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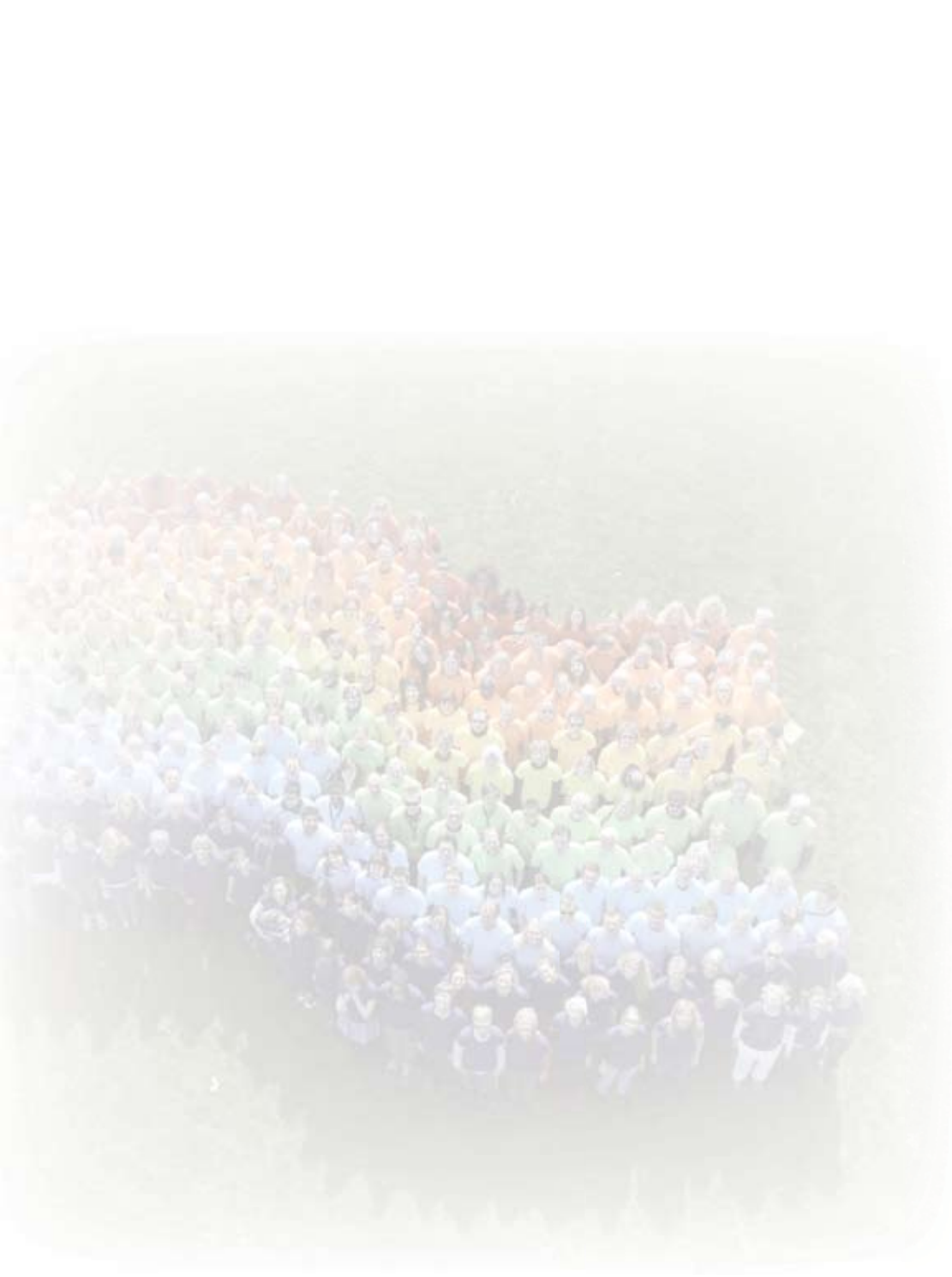
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Vilnius 2010

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Pseudo-theories and Sexual Minorities

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## PSEUDO-THEORIES AND SEXUAL MINORITIES

*By Marija Aušrinė Pavilionienė*

Pseudo-theories (pseudo, from the Greek *pseudos* (ψευδής)—*false, lying*) have been created at all times and in all societies in order to facilitate the control of human minds and emotions, to clash and oppose social groups for one's political ends and for retaining power. In contemporary society patriarchal traditions and sexual stereotypes are invoked as pseudo-theories to deny human rights and freedoms and to obscure

the truth of life. As far as sexual minorities are concerned, the truth is that people have different sexual natures and sexual identities, although until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century only heterosexuality was considered a sexual norm, whereas homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual people were persecuted, prosecuted, killed, and discriminated against. In a democratic society the law of equal opportunities legitimised varieties of sexuality, different sexual orientations and possibilities of the same sex unions. However, conservatively minded people still cannot accept the idea of social equality and cannot put up with respect of the rights and freedoms of all social groups.

