

# ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018





## **Association LGL**

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[twitter.com/LGLLithuania](https://twitter.com/LGLLithuania)

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# About LGL

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**The National lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) human rights organization LGL** is the only non-governmental organization in Lithuania exclusively dedicated to representing the interests of the local LGBT community. Having begun operations on December 3rd, 1993 <sup>1</sup>, LGL is one of the most mature and stable organizations in the country's civil sector. The fundamental principle behind the organization's activities is independence from any political or financial interests whilst striving for effective inclusion and social integration of the LGBT community in Lithuania. LGL seeks to achieve consistent LGBT human rights progress, drawing on its twenty years of experience in advocacy, awareness-raising and community building.

LGL's staff currently consists of 5 community Board Members, 7 permanent **staff** members, as well as over 20 volunteers both in Lithuania and abroad. Our team is enthusiastic, dynamic, ever-changing and open to new members, ideas and projects. It is important to emphasize that not only gay individuals are involved in the organization – in addition to the LGBT community, we are proud of our friends and allies who consider LGBT rights part of the issue of democratic and effective protection of human rights for all citizens of the Republic of Lithuania without exception.

LGL's office is located in Vilnius, Pylimo str. 21. Here, the LGL team administers and implements projects, organizes meetings, and regularly invites the LGBT community and its allies to various events. LGL's office contains the only LGBT centre in Lithuania with a library of literature related to the organization's activities, where visitors can enjoy free wi-fi and a cup of coffee or tea. The LGBT centre is open to all well-wishing visitors who want to learn more about the organization's activities and the LGBT human rights situation in Lithuania.

LGL is a member of the National Equality and Diversity Forum (NEDF ) and the Coalition of Human rights organizations. LGL also answers to international organizations **ILGA** (The International Lesbian and Gay Association), **IGLYO** (The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Youth and Student Organization), **EPOA** (The European Pride Organisers Association) and **TGEU** (The European Transgender Network). We believe that we can most effectively pursue our goals by seeing LGBT rights

as part of a broader human rights discourse, and by actively supporting various initiatives both at the national and international level.

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You can find up-to-date information about LGL's activities and current issues faced by the LGBT community at [www.lgl.lt/en](http://www.lgl.lt/en) and LGL's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/lgl.lt/](https://www.facebook.com/lgl.lt/).

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## 2018 LGBT Rights Overview: Challenges and Victories

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Augustas Didžgalvis photo

2018 was a year of challenges and inspirational victories for LGL. Thanks to your encouragement and support, LGL was able to put into motion many important steps to improve the LGBT human rights situation in Lithuania.

LGL carried out a range of successful projects this year. One of the most memorable was the Rainbow Days festival, which is already starting to become a tradition, during which Vilnius received its first rainbow crosswalk. We later marched representing the Lithuanian LGBT community in the Baltic Pride March for Equality in Riga. Unfortunately, our office also experienced a homophobic attack motivated by hatred towards us as an organization representing the interests of the LGBT community, after which we received support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as international organizations and institutions.

Much of 2018 was spent preparing for the 2019 Baltic Pride festival, which will take place from June 4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>. Although those opposed to LGBT rights are trying to halt the March for Equality, we are ensuring that the march will go forth as planned on June 8<sup>th</sup>, and that Baltic Pride 2019 will go down in LGBT history as the most ambitious and successful LGBT community festival in independent Lithuania.

## LGL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018

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**LGL pursues the following objectives through its activities:**

- PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
- PROMOTING EQUALITY IN THE EMPLOYMENT AND PROFESSIONAL SPHERES
- PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION
- PROMOTING FAMILY RIGHTS, AS WELL AS EQUALITY AND RECOGNITION OF DIVERSE FAMILY STRUCTURES
- ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES THAT EDUCATE AND DEVELOP THE SKILLS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- BUILDING THE SKILLS AND COMPETENCE OF THE ORGANIZATION

In order to implement its strategic plans and achieve the above-mentioned objectives, LGL carried out a range of activities in 2018, the most important of which are briefly summarized below.



## Activities

### LGL's Representative Participated in "E.T.Ho.S" Kick-off Meeting in Athens, Greece



Eglė Kuktoraitė, Communications Coordinator of the National LGBT rights organization LGL, participated in a kick-off meeting for the international project "E.T.Ho.S: Eliminating Transphobic, Homophobic and Biphobic Stereotypes through Better Media Representation", held on 5th-6th of February, 2018 in Athens (Greece).



