



ACTIVITY REPORT

2023-2024

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LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

As of October 1, 2023, following 14 years of the leadership of Evelyne Paradis, the role of Executive Director at ILGA-Europe has been taken over by Chaber, previously ILGA-Europe’s Finance Director. 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.

The board, the management team, the whole staff team, everyone played their part to make sure this transition would be done smoothly and be an opportunity for the organisation. This start of new leadership coincided with the beginning of a new strategic period for ILGA-Europe, and between October 2023 and September 2024 the team has taken this as an opportunity to better define ILGA-Europe’s role vis a vis the broad ecosystem of regional and national organisations, and political and other actors.

A slow and steady assessment of all areas of work is ongoing, with the aim to gradually implement improvements and re-alignments to organisational functioning and approach. With the growth of recent years, and strong strives to develop and grow ILGA-Europe further across the next five years, this initial period is crucial in ensuring the organisation is fit for purpose and sustainable so that we remain a reliable and effective regional, political voice and thought leader.

WHAT WILL ILGA-EUROPE FOCUS ON IN THE COMING FIVE YEARS?

What became very clear from the members' inputs to our Strategic Planning process last year is that our mandate is to act and work in areas where we have unique access due to our nature as a regional network; to make use of our broad overview and provide thought leadership, drive strategic thinking, and inspire and enable members to engage in different fields or in new ways; and to act as a convener.

What is more, through insights and conversations on what members see as priorities, members re-confirmed our role to elevate the voices that are marginalised, under-represented and particularly vulnerable. A number of particular themes emerged in relation to our role and mandate:

Trans and gender-nonconforming people, intersex people, BIPOC, migrants, sex-workers, refugees and asylum seekers were named among the most vulnerable and marginalised in our movement, indicating a need for ILGA-Europe to contribute to the capacities, empowerment and organising of these communities and groups that represent them. Over three quarters of members specified that they engage on "broader social justice" issues within their work for LGBTI communities, clearly showing that connectedness of the two is of much importance in our movement.

Nearly all contributors mentioned they would engage more on social acceptance and inclusion if they had more capacity, naming a need for ILGA-Europe to grow resources in this area.

Growing polarisation of discourses has been named in many conversations, and with it the need to develop spaces for openness, learning, respectful exchange, meeting people where they are and bringing them along, while being mindful of the contours of freedom of expression. ILGA-Europe's role was indicated as that of a bridge-builder.

Beyond that, many and more emerging trends and issues were named, with a clear indication that it is our role to map, assess, and provide thought leadership for the movement: the impacts of AI on our communities and societies, including democracy; navigating new ways of accessing and consuming information; impacts of digitalisation; impact of migration; humanitarian work of organisations; addressing old and new forms of hate speech; impact of climate change and what can organisations like ours do about it; and, finally, the ever-lasting pressure on scarce resources, which pushes organisations to choose between immediate gaps and problems, and longer-term impact on structural change.

In this Activity Report you will see that the two things that are not changing are the core functions of ILGA-Europe. Firstly, that we are a leading advocate with the European level institutions, and secondly that we play a central role in building capacity and building the movement in Europe and Central Asia. However, in these and all other respects, we continue to evolve and and be self-critical about where we're at.

There is inherent learning and questioning in the culture of ILGA-Europe, something that always makes us ask ourselves, how can we have as much positive impact as we can for real people? In that, we acknowledge our positionality and our primary goal to drive towards a vision of a world where rights and equality are inviolable and the lived experience of LGBTI people reflects that truth. But much like movement strategies are interconnected and need to complement each other, the lives of LGBTI people are affected by policies and attitudes that do not directly name SOGIESC – those on migration, asylum, economic inequalities, racism, employment, housing, and many more. ILGA-Europe thus needs to engage in these both to represent the realities of LGBTI people, and to, whenever we can, do our part and contribute to larger pieces of social and systemic change.



**CHABER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



There is inherent learning and questioning in the culture of ILGA-Europe

PROGRAMMES

NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS
WE HAVE SUPPORTED WITH
FUNDING AND LEARNING:

88

16 THE NUMBER OF IN-PERSON COORDINATION AND
LEARNING EVENTS FOR ACTIVISTS WE HOSTED

34 THE NUMBER OF ONLINE COORDINATION AND
LEARNING EVENTS FOR ACTIVISTS WE HOSTED

13 THE NUMBER OF FUNDING AND LEARNING
PROGRAMMES WE'VE BEEN RUNNING

7 THEMATIC PROGRAMMES
COVERING THE ENTIRE REGION
OF EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

6 COUNTRY-FOCUSED
PROGRAMMES FOR LGBTI
MOVEMENTS IN 11 HIGH-RISK OR
CHALLENGING COUNTRIES



COME OUT 4 EUROPE

FROM MARCH TO JUNE, WE WORKED
WITH OUR MEMBERS ACROSS THE EU,
CAMPAIGNING TO GET CANDIDATES WHO
PLEGGED TO PROTECT AND ADVANCE
LGBTI HUMAN-RIGHTS ELECTED TO THE
NEW EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

ACTIVISTS
MOBILISED THEIR
COMMUNITIES IN
COUNTRIES

27

1,110 CANDIDATES
SIGNED THE
PLEDGE

164 OF WHOM
WERE ELECTED

THAT'S 1/4 OF THE
NEW EU PARLIAMENT

ADVOCACY

WE VISITED 29 COUNTRIES
TO MEET WITH ACTIVISTS

WE BROUGHT
ACTIVISTS TO
BRUSSELS AND STRASBOURG
(STUDY VISITS AND ADVOCACY TRAININGS)

