular the Commission) in their efforts to promote gender equality, to fight discrimination based on sex and to raise awareness of gender issues. The tasks of the institute are to collect and analyse comparable data on gender issues, to develop methodological tools, in particular for the integration of the gender dimension in all policy areas, to facilitate the exchange of best practices and dialogue among stakeholders, and to raise awareness among EU citizens.

**European Parliament:** The European Parliament is the elected body that represents the EU's citizens, and currently seats 765 elected national representatives. They are elected every five years. It has steadily acquired greater influence and power through a series of treaties. They have transformed the European Parliament from a purely consultative assembly into a legislative parliament, exercising powers similar to those of the national parliaments. Today the European Parliament, as an equal partner with the Council of Ministers, passes the majority of EU laws - laws that affect the lives of citizens in EU countries.

**European Union legislation:** EU law is an independent legal system which takes precedence over national legislations. A number of key players are involved in the process of implementing, monitoring and further developing this legal system for which a variety of procedures apply. In general, EU law is composed of two different - but interdependent - types of legislation:

- *Primary legislation:* Primary legislation includes in particular the Treaties of the European Union and other agreements having similar status. Primary legislation is agreed by direct negotiation between EU countries' governments. These agreements are laid down in the form of Treaties which are then subject to ratification by the national parliaments. The same procedure applies for any subsequent amendments to the Treaties. The Treaties also define the role and responsibilities of the EU institutions and bodies involved in decision-making processes and the legislative, executive and juridical procedures which characterise EU law and its implementation.
- *Secondary legislation:* Secondary legislation is based on the Treaties and implies a variety of procedures defined in different articles thereof. In the framework of the Treaties on the European Union and EU law may take the following forms:
  - *Regulations* which are directly applicable and binding in all EU countries without the need for any national implementing legislation.

- *Directives* which bind the EU countries as to the objectives to be achieved within a certain time-limit while leaving the national authorities the choice of form and means to be used. Directives have to be implemented in national legislation in accordance with the procedures of the individual EU country.
- *Decisions* which are binding in all their aspects for those to whom they are addressed. Thus, decisions do not require national implementing legislation. A decision may be addressed to any or all EU countries, to enterprises or to individuals.
- *Recommendations* and opinions which are not binding.

**Fundamental Rights Agency (abbr. FRA):** formally called *The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights*. The Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) is based in Vienna, Austria, and was formed in 2007. The scope of the Agency concerns the respect of the European Convention of Human rights and the Charter on Fundamental Rights from EU countries.

**Fertility treatment:** where women (as single, or in different sex/same-sex couples) can get assisted insemination at a fertility clinic or hospital medical in order to get pregnant either with a known donor or an unknown donor of sperm. [For information on the current situation, check out our country-by-country section.](#)

**Freedom of assembly:** is the right to come together publicly and collectively express, promote, pursue and defend common interests. The right to freedom of assembly is recognised as a human right, a political freedom and a civil liberty by the European Union and the Council of Europe. Sometimes used interchangeably with Freedom of association.

**Freedom of association:** is right to form groups, to organise and to assemble together with the aim of addressing issues of common concern. The right to freedom of association is recognised as a human right, a political freedom and a civil liberty by the European Union and the Council of Europe. Sometimes used interchangeably with Freedom of assembly.

**Freedom of expression:** rights of all to express their views and opinions freely without any form of censorship. The right to freedom of expression is recognized as a human right, a political freedom and a civil liberty by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

**FTM:** Abbr. of Female-To-Male, most commonly used to refer to a female-to-male trans person. Someone who was assigned female at birth who now identifies as male. Also called a trans man. The term is widely discussed and

should be avoided as it is based on the wrong assumption that there are only two possible sexes.

**Fundamental Rights Agency (abbr. FRA):** see *European Union*

## **GHI**

**Gay:** a person who feels sexual and/or emotional desire exclusively or predominantly for persons of her or his own sex. The term has however been misused to cover all gay men and lesbians (and sometimes even bisexuals). This has been widely discussed, and *gay* should therefore only be used when it is referring to men are emotionally and/or sexually attracted to other men. If the intention is to cover all without intentional excluding any sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, then it is recommendable not to use only the term *gay*, and instead use *LGBTI* (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people)

**Gay marriage:** gay marriage has been widely misused by media and even decision makers, and it is wrongly understood as well for two main reasons. 1. There is no country which has or will intend to make a specific marriage law for solely for same-sex couples. The aim is to change existing marriage laws, so same-sex couples are included equally with different-sex couples. 2. Gay is not being considered as being inclusive (see *Gay*), and can not be viewed as equal to same-sex relationships. See "*Marriage equality*" for a correct term.

