

EVERYTHING YOU
WANT TO KNOW
ABOUT

 **LGL** *



* National lesbian, gay, bisexual and
transgender rights organization

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WHAT IS LGL?

Lithuanian gay league (LGL) is an independent non-governmental national organization, uniting homosexual, bisexual and transgender persons.

At the moment the LGL team consists of 11 board members, 7 constant employees, 2 foreign volunteers, who are here thanks to the European Voluntary Service project, and over 20 volunteers from Lithuania and other countries. Our team is youthful and dynamic, always open to new members, ideas and projects.

LGL bureau is located in Vilnius, A. Jaksto st. 22-15. Here our team administrates and implements many projects, plans meetings and regularly invites LGBT community members and their support groups to various events.

The LGL group in Lithuania was formed in late 1993, and after a few years- May 4, 1995 - it became official.

Right now LGL is a member of the National Equality and Diversity Forum (www.nlif.lt) and the Human Rights Coalition. LGL is also a member of international organizations: ILGA (The International Lesbian and Gay Association), IGLYO (the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Youth and Student Organization), EPOA

In 1991-1993 Lithuanian homosexuals were still living “underground”, unable to be themselves, stigmatized by the media as HIV/AIDS spreaders. We had to escape the image of this “risk group” and to show our community that rights for LGBT individuals were human rights. And that is why, just after the decriminalization of homosexual sex in the late 1993, we opened the “Amsterdam” club in Vilnius and in early 1994 we released the publication “Amsterdam” as well. That was the beginning of LGL. We accelerated our work thanks to the international LGBT community, since in April 1994 we organized the first ILGA-East European Conference that took place in Palanga (Lithuania).



Vladimiras Simonko & Eduardas Platovas

(The European Pride Organisers Association), TGEU (The European Transgender Network) and ANSO (Association of Nordic and Pol-Balt LGBTQ Student Organizations).

For a complete list of friends and sponsors please visit one of these links:

<http://www.lgl.lt/en/lgl/friends/>

<http://www.lgl.lt/en/lgl/supporters/>

VOLUNTEERING IN LGL

Volunteers are one of the most important parts of LGL. Our volunteers are not only from Lithuania, but from other countries like Italy, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands etc. as well. They all use their time, ideas and energy to help LGL attain its goals and enrich its everyday work.

Why volunteer with us?

- To join the activism for LGBT people's rights and be a part of history;
- To participate in various conferences, seminars, trainings and other events in Lithuania and abroad;
- To see how many projects LGL implements and how;
- To get work experience and gain new skills;
- To improve your English;
- To meet interesting and inspiring new people;

LGL volunteers have a wide range of activities they can choose from. Starting from writing articles and helping administration carry out

its daily work at the office to helping organizing activities like workshops, lectures, meetings and movie screenings for LGBT people.

We are proud of all our volunteers and of how they contribute to LGL, making it a successful organization with many activities. We are especially proud of how volunteers support each other along the way. Of course we have a volunteer coordinator who is always happy to help.

<http://www.lgl.lt/en/get-involved/volunteer/>

This summer I became more interested in human rights and the LGBT community, so I decided to join LGL volunteers' team. Here I've had a chance to organize many wonderful activities, and I also started writing articles for the LGL blog and their website. Volunteering with LGL met every expectation I had to the fullest— I met a lot of interesting and creative people, participated in lots of events and acquired many useful skills. At first I felt a little bit uncomfortable, but everyone was so friendly and answered every single question I had; and since then I have always been coming into LGL office with a smile.



Volunteer Sandra



Even though I have a full-time job and can only spare a little amount of time I still wanted to do something special. At the time of my initial involvement LGL had just received funding to make a video clip, but had problems finding people who agreed to be filmed. I didn't hesitate to help LGL and made an important step towards expressing my true self publicly, and at the moment it felt like a rebellion towards the current attitudes in this country. The reactions to that video made me realize that we need to keep talking about these things.

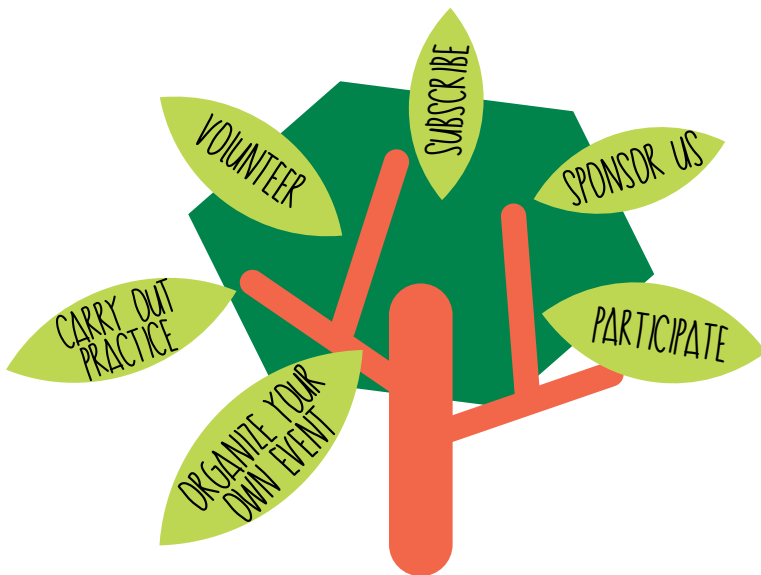


Volunteer Marius



HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE TO LGL?

Everyone can choose the nature of its contribution: volunteering, traineeship, participation in various events and lectures, organizing events on one's own or with our help, sponsoring us or just keeping track of what we do by following us on social media or subscribing to our newsletter.