50

51
SUBMISSIONS AND
LETTERS TO
INSTITUTIONS AND
GOVERNMENTS

45 THE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
WE WORKED WITH

240

ACTIVISTS INVOLVED
IN MEETINGS WITH
INSTITUTIONS THAT
WE ORGANISED

WE SUPPORTED
20 STRATEGIC
LITIGATION
CASES



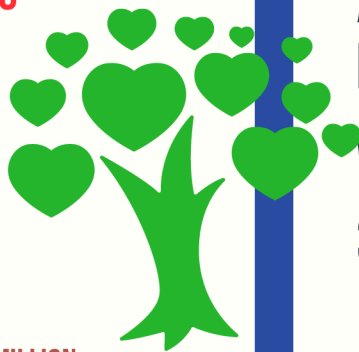
DONATE

FUNDRAISING

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

€38,000 UNRESTRICTED FUNDING

- 280 PEOPLE DONATED ONLINE
- 51 OF WHICH ARE MONTHLY DONORS
- WE RECEIVED DONATIONS IN 8 DIFFERENT CURRENCIES
- WE RECEIVED EMPLOYEE DONATIONS FROM 12 COMPANIES
- 17 COMPANIES SUPPORTED OUR WORK



€1M WE REACHED THE EUR 1 MILLION MARK WITH DONATIONS THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH REVOLUT

36,344

HOURS WORKED BY STAFF



FINANCE

INCOME: €7,555,87

EXPENDITURE: €7,497,336

6,216

FINANCIAL
TRANSACTIONS



REGRANTING

88 NEW GRANTS TOTALING:

€1,753,843

AVERAGING €20K EACH
IN 29 COUNTRIES

WE MANAGED

335 ACTIVE GRANTS TOTALING

€5,608,083

IN 29 COUNTRIES



INCLUDING:

14 ORGANISATIONS FROM 11 COUNTRIES FUNDED TO SUPPORT THEIR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS WORK

42 ORGANISATIONS IN 6 HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES

26 ORGANISATIONS FROM ACROSS THE REGION RECEIVING MULTI-YEAR FUNDING TO SUPPORT ADAPTABILITY AND EMERGING STRATEGIES

25 GRANTS TO 20 LGBTI ORGANISATIONS AWARDED TO SUPPORT WORK ON STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES

4 REGIONAL, SUB-REGIONAL OR NATIONAL PLATFORMS FUNDED TO SUPPORT MOVEMENT BUILDING

EMERGENCY SUPPORT

11 LGBTI ORGANISATIONS IN 9 COUNTRIES RECEIVED EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNDING TOTALING AT €71,435

HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT

7 GRANTS TOTALING €151,116



MEDIA REACH

"ILGA-EUROPE" APPEARED

3,577 TIMES IN PRESS ARTICLES
IN ABOUT 40 COUNTRIES

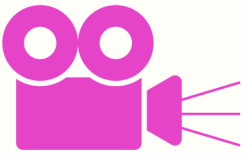
THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY
2.29 MILLION

ARTICLE VIEWS IN WHICH WE APPEARED



MULTI-MEDIA

VIDEO VIEWS
813,496



VIDEO VIEWS GREW BY 116.7%

 INSTAGRAM 645,182

 TIKTOK 123,414



28 BLOGS
10,776 READS



5 PODCASTS
1,481 DOWNLOADS



WEBSITE USERS
332,461

27.7K PER MONTH
1P 13% ON LAST YEAR



SOCIAL MEDIA

130,782 OVERALL NUMBER
OF FOLLOWERS

**ENGAGEMENT
RATE 4.8%**

UP 13.9% ON PREVIOUS PERIOD



OVERALL IMPRESSIONS **3.3MILLION**

TOP CHANNELS BY ENGAGEMENT:

INSTAGRAM HAS BECOME
NO'1 CHANNEL WITH
53,601 ENGAGEMENTS



- LINKEDIN 45,524
- TWITTER/X 38,187
- FACEBOOK 10,716
- TIKTOK 9,767

THE HUB

OUR FREE ACTIVISM
RESOURCE CENTRE

PAGE VIEWS
4,438



1,232 MEMBERS

TOP 5 MOST READ

- 1 6 STEPS TOWARDS EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNS IN THE LANDSCAPE OF ANTI-LGBTI FORCES
- 2 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES FOR SMALL ORGANISATIONS

3 7 WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT YOURSELF TO PREVENT ACTIVIST BURNOUT

4 INTEGRATING INTERSECTIONALITY IN AN ORGANISATION

5 5 PROACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS STEPS FOR SMALL ORGANISATIONS



ANNUAL REVIEW: PUBLISHED FEB 20

THE 2024 ANNUAL REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS A SIGNIFICANT RISE IN ANTI-LGBTI HATE SPEECH, PARTICULARLY TARGETING TRANS PEOPLE, ACROSS EUROPE, WITH ALARMING IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG LGBTI PEOPLE. IN THE CONTEXT OF THE THEN APPROACHING EU ELECTIONS, THE REPORT WARNED THAT THE GROWING HOSTILITY IS POSING A SERIOUS THREAT TO HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, AND THE CORE VALUES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION.

