

International *Baltic Pride* 2016 Human Rights Conference

“LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS: EMERGING INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS AND LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES”

17 June 2016

9:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Location

TOLERANCE CENTER
Naugardukas Str. 10/2, Vilnius

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Organizer



Supporters



Embassy
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Vilnius



Kingdom of the Netherlands



Siaurės ministro tarnyba
biuras Lietuvoje



Flanders
State of the art



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Vilnius



In 2014 two gay men, P. B. and M. L., posted this picture on a personal Facebook profile. The picture received more than 800 comments on the social network. The majority of online comments were inciting hatred and violence against LGBT* people in general, while a number of comments were directly threatening the two gay men in question. Some examples of the posted comments include “Faggots should be burnt” (Lith. “Sudegint pidarastus”), “You both should be thrown into gas chambers” (Lith. “I duju kameras abu”), “You are fucking gays, you should be exterminated” (Lith. “Gėjai jūs supisti, jus naikinti nx.”) and “Kill them!” (Lith. “zudyt!”).

The National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL lodged a complaint on behalf of two gay men in question to the Prosecutor General regarding 31 comments on their social media profile. The complaint was lodged under the Article 170 of the *Criminal Code* (i. e. prohibition of hate speech). It was indicated that comments in question ridicule gay people and incite discrimination, hatred and violence against them.

The Prosecutor’s Office issued a decision not to start a pre-trial investigation regarding the complaint in question. After the appeal the same decision was upheld by the two higher instance courts. The final instance court stated that “[t]he majority of the society of the Republic of Lithuania very much appreciate traditional family values. It is established in the Article 38 of the Constitution that family shall be the basis of society and the State; family, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood shall be under the protection and care of the State; marriage shall be concluded upon the free mutual consent of a man and a woman. [...] in this instance the individual by posting a picture of two kissing men in a public sphere should have and must have foreseen that eccentric behavior really does not contribute to social cohesion among individuals with different views in the society and promotion of tolerance.”

In 2015 the two gay men in question submitted a complaint to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), alleging that the failure by the national authorities to investigate the above described instances of hate speech has violated their rights to private life and the right to an effective legal remedy taken in conjunction with the general prohibition of discrimination.

SUMMARY

The one-day international human rights conference “Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships: Emerging International Consensus and Local Opportunities” will be organized within the framework of the *Baltic Pride* 2016 events on 17 June 2016. It is organized with the view of discussing international and European movement towards legal recognition of same-sex relationships and exploring legal, social and cultural implications of this phenomenon. The conference will address the following issues:

- (1) **Developments regarding marriage equality around the globe;**
- (2) **Emerging European consensus on legal recognition of same-sex relationships;**
- (3) **Possibilities for legal recognition of same-sex relationships in Lithuania;**
- (4) **Developments in the broader Baltic States region (i.e. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania).**



The conference aims at raising legal awareness among the general public and policy makers regarding the non-existent possibility for legal recognition of same-sex relationships in Lithuania. At the moment only six (6) member states of the European Union do not provide for any possibility for legal recognition of same-sex relationships. With the view of ensuring the effective implementation of the right to respect for private and family life within the European legal space, it is necessary to further stimulate public discourse on legal protection of rainbow families not only in Lithuania, but also in the broader region.

The list of speakers is as follows (in alphabetical order):