More information on how you can help us reach our goals and our newsletter subscription can be found here:

www.lgl.lt/en/

www.facebook.com/lgl.lt

<https://twitter.com/LGLLithuania>



One of the priorities of LGL is to inform international organizations and institutions about the real situation concerning LGBT individuals' rights in Lithuania. To reach this goal we prepare newsletters and send them to over 5,000 subscribers in various countries and organizations. This kind of communication is really effective because our international friends and partners not only receive important information, but also get encouraged to declare their opinion about the unpleasant situation concerning LGBT individuals' rights to Lithuanian authorities. Any kind of help is welcome in LGL.



Tomas Vytautas Raskevičius, project manager

WHY DO WE NEED LGL?

LGL seeks to remove homophobia and any kind of discrimination based on sexual orientation or sexual identity.

It is safe to say that LGL is needed, because:

- It decreases the isolation and oppression of LGBT individuals by creating a network of information and communication;

My wish to get to know the LGBT community was one of the main reasons why I chose to work in LGL. We live in a world full of variety. Diversity helps us recognize different and interesting personalities. Guided by groundless superstitions we prevent others from living their lives to the fullest. I am glad I joined this active and strong group of people guided by goals which, I think, should matter to everyone.



*Šarūnas Sodonis,
advocacy coordinator*

- It decreases the discrimination of LGBT individuals by spreading objective information about homosexual, bisexual and transgender persons;
- It organizes social, educational, cultural activities and events for the LGBT community and its allies.

Regardless of our good intentions we often have to face many obstacles and most of the time our good deeds remain unnoticed. What makes the situation even worse is that some sensational news that have very little to do with our organization's daily work often end up covering the front pages of news media in Lithuania. This only shows the harshness of the social climate in Lithuania towards LGBT people that results in hate, violence and homophobic attitudes, and once again proves that LGL plays a very important part in the current situation in Lithuania.

For more information visit

www.lgl.lt/en/ and www.facebook.com/lgl.lt



Even though for the past four years I had an honor to work with many non-governmental organizations, in my opinion, LGL stands out the most. This organization has been diligently working to improve the situation of LGBT individual's rights in Lithuania for almost twenty years, and has been representing the LGBT community voice that is very weak in our community. LGL personnel and volunteer team is unbelievable and their constant commitment to organization goals do not cease to amaze. Even though they encounter so much resistance, LGL never stops and is always searching for new innovative ways to educate people. I admire this inspiring work.



*Ashley Fowler, Elon University,
Leaderish Program Director*



LGL AND COMMUNITY

It might seem odd that people who are only connected by their sexual orientation would want to form a community. We're all different when it comes to our political views, education, beliefs and hobbies.

Our identity as LGBT individuals is formed by a long and complicated process, which is often full of mistakes and misunderstandings. We're being raised and socialized in a very different environment, where we are sometimes misunderstood and can't get answers to questions about our identity. Even worse - this environment can not only be clueless, but also hostile towards LGBT individuals. Therefore, by communicating within our community we can help each other to understand ourselves better. Community is necessary, because by talking to people who understand what it means to be an LGBT individual we can understand and accept everything that unites us.

In 2004 an LGBT center was founded in LGL office. Here gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons spend time with LGL volunteers and friends. The LGL team organizes movie screenings, discussions, lectures, activist meetings, various workshops, foreign language lessons and other activities. Many events are not only recreational but educational.

If you want to find out more about the LGBT center activities and receive information about events and dates visit our website:

<http://www.lgl.lt/en/lgl/lgbt-centre/>

At first, when I was invited to participate to the LGBT center event called “Closet monologues”, I didn’t think that it would be of any use to me at all. Perhaps that kind of thinking was due to the fact that I didn’t really know what kind of activities we would do there. The first activity was just a trial, and I said to myself that if I didn’t like it, I’d just leave, but my skepticism faded away pretty fast. Some of the activities were focused on building trust among participants, relaxing, while others focused on projecting various situations, acting them out from different perspectives. In the end we spent a lot of time sharing our personal stories. It was important to learn to listen and reflect and to be listened to. These events are very important because they help participants be themselves and be honest about it, at least with a small circle of people, and that leads to an improved self-confidence. Self-confidence helps to be more open to the people you care about.



Tomas R., volunteer



LGL GIFTS AND SOUVENIRS

You don't have to be an LGBT rights activist or a public figure to inspire society's consciousness towards LGBT rights. Sometimes it's enough not to let homophobic jokes and harsh words pass by. You can also express your support for human rights proudly wearing LGL merchandise.

By purchasing LGL t-shirts, buttons, mugs, bags or other merchandise listed in our shop you not only support us financially, but also promote equality and active representation of LGBT rights, diversity and civic initiative along with various events and other great things that become possible thanks to LGL. You also receive a beautiful object which represents your virtues and radiates great mood.

Our shop can be found here: <http://lgl.it/shop/>

I decided to buy LGL's t-shirt for "Baltic Pride 2013" even before arriving to Lithuania. I wanted to support LGBT rights in Lithuania and the organization which works for them. For me it was important to own such a thing. When people notice your t-shirt, button, cup or bag, they get curious about its meaning, and that can be an excellent conversation starter.

I personally seek to support LGL – an organization that is fighting for LGBT rights. And I also like to adorn myself with a very beautiful piece of merchandise.



Megin, volunteer



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Do you want to know what's LGL, but too afraid to ask?

In this publication you will find:



Brief history of the National lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights organization;



True impressions from LGL team members;



Information on volunteering and community work at LGL;



Main goals and activities of the organization;



Answers to the question “Why do we need LGL?”