12,000 WEB VISITS



POTENTIAL MEDIA REACH: 62 MILLION

TOP 5 MEDIA HEADLINES:

- 1 [SURGE IN TRANSPHOBIC SPEECH AMONG POLITICIANS SPARKS CONCERN AHEAD OF EU ELECTIONS](#) (EURONEWS)
- 2 [ANTI-TRANS HATE SPEECH SURGED IN EUROPE IN 2023, REPORT SAYS](#) (BLOOMBERG NEWS)
- 3 [SURGE IN TRANSPHOBIC RHETORIC ACROSS EUROPE SPARKS CONCERN AHEAD OF EU ELECTIONS](#) (WASHINGTON BLADE)
- 4 [REPORT: SURGE IN ANTI-LGBTI SPEECH IN EU](#) (ROMANIA INSIDER)
- 5 [LGBT+ RIGHTS ARE UNDER THREAT AS POLITICIANS ACROSS EUROPE INCREASINGLY USE DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE](#) (THE SCOTSMAN)

RAINBOWMAP

RELAUNCHED MAY 15

THIS YEAR, THE RAINBOW MAP WEBSITE WAS RELAUNCHED WITH A BRAND NEW LOOK AND INCLUDES FEATURES THAT ALLOW FOR IMPROVED VISUALISATION OF THE DATA, AS WELL AS A MORE AGILE AND USER-FRIENDLY ACCESS TO THE INFORMATION

**POTENTIAL MEDIA REACH:
1.9 BILLION (MAY 15 - 31)**

MAIN MESSAGE:

AS EUROPE HEADS TOWARDS MULTIPLE ELECTIONS, INCLUDING THE EU ELECTIONS, LGBTI RIGHTS HAVE BECOME A MARKER FOR THE PROTECTION OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY AMID THE RISE OF FAR RIGHT FORCES

TOP 5 COUNTRIES:

- 1 MALTA (89%)
- 2 ICELAND (83%)
- 3 BELGIUM (78%)
- 4 SPAIN (76%)
- 5 DENMARK (76%)

BOTTOM 5 COUNTRIES:

- 45 BELARUS (11%)
- 46 ARMENIA (9%)
- 47 TURKEY (5%)
- 48 AZERBAIJAN (2.25%)
- 49 RUSSIA (2%)

185,056 WEB VISITS
SOCIAL MEDIA REACH 540,014





ILGA-EUROPE BUCHAREST 2024 THE CALL TO COURAGE

430

PEOPLE FROM
52 COUNTRIES

185 PARTICIPANTS FROM LGBTI ORGANISATIONS
BROUGHT WITH ILGA-EUROPE FUNDING 

FROM **42** COUNTRIES

MORE THAN HALF OF THE PARTICIPANTS FROM THESE COMMUNITIES ARE FUNDED BY ILGA-EUROPE TO BE HERE: ASEXUAL, BI+, LESBIAN, QUEER, TRANS AND NON-BINARY, SEX WORKERS, BLACK AND/OR PERSONS OF COLOUR, PERSONS HAVING EXPERIENCE OF MIGRATION OR AS AN ASYLUM SEEKER, PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV, NEURODIVERGENT PERSONS AND PERSONS LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

34 THE NUMBER OF
CONFERENCE SESSIONS
ORGANISED BY THE
ILGA-EUROPE TEAM

12 CONNECTING SPACES

15 SESSIONS

2 PANELS

3 PLENARIES

2 GENERAL MEETING WORKSHOPS



15 SESSIONS LED BY
PARTICIPANTS

1 LOCAL PANEL **1** PRESS CONFERENCE

20 SELF-ORGANISED
SPACES

4,400 MEALS
SERVED 

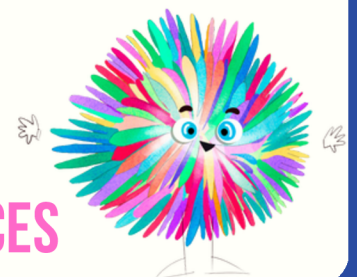


1,035

HOTEL NIGHTS
BOOKED

4 EVENING
SOCIALS

40 FABULOUS KARAOKE PERFORMANCES



PATHWAY 1

Empowered and inclusive LGBTI communities

Bringing our European and Central Asia 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 Bucharest around the theme “The Call to Courage”, the team and board have once again been working hard to create a space to connect, reflect and learn. 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. This is why, more than ever, in the current geopolitical landscape, we need to create space to ask ourselves strategic questions and hold often difficult conversations.

Long-time conference goers will notice that apart from highlighting the importance of seeking new strategies and working across differences in the programme, the team has put considerable effort into revamping several elements of the conference: new session formats; clearer focus on skill and tactic building; improvements to communications and accessibility information; new Principles for Working Together; and broadened connecting spaces to better support under-represented communities are just some of the more visible changes to our processes and approach.

A few years ago a decision was made to set a limit to the size of the event and attempt to ensure a more balanced participation by inviting a maximum of two persons per organisation. We found in evaluations that a cap on numbers led to overall positive outcomes for the conference and participants, giving more chances to connect and improving the experiences which depend on ILGA-Europe staff capacity. There was also a more fairly distributed attendance of participants from different countries and of different identities or experiences. The Executive Board decided to maintain an (increased) cap, and the limit of representatives, but will be revisiting this annually.

Overall, the conference is attended by approximately 430 people from 53 countries, including approximately 185 funded by ILGA-Europe. ILGA-Europe’s funding proved crucial to several parts of our movement – half of more of the participants with the following under-represented identities or experiences are brought to the event with ILGA-Europe’s funding: asexual, bi+, lesbian, queer, trans, non-binary, sex workers, black and/or persons of color, having experience of migration or as an asylum seeker, persons living with HIV, neurodiverse persons and persons living with disabilities.

Organising communities at the core of our movements – 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 has been developing more targeted support and work on community organising. Much of that support was directed at groups of organisations working together to establish joint approaches or activities to support, empower and build their communities, elevate vulnerable groups, nurture new activists, and provide essential skills for advocacy and security. We have been assisting in strategizing around opening and connecting community centers and shelter initiatives (especially in countries and in relation to identities where the possibility for community members to connect is severely limited), and providing support to organisations wishing to ensure their work is inclusive.

