

Protected: Webpage for the Annual Conference

Every year at the ILGA-Europe conference, we bring together LGBTI activists and allies from across Europe and Central Asia for four inspirational days of stimulating discussion, activity, networking, togetherness and fun, which connects, informs and energises all of us for the work ahead.

This year, you will join us and over 400 participants in Bucharest, Romania from October 16-19, as we work hard with our local hosts, ACCEPT and MozaiQ, to bring you an experience that has grown to become a central moment for the LGBTI movement in the region. Here's everything you need to know.

First time at our conference? Join this online session for first-timers!

The Annual Conference is a buzzing and busy event with a lot of people and activities, so we know it may not always feel easy to find your way around the programme and also network.

That's why we have a special Newbie Session dedicated to first-time attendees where they can learn about ILGA-Europe and the Conference. The session will include presentations from ILGA-Europe staff and board, and an opportunity to ask questions. It will take place on **October 9th, at 16:30 CEST**, on Zoom. It's also a good opportunity to remotely meet some of the other participants! You can register for the session [here](#).

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This year's theme: The Call to Courage

Throughout the past year our dynamic movement has brought about many far-reaching positive changes. There have been landmark legal achievements in countries across the region, numerous successful initiatives for greater social acceptance and inclusion, and untold hours of work dedicated to bringing communities together and building their power. Meanwhile, in tandem with other movements, we have continued to resist attacks against civil society. LGBTI activists and organisations have withstood clampdowns, wars and displacement, always finding new ways to continue our missions.

There is much to celebrate and build upon, yet at the same time, we are facing a present and a future where hard-won freedoms, peace, and the framework of democracy itself hang in the balance. Amid populism and polarisation, as the far right continues to rise, LGBTI people and other communities continue to be scapegoated, responses to migration are becoming ever more draconian, and wars are waging terrible impacts on peoples and societies.

In the current geopolitical landscape, in which LGBTI rights are more at risk, how can we stay ahead of the curve? Answers to this question call for us to both **seek new strategies** and **work across differences**, and under the title **The Call to Courage**, this year's conference will hold the space for these conversations.

In Bucharest, we will come together to prepare to face the complexities of the future with strategic foresight, while celebrating our successes and leveraging the lessons we've learned from our challenges.

The Courage to Seek New Strategies

As a movement we have a history of success through strategies, but in current political contexts there are many new questions that arise when we think of being strategic. Where, for instance, are the opportunities for change, and how can existing successes inspire and inform our path forward? What strategies have shown promise, and what can we learn from our struggles and failed efforts? As LGBTI organisations, how do we relate to the greater struggle for democracy and freedom? What do we need to bring to the table and what compromises are required from us? How do we avoid playing into political polarisation in our quest for success? And, in a world where there are no easy wins, what does that success look like? Together, we will revisit our strategies and look at ways of navigating political landscapes without being co-opted, achieving meaningful acceptance and inclusion without feeding into divisions, and creating robust alliances without waiting for a perfect match to happen.

The Courage to Work Across Differences

As we navigate the coming time, fostering unity in all our diversity will remain our greatest strength as a movement. The past years have indeed tested this unity. The political instrumentalisation of our communities, polarisation of society and tightening civil space have all had a clear impact on our movement. But they also brought to surface a chance to better understand and support each other across different identities and experiences. How do we address the racism, sexism and xenophobia within our movement and communities? Are we able to take a critical look at ourselves and our work? How can we meet others where they are, creating space for learning and growing together? And how do we continue to do that, knowing we might face wrongs from those we work with? Together, we will look at ways to address structural inequalities within the movement, hold space for differences, and build bridges within. And, finally, we will explore how we celebrate and embed the successes, large and small, including in the most restrictive contexts, where we have shown power through unity of the LGBTI movement.

As we gather this year in this unique space that's so vital to how we shape ourselves as a movement, and thereby shape the future for our communities, we invite you to step into these discussions with courage. And with this will come some great fun and joy, brought by the coming together of over 400 LGBTI activists and allies from across Europe and Central Asia for this energising and empowering experience.