Therefore, conservatively thinking people create theories about the fall of the traditional world and the traditional family in order to continue sorting out people thus humiliating them, thus discriminating sexual minorities. Today we face not the fall of the traditional world or the traditional family. We witness how human mind liberates itself from the dogmas of religious fundamentalism, from a conservative world-view and the world-outlook of hierarchical structures. People start to perceive that national traditions are changing, that there are no eternal or hierarchical traditions and values, and that there always has been the human desire to manipulate the alleged eternal traditions and values for making people submissive and obedient, fearful of God or government. In a democratic society each person is provided with the right to cherish certain traditions and create family traditions without infringing upon other people's life or human dignity. Today modern society respects human rights and freedoms as new

values and does not tolerate arbitrarily incited violence or hatred against individuals in the family or society, the phenomena which inflict penalty.

Preparation for the march of sexual minorities in Vilnius has revealed that groups of Lithuanian politicians, public figures, representatives of non-governmental organisations and religious communities do not recognise basic human rights and freedoms and humanistic values. They hypocritically declare the recognition of these values, however, they attribute them only to heterosexual people and married couples of the opposite sex as if they themselves were 'God's chosen people'. Opponents of the march attempting to put obstacles for Baltic Pride used one more pseudo-theory – that homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality have supposedly come to Lithuania from the European Union as 'cynical cultural barbarism'. Sexual minorities have always lived among us, only they were hiding their real sexual identity being in fear of persecution and hatred of hysterical homophobes. Pseudo-theories are disgusting because they reveal hypocrisy of pseudo-theoreticians who do not repulse EU when using EU security, freedom of movement, the opportunity to join the space of EU science and studies or the space of work and services, or the chance to obtain financing from the Structural Funds, or project funding.

Preparation for the march of sexual minorities took place in an atmosphere of intolerance spread by various mass media channels. No Lithuanian political leader openly and clearly expressed support for the idea of the march. This shows that the mentioned above pseudo-theories are quietly accepted in Lithuania, because today Lithuania is already getting ready for the new municipal and parliamentary elections, and the silence of politicians in a provincial Lithuania ensures them the retaining of their political power.

Even the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Lithuania has spread various pseudo-theories stating that the march is a social hazard because it humiliates typical femininity and masculinity, as if individuals of sexual minorities were neither men nor women; as if they were not born in a family and did not respect their mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters; and as if they did not seek to form official families.

Opponents of the march, in order to prohibit the march, say that human freedom is not absolute, because a human being is not God and therefore human choice has to reflect the structure of sexuality envisioned by the Creator. However, if a human being is not God, then God's vicars on earth have no right whatsoever to limit and violate the rights of sexual minorities, the rights of those who were born as humans.

One more pseudo-theory disseminated by the adversaries of the parade is that a human being is able consciously select sexual identity as if it were a piece of clothing one changes each evening. However, a human being is born with a certain sexual identity. Only becoming sexually mature people start to understand their sexual identity, or they fail to understand it if blindly accept gender stereotypes and sexual roles imposed by social environment. One more pseudo-theory verges to absurdity. It says that sexual minorities humiliate the human body by attempting to free themselves from a female or male body. Throughout life the human body of every individual is a source of joy and anguish. One is not able to dissociate oneself from one's body. And this individuals of sexual minorities perceived poignantly because they are persecuted by Lithuanian homophobes due to their peculiarities of body and sexuality. Only on their deathbed humans lose awareness of their body. Therefore, no march can deny human corporeality. On the contrary, using the right to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, individuals of sexual minorities can prove to Lithuanian society that they have always been, are, and will be among us.

The march of sexual minorities in Vilnius will become a challenge to the progress of democracy in Lithuania. How will we appear to Europe and the world—as blood-thirsty barbarians, as nationalists claiming the priority of national laws over EU law, or as extollers of an alleged national cultural superiority who fail to understand that glorified nationalism spreads hatred and violence towards sexual minorities?