Applying an intersectional lens enhanced and enriched the relevance and impact of organisations' initiatives - it meant deeper involvement of community members, and an increased sense of purpose for teams as they felt involved in meaningful work. Incorporating an intersectional perspective into the organisations work is of great importance and it helped them address the diverse experiences and needs of a wider array of community members.

Sharing our own journey on applying an intersectional lens – Following a long-term process of anti-racist learning and developing an intersectional approach in different areas of our work, ILGA-Europe put efforts into sharing the considerations, wins and challenges we faced with the broader movement. Through our Resource Hub and the Frontline Podcast, we made available resources to guide organisations' thinking in their own development. Specific resources were created on applying an intersectional lens to policy work, finance and operations, recruitments, and communications.

PATHWAY 2

Strong and growing 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 five new programmes and continued to increase our regranting, bringing to 25 the total number of country specific and/or regional programmes the team is currently running. Since October 2023, ILGA-Europe issued 88 new grants to LGBTI groups and organisations for a total of € 1,753,843. By the end of the year we expect to reach two million euro in new grants. But, since much of our re-granting now is done in multi-year grants, the total number of grants active and managed by the team is much higher: it amounted to 335, for the total value of €5,608,083. We have delivered on our commitment to continue bringing larger and longer financing to the movement, and have been putting significant efforts to continue this work for the next few years.

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. 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. A significant part of our total regranting and movement-building support is currently directed towards supporting national LGBTI groups through country-focused programmes in nine countries, including: Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Balkans, Central Asia, Turkey, Belarus, Ukraine, and a number of other, restrictive contexts. 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.

The model we've adopted 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. 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 Hungary – Our work in Hungary relies on a framework that combines funding for a number of organisations working in parallel, in a joint ecosystem which still allows them to recognise their different missions, approaches and targets. The funding, while crucial in advancing work, also provides an opportunity to better coordination and mutual cohesion, and creates capacity for joint strategizing. Based on this work, the organisations are coming together to establish a joint community centre to better serve their local communities and respond to needs which, in the worsening political context, have been increasing the demand on the organisations' engagement.

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, seeking for sustainable solutions in restrictive contexts, 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.

This year we committed to organising more learning and coordination spaces for the wider movement to make sure that not only our programmes offering funding are a way to access support from ILGA-Europe and connect to the movement. To start bringing organisations from across the region together, we opted for hosting an in-person regional learning event on crises comms. It brought together 25 LGBTI organisations from across the region in a confidential location, to support them in planning for crisis situations or situation requiring crisis comms later this year, such as Prides facing increased opposition, elections leading to instrumentalisation, backlash following advocacy for national legislation, etc.

We have also built a strong partnership with a for-profit analytics company Analysis Group that offers pro bono support to our capacity strengthening activities in the framework of our programme on LGBTI homelessness. The company delivers coaching sessions to LGBTI groups on accessible methods of data collection and research that can support advocacy and alliance-building work. We are developing the next phase of our partnership, which will allow us offer a learning programme for the wider movement on data collection to support work on homelessness.

Furthermore, we have been focused on designing more contained thematic learning spaces online for partners and members in specific countries or regionally, e.g. in comms, leadership and security. One of the good examples of this work is a comprehensive three-part online learning series on security, which was met with a lot of interest. Aside from connecting activists to knowledge and tools on various aspects of security, it allowed collecting further information about security-related interests and needs of a wide range of organisations from across the region. The series was complemented by a thematic podcast on organisational strategies for wellbeing, bringing together experienced activist voices to share perspectives and lessons learned through their efforts.

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. Furthermore, based on these years of close cooperation, we are able to capture the know-how, wins and challenges organisations are facing, and translate them into capacity building and strategizing for the wider movement.

Another component of this programme is the learning journey grants, first issued in 2023 and closed in the current year. These grants supported LGBTI groups that do not have resources to have paid communications staff but wished to find new ways to strengthen their communications. For these and other organisations 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. We hosted several new Skills Boost sessions: using digital ads, on data visualisation, and on developing communications strategies, among others.

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. The third edition of our 12-month programme is intended to support and strengthen the work being done by and for racialised LGBTI communities in Europe. We awarded 12 grants that support the work of 12 organisations from seven countries (Austria, Germany, France, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, 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 racialised LGBTI communities, self-organising working class racialised LGBTI people living beyond capital cities, 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 that does important work on the intersection of socio-economic justice and anti-racism and to bring this learning to the wider movement.

Providing rapid-response – We continued our 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.

Discussing difficult leadership questions – When working long-term on supporting the internal and strategic development of many organisations, we have identified some common threads between the questions, considerations and challenges many leaders of organisations face, regardless of their organisational structures and set ups. Based on this we begun piloting a leadership peer support group, where with input from ILGA-Europe team members, the group has an opportunity to build skills and understanding in a tailor-made way. This piece of our work strongly links to the OrgMinds programme from a couple of years ago which provided 25 activists with a comprehensive training around organisational issues. We hope that we will be able to build this programme, paired with the learning from this support group, into a brand new learning opportunity for the movement.

State of play on SOGIESC protections – through a small re-granting scheme that brought together 19 organisations from different countries working in cooperation with experts, we jointly developed a civil society comprehensive review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2010)5 on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity presents a complex picture of progress. We also continued our work on institutionalised violence and domestic violence against LGBTI people, which continues to go underreported across the region. The Documentation and Advocacy Fund supported seven organisations from across Europe and Central Asia in 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. We have also broadened the support, and begun developing more training and peer learning modules and other materials, including of comprehensive security and organisational wellbeing.