AUŠRINĖ ARMONAITĖ (Member of the Vilnius City Council, Liberal Movement, Lithuania)
ERWANN BINET (Member of the French National Assembly, France)
NATALIJA BITIUKOVA (Deputy Director of the Human Rights Monitoring Institute, Lithuania)
MONICA CIRINNA (Member of the Italian Senate, Italy)
ASHLEY FOWLER (Program Coordinator for HRC Global at Human Rights Campaign, USA)
DANUTĖ JOČIENĖ (Judge of the Constitutional Court, Lithuania)
HELEN KENNEDY (Executive Director of the EGALÉ Canada Human Rights Trust, Canada)
ALICE BAH KUHNKE (Minister of Culture and Democracy, Sweden)
DALIA KUODYTĖ (Member of the Lithuanian Parliament, Lithuania)
ULRIKE LUNACEK (Vice-President of the European Parliament and Co-Chair of the EP's LGBTI Intergroup, Austria)
STUART MILK (President of the Harvey Milk Foundation, USA)
VYTAUTAS MIZARAS (Professor of Law at Vilnius University, Attorney at Law, Lithuania)
NILS MUIŽNIEKS (Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe)
TANUJA MUNNOO (Provincial Manager of the South African Human Rights Commission, South Africa)
KAJSA OLLONGREN (Deputy Mayor of City of Amsterdam, the Netherlands)
JULIUS PAGOJUS (Vice-Minister of Justice, Lithuania)
MARIJA AUŠRINĖ PAVILIONIENĖ (Member of the Lithuanian Parliament, Lithuania)
TOMAS VYTAUTAS RASKEVIČIUS (Policy Coordinator (Human Rights) of the National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL, Lithuania)
BIRUTĖ SABATAUSKAITĖ (Director of the Lithuanian Center for Human Rights, Lithuania)
JUTTA SCHMITZ (Ambassador of Germany to Lithuania, Germany)
ALEXANDER SCHUSTER (Lecturer in Law at the University of Trento, Italy)
VLADIMIR SIMONKO (Executive Director of the National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL, Lithuania)
IMRE SOOÄÄR (Member of the Estonian Parliament, Estonia)
ILZE VINKELE (Member of the Latvian Parliament, Latvia)
ROBERT WINTEMUTE (Professor of Human Rights Law at the King's College London, United Kingdom)

The official languages of the conference are English and Lithuanian (i.e. synchronized translation).

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

17 June 2016

08:30 – 09:00

Conference registration and welcome coffee

09:00 – 10:00

Opening Remarks

Performance by the Ladies Choir from Finland **TUULIVOIMA**

Greetings from **JULIUS PAGOJUS**, Vice-Minister of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania (Lithuania)

Greetings from **JUTTA SCHMITZ**, Ambassador of Germany to Lithuania (Germany)

Greetings from **VLADIMIR SIMONKO**, Executive Director of the National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL (Lithuania)

Greetings from **KAJSA OLLONGREN**, Deputy Mayor of City of Amsterdam (the Netherlands)

Video greetings from **NILS MUIŽNIEKS**, Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights

Keynote Speeches

09:30 – 09:45 **STUART MILK**, President of the Harvey Milk Foundation (United States of America)

09:45 – 10:00 **ULRIKE LUNACEK**, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Co-Chair of the EP's LGBTI Intergroup (Austria)

DEVELOPMENTS ON MARRIAGE EQUALITY AROUND THE GLOBE

The global movement towards marriage equality is barely a new phenomenon. After the Netherlands became the first country in the world to legislate on marriage equality in 2001, since then as many as twenty (20) countries across the globe have followed suit. In the majority of these jurisdictions, the introduction of marriage equality was sanctioned by the progressive judgments of constitutional tribunals, extending the fundamental human right to marry to same-sex couples. The case studies of South Africa, the United States of America and Canada offer unique insights into social campaigning for marriage equality, successful legal challenges before constitutional tribunals and subsequent legal, social and cultural impacts not only on the respective societies, but also on the local LGBT* communities.

10:00 – 11:00

1st Plenary Session

Moderator: **TOMAS VYTAUTAS RASKEVIČIUS**, Policy Coordinator (Human Rights) of the National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL (Lithuania)

10:05 – 10:20 **TANUJA MUNNOO**, Provincial Manager of the South African Human Rights Commission (South Africa), "Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Unions: The South African Experience of Sexual Orientation Reform"

10:20 – 10:35 **ASHLEY FOWLER**, Program Coordinator for HRC Global at Human Rights Campaign (United States of America), "Love Wins: The Movement for Marriage Equality in the U.S. and Beyond"

10:35 – 10:50 **HELEN KENNEDY**, Executive Director of the EGALE Canada Human Rights Trust (Canada): "Marriage Takes It All! Campaigning for Marriage Equality in Canada and Its Impact on the LGBT* Movement"

Discussion

EMERGING EUROPEAN CONSENSUS ON LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

Recent years have marked a significant advance in legal recognition of same-sex relationships across Europe. At the moment twelve (12) member states of the European Union provide for same-sex marriage, eleven (11) member states provide for civil partnership schemes, while six (6) member states do not provide for any legal recognition. While in some jurisdictions legal recognition of same-sex relationships was encouraged by the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, other European countries made history by introducing marriage equality through popular vote. This plenary session will seek to explore the best practice examples and strategies with the view of advancing legal recognition of rainbow families across Europe in order to effectively ensure the human right to respect for private and family life.