**Gender:** refers to people's internal perception and experience of maleness and femaleness, and the social construction that allocates certain behaviours into male and female roles which vary across history, societies, cultures and classes. Gender is hence strongly linked to society's expectations and is not exclusively a biological matter.

**Gender dysphoria:** is a mental disorder diagnosis applied by psychiatrists and psychologists to classify severe discomfort/ rejection that people may feel towards their sex embodiment and their internally felt gender identity. See also *Gender Identity Disorder*.

**Gender expression:** refers to people's manifestation of their gender identity, and the one that is perceived by others. Typically, people seek to make their gender expression or presentation match their gender identity/identities, irrespective of the sex that they were assigned at birth.

**Gender identity:** refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely

chosen, modifications of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerism (Yogyakarta Principles).

**Gender Identity Disorder (GID):** is listed in both the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (Section F Mental Disorder) of WHO; and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association (APA).

**Gender marker:** is a gendered designator on official documents. The most obvious gender markers are designations such as male/female or Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss. They are often embedded in ID cards, driver's licences, birth certificates, diplomas, civil status documents and tax forms. Less obvious gender markers can be coded numbers such as social security numbers and tax numbers.

**Gender variant:** refers to anyone whose gender varies from normative gender identity and roles of the gender assigned at birth.

**Gendernormativity:** (see also *Cisnormativity*) relates to the practices and institutions that legitimise and privilege those who live in the gender they were assigned at birth. Gendernormativity negatively impacts upon trans people, people who do not identify with either gender, men who are perceived to be more 'feminine' than is socially accepted, and women who are perceived to be 'too masculine'.

**Gender reassignment:** refers to the process through which people re-define the gender in which they live in order to better express their gender identity. It is often referred to as a process that may involve medical assistance including hormone therapies and surgical procedures that transpeople undergo to align their body with their gender. This process, however, also includes some or all of the following social and legal adjustments: coming out to family, friends and colleagues; dressing and acting according to one's gender; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; and meeting other legal or judicial procedures depending on national law. In *P. v S.*, the ECJ affirmed that gender reassignment is included within the scope of the ground of 'sex' in EU law.

**Gender Reassignment Surgery (abbr. GRS):** Medical term for what trans people often call gender-confirmation surgery: surgery to bring the primary and secondary sex characteristics of a trans person's body into alignment with his or her internal self-perception.

**Gender Recognition:** A process whereby a trans person's preferred gender is recognised in law, or the achievement of the process.

**Gender Role:** How a person expresses himself or herself in terms of traits commonly associated with masculinity and femininity. Gender role is largely a social construct, since every society has different ideas about what sort of dress or behaviour is 'appropriate' for males or females.

**Gender variant:** refers to anyone whose gender varies from normative gender identity and roles of the gender assigned at birth.

**GLBT:** abbr. for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans people. Synonymous with the abbr. *LGBT*. ILGA-Europe uses the abb. LGBTI (as we include intersex people's concerns in its work).

**Harassment:** See *Discrimination*.

**Hate crime:** offences that are motivated by hate or by bias against a particular group of people. This could be based, inter alia, on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age or disability. Also called bias crime.

**Hate speech:** refers to public expressions which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred, discrimination or hostility towards minorities — for example statements by political or religious leaders appearing in the press or the Internet.

**Heteronormativity:** Reference to cultural and social practices where men and women are being led into believing and behaving as if heterosexuality were the only conceivable sexuality. It also implies the positioning of heterosexuality as the only way of being "normal" and as the key source of social reward.