Reaching activists beyond our programmes – Throughout the year, we have been working hard to further extend the support we offer beyond grantee organisations, to ensure we remain a key partner and are able to strengthen the wider LGBTI civil society. 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 intervened on national level, including helping organisational in national contexts come together and strategize for the future; we've launched a new online connecting space for advocacy organisations; 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 continued our travels to meet activists and better understand their realities; and we've continued to share resources on our Online Resource Hub.

PATHWAY 3

Full protection of human rights of LGBTI people in laws and policies

Ensuring the European Parliament's strong stance on LGBTI rights – In many ways this year was pivotal for determining our future work and opportunities. Apart from European Parliament elections, a significant number of countries in our region saw changes in governments and parliaments that will significantly impact the lives realities of LGBTI people in the coming five years. Entering this year we knew that towards the end of it we might be in a very different Europe than the one we hoped for, so we worked hard to increase the chances for better protections for LGBTI people.

Our Come Out for Europe campaign mobilised voters to make their voices heard in the European Elections, and committed running candidates to advancing equality for LGBTI people and meaningfully working with the movement, if elected. Many months of campaigning by ILGA-Europe and member organisations went into this work, and we could clearly see the effects. LGBTI issues were core to the political debates in many countries, and, in the end, over 1,100 candidates signed our Election Pledge. Out of those who signed, 164 were elected – nearly a quarter of the European Parliament – allowing an opportunity to once again form the largest Intergroup of the Parliament – the LGBTI Integroup.

Apart from campaigning, we supported candidates with tackling anti-trans and anti-rights sentiments in their election campaigns. Together with TGEU we organised a series of trainings for MEP candidates to help them recognise and respond to harmful narratives without adding to the polarisation and instrumentalisation of LGBTI people. We also hosted a meeting and strategic exchange between MEP candidates and activists from Hungary and Italy, who shared their experience of campaigning around highly-polarised elections.

After the elections the work continued – We mapped politicians likely to support our work and those needing a little convincing, and since summer we have been building the relationships that will help us advance the work across the next term. We are working to both build new partnerships, and foster cooperation and coordination among different politicians, to ensure a strong and united front in times of backsliding.

Future Union of Equality at stake – The last five years have proven what can political will accomplish when we pressure it to turn to practice. Both on a regional and national level we have accomplished much progress, and the cohesive approaches of governments and institutions and clear mandates to act on LGBTI equality helped us see these through. This is why from the very start of this year we have been coordinating with broader civil society and mobilising the European Parliament, member states and other actors to ensure that, following elections and appointments of the new EU Commission, human rights of LGBTI people and equality will remain high on the agenda.

We've worked on assessing the implementation of the current LGBTQI Strategy, pointed to gaps and further needs, and successfully gathered support for a renewal. At the Belgian EU Presidency High Level Conference on LGBTI Equality, we continued to advocate for ways the EU can improve protections of LGBTI people, including through a EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy, giving clear recommendations on how the EU Commission and member states can live up to their political ambition. We also worked with the Belgian Presidency on the Declaration on the continued advancement of the human rights of LGBTIQ persons in Europe, signed by 18 EU Member States signalling their clear support for the Commission's strategy and a call to step up that work in the future. 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.

A new LGBTQI Strategy is on the table, part of the portfolio of the new Equality Commissioner. We are ready with extensive recommendations on what such document should cover, and finding ways to fill the gaps on protections of LGBTI people across the entirety of our Europe and Central Asia region will be high on list of priorities.

Renewed call for an Equal Treatment Directive – For over a decade now this piece of EU-wide legislation, which would fill many of the anti-discrimination gaps currently present in the legal systems of EU countries, has been stuck in the legislative process due to the general reservations of some member states. Following discussions with representatives of member states and the Belgian EU Presidency, we began pressuring the German government to lift their general reservation.

Advocacy in times of an “alarming surge in transphobic and homophobic speech, stark rise in anti-LGBTI violence, and growing polarisation” – Published on February 29, our flagship Annual Review clearly defined the context in which our movement is currently working: in 2024, a year when elections were to take place in over 30 countries across our region, there was a stark rise in the speech and violence against LGBTI people, not only in terms of quantity but in the severity of the attacks. There has been a clear accumulation of hate speech against the LGBTI community from officials across Europe, much of it targeting trans people, in countries including EU member states Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden.

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. The report clearly shows that demonising from politicians, combined with attempts to introduce attendant legislation, is impacting suicide rates and mental health, especially for young LGBTI people, and leading to an escalation in violent protests outside schools and libraries, making young people unsafe. The vast majority of anti-trans statements instrumentalise children, using scare tactics to create opposition to trans minors' access to healthcare and restrictions on education. This is a broader trend we see in the use of children, with politicians across Europe claiming that limiting access to information about LGBTI people prevents harm to minors. This fear mongering has directly led to a further rise in attacks. Of the 54 countries reporting in the Review, only six of them reported no hate crime in 2023. In the other 48 countries, much of the reported verbal and physical violence targeted trans people. Only one EU member state reported no hate crime.

“With elections looming, Rainbow Map shows Europe is not equipped against attacks from the far-right”

– The findings in our Rainbow Map launched in May further pointed to the way forward – the need for governments to take decisive action to protect LGBTI people against further backsliding. The 2024 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 protections for same-sex couples and their children, prohibited hate crimes, and filled numerous gaps in anti-discrimination legislation. Bans on conversion practices, which also perpetrate violence against LGBTI people, were introduced in multiple countries. As it has been tradition, we presented our map at the IDAHOBIT+ Forum in the Netherlands, in the presence of governments and institutions, furthering bilateral conversations about gaps still to be filled.