Programme

This year's programme offers a wide range of panels, workshops, inspo sessions, discussions, trainings, self-organised sessions and other opportunities to come together.

The programme is available via the Conference App. Please find download details in the next section of this page.

We will start the Conference on Wednesday, October 16, with an Opening Reception at 20:00.

Before that, between 18:00 and 20:00 we invite you to join the Connecting Spaces.

The Conference will end with a closing dinner on Saturday, October 19.

Conference app

You can now access the conference programme by downloading our conference app directly on your mobile device or from your computer/laptop [here](#).

How to download the app on your mobile device:

- Download the **Guidebook** app, from the Apple App Store or Google Play for free.
- Tap on the "**Find Guides**" magnifying glass in the bottom right of the screen.
- Tap the button that says "**Have a passphrase?**"
- Then type in the passphrase: **welcometobucharest**

For security reasons, please do not share this passphrase with people who are not attending the conference!

There are lots of reasons to be excited about the app:

- You can create your own personal conference schedule, so you won't ever miss a workshop or a social event!
- You can book self-organised spaces – the booking opens this Wednesday, October 9, at 17:00 CEST at <https://calendly.com/ilga-europe/early-sign-up-for-self-organised-spaces>
- The app has its own built-in messaging function, so you can network and chat with other conference participants even before you get to Bucharest.
- You can easily use it on your smartphone, tablet or laptop.
- If there's a change of plan, or a new room for a certain event, don't worry. We'll be sending instant updates via the app's push notifications!

Next step? Create a user profile!

You'll be asked to set up your Guidebook profile when you first use the app. The name you choose here is completely up to you. If you set up a user profile, you will be able to send (and receive) private messages within the app. If you do not set up a user account, you will not be able to use the messaging service and others will not be able to directly message you.

Profile information (beyond any profile picture you share, and any names of organisation/position you add) is completely private. These additional details are only shared with other users if you choose to connect with them in the app – this is an opt-in feature!

Security of the app

Both ILGA-Europe and Guidebook care about the security of all participants at our Annual Conference. That is why our guide is set up as 'private'. This means that it will not show up in public search results in the Guidebook app.

Conference venue

The Conference will take place at **Radisson Blue Hotel Bucharest**, located at [Calea Victoriei 63-81, Bucuresti 010065](#), Romania.

For the safety and security of participants, we ask that you do not disclose or tag this location, and treat it with confidentiality.

Accessibility

The conference venue is accessible to persons with some disabilities: the conference centre is accessible by stairs and lifts; the hallways and doors are sufficiently wide for wheelchair users; there is a ramp leading to some breakout rooms; wheelchair accessible toilets are available; seating space is provided for all sessions and in one catering location (Atlas). Some of the meeting room doors may be too heavy for persons with limited mobility – they will be kept open during the breaks and at the start and end of every session. If you indicated a need for assistance on your registration form, ILGA-Europe has contacted you by email in the course of September. In case you need further assistance or adjustments, please get in touch with us at Bucharest2024@ilga-europe.org.

Participation and accommodation

At registration, you were offered several conference fee options with different types of accommodation.

If you are not sure which option you selected, you can find this information in a confirmation email from bucharest2024@ilga-europe.org, under subject line: *Congrats! Your registration is accepted, here is how to make the payment*

If you are funded by ILGA-Europe to attend the event, you'll find relevant information in the section "Information for scholars" further below.

Participation

All conference fees cover participation in the entire conference programme from the opening activities on Wednesday, 16 October, afternoon to the closing dinner on Saturday, 19 October.

All conference fees include the opening reception dinner on Wednesday, as well as lunches and dinners from Thursday to Saturday.

Read on for further details, depending on the conference fee that you selected upon registration.