## Rainbow Rights Project Partners Met in Helsinki, Finland



On March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 representatives of the National LGBT rights organization LGL attended a Rainbow Rights: Promoting LGBTI Equality in Europe project steering committee meeting held in Helsinki (Finland).

During the meeting, the project partners discussed forthcoming activities and events, shared ideas about how to make project activities more visible and reviewed project's communication plan and other administrative questions.

## Rainbow Days 2018

### LGL and Embassies Cooperate on Rainbow Days 2018 Festival



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 a meeting in preparation for the upcoming „Rainbow Days“ 2018 festival, organized by the National LGBT rights organization LGL, was held at the Swedish Embassy in Vilnius.

## Vilnius Celebrates Opening of Rainbow Crosswalk



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

To mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT), the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL decorated the crossing outside its office at Pylimo St. 21 (Vilnius) in rainbow colors. As the link between LGL's LGBT community center and the jazz club Paviljonas, which often hosts LGBT community events, the crossing is a significant one to the Vilnius LGBT community. This rainbow crossing in the city center aims to show Vilnius residents and guests that Vilnius is an open and LGBT-friendly city.



## Rainbow Days 2018 billboards displayed in three major Lithuanian cities



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, public spaces in Vilnius were decorated with social advertisements for the “Rainbow Days” 2018 festival, organized by the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL. The billboard campaign sought to focus attention on the situation of the local LGBT community in Lithuania as the country celebrated its 100th anniversary.

## Rainbow Days 2018 Press Conference Held at the Lithuanian Parliament



On 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018 the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL, in cooperation with the Member of the Lithuanian Parliament Ms. Aušrinė Armonaitė, organized a press conference “LGBT Human Rights Situation in Lithuania: between ‘Culture of Limitations’ and Progress” in the Lithuanian Parliament on the occasion of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHO). During the press conference, the following topics were discussed: Lithuania’s position on the annual Rainbow Index by the international organization ILGA-Europe; the results of the study on homophobic bullying at Lithuanian schools, implemented by the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL; “Rainbow Days” 2018 festival programme and plans for the upcoming Baltic Pride 2019 festival in Vilnius. The press conference was attended by: Aušrinė Armonaitė (Member of the Lithuanian Parliament), Vladimir Simonko (Executive Director of the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL), Dr. Joseph G. Kosciw (Chief Research & Strategy Officer of the US-based organization GLSEN), Eglė Kuktoraitė (Communication Coordinator of the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL).

## Rainbow Bus Visits Lithuanian State Institutions



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

In order to draw attention to legal, social and cultural challenges faced by the Lithuanian LGBT community, the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL invited the local LGBT community to unfurl a 30-meter-long rainbow flag in front of four of Lithuania's primary state institutions, travelling between them on the traditional Rainbow Bus as part of the 2018 Rainbow Days festival.



## Lithuanian LGBT community joins Baltic Pride 2018 in Riga, Latvia



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

On 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, representatives of the National LGBT rights organization LGL joined thousands of Baltic Pride 2018 marchers and showed Lithuania's support to the Latvian LGBT community. The event provided an opportunity to bring focus to LGBT human rights situation in the region. LGL representatives arrived in Riga on a special LGL bus.



## LGL Presented With LGBT Hero Award in Riga



On 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, representatives of the National LGBT rights organization LGL were presented with the LGBT Hero Award during an event organized by Latvian LGBT NGO “Mozaika” on the occasion of the “Baltic Pride 2018” festival in Riga (Latvia).

## LGL Representative Participated in a Meeting to Discuss Monitoring Hate Speech on Social Media



On June 27<sup>th</sup>, Eglė Kuktoraitė, communications coordinator of the National LGBT rights organization LGL, participated in a meeting with representatives from the European Commission, as well as Google+, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Youtube, at Facebook's Dublin headquarters.

During the meeting, representatives from several European non-governmental organizations currently monitoring hate speech on social media discussed problems that have arisen in their efforts to combat this hate speech.

## LGL's Representative Participates at the Equal Rights Coalition Conference in Canada



Ministers and representatives of the member countries of the Equal Rights Coalition met in a global conference in Vancouver, Canada. In the conference, spanning from the 5<sup>th</sup> of August to the 7<sup>th</sup> of August, the representatives have pledged to build a world where no one is left behind – regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics.

Vladimir Simonko, Executive Director of the National LGBT rights organization LGL, represented the organization during the conference.