11:00 – 12:00

2nd Plenary Session

Moderator: **ALEXANDER SCHUSTER**, Lecturer in Law at the University of Trento (Italy)

11:05 – 11:20 **ERWANN BINET**, Member of the French National Assembly (France), "Introducing Marriage Equality in the Republic of France (Bill 344)"

11:20 – 11:35 **MONICA CIRINNA**, Member of the Italian Senate (Italy), "Introducing Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships in Italy"

11:35 – 11:50 **ROBERT WINTEMUTE**, Professor of Human Rights Law at the King's College London (United Kingdom), "Emerging European Consensus on Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships"

Discussion

12:00 – 13:00

Lunch

POSSIBILITIES FOR LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS IN LITHUANIA

The Lithuanian legal system does not provide for legal recognition of same-sex relationships. While the Lithuanian Constitution defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman, the Constitutional Court has elaborated that the constitutional notion of family life is not limited to the institution of marriage. Despite various legislative initiatives to further narrow down the definition of family life, the emerging European consensus is suggesting the idea that the constitutional notion of family life should be interpreted as encompassing same-sex relationships as well. As a result, this plenary session will seek to explore the possibilities for legal recognition of same-sex relationships in Lithuania.

13:00 – 14:15

3rd Plenary Session

Moderator: **NATALIJA BITIUKOVA**, Deputy Director of the Human Rights Monitoring Institute (Lithuania)

13:05 – 13:20 **DANUTĖ JOČIENĖ**, Judge of the Constitutional Court (Lithuania), “Jurisprudence of the ECtHR under Article 8. Aspects Concerning Same-Sex Relationships”

13:20 – 13:35 **VYTAUTAS MIZARAS**, Professor of Law at Vilnius University, Attorney at Law (Lithuania), “Why Lithuanian Legal System Should Provide Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships?”

13:35 – 13:50 **DALIA KUODYTĖ**, Member of the Lithuanian Parliament (Lithuania), “Gender Neutral Civil Partnership as an Option for Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships in Lithuania”

13:50 – 14:05 **MARIJA AUŠRINĖ PAVILIONIENĖ**, Member of the Lithuanian Parliament (Lithuania), “Why There Is No Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships in Lithuania Yet?”

Discussion

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BROADER BALTIC STATES REGION

In the broader European context, the Baltic States are usually perceived as a single region. However, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are not only similar, but also very different in many aspects. In 2014, the Estonian Parliament adopted the gender-neutral partnership bill, thus rendering Estonia the first country in the region to legislate on legal recognition of same-sex relationships. Does the Estonian example set the path for its southern neighbors in Latvia and Lithuania to follow? The last plenary session seeks to explore how the emerging European consensus on legal recognition of same-sex relationships can be used for influencing policy makers and expanding on legal protections for same-sex couples in the Baltic States region.

14:15 – 15:15

4th Plenary Session

Moderator: **BIRUTĖ SABATAUSKAITĖ**, Director of the Lithuanian Center for Human Rights (Lithuania)

14:20 – 14:35 **IMRE SOOÄÄR**, Member of the Estonian Parliament (Estonia), "Adoption of the Gender Neutral Partnership Bill in Estonia"

14:35 – 14:50 **ILZE VINKLE**, Member of the Latvian Parliament (Latvia), "Possibilities for Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships in Latvia"

14:50 – 15:05 **AUŠRINĖ ARMONAITĖ**, Member of the Vilnius City Council (Liberal Movement) (Lithuania) "Possibilities for Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships in Lithuania"

Discussion

15:15

Final Remarks by ALICE BAH KUHNKE, Minister of Culture and Democracy (Sweden)



TUULIVOIMA

Ladies Choir (Finland)

All the singers of the female choir Tuulivoima (Eng. "Windpower") have also been singers of the reputed Seinäjoki Girls' Choir (1976–2002), which was one of the most successful Finnish youth choirs in its time. Seinäjoki Girls' Choir won a gold medal in the very first choir Olympics (i.e. World Choir Games) in Linz, Austria, in 2000. Tuulivoima was founded in winter 2011. The name "Windpower" refers to soft values and the choir participates in many charity projects. The repertoire of Tuulivoima is unusually wide, since it consists of the Seinäjoki Girls' Choir repertoire from its 26 years of existence, i.e. spiritual, Christmas, ethnic, and light music, including a wide range of foreign numbers. The female choir Tuulivoima is conducted by two former members of the Seinäjoki Girls' Choir, namely class teacher, choir conductor Kirsi Burman, and master of music, music teacher, choir conductor and drama educator Hanne Orrenmaa.