Accommodation and meals

Options with accommodation

Participants of the Conference are accommodated in one of the following hotels. **Check your email to confirm**

where you'll be staying:

- **MAIN HOTEL:** Radisson Blu Bucharest (main hotel), Calea Victoriei 63-81, București 010065, Romania
- **SECOND HOTEL:** Park Inn Bucharest (second hotel option), Strada Luteran? 2-4, București 010162, Romania
- **THIRD HOTEL:** Hotel Lido Bucharest (third hotel option) Bulevardul General Gheorghe Magheru 5-7, București 010321, Romania

Please don't disclose or tag the names or addresses of the hotel.

Conference fees with accommodation include:

- Accommodation for 4 nights, with check-in on Wednesday, 16 October, and check-out on Sunday, 20 October.
- Opening reception on Wednesday, breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and coffee breaks from Thursday to Saturday, as well as breakfast on Sunday.

Options without accommodation

Conference fee without accommodation includes:

- Opening reception on Wednesday, and meals from Thursday to Saturday (lunch, dinner, coffee breaks).

If you chose to book your own accommodation, we can recommend a superior three-star hotel located 950m away from the conference venue. We have negotiated discount rates for conference participants: 80€/night for a single room and 91€/night for a twin room (incl. VAT and city tax).

- The hotel: <https://ibisstylesbucharestcenter.com/>
- You can make a reservation by email to: Amalia.stanciu@accor.com
- Mention that you are part of the ILGA-Europe group.
- Negotiated rates are fully cancellable and refundable until 24 hours before arrival.
- For more information about the booking procedure, please contact us at: Bucharest2024@ilga-europe.org.

Cancellation and refund

Please note that the cancellation deadline was 15 September 2024. After that date, we may only be able to transfer the registration to another person at your request.

Travel

Important! Please do not book your travel until you have received an email from us with a confirmation of your registration.

- Suggested arrival: Wednesday, 16 October, morning or afternoon
- Suggested departure: Sunday, 20 October, morning

Important considerations:

- The Conference programme will start on Wednesday afternoon, around 18:00, with informal elements

aimed at connecting participants to each other, followed by an opening reception. The conference will conclude with a closing dinner and party on the Saturday evening, from approximately 20:00 to 02:00.

- Conference catering will start with a reception dinner on Wednesday.

Direction from Bucharest Airport to the Conference Venue

If you're arriving at Henri Coandă International Airport (OTP) and want to take public transportation to reach the Venue, here's a detailed guide to help you navigate easily and efficiently. Please note that these instructions are provided for Radisson Blu, the main Conference Venue.

Option 1: From the Airport to Bucharest City Center

Henri Coandă International Airport (often referred to as Otopeni Airport) is located about 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) north of Bucharest's city center. There are several public transportation options available to get you from the airport to downtown Bucharest, near the Hotel.

Option 1: Express Bus 100

The Express Bus 100 is the most direct and affordable public transport option from the airport to the city center.

Key Information:

- Bus Stop Location at Airport: The bus stop for the 100 Express Bus is located just outside the Arrivals Terminal, on the ground level. Follow the signs for public transport as you exit the terminal.
- Frequency: Buses run every 20-30 minutes, depending on the time of day.
- Operating Hours: 100 operates 24/7, but service is less frequent late at night.
- Journey Duration: Approximately 45-60 minutes to get to Piața Romană (closest stop to the Hotel).

Ticket Information:

- Fare: The fare for the bus is 3 RON (around €0.6) for a one-way trip.
- Where to Buy Tickets: You can buy tickets at the STB kiosk (Bucharest Public Transport) in the Arrivals Hall or from vending machines near the bus stop. You will receive a contactless card (called an Activ Card) which can be loaded with credit. You can also get a paper card which holds two tickets (two rides).
- Important Note: You need to validate your ticket by tapping the card on the yellow validators inside the bus.
- If you do not buy a ticket, you can also pay directly by contactless bank card on the newer validators on the bus (they carry the VISA and MASTERCARD logo). Make sure you see a green light on the validator or you get an OK message and check that your card was charged. If the charging did not go well and you do not try again, you can get a fine.
- One ticket is good for 90 minutes on any surface public transportation (except for trains).