The march of sexual minorities in Vilnius for the first time will demonstrate that there are people of minority living among us, that they wish to be respected, and that they do not want to hide their sexual identity any more or fear for their life. I believe that the march will be joined by all who respect and defend universal human rights. I believe that the citizens of Lithuania, who will be watching the march, think about the complexity of human nature and on these grounds will not humiliate others, because they understand that a human being is first of all respected for his/her creative input and contribution to the welfare of society. I believe that not the pseudo-theories, but perception of human equality and protection of human rights will ensure a peaceful course for the march of sexual minorities. I believe it because I wish to be proud of democratic Lithuania.

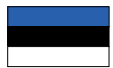


## THE ALLIANCE OF LGBT PEOPLE AND THEIR FRIENDS IN LATVIA “MOZAĪKA” IS VERY HAPPY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BALTIC PRIDE VILNIUS 2010

Although the Baltics are starting to move towards the recognition of LGBT rights and, in general, situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people improve, there is still a lot to be done. The Baltic Pride is a very important way for the local and European LGBT communities to unite and force discussion around the issues of discrimination, hate speech and prejudice. It is a platform for all of us to speak about discriminatory laws and constitution amendments that deny so many families, loving couples and individuals their basic human rights. We must not fear public discussion and speak up for our rights. See you in Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010!

*Olga Dragiļeva*

*Mosaic alliance of LGBT people and their friends*



## ESTONIAN GAY YOUTH (EGY) WELCOMES BALTIC PRIDE VILNIUS 2010

Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010 is a very important event in order to stand for the rights of LGBTQ people in all of the Baltic States. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania share a somewhat similar reality when it comes to the situation of LGBTQ people's rights and also a somewhat similar history and mentality. For that reason EGY also believes in the importance and fruitfulness of cooperation between the Baltic States. The necessity of Baltic Pride becomes especially evident in the light of Lithuania's new homophobic law for the protection of minors and we in the Estonian Gay Youth group will do our best to give all the support for our colleagues and fellow activists in Lithuania.

*Madle Saluveer*

*Estonian Gay Youth*



## GREETINGS FROM THE “BALTIC PRIDE 2010” TEAM



“Baltic Pride 2010” is the first lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) event in Lithuania. Its program includes a film festival, an art exhibition, Human Rights conference and a march “For Equality”.

This historical event is extremely important not only for the whole LGBT community but also for the Lithuanian society. The “Baltic Pride 2010” is closely linked to ideas of tolerance, equality, and Human Rights – all of which are respected by the civilized world. The idea behind “Baltic Pride 2010” is to encourage tolerance towards the LGBT community; to educate the society; and, at the same time, to empower homosexual, bisexual, and transgender people to fight for themselves and for equal rights in Lithuania and other Baltic States.

“Baltic Pride 2010” is also meant to introduce the unique, colourful LGBT culture. The culture that, thanks to event, is opening up to the city and to the society in hopes of becoming a part of it. We see “Baltic Pride 2010” not only as a social movement but also a cultural one and we hope that it will remain as a beautiful tradition.

Probably the most important events of this festival is the first “For Equality” march of the LGBT community and their supporters. This is the first independent and public step of the LGBT community towards the guarantee of equality and Human Rights.

Undoubtedly, we faced a lot of disruptions and obstacles when organizing this event. We confronted a lot of hate and hostility. However, it only proved that such events are necessary for Lithuania and for the community itself. So, after a lot of hard work, we are happy to introduce to you here and now the “Baltic Pride 2010” in Vilnius.

The best appreciation for our work is your participation in the events of “Baltic Pride 2010” and the best help is solidarity. That is why we are inviting you to participate in the first Lithuanian LGBT festival and to become witnesses of this historic event. Our flag symbolizes diversity, equality, and Human Rights. So let us carry it together!

*Sincerely,*

*“Baltic Pride 2010” team Vilnius, Lithuania*

The first  
**LGBT FILM  
FESTIVAL**  
in Lithuania

At "Skalvija" Cinema Centre



Film Festival Programme

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## 6<sup>th</sup> May

### 19:00 – Opening of the festival

*Compositor and cellist André Mergenthaler and his musical composition*

### 20:00 – “House of Boys”

*Director: Jean-Claude Schlim.*

*(drama, Luxembourg, Germany, 2009, English, Lithuanian subtitles, 127 min.)*

A glamorous, colorful coming-of-age story that follows the dramatic journey of Frank, a high school kid in 1984 through an exciting world of sex and music, when his deep new passion is suddenly turned into a struggle for courage, facing a new disease - the “gay cancer” and becomes deep, true love in the expectancy of his friend’s horrible death and beyond...