## LGL Office Entrance Damaged by Homophobic Attack



On August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at about 4:00 a.m., LGL's office was targeted by a homophobic attack. The office entrance, which LGL shared with a clothing store that occupied the ground floor at the time, was set on fire in an act of arson. While LGL reported the potential anti-LGBT hate crime to the police, the perpetrators have not been identified.



## Foreign Affairs Minister visits LGL office



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

On Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, LGL welcomed the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Mr. Linas Linkevičius, at our office in Vilnius. Together with Donatas Butkus, director of the Human Rights Division of the United Nations, International Organizations and Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he expressed his solidarity with the LGBT community in the face of allegedly homophobic arson attacks.

The visit came in reaction to an arson attack on LGL office doors in the night of August 10<sup>th</sup>, which had set the exterior door and blinds on fire. International LGBT and human rights NGOs and advocacy groups like Amnesty International have expressed concerns over the possibly homophobic nature of the crime and appealed to Lithuanian authorities to investigate thoroughly.

## LGL Representatives Participated in an NGO Exchange Programme in Helsinki



On 20<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> August, 2018 the representatives of the National LGBT rights organization LGL participated in an NGO exchange programme in Helsinki (Finland). During the exchange week, LGL's communication coordinator Eglė Kuktoraitė and LGL member and volunteer Nadežda Petruchina learned about the activities of the local LGBTI organization Seta and participated in meetings with representatives of Finnish NGOs, the Ministry of Justice, the Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Ombudsperson's offices. The visit was part of the project "Rainbow Rights – Promoting LGBTI Equality in Europe".

## LGL Representative Participated in the Annual “IGLYO” Conference in Edinburgh



On October 4-7, 2018 Eglė Kuktoraitė, Communications Coordinator of National LGBT rights organization LGL, participated in the annual conference organized by the international LGBTI youth and student organization “IGLYO” in Edinburgh (United Kingdom).



## Human Rights Discourse in the Public Sphere: Effective Response to Hate Speech in Media



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

On October 19, 2018, the National LGBT rights organization LGL organized a unique international seminar where participating researchers, experts and public opinion leaders had the opportunity to discuss the main challenges faced by human rights activists in Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. During the seminar, participants discussed the impact of hate speech, propaganda and other forms of aggressive information on the human rights discourse in their respective countries.

## LGL Submits Shadow Report to Universal Periodic Review



On 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL, in cooperation with international human rights organization "ILGA-Europe", Transgender Europe (TGEU) and "OII Europe", made a joint Universal Periodic Review submission to the UN Human Rights Council on the LGBT human rights situation in the country. The shadow report, submitted by LGL and its international partners, highlights the main challenges in ensuring the fundamental rights and freedoms for LGBT people in Lithuania.

## LGL Representatives Participated in the 22nd ILGA-Europe Annual Conference



On 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> October, 2018, representatives of the National LGBT rights organization LGL participated the 22nd ILGA-Europe annual conference. This year the theme of the conference was "Politics for Change: From Words into Action".



## Hate Crime Training for Police Officers Took Place in Kaunas



Augustas Didžgalvis photo

On November 8 2018, National LGBT rights organization LGL organized a training for law enforcement officers in Kaunas, led by the Deputy Head of the Mainstream division of the Lithuanian Police Academy Vilius Velička and an expert on victimology Aliona Palujanova. Furthermore, the participants had a chance to meet an investigator within the Democracy and Hate Crime Unit of the Stockholm county police Jonas Jonzon and the founder of Swedish Gay police association and an inspector of Hate Crime Unit in Stockholm region Göran Stanton.

## ETHOS Project Interim Meeting Held in Vilnius



On 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 the National LGBT rights organization LGL organized an interim meeting for the project “Eliminating Transphobic, Homophobic and Biphobic Stereotypes through Better Media Representation (E.T.H.O.S.)”. During the meeting the project partners discussed the next steps towards implementing the upcoming activities of the project and agreed on communication guidelines. On 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2018 a reception was held at the Embassy of Greece in Lithuania on the occasion of “ETHOS” project interim meeting.

## LGL Presents Results of Social Media Monitoring



In cooperation with the European Commission, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Google+, LGL carried out a monitoring cycle for hate speech on social media. We are pleased to announce the results of the fourth monitoring cycle and we hope to make Facebook a safer environment for every user.

## Projects

### Come Forward: Empowering and Supporting Victims of Anti-LGBT Hate Crimes



**Duration:** December 2016 – December 2018

**Financial supporter:** European Union

The project Come Forward: Empowering and Supporting Victims of Anti-LGBT Hate Crimes, in line with the Directive 2012/29/EU, aims at addressing a common need within the European Union to increase reporting of homophobic and transphobic hate crimes through building capacity of civil society and official partners and empowering victim communities.