How to get to the conference venue

- Step 1: Take Express Bus 100 from the airport and get off at Piața Romană (Roman Square) station.
- Step 2: From Piața Romană, the Hotel is a 5-minute walk. Exit the bus, head south on Magheru Boulevard (Bulevardul General Gheorghe Magheru), then turn right onto Calea Victoriei. The hotel will be on your left.

Option 2: Train + Metro

For those who prefer taking the train, there is a train service from Henri Coandă Airport to Bucharest North Railway Station (Gara de Nord), where you can transfer to the metro.

Step 1: Train from Henri Coandă Airport to Gara de Nord

- Train Station Location: The airport train station is located outside the Arrival Hall, through the upper level outdoor parking.
- Train Service: Trains run every 30-40 minutes and take approximately 20-25 minutes to reach Bucharest North Railway Station (Gara de Nord).
- Fare: The train ticket costs around 5 RON (€1).
- The trains might be from different train companies. You can buy ticket on the train, by cash and card, from the ticket machines in the train station (but ensure the ticket machine belongs to the train company that operates the train you are about to take).

Step 2: Metro from Gara de Nord to Piața Romană

- Once you arrive at Gara de Nord, you can take the M1 metro line.
- Follow signs to the M1 metro line inside the station.
- Take the M1 line (towards Dristor 2) and transfer to the M2 line (towards Berceni) at Victoriei Square.
- You can buy metro tickets from the ticket machines or the counter. You can also tap directly with a Mastercard or Visa contactless card.
- The minimum ticket has 2 rides.
- Get at Piața Romană (the second stop after Victoriei).

Step 3: Walk to the Hotel

From Piața Romană, walk south on Magheru Boulevard, turn right onto Calea Victoriei, and you will see the Hotel within 5 minutes.

Option 3: Ride-Sharing Apps or taxis (Alternative to Public Transport)

If you're looking for a more comfortable option but still want an affordable way to get to the hotel, ride-sharing apps are widely available:

- Uber and Bolt are popular and reliable ride-sharing services in Bucharest.
- Fare Estimate: A ride from the airport to the Hotel should cost between 60 RON – 90 RON (€12 – €18), depending on traffic and time of day.
- Ride Duration: Approximately 30-40 minutes, depending on traffic.
- Taxis might be slightly cheaper than Uber or Bolt but only get them through the machines in the arrival terminal (on both sides of the exit from Arrivals) which help you order a “good company” taxi. There are still a lot of scamming taxis around the airport so make sure you get on the taxi whose number is written on your order receipt. Generally, try to use taxis if you are able to call them or the hotel calls them for you, rather than hailing them in the street or picking them up from a place where taxis wait. At the airport, the taxis pick you up right outside the Arrival Terminal, upper level.
- To use ride-sharing:
 - Download the app (Uber, Bolt) before arriving.
 - Set your pickup location at the designated ride-share pickup zone, which is located outside the Arrivals Hall, through the outdoor parking lot.

Information for scholars

Please read the following carefully if you have received a scholarship to attend the Annual Conference 2024.

What does my scholarship cover?

ILGA-Europe offers two types of scholarships: full and partial. If you are not sure whether you received a full or partial scholarship, please refer to the acceptance email sent to you on July 15. It is not possible to change the type of scholarship that was granted to you.

Scholarships are offered on reimbursement basis. Scholars make their own travel arrangements and are invited to submit reimbursement claims by 4 November the latest. Find more information in the Reimbursement section further below.

Full scholarship

- If you have been approved for a full scholarship, the following costs are covered:
- Travel from your country of residence to/from Bucharest and associated costs (i.e. visa costs and compulsory insurance up to the amount communicated in the acceptance e-mail).
- Accommodation in twin room for **4 nights, from Wednesday 16 to Sunday 20 October**. Please note this means you will be sharing a room with another participant. For information on the name and address of the hotel, please check your mailbox and the section above.
- Access to the entire conference programme from Wednesday evening to Saturday evening;
- **The opening reception dinner on Wednesday, all meals from Thursday to Saturday** (breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee breaks), as well as breakfast on Sunday.