## 7<sup>th</sup> May

### 16:30 – “Suddenly, last winter”

*Director: Gustav Hofer, Luca Ragazzi*

*(documentary, Italy, 2008, orig. language, Lithuanian subtitles, 80 min.)*

It is the story of Gustav and Luca. Their life changes when the Italian government presents a draft law that would give rights to unmarried and gay couples, prompting a wave of homophobia in Italy. The Vatican and conservatives fight against it, preaching that the end of morality and the family are nigh if the legalisation on civil unions is not blocked. Together for over eight years, Luca and Gustav want to understand the different positions and undertake a journey into a country they did not know before and did not expect to find: their own.

### 19:00 – “C.r.a.z.y.”

*Director: Jean-Marc Vallée.*

*(drama, Canada, 2005, French, Lithuanian subtitles, 127 min.)*

It’s a story of two love affairs. A father’s love for his five sons. And one son’s love for his father, a love so strong it compels him to live a lie. That son is Zac Beaulieu, born on the 25th of December 1960, different from all his brothers, but desperate to fit in. During the next 20 years, life takes Zac on a surprising and unexpected journey that ultimately leads him to accept his true nature and, even more importantly, leads his father to love him for who he really is. A mystical fable about a modern-day Christ-like figure, “C.R.A.Z.Y.” exudes the beauty, the poetry and the madness of the human spirit in all its contradictions

### 21:30 – “Beyond the pink curtain”

*Director: Mathew Charles.*

*(documentary, UK, 2009, English, Lithuanian subtitles, 70 min.)*

The death of Communism in Europe brought renewed freedom for millions in the East and although homosexuality has been legalised, homophobia remains entrenched as an institutional practice in this part of the world. Previous films have documented the problems of the region. They describe a Pink Curtain in place of the Iron Curtain and show Pride marches turning to violence. But they discount homophobia in western society. False distinctions overlook how East and West can learn from each other in the struggle for equality. We forget the power and the responsibility of the EU to protect us. Sexuality and homophobia transcend nationality. Borders should therefore not allow homophobia to prevail: We must look Beyond the Pink Curtain.

## 8<sup>th</sup> May

### 16:40 – “City of Borders”

*Director: Yun Suh*

*(documentary, USA, 2009, orig. language, Lithuanian subtitles, 66 min.)*

In the heart of Jerusalem stands an unusual symbol of unity that defies generations of segregation, violence and prejudice: a gay bar called Shushan. City of Borders goes inside this vibrant underground sanctuary on the East/West border of the Holy City, where people of opposing nationalities, religions and sexual orientations create a community among people typically viewed as each other’s “enemy.” The documentary follows the daily lives of the five Israeli and Palestinian patrons as they navigate the minefield of politics, religion and discrimination to live and love openly. In observing the lives of the bar regulars, City of Borders explores the bond forged when people from warring worlds embrace what everyone shares in common - the right to be accepted and belong - rather than be defined, or limited by the differences that tear them apart.

### 18:00 – “Gazon maudit”

*Director: Josiane Balasko*

*(comedy, France, 1995, French, Lithuanian subtitles, 104 min.)*

Husband-and-wife Laurent and Loli live with their two young sons in a quiet, upscale suburban neighborhood near Avignon. Then, one day, a seemingly minor incident turns their lives upside-down: coy, butch lesbian Marijo has car trouble in front of their home, and the friendly Loli invites her in. Laurent, who himself has been cheating on Loli with half the

town, immediately accuses the two women of having an affair -- and, in revenge, reveals his own trespasses. Loli, who never suspected Laurent of infidelity, turns to Marijo for sympathy and comfort. To her surprise, she also discovers her own lesbian desires and soon Marijo and Loli are doing exactly what Laurent accused them of. The love triangle only gets funnier when Laurent tries to win back his happy and sexually satisfied wife.

#### **20:00 – “Water lilies”**

*Director: Celine Sciamma*

*(drama, France, 2007, French, Lithuanian subtitles, 85 min.)*

This film tracks the sexual awakenings of three female friends over the course of a single summer. Finding privacy in the solitude of the swimming pool locker room, blossoming teens Marie (Pauline Acquart), Anne (Louise Blachère) and Floriane (Adele Haenel) come to learn the true meaning of arousal and the power of sexual attraction.