**Heterosexism:** the belief, stated or implied, that heterosexuality is superior (religiously, morally, socially, emotionally, behaviourally, and/or in some other way) to other sexualities; the presumption that all people are heterosexual (may be conscious or unconscious); the belief that all people should be heterosexual. As an institutionalised system of oppression, heterosexism negatively affects LGBTI people as well as some heterosexual individuals who do not subscribe to traditional standards of masculinity and femininity.

**Heterosexual:** People are classified as heterosexual on the basis of their gender and the gender of their sexual partner(s). When the partner's gender is other than the individual's, then the person is categorised as heterosexual.

**Homophobia:** the fear, unreasonable anger, intolerance or/and hatred toward homosexuality. Homophobia can appear in various ways:

- *Internalised Homophobia:* when lesbian, gay men and bisexual people are considering and accepting heterosexuality as the correct way of being and living.
- *Institutionalised Homophobia:* when governments and authorities are acting against equality for LGB people. This can be hate speech from public elected persons, ban on pride events and other forms of discrimination of LGB people.

**Homosexual:** People are classified as homosexual on the basis of their gender and the gender of their sexual partner(s). When the partner's gender is the same as the individual's, then the person is categorised as homosexual. It is recommended to use the terms *lesbian* and *gay men* instead of *homosexual people*. The terms lesbian and gay man are being considered neutral and positive, and the focus is on the identity instead of being sexualised. Lastly, the term homosexual has for many a historical connotation of pathology.

**Intersex:** a term that relates to a range of physical traits or variations that lie between stereotypical ideals of male and female. Intersex people are born with physical, hormonal or genetic features that are neither wholly female nor wholly male; or a combination of female and male; or neither female nor male. Many forms of intersex exist; it is a spectrum or umbrella term, rather than a single category.

An intersex individual is born intersex. Some common intersex variations are diagnosed prenatally via pre-natal genetic screening. Intersex differences may be visibly apparent at birth. Some intersex traits become apparent at puberty, or when trying to conceive, or through random chance. Other instances may only be discovered during an autopsy.

The lowest popular statistic is around 1 in 2,000 people (.05% of births) but a more likely figure is closer to 1.7%. This makes intersex differences about as common as red hair. This means that in Europe, of 742.5 million people (2013) there could be between 371,250 to 12,622,500 intersex people.

## **JKL**

**Joint adoption:** where a same-sex couple is allowed to apply for adoption of a child. [For information on the current situation, check out our country-by-country section.](#)

**Lesbian:** a woman who is sexually and emotionally attracted to women.

**LGBTI:** Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people.

**Litigation:** used for when a case is tried at court. In a European context, it means decisions of cases from national courts tried at either the European Court of Human Rights (based on the European Convention on Human Rights) or the Court of Justice of the European Union (based on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union). (see *Council of Europe* and *European Union*). Litigation is one of the five strategic tools that ILGA-Europe is using to reach its organisational vision. It says in the strategic plan of 2011-2013: identifying and supporting legal actions at the European courts with the intention to extend rights and recognition of LGBTI rights at European level; strengthening the capacity of members to take cases at national level to litigate breaches of human rights of LGBTI people. See also *Strategic Litigation*.

**Lobbying:** the action when someone is trying to influence decision makers with arguments for on specific case or issue. Lobbying is one of the five strategic tools that ILGA-Europe is using to reach its organisational vision. It says in the strategic plan of 2011-2013: developing argumentation and providing evidence for the inclusion of the LGBTI perspective in all pertinent areas of public policies at European level; using international and European human rights standards, policies and legislations to pressure European institutions and national governments to uphold the rights of LGBTI people.

## **MNO**

**Marriage equality:** where the national marriage legislation also includes same-sex couples – e.g. gender neutral reference to the spouses. [For information on the current situation, check out our country-by-country section.](#)

**MTF:** Male-to-female, most commonly used to refer to a male-to-female trans person. Someone who was assigned male at birth but who identifies as female. The term is widely discussed and should be avoided as it is based on the wrong assumption that there is only two possible sexes.