Standard setting at EU level – On 7 May 2024, two new directives on minimum standards for equality bodies were officially adopted by the EU. One of the directives includes in its recitals and articles the grounds of gender expression, gender identity and sex characteristics in addition to sexual orientation. This marks the first time sex characteristics have been mentioned explicitly in an EU directive, and the second time gender identity and gender expression have been mentioned in an EU directive. This is an important milestone for the protection of LGBTI people in EU legislation, and follows two years of joint advocacy on these directives by OII Europe, TGEU, ILGA-Europe, EL*C and IGLYO.

The two new directives amend existing EU laws in order to add provisions to strengthen the role and independence of equality bodies in the EU, setting minimum standards regarding their mandates, tasks, independence, structure, powers, accessibility and resources. Both directives are subject to EU primary law including the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR). Article 19 TFEU and Article 21 CFR include sexual orientation in the list of protected grounds against discrimination, therefore both new directives cover the grounds of sexual orientation as regards the mandates of equality bodies in the EU.

Directive 2022/0401 amends directives in the field of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin, equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation between persons irrespective of their religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, equal treatment between women and men in matters of social security and the access to and supply of goods and services. This new directive required unanimous agreement in the EU Council. Despite references to gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics being included in the text proposed by the European Parliament, due to opposition from a small number of EU countries, these references did not make it into the final text.

However, for the second Directive, the references did make it into the final agreed text. Directive 2022/0400 amends existing Directives 2006/54/EC and 2010/41/EU which cover the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, including self-employment. This directive required qualified majority voting in the EU Council. Therefore, the references to the grounds of gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics were included in the adopted text, in the context of the definition of a victim of discrimination.

All children protected when crossing borders in the EU – For the last two years, we have been providing expert input on the proposal for an EU directive on recognition of parenthood that 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. We have been addressing the European Commission, and 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. The European Parliament plenary adopted its position on the proposed regulation without the level of opposition from conservative MEPs that we expected. Beyond that, using examples and cases from national level, we have advocated for the filling of various gaps: implementation of the Baby Sara judgement in Bulgaria, protections of rainbow families in Italy, among others. We have also been closely engaging with the European Network for Statelessness.

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 years with the European Parliament and the Commission on the EU Directive 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. While noting progressive norms, the Directive failed to ban intersex genital mutilation and forced sterilisation. We continue to engage with the DG Just Gender Equality Unit to impact their plans on transposition of the EU Directive on violence against women and domestic violence. We offered our help in ensuring an LGBTI-inclusive implementation. We agreed to touch base in October when there will be clearer plans regarding transposition workshops for EU member states.

Rule of law and making the case for democracy – 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 2023, 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. We have also engaged on the SLAPP (strategic lawsuits against public participation) Directive, and worked with the European Policy Centre and Democracy Reporting International along with 30 other organisations working on rule of law, media freedom, democracy and fundamental rights to ensure the human rights of LGBTI people remain to be a litmus test for democracy, and that all available rule of law tools can be utilised to protect the rights of LGBTI people.

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, and potentially significantly decrease the legitimacy of the EU in fighting foreign agent laws. 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. So far the process for the package has been delayed, partially thanks to ours and other equality networks' efforts to point out numerous gaps and issues within the proposal. 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, and particularly flagging several worrying countries. Contributions to this report were provided also by members.

Advancing the human rights of intersex people – We have been closely working on the development of a Committee of Ministers Recommendation on the rights of intersex people, a study on intersectional policymaking, and the evaluation of CDADI and its work. For the intersex Recommendation, we also closely coordinated with the CDADI Secretariat and the Chair of the Committee in advance, as well as with allied Member State representatives, to ensure that the debate in the CDADI Plenary was constructive and focused and thus ensure that the continuing work on the Recommendation was not derailed.

Growing explicit commitment within the Council – We've been actively supporting the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) 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. In terms of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2010)⁵ itself, which outlines measures to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, ILGA-Europe has prepared a regional report in collaboration with IGLYO, along with input from 27 member organisations and other regional LGBTI networks, to reflect on the progress made since the adoption of the Recommendation in 2010.

Through the report we present a complex reality. While some CoE member states have taken significant steps forward, others have stagnated or even regressed in their protections of LGBTI people. Key areas of concern include access to legal gender recognition, protection from violence, and equal treatment in education, healthcare, and employment. However, there are also positive developments. In the 14 years since the adoption of the Recommendation, progress has been made across the region, demonstrating that equality is achievable when governments work closely with civil society.

The report calls on the Council of Europe to fully incorporate civil society perspectives into its upcoming 2025 regional report, alongside self-assessments made by member states, ensuring that the voices of LGBTI people are heard and acted upon. To provide a thorough analysis, this data was supplemented with consultations with national authorities, desk research, and ILGA-Europe's own monitoring efforts. The report also benefited from contributions by other European networks, including TGEU, OII-Europe, and EL*C, ensuring a comprehensive look at the progress and setbacks in LGBTI rights across the region.

In the Parliamentary Assembly, we worked to provide input to a hearing on conversion practices, coordinated a series of meetings for the PACE Equality and Non-discrimination secretariat with activists from Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, and those from Pride organisations, inputted on the PACE report on freedom of assembly and expression, and collected and submitted input on the candidates to become European Court of Human Rights judges.

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. We worked closely with the SOGI Unit and EL*C on the Gender Equality Strategy, with other networks we coordinated and jointly developed workshops for the intergovernmental IDAHOBIT Forum in Netherlands, including on infrastructure, disinformation, and intersectional policy-making. We've also arranged meetings and exchanges with activists and various Council bodies, including the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), and the High Commissioner for Human Rights – among others on national monitoring reviews of Austria, Finland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, and the UK.