SPEAKERS:



AUŠRINĖ ARMONAITĖ

Member of the Vilnius City Council (Lithuania)

www.armonaite.lt

Aušrinė Armonaitė is a City Councilor in Vilnius (Lithuania) and a Chair of the Environment and Energy Committee. Aušrinė has 10 years of experience in non-governmental sector, where she advocated for liberal ideas such as human rights, individualism, tolerance and free market. Aušrinė also worked as a policy manager at the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Lithuania. She was also a member of the Advisory Council on Youth at the Council of Europe (CoE) and chaired the Lithuanian Liberal Youth. Aušrinė holds a master's degree in public policy analysis. She is a member of the Liberal Movement political party.



ERWANN BINET

Member of the French National Assembly (France)

www.assemblee-nationale.fr

Erwann Binet is a legal expert in public law. He began his career by working for National Representative Louis Mermaz. Binet continued as Deputy Executive Director of an editing company and later as a legal expert in the Lyon metropolitan area. Erwann Binet has been an active member of the French Socialist Party for 15 years. In 2008 he was elected Departmental Councilor of the Isère Department. In 2012, he was elected National Representative to the 8th district of Isère and he sits in the Law Committee of the National Assembly. As an activist for civil rights and for the fight against discrimination, he was the rapporteur for the national bill on "Mariage pour Tous", which legalized same-sex marriage in France. During the hearings, he faced strong parliamentary opposition as the debate became highly publicized and controversial for several months in 2012 and 2013.



NATALIJA BITIUKOVA

Deputy Director of the Human Rights Monitoring Institute (Lithuania)

www.hrmi.lt

Natalija Bitiukova is a Deputy Director with the Lithuanian national watchdog organization Human Rights Monitoring Institute. Before coming back to Lithuania in 2013, Natalija worked for the international human rights organizations Global Network for Public Interest Law (PILnet) and Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI). Natalija holds LL.M. in Human Rights and European Union Law from the Central European University (Budapest). She has contributed to a number of legislative initiatives in Lithuania, and authored a series of publications in the human rights field. Her professional interests include anti-discrimination law, rights of victims of crime, public interest litigation, human rights and new technologies.



MONICA CIRINNÀ

Member of the Italian Senate (Italy)

www.senato.it

Monica Cirinnà has been a member of the Italian Senate since 2013. After a short experience as a teaching assistant at La Sapienza University of Rome, Mrs. Cirinnà became a member of the city council of Rome in 1993 until she was elected to the Italian Parliament. In the past few years, her name has been associated with the civil partnership bill due to her role as a sponsor during the legislative process. She is also known for her activism in defense of environment and animal rights.



ASHLEY FOWLER

Program Coordinator for HRC Global at Human Rights Campaign (United States of America)

www.hrc.org

Ashley joined HRC Global in July 2014, after graduating as an Honors Fellow from Elon University, where she majored in political science and international studies. She was awarded the university's most prestigious research fellowship, the Lumen Prize, which allowed her to complete an extensive three-year research project examining the development of LGBT rights in Central and Eastern Europe. Ashley spent four months in Croatia and Lithuania conducting over fifty semi-structured interviews with NGO workers, parliamentarians, and op-

position leaders. The project culminated with the writing of her thesis “Human Rights Norm Change: LGBT Rights in an Enlarged Europe”, which was informed by her interviews and fieldwork. Ashley now serves as the Coordinator of HRC Global, the international arm of the Human Rights Campaign. HRC Global aims to leverage HRC’s domestic experience, knowledge and resources to strengthen the global equality movement.