#### **21:50 – “Fatherhood dreams”**

*Director: Julia Ivanova*

*(documentary, Canada, 2008, orig. language, Lithuanian subtitles, 55 min.)*

As the camera follows four fathers - Steve, Scott, Randy and Drew – the rewards they enjoy becoming and being dads are revealed. But the challenges are enormous and the sacrifices often seem overwhelming. Society has so many questions. Will the children raised by gay fathers feel isolated? Different? Unhappy? Bullied? Will they ‘turn’ gay? Gay men who want to have and raise children are “a minority within a minority”. On one hand, “family values” organizations routinely condemn gay people, and especially gay men, as a threat to families, morality and society in general; on the other hand, gay fathers often feel as though they are excluded from the larger community of gay men. Is a gay man any different as a father than a straight man? The answer lies in getting to know gay fathers and their children. Since prejudice is fuelled by ignorance and a fear of the unknown, Steve, Scott, Randy and Drew decided to allow the camera into their lives.

#### **23:00 – “House of Boys”**

*Director: Jean-Claude Schlim.*

*(drama, Germany, 2009, English, Lithuanian subtitles, 127 min.)*

## **9<sup>th</sup> May**

#### **17:00 – “She’s a boy I knew”**

*Director: Gwen Harworth*

*(documentary, Canada, 2007, orig. language, Lithuanian subtitles, 70 min.)*

Parents lost a son, sisters lost a brother, and perhaps most sadly of all, a wife lost her husband after Steven Haworth answered the nagging inner voice of his true gender identity and undertook the long process that saw him become Gwen, the director of this film. In this brave retelling of her own story, Haworth displays real film-making talent, employing archive footage and even animation to embellish what is ultimately a transgender success story. Refreshingly in its candor, *She’s a boy I knew* goes way beyond the mere recounting of the stages of the transformation to become a deeply moving story of loss and unconditional love.

#### **18:30 – “Red Without Blue”**

*Director: B. Sebold, B. Sills*

*(documentary, USA, 2007, English, Lithuanian subtitles, 74 min.)*

*Red without Blue* is an artistic and groundbreaking portrayal of gender, identity, and the unwavering bond of twin ship despite transformation. An honest portrayal of a family in turmoil, *Red without Blue* follows a pair of identical twins as one transitions from male to female. Captured over a period of three years, the film documents the twins and their parents, examining the Farley’s struggle to redefine their family. Through its portrayal of these articulate and independent twins, each haunted by the painful experiences of their adolescence, the film questions normative standards of gender and identity – as Mark and Clair reassert their indescribable bond as identical twins.

#### **20:00 – “Les témoins”**

*Director: André Téchiné*

*(drama, France, 2007, French/English, Lithuanian subtitles, 112 min.)*

Paris, 1984. In a cruisey city park, Adrien, a sophisticated, middle-aged doctor, meets Manu, a buoyant 18-year-old. Manu turns down Adrien’s proposition — then asks him to hold his jacket while he joins an orgy in the bushes. Not the best way to start a relationship, yet Adrien takes Manu under his wing. Manu needs guidance, and Adrien comes alive as he tromps around Paris with this energetic newcomer. Adrien’s friend Sarah worries that he’s being taken advantage of, but Adrien disagrees: “You can ask anything of your friends.”



Conference Programme

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FRIDAY, 7<sup>th</sup> May

## International conference “Human Rights Combating Fear and Prejudice”

(in English and Lithuanian with simultaneous interpretation)

**Time:** 09:30–17:45

**Venue:** Conti Hotel, Raugyklos str. 7, Vilnius, www.contihotel.lt

### Welcoming speeches

#### 09:30–10:15 **Baltic Pride 2010: human rights for all – a norm or still a challenge in new EU member states?**

No one doubts that human rights are one of the main values of contemporary democratic states. Human rights are given particular attention in Europe. Even though these rights are acknowledged equally with respect to each individual, there are often, unfortunately, dissenting opinions about the extent and to whom these rights apply.

Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation arising from homophobia remains a large problem and as a result, changes take place at a slower pace than expected. An increasing trend of hate speech is particularly noticeable in the new EU member states, including the three Baltic States – Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Even though the Baltic States as members of the EU and international organisations generally demonstrate their approval of European Human Rights policy, there is still often a lack of political will to implement consistently what has already been adopted and declared in the international arena.