**MSM:** Abbr. for *Men who have Sex with Men*. Term used purely in HIV/AIDS prevention, and very rarely in other activist circles. It was coined for prevention purposes where the identity of a person does not matter - only the sexual practice. From that perspective the term MSM is very inclusive – as it includes all men (gay, bisexual, heterosexual, trans or intersex). However it does not include people identifying as women and other identities where a lot of prevention is needed and takes place. Therefore ILGA-Europe does not use the term, and prefers to use LGBTI people. MSM misses out on the impact of discrimination of sexual orientation and gender identity/gender expression when working with

health and HIV/AIDS in a bigger picture. ILGA-Europe believe that MSM stigmatises unnecessarily, which can be counterproductive when working with HIV/AIDS prevention.

**Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR):** see *OSCE*

**Opposite-sex:** should be avoided as it is based on the wrong assumption that there is only two possible sexes and that they are immutable. See *Different-sex* for an appropriate term.

**OSCE:** The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the largest regional security organisation in the world with 56 participating States from Europe, Central Asia and North America. It origins from Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in 1973, and it changed name in 1995 to OSCE. The General Secretariat is situated in Vienna, Austria, but also has offices in Prague, Copenhagen, The Hague, Geneva and Warsaw.

The dimensions of the work of OSCE:

- Politico-military dimension (arms control, border management, combating terrorism, conflict prevention, military reform and policing)
- Economic and environmental dimension (economic activities and environmental activities)
- Human dimension (human trafficking, democratization, education, elections, gender equality, human rights, national and international NGOs, media freedom, minority rights)

Important body for the work of ILGA-Europe is the **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)** which is the specialised institution of the OSCE dealing with elections, human rights, and democratization.

**Out:** being openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or intersex person.

**Outing:** see *Coming out*

## **PQR**

**Parliamentary Assembly (abbr. PACE):** see *Council of Europe*

**Partnership recognition of same sex couples:** see *Marriage equality, Registered partnership and Cohabitation rights.*

**Parenting rights of same-sex couples:** see *Joint adoption, Second parent adoption, Fertility treatment and Custody rights.*

**Pride events:** Pride events and marches date back to June 1969 to the so-called Stonewall riot, when LGBTI persons in New York protested in the streets for several days against persistent police harassment of LGBTI individuals and venues. The following year, the uprising was commemorated by demonstrations in several American cities, and since then annual demonstrations against homophobia/transphobia and for LGBTI rights have spread around the world.

**Queer:** has become an academic term that is inclusive of people who are not heterosexual - includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans. Queer theory is challenging heteronormative social norms concerning gender and sexuality, and claims that gender roles are social constructions. For many LGBTI persons, the term "queer" has negative connotations as it was traditionally an abusive term, however many LGBTI persons are now comfortable with the term and have "reclaimed" it as a symbol of pride.

**Rainbow:** A symbol celebrating the uniqueness and diversity within the LGBTI community. The flag has six stripes, each a different colour, ranging from purple to red.

**Registered partnership:** a legal recognition of relationships however is not always with the same benefits as marriage - synonymous with a civil union or civil partnership. [For information on the current situation, check out our country-by-country section.](#)

## **STU**

**Same-sex relationships or couples:** covers relationships or couples consisting of two people of the same sex.

**Same-sex marriage:** same-sex marriage is a generally misunderstanding, as the term does not exist in reality. There is no country which has or will intend to make a specific marriage law for solely for same-sex couples. The aim is to change existing marriage laws, so same-sex couples are included equally with different-sex couples. See *Marriage equality*.

**Second parent adoption:** where a same-sex partner is allowed to adopt its partner's biological child(ren). [For information on the current situation, check out our country-by-country section.](#)

**Sex:** refers to the biological makeup such as primary and secondary sexual characteristics, genes, and hormones. The legal sex is usually assigned at birth and has traditionally been understood as consisting of two mutually exclusive groups, namely men and women. However, "[t]he Court of Justice has held that the scope of the principle of equal treatment for men and women cannot be confined to the prohibition of discrimination based on the fact that a person is of one or other sex. In view of its purpose and the nature of the rights which it seeks to safeguard, it also applies to discrimination arising from the gender reassignment of a person.<sup>1</sup>" In addition to the above, the legal definition of sex should also include intersex people.

**Sexism:** is the belief or attitude that one sex is inherently superior to, more competent than, or more valuable than other sex. It can also include this type of discrimination in regards to gender. Sexism primarily involves hatred of, or prejudice towards, either sex as a whole or the application of stereotypes of masculinity in relation to men identities, or of femininity in relation to women identities. Sexism has a parallel root to homo-, bi- and transphobia.