DANUTĖ JOČIENĖ

Judge of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania (Lithuania)

www.lrkt.lt

Danutė Jočienė is a Lithuanian lawyer, associate professor at Vilnius University, former Lithuanian judge to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), human rights expert and current judge of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania. In 2004 she became the Lithuanian judge in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) as the youngest judge in the Court’s history. Danutė Jočienė graduated from the Faculty of Law at Vilnius University and worked as a lecturer in the Department of the International and European Union Law. In 2003–2004 she served as the Lithuanian Government’s agent before the ECtHR.



HELEN KENNEDY

Executive Director of the EGALE Canada Human Rights Trust (Canada)

www.egale.ca

Helen Kennedy became Egale’s Executive Director in 2007. She is the first woman to hold the position. She is a founding member of Canadians for Equal Marriage, widely regarded as the most influential public policy lobbying campaign in Canadian history. Helen’s work includes the Climate Survey on Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools, the first national survey of its kind in Canada, and provides critical findings on bullying to schools, educators and governments. She has delivered training to Immigration Refugee Adjudicators and police services across Canada and at the invitation of the US Department of Defense, consulted with senior Pentagon officials in Washington DC on the US military’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. She is Co-Secretary General of the International Gay, Lesbian, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), the world federation of national and local organizations dedicated to achieving equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people.



ALICE BAH KUHNKE

Swedish Minister of Culture and Democracy (Sweden)

www.government.se

Alice Bah Kuhnke is the Swedish Minister of Culture and Democracy. She is a member of the Green Party (Miljöpartiet) of Sweden. She started her career in 1992 as a television presenter. After she left television to study political science. She worked as Secretary General of fair trade organization Rättvisemärkt. Ms Bah Kuhnke was a member of the Swedish Church synod, member of the Board of Dramaten Theatre, as well as Vice President of YMCA-YWCA Sweden. In October 2014 she was appointed the head of Ministry of Culture in the Löfven Cabinet. As the minister of Culture and Democracy, Ms Bah Kuhnke is responsible for issues relating to culture, media, democracy, human rights at a national level and the national minorities. Democracy policy includes measures to strengthen and protect the individual's opportunities for influence, and measures to promote and guarantee respect for human rights.



DALIA KUODYTĖ

Member of the Lithuanian Parliament (Lithuania)

www3.lrs.lt

Dalia Kuodytė is the member of the Liberal Movement political party and the member of the Lithuanian Parliament since 2008. She is also a Lithuanian delegate to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). Dalia Kuodytė has served as a member of the Committee on Human Rights and the Committee on Social Affairs and Labor in the Parliament since 2012. She has been one of the key proponents of the comprehensive legislation on domestic violence (adopted in 2011). Dalia Kuodytė has been a vocal supporter of LGBT* human rights throughout her career as a politician. She holds a degree in history at Vilnius University.



ULRIKE LUNACEK

Vice President of the European Parliament and Co-Chair of the EP's LGBTI Intergroup (Austria)

www.ulrike-lunacek.eu

Ulrike Lunacek is Vice President of the European Parliament, Member of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament since 2009 and head of delegation of the Austrian Greens in the European Parliament. Lunacek is Kosovo-Rap-

porteur and Co-Chair of the Intergroup on LGBT Rights and Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Substitute in the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. From 1999 to 2009, Lunacek was a member of the Austrian Parliament and the Green group's spokeswoman on foreign and development policy as well as on equality for lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender persons. Ulrike Lunacek was the first openly lesbian politician in the Austrian Parliament as well. In 2006-2009 she served as Co-Chair of the European Green Party.



STUART MILK

President of the Harvey Milk Foundation (United States of America)

www.milkfoundation.org

Stuart Milk is an international human rights activist, LGBT rights speaker, government relations consultant, and youth advocate. He is the co-founder and the President of the Harvey Milk Foundation. As the nephew of Harvey Milk, the iconic civil rights leader, Stuart Milk has taken his uncle's message of authenticity, example of courage and the power of collaboration onto the global stage. Stuart Milk has worked with and alongside local and national LGBT* organizations in both official matters with legislative and governmental entities as well as in awareness raising events and demonstrations. He has been an official delegate abroad on Human Rights issues and often serves as a representative and liaison for formal and informal dialogue with foreign policy leaders.