*Video greeting from the Vice-President of the European Commission Viviane Reding. Welcome speeches by member of the Lithuanian Parliament Marija Aušrinė Pavilionienė, Swedish EU-minister Birgitta Ohlsson, and Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Lithuania Joep Wijnands.*

### Panel discussions

#### 10:15–11:15 **Putting fundamental rights protection for LGBT on the EU and national agendas**

LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) rights are more frequently recognised and included in the catalogue of the main human

rights, human rights strategy of transnational organisations and individual states, and national law. One of the examples could be the Yogyakarta Principles that promote international human rights application principles with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity is widely recognised in European countries. This prohibition of discriminating against people is entrenched in the main human rights guidelines of both the European Union and the European Council. On 31 March 2010, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted historic Recommendations on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. This is the world's first intergovernmental agreement codifying the application of human rights standards to LGBT people. The Recommendations establish how international human rights standards should be applied to LGBT people and contain specific measures for Member States on how they should improve their legislation, policies and practices to address discrimination against LGBT people in such areas as hate crime and hate speech, freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly, employment and education.

National law must comply with the general European principles and standards in ensuring protection of human rights for all.

*Moderator – Member of the German Bundestag Volker Beck. Participants: Member of the Danish Parliament Kamal Qureshi, representative of the Human Rights Watch Boris Dietrich, Executive Director of ILGA-Europe Evelyne Paradis, Dutch Human Rights Ambassador Arjan Hamburger, and member of the Estonian Parliament Evelyn Sepp.*

#### 11:15–11:45 **Coffee break**

#### 11:45–12:55 **Equal rights for LGBT people – going beyond legislation**

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination policy in the Baltic States are still very fragile and receive little public attention. Attempts are made in the mass media to artificially contrast them with family values.

*Moderator – Sophie in 't Veld, vice-chair of the LGBT Intergroup in the European Parliament. Participants: representative of the Baltic Pride Vytautas Valentinavičius, representative of Amnesty International Nicolas Berger, J.-L. Romero, President of ELCS (France), Secretary General on Family and Social Policy of the Ministry of Social Affairs Riho Rahuoja (Estonia), Chairperson of the Latvian organisation Mozaika Linda Freimane and Ilke Jaspers of the youth organisation EGN (Estonia).*

**13:00–14:30 Lunch**

**13:15–13:45 Press Conference**

### **Presentations**

**14:30–15:50 Building sustainable partnerships for equality in society**

Fighting for human rights and seeking to ensure LGBT rights using the same measures as those used to ensure the rights of other groups and individuals, sharing of good practice and experience, and strengthening of cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organisations are particularly important.

*Examples of good cooperation practice are presented by the following participants: representatives of the Swedish RFSL organisation Lars Jonsson, Linda Elstad, and Karol Vieker, representatives of the Lithuanian Gay League Vladimiras Simonko and Vilma Gabrieliūtė, and the representative of the German organisation LSVD Klaus Jetz.*

**15:50–16:20 Coffee break**

**16:20–17:45 Access to Justice (Are measures of legal defence easily accessible and applied?)**

Real implementation measures and legal instruments are required to ensure human rights and to defend the rights of an individual that have been violated. Legal acts adopted at the EU level show progress in ensuring LGBT rights. Meanwhile national law must comply with, and not contradict the international obligation undertaken by the country to defend the rights of all people, including LGBT.

*Participants: Co-President of the European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBT Rights Michael Cashman, Director of the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission Belinda Pyke, Research Director of the Human Rights Monitoring Institute Jolanta Samuolytė (Lithuania), and lecturer at Mykolas Romeris University, lawyer Diana Gumbrevičiūtė-Kuzminskienė (Lithuania).*

*The publication of "The Yogyakarta Principles" is presented by the representative of the Lithuanian Gay League Eduardas Platovas.*

**17:45 End of the conference**

## **DISCUSSION "IS HIGHER EDUCATION OPEN TO DIVERSITY?"**

Lithuanian National Union of Students (LSS) has been working on higher education accessibility for disabled students since 2005. LSS is willing to broaden its field of activities by including multi discrimination issues in its work. The existing discrimination on various grounds such as gender, sexual orientation, disability and ethnicity challenged Lithuanian National Union of Students to be more active tackling with discrimination problems. National Unions of Students in different countries are working on some grounds of discrimination. This can be monitored through research carried out every year by different stakeholders.