**Sexual orientation:** refers to each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender.

**Sexual identity:** the sense of being homosexual, bisexual, heterosexual or asexual. The term is used as a legal term in countries such as Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Spain.

**Strategic litigation:** Strategic litigation is about using a legal case to advance the rights of LGBTI people, usually as part of a wider advocacy campaign. See also *Litigation*.

**Surrogacy:** an arrangement in which a woman (hereafter called *the surrogate*) carries and delivers a child for another couple or for another person. The surrogate may be the child's genetic mother or may also be genetically unrelated to the child – called gestational surrogacy. In the case of gestational surrogacy, the transfer of a previously created embryo is required, and for this reason the process always takes place in a clinical setting. The egg donor may or may not be intended mother. The sperm donor may or may not be intended father. The intended parent or parents can be single individuals, different-sex couples or same-sex couples. In case the intended parents are a gay men couple or a single father, they may arrange a surrogate pregnancy because no woman takes part to their parenthood projects. The sperm or eggs may or may not be provided

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<sup>1</sup> Recital 3, Directive 2006/54/EC Gender Recast Directive

by the intended parents. Monetary compensation may or may not be involved in surrogacy arrangements.

**Transgender:** refers to those trans people who live permanently in their preferred gender, without necessarily needing to undergo any medical intervention/s. Until recently, this term was also the primary umbrella term referring to all trans people, but this use is now losing favour to the term 'trans' which is perceived to be more inclusive of all trans communities. ILGA-Europe is using the wider inclusive term *trans* in its work. See *Trans Person/People/Man/Woman*.

**Transition:** see *Gender reassignment*.

**Transsexual:** refers to people who identify entirely with the gender role opposite to the sex assigned to at birth and seeks to live permanently in the preferred gender role. This often goes along with strong rejection of their physical primary and secondary sex characteristics and wish to align their body with their preferred gender. Transsexual people might intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment treatment (which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery).

**Transvestite/Cross dresser:** refers to people who enjoy wearing the clothing of another gender for certain periods of time. Their sense of identification with another gender can range from being very strong and indeed their primary gender, to being a less critical part of their identity. Some transvestite or cross-dressing people may seek medical assistance to transition and live permanently in their preferred gender at some point in their life. Others are happy to continue cross dressing part-time for the rest of their lives.

**Trans Person/People/Man/Woman:** is an inclusive umbrella term referring to those people whose gender identity and/or a gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. It includes, but is not limited to: men and women with transsexual pasts, and people who identify as transsexual, transgender, transvestite/cross-dressing, androgyne, polygender, genderqueer, agender, gender variant or with any other gender identity and/or expression which is not standard male or female and express their gender through their choice of clothes, presentation or body modifications, including undergoing multiple surgical procedures.

**Transphobia:** refers to negative cultural and personal beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviors based on prejudice, disgust, fear and/or hatred of transpeople or against variations of gender identity and gender expression. Institutional transphobia manifests itself through legal sanctions, pathologisation and

inexistent/inadequate mechanisms to counter violence and discrimination. Social transphobia manifests itself in the forms of physical and other forms of violence, hate speech, discrimination, threats, marginalisation, social exclusion, exoticisation, ridicule and insults.

## **VXYZ**

**Victimisation:** See *Discrimination*.

## **List of abbreviations and acronyms**

APA	American Psychological Association
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
CoE	Council of Europe
DSD	Disorders of Sex Development
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ECHR	European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EDF	European Disability Forum
EEAS	European External Action Service
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ENAR	European Network Against Racism
EQUINET	European Network of Equality Bodies
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EU	European Union
EWL	European Women's Lobby
FRA	Fundamental Rights Agency
FTM	Female-to-Male
GID	Gender Identity Disorder
GLBT	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans
GRS	Gender Reassignment Surgery
ICD	International Classification of Diseases
IGLYO	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer Youth and Student Organisation
ILGA-Europe	European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
MTF	Male-to-Female
NEB	National Equality Body
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TGEU	Transgender Europe
WHO	World Health Organisation
WPATH	World Professional Association for Transgender Health