VYTAUTAS MIZARAS

Professor of Law at Vilnius University, Attorney at Law (Lithuania)

www.tf.vu.lt

Vytautas Mizaras is a Lithuanian lawyer and Professor of Law at Vilnius University. He is the head of the European Private Law and Intellectual Property Law Institute. From 2014 Vytautas is a partner and the head of the Intellectual Property, Media and Privacy sub-group at the law firm "Valiunas Ellex". Vytautas Mizaras has significant expertise in advising foreign and domestic clients on the full range of issues relating to private law, privacy and national, international and EU standards pertaining to human rights. He has significantly contributed to the development of the key legal acts on the national level by participating in the working groups drafting the new Civil Code, the new Civil Procedure Code, the new wording of the Law on Authors Rights and Related Rights. Vytautas Mizaras was awarded with the National Equality and Diversity Award for the defence of the constitutional right to freedom of assembly (i.e. "Baltic Pride 2013" case) in 2014.



NILS MUIŽNIEKS

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights (Latvia)

www.coe.int/tj/commissioner

Nils Muižnieks is a human rights activist and political scientist. Since 2012 he serves as the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. Prior to his appointment as the Commissioner for Human Rights, he held prominent posts such as the Programme Director at the Soros Foundation (Latvia), the Director of the Advanced Social and Political Research Institute at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Latvia in Riga (2005–2012), the Chairman of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (2010–2012), the Latvian minister responsible for social integration, anti-discrimination, minority rights, and civil society development (2002–2004) and the Director of the Latvian Centre for Human Rights (1994–2002). He holds a Ph.D. in political science at the University of California at Berkeley.



TANUJA MUNNOO

Provincial Manager of the South African Human Rights Commission (South Africa)

www.sahrc.org.za

Tanuja Munnoo has worked for the South African Human Rights Commission for approximately 15 years, and is the Head of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Office. She holds a Bachelor of Social Science (B.Soc.Sci) and the Bachelor of Law (LLB) degrees, obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and a Masters in Law (LLM) from the University of South Africa. Tanuja is an attorney of the High Court (South Africa) and is an accredited Mediator. She has over 20 years of multi-sectoral experience within the field of Human Rights, Equality, Access to Justice and Rule of Law.



KAJSA OLLONGREN

Deputy Mayor of City of Amsterdam (the Netherlands)

www.amsterdam.nl

Kajsa Ollongren started her career at the Ministry of Economic Affairs in The Hague in 1992. Her career in The Hague spans more than two decades, during which she worked for a number of ministers. In 2006 Kajsa Ollongren was a candidate in the Dutch Parliamentary elections, representing D66, the social-liberal party. Her party appointed her as first deputy mayor and alderman in Amster-

dam after winning the municipal elections in 2014. During her time at the Ministry of Economic Affairs she was closely involved in European cooperation. She attended numerous European Councils as the economic advisor to several Dutch Prime Ministers. Most recently she served as Secretary-General at the Ministry of General Affairs, the Dutch equivalent of the Cabinet Office and the Prime Ministers' Office.



JULIUS PAGOJUS

Vice-Minister of Justice (Lithuania)

www.tm.lt

Julius Pagojus is a lawyer and a politician. In 2011 he graduated from the Faculty of Law at Vilnius University (LL.M.). In 2012 he obtained a degree in economics from the Faculty of Economics at Vilnius University (BA). He served as an adviser for the Minister of Justice in 2012–2014, resulting in his appointment as the Vice-Minister of Justice in 2014. Julius Pagojus has become the youngest professional to be appointed to the position of Vice-Minister in the history of Lithuania. Before his professional career, he presided over the association of youth organizations in Klaipėda, the union of youth organizations VJOSAS in Vilnius and the Council of Youth Issues in the City of Vilnius. He also served as the chairman of supervisory body of the Lithuanian Youth Council, its Board member, the Bard member of the Agency for International Youth Cooperation and the head of the Office of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Youth. Julius Pagojus is also a member of the Lithuanian Social Democratic party.



MARIJA AUŠRINĖ PAVILIONIENĖ

Member of the Lithuanian Parliament (Lithuania)

www3.lrs.lt

Marija Aušrinė Pavilionienė is a philologist, professor, human rights activist, feminist writer and politician. She previously worked as a lecturer at Vilnius University from 1967 to 1978. From 1994 to 2001 she was the director of the Gender Studies Centre at Vilnius University. She has been a member of the Lithuanian Parliament from 2004 to 2008 as a member of the Liberal Democratic Party and since 2009 as a member of the Social Democratic Party. She is one of the most well-known LGBT* human rights activists in Lithuania. She is also a prominent feminist thinker and occasionally publishes articles about gender issues. She holds a PhD in Humanities from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv.