The leverage of EU Accession – In April we launched our annual 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 legislation of hate crimes, and brought Ukrainian organisations together to discuss advocacy strategies. We've also worked with Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Civil Rights Defenders, FIDH and OMCT to call on the EU to prioritise fundamental rights of any LGBTI people in any future rapprochement with Turkey. Jointly with ERA and national activists we've worked towards legal gender reforms in Kosovo, and the tabling of draft LGR laws in Montenegro. EU Study visits with LGBTI activists – Overall, we have brought about 50 activists to Brussels and Strasbourg for different meetings and engagements. And we involved about 240 in direct work with institutions and politicians.

As part of our advocacy work to EU institutions, in December we organised a study visit with some LGBTI activists from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine who met with members of the European Parliament and officials from the EU's External Action Service. The prospect of joining the EU is an important motivation for governments to make reforms on advancement of rule of law and protection of fundamental rights. It is especially important in this context that the EU insists that the protection of LGBTI people's human rights are a core part of those requirements, as governments are often falling behind the requirements.

Recommendations from the EU regarding the human rights of LGBTI people are key tools supporting LGBTI organisations to engage with their governments and hold them accountable to the commitments made.

In September, we organised a study visit for Bulgarian activists, to speak to representatives of EU institutions about the recent adoption of anti-propaganda laws in the country. We continue to support the organisation in pushing the Bulgarian government.

Activating support for LGBTI people in hostile contexts – Following the attacks and lack of protection against activists in Georgia, attacks on Prides in multiple countries, and the criminalisation of the “LGBT movement” by Russia, we’ve been keeping European institutions and governments informed and engaging on effective responses to the developments, including on how best to support people on the ground. This is of course on top of all the direct support we have been providing to activists and organisations on the ground, which remains confidential.

Supporting national legislative processes – We continue to monitor and support national legislative processes that strengthen the protection of LGBTI people in challenging contexts, and across this last year, we have intervened to support national level advocacy efforts in 45 countries. This includes work such as 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. In Georgia, since the passing of the Foreign Agent law and further anti-LGBTI provisions, we held various coordination meetings and lobbied governments and EU institutions to intervene. We continue building argumentation and analyses, and using them to push more countries and institutions to increase the chances of a veto of the most recent laws. In Kazakhstan, where similar legislation was tabled, we successfully mobilised institutional support – and successfully, as the Kazakh authorities cited this pressure as a reason to postpone the legislation and seek further assessment. In Bulgaria, which in the course of the year also adopted several pieces of legislation, we worked with activists and other actors to side track the efforts of anti-rights politicians. While some laws unfortunately passed, together we managed to halt the adoption of another harmful package. In Ukraine we have been active on many fronts: from trying to ensure hormone distribution to supporting national activists in their strides to have laws on civil partnerships and hate crimes passed. These are, of course, just the highlights.

Stepping up our work with the Court of Justice of the EU and European Court of Human Rights – Overall, we’ve intervened in 20 key cases across the year: on protecting rights of victims of attacks, access to trans-related healthcare, World Athletics’ regulations on testosterone levels, foster care by trans parents, legal gender recognition, arrests and torture, and recognition of same-sex couples. We’ve been investing more of our time at the EU Court as more cases have been coming up. Many of them, through the framework of EU’s regulations on data protection, allow us to advance protections of trans and intersex people. There’s also been a growing interest in EU member states to engage. Since the Court of Justice of the EU (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 cases.

Part of our work continues to focus on the proper implementation of judgments, including failure to protect demonstrators, lacks of legal gender recognition procedures, and of course the landmark Coman case and 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. We have also launched a series of online and offline trainings and peer learning sessions, including for lawyers working with LGBTI organisations.

Bringing LGBTI voices in policies that impact LGBTI lives – Health, asylum and migration, artificial intelligence, workplace protections, and many more policy areas that have a huge impact on the lives of LGBTI have been key engagement areas for our team. For years now we've been practicing an approach of working with other civil society and political actors to make sure the broad work they do on creating standards is aware, sensitive to and inclusive of the needs of LGBTI people.

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 have supported the CoE SOGI Unit's development of a HELP course on LGBTI people in the Asylum Procedure – a module that aims to increase the capacity of legal professionals dealing with asylum claims based on SOGIGESC. We've provided input on priority issues such as trainings for interpreters, detention of asylum seekers, and vulnerability identification, and we continued monitoring EU level development of strategies for refugees from Ukraine beyond 2025.

When it comes to health, we participated in the European Centre for Disease Control Standards of Care development on pre-exposure prophylaxis and HIV testing, inputted in regional meetings on the topic of the barriers to access to cancer care for LGBTI people and the role of pharmaceutical companies in advancing access to healthcare for marginalised groups, advocated with DG SANTE on cross-border healthcare, LGBTI-related data collection, implementation of ICD-11, access to medicines, and hormone shortages. 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. We also engaged with the Mental Health in all policies Stakeholders Network, the LGBTQI Workstream of the European Cancer Organisation, and the Civil Society Forum on HIV, Tuberculosis, and Hepatitis C to ensure the health of LGBTI people are adequately considered in these various platforms.

We have begun working on artificial intelligence much more comprehensively in the summer of 2024, when we launched a terms of reference for a piece of research and analysis on recent developments in Europe on AI and its impact on the rights of LGBTI people. This work is central to understanding needs and risks, and developing further priorities and plans in this emerging area of work, including for capacity building for members.

Connecting international journalists to activists – Last 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 continued to make pitches that included offers to connect the journalist with relevant activists. We also work with journalists on how to appropriately report on issues of LGBTI people and their rights.

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, including 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 the region, among many other things. Our podcast included an episode on the impact of elections on LGBTI human rights, on intersectionality in the LGBTI movement, and on navigating team and organisational wellbeing. 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 engagements, impressions and audience size (by 7% since last year), and our landmark Rainbow Map and Annual Review made headlines for many months, at peak moments reaching the estimated readership of mentions of 1,246,655,625.