In order to achieve equality in higher education, it is important that students unions and self – organizations would effectively contribute to raising awareness in the academic society. The implementation of these ideas depends on the knowledge and tools students activists have. It is important to collaborate and to start working purposely to seek for anti-discrimination practice in higher education. The discussion „Is the higher Education is open to diversity?“ organised by Lithuanian National Union of Students will be one of ways to look at problems of discrimination in higher education.

*Discussion date and time: 5 May, 2010, 3 pm -5 pm  
Hotel Crowne Plaza, the conference hall, M. K. Čiurlionis street 84, Vilnius*



March for Equality  
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**SATURDAY, 8<sup>th</sup> May**

**12:00–14:30 Baltic Pride march for equality**

Concluding speeches by politicians and Baltic Pride organizers (tbc)  
*MEP Ulrike Lunacek (confirmed)*

**Place:** Central Vilnius, Upes str. from “Forum Palace” (Konstitucijos str. 26) to parking lot at “Olimpic Casino” (Upes str. 5)

**16.30–18.00 Post Equality March Moderated Discussion**

Hotel “Conti”, Raugyklos str. 7, Vilnius

You marched with us for equality or you stood in the crowd watching the march. Do you feel you have something on your mind that just has to be spoken out? Do you want to know what others have seen and felt? We welcome you in this discussion group where we talk about Prides and pride, visibility of LGBTQ community, LGBTQ rights and much more.

The discussion will be carried out in English.

*Event organized by NGO Estonian Gay Youth and Wel Joung Niet Hetero (Belgium). Moderator Ilke Jaspers.*



Photo Exhibition

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SOHO Club Parties

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## PHOTO EXHIBITION “PRIDE AND PREJUDICE”

Unforgettable and unique photo exhibition “Pride and prejudice” will be held in Lithuania as a part of Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010 events. The initiator of exhibition is Christofer Fjellner, Member of European Parliament group of Christian Democrats. He gives us a great opportunity to meet the reflections of LGBTQ situation in every EU country. As a symbol of supression of human rights, five empty frames, representing Lithuania, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Bulgaria, will be placed in exhibition as well.

It was this contrast that gave me the idea of doing an exhibition by collecting pictures from each and every country within the European Union. The pictures show that in most countries Pride is a festival, but they also show the kind of aggression it encounters in other member states. Last but not least, those member states where it is impossible to organise the events stand out in shame through empty frames, showing for all to see that intolerance is not a normality. With this exhibition I want to raise the question: Who is queerer? The people who want to gather for a fantastic party, or those that choose to resort to violence to prevent it from happening? Who is it that really stands out from the crowd?(Ch.F.)

The exhibition is intended to increase understanding and support on LGBTQ issues as well as to encourage us to fight for our rights and to be proud of ourselves.

*Exhibition will be open for visitors during Baltic Pride events on 6th-9th of May at the hotel Conti. Swedish MP Christofer Fjellner will present the exhibition on 8<sup>th</sup> of May at 4 p.m - just after the Baltic Pride “March for Equality”.*



## THURSDAY, 6<sup>th</sup> May

### 23:00 Warm up party at Soho club

Soho club, Svitrigailos str. 7/16, Vilnius

## FRIDAY, 7<sup>th</sup> May

### 22:00 Party at Soho club

Soho club, Svitrigailos str. 7/16, Vilnius

## SATURDAY, 8<sup>th</sup> May

### 22:00 Final party at Soho club

Soho club, Svitrigailos str. 7/16, Vilnius

## Parties

**Admissions.** All Baltic Pride parties are taking place at Vilnius gay and lesbian club “Soho”. If you have a participant registration card there will be a discounted entry to “Soho”. The registration card can be obtained in advance from the organizers. The regular price will apply to all other guests.

**Address.** Vilnius gay club “Soho”  
Švitrigailos Street 7/16, LT-03110 Vilnius



About the Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010

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About LGL

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## HISTORIC MOMENTS OF THE BALTIC PRIDE VILNIUS 2010

It is difficult to evaluate the historic significance of the International event Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010 for the Lithuanian LGBT community. The march initiated by four organisations - Lithuanian Gay League, Tolerant Youth Association, Estonian Gay Youth and Latvian LGBT - faced serious issues in making its way toward the public space. As during the Baltic Pride in Riga which took place one year ago, in Vilnius the march also encountered major resistance, including the attempts to ban, revoke or publicly denounce the peaceful march. It saw the light of day only due to persistence of organisers and the sincere support and contribution of friends and fellowmen.