TOMAS VYTAUTAS RASKEVIČIUS

Policy Coordinator (Human Rights) of the National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL (Lithuania)

www.lgl.lt

Tomas V. Raskevičius has been involved with the National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL since 2012. In his capacity as Policy Coordinator (Human Rights), Tomas continuously engages with the international human right protection mechanisms, namely the United Nations and the Council of Europe, with the view of ensuring the effective implementation of the international human rights standards for LGBT* people in Lithuania. Tomas has also actively contributed to the legal reform pertaining to the introduction of gender reassignment procedure in Lithuania, which is being implemented within the framework of executing the judgment by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in the case *L. v. Lithuania*. Tomas was also involved in the first of its kind trans* awareness raising campaign #TRANS_LT, which portrayed experiences of trans* individuals in Lithuania.



BIRUTĖ SABATAUSKAITĖ

Director of the Lithuanian Center for Human Rights (Lithuania)

www.manoteises.lt/lchr

Birutė Sabatauskaitė is the Director of the Lithuanian Center for Human Rights, as well as an expert in law and advocacy. She has been working with the Center since 2010. In the course of her professional capacity, Birutė assesses national legislation based on their compatibility with the international human rights standards, conducts research in the field of non-discrimination, prepares shadow reports on racism and discrimination together with the European Network against Racism (ENAR), submits proposals regarding legislative process of various legal acts and adopting public policy documents of strategic nature. The Lithuanian Center for Human Rights actively supports LGBT* equality and advocates for the adoption of legal recognition of same-sex relationships in Lithuania. The previous working experience by Birutė includes the lecturer of constitutional law at Mykolas Romeris University (MRU) (2009–2011), the National Audit Office of Lithuania (2006–2008), the expert on the rights of the child and social inclusion within the International Falcon Movement – Socialist Educational International (IFM-SEI) (2008–2009) and conducting various human rights trainings (2004–2013).



JUTTA SCHMITZ

Ambassador of Germany to Lithuania (Germany)

www.wilna.diplo.de

Jutta Schmitz is Germany's Ambassador to Lithuania. She has been a member of the German diplomatic service for more than 27 years and served in China repeatedly, *inter alia*, as Consul General in Chengdu from 2006 to 2008 and as Department Head for Political Affairs at the German Embassy in Beijing from 2009 to 2012. She has gained multilateral experience on different postings in the United Nations in Berlin, New York and Geneva, as well as at NATO headquarters in Brussels, where she was Germany's delegate to the Political Committee from 2000 to 2002. Insights into human rights agenda were added, when she became Deputy Head of the Human Rights Division at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin from 2002 to 2006 and later Minister for Political Affairs at Germany's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva from 2012 to 2014. In September 2014 she handed in her credentials as German Ambassador to Lithuania. Jutta Schmitz holds a Master Degree of Albertus Magnus University Cologne in Sinology, History and Political Sciences.



ALEXANDER SCHUSTER

Lecturer in Law at the University of Trento (Italy)

www.rightsonthemove.eu

Alexander Schuster, Ph.D., LL.M., is a researcher at the Faculty of Law, University of Trento (Italy), where he also practices law specializing in international family law. He is an expert in the field of cross-border medically assisted procreation practices and non-discrimination law. Alexander is the European coordinator of the EU co-funded project "Rights on the Move – Rainbow Families in Europe". He has led legal and interdisciplinary projects and is an independent legal expert for the EU Commission and the Council of Europe. He has taught and researched at universities and research centers in Montréal, Toronto, Heidelberg, Washington DC, Athens, Trier, Prishtina and Udine. His interests include fundamental rights, EU law, LGBTI studies and the new legal challenges posed by medical science. He coordinates the www.rightsonthemove.eu project on freedom of movement of rainbow families.