## We Are People, Not Propaganda: Consolidating the Status of National LGBT Rights Organization



**OPEN SOCIETY**  
FOUNDATIONS

**Duration:** December 2016 – December 2018

**Financial supporter:** Open Society Foundations

The main goal of the project We Are People, Not Propaganda: Consolidating the Status of National LGBT Rights Organization is to consolidate the status of the association LGL as the National LGBT Rights Organization in the country through strategically tailored awareness raising, advocacy and community building activities with the view of tackling discrimination and social exclusion of the local LGBT community in the country.

## Rainbow Rights – Promoting LGBTI Equality in Europe



*Rainbow Rights*

**Duration:** January 2017 – December 2018

**Financial supporter:** European Union

The project Rainbow Rights – Promoting LGBTI Equality in Europe develops LGBTI -equality policy measures in four Member States: Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

## Change in Business, Public sector and the Public – New Standards of Reducing Discrimination



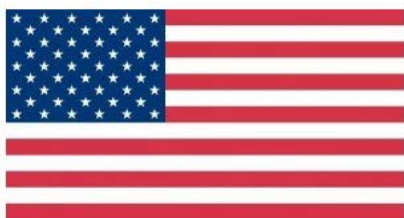
**Duration:** May 2017 – April 2020

**Financial supporter:** European Social Fund Agency

The project will be implemented together with the Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson and the Human Rights Monitoring Institute. The National Equality and Diversity Forum members will also be involved in project's activities.

The main goal of the project is to combat discrimination in the labour market on the grounds of the Equal Opportunities Law by systemically raising business and public sectors and society's awareness in human rights area.

## Exchange of Good Practices between American and Lithuanian Experts in Advocating for Inclusive School Environment in Lithuania



**Duration:** September 2017 – May 2018

**Financial supporter:** US State Department and US Embassy in Vilnius

As part of the project, American inclusive education expert Dr. Joseph G. Kosciw (Chief Research & Strategy Officer of GLSEN) was invited to Lithuania on the occasion of Rainbow Days 2018. His visit to Lithuania was intended to draw the attention of Lithuanian society, media and youth policy makers to the problem of homophobic bullying and foster exchange of good practices between American and Lithuanian activists in advocating for inclusive school environment. The expert participated in meetings with local youth policy makers, initiated by the National LGBT rights organization LGL.



## Review of the Implementation of the Council of Europe Recommendation on LGBT Rights CM/Rec(2010)5



**Duration:** March 2018 – October 2018

**Financial supporter:** ILGA-Europe

Within the framework of the project Review of the Implementation of the Council of Europe Recommendation on LGBT Rights CM/Rec(2010)5, the National LGBT Rights Organization LGL has developed the second documentation report on implementing the Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 in Lithuania. The process was to be used not only to document measures that remain to be implemented, but also to engage the Lithuanian Government to participate in the process through filling in the review questionnaire by the Council of Europe.

## Promotion of Democracy – Independent information dissemination from the Human Rights perspective



**Duration:** March 2018 – October 2018

**Financial supporter:** Development Cooperation and Support for Democracy program

Belarusian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian NGOs collaborated with journalists on the project, which aimed to counteract aggressive traditional value messaging in the partner countries through the dissemination of counter information from a human rights perspective. Working with Journalists for Tolerance, DOTYK and AucoFULCRUM, LGL lead the "Promotion of democracy – independent information dissemination from the Human Rights perspective" project and carried out research and workshops.

## Eliminating Transphobic, Homophobic and Biphobic Stereotypes through Better Media Representation (E.T.HO.S.)



**Duration:** January 2018 – December 2019

**Financial supporter:** European Union

The E.T.Ho.S. project has emerged from partners' drive to challenge long-lasting stereotypes and prejudices against LGBT people in EU by targeting one of the most powerful sources of representation, the media. The project's overall objective is thus to educate and raise awareness among journalists and media students about the phenomenon of Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (HTB) in the media and in particular about the direct or indirect (re)production of stereotypes and prejudices against LGBT. This will ultimately serve the overarching goal of the project to combat discrimination against LGBT in GR, LT and HR by enlisting media power for their benefit while challenging harmful media stereotypes.