First meetings concerning the organisation of the Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010 took place in autumn of 2009, but it gained considerable impetus only after the New Year when three representatives of the Lithuanian LGBT – Vladimiras Soroko, Vytautas Valentinavičius and Eduardas Platovas – submitted the application to Vilnius City Municipality for the permission to organise the march „For Equality“.

There is no secret that the initial reaction of the authorities toward the Baltic Pride was negative. Earlier Municipality has also hindered the attempts to organise the events aimed at tackling discrimination. In 2008, the then mayor of Vilnius Juozas Imbrasas did not give permission for the European Commission's truck „For Diversity. Against Discrimination“ to stand within the City premises. In 1997 Municipality prohibited the Lithuanian Gay League to organise the event in the Town Hall Square. Thus, the permit issued for the first LGBT march in Lithuania could be referred to as a historic event.

Due to still existing prejudices, stereotypes and negative image of the event created by mass media, there was huge resistance toward the pride march „For Equality“ among the society. Protest campaigns, the endless bullying in the public space, humiliating statements of politicians and public actors – such an atmosphere did not facilitate communication with the authorities.

In fact, even after receiving a permission, we couldn't take rest. Vilnius City Municipality was against the march in the Old Town, whereas an alternative option, practically expelling LGBT people from the City Centre, did not meet the expectations of the Baltic Pride organisers. Discussions concerning the venue of the march and changes in its route continued until the middle of April. Finally, thanks to contribution of our foreign partners, Municipality allowed to arrange the march by relocating it to the White Bridge area. We managed to enter into a constructive dialogue with the police which committed to ensure security of the event.

Organisation of the Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010 unified LGBT organisations of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; enhanced partnership with foreign associates, and served as the basis for further cooperation with Lithuanian institutions. Although the Baltic Pride is still underway, we can say that it was a success, and we are going to achieve even more if we work together. One of the strengths of the Baltic Pride is openness, solidarity and dignity.

## ABOUT LGL

Lithuanian Gay League is a national nonprofit, nongovernmental organization uniting homosexual, bisexual and transgender persons. A member of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) since 1994.

Our vision: a respectful, open, and inclusive Lithuanian society that is free of discriminatory homophobic attitudes.

Our mission: Lithuanian gay league is an advocacy organization dedicated to fighting homophobia and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Through education, support, and representation of the LGBT community, LGL promotes an inclusive social environment for gay men, lesbian women, bisexual and transgender persons.

### The values and principles of our organization:

- respect and diversity;
- equal opportunities for participation in organization activities;
- voluntary participation;
- confidentiality of membership;
- transparency.

### General fields of activity:

- human rights and equal opportunities;
- sport and cultural initiatives;
- health and lifestyle;
- employment;
- social inclusion;
- family rights;
- empowerment of organization members and encouragement of societal groups to participate in organization activities;
- organizational competence and capacity building.

Over the years, organization has implemented a number of projects, e.g. the first survey in the three Baltic countries on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation; a project entitled Challenges to Family Law and Policy in Europe, followed by publications, seminars throughout the country, and the photo exhibition Living Together; The coordination of the EC initiative EQUAL project on workplace diversity was so far the biggest and most ambitious project undertaken by the organization.

LGL is running LGBT support and information centre in capital Vilnius since 2004. Current projects include collaboration with Swedish national LGBT federation RFSL for community empowerment, legal support for improvement of LGBT rights with partners from Italy, France and Poland. LGL was a co-host of ILGA-Europe annual conference 2007. This year we are working closely with the Baltic partners and Amnesty International to make the second Baltic Pride march and conference a breakthrough event for LGBT human rights in Lithuania.



*Organisers of the Baltic Pride Vilnius 2010 are truly grateful to everybody who has contributed to the success of this event!*

We'd like to thank "Skalvija" Cinema Centre for hosting the film festival; the hotel "Conti" for giving a possibility to organise the conference and photo exhibition; and many thanks to the Club "Soho". We are also grateful to Vilnius City Police for its commitment to ensure security of the event. A very special word of thanks goes to the embassies of Denmark, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Norway Sweden and France as well as the the embassy of Luxembourg and their honourable ambassadors. We'd also like to express the acknowledgement to our friends working in the sphere of human rights: the Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. We say our sincere "thanks" to our closest friends: the Latvian organisation "Mozaika", the Estonian Youth Organisation EGN, and ILGA-Europe.

We highly appreciate the activities of our volunteers and are very grateful to all of them for their hard work and dedication toward the accomplishment of the event. Their contribution to the implementation of the programme was especially valuable.



**Supporters:**