VLADIMIR SIMONKO

Executive Director of the National LGBT* Rights Organization LGL (Lithuania)

www.lgl.lt

Vladimir Simonko has significant experience and strong background in working on LGBT* human rights issues in Lithuania, acting as an expert and a trainer in various national and international projects. He was an organizer of the first Eastern European Conference of ILGA in Palanga in 1994 and the annual ILGA-Europe conference in Vilnius in 2007. Vladimir was also one of the main organizers of the first *Baltic Pride* that took place in Vilnius in 2010. Currently he serves as a member of the Lithuanian Human Rights Coalition and the National Equality and Diversity Forum. In 2015 Vladimir was elected to serve as a Board Member of the pan-European LGBTI organization ILGA-Europe.



IMRE SOOÄÄR

Member of the Estonian Parliament, Legal Affairs Committee

www.riigikogu.ee

Imre Sooäär is an Estonian politician, composer and entrepreneur. Having been re-elected three times to the Parliament, he is the initiator of the gender-neutral Cohabitation Act in Estonia, known also as a Civil Partnership Act, making Estonia the first Ex-Soviet country to legalize same-sex relations. Before being elected to the Parliament, Imre has been developing Estonian tourism industry, establishing one of the top hotels in the Estonian countryside, "Pädaste manor Small Luxury Resort & Spa". His business activities have received numerous national and international awards and his restaurant "Alexander" has been nominated the best in the country for 5 years. Imre is an established composer and songwriter, having received master's degree of Classical Composition in the Estonian Academy of Music. He is the author of the creative concept of the Estonian National Song and Dance festival 2011. He has participated actively in the preservation of culture and heritage, building sustainable tourism concepts. He is the board member of the European Historic Houses Association and often a guest speaker of international conferences.



ILZE VINKELE

Member of the Latvian Parliament (Latvia)

www.saeima.lv

Ilze Vinkele is the current member of the Latvian Parliament, as well as the Chairperson of the Education, Culture and Science Committee. She was the Minister of Welfare of Latvia from 2011 to 2013. Ilze is one of the most vocal LGTB* human rights activists and the active proponent of legal recognition of same-sex families in Latvia. She holds a bachelor's degree in social work and a master's degree in public health.



ROBERT WINTEMUTE

Professor of Human Rights Law at the King's College London (United Kingdom)

www.kcl.ac.uk

Robert Wintemute is a Professor of Human Rights Law at King's College London (UK), where he also teaches Anti-Discrimination Law and European Union Law. His *pro bono* legal work in the European Court of Human Rights has included arguing the applicant's case in *Fretté v. France* (2002, eligibility of openly gay or lesbian person to adopt a child), and drafting third-party interventions on international and comparative law in such cases as *Karner v. Austria* (2003, right of surviving same-sex partner to succeed to tenancy of apartment), *E.B. v. France* (2008, same issue as *Fretté*), *Schalk & Kopf v. Austria* (2010, equal access to legal marriage for same-sex couples), *X & Others v. Austria* (2013, second-parent adoption open to unmarried different-sex but not same-sex couples), *Vallianatos & Others v. Greece* (2013, alternative to marriage restricted to different-sex couples), and *Oliari & Others v. Italy* (2015, absence of a registered partnership law for same-sex couples). In the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), he drafted the English version of the oral arguments for the surviving registered same-sex partner in *Maruko* (2008, pensions only for surviving different-sex spouses of employees). He also drafted an amicus brief for *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* (2003, marriage in Massachusetts).





MAIN VENUES:

PRIDE MARCH

Gediminas Avenue
From Lukiskis Square to Bernardine Garden

PRIDE VOICES

Russian Drama Theater
J. Basanavičius str. 13, Vilnius

PRIDE CONFERENCE

Tolerance Center
Naugarduko str. 10, Vilnius

PRIDE GALA

Radisson Blue Hotel Lietuva
Konstitucijos av. 20, Vilnius

PRIDE PARK CONCERT

Art Factory LOFTAS
Svitrigailos str. 29, Vilnius

PRIDE HOUSE

Paviljonas
Pylimo str. 21B, Vilnius



KREIVĖS / VILNIUS LGBT FESTIVAL

Cinema Center "Svajnišis"
A. Goštauto str. 2, Vilnius



Cinema "Pasalja"

Sv. Ignoto str. 4, Vilnius



French Institute

Didžioji str. 1, Vilnius



Swedish Embassy

Didžioji str. 16, Vilnius



PRIDE PARTY

SOHO Club
Svitrigailos str. 7, Vilnius



RAINBOW INFOPOINT

Paviljonas
Pylimo str. 21B, Vilnius