Partial scholarship

- If you have been approved for a partial scholarship, you have the costs of your participation covered partially. The information on the specific costs covered for partial scholars was sent in the acceptance e-mail. Reach out to bucharest2024@ilga-europe.org if you have questions about your scholarship.
- If your scholarship covers **accommodation**, it includes **4 nights, from Wednesday 16 to Sunday 20 October** in a twin room that you will share with another participant. The booking was made by ILGA-Europe. For the hotel's name and address, please check your mailbox and the section above.

What is expected of you

As a funded participant you are expected to **take active part** in the programme. Please attend at least 75% of the day programme.

To have your attendance expenses reimbursed, we ask you to:

- **Sign the attendance sheet** at the conference registration desk,
- **Complete the conference evaluation** within two weeks after the event.

Cancellation of scholarship

The cost of your participation is around 700 EUR plus travel, so if you are no longer willing or able to take advantage of this opportunity please **inform us as early as possible**, so we can give someone else the opportunity to attend.

Travel and reimbursement

Arrival and departure dates

Scholarships cover travel on the following dates, unless you are attending a pre-conference meeting at the invitation of ILGA-Europe:

- Arrival date: Wednesday 16 October
- Departure date: Sunday 20 October

Make sure you **keep all original tickets or boarding passes** concerning your travel to/from Bucharest. If you use electronic boarding passes, make sure to **keep screenshots** on your smartphone. Without these documents, we will be unable to reimburse you.

Scholars were invited to make their own travel arrangements to and from Bucharest, for the assigned travel dates indicated above and for the lowest price available (economy class).

We will only be able to reimburse travel costs in the amount **not exceeding the amount communicated in the acceptance e-mail**.

If you arrive earlier or leave later for personal reasons, to be reimbursed, your travel **should not be more expensive than travel on the assigned conference dates**. We will need a price comparison (screenshot) from you, which documents the price of your trip on the assigned conference dates and on your alternative travel dates. Please, note that without that document we will be unable to reimburse you.

Reimbursement procedure

- Available for: all [funded participants](#) with cost to be reimbursed
- Sent by: Complete reimbursement pack should be received by 4 November
- Sent to: Bucharest2024@ilga-europe.org
- Payment done by: 4 weeks after the reception of the complete reimbursement pack
- Payment method: Bank transfer

Complete reimbursement pack should include:

- [Reimbursement form](#) – filled in and signed (signature may be electronic or typed in)
- An invoice or receipt for each expense included in the reimbursement from clearly mentioning the date, beneficiary, amount spent and currency
- In case you are not travelling by the most direct route or on exact activity dates, attach prior approval given by ILGA-Europe and a valid cost comparison
- Copy of the ticket or boarding pass for each leg of your journey
- Explain any unusual item (reason for missing support documents, use of taxi, etc.)

Please note:

Make sure you **keep all original invoices, receipts, tickets, boarding passes** and other documents concerning your travel to/from Bucharest as they will be required for your reimbursement. If you use electronic boarding passes, make sure to **keep screenshots** on your smartphone.

We do not reimburse local transport under €10,00 (e.g. metro/tram from place of residence to the airport). These expenses will be covered by per diem – also referred to as **daily subsistence allowance (DSA)** – which you will receive in cash at the conference.

For local transport, we encourage you to use public transport. We do not reimburse taxis except under particular circumstances (very early departure/ very late arrival) and only if previously agreed with ILGA-Europe.

Check that your reimbursement pack is complete before sending. Incomplete reimbursement packs will not be processed.

If your travel was purchased in advance by ILGA-Europe you should still need to send boarding passes for both in-bound and outbound trips.

Contact

For any additional questions regarding the Annual Conference, please contact us at: Bucharest2024@ilga-europe.org.