## Call It Hate: Raising Awareness of Anti-LGBT Hate Crime (CIH)

# CALL IT HATE



**Duration:** January 2018 – December 2019

**Financial supporter:** European Union

This project tackles anti-LGBT hate crime by raising awareness on the need to report this violence among LGBT communities and the wider general public. By engaging directly with these groups, and by shifting focus from training to awareness raising and empowerment of targeted groups, the proposed project creates synergies with Come Forward, which in turn maximizes the effectiveness of both projects.



## #LGBT\_LT: Raising Awareness through Visibility in Lithuania



**Duration:** January 2018 – December 2019

**Financial supporter:** European Union

The project seeks to promote the rights of LGBT people in Lithuania through strategically tailored awareness raising and dissemination activities. By building upon the sustainable community initiatives of "Rainbow Days", "Baltic Pride" and LGBT Festival "Kreivės", the proposed project aims at qualitatively improving public discourse on LGBT issues pertaining both to social and legal spheres.

## Baltic Pride 2019: Promoting LGBT Human Rights through Nordic – Baltic Cooperation

Baltic Pride 2019  
LGBT\* žmogaus teisių  
skatinimas bendradarbiaujant  
Šiaurės ir Baltijos šalims



Supported by:

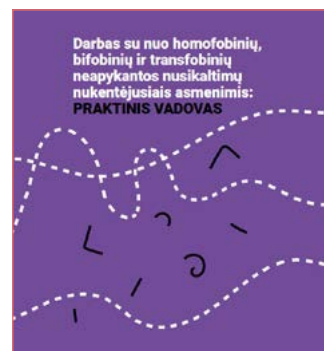
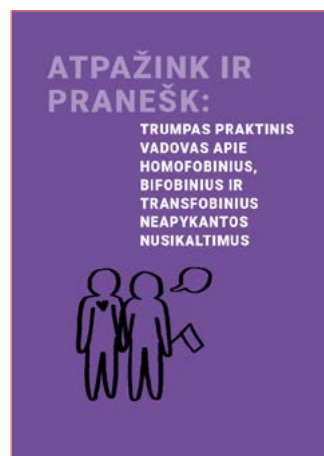
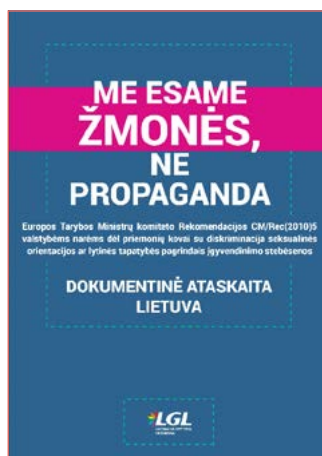
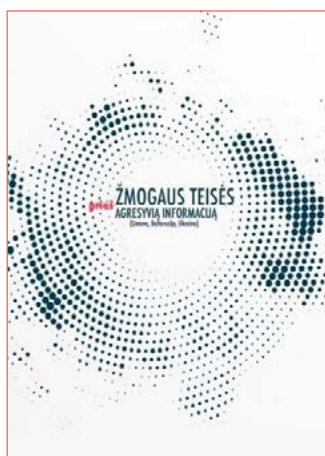


**Duration:** June 2018 – June 2019

**Financial supporter:** Nordic Council of Ministers

The project "Baltic Pride 2019: Promoting LGBT Human Rights through Nordic-Baltic Cooperation" is a collaboration of Baltic LGBT advocacy organizations LGL (Lithuania), Mozaika (Latvia) and the Estonian LGBT Association with Nordic partners Amnesty International Denmark and SETA (Finland).

# Publications



# Financial Report

INCOME AND EXPENDITURES IN 2018		
REMAINING PROJECT FUNDS (2017-12-31)	290.095 €	

INCOME	€	%
European Commission	75.191 €	35 %
Open Society Foundations	36.352 €	17 %
Nordic Council of Ministers	11.113 €	5 %
European Social Fund Agency (Lithuania)	34.446 €	16 %
„ILGA-Europe“	12.435 €	6 %
„Freedom House“	6.559 €	3 %
Development Cooperation and Support for Democracy program (Lithuania)	13.677 €	6 %
Other supporters	23.941 €	12 %
YEARLY INCOME:	213.714 €	100 %
EXPENDITURES	€	%
Salaries (gross)	119.230 €	37 %
LGBT centre expenses	31.135 €	10 %
Project implementation	171.159 €	53 %
YEARLY EXPENDITURES:	321.524 €	100 %
REMAINING PROJECT FUNDS (2018-12-31)	152.124 €	