PATHWAY 4

Deeply-rooted social acceptance and social inclusion

Comprehensive approach and new strategies – Deeply rooted social acceptance and inclusion is much more than campaigning, strategic communications and messaging and framing. We want to answer the question of how can we move people, change their attitudes at a deep level, and change their behaviours. Since our new Strategic Framework, adopted in 2023, put much more focus on work on deeply-rooted social acceptance and inclusion, our team have been doing research and analysis to put together a comprehensive programme (to be launched in late 2024) to assess and develop approaches and build the capacity of LGBTI organisations to effectively strategize and work towards social acceptance and inclusion. This will contribute to expanding national networks of advocates and allies, mobilisation of public support and inclusive practices in the context of growing hostility, and, in the longer term, capacity to contribute to defending democracy. Strategic and consistent work on building deeper social acceptance and inclusion is the needed antidote to the backsliding of human rights and democracy, and to anti-LGBTI and anti-gender ideologies used as tools to intensify regional divides and weaken democracy. We will work with partner organisations across the region, combining a joint learning and strategizing process with two consecutive annual grants to support in-country work, as well as focused skills-building and coordination opportunities.

Shaping the narrative and avoiding polarisation – In times when LGBTI people are instrumentalised and their lives and experiences make headlines only when the situation is dramatic enough, we have been putting much thought ourselves into how we change the narrative. Beyond our work with media and journalists, and beyond the advocacy work and trainings we do with various stake-holders, we have been assessing our own messaging and communications to make sure we continue to provide a reliable and nuanced understanding of the world and what's going on.

We have continuously identified trends in public discourses and narratives around LGBTI people and SOGIESC issues with the goals of amplifying positive messages from a regional perspective and using our leverage to give visibility to voices and issues which are under-represented. We've been engaging our member organisations, particularly those representing marginalised voices, and trying to ensure their stories and voices are heard in ways that are respectful and not extractive. We've been looking at trends in public discourses that feed prejudice, division and hatred, and through trainings and peer learning equipping LGBTI organisations to counter hateful speech and negative messages, and advocating for relevant public authorities and private sector to take effective measures against incitement to hatred and disinformation both offline and online. We've also been engaging private sector partners in this work. And we've continued our work with media, media associations, social media platforms, and politicians to reinforce the positive role they can play on informing, educating and fostering dialogue, at European and national levels.

Diversity of business in Pride season – We continue to receive partnership requests from a wide range of companies. While the financial aspects of these engagement is important, we chose very carefully who we partner with. We seek not only to ensure that our partners carry out their work responsibly and ethically and respect the rights of LGBTI people, workers' rights, and other considerations, but also that there is a clear fit between our work and a clear commitment on their side to partner with organisations in a way that supports our vision and mission.

This year we partnered with over 30 companies, most of them small and medium sized. 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. Within these partnerships we meet with employees and management and support their strives for equality. We bring them closer to the actual situation of LGBTI people in the region and provide advise on how they can engage with civil society and other sectors, to bring about change. We have also seen an increasing number of companies looking for strategic advice: How can they make their workers more committed to equality? How can they move their audiences and customer bases? how can they leverage their access and power to advance rights? How can they move beyond the performative? In the coming years we will be working to grow our own capacity to be able to support more private sector partners in answering these questions, because in times of a rise of the far right, we need allies in all possible places.

Networking and supporting LGBTI activism – As with every year, Brussels-based LGBTI equality supporters didn't miss the date at our Equality Fundraiser. Over 150 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 we also focused strongly on newly elected MEPs, to make sure that from the very beginning of their mandate they know what is at stake for LGBTI rights in Europe. ILGA- Europe's summer party is very popular among EU officials, fellow civil society organisations representatives and activists. It attracts a crowd that, while like-minded and eager to support LGBTI rights, often does not understand the actual situation and the complexity of our communities and movement. This event is an opportunity for us to practice what we speak: bringing allies closer, and making them more informed, engaged and inclusive.

PATHWAY 5

Fair, just and equal societies and economies

Making sure our learning is put into practice – Do not think that the ‘shortness’ of the 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, increasing our engagement on homelessness and workers' rights in advocacy areas, 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.

Sharing our own journey on applying an intersectional lens – Following a long-term process of anti-racist learning and developing an intersectional approach in different areas of our work, ILGA-Europe put efforts into sharing the considerations, wins and challenges we faced with the broader movement. Through our Resource Hub and the Frontline Podcast, we made available resources to guide organisations' thinking in their own development. Specific resources were created on applying an intersectional lens to policy work, finance and operations, recruitments, and communications.

Intersectional policy-making – Earlier in the Activity Report we explained pieces of our policy and advocacy work on homelessness, migration and asylum, workplaces, ageism, and other issues that affect most marginalised among our communities, and those experiencing intersecting discrimination and exclusions. Apart from that we have been working with institutions and activists to shed light on what intersectional policy making looks like in practice. We've attended and facilitated multiple discussions, and pointed to specific ways in which policy spaces and policy-makers can better incorporate these lives realities, and adjust own approaches.

Data to support our actions – Continuing from the previous year, where we took a deep dive into the data produced within the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) LGBTI Survey II to take a closer look at the lived realities of our communities through an intersectional lens. After the initial seven Intersections reports (on lesbians, youth, older people, intersex people, trans and non-binary people, migrant and racial, ethnic and religious minorities, and bisexual people), we published a report on homeless LGBTI people and LGBTI people with disabilities, working with FEANTSA and the European Disability Forum, respectively. The reports provide a unique view on the specific experiences of marginalised groups, and allows to drive policies to be more sensitive and better respond to the needs of these groups.



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